



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 21, Issue 1

January 2019

January 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.

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| January 6 | Book of Questions <i>Led by Theresa McReynolds and Mariann Maene</i> Come join us for an informal service where we ponder the answers to questions, both lighthearted and profound. |
| January 13 | New Beginnings/Resolutions <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> It's been almost two weeks since New Year's Day. How are those resolutions coming? Did you join a gym? Start a diet? Begin a new spiritual practice? How do we set goals and work toward them, allowing room for failure and a return to the struggle? Join us as we contemplate resolutions and what they mean in our lives. |
| January 20 | Love and Revolution <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> Two years ago, the 45 th President was sworn into office on this day. On January 19, a Woman's March celebrating Fannie Lou Hamer took place in Atlantic City. On Monday, the nation will celebrate the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King. If justice is what love looks like in the world, what is it that love calls us to do in our age? |
| January 27 | Imbolc <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> Halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, Imbolc marks the beginning of the spring season. It is the Gaelic festival of Brigid, a pre-Christian fertility goddess, later colonized by Rome into St. Brigid, guardian of livestock and homes. Join us as we mark the steady march of seasons and celebrate the coming spring. |

Souper Bowl Sunday Soup Sale

February 3, 2019

See page 5 for details

Circle Dinners 2019

Circle dinners for 2019 are upon us. For those who are new to the congregation, here is how they work. Sign up, either as part of a couple, or as an individual. You will be assigned to a group of eight, and each will be given a course to provide. The dinner will be held at the home of someone in the group, or at the UU Center if a home is not available. The purpose is to enjoy conversation and fun with others, especially those who you do not know so well. This is an excellent way of broadening your friendship base within the congregation. There will be four of these dinners throughout the winter and spring, all on the third Saturday of the month.

The first dinner in 2019 will be February 16.

Signups will begin this Sunday and extend through most of January. There will be more information about them on the signup table. This year, signups will be for one dinner at a time.

Sangha in the Sanctuary

First Saturday of each month



Dennis Bohn has recovered from ankle surgery! Thus the First Saturday of the Month Sangha in the UU Center will resume!

BOOK CLUB will meet on Friday, January 18 at 7 pm in the UU Center library. The selection is **THE STRANGER IN THE WOODS: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit** by *Michael Finkel*. This is the unbelievable but true story of Christopher Knight, who in 1986 decided to go into the Maine woods and live alone in the forest. He wasn't discovered until 2013, when he was caught stealing food from nearby cabins. Discussion will be led by Barbara Miller and all are welcome to attend. Questions? Seek out Barb Morell.

GOT YOUR WINTER BOOTS?

Some people don't have shoes appropriate to the season.



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 would appreciate them!!!

Thinking Ahead ... to Mission, Ministry, and Meaning

We have begun the planning for our annual stewardship campaign for 2019. Stewardship is a time to think about what is important to us, both individually and as a gathered community. The theme this year will be "**Mission, Ministry and Meaning**". The main campaign will run from early March through the beginning of April. On Saturday **April 13** the whole congregation will be invited to celebrate our progress at the **Fellowship Dinner** with a planned shared community meal.

Walk Together

Khaleem Shabazz, president of the Atlantic City Branch of NAACP and long-time friend of our congregation, sends a special invitation to our congregation to participate in two upcoming events in Atlantic City. The **Women's March** on



Saturday, January 19, 10 am to 1 pm at Kennedy Plaza, Boardwalk & Mississippi Ave, will honor the life of Civil Rights worker **Fannie Lou Hamer**, and features guest speaker Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver.

Also, on MLK Day, Monday, January 21 at 10:45 am, there will be a walk beginning at MLK School Complex, 1700 Marmora Ave. in Atlantic City. It will conclude with a program at 12 noon at St. James AME Church at New York and Arctic Ave. If you would like to walk together at either event or to carpool, please contact Barbara Miller.

CALL for PHOTOS

The Membership committee is revising the **Member Photo Directory** and we need a photo of *you*!

1. Stop by the tall table in the lobby to see the last photo directory and decide if it's time for a new picture.
2. *If yes*, send new photo by email to Judy Pereira.
3. *If yes* and you don't have one handy, we will take your picture -- just ask Judy P.
4. **Deadline:** Sunday, February 10, 2019

Rev. Dawn Fortune

609.289.5782



Gentle People,

As I write this, the Winter Solstice Singing Ritual is concluded, and I am at home, snuggled in with a small dog and a couple of kittens.

It seems like this is an appropriate time to reflect on the past year and to look forward into 2019.

Lots of things happened in 2018: the winter Olympics, Parkland High School shooting, indictments and guilty pleas for many of the President's campaign staff and associates. The UU Congregation of the South Jersey Shore held its first ever 100% successful stewardship campaign, longtime Director of Religious Education Heidi Jannsch retired and former board secretary Jessica Dunn-Sofanof took over that role. We added nearly a dozen new members in this calendar year, and we lost the larger than life presence of Richard Grzywinski.

It's been a busy year.

We have no clear idea what 2019 will offer, although there are some pretty easy guesses. There will be another Women's March on the weekend of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. There will be more indictments and guilty pleas in the Mueller investigation. High level government officials may well be indicted, or resign, or both. There will be more mass shootings. There will be more extrajudicial police killings of unarmed black men. There will be good justice work done by the members of this congregation. We can expect some good laws to be passed by both Congress and by the state legislative body, and probably some real stinkers. Recreational use or marijuana will become legal in New Jersey sometime this summer (I predict a great opportunity for a church bake sale!) and traffic to the beach will be packed. Our rainbow flag may well be stolen or vandalized again. And we will put it back up again. There will be beautiful sunrises over the water, and sunsets that are glorious. The birds will migrate roughly on schedule as they always do, and we will go on.

The new year is a time to take stock of where we've been and where we want to go. What is it we want from ourselves in the coming year? Individually, and as a congregation? I'm not talking about the "I'm going to join a gym, lose 30 pounds and eat salads" kind of goals, but the kind that focus more on systemic issues. How am I treating myself? Do I have a good balance of work and rest? Do I have the quantity and quality of social interaction that I want? Do I have an outlet for creative expression that satisfies me? Do I have a spiritual practice that deepens my life in a meaningful way? Am I engaged in my community?

Can I imagine those things? Want do I want those things to look like?

And we can ask those same things about our life as a congregation:

How are we treating the congregation? Are we supporting programs with our energy, or is our relationship more transactional?

Do we have a good balance of work and rest? Does the congregation do as much work (social justice, environmental, political, etc.) as we do fun social events?

Does the congregation have a way to express itself and the values we stand for? What would that look like?

Does the congregation have a spiritual practice that deepens the lives of those who participate here? Do we provide enough opportunities for different kinds of spiritual practice, and if not, how might we make that happen?

Are we engaged in the community as a congregational whole? Do we show up places as a group to participate in events? Do the people in our community know who we are and are they glad to see us when we show up?

These are all questions I consider each year, as well as thinking about how those things might become realities. In a congregation, collective action must happen through the will and energy of the collective. The minister can lead, but only so much. If the will is there, and the congregation believes in a thing, then it will happen. If it is the pet project of the minister, but there is insufficient interest, then it won't.

So what is it you'd like this congregation to be and do in the coming year?

I will be out of the office for a couple of weeks, returning January 9. Until then, I encourage you to consider these thoughts and ideas, and I look forward to hearing from you when I return.

Blessings of the season to all,

Rev. Dawn Fortune



Rev. Dawn's Twitter handle is
@queerpreacher
You can tweet about UUCSJS
using the hashtag **#uucsjs**

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

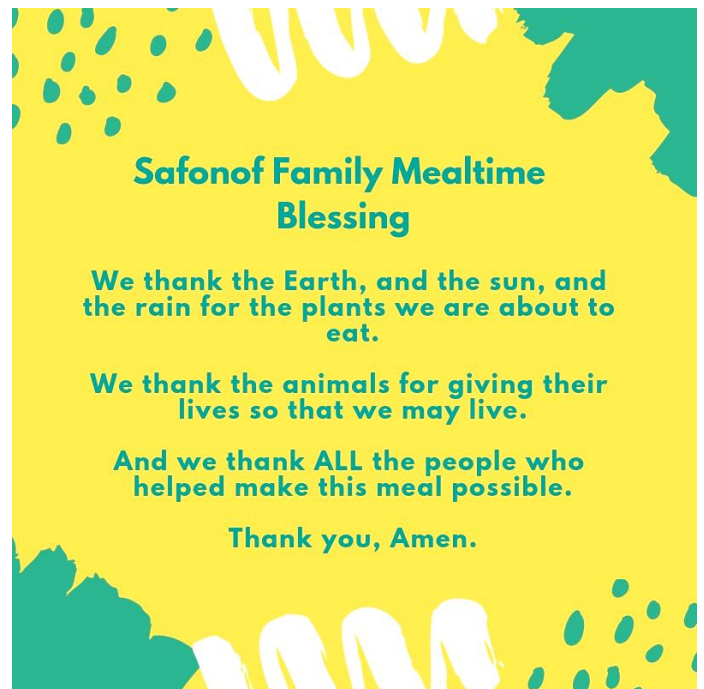
Traditions and Faith

With the winter holidays just behind us, I have been thinking a lot about traditions. Our family has a number of wonderful holiday traditions this time of year. From decorating a snow tree for wild animals on Winter Solstice, to celebrating the 12 nights of Yule, to reading 'Twas the Night Before Christmas before heading off to bed on Christmas Eve. Traditions help make this time of year special and connect us to each other, our past, and our faith. I am sure many of you also have wonderful holiday traditions that connect you as a family with each other and your faith. Do you also have everyday traditions that connect you with your faith and Unitarian Universalist values? Growing up, our family said grace before meals. It was a daily reminder of our faith and values. As a UU, I still appreciate and value the idea of giving thanks for my meals and still need a daily connection to my UU faith. So how do we find that daily connection? How do we take our faith home with us each week? What traditions can we pass on to our children that will connect them daily to their UU faith?

In the next few newsletters I will have some tips and ideas on bringing faith home. This month, I would like to offer you the idea of a blessing, a meditation, a moment of thanks to offer before eating a meal. This daily tradition can be a way to share our faith and values with your family. While there is not one saying all UU's share, the UUA worship web (<https://www.uua.org/worship/words>) offers a search to help you find words that may be meaningful to you and your family. Or, have a family discussion, see what principles you want to highlight in

your blessing, do a little internet searching, and make your own! Write your words down, maybe hang them somewhere in your kitchen. Say your blessing at each meal to create a meaningful daily faith tradition for your family.

For some inspiration, here is the blessing our family created:



In Fellowship,
Jessica Dunn Safonof
Director of Religious Education

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Sex, Love, & Relationships in the 21st Century

In the age of dating apps, hook-up culture, and online pornography, much has changed about how we interact and relate to each other. However, much remains unchanged, even in a very digital world.

Rev. Dawn Fortune will present a three-session workshop that will engage participants in the exploration of their experiences of sex, love, and relationships and how our values inform our attitudes towards intimacy and sexuality and factor into our decisions.

Thursdays from 7-9 pm
January 17 -- January 24 -- February 7

Participants must be 18 or older and must be willing to commit to attend all three sessions. Please email Rev. Dawn (minister@uucsjs.org) to register. Class size is limited so register today!

Souper Bowl Sunday Soup Sale

February 3, 2019

This year, we are pouring our fundraising efforts into **Allies in Caring**, a “culturally responsive mental health” center that addresses health and societal issues “caused by racial and ethnic disparities in mental health care by emphasizing language-accessible and culturally affirming counseling, education, and community advocacy for underserved communities.” They serve “diverse populations in South Jersey, including Spanish-speaking families, Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, and people with developmental disabilities.”

Allies in Caring was founded by UUCSJS member Ivette Guillermo-MacGahee, who also serves as its Executive Director. This February 3rd, our “Souper Bowl” Sunday Soup Sale will raise funds for **Allies in Caring**.

We urge you to pick up containers in the UU Center foyer in which to package your soup, and label them accordingly: Vegetarian, Vegan, Gluten-Free, Meat. Then, on February 3, bring your filled soup containers and buy soups that others have made!



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

January 2019

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