



# NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the  
South Jersey Shore

Volume 20, Issue 11

November 2018

## 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.

<b>November 4</b> <i>Daylight Savings ends</i>	<b>Fall Back or Spring Forward?</b> <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> Daylight Savings Time ends on this day and we set our clocks back an hour. It is the Sunday before the mid-term elections. In towns and states all across the United States, people are preparing to go to the polls. Will our nation fall back, or spring forward on voting day?
<b>November 11</b>	<b>What Have We Learned?</b> <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> I'm not sure I expected that! As UUs, we are committed to the democratic process in our congregations and in our larger world. What lessons can we find in the results of this week's elections, and what is our vision for the future?
<b>November 18</b>	<b>Gratitude As a Spiritual Practice</b> <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> It can be a challenge some days to find goodness in the world. What happens when we intentionally seek and name the good in our lives each day?
<b>November 25</b>	<b>Uncertainty... or Maybe Not</b> <i>Lay speakers Richard Grzywinski and Jack Miller</i> Many of us are uncertain as to how comfortable we are with uncertainty. We're not sure this matters, but it might.



## 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SERVICE AUCTION

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2018

### DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM

## Sangha in the Sanctuary

Saturday, November 3, 2018

10 am - 12



*You need not be a "Buddhist" or have any experience in meditation to enjoy and benefit from our meetings!*

The South Jersey Secular Buddhist Sangha will meet on Saturday, November 3 at 10 am in the sanctuary. Both curious newcomers and experienced practitioners are warmly welcomed. There will be sitting meditation, walking meditation, and a time for sharing our experiences in the practice. We shall continue looking into the Buddha's teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, which is his prescription for unwinding our suffering. Those who are curious or newcomers are welcome!



### **Imagine having inadequate shoes...**

Please remember to drop off your unwanted gently worn **SHOES OF ALL TYPES** into the lime green bin under the coat rack on Sundays **any time of the year**. Less fortunate folks can sure use them!!!

**8<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Thanksgiving Dinner**  
UU Center Sanctuary  
Thursday, November 22,  
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.

**Margaret Circle** meets Thursday, November 1 at 1 pm. We will begin with Joys and Concerns and light refreshments.

Recently Betsy Searight heard an interesting interview on NPR with Steven Johnson, talking about his recent book *Farsighted: How We Make the Decisions That Matter the Most*. It is about decision making, both personal and societal, and how we can learn to improve our ability to make good decisions. The interview was riveting. Betsy has read the book, and is prepared to share some interesting points from it.

We will then practice making a decision by remaking the decision that this congregation made 16 years ago when we purchased the land that our building sits on. We can be influenced by the way things have turned out in deciding our vote. This exercise should help us identify the aspects of good decision making as well as give us a sense of our congregational history.

**BOOK CLUB** will meet Friday, November 16 in the UU library at 7 pm. *SING, UNBURIED, SING* is Jesmyn Ward's historic second National Book Award-winner. It's "perfectly poised for the moment" (*The New York Times*): an intimate portrait of three generations of a family and an epic tale of hope and struggle. "Ward's writing throbs with life, grief, and love... this book is the kind that makes you ache to return to it." Jesse Connor will be leading the discussion and all are welcome to attend. Questions to Barb Morell.

### **Last Chance to "Talk About Race"**

Of course it's not your last chance to talk about race at all! But it IS the last time we will be meeting to talk about Ijeoma Oluo's critically acclaimed bestseller ***So You Want to Talk About Race***.

**Sunday, November 18** will be our last discussion, facilitated by the Racial Justice Task Force. Gather in the Sanctuary at noon and bring a lunch. The presentation/ discussion will start at 12:15 pm. See Betsy Erbaugh or Michael Cluff if you have any questions.

*Pssst! You don't have to have read the book!*

**So you  
want  
to talk  
about  
race**

**Ijeoma Oluo**

**Rev. Dawn Fortune**  
**609.289.5782**

## On Politics and the Pulpit

It is the season of elections, shouty political advertisements, and extreme partisan division.

As Unitarian Universalists, our values call us to engage in social justice work and the democratic process, within and beyond our congregations.

Which leads to sometimes fiery sermons about political issues of the day and discomfort about the whole process.

In UU congregations around the United States, conversations take place at this time of year about what is the appropriate role of the minister when it comes to election issues. What is required of a minister with a charge of prophetic speech? What limits are there to what a minister can say from the pulpit? Is partisanship appropriate? Why can't church simply be a place where we can get away from all that?

First, let me say that you are not alone in having these thoughts and discussions. My colleagues in congregations all over report the same conversations happening in their congregations.

We are a faith rooted deeply in the understanding that all people have inherent worth and dignity, and in the understanding that it is our obligation as human beings to advocate for those who are marginalized and oppressed. That is foundational to who we are as a people and a faith.

When I preach about political issues, I preach about how our values align – or don't align – with the realities of our political world. I talk about what is wrong with the situation, and ask us to consider what we might do to remedy injustice.

I will never tell you how to vote on any candidate or any issue. But I will tell you what our values support and what they oppose, and I will define – sometimes in very stark terms – what it means when we act or vote in a particular way.

Ministers have been historically cast in the role of preacher/teacher/prophet. We preach about morality and values and justice, we teach from the pulpit, the classroom, and the public square, and we are called to prophetic speech. Prophets through the ages have acted as the voice of the people appealing to a deity, often begging mercy; they have acted as the voice of the deity, reminding the people of the rules and covenant; and they have acted as the truth-tellers to



the powerful and the meek alike, encouraging moral behavior, and exposing that which is wrong.

In the United States, churches have tax-exempt status, and as a condition of that status, we must not advocate for a particular candidate or a particular vote on a ballot issue. You will never hear me do those things. But I will state very clearly what a vote for one or the other means in terms of our values as Unitarian Universalists.

With regards to partisanship, again I base my sermons on our values. If one party or another aligns more truly with the values we espouse, then so be it. I will point that out, just as I will point out when a party or candidate behaves in ways that are in opposition to our values.

Finally, to the question of refuge from the fray: church is sometimes viewed as a place to seek shelter from the madness and chaos of the secular world. And yet, it would be a violation of my ministry to not address the issues affecting our community in order not to upset people. I do what I can to be gentle, but understand please that church is not a spa where one goes to relax and get recharged. It is a gym, where we go to support each other and to build muscle for the work that is ours to do in this world. We need to be strong in both spirit and mind to engage with the injustice we seek to dismantle. That's why we come to church: to grow in community and to strengthen our ability to live out our values in the world.

In just over a week, the election will be over and we will have to deal with whatever the results are of this semiannual civic exercise. I will be available to talk if you need to in the week leading up to the election and in the weeks after it.

May we all be led by our values in this month and all that follow it.

Blessings,  
Dawn



Rev. Dawn's Twitter handle is  
**@queerpreacher**

You can tweet about UUCSJS  
using the hashtag **#uucsjs**

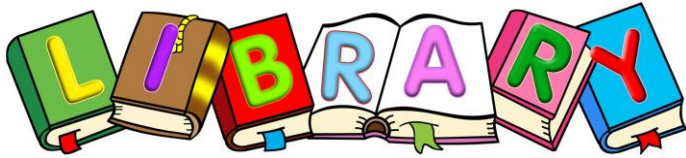
## Worship Associate Training Saturday, November 3, 10 am

Are you a current Worship Associate (formerly known as Lay Leader)? Would you like to try serving in this role?

Rev Dawn will hold a Worship Associate (WA) Training for anyone who wishes to learn about this role or refresh their skills. All current Worship Associates are encouraged to attend, too.



## CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



### RE Lending Library Now Open

If you have been downstairs in the Lounge area recently you may have noticed some changes. We have a new RE Lending Library!

Over the last few months, a great collection of books have been sorted, cataloged, organized, and labeled. More than 450 books are available for you to read and take home with you. There are books on Unitarian Universalism, UU parenting, world religions, LGBTQ stories and resources, social justice, books for teens, nature, meditation, and other wonderful and inspiring stories for reading and sharing.

The library card is a passport to wonders and miracles, glimpses into other lives, religions, experiences, the hopes and dreams and strivings of ALL human beings, and it is this passport that opens our eyes and hearts to the world beyond our front doors, that is one of our best hopes against tyranny, xenophobia, hopelessness, despair, anarchy, and ignorance.

~ Libba Bray (New York Times Bestselling Author)

You can view the online catalog (it is alphabetical, and most show images of the covers in addition to their titles) at <https://jessdunnsaf.libib.com/>, then come on down and learn something new, share a great story, increase your awareness, and live out our values.

The library is still growing. If you have book recommendations or more topics you would like to see on the shelves, please email me. Hope to see you downstairs reading soon!

In fellowship,  
Jessica Dunn Safonof  
UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

## ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Adult Religious Education committee is looking for people who have an interest in sharing their knowledge, talents, or skills with the UUCSJS community.

Classes, workshops or offerings are needed for the following time frames throughout the year:

Winter (Jan/Feb/Mar)

Spring (April/May/June)

Fall (Sept/Oct/Nov)

Offerings can be as simple as a two (or more) hour one-time offering (think: winter stew cooking class) or as lengthy as a once a week multi-week offering (think: diving into Shakespeare), as well as any length of time in between.

Adult religious education does not have to be religious in nature! The only real necessity is a desire by the offerer to share their gifts and a desire of some members of the community to enjoy partaking in that sharing process.

Have something special you'd like to share with your fellow UUs? Drop an email to Erica Onofrio or catch her after service and request an application and get the ball rolling towards sharing your uniqueness with the crew.

Deadline for the Winter session submission of application - Sunday, December 9.

### Richard Schurig asks for your help...

For the next few weeks I am looking for a few dedicated folks to help out in the kitchen. Ray is very sick right now and I am on a day to day schedule with this and also still working full time. Just come in by about 9:30 am and get the coffee and tea pots turned on and brewing, put the bagel fixins' on the tray, set items out, and clean up afterwards. Someone can text me with what we are running short of so on the days when I can't stay for clean up the shopping can get done for the following week(s). Anyone interested can **text** me, this is the best way to reach me.

*Be a coffee hero!*





GET THEE TO THE  
UUCSJS  
SERVICE  
AUCTION  
AND BRING THY  
CHECKBOOK!



SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 10, 2018

UU Center

Doors Open 6:30 pm, Bidding Starts 7:00 pm

## COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY IS NOT JUST FOR THE MINISTER

The Committee on Ministry may be the most misunderstood committee that a congregation has. Is it an advocate for the minister -- a kind of ministerial cheerleading squad? Or does it represent the congregation's interests? Beyond that, does it just respond to crises or is it supposed to meet regularly? Is it responsible only for the ministry provided by the called ministers or for the whole ministry of the congregation?

In her book, *Churchworks: A Well-Body Book for Congregations* (Skinner House, 1999), Rev. Anne Heller, district executive of the Pacific Northwest District, writes: "Committees on Ministry are designed to track the heartbeat of ministry within a congregation; how the members... take care of themselves and each other, how the lay ministerial leadership serves a congregation; and how the called minister serves the congregation. It seeks to understand, assess, support, and advocate for robust ministry throughout the context of congregational life."

"The idea behind a COM," says Rev. Tracey Robinson-Harris, the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA's) director of congregational services, "is to move away from putting sole responsibility (or blame) on the minister for the ministry of the congregation of which the minister is a part."

Finding the right people is important -- people with vision, who have the confidence of the congregation, who can leave personal biases at the door, who can work in a confidential but not secretive manner. Terms should be staggered, and the committee should meet monthly with a regular agenda so that each aspect of the ministerial-congregational relationship is reviewed.

By Donald E. Skinner

See [www.uua.org/interconnections/44219.shtml](http://www.uua.org/interconnections/44219.shtml) for more.

# Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

## Staff

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## Board of Trustees 2018-19

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Newsletter – Mariann Maene – newsletter@uucsjs.org

**Visit us on the Web: [www.uucsjs.org](http://www.uucsjs.org)**

**November 2018**

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