



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP *of the Carolina Foothills*

Virtual Services via Zoom on the first and third Sundays of each month during the pandemic



Pearson's Falls opens February 1

Happening in February:

Feb. 2 – Groundhog Day
Feb. 7 – UUFCF Virtual Service
Feb. 7 – Super Bowl LV
Feb. 14 – Valentine's Day
Feb. 15 – President's Day
Feb. 16 – Mardi Gras
Feb. 17 – Ash Wednesday
Feb. 21 – UUFCF Virtual Service



Sunday, February 7, 2021 – Lyndon Harris

A Religion of Kindness



The Dalai Lama once said, "This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness." But kindness often gets short shrift in the dog-eat-dog-winner-takes-all-world we live in. Kindness is often seen as weak. How many movies can you think of where kindness wins the day; compared to the number of movies where desires for revenge are satisfied, and the hero rides triumphantly off into the sunset, having won the day? But kindness is getting a facelift. Research has shown that a simple act of kindness directed toward another person improves the functioning of the immune system and stimulates the production of serotonin in both the recipient of the kindness and the person extending the kindness. In fact, this is the goal of most anti-depressant medications: to boost serotonin. And Wayne Dyer has pointed out that even witnessing an act of kindness can boost one's serotonin! If kindness is so good for us, why isn't there more of it? Let's work on that!

Join the conversation at 10:30 on February 7

Just go to <https://zoom.us/j/92905252751>

or by phone +1 646 876 9923

This is meeting # 929 0525 2751



Sunday, February 21, 2021 – Robin Edgar

An Introduction to the Healing Power of Reminiscence



Join journalist, author, and workshop facilitator, Robin Edgar, as she takes us on a trip down memory lane to capture the significant people and events that shaped our lives. Based on the sense memory techniques in her book, *In My Mother's Kitchen: An Introduction to the Healing Power of Reminiscence*, our own two-term UUFCF former president will demonstrate how to use reminiscence as an effective tool to record our life stories as well as find healing pathways to forgiveness.

Join the conversation at 10:30 on February 21

Just go to <https://zoom.us/j/91557993361>

or by phone +1 646 876 9923

This is meeting # 915 5799 3361



Lyndon's Letter



Dear Ones,

This month, I am at a loss for words. I'm sure I'm not alone. The January 6th attack on the Capitol and the impeachment by the House of Representatives were soon upstaged by the tsunami of compassion and empathy on display in the first ever national memorial for those who have died from COVID-19, and the somber but hopeful Inauguration of our new President Joseph Biden, and Vice President Kamala Harris. That's quite a bit for such a short time!

We still have a ways to go with winter and dealing with the worst of the pandemic, to be sure, but with the ongoing rollout of vaccines and the election behind us, I find myself relieved and a bit hopeful. How about you?

For our fellowship gatherings this month we will explore the heart-centered experiences of Kindness and Reminiscence. On February 7th, I will address the topic, "A Religion of Kindness" and on February 21st, our former Board Chair, Robin Edgar will share about her amazing work on Reminiscence.

I look forward to seeing you then! With warmth and affection,

Lyndon

Joys and Concerns

Our heart-felt sympathy goes to Christine Mariotti, whose mother died on January 17 at the age of 99 in Tuscon, Arizona. The Tryon Daily Bulletin printed her obituary in the January 24 issue.

Compounding Christine's grief was notice of her uncle's death on January 24. These personal losses follow the death last month of her dog, her house companion for years.

Christine, we are all thinking of you and share your sorrow.



REFLECTIONS ON THE YEAR 2020



If there was one word to describe a year that brought with it a national health crisis, mounting political division, economic turmoil, racial reckoning, and our country's diminished respect on the world stage, it might be "tumultuous." Yet these challenges brought awareness of problems close to home as well, i.e., discovering who among our friends have a different world view, how restrictions or limitations have hindered our personal routines, and what we now realize are personal priorities and sacred values. Responses to the invitation to share insights and reflections on the past year are as interesting as they are varied. Thanks to all who contributed!

Janice Minshew:

I paired my observations to something similar to news bites.

1. Watching TV/using media has become a primary activity.
2. A clean house is overrated; casual dress has new meaning.
3. Having all the time in the world means never getting anything accomplished.
4. I have a new appreciation for watching the activities of birds and squirrels in the yard.
5. After living in quarantine for so long, I am somewhat apprehensive about what a "new normal" will feel like although I am anxious for my vaccine.
6. I never doubted that we would prevail.

Nan Covert:

Several times a year I remove from my refrigerator all the pictures, quotes and all the cute things my grandnieces and nephews send to us. It always encourages me to reflect on the time past. Your question for the Nuusletter came at just the right time. Here are my reflections:.

- Words of the year: eschew obfuscation... avoid confusion.
- Quotes of the year: "Look at things we think aren't working. Crack them open and let more light into them." (We are fortunate that the people of the USA did this in November.)
- People of the year: Those who work in health care and health science professions and their essential workers. People who wore masks. People who voted.

Derek Harrison:

With so much to consider as we reflect on the past year, there might be an understandable tendency toward the negative. To help counter that, I would like to reflect on two positive features of 2020: I mean sacrifice and heroism.

When a young person chooses a career in one of the health care fields, he or she does so at least in part for altruistic reasons. But it's very unlikely that he or she could have imagined the challenges, the risks, and the sheer physical and emotional stresses that would await them in 2020. Could any one of them have imagined shifts of 12 or more hours during which they would sometimes have to work, in the earlier months of the pandemic, with PPE's made from garbage bags or materials from home improvement stores? Or having to work most of those long hours amid the hissing of ventilators and the gasping of patients struggling for last breaths? Or moving between beds and equipment squeezed into hallways and set up in makeshift tents?

And all of this with the ever-present knowledge that many of those for whom they were caring would surely die anyway? With all of this, the clear risk and understanding that they too might die from their work? For my part I cannot imagine working in such circumstances, day after day, week after week. As I write, they are at work now, facing even greater numbers of infected patients as the pandemic surges.

Heroism and sacrifice should be among our strongest remembrances as we reflect on 2020. And unending awe, and gratitude.

Jim Minshew:

Here are what I see as my major insights from this past year. They are listed in random order:

I have been shocked to see how many people seem to be out of touch with reality. Also, by how many people appear to have lost their basic integrity.

I have had a profound sense of gratitude for the blessings that have been bestowed on me. Especially the privilege to stay home since I am retired and still be able to associate with others through technology such as Zoom and the ability to be in touch with loved ones by phone, emails, text messages, FaceTime, Zoom, etc.

I have a heightened awareness of how important our dogs are to me.

I am grateful for and appreciate my spouse with a renewed intensity.

I was born during the second world war and as a youngster listened to many stories which begin with "before the war," or "during the war," or "after the war." I had a natural curiosity about this period of time. As a consequence I have become a fairly well informed student of World War II. This knowledge has given me the insight that as bad as 2020 was, its horrors paled in comparison to the first half of the 1940s. This has helped me keep a reasonable sense of perspective. It also made me aware that if we are not careful many of the things going on in 2020 could lead to a situation as bad or worse than the early 1940s.

Don Greeson:

My reflection on the year evoked lessons from the past.

I was in the seventh grade when a Lutheran minister scolded me for not doing my homework in Confirmation class. I assured him I would know the material by the next time we went over it, and he said, "There will be no next time. *This is IT.*"

No doubt we have all experienced a moment when it dawns on us that the window of opportunity to master some discipline or reach some goal has passed. The year 2020, with its share of challenges and deaths, was a cruel reminder that there may not be a "next time" to pursue some personal endeavor. I decided if I'm ever going to actually achieve my goals or become the person I want to be, I better get busy. *This is IT.*

The year provided opportunities to face that reality. As I became aware of things that genuinely upset me... how casually leaders spread dangerous lies, how easily followers believe them, how even some of my friends remain willfully ignorant... I realized I must find a way to reconcile my frustration and anger. The person I want to be is tolerant, but also principled. I think the best I can do is avoid pointless arguments, encourage critical thinking, and practice setting a more evolved example. At my age, there may not be a next time.



Becky Kraai:

For me - in many ways, 2020 was a year like any other. The days dawned, I created experiences to fulfill my needs and wishes, sometimes giving of myself to other people and causes; I learned, I grew, I had plenty. I am so fortunate. I live with beauty, love, good health, freedom, and a patch of fertile ground.

For others - I have tried to keep in my thoughts the lives of so many with hunger, financial loss, serious illness, early death, and unfair treatment. It was a time of ample learning about social policies and inequities, caring about and for my neighbor. I have given heartily this year - to feed others, to support their civil rights and basic needs, to feel of help from a safe distance.

I hung a new calendar: 2021 will be different is all I know.

Maria Lund:

2020 Hindsight

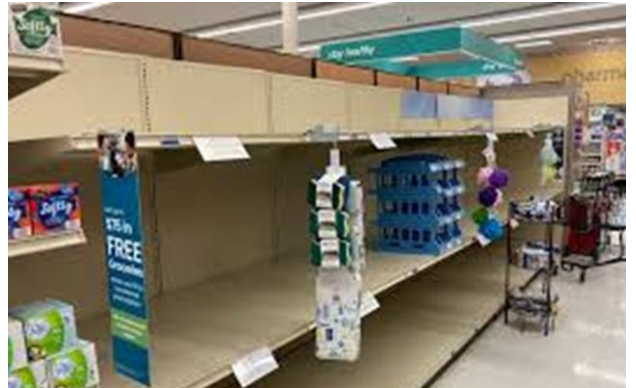
In the quiet eye of category 5 winds
from civil pandemonium and viral pandemic
sat clarity
and me.

She showed me
what's hard to lose.
Freedom to travel about
girlfriend hugs
dinners downtown
childhood friends laughing the night away
bedtime under a pile-up of grandbabies
holding my sister's hand through chemo.
Oh, how I shall savor this beauty anew.

And here in your own backyard, she asked,
what gold be buried there?
Daily witness to dawn's release of pinks and peaches and cream
quiet space for my inner thoughts to tiptoe naked into open air
lazy walks with Maggie
becoming neighborly
4000-piece puzzles
domestic chickens and their wild predators
experimental recipes from every continent
all the simple moments with my loving, goofy, handsome husband.
Oh, how I shall hold tight these treasures.

And what about your brothers and sisters,
those not sitting quietly
not safe here
in the eye,
look at them, she said,
see them.
Sitting's not so comfortable any more,
so I stand.
The view's worth it.
Oh, how I love seeing with new eyes.

I see this;
daily gratitude for life as granted
kindness in every encounter...
a virus isn't the only thing that benefits from replication.



Email your announcements for the
Nuusletter to dgreeson1@gmail.com.

Also, feel free to contact any of the
Board of Trustees with your questions,
comments or concerns.

- *President:* Barbara Moffitt - 443-535-7632
- *VP:* Christine Mariotti – 828-859-8392
- *Treasurer:* Becky Kraai – 207-210-2086
- *Secretary:* Don Greeson – 828-290-3627
- *Member at Large:*
Annie Ewing – 864-457-7278

Unitarian Universalist affirmation:

*“Love is our doctrine,
the quest for truth is our sacrament,
and service is our prayer.”*
