



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 17, Issue 01

January 2015

January Services

“We Promise... to practice FORGIVENESS”

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.

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| January 4 | <p>Forgiveness, Part 1: Lost & Found <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i> We will explore the many challenges and opportunities encompassed by the notion of FORGIVENESS. Perhaps this is the most important spiritual teaching of all. Admittedly, we fail, and yet seeking to be forgiven and to forgive are worth the effort, both individually and collectively.</p> |
| January 11 | <p>Forgiveness, Part 2: Moving Toward Community <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i> Cynthia continues her musings on forgiveness. How can it help build community?</p> |
| January 18 | <p>Unitarian Universalism in One Word <i>Guest speaker Raj Nigam</i> If we are to describe our faith in one word, which word would that be?</p> |
| January 25 | <p>Growing Together <i>Guest minister Rev. David Pyle</i> The Rev. David Pyle is the new District Executive for the Joseph Priestly District. He visits us today to become acquainted and to help you ask/answer the questions that are most important for UUCSJS this year. His message will examine the ways our congregations can be more interconnected.</p> |

**2015 JPD WORSHIP ARTS FESTIVAL
WORSHIP WIDE: OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY**

February 20-21, 2015

UU Congregation of Fairfax, VA

Featured Presenters: Mark Bernstein, Jennifer Brooks, Madelyn Campbell, Michelle Collins, Dani Fiore, David M. Glasgow, Carl Gregg, Pawel Jura, Erik Martinez Resly, Andrew Mertz, Osaretin "Osa" Obaseki, Julie Price, David Pyle, Jennifer Rodgers and Sharon Werth

Join other laypersons and religious professionals from UU congregations around our district for this annual celebration of power UU worship! Workshops address the theology, theory, and practice of UU worship, with the goal of broadening our communities beyond boundaries we may not even have realized we had drawn! Your congregation won't want to miss out on these exciting conversations!

Info here:

www.jpduua.org/news-and-notes/2015-jpd-worship-arts-festival-worship-wide-overcoming-barriers-spiritual-community

“Forgiveness”

We continue our 2014-15 Worship theme, in which we focus on the UUCSJS Covenant of Right Relations – its purpose and its 7 promises.

For January we consider this promise: **“To practice FORGIVENESS by allowing ourselves and one another to be less than perfect; by making every effort to settle our differences directly; and by keeping an open mind and heart.”** *How can you live out this promise in your relationships with others in UUCSJS? How forgiving are you lately?*

Book Lovers Group

The January meeting of the UU Book Lovers Group will be on Friday January 16 at 7 pm in the UU Center library. Discussion of the novel, ***The Journeys Of Socrates*** by Dan Millman, will be led by Ellie Gibson. "Sergei was three when soldiers took him. At fifteen he fled into the wilderness, with nothing to cling to but the memories of his grandfather who called him Socrates. This saga of courage and faith, of love and loss, reveals the arts of war and the path to peace." -*Amazon.com*. In case of inclement weather an e-mail will be sent out by noon the day of the meeting. You may also call Angela Wexler.

Margaret Circle

“Let us be wise, and not impede the soul. Let her work as she will. Let us have one creative energy, one incessant revelation. Let it take what form it will, and let us not bind it by the past to man or woman, black or white.”
– Margaret Fuller

Because of the holiday, Margaret Circle will be held on Thursday, January 8 at 1 pm in the UU Center Library. Our program will focus on Margaret Fuller, for whom our circle is named -- her life and her contributions as a mid-19th century Unitarian author, journalist, critic and women's rights activist. All women in our congregation are encouraged to attend and bring a friend. Contact Shelee McIlvaine if you have any questions.



Road Cleanup on January 18!

Help keep our stretch of Pomona Road clean and presentable. *Plus:* UUCSJS earns a stipend from the Atlantic County Utilities Authority for doing this task.

Support our congregation by doing what you already do – buy groceries! with gift cards for your local Acme or Shoprite!

Buy **Gift Cards** any Sunday for **Acme & Shoprite**.

Using these gift cards for groceries nets the congregation 5%.

We also have Fair Trade coffee, tea, and chocolate!



What's happening with Family promise?

Family Promise now has its **10th congregation** on board. Welcome to **Zion United Methodist Church** in Egg Harbor Township, NJ!!! Three more to go!

Soup makers, get ready!

On February 1, 2015, UUCSJS will celebrate “Souper Bowl Sunday” to help fund Family Promise! Here's how to volunteer: make a large pot of one type of soup and ladle it into quart containers that we will provide. Then on “Souper Bowl Sunday,” February 1st, we'll sell the soups at the UU Center. Enjoy the soup right away or freeze it for when you're tight for time. Family Promise will benefit from your generosity.

What kind of soup do YOU plan to make?!!

Regular Meetings

Family Promise of Atlantic County meets regularly on the last Thursday of each month at 7pm at the Absecon United Methodist Church, 100 Pitney Road, Absecon, NJ. Please join us and become a part of this exciting program.

COMMIT² RESPOND

Commit2Respond is an initiative for climate justice awareness and action. The UUA invites UUs and all people of faith and conscience to commit to respond in these three action areas:

- Grow the climate justice movement
- Advance the human rights of marginalized communities
- Shift to clean and renewable energy

Commit2Respond starts now. The period between World Water day on March 22, 2015, and Earth Day on April 22 will focus on explicit commitments in the service of climate justice. But these efforts require perseverance. This vital work will continue through the United Nations Climate Change Conference in December 2015 and on through the 2017 UUA General Assembly.

Please spread the word about Commit2Respond. You can learn more about this initiative on the Commit2Respond website at www.commit2respond.org. Commit2Respond invites everyone, regardless of religious affiliation or lack thereof, to join us in our commitment to respond to the dangers of climate change.

Forgiveness is an easy word to say, but it takes a lifetime to master. The *Course in Miracles* (we have a study group here at UUCSJS) says that you will never be free until you have forgiven everyone you have ever known or can even imagined.

Many people, upon hearing that, are ready to try. They will work hard to forgive everyone... "except." Almost all of us have some excepts. After all, some human behavior is so outrageous and horrific that forgiveness is hard to even contemplate. Even if we could manage to forgive all of those who have harmed us, what about those who hurt children? Commit atrocities? What about Hitler?

Forgiveness is not a one-time act that we humans can perform and be done with. It is rather a way of living in communication with the world and humanity that says that we will allow for redemption, and that, although we need never tolerate abuse or torture or genocide, we also need not spend our precious days and moments in vengeance and bitterness.

I think the reason Rosh Hashanah is such a valuable high holy day for the Jewish faith is that every year, at the turn of the year, Jews are required to ask forgiveness of G_d and especially of one another. To me, this is testimonial to the ongoing struggle and journey that forgiveness entails: one that will last a lifetime.

Finally, the *Course in Miracles* says, at the end of our life we will, of course, forgive ourselves and everyone else. As we age, we experience the veracity of this. We might call it *letting go*. *So why not start now?* it asks.

The services this month will deal with both individual and community/global forgiveness. As we examine the meaning of forgiveness in light of the UUCSJS covenant, it is my hope that we may also begin a discussion about what will be required, going forward, to make that covenant a living, breathing document. Generally, that means defining and committing to the behaviors, boundaries, and actions that will ensure this community is safe for all, and that individuals have bound themselves together in agreement to keep it that way. Your leaders have begun that conversation, but all must be included.

To that end, I'll also be introducing a curriculum entitled *Safe Congregations*. This will be encouraged for leaders and core members, but open to everyone. Look for details in the next month or so.

These are the beginning steps toward your decision about **calling/hiring a Minister** after the Spring of 2016. I look forward to this year, and to working toward that goal together.

Meanwhile, I encourage everyone to attend services on **January 25th**. On that Sunday, our JPD District Executive, the **Rev. David Pyle, will visit UUCSJS**, deliver the message, and meet with others afterward.

Here's to a happy, healthy & forgiveness-filled New Year!

Cynthia

Rev. Cynthia's Office Hours

Wednesdays 10-2 and by appointment

Upcoming time that Rev. Cynthia will be away in Kentucky:

✈ **Thursday, January 29** through **Tuesday, February 4**

Read more of Rev Cynthia's reflections at
www.ajerseygirlinkentucky.blogspot.com

Train to Selma 50th Anniversary March 4-10, 2015



Unitarian Universalist Association Moderator Jim Key has called upon Unitarian Universalists to Return to Selma, and the Central East Regional Group (CERG) and Joseph Priestley District invite you to travel to Selma as our fellow UU's did 50 years ago.

The issues for which people marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma are still very much with us today. Voting inequality, mass incarceration, gun violence, the militarization of police, civil rights violations are as much a part of our country now as they were 50 years ago. Our country remains rooted in institutions of systemic racism.

You can read Moderator Key's Call to Return to Selma here:
www.uulivinglegacy.org/call-to-selma.html.

On the trip to the Amtrak Station in Birmingham Alabama, we will share in small group ministries the stories of those who marched and bled in Selma 50 years ago, and share our own stories in the struggle for Racial Justice. We will prepare ourselves for Marching in the Arc of Justice. On the trip home, we will plan together how we can translate the transformative experience into our work for Justice back in our congregations, in our Districts, and in our Region. The small Group Ministry program on the train will be facilitated by CERG Staff and other experienced leaders.

Find out more here:
www.cerguua.org/events-90926/cegevents-1879/647-selma.html

Board of Trustees
HIGHLIGHTS
December 2014

The **regular monthly meeting of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on Wed., December 17, 2014 at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Art Wexler presiding. Chalice lighting words were spoken, and joys and concerns shared. President Wexler made reference to the awful school shooting on Tuesday by Taliban militants at the Army Public School in Peshawar, Pakistan in which some 145 persons, mostly children, were tragically killed. He shared his anguish at humanity's failure once again to comprehend that in "taking an eye for an eye, everyone is blinded."

Jon Luoma recalled how Barbara and Jack Miller's exchange student, Mehwish, returned home to Pakistan and learned her uncle was a victim of violence there. Following a period of collective silence, the meeting commenced.

• **Announcements**

—The next **Board Talk-Back** will be held Sun., January 11 at 11:15 am in a lower level classroom.

—**JPD (Joseph Priestley District) District Assembly.** President Wexler announced that the next District Assembly, "Weaving the Fabric of Our Faith: A Tapestry of Impact, Innovation and Interconnection," will be held April 10-11, 2015 at the ACE Conference Center, 800 Ridge Pike, Lafayette, PA. ["It's an ideal place for a conference..." -TripAdvisor reviewer]

Keynote speakers will be **Mark Bernstein**, Central East Regional Group (CERG) Regional Growth Development Consultant (and UUCSJS Primary Contact), and **Patricia Infante**, CERG Faith Development Consultant. Registration and details will be available soon, according to the CERG website.

—"**H-UULTI**" courses from **CERG**. Karen York reminded us that also this spring, CERG's UU Leadership Training Institute (UULTI) will offer courses through "H-UULTI: The Hybrid / Online Team-Based Leadership School." She announced that the Philly Cluster of UU congregations, of which UUCSJS is a member, will provide tuition for two (2) participants per congregation for these classes. York said she hopes we can interest enthusiastic, newer members in signing up. More information will be forthcoming.

• **Reports**

1) **Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report showing figures for **November 2014**, as follows: **Income, \$31,188** (year to date: \$89,360), and **Expenses, \$15,710** (year to date: \$70,932), for a net of income over expenses of \$15,478 (year to date: \$31,194). "Income greatly exceeded expenses due to the successful annual auction income," the treasurer stated.

—**CC3 update.** Treasurer York reported that "the general canvass phase of the Capital Campaign 3 [CC3] has been completed, with **53 pledges totaling \$130,513.**" Although the goal of \$150,000 was not fully met, the drive is viewed as a success; extra payments to reduce mortgage principal have already reached some \$48,478, she said.

—**Auction fundraiser.** Proceeds from this year's event on Sat., November 15 have now reached \$12,990—well exceeding the budget estimate of \$11,000.

—**Other.** The treasurer said that congregant Carl Benner walked her through the process of selling our Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs), which the Finance committee has determined should be done twice a year (December and June). Through broker Flett Exchange, the eight (8) credits accumulated through May 2014 were sold for \$1,495 (with a \$2.50 processing fee for each).

—*A motion to accept the written report of Treasurer Karen York as presented was passed unanimously by those present.*

2) **Minister's Report.** In her monthly report, Rev. Cynthia

Cain said that to date she has met with about two dozen UUCSJS members, friends, and former members. In responding to the question, "Where is all this leading?" she offered two early recommendations, with more to come: **a)** that UUCSJS sponsor a 10-week course of study on "Safe Congregations," led by herself and one other, and **b)** that UUCSJS hold a workshop on "Beyond Categorical Thinking in Ministerial Transitions," led by Rev. Keith Kron, the UUA's Director of Transitions (formerly, Ministerial Settlement).

As a "heads-up" to Board members, Rev. Cain passed out copies of the UUA's three-page questionnaire, "Interim Progress Appraisal," Appendix G of the *Transitional Ministry Handbook*. This form will need to be completed at the interim minister's "mid-term," and again at "end-of-ministry."

—*A motion to accept the written report of Rev. Cynthia Cain as presented was passed unanimously by those present.*

3) **Staff & Committee Reports.** DRE Heidi Janssch informed the Board that the CRE committee plans to submit an application for Stockton student participation in construction of the children's play area, which began on Blue Jean Sunday, for Stockton's MLK Day of Service in January.

Although no Board action is indicated at this time, it was noted that alterations to the landscape, and how we manage exterior space, may have insurance or other ramifications. Thus, in her role as treasurer, Karen York agreed to see if there are insurance implications with respect to the new play area.

• **Discussion/Action Items**

1) "**Professional Expenses**" budget increase. On behalf of Music Director Barbara Miller, the treasurer requested approval to increase the Music & Sunday Services budget for "Professional Expenses" (line 77) from \$400 to \$1,200 for Fiscal Year 2014/15. The increase helps cover costs of Miller's attendance at the recent UU Musicians Network (UUMN) conference in San Diego, and the upcoming JPD Worship Arts Festival. The Board fully supports her participation in these events, and the UUA's Music Leadership Certification Program.

—*A motion to approve the amount was passed unanimously.*

2) **Disruptive Persons Policy.** On behalf of the Ad Hoc committee in this matter, Melissa Hutchison reported that after reviewing documents the group agreed that the UUA's sample "Policy Regarding Disruptive Behavior" was "perfect" for adoption as the official UUCSJS policy. The committee recommended Board approval of the policy effective at once, which is applicable to members and non-members alike.

—*A motion to approve the policy was passed unanimously.*

3) **Rev. Pyle's visit.** On Sun., January 25, 2015, the JPD District Executive, Rev. David Pyle, will deliver the sermon and remain for a luncheon meeting. The Board, Transition Team (TT), and Rev. Cain will be joined by Staff members for lunch and a discussion on goals for the interim ministry, then after a short break, the TT and Board will stay on to discuss the ministerial search process.

4) **Pachamama Alliance rental.** The treasurer requested approval to reduce the building rental fee from \$200 to \$100 for the Delaware River Valley Core Team of the Pachamama Alliance, for the purpose of hosting an "Awaken the Dreamer Symposium" on Sat., April 18, 2015.

—*A motion to approve the fee was passed unanimously.*

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

— Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of
the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on
Wednesday, January 21, 2015 at 6:30 pm
in the Lounge at the UU Center,
75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Helping to give our members and friends the information and support necessary to find their own way along their spiritual path.

Well, we find ourselves at the end of another year! My, how time seems to fly by. I hope everyone had a great holiday however you celebrated and I hope you are looking forward to a great New Year!

Have you ever wondered who and what is a Mystic? What is Mysticism? What is this deeper spiritual understanding they search for and many claim they have found? One of the programs the Adult RE has in mind to start in the spring is an **Intro to Mysticism**, which would be a Sunday, once a month, for an hour or an hour and a half lesson and discussion on such topics as "What and who are the Mystics", "Reincarnation, have we been here before?", "The Mystery Schools, what is their Secret wisdom?", and "Thomas Merton, a modern day mystic", to name a few. If this is a subject that would interest you, starting in January, there will be a sign up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary. No dates are set yet, so the sign up sheet is for you to indicate your interest -- no commitments at this time.

Just a reminder for all you journalers out there, the monthly **journaling** will resume in April, when Bob Baum returns from Florida.

Please check your UU calendars for the schedules of the on-going programs and in case of inclement weather, please contact the facilitator of that particular program to see if it is canceled.

Everyone have a great January and stay warm!

Charlie Roberts, Adult RE Chair

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Welcome to the New Year!

After the holiday rush, January can be a welcome (though chilly) return to routine. Our Sunday Children's RE classes return to their regular divisions this month, after several holiday themed lessons that combined age groups. The 7-9th grade Our Whole Lives class will return to its regular monthly schedule of three weeks of OWL and one week off (OWL on Jan 4, Jan 11, Jan 18 with Jan 25 OFF).

The Children's RE Committee has contacted Stockton in the hope that some students will volunteer their time on the Martin Luther King Day of Service helping us construct some simple play stations in our developing play space in the UU Center side property.

The committee will be hosting a potluck supper for families of children in our RE program on the evening of January 22 in the UU Center Lounge. The intention is for our RE families to have some social time to spend together without the usual rush that accompanies the time following Sunday service. Our committee hosted a similar gathering last winter and felt it was a successful and meaningful event. All RE families will receive an email invite with details and RSVP information.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Children's RE Program, feel free to contact me at sjsdre@gmail.com

In fellowship,

Heidi Jansch

UUCSJS Director of Religious Education, ACRE*

*** Associate Credentialed Director of Religious Education!**



Recycling After the Holidays

Did you receive a new smartphone or digital camera for the holidays? Did you know that UUCSJS raises funds by recycling these items through Planet Green? (planetgreenrecycle.com)

We collect and recycle:

- Inkjet Cartridges
- Cell Phones
- MP3 Players
- iPods
- iPads/Tablets
- eBook Readers
- Digital Cameras
- GPS Units
- Calculators
- PDAs
- Video Game Handhelds
- Video Games

Place your items in the small collection box **outside the sanctuary door** on the right. Additional items can be placed under the small table.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Staff

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Rev. Cynthia Cain

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Board of Trustees 2014-15

Doug Dickinson, Melissa Hutchison, Jon Luoma, Judy Pereira,
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Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

January 2015

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