



# Newsletter



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the  
South Jersey Shore

Volume 11, Issue 11

November 2009

## November Services

We meet at our UU Center, Pomona Rd and Liebig Street, Galloway NJ (near the north entrance to Richard Stockton College).  
Services are at 10:00 am unless otherwise noted.

<p><b>November 1</b></p>	<p><b>Don't Just Do Something, Sit There</b> <i>Lay speaker Jim Woodcock</i> There is no doubt that our spiritual practice, whatever form it may take, can help us deal with life's problems, including our own perceived shortcomings. Spiritual teachers and texts can offer good advice to help us cope better and overcome self-defeating habits. But there seems to be a trend towards believing that psychological growth and spiritual growth are the same things, a trend which the psychiatrist Gerald May has called "dangerous." This talk will try to explain how an over-emphasis on self-improvement might actually be an obstacle to both our spiritual practice and our psychological well-being.</p>
<p><b>November 8</b> Volunteer Sunday</p>	<p><b>Home? Beloved Community?</b> <i>Guest Speaker Kathy Ellis, Ministerial Intern</i> What makes a religious congregation home? What kind of "home maintenance" is needed? How can our religious home be hospitable? How do we work toward becoming a beloved community? And what does beloved community mean anyway?</p>
<p><b>November 15</b></p>	<p><b>Unitarianism and Universalism: The Roots</b> <i>Lay speaker Mariann Maene</i> Our series on UU history will begin with the dawn of Christianity and continue through the period just before John Murray sets sail for Murray Grove.</p>
<p><b>November 22</b></p>	<p><b>Eco Service Fair: "Full Green Ahead"</b> <i>Lay speaker Jesse Connor</i> We put our Seventh Principle into practice in every phase of designing and building our UU Center. Now it is the time to step up to commit to going "Full Green Ahead" in our daily lives. Jesse Connor will lead this multi-generational service. After a 20 minute gathering of music, message, and meditation, UUs and friends will be invited to visit a dozen stations showing how we can take action to slow Global Climate Change.</p>
<p><b>November 29</b> 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Potluck</p>	<p><b>Nichiren Buddhism</b> <i>Guest speaker Michael Petkov</i> The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is based on the teachings and philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism, which places the highest emphasis on the sanctity of life. Members seek, through their practice of Buddhism, to develop the ability to live with confidence, to create value in any circumstance, and to contribute to the well-being of friends, family and community.</p>

Volunteer Sunday – November 8 (see page 4)



## Our upcoming services...

**Jim Woodcock** lived on Long Island before retiring to South Jersey, where he was a clinical psychologist and a professor in the Psychology Department at the C. W. Post Campus of Long Island University. There he developed courses in "Humanistic Psychology" and "Psychology and Spirituality." He was also an adviser to the campus Interfaith/Multifaith Center. Although he was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition, Jim has had a long-term involvement with Eastern traditions, especially Zen. He is currently interested in how religious perspectives can be part of a scientific worldview.

**Rev. Kathy Ellis** is a candidate for the Unitarian Universalist ministry; she is the intern minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York, Pennsylvania. Raised mostly unchurched, Kathy and her husband Rick attended Quaker meeting for about 10 years before joining a Unitarian Universalist congregation. Her first career was as a psychologist, and she has completed her coursework for the MDiv at the Unitarian Universalist Seminary in Chicago, Meadville-Lombard.

**Michael Petkov** is one of the Elementary School Division Leaders of SGI-USA.

## Evolving Joys & Sorrows

Joys & Sorrows, whether spoken or silent, are an important part of our tradition at UUCSJS. Depending on the service content, either spoken and silent J&S will be offered, or silent only. In the Midweek Announcements sent out each Thursday via email, you will see one of the following two announcements to let you know what is planned for the upcoming Sunday:

(a) This Sunday, Joys and Sorrows will be both silent and spoken. If you choose to share your Joy or Sorrow aloud, please identify yourself as you begin your one or two sentence sharing.

OR

(b) This Sunday, Joys and Sorrows will be silent only. If it would be helpful to you to speak about your joy or sorrow, please seek out a member of the Caring Committee, identified by the yellow border and daisy on his or her name tag.

## Who says UUs don't celebrate Christmas?

A brief meeting on **Sunday, November 1** will be held in the Library at 11:30 am for anyone interested in helping with a **Christmas Eve Service**. If there are any questions, please talk to Helene Gentile.

## Vision, Mission, Covenant discussions Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13

After services on November 29, December 6 and 13, we will be holding discussions on our Mission, Vision, and Covenant, and how talking about these can make us a better community. In preparation for these discussions, some definitions and a little background might be helpful.

### Define our terms:

**Vision:** A carefully defined picture of where the congregation wants to be in five or more years. It is the dream of what the congregation can become.

**Mission:** A concise statement of what the congregation wants to be known for, or known as, within the wider world; what the congregation wants to mean to the community.

**Covenant:** A statement of how members of the congregation will be with, and will behave toward, one another, as well as what is promised or vowed to one another and to the congregation as a whole.

### Why do this?

From the uua guide *Vision, Mission, and Covenant: Creating a Future Together*:

Congregations without a compelling and shared vision may too easily lose track of what they should be doing and, consequently, struggle to determine how to allocate their human and financial resources. Without a centralizing agreed-upon focus, battles can rage over competing interests and equally good projects. However, when vision and mission are in place, all discussion circles back to these articulated statements for a double check and grounding. In congregational decision making, the "winning" decision should reflect the vision and mission of the congregation. If it doesn't, then something needs to change. Sometimes it's the decision that needs to change, and sometimes it is time to revisit the vision or revise the mission of the congregation.

Vision, mission, and covenant are related in that they are the center of a **triangle of religious questions**. As human beings, we ask questions in three specific arenas:

**Who am I?** Theologian Alfred North Whitehead said that "religion is what one does with one's solitude." Our primary religious need is for individual fulfillment and identity -- for understanding who we are beyond our roles and the expectations of others.

**Who am I in relationship to the world?** Because we are not isolated beings, we wonder how to be in relation to others, how to live ethically, and how to shape the world around us to reflect the way we think things should be.

**What is of ultimate importance to me?** It used to be that there was a simple answer to this question: God. But in these days when we cannot assume that everyone believes in God, or that God is the same for every believer, this question takes on an even greater significance. Not only are we faced with defining that which we believe is most ultimate; we also seek an authentic relationship to that ultimate.

# REFLECTIONS by President Jim Gentile

## THE MINISTRY MYSTERY TOUR - IV

The October 18 Gratitude Service poignantly underscored that we have so much for which to be grateful and of which to feel proud. However, it also was a celebration which subtly called us to take stock of ourselves as a congregation.

As we enter the second year of Congregational life in the Center there is a corollary to celebration. The Center is a physical presence in the Community which was not there before. Its presence says “now we are here.” It now appears timely to engage in a process examining who we are and why we are here.

Obviously, we are here as a congregation because we chose to be such. But with that choice comes responsibility. If we are here because we have an inherent value, then we have a responsibility to grow and invite others to share that value. If we are here to underscore the inherent worth and dignity of people and to encourage the free and responsible search for meaning, then we have a responsibility to manifest this beyond ourselves. Obviously we choose to exist for these reasons and more. The choice to exist as a Congregation imposes a sobering responsibility calling us to look beyond ourselves.

This is the essential reason that we are choosing now to grapple with the issues of the Congregation’s vision, mission and covenant. Defining our **vision** means that we decide, in concrete and certain ways, what we want to be and where we want to go. Defining our **mission** means that we clearly articulate how we live out our congregational life, both among ourselves and in the larger community, and how we choose to serve the community. Defining **covenant** means that we memorialize the promises and commitments we make to each other within the context of this Congregational Community.

Beginning this month, a congregation-wide process to determine vision, mission and covenant will be undertaken. The process will be three-fold. **First**, on November 29, December 6, and December 13 there will be three visioning talkbacks. This will give the opportunity for the entire congregation to participate in at least one of the talkbacks. At these, members of the Board of Trustees and the Program Council will engage members of the congregation in discussion on these issues. **Second**, beginning in November, and continuing in December and January, there will be four services which will focus chronologically on the history and traditions of the Unitarian and Universalist traditions and the inspiration which those who came before us offer to us today. **Third** and finally, in January, there will be a congregation-wide workshop, early on a Sunday afternoon, to pull together all of the points of view established between now and then, in the hopes to create a vision, mission and covenant which carries us forward. Of course, this process is undertaken with the utmost respect and gratitude to all of the members of the congregation who have undertaken this process in the past and who have gotten us to where we are. May this current process bear similar success for us all.

Jim

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**Please note! Board of Trustees meetings are ALWAYS open to the public.**  
**Any member can observe – no advance “permission” or “RSVP” needed – just SHOW UP!**  
Board meetings are the second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 – 8:30 pm in the downstairs lounge.

**Notes from Board Meeting October 13, 2009**

Progress is being made on the Congregational Handbook, which will contain all policies and procedures from all committees, by the end of the year. Karen York is in charge of pulling it together.

Additional funds were moved from the Capital account to the Reserve account; we now have a total of \$35,000 in reserve towards the paying of our mortgage debt.

The Board is considering hiring a facilitator for the visioning workshop to be held in January.

**Next Board meeting** – Tuesday, November 10, at 6:30 pm in the downstairs lounge.

COMMITTEE	BOARD LIAISON
Adult Religious Education	Ruth Eaves
Building & Grounds Committee	John Searight
Children's Religious Education	Karen York
Communications Committee	Deb Dagavarian
Finance Committee	3 Board Members are Committee Members. No designated Liaison
Green Sanctuary Committee	Ruth Eaves
Interweave	Prim Reeves
Membership Committee	Deb Dagavarian
Social Justice Committee	Jim Gentile
Sunday Services Committee	Karen Zindell

**UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2009-2010**

Officers	Members At Large
<b>Jim Gentile 10</b> <i>President</i>	<b>Ruth Eaves 10</b>
<b>Debbi Dagavarian 10</b> <i>Vice President</i>	<b>John Searight 11</b>
<b>Karen Zindell 11</b> <i>Secretary</i>	<b>Karen York 11</b>
<b>Primrose Reeves 10</b> <i>Treasurer</i>	* year given is end of term, e.g. 11 means thru 6/30/2011

**Default Committee Meeting schedule**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Adult RE
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Children's RE
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Sunday Services
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Membership, Social Justice
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Potluck! *Please, no committee meetings.*

Buy **Gift Cards** any Sunday for **Acme & Shoprite**.  
**Don't you have to buy groceries anyway??!**

Using these gift cards for groceries nets the congregation 5%.  
*We also have Fair Trade coffee and tea!*

**Volunteer Fair**

**Sunday, November 8**  
**immediately following the service**

*"It takes a whole congregation to run a congregation"*

Helping our congregation towards its goals of spiritual growth and learning, social justice, membership growth, being a supportive community, and maintaining our building -- all these call for many different avenues of participation, and from all of us.

At the Volunteer Fair you will be able to learn more about what is involved in the various committees and task forces, and you will be encouraged to join one or more of them. A listing of current volunteer opportunities will be available on the Midweek Announcements, and hard copies will be at the service on November 1 and 8. . Everyone has an interest, or a way they can participate!

We are especially hoping that the newer folks in our community will take this opportunity to become more involved.

*Remember that the more of yourself you put into the work of our beloved community, the more it will mean to you !*

**MARGARET CIRCLE**

The next meeting will be held in the Library at the Center on Thursday, November 5 at 1 pm.. Kim Trotto is leading a reminiscent and historical discussion on Thanksgiving. It will be fun, but with some serious talk. Kim will read a short play she has written, talk about Plymouth Rock (the real story), and ask people to remember their own family stories. Kim's story will jog your memories when she tells us about her Mom's orange jello salad. Now what could have happened????

We will light the chalice at 1 pm and begin sharing with each other anything significant that happened in our lives during the past month. After a short meeting, we will break for refreshments. At 2 pm we will begin the discussion. Please RSVP to Peg Gillies or Arlene Yacka if you plan to attend to ensure we will have enough dessert for everyone.

**UU Book Lovers**

The selection for November is *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan. This is a good followup to Missie Aprill's talk last August on "good, clean, and fair" food. The group will meet on Friday November 20 at 7 pm.

## ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**MISSION: Broadening Religious Imaginations**

Barbra Clark has resigned the Chair of the Adult RE Committee so that she may concentrate on husband Harold's care and her continuing heavy load of counseling clients. Marsha Hannah has agreed to serve as interim Chair.

New plans are in the works for future Adult RE offerings.

**In the meantime, Marsha and the entire Adult RE committee urges all members and friends of the congregation to attend one of the Vision/Mission/Covenant sessions occurring on November 29, December 6, or December 13. Also, set aside the tentative date of January 24 or 31 for the Visioning workshop to be held after services.**

## UUCSJS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Our revitalization meeting last Thursday evening went well; with some fun, food and information sharing. The RE Mother's group was welcomed into the association along with the Spirituality Book Study group and the new Evening Circle.

Circle & Group leaders are: *Margaret Circle*: Arlene Yacka; *Evening Circle*: Marsha Hannah; *RE Mother's Group*: Kim Peters; and *Spirituality Books Study Group*: Kathryn Kelley.

Acting Officers, until elections at our first Annual Potluck Social, are: President Kathryn Kelley, Vice President Heidi Jansch, Secretary Marsha Hannah, and Treasurer Kathleen Hartnett.

Some women indicating interest could not attend the meeting due to illness or scheduling conflicts. If you are interested and want your availability considered when deciding what evenings we will be meeting, please see Kathryn for a questionnaire. They will be available at the October 25 and November 1 Sunday services. If you are interested in the Spirituality Study Group you will need a copy of the book, *The New American Spirituality (A Seeker's Guide)*. I will be ordering the books in the next two weeks. A new paperback is \$10.50 and a used copy is \$4.50. If you would like me to order a copy for you please let me know.

-- Kathryn Kelley, President, UUCSJS Women's Assn.

### Inclement Weather?

UUCSJS has in place a phone tree for emergency notifications. Services will be cancelled only in case of SEVERE weather situations. You can see a copy of the phone tree on our Members-Only webspace. Go to [uucsjs.org](http://uucsjs.org) and click on Members Only, log in, then click on Miscellaneous Documents.



## *Deep in the Dark of the Longest Night . . .*

On December 20, we will be holding our annual Winter Solstice Singing Ritual (WSSR). The 125 people who attended last year will remember the magic and power we created with this service.

Many participants made the WSSR possible. There are opportunities for singers, musicians, readers, dancers, and organizers. We also need a team to assist Heidi with the children's participation and a couple of people to guide the Coming of Age class with their part as "keepers of the flame."

There will be six (6) rehearsals between now and December 20, and singers may also practice on their own with a CD of the songs (we will supply).

Readers will need to attend a separate rehearsal before joining the musicians for the final rehearsal. Dancers will rehearse on their own. Children will need to attend one dress rehearsal.

Please see Barbara Miller, or Heidi Jansch, about how you can be part of the magic on December 20.

*Rehearsals are scheduled for:*

Sunday, November 8, 12:30p-2:00p

Sunday, November 15: 1:00p-2:30p

Saturday, November 21, 9:30a-11:30a

Sunday, November 29, after Potluck Luncheon

Saturday December 12, 9:30a-11:30a

Tuesday, December 15, 6:30p-8:00p

## A U C T I O N !

**Saturday, November 14, 2009**

**UU Center**

**Doors Open at 6:30 pm, Auction Begins at 7:00**

After Oct 18, the only new items we are accepting will go into the Chance Auction.

***Drop off times for auction items:***

Sunday, November 8, immediately after services

Friday, November 13, 3-7 pm

Saturday, November 14, 4-5 pm

## Children's Religious Education

### What's Happening in Children's RE?

On October 25 the classes enjoyed a Sunday morning of games, crafts and treats at our annual Halloween Party provided by the Children's RE Committee. Even though we took a break from our regular schedule to party, our students are usually busy learning a variety of topics in our RE classes each week. Here are a few highlights of what each class has been up to this Fall:

**Popcorn Theology:** Our teens have been discussing choices, happiness, and gratitude while viewing clips of the popular films *Back to the Future*, *Forest Gump*, and *Star Trek Generations*. In anticipation of our upcoming Eco-Fair, they also discussed consumerism and wastefulness in our society and viewed *The Story of Stuff* (and you should too! Go to: [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com) to view it - it's free!).

**Bibleodeon:** Our 5-7th graders have started their investigation of the Old Testament this fall, learning the difference between facts and beliefs, and examining ideas about the origin of the universe and the nature of evil. One Sunday they also completed an actual investigation, C.S.I. style, where they solved the mystery of Abel's demise.

**Spirit of Adventure:** The 3rd and 4th graders have been learning about cooperation, teamwork and what it means to be good sports. They were also treated to a special presentation about Victor Maene's favorite sport, surfing, when he visited the class on October 11.

**Spirit Play:** If you are wondering what the Spirit Play program is all about, tune in to the Children's Moment during service on November 15 when Karen York will provide a short presentation of one of the Spirit Play stories.

All four classes are preparing to lead the congregation in a song during the Eco-Fair service on November 22, where some of our youth will also be running or assisting at some of the stations.

-- Heidi Jansch, Director of Religious Education

### What I learned in RE...

I learned that our children are far more creative than I would have imagined! -- *Debbi Dagavarian*

### Something New at Murray Grove!

Murray Grove in Lanoka Harbor NJ (Exit 74 of the GSP) is now hosting a **monthly Welcoming GLBTQQI\* Service and Potluck** – coming up next on November 15 and December 6. All GLBTQQI folks and their allies and supporters are welcome! The future dates will vary, but it'll be on a Sunday each month, from 5 to 7:30 pm. RSVP 609-693-5558 or [murraygrove@murraygrove.org](mailto:murraygrove@murraygrove.org)

\* Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning and Intersex

### Samhain (Halloween) at Sherlock's Bookstore & Café, Saturday, October 31, 8 pm

The ending of the year at Halloween is the Witches' New Year. We end in the beginning as we should, and the Wheel Turns. Theresa McReynolds asks that you arrive at 7:30 pm if you would like to help decorate the altar. Bring Fall leaves, apples, pomegranates for the altar, pictures or mementos of friends, relatives, pets that have crossed over, a bowl to hold water or a crystal for crying, and snacks to share. For more information contact Theresa or Susan at [sherlocksbookandcafe@verizon.net](mailto:sherlocksbookandcafe@verizon.net)

### Another FUUN Event....

## Halloween Dance Friday, October 30

7-10 pm

Costumes and prizes!

Music by *PACKAGE GOODS  
ORCHESTRA*

Get tickets from Jeff Taylor.  
\$10 in advance and \$12 at the door.

Note: There will be no childcare.  
Parents are expected to look after their own children.

### Trees We Did Not Plant

We build on foundations we did not lay.  
We warm ourselves by fires we did not light.  
We sit in the shade of trees we did not plant.  
We drink from wells we did not dig.  
We profit from persons we did not know.  
We are ever bound in community.

-- Rev. Peter Raible, UU Minister

## FULL GREEN AHEAD

### ECO FAIR SERVICE, NOVEMBER 22, 2009

Over the last year or two, we put our Seventh Principle into practice in every phase of designing, constructing, and committing our talent and treasure to building our UU Center. While reverence for the interconnectedness of life has guided UUs for years, we are now faced with a clear call to action to help lessen the devastating impacts of global climate change. "First, I worry about climate change," former President Clinton has stated. "It's the only thing that I believe has the power to fundamentally end the march of civilization as we know it and make a lot of the other efforts that we're making irrelevant and almost impossible."

Many UUs have come to believe that reducing our own contributions to the problem is a moral responsibility for future generations, and probably all of us have taken some steps in response: we use cloth bags, we drive more fuel-efficient vehicles, we buy Fair Trade coffee, we unplug unnecessary appliances. But every one of us, myself included, can step it up and COMMIT to going "Full Green Ahead" to doing ALL we can do in our daily lives.

So, how can we further reduce our own individual carbon footprints?

Members of our Social Justice Committee have been hard at work designing an Eco-Fair Service which is scheduled for Sunday, November 22. This multi-generational service will begin with a twenty-minute gathering of music, message, and meditation after which UUs and friends will be invited to visit a dozen stations in the vestibule, downstairs, and outside. The stations will feature specific information on how families and individuals can take action to slow global climate change. We'll have stations set up with information about:

- Recycling
- Reducing Paper and Plastic Use
- Ethical Eating
- Fair Trade
- Green Landscaping Choices
- Transportation Alternatives
- Socially & Environmentally Responsible Consumer Choices
- Strategies for an Energy Efficient Home
- Clean Power Choice
- Increasing Automobile Fuel Efficiency
- Energy Efficient Lighting

Stations will be staffed by adults, children and teens. We'll have a Power Point presentation and a video, as well as hands-on-exhibits and demonstrations to engage everyone's interests and to strengthen the call to ACTION. Committee members will encourage individuals and families to commit to using reusable shopping bags, using reusable water bottles, increasing the number of vegetarian meals served per week, setting up home composting, and signing on to support Clean Power Choices.

At 11:00 we'll ring a bell to bring everyone back together in the Sanctuary where we'll gather for inspirational music and to collectively commit to the environmental actions we have

been inspired to take on in our daily lives. Coffee and snacks will be set up after service in the Sanctuary and in the lounge downstairs. Volunteers will be back at their stations and during coffee hour, everyone will be encouraged to revisit stations or perhaps visit ones that were missed.

We encourage you to reach out and invite friends, neighbors, and co-workers to this unique UUCSJS service. Let us lead by example in all aspects of our daily lives and inspire others to action as well.

-- Jesse Connor, Chair, Social Justice Committee

*Save the Date!*

### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual International Gift Fair

**Saturday and Sunday, December 5-6**

10 am to 4 pm, Mainland High School, Linwood NJ

Handcrafted, fairly traded gifts, food, music, information.

It's a lot of fun, and a good place for guilt-free holiday shopping.

## Gratitude is the Attitude!

...so says Theresa. At our service on October 24, 2009, Theresa and I attempted to acknowledge and thank all those who had a hand in the building of our UU Center, now officially open over a year. As I said on that day, one of the dangers of enumerating something that no one has really taken the time to record as it was happening is to leave someone out due to being unaware, or just from suffering a brain glitch. As promised, I am including an addendum to our list here in the next newsletter.

One of my most glaring oversights was Jeff Taylor. He worked closely with Broadley's, Water Today, Mill Pond Inc and other experts to figure out the true needs for our geothermal after the original proposals seemed out of scale. After complicated heat gain and loss calculations, the recommended wells were reduced from 12 to three. As we know, our Center has been comfortable in both winter and summer, no mean feat given that geothermal is still a rather new methodology.

Tull Benton worked hard on determining the lighting requirements and we ended up with a full complement of various types of lighting that fill our needs yet consume limited energy.

Victor Maene, through his solar company Brite Idea, got us a fast-tracked and discounted solar panel installation that has already saved us hundred of dollars a month on our electric bills.

Steve Fielder's brother Dave gave us furniture, as did the Bentons and Felixes. Steve's other brother Martin donated audio equipment and professional expertise and time. The Osmans donated office equipment as did the Utts (Uttses?). Chris Holaday's kids helped out on many different things.

Speaking of Paul Utts, while not having a specific construction task, he was a constant presence to both the public and our own congregation with his support and tireless efforts on our behalf. He stayed as President longer than planned to see us through to completion of the building, and his written reflections each month in the newsletter kept us inspired and focused.

With deep thanks to all.

-- Mariann Maene

# Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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**November 2009**

**Visit us on the Web: [www.uucsjs.org](http://www.uucsjs.org)**

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