



Newsletter



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South
Jersey Shore

Volume 13, Issue 07

July 2011

July 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.

<p>July 3</p>	<p>Memory and Creation <i>Lay speaker Jack Miller</i> It is hard to imagine living a life that is not based on memory. So is it a problem or a blessing that memory is unreliable?</p>
<p>July 10</p>	<p>The Three Theresas <i>Lay speaker Theresa McReynolds</i> Our own Theresa will share her appreciation of three Theresas that have led her back to a fresh understanding of Jesus: St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), St Therese “The Little Flower of Jesus” (1873-1897), and Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997).</p>
<p>July 17</p>	<p>Crumbs No More <i>Guest speaker Donna Renfro</i> What can we learn from the encounter between Jesus and the woman from Tyre? Who do we most need to truly welcome?</p>
<p>July 24</p>	<p>Our 2011 General Assembly Experience <i>Lay speaker Richard Grzywinski</i> As we did last August, prepare to attend another “virtual” Unitarian Universalist General Assembly (GA). This year’s GA was actually held in Charlotte, NC, June 22-26, 2011. Celebrate with us the 50th anniversary of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. Your delegates to the GA, Jeff Taylor, Marie Taylor and Richard Grzywinski have selected and excerpted the most inspirational messages and music from the GA for this UUCSJS service. Come, be uplifted, be inspired, and reflect on the future of our faith as UUCSJS readers and musicians bring the GA to our UU Center.</p>
<p>July 31 5th Sunday Potluck</p>	<p>Cosmology: Exploring an Evolutionary Universe <i>Lay speaker Alan Oliver</i> Cosmology is about the origin and nature of the universe. This presentation will briefly explore the old cosmologies (flat earth, earth centric, sun centric, and existential meaningless) and make a case for the creation of a new, shared sacred story: The Great Story. Science is increasingly showing us an emergent, developmental and evolutionary universe, but our myth making -- meaningful stories of our place in the universe -- has lagged behind these new revelations. How can our everyday lives reflect this new evolutionary perspective?</p>

4th ANNUAL DRUM & DANCE FEST – July 15 - 17, 2011 – See <http://murraygrove.org> for more info.



Our speakers this month:

Donna Renfro has spent half her professional life in some form of education, and the other half owning businesses. She is currently serving as the Director of Religious Education at the UU Fellowship of Northern Westchester in Mount Kisco, NY. She is pursuing a Masters of Divinity at New York Theological Seminary, is in 'Candidate' status for UU ministry, and is a member of Core of Fire Interfaith Dance Ministry and an Interplay leader.

Donna spent her first ten years in a Southern Baptist church, where her Sunday School lessons of Jesus exemplifying kindness, compassion, teaching and inclusion became her lifelong highest values. She returned to church in her forties, to the Unity Church of Practical Christianity in Houston, looking for a religious home that lived her Sunday School values, and was more interested like she's always been, in how Jesus lived and taught, rather than how he died. Donna eventually found she needed more inclusion, of theology and social justice in the wider world, and found herself having that 'coming home' experience in a UU congregation in the late 90's.

Behind Good and Evil

by Margaret Rea

I have been reading (devouring) *Behind Good & Evil: How to overcome the death-dealing character of morality* by Scott W Gustafson (see also June Newsletter). Gustafson is really "socking it to" the reader, starting with the Preface in which he reminds us that WWI, "the War to end all wars" didn't, and introduces us to the authors who led him (SWG) to write *BG&E*. The "assault" continues in the Introduction where SWG points out parallels between Osama bin Laden's world view and that of George W Bush... and then takes readers of C.S. Lewis to task for misconstruing Aslan as a Christ figure when Aslan is clearly a moralist-dominator while Jesus of Nazareth was an ethicist who refused to draw lines. ... *Curious?*

Chapter One recaps the content of, and differences between, the dominator system and partnership ways, expanding on SWG's discussion in *Biblical Amnesia* in part by looking at partnership in nature a beginning with single celled organisms and continuing through complete eco-systems existing "before" food became a commodity. This chapter also asks us to distinguish between culture and civilization, using the indigenous peoples of the Americas as examples, and introduces the connection between the commoditization of food and the establishment of morality.

Chapter Two expands on the death-dealing character of morality using illustrations from the Hebrew Bible contrasted with the gospel record of the *behavior* of Jesus. SWG also cites examples from the early history of European colonization of the

Americas and introduces the issue of the rise of the Third Reich. Chapter Three continues this theme as it describes the use of morality to rationalize racism and other forms of oppression. *Have I piqued your interest yet?*

Chapter Four is devoted entirely to the Holocaust. Having read it, even superficially, I would now describe the Holocaust as "morality on steroids" or perhaps as "hyper-morality".

You will be glad to know that in chapters Five, Six, and Seven SWG offers the reader hope. I think, however that we UUs will need self-restraint to avoid a certain smugness as we read them. On some level, our Seven Principles parallel the content of these chapters – chapters entitled Ethics without Morality; Ethical Virtues and Tactics; (and going) Beyond What We Are.

I have been reading *BG&E* voraciously: nodding smugly. I look forward to rereading it "book-study style", though sadly not in NJ this summer. I know that when I read each chapter individually, tie its ideas to other books I have read and experiences I have had, and then discuss my impressions with others who have read other authors and had different experiences – I will be able to truly savor, digest, and internalize the lessons of the book.

Have **you** ever wondered why a Samaritan felt compelled to stop and help an injured Jew while two religious officials felt justified in walking by, leaving the victim for dead? Who acted ethically and who acted morally in that historic story told by Jesus? To better understand of why we are sometimes motivated to help people and yet, other times, feel justified in ignoring pleas for help, you are invited to participate in a study of Scott Gustafson's new book, *BEHIND GOOD AND EVIL*. The study, led by Pastor Ed Harshbarger, will take place at St James Lutheran Church (Folsom) on **Monday evenings** at 7:00 pm (July 11-August 15). Pastor Ed will lead a "repeat" (with different lay participants) at Reformation Lutheran Church (Absecon) on **Wednesday mornings** at 11:00 am (July 13-August 17).

The author, Dr. Gustafson, will visit St. James Lutheran (Folsom) on **Sunday, September 11**, 4:00 to 7:00 pm., to discuss the implications of his thesis for how Churches minister to people in need. Discussion and a potluck dinner to which all readers of the book are invited will follow the presentation.

Copies of *BEHIND GOOD AND EVIL* are available from Barnes and Noble, Amazon, etc., or from Pastor Ed. If you sign up with me on June 26, I will forward your contact information to Pastor Ed, or you may contact him directly by email at: pastorech@comcast.net.

Constantly choosing the lesser of two evils is still choosing evil.
– Jerry Garcia

It may be necessary temporarily to accept a lesser evil, but one must never label a necessary evil as good.
– Margaret Mead

UUCSJS Women's Association Meetings

Margaret Fuller Circle - Thursday, June 2, 1 pm

Margaret Circle will be on break during the summer. Please plan on joining us in September. Our meetings are always on the first Thursday of the month at 1 pm, sometimes at the UU Center, and sometimes at a members home.

Olympia Brown Circle

Olympia Circle will be on break during the summer. Olympia Circle always meets on the second Thursday of the month at 6 pm, usually at a local restaurant. See you again in September!

Women's Spirituality Circle

The Women's Spirituality Circle will be on break during the summer. The Spirituality Circle usually meets on the third Sunday of the month, after Sunday service. See you in September.

News from Murray Grove

Murray Grove has changed its name to the Murray Grove Retreat and **Renewal** Center. People and groups come to Murray Grove for many reasons: to renew themselves; to recharge their batteries; to connect with colleagues/loved ones; to work towards a common goal.

Other Murray Grove renewal efforts include:

– The rescheduling of Homecoming to **once every five years**. The next Homecoming in 2015 will celebrate the 245th anniversary of John Murray's delivery of the first Universalist sermon in America.

– The scheduling of intensive workshops that focus on Universalism and related areas during the time between Homecoming events. This year's feature workshop, from July 31 thru August 5, is Heritage Week, a rare opportunity to learn about our rich history right here at Murray Grove where John Murray's first sermon in America was preached. Heritage Week is for anyone wishing to deepen their understanding of Universalist, Unitarian, and Unitarian Universalist religious education and history.

– Targeted to be unveiled on or about July 1 is our redesigned and updated website.

– The upgrading of our pool to a more efficient and environmentally friendly saltwater system.

Summer is here!

**Try some new items on your grill:
fish instead of burgers; veggies like corn,
zucchini, peppers, portabella mushrooms.
Get creative!**

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

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

We also have Fair Trade coffee, tea, and chocolate!



So what are we reading next year?

Book Group Picks List for New Season Before Enjoying a Break for the Summer

At the recent June meeting to discuss the very popular *Water for Elephants*, the book lovers group also deliberated and debated our way to a brand new list of books for the upcoming September-to-June season. (There will be no book club meeting in July or August.)

Based on suggestions put forth by members, the group settled on a list of ten new titles, beginning with *What the Dog Saw and Other Adventures*, first up when book club resumes on Friday, September 16. This is Canadian author Malcolm Gladwell's fourth book, after *The Tipping Point*, *Blink*, and *Outliers*. "It is more entertaining and edifying than should be legal for any book," enthused one critic. Come ready for smiles and laughter!

We continue on into the Fall with *The Lace Reader* by Brunonia Barry for October (a mystery with a cast of fascinating eccentrics, set in Salem), and for November, *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption* by Laura Hillenbrand (the recent bestseller recommended by no fewer than three separate book group members).

In December it's customary to have a holiday party, and this year we picture "Napoleon-era inspired" hors d'oeuvres, cakes, and pastries to accompany *The Secret History of the Pink Carnation* by Lauren Willig. Called both "inane" and "a joy to read," this book may lead us straight into a discussion of what makes good literature, and why some books garner undeserved success. The festive evening will end with a holiday gag gift exchange.

For January, we venture into the harsh Canadian wilderness for the vintage *Mrs. Mike* by Benedict and Nancy Freedman. February features the very well-regarded *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese. *American Pastoral* by Philip Roth, in March, gives us a chance to reassess this author. For April, we will read UU Randy Pausch's life-affirming *The Last Lecture: Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams*. May's book is Colin Thubron's *To a Mountain in Tibet*, a travel memoir that transcends the physical journey. Finally, in June we contemplate society in the 1800s with *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris* by David McCullough.

If you would like to join other book lovers for lively talk with light refreshments, plan to attend any or all book group meetings. *Customarily, we meet (for about two hours) on the third Friday evening of each month at 7 pm in the UU Center Library*. If you would like to get email reminders and other literary-related notices, contact Judy Pereira. Hope we see you, in September! *So what did the dog see?*

Hospitality Committee Report

An *ad hoc* Hospitality Committee was formed at the suggestion of Program Council and with the Board's approval. Barbara Miller took the lead in getting the committee off the ground because of her strong interest in providing an excellent Sunday experience for everyone -- one that includes worship and fellowship. Barbara is prohibited from chairing the committee because of her position on our staff, but she has done a great job inspiring committee members to come forward to share the tasks and responsibilities.

The working mission of the committee:

To create and maintain a coffee hour that welcomes guests and nurtures relationships by providing appropriate snacks in keeping with our identity as a Green Sanctuary and space for fellowship.

The goals are:

- Easy access to food and drink, especially for guests
- Better flow
- Minimal cleanup – less work for volunteers
- Greening of coffee hour – food choices, serving utensils, packaging; minimizing use of dishwasher
- Recruitment of volunteers for kitchen crew

Starting August 1, changes that will help us reach our goals are:

Simplified snack choices: limit snacks to foods that don't require a fork or spoon, or balancing a plate (while trying not to spill your coffee), such as pretzels, cookies, & veggie sticks that can be consumed easily, ensuring a better fellowship experience for all.

Simplified snack purchasing: Committee members, Charlie Roberts and Nancy Manderson have volunteered to take over the purchasing of snacks from our simplified list as well as juice and milk and soy milk for coffee and tea. **We thank everyone heartily for your past generosity but ask that you refrain from bringing in donations of food or drinks so that we can meet the goals above.**

Simplified kitchen-prep and clean-up. Now that kitchen prep and clean-up will be minimized, we will be circulating a sign-up sheet for coffee-hour volunteers. We encourage everyone who can help out to sign up to help out two or three times a year. Are you a new kitchen volunteer? No worry, the sign-up sheet is organized to include an "expert" for each Sunday who will be able to help you out. We will also provide a list of substitutes to call if something comes up and you are not able to help on the date you volunteered.

Promoting fellowship: The committee decided to reinstitute Fifth Sunday potlucks in an effort to promote the kind of relaxed fellowship that sharing a meal provides. There will be four potlucks a year. Our first Fifth Sunday Potluck will be on July 31, and the Hospitality Committee will make a short presentation about the new guidelines during the potluck, and we'll be recruiting volunteers for August through October.

Jesse Connor

Children's Religious Education

In the Summertime...

Our church school year ended with a grand finale at our first Bridging ceremony. Melissa Hutchison worked with the bridgers to create a beautiful and memorable service -- thank you, Melissa, and best wishes to our graduates!

As the weather gets warmer we have the opportunity to enjoy pool parties, vacations, and fun in the sun. Unfortunately, all this 'having fun' leads to sporadic RE class attendance... so during July and August we do not hold children's religious education classes. Instead, each week a member of the congregation leads all the kids in an activity or craft during the service. These activities during our "summer sessions" are geared toward including children of all ages

Our Summer Session Schedule for July includes:

- July 3 - Rock Painting with Colby Tippins
- July 10 - Camp Quest with Michael Cluff
- July 17 - Button Designs with Debbi Dagavarian
- July 24 - Chalice Ornaments with Karen York
- July 31 - Activity to be Decided

Have a great summer!

-- Heidi Jansch, Director of Religious Education

Adult Religious Education

There will be no Adult RE classes during the summer.

But you can always share your ideas for new religious exploration with Chair Marsha Hannah, anytime!

UULTI by the Sea

August 18-21, 2011
(Thursday Evening to Sunday Afternoon)

Ocean Grove Retreat Center
Ocean Grove, NJ

A long weekend residential learning experience now in its fifth year, UULTI is now under the umbrella of the Central East Regional Group (CERG), which includes the Joseph Priestley District, Metro New York, Ohio Meadville, and St. Lawrence Districts, with support from the UUA Office of Congregational Life. The mission of UULTI is to provide professional and lay religious leaders from UU congregations and communities with a unique learning community. Along with helping participants develop skills, competencies, knowledge, and insights; the matrix of tracks and lenses offer a more holistic experience that forms leaders that can transform the world.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Dear Friends,

I am happy to say there are only a few things for you to consider with regards to the Social Justice Committee this summer so now's a good time to jump in if you've been too busy over the year so far:

• The **NJ Energy Master Plan** has finally been released and new dates have been set to hold public hearings to get feedback before accepting, rejecting, or changing the plan. We have a unique opportunity to voice our comments and concerns as a faith community who cares very much about environmental issues. Though, I am also aware that there is usually less congregation participation during summer months as folks travel, vacation and relax. Therefore, I thought it may be best to have a **sign-up** sheet at the sign-up table at the rear of the Sanctuary for those who are interested in attending the public hearing. If there are 5 or more people committed to going, I will make arrangements for us to go over as a group, coordinate our comments, etc. However, if there aren't enough people committed, I will let it pass and folks can go as individuals if they please to do so.

The public hearing is set for Thursday, August 11 from 1-5 pm at the Campus Center at Stockton College. As far as I am aware, you need not be present for the entire time. The Energy Master Plan can be read (some fun summer reading, I'm sure) at: <http://nj.gov/emp/docs/pdf/2011%20Draft%20Energy%20Master%20Plan.pdf>

Our Committee is also moving forward with the **butterfly garden plans with Atlantic City High School**. Several members of the congregation have expressed an interest in participating in the project and we are grateful for that! I will also add a sign-up sheet at the rear of the Sanctuary for those who are interested in this project to please **sign-up** so that I do not leave anyone out who is interested. As a reminder, this butterfly garden would be installed (with our help) and up-kept by the students of Atlantic City High School. There will also be a vegetable garden on the site that the students will be required to maintain as part of their curriculum too. In addition, an outdoor reading area has been designated near the site of the butterfly garden location which also happens to be right outside the cafeteria window. I am thoroughly convinced that the students of the high school will enjoy and benefit from the experience of being engaged with the natural world around them and value the break from the normal daily classroom setting. If you wish to be a part of this project in any way great or small, please do not forget to sign up!

Lastly, we were scheduled to have a visit after the Sunday Service by Dennis Konzelman from **Viridian Energy** to answer any questions or concerns that congregation members may have about switching over. Unfortunately, Dennis had to cancel that visit and postpone it until further notice. I will keep everyone up to date when that has been arranged! In the meantime, if you have been meaning to switch and it just slipped your mind, there are forms which can be filled out at the SJ table and left with the

table attendant and we will take care of the rest. Several members have already expressed their delight in seeing their bills decrease while knowing they are helping the environment and the congregation in the process.

In closing, have a safe and happy summer and please remember to sign-up for our various projects and activities at the rear of the Sanctuary and we will be in touch with more information to come!

In faith and love,

Angela Jones, Social Justice Chair



Visit our UUCSJS BUTTERFLY GARDEN in GALLOWAY

Five years ago, Barbara Fiedler, Community Education Coordinator for Galloway Township, brought to my attention that the gardens surrounding Patriot Lake in

Galloway were in need of refurbishing and committed volunteer sponsorship. I wondered, could UUCSJS take on a garden? Members of our Social Justice Committee were enthusiastic about the undertaking, and Barbara and I surveyed possible sites. I selected a very visible and easily accessible spot to the right of the main path as you walk in from the parking lot. And the work of digging and planting quickly was under way.

Today, the UUCSJS Butterfly Garden continues to delight the many walkers, joggers, and visitors to Patriot Lake. Purple coneflowers, lavender, and bee balm are all in full bloom right now and alive with butterflies and other pollinators. Host plants are drawing monarchs and black swallowtails to lay their eggs among the milkweed, parsley, and dill. And asters, Joe-Pye weed, and butterfly bush will all be blooming soon to add hundreds of beautiful flowers and also the nectar and pollen they provide

I encourage you to stop by and enjoy our lovely and beneficial garden. You can find it behind the library and police station on Jimmie Leeds Road. Be sure to check out our plaque and feel free to help yourself to our pamphlet that can help you create or enhance your own butterfly garden.

Many thanks to all of the volunteers who helped create this special garden and who help keep it going. If you'd like to volunteer, on your own or working alongside one or two others, please email me.

Jesse Connor

Many butterflies can taste with their feet to find out whether the leaf they sit on is good to lay eggs on to be their caterpillars' food or not.

Between emerging from its egg and entering the pupa stage, a caterpillar increases to over 27000 times its original size.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Minister
vacant

**Music Director &
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Board of Trustees 2010-11
Debbi Dagavarian, Jim Gentile, Primrose Reeves,
John Searight, Joe Terrazzini, Karen York, Karen Zindell



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July 2011

Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

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