

The Pulse

March 2020

SUNDAY SERVICES, 10:00 AM

March 1 – Rev. Anthony Johnson – *Witches and Witch Hunts, Real and Imagined*
The term “witch hunt” has been tossed around by Donald Trump and his supporters prior to, during, and following his impeachment trial. Whether you believe in witches or not, a witch hunt is nothing to be taken lightly. Forty thousand accused - mostly women - were killed in Europe during the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries, and thousands more since on other continents. Let’s talk about witches and witch hunts from ancient times to the 21st century.

March 8 – Reverend Barbara Coeyman – *Revisioning Women’s Ministry: Celebrating Rev. Lydia Ann Jenkins, First Ordained Universalist Woman*
Here in Women’s History Month, I would like to introduce you to Lydia Ann Jenkins (1824-1874) of up-state New York. In 1860 Lydia became the first woman ordained to Universalist ministry, three years before Olympia Brown, who we usually think of as first. Lydia also served Woman’s Rights, alongside Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, and became a doctor of the alternative medical practice of water cure. In learning Lydia’s story of breaking glass ceilings in ministry, let’s reflect on the importance of staying open to new stories about women and men in the history of our liberal faith. Let’s also celebrate Lydia for opening doors for the over 125 Universalist women who followed her into ordained ministry by 1920, the year of Women’s Vote.

March 15 – Gail Costanza – *A Few More Dollars on the Bulletin Board*
This is our annual Stewardship Sunday, the one Sunday we talk about the Church’s money.

March 22 – Spirit Circle – *Ostara*
With the Vernal Equinox, the wheel of the year turns to Spring. Join with us and we look at beginnings.

March 29 – Clarissa DeLuca – *Acceptance*

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 1 – The semi-annual book sale begins

March 4 – Book Discussion: “Quichotte” by Salman Rushdie (see page 9)

March 12 – Humanist Forum – 7 PM

March 14 – Story Telling – 7 PM. Join us for an evening of storytelling. This year’s topic is “pet peeves.” We all have them. What’s yours?

March 16 – Spirit Circle – 7PM

March 19 – Motel Meals – 3:15 PM

March 28 – Retreat: “Meditation is Daily Life; Daily Life is Meditation,”
Mainline Unitarian Church, 816 S. Valley Forge Rd., Devon, PA, 9:30 AM – 4 PM.
To register: <https://mluc.org/meditation-retreat/>

(Note: All events at DDUUC, 39 Park St., Bordentown, unless otherwise noted.)

List of DDUUC Officers 2019-2020

President – Christina Sturgis
Vice President – Mary Watterson
Secretary – Mary Ann Keiffer
Treasurer – Jen Chaiken
Religious Education – Trish Concannon
Social Action – Kara DeRose
Sunday Service – Joan Spengler

The Pulse is the newsletter of Dorothea Dix Unitarian Universalist Community.

It is published monthly, September through June. Articles are solicited from members and friends. The Pulse is edited by Pete Costanza.

DDUUC has services every Sunday at 10:00 AM from the Sunday after Labor Day through the end of June. Informal Sunday services are held on selected Sundays during July and August. Sunday services are provided by guest ministers, outside speakers, or members and friends of the congregation. DDUUC has an ongoing religious education program for children. We have many activities in which to participate, and are also involved with the Greater Bordentown area through our sponsorship of an Interfaith Dialogue and many social action tasks.

DDUUC NEWS BRIEFS

- Ruth Christie continues to get better after her recent hospitalization in Roanoke, Virginia, as reported by her son, Patrick, at the February 23rd Sunday service. Patrick also quoted Ruth as saying that DDUUC is the best church in the country. Thanks for the encouraging words, Ruth, and continued best wishes for a speedy recovery!
- At the February 23rd Sunday service, DDUUC welcomed new members, Sunshine and John Lynch and their four children, Andrew, Shae, Brody and Kai.
- **Social Action:** This month we prepared meals for 57 adults, 6 kids (35 adults, 6 kids at Pine) (22 adults, 4 kids at Laurel Notch). We also dropped off gifts and party supplies to the little girl that has been living there for a while. She was so happy! Thank you to all who donated! - *Kara De Rose* (see **Special Social Action Report** on page 4)
- **Religious Education:** This month in RE the kids learned about Imbolc. Miss Trish (Concannon) brought in different essential oils and had the kids smell them, then guess what they were. She explained the importance of them and their benefits. They also made Brigid's crosses and got to make their own sundaes at bread and soup! ...Miss Trish also gave them a lesson on mindfulness. We made Valentines Day cards too... The kids have been helping prep the bags for motel meals on the Sunday before motel meals... This past Sunday, Miss Betsy (Young) gave both classes a lesson on Mardi Gras and Lent. It was a fun lesson and they learned a lot! - *Kara De Rose*



Hi Everyone! I wanted to give an update about the family we were trying to help that lives at the Pine Motel. It all started with a community Facebook request to help with a 5-year-old's birthday gift, and I found out the issues went so much deeper:

A summary of her backstory: Due to a medical condition and loss of her job, the mother was placed in the Pine Motel. However, the program paying for the housing required 40 hours of job-related work (job training and resume writing). Given she was diagnosed with epilepsy and could not afford child care, she was not able to attend the work program, so they pulled her funding for the motel room. She appealed and went to hearings with documentation, but it did not work. (I think she needs an advocate, but that is another issue.) So, the situation she found herself in was having to rely solely on her fiancé's small paycheck. His story is he is working on being a union welder but is currently still an apprentice, which means crap hours and crap pay. So, he is in the union but does not work for the union. He is still deciding on whether to keep this up (which means a HUGE increase in pay later) or give up and find a job that pays more to afford more now. (tough call, right?). It all comes down to timing! They found a house they can rent, and with Catholic Charities helping to pay the security deposit and first month's rent, they got the lease. However, they needed to make it until March 1st, which is when the lease starts. They had no way of paying for the next two weeks on just his paycheck. Note: The rented house is MUCH MUCH more affordable than the \$60 a night motel.

The help that I requested from the GoFundMe was to help keep them in the motel room until March 1st. The idea was to add to the man's pay for the rest of the two weeks, BUT we were able to raise funds to pay for their room until March 1st, which means his pay can go towards the house rental and whatever else they need.

Their daughter turned 5 Feb 19th, and she was given the donated gifts and is so happy. My kids played with her for a really long time and she is just the sweetest and one of the happiest kids I've ever met.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, to those who offered help, whether through donated items or money. They still have a long road ahead to being financially secure, but at least they won't be threatened with eviction every night.

If anyone was still interested in helping, I know they will probably need items for their new place. Plus, mom is pregnant with #2, so baby items may be needed up the road. If anyone is interested in making more monetary donations, mom

SPECIAL SOCIAL ACTION REPORT (continued)

gave me the name of the owner of their rented house so we can make payments right to her to offset the rent.

The family is so grateful. They suffer from the horrible stigma that most poor do: that they are drug-addicted and are trying to scam for money to make more poor choices. While that can be true, I can attest that this is not the case, especially since they never once asked for money, but for connections to services. Even when I told her I had extra money from the GoFundMe, she then offered the name of the house owner for rent contributions rather than asking that I give her the cash. She even asked if I could tell her who donated so she can write personal thank you cards to them.

So, thank you, again, for all the compassion and willingness to help. This is why I'm so blessed to belong to such a great community.



Ideas for DDUUC Fundraising Auction, May 2, 2020

Our fundraising in-house auction will be Saturday, May 2. Activities will begin at 1 p.m. Friends and family are also welcome. Below is a list of possible events for our auction. Please look it over and consider sponsoring one or more events. If none of these appeals to you, feel free to come up with your own. Any questions, contact Mary Watterson at mwatterson1@gmail.com or at 609-668-4502.

Three Soups for Eight (or however many soups you like): Forget about the Fruit of the Month Club! Instead, enjoy three different homemade soups, serving 8 people, during the course of the year. Add some crusty bread and a salad to enjoy the perfect fall, winter, spring, or summer dinner.

Chocolate Chip Cookies: 2 dozen scrumptious homemade chocolate chip cookies (with or without nuts) 3 times this year at a mutually agreeable time. You know you want some. Value \$30.00 Bid \$15.00

Christmas Cookies: Cookies will be delivered to the church at a mutually agreed upon time before Christmas.

Homemade Bread: A loaf of homemade bread one time a month for one year (or any number of months you prefer). Bread will be delivered at Sunday service once a month.

Desserts: 6 desserts (or any number you want) throughout the year, dates to be agreed upon by donor and bidder. (Don't worry - it won't be Fruitcakes!)

Pie for Thanksgiving Dinner: Just in time for Thanksgiving Dinner, a freshly-baked 9" pie (provider names the kind or give a choice). Delivery to be arranged. Min Bid: \$10 / Est Value: \$20

A QUICHE OR DESSERT EACH MONTH FOR A YEAR (or any number you want): A quiche OR dessert - Your Choice- will be provided each month (or however many you like) for a year. The timing and item for each culinary delight will be determined upon receipt of the previous month's food item. This item can be delivered to DDUUC.

A Basket Full of Summer Vegetables from my Garden \$7.00

EVENTS

Art Class

Fernbrook Farms CSA: One week pick-up

Make a Basket: Chocolate, Wine, Christmas, Girl's, Boy's

Poker Party

Tarot Reading

Guided Bike Tour \$15.00

Drumming Circle one hour, drums provided \$10 pp

Pizza & Parcheesi: Come on over for some yummy pizza, good times, and fun board games. Limited to 8 people

Wine & Wii: Maybe you are an expert at Wii bowling or Just Dance, or maybe you've never even tried Wii but are curious. It's A Big Old Goofy World, so whatever your Wii experience level, come
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out for a fun night of food, drinks, and Wii! Adults only.

Scrabble Night: Scrabble and snacks. Come join the fun!

Family Friendly Hike: Enjoy a Sunday afternoon hike. Hike IS appropriate for children. Flat fee of \$10 per person and maximum of \$20 per family. Limited to 20 people.

St. Patrick's Day Dinner: Corned beef and cabbage dinner to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, preceded by Irish cheese and crackers.

Karaoke and Food: There will be a lot of fun, singing (!), and you'll enjoy some delicious food too! Lots of wine and other libations to help your singing voice! We have show tunes, songs from the 50's and 60's, and for this one, we'll add lots of LOVE songs. We have many karaoke songs, but feel free to bring yours too!

Sing-along: We will provide drinks and desserts. You provide voices & joy. "Rise up and sing" books & other instruments welcome. 15 people

Soup, Salad, Dessert & Carol Sing-Along: Gather at our "winter wonderland" water-front home on December 21st at 6 PM, after most of the December events are done, for homemade crab soup, crusty bread and good salad followed by dessert. When we are ready, we will all get song booklets with the words to all our favorite carols (as we remember them!) and gather in front of the fire to sing. A good voice is not needed, just a love of these wonderful songs. Bring instruments if you have them! 6 people

Book Share & Swap: Participants will bring a book, share about the book and swap to get a new book. Hors d'oeuvres will be served. 6 people

Adult, Children or Family Pool Party: Pool and Garden Party. Our outdoor pool is bordered by lilies which should be in full bloom to enhance your swimming pleasure! Light snacks will be served. Offered for 16 people

GOLF, FOOD & DRINKS: Golf for two & Happy Hour after golf. A round of golf at a nice local course, then food & drinks after the golf game. Offered 1 time for 2 people

LUNCH AND FLOWER ARRANGING: We will cut and prepare flowers in the morning, break for a simple vegetarian lunch, and then make a professional flower arrangement in your vase. After admiring the creations, we will celebrate with a dip in the pool. Bring your vase and flower cutters. Date is dependent on weather patterns in 2020 that allow for ample blooms from the gardens. Offered 1 time for 6 people

Re-gifting Party : Have you ever opened up a Christmas or birthday gift and thought, "Oh no! What were they thinking?" Well, this is your chance to remove it gently from your possessions and get something else in exchange. Come to a re-gifting party! Bring that lovely, but not for you, gift nicely wrapped and ready for exchange. Enjoy a light lunch and fun company. 12 people

Ice Cream Social: Enjoy a variety of ice creams and special toppings to make you favorite sundae or banana split.

SERVICES

Introductory Tai Chi: You will be introduced to tai chi and qi gong. Learn to do basic movement and form from this ancient Chinese internal martial art. (Four 1-hour Sessions) up to ten people)

Lesson: Fancy braids or twists for long hair : Do you want to know how to make fancy braids and twists in your daughter's long hair? Beginner or advanced lesson in French braid, Dutch braid, fishtail braid, French twist, and sock bun. Advanced lesson may include Dutch or star crowns. The lesson will be for one hour on a mutually agreed-upon date. 4 people

ORGANIZING AND DECLUTTERING : We will provide 4 hours of work at your home to help declutter, box up unwanted items, or just help to organize a room, closet, or other location in your home. We can individualize this to your needs. Offered 1 time of 4 hours

Limo service to and from Phila or Newark Airport or Train Station: Will take one or two people to the Philadelphia or Newark Airport or Train Station and pick you up upon your return. Based on availability.

RELAAXX.....: Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. It is administered by "laying on hands" and is based on the idea that an unseen "life force energy" flows through us. If one's "life force energy" is low, then we are more vulnerable to stress, and if it is high, we are more vital.

Chess Lessons: Chess lessons for beginner or novice players. Date(s) to be mutually agreed upon. Buy as many hours as you want or need. Just let the auctioneer know how many hours you want.

Knitting for the Good: Beginning and intermediate knitters are invited to learn and enhance their knitting skills by making one or more projects. Children 9 and over who wish to participate are welcome. Three meetings (2 hours each) are planned.

Who's Living in your Family Tree?: Have you always wanted to learn about your ancestors but didn't know where to start? Find your long lost Uncle Jebediah or your Grandma Hester? Verify the family rumor that you came from royalty? You never know what fascinating history you might discover! Three 2-hour sessions will be provided. Be aware that you should have some basic information about your relatives, hopefully back a couple generations (dates of births & deaths, places lived, marriages, country of origin if immigrants, etc.) to make the search more successful.
Qty: 2

Knife or tool sharpening: \$2.00 per unit

Calligraphy and frame: A short saying or poem of the purchaser's choice. \$25

- Cathy Ann Vandegrift

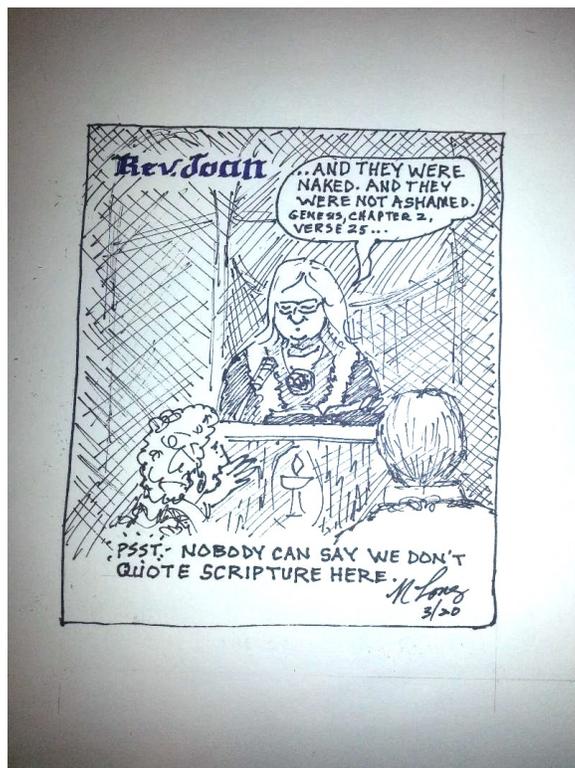
Quichotte by Salman Rushdie

In a tour-de-force that is both an homage to an immortal work of literature and a modern masterpiece about the quest for love and family, Booker Prize-winning, internationally bestselling author Salman Rushdie has created a dazzling Don Quixote for the modern age.

Inspired by the Cervantes classic, Sam DuChamp, mediocre writer of spy thrillers, creates Quichotte, a courtly, addled salesman obsessed with television, who falls in impossible love with a TV star. Together with his (imaginary) son Sancho, Quichotte sets off on a picaresque quest across America to prove worthy of her hand, gallantly braving the tragicomic perils of an age where “Anything-Can-Happen”. Meanwhile his creator, in a midlife crisis, has equally urgent challenges of his own.

Just as Cervantes wrote Don Quixote to satirize the culture of his time, Rushdie takes the reader on a wild ride through a country on the verge of moral and spiritual collapse. And with the kind of storytelling magic that is the hallmark of his work, the fully realized lives of DuChamp and Quichotte intertwine in a profoundly human quest for love and a wickedly entertaining portrait of an age in which fact is so often indiscernible from fiction.

- Barbara Kotch



PAGAN PERSPECTIVE

Joan Spengler

In like a lion, out like a lamb. That's the old saying about March weather. But the amazing thing about March is the Vernal Equinox. This is the day when light and dark don't compete, when they are in balance. And balance is nice, but I wouldn't want to live there.

I like the longer, warmer days of summer. But I also like the colder, shorter days of winter. In the winter, as I take my walks in the park, I can see into the forest, not just a wall of green. Green is wonderful, don't get me wrong, but it is interesting to see what else is there.

I have also found something called a Vernal Pond. At first I thought it was the name of the 'pond'. It's in quotes because it's just a mud puddle from autumn through to summer. But it's a type of pond. It supports a wide range of wildlife in its brief pond stage, then it rests in the summer whereas almost everything else in the park rests in the winter.



This time of year is often turbulent. Although we haven't had much of a winter, there has been sufficient rain to replenish the aquifers. And March winds are notorious for their severity. But like the saying goes, March winds bring April showers; and April showers bring May flowers. But I found some flowers already. These are snowdrops. I think they are the first blooming flowers of the year. And I've noticed the daffodils lifting their shoots up out of the ground.

March is a month of transition. As we move from winter into spring, may we also move from semi-hibernation into the joyous frenzy of springtime. With its warmer weather and longer days, may we merge into this growth of the season. And most of all, enjoy!

"The first valley is the valley of the quest itself," Quichotte said.*

"Here the searcher has to cast aside every kind of dogma, including both belief and unbelief. Old age is such a valley..." S. Rushdie

"But if you cast aside unbelief as well as belief"—Sancho scratched his head—"then there's nothing left. Right?"

"Systems of thought will not help us on our journey," Quichotte answered. "Systems of thought, and their antitheses as well, are merely codifications of what we think we know. When we begin by abandoning them, we open ourselves to the immensity of the universe, and therefore also to immense possibilities, including the possibility of the impossible, in which category I place my quest for love."

Well, something for The Skeptic to ponder. I never had any problem "casting aside all dogma," but I always had a problem with believing anything that couldn't be proven. I supposed the question is, how can one be truly open to anything, including impossibilities, if you're a serious believer, or a serious disbeliever. And, really, how many people do you know or have heard about who both believe in everything and nothing? If you have the mature perspective of old age it is possible, and I'm as close as anyone I know of to both believe and to not believe. The belief part, though, has nothing to do with dogma and everything to do with art, the creative process. In a universe that doesn't care about you, you have to care about it. You have to believe in yourself and your plans. (Where have you heard that before?) If your plans are to make a unique sculpture, making something exist that before did not, take faith in yourself and the process, and believe you can actually do it. That, and a lot of hard work. I am in the process of creating a sculpture involving cement and forms. It was a lot of work and planning but it cracked in a number of places. Failure! But now I know exactly what to do. If I fail again, it will be for a different reason. But I have a vision of it, and I will pursue that vision—even if my wife starts referring to me as Don Quixote.

**"Quichotte," by Salman Rushdie, inspired by Cervantes' Don Quixote, is a picaresque quest for love by a courtly old man cross-country to New York City in the age of Trump*

Buddhist Spirituality

“What is spirituality?” was the topic in a Sunday service panel discussion on January 26, 2020, with Joan Spengler as moderator. Jen Chaiken answered from a pagan viewpoint and Roger Long presented a humanist/atheist viewpoint (see *The Skeptic Corner, the Pulse, February 2020*). I spoke from a Buddhist viewpoint.

I once thought that anything that is not material is spiritual, but based on Buddhist scripture and the insights of modern philosophers Alan Watts and Deepak Chopra, the spiritual and the material, the mental and the physical, are two aspects or dimensions of a human being. They are not independent. Even science points to a material/spiritual, body/mind, connection. Your brain and nervous system, the interface with your mind, extends throughout the body. Your brain sends neurochemicals to all cells in your body.

Complete awareness of your material existence is associated with spiritual awareness, an awareness of higher levels of your self. In Buddhism you are not your ego, your conscious attention. You are your organism/environment, which mostly operates without your conscious attention. Your heart beats, you digest food, your endocrine system works without your conscious control. Most significantly, your sense organs receive signals from your environment and your brain converts these signals into meaningful impressions. This happens to you. You don't control it.

Your organism and your environment is one process. You can't have one without the other. That is the your real self. Changing your worldview from egocentric to organism /environment centered is the goal of Buddhism. Your environment is not only your immediate surroundings but essentially the whole universe.

Spirituality from the Buddhist viewpoint ranges from an awareness of your relationship with ultimate reality at the highest level, to a sense of compassion for others, to respect for your earthly environment, and to appreciation of the beauty of nature.

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