



CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation
A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

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The Board meeting was held on December 18, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

We will continue to need volunteers in the life of this congregation. If you are not currently serving on a committee or a team, you are encouraged to give of your time, treasure and talent.

We will continue to focus on the Congregational Manual and the Bylaws. Add to that the Strategic Five-Year Plan.

I met with Dan DeShon and Brian Bigelow to discuss plans for the grounds. Sheryl Terepka stepped forward to assist with the landscaping in a big way. She is fearless with gardening tools. She generously donated a dozen new plants.

The goal of the Building and Grounds Committee is to transition, as much as physically and financially possible, to native species in our gardens.

The Executive Committee met to review staff contracts for this fiscal year. This should have been done upon the beginning of this fiscal year. This has provided still another reason for the board to have its official calendar to track those actions required at certain times each year.

David Donovan and I attended an event sponsored by the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce aimed at introducing houses of worship to what the chamber has to offer. This was reported in a separate email. Dues are \$300 a year. There are some benefits, but not sure they are worth \$300. Worth discussing.

I attended the Finance Committee meeting. In that context, for some inexplicable reason, the subject of discussions going on with the Bylaws Review Committee came up. Specifically what we call groups of

members in action. Committees. Teams. Et cetera. More on that in discussions about the Bylaws Review Committee recommendations. All members of the congregation are welcome to attend a special workshop on Thursday, January 9 at 1 p.m. We will be reviewing the Congregational Manual, Bylaws and the Strategic Plan.

I want to thank Frank Stephens for stepping up to take over the Hospitality Team. I will continue to help in that area, as will Nicole when she is back from her recovery from hip replacement surgery.

Several of us will be attending the MLK Unity Breakfast and MLK Day activities on Monday, January 20, 2025. Look for more details in this newsletter.

The next board meeting is Wednesday, January 15, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS WORKSHOP

All members of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation are welcome to attend a workshop on our congregational governance documents, especially the Bylaws, Congregational Manual and, also, our Strategic Five-Year Plan.

The workshop will take place on January 9 at 1:00 p.m. in All Faiths Community Room.

If you wish to review these governance documents, they can be accessed on the website www.all-faiths.org. Once on the home page, go to the very bottom left side of that page and click on "Leadership & Bylaws." Once there you will find the Governance Documents.

Mission Statement

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is committed to Justice, Equity and Compassion.

Vision Statement

Recognizing our role as each other's keepers, we strive to be an inclusive, loving, spiritual community working to bring harmony to the world.

All Faiths Collection Schedule

Monthly Share-the-Plate & Special Collections

(Please write organization and amount in the memo line of your check.)

January - Quality Life Center - Scholarships

February - Special Collection - Minister's Discretionary Fund

March - Operation Joy

December Share the Plate raised \$5,220 for Employee Bonuses!

Employee bonuses are taxed appropriately through payroll services.

Your generosity directly benefits our community all year long!

We are grateful!





Happy New Year Beloveds,

This year 2025 is a special year for me, I turn 65 Feb. 3 and will begin Medicare. I will be officially a senior. Many of you have already experienced the awakening of aging. Aches and pains, stiffness, more doctor appointments than ever before, blood work and imaging etc.

Sometimes I notice a gain change as we mature, it often reminds me of a little one who is learning to walk and is still unsteady. I guess there is some truth in the old adage as I heard it growing up... "Once a man and twice a child." When one reaches very old age, one's mental or physical capacity can and often does regress. The idiom is derived from a line in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "An old man is twice a child."

My crystal ball tells me that it will be many years before my regress is as evident as my mother's, who will also celebrate her 98th birthday in Feb. But for now I will continue as I am. Moving forward in body, and yet leaning upon, muscle memory, reflex, emotional and physical fitness while continuing to learn, grow and serve community, family, friends, All Faiths and myself.

2025 is inescapable, time does not wait for us to catch up, it keeps moving. Uncertainty fills me with strange fears of

what it will be like as the President Elect is sworn in.

The election results of 2024, have soured many but we cannot survive on sour grapes. We must move forward locked arms marching in solidarity in body and spirit with love and peace in our heart.

But how...

In the Baptist Churches I attended as a youth and young adult with my family, annually the Ushers known as the Usher Board would host an anniversary celebrating the work and commitment they offered in service to the church. It was an extravaganza. Great planning would proceed the event.

The Ushers back then were the gatekeepers, greeters, and ushers. They helped us find seats, handed out tissues and fans, made you get rid of your chewing gum, gave out mints, collected the offering and made change if needed, and helped anyone who became emotional during service. Even holding your baby if needed.

They wore white gloves, men in dark suits and women in white uniforms. They also kept the church safe, as they monitored the doors, parking lot and surveyed the premises. Basically, the Ushers were the foot soldiers of the congregations.

At their annual anniversary celebration they would invite several other congregations to the event who would in turn send their Usher Board to celebrate with us. And when the invited guest would host their anniversary we would attend theirs.

During the celebration we would honor the eldest Usher and founder of the Usher Board. It was an entire service and the

church was always packed for this celebration.

The highlight of the event was the march. Our soldiers (ushers) would line up outside the sanctuary and the organ would begin playing the old Baptist hymn, "We Are Soldiers in the Army." The best marchers would lead them in while singing the hymn along with the congregation.

As is customary with us people of color, our marches were colorful also. It was like a marching band without instruments. As Ushers entered singing and marching they would eventually circle the sanctuary, then face the pews clasp hands and raise them together.

We were in a circle of safety, a sanctuary within a sanctuary.

I remember feeling safe and filled with Joy. My mother, and grandmother, were Ushers and my younger sister and I were Jr. Ushers. We helped to create Sanctuary, a safe space to be together. Sanctuary, a place of refuge and/or safety.

2025 cannot be stopped but we can be prepared. We may be small but we are mighty and when we are together in, Beloved Community, of mind, body and soul we create space, a safe space, our sanctuary.

As we enter this new year, let us turn to our Mission and Vision statements:

Mission Statement

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is committed to Justice, Equity and Compassion.

Vision Statement

Recognizing our role as each other's keepers, we strive to be an inclusive, loving, spiritual community working to bring harmony to the world.

Beloveds, our Mission and Vision statements reflect our Unitarian Universalists Values. Last month my article closed with the following, I believe it continues to be relevant.

None of us know what will happen, or where this nation is headed, but if the writing on the wall is correct. Our beloved nation is headed for dramatic change from a great leading nation to one of isolation and authoritarian rule.

The lines are being drawn, where will you stand? As Unitarian Universalists we know we stand on the side of love. We lean into our values that reflect our ways of Being.

We are Interdependent

We are Justice makers

We adhere to Generosity

We believe in Justice for all

We believe Equity is good and fair.

We believe diversity is good and fair and therefore we are people of Pluralism

As love is our source and center, and peace our guide, changes may come but we will not fear. Instead we will erase the lines of fear, anxiety and depression. And write a new chapter:

Beloveds remember this, "It's not trespassing if the boundaries you cross are your own."

This year I, like many people, plan to bypass the inauguration. I intend to celebrate MLK day, celebrated annually on the 3rd Monday in Jan. Martin, a true leader and God realized being, who continues to impact the USA positively. May his spirit live on.

We are on this journey together.

Love, Minister Albie

Happening at All Faiths

*Happy January
Birthday to you!*



- Jan 1 Shea Fierro
- Jan 1 Alan Levin
- Jan 13 Joyce Schaffer
- Jan 22 Susan Meissner
- Jan 27 Lewis Robinson
- Jan 28 Carsley Merrell
- Jan 28 Fran Way

And Coming Up...

Feb. 3 Albie Johnson

If you are missing or see someone who is missing from the birthday roster, please let Regina know.



Solos Luncheon

Saturday, January 4, 2024
1:00 p.m.

Three Fisherman
13021 N. Cleveland Ave.

No. Ft. Myers
check your email for details.

RSVP to: Annelly Hudanick,
annelyblue@hotmail.com

The All Voices Choir Practice

Meeting on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m.

The choir welcomes new members. You do not have to be a professional singer or read sheet music to join. Go ahead, give it a try. Contact: Carlos Garcia, ceegeefm@gmail.com.

McGregor Clinic Collection

Every 3rd Sunday of the Month at Service

The McGregor Clinic is a non-profit health care clinic designed to provide an integrated and holistic approach to patient and community care. Your donations of *men's and women's clothing, and non-perishable foods*, benefit people with HIV/AIDS and their families. Contact: David Donovan, ddonovan722@gmail.com

Book Club

Meeting on the 3rd Monday of the Month at 12 p.m.

The book club is casual and fun. No assigned books, just show up and be prepared to talk about an interesting book you've read or are reading. Contact: Diane Chernow, dianecher@comcast.net

Tuesday Discussion Group

Meeting on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Join the discussion. Facilitated by Frank Stephens, the group will discuss different aspects from the book, *A Course in Miracles*. All are welcome. Contact Frank Stephens at fdinfla99@gmail.com.

Mexican Train Dominoes

Meeting on the 2nd & 4th Friday of the Month at 2 p.m.




Join in on this fun and popular dominoes game. Don't know how to play? Come and we'll teach you -- it's easy. Contact Ken Malkin at kennethmalkin@gmail.com to get on email distribution list.

ACMA Songwriters Circle

Meeting on Sundays 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

The circle is for Acoustic Songwriters of all levels. Songs and experiences are shared in a non-judgmental, casual atmosphere. All are welcome to come and play or just listen. ACMA is secular and is all about original music. No Membership required. We support Americana/Folk, Singer/Songwriters and provide a venue for performing original music.

JANUARY 2025 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1  Happy New Year! Office Closed	2	3	4 11am Choir Practice 1pm Solos Lunch (Pg. 4) 7pm ACMA Concert (Pg. 10)
5 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service & No CYP	6 6:30pm Common Read (Pg. 8)	7 10am Sun. Service Mtg. 1:30pm Climate Action Team Mtg. via Zoom 6:30pm Miracles Discussion Grp.	8	9 10 am Finance Mtg.	10 2pm Dominoes	11 11am Choir Practice 12pm AF Friends & Family Day at Lakes Park! (Pg.
12 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service - CYP 12 pm Rainbow Connection	13	14 10am Racial Equity Meeting 6:30pm Miracles Discussion Grp.	15 1pm Board Meeting 6:30pm Fort Myers Camera Club	16 1pm Homeless Team Mtg. 7pm Tamiami Tale Tellers	17 2pm Dominoes	18 11pm Choir Practice 7pm ACMA Concert (Pg. 9)
19 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service & CYP McGregor Clinic Collection	20 7am MLK Unity Breakfast 8am MLK Table Setup Downtown 10am MLK Parade	21 10am Care & Support Mtg. 6:30pm Miracles Discussion Grp.	22	23	24 10am AF Justice Teams Movie Collaboration Razing Liberty Square 2pm Dominoes	25 11am Choir Practice
26 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service & CYP Ice Cream Social	27	28 6:30pm Miracles Discussion Grp.	29	30	31	

**Check the online calendar at: allfaithsuo.org
for post-printing updates**

JANUARY 2025
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
THEME: THE PRACTICE OF STORY

In-House & Live on Facebook at 10:30 a.m.

Recorded services can be viewed at www.allfaithsuu.org
or on our YouTube channel.

January 5

Come, Fly with Me

Speaker – Joyce Ramay

Worship Associate – Giovanni De Oto

Music by Carlos Garcia

Life of Congregation Report – Frank Geltner

Launch Pledge Drive – Ken Malkin

January 12

The Power of Story

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Annely Hudanick

Music by Carlos Garcia

January 19

Just Us!

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Helen Dixon

Music by Carlos Garcia

McGregor Clinic Collection

January 26

The Practice of Story

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Doug Cartwright

Music by Carlos Garcia

News Talk - 9:15am in the Sanctuary

News Talk is a facilitated group that offers a time and space for you to discuss the weekly headlines.

The Rainbow Connection

Meeting every 2nd Sunday at Noon

Contact Frank Stephens – fdinfla99@gmail.com

A space for the LGBTQ community and allies to gather in fellowship, plan activities and offer support.

STEWARDSHIP DRIVE KICK-OFF!

by Ken Malkin, Stewardship Chair

Stewardship Drive reminds us that
You are Not Alone

The inception of 2025 will mark an important beginning of the All Faiths pledge drive. This year's theme is YOU ARE NOT ALONE. This reflects a spirit that All Faiths is the source of support for our members and friends in these trying times.

We will be handing out brochures and pledge cards showing how All Faiths plans to spend money raised in the coming fiscal year. Remember that we have some great employees who appreciate your accolades but also need our financial support so they also know that they ARE NOT ALONE.

In the next few weeks, you will be hearing messages from our members reminding you why YOU ARE NOT ALONE as a member or friend at All Faiths. You will be challenged to make commitments and even increase those commitments that allow us to meet our fiscal needs for the coming year.

CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NOTES

by Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director

This month "Story" is the faith practice that we will explore. We will focus on stories and how they play a part in our lives. Each session will lift up a different way that stories help us to understand ourselves, each other and the world. We will look for ways that stories help us to grow and adapt.

January 5: No CYP

January 12: See yourself through stories. Each person creates their own story by choices they are make. Create self portraits and stories about who you are. Act out who you want to be.

January 19: Make connections with others through stories. Discuss stories that you share with other. Create a group story.

January 26: Create a better future by telling stories about our dreams. Discuss Martin Luther King, Jr. Share our dreams.

Sharon, CYP Director

REGISTER AT: www.allfaithsuu.org

RAINBOW CONNECTION NEWS

by David Donovan, Chair

Happy New Year and welcome back from your holiday festivities. As we look forward to a successful 2025, I want to recognize last year's achievements of The Rainbow Connection. Our team has made a meaningful impact in supporting social justice for the LGBTQ community as well as helping to promote the message of the Congregation.

- We have successfully completed all the requirements for the renewal of our "Welcoming Congregation" certification by the UUA. Our application was submitted in December and official recognition is expected in the coming months. A huge shoutout to our minister, Albie, for her amazing skill at weaving complex themes into her messages and speaking out for social justice. This was a yearlong process, and we have already started on next year's renewal.

- All Faiths was a major sponsor of Cape Coral Pride in 2024 thanks to a generous donation from a couple of Rainbow Connection members. All Faiths had a table at the event and proudly marched in the parade.

- All Faiths joined the SWFL Harmony Chamber of Commerce in April. This is an organization of gay and gay-friendly businesses that provides an opportunity to network with like-minded people and promote our organizations through their monthly mixers. The Rainbow Connection has represented All Faiths at these events and plans to host our own event early next year.

- The Rainbow Connection represented All Faiths at the Naples Pride event in June, where we hosted a table. We passed out our literature and promoted our message and our Congregation.

- All Faiths celebrated Gay Pride Month by hosting a service on "What Pride Means to Me" where three Rainbow Connection members shared their personal stories with the Congregation.

- At the end of June, The Rainbow Connection hosted an Evening of Poetry and Song, featuring TROPICAL STORM, a gay men's A cappella singing group. The event raised over \$500 dollars with half the proceeds going to the Congregation and the other half to support Cape Coral Pride.

- Share the Plate collection for Rainbow Connection in June raised \$515 dollars to benefit Cape Coral Pride.

- In August, The Rainbow Connection honored Rev Wayne Robinson by donating a plaque to recognize the Rev Wayne Robinson Memorial Library at All Faiths.

- After several years of absence, Fort Myers held a Pride Festival at the Alliance for the Arts. Although we did not have a booth, several of us attended the event. We will definitely be part of next year's celebration.

- The Rainbow Connection hosted a Lasagna Luncheon on December 15th at All Faiths to benefit Cape Coral Pride. Thanks to all the work of our volunteers and support from members of our wonderful Congregation, it was a HUGE SUCCESS. We raised over \$800 dollars. Thank you to all that were involved. We may have to repeat this next year.

- I also want to thank Taryn Landy from The McGregor Clinic who spoke at All Faiths World AIDS Day service on December 1st. She shared with us the amazing work that the clinic is doing in our community and the status of the disease in Lee County.

I want to thank all the members of the Rainbow Connection and to Frank Stephens personally for their roles in making this year successful. Frank has chosen to step down as Co-Chair of this team so that he can pursue other areas of action in the Congregation. Carole Latino has graciously volunteered to act as Co-chair as Frank's replacement. Welcome Carole.

I encourage anyone interested in making a difference in the lives of the LGBTQ community to join our team. As you can see, we are very active and have lots of fun. We meet the 2nd Sunday of every month, right after service. Our aim is to support the LGBTQ community and be a voice for social justice while promoting All Faiths at various events.

WITH HEARTFELT APPRECIATION

Your All Faiths' staff would like to express our deepest appreciation for your generous contributions towards the year-end employee bonuses. Working within a religious organization provides a unique and fulfilling experience, primarily because of the incredible congregation we serve.

When you truly care for the people in our community, it inspires us to strive for excellence in all we do. Your generosity exemplifies this spirit of care, and it's a testament to the values we hold dear. The support you provide not only impacts our team but also enhances the well-being of those we serve.

We are grateful for your kindness and thoughtfulness.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Albie, Regina, Carlos, Joe, and Sharon

JOYS & SORROWS

With our apologies for any omissions, here are the joys & sorrows expressed by our members in December.

Judy Alberda's granddaughter is now in a rehab center following hospitalization for serious injuries. We hope that she has a steady recovery.

Diane Chernow was not able to have surgery for her broken back. She is wearing a brace. She then suffered a knee fracture. We hope that she heals and gets relief from pain.

Carol Siferd was hospitalized in ICU with severe pneumonia. She has improved and is now at a rehab center. We hope she has a good recovery.

Mahilena Dianz had additional complications following heart surgery. She was hospitalized with intestinal bleeding. We hope she recovers soon.

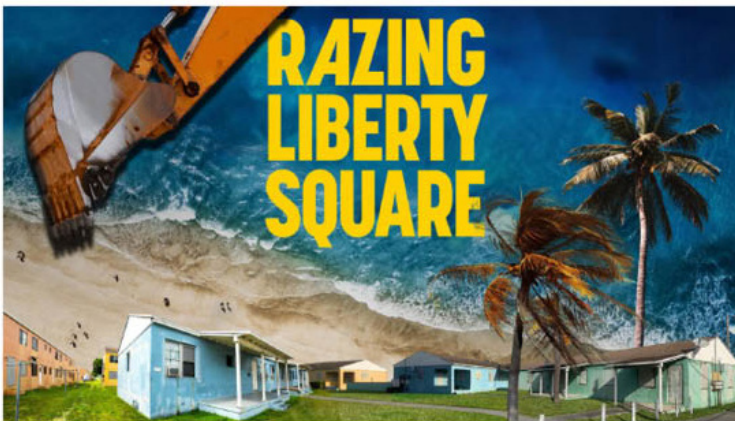
Ruth Iyengar has been diagnosed with severe aortic stenosis. We hope that she receives good medical care.

Pam Pfalzer's partner, Beth O'Brien, has been admitted to hospice care. We hold them in our hearts.

Michael Pierre has received radiation treatments for esophageal cancer. We hope that they are effective.

Joan Velasquez passed away on December 4th after suffering a stroke. She and her husband Segundo have been members of All Faiths for many years. They spent their lives doing uplift work in Bolivia with Mano a Mano. We extend our sympathy to Segundo and all those who knew and loved Joan.

HOSTED BY ALL FAITHS SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS
Friday, January 24, 2025 at 10 a.m.



About the Documentary

An historically black Miami public housing neighborhood fights to save their community from climate gentrification as wealthy property owners seek the higher ground of Liberty City.

Join us to watch this documentary followed by discussion with Paul Leingang from Fort Myers Housing Authority about local housing issues.

♥ FOR THE HOMELESS TEAM

by Barb McFarlane, Co-Chair

January is an event filled month for housing and homeless issues.

January 17 (Friday) we have an opportunity to work on a Habitat for Humanity house. Sign up to reserve a spot at: <http://habitat4humanity.volunteerhub.com/vv2/event/df440fb3-8f6d-4fcf-997b-62926da5a373>

Let me know if you need help signing up, or email Ashley Brady at Habitat: AshleyB@habitat4humanity.org

Our group is called All Faiths/Seven Lakes. This has always been a fun and rewarding day.

January 24 (Friday) at 10am this team, with other social justice teams, is showing a documentary, *Razing Liberty Square*. It deals with redevelopment and displacement of an historically black neighborhood in Miami. Paul Leingang from Fort Myers Housing Authority will be present to discuss and answer questions about local housing plans. Please plan to attend.

January 25 is the annual Point-in-Time count and Veterans/Homeless Standdown at Next Level Church on MLK Blvd. They need volunteers to help with the count, guide people through the service areas, and help with parking. It is a 2-4 hour commitment on a Saturday morning.

For the past six years All Faiths members have had a presence at this event. Join us. You can sign up to volunteer by contacting: Cheri Arnold at ess@homelesscoalition.net

Thanks to Susan Meissner we learned of an Amazon offer for bulk purchase of hats and gloves for organizations serving the homeless population. As a result, 120 beanie hats and gloves as well as 80 hand warmers will be delivered to Matt Wallace with the county's outreach program.

The team meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 1pm. Please join us. New ideas and points of view are needed to keep this team viable and all are welcome.



Ice Cream Social

After Service

Sunday, January 26, 2024

Sponsored by Lewis Robinson

RACIAL EQUITY TEAM NEWS

by Frank Geltner, Co-Chair

The Racial Equity Team (RET) continues to meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.

Julian Ramirez, the Executive Director of the Quality Life Center, will be meeting with our committee on Tuesday, January 14, 2025.

The Racial Equity Team will continue its designation of the Quality Life Center for its Share the Plate collection.

The team is now at a reflection point in its goal to find an outlet for its social justice activity.

Any member of the congregation is welcome to attend the Racial Equity Team meetings.

Put simply – we are intent on finding ways to combat systemic racism wherever it crosses our paths. We are not ashamed to say that some of us are the unwitting

beneficiaries of white privilege. Nor do we shy away from the realization that the work we propose to do is hard work. While we may have stories demonstrating our willingness to challenge racism, we understand that, to put it in metaphorical terms, white folk unwittingly swim in an ocean of while privilege. We thank our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) members who guide us in our efforts.

QUALITY LIFE CENTER IS JANUARY SHARE THE PLATE

The Quality Life Center strives to create a brighter future for both individuals and communities. Through a blend of academic enrichment, performing arts, leadership development, and cultural awareness, they empower young people and underserved communities to unlock their full potential and thrive in a world of possibilities. Theirs is a vision of personal and community transformation!

They strive to strengthen and instill pride in family and community through the development of programs and services that cultivate self-development, teach self-discipline, build confidence, and promote cultural awareness, health, and one's highest human potential. Over the past 30 years, Quality Life Center has helped to serve thousands of children and families with the help of our growing community. We pride ourselves on developing the future leaders of tomorrow with a focus on human equity consciousness.

Quality Life Center operates from the premise that if a child and community receives love, develops a healthy respect for the Creator, and forms a positive self-image, then they will be best prepared to meet life's challenges.

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair

2025 promises to be an extremely challenging year for climate activists here in the United States. President-Elect Trump has sold his soul to the fossil fuel industry and promises not only to “Drill, baby, drill,” but to undo the progress made by the Biden administration in addressing climate change. Lee and Collier counties are Republican strongholds here in the state of Florida and our state government is dominated by conservative Republicans. Yet, despite this, the environmental movement here in southwest Florida continues to grow stronger and more committed to addressing the impact of sea-level rise, a warming Gulf of Mexico which threatens increasingly more powerful storms, and the resulting economic impact of the fundamental reality of our changing climate. Your Climate Action Team is deeply engaged in helping create environmental coalitions that will empower a movement to build the resilience our future demands.

Collaboration, cooperation and coordination are key to achieving our goals, not just for your Climate Action Team, but for all our social justice groups. We are finding ways to support each others' efforts. And we are reaching out to our congregation and beyond to garner support and engagement in our activities. We hope you will join us for the January 24th screening of “Razing Liberty Square” which is being co-sponsored by Heart for the Homeless, Racial Justice and the Climate Action Team. Come learn more about the impact of gentrification on long-established African-American communities. It's a problem facing our Dunbar community right here in Fort Myers. Dunbar needs our support and your Social Justice teams need yours. Together, we can rise to the inevitable challenges of the coming year.



ACMA LIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE!

Saturday, January 4

2:00pm Workshop - 7:00pm Concert

The Reckless Saints in Concert

The Bernardis opening

Saturday, January 18 - 7:00pm

Shanna in a Dress in Concert

The Lost Lakers opening

The Listening Room at All Faiths

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida

General public \$18/Member discount \$12

Donations at the Door

TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

Cash Assets – November 2024

First Horizon Checking	\$ 19,695
Raymond James Legacy	5,232
Live Oak Operating Reserve (CD)	22,812
First Horizon Capital Reserve	4,867
Live Oak Capital Reserve (S)	28,086
Live Oak Operating Reserve (S)	42,436
Live Oak Legacy (CD)	21,560

Total	\$144,689
Prior Month	<u>140,546</u>
Net Gain/Loss	(-\$ 4,143)

November 2024 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 11,086
Operating Expense	<u>15,532</u>
Net Gain/Loss	(-\$ 4,446)

Revenue/Operating Income and Expenses:

As we entered the new 2024-2025 fiscal year on April 1, All Faiths budgeted \$200,200 for pledge giving; to date, actual pledges have totaled \$185,160 (92.5%).

Our Pledge Goal for the months of April to November was \$133,468; and \$110,259 was received (82.6%). However, before April 1, 2024, \$24,757 was received in paid pledges towards the new year. Taking this into account, we have received a total of \$135,016 towards the current year total pledge drive goal of \$200,200 (67.4%).

The Board approved the consolidation of several accounts to streamline accounting and to further increase interest income. These changes were made before the end of March 2024 and are reflected in the figures listed above. November's Interest Income was \$391.26.

At the beginning of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, several new accounts were created at Live Oak to generate increased interest income. The 1 Year CD rate is 5.0%. And the Savings rate is currently at 3.8%.

The November monthly transfer/deposit of \$1,530.00 to the Live Oak Capital Reserve account was made. No Capital Reserve expenses were incurred. However, planning is underway to repair the fence on the west side of the property and to replace the sign; both were damaged during Hurricane Milton.

In November, \$919 was collected for Operation Joy.

BUILDING & GROUNDS UPDATE

by Frank Geltner, Chair

All Faiths garden and landscaping needs are ongoing. Chief among the concerns are the weeds. Mimosa, a native ground cover, is something we want to thrive.

Nut grass and Bermuda grass are weeds we wish to discourage. Nut grass is difficult to eradicate because when you pull the top growth, the part of the plant underground will produce many more plants from the nut-like structures. Bermuda grass is easy to pull up, but needs continued maintenance. Tropical chickweed is also fairly easy to pull out, but again needs continued maintenance.

We are looking for a few weed detectives among our membership to help with detecting and pulling weeds.

I want to thank Dan DeShon, Brian Bigelow and Sheryl Terepka for all their help in maintaining the garden area.

Thanks to Bob DiGalbo for painting areas of the church in need of a touchup.

David Donovan tackled our fencing with his pressure washer.

Lewis Robinson, Rosalie Kuehn and Ken Malkin assisted in some much needed weeding around our signage area.

Special thanks to Judy Alberda and Nicole Racine for their efforts in our gardens and their occasional helper, Giovanni DeOto.

We are still looking for someone who would lead the Building and Grounds effort. Frank Geltner is happy to help as long as he can.

MLK DAY ACTIVITIES

by Frank Geltner, Chair, Racial Equity Team

The Dunbar Festival Inc, welcomes our congregation to participate in the MLK Commemorative March and the annual Multicultural Day of celebration at the Luminary Hotel Amphitheatre on January 20, 2025.

The march will begin at the Dunbar Jupiter Hammond Library at 3905 Blount St in Ft Myers beginning at 10 am and will march west on MLK to Monroe Street downtown and climax at the Luminary Amphitheater by 11 am.

Beginning at 9 a.m., there will be a trolley service to transport people from the Denison parking lot under the US 41 bridge at Centennial Park to the march. The trolley will run from 9:00 to 9:45 am.

The multicultural celebration will begin at 11am -5 pm where we will be hosting a booth. There will also be great entertainment with a high profile band and other guest artists.

Members of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation are invited to participate working the booth, joining in the march, or just enjoying the Multicultural Day.

Look for the sign-up sheet in the Community Room.

JOIN ALL FAITHS FOR MLK EVENTS ON JANUARY 20



DUNBAR FESTIVAL COMMITTEE PRESENTS

39TH ANNUAL
★ DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ★

Legacy Weekend

Join Us for one of Fort Myers most anticipated celebrations of the year. Mark your calendars for the 39th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Weekend!

Come enjoy family friendly and inspirational events throughout the month of January. Celebrate unity as we participate, educate and honor local trailblazers. While cultivating young leaders, and foster new partnerships in our community and beyond!

JAN. 17TH - JAN. 20TH, 2025



CONNECT WITH US!
ON FACEBOOK
#FMDUNBAR2025

PRESSING FORWARD FULFILLING THE DREAM.

★ EVENTS ★

JANUARY 17 LEE PITTS LIVE AFTER WORK

JANUARY 18 SERVICE EVENT TBA

JANUARY 19 MLK ECUMENICAL SERVICE

JANUARY 20 DR. KING COMMEMORATIVE MARCH

DR. KING DAY CENTENNIAL PARK CELEBRATION

FEBRUARY 8

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. LEGACY HONORS GALA

★ TITLE SPONSORS ★



★ PARTNERS ★



FOR SPONSORSHIP AND VENDOR INFO CONTACT:
Edward Hardin, President • Phone: (239)440-5669
Email: DunbarFestivalCommittee@gmail.com

Dunbar Festival Committee, Inc. is a 501(c)3 all proceeds will be reinvested into the Fort Myers community. Events and Prices subject to change.

On January 20, 2025, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday will mark the 30th anniversary as a *National Day of Service*. This day was established to honor the life and legacy of Dr. King, and to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities.

Join All Faiths for tabling activities in Centennial Park and/or march in the Annual MLK Day Parade. Sign up on the bulletin boards in the Community Room.



Lakes Park - 7330 Gladiolus - Fort Myers

January 11, 2025
12pm - 4pm

All Faiths' Family & Friends Appreciation Day!

Gather your family and friends for a day of fun and fellowship. We will celebrate each other at beautiful Lakes Park (Pavillion B2). Bring a dish to share. There will be fun activities, and beautiful walking trails.

Sign up on the Bulletin Board
Parking \$5 for the Day or \$2 an Hour
Wheelchair Accessible



All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: office@allfaithsuu.org – Website: www.allfaithsuu.org

Board: Frank Geltner, Chair; Dick Scudder, Vice Chair; John Conrad, Treasurer; Barb McFarlane, Secretary.

Directors: David Donovan, Carol Heilsberg, Rosalie Kuehn, Ken Malkin, Lewis Robinson.

Ex-Officio, Non Voting: Marge DiGalbo, Past Chair; Alberita Johnson, Minister; Regina Kilmartin, Cong. Admin.

Staff: Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director; Carlos Garcia, Music Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton.

Commissioned Lay Minister: Alberita (Albie) Johnson



Communications

Newsletter

Regina Kilmartin

Proofreaders

Weezie Close/Joyce Ramay

Social Media & Website

Regina Kilmartin/Becky Ross

Sunday Service Team

Joyce Ramay

Hospitality

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Program Support

Michelle Gemma/Barb McFarlane

Member Services

Dottie Mayol/Carole Latino

Greeters

Dick Scudder

Care and Support

Joyce Ramay

Finance

Joyce Ramay

Stewardship Committee

Ken Malkin

Nominating Committee

Sharon Gray

Sound Technician

Brad Davidson

Livestreaming

Regina Kilmartin/Sharon Gray

Brad Davidson

Building and Grounds

Frank Geltner/Brian Bigelow

Social Action & Outreach

Climate Action Team

Joan Marshall/Carol Heilsberg

Heart for the Homeless

Barb McFarlane

Racial Equity Team

Nicole Racine/Frank Geltner

L.I.F.E.

Robert Bennett,

Barb McFarlane

JoAnn Hilliard

Mano a Mano

Charlotte Blitt

Operation Joy & Solos Group

Annely Hudanick

Animal Ministry

Sharon Gray

Rainbow Connection

David Donovan

Founding Minister: The Late Rev. Dr. Wayne A. Robinson



Deadline for the **February** Issue of *Connections*
is **January 18**

(Brief announcements may be accepted later,
and will be included *if* space and time permit.)



OFFICE HOURS: 9am to 4pm, Monday–Thurs;
9am to 12pm, Friday & Sunday.
Congregational Administrator: Regina Kilmartin