



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 20, Issue 3

March 2018

March 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.

<p>March 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lent and Stewardship: A Time of Anticipation <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i></p> <p>As we kickoff our season of stewardship, we enter into a time of preparation and anticipation of growth and renewal. What does it mean to anticipate? Does it mean waiting for something to happen, or working to shape the future? What can we do to shape the future we want to see at UUCSJS?</p>
<p>March 11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RISE UP !... A Message for My Granddaughter <i>Lay speaker Stephanie Garrett</i></p> <p>Women’s issues are nothing new. There have been gains in many areas, but systemic sexism continues. From Goddess to the present patriarchal system, now is the time to come into our own. We must rise up.</p>
<p>March 18</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">St. Patrick and Identity Politics <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i></p> <p>Each of us has many facets to our identity. We describe ourselves in terms of race, age, religion, heritage, politics, and many more. As members of this congregation, we subdivide even further, identifying as members of this committee or that team. The theme of this year’s stewardship campaign is “More Than the Sum of Our Parts,” and today we will examine how the roles each of us plays support the congregation in its own interdependent web.</p>
<p>March 25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Occupational Hazards of Being a Prophet <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i></p> <p>Unitarian Universalists have a long and noble history of prophetic speech and action, some of it covered in danger and glory, and some of it quiet and behind the scenes, uncelebrated and invisible. Not everyone is called to being a public prophet, but all are capable of prophetic work. This morning we will explore the ways each of us can be prophetic in our lives as we work collectively to change the world in which we live.</p>



More than the Sum of our Parts

Stewardship gatherings: throughout March

Fellowship Dinner: Saturday April 14

See page 5 for details

Margaret Circle ... Join us on Thursday, March 1 at 1 pm in the UU Center Library for our monthly gathering. Marsha Hannah will lead a discussion about reincarnation. Marsha writes, "You have heard the expression 'you only live once', but do you?" We will explore the topic of reincarnation and past lives. Nature recycles everything else, so wouldn't it make sense that your soul would be recycled, too? This will prove to be a lively conversation. As always, coffee and refreshments will be served following our sacred Joys & Concerns. Women friends and members of UUCSJS are warmly welcomed.

BOOK CLUB will be meeting on Friday, March 16 at 7 pm in the UU Center Library. We will be discussing **UNDERGROUND RAILROAD** by Colson Whitehead. A suspenseful tale of escape and pursuit, it combines elements of fantasy and the counterfactual with an unflinching, painfully truthful depiction of American slavery. Whitehead revisits the grotesque barbarities of our nation's history in the interest of our common stake in freedom and dignity. He has given us an electrifying narrative of the past, profoundly resonant with the present. Betsy Searight will be leading the discussion and everyone is welcome to attend. Contact Barb Morell for more information.

What were the results of our 'Giving Tree' in December?

14 pairs of women's socks	30 pairs of boy's socks
27 pairs of men's socks	54 pairs of girl's socks

Many thanks to all for being as giving to those who are less fortunate. Your donations were warmly received by volunteers at Eastern Service Workers in Pleasantville serving this community's poorest of the poor. We really did a good thing!

But... I'm not ready to die yet!

Some of you attended the workshop on February 11 led by Rev. Laura Randall, Legacy Campaign Director for the Unitarian Universalist Association, on a new program by the UUA to match legacy gifts. This "Wake Now Our Vision" Legacy Challenge is a special opportunity that qualifies our congregation to benefit *now* and *in the future* from your planned gifts.

If you make a legacy gift naming our congregation (in your will or by making beneficiary designations in your retirement plan or other financial accounts), and complete the "Wake Now Our Vision" pledge forms, this will qualify UUCSJS to receive a **match of 10% of the legacy gift** (up to \$10,000) in **2019** through a grant from the Shelter Rock UU Congregation.

As Rev. Randall cheekily explained, "You don't have to die first for UUCSJS to benefit!"

If you have any questions or want a copy of the pledge form and literature, see Karen York, Treasurer of UUCSJS.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH FAMILY PROMISE?

We now have more families to host! Come and meet them during our next hosting week, March 11 through 18.

We need volunteers to make meals, spend time with our families, sleep over, driving the van, and other tasks. Check the sign-up sheets at the back of the Sanctuary or contact Debbi Dagavarian or Barb Morell!

Our Spiritual Journeys: Many Paths Up Many Mountains

Our congregation has opportunities for Lay Speakers for our "Summer Worship Series." Because our minister, Rev. Dawn Fortune, currently serves us on a part-time basis, our pulpit will be shared with other speakers on ten consecutive Sundays from June 24 to August 26. We will try to use the theme "Many Paths Up Many Mountains." We'd like to get members to talk about their spiritual journeys and how those journeys have been affected by their time and participation in our faith.

Ideally, speakers would present a sermon anchored in one of our current ministries or volunteer activities such as Music, Choir, Men's Group, Book Club, Interweave, Religious Education, Margaret Circle, Family Promise, Circle Dinners, Racial Justice Task Force, LGBTQ Support Group, Social Justice, Greeters, Congregational Leadership, Membership, Kitchen, Road Clean-Up, Building and Grounds, Worship Team, etc. Inspiration comes from many sources if you take a moment to recognize it. Life in all its facets is a constant teacher. You can even draw from your own experiences outside of the congregation. Last summer, Margaret Circle produced an excellent service based upon Jane Addams. This spring, Shelee McIlvaine, Stephanie Garrett, Cynthia Grzywinski, Geri McCluskey, and Matt Honig will each be presenting a sermon.

So ask yourself what profound truth and lessons have been revealed to you by your participation in our ministries, volunteer work, or personal life. How can you share that with our congregation in a meaningful and inspirational 20-minute message? Are you ready to deepen your own spiritual life in that act of sharing?

If you would like to bounce an idea off someone, contact Rev. Fortune, our Worship Team Leader, Richard Grzywinski, or any member of our UUCSJS Worship Team.

UUCSJS MEMORIAL WOODLAND PATH

Mission Statement: Design a Memorial Woodland Path where UUCSJS families and friends may memorialize their loved ones and where all may seek solitude and quiet to reflect and meditate. The Memorial/Meditation Space should blend in with the landscape and provide a simple, natural, peaceful, and inspirational venue for those seeking comfort, solace, fellowship, or inspiration.



Members of the Memorial Path Committee first met eight years ago. A long time and many conversations have occurred since our initial Mission Statement was put into place, but I'm pleased to report that the Board approved the guidelines and we are ready to move on to the next phase. Later this spring congregation members will have the opportunity to purchase memorial plaques that will be placed along our peaceful path in the woods to memorialize deceased members and/or important people in member's lives.

If you haven't walked the looping path that begins past the children's play area, or sat on one of the benches in the meditation circle, I hope you might be able to take a walk or sit for a few minutes soon. A trifold which provides basic information about the Memorial Woodland Path and includes an interest/order form will be available shortly in the information display rack in the vestibule. Here are the details of the WMP guidelines:

Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial stones with plaques should represent connections to our congregation, paying tribute to either a past member of the congregation or some person important in the lives of a member of our congregation. • Individual stone memorials will be placed at intervals along the path at distances that will allow for quiet meditation. • Some family members might want to have multiple stone memorials in closer proximity to each other. • The path will allow for both individual memorials and family gatherings of memorials.
Memorials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in the process of purchasing memorial stones in bulk. The stones are colonial bluestone and are approximately 14" wide and 11" high and 2" thick. Once we have them delivered, we will let congregation members know and members may choose to purchase and reserve a stone or stones. • The \$50 purchase price of the stone(s) will help to defray the initial expenses of the Memorial Woodland Path. • If a member purchases a stone prior to needing to sign an agreement form, the cost will be deducted from the price of a future Memorial Agreement and the stone(s) may be placed in collaboration with a member of the Memorial Committee along the path or the stone may be labeled and stored till needed. • A full pallet of stones will be purchased so that matching stones will be available as requested for many years to come. • Our Memorial Woodland Path will also accommodate individual stones and memorials that differ from our standard plaque and stone. These memorials will need to meet with the approval of the Memorial Committee and will be placed along the loop of the Memorial Path leading directly from the back deck. • The Memorial Path Committee will oversee mapping the locations of Memorial Stones and reserve stones. The committee will insure that locations for all new memorials are added to the master Memorial Woodland Path Map.
Plaques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The engraved plaques will be 10" wide by 7" high. • Families will have a choice of either a bronze or aluminum plaque. The background color in both of the plaques will be darkened to allow the engraving to stand out. • Families may choose what they would like to have engraved on the memorial plaque in a maximum of three lines. A limit of three lines has been set to insure that the memorials be simple and egalitarian. • Our Memorial Woodland Path will also accommodate standard Veteran's plaques which might be larger and different than those specified above.
Individual Memorial Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members who want to have a stone and engraved plaque placed along the Memorial Path will be asked to sign a Memorial Path Agreement. • The cost of the Memorial Agreement will include the stone, a concrete mounting for the stone, installation of the stone and plaque, an engraved bronze or aluminum plaque and future upkeep of the Memorial Woodland Path. • The cost for the Memorial Agreement is \$700 for the bronze plaque and package or \$550 for the aluminum plaque and package. • The price may go up over time as the cost of metal increases. • A separate UUCSJS account will keep track of the monies collected for Memorial Agreements and for the reserve stones, as well as expenditures over time.

If you have any questions, we'd be happy to answer them. Please see me or another member of the Memorial Path Committee: Paul Utts, Helen Utts, Betsy Searight, Marsha Hannah, Richard Grzywinski, or Angela Wexler.

-- Jesse Connor

Stories in Religious Education

Our youngest Religious Education class has been utilizing the SpiritPlay program, a storytelling religious education program. During each class, the storyteller (Karen York) relates a story while presenting visual cues (small objects or pictures) to the children as a way to help them remember the story. Although a few of the SpiritPlay stories are available to be purchased pre-assembled, the majority of the stories for the program require pieces to be collected or created. Karen and I compile the materials for these stories throughout the year, and we have now created a substantial collection of stories.

Following each storytelling, the children are encouraged to interpret the story through art expression or revisit past stories. Included in the SpiritPlay program are stories from many different faith traditions, creative expressions of our Unitarian Universalist principles (introduced as “promises”) and tales of our UU ancestors and social justice heroes. This winter, some the stories Karen has presented include The Good Samaritan, Our Theological UU Home, The Story of Ruby Bridges, The Pebble and the Crystal, The Labyrinth (told with our resident Labyrinth expert, Margaret Rea) and Follow the Drinking Gourd.

At the end of February, our Web of Existence class welcomed Arlene Yacka for a discussion on aging. Arlene, who holds the title of our congregation's oldest member, graciously accepted the invitation to share stories of her experiences with our 2-5th graders.

Many thanks to Arlene and Margaret for sharing their time and talents with our youth! If you would like to spend a Sunday with our young UUs by assisting in one of our classes and take part in the story that is the UUCSJS RE Program, feel free to contact me at sjsdre@gmail.com.

In fellowship,
Heidi J Jansch
UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

Circle Dinners

Sign ups for the March 24 dinner are now available through March 4. With each Circle Dinner you get to meet and get to know more folks in the congregation. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity. Sign up sheets are on the table at the rear of the sanctuary.

“Life moves fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while you could miss it.” – Ferris Bueller



UUCSJS NATIVE PLANT SALE

by Jesse Connor

As many of you know by now, I am unable to run our Annual Native Plant sale this spring due to a host of other commitments and family obligations. I have enjoyed organizing the sale in past years, despite the time it required, and am especially proud of the amazing order forms that Judy Pereira so expertly crafted year after year. I want to thank the many volunteers who devoted countless hours to our joint effort of fundraising for UUCSJS and providing people in southern New Jersey with the opportunity to purchase hard-to-get native perennials, grasses, shrubs, and trees. We can all be proud that our congregation has added greatly to the diversity and ecological services of our local landscapes.

If you are looking for native plants this spring, or know of anyone who might be, please check out the nursery that supplied many of our offerings, Clemenson Farms: <http://www.clemensonfarmsnativenursery.com/>. They are a wholesale native plant nursery in Estell Manor and open their nursery for retail sales only three times a year: the first this year will be Saturday, May 12, from 10 am to 2 pm. Also, this year they are following our idea of offering native plant collections which they will make available online as a presale (deadline for ordering is March 31).

Are you happy to see me?

If you are wondering how you can deepen your loving connection to the people you have come to care about at UUCSJS, there are many ways to do this. As part of our stewardship campaign we will be hosting a **Volunteer Fair**. Stay tuned for further details!

More than the Sum of our Parts

2018-2019 Annual Stewardship campaign

Karen York, Treasurer UUCSJS



The month of March marks the beginning of our Stewardship Campaign as we look ahead to plan our budget for the next programming year which begins in July 2018. It is a time to reflect back on the events and accomplishments of the year so far, and to consider the possibilities for the year ahead.

This year we have enjoyed a ministerial transition from Interim ministry to the first six months of called ministry (part-time) with Rev. Dawn Fortune. We have continued our work with racial justice with a “Rally to Resist White Supremacy” under Rev. Dawn’s leadership in August in response to the white supremacist and fascist violence in Charlottesville, Virginia. Members of the congregation have helped to organize our hosting of public events on “End of Life Compassionate Choices” and the “Opioid Crisis,” meetings of the South Jersey Humanists and League of Women Voters, and celebrations of Pagan rituals in our building. We have hosted some outside groups including the local Citizens’ Climate Lobby and the Stockton Vegan club. We have participated in direct service to the community through our work with Family Promise of Atlantic County, and the Men’s group continues to assist in the soup kitchen with Asbury United Methodist Church in Atlantic City one Saturday a month. We have reestablished our Committee on Ministry to work with Rev. Fortune, held congregational workshops on “Creating Radical Culture Shift” with Alex Kapitan and “Legacy Giving” with Rev. Laura Randall of the UUA, and begun organizing for a strategic planning process to help us articulate our aspirations and goals for the future of the congregation. *Whew!*

In our “**More than the Sum of our Parts**” stewardship campaign, we will be holding small group gatherings, which will be an opportunity for some social time and time for conversations about your hopes and dreams for the congregation in the years ahead. **Each member should choose one small group event to attend.** Sign-up sheets will be available after services, or you can email or call the office to add your name to the guest list for any event. We will also be requesting financial commitments (pledges) to support next year’s programs at these events. More information about stewardship and supporting the congregation with your time, talent and treasure will be provided during the month of March through the beginning of April. **On Saturday, April 14** the whole congregation will be invited to celebrate our progress at the **Fellowship Dinner** with a community meal.

- Friday March 9 hosted by Jim and Helene Gentile in their Galloway home.
- Saturday, March 10 6:00 pm wine and cheese hosted by Helen & Paul Utts in their Northfield home.
- Sunday March 18 after services at the UU Center, hosted by Melissa Hutchison.
- Saturday, March 24 hosted by Barbara and Jack Miller in their Petersburg home.

Please make plans to attend one of the small **group gatherings in March** and the **Fellowship Dinner on Saturday, April 14**. We look forward to some social time and having conversations about your hopes and dreams for the year ahead!



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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