



January 2020

Pledge Drive

Volunteers needed for 2020 Annual Stewardship Campaign and Pledge Drive

Each year, the UUFF conducts a stewardship campaign to raise funds for our expenses for the new fiscal year which begins on July 1. Our expenses include our building mortgage, utilities, staff salaries, program activities, and much more. The funds we raise also help us pursue our dreams and goals as a Fellowship. Our 2020 Stewardship Campaign will kick-off with the Sunday Service on Feb. 16. Other special events include a Variety Show on Feb. 22 (*see separate article for details*) and our 27th Annual "At Your Service" Auction on April 18.

Throughout the stewardship campaign, we will conduct 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. More information about our 2020 budget will appear in future editions of this newsletter. In the meantime, volunteers are needed to help with the Pledge Drive. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact the 2020 Stewardship Campaign Co-Chairs Lisa Wright (vocalisa@gmail.com) and Shari Pastore (shari.pastore@gmail.com).

~ Lisa Manion, 2020 Stewardship Campaign

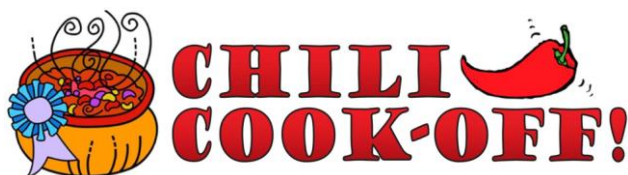


It's time to play the music! It's time to light the lights! It's time to get things started for the Pledge Drive Variety Show! As part of the 2020 Annual Stewardship Campaign and Pledge Drive, the UUFF is hosting a Variety Show from 7-9 pm on Feb. 22. We're looking for performers, musicians, singers, dancers, jugglers, magicians, comedy writers, actors, stagehands, concessions staff, clean-up artists, rehearsal snack makers and more.

Our first rehearsal will be held 12-4 pm on Jan. 18 at the Fellowship. Our final/dress rehearsal will be held on Feb. 15, also from 12-4 pm. Snacks and drinks will be provided during the rehearsals. To volunteer and/or sign up to perform, please fill out our online form at <https://forms.gle/YGws5wX7E3rgMksr8>.

If you are a performer who will be auditioning, and you need musical accompaniment for your act, please submit your recording or the sheet music as soon as possible. For more information, contact Lisa Manion, laughingriver@gmail.com.

~ Lisa Manion, Variety Show Director



Think your chili is something special? Put your recipe to the test against fellow UUFF chefs in a battle of the best in our sixth annual Chili Cook-Off to be held 6-8 pm on Jan. 25. Talk about chili can get serious, with regional loyalties and level of heat sparking plenty of debate. To satisfy all chefs, we'll have two judging categories, carnivore and vegetarian, and every possible variation is welcome. We will let the people decide whose chili rules, with fan favorite awards in both categories. Fabulous prizes will be awarded.

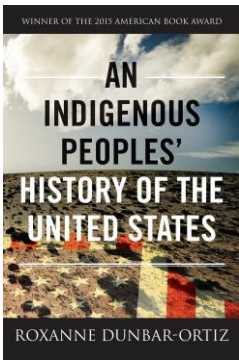
If you would like to join the competition, please contact Susan Lovegrove (540-226-4748, susan.g.lovegrove@gmail.com) by Jan. 23 with the category you will be entering. Your chili must be fully prepared and in a crockpot. Nothing can be heated or cooked at the Fellowship. If you don't want to prepare a chili, please bring bread, salad or another side dish to contribute to the occasion. The Friendship Committee will provide drinks and there will be a cooler for BYO beer.

~ Susan Lovegrove, Friendship Committee

Common Read to take place on Sundays in February

“Under the crust of that part of Earth called the United States of America are buried the bones, villages, fields, and sacred objects of the first people of that land – the people who are often called American Indians or Native Americans. Their descendants, also called Indigenous Peoples, carry memories and stories of how the United States came to be the nation we know today.”

This quote appears on page 1 of the book *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People*. This book, along with *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (Beacon Press, 2015), have been chosen by the UUA for this year's Common Read. Indigenous Peoples' history and rights will be a focus at the UUA General Assembly 2020 (see separate article).



The year 2020 marks the 400th anniversary of the much-mythologized encounter at Plymouth between colonists and those native to the land. This year's Common Read books challenge readers to learn U.S. history through a narrative that centers the story, the experiences and the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples. They upend the myths and misinformation that have been promulgated by leaders and media. They ask readers to reconsider the origin story of the United States taught to every U.S. school child. This Common Read invites UU congregations, communities and individuals to learn the story of trauma and resilience that is the Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States.

Participants may choose to read either version of the book, depending on their personal preference. The original version, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, is also available in audio format. 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.

~ Lois Colbridge & Chris Johns



The General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association

(UUA) meets in Providence, RI, June 24-28. The theme for the 2020 General Assembly (GA) is "Rooted, Ready and Inspired." At this annual

UUA meeting, attendees worship, witness, learn, connect and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend, and all member congregations have voting delegates. To register and to find more information, visit <https://www.uua.org/ga>.

We Are Rooted: To know where we are headed, we must be in touch with our theological and historical roots. A major focus of GA will be partnership with Indigenous leaders in the Northeast to explore how to co-exist in right relationship with one another and with the land we occupy. Attendees will deepen their understanding of UU's role in European settlement and focus on moving toward acting in solidarity with Indigenous communities.

We Are Inspired: We are the one we have been waiting for. We have been engaged in a transformation of our faith to be more inclusive and anti-oppressive. Delegates will choose the Association's senior elected volunteer leader with the election of a new Moderator. The Commission on Institutional Change will deliver its final report and engage attendees in exploring how to take action 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: Our UU values call us to take action in the face of rising white nationalism, authoritarianism and climate destruction. The need for our 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 Jan. 20, the group will meet at Guru Indian Restaurant now located at 3140 Cowan Blvd. 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 Jan. 17. 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 Jan. 16. 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 January that's the 6th and 20th. 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

Awakened Mind Retreat: The Insight Meditation Community of Fredericksburg will present their winter day-long retreat Application of Bodhicitta (awakened mind) from 9 am to 4 pm on Jan. 25 at the UUFF. This will be led by Dan Hirshberg. [Click here](#) for details and to register. ~ Bill Brooks

Intergenerational Discussion Group: This month, the Intergenerational Discussion Group (UUFF's high school youth) returns to its regular spot on the fourth Sunday, which for this month is Jan. 26. Please bring a bag lunch and an open mind and join our youth and youth advisors for some lively conversation. Dessert will be provided. This month's topic is TBD. ~ Chris Johns



Choosing the "Best" Diet in 2020: The new year brings resolutions to improve your diet and adopt a healthier lifestyle. Faye Krause, registered dietitian for our UUFF December "Lunch & Learn – Ask a Dietitian" series, along with Marsha Lockett and Nile Harris, will provide pros and cons of the wide variety of popular diets to help you decide what's right for you. Bring your lunch and questions to the lunchtime event, 12-1 pm on Jan. 2 at the UUFF. 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 racism it spawned. Their goal is to dismantle systems of racial inequality, injustices and oppression. Let's build some relationships. The SJC will have a special guest for the kickoff program. For more information, contact Eunice Haigler, 540-455-9454, or John Bernard, 571-241-7074. ~ Eunice Haigler

Wondering Out Loud

Rev. Doug McCusker



Several years ago, I made a New Year's resolution to stop lying. It was a hard one to keep. I'm not talking about the bald face lies or as we call them today, "alternative facts." I'm talking about good old-fashioned blarney. You know, little exaggerations and truth stretching to amplify a story or to claim some achievement that I made up.

I'd been doing this since I was a kid and it had become a nasty habit. I'd get caught in the lie once in a while, but for the most part they were innocuous embellishments that only I knew were untrue. Every time I would say one, I would feel a twinge in my stomach as my conscience called bulls**t. Then I would rationalize it as a harmless fib and move on.

That in and of itself was another little lie, but this time to me. I was compensating for thinking that my real-life story wasn't enough. I don't remember why I decided to quit cold turkey. I suppose being in seminary and doing a lot of self-examination had something to do with it. The first step toward recovery was to believe in myself. My true story is full of amazing things that doesn't need any extra sauce in order to taste good. I've been blessed, and to want more felt ungrateful.

The second step was to listen intently to others without having to one up them all the time. Basically, it required me to be present to my authentic truth and to listen to my thoughts before they came out of my mouth. That was probably the toughest part and it's still a work in progress. Living a life of integrity and being impeccable with my word is liberating. I highly recommend it.

~ Rev. Doug McCusker



President's Corner

DEBBIE BROCK

In November we celebrated another fabulous Thanksgiving buffet. Thank you to the Friendship Committee and all the folks who volunteered to help. Just before we ate, we held a Special Congregational Meeting, all of two minutes long. The congregation approved a bylaws change giving the youth representative voting rights. The current incumbent, Austin McNichols, exercised that right at the joint Board/CoC meeting in December. This joint meeting was dedicated to a discussion of the budget. You will see this budget as part of the annual pledge drive in February.

Those of us who attended services during the month of December were treated to the lovely greens decorating the main hall. Let's give a shout out to the great team that made this happen. This is a special group of volunteers who helped make our holidays brighter.

The holidays are behind us and our lives are getting back to normal. This is true of our Fellowship lives

as well. We have many, many “silent” volunteers who make the Fellowship run smoothly. One of these is Ron Wasem. Ron does our accounting work. He gives the Fellowship many hours of work a week. He keeps track of our pledges, authorizes check writing, communicates with our bank, manages all of our accounts, and makes sure we follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. His work is so good it helped us satisfy the bank when we needed to refinance our loan this year. You can find Ron every Sunday morning in the office.

We all appreciate how much we depend on Hannelore Montgomery to keep our building clean and functional. But Hannelore spent much of this month in Germany visiting family (thanks for the great pics in Facebook.) Did you notice dishes piling up in the kitchen and running out of toilet paper in the bathrooms? No? Because James Sperlazza stepped up to fill in.

There are many of these “silent volunteers.” These are people, that giving of their time and talent make the Fellowship run smoothly and help us achieve our mission. I will try to mention others in future newsletters.

~ Deborah Brock



What are you doing out there?

Early one Sunday morning in December, I visited the Regester Chapel United Methodist Church to support the sister of my heart as she preached her first sermon. I couldn't stay for the whole service. I had to report for RE duty by 10 am, but during my time there, I enjoyed a warm welcome and the comfort of familiar rituals from my Presbyterian upbringing. I was moved by readings from scripture and sang the Advent hymn with gusto. If I am being honest, I was surprised at how easily this Presbyterian refugee and 20-year Unitarian Universalist relaxed into a morning of Christian worship.

The title of Keri's sermon was, “Do Something.” She spoke of the need for those assembled to move beyond Sunday mornings and take their beliefs in the form of actions into the rest of the week. She encouraged us to offer more than prayers and thoughts to those in need. I couldn't help but think how easily this sermon could have moved seamlessly from the Methodist pulpit to our own. But what hit me like a ton of truth bricks was when she said, “What are you doing out there that makes people want to come in here?” She was sharing something that her beloved childhood pastor said 15 years ago that she carries with her even now. I think that I will carry it with me for the rest of my life. “What are you doing out there that makes people want to come in here?”

I know as a Fellowship, we participate in community outreach and make space for Social Justice work, but what am I doing? Me? Personally? How am I showing up in such a way that it would make someone say, “Now there's a person living their faith and I want that, too?” I don't know the answer, but I offer it as a question for all of us to take with us into this new decade. What are we

doing out there that makes others want to come in here? I'd love to hear what you come up with. Wishing you an outstanding New Year!

~ Chris Johns



K-1 OWL Interest Form

Members of the Elementary OWL team and the Director of Lifespan Religious Education are currently planning to offer a new-to-us version of the Our Whole Lives series. Starting in late January, we will be offering OWL for children in Kindergarten and 1st grade. Those of you with children in these grades please to take a moment to [click here](#) and fill out this interest form. Thanks in advance!

~ Chris Johns

New Adult Religious Education Offering!

I am excited that UUFF has been selected to be a field test site for the new *Creating Theology Together* (CTT) course designed by the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School. For the last 3 years, we have offered the *Build Your Own Theology* course to identify our deeply held values and develop our personal theologies on who we want to be. CTT offers a new perspective of a shared UU theology that grounds our social justice values in covenantal community. And it is designed to be multi-generational. CTT hits all aspects of our congregational mission: nurturing learning, inspiring spiritual insights, creating compassionate relationships and offering a path to transformation for ourselves and our community. It's as if they designed the course just for us.

There will be 12 classes broken into three Units. Each Unit will start with a Saturday potluck (the first being on January 11th) and then run every other Wednesday to allow time for personal reflection. Please [click here](#) to register and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. Join me, Chris Johns, Michele Nierle and David Boone as we embark on this adventure together.

~ Rev. Doug McCusker

Inter(n)connections
with Michele Nierle

I used to teach yoga at a community college, and it was very rewarding. I enjoyed being able to explore the different principles of yoga (some similarities to UUism)

along with the physical aspects with students, and I also gained new insights from the students' stories and perspectives.

One week, we were working on one of the ethical principles, *satya*, which means truthfulness. We were discussing that what we believe to be true changes over time as we change, and that the stories about ourselves that we think are true are often false.

One student had the courage to share a story about her encounter with truth. She explained that she grew up being called "clumsy" or a "clutz," and received other equally negative harassment by the people who were supposed to protect and support her. Then, she enrolled in a dance class. She said that it was through that class that she found grace – that the story she had been told for so many years of her life was not true. Ever since then, she has been dancing!

Sometimes a new experience allows us to discover that we've been carrying a story around with us that's not true. It might be a story that someone else told about us. As we embrace the New Year, and we focus on this month's theme of *integrity*, may we ask ourselves about the stories that we have been shaped by, and perhaps begin to rewrite the ones that don't let us dance.

~Michele Nierle

UUFF ART GALLERY

The January/February Art Exhibition at UUFF features Fredericksburg artists Ginny Martinez, Kathy Paz Craddock, and Kay Roscoe. They all create collages, compositions of materials and objects pasted over a surface. The opening reception will be held from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm on Jan. 5, following the Fellowship service.

For Ginny Martinez, when images from magazines and books are juxtaposed in an unintended way, she is always surprised, sometimes with a shock of recognition. She likes to "think outside the box," and the 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.

Martinez is a member of Darbytown Art Studio, as is Craddock. The intimacy of this small group of artists seems to nurture courage. Craddock suffers from conditions that affect her imagery. She suffers from a variety of auto-immune diseases that "at times leaves my body partially paralyzed." Her art journey is informed by "my daily struggle to cope and thrive while being sick." She uses magazine images, particularly from 1930-1965, fabric, canvas and mixed media in her collages.

Roscoe was a watercolor and pastel artist until she began creating collages about three years ago. The process of collage-making brings her much joy. She usually begins with an artistic intention that is charged with feeling. Her works are abstract. She has studied with many Virginia artists. Her main venues

for exhibiting her work are FCCA in Fredericksburg, and the James River Art League in Richmond.

Please contact the office administrator at UUFF for viewing hours. The phone number is 540-310-4001.

~ Patricia Smith

COMMUNITY ACTION CORNER

With the beginning of winter, you may meet people in Fredericksburg looking to get out of the cold to seek food and shelter. Here is a listing of the local services available:

Shelter –

- Fredericksburg Continuum of Care, 540-358-5801 - They assist in finding shelter.
- The Micah website (<https://www.micahfredericksburg.org>) has a shelter guide which lists shelters in the local area and DC suburbs. From the home page click *Get Help*, then *Local Resources*, and then scroll down to *NOVA Shelters*.
- Micah Cold Weather Shelter, 48 Kings Highway, Fredericksburg, 540-361-7808
- Thurman Brisben Center, Fredericksburg, 540-899-9853 - 80 bed high demand programmatic emergency shelter for men, women and children.
- Beverly Warren Emergency Shelter, Dumfries, 703-221-3188
- Prince William County Winter Shelter, Woodbridge, 703-792-7648
- Bill Mehr Drop In Center, Woodbridge, 703-792-7648
- The Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center, Woodbridge

Local Food and Support –

- The Micah website (<https://www.micahfredericksburg.org>) has a Community Meals Calendar which lists community breakfasts, dinners and food pantries available seven days a week. From the home page click *Get Help*, then *Local Resources*, then scroll down to *Community Meals*.
 - Micah Hospitality Center, 1013 Princess Anne St., Fredericksburg, 540-479-4116 - A place for breakfast, showers, hygiene goods, clothing, sack lunches, a mailing address, and a warm sense of community.
 - Thurman Brisben Center, Fredericksburg, 540-899-9853
 - Fredericksburg Area Food Bank, 3631 Lee Hill Dr., Fredericksburg, (540) 371-7666
 - Encounter Church Food Pantry, 12240 Five Mile Rd., Fredericksburg, (540) 786-3335
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Sunday Discussion Group



Sunday Discussions are intended for people who enjoy discussing controversial public policy issues. We meet from noon to 1pm on most 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. Participants are encouraged to suggest controversial topics of interest and to moderate those discussions.

Date	Moderator	Topic
Jan 5	Rick	"How Could Presidential Electors Fairly Represent All Voters in a State"
Jan 19	Fred	"Should the Sale of Flavored e-Cigarettes Be Banned?"

SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30AM

Monthly Theme: Expectation

Wholeness is never lost; it is only forgotten. Integrity rarely means that we need to add something to ourselves: it is more an undoing than a doing, a freeing ourselves from beliefs we have about who we are and ways we have been persuaded to “fix” ourselves... Often in reclaiming the freedom to be who we are, we remember some basic human quality, what we find is almost always a surprise but it is also familiar; like something we have put in the back of a drawer long ago...

~ Rachel Naomi Remen, *Kitchen Table Wisdom*

January 5

Moving Beyond the Representative You, Rev. Doug McCusker

Your representative is a version of you that’s sent into the world in your place. It’s a blander, less authentic person who stands in for you when it doesn’t feel safe to expose the real you. Think of how many representatives of you are out in the world. Maybe it’s time to call them back home and instead introduce the real you to the world.

January 12

A Hopeful Call to Action, Rev. Doug McCusker

Negativity and despair can wear us down. Our climate is changing and it is time to act. But first we must clean up our internal psychic pollution. In this At-Your-Service-Auction sermon won by John Bernard, we will explore the hopeful opportunities and developments right in front of us because of the amazing work going on at the local, regional and global level.

January 19

Responding with Creative Force, Michele Nierle

“As my sufferings mounted I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation — either to react with bitterness or seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course.”

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Today we will honor the integrity that Dr. King exemplified, and we'll explore what it means for us to "transform suffering into a creative force," with racial justice and reconciliation at the forefront of our collective healing.

January 26

Compassion and Choices, Maria Spencer

Modern medicine has changed end of life care. With the aid of advanced technologies, we can treat more illnesses and allow people to live longer, but sometimes these advances have a downside. They can extend life to an unreasonable extent and result in unnecessary suffering. Medical aid in dying allows a doctor to prescribe a lethal dose of medicine and empowers people to choose end-of-life-care that reflects their values, priorities and beliefs. Currently this is illegal in Virginia despite numerous attempts to pass a bill to allow it. Maria Spencer from Compassion and Choices will talk about the work of her organization to expand end of life options and provide advocacy for "this very important subject."

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.



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Office Admin: Nancy Michael.....540-310-4001
Dir. of Religious Ed: Chris Johns.....540-310-4001
Music Director: Jason Michael.....610-698-6896
Treasurer: Ron Wasem.....540-373-2929

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

OFFICE ADMIN HOURS: Tue & Thurs 9am-12pm
Fri 1:30pm-5:30pm

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

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

Please make an appointment for any other times.

BOARD MEMBERS

President: Debbie Brock.....540-841-1953
Vice Pres: Andy Cameron.....540-226-1963
Secretary: Lois Colbridge.....540-847-4189
Craig Cherry.....410-353-7150
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Steve Elstein.....540-371-5928
Austin McNichols.....Youth Member