Where you belong!

CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation, *where diversity is treasured.*
A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

Inside

Board Notes.....2
Sunday Collection Schedule.....2
MLK Jr. Day Annual March.....3
Joys & Sorrows.....3
Happening at All Faiths.....4
January 2023 Calendar.....5
January Sunday Service Schedule.....6
Ministerial Search Update.....6
Child & Youth Program Notes.....6
Climate Action Team News.....7
With our Appreciation.....7
Share the Plate with BLUU.....8
Heart for the Homeless News.....8
LIFE News & Updates.....8
Treasurer's Report.....9
ACMA Concert Lineup.....9
Racial Equity Team News.....10
Operation Joy Scores Big.....10
Help Table MLK Jr. Day Event.....10
Being a Good Neighbor Program.....11
Animal Shelter Collection & Info.....11
Dinner & a Movie Event.....12

Board Notes *by Marge DiGalbo, Board Chair*

The Board of Directors met on December 21, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Wishing a Happy Healthy New Year to you all. Hopefully you had wonderful holidays with your families and were able to attend our wonderful Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services either in person or on online.

On behalf of all of us, I want to thank everyone involved in providing us with the truly beautiful and inspiring services, from Joyce Ramay and the Sunday services committee. Carlos Garcia, and the All Voices Choir with Darlene Mitchell for their gift of music. To Michelle Gemma and Regina Kilmartin for leading the services, to Diane and Doug Cartwright for their history of Christmas Around the World, Michael Pierre's readings of The Christmas Story and The Night Before Christmas. Also to Linda Bigelow and Joe Gayton for all they do for us. It truly takes a village.

Now with the holidays behind us the work of keeping All Faiths moving forward can really get into full gear. The Nominating Committee is meeting to propose a ballot of candidates to replace our retiring Executive Board members Rachel Spiller, Vice Chair, Ed Elrod, Secretary; and Board Directors Peter Erickson and Judy Alberda. We thank you for your service to All Faiths. We will vote on the new proposed ballot at our Annual Meeting at the end of March. The Search Committee has posted the position for our new minister on the UUA's website. Hopefully they will start to receive applications after the first of the year. The all important Stewardship Committee will begin the process for our pledge drive to support the Board approved budget for the 2023/2024 fiscal year.

The Racial Equity Team will have a table at the MLK Event on January 16, 2023. They will need our participation to man the table and to show up in our yellow tee-shirts to march.

Michelle Gemma and her committee are planning for our big March auction fundraising event. She will be asking for our support and items to auction.

Work continues inside and outside of our building. Hope you all saw our beautiful new roof. Soon the new gutters will be installed and the repairs to our ceiling and walls will begin.

A new AED has been ordered and hopefully will be arriving soon. Thank you to Lewis Robinson for his generous donation to help with the cost of the new defibrillator. We will be planning training for the Board of Directors and any members who would like to take the course.

Thank you to Greg Monk and Cameron Anholt for sponsoring our December Ice Cream Social. This has become one of the congregation's favorite events.

Another Dinner and a Movie Event is being planned for January 25. Tickets will be on sale starting on Sunday January 8, and the last day to purchase tickets will be January 22, 2023. You may also contact the office for tickets. The Racial Justice Team is planning a movie prior to dinner.

Mission Statement

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is committed to Justice, Equity and Compassion.

Vision Statement

Recognizing our role as each other's keepers, we strive to be an inclusive, loving, spiritual community working to bring harmony to the world.

All Faiths Collection Schedule

Monthly Share-the-Plate & Special Collections
(Please write organization and amount in the memo line of your check.)

January Share the Plate - Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU)
February Special Collection - Minister's Discretionary Fund
March Share the Plate - Operation Joy

Your generosity directly benefits our community!
We are grateful!

Board Notes

(Cont'd from page 2)

Bob and I will provide *"Italian Food – An Expression of Love."* Dinner will consist of lasagna, Bob's famous meatballs, salad and Italian pastries for dessert. Cost will be $20/person. Get your tickets early as we have limited seating.

So there will be lots happening in the new year. Please join and support us in as many events as possible. We're always happy to have new participants.

Judy Alberda has placed Rev. Robinson's remaining books in the bookcases in the minister's office. This will serve as a lending library for us all to enjoy.

Peace and Joy to you all.

The next Board meeting will be January 18, 2022, at 1:00 pm at All Faiths.

Park Legacy Celebration
Monday
January 16, 2023

SAVE THE DATE!

Plan to join the All Faiths Racial Equity Team as we march from Dunbar Community School: 1857 High Street to Centennial Park.

Come celebrate with us!

Watch for details. Sign up on Bulletin Board

Order Your All Faiths Tee-Shirt

Stand Out in the Crowd!

Order forms are on the bulletin board in the Community Room. Yellow tee-shirts (now bearing our mission on the back: *Committed to Justice, Equity & Compassion)* are on sale for $20 each. These unisex tee-shirts come in a variety of sizes. Order in time to march on January 16 at the Annual MLK, Jr. Day March and community events at Centennial Park.

Joys & Sorrows

With our apologies for any omissions, here are the joys & sorrows expressed by our members in December.

Doug Cartwright was able to return to our pulpit as Worship Associate after recovering from two heart surgeries and extended rehabilitation. We are happy to have him back with us.

Carol Elrod was able to return to services after many months suffering from strokes and injuries. We are happy to have her back with us.

Frank Geltner had surgery to remove his blind eye. We hope that he has a good recovery.

Janet Goen was hospitalized for weakness due to low sodium. She then went to skilled nursing facility for rehabilitation. We hope she improves quickly.

Gerald Goen was hospitalized with pneumonia and was placed on a ventilator. We hope that he improves with skilled treatment.

Sharon Gray was hospitalized for planned surgery. We hope that she has a good recovery.

Richard Keelan shared the good news that he will be starting his job as a Community Care Navigator with the National Health Service in London. We are happy that he will be able to continue to work in his professional field of mental health care.

Many of our people are still dealing with the impact of Hurricane Ian on their homes and their lives. Reach out to them and help in whatever way that you can.

We wish you a Happy and HEALTHY New Year.

Joyce Ramay,

Care & Support Coordinator

Happy January Birthday to you!

Jan 1 Shea Fierro
Jan 5 Colleen North
Jan 12 Emmie Spiller
Jan 13 Joyce Schaffer
Jan 22 Susan Meissner
Jan 23 Judy Whitcomb
Jan 27 Lewis Robinson
Jan 28 Fran Way

And Coming Up...

Feb 3 Midge Magstadt

If you are missing or see someone who is missing from the birthday roster, please let Regina know.

Solos Monthly Lunch!

Saturday, January 7, 2023
12:30 p.m.

NOMIKI'S PLAKKA
Greek restaurant

Bridge Plaza - 12901 Mcgregor Blvd,
Fort Myers, FL 33919
(across from The Landings)
Check your email for details.

RSVP to: Annely Hudanick,
annelyblue@hotmail.com

Everyone is welcome to join the Solos for outings and lunches.

Happening at All Faiths

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR
Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. - Community Room
Facilitated by ***you?***

Wednesday mornings are available for Adult Education Programs.

Contact the office to reserve a single Wednesday or a series of Wednesdays.
Learning is fun!
office@allfaithsuu.org or 239-226-0900

The Rainbow Connection

Meeting on the 1st Monday of the Month at 6:00 p.m.

The Rainbow Connection is a new addition to All Faiths' social justice teams. This group will support the LGBTQ+ community and Allies. All are welcome.

Racial Equity Team Meeting

Meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the Month at 10:00 a.m.

The Racial Equity Team is regrouping. As we seek to live into the 8th Principle, we look forward to ideas and engagement with the congregation. All are welcome.

All Voices Choir Practice

Meeting Every Thursday at 2:00 p.m.

The choir welcomes new members. You do not have to be a professional singer or read sheet music to join. Go ahead, give it a try. Contact: Carlos Garcia, ceegeefm@gmail.com.

Book Club

Meeting on the 3rd Monday of the Month at 12:00 p.m.

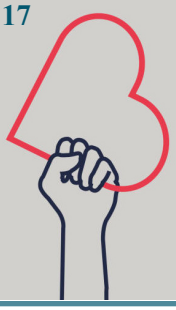
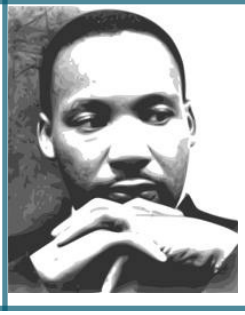
The book club is casual and fun. No assigned books, just show up and be prepared to talk about an interesting book you've read or are reading. Contacts: Diane Chernow, **dianecher@comcast.net**

McGregor Clinic Collection

Collection is on the 3rd Sunday of Every Month

This month the clinic is in need of towels, sheets, men's and women's clothing. Coordinator: Joyce Schaffer, joycelschaffer@gmail.com

January 2023 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 **9:15am** News Talk w. Ray Ellis **10:30am** Service	**2** *This month only: Rainbow Connection rescheduled to 1/9*	**3** **1:30pm** Climate Action Team Mtg. via Zoom	**4**	**5** **2pm** Choir Practice	**6** **2pm** Dominoes in the Community Room	**7** **1pm** **Solos Lunch** (Pg. 4) **7pm** ACMA Concert (see pg. 10)
8 **9:15am** News Talk w. Ray Ellis **10:30am** Service	**9** **10am** Sun. Service Team Mtg. **6 pm** Rainbow Connection	**10** **10am** Racial Equity Team Mtg. via Zoom	**11**	**12** **10 am** Finance Mtg. **2pm** Choir Practice	**13** **2pm** Dominoes in the Community Room	**14** **8am** **2pm** Choir Practice
15 **9:15am** News Talk **10:30am** Service New Member Recognition McGregor Clinic Collection	**16** **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** Annual March Office Closed **2pm** ACMA Work-shop	**17** 	**18** **1pm** Board Meeting	**19** **1pm** Heart for the Homeless Team **2pm** Choir Practice	**20** **2pm** Dominoes in the Community Room	**21** **7pm** ACMA Concert (see pg. 10)
22 **9:15am** News Talk w. Ray Ellis **10:30am** Service	**23**	**24**	**25** **3:30pm** Movie & a Dinner Event (see pg. 12)	**26** **2pm** Choir Practice	**27** **2pm** Dominoes in the Community Room	**28** **7pm** ACMA Concert (see pg. 10)
29 **9:15am** News Talk w. Ray Ellis **10:30am** Service Ice Cream Social Pet Shelter Collection	**30**	**31**		"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today."		

Check the online calendar at: http://www.allfaithsuu.org for post-printing updates

January 2023
Sunday Worship Services
"Dreams & Goals"

In-House & Live on Facebook at 10:30 a.m.
Recorded services can be viewed at www.allfaithsuu.org or on our YouTube channel.

January 1 - Starting Over Again
by Joyce Ramay
Worship Associate – Michelle Gemma
Music by Nancy Frasca-Cabazares and Carlos Garcia

January 8 – You Have to Be Present to Win
by Ariel Hoover
Worship Associate – Bob Moore
Music by Carlos Garcia
Child & Youth Program with Kath Fanny

January 15 – Today is Your Opportunity to Build the Tomorrow You Want to See
by Abdul'Haq Muhammed
CEO, Quality Life Center
Worship Associate – Greg Monk
Music by Carlos Garcia and Bob Way
Child & Youth Program with Kathy Fanny

January 22 – Get Out of Your Pajamas
by Chris Stotler
Worship Associate – Doug Cartwright
Music by Carlos Garcia
CYP with Kathy Fanny

January 29 – Walking the Path with Others
by Matt Wallace, Outreach Coordinator,
Lee County Human & Veteran Services
Worship Associate – Susan Meissner
Music by Carlos Garcia and The All Voices Choir
Child & Youth Program with Kathy Fanny

Sunday Programs

News Talk with Ray Ellis
9:15 a.m. - at All Faiths in the Sanctuary

News talk is a facilitated group that will offer a time and space for you to discuss the weekly headlines.

Child & Youth Program
In the Robinson Room at 10:30 a.m. 1/8, 1/15, 1/22

Ministerial Search Update

by Marsha Bates, Chair

The Search Team was notified by Christine Purcell, UUA's Ministerial Transition Manager, that All Faiths' Congregational Profile has been posted to the Ministerial Search site. The profile, which was compiled by the Search Team, contains information about All Faiths and the surrounding community such as the demographics of our congregation and Fort Myers; All Faiths' relationship with the community; our outreach programs; the results of the Congregational Survey conducted in October; and All Faiths' governing documents such as our Policy and Procedure Manual, bylaws, etc.

Interested ministerial candidates will review our information. If interested, they will alert UUA's Transition Office who will forward the potential candidate's information packet to our Search Team members for review.

Michelle Gemma was appointed by All Faiths' Board of Directors to replace Frankie Jennings on the Search Team. After encountering unanticipated circumstances, Frankie asked to withdraw from the committee. She felt the extenuating circumstances would prevent her from devoting sufficient time to the search process. Frankie's contributions to the initial stages of the process are greatly appreciated. And we welcome Michelle to the team.

From your Search Team: Joe Batal, Michelle Gemma, Annely Hudanick, Bob Moore, Emmie Spiller, and Marsha Bates.

Child & Youth Program Notes

by Kathy Fanny, Director

January 8 - This workshop includes activities related to current issues around immigration. Reflect on the recent news about immigrant families. Do you notice any similarities or differences between these current news stories and your family stories? Does your family story include immigration? Does thinking about your family and immigration help you empathize?

January 15 - Immigration (continued).

January 22 - Youth encounter many fears as they explore their autonomy. How do you think teaching youth about courage will help them develop as leaders? Healthy amounts of fear are important to human beings. How do you think the Unitarian Universalist faith supports the intersection of courage and fear, faith and action?

January 29 - Courage (continued).

Climate Action Team News

by Carol Heilsberg, Co-Chair

The All Faiths Climate Action Team meetings have evolved over the years into a monthly gathering of the leaders of several local environmental groups with whom we work in association. In our December meeting we discussed numerous issues involving all of us, including ways we can influence the build back from Hurricane Ian to focus on resiliency and sustainability. A report from Ana Puszkin-Chevlin, leader of Growing Climate Solutions, informed us that those decisions will basically be made at the county level and we need to engage regularly in both the City Council and Board of Commissioners meetings to be able to influence their actions. She suggested we focus on hurricane impact in a specific neighborhood and put us in touch with Dr. Sonia Chao, head of the Center of Urban and Community Design at the University of Miami, to discuss the possibility of a student design project.

Bob Moore, who, with his wife Ariel Hoover, leads the local Climate Reality chapter, commented that achieving energy conservation is a long term process much like the one Ana described. Jack Ubinger, a co-leader of the Fort Myers Citizens Climate Lobby, observed that we need to determine a primary goal for our efforts and pick a local project to work on.

Our discussions then focused on the three such projects we are working on currently. The first is engaging in petitioning for putting the Right to Clean Water amendment on the 2024 ballot. We need to help get 223,000 petitions signed by March 28. Joe Bonasia, the leader of this statewide effort, is looking for help getting petitions signed at a January 14 and 15 weekend event in Cape Coral. If you can help please contact Joe at jbonasia@hotmail.com.

Secondly, to reach a broader audience with our message of climate action urgency, we are involved in the formation of the interfaith Southwest Florida Climate Action Team and will be reaching out to other congregations to participate in this faith-based organization.

Thirdly, All Faiths is one of four UU congregations collaborating with the SWFL RESET Center on the learning series "Being a Good Neighbor." Please see the invitation in today's newsletter (page 11) to participate in this exciting learning adventure and register to attend.

We strongly encourage our fellow All Faiths congregants to get actively involved in addressing climate change. Here are another two powerful events you may want to consider attending this month:

The SWFL Climate and Community Summit takes place on January 17th from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Arthrex One Conference Center at 1 Arthrex Way in Naples, FL 34104. There is a $25.00 fee to attend which includes a boxed lunch.

The Summit offers you the opportunity to engage with community residents, leaders and policymakers in an interactive and dynamic program that examines our area's climate challenges, solutions and how we can build stronger after Hurricane Ian. The deadline to register is January10th.

To register go to: https://swflclimate.org/summit/#form.

The FGCU Water School is hosting a special event on January 25th with a tour of the new building at 5:00 p.m. followed by a discussion from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. We'll send out more information as it becomes available.

Our next CAT meeting will take place on ZOOM at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 3rd. We hope you will join us as we look for ways to make 2023 a year of growing climate action that will help to protect and preserve life on this beautiful planet we share with so many other life forms, many of whom are now endangered.

Let's help make it a Happy New Year.

With Our Appreciation

♥ A big thank you to ***Ariel Hoover*** and ***Bob Moore*** for hosting Dinner and a Movie on December 9. Your homemade breads, quiches, soup and desserts were fantastic -- and you raised over $800 for our congregation!

♥ Your staff, ***Regina Kilmartin***, Congregational Administrator, ***Carlos Garcia***, Music Director, ***Kathy Fanny,*** Director of Child & Youth Programs, and ***Joe Gayton,*** our sexton, would like to thank the congregation for their donations towards employee year-end bonuses. Your generosity makes a significant difference in our lives every holiday season and we are all most appreciative. ***Wishing you blessings, good health, and much love in the new year.***

January Share-the-Plate: Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism

Their Story: When we first met at the Movement for Black Lives convening in July 2015, we didn't know we'd be starting a new organization or a new faith community–yet we ended up doing both. The Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism Organizing Collective Board (BLUU OCB) is a group of people that came together out of a need for spiritual connection and commitment to creating a more just and loving world for Black people.

Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism was founded in 2015 at the Movement for Black Lives Convening in Cleveland, Ohio. The dozen or so Black UUs in attendance imagined a cohesive, national, vibrant community of Black Unitarian Universalists. BLUU evolved from several conversations among Black UUs at that gathering.

In six years, BLUU has transformed from a small, informal gathering of Black UUs into an impactful 501(c)(3) organization that creates life-giving and life-saving opportunities for spiritual community and Black-centered organizing. Since its founding, BLUU has hosted a symposium centering Black UU theology, established a popular virtual worship space for Black people; organized UU congregations to donate and organize for bailout funds; and started a vibrant youth ministry.

BLUU also just launched BLUU Havens, which will give Black folks opportunities to socialize, organize with, and spiritually grow with other Black people, especially Black UUs, in their local communities.

BLUU's leadership is a combination of a working board of volunteers and staff, who comprise the Organizing Collective Board (OCB). The OCB models commitments to collective leadership, accountability, and flexibility within BLUU's work culture. In addition to being accountable to BLUU members (Beloveds) and each other, the OCB works closely with its Financial Transparency Group, Advisory Team, and Elders 360 Council.

Since our kickoff in September 2015 with the Seven Principles of the Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism–our take on the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism–we have been striving to live ever more deeply into our principles.

This month's Share-the-Plate collection will go to BLUU.

♥ For the Homeless News

by Barb McFarlane

First, a big thank you to Dan Deshon for picking up eight bikes that were left at All Faiths over the past month and delivering them to All Souls bike ministry in North Fort Myers. It's a huge help to this team!!

All Souls Homeless outreach volunteers repair and distribute them to those needing transportation….usually to work.

January offers several opportunities to volunteer and learn about homelessness:

Jan. 7 - Habitat for Humanity All Faiths team.

Jan 22-28 - Point in Time (PIT), the annual HUD census of Lee county homeless residents. This count brings federal dollars to Lee County for services directed at alleviating homelessness.

Jan. 28 - Homeless Standdown/service day at City of Palms park.

If you're interested or have questions about any of these events, contact Barb McFarlane, 651-808-8271, mcfarlanebar@gmail.com.

Matt Wallace with the county's Homeless Outreach Team will speak at our service January 29. He is an energetic advocate for those without housing.

February 5 we will collect clean used or new sleeping bags. If you have one that's no longer needed, we hope you'll consider donating it. They will be given to Matt Wallace's team for distribution to those living on the street.

We continue to be aware that members of our congregation remain without stable housing as a result of Hurricane Ian. If you know of available temporary housing please contact Judy Alberda or Barb McFarlane.

Lee Interfaith For Empowerment Updates

by Marsha Bates, Team Leader

LIFE's member congregations continue to concentrate on caring for the community in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian. Therefore, LIFE is currently taking a hiatus from research and action. However, the Board of Directors is planning a network-wide assembly on Monday, February 13, 2023. This gathering, called *Love in Action*, will allow network members to interact with justice seekers from other congregations. The new Executive Committee will be installed and network members will have the opportunity to decide the action(s) LIFE will focus on in 2023. The meeting place for the 6:30 pm assembly will be announced at a later date.

Do you have questions about All Faiths' involvement in LIFE? You can ask Marsha Bates (740-278-2357), Michelle Gemma (781-913-5122), or Barb McFarlane (651-808-8271).

Treasurer's Report

by John Conrad, Treasurer

Balance Sheet: Cash Assets – November 2022

First Horizon Checking	$ 12,125
First Horizon Op. Reserve	19,728
Live Oak Op. Res. CD	21,072
Raymond James Legacy	22,421
Pay Pal	35
First Horizon Capital Checking	619
First Horizon Capital Reserve	17,361
Total	$118,960
Prior Month	85,786
Net Gain	**$ 33,174**

November 2022 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	$ 28,586
Operating Expense	10,541
Net Gain	**$ 18,045**

Revenue/Operating Income and Expenses:

No unusual expenses were incurred. Budget control was good with 81.3% of our budget over the first 8 months being expensed (taking into account the monthly transfers to Capital Reserves). There were no minister related expenses in November.

Our Pledge Goal through November was $139,982; and $111,973 was received. 80% of the year-to-date pledge goal has been achieved. This is a significant improvement since October! Thank you for your generous giving!

$6,000 remains "borrowed" from the Operating Reserve Account; but we were able to return $8,000 in November.

We received a grant from the UUA's Disaster Relief Program of $16,350, which will be used to cover the wind insurance deductible and other hurricane-related expenses.

Our Wind insurance company has accepted our hurricane wind damage claim and has sent All Faiths a check for $53,806.43 for roof/gutter replacement and interior ceiling damage repair.

A new street sign has been ordered and will cost All Faiths $1,031.

All Faiths is very fortunate to have survived the hurricane and will be able to have all significant damage corrected with little financial stress. A BLESSING!

In November, a replacement AED/defibrillator was ordered/purchased at a cost of $1,330. A generous gift of $600 was received to assist in this purchase.

In November, Operation Joy collected $500 and food supplies for St. Martin de Porres' Outreach Program.

Ice Cream Social

After Service
Sunday, January 29, 2023
Sponsored by Lewis Robinson

DO YOU SING IN THE SHOWER?

The All Voices Choir rehersals are held on Thursdays at 2pm.

If you can sing in the shower,
you can sing in the choir!

Come alone, or bring a friend.

Carlos Garcia, Music Director
ceegeefm@gmail.com

ACMA Live Music!

Check the Americana Community Music Association's Facebook page or website: americanacma.org for updated concert info.

Saturday, January 7 - 7:00pm
Reckless Saints in Concert!
Pearl Street Band Opens

Sunday, January 15 - 2:00 to 5:00pm
Great Song Now What?
Workshop & Open Mic

Saturday, January 21 - 7:00pm
David Mayfield in Concert
Ross Jordan Opens

Saturday, January 28 - 7:00pm
Ruth Wyand in Concert
Carolyn & David Stanley with Mary Dahl Opens

The Listening Room at All Faiths
2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

General public $18/Member discount $12
Donations at the Door

We Need You to Show Up in Order to Move Forward!

by Lewis Robinson, Co-Chair, Racial Equity Team

I am asking you to remember and celebrate, on this Martin Luther King holiday, some heroes who didn't fail to do what they could do. In fact, two of them paid the fatal price. When Dr. Martin Luther King sent out the call for help from the war zone in Alabama, few people showed up. We must not forget them. Two heroes of the civil rights movement were abused, to say the least, murdered, and forgotten.

James Joseph Reeb (January 1, 1927 – March 11, 1965) was an American Unitarian Universalist minister, pastor, and activist during the civil rights movement in Washington, D.C. and Boston, Massachusetts. While participating in the Selma to Montgomery marches and actions in Selma, Alabama, in 1965, he was murdered by white segregationists, dying of head injuries in the hospital two days after being severely beaten. Three men were tried for Reeb's murder, but were acquitted by an all-white jury. His murder remains officially unsolved.

Viola Liuzzo was slain in Alabama on March 25, 1965, on US-80 when she was driving a participant in the Selma-to-Montgomery march.

I ask you to also celebrate our sister UU congregation, **All Souls Unitarian Congregation**, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Their vision statement begins: "Our church is an embodiment and celebration of the world as we hope it will one day become." When they learned of the murder in Birmingham Alabama of Rev. Reeb, All Souls hosted an interfaith worship service. Several clergy from different religions served as ushers. A Baptist pastor and a Catholic priest offered readings, and a Rabbi preached. ***"The whole town showed up."*** We need the spirit and attitude of All Souls. We need to "show up". We need to celebrate the rich history of Unitarian Universalism as we continue to show up to make this world a better place.

On this celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, I can't imagine how we would be today without those heroes who helped to move us forward from the backwardness from which we came.

Today, I invite you to show up and prepare to move forward for a better tomorrow!

Operation Joy Scores Big for Holiday Collection

by Annely Hudanick

Project "Holiday Cheer" was a wonderful example of generosity. A heartfelt "Thank you!" to the congregation for all your contributions.

Six car loads of goods were donated to the St. Martin de Porres Outreach on Palm Beach Boulevard, and gratefully received.

"Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference." – Kathy Calvin

Participants Needed

For Tabling MLK, Jr. Community Day Event
January 16, 2022 - 12:00 to 6:00 P.M.

Time to show up in the community again! All Faiths would like to have a table at the MLK Celebration which takes place in Centennial Park after the march on January 16.

We are in need of people to help set up our table and tent, man the table throughout the day, and break down after the event. If you are interested, please sign up on the bulletin board before the deadline of January 9.

The table will be sponsored by All Faiths' Racial Equity Team. There is no time better than right now to show our support.

Join members of 4 SWFL UU congregations and their allies for a 5-week curriculum in January and February 2023. This project has been generously funded by the UUSC and UUJF. Each of the four virtual sessions will include time with Rev. Houston Cypress, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians, Otter Clan, and co-founder of Love the Everglades Movement. Rev. Cypress will add Miccosukee insights as we explore indigenous sovereignty, justice, and U.S. history from the perspective of indigenous people.

The first 4 weeks will be on ZOOM and the last session will be held in person at UU Congregation of Fort Myers in person. The course will include some suggested reading before each session.

A key component will be how the Miccosukee people relate to Nature and what we can learn about reciprocity and how we can become better allies from this connection.

Register here for the whole series - You will receive a response by email with the link and more information.

January is Animal Shelter Collection Month

by Sharon Gray, All Faiths Animal Minstry

Perhaps you've wondered about All Faiths' Animal Shelter Collection. Where do the donations go? When did it start? Does it really make a difference? Would my small donation matter? What effect, if any, has Hurricane Ian had on local Animal Shelters?

In late 2012, the Board of Directors approved a request to begin collections of food and various supplies for local animal shelters/refuges. The Collections began in 2013. With the New Year, we will be celebrating 10 years of continuous donations from members and friends of All Faiths. The collection takes place during months with 5 Sundays (approximately 3-4 times a year).

Donations from the generous folks at All Faiths have benefited the Lee County Domestic Animal Services, Gulf Coast Humane Society, Cape Coral Animal Shelter, PAWS, ARC (Animal Refuge Center), Octagon Animal Refuge, Forever Pets, Peace River Wildlife Center, Humane Society of Bay County (whose shelter was severely damaged by Hurricane Michael in Panama City, FL).

Often in natural disasters, animals need to be relocated at great expense to safe places.

Here in Lee County, in response to Ian, emergency pet pantries were set up throughout the county to provide thousands of pounds of free pet food and supplies for residents in need. The shelters were overloaded with lost pets. Some owners were able to reclaim their pets, while others were never claimed. Many animals were shipped to other shelters in and out of the state.

Some shelters/refuges are funded by tax dollars, grants, endowment, and donations. But there's never enough money to fully fund supplies and veterinary care for the lost, surrendered, and abused animals that end up there.

Animals are valuable members of our families and community. Pets are some of our greatest teachers and companions.

This January 2023 has a 5th Sunday which means another Animal Shelter will receive donations from All Faiths friends and members. Please consider bringing in wet/dry food, towels, trashbags, Clorox and other cleaning items for the shelters. Your donations will be greatly appreciated.

Dinner and a Movie!

Wednesday, January 25, 2023 - 3:30 p.m.

Dinner Hosted by Marge & Bob DiGalbo
Movie Sponsored by Racial Equity Team

Tickets are $20 each, kids under 12, $10.
All moneys go to support our beloved All Faiths.

Tickets on sale Sundays, January 8 - 22.

The movie "Time" is a 2020 American documentary film produced and directed by Garrett Bradley. It follows Sibil Fox Richardson, fighting for the release of her husband, Rob, who is serving a 60-year prison sentence for engaging in an armed bank robbery, followed by brief discussio. Dinner will be served at 5:30.

Across the Way

Happening at UU Congregation of Fort Myers

8th Principle Group meets on Mondays from 4-5:30 pm via Zoom. Through readings and facilitated conversation, we address developing an in-depth understanding of oppressions, including their institutional character, the impacts of intersectionality, and strategies for actions to begin working to dismantle oppressions, in ourselves, our congregations, and our communities. Our next meeting is probably January 3.

Poetry Circle meets on alternate Tuesdays from 1:00-3:00 pm via Zoom. We are currently focusing on poetry by writers who belong to marginalized groups, and the relation of their work to theology and/or politics and advocacy. We also discuss work that some of us have written, on these topics or any others.

For more information please contact Cat Pivetti at joypivet@aol.com.

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: *office@allfaithsuu.org* – Website: *www.allfaithsuu.org*

Executive Board: Marge DiGalbo, Chair; Rachel Spiller, Vice Chair; John Conrad, Treasurer; Ed Elrod, Secretary; Chris Stotler, Past Chair.

Directors: Judy Alberda, Peter Erickson, Michelle Gemma, Lewis Robinson, Linda Runkle.

Staff: Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Kathy Fanny, CYP Director; Carlos Garcia, Music Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton.

Minister Emeritus: The Rev. Dr. Wayne Robinson

Communications
Newsletter
Regina Kilmartin
Proofreaders
Weezie Close
Joyce Ramay
Social Media & Website
Regina Kilmartin,
Sharon Gray, Becky Ross
Adult Education Forums
Sunday Service Team
Joyce Ramay

Member Services
Fran Way
Greeters
Marsha Bates
Care and Support
Joyce Ramay
Finance
Joyce Ramay
Stewardship Committee
Marsha Bates
Nominating Committee
Lisa Leonhardt

Sound Technician
Ed Elrod
Livestreaming
Regina Kilmartin/Sharon Gray
Building and Grounds
Bob DiGalbo
Judy Alberda
Social Action & Outreach
Climate Action Team
Joan Marshall/Carol Heilsberg
Heart for the Homeless
Barb McFarlane

Racial Equity Team
Lewis Robinson/Becky Ross
L.I.F.E.
Marsha Bates, Michelle Gemma,
Barb McFarlane
Mano a Mano
Charlotte Blitt
Operation Joy & Solos Group
Annely Hudanick
Animal Ministry
Sharon Gray
Rainbow Connection
Greg Monk

Minister: In Search

Deadline for the **February** Issue of *Connections* is **January 18**
(Brief announcements may be accepted later, and will be included *if* space and time permit.)

OFFICE HOURS: 9am to 4pm, Monday–Thurs;
9am to 12pm, Friday & Sunday.
Congregational Administrator: Regina Kilmartin