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Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship

1150 Fairhope Ave.
 Fairhope, AL 36532
 FairhopeUU.org

A NOTE FROM THE FUF PRESIDENT

Dare I say, “Spirituality”

One of the precepts of Unitarian Universalism that I appreciate most is that “no single belief includes us here; no disbelief excludes us.” We come with our own backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, seeking a community of belonging.

I’ve learned that over the years of coming together, Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship thinkers may have been moving away from more traditional upbringings and leaning more to the secular rather than the spiritual. There was seeming aversion by some to the so-called “religious” words, including the word, “spirituality.”

Prompted by feedback following a January program, for their lesson topic in February, the two Chalice Circle groups discussed “Spirituality.” It was hard to put into words, but we gave it our best shot. Some of us described it as “connection,” the moments of “awe,” something we feel within, yet something beyond ourselves. We learned from each other that “spiritual” means different things to each of us, but each of us identified it as having meaning to us.

Whether you regard yourself as deeply spiritual or never want to be associated with the idea of “spiritual,” consider these quotes from the UUA website:

“Many people’s ideas about religion and spirituality are shaped by the religious traditions they grew up with, and sometimes you will find people who don’t even want to use words like religion, spirituality, and worship, because they or others they know have limited the meanings to ideas they feel are negative.”

“A central belief in Unitarian Universalism is that a person is free to explore

(Continued on page 2)

and decide what they believe (UU Principle 4 speaks of the “free and responsible search for truth and meaning”). Despite our common UU Principles, Unitarian Universalists can have very different beliefs about the supernatural, about right and wrong in a specific situation, about politics, and about other important matters. As individuals go through life, their beliefs often change because of their experiences...”

As Unitarian Universalists let us agree to respect one another, accept one another, and encourage each other’s religious and spiritual growth and exploration. Let us give ourselves permission to:

- Slow down.
- Connect with others.
- Listen to others.
- Find good in each moment and feel good toward each other.

Even leaving out “religious and spiritual”, “growth and exploration” are big enough enticers to care for and support each other.

Proudly and humbly,
Mary Anderson, President



APRIL BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Financially, the Fellowship ended February with a balance of \$12,559. The Board is exploring ways to encourage giving and ensure our investments are earning the best possible return.

Work continues on implementing our updated Building Use Policy, helping streamline how we welcome and manage renters. New interior signage has been installed, with more on the way.

The Board reviewed options for driveway repairs and determined that large-scale asphalt work is not feasible at this time. Instead, efforts will focus on maintaining the current surface and addressing potholes. Landscaping improvements are also ongoing, particularly near the garden shed and western side of the property.

Programs and special events continue to be active, with the next events being the Art Opening Reception May 9, New Member Orientation on May 17, and New Member Welcoming on June 7.

The Board approved a Record Maintenance and Retention Policy. Historical documents are in the process of being scanned, and work continues on organizing files to meet retention requirements and improve accessibility.

We are also exploring options for a programmable digital sign on Fairhope Avenue to increase visibility, with a plan to consider moving forward if funding can be shared between Fellowship funds and donations.

Looking ahead, we are planning for ways to participate in the UUA General Assembly in June, including streaming the Sunday service.

We will delay the decision on a replacement for Vice President for the time being and consider how that position may be enhanced.

As always, we are grateful for the many members who support the life of our Fellowship.

FINANCIALS 1ST QUARTER UPDATE

As of March 31, 2026, the Fellowship's expenses were on target; however, our income from member contributions was \$2,000 under budget. The budget, approved in December 2025, is based on the expectation of collecting a total of \$800 per week from Fellowship members, collectively.

The \$7,000 spent last quarter for major maintenance work on the exterior of the main building and to pay for the immediate need to replace the roof of the Garden Cottage were off budget and paid from the Halstead Fund, which was bequeathed for major building maintenance. The Halstead Fund has a reserve balance of approximately \$25,000.

Budget planning for 2027, which we will conduct in the fall, will include developing a 20-year maintenance plan so we can anticipate and prepare for large off-budget maintenance needs.



HISTORICAL TIDBIT

The Blue Boy Sculpture Story by Gwen Snyder and Phil Strniste

The piece of artwork recently uncovered by Phillip Herring and Stephen King while renovating the overgrown Living Memory Garden on the east side of the FUF property has been there for several years. Thanks to Phillip's welding repair of its base, and a new location closer to the building that I suggested, it should last many more.

Once upon a time, in our capacity as market farmers Gwen and I were fortunate to get to know Jeff Lowther. He is an individual who was smart, sensitive and artistic. After he became one of our "apprentices," our relationship with him grew. He built a yurt on our property and lived in it while he worked on the farm. Later when his life circumstances changed, he dismantled it, moved it to a new location, and put it up again.

He gave us the "Blue Boy" sculpture in light of our friendship as well as that of the 65 families or so that supported Bee Natural Farm (our farm's name). For years it enjoyed a prominent spot in the farm's parking area. The sculpture has always brought a sense of joy -especially when the sun is shining through it.

When we moved off the farm in 2012, we gifted the sculpture (with Jeff's permission) to FUF and placed it in the Living Memory Garden in an advantageous spot on the south side. I moved it to the north side to fill a hole left by a crepe myrtle that had died.

Jeff now lives in Daphne, but before moving there he and his wife Angie lived quite close to the FUF property and would often walk their dogs there. Several times he commented to me about the appropriateness of the sculpture in the Living Memory Garden.

Just as an aside, Jeff was employed by Custom Window and Door at the time FUF was built (2003) and is responsible for constructing the beautiful cypress front doors to the building.



MAY & JUNE ART EXHIBIT

We're delighted to feature artist Dawson Morgan during May and June!

Join us on Saturday, May 9, from 4–6pm for her opening reception, and enjoy her beautiful ceramic works on display at the Fellowship throughout May and June.



Coastal Collection Hand-built, the work of Dawson Morgan, will be exhibiting at The Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship Gallery, May-June. It showcases stoneware ceramics texture and color found on our shores, often incorporating shells as a textural feature embellished by bold glaze colors. “I relish these nuances that add depth, interest, and local shells that I remember from childhood into my work.” Also included will be large acrylic abstracts on canvas stimulated by the centrifugal patterns of throwing colored clay on the wheel.

Dawson Morgan has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, USA with a specialty in hand-built ceramics. After directing Global Galleries in New Orleans, Louisiana, her family moved to Lausanne Switzerland where she had the opportunity to work with other European ceramic artists. New collections and events are updated monthly through Dawsonmorgan.com.

Accolades include Sponsors Choice GGAF 2017, Ceramics Award at the Eastern Shore Art Center Outdoor Arts Festival 2018, as well as numerous other awards and exhibitions throughout Missouri. More recently she has shown locally in exhibitions including the Eastern Shore Art Center; Splash, a solo show and Color In Motion, and a solo exhibition at Sophiella Gallery in Mobile.



CARES AND CONCERNS

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.



LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Please consider making it a weekly habit to bring nonperishable food items and/or toiletries for our Little Free Pantry! There is always a need, and your contributions truly make a difference!

Financial donations are also welcome (please note "Little Free Pantry" with your gift). Thank you for your generosity and care for our neighbors—you make a meaningful impact!



SPECIAL COLLECTION

In addition to supporting the Little Free Pantry, we are collecting donations for our Hispanic neighbors who have been affected by recent ICE activity.

Please see the list of current needs.

Donated items will be delivered to the drop-off site at the Hair Do Salon in Daphne. Thank you for helping us support members of our community during this time.



Donations

PLEASE NO OPEN OR EXPIRED FOODS.

BABY TOILETRIES
(BABY WASH, SHAMPOO, LOTION, POWDER, DIAPER CREAM, BABY WIPES)
ALL SIZES OF DIAPERS (ESPECIALLY 2,3,&4)

HOUSEHOLD ESSENTIALS
(TOILET PAPER, LAUNDRY DETERGENT, DISH SOAP, ETC.)

TOILETRIES
(BODY WASH, DEODORANT, TOOTHPASTE, SHAMPOO, PADS AND LINERS ONLY)

JUICE
(JUICE BOXES, CAPRI SUNS, CARTONS, ETC.)

BOTTLED WATER

CANNED/POWDERED MILK
NIDO KINDER 1+ POWDER BEVERAGE MIX
NIDO FORTIFICADA DRY WHOLE MILK

COFFEE

CANNED CHICKEN

CANNED VEGGIES: CORN, GREEN BEANS, & PEAS

TORTILLAS

CANNED BEANS/DRY BEANS

POTATOES

EGGS

SUGAR

COOKING OIL

RICE

PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY

CEREAL

OATMEAL

MESECA: CORN FLOUR
MEXCLA: FLOUR TORTILLA MIX

SNACKS & TREATS FOR KIDS



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



The Mobile Bay Group Sierra Club will have a free showing of the fantastic local documentary, "Sallie's Ashes," at their May meeting, first **Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 5:30pm** on the Causeway at Five Rivers. Bring a friend!

As Unitarian Universalists, our shared values often call us to engage with issues that impact both people and the planet.

Guided by our UU Principles:

- **The 5th Principle:** the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
- **The 7th Principle:** respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

From Elders Climate Action (edited and summarized for length)

EPA Plan for Coal Ash Eliminates Critical Safeguards: Your Comments Are Needed

Coal ash—the toxic byproduct of burning coal for electricity—is contaminating water with hazardous chemicals such as arsenic, chromium, lead, and radium at nearly every current and former coal plant site in the U.S. Just as the full scale of this contamination was beginning to come to light, a new proposed rule would effectively halt key coal ash regulations. There is an opportunity to respond during the virtual public hearing on May 28 and through the public comment period open until June 12.

Why Your Written Comments Matter

Submitting a written comment is one of the most direct ways individuals can participate in the democratic process. Unlike form emails, personalized comments become part of the official record and must be reviewed by federal agencies. They can influence how a rule is shaped, amended, or delayed—and may even be referenced in future legal or policy decisions.

Take Action:

- ⇒ Read the draft rule [here](#).
- ⇒ Register [here](#) to attend or provide testimony at the May 28 virtual hearing (9am-6pmCT)
- ⇒ [Submit a written comment](#) by June 12.
- ⇒ Explore additional information and talking points through [Elders Climate Action](#) and use this [Toolkit](#) from our partners at Sierra Club to help you formulate your response.



INVITATION TO NEW MEMBERS



New Member Orientation will be held on May 17 following Sunday service treats. All are invited to the orientation simply to learn more. Information includes "What is UU?" and a brief history on the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship.



New Member Welcoming will be held on June 7 during the Sunday program.

If you wish to become a voting member of the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship, you simply fill out the New Member Form available in hard copy or at fairhopeuu.org/join, and sign the Membership Book. Please see Mary Anderson (Member Support Chair) or Ashley Weller (Administrative Assistant) to complete the process.



SPECIAL SHOWING



Come learn the inspiring history of Unitarians Rev. Waitstill Sharp and his wife, Martha Sharp, who left their own children in 1939 to serve on a humanitarian mission in war-torn Europe. At great personal risk, they helped orchestrate the rescue of hundreds of adults and children from Nazi persecution. The following year, they helped establish what would become the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), one of the world's leading voices for international justice in human rights.

Their story is told by their grandson, Artemis Joukowsky, who co-directed this compelling 90-minute film with Ken Burns.

While in Czechoslovakia, the Sharps were welcomed by Rev. Norbert Čapek, father of Czeck Unitarianism and creator of the UU Flower Communion. Čapek was later imprisoned and killed by the Nazis.

Our potluck has been rescheduled for this date—come enjoy a full lunch before the film.



May Programs

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 May 24



**Janet Fischer &
 Diane Zills, LMSW**

May 3—Sacred Worth: Consent, Respect, and Responding to Sexual Assault

When we say every person has inherent worth and dignity, we commit ourselves to protecting that worth, in ourselves, in our partners, in our communities. Consent is how we honor that commitment. Preventing sexual assault is how we defend it. And supporting survivors is how we restore it.

The Mission of the Lighthouse is the elimination of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault through education, intervention, services and collaboration with the community.

May 10—Exploring a Faith-Based Response to Climate Migration

The global surge in migration over the past decades, often linked to climate change, is now frequently in the news and has spurred a new era of hard-right politics in wealthier countries, including the United States. According to Colette Pichon Battle, a New Orleans-based climate justice strategist and lawyer, “We must start preparing for global migration today. It’s a reality now. Our cities and our communities are not prepared.”

Join Lella Lowe, long-time environmental champion, as she sets the stage for what we are facing and invites conversation about the role of faith communities in preparing for climate-linked mobility and our call to compassion and solidarity with the poor and the stranger.

Lella Lowe is a long-time climate justice champion, involved for many years in creation care programming at her church and in her Episcopal diocese. She has obtained climate justice certifications from the EPA, Climate Reality and Blessed Tomorrow, and is a member of the Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition, Gulf Coast Creation Care, and Mobile Bay Sierra Club. Lella has been rattling creation justice cages at Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Mobile for nearly 40 years.



Lella Lowe

May 17—Council on Aging

Kelly will discuss resources available in Baldwin County for the aging population. The Council on Aging’s mission is to serve as an advocate for Baldwin County seniors. To educate and enlist the support of all levels of government, service agencies and private organizations that can assist with securing resources and implementing programs. The Council on Aging is dedicated to preserving dignity, independence, and peace of mind for the elderly citizens of Baldwin County.

Born and raised in Baldwin County, Kelly has been employed with the Council on Aging for 26 years.



Kelly Childress



May 24—Flower Communion

The Flower Communion is a UU celebration originated in 1923 by Rev. Norbert Capek, a Unitarian minister in Czechoslovakia. His wife Maja Capek, also a Unitarian minister, introduced it in 1940 at the Bedford Massachusetts Unitarian Church where she was serving at the time. The program will include information on the Capeks, the historical era of WW II and his acquaintance with Rev. Waitstill and Martha Sharp who are featured in the Ken Burns documentary, *Defying the Nazis*.

This ritual is not a historical reenactment, but an affirmation of our continuity with the generations of struggle for liberty. You are each asked to bring a flower to the Fellowship, from your gardens, field, or roadside. Upon entry, we will place these flowers in a vase. At the end of the program, each of you will take from the vase a different flower from the one you brought. This symbolized the uniqueness of each individual and the coming together in communion to share this uniqueness.

Presenters: **Mary Anderson** has been a Unitarian Universalist for over 20 years and currently serves as President of the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship. Originally from Minnesota, she now resides in Daphne. **Mark Preston** has been involved with Unitarian Universalism for two years and serves as FUF’s Second Vice Chair and Program Coordinator. Originally from New York, he now lives in Fairhope with his wife, Joanne.

May 31—Fairhope Quakers: A 100+ Year History

Dr Motley will share the origins of the Fairhope Friends Quaker Meeting on Fairhope Avenue, just down the street from FUF. The meeting and its historic building have been part of the community for over 100 years and carry a rich history. Her talk will include the story of the meeting’s founding, the building itself, and a story of Conscientious Objection. She will also reflect on her personal understanding of what it means to be a Quaker and welcomes questions and conversation.

Dr. Carol Motley attends the Fairhope Friends Quaker Meeting. She is a retired family physician who spent most of her career in academic medicine, including 12 years at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. Recently, she presented at the Annual Meeting of the Alabama Historical Association on the legacy of Quakers in Fairhope. She lives in Spanish Fort with her two basset hounds.



Carol Motley

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 Dinner Group

Meets every Thursday 5pm
 Check with Michael for current meeting location.
 Contact: Michael Patrick 251-233-3176

Bi-weekly

Women of Wisdom Discussion Group

WoW meets every other Thursday at 11am in the *Louisa May Alcott* Foyer. 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

Chalice Circles

Afternoon Circle meets 1:30pm on 5/20 at the Joffe's
 Evening Circle meets 6:30pm on 5/21 at the McMurry's
 To join, an empty chair awaits you.
 May's topic is "Trust"
 Contact: Mary Anderson, Joanne Preston,
 Maggie Joffe, or Vivian McMurry



SUNDAY	CHALICE LIGHTING	SPECIAL READING
May 3	Susan Hammack	Jane Finger
May 10	Ken Hudson	Kathryn Firsching
May 17	Maggie Joffe	Mark Oehler
May 24	Mark Preston	Joanne Preston
May 31	Jennifer Lyon	



Interested in serving as a chalice lighter or reader?
 See Joanne Preston to sign up for future dates!

May



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
May is Mental Health Awareness Month					1 1pm-ESIC	2
3 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Prelude 11:00-Program	 2pm- Uke Open Jam	5 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café) 	6 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers 4:45-5:45- Eastern Shore Strings	7 9:30am- Non-Fiction Book Group 5pm-Thursday Dinner Group	8 1pm-ESIC	9 4-6pm Opening Art Exhibit Reception
10 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program 	11 2pm- Uke Open Jam	12 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café)	13 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers	14 11am-Women of Wisdom 5pm-Thursday Dinner Group	15 1pm-ESIC	16
17 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program New Member Orientation 12:45-4pm-Grandmothers' Circle	18 2pm- Uke Open Jam	19 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café) 4:30pm Board Meeting	20 1:30pm- Small Group at the Joffe's 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers	21 5pm-Thursday Dinner Group 6:30pm- Small Group at the McMurry's	22 1pm-ESIC	23
24 9:45-Silent Meditation 10:45-Musical Prelude 11:00-Program Potluck 1:30-Defying the Nazis Showing	 2pm- Uke Open Jam	26 9am-Men's Group (Kind Café)	27 3pm-4:30pm-Back Porch Folk Singers	28 11am-Women of Wisdom 4:30pm-Fiction Book Group 5pm-Thursday Dinner Group 5pm-Eastern Shore Dems	29 1pm-ESIC	30
31 9:45-Silent Med. 10:45-Music 11:00-Program						

Deadlines for Publications

Weekly Bulletin and FUF Weekender

Wednesdays by 5pm

Submit to Mary Matthews: matthewsmary29@yahoo.com

May Newsletter

Submit by end of day, May 27

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

Submit to Ashley: 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.