



February 2020

Stewardship Campaign

The UUFF's 2020 Stewardship Campaign will kick-off with the Sunday Service on Feb. 16. This annual campaign raises funds for the Fellowship's new fiscal year which begins July 1. It pays for all our operating costs including the salaries of our paid staff. It also pays for all our programs, events and activities, like the UUFF's religious education of our youth, the beautiful music you hear on Sunday's, the community dinners we provide to help feed the hungry, the social justice programs we sponsor, and so much more. The funds we raise also help us pursue our dreams and goals as a Fellowship. Besides the Feb. 16 Kickoff, this year's Campaign also includes a Variety Talent Show on Feb. 22 (*see separate article for details*) and our 27th Annual "At Your Service" Auction on April 18.

In addition to the special fundraising events, the Campaign also conducts a pledge drive. This is our way of securing commitments of financial support from our members and friends. Since pledges cover roughly 85 percent of our expenses, having these funding commitments in advance allows us to more effectively build our organizational budget for the year.

"Pledging a significant financial contribution is the equivalent of signing the membership book every year, even if you aren't an official member," said Curt Swinburne, co-chair of the UUFF's Community Action Committee. "We all join something. We all believe in something. When we make a pledge of financial support, we are in effect saying that we belong to UUFF and that we believe in its mission, its people and its future."

"When you give to this congregation, you are receiving all that it has to offer because you are UUFF," Swinburne continued. "Collectively we all are UUFF, so when we give, we receive. If this sounds like a spiritual message of interdependence, it's because giving money to a cause that we truly believe in is a spiritual testament of faith."

Besides financial support, volunteers are also needed to help with the Pledge Drive. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the 2020 Stewardship Campaign Co-Chairs Lisa Wright (vocalisa@gmail.com) and Shari Pastore (shari.pastore@gmail.com).

~ Bill Johnson-Miles

Fellowship's Got Talent

You may have seen the television program “America’s Got Talent” with their great singers, dancers, comedians, magicians, and so much more. So now we are turning the spotlight on our local entertainers to see if our “Fellowship’s Got Talent.”

Come join us Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Fellowship for a night of fun, frivolity and foolishness with our 2020 Pledge Drive Variety Talent Show. Doors to the “theater” open at 6:30 p.m. and the “curtain” rises at 7 pm. Besides the great entertainment, we will also provide light, fun, theater food. All the funds raised by this two-hour event will support the UUFF’s 2020 Stewardship Campaign.

There is still time to be part of the show - all talents are welcome. For those who missed our first "rehearsal" in January, we will be scheduling another session in early February. Watch the weekly announcements for details. Please be sure to signup via our online form [here](#). The final dress rehearsal will be held 12-4 pm on Saturday, Feb. 15. For more information, contact Lisa Manion, laughingriver@gmail.com, 703-975.-2725.

~ Lisa Manion, Variety Show Director



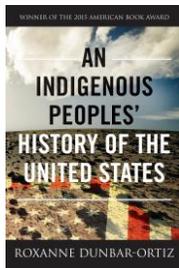
The UUFF’s annual *At Your Service Auction* will be here before you know it. Slated for April 18, it’s destined to be one of the year’s most popular events. Guests bid on a variety of creative items and services while enjoying wonderful refreshments, entertaining auctioneers and a lively atmosphere. It’s part of the UUFF’s Stewardship Campaign.

It’s never too early to start thinking about some great ideas for this year’s auction, so put your imagination to work and come up with some practical, whimsical, tasty, entertaining, time-saving, handy, and creative ideas. Categories for donations are: Recreation, Tours & Excursions; Services & Instruction; Dinners & Parties; and our Silent Auction, which includes prepared foods, arts & crafts, and miscellaneous items.

Auction forms will be available in March, and we’ll display sample catalogs so those new to the event can see the kinds of things that have been offered in the past. If you offered a service or event at our last auction that hasn’t been scheduled yet, now is the time to make plans to follow through. We’re looking forward to a whirlwind of activities in the next few months!

~ Maryann Brown

Common Read to take place on Sundays in February



It is said that history is written by victors. What if virtually everything you were taught about the “discovery of America” and the westward expansion of the United States is wrong? In 2020, the United States will approach the 400th anniversary of the much-mythologized encounter at Plymouth between colonists and those native to the land. The book *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, this year’s Common Read, sets the record straight. This Common Read invites UU congregations, communities, and individuals to explore American history from the perspective of those who were the victims of genocide and whose land was stolen.

An alternate version, *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States for Young People*, is also available. Participants may choose to read either version of the book, depending on their personal preference. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United State* is also available in audio format.

Through the Common Read, UUs from throughout the country read and discuss the same book. It is designed to build community in our congregations and our movement by giving diverse people a shared experience. The discussion group will meet on Feb. 9, 16 and 23. [Click here](#) to register. For information or to obtain a copy of the book, contact Lois Colbridge. If needed, childcare will be provided with advanced registration.

“This may well be the most important U.S. history book you will read in your lifetime.” ~ Robin D.G. Kelley, author of *Freedom Dreams*

~ Lois Colbridge



The General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) meets in Providence, RI, June 24-28. Imagine an event with you and 3,000-4,000 of your closest UU friends. That’s the experience of the UUA General Assembly (GA), the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists. It’s a 5-day immersive experience where you may participate in worship, witness, learning, connecting,

and making policy for the UUA through the democratic process. You’ll leave with renewed energy and innovative ideas to share with your congregation and community-at-large!

Anyone may attend, and all member congregations have voting delegates. To find more information and to register, visit <https://www.uua.org/ga>. If you would like to serve as a voting delegate representing the UUFF, please contact Rev. Doug McCusker or Debbie Brock, our UUFF president.

The theme for this year’s GA is *Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!* We are rooted in our history and theology. A major focus of GA will be partnerships with Indigenous leaders in the Northeast to explore how to co-exist in right relationship with one another and with the land we occupy.

We are inspired to continue in a transformation of our faith to be more inclusive and anti-oppressive. The Commission on Institutional Change will deliver its final report and engage attendees in exploring how to act to effect change based on their recommendations. GA will provide learning opportunities for leaders to experience this work first-hand, and to take it back home.

We are ready to take action in the face of rising white nationalism, authoritarianism and climate destruction. The need for our UU values of justice, equity, compassion and liberation rises each day. As the 2020 elections approach, UUs across the country will be mobilizing to “UU the VOTE,” working as people of faith, living out our values in service of all our intersecting justice commitments.

~Lois Colbridge

News & Notes

Gentle Yoga: Gentle Yoga with Anita Holle meets each Wednesday morning. Please arrive early enough to sign in and be set up to begin at 8:45 am. ~ *Nancy Michael*

Women's Group: This group meets on the third Monday of the month at 7 pm. On Feb. 17, the group will meet at Mian Noodle House located at 1005 Prince Anne Street in Fredericksburg. Drop by for conversation and connection. Newcomers are especially welcomed. Ask to join the UUFF's Women's Group on [Facebook](#). ~ *Susan Lovegrove*

Green Sanctuary Group: This group meets the third Friday of each month at 6 pm in the Board Room at UUFF. Their next meeting will be held Feb. 21. For more information, contact John Bernard or Heather Gray. ~ *BJM*

Social Justice Committee: SJC meets the third Thursday each month at 6 pm in the Board Room at UUFF. Their next meeting will be held Feb. 20. For more information, contact one of the co-chairs: John Bernard or Eunice Haigler. Check out the SJC upcoming events and activities on the SJC Bulletin Board in the UUFF Front Lobby and on [Facebook](#). ~ *BJM*

Monday Night Music Group: They meet on the first and third Monday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm in the high school room at the UUFF. In February that's the 3rd and 17th. For more information, contact Lee Criscuolo, ziggy22553@gmail.com. ~ *Lee Criscuolo*

Insight Meditation Community of Fredericksburg: They are providing a comfortable and supportive environment for individuals seeking to meditate in a group setting and for those new to the practice of meditation. Join them at 7 pm every Thursday at the UUFF. [Click here](#) for more information. ~ *Bill Brooks*

UUFF Document Repository: UUFF has a Google Drive where you can access copies of all our Policies and Procedures, By-Laws, RE documents, and other important items. The Document Repository is meant for anyone at the Fellowship to view by [clicking here](#), so that you have access to any important information. ~ *Nancy Michael*

Intergenerational Discussion Group: The UUFF youth invite the grown-up to join them Sunday, February 28th from 12:15 - 1:45 for their monthly Intergenerational Discussion Group meeting. Please bring a bag lunch and an open mind. The youth will choose a timely topic and bring a dessert to share. See you then! ~ *Chris Johns*

Youth Group Meeting: The UUFF Youth and their advisors meet on Sundays after service from 12:15 - 1:45 in the High School room (aka the couch room). Teens in grades 9 - 12 are welcome to join them for community building and faith exploration! Please contact Chris Johns, Director of Lifespan Religious Education at uuffva.dre@gmail.com for more information. ~ *Chris Johns*

Art Workshop: The UUFF is offering the art workshop "Create your Own Collage" on a Sunday afternoon to be announced upon availability. The cost is \$24 for a three-hour class. For more information, contact Anita Holle, anitalouiseholle@gmail.com, 540-287-7230. ~ *Anita Holle*

Lively Death Discussion Group: Learn about "Medical Care As We Approach Death" at a discussion group from 2-4 pm on Feb. 16 at the UUFF. The guest speaker is Dr. Wayland Marks, a board-certified geriatrician who practiced in

Fredericksburg for 42 years before his retirement. Marks was awarded the Partners in Aging Gratitude Award for the “person who exemplifies the principal of advocating for the senior population in Fredericksburg.” The award was later renamed in his honor. If you plan to attend or need more information, send an email to Gloria Lloyd, loundsfloria@msn.com, or Patrick Neustatter, pneustatter@aol.com. ~ *BJM*

Healthy Habits for a Healthy Heart: February is American Heart Month. Heart disease is the number one cause of death for both men and women, and half of all Americans have at least one of the top three risk factors for heart disease. At the next “Lunch and Learn – Ask a Dietitian Series” event registered dietitians Faye Krause and Marsha Luckett will discuss risk factors for heart disease along with ways to reduce those risks. Bring your lunch and questions to the lunchtime event, 12-1 pm on Feb. 6 at the UUFF, and wear red. This program is provided on the first Thursday of each month through May 7, 2020, in partnership with the Fredericksburg Food Co-op. For more information, contact Gloria Lloyd, Lloydsgloria@msn.com. ~ *Gloria Lloyd*

Coming To The Table: The UUFF Social Justice Committee, following the seven principles of our congregation, will be presenting “Coming To The Table” at 6:30 pm on Feb. 28. *Coming To The Table* is a national racial reconciliation organization (<https://comingtothetable.org/>) that works together to create a just and truthful society that acknowledges and seeks to heal from the racial wounds of the past, from slavery and the many forms of the racism it spawned. Their goal is to dismantle systems of racial inequality, injustices and oppression. This SJC event will feature special guest Gaye Adegbalola, nationally recognized Blues musician and Fredericksburg NAACP vice president. This is a free event and open to the public. Join us and let's build some relationships. For more information, contact Eunice Haigler, 540-455-9454, or John Bernard, 571-241-7074. ~ *Eunice Haigler*

Wondering Out Loud

Rev. Doug McCusker



I consider myself an endurance person. I can start a book and pick it up and put it down many times. But by golly, I will finish it! When I was younger, I ran in endurance races not to compete, but for the love of running. In fact, it was the camaraderie with my fellow runners that kept me going. However, there were setbacks and injuries. In order to run in the San Diego Rock and Roll marathon in 1997, I had to have a cortisone shot in my heel just to get to the starting line, much less finish it.

Ministry can sometimes be like running a marathon. It takes a lot of resilience and endurance to always be present to the needs of the congregation. It is certainly not a solo effort. There are many others running this race with me. And the rewards are beyond measure. There is nothing I'd rather be doing at this point in my life. But after all the sermons, memorial services, weddings, pastoral care sessions, committee meetings, community outreach, and emails these last four and a half years, it's time to start planning to take a breather so I can be with you all for the long haul.

Therefore, I will be going on sabbatical starting right after General Assembly on June 28 through October 31, 2020. The Board of Trustees has appointed our Intern Minister, Michele Nierle as the Sabbatical Minister while I am away. I still have a lot of miles to run with you all in the next five months. And yet, I am also excited about the rest up ahead. I completely trust that Michele and you all will deepen your relationship and do some great ministry together while I am away.

~ *Rev. Doug McCusker*

The Board has approved the budget for fiscal year 2021. The budget shows some growth and reflects much of the first year of the five year Strategic Plan. This budget will be available for you to view as part of the pledge drive. If you have questions, contact our pledge drive managers Lisa Manion and Shari Pastore, any board member, or Rev. McCusker. The pledge drive this year will kick off with a talent show on Feb. 22 from 7-9 pm. I hope you can be there.



We are in the process of updating the address and phone number list. There are still some who have not gotten the word about the appropriate use of this list. It can only be used for Fellowship business, not as a mailing list for other causes. **EVEN IF YOU ARE SURE THE MEMBERSHIP AGREES WITH YOUR CAUSE.** First, we are diverse in thought and political persuasion, and we have a clear policy that we will not use this list in that way.

UUFF needs you. As is true of every organization, the Fellowship needs qualified leaders to ensure that we continue to be a vital congregation that serves not only its members but the larger community as well. But stepping into a leadership position can be daunting. Fortunately, learning opportunities are available where current and potential leaders can acquire needed knowledge and skills.

The UUA Southern Region staff is coming to Virginia to present a series of four workshops that will meet the first Saturday from March through June. Attendees will learn skills that can help them in their personal and professional lives as well. This training can help prepare you for the next step in serving your UUFF. Registration is \$120 (to cover the cost of food at the sessions). For more information about this opportunity for personal and spiritual growth, please talk with Lois Colbridge.

~ Deborah Brock

Ms. ~~Chris~~ The Children Want YOU!

Once upon a time, there was a Fellowship, who for whatever reason, tended to keep the children “over there.” Classes were “over there.” Children were rarely seen in service because, well, they were “over there.” Even the Youth Group teens, were “over there,” or more precisely, over at Hyperion (back in the day...).



Happily, things have changed. The main hall Fellowship feels more welcoming to our younger congregants. Children are in the service every week. Youth have a place in the pulpit as Worship Associates, serve on the Board of Trustees, and as staff in the RE classroom. In fact, they have gone well beyond our doors, serving as youth leaders in the Region and UUA at large. Is this because of Rev. Doug’s welcoming presence or my insistent nagging? Hard to say. Either way, it’s awesome!

But there is something still missing. With all these wonderful advancements in how our children and youth participate in congregational life, there is a dearth of teachers and assistants in the classrooms. And the children need them. Desperately. They need to get to know you as people so they can choose their mentors when Coming of Age time rolls around (September 2020!). They need to see that grown-ups are willing to commit time to their education. And if grown-ups commit themselves to the religious education, our children and youth begin to see that their place in this faith and our community is valuable. Not just to them, frankly, but to the health of Unitarian Universalism.

I could go on, but I won’t. I will just ask that you [click here](#) or email me at uuffva.dre@gmail.com to let me know that you are willing to step up and be a valuable member of this shared ministry. Because, well, the children want YOU!

~ Chris Johns

Inter(n)connections with Michele Nierle

To start the new year, I decided to participate in a labyrinth meditation at my home church in Glen Allen, Virginia. The indoor space was beautiful and simply adorned, with warm twinkle lights, soft music, and there was a sense of quiet reverence infusing the room. A labyrinth is an ancient spiral-like path which symbolizes the path of life. While proceeding on a labyrinth, one typically finds themselves taking several severe turns, eventually leading to a center, then reversing to turn back out.

There is no way to get lost on a labyrinth, which brings me much comfort, being directionally challenged. On this occasion, as I turned and turned towards center, I contemplated the many little turns my life has taken in 2019. I often didn't know which direction I was headed but trusted that center would be found. On the way out, the winding path suggested the many turns to come in 2020, which will be new, exciting, frustrating, scary, or any combination of these!

The bends, twists, turn-arounds, and squiggles of our lives are part of the path and can teach us about resilience. We can reflect back, recognize, and celebrate that we turned (or were turned) where needed in order to move forward and towards center. And perhaps that reflection offers strength in knowing that the turns to come are navigable, exciting, and maybe not so frightening.

~Michele Nierle

UUFF ART GALLERY

The Art Exhibition at UUFF continues to feature the collages of Fredericksburg artist Ginny Martineau. Her dance of images allows a limitless range of emotions to erupt. She uses magazines, books and other forms of print to create her work. Feelings that erupt can seem universal as well as personal. Because one image is juxtaposed with another image, or with a color or texture, collage is a medium as close to the artist's stream-of-consciousness as possible. You can see more of her work, and take collage classes, in her new studio/gallery/art classroom at Freedom Arts, 10813 Courthouse Road, Suite 110, in Fredericksburg.

~Patricia Smith

Art Of Protest



Are you an activist for social change? Do you sometimes employ visual tactics to help your cause succeed? Or are you an artist whose work is aligned with social justice movements? The UUFF Gallery wants to display your art, photographs, posters, etc. in our *Art Of Protest* exhibit March 1

through April 26. For a prospectus and to submit photos of your work, email Pat Smith (pasmith12345@msn.com). Submissions are due Feb. 10.

Sunday Discussion Group



Sunday Discussions are intended for people who enjoy discussing controversial public policy issues. The group meets 12-1 pm after the service on most first and third Sundays of the month. Participants are encouraged to suggest controversial topics of interest and to moderate those discussions. For more information, contact Rick Neil. Here are the upcoming topics:

- Feb. 2 – Why is the United States so Bad at Foreign Policy?
- Feb. 16 – When Should Collective Rights Take Precedence over Individual Rights?
- March 1 – Should the U.S. require everyone to do two years of national service in civilian jobs or in the military?

COMMUNITY ACTION CORNER

A Service About Service

Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 8, and make sure to attend the UUFF Service About Service. Then following the regular Sunday service on March 8, attend the Community Action Service Fair and learn about opportunities to serve our community as part of the Fellowship. This is an opportunity for all to sign up for projects, share your service experience, and get connected.

Join the Community Dinner Team

In the past three and a half years that UUFF has been responsible for providing a monthly dinner for the community, and in doing so we have fed more than 4,500 people. The team that plans and organizes this dinner that takes place the 4th Monday of each month at St. George's Episcopal Church is looking for additional volunteer leaders to help with this effort. There are more opportunities than just cooking and serving. You can help plan meals, shop, organize volunteers, or even wash aprons every month. This is a wonderful way to practice UU's 2nd principle ("Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.") or to fulfill our New Years' resolution to be of service to neighbors in need. If you have questions, feel free to call or text Amy Ridderhof at 540-850-8258 or email her at amy@dolovewalk.net.

Community Action Opportunities

The Share the Plate Offertory on Feb. 2 will benefit the Mental Health America organization in Fredericksburg and Share the Plate on Feb. 16 will support the Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic. Community Action Committee meetings are held the first Monday of each month. The next meeting begins at 6:30 pm on Feb. 3 at the Courtyard Marriott hotel in downtown Fredericksburg.

SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30AM

Monthly Theme: Resilience

Resilience is like a tree being able to flexibly lean and bend with the wind. Of course, all the action that we can observe is above the surface. The tree's flexibility depends on a healthy root system that can sustain it in times of turbulence.

Well, another kind of leaning is just as invisible and as important: the practice of leaning and swaying with those next to them. No one makes it through the windstorms alone. While resilience has a lot to do with what is *inside us*, it equally depends on what is *between us*. Forget solo act; think community choir!

We survive our pain by having the strength to tell others about it. We find the courage to make our way through the dark only when we sense we are not alone. Internal and individual grit only gets us so far; empathy, assurance and love from others gets us the rest of the way. Resilience has everything to do with the water within which we swim and the web of connections that surround us. Resilient people arise from resilient relationships!

~ Rev. Doug McCusker, Adapted from February 2020 Soul Matters Packet

February 2

What We Need to Heal, Viola Abbitt

Healing is a necessary part of resilience. But what is necessary to help ourselves and others heal, and perhaps even heal the world? Join us as we welcome Viola Abbitt to the pulpit. Since September 2019, Viola Abbitt has been serving as the half-time minister for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Poughkeepsie and the First Unitarian Society of Westchester. Prior to that, she served as the ministerial intern at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Greater Springfield in Massachusetts. She also worked in various positions as a member of the laity, as well as paid staff, at UU congregations in upstate New York. Viola was a contributor to the liturgical materials for the Promise and the Practice of Our Faith Campaign in 2018 and served on the President Search Team for Meadville Lombard Theological School. She is currently

a member of the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Board of UU Wellspring.

February 9

The Resilience of Jazz, Rev. Doug McCusker

Jazz music is a powerful vehicle for human expression. From its very beginning, it has been infused with tears of tragedy and a joy of liberation. Jazz is a music of transcendence with roots in slavery and the wings of resilience. Come hear our jazz ensemble, listen to poetry and let your spirit soar.

February 16

Growing Together, Rev. Doug McCusker

Our Fellowship has changed and grown over the years reflecting the abundant gifts that each member brings. Together, we shape our destiny, never knowing what the future holds. We are the stewards of the health and resilience of this beloved community. As we kick-off our 2020 Stewardship Campaign, let us renew our pledge of mutuality by reflecting on the importance of generously giving our time, talent and treasure so that our Fellowship can continue to serve the needs of the world.

February 23

One Small Step, Rev. Geraldine Amaral

What does it take to make lasting changes in our lives? The philosophy of Kaizen, developed in Japan, offers a unique but simple approach to making changes and achieving goals. This philosophy is similar to what Jesus taught us in the Parable of the Mustard Seed. Join Rev. Geraldine Amaral as she explains how to apply the Kaizen philosophy in our every-day lives, and ask what “mustard seeds” are you hoping to plant in your life? Rev. Geraldine Amaral is a minister in the United Metaphysical Churches. She helps people apply esoteric principles in pragmatic ways and gain insights and personal transformation. She says she has a “thirst and passion for mystical, spiritual and esoteric wisdom.” Her work offers a blend of spirituality, psychology, humor, philosophy, literature and personal empowerment. She is author of *Tarot Celebrations*, creator of an instructional video “Tarot 1-2-3” and a regular columnist for *Pathways Magazine*.

From the Editors' Desk...



Each newsletter will now include the section “From the Editors’ Desk” tucked down here at the bottom. This is where you will find the article submission deadline for the following month’s newsletter and any other information you may need.

MARCH Newsletter Deadline: Saturday, February 22

Contributors will receive a confirmation email of article submission within 48 hours.

Contact [Bill](#) or [Shari](#) if you do not receive one.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the UUFF is to nurture learning, inspire spiritual insights, create compassionate relationships, and lovingly transform our community and the world.

VISION STATEMENT

To be a catalyst for spiritual growth and social justice with service as its guide and love at its core.



GENERAL OFFICE HOURS: Mon-Thu 10am-3pm

OFFICE ADMIN HOURS: Mon & Wed 12pm-4pm

Fri 11pm-3pm

REV. McCUSKER'S OFFICE HOURS: Tue-Thurs 10am-6pm

Drop-in hours: Wed & Thurs 3-5pm

Please make an appointment for any other times.

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Treasurer: Ron Wasem.....540-373-2929

BOARD MEMBERS

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