**NCUU****NATURE COAST****UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST**

7633 N. Florida Ave. (Hwy 41)

Citrus Springs, FL 34434

352-465-4225

Nature Coast Unitarian Universalist (NCUU) News



Nature Coast Unitarian Universalists

Website: <https://www.ncuu.org>**February 2023**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Envisioning a Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Future Generations

Today, most UU Congregations support social justice programs that address current humanitarian and environmental issues such as “Black Lives Matter,” climate justice, LGBTQ rights, reproductive rights, racial and gender inequities, immigration policies, etc. These vital programs are defining facets of Unitarian Universalism and should be pursued into the distant future with ever increasing vigor. But while we continue to promote the wellbeing of all existing people, we also should be increasingly mindful of the rising threats to future generations, including those who are still infants or as yet unborn. Based on current and projected future circumstances and attitudes, our grandchildren could face challenges that are currently unthinkable. Whether or not these challenges are insurmountable will depend on today’s priorities and actions – or inactions. National and global collaborations in promoting science, education, health care, clean water, food security, diversity, economic justice, and unrestricted compassion offer a much more promising future for the world than do pursuits of nationalism, excessive wealth, cultural and ideological uniformity, and xenophobia. Autocracy, bigotry, and hate are anathema to the ideals of a bright future and to UU values.

Climate change poses a crisis that must be addressed soon. The young activist Greta Thunberg is obsessed by the grim plight of future generations for good reason. The need for the world to become more aware of climate change and its tightly interwoven aspects of poverty, immigration, racism, famine, and human health is urgent. Today, the threats to humanity presented by global climate change are orders of magnitude worse than at any time in our history. The impending pressures on the borders of the US and other affluent countries by climate change refugees may soon be unprecedented. Worldwide, tens of millions of people are in jeopardy of becoming climate change refugees within a decade. Nonwhites and the poor are most vulnerable. Denial of climate change by the public and politicians is exacerbating the threats and doing nothing to eliminate them.

Added to the climate-related threats are ever growing political and ideological assaults on democracy, nonwhites, diversity, science, reason, LGBTQ rights, and even education. These assaults must be strongly countered if the future is to welcome the generations to come. In adhering to our

principles, Unitarian Universalists have a moral obligation to do whatever we can to oppose the assaults. For the most part, this means adding our voices to the voices of other enlightened and caring congregations and organizations. Letter-writing to State and Federal legislators and to the editors of newspapers; participation in marches, rallies and campaigns; visits to political representatives in Tallahassee and Washington, helping to get out the vote for enlightened candidates; and promoting orchestrated programs, such as NCUU Kitchen Table Forums, are among the ways that we can make our voices heard. And, with luck, we can entrain some of the younger people whom we want to defend into our campaigns for the future. Let's be peaceful, but vocal, activists on behalf of those yet to come!

Don Wright

SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023

Speaker — The Rev. Harry Coverston



Harry is a sixth generation Floridian and fourth generation educator. He is a recovering lawyer, a retired academic, and currently serves as a priest at an Episcopal parish in Winter Park. He earned a law degree from the University of Florida, a masters of divinity degree, from the Episcopal seminary in Berkeley, Calif., and a doctoral degree in Religion, Law, and Society from Florida State University. He has led an unorthodox life that included a two-year chapter here in Citrus County. From that life journey, he offers some insights gained along the way. He is grateful to be asked to return to NCUU to speak.

Topic: “Life Lessons from the Spiritual Journey”

The Rev. Harry Coverston believes every one of us is called to engage in a lifelong spiritual journey. It is marked by lessons forged through growth, loss, accomplishments, and failures. He has lived an unorthodox life, to say the least. A number of insights have come from that unpredictable life that he believes would prove of interest, if not of value, to others.

Sunday, Feb. 12, 2023

Speaker – Amira Sims



Amira Sims is a mother of four, college professor, spoken word artist, and lifelong learner. Starting at the ripe age of 8, she began keeping a journal. Ever since she can remember, she always wanted to be a teacher. Her childhood nickname was “School.” Even before graduating with her master’s degree in psychology, she guest-lectured at Valdosta State University. In 2003, she began teaching an array of psychology courses at the collegiate level. Many years later, in her 2019 TEDx Ocala talk, she shared that one of the reasons she consistently began to speak her poetry was thanks to one of her undergraduate college professors

who encouraged her to “keep writing, start sharing.”

Topic: “You: It’s Up to You”

Amira Sims will share several poems and provide a brief talk about the message behind the selected poems. If time permits, she also will share a short clip of an inspirational poem. Several of the themes of the selected poems center on personal development and provide a call to action. One big idea is that to make one’s life better, it is up to the individual; additionally, to make the world better, it is also up to the individual. Personal development involves taking action steps, as well as being patient. Focusing on intrinsic value and equity are two principles that she will highlight.

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2023

Speaker – Lynne Westmoreland



After a 30-year career in music, Lynne Westmoreland returned to graduate work in Humane Education. Humane education considers the intersectionality of human rights, animal protection, environmental concerns, and how our media and culture, beyond our conscious awareness, indoctrinate us to live in ways that are in direct conflict with our most deeply held values. Lynne's work as a humane educator has been in UU faith communities, through teaching meditation and mindful communication, and with end-of-life work. Lynne has been a Unitarian for

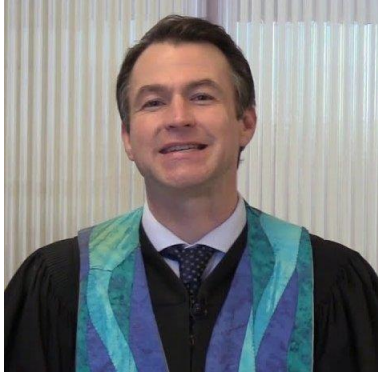
about 40 years and finds deep commonality between our seven principles and Humane Education.

Topic: "Death Is a Five-Letter Word"

How is it that death has become such an unspeakable word in Western culture? Why do we believe that if we don't speak of death, it will not happen? How have we been culturally indoctrinated to think of death as the enemy, rather than as, perhaps, the most sacred time of our lives? Talking about death won't kill you, but not talking about it and befriending it may just result in a life less fully lived and a legacy left unrealized.

Sunday, Feb. 26, 2023

Speaker — UU Rev. Aaron White



The Rev. Aaron White received his master's degree in divinity from Harvard Divinity School, with a focus in comparative religious ethics. At Harvard, he served as the founding editor of the *Harvard Graduate Journal of Religion*. He served a variety of churches in Texas, most recently serving the First Unitarian Church of Dallas from 2009-2021. He is now the chief development officer for Greenhill School in Addison, Texas, and lives with his wife, Suzi, and their four children in Dallas.

Topic: "Why Be Spiritual"

What is a spiritual life for? What does it do for us and others? What is the great "YES" in your life?

NCUU Board of Directors

President	Don Wright
Vice-President	Connie Hart
Clerk	Margo Wilson
Directors	Rob Deremer, Carole Goodman, John Ivens, Shirley Leonard, Lowell Smith, and Mike Taylor

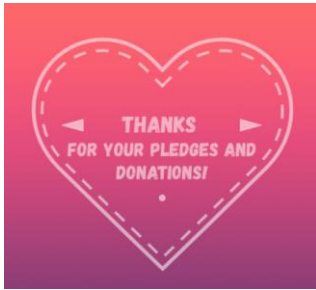
NCUU Committees

Building	Matthew Ciszewski, John Comer, and Lowell Smith
Bylaws	Amy Haiken
Calendar	Gordon Hart
Caring Committee	Jeanne Wright
Choir Director	Sally Smith-Adams
Denominational Affairs	Bree Hill
Facebook	Mike Taylor and Linda Myers
Finance	Shirley Leonard
Grounds	Chas Anderson
Librarian	Tom Hibberd
Long-Range Planning	John Comer
Media and Technology	Gordon Hart
Membership	Holly Alexander
Music	Sally Smith-Adams
Newsletter	Amy Haiken
Nominating Committee	Jeanne Wright
Photographer	Gordon Hart
Piano	Connie Hart and Sally Smith-Adams
Property	Matthew Ciszewski, John Comer, and Lowell Smith
Religious Education	John Ivens
Social Activities	Matthew Ciszewski and Pam Ricker
Social Justice	Open
Sunday Service	Pam Ricker
Treasurer	Jean McCauley
Website	Gordon Hart, Amy Haiken

Board of Directors

Our board meeting is Monday, Feb. 13 (Second Monday of the month) at 10:30 a.m. If you want to place an item on the board agenda, please send it to the clerk, Margo Wilson, (clerkatncuu@gmail.com), about a week in advance.

NCUU Pledges



NCUU Pledges and [Youtube](#) Video

Our Fellowship is still functioning and has ongoing expenses. Click the above link if you are viewing this on your email to watch the video. We are open. Please find it in your generous hearts to keep your pledges and gifts up to date. Many thanks to all of you. Checks should be sent to:

Nature Coast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
P.O. Box 94
Holder, FL 34445

Connie Hart

Special Safety Sunday & Pizza Planned

Mark your calendar for a pizza party after the service on Sunday, Feb. 26. We will enjoy pizza and conversation after the service. The party will be arranged by the Membership and Social Activities committees. Don Wright and the Safety Committee will then conduct a requested Safety Training for those interested. The alarm system and A.E.D. will be addressed, as well as evacuation procedures. Look for a sign-in sheet in the lobby.

February Birthdays



If your birthday is not included, and your name is not on this list, please notify the editor: ahaiken@yahoo.com.

Birthdays will be celebrated for now with a card from the Caring Committee. Please take time to text, call, or email these members this month.

Holly Alexander
Lowell Smith
Jean McCauley

A. Rob Deremer
Peg Gotz
Susan Smith

February NCUU Hike

You are invited to hike at Ross Prairie Trailhead and Campground on Thursday, 9 February. Meet at 10am at the parking lot at 10660 S.W. Highway 200 (Dunnellon, FL 34431). We will hike about 2.3 miles on the Holly Hammock Trail, and if we decide to hike further, there are several other trails there. Well-behaved dogs are welcome.

February Share the Plate

The recipient for February Share the Plate donations is the Florida Interfaith Coalition for Reproductive Health and Justice. This is a grassroots group of interfaith clergy, faith leaders and lay people who support the right to safe and legal abortion services and a broad range of reproductive health care services through education and advocacy.

NCUU Joins the Festivities for MLK, Jr. Day at Copeland Park, Crystal River



Don Wright, Linda Myers, John Ivens, Fred and
Gin, Sandy and Monique Sondheim

NCUU Calendar

Please send additions, deletions, updates,
and edits to Gordon Hart,
gchshutterbug@gmail.com, so that he
may keep the calendar updated on our
website, ncuu.org.

Request for Two Members

The Finance Committee is looking to fill
two vacancies. Contact Chairwoman
Shirley Leonard, (781) 264-5098, or email
reportersr@hotmail.com if interested.

African American Read-in

Every February, Citrus County comes together
for our African-American Read- In, promoting
history, literacy, and African-American
contributions. This is part of the 33rd national
read-in, sponsored by the National Council of
Teachers of English.

The 15th annual local reading is Sunday Feb 26,
from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., at the College of Central
Florida, in Lecanto. This FREE event provides a
delightful opportunity for young and old to
come together and support heritage,
education, literature, and historic preservation
programs.

Many times, Sally Smith Adams and Jim Davis
have performed at this event. Come and enjoy
local talent.

- Linda Myers

Announcements

Send Sunday Morning Announcements To:
Contactncuu@Gmail.com Write "For
Announcements" in the subject line.
Deadline is the Friday before Sunday service.

Newsletter Deadline

Please Remember That the Deadline For The Next Newsletter Is Feb. 21, 2022 (it's a very short month). Please Adhere To This Deadline; otherwise, your material won't be included in the newsletter.

All request entries should be sent to the email address: ncuu.news@gmail.com. That will make it easier to keep all requests organized in one place. Please send the proofread text and photo attachments. In addition, please keep your text to a maximum of two short paragraphs. If it is longer, we will edit to shorten the announcement.

Amy

Around the Grounds

Work has begun on rehabilitating the grounds and "gardens" surrounding our fellowship building.

Plans are to move plants away from the building, trim overgrown brush, replace the well pump, and rehabilitate the meditation gardens, irrigation system, pathways, and memorial.

The first work party was on Friday, Jan. 13, at 10 a.m. with Art, Gordon, Don, Connie, Bonnie, Ted, and myself, clipping, digging, cutting, and hauling away some of the overgrowth. It's amazing what a change two hours of work made in the appearance of the grounds.

Notably, the brush around the pump was removed to allow unimpeded work on the well and replacement of the irrigation pump, which was approved by the NCUU board.

Wildhart Photography

The photographs on the walls of the sanctuary can be purchased with 50% off the purchase price going to NCUU.

Talk to Gordon Hart if interested.

Please check out <http://www.wildhartphotography.com> for more of Gordon's photographs.

The same deal will be honored if someone from the congregation wants to order a photo from the website

Area Interfaith Group Proposed

Representatives of NCUU met at Unity of Citrus County on Jan. 19 with representatives of Unity and the Citrus County Bahai's to discuss forming an area interfaith group.

NCUU's Don Wright agreed to draft a proposed mission statement, and the group discussed various names for the partnership.

The group agreed to meet again and to collaborate on an Earth Day celebration.

The proposed mission statement reads:

Many faiths are represented within Citrus County, as well as other Nature Coast counties. The specific beliefs and underpinning principles and scriptures of the diverse faiths vary. But the commonalities among the faiths are powerful and unifying. They all aim to support able stewardship of the world and its inhabitants and to provide spiritual

I've been asking for estimates on a second, round U.U. logo sign for the south side of our driveway. Reflective vs. nonreflective lighting is being considered.

Speed bumps on our drive also are being investigated as a way to reduce traffic and use of our driveway as a pass-through for non-members.

Our meditation gardens/areas have become dried and cluttered with leaves. The irrigation system is broken. Once the chance of frost recedes and the irrigation system is restored, we can begin new plantings of flowers.

If anyone has old photos of the pre-COVID gardens, before loss of the irrigation, please share them. Amy Haiken sent me a color copy of the old fire pit area. Beautiful and sad to see!

Brush and other debris has accumulated between the road and the front of the building and should be removed to clean the roadside view of NCUU. This will be the focus of the next work party on Jan. 27th at 10 a.m. Please consider helping.

Ideas, suggestions, history, as well as physical help, are surely welcomed to restore, rehabilitate, and renew our property.

Intentions are to gather every two weeks to continue the goals. Please join us and consider taking charge of or sponsoring an area.

Work days/dates will be posted in Announcements at gatherings and newsletters. I hope to see you all!

Regards, Chas Anderson

communities that promote love and social justice for all citizens.

Several of our Citrus County congregations propose that by joining forces and sharing resources and talent we can better serve some of the most urgent needs of our diverse population, especially focusing on those people who, for various reasons, are underserved and in need.

We are confident this can be done in ways that respect different religious identities, build inspiring relationships across differences, and facilitate common and effective actions that address issues of shared concern.

Such interfaith collaboration can transform our religiously diverse society to become more just, kind, and pluralistic. As we proceed, we acknowledge that while the needs within our community are many, we must focus on specific, “doable” priorities that are likely to change or evolve from year to year.

Identification of these priorities should take place by way of community workshops that include underserved stakeholders, as well as congregational leaders and members who will make things happen.

