



IN THIS ISSUE

President’s Note..... 1-2

Board Update 2

Join FUF 2

ESIC Neighbors 3

Pollinator Garden 3

Fiction Book Group 4

Members’ Art 4

Scam Alert 4

UU Silk Artwork 5

Donations Needed 6

Cares & Concerns 6

Environmental..... 7

September Speakers 8

Special Events..... 9

FUF Schedule..... 10

Calendar 11



Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship
1150 Fairhope Ave.
Fairhope, AL 36532
FairhopeUU.org

A NOTE FROM THE FUF PRESIDENT

What UU Means to Me

Over the summer, we did a series on the history of Unitarian Universalism (UU), beginning with Part 1: the early Christians, the Nicene Councils, Wars of Religion, the Reformation, and the Renaissance; continuing with Part 2: the Enlightenment’s impact on our Founding Fathers and emerging religions in America, including Unitarian Universalism; then Part 3: how UU came to Fairhope, Alabama. The series culminated with Part 4: personal sharing of “What UU Means to Me.”

Here is a summary of the notes, using many of the words from the vigorous discussions among the four circles that gathered for the Part 4 Sunday program on August 23.

Several of us came from backgrounds of “you have to be saved.” We struggled, thinking, “How can I know I am saved?” to “That doesn’t make much sense,” to “That can’t be the answer.” Finding our ways, sometimes sooner, sometimes later, to UU seemed to be the “best bet.”

A comment from one participant that especially struck us was that Unitarian Universalism is “a religion for people who don’t like religion.” Or, at the least, we don’t like restrictive, fear-producing brands of religion that are intolerant of other beliefs or non-beliefs or judgmental of persons seemingly unlike ourselves.

What we find and like about Unitarian Universalism is that there is no creed, dogma, liturgical ritual, or condemnation that what you believe is wrong. Our beliefs are personal. Spirituality need not come from the pulpit—it comes from our connections with each other, with nature, through acting in community, and through a sense of something within and beyond ourselves.

UU allows us to be who we are: “We have the freedom to do, believe, and share our own diverse backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs. We can be authentic and still fit in.”

Here within the FUF community, the descriptions of “What UU Means to Me”

(Continued on page 2)

included: “safe, friendly, welcoming, accepting, comforting, non-judgmental, compassionate, inclusive, not fear-based, not condemning. It is peaceful yet stimulating, with new people and new ideas. It is open to seekers to explore and share opinions and philosophies and, in the learning, know it is even okay to change one’s opinions. It is an oasis of shared values, to act ethically and morally, to protect our environment, and to work toward social justice.”

Our 7 Principles remind us to respect and listen to other people’s beliefs and ideas, inside and outside our insulated community, even though we may disagree.

Some with different backgrounds find having no minister or choir a bit lacking. Others relish the idea of being lay-led, with the variety of speakers, reduced budget, and shared leadership as main attractions.

But for the most part, the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship Hall and grounds say who we are and what we want to be: “open, inviting, welcoming, safe.” Here we find “friends, community, connections, togetherness, HOME.” And for this, we celebrate and we are grateful!

Proudly and humbly,

Mary Anderson

President, Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship



BOARD UPDATE

The Board did not meet in August.

Its next meeting will be **Tuesday, September 29, at 4:30 p.m.**

2026 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Chair of the Board — Nick Coulson

Recording Secretary — Jeanine Normand

President — Mary Anderson

Corresponding Secretary — Jeanine Herring

1st Vice-President — vacant (*Mary Matthews resigned*)

Member at Large (Past President) — Irene Wegner

2nd Vice-President/Programs — Mark Preston

Member at Large — Bellamy Watson



WE’RE SO GLAD YOU’RE HERE!

Wherever you are on your journey, you are welcome.

- 🌿 If you’re ready to join our community as a member, please complete the form at fairhopeuu.org/join or ask for the hard copy form.
- 🌿 After completing the form, simply sign the membership book to become a voting member.
- 🌿 New member orientation will be held in November, and new members will be welcomed with a short ceremony at the Annual Meeting on December 6. At that time, you will be eligible to vote as a member of the Fellowship.



BUILDING COMMUNITY WITH OUR MUSLIM NEIGHBORS



A dozen members of the Fellowship attended the Eastern Shore Islamic Center's Grand Opening on Saturday, August 8. There we enjoyed touring their new center, meeting Muslims from around the world, and indulging in a dinner of delicious international foods.

ESIC member Boubacar Maiga will be speaking at the Fellowship's Sunday program on September 20. We have invited the Center's members to join us for the program and the potluck dinner that follows. We will check with the group beforehand regarding any preferred dietary restrictions and announce them accordingly.



OUR POLLINATOR GARDEN IS BUZZING



The Landscape Committee approved the conversion of a small area of FUF grounds from grass to a native plant pollinator garden. It was intended to provide nectar for fall-migrating butterflies, but it began blooming in early July. Since then, it has hosted a lively community of wasps, small flies, caterpillars, moths, butterflies, bees of many varieties, and beautiful dragonflies.

Members Phil Herring, Susan Hammack, Vivian McMurry, Nick Coulson, and Kathryn prepped and installed the garden in early May. Vivian, Kathryn, and Nick have maintained it.

The garden is a small plot next to the Memorial Garden,

designed in the block-style planting associated with Piet Oudolf. At least five individuals of each known species known to have strong nectar production are planted in blocks. Currently, there are seven plant species in the garden..

The plot was added to Gulf Care Creation's network of pollinator gardens created on church grounds. On Saturday, August 22, Susan Hammack helped FUF take part in the Great Southeast Pollinator Census, a regional citizen-science effort that brings communities together to observe and count pollinators.

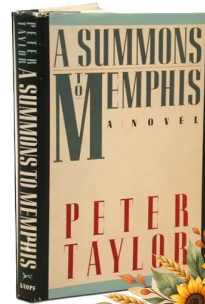




FICTION GROUP BOOK OF THE MONTH

A Summons to Memphis by Peter Taylor

This is a wonderful, Jamesian novel that went on to win the Pulitzer Prize. The story focuses on the crisis caused in a southern family's middle-aged children by their widowed father's remarrying (or plans to remarry). The main character has left the South to live in New York City. He returns home with some ambivalence, for the journey back raises difficult and dramatic questions for the protagonists about buried family history and the meaning of the past. *(Summary modified from the National Book Critics Circle)*



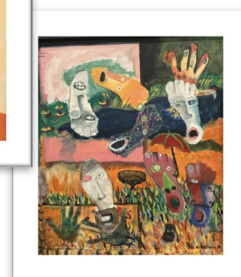
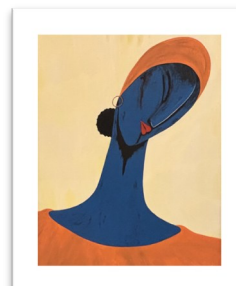
*The Fiction Book Group meets
Thursday, September 24 at
4:30pm.*



THESE ARE A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

There was an overwhelming response from members and friends who brought in some of their favorite art pieces for display. The Hall walls now feature an eclectic mix of two dimensional and woven articles.

Please take time to view the pieces, read their descriptions, and note the contributors. Seek them out for an interesting conversation!



The Art Committee worked together to make this exhibit possible.
The show has been extended through October 16.



SCAM ALERT: BEWARE OF FAKE ONLINE INVITATIONS

Scammers are sending fake "You're invited" emails and texts that may appear to come from services such as Evite or Paperless Post—and may even name someone you know as the host.

The invitation may ask you to enter your email username and password, phone number, or a temporary security code to view the event or RSVP. Don't provide this information. Legitimate invitations should not require you to sign in to your email account or share a security code simply to see the event details. Scammers may use the information to take over your email account and send the same scam to your contacts.

PROTECT YOURSELF:

-  If an invitation is unexpected, **do not click the link right away**. Contact the supposed host separately by phone or text to confirm it.
-  Never give an invitation site your email password or temporary security code.
-  Use two-factor authentication on your accounts and keep your devices updated.
-  If you think you entered your information on a fraudulent site, **change your password immediately** and alert your contacts that messages appearing to come from you may be fraudulent.

Adapted from consumer alerts from the AARP Fraud Watch Network and Federal Trade Commission.

HISTORY OF THE SILK PIECE

donated by Carol Hull

Last month, Carol Hull donated this beautiful silk piece to FUF, which is now hung in our foyer.

Here is the history of this meaningful artwork.



I was a member of the Unitarian Fellowship of Montgomery for fifty years, becoming a member shortly after I married in 1967. At first, we met in the YMCA, but not long afterward we bought land on which to build a church. Plans were made for a building, but limited funds meant that the education building would be completed first—a utilitarian Butler building that housed a meeting room, an office, and a children's room. Although we were delighted to be in our own building in 1970, the plain paneled walls of the windowless meeting room were not very attractive. Art was often borrowed to help brighten the space.

Around 1983, I took a class in silk painting at Arrowmont and decided to create a piece for the Fellowship. I had seen a black-and-white sketch in a newsletter for UU teens featuring world religion symbols arranged in a circular format. I wrote to ask permission to use a variation of the design and then used it to create this vibrant, colored piece. It was first used as a banner on the wall behind the podium in the meeting room.

Years later, I learned that there was a stained-glass window in a Unitarian Church somewhere in the country using a similar design. It seemed uncanny that I had such vibrant colors for my own version.

The piece is hand-painted on silk. The lines were created with beeswax using a tjanting pen. The colors were then hand-painted using Procion fiber-reactive dyes, cured, and steam-set to make them permanent. The wax was removed, and the piece was hemmed and prepared for hanging. Some years later, it was framed behind glass.

At some point, the Fellowship's original building was sold and the congregation moved into a lovely building that had formerly been used as a church by another denomination. When the Fellowship later sold that building—I do not remember the year—I was already living in Fairhope, and the piece was returned to me.

I bought my condo here in 2017 but came down for a few days from time to time for a few years. I attended the UU Fellowship here in Fairhope from time to time but did not become a member. I had also begun singing with the Back Porch Folk Singers, but before we had an opportunity to perform, COVID came along. Like other seniors, I stayed home for a year, and after COVID, I didn't return to regular attendance.

Like many women, I have changed last names a couple of times over the years. When I painted the silk piece, I was Carol Camp; later, I became Carol Hull. My artwork has appeared under both names. For my writing, I also use the name Carol Robbins. I was primarily a teacher rather than a professional artist. Now I'm retired!

Thank you, Carol!



Carol generously donated the silk piece to FUF without restrictions on its future use. If the Fellowship no longer wishes to keep it, she has given FUF permission to pass it on, place it elsewhere, or otherwise decide its future disposition.



LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Nonperishable food items and household staples are always needed. You may bring items to the Little Free Pantry cart on Sunday mornings or whenever the Fellowship is open for a group or event. Donations may also be placed directly in the outdoor pantry at any time—items added between our regular volunteer stocking days are especially helpful in keeping the pantry supplied throughout the week.

Financial donations are also welcome—please note “Little Free Pantry” with any financial gift.

Thank you for your generosity and for helping care for our neighbors—you make a meaningful difference!

SPECIAL COLLECTION

We are collecting food, toiletries, household supplies, and baby essentials for local Hispanic families affected by recent ICE activity. Donations will be delivered to the Hair Do Salon in Daphne.

Most-needed items include:

-  Diapers and baby-care products
-  Soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, and feminine hygiene products
-  Shelf-stable milk, juice, cereal, rice, beans, canned meat, and canned vegetables
-  Laundry detergent, dish soap, and toilet paper

A complete list of requested items is posted on the FUF bulletin board.



Please do not
donate expired
or opened food.

Walmart gift cards
are also welcome.

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@fairhopeuu.org



You are not alone. We are in this together.



Coal Ash Update



What's happening now—and how you can help.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to approve Alabama's coal-ash permitting program. If approved, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) would run much of the federal coal-ash program in the state.



WHAT THIS MEANS

- This follows EPA's 2024 decision that AL's program and permits were not sufficiently protective.
- EPA's proposal does NOT approve Plant Barry's existing coal-ash permit.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- If Alabama's program is approved, ADEM would still need to review and modify existing permits.
- That process would include another opportunity for public comment.



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Public comments on EPA's proposal are being accepted through

September 14, 2026.

Learn more or submit comments:
epa.gov/coalash/alabama-program



STAY INFORMED. TAKE ACTION.

Your comments help protect our waterways, our communities, and our future.

Information summarized from the U.S. EPA and the Coal Ash Action Group.

Alabama Coastal Cleanup

~~~~~ *Trash Out of the Splash!* ~~~~~

Join thousands of volunteers across coastal Alabama for the 39th Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup!



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19**

**8:00 A.M. – NOON**

Help clean beaches, waterways, parks, streets, neighborhoods, and storm drains to help keep litter from reaching Mobile Bay and the Gulf.



**FIND A CLEANUP ZONE AND LEARN MORE:** [AlabamaCoastalCleanup.com](https://AlabamaCoastalCleanup.com)

~~~~~ *Thank you for caring for our community and our coast!* ~~~~~



September Programs



SEPT

6

A Celebration of American Labor in Poem & Song

In observance of Labor Day, Fairhope poet/songwriter Mike Turner shares a selection of poems and songs that celebrate the American Worker.

Mike Turner was named 2017 Male Gospel Entertainer of the Year by the North America Country Music Associations International; featured performing his original songs about life on the Gulf Coast at the 2020 Monroeville Literary Festival; and is president-elect of the Alabama State Poetry Society, which previously named Mike as its 2025 Poet of the Year.

www.facebook.com/MikeTurnerSongwriter



Mike Turner

SEPT

13

Alabama, Iron Maker for the Confederacy

In 1865, approximately 70 percent of the iron used by the Confederacy was produced in Alabama. Mr. Czekanski will explore the rise of the iron industry in Alabama, the current historic sites associated with production, and the efforts of the Union Army to stem the flow of iron to the Confederacy.

Retired museum curator Tom Czekanski is enjoying his time in Baldwin County and his association with the other members of the Fairhope Universal Unitarian Fellowship. He enjoys sharing his interpretations of history with the Fellowship.



Tom Czekanski

SEPT

20

Justice and Human Relations

Islam spread through a combination of faith, personal examples.

Boubacar Maiga is a manufacturing and operations leader with a passion for operational excellence, Lean transformation, and developing high-performing teams. With extensive experience in aerospace, automotive, and industrial manufacturing, he focuses on safety, quality, productivity, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Beyond his professional career, Boubacar is deeply committed to community, faith, service, and bringing people together. He is exploring ways to strengthen interfaith and community relations with a vision of building a welcoming, united, service-oriented community. He believes in leading with humility, integrity, and purpose—whether on the manufacturing floor, in the community, or in service to others.



Boubacar Maiga

SEPT

27

Water: Our Most Essential Resource

We live by the grace of water, yet rarely consider what is happening to water resources around the world. Elaine will address the many challenges we face, including overabundance, scarcity, and pollution.

Elaine holds a PhD in biology with an emphasis in aquatic sciences. She has served as a visiting assistant professor at NC State University and the University of Alaska and spent 23 years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, primarily as an environmental contaminants specialist. She later served as Deputy Field Supervisor at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Daphne Field Office.



Elaine Snyder-Conn



UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS AT FUF



Mark you calendar and invite a friend—there's something for everyone!

SEP
5



[Get your tickets here!](#)



HIROYA TSUKAMOTO

Award-Winning Fingerstyle Guitarist

A Journey Through Strings and Stories

Saturday, Sept. 5 • 7 PM

Tickets: \$20 advance • \$25 door

Free admission for children under 13

SEP
26



[Get your tickets here!](#)



with Veteran Caller
Nick Hartley

SQUARE DANCE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
★ 3:00 TO 5:00 PM ★

All are welcome
to join the fun—
no experience needed!

Admission: \$10

OCT
17

Standup Comedy Jam 3

Saturday, October 17 • 7 PM

Five comedians.
One night full of laughs.



OCT
20

Musical Journey Through Bavaria

Tuesday, October 20 • 7 PM

Celebrate Oktoberfest with live music!



NOV
7

Back Roads & Back Stories

Saturday, November 7 • 7 PM

Songs and stories from the road
less traveled.



NOV
15

Emerging Artist Series: Jaishon Robinson

Sunday, November 15 • 2 PM

Enjoy local talent on the rise!



DEC
5&6

Miracle on 34th Street: The Radio Play

Saturday, Dec. 5 • 7 PM

Sunday, Dec. 6 • 2 PM



DEC
18

Riverdance

Friday, December 18 • 7 PM

High-energy Irish dance & music!





FUF Groups & Gatherings



WEEKLY

SILENT MEDITATION GROUP

Resumes Sept. 20

Sundays • 9:45am

Contact: Nick Coulson

UKE OPEN JAM

Mondays • 2:00-4:00pm

All are invited to come jam with us

Contact: Carl Couret

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Tuesdays • 9:00am • Kind Café in Fairhope

Contact: Don Joffe

BACK PORCH FOLK SINGERS

Wednesdays • 3:00-4:30pm

No invitation necessary

Contact: Phil Strniste

DINNER GROUP

Thursdays • 5:00pm

Check with Michael for current meeting location

Contact: Michael Patrick 251-233-3176



SUNDAY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

| DATE | CHALICE | READING |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Sep 6 | Mary Anne H. | |
| Sep 13 | Jane F. | |
| Sep 20 | Mia M. | Mark P. |
| Sep 27 | Rachael G. | Kathryn F. |
| See Joanne Preston to sign up for open slots! | | |

BI-WEEKLY

WOMEN OF WISDOM

Thursday, 9/3 and 9/17 • 11:00am

WoW Discussion Group meets every other

Thursday at 11am in the foyer. Lunch to follow at a local restaurant.

Contact: Vivian McMurry or Jean Normand

MONTHLY

NON-FICTION BOOK GROUP

1st Thursday, 9/3 • 9:30am

Contact: Robin Fabel or Michael Patrick

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Tuesday, 9/8 • 4:00pm

Join us as we explore ways to support each other in understanding our grief.

Contact: Virginia McClintock

CHALICE CIRCLES

Wednesday, 9/16 • 1:30pm • The Joffe's Home

Thursday, 9/17 • 6:30pm • The McMurry's Home

To join, an empty chair awaits you.

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

FICTION BOOK GROUP

4th Thursday, 9/24 • 4:30pm

September's book: *A Summons to Memphis* by Peter Taylor

(see page 4 for more details)

Contact: Kathryn Firsching

GAME NIGHT

Last Saturday, 9/26 • 6:00pm

Join us for a fun evening together! Bring your favorite board or card games.

Contact: Bellamy Watson



September



| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|--|---|---|-----------|---|
| | | 1
9am -Men's Group (Kind Café) | 2
3pm-4:30pm - Back Porch Folk Singers

4:45-5:45pm - ES Strings Practice

6-7pm -Reserved | 3
9:30am - Non-Fiction Book Group

11am -Women of Wisdom

5pm -Thursday Dinner Group | 4 | 5
7:00pm - Hiroya Tsukamoto Concert |
| 6
10:45 -Musical Prelude
11:00 -Program | 7
Labor Day

2pm - Uke Open Jam | 8
9am -Men's Group (Kind Café)
4pm -Grief Support Group | 9
3pm-4:30pm - Back Porch Folk Singers

4:45-5:45pm - ES Strings Practice | 10
5pm -Thursday Dinner Group | 11 | 12
8am-2pm - Reserved |
| 13
10:45 -Musical Prelude
11:00 -Program | 14
2pm - Uke Open Jam | 15
9am -Men's Group (Kind Café) | 16
1:30pm - Small Group @ Joffe's

3pm-4:30pm - Back Porch Folk Singers

4:45-5:45pm - ES Strings Practice | 17
11am -Women of Wisdom

5pm -Thursday Dinner Group

6:30pm - Small Group @ McMurry's | 18 | 19 |
| 20
9:45 -Silent Meditation
10:45 -Musical Prelude
11:00 -Program

Potluck | 21
2pm - Uke Open Jam | 22
9am -Men's Group (Kind Café) | 23
3pm-4:30pm - Back Porch Folk Singers

4:45-5:45pm - ES Strings Practice

Newsletter Deadline | 24
4:30pm -Fiction Book Group

4:30pm - Reserved ESD

5pm -Thursday Dinner Group | 25 | 26
3:00pm


6pm -Game Night |
| 27
9:45 -Silent Meditation
10:45 -Musical Prelude
11:00 -Program | 28
2pm - Uke Open Jam | 29
9am -Men's Group (Kind Café) | 30
3pm-4:30pm - Back Porch Folk Singers

4:45-5:45pm - ES Strings Practice | Join us for Fellowship every Sunday!
10:45am —Musical Prelude
11:00am —Program with Guest Speaker
<i>Coffee Hour follows; Potluck on September 20</i> | | |

DEADLINES *for Publications*



Weekly Bulletin and FUF Weekender

Wednesdays by 5pm

Submit to Ashley: Office@FairhopeUU.org



Scan to sign up
to receive
FUF newsletters!

Thank you



for reading!

October Newsletter

Submit by end of day, September 23

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.

WE WELCOME ALL

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



FairhopeUU.org



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