

Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

VOLUME 64 ISSUE 2 February 2021
Coping and Connecting During Covid-19



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FROM YOUR MINISTER

Our Theme for February is Beloved Community. The question to consider is "What Does It Mean to Be A People of Beloved Community?"

Henri Nouwen, the treasured Catholic teacher, activist and priest, once described beloved community as "the place where the person you least want to live with always lives."

On its surface it seems to be a straightforward reminder not to expect perfection from the communities we join. And not

to expect perfection from others. Indeed, it's a plea to stick with those troublesome others. Forgive them. Accept them. Stay open to the whole of who they are, not just the caricatured sliver of them that makes it easy to write them off.

Besides the obvious calls to commitment, conflict resolution and hard work, there's also a hidden call to hope woven into Nouwen's words. To stay in community with difficult or offensive people, we have to hold on to the hope that they can change and grow. We have to believe that their better selves exist and will eventually show up. We have to have faith that giving them the benefit of the doubt is worth it. That assuming their good intentions isn't foolish.

It's a tall order. This kind of hopefulness and generosity toward others is not easy. But here's the catch, Nouwen doesn't stop there. Right after that first sentence he adds another. Here's the whole quote:

"Community is the place where the person you least want to live with always lives...That person is always in your community somewhere; in the eyes of others, you might be that person."

Ouch! Nouwen doesn't pull his punches. Just when we were starting to feel good about being the ones who are magnanimous with these annoying and offensive folks, Nouwen reminds us that we are actually among them! But don't get so caught up in this message of humility that you miss how Nouwen is also using this to call us to an even greater hopefulness.

By adding us to the mix of the unwanted, he's pointing out that beloved community requires us to believe not only that others are worth our effort but also that we will be worth the effort in the eyes of others!

It's an insight that we must not miss this month. We human beings run away from community not just because others let us down, but also because we doubt that others will step up when we let them down. Beloved community stays at arm's length not just because it is hard to build, but also because we don't trust that it will be there for us.

It's all one big reminder that the work of beloved community is bigger than we usually imagine. It's not just about building a better world; it's also about building up each other's faith. We are in a battle not just against the division between us, but also the doubt within us.

What we really need to hear about beloved community is not just that we can create it, but that we can count on it. This month, may we make sure we all bless each other with both of those messages.

In Love and Hope, Rev. Alice

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How do we inspire love?

FROM YOUR BOARD: PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Two cool things happened in January. One thing was that I tuned in to a powerful press conference presented by the Poor People's Campaign of Florida, a multicultural, interfaith group of leaders and concerned citizens who addressed the bill proposed by Governor DeSantis in response to the demonstrations this summer against racist police. The other cool thing was that I participated with you all in our Midyear Congregational Meeting. Oh, and there was a historic inauguration this month, too.



The inauguration of Joe Biden as president with Kamala Harris as our first female vice president underscored the resilient endurance of our democracy. Still, our foundational democratic rights are threatened on many fronts. The reactionary bill in the Florida Legislature is one example of an effort to criminalize protest and silence dissent. The virtual press conference on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day decried this effort by the Florida governor, which will be taken up during this legislative session. The involvement of UUA President Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray with the Poor People's Campaign underscores the alignment of this coalition's work with our UU values.

I felt touched to join with our UUCP Members and Friends on Jan 24 to share updates on church activities and business during the midyear meeting. We have been impacted by the global pandemic and political turmoil, no doubt, yet we have so much to be thankful for. We remain vibrant and vital during these challenging times. Rev. Alice has been such an asset to our congregation. She has worked with the Sunday Services team to provide consistent, moving, and relevant messages over the past year since we were rocked by COVID-19. As a part-time Consulting Minister under contract with UUCP, Rev. Alice has gone above and far beyond what we have asked of her. In addition to leading and coordinating most weekly services, she provides much-needed pastoral care to our congregants. Her involvement with us has been a real blessing, and we are thankful and pleased.

Likewise, we have benefited from the volunteer work of our leaders and our Members and Friends who tend the hearth fires of our beloved community. These unsung heroes include our CRE Ministry Team, our Building and Grounds gurus like Gerry and Arnie, the Fun and Fellowship folks, our Caring Ministry Team, our dedicated Office Assistant, and our amazing Treasurer.

We continue to need each other. Scientific research underscores the importance of the presence of caring individuals in our lives, especially during a time when we are more isolated from others due to health concerns and physical distancing. Membership in and identification with a community and a sense of purpose is psychologically strengthening. As we witness the very fabric of our democracy seem to be ripped and tattered in parts, with many Americans still angry and oppositional after the inauguration, we find comfort and strength in a supportive network of people like UUCP.

We are also getting closer to a time when we can be together in person. As discussed during the Midyear Congregational Meeting, the Board is considering plans for an outdoor social event in the spring for us to fellowship safely. The date remains to be determined. With an eye to COVID infection rates and immunization statistics, we are hoping for the first event to be on a Sunday in April. Whenever it is, what a beautiful day it will be!

Until then, Lauren Anzaldo, Board President



In Memory of Carol Trotter

Last week we heard the sad news that church member and friend of many, Carol Trotter, passed away. Carol was in Tampa to spend the Christmas holidays with her daughter Kristine, Kristine's partner Raymond, and her grandson Mason. She began to feel bad on Christmas Day and Kristine convinced her, which wasn't easy, to see a doctor at an urgent care clinic. From there she was admitted to the hospital and ended up in the ICU, where she was placed on a ventilator. After a few days she was able to breathe on her own and was placed in a regular room. From there she went to a rehab unit to regain her strength. Unfortunately, she suffered a set back in rehab and

after spending a few more days in ICU, she returned to a regular room. Over the next two weeks she had good days and bad days, but her need for oxygen continued to increase. Because Carol had already made her wishes known, at this point hospice was called in.

On Tuesday night the family, including Carol's brother from Oregon, Larry Guzman, gathered with Carol at the hospital, and Kristine called me so that 1 could talk to Carol. Carol told me how she and Byron had come to join the church and commented that some people find religion when they are young and some when they are older. For her it was the latter.

Carol was a remarkable woman. She graduated from Marquette University and received an MBA from the University of Chicago. She worked for IBM for 25 years, which is where she met her husband Byron. As Kristine pointed out, this was impressive for a woman in the 70's, when this was not the norm. Sadly, Byron died in 2016. Carol maintained connections with several groups and was active in a number of community organizations, including the Newcomers Club, the local Library, multiple book clubs, and her Bunco group. She was also an active member of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, and a former Flotilla Commander, trainer and District and Regional Staff member.

Carol and Byron joined UUCP in 2007. She served as president some years ago and currently as a member of the Committee on Ministry and as co-chair with Linda Cobb of the Strategic Planning Committee. Our use of Zoom as a way to stay connected during our Covid isolation made it easier for Carol to be more involved in church activities than she had been recently. She regularly attended Coffee Hour, Happy Hour, and our Theme Circles, before we took the break. Some of our church people were just getting to know her, when she became ill.

Carol will be deeply missed by her friends and her family, especially her daughter Kristine and her grandson Mason, with whom she was very close.

Kristine and I have talked about a memorial service, but with the current situation, we have not made a decision about how we will do that. As of this time, there is not an official Obituary to share with you. Carol tested positive for Covid the night before she died. We are convinced she caught it while in the hospital. Unfortunately Kristine now has Covid. So for now, her energy will go toward her own healing. She did, however, send the following picture and poem, telling me that it particularly spoke to her about Carol.

We continue to hold all the family in our thoughts, as well as the many friends who are touched by this loss.

In Love and Hope, Rev. Alice



The Light - February 2021



Children's Religious Education

February 2021 Happy New Year!

Interfaith Calendar Connections

- <u>Chinese New Year</u> (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist) Feb. 12,
 2021 (more here)
- Ash Wednesday (Christian) Feb. 17, 2021 (more here)
- Lent (Christian) Feb. 17 April 3, 2021
- <u>Nirvana Day</u>/Parinirvana Day -Buddha's death and his entry into Nirvana (Buddhist) - <u>Feb.15</u> (more <u>here</u>)
- <u>Purim</u> begins (Jewish) Feb. 26-27, 2021, begins evening of the 25th (more <u>here</u> & <u>here</u>)

Unitarian Universalist

- Fannie Barrier Williams' <u>birthday</u> Feb. 12 (1855)
- Susan B. Anthony's <u>birthday</u> Feb. 15 (1820) (more <u>here</u>; On her complex relationship to racism: <u>here</u>, <u>here</u> and <u>here</u>.)
- Thirty Days of Love Side with Love Campaign -Jan. 15 - Feb. 14
- The Edict of Torda is issued Feb. 18 (1568)

Beloved Community

This month we're exploring the many ways our UU faith invites us to become "A People of Beloved Community." Beloved Community is a special type of community. It has multiple characteristics. In our packet this month, we focus on four of those characteristics:

Beloved Community is a special kind of community where...

Black Leaders are Honored

Love Grows beyond Boundaries

Wounds are Healed

We Don't Run Away When Things Get Hard

February Sundays

February 7th: Come as You Are Sunday School: Where Black Leaders Are Honored: Malcolm X and Georgia Gilmore

February 14th: Come as You Are Sunday School: Where Love Grows Beyond Boundaries. Valentine's Day

February 21st: Multi-Age Service February 28th: Children's Chapel

If you would like to be added to the weekly email please contact the Church Office.

Children's Religious Education (CRE) Ministry Team
Coordinator: Sarah Stubbs (437-5979) Team Leader: Open
Team Members: Emma Mulvaney, Linda Cobb, Penny
Featherstone, Kate Wolverton, Pam Levitt
Feel free to contact any member with comments or suggestions!

CRE Acronyms & Jargon explained

SFAA: Service For All Ages

ORSS: One Room Sunday School

Children's Chapel: Mini Service for small

& big people

CRE: Children's Religious Education CREC: Children's Religious Education

Coordinator

Youth: Children 13ish to senior in HS

ZOOM: online live streaming

classes/meetings

DRE: Director of Religious Education



(*** Cour Caring Community (***) (***)

At World with Jan

"Teaching is always rewarding," says Jan Hervieux. "Loved it," she adds, characterizing her

teaching service for the U.S. Department of Defense, including some 11 years teaching children of the U.S. military overseas, in France, Japan, the Philippines, Turkey, Libya and Guantanamo Bay.

Jan quietly marked her 89th birthday on January 10 — a good time, mused UUCP folk, to celebrate her contributions.

And her adventures.

"While in Libya I went into the desert, encountered sandstorms, and danced with the crown prince of Libya at a party he gave. In Turkey, I went on a local sponge boat in search of amphorae. From a hotel rooftop in Hawaii I saw the last atomic test in the Pacific – awesome and frightening."

Rounding out Jan's 35 years as a federal government employee were administration assignments, mainly in Washington, D.C.

Jan was born in Auburn, NY, "in the heart of the beautiful Finger Lakes — wine country — very historical; a Harriet Tubman museum is in Auburn." She attended the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, NY, and Cortland, NY, and the University of Rhode Island.

She moved to Pensacola from Washington D.C. in 1973 — on Navy orders — and worked here for Navy dependent schools. Upon retirement, she worked for Pensacola State College and University of West Florida as a teacher of English and citizenship to foreign students — "wonderful students. I still meet some of them around town."

Volunteer work also has dotted her Pensacola calendar. In the '70s, she was president of the

Humane Society of Pensacola; (she is especially fond of cats!). She also worked as a volunteer at West Florida Hospital for six years, and made many friends there. As a result of friendships here and abroad, she has two adopted daughters, one living in Georgia, one in Pensacola, and both with successful families.

Jan joined UUCP upon arrival in Pensacola; overseas, she was a member of The Church of the Larger Fellowship.

Jan isn't as active today as in earlier years when she enjoyed gardening and computer work. "A stroke in 2007 messed things up," she says, flipping the major focus to reading, TV, and staying in touch with friends.

And to memories of a world of good works.



An **amphora** is a type of container of a characteristic shape and size, descending from at least as early as the Neolithic Period. Amphorae were used in vast numbers for the transport and storage of various products on ships, both liquid and dry, but mostly for wine. Photo taken from the collection at Bodrum Museum on the Bodrum Peninsula of Turkey.

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A Time to Build

Bob Ortiz began his career journey as a farm hand at age 15. Some 60 years later, he retired after completing work as Project Architect on an \$18 million project for the Washington Hospital Center in D.C.

His tableau of the years between, of ventures at work and play, is now being shared with family and friends in a just-completed 104-page memoir book, the latest in a series of seven books Bob has written about life and travels — and even including a fairy tale for kids.

The new book — entitled ONLY REMEMBERED, A Reflection of My Life — not only describes interesting engineering work but also

sparkles with a personal role he never expected — singing in *La bohème* for the Pensacola Opera Chorus along with 11 more operas — plus sports play and scouting service.



From the beginning: His teenage job as farm hand evolved into a job farming 300 acres, which lasted until age 19. Then, relates Bob, "after losing my hand in a farm accident, I went to school at the Southern Illinois University where I majored in pre-engineering." He received an associate degree from SIU and then was hired by the Electrical Engineering Department at the University of Illinois, involving work on a federal project designing and constructing an electronic tracking station. Next, he helped develop landscape plans and campus maps at the U of I Campus Planning Office, then took a job with an architectural construction company which designed and built churches.



Bob and wife Lesley serving dinner at the 2012 UUCP Auction.

His longest stint of career specialty came next. "In 1969 I started work with another architectural construction company, in Madison, WI, designing and building medical buildings. I started that job as a draftsman, then pricing/estimator, a designer and salesman." He retired there, after 30 years — years which included that most-satisfying assignment as Project Architect for the Washington Hospital Center" — "My proudest job."

That was 1999 — and time to move to Florida to be close to grandkids, a new location over other options, Minnesota or Massachusetts. And time to sing in UUCP's new music events, the Friday Frolics, and then to join the opera chorus — drafted by David Suhor, who said they needed more men, more tenors. "My first reaction was to laugh, but I went, loved it and survived 12 operas."

He's had time for other ventures as well. "I've been a Scoutmaster, been to all 50 states, traveled to 34 countries and ridden in a hot air balloon."

Might be time now to write books.

Our Caring Community - continued

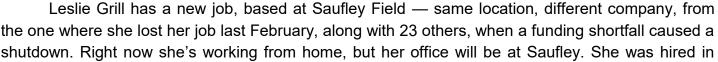
News from Sharon West: a move, a fall, a positive Covid test.

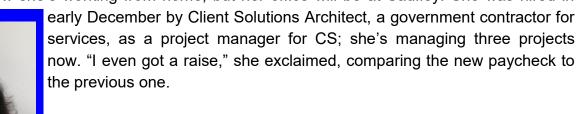
Sharon moved early in December to a new home. Prior to the move, she took a fall on her previous landlord's property, which Sharon says was caused by a pipe sticking 6 to 7 inches out of the ground, damage from Hurricane Sally which had remained unresolved. She's working on a law-suit, faulting the owner.

Sharon doesn't think the positive Covid test will be a problem. She talked to a doctor over the phone and he gave her a prescription to thwart any development. And she's already feeling much better.

Hedwig Anderson also took a fall recently — the day before Christmas, and went to emergency care the day after Christmas. She then had spinal surgery on Jan. 13. Says Hedwig: "I'm doing good, walking around, and only took pain medicine between the fall and the surgery. I'm tough!" Cards, calls and visitors are welcomed.

Hedwig also took a fall last September; that one was Sally related.





Charlotte Crane



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MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ALSO ARE INVITED TO THE:

UUCP VIRTUAL ZOOM COFFEE HOUR at 12:30pm on Sundays: Please join us at 12:30pm Sundays for a virtual Coffee Hour through the Zoom platform. Look for the Facebook post each week or a separate email from Rev. Alice or Lauren Anzaldo with info on how to get into the Coffee Hour online. To join the Zoom Meeting, you'll be sent an email that will give you the link, the Meeting ID number and a password to use. If you don't receive Coffee Hour information, please ask another Member or Friend for the information.

UUCP VIRTUAL ZOOM HAPPY HOUR at 5:30pm on Fridays: Trista Blouin says, "Please grab a beverage and join your UUCP family on Friday evenings for a time of light-hearted conversation. We're finding it to be a great time to just laugh and let go of cares for an hour. Hope to see you there." To join the Zoom Meeting, you'll be sent an email that will give you the link, the Meeting ID number and a password to use.

THEME CIRCLES STARTING BACK

The number of Zoom activities have grown, and many of you are connecting through one or more of our various offerings. I'd like to bring back Theme Circles for anyone interested in adding something a little different. Theme Circles are an opportunity to engage with the Soul Matters Theme of the Month in a small group context. Here is a brief description from the Soul Matters team:

Simply put, Soul Matters groups offer the gift of spiritual connection. Around us swirls a shallow, frantic and materialistic culture that leaves us cut off from our deepest selves, life's gifts and needs greater than our own. Many of us come to church hungry to mend these sacred connections that get frayed and torn. Soul Matters exists to support this journey of reconnection to life, others and ourselves.

We determined last time that on Zoom a group of about six seemed to work best. I think it is better to have more small groups than fewer larger ones.

If you are interested, or want more information, please send me an email and let me know. The Theme for February is Beloved Community. That sounds like a great way to start.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please email me at the address below.

Rev. Alice: uupensacola@gmail.com

WHAT WE'RE READING — FROM THE READERS' GROUPS

Participants in the UUCP Zoom Readers' Groups have been generous with sharing recommendations of great books to read – here are just a few:

The Overstory by Richard Powers – Winner of the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction
The novel is about five trees whose unique life experiences with nine Americans bring them together to address the destruction of forests.

Ocean at the End of the Lane by Neil Gaiman – The work was first published in 2013 and follows an unnamed man who returns to his hometown for a funeral and remembers events that began forty years earlier.

The Book of Longings by Sue Monk Kidd. "I am Ana. I was the wife of Jesus." So begins the new novel from the number-one New York Times bestselling author of *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Invention of Wings*, an extraordinary story set in the first century about a woman who finds her voice and her destiny in a time of great despair and great hope.

The Invention of Nature - Alexander von Humboldt's New World is a nonfiction book released in 2015, by historian Andrea Wulf about the Prussian naturalist, explorer and geographer Alexander von Humboldt.

The Girl Who Wrote in Silk by Kelli Estes tells the story of two young women in Seattle and the San Juan (islands) living 130 years apart, connected by a secret.

READERS' GROUPS Zooming January Through March 2021!

The twice a month Zoom Readers' Groups are scheduled through March 2021.

February 11 (Thurs) – 10 am February 23 (Tues) – 1 pm

March 11 (Thurs) – 10 am March 23 (Tues) – 1 pm

There are NO REQUIRED books to read. Participants share their experiences and recommendations for "Good Reads."

An email from the church is sent to all UUCP Members and Friends on Sunday before the scheduled Zoom meeting. The email will contain the link to the meeting. Questions — contact Laurie Winterberg or Laura Keith King.

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How do we strive for justice? JUST Pensacola

JUST Pensacola, UUCP's Justice Partner, Takes on Affordable Housing

On January 11, 2021, over 160 members of the JUST Pensacola Coalition "Zoomed in" to vote on the justice issues we would address this coming year. The meeting was called a Problem Assembly. Last year's 120 congregations have been joined by several more. At least 3 new congregations were recognized as we were all greeted. I was happy to spot at least 8 or 10 members of UUCP in the crowd. We are indeed a justice-seeking people.

After The Rev. Michael Hoffman greeted each congregation represented there, The Rev. Kammy Young celebrated last year's success. At last year's Nehemiah Assembly we received firm verbal commitments from incoming State Attorney Ginger Bowden-Madden and incoming Sheriff Chip Simmons to work to increase the use of civil citations instead of arrests for our young people who have encounters with law enforcement.

At this Problem Assembly we voted to continue to follow up and monitor the use of civil citations this year. Our next vote was whether to focus primarily on school readiness among our children, one of last year's issues, or to move to another issue. The one that was brought forward in many of our house meetings was the lack of affordable housing in this area. Housing was already in short supply before the COVID-19 crisis caused many to lose their jobs and Hurricane Sally reduced the supply of housing, leaving us with an even worse problem. The vote was overwhelming in favor of taking on the housing crisis. We will keep our interest in education alive but on the back burner for future action.

The vote for JUST Pensacola officers brought forward The Rev. Paul Blackman as Co-President for a two-year term with Rev. Michael Hoffman staying in place for his second year. The Vice President for a one-year term will be The Rev. Freddie Tellis.

If you are interested in being part of the research team for our issues, the kick-off for that action will take place on Monday, February 8th at 6 PM with a Zoom meeting. If you believe that you might be interested I encourage you to attend to see what it is all about. Please email me and I'll send you the link and other info to attend the Zoom meeting. You can look up my email on Simple Church or you may email the church office at uupensacola@gmail.com and the office administrator will forward the email to me.

On a financial note, our congregation at UUCP is living up to its budgeted commitment for support. Each of us at our house meetings last year agreed to consider whether to make a personal contribution. The suggested level was \$200. JUST Pensacola has demonstrated its ability to move the needle toward justice. I am writing my check right now. If any of the rest of us have not done that yet, the checks can be mailed to JUST Pensacola at 500 Woodland Drive, Pensacola, FL 32503.

Paula Montgomery

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Deadline for submissions for MARCH LIGHT:

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 16th

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