

# The Quest

SEPTEMBER 2022  
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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
of Sussex County

## PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR SEPTEMBER



**SUNDAY SERVICES ARE HYBRID AT 10:30.** You may attend in person WITH NO PROOF OF VACCINATION necessary, but MASKS ARE REQUIRED. If you wish to attend virtually, you can do so the same way we've been doing all along. Go to [meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj](https://meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj). Or join by phone, 413-679-2794, PIN 139 523 137#.

**Sept 11. Ingathering and Water Communion.** We begin the new Fellowship year with our traditional water communion ritual. Remember to bring a small container of water from your travels, from your home, or from another meaningful source, for our water ceremony. Led by members of the UUFSC Board of Trustees.

**Sept 18. Values and Community: The President's Service.** Our UU principles are a strong base of values for our sense of community. But on a national level, differing values seem to be polarizing our American identity. What role do values play in creating and sustaining a community? How can we bridge differences in values? Let's have a discussion. Led by Barbara Kelly.

**Sept 25. The Many Faces of Family.** What is a "family?" We will explore this question during several Sunday programs this year. The understanding of what constitutes a modern family has expanded beyond the traditional notion of a biological nuclear unit. Join today's presentation on the evolution of the concept of family, and participate in the discussion of what makes a family. Led by Jeff Wallis and members/friends of the Fellowship.

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](http://www.uunewtonnj.org). Our phone number is 973-579-7210.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

What a pleasure it will be to be back together again starting on September 11. There is a special sense of community in seeing each other, in knowing that Sundays will bring us together.

Despite no Sunday services, the summer has provided opportunities to get together with a variety of projects and activities. The Rummage Sale in July, which Sharon Pontier so tirelessly ran with help from Stevie Fava, was a great success, raising almost \$5,000. Thanks to everyone who chipped in to donate and to work. And thanks to those who ran Mini-Fling events, which were great social get-togethers and raised additional funds for the Fellowship.

As we start our new service year, we are so happy to welcome Sharon Tominac as our new Director of Religious Education (DRE). Sharon will be reaching out for adult volunteers to help occasionally with the RE classes. I ask that you please participate.

Jeff Wallis will be continuing our search for a new minister and will be keeping us posted. Until we hire someone, Jeff has a full program of services that will keep us spiritually and intellectually inspired!

The new service year does bring some challenges.

The Board has been discussing the need for additional security measures, given the unsettling instances of violence in our society. So, we have decided to lock the front doors at 10:40 each Sunday. See the article later in this issue.

And we are conscious of the issues we face with our aging membership, as well as the need to attract new members and/or reprioritize how we operate. The Board will be holding a mini-retreat this fall to consider this issue. If you have any related thoughts or questions, please share them with me or any other Board member.

I hope you all had an enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing you, in person or virtually, on September 11.

In Fellowship,

Barbara



# THIS MONTH IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Hello Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sussex County!

Thank you for welcoming me with open arms as the new Director of Religious Education.

If we have not met yet, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Sharon Tominac. I was fortunate to discover this congregation in 2019 after a long search for a nondenominational place of gathering and fellowship. I was at a place in my life where I needed the comfort of faith, a connection with others and, as many people say, a connection with something bigger than myself. I also wanted a spiritual home to share with my son, Samuel, who is now eight years old.

Children have always been a part of my life, both personally and professionally. Currently, I teach elementary Spanish, and now also social studies, in the Belvidere School District. In my free time I like to read, enjoy time outside, cook (and eat!), and spend time with family and friends. And all the time I strive to stay grounded. Coming to the Fellowship and spending time with all of you is one way I am able to remember that I don't have to have all the answers and that we're all in this together.

The theme for this year in the RE program, at least for the upcoming fall season, is **Moral Tales**. Storytelling, which I believe to be a very powerful learning tool that also nourishes the soul, will be a central component of the curriculum. Stories as the ones woven throughout Moral Tales help inform children's learning about how to make moral choices and take actions reflective of their Unitarian Universalist values and beliefs.

Occasionally, I will ask parents and other members of our congregation to volunteer their time and talent, in the form of participation in intergenerational services and projects, and their resources, in the form of donating materials or recycled items to be repurposed by the children. Thank you in advance to everyone for helping to foster a sense of community with the children of our congregation.

Below is our RE calendar for September.

**Sept 11. Water Communion and First Day of RE.** Bring a small amount of water from a place that is special to you. Every week, we will begin our morning upstairs, this week participating in the Fellowship's traditional water ceremony, and then head downstairs to the RE gathering space. Once downstairs, we will introduce ourselves and the new curriculum.

**Sept 18. We Are All One.** This session introduces the notion that our interconnectedness with one another and the earth forms the basis for understanding justice and goodness. We will also establish a routine for our RE sessions, set expectations of the program, and begin to form a covenant of behavior.

**Sept 25. Conscience: Hearing the Inner Voice.** In this session, children are introduced to their own conscience as an inner voice that can guide them to make choices that effect goodness and justice. We will engage in role-play and begin the Gems of Goodness Project.

## DISCUSSION GROUP

As there was no quorum for the July meeting, it was decided to skip the rest of the summer. So, a meeting will be held Friday, September 9, 10 am at the Fellowship. The topic (carried over) is, "Can our society recover from the political divide clearly apparent, not only by reason of the occurrence of the January 6 insurrection, but also by the growing political and philosophical rift currently tearing this country apart?" (Masks required.)

## SOCIAL ACTION TEAM



Here are our attendees for the NJDEP Public Hearing for Air Permits, held August 4 in Sparta. There was a very good advocacy turnout, but there were loads of union members supporting the project (although jobs come mainly from out of state and are temporary). We're now waiting on the NJDEP decision. The Tennessee Gas Pipeline expansion project will begin when and if permits are issued. Folks in the Wantage area of Sussex County will be most impacted, with blowdowns of toxic chemicals. We hope to raise funds to install an air quality monitor near the expansion facility. If you're interested in our social issues and wish to have meetings start up again, contact Chris Dunbar.

## LUNCH BUNCH

As Mary Tiebout had been coordinating the Lunch Bunch meetings, we need someone to volunteer to take it over. If you're interested, please let Sue Weiner know. If you wish, you could even set one up for September. Sue will gladly email the news to everyone. Thanks!

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

Because *ALL* of our services may be lay-led this year, the Program Committee will play a crucial role in the life of the Fellowship. **Please become a member of the Program Committee.** This would entail attending 1-2 brief online committee meetings, helping to schedule new programs, and creating the orders of service for lay-led services.

**If you're willing to join the Program Committee, please email Jeff Wallis.**

## NEW SECURITY PROCEDURES

Please note that, starting this September, the front door of the Fellowship will be locked at 10:40 am. Members and friends who arrive after this time can use their keys to enter the building. If you don't have a key, please contact Hal Cohen to get one.

This is an additional security measure, given the regrettable attacks over the past few years at various churches, synagogues, and mosques. Thank you for your understanding.

## FOOD PANTRIES

UUFSC will support the Sparta Community Food Pantry this fall with two food drives.

*In October*, we'll be collecting dog and cat food. Desired donations are dry or canned (shelf-stable) food in the smaller sizes (e.g., 15-20-pound bags), although 50-pound bags will be accepted.

*In November*, we will be collecting non-perishable food in advance of Thanksgiving.

Please be generous!

# 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!



# 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 13% on gift cards that you purchase from among more than 750 well-known merchants. You can buy gift cards by going to [www.raiserright.com](http://www.raiserright.com). Please contact Sue Weiner or Hal Cohen if you have any questions about this program.



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