

The Fellowship Focus

Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart June 2024



Chuck, a UUFE member, and Pedro, a fellow pilgrim, on their final day on El Camino de Santiago. Hear about Chuck's journey in the June 2 Service.

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Send information and suggestions for future issues to katsirx@gmail.com

Sundays at UUFE

1st Sunday, June 2, 10 AM: "My Camino", Chuck Bower

Chuck Bower is the chair of the Worship Committee and has completed a Camino pilgrimage this spring on the Portuguese route, starting in Porto, Portugal and ending in Santiago, Spain. He will talk about the intense emotions felt by all during their pilgrimage.

2nd Sunday, June 9, 10 AM: "Understanding the Satanic Temple", Geo Warner

Geo Warner, a visitor to our Fellowship, will explain myths and help us understand the non-theistic Satanic Temple. Plus, we will have a special recognition ritual for our RE Program and teachers, led by Renee Ruocco.

3rd Sunday, June 16, 10 AM: Father's Day and Flower Communion, Laura Snow and Carolee Searles

For our special day, Laura Snow, a member of our Worship Committee (and soon to be Board President) will speak about Norbert Capek, the originator of our Flower Communion ritual. Also, Carolee Searles, another member of our Fellowship, will introduce a poem of significance of her father's. We will share Joys and Sorrows, and afterwards will be our monthly potluck in the Gathering Place. Please bring a dish, but don't worry, if you forget, there will be plenty! Join us for this special Sunday!

4th Sunday, June 23, 10 AM: UUA GA virtual worship, "Weaving Our Lives", Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, replayed in the Sanctuary

Terry Mark will host the General Assembly Sunday worship service, the largest gathering of UU's in worship. We are all tangled up together in a great web of life that is woven with beauty and hardship, love and loss, thriving and struggle. How do we tend well to the weaving so that all of us are held in care? Rev. Molly Housh Gordon will be joined by Violet Vonder Haar, Jamila Bachelder, Rev. Leon Dunkely, Rev. Eric Kaminetsky, Rev. Joan Javier-Duvall, Rev. Jordinn Nelson Long, Rev. Aaron Wisman, Rev. Sadie Lansdale, and Rev. Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan.

5th Sunday, June 30, 10 AM: Center for Community Justice, Irwin Larrier

Irwin Larrier is the Executive Director for the Center for Community Justice. They focus on Restorative Justice, shifting the focus from broken laws and incarceration to repairing broken lives and healing damaged relationships. We look forward to his words on the life-changing work that they do for Elkhart County.

Afterward 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sunday Services, join us for Social Hour in the Gathering Place. Coffee and tea are available, along with assorted snack foods generously provided by a volunteer. A Meditation program follows at 11:45 on these weeks, see description on page 4.

Looking ahead...

1st Sunday, July 7, 10 AM: "Forgiveness", Susie Holszuh

Susie Holszuh is a member of our Fellowship and previously has spoke. She is going to speak on Forgiveness and taking responsibility for personal, mental, emotional, and physical care around unforgiveness and forgiving. We look forward to this important topic that everyone can leverage.



Worship and Arts

We won't describe or highlight every service in the coming weeks. However, there are a few special items to note. For one, we will have a special RE Recognition for our students and teachers on June 9. Let's applaud the first year of our rebuilt RE Committee! Also on this Sunday, Geo Warner will speak about the Satanic Temple, of which he is a member. I've learned much from him and their website, and I'm pleasantly surprised. Their mission has substantial alignment with UU-ism and UU social justice efforts. We have much to learn on this Sunday!

We also will feature Flower Communion as one part of our Father's Day Sunday service, so be thinking of what flower(s) you will bring to share on that Sunday. And for Sunday, June 23, we have special news!!! Terry Mark will host a virtual viewing of the General Assembly worship service at 10 am, in our Sanctuary. This is a great opportunity to attend a UUA GA service, the large annual gathering of UU's across the country.

As we celebrate the lives of Rich Hackel and Kenley Inglefield soon, (as of this writing), we also wish to thank all of the volunteers who have signed up to help with their memorial services. These include: Annette Long, Carolee Searles, Dwight Fish, Genee Crump, Joan Clayborn, Ken Clayborn, Linda Becker, Mary Adams, Oxana Werbiansky, Pam Wycliff, Phyllis Hostetler, Shari Mellin, TJ Shaum, and William Becker, plus all those who chip in without signing up.

We will see you on Sunday!

Join the largest annual worship service for Unitarian Universalists

The Sunday morning worship service of General Assembly is considered to be the largest gathering of Unitarian Universalists every year, and you have the chance to join in from UUFE. It is moving, emotional and inspiring service that celebrates what it means to be UU.

We will be hosting a livestream of the worship service at 10am Sunday, June 23, in the sanctuary.

This year's worship leader is the Rev. Molly Housh Gordon of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri. Here is her bio as provided by the UUA:

A lifelong Unitarian Universalist from Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Rev. Molly Housh Gordon is the minister of the UU Church of Columbia, Missouri, where she is currently suing the state of Missouri for their unconstitutional abortion ban alongside 13 other multi-faith clergy co-plaintiffs. Molly is passionate about red-state UU ministry, community organizing, and mutual aid. In addition to her ministry and organizing work, Molly is a published essayist and poet completing a Doctor of Ministry in Creative Writing and Public Theology. Alongside her wonderful spouse, she is the delighted parent of two very fierce young children and one very chill old dog.

Sunday Meditation

from Ken Clayborn

In June the meditation group will meet on Sundays after the service at 11:45 am, in the RE classroom. Dates for the June programs are: June 2, June 9, June 23, and June 30. We have a congregational potluck on June 16 so we will take that day off to enjoy the meal together.

Generally during the meditation group session, we discuss our meditation practices together followed by a short, guided meditation. These sessions usually last about an hour. There is no charge for this program, and all are welcome.

UUFE Art Gallery: New Display

The new show is from Emily Morison's collection and features 3 portraits. Carlyne Andersohn's prize winning oil The Matriarch; a bronze head One Face of Lynne and a pastel of Kristian by Emily. There is a wondrous dragon by Cameo Knowles and a touch of whimsy here and there. Have fun, we did.

PS. The Fantasy Zebra, a silk painting, is by Kyle Morison a former LRY member.

BLESSING BAG UPDATE

The next deadline is Sunday, June 23, with distribution on Thursday, June 27. See the tubs in the Gathering Place for items to collect. Light summer clothing and soft chewy bars are needed especially right now. Thanks in advance for your support. Contact Steve or Karen Cripe with any questions.

Thank you from the Social Justice Committee to the ten people who participated in the CPR Training on Monday, May 20.

The instructor from Elkhart General Hospital (Jon Simmons) has offered to come back to our fellowship and train anyone on the use of a defibrillator once UUFE makes that purchase.

Steve Cripe, Chair - Social Justice Committee

UU Feasters

Feasters will meet at 11:30 AM on Wednesday, June 26, at Flat Rock Grill, 68973 M-62, Edwardsburg. Let Mary Adams know that you can come so that she can reserve adequate space for us. Contact her at 619-921-0613 or createnjoy@yahoo.com.

UU Feasters is a social outing for those interested in sharing a monthly luncheon together. Please consider coming and having a wonderful social time with others from our Fellowship.

YOGA at UUFE

We are pleased to have Kristen Smith-Myers as our yoga teacher. She will be with us on most Thursday evenings beginning at 6pm in the Gathering Place.

Science and Society

For those of you who have enjoyed the Science and Society presentations in the past we plan to resurrect them soon. Please share your thoughts on what kinds of presentations and programs you would most enjoy. Also be thinking about the preferred day of the week and time of the day. Please relay your thoughts to Ken Clayborn at kclayborn52@gmail.com.

We plan to renew the program, beginning in August, starting with the first two sessions of the recent PBS program "A Brief History of the Future" presented by futurist Ari Wallach. Dates and times will be shared at a later date, once all the inputs have been received.

Announcing ‘Love at the Center: Unitarian Universalist Theologies’

The following article was adapted from the monthly MidAmerica Messenger newsletter.

Inspirit, the UUA Bookstore, is thrilled to announce the newest book from Skinner House: Love at the Center: Unitarian Universalist Theologies, edited by Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt. Love at the Center is available in ebook format now from retailers like Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, and wherever ebooks are sold. You can also pre-order a printed copy of the book coming this fall from us. It will be updated after the 2024 General Assembly and may include additional chapters that are not in the current version of the ebook.

Unitarian Universalists as a progressive religious community hold a humbling expectation to periodically re-evaluate the freely chosen covenant that holds us together. While this work impacts the bylaws that define our governance structures, it also gives life to the values we express in common cause. We do this work to live into the Unitarian Universalism of the future.

In response to the Article II Study Commission and the more than 10,000 Unitarian Universalists who answered complex questions about the values that guide their faithful living, it is clear that the value most describe as central to their faith, to their living, and to the mission of their congregations is love itself. We are a people guided by, and centered in, our engagement with all that love requires.

Our pressing task now is to ask ourselves and each other how this understanding calls us forward, individually and collectively. We may agree that love is central, but what does that mean to us and what does it require of us? It is in that spirit that we asked more than two dozen leaders in our movement the question of what it means to put love at the center of our faith.

In these pages, you’ll find personal testimony to love’s power, reminders of the centrality of love throughout the long histories of Universalism and Unitarianism, and theologies of love drawn from many different expressions of Unitarian Universalism – from the natural world to the justice rally, to a loved one’s deathbed, to the quiet moment before a worship service begins. May Love at the Center serve as an invitation to deepen your own understanding and practices of love.

Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt is the 10th president of the Unitarian Universalist Association. She was elected in June 2023. Rev. Dr. Betancourt’s 20-year ministry has included serving as a parish minister, seminary professor, scholar and environmental ethicist, and public theologian.

Board of Trustees Report
from Pam Wycliff, President

This month of May reporting we will connect two meetings – the Board meeting of May 8 and the Annual Meeting on May 19.

We spent much time discussing the hiring and negotiation for our new minister. Beyond that:

- We have had M&M security assess our campus to determine areas and ideas for us to maintain the security and safety of our grounds and buildings. More to come next report.
- We will be increasing our involvement in UU the Vote in June. We already have a group of folks who are registering voters and giving voting information to people at the Elkhart Farmers Market. Soon we will be writing letters to registered voters to encourage voting. This project will be through Vote Forward, a non-profit organization, for letter-writing to encourage folks to vote. We also may be writing postcards as well through the summer. We would really like YOU to help with this project. Write a few or a lot of letters. If interested, please contact Pam Wycliff, We'll have fun and do good work at the same time!
- Tee-Shirts have been purchased! They will arrive in next few weeks. We will have them for sale for \$15.00 each. Would love to have everyone buy one so when we do things as a group, people will know who we are!
- Our insurance company, Church Mutual, has decided to not renewed our contract for this next year. Ken Clayborn has reached out and has scheduled assessment quotes from two companies – Farmer's Insurance and Farm Bureau Insurance
- Hopefully by end of June, we will have a software platform up and running to allow for better communication between committees, Board, and membership of UUFE.

Highlights from Annual Meeting:

- We approved our financial operating budget for 2024-2025,
- We approved our slate of officers, Board Trustee, Endowment and Nominating committee members. Also, our UUFE Delegates to UUA General Assembly.
 - President-Elect: Chuck Bower
 - Treasurer: Ken Clayborn
 - Secretary: open but since that time – Judy Wise (who we will vote on in June)
 - Trustee: Oxana Werbiansky
 - Endowment: Jim Barnes
 - Nominating: Susie Holzshuh, Annette Long
 - Delegates: Terry Mark, Laura Snow

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- Each committee wrote an annual report and has been put in the Annual Meeting booklet which can be available either via email or hard copy.
- We had hoped to vote for a bylaw's addition but due to a technicality of the bylaws we were unable at this time. We have written out this addition, it is displayed on the board outside the kitchen and the board outside the office. Next month after the potluck we will vote on this addition if we have a quorum of members on that day.



Finance Committee Summary

from Ken Clayborn, Treasurer

1. The budget for 2024-2025 was approved at the Annual Business Meeting on May 19, 2024. The version approved was the second revision of the draft budget and had been reviewed and approved by the board. This final approved version is posted on the bulletin board beside the office and depends on support from the Endowment Committee from interest earned on the endowment. Discussions with the Endowment Committee indicate that the level of support is not an issue. We will only rely on additional support only if necessary. (This is no different than in previous years and is listed as "Investment Income" on the budget income line). The amount this year may be slightly higher since we have hired Rev. Dan Miyake as our half time minister for at least a year starting in mid-August.
2. The budget includes funding for the contract minister as well as funding for all the committees and estimated costs for upkeep such as furnace and air conditioning inspections and service, snow removal, grounds maintenance and utilities and insurance.
3. Speaking of insurance, we are in the process of investigating insurance companies to replace Church Mutual as our property insurer. Church Mutual decided not to renew our contract in July, even though we were always current with our payments. Their decision has more to do with the change in Church Mutual's business model than anything associated with us. We were assured, by our Regional Leadership, that we are not the only congregation to be canceled. Several others are in the same position. We will have that new insurer in place by July 1, 2024.
4. All payments are current. There are no outstanding obligations.

June 2024

Birthdays

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
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2 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	3	4	5 6pm Membership	6 <i>Beth Lefever</i> 6pm Yoga	7	8 10am RE @Zoo
9 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	10 <i>Jennifer Demerly</i>	11 7pm Worship & Arts	12 6:30pm Board	13 6pm Yoga	14	15
16 10am Service Potluck	17 <i>Judy Gibson</i>	18	19	20 <i>William Becker Gordon Hostetler</i> 6pm Yoga	21	22 <i>Emily Searles</i>
23 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	24	25 FOCUS INFO DUE	26 11:30am Feasters	27 6pm Yoga	28	29
30 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation						

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