



Where you *belong!*

# CONNECTIONS

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

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*Happy Holidays!*

**Mano a Mano**  
Annual Bolivian Craft Sale  
December 4 & 11

**Dinner & a Movie**  
December 9 - 6:00 p.m.  
Hosted by Ariel Hoover & Bob Moore

**Holly-Day Open Mic & Sing-Along**  
Thursday, December 15 - 6:30 p.m.

**Newcomer Orientation**  
Saturday, December 17 - 10 a.m.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
Saturday, December 24 - 6:30 p.m.

**Love & Peace**  
All Day, Every Day!

*The Board of Directors met on November 16, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.*

As I write this I am in Connecticut having spent Thanksgiving together with my family for the first time in three years. As I sat at the table surrounded by our loved ones I was reminded of what we say at All Faiths every Sunday, "It is good to be together in whatever way we can." This year it was particularly meaningful to me. I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family/friends.

Your Board of Directors held its regular meeting on November 16 at All Faiths. Everything is progressing well. We received a check from the UUA disaster fund in the amount of \$16,350, and a check for \$43,844.98 from our insurance company for the wind damage. The

insurance will cover damage to the roof, the ceilings, dry-wall repair, and storage bins. It will not cover damage to the fence or street sign. The grounds crew intends to fix the fence and we have received an estimate to replace our street sign. We are waiting for estimates on the roof and building repairs. The rest of the planned grounds work will continue.

The work of the Stewardship Committee has begun. Lewis Robinson will be the Board of Directors representative on the Committee.

The Ministerial Search Committee is also continuing their work. Unfortunately, Frankie Jennings had to resign from the Search Committee for personal reasons. The Board voted on Michelle Gemma to serve on the Committee in her place.

Judy Alberda has suggested we move Rev. Robinson's donated books to the bookshelves in the minister's office. She has agreed to go through the remaining books and place them in the shelves. Books are available to borrow or purchase with a donation to the Minister's Discretionary Fund. Please take a moment to browse through the books, you may find a treasure or two.

Social events are being planned, we hope you take the opportunity to attend these socials as we try to have more fundraising activities here at All Faiths. The first will be on December 9, a dinner and movie hosted by Ariel Hoover and Bob Moore (see page 7 for more information). There will also be a "Holly-Day Open Mic and Holiday

Sing-Along" on December 15 (see page 10). I look forward to seeing you all there.

*The next Board meeting will be December 21, 2022, at 1:00 pm at All Faiths.*

**SPECIAL THANKS**

*All you have to do is ask!* Our monthly Ice Cream Socials have been a big hit on the last Sunday of the month. We asked people to sponsor a month by donating \$25 to cover the cost of ice cream and fixin's. The response was overwhelming! Thank you to Barb McFarlane; Cameron Anholt & Greg Monk; Lewis Robinson; Nicole Racine & Frank Geltner; Brad Davidson & Becky Ross; Chris Stotler & Marsha Bates; Annely Hudanick; Diane Chernow, Regina Kilmartin; Terri & Jeff Lazar; Dottie Mayol, and Laura Snow. We're covered through next October!

**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.)*

- December Special Collection** - Employee Bonuses
- January Share the Plate** - Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU)
- February Special Collection** - Minister's Discretionary Fund

November Share-the-Plate collected \$450 for Operation Joy!

*Your generosity directly benefits our community! We are grateful!*



# MINISTERIAL SEARCH UPDATE

by Marsha Bates, Chair

Thank you to the 64 congregants who responded to the Congregational Survey. The purpose of the Congregational Survey was to:

- Identify what qualities the Congregation desires in a minister and what activities they feel the minister should focus on;
- Learn why you attend our services; and
- Identify what programs interest you.

Respondents ranked items listed under each of those four categories either as being "Very Important", Somewhat Important, or Not Important. Some results:

- Ministerial Activities
  - 88% ranked "Inspiring, Thought-provoking Sermons" as Very Important while 13% ranked it as Somewhat Important.
  - Pastoral Care was ranked as very important by 59% of the congregation; 41% ranked it as "Somewhat Important."
  - 95% of the respondents ranked being a community spokesperson as being either very important (55%) or somewhat important (41%).
- Ministerial Qualities
  - 92% ranked having good character as being very important while 8% ranked that as being somewhat important.
  - 89% ranked having empathy as being very important; 8% ranked it as being somewhat important
  - Being open-minded was ranked by 100% of respondents as being either very or somewhat important.
- Reasons for Attending All Faiths
  - A sense of belonging and to hear uplifting, informative sermons were both ranked by 100% of respondents as either very (80%) or somewhat important (20%).

- Celebrating common values was cited as very (73%) or somewhat (25%) by 98% of the respondents.
- Programs of importance
  - The Social Justice and Community Outreach item was ranked by 100% of respondents as being very or somewhat important.
  - Social Events and Music/Choir were the next-highest ranking categories.

If you want a summary of the entire survey, you can email Marsha Bates ([gcsmbk@gmail.com](mailto:gcsmbk@gmail.com)) and she will email you the table that was distributed at the November 4 service. Your Search Team is using the survey results as we prepare to evaluate potential candidates who indicate an interest in serving our congregation. Again, thank you to all the respondents; your input will help shape the future of our congregation.

## JOYS & SORROWS

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

**Donalie Benyak** has improved and has returned to her condo. We are happy that she has made such good progress.

**Carol Elrod** was hospitalized with pneumonia. She has experienced many health issues this year. Our hearts are with her and her husband, Ed.

**Wayne Dean** had carotid artery surgery. We hope that he has good benefits from the procedure.

**Joe Gayton and Carol Siferd** came down with the flu. We are glad that they are doing better.

**Gerald Goen** was hospitalized with a serious case of pneumonia. We hope that he has a good recovery.

**Serious Season for Respiratory Infections.** Doctors say that this is the worst season they have seen in many years. Get your flu shots and update boosters for COVID-19. If you or someone in your family is ill, please stay home and don't share the infections.

*Joyce Ramay,*

*Care & Support Coordinator*

## 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.

Do you have something of interest you  
would like to share with the congregation? Do you  
know of an organization or speaker that may wish to  
present to the congregation?

Contact the office to reserve a single Wednesday  
or a series of Wednesdays.

Learning is fun!  
office@allfaithsuo.org or 239-226-0900

### Happy December Birthday to you!



December 6 Sharon Gray  
December 9 Scott Kilhefner  
December 14 Jeff Moran  
December 14 Carol Siferd  
December 15 Rev. Emily Palmer  
December 16 Maggie Mullins  
December 18 Nancy McGlasson  
December 21 Mary Ellen Fritz  
December 23 Chris Stotler  
December 30 Linda Bigelow  
December 31 Nova Spiller

### And Coming Up...

January 1 Shea Fierro

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



### Solos Holiday Extravagaza!

Saturday, December 3, 2023  
12:30 p.m.

**Christof's**  
10231 McGregor Blvd.,  
Fort Myers, FL 33912

*Check your email for details.*

**RSVP** to: Annely Hudanick,  
[annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com)

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

### 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](mailto:ceegeefm@gmail.com).

### Book Club

Meeting Every 3rd Monday at 12:00 p.m. - Social Hall

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](mailto:dianecher@comcast.net)

### 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.

### 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](mailto:joycelschaffer@gmail.com)

# DECEMBER 2022 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1  2pm Choir Practice	2  2pm Dominoes	3  12:30pm Solos Holiday Extravaganza (Pg. 4)
4 9:15am News Talk w. Ray Ellis  10:30am Service	5  6 pm Rainbow Connection	6  1:30pm Climate Action Team Mtg. via Zoom	7	8  2pm Choir Practice	9  2pm Dominoes  6pm Dinner & a Movie Event	10  7pm ACMA Members Holiday Party
11 9:15am News Talk w. Ray Ellis  10:30am Service  Special Collection for Employee Bonuses	12  10am Sun. Service Mtg.	13  10am Racial Equity Team Mtg.	14  	15 10 am Finance Mtg.  2pm Choir Practice  6:30 pm Holly-Day Open Mic & Sing-Along	16  2pm Dominoes	17  10am Newcomer Orientation
18 9:15am News Talk w. Ray Ellis  10:30am Service  Ice Cream Social McGregor Clinic Collection	19  12pm Book Club  Hanukkah Begins at Sundown	20	21  1pm Board Meeting	22  1pm Homeless Team @ All Faiths  2pm Choir Practice	23  2pm Dominoes	24  6:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
25 9:15am News Talk w. Ray Ellis  10:30am Service  Christmas Day	26	27  	28  7am Odyssey with Rachel Spiller @All Faiths	29  10am Membership Meeting	30  2pm Dominoes	31

Many meetings have returned to in-house, some meetings remain on Zoom.  
If you are not sure, check with the chairperson or call the office.

## DECEMBER 2022 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES "CELEBRATION"

**In-House & Live on Facebook at 10:30 a.m.**

Recorded services can be viewed at [www.allfaithsuo.org](http://www.allfaithsuo.org)  
or on our YouTube channel.

**December 4 – *UU Response to Climate Forced Displacement*** by Joan Marshall  
Worship Associate – Bob Moore  
Music by Carlos Garcia  
*Mano a Mano Craft Sale*

**December 11 – *My Christmas Journey***  
by John Conrad  
Worship Associate – Doug Cartwright  
Music by Carlos Garcia  
*Mano a Mano Craft Sale*  
***Special Collection – Employee Bonuses***

**December 18 – *Celebrating Winter Solstice***  
by Rachel Spiller  
Worship Associate – Joyce Ramay  
Music by Carlos Garcia  
*McGregor Clinic Collection*

**December 24 – 6:30 p.m. *Christmas Eve***  
Worship Associate – Michelle Gemma  
Music by Darlene Mitchell & Carlos Garcia

**December 25 – *Christmas around the World***  
Worship Associate – Regina Kilmartin  
Music by Carlos Garcia & Congregation

**January 1 – *Starting Over Again*** by Joyce Ramay  
Worship Associate – Greg Monk  
Music by Nancy Frasca-Cabazares and  
Carlos Garcia  
Child & Youth Program – 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

On hiatus in December - will resume January 8.

## ALL FAITHS' NEWCOMERS ORIENTATION

*Hosted by the Membership Committee*

**Saturday, December 17, 2022**

**10 a.m. -- 12:00 p.m.**

**2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers**

How much do you know about our All Faiths congregation? How much do you know about Unitarian Universalism? Did you know that UU congregations are self-governing, and that authority and responsibility are vested in the membership of the congregation?

If you are considering becoming a member, if you are a relatively new member, or if you're just curious, we invite you to come on Saturday, December 17 at 10:00 a.m. for snacks and an informative workshop that will bring you up to speed on our faith community. Visitors are welcome, too!

Sign up on the bulletin board in the Community Room, or RSVP to Fran Way at [franwayrn@aol.com](mailto:franwayrn@aol.com).

## APPRECIATE OUR DEDICATED EMPLOYEES!

*by Joyce Ramay*

At All Faiths we are particularly blessed to have talented, dedicated and hard-working staff members. Thanks to them, we are able to continue to provide full services to our members and friends, even when we do not have a minister. Our Administrator **Regina Kilmartin** is a lady who knows everything and holds it all together. Our Music Director **Carlos Garcia** brings his joy and enthusiasm to our Sunday Services, and develops the talents of our soloists and choir. Our Child and Youth Program Director **Kathy Fanny** provides education for our children. Our Sexton **Joe Gayton** greets us every Sunday and takes care of our building and facilities.

We take a special Second Collection for Employee Bonuses on the second Sunday of December each year, and you can donate cash or checks that day. But you can make your contribution all month long. Just write "Bonuses" on the lower left of your checks, and place in the collection baskets or mail to: All Faiths, 2726 McGregor Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33901.

So let's all be generous this holiday season in showing our appreciation for these wonderful people.

# CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Carol Heilsberg, Co-Chair



In our November Climate Action Team meeting, much of our discussion centered around the impact of Hurricane Ian and how we can best promote the need to rebuild sustainably. The SWFL RESET Center, one of our CAT partner organizations, has arranged for a conversation on this topic and we encourage you to mark your calendar and sign up now to participate in this discussion with FGCU professor Dr. Edwin “Win” Everham. Here is the invitation from RESET:

RESET Conversation...

Our next conversation is on Thursday, December 8th from 6:00pm - 7:00 pm and is shaping up to be another really terrific conversation! The title for the conversation is “Hurricane Ian: Will we build a more sustainable future? As Southwest Florida rushes to get back to “normal” after the devastating effects of Hurricane Ian, many are justly asking if our old “normal” was good enough. Edwin “Win” Everham, Ph.D. from the Department of Ecology & Environmental Studies at FGCU, will lead the discussion on steps we SHOULD be taking to rebuild, and what we should be doing right now to protect our environment and our communities from the ravages of increasingly dangerous climate disasters. It should be another interesting and informative RESET conversation - You won’t want to miss it! Register at this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUof-qrp-jojHdbdX9NekoPobdes84Pny92b>

ANNOUNCING an exciting new program in 2023:

Being a Good Neighbor - Mondays, Jan 23, Jan 30, Feb 6, Feb 13, 6-7:30 PM via Zoom, Feb 18 Time TBA at UU of Fort Myers.

We have an opportunity to participate in a UUSC-inspired learning series, Being a Good Neighbor, in collaboration with the SWFL RESET Center, four Unitarian Universalist Congregations of SW Florida, Love the Everglades Movement, and generously funded by UUJF - UUSCF.

Each of the four virtual sessions will include time with Houston Cypress, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians, Otter Clan, and leader of Love the Everglades Movement, who will add Miccosukee insights as we explore issues of indigenous sovereignty, justice, and U.S. history from the

perspective of the indigenous. A key component will be how the Miccosukee relate to nature and what we can learn from this connection. The last session on February 18 will be in person at UU of Fort Myers where we will gather to celebrate our newly-made connections.

To register click here:

We hope this will be an entry for many of us into the rich culture and history of the Miccosukee Tribe and that it will enable us to better support them in current and future justice issues.

Your Climate Action Team meets via Zoom at 1:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month. The meetings are open to all who wish to participate. Look for an All Faiths email invitation to our next meeting on Tuesday, December 6th We hope you will join us.

CAT ZOOM link: <https://zoom.us/j/7787257501>



## Dinner and a Movie - You Bet!

Friday, December 9, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

at All Faiths

Hosted by Ariel Hoover & Bob Moore

Do you miss having fun with your All Faith’s friends? Come to our movie night and dinner on Friday, December 9th at 6:00 p.m. We start with a yummy dinner of assorted, handmade quiches and homemade tomato soup with salad. Bob will make his famous homemade bread and Ariel, Flourless Chocolate Cake!

Then we will share “*Mission Joy*,” a movie with the Dalai Lama and his friend, Desmond Tutu. This is a special private screening of the film featuring video of these teachers’ discussing the nature of happiness. You’ll go home full of delicious food and joy!

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

You can buy tickets on Sunday, November 27 or December 4. Also, if you have any questions, feel free to email me at [Ariel.hoover@verizon.net](mailto:Ariel.hoover@verizon.net) or call: 978-505-5599. This is a fundraiser for All Faiths.

# 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).

# ♥ FOR THE HOMELESS NEWS

by Barb McFarlane

Hurricane Ian exacerbated what was already a major problem in Lee County -- finding affordable housing. All Faiths has at least 12 people displaced due to Ian. Although they may be fortunate to stay with friends and family, have a second home, or financial resources to pay for temporary housing, they face the same exhausting uncertainty, bureaucratic hoops, and lack of available housing that homeless people faced before Ian. If you are aware of available condos, apartments, or homes in your neighborhood, please pass that information along to those members still looking for a place to stay.

The Heart for Homeless team has three volunteer opportunities in January and February for All Faiths members.

1. January 7th work with a team of All Faiths members on a Habitat for Humanity home... Sign up by December 30 on the Habitat website.

2. January 28th, volunteer at the Homeless Coalition's annual Homeless/Veteran standdown. Be a greeter, direct parking, accompany a client through the numerous tables of resources. Sign up information to follow.

3. February 5th Sleeping bag collection. Purchase and clean a used sleeping bag from thrift stores, clean out your own or friends' closets, or purchase a new bag. These will be given to the County's outreach team. An All Faiths member has already donated five sleeping bags which were gratefully accepted by Matt Wallace at Lee county Veteran and Human services for distribution to those living on the street.

Please contact Barb McFarlane, mcfarlanebar@gmail.com, with any questions about signing up for Habitat. Feel free to include friends and family in these opportunities.

Join our monthly meeting the 3rd Thursday at 1:00 pm at All Faith's.

## MANO A MANO BOLIVIAN CRAFTS SALE

Sunday, December 4 and 11, 2022

Brightly colored, beautifully woven potholders, small purses, glasses cases and other handmade items will be sold at All Faiths on Sunday, December 4 and 11. These articles make lovely gifts. They also help support the work of Mano a Mano in Bolivia and the artisans who sew them. Charlotte Blitt has sold these items for years and can answer questions about them.

Mano a Mano International was founded in 1994 by All Faiths members *Segundo and Joan Velasquez* to improve the daily lives and health of subsistence farmers throughout Bolivia's marginalized rural communities. Community residents are involved in all aspects of their projects and own the project when it's finished. You are invited to join Mano a Mano when they travel to Bolivia in March of this year (see page ?) to see first hand the impact they have made.

All Faiths has been central to this social justice mission. If you wish to learn more, check the website: [manoamano.org](http://manoamano.org).



## TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

### Balance Sheet: Cash Assets – October 2022

First Horizon Checking	\$ 5,322
First Horizon Op. Reserve	11,722
Live Oak Op. Res. CD	21,037
Raymond James Legacy	22,482
Pay Pal	141
First Horizon Capital Checking	619
First Horizon Capital Reserve	24,463
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 85,786</b>
Prior Month	<u>85,689</u>
<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>\$ 97</b>

### October 2022 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 9,407
Operating Expense	<u>9,686</u>
<b>Net Loss</b>	<b>(\$ -279)</b>

Budget control was good with 88.3% of our budget over the first seven months being expensed (taking into account the monthly transfers to Capital Reserves). There were no minister-related expenses in October.

Income was lower than budgeted. Our Pledge Goal through October was \$122,484; and \$85,529 was received. 69.8% of the year-to-date pledge goal has been achieved.

\$14,000 has been “borrowed” from the Operating Reserve account to date.

We received a generous grant from the UUA’s Disaster Relief Program of \$16,350 which will covers our insurance deductible. Our Wind insurance company accepted our Hurricane Ian wind damage claim and will be sending All Faiths a check in excess of \$43,000 for roof and gutter replacement and interior ceiling damage repair.

The street sign is not covered by insurance and will be fully replaced utilizing our Capital Reserve fund. The damage to the fence is also not covered by insurance; it will be repaired utilizing either normal repair funds or Capital Reserve funds.

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 October, \$245 was collected for the All Souls Episcopal Church, an organization supported by the Homeless Team.



# Ice Cream Social

After Service

Sunday, December 18, 2022

## DO YOU SING IN THE CAR?

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

*If you can sing in the car,  
you can sing in the choir!*

No auditions required.  
Our weekly music rehearsals are fun,  
engaging and highly educational.

Come alone, or bring a friend.

Carlos Garcia, Music Director  
ceegeefm@gmail.com

## ACMA LIVE MUSIC!

The Americana Community Music Association's Facebook page is updated every Saturday with YouTube or music links for scheduled artists for that date

**Saturday, December 3 - 7:00pm**

Cliff Eberhardt in Concert!

Louise Mosrie Opens



**The Listening Room at All Faiths**

2756 McGregor Blvd.

Fort Myers, Florida 33901

General public \$18/Member discount \$12

Donations at the Door

Check ACMA Facebook or website:  
[www.americanacma.org](http://www.americanacma.org) for more info.

## FACING THE REALITY OF OPPRESSION

by Lewis Robinson, Co-Chair, Racial Equity Team

Oppression is all around us, yet we do not recognize it. Just as we do not recognize the problems it causes.

One definition of oppression is group prejudice and discrimination backed by institutional power. The term indicates that one group is in the position to enforce their prejudices and discrimination against another group throughout the society, the prejudices and discrimination has moved from the individual to the societal level and have a long term and far reaching impact. Prejudice + discrimination + power equals oppression.

Oppression is an imbalance of social, political and institutional power that spans history and is taken for granted by most people in the society particularly by those whom the oppression benefits.

We generally do not use the term oppression, but far more often we talk in terms of the forms that oppression takes (racism, ableism, heterosexism and sexism). We are using the large scale historical, political and pervasive relationships. We skip the individual acts (which all people commit), and refer to the dynamics of the groups' collective power over the group seen as (minoritized) less-valued opposite (men/women; white/people of color; heterosexual/gay).

All people have prejudices, but only the dominant group is in the position of social, historical and institutional power to back the prejudice with privilege and procedure.

Oppression is historical, institutional and ideological, and results in systemic dominance by the privilege group. Marilyn Frye uses the metaphor of the birdcage to explain the interlocking forces of oppression. The birdcage theory helps to understand why oppression is so hard to see.

Deeply woven into the fabric of society, oppression is internalized by the dominant group. It is also internalized by the minorities group. As a result, the person believes the negative information about their group and acts on it fulfilling the society's expectation. The suicide rate of gender queer persons is offered as an example of internalized oppression in action.

Join with us to create a more equitable and just society. The Racial Equity Team meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.

You can also support Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) during the January Share-the-Plate collection.

## GROUNDS & GARDEN UPDATES

by Judy Alberda



The gardens around our congregational building are thriving and continue to be a reminder that life and beauty continue.

We are pleased to have provided the Maypop passion vine with a new trellis, as the old one didn't survive Ian. The new growth is curling around the supports. Take a look - to the right of the front door by the porch. Dan DeShon planted three new red Ixoras and a beautiful stand of Muhly grass. It's by the sidewalk as you approach the front door. It's PINK!

We welcome Kathleen Weber as the "take-out-those-weeds" participant in grounds upkeep.

There is still some storm debris hidden under and around some plants but it is gradually discovered and disposed of.

It is still a joy to work with living things that inspire and enable reflection.

### Holly-Day Open Mic & Sing-Along

Thursday, December 15

7 pm at All Faiths

Save the Date!

Karaoke • Story Telling & Poetry

50/50 Raffle • Gift Basket Giveaway

Christmas Carol Sing-Along

Wine & Cheese

Beverages & Finger Foods

(Sign up on the Bulletin Board)

Come Jingle & Mingle with Us!

# **Travel to Bolivia with Mano a Mano International**

## **March 10 – 19, 2023**

### **Mano a Mano's Center for Ecological Agriculture**

### **Water, Food, Health, and Education: A Journey to Learn**

#### **What is the purpose of this trip?**

Mano a Mano invites you to join us on a nine-day trip to Cochabamba, Bolivia. Through this unique travel experience, you will meet high Andean subsistence farm families and become immersed in their daily lives. A trip to Bolivia with Mano a Mano can be a life-changing event. On this trip, you will learn first-hand about how Bolivians grow the food they eat and sell. We will meet subsistence farmers who manage to survive in their high mountain communities with meager material resources and witness their determination to remain on their land and improve life for their children.

For travelers concerned about global food and water scarcity and equitable distribution of resources, the trip will provide an up-close view of how Mano a Mano teaches farming practices that protect the fragile natural environment and improve health. You will learn how Mano a Mano's Center for Ecological Agriculture integrates its health, water, and food production programs to create more sustainable rural communities.

And travelers will take part in Mano a Mano's distribution of the nearly 200,000 pounds of medical and school supplies that Minnesota volunteers collect, sort, pack, and ship to our Bolivian sister organizations each year. Throughout this journey, you will see projects that accomplished our original vision and so much more.

We also want the trip to benefit Mano a Mano. We hope that by traveling together to Cochabamba, we will build a group of people who are very knowledgeable about Mano a Mano's activities, both here and in Bolivia. We hope that a trip to Bolivia will encourage travelers to deepen their commitment to supporting Mano a Mano. We want to demonstrate our support and solidarity with Mano a Mano's Bolivian staff and volunteers, and especially with the communities in which Mano a Mano works. When you return, we hope that you will become passionate advocates, telling the Mano a Mano story and/or volunteering in whatever capacity fits your interest and schedule.

#### **What is Mano a Mano International?**

Mano a Mano is a grass-roots non-profit organization based in St. Paul, MN whose mission is to create partnerships with poor Bolivian communities that improve health and increase economic well-being.

We work through four counterpart organizations in Bolivia to fulfill this mission: Mano a Mano – Bolivia focuses on health and education by creating and expanding a network of community health clinics, schools, and related infrastructure projects; Mano a Mano – Nuevo Mundo focuses on economic development and food security through construction of agricultural water reservoirs and roads; Mano a Mano – Apoyo Aereo provides air transport and air rescue services for Mano a Mano and other organizations throughout Bolivia; and Mano a Mano Internacional hosts volunteer groups and pilots new initiatives. Our website – [manoamano.org](http://manoamano.org) - will give you the most up-to-date information on all of our projects and results.

#### **Who can go on this trip?**

Adults and children who are accompanied by a parent or guardian are welcome. While Spanish-speaking ability is highly valued, it is not essential. Interpreters will be available throughout all trip activities.

#### **Where will we stay?**

Mano a Mano will reserve a block of rooms in a comfortable, clean hotel in Cochabamba. Private single or double rooms are available. There are many internet cafes in the area, in addition to your hotel, from which you can e-mail or phone home. For purposes of an address for Homeland Security, you may use the Cochabamba address of: 291 Junin – esquina Ecuador, Cochabamba, Bolivia (address of Mano a Mano – Internacional Cochabamba).

**More Detailed Important Information Will Be Sent via Email**

# 2023 UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY - PITTSBURGH, PA

June 21 - 25, 2023

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Participants worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to have voting delegates.

The Ware Lecture is one of the highlights of the assembly. The UUA President, in consultation with the General Assembly Planning Committee, invites a distinguished guest each year to address the General Assembly as the Ware Lecturer. In-person or full virtual registration is required to live-stream the event on June 24, or to access the video on-demand when it is posted.

If you are interested in representing All Faiths as a GA delegate, contact Regina in the office. Stay tuned for more information.



This year's GA will take place in Pittsburgh, PA, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, (pictured above) located at 1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd.



## All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: [office@allfaithsuum.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuum.org) – Website: [www.allfaithsuum.org](http://www.allfaithsuum.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 Marsha Bates, Michelle Gemma,

**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.*

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 **January** Issue of *Connections* is **December 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