

# QUEST



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

**November 2020**  
2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080  
3/4 mile south of State Road 312  
[uufsacontact@gmail.com](mailto: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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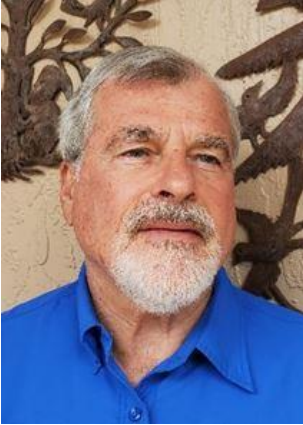
## **Board of Trustees 2020 - 2021**

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The *Quest* is published monthly September through July.  
**Materials for the December issue are due by November 20.**  
Don Brandes, Editor: [donaldblandes@gmail.com](mailto:donaldblandes@gmail.com)  
Thanks to Adele DeSavio for proofreading.

# From Your President



Millions have already voted, and you may find yourself, like me, sitting on pins and needles awaiting the outcome. I hope you've done your part and now perhaps – you wisely listened to the Buddha and are sitting calmly on a cushion. "I'd love to change the world, but I don't know what to do, so I'm leaving it up to you." – Ten Years After (singer Alvin Lee). Anxious. That's how I would describe it. I should know better and be joining you on that cushion, meditating about the oneness of it all. But, it's challenging. Before I get to nirvana, here are some thoughts about these times.

It's spiritually healthy to take an attitude of gratitude for all the good things we enjoy. The family, friends and memories we share. We live in a beautiful area, and herons, gulls, hawks, turtles and tortoises are never far away. In our circle, we have food on the table and a lot to share. May we be thankful and generous. May it also drive us to look deeper into our history and uncover things which are easier to ignore. Today's injustice, hatred and divisiveness are not new to this country, and this election – no matter what – won't change the minds of those who lose. We'll need to fix lots of broken things after November. Looking into the roots of recent political violence we find context. I found revelations in a best-selling book, **Caste**, by Isabel Wilkerson, which I highly recommend and will draw on below.

Wilkerson went to German libraries to learn how Nazi racial laws were directly inspired by the American model. In meetings held in Nuremberg, 1935, party leaders drew upon the laws and practices of the 1930s American South, which were so effective at keeping the races segregated, restricting ownership and civil rights of Negroes, and making racial intermarriage and "miscegenation" a crime. The Nazi politicians expressed shock at how southern states mandated racial purity and separation under America's "all men are created equal" Constitution. They marveled at how such contradictions, denial of human rights and flagrant hypocrisy could stand in a democracy. They rejected the southern states' definition of "one drop of African blood" (or 1/32 of a family connection) of non-white as too severe, and opted for 1/16 Jewish blood as the threshold for non-Aryans. Once fully in power and with concentration camps in operation, the Third Reich added Slavs and Roma, along with Africans, to Jews on their list of *untermenschen*, or "inferior people."

There are a lot of popular books and movies about the victories of the Allies over the Nazis. Yet, I don't seem to recall seeing one which documents how America's south served as a model for Nazi racial policies. And my recollection of grade school in New Hampshire does not include mention of Jim Crow and the terrorism of lynching, or how these atrocities inspired the Nazis. And until recently, I didn't know that when Lincoln died, his promise to give every former slave who fought for the Union "40 acres and a mule" died with him. Only freed non-African servants got the largesse. The Federal Reserve reports that for 2019, the median net value of the non-Hispanic white family is \$288,200 – and for black families it is \$24,100 or less than 15% of the white families. Have to wonder how much 40 acres and a mule would be worth today, invested since 1867? We have to wonder, what exactly are schools teaching about all that? You're invited to ask the School Board to learn more. Then, with a perfectly satisfactory answer you may retire to that cushion for peaceful meditation. "OHMMMMM."

Finally, please see the announcement of my weekly "drop in" hours on page 6. Stop by and tell me about a good book or what's new. I hope we will have more to celebrate this November. See you soon.

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

**All Sunday services will be presented online through Zoom video conferencing until further notice. The meeting ID will be posted on the UUFSA website, [www.uufsa.org](http://www.uufsa.org), and 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 and would like to be, please contact Don Brandes at [donaldbrandes@gmail.com](mailto:donaldbrandes@gmail.com). The starting time for services has changed to 9:30 a.m. instead of the traditional 10:30 a.m. to avoid overloaded Zoom servers during the peak church hour.**

## **Sunday, November 1, 9:30 a.m. “Day of the Dead: A Sharing Service”**

Service Leader: Ruth Weber  
Chalice Lighter: Jindy Gelow  
Music: Alex Richman  
Story for All Ages

Though the particular customs and scale of Day of the Dead celebrations continue to evolve, the heart of the holiday has remained the same over thousands of years. It's an occasion for remembering and celebrating those who have passed on from this world, while at the same time portraying death in a more positive light, as a natural part of the human experience. Sharing their remembrances and stories will be Cal Marshall, Joyce Peterson, Chuck Chambers, and Ruth Weber. Members and Friends Zooming in will be encouraged to share as well.



# Sunday, November 8, 9:30 a.m.

## “Post-Election Gala”

### Roy Zimmerman

Service Leader: Chris McDermott

Music: Alex Richman

This I Believe

We're all on pins and needles as we await the results of the most important Presidential Election of our lifetime. Our old friend, musician satirist Roy Zimmerman, appears via Zoom from California not to preach to the choir, but to entertain the troops, no matter the outcome. Join us to decompress with a little music to lighten our spirits.

In the current national nightmare, we need to laugh. And we need to hope. Roy Zimmerman's signature blend of heart and hilarity has never been more necessary. In a career spanning more than thirty years, Roy's songs have been heard on HBO and Showtime, and he has recorded for Warner/Reprise Records. Roy has shared stages with Bill Maher, Ellen DeGeneres, Holly Near, Robin Williams, Arlo Guthrie, John Oliver, The Roches, Andy Borowitz, The Chambers Brothers, Kate Clinton and George Carlin.

**RiZe UP** is Roy's tenth album release as a solo artist. It's a funny and forceful expression of resistance in the age of Trump. "Satire empowers people," says Roy. "To laugh is to fight back. To hope is to fight back."

Roy co-writes with his wife, Melanie Harby. Melanie is a three-time West Coast bluegrass guitar champion, and an original Broadway cast member of *Quilters*. Melanie's children's picture book, *All Aboard for Dreamland*, is published by Simon and Schuster. Roy and Melanie collaborated with the late great Anita O'Day, and have also written hundreds of children's songs for Disney, Warner Bros, Looney Tunes, and McGraw and Hill. Roy and Melanie tour the country constantly bringing laughter and encouragement to the "Blue Dots" – the most progressive people in some of the least progressive places in the nation.

"Roy's lyrics move beyond poetry and achieve perfection." ~ Joni Mitchell

"Lyrical brilliance, just excellent." ~ 'Weird Al' Yankovic

"Zimmerman displays a lacerating wit and keen awareness of society's foibles that bring to mind a latter-day Tom Lehrer." ~ Los Angeles Times

<http://www.royzimmerman.com/>



# **Sunday, November 15, 9:30 a.m.**

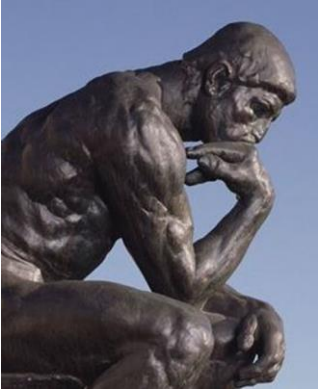
## **“What Do You Know?”**

### **Donald Brandes, Ph.D.**

Service Leader: Gina Jonas

Music: Alex Richman

Third Sunday Plate Collection: Food Pantry

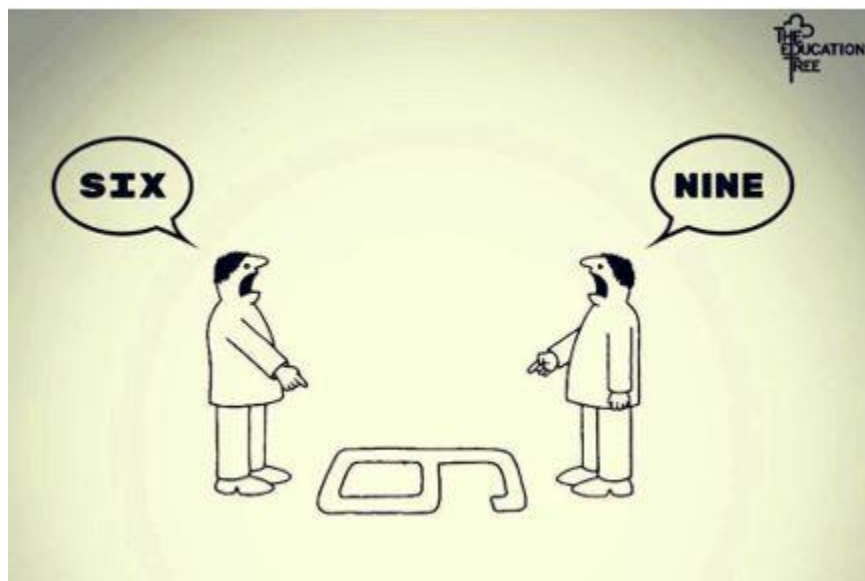


This is the second of a two-part series that examines how we determine what we believe and what we really can know.

Last month Don challenged the means we use to determine what we believe. He presented the proposition that most of what we know and believe is hearsay, information that we believe on the basis of trust or faith in its source. Now he will go a step further. But what is there left to do after having challenged the very means by which you decide what to believe? Well, there is everything you think you know. This month Don will challenge almost everything you think you know and show you that you really can't be sure of most of it and that some of it is definitely wrong.

Don Brandes has a Ph.D. in physical geography, with a specialization in climatology and natural resource management from the University of Florida. He became interested in epistemology while undergoing training in how to do scientific research.

Don taught climatology, geomorphology, and regional natural resource management at Texas State University and the University of Alabama before returning home to Florida and finishing his working career in water resource management with the St. Johns River Water Management District, where he served at various times as Water Conservation Program Manager, Assistant Director of Water Supply Planning, and Assistant Director of Water Use Permitting.



Thanks to Joyce Peterson for this illustration.

**Sunday, November 22, 9:30 a.m.**  
**“Hazards in the Neighborhood - Can a Grassroots  
Environmental Justice Movement Make a Difference?”**

**John Pilecki**

Service Leader: Nana Royer  
Music: Alex Richman



John will present evidence that although Black communities bear disproportionate hardships of the environmental crisis, they historically have been left out of the environmental movement. In the light of indifference at the national level, local actions can make a difference and should be adopted as part of the Black Lives Matter movement.

John was born and raised in Montgomery County, PA. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in English Education and a Master's Degree in Special Education from Temple University. He taught these subjects for 34 years at the secondary level in the Quakertown, PA School District in Bucks County, PA. John and his wife Laura reside in North Beach on Vilano; they have two grown children, Mathew and Alexandria, and two grandchildren, Alijia and

Julian. A life-long Democrat whose first Presidential vote in 1972 was for George McGovern, John is the Vice-Chair of the Democratic Party of St. Johns County, and Chair of the Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida, St. Johns County Chapter.

**Chris McDermott Office Hours**  
**Thursday Afternoons from 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.**

I'm going to be holding "office hours" every Thursday afternoon from 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. at the UUFSA until further notice. Come by to chat, share news or meditate. We'll be social distancing and/or masking, and we will probably hang outside, weather permitting. I'd like to just keep it open and if those present want to meditate – we'll sit down for that, or we can pull weeds with Mary or just chat. Please bring a chair (for outside), your drink (no throw-aways please) and your mask. When you come by, you might want to bring your monthly donation; you can drop it in the mailbox out front. **A two-fer!** In this time of COVID, we are unable to safely gather all at once, but I believe we can safely meet in small groups for a limited time period. Thursday afternoon. We'll try this day and time and adjust if it's not suitable. See you there!

*Chris*

# **Sunday, November 29, 9:30 a.m.**

## **“What Fertile Ground: A Sharing Service”**

Facilitator: Robin Mahonen and other Sharers

Music: Alex Richman

Green Minute

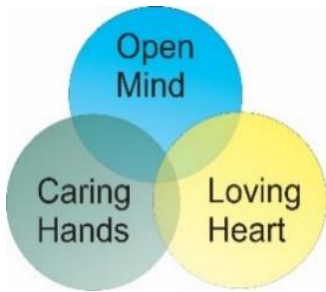
It is the time of the harvest festivals, and many cultures use this time to show gratitude for the gifts of the Earth. The Judeo-Christian creation myths are not entirely wrong. Genesis 3:19 says: “...for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return...” To consider it in a scientific, or a New Age manner, we are indeed stardust. Our relationship with the Earth, as delineated in our Seventh Principle, is one of respect and reverence, honoring the interdependent web of which we are a part.

In this Sharing Service, several fellowship members will discuss their spiritual connections with Mother Earth.

Members and friends Zooming in are also invited to share their experiences.



# Programs for Children and Youth



Our *Harry and UU Hogwarts School of Social Action* is going strong with 12 young **Enchanting Activists**. After completing a very successful book drive to benefit the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida, our *Enchanting Activists* joined with the UUFSA's Program Team to fight the *Hunger Horcrux*. With support from UUFSA members and friends, our young activists collected \$411 and bags of food for the local Ecumenical Food Pantry. Thank you to all who donated!!



We want to specifically recognize here our partnership with the First Unitarian Universalist Church of West Volusia in our UU Hogwarts School of Social Action. Helen, a student in their RE program, is a valued participant. She is the senior member of our group and an expert in all things Harry Potter, so she serves as prefect. Her actions in Deland have extended what our kids have done locally. To fight the Illiteracy Horcrux, Helen collected a large box of books from members of her congregation and gave them to her local branch of the Early Learning Coalition. To fight the Hunger Horcrux, Helen organized a drive-by food collection in the parking lot of her church. She collected 25 bags of food and gave them to



her local food pantry. To top off her efforts, she gifted each donor with a bag of cookies she baked herself!! She baked tons of cookies! She is a great role-model for our kids. We are so pleased Helen has joined us.



The next *Horcrux* our young activists will take on is the devastation caused by the wildfires in the West. To learn more about these wildfires and their impacts, our children received first-hand accounts via Zoom from children and teachers in the RE programs of the **UU Church of Willamette Falls** near Portland, OR and the **Rogue Valley UU Fellowship** in Ashland, OR. Both areas were hard-hit by the fires. This was an amazing conversation. You will learn more about this soon.



In addition to their social action efforts, our students have lots of fun during their Sunday classes exercising their creativity. This past month they had great fun creating imaginary beasts out of cards and clay, and origami *Snitches*.

Finally, we hope UUFSA members enjoyed October's *Story for All Ages* titled **I See You**, a picture book about homelessness that was interpreted by our *Enchanting Activists* Lily, Ellery, Grace and Stella. Our students look forward to sharing more stories with you.

To learn more about or to join our program, please contact *Professor Kelly Sommer* ([Kelly.winten@gmail.com](mailto:Kelly.winten@gmail.com)) or *Co-Headmasters of the UU Hogwarts School of Social Action* Jindy Gelow ([jindyms@yahoo.com](mailto:jindyms@yahoo.com)) or Barbara Battelle ([Battellebarbara@gmail.com](mailto:Battellebarbara@gmail.com))



# Adult Learning

## UUFSA Adult Learning: 2020-21

### Tuesdays, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

#### Part 1. Science and Religion

**Coordinator: Richard Lahey**

November 10 ..... Fundamentalism and Creationism .....Louis Post  
 November 24 ..... De Beauvoir, Hypatia, Hildegard and Wollsentcrat.....Renee Jones  
 December 8..... Why Evil Exists ..... Chris McDermott

#### Zoom login information

Nov 10, 2020 through Dec 8, 2020:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82211021377>  
 Meeting ID: 822 1102 1377  
 Password: 180319

#### Part 2. Science and Religious Experience: The Spiritual Brain

#### Neurotheology: A New Perspective on Ancient Questions

**Coordinator: Surindar Paracer**

January 5..... Why Do We Have a Spiritual Brain?  
 January 19..... Brain Function and Religion  
 February 2 ..... Believers and Atheists  
 February 16 ..... Spiritual Development  
 March 2 ..... The Myth-Making Brain  
 March 16 ..... The Brain and Religious Rituals  
 March 30 ..... The Biology of Spiritual Practices  
 April 13 ..... Religion and Health  
 April 27 ..... Religion and Brain Dysfunction  
 May 11 ..... Transmitters to God  
 May 25..... Near-death Experiences and the Brain  
 June 8..... The Believing Brain  
 June 22..... The Brain's Influence in Religious Ideas  
 July 6 ..... How the Brain Changes God  
 July 20 ..... How God Changes the Brain  
 August 3 ..... Why God Won't Go Away  
 August 17 ..... The Mystical Mind  
 August 31 ..... Reality and Beyond

# What is a Welcoming Congregation?



*Photo © UUA 2020*

For 25 years Unitarian Universalists have worked hard to make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are full members of our faith communities. Being welcoming means striving for inclusion and creating communities that honor all identities, backgrounds and experiences. Basically, welcoming everyone to our liberal community including LGBTQ people, people of color and people of all faiths.

Although we are already a liberal faith that believes in inclusion, this year we have decided to go that extra mile and obtain our Welcoming Congregation recognition from the UUA. Most UU congregations are recognized Welcoming Congregations and the spiritual practice of welcoming is a very important one to our faith community.

One of our first steps in the program is a Welcoming Congregation Service on January 24, 2021. Our speaker will be Bruce Knotts, the UUA Human Rights representative to the United Nations. A retired diplomat, Bruce will talk to us on the importance of being a Welcoming Congregation and how to move forward with our plans.

*Gina Jonas, Renée Jones, Robin Mahonen  
Renee@scggroup1.com*

## **Green Sanctuary Team Outing Nov. 18, 9:00 a.m. to approximately 3:00 p.m.**

Another great outing is planned for the beautiful **Jacksonville Botanical Gardens**, to be led by Mary Kellough. Learn more about the gardens at <https://www.jacksonvillearboretum.org/>. We'll plan to bring our lunches and eat on the grounds. It's about an hour's drive, with carpooling for those who wish, leaving from the Fellowship. Group size is limited to the first lucky 10 people. Masks are required, even though participants will be outside. Reserve your spot with Mary Kellough ([Lkellough@comcast.net](mailto:Lkellough@comcast.net), 904-460-9406).

# Donating to UUFSA

In this time when we cannot be together on Sunday to pass the plate, please remember to make your donations and pay your pledge to UUFSA. Make all checks payable to UUFSA. If you wish your check to be applied to your pledge, write "Pledge" 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. The charities we support are the Food Pantry, Wildflower Clinic, and Home Again St. John's. Mail checks to:

**UUFSA  
2487 A1A South  
St. Augustine, FL 32080**

You also can make your weekly plate donation online now on the UUFSA website. Scroll down the home page and you will see a button labeled "Donate."



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. You can pay with Google Pay or by credit card on the next screen.

# Goodbye from Taffy

Dear friends,

It's such a bittersweet experience to say goodbye to all of you. On one hand, I'm looking forward to a new adventure but on the other, missing the blessing of your friendship. Life is always about contrasts but this time, I'm especially aware of saying goodbye to you and hello to the new UU congregation I will meet after I move.

I've been privileged to play in a sanctuary that enjoys all genres of music and it's always been a joy to find complementary songs for services with a variety of topics.

When people ask me where I play and I tell them the UU fellowship, they usually ask, "What do they believe in?" My simple answer is that "love is the doctrine of this congregation, the quest for truth its sacrament and service it's prayer" and this satisfies most. Some also say that they want to explore the services sometime and I tell them that every Sunday's message is unique and interesting.

I walked through the door of the sanctuary sixteen years ago and found a new family filled with scholars, musicians, scientists, historians, environmentalists, healers and many others whose heart collectively is overflowing with goodness and so much generosity. I am forever grateful to all of you for being true to who you are; sharing this with me and making me part of your family.

I'm singing "It Had To Be UU" as I send this letter.

**Much love and many trills,  
Taffy**

# Dining With Dignity

Our next opportunity to provide a nourishing meal for the homeless will be **Sunday, November 1, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** Food listed on the monthly emailed menu must be dropped off at UUFSA between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m. so everything can be assembled for distribution at 6:00 p.m. downtown. This is the new routine during COVID-19. For more information, contact **Mary Kellough**, [Lkellough@comcast.net](mailto:Lkellough@comcast.net), 904-217-9837.



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



A big thank you goes out to our RE program Enchanting Activists who organized a very successful food drive bringing in large quantities of donated food and over \$400 in donations. You are amazing!

The Saint Johns Food Pantry serves our community five days per week with drive-up and walk-up service from 1:00 to 4:00 Monday through Friday. Our UU team staffs the pantry on the second, fourth, and fifth Thursday afternoons in collaboration with volunteers from Anastasia Baptist Church. We are serving more people in need than ever before. This month nonperishable food donations can be taken to the front porch of the Fellowship on Sunday, November 1 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Thursday November 12 from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m. There you will find a large gray bin labeled for the Pantry. Suggested items include canned vegetables, turkey gravy, and snack cakes or seasonal sweet treats to fill our Thanksgiving special meal boxes.

To make a donation to the food pantry, 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 our website, [www.uufsa.org](http://www.uufsa.org), or theirs, [www.stjohnsfoodpantry.org](http://www.stjohnsfoodpantry.org), to donate via credit card or PayPal. Thank you very much for your support.

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

## Great Decisions November 16, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

For more information, please contact Yosi at [jomcintire@bellsouth.net](mailto:jomcintire@bellsouth.net) or 904-808-2717.

# 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 ..... 904-864-1303  
Rosemary Wheeler ..... 352-339-4157  
Anne Wilke ..... 904-797-1944

## November Calendar



- 1 – Collection for Food Pantry at UUFSA 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- 1 – Food drop-off for Dining with Dignity 3:30 – 4:00 p.m.
- 1 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 2 – Program Team 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 9 – Board of Trustees meeting, online 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 10 – Adult Learning, online 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- 12 – Collection for Food Pantry at UUFSA 8:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 12 – Food Pantry 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.
- 15 – Third Sunday Plate Collection: Food Pantry
- 16 – Great Decisions online 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- 18 – Green Team to Jacksonville Botanical Gardens  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- 20 – Deadline for December Quest contributions 5:00 p.m.
- 24 – Adult Learning, online 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- 26 – Food Pantry 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.
- 5, 12, 19, 26 – Chris McDermott office hours 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.