

Sunday, October 2, 10:30 a.m.
“The Blessing of Animals”
Rev. Tom Schmidt

It has become customary in churches of many denominations to celebrate the Blessing of the Animals in early October to coincide with the Catholic feast day of St. Francis of Assisi. In recognition of this tradition, everyone is invited to bring a picture or other memento of a beloved pet to share during the service.

Sunday, October 9, 10:30 a.m.
“About Rules”
Sharon Scholl

Rules are usually made sacred by some vast power, but what if good rules are implicit in our own experience as humans on this earth? What might this approach teach us?

Sharon Scholl is retired professor of humanities and non-western studies from Jacksonville University. She is a long time UU, member of the UU Musicians' Network, and directs the seasonal choir at her church in Jacksonville. She hosts a website for the Network that gives away free choral music. From her study of ancient cultures, she became interested in the written and unwritten rules we observe for living together.



Sunday, October 16, 10:30 a.m.
“Philosophical Anarchy”
Rev. Tom Schmidt

One can argue that Unitarian Universalists are very much theological anarchists, in that we generally do not recognize any authority beyond our own experience in matters of religion and spirituality. This doesn't mean we are all atheists, rather it means that we accept the concepts of free will and self determination. Philosophical anarchism is really just an extension of that belief to all aspects of life and living. Philosophical anarchists of historical note include Mohandas Gandhi, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Henry David Thoreau.

Sunday, October 23, 10:30 a.m.
“Islam 101”
Dilara Hafiz

This introduction to Islam will cover beliefs, rituals, myths, misconceptions and surprising facts.



Dilara Hafiz has a BA in Economics from Johns Hopkins University and an MSc in International Political Economy from The London School of Economics. She currently teaches a class on Muslim Culture & Traditions at Jacksonville University, as well as various Islamic topics in Flagler's Adult Education & Lifelong Learning. She has worked in a variety of European and Middle Eastern countries including England, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia as a writer, editor, and educator. She is the co-author of The American Muslim Teenager's Handbook (2nd edition 2009 Simon & Schuster) along with her two children, Yasmine and Imran Hafiz. As the former Vice President of the Arizona Interfaith Movement, she has a keen interest in interfaith issues and her writings have appeared in the Huffington Post, Common Ground, and the Religion News Service. She currently serves on the board of Compassionate St. Augustine.

Sunday, October 30, 10:30 a.m.
“We are Golden”
Mark Yount

So much depends on how we see ourselves - our view of human nature, and of our own potential. Let others debate origins and end times: this life offers contrast enough to set us wondering who we might be. In my peak experiences I am golden; in the pits, leaden. Can we accomplish in our lives what the alchemists could not in their laboratories? Can we turn our leaden selves to gold?

Mark Yount taught Philosophy for 12 years at Trinity College (Hartford), Saint Joseph's University (Philadelphia) and Jacksonville University after earning degrees in Philosophy from The College of William and Mary (B.A.), Villanova (M.A.) and University of Colorado at Boulder (Ph.D.). He has given over 80 sermons at Buckman Bridge UU Church (Jacksonville) and served as YRUU/Beacon youth advisor for over a decade. Since April 2015 Mark has worked with Mental Health America of northeast Florida helping homeless or at risk people with mental illness apply for disability benefits. Mark is writing a book titled Wisdom on the Way.

