



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP *of the Carolina Foothills*

Meeting 1st and 3rd
Sundays of each month at
Whimsical World Gallery,
116 Jones St, Landrum, SC

Mailing Address:
UUFCF

P. O. Box 653
Tryon, NC 28782



Downtown Landrum, SC

Happening in January

Jan. 1 – New Year's Day
Jan. 7 – UUFCF Service at 10:30
Jan. 15 – Martin Luther King Day
Jan. 21 – UUFCF Service at 10:30
Jan. 25 – The Wolf Moon (*full*)

January 7, 2024 at 10:30 -- Rev. Ernie Mills

Can Science Save Us?

"We believe in science" seems to be the modern-day mantra backed by the belief that science will somehow save the planet. We seem to put as much faith in science as we do any religion. In posing this question I am aware that the word "save" may raise some issues. What is it that we expect science to save us from? Science has indeed saved us from many killer diseases but it has also been instrumental in the production of many chemicals that are destructive to both human lives and the life of the planet. Can we expect science to save ourselves from the fear, hate and greed that so often drive us to war and the destruction of our planet? We'll explore this question and determine if it is really science or a new myth that will save us.



January 21, 2024 at 10:30 – Rev. Ernie Mills

What Do We Give When We Forgive?

The etymology of the word "forgive" comes from Latin *perdonare*, which means "to give completely without reservation." Yet, what are we giving when we forgive? We will take a close look at the psychological aspect of forgiveness and see if we can't come up with an answer to the question.



Celebrating Christmas in Ukraine -- Don Greeson

It's no secret that religion and politics are siblings, or at least first cousins. US Supreme Court debasement of constitutional rights thanks to conservative activism, a horrific war in the Middle East basically spawned by religious zealotry, and the presence of right wing evangelicalism in our local politics... are all obvious examples. Given the maelstrom of ideological turmoil across the planet, a new law in Ukraine concerning Christmas seems insignificant.

But on December 24, Aljazeera posted the news story that Ukraine, for the first time in more than a century, will celebrate Christmas on December 25 and not on January 7. This is a break from Eastern Orthodox tradition and a symbolic shift away from Russia, inspired by the invasion and ongoing war. It's also a not-so-subtle gesture toward Vladimir Putin. That gesture now aligns Ukraine with the Gregorian Calendar and with most of the world's Christians. A law signed by President Zelenskyy noted that Ukrainians wanted to "live their own life with their own traditions and holidays," and allows them to "abandon the Russian heritage of imposing Christmas celebrations on January 7."

The story, picked up by CNN and others, goes on to report, "The political rift has seen priests and even entire parishes swap from one church to another, with the new *Orthodox Church of Ukraine* growing fast and taking over several Russia-linked church buildings in moves supported by the government."

Ukraine is predominately Catholic (or some orthodoxy of Catholic), with only 4% of the population considered Protestant (mostly Presbyterian). I share this trivial news tidbit only as a reminder that religious traditions are mostly symbolic, and sometimes the most important symbol may have little to do with historical accuracy. The rebellion against Russia's dictate of when a church holiday may be celebrated illustrates the overlap of religion and politics and demonstrates how badly Ukraine wants to break ties with Russia. But it's interesting, isn't it, that it's now the Ukrainian government declaring what day Christmas may be celebrated? The religious freedoms we take for granted are alien to some countries and cultures. The seven foundational principles of Unitarian Universalism set us apart, and I'd like to think *elevate us*, above political dictates and conservative cults.

Sometimes we don't realize how good we have it... at least for now. Still, *Merry Christmas, Ukraine!*

Mark your calendar!

The first service of February (2/4/24) will be held in the Landrum Depot, followed by a pot luck lunch. The service will begin at our usual time of 10:30. The Depot is along the tracks at 211 South 562, beside the fire station and the old railroad car. Details will be in January email updates.



Questions, Comments, or Ideas?

Contact any of our UUFCF Board Members

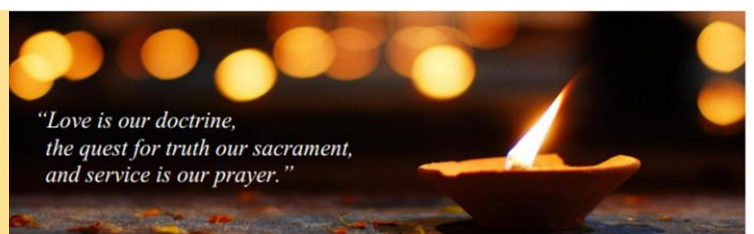
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*"Love is our doctrine,
the quest for truth our sacrament,
and service is our prayer."*