



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 18, Issue 2

February 2016

February Services

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

<p>February 7</p>	<p align="center">Congregational Challenges of Calling a Minister <i>Lay speakers Jim Gentile, Marsha Hannah, Paul Utts from the Ministerial Search Committee</i></p> <p>The worship theme this year is “Change.” As our Congregation anticipates calling a Minister later this year, the Ministerial Search Committee presents a service to contemplate the congregational, relational, and stewardship challenges now placed before the Congregation.</p>
<p>February 14</p>	<p align="center">Changing the Way We Look at Love <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p>Our language is the only one that has but a single word for “love.” There are so many other ways to think about love, and to broaden our conversation about who we are as people of faith, especially when we, as Unitarian Universalists talk so much about Standing on the Side of Love. What do we mean, exactly? Can “love” be every bit as fuzzy a word as God?</p>
<p>February 21</p>	<p align="center">A Blues Praxis <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i></p> <p>What can we learn from the blues about living, loving, and about the life of a community of faith? Quite a bit, I will argue. From Robert Johnson to Muddy Waters, the lessons abound.</p>
<p>February 28</p>	<p align="center">Beloved Conversations Revisited <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain, Barbara Miller, Heidi Jannsch</i></p> <p>Over thirty members of our congregation have engaged in meaningful conversations about racism, white privilege, and the issues surrounding the African American community today. In this service, we’ll be hearing from some of these folks. Come and be enlightened!</p>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

**17th ANNUAL
FELLOWSHIP DINNER
Saturday, March 12, 2016**



6:00 pm - Social Time with Hors d’oeuvres
6:45 pm - Dinner
8:00 pm - Entertainment begins

See page 2 for details

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Last year, in response to the anticipated attendance of over a hundred members and friends to our annual dinner and gathering, we tried something new: instead of the usual potluck. We offered a menu with different types of **lasagna, a green salad, and Italian bread**. The change from potluck to a set meal was a big hit and resulted in more efficient planning, better flow and an easier clean-up. So, we'll be repeating a lasagna dinner again this year with a tweak or two, and we're confident that it will be even more successful!

- ✓ To help ensure the success of this year's dinner, we need everyone who is planning to attend to **RSVP**.
- ✓ **RSVP/Sign-up forms** will be available on the Fair-Trade Table on the following Sundays: February 20, February 27, and March 5.
- ✓ **What will you be eating?** When you RSVP, you'll have an opportunity to sign up for your choice of what kind of lasagna you and your family will be **EATING**, as well as a choice of what you will be **BRINGING**.
- ✓ **What will you be bringing?** There will be lots of different possible food and beverage contributions to select from, including appetizer, wine, beer, non-alcoholic beverage, lasagna (meat, vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free), large green salad, Italian bread, and cake.

Margaret Circle... meets Thursday, February 4, at 1 pm in the UU Center Library. If you arrive a little late please kindly wait until you are invited in, as we begin our sacred time with Joys & Concerns. After refreshments, Shelee will offer an informational presentation in honor of Black History Month. She will explore the life and work of 3 rarely spoken of Black authors. Join us for comfort food, engaging conversation and the company of like-mindedness.

Book Lovers Group ... meets Friday, February 19, 7 pm at the UU Center Library.

This month the selection is **Orphan Train** by Christina Baker Kline -- "an unforgettable story of friendship and second chances that highlights a little-known but historically significant movement in America's past." Ellie Gibson will be leading our discussion and everyone is always welcome to come and see what book club is all about!



What's new with Family Promise of Atlantic County?

UPCOMING EVENTS



It's time for our UUCSJS SOUPER BOWL!!

Please support Family Promise of Atlantic County by making soup or buying it – or both! Look for clipboards after services to sign up, and grab your soup containers with instructions at the front door.

Soup sales are on February 7th and 14th.



**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!

It hit me on Wednesday, when Jesse Connor arrived at the UU Center to plan for the Spring Plant Sale, that while it's wonderful to realize that warm weather and all of the joys that it brings are not far away, that it also signals that my time with you is drawing to a close. Although we still have five months together, and, I hope, some valuable work to accomplish, your sights are set, as they should be now, on the arrival of a called Minister! You should be very grateful and proud of the work that your Ministerial Search Committee has done. It would be difficult to overestimate how diligent and how thorough this group of people have been in the tasks given to them. I feel confident that if a Minister for UUCSJS is out there, he/she will be with you come August.

So, what I come to ask you now is *what can I do for you while I am here?* There are many parts of congregational life that I have been able to assist you with, and others not as much. If you feel that a meeting with me, or some time together with the leadership of your group, would be helpful, let me know. On a more personal level, you all know me pretty well after hearing me talk about myself (and other matters of the spirit, the heart and the world) for a year and a half, and I know many of you. If there is something you would like to process with me, or that you feel I could be of help with, do let me know. We will find a time to talk. I also accept invitations to lunch or dinner, if you just want to say fare-thee-well!

My theme this year was "change," and my goal was to acquaint you slowly with the idea that change is always happening, and that we can choose to fight it, to accept it, to celebrate or bemoan it. This month, you'll be hearing from your Search Committee again on the 7th regarding what your biggest change will entail... the settlement process for a new minister. On the 14th, I'll be speaking about some different ways to look at love (other than the romantic kind). On the 21st, I plan to talk about a new way of looking at church and the work we do... through the lens of what I am calling a "Blues Praxis." Let's just say that the whole notion of "church" is changing rapidly, and we ought to be wondering whether UUism is keeping up with that.

Finally, if there is a topic or a particular area that you would love to see addressed from the pulpit, by all

means let me know! I will consider your suggestion. And, if you have experience in public speaking, and would like to present the message some Sunday, we can talk about that as well. I'm looking forward to a productive 5 months together, and I'm feeling so fortunate for the opportunity to spend them here at UUCSJS!

Fondly, Cynthia



**Saturday, February 20
2 pm**

**Faith and
Public Policy**

Speaker:

Rev Dr Jessica J. Davis

- Senior Pastor, St. Paul United Methodist Church, Mt. Holly, NJ
- President and Federal lobbyist, Faith & Public Policy Institute, Princeton, NJ

LAY LEADER OPPORTUNITY

If you would like to be considered as a Lay Leader for Sunday services, please let Barbara Miller or Cynthia know. There will be a training soon. You should have some experience and be comfortable speaking in public!

SIGN-UPS FOR FELLOWSHIP DINNER TEAM BEGIN SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

Once again, we'll need lots of volunteers for our Fellowship Dinner Team to help with planning, prepping, serving, bar tending, clean-up, and child care. Please be sure to check out the sign-up forms at the table in the back of the Sanctuary if you think you might be able to join the team.

Questions? Suggestions?

See Jesse Connor or Charlie Roberts.

Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. A man can't ride you unless your back is bent.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

Board of Trustees HIGHLIGHTS January 2016

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on **Tuesday, January 12, 2016** at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Art Wexler presiding. Chalice lighting opened the meeting and joys and concerns were shared. Also present for the first item on the agenda, Jim Gentile, MSC Chair.

• Ministerial Search Committee (MSC)

President Wexler welcomed Jim Gentile and offered thanks for a "job well done" for the successful workshop on "Beyond Categorical Thinking" on Sunday, January 10, facilitated by Carol Carter Walker on behalf of the UUA Transitions Office. Gentile confirmed that our search submission became "uncovered" as of January 2, and the MSC will conduct interviews in January and hear candidates in "neutral pulpits" in late February and early March. If the search process is successful, this will be followed by an intensive week-long visit by the chosen candidate, then culminate in a June congregational "vote to call" a new minister. *Stay tuned.*

• Announcements

- **Board Talk-Back.** The January Talk-Back will be held Sunday, January 17, postponed due to workshop on January 10. Next opportunity for dialogue with Board members will be held on schedule (2nd Sunday of the month) on Sunday, February 14 at 11:15 am in a downstairs classroom.

- **JPD Presidents' Roundtable.** "JPD Leadership Day" will be held on Saturday, February 13 at Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, PA. The president said that attendees are asked to bring a guest who also serves or will be serving in a congregational leadership capacity.

- **JPD Assembly.** This year's District Assembly, "Congregations in Covenant: Living the Interdependent Web," will be held April 8-9 in York, PA. The featured keynote speaker is UUA Moderator, Jim Key.

• Reports

1) **Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report for January along with two additional budget documents, one condensed and the other complete for the first six months of FY 15-16. The written report showed account balances (12/31) as follows: TD Checking (Operating funds): \$32,283.17; TD Savings (CC3/Capital funds): \$250.04; and Fidelity/Capital Reserves: \$2,788.53.

There were two highlights from this month's report, the treasurer said. First, she noted that Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) were sold, which is done every six months, earning \$2,075 on this occasion. She also highlighted that "December income exceeded expenses by \$13,050 due to end of the calendar year payments on pledges. In several of the prior months our expenses had exceeded income," she went on, concluding, "For the year we have excess income." The treasurer stated that she sees no red flags, while noting that there is usually some degree of cash flow concern due to uneven receipt of pledge monies; expanded options for automatic direct deposit are being worked on to help improve the situation, she said.

—**Stewardship:** the Finance committee is at work on the spring budget campaign and exploring possible new ways to canvass, etc. *Stay tuned.*

—**Mortgage/CC3:** prepayments of principal with CC3 funds were made on 12/1 and 12/31 for \$1,915.16 and \$2,350.05, respectively; the current principal balance on our mortgage with TD Bank is \$250,814.05.

2) **Minister's Report.** In Rev. Cain's absence there was no report this month.

3) **Staff & Committee Reports.** The secretary said that she

found no requests for Board action in this month's reports and no items for discussion not already on the agenda.

• Discussion/Action Items

Board officer succession. President Wexler informed the Board that although he will serve another year on the Board and complete his third and final term, he will not stand again for the office of president for FY 16-17. Referencing both personal and organizational dimensions of this decision, he explained that in the interests of the health of any organization, his experience has been that when the same person serves in office too long, inertia sets in. During discussion that followed, Vice President Jon Luoma told us that he will not be running again for the Board this year; his current term ends 6/30/16.

Wireless security cameras. Installation of surveillance cameras has been delayed while the Safety & Security subcommittee reconsiders the pros and cons of *wireless* cameras versus *wired*. The Board anticipates a proposal from the subcommittee as soon as deliberations are complete.

"Active shooter" training. While all expressed sadness that such precautions were becoming necessary and routine in many organizations (such as AtlantiCare and ACCC, for example), it was determined that we do need to bring this training to the larger congregation (in addition to Children's RE, already underway) through our Safety & Security subcommittee.

Membership/Attendance trends. Membership committee chair, Betsy Searight, recorded in her monthly report that UUCSJS now has 108 members, down from 123 in January 2015. The report also tells us that *average adult attendance* at Sunday services is down from 76 to 64 for 4th Quarter 2014 v. 2015. (Children's RE is holding steady.) After discussion, and not arriving at any definite conclusions, it was resolved that the Board will remain watchful and attentive while not unduly anxious, as many things seem to be going well. On behalf of the Board, the president thanked the Membership committee and its chair for their hard work in collecting these statistics and monitoring trends, along with many other ongoing tasks.

• Updates/Follow-Up

AED (Defibrillator). At-Large Board member Charlie Roberts circulated an application form for the AtlantiCare Heart Heroes AED Matching Funds Program as promised, to be filled out by the appropriate people and signed by the president. If successful, the program will provide roughly half (\$700) of the \$1,450 price tag to acquire the device. An informal "pop-up" fundraiser is contemplated to raise our share of the cost.

Outdoor Smoking Policy. This agenda item is being carried forward to the February Board meeting.

"Black Lives Matter" (BLM) Initiative. It was noted that through a special Christmas Eve collection, some \$500 was raised in support of our shared sponsorship of the year-long series of monthly forums, "Black Lives—AC: *Beyond the Slogan.*" Board members also noted that our BLM sign was again vandalized on Tuesday, December 22 (with white spray paint and the word "ALL" again scrawled over the word "Black").

Family Promise (UUF & FPAC). For the second year in a row, the UU Family Promise team will be holding a fundraiser on February 7 and 14 dubbed "Souper Bowl Sunday."

• **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

— Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 6:30 pm** in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey



“RACE: THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION” **UUCSJS Film Series and Community Discussion**

Fourth Friday in February, March, April:

Friday, February 26
Friday March 25
Friday April 22
6:30- 8:30 pm

The Anti-Racism Task Force is delighted to announce that Betsy Erbaugh, UU member and Assistant Professor of Sociology at Stockton University, has graciously volunteered to present a film series followed by a community discussion. ***Race: The Power of an Illusion*** is a three-part film series (produced by [California Newsreel](#)) that investigates race in society, science, and history. The educational documentary originally screened on PBS and was primarily funded by Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Ford Foundation, and PBS. The series was met with rave reviews and promises to be timely, informative, and thought-provoking. Betsy will lead a community dialog after each film. Friends, neighbors, and community members are welcome to attend. The sessions will be held at our UU Center on the fourth Friday of February, March, and April.

Friday, February 26, 6:30-8:30 pm
Episode One
“The Difference Between Us”
followed by a Community Discussion

Everyone can tell a Nubian from a Norwegian, so why not divide people into different races? That's the question explored in “**The Difference Between Us**,” the first film in the series. Episode One shows that despite what we've always believed, the world's peoples simply don't come bundled into distinct biological groups. The film begins by following a dozen students, including black athletes and Asian string players, who sequence and compare their own DNA to see who is more genetically similar. The results surprise the students and the viewer, when they discover their closest genetic matches are as likely to be with people from other "races" as their own.

Friday, March 25, 6:30-8:30 pm

Episode Two
“The Story We Tell”
followed by a Community Discussion

It's true that race has always been with us, right? Wrong. Ancient peoples stigmatized "others" on the grounds of language, custom, class, and especially religion, but they did not sort people according to physical differences. It turns out that the concept of race is a recent invention, only a few hundred years old, and the history and evolution of the idea are deeply tied to the development of the U.S. The second episode, “**The Story We Tell**,” traces the origins of the racial idea to the European conquest of the New World and to the American slave system – the first ever where all the slaves shared similar physical traits and a common ancestry.

Friday, April 22, 6:30-8:30 pm

Episode Three
“The House We Live In”
followed by a Community Discussion

If race doesn't exist biologically, what is it? And why should it matter? The final episode, “**The House We Live In**,” is the first film about race to focus not on individual attitudes and behavior but on the ways our institutions and policies advantage some groups at the expense of others. Its subject is the "unmarked" race: white people. We see how benefits quietly and often invisibly accrue to white people, not necessarily because of merit or hard work, but because of the racialized nature of our laws, courts, customs, and perhaps most pertinently, housing. "Colorblind" policies that ignore race only perpetuate these inequities. As Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun wrote, "To get beyond racism we must first take account of race. There is no other way." As **The House We Live In** shows us, until we address the legacy of past discrimination and confront the historical meanings of race, the dream of equality will remain out of reach.

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In honor of Martin Luther King's birthday this January, all of our Children's Religious Education students participated in a service project on January 17; creating greeting cards for Spring Village, a local assisted living and senior care facility. After a brief discussion about Martin Luther King's life and work, the children and youth spent their RE class time sharing their artistic skills and well-wishing our neighbors in this outreach project. Plans are being made for the delivery of the cards, and the Children's RE Committee hopes that some of the children will be available to join us as we deliver the cards one afternoon.



Jessica Dunn leads the RE students' MLK greeting card project

The Children's RE Committee is planning to host our third annual RE Family Pot Luck this February. The committee will be deciding on the date for this event at our upcoming February meeting. Families, watch your email for an invitation. We are looking forward to this opportunity for our RE families to get together and spend some quality time together without the usual Sunday rush!

In Fellowship, Heidi Jansch
UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

Life is about not knowing, having to change,
taking the moment and making the best of it,
without knowing what's going to happen next.

-- Gilda Radner

A fanatic is one who can't change his mind
and won't change the subject.

-- Winston Churchill

If you want to make enemies, try to change something.

-- Woodrow Wilson

LIGHT FOR LIFE

Interfaith Candlelight Service of Hope and Healing

For some, Valentine's Day is a day of love. But, for those suffering silently with emotional distress, it can be a time of loneliness. For others, grieving the loss of loved ones to suicide or addiction, it can be a time of great sadness.

Join us to heal... and to help

Your light, presence, prayers, and contributions, will help stem the tide of loss within our schools and communities. Help us to "Spread the Love", reduce the stigma of emotional distress, and reach out to support those who continue to struggle. Help us bring light into the darkness.



Valentine's Day, Sunday February 14 3 - 5 pm

Somers Point United Methodist Church
223 Doran Avenue at Bethel Rd, Somers Point, NJ

**Refreshments, information, and support
available following the service.**

**A Love-offering will support mental health
counseling, and suicide prevention in our schools
and communities. (to Bridge Wellness Services).**

Event sponsored by:

Mental Health Association in Atlantic County



Bridging the Gap from Distress to Success
609-840-6034 Bridgewellnesscenter.com

Spread the Love

www.spreadthelovefoundation.com

SEMINAR ON INCOME INEQUALITY AND FINANCIAL JUSTICE

Five Sundays after service on:

- February 7
- February 14
- February 21
- March 6
- March 13

Would you like to engage the banksters in a powerful and principled way? Learn how to fight for fairness in financial services. A series of seminars about Financial Injustice will meet at UUCSJS shortly after the service for five Sundays starting on February 7. *We'll skip February 28, because Kit is travelling.*

This series kicks off UUCSJS' participation in UUA Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) on **Escalating Inequality**.

Background

Income inequality is increasing greatly in the USA. Between 1979 and 2012, the richest 5 percent of American families saw their real incomes increase 74.9 percent. Over the same period, the lowest-income fifth saw a **decrease** in real income of 12.1 percent. UUCSJS can raise consciousness of this issue by focusing on ways that rich people prey on poor ones. Some examples include:

- For-profit universities
- Payday loans
- Check cashing and bill payment
- Tax-refund anticipation loans.

Last year, the 50 million American households that are unbanked or under-banked paid \$138 billion dollars for "alternative financial services" that most of us don't need to buy. That's \$2,760 per family, almost **10%** of income. As *The Economist* said in September, "It's expensive to be poor."

Study Phase

Church members need knowledge to take effective action on this topic. This seminar will merge the UUA study guide,¹ the study guide from the Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community,² and additional materials on justice in financial services, which Kit Marlowe would develop and present.

Direct Service

Although injustice in financial services is wired into our economic system, low-income families **can** use information and low-cost banking services to avoid many of these excessive costs. Finding low-cost banking services and avoiding tax-refund loans can help a family avoid \$400 of these charges each year. Our study efforts may identify several more.

After we have mobilized our members and developed tools that can help poorer people, we would use our existing contacts, and those our friends suggest to present the tools to groups of people who need them. We hope to be not indispensable technical specialists, but an inspiration to other community activists.

Political Action

As UUCSJS members become more knowledgeable about unjust financial services, we will be better able to advocate for regulatory reform. The issue is ripe for political action because:

- It's a great injustice.
- The injustice continues only because middle-class citizens don't know what's going on.

Once we become more knowledgeable and find our natural allies, UUCSJS should be able influence the debate on other unjust practices.

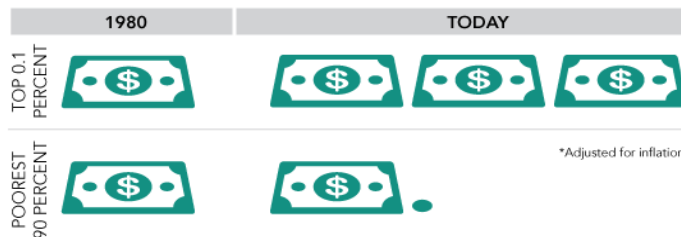
Contact Kit Marlowe (krismarlowe@verizon.net or 732.539.8128) for more information.

¹ UUA Study/Action Issue Guide at http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/escalating_inequality.pdf

² UUs for a Just Economic Community Study Guide at <http://uujec.com/Escalating-Inequality-CSAI/Shoreline-UU-Study-Series>

THE RICH GET RICHER

For every dollar the wealthiest 0.1 percent earned in 1980, they've added three additional dollars in yearly income. The poorest 90 percent have only added one cent.



Source: David Cay Johnson, "9 Things The Rich Don't Want You To Know About Taxes"

THE HUFFINGTON POST

PERCEPTION VS. REALITY

Wealth distribution in America is worse than you think.

WHAT AMERICANS THINK THE WEALTH DISTRIBUTION IS



WHAT THE **ACTUAL** WEALTH DISTRIBUTION IS



■ Bottom 20% ■ Second 20% ■ Middle 20% ■ Fourth 20% ■ Top 20%

Sources: Dan Ariely, Michael Norton, "Building a Better America — One Wealth Quintile at a Time"

THE HUFFINGTON POST

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