



Newsletter



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 11, Issue 08

August 2009

August 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.

August 2	<p>6.8 Billion and Growing: Are We There Yet? <i>Guest speaker John Seager</i></p> <p>The earth's population is growing by one billion every dozen years. There is a clear connection between this growth and virtually every global challenge from poverty to climate change and from species extinction to the political instability of failed nation-states. John will give a brief overview of the causes and impacts of rapid population growth and how to meet this challenge through voluntary approaches.</p>
August 9	<p>Loving Ourselves and Others <i>Guest speaker Don Grubbs</i></p> <p>Can "love" be a basic philosophy of life? What is love? How can I really love myself and how can I grow in love? Can I love <i>all</i> others, when some people seem so "unlovable?"</p>
<p>August 16 12 noon – Civil Union of Kathy and Jeanine</p>	<p>Sacred and Profane: The Common Roots of Theater and Worship <i>Lay speaker Pam Hendrick</i></p> <p>As far as historians and anthropologists have been able to discern, religion has existed in all human societies. The same is true for public performance. In many cultures these two phenomena were at one time inseparable, and in some cultures they still are. Most forms of worship contain elements of performance, but do elements of the sacred still reside in our many forms of public performance?</p>
August 23	<p>Slow Food Smorgasbord <i>Lay speaker Missie Aprill</i></p> <p>Join Missie Aprill as she prepares an "all-you-can-think" buffet of ideas about food. Learn about the Slow Food movement and how its philosophies mirror our UU principles. Satisfy your intellectual appetite and take home new "recipes" for food that is good, clean and fair.</p>
<p>August 30 5th Sunday potluck!</p>	<p>Rethinking the Creation Story of Genesis From a Feminist Perspective <i>Guest speaker Donna Renfro, Divinity student</i></p> <p>In the first three chapters of Genesis, information about females is revealed in three different ways -- explicit, implicit, and null (which means: What's said? What's not said? What's not even noticed?). This leads to a new way to interpret the feminine in these verses.</p>

Saturday, August 1, 3-7 pm – Picnic for Rosemarie Newberry (*see page 4*)

Sunday, August 23, 3 pm – Classical Music recital (*see page 2*)



About our Guest Speakers...

John Seager was formerly with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and also served as Chief of Staff for then-U.S. Representative Peter H. Kostmayer (D-PA). John joined Zero Population Growth in 1996 (the name of the organization was changed to Population Connection in 2002). He was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer in January 2005.

Population Connection is the national grassroots population organization that educates young people and advocates progressive action to stabilize world population at a level that can be sustained by Earth's resources. Population Connection has 150,000 members, supporters, and participating educators.

Donald S. Grubbs of Bucks County, PA was Founder of Greater Norristown Area Unitarian Fellowship, now Thomas Paine UU Fellowship, in Collegetown PA, and a former seminary student. He is a law school graduate, actuary, and retirement specialist.

Donna Renfro has spent half her professional life in some form of education, and the other half owning businesses. As a UU she's been a lay worship leader and a Director of Religious Education, beginning her second year at Mount Kisco, NY, after 6 years at Lincroft, NJ. She is pursuing a Masters of Divinity at New York Theological Seminary, is in 'Aspirant' status for UU ministry, and is a member of Core of Fire Interfaith Dance Ministry and an Interplay leader.

Missie Aprill is an open-hearth cook, specializing in early Colonial methods of preparing and preserving foods. Learning more about the foodways of early America sparked an interest in examining "modern" methods of food production, processing and distribution.

Becoming aware of the many flaws of current agribusiness and food industry practices led Missie to join the South Jersey chapter of Slow Foods International. This organization raises awareness and presses for reforms in the way we produce and consume food. Advocating for food that is good, clean and fair is an active expression of UU principles.

Under the guidance of the Social Justice Committee, Missie has established a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project, providing fresh vegetables and eggs for nine shareholder families that pay for a season's worth of locally produced food. Sustainable farming practices that care for soil fertility and the health of the consumers are paramount, and no toxic chemicals are used. Missie hopes to expand this CSA project next year to include low-income families, as she believes that access to fresh, clean food is a basic human right.

Missie owns and operates Leaming's Run Gardens and Colonial Farm in Swainton, NJ, along with her husband and family. She practices her open-hearth cooking techniques at the farm cabin. She enjoys singing with the UU choir and is a member of the Sweet Adeline Cape Shore Chorus.



Coffee Hour Volunteers

URGENT CALL!

There are still no signups for the first four weeks of August to prepare the coffee. Will we need to settle for water as the 'offering of the day?'

If anyone wants to change the status of the offering and volunteer to keep the coffee flowing, please feel free to drop in the kitchen and signup on the bright orange sheet is posted on the Bulletin Board in the kitchen.

From Bach to Chopin to Segovia

Our first Summer Classics Recital will be held on Sunday, August 23 at 3:00 pm in our sanctuary. The event is free and open to the public. Members and friends of the congregation who wish to perform a classical work, please contact Barbara Miller, Music Director, at music@uucsjs.org.

Classy refreshments will be served following the recital. Black tie optional.

REFLECTIONS by President Jim Gentile

The Ministry Mystery Tour

I embark upon my first monthly “President’s Reflection” with some fear and trembling. I expect that, like my reflection in the mirror, this Reflection will be noticeably imperfect, and not age particularly well.

On June 9, 2009, the outgoing and incoming Boards of Trustees met to identify Congregational issues for the coming year. The primary issues identified were governance and ministry. I would like to reflect here on the latter.

The UUA has indicated that a “Ministering Congregation” is one which has a communal sense of call, knows the community it seeks to serve, mobilizes its resources to serve congregational and community needs, and provides a formation process to engage its members in its shared ministry. While this definition is helpful to begin a Congregational conversation on ministry, it is the *dialogue* which “is the thing” which enables the formation process. The Board hopes to facilitate a dialogue among the Congregation. This means sharing your ideas as to how to facilitate a dialogue as well as contributing to the dialogue itself. Please feel free to do so through emails to Board members, by attending Board meetings, by participating in the Talk Back Sessions held by Board members twice a month in the Green Room, and in any other reasonable way you can think of.

Over the years, many members and friends have contributed significant time, treasure and talent to this same dialogue. This past and present sacrifice and dedication enables us weekly to experience the sense of personal fulfillment which brings us here, and keeps us here. The current ministerial dialogue continues and builds upon that work. Our growth and continued congregational health require that this exchange of ideas earnestly continue.

Engaging in a principled discussion about Congregational Ministry brings to mind Groucho Marx’s quip, “Those are my principles and if you don’t like them . . . well, I have others.”

The genius of this statement rests on the proposition that no principle is an absolute (which, I suppose, is itself an absolute principle). In that spirit, you are invited to join in the conversation about Congregational Ministry. It is an interchange which has been and will continue to be free, responsible, civil, and mutually respectful. It promises to be a tour of the ministerial mystery of who we are.

Buckle up.

Jim

**Please note! Board of Trustees meetings are ALWAYS open to the public.
Any member can observe – no advance “permission” or “RSVP” needed – just SHOW UP!**

Board meetings are the second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 – 8:30 pm in the downstairs lounge.

Notes from Board Meeting June 9, 2009

June's Board meeting is where the newly elected Board and the outgoing Board meet together. Transition tasks are completed such as electing the President and Vice President, appointing committee liaisons (see below), and visioning for the coming year.

Jim Gentile is the new Board President and Debbi Dagavarian is the Vice President. Elected by the congregation as Treasurer is Prim Reeves and as Secretary, Karen Zindell.

The Board's regular monthly meetings will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 - 8:30 pm. It was agreed that at each meeting, if discussion length required it, an 8:00 decision would be made to either extend the meeting or schedule an additional one. This is a new attempt to control the length of Board meetings, which in the past have frequently extended till 10 or 11 pm. Committee and staff reports will be due to the secretary by the 1st of every month in order that they may be assembled into a single board packet.

Next Board meeting – Tuesday, August 11, at 6:30 pm in the downstairs lounge.

COMMITTEE	BOARD LIASION
Adult Religious Education	Ruth Eaves
Building & Grounds Committee	John Searight
Children's Religious Education	Karen York
Communications Committee	Deb Dagavarian
Finance Committee	3 Board Members are Committee Members. No designated Liaison
Green Sanctuary Committee	Ruth Eaves
Interweave	Prim Reeves
Membership Committee	Deb Dagavarian
Social Justice Committee	Jim Gentile
Sunday Services Committee	Karen Zindell

UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2009-2010	
Officers	Members At Large
Jim Gentile 10 <i>President</i>	Ruth Eaves 10
Debbi Dagavarian 10 <i>Vice President</i>	John Searight 11
Karen Zindell 11 <i>Secretary</i>	Karen York 11
Primrose Reeves 10 <i>Treasurer</i>	* year given is end of term, e.g. 11 means thru 6/30/2011

You're Invited -- Again!!

-- a new time --

The Committee on Ministry is hosting a farewell potluck picnic for Rev. Rosemarie Newberry on Saturday, August 1, 2009 from 3 to 7 pm at the UU Center.



We will provide the hamburgers, veggie burgers, and hotdogs (or, as Melissa Hutchison says, the "burgers and brats"). You can bring salads, sides, drinks or desserts. There will be a sign-up to help coordinate the potluck offering, which will also serve as an RSVP to help us plan the amount of food to purchase. If you have any questions contact Karen York. Please plan to join us!

MARGARET CIRCLE

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 6 at 1 pm. We will meet at the UU Center in the library. The discussion topic will be "Is the United States a Christian Nation?" All women are welcome, you do not have to be a member of the congregation -- guests are encouraged.

We will light the chalice at 1 pm and begin sharing with each other anything significant that happened in our lives during the past month. After a short meeting we will break for refreshments. At 2 pm we will begin the discussion.

Please RSVP to Kathy Kelley if you plan to attend to ensure that we will have enough dessert for everyone.

Default Committee Meeting schedule

- 1st Sunday Adult RE
- 2nd Sunday Children's RE
- 3rd Sunday Sunday Services
- 4th Sunday Membership, Social Justice
- 5th Sunday Potluck! *Please, no committee meetings.*

Buy **Gift Cards** any Sunday for
Acme, Foodtown & Shoprite.

Don't you have to buy groceries anyway??!

Using these gift cards for groceries
nets the congregation 5%.

We also have Fair Trade coffee and tea!

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MISSION: Broadening Religious Imaginations

LEARNING TO LOVE BETTER

The Introduction to the UU Course, *Discovering Your Ministry*, includes this statement, "Learning to love is a lifetime task for Unitarian Universalists."

Don't we already know how to love as evidenced by the love shared by loving couples and family members, the pastoral care shown to members of the congregation in need, and our love for our new green building and the surrounding environment?

However, it may be that what the author had in mind was that it is a lifetime task for us to deepen and broaden our love so that it becomes even more inclusive. For example, can we learn to love those who:

- Believe in some kind of divine presence, as did Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, Jefferson, and Joseph Priestley, as well as atheists, agnostics, and other nonbelievers?
- Appreciate and value the contributions of the traditional faith communities to architecture, art, legal matters, music, philosophy, and democratic politics, despite the horrors committed in the name of religion?
- Patriots as well as the cynics and the naysayers?
- Optimists and positive thinkers as well as those inclined to think more negatively?

Isn't this what our "official" elevator speech calls on us to do when we say, "Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion guided by reason and motivated by love"?

Since we know that many sins have been committed in the name of "love," perhaps it would be good to have a working definition. One we like is "Love is a delight in the presence of the other person and an affirming of his or her value and development as much as one's own."

All those who wish to know more about this in relation to Unitarian Universalism and personal relationships can sign up for one of the UU courses to be offered this Fall: *Building Your Own Theology* or *Principled Commitment: A Program for Unitarian Universalist Couples (A UU Tapestry of Faith Program for Adults)*.

Signup sheets will be available just as soon as the schedule is finalized. See you there!

-- Barbara J Clark, Chair, Adult Religious Education

"The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and good ending, then having the two as close together as possible." -- *George Burns*

Singing Meditation -- Singing for Joy!

Saturday, October 3,
from 1 - 3:30pm



Singing Meditation is an interfaith spiritual practice where singing is alternated with periods of silence for meditation and contemplation. Songs are drawn from a variety of spiritual paths and many are not specific to any religion. You don't need to be an experienced singer nor able to read music -- just willing to sing! We will revel in toning, singing in harmony, mantras, chants, and rounds. Sacred circle dancing will provide an opportunity to join hands, hearts and voices as we blend movement and music.

This is Ruthie Rosauer's second visit to us: she led a Singing Meditation workshop back in May. She has been leading Singing Meditation for five years. Her book, *Singing Meditation: Together in Sound and Silence* is due for release by Skinner House in November 2009. She is an active member of her home UU congregation in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. For more information about Singing Meditation see the website:

www.singingmeditation.com

Do you shop at Foodtown? If so, there are only a few gift cards left. If you want us to continue making Foodtown cards available, please make your desires known -- as we may not be ordering more.

Meditation on Broken Hearts

And how is it with your heart?

Does your heart feel whole, shielded by intellect, cocooned by reason, closed to feeling?

Or is it broken, fragile to the touch, brimming with the pain of loss?

None of us has an unblemished heart, not one.

For such perfection can be found only in death, and we who are alive still have much to heal.

So let us give thanks for the broken places in our hearts, and in our lives.

For it is only through such brokenness that we may truly touch one another

and only through touching one another that the world may be healed.

Let us give then thanks for the brokenness that we share.

by Thomas Rhodes

Children's Religious Education

Summer Sessions

So far this summer, the children have enjoyed their Summer Sunday sessions playing games with Kyle Jones, making greeting cards and jewelry with Debbi Dagavarian-Bonar, exploring the woods behind the UU Center during a nature walk with Kim Peters and Jack Miller, and folding origami cranes with Karen York. These cranes will be presented by the children to the Hiroshima survivors at the August 6 Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemoration.

Upcoming Activities for Children during the summer months (tentative schedule)

- August 2 Sign Language - Angela Jones
- August 9 Pottery - Prim Reeves
- August 16 Fun with Recycling - Jesse Connor
- August 23 "Jam Session" with some of our congregation's musicians: Chris Holaday, Victor Maene, Steve Fiedler, David Shaman
- August 30 Crafts - Colby Tippins
- September 6 Cooperative Games - Karen Zindell

Many thanks to all of these generous volunteers for sharing their time with the kids this summer!

-- Heidi Jansch, Director of Religious Education

WHAT IS AN "ELEVATOR SPEECH"

It's a challenge to describe our faith, and your part in it, in the amount of time it would take to share a few floors of an elevator ride with a stranger. Last month we heard from Will Parsons. Another installment in this series, this time from **Ronda Cluff**:

"Rather than focusing on the dogma of religion, Unitarian Universalism promotes living according to principles like affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person and respecting the interdependent web of life. Whatever you believe (or don't believe) about God is fine — UUs are interested in the contribution we can make to creating a more compassionate and just society. You can maintain your own personal religious values while sharing the congregation's journey to greater understanding of our world and each other. What I love most is that I've found a community that embraces me and my family as we are, but gives us opportunities to explore other ways of 'being' in the world."

Celebration!!!

All UUCSJS Members and Friends
are invited
to share in the celebration of the
Civil Union

of **Kathy Purdy and Jeanine Blockus**,
long-time UUCSJS members.

The ceremony will be after
the regular Sunday service,
at **12 noon, on Sunday, August 16.**

Reception to follow, with a luau theme!
*Hawaiian attire welcome
but not required!*

Do you like to tell stories?

Join the Children's RE Committee for a

Spiritplay Training Workshop

Wednesday, August 5, 6:30-8:30 pm
at the UU Center

What is Spiritplay?

Spiritplay is a storytelling religious education program presented for our Pre-K-2nd graders. During each class, the storyteller relates a story while presenting visual cues (small objects, pictures) to the children as a way to help the children remember the story. The children are then encouraged to interpret the story through art expression, or can revisit past stories and present them to each other taking on the role of the storyteller.

Karen York has received official training to get the program started, and will share her enthusiasm and knowledge for Spiritplay as she introduces the program during this training session.

Please RSVP by August 4 to Heidi Jansch at sjsdre@gmail.com if you will be attending.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Annual Commemoration



Thursday,
August 6th,
7:00 p.m.
at Stockton
College,
Room F111*

Join us in welcoming two Japanese guests – survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – who will share their stories as *Hibakusha* delegates to the state of New Jersey.

Sponsored by

Coalition For Peace and Justice
The Holocaust Resource Center of Richard Stockton College
Atlantic City Area Friends
and
UUCSJS

* Room F111 is located across the hall from the Library. Park in Lot 1.

FULL GREEN AHEAD

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle ... your book consumption!

No we don't mean STOP READING! We mean giving your books a second life.

Paperbackswap is an online club for swapping books. After registering, you list the books you want to give away, and you browse or list the books you want to get. The only cost is the postage that you pay when you mail one of your books to another member. You earn a credit for each book that you send to another member. Then when you request a book from another member, it's free to you... the sender pays the postage.

To learn more about joining, and see the selection of available books (over 3 million titles), go to www.paperbackswap.com.

To read a comparison of some other book-sharing services, visit this article from the Wall Street Journal:

<http://tinyurl.com/compare-bookswaps>



Don't throw out those old ink cartridges and cell phones...

Donate them!

Through Planet Green Recycling Program, the Children's RE program will be collecting these items and raising funds for playground equipment. Please look for the drop boxes in the vestibule. And please place your donations in a plastic bag before dropping them in the boxes. The children thank you and the earth thanks you!

Here To Help

As members of a liberal religious community, we covenant that each of us shares responsibility for our brothers' and sisters' care, both worldly and spiritual. In recent years we have responded to reports of need by asking a person close to the member in need to be our Care liaison, making sure that we are offering and delivering the kinds of support needed in the ways that are most helpful. UUCSJS members have been *wonderfully* generous and attentive to members' needs, difficulties, and celebrations, too. Caring Team volunteers are respectful of members' privacy, and practice strict confidentiality.

Now, our congregation has reached a size where we do not all know each other by name, and we have no current professional ministry. We want to make sure that every member feels secure and not alone when a crisis appears; it is essential that we adapt our past practices to our current size and situation.

When we were a smaller congregation, needs were communicated just by "spreading the word." Now that we are a little larger, it would be helpful if members of the Caring Team could be easily identified. To this end, there will soon be identifying labels for Caring Team volunteers on their membership badges. You may speak to any one of these persons before or after Sunday services to seek help for you or a family situation. All contacts will be held in confidence.

Another method to communicate needs will be the availability of Care Cards which can be placed in the offering basket on any Sunday. You will then promptly receive a call from a Caring Team member.

For needs in which a professional minister is desired, we are in contact with nearby ministers, asking that they accept calls of urgent need from our members for such formal rites as weddings and funerals.

So if you, sometimes suddenly, must deal with illness, death of a loved one, dramatic changes in life situations both pleasant and difficult, or spiritual crises, you will not be alone. The Caring Team is here to help, in both practical and emotionally supportive ways.

-- Kathie Benner

Love doesn't just sit there like a stone; it has to be made, like bread, remade all the time, made new.

Ursula K. LeGuin

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Minister

vacant
minister@uucsjs.org

Music Director & Sunday Service Coordinator

Barbara Miller
music@uucsjs.org

Director of Religious Education & Staff Coordinator

Heidi Jansch
dre@uucsjs.org

Church Administrator

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Board of Trustees 2009-10

Debbi Dagavarian, Ruth Eaves,
Jim Gentile, Primrose Reeves,
John Searight, Karen York, Karen Zindell



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August 2009

Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

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