



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 18, Issue 11

November 2016

November 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.

November 6 <i>Fall back!</i> Daylight Savings Ends	Revealing the Sacred: The Enduring Bonds of Kin <i>Guest Minister Rev. Rebekah Montgomery</i> As we reflect on community and how we come together, we often turn to how family of choice and family of blood relates to our spiritual lives. Rev. Montgomery explores our chosen bonds as a source of personal theology and a way to live out our chosen faith.
November 13	What Have We Done? <i>Rev. John Marsh</i> On this Sunday after the election you are invited to reflect together on the significance of this moment. Rev. Marsh will offer a brief homily and there will be time for shared reflections.
November 20	A Song of Thanksgiving <i>Rev. John Marsh</i> Thanksgiving is a civic holiday, a religious holiday, and an attitude of gratitude. For some, that attitude comes naturally; for others it requires some training.
November 27	“What!?! Are You Crazy Or What?” <i>Lay speaker Richard Grzywinski</i> Aristotle reportedly observed that “no great mind has ever existed without a touch of madness.” Do our observations of the behavior of others as being “different” or “abnormal” too easily morph into judgments on their sanity, and perhaps further into hate or distrust? As Henry David Thoreau advised, “If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away.” So let’s think about this and recall some of the great minds in the arts whose madness brought them notoriety and ask, should we culture a little bit of madness within ourselves?

Coming up....
Mark your calendars...



Service Auction

Saturday, November 12, 2016

Doors open 6:30 pm

About our Guest Speaker...

Rev. Rebekah Montgomery is a distinguished military Chaplain, UU minister, licensed professional counselor, and mental health provider with over 15 years of professional experience in pastoral services, counseling, grief management, and conflict resolution.



She was the recipient of a Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service as a US Army Chaplain in Afghanistan, and the Military Chaplains Association named her 'Chaplain of the Year' in 2009.

During her 18-month tour in Afghanistan, she provided pastoral counseling support to more than 3,000 soldiers and traveled to 38 Forward Operating Bases to support soldiers in remote areas. She was responsible for overseeing the strategic management, guidance, and standards for the US Army Reserve Strong Bonds program, a relationship skills and family wellness program. She previously served as a Senior Program Analyst for the US Army Office of the Chief of Chaplains, a Deployment Support Chaplain at the Maryland Army National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters, and a US Army Chaplain during Operation Enduring Freedom.

In June 2014, Rev. Montgomery preached the Service of the Living Tradition at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association. In October 2015, she began her service as Assistant Minister at the UU Church of Rockville, MD -- her first parish-based ministry for an extended period of service. She is also pursuing a Doctorate of Ministry in Military Chaplaincy at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC.

Outside of her professional life, Montgomery is an enthusiastic self-described 'gym rat,' trains in karate and yoga, and enjoys a quiet life at home with her two children Genevieve and Thane.

Let's all help UUCSJS in welcoming Rev. Rebekah Montgomery on Sunday, November 6. It would be wonderful to see all our seats filled. Even though you may have had to skip a few, this is a Sunday service you won't want to miss!

6th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner UU Center Sanctuary Thursday, November 24 12 noon



You may bring a dish to share or not, either way is fine. Invite your family and friends. Vegetarian/vegan options will abound!

Come early if you wish to participate in setting up. Sign up will be in the back of the church so we can get an idea of how many will be coming and what you may be bringing. Talk to Theresa McReynolds for more info.

Note: Vespers service for November will be on November 11, the second Friday, at 6:30 pm. *This is a change from the usual third Friday.* Please contact Barbara Miller if you would like to offer a reading or lead a meditation in the Vespers service.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH FAMILY PROMISE?

It's finally going to start! We will probably start hosting families sometime this December!

In the next few weeks, members of the UUCSJS Family Promise team will be asking you to sign up to help by preparing a meal or a side dish, staying overnight with the guests, or taking on another important role when our guests visit.

Family Promise families are thoroughly vetted. They cannot have any history of domestic violence, drug use, alcohol abuse, or other undesirable behaviors. They will not be a single individual; they will be a family with at least one parent and one child.

These families need a temporary home, and for one week soon, that home will be our UU Center. Please be generous with your time! Volunteer!

Margaret Circle... will meet on Thursday, November 3, at 1 pm in the UU Library. A short meeting will be followed by our Joys and Concerns. The refreshment host will be Barbara Morell, and Kathryn Kelley will continue on the topic inspired by an article called, "The World is Not Falling Apart." We will discuss some of the very good things that are going on in the world, in our community, in our lives and in the lives of those we hold dear. All women of the UUCSJS are welcome to join us for this time of sharing.

Book Lovers will meet Friday, November 17 in the UU library at 7 pm. Marsha Hannah will be leading the discussion on *THE RAILWAY MAN* by Eric Lomax. During the second world war, Eric Lomax was forced to work on the notorious Burma-Siam railway and was tortured by the Japanese for making a crude radio. Incredible story of innocence betrayed, and of survival and courage in the face of horror. Thanks for all the donations to the chocolate basket!!!! Contact morellb@msn.com with questions.



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!

Chocolate is back at the Fair Trade Table!

In addition to the large bars, we are offering mini pieces for 25 cents.

In the Interim...



"The most radical thing we can do is to introduce people to one another." This is the tag line of our Partner Church Program which introduces Unitarian Universalists in North America to Unitarians in Transylvania, India, the Philippines, and other parts of the world. However, it also applies right here on the South Jersey Shore.

I know this election has strained family ties and friendships decades old. Yet, I still believe the answer is to get out and meet more people. If you don't know anyone who is voting for Donald Trump, it is a sign that you have become a bit parochial and really ought to get out more often.

It was through Jim Gentile's getting to know the Rev. William Williams (not a Trump supporter as far as we know, but not a Unitarian either) that a few weeks ago I found myself passing out plates of roast chicken and mashed potatoes at the weekly free Saturday brunch hosted by the Asbury United Methodist Church in downtown Atlantic City.

I won't tell you that "I saw God and everything," but it was kind of like that, and fun besides. In the words of the late Daniel Berrigan: "Sometime in your life, I hope you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. I hope you might have baked it or bought or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even."

The tag line for the Black Lives Matter year-long dialog at Asbury Methodist is "moving beyond the slogan." In addition to the Saturday brunch their congregation is also involved in tutoring and helping at risk youth with their homework. I look forward to our Congregations working together. I believe that wonderful things can come out of simply getting to know each other.

Dan McKanan, in his essay "The Sacred Fire," tells of how individual friendships between white and black -- Unitarians, Universalists and people of other faiths -- fostered progress in our nation including: the end of slavery, the founding of the NAACP, the integration of private clubs and neighborhoods, the first urban settlement houses for Blacks. Dan concludes: "if, our Unitarian Universalist faith centers on the religious experience of encounter with other people, then our religious practice must necessarily be one of partnership. The sacred fire that burns among us is not just among Unitarian Universalists -- it is inseparable from the interconnected social and ecological web of which we are a small part."

See you in church,
John Marsh



Black Lives AC
Sat., Nov. 19
2 - 4 pm

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



Ministerial Search News

Thanks to all of you who participated in our recent Roundtable Discussions. We are pleased that 36 of you showed up, which is one third of our congregation. We are compiling all of your comments, and believe that we have gained insight, and some certainty about what the congregation means in your lives, your concerns about it, and your hopes for our minister. We expect to be asking you a few more questions through Survey Monkey, which will be visiting your computer screens very soon.

Your Search Committee is busy now with finishing the revisions to the CONGREGATIONAL RECORD. This is a document that will be on the Transitions UUA website and is available to all clergy who want to see it. It contains much information about our congregation -- hard facts such as years of budgets and previous ministers, and subjective things such as a description of the congregation, and the minister we are seeking. Next we will be revising THE PACKET. This is shown to ministers in search who show an interest in us and want to take a deeper look. It has lots of letters of introduction, and photographs of our congregation in various activities. We have included many photos of the natural beauty and resources of our area, so folks know that that we do not look and feel like North Jersey. With all the suggested reports and documents included, our packet last year was 129 pages long. The Congregational Record and the Packet need to be completed prior to November 30. Yes, we are quite busy right now! We will keep you posted as we move along.

LOOKING FOR A GOOD BOOK?

Sunday, November 27 & December 4
BEFORE & AFTER SERVICES

We will be having a book fair featuring books from



You will be able to shop for books that all UU's should have in their libraries. *Holiday shopping made easy!*

A list of the books that will be for sale is available on the bulletin board in the lobby. There is only one copy so please return it to the bulletin board when you're finished perusing it. *Proceeds from the sale will go into the general fund to support this congregation.*

Payment is with cash or check. Take advantage of this opportunity to purchase books related to the issues & ideals of Unitarian Universalism.

Board of Trustees HIGHLIGHTS

The **regular monthly meeting** of the **UUCSJS Board of Trustees** was held on **Tuesday, October 11, 2016** at 6:30 pm in the Lounge at the UU Center, President Jim Gentile presiding. Chalice lighting opened the meeting and joys and concerns were shared.

➤ **Agenda Items**

• **Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer Karen York distributed her written report for September showing **account balances** (9/30) as follows: TD Checking (Operating funds): \$24,952.09; TD Savings (CC3/Capital funds): \$250.01; and Fidelity/Capital Reserves: \$8,926.32 (\$6,136.89 Operating). Prepayment of mortgage principal with CC3 funds was made on 9/30 in the amount of \$455.02; the current principal balance on **mortgage** = \$235,115.84 (10/19).

The treasurer reported that final reminders and thank you notes have been sent out regarding "*Moving Forward*," our two-year **Capital Campaign 3** (CC3) to pay down mortgage principal that ends 12/31/16. There are three important **bookkeeping tasks** to be completed by October 31: **a)** filing for our *property tax exemption*, done every three years; **b)** audit of *Workers' Compensation*, using new online reporting system; and **c)** update of financial information in our *Congregational Record*, as requested by the Ministerial Search committee.

– **Building use requests.** **1)** *Stockton Vegan & Vegetarian*, a new student group [member Ron Hutchison, faculty advisor], received Board approval for use of the Sanctuary and kitchen for a potluck with 15-20 attending during evening hours on Sat., October 22, at reduced fee of \$50. The Center's being ADA-friendly was a consideration for this rental. **2)** *Alfrea* [member David Wagstaff, co-founder & CEO] began renting flexible office space at the UU Center on October 1, at monthly fee of \$400, pending Board approval after a revised contract is signed. Thus you may see the non-profit's three-person staff at the Center between the hours of 8:30 am and 6 pm on weekdays, plus some weekends by arrangement. Alfrea's mission, in harmony with UU principles: "[To] inspire a worldwide movement toward a sustainable food economy by empowering everyone to grow, harvest, preserve and share homegrown food."

Before leaving the subject of **building rentals**, Rev. Marsh recalled that when he was with the San Francisco congregation, part of their normal procedure when opening the building to outside groups was to have someone on hand to *welcome* and *explain why* the space was being offered for a reduced fee (or even free), thereby placing the action in a larger context and communicating something important about the congregation, and Unitarian Universalism in general, in the process.

• **Minister's Report**

– **Update.** Rev. Marsh described activities in which he will be engaged in the near future, including volunteering with the Men's Group to help serve **free Saturday brunch** on October 15 at Asbury United Methodist Church in Atlantic City. He is also spending time preparing for the first-ever webcast on October 23 by the **UU Historical Society of Canada**, of which he is Board chair, about Lotta Hitschmanova (1909-1990), founder and first director of the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, "arguably the best-known Unitarian in Canada's history" (and one of the candidates being considered for appearance on a bank note to be issued in 2018 featuring an iconic Canadian woman).

Rev. Marsh reminded us that on Sun., November 6, we will have as honored guest **Rev. Rebekah Montgomery**, who is a distinguished military Chaplain, UU minister, licensed professional counselor, and mental health provider with over 15 years' experience in pastoral services, counseling, grief management, and conflict resolution. She was recipient of a Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service as a US Army Chaplain

in Afghanistan, and the Military Chaplains Association named her "Chaplain of the Year" in 2009. Rev. Montgomery preached the Service of the Living Tradition at General Assembly in 2014, and since 2015 has been Assistant Minister at the UU Church of Rockville, MD, her first parish-based ministry for an extended period of service. She is also pursuing a Doctorate of Ministry in Military Chaplaincy at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC. ***This is a service you won't want to miss!***

• **Director of Religious Education (DRE) Action Item.**

The Board approved a **second "Trick or Treat" collection** at the Sunday service on October 30 to benefit the Community FoodBank of New Jersey—Southern Branch. The RE kids will be asking congregants to give money as well as food donations. DRE Heidi Jansch explained that the class is doing a block of lessons on hunger and the curriculum encourages social action.

• **Requested proposal from RJTF re \$8,000 UUA grant.**

In its financial oversight role, the Board has responsibility to ensure that grant requirements are fulfilled, and therefore requested details from the RJTF on how they are planning to use these funds. RJTF chair Stephanie Thomas responded that preliminary ideas include their determination to "use the grant money to continue our work with **Black Lives AC**"; the year-long series of forums termed "*Beyond the Slogan*" winds up in November. The group wants to meet with the BL-AC core team "to develop a solid plan for the next year," she said.

• **Board actions to be taken as result of straw poll.**

On the basis of the results of a straw poll taken among those attending the Sun., October 2 **Congregational Conversation** about the role of UUCSJS in support of **Racial Justice**, sponsored by the Board and facilitated by Rev. Libby Smith, the Board of Trustees determined to take the following actions: **1)** that the Board supports displaying a new Black Lives Matter sign in accordance with the level of positive response to the proposed Board recommendation to do so; and **2)** that the Board charges the Racial Justice Task Force to work to expand our involvement in actions of direct service to our local communities, in accordance with the level of positive response to the proposed Board recommendation to do so. (On the third Board recommendation, that we revisit involvement in issues of racial and social justice at the June 2017 annual meeting, no immediate action was indicated but a positive level of response was received, too.) At the session, those attending participated in group discussions and had an opportunity to express their joys, and concerns, about the congregation's actions in support of racial justice.

• **Update on Family Promise.** Karen York reported that Family Promise of Atlantic County (FPAC) has now hired their part-time social worker, and has also held training for key volunteers who will interact with guests; these are among the **final steps** before operations can begin. UUCSJS is considered one of the more organized hosting congregations, York said, and we may well be near the top of the schedule. She added that members of our UU Family Promise team, led by Deb Dagavarian and Barb Morell, have started more detailed planning such how to handle a week's worth of dinner menus, among other duties.

• **Program Council.** Board VP Melissa Hutchison confirmed that she will become **Program Council chair** this month, replacing Treasurer Karen York, who has been serving as acting chair for well over a year after stepping up to fill that need.

➤ **Adjournment**

After extinguishing the chalice, the meeting adjourned at 8:22.

— Judy Pereira, *Secretary*

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 6:30 pm** (**one day later than usual**) in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

Auction Fever!

Now that you've made your donations to the UUCSJS Service Auction on **November 12th** – you've made them, haven't you? – let's discuss the types of auctions you're likely to encounter on Auction night.

Silent Auction

The Silent Auction is anything but! It's the largest of the auctions in that it includes events, items, services, handmade items and baked goods. It gets awfully noisy in what we call the "sanctuary."

Let's discuss bidding on the Silent Auction. Each item or event or service has a sheet on which you write your name when the bidding starts. If the bids are a fixed price, as with events, you win it when you write your name on one of the pre-numbered lines.

The "Win it Now" price means that if you really, really, really want the item, you can write your name on the bottom line next to the "win it now" price and give the sheet to the table monitor. You pay that price – which is usually closer to the estimated value of the item – but that perfect item will be yours before the evening is out!

Chance Auction

The Chance Auction is exactly that – all up to chance. You buy a sheet of tickets, and place a ticket in a small bucket in front of the items you want. Then, we pick a ticket from the cup, and if your number is picked, the item's yours.

Winning or losing is pure luck. Unless you stuff the cup with tickets that cost you more than the item would have cost at Target. And then you still might not win it! *And to those of you who believe that one person's junk is another person's treasure . . . get real! If it's your junk, it's my junk and it's their junk. If you donate something we cannot place in the Chance Auction, we will donate it to a worthy charity.*

Live Auction

The Live Auction is when you get to hold up your number to bid on something as the auctioneer calls out the offered bids. This is the big time, the main event, the show, the major leagues, the cat's pajamas. This is when – unlike when you were in grade school and had to use the bathroom – holding up your hand could get you in serious trouble. But this is also the most fun part of the auction! Don't dare wave to someone in the front row, or you could be the proud, new owner of a baby carriage. The bidding sometimes gets quite competitive!

It is not happy people who are thankful.
It is thankful people who are happy.
– the internet

Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they are never weakness.
– Brenè Brown

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thanks for Giving!

As we take time this month to reflect on all those people and things that we are thankful for, we can't forget to express our thanks to all those who helped our children in their Fight Against Hunger collection for the Community Food Bank on October 30.

With your help, our children are learning that we can all make a difference in this world. Thank you for being a living example for the UUCSJS youth!

With gratitude,

Heidi Jansch, UUCSJS Director of Religious Education



RAIN GARDEN MAKEOVER

Our rain garden has two sections. The main, lower area, dominated by a large Elderberry, collects and stores rain water that is taken up by the native perennials, grasses, and shrubs that make up this beautiful wildlife and pollinator habitat. The upper area originally had a selection of herbs in raised beds. Despite our best efforts, however, this smaller section was taken over by weeds. This past summer we came up with a plan to tackle the weed problem and, thanks to our volunteers, we have transformed the area. The weeds were dug up and removed and the area covered with a ground cloth. We've filled large wooden tubs with a potting mix and have begun replanting herbs. We look forward to next spring when we can add an additional raised bed and finish planting the herbs. Look for an update next spring and an invitation for all to come and sit in the enclosed space and trim the herbs for your culinary needs.

Thanks goes to members of the Building & Grounds Outside Task Team, Jessie Haviland and her very helpful crew-- Griffin, Indigo, Zephyr, and Vale; Barbara Miller; Pam Hendrick; Barbara Morell; and Jack Connor. Thanks to Arnold & Chris Clemenson of Clemenson Native Nursery for donating the commercial ground cloth. Last but not least, thanks to TJ for donating lumber, soil, and his time to create an edge to our upper area to help keep soil in and weeds at bay. -- Jesse Connor

Get your game on!



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18
6:30 PM
BOARD GAMES AND
OTHER FUN!

Join us for Intergenerational Game Night.
You are welcome to bring family-friendly games
and snacks to share.
Betsy Erbaugh has more details.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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November 2016

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