



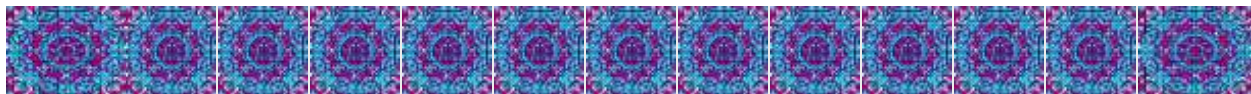
A Welcoming Congregation  
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## *Reverend Ruth's Reflections*

Hello Bay County UUs!

Last week I was honored to join a group made up of our folk and friends from the UU Fellowship of the Emerald Coast for a tour of the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery. Afterward we met at the UU Fellowship of Montgomery for a picnic lunch and discussion of our experiences.

What an eye-opening and heart-softening experience! I thought I understood the history of slavery in this country, but I learned so much more about how the kidnapping and enslavement of 12 million African people has continued to poison and damage our nation through Reconstruction, Jim Crow, lynching, voter suppression and mass incarceration in the present day.

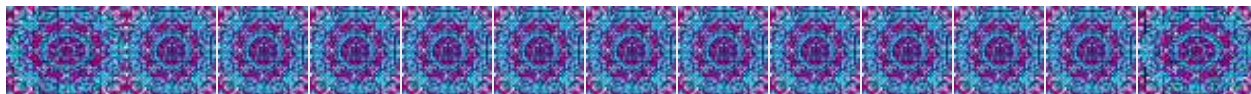
Is there really much difference between a man yanked out of jail and hung from a tree by an angry lynching mob and a man yanked off the sidewalk and killed under the weight of a police officer's knee while he smiled at the crowd?

People of African descent experience anxiety every time they leave home because our cities and towns are still not safe for them. Dr. King's "Two Americas" still exist and there is much yet to do to make true equality and equity in all things a reality in the United States.

Take courage, my Friends. Open your eyes and soften your hearts . . . then roll up your sleeves! We have work to do!

In wisdom and grace,

*Rev. Ruth*





## Worship Services at our Fellowship

*Our Soul Matters theme for March is “RENEWING FAITH”*

Monthly themes focus on our relationship with our times, and on the central work and spiritual practices needed during this period of radical change, challenge, crisis and opportunity.

**Heads Up! Time change tonight. Spring forward an hour and don't miss our worship service tomorrow!**

**March 13<sup>th</sup> Reverend Ruth Vann Lillian *Prerecorded* “Invite, Inspire, Involve”**

Stewardship is at the core of our ministry and mission. Generosity is a spiritual practice and all members are called to give of their time, their talents and their financial resources to each other in this, our tribe, our community, our fellowship family. We're all in this together and the Florida panhandle needs us now more than ever!

**March 20<sup>th</sup> Serena Dee Latiolais and Chris May “Planting the Three Sisters”**

Join Service Leaders Serena Dee Latiolais and Chris May for our Equinox service; “Planting the 3 Sisters” which will feature thoughts on regrets, renewal, connections to community and a short meditation on our personal harvest. For those who are able, come prepared to do a little planting outdoors as well.

**March 27<sup>th</sup> Reverend Ruth Vann Lillian “Grandma Got the Vote”**

Rev Ruth is live this week! It's Women's History month and voter suppression is on the rise. Through the lens of my own grandmother's life, we'll look at the history of women's suffrage, the intersection with the struggle for Black suffrage, and our current battles with new efforts to make it harder for individuals of color to exercise their right to vote.

**Zoom:** You may also join us remotely this Sunday by using the Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/3hWkhEI>  
Please tune in by 10:25 am so you will be connected when the service begins at 10:30 am.

**Note:** If you join us in person this Sunday, remember to bring some warm clothing in case you need it, as the sanctuary will be ventilated with doors and windows open. Plan to wear a mask and remain socially distanced. Please do not attend in person if you are not feeling well or have any COVID symptoms.

## Have questions or need more information?

Contact the Fellowship at [info@uuofbaycounty.com](mailto:info@uuofbaycounty.com) or call us at 850-615-4127 for more information about our services or events, or with any question you may have. Reverend Ruth invites you to contact her at 205-218-1666 whenever you need a pastoral ear. Please let us know if you have a joy or a concern that the Service Leader may share during our Sunday worship service. Also let us know if you have an article, a poem, or a picture that you would like to submit for publication in this newsletter.

## Joys and Concerns

Keep Harriet Myers in your thoughts and send her well wishes. Harriet recently fell and broke her arm. She is convalescing at home and would enjoy hearing from you.



## UUFBC Schedule of Upcoming Events:

|          |            |                             |
|----------|------------|-----------------------------|
| March 16 | 6:30 pm    | UUFBC Book Club (Zoom)      |
| March 18 | 6:30 pm    | UUFBC Cultural Cooking Club |
| March 27 | 12:00 Noon | UUFBC Book Club             |

### **The UU Book Club**

The book for the month of March is titled Children of Covenant. It was written by Reverend Fred Howard who has been a guest preacher at UUFBC several times and is currently serving the Unitarian church in Valdosta Georgia.

This book is a fictional story based in a southern town. It is a mystery centering on a Muslim man accused of murder. In this month before Ramadan, we will spend time considering religious prejudice in our reading, in our own Southern community, and in ourselves as well.

Book Club will meet on Wednesday, March 16th at 6:30 pm by Zoom and again on Sunday, March 27th at noon in person and by Zoom. For questions, more information, and to indicate your interest, contact Chris May at [chrysalis33333@gmail.com](mailto:chrysalis33333@gmail.com). Chris will send an email with the Zoom link to those who have indicated an interest.

### **The Cultural Cooking Club**

Rescheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup>The

The Fellowship is hosting a Cultural Cooking Club event on Friday, March 18th at 6:30 pm. UUs love to learn about the world and what better way than through FOOD! Each quarter we'll pick a new country, explore its cuisine and come together for a tasty potluck. Our first country is TURKEY! Start now to learn more about this uniquely positioned country and their cuisine. We'll be discussing Turkish cultural highlights so pick your dish and be ready to share on the night of our Potluck. If you're planning to participate or have any questions, please contact Charissa Thacker at 850.814.5365 or [charissa.thacker@yahoo.com](mailto:charissa.thacker@yahoo.com)



### **Sunflowers**

Did you know that Ukraine's national flower is the sunflower? Did you also know that sunflowers were originally imported to Ukraine from North America about 200 years ago? When the Orthodox Church restricted butter during lent, sunflowers provided sunflower oil to use instead. Soon there were fields of sunflowers everywhere as they became more and more popular.

Not only does Ukraine grow and export sunflower seeds and oil today, you can see sunflowers in the yards of homes that are grown to be woven into wreaths, known as "venkis", for girls to wear. Sunflowers are also celebrated in Ukrainian folk art, such as embroidery and paintings that are called "petrykivka".

Sunflowers are a symbol of things we share with Ukrainians and the appreciation we all have for nature and its beauty. The sunflower may now also serve as a symbol of hope for the survival of the Ukrainian people and their country.



**Powerful and Compelling...** Last weekend, Bob Gilmore, Arlene Zacher, Georgia Beauchemin and I, and a small contingent from the UU Fellowship of the Emerald Coast, traveled to Montgomery, Alabama to visit [The Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration](#) and [The National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#) (informally known as the “Lynching Museum”).



For me, it was truly gut-wrenching and often very emotional, but that's what makes it so powerful and compelling! The museum does a great job of making the journey of black Americans very personal to everyone who walks its halls. It deepened my knowledge and understanding of American History. Not only is the content powerful, but the museum is a masterpiece of technology and interactive innovation. Every American should see and feel this history!

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice was another very well-designed experience. Solemn and beautiful, I found it to be a proud and peaceful resting place for the souls it honors. Afterwards, Reverend Ruth and the UU of Montgomery hosted a lunch and discussion about the day's experiences. Thank you to them for their hospitality!

No photos are allowed in the Museum, so these pictures are all the National Monument. You can learn more about both the memorial and the museum at <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/> by *Charissa Thacker*



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