

DECEMBER | 2021

NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis



Between Us

Rev. Jill McAllister

December 2021? It seems like just yesterday there was so much relief at the end of 2020. And how did our expectations of 2021 pan out? Well, mostly not as expected. This is the ever-present lesson of these times, it seems -- hold your expectations loosely! It's a spiritual practice for sure.

We're just at the start of the experiment of returning in limited ways to indoor services and gatherings. It's beautiful! And it's challenging. December holiday activities will be done in new ways, as needed. Our RE department has a week of beautiful interactive offerings planned for Solstice / Yule, and Christmas Eve will include candlelighting, singing, cocoa and cookies, and possibly some live animals (!) - all in new ways.

Does anything remain the same? (It is exhausting to constantly face change after change, I know.) Yes - the most important things have not changed. Our need to hear stories of perseverance and courage, to muster goodwill amidst so many hardships and challenges, to discover again that the most important gifts are not things, and to help bring peace and love to as many people as possible.

December is a month of many celebrations and holidays, and it is also just a month -- the season of winter in Oregon, each day part of the cycles of life, each day a gift in itself and unlike any other. Take care with your expectations (let go a little), be gentle with yourself and others, and try to find beauty around you every day. Be kind. Stay connected.

Monthly Newsletter

About this publication

This monthly newsletter focuses on the life of the Fellowship. Each month we're sharing reports from Fellowship leaders, councils, teams and projects and exploring Unitarian Universalist (and Fellowship) history and practice. We're also sharing important 'save-the-dates' information.

DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES - via Zoom, and in-person indoors by reservation at 9:30 and 11:00 AM.

Live Zoom Sunday Service
at 9:30 AM:

<https://zoom.us/j/96231448170?pwd=cUoxaWxyei9wOTE5cFVZOTt0Qk5KUT09>

Phased Re-Opening Continues

The Pandemic Response Team, worship team, admin team, board and others continue to work through the MANY details of a phased re-opening plan for using our building again. We began with Sunday Worship in November - using the largest rooms - the Sanctuary and Social Hall. The services are at 9:30 and 11:00 AM and are by reservation only. Each Monday around noon a UU-Announce email is sent with the links to request to attend. The forms are open until 8 PM Wednesday and notifications are sent out Thursday afternoon either confirming the reservation or being placed on a waitlist (with priority given for the following week). A request form is being developed for Fellowship small groups want to meet in the building. That form will come out later this week and we aim to accommodate these requests, as possible, beginning in January.

YEAR-END 2021 ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Mighty Networks is a great resource for sharing what is going on in the Fellowship and in our larger communities. The Adopt A Highway team is looking for volunteers 12/4/21. [Read more here.](#)

FINAL DAYS OF THE HOLIDAY FAIR

Time is almost up to shop. The Holiday Fair continues through Friday, Dec. 3. [View the catalog here.](#) All sweets & savories (English toffee, fudge, salsas, jams and jellies) and holiday greenery for your door were made by UUFC volunteers and 100% of the price goes to support the Fellowship!

December Sundays +

Dec. 5 Comfort Ye? Rev. Jill McAllister

Dec. 12 Chaplain Jesse Ford

Dec. 19 Winter Solstice All Ages Service

Dec. 24 All Ages Christmas Eve Candlelighting

Dec. 26 Letting Go of A Year - Rev. Jill McA

Upcoming Events

Thru Dec. 4 - Online Holiday Fair continues.

Dec. 5 and 19, 1 PM - Let's Sing

All ages invited, in person, RSVP needed, to warm up our voices with UU hymns and songs of the season.

Dec. 24 - All Ages Christmas Eve Candlelighting

*Sometimes letting things go is an act of
far greater power than hanging on.
- Eckhart Tolle*



Board of Directors

Your Board of Directors met on Tuesday, November 16th. Our next meeting will be December 21st at 7 pm. We're meeting on Zoom, and we welcome visitors. If you'd like to attend, please RSVP to Church Operations Manager Jamie Petts. Here are the key actions from our recent meeting.

Fellowship Health Check-Up. As the fiduciary body for the Fellowship, the Board keeps an eye on the health of our organization. We were happy to hear in the Minister's Report from Rev. Jill McAllister that our mailing list has expanded from around 450 when the pandemic started to around 665 now. In addition, the Treasurer's Report stated that pledges are coming in at a regular pace. Our mission is reaching even more people and our finances are doing well even in these uncertain times.

Proposed 8th Principle. The Board has issued a statement endorsing the congregation's consideration of the spirit and letter of proposed 8th Principle, which is published below in this newsletter.

We approved three goals with the intent of substantially completing them before July 2022:

1. Help to create and implement plans for wise and responsible management of the UUFC building amidst continuing threats from Covid-19, including to navigate a return to indoor meetings and launching the building expansion.
2. Continue to evolve council governance structure toward more transparent and responsive governance; improved alignment of teams and councils; clarified means for financial support and oversight; improved coaching of council leadership and timely communication.
3. Systematically review the Justice Council's summary recommendations (cited below) from their analysis of "Widening the Circle" ideas to identify key gaps in UUFC programs and new opportunities for progress.
 - a. We will offer concrete processes to support and care for the resilience needs of our community.
 - b. Actively model that we embrace diversity and are committed to being inclusive.
 - c. Be committed to learning and growth...especially in understanding contributions of peoples who have been historically marginalized and excluded. Employ culturally appropriate pedagogy.
 - d. Build the consciousness, knowledge and skills that will enable us to perform as a multicultural community; including strengthening intergenerational connections.
 - e. Build and sustain partnerships with external entities.
 - f. Have in place processes to support successful planning, implementation, follow through and monitoring the progress of our Teams, Councils, activities and initiatives.
 - g. Systems and processes to address urgent and pressing issues, as well as approaches to effectively communicate.
 - h. Processes to enable Fellowship members to become members of our Teams and Councils.
 - i. Consciously consider and apply principles of justice, equity and inclusion when making decisions.

Board of Directors: Treasurer's End-of-Year Report

The Unitarian Universalist Association website includes a wonderful [page on Giving and Generosity](#). Since becoming your Treasurer, I often refer to this page, followed many of the links to learn more, and cite it as a model as for [our Giving page](#).

Any Treasurer's message in December will be tailored to a year-end appeal.

Tax decisions: Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) for those 70 ½ and above, the in/outs of a Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD), the mechanics of transferring stock, all loom large as we head to the end of the month and close out the calendar year. Your Treasurer, members of the Finance Oversight Council, and most importantly, our Business Manager, Jean Gilbert, are ready to discuss these matters and help find a path that reflects your values.

Earlier this year your Board made the unprecedented decision to allocate the unrestricted portion of the bequest from longtime UUFC member Marjorie Goss to the Building Enhancement Fund. Part of the Goss bequest came with the instruction that it be donated to charitable organizations. That instruction was followed and the funds were carefully and thoughtfully distributed to local and national organizations that do work Marjorie had previously supported.

Traditionally, we receive money from an estate and divide it between the Operating Budget (40%), the Endowment Fund (now called Legacy Fund) (50%) and Social Justice Outreach Fund (10%).

The 2018 Bylaw revisions afford the Board of Directors considerable latitude regarding the allocation of bequests, and we arrived at the decision to deviate from our historical formula only after considerable, spirited debate. There remains much planning/budget review, not to mention actual construction before we're done. This segment of a large project is the most nerve-wracking: not knowing how much the project will actually cost. The decision to use bequest money signals determination to get Phase 1 underway and to completion.

As we enter into 2022, members and friends are urged to stay informed of construction developments as the Board and Building Construction Team share progress and seek input.

Learning about and participating in these Board decisions has made me more of an evangelist than ever for including the UUFC in one's estate planning. Continuous improvement in governance and oversight remains a top Board goal for 2022 and beyond. This beloved community is a worthy, vibrant, effective vessel for enduring legacies of love, justice, peace.

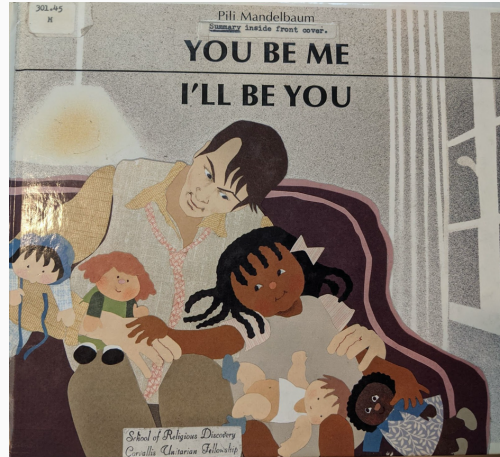
A blessed year end and new year to us all,
Scott Bruslind

Religious Exploration Council

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY REVITALIZATION PROJECT

We've spent the past year evaluating our children's library and sorting through it, and we've finally made the choices about what to give away and what to keep before embarking on the exciting work of updating our collection. We thought it would be interesting to share some of the materials we've chosen to discard, and as we make new acquisitions, some of the new books, too!

One of the books we're choosing to give away is a picture book called *You Be Me, I'll Be You*, by Pili Mandelbaum. This is a best-selling children's book from the 1990s, written and illustrated by a Belgian woman (who is white). It carries an extremely well-meaning message about self-acceptance from the perspective of a biracial child, but it does so in some unfortunate ways in the context of American history and culture.



While some elements of the book are quite progressive, especially the understated fact that the father in the story is the homemaker and childcare provider while the mother is the primary provider of income, the main conflict is about the protagonist's ambivalence about the color of her skin and the texture of her hair. The father's "playful" solution to teaching her about her true beauty is to dress her up like him with a hat and flour on her face and to dress himself up like her with coffee grounds on his face and braids in his hair. The pair then go on a walk.

While I think that the author, being from Belgium, may not have quite grasped why any form of blackface, especially in a public setting, is extremely inappropriate, there's no way to look at this book in the context of the United States and not find it problematic. There are many modern books by Black authors which carry similar messages of self-acceptance in much better ways, so we will be replacing this book.

Rachel Kohler, Director of Religious Exploration

THE RE COUNCIL IS PLEASED TO SHARE THE NEW MISSION STATEMENT THAT WILL GUIDE OUR WORK TOGETHER.

"The RE Council aims to support the work of the Religious Exploration program by assessing and communicating the current needs of our beloved community and participating in ongoing efforts to meet those needs. We do this in partnership with church staff to help nurture and guide the development and spiritual growth of our next generation to create a better world."

Religious Exploration Council, cont.

JANUARY IS INTERGENERATIONALITY MONTH!

January is going to be all about intergenerationality!

How could we communicate differently with members of other generations to better be heard?

How could we listen differently to members of other generations to better connect?

What biases can we set aside?

What hurts do we need to address?

How much does intergenerationality really impact the health of our beloved community?

We'll explore this and more in January!



THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who dressed up and made Samhain Sunday a day to remember!

Eight different councils and teams contributed treats, games, and enthusiasm to make our post-service Trick-or-Treat event possible! Over a dozen individuals were connected with community and service opportunities. Countless calories were burned dancing to the Monster Mash.

The names of our departed loved ones that were added to our ancestor tree have been lovingly relocated out of the weather, and can be visited at their new home in the RE wing.



Justice Council

HELPING HANDS FOR REFUGEES



The Perlas enjoying Halloween festivities

CAFE JUSTO (THE DELICIOUS COFFEE WE SERVE AT THE FELLOWSHIP!)

Café Justo is celebrating 19 years of addressing root causes of immigration this month. In 2002, Mundo Ballinas was in Atlanta, Georgia, roofing houses when his mother, Dona Soraida Santiago, joined with 25 other farmers to found Café Justo. Last month, Mundo visited the cooperative's roasting facility in Agua Prieta with two others of the leadership team.

Having returned to Chiapas because of the founding of Café Justo, Mundo shared with us how grateful he was to be able to be by his mother's side when she died earlier this year and to have been able to spend the last 15 years with her and his wife raising their daughters. His eyes beamed with pride when he talked about his daughters graduating from college, his oldest starting a new business, his youngest starting a family, and his new grandchild all living in the same community.

Join us in giving thanks to God for the vision and perseverance of Dona Soraida and the other founders of Café Justo. You can buy delicious, freshly roasted 100% organic Café Justo through our Coffee and Compassion program. Your partnership helps families thrive

Peace --Jocabel Gallegos and Mark Adams. Coordinators

IRST, your Immigrant and Refugee Support Team invites you to join us in our work, which directly assists refugees in and from Africa, south of our border, and most recently Afghanistan. It takes many hands to accomplish all that needs to be done! Contact Elona Meyer at elonameyer@icloud.com or Nancy Kyle at n.kyle12@gmail.com if you would like to become part of our team or lend a hand.

IRST is excited to report that our Pumpkin Patch, along with the dedicated Sunday Social Concerns Basket, raised \$2,636 which will be used to help Afghani refugees arriving in our area. Thus far we have two women, Sitara and Shukria, settling locally. They are participating in ESL classes arranged by Melinda Sayavedra, through the MCLC (Multi-Cultural Learning Center); housing is being arranged as well. WITO (Welcoming Immigrant to Oregon) has organized the committees working hard to take care of immediate Afghani refugee needs; our donations are going to support the efforts of WITO. Additional Afghani families and individuals are expected in the coming months.

Our sunflower bouquets in August raised over \$500 for Flaming Chalice International and One Story at a Time, both doing important work for refugees in Africa and south of our border respectively.

The Perlas, our El Salvadoran asylum seekers, continue to thrive in their current living arrangements; the children are doing very well in school. Aracely and Juan Carlos have part time employment locally. Nancy Kyle has provided direct support in meeting the Perlas immediate needs; recently, a call went out for warmer clothes.

Justice Council, cont.

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS HAPPENINGS

GOOD NEWS: OREGON JOINS CALIFORNIA AS THE SECOND STATE TO ADOPT THE CLEAN TRUCK RULES

Shared by Deborah Clark, member UUFC Climate Action Team

Oregon's Environmental Quality Commission voted last month to enact Clean Truck Rules that will accelerate the state's transition to zero-emission trucks and reduce smog pollution from new diesel truck engines.

- This is a significant win for the reduction of greenhouse gases because heavy-duty trucks and buses contribute nearly 23% of greenhouse gases caused by transportation, which is Oregon's largest source of emissions (approximately 40%).

- The Clean Truck Rules will also help reduce the health impacts from diesel pollution, particularly respiratory illnesses. These impacts are especially felt by low-income communities and Black, Indigenous, and communities of color, which are disproportionately located near highways and busy truck corridors.

While Oregon is the first state to adopt these rules following their creation and adoption in California, five other states — Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Washington — are considering adopting them this year. These seven states contain more than 20-percent of the national fleet of medium- and heavy-duty trucks.

More than 30 environmental, health, and community groups advocated for passage of these rules under the umbrella of the Clean Air, Healthy Communities Coalition. Together we make a difference!

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS HAPPENINGS: BIG NEWS!

Shared by Jed Irving, member UUFC Climate Action Team

I'd like to share some great news - UUFC has taken critical steps toward reducing and taking responsibility for its carbon emissions, both in the long and short term.

Starting in 2019, UUFC began to take responsibility for its emissions through donations from members. Earlier this month, the Board adopted a policy that codifies having a line item for carbon emissions in the annual budget - the Carbon Reduction and Responsibility Fund. This line item honors the fact that taking responsibility for carbon emissions is an ongoing 'cost of doing business'. This policy (and associated procedures), crafted collaboratively by the Board, the Climate Action Team (CAT), and the UUFC Admin team, specifies the commitment, the high level procedure, and how funds are to be spent: first for emissions reduction, and second, for offsets or climate justice work. The three paragraph policy and associated procedures can be read [here](#).

Emissions reduction work is already underway, leveraging our Carbon Reduction and Responsibility Fund (CRR Fund). Earlier this year, CAT applied for and secured a two year interest-free loan of \$10,100 from the City Of Corvallis to help expedite our emissions reduction efforts. This loan will be paid back using the CRR Fund. CAT had worked earlier with Dennis Feeney to determine the highest impact efficiency upgrades that could be accomplished. Requests for bids were sent to five companies, and a proposal from Total Comfort Weatherization was accepted. The CRR Fund will be used to pay back this loan. The project includes window replacement in the kitchen and business office and insulating the social hall floor and attic access stairways. The expected completion date is May 31. It's wonderful to have UUFC be "institutionally mindful" of our 2nd and 7th principles in this way.

Justice Council, cont.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION - ENGAGING IN BRAVE CONVERSATIONS

As Lutricia Cullair said, "The 8th principle, if we were really practicing it, would be transformative; it could change our relationship to not only our congregations, but to ourselves and our community..." Lutricia was one of several panelists featured in the video, The 8th Principle Matters to Members of the BIPOC Community.

A big thanks to the 22 folks, including our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Team (EDI), who joined us for our November 6th workshop on the proposed 8th principle. In case you missed the workshop, here are the links to the videos we featured in the workshop:

• **Rev LaWalls' video** (8 minutes). Rev LaWalls discusses her perspective on the Boise congregation's adoption of the 8th principle.

• **Paula Cole Jones video** (23 minutes) Rev Paula Cole Jones, who was a major contributor in the development of the 8th principle, shares her perspective on the importance of this proposed principle.

Along with discussion groups focusing on these video offerings, EDI will offer further opportunities in the coming year to explore the "8th principle" and what it could mean for us individually and as a congregation. We are grateful for the recent endorsements received from the UUFC staff, Board of Directors, and the Religious Exploration (RE) council, in support of the year of exploration of the proposed principle 8. If you're interested in joining us in this work, we welcome you! Contact Elona Meyer at elonameyer@icloud.com or Bonnie Morihara at moriharb@wou.edu for more information.

BOARD, STAFF AND RE COUNCIL EMBRACE THE AIMS OF THE PROPOSED 8TH PRINCIPLE

Within the year-long exploration of the proposed 8th principle, Fellowship groups and teams have been invited to consider how it could impact their own work. In September the Fellowship staff agreed that they are committed to its aims, and have already been working for some time with these aims in mind. The RE Council arrived at a statement of support: "The RE Council vigorously and actively embraces the importance of living a strong antiracist stance. We are committed to the spirit of the proposed 8th Principle and will fully engage with that ongoing conversation."

The Board of Directors discussed the aims of the proposal, and agreed on a statement at their November board meeting, which includes: "The Board of Directors appreciates the devoted thinking and hard work that EDI and ICT have put into this process. Further, the Board supports the antiracism and anti-oppression work that is called for by the proposed 8th principle. The Board added to the UUFC Board policies this statement earlier this year:

"The Fellowship Board of Directors (Board) acknowledges our society's, and the Unitarian Universalism's, legacies of racism, sexism, and colonialism and is committed to actions that seek to address past injustices and build just and fair institutions and human behaviors."

Therefore, the Board encourages all members of the congregation to participate in the activities offered in this year of exploration of the proposed 8th principle. We need to further our understanding of the issues and commit to concrete actions."

Unitarian Universalism

UPLIFT: MINISTRY TO LGBTQ / TGQNB*, AND HOW TO RENEW BEING A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

What does it mean to be a Welcoming Congregation? In the 1990's, the Fellowship was one of many UUA congregations that undertook education and discussion about homophobia and made commitments to welcome and support LGBT people, thereby becoming an official "Welcoming Congregation" of the UUA.

More than 10 years ago, that commitment was updated through "Living the Welcoming Congregation."

Since then, the UUA has continued to update its ministry to the broad community of gender minorities; UPLIFT is now the name of that program, which includes addressing the concerns of people who identify as Transgender, Gender Queer and Non-Binary.*

UPLIFT offers a renewal process for Welcoming Congregations, which was established in 2018 around **Five Practices of Welcome Renewal**. "In 2018, we wish to be bolder with our Welcome. Transgender Unitarian Universalists (UUs) are still struggling to find community in UU congregations. Bisexual UUs suffer from invisibility while asexual, intersex, and polyamorous communities are wrestling with a progressive faith that does not privilege their truth. These and the many more social ills that plague our LGBTQ+ and TGQNB communities are calling us into a deeper commitment to insure that our Unitarian Universalist congregations are living into the Welcome that we boldly proclaim." **The Five Practices include: Becoming A Welcoming Congregation, Welcoming Worship Services, Welcoming Days of Observance, Welcoming Religious Education, and Support A Welcoming Project.** "These Five Practices of Welcome Renewal are benchmarks that every congregation will need to integrate into congregational life in order to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, asexual, two-spirit, genderqueer, non-binary, and the like feel fully welcomed, centered, and embraced in our Unitarian Universalist congregation. Welcoming Congregations will be required to meet these benchmarks annually in order to remain "current" as a Welcoming Congregation."

At UUFC, our Welcoming Congregation status is out of date and needs to be renewed. Would you like to help with this work?

UUA Purpose and Principles Under Review

Because we are a living tradition, our national bylaws require that we study our principles, sources and purposes (all contained in Article II) at least every fifteen years. There was a study process in 2006 which yielded proposed revisions which were not adopted in 2009, and there is currently an Article II study process underway, which began at the 2020 GA. The Article II Study Commission can report back with results that could be proposed adjustments (additions, changes in wording, etc.) to the current principles, or could be new wording for a re-written set of principles and sources (which might total to something other than seven and six). As the charge to the Article II Study Commission says, "There is nothing sacred about the number of principles or sources, nor their specific wordings, nor in the way that Article II is laid out." The Commission is tasked with submitting their proposals for consideration on the agenda for GA in June 2022. **Read more** about how, through this process, our Purposes and Principles have been reviewed, edited and changed since they were first written.

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