



# 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*

New Members Recognition  
December 5, 2021  
at 10:30 Service

Mano a Mano Annual Craft Sale  
December 5, 2021  
Before & After Service

Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service  
December 24 at 6:30 p.m.

*Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy Kwanzaa!*

The Board of Directors met on November 17, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Your Board of Directors had a busy meeting. We were pleased to meet in-person at All Faiths. Two members joined the meeting by conference call.

Prior to calling the meeting to order the Board had the opportunity to meet Carlos Garcia, the candidate for Music Director. The first item of new business was approval of an employment agreement with Carlos, which the board unanimously approved. He brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the position.

The Board voted to accept the resignation of Chantel Rhodes as the Child and Youth Program (CYP) Director. We are sorry to see Chantel leave and wish her the best. The CYP will continue under the direction of the new CYP committee and Rev. CJ

while a search is conducted for a new CYP Director.

Your Board approved a goal budget that had been developed by the Finance Committee. This goal budget, which is for All Faiths' 2022-23 fiscal year (FY), will be used during the pledge drive. Like this current year's budget, it is very lean with the exception of including pay increases for our staff. The FY 2021-22 budget did not include any pay increases.

As noted above, we did not have room in the budget for pay increases for our staff this year, but now is the time when the Congregation can make up for that by contributing to Christmas Bonuses. On December 12th we will take a special collection for staff bonuses. If you are not at church that day or if you want to contribute early, you can send your donation to the office. Be sure to note on the memo line that it is for bo-

nuses. Let's show Rev. CJ, Regina, and Joe how much we appreciate all that they have done for us during this past year.

The Board voted to adopt a new, concise mission statement: *All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is Committed to Justice, Equity and Compassion*. This brief statement summarizes our values and gives us direction for everything we do. This statement will be presented to the full congregation for final approval at the Annual Meeting in March. The Board is also working on a Vision Statement.

The accelerated Burn-the-Mortgage challenge has been progressing wonderfully. Donations jumped in the past couple of weeks; donations may exceed \$10,000 in November. With continued generosity, we will burn the mortgage within a year; ideally, we will have that ceremony

this fiscal year.

Pledges for the first seven months of this year were 88 percent of the budget which is a bit less than last year's donations at this time. We anticipate an end-of-year increase in pledges received and more pledges collected in the winter months will enable us to achieve the annual budget.

Comments or suggestions for your Board of Directors can be emailed to All Faiths, or you can contact me (239.770.0795 or gcstotler@gmail.com) or other Board members.

*Our next board meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2021, at All Faiths, starting at 1:00PM.*



## Mission Statement

“All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is a welcoming, caring community, seeking diversity, practicing openness, and encouraging personal and spiritual growth. “We are working toward a just, free, peaceful and compassionate world.”

## All Faiths Collection Schedule

### Monthly Share-the-Plate

*(Please write organization and amount in the memo line of your check.)*

**January** - The Change Program – Alliance for the Arts (Racial Equity)

**March** - Angel Wings (Heart for Homeless)

### Special Collections

**December** - Special Collection for Employee Bonuses

**February** - Special Collection – Minister's Discretionary Fund

*The November Share-the-Plate raised \$900 for Operation Joy!*



by Rev. CJ McGregor



From the time the first Florida frost arrives through the holiday season I return to one song that deeply moves me. The song is *Harvest Home* by Maddy Prior from her album "Year." A dear friend introduced me to Maddy Prior years ago. I've been mesmerized since. I encourage you to listen to the song [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQ\\_IshjXfIM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQ_IshjXfIM). Though this is a song about the transition from autumn to winter and the relief of bringing in the harvest, it reminds me what this season can mean for each of us. Oh, yes, the lyrics:

*When the marigold no longer blooms, when the summer sun is turned to gloom. See the forecast winter snow; see the evergreen that lonely grows. Move closer to the fireplace, neglect the garden, see the ground harden, at a ghostly pace. The golden summer sun is silver now. The fruit has fallen from the bough. The season moves to chestnut time. Toffee apples, treacle and mulled wine. Quilts and furs and woolens gay. You wrap around you. But the cold confounds you. On an autumn day. Stout and strong the walls of home and hearth. Curtains drawn against the draft. The rake has reaped, the blade has mown. Nights draw in to call the harvest home. The quiet of a heart at rest. In peace abounded. By love surrounded. Here the home is blessed. Come, ye thankful people, come. Raise the song of harvest home. All be safely gathered in. 'Ere the winter storms*

*begin. God, our maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied. Come, ye thankful people, come. Raise the song of harvest home. Raise the song of harvest home.*

Living in a pandemic has taught us many things. Beyond the shopping, the overscheduling of parties, to-do lists, the demands that we place on this season and ourselves, there is peace, quiet, rest, and simplicity. These are what matter most. Raising the song of harvest home means rejoicing in the fact that we have safely gathered, the harvest is in, our work is done. Let us now find peace and joy with each other and relax, and steep in the

wonder of this magical season. We don't need to drive to the mall, be glued to Amazon, succumb to the pressure to buy, to accomplish, and be what somebody else wants us to be. The blessings are before us. We need not go anywhere or do anything other than move closer to the fire, snuggle in, and quietly observe the love, peace, and rest that surround us.

Come, ye thankful people, come. Observe and discover the harmony and stillness that awaits us. May each of us experience the comforts and joy that lie before us.

*Peace & Blessings,  
Rev. CJ*

## LET'S APPRECIATE OUR EMPLOYEES

We have recently passed through two very challenging years. We have been blessed, however, to have dedicated employees who kept our All Faiths family together through hard times. I cannot imagine what those many past months would have been like without the connections with each other that have been sustained through their efforts.

So, at this holiday season of gratitude and giving, let's all express our deepest appreciation to our employees by making generous donations in December for Employee Bonuses. You can send your check made out to All Faiths with Bonuses written in lower left corner. You can also make a contribution at our Second Collection for Bonuses at our Sunday Service on December 12th.

Let's join together to make the holidays bright for our most precious people!!

— Joyce Ramay

## JOYS & SORROWS

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

**Donalie Benyak** had treatment for macular degeneration in her eyes. We hope that she continues to get beneficial results for her vision.

**Diane Cartwright** had treatment on her foot. We hope that she has a good recovery.

**Cindy Crean** had aortic surgery. We are happy to know that she is recovering well.

**Ed Fulker** has moved to a new residence at the Pavilion and we understand that he is adapting well there.

**Joseph Brauer's** husband Kody Jones has been suffering with pneumonia and a partially collapsed scarred lung. We hope that he recovers soon.

**Rachel Spiller** and her family lost their beloved pet chicken, Honey. We extend our sympathy to them.

**Chris Stotler's** mother, Gwen, passed away on November 28 at 102 years of age. Our condolences to Chris, Marsha and their family.

**Happy and Healthy Holidays to All,**  
*Joyce Ramay - Care and Support Coordinator*

# Happening at All Faiths

## Happy December Birthday to you!



- Dec. 6 Sharon Gray  
Dec. 9 Scott Kilhefner  
Dec. 12 Elaine Dorais  
Dec. 14 Jeff Moran  
Dec. 14 Carol Siferd  
Dec. 15 Emily Morse Palmer  
Dec. 16 Maggie Mullins  
Dec. 18 Nancy McGlasson  
Dec. 21 Mary Ellen Fritz  
Dec. 23 Chris Stotler  
Dec. 30 Linda Bigelow  
Dec. 31 Nova Spiller

## And Coming Up...

- Jan 1 Shea Fierro  
Jan 5 Colleen North



## Solos Group Events

**Saturday, December 11, 1:00 p.m.**  
Solos Annual Holiday Extravaganza!  
**Jungle Bird Authentic Tiki**  
1520 Lafayette St., Cape Coral 33904

*Don't lose track of your Solos friends.  
Check your email for details.*

Contact: Annelly Hudanick,  
[annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com)

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

## TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR

Online via Zoom - Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m

<https://zoom.us/j/7787257501>

Facilitated by Rev. CJ McGregor



## LONG STRANGE TRIP

- December 1** - Part 3 - American Unitarianism  
**December 8** - Part 4 - Universalism  
**December 15** - Part 5 - Evolution  
**December 22** - Part 6 - Courtship between Unitarianism  
and Universalism

## LECTIO DIVINA

Online via Zoom - Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/7787257501>

Facilitated by Rev. CJ McGregor

This spiritual practice will draw us into deep reflection about some of the source texts relating to the Unitarian Universalist theology of love, compassion, and justice. Facilitated by Rev. CJ.

## Sneak Peek

### Spring 2022 Adult Education *WELLSPRING* (LIVE)

Participants are supported by a curriculum designed to strengthen your understanding of Unitarian Universalism. Through class assignments and interactions, you will be enabled to deepen your own understanding of UU values, gain a deeper commitment to your own values, and engage with a deeper connection with fellow participants.

The goals of *Wellspring* are to ground participants in Unitarian Universalism, to develop the practice of deep listening and commitment to spiritual practice and spiritual direction, and to ask the “big questions” that are central to our Unitarian and Universalist faith, including human nature, death, joy, and forgiveness.

Led by Rev. CJ McGregor

We will meet Wednesdays at 10 am - 12 p.m. at All Faiths on March 9, 23, 30; April 13, 20, 27

# DECEMBER 2021 CALENDAR

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

		1 10am-Zoom 10 O'Clock Scholar-Long Strange Trip	2	3	4
5 9:30am News Talk w. Richard Keelan  10:30am Service  1:00 pm Child & Youth Field Trip	6	7 1:30pm-Zoom Climate Action Team Mtg.  7pm Zoom <i>Lectio Divina</i>	8 10am-Zoom 10 O'Clock Scholar-Long Strange Trip	9 10 am Zoom Finance Mtg.	10  11 1pm Solos Holiday Extravaganza! (Pg. 4)
12 9:30am News Talk w. Richard Keelan  10:30am Service & Child & Youth Program in the Garden  Employee Bonus Collection	13 10am Zoom Sun. Service Mtg.  7pm - Zoom Odyssey with	14 10am - Zoom Racial Equity Meeting  7pm Zoom <i>Lectio Divina</i>	15 10am-Zoom 10 O'Clock Scholar-Long Strange Trip  1pm Board Meeting	16	17
19 9:30am News Talk w. Richard Keelan  10:30am Service & Children & Youth join Intergenerational Service	20 12pm - Zoom Book Club	21  7pm Zoom <i>Lectio Divina</i>	22 10am-Zoom 10 O'Clock Scholar-Long Strange Trip	23	24 6:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
26 9:30am News Talk w. Richard Keelan  10:30am Service No Child & Youth Program Today	27  Kwanzaa Begins 	28  7pm Zoom <i>Lectio Divina</i>	29	30	31  New Year's Eve  Office Closed

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

## DECEMBER 2021 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.

### **Dec. 5 – Celebrating Rosa Parks**

by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Carlos Garcia &  
Darlene Mitchell

Worship Associate – Carol Elrod

### **Dec. 12 – Mitten Tree**

by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Carlos Garcia

Worship Associate – Donalie Benyak

### **Dec. 19 – Celebrating Winter Solstice**

by Rev. CJ McGregor with CUUPS  
Music by Carlos Garcia & Kat Epple

### **Dec. 24 – 6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve**

Candlelight Service

Led by Rev. CJ McGregor

Music by Carlos Garcia & William Glover

### **Dec. 26 – After the Lights**

by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Carlos Garcia

Worship Associate – Greg Monk

## SUNDAY PROGRAMS

**News Talk with Richard Keelan**  
9:30 a.m. - at All Faiths in the Sanctuary

**Child & Youth Program**  
10:30 a.m. on Zoom  
No CYP on December 19  
(Confirm Dates on Calendar)

## ALL FAITHS WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC



*Carlos Garcia* joined All Faiths in December 2021. He was born and raised in Havana, Cuba and his family immigrated to Miami, Florida, when he was a child. Carlos moved to Fort Myers, Florida, from New York City in 2021. He holds a Master's degree in Computer Science, a Bachelor's degree in Music Education, and is a certified Music Educator. Carlos has held many roles throughout his career such as a Music Minister and Director for congregations, an elementary Music Teacher, a Computer Science and Math Teacher, and has taught music and computer science for the New York State Department of Education.

## CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NOTES FOR DECEMBER 2021

- December 5 - Farm and Chalice making field trip
- December 12 - Covenant making live in the garden with Rachel Spiller
- December 19 - Intergenerational Winter Solstice service
- December 26 - No CYP

## CHILD & YOUTH FIELD TRIP

*Sunday, December 5, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.*

Children & Youth are invited to go on a field trip to Shakers Acres art farm located in No. Fort Myers, FL.

In addition to exploring the farm, students will have the opportunity to make their own Chalice. Having a chalice at home can remind students of their own faith and their commitment to engage the world with compassion.

Students who participate in the Child and Youth Program at All Faiths are encouraged to invite friends to this event.

Please register with Rachel Spiller at:  
([rlspiller@gmail.com](mailto:rlspiller@gmail.com))

If you would like assistance with transportation on that day, please let Rachel know.

## CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Chair



Your Climate Action Team works in close collaboration with numerous other environmental organizations here in Southwest Florida. We are deeply committed to helping build a strong, effective grassroots movement of environmentally aware and concerned citizens who will help to bring about the regenerative, sustainable future we want for our children and grandchildren.

The SWFL RESET Center, located on the campus of our sister congregation, UUCFM, is one of those organizations. Ensign Cowell is a founding member of this organization and he and Joan Marshall serve on its Advisory Board. During its first year of operation the SWFL RESET Center has focused on two major environmental challenges: securing the right to clean water and fostering a shift to regenerative agriculture. On Tuesday, December 14 at 3:00 p.m., RESET will be presenting the following program on Zoom. We urge you to join in this conversation with an extraordinary climate change maker.

### **RESET Conversation with Christopher Nesbitt**

*Land Degradation Reversal, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Strategies for the Lowland Humid Tropics.*

Christopher Nesbitt has run the Maya Mountain Research Farm, an ongoing permaculture project in southern Belize, Central America, since 1988. Former degraded citrus and cattle land, the farm is focused on the intersection of agriculture and ecology. He managed the Toledo Cacao Growers Association in cooperation with UK based Green & Blacks from 1997 to 2004. Since 2004, the Farm has been working on specific ways to draw down carbon, with an emphasis on food security, degraded land repair, multistrata agroforestry systems and staple tree crops. In 2019, the farm won the Commonwealth Secretary General's Innovation for Sustainable Development Award under the Prosperity category. Christopher runs the farm with his wife, Celini Logan Nesbitt.

Register here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ-wuduigqjsiGNFmvj0IzSDxO3moxeF1n7dh](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ-wuduigqjsiGNFmvj0IzSDxO3moxeF1n7dh)

Christopher will present a slideshow and talk and really looks forward to the Q&A portion. Mark the date and register today. Christopher is a very brilliant and dedicated permaculturalist.

Our next CAT meeting will be held on Zoom at 1:30 on December 7. Our meetings are open to all who wish to participate. We hope you will be among them.

The Climate Action Team Meets on 1st Tuesday of the Month at 1:30 p.m.

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

## CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NEWS

by Rachel Spiller, Chair

Families,

With vaccinations now being available to all school-aged children, we will definitely be revisiting the policies soon and considering a move indoors if numbers deem it safe, but for right now it is excellent weather and we can take full advantage of it!

On Sunday, December 5th at noon, we will celebrate our official kick-off and return to in-person programming with a special event at Shaker's Acres in North Fort Myers! Shaker's Acres South is an incredible, USDA certified teaching farm run by Dr. Nathan and Tori Shaker, Florida certified educators. Tori teaches art-centered programming, and our children and youth are invited to make their own chalice that will be fired in the farm's kiln! We will meet the animals and learn a little bit about the goats, bunnies, chickens, pig and cattle at the farm. My own family have taken homeschool classes here for years and I cannot say enough about this wonderful place. Many of you have been there and know what a fantastic environment it is. There is no charge for the event, but if you'd like to make a donation to the church to cover the cost it will always be welcome. But you should by no means feel obligated to do so. We do, however, need a head count, so please email me at [RLSpiller@gmail.com](mailto:RLSpiller@gmail.com) or text 205-527-2386 as soon as possible to let me know the number of children and/or youth in your family that will be participating so that Ms. Tori can have enough supplies ready and so I can give you the address to Shaker's Acres.

In final news, our beloved Chantel Rhodes has resigned her position as CYP director. We are so excited for Chantel's future as she launches her campaign for a local elected position, and of course we all wish her well. If you'd like to send a card to Chantel in appreciation for the time she devoted to our children and families, I will be glad to pass them on. Our minister is currently screening applicants for the director's position, and there are already applicants. The board and staff of All Faiths feel buy-in from our children and youth is critical for the success of our program and for our impact in the community. Therefore, we want to hear input from our children, teens and families regarding what YOU want out of our programming and to "fill your bucket." We will be discussing this as well as working on a program covenant created by our children and youth.

*Rachel Spiller, Chair*

All Faiths Child & Youth Program Committee

[RLSpiller@gmail.com](mailto:RLSpiller@gmail.com)

# Welcome to our New Members

Please join us as we recognize our newest members at service on Sunday, December 5. Below are new members that have joined All Faiths since February 2020. We look forward to getting to know you!

Brian Bigelow

Vicki Conran

Cynthia Crean

Dan DeShon & Richard Scudder

Nita Flores

Michelle Gemma

Arlene Han

Ariel Hoover & Bob Moore

Jack Kennedy

Tina Noel

Pam Pfalzer

## MANO A MANO CRAFT SALE

December 5, 2021, at Service

Mano a Mano will hold its annual hand-made craft sale before and after the December 5 service. Mano a Mano is a non-profit organization founded by All Faiths members, Joan and Segundo Velasquez, to improve the lives of the very poor in rural Bolivia in South America.

Charlotte Blitt coordinates this effort every year. Among the items for sale will be beautiful shawls, sweaters, potholders, glasses cases, finger puppets, tote bags, and small purses.

To learn more about Mano a Mano, its many activities and opportunities to volunteer, visit [www.manoamano.org](http://www.manoamano.org).



## OPERATION JOY – TEN YEARS OF SPREADING LOVE

Dear Members and Friends,

Thanks to your generous donations, Operation Joy has been able to help local families in need for the past ten years.

Just that little extra can help so much! We welcome your donations through December 15th.

All donations will go to families enrolled in counseling at Golisano Children's Hospital

Wishing you a joyful season,

Annely Hudanick

## Enter, Rejoice & Bid!

*All Faiths' 3rd Annual*

*Live and Silent Auction*

**Third time is a charm?**

**COVID put the brakes on our biggest fundraiser of the year, but we're hopeful the show will go on in 2022!**

**Stay tuned for more information...**

**...but save the date!**

**▶▶ March 12, 2022 ◀◀**

# LIFE

## Lee Interfaith for Empowerment

### UPDATES AND EVENTS

by Marsha Bates, Team Leader

A dozen All Faiths congregants participated in LIFE's November Research Kickoff Zoom meeting which focused on the two initiatives LIFE will pursue this year: Affordable Housing and Mental Health. We learned about the process LIFE uses to influence government officials to act in a manner that promotes social justice for its citizens.

Fort Myers City Council continues to delay creating an Affordable Housing Trust Fund that will help households making less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). In May 2021, Fort Myers Council voted to have that ordinance written, but LIFE still has not seen that document. *Regina Kilmartin, Marsha Bates* and two other LIFE members spoke at the November 15 City Council meeting advocating for completion of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund ordinance; asking about the unaccounted for \$1.5M that had been included in Fort Myers' 2020 budget for the trust fund; and pointing out the advantages of lower-wage workers having safe, decent housing. Other All Faiths network members will speak at future City Council meetings. If you share the concern about the lack of affordable housing in Fort Myers, send letters to Mayor Anderson, city officials, and council members urging them to act to establish an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

At the Research Kickoff's Mental Health Initiative discussion, participants brainstormed approaches and identified key professionals, government agencies, and officials to contact during the research stage. LIFE's Mental Health Action Team has scheduled upcoming fact-finding meetings with entities dealing with mental health issues:

- **Clubhouse of Fort Myers**, which is a forum with Lee County residents diagnosed with mental illness. Tuesday, December 7 at 4:15 p.m. Meeting at Mount Hermon Ministries.

- **Golisano Children's Hospital** - Friday, December 17 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Location TBD.

If you want to attend, contact Chelsea Baker, LIFE's Lead Organizer ([chelsea@thedartcenter.org](mailto:chelsea@thedartcenter.org)).

There are two Caring for Creation Zoom meetings scheduled at this time:

November 30 from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. - Zoom meeting with Center for Biological Diversity staff to discuss phosphate mining impacts to seawater and drinking water qual-

ity. To participate, RSVP to Jacqueline, an organizer for FAST (a DART organization) located in Pinellas County, Florida: [jacqueline@thedartcenter.org](mailto:jacqueline@thedartcenter.org)

Monday, December 6, convene at 2:30 to prepare for a 3:30 p.m. call with the Broward County Resiliency Officer who oversees countywide climate resiliency initiatives and water resource policies. Register in advance at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZYsfuyqpz8>

Thank you to All Faiths congregants who act on their social justice concerns!

*LIFE for Justice - Justice for Life!*

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## FOR THE HOMELESS NEWS

by Barb McFarlane

November saw many reasons for the Heart for the Homeless team to be grateful. Twelve bikes were received from neighbors of All Faiths or our members. They were given to All Souls Homeless outreach program in No. Fort Myers and to the Lee Bicycle Ministry.

The team met with some of our youth on November 7th. This was their first opportunity to meet in person, outside in the Memorial Garden. It was fun to hear young perspectives on the issue of homelessness.

And, thanks to the congregation's generosity, the November 21st Sock Drive resulted in two big tubs of stockings. The Salvation Army's Day Resource program, Triage shelter, and program for women and children gratefully accepted them.

We also received financial donations from two members of the congregation!

### Save the dates for upcoming events:

1. December 21, 2021 from 6:00—7:00 p.m., on the courthouse steps. The Lee County Homeless Coalition's Candlelight Vigil honoring lives lost while experiencing homelessness.

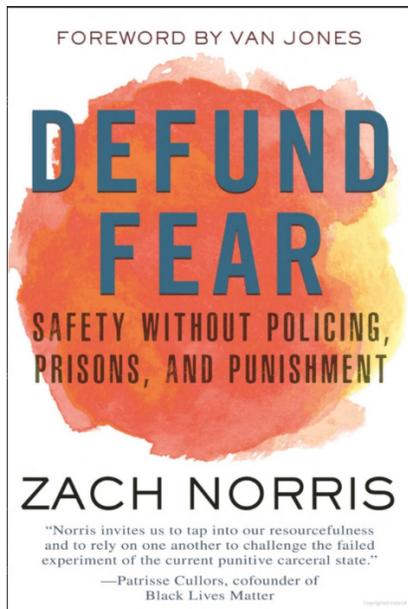
2. January 29, 2022, 9:00 a.m., Homeless Service Day and Veteran Standdown. At City Gate Ministries. Volunteers needed.

The team will not meet in December. We wish everyone joy, peace, and good health during this holiday season and in the new year.

*"It is in your hands to create a better world for all who live in it"*

– Nelson Mandela

"Defund Fear"



The 2021–2022 UU Common Read is *Defund Fear: Safety Without Policing, Prisons, and Punishment* by Zach Norris, published by Beacon Press. The Common Read builds community in our congregations and our movement by giving diverse people a shared platform for reflection and a shared focus for action. Further, a Common Read can take us on a powerful faith journey as we explore—individually and together—what it

means to be human and accountable in a pain-filled world.

In *Defund Fear*, Community leader and lawyer Zach Norris shifts the conversation about public safety away from fear and punishment and toward growth and support systems for our families and communities. Norris explores what has gone wrong, why, and who has been most impacted by repressive and racist policing systems. He offers a blueprint for public safety that holds people accountable while still holding them in community. As Unitarian Universalists, the matters raised in *Defund Fear* invite us to respond to public safety in the U.S. today through a lens of faith. We urge you to grapple theologically with big, tough questions about who we are and the meaning and purposes of our lives. For your care, for your growth, and for the care and growth of others in your community with whom you will discuss *Defund Fear*, it is strongly recommended that you enter this book with this series of questions by your side.

We expect by the end of this calendar year we'll be ready to announce a menu of resources so that congregations can start scheduling their Common Reads. You may find, based on the identities and social location that you hold, that a community other than your UU congregation may better support your faithful exploration of *Defund Fear* and what it asks of you. With online gathering now a norm, readers need not live near one another to form a group. Anticipate a range of resources geared toward identity-based groups and geographically dispersed cohorts as well as a traditional discussion guide for a Common Read session that any UU faith community can use.

For more information visit: [www.uua.org/read](http://www.uua.org/read).

Lee County Homeless Coalition



You are invited to the Lee County Homeless Coalition's Twenty-Fifth Annual Candlelight Vigil remembering lives lost while experiencing homelessness.

Tuesday, December 21, 2021

6:00-7:00 PM

Lee County Courthouse Steps

2120 Main Street, Ft. Myers, Florida.

This event honors those who have died this past year while living on the streets or shelters of Lee County. Remember those who have lost their lives while experiencing homelessness in Lee County.

For more information please contact Therese Everly at [therese@leehomeless.org](mailto:therese@leehomeless.org).



As 2020 (the last year) and 2021 come to an end, All Faiths would like to thank all of you who make our mission possible. The Board (also volunteers) and staff would like to thank the many volunteers who give of their time in so many ways, from serving on committees and teams, to taking the trash to the street, we could not function without you. Thanks to each and every one of you! You are greatly appreciated.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

### Balance Sheet: Cash Assets – October 2021

Iberiabank Checking	\$ 7,323
Iberiabank Op. Reserve	25,039
Live Oak Op. Res. CD	20,811
Raymond James Legacy	36,977
Pay Pal	35
Iberiabank Capital Fund	<u>6,878</u>
Total	\$ 97,062
Prior Month	<u>104,790</u>
<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>\$ 394</b>

### October 2021 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 17,315
Operating Expense	<u>16,163</u>
<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>\$ 1,151</b>

#### Comments:

- Revenue/Operating Income increased slightly in October compared to September. This is a positive sign as snow birds return and our services are being enjoyed by greater attendance in person!

- The outstanding mortgage principal at the end of October was \$47,489.52. This reflects significant progress because on April 1, 2021 the mortgage principal balance was \$86,896.22 (a decrease of \$39,406.70 in just 7 months)! In addition, over \$10,000.00 has been received in early November. The response to the Burn the Mortgage campaign has been incredible. It is with increasing hope that we can achieve our goal of being debt free by the end of our fiscal year on March 31, 2022. Thank you to all that have been so generous.

- The Capital Reserve Study, approved by the Board earlier this year, has been completed. The Finance Committee and the Board are now hoping to incorporate the funding of the reserves into the budget for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. The reserves, once implemented, will be used for future anticipated capital expenses, such as replacement of air conditioning units, roofs, carpeting, et cetera.

- In October, \$255.00 was collected for Meals of Hope (Hunger).

## DECEMBER'S ODYSSEY ENSIGN COWELL

Monday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m.



Ensign Cowell has been a member of All Faiths since 2015, and is actively involved in the Climate Action Team. Ensign and his wife Lana are snowbirds from Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Please join us on December 13 at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom. Hosted by Rev. CJ with Q&A to follow. Link sent prior to program.

## ACMA HAPPENINGS

The Americana Community Music Association's Facebook page is updated every Saturday with YouTube or music links from our scheduled artist for that date. Also check out new concerts outdoors at the Alliance for the Arts.

**Saturday, December 4, 2021 - 7 P.M.**

**Louise Mosrie Coombe  
with Kim Mayfield Opening**



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

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

*The safety of our audience, musicians and hosts is our top priority. CDC COVID protocols observed. Masks required in the building, and we prefer that attendees be vaccinated. Thank you for your cooperation so we can once again gather to enjoy live music in a listening atmosphere!*

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

# BURN-THE-MORTGAGE COUNTDOWN

AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2021

**BALANCE: \$23,659**

GOAL PAYOFF DATE - 03:31:2022  
(121 DAYS TO GO!)



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR EXTREME GENEROSITY!**



## All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: [office@allfaithsuu.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuu.org) – Website: [www.allfaithsuu.org](http://www.allfaithsuu.org)

**Executive Board:** Chris Stotler, Chair; Rachel Spiller, Vice Chair; John Conrad, Treasurer; Ed Elrod, Secretary; Diane Cartwright, Past Chair.

**Directors:** Marge DiGalbo, Peter Erickson, Eileen Moran, Ernie Reid, Linda Runkle.

**Staff:** Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Carlos Garcia, Music Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton.

**Minister Emeritus:** The Rev. Dr. Wayne Robinson



### Communications

*Newsletter*

Regina Kilmartin

*Proofreaders*

Carol Elrod

Joyce Ramay

*Social Media & Website*

Regina Kilmartin,

Sharon Gray, Becky Ross

**Adult Education Forums**

**Sunday Service Team**

Joyce Ramay

Richard Keelan

### 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

**Building and Grounds**

Bob DiGalbo

Judy Alberda

**Social Action & Outreach**

*Climate Action Team*

Joan Marshall

*Community Events*

Richard Keelan

*Heart for the Homeless*

Barb McFarlane

*Racial Equity Team*

t/b/d

*L.I.F.E.*

Marsha Bates, Lana Cowell,

Barb McFarlane

*Mano a Mano*

Charlotte Blitt

*Operation Joy & Solos Group*

Annely Hudanick

*Animal Ministry*

Sharon Gray

**Child & Youth Program**

**Committee**

Rachel Spiller

**Minister: Rev. CJ McGregor - Cell: 508-736-3361**



Deadline for the **January** Issue of *Connections* is **December 17**

(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