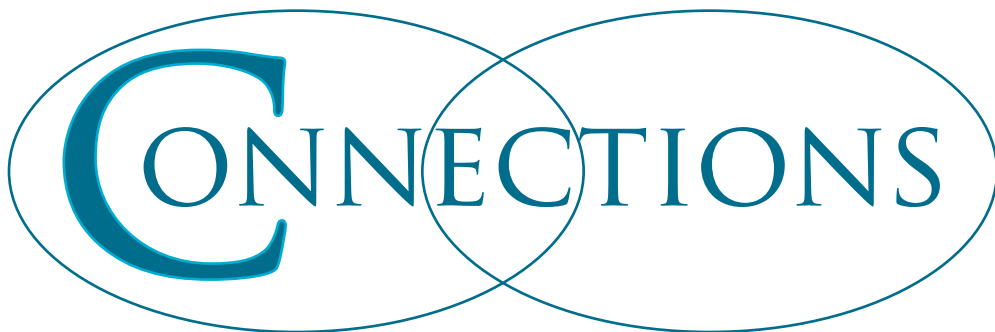




Where you *belong!*



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
Ministerial Search Update.....	3
Joys & Sorrows.....	3
Happening at All Faiths.....	4
February 2023 Calendar.....	5
February Sunday Service Schedule.....	6
Child & Youth Program Notes.....	6
Pledge Reminder.....	6
Climate Action Team News.....	7
From the Garden.....	7
Rainbow Connection News.....	8
Heart for the Homeless News.....	8
With Appreciation.....	8
Treasurer's Report.....	9
ACMA Concert Lineup.....	9
Racial Equity Team News.....	10
Heart for the Homeless Team News.....	10
LIFE News & Updates.....	11
The Meaning of Imbolc.....	11
<i>Bible Bad Girls - Coming Soon</i>	12

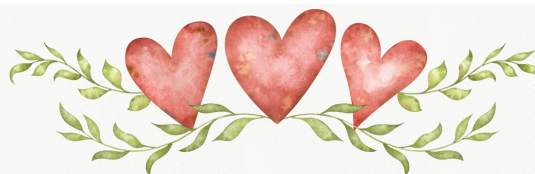
FOUNDERS' DAY

Celebrating 22 Years!

Sunday, February 19, 2023 - 10:30 a.m.

Cookout after Service

\$10/Person - Kids Free



Stewardship Pledge Drive Deadline

Let's make sure we're celebrating

Founders' Day 50 years from now!

Your support is the only reason we exist!

Pledge forms due by February 15, 2023

LIFE - Love in Action!

February 13, 2023 at 6:30 pm

Covenant Presbyterian Church

2439 McGregor Boulevard

Lee Interfaith for Empowerment's First

Large Gathering of 2023 - You won't want to miss it!

(Details on page 11)

The Board of Directors met on January 18, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

So far 2023 has been a busy year. The new gutters and guards have been installed. The storage sheds are in place and secured. The clean up behind the building and placement of rock continues. Fence repairs are planned for the coming weeks. We are hoping to have all these projects completed by our Founders' Day cookout on Sunday February 19th.

The street sign proofs from Sign & Design Depot have finally been received and approved. The new sign should be installed during the second or third week of February.

Rachel Spiller is heading up the planning of our Founders' Day event. We

will be having burgers, both meat and veggie, hot dogs and brats. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish representing your cultural background to share. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you can help with this.

Interior damage repairs to the ceilings in the Community Room, foyer and office area are being planned for later in the summer when contractors have more availability and, hopefully, prices will come down.

Our Italian Dinner and a Movie was a wonderful evening of good food, entertainment, conversation and fellowship. We are looking at having more events like this. Several people have expressed an interest in planning their own activity.

The Board of Directors have agreed to postpone

our March Auction in favor of the play *Bible Bad Girls, Heresy or Herstory*, starring Lisa Leonhardt, Pam Minton and others. This play has been presented at other area churches and was very well received. It will be on March 11, 2023 here at All Faiths. Watch for more details.

Our favorite hostess, Linda Bigelow, is retiring from the Sunday Service hospitality. Nicole Racine has stepped up to help with the kitchen duties. Please offer to help her as you are able. It's too much for one person.

Our Stewardship Campaign continues. In week #3 we have only received about one third of the pledge forms back. We can't do the work of the church without your support. It takes all of us to

commit at this time. Please get your forms back to Regina as soon as possible.

The Board approved a proposal from Kathy Fanny, our CYP Director, to plan a trip to the Elephant Educational Encounter in March. The Children and Youth will also be presenting a special service in March for the Jewish Holiday, Purim.

Thank you to Lewis Robinson for sponsoring our January Ice Cream Social.

The work continues on the Ministerial Search Team and Nominating Committees.

Once again we are keeping busy here at All Faiths, please join us in whatever way you can.

The next board meeting will be held on February 22, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

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.)

February Special Collection - Minister's Discretionary Fund

March Share the Plate - Operation Joy

Donation Request - February 5

Heart for the Homeless Team will be collecting clean used or new sleeping bags.

Your generosity directly benefits our community!

We are grateful!



MINISTERIAL SEARCH UPDATE

by Marsha Bates, Chair



Your Search Team continues to work with the UUA Transitions Office to ensure we fulfill our All Faiths' Bylaws requirement that any minister who is called to serve All Faiths "shall be in fellowship with the UUA."

To help congregations achieve that goal, the UUA Transitions Office has established a robust hiring platform to connect congregations searching for a minister with interested candidates. The Search Team developed a comprehensive profile of All Faiths which will give candidates a good understanding of our congregation and our priorities for a minister. Now that it has been posted on UUA's platform, we can receive queries from interested ministers.

Our goal is to identify a ministerial candidate who will provide the experience needed to lead All Faiths as we work to fulfill our congregational commitment to Justice, Equity, and Compassion. Potential candidates are evaluated using the results of the congregational survey we conducted last fall. We are paying close attention to candidates' pastoral care experience; their ability to work with a diverse group of people; their demonstrated ability to provide inspiring and stimulating messages from the pulpit; candidates' interest and past involvement in social justice issues; and their ability to be a spokesperson for All Faiths in the greater community.

Although we want to find a minister as quickly as possible, we are committed first and foremost to finding a minister who we believe is a good fit for our congregation. That may take some time. The UUA office has indicated that there are relatively few ministers seeking a new position compared to the number of congregations searching. Finding the right person may happen quickly or it may take some time. We believe that having patience to find the right person will serve our congregation best in the long run.

After the congregation approves the successful candidate, the minister will be hired on a contract basis for a one-year term. After that year, the congregation will have the option of either ending the minister's employment or inviting the minister to enter into a settled, long-term contract with All Faiths.

The Search Team will continue to update you about the status of the search throughout the process.

JOYS & SORROWS

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

Gerald Goen died in January following hospitalization for pneumonia. We extend our sympathy to his wife Janet and their family. Janet Goen has now moved to assisted living.

Jan Guardiano is expecting to move back from the East Coast to Calusa Harbor after being displaced by the hurricane. We look forward to having her back with us.

Joan Marshall had knee surgery, followed by a lot of pain. We hope that she has a good recovery.

Valerie Meacham suffered from COVID. We hope she has a full recovery soon.

Lillian Pierce died in New Jersey at the age of 99. We extend our sympathy to her family.

Barbara Salzberger died at the age of 94 in Connecticut. She and her deceased husband Emil were founding members of All Faiths. We extend our sympathy to their family.

Emmie Spiller became our first teenaged member at our welcoming ceremony in January.

Frank Geltner, Nicole Racine and **Ken Malkin** were also welcomed as new members at our ceremony in January.

Many of our people have been suffering with COVID, colds, sore throats, laryngitis, and stomach ailments. Please take measures to protect yourselves during this season, and stay home if you have symptoms.

Joyce Ramay,

Care & Support Coordinator



KIDS CORNER

by Kathy Fanny, CYP Director

The youth have been working on empathy, what it is like to be differently abled. We worked with drawing as if we had no hands. As a group, we made shirts to wear for the MLK march. We are also planning on visiting an elephant sanctuary as part of the interdependent web of life where we care for all living things. In February, we are continuing with the *Call of Courage*

Happening at All Faiths

*Happy February
Birthday to you!*



Feb 3 Midge Magstadt
Feb 7 Kendra Maroon
Feb 14 Jolene Jeranson
Feb 15 Linda Arthur
Feb 17 Carol Sommer
Feb 18 Howard Silverman
Feb 24 Ed Elrod
Feb 25 John Davidson
Feb 26 Nita Flores
Feb 28 Cameron Anholt

And Coming Up...

March 1 Eileen Moran
March 2 Robert Way
March 3 Charlotte Blitt



Happy Valentine's Day!

Solos Monthly Lunch!

**Saturday, February 4, 2023
12:30 p.m.**

El Goucho Inca

Colonial Center 4383 Colonial Blvd Ste
100, Fort Myers, FL 33966

Check your email for details.

RSVP to: Annely Hudanick,
annelyblue@hotmail.com

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

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@allfaithsuo.org or 239-226-0900

The Rainbow Connection

Meeting on the 2nd Sunday of the Month at 12 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 via Zoom on the 2nd Tuesday of the Month at 10 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 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 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

FEBRUARY 2023 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div>Happy</div> <div>FOUNDERS' DAY</div> <div>February 19, 2023</div>			1	2 <div><div>Be kind to groundhogs!</div><div>2pm</div><div>Choir Practice</div></div>	3 <div><div>2pm</div><div>Dominoes</div><div>in the Community Room</div></div>	4 <div><div>1pm</div><div>Solos Lunch</div><div>(Pg. 4)</div><div>7pm</div><div>ACMA Concert</div><div>(see pg. 10)</div></div>
5 <div><div>9:15am</div><div>News Talk w.</div><div>Ray Ellis</div><div>10:30am</div><div>Service & CYP</div><div>Sleeping Bag Collection</div></div>	6	7 <div><div>1:30pm</div><div>Climate Action Team Mtg.</div></div>	8	9 <div><div>2pm</div><div>Choir Practice</div></div>	10 <div><div>2pm</div><div>Dominoes</div><div>in the Community Room</div></div>	11
12 <div><div>9:15am</div><div>News Talk</div><div>10:30am</div><div>Service & CYP</div><div>12 pm</div><div>Rainbow Connection</div></div>	13 <div><div>10am</div><div>Sun. Service Mtg.</div><div>6:30pm</div><div>LIFE's Love in Action Gathering</div></div>	14 <div><div>10am</div><div>Racial Equity Meeting via Zoom</div><div></div><div>Valentine's Day</div></div>	15	16 <div><div>10 am</div><div>Finance Mtg.</div><div>1pm</div><div>Homeless Team @ All Faiths</div><div>2pm</div><div>Choir Practice</div></div>	17 <div><div>2pm</div><div>Dominoes</div><div>in the Community Room</div></div>	18
19 <div><div>10:30am</div><div>Service & CYP</div><div>Founders' Day</div><div>McGregor Clinic Collection</div><div>7pm</div><div>ACMA Concert</div><div>(see pg. 10)</div></div>	20 <div><div>12pm</div><div>Book Club</div><div></div></div>	21	22 <div><div>1pm</div><div>Board Meeting</div></div>	23 <div><div>2pm</div><div>Choir Practice</div></div>	24 <div><div>2pm</div><div>Dominoes</div><div>in the Community Room</div></div>	25 <div><div>7pm</div><div>ACMA Concert</div><div>(see pg. 10)</div></div>
26 <div><div>9:15am</div><div>News Talk w.</div><div>Ray Ellis</div><div>10:30am</div><div>Service & CYP</div></div>	27	28	<div>Will you be our valentine?</div> <div></div>			
<div>Check the online calendar at: allfaithsuu.org</div> <div>for post-printing updates</div>						

FEBRUARY 2023 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES "LOVE IN ACTION"

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

Recorded services can be viewed at www.allfaithsuu.org
or on our YouTube channel.

February 5 – What's Love Got to Do with It?

by Sharon Gray

Worship Associate – Doug Cartwright

Special Music by Felicia Rose and
Carlos Garcia

CYP with Kathy Fanny

February 12 – The Power of Love in Action

by Crystal Czynscon,

Consultant to Visuality

Worship Associate – Greg Monk

Music by Carlos Garcia

CYP with Kathy Fanny

***Special Collection for All Faiths Minister's
Discretionary Fund (MDF)***

February 19 – Responding to the Call: Rebuild My Church.

by Joyce Ramay

Worship Associate – Regina Kilmartin

Music by Carlos Garcia

CYP with Kathy Fanny

McGregor Clinic Collection

February 26 – Love – Let It Go Around

by Lewis Robinson

Worship Associate – Michelle Gemma

Music by Carlos Garcia, Choir and Congregation

CYP 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.

2023/2024 PLEDGE DRIVE PLEDGE GOAL: \$231,156

As of February 1, 2023, we have received 41 pledges
totaling \$130,114. That brings us over the half way mark,
but we still have a long way to go. We need and greatly
appreciate your support.



Please be sure to return your pledges to the office by
February 15. If you have not received a pledge form,
please call Regina at 239-226-0900.

CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NOTES

by Kathy Fanny, Director

February 5 - One isn't necessarily born with courage,
but one is born with potential. Without courage, we cannot
practice any other virtue with consistency.

February 12 - Youth explore fears and ways to approach
their fears with courage.

February 19 - Continued.

February 26 - In this workshop, youth explore abun-
dance and scarcity. This includes time to reflect on how
we view abundance and scarcity and how individuals can
change these perceptions and realities. Participants discuss
the unequal access to resources in the world, particularly
how it is affected by an individual's identity, and privilege.

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Carol Heilsberg, Co-Chair



Without doubt, the impact of Hurricane Ian has raised the environmental awareness of people living in southwest Florida. This was clearly evident in the powerful program presented at the inaugural SWFL Climate & Community Summit on January 17th in

Naples. The theme of the event was: "Act now to protect our paradise." Over 250 people attended the conference, including business and community leaders, government officials, members and supporters of numerous environmental organizations, and students and faculty from FGCU.

The one-day conference opened with a powerful eleven-minute documentary, *The Urgency of Now*, which you can watch online at the SWFL Climate & Community Initiative website: <https://www.swflclimate.org>. Your Climate Action Team urges you to visit the website to learn more about this groundbreaking event and to add your name to their mailing list to stay informed about this exciting new community initiative.

This summit was not an end in itself, but the beginning of a movement to bring our community together to understand the climate challenges and opportunities in our region. The program included presentations by FGCU professors, government officials, environmental leaders and building experts. A key element involved attendees participating in tabletop discussions around strategies for advancing resilience. You'll find the key recommendations from these discussions at the website above.

Solar United Neighbors also announced the launch of a Southwest Florida Solar Co-op. All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is one of the organizations partnering in this effort. You'll be hearing more about this as the campaign to inform and motivate people about the benefits of solar gets underway.

January 23rd saw the launch of the UU-sponsored educational program "Being a Good Neighbor", which is focused on building both understanding and a strong supportive relationship with our local indigenous tribes. Four southwest Florida UU congregations are participating in this five-session educational program. The curriculum has been developed in collaboration with Rev. Houston Cypress of the Miccosukee tribe, who will also be participating in the program sessions.

Look for an announcement of the resumption of CAT's monthly film screening and discussion event soon. This series had just gotten underway when the pandemic returned in force, and we had to postpone it. We look forward to an opportunity to gather together again to share some of the excellent and thought-provoking climate documentaries now available to us.

Our next CAT meeting will be on Tuesday, February 7th at 1:30 p.m. on ZOOM.

We hope you will be able to join us as we look for ways to "act now to protect our paradise."

"For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver." —Martin Luther King Jr.

FROM THE GARDEN

by Judy Alberda, B&G Co-Chair

Did you know that All Faiths is a **Green Sanctuary Congregation**? After meeting a variety of standards a few years ago, we achieved this designation. For the garden this means that we are to plant only native plants and use natural fertilizer and weed killer. Non-native plants that were here before we became a Green Sanctuary are not required to be removed.

Benefits of gardening are it builds strength, promotes sleep, lowers anxiety levels and builds self-esteem. It inspires a feeling of connection to the earth, enjoying the breeze, sun, birds and butterflies, growing and thriving.

I have been caring for the garden areas for five years, at first once a week, now twice a week, for an hour and a half each time. I've had various garden partners over the years. Right now there is a need for more people to help. After I show you what to do, you can come any time that fits your schedule. Now is the dry season so watering is crucial. It's fun! I'd love to have you join me.

Contact: Judy Alberda judyalberda@yahoo.com or 239-800-5335.



THE RAINBOW CONNECTION NEWS

CHANGE OF MEETING DATE

by Greg Monk, Chair

The Rainbow Connection, our LGBTQIA+ support and action group, is changing its monthly meeting time from Monday nights to the **2nd Sunday of each month, at 12 p.m.** at All Faiths - right after our service. It's a more convenient time for many in our group, as evening weekday travel becomes more challenging.

The Rainbow Connection is a relatively new program offered through All Faiths, offering support, connections and opportunities to get involved in the community for anyone under the rainbow of attraction and identification diversity, and their allies. We know the political and social climate for the LGBTQIA+ community in SW Florida is not often a positive one, and we welcome those who would like to make a difference – though visibility, support, and letting our voices be heard.

Some upcoming events – February 12, we will have a presenter on the challenges and stories of our LGBTQIA+ youth in the community; March 4 and 5 is the upcoming Cape Coral Pride, where our members can have a presence in the parade or at a booth; and we regularly discuss other opportunities and local events, such as the 40+ luncheon hosted by Visuality, and school board and other local meetings that address those issues affecting our LGBTQ neighbors. If you have an interest or would like our support or just to connect, please attend **our next meeting, February 12 at 12 p.m.**, or contact me for more information! Greg M. (239) 357-7358 or gmonk1967@gmail.com.

WITH OUR APPRECIATION

♥ A big thank you to **The Racial Equity Team** for showing the movie *Time* at our January 25 *Dinner and a Movie* event. And a great big thank you to **Marge & Bob DiGalbo** for serving a wonderful home-cooked Italian dinner with all the fixin's! You raised over \$500 for our congregation!

♥ Our very organized and lovely Sunday morning hostess, **Linda Bigelow**, will be resigning from kitchen duty in February. We are so grateful to Linda, and all of our volunteers, who help keep All Faiths running smoothly. We will miss you, Linda -- but see you around!

♥ FOR THE HOMELESS NEWS

by Barb McFarlane

Seven members “Raised the Walls” on a Habitat House on January 7. We arrived to a slab of cement and left five to six hours later with the frame of the house in place. We were joined by the woman whose home this will be and her extended family and friends. It was a fun day shared with fellow members and new friends.

On January 28 several All Faiths members volunteered or observed the annual Homeless Service Day and Veteran Standdown. We invite all to either volunteer or come to observe what this day of service is about next year.

On Sunday February 5, we will collect new or used clean sleeping bags for donation to the county’s outreach team. We hope you were able to attend our January 29 service when Matt Wallace from the County Veteran and Human Services spoke.

We are grateful for bikes donated by neighbors. Judy Alberda and Dan Deshon continue to bring them to the All Souls church in North Fort Myers for repair and distribution to people at risk or homeless.



(Above from left) Kathleen Hoban, Barb McFarlane, Michelle Gemma, Chris Stotler, Marsha Bates, Dan DeShon and Regina Kilmartin. (Below) Final wall goes up!



TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

Balance Sheet: Cash Assets – December 2022

First Horizon Checking	\$ 12,921
First Horizon Op. Reserve	19,743
Live Oak Op. Res. CD	21,107
Raymond James Legacy	22,421
Pay Pal	141
First Horizon Capital Checking	42,775
First Horizon Capital Reserve	27,376
Total	\$146,483
Prior Month	<u>118,960</u>
Net Gain	\$ 27,523

December 2022 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 14,421
Operating Expense	<u>11,168</u>
Net Gain	\$ 3,253

No unusual expenses were incurred. Budget control was good with 78.9% of our budget over the first 9 months being expensed (taking into account the monthly transfers to Capital Reserves). There were no minister related expenses from September through December.

Our 2022/2023 Pledge Goal through December was \$157,480; and \$123,410 was received. 78.4% of the year-to-date pledge goal has been achieved. Our annual insurance premiums will be paid in February which are expected to total about \$10,000. Your continued generosity to meet our obligations this fiscal year are appreciated.

\$6,000 remains "borrowed" from the Operating Reserve Account.

Since Hurricane Ian, with available funds from the UUA and our insurance carrier, the roof has been replaced and gutters will be soon. Interior renovations will be done when contractors are available and acceptable quotes received. Funds for this work are on deposit in the Capital Fund.

A new street sign has been ordered and will cost All Faiths \$1,031.00. Funding for this is available in Capital Reserves.

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!

The monthly transfer/deposit of \$1,150.00 to the Capital Reserve account was made. The replacement AED/defibrillator was ordered/purchased at a cost of \$1,330; it is currently on "back order".

In December, \$5,838.00 was collected for Employee Bonuses.



Ice Cream Social

After Service

Sunday, February 26, 2023

Sponsored by Nicole Racine & Frank Geltner

DO YOU SING IN THE SHOWER?

The All Voices Choir rehearsals 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, February 4 - 7:00pm

Verlon Thompson
Bill Metts Opens

Sunday, February 19 - 7:00pm

Mare Wakefield & Nomad
Bob Williams Opens

Saturday, February 25 - 7:00pm

Abbie Gardner & Marc Douglas Berardo
Bill Saltzman Opens

The Listening Room at All Faiths

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

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

SHOWING UP FOR MLK EVENT

by Lewis Robinson, Co-Chair, Racial Equity Team



I would like to thank those who participated and worked at the MLK event on January 16, 2023.

In the beginning, there was some concern that we would not have enough people to participate, but things went well, thanks to you, who were so durable.

It would help very much if you could drop me an email (lewrob@gmail.com) on your opinion regarding the event, particularly regarding the participation with the others in attendance and the events that culminated at Centennial Park. This would be important in planning in the future events.

We live in very troubling times, as well as a very troubled environment. The Waters are very corrosive, as well as polluted. It will certainly help to know if we need to lean on each other for strength.

Our congregation is out of space, this is where we build our bridge, as well as a vessel, which will carry us through the times and over troubled waters.

Your attendance at the Racial Equity Team meetings, as well as other justice events will offer time for us to get together and have discussions, which I am sure will be reassuring. Let me hear from you.

There is a problem at this time, the state, education department, at the advice of the governor, has rejected Advanced Placement for African-American studies class. Below I share the article I wrote for the *News-Press* mail bag, which was published on January 25.

State promotes division, racism

Regarding the state's rejection of Advanced Placement African-American Studies classes: The advanced placement classes and the SAT exam have been offered at many school programs already. And it will be rolled out at hundreds more high schools [during] the next school year. The program has already gone through a multi-year pilot phase and collected feedback from teachers and students, scholars and policymakers.

The curriculum has undergone extensive development and covers, "literature, the arts and humanities, political, science, geography, and science — to explore the vital con-

tributions and expressions of African-Americans." I believe that it is vital for African-American youth to learn their history and see how they have contributed to this America we live in. It is vital to all students to learn the correct history, and therefore dispel prejudice and advance tolerance.

Unfortunately, our governor and state government intend to promote division and separation, continue to present minority groups as inferior and teach a false history. They can thus continue to promote white supremacy, racism, sexism, and any other they wish. There is little interest in strengthening minority groups, promoting a better understanding and developing a real free and stronger Florida.

Lewis Robinson, M.D., Fort Myers



(Above) All Faiths' entourage takes to the streets at MLK march on January 16.



(Above from left) Kathleen Weber, Lewis Robinson and Becky Ross at the All Faiths' table in Centennial Park.

LEE INTERFAITH FOR EMPOWERMENT UPDATES

by Marsha Bates, Team Leader

After Hurricane Ian, Lee Interfaith For Empowerment (LIFE) took a brief hiatus to allow congregations to focus on caring for their congregants impacted by the storm. Now LIFE is renewing its focus on justice issues.

On Monday, February 13, All Faiths' LIFE network members and other interested congregants are invited to attend LIFE's first large gathering of 2023. The event, called Love In Action, will start at 6:30 pm at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2439 McGregor Blvd (about 5 blocks north of All Faiths). Attendees will meet in small groups with LIFE members from other congregations to share Ian-related information and to express on-going concerns about continued impacts to our congregations and those in the community who don't have the resources to rebound from the devastating storm.

Using the concerns expressed during those small group discussions, the group will have an opportunity to consider potential justice actions that LIFE could focus on during the upcoming year.

LIFE's Affordable Housing Action Team (AHAT) will update the group on their on-going efforts related to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund passed by the City in 2022. Some All Faiths congregants supported AHAT when they attempted to meet with Ft Myers City Manager, Marty Lawling, in mid-January. Despite having scheduled the meeting well in advance, Mr. Lawling was unable to meet that day; AHAT will re-schedule the meeting (time and date TBD). LIFE hopes to learn (1) what policies and procedures have been established to disburse the Affordable Housing Trust Fund monies in a manner that will benefit Ft. Myers' low wage earners; (2) whether funds have been disbursed already and if so, what were the funds earmarked for; (3) what on-going funding mechanisms will be created to ensure the Trust Fund is sustainable into the future; and (4) how quickly will affordable housing units be built. Stay tuned for ways you can help influence Fort Myers officials to focus on this important issue.

Thank you for your support of LIFE's social justice activities. If you want to learn more, you can talk to All Faiths Team Leaders:

Marsha Bates (740-278-2357)

Barb McFarlane (651-808-8271)

Michelle Gemma (781-913-5122)


THE MEANING OF IMBOLC

by Rachel Spiller, Board Vice Chair

Imbolc is coming up at the beginning of February. I've talked before about how I think living with the seasons and a sprinkle of old wisdom is good for people of all faiths, not just pagans.

This is the time that is the origin of "spring cleaning." In the old times, folks would clean out their larders and still rooms, using up the rest of what is stored and throwing out anything that is spoiled or will soon spoil. It was a necessary action; this yearly total purge lessens the chance of food poison in a household.

We celebrate it by doing a top-to-bottom clean of our home as well. The girls hate this holiday more than any other day. It feels good later in the year to sort of have an idea of where everything is and knowing "well, I know that was cleaned/sorted through at Imbolc."

A graphic for the Imbolc 2023 Worship List. It features a dark background with warm, glowing bokeh lights. In the center, the word "Imbolc" is written in a large, elegant, white script font. Above it, in a smaller white sans-serif font, is "CUUPs National presents...". Below "Imbolc", also in white sans-serif font, is "2023 Worship List". To the right of the text, there is a photograph of several lit candles, with one large candle in the foreground and several smaller ones behind it. The bottom half of the graphic has a solid dark brown background with white text.

CUUPs National presents...

Imbolc

2023 Worship List

Imbolc marks the point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. It is a time for bringing new ideas and projects into the burgeoning light. Some pagans celebrate by making candles, cleansing the home, fire scrying, and more.

Join any CUUPs chapter on the worship list to visit and learn about Imbolc and different ways to observe it along with lunar worship opportunities!

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/CUUPsWorshipList> for more information.

"Let us nurture the spirit of renewal and embrace the light of the lengthening days"



Bible Bad Girls - Heresy or Herstory? *Save the Date!*

Saturday, March 11, 2023 at 2 pm

Come and listen to the infamous women of the Bible defend their tarnished reputations with compelling reasons for their choices. Characters such as *Eve*, *Bathsheba*, and *Salome* will present a new perspective on gray areas of good and evil! Ten stories will entertain and make you rethink History! Stay tuned for details. Proceeds will benefit All Faiths. **Tickets \$20/pp.** Stay tuned for more details.

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: office@allfaithsuum.org – Website: 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 **March** Issue of *Connections* is **February 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