



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 18, Issue 9

September 2016

September 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.

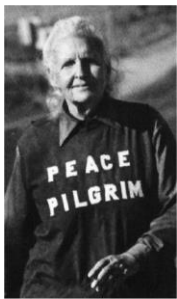
September 4	Labor and Justice <i>Lay speaker Kit Marlowe</i> Our work and employment determines much about our health and social happiness. UUs strive for fairness in spiritual, political, and economic relationships, and labor unions can give workers enough power to negotiate a fair deal. Here's to a better understanding of economic justice..
September 11 <i>Family Picnic</i>	Living Waters <i>Interim Minister Rev. John Marsh</i> Everyone is invited to bring some water from a source that gives meaning and hope. We will celebrate the beginning of a new Congregational Year, with a new minister, a new Board, and a renewed Search Committee. We will acknowledge the anniversary of a tragic event for our nation, and we will hear a story about living waters that gave hope to a woman in search of stability. Everyone is invited to stay for a picnic directly after the service.
September 18	The Pursuit of Happiness <i>Interim Minister Rev. John Marsh</i> Ours is one of the few governments that gives helping to make its citizens happy as a reason for its existence. How is that working out for you? How much can we reasonably expect from government in the happiness department? How much from our religious community? How much from ourselves?
September 25	Blind Spots and Brain Bugs: Roadblocks to Social Justice <i>Lay speaker Michael Cluff</i> Nobody ever said fighting for social justice was easy. Michael will explore the mindsets that block progress, both in our rivals and in ourselves.

Come to the UUCSJS Picnic!

Sunday, September 11, after the service.

We will provide burgers (veggie and meat), hot dogs, and buns. Please bring a side dish, dessert, or beverage.

For the Water Communion service that day, bring a small container of water that symbolizes a feeling or special event for you. As always, we will blend our water with the water of all.



Peace Pilgrim Celebration

All events at:
Peace Pilgrim Park
500-block London Ave.
Egg Harbor City, NJ

Saturday Sept 17

8:30 am: YOGA under the pines.

10 am: GUIDED WALK to Peace Pilgrim's childhood home.

Noonish: POT LUCK (if you can, please bring a meal to share) under the big top with music, dancing, tie-dying, peace-crane tree, vendors. Also collecting gently-used shoes.

2 pm: DRUM CIRCLE in the park led by David Shaman.

Sunday Sept 18

2 pm: SUNDAY SERVICE in the park with music.

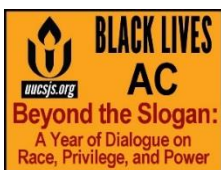
CRITTER COLLECTION



In the month of September, UUCSJS will be collecting supplies for the Atlantic County SPCA, a volunteer, non-government funded animal advocacy group that also adopts out needy dogs and cats. Wish list items include canned wet food, dry food (Pedigree or higher quality), scoopable litter, new or gently used leashes and collars, yoga mats, blankets, paper towels, bleach, hand sanitizer, Clorox or Lysol wipes and deodorizing pet wipes. South Jersey Animal Advocates will gather your donations from the weekly collection and deliver them to the SPCA. Please see Ronda Cluff with any questions.

2016-2017 UUA Common Read

The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and Rise of a New Justice Movement by Rev. Dr. William Barber and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove is published by the UUA's Beacon Press. Rev. Barber recently gave an electrifying speech at the Democratic National Convention. "Some issues are not left versus right, or liberal versus conservative, they are right versus wrong." Listen to Rev. Barber's full speech from the DNC (youtu.be/NAFZKcYn8qI) and learn more about the UUA Common Read at www.uua.org/re/adults/read.



Black Lives AC
Sat., Sept. 17
2 - 4 pm

Affirming Black LGBTQ Lives

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

Donate to the Service Auction!!

12th Annual UUCSJS Service Auction

Examples of Donations

Services: raking leaves, guitar lessons, surfing experiences, repair work around the house, ride to and from the airport, housecleaning, babysitting, therapeutic massage . . .

Dinners and Events: fondue party, kayaking, ethnic dinner, beer tasting, nature excursion, make your own pizza party, Pine Barrens tour, murder mystery party, vegan dinner . . .

Items: kitchen tool, radio, guitar, travel clock, theatre gift certificate, briefcase, teapot, cookie jar . . .

Handmade and Baked Goods: jewelry, pesto, pies, cookies, homemade wine, home grown herbs, crocheted sweater, vegan cupcakes . . .

Find donation forms on the sign-up table in the back of the sanctuary!

Auction date: Saturday, Nov. 12 @ 6:30 pm

Margaret Circle... As we look forward to cooler temperatures we welcome one another back to our sacred time. Join us Thursday, September 1, at 1 pm in the UU Center Library. We will share joys and concerns, enjoy refreshing delights offered by Arlene Yacka, and discuss a few new ideas. Kathryn Kelley will engage us in discussion based on an article entitled "The World is Not Falling Apart," by Steven Pinker and Andrew Mack, from *Slate.com*, and "Three Myths About the World's Poor," by Bill and Melinda Gates, from *The Wall Street Journal*.

Kathryn urges us to reflect with the understanding that "sometimes we are so bogged down by gloom and doom presented by the media we miss the good news that affects those near and dear to us."

Book Lovers will be meeting Friday, September 16 at 7 pm in the UU Center Library. We are starting off the year with *Euphoria* by Lily King. Inspired by events in the life of revolutionary anthropologist Margaret Mead, *Euphoria* is "dazzling... suspenseful... brilliant... an exhilarating novel" – *Boston Globe*.

If you would like a list of books that Book Club will be reading for this 2016-2017 year, please email Barbara Morell. Printed copies of the list are available also - either by Social Justice table or just ask. You are welcome to come to any or all meetings!!!

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!

UUCSJS' Receipt of the Freedom Fund Award Presents Us with an Opportunity for a Congregational Conversation on Our Involvement in the Movement for Racial Equality and Social Justice

On May 4, 2016, the NAACP Mainland/Pleasantville Branch announced to our Congregation that we had been selected to receive the 2016 Freedom Fund Organization Award. The Freedom Fund Dinner, at which the Congregation will receive this award, will be held on Saturday, October 29, 2016, at the Greate Bay Country Club in Somers Point. As the Awards Dinner soon will be upon us, I think that it is time for us to take some time to consider what an important honor it is to be the recipient a Freedom Fund Award.

The Freedom Fund is also known as the Fight for Freedom Fund. It was created in 1953 to intensify efforts to counteract racial inequality. Initially, the Fund's activities were to culminate in 1963. But with the assassination of Medgar Evers, an NAACP Mississippi Field Secretary, in June 1963, the Fund was continued until its work was completed. It is sobering to consider that, 63 years after the Fund's foundation, issues of racial inequality, and the tragic and genuine effects of that inequality, remain complex and deep-seated within our society.

Such is the context from which the local Chapter of the NAACP has acknowledged our Congregation as a Freedom Fund Organization. It must be noted that the Congregation's receipt of this award is directly related to the dedication, commitment and positive energy of our Congregation's Anti Racism Task Force and its work, done on behalf of our Congregation, in the greater community through Black Lives Matter-AC. The work which they have undertaken over the last year, clearly has been undertaken in concert with the Principles of Unitarian Universalism; the Principles which we affirm each time we gather in community. The work the Task Force has undertaken, on behalf of the Congregation, with Black Lives Matter-AC has been difficult and challenging. It is certain that the work will remain difficult and challenging. It is certain that there is very much more work to do as our Congregation remains involved with and dedicated to the Black Lives Matter Movement.

The work of confronting racism and social injustice necessarily involves seeking and creating constructive ways to overcome them. Clearly, it is work founded firmly in the one abiding principle which undergirds our life as a community: the principle of compassion. Thus, the work undertaken on our Congregation's behalf by the members of the Anti Racism Task Force deserves the Congregation's acknowledgment; the members of the Task Force deserve our thanks. On behalf of the Congregation, I here acknowledge their work and thank them for it.

Looking forward, it seems to me important to consider that that this award is not simply a 'reward' given at the culmination of a year of work by our Anti Racism Task Force. Rather it is an award which has been awarded to the entire Congregation. As such, it seems to me to be call from the greater community in which we live to further engage with that community. Perhaps it is a call to bear further witness, as a Unitarian Universalist Congregation, to the principle of compassion. Perhaps it even is

a call to become "proselytizers of compassion." Perhaps it is a challenge to our Congregation to further leave the comfort of our conceptions of who we are as a community and as individuals, and to further grow beyond whom we perceive ourselves to be. Perhaps it is a call to further embrace the principle of compassion beyond the figurative walls of our religious community, and to travel the path to wherever that embrace leads.

Thus it seems appropriate that the Congregation uses the opportunity of the Freedom Fund Organization Award as a time to meet as a Congregation and discuss our engagement on issues of racial equality and social justice within the context of our Unitarian Universalist faith; and to discuss how we, as Unitarian Universalists, can further engage these issues from the continued stance of compassion.

Therefore, **the Board of Trustees has engaged Rev. Libby Smith to facilitate that conversation within our Congregation on Sunday, October 2, 2016, after the service.** The Board urges everyone to attend and participate so that further meaningful conversation on our commitment to issues of racial justice within the context of our faith is able to occur. We hope that everyone looks forward to this opportunity to grow our faith, and the strength of our compassion, as a religious community of Unitarian Universalists.

In closing it is important that I acknowledge that it is my genuine honor to engage in the life of this Congregation with all of you.

Jim Gentile

President of the Board of Trustees

Mainland/Pleasantville Branch N.A.A.C.P.

Saturday, October 29, 2016
Annual Awards Banquet & Dinner Dance

An Evening of Elegance

Greate Bay Country Club

901 Mays Landing Road, Somers Point, NJ 08244

6pm-10pm

Tickets \$65.00

2016 Honorees

Local Government: Captain Danny Adcock

Health; Dr. Anjeanette T. Brown

Secondary Education; Dr. Robin L. Moore Greene

Post Secondary Education; Dr. Beverly Vaughan

Youth In Action: Sierra Jordan, Mary Ann Amro Sarhan

Organization Business: Unitarian Universalist

Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Back to School in Children's RE

On August 21 a group of UUCSJS kids and parents visited the Absegami High School rain garden. Under the direction of Katy Cardwell, advisor of the Earth Shepherds group at Absegami, our families spent a few hours weeding, clearing and watering the rain garden. Thanks to Katy for organizing (and feeding) us and to all those who participated.



Our summer programming provided a variety of activities and crafts for the children to enjoy each Sunday. Many thanks to our volunteers who provided these activities: Mariann Maene, Karen York, Jessica Dunn, Michelle Tomko, Debbi Dagavarian, Colby Tippins, Bud Smith, TJ Jansch, and Rev. John Marsh. Our final summer session on September 4 will include a review of our safety and evacuation procedures followed by a dance party, appropriately titled "Safety Dance."

On September 11, there will be no separate RE programming when we will celebrate our annual All Ages Water Service followed by a family picnic. Our weekly Religious Education classes will begin on September 18. This year we will be offering the following classes: *SpiritPlay* for Pre-K - 1st grade, *Harry and UU* for 2nd-6th grade and *Coming of Age* for grades 7 and up.

SpiritPlay is a storytelling religious education program. During each class, the storyteller relates a story while presenting visual cues (small objects or pictures) to the children as a way to help them remember the story. Following each storytelling, the children are encouraged to interpret the story through art expression or revisit past stories. Included are legends from many different faith traditions, creative expressions of our Unitarian Universalist principles (introduced as "promises") and tales of our UU ancestors.

"*Harry and UU*" is based on the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling, books that immerse children in the idea that one can work to make the world better. The curriculum includes many fun wizarding activities, but the main purpose of the curriculum is social action. The class forms a chapter of Dumbledore's Army and fights against seven Horcruxes during the year. The Horcruxes are real world social action projects. The curriculum spends about four classes on each Horcrux fight, with three classes devoted mainly to education and small projects, and one class devoted entirely to action. The goal is to produce tangible results on seven real-world problems.

"*Coming of Age*" celebrates the transition from childhood to adolescence. Throughout the RE year, this group will explore theology, spirituality, and history through discussion, drama, music, writing, and art. This program will help youth to define their beliefs and put their faith into action. The class will then host and present a special "Coming of Age" service in the spring.

If you have any questions regarding the UUCSJS Children's Religious Education Program, feel free to contact Heidi at sjsdre@gmail.com

Heidi Jansch, UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

In the Interim...



Thanks to many of you for the warm welcomes I have received in the past few weeks. I look forward to meeting more of you in the weeks ahead. As you probably have already learned: an interim ministry is a set period of time in which there are tasks that must be accomplished to prepare the way for next settled ministry. By the grace of circumstances, I come to you at a point where most of those tasks have already been accomplished under the excellent leadership of Cynthia Cain. This will give the Board and I the opportunity to work on some other goals and to have fun together. "I'm here for a good time, not a long time."

I am also arriving in the midst of one of the most interesting political seasons in the history of the world. I urge everyone to join in the fray. This is no time to sit on the sidelines. I also urge everyone to take a few deep breaths—reflect on the principles you hold dear—consider the history of our nation and its ideals. Consider also how its religious heritages have shaped it.

Two groups that have always punched way beyond their weight are the Friends (Quakers) and the Unitarian Universalists. While they end up supporting many of the same causes, the paths they took to get there represent two different American ideals: the rights of the individual conscience (Quaker) and the necessity of collective action for the common good (Unitarian Universalist).

This is, of course, a generalization, but I think it is one worth pondering. I plan to dwell on it this fall and I hope you will find it interesting and maybe even consider inviting a friend to join the discussion. One of the things that neither Quakers nor UU's have been very good at is broad proselytizing.

Please spend a moment on the following quiz:

How often does the average Unitarian Universalist invite a friend to church?

- A. Once a season?
- B. Once ever two years
- C. Are we really allowed to do that?

The answer to C is, YES, you are really allowed, in fact, you are encouraged.

Hoping to see you (maybe with a friend) at our picnic on September 11.

Rev. John Marsh, Interim Minister

Can we be good neighbors in an election year?

Democracy requires disagreement and the skills to manage it.
Let's model the best of that practice.

KIMBERLY FRENCH | 8/1/2016

UUWORLD.ORG

This has been one tough presidential campaign cycle. It's been tough on friendships.

Supporters of candidates within each party have always sniped at one another. Other years, some say, have been just as contentious—1964, '68, '72. I well remember the angry schisms that opened up between gender and race, young and old, in the 2008 Democratic primary season. But this year feels different.

This spring one UU minister I know announced that he has been unfriending, unfollowing, and blocking posts on social media, and linked to a *Slate* article called "[The Democratic Primary Ruined My Friendship!](#)" Republican friendships have been just as strained, creating ruptures "among people who have for years been political allies, whose friendships were forged through common battles, often standing shoulder to shoulder" who are now questioning the state of one another's souls, reported Peter Wehner, a conservative *New York Times* opinion writer, this spring in "[Friendship in the Age of Trump](#)."

The people who have come to hate each other "are a small, unrepresentative group of political obsessives," Michelle Goldberg wrote in the *Slate* article, citing a 2012 Pew Research Center study showing 84 percent of social-media users rarely or never mention politics. If that's true, then I—like one prominent UU who commented on my minister friend's post—"seem to know a disproportionately high percentage of them."

As a rule, I don't like to talk politics. I hang back in those heated political discussions around the Thanksgiving table or at college reunions. On social media, my political participation is mostly "liking" other people's posts.

However, I admit to being one of Goldberg's political obsessives, every four years. I love checking [RealClearPolitics](#), [FiveThirtyEight](#), and [PolitiFact](#): the delegate counts and polls, the fact checking, the opinions from outlets I'd never know about otherwise. It feeds the data hound in me.

Over the past months I've quietly seethed when reading posts by friends that tear down other candidates and those candidates' spouses and supporters, and that circulate horrible memes, often based on dubious evidence from fake news sites.

For the sake of friendship, I too was tempted to announce I would unfriend or unfollow anyone who posted anything negative about another candidate, until after the election. But one thing I value about social media is how it gives me a view outside the little bubble I usually travel in. I resisted.

I found another antidote. I let Samantha Bee's *Full Frontal* TV show rip on my laptop, segment after segment. Fast-talking, fearless, and wickedly funny, she talks me down and makes me laugh. In one of my favorite segments, she cooed, "[Presidential elections are like children](#)—they're *all* the most important," while running quick clips of candidates in 2016, '12, '08, '04, and '00, saying exactly that.

The most important election of our lifetime, Sam Bee argued, was actually the 2010 congressional midterms, a year when many moderates, progressives, and especially youth didn't bother to vote. That election brought eighty-seven Republican freshmen into Congress—a large portion of the tea party bloc—who shut down government, attempted to reverse Obamacare sixty times, and refused to vote on immigration reform, gun control, judicial appointments, or much of anything else.

State legislators elected that year did even worse: bankrupting school systems, redrawing congressional districts, and restricting women's access to abortions—"all the things that directly affect your life a million times more than the presidency," she zinged.

That resonated. Four years ago I did something I'd never done before: I stopped lurking behind my computer screen and took to the street, my own street. I rang neighbors' doorbells to talk to them about a candidate for Senate who had really gotten me excited, Elizabeth Warren.

I live in the most conservative county of one of the most liberal states. I showed up at a volunteer training in a rented office in a small city nearby, packed well beyond maximum capacity. The staff political organizers were young and smart, all working on multiple tech tools at once. The canvassers were mostly retired professional women. On different afternoons I was paired with some wonderful, accomplished women—a retired lawyer, teacher, minister, town planner.

One day after canvassing, I knocked on the door of a neighbor in failing health to bring her some soup. I still had my Warren button on my coat. "I can't stand that woman," she hissed. "I just want to scratch her eyes out." Taken aback, I managed to stammer, "Well, I guess that's why we have elections in this country—so we can decide these things and still be good neighbors."

Most of the people who opened their doors were polite, some even happy to see us doing this work. Combining a traditional ground game with the latest technology, the basic strategy was simple, all targeted to the final three hours of Election Day: identify supporters, then make sure they actually go to the polls.

Phone banking that night was even more uncomfortable than ringing doorbells: "I know you've gotten a zillion calls already," I'd launch in, breathlessly. "I'm a volunteer, sitting at my house making calls, and I just want to make sure: Did you vote today? Do you need a ride?" It worked. Over the past four years, I've often reflected on how well spent that time was.

I believe this presidential election *is* important. It's already a historic first. But the presidency is just one branch of one level of government. The past eight years have shown how hamstrung the executive can be without allies in other branches.

What's struck me is how easy it is to get caught up in the reality-show infotainment that news coverage of presidential campaigns has become. Not only are the campaigns numbingly overlong, obscenely costly, and corrupted with influence peddling, but the cultishness of focusing on a few personalities at the top distracts us from the places where our political energies could make the most difference.

Thirty-four Senate seats are up for election this fall, all of the House, and thousands of state legislative and executive posts. If you're serious about trying to make change through government, if you want to build a movement, I invite you to pick a candidate for Congress or state office. Go to [Emily's List](#), [Berniecrats](#), or a site that speaks to you. Put that energy arguing with family and friends to work toward getting somebody good elected. I've got my eye on a dead-heat Senate race in a nearby state, where a progressive woman candidate is challenging the incumbent. Or if you can't stomach any more campaigning, join a town board.

Each presidential campaign cycle seems to have less and less to do with governing or democracy, and more to do with deepening our divisiveness. Democracy requires disagreement and the skills to manage it, listening and tolerance. But our political discourse increasingly assumes the way to relate to those who differ with us, across the political spectrum, is to loathe and make fun of them. We UUs say democratic process is one of the central tenets we aspire to practice, our Fifth Principle. We may not do it perfectly, but let's model the best of that practice. And let's be kinder to one another.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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September 2016

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Congregation of the South Jersey Shore
P.O. Box 853
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