

# **Welcome to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter (FUUSE)**



## **FUUSE**

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Exeter, NH 03833

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**Sunday Services: 9:30 am, September through June  
Coffee and Conversation following the Service.  
We Are A Welcoming and Affirming Congregation.**

The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter (FUUSE) welcomes all who enter peacefully, regardless of creed, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.

At FUUSE, we are people of all ages, many backgrounds, and many beliefs. We are brave, curious and compassionate thinkers and doers. We create spirituality and community beyond boundaries, working for more justice and more love in our own lives and in the world.

In the pages that follow, we hope to shed a little light on what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist (“UU”) and to help you find meaningful ways to connect with the people and principles of our vibrant FUUSE community.

### **About Unitarian Universalism**

Unitarian Universalism creates change: in ourselves, and in the world.

Seven days a week, UUs live their faith by doing. Whether in community or individually, we know that active, tangible expressions of love, justice, and peace make a difference.

Our faith tradition is diverse and inclusive. We grew from the union of two radical Christian groups: the Universalists, who organized in 1793, and the Unitarians, who organized in 1825. They joined to become the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) in 1961. Both groups trace their roots in North America to the early Massachusetts settlers and the Framers of the Constitution. Across the globe, our legacy reaches back centuries to liberal religious pioneers in England, Poland, and Transylvania. Today, Unitarian Universalists include people of many beliefs who share UU values of peace, understanding, and love.

### **New to FUUSE and/or Unitarian Universalism?**

Fill out a [blue card](#) (these can be found in the pews in the sanctuary, in the entryway or ask an usher. They are also available on our website) or just email the [office@exeteruu.org](mailto:office@exeteruu.org) and you will be sent a letter of greeting and information on UU if requested. Get signed up for our eFUUSE weekly updates. To help you become connected in our community, throughout the year we will offer gatherings to help you get more involved. Or join one of the many volunteer groups engaged in social justice, religious education (RE), music, or help serve our community in other ways all to help make the world a better place. (See below for more details.)

## Our Shared Values as Unitarian Universalists



Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love.

Inseparable from one another, these shared values are:

**Interdependence.** We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it. We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships.

**Pluralism.** We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology. We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.

**Justice.** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive. We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregations, our Association, and society at large.

**Transformation.** We adapt to the changing world. We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically. Openness to change is fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages, never complete and never perfect.

**Generosity.** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope. We covenant to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. Our generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality.

**Equity.** We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love and compassion.

We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities.

### **Our Mission**

***At FUUSE we seek to build a caring, inclusive community where we can ground ourselves spiritually, pursue justice in the larger society, and work to heal the natural world.***

Approved by the congregation on March 26, 2017

### **Sundays at FUUSE**

Sunday Services: 9:30 am, September through June  
Coffee and Conversation following the Service.

FUUSE Worship Services and Religious Education for our children and Youth are offered from September through June. Services begin at 9:30 am, followed by coffee hour at 10:30.

We gather in worship to find meaning and live more deeply. Worship creates connections within, among, and beyond us, calling us to our better selves, calling us to live with wisdom and compassion.

During the summer months, opportunities for worship vary from year to year. Please visit our website for current information.

### **Religious Education for Children and Youth**

FUUSE welcomes and encourages family participation of all natures! On Sunday mornings, we welcome all ages to worship together in our sanctuary. We also have a professionally staffed nursery for the youngest children.

Most Sundays, children and adults start worship together in the Sanctuary, where the service will include a “Time For All Ages,” often a story or interactive activity. Midway through the service, children are invited to join our RE Director and volunteers for Sunday School classes, where they will continue to explore the same monthly themes as the adults are reflecting upon. The second Sunday of the month is an intentionally multi-generational service, with more embodied and participatory elements; the nursery is open but there is no separate Sunday School.

We will be exploring some new multi-generational and adult religious education offerings this year.

The success of our religious education program depends on the participation of parents and other FUUSE congregants who volunteer to teach, lead, and inspire our children. Volunteering is a wonderful way to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and to get to know other adults, as well as the children of FUUSE. To register your child for religious education or to sign up to volunteer, contact: Rebecca Figueroa Winter, Religious Education Director: [dre@exeteruu.org](mailto:dre@exeteruu.org)

## **Multiple Ways to Connect at FUUSE**

One way to learn more about the people, activities, projects, ministries, and faith of the people of FUUSE is to explore the pages of our web site [www.exeteruu.org](http://www.exeteruu.org).

Another is to ask about or get involved with various groups and activities in the congregation. Here is a partial list:

### **Caring Committee**

Meetings (all year): Once monthly with Minister

Level of activity: as much or as little as you can give.

Contact: Changes each month; contact the office at [office@exeteruu.org](mailto:office@exeteruu.org)

The Caring Committee exists as a ministry to help FUUSE members with situations of temporary crisis or transition, due to difficult events such as illness or death, or in the case of happy events such as a new child in the family.

This committee works confidentially with our minister to be as aware as possible of members in our community who need support. We are always happy to have help from the greater congregation to occasionally cook and deliver a meal or help with memorial service reception food.

### **Knitting Ministry**

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays from 6:30-8 pm in the Parsonage Parlor

Contact: Merci Voorhees at [voorheesmm3@gmail.com](mailto:voorheesmm3@gmail.com) for more information.

Join us for fellowship, conversation, and good works. Some members of this group make comfort shawls, which are given to people in times of crisis. Others work on their own projects. Knitters of all abilities are warmly welcomed. Crocheters are also welcome.

### **Choir**

Meetings: weekly on Wednesdays in the Parish Hall from 7:00-8:30. New members are always welcome.

Contact: Jimmy Dority at [music.director@exeteruu.org](mailto:music.director@exeteruu.org)

FUUSE has a rich music program with an adult choir and many musical members who share their talents during the services as well as in the community. The choir performs often throughout the year. All are welcome, experienced or novice alike. Reading music is an advantage, but not required. The choir performs at Sunday services twice a month on the first and third Sundays.

**Coffee Hour**

Every Sunday at 10:30 am following the service

For our children and congregants, coffee hour is a chance to socialize and network with others at FUUSE in the Parish Hall. Occasionally we ramp up to have a potluck or community breakfast. There are sometimes special classes, info sessions, or opportunities to discuss the service that take place during coffee hour.

**Fellowship Committee**

Meetings: no regularly scheduled meetings at the moment

Contact: Deb Merrick at [fjmerrick@gmail.com](mailto:fjmerrick@gmail.com)

The Fellowship Committee coordinates regular opportunities for congregants to connect outside of Sunday services, to deepen fellowship between members.

We have two regularly gathering social groups. People of any gender are welcome at either.

**Men's Group**

Meetings: 3rd Sunday each month, 5:30 pm in the Parish Hall

Contact: Martin Meyers at [martinpmeyers1@gmail.com](mailto:martinpmeyers1@gmail.com)

**Women's All Are Welcome Potluck**

Meetings: 3rd Friday each month, 6 pm in the Parish Hall

Contact: Denise Short at [deniseshort@gmail.com](mailto:deniseshort@gmail.com)

**Green Team**

Meetings: We meet for special program planning and for projects throughout the year. Watch for announcements in the eFUUSE.

Contact: Sylvia Foster at [sylviajfoster@gmail.com](mailto:sylviajfoster@gmail.com)

The Green Team seeks to strengthen our connections between spiritual practice and earth consciousness. We educate ourselves about our earth in peril and in challenges to ourselves to make lifestyle changes. We clean the Seabrook Beach monthly, (see beach cleanup contact), host a sustainable holiday shopping table, and build awareness on issues such as the need for solutions and alternatives to the use of plastic.

**Beach Clean Up**

When: The first Sunday of every month at 1:30 pm. Please meet at the beach end of Hooksett Street in Seabrook, NH. Parking is available at the last house on the right before the sand dunes.

Contact: Dan Hummel at [hummel.d@comcast.net](mailto:hummel.d@comcast.net) for more information.

## **Membership Committee**

Meetings: First Wednesday of the month, 1 pm in the Parsonage.

Contact: Karen Patnaude at [kpatnaude11@comcast.net](mailto:kpatnaude11@comcast.net)

This Committee is charged with welcoming newcomers, assisting with the transition from newcomer to member, and helping newcomers find ways to connect into the FUUSE community with the help of the office. We mentor newcomers, coordinate the *New to UU* and *Pathways to Membership* classes when needed to help orient newcomers to our church and our faith; hold gatherings once or twice a year and welcome new members at a New Member Service each spring.

## **Music Committee**

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, 6:00-7:00 pm presently on Zoom

Contact: Janice Tierney at [music@exeteruu.org](mailto:music@exeteruu.org)

This committee supports music at FUUSE by assisting the work of the Music Director and choir and keeps a pulse on the committee goals designed to create the best possible music elements for our church.

We want the music to be enjoyed by everyone who walks in the door and encourage them to want to return over and over.

The committee meets once a month for about an hour, helps the director recruiting new choir members, helps organize the choir calendar, assists with filing used music in the music library, helps locate and schedule guest musicians and makes budgetary suggestions for music needs.

We strive to:

- have a wide variety of music, vocalists and musicians in our services, integrating the many talents of our congregation
- educate ourselves continuously about all that is involved in creating a dynamic music program
- connect with other committees at FUUSE and be aware of our shared goals and projects

## **Office Volunteer**

Contact: Office Administrator Kemetia Foley at [office@exeteruu.org](mailto:office@exeteruu.org)

FUUSE is always looking for individuals willing to answer phones, make copies, and complete other office tasks that advance the overall functioning of the Society. Volunteering is a productive and enjoyable way to connect you with FUUSE staff and other FUUSE members.

## **Outreach Committee**

Meetings: First Monday morning of every month during the church year at 9:30 a.m.

Contact: Gail Nostrom at [gnostrom@msn.com](mailto:gnostrom@msn.com) or 603-205-0904

Interested in supporting local good works through service, spirit, and financial generosity? This committee researches and selects local non-profits to be beneficiaries of our monthly Give-It-Away offering (usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday service). Beneficiaries have included Seacoast Family Promise and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Exeter Food Pantry, Gift of Warmth, and more.

This Committee also does the following:

- Organizes annual Thanksgiving Baskets for SAU 16
- Solicits and delivers Senior Santa gifts for Rockingham Meals on Wheels
- Collects food for End 68 Hours of Hunger
- Coordinates FUUSE volunteers to support the Seacoast Family Promise program for homeless families

Whether you can commit one hour or several, *we welcome all levels of involvement.*

## **Property Committee Volunteers**

Contact: Steve Kenney at [sckenney2@comcast.net](mailto:sckenney2@comcast.net)

The Property Committee's charge is to maintain and improve all FUUSE facilities. We welcome your help with everything from raking leaves, snow shoveling, painting, and repairs. *All levels of participation gladly accepted.*

A subcommittee to help tend the gardens with weeding and transplanting is also welcome.

Contact: Gwen Kenney at [sgkenney2@gmail.com](mailto:sgkenney2@gmail.com).

## **Aesthetics Committee** *(a subgroup of the Properties Committee)*

Meetings: As issues arise a group meets and/or deals with projects.

Contact: Karen Patnaude at [kpatnaude11@comcast.net](mailto:kpatnaude11@comcast.net)

Interested in interior design and DIY projects? This groups' goal is to make our facility as welcoming and optimally functional as possible. Recent activities have included selecting paint colors, assisting with interior painting, and decreasing noise levels in the community room by researching, purchasing, and installing decorative acoustic panels.

## **Religious Education Committee**

Meetings: First Monday, 8 pm on Zoom

Contact: Rebecca Figueroa, Religious Education Director: [dre@exeteruu.org](mailto:dre@exeteruu.org)

The RE Committee works in collaboration with the Religious Education Coordinators, to plan and help provide programming for children, youth, and families. They are a vibrant source of creativity, thoughtfulness and connectedness!



### **Religious Education Volunteer**

Contact: Rebecca Figueroa, Religious Education Director: [dre@exeteruu.org](mailto:dre@exeteruu.org)

The success of our religious education program depends on the participation of parents and other FUUSE congregants who volunteer to teach, lead, and inspire our children. Volunteering is a wonderful way to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and to get to know other adults, as well as the children of FUUSE.

### **Social Justice Action Committee**

Meetings: The first Saturday of every month in the Parsonage, from 8:30 am to 10 am—with additional meetings as needed.

Contact: Bob Moore at [bmoore628@comcast.net](mailto:bmoore628@comcast.net)

The Social Justice Action Committee works to foster practices that advance a community of inclusion, equity and diversity. We work for the stewardship of the earth and for the right to feel welcome. We work to address injustices regarding gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, national origin, economic status, climate, and faith.

### **Sunday Welcoming Circles**

Contact: Karen Patnaude at [kpatnaude11@comcast.net](mailto:kpatnaude11@comcast.net)

FUUSE's Welcome Circle is a low-commitment way to help make Sunday services happen smoothly.

Become an usher or greeter, or help prepare coffee and set up/break down coffee hour items. The involvement includes a handout and on-the-job training. Volunteering is presently every 6-7 weeks but scheduling is flexible with your availability. This is a great way to get to know people in a small team setting and connect more with the congregation.

### **Worship Committee**

Meetings: 3rd Monday of the month at 4:30 pm

Contact: Rev. Ariel at [minister@exeteruu.org](mailto:minister@exeteruu.org)

The Worship Committee is made up of Worship Associates who work with the Minister to ensure that all Sunday morning worship services serve the spiritual needs of the congregation and run smoothly on a practical level. Volunteers who want to help lead and coordinate services are welcome to join throughout the year.

## GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES

While the following governance committees are volunteers, these are elected and appointed positions. Usually, members have been active at FUUSE for a few years before joining these committees.

### **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees oversees the activities and performance of the Minister and of the committees responsible for personnel administration. It is responsible for the Society's legal affairs, as well as for managing its property and financial resources, including the annual operating budget and investment funds. Meetings are open and held the second Thursday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Parsonage.

### **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee provides financial advice and assistance to the Board of Trustees, while ensuring that all aspects of fiscal execution are in compliance with FUUSE policy and support the FUUSE mission.

### **Nomination Committee**

This Committee is responsible for developing a slate of trustees and standing committee chairs- people and members to be nominated and voted upon at the annual meeting in May/June.

### **Personnel Committee**

This committee oversees the employment of the church staff, excepting the Minister, including advertising for positions, maintaining job descriptions, initiating staff evaluations, and negotiating terms and agreements relating to compensation, benefits, and employment status.

### **Program Council**

The Program Council brings together representatives from *each* of FUUSE's program-related committees, the Minister, and a Board representative to coordinate programs and events that further the mission of FUUSE. Presently meets on the second Tuesday of the month, on Zoom. Contact: Janis Tierney at [janistierney@gmail.com](mailto:janistierney@gmail.com) if you have an idea that you would like discussed with the committees.

### **Property Committee**

The Property Committees' charge is to maintain and improve all FUUSE facilities.

### **Stewardship Committee**

Committed to the financial strength and viability of FUUSE now and into the future, this committee raises funds for FUUSE's annual fund, special fund-raising events, capital campaign, and endowment.

## Online Church Management System, Membership Database, and Calendar

[Elvanto](#) is a church management system. It has many possible functions, but we use it primarily for the member directory and to track giving. When you fill out a blue card, you get added to Elvanto as a “New Person.” If you remain involved with FUUSE, you become a “Friend” or a “Member.” Please familiarize yourself with Elvanto in order to be able to look up other members and friends in the directory. Elvanto also includes the calendar you can use to reserve space for FUUSE events. If you have questions, please contact [office@exeteruu.org](mailto:office@exeteruu.org).

Logging In for the First Time: [https://fuuse.elvanto.net/posts/logging\\_in/](https://fuuse.elvanto.net/posts/logging_in/)

### Our Staff

- Rev. Ariel Aaronson-Eves, *Minister, Ministry and Programs* <[minister@exeteruu.org](mailto:minister@exeteruu.org)>
- Jimmy Dority, *Music and Programs Director* <[music.director@exeteruu.org](mailto:music.director@exeteruu.org)>
- Rebecca Figueroa Winter, *Religious Education Director, RE Programs*, <[dre@exeteruu.org](mailto:dre@exeteruu.org)>
- Kemetia Foley, *Office Administrator, Administration and Operations* <[office@exeteruu.org](mailto:office@exeteruu.org)>
- John Budzyna, *Bookkeeper* <[bookkeeper@exeteruu.org](mailto:bookkeeper@exeteruu.org)>

## **Benefits and Responsibilities of Membership**

Members of FUUSE consider it their “spiritual home”. Members enjoy the benefits of this home and carry the responsibilities for maintaining it.

### **Benefits:**

Our worship services bring us together as a loving community, uplifting our spirits and touching our hearts. They foster our spiritual growth, and challenge us to live our lives according to Unitarian Universalist values. While the Minister leads most of the services, we also enjoy guest preachers and lay led services. In weekly worship, members have opportunities to play many key roles.

We have a unique, interactive children’s religious education program that kids like to attend. Through storytelling, role playing, skits and hands-on creative arts, kids learn about other traditions as well as our own, and are encouraged to develop their own personal spiritual path following UU values. Members can help participate in this religious education, under the guidance of the Director of Religious Education. (DRE)

At times there are also opportunities for Adult Religious Education and participation in small group ministries, both of which depend upon the leadership of FUUSE members.

FUUSE has a strong tradition in social action, and in being a catalyst for progressive change in the Exeter area. We have a generous outreach program, through which members support local organizations and individuals in need with gifts of time, money, and resources. We also have an active social justice program, with many opportunities to volunteer and get involved, especially in projects that relate to the environment.

Group and individual social opportunities abound. We encourage potlucks, circle dinners, educational offerings and musical evenings. New friendships are quickly made at FUUSE.

### **Responsibilities:**

Members are expected to participate in Sunday worship and church activities. This is critical to keeping our spiritual community strong.

Members are expected to support FUUSE financially. FUUSE is totally self-supporting. While no specific amounts are prescribed, all members are expected to make a pledge for each fiscal year, from July to June. The members’ pledges form the basis for all budgets and financial plans of the church.

Members are encouraged to participate in the democratic governance of the church. This includes attending and voting at the annual meeting (where the budget is approved). We encourage participation in various Committees, Task Forces and small groups where the work of the church is performed.

Members define the vision and the mission of the church, within the broader principles of Unitarian Universalism.

## Becoming a Member

Get to know us by attending worship services, coffee hours, potlucks, circle dinners, newcomer tea, classes and other events. If you have children who are interested in attending, check out our Religious Education programs. Introduce yourself to our minister, Rev. Ariel. Fill in a blue card to let us know your interests and sign up for our weekly communication. Stop by our welcome table with any questions.

After attending for a short while if you are interested in joining, please let our Minister or the chair of the Membership Committee know.

### Steps for becoming a member

*Pathways to Membership:* Try to attend our *Pathways to Membership* class, held in the winter, to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and FUUSE, as well as to build connections with other newcomers.

*Meet with the Minister:* Reach out to Rev. Ariel ([minister@exeteruu.org](mailto:minister@exeteruu.org)) to schedule a meeting. This will be an opportunity for them to learn more about you and what draws you to FUUSE, as well as to help connect you with various programs and opportunities in the congregation.

*New Member Application.* Once completed, this will be sent to the office administrator or minister and ensures we have your complete and up-to-date contact information. When you become a signed member, you will be entered into our registry as a member instead of a friend, and you will be eligible for the semiannual UUA magazine, *UU World*.

*Pledging Commitment:* We ask you to estimate the financial support you expect to give the church. Our pledging period occurs in March for the following fiscal year. The congregation adopts a budget in May/June for the new fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) based on expected income, determined by member pledges. We can help you get connected with our Stewardship Committee.

*Religious Education:* If your children have already been attending Sunday morning programming or youth groups, you may have already enrolled them in the program.

Once you have completed the necessary requirements, you will be invited to sign the membership book and attend the next New Member Welcoming Ceremony, held one or two times a year. New members will be introduced to the congregation during the service.

Join in. Continue to come to services on Sundays and other events throughout the year. Find the areas of our ministry that appeal to you, both as a participant and as a volunteer. Come to congregational meetings to participate in our governance so you can vote and help guide FUUSE. Thank you for being here.