

The Quest

MARCH 2024
VOL. 59, NO. 7

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County



PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR MARCH

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#.

March 3. An Overview of Islam. Rev. Doak says of his message, “I am a beginning student of Islam, but know it’s vital to have some understanding of this very significant shaper of character and ideology. I’ll share what I’ve learned.” Led by Rev. Doak Mansfield.

March 10. The Buddha’s Path of True Love. Spiritual exercises for cultivating kindness and compassion. A short talk, guided meditation, and a contemplative interpersonal exercise, followed by discussion. Led by Peter Dlugos. **(Don’t forget to set your clocks ahead one hour before bed on March 9.)**

March 17. Overview of World Religions. Seems fitting for St. Patrick’s Day to consider the ancient pre-Christian religious/spiritual practices of our ancestors. Let’s hear it for the snakes! Led by Rev. Doak Mansfield.

March 24. Language, Culture, and Identity. What do language and culture teach us about identity? Linda will discuss what she has learned during a lifetime of linguistic exploration. Led by Linda Watkins-Goffman.

March 31. Easter: Christianity, the Religion about Jesus, Not the Religion of Jesus. An exploration of what can be discerned of Jesus’ original message, before it was manipulated by power brokers. Led by Rev. Doak Mansfield.

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



For me, the use of titles, earned or assumed, seems like something tricky. It can sometimes feel pretentious, but it's also important to recognize each other's accomplishments. The medical title of Dr. is easily applied. Also, the Dr. for Ph.D. is common, but many times the title of Dr. is for doctorates in other disciplines.

In 1962, the Claremont (CA) School of Theology introduced a new degree, the Doctor of Religion. In 1964, the University of Chicago Divinity School moved to a four-year program, the Doctor of Ministry. Vanderbilt Divinity School announced a four-year professional doctoral degree to ministers who engaged in seven to eight years of part-time study, Doctor of the Science of Theology.

In 1970, member schools of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) authorized their member schools to award the Doctor of Ministry degree, setting up standards and requirements developed over 20 years of discussions and study. I earned my Master of Divinity at the United Theological Seminary (OH).

I earned my Doctor of Ministry in 1996 from the Graduate Theological Foundation (GTF) in Donaldson, IN, after 24 years in ministry. GTF is an American nonprofit interreligious institution of higher learning, originally founded (1962) in Indiana, but now centered in Sarasota, Florida. Unlike traditional residential theological schools, GTF focuses on continuing educational opportunities for practicing ministry professionals, administrators, and academics who want to pursue advanced degrees while retaining their current positions. Students and faculty reside around the world, and scholarly work takes place through onsite, online, and distance learning engagement. Students are eligible to earn bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in a variety of theological disciplines. Spirituality was my focus.

My course of study included work at The University of the South School of Theology (Sewanee, TN), Austin Seminary (Austin, TX), Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University (Fort Worth, TX) as well as GTF. I have been devoted to independent study of UU history, both theological and cultural.

Over the last 40 years, a practice has developed in the UU ministry to use Reverend and one's first name (e.g., Rev. Doak) rather than the older way, Reverend Mansfield. Technically, it should be The Reverend Mr. or Dr. So, because I aspire to be a wise old man (aka, Sage, Elder, Mahatma, Guru...), I invite folks to refer to me as Doc. Doak, rather than Rev. Doak. (Alliteration is so cool!) "Vanity, vanity...all is vanity."

As an affiliate member of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, I will attend their annual meeting April 3-6 in the UK. I will staff a booth for *The Universalist Herald* magazine, the oldest (1847) continuously published liberal religious periodical in North America. I have had several essays published there over the years. I will peddle my two books (second due soon), *Kin-ship Spirituality* and *The Kin-dom Option: A Metamodern Guide to Faith*.

Please enjoy the waning days of winter. Spring is coming soon, "I ger-on tee it."

Love,

"Doc." Doak

This just in: On July 1, 2024, I will begin working with the Mattatuck UU Society in Southbury, CT, halftime. They're our size and are putting up their own building. I'll give priority to UUFSC in my scheduling. The plan is to go there for two long weekends, Thursday through Monday, twice a month.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

It won't be long now. Our annual Spring Fling will be held Saturday, April 13, at noon. But, unlike some other years, this year we have several new members and some new, regular visitors. So, what is the Fling? It will look like a party, with a buffet lunch, photos, at least one contest, and more. But the real key will be the auction of proposed Fling activities. Proposed by you!

At any time after April 13 (but usually in the spring and summer months), our members arrange activities that others can sign up for at a price—the price being a donation to the UUFSC. At the luncheon, we bid for one activity or another, and our resident administrators keep track of who signed up for what. Payment of the donation is managed at a later date.

The key to making this a real adventure is creativity in ideas for the activities being auctioned. Sometimes, the activity is simply “dinner at our house,” and that's fine (especially if you're hungry). But other ideas can be wildly different. Last year, we had trips to Grant's Tomb, the Presby Memorial Iris Gardens (one of the nation's largest displays of irises), the Storm King Art Center in upstate New York, and an ice cream social at Grey Towers in Milford, PA.

The excursions can take advantage of some of New Jersey's outstanding attractions. For instance, the second largest Hindu temple in the entire world is in Robbinsville, only about 1.5 hours' drive from Newton. And, in West Orange, the Turtle Back Zoo has been vastly expanded. Neither of these has been a Fling event in recent years, so they're ideas up for grabs.

Fling events can also be educational. I did one a few years ago on edible wild plants found on our farm. Someone else offered an event called “Forest Bathing.” (Not quite sure what that involved, but it sounded pretty interesting.)

Anything else? Yes. At the Fling, we also auction off actual articles, large and small. We've had everything from a Baldwin piano to a recumbent bike.

Now is the time... to think of exciting Fling ideas that will entertain or educate the membership, while also generating much-needed UUFSC revenue. We'll soon be putting your ideas into a Fling catalog.

In fellowship,

Stu

***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



Hello Friends,

The children spent some quiet reflection time and connected with each other while writing cards to congregation members in need and helping decorate our gathering space downstairs. Sometimes, it's good to slow down during these cold winter months to replenish ourselves and each other.

This slowing down, in addition to a "snow day" and illness earlier this year, has meant that we are putting some lessons back on the RE calendar that we did not get to cover last month.

We look forward to the Moral Tales we will share this month and we eagerly await the coming of spring and the renewal that it brings!

Egg-cited to see you soon,



Sharon and Pin

Below is the RE calendar for March.

March 3. Do No Harm. We'll begin this month by reading a story from India called *The Answer is in Your Hands*, about a young boy who has a bird's destiny in his hands. If time remains, we'll play a game in which we pass around a bird as we brainstorm non-violent ways to solve conflicts that may come up in our own lives.

March 10. Do No Harm (continued). If we didn't get to play the bird game last week, we'll play it today. Afterward, we'll make door hangers we can bring home to hang on our front doors. They'll remind us to stop and think "What would a Unitarian Universalist do?" as we go about our days.

March 17. Making a Difference. This week's story is a folk tale from Burma and Thailand about responsibility. The story, called *Not My Problem*, is about a queen who's asked to take action on a problem she believes is too small for her trouble. The problem eventually grows so large that it destroys her entire queendom. Afterward, we'll role-play positive responses to some common challenges in the children's lives.

March 24. Making a Difference (continued). Today, children will name some problems locally or in the world that concern them or that they are passionate about, and then use a "magic wand" to pretend to make them magically go away. Next, we'll create a grid outlining solutions we can actually take to tackle the problems we identified earlier, but in small steps that each of us can realistically accomplish so that we feel we're making a difference. Finally, each child will get to sign a commitment to take one small step, which we'll recognize the completion of at a later date.

March 31. Easter Sunday and Spring Celebration. On this special Sunday, we'll learn how the symbols of Easter are tied to ancient pagan traditions to commemorate the arrival of spring. Afterward, we'll head outside for an egg hunt and a canned goods hunt! The found cans will be donated to a community food bank. If you'd like to help us with this service project, please bring canned goods to the Fellowship. Items can be dropped off downstairs by March 24th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussion Group

Our February discussion was "What are the pros and cons of banning books?" and "What is free speech?."

Members recommended and voted on our next discussion topics, which are:

- Immigration – March 15
- End of Life – April 19
- Diversity in Education – May 17

We meet at the Fellowship at 10:00 am for an hour or so on the third Friday of each month, and we hope you'll join us on March 15th. Bring a friend!

Anyone who wants to join the UUFSC Discussion Group is welcome to just show up at a meeting or to email ufdiscussion@gmail.com for more info. Not all members are UU, and we encourage people of the community to join.

Treasurer's Address Change

Beginning February 12, all mail to the Treasurer should be directed to:

Jerry Sattin
609 W. South Orange Ave
Apt. 5B
South Orange, NJ 07079

Leaving a Legacy to Our Fellowship

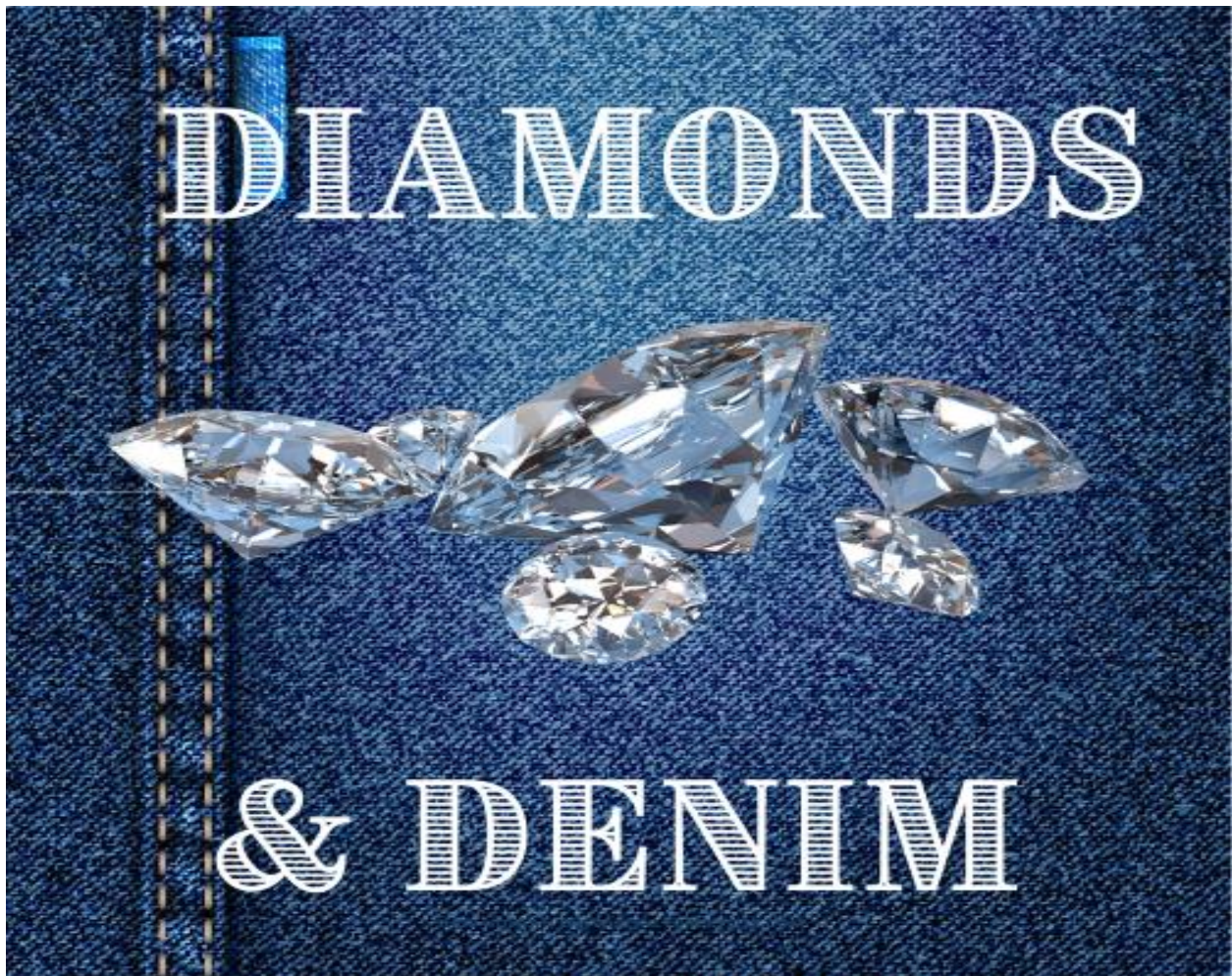
What is a legacy gift to UUFSC? A legacy gift is a planned future donation to our Fellowship. It's typically the single most significant donation an individual makes to the Fellowship. Planned giving can have a profound impact on the Fellowship's mission. It's a decision each person makes in his or her financial planning process, considering their charitable desires and values.

Why create a legacy gift? Members and friends of the Fellowship create legacy gifts for many different reasons. For some, it's a way to ensure their memory lives on. For others, it's a way to ensure the Fellowship can continue its very important work. Others find that it represents a way to facilitate the tax implications that come with the transfer of one's estate to surviving relatives. What better way to thank the organization that has had an impact on your life, or the life of someone you love, than by donating from your estate? By creating a legacy, you're making a significant contribution to the future sustainability of the Fellowship and its important work.

How do you create a legacy gift? A legacy gift can easily be created in several ways, including wills, codicils, IRA or retirement accounts, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, and charitable trusts.

Please consider a legacy gift to the Fellowship when you're evaluating your personal, family, and financial needs, as well as your long-term charitable giving. Every legacy gift, regardless of the amount, is important and cherished. We encourage you to review your estate planning with your lawyer, or financial/tax adviser.

CALLING ALL COWGIRLS & COWBOYS TO JOIN US FOR
UUFSC Spring Fling 2024



Saturday, April 13, Noon

Chuckwagon Lunch & Live Auction

~50/50 ~Western Costume Contest ~Photo Booth

Donation \$20.00

**Fancy Duds & Western Wear Optional
Join the Fun! Hee Haw!!**

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**

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