



NEW OUTLOOK

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

A spiritual home where religion and reason meet

JUNE/JULY 2020



Chalice Chatter from Rev. Dan

Dear UUFCC Family,

As we welcome in the month of June, the Florida summer, rainy season, and hurricane season, we are also entering our fourth month of dealing with a pandemic I like to call “Coronapocalypse.” The medical research experts are continuing to learn more about COVID-19 every week. We know the safest thing to do is to stay home, to wear a mask anytime you have to be around others at the store or in public, to avoid crowds, and to wash your hands well and often. And there is no end in sight.

I know these events are the source of unusual stress, trauma, and grief for so many. If nothing else, we grieve the loss of seeing our friends and family without fear of transmission. But we also grieve the loss of going where we want when we want. We grieve gathering for parties at someone’s house. We grieve the loss of laughter and live music and theater and so many other activities we took for granted just four months ago.

And obviously we grieve the loss of gathering together as a fellowship. We miss seeing each other in person. We miss singing and laughing together. We miss meeting face-to-face.

Our UUFCC community is not the same, but it is still strong. In late March when we hosted our first virtual worship live on Zoom we had over 65 devices logged in. That number has been consistent since then.

We are learning that community can be enjoyed via Zoom or Facebook or on many other electronic platforms. We get to keep in better contact with our snowbirds who have gone north for the summer. We are seeing friends who have moved away. And we are still welcoming newcomers to our fellowship. We also continue to do social justice work, to help those who are struggling, and to speak out on behalf of those who are suffering economic, political, and social discrimination.

Our doors are closed, but the Living Tradition that is Unitarian Universalism very much lives on. I have no idea how long it will be before we can hug each other again. What I am sure of is that we will emerge changed, stronger, and even more passionate about all that UUFCC holds dear.

Take care of yourself and take care of each other. PLEASE let me know if you or someone you know needs food, medicine, transportation, internet, or pastoral care of any type.

I continue to be here to serve you all.

Be a blessing to the few people you will see today. Most importantly be a blessing to yourself.

I truly love and miss you all.

Rev. Dan

Dearly Beloved is a wonderful expression, but I have decided it is not me. As much as I love the reference to the Prince song, it feels too "high church", or like a wedding. Please send me your suggestions for a title or phrase... the chosen selection will receive.....a surprise!



Dear Loving Community,

This month seemed to have whizzed by. Like many of you with whom I have spoken, I am realizing that I really need to ground myself regularly during these times. Just as individuals, we as a community, need to ground ourselves in what we know, who we are, and how we are connected. This need to reaffirm and settle is in the air.

In taking in the wisdom of our UUA President, Susan Frederick-Gray, we need to get out of crisis mode; settle and assess our plans for the potential "long-haul" of this new way of life. We understand that we are going to be closed indefinitely, and will assess conditions regularly to keep us as safe as possible. Remaining physically closed does not mean that we stop being an active and connected community.

We have already begun. You will see some exciting changes from the office, as our new software simplifies and improves our previous five (yowzaa!) different tracking systems. (Thanks to the teamwork of Mary Jane, Katheryn F., Laura A., Fred P. & myself). Also, watch for the appearance of a new website in our near future! Program Council will be up and going very soon - be ready, Committee Leaders!

From the feedback that we have received, our first Town Hall meeting was a great experience with some important sharing. We will continue these on a monthly basis. In the next two weeks, your Board will have a reassessment meeting to look at what happens between now and when we do open regarding budget, positions, and activities. We continue to welcome your creative ideas for activities that we could safely do. Please email them to me by June 5th. We have an exciting surprise coming up!

It is time for us to learn some new skills, share some old skills, and come out (figuratively), be heard/seen, connect, play, and take our power to enjoy each other and make this world a better place! It doesn't matter what kind of position we are in...whether we are in a small room by ourselves, whether we do not feel well, whether we are out running and kayaking, whether we have phones glued to our hands or developed new keyboard calluses on our fingertips...everyone needs a connection, and it will take **all** of us to figure out how to make that happen for **all** of us!

Namaste,
Lorrie
Board President

Sunday Services – by Zoom

(see page 7 for Zoom link)

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 7</i></p> <p>The Fifth Source of Unitarian Universalism Rev. Dan Lambert</p> <p>Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science and warn us against the idolatries of the mind and spirit.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>July 5</i></p> <p>General Assembly Report</p> <p>Rev. Dan Lambert and the UUFCC delegates will share highlights from the 2020 Virtual UUA General Assembly.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 14</i></p> <p>The Sixth Source of Unitarian Universalism Rev. Dan Lambert</p> <p>Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>July 12</i></p> <p>Issues from General Assembly. Part 1 Rev. Dan Lambert</p> <p>All kinds of issues usually arise at General Assembly each year. Rev. Dan will take time to share some that occurred this year.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 21</i></p> <p>Fathers and Other F words</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>July 19</i></p> <p>Issues from General Assembly. Part 2 Rev. Dan Lambert</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see above)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 28</i></p> <p>General Assembly Closing Worship</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>July 26</i></p> <p>The service will be led by Matt Meyer. Matt has led music and worship for hundreds of services in congregations all over the U.S. and Canada. Matt has a degree in hand drumming from Berklee College of Music and has studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America. In addition to music, Matt is also an active community organizer and educator.</p>

Money Matters



Did you know you that Amazon has a feature that donates a small percentage of most purchases to non-profits? To participate, all you have to do is designate UUFCC as your benefiting organization. Then, whenever you use Amazon Prime to order anything, use the [Amazon Smile](#) web page. I don't know about you, but I have been doing as much of my shopping as possible on-line since the shutdown and will be continuing to do so until it is safe to go out. I assure you that every little bit donated to the cause helps.

I thought I would take a minute this month to talk to you about the monies that sustain us and what membership entails. We receive the majority of our operating budget from pledges and donations. Pledges are done every year to help us create and manage our budget for the year. Members that pledge money for a particular year are eligible to vote for that year's budget regardless of the pledge amount. This is why we have a pledge drive in February/March culminating in the annual meeting at the end of March, which always includes congregational approval of the budget and board elections. Pledging members are authenticated to vote at the annual meeting that presents the budget for the next fiscal year.

We have pledging members and pledging friends. We also have friends that do not want to be members and do not pledge, but who are regular donors. We also have pledgers, friends and visitors that throw money in the collection plate when we have services in the sanctuary. This is the one fund that does not exist in Corona-time.

To be a member, you need to sign "the book" which puts you on the UUA membership list, and either pledge or have donations on the record every year. That is why it is important to put your name on any cash donation now and during regular operations.

As another reminder, you can donate with the phone app Venmo. Venmo doesn't charge any fee if you donate with a debit card or put funds to use in a Venmo or PayPal account. You can also use a credit card, which is fee based (UUFCC pays the fee). Setting up this app on your phone can be a little tricky, but once you have set it up it's a breeze. Let us know if you need help.

PayPal is still in process – we are trying to get the non-profit paperwork together so that the Fellowship does not have to pay a fee for your contributions. We will keep you informed.

I recently did an assessment of how our business expenses/income have changed due to the Coronavirus. My best guess at this point in time, just two months into the new fiscal year, shows that we will still have a deficit at the end of the year that is only a couple hundred dollars less than the one predicted with the original budget. Having said that, this community's generosity so far, especially considering most of us are sheltering from home, has been tremendous. We are thankful for all you are doing to support your fellowship and your community at large. Thank you!!

Pledges continue to come in and are a pleasant surprise! If submitting your pledge has slipped your mind due to the quarantine or for any other reason, please consider submitting it at your earliest convenience. Additional commitments will enable us to burn down the deficit. It would be wonderful to break even or end with a small surplus in these Corona times.

With best wishes to you all,
Nancy Weaver

UUFCC Treasurer
nancyxweaver@gmail.com
303-241-0309



And the Beat Goes On...

Linda Chorny Himes

Every year the choir patiently waits for the return of our Music Director, Jim Boyle. When he arrives, we are joyous to make noise together once again. Fall 2019 was no different, every Thursday evening we gathered in our loft. Warming up with Do, Re, Mi's and singing together from our hearts. Snowbirds trickled in and by Christmas we were mostly complete.

On Christmas Eve 2019 Jim led us in A Happening. Taking turns performing many well-loved Christmas themed tunes. We had choir pieces, trios, duets, four-handed piano pieces and a clarinet-piano duet. Those are the times we find ourselves longing for now in our time of COVID-19 quarantine.

March 2020 arrived, and we got the announcement that all activities and services at the Fellowship would cease. Sunday services would be streaming on Zoom. Jim and I talked about music, because that is what we do. When Jim told me services may go to recorded (commercial) music. My reaction...NO! We can't let that happen!

We stopped and counted the things we had on our side...Jim has experience with recording music. He has recorded his own compositions and has an electric piano that he can turn into "Boyle's Tiny Symphony". Our choir members, who all have beautiful voices to share, can record themselves with minimal equipment. I have computer knowledge and can never resist a challenge. And so, it began...

We chose a hymn that the choir has often sung, #123 "Spirit of Life". Jim put together the music track in an audio file. He sent that WAV format file on to me. My job, from there, was to scan the pages from the hymnal for those who didn't have one at home. Assemble an email with instructions and attach the music WAV file and hymnal pages. Send out the email to the choir and wait...

The choir members open the email and get to singing...They open the music file on a device which they are able to plug their headphones into. Then use their smartphone, with Voice Memo or a similar app, to record their vocal track as they sing to the music. Listening to your recording is difficult, especially since we don't hear the voice we recognize in our head on that recording! Our bones lower the frequency of the vibrations from our voice and it sounds quite different to us from what the world hears. We also hear every tiny note or word that doesn't seem just quite right. Recording version 1, 2, 3....until you finally get THE ONE you can live with and it goes to Linda.

"Linda's Tiny Music Studio and Video Production Emporium", fully equipped with a laptop, iPad and iPhone, opens for business. I get busy importing the WAV files from Jim and each choir member into an app, n-Track Studio 9 (a digital audio workstation). Each track is laid down then adjusted like puzzle pieces. Listening to them, equalizing them, bringing out parts and fading others. Building those tracks into the choir we so love...a Virtual UUFCC Quar'n Choir hymn is born!

On to the next challenge...Jim had told me in order to get a song up on YouTube it has to be in a video form. I think back to my course on Microsoft Office at Edison College, where I HAD to make a PowerPoint video. It becomes like algebra, someday you'll find you really need it! The slides will allow the congregation to join in singing using the lyrics on their screen while the audio (hymn) runs in the background. Add some animation and boom it's a video! I uploaded the video and shared the link to Jim, the choir and Dan...see and hear what we have done! Success.

We are now solidly in hymn production. We have learned things along the way and are working to improve the final product. Solos and duets will be featured from time-to-time.

Now the whole congregation can hear, watch and sing with each hymn on the UUFCC YouTube Channel. Go there and check it out!

Immigration Justice

The UUFCC Immigrant Justice Committee, following the example of the Racial Justice Committee, is planning to hold an event in November 2020 during which brief vignettes (no more than 500 words) written anonymously by an immigrant or close relative of an immigrant will be read in a public setting and also published in a booklet titled "Immigrant Voices". Or someone not an immigrant may have a story about an experience with an immigrant. These should be the telling of some immigrant incident or experience. They can be serious, funny, insightful, revealing or whatever the teller has to share.

For whoever might feel the need for assistance in writing their vignette, help is available.

We hope you will help this effort.

Those interested may email Immigrationjusticeuu@gmail.com or call Betty at 941-258-8473. Also, a drop-off box will be available in the UUFCC Fellowship Hall.

Racial Justice Committee

First, a little bit of history...the Racial Justice Committee was born out of a response to an all-congregation read of Michelle Alexander's book *The New Jim Crow* on mass incarceration. It was tasked with looking for ways to call attention to racial disparities and actions we, as a congregation, could take. During this time, we have banded with Blanchard House and Mid-County Library to have a movie series highlighting black history, issues relevant to African Americans, by or about Black folks. For the past four years, we have culminated our Black History movie series with Racial Monologues. There have been other smaller congregational and community actions taken over the years.

That brings us back to the present. For the past year, the committee has been without leadership to some degree due to the fact that a majority of members are snowbirds and unable to make the commitment necessary year-round. This year, we winnowed down our activities to the Black History Month movie series and Racial Monologues. These were both led by members committed to the continuation of these specific activities. No other activities have been logged due to a lack of participation.

Given this situation, at the last Zoom meeting, the decision was made to fold the committee back into the Social Justice Committee. The smaller group committed to the movie series and Racial Monologues will continue with those activities. There has been some discussion of changing the format of the movie series as attendance has continued to decline and we have started conversations with a few other congregations.

While it is sad to think of the demise of this committee while racism continues to be rampant, lack of participation has led to this point. Still, considering there were not a lot of voices at the last meeting, we thought to give folks who might still be interested a chance to step up. So, if you have an interest in seeing that the Racial Justice Committee continues AND are willing to assume a leadership role, please let yourself be known. If this saddens you but you see the necessity of this current plan, please consider becoming more involved in the Social Justice Committee so that action can be taken as the need arises.

UUFCC BYLAWS COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

The search for two volunteers is extended

A Bylaws Committee is being formed to review, assess and, if needed, update UUFCC Bylaws so they represent UUFCC and its members, friends and goals.

The Bylaws Committee will consist of three Board members and two Non-Board members.

UUFCC BYLAWS COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

If you wish to be considered for UUFCC Bylaws Committee, please send your name, contact info and a brief description of what you bring to the table to www.office@uufcc.org ASAP.

Happy Birthday to You!



June

Jacqueline Williamson	6/11
Mary Pender	6/18
Ginger Abraham	6/21
John Chase	6/21
Lynn Ritchie	6/30

July

Cheryl Deuley	7/6
Delmar Wooden	7/7
Lorrie Budlong	7/11
Carolyn Kellar.	7/14
Jack Osbourne.	7/16
Sharon Whitehill.	7/21

Worship Survey Results

A couple of weeks ago Rev. Dan sent out a survey asking a few questions about our Zoom worship. We had over 70 responses! The feedback was encouraging and included some good ideas. The Worship Team will discuss the results at their regular June meeting and will make adjustments based on the feedback. It's abundantly clear that having that regular live community connection is important to our fellowship. Thanks for your help!

Zoom News!

In an effort to make Zoom easier to manage for the staff and for all of you, we now have just one Zoom link for ALL on-going activities and meetings. The exception to that is Conversations Among Friends, Spanish for Beginners, committee and one-time meetings. Now <https://zoom.us/j/93526372148> is the ONLY Zoom link you need for most gatherings, INCLUDING Sunday worship. If you have the Zoom app on your computer or phone, or if you simply use a web browser for Zoom, the numbers are all you need. Enter 935 2637 2148 when asked for the Meeting ID and you can enter any gathering.

OUR NEWEST ZOOM CONNECTION

Happy Hour with John Lee on Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Pour your favorite beverage and Zoom-in for a new-fashioned cocktail hour hosted by John Lee. Teetotalers also welcome.

