

QUEST



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine Newsletter
St. Augustine Beach, Florida

April 2020

2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080
3/4 mile south of State Road 312

uufsacontact@gmail.com <http://www.uufsa.org/>

**Fellowship Sunday services are on hold until further notice
to avoid spreading the corona virus.**

Audio transcripts of most past presentations are available on our website.

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Materials for the May issue are due by April 17.

Don Brandes, Editor: donaldbrandes@gmail.com

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David Wright for printing each issue of the *Quest*.

From Your President



Our world has changed since I wrote my note for the March Quest, Covid - 19 infections have exploded around the world, the stock market has crashed, and the economy is being tested as it has never been tested before. Employers are having to lay off workers, possibly for months, as social distancing is imposed and many businesses are forced to close. Families and friends are confronted with the necessity of not being able to engage in that most basic human act of sharing time together.

The UUFSA Board of Trustees, at our March meeting, decided we would continue with church services until advised by local health authorities that we should not. Two days later, having the benefit of further research, we decided we should not wait to take that crucial step, and reversed ourselves. A few days later, in a video conference call, we decided to cancel all meetings at the fellowship.

We are also looking at how we can, as Robin Mahonen puts it, come up with “programmatically ways of keeping us all engaged with each other during these times.” There may be Sunday presentations that are recorded and shared on our website. Or, it may be possible to

live stream some speakers, via FaceBook or similar service. If you have ideas that you would like us to consider, please feel free to make suggestions.

In the meantime, I have been thinking about the line from our spoken affirmation, “And service is our prayer.” As I write this on March 20th, Christine and I have just come from the St. Johns Food Pantry, where in two days, there were dispensed as many bags of food as they normally distribute in a five - day week. The food pantry has adopted a two day week to protect its volunteers who may be at high risk, and has also revised procedures to minimize possibilities of exposure.

If service is our prayer, there will probably be no better time for that prayer than now. I think we can be sure that, over the next few months, the needs of people will grow with the disruptions to the economy. Whether it be the Food Pantry, Dining with Dignity or any one of many, many other worthy efforts, now is the crucial time to engage. Volunteer, or if that is not recommended, contribute in whatever way you can.

One of the most important things we can do if we are at high risk is to avoid becoming sick, so as to avoid burdening our health care resources. *Everyone* must strive to avoid exposing others. In these uncertain times, we each must assess the right path. Sometimes, that will mean not showing up in person.

Jerome Fosaaen
904-417-7344
fosaaenj@gmail.com

Pledge Drive Still Happening!

The world has changed so much, so fast. But this too shall pass. Someday. In the meantime, we are all doing what we can in our own corner of the world. One thing you can do today is take some time and fill out the pledge form below and mail it back to the UUFSA. We WILL reopen and we WILL continue to provide a bright spot in the lives of our members and friends to enjoy on a regular basis.

It is easy to let this slide while we are not meeting. But all you need to do (if you have not already) is sign the pledge form below and send it in. No money is required at this time! Nothing fancy here. This is for the next fiscal year, 2020 - 2021. It is going to be a year unlike any other. That much is for sure. We will want and need to reach out and receive fellowship from our UUFSA friends. Please do this today. Please print this form and send it to:

UUFSA
2487 A1A South
St. Augustine, FL 32080

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine Annual Pledge 2020-2021



I/We wish to support our Fellowship by pledging \$ _____

for the period 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021

I/We prefer to make my/our payments: Weekly _____ Monthly _____

Quarterly _____ Semi-Annually _____ Annually (one payment) _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____, 2020

Great Decisions

Monday, April 20, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

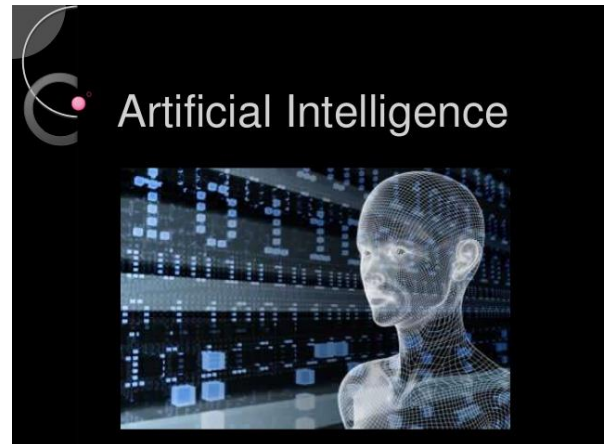
“Artificial Intelligence”

Video Conference

Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) is transforming economies and societies around the world. In our next Great Decisions discussion, we will assess the possibilities and dangers of this technology, explore the mounting technological competition between China and the U.S., and ask how the international community can manage the coming wave of digital innovation. The discussion will be led by Dick Lahey.

A Vimeo video you may care to watch before the discussion is available at:

<https://vimeo.com/382482586/a60d5e20f2>



Once again, due to the risk of coronavirus contamination, the discussion will be virtual on Zoom. Yosi will send out the Zoom access on April 20, at about 5:30 p.m. The discussion starts at 6:00 p.m. If you've never used Zoom before, download the free app first. Most importantly, if you are not on the regular Great Decisions mailing list, Yosi will need to be given your email address. He cannot send you the link without your email address.

For more information, please contact Yosi at jomcintire@bellsouth.net or 904-461-3175.

Skeptics and Believers: Religious Debates in the Western Intellectual Tradition

**UUFSA Adult Learning classes are on hold.
An announcement will be made when classes recommence.**

Green Team News



Here we are in the middle of a major pandemic caused by the widespread transmission of the COVID - 19 virus. By now, most of us have become familiar with terms like “social distancing” and adopted good preventive measures, such as staying home more, using take - out or avoiding crowds, and frequent hand washing. Let’s not forget that the new strain of coronavirus threatening lives around the world emerged, most scientists believe, from a mixing of virus strains among exotic animals for sale at an open market in Wuhan, China. Cells from two species that probably would never have come across each other in a natural environment, found a mutually advantageous way to combine and spread, and the COVID - 19 pandemic was born. It’s a now familiar story, as HIV and other coronaviruses seem to have a genesis involving wild animals and resulting in new strains of viruses which are foreign to our immune systems – thus very deadly. We urge you to take the appropriate precautions and stay well. If you do

experience symptoms or have a question, PHONE your local health provider before heading there.

Our congregation, like dozens around the country and world, have made the difficult decision to cancel services, social events, meetings and documentary screening events. The national Unitarian Universalist Ministry for the Earth (UUMFE) is currently working with filmmakers to adapt to this new reality and launch an online streaming campaign in the near future (and hope for renewed opportunities for community screenings later this year). When the UUMFE announces updates on new availability, our Green Team will look into how we might participate here in St. Augustine.

Despite the restrictions on social gatherings and services, we still have Green Team activities. Save your dental waste and bring it in to the UUFSA box downstairs when this is over. You can continue to save your receipts from grocery stores that aren’t from Publix and send them to Publix headquarters in Lakeland, FL to protest their continued handout of free plastic bags at their stores. The Florida House and Senate are winding up, but if you are following the budget, you know there were some important wins and some painful losses. And, you can continue to replace single-use-plastic in your shopping and daily life. We know that emissions from new concrete and black top, combined with clear cutting and loss of green areas, are contributing to increases in carbon emissions and global warming. We have so many things we can do, from beach clean ups to driving less – to eating less meat (especially factory farm meat). There is no reason to let this pandemic get in our way to greening the planet.

Please keep your distance and limit your social interaction. It’s going to be at least several more months before the virus infections wane, and we need to be disciplined and determined. Our Care Connection group can contact volunteers if you need help with pickup or delivery of essentials, and our Green Team is available by phone or email if you have a question or just want to catch up on things. Stay healthy and well.

[Write Here! Write Now! Letter Writing Advocacy Campaign \(USA\)](#) – COVID - 19 is also affecting advocacy-as-usual on Capitol Hill. UUMFE will confer with Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ) to determine how to adjust the protocols and plans for the *Spring for Change* letter-writing campaign to adapt to these unanticipated circumstances. Please stay tuned and fill out the sign-up form linked above if you are definitely willing to champion some letter-writing about climate to the US Senate!

[Earth Day / #ClimateStike](#) – A great many Earth Day and climate strike public events are being canceled or rescheduled, but the climate strike will not be canceled. Greta Thunberg has put out a call for a #ClimateStrikeOnline and the US climate strike coalition is actively finalizing a digital strike contingency plan. Once again, stay tuned for updates!

Chris McDermott for the Green Team

St. Johns Food Pantry

(AKA St. Johns Ecumenical Ministries Inc.)



During this very difficult time, the St. Johns Food Pantry is trying to stay open to assist needy clients, while adhering to CDC suggestions. We have changed our procedures for distributing food at the pantry, to protect clients and volunteers.

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN HELP – PLEASE DONATE FINANCIALLY!!!

Write a check to UUFSA, but make a notation on the memo line that says “Food Pantry.” Address it to our treasurer, Barbara Battelle, at the UUFSA, (2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080) and put it in the mail. Our treasurer will pass along all of the donations to the pantry.

If you prefer, you can write a check to the Food Pantry directly. Make the check out to “St. Johns Ecumenical Ministries, Inc.” and send it to PO Box 860191, St. Augustine, FL 32086. Or go to www.stjohnsfoodpantry.org on the internet and donate via credit card or PayPal.

Thank you for any help that you can give. Your donation will be used to purchase food from various sources, since we are not able to collect nonperishable food items from individuals or organizations at this time. If you have questions or wish to volunteer at the Food Pantry, please contact:

UUFSA Food Pantry Team Co-coordinators:

Cherie Dolgin 904-461-1604 or Chris Fosaaen 904-673-5630



**Joyce Peterson, Adele DelSalvio, and Don Brandes
social distancing at Butler Beach Park**

The beaches may be closed to vehicles but they were still open to people as of Sunday, March 22. Parking was available at Butler Beach and there was plenty of space for social distancing.

Book Group

Tuesday, April 21, 1:00 p.m.

Tentative, May Be Canceled



The book for discussion is *Remarkable Creatures*, by Tracy Chevalier. Please feel free to join us if you know or want to know something about this classic.

For further info, contact **Bobbie Brenner**
904-471-2099, barbbren25@gmail.com.

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 serves everyone in our Fellowship willing to receive and give support at times of difficulty. Contact one of our members listed below if you are in need of assistance or would like to be involved in the Care Connection Team. We accept and appreciate donations.

Claudia Atkins, Chair 386-717-6765
Adele DelSavio 315-529-6287
Cherie Dolgin 904-461-1604
JoAnne Engelbert 904-460-1190
Pat Hall 914-787-9184

Maureen Herth 904-463-1032
Cynthia McAuliffe 904-863-1303
Rosemary Wheeler 352-339-4157
Anne Wilke 904-797-1944

Dining With Dignity

Our next opportunity to provide a nourishing meal for the homeless will be **Sunday, April 5, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** For more information, contact a member of the Dining with Dignity Team:

Mary Kellough, 904-217-9837





Friday Darts Nights April 3 and 17, 7:00 p.m.

**Yes, Palmer will still be darting around the basement in April.
Join him for one of the few things that is not canceled.
Just stay six feet away from him.**

Darts nights are held at the Pub UU (downstairs at UUFSA) at 7:00 p.m. on the first and third Friday of each month and the fifth Friday if there is one. Contact Palmer Short, palshort@gmail.com, for details.

Palmer's Pic

THE APRIL MOVIE IS ON HOLD

An eblast will be sent if a film is shown.

Palmer



April Calendar



- 3 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 5 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 10 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 13 – Board of Trustees meeting 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 17 – Deadline for April Quest contributions
- 17 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 20 – Great Decisions, Artificial Intelligence 6:00, online
- 21 – Book Group 1:00 – 2:45 p.m., **tentative**
- 24 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.