

The Quest

MAY-JUNE 2024
VOL. 59, NO. 9

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County

PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR MAY AND JUNE



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#.

May 5. Third Annual Brian Doherty Program. This is an annual discussion dedicated to a man we hold near and dear.

May 12. Universalism: A Mighty Big Concept? Dr. Doak will share a bit of our spiritual legacy and consider the resources available for our present-day challenges and opportunities. And he won't forget the recognition of Mother's Day! Led by The Rev. Dr. Doak M. Mansfield.

May 19. Annual Business Meeting/Readings by the Fellowship. (See the ballot on page 6.) Our Annual Business Meeting will be followed by readings by the congregation. Members and friends are encouraged to bring a reading on any topic or in any form to this meeting. Each person will read a selection of no more than four or five minutes. It can be something original by the reader or from another author. As appropriate, discussion can follow each reading.

May 26. Annual Flower Communion. Established in 1923 by The Rev. Norbert Capek, founder of the modern Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia, the Flower Communion is our unique expression of community. Everyone is requested to bring buds, blossoms, or some type of flowering plant for our service. There will be flowers provided for those who aren't able to bring them. Led by The Rev. Dr. Doak M. Mansfield.

June 2. Picnic. Details will be emailed (or snail mailed) to you.

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



Wow, what an April. April showers bring May _____ (fill in the blank). Sussex County (I've dubbed it the *Diamond of the North*) certainly has a variety of weather...floods, winds, sun, clouds, snow, earthquakes.

It's now been a full year for me here. I love the region and you all! Hard to take in, but I'm a certified New Jerseyite (sic) voter, licensed driver, etc. I've grown used to not pumping my own gas. (It's such a pain out of state!)

I'm thrilled with my new charge with the Mattatuck UU Society in Woodbury, CT. (Of course, Newton is home.) It's sort of like the churches in which I grew up, in a *three-point charge* (three congregations that are close to each other) of United Methodist Churches. They were Rev. Mary Tiebout's first congregation!

My second adventure in the UK was a grand one. The British Unitarian & Free Christian Churches Annual Meetings April 3-7 were wonderful. I'm an Associate Member (sort of like dual citizenship). Great preaching, helpful workshops, and meeting-visiting with new colleagues and friends. Oh, and yummy food. My friend Karen and I had a four-day holiday in Nottingham (<https://www.visitbritain.com/en/destinations/england/nottingham>), I was moved by all of it, but especially the powerful video/display in tribute to civil disobedience. Very woke and timeless.

I'm researching my 34% Irish heritage. "Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a soul?" (John Keats, *Letters of John Keats*)

Our summer recess is coming soon. My mornings from 7 until about 11 are usually spent "working" at Panera in Newton (Water Street, across from Walgreen's). I read, write, draw, and do research. I like the business around me. I concentrate better. It's a very nice place (good beverages, remarkable food, and good service! Please come by to visit anytime. Texting me first might be good, as I may have something going on. Hope to see you!

Please be safe. Restore and refresh! Did I tell you the one about the tradition of Unitarian congregations recessing over the summer? That's possible because, "The Unitarians are the only ones God trusts to take off the summer!"

Planning on a holiday July 29-Oct 8. Visiting Cincinnati, OH, Fayetteville, TN (hometown), and Huntsville, AL (speaking at my former church, 1985-2000). Hoping to take grandsons to a Cincinnati Reds game...

Stay in touch. I'm here most of the summer. Bored, lonely, extra food, know someone hospitalized...please reach out!

Love,

Rev Doak

P.S. Please invite a kindred spirit to our services! Odds are that's how you found out about us. Share the gift!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

On October 7, 2023, fighters of the Hamas organization in Gaza executed a coordinated attack on Israeli citizens, slaughtering over 1,200 men, women, and children.

The victims were almost all unarmed. Women were raped. More than 200 hostages were taken back to Gaza. These were not POWs—not military personnel—but merely civilians.

With this brutality in mind, it must surprise some people to see protests erupting across the U.S. in support of Hamas or of the Palestinian people that Hamas rules. But there is a reason. And the reason is Israel's response. More than 34,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed in the subsequent bombings and fighting. The vast majority were unarmed civilians, including many children. For every Israeli killed on October 7, more than 30 Palestinians have died.

And that is just one statistic. Literally hundreds of thousands of homes in Gaza have been bombed into rubble. The entire population of Gaza is near starvation, without clean water, and with little or no medicine. If the Israeli government had taken just retribution in a proportional way, it's hard to believe we'd be seeing pro-Palestinian protests in cities and on college campuses. But what has taken place is grotesquely out of proportion.

It's understandable that Israel would want to put an end to a terrorist group. But it seems likely that by killing so many innocents, Israel is instead creating the terrorists of tomorrow. The children who aren't killed will grow up focused on revenge.

Ironically, Hamas must have foreseen that Israel's response would be terrible. So why did they do it? It's a good bet that October 7 was done with purposeful brutality to bring a strong reaction—strong enough to cause other Middle Eastern nations to enter the war. Hamas wants Israel destroyed, and perhaps this was the best method they could conceive of.

It was a bad idea in a conflict of extremists. The U.S. and most other nations agree that there should be two separate countries—Israel and Palestine—where now there's one. But current leaders in Israel oppose this, and so does Hamas and its ally Iran. Until the politicians come to their senses, and until moderation replaces abject hatred, the horrors continue.

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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



Hello Friends,

It's hard to believe another year of religious education at the UUFSC is ending. We've spent the last two years hearing moral tales from around the world. Each moral tale gave us directions for fostering goodness and justice, from the first direction of "interdependence," taught by a tale of a woman's kindness to an ant, to the final direction of "cooperation," taught by a tale of a family made stronger by sticking together.

As a keepsake of our time together in *Moral Tales*, each child will receive a moral compass on the last day of RE, May 26th. It's our hope that the memento will remind them about the virtues they've explored in *Moral Tales* and reinforce the idea that, to act from goodness and justice, one may need to use all of these traits, and more.

Have a wonderful summer! 🍷 ❤️

Sharon and Pin

Below is the RE calendar for May.

May 5. Justice for All. This week's story, *The Dog and the Heartless King*, is about a kingdom in which many people don't have enough food. A dog comes to the palace and refuses to stop barking until the king has redistributed the wealth and everyone in the land has been fed. Through an "unfair snack" activity, the children will experience injustice first-hand and can turn it into justice.

May 12. Courage. An African folktale with dancing, singing, and a musical instrument introduces the children to a young woman who finds the courage to stand up to a hungry lion to save her cousin. The children will be guided to remember times when they've found the courage to do something risky. Through kinesthetic role-play, the children will be introduced to assertiveness techniques to feel more empowered to express themselves when conscience calls.

May 19. Perseverance. In this session, the children will hear stories about everyday people, children and adults, who have persisted against great odds for what they believed. Afterward, they will make a comic book of one of the heroes or heroines and help each other create a challenging homemade treat inspired by the perseverance of the people in these stories.

May 26. Working Together. This week, the children will hear and act out an Aesop's fable that uses a bundle of sticks to demonstrate the practical and spiritual strength gained by sticking together. They'll also engage in a simple art activity in which they each make a bundle of sticks to take home. Each stick in the bundle represents a child in the group, and each child's strengths will be honored as part of the whole, as in the story. The moral of the story is that individually, life's challenges can cause us to snap, but if we "stick" together, we're much harder to break.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussion Group

The topic of our upcoming meeting on May 17 (10 am at the Fellowship) is "Diversity in Education."

The UUFSC Discussion Group plans to continue meeting over the summer months and will be selecting topics during the next meeting. If you're interested, join our email list (ufdiscussion@gmail.com) to get pertinent info about what we're discussing.

Anyone who wants to join the group is welcome. Not all members are UU, and we encourage people of the community to join.

Minister's Advisory Committee

Last year, a Minister's Advisory Committee was established, consisting of Hal Cohen, Stevie Fava, and Susan Felsen. Meeting bi-monthly, they serve to consult with our minister, Rev. Doak, on issues arising within the Fellowship. Hal was the original convener.

In April, Tony Balzano and Phil Schaming joined the committee as Hal cycled off. Tony will be the convener. If you have any concerns, comments, ideas, or other feedback, please reach out to one of the MAC members.

Rummage Sale

Our annual Rummage Sale is scheduled for June 21 and 22. So, start hunting for all the items you'd like to get rid of, but that are of some value. Stay tuned for emails about when you can drop things off (sometime after June 2) and when you can help at drop-offs, setup, and the sale itself.

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!



Formerly ShopWithScrip

RaiseRight 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 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.

Notice of Annual Business Meeting: May 19, 2024

Absentee Ballot

For the Fellowship Year July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Voting Instructions: This is an absentee ballot. ***This absentee ballot should be used if you will not be attending the business meeting at the Fellowship on May 19, including those who will be at the meeting remotely.*** You may cast your vote either by mail or by email. Please record your votes below, and either mail it to UUFSC, 1 West Nelson St., Newton NJ 07860, Attn: Board Secretary, or email it to UUFSCVote@gmail.com. Those eligible to vote are members who have signed the membership book at least thirty days before the election. (The proposed budget and the proposed Bylaw revisions will be sent to members, separately, by May 5.)

The following nominations have been made by the Corporate Board of Trustees of the UUFSC.

Executive Officers

- Vice President: Phil Schaming (One 2-year term)
- Treasurer: Mary Jones-Schaming (One 2-year term)

*President Stu Feldstein and Secretary Richard Goffman will serve the second year of their previously elected two-year term.

Executive Trustees (maximum of three consecutive one-year terms)

- Jim Kasprzak (third term)
- Tony and Karen Balzano as co-trustees (second term)

Corporate Trustees (maximum one consecutive 3-year term)

- Jeff Wallis (third year)
- Marilyn Chapman (second year)
- Barbara Kelly (first year)

Votes (mail or email) must be received by Saturday, May 18, 2023

	Yes	No	Abstain
Vote on Slate of Officers and Trustees			
Vote on Annual Budget 2024-25			
Vote on Bylaw revisions			
If other issues are raised at the meeting, I choose to have the Board cast my vote			

Name: _____



**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**