

The Quest

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County

DECEMBER 2022
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DECEMBER PROGRAM INFORMATION

Hybrid Sunday services start at 10:30. (Religious education classes are in-person only.) If you attend in person, including children, **MASKS ARE OPTIONAL**. If you attend virtually, please do so the same way we've been doing all along. (Codes are the same every week.) Google Meet codes/phone numbers and PINs: online at meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj or by phone at 413-679-2794, PIN 139 523 137#.

Dec 4. Little Gifts, Big Expectations. Often, the best gifts are not what we ask for. This lighthearted holiday-themed service looks at gifts that didn't match expectations, but were perfect after all. Led by Dr. Melanie Davis. (Melanie Davis, PhD, is a life-long UU who brings to our pulpit a deep understanding of, and commitment to, our religious movement, as well as 15 years of lay speaker experience. She is the UUA's Our Whole Lives (OWL) Program Manager, and the author of *Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Older Adults* and the UU *Views on Sex* pamphlet. She is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Society for Community Ministries.)

Dec 11. Board Retreat Update. The Board of Trustees and the Corporate Trustees held a retreat in early November. The purpose of the retreat was to identify current and foreseeable challenges for the Fellowship, and to start a thoughtful and systematic planning process to address these challenges, where possible. Come hear Barbara Kelly, UUFSC Board President, present an overview of what was discussed at the retreat and join the conversation about the future of our Fellowship. Everyone is invited to attend a salad and sandwich luncheon after the service. Led by Barbara Kelly and members of the Board.

Dec 18. Ceremony of Lights. This intergenerational service will explore and celebrate the various holidays (Diwali, Hannukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Chinese New Year) and special events (Winter Solstice) that happen around this time of year. Join the celebration as we hear the stories of these holidays and the symbols of light that are central to their celebration. Led by Jeff Wallis, and members and friends of the Fellowship.

Dec 25. Christmas Day. NO SERVICE*

Jan 1. New Year's Day. NO SERVICE*

**Enjoy the holidays!*

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.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

This season has many celebrations across the religious and cultural spectrum. They all share common themes of love, family and community, gratitude, and generosity. May this be a blessed and joyful time for you and your families.

As the year comes to an end, it is also the time for reflection and future planning. The UUFSC Board and Corporate Board recently met to take a realistic look at the future of our Fellowship.

While we are fortunate to have many strengths (committed, caring members; some financial reserves; our own building, which we own free and clear), we are facing some serious challenges (an older congregation with a declining number of members; a drop in pledges; an RE program that was closed down during the pandemic).

The Board identified two key challenges we need to address if we are to continue to be the strong, caring community we all value.

1. The need to attract new members, especially younger people and families with children.
2. The need to identify volunteers to fill openings on the Board, and work on committees and projects.

Please attend our service (in person or virtually) on Sunday, December 11, where we will discuss your comments on the Board's analysis and ask you how you can participate in meeting these challenges.

On that Sunday, we will also have **our first luncheon of this service year**. I hope you can all attend. Sandwiches, salad, and chips will be provided. No need to bring anything, but please make our usual \$5 per person lunch donation (as we've always done with our soup and salad lunches). This is definitely something to look forward to!

I wish you and your families all the blessings of this holiday season and a very happy and healthy New Year.

In fellowship,

Barbara

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



Dear Friends,

November was a very busy month for our religious education students. In celebration of Thanksgiving, the children not only learned the meaning of gratitude (through discussion and a body awareness activity), but they also put it into practice (by making cards for our Gratitude Table and preparing treats for the congregation's coffee hour).

Members and friends of the RE committee marched in Newton's Annual Holiday Parade to raise awareness of the RE program here at our Fellowship. We carried our new UUFSC banner and passed out goodie bags to families. It was a beautiful sunny day spent together in the community. Thank you to Marcia, Pin, Julianne, Rylee, and Samuel for all your help!

Continuing this year's theme, *Moral Tales*, we heard a Buddhist story from Japan about listening to our inner voice to guide the choices we make. The children especially enjoyed the role-playing we did after the story.

🌲 Be on the lookout for our Mitten Tree, which will be on display on the stage in the sanctuary. Please bring in new mittens, scarves, and hats for children and decorate the tree with them. You may also leave new unwrapped outerwear and pajamas for kids of all ages under the tree. At the end of the season, everything will be donated to Project Self-Sufficiency. 🌲

Happy Holidays,

Sharon and Pin ✨

Below is a preview of our RE calendar for the month of December.

Dec 4. Winter Holidays. In preparation for our Ceremony of Lights on December 18, the children will learn about, hear stories, and sing songs of the holidays of Diwali, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Christmas, and Kwanzaa. We will also be making symbols of light and winter-decorations for our sanctuary—for our last service of the year.

Dec 11. Winter Holidays (continued). The children will sing the holiday songs again and finish making our sanctuary decorations—symbols of light and winter.

Dec 18. Ceremony of Lights, Intergenerational Service. The children will join their families upstairs in the sanctuary for our very special Ceremony of Lights service. We will all celebrate the symbols of light used in various religious and non-religious holidays around this time of year.

Dec 25. No RE Class (No Service). Happy holidays!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISCUSSION GROUP

There will be no December meeting of the Discussion Group.

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Paulins Kill Watershed Cleanup and Newton Holiday Parade. . .





RaiseRight™

Formerly ShopWithScrip

RaiseRight, formerly ShopWithScrip, continues to offer the Fellowship a wonderful way to raise needed funds as you shop. UUFSC gets rebates of up to 13% on gift cards 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.

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!



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
OF SUSSEX COUNTY**

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