



# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Church of Fort Myers

## *The Communicator*

January 2016 Volume 33 Issue 1

### **Worship in January: Creation**

Meaningful and creative shared experiences between people can be more compelling than all of the faiths, fears, concepts and ideologies that separate them. And, if these experiences can be multiplied and sustained over a sufficient duration of time, then any barrier that separates one person from another can be undermined and eliminated.



### **Community Sharing in January**



The South Fort Myers Food Pantry opened in 2008. 15 churches and community organizations are now involved. By 2015 the Pantry, staffed totally by volunteers, served more than 100,000 people and purchased over two million pounds of food. As long as there is hunger in the South Fort Myers area, our goal is to provide food to

those in need and give information about assistance programs which may be of benefit. We can provide pantry guests with *choices* as to what food they receive. Our goal is to continue a choice pantry and provide healthier selections, particularly with protein items and fresh vegetables. Donations are necessary to continue this work. Many UUCFM members contribute time and energy to this organization. Your food contributions on a weekly basis are most appreciated. All non-designated cash donations will be given to the Pantry this month. Please continue your generous support.

*The UUCFM Office will be closed on New Year's Day*

## Community Sharing Proposal

The Social Justice Committee recommends this list of recipients to the Congregation for consideration for 2016-2017:

April 2016	Minister's Discretionary Fund
May 2016 (5 weeks)	Planned Parenthood FGCU Campus Ministry
June 2016	SalusCare
July 2016 (5 weeks)	Early Learning Coalition Literacy Council Gulf Coast
August 2016	Alliance for Fair Food
September 2016	Visuality, Inc.
October 2016 (5 weeks)	Lee County Homeless Coalition PACE Center for Girls
November 2016	LIFE (Lee Interfaith for Empowerment)
December 2016	Quality Life Center
January 2017 (5 weeks)	ACT (Abuse Counseling and Treatment Center) Our Mother's Home
February 2017 (5 weeks)	GRACE Project (Guatemala Rural Adult & Children's Education)
March 2017	South Fort Myers Food Coalition, Inc.

*The Board of Trustees wishes to thank the following people for their volunteer service: **Andrea Hildreth, Prita Lal, the audio visual trainees, and the members of the UUCFM Band.** Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Month for December: **Holley Rauen.***



## Music Notes



As I create my column on the new monthly topic of Creation, I'm brought to a memory about creating music. One of my older brothers flunked all of his college courses in music because he could not wrap his head around the concept of keys and scales and the abstract nature of music. Consequently, he became a prolific songwriter. I have heard it said that education erases creativity. It's not always true but often it is.

The apparent moral to this story, for me, is music is for everyone, educated or not, for babies to elders, rich or poor, for all people. Creating music is a vital part of our existence.

As we enter our new year I want to express my deep appreciation for all who make my work my calling; the singers and players, and the listeners. Without you all I would not be alive.

In Love and Peace in 2016, **Phil Hildreth, CMA**

[directorofmusic@uucfm.org](mailto:directorofmusic@uucfm.org)

*The Humanist Forum meets every Sunday at 9:15a in Hobart Hall. All are welcome to join us for a new and engaging topic each week. The Forum this coming Sunday, January 3rd, has a special presenter. We welcome Dr. Madeline Lancaster, Cambridge University, a pioneer in human brain development.*



## New Year's Eve Gathering

We would like to extend an invitation to join friends at the UUCFM fire pit at Holton Eco-preserve for a low key New Year's Eve gathering. We'll start around 8:00p. Bring your drum, voice, and conversation. We will light a fire even if it is warm. The object is to celebrate the New Year in natural surroundings with fun people. Bring your own chair and drum, if you have one. Let's drum and sing in the New Year with new traditions on our gorgeous land. Love and light.

Contact Joy Purcell for questions. [hawkmistrs@aol.com](mailto:hawkmistrs@aol.com)

## Caring Network News

As we look back on the past year we are humbled by the caring that takes place within our congregation. There have been many visits by Rev. Allison and the Pastoral Care Associates to homes, hospitals, and hospice. Meals have been delivered, cards have been sent by Suzanne Ziemer (many of them the beautiful cards of Nancy Letts), and telephone calls have been made as needed. We hold training sessions quarterly to continue to develop our skills. Comfort Shawl and Quilts have been made by many of our members and continue to be warmly received. The Coping and Optimal Living group facilitated by Wayne Leaver continues to meet regularly and to provide support.

Most importantly, all of you have been our eyes, ears, and hearts during the year. For those new to our congregation you can make a referral to us if you are aware that someone is in need. You can fill out the blue cards in the pews or you can directly contact me at [dbny79@aol.com](mailto:dbny79@aol.com) or (239) 768.0130. Office volunteers and the Office Manager will refer your concerns to me. It is a system that works well. Be assured that all of our Pastoral Care Associates are trained to keep referrals confidential and to preserve the privacy of our members.

In continuing gratitude,

**Neil Yesu**, Caring Network Coordinator

## Wake Now My Vision

### Congregational Workshop & Conversation

Come join us for large and small group heart to heart conversation as a congregation about how we envision our life of shared ministry together. How will we enliven our

new mission statement in all the ministries of the church? How can we find ways to craft a shared bigger picture that is so big it makes room for the newest of members who join us? That it makes room for growth and change? All children & youth, members, and contributing friends are welcome.

We have moved this event to January so that more of our UUCFM family may join us. The workshop is **Saturday January 9th**, from 9:00a until 1:00p in Miller Sanctuary. Light refreshments provided.



## Second Annual Leadership Development

As The Second Annual Leadership Development Program will start the week-end of January 15, 2016. Modeled from high-level corporate training programs but tailored to fit the culture and dynamics of our spiritual community, the UUCFM Leadership Development Program is available to UUCFM/All Faiths members who:

- hold current leadership positions in the church
- are employed at the Church
- are volunteers at the Church
- are interested in a future leadership position in the Church.

The program will cost \$25 (to cover kick-off dinner) and offered in 3 weekend sessions beginning January 15 and concluding March 12, 2016. Each weekend will start Fridays at 6:00 to 9:00p and Saturdays from 9:00a to 3:30p. The program is limited to 24 individuals and a certificate of completion will be awarded to those who participate in the entire program. While not mandatory, individuals will achieve maximum effectiveness of the program by attending all sessions. Session topics will focus on:

- UU 101 – History and Organization
- Volunteer and Leader Motivation
- Leadership Style and Effectiveness
- Group Dynamics
- Organizational Decision-Making
- Emotional Intelligence
- Cultural Sensibilities
- Congregation as an Emotional System
- Mentoring

Applications will be available Sundays in the Narthex.



*This is the third year running for this GRACE Project class and support circle in North Fort Myers at the Suncoast Community Center. We had a great Holiday Party.*

## My UU Story

Helen Dixon

Soon after arriving in Florida in 2003 I saw a newspaper notice about a Buddhist meditation class held at UUCFM. One evening a substitute leader asked us to introduce ourselves and tell what brought us to Buddhism. Jonas told us that he was a Pagan—he wanted to study all the religions of the world. Never having called myself Pagan, I said, “The Divine in my heart is Feminine. Since the cultures which honored the Divine Feminine were pre-Christian, I think the word Pagan describes me.” After the class Jonas told me about CUUPS, Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, which meets monthly at noon.

Over the years, attending coffee hour and the monthly CUUPS meetings became a cherished habit. In 2006 I was asked to serve as treasurer of CUUPS. I accepted, and Joy Purcell explained that anyone can join CUUPS but the Church prefers that the officers be members of UUCFM. So I joined this church! (I had not been looking for a church—I had been raised Southern Baptist and had left the Church as a teenager.) The sense of community which I immediately felt surprised me. I appreciate a Church which honors us Pagans along with other liberal ideas.

Over the years I have been involved in many awesome activities. I helped organize the CUUPS weekend retreats when we hosted Ubaka Hill and Starhawk. I co-facilitated with Paula Copestick and Holley Rauen the classes—“Cakes for the Queen of Heaven” and “Rise Up and Call Her Name.” Being Volunteer and Travel Coordinator for the GRACE Project is enriching. This is the third year that Carol Ann Ungerleider and I will have organized the Service Auction (Save the Date—February 6, 2016). Currently I am co-coordinator of CUUPS with Joy Purcell. I enjoy working with Jill Carville in the Office and on Tuesdays I make the bank deposit. After some years’ break I am again attending the Monday night Mindfulness Meditation class.

UUCFM is a blessing in my life: it is my spiritual and social home. Finding CUUPS led me to Unitarian Universalism for which I am very grateful. I thank the Goddess that I found this UU church.

## My UU Story

Each month, the Membership Committee would like to publish your UU story - either converted or born UUs. How did you become a UU or how did our religion affect your life? Alternatively, do you have a one-paragraph remembrance of your first reaction to being in a UU church and/or learning about the religion? To share your story, please contact Joy Sokeitous at [member-services@uucfm.org](mailto:member-services@uucfm.org) Joy will help you edit and she will provide questions to help you develop your story.

## Newcomer's Meeting

There is a meeting for newcomers to UUCFM held on the first Sunday of each month at 12:00 noon in classroom 2. The meeting for January will be held on Sunday ,January 3rd.

The Newcomers Meeting will focus on the following: newcomers will have an opportunity to talk about what they are looking for in a church community, there will be a discussion of what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist, the opportunities for spiritual growth and social interaction will be discussed and attendees will be asked what skills they think that they would bring to UUCFM. The Newcomers Meeting should not be confused with the Pathways to Membership Meeting which is for people who are ready to commit to membership to UUCFM.

## Service Auction 2016

***The UUCFM Service Auction is Saturday, February 6th from 5:00-10:00p. Celebrate Carnival in Rio! Donate now!***

***[Togetherauction.com/uucfm](http://Togetherauction.com/uucfm) Tickets on sale Jan. 3 in Hobart Hall.***



## UUCFM Christian Group

The Adult Christian Group is growing. We meet every Sunday at 9:00a in the Conference room/Library. In January we will determine how we want to shape out our bible study for 2016. We will know by February what resources we will be using. If you would like to help form this exciting new group, please join us on a Sunday morning or contact Susan Forsyth, VP Ministerial Services [thecaperabbit@gmail.com](mailto:thecaperabbit@gmail.com) or 239-424-8442



## Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Group

The Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Group meets every Sunday in Room 1 from 1:45-3:45p. All are welcome to attend!

## Community Wednesday

Join members and friends of our UUCFM community each Wednesday for a delicious vegetarian meal prepared by Chef Joy for a donation of \$5.00.

After the fellowship and fine fare from 6:00- 6:45p, join your favorite programming event, committee meeting, or social activity. A place will be provided for any informal gatherings of your choosing. Childcare is provided free of charge until 8:30p.

### January Activities

- 2:00-4:00** Mah Jongg in Narthex  
**4:00-5:30** Coping & Optimal Living  
(1st & 3rd Wed)  
**6:30-8:00** Children's Activities  
**6:00-6:45** Community Meal  
**6:45-8:00** Music Team in Sanctuary  
**7:00-8:30** **Programs (see below)**



If you are interested in providing a program for Community Wednesday contact Linda Jensen at: [lindajensen50@gmail.com](mailto:lindajensen50@gmail.com) or 215-880-1433.

### Upcoming Programs for Community Wednesday

**January 6:** Representatives of Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida will present a program. Arlene Knox, senior director of philanthropy, and Veronica Schell, volunteer and advocacy coordinator, will address questions and answers.

**January 13:** *Walk Down Memory Lane*, a video look at our own Suzanne Ziemer when she won big on the TV quiz show *Name That Tune* in 1957. Bill even appears on the program with a surprise.

**January 20:** Author and mental health advocate Deena Baxter offers strategies on coping with loss in her presentation, *Driving Like Crazy in Search of Normal*.

**January 27:** Member Alison Carville discusses the status of LGBTQ rights today.

**February 10:** Member Jerry Blumenfeld presents words and music in his program--*The Accordion: A Documentary*.

**Attention Writers:** You're invited to share your writing at a Community Wednesday in March (date to be determined). Calling all poets, essayists, fiction and memoir writers. Contact Linda Jensen to reserve a spot. [lindajensen50@gmail.com](mailto:lindajensen50@gmail.com)



## Coping & Optimal Living Group

The Coping and Optimal Living group is open to all and does not require attending every session. We meet in the Sanctuary the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 4:00-5:30p. We discuss how to live optimally including practical ways to cope with life's challenges and issues. Helping others and developing maturity in ourselves is part of our quest. We explore many paths and techniques for enriching our lives and making a difference for others. For more information call Wayne Leaver at 275-3097.

*Join us for Mah Jongg on Wednesdays in the Narthex from 2:00-4:00p.*

*Join us for Tai Chi on Thursdays in the Sanctuary from 10:00-11:00a*

## Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America

### Book Study with Rev. Allison



In light of the recent Islamophobia, now is a great time to join in our newest book study beginning Wednesday, January 6th. In *Sacred Ground*, author and renowned interfaith leader Eboo Patel says this prejudice is not just a problem for Muslims but a challenge to the very idea of America. Patel shows us that Americans from George Washington to Martin Luther King Jr. have been “interfaith leaders,” illustrating how the forces of pluralism in America have time and again defeated the forces of prejudice.

We meet Wednesdays January 6-February 3, from 1:00-2:30p in the conference room.

Meeting 1 – Purpose of Discussion and Introduction

Meeting 2 – Part I – Ground Zero, The Muslim Menace, The Evangelical Shift

Meeting 3 – Part II –The Science of Interfaith Cooperation, The Art of Interfaith Leadership

Meeting 4 – Part III – Colleges, Seminaries, American Muslim Child

Meeting 5 – Conclusion

## Articulating Your UU Faith



Articulating Your UU Faith will help you to explain your UU faith to friends and family. The course will be in February from 4:30-6:00p on Wednesdays. There are 5 sessions to the course and it is important that interested parties are committed to attending all the classes. The

dates for the classes are: 2/3/16, 2/10/16, 2/17/16, 2/24/16 and 3/2/16. If you are interested in this class, you need to contact the church office to register at 561-2700. The co-facilitators are Suzanne Fast and Harvey Heckes.

## Mindfulness Meditation

Join us on Monday evenings to explore the very simple and satisfying practices of mindfulness and meditation. You don't need experience with meditation, nor do you have to be a Buddhist. Do please bring an intention to quiet the mind and the body in a supportive group of UU members and friends with a similar intention - people who want to carry mindfulness into their daily lives.

We meet Mondays from 6:30-8:00p in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, please contact Gary Robbins at [ggleasonr@live.com](mailto:ggleasonr@live.com)

## Learn Spanish

I'm getting ready to offer an introduction to communicating in Spanish. Before I schedule, I have to know how many people are interested in signing up. The course will be nothing like your experience in studying a foreign language. There will be little grammar taught and little memorization of nasty irregular verbs. My goal is to help you to learn to communicate. Achieving grammatical perfection is irrelevant.

By signing up for Spanish class, there is an implied commitment that you will study and learn the material presented and that you'll attend class.

Please call or email me soon so that we can get started.

**Mel Cooper**

239.466-9463 [melteri99@gmail.com](mailto:melteri99@gmail.com)

## Learning Circle

CUUPS' very popular *Learning Circle* returns on Wednesday, January 6th in Room 4. Join Whale Maiden as she presents *The Earthways Path*, a series of lectures about practicing Earth-based religions in modern days, and applying the practices to Florida and times of changing climate. Class meets from 7:00-9:00p. Donations to cover the cost of the class are gratefully appreciated.

## Let's Talk about Dementia; A Colloquium for Caregivers

Presenters: Mary Freyre, RN & Dr. Mabel Loez of *Mind and Brain Care*

Join us Sunday, January 17th from 1:00-3:00p in the Sanctuary for this special session on Dementia. It is sponsored by UUCFM's Caring Network and the Alvin A. Dubin Alzheimer's Resource Center. Feel free to join in our church service at 10:30a, or enjoy refreshments at 11:45a in Hobart Hall before the convocation in the Sanctuary at 1:00p. Learn that you are not alone. Sign up for complimentary Memory Testing. Call the office at 329.561-2700 or email [officemanager@uucfm.org](mailto:officemanager@uucfm.org) to RSVP.



## April Pilgrimage

6<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Unitarian Universalist

Women's Retreat

April 8 -10, 2016

DaySpring Episcopal Conference Center Ellenton Florida

As the theme suggests, we'll be traveling in mind, heart, and spirit...discovering many paths to explore ourselves and the world to see how movement in this world is, itself, home. It's an adventure that we'll share through music, art, movement, poetry, meditation, and play.

The retreat begins on a Friday at 5:00p and ends Sunday at Noon.

DaySpring Conference Center

is conveniently located off I-75 just north of Sarasota on Florida's West Coast. The beautiful campus nestled under ancient oaks and located on a cove of the Manatee River offers a serene setting for our annual retreat. Take a look.

<http://Dayspring.dioswfl.org>.

\$220 per person covers expenses for a semi-private room and six meals. 8 women share a cozy cottage with 4 bedrooms and 4 baths, a screened porch and common area. A non-refundable deposit of \$20 will reserve your place. Final payment is due January 15, 2016. Come join us for a memorable weekend. To register contact Helen Leddy [helen.leddy@gmail.com](mailto:helen.leddy@gmail.com)



## Important Alarm Information

If Alarm Sounds:

1. EVACUATE immediately;
2. WAIT for notification by leadership and/or the Fire Department for safe return to the buildings;
3. Under NO circumstances should anyone touch the master alarm panel. The fire department will arrive within approximately two minutes.

All leaders and employees are required to have a working knowledge of the emergency procedures. UUCFM expects all occupants to evacuate during a fire alarm situation for the safety of all. Evacuation routes are posted in every building and should be followed promptly at the first sound of the fire alarm or voice emergency evacuation.

The above is from the UUCFM Security, Access and Facility Use Policy passed by the Board of Trustees.

**Would you like your business or personal services advertised to our UUCFM community? This is a great opportunity to get your name and business viewed by over 400 Member and Friend online subscribers to our UUCFM newsletters. The price for a half page ad is only \$10 per month and will be published for four weeks. All ads should be sent to [officemanager@uucfm.org](mailto:officemanager@uucfm.org)**

## Get Involved!

Are you looking for ways to become more involved at UUCFM and make friends? We always need volunteers to be greeters, ushers, RE helpers, AV assistants, general office helpers, and grounds workers.

If you are interested in getting involved with our youth with our new, dynamic RE Director, please email Jenn Blosser at [dre@uucfm.org](mailto:dre@uucfm.org)

If you love our Sunday service and don't want to miss it, please consider becoming an usher/greeter, worship associate, music team member, or AV assistant. You can remain in the service and help make it happen! Email Susan Forsyth at [thecaperabbit@gmail.com](mailto:thecaperabbit@gmail.com)

If you need something to do on weekdays, consider helping in the office. We always need help greeting visitors, answering phones, or putting publications together. Email Jill Carville at [officemanager@uucfm.org](mailto:officemanager@uucfm.org)

If working outside is your thing, you can volunteer to weed, water, or trim any day! Contact Walt Ittenbach at [wittenbach@comcast.net](mailto:wittenbach@comcast.net)

## Happening in Our Greater Community

If you are a UUCFM Community Sharing Partner, a regular Facility User, or have UU news to share, you are now welcome to submit announcements for publication in our *Greater Community* section of the newsletter. Please send announcements in by each Wednesday for publication in the Thursday e-news and Sunday insert.



**Southwest Florida Gay & Lesbian Chorus**  
**Presents**

**A  
MID-WINTER  
CHORAL  
FESTIVAL  
2016**

**7:30pm**  
**Saturday January 30th, 2016**  
**Unitarian Universalist Church**  
**Hobart Hall**  
**13411 Shire Ln, Fort Myers, FL 33912**

**6:30pm**  
**Sunday January 31st, 2016**  
**Unitarian Universalist Church**  
**1532 Forrest Nelson Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL 33952**

**Tickets** (suggested donation)  
**\$15.00 ADULTS \$10.00 STUDENT**

for information or to order tickets 239-410-2025 or [www.Gaychorus.org](http://www.Gaychorus.org).

SWFGLC INC a 501(c)3 Organization

  

## UUCFM Drum Circle

Come to the UUCFM Monthly 4th Sunday Drum Circle on January 24th at 11:45a. We meet in the Screen Room and share a potluck snack before the circle begins. Please bring a snack to share. I will have drinks. Children and beginners always welcome. This Circle is absolutely free! If you forget to bring a snack to share, you are welcome to make a love donation to fund paper plates, etc. Please bring your own drum or other percussion instruments. There will be a few to share. Also bring your ideas and favorite rhythms. Don't forget– we are playing in the January 3rd service so bring your drums and meet in the Sanctuary at 10:00a.



Jill Carville [officemanager@uucfm.org](mailto:officemanager@uucfm.org)



**January 2** Roy Green  
**January 3** Marshall Hoffman is 4!  
**January 3** Julie Clark Ireland  
**January 4** Bruce Leddy  
**January 4** Neil Yesu  
**January 6** Elyana Hutson is 14!  
**January 8** Margie Kolde  
**January 10** Ellen Erickson  
**January 10** James Kolde  
**January 19** Declan Ireland is 11!  
**January 23** Mel Cooper  
**January 26** Emily Hutchinson  
**January 30** John Johns





# JANUARY

**Saturday, Jan 2:**

Family Gardens Plant Sale 8:30a  
Gardeners Meeting 9:00a  
Memorial Garden Work Day 9:00a  
Veggie Gardeners 10:30a

**Sunday, Jan 3:**

Music Team 9:00a  
Humanist Forum 9:15a  
Sunday School 9:15a  
Sunday Service 10:30a  
Children's RE 10:45a  
Social Justice 12:00p  
Newcomers Mtg 12:00p  
Role Playing Group 12:00p  
Rissho Kosei-kai 1:45p

**Monday, Jan 4:**

Mindfulness Meditation 6:30p

**Tuesday, Jan 5:**

NA Group 5:30p

**Wednesday, Jan 6:**

Family Garden Ops Team 10:00a  
Book Study 1:00p  
Mah Jongg 2:00p  
Staff Meeting 2:30p  
Ways & Means 4:00p  
Coping Class 4:00p  
Community Wed. Dinner 6:00p  
Music Team 6:45p  
Community Wed. Program 7:00p  
Learning Circle 7:00p

**Thursday, Jan 7:**

Tai Chi 10:00a  
Grounds Committee 4:00p  
Yoga 4:30p  
Belly Fit 5:00p  
Womynfolke 6:00p

**Friday, Jan 8:**

Bringing the Harvest 10:00a

**Saturday, Jan 9:**

Wake Now My Vision 9:00a

**Sunday, Jan 10:**

Music Team 9:00a  
Humanist Forum 9:15a  
Sunday School 9:15a  
Sunday Service 10:30a  
Children's RE 10:45a  
Pathways to Membership 12:00p  
Connection Circles 12:00p  
Rissho Kosei-kai 1:45p

**Monday, Jan 11:**

Mindfulness Meditation 6:30p

**Tuesday, Jan 12:**

NA Group 5:30p  
Board of Trustees 6:00p

**Wednesday, Jan 13:**

Family Garden Ops Team 10:00a  
Book Study 1:00p  
Mah Jong 2:00p  
CoSM 3:00p  
Ways & Means 4:00p  
Community Wed. Dinner 6:00p  
Music Team 6:45p  
Community Wednesday Program 7:00p

**Thursday, Jan 14:**

Tai Chi 10:00a  
Yoga 4:30p  
Belly Fit 5:00p  
Womynfolke 6:00p

**Friday, Jan 15:**

Leadership Development 6:00p

**Saturday, Jan 16:**

Leadership Development 9:00a



**UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST**

Church of Fort Myers

13411 Shire Lane

Fort Myers, FL 33912