

Newsletter

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore



Volume 11, Issue 01

January 2009

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 4	The First Hundred DaysRev Rosemarie NewberryNo, this is not a sermon making predictions about the Obama presidency. It is aboutRosemarie's first hundred days as our new minister. To start off the new year, she willshare some reflections and make some predictions.	
January 11	Marching With Martin Rev Rosemarie NewberryTwo Unitarian Universalists sacrificed their lives supporting Civil Rights. The stories of The Rev. James Reeb (1927-65) and Viola Liuzzo (1925-65) are important to know. They were both killed as part of their participation in the protest march from Selma to Montgomery. Their actions can still be an inspiration for all of us.	
January 18	Sixth Source: Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature <i>Lay speaker Prim Reeves</i> Adopted in 1995, UU's newest source of inspiration and meaning owes its inclusion in part to the increasing need to feel part of the "interdependent web" mentioned in our Seventh Principle.	
January 25	Change the World Before Those Other Guys Do Guest speaker Bruce Knotts While we are not a missionary church, we need missionary zeal to promote UU values. Without our input, we leave the world to those who would remake the world according to values most of us would not like to see prevail. Therefore, it is our obligation to be involved and active to change the world with justice and compassion. One way to promote UU values on a global scale is to support the UU office at the United Nations, the world's most important forum for global issues.	

The Spirituality Discussion Group will meet the second Sunday of every month after services.

At the meeting on January 11, 2009 we will discuss the book *The Seat of the Soul* by Gary Zukav.

Everyone is welcome. You don't have to read the book to attend.

(see page 5 for a description of the book.)



Words from... Reverend Rosemarie Newberry

"I go to church ... because I fall below my own standards and need to be constantly brought back to them ... I must have my conscience sharpened -sharpened until it goads me to the most thorough and responsible thinking and action of which I am capable." -- A. Powell Davies

A. Powell Davies, who had previously been a Methodist minister, began his career as a Unitarian minister in 1933 in Summit. New Jersey. I served the Summit congregation for one year. Davies was called to All Souls Church in Washington, DC from 1944 until his untimely death in 1957. In the Washington Post, he was eulogized as "...militantly in the forefront of every assault upon intolerance and racial discrimination and injustice. Convenience and convention never silenced him. ... He was. among all the members of his calling, the most resolute and indomitable champion of righteousness as he saw it and the brotherhood of man."

I wonder about the reasons that people come to Sunday services. How many do it for the same reason as Davies? I have people in my life that "goad" me and even though I am not always happy with the goading, I do appreciate it. I need to be reminded that I can be more responsible and take more action.

My new year's resolution: Find more ways to have "my conscience sharpened". What are yours?

Rosemarie has office hours on Juesday mornings from 9 am to noon. Call the office at 609-965-9400 or send her email to make an appointment. She will also meet with folks in the evening, with an appointment.

Reverend Newberry has her own email address : minister@uucsjs.org

About our Guest Speaker:

Bruce Knotts is a retired Foreign Service Officer/United States Diplomat with 25 years of U.S. Government service. He writes, "I retired last year and became the Executive Director of the UU UNO on January 1, 2008. During my tenure I have joined UUA President, Rev. Bill Sinkford to visit the UU UNO Every Child is Our Child project in Ghana (see page 5) where we help orphans and vulnerable children. I persuaded the United Nations to include, for the first time ever, Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) concerns at the Human Rights conference in Paris in September 2008. At that conference, the French government announced that in its capacity as President of the European Union, it would propose an end to official persecution against the The UU UNO was part of this LGBT community. historic day when 66 nations put the world on notice that continued state-sponsored persecution will no longer be tolerated. While at the Department of State, I served on the Executive Board of Directors of Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies. I earned two awards from the Department of State for Heroism, two Meritorious Honor Awards and a Superior Honor Award, among others. As a diplomat, I served in Greece, Zambia, Belize, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and The Gambia. Prior to joining the Department of State in 1984, I was a teacher in Somalia, California, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia."

Check out our new pulpit!



Our speakers no longer need to speak from a music stand. We have a new handmade wooden pulpit/lectern that was delivered in time for the Christmas Eve Service.

The members of the Margaret Circle are the generous donors. Years ago, Kathryn Kelley had the idea of collecting a dollar per member at each meeting, to be used for something for our new building. A good quality pulpit/lectern became the obvious item in need of a donor, and the Margaret Circle rose to the occasion, providing far more than their dollars accumulated over the years.

REFLECTIONS FROM UUCSJS PRESIDENT PAUL UTTS

A new year is here and I think the world is marking the passing of another of life's mile markers with both hope and dread. The hope comes from the inauguration this month of a new US President, Barack Obama. Never in my lifetime have I seen such expectation and anticipation heaped onto a single (living) human being. The closest in my lifetime would be President Carter. After a war that went badly, a corrupt president leading an equally

corrupt government, an economy with terrible inflation (remember "Whip Inflation Now" or WIN buttons?), and an increasingly damaged environment, we looked for an intelligent, honest leader to lead us with integrity. President Carter is an honest man with great integrity, but I would submit, but for a few accomplishments, his presidency was a disaster.

President-elect Obama has an advantage that few other than perhaps F.D.R. had: the world is a big mess and he knows it. The developed world, especially the USA, is so addicted to credit and cheap energy, from the top to the bottom, it will take nothing short of a great leader to convince us to fix this mess. How do you change a system so dependent on these two factors? How do you teach a country, let alone the world, that fossil fuel has a hidden cost we have ignored, and that you can't borrow and consume your way out of debt? These two factors are how we became the world's superpower, and it will be difficult to convert our way of thinking.

The reaction of the world's leaders so far is not encouraging. Borrow, encourage people to spend, and seek cheap energy. As with any addiction this will bring temporary relief from the longer-term pain we must endure if we are to correct the problem. I am mostly heartened by the staffing choices our President-elect is making, surrounding himself with a balance of both experienced politicians and theoretical academics. I hope that with this mix of people with new ideas and experienced political "salespeople," we can achieve the paradigm shift needed to lead us to a brighter, more sustainable future. I find his selection of Rev. Warren to conduct his inaugural invocation troubling. I would have preferred our own outgoing UUA president Rev. Sinkford, who I am sure would have delivered a seven-principled message of inclusiveness and personal responsibility to help improve this world. Perhaps Obama is hoping to preach over the choir to include the "unconverted."

As President-elect Obama seeks to reinvent our country, rebuilding our intellectual infrastructure through education, redesigning our energy economy by investing in green technology, and restoring our world trust through dialogue and targeted aid, we at UUCSJS have a part to play. Unitarian Universalists have always contributed their voice to positive change. From the founding of this nation, abolition, civil rights and the environmental movement, UU's have helped the majority understand the imperative nature of these causes. If this new leader is to succeed, he will also need our voice. There are harder times still ahead and the urge of the majority will be to seek quick fixes and to indulge in blame and protectionism. Like any addiction, the first step will be to admit WE have a problem, and that others are not responsible for our trouble.

Soon, solar panels will go up on our building. We will borrow money to pay for a long-term asset, our building, built with environmental concern and a long-range plan to improve the human condition. These are good reasons to borrow. The conversations that take place in these walls will branch out and put faces and voices to a message, not just of hope, but how to bring about positive change. I think we all hope and pray that President Obama will be the leader these challenging times demand. Nevertheless, no matter how inspirational his message, no matter how loud his voice, it will take leadership at all levels to produce change. We can and must help, through example and voice, to keep our leaders on task.

As we approach our tenth anniversary and our building's dedication, we have reason to celebrate. What this group has accomplished in a relatively short time is amazing to me and to many outside our group. We need to continue using this energy, this human potential, to spread the message of the power of a non-dogmatic spiritual community. The transformative power this group brings to individuals, and the synergy that like-minded individuals bring to the group, benefits both. It will take activism of both individuals and groups such as ours to change hope into reality.

President Carter was elected in a time of national despair and economic turmoil. He failed to inspire the masses to change their ways. These failures led to the election of President Reagan who used borrowing and cheap energy to restore our national confidence. We need the honesty and intelligence of Carter combined with the inspiration of Roosevelt to break our bad habits. We at UUCSJS can amplify inspired words and model positive change. Throughout history, the Unitarian message has always been ahead of its time. Now the time has come for our nation to catch up.

Board Notes – December 17, 2008

Now that we are in our beautiful and usefully configured UU Center, we must prepare to lease it, perhaps to couples seeking a venue for marriage, and to UU and other approved groups for meetings, and workshops. To that purpose, Board members are working on rental use policies that will determine a list of approved groups, and appropriate fees. If you are interested in this aspect of our building care and use, please volunteer.

The Board approved a request to investigate the possibility of establishing at UUCSJS a chapter of Interweave Continental, a UUassociated national organization actively working toward ending oppression based on sexual orientation and gender identity, which fits in with our continuing social action for GLBT men and women. Allison Woolbert will coordinate the contacts with Interweave about this question, and report findings back to the board at the January meeting. If you would like more information, you may contact Allison or members of our Social Justice Committee.

Also approved in a separate action at the December Board meeting was a new ad hoc committee, The Welcoming Congregation Action Group. This committee, headed by Roberta Castorani and Rich Schurig, is charged with making sure that our Congregation is actively and visibly welcoming to all GLBT persons who come to UUCSJS. This group had a movie/potluck evening social in December and will be sponsoring more activities in the future.

A piece of very welcome news is that Debbi Dagavarian has volunteered to chair next year's Service Auction. You may notice frequent use of "Volunteer" in description of our congregational life.You don't have to feel left out -- we warmly welcome you to find an action group that piques your generous interest!

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry, or CoM (formerly the Ministerial Search Committee) has been meeting monthly, and we are starting to formulate the structure and functions of this committee as a permanent part of UUCSJS. There will be a Startup Workshop in January, 2009, which will help us explore expectations around having a new minister, and how the congregation can work together with common goals. This workshop will be led by Rev. Libby Smith, a community minister from our Joseph Priestley District. Members of the Board, the CoM, staff, and Committee chairpersons will attend the seminar, along with Rev. Newberry. The CoM has also been discussing ways to ensure more intimate and meaningful encounters within the congregation during this period of membership growth. In addition to currently scheduled "meet and greet" gatherings with Rev. Newberry, the CoM is suggesting that we restart the popular Evensong groups. The CoM is also available to help solve conflicts that may arise within our congregation, with an emphasis on finding ways to avoid triangulation. We are looking forward to working with Rev. Newberry and the congregation in 2009.

-- Melissa Hutchison, CoM Chair

MARGARET CIRCLE We will meet on Thursday, January 8 at Noon. Lunch will be at Fred & Ethel's Lantern Light Tavern in Smithville. If for any reason you decide to pass on lunch, you could meet us at 1 o'clock at the home of Arlene Yacka for discussion and dessert. We will be sharing fond memories of Holidays past.

UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2008-2009 Kathie Benner 09 Primrose Reeves 10 Secretary Treasurer Debbi Dagavarian 10 Paul Utts 09 President Jim Gentile 10 Karen Zindell 09 Karen Zindell 09 Richard Grzywinski 10 * date given is end of term, e.g. 10 means thru 6/30/2010

UUBookLovers News

With the New Year comes new books. The selections for the book group for the next 6 months are as follows:

January: Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy - Douglas Adams February: Waiting For Snow in Havana - Carlos Eire March: Here If You Need Me - Kate Braestrap April: Three Cups of Tea - Greg Mortenson May: Alice In Wonderland - Lewis Carrol June: The Outermost House: A Year of Life on The Great Beach of Cape Cod - Henry Beston

More information as to meeting place, time, date and facilitator will be forthcoming. Meetings are usually held on a Friday evening toward the end of the month. Anyone is welcome to join. For more information, or to get on our email list, please contact Helene Gentile.

Our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers. --- *M. Scott Peck*

An "abomination"? In MY Family?

On Sunday evening, December 7, about 20 members and friends of UUCSJS gathered at the home of Theresa McReynolds and Roberta Castorani to share a potluck supper in front of a roaring fireplace. Following supper, the group viewed the movie *For the Bible Tells Me So.* This movie is described as an "exploration of the intersection of religion and homosexuality in the U.S., and how the religious right has used its interpretation of the Bible to stigmatize the gay community."

In retrospect, the movie seems much more personal than that description conveys. Discussion produced appreciation for the high quality film, and also consensus that the portrayal of the real family situations chosen for the film would be helpful to many persons seeking understanding of gay community issues. More events are being planned for UUCSJS in continuation of our Welcoming Congregation commitment. If you are interested in receiving information about future activities, see Roberta Castorani or Rich Schurig after Sunday Services; and, keep an eye on announcements in the Newsletter and our Yahoo Groups forum.

Ever want to be a Camp Counselor?

Unirondack Camp & Conference Center in the Adirondacks is a Unitarian Universalist camp and conference center located on a forever-wild peninsula in the Adirondacks Mountains in New York State.

You can be a Counselor, or take another position such as Cook, Maintenance, or Driver.

Interested applicants should visit the website at www.unirondack.org and explore the summer employment page. There applicants can download an application form, fill it out and email/mail it back to the Directors.

The Seat of the Soul revolutionized the field of selfdiscovery. This legendary book became the #1 New York Times Best Seller thirty-one times, remained on the New York Times Best Seller list an incredible three years, sold more than three million copies in the U.S., and has been translated into twenty-four languages. Touching millions of readers and many more viewers through Gary Zukav's numerous feature appearances on The Oprah Winfrey Show, The Seat of the Soul led the way to seeing the alignment of the personality with the soul as the fulfillment of life and captured the imagination of tens of millions. It presents the fundamentals of authentic power, the tools required to create it -- emotional awareness, responsible choice, intuition, and trust -- and the intentions of the soul. The Seat of the Soul is the most important book in the lives of millions of readers. If you are on a spiritual path, or suspect that you might be, this will а book you want to read. is – from Gary Zukav's website

Guest at Your Table

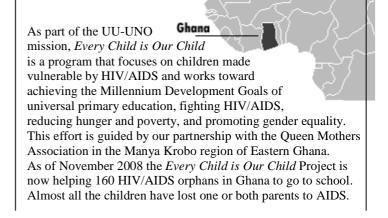
Guest at your Table is the annual campaign to raise money for the UU Service Committee. Their mission is to advance human rights and social justice around the world. They are our "faith in action" group. During the month of December, many of you, especially those with children, have taken boxes to fill on a regular basis. During the first two weeks in January, these and all other donations will be collected. It will be most helpful if the money from the collection boxes will be donated as a single check made out to the UU Service Committee. Collection envelops are available for all.

While all donations are gratefully accepted, some amounts qualify you to become a member of the UU Service.

- A single membership is \$40. A dual membership is \$75.
- For seniors: A single membership is \$20, dual
- membership, \$40A Student/Youth membership is \$10

Any contribution of \$100 or more will be **matched** by the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock, Manhasset, NY.

Our congregation has always participated generously in this campaign, and we have two beautiful banners that were awarded to us to prove it.



The 4th Annual Kindling the Flame Program February 21, 2009 UU Church of Delaware County Media, PA

sponsored by the Philadelphia-Wilmington Growth Team

Wayne Clark, UUA Director of Congregational Stewardship Services, is the keynote speaker. His office partners with congregations to help them transform their vision into reality. Are you interested in:

- Strategic Planning
- Annual Budget Drives
- Financial Feasibility Studies
- Capital Campaigns

Morning: Fund Raising in These Challenging Times Afternoon: Creating Awareness Cost - \$12.00 per person (includes Lunch)

Information: Howard Bennett (215) 672-6129

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A SCIENTIFIC SPIRITUALITY

"He sees the world as it really is. He looks on the temporal in the light of the Eternal. So he comes to look on the world with new eyes. So he learns the high truths which nature teaches."

-- from Emerson's *Nature*, reviewed by Unitarian Minister, Samuel Osgood, January 1837

The Dalia Lama said recently that he is a scientist and that, in fact, the Buddha was a scientist.

On the other hand, the scientific conferences for Psychologists and Psychoanalysts routinely include presentations and workshops on meditation, mindfulness, and other Buddhist practices

In fact, our basic UU Principles rest on the combination of scientific findings with regard, for example, to our common DNA, and approaches to global warming, and the spiritual foundations from all of the world's religions that: there is an inherent worth of all human beings, and that we live in an interdependent world of which we are a part.

Spirituality provides the aspirations motivated by faith, love, and passion -- and, science provides the tools.

Therefore, might we say there is ample evidence that these two disciplines are not disparate, but are in fact interdependent?

ALONG THESE LINES, WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO EXPLORING TOGETHER:

- **Transgender: Gender & Identity**, a new presentation by **Allison Woolbert**, focusing on both a scientific and spiritual approach to understanding the challenges of Transgender adults and children. January 18, 2009.
- On March 2, 2009, Alan Oliver will repeat his oneday "conversation" based on the scientific and spiritual teachings of Eckhart Tolle (one of Oprah Winfrey's favorites).

In the interim, The *Freethinkers Discussion Group* (based on Susan Jacoby's book of the same title) led by **Jim Gentile will next meet on January 8;** the *Spirituality Group* led by **Marsha Hannah and Seerat Emmanuel** will resume meeting every second Sunday; and **Margaret Rea** is planning a *Labyrinth Workshop*.

Our next Adult Religious Education Committee meeting will be on Sunday, January 4, 2009, when we will be reviewing plans for all of our ongoing and new adult religious education programs for 2009.

We, also, will be deciding on a **new regular evening of the week for our meetings.** Everyone is always welcome to attend our meetings and to share your thinking on these matters and any you wish to bring to our attention.

-- Barbara J Clark, Chair, Adult Religious Education

Children's Religious Education

As we begin the new year, we welcome two new teachers into the Children's RE program; for the next few months, Prim Reeves will be leading the *We Believe* class and Jim Gentile will be guiding the *Coming of Age* class. Thank you to Kim Peters and Kathie Benner for beginning the year with these classes, and to Karen York and Paul Utts who have offered to lead their classes for another trimester.

Spirit Play - Some of the upcoming lessons throughout the winter and spring will include different ideas of sacred spaces, earth centered stories of the stars and the universe, introductions to UU historical figures John Hus and Francis David and the parables of the Pearl and the Good Samaritan.

We Believe - The 3rd and 4th graders will continue discussing one of our principles each week, hearing stories of famous UUs and enjoying games and activities. This year, instead of taking home the dittos and coloring pages every Sunday, the children have been adding them to their own personal spirit book. Some upcoming lessons will include introductions to Dorthea Dix, Susan B. Anthony and Charles Darwin, and learning how each of them exemplified our UU principles.

Traditions - The 5th through 7th grade children will continue to learn about UU traditions, with several lessons inspired by our Judeo-Christian heritage. The spring will also include discussions of rituals and ceremonies, and the class will be invited to create their own worship.

Coming of Age - This month the COA class will begin a segment of lessons titled "The Gospel According to the Simpsons." Each Sunday the class will consist of viewing a religious or ethical themed episode of "The Simpsons" followed by a discussion of topics including our concepts of the Bible, the soul, faith and reason, the value of community, homophobia, and our responsibilities toward the earth and animals.

Superstars:

Thank you to all of the super folks who assisted in our classrooms last month. Please contact Heidi at sjsdre@gmail.com if you would like to help out in our Sunday classes.

Geri McCluskey	Lee Campbell
Tull Benton	Heather Bliss
Barbara Clark	Harold Clark
Prim Reeves	Ronda Cluff

And thanks to Melissa Hitchison and Brenda Yunker for providing healthy snacks for our classes!

-- Heidi Jannsch, CoRE (Coordinator of RE)

What's Happening in Social Justice?

We were pleased to participate for the 3rd year in a row in the International Gift Fair held at Mainland High School in early December. Thanks goes to Helene and Jim Gentile, Peg and Bob Gillies, Tom Celandine, Judy Pereira, Doug Dickinson, Lee Campbell, Martha Parsons, Betty Lui, Sharon Gray, Eddie Hicks, and Jack Connor for setting up our tables and selling Fair Trade coffee, tea, and Our participation at the Fair helps chocolate. educate interested shoppers about the economic justice reasons for purchasing Fair Trade products, and this yearly sale of Equal Exchange products also supports our weekly sales at the social justice table. Equal Exchange works to help small cooperative farmers make a reliable living wage. Participation in the Fair is the SJ Committee's main fund raiser, and this year we made \$211, a bit less than other years because we reduced the coffee price (and the profit) to help make it more affordable in these difficult economic times. We also collected \$78 in donations for full cups of coffee (smaller cups were given away free) for the Food Bank.

The South Jersey Fair Trade Alliance organizes and promotes the International Gift Fair each year. It is a huge amount of work, and a number of UUs deserve credit for their energy and participation, among them: Michele Bellinger, Jen Zappone, Meredith Slotoroff, Julia Utts, Colin Hutchinson (who played his cello again this year), and most especially Colby Tippins who was instrumental to the Fair's success.

Thanks also goes to everyone who responded to our call for warm winter coats. We collected 29 coats, which we have donated to the Food Bank for distribution to those in need.

JANUARY is ShopRite's annual CAN-CAN SALE!

Stock up Now for the cold winter months!

Buy **Gift Cards** any Sunday for **Acme** and **Shoprite**. Using these gift cards for groceries nets the congregation 5%. Buy at the Social Justice table. We also have Fair Trade coffee and tea!

What is Interweave?

A new exciting committee has been formed in UUCSJS this past month called the Interweave Committee.

Interweave Continental has been an integral part of UUA since the early 1970's. We are a spiritual community actively working towards the ending of oppression that is based on sexual orientation and gender identity, recognizing that we will not be free until all oppression is a thing of the past.



By providing and supporting leadership and working in collaboration with other organizations of similar vision, we strive to connect and nurture all GLBTQ individuals, communities and our allies.

With so much oppression happing to the GLBT community, and with so little support, the UUCSJS Interweave will be working to create a safe and supportive community outreach for all GLBTQ's within our area. The new committee will be working as a social justice outreach to confront issues such as Proposition 8, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity discrimination, educating individuals to create a safer community for all, creating support groups where spouses, children, parents and others affected with family members who are GLBT will have a resource within our region to begin understanding and embracing the GLBTQ members of their family, and more.

Some horrific events have happened recently concerning the GLBT community, including: 4 gay men murdered, 2 gay men beaten, and 1 lesbian woman gang raped and beaten down, 3 transgenders murdered, and 1 transgender shot three times and in intensive care in Memphis, TN. Since the passage of Proposition 8 in California, there has been an unprecedented escalation of murders and assaults on members of the GLBT communities. In 2008, there were over 26 transgenders murdered based only on their gender identity. Countless GLBT individuals have been assaulted and killed that go unreported by local authorities.

Interweave of UUCSJS now has an opportunity to stand up in our community. Our first meeting on January 3, 2009 at UUCSJS will feature a potluck dinner for its first organizational meeting. All are invited to attend and anyone interested in supporting GLBTQ needs and concerns are welcome.

For further news and information about the upcoming meeting, please contact Allison Woolbert.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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