



**ALL FAITHS**  
UNITARIAN CONGREGATION

# CONNECTIONS

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

## Inside

Board Notes.....	2
Sunday Service Collection Schedule.....	2
From McGregor Boulevard.....	3
<i>by Rev. CJ McGregor</i>	
Joys & Sorrows.....	3
Ongoing Events.....	4
May Calendar.....	5
Treasurer's Report.....	6
Climate Action Team Update.....	6
Carol Siferd's Odyssey.....	6
May Sermons.....	7
Teaching Tuesdays.....	7
May Adult Ed. Forums.....	7
Shell Point Radio.....	7
LIFE Celebration.....	7
Together on the Journey.....	8
<i>featuring Greg Monk</i>	
NAACP and All Faiths.....	9
Farewell to Matt Stark.....	9
Newcomers Orientation.....	10
Social Action & Outreach Updates.....	10
Children's Program Notes.....	11
ACMA Concert Lineup for April.....	11
Board of Directors' Wish List.....	12
Happy Anniversary Rev. CJ.....	12

*Additional Stories online at:*  
[www.allfaiths-uc.org](http://www.allfaiths-uc.org)

**ONE SERVICE ONLY**  
Starting May 6 at 10:30 a.m.

**Adult Education Forums**  
move to 9:15 a.m.

*Children's Religious Education*  
during 10:30 service

Join us this May as we Celebrate:

- **Mental Health Awareness Month** ●
  - **Rev. CJ's 1st Anniversary** ●
  - **Mother's Day** ●
- **New Members Recognition** ●
  - **Memorial Day Cookout** ●

# BOARD NOTES *by Lee Page, President*

*The Board of Directors met on Friday April 20, 2018, at 4 pm.*

While there were few items passed at this meeting, there were many topics discussed and actions are being taken in these efforts:

1) A discussion about a volunteer coordinator led to the decision it would likely be better to hire outside help (such as Handy Vets, or other organizations) to assist with setup, break down, chair movements, et cetera, during events and when needed). Funds could be generated from those events to cover the costs of these outside laborers, although more discussion will be held on this topic.

2) As a result of committee members being appointed to the board, we are seeking to fill a few vacancies that have resulted. This would include members of the Stewardship Committee and the Finance Review Team.

3) The Wish List does not seem to be attracting very much interest in its current form. To add some momentum, it was decided to take the top priority wishes from the list and set up a Wish Jar for donations for the chosen wish, with a chart showing the progress to the goal amount needed.

4) A new phone system was discussed and an update of the system is forthcoming.

It would enable callers to connect directly to Rev. CJ when desired.

5) With an eye toward growth, resources are being investigated to provide a three, five, and ten-year plan for the evolution of the congregation.

I am excited to be a part of this spiritual family with all the talented individuals on the board and committees working for the health of this congregation. I can enthusiastically say that, from my viewpoint, the future looks quite bright for All Faiths.

*The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 16, at 3:45 p.m. Members are welcome to attend.*

## GREET THE GOLD

There is no doubt that All Faiths is a warm and welcoming congregation. Those sentiments are reflected in the comment section of our guest cards all the time.

Fran Way, our membership chair, has done an extraordinary job of making visitors feel welcome here at All Faiths. She conducts quarterly newcomer orientations, organizes and trains the greeters, tracks attendance and follows up with visitors.

Something you may not know is Sunday visitors receive a *gold* name tag. So keep an eye out for anyone wearing a gold name tag and be sure to say hello and make them feel welcome. It's what we do best.

### All Faiths Collection Schedule 2018

#### Share-the-Plate Outreach Funds

<b>May 20</b>	Standing Up for Racial Justice Fort Myers
<b>June 17</b>	Lee County Homeless Coalition
<b>July 15</b>	And Literacy For All
<b>August 19</b>	Operation Joy
<b>September 16</b>	Standing Up for Racial Justice Fort Myers
<b>October 21</b>	Operation Joy
<b>November 18</b>	Operation Joy
<b>December 16</b>	Lee County Homeless Coalition

#### Food, Clothing, and Other Collections

**McGregor Clinic** - May 20, June 17, July 15, August 19, September 16, October 21, November 18, December 16  
**Pet Shelter** - July 29, September 30, December 30  
**Mano a Mano** - December 9

#### Second Collections

**Employee Bonuses** - December 9

*The April 15 Share-the-Plate resulted in \$508.40 to Operation Joy!*

## Mission Statement

“All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is a welcoming, caring community, seeking diversity, practicing openness, and encouraging personal and spiritual growth...”

“We are working toward a just, free, peaceful and compassionate world....”

## FROM MCGREGOR BOULEVARD

by Rev. CJ McGregor



I have high blood pressure, and I take medication to control it. If I don't take my medication, my behavior changes, my mood changes, I experience dizziness, headaches, and I act differently—sometimes confused. When I tell people I have high blood pressure, they usually stop talking to me and move away. Once, a young mother held her child tighter as I walked by.

I wish I didn't have to rely on medications to make me feel healthy, but that is how my body works. I was in a restaurant once, and a group

of older teens overheard me talking about my high blood pressure and how it causes me to act “weird” sometimes. When I left the restaurant, they pushed me up against the wall and started punching me.

Another time, I had a job I really liked. I could manage it, even with my high blood pressure. I didn't tell everyone about my high blood pressure, didn't think I needed to, but my boss found out and fired me. Then, I couldn't find a job. No one was hiring people with high blood pressure. Prospective employers thought that, because I had it, I would not be able to work, I might steal, or I might have some sort of high blood pressure attack right there in their place of business.

Soon, I lost my apartment and had to learn to live on the streets. Finally, I did find an organization that helped

people with high blood pressure, but I couldn't really be helped because I didn't have an address. I couldn't see a doctor with no insurance, so I couldn't get the medication I needed. I eventually started to experience the effects caused by lack of blood pressure medication. My blood pressure was so high one day that the police came and put me in jail.

If you are wondering whether my story here is true, rest assured, it isn't! I wanted you to experience how absurd our world can be if we have a medical condition such as a mental illness. These situations I've described are quite real for people living with a mental illness. Furthermore, their existence is feared or disregarded because of the stigma associated with it. People living with mental illness can live healthy, productive lives if they have access to care,

support, medication, and treatment. Just like those who have high blood pressure.

Our fear and the stigma associated with mental illness allow us to perpetuate untruths. Our city, state, and federal governments seriously underestimate the needs of people with mental illness and criminalize people when they crash due to lack of public resources to remain healthy. This month, Mental Health Awareness Month, let us challenge our thinking about mental illness and challenge others when they perpetuate the stigma and myths about this disease.

Let us be aware of the needs in our communities and do something positive to meet those needs.

- Blessings, CJ



## JOYS & SORROWS

*With our apologies for any omissions, here are the joys & sorrows of our members expressed in March:*



**Ernie Fierro's** grandson passed away at the age of 31. We extend our deepest sympathy to Ernie, Shea and their family.

**Nathalie Hahn's** stepson, Christopher Hahn, died of pancreatic cancer at the age of 66. We extend our deepest

sympathy to Nathalie and her family.

**Matthew Stark** died in Minneapolis at the age of 88. He spent his entire life in promoting human rights in his career at the University of Minnesota and as the leader of ACLU in Minne-

sota. He promoted equality and dignity for blacks, native Americans and members of the LGBTQ community. We extend our deepest sympathy to Terri, his wife of 33 years. (Obituary on page 9).

**Joan and Segundo Velasquez** came from Minneapolis to be with us and to

lead our Teaching Tuesday session on their work in Bolivia with their non-profit organization Mano a Mano. We are proud of the superb work that they have been doing there for many years.



# Ongoing Events at All Faiths

## Happy May Birthday to you!



May 5	Doug Jeranson
May 7	Ed Kleinow
May 8	Ray Kocol
May 13	Annely Hudanick
May 15	Audrey Olson
May 22	Patricia Sala
May 22	Paul Zoschke
May 22	Laurie Babcock
May 23	Jeanne Ezell
May 25	Lisa Leonhardt
May 26	Marge DiGalbo
May 27	Rev. CJ
May 29	Mary Ellen Taylor
May 29	Ann Meissner
May 30	Nancy Frasca-Cabazares

## And Coming Up...

June 1	Jeannine Martin
June 2	Barb Pizzini
June 6	Joyce Davison
June 7	Lou Pizzini

## Solos Group Events

Contact: Annely Hudanick,  
[annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com)

Everyone is welcome to join the solos for outings and lunch w/wo a movie date. The potlucks, however, are reserved for "single" solos.

**Sat. May 05, 1pm** - Potluck at Bill Snider's House, 239-938-7427

**Sat. April 21, 1pm** - Lunch w/wo a movie, *PF Chang's*, 10081 Gulf Center Drive Gulf Coast Town Center, Ft Myers

## Book Club & Brown Bag - May 14 at 12pm

Meeting on the 2nd Monday of the Month

Contacts: Diane Chernow, [dianecher@comcast.net](mailto:dianecher@comcast.net) and Annely Hudanick, [annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com)

Be prepared to give a brief talk about a book you're reading or you have read.

## Pathways Loss Support Group

Meeting weekly on Tuesdays at Noon

Contact: Fran Way, [franwayrn@aol.com](mailto:franwayrn@aol.com)

Grief is a difficult journey, but you do not have to travel it alone. If you have experienced a loss in your life, you are invited to join this group where you can share, listen, make friends, and find support. Open to the general public.

## Meditation - Wed. at 7pm & Friday at 10:30am

Wednesday Contact: Lisa Leonhardt, [kindreds@aol.com](mailto:kindreds@aol.com)

Friday Contact: Jeanne Ezell, [jeannezell@gmail.com](mailto:jeannezell@gmail.com)

Join friends to develop your mindfulness, compassion, and sense of serenity.

## Free Inquiry Group (FIG) - May 17 - 6pm

Nature is Queer - Speaker, Dr. Rozalind Jester, professor of Marine Science at Florida South Western State College.

Contact: Sharon Gray, [geema1@yahoo.com](mailto:geema1@yahoo.com)

The first segment of each FIG meeting is a social time. Second segment, tons of insightful topics and discussions.

## McGregor Clinic Collection - Sunday, May 20

Collection is on the third Sunday of every month.

Coordinator: Joyce Schaffer, [joycelschaffer@gmail.com](mailto:joycelschaffer@gmail.com)

Please donate non-perishable foods such as cereal, peanut butter, tuna, as well as men's and women's clothing to help HIV/AIDS patients and their families. This month the clinic would appreciate new men's underwear.

## All Voices Choir Practice - Mondays at 4:45pm

Contact: Joseph Brauer, [jodabrauer@gmail.com](mailto:jodabrauer@gmail.com)



# MAY 2018 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> Rev. CJ's 1st Anniversary  <b>12pm</b> Loss Support Gr.  <b>1:30pm</b> CAT Meeting  <b>6:30pm</b> LIFE Celebration	<b>2</b>   <b>7pm</b> Meditation	<b>3</b>   	<b>4</b> <b>10:30am</b> Meditation	<b>5</b> <b>1pm</b> Solos Potluck @ Bill Snider's  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert <i>Bill Bynum &amp; Co.</i> w. <i>Joyce Knacke</i> opening
<b>6</b> <b>10:30am</b> Service <b>9:15 am</b> Adult Ed. Forum	<b>7</b>  <b>4:45pm</b> Choir Practice  <b>7pm</b> Carol Siferd's Odyssey	<b>8</b>  <b>12pm</b> Loss Support Gr.  <b>2pm</b> Teaching Tues. ( <i>Mental Health Stigma</i> )	<b>9</b> <b>2pm</b> Homeless Action Team Seminar with Lee County Coalition for the Homeless  <b>7pm</b> Meditation	<b>10</b> <b>10 am</b> Finance Comm. Meeting  <b>12pm</b> Exec. Comm. Meeting	<b>11</b> <b>10:30am</b> Meditation  	<b>12</b> <b>9:30-12pm</b> Newcomer Orientation  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert <i>Tim McGeary</i> w. <i>Carlene</i> <i>Thissen</i> opening
<b>13</b> <b>10:30am</b> Service <b>9:15 am</b> Adult Ed. Forum	<b>14</b> <b>10am</b> Sun. Srv. Mtg.  <b>12pm</b> Book Club  <b>4:45pm</b> Choir Practice	<b>15</b> <b>12pm</b> Loss Support Gr.  <b>6-7:30</b> PFLAG Mtg.	<b>16</b>  <b>3:45pm</b> Board Meeting  <b>7pm</b> Meditation	<b>17</b>   <b>6:30 pm</b> FIG Meeting	<b>18</b> <b>10:30am</b> Meditation	<b>19</b> <b>1pm</b> Solos Lunch  <b>11am</b> Russian School Piano Recital  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert <i>HomeGrown</i> Open Mic
<b>20</b> <b>10:30am</b> Service (Share the Plate) <b>9:15 am</b> Adult Ed. Forum  <b>McGregor Clinic</b> Collection	<b>21</b>  <b>4:45pm</b> Choir Practice  <b>6pm</b> Social Action & Outreach (rescheduled from 5/28)	<b>22</b> <b>12pm</b> Loss Support Gr.  <b>4pm</b> Teaching Tues. ( <i>Restorative Justice</i> )	<b>23</b>   <b>7pm</b> Meditation	<b>24</b>  	<b>25</b> <b>10:30am</b> Meditation  <b>4:30pm</b> Visuality Youth Group	<b>26</b>  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert <i>Cottdonale</i> <i>Swamp</i> w. <i>Robert</i> <i>Lloyd</i> opening
<b>27</b> <b>10:30am</b> Service  <b>New Member</b> Recognition  <b>&amp;</b> Cookout	<b>28</b>  <b>Memorial</b> Day  <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>29</b>  <b>12pm</b> Loss Support Gr.	<b>30</b>   <b>7pm</b> Meditation	<b>31</b>  		

See the calendar on-line: <http://www.allfaiths-uc.org>  
 Updates & Corrections will be on the website in Red Print.

# CLIMATE ACTION TEAM

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair



A great big THANK YOU to the entire congregation for your outstanding support of the Climate Action Team Earth Day Plant Sale. Many of you contributed beautiful healthy plants for us to sell. Most of those plants were purchased and taken to their new homes in celebration of Earth Day. The funds from the sale, an impressive \$343 will help fund future CAT activities.

Our team efforts have been focused on support for the Green Sanctuary initiative which is gaining momentum with each passing day. No doubt you have noticed the beautiful thriving butterfly garden that now graces our entrance. Less obvious are the rain barrels we are installing to collect and store water to use during dry periods. These are only two of dozens of changes we are making as a congregation to foster sustainability and help heal the Earth.

We continue to reach out to other environmental organizations to help build coalitions for mutual support. Those organizations include the Calusa Sierra Club, the Pachamama Alliance (which has a local chapter supported by our sister congregation, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fort Myers), the Environmental Committee of the League of Women Voters, the Citizens Climate Lobby and others. We are discussing plans for joint events to be held over the summer and will keep you informed as they are scheduled.

We urge each of you to make the effort to become more informed about what is happening in the climate change movement. One excellent source of information is the website [www.ecowatch.com](http://www.ecowatch.com). You'll be glad you took the time to check it out.

Our next meeting is at 1:30 on Tuesday, May 1st. You are warmly invited to join us as we continue our search for creative, effective and enjoyable ways to learn to live in harmony with the natural world. Hope to see you there.

## MAY's ODYSSEY

### Founding Member

**Carol Siferd**

**Monday, May 7, 2018 - 7:00 p.m.**

This month Rev. CJ has scheduled an Odyssey with All Faiths' Founding Member, *Carol Siferd*. Each month Rev. CJ will host an evening program where he will "interview" a congregant. It will be a mix of interview, storytelling, and an intimate look at the life and story of our members.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

by Sharon Gray, Treasurer

## Cash Assets for March (after payroll deductions)

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$94,499</b>
--------------	-----------------

## March P&L

Income	28,722
Expenses	<u>12,645*</u>
<b>Gain/Loss</b>	<b>\$16,645</b>

\* Expenses are lower than normal due to calendar-end mortgage adjustments.

## 12 Months P&L

Income	207,528
Expense	<u>203,471</u>
<b>Gain/Loss</b>	<b>\$ 4,055</b>

I would like to thank Joyce Ramay for compiling the March Treasurer's report for the newsletter while I was away.

April 1st began our fiscal year which runs through March 31, 2019. We will be working with our new budget which the congregation approved March 25th. The 2017/18 books will be closed and a financial review of the accounts will be performed in the next few weeks.

Have you noticed how many visitors we've had recently? More folks have found us and are "trying us on for size." We hope they'll choose to join us.

As always, your time, talents and treasures are greatly appreciated.



## Free Inquiry Group (FIG) of SWFL - May 17, 2018

6pm Pizza & Social Hour  
7pm Meeting & Presentation

Nature is Queer - Guest Speaker, Dr. Rozalind Jester, professor of Marine Science at Florida South Western State College.

Join us for a provocative discussion where we will examine the evolution of homosexuality in animals and explore the fascinating world of gender roles, sexuality and mating behaviors in wildlife. It is time for a cultural revolution in the way we perceive gender and sex in our own species!

## MAY SERMONS "LETTING GO"

- May 06 – **Letting Go**, by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Joseph Brauer and guest performer  
Emma Wood  
Worship Associate Carol Elrod
- May 13 – **Mother's Day: The Story of the Ladies  
Liberal Sewing Society**  
by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Joan Marshall and Joseph Brauer  
Worship Associate Emmie Spiller
- May 20 – **Doors and Windows**, by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Donalie Benyak and Dan Tudor  
Worship Associate Barbara Gaiser
- May 27 – **Born of the Sun**, by Rev. CJ McGregor  
Music by Bob Way and Joseph Brauer  
Worship Associate Susan Meissner  
Memorial Weekend BBQ

## TEACHING TUESDAY PROGRAMS IN MAY

**The Stigma of Mental Illness - May 8, 2018 - 2pm**  
**Presenter: Richard Keelan, MS, LMHC**

This is mental health awareness month and we will tackle the stigma of mental illness. Come and learn about approaches to mental health and be challenged to eliminate the stigma. Our presenter, Richard Keelan, is a licensed Mental Health Counselor, who specializes in counseling for youth with disabilities. He has worked with families, children, and youth at UMASS Medical School, Pediatric Behavioral Health of Massachusetts, is certified in special education advocacy, has worked in private practices, and currently works in Child Life Services at Golisano Children's Hospital.

**Restorative Justice - May 22, 2018 - 4pm**  
**Presenter: Dr. Sandra Pavelka**

Restorative justice is an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community. This contrasts to more punitive approaches where the main aim is to punish the offender, or satisfy abstract legal principles. Our presenter, Dr. Sandra Pavelka, is President and CEO of Community and Restorative Justice Associates and Consulting Group. She is Professor and Director of the Institute for Youth and Justice Studies at Florida Gulf Coast University.

## MAY ADULT ED. FORUMS

**Adult Education Forums Summer Schedule**  
**Great World Religions**  
**Sundays 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.**  
Half hour DVD lectures  
followed by discussions led by Joyce Ramay

**The Great Courses DVDs**  
**by The Teaching Company**  
*Buddhism DVD lectures by Professor Malcolm David  
Eckel, Assoc. Prof. of Religion, Boston University*

- May 6 - Buddhism: Lecture 5 – The Buddhist  
Community
- May 13 - Buddhism: Lecture 6 – Mahayana  
Buddhism – the Bodhisattva Ideal
- May 20 - Buddhism: Lecture 7 – Celestial Buddhas  
and Bodhisattvas
- May 27 - **No Forum** – Memorial Day Luncheon

## Shell Point Radio



Another great reading by Joan Marshall is featured on David Hauenstein's Listening to the Words program 302. It's titled "The Bird List." It will attract those interested in birds as well as those who appreciate the workings of human relations.

Programs can be found on *David's Listening to the Words Program* at [shellpoint.net/listening](http://shellpoint.net/listening).

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**LIFE CELEBRATION**

**May 1, 2018**

**New Image Tabernacle**

**81 Pondella Road, N. Fort Myers**  
**6:30 Sign-In and 7:00 Event**

Join us for our last meeting as we celebrate another successful Nehemiah Action and recognize the people who made it happen - including you!

# TOGETHER ON THE JOURNEY

by Fran Way, Member Services

Each month the newsletter will profile an All Faiths' veteran and/or new member. This month we feature Greg Monk.



## Gregory Monk Member Since December 2018

Gregory Monk first learned about All Faiths when his singing group performed at a Sunday service. He found our congregation open and affirming and felt “accepted for how I believe.” He returned regularly, and during the year before Rev. CJ came, he gave a candid talk about his gay identity, his youthful rebellion, his struggles with alcohol and his recovery.

Born in Minneapolis, Greg was adopted into a family, but his parents divorced when he was ten. He has a younger sister. They moved with their mother to a suburb of St. Paul where Greg took on many of the family chores. He says he and his sister, “grew up unsupervised.”

His mother was a strict Lutheran, and Greg attended the church where she was the choir director. His sister played flute, and he sang in the choir and in his school’s orchestra. He recalls that the congregation hired an artist to paint a mural, and a great controversy broke out over an exposed belly button. For a year, he attended a Lutheran parochial school, where a teacher rapped his knuckles because he tried to write left-handed. His mom transferred him to a public school. There he was placed in advanced classes, but he describes himself as emotionally delayed and rebellious. Greg began drinking as a teen.

After high school, Greg spent four and a half years in the Marine Corps. When he was discharged, he moved back to Minnesota and enrolled in the University of Minnesota-Duluth, majoring in English and theater. But he dropped out because, he says, “I needed a support system.”

He reports that the Rev. Fred Phelps of Westboro Baptist Church played an interesting role in helping him to reconnect and to work on getting sober. Subsequently, Greg earned a degree in graphic design, and resumed his involvement with theater, focusing on lighting and sound.

In 2004, Greg came to Florida on vacation with his recovery coach. He says he no longer enjoyed his job back home, so he took a position with child support protective services in Collier County. He currently manages the regional office for Alcoholics Anonymous, the activities of which keep him busy. His personal life has changed, too. He and his long-term partner have

parted company, he recently bought a house in Lehigh Acres and has been dating Cam since November.

At All Faiths, he is a “charter member” of the newly formed choir and performed as a soloist in Joan Marshall’s dinner theater production. Greg says his past experience with sound and lighting may be of use to the congregation. As a new member of the “greeter team,” he welcomed congregants in March. Our current building’s small size will be challenging to growth, Greg believes, but he is happy to see younger people joining All Faiths.



## UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Grounded in a deep belief that we are all prophets, Unitarian Universalists ask, “How can we faithfully meet the demands of our time?” The call to witness and act for justice in our society and in the world is clear. So, too, is the call to examine our structures and practices, dismantling and transforming those which fail to recognize the full humanity of all people and to honor the interdependent web of life. Join us in Kansas City as we dive deeply into questions of mission for our Unitarian Universalist Association, for our congregations and communities, and for each of us as individuals. Together, we’ll ask:

Who and how are we called to be at this time, individually and collectively?

How are we called to act and to live?

How does our Unitarian Universalist legacy strengthen us in living out our mission? In what ways does our legacy present challenges and impediments to answering our call?

The call of our faith has a place for each of us. Join us in Kansas City to build courageous, collective leadership with tools, skills and connections.

### Kansas City

General Assembly 2018 will take place at the Kansas City Convention Center, 301 W 13th St, Kansas City, MO 64105 (Google map).

The City of Fountains is practically overflowing with adventure. Whether it’s the scent of smoldering BBQ luring you to a plate of ribs, the sweet echo of jazz welcoming an evening of

*(continued on page 9)*

entertainment or the spray of fountains inviting you to kick off your shoes and make a splash, you'll sense inspiration in the air – and find it along every boulevard.

As America's most centrally located major metropolitan area, Kansas City's location is a huge advantage for travelers. In fact, more than 55 million Americans can get to Kansas City in less than a day's drive. And flying there is even easier—as Kansas City International Airport (KCI) is just a three-hour flight away from each coast. All major U.S. air carriers serve KCI, which offers more than 400 daily flights with nonstop service to 48 destinations.

Contact the office for more information if you would like to attend, 239-226-0900.

## THE NAACP & ALL FAITHS

by Eileen Moran

Members of the Fort Myers NAACP met at All Faiths in April for the second time to explore ways in which we can become allies and support their fight for racial justice. The NAACP is the place where we can make a difference.

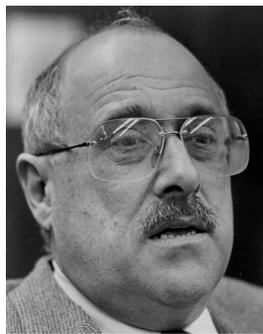
Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest, largest and most widely recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization. Its more than half-million members and supporters throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, campaigning for equal opportunity and conducting voter mobilization.

Speakers at the forum recognized that the Fort Myers branch of the NAACP is not a large organization. They would appreciate help in a number of ways. Becoming a member of the NAACP is a huge first step to show support. They meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 11 am at their offices at 3903 MLK Boulevard and encourage us to join them

With them, we can stand together on issues. Current activities include working to remove the portrait of Robert E. Lee in military uniform from the courthouse and his statue from the downtown area; these images send a subliminal message that needs to be counteracted. Another is to register voters and educate them. A third is to have the VA clinic moved back from Cape Coral to Fort Myers, more accessible to the community it serves. Individually, we can support candidates for city council and for the school board who will represent the interests and needs of the African-American community.

Plans for a third meeting between All Faiths and the NAACP are being discussed. You can visit their website at <http://theleecountyflnaacp.org/>, visit their Facebook page, or call them at 239-936-2352 and ask what you can do.

## ALL FAITHS SAYS FAREWELL TO MATTHEW STARK



Matthew Stark passed away this month in Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the age of 88. He was a member of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation in Fort Myers and the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis.

Matthew Stark was a noted civil rights activist in Minneapolis, and Lee County, Florida.

Stark was born to a Jewish family in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Ohio University in 1951 with a BA degree in English and a BS degree in education. He graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1959 with a master's degree in Educational Psychology. Stark received his Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Counseling in June, 1963 from Case Western Reserve University. He was Dean of Students at Moorhead State University 1962-63. He was assistant professor and coordinator of human relations programs at the University of Minnesota, 1963-1970. Stark left the University of Minnesota in 1973 to head the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota. He was a strong supporter of the separation of church and state. He was actively involved in the civil rights movement, and worked with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was proud of his support for racial equality and gay rights.

The University of Minnesota established the Dr. Matthew Stark Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Faculty and Student Award to recognize contributions to civil rights and liberties. It annually presents an award to both a faculty member and a student. The Hennepin County Bar Association awarded Stark its Advancement of Justice award in 1987. In 2008, Stark presided as grand marshal of the Twin Cities Gay Pride Festival and Parade and received the Pride award from Twin Cities Pride. He won the medal of merit from the Ohio University Alumni Association in 2011.

He and his wife Terri spent their winters here in Fort Myers, where he remained active in the ACLU chapter in Lee County and in the local Gay Social Network, and he served on the ACLU national advisory council.



## INVITATION

### ALL FAITHS NEWCOMERS ORIENTATION

*Hosted by Rev CJ McGregor and the Membership Committee*

**Saturday, May 12, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**2756 McGregor Boulevard, Fort Myers**

How much do you know about our All Faiths congregation? How much do you know about Unitarian Universalism? Did you know that UU congregations are self-governing, and that authority and responsibility are vested in the membership of the congregation?

At All Faiths we want our members and friends to understand what we believe in, what we strive for, and what we celebrate. We encourage every member to participate actively in their faith community.

If you are considering becoming a member, if you are a relatively new member, or if you're just curious, we invite you to come on Saturday, May 12 at 9:30 a.m. for snacks and an informative workshop that will bring you up to speed on our faith community. Visitors are welcome, too!

**So that we can plan for your participation, please sign up on Sunday at the Activities Table in the Social Hall, or RSVP Fran Way by email [franwayrn@aol.com](mailto:franwayrn@aol.com) or phone her at 863-675-7880.**

## SOCIAL ACTION & OUTREACH

*by Richard Keelan, Chair*

### The Social Action Teams are forming!

Members of the Social Action and Outreach Committee have begun scheduling meetings to solicit team leaders for each of the four teams.

The **Homeless Action Team** met on April 19 and emerged with co-team leaders, Judy Alberda and Barbara Gaiser. They have already arranged for the Coalition for the Homeless to meet with the congregation Wednesday, April 9 at 2 p.m. Thank you, Ladies, for stepping up to the plate.

The **Racial Justice Team** is scheduled to meet on Friday, May 11th at 2 p.m. and will be facilitated by Lewis Robinson and Richard Keelan.

You will be hearing from the **Community Outreach and Hunger Team** soon!

## HOMELESS ACTION TEAM TO MEET WITH LEE COALITION

*May 9, 2018 at 2:00 P.M.*

*by Barbara Gaiser, Co-Team Leader*

All Faiths' newly formed Homeless Action Team (HAT), formed under the Social Action and Outreach Committee, will be hosting an informational seminar at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, May 9. Janet Bartos from the Lee County Homeless Coalition will be presenting information to the team members, as well as to all interested members of the congregation who wish to attend. All participants are encouraged to study the Lee Country Homeless Coalition website prior to attending the seminar.

Ms. Bartos will provide an overview and summarize the needs of the homeless in Lee County. Specifically, she will identify existing programs, acknowledge other faith based organizations currently engaged, suggest options for service/contribution for a small congregation with our demographics, present- ongoing solutions, as well as ideas for future solutions to address the needs of the homeless in Lee County.

A brief discussion to assimilate and apply the information will be held immediately following the seminar. It is imperative that those who volunteered to "help the homeless" attend this seminar so we can define our specific area of interest and support.



Love in Action



**Children's R.E. is held in the Robinson Room during the 10:30 a.m. Service**

**May 06** - This session introduces the notion that our interconnectedness with one another and the Earth forms the basis for understanding justice and goodness. Our well-being is linked to the well-being of those around us. Not just the well-being of humans, but also the well being of the animals and plants that share this planet with us; not just our friends and neighbors, but also people who live on the opposite side of the world.

**May 13** - In this session, children are introduced to their own consciences as inner voices that can guide them to make choices that effect goodness and justice. The children will hear a Buddhist story about a boy who recognizes that whatever action he takes, he will be watching himself, and questioning whether it feels right or wrong. Through the story, the children explore times in which they listened to their inner voices and acted on their consciences.

**May 20** - This session introduces faith, hope and prayer as tools that can help us discern the path of goodness and justice. Participants will hear a story in which a shah decides to test a poor Jewish man's faith and creates challenges for him to face. Through prayer, the Jew expresses his trust in God and finds answers to each dilemma created by the shah. Ultimately, the poor man teaches the shah the value of a faithful life.

### **TEACHERS NEEDED THIS SUMMER FOR CHILDREN'S R.E.**

Would you like to get involved with teaching our kids this summer? The Children's R.E. team is looking for some volunteers to teach R.E. during the 10:30 a.m. service. All of the lesson plans will be provided. You do not have to be a certified teacher. It's a great way to get involved with our great children.

Please contact Mary Corrigan at [mary837@gmail.com](mailto:mary837@gmail.com), or call the office, 239-226-0900, and we will put you in touch.

## **AMERICANA COMMUNITY MUSIC ASSOCIATION**

### **May 2018 Concert Line-Up**

Concerts Start at 7pm

\$15 General Public/\$10 ACMA Members

#### **Saturday - May 5**

Bill Bynum & Co.

w. Joyce Knacke opening

#### **Saturday - May 12**

Tim McGeary

w. Carlene Thissen opening

#### **Saturday - May 19**

ACMA HomeGrown Open Mic

#### **Saturday - May 26**

Cottondale Swamp,

w. Robert t Lloyd opening

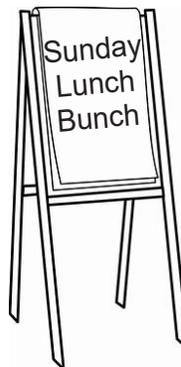
### **SUNDAY LUNCH BUNCH**

Our Sunday lunch group is getting too large for one restaurant to accommodate.

Starting in May, each Sunday there will be an easel outside the front doors with three restaurants listed.

On your way in, put a check mark next to the restaurant you would like to attend after service.

Regina will call each restaurant and make reservations during the service. You won't know who else will be at the restaurant you chose until you show up. What fun!



### **MAY CLEANING CREW VOLUNTEERS**

Before May 06 Ed Kleinow & Joyce Ramay

Before May 13 Doug Deininger

Before May 20 Sharon Gray & Bill Snider

Before May 27 Can You Fill This Spot?

**Thank you all for doing such a great job all year.  
We need a few more volunteers.  
If you can help, please call the office 239-226-0900**

# WISH LIST

Did you know that the Board of Directors has a wish list? The Treasurer and Finance Committee worked hard to build a lean budget that was attainable, and they succeeded! There are a few things, however, that the congregation could use that are not in that budget.

It's an opportunity for everyone to contribute to the needs of their spiritual home. Beginning May 6, there will be two **Wish List Jars** on the credenza in the community room. The top two wishes (a linoleum floor for the kitchen and a conference telephone for snowbirds on the board) will be displayed with the jars. Please help make our wishes come true by dropping what you can, when you can, into the jars.

## Happy Anniversary, Rev. CJ!



The congregation is excited to be celebrating the one-year anniversary of our settled minister, The Rev. CJ McGregor.

Thank you, Rev. CJ, for all you do to carry on the good work of All Faiths. We are thriving and growing under your leadership, and we are extremely grateful.

### All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 Fax: (239) 278-5743

Email: [office@allfaiths-uc.org](mailto:office@allfaiths-uc.org) Website: [www.allfaiths-uc.org](http://www.allfaiths-uc.org)

**Board of Directors:** Lee Page, President; Chris Stotler, Vice-President; Sharon Gray, Treasurer; Ed Elrod, Secretary; Diane Cartwright, Past Chair;

**Directors:** Doug Cartwright, Barbara Gaiser, Annelly Hudanick, Lisa Leonhardt, Eileen Moran.

**Staff:** Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Joseph Brauer, Music Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton; Robert Bennett, Hospitality

#### Communications

Regina Kilmartin

*Newsletter*

Regina Kilmartin

*Proofreaders*

Carol Elrod,

Joyce Ramay

*Social Media & Website*

Regina Kilmartin, Kendra Maroon,

Sharon Gray, Steve Pennisi

#### Adult Education Forums

Pat Nuding

#### Member Services

*Greeters*

Fran Way

*Care and Support*

Joyce Ramay

**Finance**

Joyce Ramay

#### Stewardship Committee

t/b/d

#### Nominating Committee

Carol Elrod

#### Sunday Services

Joyce Ramay

#### Sound Technician

Ed Elrod

#### Building and Grounds

Michael Pierre

#### Social Action & Outreach

Richard Keelan

*Climate Action Team*

Joan Marshall

#### Homeless Action Team

Judy Alberda & Barbara Gaiser

*L.I.F.E.*

Bill Snider & Regina Kilmartin

*McGregor Clinic*

Joyce Schaffer

*Mano a Mano*

Charlotte Blitt

*Operation Joy*

Annelly Hudanick

*Animal Ministry*

(seeking leader)

**Minister: Rev. CJ McGregor - Cell: 508-736-3361**

Minister Emeritus: The Rev. Dr. Wayne Robinson

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

**May 18**

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



OFFICE HOURS: 9am to 4pm, Monday thru Thurs;  
9am to 12:00pm, Friday and Sunday.  
Congregational Administrator: Regina Kilmartin

# Never a Dull Moment at All Faiths!



LIFE, rallying with 100s at Lee Co. Commissioners meeting to put a Children's Service Council on the ballot

Supporting Our Muslim Friends



Lubna Alam Introduces us to Islam

Fighting for our Children



Justice



Climate Action Team attending March for Science & selling plants on Earth Day

Teens Fighting for Gun Control



Sarah Brown, 18, writes the names of victims of mass shooting on sidewalks as part of her project called "Collateral Damage"

Working to Save Our Planet



## BELTANE/MAY DAY

*by Lee Page*



Although I do not identify as a Pagan, I have studied the olde religion and have a great fondness for its traditions, beliefs, rituals, and practices. I find it very interesting how many of the traditions and rituals have been passed on through to Christian celebrations of today.

Mayday or Beltane is this last of the fertility holidays from Pagan roots, not widely celebrated in the United States, however there are many cities throughout Europe that have festivities based on this springtime fertility holiday. The origin of the holiday is traced to agrarian societies including the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and Celts. The day was intended to bless the fields and livestock to ensure abundant harvesting later in the year. Typically, all the seeding was done by this time and the lives of every citizen in these societies often depended on the success of their crops.

Over two thousand years ago, this was celebrated in the Roman empire as the Festival of Flora, five days of ceremony to honor the Goddess of Flowers, who also reigned over all vegetation and fertility. It often included sporting competitions, circuses, and theatrical presentations, as well as sacrifices to the Goddess. And no, no records of Christians being sacrificed, at least not for this festival.

About the same time period, the Celts celebrated this first day of May, not towards any polytheistic deity such as Flora, but more generally, as a celebration of the return of the sun, which is the English translation of the Gaelic word Beltane. However, the notion that this celebration would increase the chances for fertility of crops and livestock remains consistent. Their celebrations included bonfires, leaping over the fires, and later, using the ashes as blessings, placed on fields, animals, and people.

Typically, those seeking to convert pagans to Christianity attempted to place Christian holidays either on or close to the Pagan holidays so to ease the transition. However, the only significant Christianization of Mayday is in Germany where it is one of holy days used to commemorate St. Walpurga. She is the saint believed to have brought Christianity to Germany.

Today, we still have many customs and rituals for Mayday, including the gathering of wildflowers and decorating a Maypole, and then dancing around the lovely Maypole. The tradition of garlanding is also still celebrated in association with the spring fertility rites of the first of May isolated mostly within the United Kingdom.

But please, don't confuse this happy celebration of the return of the sun, bringing of flowers, fertility, and all things green and beautiful with the distress call, "Mayday, mayday!" This use of the term was originated in 1923 and made official in 1948 by Frederick Mockford, a radio signal officer in London, who introduced it believing it to sound like "m'aider", the French term for "help me".

Here's to wishing us all a fertile, happy season with no "mayday, mayday"'s in our near future.