



Where you *belong!*

CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation, *where diversity is treasured.*
A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

Inside

- A Message from Our Board Chair.....2
- Sunday Collection Schedule.....2
- Destination Joy.....3
by Alberita Johnson, CL Minister
- Joys & Sorrows.....3
- Jeanne Ezell Celebration of Life.....3
- Happening at All Faiths.....4
- May 2024 Calendar.....5
- May Sunday Services.....6
- Child & Youth Program Notes.....6
- Board Notes.....7
- LIFE Updates & News.....8
- Heart for the Homeless Team News.....8
- Treasurer's Report.....9
- Qualified Volunteers Needed.....9
- ACMA Concert Lineup.....9
- Climate Action Team News.....10
- The Rainbow Connection.....10
- Special Presentation in June.....11
- Racial Equity Team News.....11
- Annual Plant Sale!.....12

The Big Spring Clean!

Saturday, May 11, 2024
9am - 2pm



Join us for our semi-annual deep clean. We guarantee a job for everyone! We will clean inside and out. There's no better way to show you care. ♥

(Sign up on the bulletin board)

Happy Mother's Day

Sunday, May 12, 2024 - 10:30 a.m.

*The Myth & Reality of the Triple Goddess
Maiden, Mother, Crone*

Spring Plant Sale

Saturday, May 18 and Sunday, May 19
9am - Noon

Plants are inspirational and comforting, and provide a peaceful atmosphere. Buy a plant and bring some tranquility into your home. (see pg. 12)

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW BOARD CHAIR *by Frank Geltner, Board Chair*

I must confess that the distance in time from walking through the front door of All Faiths to becoming a member and then being elected board chair feels a little surreal. I am grateful to many people who have made Nicole and me feel welcome. Of course, we jumped right in with service as Greeters. Then we started helping Linda Bigelow who trained us and then transitioned out after her term of service. Then Nicole agreed to help Judy Alberda in the garden. Then Nicole and I agreed to serve as co-chairs of the Racial Equity Team.

One of the many challenges of rising to the top of the heap is learning all the names of members. I have been to a Unitarian congregation which posts photos of all its members in a public space to help with remembering names. We, as most of you know, have our directory online accessible through the

All Faiths website. It took me two years to discover that – or maybe I wasn't paying attention. When I look at the officers, staff, committees, and teams, I am amazed at what this congregation accomplishes on a regular basis. One person, in particular, is foundational to all these accomplishments. Our Congregational Administrator has the unenviable responsibility of navigating the ever-changing landscape of All Faiths leadership and membership. While we all sing "Don't Be Afraid of Some Change" each Sunday, Regina Kilmartin epitomizes someone who lives change – constantly. Kudos to her for juggling the needs of the leaders and members of the congregation.

Let me acknowledge others who have contributed to my better understanding the culture of All Faiths. Fran Way was an early contact as our Membership Chair. Then we were invited to be Greet-

ers by Marsha Bates and Chris Stotler. The ubiquitous Joyce Ramay, whose influence ranges far and wide. Chris Stotler and Marge DiGalbo, as former board chairs, helped me understand the role I was about to take on. Joe Gayton informed me about the many duties he performs. Linda Bigelow helped in the transition to Hospitality. Lewis Robinson helps me understand "understanding" when it comes to social justice. Joan Marshall exudes climate justice fervor. Carlos Garcia navigates the musical needs of our congregation.

It was fun watching Alberita's path to becoming our Contracted Lay Minister. She has managed to work her way into the hearts of the congregation. To help her navigate her entry into our diverse membership, a Ministerial Support Team was formed. This team includes Joyce Ramay, Marge DiGalbo, Regina Kilmartin, and myself, Frank Geltner.

Please see the *Board Notes* on page 8. They will return to page 2 in June. ■

All Faiths Board of Directors

Executive Board

Chair, Frank Geltner
Vice Chair, Dick Scudder
Treasurer, John Conrad
Secretary, Diane Chernow

Directors

David Donovan
Rosalie Kuehn
Ken Malkin
Barb McFarlane
Lewis Robinson

Ex-Officio Non-Voting Board Members

Alberita Johnson, Minister
Marge DiGalbo, Past Chair

Staff

Alberita Johnson, Lay Minister
Regina Kilmartin, Administrator
Carlos Garcia, Music Director
Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director

Ministerial Support

Joyce Ramay, CLM Covenant Partner
Frank Geltner
Regina Kilmartin
Marge DiGalbo

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.)

May - St. Mathew's House Shelter for Women & Children (Homeless Team)

June - Quality Life Center - Scholarships (Racial Equity Team)

July - Operation Joy - Back to School

April Share the Plate raised \$325 for SWFL RESET Center!

*Your generosity directly benefits our community!
We are grateful!*





In thinking about the months of April and May and the fullness of spring, I realize they embody the spirit of hope. “I hope for the best.” “I hope all is well with you.” These are common phrases we’ve all heard and likely expressed ourselves at some time.

One of my past blogs called Positive Outcomes generated a few responses, one of which was about hope. It triggered my thinking about the concept of hope. What is hope and does it have the same meaning for everyone?

Hope for many is a little flame that keeps them going. We can hope to get to work on time. We can hope to complete a project to satisfaction. We can hope to . . . fill in the blank.

For many other people, hope is seldom used; instead it is saved for serious problems. It is needed only in dire circumstances, for emergencies, or when they want or desire something with great anticipation.

But for me, hope is a raging fire that keeps me motivated. Hope is an anchor for me, one of my greatest and most used tools. It permits me to believe in myself when no one else does; it helps me to kill unhealthy fears; it allows me to complete tasks that seem too daunting to accomplish. Hope is that smooth stone that David used to kill Goliath.

I use hope all the time. I found out something about hope a long time ago; that is, one does not need to have a lot of it. Instead hope is something we have to have faith in. All we need is a little of it and we can do mighty things. Let’s take a look at the common phrases mentioned earlier. “I hope for the best,” or “I hope all is well with you.” These are actually powerful phrases filled with encouragement for positive outcomes.

Positive outcomes are what I hope for you today: that you succeed, and that you always have joy and peace in your life. That you continue in a life of satisfaction, and that no hurt or harm comes your way. I want you to be fulfilled and to live a long healthy life, have a life of abundance. Do you have a dream, a goal you want to achieve? Then I want that for you too! That’s hope in action, my hope for you.

The next time you hope, remember the power of HOPE. And feel free to add to it, maybe with a little love and with genuine sincerity.

Hey! I think hope is running past! I am reaching out and grabbing hold. Won’t you join me and -- as Jesse Jackson said -- “Keep Hope Alive!”?

May it be so - *Albie*

JOYS & SORROWS

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

Carol Elrod is receiving hospice care at the Larsen medical center at Shell Point. We hope that she receives loving care.

Ed Elrod was hospitalized and then received care at the Larsen center. He has improved and has returned to his assisted living home.

Jeanne Ezell passed away. She had been in assisted living for some time for dementia. She was Secretary of our Board from 2013 to 2017. We extend our sympathy to her family and friends.

Michelle Gemma shared the joy of the birth of her granddaughter, Leo Rosemary. We congratulate her and her family for this happy event.

Vanessa Gilyard said that she is moving to San Diego. We will miss her but hope that she enjoys her life there.

Sharon Gray reported that her son Rick has decided to start radiation and chemo. Our hearts are with them both.

Dawna Lieber’s mother died. She and Kendra Maroon now live in Maine. We extend our sympathy to them.

Joyce Ramay fell and broke a bone in her hand. She is grateful for the cards and offers of help.

Chris Stotler and Marsha Bates have bought a home in Denver and will be moving there. We appreciate their leadership and all that they have done for All Faiths during their years with us.

Joyce Ramay,

Care & Support Coordinator

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

for Jeanne Ezell

Saturday, May 4 at 1:00 p.m.



The family of Jeanne Ezell will hold a Celebration of Life and brick laying on Saturday, May 4 at 1:00 p.m.

Jeanne served on All Faiths Board of Directors and was an intrigal part of our congregation.

Happening at All Faiths

*Happy May
Birthday
to you!*



- May 5 Veronica Raphael
- May 8 Peg Clayton Fischer
- May 9 Helen Dixon
- May 13 Annely Hudanick
- May 16 Laura Snow
- May 22 Laurie Babcock
- May 25 Lisa Leonhardt
- May 26 Marge DiGalbo
- May 30 Nancy Frasca Cabazares
- May 31 Pam Pfalzer

And Coming Up...

- June 5 Vanessa Gilyard
- June 6 Joyce Davison



May Potluck

Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.
Come for food and fun!
Bring a dish to share – Play fun games!

Sign Up on the Bulletin Board

Solos Monthly Lunch!

**No Solos luncheon this month due to
Jeann Ezell's Celebration of Life**

Solos will return in June.

**RSVP to: Annely Hudanick,
annelyblue@hotmail.com**

Everyone is welcome to join the Solos
for outings and lunches.

The Epicureous Group

Strictly Social Dinner Group - All Are Welcome!
Saturday, May 25, 2024 - 5:00 p.m.

Dinner & Conversation at **Perkins, 14801 S. Tamiami Trail, So
Ft Myers Fl 33912**

Please text, call or email John Fischer to RSVP at 267-992-6566
or silverfischstudios@gmail.com with your name, contact informa-
tion and the number in your party. The restaurant needs exact num-
bers and reservations. Please tell the Host or Hostess you are from
ALL FAITHS when you arrive.

The Rainbow Connection

Meeting on the 2nd Sunday of the Month at 12 p.m.

The Rainbow Connection is an inclusive group that supports the
LGBTQ+ community and Allies. All are welcome.
Contact: Frank Stephens at fdinfla99@gmail.com.

Racial Equity Team Meeting

Meeting on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the Month at 10 a.m.

The Racial Equity Team will meet twice a month until further
notice to accommodate a book read. The team is currently reading
Layla F. Saad's "*me and white supremacy*." All are welcome.

All Voices Choir Practice

Meeting Every Saturday at 11 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.

Book Club

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



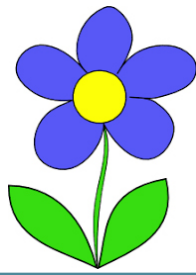
The book club is casual and fun. No assigned books, just show up
and be prepared to talk about an interesting book you've read or
are reading. Contacts: Diane Chernow, dianecher@comcast.net

McGregor Clinic Collection

Collection is on the 3rd Sunday of Every Month

This month the clinic is in need of men's clothing and kitchen
utensils. Coordinator: Joyce Schaffer, joycelschaffer@gmail.com

MAY 2024 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10am Ten O'clock <i>Scholar-Rise Up</i>	2	3	4 11am Choir Practice 1pm Jeanne Ezell Celebration of Life 7pm ACMA Concert (Pg. 10)	
5 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service & CYP Happy Cinco De Mayo!	6	7 10am Sun. Service Mtg. 11am Membership 1:30pm Climate Action Team Mtg. via Zoom	8 10am Ten O'clock <i>Scholar-Rise Up</i>	9 10 am Finance Mtg. 5pm MAY Potluck Dinner & Fun Stuff	10 2pm Dominoes	11 11am Choir Practice  9am-2pm
12 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service & CYP 12 pm Rainbow Connection Mother's Day	13	14 10am Racial Equity Meeting	15 10am Ten O'clock <i>Scholar-Rise Up</i> 1pm Board Meeting	16 1pm Homeless Team Mtg. 7pm Tamiami Tale Tellers	17 2pm Dominoes	18 11pm Choir Practice 9am-Noon PLANT SALE 7pm ACMA Concert (Pg. 9)
19 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service- No CYP After Service PLANT SALE McGregor Clinic Collection	20 12pm Book Club	21 10am Care & Support Mtg.	22 10am Ten O'clock <i>Scholar-Rise Up</i> [Last Session]	23	24 2pm Dominoes	25 11am Choir Practice Plant Sale Rain Date 5pm Epicureous Dinner (pg. 4&7)
OFFICE CLOSED - REGINA ON VACATION						
26 9:15am News Talk 10:30am Service & CYP Ice Cream Social Insect Repellant Collection	27 MEMORIAL DAY Office Closed	28 10am Racial Equity Meeting	29	30	31 2pm Dominoes	
Check the online calendar at: allfaithsuu.org for post-printing updates						

MAY 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES THEME: PLURALISM

In-House & Live on Facebook at 10:30 a.m.
Recorded services can be viewed at www.allfaithsuu.org
or on our YouTube channel.

May 5

Title – *When Faith Comes Knocking*

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Michelle Gemma

Music by Carlos Garcia

May 12

Title – *Woman Divine*

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Doug Cartwright

Music by Carlos Garcia & All Voices Choir

May 19

Title – *Sacred Fear*

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Bob Moore

Music by Carlos Garcia

McGregor Clinic Collection

May 26

Title – *Yesterday's Blues*

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Joyce Ramay

Music by Carlos Garcia & All Voices Choir

Life of Congregation Report – Frank Geltner

SUNDAY PROGRAMS

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 & allies to gather in fellowship, plan activities, and offer support.

MAY CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NOTES

This year's theme, "The Gifts of Our Faith" explores ten beloved UU values and explores their potential to shape us and, in turn, shape the world. In May, we will focus on the gifts of pluralism. We will celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology. Our songs for the month include "The More We Get Together" with Sign Language, "One Tribe," "One Light, One Sun," "Peace is the World Smiling." We will work together on group projects, play games, and make crafts as we care for each other and our world.

Opening: We are here together. We think with our minds. We love with our hearts. We create with our hands. We celebrate each other.

May 5: We see things differently. "Tale of Two Beast" and "The Pear Tree," and May Day

May 12: Who and what makes us who we are? Mother's Day Stories, crafts, and songs

May 19: No CYP

May 26: Celebrate our differences.

Closing: "As we make choices each day, may we make them with love."

If you have any questions, ideas, or something to share, please contact me.

Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director

Email: heinrich.sharon.s@gmail.com

Child & Youth Program

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. with Sharon Heinrich
(no program on May 19)

May Potluck

Thursday, May 9, 2024 - 5pm

Enjoy food, fellowship and fun.

Get to know each other better.

Play games and eat cheap!

All are welcome at All Faiths' table.



The Board Meeting was held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

The usual things took place at the Board Meeting. The Treasurer gets asked detailed questions. We review the agenda. We were updated as to moving forward with parking lot improvements. We also discussed the need for reserving parking spaces for guest speakers and our minister (so she can find her way into her office for some quiet time before Sunday service).

We discussed the concept of "passive promotion" made possible by All Faiths excellent location on McGregor Boulevard. We voted to purchase an audio visual (AV) system,

including a projector, cart and power bank. Regina donated a DVD/CD player to be made part of the AV system. All of this will hopefully relieve Regina from having to take time to set up all of the AV equipment.

We discussed the upcoming contract renewal for our Contracted Lay Minister. This will be accomplished over the next two months.

Rosalie Kuehn has agreed to succeed Fran Way as head of the Membership Committee. Dick Scudder will be assisting this team as the coordinator for Greeters.

Ed Elrod drew the winning ticket for the quilt on Sunday, April 21. The

lucky winner was Christine Fisher. The board discussed the status of the additional nine quilts. Ed and Doug and Diane Cartwright have agreed that they will place the remaining quilts for sale on the internet.

We discussed use of our facility by outside groups, prompted by a request from some visitors and a Ukrainian Theater Group. More information is needed. This discussion also included membership in outside groups related to social action teams. Barb McFarlane noted the Heart for the Homeless Team used its budgeted moneys for an All Faiths membership in the Lee County Homeless Coalition. David Donovan asked about membership

for our Rainbow Connection Team in the Southwest Harmony Chamber. More info on this in the future.

Frank discussed the upcoming review of the Congregational Manual. He will be forming a small group to review all governing documents for consistency and then bring recommendations to the board and then to the congregation.

Comments or suggestions for your Board of Directors can be emailed to All Faiths or by contacting me (541-961-1482 or frank@newportnet.com) or other Board members.

Our next board meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2024, starting at 1:00 p.m.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE EPICUREOUS DINNER GROUP?

by John Fischer, Coordinator

The *Epicureous Dinner Group* first met in March, 2023. We meet with the sole purpose of socializing and sharing dinner on the 4th Saturday of each month. The group was named for the Greek philosopher, EPICURUS who met in 352 BCE to share company, conversation and food. We carry on that tradition meeting at **2 Meatballs in the Kitchen, Ninja Thai Sushi Bar, Mythos Authentic Greek Cuisine, India Grill, Ginger Bistro** and many others, all within a few miles of the church and as suggested by participants.

There are NO requirements. Just tell us you are coming by calling John E. Fischer at (267) 992-6566, or signing on the signup sheet on the bulletin board in the Community Room with your name, contact information and number in your group.

Please join us at our next dinner as listed in "This Week at All Faiths" on page 4 or the signup sheet on the bulletin board.

All Faiths says thank you and farewell to Marsha Bates and Chris Stotler who will be moving to Colorado this month to be closer to family. They will be dearly missed.

Dear Marsha and Chris ~



You came. You stayed a spell. You touched our hearts. You did your thing.

You made us laugh. You eased our burdens. You shared your love. We will never forget.

From footprints in the sand, to footprints in the snow, your spirit will live on here, no matter where you go.

Wishing you all the best!
Your congregation & your friends.

LIFE NEWS & UPDATES

Lee Interfaith for Empowerment

by Marsha Bates

Three hundred network members and their guests attended LIFE's April 9th Nehemiah Action. Thank you to the 16 All Faiths network members who were among the crowd.

During LIFE's Mental Health Action Team research phase, they interviewed local mental health professionals and persons who have had interactions, either for themselves or for family members, with the mental health system. Both mental health providers and system users said that persons who are being admitted to a mental health facility using the Baker Act are often handcuffed which creates more trauma for a person who is already feeling stress.

Although Lee County Sheriff Department deputies routinely handcuff (and sometimes shackles) persons being transported for mental health treatment, the Fort Myers Police Department rarely uses restraints during transport. In the rare instances when restraint is used, the Fort Myers police officer is required to complete a form stating why restraint was necessary.

A review of both departments' policies revealed that Fort Myers' policy reflects the Baker Act's stipulation that persons being transported under the Act should not be restrained or treated like a criminal. The only exception is if the person is violent or a danger to themselves or others. The Sheriff Department's policy does not reflect those Baker Act requirements.

LIFE had invited Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno to attend the event. Because Sheriff Marceno had declined to attend but sent a representative instead, LIFE attendees signed post cards asking the Sheriff to change his department's policy to reflect the Baker Act requirements. The Sheriff's representative was asked to deliver the 300 cards to the Sheriff; the representative said he would do so.

Fort Myers Police Chief Jason Fields was also invited to the Nehemiah Action. LIFE presented Police Chief Fields a certificate of thanks for having and implementing a policy that reflects the Baker Act's intent to not criminalize a person seeking mental health treatment.

The Mental Health Research Team will continue to petition Sheriff Marceno for a meeting at which they will ask him to amend the Department's policy related to persons who are being transported (under the Baker Act) to a mental health facility. They also will ask Police Chief Fields for the opportunity to review his department's database where that tracks whether or not restraints were used during a Baker Act transport.

♥ FOR THE HOMELESS NEWS

by Barb McFarlane

We continue to learn of resources in the community that support people without housing. We will accept Terryn Baah-Acheamfour's offer to tour the Salvation Army's day program. More information on the date will be sent via email. Please join us in seeing how their services help people work toward more stable safe lives.

For some reason, the sign on our bike rack has disappeared twice. We will hold off on replacing, because the neighbors seem to know to leave bikes.

If you find an extra few hours a week or month on your hands....AND have an interest in fixing or learning how to repair bikes, please let me know. Mike's Bikes, associated with North Shore Alliance church (where we bring the donated bikes), could use help. He's offered to teach anyone interested.

Insect repellents will be collected on Sunday, May 26. The outreach team suggests repentant with DEET, because it prevents jigger bites, but any small sized repellent is needed and useful for those sleeping outside. These will be delivered to outreach teams by Matt Wallace, Outreach Coordinator for the Lee County Homeless Coalition. He appreciated the large T-shirt collection in March, saying they've distributed most of them.

As always, feel free to stop at our casual monthly meeting to ask questions or bring ideas.

Meetings are at All Faiths on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m.



Insect Repellent Collection

Sunday, May 26

sponsored by the

Heart for the Homeless Team

Drop off small sized insect repellents - preferably containing DEET, which helps prevent jigger bites. Donations will be distributed to individuals sleeping outside.

It's the little things that matter.

TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

Cash Assets – March 2024

First Horizon Checking	\$ 35,843
Raymond James Legacy	4,501
Pay Pal	35
Live Oak Operating Reserve (CD)	22,090
First Horizon Capital Reserve	7,504
Live Oak Capital Reserve (S)	43,262
Live Oak Operating Reserve (S)	20,626
Live Oak Legacy (CD)	20,868

Total	\$175,541
Prior Month	<u>171,069</u>
Net Gain	\$ 4,382

March 2024 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 18,492
Operating Expense	<u>16,253</u>
Net Gain	\$ 2,239

Revenue/Operating Income and Expenses for the **2023-2024 fiscal year** which ended on March 31, 2024:

-All Faiths budgeted for pledge giving at \$203,509 in 2023-2024; but the amount actually pledged was \$183,268 (90%).

- As of 3/31/2024, \$178,250.79 (97.3%) of these pledges has been received.

- Total income exceeded total expenses. Overall, expenses were lower than budgeted primarily because there was a Minister vacancy for 5 months.

- 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.

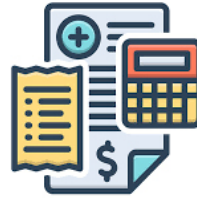
At the beginning of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, several new accounts were created at Live Oak to generate increased interest income. The 1-Year CD rate is 5.0%. And the Savings rate is currently at 4.0%.

The March monthly transfer/deposit of \$1,250 to the Live Oak Capital Reserve account was made. There were no Capital expenses in March. Repaving of the parking lot has not yet occurred.

In March, \$1,840 was collected for Operation Joy.

As we enter the new **2024-2025 fiscal year** on April 1, All Faiths budgeted \$200,200 for pledge giving; to date, actual pledges have totaled \$182,860 (91.3%).

QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR FINANCIAL REVIEW



All Faiths is looking for three people to help with our Annual Financial Review. A review of our financial records and accounting practices is required under All Faiths' Bylaws after our books are closed for the last fiscal year.

Ed Kleinow had graciously volunteered to lead this team for many years, and for that, we extend our deepest gratitude.

This is a review, not an audit, but knowledge of book-keeping, accounting and/or financial experience would be helpful. Prior financial review reports and very detailed guidelines are available for conducting the review so we won't be reinventing the wheel.

This is a once-a-year short-term commitment. The review typically takes two or three days to complete.

For more information on what is entailed, please contact John Conrad at jconrad@hotmail.com or call Regina at the office (239) 226-0900.

ACMA LIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE!



Saturday, May 4 - 7:00pm

Hymn for Her

Dan Philgreen opening

Sunday, May 18 - 7:00pm

Jennings & Keller

Karen Cohen opening

Saturday, June 1 - 7:00pm

Passerine

Frad Ball opening

The Listening Room at All Faiths

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida

General public \$18/Member discount \$12

Donations at the Door

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair



As another Earth Day celebration passes, your Climate Action Team continues to look for ways to be more effectual and to having a broader reach into our community. The climate change clock keeps ticking and reminding us that what we do today will profoundly impact the kind of world we live in tomorrow.

At our meeting in April, we discussed a sales call Joan had received from a company called Palmetto Solar that was promoting a “no cost” installation of leased solar panels. According to the sales pitch, this “no upfront cost solar system” would save the homeowner about a third of the cost of energy from FP&L. All Faiths had explored installing solar and found the upfront cost prohibitive. Perhaps this was an alternative. Bob Moore confirmed that leasing is an option in Florida. Here’s what he said:

“It’s one of 3 options:

- 1) Buy outright.
- 2) Finance through a loan
- 3) Lease from a 3rd party.

Generally options 1 and 2 have more benefits to homeowners. If you can afford it, option 1 has the greatest benefit. If not, financing can allow you to own the system and usually pay it off with monthly payments that are similar or less than your current electric bill. Leasing is usually the least beneficial to the homeowner. Even though the monthly payments may be less than the electric bill, they extend for a long time. So the total cost is high. You also don’t own the system when you go to sell your house. So you need to know the terms of the lease for that.” If you have not yet considered solar for your home or business, we encourage you to investigate these options.

There is a great deal of discussion taking place among the various Climate Action Team partner groups about finding ways to function more collaboratively in order to have more impact. Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it will affect all aspects of our economy and strongly impact social justice issues. The groups are exploring ways to help organize a climate solutions consortium that can bring multiple groups together in shared goals and actions. We look to you for your help in this process. Please let us know about any connections you may have with business or organizational leaders, so we can reach out to them and engage their support for our efforts. Together, we can make a difference.

THE RAINBOW CONNECTION!

by David Donovan, Co-Chair

The Rainbow Connection has been very busy these past couple of months. Several of us attended a social mixer in downtown Fort Myers, sponsored by the SW Florida Harmony Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is an LGBTQ organization whose mission is to promote professional networking within the greater Fort Myers LGBTQ community, as well as to promote outreach within the community. At the event, we met with members from other organizations and Board members from the Harmony Chamber, as well as the Director of the Board for Visuality. We introduced ourselves and gave a brief description of who we are and what we do as a congregation.

In talking with Visuality, we agreed to set up a meeting at their location to review their operation and explore where we had a mutual interest in supporting each other. This is the start of the last element of the FIVE PRACTICES of a WELCOMING CONGREGATION – Support a Welcoming Project. Visuality is a non-profit organization with a mission to enhance and sustain the health and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies in SWFL through peer support, education, and empowerment programming. This includes programs for LGBTQ+ youth, the trans community, adults, and seniors.

We made a request to join the Harmony Chamber at the All Faiths Board meeting in April and got approval. That same week, we officially became a member. This relationship will provide networking opportunities with local businesses and organizations to promote the work that All Faiths does in the community and potentially attract new members. We also expressed an interest with the Harmony Chamber Board in hosting a similar mixer event in the future to showcase our organization and mission.

The Rainbow Connection is currently working on getting ready to represent All Faiths at the Naples Pride Event on June 8th.



Ice Cream Social

After Service

Sunday, May 26, 2024

Sponsored by Lewis Robinson

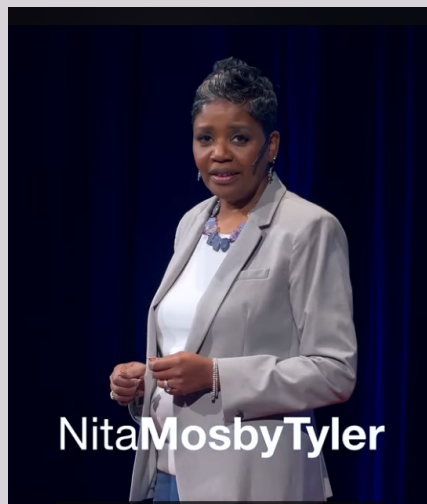
SPECIAL PRESENTATION

"WHAT IF WHITE PEOPLE LED THE CHARGE TO END RACISM?"

Sunday, June 2, 2024 - Noon to 12:45 P.M.

All Faiths Sanctuary

Dr. Dwinita Mosby Tyler is the Chief Catalyst and Founder of The Equity Project, a company that supports organizations & communities in building equity, inclusion, and diversity. Previously, she was the Senior Vice President and Chief Inclusion Officer for Children's Hospital Colorado and the Executive Director of the Office of Human Resources for the City & County of Denver.



This short program is the Congregation's look at its commitment to racial justice currently being explored by the Racial Equity Team.

Program will include an eleven-minute video, short presentation by Racial Equity Team members, and a short Q & A session.

Please show your support of the Racial Equity Team's effort to guide the Congregation toward its goal of building a multicultural Beloved Community free of racism.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQSW5SFBsOg>

RACIAL EQUITY TEAM NEWS

by Frank Geltner, Co-Chair

The Racial Equity Team is nearing the end of its reading of Layla F Saad's *me and white supremacy* in anticipation of deciding on a congregational outreach strategy for the future. The team has decided to engage with the congregation in a performative way about the perils of racism in our daily lives on Sunday, June 2. We will be watching an 11-minute video program titled "***What if white people led the charge to end racism?***" This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Diversity fatigue is real: people of color are tired of leading the fight. White allies are tired of being told they're doing it wrong. No wonder we don't have equity yet! In this inspiring talk, Dwinita Mosby-Tyler explains why we need "unlikely allies" in the fight for justice, and why people who are experiencing inequality first hand must be willing to accept the help. Dr. Dwinita Mosby Tyler is the Chief Catalyst and Founder of The Equity Project, a company that supports organizations & communities in building equity, inclusion, and diversity, and The HR Shop, a boutique human resources firm for non-profits & small businesses.

The team has been meeting on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. It will be shifting to one meeting a month on the second Tuesday beginning June 11.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VIRTUAL GA • JUNE 20 - 23, 2024

Love Unites, Stories Ignite

In a world filled with division and challenges, the theme for this year's General Assembly is a powerful reminder of the core principles that unite us as Unitarian Universalists. "Love Unites, Stories Ignite" celebrates the profound impact of love as a binding force that transcends boundaries and fosters connections within our faith community and beyond.

Our faith has always been rooted in the power of storytelling, and this year we'll explore how our stories can ignite change, inspire compassion, and help us build a more just and equitable world. Through storytelling, we share our experiences, our dreams, our struggles, and our triumphs. It is through these stories that we can find common ground, deepening our understanding of one another and the world around us.

The 63rd General Assembly will take place virtually Thursday, June 20 through Sunday, June 23, 2024.

You may now view the GA schedule to see the lineup of informative workshops, inspirational worship services, and more!

We currently Alberita Johnson and Frank Geltner signed up. We are allowed three, so if you would like to participate, please contact the office (239-226-0900).

ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE!

Saturday, May 18 and Sunday, May 19 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon

[Rain date Saturday, June 1 and Sunday, June 2]

Our beautiful garden is being tended by three congregants - *Judy Alberda, Nicole Racine* and *Giovanni De Oto*. The tasks are watering, trimming, fertilizing, weeding, taking away and adding, and rearranging. Did you know that ferns will spread and take over any area they are near? Now you see a plant, now you just see ferns. They have to be removed. *Coontie* gets diseased and has to be cut down completely. Then beautiful light green fronds appear and all is well. Anyone interested in contributing time and energy to this effort are welcome to join our crew. You can choose your time to spend an hour or so in a quiet, beautiful setting. See Judy or Nicole to join the effort.

It's an ever changing landscape. Did you know that *orange blossom* is the Florida state flower? And that *scarlet salvia* changes color when new plants emerge and they could be pink or white? Throughout the year, we pot some plants and some are donated by Brian Bigelow (natives) and from myself. A delightful selection will be available for a donation on Saturday, May 18 and the remaining plants will be available on Sunday, May 19 after the service. We hope you will add one of our offerings to your home or yard.



All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

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

Executive Board: Frank Geltner, Chair; Dick Scudder, Vice Chair; John Conrad, Treasurer; Diane Chernow, Secretary; Marge DiGalbo, Past Chair.

Directors: David Donovan, Rosalie Kuehn, Ken Malkin, Barb McFarlane, Lewis Robinson.

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

Adult Education Forums

Sunday Service Team

Joyce Ramay

Hospitality

Frank Geltner/Nicole Racine

Program Support

Michelle Gemma/Barb McFarlane

Member Services

Rosalie Kuehn/Fran Way

Greeters

Dick Scudder

Care and Support

Joyce Ramay

Finance

Joyce Ramay

Stewardship Committee

Marsha Bates

Nominating Committee

Sharon Gray

Sound Technician

Ed Elrod

Livestreaming

Regina Kilmartin/Sharon Gray

Brad Davidson

Building and Grounds

Brian Bigelow/Judy Alberda

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,

Michelle Gemma

Barb McFarlane

Mano a Mano

Charlotte Blitt

Operation Joy & Solos Group

Annely Hudanick

Animal Ministry

Sharon Gray

Rainbow Connection

Frank Stephens

Minister Emeritus: The Rev. Dr. Wayne Robinson



Deadline for the **June** Issue of *Connections* is **July 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