

QUEST



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

July-August 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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Board of Trustees 2020 - 2021

President.....	Chris McDermott
Vice President	Renee Jones
Secretary	Rosi Angeli
Treasurer.....	Barbara Battelle
Trustee, past president.....	Jerome Fosaaen
Trustee	Maureen Herth
Trustee	Michael Read



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Don Brandes, Editor: donaldbrandes@gmail.com
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From Your President



July 1 marks the start of a new year for our Fellowship and a new Board of Trustees. We welcome new members, Renee Jones and Maureen Herth and here's a shout out for retiring Board members, Chuck Chambers and Annette Jones for their years of dedicated and, let me add, inspired service. As we begin 2020-21, I'd like to thank Jerome for leading us through a successful year despite the pandemic. As this new year at UUFSA begins, we have limited access to our facility, a state of affairs likely to continue for some months. Let's hope that we return to our facility before next June, and that I'm the last "e-President." I look forward to serving you along with fellow Board members.

During the pandemic, UU volunteers continue community activities. *Dining with Dignity*, *Home Again St. Johns* and the *Wildflower Clinic* operate with heightened demand and they continue to depend on our contributions.

Our website has a "donate" button that allow us to "pass the basket" virtually and maintain our vital commitments. In addition, we continue our youth/child education and music teams, and on-line Sunday services, and recently we made headway on plans for improved landscaping and grounds. There's always a lot of UU activities going on – and we hope you will continue to support them with pledges and monthly plate donations.

In the midst of this historic pandemic, another national scourge surfaced in its awful, undeniable ugliness. *Black Lives Matter* protests erupted across the country, nay, across the globe, as video accounts of George Floyd's merciless execution by police in Minneapolis reminded us, once again, that killing unarmed people of color is nearly a daily occurrence. George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Philando Castile, and Eric Garner, are among those honored by demonstrators as they protest injustice and racism. Like them we have to ask, where is this Justice and Equality we enshrine in our Constitution? And what can we do to bring it to light? Silence is indeed complicity.

June also happens to be Gay Pride month. We celebrate life and love in all its diversity. I hope everyone will appreciate that given our ongoing pandemic our plans for recognition fell short. UUs embrace the right for "all to love and love for all," and we'll strive to enhance our recognition in the coming year. We'll not be holding regular Sunday services through July and early August. Let's use this "down time" to recharge our energies and come back on August 16 with a renewed energy for our community and the causes we believe in. We have a tremendously important election coming up in November, and I urge all of you to stay informed, to work for electing candidates who represent our values and are open to change. Like the sign now reads in front of our Sanctuary, "Hate cannot drive out hate. Only Love can do that."

In closing, I note that we have a number of openings on our special Teams and Committees, and, if you have an interest and would find the time to do so, please step up and volunteer. Finally, if you have any suggestions for me or the Board to consider, I welcome them.

Chris McDermott
571-265-4189
surfbiker55@yahoo.com

Request for New Committee Chairs



(Photo: Ed Janwattana)

Hi everyone, I'm Renée Jones, the new Board of Trustees VP. I look forward to working with Chris McDermott this year and my main responsibility will be overseeing committees. My husband, Tony DeCrosta, and I moved to St. Augustine from Philadelphia in June 2019 and we are new to this congregation. We have a wonderful son, a classically trained composer and pianist, who still lives in Center City, Philadelphia. We have been delighted to join a group of like-minded people involved in Social Justice and political issues that are near and dear to our hearts. Some of you we already know and the rest we look forward to knowing.

Some of our committee chairs, including Robin Mahonen and Fred Dolgin, are stepping down after years of incredible work developing programs and overseeing membership initiatives. Most of you know them well and their contributions to our thriving congregation cannot be stressed enough. Chris McDermott is stepping down as leader of the Green Team to take on the job of President of the congregation.

To continue their great work, we need a few good people to head up or be part of the Program and Membership Committees and the Green Team. Many of you are doing some amazing work on these teams already and it would add to the continuity if one you would step up to be leader. Please call me or e-mail me:

Renée Jones, 646-565-8504, renee@scggroup1.com

Sunday services

Sunday services are canceled for summer break to give our overworked Program Team time to regenerate. Sunday services will resume on Zoom on August 16. Watch for an email announcement in early August.

Donating on the UUFSA Website (Revised)

Please take a look at the UUFSA.org website. COVID-19 has made face-to-face gatherings unsafe but we continue to offer Sunday services and more. You can make your weekly plate donation online now on the UUFSA website. Scroll down the home page and you will see a button labeled “UUFSA Plate.”



Click on the button and you will go to a page where you can choose to give to the UUFSA or one of the local charities we support.

Once you select a recipient, the screen will change and let you decide how much to give. There are set amounts and also a button that says “\$0.00.” If you click on the “\$0.00” box you will then have the option to write in any amount you choose.



UUFSA Plate \$0.00 - \$100.00

\$10	\$20	\$50
\$100	\$0.00	
Donate		

Description
These donations will go to the UUFSA

You can pay with Apple Pay, Google Pay, or by credit card on the next screen. It’s simple and safe. Our Treasurer and others have examined the online options and this one seems very safe and secure.

You also can still donate by check. 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. If you intend the check as a miscellaneous donation, write "Plate." If you wish to make a contribution to one of the charities we support, write the name of that charity on the memo line. Mail checks to:

UUFSA
2487 A1A South
St. Augustine, FL 32080



Welcome to New Members of the Fellowship

Since July 1, 2019, the UUFSA welcomed 9 new members: Pat Hall, Renee Jones, Anthony DeCrosta, Jocelyn Breakwell, Robin Russo, Ian Abarbanel, Judy Brandon, Bizza Legomoditswe, and Michael Dixon. The fellowship currently has 83 members.

Farewell to Longtime Fellowship Members

In the past year, we've seen several long-time members of our Fellowship depart.

Charlie West and his spouse, Beverly Cree, moved to Clemson, SC, where they had spent many years, and on May 2, 2020, Charlie passed away after a long bout with illness. Charlie led the UUFSA Adult Education program in recent years. Beverly was active in the UUFSA Children's Program and the Green Team, and she is an ardent supporter of "The Mountain," the Unitarian retreat center in North Carolina.

Gene Schepers passed away in early 2019, and his wife, JoAnne Engelbert, has moved to Gainesville to be closer to her daughter. Through her many years with UUFSA, JoAnne headed many UU social action teams, creating a stream of social action events and petition campaigns. JoAnne also headed the UUFSA music program for many years.

Toni Wallace's husband, Jim, also passed away this year, and Toni moved to Gainesville to live in an intentional community. Toni is a retired archaeologist, and she remains very active in the rich archaeology research taking place in St. Augustine.

Because of the sadness of the deaths of Charlie, Gene and Jim, and because of the pandemic, we regretted not being able to celebrate these long-time members with a great going-away party. Instead, in recognition of their years of membership, the UUFSA Board presented them with a gift of memento photographs and a financial contribution made on their behalf to their favorite non-profit organizations.

We miss you, Beverly and Charlie, JoAnne and Gene, and Toni and Jim. But we'll keep you in our hearts and memories.

Programs for Children and Youth



As many of you know, for the past couple of months, our lead teacher, Kelly Sommer, has held regular Zoom classes with our children every Sunday at 12:30 PM. She has used the time to help our children consider serious topics we all are coping with as well as to have some fun. Charades based on the Harry Potter novels has been a favorite game. We are deeply grateful to Kelly for organizing and leading these interesting and fun virtual classes.

We will not have regular Sunday classes during July, but classes will resume when schools open in August. We do not know yet whether we will be able to hold in-person classes or whether we will continue with virtual classes. Regardless, Kelly will use the summer hiatus to explore and develop course material for the fall. We always welcome ideas from the broader membership about how best to engage and involve our children with the Fellowship as a whole. If you have ideas to share, please contact Kelly Sommer (Kelly.winton@gmail.com), Jindy Gelow (jindyms@yahoo.com) or Barbara Battelle (battellebarbara@gmail.com).

We wish all our families a happy and healthy summer break, and we look forward to seeing all of you in the fall.

Great Decisions

Great Decisions video conferences are on summer break. Discussion sessions will resume in October. For more information, please contact Yosi at jomcintire@bellsouth.net or 904-808-2717.

Adult Learning

Adult Learning video conferences are on summer break. Discussion sessions will resume in October. For more information, contact Surindar Paracer at 904-217-3802 sparacer@worcester.edu.

Green Team

June-July Update



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MINISTRY FOR EARTH

Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.

Recent events highlight the urgency of *Black Lives Matter* and the need for justice and legal reforms to ensure the birthright of us all. The warming planet and other climate changes are not affecting us equally; they're bringing differentially greater harm to those who live in poverty, who live in already hot climates or who must work outdoors. The urgency of turning back climate change has never been more relevant to the social injustices and problems we face.

As recent news and fact-finding articles attest, the plastics and fossil fuel industries have employed the Covid-19 pandemic to further promote plastic and, in particular, plastic bags. Thanks to those who shared articles attesting to the industry scams. Have you heard that cloth bags aren't as safe? The stories are made up and not based on science. It's the usual advertising gloss and spin we've come to expect from the industries profiting from fossil fuels and the endless and increasing production of plastic. The truth is all surfaces can sustain the SARS-2 covid virus for some time, plastic among the more long-lasting. Use your cloth bags and wash them every time – or spray them with a disinfectant and let them dry. That's what we can do to resist the corporate spin AND keep ourselves safe. Going to the grocery? Bring your mask and your cleaned, safe cloth bags. And wash up/down when you get home, hands first.

While we are not doing as much collectively during the pandemic, we maintain our individual initiatives. Today, I sent a letter to Publix urging them to stop pushing plastic bags as Nana (and Sierra Club of North Florida) have suggested. Please continue to do what you can.

In our own Fellowship, we're welcoming a new Board of Trustees (July 1) and looking for committed and willing leadership to lead our programs. More of my time will be spent on our Board, and we need a new Green Team leader for the year. We're not meeting regularly now, Zoom or in person, so the time demands are more in line with your ambition and agenda. Please let Renee Jones (or me) know if you would consider leading the Green Team this year (July- June) and if you have any agenda items for us to add to our ongoing programs. Thanks for all you do, stay green and safe.

Chris McDermott

571-265-4189

surfbiker55@yahoo.com

St. Johns Food Pantry (AKA St. Johns Ecumenical Ministries Inc.)



The UUFSA food pantry team continues to be an active force for the Saint Johns Food Pantry. We staff the pantry every Thursday afternoon from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. If you would like to volunteer with our team for regular or relief staffing, please contact Chris Fosaaen or Cherie Dolgin.

Thank you for the reusable bags and egg cartons brought to the fellowship on Dining with Dignity Sunday. We will collect again on Dining with Dignity Sundays July 5 and August 2. Place the reusable bags and egg cartons in the food pantry box on the front porch of the fellowship for pickup by 2:30 p.m..

Co-chair: Chris Fosaaen, phone: 904-673-5630; email: cfosaaen@gmail.com
Co-chair: Cherie Dolgin, phone: 904-461-1604; email: cdolgin@bellsouth.net

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

Dining With Dignity

Our next opportunities to provide a nourishing meal for the homeless will be **Sunday, July 5 and August 2, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** Food listed on the monthly emailed menu must be dropped off between 2:00 and 2:30 p.m. at the UUFSA front door. This is the new routine during COVID-19. For more information, contact a member of the Dining with Dignity Team:



Mary Kellough, 904-217-9837

The Book Group

Suspended until further notice.



Friday Darts Nights

Suspended until further notice.

Palmer's Pic Movies

Suspended until further notice.



July - August Calendar

July

- 2 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 5 – Dining with Dignity food drop off at UUFSA 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 5 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 9 – Food Pantry noon – 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 13 – Board of Trustees meeting, online 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 16 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 23 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 30 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

August

- 2 – Dining with Dignity food drop off at UUFSA 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 6 – Food Pantry
- 10 – Board of Trustees meeting, online 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 13 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 20 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 21 – Deadline for September Quest contributions 5:00 p.m.
- 27 – Food Pantry noon 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

