

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 UUofBC is meeting in person for our Sunday Services at this time

Sunday Fellowship Services; 10:30 in person and on YouTube. Address: 1410 Airport Rd, Panama City, FL

*Note! No longer on zoom! YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/@UUofBayCounty/streams>



Side With Love

For Your Reflection

Instead of opening with some interesting trivia, I'm using this space for a letter:

Joe Biden has a folksy way of starting some speeches that I like and will humbly try to use it as kind of a re-introduction to what we can do together.

Look, here's the deal. We have a serious problem with partisan obstruction preventing us from making progress on a number of issues. The issues are all important, but some are more severe involving serious illnesses and even deaths: women being able to make personal decisions about their health, protecting our citizens during pandemics, and doing what is critically needed to deal effectively with climate change. Is it not unconscionable to prevent these problems from being dealt with when we know of some effective approaches and people have already died due to our delay?

And is not the bottom line that we have available to us two solutions?

We can continue to try and change the minds of our elected officials who are being obstructionists, or we can help voters see that we must remove officials like that from office and replace them with people who share our values. Changing the minds of the obstructionists has been tried but not worked. (Some information on that sad fact later) Changing the minds of voters is difficult too but isn't that what we are left with?

If the political situation was more normal, I believe we would not be faced with the grim possibility that we now have for the upcoming election. In elections before the one in 2016, if a Republican won, we might expect to have a 4 year delay on getting many things done for the Common Good as happened during Donald Trump's time. But we would recover. Eventually, based on the past experience of more recent times, Democrats would take over and start making progress once again, and we could pretty much count on that cycle continuing - times of progress, times of regression. Of course that shows my political bias, but I believe it is the truth.

Our problem in getting honest and caring people elected is illustrated by some disturbing facts for Sarasota County that I suspect are generally true for your part of Florida too. There are so many more registered Republican voters here than registered Democrats, and getting worse, we cannot expect to win many future elections unless we can convince enough other voters that it is in their interests to vote for Democratic

candidates and for Democratic policies. The **other** voters being a group that has become much larger the past 10 or so years, those registered as No Party Affiliation.

A conservative journalist, George Will wrote over 20 years ago that we need to have a large grass roots effort where neighbors on one side of the issues finds ways of convincing neighbors on the other side to switch their allegiance so that there is a sufficient consensus to pass needed legislation. He commented that this might take several election cycles. Makes sense, don't you think if you can get over some of George's other strange conservative long-worded writings?

As to what we can try to do together to try and speed up that process: A few years ago, I happened to be watching the news on tv when the highly respected Bob Schieffer was summarizing the results of a large annual conference of journalists saying they had concluded that disinformation is the major obstacle to addressing serious national problems. They widely agreed that journalists had an obligation to go beyond just reporting what happens, that they must help the public understand what information has a basis in facts and what does not. Otherwise, many voters will continue to elect unqualified and sometimes even dangerous people. He explained saying that during publicly broadcast interviews or panel discussions, whenever someone makes an important claim, moderators must be more diligent to insist that a basis be supplied for the claims -some form of verifiable evidence.

It does appear that journalists have started to do better, but I think you will agree that is not enough. As George will says, we citizens must help inform voters with whatever means is available. That is what this collaboration project is about. I hope you will consider a very concise simplistic goal for what we might be able to accomplish together. None of the ideas for this goal and a vision for how to accomplish it are original with me. They have been contributed to by many people and discussed in numerous meetings.

Accordingly, at this point unless something more effective comes up, the proposed goal is it is to try and influence our many misinformed citizens by giving them verifiable factual information to counter that which is false. And to get that information out to as many of our neighbors as possible between now and the elections this fall. And to repeat some particularly high-priority themes.

Please, please, since time is flying, I hope someone from your congregation will give me a call anytime, or reply by email so we can discuss this proposal.

Brad Hardin 941-223-6849

deebrahardin@netzero.net or bradhardin1963@gmail.com

Upcoming Services

April 7: Songs of Protest, Compassion, and Change: Ken Sizemore. The “Ole Folkie” is back! Our longtime member and troubadour, Ken Sizemore, is visiting with his musical service “Songs of Protest, Compassion, and Change – the Sixties Revisited”. Ken always brings a fun and thoughtful message with his music and charming personality. Don’t miss out on his service and the chance to catch up with this good friend and amazing fella!

Pot Luck!



April 7th is a Pot Luck lunch Sunday!

April 14: Nurturing Loving Kindness Consciousness. Melissa Arrant, M.A. explores practices and techniques that allow one to awaken and nurture a consciousness of loving kindness.

About the speaker:

Melissa Arrant is the Creative Director of Unity Spiritual Center of Panama City. Melissa is a long-time member of Unity Spiritual Center of Panama City, where she serves on the Spiritual Leadership Team and as Lead Prayer Chaplain. Melissa is a firm supporter of interfaith teachings. She believes in the unifying nature of LOVE and COMPASSION on the path of spiritual seeking. She has presented Sunday messages on a wide range of spiritual and inspirational topics including but not limited to meditation, prayer, contemplation, mindfulness, oneness, unity, creativity, and the Buddhist path.

April 21: Earth Day by Charissa Thacker. Details to come.

Announcements

Pledge time! This link goes to the Website's pledge page where folks can find this year's Packet and the Pledge Form. Pledges are due April 7 <https://www.uuofbaycounty.com/2019-2020-pledge-drive/>

Here's a note from Charissa Thacker, our UUFBC president:

A quick reminder that our Pledge Drive wraps up This Sunday! If you've already submitted your pledge - **THANK YOU!**

>The scary news is that we're only 76% to our goal >The good news is that we have received less than half the pledge forms back... >>>> So there is hope we'll hit our goal!

If you prefer, fill out online and email to our Treasurer Janet Cross (janetcross77@gmail.com) or bring it with you on Sunday! If you have any questions, please reach out to me or Janet! Your thoughtful consideration of your pledge is greatly appreciated. We hope to grow this community in many ways but need your help to make it a reality. Even the smallest contribution helps sustain our Fellowship.

Next Campfire is on April 24th, under the Magnolia Tree at 6:30. April is when spring is in full display with blooms, warm days, and promises of the year to come. Please join us for an evening of easy fellowship with fellow UU's and friends. Bring something interesting to share, or just bring yourselves!

Recent Events

Only UUs can combine a service by a Buddhist Monk and the Easter Bunny!



Seriously though, Master Tran, along with members and friends, of the QuanAm NamHai Monastery, thank you for sharing your dharma talk on Transformation and Healing with us! We look forward to seeing you again!

Joy and Concern

FLORIDIANS WILL VOTE AND WE WILL WIN!

Today the Florida Supreme Court ruled that Amendment 4, to limit government interference with abortion in Florida, meets the requirements for placement on this year's ballot.



JOIN // VOLUNTEER // DONATE

yes4florida.com

Paid political advertisement paid for by Floridians Protecting Freedom, Inc., Post Office Box 4068, Sarasota, FL 34230.

Book Club

For March, April, and May we will read Proud: My Fight for an Unlikely American Dream. By Ibtihah Muhammad. She is an Olympic medalist in Fencing, and Muslim. This book this book honors Women's History Month with a nod to Islam during Ramadan. It is an award-winning biography. There are two copies at the library. It is available as an e-book and audio CD as well. We will meet in May for a discussion.

Below is a link to Amazon with full description

[Proud-Fight-Unlikely-American-Dream-Ibtijah Muhammad](https://www.amazon.com/Proud-Fight-Unlikely-American-Dream-Ibtijah-Muhammad/dp/B01AQNZQAY/ref=sr_1_1?crid=31W5CWFBUNM64&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.KamCdCzALmxnRukRHWG1Zfp6euS8FKxNbqMtFTRFM9ctVrbEmefrIoXf8s2s4cMfX5XkkPrJ0e8sxPbNLriwA.J8pKZwwex4nddBTx2KpDuXZDMc1ui7KattQt3ZJNkbc&dib_tag=se&keywords=being+jazz+my+life+as+a+transgender+teen&qid=1712239357&srefix=Being+Jazz%2Caps%2C108&sr=8-1)

Back to a banned book for LGBTQ Pride in June. Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen, by Jazz Jennings. https://www.amazon.com/Being-Jazz-Life-Transgender-Teen-ebook/dp/B01AQNZQAY/ref=sr_1_1?crid=31W5CWFBUNM64&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.KamCdCzALmxnRukRHWG1Zfp6euS8FKxNbqMtFTRFM9ctVrbEmefrIoXf8s2s4cMfX5XkkPrJ0e8sxPbNLriwA.J8pKZwwex4nddBTx2KpDuXZDMc1ui7KattQt3ZJNkbc&dib_tag=se&keywords=being+jazz+my+life+as+a+transgender+teen&qid=1712239357&srefix=Being+Jazz%2Caps%2C108&sr=8-1



The Invitation to National Conversation

- Awareness of the proposed Article II changes
- Analysis of the new Article II language
- Discussion within your community
- Decision by your congregation on what is the best direction of Unitarian Universalism
- Share your thoughts at Town Hall meetings

General Assembly



Virtual
June 20 - 23, 2024

Decision at GA in 2024

A decision at GA in June will be made to accept or reject the proposed Article II language. The changes are sweeping impacting all sections of Article II.

More conversation is needed before this decision!

Join the National UU Conversation

We are a grassroots initiative of everyday UUs seeking a national conversation to discuss Article II.



Visit our
Video Library



Visit our
Resource
Library



Register for a
Town Hall Meeting

[Visit our Website](#)

- Please share this email and this link to UUtheConversation.org with members of your congregation.

Visit our website and Join the National UU Conversation.

- Register for a Zoom Town Hall Meeting



"WHITE PRIVILEGE" & MULTIRACIAL UNITY

A Convocation of the UU Multiracial Unity Action Council

Led by Dr. Kenneth Christiansen & Rev. Richard Trudeau

Saturday, Apr 13, 2024, Noon-1:30pm Central time
TO REGISTER send an email to UUMUAC@gmail.com;
Zoom codes will be sent the day before

Part 1. The Term "White Privilege" -- Its Good & Bad Effects

“White Privilege” is a highly emotional term. It highlights racism and racial disparity. It can be everything from a discussion starter, to an empathy block, to a guilt wedge, to a blindfold in relation to the effects of CLASS.

Part 2. Changing the Conversation

White Privilege can also be seen as an inventory of resources available for genuine antiracism work that collaboratively addresses discriminatory laws and policies.

More UU Events:

Gather at the Crossroads



The final date to register for the event is **Wednesday, April 24, 2024.**

Do you know someone who would love to attend UUWomenspirit, but can't afford it? Please encourage them to apply for a scholarship. It's a great way to increase our attendance and share our wonderful organization. Complete scholarship information can be found [on the website](#). Thanks to the generosity of our members, we are **extending the scholarship application deadline to April 10**.

Dear UU Ministry for Earth Community,

We have loved creating free [monthly worship and small group ministry resources](#) for you - all focused on Earth care and climate justice. We publish the information two months in advance of the time you'll actually use them.

And so here in April 2024, we bring you the **resources for June 2024**. The theme is "Come to our Senses", and we explore ways to engage your physical senses to restore a right relationship with nature. We also include a Summer Solstice ceremony.

You are invited to visit [our website](#) for an overview of Monthly Musings along with past issues. And [this Google folder](#) is where you can find the content in both PDF and Google Doc format.

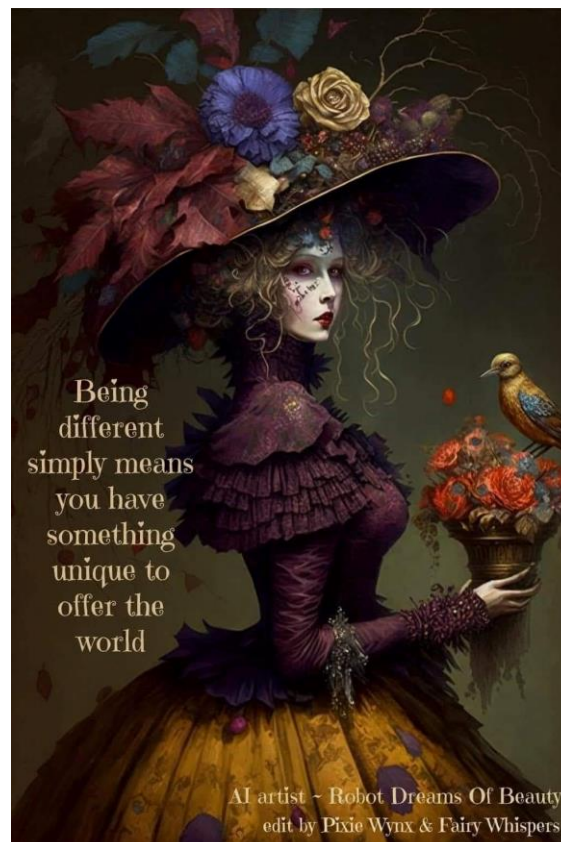
We are taking a break from Monthly Musings so we can focus on planning the [Climate Justice Revival which is September 28 and 29, 2024](#). We hope you'll participate and register your congregation soon.

With gratitude for your commitment to our faith and climate justice!

The UU Ministry for Earth Team

[Click Here for June's Monthly Musings](#)

We invite you to visit [our website](#) for an overview of Monthly Musings along with past issues. And [this Google folder](#) is where you can find the content in both PDF and Google Doc format.



UUFBC Website <https://www.uuofbaycounty.com/>

UUFBC Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/uubaycounty>

There's also a Facebook page for the LGBTQ center. That and a lot of other info is on their website:
<https://gulfoastlgbtqcenter.org>

Newsletter Editor: Cindy Gregory – Board Members: President: Charissa Thacker; Vice president: Bob Gilmore; Secretary: Chris May; Treasurer: Janet Cross; Members At Large: Serena Dee Latiolais, Bob McNeal, Dusty Huff

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