



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP *of the Carolina Foothills*

Meeting 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month at the Whimsical World Gallery, 116 Jones St in Landrum, SC
Mailing Address: UUFCF, P. O. Box 653, Tryon, NC 28782

A Quiet January

Jan. 3 – The Wolf Moon (super moon)
Jan. 4 – Service at 10:30
Jan. 18 – Service at 10:30
Jan. 19 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



January 4, 2026 at 10:30 -- Rev. Ernie Mills

JANUARY IS FOR JANUS

The month of January gets its name from the Roman god, Janus. He is depicted with two faces looking in opposite directions. As we enter the new year, Janus is a good reminder of how important it is to reflect on where we have been and where we are going- both as individuals and as a nation. We'll see how vital reflection is to living a good life in 2026.



January 18, 2026 at 10:30 – Rev. Ernie Mills

The P'u (*pronounced “Pooh”*) of Taoism

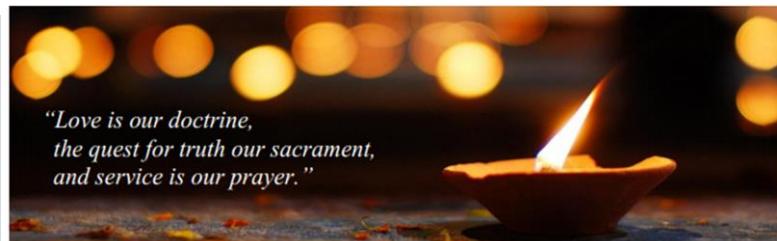
In Taoism “P'u” refers to the un-carved block, or what we might call the *state of Innocence*, before the sculpture's chisel is applied. It is the natural state of what is believed by Taoist to be pure. We, in the West, often refer to P'u as being the child in us, much like the character Pooh, in the book, Winnie-the-Pooh. We will explore this concept and perhaps discover – or rediscover – it in our own lives.



A.A. Milne's Winnie the Pooh turns 100 in 2026

2023 UUFCF Board Members

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Vice Chair: Don Greeson – 828-290-3627
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Collective Wisdom? Let's hope so.

-- Don Greeson

In our UUFCF Men's Group meetings, one recurring topic of discussion (though we try to limit it) is the stunning amount of corruption in the White House, but another is the subject of Artificial Intelligence. We wonder aloud if AI is a blessing or a curse, and if it really captures human values. I admit I have paid little attention to the phenomenon, and only recently realized that Google routinely responds to a general search topic with an AI summary. After Trump's disgusting post about Rob Reiner's murder, I typed in "decency in politics" to see what the AI response would be. To my surprise, the text sounded as if a UU wrote it. Of course, the summary describes "decency in politics" without advocating it, but it nonetheless outlines principles that mirror many of our own, and that seems promising. Here's the AI text:



"Decency in politics refers to upholding fundamental moral conduct—like respect, honesty, empathy, and dignity—in public life, even amidst deep disagreements, acting as a bedrock for democracy, though it's often challenged by tribalism, polarization, and the pursuit of power, with debates existing over whether it's a baseline requirement or something requiring higher, activist aims to achieve true justice. It's about prioritizing human dignity, rejecting cruelty, and maintaining civility, even when disagreeing, a concept famously highlighted by figures like Theodore Roosevelt ("the politics of decency") and Joseph Welch's "Have you no sense of decency?" question to McCarthy."

The AI summary then goes on to list "*Core Aspects of Political Decency*"

Respect & Dignity:

Valuing each person's worth, ensuring they are seen, heard, and treated with respect, regardless of differences.

Honesty & Integrity:

Acting truthfully and upholding moral standards, contrasting with lies or manipulative tactics.

Empathy & Compassion:

Showing care for others and rejecting cruelty, even in partisan conflict.

Civility:

Speaking and acting in ways that avoid inciting anger or violence, allowing for productive dialogue.

Responsibility:

Acting for the collective well-being, not just self-interest or partisan gain.

The article, which of course distills countless online resources, continues with what it calls "Challenges and Debates," listing Polarization, Activism and Identity Politics as obstacles to achieving political decency, but ends with a final section titled, "Why It Matters." Three key points are listed: [Decency in Politics] Strengthens Democracy, Enables Progress, and Upholds Humanity. It's comforting to know that the collective wisdom summarized by AI reflects the ideals we as UUs embrace.



Men's Discussion Group

The first meeting of 2026 will be on Tuesday, January 13 at 11:00 in the Polk County Library, 1289 W. Mills St. in Columbus



Women's Discussion Group

will meet at the Landrum Library, 111 Asbury Drive on Wednesday, January 14 at 2:00.