

The Quest

MAY-JUNE 2022
VOL. 57, NO. 9

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County

PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR MAY AND JUNE

SUNDAY SERVICES ARE HYBRID AT 10:30. You may attend in person, with masks being required. If you wish to attend virtually, you can do so the same way always. Go to meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj. Or join by phone, 413-679-2794. PIN 139 523 137#.

May 1. Rev. Kim Wilson, Minister Candidate. Sermon topic to be announced. Meet Rev. Kim at the Meet-and-Greet Coffee Hour after the service.

May 8. Rev. Don Garrett, Minister Candidate. Sermon topic to be announced. Meet Rev. Don at the Meet-and-Greet Coffee Hour after the service.

May 15. UUFSC Business Meeting/Readings by the Fellowship. See the ballot on page 5. **Members and friends please note:** Those attending, either in-person or online, are encouraged to identify a reading on any topic, in any form, to read at this meeting. Selections should not be more than 4-5 minutes. It can be something original by the reader or from another author. As appropriate, discussion can follow each reading

May 22. Gratitude to Ancestors. That we are here, on this earth, brings us into a relationship with all beings, rocks, waters, animals, and plants who have been here with and before us. We are descendants of people whose ideas have shaped our world. In particular, we lift up those who advanced ideas of freedom, justice, and reason in this land—our religious and political forebears. Led by Mary Tiebout.

May 29. Flower Ceremony and Homily: Along the Path. For the last Sunday of our Fellowship year, we'll have our traditional Flower Ceremony, a homily and conversation before going outside with flowers to place on a spirit house that we'll make. If we have a storm, we'll stay inside. All ages are welcome. Led by Mary Tiebout.

June 5. Annual UUFSC Picnic. The picnic will be held at the Fellowship from 11:30 to 2:00. (Details to follow.)



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.

© 2022. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

ALONG THE PATH



Dear Fellowship Friends,

Many years ago, a huge snapping turtle hauled herself/himself/themself out of our neighbor's pond and headed across our yard, on the grass and in the gulley, through the pipe that runs under the road and into a small stream that leads to Cabin Run Creek, which then pours into Tohickon Creek, and after many winding turns, flows into the Delaware River. The name Tohickon comes from the Lenape people who described the area as "Wood Area" and "Deer Area." To this day, the land hosts plenty of both.

I filmed the turtle's journey across the yard with a heavy old video camera, and there are a few terrible sequences where I'm moving or changing cameras when the batteries failed. My daughter, Johanna, edited the film and added music, and it does give the feeling of a journey. I hope to show the turtle video at our last service in May, which will center around our Flower Ceremony.

As with all beings, our journeys take many turns, some in response to features of earth and life, and some generated by our thoughts, emotions, desires and imaginations. Being at a moment when my call to ministry has met with the moving stream of my "call" or responsibilities to my parents, this will soon be a place where I will make yet another of life's turns. Your forgiving, patient, and generous hearts have allowed these many years and, in particular, recent months to feel like a blessing, and not a burden. The work of ministry requires some clarity and desk-centered discipline, which I don't have a lot of at this point, but the necessity of sitting down to organize my thoughts for a sermon, a *Quest* letter, a long email or a phone call, has been a great help, and something I love to do...once I actually sit down.

As I often do, I will end this letter with my greatest thanks to all of our UUFSC members and friends, all those who were with us, supporting and nurturing this Fellowship before my years of ministry, all who have been with us since. That includes your stories, your caring, your families, dogs, cats, all your animals, trees, gardens, nearby waters, your brilliant and curious and studious minds, your gifts of leadership and hard work, your Sunday programs, your music, your presence, your provisions, your generous hearts, and, most especially, your kindness and good humor, which, as much as all other things, create the beauty that feeds the world so that it can, and will, jump up and live again.

All blessings and greatest love and thanks to you all, dear Fellowship friends...

Mary

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Members and Friends,

As our service year draws to a close in June, I reflect back on this past year's challenges and changes.

Perhaps the biggest change will be the retirement of our beloved minister, Rev. Mary Tiebout, who has been such an integral part of our Fellowship for 15 years. It will be a challenge to find a new minister who will match Mary's caring and commitment.

But the good news is that, as of this writing, the New Minister Search Committee has interviewed several qualified candidates. We were concerned that it might be difficult to attract someone to a part-time position in our small Fellowship. So, to have four applicants is a testimony to the special community that UUFSC is.

That view of the vibrancy of our Fellowship was reinforced recently when Hal Cohen and I attended a UUA webinar focused on small congregations. Quite a few of the attendees spoke of declining membership and attendance during the pandemic. Yet our UUFSC attendance, both when we were strictly virtual and now that we hold hybrid services, has been steady. To me, that demonstrates that our “beloved community” is important to us and has been a source of support during the uncertainties of the COVID pandemic.

This pandemic has been a major challenge during the past service year. The decision to resume in-person services last fall, only to revert to purely virtual services for several months when there was a new COVID surge, was difficult. We are all grateful to Hal Cohen and Phil Schaming for implementing our successful virtual platform. But this challenge has brought about a valuable change in that hybrid services now will be an ongoing part of our Sundays, allowing members who are not able to be at UUFSC in person to still participate.

Religious Education (RE) has been another challenge, as we were forced to suspend it during the pandemic and now must recruit a new Director of RE, as Lauren Jones-Rabbitt decided, for personal reasons, not to return after several years of dedicated and creative work. We are very fortunate that Olivia Smith has stepped in as the Interim RE Manager so that we've been able to resume RE, which is so important to our future.

Yes, it has been a year of challenges and changes. UUFSC has managed them and, if anything, has become a stronger community.

In fellowship,

Barbara Kelly

DISCUSSION GROUP

The Discussion Group will meet on Friday, May 20, 10 am at the Fellowship. The group will take on the questions: "What are appropriate and what are excessive limitations on free speech? Who should be held responsible for the propagation of hurtful and damaging lies, and fake news? What are the appropriate limits to state censorship in the classroom?"

A very nice turnout in April resulted in a wide-ranging discussion of today's face-off between democracy and authoritarianism.

HERBERT TOBIAS PAINTINGS

The Herbert Tobias paintings will be offered once again for donation to the Fellowship. Roger Cherney is able to be with us on May 15, 22, and 29, during coffee hour, for donations, recommendations, information, and advice. After that, the display we've been able to enjoy this year will be returning to its home.

Please let your friends and family know about this very generous offer from a fine artist. If you have any questions, contact Sharon Pontier.

MINISTER CANDIDATES

Since our letter of April 24 regarding the minister search, there's been one change--one candidate has withdrawn her application from consideration, as she was offered another position. However, we still have two strong candidates, **Rev. Kim Wilson** and **Rev. Don Garrett**. Brief bios of each candidate follow. The candidates are scheduled to come to UUFSC in the next two weeks to give a sermon, and you're encouraged/invited to participate in these visits. Both services will also be online.

On **Sunday May 1 and May 8**, Rev. Wilson and Rev. Garrett, respectively, will be leading the services at our regular 10:30 hour. A Meet-and-Greet Coffee Hour will follow to give everyone an opportunity to meet the candidates. We ask everyone to wear a name tag both Sundays. A short feedback form will be available to relay your impressions to the search committee. (The feedback form will be emailed to those attending online so they may provide input, if they wish.) The Saturday service has been canceled, as we were able to move Rev. Garrett's visit to a Sunday.

Please join us in giving the minister candidates a warm UUFSC welcome. If you have any questions, please feel free to talk to anyone on the Minister Search Committee (Jeff Wallis, Chair, Susan Felsen, Barbara Kelly, and Sally Sattin).

Rev. Kim Wilson is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist with 20+ years' experience as a parish minister. Most recently, she was the contract minister for 9½ years at the UU Fellowship of the Poconos in Stroudsburg, PA. She has a Master of Divinity from the Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, PA. Her stated overarching goals of ministry are to transform lives, minds, and spirits through worship services and preaching, pastoral care, religious education, and all other aspects of the life of a congregation.

Rev. Don Garrett has a Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School and has been a Unitarian Universalist minister since 2003. He's currently the contract minister at the UU Fellowship of Newark, Delaware. Previously, he was the minister for nine years at the UU Church of the Lehigh Valley in Bethlehem, PA. He describes his ministerial and leadership style as collaborative. He facilitates cooperation and involvement through interaction and example, while working to empower lay leadership and encourage participation in all areas of parish life.

Notice of Annual Business Meeting: May 15, 2022

Absentee Ballot

For the Fellowship Year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Voting instructions: This is an absentee ballot. It is to be used **only if you are not physically in attendance in person at the May 15 business meeting. This absentee ballot should be used only if you are attending the May 15 meeting remotely or if you are not attending at all.** 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 Street, Newton 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 will be sent to members separately, by May 1.)

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

Executive Officers*

Vice-President: Hal Cohen (One 2-year term)

Treasurer: Jerry Sattin (One 2-year term)

*President Barbara Kelly and Secretary Stevie Fava will serve the second year of their previously elected two-year terms.

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

Stu Feldstein (third term)

Phil Schaming (second term)

Jim Kasprzak (first term)

Corporate Trustees (maximum one consecutive five-year term)

Michael Busche (fifth year)

Susan Felsen (fourth year - to fill vacancy on Corporate Board)

Chris Dunbar (third year)

Jeff Wallis (second year)

Marilyn Chapman (first year)

Votes (mail or email) must be received by Saturday, May 14, 2022.

	Yes	No	Abstain
Vote on Slate of Officers and Trustees			
Vote on Annual Budget 2022-23			

Name: _____

As you shop this spring and summer, please remember to use the wonderful programs that support our Fellowship throughout the year:



Please contact Hal Cohen for your supermarket gift cards or for assistance in using any of the shopping programs.
Thanks for your support!

UUFSC HISTORY ACCORDING TO BILL BENNETT

Bill Bennett has sent more remembrances of UUFSC activities and members. Here are some excerpts.

Our Fellowship was started by a number of people, and I hope I have included everyone. Joan and Norton Karp were very active. Clare and Paul Callender, Rhoda Bell, Florence and Paul Lighty, Marilyn Chapman, Linda Hendrixson, Debbie Rice, and Alexis and Jerry Tomlinson were also early, active members. Michael Busche was our attorney. They met in a Newton school, the Sparta Library, and the Sparta Ambulance Squad prior to leasing, then purchasing, the Grange building, our current home.

Judith Kohlbach Fulton, a long-time Fellowship member, was gracious enough to let me write this for *The Quest*, and we hope you enjoy it. Judith had a “bucket list” of 100 things she wanted to do in her lifetime, and one was a visit to Antarctica. Off she went, and the leader of her group asked each person to state their name and share a little about themselves. Judith shared that riding in a glider was on her list, and Al Fulton came over to her and mentioned that, if she ever got to Redlands, California, he would give her a ride in his. She took him up on it, which eventually ended up with them marrying in the chapel on Star Island*. I offered to take care of the flowers in the chapel, which I did with Mary’s suggestions. A wonderful wedding and reception were enjoyed by us all.

Why are Mary and Bill Unitarians? Mary was brought up in the Apostolic Christian Church and despised their teachings. I was brought up Lutheran, but rarely attended church. When we were married, we tried several different churches, and decided to join the Baptist church. We were advisors to the lively youth group, and I volunteered as Scoutmaster for a troop that had been sponsored by the church for 50 years. We were baptized again, dunked in the large tank in front of the church, and I thought, “What am I doing?” On the way home, we decided to look for a new church, which ended up being the Central Unitarian Church in Paramus. It was exactly what we were looking for, and we were members there for 32 years before moving to Hardwick and joining our Fellowship.

* Star Island brochures can be found downstairs in the Fellowship. They are fully booked for 2022, but you may want to plan for 2023. Star Island is located about 10 miles off of Portsmouth, NH. Their summer conferences include such topics as international affairs, religious education, writing, photography, music, painting, etc. Star Island’s historical connections to Unitarian Universalism and the United Church of Christ result in a liberal spiritual quality.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX COUNTY

Minister: Rev. Mary Tiebout

President: Barbara Kelly

Vice-President: Marilyn Chapman

Treasurer: Hal Cohen

Secretary: Stevie Fava

Quest Editors: Susan Weiner, Richard Goffman