

QUEST



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

February 2021
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3/4 mile south of State Road 312
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All in - person activities are on hold until further notice to avoid spreading COVID-19.
Sunday services and the Sunday children’s program are being presented online through Zoom video conferencing.
Audio transcripts of most past presentations are available on our website.

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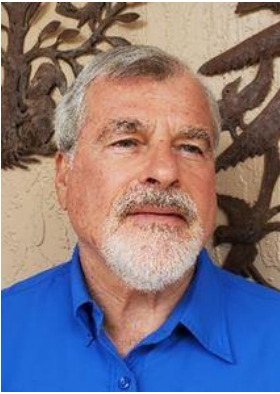
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Materials for the March issue are due by February 19.
Don Brandes, Editor: donaldbrandes@gmail.com
Thanks to Adele DelSavio for proofreading.

From Your President



Some of us may recall the American journalist Walter Lippmann, who died in 1974. He coined the term “cold war.” Writing about America’s political landscape, Lippmann wrote, “Men generally find in the past what they miss in the present.” He continued, “...most of us insist that somewhere in the past it was a golden age, but people who were forever dreaming of a mythical past are merely saying that they are afraid of the future. The past which men create for themselves is a place where thought is unnecessary, and happiness is inevitable.”

In other words, a time when things were just naturally great, and that no changes or sacrifices were required. Armchair patriotism. Our recent politics make it easier to understand that mentality: heavy on nostalgia, a yearning for white privilege, anger at those calling for more equal justice. These are bricks in the foundation of a major retro movement. Lippmann notes, “...the American temperament leans generally to a kind of ‘mystical anarchism.’” A detailed account of this ‘mystical anarchism’ and how it figures in our recent history are found in a new book shared with me by a dear friend. The book is *Evil Geniuses, the Unmaking of America* by Kurt Andersen.

Andersen relates how the U.S. failure in Vietnam, the bloody Chicago 1968 convention, and the perfidies of Watergate and the CIA shattered faith in government on the left, and the fiery social movements for Black rights, women’s rights and anxiety over changing mores and technologies led to a reactionary movement in culture and politics. Folks were just yearning for the good old days, and the attacks on progressive action intensified. Big money established foundations, university chairs and think tanks to put on fancy ideologies to cover the gritty war against unions, regulation and government oversight. The coming together of discontent among **both** the left and the right led to an explosion of anti-government ideas – a rejection not only of the government’s role in defining and addressing problems, but a denial those very problems exist. A culture boom in nostalgia for the good old days, when strife just didn’t exist – or didn’t matter, and when the US was predominant and self-possessed – accompanied that political shift. It is quite a story; I highly recommend Andersen’s book.

What can responsible, peace and progress-loving folks do about it? Can we find common ground with conspiracy theorists who rely on rumor as history, on guns as their license to rule? Our new 46th president makes clear he favors dialogue. Let’s hope it works out, but he must counter sober new realities. For those who believe facts matter, dialogue can’t begin until the willful denial of evidence, and the insistence on truth as whatever I say it is. just stops. So how?

Clearly, reliance on science AND a dynamic and strong free investigative press are essential to restore facts to their rightful place. Unbiased and unblinking journalism matters. But, it’s disappearing under the onslaught of our mega media moguls and our indifference to local issues. To change this, we ALL need to subscribe to at least one **paid** investigative news source, and two if possible. Without them, we don’t stand a chance against the hyperbolic, patronizing “propaganda as news” coming from the money and agenda-driven media. Reading and supporting libraries may also help, but, the reporters who dig deep and invest months, if not years into getting the story, need to eat. If you haven’t tried, *Mother Jones* magazine, *The (Manchester) Guardian*, *The New Yorker*, the *Tampa Bay Times*, or relied upon *Snopes.com*, *Politico.com* and *Politifact.com* for non-partisan reporting, perhaps it’s time to start. Let the determined and joyous spirit of Martin Luther King – who relied on Americans paying attention to real news – drive us onward to digging for truth and leaning towards justice.

May it be so.

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, 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 send a note to uufsacontact@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, February 7, 9:30 a.m.

“Our Six Sources: Prophetic People”

Phillip Baber

Service Leader: Gina Jonas
Music: Taffy Rook
Story for All Ages

Many Unitarian Universalists are well-versed in the “Seven Principles” found within the UUA Association Covenant; however, considerably fewer are familiar with the “Six Sources” embedded in the same document. In this talk, we will explore the etymology of the word “prophet,” how it is understood in the Jewish tradition, and why it is so relevant (and dangerous) that the Second Source is written in the present tense.

Phillip Baber is the pastor of The People’s Church of Jacksonville and the Regional Director of the Poor People’s Campaign of Northeast Florida. He is the former pastor of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Jacksonville and has served as co-president of I.C.A.R.E., the Jacksonville-based Interfaith Coalition for Action, Reconciliation, and Empowerment. Phillip’s ministry is dedicated to the advancement of our collective liberation, leading him to advocate in support of criminal justice reform; police accountability; racial and economic justice; justice for refugees and immigrants, and LGBTQIA+.



Sunday, February 14, 9:30 a.m.

“The Dream: Fifty Years Later”

Dr. Chester Wilson

Service Leader: Michael Read

Music: Alex Richman

This I Believe

It has been over 50 years since the famous "I Have a Dream" speech. This speech highlights the dream and brings a reminder of the charge. Its highlights are civic duty to each other. We will reflect on where we are now, but most importantly what needs to happen for us to achieve the dream.

Dr. Chester L. Wilson, Jr. is a business owner, motivational speaker, educator, trainer, mentor/volunteer, and community resource. Dr. Wilson's professional pursuits include currently serving as the CEO of the CW Consulting Firm and Outreach Community Care Network. Dr. Wilson has 20 years of experience in healthcare, 12 years as a college professor, and six years as a business consultant. Dr. Wilson's educational achievements include having earned a Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership and Human Services Administration, and a Master's in Business Administration degree with a concentration in Criminal Justice. Dr. Wilson possesses a plethora of professional

certifications, which include being certified in Addictions, Mental Health, HIV, CPR and First Aid Instructor Trainer, Quality Assurance Reviewer, Healthcare Risk Management, Private Security, Circuit Civil, County, and Family Mediation and as a Notary. Dr. Wilson's volunteerism activities include serving as an advisor and board member, and community consultant. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and serves as a church administrator. Dr. Wilson has been highlighted and has received a bevy of community awards and accolades for his service, dedication, and volunteerism. He has been acknowledged for freely sharing his talents and gifts with others. He has acquired a wealth of information and serves as a community resource. Dr. Wilson's life's goal and mission is to utilize his acquired skills to assist individuals, families, and communities in need. It is also his desire as a life-long learner to acquire skills that will afford him the opportunity to assist others in developing professionally and growing personally.



Sunday, February 21, 9:30 a.m.

“Necessary Trouble in the Temple”

Warren Clark

Service Leader: Ruth Weber

Music: Taffy Rook

Third Sunday Plate Collection: Home Again St. Johns

How can we prepare ourselves to engage in “Good & Necessary Trouble”? How did civil rights leaders in St. Augustine prepare themselves for Good Trouble? We will remember Black people killed by police and ask, “What is so not right that it causes these serial killings?” We will unearth the “Temple Money System's” exploitation of Jewish society from the story of Jesus chasing out the moneychangers. In Quaker fashion, we will ask ourselves several “Queries” (prayerful questions) to help prepare for engagement in “Necessary Trouble.”

Warren Clark was born in Jacksonville, Florida, and grew up on the St. Johns River in Mandarin. He has lived and worked in South and North America creating self-help and advocacy programs addressing hunger, farmworker justice and homelessness. Warren was also a pastor of Spanish and English-speaking congregations, most recently at First United Church (UCC) of Tampa. He and Pam Brown moved to St. Augustine in 2013 where they became active in Compassionate St. Augustine, the St. Johns Solar Co-op, and Indivisible St. Johns. Warren is also an illustrator of Florida and St. Augustine history. He has two great human beings as children, Jessica and Nathaniel Clark.



Chris McDermott Office Hours

Thursday Afternoons, 3:00 – 5:15 p.m.

I'm going to be holding “office hours” every Thursday afternoon from 3:00 – 5:15 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-a-ways 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-19, 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, February 28, 9:30 a.m.
**“Protect What You Love: The Matanzas
Riverkeeper and the Health of Our Watershed”**
Jen Lomberk

Service Leader: Nana Royer

Music: Alex Richman

Green Minute

Jen Lomberk, the Matanzas Riverkeeper, will discuss what it means to be a Riverkeeper, the current state of our local waterways, and what you can do as a resident to ensure that our natural resources stay healthy and beautiful.

As a native Floridian, Lomberk has a lifelong personal connection with Florida’s natural areas and has dedicated her career to protecting them. Lomberk holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Central Florida as well as a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Florida Levin College of Law with a certificate in Environmental & Land Use Law and Policy. Lomberk took the helm as the Matanzas Riverkeeper in December of 2017 and currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Waterkeepers Florida regional entity. As the Matanzas Riverkeeper she spearheaded the grass-roots campaign to save Fish Island from development, administers the Litter Gitter waterway cleanup program, and advocates for stronger protections for our waterways at both the state and local level.

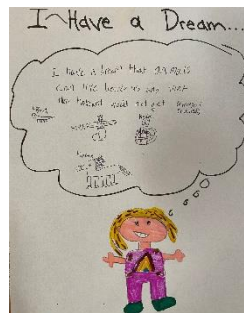
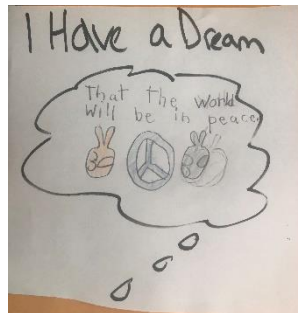


Programs for Children and Youth



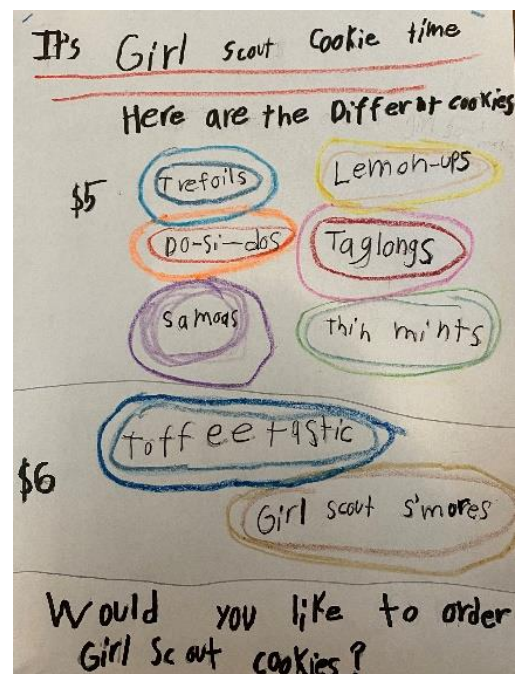
The second semester of the UUFSA's *Harry and UU Hogwarts School for Social Action* has begun with a focus on fighting the **Horcrux of Hate**. In their classes, the children discussed what hate looks like on the playground and on the street and how to combat it. They also considered, in some depth, the segregation laws that were in place during the Jim Crow era, the civil rights movement of the 1960's, and the importance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in that movement. They listened to a portion of Dr. King's "I have a Dream" speech read by children.

In response, Helen, our Enchanting Activist from the First UU Church of West Volusia, joined other members of her "isolation pod" to participate in the MLK celebration in Deland, and all our young people thought about their dream for the future. Some dreams included magical creatures. The group continues to brainstorm about what they can do to combat hate in the broader community.



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

As a final note, don't forget there are still a few days left to order your Girl Scout Cookies. To place your order, contact Enchanting Activists Grace (graceshuford12@gmail.com), Stella (stellashuford@gmail.com) or their mom Kelly (kpelovitz@hotmail.com).



UUFSA Adult Learning

Your Spiritual Brain on Religion: The Neuroscience of Religious Belief

6:00 p.m. on Zoom

February 2 Believers and Atheists

February 16 Spiritual Development

As in all complex behaviors, several brain parts get involved during religious experience. It seems that religion makes use of the same areas used by other functions. By analyzing brain scans of people in prayer, meditation, and rituals, we will explore topics such as stress management, spirituality and health, and the neurophysiology of religious experience. Other topics include the effect of spirituality and religion on health and wellbeing, the nature of near-death experiences, the human urge to create myths and rituals and the philosophical and theological implications of linkage between brain and spirituality.

In the last three decades, the biological basis of religion has been debated and explored in diverse fields such as evolutionary psychology, anthropology, genetics, and cosmology. Our guide in this adventure is Andrew Newberg, MD, Professor and Director of Research of Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

Zoom login through August 31:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83179766261?pwd=bFZ3aXN1MHRtaWxScXBGVVnkV0hZQT09>

Meeting ID: 831 7976 6261

Passcode: 145234

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

Great Decisions

February 15, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Zoom

Great Decisions is an informal discussion group that meets most third Mondays at 6:00 p.m. to develop awareness, understanding, and informed opinion on U.S. foreign policy and global issues.

Until further notice, we meet on Zoom:

<https://tinyurl.com/y4p9x5pk>

Meeting ID: 216 526 385

Passcode: 831270

The 2021 discussion topics are:

- February 15: “The fight over the melting Arctic,” led by Cal Marshall
- March 15: “Global supply chains and national security,” led by Richard Lahey
- April 19: “Brexit and the European Union,” led by Chuck Chambers
- May 17: “The Korean Peninsula,” led by Chris McDermott
- June, July, August: SUMMER BREAK
- September 20: “China and Africa,” led by Surindar Paracer
- October 18: “Persian Gulf Security,” led by Louis Post
- November 15: “The End of Globalization?” led by Cynthia Thompson

Guests are always welcome. Please join us and consider bringing a friend!

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, February 7, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** Food listed on the monthly emailed menu must be dropped off at UUFSA between 4:30 and 5:00 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, 904-217-9837.



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



Chris and Cherie want to sincerely thank so many of you who donated food or money to the Saint Johns Ecumenical Ministries Food Pantry. The holidays brought in extra of both and we truly needed it.

In December, the pantry provided 1914 bags of food to 2394 adults and children in our county. This is a 362% increase from December 2019. It is a time of great food insecurity and it is only because of the kindness of people like you that we were able to provide for those in need.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Co-chair: Chris Fosaaen, phone: 904-673-5630; cfosaaen@gmail.com
Co-chair: Cherie Dolgin, phone: 904-461-1604; 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 | Cynthia McAuliffe | 904-864-1303 |
| Adele DelSavio | 315-529-6287 | Rosemary Wheeler | 352-339-4157 |
| Pat Hall | 914-787-9184 | Anne Wilke..... | 904-797-1944 |
| Maureen Herth | 904-463-1032 | | |

February Calendar



- 1 – Program Team 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 2 – Adult Learning, online 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- 4 – Chris McDermott office hours 3:00 – 5:15 p.m.
- 5 – Food Pantry 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.
- 7 – Food drop-off for Dining with Dignity 4:30 – 5:00 p.m.
- 7 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 8 – Board of Trustees meeting, online 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- 11 – Chris McDermott office hours 3:00 – 5:15 p.m.
- 12 – Food Pantry 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.
- 15 – Great Decisions online 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- 16 – Adult Learning, online 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- 18 – Chris McDermott office hours 3:00 – 5:15 p.m.
- 19 – Food Pantry 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.
- 19 – Deadline for March Quest contributions 5:00 p.m.
- 21 – Third Sunday Plate Collection: Home Again St. Johns
- 25 – Chris McDermott office hours 3:00 – 5:15 p.m.
- 26 – Food Pantry 12:30 – 4:00 p.m.