

QUEST



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

May 2023

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

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

Sunday services are presented in-person and online at 10:00 a.m.

Click <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4750592013> after 9:30 a.m.

A Sunday children's program also is available.

Recordings of most past presentations are available on our website.

In This Issue

From Your President	2
Sunday Programs.....	3-5
Annual Congregational Meeting	6
Spring Potluck	7
Programs for Children and Youth.....	8
Adult Learning	9
Other News and Announcements.....	10-13
Calendar and Humor	13-14
The Mountain	15

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Materials for the June issue are due by May 19.

Don Brandes, Editor: donaldbrandes@gmail.com

Thanks to Michael Read for proofreading.



From Your President



Dear Members and Friends,

Hurricane season started early this year as the 2023 legislative session unleashed the full malevolence of its destructive force. With one egregious bill after another, passed or proposed, we've been called to withstand the gale psychologically, and to gather our resources for the repair of damages sustained.

In the wake of disaster, whether from human or natural causes, we feel sadness and anger, sensitive to the harm that will result. In the face of political power that thwarts human dignity and flourishing, we are called to respond. What actions can we take?

Philanthropic actions of compassionate citizens and charitable organizations assist victims of economic and political injustice. Participating in Dining with Dignity and the Food Pantry, we help to ameliorate society's failures. Efforts to change the undergirding structures of the status quo also continue. In the coming months, our congregation, in solidarity with the larger community, will try to deal with the newly passed voter suppression laws.

As Unitarian Universalists, our search for meaning goes beyond the boundaries set by a materialist consumer-driven society. It must, if we are to "affirm and promote" the Principles of our faith, such as "Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations." In closing, I appeal to you with a metaphor of solace and courage: the green grass. Like you, it grows and expresses a vital, life energy. It also regrows, after the lawn mower cuts it down. As Joseph Campbell says about this cycle: "Suppose the grass were just to think, Ah, shucks, what's all the fuss about? I quit!"

We are the grass, and we grow in the fertile, nutrient-rich soil of our UUFSA community. When wounded by the hurricanes of political backlash, we come first to the aid of ourselves, soothing our hearts with empathy and kindness, and then, to the aid of one another, listening and comforting the pain that attends our loss. Healed enough, we encourage and support a renewed effort. The work is ongoing, the grass is growing!

In the warmth of fellowship,

Gina

904-679-4610
gina.jonas@gmail.com



Sunday Programs

Sunday services are presented in-person in the Fellowship and online.

To join online, go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4750592013> after 9:30 a.m. For safety, we are asking everyone present in person at the live service to be vaccinated. Wearing a mask is optional.

A Little Help from Your Friends



For any reason, if you need help getting from the parking lot to the Sanctuary and back again, we now have a wheelchair on hand to assist you. Just ask anyone in the parking lot to let the Greeters know that you need assistance, and someone will come to your car with the wheelchair. Please try to arrive 15 minutes early so we have time to get you situated. Note that you must be able to transfer into and out of the wheelchair on your own. We hope this service furthers our aim to be an inclusive, welcoming community.

Sunday Announcements

If you have a brief, UUFSA-related announcement you would like the Service Leader to relay to the fellowship at the beginning of our Sunday services, please submit it by email to the Service Leader no later than 24 hours before the Sunday service. Please send it directly to the Service Leader for the specific date you request. Due to time constraints, and the many diverse interests of the members of this fellowship, only UUFSA events will be announced.

May 7: Margaret Nicholson, send2me@bellsouth.net

May 14: Chris McDermott, mcnoodle55@gmail.com

May 21: Gina Jonas, gina.jonas@gmail.com

May 28: Mick Read, mickread@gmail.com

UUFSA Sunday Service Team Meeting May 1, 5:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held on Zoom.

All members of the fellowship are welcome to attend.

Contact Robin Mahonen, RRafael2@aol.com, for login details.

Sunday, May 7, 10:00 a.m.
**“Of Crosses and Lotuses, A Three-Part
Examination of Thich Nhat Hanh’s
Living Buddha, Living Christ, Part 1”**
Phillip Baber

Service Leader: Margaret Nicholson
Music: Barbara Joy Plattner
Story for All Ages

In this 3-part sermon miniseries, Phillip will interrogate the wisdom of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh’s 1995 book, *Living Buddha, Living Christ*. TNH is recognized as a major influence on Western Buddhism, the father of “mindfulness,” and originator of “engaged Buddhism.” In this series, we will consider the opportunities and dangers represented in his understanding of the ongoing dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism. (It is not necessary to read the book to enjoy this sermon series.)



Phillip Baber 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+ rights.

Sunday, May 14, 10:00 a.m.
**“Of Crosses and Lotuses, A Three-Part
Examination of Thich Nhat Hanh’s
Living Buddha, Living Christ, Part 2”**
Phillip Baber

Service Leader: Chris McDermott
Music: Alex Richman
This I Believe: Jim Herth

Sunday, May 21, 10:00 a.m.
“How Can I (or Why Should I) Help?”

Cheryl Freeman

Service Leader: Gina Jonas

Music: Barbara Joy Plattner

Food Collection

Third Sunday Plate Collection to Home Again St. Johns



This presentation will include information about some of the volunteer services needed in St. Johns County. Cheryl will be speaking primarily on needs in the St. Johns County School District, but will also point people to the right contacts for other services.

Cheryl Freeman has worked with the RSVP/Volunteer Services program with the St. Johns County School District for over 22 years. In addition to working with volunteers, she likes to volunteer with her church, and spend time with family whether in-person (husband and parents) or remotely (children in California and Texas). She has a passion for helping people discover their purpose in service to others.

Sunday, May 28, 10:00 a.m.
**“Of Crosses and Lotuses, A Three-Part
Examination of Thich Nhat Hanh’s
Living Buddha, Living Christ, Part 3”**

Phillip Baber

Service Leader: Mick Read

Music: Alex Richman

Family Chalice Lighting

Green Minute

Members
please plan to attend our



Annual Meeting



Sunday, May 21st following Service.
You can attend in person or via Zoom.
Childcare will be provided.

We will be voting on several important items
including our 2023-2024 Budget and the Slate
of Officers for our Board.

Your vote matters!

Spring Potluck

May 7, after Sunday Service

Spring is our favorite season here in northeast Florida, so let's celebrate together before our hot and humid summer weather arrives!

Who: You are invited

What: Spring Potluck

When: May 7, 2023 after Sunday Service

Where: UUFSA backyard

In the best UU tradition, please bring food to share. Ice and beverages will be provided.

In case of inclement weather, it'll be downstairs in our social hall.



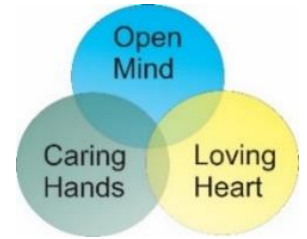
The Quest Will Continue!

Thank you to Judy Olson for volunteering to take over the UUFSA Treasurer duties. I will be able to continue producing the **Quest** after all.

Don Brandes

Programs for Children and Youth

Jindy Gelow and Barbara Battelle



Members of the Hester family were our chalice lighters the last Sunday of March.



On the first Sunday in April, our young people presented a moving story about slavery in America titled “An American Story.” If you missed it, it is worth a listen. You can find it in the archives on our website. Click this link and then scroll down: [2023 Sunday Programs \(uufsa.org\)](https://uufsa.org/2023-Sunday-Programs)

In their classes, our students continued learning from the Riddles and Mysteries Curriculum from the UUA’s Tapestry of Faith and address big questions such as: “Why do bad things happen?” and “Is life fair?” In keeping with UU tradition and philosophy, we focus on the questions. The lessons are designed to help students explore in different ways their own answers to the questions. In addition, students watched an episode of “The Simpsons,” in which Bart sells his soul. As usual, this episode prompted great discussions focused on the nature of the soul. What is it?

While our older students explore big questions with Jindy or Barbara, younger students can explore their own interests and questions through creative play with Ayler.

The children will present the last Story for All Ages for this Congregational Year on the first Sunday in May and participate in the food collection on the third Sunday. Since public schools close for the summer mid-May, and most of our young people and their families take advantage of the summer break to travel and for new adventures, our last formal class for young people will be at the end of May. Nevertheless, members of the Fellowship will be available through the end of June to work informally with any young people who attend.

For more information about the UUFSA’s Program for Children and Youth, contact Barbara Battelle (Battellebarbara@gmail.com) or Jindy Gelow (Jindyms@yahoo.com).

UUFSA Adult Learning

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Sessions are in person at the Fellowship only, not online.

The Myth of the Trickster: The Breaker of Taboos

A trickster is a cultural hero, assisting in creation or organizing the elements of creation into forms (positive or negative) that define how humans live.

A trickster is almost always a low character who outwits the high and the mighty; but in the process, he frequently overreaches and outwits himself and gets caught in his own traps. In the New World and Africa, the trickster is associated with an animal that assumes human form.

May 4 Tricksters from around the world.

May 18 African Tricksters

June 1 The Places of Myths – Mountains

June 15 The Places of Myths – Sacred Trees

We welcome all UUFSA members and friends.

UUFSA Adult Learning Coordinator
Richard Lahey, Surindar Paracer (chair),
Trudy Byerly, and Jocelyn Breakwell





We Need this Amendment!

UU Justice Florida supports the proposed Amendment to the Florida Constitution, establishing the Right to Clean and Healthy Water.

When 80% of our springs are contaminated by excessive nitrogen, 9,000 miles of our estuaries, streams and rivers are contaminated with fecal bacteria, and when blue-green algae blooms are becoming the “new normal.” linked to neurodegenerative diseases, it is clear that litigation is not working. The laws have become “permits to pollute.”

This citizens’ initiative is the only way forward for our peninsula to continue to function with good water quality and quantity. Those who know call this a “911 issue.”

According to environmental attorney Jane West, ***“Litigation isn’t working. Lobbying isn’t working. My personal opinion is that this is the only way forward. Without meaningful action on this amendment, I don’t see how the peninsula is going to continue to function with good water quality and quantity moving forward.”***

Please get in touch with **Nana Royer** or **Chris McDermott** about how you can help with this critical issue. We can get you petitions and/or you can print them for yourself at

FloridaRightToCleanWater.org
We need 900,000 valid signed petitions!
Please!



Island Players

A play reading group of mostly UUFSA members has formed at the UUFSA. We meet downstairs at the UU on the 4th Sunday of each month, 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Meetings start with an hour of socializing with finger food appetizers and beverages (BYOB). A short play-reading performance by members of the group follows. After the play-reading performance, a discussion with dessert and coffee will follow. The Players meeting concludes with review of volunteer roles for the next meeting.

All members of the play-reading group are expected to participate as a director, a meeting host, and actors (reading a part) when asked. The Director chooses a play and invites group members to read a specific part. Members not directing or reading a part on a particular 4th Sunday form the audience! The Director volunteers in advance. Those invited to read parts for a play reading performance meet for only one rehearsal prior to the 4th Sunday performance. The volunteer host of the Sunday performance comes early for set up, makes decaf coffee, and stays to clean up. Each member brings EITHER an appetizer OR a dessert to share. Beverages are BYOB.

If you are interested in the play-reading group, we'd love you to join us and participate fully. For more information call Cal Marshall at (505) 879-1869 or e-mail at calmarshall@hotmail.com. Please, no texts.



Care Connection

The Care Connection is thrilled to announce that Marsha Williams has joined our team!

Our Care Connection group provides short-term, non-medical support for members of the Fellowship during times of difficulty. With the help of the UUFSA Congregation, the Care Connection:

- Makes hospital or home visits
- Provides wellness-check phone calls or calls just to converse
- Runs errands
- Provides rides to appointments and church functions
- Delivers meals during times of adversity
- Offers financial assistance to members in need (all information is confidential)



We thank everyone for their generous support with transportation to medical appointments, making meals, assistance with errands, visiting and sharing. Contact one of our members listed below if you are in need of assistance or would like to join the Care Connection Team. Phone numbers are available in the Membership Directory. We accept and appreciate donations.

The Care Connection is pleased to announce that Trudy Byerly has joined our team!

	Rosemary Wheeler, Co-Chair	Maureen Herth, Co-Chair
Claudia Atkins	Anne Wilke	Cynthia McAuliffe
	Pat Hall	Marsha Williams
		Trudy Byerly



Dining With Dignity

Dining with Dignity is our once-a-month opportunity to feed the homeless downtown. A menu is sent out two weeks in advance, listing the items we need. We set up between 5:30 and 5:45 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month and serve at 6:00 p.m. If interested in participating, please contact Mary Kellough at lkellough@comcast.net.



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



We still have plenty of volunteer opportunities at the pantry and would appreciate your participation. Volunteering allows you to share our work, know our team members, and get to know our clients who are most grateful for our assistance. For more information, contact Mary Kellough at 904-217-9837 or lkellough@comcast.net.

To make a cash donation to the food pantry, please bring or mail your check to UUFSA, 2487 A1A South, St. Augustine, FL 32080, or go to our website at: [Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine \(square.site\)](http://Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine (square.site))

UUFSA May Calendar



- 1 – Sunday Service Team 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
- 4 – Adult Learning 6:00 – 7:30
- 5 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 7 – Spring Potluck after Sunday Service**
- 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, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
- 12 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 18 – Adult Learning 6:00 – 7:30, p.m.
- 19 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 19 – Deadline for May *Quest* contributions 5:00 p.m.
- 21 – Third Sunday food collection at start of service
- 21 – Collection plate to Home Again St. Johns
- 21 – Annual Congregational Meeting after Sunday Service**
- 26 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 28 – UUFSA Island Players (play reading group) 5:00 – 7:30

Online UUFSA Events Calendar

It is now possible to view the online Google calendar of UUFSA events and building usage from the UUFSA website by clicking on a link on the Calendar page at:

<http://www.uufsa.org/newsletter--calendar.html>



On the Lighter Side . . .

Submit a short joke/piece of entertaining humor you'd like to share for consideration. Submit to Michael Read at mickread@gmail.com.

Excerpt from the Young George Washington's Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation

Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.

When in company, put not your hands to any part of the body not usually discovered.

Shew nothing to your friend that may affright him.

In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

If you cough, sneeze, sigh or yawn, do it not loud but privately; and speak not in your yawning, but put your handkerchief or hand before your face and turn aside.

Put not off your clothes in the presence of others, nor go out your chamber half drest. When you sit down, keep your feet firm and even, without putting one on the other or crossing them.

Shake not the head, feet or legs, rowl not the eyes, lift not one eyebrow higher than the other, wry not the mouth, and bedew no man's face with your spittle by approaching too near him when you speak.

Do not puff up the cheeks, loll not out the tongue, rub the hands or beard, thrust out the lips, or bite them or keep the lips too open or too close.

Kill no vermin as fleas, lice, ticks, etc. in the sight of others; if you see any filth or thick spittle, put your foot dexterously upon it; if it be upon the clothes of your companions, put it off privately, and if it be upon your own clothes, return thanks to him who puts it off.



The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center

Join us at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center, a Magical UU Place and Experience:

- [Homecoming](#), **May 26-29**. Join us at The Mountain for our 43rd Annual Gathering of Members and Friends. We will have three days of renewing connections with old friends and making new connections, being immersed in this extraordinary natural environment, learning about current projects and possibilities for the future, in addition to workshops, entertainment, and our Annual Meeting.
- [Summer Camp](#) options for kids and for adults!
- **Personal Retreat – for individuals or groups**

We look forward to hosting you at The Mountain soon.

For more information about The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center:
themountainrlc.org or 828.526.5838