



April 2022

Group Gathering Policy

This last month, the Building Reopening Task Force met to consider relaxing many of the provisions in the Group Gathering Policy. The [COVID Act Now Risk Factor](#) for our area fell from Very High to Medium in the wake of the sharp decline of the Omicron variant. The Board met via email and approved the Task Force's recommendations. The current policy can be accessed via the [Document Repository](#) and the [UUFF Homepage](#).

Some of the policy changes include removing the restriction that limited bathroom occupancy to only one person/family unit at a time. Social distancing was changed from mandatory to encouraged. Meetings no longer have a maximum time limit of 90 minutes. And now that the risk factor is Medium, there are no additional limits beyond the fire code for gathering sizes. This means that in-person Sunday worship and religious education classes are back. Masks are still mandatory for everyone in the building. But hymn singing is fine. We held our first in-person worship on Mar 6 in which 34 people attended.

As news spread about the reopening, many volunteers came together to clean and decorate the building. The RE Committee hung festive garlands in the hallway and pictures in the classrooms. The Interior Design team updated all the bulletin boards and posted photographs on the walls. Sunday Services committee put fresh flowers on the Chalice table. The Building and Grounds committee consulted with our Heating and Cooling service company about maximizing air flow. They also scheduled a congregation-wide cleanup day for Mar 26. The Music Committee is planning for the resumption of live music starting on Apr 3.

The Building Reopening Task Force will continue to meet as the pandemic risk stabilizes and will respond using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as the Virginia Department of Health. We are grateful for everyone's patience and understanding during this unprecedented time. We are glad to see that groups are scheduling social gatherings and renters are starting to reserve space. These are all positive signs that people are feeling safe to return to our cherished building in the company of others.

2023 Fiscal Year Pledge Drive

First of all, an enormous **THANK YOU** to all of you who submitted your pledges for our next UUFF fiscal year, particularly those who increased their pledge.

Our financial situation, however, remains urgent. Similar to other institutions like ours, Covid has cost us members and income. Major contributors have moved away. Others moved on as meeting online was too impersonal and they lost the sense of community. Before the pandemic, we always attracted many new members, but it's been difficult to do so without holding Sunday services and other functions in person.

At the same time, we're working feverishly to get back to normal. On March 6th we held our Sunday service at the Fellowship and online. Although there were some technical difficulties (which are being resolved), it was great gathering in the building with other UUs. The walls were decorated with members' and friends' pictures and we had "coffee and conversation" in front of the building. How wonderful to meet again in person!

Next month the choirs will be back live. RE is back! We are doing critical anti-racism work, cooking community dinners in person, having a combination Zoom and live auction, and planning social gatherings for the spring, including our annual picnic!

Now is a critical time as we start to renew our community after being apart for 2 years. We need to give generously now more than ever. With your help we'll make it through this critical financial situation.

The pledge campaign ends on April 1st. We haven't heard from at least 40 people yet and we've currently only reached

60% of our desired pledges.

If you haven't yet pledged, now is the time to do so. If you've already pledged, we're asking you to consider increasing your contribution if you are able to do so. You can add to your pledge by completing another pledge form, or emailing [Ron Wasem](#).

Pledge [ONLINE](#)! Or you can download the [Form](#), print it, and mail it in.

Contact [Curt Swinburne](#), if you need the form to be sent to you or if you have any questions about pledging.

~ Curt Swinburne, Eileen Carson & Diane Elstein
The Pledge Drive Committee

TENTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF MOVING INTO OUR PRESENT BUILDING

On April 20, 2012, the Fellowship celebrated the completion of our new building at 25 Chalice Circle with a ribbon cutting and 9 days later, on Sunday, April 29, the congregation gathered for a joyous first service, led by Rev. Walter Braman.

To commemorate our tenth anniversary this year, during our Sunday, May 1st service, Gae Pinschmidt will read her Welcome Home poem, which beautifully expresses her sentiments about the Fellowship. Gae wrote and read this poem at the service 10 years ago.

After the May 1st service, RE will hold a Maypole celebration for all to participate, after which the Friendship Committee will host a potluck.

Please come help us celebrate this ten-year anniversary!

~ *The Friendship Committee*

The May meeting of End Of Life Conversations group will be on Sunday May 1st at 2 pm and will feature The Longevity Project, an initiative by VCU in Richmond to reduce ageism, celebrate elderhood, and help make communities engaged and livable.

Specifically, they say they are trying to:

- Inspire leaders and policy makers and advocate for change to build communities that are engaged, livable, stable, and well, at local, statewide, and national levels
- Collaborate with local governments and encourage regional collaboration
- Promote the tenets of inclusive, equitable, person-centered communities (i.e. respect, opportunity, engagement, general accessibility, transportation access, health care access, and connectedness)

We would like to make this an in-person event but may not be able to get a local presenter and may be obliged to do it by Zoom (even though we know people are "Zoom-ed out.")

Mark your calendars. If necessary, we will meet on [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 854 2127 0680, Passcode: 155404).

As always, we will record this and distribute the link to view it later. And if you're having trouble connecting at the time, text Patrick at 540-809-4435.

Save the Date!
Join us for the Annual Congregational Meeting
May 22
after Sunday Service

Adult RE Series with Marcia Grimsley

Living More Fully with Marcia Grimsley, Professional Life Coach

Please join Marcia Grimsley for this three-part interactive series which aims to teach skillful living in today's world while reflecting UUFF fundamental principles. Each class will meet from 7:00 - 8:15 and are crafted to stand alone, giving the participants the option to register for one, two or all three.

Thursday, April 21st: Living Peacefully in a Chaotic World

Participants will explore creative ways to live more peacefully in these challenging times and learn techniques for reducing stress, worry, guilt, and fearful thinking and feeling. Marcia will also share techniques for reducing negative self-talk and use gratitude and forgiveness to enhance the quality of your life.

Thursday, April 28th: Creating and Maintaining Healthy Relation

The focus of this session will be fostering and sustaining positive and collaborative relationships. Not only will participants learn way to decrease and eliminate potential conflict with friends, family, and community, they will become more skillful at eliminating their own negative judgments and in dealing with difficult people

Thursday, May 5th: Just for Women: "A Woman's World, A Woman's Worth"

This class is open to all women (including those assigned male at birth) ages 18 and older. This class will explore:

1. A woman's value and uniqueness in today's fast-paced world.
2. Ways to improve self-esteem and enhance self-care and emotional well-being.
3. Raising a more self-reliant family.
4. Carving out time for You, while living a hectic lifestyle.

These classes will be offered in person at the UUFF, with a Zoom option as well. There will be a fee for the materials (one class \$10, two classes \$18, all three classes \$25). Please [click here](#) to get on the "Yes! I'm definitely interested! Send me details!" list or contact our DRE, [Chris Johns](#) for more information.

Hippity Hoppity Hooray! The Easter Egg Hunt is Back!

After a two-year hiatus, our Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Chris Johns, and the RE Committee are "hoppy" to report that the in person Easter Egg Hunt will be held immediately after the intergenerational service on Easter Sunday, April 17th! Please [click here](#) to register your children so we know how many eggs the Bunny needs to hide!

RE Volunteers Needed!

Now that we are heading back into the building, with all the wonderful things that go with the re-opening, the Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Chris Johns and the amazing UUFF kiddos are in need of help in the Sunday morning classrooms! Please email [Chris](#) to say you are willing to join in the fun!

River Cleanup

On **April 9** from **9 - 11 a.m.**, Come help clean up the river with Friends of the Rappahannock at Alum Springs Park. Let's clean up the trash and have fun outside! Bring a packed lunch and we'll have a picnic afterward.

It's election season again. As individuals, we passionately participate in the democratic process on behalf of candidates as well as issues. As UUs, we wholly endorse this via our 5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

However, our status as a tax-exempt religious organization requires that we adhere to IRS guidelines that state:

- Under the Internal Revenue Code, all section 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. Contributions to political campaign funds or public statements of position (verbal or written) made on behalf of the organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity. Violating this prohibition may result in denial or revocation of tax-exempt status and the imposition of certain excise taxes.
 - Certain activities or expenditures may not be prohibited depending on the facts and circumstances. For example, certain voter education activities (including presenting public forums and publishing voter education guides) conducted in a non-partisan manner do not constitute prohibited political campaign activity. In
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addition, other activities intended to encourage people to participate in the electoral process, such as voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, would not be prohibited political campaign activity if conducted in a non-partisan manner.

- On the other hand, voter education or registration activities with evidence of bias that (a) would favor one candidate over another; (b) oppose a candidate in some manner; or (c) have the effect of favoring a candidate or group of candidates, will constitute prohibited participation or intervention.

I most certainly am not a tax expert, so I have directly quoted the information from the IRS website. The Unitarian Universalist Association has also provided guidelines to help in interpreting the code. Please be in touch with Rev. Doug or Lois Colbridge if you have questions. As our Finance chair pointed out, even though we are not a profit-making organization we would still have to pay real estate tax if we lost our tax-exempt status. In 2020, that tax would have been \$17,000. Please be mindful of posts in our Facebook group as well as any other activities that might jeopardize our status.

~ Lois Colbridge

Board Business

A report to the congregation on what's happening. And yes, we're still meeting via Zoom ...

This is a brief summary of business that was discussed during the regularly monthly meeting of the UUFF Board of Trustees on March 10, 2022. The Board has been very busy recently, considering and voting on many items.

- Diane Elstein, co-chair of the annual Pledge Drive, gave a detailed account of the status of the drive. At the time of the meeting, we had received half of our pledge goal. Projecting ahead, Diane cautioned that it is unlikely that we will meet our goal. Factors contributing to this include that several past contributors have passed away, moved out of the area, or no longer actively participate in the Fellowship. Diane is contacting those who have yet to pledge. On a positive note, Diane reported that some contributors have increased their pledge.
- Lois noted that the salary and other compensation for FY23 for Ministerial Intern Roddy Biggs will be fully covered with funds received from the UUA Ministerial Salary Grant as well as from two anonymous donors.
- Rev. Doug reported on the return to in-person Sunday Services and other activities on March 6. The reopening was very warmly received. He said that while we are not back to the "old normal," it was still great getting back together. About 30-35 people attended the service and other activities in person, and there were 47 online connections. Assuming that there is not another increase in the COVID risk level, live music will resume on April 3, according to Music Director Jason Michael.
- Rev. Doug reported that the Intern Minister contract with Roddy Biggs has been signed by all parties and has been submitted to and acknowledged by the UUA. R.J. Boyd agreed to serve on the intern minister committee, along with other committee members Liesel Briggs, Eunice Haigler, and Curt Swinburne. The committee is not yet fully staffed, and we continue to consider candidates.
- Board members discussed the UUFF Social Media policy with specific reference to the provision that it does not allow posting regarding fundraisers by outside group to be posted to our Facebook group.
- There was discussion about how best to proceed with reopening to ensure that the Fellowship continues to be a healthy and growing congregation. Lois will reach out to staff from the UUA Southern Region office to discuss this with them.
- By-Laws were briefly reviewed with regard to changes that may be warranted. We encourage UUFF members to submit any changes that they would like us to consider. The By-Laws can be found in the Document Repository: [By-Laws](#). Please send your suggestions to [Lois Colbridge](#).

~ Lois Colbridge

**After approval by the Board, the full minutes of each meeting are available in the [Document Repository](#).
The Board meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. on [Zoom](#).
UUFF friends and members are welcome to attend.**

News & Notes

Basket Contributions: As the UUFF ventures further into the 21st century, we are adding text giving to our options of ways in which contributions may be made to the Fellowship. We're not able to pass the basket at services while we are meeting virtually. But you can make those "basket contributions" during the Sunday worship services on your phone. And when we return to in-person services, the text option will remain useful for times when you cannot attend, or don't have cash or checks with you.

To donate to the UUFF, text 844-963-2785. The first time you text this number, you will receive a registration link. Click the link and enter your contact and payment information, then tap "Process." After registration is complete, you will receive a verification text as well as a receipt via email. For future giving, simply send a text with the amount you wish to give, and your contribution will process automatically. Please visit [Vanco Payments](#) for more information. We hope this new way of giving will be helpful. As always, the missions of the Fellowship depend wholly on the generosity of our members and friends. Your support is vital, and much appreciated. *~Lois Colbridge*

Women's Group: Meets on the third Monday of the month at 6:30pm. On Monday, April 18, the group will meet at Miso Asian Grill & Sushi Bar, 1305 Emancipation Hwy, in Fredericksburg. No reservations necessary – just drop by for conversation and connection. Newcomers are especially welcomed. Check out the UUFF Women's Group on [Facebook](#) or contact [Susan Lovegrove](#).

Day-long Silent Retreat: The Insight Meditation Community of Fredericksburg presents a spring day-long retreat, The Practice of Awareness, led by Todd Drake from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm on May 7 at the UUFF. [Click here](#) for details and to register.

Insight Meditation Community of Fredericksburg: IMCF provides 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.

Intergenerational Discussion Goup: Join the UUFF Youth on the 2nd Sunday after service from 12:30 - 2:00 PM for a lively discussion among generations. April's topic is "Two-way street for Understanding". What does each generation wish the other generation would understand about them? Please contact [Chris Johns](#), DLRE for more information.

Youth Group Meeting: The UUFF Youth and their advisors meet on Sundays after service from 12:15 - 1:45 PM on ZOOM at [\[YG Meeting\]](#). Teens in grades 9-12 are welcome to join them for community building and faith exploration! Please contact [Chris Johns](#), DLRE for more information.

Midweek Spiritual Practice: First Wednesday each month, 5:30 - 6:00 PM on ZOOM at [\[Midweek\]](#). Join us on Apr 2 as **Jason Michael and John Adams Michael** lead us in an origami practice to celebrate the emergence of Spring. Formerly known as Vespers, the Midweek Spiritual Practice is an opportunity to engage with others while practicing together a simple spiritual activity. 30 minutes of community building and spiritual practice before dinner - Priceless!

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.

Wondering Out Loud

Rev. Doug McCusker



I have only been awake for an hour. I am alive and grateful for another day to experience the miracle of life. I just finished my meditation, and I am settling in with a hot cup of coffee. The sun has risen in the East and the birds are singing their morning songs. Tomorrow will be Ostara, the Spring Equinox. It will mark the astrological first day of Spring. Yesterday, I helped a friend turn the earth for a new garden bed. My

muscles and joints are reminding me that they have been awakened from their winter rest. Stirring in my heart is a feeling of hope that no matter what falls apart we still have new life all around us. This month we celebrate the spiritual theme of Awakening. The Soul Matters team selected this topic almost a year ago. How were they to know that this month, we would be finally awakening from two years of pandemic isolation. Slowly, but surely, we are coming out of our places of refuge with that bleary look of caution, not knowing what to expect. We need to find a place to lay down our existential anxiety. This community, this loving, caring band of religious misfits, is an excellent place for us to come together and celebrate our collective Awakening. This month, we will be able to congregate on Sundays and enjoy our choirs as they sing and play their bells right in front of us. Listen deeply for the spirit of Awakening in their voices. We will hear laughter in the halls and joy in the classrooms. Take it all in and let your heart be full. For such is the power of Awakening. Not only do we have a new day, but we have it with each other.



*Yours in Fellowship and Love,
~ Rev. Doug McCusker*

**"A budget is much more than numbers on a page.
It's a moral document that reveals your priorities."**

*~ Cedric Richmond
White House Aide and
former Congressman from Louisiana*



**President's
Corner**

Lois Colbridge

At this writing, we are nearing the end of the pledge drive for fiscal year 2023. The Fellowship cannot continue to fulfill its mission without your support. We are seeking to raise \$280,000 in pledges, an increase of \$17,000 from last year. Even though we're requesting an increase in pledges, we are looking at a bare-bones budget.

The past two years have been challenging financially, as we've lost income from sources such as rentals and basket contributions. Our membership numbers have also dropped, likely as a result of Zoom fatigue as well as several people who have relocated out of the area. That's why we're asking people to give a little more this year, particularly if you have not increased your pledge in recent years.

The Council of Committees and the Board of Trustees will devote time at their joint meeting in April to discuss what needs to be cut if we do not meet our pledge goal. Much of our budget cannot be cut: mortgage, insurance, utilities, salaries. As we grow larger and our administration and finances grow more complicated, we are less able to rely on volunteers for those positions. So, what will the Board be faced with cutting? Those very things that are the heart of our community: protesting injustice, feeding the hungry, uniting diverse communities, and lovingly transforming the world. We will cut guest speakers on Sundays, we will reduce our support to local charities, reduce Religious Education. We will not be able to repaint rooms if needed. This will be tragic. If you have not pledged and/or feel you can increase your pledge, please do so. On May 22, the Board will bring the budget to the congregation at the annual meeting. Let's make it a budget that reflects our values.

~ Lois Colbridge

Awakening... Again

March, which in my opinion came in like a lamb this year, has come and gone. Surgery and the healing process, took up most of my time and energy last month. I guess you could say, at least for me, the month went out like a lion! So while a lot of you were heading back to the building, back to RE, back to church, I was just trying to get my legs under me - literally and figuratively. And now, here in the month of April, I feel like I am playing a crazy game of "Catch Up."

Last month's Soul Matters theme was "Renewing Our Faith." This month's is "Awakening." I think, given my absence, it makes sense to combine them. While we tentatively make our way back into this building and this community, we won't be able to jump in with both feet (well, I won't be able to jump at all yet, but I digress...). We are changed. No matter how much we'd like it all to be the same, we are changed. So we find ourselves renewing all manner of things - relationships, schedules, attention to our principles to name just a few.

I find myself having to renew my faith in you - my families and volunteers. Have I done enough to make you want to come back? Will children fill the halls? Will there be a there there when I get there? And while I wait and hope to see what April brings, I also stretch and yawn in my effort to awaken my mind and my heart to the joy that I've had for this place and this job for so long. Will I be up to the challenge? Will I also be there? Fully and wholeheartedly there? I



guess we'll see.

Nap time is over, friends. Let's get to work and see what new thing comes out of this long, dark, quiet time. Let's renew and (re)awaken this glorious faith of ours, as always, together.

*Yours In Faith,
~ Chris Johns*

RE At-A-Glance

Sunday, Apr 3

YG 12:15- 1:30

MS OWL 12:30 - 2:00 (in-person)

Adult RE "What Moves Us w/ Rev. Doug" 12:30 - 2:00

Sunday, Apr 10

YG Intergen Discussion Group 12:30 - 2:00

MS OWL 12:30 - 2:00 (in-person)

Sunday, Apr 17

Easter Egg Hunt!

NO RE, MS OWL, HS OWL

Adult RE "What Moves Us w/ Rev. Doug" 12:30 - 2:00

Sunday, Apr 27

YG 12:15 - 1:45

MS OWL 12:30 - 2:00

Save the Date(s)!

May 1: Mark your calendars and then get ready to join Craig Cherry and DLRE, Chris Johns, around the May Pole on Sunday, May 1st after service as we celebrate the season in festive style!

May 8: 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. - Alpaca Visit at UUFF! The alpacas will bring their friends — the bunnies, ball python snake, gecko, and dwarf goat — for some cuddle time. You'll also be able to feed the animals.

May (exact date to come) - Group Screening of Dr. Strange and the Multiverse of Madness. The RE Committee will pay for tickets of members and friends, ages 18 and under, to see the new Marvel movie at a local theater. Parents and friends older than 18 are welcome to attend, too (however, you will need to purchase your own tickets). Advance signups will be required; more details will be posted soon.



The "Miracle" of Brigadoon

If you came to the March 20, Celtic Spring service, you heard my Wonder Box retelling of the legend of Brigadoon. In short, Scottish village Brigadoon was beset by witches in 1735, a threat they couldn't overcome. Appealing to God, their prayers were answered, and Brigadoon and its inhabitants were spirited out of reality, only to appear for one day every one hundred years. As part of the bargain with God, anyone who leaves Brigadoon will destroy the miracle resulting in the village and its people disappearing forever.

In context of the 1947 musical, the miracle is portrayed primarily in the positive. The village has been saved, the people are grateful and content, and American interloper Tommy Albright (portrayed by Gene Kelly in the film) is granted permanent entry into Brigadoon by God so that he may spend eternity with villager, Fiona McLaren (Cyd Charisse), a woman he has fallen in love with after a single day. The musical is grand, romantic, and exotic, and as a child and teen I fell under the spell of its charms, music, and message. At a half-century, I find myself reevaluating its message, or at the very least questioning the "miracle" at the heart of the story.

Accepting and setting aside the "love at first sight" trope as part of cinematic and dramatic culture, the costs of the miracle are, in a word, disturbing. God has spared the village but none may leave, and no escape clause for terminating the miracle has been bargained out. The result is a closed system of beings spiraling through the history of their planet with no connection to terrestrial time. At the musical's outset, the miracle is only two days

old, communion with the outside world is a bit alienating but manageable. In a month three thousand years on Earth will have passed. What will Brigadoon's villagers behold six months or a year on in their time? Will humans have evolved beyond comprehension? What if the world is destroyed, what happens then? What if the land Brigadoon is situated on is now all a Starbucks or worse an Amazon distribution center? Do the villagers appear venti cappuccinos in hand? Being this removed from all of civilization can the villagers still claim to be living? They may not leave the village and may only interact with each new arrived future when it encroaches on them, but only for a day, rendering their contribution to future society relatively meaningless, and their entire existence forgotten to time. Is this life or a living death?

And then of course there is the lack of a bargained end to the miracle. Who gets to decide when the village can rejoin normal time; only God, or do the villagers get a say? Can they pray for release of the miracle? This remains unclear. The miracle is too fresh after two days and no one is thinking about the remote future. For now. The religious answer is to have faith that a god who granted such a miracle knows best and will presumably end it when the time is right. As a person of free will and independent spirit, I confess that I struggle with this answer. For me, it gives new meaning to the expression, 'Be careful what you wish for...'

In the last several months the legend of Brigadoon has been used as a metaphor for the pandemic, but it is a loose fit at best. Metaphorically speaking, God's miracle is both our ability to avoid death and destruction through the vaccine and our ability to shelter while remaining technologically connected; Harry Beaton, the man who tries to leave Brigadoon and dies is equated with anti-vaxers, anti-maskers, and those who don't put the common good before self-interest; and the way in which the village disappears from the world parallels our retreat into our homes and our sheltering in place. It is a nifty way in which a musical written over seventy years ago is finding renewed relevancy. Paradoxically, many of the questions being asked through the metaphor's application are those that the musical chooses never to address. What is the difference between living and alive? Is a miracle with such a high price tag really a miracle at all? What is our responsibility to the rest of civilization? What is our responsibility to the common good?

As recounted by Lerner and Loewe in 1947, *Brigadoon* is a highly enjoyable, sweeping romance, a triumph of love and faith in God, and a testament to one village's ability to survive in the face of certain doom. However, given a second glance in 2022 after two years of living with a life-changing pandemic, *Brigadoon* gets some answers right, but shortchanges itself from striving to address many of life's larger more complex issues. I'd say a revival and a rewrite are long overdue. Just like the next appearance of the village itself.

Namaste,
Jason



Spring is here and your Building and Grounds committee is generating a number of projects for the warm season(s). In addition to our spring "Weed Party" on March 26, we are accepting volunteers for mowing, power washers (and their operators) to clean the outside of the building, gardeners to tend our Memorial Garden, carpenters to refurbish our sign at the driveway entrance and helpers to assist our tree steward(s). If you are interested in helping with any of these tasks, please contact [Bruce Callander](#).



Charities Supporting Operations in Ukraine

A Short List of 4 Star Charities Supporting Operations in Ukraine According to Charity Navigator:

- [Doctors Without Borders](#) (medical)
- [Care](#) (food, water, other support)
- [World Vision](#) (housing, water, sanitation, other)
- [Americares](#) (supplies, other)
- [Save The Children](#) (long term support, supplies, other)
- [Heart to Heart International](#) (medical, medical supplies, general supplies, water sanitation, other)
- [Global Giving](#) (housing, water, sanitation)
- [American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee](#) (housing, sanitation, other)

People in Afghanistan who are also in need of help can be supported by these charities. Doctors Without Borders is at their limit in hospitals providing medical care there.

Community Dinners

On March 28th our Fellowship will return to cooking meals as a group for homeless adults in Fredericksburg, this time at Christ Lutheran Church. (This will replace what we have been doing since the beginning of the pandemic – asking volunteers to prepare and deliver to the Fellowship individual meals, which we then distributed to where they were needed.) Kit Carver has become our lead cook, and as of now, only four other people are allowed in the kitchen.

We will continue to distribute the meals made at Christ Lutheran for at least March and April, to various locations where homeless people live. We're waiting for the churches who've previously hosted the dinners to let us know when they'll let people eat in their dining facilities.

Our Fellowship routinely makes meals on the fourth Monday of every month. If you're interested in making brownies or cookies to go along with the dinners on the fourth Monday in April (the 25th), contact [Diane Elstein](#). You're also welcome to donate fruit such as bananas, apples, oranges, and healthy snacks. But please let us know what you plan on donating. Thanks for all your help with providing food!

Thanks to all those who serve the local and wider community on behalf of our Fellowship.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee's project for this year is related to the 8th Principle that the UUA has offered up as an addition to the adopted Principles of Unitarian Universalism. So far, several hundred UU

congregations have approved the 8th Principle, and we anticipate voting on it at our Annual Meeting. The principle deals with building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community and dismantling racism and other oppression:

[The 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism \(8thprincipleuu.org\)](http://8thprincipleuu.org)

To allow the Fellowship to consider the meaning of this principle and to answer questions about why the UUA wishes to add the 8th principle to its list of seven principles of Unitarian Universalism, the Social Justice Committee will host a discussion immediately after the April 3rd hybrid service. Please plan to participate.

~ Alane Callander

Sunday Discussion Group



Sunday Discussions are intended for people who enjoy discussing controversial public policy issues. The group meets from 12-1 pm on ZOOM on the first, third and fifth Sundays of the month. Participants are encouraged to suggest controversial topics of interest and to moderate those discussions. For more information, contact Rick Neil or visit the [calendar](#).

- **Apr 03: Timothy** "Would You Agree to Assassination of Putin?"
- **Apr 17: Fred** "Are Corporate Taxes Fair to Ordinary Folks?"



Monthly Theme: Awakening

The world was alive once. When we were little. The trees whispered words. Animals spoke to us with their eyes. Playgrounds could become castles. The stars somehow told us we were special. Life could speak. The magic wasn't imprisoned in childhood. We've all had adult moments when we've "come alive." Wonderfully lost in our work, our creativity, or a kiss. Time both stopped and was set on fire. There it was in the flower too and in so many simple things: freshly baked bread, blackberries, a deer standing still staring at us without blinking, our children laughing. For those fleeting moments, we lacked nothing. We felt gifted beyond comprehension. We knew what "rich" really meant.

And it's not that these moments of awakening don't still happen. There's just something about how we've got things organized that places a fog between them and us. It's surprising how easily we let dullness sink in, how often we allow life to be muted. But there are always those memories. That whispering tree. That magic kiss. That moment of being true to ourselves. That priceless taste of blackberry juice on our tongue. They can be brought back. Yes, we forget what it feels like to be fully awake and for life to be fully alive. But forgetting means we can remember. It means we can help each other remember. And remembering opens a door for us to find our way back.

~ Soul Matters April Packet

Apr 3

Staying Awake to Racial Injustice, Rev. Doug McCusker

The backlash is upon us. After so much progress the last two years toward uncovering and dismantling racism in our society, there are those who want to apply another paint of whitewash on history and close their minds to institutional racism right in front of us. Now is the time to stay awake in the journey toward spiritual wholeness. Now is the time to keep the curtains open and allow light to penetrate our shadows.

Dual Platform: In-person and on Zoom

Zoom: [UUFF](#); Meeting ID: 632 068 0813; Password: 838891

Teleconference: 1-301-715-8592

Apr 10

Past, Present and Future, Youth Group

Join the youth as they look at these unusual times and their lives through the lens of where they've been, where they are and where they hope to go.

Dual Platform: In-person and on Zoom

Zoom: [UUFF](#); Meeting ID: 632 068 0813; Password: 838891

Teleconference: 1-301-715-8592

Apr 17

Awakening to Life's Miracle, Rev. Doug McCusker

Thich Nhat Hahn wrote, "The true miracle is not walking on water or walking in air, but simply walking on this earth." I will add that the true miracle is not resurrecting from the dead but awakening to life. There is so much beauty, awe and mystery within the simplest things. We have been given a front row seat to a miracle. Better yet, we are all invited to jump on the stage and be a part of the production. Join us on Easter Sunday for our Flower Communion Ceremony.

Dual Platform: In-person and on Zoom

Zoom: [UUFF](#); Meeting ID: 632 068 0813; Password: 838891

Teleconference: 1-301-715-8592

Apr 24

Earth Day Celebration, Craig Cherry

Craig Cherry returns to lead us in an Earth Day Celebration about how we influence our world. An interactive service to help discover how the small things in our lives impact the big issues of climate change and world events.

Dual Platform: In-person and on Zoom

Zoom: [UUFF](#); Meeting ID: 632 068 0813; Password: 838891

Teleconference: 1-301-715-8592

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.



OFFICE ADMIN HOURS:
Tue, Thu - 10AM-2PM
Fri - 1PM - 5PM
Thursdays - Working from Home

REV. McCUSKER'S OFFICE HOURS:
Tue, Wed. 10AM-5AM, Thu. 10AM - 3PM
Working from home Fri, Sat 10AM - 3PM
Contact [Rev. McCusker](#) to make an appointment

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