

QUEST



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

December 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.

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Materials for the January issue are due by December 15.

Don Brandes, Editor: donaldbrandes@gmail.com

Thanks to Michael Read for proofreading.



From Your President



December is the month of holiday celebrations offering light and hope to offset the darkness and despair surrounding the winter solstice. In this column, I will discuss the relationship of the light/dark cycle to seasonal mood changes from neurobiological and cultural perspectives.

The winter solstice refers to the shortest period of daylight of the year, usually December 21 or 22 in the Northern Hemisphere or June 20 or 21 in the Southern Hemisphere. Solstice is derived from the Latin “solstitium” meaning when the sun stops, i.e. when it ceases to move higher or lower in the sky because of the tilt of the earth’s axis as it orbits around the sun.

Throughout the world, different societies have marked this occasion with celebrations of days of feasting. The northern European ancient Yule festival lasted 12 days starting with the winter solstice. The Roman Empire’s Saturnalia holiday was celebrated with seven days of feasting from December 16 to 23.

The effects of sunlight on the brain include modulating the sleep/wake cycle and mood in addition to enabling vision. Visible light for humans is limited to a narrow electromagnetic band of wave lengths from 380 to 780 nanometers. Specific cells in the retina are most sensitive to the shorter blue/violet wavelength of 459 nm. These photoreceptive ganglion cells signal parts of the midbrain which affect the sleep/wake cycle and mood by altering the production of melatonin, serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD), manifested by the symptoms of carbohydrate craving, hypersomnia, and fatigue, occurs more frequently in northern latitudes when the days are shorter and nights are longer. Morning bright light therapy in the blue/violet wavelengths, or an hour walk in natural daylight, can improve sleep and mood. Candle and incandescent light are not as effective.

This holiday season be sure to expose yourself to natural daylight or daytime artificial light including the blue/violet spectrum as in a therapeutic light box to improve your sleep and mood. The darkness of the winter solstice need not get you down. Try to remain hopeful as you celebrate with family and friends.

**In fellowship,
Fred Dolgin**

904-687-4018
fdolgin@bellsouth.net

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.

The front doors of our sanctuary are locked at 10:10 a.m. on Sunday mornings to promote the safety and security of service attendees.

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.

December 3: Chris McDermott, mcnoodle55@gmail.com

December 10: Gina Jonas, gina.jonas@gmail.com

December 17: Christy Sanford, christy.sanford@gmail.com

December 24: Chris McDermott, mcnoodle55@gmail.com

December 31: Robin Mahonen, RRafael2@aol.com

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, December 3, 10:00 a.m.

“Hello. Goodbye. Hello.”

Phillip Baber

Service Leader: Chris McDermott

Music: Alex Richman

Story for All Ages

The first Sunday in December marks the beginning of the Advent season in the Western Christian calendar. While millions of Christian congregations across the world will be exploring the Advent theme of “Hope” on December 3, Phillip will take an alternate approach rooted in pre-Christian traditions that understand winter as an opportune time to engage in the shadow work of spirituality, centering darker themes of death, loss, grief, and resilience.

Our speaker is Pastor Phillip Baber, well known to this Fellowship, and a strong advocate of social justice. His ministry emphasizes Reconciliation and Empowerment in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In years past, Phillip served as pastor of the Unitarian Church in Jacksonville, and as an interfaith leader in greater Jacksonville. Some months ago, Phillip and his family moved to Dublin. Besides being a devoted husband and father, Phillip continues his scholarly research and writing.



Sunday, December 10, 10:00 a.m.

“Music in Technicolor”

Bella Costa String Quartet

Service Leader: Gina Jonas
This I Believe: Marsha Williams

“About a year ago, our cellist suggested putting together a program of music inspired by all the colors of the rainbow. We did some brainstorming and then some research and discovered that there is quite a selection. From red roses to shy violets, there is a stunning collection of music inspired by color.

“For this program, we offer you a palette of tunes both classic and popular. Do you remember how you were taught to remember the colors of the rainbow?

R – La Vie en Rose
O – Orange Blossom Special
Y – Yellow Submarine
G – Fantasia on Greensleeves
B – Blue Moon
V- La Violatera



The Bella Costa String Quartet: from left to right: Alexander Lynn, Heather Turvey, Rebecca Simpson and Patti Colema

“And what could bring it all together better than The Rainbow Connection? The Bella Costa String Quartet is comprised of members both past and present of the St. Augustine Orchestra: Patti Coleman and Rebecca Simpson co-concertmasters, Heather Turvey, principal violist and Alexander Lynn, cellist. Formed in the summer of 2018, the Bella Costa String Quartet has performed together at concerts, galas, weddings and charity fundraisers. We are very pleased to be presenting our fifth program to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine!”

The Bella Costa String Quartet: from left to right, Alexander Lynn, Heather Turvey, Rebecca Simpson and Patti Coleman



Sunday, December 17, 10:00 a.m.

“Knowledge is Fragile”

Jerome Fosaaen

Service Leader: Christy Sanford

Music: Barbara Joy Plattner

Third Sunday: Cash Plate Donation: Food Pantry

Food Collection by Youth

Knowledge is the basis of human culture. Before there was any form of writing, spoken language and human memory were the means of sharing and storing knowledge. Subsequently, written languages were developed, first carved into stone, or pressed into clay or wax tablets. Later, papyrus and paper, the printing press, the telegraph, photography, the phonograph, radio and television and now the internet each in their own time revolutionized the collection, storage and dissemination of knowledge. Jerome will consider the inherent vulnerabilities of each form of storage, from accidents such as fire or flood, to deliberate destruction such as the burning of books or even whole libraries, and the limitations even of digital media.



Jerome Fosaaen is familiar to most of you, having served as President of our Board of Trustees twice and is seen often in the sound booth on Sundays. A UU since 1974, Jerome has since retired both from being a dietitian and a business owner.



Sunday, December 24, 10:00 a.m.
“Songs and Stories for a Winter Morning”
Chris Kastle

Service Leader: Chris McDermott
Music: Alex Richman
Fourth Sunday: Green Minute
Family Chalice Lighting



Chris Kastle will perform original songs, stories and poems of generosity, sharing, hope, and joy.

Chris Kastle is an award winning storyteller, songsmith, poet, and critically acclaimed author and educator from St. Augustine with a number of recordings and publications to her credit as well as a YouTube Channel. Her first book of poetry, *Nonets in Nine Courses: Recipes in Verse*, was released in 2022. She is a professional touring performer and seasoned traveler who offers insight into a lifetime of adventure. Chris received the Annette J. Bruce Lifetime Achievement Award from the Florida Storytelling Association and will be featured at the Florida Storytelling Festival in January, 2024. www.chriskastle.com

Sunday, December 31, 10:00 a.m.
“Marcus Aurelius: A Stoic’s Welcome to the
New Year”
Mick Read

Service Leader: Robin Mahonen
Music: Barbara Joy Plattner

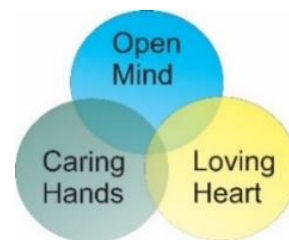
Does the year ahead look a little bleak? Then find practical guidance from *Meditations*, a work by the Roman emperor and renowned Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius. His approach to life is as pertinent today as it was 2,000 years ago, and some of his teachings complement our own Unitarian Universalist principles.

Bio: Mick Read was born in Sydney, Australia. Mick studied at universities in Europe, including the University of Vienna, the Sorbonne and the University of Tübingen. In the U.S., he completed his studies in Comparative Literature at the University of Washington in Seattle. There he received a Ph.C. (Doctoral Candidacy), and embarked upon a teaching career. After retiring from academia, he enjoyed teaching Chinese American children at a private, after-school academy. Mick is a member of the UUFSA and enjoys reading, writing, playing the guitar and composing songs, especially ones connected with social and political issues.

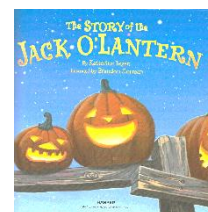
Programs for Children and Youth

Jindy Gelow, Barbara Battelle & Rachel Cross

Thank you to Sanannah Merlo and her Dad for a very special Family Chalice Lighting in October.



In their classes with Teacher Ramona and Assistant Ayler, our students continued to discuss the moral challenges they face in their daily lives. They recorded and presented to the congregation a *Story for All Ages*, which tells the Irish folk tale that is the origin story of the Halloween tradition of making Jack O' Lanterns. If you missed it, you can find it in the Archives at UUFSA.ORG. They also prepared for their Halloween/Fall Festival and Fund Raiser to benefit Horseplay Therapy Center. The festival was a great success! With the support of our members, our kids raised \$246 for the Horseplay Therapy Center. Fall Festival items created by our young people were raffled off and games were played.



Hand crafted candles, jewelry and bookmarks were raffled, and plants donated by Cal Marshall



Painted pumpkins were raffled



Many joined in the Halloween spirit with costumes, and all enjoyed a beautiful day in the UU's backyard.



We wish all our young people and their families a wonderful start to the Holiday Season.

For more information email: BattelleBarbara@gmail.com

Highway Cleanup



The last week of October, the SR A1A Highway picker-uppers cleaned up the 2-mile stretch of A1A which runs by the UUFSA. Some of our stalwart team are shown in the photo; missing is Mary E Kellough who does a fine job, but is always late for the photo. Thanks to Judy, Nana, Larry, Robin and Mary who donned their safety vests and cleaned up the roadside - adding allure and value to our UU neighborhood. Thanks to our hard-working team we were able to finish up in just about an hour. If you're interested in joining us, please send an email to Chris at Mc noodle55@gmail.com and we'll put you on the Sign up list. Thanks - Chris McDermott



Adult Learning

The Adult Learning program is temporarily suspended.

Motion is Lotion

Motion is Lotion will continue with the full 60 minutes of Strength and Stretch and Qigong warm-up. Cost is \$10 per class or 4 classes for \$32. Call for questions and permission to add to reminder text list.

Priscilla
904-347-7497

Island Players



A play reading group of mostly UUFSA members meets downstairs at the UU on the second 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.

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 Team provides short-term, non-medical support for Members and Friends 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.

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 \(square site\)](#)



UUFSA December Calendar



- 1 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 3 – Food drop-off for Dining with Dignity 4:30 – 5:00 p.m.
- 3 – Dining with Dignity 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 5 – Motion is Lotion
- 8 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 10 – UUFSA Island Players (play reading group) 5:00 – 8:00
- 11 – Board of Trustees meeting, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
- 12 – Motion is Lotion
- 15 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 17 – Third Sunday food collection at start of service
- 19 – Motion is Lotion
- 22 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- 22 – Deadline for January *Quest* contributions 5:00 p.m.
- 26 – Motion is Lotion
- 29 – Food Pantry 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

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 home page at uufsa.org.



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.

Revelation: a Variation of the Legend of Siddhartha

Frustrated by the conflicting socio-political, economic and ethical views and practices and the news of wars being waged bombarding me daily, I determined to sit under a shady palm tree and drink margaritas until I had found the ultimate truth. Ten (or twelve?) hours later after downing my umpteenth margarita, my eyes were opened. (Though half closed.) At last! The truth is revealed! All is as it should be! Remember the ontological maxim: *que sera sera*, whatever will be will be! Accept life as it is! I'll drink to that, I cried, and poured myself another margarita.

According to the UN Outer Space Orbit Index, there are approx. 7,500 satellites in low earth orbit (LEO, which spans up to 1,424 miles from earth). As ever more private enterprises join countries and launch their own satellites, the number in LEO is increasing exponentially, which will cause increasing satellite collisions and consequent increasing space debris. One evening you might think you see a falling star and want to put it in your pocket as the song goes, but instead you end up with a severe concussion.

Beyond our Congregation



The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center

Join us at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center, a Magical UU Place and experience near Highlands, NC

- **Register today for Youth CONferences!** Gather with youth from around the southeast. <https://www.themountainrlc.org/cons> High School CON – Dec 1-3
- **Apply now to be a YouthCON youth leader** in the Spring, planning weekend Jan 19-21: <https://www.themountainrlc.org/pal-application>
- **Early bird pricing is now available for Music Week** April 18- 23. <https://www.themountainrlc.org/music-week>
- **Personal Retreats** -- Join us in the cool mountain air; combine a personal retreat with a farm or other event and local explorations.
- **Join a passionate Mountain team** and be part of making a difference for individuals and our wider world! Available positions and application at <https://www.themountainrlc.org/jobs> - competitive compensation, including medical insurance and retirement.

We look forward to seeing you at The Mountain soon! [themountainrlc.org](https://www.themountainrlc.org) or 828-526-5838