



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 17, Issue 08

August 2015

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>Race, Religion, Sex, Politics... Deeds, Not Creeds, is Our Challenge <i>Lay speaker Stephanie Garrett</i> A brief historical overview of this society, where we are today, and what role we as UUs should play for positive change.</p>
August 9	<p>The Gospel of Thomas (Merton) <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i> This summer I have delved further into Merton's late writing on race and war. Some feel he was assassinated for these radical thoughts. I had a chance to take part in discussions of his writings on violence and faith, and to compare his prescient thoughts with our most talked about black intellectuals today. I will try to cohere some of this into useful form for day-to-day UU life and being.</p>
August 16	<p>Journey Toward Wholeness <i>Lay speaker Karen York</i> Karen shares her experience with a Courage & Renewal® retreat series based on the work of Quaker author and educator, Parker Palmer. The retreat series explored the issues of life purpose, vocation, transition, and how to live with integrity and authenticity in alignment with our deepest values.</p>
August 23	<p>CHANGE: Can We Take It? <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i> This year's theme. Actually CHANGE is the theme of every year, whether we like it or not. What is ours to control is how we respond to it, and that alone is a spiritual task.</p>
August 30	<p>Singing Our Sources <i>Lay speaker Barbara Miller, UUCSJS Music Director</i> Most Unitarian Universalists are aware of our Seven Principles. For many of us, the Principles are what first drew us to this faith. On the last Sunday of August we will explore the lesser known Six Sources of our living tradition through songs in Singing the Journey, affectionately known as the "teal hymnal."</p>



On August 23, after the service, we will have a brief ceremony while we hang our new Black Lives Matter banner.

The UUCSJS Book Lovers Group

normally meets on the third Friday of each month (September through June) at 7 pm in the Library at the UU Center. An alternate date is often chosen for December. Meetings are usually facilitated by the person who selected the book.

All members of our community are invited to participate in book group meetings at any time of the year – newcomers are always welcome! (Bring a small snack to share, if you wish...)

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact BARBARA MORELL, she's in the Member Directory.

Here's the schedule for the 2015-16 year.

September —Nancy Brail

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Daniel James Brown (2013)
"...out of the depths of the Depression comes an irresistible story of beating the odds and finding hope..."

October —Helene Gentile

A Reliable Wife, Robert Goolrick (2010)
Rural Wisconsin, 1907; "a historical potboiler, an organic mystery... rooted in the real social ills of turn-of-the-century America." (Boston Globe)

November —Marsha Hannah

Song of Solomon, Toni Morrison (2007)
"With this brilliantly imagined novel, Toni Morrison transfigures the coming-of-age story as audaciously as Saul Bellow or Gabriel García Márquez." (amazon.com)

December —Peg Felix

Old Filth, Jane Gardam (2006)
FILTH is an acronym for Failed In London, Try Hong Kong...
"Old Filth belongs in the Dickensian pantheon of memorable characters." (New York Times Book Review)

January —Judy Pereira

Blood, Bones & Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef, Gabrielle Hamilton (2011)
Before Hamilton opened her acclaimed NY restaurant Prune, she spent 25 hard-living years trying to find purpose and meaning in her life.

February —Ellie Gibson

Orphan Train, Christina Baker Kline (2013)
"...an unforgettable story of friendship and second chances that highlights a little-known but historically significant movement in America's past."

March —Betsy Searight

Flight Behavior, Barbara Kingsolver (2012)
"Drawing on both her Appalachian roots and her background in biology, Kingsolver delivers a passionate novel on the effects of global warming." (Booklist; starred review)

April —Diane Dreby

Me Before You, Jojo Moyes (2012)
"A Love Story for this generation... a heartbreakingly romantic novel that asks, What do you do when making the person you love happy also means breaking your own heart?" (amazon.com)

May —Debbi Dagavarian

Secrets of a Charmed Life, Susan Meissner (2012)
This thoughtful story about lost love and times past moves from present-day Oxford to WWII London in the 1940s.
"Meissner's prose is exquisite, and she is a stunning storyteller." (Publishers Weekly)

June

NEW BOOKS SELECTED

This month new books will be selected for next year — September 2016 through May 2017.
(June also gives us a chance to catch up on any cancellation for weather or some other reason.)



What's new with Family Promise of Atlantic County?

Soup-a-thon Redux!

Our soup sale last winter for Family Promise of Atlantic County was so successful that we are doing it again in September! Details will follow, but start thinking now of what soups you want to make!

Margaret Circle As the women of Margaret Circle enjoy the summer, we look forward to our next formal meeting on Thursday, September 3 at 1 pm. In the meantime, please consider the Covenant we are creating and feel free to forward your thoughts to Shelee McIlvaine by email or phone.

August Collections for Animal Shelters

During the month of August, we'll be working in conjunction with South Jersey Animal Advocates to collect items for HiArbor Cares (www.hiarbor.org), a Galloway-based non-profit that rescues kittens and cats and finds them good homes. The following items are needed by HiArbor:

- clumping litter
- Fancy Feast canned food
- Meow Mix or Iams dry cat food
- Purina Dry Kitten Food
- old towels
- paper towels
- tissues
- Dawn dish detergent (blue)
- Pine Sol floor cleaner
- bleach



Any questions, contact Ronda Cluff.

Support our congregation by doing what you already do – buy groceries! with gift cards for your local Acme or Shoprite!

Using these gift cards for groceries nets the congregation 5%. We also have Fair Trade coffee, tea, and chocolate!

UU Board of Trustees Recognizes Charleston Martyrs

At their June meeting, before General Assembly, the UUA Board of Trustees opened their meeting with a remembrance of the 9 victims of the shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

They were:

- Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd** (54) – Bible study member and manager for the Charleston County Public Library system
- Susie Jackson** (87) – a Bible study and church choir member
- Ethel Lee Lance** (70) – the church's sexton
- Depayne Middleton-Doctor** (49) – a pastor who was also employed as a school administrator and admissions coordinator at Southern Wesleyan University
- Clementa C. Pinckney** (41) – the church's pastor and a South Carolina state senator
- Tywanza Sanders** (26) – a Bible study member; nephew of Susie Jackson
- Daniel Simmons** (74) – a pastor who also served at Greater Zion AME Church in Awendaw
- Sharonda Coleman-Singleton** (45) – a pastor; also a speech therapist and track coach at Goose Creek High School
- Myra Thompson** (59) – a Bible study teacher

The Bible passage the 9 were studying when killed was the parable of the sower in the Gospel of Mark:

Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the birds of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, some an hundred. He said unto them, He that has ears to hear, let him hear.

— Mark 4:3-9

**Rev. Cynthia will be away
until August 8.**

Rev. Cain's Office Hours
Wednesdays 10-2 and by appointment
Read more of Rev Cynthia's reflections at
www.ajerseygirlinkentucky.blogspot.com

Ministerial Search Committee Update

During August the MSC has worked on the congregational survey suggested by the UUA. With input from the entire committee elements from the template will be chosen that will give a complete impression of our unique congregation. The survey will be ready for distribution in September.

The next project for the MSC will be completing the Congregational Record. This document gives a perspective minister a snapshot of our community such as congregational history, membership and operating expenses as well as important aspects of current congregational life. Some of this information will be taken from your responses on the survey.

The Ministerial Search Committee will meet in September with Rev. Libby Smith for a full day retreat to develop a strategy for choosing our new minister. With Rev. Smith's guidance we seek to find a balance among the MSC members that will enhance communication and decision making.

If you have any questions about the process of choosing our new minister you may contact committee members Betsy Erbaugh, Jim Gentile, Marsha Hannah, Jack Miller, Betsy Searight, Paul Utts, or Angela Wexler

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

More Summer Fun In RE

We have been having a great summer in RE! Thanks to Jessica Dunn, Debbi Dagavarian and Nick Bonar, Colby Tippins, and Michelle Tomko for leading activities and crafts on Sundays throughout July. Our upcoming summer sessions will include:

August 2	Fire-less Campfire - Bud Smith
August 9	Origami - Karen York
August 16	Pebble Meditation - Barbara Miller
August 23	Board Games Galore - Heidi & TJ Jansch
August 30	Cooperative Games - Karen Zindell

Enjoy the rest of your summer vacation! Regular religious education classes will resume in September.

Stay cool!

Heidi Jansch

Associate Credentialed Director of Religious Education

Board of Trustees

HIGHLIGHTS

July 2015

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Art Wexler presiding. Chalice lighting words were chosen by At-Large member, Joe Terrazzini, and joys and concerns were shared.

This evening's joys and concerns reflected with sadness on the recent loss of Bob Gillies, beloved member of the community, who along with his wife, Peg Gillies, was a Charter member of UUCSJS.

• **Announcements**

—The president warmly welcomed **Charlie Roberts** to his first meeting as a new At-Large member of the Board.

—The next **Board Talk-Back** will be held Sunday, August 9 in a downstairs classroom immediately following the service.

—The president congratulated Heidi and TJ Jansch, Karen York, and others on the success of this year's **Murray Grove** weekend, organized by the Children's Religious Education committee (CREC), which had more than 40 attendees. Next year's Murray Grove will be scheduled again for the weekend before Father's Day.

• **Reports**

1) Ministerial Search Committee (MSC). The president welcomed Jim Gentile, who was elected chair of the MSC and who will serve as liaison to the Board. Gentile reported that the MSC had met three times and was successfully moving ahead on necessary tasks, which he outlined in some detail. Three Board action items were identified and assignments made.

2) Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report for July 2015 along with a two-page spreadsheet titled "UUCSJS Budget Report for July 2014 to June 2015," which completes the fiscal year. York reported that for FY 14/15, expenses exceeded income by \$9,878, due to some \$10,998.55 in annual pledges that went unfulfilled. The amount anticipated from pledges for FY 14/15 was \$148,597.67.

Account balances (as of 06/30/15) were as follows: TD Bank Checking/Operating: \$17,002.05; TD Bank Designated: \$458.45 (of that, \$208.45 Margaret's Circle); TD Bank Reserve (Capital): \$8,196.15 (of that, CC3 funds \$5,196.15); and Fidelity Investments Reserve (Capital): \$1,793.38; Loan (Liability): -\$8,000.00. [Total Reserve: \$1,989.53 (CC3 funds, \$5,196.15)]

The treasurer also reported that UUCSJS duly closed on our mortgage with TD Bank on Friday, June 19, Finance Committee member John Searight and herself in attendance. [Summary: monthly payments, \$1,612; loan principal, \$265,000; interest rate, 3.99%; amortization period, 20 years; interest rate to be reset after five (5) years.]

President Wexler and Treasurer York noted that contributions to UUCSJS in memory of the late Bob Gillies have been coming in, their eventual purpose to be determined at a future time, and after consultation with Peg Gillies.

MOTION: Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for July 2015 as presented was adopted unanimously by those present. The treasurer's complete written report may be viewed in the Members Only section of our website.

3) Minister's Report. In the absence on leave and vacation of Interim Minister, Rev. Cynthia Cain, the president acknowledged receipt of her written report to the Board dated July 9, and ascertained that there were no matters arising from the report at this time.

4) Notes from Staff & Committee Reports. The secretary reported that there seemed to be no matters arising from this

month's round of reports other than notices of leadership change. Altogether, the following committees have had, or are seeking changes in leadership: Adult Religious Education (ARE), Children's Religious Education (CREC), UU Family Promise (FP) Team, Membership, and Social Justice.

In addition, President Wexler cited this month's Membership Committee report on the subject of pledging; see *below under Updates/Follow-Up*.

• **Discussion/Action Items**

—**Proposed Sunday Service Changes.** Along with her monthly report, Rev. Cain wrote a memo to Board members titled "Sunday Services Changes." The memo states that as she takes over the Sunday services coordinator position from [Music Director] Barbara Miller (and thereby growing the music ministry), "the goal is to 'try out' some of the new/different worship modes and styles." She wrote: "I believe that Congregational Polity dictates that a member of the congregation, preferably a leader, accept the money, *never the clergy.*"

President Wexler called on Melissa Hutchison, who is also a member of the Worship Committee, to introduce Rev. Cain's idea that Board members participate in Sunday services when she officiates, by speaking the words of welcome and then introducing and receiving the offering. Preliminary feedback from the Board was requested.

ACTION ITEM: After a brief discussion, the consensus of the Board was that it's a good idea, and the Board agreed in principle to participate in Sunday services as described. It was suggested that others in leadership positions might also take part in this way.

• **Updates/Follow-Up**

—**Proportion of Pledges from Members.** President Wexler made reference to the following statistic on the subject of congregational pledging from the Membership Committee's July Report to the Board:

"3. For most of the meeting, we discussed members who have not been active or made pledges. Betsy [Searight], who is serving on the Ministerial Search Committee, reviewed the data we received on inactive members. ***She found that almost one-third of our members have not pledged.*** This is very disturbing, and such data will be reviewed by prospective ministers. ... Prim [Reeves] noted that since our bylaws require a donation of record to maintain active membership, and nothing about pledging, we cannot require members to pledge. ..." [Debbi Dagavarian, *Chair*, Membership Committee (6/14/15)] [***bold italics added***]

ACTION ITEM: After a brief discussion, no action was proposed at this time, but the suggestion was made that it might be useful to take a closer look at the contributions of members who are not making formal annual pledges.

—**Social Justice Committee/Anti-Racism Task Force.** The Board acknowledged the update on the past work and future plans of the new Anti-Racism Task Force, as contained in Rev. Cain's monthly written report.

• **Old Business/New Business** – None

• **Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

— Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Tuesday, August 11, 2015** at **6:30 pm** in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

Black Lives Matter resolution, rally, die-in cap General Assembly

From *uuworld*: www.uuworld.org/articles/blm-rally-general-assembly

After a week full of “Black Lives Matter” workshops—of discussions about Ferguson and talks by racial justice activists from across the country, of speeches from civil rights leaders Dr. Cornel West, Rep. John Lewis, and the Rev. Clark Olsen, and a passionate, sometimes heated debate over word choices in an Action of Immediate Witness introduced by the Youth Caucus—many UUA General Assembly attendees’ desire to take a more active stance on racial justice spilled over into a Portland intersection Sunday afternoon.

Co-planned by Amanda Weatherspoon, a student at Starr King School for the Ministry, and supported by an initially tentative but prayerful and boisterous crowd, the afternoon rally of approximately 200 people, mostly Unitarian Universalists, **briefly shut down the intersection of NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd and NE Holladay Street** next to the Oregon Convention Center.

Sunday afternoon’s rally—which was planned only hours before it happened—was one of many such events for experienced activists such as Elandria Williams, a black UU from Knoxville, Tennessee, who electrified the crowd. **“This is not new. The struggle is long. It didn’t start last week, last month, or even last year.”** Williams said. “Organize, organize, organize!” she sang along with the gathering.

The rally, and subsequent “die-in”—a now oft-used tactic in which participants lay in the street for four-and-a-half minutes, to **honor the four-and-a-half hours that Michael Brown’s body lay in the Ferguson street** August 9, 2014—was, for some, a cathartic release after a Sunday afternoon General Session full of tension. “It’s not all about me, but it was a release to say those things to other UUs and have them be heard,” said Weatherspoon, who helped organize the rally and is black.

General Assembly delegates had overwhelmingly approved an Action of Immediate Witness entitled “Support the Black Lives Matter Movement” only 40 minutes before the rally started—before they raised their voting cards, they took an awkward and confusing tour through Robert’s Rules of Order.

“We must continue to support the Black Lives Matter movement and Black-led racial justice organizations,” the adopted resolution says. “The 2015 General Assembly calls member congregations to action, in order to become closer to a just world community . . . ; urges member congregations to engage in intentional learning spaces to organize for racial justice with recognition of the interconnected nature of racism coupled with systems of oppression that impact people based on class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, and language . . . ; encourages member congregations and all Unitarian Universalists to work towards police reform and prison abolition, which seeks to replace the current prison system with a system that is more just and equitable; and . . . recognizes that the fight for civil rights and equality is as real today as it was decades ago, and urges member congregations to take initiative in collaboration with local and national organizations fighting for racial justice against the harsh racist practices many black people are exposed to.”

Almost all of the debate in General Session was focused on parliamentary procedures delegates introduced to clarify the phrase “prison abolition,” but the convoluted process generated enough discomfort that chaplains paused the process for a few moments for prayer. At one point, a vote to call the question on an amendment was counted by tellers, a situation that former UUA Moderator Denny Davidoff said she had never seen before in her 47 General Assemblies.

When the AIW passed with overwhelming support, delegates stood and chanted “Black lives matter! Black lives matter! Black lives matter!”

At the rally beside a statue honoring the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, Weatherspoon, Williams, and the Rev. Osagyefo Sekou articulated for UU participants—many of whom had never before participated in a racial justice action—directions on how the die-in would proceed, as well as a primer for what was needed from white attendees. **“The task now is to be more than allies, but to be freedom fighters,”** Sekou said to roaring approval. Sekou, a noted Ferguson, Missouri, activist, then linked arms with fellow rally leaders Williams, Weatherspoon, Chris Crass, and the Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen and led a procession into the intersection.

Police officers quickly approached the action, and multiple drivers who were inconvenienced by the traffic yelled obscenities at the protest. Two teenage passersby were heard questioning whether messing up people’s day was the best way to “get us on your side.” Rally organizers repeatedly encouraged participants not to engage with police, or with hecklers. As the minutes of silence went on, an ambulance came through the intersection, which made some attendees anxious and others skeptical. “I honestly think they sent that ambulance through to throw us off,” said one white woman UU who did not give permission to be identified.

The idea of stopping traffic was disconcerting to some UUs in attendance. “I believe in racial justice, but I’m not sure getting in the way of others’ day is the thing to do,” one UU man said. Despite trepidation from some, many enthusiastically participated, or at least supported the action. Emrys Staton, of the UU Church of Tucson, Arizona, said after the action, **“I’ve come to understand that a tactic of disrupting ‘business as usual’ is an important tactic for the movement.”** Staton said he deeply appreciated the experience and was moved by it.

Ada van Tine, a white young adult from Bull Run UU in Manassas, Virginia, who attended the rally, said, **“I think a lot of people want to be invested in ‘black lives matter’ but hold themselves back because they’re afraid to jump in, or don’t know how.”**

Colin Luken, a Youth Caucus member who helped put forward the “Black Lives Matter” Action of Immediate Witness, said that the die-in—and a longer-term commitment to work for racial justice—are essential. **“These are important tactics to call attention to systemic racism.** This message is the most important of our time,” said Luken, who is white, as the “Black Lives Matter” chants continued. At the end of the rally, the chanting gathering went back into the convention center, stopping their chant just outside the plenary hall, where the Closing Worship was already underway.

Worshippers inside the main hall could clearly hear the chants. The Rev. Cecelia Kingman, who was preaching, briefly diverted from her prepared text to affirm the chanters’ words. In the convention center hallway, Williams quieted the crowd: **“We can chant this all day, but what really matters is that we take this energy home with us and are willing to do this work in our churches and schools and our own cities.”**

“It’s not enough to say black lives matter,” Weatherspoon told the gathering. “You have to believe it, and to live it.”



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

August 2015

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