



# Skylights newsletter

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CONGREGATION OF PRINCETON



## Upcoming Sunday Worship Services

**Sundays: One Service Only at 10:30, Live in Channing and Live-streamed on Zoom.**  
Please see Page 2, and keep an eye on your email, as well as [www.uuprinceton.org](http://www.uuprinceton.org) for updates.

### Jan. 5, *A Just and Loving Life*

The poet Mary Oliver once asked, “What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” How we live the answer to that question determines the legacy we leave behind; a legacy that will guide, support, and challenge those to come. As we begin the year together, let us consider our lives and our legacies, for both are being written every day in how, for what, and for whom, we live.

**Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely**

**Worship Associate: Cindy Funka-Lea**

**Music: Special Musician TBA; Sue den Outer, Pianist**

### Jan. 12, *Have Courage & Be Kind*

In a reimagining of the fairytale Cinderella, Brittany Rubiano writes these lines for Cinderella's mother, “You must always remember this: Have courage, and be kind. You have more kindness in your little finger than most people possess in their whole body. And it has power. More than you know.” Through this all-ages worship service, co-created by children and youth, we will explore the power of courage and kindness and how we might serve as examples of both.

Also, as part of *Leadership Leaves*, the statewide UU Ministerial Sabbatical Support program that UU Princeton helped start in 1967, Rev. Bill is leading worship this morning at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair in support of their current ministerial sabbatical. For more information on *Leadership Leaves*, please contact either Revs. Bill or Jennifer or Lauren Foss, our UU Princeton Leadership Leaves representative.

**Worship Leaders: Jennifer Kelleher and Scarlett Davis, Ben Maskell and More!**

**Worship Associate: Courtney Orlando**

**Music: Special Musician TBA; Sue den Outer, Pianist**

### Jan. 19, *Radiant Hope*

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of a “radiant hope” to which one should cling even in the face of finite disappointments. This faithful orientation absorbs grief and struggle while still energizing one for movement toward equality, dignity, and freedom. On this Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, one that also includes the presidential inauguration, how can we live with a radiant hope that leads us to a more beloved community?

**Worships Leader: Rev. Bill Neely**

**Worship Associate: TBA**

**Music: Special Musician TBA; Sue den Outer, Pianist**

### Jan. 26, *You Are Loved*

At the center of our faith is the belief that whoever you are, you are loved. No matter what you’ve done, you are loved. Regardless of what you believe, you are loved. This love is not based on merit, accomplishment, perfection, or creed, but is elemental in life. Let us explore how we strengthen this assurance that “You are Loved,” in ourselves, each other, and the world.

**Worship Leaders: Rev. Bill Neely**

**Worship Associate: TBA**

**Music: Special Musician TBA; Sue den Outer, Pianist**

## The Good News

The Good News, Rev. Bill Neely

I love those moments when one person is leaving somewhere just as I am walking in, or vice versa, and we both pause to hold open the door for each other. We each want the other to go first, each of us insisting, sometimes several times, on being neighborly to this other person whom we've never met and will likely never see again. "You go," Oh please, you go," "You first," back and forth once or twice or three times until inevitably we both go at the same time and have to back up a step. I love this awkward choreography of causal kindness. The stop/start/stop of it until it all works out and we go on our separate ways, often smiling a little. I even like seeing this dance when others do it.

So much of life can be like that: considerate, polite, and silly. Though difficult to remember when the days are stressful and the times are divisive, an inner seed of kindness grows in everyone you meet. And we nourish those seeds within each other every time we offer simple pleasantries to unknown neighbors and passing strangers. The lights of others grow those holy, human seeds within us, and we grow them in the people we encounter, even when the meetings are so brief. Even then, we create a moment of beauty and kindness where one did not previously exist. We make those moments happen and then walk away, smiling and more practiced to co-create the world in the same way, anew and again.

## For Our Newcomers

The Mission of the UU Princeton Membership Ministry is that *all who enter feel welcome, known, and loved. Newcomers experience personal and congregational connections that lead them to become committed UUs and members of our congregation.*

**If you have any questions about our events, membership or our congregation, please email us at [office@uuprinceton.org](mailto:office@uuprinceton.org). We look forward to getting to know you better.**

### Meeting with the Ministers

Rev. Bill and/or Rev. Jennifer are happy to meet with you individually at church, for lunch, over coffee, etc., at a time that works for everyone.

Please email either of them to make an appointment.

[bill@uuprinceton.org](mailto:bill@uuprinceton.org)  
[jennifer@uuprinceton.org](mailto:jennifer@uuprinceton.org)

In the event of emergencies needing the attention of a minister, please contact Rev. Bill by phone or email first. If necessary, then contact Jeanne DeVoe, President of the Board of Trustees, at [president@uuprinceton.org](mailto:president@uuprinceton.org)

## STOCK/SECURITY DONATIONS

Thank you for your continued support. For those choosing to transfer stocks, securities, or mutual funds as part of your pledge contributions, please complete the Stock Donation Form available here:

<https://www.uuprinceton.org/about-giving/forms/>. Or contact the office with the transfer information.

Click on the "Stock Donation Form," fill it out, and send it to the office at [office@uuprinceton.org](mailto:office@uuprinceton.org). It is important that these steps are followed so we can properly track your transfer and credit your contribution to your pledge account.

If you recently made a stock donation and have not heard from the office, please reach out so that we correctly credit this donation to your account.

Thank you!

## Signing the Membership Book Ceremony

This ceremony of becoming a member is for those who have previously attended "Exploring Our Faith" and want to become members of our congregation. Please contact Rev. Bill to arrange a time. [bill@uuprinceton.org](mailto:bill@uuprinceton.org)



**JOIN US FOR  
WORSHIP SERVICE**  
In-Person, as well as live-streamed, at  
10:30 a.m. in Channing Hall

Via live-streamed video:

[https://zoom.us/j/94163305308?](https://zoom.us/j/94163305308?pwd=L3VDOVRPaUVKVUU4TIJsVXIrUVBMQT09)  
[pwd=L3VDOVRPaUVKVUU4TIJsVXIrUVB](https://zoom.us/j/94163305308?pwd=L3VDOVRPaUVKVUU4TIJsVXIrUVBMQT09)  
[MQT09](https://zoom.us/j/94163305308?pwd=L3VDOVRPaUVKVUU4TIJsVXIrUVBMQT09)

**January Spiritual Theme—Courage**  
**By Chalice Circle Facilitators**

**Our Monthly Spiritual Themes** guide our Chalice Circles, which are small, intentional groups of members and friends that gather for spiritual enrichment through personal sharing. For more information on Chalice Circles, please email [chalicecircles@uuprinceton.org](mailto:chalicecircles@uuprinceton.org). Our Chalice Circle thoughts and questions around the theme of Courage this month are:

“Courage is the measure of our heartfelt participation with life, with another, with a community, a work, a future... To be courageous is to seat our feelings deeply in the body and in the world: to live up to and into the necessities of relationships that already exist, with things we find we already care deeply about...”

- David Whyte

*Can you think of an example of how your life, those you love, or the world calls you to act with courage? If not, feel free to respond with a different idea of what courage means to you.*

“And then it struck me: Maybe being brave enough doesn’t mean lessening my fear, but listening to it.”

- Amanda Gorman

*When your goal is to meet a situation with courage, do you find it is helpful to allow yourself to listen to or feel your fear?*

“Nothing is more vital to the capacity for change ...than the courageous willingness to outgrow your views, anneal your values, and keep clarifying your priorities. Changing – your mind, your life – requires giving something up – a way of seeing, a way of being...”

- Maria Popova

*Have there been times in your life when you realized that becoming your “best self” also meant letting go of “a way of seeing or being”?*

“They will discover that when we reach beyond the confines of narrow interest, our hearts become filled with strength.”

- 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet (Tenzin Gyatso)

*When has your heart filled with strength? What did you do?*

**Pastoral Associates** is a group of trained and caring members of the congregation that offers support and assistance to congregants facing difficulties, crises, or life transitions. Rev. Jennifer Kelleher ([jennifer@uuprinceton.org](mailto:jennifer@uuprinceton.org)) is the primary support for Pastoral Associates and our Prayer Circle. You are always welcome to reach out directly to Rev. Jennifer and/or Rev. Bill Neely ([bill@uuprinceton.org](mailto:bill@uuprinceton.org)) for pastoral care and support in times of difficulty and times of celebration.

## Joys and Sorrows

UU Princeton sends our love and care to the family and friends of Irene Tedeschi, who joined our congregation in 2002 and passed away on Nov. 14, 2024. Her warmth, humor, friendship, and generous and curious spirit will be remembered with deep affection. A full obituary may be found online at <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/irene-tedeschi-obituary?pid=208079754>.

### Introducing: Conscious Consumers

As UUs, we are keenly aware of the interconnectedness of all things, and that our actions and choices can have a ripple effect on the world around us. But we sometimes struggle to put this knowledge into practice on a daily basis. A new group at UU Princeton, called Conscious Consumers, is working to raise awareness among members that everyday choices, even seemingly insignificant ones, do matter. Through monthly challenges and calls-to-action, we will encourage fellow congregants to adopt habits that will have a positive impact in the following areas: **climate change, conservation, human and animal welfare, and health.**

We can all start small and build on our successes. Let’s make this effort fun and doable!

#### **January Resolution:**

Here is an inaugural 2025 New Year’s resolution challenge: **I will check Skylights every month this year to read the monthly UU Conscious Consumer challenge, and I resolve to try a few!**

Your Conscious Consumers team: Kirsten Shearer (chair), Vicky Campbell, Dunbar Birnie, Sharon McCrae

## Children and Youth Ministry

### January 2025: Children and Youth Ministry

As we transition into the New Year, we share with you some of the activities our children, middle school youth and adult guides have experienced together thus far this congregational year. We've been making new friends, learning about our shared UU values, reflecting on our own identity and lenses on the world, and engaging play as a spiritual practice. Since August we have welcomed nine new families and eleven children & youth to our program. It has been a great pleasure to extend both a welcome back to so many and a welcome to UU Princeton to new friends. The energy on Sunday mornings is palpable. What a joy it is to be together!

As our program continues to grow, we will look to you - our adult congregation - to support us as class leaders and guides. With the number of children & youth now involved, we anticipate that the program will require at least 6 more volunteers by September. What an exciting prospect!

**Age Group: Pre-K/Kindergarten**, Program: [Chalice Children](#) supplemented by lessons/activities curated by our leaders. Adult Guides: Kari Dalane, Jon Krejci, Betsy Marshall, Lydia Rieck - with support from Molly Sharlach. Assistants: Cathy Bauer-Koggan, Florin Daly & Clem Zimmer. Thirteen Children are registered in this age group, with 6-9 attending each Sunday.

From Molly: In one lesson this fall, "we read the book *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*, about a man who works at a zoo and gets a visit from his animal friends to cheer him up when he's sick. We asked the kids to make cards for people in our congregation who might be sick or lonely, but they all wanted to make cards for their parents, which was also sweet.

From Lydia: In one of our last gatherings, "We talked about the Solstice and read a kids' solstice book. We pretended to be planets circling around the sun. We talked about how many people celebrate with light or fire, because the sun's light will come back and the days will get longer. The kids made some (really delightful!) candle holders with sculpy, greens, and sparkly stuff.

**Age Group: 1st-4th Grades**, Program: [Lego ValUUES](#), Adult Guides: Jo Ellen Burton, Alice Deanin, John Stash & Chris Sturm. Assistants: Nicole Campbell, Rachel Neely, Cheryl Stash, Farooq Zama. Eighteen Children are registered in this age group, with 8-12 attending each Sunday.

From Chris: in our lesson focused on the UU value of Justice, "the kids loved the book we read, *All the Way to the Top*, by Annette Bay Pimental, which is based on the true-life story of Jennifer Keelan-Chaffins. Jennifer was handicapped by cerebral palsy and played a key role as a child advocate to help win passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The kids were fascinated to learn at the end that she was not a fictional character. Then we split into two groups to walk around the building and look for things that are impediments to folks with handicaps, and things that help them. Some of the kids like to be silly, which can be contagious, but we have many wonderful learning moments and it's fun to watch them get to know each other better."

**Age Group: 5th-8th Grades**, Program: [Windows & Mirrors](#), Adult Guides: Beth Behrend, Binnie Thom & Michael Weeks. Assistants: Dave Avasthi, Regine Clement, Sofia Strauss. Eight Youth are registered in this age group, with 3-5 attending each Sunday.

Our lessons focus on how UUs value multiple perspectives as contributing to our collective pursuit of truth, fairness, justice and love — and work on better understanding ourselves in relationship to others. Each youth has been crafting their own "window/mirror" that reflects their own identity and lenses on the world, adding elements as the year progresses. The hope is to offer them opportunities to help with various congregation events throughout the year. Thus far, they made table decorations for our Sunday service in which we take a collection for Arm in Arm.

In one of our Sunday lessons, we affirmed the relevance and meaning of church attendance for individuals and asked the children to consider these for themselves. The Sunday following, the youth interviewed 4 adult congregants, asking these questions: *Why do you come to church? What one word best describes your congregational attachment? Is there a location in the church that is particularly meaningful to you? Why is the presence of children at church important to you personally?*

**Age Group: 7th-9th Grades**, Program: [Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education](#)

In collaboration with the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing and including youth from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills as well. UU Princeton Facilitators: Lauren Foss and Rebecca Thompson (there are also 2 facilitators from UUCWC). Sixteen Youth are registered for OWL, including four youth from UU Princeton.

This year our 7th-9th grade OWL participants (and facilitators) are using the newly revised (and long awaited) 2nd edi-

tion of the curriculum. The 2nd edition is more relevant to and inclusive of queer youth, specifically, and participants of all gender identities and sexual orientations more generally. Over the year they will reflect together on puberty changes, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, healthy relationships, responsible sexual behavior, and communicating about sexuality, among other topics. In January the youth will welcome a LGBTQ+ panel in which they may learn the stories and perspectives from panel members and ask questions. Youth from three different UU congregations are getting to know one another and build friendships while having these important and brave conversations. We are grateful to our partners at UUCWC and a collaboration that allows a diverse set of youth to have this experience - from 3 congregations.

**9th-12th Grade YoUuth Group:** In collaboration with the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills. UU Princeton Advisor: Deana Graffeo Weeks. **(and we'd love another to join her)**. Eight Youth are registered in this age group, including seven youth from UU Princeton. UUCSH have two advisors who support our shared YoUuth Group programming. The group meets for social events, community service and spiritual growth with a model in which youth are empowered to design their "curriculum" with mentorship from their advisors.

**Youth group kicks off this January!**

YoUuth Group Jan-June 2025 Schedule	
<b>Sunday, January 12:</b>	from 4pm-6pm - meeting at UU Princeton
<b>Sunday, February 23</b>	- from 4pm-6pm - meeting at UUCSH: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills 123 East Cliff St., Somerville, NJ 08876
<b>Sunday, March 9</b>	- from 4pm-6pm - at UU Princeton
<b>Sunday, April 13</b>	- from 4pm-6pm - meeting at UUCSH
<b>Sunday, May 18*</b>	- from 4pm-6pm - at UU Princeton
<b>Sunday, June 8*</b>	- from 4pm-6pm - meeting at UUCSH <i>*dates to be adjusted around prom/graduation as needed.</i>

**January's Children and Youth Schedule**

January 2025	
<b>Sunday, January 5</b>	<b>Gatherings by age group.</b> <b>OWL Session 11:</b> 10:00am-11:30am at UUCWC
<b>Sunday, January 12</b>	<b>All ages worship</b> "Have Courage & Be Kind" led by Scarlett Davis, Ben Maskell, Rev. Jennifer & More! <b>OWL Session 10 (LGBTQ+ Panel):</b> 10:00am-11:30am at UUCWC <b>YoUuth Group Meets from 4pm-6pm</b> at UU Princeton
<b>Sunday, January 19</b>	<b>Gatherings by age group.</b> <i>OWL does not meet today. Youth invited to worship.</i>
<b>Sunday, January 26</b>	<b>Gatherings by age group.</b> <b>OWL Session 12:</b> 10:00am-11:30am at UUCWC

**Recent Books/Stories Used in "Wonder & Wisdom"**

November 24: The Magical Yet, Angela DiTerlizzi, illustrated by Lorena Alvarez Gómez

December 1: We Are Free You & Me, Colin Kaepernick, Nessa Diab; illustrated by Gladys Jose

December 8: May You Love and Be Loved, by Cleo Wade

December 15: Skit, "The Latke that Couldn't Stop Screaming," based on the book by Lemony Snicket

December 22: Because, Mo Willems, illustrated by Amber Ren

And as always, I am here for you in times of personal and family transitions and/or challenges. Please do contact me at [jennifer@uuprinceton.org](mailto:jennifer@uuprinceton.org) or 609-924-1604, ext. 118 if I can be of support. With abiding love, Rev. Jennifer

**UU HISTORY- CLARA BARTON - Part Two, Life in DC and the Civil War****By Carl H. Haag**

Clara Barton was 33 when she went to Washington, DC to visit her sister, Sally. She had always lived in small towns and found the city of forty thousand to be exciting. She toured the city, sat in the galleries of the Senate, and was at the inauguration of President Lincoln.

She got a job copying letters in the government Patent Office and was not paid as much as the men there. That did not sit well with them, and they made life miserable for her. Their anger increased when she was promoted to the position of Confidential Secretary and was assigned to find out who was leaking secret documents from the Patent Office. She found the men who were guilty of the crime — the same ones who had tried to get rid of her.

The Civil War started. The first troops to reach Washington were from her area of Massachusetts, including some of her former students. They had been attacked in Baltimore by Southern sympathizers and arrived in Washington bruised, hungry, and without luggage. They were quartered in the Senate Chambers, sleeping on the floor. Clara went to them there and asked what they needed and pledged to return the next day.

On Sunday morning a procession of five strapping Black men, staggering under five huge baskets, being led by a prim little woman were seen by churchgoers. Using her own savings, Clara had bought food, clothing, blankets for them. She had been up all night tearing up sheets and petticoats to make handkerchiefs and bandages for the troops.

Barton soon knew that the wounded and sick soldiers were not being taken care of and many were dying, even from the lack of food and water. She bombarded the War Department, senators, and others for permission to go to the battlefield to supply the men with medical and other supplies. The War Department stated they did not need her help and that women were not permitted on the battlefields.

Two years passed before the Surgeon General finally gave her a pass to go and take others with her to the battle areas. Transportation for her supplies and workers to unload supplies would be provided. Clara conferred with medical and army officers, the newly formed Sanitary Commission, whose president was the Unitarian Rev. Dr. Henry W. Bellows, which was investigating conditions on the battlefield, and Dorothea Dix [a Unitarian], the Superintendent of Army Nurses, so Barton could find out what was needed.

She did, and in 1863 organized a wagon train to take medical supplies to the front near Harpers Ferry. The eight drovers were a rough lot, who had been at some horrible battles, and swore they would never go back. Here they were heading back under the command of a woman. They stopped early but Clara told them it would be in their interests to drive on until nightfall. After they stopped and set up camp, Clara invited them to join her for a hot meal from her supplies, there was a cloth on the ground, and Clara went around pouring hot coffee for them.

Later, as Clara sat by the fire, the men emerged from the darkness, and the spokesman said, “We’ve been mean and contrary to you all day. You’ve treated us like gentlemen and you made us the best meal we have had in two years. It makes us ashamed and we ask your forgiveness. We shan’t trouble you no more.” The next morning the men made breakfast for Clara.

To Be Continued-

## Rainbow Ministry

**Join the UU Princeton Rainbow Ministry for a lively discussion of the most banned book in the United States! Sunday, January 19, 2025, in Fahs Theater, 12 noon to 1:30pm.**

The book is *Gender Queer: A Memoir*, a 2019 graphic memoir written and illustrated by Maia Kobabe. It recounts Kobabe's journey from adolescence to adulthood and the author's exploration of gender identity and sexuality, with an ultimate identify choice outside.

It is the most banned book in U.S. schools. Some advocates of these bans argue that the book is pornographic in nature, pointing to its graphic illustrations of sex.

Books will be available in Robinson Lounge after the Sunday service for the next few weeks. The cost is \$13, with scholarships available.

We will read the book independently and meet for discussion and questions after the service on Jan. 19, led by Audrey Pico and Elissa Hoeger.

Interviews with the author make it clear both why there was a need to write this book and why it is important to read it:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3zO21caR\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3zO21caR_w)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qc\\_xjqPRFTw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qc_xjqPRFTw)

Please join us and help the UU Princeton Rainbow Ministry renew our Welcoming Congregation Certification.

## Adult Faith Development

### Buddhist Meditation Group

UU Princeton's Buddhist meditation group meets every Sunday from 9:30 - 10:25 in Fahs Theater and on Saturdays from 3:30 - 4:15 pm on Zoom. Whether you are a beginning or experienced meditator, all are welcome! Please contact Michele Ochsner ([michele.ochsner@gmail.com](mailto:michele.ochsner@gmail.com)) to receive weekly email reminders and Zoom links.

### Zen Meditation Practice and Talks

All are welcome to discuss and practice Zen Meditation on the Fourth Sunday of every month from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. The practice consists of chanting the heart sutra and 25 minutes of seated meditation followed by a Dharma talk and discussion. Contact Steve Valerio ([sgvalerio312@gmail.com](mailto:sgvalerio312@gmail.com)) for more info.

### Short Story Hour - Vonnegut

Join Rev. Bill for the reading and discussion of a short story by the great contemporary writer and Unitarian Universalist Kurt Vonnegut. The next program is on Friday, Jan 10 at 12 noon. Keep an eye on your email for the Zoom link. No sign-up needed

### New to UU Programs

All are welcome to a casual and conversational introduction to UU Princeton and Unitarian Universalism with Rev. Bill. Bring your questions as we begin exploring our faith, together. Our next sessions are on Jan. 12 and Feb. 9 from 11:45 - 12:30. No sign-up needed, and bring your friends!

### The Bible: An Introduction

The Bible is a complicated and contested work that has as many interpretations and meanings as it has readers. Let's explore it a bit, from a liberal religious perspective. This program will be on Sundays, Jan. 19 and 26 from 9 - 9:45 a.m. Please register on the Signup Genius page at [www.uuprinceton.org](http://www.uuprinceton.org). All are welcome!

### Young Adult Groups (ages 18-27 and 28-40)

Interested in meeting other young adults within the UU Princeton community? Come to Young Adult Sundays, at least once a month! Emma Moore ([emoore42@gmail.com](mailto:emoore42@gmail.com)), Irene Donne ([irene.donne@gmail.com](mailto:irene.donne@gmail.com)), and others are working on developing connections for fellowship, activism, and fun! Email the two of us any time or come introduce yourself after Sunday service. Join the email list to get each month's date and keep connected for other events.

### UU Princeton Book Discussion Group

Join us for our next discussions of member-chosen books. All are welcome.

We will meet at noon in the John Murray Room unless otherwise noted.

#### January 12, *There, There, Tommy Orange*

Here's our reading list for the rest of year:

March 16, *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots*, John Swanson Jacobs, edited by Jonathan D. S. Schroeder

May 18, *Fourteen Days*, The Author's Guild, Margret Atwood, Douglas Preston

Happy Reading!

Contact [peggy.matthews@gmail.com](mailto:peggy.matthews@gmail.com) if you have Questions.

### CUUPS (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) Evergreen Chapter meets monthly and quarterly.

For more information about CUUPS events, please reach out to Herb Foster at [herb\\_foster@yahoo.com](mailto:herb_foster@yahoo.com) to join the Evergreen CUUPS mailing list, or to Jennifer Santos at [jsantoscnm@verizon.net](mailto:jsantoscnm@verizon.net) or Kate Foster at [subligaria@yahoo.com](mailto:subligaria@yahoo.com). Co-Convenors, with questions.

### Princeton Eats Plants

Join Princeton Eats Plants, a vibrant UU Princeton community promoting plant-based living through monthly potluck gatherings. Discover delicious, plant-powered dishes and connect with others passionate about sustainable eating and cruelty-free living. Exchange recipes, share journeys, and forge connections. Whether you're a seasoned enthusiast or curious about plant-based diets, join us every first Wednesday at 6:00 PM in the Founder's Room. Contact Vicky Campbell, JoEllen, or John Burton for details.

Meet Up group: <https://www.meetup.com/princeton-eats-plants/>

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2428735040700564>

### Mission Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton

*In our open, welcoming community  
we live our message of hope, love,  
justice, and joy.*

*Approved at the 6/3/2012  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton  
Annual Meeting*

## Women's Alliance

**Lunch and Program – Thursday, January 16, 2025  
12:00 – 2:00 p.m., Founder's Room**

Join us at noon in the Founder's Room for our monthly lunch and program. *Please bring a salad or sandwich to share*; the Women's Alliance will provide dessert and beverages.

Our speaker will be Beth Behrend, a fellow UU Princeton congregant. Come join a conversation with Beth who is in her third, three-year term of service on the Board of Education of the Princeton Public Schools. Beth will talk about her experience as an elected steward of an organization responsible for educating 3800+ children, with over 750 employees, and a \$100+ million budget. She will also provide information and answer questions on Princeton's January 28 school growth referendum. Beth will be joined by her BOE colleague Susan Kanter for an informative conversation about our public schools.

No reservation is needed and all members, friends and guests are welcome! Please feel free to contact Betty Ashwood with any questions (see contact information below).

### About Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance promotes friendship and kindness, inspires learning and serves the congregation and greater community. We organize monthly lunches with timely programs of general interest, assist bereaved families with receptions following memorial services and raise funds to support organizations that serve women and children.

Anyone who supports what we do and wishes to more fully participate may become a member of the Women's Alliance upon payment of \$10 in annual dues. To receive email updates about the monthly lunches and other activities, obtain more information about the Women's Alliance in general, or to become a member, please contact Betty Ashwood, President at 609 558-1136 (call or text) or email [bjashwood@gmail.com](mailto:bjashwood@gmail.com).

More information about this ministry is also available on the UUCP Website <https://www.uuprinceton.org/connect/groups/womens-alliance/>



UU Princeton's Social Justice Ministries are organized into six major areas, with several affiliated activities, all listed below. To become involved in any of these areas please contact the person listed or the church office. If you have an idea for a new area of focus, please contact Rev. Bill ([Bill@UUPrinceton.org](mailto:Bill@UUPrinceton.org)).

### Social Justice Ministries (alphabetically):

**Caring for Our Neighbors** – organizes projects that provide hands-on help to address immediate, local, concrete needs (Louise Senior,

[caring4neighbors@uuprinceton.org](mailto:caring4neighbors@uuprinceton.org))

**Immigration Task Force** – assists immigrants, refugees and sanctuary seekers. Michele Ochsner, [sanctuary@uuprinceton.org](mailto:sanctuary@uuprinceton.org),

**Ministry for the Earth** – acts to preserve earth's resources at UU Princeton and among individuals. Ray Nichols [earthministry@uuprinceton.org](mailto:earthministry@uuprinceton.org).

**Public Action Issues** – promotes advocacy actions, through support of UU Faith Action, legislative actions, and other activities. Michael Loney for UU Faith Action [socialjustice@uuprinceton.org](mailto:socialjustice@uuprinceton.org),

**Racial Justice Ministry** – conducts anti-racism work inside and outside of UU Princeton. Ted Fetter and Kevin Trayner, [racialjustice@uuprinceton.org](mailto:racialjustice@uuprinceton.org)

**Rainbow Ministry** – welcomes LGBTQIA persons at UU Princeton and advocates outside of UU Princeton. (Judy Vee, [lgbtq@uuprinceton.org](mailto:lgbtq@uuprinceton.org))

### Affiliated Activities:

**Spring Sale** – Proceeds from our 50+ annual, congregation-wide rummage sales fund our annual Social Justice Outreach Grants (Sale Coordinators: Kirsten Shearer, Binnie Thom, Teri Hyatt, Amanda Gillum & Cathy Bauer-Koggan)

**Social Justice Outreach Grants** – Financial grants to local nonprofits sponsored by UU Princeton congregants, determined by committee review of applications. Funded by annual Spring Sale proceeds

**Review Committee Chair:** Gareth Funka-Lea, Carol Allen (Liaison to Coalition for Peace Action)

Jeanne DeVoe (Liaison to Not in Our Town)

Valerie Haynes (Liaison to Princeton Community Housing)

Debra Lambo (Liaison to Represent US NJ)

Dunbar Birnie (Liaison to Citizens' Climate Lobby)

No importa de dónde eres,  
estamos contentos que seas  
nuestro vecino.

No matter where you are  
from, we're glad you're  
our neighbor.

ከየትም ይምጡ ጎረቤታችን  
በመሆንዎት ደስተኞች ነን!





## Racial Justice Ministry

Do you have a passion for equity, anti-racism and social justice? The focus of our Racial Justice Ministry includes race-related issues in local governments, working with Indigenous peoples, education and school policies, faith development opportunities (a congregational book read is in the works for example), and looking at our own internal policies, practices, and history.

Come and check us out and be part of our work. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Email [racialjustice@uuprinceton.org](mailto:racialjustice@uuprinceton.org) for more information or to get on our mailing list. Or **you can** contact co-chairs Kevin Trayner and Ted Fetter directly at [Kevintrayner@gmail.com](mailto:Kevintrayner@gmail.com) or [fetter4@verizon.net](mailto:fetter4@verizon.net).

## Caring for Our Neighbors

### Caring for Our Neighbors Ministry

Join us for hand-on projects that help hunger and homelessness prevention in Mercer County. Contact Louise Senior at [Caring4Neighbors@uuprinceton.org](mailto:Caring4Neighbors@uuprinceton.org) if you'd like to pitch in! You can always bring shelf-stable, in date, unopened food to our **Giving Table in Robinson Lounge**. Contact Jody Maher at [JodyM1025@gmail.com](mailto:JodyM1025@gmail.com) if you'd like to help deliver food to Arm in Arm.

### DONATIONS NEEDED: 2025 CALENDARS & RECENT MAGAZINES

We're again collecting **colorful calendars and high-quality magazines**. **Donation Deadline** is Martin Luther King Sunday, **January 19<sup>th</sup>**. **COLLECTION BOXES** are in Robinson Lounge, under the coat racks. **Note:** Please clip off any magazine address labels.

We'll deliver our donations to **Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK)** during December and January. Colorful calendars are a lovely way to brighten a room and are greatly appreciated. Magazines are fun, informative, and used in ESL classes and other tutoring at TASK.  
Many thanks!

**Fun! Fun! Fun!**

Eat, bid, drink, bid, eat, bid - Win!

### 2025 FELLOWSHIP AUCTION CELEBRATION PARTY

SATURDAY, March 1, 5:00 – 7:00 PM

**ON-LINE BIDDING FEBRUARY 21 – February 28:  
DON'T MISS OUT!**

On-line bidding starts February 21 and ends February 28 just before the Party starts on March 1st! Join the Party and bid on Take Me Home Tonight items, **various offerings**, and raffle baskets. When our Celebrations Committee polled congregants about celebrations we want to have, this party was the most requested. It is a fun, intergenerational, community-building event that celebrates yet another successful auction. The party is a fun way to get to know each other that night and throughout the year as we cash in on our winnings, attending dinners, tours, classes, food items and more. Come enjoy great finger food, wine and beer and, of course, FELLOWSHIP!

All the money raised will go to support the important activities of UU Princeton! We've scheduled it early in the evening so that children can come and join in the fun.

Save the date now and watch your e-mails and the February 2025 Skylights for more information on donating items for the Auction and the party.

**The Fellowship Auction is for a great cause, and it's great fun!**



### Are you working with a non-profit that could benefit from a grant?

Are you actively involved with a local non-profit organization that could benefit from a grant funded by the money we raise at the UU Princeton Spring Sale? The grants have typically been \$1,000 to \$3,000. The organization needs to be sponsored by a congregant and the organization will need to fill in an application form that will be provided. We are looking for organizations whose work aligns with our values. Applications are reviewed by our UU Princeton Outreach Grant Committee. Request a grant sponsorship form by emailing [grants@uuprinceton.org](mailto:grants@uuprinceton.org)

## Gracenotes

It's been my joy and my honor to offer you this last monthly summary of the upcoming events in our beloved music ministry, those connected to Sunday worship, and those who are. As the month of December draws to a close, it's time to take leave of my position as Director of Music here at UU Princeton. Since my husband and I are long-standing members of UU Princeton, our relationship is only a shifting one, and we both looking forward to engaging with a wider swath of interesting people and projects.

Only one thing remains, and that is to offer my deep gratitude to all who have helped me during my extensive term at UU Princeton.

**The Musicians.** First, the volunteer and professional musicians who have made my life such a joy in every respect. Finding music for the congregation that uplifts our weekly Sunday hours has truly been a gift to me, and has led me to the exquisite combinations of musicians over the years: The Bell Choir, the Kids' Chorale, the Adult Choir, the Vocal Trio, JoEllen and John Burton, Courtney Orlando, our pianists – currently the genius of our accompanist – Sue den Outer.

**The Brunch Team.** Our Music Ministry has established itself as one fantastic group of spread-makers, and that's why all of our brunches have really help us to bring our ministry to life in a major way. Special thanks to Ruth Ramsey, Candus Hedberg, Binnie Thom and especially Karen Nalbone, and others who have helped out often and completely.

**The Staging Managing Team.** The volunteers who have set up and replaced chairs for rehearsals and Sundays have made the rest of our lives so easy. Special mention goes of course to **Jorge Garcia Salas**, our beloved Sexton, for his patience with shifting schedules and set-up plans in Channing Hall on numerous occasions. His good humor and warmth are readymade gifts that greet us all each Sunday morning.

**The Music Ministry Committee.** This amazing group of visionaries has for the past dozen or so years met monthly to attend to all manner of issues. But its primary function has been to raise funds to cover the costs of special sheet music, a instrumental guest musicians for All Music Sunday, and other costs not covered by the Music Budget. Last year's prominent goal was to raise funds for the Bell Choir to pay for long-needed repairs, a very costly project. We did this through brunches, showing special evening movies, and other projects as well. Special mention to our Committee Advisor, **Jordan Corn**, who has served in this capacity since the formation of this committee.

### **And the UU Princeton Staff**

**Ministerial Interns and Seminarians** – Pauline Nijander and Patricia Hennigan ----- who gifted us with their special gifts on the way to becoming professional ministers. What a joy it's been to watch you both find your unique gifts along your pathways.

**Susan Langkafel** – who took over a little over a year ago from Sara Oderwald – a yeoman's job of huge proportion, and who now keeps the place running. Susan jumped right in, undertook the learning of a position that had been expanded by Sara before her. A lovely person as well, Susan has been a godsend to us all. There is no describing all the facets of organization that she brings to UU Princeton

**Rev. Jennifer Kelleher** – I didn't really understand fully the role of the UU Princeton Religious Education Director until we had the good fortune of welcoming Rev. Jennifer to our congregation. A pied piper with our children and a passionate lover of craft projects, Jennifer has dazzled all of us with her intriguing Wonder Box, accompanied stories, and most Sundays a little gift to end each story time, to take home to remind kids and their parents with her beloved invitation: "I WONDER....."

**Rev. Bill Neely.** After the tenures of three ministers in a relatively small period of time, the congregation was, in my opinion, ready for a new chapter, a new leader, a new champion, AND a new minister. We were graced in finding all of that in the person of Rev. Bill Neely. Before I began to get to know Bill, the first major difference I noticed was the call of weekly staff meetings, something we had never experienced before. Thus began a bonding of the staff – a creation of a real team united to perform the work of the congregation, and we all responded in kind. He put his stamp on the meeting experience by greeting us with a reading, a "chalice lighting" if you will, gathering our separate energies together for the meeting. Early on Bill also brought a talent for organizational systems, another facet of the UU Princeton community that had been sorely absent. With a huge series of ministries and volunteer committees to manage, Bill showed us this ease many times over.

But the greatest of Rev. Bill's gifts has been his extraordinary sermons and homilies. Drawing from his extensive store of theological sources, books, poems, and current articles, his words always carried the threads of the service into focus when he spoke. He GOT us, and we GOT him. What a blessing. For the music ministry, I was always encouraged to meet with him to discuss anthems and hymns that he thought would enhance the overall service themes, and to discuss any challenges I might be facing. It was an easy going, creative, mutual respectful, and fun relationship which

(Continued from page 10)

I will treasure through whatever my next experiences may hold. My enduring gratitude to all of you who have made this period of my life so enriching and full. With love and best wishes, Margie

### **Music Ministry Mission Statement**

To provide, through the power of music, a dynamic ministry that will inspire transcendent personal experiences, draw the congregation into greater kinship, and bring inspiration to



## **Caring for Our Neighbors Ministry**

### **Great Success with Our November 2024 ‘Gather and Give’ Food Drive**

Thank you to all who donated and helped sort food for Arm in Arm on Sunday, November 24, 2024! Together we packed 102 labelled ‘to-go’ bags of holiday foods from our donations for Arm in Arm to disperse with their mobile pantry throughout Mercer County. There was a wealth of additional food donated that day as well – our grand total was 1113 lbs. of food! That Sunday’s Plate Collection was also dedicated to Arm in Arm to support their work. HUGE thanks also to Jess Traynor and her friend who were home from college for the holiday and helped deliver and weigh the donations at Arm in Arm the following day – many hands made light work, and Arm in Arm was thrilled by our contributions!

### **Upcoming: Join us to Spice up Life on February 9, 2025!**

*Can you imagine only eating bland pantry staples without seasoning, day after day?* Many of the families who depend on Arm in Arm and other food assistance programs live in food deserts where they cannot buy spices at affordable prices, and many also suffer from high blood pressure so should limit sodium/salt in their diets. Spices and salt-free seasoning mixes help make their food healthier and more satisfying.

Our **UU Princeton Social Justice Caring for Our Neighbors Ministry** invites families and individuals to help bag spices & seasonings after our Sunday Service on February 9, 2025. These will be donated to the **Arm in Arm Food Pantries**. We’ll supply the spices, Ziploc bags and labels so that they are standardized and clearly marked from us at UU Princeton. If you’d like to sign up to help organize the effort, or prefer to work on your own from home, please contact Louise Senior at [caring4neighbors@uuprinceton.org](mailto:caring4neighbors@uuprinceton.org) or [DrLSenior@gmail.com](mailto:DrLSenior@gmail.com) Thank you!

## **NOVEMBER FELLOWSHIP NIGHT SATURDAY, January 11th at 6 PM in the FOUNDERS ROOM**

### **WHAT ARE FELLOWSHIP NIGHTS?**

Want to get to know more members of UU Princeton, but need help figuring out how to do it? Come to Fellowship Nights! We do all the prep, you just show up.

We provide pizza (other ideas welcome), but we love when people bring side dishes, dessert, or even just a bit of cash to defray the cost (absolutely not required though!)

Our usual format for Fellowship Night is a mix of board games and friendly discussion, but we eagerly accept suggestions for other activities.

We meet on the second Saturday of every month. Keep an eye out in all your UUCP channels. Happenings, e-Happenings, and email blasts will tell you what the program is for the month. Signup Genius is a great way to let us know how much food to order, and even better for accommodating your dietary needs and interaction preferences. But mostly, we look forward to seeing you, just as you are.

Signup Genius will be on the UU Princeton website. Contact us if you have any questions ([picoaudrey@yahoo.fr](mailto:picoaudrey@yahoo.fr)).

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0945A8A629A46-50725128-fellowship>



## **Ministry for the Earth**

**Ministry for the Earth** - is based on the Seventh Principle of Unitarian Universalism: *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.* We provide a path for congregational study, reflection, and action in response to environmental challenges, from local to global.

On Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, from noon to 1:00, in the Founders Room, the Ministry for the Earth invites everyone interested to participate in a discussion of potential activities we could undertake this year



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## Names & Numbers

### Rev. Bill Neely

[bill@uuprinceton.org](mailto:bill@uuprinceton.org)  
Parish Minister ext. 111

### Rev. Jennifer Kelleher

[jennifer@uuprinceton.org](mailto:jennifer@uuprinceton.org)  
Assistant Minister ext. 118

### Pauline E. Nijander

[pauline@uuprinceton.org](mailto:pauline@uuprinceton.org)  
Seminarian ext. 114

### Patricia Hennigan

[patricia@uuprinceton.org](mailto:patricia@uuprinceton.org)  
Seminarian ext. 113

### Open

Music Director ext. 116

### Jorge Garcia Salas

[jorge@uuprinceton.org](mailto:jorge@uuprinceton.org)  
Sexton ext. 119 or 609-954-7789

### Susan Langkafel

[susan@uuprinceton.org](mailto:susan@uuprinceton.org)  
Administrator ext. 110

Office Hours: Varies  
Please call or e-mail.  
Phone: 609-924-1604

e-mail:

[office@uuprinceton.org](mailto:office@uuprinceton.org)

Web page:

<http://www.uuprinceton.org>

## Welcome New Members

We are so pleased to welcome our newest members! **Regine, Judy, Marybeth, and Belinda** recently signed our Membership Book and became official members of our congregation. We are grateful for their presence and commitment and look forward to many years of shared ministry together!

We will celebrate their membership during worship on Feb. 2. If you have been attending UU Princeton and would like to join our congregation, or if you have questions about membership, please contact Rev. Bill ([Bill@UUPrinceton.org](mailto:Bill@UUPrinceton.org)).

Our next three-session Membership Program will happen on 11:45 – 12:45 on March 9, 23, and 30, and our next monthly *New to UU* introductory programs will be on Jan. 12 and Feb. 9 from 11:45 - 12:30. We'd love to see you at any or all of these!

And here are some introductions to our newest members!

**Regine Clement** is a native New Yorker and former Army brat. She was introduced to UU by a friend and feels lucky for it. She's a non-profit development professional and has lived in New Jersey for three years. Regine has been attending UU Princeton since May 2023 and is grateful for the warm welcome she's received, particularly from the wonderful Linda Benson.

**Judy Vonella Fisher.** I have been attending UU since December of last year. That means this is my 1st anniversary with UU and even better, I'm officially a member now! A little about me, my husband and I have raised our two sons who have grown into lovely young men. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Princeton Junction. We relocated from Highland Park to Princeton Junction just two years ago. I feel lucky to have such a rewarding career and am very thankful for it. Something special happened, one day early in our relocation process. We were in the car driving along and passed UU. I was reminded that years ago I had attended a program at the church that was really positive, but I had forgotten about it. A few months went by and I hadn't thought of it again. Until one morning when I opened my eyes and said to myself I needed to go there. So anyway, I'm still here and very grateful to be a member. I view UU as a beautiful little island. Unfortunately right now it's surrounded by turbulent waters, but UU will continue to be a bright light in the midst of it all.

**Marybeth Tran** - I was born and raised in New Jersey and have lived in Lawrence for the past 10 years with my husband, Eric. I am so happy to have found a spiritual home at UU Princeton. If you told me a community like UU Princeton existed, one where all faiths, agnostics, and atheists gathered together, welcomed, respected and honored each other, worked together to help those outside of these walls without any other motive than recognizing their need, I would not have believed it until I walked into UU Princeton for the first time. A place like this is so rare and special and it only exists because of the generations that came before us and the people who are here now. I am excited to be part of the people who are here now to make it possible for the generations to come.

## Next *Skylights* Deadline:

**January 16, 2024**  
Submissions due for the  
**February 2025**  
ISSUE

[skylights@uuprinceton.org](mailto:skylights@uuprinceton.org)