

DECEMBER 2024



FUF MONTHLY NEWS



Grounded in love,
Guided by wisdom,
Committed to spiritual
growth and justice.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy Holidays! We have a friend who goes crazy when she hears that. “It’s ‘Merry Christmas,’ dammit!” Well, in her world, yes, that’s what’s celebrated. But in the Wegner world, it’s bagels and lox for Christmas Day breakfast, a movie that afternoon, and Chinese for dinner. It’s a long story, but it has to do with a diver’s family and being grateful and kind and not hurting anyone’s feelings.

And, isn’t that what this season, starting with Thanksgiving, is all about? Being grateful. Being kind. They kind of go together. It makes me give a little more at the red Christmas pails, bring more to the Food Pantry, be sure my isolated neighbor is being included in Holiday cheer, and help to meet our anonymous donor's challenge.

As a group, we don’t join in any community giving this time of the year. We have the Food Pantry (Please, please give generously!), but our community action is lacking here. Internally, we have recently risen to providing help to members is great need. Thank you for your care and concern! We also had a great Annual Meeting this year. New members were recognized and volunteers (which is ALL of you) were celebrated.

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We are off to a great start with 2025! I noted that our size and structure need to be able to work together to give us the ability to grow. Size. Structure. Growth. That will be tackled by the Board this coming year as we also develop a Mission Statement to coordinate with our vision: "GROUNDED IN LOVE, GUIDED BY REASON, COMMITTED TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND JUSTICE."

May we use 2025 to grow stronger, kinder, and most grateful for this special place.

Blessings Be,

Irene

WHAT CAN UU'S CAN DO RIGHT NOW TO PROTECT THE VALUES THAT WE CHERISH?

Our new Government has an extreme agenda on many fronts. Many of their proposals attack the values and principles which Unitarian Universalists cherish. The best way to address our despair is to act on our values and beliefs. There are many organizations in Alabama that provide support to the groups and people threatened, and that need your support. Here is a list of those local groups that support people and causes that are threatened:

Pro-Immigrants:

<https://www.acij.org/>

<https://www.alirp.org/>

Anti-Racist:

<https://naacp.org/>

<https://atlanta.adl.org/>

<https://www.alimanacademyofmobile.com/>

Pro-LGBTQ+:

<https://www.rainbowprideofmobile.org/>

<https://www.lgbtqofmobilebay.org/>

Pro-abortion Provision:

<https://www.yellowhammerfund.org/>

<https://powertodecide.org/>

Anti-book Banning:

<https://www.readfreelyalabama.org/>

Multiple Issues Affecting Working People:

<https://www.alarise.org/>

Anti-Climate Change:

<https://gaspgroup.org/climate-energy/>

<https://gulfoastcreationcare.org/>

Pro Labor Unions:

<https://www.causeiq.com/directory/unions-list/alabama-state/>

Pro Civil Liberties:

<https://action.aclu.org>

ACLU will be the leader of the fight to protect our democracy and civil liberties in the face of those determined to change laws to overturn them.

Please choose 1 or 2 groups which engage issues dear to your heart and reflect how you can support them either financially or with volunteer help.

When discussing these issues remember to use a language of caring when discussing threatened organizations and people. Don't be afraid to use vivid language to channel your anger about things you care about. Try to use moral arguments to support your positions.

Fairhope Unitarian Board Minutes

November 8, 2024

Present: Irene Wegner, Phillip Herring, Maggie Joffe, Carl Couret, Nick Coulson, Gwen Snyder and Mary Matthews

In attendance: Bill Meck, Jeanine Normand and Ashley Weller.

I. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 12:30pm. Irene reiterated that we need to use Robert's rules of order for our meeting format.

Approval of the minutes were called for by the recording secretary. Irene had two additions she wanted to add to October minutes: that of mentioning that in addition to outside signs for the UU., signs for the rooms inside were needed to be included too. And that Carl was responsible for giving the board an assessment of what we need to do about the dead trees.

After these additions were added to the minutes, Mary called for approval and Maggie seconded the motion and all approved.

II. Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report: Maggie Joffe noted that the administration account was over budget this month due to having to purchase new checks for \$475.00. She will ask if there is a less expensive option since we are a nonprofit. There is also a service charge for our bank account and 2 Wix charges. The purchases of shades and room locks by Nick were an additional expenditure.

The budget committee (Bert Sonenstein, Elaine Snyder, Sandra Tormoen, Mia Manifold along with Maggie Joffe) met. The committee wanted actual figures from October 2023 to October 2024 to be the basis of determining the 2025 projected budget. They decided to omit the anonymous matching donation donor out of the calculations since this is not a certainty for the future. Maggie then went on to explain the various changes in the proposed budget for next year. The board wanted include \$500 for charitable contributions and raised the publicity budget from \$500 to \$1000 and the newsletter from \$100 to \$200. Nick also pointed out that it would be nice raise the speaker fee that we provide. Carl proposed to leave this to the discretion of the program chairman provided it remained within the said budget. This was approved. Nick called to approve the treasurer's report and Mary seconded the motion. All approved.

Art Committee: It was agreed that the costs of art receptions would be the responsibility of the exhibitor.

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson has agreed to head the new membership committee. She has a lot of plans for the coming year. Stay tuned!

Programs: Programs for December were discussed. Two Fellowship circles were planned for December 22 and December 29. The annual business meeting will be held on December 8 and a panel of the nominees will discuss their plans and ideas for the year. A new member book signing and recognition of the volunteers of the fellowship will be included in the program. It was decided not to take a vote at the annual business

meeting on locking of the door for security as previously stated. More needs to be investigated (see under security).

Administrator's Report: Ashley finally accessed the passwords and is changing Wix to Ionis (\$500 vs \$120 a year). She has gotten our Web page and calendar up and running. She will be working on uploading emails and working with Mary Matthews to ensure a transition to the new site that Mary can use for the send out of the weekender. She will also be getting paper copies of the newsletter out as part of her duties. Printing of the UU pamphlets which were stalled in the administrative transition will be resumed. Ordering of pamphlets from the UUA also need to be done so we can maintain our inventory.

A vote of appreciation from the board for the work Ashley has done was heartily endorsed. Thank you, Ashley!

III. Old Business:

A nominating committee has been seeking candidates for the coming year and we should know soon their results. This needs to be made public 2 weeks prior to the annual meeting.

Security of UU building: Thumb locks and blinds have been purchased for the side rooms and are ready for installation.

It was decided not to take a vote on locking the entry door at the annual general business meeting. Instead, a subcommittee was formed to examine security and look into the use of security cameras, door locks and signage as well as surveillance of the parking lot and also recommendations of the UUA, and insurance companies. Carl Couret and Phillip Herring will report back to the board. Meanwhile Boogie has volunteered to keep surveillance of the parking lot during the UU service.

Carl is trying to find out if the dead trees on our property are within the public right of way. He hasn't heard back from the city yet.

Mark Oehler has proposed some names for the rooms in our UU building on line. If anyone has suggestions they are to submit them to him.

IV. New Business:

Irene is planning a holiday decorating party for Saturday, December 7 from 3 to 5 pm and is encouraging people to make suggestions on food and activities for this occasion.

A community action committee is being created. Nick Coulson, and Irene) to look at what the fellowship could do in response to possible curtailments to civil liberties and to discuss and coordinate with outside groups on how to provide needed community services (i.e. transportation, etc.) that might become necessary to support individuals who might need extra help with the incoming transition in our federal government. They will be asking other UU members to help in this endeavor.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40pm. Next board meeting will be on Friday, December 13 at 12:30 p.m.

What's Happening at FUF

Regular Goings On

Sundays

9:45am — Silent Meditation Group
(regular meeting time will resume in January)

10:45am — Youth Fellowship

11:00am — Sunday Service

Mondays

2-4pm — Uke Open Jam

Tuesdays

9:00am — Men's Discussion Club (at Kind Café)

Wednesdays

3:00-4:30pm — Back Porch Folk Singers practice

3:30pm—

4:45pm — Eastern Shore String Rehearsal

Thursdays

5:00-7:00pm — Thursday Group at Sage Café

10:30am— Dec. 5th & 19th Women's Group

Saturdays

6:30pm — Dec. 14th & 28th Game Night!

Group Activities

Silent Meditation Group

The TED Talk room will be open for silent meditation beginning at 9:45am on Sundays. It will not be guided or linked to any method or religion. All are welcome and may come and go at will provided they respect silence.

Sunday Morning Book Group

The group will not meet during the month of December.

Non-Fiction Book Group

Meets at 10:30am every other Thursday, excepting holidays.

Game Night

Board games, card games, dice games... bring it and we'll play it! Every 2nd and 4th Saturday night from 6:30-8:30pm.

Women of Wisdom Discussion Group

WoW meets every other Thursday at 10:30am in the TED Talk room. Members select the topic. Lunch to follow at a local restaurant. For more info contact Jane Finger jane09@gmail.com or just show up!

If there have been any changes to your FUF group meetings, please update our Office Admin, Ashley Weller.

Office@FairhopeUU.org

Thank you!

DECEMBER PROGRAMS



FUF 2025 General Board

December 1

Presentation of Candidates

Candidates for the positions on the 2025 Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship General Board will talk about the work they would do if elected to the Board. There will be an opportunity to question the candidates about any issue, and to ask about how they will contribute to FUF. Members should see this as an opportunity to ask about the issues ranging from the color of the coffee cups for visitors to the direction the Fellowship is going.

December 8

Annual Congregational Business Meeting

This is the major opportunity for the FUF Board members to outline the developments over the past year, as well as plans for the future to the FUF congregation. It is the opportunity for FUF members to vote in a new Board for 2025 and to comment on and question what they are hearing.



December 15

Bah Humbug!

The Fellowship will see the true story of the origin of our American celebration of Christmas with a cast of members. We have celebrated thus this last 4 years.

Irene Wagner will direct.



December 22

Holiday Stories

Come share your favorite holiday story and hear new ones. Recount some memorable, interesting, or amusing tales from holidays past. No subject is off limits. Members and friends are requested to come armed with a tale to tell!



December 29

Hopes and Resolutions for the New Year

Share your hopes and resolutions for the coming New Year with us!



Deadlines for Publications

Weekly Bulletin and FUF Weekender

Wednesdays by 5pm

Submit to Mary Matthews: matthewsmary29@yahoo.com

Monthly Newsletter

23rd of each month by 5pm

Email your UU-relevant articles, bits of wisdom, scheduled events, quotes, poems, or images!

Submit to Ashley Weller: Office@FairhopeUU.org

Thank you
for reading!



Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship

Sunday Schedule

Silent Meditation - 9:45 am
Youth Fellowship - 10:45 am
Musical Prelude - 10:45 am
Sunday Service - 11:00 am

All visitors are warmly invited to participate as our guests!

Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship welcomes and embraces people of any age, race, gender identity, or expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, language, or cultural background.

2024 Officers, Executive Board, & Staff

Board Chair/President - Irene Wegner

VP/Corresponding Secretary - Mary Matthews

2nd VP/Programs - Nick Coulson

Treasurer - Maggie Joffrey

Recording Secretary - Gwen Snyder

Member at Large - Phillip Herring

Office Admin - Ashley Weller

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