



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Volume 12, Issue 07

July 2010

July 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>July 4</p>	<p><i>COMMON SENSE</i> – The pamphlet that sparked revolution(s) <i>Lay speaker Carl Benner</i> As we celebrate the birth of our nation, today's talk will describe the accepted values that had to be challenged before a Declaration of Independence could be written.</p>
<p>July 11</p>	<p>Mountain Meadow: A Safe Haven for Youth from LGBTQ Families <i>Guest speakers Carolyn T. Thompson and Tessa Corcoran-Sayers</i> Youth from diverse backgrounds will share their experiences growing up in LGBTQ families.</p>
<p>July 18</p>	<p>Walking with Peace <i>Guest speaker Bruce Nichols</i> This service will celebrate the life, work and teachings of Peace Pilgrim, an American woman who dedicated her life to the cause of peace in a unique and powerful way. Drawing inspiration from this remarkable person who truly “walked her talk” for a peaceful world, we will be looking at the interconnections between inner and outer peace and how these manifest in our lives and in the world.</p>
<p>July 25</p>	<p>A Letter From Your Minister <i>Guest minister Rev. Libby Smith</i> Using the format of a letter to a fictional congregation (one that looks a lot like UUCSJS!), Rev. Smith explores the joys and and the challenges of part-time ministry. Following the service, she will facilitate a congregational discussion about ministry, answer questions about her own half-time consulting ministry, and help us seek clarity about our needs and expectations.</p>

Eat Locally ... Drink Locally Too!

Saturday, July 24 at 2pm

Bellview Winery in Landisville, NJ. (near Vineland)

We have been focusing on ethical eating so much we have forgotten all about ethical drinking!

We will be touring the Bellview Winery and tasting some wines.

You may bring a lunch or order a cheese platter or other items from their menu.

The cost for the trip is \$8 for the tour and tasting only, and \$20 if you wish to take advantage of transportation as we have reserved a passenger van for those who would be interested in not driving!



Our guest speakers this month....

Bruce Nichols is a member of the Friends of Peace Pilgrim board of directors. In 1995, on a whim, he created the Peace Pilgrim website – an event that turned out to be a life-changing experience. For the past ten years, Bruce has dedicated much of his time to service in causes of peace. He has also found time for a little walking including the Appalachian Trail, the Long Trail in Vermont, the Camino de Santiago in Spain, a walk from Nagasaki to Hiroshima in Japan, and the John Muir Trail in the California sierra. Bruce often shares his travel experiences in words and photos with various audiences. Bruce is also an ordained lay member of the Order of Interbeing, a group connected with the Zen Buddhist teacher and peace maker, Thich Nhat Hanh.

Mountain Meadow is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping youth from unconventional families, and their allies, succeed in school and daily life. Started in 1981 by a lesbian rabbi, Mountain Meadow continues to be the only organization in the Eastern United States specializing in the needs of youth from LGBTQ families. Each summer Mountain Meadow offers a two-week residential summer camp program where 80 youth from across the country learn leadership skills in a community of peers. Throughout the year, Mountain Meadow youth are active in the community through Keeping It Real, Mountain Meadow's youth speakers program. Youth represent the organization at community events, speak on panels and are interviewed by the media. The program is in the process of securing a contract to lead family diversity trainings in the Philadelphia school district.

Rev. Libby Smith serves the UU Fellowship of Lower Bucks (Bucks County, PA) as half-time consulting minister, and is an adjunct staff member for the Joseph Priestley District. She has worked with our congregation on vision and mission, and helped us revisit the question of professional ministry. She looks forward to continuing the conversations together!

"There is a criterion by which you can judge whether the thoughts you are thinking and the things you are doing are right for you. The criterion is: Have they brought you inner peace? If they have not, there is something wrong with them -- so keep seeking! If what you do has brought you inner peace, stay with what you believe is right."
-- Peace Pilgrim

Grove Gatherings at Murray Grove: Musical/Artistic Coffee Houses. Every second Wednesday of the month: 7:00-9:00 entertainment - \$10 per person; and join us before the show for a potluck dinner 6:00-7:00 pm (BYOB).



July 14: Marafanyi – West African drum, dance and song in poetic motion

Grove Gatherings on Wednesday July 14th will feature **Marafanyi**, international artists who regularly teach at Murray Grove's annual Drum and Dance Fest (August 13-15, 2010). With big hearts and open minds, international artists, Lara Gonzalez and Yael Shacham, fell in love with West Africa. As Marafanyi's founders and artistic directors, these gifted and talented ladies present an artistic expression that fuses original songs and spoken word with traditional West African rhythm and dance showcasing indigenous instruments. They travel frequently to Guinea to focus on the dynamic and lyrical music and dance from a variety of ethnic groups.

As teaching, performing and recording artists, Marafanyi strives to make accessible the therapeutic, empowering and educational benefits of the music and cultures of West Africa to all ages, populations and the community at large. Their performances and classes have delivered the electrifying and danceable rhythms and mystique of the music of West Africa to a variety of audiences. Together these pioneering ladies present an artistic expression combining rhythm, movement, song and spoken word in poetic motion. They are determined to change the world beat by beat! As headliners, they have performed in a variety of venues from intimate house concerts to multi-media performance art events. They enjoy frequent television and radio appearances. As an opening act, Marafanyi has supported musicians from all genres including: WORLD (Angélique Kidjo), FOLK (Odetta), JAZZ (Perry Robinson), SPOKEN WORD (Carl Hancock Rux), ROCK (Hamell on Trial), and METAPHYSICAL (Ram Dass).

This program is made possible in part by a grant administered by the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission, in conjunction with the New Jersey State Council of the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Northeast UU Choral Festival at Ferry Beach

July 17-24, 2010

Renowned UU Music Directors, Frances Conover Fitch and Mimi Bornstein will be leading this event. Participants are guaranteed to return to their churches with their spirits renewed and with new music to share.

Register at www.ferrybeach.org/summer_conferences/choral.html

REFLECTIONS by President Jim Gentile

Minister Conversation

Over the past year, the Congregation has taken a breath after years of noteworthy growth. We have learned what it means to "be" in the Center. Through a series of Sunday Services, we have heard of many aspects of the Unitarian Universalist Tradition, its history, its philosophy and empathy. We have sought to become more centered on our vision and mission and have begun to talk about the need for communal covenant. We have met the demands of our budget. It seems to me that we continue to grow and mature as a Community.

As previously noted, this past April, Rev. Libby Smith engaged the Program Council and the Board of Trustees in a workshop focusing on the question of the Congregation seeking a minister. The consensus which arose from the workshop is that the Congregation is at the point where this discussion should begin in earnest. It was felt that, so as to offer the Congregation insight into the demands placed upon a part-time minister, and the challenges of such a role, Rev. Smith would present a service on this issue, followed by a workshop for the Congregation. These will be held on July 25, 2010. While holding such a service and workshop in July may be antithetical to life here on the South Jersey Shore, the Board and Program Council felt that the conversation should begin sooner rather than later, and Rev. Smith was unable to schedule a service/workshop prior to that date.

Thus, please mark your calendars and try to attend. It is important that all voices be heard as this conversation begins.

Java Jive

In the early 1940's the Inkspots sang harmonically about the wonders of coffee and tea. The hauntingly plaintive cry: "Shoot me the pot and I'll pour me a shot" is seen in our faces as we flow to the back of the Center on Sunday morning after service in a quest for the percolator.

One wonders, if the Israelites had coffee would not Jesus' first miracle have been to change water into coffee instead of into wine. Now, I do not want to whine, but please, please, please sign up to change our Unitarian Universalist water into coffee, thereby starting off your week as a worker of minor miracles.

Jim

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.

Board Meeting Notes

May 11, 2010

Special Meeting June 8, 2010

The meeting began by President Gentile asking for the building committee's recommendation regarding the EPA's request to use the congregation's retention basin for testing purposes. Richard Grzywinski indicated that the committee has reviewed the request and recommends proceeding to Board deliberation.

President Gentile welcomed Joseph Gowers, Remedial Project Manager of the EPA, and Chorfan (Frank) Tsang, P.E., Senior Project Manager with the CDM Federal Programs Corporation.

A presentation was given and questions regarding specific project elements and processes were answered, and issues regarding other agencies' approvals, insurance, bonding, indemnification and compensation were discussed.

President Gentile expressed the Board's willingness to move forward with negotiations and indicated that the issue will be discussed further upon the consultants' response during the Board's next regular meeting.

Regular Meeting June 12, 2010

EPA Request: The Board stands willing to negotiate, pending the outcome of the questions raised at the June 8th special meeting.

In response to problems with the current doorbell, the board approved spending \$150 to install a new doorbell/intercom system.

Visioning: Karen York led the Board in listing and discussing perceived strengths, challenges, hopes & dreams, and specific goals for the future.

The Board thought that the talk backs are a successful way to make the Board directly available to congregants, and should continue.

Next Board meeting – Saturday, July 13, 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the UU Center, downstairs lounge.

Committee Meeting schedule

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

Blueberries – locally grown!

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!



UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2009-2010

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Jim Gentile 12
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Debbi Dagavarian 12
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Karen Zindell 11
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John Searight 11

Joe Terrazzini 12

Karen York 11

* year given is end of term,
e.g. **11** means thru 6/30/2011

UUA General Assembly Statement of Conscience on Peacemaking

To read the entire statement as originally drafted in March 2010, go to www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/currentissues/peacemaking/121606.shtml

Before being accepted at GA, it will most likely be modified. Here are the main sections of the Statement:

Draft Statement of Conscience on Creating Peace, March 2010

I. Where We Stand

Peacebuilding
Peacemaking
Peacekeeping

II. Historical and Theological Context

A. Historical Practices

B. Theological Principles

- The fundamental unity and interdependence of all existence.
- The transforming power of love.
- The inherent worth and dignity of all persons.
- Human freedom.
- Rejection of moral dualism.
- Cooperative power.
- Justice and peace.
- Humility and open-mindedness.

III. Calls To Action

Creating Peace In Our World
Creating Peace In Our Society
Creating Peace in Our Congregations
Creating Peace In Our Relationships
Creating Peace Within Ourselves

In reverence for all life, we covenant to practice peace at all levels of human interaction.

The Seven Principles of Vital UU Congregations

from the blog of Rev Thom Belote, Minister at Shawnee Mission Unitarian Universalist Church, Overland Park, KS

At the UUA Growth Consultation held from May 5 to May 7, one of the most interesting documents that the participants developed was a list that we wound up calling "The Seven Principles for UU Vitality." This document was produced using a process of brainstorming, the grouping of emerging themes, and reflection on our own experiences.

1) The Congregation has a clear and powerful Purpose and Mission

- The congregation possesses a compelling narrative that connects past, present, and future.
- The congregation's story is constantly embodied and rehearsed.

2) The Congregation is aware of & responsive to the world around it

- Another way of saying this is to say that the congregation has a "sense of place" that is theologically informed.
- The mission is owned and embodied by the congregation.
- There is strong leadership and high levels of participation in living out the public mission. [It is not just the minister doing it or a committee or a group of people who are marginal in the life of the congregation.]

3) There is vital worship and a vital Sunday experience for all ages

- "It's gotta sing": vitality and energy are felt throughout the congregation on Sundays.
- There is coherence in the church's programming. Sunday morning is an aesthetic whole.
- The worship service is relevant and meaningful in people's lives.
- Music inspires and moves the congregation.

4) Church is done well [this principle is in reference to administration and leadership.]

- This principle has to do with Policies, Practices, and Places.
- The above are clear, adaptable, and responsive to the evolving needs of the congregation.
- There is a sense that we must be willing to change ourselves in order to "do church well."

5) The Congregation cultivates religious community

- The community participates in shared practices and rituals.
- The congregation provides connections where there is disconnection. [This is another way to describe the building of the beloved community: It encompasses multiculturalism, multigenerationalism, and other forms of diversity.]
- The congregation provides a safe atmosphere and environment where healthy relationships can be built.
- The congregation recognizes and overcomes its own idolatries in how it envisions community.

6) The Congregation builds skills to lead and nurtures gifts to serve

- People who come to a church discern a call in community.
- The community nurtures, trains, honors, and trusts leaders.

7) Strong ministerial leadership supports the fulfillment of the previous six principles.

The seventh principle is intended to signify the role of the minister in promoting the previous six principles.

Pat Infante, JPD Director for Lifespan Faith Development, on Healthy Congregations

Healthy relationships are at the heart of a healthy congregation. First and foremost, we are a covenantal faith and our highest principle is respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all. When asked what attracted them to Unitarian Universalism and what they value most about their UU faith, people often respond "community" or "belonging" which is all about relationship and the sense of connectedness that unites all the living things on this glorious green planet.

There are several things that make a relationship healthy. First, we must be willing to communicate with one another – effectively, authentically and truthfully. We must understand that listening is as, or more important than a willingness to engage in dialogue. Second, we must be willing to forgive. Rev. Peter Steinke tells us that "forgiveness is the absolution of guilt, the reconciliation of brokenness, and the creation of new future." Finally, we must connect with one another through play or with a nurturing touch or a supportive conversation.

Small group ministry is a great way to help all ages build communication skills and connect with others. Offering multigenerational fellowship events can offer opportunities to connect across generational and attitudinal boundaries. Leaders who are adaptive and whose work is done in a transparent and collaborative spirit will also help the congregation grow in health.

Living in healthy relationship requires attention and intention. It is not easy to undo or forgive the brokenness of the past but transforming a congregation into a healthy one deserves everyone's best effort. In the words of William Phelps, "The greatest of all arts is the art of living together."

We weren't the only ones...

Eleven UU congregations from the District of Columbia to northern New Jersey reached out to the transgender community in early June with a presence at the Mazzoni Center's Trans-Health Conference in Philadelphia. The congregations placed a two-page ad in the event program and staffed an information table. They also contributed \$500 to the Mazzoni Center, which provides a range of services for the lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender community.

Ken Goldberg, chair of the social justice committee at the UU Church in Cherry Hill, said, "we shared our compelling message – you are welcomed to our churches, at all levels of congregational life; please share your personal journey with our loving, spiritual communities; ours is a place where you can be your real self."

He said five people who attended the event came to services the following Sunday at First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, the closest congregation to the event.

He also noted Unitarian Universalism was the only faith group represented at this event. "We became more aware of transgender issues, trans folks became more aware of us, and we developed contacts with other groups supporting this community," he said.

For more info on the Conference, visit www.trans-health.org/about/



Children's Religious Education

Our summer sessions are off to a good start; so far the kids have played games with Kyle Jones, enjoyed a Nature Walk with Jesse Connor and Kim Peters and made a joyful noise drumming with David Shaman.

Throughout July our schedule of Sunday activities includes:

July 4 - *Geneology* with Prim Reeves

July 11 – *Personalized Jewelry* with Debbi Dagavarian

July 18 – *Peace Project* with Angela Jones

July 25 – *Tye-Dying T-Shirts* with Colby Tippins and Doug Dickinson

During the summer months the Children's RE Committee focuses on plans for the coming school year. We are in the process of choosing curriculum and recruiting teachers for the upcoming year, and also discussing future programming including OWL (Our Whole Lives) sexuality education and will soon begin planning a complete Coming of Age program for our 10th and 11th graders to engage in during the 2011-2012 school year.

If you are interested in participating in Children's RE, either on the committee or in the classroom, please speak to Heidi Jansch, the Director of Religious Education, or Katy Cardwell, Children's RE Committee Chair.

-- Heidi Jansch, Director of Religious Education

UUCSJS Women's Association Meetings

Summer hiatus

There will be no meetings of the Margaret Fuller Circle, Olympia Brown Circle, or Women's Spirituality Circle during the months of July and August.

See you in September!

This just in....

Richard Grzywinski sends messages from
General Assembly in Minneapolis:

"3835 attendees, 500 congregations, 180 delegates, 150 youth. Currently in great debate on the "creating peace" Statement of Conscience which will likely pass with some small changes. The next debate will determine whether the UUA will boycott Arizona for the June 2012 GA."

"The Congregational Action/Study Issue for next year is Immigration as a Moral Issue, just passed a few minutes ago."

"Absolutely the most spiritually uplifting event I could ever have imagined."

What is Environmental Justice?

Environmental Justice is the human affirmation of our place within the interdependent web of all existence. It pursues simultaneously the protection of natural systems and the ecological health of human communities – especially communities of the poor, minorities, and indigenous peoples.

Unitarian Universalists can work to create Environmental Justice by:

Guaranteeing basic needs for all Earth's people;

Distributing the benefits of Earth's resources fairly and sustainably;

Avoiding inequity in bearing the burdens of humanity's impact on the Earth;

Recognizing that people have common but differentiated responsibilities according to abilities and resources available to them;

Ensuring the moral and political rights of all to participate in decisions affecting the environment and wellbeing;

Providing equal participation in decision-making processes regardless of race, class, gender, age, language, education, or economic barriers;

Applying and enforcing environmental rules, regulations, and laws equitably and impartially;

Recognizing the inherent value of all species; and

Acknowledging our human responsibility to seek the sustainable balance between the rights of nature and human rights.

The US Environmental Protection Agency Office of Environmental Justice gives the following definition:

"Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. EPA has this goal for all communities and persons across this Nation. It will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work."

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SOCIAL JUSTICE?

It was once said, "A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm." With that in mind, the members of the Social Justice Committee accepted the task of creating a topic that would guide us as a committee and our congregation into future social action work. This was no easy task. This potential umbrella topic would need to be broad enough to allow for a variety of interests and passions and yet narrow enough to focus our efforts in a meaningful and productive way. We are therefore very pleased to announce that during our June meeting, we unanimously voted to accept *Sustainability and Environmental Justice* as our umbrella issue! It is our hope and intent that this social justice issue will inspire and motivate the congregation, as a whole, into greater unity with each other as we work together to reach our goals. It is also our objective to lead the congregation into further engagement in the community. The congregation has already expressed its commitment to promoting sustainability; for example, in large ways through building an environmentally friendly building and also in small ways such as every time those in the kitchen wash our re-usable mugs at coffee hour. The love this congregation has for our planet is constantly evident and is a central part of our identity. It is also what attracts others to us.

Sadly, not every one is in a position to live as sustainably as they may desire and that is where Environmental Justice aspect of the topic will come into play. There are those who are economically disadvantaged and may not have the financial means to purchase environmentally sound products such as composters, CFL light bulbs, quality produce and more. It is also sometimes the case that those who live in low-income areas are subject to a poorer quality of services provided through local governments such as with regard to water quality, proximity of landfill sites, etc. And, truthfully, there are many among us and in our community who lack the knowledge and education to make more earth-friendly choices. In each and every one of these matters, together our congregation can make a huge difference.

This is a very exciting time for the Social Justice Committee and we hope the wide-ranging congregation. We will be having many opportunities for everyone to "get in and get our hands dirty"- literally and figuratively. We invite all of you to come aboard!

And on a lighter note, please don't jump ship!

Having said that, we certainly need all of the help we can get. We know the economy is terrible and lay-offs abound... but the Social Justice Committee is always hiring! Any talent or skill that you may have; from writing, to building, to public relations, manning tables, gardening, pretty much if you are breathing we can use you! We are accepting full-time help, part-time help, and even day labor. **Although we will not be having a meeting in July**, please see or contact Angela Jones or any member of the Social Justice team with any thoughts, offers, comments or concerns. Our normally scheduled meeting will resume on August 1st (the first Sunday of the month). Please feel free to join us!

In the meantime, we do have an exciting upcoming event planned! **On Saturday, July 24 at 2pm** we are having a touring and tasting of the **Bellview Winery** in Landisville, NJ. We felt that we have been focusing on ethical eating so much we have forgotten all about ethical drinking! We can support our community and save on pollution and environmental problems associated with transportation by drinking locally. Okay, that may have been a stretch- but it's true! The Bellview Winery is certainly unique with their extensive list of white wines, red wines, fruit wines, seasonal wines, and even Sangria! You may bring a lunch or order a cheese platter or other items from their menu. The cost for the trip is \$8 for the tour and tasting only and \$20 if you wish to take advantage of transportation as we have reserved a passenger van for those who would be interested in riding together. Of course, you also have the option of driving yourself or carpooling with friends. A sign-up sheet is on the Social Justice table and it is vital that you sign up for the transportation as soon as possible.

It must also be said that we have been very busy and have, with your help, accomplished many incredible feats. For one thing, our letter writing campaign on Affordable Housing was an tremendous success! We mailed over 70 letters to our local representatives in 3 districts. And, it worked! The vote on the S-1 bill on Affordable Housing has been put on hold pending more discussion and analysis. An article recently quoted, "We will do this right, with input from everyone," said Assemblyman Jerry Green (D-Union), chairman of the Assembly Housing and Local Government Committee. "I don't want to be back here next year debating yet another affordable-housing bill. I don't want an endless court fight. I want a system that works, and if that means taking time to do it right, then that's what we're going to do." We can be proud to know that our voices, united with over 100 other concerned organizations, including the UU Legislative Ministry of NJ, were heard and had an impact.

Our congregation has also had plenty of visibility recently in community events. Members of the Social Justice Committee hosted tables at the Wheaton Village Eco-fair, the ACUA Earth Day Festival, the Mullica Green Day event and the Cape May Harbor festival. Our table emphasized our beautiful building and our even more beautiful faith which motivates our love of neighbor and environment. These tabling events are a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, answer questions, and attract those who may be searching for a spiritual home. The public response is overwhelmingly very positive. Quite a number of people have stated that they had heard about our church, had thought about attending our services, and will now likely do so. If you have not yet participated in one of these tabling opportunities, I couldn't recommend it more. It has really been the highlight of the season for me and there will be more to come.

Thank you as always for your commitment and support of the social action efforts of the Social Justice Committee.

Angela Jones, Social Justice Chair

"Nature shrinks as capital grows. The growth of the market cannot solve the very crisis it creates." – Vandana Shiva, author of *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis*

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Minister

vacant

**Music Director &
Sunday Service Coordinator**

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Director of Religious Education

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Board of Trustees 2010-11

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