

# The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County



**Building Liberal Religious Community — Please Join Us!**

**November 2023**

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

## November Sermons

### Gratitude as a Spiritual Practice

*Rev. Jaye Brooks*

*November 5*

During November, when the learning and worship theme is “Gratitude,” let’s experiment with gratitude as a spiritual practice. Look around—pay attention to the people whose deeds move you to a feeling of gratitude. How can you express your gratitude? Maybe there’s a small act of kindness that you can couple with the words, “I’m grateful, thank you. Try it. How does it make you feel to express gratitude out loud? This Sunday morning, let’s embark on gratitude as a spiritual practice by noticing, and expressing, gratitude every day.

### Greetings to the Natural World

*Buffalo Trace Society*

*November 12*

The Buffalo Trace Society will share, and we will participate in, a special service which will include the Haudenosaunee Iroquois Thanksgiving Address: Greetings to the Natural World. As we greet members of the Natural World, individuals will read a brief paragraph of greeting to each of the elements: People, Earth Mother, Waters, Fish, Plants, Food Plants, Medicine Herbs, Animals, Trees, Birds, Four Winds, Thunderers, Sun, Grandmother Moon, Stars, Enlightened Teachers, The Creator. We will be placing a symbol of each of these elements on a ceremonial altar.

Please consider bringing a small symbol for one or more of the elements that speaks to your heart. Reach out to Ron Henry or Kimberly Roberts if you would like to read one or more of the 18 paragraphs. We will be sharing our joys and concerns by lighting a traditional candle or putting a prayer into the Sacred Pipe. Native American flute song will bless our special time together. **Our youth are especially welcome during this service.**



### The Bread on Our Table

*Rev. Jaye Brooks and Jenn Blosser*

*November 19*

In this service for all ages, families are invited to bring their favorite bread—including rolls, bagels, muffins, tortillas, biscuits, lavash, baguettes, pretzels, naan, focaccia, pineapple buns, poori, pupas, injera—whatever is in your family tradition. There will be a time in the service for adults and children to say what kind of bread they’ve brought and why it’s a family favorite. A story links this service together, with children taking key roles. As a loving religious community, we will find many reasons to be grateful.

### Pursuing Liberation

*Worship Committee and UUSC*

*November 26*

Join us for this year’s Guest at Your Table program to learn what UUSC partners are doing to address immediate injustices – as well as the collective liberation they envision for the future. At this extraordinary juncture in history, we think their stories will offer inspiration and guidance on the path toward justice and liberation for all. See article on p. 6 for more information about the program.

### From Our Minister

#### GRATITUDE. AS WE JOUR-

NEY into November, when our learning and worship theme is Gratitude, I recall the words of a 12<sup>th</sup> century Sufi Muslim poet, Ibn Arabi. To me it feels like an expression of Unitarian Universalist ideas—and at the time it was controversial because the poet embraced religious diversity:



My heart has become capable of every form:  
It is a pasture for gazelles,  
And a cloister for Christian monks,  
And a temple for idols,  
And a Ka'aba of the pilgrims,

And the tablets of the Torah,  
And the book of the Koran.  
I follow the religion of Love:  
Whatever path Love's camel takes,  
That is my religion and my faith.

Ibn Arabi cautioned spiritual aspirants against “becoming bound to a particular belief thereby denying the legitimacy of others, ‘lest great good escape you’,” according to Atif Kahlil, writing in the Journal of Religion and Society (Vol. 7, 2005).

Whatever path Love’s camel takes. How grateful I am to be part of a faith tradition that connects Love to diversity of belief—and to dwell in a nation that protects religious freedom.

We are so many centuries apart from Ibn Arabi, who lived from 1165–1240, and yet his words are still available to us. What, I wonder, of our era will live on to resonate with people hundreds of years from now?

It isn’t enough to enjoy the freedom we have within the shelter of our Fellowship’s walls, or the larger freedom within the shelter of our nation’s Constitution. It isn’t enough to be merely grateful for those freedoms.

If we feel gratitude, may we find ways to live with a heart open to the religious diversity in our neighborhoods, our nation, our world. May we find ways to enact that gratitude by the way we live, by the way we speak gentle words to one another and to strangers, by the way we listen to people who see the world differently.

To follow the religion of Love, it is necessary to harness gratitude, like Love’s camel, and begin the journey along whatever path it takes.

- Rev. Jaye Brooks

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## From Our President

I am excited to welcome some new members to our UUFHC Board. As announced previously, Marc Petrequin is our new chair of Faith Formation. I am also pleased to welcome Barbara Bowman as the our new Member at Large on the Board. I’d also like to thank Beverly Peters for agreeing to serve as a member of the nominating committee to replace Barbara’s role.

The UUFHC Board is here to serve the members of our congregation. We affirm this as part of the covenant that we’ve committed to as Board members. All members are welcome to join our Board meetings and I expect to post

the Board agenda in advance of the meetings on our members only website. Members can request the password from Rick Saucier using [webmaster@uufhc.net](mailto:webmaster@uufhc.net).

During our special congregational meeting we agreed to amend our Bylaws to start our fiscal year on July 1 versus May 1. As we discussed, the extra time will allow the Board to properly prepare and review the proposed budget prior to the congregational meeting each year. In the past we’ve had only a couple weeks to iron out the details of the budget. Due to this change, our FY24-25 budget will have to be 14 months vs. 12 months. Accordingly, we will be asking for you to support a 14 month pledge during the next Stewardship drive. More details on that early next year.

I am truly enjoying working with Rev Jaye and gaining her insights as we work through our interim ministry period. She is helping our Board think about key issues that we need to consider and address as a congregation and as servant leaders of the congregation. I’m confident that our journey together will be beneficial and productive.

Finally, I want to express gratitude for all the contributions that I see regularly that make UUFHC such an amazing place. For example, Erin Gallagher organized our Silent Witness activities. Shawna Brinkerhoff recently stepped in to organize UUFHC’s participation in the Upper Chesapeake Pridefest. Marlene Lieb recently took the initiative to restart our Circle Dinners. There are many other examples I could cite in just the past couple months. Thanks to all of you who help make UUFHC such a special place for our community.

As always, I appreciate your feedback for me after the service or at any time on my email at [president@uufhc.net](mailto:president@uufhc.net).



*Yours in service,  
- Mark Davis*

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## Faith Formation Exploration

This month, I want to lift up the efforts of the Faith Formation Committee as they work with me to continue to reimagine and grow the programming offered at UUFHC. I am excited about the discussions we’ve been having and the deep commitment to our young people in the hearts of our committee members. We are working together on doing deep discernment about our program

and the role it serves both in our congregation and the community.

Recently, as a part of this discernment work, we met to discuss *why* we offer Faith Formation programming at UUFHC (using Simon Sinek's Golden Circle model of organizing). It might seem an unnecessary question at first, but there's rich conversation to be had to reach an unanimous answer. During our meeting, we were able to reflect on how the former Faith Formation Committee (before the pandemic arrived) was already beginning this—it was actually this very issue which spurred the name change from Religious Education to Faith Formation. The committee continued the work and is now revising an official "Why" statement to anchor our program. I'll be delighted to share it once the wordsmithing is done!

Our next phase of discernment will be to review our *how*, that is to say the systems and methods which have been employed since our return to the building. Committee members have been doing plenty of research and reading up on Faith Formation resources from all over to help progress this conversation and I just want to sing their praises for their efforts. I cannot overstate the commitment and diligence of these committee members—this is *no* small effort and they are rising to the challenge wonderfully.

In the meantime, as we continue to do all this deep thinking and discussing, we are pleased to be offering weekly activities on Sundays which tie into the worship themes and are informed by the interests expressed by our young folks. Faith Formation happens all the time, in every place where UUs gather together to share time and spirit. It's our joy to be doing this work with the children and youth of UUFHC.



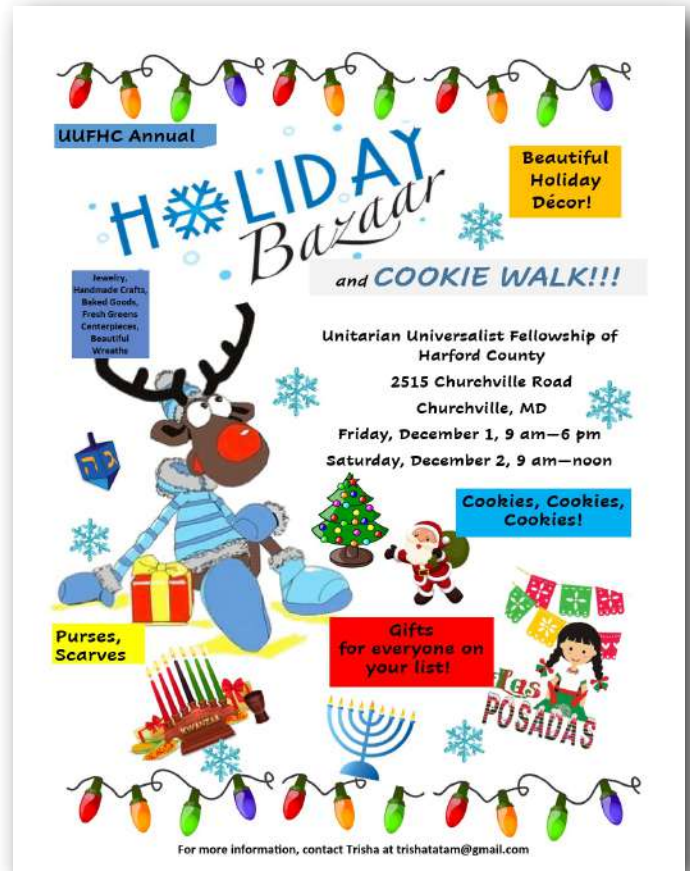
- Jenn Blosser,  
Director of Faith Formation

## Volunteer of the Month

**Shawna Brinkerhoff**, our latest volunteer of the month is honored for taking on the herculean task of UUFHC's Treasurer and learning all the aspects of the job. She spent the summer learning the ins and outs of closing out the fiscal year, beginning a new year, insurance issues, Quick-Books methods, and so much more!



She is up to speed now, and along with Finance Chair, Dave Callan presents the monthly reports of our income, expenses and financial status in a timely manner. We appreciate the many hours of work she puts into the job. Thank you so much, Shawna for everything you do for our Fellowship.



UUFHC Annual

# HOLIDAY Bazaar

Beautiful Holiday Décor!

and **COOKIE WALK!!!**

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

Friday, December 1, 9 am–6 pm  
Saturday, December 2, 9 am–noon

Jewelry, Handmade Crafts, Baked Goods, Fresh Greens, Centerpieces, Beautiful Wreaths

Purses, Scarves

Gifts for everyone on your list!

Cookies, Cookies, Cookies!

Las POSADAS

For more information, contact Trisha at trishatam@gmail.com

## The Holiday Bazaar is Almost Here!

The Holiday Bazaar will be held the first weekend in December, Friday, Dec 1 from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, and Saturday, December 2 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. This is one of the most important church fundraisers of the year. Please help support it by:

- Donating new and gently used holiday decorations and other gift-type items, items you love but you don't need any longer.
- Donating purses, scarves, toys, jewelry (vintage and new), handmade crafts, pet items.
- Volunteering to bake cookies (lots of them, minimum 5 dozen please), cookie sign up sheet will be posted soon.

- Volunteering to help set up Wednesday and Thursday, and tear down Saturday afternoon. Sign up sheet coming soon.
- Spending a 2-hour shift with us at the sale. It's fun. Volunteer signup sheets will be out as soon as the Serendipity Auction is over.
- Coming to shop, there are some great deals on decor and a lot of wonderful jewelry, purses and scarves, not to mention you'll be supporting our second largest fundraising event of the year.
- Speaking to your neighbors and friends, asking for donations and telling them to come shop.

Please place donated items in a box/bag marked "Bazaar" in the front lobby coat closet on the right side marked for Bazaar drop offs. Or call Trisha, (443) 418-8187, if you are unable to get to UUFHC. If you have any questions, please contact Trisha Tatam-McQuate, [trishatatam@gmail.com](mailto:trishatatam@gmail.com).

And thank you for supporting this important fundraising event for UUFHC.

- Trisha Tatam-McQuate

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## Bazaar Cookie Walk

Imagine this. Rows of scrumptious looking cookies. Lines of happy people pointing to their favorites. Holiday music fills the air.... **and** our Fellowship is making money!

**You** can make this scene a reality, by donating five dozen of your favorite cookies to our **Holiday Bazaar Cookie Walk**. We know it seems early to begin your holiday baking, but the Bazaar will be open for business on December 1. YIKES! That's only weeks away. So pull out your recipe books and start baking. And remember: the really nice part about cookies is that they freeze well. Why not make a batch this week?

Please let Marlene ([marlenelieb@comcast.net](mailto:marlenelieb@comcast.net)) or Kathy ([kkraft2312@gmail.com](mailto:kkraft2312@gmail.com)) know of your donation so we don't lose sleep worrying that the **rows** of scrumptious cookies will be too sparse. We need everyone to contribute!

- Marlene Lieb



## Exploring Membership of UUFHC

UUFHC's Membership Committee announces the upcoming "Exploring Membership" orientation schedule for those wondering whether becoming a member of UUFHC is the next step in your spiritual journey. This is a four step process. Childcare can be provided upon request, but two weeks advanced notice is needed. The first three sessions are held in the UUFHC Library.

### Session 1: Greetings and Overview

**Sunday, November 5, Noon to 1:30 pm**

This session is facilitated by members of the Membership Committee. Topics include the Seven UU Principles and our beliefs, UUFHC history, our Mission Statement, and congregational activities.

### Session 2: UU History and Theology

**Wednesday, November 8, 7:00 to 8:30 pm**

Rev. Jaye leads the discussion about our **Roots**—giving an historical overview of Unitarian Universalism, and our **Wings**—UU theology, UU faith practices and social justice.

### Session 3: In Depth Discussion on UUs and the UUFHC Congregation

**Sunday, November 12, Noon to 1:30 pm**

This week we'll learn more about UUA, Congregational polity, our By-laws, Board, committees and staff, Faith Formation, social activities, and Membership requirements and benefits. Membership Committee facilitates.

### Session 4: Signing the Membership Book

**Sunday, November 19 During the Sunday Service in the Sanctuary**

If you are ready to become a member, Rev. Jaye Brooks and the UUFHC Board will witness your signature, and the congregation will give you a warm welcome!

For more information, contact Sandy Gibbons, [membership@uufhc.net](mailto:membership@uufhc.net). Exploring Membership sessions are held three times each year. If November is not convenient, look for the next round after the holiday season.

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## Recover the Reason for the Season

**Saturday, November 18, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at UUFHC**

Whether you look forward to the upcoming Holiday season or dread it, the month of December comes around every year, with all the Whoville fuss and busyness enough to make anyone a bit nuts. Why is it like this

every year? What can we do differently this year?

Cindy Curry will lead this retreat on November 18. Set aside a day to ponder these questions as we explore our individual stories and history about this holiday time of December. Clarify your priorities for this special time of year and set some intentions for how you will spend your time and energy without overwhelming yourself. Our day together will have ample opportunity for both individual reflection and group discussion.

The exchange is \$20 for UUFHC members and \$25 for non-members. Payment will be collected on the day of the retreat. This covers materials, light snacks and coffee/tea. Please bring your own lunch. To register, go to the [Retreat Link](#). For questions, contact Cindy at [cindy.aka.mo@gmail.com](mailto:cindy.aka.mo@gmail.com).

## Corner on Finance

Well, we are easing into the Fall months now and before you know it we'll be looking at the New Year coming. In this newsletter, I'm reviewing financial data from August, but I'll be reminding everyone firmly now that we're heading into our fun and critical fundraising time for UUFHC—the Serendipity Auction!

These are simplified financial statements. For more detail, please look for the full statements (Balance Sheet, Profit & Loss, and Cash Flow) posted in the 'Members-Only' section of our website.

### FYTD 2023-24: August 31, 2023

Our August 31 Fiscal Year to Date (FYTD) net income was \$19,849. Our pledge receipts thankfully were once again ahead of our anticipated budget figures. Our expenses are still higher than expected at this point too, but thankfully less than they were FYTD July. It appears many of you have received your pledge reminders and are catching up if the summer months had escaped you. Please continue to stay vigilant and fulfill your pledging promises.

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### **Profit & Loss Statement: FYTD August 31, 2023**

Description	Actual FYE	Budget FYE
INCOME	\$ 107,250	\$ 94,397
EXPENSES	\$ 87,402	\$ 89,516
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 19,849</b>	<b>\$ 4,881</b>

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### **Cash Flow Statement: FYTD August 31, 2023**

<b>Beginning Balance May 1, 2023</b>	<b>\$ 197,481</b>
Net Cash Flow Activities	<u>\$ 20,551</u>
<b>Ending Balance August 31, 2023</b>	<b>\$ 176,930</b>

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The above statements show that for the four (4) months ending August 31, we had net income of **\$19,849** and our cash has decreased by **\$(20,551)** since the start of the fiscal year. Remember our cash position decreased substantially at the beginning of the new fiscal year from expenses accrued from the previous fiscal year, and only increased with FY 23-24 pledges received after the start of the new fiscal year (May 1, 2023). We will be playing catchup for cash until we have the Serendipity Auction at the end of this month (October), so bring your enthusiasm, Christmas lists, and entertainment schedule for next year and purchase as much joy as you can handle. UUFHC needs it!

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That's it for this round. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about these financial statements, or any other issues related to the financial health of UUFHC. I can be contacted via email at [treasurer@uufhc.net](mailto:treasurer@uufhc.net) or call me at (410) 878-6337.

Again, to see full detailed statements (Profit & Loss, Balance Sheet & Cash Flow) go online to our website at: <https://uufhc.net> and select the Member's section at the top right of the screen. Then enter the password and scroll down and the most recent statements will be located under the "Financial Statements" header.

Thanks for your continued commitment to the financial well-being of our congregation.

- *Shawna M. Brinkerhoff,*  
*UUFHC Treasurer*



## November Birthdays

The fall/early winter holiday season begins with Halloween and includes Thanksgiving and all the festivities surrounding the December holidays. Don't forget to celebrate these members November birthdays—don't let them get lost in the hustle and bustle!



Martina Kuzenski	November 2
Kay Saucier	November 2
Beth Wood-Roig	November 11
Rebecca Slentz	November 19
Alyssa Cosentino-Tich	November 20
Lynn Kirylo	November 21
Emily Shaley	November 23
Sharon Delgado	November 28

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## Chalice Lighters Corner



This is the beginning of a new year for the Central East Region's Chalice Lighter awards. This program helps the growth of Unitarian Universalism by giving grant money to help congregations fund special projects. These can include:

- Congregations looking for a new home, to expand or repair a familiar home to meet the needs of members and future members.
- New or expanded staff positions to help congregations realize their mission, increase their reach, and to serve new ministries and members in new ways.
- Support for new congregations in their fledgling stages so they can thrive, grow and serve those around them.
- New programs and outreach to make dreams into program realities.

The first newsletter announcing the newest congregations to receive grants, along with a description of the funded projects is due out soon. How are these grants funded? By UU members like you who send donations of \$20 per person per call, or \$60 per year for an individual and \$120 per year for a couple. Pledges of more or less are welcome.

Please consider becoming a Chalice Lighter. You can sign up [Chalice Lighters](#) and while there, read more about the program.

- Kay Saucier

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## This Year's Guest At Your Table Theme: Pursuing Liberation

Each year the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) features their Guest At Your Table Campaign from Thanksgiving through New Year. This is one of the primary ways UUSC raises funds to help people all over

the world working to solve problems such as climate change, discrimination, and hunger, to name a few areas of involvement. Traditionally, each year families receive a box to put in a coin or bill at each meal to represent inviting one of the four featured "guests" to a meal. At the end of the campaign, it's requested that you convert the cash to a check or online donation to UUSC.

This year's theme considers the alarming rise of fascism, authoritarianism, and nationalism in the United States and in many places around the world putting the lives of people, and the sustainability of the planet, in critical danger. These far-right forces have co-opted the word "freedom" for their own purposes, but the concepts of liberation and freedom mean something very tangible to UUSC's grassroots partners in communities the world over. Whether they are fighting for the right to seek safety, convincing the UN's International Court of Justice to address the human rights threatened by the climate crisis in the South Pacific, or replenishing the energy of human rights activists in Eastern Europe by addressing burn-out, UUSC partners invite us to help in this pursuit of liberation all over the world.

During the month of November, you will learn more about the program and meet the four "guests." The Sunday, November 26 service will focus on the program. In the meantime, the UUSC Guest at Your Table website features videos of the guests and other program information. Visit [Guest At Your Table](#) to find out more, and plan to welcome these guests to your table during this holiday season.




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## Songs to Inspire

Join fellow UUs for an evening of songs that tell our stories; songs that move faith into action for a livable Earth with justice for all. This concert, which benefits UU Legislative Ministry (UULM) features Joshua Long and Paint Branch Creek.

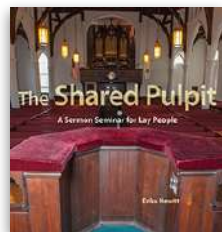
The acclaimed musical group, Paint Branch Creek, is a collaboration of five musicians and a lyricist. They perform music rooted in a variety of American experiences. Josh Long is an active song-writer and performer, and currently serves as the Director of Music Ensembles at the UU Church of Annapolis.

The Concert takes place Saturday, November 4 at 7:00 pm at the UU Congregation of Columbia, 7246 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045. Tickets are \$25 for general admission. See the website, [Songs to Inspire](#) to find other rates and to request tickets.



## From InSpirit, the UUA Bookstore

**The Shared Pulpit,**  
by Erica Hewitt  
Skinner House Books, \$14.00



We often have lay led services. These are offered during the summer and once or twice a month during the September-June church year. They say that everyone has a sermon they'd like to give, but how-to is often the question. The Unitarian Universalist publishes Skinner House Books, and offers "The Shared Pulpit," a sermon seminar for lay people.

Here is a complete workshop to help you gain experience writing and preaching a full-length sermon. This easy-to-use guide for both facilitators and participants provides a step-by-step lesson plan for eight sessions. You can learn about theory and theology of preaching, and there are practice lessons learning to write and speak with authenticity. Gradually you will build toward composing a 20-minute sermon.

This book is appropriate for an adult education class, but can be helpful just for self-learning. It is available at InSpirit, the UUA Bookstore, [www.uuabookstore.org](http://www.uuabookstore.org).

## Remembering Dave McMillan

As the newsletter was going into final edit, I noticed in the Baltimore Sun that our long-time member, **David Bruce McMillan**, passed away on September 23 at the age of 81. He joined the Fellowship September 1, 1967. When Rick and I joined in 1984, when the Fellowship was located on Lee Way, his three children, Randal, Andrea and Bradley were enrolled in Religious Education. He was a dedicated and active member until health issues prevented him from attending. Even then, when his son could bring him, he was present. The Fellowship remained close to Dave's heart, however. In the Sun's death notice the last sentence mentioned, "In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County."

- Kay Saucier



## UUA Has a Disaster Relief Fund

The Unitarian Universalist Association's Disaster Relief Fund helps channel donations from individuals and congregations to our UU congregations to support them in the wake of disasters, particularly those most affected and unable to access other funding sources. We know that because of climate change, fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods are stronger and happen more often.

Already this year the fund has distributed more than \$275,000. This is the second highest amount amount since the fund was created in 2017. The UUA has given out more than \$1.5 million in grants over the seven years of the Fund's existence. However, the Fund is at its lowest level since the beginning—only \$50,000 is on hand.

To donate to the Disaster Relief Fund and to learn more about it, go to [Disaster Relief](#).

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

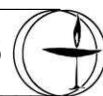
Building Liberal Religious Community  
*Please Join Us!*

Sunday Services: 10:30 am; coffee follows

Please visit us online at [www.uufhc.net](http://www.uufhc.net)



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



Minister:	The Rev. Jennifer Brooks
Director of Faith Formation:	Jennifer Blosser
Church Administrator:	Karen Kurrle
Newsletter Editor:	Kay Saucier
Webmaster:	Rick Saucier

Fellowship Office Hours (Karen Kurrle):  
Tues & Thurs: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Wed (Home Office): 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Minister's Office Hours:  
Sun, Wed & Thurs: Afternoon

Director of Faith Formation Office Hours:  
Thurs: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm  
Tues, Wed & Fri (Home Office): 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

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Newsletter Email:	<a href="mailto:newsletter@uufhc.net">newsletter@uufhc.net</a>
Webmaster Email:	<a href="mailto:webmaster@uufhc.net">webmaster@uufhc.net</a>
Website:	<a href="http://www.uufhc.net">www.uufhc.net</a>

## Wayside Pulpit

The secret of happiness, you see, is not found in seeking more, but in developing the capacity to enjoy less.

– Socrates