

February

FUF Monthly News

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Note	1-2
Historical Tidbit	2
UU's Interconnected	3
Jan. Board Summary.....	3
UUA Certification.....	4
Artist Spotlight.....	5
Cares and Concerns.....	5
February Speakers.....	6-7
FUF Schedule	8
Calendar	9



Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship
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Fairhope, AL 36532
www.FairhopeUU.org

A NOTE FROM THE FUF PRESIDENT

After our Sunday Program on January 4th – I sensed a change erupting. Here at the Fellowship, we have long-term members who established the way things are done, like it, and may be resistant to changing it. Change can create discomfort. Change can also offer opportunities. We have been working our way through this transition, an ending of what was and the beginning of what can be.

Consider that just in the last 5 years, the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship has experienced an influx of new members. These newcomers now outnumber the steadfast long-time members who remain with their known history, habits, and traditions. Those coming in to the Fairhope faith community may experience similarities and differences from their UU faith, other previous faiths or non-faith practices. But mostly they are seeking and finding a place with like-minded souls, open arms, welcoming community, and a place of belonging.

To honor the “old” and welcome the “new,” we are encouraged to give reference to the 3rd UU Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

I bid you newcomers – respect the history, traditions, contributions, and passions of those who have come before.

I bid you long timers – respect the new ideas, different experiences, potential contributions, and equal passions of those who have now come along.

Let’s share our knowledge, exchange ideas on what has been and what can be, but mostly let us LISTEN and LEARN from one another so that we can continue

(Continued on page 2)

to build together and bind together in our quest for understanding and belonging to this, OUR community.

Humbly and proudly,
Mary Anderson
FUF President



FUF HISTORICAL TIDBITS:

Long time members, Bayne and Annabelle Snyder were the parents of current members: Gwen Snyder, Elaine Conn-Snyder and Janet Snyder and in-laws to Phil Strinste.

As the “kids” recall: The couple moved to Fairhope from Gulfport, Mississippi sometime around 1979 (right after Hurricane Frederic). They moved here for two reasons: 1) In the beginning, they liked the musical program of the Methodist Church, but when the minister rained down with messages of “fire and brimstone,” it was not to the Snyders’ liking. They got to know Verda Horne, a Fairhope UU. Verda came to Gulfport and inspired the formation of a UU fellowship that initially met in a house in Pass Christian, Mississippi. (2) The other reason was that by moving here to the East Shore, they had proximity to water. Bayne loved boats and fishing. Upon arrival, they set about building a passive solar house which Phil and Gwen now live in.

As UUs they joined with others like the Ehlers, Coutant’s, Arden Flagg, to form the Back Porch Folk Singers. Phil, Gwen, and Elaine continue to perform with the Back Porch Folk Singers.

From Gwen: “For many years my mother did the coffee and refreshments. Both were active in giving programs to the group as well as participating in the planning and fundraising for the present UU building. The living memory garden was designed by my father to honor my mother after she died.”



From the Baldwin Press Register, Tuesday, May 14, 1991

*Pictured Back row: Diane Ellers, Ernie Ellers, Bayne Snyder, Joyce Bishop, Deborah Nessup
Front row: Arden Flagg, Marjorie Tuck Annabelle Snyder*



UU'S INTERCONNECTED

With their shaken community in upheaval after an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent fatally shot 37-year-old mother of three Renee Nicole Good, Unitarian Universalists in Minneapolis are responding through protest, mourning, and caring for their neighbors.

Rev. Ashley Horan, the UUA's Vice President for Programs and Ministries, who resides near the site of the shooting in south Minneapolis, began livestreaming from the scene. Amid a "terrible and terrifying time," Horan said, she has seen "the very best of people, the very best of faith, of the very best of humanity just showing up for each other.

Horan said she was heartened to see UUs living their values in a time of crisis.

"At the center of our faith are the twin values of understanding that all life is sacred, all life has inherent worthiness and dignity, and that we are deeply interdependent and interconnected."

Good's killing and the later killing of Alex Pretti has led thousands of people to protest including that of a well-represented gathering in Foley, Alabama on January 11th and the vigil sponsored by Indivisible held at the Fellowship January 31. Together we stand in love.

Read the full article at: [Unitarian Universalists in Minneapolis Protest ICE Killing of Renee Nicole Good | UU World Magazine](#)



JANUARY BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Board members received updated orientation materials, including the finalized Volunteer Handbook, which will be available in the office, foyer, online, and in the digital archive. The board also reviewed Board expectations and orientation processes.

Reports were accepted, including the Treasurer's report showing an end-of-year bank balance of \$25,109, and updates from the Administrator and committees. Members were informed of upcoming Sunday programs, including the Membership Appreciation Sunday on February 22, as well as special events (March 7—Stand Up Comedy Jam 2, April 4—Rummage Sale, and April 11—Concert).

The board formally confirmed the election of Irene and Bellamy as members-at-large. The Facility Use Fee Schedule was approved, and a proposed Facility Use Policy will be distributed to the board for discussion and a vote at the February meeting.

The board agreed to try meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 4:00 pm, with the next meeting scheduled for February 10 at FUF.



UUA CERTIFICATION

Each year, congregations are required to submit their annual Certification of Membership report to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Our plan is to submit the FUF report by the due date, February 2, 2026.

The information is used by UUA to update member and lay leader information, certify membership numbers, and designate delegates for General Assembly. Information on annual operational expenditures is used to calculate our contribution to UUA's Annual Program Fund (APF).

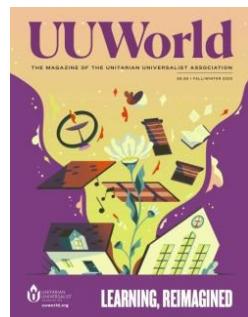
Annual Program Fund (APF)

The Annual Program Fund is the primary source of funding for the Unitarian Universalist Association. Nearly two-thirds of the UUA's philanthropic revenue comes from our congregations. The Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship is one of the numerous congregations who contribute to the UUA Annual Program Fund.

As a concrete expression of our interconnectedness, we give to support congregations other than our own, investing in and strengthening the presence of Unitarian Universalism.

The bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association state: "*A congregation becomes a member upon acceptance by the Board of Trustees of the Association of its written application for membership in which it subscribes to the principles of and pledges to support the Association.*" Our principles and purposes close with this promise: "*As free congregations we enter into...covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.*"

Note: Entering into the covenant, Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship became affiliated with the Unitarian Association January 27, 1952, by a group of liberal thinkers in Fairhope who first met in homes, the Quaker Meeting House, & then Art Center before erecting their own Fellowship Hall in 2003.



UU World Magazine

Each household that contains a congregation member can receive a copy of *UU World* as part of that congregation's Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) membership. We are in process of updating the list to assure FUF members who want it are on the list to receive the quarterly magazine. If you currently do not receive UU World and want to be added to the list, please contact Ashley Weller at Office@fairhopeuu.org.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JUNE 14 – 21, 2026
MEET THE MOMENT: TOGETHER EVERYWHERE

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), where participants gather to worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy decisions for the Association through a democratic process. While anyone can attend, congregations must certify annually to have voting delegates. Our membership numbers will determine how many delegates are assigned to vote on our behalf.

As the GA nears closer, we will continue to provide information on our opportunities to be a part of this gathering of the larger UU.

For more information go to: www.uua.org.

FUF ARTIST GALLERY SPOTLIGHT

Bryant Galloway Whelan

Bryant Galloway Whelan is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work reflects her sense of awe and wonder for forms of nature and their intrinsic beauty. Through her work she hopes to inspire others to see nature through an expanded lens, inspiring a reverence for its beautiful biodiversity.

A lifelong artist, Whelan earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Auburn University and only began making art as a full-time practice in 2023 upon retirement as Executive Director of Eastern Shore Art Center in Fairhope, Alabama. Whelan has won numerous awards for her work as well as been awarded artist residencies in Nantucket, Cape Cod, and Seaside, Florida. Whelan is a member of Fairhope Signature Artists and Mississippi Art Colony and enjoys teaching classes and workshops in experimental printmaking techniques. When not in her studio Whelan is likely on a coastal beach foraging for seaweed and beach fauna, walking in the woods gathering flora, seed pods and moth wings, or traveling to explore remote natural environs.



CARES AND CONCERN

If you experience a health setback and could use some assists or if you know of a Fellowship friend or member who is experiencing such setback, the Care and Concerns Team is here to help. Team members and friends can provide meals, transportation, cards of support, and/or visits while you are on the mend. Call/text Susan Hammack @ 205-527-3328 Email the Fellowship office office@fairhopeuu.org or leave a voicemail at 251-929-3207. You are not alone. We are in this together.



February Programs

**Nick Coulson**

February 1

Programs Inequality: Bad for the Poor... and the Rich

Research shows that societies experience more social, environmental and health problems as the gap between the wealthy and the poor increases. In this talk, Nick will present research and insights from the work of the Equality Trust, exploring how inequality affects everyone—from the bottom to the top.

Nick Coulson is a retired English Architect. He moved to Fairhope some 30 odd years ago and is still adjusting. He loves the Unitarian Fellowship for its values and friendships.

February 8

Prodisee Pantry: Filling Plates and Filling Hearts

This talk explores the importance of sharing healthy food with members of our community who are hungry—while protecting their dignity and building meaningful connections that help address other needs. Deann will also share updates on the Prodisee Pantry, along with exciting plans for future expansion.

Deann Servos is the Executive Director of Prodisee Pantry, Baldwin County's largest emergency food pantry, providing thousands of families with groceries and hope! She is a graduate of Penn State and was an accomplished broadcast journalist before answering the call to start Prodisee Pantry.

She received the distinguished Aubrey D. Green Humanitarian Award in 2025 and the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce's Community Leader Award in 2016. Deann serves on the Local Emergency Planning Committee of Baldwin County's Emergency Management Agency, is Chair of Baldwin County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, and sits on the boards of the North Baldwin Infirmary Foundation and the North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce. With over 20 years of nonprofit experience, she is also a mentor and active volunteer in numerous nonprofits.

Deann lives in Stapleton with her husband and three children.

**Deann Servos**



February 15

Begin with Hope

One of most iconic phrases from scripture comes from 1 Corinthians 13: “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” Love is often seen as the ultimate goal—caring for people and affirming the worth and dignity of all, as expressed in our first UU principle. Faith can be understood as a system of belief that helps shape our lives and sustain us through life’s challenges. This talk suggests, however, that hope must come first, because without hope, faith and love cannot endure.

Harold W. Beu

In a time when many people are losing hope, this talk explores the important distinction between realistic and unrealistic hope, and invites reflection on what hope means in today's world.

Harold W. Beu is a retired Unitarian Universalist minister who served congregations for over 30 years in California, Idaho, New Hampshire and Michigan. He has also worked as a high school teacher, teaching history, civics, psychology, and math.

For the past decade, Harold has taught the history of Israel/Palestine for organizations including the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, as well as churches, senior centers, and libraries. He has long been active in the peace movement, working to quell the corrupting effect of militarism in America and to advocate for human rights for all oppressed people.

Harold lives in Kalamazoo with his wife, journalist Julie Mack, and has three grown children.

February 22

Giving in Gratitude Festival

The Member Support Committee is sponsoring a celebration to:

- * Recognize our volunteers,
- * Describe connection opportunities through committee volunteering and participation in Fellowship community offerings,
- * Encourage regular financial giving.

We give in gratitude of our time, talents and treasures, and in doing so, we also receive.



FUF Program

Member Support Committee: Mary Anderson (Chair), Annette Chioma, Susan Hammack, Charlene Lee, Deborah Little, Vivian McMurry, Irene Weaner

open to all!

FUF Groups

Weekly

Silent Meditation Group

Sundays at 9:45am.

Contact: Nick Coulson

Uke Open Jam

Meets every Monday from 2-4pm.

All are invited to come jam with us.

Contact: Carl Couret

Men's Discussion Group

Join us every Tuesday at 9am
at the Kind Café in Fairhope.

Contact: Don Joffe

Back Porch Folk Singers

No invitation necessary

3-4:30pm every Wednesday

Contact: Phil Strniste

Thursday Group

Meets every Thursday 5pm
at the Market by the Bay on Church Street.

Contact: Michael Patrick

Tai Chi

Meets every Saturday at 3:30pm. (When the Fellowship
has a Saturday event, class will shift to Sunday).

Contact: Andrea Cherry



Join us for Fellowship every Sunday!

9:45am—Silent Meditation

10:45am—Musical Prelude

11:00am—Program with Guest Speaker

Coffee Hour follows; Potluck on the last Sunday of the month



Bi-weekly

Women of Wisdom Discussion Group

WoW meets every other Thursday at 11am in the TED

Talk room. Members select the topic.

Lunch to follow at a local restaurant.

Contact Vivian McMurry or Jean Normand

Monthly

Non-Fiction Book Group

Meets at 9:30am on the 1st Thursday of the month.

Contact: Robin Fabel or Michael Patrick

Fiction Book Group

Meets at 4:30pm monthly on the 4th Thursday

Contact: Kathryn Firsching

Small Group Circles

Afternoon Circle meets 1:30pm on 2/18 at the Joffe's
Evening Circle meets 6:30pm on 2/19 at the McMurry's

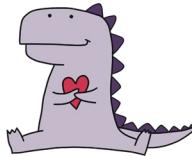
To join, an empty chair awaits you.

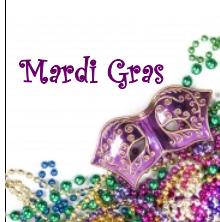
February's topic is "Spirituality"

*Contact: Mary Anderson, Joanne Preston,
Maggie Joffe, or Vivian McMurry*



FEBRUARY



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program	2  2pm- Uke Open Jam	3 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café)	4 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers 4:45-5:45- Eastern Shore Strings	5 9:30-Non-Fiction Book Group 11am-Women of Wisdom 5pm-Thursday Group (FH Market by the Bay)	6 <i>1pm-ESIC</i>	7 3:30pm-Tai Chi with Andrea
8 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program Super Bowl Sunday 	9 2pm- Uke Open Jam	10 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café) 4:00pm Board Meeting	11 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers 4:45-5:45- Eastern Shore Strings	12 5pm-Thursday Group (FH Market by the Bay)	13 <i>1pm-ESIC</i>	14 <i>HAPPY Valentine's DAY</i> 3:30pm-Tai Chi with Andrea
15 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program 12:45-4pm- Grandmothers' Circle	16 2pm- Uke Open Jam	17 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café) 	18 1:30pm- Small Group at the Joffe's 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers 4:45-5:45- Eastern Shore Strings	19 11am-Women of Wisdom 5pm-Thursday Group (FH Market by the Bay) 6:30pm- Small Group at the McMurry's	20 <i>1pm-ESIC</i>	21 11am-3pm- Hall Reserved 3:30pm-Tai Chi with Andrea
22 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program Potluck Sunday	23 2pm- Uke Open Jam	24 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café)	25 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers 4:45-5:45- Eastern Shore Strings	26 4:30pm-Fiction Book Group 5pm-Thursday Group (FH Market by the Bay)	27 <i>1pm-ESIC</i>	28 3:30pm-Tai Chi with Andrea



Deadlines for Publications

Weekly Bulletin and FUF Weekender

Wednesdays by 5pm

Submit to Mary Matthews: matthewsmary29@yahoo.com

February Newsletter

Submit by end of day, February 25

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

Submit to Ashley Weller: Office@FairhopeUU.org



Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship

Mission Statement:

To explore new ideas,
To search for truth and knowledge,
To take care of the Earth,
To enjoy fellowship with open-minded thinkers,
To support and care for each other,

And to create an atmosphere of love and
understanding among our members and for those
who come after us.

Vision Statement:

Grounded in love,
guided by reason,
committed to spiritual growth and justice.

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