



# CONNECTIONS

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

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*happy holidays*

**Joseph Brauer**  
*Tidings of Comfort and Joy!*  
**Thursday, December 12 at 7pm**  
**Tickets \$20 at the door, on Sundays,**  
**or at [viewstub.com/JBTidings](http://viewstub.com/JBTidings)**

***Lasagna Luncheon!***  
**Hosted by the Rainbow Connection**  
**Sunday, December 15 after Service**  
**Tickets \$20 available on Sundays.**  
**Proceeds benefit Cape Coral Pride**

***Christmas Eve Candlelight Service***  
**by Alberita Johnson**  
**Sunday, December 24 at 6:30pm**  
**An Evening of Storytelling and Caroling**

***Merry Christmas, Fido!***  
***Animal Shelter Collection***  
**Sunday, December 29**  
**Wet/Dry Food, Cleaning Supplies Welcome**

## BOARD NOTES *by Frank Geltner, Board Chair*

*The Board meeting was held on November 20, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.*

Hopefully you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and are now getting ready for the Christmas holidays. Regina and her team of Merry Elves will have decorated the Sanctuary and Community Room. We take this time of the year to count our blessings and begin thinking into the new year.

Diane Chernow has had to resign from the Board of Directors for health reasons. We wish her well. Barb McFarlane agreed to be nominated and was elected to serve as Secretary for the remainder of the year.

We will be having a workshop on the Congregational Manual on Thursday, January 9. Any member of the congregation is welcome to join the board for this discussion.

The next meeting of the Bylaws Review Committee is Monday, November 25 at Noon.

Dan DeShon has agreed to serve as adviser to Building and Grounds Team for our landscaping.

Fran Way's son, Bobby Way, has agreed to serve as consultant on our Audio/Technical system.

A Social Justice Coordinating Team is engaged in a pilot program to sort out how best to organize its efforts for both the internal communications between Social Justice Teams and external outreach.

The board gave the green light to Brian Bigelow to bring an estimate to build a cedar screen behind the Memorial Garden for both aesthetic and practical purposes, i.e., to screen the storage behind the Memorial Garden and dedicate a space for storage.

I met with Dan DeShon and Brian Bigelow to discuss the grounds maintenance. Dan has been working at the Edison Ford Estates and will bring his expertise to bear on All Faiths needs. We have quite a few overgrown trees and shrubbery needing cutting. As a Green Sanctuary we seek to populate our grounds with native species. We also work towards lower maintenance strategies. Brian has agreed to build a cedar fence behind the Memorial Garden to screen off the storage area.

This, and other improvements will require some volunteer time from members. We will make an announcement when the time comes. Marge and Bob will be finding some solar lights to both illuminate our damaged sign and provide some light for those seeking our facility after dark.

John continues to pursue bids for replacing the fence and sign.

*The next board meeting is Wednesday, December 18 at 1:00 p.m.*



## 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.)*

**December** - Special Collection - Employee Bonuses

**January** - Quality Life Center - Scholarships

**February** - Special Collection - Minister's Discretionary Fund

**November Share the Plate raised \$819 for Operation Joy!**

*Making the holidays special for families and children*

*Your generosity directly benefits our community!*

*We are grateful!*





Beloveds,

As I sat down to write this article, I found myself returning to the election results of 2024. Immediately the roller coaster of emotions filled my cup, spilled over the top and I started wondering what tomorrow will be like in this country. I began to compare the history of this country to stories we are now not only writing but living. Unfortunately it appears that it is a story of backsliding. But is it true or are my fears guiding my thoughts?

My story is not new, I was born during the latter part of the boomer generation and now sixty years later it feels as if we choose to turn back. For some it is nostalgia and they are filled with wistful affection while others are filled with regret. As fear and a relapse to bad and erroneous ways of Being that many of our parents, and friends fought against.

They protested for peace, freedom from tyranny, and freedom of choice. And now here we go again. I, and hundreds perhaps thousands more are trying to comprehend how we could be going backwards, how could this be happening in the twenty first century within a capitalist and democratic nation.

This nation is still a young nation compared to our European neighbors and others across the pond. I deeply believe that we can learn from their history so we do not have to repeat it here. Then I remember and come to a full stop.

Perhaps we this nation have not learned enough as evident in Hungary, and India. These nations are backsliders, and have become Electoral Autocracies. In 2022 the European Parliament passed a resolution that due to "a breakdown in democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in Hungary" the country turned into "a hybrid regime of electoral autocracy," and prior to that in 2021 India slipped from a flawed democracy also and became a electoral autocracy and or a hybrid regime.

Hybrid Regimes are one in which democratic institutions are imitative and adhere to authoritarian methods. In these regimes, regular elections are held, but they are accused of failing to reach democratic standards of freedom and fairness. Sounds Familiar right?

This became close to home, since the advent of the Republican Tea Party Movement of the twenty first century formed in opposition to the Presidency of Barack Obama. And their platform continues to be prevalent within the current Republican Party.

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."

Until then, let us gracefully embrace the holiday season with Joy and Gratitude as we gather with family and friends. May you be safe, healthy, and filled with Joy! Amen and Ashe.

You are not alone... We are on this journey together.

All aboard... Destination Joy.

*Love ~ Minister Albie*

## IT'S TIME TO APPRECIATE OUR WONDERFUL EMPLOYEES



At All Faiths, we are blessed to have dedicated and committed employees. This is the time of the year to show our appreciation by making donations for Employee Bonuses for our Minister *Alberita Johnson*, Congregational Administrator *Regina Kilmartin*, Music Director *Carlos Garcia*, CYP Director *Sharon Heinrich*, and Sexton *Joe Gayton*.

We will have a Second Special Collection on December 8th, but you can make your contribution any time by making out your check to All Faiths and writing **Bonuses** on the memo line.

Show your happy holiday spirit -- your generosity is appreciated.

*Joyce Ramay, Finance Chair*



# Happening at All Faiths

*Happy December  
Birthday to you!*



December 6 Sharon Gray  
December 9 Nancy Clark  
December 14 Jeff Moran  
December 14 Carol Siferd  
December 20 Greg Kopp  
December 21 Mary Ellen Fritz  
December 23 Chris Stotler  
December 30 Linda Bigelow

*And Coming Up...*

Jan 1 Shea Fierro  
Jan 1 Alan Levin

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



## Solos Holiday Extravaganza!

**Saturday, December 7, 2024  
1:00 p.m.**

**Annual Holiday Extravaganza!  
Rum Runners in Cape Coral  
check your email for details.**

In keeping with tradition please bring a  
\$7 or less useless gift for exchange.

**RSVP to: Annelly Hudanick,  
[annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 Regina at [office@allfaithsuo.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuo.org) 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.

# DECEMBER 2024 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
<b>1</b> <b>9:15am</b> News Talk <b>10:30am</b> Service  <b>2-5pm</b> ACMA Circle	M A N O A M A N O	<b>2</b>  <b>6:30pm</b> Common Read (Pg. 8)	<b>3</b> <b>10am</b> Sun. Service Team Mtg.  <b>1:30pm</b> Climate Action Zoom Mtg.  <b>6:30pm</b> Miracles Discussion Grp.	<b>4</b>  <b>7pm</b> Vespers Zoom Mtg. (Pg. 6)	<b>5</b>  	<b>6</b>  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert (Pg. 10)	
<b>8</b> <b>9:15am</b> News Talk <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP  <b>12pm</b> Rainbow Connection  <b>2-5pm</b> ACMA Circle	C R A F T  S A L E	<b>9</b>  <b>6:30pm</b> Common Read (Pg. 8)	<b>10</b> <b>10am</b> Racial Equity Team Mtg. via Zoom  <b>6:30pm</b> Miracles Discussion Grp.	<b>11</b>  	<b>12</b> <b>10 am</b> Finance Mtg.  <b>7pm</b> Joseph Brauer In Concert Tidings of Com- fort and Joy!	<b>13</b>  <b>2pm</b> Dominoes in the Community Room	<b>14</b>  <b>11am</b> Choir Practice  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Holiday Party (Pg. 10)
<b>15</b> <b>9:15am</b> News Talk <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP  McGregor Clinic Collection	<b>16</b>  <b>12pm</b> Book Club  <b>6:30pm</b> Common Read (Pg. 8)	<b>17</b> <b>1pm</b> Heart for the Homeless Team <i>(December                      Meeting Only)</i>  <b>6:30pm</b> Miracles Discussion Grp.	<b>18</b>  <b>1pm</b> Board Meeting	<b>19</b>  <b>7pm</b> Tamiami Tale Tellers	<b>20</b>  	<b>21</b>  <b>11am</b> Choir Practice	
<b>22</b> <b>9:15am</b> News Talk <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP  <b>12:15pm</b> Sacred Circle	<b>23</b>  <b>6:30pm</b> Common Read (Pg. 8)	<b>24</b>  <b>6:30pm</b> Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	<b>25</b>  Christmas Day Office Closed  <i>Merry                      Christmas!</i>	<b>26</b>  	<b>27</b>  <b>2pm</b> Dominoes in the Community Room	<b>28</b>  <b>11am</b> Choir Practice	
<b>29</b> <b>9:15am</b> News Talk <b>10:30am</b> Service  <b>3:00-5:00pm</b> Fried Food Potluck (Pg. 8)  Pet Shelter Collection	<b>30</b>  <b>6:30pm</b> Common Read (Pg. 8)  Regina on Vacation through 1/2/25	<b>31</b>  <b>6:30pm</b> Miracles Discussion Grp.					

Check the online calendar at: <http://www.allfaithsuu.org>  
 for post-printing updates

**DECEMBER 2024**  
**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**  
**THEME: THE PRACTICE OF REPAIR**

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

Recorded services can be viewed at [www.allfaithsuo.org](http://www.allfaithsuo.org)  
or on our YouTube channel.

**December 1 – World AIDS Day**

*Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

Speaker – Taryn Landy, McGregor Clinic

Worship Associate – Diane Cartwright

Music by Carlos Garcia

*Life of Congregation Report* – Frank Geltner

**December 8 - The Invisible Among Us**

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Joyce Ramay

Music by Carlos Garcia

Second Collection: Employee Bonuses

**December 15 - Virgin of Guadalupe**

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Annely Hudanick

Music by Carlos Garcia

McGregor Clinic Collection

**December 22 - Following Yonder Star**

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Helen Dixon

Music by Carlos Garcia

**December 24 – 6:30 p.m.**

*Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Regina Kilmartin

Music by Carlos Garcia

**December 29 - Lights of Justice and Peace**

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Michelle Gemma

Music by Carlos Garcia

*Pet Shelter Collection*

**News Talk - 9:15am in the Sanctuary**

News Talk is a facilitated group that offers a time and space for you to discuss profound questions.

**ALL FAITHS' VESPERS**

*1st Wednesday Monthly 7:00 P.M.*

*A time of evening prayer,  
meditation and contemplation*



Join us via Zoom:

Meeting ID: 852 1697 7661

Passcode: 485483

What to Expect: We may experience sacred readings, crystal and Tibetan bowls, flute, violin, harp, lite drumming, poetry, quotes, testimonials, storytelling, chanting and movement. Each service is different but will always include prayer, meditation and contemplation.

For more information email: [office@allfaithsuo.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuo.org)

**CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NOTES**

*by Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director*

This month “Presence” is the faith practice that we will explore. The meaning and value of “presence” and “presents” will be in the focus of our stories, songs and activities. Each session lifts up a different way that “presence” is important in our lives. We will talk about the winter holidays, make presents to give and prepare to celebrate this time of year. We will have a chance to encourage each other to give their gifts and appreciate the gifts that we receive...

**December 1:** No program this day.

**December 8:** We will talk about “Presence” and “Presents.” We will make presents.

**December 15:** We will explore divine presence and look for the divine in everyone and all all-around us. We will discuss the Christmas Story. We will continue to make presents and cards.

**December 22:** We will participate in the congregation presentation of “Follow Yonder Star”

**December 29:** No program this day.

I would like to encourage our congregation to share talent, skill and knowledge with our young people. Please let me know if you would like me to schedule a short time on a Sunday morning for you to share with the young ones.

Sharon, CYP Director

**REGISTER AT:** [www.allfaithsuo.org](http://www.allfaithsuo.org)



## JOYS & SORROWS

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

**Diane Chernow** suffered a broken back and is consulting with doctors about treatment. We hope that she can be relieved of her pain and have a good recovery.

**Louise Close** remains displaced for a third year from her home due to all the hurricanes. She shared the joy that she has two new granddaughters.

**Mahilena Dianz** had heart surgery to replace a valve and is receiving care at a rehab facility. We hope she recovers soon with good results.

**Janet Goen** passed away in assisted living on October 15th. Our condolences to her family and friends.

**Jan Guardiano** has gone to a rehab facility after being hospitalized. We hope that she improves soon.

**Ruth Iyengar** has been diagnosed with severe aortic stenosis. She is exploring surgical options.

**Rosalie Kuehn** had a car accident and suffered a broken arm. We hope that her arm heals well.

**Susan Meissner** suffered a severe respiratory infection after her return from the north. We are glad that she is doing better now.

**Pam Pfalzer** was hospitalized again with a broken elbow but has returned home. Her partner Beth has been receiving hospice care but had to return to the hospital. We send our blessings to them.

**Michael Pierre** has been receiving radiation treatments for esophageal cancer. We hope that he has good results and recovers soon.

**Carol Siferd** has been hospitalized with pneumonia. We hope that she has a good recovery.

*Joyce Ramay,*

*Care & Support Coordinator*

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower,  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief.  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.

— Robert Frost



## RAINBOW CONNECTION NEWS

*by David Donovan*

After several years of absence, Fort Myers held a beautiful Pride Festival on November 15th at the Alliance for the Arts. All Faiths did not have a booth at the event this year, but we will definitely be part of next year's celebration. A few of us did attend the event and made our presence known.

Several members of the Rainbow Connection team attended a SWFL Harmony Chamber mixer hosted at The McGregor Clinic on November 21. The Clinic is one of our community partners and it was so great to meet their staff and see firsthand all the wonderful things they do for those living with HIV.

Congratulations for all the hard work this year to our Rainbow Connection Team!! We have completed all of the steps necessary to apply for the renewal of our "Welcoming Congregation" status for All Faiths. Final paperwork will be submitted in December.

All Faiths will be honoring World AIDS Day with a service on Sunday Dec 1st. We will have a speaker from the Prevention Group at The McGregor Clinic. They will share all about their outreach work and the status of the epidemic and the stigma that still exists in our community.

The Rainbow Connection will be sponsoring a Lasagna Luncheon on Sunday December 15th right after Service for \$20 a plate. We will serve homemade Lasagna, Salad, Dessert and beverages. Proceeds to benefit Cape Coral Pride.

David Donovan: [ddonovan722@gmail.com](mailto:ddonovan722@gmail.com)

Frank Stephens: [fdinfla@gmail.com](mailto:fdinfla@gmail.com)

**We NEED you.**  
**Can you HELP?**

**Animal Shelter Collection**  
**Sunday, December 29, 2024**



Shelters provide a safe and nurturing environment for these animals until they can find a forever home. To help shelters in their mission, they would appreciate donations of pet food, treats, cleaning supplies, bedding sheets or towels, and gift cards. **Sharon Gray will deliver the donations to shelters in need.**

## CELEBRATE HANNUUKAH & KWAANZA

Sunday, December 29, 2024 - 3:00 - 5:00 P.M.

Congregational Fried Food Potluck



There are some foods you're almost certain to encounter at a Hanukkah dinner: fried shredded potato pancakes known as latkes, fried pastries, fried fish, and even fried chicken. Noticing a pattern? These delicious treats all get the deep-fried treatment. This contrasts with the Jewish high holiday menus for Yom Kippur or Rosh Hashanah, which often have brisket, fresh fruit like apples and pomegranates, and non-fried fish such as lox. So what gives with all of the fried goodness at Hanukkah?

That goes back to the actual story of Hanukkah, the festival of lights, which celebrates a miracle that occurred over 2,000 years ago. After ousting an oppressive king, Jewish rebels recovered a religiously significant temple. According to the Talmud, when they went to light the menorah as part of the rededication, they realized there was only enough oil to keep the flame lit for a single night. But the flame didn't go out and lasted for a total of eight days and nights, which gave them time to find more oil. That's why the festival of lights is just as much a celebration of oil.



Each year as the calendar winds down, the holiday of Kwanzaa is just beginning. Honoring African American culture and heritage, Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration observed from December 26 through January 1. It's seven days marked by family and community gatherings, lighting symbolic candles, and sharing delicious food. Dating back to 1966, the holiday serves as more than a festive get-together; it's an important signifier of Black identity and unity in America.

African American identity according to the holiday's creator, Professor Maulana Karenga. Each of the principles, such as self-determination, creativity, and faith, is represented by a candle on a seven-branched candleholder called a kinara. Based in part on African harvest traditions, the holiday culminates with a large, communal feast called Karamu.

Though the word Kwanzaa roughly translates to "first fruits of the harvest," the holiday's menu varies. Traditional American soul food dishes – like mac and cheese, collard greens, and fried catfish, to name a few – are every bit at home on the Kwanzaa table as foods inspired by the African harvest season.

## ♥ FOR THE HOMELESS TEAM

by Barb McFarlane, Co-Chair

There are several opportunities coming in January to volunteer or learn about issues facing people without or at risk of losing housing. Mark your calendars and please join us:

1. Along with the All Faiths other justice teams, we are showing the documentary *Razing Liberty Square* on Friday Jan 24, 10 am. Paul Laingang with Fort Myers Housing Authority will be present to answer questions and discuss similar local issues. See the flyer on the bulletin board. This was shown earlier this year at Alliance for the Arts. Its free to see it here!

2. Annual Homeless Standown and Point in Time Count. Saturday January 25, 8:00 am. A few All Faiths members have helped at this each year. It's just a couple hours of your time to help people get the services and goods they may need.

3. We hope to have a Habitat for Humanity date scheduled on a Friday in January. Watch for more details. Its always been a fun day. Judy Alberda has the little white books that can be passed out to people you might encounter who are without housing. See her if you would like a couple. Brian Bigelow continues to pick up and deliver the bikes left at All Faiths.

For December *only*, the team meeting will be **Tuesday, December 17 at 10:00 a.m.** Stop by, join us, no obligation to join.



A Memorial Service and Brick Laying Ceremony was held for Ed and Carol Elrod on 11/17. We are grateful for all the years they spent with us from the day of our founding. May they rest in peace.

Left: One of Carol's quilts entitled "Second Hand Rose," owned by Doug & Diane Cartwright.



# RACIAL EQUITY TEAM NEWS

by Nicole Racine, Co-Chair

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

At its last meeting the RET met with Julian Ramirez, the Executive Director of the Quality Life Center. He invited All Faiths Unitarian Congregation to a workshop featuring Rev. Dr. Barrion Staples. This workshop has been customized for the event scheduled for Wednesday, November 27 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Quality Life Center, 3210 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Fort Myers, FL 33916

## BRIDGING THE DIVIDES: EXPLORING RACE AND FOSTERING POSITIVE RACE RELATIONS

Bridging The Divides: Exploring Race and Fostering Positive Race Relations is a program designed to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of race and its impact on society. The workshops aim to foster open dialogue, enhance cultural awareness, and promote inclusivity and equality.

Bridging The Divides employs a combination of interactive activities, group discussions, multimedia presentations, and guest speakers. Participants will be encouraged to engage in reflective exercises, share personal experiences, and collaborate on action-oriented projects.

This workshop is a stepping stone for the Racial Equity Team in deciding on an outcome activity to meet our social justice goals.

As noted in earlier announcements, the team spent the past year working through Layla F. Saad's *me and white supremacy* a book written to combat racism, change the world, and help its readers become good ancestors.

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MTG.

Friday, December 13, 2024 - 9 - 10 a.m.

The Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce will be holding an informational meeting for those in the religious community, houses of worship etc. at the GFMCC, 1520 Lee Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901

This meeting will be an introduction to the Chamber and some of the services that we are providing to your organization. Some of these programs are for both members and non-members of the Chamber.

We are looking forward to sharing with you some of our resources and plans we have for future opportunities to better serve our community.

[Register Here](#)

<https://members.fortmyers.org/atlas/events/house-of-worship-informational-meeting-4923/details>

# CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Myers, supported by the SWFL RESET Center & the SWFL EcoAlliance, invites you to

## Please Join Us for a community celebration of Solemi Hernandez, recipient of the 2024 Holley Rauen Environmental Leadership Award

December 13, 2024 7-9 pm  
Hobart Hall on the campus of  
UUCFM 13411 Shire Lane,  
Fort Myers, FL 33912

- Hors d'oeuvres, deserts & drinks
- Live music
- In-person presentations
- Video presentations by those unable to attend
- Video by Holley Rauen
- Presentation of Award
- Comments by Solemi

RSVP to Tami @  
[tami.renkoski@gmail.com](mailto:tami.renkoski@gmail.com)  
Seating is limited to 100 people  
so reserve your spots asap

Donations welcome to SWFL RESET Center to support this celebration.  
Contact Gary Robbins ([pachamamaelder@gmail.com](mailto:pachamamaelder@gmail.com))  
Looking forward to celebrating together!

## SOLOS UMPTEENTH HOLIDAY SHINDIG

Saturday, December 7, 1:00 pm

RUMRUNNERS

5848 HARBOUR DRIVE

CAPE CORAL

*Mandatory Useless Gift Exchange:* Due to rampant inflation, the acceptable cost of the gift giving has been adjusted to a maximum of \$7!!! Wow!!!!

Since I am, at times, careless with my electronic devices, (never too dense to understand which thing does what), I have erased all my contacts, my bad.....

If there are any unattached, semi-attached or wish to be detached, members of All Faiths you think would enjoy this wonderful event, please let them know the particulars and drag them along!

I need numbers, so give me a ring, text, thumbs up, or verbal yay or nay.

Must know by Wednesday December 4th! Or heads will roll. RSVP: [annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com).

Annely, Aging Den Mother of the All Faiths Solos.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

## Cash Assets – October 2024

First Horizon Checking	\$ 17,117
Raymond James Legacy	5,232
Live Oak Operating Reserve (CD)	22,721
First Horizon Capital Reserve	5,224
Live Oak Capital Reserve (S)	26,472
Live Oak Operating Reserve (S)	42,306
Live Oak Legacy (CD)	21,474

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$140,546</b>
Prior Month	<u>151,790</u>
<b>Net Gain/Loss</b>	<b>(-\$ 11,244)</b>

## October 2024 Profit & Loss

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

## 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 October was \$116,785.00; and \$92,286.38 was received (79.0%). However, before April 1, 2024, \$24,757.01 was received in paid pledges towards the new year. Taking this into account, we have received a total of \$117,043.39 towards the current year total pledge drive goal of \$200,200 (58.5%).

No unusual expenses incurred in the General Fund Operating Account during October.

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 October monthly transfer/deposit of \$1,530.00 to the Live Oak Capital Reserve account was made. In October, the new side door was paid for at a total cost of \$2,560.00, and funding was from Capital Reserves.

In October, \$761.00 was collected for the St. Matthew's House Shelter (Heart for the Homeless Team). In addition, \$1,415 was collected for the UUA Disaster Relief Fund and All Faiths contributed an additional \$5,000 from Reserves to pay back the generosity of the UUA Disaster Relief Fund after Hurricane Ian.

# MANO A MANO CRAFT SALE!

Sunday, December 1 and Sunday, December 8

by Charlotte Blitt



December is the time to find great holiday gifts by stopping at the Mano Mano Craft Sale at All Faiths on Sunday. As you may know, All Faiths members, Joan and Segundo Velasquez conceived the idea for this outstanding non-profit organization to help the poor people in Segundo's home country, Bolivia. From initially delivering minimal first aid supplies to Segundo's brother, Dr. Jose, it has become an incredible organization building roads, medical clinics, schools and even air strips in remote areas of the country where they are able to provide emergency rescues with their planes. They have aided farmers, teachers and even doctors with more effective skills. It is extremely unfortunate that Joan is now homebound in Minnesota due to her on-going struggles with infantile paralysis so she hasn't been able to visit Bolivia in many years, nor Fort Myers in the last few years. Segundo travels to Bolivia a few times a year but cannot leave Joan home alone...

Several All Faiths members, Sharon Gray, Joyce Schaffer and Charlotte Blitt have joined Segundo on trips to Bolivia and have seen the amazing work that Joan and Segundo have initiated. Ask them about their experience there and hopefully you might be able to join Segundo on a trip.

Even small purchases are very much appreciated!!

## MLK UNITY BREAKFAST 2025

*Save the Date! January 20, 2024 - 7 - 10 a.m.*

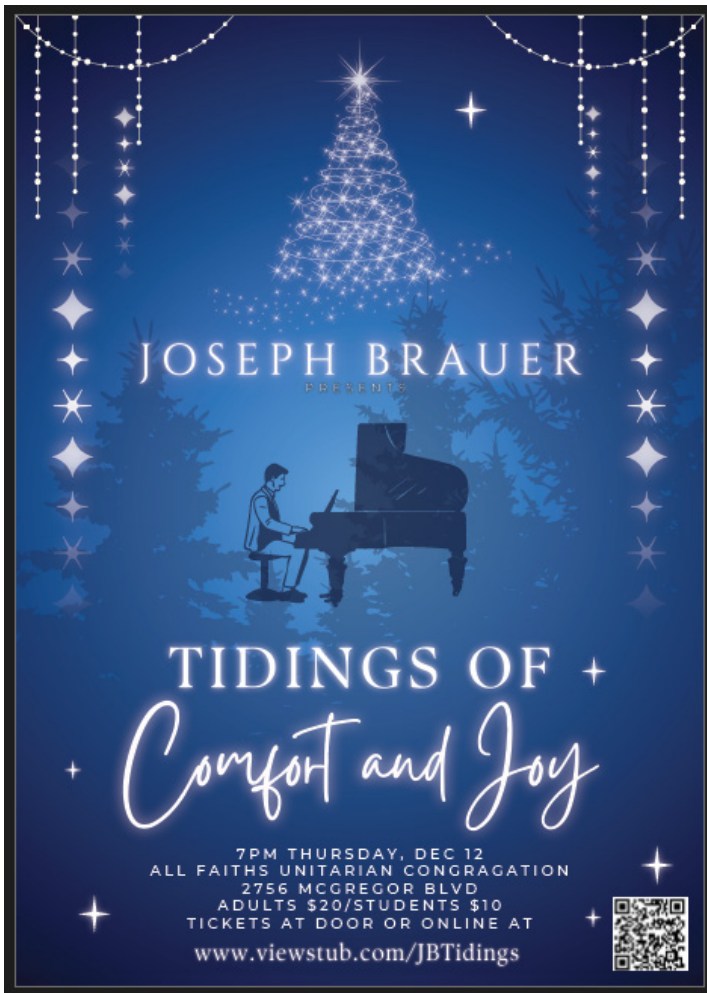
Welcome to the 2025 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. UNITY Breakfast!

Come join us for a morning of celebration and reflection at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre. This in-person event is a wonderful opportunity to honor Dr. King's legacy and promote unity within our community.

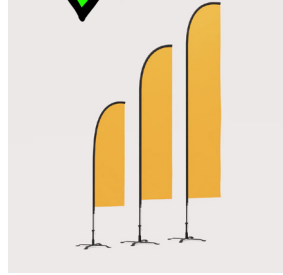
Enjoy a delicious breakfast while listening to inspiring speakers and engaging in meaningful discussions about equality and justice. Let's come together to continue Dr. King's work and strive for a more inclusive society.

Don't miss out on this special event - reserve your spot today and be a part of the UNITY Breakfast in 2025!

Tables are selling out quickly. Please contact Frank Gelter if you are interested in attending: [frank@newportnet.com](mailto:frank@newportnet.com).



## ALL FAITHS' WISH LIST



### **Location, Location, Location!**

All Faiths is in a great location to advertise our values and beliefs to passerbys on McGregor!

Banner flags are a relatively low-cost (about \$100 each) way to advertise, and now you can help.

We are reactivating our WISH LIST in order to purchase three or four banner flags to place prominently on our front lawn.

If you would like to contribute to the purchase of a banner flag, see the wish list and envelopes on the bulletin board. All Faiths' Wish List helps up purchase items that are not in the budget. We thank you for your contributions!



## Ice Cream Social

After Service

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Sponsored by Lewis Robinson

Rainbow Connection presents its

# Lasagna



# Luncheon

Sunday, December 15, 2024  
12:00pm NOON - Directly after Service

Where: All Faiths Unitarian Congregation  
2756 McGregor Blvd, Ft Myers, FL 33901

Tickets: \$20 each

Dinner includes: lasagna, salad, rolls, dessert and beverages



Reserve your spot by December 8th.

Tickets will be available after Sunday services until the event.

Contact us at 239.961.7086 for information or email [ddonovan722@gmail.com](mailto:ddonovan722@gmail.com)

Proceeds to benefit Cape Coral Pride



## ACMA LIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE!

**Saturday, December 7**

**2:00pm Workshop - 7:00pm Concert**

Cliff Eberhardt in Concert

Louise Mosrie opening

**Saturday, December 14 - 7:00pm**

ACMA Holiday Party

**The Listening Room at All Faiths**

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida

General public \$18/Member discount \$12

Donations at the Door



## All Faiths Friends & Family Appreciation Day



Saturday, January 11, 2025

1:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Lakes Regional Park

Pavilion B-2

7330 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers

All Faiths Family and Friends are invited to a day of fun, food, and fellowship. Why?

**Because we appreciate you!**

We appreciate that you are part of our All Faiths Community.

We recognize your presence, your participation, your precious gifts of *Time, Talent & Treasure!*

*Bring a Dish to Share!*

*Sign Up on the Bulletin Board*



## All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: [office@allfaithsuo.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuo.org) – Website: [www.allfaithsuo.org](http://www.allfaithsuo.org)

**Executive 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

Nicole Racine/Frank Stephens

### 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

t/b/d

### 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

Frank Stephens

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



Deadline for the **January** Issue of *Connections* is **December 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