



# NEW OUTLOOK

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

*A spiritual home where religion and reason meet*

JULY/AUGUST 2019



## Dear Ones

*(Excerpts from a sermon, "Strengths, Challenges and a Reflection on the Future of UUFCC", by Dennis G. Shaw, Ed.D)*

Dear Ones,

I have been a Unitarian Universalist for over 45 years. Nine of those years have been spent here at UUFCC. For 7 of those nine years, I have served on the Board of Trustees as a trustee, secretary and president. Based on this investment of time and energy, I feel confident that I have a strong grasp of UUFCC's strengths and major challenges. I will begin with what I see as UUFCC's major strengths.

First, we are blessed with lots of seriously committed people and many of them are newer members. These are "long haul" folks!

UUFCC's second major strength can be found in our history. We have existed for 50 years. The people who created this Fellowship struggled, invested and worked very hard to create their dreams and nurture them to fruition. The notion that all our ancestors were rich snowbirds is a myth!

You may remember from our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service that the Fellowship's first gathering occurred on January 9, 1969 in a home. Twelve folks attended. It took the group 9 years to grow large enough to afford a retired, part-time contract minister and 11 years to construct our building. Our first full-time minister didn't arrive until 1993.

UUFCC has had 13 ministers over 40 years. We have experienced ministerial transitions numerous times before. Each new arrival brought his or her special gifts and together we have usually found common ground and grown.

The third strength that energizes this beloved community is our shared core values. We are strong because so many of us embrace and attempt to live lives based on love, service, justice, spiritual growth and peace. These values create natural bonds which are quite contagious.

Our fourth major strength is we are rich! Together we own almost two beautiful acres just a block off the major artery in a growing city. We also own a 4,500 square foot building which is mortgage-free and in good shape. Additionally, we have funds invested to care for our property and significant rainy-day savings which will cover deficits that will occur once we contract with a minister.

Finally, we are a community of action with high expectations and a deep hunger for community and justice. Think about the time, energy, talent, thought, labor, and of course, money we invest in the creation of worship, music, art, care and hospitality, social, racial, immigration and climate justice.

Given these strengths, UUFCC will be able to face significant challenges like finding a minister and growing our pledge base so we can pay his or her salary over the long term. We currently have received approximately \$104,000 in pledges for the 2019-20 fiscal year. We need to increase this amount to \$135,000 by the 2022-23 fiscal year. When we accomplish this, we will be in a financial position to invite a two-year contract minister to stay with us in a “settled” relationship.

To this end, Finance and Stewardship folks will meet regularly throughout the year to monitor and publicize our progress and create strategies. We will also focus on membership growth.

Please consider the Fellowship in your estate planning. Bequests have provided significant opportunities for expansion of programming and services in the past.

If you can, please increase your current pledge. You can accomplish this by notifying our treasurer, Nancy Weaver, in writing. Simply state that in addition to your previous pledge, you pledge an additional specified amount for the 19-20 pledge drive, then sign and date it.

If you have not pledged, please do so ASAP.

### AND WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

I don't have a crystal ball and the only constant I am aware of is change. But the vibes here at UUFCC are good. So, I will leave you with this final thought.

**DON'T WORRY. “BE HAPPY FOR LIFE IS AS SHORT AS A KISS.”**

In faith and gratitude,  
Dennis Shaw, President  
UUFCC Board of Trustees

## CHANGES IN THE OFFICE

On July 28th during the Sunday service, we will officially say goodbye to the McCoy family. Members, Chris and Chrissy and son, Haven, are moving to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Chris McCoy has been our Fellowship's administrator since June 2014. During this period, he has served UUFCC in so many capacities. His replacement will have much to learn.

During the over four years that I have served as President of UUFCC's Board of Trustees, I have relied on Chris' amazing wealth of information and technological skills to do my job. I treasure him as a trusted employee and dear friend. Chris' last day in the office will be July 18<sup>th</sup>.

On July 1<sup>st</sup> our new administrator, Mary Jane Williams, will begin learning Chris' responsibilities. We are delighted that Mary Jane accepted the position. The transition should be quite smooth.



## Many Paths...

### Sundays

**9:15 a.m.** Conversation Among Friends

**10:30 a.m.** – Worship Service

Coffee Hour following Worship

Potluck Lunch on first Sunday

### Meditation and Buddhist Discussion Group

**Thursday nights, 5 - 6:00 pm**

Each evening we begin with a discussion and end with a period of meditation. All are welcome to attend.

## Sunday Services

### July

**July 7 "Why I Get Out of Bed on Sunday Morning"**  
Sharon Whitehill, Robert Moran, and Marilyn Reeve

Yes, it's tempting to sleep late on Sundays. But the former teacher in me is tempted to mention that unexcused absences today will be recorded and may affect your final grade. We three presenters will tell you why UUFCC acts a magnet for us, so come and compare what brings *you* here week after week. And be ready to be inspired by possibilities you've overlooked or postponed.

**July 14 "Providing Hope and Humanity"**

Vernon Scott of Meals on Wheels will tell us everything we need to know about what this organization does, how it is funded and how the meals are delivered. The Second Helping will be collected for Meals on Wheels as well.

**July 21 "An Updated Look at the Five Smooth Stones"**  
The Reverend Margaret L. Beard

We know that Unitarian Universalism has no creed. Over the years, there have been various efforts to describe who we are as a movement. Unitarian Theologian James Luther Adams attempted to delineate the essential elements of a genuine and vital religious liberalism. This is a model that has been around for over 50 years. While many have found it useful, are there ways it needs to be updated?

**July 28 "Confronting Stigma"**  
John Lee

John Lee will share about dealing with the stigma associated with HIV and help us learn the facts.

### August

**August 4 "Unheard Melodies: Sacred Music of Heaven and Earth"**  
Sharon Whitehill

"Heard melodies are sweet," wrote John Keats, "but those unheard are sweeter." Human music, of course, is familiar. But what about animal music, or plant music - or the ancient idea of the music of the spheres? Today we leave the noise of TV and traffic behind and tune in to the sweet music of nature.

**August 11 "40 Acres and a White Girl: Reparations"**  
James Abraham

What happened to the 40 acres and a mule? Does the U.S. government owe black people anything? James Abraham will discuss the pros and cons of reparations in an engaging, fact-filled presentation.

**August 18 "What About Eve?"**  
The Reverend Margaret L. Beard

Most of us are generally familiar with the story of Adam and Eve. It is the creation story shared by the three Abrahamic religions: Islam, Judaism and Christianity. This story also sets the basis of the doctrines for "the fall of man" and "original sin" present in Christianity but not in Islam or Judaism (or Unitarian Universalism for that matter.) How can Eve be understood today as a heroic ancestor?

**August 25 "For the Love of Pets"**  
Dennis Shaw

Many of us share our homes and hearts with pets. This service will celebrate these special relationships that enrich our lives. While only official service animals can attend, you are encouraged to send stories and photos about your special "friend" to Dennis Shaw at [shawdennisg@yahoo.com](mailto:shawdennisg@yahoo.com)

# Book Group

Mary Jane Williams

The Book Group meets at the UUFCC on the last Wednesday of the month October through May at 1:30 p.m. except for the November and December discussions which are combined and held on a date to be determined. For further information contact Mary Jane Williams [maryjanewms@comcast.net](mailto:maryjanewms@comcast.net)

All are welcome to attend and suggestions for future discussions are welcome. Please keep in mind that we try to keep the price down for books that need to be purchased by discussion participants. The availability of inexpensive used copies is frequently a consideration.

If you would like to receive email notifications of future book choices and meeting reminders, please contact Mary Jane and you will be added to the group email list.

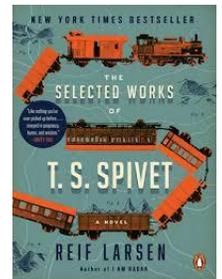
The October book will be the Epic of Gilgamesh. The story is about 4 thousand years old and is considered by many scholars to be the oldest piece of epic writing in existence. There are many versions and translations of this work and some of them are more difficult to read than others. A recommended inexpensive version is *Gilgamesh: a new English version* by Stephen Mitchell ISBN 978-0-7432-6169-2.

There are used copies available from Amazon in the \$5 range. If you can't get it, let me know and I'll see if I can lend you an e-reader with the book on it. The story itself is only about 80 pages in most versions but this edition contains a lot of supplementary material. I just like this translation best.

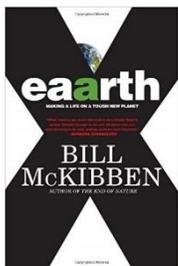
## Book selections for July and August

### July 25 *The Selected Works of T. S. Spivet* by Reif Larsen (fiction)

When twelve-year-old genius cartographer T. S. Spivet receives an unexpected phone call from the Smithsonian announcing he has won the prestigious Baird Award, life as normal—if you consider mapping dinner table conversations normal—is interrupted and a wild cross-country adventure begins, taking T. S. from his family home just north of Divide, Montana, to the museum's hallowed halls. There are some answers here on the road from Divide and some new questions, too. How does one map the delicate lessons learned about family or communicate the ebbs and flows of heartbreak, loneliness, and love?



### August 29 *Eaarth: making a life on a tough new planet* by Bill McKibben (nonfiction)



Twenty years ago, with *The End of Nature*, Bill McKibben offered one of the earliest warnings about global warming. Those warnings went mostly unheeded; now, he insists, we need to acknowledge that we've waited too long, and that massive change is not only unavoidable but already under way. Our old familiar globe is suddenly melting, drying, acidifying, flooding, and burning in ways that no human has ever seen. We've created, in very short order, a new planet, still recognizable but fundamentally different. We may as well call it Eaarth.

That new planet is filled with new binds and traps. A changing world costs large sums to defend—think of the money that went to repair New Orleans, or the trillions it will take to transform our energy systems. But the endless economic growth that could underwrite such largesse depends on the stable planet we've managed to damage and degrade. We can't rely on old habits any longer.

# Library Update

Mary Jane Williams

I'm happy to report that through the combined efforts of Tom, Chris and myself, the UUFCC Library Catalog is back online for your use. The link for the catalog is available via the UUFCC homepage under the Miscellaneous heading.

I am busy cataloging new materials for the Fellowship and suggest that you keep an eye on the new book shelf for great new books.

A special thanks to the Racial Justice committee for their generous contribution of the supporting materials from the White Ally movement and the newest edition of Racial Monologues. These books will be available in the library soon.

## Happy Birthday to you!



Cheryl Deuley 7/6

Delmar Wooden 7/7

Lorrie Budlong 7/11

Carolyn Kellar 7/14

Jack Osborne 7/16

Sharon Whitehill 7/21

Linda Himes 8/4

Norma Jock 8/20

Bill "Fossil" Howat 8/23

Joanne Murphy 8/23

Rosemary Hagan 8/25

Maureen Peters 8/30



## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Mondays – July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Aug. 5, 12, 19, 26 – Conversational Spanish 5 pm**

**Thursdays – July 4, 11, 18, 25, Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 – Meditation 5 pm,**

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|---|---|
| <b>July 3</b> Gulf Coast Acoustical Guitar Society<br>7 pm  | <b>Aug. 7</b> Immigration Justice 5 pm<br>Gulf Coast Acoustical Guitar Society 7 pm |
| <b>9</b> NAMI Group   | <b>9</b> Café Serendipity 7 pm  |
| <b>10</b> Caring & Hospitality 10 am                        | <b>11</b> Social Justice 12 pm  |
| <b>12</b> Café Serendipity 7 pm                             | <b>13</b> NAMI Group  |
| <b>13</b> Chalice Circles 2 pm                              | <b>14</b> Caring & Hospitality 10 am  |
| <b>14</b> Social Justice 12 pm                              | <b>16</b> UUFCC Gaming Night 6:30 pm  |
| <b>16</b> UUFCC Board Meeting 6 pm<br>Sierra Club 7 pm      | <b>19</b> Art Committee 12 pm<br>Mystical Experiences 12 pm                         |
| <b>19</b> UUFCC Gaming Night 6:30 pm                        | <b>20</b> UUFCC Board Meeting 6 pm<br>Sierra Club 7 pm                              |
| <b>21</b> Art Committee 12 pm<br>Mystical Experiences 12 pm | <b>21</b> Immigration Justice 5 pm  |
| <b>24</b> Worship Committee 10 am<br>Healing Oasis 6 pm     | <b>24</b> Chalice Circles 3 pm<br>Meatless Meals 5:30 pm                            |
| <b>27</b> Chalice Circles 3 pm<br>Meatless Meals 5:30 pm    | <b>28</b> Healing Oasis 6 pm  |
|   | <b>30</b> Art on the Wall Takedown 10 am  |
|   | <b>31</b> Art on the Wall Hanging 10 am   |