



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 21, Issue 2

February 2019

February 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.

February 3	Where the Road Leads <i>Guest speaker Patricia Hall Infante</i> As institutions grapple with the shifting sands of the 21st century and the constant headwind of change, congregations face questions of relevance and sustainability in the community and the broader world. Strategic conversations are an important first step for discerning, in the words of Frederick Buechner, “where your greatest joy meets the world’s greatest need.” Patricia Hall Infante of the Central East Region of the UUA will share thoughts on how to map a path forward that is both strategic and wholehearted.
February 10	Sex and Church: Saint Valentine revisited <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> From Lupercalia, to a martyred Christian saint, to Chaucer to Hallmark and boxed chocolates, humans have found a way to celebrate romantic and sexual love, even in some of the most creative and sometimes bizarre ways. Join us as we consider the role sexuality has played in the evolution of religion and theology.
February 17	Question Box Sermon <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> <i>Rev. Fortune will answer your questions submitted to the question box in the foyer at church -- or you can submit them to minister@uucsjs.org and put “QUESTION BOX SERMON” in the subject line.</i> Ever wonder why worship is organized the way it is? Where did our exceedingly long name come from? How can someone be atheist and a religious leader? <i>Write your questions down and submit them by February 10, and Rev. Fortune will answer as many of them as possible in the space of the worship hour.</i>
February 24	Looking Ahead <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> It has been said that we manage life or it can manage us – it’s all a matter of planning. Certainly no one can plan for every contingency, but it behooves anyone – and any organization – to have an idea of where they want to go and how they plan to get there. On February 23, UUA Congregational Life Staff Pat Infante will discuss with us our plans for the future of UUCSJS. Sunday’s service will be a reflection on that discussion and consider some of the options before us. Come join!

**Souper Bowl
Sunday Soup Sale!**
February 3, 2019

Long Term Planning Workshop
Saturday, Feb 23, 2019

See page 5

Circle Dinners 2019

First date: Saturday, February 16

♥ *an excellent way of broadening your friendships within the congregation*

What are Circle dinners? 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.

There will be four of these dinners throughout the winter and spring, all on the third Saturday of the month. *You can also sign up as a "alternate" and will be contacted if someone previously scheduled can't make it.*



Sangha in the Sanctuary

The UUCSJS Buddhist sangha will gather on Saturday, February 2, at 10 am in the sanctuary for sitting meditation, walking meditation, a Dharma talk and Dharma Sharing. Newcomers are warmly welcomed.

BOOK CLUB will meet at 7 pm on Friday, February 15 in the UU Center library. **LITTLE FIRES EVERYWHERE** by Celeste Ng is the February selection. Celeste Ng presents a story of the past in order to examine relevant themes of the present day – such as race, class, identity, and a sense of belonging. This tale of family and motherhood, which is set in the author's hometown of Shaker Heights, Ohio, is told through an omniscient point of view. Reader's Choice as Best Fiction of 2017 by 39,077 Goodreads members. *Did you know it is being adapted as a series for Hulu?* Barbara Morell will lead the discussion and all are welcome to attend.

MARGARET CIRCLE will meet on Thursday, Feb. 7, at 1 pm in the UU Center Library. We will begin with joys and concerns, followed by light refreshments. In celebration of Black History Month, Shelee McIlvaine will present The Black History Trivia game! Bring your knowledge and your awe & wonder as we learn and celebrate together.

SHOES! SHOES! everywhere, SHOES!

The lime green shoe bin in the vestibule has been retired! But still bring in your foot wear along with other warm weather donations (*we are now collecting for spring and summer!*) which will bring much relief to war-torn Syrian displaced people via **Narenj Tree Foundation**. Please see Colby or Michael Cluff, SJ Humanists for more info.

Visit their Facebook page at
www.facebook.com/narenjtree/.

MEMBERSHIP Highlights

• **New Members.** UUCSJS welcomed **nine (9) new members** in November and December. They all attended two orientation sessions and signaled their commitment to membership. Your continuing interest in getting to know our newcomers and including them in the work (and fun) of the congregation is appreciated! Short biographies can be found in the lobby and attached to the Midweek Announcements (1/10/19).

• **Annual UUA Certification.** Every January the Membership committee reviews member status and initiates contact with folks who have been inactive to ascertain whether they now regard themselves as "Friend" of the congregation rather than "Member," contributing meaningfully of time, talent, and treasure. Moving five (5) names off the membership roll, **UUCSJS membership now stands at 111** (as of 1/31/19).

This review is done in advance of official re-certification each February with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). We want the membership roll to reflect reality then, because UUCSJS pays a stipulated "Fair Share" amount per member to the UUA (calculated as a percentage of operating expenditures).

• **Member Photo Directory.** Membership would like to produce a new photo directory (the last edition is dated April 2015). Therefore, we need to ask whether you want to: **1) keep your existing photo, 2) send us a new photo, or 3) arrange to have a new picture taken.** Please see Judy Pereira to indicate your choice by Sun., February 10!

• **New Member Orientation.** Rev. Dawn Fortune together with Membership set these dates for orientation sessions: **Newcomer Welcoming Brunch**, Sun., May 19, 11:30 AM; **Orientation II**, Sat., June 1, 10 AM; and **New Member Signing**, Sun., June 2 during Sunday service.

• **Membership.** Interested in serving on the Membership committee (*or becoming a member*)? Talk to Betsy Searight or Judy Pereira any time! Also on the committee are Marylou DeMaria Berhang, Debbi Dagavarian, Diane Dreby, Janet Longo, and Marie Taylor.

The **NEXT MEETING** of the Membership Committee will be held **Sunday, February 10, 2019 at 11:30 AM** in a downstairs classroom.

CALL for PHOTOS

We are revising the **Member Photo Directory!**

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 P.
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**



FLOWER CHILDREN

Even during the winter months our chalice table calls your name to bring forth flowers! See Colby.

Rev. Dawn Fortune
609.289.5782



Greetings, Gentle People.

I hope this finds you warm and well on this side of the busy holiday season. The weeks between the Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox seem to stretch longer than those in any other part of the calendar. The air is cold, the world is painted in shades of gray and brown, and we long to see the first crocus poke its tender petals into the air from the cold earth.

As a minister, my first concern is for the spiritual health of the people in the congregation I serve. These long, cold weeks can grind upon a person's spirit. The days are getting longer, yes, but the temperature is still cold, preventing many from getting outside to absorb their daily dose of vitamin D from the sun's rays. It is easy to become discouraged or depressed.

Our national political situation is also challenging to our sense of hope or optimism. There is a lot that can bring us down at this time of the year. Inertia can creep in, and it gets harder and harder to leave the house.

Take heart, my spiritual companions! There is reason for hope and encouragement. Spring will come, the days will continue to lengthen, and the sun will feel warmer as we go. There is much to look forward to in the coming weeks and months, and I am glad to share them with you here.

This month we will focus some serious energy and attention on our hopes and plans for the future of the UU Congregation of the South Jersey Shore. UUA Congregational Life Consultant Pat Infante will be preaching about planning for the future when she visits our pulpit on February 3, and will return two weeks later to lead a workshop/discussion open to the congregation on Saturday, February 23. Keep an eye on the midweek announcements for more details. Do save the date, though, to participate in this important discussion. *See page 5 for more details.*

Having a strategic plan is one of the requirements for this congregation to be eligible for a Chalice Lighter Grant from the UUA. We can use that grant for a variety of purposes, from making improvements to our building to increasing staffing hours for better serving the ministry and mission of the congregation. Expect conversations about those ideas in the future as well

In March we will begin our stewardship campaign, and we are already planning for that. Last year was a watershed year for this congregation, and I anticipate that we will have another successful campaign this year.

There is one really exciting piece of information I want to share with you: through the Wake Now Our Vision program by the UUA to encourage planned giving, the UUCSJS has qualified to receive over \$52,000 in matching funds to be disbursed later this year. This is a fantastic windfall and is directly related to the number of people who have included the UUCSJS in their estate planning. We are very grateful for their foresight and generosity. The board and endowment committee will seek input for ideas as to how that money will be spent. A windfall like that can greatly boost the mission and ministry of the congregation. Thoughtful conversations about what that will look like are sure to come.

2019 is off to a good start. The year holds much potential and I look forward to greeting what it has to offer.

Blessings,

Rev. Dawn Fortune



Rev. Dawn's Twitter handle is
@queerpreacher

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

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.

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Creating New Faith Traditions, Part 2

Last month I wrote about our family's mealtime blessing. I hope you were able to find some meaningful words to add to your meal times.

This month I would like to tell you about another tradition you can use to bring your faith home: *the bedtime meditation*. Love permeates our faith and our principles. We show this love in our celebration of the worth and dignity of every person. In our fight for justice and equity and in our goal of world community with peace and liberty for all. We honor the interdependent web of existence and all its wonderful elements. We can bring our faith home and remind ourselves and our family of this overwhelming sense of love and duty with a loving-kindness meditation.

Used as part of a regular bedtime routine it becomes a lovely way to end the day with your child, to reconnect as a family, or help settle your mind and bring you peace before sleep.

Begin by getting comfortable. For a bedtime meditation why not get under the covers or tuck your child in. Take 2-3 slow, deep breaths and clear your mind of the day's clutter. Loving-kindness meditations begin with yourself and then move out into the world. Gil Fronsdal describes the loving-kindness meditation in his book *The Issue at Hand* as follows:

After you have settled in and begun breathing deeply, focus on your inner self and repeat these words:

May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe.
May I be peaceful and at ease.

After a period of directing the loving-kindness toward yourself, bring a friend or someone you care about to mind. Repeat the same phrases with the word *you* instead of *I*.

May you be happy. May you be well. May you be safe. May you be peaceful and at ease.

Allow the intention of these words to really sink into your mind and your heart. Continue the meditation bringing to mind other friends, neighbors, acquaintances, strangers, animals, and finally people with whom you have had difficulty. Why not spread that radical love we Unitarian

Universalists like to talk about and bring your faith home each evening with a bedtime loving-kindness meditation ritual?

RE News and Notes:

- The teens are working on a project to create a chalk wall in the hallway near the lounge. Keep an eye out for its completion and come on down to create some art!
- Families - don't forget to stay and sing with Barbara Miller on February 3, 2019 for our Family Song Circle – another great way to celebrate our UU faith and culture.
- The CRE Committee will be hosting a Family Potluck on February 28, 2019 at 6:30 pm in the lounge. More details and a sign up soon.
- The Adult RE committee is searching for new workshop offerings for the spring and fall. What can you share with our community?

In Fellowship,
Jessica Dunn Safonof
Director of Religious Education

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Adult RE Series "Sex, Love, and Relationships in the 21st Century" is postponed till the spring.

Think UU History is a dry topic? Wait till you hear how Rev. Dawn tells it!

Unitarians and Universalists trace their respective roots back through time in similar, yet divergent paths. Join Rev. Dawn Fortune in a whirlwind trip through thousands of years of history, from the Council of Nicea to the adoption of the Seven Principles by the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

**Sunday, February 24 & March 3
11:30 – 1:30 pm**

Includes potluck luncheon.

To register for this class, please RSVP to minister@uucsjs.org with "UU HISTORY" in the subject line.

Long Term Planning Workshop

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you will surely get there.”

Join your fellow congregants and neighbors as we consider where we are called as a people, at this time in our history, to meet the world’s greatest need. We’ll come together in conversation to answer powerful questions about how to amplify our UU values in ways that are impactful and sustainable. Small group conversations and a process for discerning next steps will be part of this workshop.

As you will have learned if you attend on Sunday February 3, UUCSJS can best become (or stay) a comfortable spiritual home for all of us if we overtly discuss our identity, purpose, and future and set priorities for our resources, our efforts and our programs.

On Saturday, February 23, regional ministry consultant Patricia Infante will help us work towards a long-term plan that includes:

1. A mission statement reflecting the will and consensus of the congregation and
2. A list of realistic, achievable, and measurable programmatic goals aligned with the vision and mission statements to be implemented over a three-to-five-year period.

Using experience of helping dozens of congregations develop these plans, Patricia will guide us through exercises to determine who we are, what we want to be, and how we can get there. We’ll discuss our mission and vision statements, our programs and your desire to make them work.

Please, join us. We will meet in the UUCSJS center from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday, February 23. Lunch and childcare will be provided.

If you want more involvement with this project, contact Chairperson Kit Marlowe.

Spots are still available for 3 Winter Auction Events!

Successful Campaigning Workshop

Kit Marlowe, who has run for local office three times since 2014, will conduct a workshop to teach you how to run for any elective office. Topics covered will include starting your campaign, fundraising, election regulations, canvassing, and media purchases. The event includes a light lunch at Kit’s house in Cape May, NJ. He already has one taker and a few more would make this a great group.

Date: Saturday, February 16, 2019, 2:00 PM on unless participants agree on another date
Place: Kit’s house in Cape May, NJ
Price: \$40 per person

Coffee Roasting Workshop

Roasting coffee in your own home is easy, inexpensive, and allows you to enjoy sustainable, small-grower coffee throughout the world. Workshop covers selecting green beans and customizing your roast with a popcorn popper, other tricks for getting the most from your brews, and a coffee sample for each participant. There is only one spot left, so don’t wait to register.

Date: Sunday, February 17, 2019 12-1pm
Location: Jack and Jesse Connors home in Port Republic
35 Clarks Landing Road, Port Republic
Price: \$25 per person.

Juke Box Favorites

Tony Zittelli and Marty Quish own a large classic jukebox, and they are sponsoring an event around this. Enjoy dinner and soda, beer, or wine with Tony and Marty while you listen to a variety of guests’ favorite tunes on their juke box. Each guest can submit up to five songs, and at least one of them will be in the juke box ready for your selection. 1955 to 1985 will be covered. Fifteen spots have already been sold, but many remain for this fun event.

Date: Saturday, March 23, 2019
Place: Marty and Tony’s home in Galloway
Price: \$35 per person

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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Board of Trustees 2018-19

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Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

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