

NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 18, Issue 4

April 2016

April 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.

April 3	A Spiritual “OPEN MIC” What piece of music, literary quote, or poetry has moved, inspired, or sustained you? What keeps you focused, centered, keeps you coming back to the world as a liberal person, ready to take on another day? <i>All are invited to share, your own or another’s creation, but you must sign up, and there will be time limits!</i> Call or email Cynthia by Friday, April 1. No Fooling!
April 10	YOUR SHARED MINISTRY PART I: Freedom of the Pulpit/Freedom of the Pew <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i> As you move toward what we all hope will be a called minister, I will be talking with you about your part in the ministry of the congregation. Today we explore these two doctrines, foundational to our faith, but often misunderstood. Come, and be enlightened!
April 17	Transformative Poetry <i>Lay speaker Jack Miller</i> Poet Adrienne Rich called poetry “the moment of change.” Jack Miller will reflect on how poetry can capture an insight, and how that insight can lead to change.
April 24	YOUR SHARED MINISTRY PART II: Cultural Creatives <i>Rev. Cynthia Cain</i> Are you a “cultural creative?” Learn how this new way of looking at life and the world can help you redesign the way you interact with your own destiny, and most important, the way you as a congregation have a great deal more freedom about your own future than you may believe.



Hope for Tomorrow Gala

April 16, 2016

6:00 pm

Frog Rock Inn, Hammonton

See page 2 for more...

Margaret Circle... will meet on Thursday, April 7 in the UU Center Library at 1 pm. After sharing Joys and Concerns we will be refreshed by the offerings of Marsha Hannah. Debbi Dagavarian will lead us in a lively and candid conversation inspired by The Book of Questions. Join the Women of Margaret Circle and "get to know one another in ways that might not be apparent through ordinary conversation."

Journaling returns from its winter hiatus on Monday, April 4 and convenes the first Monday of the month thereafter. Join our group of scribblers in the UU Center library 6:30--8:00 pm. Meditative, family history, closure, exploration, comic relief, anger management, bio/psycho feedback, or just tell your story-- regardless of your motive, you'll find a supportive group for your writing, and a kind audience if you choose to share. Newbies: we will get you up to speed. -- *Bob Baum, journal jockey*

BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE NEWS

Five wireless security cameras were successfully installed and appear to be able to meet our center's needs for deterrence and surveillance. Charlie Roberts, Michael Cluff, Jon Luoma, and TJ Janssch were instrumental in getting this system up and running, and they will also be able to make any adjustments we may need over time.

Heidi Janssch purchased walkie-talkies to enable communication from the upstairs to the downstairs during service and other events in which our two floors are being used simultaneously.

Small -- and not so small -- pine saplings were pulled up from the retention basin in preparation for mowing (or brush-hogging) later this month. Thanks goes to TJ Janssch, Jack Miller, and Jack Connor. A special, additional thanks goes to Jack Miller for mowing the meadow, a Herculean effort given the woody shrubs and tall wet grasses that could only be cut pushing uphill. Thanks also to Steve Fiedler for helping finish that mowing. The meadow looks great, and we plan to increase the biodiversity with native wildflower plantings next month.

I could use a few more volunteers for an Outside B&G Team which will meet on the first Thursday of the month from 9:00-11:00 am. Creation of the team was inspired by the success of the Clean Team. If you are available to help with outside tasks on the first Thursday morning of the month, please contact Jesse.

I am also looking for garden volunteers. See the Adopt-a-Garden article on page 5.



The donation bin under the coat rack for "gently loved shoes" has received over 100 pairs since we started the collection inspired by Arizona resident, Rev. Donna Parks, "Walk a Mile in My Shoes," friend to Peace Pilgrim

Celebration. Shoes are delivered to Eastern Service Workers in Pleasantville, a small group of volunteers helping the retired, disabled and others to become independent. They aid in storm relief and utility assistance too. They help the poorest of the poor in our county. Clothing and shoe donations are not sold, but given to those in dire need. Keep bringing in your retired shoes. Many feet of thanks! -- Colby



HOPE FOR TOMORROW GALA

APRIL 16, 2016
6:00 PM

FROG ROCK INN, HAMMONTON

Get your tickets now!

We are looking forward to the 1st Annual Family Promise of Atlantic County Gala! The Gala will be held on April 16, 6 – 10 pm at the Frog Rock Inn in Hammonton, NJ. There will be a buffet dinner, silent auction (with many cool gift baskets put together by Colby Tippins!), and a keynote address by Karen Olsen, the founder and first president of Family Promise. Tickets are \$45 each and can be purchased through Janet Longo, Barb Morell, Colby Tippins, or Deb Dagavarian. Make checks payable to Family Promise of Atlantic County.

Gala keynote speaker **Karen Olson** is the founder and former president of Family Promise, a national interfaith nonprofit organization started in Union County, NJ, committed to helping homeless families nationwide achieve lasting independence. Family Promise has over 187 affiliates in 42 states, and has served over 600,000 individuals in need, and has mobilized more than 160,000 volunteers in over 6,000 congregations who provide shelter, meals, and support services to families.

A former manager at Warner Lambert, Karen Olson has been working on behalf of the poor and homeless since the mid-1980s. She has received numerous awards for her work, among them the 1992 Annual Points of Light Award from former President George H.W. Bush, the New Jersey Governor's Pride Award in social services, the Jefferson Award from the American Institute for Public Service, and the 2013 New Jersey Woman of Achievement Award sponsored by the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and Douglass Residential College. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie recently appointed Karen to serve on the Interagency Council on the Homeless.

Please see Colby Tippins, Barb Morell or Janet Longo if you would like to help on the night of the Gala. Many helpers are needed, in several areas from greeting to cashing the auction baskets.

GREAT NEWS!

Did you know that our UU Center is now surrounded by PROTECTED LAND? Atlantic County's newest park, "Galloway West," encompasses 188 acres surrounding us.

The Atlantic County Division of Parks and Recreation is sponsoring a spring cleanup on Saturday April 16, 8:30 am to Noon. Meet at the gate on Liebig Street (right next to the UU Center parking lot).

HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU GIVE?

Let me tell you my theory about human nature. You know, the one we as UUs are supposed to have about the inherent worth and dignity of every person? Lately, I'm thinking, *not so much*. No, I haven't gone over to the Calvinism of our Puritan forebears. I don't think we are born evil, nor do I believe anyone had to suffer or die for my sins.

It's just that a while back I would have said *most people are basically good*. The past few years, with the rise of the Trump machine, the vitriol against minorities, and the latest: legislation in NC preventing transfolk from using their gender expressive restrooms, I'm modifying "most."

While I'm on the subject of restrooms, I go to a **lot** of rest areas on my frequent drives to and from Kentucky. I also hit some service stations and a Dunkin Donuts or two (yes, I'm still gluten free, but they have great coffee and wifi!). I've done an informal study, and I've noticed that an unacceptable number of people who apparently do not want to make contact with the seat *spray all over it and leave it wet for the next person*. Can someone explain this to me? You have such an aversion and fear of germs that you don't want to sit on a public toilet, yet you feel it is **just fine for someone else to sit down in your urine?** Men, you are off the hook on this one.

Next: I took my eleven-year old for ice cream and he saw some kids his age and greeted them on his way into the store. After he passed, they started to snicker. Just then, an adult came out and said, *What's so funny?* I told her, *They are laughing at my son, who is autistic. Maybe you could teach them to do better.*

To her credit, they came inside and apologized. I can't tell you how many times this has happened. It's happened with kids he goes to school with, people I know are devoted church-goers. To me, the whole "Christian" business just adds a layer of hypocrisy over the meanness and selfishness that has gripped our society, at every level of income, status, and in every locale.

You know, I used to be that way. I mean, I never peed on the toilet seat, but I was selfish and self-absorbed.

I wasn't raised to be compassionate or to be generous. I did not have any example of tithing or charitable giving. For me, it took having kids to bring clarity that my own life must be different. It was through being part of a UU community, first here in NJ at Cherry Hill, and soon after as a minister, that I learned, albeit slowly, that the only real happiness in life comes from giving your life away.

And that is why our UU faith is needed... now more than ever.

How much should you give? All. Give your heart, your time, your attention, your passion, your talents to this world. You alone know what the best way for you to do that is. Ask yourself morning and night how you can serve the world... and resolve to do your part. Don't ignore your own joy, but weave it tightly into the giving back you do. Match it with gifts to those who have none.

Try this: *Look at what you think you can afford to pledge to this congregation, and add 25%. Or 50%. Stretch! I can think of no other enterprise that will use your gifts so wisely and wonderfully.*

With Love,
Cynthia



**Saturday, April 16
2 - 4 pm**

HOUSING, GENTRIFICATION, & DISCRIMINATION

Featuring:

- **Rev. Eric Dobson**
of the NJ Fair Share Housing Center
- **Local Fair Housing Attorney**
- ***** YOU the citizens *****
 - Learn about the historic **Mt. Laurel Decisions**
 - Find out what can happen in AC due to **TAKEOVER**
 - Continue to **mobilize for ACTION**

Asbury United Methodist Church
1213 Pacific Ave. Atlantic City, NJ
FIND us on Facebook: Black Lives AC: Beyond the Slogan

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

March was a festive month for our youth. In addition to our regular educational programming, we celebrated with the whole congregation at the annual Fellowship Dinner, and then concluded the month with another party during RE time.

At the Fellowship Dinner the children helped Barbara present a few songs that they had been working on with her during their RE classes this winter. Two of our teens (Quin and Raya) did double duty helping clear dishes and then serving as Mistresses of Ceremony for the talent portion of the evening. The event was a wonderful reminder of the talents of each of our members, young and young at heart!



The Children's RE Committee hosted our annual Egg Hunt and Party on March 27. Many thanks to Colby for decorating for the party and to the committee for donating non-candy egg fillers. Our egg hunt featured toys, prizes and coins inside eggs instead of candy. Doing this enables all of the children to enjoy the activity and their "loot" regardless of any food sensitivities they may have. *Happy Spring!*

Heidi Jannsch, UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

8th ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SWAP: BEGIN POTTING NOW!

Early April is the time to pot-up your extra native plants for the 8th Annual Native Plant Swap on Saturday, May 7 at our center. Are you new to our congregation and wondering what is involved in a native plant swap? Perhaps you have some New England aster or goldenrod you'd like to divide and swap this spring? The swap is a little complicated, but here are the basics of how it works: participants who bring two native plants to cover the price of admission can swap up to 10 additional plants. Participants without plants to swap may purchase up to three plants for \$2 each. The event focuses on native, non-invasive perennials, shrub and tree seedlings, as well as non-invasive species beneficial to butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife. Unsure which plants are native or what an acceptable, beneficial, non-invasive plant might be?

For more information, and answers to your questions, including a FAQ flyer and step-by-step guide to the swap, go to www.uucsjs.org or pick up a flyer at the Fair Trade table.

Our goal with the swap is to promote more backyard habitat in southern New Jersey by providing local gardeners who bring plants to swap with a source of inexpensive -- or even free -- native plants. The Plant Swap will take place, rain or shine, on May 7 from 9 am to 2 pm. Plant drop-off hours are 4 to 6 pm on May 6 and 8 to 10 am on May 7.

Celebrate Spring with an Auction Event! *There's a Spot For You!*

Forsythe Refuge Tour – Saturday, May 7 – tour of Forsythe Refuge with John and Betsy Searight, followed by brunch in their home. \$20.00 \$10 per child 3 spaces left

Wine tasting at the Utts home – new date! Saturday, May 21. Bonus: see their new remodeling! \$30 each – 6 spaces left

Jewelry Workshop – Debbi Dagavarian will help you to make jewelry, and supply the material, at her home in Little Egg Harbor. \$35 each – 3 spaces left

Motley Brew Review – Beer tasting at the Maene home - Saturday, June 18. \$25 per person – 2 Spaces left

You can register and pay for any of these events at the signup table. Contact Betsy Searight with any questions.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for the ANNUAL UUCSJS NATIVE PLANT SALE

Spring 2016 marks the 8th anniversary of our Annual Native Plant Sale & Swap and we need volunteers to help on Friday, May 6 and/or Saturday, May 7.

Please consider signing up to help out. This sale is a win-win. We raise funds for UUCSJS (last year we raised \$4,000+!) while also spreading the message of the importance of sustainable landscaping to folks in southern NJ.

Here are some of the tasks we need to accomplish to make this year's sale/swap a success:

1. Off-load and set up sixty species of perennials, shrubs, & trees.
2. Organize plants into participant's orders, double-check orders.
3. Set up tables, chairs, signage, and shade.
4. Help participants check over orders, load plants into vehicles.
5. Help plant swappers find specific plants.
6. Collect swap money, handle refunds.
7. Be a presence in the entryway and vestibule and greet visitors to our center.
8. Provide volunteer support by contributing food and/or beverage on Friday or Saturday morning.
9. Help breakdown tables, chairs, and extra swap plants at conclusion of sale.
10. Help sell any left-over swap plants on Sunday morning after service.
11. And here's our most-talked-about volunteer need: protector(s) of the plants. Open to Men's Group volunteers who are willing to brave the elements, drink beer, and talk far into the night all the while keeping our plants safe from marauding deer!

More information and sign-up sheets will be located at the Fair Trade Table in the vestibule. Questions? Suggestions? Please contact Jesse Connor.

RACE The Power of an ILLUSION

Final Episode of the Series

Friday, April 22, 6:30-8:30 pm

Episode Three ***"The House We Live In"***

If race doesn't exist biologically, what is it? And why should it matter? The final episode, **"The House We Live In,"** is the first film about race to focus not on individual attitudes and behavior, but on the ways our institutions and policies advantage some groups at the expense of others. Its subject is the "unmarked" race: white people. We see how

benefits quietly and often invisibly accrue to white people, not necessarily because of merit or hard work, but because of the racialized nature of our laws, courts, customs, and perhaps most pertinently, housing. "Colorblind" policies that ignore race only perpetuate these inequities. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun wrote, "To get beyond racism we must first take account of race." Asserting that *"I don't see color"* (as many progressive whites are fond of saying) does nothing to dismantle system-based racism. As this episode shows us, until we address the legacy of past discrimination and confront the historical meanings of race, the dream of equality will remain out of reach.

Adopt A UU Garden Bed



Our Building & Grounds Committee has come up with an Adopt-a-UU-Garden-Bed initiative that allows individuals, families, or groups the opportunity to care for a manageable garden bed on our property at their own convenience. This has proved to be a win-win for all concerned.

You've probably noticed the small signs in various garden beds with the name of the garden and its volunteer caretaker as you've walked around the grounds. Once again this year, we have some gardens that are up for adoption. If you are interested or have questions, please email me and I'll let you know which gardens are up for adoption this year.

Who can adopt?

- Individuals & Families
- Groups/teams of like-minded individuals

How long will I/we be committed for?

- We will give people the opportunity to renew their sponsorship on a yearly basis. As long as the garden has been well maintained, sponsors will be able to continue caretaking their chosen garden.

How often would I/we have to come?

- A light weeding once a month, beginning in April and ending in September or October should be sufficient to keep the bed looking good.

Why adopt?

- You'll have the satisfaction gained from sharing the responsibility for the stewardship of our grounds.
- Shared work affords the opportunity to strengthen friendships and family ties.
- You can involve children in appreciating and learning about how to care for our environment.
- Scheduling is up to you -- individuals or groups have the flexibility to arrange volunteer time to suit their needs.
- We are committed to environmental sustainability at UUCSJS and therefore plant only native perennials, shrubs, and trees. By helping us maintain our grounds, you will make it possible for us to showcase native plants and educate the public about their value.

How can I/we get started and know what to do?

- Jesse Connor will help you get started and will be available to assist you or answer any questions you might have. Tools for maintaining the garden will be available in our shed.

**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!

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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April 2016

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