

# QUEST



## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine Newsletter

St. Augustine Beach, Florida  
Reverend Tom Schmidt, Minister

July-August 2017

2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080

3/4 miles south of State Road 312

[uufsamail@gmail.com](mailto:uufsamail@gmail.com) <http://www.uufsa.org/>

Fellowship services are held Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

A program for youth is provided at 10:30 a.m.

Refreshments are served after the service so all may socialize.

Audio transcripts of most presentations are available online at

<http://www.uufsa.org/2016-2017-sunday-services.html>

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The **Quest** is published monthly from September through July.

**Materials for the September issue are due by August 18**

Don Brandes, Editor e-mail: [donaldbrandes@gmail.com](mailto:donaldbrandes@gmail.com)

Thanks to Charlie West and Rosi Angeli for proofreading.

# From Your President

## Greetings!

Thank you all for your vote of confidence in asking me to serve a second term as your President. It is an honor to serve the good people of this fellowship. I do not regard the position or the tasks involved as a chore. I consider this to be sacred work, and I find joy and fulfillment in this participation.

I am grateful to all those who felt similarly, who preceded me, and who were instrumental in laying the groundwork for this very special community of people. Like many others, there have been times in my life that were very stressful, where I felt I could just barely put out all the proverbial fires going on in my life. Those were the times it was easiest to put aside spiritual practice as something extra, not a necessity of life. Every time I did that, I found that things seemed to fall apart. But when I took the time to take care of my spiritual house, everything else seemed to fall into place. Time and again, I have found this to be true, and part of my spiritual exercise has been in service to members of my spiritual family.



The first time I came here just under three years ago, I was delighted to find a wonderful group of devoted, compassionate members who tirelessly support this fellowship. I am so grateful to them for all the things they do, from serving as committee chairs and service leaders, to silently and without complaining taking care of such small details as getting us a new teapot, changing the battery in the clock in the back of the sanctuary, to purchasing new altar cloths, to changing a flickering light bulb. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that many in our community are perhaps not aware of how much their help would be appreciated. As the old saying goes, "Many hands make light work". At this time, I am asking all of you to take the time to reach out, let us know your passion, and how you'd like to participate in the work of creating sacred space and a warm home for all who pass through our doors.

The story of the Little Red Hen comes to mind, where the title character asks for help from all her fellow barn animals in every aspect of the process of cultivating, processing and baking bread- "Not I" said the duck, "Not I" said the cow, "Not I" said the pig, was the catchline. Apparently they all thought the Little Red Hen could do it herself. Perhaps she hit them all on a bad day, but it seemed the poor bird only found interest when it was time to eat the bread. This is sometimes a source of frustration and burnout to the Little Red Hens of many a good organization.

Figuratively, in this fellowship, we have planted in the Spring. As the Little Red Hen illustrates, we cannot idle away the Summer and then expect to reap in the Fall. There are special skills and active involvement and engagement and money that we require to keep our house in order. There is always work to be done, and there are bills to be paid. I have always enjoyed alliteration as a way of both enjoying our language, and providing mnemonics to encourage

messages to remain in people's minds and hearts, so I share this one. We actively and fully participate in this spiritual family by lending our Talents, Time and Treasures.

I encourage each of you to reach into your spiritual heart, and recognize your part in baking the bread which this family of diverse, yet like minded, people need to thrive and grow. If you have a TALENT which can be helpful to us, and that would bring you joy to share, please let us know. Maybe you don't sing or dance, but can you swing a mean hammer or paintbrush, or cut down a dead branch with the greatest of ease? We love to learn more about our fellow members and their passions. No talent is too large or too small, if it saves us from paying someone else to do, it is a great service to all of us.

If you have TIME to offer, let us know what you enjoy doing with your time, what makes you feel that your time is worthwhile. Perhaps you feel good comforting and supporting the ill, feeding the homeless, teaching our children, greeting new visitors, gardening, beautifying. And certainly, we appreciate any TREASURE, the donations which financially sustain our daily operations and programs. You support our building, facilities, speakers and activities with your cash contributions. Your pledges are critical to keeping the doors open.

Finally, I'd like to ask each of you to consider what it would mean to you if this fellowship was not here in Northeast Florida for you, or for others like you in the generations to follow. What would it be like if there was no safe sanctuary for people of liberal religious leanings? What would it mean not to have a place to gather with the people who become like family to you, who share your thoughts, values and dreams for a just society? The indigenous people of this land believed that every decision had to include the seven generations that followed, we also want to provide a solid ground for those who will follow us in this beloved community. Working together, we build upon and reinforce a strong foundation for the future.

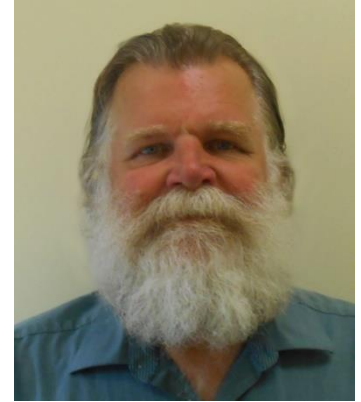
***May you never thirst!***  
***Robin Mahonen, President, UUFSA***



Robin welcomes direct communication from any congregation members for feedback and other concerns. If you can't speak with her in person at the fellowship, please feel free to call her at (304) 639-5538 or email her at [RRafael2@aol.com](mailto:RRafael2@aol.com).

# From Your Minister

As we move into our summer programming and many of us begin to wander near and far, please keep the Fellowship in mind and collect water to share with the congregation at our annual Water Communion in the Fall. For those new to Unitarian Universalism, the Water Communion serves to bring us back into beloved community following our summer travels. When possible, collect small amounts of water from places significant to you and in the Fall we will blend our collected water into a common bowl that includes water from previous years and will again be saved for future services.



Like the Flower Ceremony we celebrated in June, the Water Communion is, above all, a celebration of community. Both rituals invite us to reflect on how our individual gifts and offerings are amplified when we work together in service of something greater than ourselves. Our Fellowship exists because a small group of people came together with a vision and a commitment to make it happen. We the inheritors of that commitment are now the stewards of the vision for the generations that follow us. To help this Fellowship thrive well into the future it requires our continued commitment and a bit of courage.

Commitment can take many forms but one of the most important at this point in the life of this Fellowship is the commitment comes in the form of a pledge of financial support. Most of us have already made such a pledge, but for the Board to plan responsibly for the future it needs everyone's participation so that it will have a solid foundation from which to make decisions. A search committee is being formed to find your next minister, we are working on achieving Welcoming Congregation status, and we are adding another staff position for our growing children's program, so your commitment is essential to make our collective vision come to fruition.

Like moths to a flame, humans are drawn to places of transition. Beaches and shorelines, sunrises and sunsets, spring flowers and autumn leaves, they call to us. In such places and times, we seem more open to the still small voice within that reminds us that we are alive, that we are one with all that we see. We have entered a time of transition for this Fellowship, one that has the potential to be as special and transformative as we choose to make it. We cannot just assume this will all work out for the best any more than we can assume it will end horribly. As Unitarian Universalists, we embrace a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Because assumptions are, by definition, things we accept as truth without any evidence, to assume anything is to cease our searching and is grossly irresponsible.

In my first talk as your minister, I told the story of the Chinese farmer who in a short time had several "bad" things happen that lead to "good" results, which then lead to more "bad" things to happen. Though his neighbors and friends got caught up in the emotional roller coaster of all the good and bad, the farmer maintained the attitude of "It could be good, could be bad, too soon to tell." This is where a responsible search for truth and meaning leaves us, withholding judgement so that we are open to what the next moment might bring. As Soren Kierkegaard said, "Life is not a problem to be solved, but an experience to be lived." I am looking forward to what the next year will bring and hope the members and friends of UUFSA all do the same.

***Rev. Tom Schmidt***

**Rev. Thomas Schmidt**

Phone: 432-559-2411

E-mail: [uurev@icloud.com](mailto:uurev@icloud.com)

## **Office Hours**

Tuesdays 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Wednesdays 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

By appointment anytime.

# Summer Program

The Program Committee is pleased to announce the following members of our congregation will be the speakers for our Summer Program, which will start on July 2 and end July 30. Summer services will start at the regular time: 10:30 a.m.

July 2 Palmer Short: "Poetry, Theirs and Mine"

July 9 Megan Porter: "Livin' La Vega Loca"

July 16 Charley West: "Liberals, Conservatives, and Community"

July 23 Robin Mahonen: "Putting Optimism into Practice".

July 30 David Wright: "First Hand Experience with a Hydrogen Bomb Detonation"

We will have music, childcare, coffee and fellowship. Our regular services will begin August 6.

***Megan Porter***  
***Program Committee***

## Great Decisions

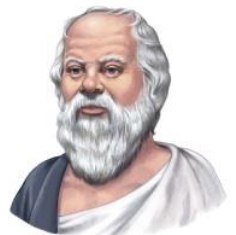
**Great Decisions will take a summer break in July and August.** After summer break, the next discussion will be on September 4. Topic: Latin America's Political Pendulum led by Bill and Penelope McCormick.

For more information, contact Yosi at [yosi@acrossthestraits.com](mailto:yosi@acrossthestraits.com) or (904) 461-3175.

## Downstairs Dialogue "Socrates Café" – Open Discussion

Downstairs Dialogue will take a summer break in July and August.

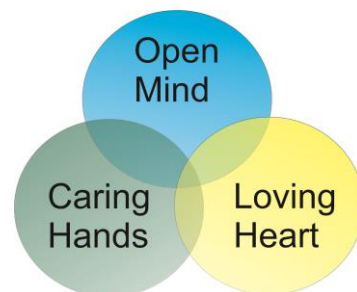
***Charlie West***





# Programs for Children and Youth

It has been a very busy month for us beginning with a morning dedicated to painting birdhouses with Jessie Rutland. Thank you Jessie! Jessie and the children were also responsible for planting our butterfly garden, which is truly beautiful after the rains. Check it out. The garden box itself was constructed by Dax Speight, another of our talented and generous parents.



After the milkweed began to bloom, the aphids came, so it was time to release some ladybugs. This is exactly what

our children did together with Vanessa Friedman and Claudia Atkins. Thank you Vanessa and Claudia! Sadly, Vanessa is relocating to California very soon. For several years, Vanessa has been an important member of the team that coordinates our Programs for Children and Youth. We wish her well as she transitions to the west coast, but we will miss her.

We celebrated the high school graduation of Katie Foster with a Bridging Ceremony. Katie began attending our Fellowship at the age of four, and it has been a joy for us to be part of her growing up. During the Bridging Ceremony, the members of our Fellowship celebrated her accomplishments and committed to continue to support and nurture her as she takes her next steps into the future.



*Young Katie*



*Katie receives a rose and a gift from the Fellowship*



*Katie, the graduate*



With the arrival of summer, it was time to spruce-up our UUFSA backyard, so families got together for a very productive and fun work-party. They weather-sealed our picnic table, pulled weeds and spread tons of mulch. Everyone, even the youngest, helped. After the work was done, all celebrated with a very juicy watermelon. Delicious! Thank-you everyone. Great job!

# Food Pantry



During the summer, volunteers from the UUFSA will continue to staff the St. Johns Food Pantry two Friday afternoons a month. As volunteers tend to go on vacation in the summer, please contact me if you have an interest in joining our volunteer group and we will get you trained. Thanks very much,

If you have questions about the St. Johns Food Pantry or wish to volunteer, please contact me at (904) 461-1604.

***Cherie Dolgin***  
***UUFSA Food Pantry Coordinator***

## Dining With Dignity July 2 and Augsut 6, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Our next two opportunities to provide a nourishing meal for the homeless will be Sunday, **July 2 and Augsut 6, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** For more information, contact a member of the Dining with Dignity Team:

***Mary Kellough, Nana Royer & Toni Wallace***



## Care Connection



Our Care Connection group provides short term support and assistance for members of the Fellowship during times of difficulty. We thank everyone for their generous support with transportation to medical appointments, making meals, assistance with errands, visiting and sharing. The Care Connection includes everyone in our Fellowship willing to receive and give support at times of

difficulty. Contact ***Elle Barry*** ([ellepaper@hotmail.com](mailto:ellepaper@hotmail.com) or 392-5722) if you are in need of assistance or would like to be involved in the Care Connection Team.



# Third Tuesday Book Group



The Book Group will take a break for the summer and begin again in September. Contact Barbara Brenner at [barbbren25@gmail.com](mailto:barbbren25@gmail.com) for more information.

## Meditation Group

The meditation group will suspend meeting for the summer.

*Peter Gibbon*



## Calendar

### July

- 2 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 7 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 10 – Board of Trustees meeting 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 14 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 21 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 28 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 28 – Movie: *Hell or High Water* 6:30 p.m.

### August

- 4 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 6 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 11 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 14 – Board of Trustees meeting 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 17 – PFLAG 7:00 p.m.
- 18 – Deadline for September Quest materials
- 18 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 25 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 25 – Movie: *A Face in the Crowd* 6:30 p.m.





(Palmer's Page!)

## Darts Nights

### July 7 & 21 and August 4 & 18, 7:00 p.m.

Darts nights are held at the Pub UU (Basement at UUFSa) at 7:00 p.m. on the first and third Friday of each month and the fifth Friday if there is one. This month they will be July 7 & 21 and August 4 & 18, 7:00 p.m.. Contact Palmer Short, [palshort@gmail.com](mailto:palshort@gmail.com), for details.



## Palmer's Pics

### *Hell or High Water*

Friday, July 28, 6:30 p.m.

The movie for July 28 is *Hell or High Water*. A divorced father and his ex con brother devise a scheme to save their West Texas ranch. Rob a bank or two. Starring Ben Foster, Chris Pine and Jeff Bridges.



### *A Face in the Crowd*

Friday, August 25, 6:30 p.m.

The movie for August 25 is *A Face in the Crowd*. Here is Andy Griffith as you have never seen him before as Lonesome Rhodes an Arkansas drifter who becomes an overnight sensation. But there is a darker side to this man. Starring Andy Griffith, Patricia Neal and Walter Mathau. Directed by Elia Kazan.

*Palmer Short*

# Beyond Our Congregation



For information about events beyond our Fellowship, check the UUA Southern Region event calendar at:

<http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/home.html>  
and the UUA web site <http://www.uua.org/>



## **August 6-11, Southern Unitarian Universalist Leadership Experience (SUULE), Wirtz, VA**

The core pedagogy of the Southern Region Leadership Experience rests on the philosophy that leadership is about discernment, presence, and functioning of the self. Everyone brings their own gifts and talents to the experience, and over the course of the week, each individual gets an opportunity to see how those gifts can manifest as a leader in a spiritual community. To augment this individual discovery and growth, knowledge of systems and group dynamics are taught to shed light on how each individual can play a unique and important role in creating a vibrant religious community.

Sending leaders to a Leadership Experience is an investment in the future of the congregation and in the future of Unitarian Universalism. Leadership Experience graduates return to their congregations more grounded in Unitarian Universalism and heed a deeper call to serve. They function at a higher level and are able to inspire and invite others.

For more information: <http://www.uua.org/southern/leadership-experiences>

## *Happenings at The Mountain*

*Come to The Mountain for a great program at an amazing place in the Blue Ridge Mountains – join us and let your spirit soar!*



## **Southern UU Fall Institute (SUUFI) ~ The Best of Us: October 1 - 6**

Come for a colorful autumn week as we learn from one another – sharing our thoughts and skills. Typical of SUUFI, the schedule balances mind and body, thought provoking, and heartfelt pursuits.

## **Thanksgiving -- November 22 - 26**

Program provides indoor and outdoor activities for this intergenerational event. This is a great way to enjoy a special feast prepared by The Mountain chef and staff while you enjoy the program.

**For more information:** [www.TheMountainRLC.org](http://www.TheMountainRLC.org) or 828.526.5838 or contact Beverly Cree, Lyn Klarman or Priscilla Gulliver at UUFSA. Plan now to be part of these or other special programs.