



Newsletter



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South
Jersey Shore

Volume 13, Issue 12

December 2011

December 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.

Dec 4	<p>Lessons From My Youth <i>Lay speaker Bob Baum</i></p> <p>In our youth we tend to accept things the way they are -- attitudes about race, lifestyle, and gender roles. Bob can remember events that made him question the rightness and wrongness of these attitudes. He'll share with us some of his stories of coming of age viewed through the lens of adulthood.</p>
<p>Dec 11 Ministry Workshop with Rev Richard Speck 12 to 2 pm</p>	<p>Bring Many Names <i>Pastor Charlie Dieterich</i></p> <p>Even in the 19th Century Unitarians were noticing that congregations diverged in their religious practices, but there were common threads running through the many beliefs. What was the "landscape of religion" like then, and what is the Unitarian Universalist landscape like today?</p>
Dec 18	<p>Bard in the UUSA <i>Lay speaker Michelle Tomko</i></p> <p>In this three-part series, Michelle Tomko and other members of the congregation will explore our seven principles via the works of William Shakespeare, period music, and dance. Part I will introduce the series and explore Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations ("The quality of mercy is not strained." - <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>) and A free and responsible search for truth and meaning. ("To be or not to be." - <i>Hamlet</i>).</p>
<p><i>Saturday,</i> Dec 24, 7 pm</p>	<p><i>Come, bring friends, join in a celebration of Christmas with readings, songs and candles! This is your big chance, since there is no service on Christmas morning!</i></p>
Dec 25	<p>No service. Enjoy the day with loved ones.</p>
Jan 1	<p>Sharing Service with Pastor Charlie. We simplify our service and meet in a circle to check in with ourselves, our hopes and burdens. (No RE Classes)</p>

Wednesday, December 21, 7 pm: Winter Solstice/Yule
Chant and Dance and Share in the longest night of the year.
Theresa McReynolds and Pastor Charlie will guide our meditations
as we observe the turning of the seasons.

A Ministerial Start-Up workshop with Pastor Charlie Dieterich, facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Richard Speck, District Executive of the Joseph Priestley District of the UAA, will take place on **Sunday, December 11, 2011**, following Sunday Services. The whole Congregation participates from 12 noon to 2, and the Board of Trustees from 2:30 to 4:30. *Please mark your calendars.*

Our guest speakers...

Bob Baum grew up on his grandfather's farm in Cross Keys and served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. After his tour of duty he finished his Bachelor's degree in Georgia and his Master's degree in Education at Rowan University. His career has spanned education at all levels as well as writing and editing for several magazines. Before retiring from education he developed a humanities program for middle schoolers encompassing his combined love for the arts, literature, and history. He has now retired from teaching in order to paint and sculpt fulltime at his home studio along the Great Egg Harbor River in Mays Landing. Bob says, "Carolyn is the reason I do any of this." They have two children and three grandchildren, and have been here at UUCSJS since the summer solstice of 2008.

Pastor Charlie has regular office hours from 10 am to 2 pm Wednesdays at the UU Center.

Feel free to call the office for a half hour appointment (he has his own mailbox on the answering machine), or send him a note at minister@uucsjs.org.

Did you miss a Sermon?

Many of our previous sermons are available for reading on our web site, and more recently, some are available in video format. If you've missed a Sunday or want to go back and read or listen to a previous sermon, just visit www.uucsjs.org/sermons.html

Thanks to Richard Grzywinski, many of our sermons are now video-recorded and available for our congregation on YouTube. Please note that **music used during the service is subject to copyright laws** both with respect to performance and the material performed.

Please do not record music offered during a Sunday Service without first discussing it with Barbara Miller, Worship Coordinator. And never post such a recording to a public website such as YouTube without obtaining the necessary permissions. The congregation can be held liable for violations of copyright.

First Annual UUCSJS Thanksgiving Dinner was a huge success!

Twenty-six people attended bringing all kinds of wonderful food to share. There was lots of laughter and fun. I want to thank everyone who helped make the day great: Roberta for the turkey, Michelle and Anne for the ham, Richard G for his vegan pies, Lori for the grateful game, Colby for decorating, Lauren, Steve, Jill and Shannon for setting up and taking down, Kathleen for washing the linens, Wendy for doing the dishes, David and Joe and Xena for putting the tables away -- and everyone that helped in the kitchen. And everyone that came and brought delicious food, and of course Richard S for his beautiful blessing. And all the children for their laughter and music. I know I am forgetting someone -- please forgive me. It was truly a community effort that made for a wondrous Thanksgiving. I am so grateful for this community. Thank you.

-- Theresa McReynolds

"At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled shows;
But like of each thing that in season grows."
- *Love's Labours Lost*

Blow, blow, thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind,
As man's ingratitude.
-- *William Shakespeare*

When you close your doors, and make
darkness within, remember never to say
that you are alone, for you are not alone;
nay, God is within, and your genius is
within. And what need have they of light
to see what you are doing?
-- *Epictetus*

All the darkness in the world
cannot extinguish the light of a single candle.
-- *Saint Francis of Assisi*

From Pastor Charlie Dieterich:

Belief and Celebration



This week I've been thinking about Christmas trees. It's still a bit early, but I'm wondering if I should get one or not. I guess the answer depends on how festive I'm feeling and whether I get the opportunity to buy one.

When I lived up near Boston my parent's tradition was to buy a tree from the Follen Church (UU) in East Lexington. They sold Christmas trees as a fundraiser. And the reason they sold them was because their first minister, Rev. Charles Follen, brought the tradition of Christmas trees to New England in the 1830's.

And so you might assume Rev. Follen was a stodgy traditionalist. You would be wrong. He was born Karl Follen, in the state of Hesse-Darmstadt, where he studied Theology and then Law. At the time Germany was occupied by Napoleon, and Karl held republican beliefs. He became outspoken in his enthusiasm for political independence, and was soon fleeing to Switzerland to avoid the authorities. In Switzerland he advocated Unitarianism in a very Calvinist culture, and thus he found himself heading to the United States, where he changed his name and left behind his law training.

He ended up with an appointment as Harvard College's first Professor of German. He also brought German biblical criticism to the intellectuals of New England, who were already evolving from early Unitarianism to Transcendentalism.

But I don't think Follen was an intellectual. I think he was a radical seeker of justice. In the 1830's our nation had several paradoxical laws. One was the wildly popular "Indian Removal Act of 1830" which confiscated native lands, and "relocated" Native Americans west of the Mississippi. The second was the network of laws supporting slavery. The British were in the process of abolishing slavery in the Caribbean, but it was a thriving exploitation in the USA.

Follen spoke out against slavery, advocating immediate emancipation. His opinions soon got him fired from Harvard, though the actual tipping point might have been his opposition to disciplining students. Follen's friends, including Unitarian ministers William Ellery Channing and Ralph Waldo Emerson, encouraged him to become a minister, and he was called to the Second Congregational Society in Lexington, Mass., a tiny congregation with no building.

Follen, the lawyer, saw the paradox of slavery laws, and Follen, the minister, felt it his duty to speak against it. Unfortunately, Unitarianism, the established church in Massachusetts, included many wealthy families who benefitted from this paradox and preferred the status quo.

His small congregation believed in his teachings, but could not support him full time, so he traveled and lectured around the northeast. Tragically, in 1840 the steamer he was aboard caught fire and sank. He had been on his way to dedicate the first building of Second Congregational -- a building he had designed, and which stands today.

You can tell how unpopular Abolitionist views were in 1840, because no church in Boston was willing to host a memorial

service for him. Ten years later, Abolition would be appropriate in some churches; Theodore Parker was preaching it to large crowds, though other congregations shunned him. In twenty years Boston was a hotbed of Abolitionist preaching. Rev. Charles Follen was a radical ahead of his time.

But calling him a radical Abolitionist does not do him justice. Charles Follen was a whole human being. He had married Eliza Lee Cabot, "of the Boston Cabots," and they raised one child. When Harriet Martineau, a sociologist from England, was staying with them she observed the Follens' Christmas tree, a tradition virtually unknown at the time in Massachusetts or England, though common in Germany. The Puritans were anti-Christmas, disdaining it as a "Papist Holiday." Perhaps the Puritan spirit was what was being expressed by Scrooge, the character in (British Unitarian author) Charles Dickens' 1843 story. In any event, Follen's celebration of Christmas was at the beginning of a revisioning of the day into a day of joy, peace on earth and goodwill.

This is a lesson to us all, radical, liberal and conservative. First, we are all human, and finding joy in our lives gives us balance. I enjoy persons with radical views especially when they can make their case, and also come down from their pulpit to acknowledge our common humanity. Indeed, Follen's friends Channing and Emerson did not come to the Abolitionist viewpoint until many years after Follen died, but they were his friends.

Eliza, his widow, continued their work for Abolition until her death in 1860, publishing children's books and anti-slavery hymns. Her poetry contains both outrage at slave laws and also wonder at life, nature and family.

The work of social change is slow, uneven, and frustrating. Many voices and many efforts combine over time. Perseverance and self care are essential, no matter what the cause.

It was said that Charles Follen's understanding of law brought him to advocate for Abolition, and that his legal and logical approach complemented the emotional appeals of the day. At the ground-breaking of the church he designed in Lexington, Rev. Follen prayed that:

"...this church never be desecrated by intolerance, or bigotry, or party spirit [partisanship]; more especially its doors might never be closed against any one, who would plead in it the cause of oppressed humanity; within its walls all unjust and cruel distinctions might cease."

Our Sundays this month will speak to the Traditions of our lives. Bob Baum will speak of his youth, Michelle Tomko will speak of Shakespeare's values, and I will be speaking on the breadth of Unitarian Universalism.

On Wednesday December 21 we will celebrate Winter Solstice/Yule with an evening gathering, and then in the Christian tradition, on Saturday a Christmas Eve "Instant Pageant," please come and bring friends. I look forward to seeing you there! And looking ahead to New Year's, there will be a quiet service on New Year's Day, with the theme of letting go and moving forward.

Peace on Earth, Pastor Charlie



The Paw Print

Your link to the doings of the South Jersey Animal Advocates

It's here. That season of giving. In that spirit, SJAA would like to sincerely thank the members of the board for allotting \$200 to our group last month. Through active fund-raising, we hope to make that figure grow and grow in the near future. Also, thanks to all who donated to the collection for *Alley Cat Allies* in November. Picture yourself spending a cold winter night under the boardwalk in Atlantic City and you'll realize how much these abandoned animals need your help.

Speaking of giving now is a great time of year for all you parents and grandparents out there to teach the kiddies a thing or two about giving. And what better way to give your family a "warm fuzzie" than by giving your family an actual *warm fuzzy* for the holidays. Or, if your lease or allergies won't allow that, at least get together as a family and do something for a warm fuzzy in your community.

If you are getting a pet, please, skip those breeders! In this economy, who has the money for a four-figure designer dog? Local shelters have many choices. *And...* most adoption fees (two-digit) cover some vaccinations and spay or neutering! So when you are watching a movie of the week this month on the *Hallmark Channel* about a dog who saved Christmas, remember that down the street from your comfy couch many, many animals need your help.

The SJAA is challenging you to be a leader this season. Don't just give money to a group. Show up at your local animal shelter with a bag of treats for dogs that won't be visited by Santa this year. The next time you are out shopping, clean some cages at shelters operated by local animal groups at *Petsmart* and the like. Instead of tossing that box from your new television or computer, cover it in plastic and toss in a blanket for that neighborhood cat you see around. Be on the lookout for breeds like Pugs and French Bulldogs that are being made to live outdoors in harsh weather in your area and **SAY SOMETHING! Be a LEADER!** Because always remember: *If you ain't Rudolph, the scenery never changes.*

"Whoever said you can't buy happiness forgot about puppies." -- Gene Hill



"In my opinion, the main virtue of this book is that it's funny." — Amazon reviewer

"Pleasurable Potpourri" for Book Lovers in December: Read, Write, Eat, Talk, Give, and Laugh!

Puzzling? How to explain the promise of "a pleasurable potpourri"! We will meet on **Friday, December 16 at 6:30 pm** (half hour early) in the **UU Center Library** for this holiday soirée. Since the book we're reading is set in early 18th century Napoleonic days, the evening is vaguely French-themed. Chocolate fondue will be featured along with the many good things for dipping that book lovers provide.

December's book, *The Secret History of the Pink Carnation*, was selected more than half in jest. Described as "essentially romantic comedy — with all the silliness, crazy plots, and exaggerated characters that entails"¹ and "romantic adventure executed with wit,"² author Lauren Willig actually graduated from Yale University, earned an advanced degree in history from Harvard, and holds a JD from Harvard Law. With the success of this book and eight more in the "Pink Carnation" series, she now writes full time and lives in New York City. It has been said that "few authors are capable of matching [her] ability to merge historical accuracy, heart-pounding romance, and biting wit."³ Oh, dear.

To find out who might be a match for Willig, Helene Gentile has come up with a fictional lead-in to a story to be finished in 250 words or less! These pieces of literary nonsense we will send via email to Marsha Hannah, who will render them anonymous. Then at book group in December, we will try to guess who wrote which. Wow.

And as if this were not enough, the evening ends with our gag gift exchange—your chance to get rid of a perfect white elephant. Wrap it up and somebody chooses, then tries to trade up for something better. Very merry.

The evening should prove to be a "pleasurable potpourri," and everybody is cordially invited. RSVP by Monday the 12th. If you would like more information, please contact Judy Pereira, Helene Gentile, or Marsha Hannah.

¹Review on Amazon by Lora Singleton

²*Kirkus Reviews*

³*BookPage*

Children's Religious Education

Celebrating the Season

Along with the December holidays, Children's RE will be celebrating a milestone in our congregation's history as we complete our first OWL (Our Whole Lives) program. Our 4-6th grade OWL class has been meeting on Thursday nights this fall under the leadership of Kyle Jones. A huge "thank you!" goes to Kyle, who has done an amazing job with the kids and with this program. Thanks also goes to Pam Altaffer who volunteered her time as Kyle's teaching assistant for many of the sessions. The group will finish up the program in early December and receive recognition for their participation at the December 11 service. Look forward to hearing more about OWL, as the Children's RE Committee will be looking into offering the program for our older students in the future.

The religious education lessons this month will include discussions of Hanukkah, Christmas and the Winter Solstice. As we all begin making our plans for the winter holiday season, keep in mind that our Sunday service schedule changes at the end of December. There will be no Sunday service on Christmas Day, December 25. Instead, there will be a Christmas Eve service on Saturday evening, December 24. Both the Christmas Eve service and the service on New Year's Day will be family friendly; but there will be no Religious Education classes on December 24 or January 1. We will return to our regularly scheduled Children's RE classes on January 8.

The season of giving is upon us. If you are willing to give the gift of your time, consider spending a Sunday morning with our congregation's children; you may just be surprised at what you get back in return!

Happy Holidays!

-- Heidi Jansch
Director of Religious Education



Our Whole Lives

Program Values are:

- Self Worth
- Sexual Health
- Responsibility
- Justice and Inclusivity

Grades 4-6 Sessions include:

- Values and Sexuality
- Family Relationships
- Puberty: Physical and Emotional Changes
- Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
- Lovemaking and Reproduction
- Health and safety
- Communication
- Dating

UUCSJS Women's Association Meetings

Margaret Fuller Circle - Thursday, December 1, 1 pm

If time has gone as fast for you as it has for me, you will be astonished to hear that it is time again for our Holiday Celebration at the Gourmet Restaurant on Pitney Roat at 1 pm. I'm sure you will again enjoy our gathering and open discussions in a social setting. The food is good too! We can be guaranteed the back room if we take a closed menu with choice of 5 cold sandwiches at \$11.95 or hot sandwiches at \$15.95, both plus tip. Otherwise, we chose from the menu individually.

Let me know that you are coming and if you prefer individual, cold sandwiches, or hot sandwiches menu. The majority wins! We must have 14-15 attending to get the back room, so y'all come on out!!

-- Arlene Yacka, Circle Leader

Musings on the Sabbath

Sabbath, not as worship but as *rest*. Spring does not come without winter. The field must be allowed to lie fallow. What if I did not meditate on a cushion, with legs folded under me and new age music (or silence - even harder to get in real life) in a world apart from my life? What if I meditated in my adirondack chair, with a cup of coffee on one arm? Gazing out over the field, bundled up against the cold, just sitting there? What if I allowed myself to just enjoy all that I have, not worrying if I am worthy of it or not, not worrying if I have done enough to earn this rest time, not worrying if others see it all as good or not. How amazing and free would that be? What if I just sat, not in a hermit's cave or on a mountain top, but here, now, amidst my life and all its crazy messiness?

Fom UU blog Curriculum of Love

<http://curriculumoflove.blogspot.com/2011/10/musings-on-sabbath.html>

Sometimes I sits and thinks, and sometimes I just sits. -- Satchel Paige

**Do you grow your own food?
Well if you don't, you have to visit the
grocery store.**

**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!

Board of Trustees
HIGHLIGHTS
November 2011

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **Board of Trustees** on November 15, 2011, opened with the sharing of joys and concerns, Vice President Debbi Dagavarian expressing her great joy that John Searight, who had undergone surgery less than two weeks ago, was well enough to attend, a sentiment shared by all present.

• **Finance Committee Report** – Committee Chair and Board member John Searight distributed his “UUCSJS Fund Balances 11-14-11,” reporting that it had been a very good month financially. He was pleased to report that money could be moved to the Reserve Fund sufficient to allow repayment of some \$10,000 in debt without depleting the account too much. The chairman also acknowledged with thanks generous pledges from new UUCSJS members.

The Finance Committee has been concerned for some time however, he said, that mortgage interest erodes the value of the unselfish pledges of our members, and the committee proposes that we begin at once to pay down our mortgage.

After this proposal was considered at length, *it was moved that* “effective with our December 2011 mortgage payment, the amount of the monthly payment be increased from \$2,708.69 to \$3,008.69, representing an increase of \$300 per month which will go against principal and reduce our amortization by four years and interest payments by \$41,000.” *The motion carried by a vote of five (5) for, and two (2) against.*

• **Treasurer’s Report** – Treasurer Prim Reeves presented her detailed “Financial Report for October 2011,” reporting that in October we spent more than we took in, with expenses \$15,711 and income \$14,180. This is not a danger sign, she said, if it happens only once or twice a year. On the good news side, pledges were \$193 over budget. However, she cautioned, on a year-to-date basis we are \$8,086 under plan in pledge income, and last year at this time we had brought in \$2,522 more.

– **Service Auction:** At this point we have missed our goal of \$10,500 by \$362, although more than \$6,000 remains unsold and therefore we’re not finished trying to reach the goal!

– **Birding B&B:** About \$2,400 is expected from this event in our budget, and if it can’t go forward we’ll need to make up for the loss. Marsha Hannah has tentatively agreed to co-chair if enough others volunteer or can be recruited. Can you help?

– **Animal Ministry:** Our UU Animal Ministry, South Jersey Animal Advocates (SJAA), chaired by Cynthia Grzywinski, has become very active but is operating with almost no budget. Michelle Tomko and Anne Peifer attended the Board meeting to speak on behalf of SJAA. *It was moved that* “the Board of Trustees reallocate the amount of \$200 from Line 28 (‘Utilities: Water’) to Line 88 (‘UU Animal Ministry’).” *The motion carried unanimously.*

• **Minister’s Report**

New this month as a standing item on the agenda, Pastor Dieterich also provides a written report to the Board early each month, writes a monthly newsletter column, and frequently contributes to the Midweek Announcements. Just back from a conference and retreat outside of Harpers Ferry, WV, he reported he has also signed up for two new courses.

He noted that almost all his sermons are now available on our website and that he’s been getting good feedback. He’s also working with the “Our Whole Lives” (OWL) program and will be joining them for a breakfast on December 11.

• **Committee on Ministry (COM)**

– **Nominees to the transitional COM**

Two members of the new COM are to be named by the Board of Trustees, and so the Board duly deliberated and made its choices. The other two members will come from the Ministerial Search

Committee, and all four will then serve until elections are held at the Annual Meeting in June, 2012.

• **Ministerial Start-Up on 12/11/11**

The Rev. Dr. Richard Speck, District Executive of the Joseph Priestley District of the UAA, will facilitate a Ministerial Start-Up workshop on Sunday, December 11, following services.

It will likely take place in two parts, the first open to the whole Congregation for the purpose of hearing from a cross section of members on our history, values, and hopes and expectations for the new Ministry (12 to 2 pm). The second part will be dedicated to exploring Board-Ministerial relations and will be attended by Rev. Speck, Pastor Dieterich, and members of the Board of Trustees (2:30 to 4:30 pm).

• **Report on Bylaws Review Status** – Vice President Debbi Dagavarian reported that the review is moving forward; further discussion was tabled.

• **Half-Plate program** – President Gentile initiated discussion on this idea, which has been adopted by UU congregations around the country to regularly contribute a portion of their undesignated, non-pledge income to the greater community in need. He said the practice could create ways to enhance our community presence and make us better known.

Pastor Dieterich said congregations that “Share the Plate” may need to be ready to close the budget in other ways. He observed that in his experience, UUCSJS collects and distributes an extraordinary level of “goods” each and every week, and wondered if this might be affected.

Board members were asked to research further and be prepared for more consideration of this idea.

• **Miscellaneous Matters**

– **Letter from UU Service Committee**

UUCSJS received a letter of thanks from the UUCS acknowledging the donation of some \$646 to their “Water Initiative,” collected during our Water Service on 9/11/11.

– **UUA Music Leadership Credentialing**

Music Director Barbara Miller emailed the Board links to two YouTube videos on this program, and copies of the UUA brochure with more detailed information were also passed out for information purposes.

– **Reports for Program Council**

The Board decided the monthly “Staff Reports and Reports from Committees” will be posted on our website as early as humanly possible, where they can be accessed by Program Council members, but will not be sent to members individually.

– Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of
the Board of Trustees will be held on
Tuesday, December 20, 2011 at 6:30 pm
at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd.

UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2011-2012

Jim Gentile (12), President
Debbi Dagavarian (12), Vice President
Judy Pereira (13), Secretary
Primrose Reeves (12), Treasurer
John Searight (13), Member at Large
Joe Terrazzini (12), Member at Large
Art Wexler (13), Member at Large

year given is end of term, e.g. (12) means thru 6/30/2012

Year End Update on UUCSJS Finances

As 2011 draws to a close, it's a good time to reflect on the financial health of UUCSJS: how have we done and what challenges are ahead?

The good news: Our annual budget drive resulted in pledges of \$140,525 (exceeding our goal by \$4,025), we have reduced our in-house debt to \$5,000, our building (capital) fund has \$4,415 remaining, our budget is balanced, and we have increased our reserve fund to \$22,080 (\$5,000 of which will be used to retire the in-house debt on March 1, 2012). And we have been able to do this while hiring Pastor Charlie as our half-time minister and becoming a fair compensation congregation by increasing salaries and adding benefits for the first time for our professional staff. We now have an operating budget of \$170,000, an 18% increase from the previous fiscal year.

The challenging news: We have a \$500,000 mortgage on our beautiful and green UU Center. This mortgage is from the UUA and is on an amortization schedule of 25 years. The current rate is 4.25%, subject to a resetting to prevailing interest rates in four years. If we were to pay it off over the 25 years, the amount of interest would be significant (\$312,607!). Fortunately, we have benefited from the generosity of several members and friends who have made special contributions totaling \$8,740 for payment of principal, and that has reduced our interest to \$298,476. And, beginning this November we have increased our monthly mortgage payment by \$300 to \$3008.69, and that reduces our amortization to 21 years and our interest to \$257,474.

Looking ahead: We are "making it" financially because of the culture of generosity that has taken hold in our congregation. We are one of the few congregations in the Joseph Priestley District that has made its goal for the annual budget drive in each of the past three years. Long time and new members alike have made this possible. But we need to remember the responsibility we have assumed as stewards of our building and our faith in southern New Jersey. Like many families who make it by living from paycheck to paycheck, we are making it by living from Sunday Offering to Sunday Offering. We do not yet have an endowment or legacy funds, and our reserve is just now becoming free of its responsibility to our in-house congregational loans. I am confident that our financial success will continue. If this congregation is consistent about one issue, it is that when the need arises for us to support our building and our mission, we come through. We pledge and we give generously of our time, talents, and money. We always find a way to get it done.

In 2012 I hope that we will establish a Planned Giving Program, grow our Reserve Funds, develop a program to increase our ability to pay down our mortgage, and continue to support the programs of UUCSJS with another successful annual budget campaign. No small order, but I believe we will do it.

In the meantime, remember that we are approaching the end of the tax year (pledge payments and IRA distributions are always welcome); remember UUCSJS if you are making or revising your will, or doing estate planning; and remember our challenges as we begin our Annual Stewardship Campaign in the Spring of 2012.

In Fellowship,
John Searight, Chair, Finance Committee

At our building dedication in February, 2009, I offered the following words about how our congregation had done it:

"As a Unitarian Universalist congregation we are an open and free community and we are responsible ourselves for providing the financial support for our building and for our ministries. This wonderful, beautiful, green building did not just suddenly rise up out of the mists one fall evening in the Pine Barrens. Years of yearning, of dreaming, of planning, and of contributing, made it possible:

A Few Details: First and foremost: the generosity of our members and friends: Two capital campaigns in four years, with \$500,000 in pledges; in-house loans from 7 members totaling \$554,000 (subsequently retired by our mortgage and gifts); and donated expertise and sweat equity of incalculable value.

From our denomination, The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and the Veatch Program at Shelter Rock: in the beginning, \$52,000 of support from the Fast Start Program, more recently, two First Home Grants totaling \$50,000, and a \$500,000 mortgage.

From the Chalice Lighter's Program of our District, the Joseph Priestley District: \$108,000 in grants over the past 11 years.

From Main Line Unitarian Church in Pennsylvania: 3 grants in our first 3 years.

From First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, and from the Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek: regular, sustained, grants and gifts, mentoring, and support. This is how it has happened, and it speaks volumes to the fact that Unitarian Universalists are generous and supportive of their denomination and its programs, and in giving to growth so that there might be more places such as this for those who seek a liberal, free, and theologically diverse spiritual home."

Practice gratitude

Like hope, trust, and love, gratitude is both a feeling and a spiritual practice.

By Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins

It has been said that religion is primarily an affair of gratitude. You may have always thought that religion is primarily an affair of believing, and if you were not sure how a person goes about "believing," you may have thought you were not a religious person. Gratitude, on the other hand, is something that all of us can practice, and that makes us all religious.

Whatever one's beliefs about faith and grace, gratitude is basic. Like hope, trust, and love, gratitude is both a feeling and a spiritual practice. Though we have little control over our immediate feelings, we can decide to cultivate the ground in which those feelings thrive.

From UUWorld:
<http://www.uuworld.org/spirit/articles/145472.shtml>

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Minister

Pastor Charlie Dieterich

Music Director & Sunday Service Coordinator

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Board of Trustees 2011-12

Debbi Dagavarian, Jim Gentile, Judy Pereira, Primrose Reeves,
John Searight, Joe Terrazzini, Art Wexler



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December 2011

Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

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