



## Encouraging Spiritual Growth

Aviation, like many professions, has its own particular and sometimes peculiar concepts and jargon. I spent almost twenty years flying helicopters in the Marine Corps. That meant nearly twenty year's worth of picking up FOD.

FOD is garbage that can hurt you. The acronym means Foreign Object Damage, which implies an event. But the acronym gets used to name the stuff that could cause damage—a screw, nut, bolt, rivet, stone, chip of glass... almost anything. When this stuff is on the airfield, it can get kicked up by jet wash, prop wash, or rotor wash and become an injurious missile: in the words of Hamlet, “the slings and arrows.” It can damage people, airplanes, and airplanes flying with people. FOD is bad.

So we did what humans frequently do—we created a ritual. By the time I joined the military, the ritual was policy, so I didn't think of it as a ritual. I felt it as a requirement.

Every morning we conducted a FOD walk. We lined up at double-arm intervals and walked the width and length of our part of the airfield, picking up FOD. It was a good ritual. Whether I knew it back then or not, it was like a prayer early in the morning that set the tone for what we would do for the rest of the day. It was proof to ourselves and each other that we would invest in doing the right thing in the right way.

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### WANT TO ADD TO OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER?

Please email [info@jonesborouu.org](mailto:info@jonesborouu.org) by the 25th of each month any information you would like included in the monthly newsletter. This includes any community events you would like to share, an article you found interesting on a UUA related site, a recipe to share with the fellowship, etc.

*“It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade.”*

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*



## The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Jonesboro

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### Board Members

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# APRIL FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship meets on Sundays at Temple Israel, 203 W. Oak Ave., Jonesboro. Fellowship starts at 10 a.m. followed by the sacred coffee and discussion ending at noon.

**In the case of inclement weather, watch our Website, Facebook Page, and Email.**

## April 7

Join us for our annual celebration of the UU Flower Communion. Bring your favorite cut flowers (homegrown or bought) or potted plants. During the service you will be invited to select a flower/plant different from the one you brought, symbolizing the appreciation of diversity and the interconnectedness of the community.

We will also celebrate our New Members. If anyone would like to take this step and commit to membership, please let Karen Yanowitz know.  
karen\_uujonesboro@yahoo.com

Announcements today will include preparing for the Annual Congregational Meeting on May 5th. Items to be decided at that meeting include Budget, Nominations, By-Laws revisions, and other business items.

## April 14

Chuck Turner will speak on Hoarding. What is worse than being a hoarder most of your life? Still being one when you die. Will your children inherit their worst nightmare?

## April 21

Join us for our annual Congregational Spring Picnic at Craighead Forest Park, Pavilion 4, at 11 a.m. A short service will celebrate Earth Day, and then we'll enjoy a picnic POT-LUCK. Please bring a Spring or picnic-like dish to share. Plates/utensils will be provided.

## April 28

"Refreshing Our UU Values—How can we covenant fully as a faith?" Sue Garrison and Betty Stafford will discuss the new values presented at the UUA's General Assembly last June, part of a revised Article II of the UUA Bylaws, articulating the covenant uniting UUA congregations.

## Encouraging Spiritual Growth

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I paid the rent while I was in seminary by flying in the Reserves. I was immersed in both Operationality and Spirituality. It produced an interesting set of observations and reflections about the real meaning of the things I did day after day. I wish that I understood the real purpose of the FOD walk earlier in my career, earlier in my life. I used to bemoan that it was one more thing that required us to get up ever-earlier in the morning. If I had been gently paying attention to the here-and-now, I would have realized that it was a ritual that invited a blessing of care and wellbeing on the day.

"Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment." (attributed to the Buddha)

*Seanan Holland (he/him) is a UU and a retired Navy chaplain.*



## Sunday Funday!

### FIRST SUNDAY The Lunch Bunch

Interested in going out to eat after services? Gather after services with other like-minded (and hungry!) people to decide where to go as a group. If the numbers get large, we may arrange this before services and make reservations, we'll see how it goes

### Second SUNDAY Peanut Butter Sunday



The Fellowship's March donation to Helping Neighbors was 35 lbs. This total is slightly lower than in previous months. Help us reach or even exceed our regular donation.

The UU Book Club meets after services to discuss Amanda Skenandore's *Between Earth and Sky*.

### THIRD SUNDAY Potluck

**Potluck!** Please bring a dish to share as we enjoy each other's company after services

### FOURTH SUNDAY Funday!

Bring a sack lunch and stay after Fellowship for games, crafts, or any fun you want to bring and share!





## The Search for Truth and Meaning

Those who have experienced a total solar eclipse, who stand in the path of totality, where the moon completely obscures the sun, regularly report strong bursts of emotion and a lingering sense of awe. Many Arkansans and visitors to our State will experience this phenomenon on April 8, 2024. This heightened emotional state has the power to do more than open us to wonders of the universe—scientists say it can make us feel more curious and connected to others in it.

The power of awe is often considered ineffable and beyond measurement, but a deeper understanding of it has been largely driven by the long-term work of Dacher Keltner, at the University of California Berkeley. For many of us, awe feels beyond words. Keltner defines it as the feeling of being in the presence of something vast that transcends our understanding of the world, with many positive effects on our mental health and well-being.

Maria Monroy, a post-doctoral student in Psychology at Yale University, has focused particularly on how awe makes people more prosocial —acting to benefit others rather than themselves. Monroy’s surveys taken after the 2017 eclipse showed that the more awe people felt during the eclipse, the more curious and connected they felt about others. Monroy says awe can result from a “vastness beyond nature and the physical — it can be an idea that blows your mind, a musical experience that renders you speechless, or even an awakening through psychedelics.”

Eclipse chaser Kate Russo has another perspective. “When you experience awe during totality, or even a little awe at sunrise [and] sunset,” she observes, “you lose yourself a little bit instead of interpreting everything from your own perspective.” Awe, she says, not only inspires personal reflection, but it can also create community transformation. Russo partnered with the West Texas town of Uvalde to help prepare them for their spotlight in the eclipse crossroads. The town was in the path of the annular solar eclipse that took place on October 14, 2023, and will also be in the path of totality for the eclipse on April 8.

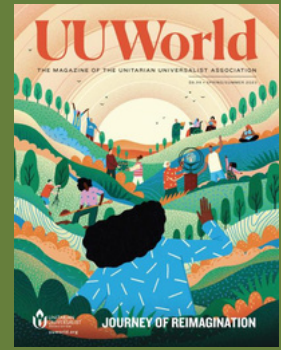
Uvalde received national attention after the tragic school shooting May 24, 2022. During the October 14 eclipse, Russo and her research partner Andrew Bailey used EEG headsets and heart-rate monitors to measure the physiological responses of volunteers. This pilot project was the first study to capture physical reactions to eclipses. One unexpected finding was the occurrence of awe at various stages throughout the eclipse.

Immediately after the eclipse, heightened introspection was indicated by high-amplitude, low-frequency brain waves, commonly seen in other profound or thought-provoking experiences. Russo says experiences with awe can be found in many ways beyond celestial phenomena — in everyday small wonders like catching sunlight filtering through the trees or what Keltner calls “moral beauty,” a sense of appreciation for others acting altruistically. Keltner and his team found that it’s the most common source of awe.

Awe reminds us we are not alone. We share our greatest moments of awe with others in “collective effervescence,” says Russo. “Just as a starling murmuration in the sky moves as one, during totality the crowd behaves as one.”

*Kathleen Rellihan, National Geographic, 3/19/24*

*We need not to  
think alike to  
love alike.*



**UU World**

## FELLOWSHIP BUSINESS & IMPORTANT DATES

**April 7th - New Member Ceremony followed by announcements on the upcoming Annual Meeting**

**May 5th - Fellowship Annual Meeting**

### Order of business:

- Voting on updated bylaws
- Voting for 2024 - 2025 Executive Board Members
- Voting on the 2024 - 2025 Budget

**You must be present to vote for these issues.**

## ARROUND TOWN



**May 18 10 am to 7 pm  
Downtown Jonesboro**

This multicultural celebration will feature performers, food vendors, and arts and crafts vendors that highlight the rich cultural diversity of Northeast Arkansas.



**June 8 - 11am  
Downtown Jonesboro**

The Fellowship will have a booth at this event. Volunteer sign-up times coming soon!

## THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF JONESBORO

### WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

We come together in freedom,  
for pursuit of truth,  
service to humanity,  
and fulfillment of self.





## Our Interdependent Web

Flowers and greens are an integral part of most worship services, marriages, and funerals in all religions. But consider where these floral gifts and decorations in our homes, offices, and sanctuaries come from. For UUs concerned about carbon footprints and social justice, the international floral industry warrants our consideration. About 80% of all flowers sold in the U.S. are imported, primarily from South American industrial flower farms. For decades, these farms have been the subject of exposés about toxic chemicals and pesticides that poison the land and the workers, as well as their onerous labor practices.

### The world's largest producers of familiar flowers are:

- Roses: Ecuador
- Tulips and Peonies: The Netherlands
- Carnations: Colombia
- Orchids: Thailand

Internationally, the top producers of cut flowers in the world as of 2023 are the Netherlands (52%), Colombia (15%) and Ecuador (9%). Kenya and Ethiopia are #4 and #5. The U.S. is not even in the top ten. In addition to the chemicals and labor issues, we can quantify the carbon footprint of transporting those lovely flowers to the chancel or dining room table.

According to the International Council on Clean Transportation, in the three weeks preceding Valentine's Day in 2018, 30 freight planes carried loads entirely comprised of flowers into the U.S. EVERY SINGLE DAY. The environmental impact of delivering those 15,000 tons of flowers was 360,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and 115 million liters of airplane fuel.

If this information prompts a reconsideration of purchasing bouquets, what might you do instead?

- Buy in-season flowers and plants grown locally.
- Grow your own flowers and plants.
- Enliven your church, home, synagogue, community center, and office with long lasting, living plants.
- Decorate with other natural products—shells, leaves, rocks, pine cones, or branches.
- Engage friends, family, and members of the congregation to create art works depicting plants and other aspects of nature, such as needlepointed images, or framed, pressed flowers.

The cleverest art installation I saw was at a Houston, TX, synagogue. Arrayed along a long table was a beautiful display of 20 bouquets that I thought were made of glass. Actually, the synagogue's resident artist had taught adults and children to cut up used plastic soda and other bottles of various colors to create individual works of art that looked stunning en masse!

Botanical gardens offer great ideas and classes, such as creating cement leaf prints as stepping stones and birdbaths. Or you can feature a wall of nature photographs taken by church members.

Ministering to and for Earth can seem like a daunting task. Asking simple questions, like “where does this bouquet come from,” arms us to make intentional choices about how we interact with and impact the earth ourselves

# APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 	2 	3 	4	5	6
7 	8 	9 	10 	11	12	13
14 	15 	16	17	18 	19	20
21 	22 	23	24	25	26	27 
28 	29 	30 				

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

1st - Ashe Montalvo  
9th - Jack Ivy

- 1- April Fool's Day
- 2 - Autism Awareness Day
- 3 - National Rainbow Day
- 8 - Total Solar Eclipse
- 9 - Last Day of Ramadan
- 9 - National Unicorn Day
- 10 - World Homeopathy Day
- 10 - National Siblings Day
- 11 - National Pet Day
- 14 - National Gardening Day
- 17 - Administrative Professionals Day
- 18 - World Amateur Radio Day
- 22 - Earth Day
- 22 - Passover Begins
- 23 - Hanuman Jayanti
- 27 - Morse Code Day
- 28 - National Superhero Day
- 29 - International Dance Day