

Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bay County!

Welcoming Everyone • Growing in Mind & Spirit • Empowering People • Leading in Social Justice

We are an open-minded, open-hearted spiritual community

The UUFBC is meeting in person for our Sunday Services at this time

Sunday Fellowship Services at 10:30 in person and on zoom. *Address: 1410 Airport Rd, Panama City, FL

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/3hWkhEI> Please start the connection process a little early.

A Message from the UU President

Dear UU Fellowship of Bay County,

Happy New Year! I am sending you care as we begin another year. This, 2023, is an important year for Unitarian Universalism.

We are currently in a multi-year process to consider changes to our UUA Principles and Purpose. This process began in 2020 when the UUA Board appointed an Article II Study Commission. This is a dry name for such important work. The reason is our Principles, Purpose, covenant and Sources are contained in Article II of the UUA Bylaws.

Our seven Principles and six Sources – which we know and love – were adopted in 1985. They offered a substantial (even radical) change from what preceded them. The changes came through years of effort by UU women, particularly the UU Women's Federation, to push for greater gender equality in UUism, support for women in the ministry and to eliminate sexist language

from our Bylaws, hymns, and yes, from the version of Article II passed in 1961 (at the time of consolidation).

But the changes didn't just address gender, they made significant language changes that reflected the times. It removed language of God, man, and brotherhood and added the language of interdependence and the Sources reflecting the growing theological diversity of our tradition.

As a lifelong UU, coming of age after these changes, I am grateful. They changed our movement in ways that were important for the success of women leaders, ministers, and for me, as our first elected woman President. These changes, at the time, brought fierce dissent. But more, they inspired excitement and possibility.

Why do we need a review of the Principles and Purpose?

In the mid-2010's, the ground began to shift again – much as it did in response to the women's movement. The emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, the election of Donald Trump with his racist and misogynist campaign, and the urgent calls to confront white supremacy culture in our own movement – all of these compelled UUs to ask questions about whether our Principles reflected fully who we are and who we need to be.

By the 2017 General Assembly, there were multiple grassroots efforts to change our Principles. The first was overwhelmingly adopted, to change “prophetic women and men” to “prophetic people” to move beyond gender binary. There was also a proposal to change the first Principle from “the inherent worth and dignity of all people” to the “inherent worth and dignity of all beings.” This proposal was ultimately tabled as delegates grappled with the reality that we still had a lot of work to do on living the first Principle *for people*. Discussions of the Eighth Principle were also happening and by 2020, hundreds of UU congregations had adopted it! The Eighth Principle recognized the need to go beyond aspirational principles to commitments to dismantle systems of oppression – calling us from aspiration to action.

It was within this context that your UUA Board appointed an Article II Study Commission to integrate these conversations and lead a discernment process for our whole Association about core values, covenant, and purpose. The Board gave the Commission [a broad charge](#) to review, change, or reimagine Article II to “enable our UUA, our member congregations, and our covenanted communities to be a relevant and powerful force for spiritual and moral growth, healing, and justice.”

After two and a half years of study and conversations with thousands of Unitarian Universalists, the Article II Study Commission submitted their report and proposal to the UUA Board of Trustees for its January 20th meeting.

[Read the Report & Proposal](#)

This spring, congregation delegates and the Board can propose amendments to the proposal. The proposal and amendments will be considered at General Assembly this June and a majority vote is required to continue consideration at GA 2024. If any of the delegate amendments are accepted, and if the proposal receives majority approval, then the Article II Study Commission will make any necessary changes to create a final draft for consideration at GA 2024. The final proposal will require a two thirds majority vote at GA 2024 to be adopted.

Seven years ago, when I was beginning my campaign for UUA President, I approached the process with an intention to be open to the process while letting go of outcomes. My hope for us as Unitarian Universalists is that we approach discernment about Article II with similar openness. May we enter our conversations with a spirit of curiosity, holding off attachment to outcomes, and listen with our whole hearts and to the fullness and diversity of voices in our community. May the process itself deepen our understanding of and commitment to our faith.

Love, Susan (Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray)

Upcoming Worship Services

Feb 12: Bay Story Tellers. Service Leader: Bob Nixon

Feb 19: A Musical Look at the Many Ways We Love, Ken Sizemore. Service Leader: Bob G Ken will perform songs that celebrate romantic love, love of being alive, love songs for our children, our parents, and dear friends, songs that declare our love for the earth and for the environment, love for home and country, and a song or two that celebrate the all-encompassing love for all humankind....(Ken also says that he will do as much of all this as time allows!!!)

Feb 26: Reverend Ruth, Live. Potluck lunch after the service. Bring something yummy to share or just bring yourself.

Announcements

THIS SATURDAY! Mardi Gras is on Feb 11th and the LGBTQ Center is asking for volunteers to walk with their float. They usually need "wheel walkers" for safety.

Learn how to write a sermon! Rev. Ruth will lead "The Shared Pulpit" in 8 sessions, mostly online, on Wed evenings at 6:30 beginning Mar 1. Please email minister@uufec.com to register and order your book (\$14.80).

WorshipWeb offers you the NEW 2022-2023 UUA Worship Calendar (PDF), which includes faith-based and secular holidays that UU congregations often celebrate. The calendar also includes monthly worship themes used in four popular theme-based ministry programs. <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/worship-themes-holy-days-and-holidays>

Next campfire: March 8th at 6:00 Bring a canned good for the food pantry and also bring a poem, story, song or inspiring words to share around the campfire. Any Questions?... ask Bob Gilmore

LGBT Support Group: The first Saturday of the month at 9am there is an LGBTQ ally support group at the Center on Baker Street. Bob Gilmore will be going if you want more details.

Book Club The Rough Side of The Mountain:Black Women's Ministries in Unitarian Universalism., edited by Rev. Dr. Qyamah Rahman.

This is a series of articles by many of our most important black women ministers. Since February is black history month, and March is women's history month; this seems a very appropriate choice. The link below is to the UUA bookstore. Meeting on April 2nd. We will meet after the service. <https://www.uuabookstore.org/The-Rough-Side-of-the-Mountain-P19391.aspx>

Annual Yard Sale

Mark your calendars now! Our Annual UU Yard Sale DATE MOVED to **March 11, 2023**. Due to the Mardi Gras on **Feb 11th**.

Your donations to this sale are greatly appreciated and if you begin setting things aside now, we'll be well-prepared when the day arrives.

NEW THIS YEAR... we would like to add a PLANT SALE to this fundraiser. With all of the Green Thumbs in our community, we are asking folks to consider propagating some of your plants to sell. Folks LOVE Plant Sales and it will also draw folks to the Yard Sale as well. All types of plants are needed, but Native Plants would be a bonus! *Please, avoid any plants that may be invasive*

Upcoming UU Events

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



Join us June 21 - 25, 2023 online or in-person in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Most GA events will take place at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, 1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA. [Google map](#) [More about traveling to Pittsburgh](#) [Registration](#) is open. Register early to secure the lowest rates. [Volunteer opportunities](#) and [financial support](#) are available.

Upcoming Community Events

UUFBC is hosting the Interfaith Dinner for February 25th at 5:30pm

As part of Black History Month let's attend this community event.
Friday Feb 17th at 6:00 at Rutherford HS auditorium.

RUTHERFORD HIGH SCHOOL
PRESENTS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH SHOWCASE

Special presentations from Rutherford students and other organizations throughout the community.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH
6:00PM**

FREE ENTRY

RHS Auditorium

Free food will be served in the RHS Cafeteria immediately following the showcase. All food will be cooked and served by the RHS Culinary Club.



Did you know we have a Facebook page? If not, you should check it out and click the Like button here: <https://www.facebook.com/uubaycounty>
UUFBC Website <https://www.uuofbaycounty.com/>

Newsletter Editor: Cindy Gregory -- Board Members: President: Bob Gilmore; Vice president: Matt Raver; Secretary: Charissa Thacker; Treasurer: Janet Cross Member At Large: Chris May

Contact info: 850- 615-4127 *Office Hours are Tuesday 10 a.m. – noon (leave a message, please)

To submit information for the biweekly e-newsletter, send to info@uuofbaycounty.com and please cc cindykg@gmail.com