

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

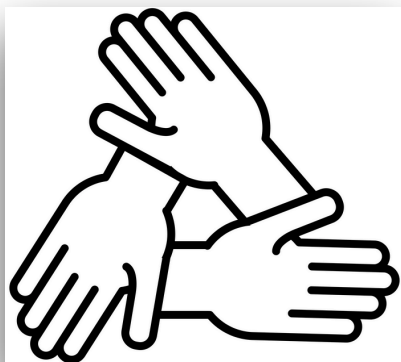


To the beloved community

The meaning of charity versus solidarity

At a recent meeting of interfaith ministerial minds, a question was posed, “What is the smell of solidarity?” Not: “Give me a 100 word treatise about your thoughts on solidarity” or “Tell us what this word brings to mind for you.” Rather, pause for a moment with me, and engage your animal senses. Utilize the pathway of smell, which ties us to memory and emotion and brings us into felt awareness of our own tactile human experience.

Answers came forth like: “It smells like a cup of coffee, shared with others.” “It smells like dirt,” calling to mind images of community gardens, the innate fecundity of the Earth itself, and speaks of an abundant birthright to which we all are called. Then the follow up: “Tell us about a time you experienced an act of charity.” After some sharing and reflection time, the Rev. Mykal Slack, of [Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism](http://blacklivesuu.org), (blacklivesuu.org) summed it up beautifully like this: “Charity is transactional whereas Solidarity is relational.”



In the Judeo-Christian tradition (one of our UU sources), we see this echoed in the story of the life of Jesus. So many first rejected his teachings and his message because it didn't fit their ideas about what a powerful, sacred leader ought to look like. “We wanted a king,” he would hear again and again: A man who could lay siege to empire from within the ranks. How could a humble day laborer hope to confront the thick webs of power from such a lowly position as his? A man who spent his time with fishermen, fellow members of

the working class, plus societal outcasts like beggars and sex workers. Surely the revolution would be seeded from on high, not from the hardscrabble landscape of the societal underbelly.

This month, we turn our thoughts to “Generosity” as prompted by our Soul Matters packets as well as the cultural nudge from the upcoming holidays. We are reminded to get out our checkbooks, spend a few hours at a soup kitchen, or load up a quick bag of donations so the “be a good person” box can be checked off alongside picking up the dry cleaning and the grocery shopping. Such gestures of charity, so easily accomplished, are not without merit. They allow us to keep moving forward through endless demands of neoliberal life without getting our hands too dirty. But what if “getting dirty” was in fact part of the work to which we are called?

See “Beloved,” page 2

November 2023

Come together for Thanksgiving Dinner at HUUF

Why spend all Thanksgiving Day cooking a huge dinner when you can just cook a side dish and eat with friends? Jo Weisgerber and Berti Welty will again host a potluck at the Fellowship on Thanksgiving Day at 2:00 p.m. Prior to Covid this was a yearly event, often including entire families. Over the years the number of attendees grew to 50 to 60 people.

Let's bring back the magic of the holiday meal with your Fellowship family. Berti and Jo will arrange for the cooked turkey(s) and everyone brings a dish. Some vegans bring main dishes to share. If you know you are coming and know what dish you wish to bring, please email Berti at bertijo@humboldt1.com. That way, when people ask “What should I bring?” Berti will be able to give an answer.

If it's at the last minute and you have not contacted Berti? Come anyway and enjoy.

People will be needed to help set-up starting at 1:00 p.m. and those willing to help with clean-up are greatly appreciated. Please let Berti know if you are able to help.

We will also be hosting a Christmas dinner at HUUF at 2:00 p.m. on Christmas Day.

Berti Welty

Prayer poems from Rev. Bryan Jessup

If you were able to attend Reverend Emeritus Bryan Jessup's service on October 8, you heard a few prayers he shared. But if you didn't make it, I'm happy to share his prayers so we can reflect on them. *Bek Paez*

Creator

Creator – Who art in every –
Wholeness would be Thy name.
Thy breath we're from. – Thy will become, on Earth, every star in heaven.
Give us this now our needed Wise.
And forgive us our Proud as we forego our Vengeful.
And lead us not into Self Loath Small – But deliver us from Ego –
For Thine is the Life Web and the Love Song and the Joy Song – Forever.
So be.

Holy Earth Home

Holy Earth Home – Mother of All
The Power of Creation is with you
Blessed art thou among planets – And blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
The whole interconnected Web of Life.
Holy Earth Home – Mother of All, -
Pray for us Love Learners now and in the hour of our death – Amen



Food outreach resumes for Church of the Joyful Healer partnership

Got an easy enchilada recipe or a favorite stew that's simple to prepare? Our friends at the Church of the Joyful Healer in McKinleyville could use a little help providing food for the unhoused. Each Saturday, they provide bagged lunches, a hot meal, and an assortment of useful goods as part of their [Saturday Outreach Program](https://umc-joyfulhealer.org) (umc-joyfulhealer.org).

Once a month, beginning Friday, November 17 at 6:00 p.m., we'll gather at HUUF's kitchen to whip up sandwiches and a pot of soup or warm tray of something hearty to be distributed the following day. It's a wonderful way to continue to live our aspiration: "Let service be our prayer."

Contact Amy for more information at comm@huuf.org

Beloved, from page one

Popular author and researcher Brene Brown talks about the difference between sympathy and empathy, and uses a simple graphic to illuminate this topic. We see a character sitting in a cave. The voice of Sympathy hovers in the sun-dappled world above, calling to this pitiful creature below: "Have you tried taking B-vitamins?" "What about meditation? Exercise? Perhaps you should explore a vegan diet!" In the second frame, we see the figure of Empathy, silent and humble, descend into the cave beside their suffering friend. No words of advice are offered, no facile solutions. They simply move into the space beside their fellow, place an arm around their shoulders and sit with them in the dark.

Siddhartha was only able to become the Buddha once he left his lofty perch inside the palace walls and sat by the mud-stained roots of the Bodhi tree to take alms. Jesus' famed Sermon on the Mount carries weight not because of the position on high from which he is said to have delivered it, but because he lived an ethos of proximity, not simply preaching "love thy neighbor" but showing his disciples what that looked like.

Aboriginal activist Lilla Watson put it this way: "If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

We might say: Charity is a one-and-done transaction that leaves both the giver and receiver largely unchanged — an upbeat way to maintain the status quo. Solidarity is a journey, a question to be answered, holding the power to transform lives. Solidarity is the work of our time.

Yours in grace and gratitude, your Shared Ministry Team,
Amy Day and Bridgette Garuti

How to make your HUUF potluck a success

HUUF potlucks are tasty feasts and provide great fellowship. The following tips are offered in the spirit of potluck success all the way to the final floor sweep.

If you are planning a potluck, please book setup and cleanup crews as part of the planning. Hoping for some kind souls to pitch in at the last minute is wishful thinking. Some kind souls may be available for kitchen cleanup if contacted a month in advance - contact Jackie Wales and Shawn Nichols at 707-725-3871 and 5centcountry@suddenlink.net. You will also need to arrange for at least two more people to do setup, take down, floor cleaning and trash.

SETUP:

Setup two or three tables from the multipurpose room in the location planned for service of the potluck in advance so food can be placed there as it arrives, table coverings and cloth napkins for those tables are under the center counter in the kitchen.

On one end of the tables place the dishes, flatware and cloth napkins. A few extra serving spoons on the tables helps also. Place bus tubs for dirty dishes in strategic locations, as well as trash can, compost buckets with scrapers and a container for dirty napkins. Bus tubs are stored on top of the refrigerator. Arrange for one or two people who are familiar with the kitchen to be directing traffic and answering questions.

CLEANUP:

Turn on the dishwasher a few minutes in advance so it can reach the right temperature; directions are on the wall behind the machine. We try to keep a box of containers for take home food stored under the microwave. At least four people are needed for a cleanup crew. They will be rounding up dirty dishes to begin with, but also dishes that have been scraped need to be quick washed in the sink and loaded in the appropriate dishwasher tray. Plates need to stand up, cups need to be upside down and flatware needs to be in an open small mesh bag. Loaded trays are placed in the dishwasher and then push the WASH button. The trays will be heavy, so watch your back. It takes less than four minutes for the dishes to be washed.

Trays are unloaded when they are steamy hot. If you wear glasses, they will steam up. Again, watch your back when lifting the trays of dishes. Place the tray on the center counter with towels underneath to absorb moisture. Dishes will air dry in one or two minutes and can be put away. Silverware will need to be patted dry with a towel while still in the tray. Carts are convenient for storing dishes in the pantry. While the dishes are being dealt with in the kitchen; other volunteers can clean tables and return them to the multipurpose room, sweep floors as needed and empty trash. When all dishes are done, turn off the dishwasher, allow water to empty, then remove the filter in the bottom of the dishwasher, clean and replace it.

Empty the compost bucket and rinse it. Sweep the kitchen floor and empty the kitchen trash. Dirty linens can be put in mesh laundry bags located in the pantry and taken home for laundering. Please return them as soon as possible.

Blessed are those who do humble tasks!

Sylvia Shaw

Notes from the garden

Staying ahead of the weeds

Our October grounds work party began with a bit of a surprise - I arrived, plants in hand, and found no one else! Pat came not long after. We rolled up our sleeves and got to work: three new yerba buena plants will spread through the bed that screens the storage shed in front of Bridgette's office. Our hope is that this attractive ground cover will out-compete the weeds and cut down on our workload.

Next, Pat planted a ninebark in an enclosure at the far end of the big meadow, replacing one that died. He added a few more drip emitters that should keep this plant better watered in the summer. Lastly, I planted a deer fern in the bed outside the nursery to punctuate the ginger around it. Bert Taylor, bless her, arrived shortly after we did, and helped weed and water around the yerba buena. She cleared cobwebs from the shed and front entrance, refreshed the planters, and swept the area clean. It provided a nice welcome for Bryan and Edie that Sunday.

Our next grounds work party will be on Saturday, November 9, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. With enough help, we can dig around the heat pump to locate and repair the leak in our irrigation system caused by its installation, and weed and mulch our beds. By then I should have healed from my cataract surgery, which is scheduled for November 1.

I'm not sure, though, that I want to see the weeds any better than I already do!

Valerie Gizinski



Creating the future of HUUF's music ministry

Thank you to all who contributed to our Music Ministry survey. For the past month, we've been soliciting feedback to gather information on how to move forward with our music ministry program.

We asked you to share what role music plays in your sense of the sacred. We asked what musical experiences you enjoy in a service. We asked your recommendations for people who could help us continue to bring high quality musical experiences to our congregation. Here is what we found:

Everyone who responded claimed music is a key element of their spiritual experience. You told us it opens your heart and provides a powerful conduit for connection and healing.

77.8% chose "Led Group Singing" as their top way to enjoy music. Respondents were able to choose as many options as they liked, so things like "Call and Response songs with a Skilled Song Leader" followed close behind at 66.7%. "Classical Choral Repertoire" and "Soloists and Duet/Trio Performances" tied for 55.6% of the vote.

When asked who you might like to see help us move forward, an overwhelming majority mentioned both the Arcata Interfaith Community Choir and Maggie McKnight as a song leader. One respondent suggested we consider splitting the Choir Director stipend between two parties, one to lead a traditional choir and one to offer more non-traditional song circle experiences geared toward community healing and participation and less toward performance.

In the end, a committee of three of us gathered - Amy Day, Director of Spiritual Life, Margy Emerson, Co-President of the Board and member of the Program and Worship Committee, and Sara Janus, new to our congregation, who already serves on our tech/hybrid service team,

We reviewed individual responses and looked for themes and collective solutions to present themselves. Here is what came forth:

The recommendations we shared at the Congregational Meeting on October 22 were to honor the emerging voices calling for new and communal ways to experience music together, and to carry forth the beloved tradition of choral music our community has come to love over the past 15 years. In the end, a hybrid solution was proposed. To split the stipend currently allocated for Music Ministry between two qualified individuals: one, possibly (hopefully!) Maggie McKnight, who has trained extensively in the work of group song leading and facilitation, to offer us twice monthly community song circles, in addition to sharing her skills with us at one service a month. Two, to hire a candidate from the list of names provided us who can offer twice monthly choir rehearsals (the same schedule the Interfaith Choir maintains), plus a monthly performance at service.

In any new iteration, some beloved forms fall by the wayside or get reshaped. Change is hard. In a world where so much certainty has been stripped from us these past few years, we want some things to remain intact.

At these moments, I'm grateful to the experience of parenting and the metaphors it provides. My daughter, now 11, looks, sounds, and acts very different than the child I accompanied through life just a few years ago. Her needs have changed, preferences, body, gestures, style. I've had to learn and relearn what it

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Sunday Services and Religious Education

Sunday, November 5, 11:00 a.m.

Listening to Each Other on the Topic of Transforming Conflict

Margy Emerson

In small groups, using our deep listening guidelines, we will weigh in on the subject of the previous Sunday's service—Transforming Conflict. These questions are offered as possible springboards for conversation: What has been your personal pattern of responding to conflict? How and where in your body do you feel conflict? If you've experienced a conflict that went badly, or turned out particularly well, do you know why? The underlying topic for our small-group conversations is deep listening—a practice that takes practice.

Sunday, November 12, 11:00 a.m.

Heartbreak and Joy: Struggling to make change and what we all can do

Corazon Amada

In a world that's becoming more challenging and heartbreaking, action can be an antidote to despair. Corazon started her activism journey while still very young and has had much experience. Come hear about the mistakes, pain, and deep joy of struggling to make change. Gain ideas and visions of what we all can do. History isn't made by special people. Hard times call forth what's special in each of us, if we open our hearts. Followed by a question and answer session. Bring your questions and visions.

Sunday, November 19, 11:00 a.m.

Healthcare Justice

Rev. Tom Lewis, dentist

Access to healthcare services in the US is dependent on a third party that pays the bills. Our health care cost per person is one of the highest in the world. Additionally, the US has some of the poorest health outcomes. Most countries have a universal healthcare system that is successful and fair to all citizens. Our UU principles call us to work toward a just and fair universal healthcare system. Attend this service and find out how you can help make universal healthcare a reality.

Sunday, November 26, 11:00 a.m.

Stone Soup Sunday

Amy Day

Join us on this Social Action Sunday as we reimagine this much-loved story and put our hands to work in service of our values. Let us embody this month's call to generosity where we can give it. In partnership with Arcata House, we will use a small portion of our time preparing meals for those experiencing homelessness. Bring an offering of chopped vegetables to contribute. Come feel the sacred embedded within the seemingly mundane as we pack lunches, share stories and songs, and embody our values through this communal act of serving others.

Children and Families Religious Education

Sundays at 11:00 a.m.: Our wonderful RE staff provide meaningful engagement in the form of games, crafts, songs, sharing time, stories and outdoor play to our youth, grades Pre-K-5, during Sunday services. Nursery Care is also available for babies and toddlers. Please see this month's service descriptions for more details.

This month, we'll be exploring the topic of "Generosity" as part of our ongoing learning through the Soul Matters curriculum.

Board report

The HUUF Board meeting on October 10 was attended by Pat McCutcheon, Margy Emerson, Montana Caouette, Jason Teraoka, Amy Day, and Bridgette Garuti. There were no HUUF members attending the public comment period.

The Board discussed the "Taking Flight" Halloween Festival, which will be held on October 28. This year, the festival will raise funds for the OWL program. Amy is working hard to solicit volunteers to make this a successful event.

The Chalice Dinners were discussed. These dinners provide opportunities for new and longtime members to get together and share interests. To sign up for the dinners use the following link and refer to the October 13, 2023 *HUUF Weekly*: <https://forms.gle/o2YbuXahsPMAvsku5>

The future of HUUF's Music Ministry is a big concern and Margy Emerson and Bert Taylor will serve on a committee to seek at least 18 responses to a survey of interested members. The survey will be used to form recommendations.

Amy discussed the Teen Coordinator position and the Board unanimously approved hiring Belemy Devine for the position. Bellamy is a CalPoly Humboldt student and has been active at HUUF. We are very fortunate to have Bellamy serve as Teen Coordinator and we welcome them!

HUUF will host Samhain, an Earth-based ritual that will be led by Yemaya, on October 29. We went on to discuss Bek Paez's work with the Membership Committee creating ideas for passive, low-management fundraising.

The Board is looking to recruit a Board Member/Treasurer and a few ideas were discussed.

Lastly, the Board discussed the agenda for the October 22 Congregational Meeting and logistics and agenda items were finalized.

Our next Board get together is scheduled in-person in the HUUF Sanctuary on November 14 at 7:00 p.m. The first 30 minutes of every Board meeting are reserved for HUUF members to address the Board and Leadership Team.

Jason Teraoka, Board Trustee

Hybrid services still need helpers

Thank you to our great team of volunteers who stepped forth to be trained on setting up and facilitating HUUF's Sunday hybrid services. While some technology is needed to make this happen, in the end, it's our wonderful people who make this possible. We still need a few more folks to step up and join this effort for hybrid services to resume fully. If you would like to get trained to host Zoom services, contact Amy at comm@huuf.org.

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means to be her mother, and the ways in which to love her. But I am steadfast in both my decision and desire to love and parent her in the way she needs. So I open myself to the journey and the new forms this will take.

So we look to our Fellowship and the ways music uplifts us at this trying time. The forms and faces may change, but the method and medicine remain the same. Let us raise our voices. Let us harness the tools of connection and the embodied sense of the sacred. Let us make music in the ways available to us in the here and now.

Any questions, please feel free to direct them to Amy Day at comm@huuf.org

Climate Action Campaign

Some good news, and something to keep an eye on

We got encouraging news for the climate when Governor Newsom recently signed SB 253 and SB 261. These bills mandate large corporations and financial institutions to disclose the climate changing emissions they produce.

These two bills, along with SB 252, which would require state pension funds to divest from fossil fuels, formed the California Climate Corporate Accountability Bill package.

SB 253 requires all corporations that make over one billion dollars in California to report their emissions, not just those coming directly from their factories and buildings, but also those they generate indirectly, such as the electricity they use to create their products, and on down the supply chain. This may have national and international impact as it includes corporations that do business in California but may be headquartered anywhere in the country.

SB 261 will require businesses with annual revenues over \$500 million to report their climate-related financial risks. This corporate climate accountability package will set a new standard, for the nation and the world, as the data these companies provide are predicted to be a powerful lever for other nations as well as the U.S.

Meanwhile, action on SB 252 in the State Assembly was delayed until next year. CAC members will continue to send letters and postcards and make calls to support that important bill.

CAC also contacted the Board of Supervisors to support a stronger Climate Action Plan (CAP) for Humboldt County. After years of staff work and input from the public, the County Board recently abandoned a draft plan that was pretty strong, instead engaging in accounting tricks to make it appear that Humboldt had already reduced its greenhouse emissions. Thanks to John Schaefer, who testified at the October 17 County Board meeting, and others who contacted their supervisors, the county abandoned that mistaken strategy and instead committed to completing a CAP without accounting tricks. We'll follow up and report to you what comes of it.

We thank the Rev. Gregory Stevens of California Interfaith Power and Light for his informative October 15 presentation on the California Clean Vehicle Rebate Program (CVRP). For additional information about California's CVRP, see <https://cleanvehiclerebate.org/en>

In shared ministry, we support each other on behalf of Earth's climate and her life support systems.

Sue Lee Mossman, Co-chair



Planning begins for Women's Retreat

It has been years since HUUF organized a weekend long women's retreat. Berti has reserved the Mattole Camp and Retreat Center for the three day weekend of June 7-9, 2024. Those who wish may come on Thursday. If you would like to be part of the planning process, and help develop the kind of retreat you'd want, contact Berti Welty at bertijo@humboldt1.com.



Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

P.O. Box 506
Bayside, CA 95524

24 Fellowship Way, Bayside (off Jacoby Creek Road) (707) 822-3793 <https://huuf.org/>

e-mail: office@huuf.org

Director of Operations: Bridgette Garuti, on campus Mon.-Wed. 9:30-4:00, Thurs. by email only

email: office@huuf.org

Director of Spiritual Life: Amy Day on campus Tues. and Thurs. email: comm@huuf.org

Membership Director: Rebekah Paez, on campus Tues. 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday/Friday by appointment

email: Connect@huuf.org

Newsletter Editor: Pat Carr

email: newsletter@huuf.org

Newsletter Proofreader: Stephen Sottong

Board of Trustees:

Co-Presidents: Margy Emerson, Pat McCutcheon

Vice-President: Michael Caouette

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Membership report

This month has been busy with blessings, and I am so grateful to be filled with the bountiful harvest this community provides. I am happy to share with you some new members that have joined recently: Dennis McGetrick, Colleen Betts, Paula Levine, and Josh Charles. Look for them on Sundays and stay tuned for more information on our growing congregation.

Bek Paez

Dental consult offered

Dental problem? Dental treatment plan confusion? Need a second opinion about a dental condition?

As part of my ministry I am available to have a gratis (no fee) private dental consultation and brief dental exam for any HUUF member or friend. Please call me directly at (530) 774-3550 or send me an email: tomaslewis70@gmail.com. Consultations will be confidential in respect to you and your dental health.

Tom Lewis

Art Matters/Soul Matters - A space of creativity and healing:

Join Amy Day and Bridgette Garuti on Wednesday, November 29, 6:30-8:00 p.m., for a unique small group experience. We will bring a creative twist to the exploration of this month's Soul Matters theme of "Generosity" with mindful writing prompts and art journaling. No art or writing experience is necessary to participate. A **\$5.00 materials fee** helps cover the cost of supplies, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds.