
April 2018: Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church

Welcoming Congregation

The Bridge

*10:00 a.m. each Sunday: Intergenerational Devotional

*10:10 a.m. Religious Education for all ages

*Primary: Earth Day Activities for the month of April

*Teens: "Families"

*Adults: "Transforming Faith" by Fred Howard

April 1 "Listening for Easter's Good News" - Reverend Claudia M. Frost – What is the "Good News" of Jesus' ideas for the Kingdom of God on earth? What is our "Good News" as a faith community? Come celebrate the love, hope and joy of the Easter message.

April 8: - "History of U. S. Immigration, 1790-2018" – Ed Clark – Ed will trace immigration to the United States and explain how, when it came to the way immigrants were treated, it mattered when they got here and where they came from.

April 15: "Shon Hopwood: A Journey of Forgiveness, Redemption and Rebirth" - Reverend Lois Cavanaugh-Daley – Lois will reflect on the amazing true story of Shon Hopwood, a convicted bank robber and jailhouse lawyer who became an expert in Supreme Court Law!

April 22: "Kinship with All Life" - Reverend Claudia M. Frost – On this Earth Day 2018, we will immerse ourselves in spiritual inquiry concerning our sacred work in the world for the benefit of the Earth and all its creation. Join us to explore a sense of profound interconnectedness with all life and especially a reconnection with nature.

April 29: "A Teacher's View of Earth Day" - Michael Mozingo – Fifth Sunday offering goes to "Laundry Love" in Goldsboro.



Dates to Remember

April 1: Easter Breakfast at 9:00 a.m. followed by Easter egg hunt before services

April 12: 11:30 a.m. Dutch treat lunch at Johnny's Seafood followed by AUW meeting at 1:00 p.m.

April 22: Board meeting following services and pot-luck lunch.

April 26: Music Concert: Brandon Banks and Friends: Covered-dish supper at 6:30; concert at 7:30

April 28: Spring Cleanup at the church

May 13: Homecoming



Make Every Day Earth Day!

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A Green Sanctuary, A Welcoming Congregation, Affiliated with the Universalist Convention of North Carolina, Inc. (UCONCI) The Universalist Convocations, The Southeast District of the UUA, and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

Claudia's Comments

Happy Easter Everyone! Although Easter is April 1st (April Fool's Day) this year, I hope you'll take seriously the idea to extend Easter joy throughout this month. During Lent we spent time in quiet contemplation as well as various kinds of prayer and reflection as we listened to the Sacred. Easter dawns with an orientation toward celebration and joy.

Easter Sunday at Outlaw's Bridge is a fun and joyous celebration. When you step out into the weekday world, are you going to let that joy fade as noise and expectations rush in? Job stress, over-booked schedules, constant demands or maybe even loneliness and boredom can all deplete our good intentions. After the Easter hymns are sung, the flowers are wilting, and there's not much left of the glazed ham and chocolate eggs, the post Easter let down can occur.

This is not an indicator of a weakness in your religious faith. It is more about the contrast between the sanctuary of ideals and the challenge of daily habits. How can we extend the joy of Easter and embody that joy in our lives?

Cultivating compassion for ourselves and others will extend the joy. Remembering the worth and dignity of every person, we can speak up and compassionately work to eliminate aggression, jealousy, greed and violence when we encounter it either in ourselves or others. Another way to extend Easter joy is by growing our sense of generosity and sharing our gifts. Continuing your spiritual practice of daily meditation, prayer or gratitude reflections fosters inner joy and peace. Nurturing friendships, enjoying food and fun with those you love and living from the rule of love that Jesus taught rather than judgement also extends Easter joy.

Joy is a state of your spirit. My mentor and Spiritual Director tells me there are five signs of spiritual progress according to his meditation teacher, Shinzen Young.

1. You have less suffering, resentment, self-pity, negative judgement of self and others and envy. You are able to take the bumps and hardships of life with greater calm and equanimity.
2. You have more fulfillment and experience gratitude for life and the many joys and gifts that you've been given. You enjoy your loved ones, friends, community, activities and material goods. Nature nurtures you. You feel your life matters.
3. You have more insights and see more and more the interconnectedness of all life.
4. You have more positive behaviors and fewer negative ones. You find yourself being kinder, more patient with others and less judgmental. You may find it is easier to take good care of yourself.
5. You act more compassionate and serving others comes more natural.

I hope your spiritual path is leading you to more joyful living like the results listed above. If not, you may want to look more closely at what you are practicing.

With Love, Hope and joy,
Reverend Claudia