

North Fork Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Jamesport, Long Island

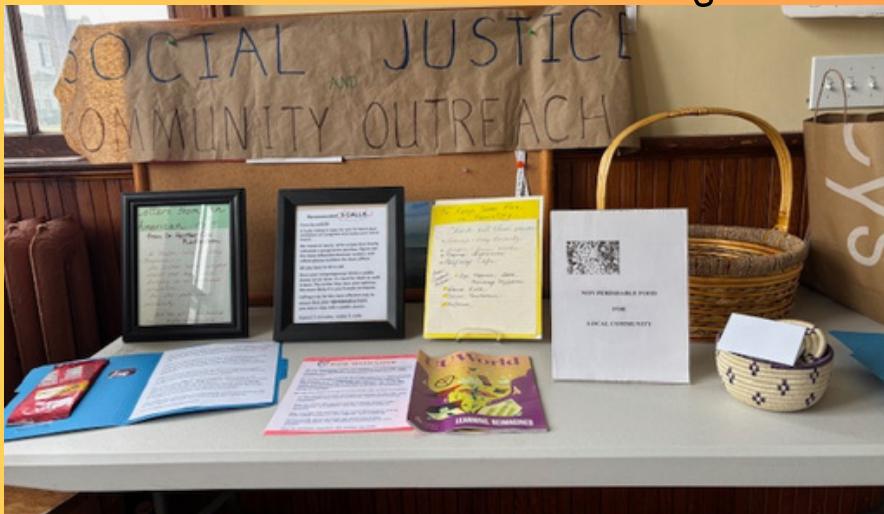
Newsletter

Late Winter, 2026



Love radically, serve gratefully, wonder daily.

Social Justice Table



A new addition to our hospitality hour is the display items and information pertaining to social justice matters that are at the core of Unitarian Universalism. The table was created by Mary Ellen Tomaszewski who wanted to share information with our congregation. The items include writer recommendations such as Heather Cox Richardson, Andy Borowitz as well as music recommendations to soothe our souls such as David Roth and Carrie Newcomer. Mary Ellen also spotlighted an app titled 5 Calls. This is a free app that will send you a newsletter that breaks down what your representatives are voting on and what you can do to influence them.

Reflections

From Rev. Ben

I am deeply disturbed about the state of our great country. Masked, unidentified officers fill some of our cities, most recently Minneapolis, arresting them often without a warrant, often throwing them to the ground, frequently causing physical injury, handcuffing them behind their backs, and taking them to undisclosed detention centers. Two workers at a Target store who were tackled and taken from their place of employment, despite being U.S. citizens. Another had her arm broken by ICE officials. Still another screamed that she needed to get to a hospital; instead, she was taken to a detention center, where she stayed until she lost consciousness. An elderly man, also a citizen, was arrested from his home in the middle of the night, taken in his underwear in 13 degree weather, not allowed to show his proof of citizenship which was still in his home. And of course, many of us watched in horror as an officer reached into an open car window and shot the unarmed Renee Nicole Good pointblank, taking her life. Ms. Good was the mother of three. “It feels like our community is under siege by our own federal government,” said State Representative Michael Howard, representing the district that includes the Target where the two workers were recently seized. As outrageous as the incidents I’ve mentioned above are, there is another that somehow particularly haunts me. In the small town of Willmar, Minnesota, ICE officials had lunch at a Mexican restaurant. Later the same officials arrested some of the restaurant workers who may have prepared the officials’ lunch.

That is vividly emblematic of a morally misguided attitude and policy toward immigrants (or alleged immigrants). After benefiting from their labor, those who provided the service were then punished as criminals.

Immigrants have contributed mightily to our society, economy, and culture. They are our neighbors and friends. As Pope Leo XIV and other religious leaders have pointed out, they are being horribly mistreated in this country. Meanwhile, many Americans, including children, are about to lose health care coverage. With SNAP benefits cut, many will go hungry. And now we have the preposterous suggestion that this country buy or invade Greenland. Informed by our religious values, I hope we stand firm on behalf of democracy, compassion, and human rights. I am proud of so many people in this country, offering public witness against the mass deportation and gross mistreatment of immigrants, and citizens mistaken for immigrants. The prophet Amos said it two and a half thousand years ago...Let justice roll up like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

SPECIAL EVENT

AUTHOR'S TALK AT THE MATTITUCK LAUREL LIBRARY

On March 7, 2:00, our very own Mary Ellen Tomaszewski will be the guest speaker talking about her latest book of essays, *Savoring Time*. Her writings are warm, thoughtful and hopeful. It will be a treat to hear her sharing her thoughts! She will be joined by her brother Michael who will provide musical interludes.

Gratitude Both Ways



Our congregation has always been grateful for the musical talents of Ted Haiman, who is recovering from an illness he suffered last Fall. We have missed seeing Ted and Diana, and Ted's piano playing that always set a wonderful tone for our services. We recently spoke with him to catch up on his health . He reports that recovery has been a slow process, but he feels that he has turned a corner and is feeling better. He told us that the experience has given him new awareness of what is important and that he has a strong feeling of gratitude. He sent us this wonderful thank you note:

To members of the UU Fellowship of Jamesport,

Thank you so much for your generous gift card. It has been my pleasure in serving as the pianist for the congregation. Your enthusiastic response to my playing was gratifying and encouraged me to achieve a level worthy of your response.

Thanks again for everything!

Ted

We want to extend our gratitude to Marguerite Volonts who has stepped into the breach to play piano and violin for our services. Marguerite, a member of our congregation, is a gifted and experienced musician who is the Director of the Jamesport Meeting House Chorus. A thank you also to Danielle Schulman and Liz Yenetchi who often grace us with their beautiful flute pieces. Their music continues to help make our services so moving.



OPEN ARMS FOOD BANK



We received this wonderful letter from the Open Arms Food Bank which is the food pantry that receives our Sunday donations. A special thank you to Elizabeth Daly who faithfully delivers the food items, usually on a lunch break from her job!



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December 31, 2025

North Fork Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Jamesport Meeting House
1590 Main Road
Jamesport, NY 11947

Dear Members,

This seems like a perfect time to thank you for your generous continuing support of Open Arms Emergency Food Pantry. Your donations have been very helpful as we welcome an increasing number of our neighbors who are struggling to feed themselves and their families.

With all the uncertainty these days regarding food stamp allocations and rising prices on almost all groceries, we now see many more visitors at Open Arms food pantry. This year has been our busiest ever, and your congregation's donations have always been very timely. A lot of our clients are making their first visit to a food pantry. Your contributions make a big difference and allow us to serve many more people. Each month now we are seeing 2,500 to 3,000 visitors who have come to depend on Open Arms pantry as a reliable resource when they need help.

Your donations continue to be a blessing to our clients and lift the spirits of our volunteers as well. We sincerely appreciate your partnership in the mission of preventing hunger in our community. We hope you and all your families enjoy the rest of the holiday season, and you have a very healthy and prosperous 2026!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Zona Stroy".

Zona Stroy
Executive Director

A MOMENT OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

BY REVEREND BEN

Anniversaries, anniversaries. This year, of course, is the 250 th anniversary of the United States of America. 2025 was also the 200 the anniversary of Unitarianism in this country. If there's one person more responsible in than anyone else for starting this religious movement in our country, it was William Ellery Channing. Prodigious scholar, compelling preacher, social activist, and abolitionist, Channing was born in 1780, and eventually served the Federal Street Church in Boston for 39 years. He grew up in a religious environment steeped in Calvinist theology, which held that a tyrannical God pre-determined who was saved and who condemned to a fiery eternity. No amount of good will or good works could change the grim fate of those who were damned. Channing came to feel that God was loving, and that human beings had the capacity for moral sense, for choosing ethical, rational, and compassionate courses of action. How absurd, he pointed out, that a wise, loving God would create human beings unable to aspire to and emulate God's wisdom and love.

To believe that human beings were utterly incapable of choosing goodness, Channing said in his famous 1819 Baltimore sermon, was an insult both to human beings and God. He also decried the orthodox church's contempt for human reason, a gift with which we are also inherently endowed. Though he was the first minister in this country to call himself a "Unitarian," he founded more than the American Unitarian Association – not that bureaucracies interested him whatsoever. He also started organizations promoting world peace, education for children and adults, assistance for the impoverished, and aid for the mentally ill. He encouraged the New England literary renaissance. And he supported the empowerment of women - including leaders like Dorothea Dix, Margaret Fuller, and Lydia Child. Not a household name, but William Ellery Channing, in his words, ideas, and actions blazed an inspired spiritual trail, namely American Unitarianism. 6

UU LEADERS CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN NON VIOLENT PUBLIC ACTIONS

According to UU Wayfinder, leaders from the UU community, together with members of other faiths, took part in peaceful public demonstrations, some of which resulted in arrests. On January 29, UU Association President Rev. Sofia Betancourt was taken into custody and released four hours later. Additional arrests of other UU leaders occurred on January 23 during an anti-ICE protest in Minneapolis. For updates, readers are encouraged to consult the UUA IN GOOD FAITH BLOG.

"As long as patterns of state violence against vulnerable and marginalized communities continue, UUs remain willing to put themselves in harm's way, in solidarity, to create a world where values of pluralism, love, and justice prevail."
Maryann Battle

BOOK CORNER

Buddha, Socrates and Us: Ethical Living in Uncertain Times by Stephen Batchelor.

This Buddhist teacher and best selling author explores how these two teachings can lead us to lives of integrity and justice.

Recommended by Ezra Klein on his podcast.

The Uncommon Reader by Alan Bennett.

A delightful book that made me think about the gift of literature while making me laugh out loud.

Recommended by Betsy Kaplan

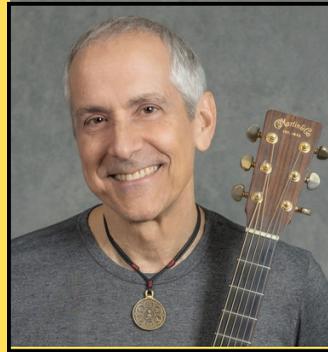
an evening with David Roth

Saturday

May 9th

7 PM

www.nfuuf.org



Jamesport Meeting House
1590 Main Road ~ Jamesport
\$20suggested/none returned away
Advance tickets through Venmo →
AND on the nfuuf.org website.



David's songs have found their way to Carnegie Hall, the United Nations, several Chicken Soup for the Soul books, the Kennedy Center, NASA's Space Shuttle "Atlantis", Peter, Paul, & Mary and Kingston Trio CDs, (and 15 of his own), the Rise Up Singing and Rise Again songbooks, and countless venues in this and other countries (and now other WORLDS) for more than three decades. Poignant to improbable, holistic to hilarious, the Chicago native (now living on Cape Cod) comes to Long Island's North Fork!

caring corner

If you wish to reach out to someone
with support, concern, or celebration,
email

Desiree Passantino at
desiree.passantino@gmail.com

NFUUF is an open-minded, open-hearted spiritual community. We are ever grateful for the guidance of our Reverend Ben Bortin. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month a 10:30 a.m. Jamesport Meeting House, 1590 Main Road, Jamesport, NY www.nfuuf.org
Editor Betsy Kaplan