



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 18, Issue 1

January 2016

January 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.

January 3	<p align="center">Peaceful Dissent As a Spiritual Path <i>Lay speaker Deb Dagavarian</i></p> <p align="center">What are the ways in which marches and rallies for social justice offer spiritual gratification?</p>
January 10	<p align="center">Beyond Categorical Thinking <i>Guest speaker Carol Carter Walker and the Ministerial Search Committee</i></p> <p>Try this: close your eyes and imagine a minister. Was it a person of a particular gender, race, or age? Without becoming aware of our preconceptions and biases, we could potentially overlook the person who would be the best match for us. Beyond Categorical Thinking is a program designed to promote inclusive thinking and help prevent unfair discrimination in the search process for a new minister.</p>
January 17	<p align="center">New Year REVOLUTIONS <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p align="center">Let's forget the old tired resolutions we never keep. What do we need to stand up FOR and stand AGAINST, starting today, and HOW do we do it?</p>
January 24	<p align="center">The Geese Are Flying Low <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p align="center">A look at mental illness and how we as UUs can normalize our conversations around it.</p>
January 31	<p align="center">Let Us Pray (Please?) <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p align="center">I think we all know by now that prayer is good for your health. So... how can UUs, with our theologies, and lack thereof, all over the map, agree on a way to pray? A good conversation for a congregation in search!</p>

BEYOND CATEGORICAL THINKING

Sunday, January 10

After the service and concluding by 2:30 pm

Lunch will be provided! Sign-up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary.

Childcare will be available downstairs to any parents who need it (contact Jim Gentile if you do).

More details on Page 5.

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The New Year in Children's Religious Education

Our teens wrapped up 2015 with a service project focused on preparing the UU Center for our Family Promise involvement. On Friday, December 4, they spent the evening painting the downstairs hall closet (and themselves), and creating an art installment for the downstairs lounge. Thanks to Jesse Connor for organizing and TJ Jansch for helping with touch-up.



The teens collaborate on their art installation.

As we welcome in the new year, our religious education classes will continue with their regularly scheduled Sunday morning programming. The 2-6 grade class will now be led by Jess Safanof, and the teens will welcome back Michael Cluff for the next few months.

Our Children's RE Committee meets the first Sunday of each month; if you are interested in serving on this committee, volunteering in RE classes one Sunday, or have any questions about our RE Program, feel free to contact me at sjsdre@gmail.com. You can also visit the Children's RE blog at sjsdre.wordpress.com for the latest news.

In Fellowship, Heidi Jansch
UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

Margaret Circle... As the winter days begin to settle in, we look forward to seeing each other once again on Thursday, January 7 at 1 pm.

After our session of Joys and Concerns, we will have a short meeting. We will be surprised and delighted by the refreshment offerings from Debbi Dagavarian. Kathryn Kelley will lead us in a discussion she has titled "The Expanding Definition of Prayer." Her thoughts and reflections come from an article by UU-World writer Lise Funderburg titled, "How We Pray." All the women of the Congregation are welcome to join us. Please consider presenting a topic for the March, May or June meeting.

Book Lovers Group ... meets Friday, January 15, 7 pm at the UU Center Library.

This month's selection is *Blood, Bones & Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef*, by Gabrielle Hamilton. Before Hamilton opened her acclaimed NY restaurant Prune, she spent 25 hard-living years trying to find purpose and meaning in her life.. Judy Pereira will be leading our discussion and you are welcome to join us !!



What's new with Family Promise of Atlantic County?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Items will be needed to fill baskets for a **silent auction fundraiser coming up in April** so please bring in your donations of appreciated but unwanted holiday gifts from Gramps and Aunt Phyllis! Items need to be in *great shape* or *new*. \$2000 was raised the last time we did this during the art auction!

On behalf of FPAC, UUCSJS will be hosting a **Wine Education fundraising event** on Thursday, **February 4**. Watch for more information, but mark your calendar now!

We will be having another fundraising **SOUPER BOWL soup sale** in our library on **February 7 and 14**. Look for the sign-up clip boards! Stock up on your supplies and leave room in your freezer!

Our 'Tree of Promise' has been a huge success and we still are in need of items. Please continue to help prepare us to host Atlantic County families in need. Items need not be brand new, but in great shape, and will continue to be collected **throughout January**. You may ask Kathleen Hartnett for a tax receipt.

A HUGE note of gratitude for everyone's support in our congregational decision and preparedness to host for Family Promise of Atlantic County.

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!

As I write this, on New Year's Day, it is a joy to think of all that will be so different for us by this time next year! I met with a member of my former congregation here last week, when I attended an open mic at the *Wild Fig Books & Coffee*, and he didn't say much about their new, YOUNG minister, except that they are having trouble finding room for everyone! Of course this made me very happy, and I expect the same for you. New and enthusiastic ministers always bring energy, creativity, and joy. I feel that UUCSJS is truly ready for this step forward. So, I rejoice with you.

For me, it looks as if I shall return to Kentucky, barring any unforeseen events. It's time for me to spend more time with Seth, and to get back to my writing. I mentioned the *Wild Fig*, because its owners are a vital part of the newly burgeoning arts and literary scene in Lexington, and while the life of a writer is, by definition, a lonesome one, there is truly a need for support and companionship as well. So, I'm excited to join Ron & Crystal and other awesome Kentucky artists (some of whom I've shared with you via readings and message) at workshops, open mics, and get this... SALONS! (something that I have dreamed of for eons...in Kentucky, no less.) Roll on over to their Facebook page or website to see where I'll be hanging out (www.facebook.com/thewildfigbooks/). I even ended 2015 with a real risky maneuver: reading something I'd written at the open mic. While it didn't bring down the house, no rotten tomatoes were thrown. Enough about me!



Where I will be one year from now!

So... with about one half year for us together, there are some things on my wish list as well as some serious duties to accomplish together with you. This month, I will be setting some goals with Staff, talking with the leadership about what priorities should be, and rolling out a few topics on the "change" roster: Revolution instead of resolution (see January 17 service description); normalizing mental "illness"; and what do UUs think/say/do about prayer? (Hint: the answer is NOT run!)

A reminder: I've taken some extra leave time, so please be patient if you are trying to reach me other than emergencies. I'll be back and on duty around the 15th of January.

Rev. Cain's Office Hours

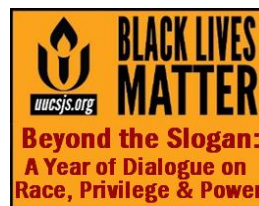
Wednesdays 10-2 and by appointment

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

AND... our THIRD in the BLACK LIVES MATTER: BEYOND THE SLOGAN series is Saturday, January 16 (details below) so please mark your calendars for 2 pm and meet us at Asbury United Methodist in Atlantic City! Topic is Domestic Violence.

Love & Happiest of New Years to All,

Cynthia



**Saturday, January 16
2 pm**

Domestic Violence

Panelists:

- Henry M. White, Jr., Chief of Police, Atlantic City
- Councilman Kaleem Shabazz, 3rd Ward, Atlantic City
- Darren Palmer, Assistant Principal, Vineland High School
- Valeria Marcus, Artist, Photographer, Social Worker, AC
- Cory Young, Youth Advocate, Certified Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Counselor
- Tamu King-Lewis, Therapist, Atlantic County Women's Center and Author of *Finally Free*

Black Lives AC Presents



Henry White



Kaleem Shabazz



Darren Palmer



Valeria Marcus



Cory Young



Tamu King-Lewis

DOMESTIC ABUSE PANEL

Hosted By Joshua Armah & Dr. Christina Jackson

Board of Trustees

HIGHLIGHTS

December 2015

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on **Tuesday, December 8, 2015** at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Art Wexler presiding. Also present for the first item on the agenda, Jim Gentile, MSC Chair. Ex-officio Board member, Rev. Cynthia Cain was delayed at a core planning team meeting in Atlantic City with the "Black Lives Matter—AC" coalition.

• Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) Report

President Wexler welcomed Jim Gentile and confirmed that Board action on **guidelines for screening ministerial candidates** would be needed immediately in order to include the policy in our Informational Packet for viewing by candidates seeking minister positions, to be ready online in early January. Gentile indicated that this could be approached by adopting "as-is" the UUA recommendations found in the document "**Responsible Staffing**," followed later by review of the provisions to tailor them for UUCSJS. President Wexler observed that there are strong ethical reasons to put such guidelines in place in addition to the legal protections afforded by these practices.

Before leaving, Gentile described plans for the **Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop** to be held on **Sunday, January 10** immediately following the service. *The congregation is urged to participate, and child care and lunch will be provided.*

• Announcements

Welcome to new Board member. The president officially welcomed new At-Large Board member Damon Smith, elected Sunday, December 6 at a meeting called for that purpose. Damon will serve out the remainder of Joe Terrazzini's term until June 30, 2016, after which he may agree to run in his own right for as many as three (3) full two-year terms.

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

Secretary's absence. The secretary stated that she will be out of the country at the time of the 2016 Board meeting scheduled for April 12, and Vice President Jon Luoma has generously agreed to cover the meeting in her absence.

• Reports

1) Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report for December, with account balances (11/30) as follows: TD Checking (Operating funds): \$21,050.43; TD Savings (CC3/Capital funds): \$2,165.21 (CC3 \$1,915.16); and Fidelity/Capital Reserves: \$2,788.50.

—**Service Auction on 11/7:** as of 11/30 earnings stand at \$9,274, below last year (\$13,370) and below budget (\$12,500). There are still some unsold items, along with seats at events that will be sold as their dates draw nearer.

—**Stewardship:** the treasurer reported that the Finance committee is already at work discussing how best to conduct the spring budget campaign, with possible new ways for canvassing, etc.

—**Ministerial Search:** the Negotiating Team (John Searight, Paul Utts, Karen York), has prepared a draft contract and proposed a minister salary + housing in the high-middle \$52,000 range; total cost for ¾-time ministry (with all called minister benefits) would be about \$75,000. (In addition, moving expenses are estimated at \$5,000.)

—**Mortgage/CC3:** prepayment of principal with CC3 funds continues with \$1,915.16 paid December 1; the current principal balance on our mortgage is \$253,929.93.

2) Minister's Report. In Rev. Cain's absence the president noted that in her December report, Cynthia wrote that she would

like to take two weeks of leave in January in addition to her regular week off, and therefore would be away from December 26 until about January 15; she made clear that she can still be reached by phone and email. The Board registered that there are no objections to this proposal.

3) Staff & Committee Reports. The secretary reported no requests for Board action from this month's reports.

• Discussion/Action Items

Ministerial Search – UUA Guidelines on Screening Practices. The Board determined to act on this matter and the following motion carried unanimously: "that the Board of Trustees adopt as UUCSJS policy the UUA recommendations given in *Guidelines on Screening Practices for Use by Unitarian Universalist Association Organizations When Adding Clergy, Professional Leaders, Staff, and Volunteers* (also called 'Responsible Staffing'); the recommendations are accepted as written, with the intent to revisit them in detail at a later date."

AED (Defibrillator). As described by At-Large Board member Charlie Roberts, there may be an opportunity for UUCSJS to acquire an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) through the AtlanticCare Heart Heroes AED Matching Funds Program at one half the AED's approximately \$1,400 price tag. Accordingly, Charlie offered to obtain the necessary application for UUCSJS, and it was suggested that the needed funds (about \$700) be raised quietly through individual donations, if possible.

BLM "Sign Saviors." The Board determined to provide cards for the whole congregation to sign as a token of our thanks to Bob Baum, Steve Fiedler, and TJ Jansch for their expertise to repair our Black Lives Matter sign after it was vandalized first on September 2, then knocked down on November 25. [There has now been a third act of vandalism, of course; on December 22 the sign was defaced again with white spray paint.]

• Updates/Follow-Up

Building/Grounds Security. The Board noted that the evacuation drill held on Sunday, November 22 went very well, especially with respect to children in RE, who had been carefully instructed. The Board offers special thanks to Shelee McIlvaine, Jesse Connor, Heidi Jansch, TJ Jansch, and all the others who were instrumental in planning and conducting this important practice exercise.

Outdoor Smoking Policy. It was noted that putting such policy in place is important to the congregation as a whole, not just for guidance to guests staying at the UU Center as part Family Promise (FP); the policy request originated with our FP team. Board member and physician Melissa Hutchison has offered to work on this matter after the first of the year.

"Black Lives Matter" (BLM) Initiative. After her delayed arrival at the Board meeting, Rev. Cain reported that she is thinking about seeking a substantial grant through the UUA to fund our anti-racism outreach work, including sponsorship of the year-long series of events together with Asbury United Methodist Church and others, to explore issues of mutual concern. As a non-profit organization, UUCSJS could function as fiscal agent in funding the local coalition, she said.

Social Justice (SJ). Between now and the next meeting, Board members were asked to come up with names of people who might serve on our revamped SJ committee. It was suggested that the Nominations committee be asked, too.

• **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.

– Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 6:30 pm** in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

WITH GRATITUDE TO ALL

By Betsy Searight

With Gratitude to all who have taken leadership roles of the groups which enrich our community.

You make the UUCSJS a good place to be!

The Caring Team – This group identifies those in our community who are having a difficult time with health or other issues, and in coordination with our minister, makes contact by phone and cards, and does what needs to be done to help.

*Carolyn Baum,
Theresa McReynolds,
Darah Walther,
Jessica Dunn*
- Caring Team members



Circle Dinners – These dinners are overseen by the Membership Committee, and give us an opportunity to get to know each other better as we enjoy a meal together.

Marie Taylor – coordinator for the past four years

Interweave – Interweave is a support program for those who are in the LGBTQ community, and their friends and supporters. In addition to providing friendship and support, they are an advocacy group for LGBTQ rights.

Sheila Stoner, Richard Schurig – coordinators

Book Lovers Group – Each month the group reads and then discusses a book which they have chosen at the end of the previous year.

Barbara Morell – current coordinator
Angela Wexler, Judy Pereira - past coordinators

Margaret Circle – A group of women who meet one afternoon a month to renew friendship and the joys and concerns of their lives, share a dessert, and discuss a planned topic.

Shelee McIlvaine - coordinator for past two years
Judy Brown, Arlene Yacka - recent past coordinators

Men's Group – Meets monthly and shares the joys and concerns of their lives. They help with various UUCSJS projects. They have had a retreat, and a rafting outing this past year.

T.J Jannsch – coordinator
Richard Grzywinski - founded this group

Green Light Coffee House – This program, currently on hiatus, has been a place where folks could perform music, read poetry, or perform in other ways. It has been a bright spot in our community.

Steve Fielder - founder and producer
Barbara Fiedler - co-producer
Theresa McReynolds - coordinator of setup, refreshments, and takedown team
Colby Tippins, Karen Zindell, Tracey Catino
- team members

Beyond Categorical Thinking

The Beyond Categorical Thinking (BCT) program helps UU congregations examine ways they can be more inclusive in their consideration of ministerial candidates. UU ministers who identify as people of color or Hispanic; as bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender; or as people with disabilities often have a more difficult time in the ministerial search process because of unconscious congregational biases. These aspects of a minister's identity are not indicators of a minister's skill, leadership style, or probability of a good match with a congregation.

Participating in the BCT Program provides a place for congregations to raise and examine these issues ahead of time, affirm their commitment to fairness and justice, and proceed with the search with a more heightened awareness of those biases which do exist in the congregation and need to be addressed.

The BCT program includes a worship led by our facilitator, **Carol Carter Walker**, followed by a lunch and workshop. Ms. Walker is currently a member of Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church in Adelphi, MD, a suburb of Washington, DC.

Carol has been a Board Member at both her former and current congregations. At Paint Branch, she currently serves as a Board Trustee, co-chair of the Diversity/Anti-Racism Transformation Team, a Worship Associate, member of the Auction Team and the Denominational Affairs Committee. She has served twice as a member of the Joseph Priestley District (JPD) Board, co-chairing its Finance & Audit Committee and chairing its Bylaws Review Committee. She now serves as a member of the JPD Growth Committee that approves and manages Chalice Lighters grants.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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Board of Trustees 2015-16

Melissa Hutchison, Jon Luoma, Judy Pereira, Charlie Roberts,
Damon Smith, Art Wexler, Karen York

Newsletter – Mariann Maene – newsletter@uucsjs.org

Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

January 2016

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Congregation of the South Jersey Shore
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