



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 17, Issue 04

April 2015

April Services

“We Promise... to promote RESPONSIBILITY”

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.

April 5	<p>A TRANSYLVANIAN EASTER: An International Responsibility <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p>Since Rev. Cain's former congregation had a ten-year partnership with a small village church in Romania, she visited there four times, and helped lead services. Two years ago, she stayed for Easter. It's one of the 4 times a year when a (very) Unitarian "Communion" is held, so we will do the same. We'll celebrate in word and song. If anyone knows a Hungarian speaker who'd like to join us for the morning, that would be a huge asset!</p>
April 12	<p>Significant Choices <i>Guest minister Rev. Don Garrett</i></p> <p>The search for a new minister involves some of the most important choices a congregation can face. We'll explore strategies designed to make the process a success. NOTE: Followed by a congregational presentation on the search process with plenty of time for questions & answers. <i>Rev. Don Garrett is minister at the Lehigh Valley (PA) UU Congregation and the Ministerial Settlement Representative for our Joseph Priestley District.</i></p>
April 19	<p>LET'S GET SMALL: Responding to Climate Change as People of Faith <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p>What is our <i>responsibility</i> at this moment in time? And how can we, as individuals as well as people acting together in congregations, move forward to have an impact?</p>
April 26	<p>Responsibility: The Ability to Respond <i>Lay speaker Penny Harter</i></p> <p>Penny Harter believes that the root of “responsibility” is having the ability to respond. But before we can respond, we have to perceive: first, perception, then response-ability. Penny will share and talk about her poems that: respond to the natural world; to others---the human condition; and to events, from the everyday to the significant in her own life, with the hope that hearing them will help others cherish the planet, celebrate the everyday and/or deal with life's challenges.</p>



SAFE & HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

SESSION 3

will be offered on a **SUNDAY** and a week night.

WATCH the MidWeek Announcements for dates!

“Responsibility”

We continue our 2014-15 Worship theme, in which we focus on the UUCSJS Covenant of Right Relations.

For April we consider this promise: “To promote RESPONSIBILITY among ourselves by contributing our time, efforts, and talents in meeting the needs of the congregation; by being willing to lead and be led; and by being open to the risks of new experiences.” *How can you live out this promise in your relationships with others in UUCSJS? Do you practice responsible behavior in your dealings with others?*

Book Lovers Group will meet Friday, April 17, 7 pm at the UU Center Library. *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert tells the tale of Alma Wittaker who is born in the first year of the 19th century and lives through the Age of Enlightenment into the Industrial Revolution. The reader witnesses her span the confines of life on an estate outside Philadelphia, through a disappointing marriage (and how!), to the Island of Tahiti in search of answers to her always exacting mind. “An earthy, elegant, deeply sensual novel of daring breadth and imagination.” - *Mari Malcolm*. New members or visitors are always welcome. If you have questions contact Angela Wexler.

Margaret Circle will be held on Thursday, April 2 at 1 pm in the UU Center Library. Joys & Sorrows will be followed by a short meeting, and then Kathryn Kelley will lead a discussion based on the Reader's Digest article, “The Best Advice I Ever Got.” Plan to join in; sharing the advice you have received along your journey and how it has impacted your life. Refreshments will be offered by Debbi Dagavarian. Contact Shelee McIlvaine if you have any questions.

South Jersey Animal Advocates

If you're committed to advancing the cause of animal welfare, you're invited to join South Jersey Animal Advocates. We meet the second Wednesday of the month, 6 to 7 p.m., at the Galloway Township Library on Jimmie Leeds Road. For more information, contact Ronda Cluff or find us on Facebook or MeetUp.

Humanists Movie Night – “Letting Go of God”

Thursday, April 9, 6:30 pm

(postponed from a snowy March 5)

The South Jersey Humanists will show “Letting Go of God” on Thursday, April 9 at 6:30 pm at the UU Center. Saturday Night Live actress Julia Sweeney, in a hilarious and thoughtful monologue, tells the story of her loss of faith after a pair of Mormon missionaries try to convert her from Catholicism. We'll have a short discussion and refreshments will be served. Admission is free.

Before coming, check your closets! Donations of gently-used and new clothing will be collected for Kathleen's Closet thrift store.

More info at www.southjerseyhumanists.com or ask Michael Cluff.

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

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

The Eastern Bluebird on Spring Grass



by Penny Harter

On this spring equinox, a bluebird flits from newly green to yellow patches, flashes a rosy breast, then flies to the fencepost.

I think of you, husband—how every Easter afternoon before we were together, you went in search of Eastre, pagan goddess of spring,

tramping out into woods or fields, looking for her signs. *Fly here to my window*, I silently ask the bluebird, your talisman of rebirth,

bring me birdsong from the dead. All night I listened to sleet pinging outside my open window, pulled aside the curtains in the gray

pre-dawn light to see glistening pebbles and the silver slope of the lawn. Yet this morning every blade of grass, every bud slipping yellow from its

green stem tells me that tonight's full moon will scatter brilliant light above the clouds while the bluebird, nestled on her eggs, will warm us all.

Journaling

We're back! After the winter hiatus, the first Monday of the month is again devoted to journaling. Long-time journal writers are chomping to get started again, and newbies are always invited to get their feet wet and mix all the metaphors they can. On the hammock in Florida this winter Bob Baum was hard at work coming up with unique prompts for those in the group as well as some instructive tips for those getting started. For instance, “On your train of life, who are some of your fellow travelers who have gotten off at various stations -- how could you connect with them again?”

We start April 6, 6:30 pm in the UU Center Library. Sharpen your pencils and we'll see you there!

We are made wise not by the recollection of our past,
but by the responsibility for our future.
-- George Bernard Shaw

Until the great mass of the people shall be filled with the
sense of responsibility for each other's welfare,
social justice can never be attained.
-- Helen Keller

Most people do not really want freedom, because
freedom involves responsibility, and most people
are frightened of responsibility.
-- Sigmund Freud

Who Are We? Where Do We Come From?

It's funny. Here in my Jazzercise class, everyone calls me "Kentucky." All my T-shirts sport a UK logo, so that's my name. In Kentucky, I was that person from New Jersey. Down there, I sometimes got accused of being "too Christian" or "too theistic," so it did take me by surprise when concern was expressed that I may have alienated a Christian visitor if we'd had one last week.

If you were present in services on Stewardship Sunday, you know that we sang the song that carries the title refrain. It's called *Woyaya*. My family used to make fun of it, and say it was the perfect UU "anthem": Where did we come from? Where are we going?... as in, we are a bunch of misdirected liberal people wandering around in the world without a clear mission and a clear message.

If you were here, you also heard Paul Utts and I having a conversation based upon a list written by Rev Galen Guengerich called *Ten Things I wish Everyone Knew About Unitarian Universalism*.

www.faithstreet.com/onfaith/2015/03/17/10-things-i-wish-everyone-knew-about-unitarian-universalism/36374

What we attempted to do was to use his list, and our own beliefs and thoughts, to explicate how UUism, and the UUCSJS in particular, are indeed very much on a mission and very much places and entities with a proud past, a vibrant present, and a promising future.

One point Rev. Galen (Senior Minister at All Souls Church in NYC) made was this: *We don't believe in the God you probably don't believe in either*. He talked (as did we) about how even moderate and progressive views of faith and "God" have evolved from an anthropomorphic, one-on-one, Supreme Being to something much more abstract. He talked a great deal about how the basis for both Unitarian and Universalist heresies that were at the root of today's churches and congregations were based upon reason and rationality. Empirical evidence trumps blind faith every time.

Somewhere in there I said that, for example, I've never seen or heard of anyone *literally* getting up out the grave, even though the metaphorical story of rebirth and resurrection is extraordinarily powerful in my own life. Some may have felt that this may mean we are unwelcoming to theists or Christians. Indeed not! UU congregations contain many stripes of believers and non-believers, and theists should feel as welcome as non-theists. Most likely, a literal or fundamentalist Trinitarian would not resonate with our message. Still we ought to affirm their right to believe as they wish.

I hope you didn't feel that I was bashing Christianity. If so, I will be testing your limits in the other direction on Easter, when we will observe the Unitarian Easter as it's done in our Partner Churches in Transylvania. Hope you'll come with open minds & hearts. Bring a friend!

In faith & Hope,

Cynthia

Rev. Cain's Office Hours

Wednesdays 10-2 and by appointment

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



Art Auction!

Mark your calendars for what could bring Family Promise of Atlantic County (FPAC) the big funding it needs. On **Saturday, June 6** at **St. Mark and All Saints Episcopal Church** on Pitney Road in Galloway (just south of Jimmie Leeds), Family Promise of Atlantic County will host an art auction through Marlin Art (www.marlinart.com).

Plan on an evening of fun! Tickets are now on sale after services. For \$10, you get entry, door prizes, a chance auction, wine and cheese, hors d'oeuvres, and desserts.

Tickets will ask what specific genre of art you might be interested in, so Marlin Art can better target their audience. You will also get a specific code number so that any art you buy before or after the auction will be credited to us.

You may want to buy art at the auction, but you don't have to buy anything other than a ticket to enjoy the evening. We have the potential to make thousands of dollars for Family Promise of Atlantic County, depending on **how many people are present at the auction an hour into it**. *Your presence is important!*

We are so close to finally getting Family Promise started in Atlantic County, and this could lift us over the hump!



Stewardship Campaign: Leveraging Love

Thanks to all the facilitators for leading the sharing groups on March 22 and for everyone who participated.

So far we have collected **45 pledges (58%)** and raised **\$113,080 (69%)** toward our stewardship goal.

In recognition of those that have pledged there will be a little heart on your name tag. For those of you who have not yet pledged there will be pledge cards available near the nametags and in the order of service for the next several weeks. Please return completed cards to Karen York.

An email "pledge" can be sent to our bookkeeper at uucsjs.bookkeeper@gmail.com stating your anticipated pledge amount.

Camping in the Grove



Our **Camping in the Grove** Summer Camp is scheduled for August 9-13 this year and registration is **OPEN!** This year we have added an 8th Grade Adventure Program. Now children going into 4th through 8th

grades in September 2015 can be part of the fun! In addition, any prior campers entering 9th grade in September 2015 are encouraged to apply to become a Counselor in Training (CIT).

Details here: <http://www.murraygrove.org/#!camping-in-the-grove/c15no>

Please sign up soon, as we have a limited number of spots and they fill up fast! In addition, we have Early Bird rates for both programs; registrants can save by paying in full by May 15th. We're here to answer your questions; you can contact us at 609-693-5558, or murraygrove@murraygrove.org.

A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share in the responsibility for upholding the common good.

-- Barbara Jordan

Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity.

-- Khalil Gibran

WITH GRATITUDE TO ALL

By Debbi Dagavarian

Thank you to the members of the **Membership Committee** and our many greeters! They greet those entering our doors, extending hospitality to visitors and getting to know them. The Membership Committee's members ease visitors' introduction to Unitarian Universalism and UUCSJS, and help to integrate new members into the life of the community. They also explore ways to attract people to us, spreading liberal religion to southern New Jersey. Longtime chair **Betsy Searight** has stepped aside to allow others to take leadership in this important endeavor, and now **Debbi Dagavarian** chairs the committee. Truthfully, though, the committee would flounder without Betsy, so important is she to our mission.

Members of the committee are **Maxine Blumenthal, Nancy Brail, Paul Carbino, Debbi Dagavarian, Peg Felix, Pat Kennedy, Janet Longo, Judy Pereira, Prim Reeves, Richard Schurig, Betsy Searight, and Marie Taylor**. A special thanks goes to **Peg Felix** for organizing greeters for every Sunday.

Another special thanks goes to **Judy Pereira** for designing and creating personalized name tags.

Many members of the congregation have acted as greeters, and we thank them all for serving this way. Over the past year, the following people have served as greeters: Maxine Blumenthal, Nancy and Richard Brail, Judy Brown, Meg Bryant, Katy Cardwell, Dina DeSalvo, Doug Dickinson and Colby Tippins, Gayle Eaves, Peg and Bill Felix, Helene and Jim Gentile, Elizabeth Hall, Pam Hendrick and Jon Luoma, Robbenmarie Insogno, Pat Kennedy, Steve Hall, Patti Kenney and Ellie Gibson, Dave King, Janet Longo, Al Martens, Geri McCluskey, Theresa McReynolds, Barbara Morrell, Sue Parks and Julie Spradlin, Tracey Staab, Bud Smith, Marie and Jeff Taylor, Kim Trotto, Helen Utts, Darah and John Walther, Angela and Art Wexler, Marcia and Dan Wolfe, and Arlene Yacka.

The entire congregation can help us every Sunday by welcoming and socializing with visitors and other newcomers.

Hospitality is part of our covenant!





Yes, UUCSJS has a presence on Facebook!

For social interaction:

www.facebook.com/groups/uucsjs/



Many of you already participate in the UUCSJS Facebook “Discussion Group” (as of this writing, there are 91 who belong). This is where you see at the top of the page the group photo of us taken at our 15th Anniversary celebration on February 22. In the past two weeks you’ve seen photos of Rev. Cynthia’s Downton Abbey auction dinner, news of Penny Harter’s poem being published in newspapers around the country, Michelle Tomko talking about the Ventnor Coffee open mic night, pictures of our Fellowship Dinner that I posted, and Damon Smith giving an update on his Ugandan friend Steven.

Here is the official description of the group:

This is a page for all UUCSJS members to share while being mindful of the following tenets of our Covenant. It is Closed to the outside world, so it’s safe to share photos and have discussions about what’s happening in our beloved community. Please share with respect and as if you were talking face-to-face!

We promise:

- To foster COMMUNICATION among ourselves by providing an atmosphere of openness, honesty and safety; and by ensuring that while listening respectfully, we take care to hear every voice.
- To show RESPECT for one another by acknowledging our differences; by listening without interruption; and by remaining open-minded, humble, and patient in our interactions.
- To build TRUST in one another by behaving with integrity in our relationships; by being accountable for our actions and reactions; and by respecting confidences.

It is a **social space** where we can share news and pictures as if we are talking at coffee hour. I love to have this additional way of connecting with people that I may not have had the chance to talk to face to face! We can “check-in” with each other, share our joys and sorrows, and grow our bond.



For promotion and publicity:

www.facebook.com/uucsjs



UUCSJS also has a “public” page that represents our faith community to the general public and the outside world. This is our “Page” where we announce events and news that might draw people to learn more about us and find their home with us.

Besides posting notices of upcoming Sunday service topics, we also feature news about happenings such as fundraisers and other events that are open to the public, and news about UUism in general.

We would love it if everyone who calls UUCSJS their spiritual home would go to our “Page” and click “Like”! If you do this, you will receive the UUCSJS reminder posts in your own news feed without having to go to the UUCSJS page to view them. Plus, more people who are “UUs and don’t know it yet” might hear about us!

How Facebook works: What is the difference between our “Page” and our “Group”?

Pages allow organizations, businesses, celebrities, and brands to communicate broadly with people who like them. Pages may only be created and managed by official representatives.

Groups provide a space for people to communicate about shared interests. Groups can be created by anyone.

Pages

Privacy: Page information and posts are public and generally available to everyone on Facebook. Your aunt in California as well as a random taxi driver in Bangladesh can both find the UUCSJS page if they search for it on Facebook.

Audience: Anyone can like a Page to connect with it and get News Feed updates. There is no limit to how many people can like a Page. This includes your aunt in California and that taxi driver in Bangladesh.

Communication: People who help manage a Page can share posts from the Page. Page posts can appear in the News Feeds of people who like the Page. Page owners can check Page statistics to track the Page’s growth and activity.

Groups

Privacy: Our UUCSJS group is set to Private/Closed. You must be invited or ask to Join. Posts are only visible to other group members, unless a member decides to “Share” to the outside world.

Communication: In groups, members receive notifications by default when any member posts in the group. Group members can participate in chats, upload photos to shared albums, and invite members who are friends to group events.

Board of Trustees
HIGHLIGHTS
March 2015

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Art Wexler presiding. Chalice lighting words were chosen by Board member Doug Dickinson, and joys and concerns shared.

Before the regular meeting commenced, Board members welcomed **Rev. Don Garrett**, Minister of the UU Church of the Lehigh Valley in Bethlehem, PA, who will be serving as our **Ministerial Settlement Representative (MSR)** on behalf of the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations). This **special session** with the Board—together with a presentation to the congregation as a whole—constitute the *first step* as we begin our search for a new minister. A 19-page document handed out by Rev. Garrett, entitled “Board Responsibilities in the Ministerial Transition Process,” was reviewed during our session. After more than an hour, President Wexler thanked Rev. Garrett for his time, travel, and wise counsel, adding that we look forward to his return to UUCSJS soon to deliver the sermon and meet with congregants.

• **Announcements**

—The **Board Talk-Back** for April has been cancelled, as congregants are being invited to meet with our Ministerial Settlement Representative, Rev. Don Garrett, after he delivers the sermon that day on Sunday, April 12, 2015.

—**Joseph Priestley District’s (JPD) District Assembly**, “Weaving the Fabric of Our Faith,” takes place April 10-11, 2015 at the ACE Conference Center, 800 Ridge Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA. President Wexler has said he’s planning to attend, and is encouraging others to consider doing so.

• **Reports**

1) **Treasurer’s Report.** Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report for February, with account balances (as of 02/28/15) as follows: TD Bank Checking/Operating: \$20,001.70; TD Bank Designated: \$458.36 (of that, \$208.36 Margaret’s Circle); TD Bank Reserve (Capital): \$3,200.62 (of that, CC3 funds: \$200.62); and Fidelity Investments Reserve (Capital): \$492.31. [Total Reserve: \$3,692.93 (CC3: \$200.62)]

—**Stewardship Sunday.** An entertaining service on the importance of our pledges and UU principles was delivered on March 22, 2015 by Rev. Cynthia Cain and Paul Utts of the Stewardship team, followed by seven (7) facilitated small group “sharing circles” for appreciative inquiry and pledging. Follow-up groups will be held for two more Sundays, along with face-to-face contacts. *Thanks to Kathleen Hartnett, Betsy Searight, and Karen York, among others*, for their work in preparing for this important task.

—**Capital Campaign 3.** As previously reported, the general canvass phase of CC3 has been completed, with 53 pledges totaling \$130,513 in contributions. Special payments to mortgage principal (*representing paid pledges to date*): \$68,684 (additional \$200 pending). Our remaining mortgage principal, after a regular February installment plus the special payments: \$312,300.

—**Parking Lot lamp replacement.** The non-working light in the parking lot has been replaced with a new LED lamp that uses 80% less energy (which required retrofitting the wiring). At a cost of \$585 for just the one, further replacements (though greener and more efficient) will have to happen gradually.

—**Utility Pole incident.** The treasurer reported that on February 26, a two-car motor vehicle accident occurred on Pomona Road in which one car left the road and impacted the utility pole. The pole itself was not damaged, but our conduits were smashed. Atlantic City Electric informed us that the

conduit is “personal property,” and an insurance claim has been filed (\$1,000 deductible). Estimate for repairs, which were completed by Nor’easter Electric, LLC on March 16-17: \$2,853!

2) **Minister’s Report.** Rev. Cynthia Cain said she had nothing further beyond the monthly written report, but added that her reflections on having attended “50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday, the Selma-to-Montgomery March, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965” (as the commemoration is formally titled on the website) will be available, when finished, at: ajerseygirlinkentucky@blogspot.com

• **Discussion/Action Items**

—**April 12 “MSR-I” Service.** In preparation for our Ministerial Settlement Representative’s (MSR) service by Rev. Don Garrett on Sunday, April 12, the Board resolved to schedule a Special Board Talk-Back with the congregation as a whole on Sunday, March 29 at 11:15 am in the front of the Sanctuary during/after coffee hour.

—**Office Administrator resignation/replacement.** Rev. Cain, who also serves as supervisor of UUCSJS staff members, confirmed that our Office Administrator, Cassandra Shellhorn, has tendered her resignation effective Wednesday, April 8, due to the happy circumstance of having secured a full-time position.

The Board voted to initiate a job search process at once to secure a new part-time administrator (10 hours per week). Screening for the position is expected to begin on or about Wednesday, April 1, for a start date soon thereafter.

• **Updates**

—**Social Justice Initiative.** Board member Joe Terrazzini reported that congregants Jim Gentile and Ron Hutchison had each generously agreed to head up our newly-envisioned committee on Social Justice (based on proposals from UUA resources, as presented to the Board by Terrazzini last year).

After consideration, the Board suggested that the next step would probably be to ask Jim and Ron, themselves how they wish to proceed, and Joe agreed to contact them on this.

—**Disruptive Persons Policy/“Safe Congregations” workshops.** Rev. Cain suggested that the new Board-approved Disruptive Persons Policy probably needs to be published in the newsletter in its entirety, to assist the congregation in getting to know that this policy is out there and what it contains.

Also, Rev. Cain stated that the second (and later) workshops in the “Safe Congregations” series will now be offered *twice*—Sunday and weeknight—in order to try to build attendance for this important work of the interim period.

—**Website.** On behalf of the ad hoc Communications team, Vice President Jon Luoma distributed the 11-page “Tech Team Report” put together by Mariann Maene, and asked for input from Board members on early ideas regarding such things as *branding, color palette, website redesign, social media, logo for UUCSJS*, and more. Time constraints prevented a full discussion this evening, but the importance of the team’s work is greatly appreciated by the Board and feedback will be forthcoming.

• **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 pm.
— Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

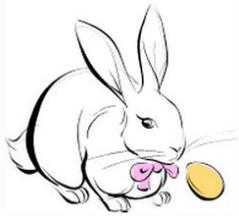
The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 6:30 pm** in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

Springtime in RE

While most people are beginning to think about spring cleaning, the Children's RE Committee is looking forward to doing some spring *planning*. The change in season (and thankfully, weather) enables us to focus on outdoor projects and activities, and so we will soon meet to plan our annual Easter Egg Hunt and Celebration which will take place during class time on Sunday, April 5. This month the committee will also be considering a third field trip for our students and their families to Forsythe Wildlife Refuge, our next steps toward completing the play area in the UU Center yard, and our annual Murray Grove Retreat (slated for June 12-14).

Our regularly scheduled classes continue to be well attended and full of energy each Sunday. As ever, class assistants are an integral part of our program, and volunteers from the congregation are encouraged to sign up to assist our dedicated teachers each week. See me or send an email to sjsdre@gmail.com if you are available to serve in this important role one Sunday; you might just learn something (and have fun at the same time!)

In Fellowship,
Heidi Jansch, UUCSJS Director of Religious Education



Easter Egg Hunt and Celebration Sunday, April 5, 2015 (during RE classes)

UUCSJS 7th ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SWAP – BEGIN POTTING NOW!

April is the time to pot-up your extra native plants for the 7th Annual Native Plant Swap on Saturday, May 9 at our center. Are you new to our congregation and wondering what is involved in a native plant swap? Here's how it works: participants who bring two native plants to cover the price of admission can swap up to 10 additional plants. Participants without plants to swap may purchase up to three plants for \$2 each. The event focuses on native, non-invasive perennials, shrub and tree seedlings, as well as non-invasive species beneficial to butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife.

The swap allows us to promote more backyard habitat in South Jersey by providing local gardeners with a source of inexpensive native plants. The Plant Swap will take place, rain or shine, on May 9 from 9 am to 2 pm. Plant drop-off hours are 4 to 6 pm on May 8 and 8 to 10 am on May 9. For more information, including a FAQ flyer and step-by-step guide to the swap, go to www.uucsjs.org or pick up a flyer at the Fair Trade table.

Of Kiddie Pools and Shopping Bags

By Barbara Miller

I don't remember what circuitous path found me on Larry Hall's Facebook page a couple of weeks ago. Larry is a gardener from Brainerd, Minnesota. He has thousands of followers now who ascribe to his Kiddie Pool Shopping Bag Hybrid Garden method.

It has two features that appeal to me: cheap and lazy. I don't mean to say that kiddie pools or shopping bags are inherently lazy, but I surely am. I don't actually enjoy being hot, sweaty, and dirty – which is how I think of gardening. The cheap part shouldn't surprise anyone that knows me.

You will need the following ingredients for the Kiddie Pool method.

- kiddie pool
- reusable shopping bags or GrowBags
www.growbaggardensystems.com/collections/all
- potting soil or Ecosoil available by the truckload or in bags at ACUA
- plants or seeds

Optional:

- pea gravel
 - mosquito dunks www.amazon.com/Summit-111-5-20-Pack-Mosquito-Dunk/dp/B0002568YA
1. Get a kiddie pool and decide where you want your garden. The site should get 6-8 hours of sunlight daily. Punch holes in the sides of the pool about 3 inches up from the ground for drainage.
 2. Fill your shopping bags with potting soil to a couple of inches from the top. If you are concerned about the small amount of lead in some shopping bags, do some research. Most of the concerns seem to be from several years ago. Here is a list of shopping bags and amounts of lead. www.consumerfreedom.com/downloads/cf_bag_report.pdf
 3. Plant your vegetables or seeds in the bags as you normally would in the ground.
 4. Place the bags in the kiddie pool. Fill around the bags with a couple of inches of pea gravel or river rock if desired. This will help prevent algae and mosquitos. If you don't wish to buy the gravel/rock, you could use mosquito dunks.
 5. Water your seeds/plants from the bottom or the top, following the recommendations from the seed pack or the nursery.

I see all kinds of advantages to the bag system. You can put these anywhere – on a deck or in your driveway. There is no digging, less watering, and voles cannot eat the roots. A disadvantage for some people is the appearance of the bags. I have looked at so many pictures of bag gardens on the internet, that it now looks normal to me! I will let you know how this experiment turns out.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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Rev. Cynthia Cain

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Board of Trustees 2014-15

Doug Dickinson, Melissa Hutchison, Jon Luoma, Judy Pereira,
Joe Terrazzini, Art Wexler, Karen York

Newsletter – Mariann Maene – newsletter@uucsjs.org

Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

April 2015

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