

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



December 2022

To the beloved community

A while ago, my husband and I found ourselves at one of those crossroads one inevitably comes to in a long-term relationship. We sat upright, armed with clipboards and coffee, ready to negotiate this present warble in the fabric of our life together. He didn't see the problem. "I'm doing all the things," his argument basically went. And he listed off the innumerable ways he cared for our home, our property, our finances, even pitched in on domestic duties like laundry and dishes. There was not a single point with which I could argue. Rather, I turned to him and said plainly, "It's not enough." He looked at me astonished, and I could see the whirring of his mind, trying to figure out how he could fit in yet one more to-do item on his already heaving list. "It's not about *doing* more," I continued, "it's about a shift of focus. I need you to tend to the heart of our relationship with me."

"*What does a Minister do?*" It's a question we find ourselves mulling over on a regular basis these days, as Bridgette and I survey the landscape of the new task we've been given: Interim Ministerial Team. Tend to the needs of the congregational "household". Attend to the day-to-day: the scheduling, the correspondence, the phone calls, the spreadsheets and invoices and ever-growing list of whatnots. Attend to the heart: look for meaningful and impactful ways to offer the gift of presence, companioning and tending as beloveds navigate the difficult terrain of illness, loss, societal decay and personal heartbreak. It seems that those of us who feel called to do heart-led, values-based, spiritual or transformational work in this life, must constantly navigate the space of betwixt and between. Show up. Do the work that is needed. But never lose sight of the bigger *Why* behind it all.

As we move into this next era of our growth and unfolding as a community, we shall be showing up inside this space to sketch a picture of the ins and outs of our current ministerial aims and efforts. What are we doing? What's driving our thinking and how are we engaging in the work that will help our beloved community flourish, rebuild and move into the next era of growth and expansion to which we are called? How are we tending to the needs of the congregation both in the present, while planting seeds for the future?

Here is a sampling of what those efforts have included thus far:

Bridgette continues to expand our connection to the larger community through ongoing relationship building with organizations like Queer Humboldt (who hosted a well-attended community offering last month), Cooperation Humboldt (whose leadership team we sat with to look for ways to collaborate in the year to come), and Schatz Energy Lab. She's helping to grow our larger engagement offerings by supporting the ongoing Monday evening Yoga class, and inviting to our worship experience exciting guest teachers like the Tibetan Buddhist group that will be visiting us in January.

Amy continues to help support our RE program as we continue to craft more opportunities for Intergenerational worship and gathering. From bigger projects

Page 2: RE (cont) Personal info
Page 3: Sunday Services RE schedule Fellowship events
Page 4: Climate Action
Page 5: Board Report WhaleCoast AK-
Page 6: Deadline change



See "*Beloved*," page 2

like our annual Halloween Festival to monthly Family FUUn Nights and potlucks, to an upcoming Green Friday event for our teenage youth, made possible through cooperative efforts with the Northcoast Environmental Center and 350 Humboldt. In addition, she is supporting the heart-led labors of our Program and Worship team, as well as continuing to provide meaningful spaces for small group ministry.

As we enter into this period of deepening our commitment to shared ministry, I invite you to contemplate the work you are currently engaged in. Take time to reflect upon how the minutiae of your day-to-day feeds into the larger tapestry of your values and aspirations. Some questions to consider, as we look upon the close of this Gregorian year and enter into another: The Macro - Who are you? What is the core of your spiritual identity? What drives the work you do? And the Micro - What work are you currently engaged in (as a partner/parent/community member and movement builder - yes, that's you!)? How does the smaller tributary of your own efforts feed into the larger stream? And who are your companions in this work?

In our last Congregational meeting, at which Pat McCutcheon was enthusiastically welcomed onto the Board of Trustees, she referenced this line from the Talmud: *"Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly now, love mercy now, walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it."* The truth is we are, all of us, charged with doing what is needed to tend to both the mechanisms and the heart of this Fellowship - and of the larger world of which we are a part. As my husband and I discovered, as we moved into the synthesis portion of our lengthy talk, we needed to seek a re-defining of our efforts. Labors that implored us not to work harder or faster or produce more, but rather to infuse our actions with more presence, more attention, and in service of the whole.

There's a story from the Judeo-Christian tradition in which I was raised: A young boy comes to see the great Teacher speak, amidst a crowd of hundreds, maybe more. The great Teacher has been speaking at length for many hours, when the crowd begins to get hungry. And He inquires into the multitude, as to whether or not anyone has brought any food. The young boy lifts up his paltry offering - a few small loaves and a couple of fish, keenly aware that this doesn't constitute more than a mouthful for a select few. But at the Teacher's bidding, he takes forth his meager offering, and presents it to the wise man. And the story goes that the Teacher blesses it, receives it and lays his hands upon the tiny meal. And all of a sudden it begins to multiply. He begins to break the bread, distribute the few fish, telling the boy to begin to circulate these morsels among the crowd. And they begin to replenish themselves. Each time the boy returns empty-handed, he is met with yet more sustenance, enough to feed ten, fifteen, a hundred more. And slowly they move the meal among the crowd, until, the story tells us, the entire congregation has had their fill.



Perhaps it's a fitting moment to attune to the lesson of that mythic little boy. Our gifts, such as they are, are nowhere near enough to feed and nourish this soul-starved world. And yet... we understand that a humble gift, offered freely - to Source - to the fecund Hand of Life - has a way of multiplying, growing, swelling to meet the need that is there. In this way, a puny mouthful becomes a full meal. In this way, a tiny seed, offered freely to the gracious Earth herself, blossoms into a tree, laden with fruit.

Our individual and collective labors hold the potential to gently, over time, reweave the fabric of our world, or they could just serve to keep our hands busy. It could be that what is needed is not yet one more task, one more fish: one more circle, committee meeting, perfectly-orchestrated worship service, or act of volunteerism. Rather, a simple offering of what we have, a deep love and attention to a single row of seedlings, and a reverence for the soil. If all we are granted is a small loaf and a fish, then we must learn to wield them well.

*yours, in grace and gratitude,
Your Interim Ministerial Team,
Amy Day and Bridgette Garuti*

Personal information in articles

In a recent issue, an article appeared with personal information that was not for public dissemination. That information was deleted from the online edition of the newsletter, but the print edition was at the press before we were notified. In this kind of situation it is the responsibility of the submitter of the article to ensure that all personal information (names, phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, etc.) has been cleared with the individual. Please do not take for granted that it is all right to publish this information. The newsletter guidelines (<https://tinyurl.com/HUUFNewsGuide>) have been updated to reflect this.

The Editorial Staff

Sunday Services and more

Sunday, Dec. 4 – 11 a.m. – Circling in Wonder

This month's discussion service will focus on the December Soul Matters theme. Join in person or via zoom to explore "Wonder" in congenial small groups.

Sunday, Dec. 11 – 11 a.m. – Music Sunday – Elisabeth Harrington, Debi Cooper, and Choristers

This service will offer a vibrant choral celebration for all ages. It will feature music from Judaic, Christian, Earth-based, and secular streams.

Sunday, Dec. 18 – 11 a.m. – Honoring the Winter Solstice – Amy Day

Come sing with us as we move and craft and gather into the sweet sacredness that winter days offer. In this vibrant all-ages celebration, we will look at time-honored rituals that are from Earth-based traditions to help us attune to the heart of this season.

Saturday, Dec. 24 – TBA – Christmas Eve gathering – Elisabeth Harrington and Amy Day

Our traditional HUUF Christmas Eve all-ages service will be celebrated with joyful music and heart-centered reflections.

There will be no service on Sunday, Dec. 25

Children and Families Religious Education:

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

Fellowship Engagement Activities:

Mondays, December 5, 12, and 19, 5:30 p.m.- 6:45 p.m.
Toning Our Temple: Yoga for all Bodies, with Jamie Kesslof

Thursdays, December 8 through February 2, 2023, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Writing in the Dark: A Virtual Gathering and Excavation

Amy Day

"Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness. It took me years to understand that this too, was a gift." ~Mary Oliver

A multi-week expressive writing journey into the darkness of winter, in which we'll find ways to lovingly mine our grief, cozy up to our shadows, and honor the healing wisdom of the dark.

Each week, we'll gather online, explore a chosen writing prompt for 20 minutes or so, followed by time to share and offer up a brief mindfulness practice to honor what we find. All are welcome, but please register in advance by going to the website: <https://huuf.org/home-2/upcoming-events/engagement/>

For more information, contact Amy at comm@huuf.org

Climate Action Campaign: carpools, Street Project, EVs, and better carry-out

Keep your calendars open for these climate-related events at HUUF in December:

On Friday, December 2, 7:00-9:00 p.m., join us for a Zero-Waste, Maker's Space for Teens and Young Adults. HUUF's Teen Council, in collaboration with 350 Humboldt and the Northcoast Environmental Center, offers a fun and creative upcycled gift-making experience for youth.

For December's Climate Action of the Month, join CAC on Monday, December 5, 7:00-9:00 p.m. on Zoom and watch "The Street Project," a documentary on the effort to make streets safer for walking and biking. Since 2009, pedestrian deaths across the nation have risen by 51%, and locally we've seen far too many tragedies. Colin Fiske of the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities will talk about what his organization is doing locally and invite our support. We hope you'll attend this inspiring event and join the effort to make our streets safer while reducing global warming! Here's the Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99926710555?pwd=cUhxQStTejJEL0NCMy9JMWRVeTJxQT09>

CAC has joined the Caring Circle Collaborative to promote carpooling to and from HUUF services and other Fellowship events. CAC members who will try to be available to provide rides include: Chris Chapin, Cena Marino, and Joanna Welch (all from Eureka). Rides from Arcata may be obtained from Jamie Kessloff at (707) 460-0303, John Schaefer, and Pat Carr (refer to the HUUF Directory or huuf.org website for phone numbers not listed). Jamie also offers rides to her Monday evening yoga class at HUUF for those in the Arcata area. All agree to wear masks and provide ventilation in the car. Reimbursement for fuel costs may be requested.

For those who are thinking about buying an electric vehicle, several CAC members who own EVs are willing to share their experiences and what they have learned. Contact Joanna Welch, John Schaefer, Pat Carr, or Chip Sharpe if you'd find that helpful. Cena Marino has a Juice Box EV charger at her house, and graciously offers free charging. Call her to make arrangements.

Thanks to John Schaefer who has offered the following information on how to find EV charging when traveling.. John says:

"EV charging while traveling is easy but the devil is in the details. Several mapping apps are available. Look for DC fast chargers, CCS level 3, which charge faster than J1772.

"I think the maps at <https://www.plugshare.com/> give the best selection of chargers. Another is https://na.chargepoint.com/charge_point, but Chargepoint owns a lot of chargers, so they don't always show competitors. That said, I've used Chargepoint chargers in Laytonville and Ukiah (Burger King) and find they usually work. Not so with <https://www.electrifyamerica.com/locate-charger/>, particularly the one at Safeway in Willets. I believe all EVGO chargers are DC fast chargers (CCS) <https://www.evgo.com/find-a-charger/>.

"Another detail is connectors: Most newer cars accommodate CCS, fast DC charging. A slower connector is the J1772. Every car that accepts CCS also accepts the older, slower J1772.

"The big exception is Tesla which has a unique connector, and two types of chargers: destination, and super chargers. Only Tesla cars can use super chargers, but if you purchase a special adaptor I understand other cars can use destination Tesla chargers.

"Leafs also use an older Japanese connector called CHADEMO, and some charging stations offer those connectors. They are slow chargers like the J1772." Again, thank you, John.

Adding to John's words, Pat Carr reminds us that 80% of EV charging is done at home according to information from the August, 2021, 350 Humboldt webinar on EV charging.

Finally, on January 1, Arcata's single-use disposable ordinance will take effect after having been on hold since soon it was enacted in 2020. It will require a \$.25 per order fee for takeout orders with disposable foodware. But customers will get a discount of \$.25 if they bring their own reusable containers. For more information, go to <https://bit.ly/3zi0b10>.

CAC sends our warmest wishes of the season to all,

Sue Lee Mossman



HUUF Board Report for November

HUUF's Board of Trustees met on November 8. Director of Operations Bridgette Garuti reported on a number of important issues facing HUUF, including the departure of our tech person, Anna Bressers, who will be leaving her post at the end of November. Tech duties will be filled by volunteers until a replacement is found. Other items in the report included increasing the Adult Religious Education budget, and remodeling the Multipurpose Room so it can be used for even more purposes. Bridgette also reported on challenges the Pastoral Care program faces in creating a well defined system, as well as recruiting additional members.

Director of Spiritual Life Amy Day's report included discussion of the Our Whole Lives program, fellowship/community engagement, Religious Education Family Art Day and Karaoke activity, and Membership Committee and pastoral care concerns. Some of these items had been discussed earlier and there was no further discussion on the report except praise for all of the great programs that were described.

The alphabet soup discussion was next, regarding the MRC (Ministerial Relations Committee), TLC (Transition Leadership Committee), IMT (Interim Ministry Team), and the newly named MSG (Ministerial Support Group). These working groups were formed to help with congregational and organizational needs until we have a formal minister. Discussion focused on clarifying each group's mission and membership, how the groups dovetail with HUUF's existing committees, and the question of whether we should contract with a consultant for the IMT.

Although it was recognized that in-person meetings are best, board members decided that board meetings will meet via Zoom until we can resolve the challenges presented by hybrid meetings.

Other business included a new exterior paint job for HUUF's buildings. Proceeding with this has been postponed until after the rainy season. Also, the board was informed that we can use a shared folder for board documents. Finally, it was suggested that the board be more proactive in making efforts to recruit volunteers.

The HUUF board meets 7:00-9:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month via Zoom. The first 30 minutes of each meeting is dedicated to questions and discussion from members, friends, volunteers, or the general public. Zoom links for board meetings will be posted the Friday before each meeting in the HUUF Weekly.



Sandy Lynn



Former HUUF Member Leads WhaleCoast Alaska

Former HUUF member Maya Kaup has moved to Alaska to run a Unitarian Universalist tourism company called WhaleCoast Alaska. Two tours are offered each summer to raise funds for four Alaskan UU congregations. Maya says the tours offer a unique and more authentic Alaskan travel experience that includes homestays with local UU members, dinner parties, and other activities. Visitors experience majestic scenery, wildlife, Denali National Park, Alaskan native culture, and glaciers. Maya says she is proud to be leading these tours and that they have been a great way to visit Alaska for 28 years.

Reservations for this summer are now available. For details, visit the website: www.WhaleCoastAK.org For questions, contact Maya at: whalecoastak@gmail.com

Submitted article





Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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January HUUF Newsletter deadline December 18

The holidays can be wonderful times but schedules easily go awry. So we can get the newsletter out on time, please get submissions in by 5:00 p.m., December 18. Send them to newsletter@huuf.org.

Thank you!

The Editorial Team

Classified Ads

Classified ads are 10¢ per word. Send your check to the HUUF office and email the text of your ad

Deadline Information

Deadline for the January newsletter issue is Sunday, December **18** at 5 p.m. Send committee reports, announcements and articles related to HUUF (email only) to newsletter@huuf.org.

Many file formats are acceptable, but .doc, .docx, .rtf and text are preferred, and .pdf and .pages cannot be used. Late submissions are not accepted without prior approval. Full guidelines at: <https://tinyurl.com/HUUFNewsGuide>

Holiday Celebration Concert

On Friday, **December 16**, ACompany of Voices, directed by Elisabeth Harrington, will present two concerts in the Sanctuary at HUUF. There will be festive refreshments, also fun HUUF Choir sing-along. Watch the Weekly for details and ticket info.

Part of proceeds goes towards our Wiyot Honor Tax.

Volunteer event helpers wanted! Free concert ticket! Email Elisabeth at elisabethharrington@gmail.com.

The Christmas myth calls us to remember that the ordinary can become extraordinary.

That any child, our own children, can become great prophets, teachers, leaders of nations, saviors even, not of souls but of lives, working to end the ills and suffering in our world.

So the challenging thing becomes not to look for miracles, but finding where there isn't one.

- Sara Eileen LaWall, Unitarian Universalist

