

The Quest

FEBRUARY 2022
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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County

PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR FEBRUARY



NOTICE: Until further notice, services will remain

virtual only. You can attend the same way you've been doing all along. Go to meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj. Or join by phone, 413-679-2794, PIN 139 523 137#.

Feb 6. Winter's Invitation. A beautiful new book by Katherine May and readings from Thich Nhat Hanh remind us that winter invites us and sometimes advises us to rest, even though so much in our culture tells us we have to stay busy, and even though our lives, at times, give us no choice. Led by Mary Tiebout, with readings and thoughts shared by Linda Watkins-Goffman.

Feb 13. On Our Game. Yes, this is Super Bowl Sunday, and sure, we may already be hungry for corn chips and salsa, and right, the Olympics might still be getting our attention, but first, a few words about seeing the gaming aspects of life, including fair play, sportsmanship, coming up with our own game plan, and occasionally feeling the small but significant joys of being on our game. Led by Mary Tiebout.

Feb 20. Know Your Punchline. It's February; we need a little laughter as an antidote to the mid-winter blues. And something to think about wouldn't hurt either. Join us as we listen to Michael Jr.'s TED talk, *More Than Funny*, viewed over 3.5 million times online. Comedian Michael Jr., described as a thought leader, shows how to take life's setups, and then change direction in a way that brings fulfillment, revelation, and joy—not only to you, but to those around you. Led by Jeff Wallis.

Feb 27. You're a Grand Old Flag: Reflections on Patriotism. In this month of celebrating Presidents and patriotic flag-waving, we discuss the meaning of patriotism. Some of the questions that will be posed are: How do you define patriotism? Has your view of patriotism changed over the course of your lifetime or in recent years? What role, if any, should patriotism play in American society? And, do you see differences between patriotism and nationalism? Wearing red, white, and blue—optional. Led by Jeff Wallis.

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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ALONG THE PATH



Fannie Lou Hamer at the Democratic National Convention, Atlantic City, NJ, 1964

Dear Friends,

It seems so long ago that we were able to be together for services at our fellowship building. In November and December, we got to see and speak to each other in person, we lit our chalice, heard the beautiful sounds of our piano, were delighted by the exhibit of artwork by Herb Tobias, and were happy that people could participate in our hybrid services from home. And it was just about a month ago that I was presented with gifts from the fellowship—a big and beautiful bright red poinsettia, and a very generous gift card, which I've already used part of at our local bookstore. Thank you so much for these very special and lasting gifts!

When we turn the calendar page to February, it's time to dig deeper into the learning and action opportunities related to our nationally recognized Black History Month. First on my list is to read *Until I Am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Enduring Message to America*, by Keisha N. Blain. This book, which I received as a gift in December, was published in 2021 by the UUA's Beacon Press. With many references to the issue of voting rights, I expect to find inspiration in Fannie Lou Hamer's life and words for doing what small things I can to strengthen and broaden our democracy. I look forward to sharing some of her inspiring words with you.

Special thanks to our Board for continuing to make careful and wise decisions about when and how we might re-re-open. Great thanks to Jim K. for seeing to the care and upkeep of our building and grounds—there's a lot to do, even if we're not there. And special thanks to Jeff, Jen (and Johanna) for the wonderful Sunday services that you led in the last few weeks.

I wish you all the best of health, and, now that we're noticing that it's still light out at 5 pm, that the underbrush along the roadside is thickening and changing color, and that the foxes are on the move, I wish you the delights of mid to late winter.

With thanks and thanks and love...

Mary

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

“There is light at the end of the tunnel.” This hopeful thought came to me as I reflected on February.

Spring is on the horizon. As many of you know, I am not a fan of cold weather, and by February, winter has often become dreary. But by the end of February/early March, we’ll see those hardy harbingers of spring—the crocus, the snowdrops. They always fill me with delight.

Hopefully, there’s light at the end of the tunnel with regards to this exhausting COVID pandemic as well. Reportedly, the number of cases is declining and, in the foreseeable future, this may become more endemic, a risk like the flu that we can manage while resuming more normal lives. The Board has decided, however, to continue virtual-only services into February, given that Sussex County is still rated by the CDC at the highest level of risk. We will be monitoring the situation on an ongoing basis and will resume hybrid services as soon as it is prudent, as we all miss the opportunity to see each other in person.

February also has some holidays that inspire me with hope. Presidents’ Day commemorates Washington and Lincoln, who fought so hard to create and protect our democracy. Today, as our democracy seems under siege in some ways, I hope that our leaders and our citizens in general can join together to reduce our polarization and protect our rights as citizens.

Finally, what could be more hopeful than Valentine’s Day? This day reminds us of just how important love is in our lives. May we give it generously and receive it gratefully.

In love and fellowship,

Barbara Kelly

UUFSC SUPERMARKET GIFT CARD PROGRAM

Please call or email Hal Cohen for your \$50 or \$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!



SOCIAL ACTION TEAM

The UUFSC Social Action Team will meet virtually at noon on Tuesday, February 8. The meeting will include discussion of the upcoming UU FaithAction NJ Spring Gala, as well as updates on local issues of concern. Chris will send an agenda and Zoom link to team members a few days before the meeting.

The UU FaithAction New Jersey 2022 Spring Gala is scheduled for Saturday, April 9. For now, the plan is for in-person and virtual invitations. Stay tuned to the UU FaithAction NJ website, uufaithaction.org, for more details.

UU HUMOR

-A UU family moves into a new neighborhood. Their child finds a new playmate, and they're happily getting to know each other. One day, the playmate says, "We're Episcopalians, what are you?" The UU child thinks for a minute and says, "I'm not sure, but I think we're League of Women Voters."

-A UU is told, "I hear you deny the divinity of Christ." "That's not true," said the UU, "we don't deny the divinity of anyone."

NEWS FROM THE UUA

Excerpted from the UUA website (UUA.org).

On the anniversary of the Capitol insurrection, the UUA affirms, "As Unitarian Universalists, we hold democracy as a central principle for our faith. This is a time for true accountability and courageous action in pursuit of a more just, equitable, multiracial and pluralistic democracy." We mark this anniversary by urging people to assess the danger and to advocate for urgent measures to protect democracy. Absent intervention by Congress to secure voting rights and election oversight, anti-democratic forces are well-positioned to seize power by subverting national election results.

Millions of Americans have become disillusioned by the march toward authoritarianism and lack of resistance from elected officials. But an opportunity emerges as a result. Only when stripped of illusions can we see clearly. It's now apparent that leading our nation away from the abyss will depend on millions of people who lack official power to come forward and lead. As Unitarian Universalists, we will be among them.

Use this link to access the UUA press release, as well as additional references and steps to action:
<https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/threats-democracy-grow>,



Don't forget our SHOPWITHSCRIP gift card program. UUFSC gets rebates of up to 13% on gift cards from more than 750 well-known merchants. If you have questions, please contact Sue Weiner, or Hal Cohen if Sue isn't available.

EARLY TIMES AT UUFSC... **(from Bill Bennett)**

When the Board decided to install a lift to make the upstairs handicapped accessible, the work was just beginning. Chris Nelson was a master plumber and pipe fitter on tramp cargo vessels that went from the U.S. to the Orient. As he was in between jobs at the time, he was the one in charge. We dismantled the cloak closet that the Klan used. We then had to construct the side walls so that a pre-constructed lift could be installed. A steam pipe had to be cut and shortened so the existing pipe could carry steam heat from the boiler to the left side along the wall. There was never a check valve installed, so, during services, we could hear the pipes knocking until the steam reached the end and was full. As I recall, the lift was installed in the second storage area for the RE. All the sheet rock had to be removed and later replaced. We hired someone to spackle. The lift was installed, along with all the electric wiring, and then inspected by the state. It's been in use for quite a few years.

Bill Bennett is collecting all of the photos he has from the past, with peoples' names (if he knew who they were). According to Bill, he's putting them together in "some sort of mish-mash order." He has requested that you send him "any photos for nostalgia's sake," with names and dates.



Clare Callender at work upstairs at UUFSC.



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