The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County



Building Liberal Religious Community — Please Join Us!

March 2023

Our Sunday Schedule Worship at 10:30 am is now in-person and virtual via Zoom

March Sermons

The Dark Night of the Soul

Rev. María McCabe

Doesn't sound much like fun, does it? Poets, mystics, and storytellers describe as a moment of such extreme vulnerability that we fear we may not survive it. In this service we will explore how that dark night opens the doorway to our spiritual and emotional wellbeing.

The Sermon on the Amount

Rev. Maria McCabe March 12
As our annual Stewardship campaign officially closes, let's celebrate together our dreams and hope for the future.

In This Time of Anticipating Spring

Worship Committee March 19 Please join us in a celebration of the Spring Equinox. In this time of anticipated spring, let us allow ourselves to extend the anticipation—to value the time of budding before blooming, of seeding before sprouting.

This is a time of revelation: the revealing of that which is eternal, which we see every year, but still need to be reminded to see it in a new way. There is also the revelation of that which is new. Every spring we encounter something never before seen. It is that very newness which embodies hope and potential for the wholeness which is yet to be.

Let us allow spring to unfold slowly that we may appreciate the true mystery of rebirth and renewal.

-by Terasa Cooley

The Dangers of Courage Culture

Rev. Maria McCabe March 26

Not every strand of courage or vulnerability are created equal. Join us for an intriguing look at why these two attributes can look very different for different people.

From Our Minister

Welcome to:

The Path of Vulnerability

It may be that when we no longer know what to do we have come to our real work, and that when we no longer know which way to go

we have come to our real journey.

The mind that is not baffled is not employed.
The impeded stream is the one that sings.
- Wendell Berry



THIS MONTH IS A TRICKY ONE for us UUs. Let's be honest. Berry's celebration of vulnerability and limits is just not our thing. We are, after all, the religion of human potential, goodness and power! We don't sing at impeded streams; we break through them. We don't put up with confused minds; we keep at it until we become un-baffled. When we no longer know what to do, we just turn to each other and figure it out together.

There is something deeply inspiring about viewing ourselves so capable and strong. But there's a shadow side too. In pursuit of being our best and most powerful selves, we often fear leaning into vulnerability. It becomes a problem. The thing we need to protect ourselves from.

But it is a protection that betrays.

The theologian, C.S. Lewis, gets at this in his reflection on the vulnerability of love:

"To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to keep it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable."

In other words, there's a big difference between breaking and being broken open. Yes, leaning into vulnerability is frightening. But often, it also unlocks a door, allowing grace to drift in.

For instance, a loved one dies and, to our surprise, our hearts aren't just crushed, they are cracked open, illuminating beauty just a little more clearly. The absence we thought would haunt us, actually unveils how deeply we loved, and how lucky we are to have loved.

Or what about when we're finally honest about the fears and burdens we hide? In that leap of courage, we discover that telling our truths doesn't just make us feel weak or exposed; it opens our eyes. We become able to see that others hide their pain and fear too. And with that, the faceless crowd becomes a sea of fellow travelers. All of us connected. All of us aware how much kindness is needed, even when the other's pain is not easy to see.

It's all about understanding that vulnerability isn't weakness but a softer form of strength.

Remembering that isn't easy. But it is necessary. It's maybe our *most real* work, as our friend Wendell Berry would say.

- From our friends at the Soul Matters Sharing Circle

Warmly, - Rev. María

From Our President

Our FY 23-24 Stewardship Drive is in full swing, and we are eager to share information about the activities underway in our congregation and to collect feedback from you that will help us shape our priorities for next year. We are very fortunate again to have so many of our members support our drive. This year we will gather together in Fellowship thanks to the generosity of our hosts: Judi Walkley, Alice Leeds, Paul Seadler, Hazel and Larry Hopkins, J. Sue and Ron Henry, Marlene and Rob Lieb, Olivia Spencer, Sylvester Uyanga, and Allison and Steve Ehrman. In addition, several members have volunteered to be stewards to keep you informed: JoAnn Macdonald, Ed Roberts, Marla Posey Moss, Beth Wood Roig, Karin Johnsgard, Rebecca Slentz and Sue Knause. I truly appreciate everyone's support for our drive.

We need about \$22,000 per month to operate UUFHC and over 70% of that funding comes from our Stewardship Drive. To achieve an **ideal** budget, we need about a **15% increase** in pledges for FY 23-24. Please consider the value UUHFC brings to you as you prepare your pledge. Every gift is important, so please be sure to complete your pledge.

As part of our effort to better serve our congregation the Board and some key committee leaders met for a mini retreat on February 4. The session was facilitated by Mark Bernstein from the Central East Region UUA. We discussed many topics and had a very open and productive discussion. Some of the topics included our Mission Statement, the need for a congregational covenant, our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, as well as shared ministry and Faith Formation. We left with many recommendations that we will evaluate and prioritize. The timing works out well as we can blend this effort with feedback we will receive during the Stewardship Drive.

I am very pleased that our covenant task force now has a proposed congregational covenant that we will be sharing during our small group sessions as part of stewardship. I look forward to seeing us adopt a statement of covenant and how we will operate together.

Finally, I want us to be able to reflect on how much has changed in the last year. When we kicked off our Stewardship Drive last year, we were planning to be together in person for the first time in months. Now a year later, we kicked off the Stewardship Drive with a dance party! What a difference a year makes.

As always, I look forward to getting your feedback and suggestions! I look forward to speaking with you after services, or you can reach out to me at president@uufhc.net.



Yours in service,
- Mark Davis

What's New in Faith Formation

Summer Camp at UUFHC is now FREE for all members!

Our summer camp, the Univelarian University of Wizarding Arts (UUWA), is a renowned program which delves into Unitarian Universalist theology through immersive make-believe and play. For one week, the Fellowship is transformed into a magical school where students belong to one of four Houses, practice spells, and build a close-knit community guided by House Leaders,

Professors, and friendly ghosts all under the watchful eye of Chancellor Porpington. Be warned, once your kids attend UUWA, they will always ask to come back! Click here to watch a video of last year's UUWA fun: UUWA Video.

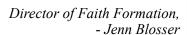
As part of the restructuring of our program, summer camp is now **free** for children/youth of Fellowship members—all you have to do is have them registered for Faith Formation on Sundays! We offer a discount to relatives of Fellowship members (grandchildren, nieces/nephews, etc.) as well. For community members, the cost to register their children is only \$250 with a sibling discount for additional registrants.

So save the date for a fantastic week of adventure, magic, and friendship!

Monday July 10 to Friday July 14 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

(Before and after care available for an additional cost!) Wizarding Worship Service to follow on Sunday July 16.







Corner On Finance

Our Endowment statements for December 2022 show a Balance of \$59,269.46. Please note this is a separate organization and has its own Board of Directors.

Please see our simplified financial statements for the eight months ending December 31, 2022. For the detail of the statements, you really need to refer to our Profit & Loss & Cash Flow statements on the website. I am more than willing to answer any questions you may have on any issues related to our financial situation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at **treasurer@uufhc.net** or (410) 688-0891.

Description	Actual YTD	Budget YTD
INCOME	\$223,172	\$195,941
EXPENSES	<u>\$191,797</u>	\$190,750
NET INCOME (L	OSS) \$31,375	\$5,191

Cash Flow Statement Year to Date Nov. 30, 2022

Beginning Balance May 1, 2022	\$194,496
Net Cash Flow Activities	<u>\$289</u>
Ending Balance Nov. 30, 2022	\$194,785

The above statements show that for the eight months ending 12/31/22 we made a profit of \$31,375 and our cash was increased by \$289.

To see our detailed financial statements (Profit & Loss and the Balance Sheet) on our website, www.uufhc.net, click on the Members tab on the top right. You can get the password by sending a request to office@uufhc.net or webmaster@uufhc.net. I am trying to let you know exactly where we stand financially on a monthly basis. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at treasurer@uufhc.net.

BStrong BSafe



Volunteer of the Month

Our Volunteer of the Month, **Jeff Matthews**, heads of the Safety Committee, whose mission is to keep us safe on Sunday mornings. He recruits volunteers to patrol near the entrance and in the foyer on



Sunday mornings to make sure no one—not wanting to be part of our worship service—wanders through the building to disrupt the service and Faith Formation classes. Jeff also makes sure that committee volunteers and other interested members learn CPR and to use the cardiac defibrillation equipment. The Safety Committee is planning a CPR training session. See Jeff if you are interested in the course or if you would like to be on this very important committee, which always needs volunteers!

Best Wishes to the Noori Family

Many years ago, during my long career at HCC, I conducted workshops and classes on the topic of "Human Relations." In every session this question would eventually arise: "what is it that you want to do with your life?" The wide majority of responders almost always answered, "I want to make a difference in the world." Often that opportunity presents itself when you least expect it. Such was the case when our Fellowship chose to partner with two other faith communities to support an Afghan refugee family last February (2022).

The Noori family of 13, arrived on Valentine's Day, and with them came all of the challenges you might expect from a family with 11 children, one of whom was born en route to America. No one in the family had ever been to school, had never visited a doctor or dentist, and had no knowledge of the English language. And thus, our journey began. Representatives from each of the church communities formed a core group who laid out all of the areas of service that needed to be provided, and worked to engage other volunteers to accomplish these goals. Here are just some of the major milestones that we met:

- The First Presbyterian Church of Bel Air moved this large family into their Sheffler House and provided housing at no cost.
- We donated clothing and toys.
- We donated car seats for all of the children.
- The children were enrolled in school. Members wrote grants so that two of the younger children could attend pre-school. Volunteer tutors worked with all of the children before and after school.
- One of the children had to have heart surgery, and spent time at the Children's Hospital in Philadelphia. Transportation was provided by volunteers for follow up appointments.
- Social Services benefits (cash assistance and SNAP) were applied for and granted.
- Volunteers taught the parents how to use their benefits and how to manage their money.

- We found an employment opportunity for the father, Shafaker.
- A group of transportation volunteers provided needed rides for Shafaker to get back and forth to work, and transport the children whenever needed.
- All of the children received their needed vaccinations, and each had a general physical.
- Everyone in the family visited a dentist. Some of the dental work was provided at no cost.
- The Lions Club provided eye examinations and glasses, where needed.
- We worked with Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services to apply for permanent asylum for the family. This involved meetings in Baltimore and Pikesville, sometimes involving multiple drivers.
- An interpreter was found to tutor Shafaker so that he could acquire his Learner's Permit to drive
- The family received a donated van.
- A core group of transportation volunteers drove Shafaker to Woodlawn to attend a Driver's Education course with an instructor that spoke his language. He passed and now has a valid driver's license!
- We provided childcare for times when the parents were not available.
- A group of women met with the mom, Farzan, to provide fellowship and support.

Of course there were also trials, tears, and challenges, but as a committed group, we weathered them together.

About a month ago we learned that Shafaker had family in St. Louis, and he expressed an interest in moving closer to the family who lived there in a large Afghan community. Many phone calls and several meetings later, it was arranged for them to make the move! Last Thursday, Dad and his eldest son drove their van, along with two volunteers who drove the cargo van, and 15 hours later arrived at their new home. On Friday, the remaining 10 children flew with mom and two of our church members to St. Louis to join the rest of the family.

We have all learned so much over the past year about the Afghan culture, about each other, and about ourselves. Our core group met every week (46 meetings in all) as well as numerous interactions by email and phone. There were more than 25 volunteers from UUFHC that helped make all of this happen. It is clear that we certainly **did** "make a difference in this world."

As we say goodbye to the Noori family, we want to extend our sincerest thanks to the UUFHC Board for approving our partnership with the First Presbyterian Church and our local mosque, and to all of you who have provided your time and talents to help this family integrate into America. Many of you were able to provide a few days, some a few weeks, some a few months. What matters is that you cared and gave this family the foundation they needed to independently begin their lives here. Blessings Be!

- Marlene Lieb

(UU) Women's History Month

March is one of my favorite months because Spring is scheduled to begin by the end of March in the Northern Hemisphere. And March is dedicated to many causes in the USA, one of which is the remembrance of women's history. That is our discussion for this Newsletter. How many women do you recognize as Unitarians and Universalists and their accomplishments?

The Right to Vote/Equal Rights:

Margaret Fuller-Transcendentalist:

Held "Conversations," 1839.

Susan B. Anthony: Seneca Falls Convention, 1848; and much more during the 19th century.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and daughter Harriott Stanton Blanch: 1848; and much more during the 19th century.

Lucy Stone: New England Women Suffrage Association, prior to 1869; American Women Suffrage Association, 1869, and more during the 19th century.

Carrie Chapman Catt: National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), 1900; Women's Peace Party, 1915; NAWSA formed the League of Women Voters, 1919; Instrumental in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, 1920.

Scientists, Medicine:

Maria Mitchell: Self-taught astronomer, comet named for her, 1847; first woman elected to American Academy of Arts and Science. 1848.

Elizabeth Blackwell: First modern woman to graduate from medical school, 1849.

Rachel Carson: Biologist, wrote *Silent Spring*, among other pieces alerting Americans to the dangers of pesticides, namely DDT, 1962.

Abolitionists:

Lydia Marie Child: Successful writer, author of the First Antislavery Book in the US: Appeal in Favor of That

Class of Americans called Africans, 1833. Also, she was active in suffrage movement and equal rights for women.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper: Prolific African-American writer, lecturer, abolitionist, active in civil rights and women's rights issues with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton, and temperance. Wrote *Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects*, 1854, also attacked racism and oppression of women, and supported the Underground Railroad. Led the National Association of Colored Women, 1985-1911.

Ministers:

Antoinette Brown Blackwell: Originally ordained as a Congregationalist minister, 1853, later became a Unitarian minister and earned her Doctor of Divinity in 1909. Also, "the last surviving delegate to the first national women's rights convention, which had taken place in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850; in 1920 at the age of ninety-five Blackwell proudly exercised her newly-won right to vote."

Olympia Brown: First woman to be ordained as a minister by full authority of her denomination, Northern Universalists, 1863. Also, charter member of the American Equal Rights Association, 1866; President of the Equal Rights Association, 1884-1912; No genetic relationship to Antoinette Brown Blackwell.

Celia C. Burleigh: First woman ordained as a minister in the Unitarian Church, 1871.

Social Reform Programs:

Judith Sargent Stevens Murray: Wrote under the name of "Constantia" in 1784; widowed in 1786, remarried itinerant preacher John Murray in 1790 (founder of the Universalist Church in America); her writings argued for equal education for women.

Dorothea Dix: Exposed harsh treatment of mentally ill in Massachusetts, 1843.

Jane Addams: Hull House, a place for immigrants: a settlement house in Chicago, 1889; Women's Peace Party, 1915; Co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, 1931.

As you see, many of these women contributed decades of their lives to many causes that determined who we American women (and men) are today. It is not complete. It is my hope that Unitarian Universalists will continue to contribute to the progress of all people of our nation—these United States of America. Proud to say: UUFHC children have gone on to careers that mirror their positive education within these walls.

Moreover, UUFHC is a beacon of hope that shines for equality and much more in Harford County and in the

State of Maryland. With this list of American women as our spiritual ancestors, we can answer with historical confidence when someone asks... "Who are Unitarian Universalists?" What will be your answer?

- JoAnn Macdonald (Bibliography from many sources. Please contact me.)

March Birthdays

Happy birthday to our March honorees. Although most of our honorees have end-of winter birthdays, one of our members celebrates on



the first day of Spring. Enjoy your day, and know that beautiful spring weather is on its way.

Laura Paligo	March 2
Darlene Rothwell	March 3
Cindy (Neff) Oatman	March 5
Kit Brown	March 9
Bob Blackstock	March 9
Virginia (Cindy) Curry	March 20

Chalice Lighters Corner

Exciting news! Our support along with the support of other UU Fellowships in the Central Eastern Region (CER) of the CER Chalice Lighter program is helping two congregations improve how they



share the joy of Unitarian Universalism with their communities so that they can grow in their mission and membership.

One is doing it by making their building safer and more welcoming, the other by trying new methods of programming and outreach.

The UU Church of Annapolis, in Annapolis, Maryland, UUCA, is about to complete a major renovation of their existing building that will make it more open and inviting with a new entrance, expanded main gathering space and re-configured kitchen.

A \$20,000 Chalice Lighter grant will make it possible to add features that will announce the congregation's presence in the community and enhance the safety of their building's ventilation so that people can feel safe wor-

shiping together. With the help of its grant, UUCA will commission and install a striking backlit, oxidized steel sign, approximately 6 feet x 8 feet announcing the name of the congregation.

Secondly, as the focal point of the new entrance, the congregation will purchase and install a large piece of original art created by a local artist of color, with the message "You are welcome here."

The grant will also create a healthy and virus-free environment in the Sanctuary by providing for a system of UV air purifiers to kill air-borne viruses and lower the risks of in-person participation at UUCA.

Located in southeastern Ohio, across the Ohio river from West Virginia, The First UU Society of Marietta, Marietta, Ohio, is also receiving a \$20,000 grant that it will use to enhance programming and hire consultants to help plan and implement a campaign of outreach to their region, which is increasingly conservative. It hopes to attract young families, the "Nones" who reject traditional religion but yearn for a spiritual community, LGBTQ+individuals and families, and those who are concerned about the environment.

"Since there is minimal understanding about what Unitarian Universalism is in our region, we shall seek assistance from a professional branding and marketing organization about how to reach a broad audience in order to explain Unitarian Universalism and how it differs from other religious organizations in an effort to engage people who are disenchanted with traditional religious organizations.

"But we still need help to obtain information and skills on developing other ideas to attract new members, especially younger people. Our initial thoughts are to promote and publicize environmental programs, which have been a demonstrated strength of our congregation."

Congratulations to both UU communities. Your continued generosity keeps the spark lit. Thank you, on behalf of the CER Chalice Lighter Program Committee and staff.

If you would like to help other UU Fellowships spread the word, please consider becoming a chalice lighter. The current suggested pledge is \$20 per call, or \$60 per year. Pledges of more or less are always welcome!

For more information, contact: Kay Saucier or Kimberly Roberts or visit: Chalice Lighter to read about the program and access the link for sign-up. Thank you, on behalf of the CER Chalice Lighter Program Committee and staff!

- Kim Roberts

Draft of the Proposed UUFHC Covenant

The Covenant Task force has done research, met, discussed and has proposed a covenant for UUFHC. Please review and become familiar with the proposed covenant. We will vote whether to accept it at an upcoming congregational meeting. Members of the Task Force encourage questions and feedback via email.

"At the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County, we come together to share in life's meaning, grow in care and community, and open our hearts and minds to the sacred truth known by many names. Our covenant represents the promises we make to one another. We turn to these promises to guide our conduct within our community of faith. We understand that when our behavior causes us to fall away from covenant, these promises will call us back into right relationship with the community. A covenant is not a creed. We make these commitments to each other, not to a deity or higher authority. Most importantly, our covenant is a living document that helps us grow in faith and strength. We therefore covenant to:

- 1. honor the values and mission that bind us together;
- 2. behave respectfully, honoring the personhood and experience of all;
- 3. be aware of the space we occupy, leaning back to allow others to speak and leaning in when we have been silent;
- 4. actively share responsibility for the future of the Fellowship, including stewardship;
- 5. promote action and decision-making that are grounded in our UU Principles;
- 6. foster genuine inclusion of all in the community:
- 7. cultivate grace and patience, especially in difficult times:
- 8. accept a process for reconciliation that honors the inherent worth and dignity of every individual while acknowledging that harm has been done;
- 9. remain mindful in our personal interactions—We hold multiple truths gleaned from our lived experiences. None of our experiences, especially those of us who have been historically marginalized, are up for debate."

Upcoming Events

Disability Day of Mourning Wednesday, March 1, 7:00 pm at UUFHC

Rev. María and Martina Kuzenski are planning a virtual Disability Day of Mourning vigil that



will be held on March 1, 7:00 pm in the sanctuary. The service is available in the Fellowship and on Zoom. The vigil will aid us in remembering those who were murdered for being disabled and to demand that these murders be taken as seriously as the murders of non-disabled people. Spread the word to your friends, especially those whose jobs are in the justice, medical, or media fields.

Spring Garden Cleanup At your convenience in March at UUFHC

On some of these lovelier warm days, we would love to get are gardens spruced up for spring! If the appearance of our Fellowship is important to you, please stop by with a fellow member (or two) and cut back the garden out front. The new shoots will be out soon. The Memorial Garden can also use some tender loving care.

UUFHC Retreat: Celebrating Creativity for Spiritual Expression

Saturday, March 25, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, at UUFHC We invite you to join us for the final daylong retreat, and this one takes place as Spring arrives. We will focus on "Letting Your Soul Speak Out Loud" by celebrating our creative spirits. Even if you don't consider yourself an artist, you are creative. We all are! Available at the retreat are soul collage and art materials, opportunities for musical improvisation, body movement, and more! Come to UUFHC for a free-wheeling, fun day. Light refreshments, coffee/tea are provided. The exchange is \$15 to cover building costs and food preparation. Contact Beth Wood-Roig for more information.

Two Regional Summer Institutes Combine

Two Summer Institutes have combined to offer a dynamic summer program! CERSI and UUMAC will now meet July 9-15 at PennWest University (formerly Cal U) in California. PA.

The 2023 theme is "The Call is Coming from Inside the House: Preemptive Radical Inclusion and Practices for Witness, Self Examination and Change." The theme speaker this year is C. B. Beal (they/them/theirs), a storyteller, educator, and speaker who is known for their humor, insight, ability to use their own foibles and unfortunate life experiments as a cautionary tale, and to hold space where people can be braver and safer to make their next moves toward justice.

Also included are morning seminars, afternoon workshops, and other programs. Registration opens March 1. Some scholarships are available. More information is available at www.cersiuu.org.

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County 2515 Churchville Road Churchville, MD 21028

Building Liberal Religious Community Please Join Us!

Sunday Services: 10:30 am; coffee follows

Please visit us online at www.uufhc.net





Please note: Next Newsletter deadline is Sunday, March 12, 2023



Minister: The Rev. Maria McCabe

Director of Faith Formation:

Church Administrator:

Newsletter Editor:

Webmaster:

Sennifer Blosser

Karen Kurrle

Kay Saucier

Rick Saucier

Fellowship Office Hours (Karen Kurrle):

Tues, Wed & Thurs: 9:30 am to 5:30 pm

Minister's Office Hours:

Tues: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm Thurs: 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Director of Faith Formation Office Hours:

Sun: 8:30 am to 1:00 pm Tues, Wed & Thurs: 9:30 pm to 3:00 pm

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Wayside Pulpit

The wonder is not that the field of the stars is so vast, but that man has measured it.

- Anatole France