

QUEST



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

May 2020

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

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

**All in-person activities are on hold until further notice
to avoid spreading COVID-19.**

Sunday services are being presented online through Zoom video conferencing.

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

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The *Quest* is published monthly September through July.

Materials for the June issue are due by May 22.

Don Brandes, Editor: donaldbrandes@gmail.com

Thanks to Adele DeSavio for proofreading and

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

From Your President



We are one month into the COVID-19 emergency, and our fellowship has already held two virtual Sunday services using the Zoom platform - three actually, by the time you receive this. If you are missing being able to gather and you have not yet joined one of these services, I urge you to do so.

Unlike some platforms, Zoom allows the participants to share joys and concerns, and to have questions and commentary for the speaker. The response so far has been quite positive. If you are unable or unwilling to use Zoom, perhaps because you don't have broadband available at home, Zoom also allows you to call in and hear the audio of the service using a phone, without Internet at all. The phone numbers to call are included with the invitations.

May is the month in which we are supposed to have our Annual Congregational Meeting. Among other items, the mandatory tasks are approving a budget for the coming fiscal year which begins July 1st, and electing a slate of officers. This year, we have little choice but to meet virtually, which we will also do using Zoom. The date will be May 17th, and the time will be immediately following the service, at 12:00 noon. That is one more good reason to practice and become comfortable with Zoom. Phone - in participation is available, but I think most people will find the Internet version a better experience, as you see the face of the person speaking. However you choose to do it, I hope you all participate in this important exercise in our fellowship's governance.

By the way, if you have not already returned your pledge for 2020-2021, please do so now. It is vital to our effort to create a realistic budget proposal to put forward at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Finally, a small ray of hope during this time of COVID-19. The vast majority of Americans seem to understand the gravity of the threat, and have adopted behaviors that mitigate transmission of the virus. There will still be many deaths, but not the numbers that might otherwise have occurred. And that collective action is a sign of caring: citizens doing what is necessary for the common good.

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

All Sunday services for May will be presented online through Zoom video conferencing. The meeting ID and password will be emailed to everyone on the UUFSA members and friends lists several days before each service. If you are not on either of those lists, please contact Don Brandes to obtain the information: donaldbrandes@gmail.com

**Sunday, May 3, 10:30 a.m.
“Letting Go and Starting Over”
Rev. Jack Ford**

Service Leader: Chris McDermott

Music: Alex Richman

Story for All Ages

Change is often difficult. In a time of unchosen solitude and isolation, we are gifted with an opportunity to self-examine. "You will never find interior solitude," said Thomas Merton, "unless you make some conscious effort to deliver yourself from the desires and ... attachments of the world in which we live."

Jack Ford is a Jacksonville native. He currently lives in Green Cove Springs. Two brothers live nearby in St. Johns County with their wives. His sister lives in northern Virginia. Baptist by birth, he became a Unitarian Universalist in 1987 at the UU Church of Jacksonville. He also has a strong background in Eastern religions and Native American spirituality. Jack is recently “retired” (ha ha) from a 33-year career as a custom woodworker.

He has been a UU minister for 28 years and was ordained on December 8, 2001 at the UU Church of Valdosta, Georgia. He is presently a member of the All Souls Church, Palatka, where he has spoken frequently for more than ten years.



He is an alumnus of Stetson University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and FSU's Graduate School of Social Work. He trained in Clinical Pastoral Education at the Shands Hospital, Jacksonville. The most influential UUs in Jack's life are Henry David Thoreau and the Rev. John DeWolf-Hurt. "John was a dear friend and mentor who led me into UU ministry," said Jack. "Thanks a lot!"

Sunday, May 10, 10:30 a.m.
“Wide Awake and Dreaming”
Amy Jo Hutchison

Service Leader: Robin Mahonen
Music: Taffy Rook
“This I Believe”

“One of the hardest parts of my job is not being able to turn off. I was organizing years before I even knew it was a thing. Who doesn’t want to fix something that is affecting their life, right? I’ve always been that person with whom strangers share their business in the checkout line. It’s a gift I’ve inherited from my mom. The one thing I wasn’t prepared for was the fact that now I see inequity just about everywhere, whether it is socioeconomic status, race, or gender, to name but a few. I understand the meaning of ‘woke’ more than I ever thought I would. Granted, it’s become a joke in certain circles of mine, but the truth is that I am awakening.”



Amy Jo Hutchison is a lifelong West Virginian whose lived experience has been poverty. Her greatest work is her daughters, despite the struggles of raising them alone. Her own experience feeds her passion for organizing poor folks, especially single moms, throughout West Virginia. She previously served as tri-chair with the WV Poor People's Campaign and spoke at national events. Most of her work has focused on organizing to protect the safety net, particularly SNAP benefits. Her experience has provided her the opportunity to testify before Congress to describe how poverty affects children and families, and the need to update poverty guidelines. She is an ordained minister, and proud graduated fellow with the WV Trainers Project through Training for Change.

When Amy testified before Congress in February, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez told her, “Your story has filled this entire room. You have been one of the most powerful witnesses I have ever seen in my short time here in Congress. Your testimony, I hope, will move and change the tide of how we treat poverty in this country.”



Sunday, May 17, 10:30 a.m.
“TBA”

Ann Ashworth

Service Leader: Jerome Fosaaen

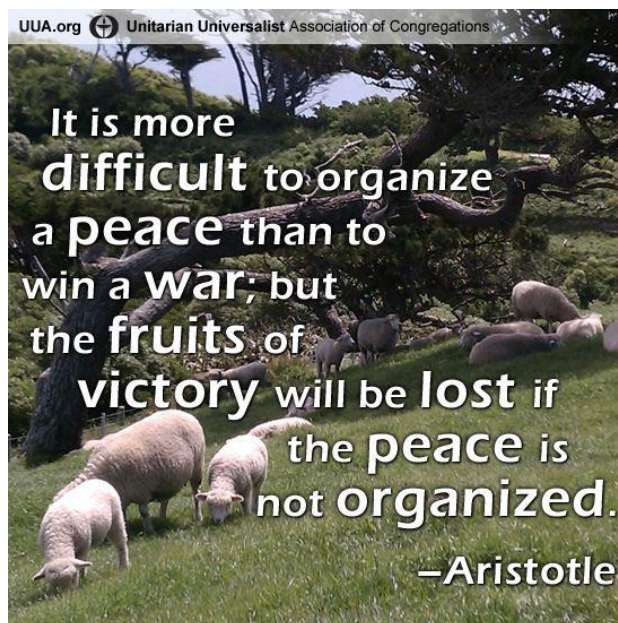
Music: Alex Richman

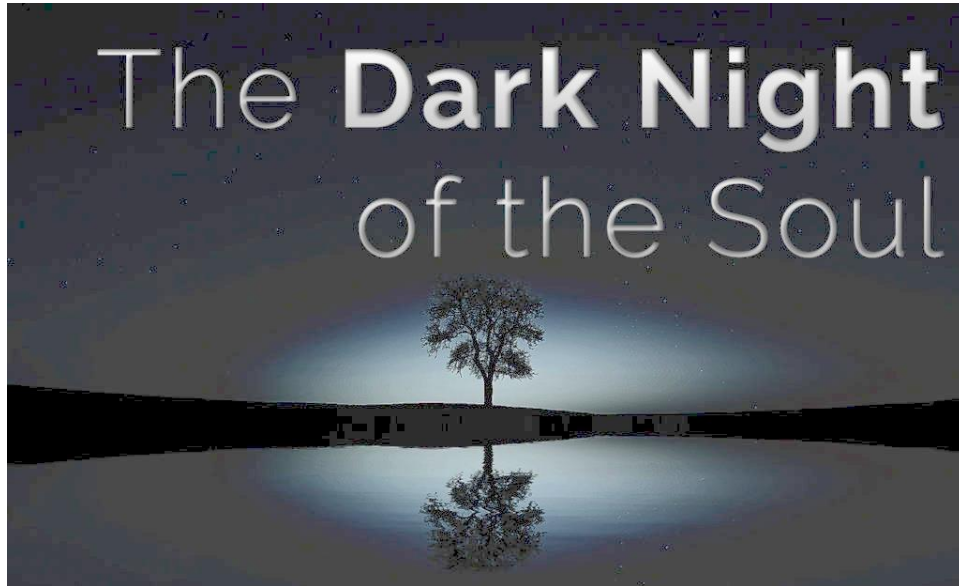
Third Sunday Cash Plate Donation: Wildflower Clinic

(See instructions for how to donate on page 9.)



Ann Ashworth recently moved to St. Augustine following 17 years of working overseas on projects contributing to long term social change in the Middle East and Persian Gulf Region at a time of exceptionally fast-paced development. In particular, programs focused on national level strategies to meet socioeconomic deficits contributing to religious radicalization and civil unrest at a time of increasing incidences of terrorism, human rights initiatives, access to education for women, and relationship building through education and training across both public and private sectors. Ann holds a BA in Intercultural Relations from Carroll University, an MA in Human Rights and Global Ethics from the University of Leicester, with additional Masters Certificates in Education from the University of Worcester, and Masters Diplomas in Linguistics and Project Management from the University of Cambridge. Ann has lived and worked in Cyprus, the UK, Spain, Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.





Sunday, May 24, 10:30 a.m.
“The Dark Night of the Soul: A Sharing Service”
Robin Mahonen and a panel

Service Leader: Robin Mahonen
Music: Taffy Rook
Green Minute

This 16th century poem narrates the journey of the soul to mystical union with God. The journey is called "The Dark Night" in part because darkness represents the fact that the destination, God, is unknowable. The "dark night of the soul" poem does not refer to the difficulties of life in general; however, the phrase has understandably been taken to refer to such trials. The Dark Night of the Soul is a stage in personal development when a person undergoes a difficult and significant transition to a deeper perception of life and their place in it.

The experience of the Dark Night of the Soul reaches into the core of your being and fills you with an agonizing sadness. Sometimes it seems to come out of nowhere and it feels like it is never going to leave. It mimics all the symptoms of depression.

In modern mindfulness practice, many authors have named a similar phenomenon in meditation as the Dark Night of the Soul, described as a lengthened and intense state of depression or ennui caused by errant or irresponsible meditation practices. Author John Yates compares it to a Theravadan term, *dukkha ñanas*, or "knowledge of suffering."

A panel of congregation members will share their experiences with their own Dark Night of the Soul.

Sunday, May 31, 10:30 a.m.

“Delivering Hope: Pie in the Sky”

Malea Guiriba

Service Leader: Nana Royer
Music: Alex Richman

Pie in the Sky delivers fresh, healthy produce and compassion to low-income, hungry and lonely senior citizens in our community.

A true Florida native, Malea Guiriba grew up on the Trout River during the '60s and '70s. As early as third grade, her mother would recall, she was always standing up for the underdog, defending a classmate against a bully. She has always been an example of what one person can do to change the world: one house, one person, and one day at a time. She's had careers in real estate and journalism, but it is her activism that has touched hearts and changed lives. Malea has been a passionate worker in the civil rights and domestic violence movements, always embracing the disenfranchised and poor.



While working with the domestic violence shelter in St. Augustine, she took a post as Rural Services Coordinator in the small farming town of Hastings. She built her program from scratch by embedding herself in a community which was long ago divided by race, class, and economics. Malea was inspired by two middle-aged African-American men who had essentially been enslaved as farm workers for most of their lives. Their experiences awakened her to a need she never imagined existed: helping the historically underprivileged Hastings farm workers. She and others were shocked that such a wealthy county could be the site of such inhumane treatment. It became her mission to provide basic needs to families, including healthcare, safe and affordable housing, and food. The program became a focal point of the community, but suddenly was without the grant funding that kept it going. Malea was suddenly unemployed, yet determined to continue the work she had begun.

Her answer was to open Pie in the Sky, a pie shop symbolizing what someone called her “pie in the sky” ideas about how to help people. Two months after she cleaned out her office, she served her first pie – a real achievement, considering she'd never baked a pie in her life. She has since sold thousands of pies all the while delivering furniture to a family that lost its home to fire, buying dentures for a man to build his confidence while he focused on finding a new job, riding in the potato fields to take a man to his doctor's appointment, building wheelchair ramps, running a food bank and taking food to homebound low-income senior citizens and much more.

Today, her Senior Produce Program, which began four years ago with four volunteers delivering to 12 seniors, has grown to more than 100 volunteers and now delivers fresh, healthy produce, 47 tons of it last year, to the homes of 465 low-income senior citizens throughout all of St. Johns County. The work Malea has accomplished continues to inspire others and to grant the gift of giving to the volunteer workforce. Her mantra is, “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.” Even after suffering from a crippling disease that left her paralyzed from the shoulders down, just two year ago, Malea rebounded, learning to walk again and soon back to the business at hand. She is quick to point out that a wonderful board and volunteers never skipped a beat while she spent six weeks in the hospital and another year in rehab therapy. Whether she is selling pies, delivering food, or wielding a power saw to help build a wheelchair ramp, Malea sets the example for those around her and spreads her goodwill, her can-do attitude and passion for helping wherever she goes.

www.pieintheskystjohns.org

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

The Plate

The one part of our Sunday Service we cannot yet replicate virtually is the plate collection. These cash donations are a small but still significant part of our annual budget. In addition, for the third Sunday of each month, the collection is done on behalf of a local charity. The current recipients in the rotation for the third Sunday plate collection are the Wildflower Clinic, The Food Pantry and Home Again St. Johns.

We are looking at ways in which we can accept collections during the service, but, until we have such a mechanism, we ask people who wish to make a "Plate" donation to do so by check. If you would like to designate it as a third Sunday contribution, the May recipient is Wildflower Clinic.

Please make all checks payable to UUFSA. If you wish your check to be applied to your pledge, write "Pledge" and either 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 in the memo line so we know where to apply it. If you wish to make a contribution to the Wildflower Clinic, write "Wildflower." If you intend the check as a miscellaneous donation, write "Plate."



Mail checks to:

UUFSA
2487 A1A South
St Augustine, FL 32080

St. Johns Food Pantry

(AKA St. Johns Ecumenical Ministries Inc.)



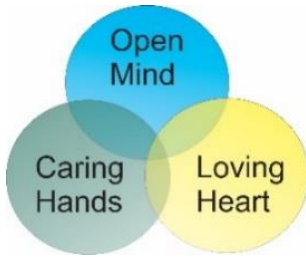
The St. Johns Food Pantry has continued its operation during COVID-19, with modifications to promote social distancing between clients and volunteers. Our UU team has really stepped up to the challenge, enabling the pantry to stay open at this critical time of need. Donors have increased their generosity as well. In March, the pantry provided 446 bags of food to 324 households. In the first 10 days of April, we provided over 200 bags of food to families needing assistance. Restaurants and stores have reached out to make donations of overstocked perishable items, putting food into the hands of our clients instead of into a landfill.

To make a donation, please send a check to UUFSA, with notation on the memo line: "Food Pantry." Mail your check to UUFSA, 2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Donations can also be made directly to the food pantry by sending checks to St. Johns Ecumenical Ministries, PO Box 860191, St. Augustine, FL 32086. Or you can go to their website, www.stjohnsfoodpantry.org, to donate via credit card or PayPal. Thank you very much for your support.

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

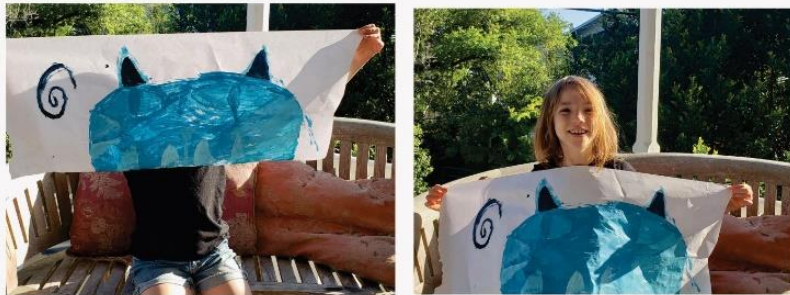


Programs for Children and Youth

Gosh, it has been a strange month for all of us. Just like the rest of us, our children have been isolated from us, from one another and from all their friends. Our children have reached out to us during this time of isolation by emailing cheery images. In case you missed them ...

Ellery is blue, just like you, missing her friends. Painting this whimsical very Blue Cat helped to cheer her up. She hopes it cheers you, too.

Thank- you Ellery!



You can thank Ellery directly by emailing her Mom.
Letterstoautumn@yahoo.com

Stay safe out there!

Greetings from UUFSA kid Lili Sommer to brighten your day!



You can thank Lili by writing to
Kelly.winton@gmail.com

Grace and Stella also have colored many wonderful pictures that they mailed to members whom we know are living alone or in assisted living facilities. We hope these pictures helped lift your spirits.

Although our kids have been disconnected from one another for about a month, that ended on Sunday, April 19 when the UUFSA hosted a Zoom meeting for our kids after the regular Sunday service. We are especially excited to take advantage of the opportunity Zoom offers to reconnect with UUFSA children who now live in Colorado and who are on their sailboat in Panama! We are really looking forward to connecting with all our St. Augustine friends and reconnecting with friends who have moved away. Our April 19 class focused on sharing the fun things they have discovered to do while being physically distant from their friends.

We anticipate these Zoom classes will be a regular Sunday event and thank our teachers for stepping up to this challenge. You may also see our children as participants in upcoming regular Sunday Services. Stay tuned!

Green Team News

COVID-19 or not, it is still the 50th anniversary of Earth Day!



The COVID-19 pandemic does not shut us down. Instead, it reminds us of what's at stake in our fight for the planet. If we don't demand change, our current state will become the new normal — a world where pandemics and extreme weather events span the globe, leaving already marginalized and vulnerable communities even more at risk.

On December 24, 1968, astronauts on the moon took the first full color photo of the Earth. This photo, titled Earthrise, showed us both strength and fragility of our planet while helping launch the modern environmental movement. That movement took a historic step forward just over a year after that photo, when 20 million people turned out for the world's first Earth Day.

Human health and planetary health are inextricably linked. To protect one, we must protect the other. Millions rallied behind this idea to create the first Earth Day in 1970, and, 50 years later, we must rally behind it again.

On April 22, join us as we EARTHRISE, a global digital mobilization that drives actions big and small, gives diverse voices a platform and demands bold action for people and planet. Over 24 hours, EARTHRISE will fill the digital landscape with global conversations, calls to action, performances, video teach-ins and more.

Take action: Join us on earthday.org and on [@earthdaynetwork](https://twitter.com/earthdaynetwork) on social media for 24 hours of action with EARTHRISE. Every hour, on the hour, we'll have a new, powerful way for you to demand action and drive change.

Unless we do everything in our power to both bend the curve on COVID-19 *and* our climate crisis, we might as well start preparing for the next pandemic because in a warmer world, extreme weather events, vector-borne diseases and pandemics will only be even more likely.

Despite being on lockdown, we can continue our work to care for our earth and nourish the soil. Keep that compost going – the UU compost bin is still open for business!

So do what you can, wherever you can. Wash your hands, stay at home. Don't waste your food; compost what you can. Let's keep calm, compost and make it through this.

Great Decisions

Monday, May 18, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Video Conference

Once again, due to the risk of COVID-19 contamination, the discussion will be virtual on Zoom. Yosi will send out the Zoom access on May 18, 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 904-808-2717.

Dining With Dignity

Our next opportunity to provide a nourishing meal for the homeless will be **Sunday, May 3, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** For more information, contact a member of the Dining with Dignity Team:

Mary Kellough, 904-217-9837



Care Connection



Our Care Connection remains dedicated to providing support and assistance to members and friends during this challenging time. In recognition that we won't be able to physically come together for a while, the Care Connection encourages you to reach out safely. Let's check in on each other. If you are concerned about someone's well-being, give them a call, or inform a member of our team. And don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. Contact one of our members listed below if you are in need of a helping hand or would like to be involved with the Care Connection Team. And remember we are all connected through our shared commitment to our faith and to each other.

Claudia Atkins, Chair 386-717-6765
 Adele DelSavio 315-529-6287
 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

Skeptics and Believers: Religious Debates in the Western Intellectual Tradition

UUFSA Adult Learning classes are suspended
until face-to-face meetings can recommence.

Book Group

Book Group meetings are suspended until further notice.

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



Friday Darts Nights

At press time, Palmer was uncertain if darts sessions would be held in May.
Please contact him for updated information.



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 MAY MOVIE IS ON HOLD

An eblast will be sent if a film is shown.



May Calendar



- 1 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., tentative
- 3 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 8 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 11 – Board of Trustees meeting online 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 15 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., tentative
- 18 – Great Decisions, 6:00, online
- 22 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 22 – Deadline for June Quest contributions
- 29 – Darts 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., tentative