



The
**UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST**
Fellowship of Jonesboro

GOODGENUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025



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WORSHIP SERVICE

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.



Sunday, February 2, 2025

As we anticipate spring's arrival, our service will welcome spring with a focus on the Celtic holiday of Imbolc, with maybe a few other similar holidays from other religions.

Sunday, February 9, 2025

Zach and Julianna will give a service on their experiences at protests at DC during the inauguration.

Sunday, February 16, 2025

Jennifer will talk on the Gods and Goddess of love.

Sunday, February 23, 2025

TBD

UU ANNOUNCEMENTS

Peanut Butter Sunday - Feb 9th

Your continued generosity toward those in need in our community with a gift of nutritious PB is a welcome addition to Helping Neighbors' shelves.

Third Sunday Potluck - Feb 16th

Bring a dish you love to share and join us following services for our monthly potluck.

Board Meeting - Feb 23rd

The board will be meeting at noon on February 23rd. If you would like to have anything added to the agenda, please [email Karen](#) prior to February 16.

Update Your Contact Information

Keep your contact information up-to-date. Please [click here](#) and spend 2-3 minutes to update your info!

[UPDATE CONTACT INFO](#)

OPENNESS TO CHANGE

*MARTHA DURKEE-NEUMAN
ASSISTANT MINISTER FIRST CHURCH, BELMONT, MA*



When I was a youth, the young adult fantasy series, *His Dark Materials*, by Philip Pullman, was an important source of spiritual guidance for me. Something I love about being a UU is drawing sacred texts from places such as the shelves of the middle school library. In the final book of the series, *Will*, one of the young protagonists, must make a decision, upon which possibly the fate of our world and the next world hangs. Before he decides, *Will* evaluates his options as if they are lit candles before him.

This short passage returned to me recently when I was faced with a hard choice. I saw all my options in front of me as lit candles. Waiting there for me, representing different things. Different paths. All looking particularly enticing and bright and shiny and glittery, and some maybe a little frightening, and all of them on fire.

Before I chose, when all my options still existed, I felt attached to all those candles. I didn't want to choose, and snuff out my other options. Eventually, I made my choice, but I still grieved the candles I had blown out. When we lean on each other, our shared courage grows infinitely, and we can move alongside one another into the world to come.

This is a year in which hard choices will be required of all of us. Our world is changing, so much is in flux. Increasingly we are faced with questions and decisions about our money, our time, our place in history, how we act, how we don't act, what matters, what we give our attention to, what kind of world we're building. We cannot afford to linger in front of all the flaming candles in front of us. Will had to choose, after all.

It takes courage to blow out the candles of the roads we will not travel. But in this moment, our task is to find this courage and lift it up and—lucky for us—we have each other. We do not have to do this alone. And on the other side of that decision, we can travel forward together, with our one remaining candle to light the way.

So come and find me. Travel alongside me. Bring me your courage, because Lord knows I don't have enough on my own. Together we can blow out the candles of the roads not taken. And then we can go forward side by side.

May a spirit of discernment be with us as we make the hard choices that lie before us. When we lean on each other, our shared courage grows infinitely, and we can move alongside one another into the world to come.

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



Soul Food Dinner and Program - Feb 7th

The Strong-Turner Alumni Chapter of the A-State Alumni Association will host the 18th annual Soul Food Dinner and Program on Friday, February 7, 2025 from 6–8 PM. The event will take place at the Baptist Collegiate Ministries building, at 115 N. Caraway Rd., on the A-State campus.

What to expect: a soul food dinner, performances by singers and speakers, and a community-centered event that celebrates Black History Month.



Library Craft Swap - Feb 7th

Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library - Drop-offs for craft materials will only be accepted from February 3rd-5th from 10 AM - 5 PM, the drop-off location is the Adult Services desk. Please carefully read the list of rules on their website before you donate. In-person trading will be on February 7th from 3 - 5:30 PM in the Library's Round Room.



Black History Month Activities

Visit our friends from [KLEK's Facebook Page](#) to stay up-to-date on Black History Month activities around town.

OUR INTERDEPENDENT WEB

LARA FARRAR, AR TIMES, 12/4/24



As climate scientists continue to research unpredictable weather patterns and their correlation with global warming, researchers with the University of Arkansas at Monticello have created a tool that could predict more accurately and understand drought patterns in Arkansas more fully.

Research by Hamdi Zurqani, Assistant Professor of Geospatial Science for the College of Forestry, Agriculture and Natural Resources, at UA Monticello, was published in the November issue of Ecological Indicators Journal.

Using satellite imagery, Zurqani and his team created an online mapping tool that shows drought levels across Arkansas over multiple decades. The Arkansas Vegetation Drought Explorer incorporates data from the Vegetation Health Index, a tool used to monitor drought conditions around the world.

Zurqani began his research in 2022, after realizing that Arkansas lacked available data about weather patterns in the State. Without a state climate office or climatologist, Zurqani believes environmental scientists, as well as agricultural sectors, insurance companies, and policymakers, can benefit from the information his team is developing.

Similar databases do not exist in other states, and this tool, Zurqani believes, could be used in other regions plagued by droughts, like Sub-Saharan Africa.

During the development of the Arkansas Vegetation Drought Explorer, Zurqani and his team noticed some interesting trends with historical drought and rain patterns in the state. Shorter-term data, for example, showed more frequent droughts, yet an analysis of longer time periods indicated that drought conditions may actually be improving in some areas, indicating greater resilience to climate change.

Dry spells are more common in eastern and southern Arkansas and near the Mississippi River. The researchers were also able to track the emergence of flash droughts, a condition marked by low precipitation along with increased temperatures, radiation and wind that speed evaporation from the soil. Flash droughts can wreak havoc for both farmers and forestry operations.

According to NOAA's National Integrated Drought Information System, flash droughts are a continuing topic of research, with scientists trying to understand the phenomenon as well as their impact. "Flash drought occurs more often than many people realize and can cause major impacts," according to the NIDIS website.

Significant negative impacts to the agricultural sector have been better documented than impacts to other sectors and the environment. Flash drought has occurred in the southeastern U.S. as recently as the fall of 2019. In a widespread flash drought across the central U.S. during the summer of 2012, damages in the Great Plains were estimated at more than \$30 billion.

We need not to think alike to love alike.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

DIANE
ELLEEN
HAWKEY

MAY 20, 1946 - DECEMBER 17, 2024





February Birthdays

Jennifer - Feb 24

Ashley Stone - Feb 26

Michael - Feb 26



WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEWSLETTER?

Email info@jonesborouu.org by the 20th of the month to have your article, community event, announcement, or contribution added to the next month's newsletter.

LOVE

ALYSSA KELLEY, NATURAL HISTORY, 11/24



Valentine’s Day often encourages us to speak about “love” in broad terms, applying the label to romance, pets, or even favorite places. But are these feelings of love all the same, or do they originate from distinct neural mechanisms? Pärttyli Rinne of Aalto University in Finland led a study to investigate.

Scientists used affectionate stories and functional magnet resonance imaging (fMRI) to depict activation in the brain in a “loving couple-relationship” with at least one child. Introducing six types of love—romantic, parental, friend, stranger, pet, and nature—the researchers played short narratives to elicit feelings of love as participants listened inside an MRI scanner.

“You are taking a walk with your partner. They stop and turn to look at you deep in the eyes with a soft smile. You love them.”

As they are immersed in the stories, participants’ reward centers and social cognition areas lit up. The results revealed stronger and more widespread activation in the brain’s reward system for closer affiliative bonds like romantic

partner, child, or friend. Love for a stranger scarcely activated the cerebellum and subcortical regions, indicating that the intensity of love is reflected to the degree the reward system is activated. Interestingly, the social cognition areas of pet owners in the subject pool saw heightened activity compared to non-pet owners, although pet love was less activated overall than human love.

Parental love or love for people we deem family demonstrated the most intense activation, with stronger feelings of love and thus greater activation in reward pathways.

These precise neural mechanisms of love guide our human connections. With widespread reward and social cognition activation, we can see how love builds on biological attachment systems. The researchers hope their work will improve mental health measures for attachment disorders, depression, or relationship issues.

Chocolate would help too.



*Love is the power that holds us together
and is at the center of our shared values.*



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THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF JONESBORO

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