



# NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the  
South Jersey Shore



Volume 17, Issue 12

December 2015

## December Services

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

<p><b>December 6</b></p>	<p><b>When Holiday “Cheer” Isn’t: A Look at Addictions Today</b> <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p>Addiction is actually something that affects every one of us. In Buddhism, <i>tanha</i> -- or "grasping," "thirst," "desire" -- is that which brings suffering. We talk about alcoholism and drug addiction, even food or gambling as if they are “diseases” and these people are separate from the rest of us, yet in reality, we all suffer from desire, and it is somewhere along the continuum that addiction begins to destroy lives. As we head into the winter months, and the holiday seasons, a sober and spiritual look at this universal problem.</p>
<p><b>December 13</b></p>	<p><b>Beloved Conversations</b> <i>Rev Cain, Heidi Jansch, Barbara Miller</i></p> <p>Since we have posted our Black Lives Matter sign, we've done a great deal of outreach in the community. “Beloved Conversations” is inreach -- talking with one another about the challenges and rewards of recognizing and overcoming White Privilege. Please attend on this day, and become part of a project that will last until Valentine's Day!</p>
<p><b>December 20</b></p>	<p><b>Science of Christmas</b> <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p>Today will be a fun and lighthearted look at holiday traditions and how they began, and a celebration of how science, math, and even physics play a part in the ways we celebrate this festive time of year. Come, enjoy, and be merry!</p>
<p><b>December 24 5:30 pm</b></p>	<p><b>Traditional Christmas Eve for All Ages</b> <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p><i>Carols, readings, and the traditional stories of Christmas. Bring the relatives! The service will be one hour or less... no sermon! A beautiful way to pause and honor the season of Peace and Joy.</i></p>
<p><b>December 27</b></p>	<p><b>Book of Questions</b> <i>Lay leaders Helene Gentile and Margaret Rea</i></p> <p>Come join us for an informal service where we ponder the answers to questions both lighthearted and profound.</p>

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, AFTER THE SERVICE

*To elect new Board member Damon Smith*

*A quorum of 30% of members must be present. With membership at 119, this means that at least 36 members are needed for a vote.*

## CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Happy Holidays from Children's Religious Education

Our children and teachers did a wonderful job last month practicing the new emergency evacuation procedure. By the time the congregation-wide drill happened on November 22, the kids were able to exit quickly, calmly and efficiently. The RE program is grateful to the Safety Team (especially Shelee McIlvaine and Jesse Connor) for helping the congregation assemble the emergency evacuation plan, a much-needed element in making UUCSJS a safe congregation.

Religious education classes will continue with their regularly scheduled Sunday morning programming throughout December. The 2-6 grade and teen classes will be enjoying bonus time with their teachers TJ and Mariann, who have volunteered to spend another month with their classes. Thanks to them, and to Karen and Meredith for their continued dedication to the RE program this year!

In addition to our regular programming, there are two special events this month. Our teens will be volunteering some time in December on a service project at the UU Center, coordinated by Jesse Connor. Later in the month, our families are invited to attend the Christmas Eve service at UUCSJS (check the front of the newsletter for exact time.)

Wishing you peace and happiness during this joyful time of year!

In Fellowship,

Heidi Jansch

*Associate Credentialed Director of Religious Education*

**Margaret Circle** ... Kathryn Kelley will be hosting the second annual Margaret Circle pot luck lunch, at her home in Linwood on Thursday, December 3, 2015 at 1 pm. RSVP Kathryn to let her know what dish you will bring, and for driving directions. Let us begin this Winter Season in the company of friends and good cheer!

### From the Safety Team

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Evacuation Drill on Sunday, November 22. A special thank you to those that volunteered to work as Monitors including Heidi, Karen, TJ, Mariann and Meredith-with the children and Jesse, Michael, Paul, Kit, Reverend Cynthia and Richard in the Sanctuary. Please know that more "trained" monitors are needed and everyone is encourage to learn the simply tasks that could get us all out of the building safely in time of an emergency.

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**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!



## What's new with Family Promise of Atlantic County?

### Tree of Promise

A Christmas "Tree of Promise" will be in our lobby throughout December for you to select items on it for donations to our congregation's supplies for Family Promise hosting weeks. Please remove your printed selection(s) from the tree, replace it with an ornament (provided) and fulfill it by bringing that item and placing it under the tree.

### From the Ministerial Search Committee: Congregational Survey Results

Thank you to all who participated in our Congregational Survey. The results were sent out in the Midweek Announcements on November 26, and are also available on the Members area of the UUCSJS website (the latter requires a password to view).

We have shared two documents with you:

- PowerPoint slide show of results (quantitative items and summarized qualitative items) that was presented to the congregation after Service on Sunday, November 15
- complete survey results that will be included in our Informational Packet for ministerial candidates.

The latter document includes some narrative highlights and explanation of selected results. In order to preserve confidentiality, written responses to open-ended comments are summarized but not presented in detail in these documents.

Please let us know if you have any questions about the survey. Please save the date for the **Beyond Categorical Thinking** workshop on January 10, 2015.

Thank you again for your active participation in our Ministerial Search process.

Your MSC: Angela Wexler, Betsy Erbaugh, Betsy Searight, Jack Miller, Jim Gentile, Marsha Hannah, Paul Utts

Yesterday was Black Friday, and my daughter texted me from California. “If I buy something online, will I be an evil person?”

I texted her back: “Yes.”

Of course, she will not. I was in a hurry, but that was the only answer I could give in a moment.

In fact, Seth and I went to the *Peanuts* movie, and we bought some popcorn. So I spent about \$14 on *Buy Nothing Day*. Later I read how thousands of protesters filled the streets of Chicago, interfering with Black Friday shopping as they demanded accountability in the shooting of Laquan McDonald. Each person who decided to go out on that cold, damp day was only one, but their witness made a difference. *Buy Nothing Day* has been around for a long time, but like recycling, reusable water bottles, shopping bags and many other changes made by consumers, it has to start somewhere. We are running out of time, and we humans must impact the environment ourselves, as the corporate world will never do so.

I had a few revelations here at home in Kentucky. A well-known author and one of my teachers, Silas House (<http://www.silashouse.org/>) posted that it upset him that people were so judgmental about Black Friday, because his family always got so excited about it, and he remembered as a young father that he could only afford gifts that way. Now he is a vocal and prominent advocate against strip mining and its devastation. It seems to me that he’s letting his nostalgia and his loyalty get in the way of what is just right.

I did the same thing. Our former poet laureate, Frank X Walker (<http://www.frankxwalker.com/>) – I’ve read his poems to you – posted about the mural in the University of Kentucky’s Memorial Hall that is to be covered up (<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/university-of-kentucky-to-cover-controversial-campus-mural/>) and I replied on Facebook: “But Wendell Berry’s mother-in-law’s sister painted that in the 1930s. Dee always told me that her sister wasn’t racist at all.” He and others replied that her intent didn’t matter now. What mattered was that it made Black students feel shamed and dismissed every time they passed it. Upon reflection, I saw that. I understood.

This holiday, may mindfulness and love, for one another, for our fragile earth, and for our sisters and brothers upon it, guide our words and our actions, and may we never be afraid to say, “I’m sorry.”

Rev. Cynthia

## Rev. Cain’s Office Hours

Wednesdays 10-2 and by appointment

Read more of Rev Cynthia’s reflections at  
[www.ajerseygirlinkentucky.blogspot.com](http://www.ajerseygirlinkentucky.blogspot.com)



**Murray Grove says,  
2015 has been one  
amazing year because of  
the generosity of many  
supporters!**

**60+ diverse groups warmly welcomed  
throughout the year!**

Many UU congregations and groups hold their board leadership retreats and meetings at Murray Grove. A wide array of community organizations, environmental groups, and interfaith groups also offer their programs and gatherings at Murray Grove.

Your generous gift of support made between now and December 31st will enable even more groups to be welcomed to Murray Grove, provide even greater benefit to the local community, and further enhance our historical Universalist site in 2016.

Give to the dreams! Donate here:

<http://www.murraygrove.org/#!/donations/cgxy>

Imagine your generosity helping to...

- bring 50 more children to Camping in the Grove for its 5th year!
- welcome 60 youth for a creative new Coming of Age retreat, funded in part by the NY State Convention of Universalists and the Unitarian Sunday School Society.
- install 19 new plumbing fixtures plus 2 ADA bathrooms proposed for the Friendrich Guest House renovation.
- move 1 member of the staff from part-time to full-time with benefits!
- offer 10 more music and arts programs.
- plan for Murray Grove's 250th anniversary celebration in 2020!

# Board of Trustees

# HIGHLIGHTS

## November 2015

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Art Wexler presiding. Also present were Damon Smith, nominee for At-Large member of the Board; ex-officio Board member, Rev. Cynthia Cain; and for the first item on the agenda, MSC (Ministerial Search Committee) Chair, Jim Gentile.

### • Ministerial Search Committee Report

President Wexler thanked Jim Gentile for keeping us up to date with his monthly written reports, and also coming in person. Gentile reported that our Ministerial Settlement Rep is currently reviewing our Congregational Record, and thanked Treasurer Karen York for providing ample financials. Results of the recent survey will be shared with the congregation this Sunday, he said, and "MSC Talk-Backs" are to be scheduled. The committee expects the completed "ministerial information packet" to be ready for online posting on January 3. (The Board has to supply three things for this information packet: a draft contract, an introductory letter from the president, and when adopted, UUCSJS guidelines on screening practices, also called "Responsible Staffing.") Finally, the MSC will confer this week with the UUA facilitator who will lead our early January congregational workshop on "Beyond Categorical Thinking."

### • Announcements

There will be a brief **Special Congregational Meeting** on Sunday, December 6 at 11 am to elect an At-Large member of the Board to replace Joe Terrazzini, who resigned in October.

The next **Board Talk-Back** will be held on Sunday, December 13 at 11:15 am in a downstairs classroom.

The president circulated a clipping from **Press of Atlantic City**, "Voice of the People," November 6. In a letter from the head of the Mainland/Pleasantville NAACP, UUCSJS and Rev. Cain were applauded for putting up our BLM banner and then, despite its defacement, holding "steadfast in supporting those who have suffered excessive force by some police personnel."

### • Reports

**1) Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report for November, which showed account balances (10/31) as follows: TD Checking (Operating funds): \$21,903.58; TD Savings (CC3 Capital funds): \$360.16; and Fidelity/Capital Reserves: \$4,793.47.

—**Auction 11/7:** as of 11/8 earnings were \$9,101, well below last year (\$13,370), and below budget (\$12,500). However, there are still unsold items and events that can increase the final total.

—**Stewardship:** the Finance committee has started planning for the spring annual campaign earlier than ever before. It will be held amidst some uncertainty, while our search for a called minister is still in progress.

—**Mortgage/CC3:** prepayment of principal with CC3 funds has resumed with \$2,557.68 paid in October; current principal balance on our mortgage is \$256,573.28. All bridge loans around refinancing have been satisfied, as previously reported. "We still anticipate approximately \$22,300 for payments to CC3 pledges," the treasurer noted; "\$20,000 of that is scheduled for 2016."

**2) Minister's Report.** Board members duly received Rev. Cain's written report for November. The main item remaining for this evening, she added, was asking the Board to affirm formal sponsorship of the year-long series of events being organized as "Black Lives Matter AC: *Beyond the Slogan*," to be held at the Asbury United Methodist Community Center in Atlantic City. The Board confirmed ongoing support of the BLM movement and readily agreed that UUCSJS be listed as "Sponsor" of the events.

The Board understands that there is no financial obligation, although strong volunteer support has been forthcoming and is expected to continue.

**3) Staff & Committee Reports.** Most matters raised by this month's reports are covered elsewhere on the agenda. However, it was noted for the record that the Membership committee reports that UUCSJS now has 119 members (down from 124 on 10/1/14 and 132 on 1/15/15). By the time of annual UUA certification on February 1—in advance of which inactive members are taken off the rolls—membership could be below 110, the report concluded.

### • Discussion/Action Items

**SJ Humanists request.** As requested by congregant Michael Cluff and South Jersey Humanists, the Board voted to approve use of the UU Center and waiver of building rental fee for a late-afternoon event on Sunday, January 24, featuring American Atheists' President David Silverman as guest speaker.

**Family Promise (FP) request.** As requested by congregant Janet Longo and our UU FP team, the Board voted to approve use of the UU Center and waiver of building rental fee for a Wine Tasting fundraiser to benefit Family Promise of Atlantic County, led by personnel from White Horse Wine & Spirits, at a date and time early in 2016 to be determined.

### • Updates/Follow-Up

**Building/Grounds Security.** The president provided an update on the Safety & Security initiatives undertaken with Board support and approval, as follows: an audio/video intercom system has been installed between the front porch entry and downstairs office; the malfunctioning kitchen door lock has been replaced; new push-bars have been installed on Sanctuary doors to the outside deck; and finally, installation by the Men's Group of surveillance cameras donated by Paul Utts was postponed until Saturday, 11/21 due to rain.

**Outdoor Smoking Policy.** In the absence of Board member Melissa Hutchison, who volunteered to research and offer recommendations on UUCSJS smoking policy, this matter was deferred until the December Board meeting.

**"Black Lives Matter" (BLM) Initiative.** Reporting on behalf of the Anti-Racism Task Force, Rev. Cynthia commented that our work in helping to develop a year-long series of discussion events with Asbury United Methodist and others has been rewarding. In the process we are learning a lot about our neighbors in Atlantic City, she said, some hearing about the BLM movement for the first time. President Wexler observed that it feels significant that we now have more of a presence outside our own congregation.

**Social Justice (SJ) Committee.** Vice President Jon Luoma reported on his conversation with congregant Ron Hutchison regarding leadership of Social Justice. While Ron still has questions about how the new SJ committee model will actually work in practice, he has agreed to start talking to some folks and putting together a group of three or four in order to move forward. Board members noted that there are valuable resources available from the UUA offering advice and guidelines on SJ for small congregations such as UUCSJS.

*As always, there was more on the agenda than can be covered in these short "Highlights" of the meeting.*

• **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

— Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Tuesday, December 8, 2015 at 6:30 pm** in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

# WITH GRATITUDE TO ALL

By Ronda Cluff

## Communications

The Communications Team gathers and shares information in all the myriad ways needed to reach friends, members and the public in support of our congregation and our programs, services and special events.

**Mariann Maene**, a vital member of our Web/Social Media Task Force, has composed and edited our monthly newsletter since 2001 and she's the point person for all things web-based. Among her many contributions, she created, maintains and is revising our website (uucsjs.org) and she created and helps to maintain the members-only webspace (members.uucsjs.org). She updates our Facebook page with notices for special events and our Sunday services (sometimes spending hours online looking for just the right picture to accompany the description). She and **Michael Cluff** maintain our UUCSJS mailing list.

**Betsy Erbaugh** participates actively on the Web/Social Media Task Force and she plays a key role in helping to renovate the website and gather content. Betsy is a liaison between Communications/Website/Social Media and leadership (especially the Children's RE committee, Program Council, and the Ministerial Search Committee) to match needs with the right resources and strategy. She also posts content to our "public" Facebook page and the UUCSJS Facebook Discussion Group.

**Michael Cluff** serves on the Web/Social Media Task Force and advises on website usability. He helps to maintain the UUCSJS Facebook pages and groups, and the congregation's Twitter feed. He posts videos to our Youtube channel, worked on the development of our logo and designed the Black Lives Matter banner. Michael also designs congregational surveys and manages the SurveyMonkey tool we use to implement the surveys.

**Ronda Cluff** has handled public relations and publicity for Sunday services, programs and events since joining the congregation about 10 years ago. When we have a newsworthy event or story, she contacts the various newspapers. She knows many of our local reporters. When a reporter is doing a story, Ronda is our spokesperson. She also supports the Membership Committee by writing new member bios.

Along with Michael, Mariann and Betsy, the Web/Social Media Task Force includes

**Elizabeth Hall, John Walther,  
Charlie Roberts, and Jon  
Luoma as the Board liaison.**



**Saturday, December 19, 2015  
2 pm**

## Origin of Separation of Families

**Speaker: Ralph E. Hunter, Sr.**  
**Founder, African American Heritage Museum  
in Newtonville, NJ and at the Noyes Arts  
Garage, Atlantic City**

Read about Mr Hunter here:

[blog.nj.com/iamnj/2008/03/ralph\\_hunter.html](http://blog.nj.com/iamnj/2008/03/ralph_hunter.html)

What is the historical reason for today's mostly female-led black families? What are the social and economic results of this phenomenon?

This is one of a series of race-related topics sponsored by Black Lives Matter AC. Each event lasts from 2 to 5 pm, with the main presentation at about 2:30. The Asbury UMC Community Center is located at 1213 Pacific Avenue between North Carolina and South Carolina Avenues, with off-street parking (please carpool) on S. Chalfonte Ave. behind the Community Center. There will be entertainment (poetry, spoken word, music) by Atlantic City youth; childcare; and refreshments.

Please mark your calendars for the  
**third Saturday** of each month!

## Transgender Day of Remembrance November 20, 2015

This year violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people claimed at least 21 lives nationally, and more globally. Many more incidences of murder and violence against transgender people go unreported.

The 2014 LGBTQ and HIV-affected Hate Violence Report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Projects shows that, of the victims murdered, 80% were people of color, 55% were transgender women, and 50% were transgender women of color.

For more information see [TDOR \(tdor.info\)](http://tdor.info).



# Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

## Staff

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Rev. Cynthia Cain  
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**Associate Credentialed Director of Religious Education**

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## Board of Trustees 2015-16

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Melissa Hutchison, Jon Luoma, Judy Pereira, Charlie Roberts,  
[vacancy], Art Wexler, Karen York

Newsletter – Mariann Maene – newsletter@uucsjs.org

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

**December 2015**

**Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of the South Jersey Shore  
P.O. Box 853  
Pomona, NJ 08240**

