



The H E E D

May 2026

Newsletter of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

One of Our Sunday Announcements

The Active Retirement Association Presents Special Guest Jake Sullivan discussing **“A New World Disorder”** Thursday, April 30, 2026 from 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM in the Oyster River High School Auditorium, 55 Coe Drive, Durham, NH

Jake Sullivan, former US National Security Advisor in the Biden administration, has held a significant number of high-level national service positions under Presidents Barack Obama and Joe Biden and served as an advisor on a wide range of national and international boards. In addition to his political career, Sullivan has also taught at UNH, Dartmouth, and Yale.

ARA's Memorial Fund was established in 2004 with a grant from the Robert E. Smith family and is further endowed by membership donations.



Jake Sullivan, UNH courtesy photo

Join Our Services at 10:00 AM Sundays

(and stay afterward for coffee/tea, snacks, & conversation)

May 4 - “When I breathe in, I breathe in Peace” - Betty Crepeau, long-standing member of the Fellowship. This Sunday will focus on a meditation using the hymn “When I breathe in, I breathe in Peace” as an anchor throughout the meditation. We will sing this hymn to mark the five stages of the metta bhavana or loving kindness meditation. Through the inspiring and hope-filled message of this hymn and the stillness of the meditation. We hope we will develop a greater sense of peace during these troubled times.

May 10 - Dan Bricker will speak on issues that are unique to military veterans.

Dan grew up on a dairy farm in Indiana, joined the US Marines and after spending time in the Infantry was selected to join a Scout sniper team. After leaving the Marines he became a police officer in the State of Washington where he worked many duties to include the gang and drug unit as well as SWAT. After 9-11 he left police work and became a bodyguard for the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in Kosovo and then transferred to the US State Department where he was a bodyguard for dignitaries in Afghanistan. He returned to the US in 2006 and became a Lieutenant at the New Hampshire Police Academy. Dan left the academy, went through a lineman apprenticeship program, and became a journeyman lineman building power lines in the Northeast. He finally did what he had always wanted to do and went to graduate school at UNH and received his master's in social work and has held many roles at the VA to include providing therapy, justice outreach, and now homeless outreach.

May 17 - Matt Meyer, noted hand drummer, will lead us in uplifting music, for this last service of the season.

Matt is a sought-after speaker wherever Unitarian Universalists gather to deepen their worship and explore their faith. He has led worship for convocations at several

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seminaries and has been a worship leader and workshop presenter for national gatherings of LREDA, UUMN, UUMA and the last 12 General Assemblies of the UUA. Matt has been blessed to have performed with Ysaye Barnwell (of Sweet Honey in the Rock), Pete Seeger, Emma’s Revolution, Peter Mayer, Jim Scott, Nick Page, The Halalisa Singers, Samba Tremeterra, and Bloco de Afrobrazil. He has a degree in hand drumming from Berklee College of Music and has studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America.

Save the Date

May 28, Thursday, 6:00 pm. Please come to the **Annual Business Meeting.**

Members are strongly encouraged to attend.

Avalyn Reed Trio

presenting

“Notes from America”



Nancy Fiske, Maria Isaak Christine Fell

MAY 31, 4:00, Sunday
SELT headquarters, Rt. 125
Burley Farms, Epping

August 5, 7PM, Wednesday
PEA Summer Library Series
PEA Library, Elm St., Exeter

Avalyn Reed Trio will be celebrating 250 years of democracy and diversity through music featuring music from the early New England tradition of William Billings and “Simple Gifts” to zany Peter Schikele. Other New Hampshire highlights include Amy Beach and Edward MacDowell (of the NH MacDowell Colony of Peterborough). Stephen Foster, George Gershwin and John Philipp Sousa will also make appearances.



Dawn Meredith

Dawn and Larry at a recent Fellowship Service

Larry Vogelman



Year End Reports - DUUF Board, Committees, and Councils

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

We're ending this year with 52 members-about 35 of whom have been at least partially active participants with DUUF in the past year. We also have about 42 Friends of DUUF.

We have had three new members this year. The membership committee and the Board have been actively seeking ways to increase visitors, members and participants in our Fellowship. We ask: How do people find out about us and what leads them to visit us? Why do visitors come back? What leads them to become members?

The HEED is sent to all members and friends. Our sign in front of the Fellowship is on display for drivers and students to catch at least a glimpse of what might be important to those who claim this religion. Word of mouth and church-associated activities and presentations also let others know about us. Childcare and religious education are especially important to those with children and efforts this congregation has made in these areas have led to an atmosphere of DUUF being a child-friendly place.

The feeling visitors get when they attend one of our services is a decisive factor in deciding whether to keep attending and pursuing involvement with DUUF. Sincere efforts of individuals in our congregation which welcome and involve visitors has been consistent and one of our strengths that is visible every Sunday.

We welcome any feedback and ideas regarding membership and related issues. Please feel free to speak with the membership committee (Tom Reichheld, Rachel Legard and Mary Downes) or any board members about thoughts you have.

Tom Reichheld, Chair

SOCIALS COMMITTEE

Socials sponsored several potluck dinners, a very successful circle dinner/lunch, a hilarious Easter egg roll, and the annual Fellowship picnic.

We support DUUF green sanctuary initiatives by composting after snack on Sundays.

Every week, following the service, the Socials Committee supplies coffee, tea, and snacks with the help of Jon Babon, Carol Bullivant, Christopher Dunning, Sue Noon and Tom Reichheld, who make coffee. Many thanks to them and to our members for supplying tasty treats every Sunday.

End of Year Picnic

You are warmly invited to our end of year DUUF picnic. Join us on May 24 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM (rain or shine) at Maria and Nick Isaak's home for a relaxed and festive gathering. Their address is 35 Oyster River Road in Durham. Please bring something to grill, a dish to share, or beverage to contribute. We look forward to celebrating the end of a wonderful year together.

Carol Bullivant, Socials Committee chair

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PROGRAM COMMITTEE

This year's Program Committee consisted of Betty Crepeau, Larry Vogelman, Mary Downes and Dawn Meredith

Building on the success of last year, the Program Committee continued with a variety of formats and topics. We had speakers who presented on social justice issues including the stories of immigrants and refugees, climate change hope, sustainability after death, the justice efforts of the NH ACLU, indigenous world views, the challenges of being trans (and importance of being an ally), protesting the war in the Middle East, human trafficking, and veteran's concerns.

There were moving personal reflections on surviving and thriving in difficult circumstances, and opportunities to think about and plan for our own death. Some programs had more of a focus on music, poetry, or meditation: sound bath, gratitude, stillness, hope and community through song, welcoming everything, rebirth and renewal. There were also programs to satisfy our curiosity: is UUism a faith? what legal questions do members have? what are the implications of artificial intelligence? and what can mushrooms teach us?

We always appreciate input from other members of the Fellowship. If you have ideas for speakers, please email them to dawn.meredith@comcast.net. It is especially helpful if you have contact information and a sentence or two about why you are recommending a specific presenter or subject. We also welcome other members of the Fellowship to present or collaborate on a topic of interest to them. For example, we were delighted to have Dylan Babon, a young member of our Fellowship, present their own experiences, and those of their friends, on "Personalizing Gender".

The Program Committee continues to be very appreciative of all that Maria Isaak does to weave music into our services. This has included leading us in African song, featuring the Solstice Singers on several occasions, bringing in guest musicians (Fiske'n Fell, Peggo Horstman Hodes, Erin Dubois, and Chip's family), regaling us with her own virtuoso oboe and piano playing, providing opportunities for other DUUF musicians (Bob, Chip, Zoë), celebrating members' birthdays with a song, and always saying kind things about our singing abilities.

Technical support from Thomas Babon was critical to so many sessions, and his calm demeanor in helping committee members set up, troubleshoot and break down audio and video equipment was a huge help. Finally, we want to give thanks to Rachel Legard for integrating Moments for Young People into our programs, ensuring that our youngest congregants know that they are important members of our community.

Betty Crepeau will step down at the end of this year from the Program Committee, though she will continue to lead some programs next year. Betty has served on the committee for many years (including COVID years when we were on Zoom). A huge thanks to Betty for all the work she has done in this role.

Dawn Meredith, chair

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HOUSE COMMITTEE

Last summer, after extended negotiations with the town of Durham, we finally got our stone wall built alongside Madbury road. It surpassed our expectations, due mostly to the fine stone mason contractor who built it.

Next up was removing all of the invasive growth in the front and side yards of our building. This was a big job fulfilled by one of our own, Elodie Mitchell, who has gone on to create her own landscape business.

Our upstairs office rental situation is going very well and a difficult ceiling repair was completed by another contractor who is connected to the fellowship. Our new downstairs office tenant is also working out well. Maria has been dealing with the increased house rentals. These important income sources are vital to our bottom line.

We also tackled a big job this past year, so big it is still ongoing. We're attempting to resurrect the fellowship office from the storage closet that it had morphed into.

Sarge Legard, House Chair

PRESIDENT

Another Great Year

As we wrap up this Fellowship year, there are a few things that stand out to me about this fabulous community.

People jump in to help with many things- and some people even have committed to two huge jobs! (Maria- music and rentals, Dawn- program and social action, Sarge- house and nominations, Mary- program and vice president) When there are potlucks or even just coffee hour, you can watch folks looking around for what they can offer to help with, then proceed to washing or putting away dishes, sweeping and folding tables. This is heartwarming!

The all-important **Annual Business meeting is scheduled for May 28**, a Thursday evening. Please plan to come. Questions about budget are addressed and elections are held. There are still some open positions for council chairs and committee members. Please talk to Sarge if you would like to consider volunteering.

Keep an eye out for happenings over the summer. In the past we have participated in a Durham Day activity where many organizations and vendors set up booths. Face painting and coloring activities were a big draw for families. We still need young families to join for the future sustainability of DUUF.

Another thing that stands out to me is what attracts people to DUUF and engages people enough to do the hard work of being a lay-led fellowship. It appears much of it is the camaraderie of doing this work together. I think many people are drawn to a place where you are not told how or what to believe, rather, diversity of thought is valued. We are also attracted to a place where stated values include caring for all humans and the planet we all live on.

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I am grateful to all of our members and friends for being part of this special place and reminding me every week of what I value.

Rachel Legard, President

DARLA (Dover Area Religious Leaders Association)

Chris Chance attended the Dover Area Religious Leaders Association (DARLA) committee meeting in April and below is summary of relevant updates:

Next year's special events will include location reconfirmation for the special MLK service at the Madbury Town Hall, where the Maranatha Indonesian congregation generously helped provide music and set up for a beautiful and well attended event this past January. Reverend Dana Mann's First Parish of Dover church will host a winter service exploring finding light within darkness. Stay tuned for details on the Thanksgiving Service, where all area choirs are invited to participate.

The committee also talked about our community's anger, sorrow, and collective sense of moral injury in response to the continuing and multiplying violent escalations instigated by the federal leadership. DARLA will be sending a letter to the local paper articulating the fact that at its core every major world religion advises nonviolence, and recognition of some version of the "golden rule" as an essential ethical guide. (Covered very clearly in the UU centering of Love, and ethics about plurality, radical welcoming, inherent worth and dignity of all, promotion of nonviolent search for meaning, and interconnectedness of all beings and the earth). They are trying to keep the example of peaceful dialogue across differences going, especially through these times when we understand the sense of being overwhelmed and the temptation to look away. It is the committee's observation that concerns about the current level of violence and dishonesty transcend political party lines, and are of deep spiritual concern to all compassionate people. Keep an eye out for final DARLA statement in the Fosters Daily Democrat!

Please see the Dover Area Religious Leaders Association FaceBook page for announcements of other events, including various contra dances and open mic opportunities popping up around Lee and Dover.

Chris Chance, DARLA Representative

Oyster River Folk Concerts
Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Saturdays 7:00pm – 20 Madbury Rd.



Cosy Sheridan
May 2nd, 2026

Cosy Sheridan has been called one of the era's finest and most thoughtful songwriters. Backed by the strong rhythms and harmonies of her bass player, Charlie Kosh, she plays a percussive bluesy style of guitar. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, The Cowgirl Hall of Fame, and on the Jerry Lewis Telethon.



The Six Sources Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
6. Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.



Unitarian Universalism is a living tradition that has changed in many ways from the original Christian roots of its Universalist and Unitarian heritages, and it continues to evolve today. Most recently, this evolution has taken the form of adopting new language to describe who we are as UUs. At General Assembly in June 2024, UUs voted to replace the existing Seven Principles and Six Sources language in our

bylaws with language describing Unitarian Universalism through these shared values:

Interdependence: We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.

Pluralism: We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.

Justice: We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.

Transformation: We adapt to the changing world.

Generosity: We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.

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

The Seven Principles

Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote seven Principles which we hold as strong values and moral guides. We live out these Principles within a “living tradition” of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from sources as diverse as science, poetry, scripture, and personal experience.

As Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove explains, “The Principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in Unitarian Universalist religious communities.”

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual

growth in our congregations;

4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The seven Principles and [Six Sources](#) of the Unitarian Universalist Association grew out of the grassroots of our communities, were affirmed democratically, and are part of who we are.



DUUF Officers, Chairpersons and Council Coordinators, and Members of Committees and Councils for 2025-2026 - *Under 2023 amended by-laws*

BOARD OFFICERS

President: Rachel Legard
Vice President: Mary Downes
Treasurer: Jen Pavlik
Secretary: Nick Isaak

COMMITTEES

Program: Dawn Meredith (Chair), Betty Crepeau, Mary Downes, Larry Vogelmann
Religious Exploration: Bob Pavlik (Chair)
House and Grounds: Sarge Legard (Chair), Grounds: Jon Babon, Rentals: Maria Isaak
Socials: Carol Bullivant (Chair), Susan Noon, Tom Reichheld
Membership: Tom Reichheld, Caring Subcommittee: Chris Rodgers (Coordinator), Susan Bullivant, Dawn Meredith, Carol Bullivant,

COUNCILS

Nominations: Sarge Legard (Coordinator)
Music Council: Maria Isaak (Coordinator)
Green Sanctuary: Mike Fleming (Coordinator), Nick Isaak
Social Action: Dawn Meredith (Coordinator), Betty Crepeau
Communication & Outreach: Christopher Dunning (Web Administrator), Bob Bullivant (HEED Editor), Chip Noon (HEED Design & Layout) Samantha Yeaton (Social Media Administrator)
Denominational Affairs: Deb Johnson (Coordinator)
DARLA Representative: Chris Chance
Durham Housing Association Representative: Susan Noon, Secretary
Marketing ad hoc committee: Susan Noon, Chip Noon

Our Mission Statement

The real test of our religion is the way we live our lives. The Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship affirms the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism:

We seek to be a place in which each person's unique worth and beliefs are acknowledged and respected and where each person's voice may be heard – a place in which each may freely explore his or her own spiritual path. We join with others in reaching out to make the world more just, and commit ourselves to caring for the earth and all that makes up the web of life.

We strive to be a source of inspiration, a forum for intellectual exchange, a wellspring of comfort to those in need and a nurturing, supportive community for each other and our children.



Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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