

The Quest

OCTOBER 2023
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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County

PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR OCTOBER

Sunday services are both in-person and online, and they start at 10:30. (Religious education classes are in-person only.) Google Meet codes/phone numbers and PINs, which are the same every week, are online at meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj or by phone at 413-679-2794, PIN 139 523 137#.

Oct 1. Living Reflections. Acupuncturist Ruth Karmazon, MS, L.Ac., Dipl.Ac., will discuss the distinct, nuanced connections between the health of the earth and that of the human body, specifically the heart. Hosted by Sharon Pontier. Led by Ruth Karmazon.

Oct 8. How Could They Have Taught Us That? Rev. Doak will contend with the great stories that are our legacy as Americans and how they became distorted at best, and bold lies at worst. Led by Rev. Doak Mansfield.

Oct 15. A Look at The Friends Committee on National Legislation. Activists Chris Dunbar and Sharon Pontier will present the current legislative projects for this year that the FCNL will bring to legislatures. They'll give an overview of some of the 80-year history of the committee, and discuss why creating and working in an advocacy group is important. Hosted by Sharon Pontier. Led by Chris Dunbar and Sharon Pontier.

Oct 22. Notes from Merrie England. Rev. Doak will share some of his experiences and learnings from a weekend workshop on "Worship," which he's attending in England, October 12-16, with British Unitarian ministers. Led by Rev. Doak Mansfield.

Oct 29. Something Sings: Wisdom by Emerson, Poetry by Jane Ebihara and Elaine Koplow. Beloved regional poets Elaine Koplow and Jane Ebihara have shaped a responsive reading from pieces of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Music." Hosted by Sharon Pontier. Led by Jane Ebihara and Elaine Koplow.



We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person.*
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.*
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.*
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.*
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.*
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.*
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

The Quest is the monthly newsletter of the UUFSC. For the most up-to-date information, go to our website, www.uunewtonnj.org. Our phone number is 973-579-7210.



MINISTER'S MUSINGS

So much of the life of a minister is devoted to wondering, pondering ideas. A Catholic priest has a vast amount of specialized information to learn related to rituals and requirements...necessary teachings translated into requirements of faithfulness. The Protestant minister has a need for a real memory for Bible passages, stories, and morals. A Jewish rabbi must be a scholar in Jewish history and culture, and is called on to be a great story-keeper, traditions expert, and storyteller.

The characteristics of Unitarian Universalist ministers are, I think, more varied than traditional clergy types. I suppose because I'm so very attracted to historical studies, I think of history, religious studies, and social studies as foundational for a UU minister. Also vital is knowledge in psychology, and in human qualities and quirks.

Historically, traditional Christian clergy served in a role of authority, charged with the spiritual health and salvation of those they serve. Through their ordination (literal linkage through the generations of the historical church, tracing back to the apostles of Jesus) they share in the power of dispensing the grace of Jesus' love in atonement for sin and estrangement from God.

While Unitarian and Universalist traditions are rooted in Christianity, albeit two of the earliest Christian heresies, from earliest times their clergy were ordained in the Christian tradition. There's no official date on which UU moved beyond the limits of the Christian tradition. (Perhaps 1961, the year of the merger of the Unitarians and Universalists, could be set). Or the UU clergy took on a differently oriented ministry—loyalty to religious/spiritual liberty, affirmation of every person's worth and dignity, work for justice, and devotion of the interdependent web of existence, physically and morally.

I see my job as caring about, yes loving, all who it is my privilege to know in the Fellowship and larger community, and to offering ideas, understandings, affirmations, and encouragements as together we engage the challenges and struggles of learning to be better people in service to the good. We're not necessarily about salvation...but we certainly are about loving the hell out of life! And we're called to do that together, teachers and scholars all.

Love,

Rev. Doak

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Our intrepid chronicler, Sue Weiner, publishes the UUFSC contact list of names and addresses. The list shows members, as well as folks we call friends or visitors. These friends are the people who attend services—and are welcome at all our other events—but have never taken the plunge to become actual UUFSC members.

We'd be delighted if they would. Membership makes a personal impact, spiritually and socially.

The Fellowship is a unique organization. We stand for peace, justice, racial and gender equality, LGBTQ rights, and environmental action to defeat climate change. I like to think we're the good guys.

And what an interesting bunch to be part of!

Richard Goffman, our Secretary, just published his latest novel, nine years in the making. Jerry Sattin, our Treasurer, has been a literary scholar, lawyer, and high-talent musician. Barbara Kelly is (I guarantee you) the only person on your block fluent in Wolof, the language of Senegal, where she worked in the Peace Corps. Joy Daniel invented the popcorn button on microwave ovens. Her husband, Wayne, was a rocket scientist and financial wiz.

I could go on. But, if you're more boring, like I am, that's OK too. We still want you! Visitors who share our principles ought to jump in with both feet.

So, join us formally. Become a member. Be an integral part of our family. Make new friends. Be supported in tough times. Be celebrated in good times. **Stand up for what you think.**

Reverend Mansfield is making plans for a member induction ceremony on December 10.

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***Mission Statement of the
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sussex County***

**We seek to nourish the spirit;
to foster peace, justice, diversity and understanding
in our community and the world;
and to cherish and sustain the earth and the web of life.**

THIS MONTH IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Happy Autumn, Friends!

In our first story of Moral Tales, we learned to “Welcome One and All” with a story of a Muslim man celebrating Ramadan. In the story, he teaches others how to look past outside appearances and to treat all people with love and dignity.

The lessons of our next two tales go hand in hand—see all living beings with awe and adhere to the Golden Rule, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Respectfully yours,

Sharon and Pin

Below is our RE calendar for October.

Oct 1. Welcome One and All (continued). Last month, we finished listening to the moral tale “Welcome One and All.” In this next session, we’ll play the Welcome Game and do an activity together in which we literally demonstrate the expression. “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”

Oct 8. Seeing Others with Awe. The tale this week is about a third-grade class in which the children start to see each other as a messiah, which leads to some very special outcomes. In the next session, we’ll actively practice seeing others with awe and see first-hand how this leads to treating people with respect.

Oct 15. Seeing Others with Awe (continued). Last week, the children were introduced to the moral tale “A Messiah is Among You.” This week, we’ll make affirmation portraits or books to express our inherent worth, illustrating our differing and amazing qualities.

Oct 22. Do unto Others. This session takes a suggestion from scripture to “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” The children will role-play the story of the Good Samaritan.

Oct 29. Do unto Others (continued). Last week, the children were introduced to the moral lesson “Do unto Others.” This week, we’ll lead a discussion, asking the children how they would like to be treated by others. Afterward, we’ll play a game of freeze tag, in which we help “unfreeze” our neighbors.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussion Group

Mike Busche has retired as the group's moderator after many years of service. We want to thank him for his contributions and leadership. The group's new moderators are Susanna Lee and Phil Schaming, and they will be looking for volunteer moderators going into 2024.

The subject of our October meeting is Artificial Intelligence (AI). What does it do? How is it used? What experiences do you have with it? Why is it good and/or bad? Implications in education seem to be a hot topic in the news media.

To provide some background, it's advised to have an experience at <https://openai.com/chatgpt> . Create an account, and get started! Ask it some questions, and see what happens. Bring your experience to the discussion group.

Your interest and help is requested. Join the group. Tell a friend. Bring a friend. Let's make this group a bright spot in our day-to-day lives.

The meeting is at 10 am on October 20, at the Fellowship.

Food Pantries

UUFSC will support the Sparta Community Food Pantry this fall with two food drives.

In October, we'll be collecting dog and cat food. Desired donations are dry or canned (shelf-stable) food in the smaller sizes (e.g., 15-20-pound bags), although 50-pound bags will be accepted. Bins will be provided downstairs. See Susan Felsen with any questions.

In November, we'll be collecting non-perishable food in advance of Thanksgiving. Again, bins will be provided downstairs. See Hal Cohen with any questions.

Art Exhibit

The current art exhibit at the Fellowship features two artists, Curtis Engesser and his late mother Sylvia Stewart Engesser. Curtis is a local plein air oil painter, and Sylvia was a watercolor painter. It's our privilege to have a mother and son exhibit. All paintings are available for donations. Please see Sharon Pontier if you're interested.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Social Action

March to End Fossil Fuels: Thanks to Marilyn, Sally, and Sharon Pontier, who attended The March to End Fossil Fuels in NYC on September 17th, along with many thousands of activists. This event was aptly timed to precede the UN special climate summit that followed on Wednesday.

Neighborhood Cleanup: Members are invited to help clean up our neighborhood directly after coffee hour on October 8th. Newton really appreciates our doing this each year, as folks holler out nice comments. Chris will be wearing her UU tee shirt and UUFSC cap! Hope you can join her for an hour or two. Bags and grabbers are provided.

Stewardship

For many years, the purchase of gift cards by our members and friends has been a very lucrative way for the Fellowship to raise important funds directly from other businesses. Last year, the Fellowship raised almost \$1,800 from these programs. Our current programs include:

1. **Supermarket Gift Cards.** We offer \$100 gift cards from either Shop-Rite, Weis Markets, or Stop & Shop. As we can purchase those cards for \$95 each, the Fellowship earns \$5 for each gift card you purchase, **at no cost to you**. If you'd like to participate in this program, please call, text, or email Hal Cohen with your order, and he'll make arrangements to get your gift cards to you.
2. **Raise Right Gift Cards.** Through Raise Right (at www.raiseright.com), you have the ability to purchase gift cards from over 750 retailers, and the Fellowship can earn up to 14% of the value of your purchase directly from the gift card vendor, **at no cost to you**. The fee earned by UUFSC will vary by vendor. You can either purchase an ecard, which is available immediately to print at home or maintain on your phone, or you can purchase a hard gift card that will be mailed to the Fellowship and passed on to you. Please contact Sue Weiner or Hal Cohen for further information about how to participate in this program.

Please let Hal or Sue know if you have any questions about how to participate in either program. We greatly appreciate your support of these very valuable fundraising opportunities.

UUFSC SUPERMARKET GIFT CARD PROGRAM

Please call or email Hal Cohen for your \$100 supermarket gift cards each month. Help the Fellowship earn 5% of each card purchased directly from the store, at no cost to you. Thanks!



RaiseRight™

Formerly ShopWithScrip

ShopWithScrip is now called RaiseRight and continues to offer the Fellowship a wonderful way to raise needed funds as you shop. UUFSC gets rebates of up to 14% on gift cards that you purchase from among more than 750 well-known merchants. You can buy gift cards by going to www.raiseright.com. Please contact Sue Weiner or Hal Cohen if you have any questions about this program.



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
OF SUSSEX COUNTY**

President: Stu Feldstein
Vice-President: Phil Schaming
Treasurer: Jerry Sattin
Secretary: Richard Goffman
***Quest* Editors: Susan Weiner, Richard Goffman**