



NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore



Volume 19, Issue 4

April 2017

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 2	Inspiration from General Assembly <i>Lay speakers Stephanie & Aaron Thomas and Melissa Hutchison</i> Every year representatives from Congregations all over the United States (including Alaska and Hawaii) gather to learn, conduct business, sing, and be joyous together. It happens in June, and this year it will happen in New Orleans. Some of those who attended last year will speak of their experiences.
April 9	Palm Sunday <i>Rev. John Marsh</i> Palm Sunday remembers a day on which a population puts reason aside and goes crazy over a charismatic leader. Within a week the crowd will turn on the savior as the cause of all of their problems. For many Unitarian Universalists, it is an invitation to look within.
Friday, April 14 7 pm	Good Friday Service <i>Rev. John Marsh and others</i> Ours is an optimistic faith. This is a service that requires us to acknowledge some hard truths. Not all that wounds us makes us stronger. Sometimes there is nothing redemptive about suffering. We will remember stories of crucifixions both ancient and modern.
April 16	Easter Celebration <i>Rev. John Marsh</i> We will look at some parallels between the story of Harry Potter and the Christian Gospels, celebrate some good news, and sing songs of rejoicing. <i>Wearing of Easter bonnets is encouraged — regardless of gender.</i>
April 23	Earth Day <i>Rev. John Marsh and others</i> We will celebrate spring and the earth, talk about some of the threats to the Pinelands, and recommit ourselves to living gently as part of the natural world.
April 30	Inherent Worth and Sanity <i>Lay speaker Matt Honig</i> What is a mental disorder? What is the state of the mental health system? Why should we care? All of these are complicated questions, but the answers to some (and more) will be answered in a sermon getting us ready for May's Mental Health Month. (Please note that this sermon will briefly discuss suicide.)

Save the Date! Fellowship Dinner - Saturday, April 22, 2017 - 6 pm

FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Saturday, April 22, 2017

6 pm

The wrap up for the stewardship campaign will be the Fellowship Dinner, a community shared meal, to be held on Saturday April 22, 2017. Please sign up to indicate your eating preferences, and the item you will bring to the dinner. Sign up sheets are on the Social Justice table.

You will be missed if you are not there!

**Calling all singers, actors, comedians,
and other extroverts!**

Our Fellowship Dinner offers more than tasty food and good conversation. Each year, members of all ages entertain us while we enjoy our dessert. If you have a song, skit, or dance to share, we will be your appreciative audience. Contact Barbara Miller if you have something fun to share.

**Not a performer?
We need back of the house help too!**

For the Annual Fellowship dinner on April 22, we need people who are willing to put out and serve the food, and a crew of people who will do a kitchen clean up shift. Will you help?

See Betsy Searight before she comes after you with a clipboard. *"Blessed are those who help, for they are the heart and soul of the congregation."*

Margaret Circle will meet this Thursday, April 6 at 1 pm. After a short meeting and the sacred Joys and Concerns, Maxine Blumenthal will delight us with refreshment. Kathryn Kelly has promised a lively conversation around a story titled **The 10 Rooms that Should Be in The House of Life**. Author Frank Crane says "want to know how to be really rich?" Adapted from the American Magazine, the story appeared in *Readers Digest* in April 1922. All women of UUCSJS are welcome.

BOOK CLUB will be meeting Friday, April 21 at 7 pm in the UU library. April brings **CROSSING TO SAFETY** by Wallace Stegner. Called a "magnificently crafted story... brimming with wisdom [Washington Post Book World], *Crossing to Safety* has established itself as one of the greatest and most cherished American novels of the twentieth century." All are welcome to join the discussion!!



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH FAMILY PROMISE?

Coming up this month! Our next week of hosting is April 30 through May 7.

How can you become involved during our week? You can bring a meal, hang out in the evening, or sleep overnight. Sign up sheets will be available towards the end of the month.

FPAC also needs additional volunteers throughout the month to transport our guests using the Family Promise van, to help out at the Day Center on weekends, and to assist the smaller congregations hosting guests during their quarterly week. Visit FPAC's Facebook page for more details:

www.facebook.com/FamilyPromiseAC.

Remember, for us and the other congregations in Atlantic County, Family Promise is still a fledgling endeavor. So help us get the routine down so it becomes a joyous endeavor helping those in need.

Our sincere gratitude to each and every person who steps up to the plate!

Coming up!!!

**Hope For Tomorrow Gala
Friday, May 6, 2017
Carriage House, Galloway**

Contact Janet Longo for tickets.

In the Interim...



Walt Whitman was wrong about one thing at least!

Whitman has always been one of my all time favorite poets.

When I was in my twenties, one of his passages I admired was:

*I hear it was charged against me that I sought to
destroy institutions;*

But really I am neither for nor against institutions;

*(What indeed have I in common with them?—Or what
with the destruction of them?)*

Now I believe it is one of the stupidest things he ever wrote. Our lives are bound up with institutions whether we will it or no.

My thinking is now more closely aligned with Timothy Snyder, Yale professor of history and author of the just released book, [*On Tyranny*](#). In his book Snyder argues that one of the most important things Americans can do right now is to support our democratic institutions.

It is ironic that the most retroactive group in Congress is called the Freedom Caucus, and that they pretend to be all about supporting the Constitution. For them, freedom seems to be about freedom to live without a healthcare plan. I would have them remember that two of the most important freedoms spelled out in the Constitution are freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly.

It is now the task of the free press to help us distinguish truth from lies and to name lies for what they are.

Freedom of assembly, as Unitarian Universalist theologian James Luther Adams taught us, is about the freedom, not to just believe whatever you want, but to join together with other like-minded individuals in order to influence policy.

These relate to innumerable situations, but here are two examples: one profound and another mundane.

The profound one is that, as of this writing, The Affordable Care Act (sometimes called Obamacare) is still the law of the land. There are a number of reasons why this is so, but surely one of them is because tens of thousands of voters put pressure on moderate Republican members of Congress, not to leave the most vulnerable people in our country without healthcare. Individuals organized, pressured, and it worked.

The more mundane example is our Congregation's Stewardship Campaign. Local Unitarian Universalist Congregations are one of the most important institutions in any community. We are now almost half way through the time of the annual campaign, and about half of the members and friends here have made a pledge. If you have not done so already, I urge you to join them.

As the wise Walt Whitman once said: "When I give – I give myself."

So let it be with us.

John Marsh



We expect to be sharing some wonderful news with you within the next few weeks. Following the protocol of the UUA Ministerial Transitions Office, this is all we are able to say at this time. Congregations in search are not permitted to make an offer to a candidate until Thursday, March 30. We have a candidate we are very enthusiastic about and that candidate feels the same about us. We can't say anything more until we are in a position to tell you everything, and this will not be until our candidate accepts the invitation to be our candidate, and a contract is agreed upon and signed. After this, we will be sharing lots of things.

Should our stewardship campaign be successful, and we come to an agreement with our candidate on the contract, the next major event will be candidate week. This will be May 14 through May 21. The candidate will give the sermon on Sunday the 14th and on Sunday the 21st. Mark your calendars now! During the week, there will be many planned activities involving various groups within the congregation, and probably a potluck event involving everyone. Everyone will have several chances to get to know our candidate. Much planning will go into this week, and a special *ad hoc* committee will be formed to do the planning. Following the service on Sunday, May 21, there will be a congregational meeting – with the candidate not present, and the congregation will be asked to vote on whether or not to ratify the Ministerial Search Committee's work and extend a call. The candidate will only accept the call if the vote to ratify is above 95%.

This is what it means to be "calling a minister," rather than having the Board hire a contracted or an interim minister. As you can see, there are big and exciting times ahead. Your Ministerial Search Committee is unanimous in our belief that we have found a wonderfully promising candidate.

Betsy Searight
Chair, Ministerial Search Committee

Your Ministerial Search Committee is Aaron Thomas, Betsy Erbaugh, Betsy Searight, Helene Gentile, Jack Miller, Jessica Dunn Safonof, Paul Utts

Hope is being able to see that there is light
despite all of the darkness. ~ Desmond Tutu

Board of Trustees
HIGHLIGHTS

March 2017

Due to the March Board meeting being postponed to March 23, there will be no Board Highlights in this month's newsletter.

— Judy Pereira, Secretary

UUCSJS Board of Trustees 2016-2017

Jim Gentile, *President (2018)*
Melissa Hutchison, *Vice President (2018)*
Karen York, *Treasurer (2018)*
Judy Pereira, *Secretary (2017)*
Charlie Roberts, *At Large (2017)*
Damon Smith, *At-Large (2018)*
Art Wexler, *At-Large (2017)*

year given is end of term, e.g. (2018) means thru 6/30/2018

The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING** of the UUCSJS Board of Trustees will be held on **Tuesday, April 11, 2017 at 6:30 pm** in the Lounge at the UU Center, 75 S. Pomona Rd., Galloway, New Jersey

March Madness

**What's the "Most UU Thing Ever"?
What will win the final bracket?**

Which is more UU –

Mary Oliver's poetry, or "Spirit of Life"?
Lighting the Chalice, or General Assembly?
Pete Seeger, or William Ellery Channing?

Check it out at

www.uuworld.org/sites/live-new.uuworld.org/files/marchmadness2017.pdf



Keep the Lights On

2017-2018 Annual

Stewardship campaign

Karen York, *Treasurer UUCSJS*



The last stewardship gathering will be Saturday, April 1, at 10 am for brunch hosted by Barbara and Jack Miller in their Petersburg home. Children are welcome and childcare will be provided. Please contact Barbara or Jack Miller directly.

We are making excellent progress in the campaign and together we have raised \$99,945 to support our programs next year with 13 pledging families increasing their contributions. So far 43% of our members have pledged, and we are on track to exceed last year's level of pledged support. We thank you for your generosity and support.

If you have not yet pledged, you may ask Karen York or Kathleen Hartnett for a pledge card or a member of the finance committee or stewardship committee will contact you. The wrap up for the stewardship campaign will be the Fellowship Dinner, a community shared meal, to be held on Saturday April 22, 2017. Save that date in your calendar!

Also, please sign up to indicate your eating preferences, and the item you will bring to the dinner. Sign-up sheets are on the Social Justice table.

Interweave is looking for you!

Interweave is our LGBTQ+ committee, and it's not just for members of those communities!

Allies are also more than welcome to our meetings, and we need everyone's help in order to pursue our goals of justice, equality, and community. Meetings are the third Sunday of the month after coffee hour.

Please contact Matt Honig for more details.

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Spring in Children's Religious Education

Our Coming of Age (COA) students (and our Director of Religious Education) will welcome in the month of April while attending a COA retreat at Murray Grove. This three-day event will enable our teens to focus on what is important to them, and give them time to formulate a credo, or belief statement. Credos are traditionally shared with the congregation at a Sunday Service, and we will be encouraging the group to share at our RE service on June 4, 2017.

In addition to our regularly scheduled Sunday classes this month, on April 16 the Children's RE Committee will host our annual Easter Egg Hunt and Celebration.

Our Music Director, Barbara Miller, will be joining our RE students for a bit of class time each Sunday in April to work on a song with the children that they will share with the congregation during the annual Fellowship Dinner on Saturday, April 22. Families are welcome to attend and enjoy this evening of fun and fellowship together.

In fellowship,
Heidi Jansch, UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

Remembering Martin Luther King

There will be a gathering in Atlantic City on Tuesday, April 4, from 6 to 8-ish pm, to mark the anniversary of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

UUCSJS has been invited to participate musically. Please help our choir create a big sound by joining us at this event. We will be singing *All Join Hands* and *Building Bridges*.

Recordings are available to help you learn the music on your own. See Barbara Miller for details.



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.

Annual Nursery-Grown Native Plant Sale

Native Plants: The Purchase That Keeps on Giving

Only two weeks left to order native plants from our Native Plant Sale. This year we have 20 shrubs, 8 trees, and 45 perennials to select from -- there's a native plant for everyone! Native plants make great gifts for a friend, a neighbor, a birth, a wedding, an anniversary, as a plant in memory of someone, or for Mother's Day! For an online order form, sale details, and other info on growing natives go to uucsjs.org/saturday-may-6-2017-native-plant-sale/.

You can also pick up a hard copy at the Social Justice Table. NOTE: ORDER DEADLINE IS APRIL 1, and plants are available on a first-come first-served basis. Plant sale pick-up hours are Friday, May 5, 4 to 6 pm and Saturday, May 6, 8 am to noon.

Camping in the Grove

Murray Grove's 2017 installment of Camping in the Grove will include five days of fabulous ol' fashioned camp fun with our healthy dose of Unitarian Universalist religious education and history. Our camp will be offered for children and youth entering 4th through 7th grade in the upcoming fall.

Our theme for 2017 is "Come Together." Throughout small and large group discussion, activities and worship, our campers will gain an understanding of where racism comes from and why it is so important that we all work against it.

This year's camp will take place July 23rd - 27th -- there is an early bird registration discount.

For registration and more details, visit murraygrove.org

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope. ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

Staff

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Board of Trustees 2016-17

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Damon Smith, Art Wexler, Karen York

Newsletter – Mariann Maene – newsletter@uucsjs.org

Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

April 2017

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