

# Introduction to Congregational Life at UUFSB





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## Congregational Life at UUFSB

Welcome! There are many ways to enrich your life as a member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook (UUFSB), by taking advantage of opportunities for personal growth, advancing social justice, meeting new people, and utilizing your skills and talents in ways that are fulfilling to you and enhance the life of the Fellowship.

This guide will help introduce you to the various activities, classes, social events, and volunteering opportunities available to engage in UUFSB community life!

For more information, contact the office at 631-751-0297 or [office@uufsb.org](mailto:office@uufsb.org).

### Creating Sunday Services

Group	Description
<b>Worship Associates</b>	Work with the minister to produce and participate in consistently inspiring, moving, and intelligent Sunday morning services. Also work with lay leaders and identify summer services themes. The group meets monthly.
<b>Music</b>	<p><b>Music Committee</b> - Meets two-three times per year, mainly to schedule musicians for upcoming worship services. Individual musicians and groups of all genres are welcome to participate. Responsible parties work with the minister to select music appropriate for the service topic.</p> <p><b>Choir</b> - For senior high students through adults. Everyone invited -- experienced choristers or those who have never before sung in a choir. Rehearsals held on Wednesdays, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Choir sings at Sunday services about once a month.</p> <p><b>Folk Group</b> - For all folk music-loving singers and instrumentalists. We perform at Sunday services and rehearse at convenient times starting about three weeks before the scheduled service. If you sign up to be in the group, you'll be notified of upcoming folk group services and you can choose which fit into your schedule.</p> <p><b>Accompanists</b> - If you are a pianist, perhaps this is for you. Play hymns at Sunday morning services on a rotating basis.</p>
<b>Greeters</b>	Greet people as they enter the Fellowship for Sunday morning services. Hand members and guests an Order of Service and other materials and make newcomers feel welcome.
<b>Coffee Hosts</b>	Help provide coffee and treats for coffee hour after Sunday morning service (on a rotating basis). Also includes clean-up.
<b>Ushers</b>	Help set up the room for Sunday services, put hymnals on seats, usher newcomers to seats, make sure chairs are put away after service.
<b>Audio Visual / Tech Team</b>	Sets up and runs sound and video for live streaming of Sunday services, as well as sets up and controls in-house audio. Works with the Worship Associate as needed to create hymn slides for the livestream.

## Changing the World

Group	Description
<b>Social Justice</b>	<p>Supports and encourages our congregation to act for positive change at local, national, and global levels through service, education, witness and advocacy. Our faith requires that we act to heal our world by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● advocating non-violence and peace over war</li> <li>● sustaining and respecting the Earth</li> <li>● eliminating racism</li> <li>● working for universal human rights</li> <li>● promoting economic and social justice</li> <li>● reaching out to others in times of crisis.</li> </ul>
<b>Racial Concerns</b>	<p>Provides the congregation with information and opportunities to identify and eradicate institutional and personal expressions of racism. It also encourages a view that celebrates African American history including its cultural richness as well as the diversity within the larger American population.</p>
<b>Hobbs Farm</b>	<p>Property of the Setauket Bethel AME Church, its restoration as a community farm and education center is a joint venture. This project helped UUFSB earn our “green sanctuary” status. Volunteers are always welcome.</p>

## Caring for Each Other

Group	Description
<b>Pastoral Care Ministry</b>	<p>A group of caring lay people who are invited by the minister to assist with outreach to UUFSB members who are experiencing a time of special need. Pastoral Assistants provide practical assistance, social connection, and emotional support during times of crisis or difficult periods of transition. They are also there to share in the celebration of joyous life events.</p>
<b>Helping Hands</b>	<p>Coordinates assistance from Fellowship volunteers to meet temporary, short-term needs of members and friends, such as: rides to/from appointments; rides to/from service; temporary help with meals; light one-time assistance with chores; light one-time errands, e.g., groceries.</p>
<b>Shawl Ministry</b>	<p>Meets monthly to knit/crochet shawls, which are then presented by the group to someone who is celebrating a milestone in life, who is ill, or who has other special needs. The shawls symbolically and physically wrap the recipient with the love and warmth of those who made them.</p>

## Social Activities

Event	Description
<b>Goods &amp; Services Auction</b>	Yearly auction, offering many events designed to help people get to know each other (dinners, hikes, game nights, etc.), arts and treasures, trips, and services. Includes dinner, live bidding, silent auction, and raffle auction. Attend or help out.
<b>Grounds &amp; Sounds Café</b>	Monthly music café on the second Friday of each month. A night of musical entertainment, starting with an Open Mic at 8:00 p.m., followed by a main act. Enjoy a relaxing night out, or volunteer to help.
<b>Le Petit Salon de Musique</b>	Sunday afternoon classical music series, featuring diverse and talented artists, from vocalists to chamber groups to solo pianists and more. Takes place about every 6 weeks (except in summer).
<b>Passover Seder</b>	A wonderful Jewish tradition, celebrated in UU style. Family members are welcome. Attendees usually assist with food, preparation and/or cleanup.
<b>Fashion Swap</b>	Bring gently used clothes / accessories and take home whatever tickles your fancy. An interactive and often amusing presentation is offered at each swap on some aspect of fashion. Small entry fee supports the Fellowship. Held annually.
<b>Women's Potluck Dinner</b>	Meet, greet, enjoy conversation, and eat a delicious potluck dinner provided by each other.
<b>Family Fun Night</b>	Intergenerational night out featuring varying family-oriented activities, such as board games, bingo, dance classes, etc.

## Meditative & Wellness Arts

Group	Description
<b>Labyrinth</b>	Afternoon guided walks are held weekly on the Fellowship's 32-foot indoor labyrinth, permanently inlaid in the sanctuary floor. Candlelit evening walks are offered once a month. We also have an outdoor labyrinth for walking when weather permits.
<b>Tai Chi</b>	Beginner, intermediate and advanced classes of varying styles are offered several days a week, 12 classes per semester.
<b>Kripalu Yoga</b>	"Kripalu" means compassion. "Yoga" means union. Our goal is to bring union to body and soul through postures that are stable, steady, strengthening and healing. Our entire yoga practice is "meditation in motion."
<b>Buddhist Sangha (Meditation)</b>	Meditation in the tradition of Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. Buddhism, like Unitarian Universalism, holds the interconnectedness, or Interbeing, of all life to be paramount. Buddhism complements Unitarian Universalism, and vice versa. The Sangha meets in person and online at 9:00 a.m. on Saturdays. Weekday meditations offered on Zoom only from 7:30-8:00 a.m. All are welcome.

<b>Essentrics®</b>	Stretch and fitness program that works through joints and muscles for strengthening and pain relief. Several different classes offered weekly; 12 classes per semester.
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## Lifelong Learning

Program	Description
<b>Leadership Development</b>	Provides opportunities for attending various workshops for those interested in growing and leading teams and events within the congregation as well as in other areas of one's life. Recognizes the work of current leaders.
<b>Small Group Ministry (Sharing Circles)</b>	Sharing Circles are led by a trained facilitator and provide opportunities for participants to reach out to one another in caring support while exploring themes central to our UU principles.
<b>Book Discussion Group</b>	Meets the First Friday of the month. Book selections are posted in advance in the UUFSB newsletter and newsfeeds and on the uufsb.org website.

## Working with Children and Youth

Please contact the Director of Religious Education ([DRE@UUFSB.org](mailto:DRE@UUFSB.org)) for further information regarding the programs below.

Program	Description
<b>Religious Education</b>	Offers programs from Kindergarten through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade. Provides a connection to UU tradition and encourages development of friendships and a social network among the children and youth. Children learn about the customs of various world religions and are given the opportunity to explore and develop their own religious beliefs.
<b>Coming of Age Program</b>	Prepares youth ages 13-14 for transition into young adulthood. Through a series of projects and weekend classes with trained leaders and a personal mentor, youth develop their own religious philosophy, better understand Unitarian Universalism, develop friendships with other UU youth, and discuss issues important to them.
<b>Our Whole Lives (OWL) Program</b>	A comprehensive UU sexuality education program designed for use in religious communities. The program offers two different age-appropriate lessons for grades 7-9 and 10-12. Led by specially trained adults, the program addresses the current needs of the youth and helps prepare them for healthy, meaningful relationships in the future. Contact the DRE if you are interested in this for your youth or to be an OWL leader.
<b>Youth Group</b>	Comprised of youth in grades 8-12 who gather every month for worship, fun, food, social action, and deepening relationships. It is an ongoing group that seeks to foster spiritual depth and to clarify individual and universal religious

	values. The youth are connected to the wider UU world through district CONs (conferences) and LIAC (the Long Island Area Council).
<b>UUConnect</b>	A Long Island wide group of UU families. Events are planned monthly throughout LI, including apple picking, pasta nights, picnics, and local trips. It is an excellent opportunity for our children and youth to meet other UUs.

## Maintaining Our Fellowship Home

Committee	Description
<b>Garden &amp; Landscape Team</b>	Cares for the gardens and sacred spaces on the land we tend. We meet when there are specific tasks to do, to educate ourselves about best gardening and stewardship practices, and organize semi-annual plant sales. No previous knowledge of gardening is required. We work to support each other to learn about gardening and build community by caring for the beauty and spiritual well-being of the Fellowship gardens.
<b>Facilities Committee</b>	Supports the upkeep of the building. Appropriate to the need, members of the committee do the work themselves, organize a volunteer effort by members of the congregation, or hire an outside professional.
<b>Kitchen Committee</b>	<b>Shoppers:</b> Check for needed supplies on a rotating basis (napkins, paper towels, etc.) and purchase them (with Fellowship money). <b>Cleaning Crew:</b> Participate in semi-annual cleanup of kitchen, esp. major appliances. <b>Launderers:</b> Take home dish towels and tablecloths, launder and return.
<b>Memorial Garden Committee</b>	Responsible for the design and maintenance of a memorial garden where markers remembering loved ones and/or ashes may be placed in a meditative setting on the grounds of the Fellowship.

## Running the Fellowship

Committee	Description
<b>Board of Trustees</b>	Three-year elected position accountable to the congregation. The Board has fiduciary responsibility and provides essential leadership in visioning and strategic planning for the future. Attend monthly meetings. Four officer roles: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary; also liaison roles to other committees.
<b>Ways &amp; Means Committee</b>	Determines appropriate uses for the building, rentals, and scheduling of rentals based on room availability.
<b>Committee on Ministries of the Congregation (COMC)</b>	Three-year elected position accountable to the congregation. The mission of the COMC is to ensure transparency of Fellowship operations, to provide feedback from the congregation by which the Fellowship's vision and mission statements are kept vital, and to strive to maintain harmony among all Fellowship members.

Committee	Description
<b>DRE Relations</b>	Serves as a support mechanism for the Director of Religious Education (DRE) and as a communication network between the DRE and the congregation. Consists of UUFSB members approved by the Board from names submitted by the DRE.
<b>Denominational Affairs</b>	Serves as a source of connection and transformation for our members and friends to a larger, more global vision of Unitarian Universalism.
<b>Personnel Support</b>	Serves to support the administrative staff of the UUFSB.
<b>Finance Committee</b>	Solicits budgets from committees, compiles them into a comprehensive budget, and works with the Board to set spending priorities for the year. Also monitors spending towards the annual budget during the year.
<b>Communications Committee</b>	Works on internal and external communications and marketing of the UUFSB and its programs. Includes preparing and distributing Fellowship’s newsletter, newsfeeds, and other publications; and maintaining its website and Facebook and Instagram pages. Works on marketing and public relations to reach out to the community and raise awareness of Fellowship events and fundraisers.
<b>Nominating Committee</b>	Nominates members for key positions within the UUFSB, such as Board members, finance committee, and other elected positions. As part of the Leadership Development Team, identifies members for leadership development and works to find programs / workshops geared toward developing their organizational and leadership skills.
<b>Annual Budget Drive Committee</b>	Plans and coordinates the annual budget drive. Includes planning the annual kickoff dinner, establishing a theme, and finding leaders to oversee all aspects of the drive: creating a brochure and invitation, entertainment, food, room setup and teardown, keeping track of pledges, etc.
<b>By-laws Review Committee</b>	Responsible for presenting a report at the Annual Meeting. Seeks input from the Fellowship for possible changes and updates to include in this report, which is then voted upon at the Annual Meeting.
<b>Safety Committee</b>	Works to create and maintain a safe and secure physical environment for all persons on the UUFSB property, including the development of Emergency Operations Plans and safety measures for the physical premises.
<b>Auditing Committee</b>	Members are elected by the congregation at the UUFSB Annual Meeting. The committee conducts an audit of the accounts kept by the Treasurer and certifies to the correctness of those accounts at the Annual Meeting.
<b>Endowment Committee</b>	Members are elected by the congregation at the UUFSB Annual Meeting. The committee is the custodian of the Endowment Fund, in accordance with their mission statement. The committee manages this fund and works to increase it in accordance with the committee policies and the laws of the State of New York.