

The Quest

NOVEMBER 2024
VOL. 60, NO.3

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Sussex County



PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR NOVEMBER

Sunday services are both in-person and online, and they start at 10:30. (Religious education classes are in-person only.) Google Meet codes/phone numbers and PINs, which are the same every week, are online at meet.google.com/kww-ugyh-spj or by phone at 413-679-2794, PIN 139 523 137#.

Nov 3. General Dwight “Ike” David Eisenhower Visits: Politics and Faith. Led by The Rev. Dr. Doak M. Mansfield.

Nov 10. The Origins and Persistence of Bigotry. The human propensity to form in-groups and “mark outsiders as not deserving of status” (aka bigotry) will be presented. Evidence indicates people inherited this strategy from common ancestors of humans and primates. Amusing and fascinating examples from ancient societies and 21st century cultures will be discussed. Led by Dr. Anthony Balzano, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at Sussex County Community College.

Nov 17. Corn Bread and Cider Communion. This is a celebration of the season informed by earth spirituality. Also, a meditation on the election. Led by The Rev. Dr. Doak M. Mansfield.

Nov 24. Storytelling. Reprising a popular service from last year, this Sunday we’ll hear stories from members of our congregation. Last year, Mike Bengis told a hair-raising tale about learning to drive while driving. Stu told us about his days working on a Great Lakes steamship and the scary tasks he was assigned, one of which involved being hung over the side of the ship. Many contributed, and now we’d like *you* to think of a five-minute story from your life that was interesting, horrifying, poignant, or otherwise memorable. Led by Richard Goffman.

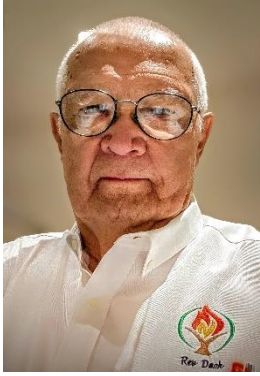
We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- 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.*

DON'T FORGET TO FALL BACK! Set your clocks back an hour before bed on Saturday, November 2.

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.

MINISTER'S MUSINGS



What do I write about? Health, weather, politics, dread, or maybe moving steadily forward?

VOTE, please. No scolding or begging. VOTE. It matters so very much.

I'll do my best for our shared ministry during the next seven weeks. I lead four more services—the first and third Sundays in November and December.

The beauty of this season, for me, is what I thought a northeastern autumn would look and feel like—brilliant, vivid, and inspiring. I hope I'm able to come back to UUFSC from time to time, and it will be in October or May. Except for the cold and cost, it's wonderful. (But I bet you know that.) Maybe Amtrak can continue to be an option.

My health is still a challenge, but I'm not in dire straits. I've come to terms with pain just about everywhere. There's some help with medical massages, natural remedies, and Tylenol. Maybe there will be more treatments to come. My mean COPD is not cancer. Damn smoking!

I've decided to take the Cardinal Amtrak December 18-19, from Newark to Cincinnati. I'll spend the holidays with my family. Three teenage sons of my deceased youngest son Adam and his widow and their grandmother, my first wife. We're dear friends. Her best friend of 35 years died unexpectedly last week. I speak at the Sunday Service December 29 at Heritage Universalist Unitarian Church, established as the First Universalist Society of Cincinnati in 1827. I was its 42nd minister and, now, a minister emeritus. I'll fly out of Cincinnati to Tampa that afternoon to begin my tenure with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa, 60% time, on January 1.

I wish everyone related to UUFSC the best. You've taught me a lot. Your kindness and support are treasures I take with me.

Be safe, well, and hopeful.

Love,

Rev. Doak

***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.**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:



The Cost of Economic Ignorance

Price inflation ended the presidency of Jimmy Carter, and it could tank Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. People often vote based on their perception of “the economy.” And for most people, the economy is defined as the price of food, fuel, and other necessities.

Did you take economics in high school? My school didn’t offer it. My four-year university didn’t require it. Of all the crucially important matters adults face, money and economics are largely ignored in U.S. public education.

So, when inflation gets out of control, people blame the U.S. president—because they have no idea what actually causes inflation. They just know who the nation’s leader was when it occurred.

Inflation almost never depends on who’s president. It’s driven by an imbalance in supply and demand for one or more products. The pandemic badly damaged the supply of nearly everything, while demand remained about the same. Then, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine cut the world supply of grain, natural gas, and oil.

Prices always rise for anything that’s in demand but is scarce. That’s why gold is more expensive than salt. Even things in decent supply can be affected by rising ingredient or transport costs, or by potential scarcity. The cost of grain is set in the futures market, so even a perception that Ukraine is a problem can cause U.S. breakfast cereal prices to rise. And compounding everything these days are the impacts of climate change, damaging crops, causing home insurance premiums to jump, etc.

Anyone could have been president from 2020 to 2023, and it wouldn’t have mattered. Inflation would have happened. Inflation was a worldwide phenomenon, worse in most other nations than it was here.

As for dealing with inflation, that’s always been the job of the Federal Reserve Board (FRB). The FRB is another part of government that’s a complete mystery to most of the general public.

The result of our collective economic ignorance could well be the election of someone who dislikes anyone nonwhite and favors widespread tariffs, which (ironically) would make price inflation worse.

Regardless of the outcome of our presidential election, the time is overdue when our public education system must embrace financial matters. People get out of school, face adult life, and suddenly realize money is important. If more people understood basic economics, we’d all be a lot better off.

Best,

Stu

THIS MONTH IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Dear families and friends,

As we enter November, a time when the world around us begins to quiet and prepare for winter, we're continuing our journey through *The Powers Within You* unit that we've been exploring this year. This month, we're focusing on The Power of Stillness.

There's a deep, transformative power that comes from moments of stillness. In a world often filled with noise and activity, learning to be still is a valuable lesson. Stillness can provide clarity, peace, and a deeper connection to ourselves and the world around us. Through meditation, reflection, and gentle activities, children will discover how moments of quiet can help them listen to their inner wisdom and become more mindful of their thoughts, feelings, and surroundings.

Stillness is not only about quieting external noise, but also about finding a center within ourselves, where we can draw strength and calm in times of challenge or uncertainty. The children will learn that in stillness they can access their own power of insight and compassion.

Parents and guardians may want to create space for moments of stillness at home, whether it's through quiet reflection, mindful breathing, or simply sitting together in silence. These practices can be a wonderful way to continue exploring this important concept beyond the classroom.

As we look ahead to Thanksgiving, the children will have a special opportunity to express their gratitude to the congregation by making something to eat for everyone on the Sunday before the holiday. This act of service and appreciation will help them put their learning into practice as they reflect on the importance of community and giving.

Thank you for your continued support in our shared journey of learning and growth.

Warm regards,

Sharon and Pin, Religious Education Teachers

Below is our RE calendar for October.

Nov 3, 10 and 17. Introduction to the Power of Air.

Story: *Henry David Thoreau and the Still, Small Voice*

Element Mural: Add symbols of air

Breath Meditation

Prayer Flags

Moving Candle Flame

Prayer Pinwheels

Nov 24. Thanksgiving Gratitude. The children will make a homemade treat together in RE to share during coffee hour.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussion Group

Join us on November 15th for a discussion of the election.

If you're interested, join our email list (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.wantage.us/unitarian-fellowship-discussion-group>.

November Food Pantry



This November, the Fellowship will once again be collecting food items to support the efforts of the Sparta Community Food Pantry (www.thespartacommunityfoodpantry.com). In case you're looking for ideas, the pantry is specifically requesting cereal (hot and cold), pasta and pasta sauce, meals in a can, juice, boxed milk, coffee and tea, boxed mac and cheese, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, canned vegetables, canned protein, toilet paper, and paper towels. Please leave your donations in the bins provided downstairs. Contact Hal Cohen with any questions. We appreciate your support for this very important community program.

Guest at Your Table

We're celebrating Guest at Your Table's 50th anniversary with the theme "Expanding the Welcome Table." This year, Guest at Your Table is supporting:

- Young climate activists in the Marshall Islands helping heal from U.S. nuclear testing
- LGBTQ+ leaders in Ukraine offering resources to the queer community impacted by Russia's invasion
- Haitian academics researching racism's impact on the experiences of migrants of color in the U.S.
- Trans organizers forming networks of safety for trans people forced to flee unsafe communities and states.

Susan Felsen will be speaking to the Fellowship before one of the November services to discuss this program at greater length. Donations can be made from November 1 through January 5.

Our Fellowship has always been supportive of this program, sponsored by The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Donations can be made online at <http://donate.uusc.org/uufsc24>. If you prefer, checks made out to UUSC can be given to Susan or sent to her home address. Please be as generous as you can be.

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!



RaiseRight™

Formerly ShopWithScrip

RaiseRight, formerly known as 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 that 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.



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
OF SUSSEX COUNTY**

President: Stu Feldstein
Vice-President: Phil Schaming
Treasurer: Mary Jones-Schaming
Secretary: Richard Goffman
Quest Editors: Susan Weiner, Richard Goffman