



Newsletter



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South
Jersey Shore

Volume 14, Issue 01

January 2012

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.

<p>January 1</p>	<p>Resolutions: A Sharing Service <i>Pastor Charlie Dieterich</i> The old year is past, let us leave behind that which does not serve us, and take time to formulate a new song for a new year. Wear your Christmas sweater, or other comfortable clothing, we will be informal, and intergenerational (No RE Classes)</p>
<p>January 8</p>	<p>Bard in the UUSA Part Deux - The Muse of Fire Strikes Back <i>Lay speaker Michelle Tomko</i> We will continue the review of our principles via Shakespeare's characters. In this, the second installment, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large (<i>Julius Caesar</i>) and the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all (<i>Richard III</i>) will be considered. To set the mood for our monthly theme, which in January is "Welcome," our Core of Fire dancers will perform the Trenchmore dance, popular in the 16th century, during the prelude. "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!" - <i>Julius Caesar, Act III, Scene II</i></p>
<p>January 15</p>	<p>Always Use Your Best China <i>Pastor Charlie Dieterich</i> The words of the prophet are written on the subway walls! But what does it mean? Pastor Charlie gives one answer... maybe you have another?</p>
<p>January 22</p>	<p>Getting to Know You <i>Lay speaker Richard Grzywinski</i> This well-known song from "The King and I" contains the following lyrics "...Suddenly I'm bright and breezy, Because of all the beautiful and new things I'm learning about you." How much do we miss out of life by not being receptive to learning about others, particularly strangers; their life stories, joys and tragedies. Is it possible to truly know ourselves without knowing others? Is the Buddhist practice of "deep listening to others" a key to understanding and compassion? From Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism: "Knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is enlightenment."</p>
<p>January 29</p>	<p>Come Into This Place <i>Pastor Charlie Dieterich</i> Some of us feel unsafe being in different situations. Some don't like cities, some don't like being alone. Is our Sunday meeting a safe space? How will we know?</p>

Guest at Your Table

Around the New Year is the annual Guest at your Table (GAYT) initiative by the UU Service Committee, which in previous years UUCSJS members have supported generously. Here is a message to all who have, or will, help:

"On behalf of Chrisanthus in Kenya and Miriam in Guatemala, Patrick in Haiti, and Dalia in Egypt, Maria in Arkansas, Chavannes in Haiti -- and all the members, volunteers, partners, and staff of UUSC, working in more than 20 countries around the world -- thank you for all you do to make this a more just world".

In our little corner of New Jersey, we try to do our part to help this great organization, and renew our pledge to uphold the 1st principle supporting the inherent worth of all individuals. All pledges and GAYT banks will be collected at the January 8 service.

**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.

Resiliency Groups

When times are tough, life gets hard, and confusing. Simple decisions become complicated. There's an alphabet soup of programs, forms and processes., and many ways for those with power to say "no". Many churches, including UU churches, have found it helpful to encourage formation of "Resiliency Groups" for those who are affected by financial insecurity. These groups have helped folks find ways of mutually supporting each other, of fighting isolation, and even finding ways to effect change.

"Resiliency groups" were written up in the recent UUWorld. One of our members has asked about our having one, and why not? If we can get a core of participants to make this not a "self help" group, but a "mutual help" group," then why not? If this speaks to you, please tell Pastor Charlie, or any member of the UUCSJS Caring Team. This does not obligate you to anything, but it helps us to determine when and how this might work.

The Caring Team is: Richard Grzywinski, Pam Altaffer, Betsy Searight Theresa McReynolds, Pastor Charlie Dieterich.

Who Are The Traditional Buddhists and What Do They Teach?

The focus for the Buddhist Sangha in January and February will be reviewing the various Buddhist traditions to better understand what each one emphasizes. This will help everyone to appreciate where a specific Buddhist teacher, a book or article they have read fits into the whole spectrum of Buddhism. We will also look at one specific teaching, The Heart Sutra, which is highly valued in the Zen (Japanese) Tradition. Discussion of this Sutra (Buddhist teaching) and application to our lives will carry over into February. As always there will be sharing of experiences or questions involving Buddhism. Alan Oliver will present the topic and moderate the discussion. This group meets on Saturday, January 28 from 10 am to 1 pm. It is non-sequential -- you don't need to have come to any previous session -- and everyone is welcome.

Pastor's Page

In her poem "1937 New Year Greeting," May Sarton wrote: "The earth feels old tonight, and we who live and stand on the cold rim face a new year..." She follows that image with her belief that love could work miracles... and cause even a wooden staff to grow and flower again.

Does your life have a sense of miracle? Maybe it has a sense of survival or of struggle. Maybe it has a sense of satisfaction, of gratitude, of longing, of hope. And maybe it's all of those mixed together. 1937 was not a particularly good year, in fact it was pretty awful -- economic depression, the shadow of war in Europe, political oppression of Jews and Gypsies and homosexuals in Germany. It was audacious to say that miracles would happen then. And perhaps this year you might have trouble envisioning anything miraculous.

This month we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a man who also lived through awful times, but saw the promised land. In a sermon from the end of March 1968, he said: "...we are coming to engage in a dramatic nonviolent action, to call attention to the gulf between promise and fulfillment; to make the invisible visible," and "I submit that nothing will be done until people of good will put their bodies and their souls in motion. And it will be this kind of soul force brought into being as a result of this confrontation that I believe will make the difference." And: "We shall overcome because the arc of a moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." This last quotation is a paraphrase of a 1853 sermon of Theodore Parker, beautifully repurposed for the 1960s.

As society commemorates Dr. King's life this month, you may hear a concentration on "I have a dream" sentiments. I challenge you to remember that King also called us all to action. I have volunteered to help with an interfaith observance honoring Dr. King's life, set for April. I would love to have help in creating a part of the program -- which could involve research or drama or something else -- drop me a note if interested.

Our services for January have the theme of "Welcome." We will welcome the new year, and new possibilities on New Year's Day, and on the 8th, we again take a principled look at Shakespeare. The 15th has us talking etiquette, and the 22nd, about getting to know each other. We end the month with a discussion of safety in worship, and Edwin Markham's famous poem:

He drew a circle that shut me out --
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in.

This month we will investigate a new concept called a Resiliency Group: a way to make the invisible visible, to share our truths, to find what works and to find hope in tough times. If that interests you, sign up at a service or send me a note. We will formulate the group to meet the needs and hopes of the participants.

Yes, 2012 will be a year for miracles. May Sarton's poem includes the lines: "We shall go on by the light of our hearts. We shall burn mightily in the new year. We shall go on together."

May we be guided by love!

Pastor Charlie

Building Healthy Congregations: A Series of Four Workshops for Teams from Congregations

Main Line Unitarian Church, Devon, PA,
Four Saturdays 9:30 am to 4:30 pm
January 14, February 11, March 10 and April 21, 2012

UUCSJS would like to send a team of four or five members to attend this training opportunity offered by the Joseph Priestley District. It is an opportunity to meet UUs from other congregations, to learn, exchange ideas, and gain a new perspective on the congregation. The workshop takes a systems approach to considering how the congregation functions as an emotional system of interrelated parts. How do we welcome new members? Or guide members into deepening their UU faith and develop and equip our leaders to maintain vitality and fulfillment of individuals in the congregation? These four workshops are designed for a time of rapid changes in congregations. Our team members need to commit to attending all four workshops. Karen York and Jack Miller hope to attend, if you would like to join us please email Karen York. The deadline to register is January 6, 2012.



The Paw Print

Your link to the doings of the South Jersey Animal Advocates

Thank you to all who donated both your time and resources to our successful events last month. A special thanks to Angela Wexler who gave us three huge bags of stuffed toys for shelter animals at the *Humane Society of Atlantic County (HSAC)* that didn't get a forever home before the holidays. Angela: know that your donations are at this moment "snuggle buddies" to motherless kittens at the shelter.

Last month the *South Jersey Animal Advocates* were busy elves. On Saturday, December 3, we had a table at South Jersey Fair Trade Alliance's 7th Annual International Gift Fair. We collected contact information from interested shoppers, told the crowd about our group, and collected money for Christmas toys. The following Friday we repeated this outreach at *A Taste of Galloway* in Smithville. We took all our donations, made a quick trip to the dollar store, and took a carload of cat toys, squeakies, and Angela's teddy bears and unicorns to the HSAC. Maggie, a German Shepherd who serves as the shelter's four-legged ambassador, gave Michelle Tomko a big kiss. And with that, the Sadie Squeaky Sack was born! We plan on this being an annual action.

We at *SJAA* hope that one of your New Year's resolutions will be to help animals in your community. Or if you can, welcome one into your own home. The economy is not helping the homeless pet situation, nor can domesticated animals survive on their own in the winter months. So please do what you can to help. And get those kids of yours involved! Young volunteers make future responsible pet owners. Remember, if you're thinking of a pet, "Don't shop-- Adopt!"

In January, we will be collecting donations for Kibble Cupboard of South Jersey. KC is a 100% volunteer organization that provides pet food and other basic pet necessities to seniors, low income families, people with disabilities, and the homeless. Kibble Cupboard is in need of dry cat food in particular. Purina and Friskies are suggested, but any brand is appreciated in any size. They also need: dog food, scoopable cat litter, gallon-size Ziploc bags, postage stamps, Rubbermaid containers, Target or PetSmart gift cards, and coupons. Your donations will help keep companion animals out of the shelter and with the families who love them! (To learn more about Kibble Cupboard, find them on Facebook or visit www.kibblecupboard.com.)

"He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion." - Anonymous

"Lord, help me to be the person my dog thinks I am." - Anonymous

"One reason a dog is such comfort when you're downcast is that he doesn't ask to know why." - Anonymous

"Mrs. Mike brings the fierce, stunning landscape of the Great North to life . . ."
— *Boston Herald*

Book Lovers to Explore Great Northwestern Territory of Canada in January

Originally published in 1947 and reprinted as recently as 2002, *Mrs. Mike* by Benedict and Nancy Freedman has attained the status of cherished classic, and among its devotees is reader extraordinaire, Debbi Dagavarian. Join other book lovers when we meet to discuss this "saga of love and courage in the Canadian wilderness" on **Friday evening, January 20 at 7 pm in the UU Center Library**. Bring a light snack to share, if you wish.

Based on the real lives of Sgt. Mike Flannigan of the Canadian Mounted Police and "Mrs. Mike," for many this book has endured the test of time. According to a *New York Times* reviewer, "It is the personality of Sgt. Mike blowing through this account like a clear breeze that gives it a refreshing quality." The story takes place in the early 1900s and many scenes reflect the values of an earlier era. However, at times *Mrs. Mike* can seem surprisingly contemporary, with its main character being a strong female recognizable to modern sensibilities.

Collected on Amazon are many heartfelt testimonials; 158 of 180 reviewers award five stars to this memorable work. "If I had to name one of my life-long favorite books, *Mrs. Mike* is at the top of the list" and "This book made a lifetime impression on me as a young girl to love and respect nature and native folklore," are two of many examples.

Are you curious about next month's selection? February's book is the well-regarded *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese. "Moving from Addis Ababa to New York City and back again, *Cutting for Stone* is an unforgettable story of love and betrayal, medicine and ordinary miracles—and two brothers whose fates are forever intertwined." (*Amazon.com*) Jesse Connor leads our discussion.

Everyone is most welcome to come to book group. Please plan to attend every month as you are able! We meet on the third Friday of each month, September through June. For more information or to receive meeting reminders and other occasional literary notices, contact Judy Pereira. Hope to see you on Friday, January 20.

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness."

— Mark Twain

"One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things."

— Henry Miller

"All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware."

— Martin Buber

"A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving."

— Lao Tzu

"1937 New Year Greeting"

The earth feels old tonight
And we who live and stand on the cold rim
Face a new year.

It is raining everywhere
As if the rain were mercy,
As if the rain were peace,
Peace falling on our hair.

Open your hearts tonight, let them burn!
Let them light a way in the dark.
Let them one by one affirm there is hope for a staff:

I say it will flower in our hands,
We shall go garlanded.

There is the fine fresh stuff of faith for a coat:
We shall go warm.

We shall go on by the light of our hearts.
We shall burn mightily in the new year.
We shall go on together.

O you who stand alone on the rim of the earth and
are cold,
I salute you here!

-- *May Sarton (1912-1995)*

From the Wikipedia entry on May Sarton:

[Despite the fact that she wrote many well-received novels and volumes of poetry,] "May Sarton's best and most enduring work probably lies in her journals and memoirs... In these fragile, rambling and honest accounts of her solitary life, she deals with such issues as ageing, isolation, solitude, friendship, love and relationships, lesbianism, self-doubt, success and failure, envy, gratitude for life's simple pleasures, love of nature (particularly of flowers), spirituality and, importantly, the constant struggles of a creative life. "

"She often emphasized in her journals that she didn't see herself as a 'lesbian' writer, but wanted to touch on what is universally human about love in all its manifestations. 'The fear of homosexuality is so great that it took courage to write [about it],' she wrote... 'to write a novel about a woman homosexual who is not a sex maniac, a drunkard, a drug-taker, or in any way repulsive, to portray a homosexual who is neither pitiable nor disgusting, without sentimentality ...' ".

She died of breast cancer at the age of 83.

When Our Children Speak

by Andrew Mertz - Director of Youth and Young Adult Programs, Joseph Priestley District

Chances are you have heard a sermon, homily, or other speech from a child or youth from your congregation that blew you away. Take yourself back to that moment. Were you impressed by their story? Were you honored to know them? Were you proud that your program had produced this deep, connected soul that inspired you?

One of the greatest privileges of working with your youth and young adults is the honor and pride I feel when I see the impact your work does for them. You may not know this, but you and your congregation save lives. Our ministry is littered with stories of GLBTIQ people who would probably not be alive if it wasn't for our communities. We have many more youth and young adult stories that if it were not for the safe supportive community that loved them no matter what, they would not be here either. Your work saves lives.

These stories are often hard to hear, and even harder to share, but they are much more common than we think. I encourage you to seek out these stories and share them with your congregation in appropriate ways. Share with the wider community the lifesaving work that they do all the time.

Let the volunteers that work with our children know that the curriculum they use to teach is only 10% of what the children will learn that year. The other 90% comes from them, the teachers, the lay leaders, the folks that the children see every day. Infants are not taught how to speak from a book. They learn from the exposure to people around them. That's what our children face all the time. They learn about their faith, their values, and the sense of love from the community around them.

Your congregation is a teaching congregation as long as you have children and youth in it. Even if you held no classes, you are imparting wisdom, values, and a community of love that they will never forget. Don't you forget it either!

**Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea,
never regains its original dimensions.**

~Oliver Wendell Holmes

UUCSJS Women's Association Meetings

Margaret Fuller Circle - Thursday, January 5, 1 pm

The Margaret Fuller Circle will meet on January 5, 2012 in the Church Library at 1 pm. Join us for a time of Reminiscing and Resolutions. Reminisce about the past year and resolve what can be changed in the new year. Refreshments will be served followed by our discussion.

All women of the congregation are invited to join us and guests are always welcome. Join with us in this time of reflection.

-- Arlene Yacka, Circle Leader

UUCSJS Men's Group reconvenes: It's not about the beer and pizza!

Ok, so maybe a part of it is. But we try to provide a means for men to support each other in brotherhood and introspection as we address issues of masculinity, spirituality, homophobia, two-sided gender discrimination, families, and male issues. And we also build in some fun and comradeship along the way. Perhaps we'll plan another Fathers Day service as we did in 2010. So bring your favorite readings, quotations, ideas, and questions. (And maybe a jar of Tums to pass around.) We've got eight members already committed. If interested, email Richard Grzywinski.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 6 pm, location to be determined.

Tickets on Sale Now

UUCSJS is hosting a concert featuring Peter Mayer on Saturday, March 24 at 7:30 pm. The ticket cost for UUCSJS members is only \$15 (advanced sale to the general public will be \$17, and \$20 at the door). Tickets will be available for purchase on Sundays – see Jeff Taylor after the service.

**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!

MISSION: FUN

Are you a fairly new member or friend of the congregation wondering how you can contribute without having very much knowledge of the whys and wherefores of our community yet?

The FUUN Committee (Friendly UU Networking Committee) is putting out a call for new members -- our numbers are small and we have a lot of wonderful FUUN projects scheduled for the coming year and will be needing help -- the more vigorous, vibrant, and fun-loving the better. The Peter Mayer concert, Mardi Gras Dance, and of course our ongoing monthly Coffee House are just a few of the events we'll be planning, as well as pizza and game nights from time to time. Our Mission -- *should you choose to accept it!* -- is to provide fun events for the congregation.

There will also be a sound system training soon for anyone interested in learning how to do the sound for our Coffee House nights -- we are greatly in need of people to help do this important job.

So if this mission speaks to you, please contact any FUUN member: Theresa McReynolds, Karen Zindell, Steve and Barb Fiedler, Colby Tippins, Jeff and Marie Taylor, Nick Bonar and Debbie Dagavarian, to name just a few.. Our meetings are on the 2nd Sunday of the month..

LAST CHANCE TO SIGN UP FOR CIRCLE DINNERS

Did you share in the fun of Circle Dinners last spring? It is a chance to get together with a different group of UUCSJS friends (all who attend services are welcome to participate, members or not) and enjoy food and conversation, one Saturday each month. The dates for the dinners are: January 21, February 11, April 21 and May 19.. You do not have to be available for every month to participate, but we would like to get you "into the system" now to simplify organizing the dinners. You may participate even if you do not wish to host. You probably have questions! Charlie Roberts, Barbara Miller, or Helen Utts will be happy to answer them. The assignments for the first dinners will be coming out on January 8. Please sign up at the January 1 service or contact Charlie Roberts immediately if you wish to participate.

UUCSJS Social Justice Ministry prepares for a new era.... A call to ACTION

After a change in leadership and a brief hiatus, the Social Justice Ministry is looking for another productive year of activism. While continuing our former emphasis on energy, environment, peace, ethical eating, LGBT issues, and support of South Jersey Animal Advocates, we hope to focus additionally with the "3-H Issues" in our local community, namely, Hunger, Homelessness and Health. We hope to make a positive and tangible difference in the lives of those who need us.

Recently, we initiated "Occupy Absecon" for a day in support of the "99%" movement; held a successful "Peanut Butter Sunday" for the Food Bank; and conducted a very successful holiday gift-giving for local poor and disadvantaged high school students, delivering nearly \$1,000 in much-needed new winter clothing – yet another example of our UUCSJS spirit of generosity. We're hoping to lead an Atlantic/Cape May seminar this Spring on the issues of regional poverty in conjunction with South Jersey Legal Services, the Food Bank, and others. But there is yet so much more to do.

A core group has volunteered to help develop our goals and guide future activities: Jim Gentile, Bob Baum, Jesse Connor, Bob Gillies, and Theresa McReynolds. And Pastor Charlie Dieterich will bring a much-needed pastoral perspective. Jesse Connor has already offered to lead us on issues of Sustainability and Global Climate Change – which is one of the proposed UUA Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAI).

See www.uua.org/statements/current/ for details.

So what is *your* social justice passion? Are *you* prepared to lead and make a difference? Perhaps you can take the lead on one of the other CSAIs: Ethical Eating, Immigration as a Moral Issue, Creating Peace, or Reproductive Justice. How about Homelessness, Ensuring Access to Health Care, Economic Justice and Hunger, Election Reform, or Racial Justice? Please visit www.uua.org/justice/ for more information and ideas.

If you are interested in joining this planning group and/or taking a leadership role, please speak to any of the above or Richard Grzywinski, Chair.

Are you ready to make history.....?

"The prophetic liberal church is the church in which all members share the common responsibility to foresee the consequences of human behavior (both individual and institutional), with the intention of making history in place of being merely pushed around by it".

-- James Luther Adams, "Taking Time Seriously," in *The Prophethood of All Believers*.

UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2011-2012

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Martin Luther King Day -- Not Just Another Day Off at Stockton

Our congregation has been invited to participate in Stockton's Martin Luther King Day of Service on Monday, January 16. The new director of the Office of Service Learning is eager to reach out to us and learn more about what Unitarian Universalism is all about.

This will be an opportunity for us to spend a day of service with Stockton students and staff. *From their website:* Please join the nearly 500 expected participants on January 16 by volunteering your time to fulfill Dr. King's dream of helping others. As Dr. King once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: **What are you doing for others?**" Your participation will allow you to engage in fun and worthwhile service projects that have lasting impact on our entire community. Please contact Barbara Miller or Bud Smith for more information or to help with the planning. Families are welcome.

The choice of On-Campus Projects includes: Books without Borders, Circle K (varied service projects like cards for soldiers and Valentine's door-hangers for Sunrise Senior Living); Osprey Nest Construction, and Samaritan Hospice. Details can be found at:

<http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=113&pageID=1>

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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