

Encouraging Spiritual Growth

When my hospital chaplaincy cohort completed our final reviews, we had to give (and receive) feedback from our peers—not just our supervisor. One of my peers clearly struggled to speak to me honestly, fearful of hurting my feelings.

"Quinn," he said, "you know a lot. Like, so much. And I love talking to you. But I think you might have an easier time relating to people if you dialed back the information. It's a lot to take in sometimes."

I deflated. Not because this was shocking to hear, but because it was terribly familiar. I've received similar feedback my whole life, and I've worked hard to rein it in.

In part, the struggle comes from a lack of understanding. If I were lost in grief, the first thing I'd want to know is the words for it. And the theory. And the pathway. How else do you get unlost without a map? Information is a coping mechanism. It gives me hope.

In my experience, people who aren't neurodiverse tend to frame neurodiversity as symptoms of inconvenience to people around them. My ADHD is being over-excited, distractible, fidgeting, being too much.

This is not what it feels like on the inside. For me, my ADHD means beauty. This world around us is so unbelievably beautiful that it simply demands my attention. ADHD is only disabling—at a psychological level—because the world is too big to admire fully: everything is interesting. Sadly, I can't pay attention to it all.

Cont. Page 2

WANT TO ADD TO OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER?

Please email 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.

"When I breathe in, I'll breathe in peace. When I breathe out, I'll breathe out love."

Sarah Dan Jones, are from hymn #1009
in Singing the Journey.



The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Jonesboro

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The Search for Truth and Meaning

When my daughter was nine years old, she asked me which religion was the “right one.” Why did she ask this question? My children are part of an interfaith family. Their father was raised Jewish, and I was raised Muslim. When we married, we had a secular wedding and for a time chose not to raise our children in either tradition exclusively. We thought we could raise them with no religious identity. Not so.

My children’s best friends (also siblings) attended a conservative Christian congregation. I let my kids attend programs with them, thinking it would be benign. This changed after my daughter returned home at age 5 declaring “Jesus is the light of the world.” I realized then that we weren’t being intentional in how we raised our children and that they were clearly wanting to engage in some kind of religious community, even at their young age. It was age appropriate, wanting to belong. I was aware of Unitarian Universalism and promptly looked up the closest UU congregation. We attended together and the rest is history.

One year later, I was the RE coordinator for a small congregation in Orange, NJ, and from there I dove deeper into the world of faith leadership, eventually becoming credentialed in RE leadership.

The reason we chose a UU community is that it is pluralist. UUs do not claim to be superior to other faiths, and we affirm that what we understand to be spirituality takes many paths, whether or not that includes belief in a deity.

This is a profound and sacred notion for the modern era, especially because the world around us seems to be doubling down on religious extremism. Religious dominance causes intolerance of those who are of a different faith, or choose no faith at all.

Truly embracing pluralism and the freedom to coexist in the same society while maintaining your own religious identity is a transformative idea. We are witnessing in real time the impact of religious extremism. Whether it is anti-trans laws that purport to “protect children” or removing the right to bodily autonomy, this kind of thinking is oppressive at its core. The path to a liberated society includes embracing pluralism and not holding up any one religion over another.

As for my children, they continue on their own path. Someday they may tell their stories. But their values and who they are have been shaped by growing up as part of a Unitarian Universalist community.

Aisha Hauser, MSW, Church of the Larger Fellowship

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



UU World

FELLOWSHIP BUSINESS & IMPORTANT DATES

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.

June 8th - Jonesboro PRIDE Celebration

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Jonesboro will have a booth at the event. An email will be sent out to have a meeting to decide what we will do at our booth and a shift schedule.

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.

AROUND TOWN



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

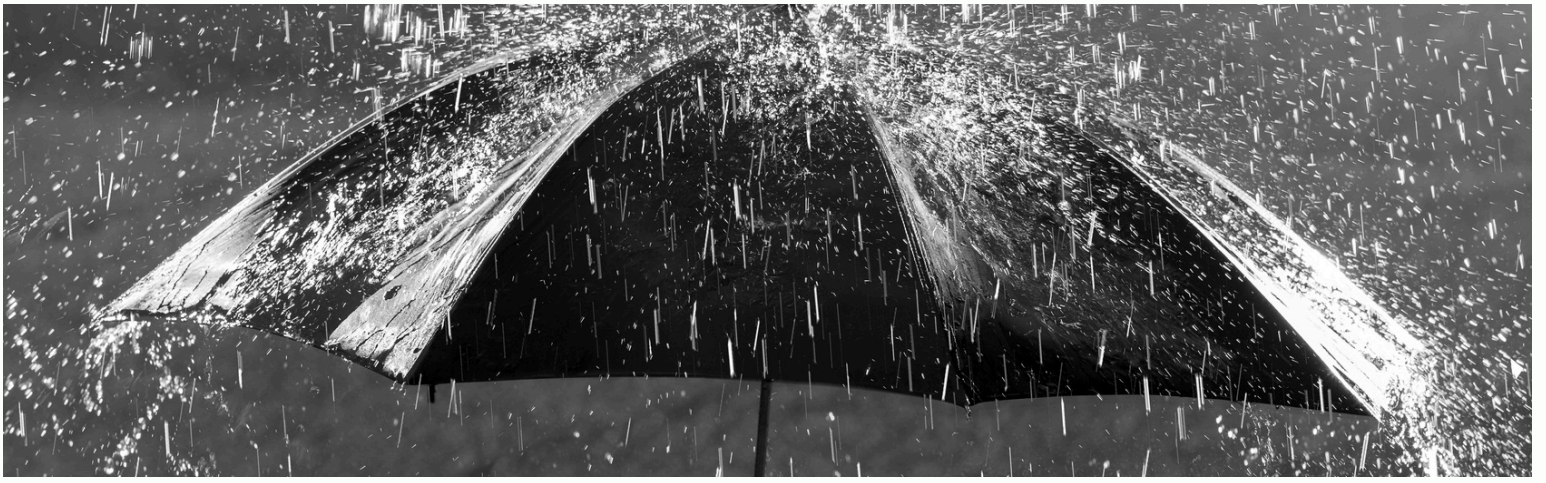
This multicultural celebration will feature performers, food vendors, and arts and crafts vendors that highlight the rich cultural diversity of Northeast Arkansas.



**June 8 - 11am
Downtown Jonesboro**

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





Our Interdependent Web

The impact of Arkansas' changing weather and interest in reforesting the Southern Delta are creating markets for Floodplain Restoration. Much of the agricultural land in this region was originally hardwood forest adapted to the Delta wetlands. These waterlogged lands are challenging to farm, but also can't just be left fallow. Incentives are needed to return them to forest, and farmers all over the Delta reflect this view. "Some land never should have been cleared," says Jason Milks U.S. Reforestation Program Director for the Nature Conservancy.

Federal programs to reforest Delta farmland do exist, but they are highly competitive and, unfortunately, leave out most small-scale landowners. The solution?—**Markets for Floodplain Reforestation**. This program rents landowners' flood-prone acres for 30 years, providing a reliable source of revenue. Once the rented land is reforested, the program will generate carbon credits to finance further reforestation.

Landowners in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi are being recruited to reforest 3,600 acres, especially small-scale farmers, including Black farmers who have been disproportionately impacted by a legacy of discriminatory practices in agricultural finance and relief programs. The first participant planted 125 acres of native trees in January 2024.

The carbon storage potential of restored Delta forests will be monetized, creating a new market for carbon sales, stable revenue for landowners, and billions of dollars in crop insurance and disaster relief savings.

Partners in this endeavor include the Nature Conservancy, the Walton Family Foundation, the American Forest Foundation, Bain & Co. (a Boston, MA, management consultant), and Harvard Business School's Community Partners Program.

Nature Conservancy, February 2024

Summer

NOTICE OF SUMMER SCHEDULE:

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF JONESBORO WILL ADOPT THEIR SUMMER FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE JUNE - AUGUST.

The Fellowship will meet the first and third Sundays of each month with an optional 2nd Sunday Brunch. Sunday FUNdays will also be affected.

May



SUNDAY

MONDAY


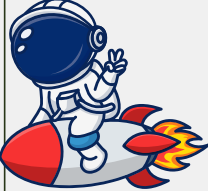












TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

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26		27	28		29		30		31				

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Valerie - May 17
Diane - May 20
Chloe - May 21

- 1 - May Day
- 2 - Astronomy Day
- 2 - National Day of Prayer
- 3 - National No Pants Day
- 3 - National Paranormal Day
- 4 - Star Wars Day - May the 4th Be With You
- 5 - Cinco De Mayo
- 6 - National Nurses Day
- 7 - National Teacher's Day
- 12 - Mother's Day
- 14 - Dance Like A Chicken Day
- 22 - World Goth Day
- 23 - Vesak
- 25 - Wine Day
- 27 - Memorial Day
- 31 - National Smile Day