

# The Quest

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
of Sussex County**

**1 West Nelson St., Newton, NJ 07860**

## Programs for January 2026

Sunday services are both in-person and online, and they start at 10:30.

Google Meet codes/phone numbers and PINs are online at

[meet.google.com/kss-abvh-ipw](https://meet.google.com/kss-abvh-ipw) or by phone at 478-308-5688, PIN 921 793 045#.

### January 4 “E Unum Pluribus”

One of the values that Unitarian Universalists share and centers on love is pluralism, which we describe in these terms: We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology. That which makes another culture distinct may have been lost or forgotten in our own ancestral stories. Learning from others’ relationships to the land, to life and to what they see as holy feeds our souls. Led by Mary Tiebout.

### January 11 “Wild Nights: A Romp with Emily Dickinson”

Presented by Susanna Rich, explores sex and sexuality in the poetry of the self-proclaimed “Wayward Nun”. Susanna taught a course and conducted pilgrimages devoted to Dickinson for over thirty years. A poet herself, she is recipient of the Presidential Excellence Award for Distinguished Teaching at Kean University.

### January 18 “E Pluribus Unum”

Dr. Martin Luther King wrote about “an inescapable network of mutuality,” “a single garment of destiny,” and about “the solidarity of the human family.” At times when we feel increasingly distant from others in our country and around the world, we strive to hear the connection through others’ words and music, to see it in their art, and in their eyes. And to know it in our hearts. Led by Mary Tiebout.

### January 25 “Story Is Resistance: Listening, Reflecting, and Leading with Intention”

Stories shape how we understand ourselves and the world. When we engage them thoughtfully—questioning, reflecting, and seeking deeper meaning—we shift from passive recipients to active participants in creating justice and compassion. This service invites us to explore how story becomes a tool of resistance, clarity, and purposeful leadership.

Presented by Denise McCormack, M.Ed.

Sacred Storytelling Practitioner.

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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.



**Dear Fellowship Friends,**

I had a lovely quick trip to New Hampshire on Tuesday. Well, actually, the snow was nearly blinding and the roads were slick, but once we arrived, it was warm inside and good to have hot tea and then supper and then, over the next three days, bridge, Scrabble, and three versions of Scrooge which made us laugh and made us think about the Unitarian values that author Charles Dickens wove into his classic tale, “A Christmas Carol.”

This is the first holiday season that I’ve experienced without either of my parents, and anticipating that, I thought about how many of us in our fellowship community would be missing loved ones during these days. Last year, I took my father to the Christmas Eve Pageant at his church in Princeton. He fell asleep during the service, which worried me a bit. He died at his home two weeks later. In New Hampshire, I decided to go to the Christmas Eve Pageant at the church on the Dartmouth campus where my grandson’s father, Henry, is Music Director. I knew I would feel sad, but I thought that was what I needed to feel, just a bit. One of the carols brought tears to my eyes, as one did during our candle lighting service. And then something very funny happened which I’ll tell you about when I see you. It involved donkey ears and young angels and happy memories. I hope that any sadness that you may have been feeling has been held within the warm embrace of gratitude and love.

While welcoming the returning light, we hope to welcome new members in January, at our service on the 18th. If anyone is thinking about joining our Fellowship and would like to have more information about membership in our Fellowship or about Unitarian Universalism in a wider context, we’d be happy to provide that information. And if you would like to “sign the book”, but Jan. 18 is a day that you won’t be able to be at the Fellowship, please let me know.

Celebrating the season of hope, love and light has been made special this year because of your singing, baking, laughing, smiling, sharing, your kindness, generosity of spirit, and the way each one of you bravely carries your light.

Deepest thanks to you all, and blessings for the New Year and the good work we will do together.

Mary T.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:



## **Dear UUFSC Members**

As all of us are aware, we enter the New Year at a pivotal moment not only for our fellowship, but for our nation and the world. This year, we are called to two vital paths: deepening our community and living our values with courage and compassion.

Our fellowship has always been a sanctuary for those seeking truth, justice, and belonging. In 2026, I hope each of us will actively find ways to welcome others especially those who are searching for a spiritual home where love triumphs over hate, where dignity is affirmed for all, and where justice is not only preached but practiced. Every person who joins us strengthens our collective voice and our capacity to create change.

We also live in a time when division runs deep. Our faith calls us not to retreat into isolation, but to seek connection—both with those who share our values and with those who hold different views. We are called to engage with compassion, to listen deeply, and to find common ground where it exists. This does not mean compromising our principles, but rather living them with grace and courage offering the possibility of understanding, even when we disagree. The goal is to build bridges, not to win arguments. If we speak with truth and tenderness, we reflect the best of who we are: a community rooted in love, justice, and the belief that every person matters. I hope we can move forward together welcoming, listening, and acting with integrity. In our openness, we make space for transformation not only in others, but in ourselves.

Happy New Year to Everyone!

Andi Randall

***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.**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Discussion Group

Our topic for the January 16, 2026 meeting is "**Travel and Adventure Stories**".

Share memorable trips, bucket list destinations, or local hidden gems. Include practical discussions about senior-friendly travel, budget considerations, and how to make travel accessible regardless of mobility or health considerations.

If you're interested, join our email list ([ufdiscussion@gmail.com](mailto: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.

Our group web page URL is <https://www.uunewtonnj.org/index.php/discussion-group>.

## Fellowship Space Available

If you or a group is looking for a space to meet, please consider the availability of the Fellowship building, which can be reserved for a donation. Please contact Phil Schaming to inquire about available dates.



## UU FaithAction NJ - Join Us

We invite UU FaithAction NJ supporters and friends to gather for just one hour on the first and third Fridays of each month to take action and experience the joy and power of community.

Charles Loflin will prime us on the issues of the moment, and then we will make our calls at this critical time.

Join us on Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/94313960594?pwd=OTFDdUdocmY1ckZNZFRyemp6V2NiZz09>

For more information about UU FaithAction NJ, visit our website: [ufaithaction.org](http://ufaithaction.org)

Contact Chris Dunbar, 201 697 7815, for further insights into 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.



RaiseRight™

RaiseRight 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.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com).

Please contact Sue Weiner or Hal Cohen if you have any questions about this program.

Act Now! Currently, the RaiseRight Gift Card purchase program is not being used by members of the Fellowship and may be discontinued due to a lack of interest.



## **UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX COUNTY**

**President: Andrea (Andi) Randall**

**Vice-President: Phil Schaming**

**Treasurer: Stu Feldstein**

**Secretary: Christine Dunbar**

**Quest Editor: Phil Schaming**