



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 21, Issue 7

July 2019

July 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.

July 7	<p>The Story of Five Seeds: Seed Justice and Gloves on the Ground <i>Lay speaker Damon Smith</i></p> <p>Join Board member, veteran and avid gardener, Damon Smith, on an investigation into five “conflict seeds” he is growing this year, and the importance of seed justice to his new organization, Gloves on the Ground.</p>
July 14	<p>Book Lovers’ Faves <i>Led by UUCSJS Book Lovers</i></p> <p>Still looking for some summer reading? Hear about some of the fascinating books the UUCSJS Book Lovers’ Group read this past year.</p>
July 21	<p>Music to Suffrage By <i>Guest speaker Pat Lamanna</i></p> <p>Women gained the right to vote on August 18, 1920, so the year 2020 will mark the centennial of that achievement. This music service weaves songs from the seven decades of the struggle for women’s suffrage with a brief history of that movement, bringing us to the present day and contemporary women’s struggles.</p>
July 28	<p>When Our Heroes Disappoint Us: Lessons from Harry Potter <i>Guest minister Rev. Hannah Roberts Villnave</i></p> <p>Have you ever been disappointed in a hero of yours? Or discovered that a person you admire has all kinds of problematic viewpoints? Join us this Sunday as we explore what the Harry Potter series can teach us about dealing with disappointing heroes.</p>



**Peace Pilgrim
Birthday Picnic**
Thursday, July 18, 6 pm

Music sing-a-long, cake, crafts

Bring your own food, chair blanket, musical instrument

Peace Pilgrim Park, 500 London Ave, Egg Harbor City

Rev Dawn’s Summer schedule:

All of JULY - on vacation

August 1 - return to the office

September - return to the pulpit

President's Corner

As some of you may know, my mom, "Grammy Bev", is on the "Pete Buttigieg for President" train, so I now receive daily email messages from Mayor Pete. I delete most of the messages without even reading them, but the one I received earlier this week, really struck me and stuck with me:

"Safety and justice are inseparable. Making them a lived reality for all is one of the great challenges of our time."
~ Presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, June 24, 2019.

Pete's statement (which was in reference to racial tensions this past week in South Bend, Indiana) felt like an appropriate message to describe the conflict that we are currently working through at UUCSJS around how to best support our LGBTQ community while at the same time making sure that our church and our members and staff feel safe.

As your board president, I am working closely with Rev Dawn and my fellow board members to help steer the discussion around this issue in a productive way that allows all voices to be heard, and to help make the best decision for us as a congregation. The board is working to make sure that we do a better job of communicating not just what decisions are being made but how they are being made, so that no one feels left out of the conversation.

Last week, we resumed a previous board tradition of monthly board "talk back" sessions after services, and I was grateful that a number of you attended to ask questions and to express your concerns. Karen York and I felt that we had a robust discussion, and we were able to hear a variety of opinions about how members feel about the Rainbow Flag (and other alternatives to that display) as well as about safety and security needs. I also had an emotional break down during that meeting, primarily due to my taking some of the criticism personally, and feeling somewhat overwhelmed by the situation and the tensions that it is creating. I asked the group on Sunday, and I will ask of all of

you, to please have patience - with me, with the board, with the process, and most importantly, with each other. We are not a business or a government entity. We all have full time jobs in addition to our volunteer jobs as board members and congregants. We are human, and we will make mistakes along the way. I promise that I will present my best self to this effort and will continue to help steer the ship (by moving the "trim tabs" as opposed to trying to move the giant rudder, as Rev Dawn has recommended in their GA Homily [*Ed.: transcript on page 4*] and in a previous sermon at UUCSJS) towards a better harmony of justice and safety.

We have several items in progress including:

1. A request (thanks to a suggestion from board talk back) for a police security audit
2. A survey to assess congregational opinions and suggestions on justice and security issues
3. A meeting with our CERG representative, David Pyle, to help us to come to a more satisfactory resolution on these issues. David will be meeting with the board in July, and we will be setting a date for an all congregational workshop for some time in September (David has National Guard duty in August, and with summer vacations for most of us, September is the most realistic time for all of us to meet together).
4. As we evaluate the best security plan for the church, several members of the mens group have volunteered for "Atticus Finch" duty on Sunday mornings to stand outside the building. Anyone can volunteer for this duty (see Geoff Stuart or Jack Miller).
5. Resumption of monthly "board talk backs" will occur on the 4th Sunday of every month. I am available to talk by phone or correspond by email. I look forward to ongoing conversations and constructive feedback.

Thank you to everyone in advance for your patience and your contributions to this important process.

Melissa

Welcome to our Five New Members!

The Membership committee is delighted to introduce five new members who signed the membership book during the Sunday service on June 2 in a brief ceremony led by Rev. Dawn Fortune. They are **John Brilla** and **Heather Swenson Brilla** (and their four-year-old son, **Charlie**), along with Heather's son **Jack Swenson**, who will become a full member in October when he turns 18. Also joining us are **Terri Ballas**, who travels nearly an hour each Sunday from Millville, and **Mike Hannisian**, who has scarcely missed a single Sunday since his first visit last November.

A warm welcome to these five talented individuals, who are already contributing their time, talent and treasure to the congregation. Be on the lookout for the brief biographies that will soon be made available by the Membership committee so you can get to know them better. We're very grateful they've become members of our community!

BOOK CLUB and **MARGARET CIRCLE** will not meet during July and August. See you in September!

Unsold Auction Events Pool Parties

① By the time you get this newsletter, there still may be a couple spaces left for the Pool Party that Barbara and Jack Miller are having at their home on Sunday afternoon, July 7. There will be swimming, butterfly viewing from all the plantings in their garden, badminton, and lots of good food to please all diets. Cost is \$30 each, with children free.

② Theresa McReynolds is planning a pool party at her home in Absecon on Saturday, August 3 (Rain date: Sunday, August 4). This is a very friendly family event. Cost is \$25 per family, which includes parents and children. Food will be very child friendly. This will be a great way for parents to relax and get to know each other, as children splash together. There are five spaces currently available.

For either of these events, you can sign up on Sundays, or contact Betsy Searight.

Rev. Dawn Fortune
609.289.5782



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

At the Closing Ceremony at General Assembly, on Saturday, June 22, 2019, Rev Dawn Fortune delivered an inspired homily.

You can watch it at the UUA's YouTube channel here:
<https://youtu.be/xh-n6yNZHc>

Transcript is on the following page.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY



*GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SATURDAY CLOSING CEREMONY:*

Saying Yes to the Power of We

Rev Dawn C. Fortune

Delivered at General Assembly
Spokane, Washington
June 22, 2019

Blessed Solstice to all.

The great ocean liner of our denominational culture is turning. We can feel a deep foundational shift towards something more expansive, more equitable, more transparent, with deeper integrity. Something that expands our understanding of what is meant when we speak of the power of “we”.

We are moving toward a new model of what my friend and colleague CB Beal calls **pre-emptive radical inclusion**. With pre-emptive radical inclusion, we do not work merely to accommodate those who hold marginalized identities when they appear, but we construct our spaces with the presumption that they will be in attendance every day. Preemptive radical inclusion requires us to assume that everyone is in the room every time we do something. There are people of color in the room, there are disabled people in the room, there are queer and trans and non-binary and gay and lesbian and bisexual and asexual and kinky and polyamorous people in the room, there are people with mental illness in the room, there are people living with intimate partner violence in the room, there are trauma survivors in the room, working-class people, the poor, the unhoused and undocumented. Our spaces must be constructed so that all of these people are included in the “we” that we seek to create.

Changing denominational culture is like changing the course of an ocean liner underway. Turning a large craft is not done by the rudder alone. In a 1972 interview in Playboy magazine Buckminster Fuller spoke about the importance of trim tabs. Trim tabs are small hydraulic-powered flaps on the outside of a ship's hull well below the waterline. They don't look like they do much, only being a foot or two square each, but they are vital to navigation. By adjusting the angle on the trim tabs by just a single degree, those little flaps generate enough wash in the current to make the work of the rudder possible. Without the

trim tabs the rudder would be unable to steer the ship at speed. The work we do is often the work of the trim tabs.

Sometimes when we are immersed in the work, it is easy to think that what we do has no effect. We barely moved this thing one degree from where it was, but over the years, our efforts, those incremental movements of the trim tabs, had caused enough wash in the currents to permit the enormous ship that is denominational culture to begin to turn in a direction of those aspirational statements of principle crafted so many years ago. Seeking justice equity and compassion in human relations, dignity for all, the search for truth, and spiritual growth that enriches our lives.

In order to understand our understanding of who was included in this “we”, we must ask every committee or board meeting: who is not represented at this table? whose view is not included in this conversation? And then we must cultivate the leadership and development of the humans with those voices that are missing, because their viewpoints make us as Unitarian Universalists smarter and stronger and better, and we must pay attention and heed the insights offered by all at the table.

It is not sufficient to simply look around and see that all are represented if the conversation is still dominated by those with institutional power. The power of “we” requires that those of us who have privilege use it to center those who have been historically marginalized. The power of “we” means that *those of us who have privilege understand that being asked to listen is not the same as being silenced; and that telling the marginalized not to be angry is a form of oppression; and to encourage patience in the pursuit of justice is to support the continuance of that oppression.*

The power of “we” will be fully realized when wholeness in our communities is achieved; when none are silenced; when all are empowered; and when our energies can be directed entirely toward creativity because the healing has been achieved. Until then we keep on listening, learning, and adjusting with each new effort like the trim tabs. That is our charge, that is our path, that is our future.

Autogenerated by YouTube transcription service

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Summertime - Reading and Relaxing

“Live in the sunshine, swim in the sea, drink the wild air.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ah, summer. There are many opinions about summertime and many of us hold opposing opinions of it at the same time. It can be both beautiful and oppressive, relaxing and stressful, enjoyable and overwhelming. It can be a time of relaxation and rejuvenation or just more of the same old, same old with added humidity and mosquitoes. Regardless of your schedule or your responsibilities, I hope that you get the chance to get out and notice the beauty and wonder around you before we plunge back into the dark, cold of winter. I hope you get the chance to learn something new and to put our faith into practice. To get you started I would like to offer you some summer reading, listening, and activity ideas. It's like those summer reading lists you used to get in school, only much more interesting and fun.

The InSpirit Bookstore is a valuable resource for all things UU. Here are some of their offerings I hope to read this summer:

- Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry edited by Mitra Rahnema
- White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin Diangelo
- A Year of Living Kindly by Donna Cameron
- History Teaches Us to Resist: How Progressive Movements Have Succeeded in Challenging Times by Mary Frances Berry
- In Defense of Childhood: Protecting Kids Inner Wildness by Chris Mercogliano

And for the kids

- A Queer History of the United States for Young People by Michael Bronski
- An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
- I Am Human: A Book of Empathy by Susan Verde
- The Book Tree by Paul Czajak and Rashin Kheiriyeh
- The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

If you are looking for something to listen to in the car or sitting at the beach or getting chores done at home, there are some wonderful podcasts you can try out. You can find them on Podcast Addict, Stitcher, iTunes, or wherever you listen to podcasts. Here are some that I have been listening to this year:

UU Specific Podcasts

- Fortification
- The Pamphlet: Uncovering Unitarian Universalism's Hidden Histories
- The UU Perspective with Sharon Morrell

Other interesting and informative podcasts

- **Code Switch** from NPR is produced by journalists of color and centers on race and identity
- **How to Be a Girl** is the story of a single mom and her six-year-old transgender daughter
- **Invisibilia** also from NPR, “fuses storytelling and science to see the unseeable forces that control behavior and shape our beliefs and assumptions”
- **On Being** with Krista Tippett, conversations about the big questions of meaning

For family listening

- **Brains On!** A science podcast for curious kids and adults
- **Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls:** not just for girls!
- **Storynory** has family-friendly stories and folktales from around the world
- **TED Kids & Family**
- **Wow in the World** from NPR journeys into the wonders of the world around us, from inside our own brains to out into space

Maybe you want to get out and see or learn something new. Here are a few websites and apps to get you started.

- If you are into hiking (or nature walking as my family calls it) you can check out www.southjerseytrails.org. There are ways to search for the level of difficulty, accessibility, and kid or pet-friendly trails.
- Want to stay comfortable inside and see the world at the same time? Try Google Earth. Select “Voyager” to see the many games and activities you can try out to explore our planet and its people.
- Wondering about the stars in the night sky? Download the SkyMap app to your smartphone. It will show you exactly what you are seeing. Visit the Edelman Planetarium at Rowan University to view a public show or check out the South Jersey Astronomy Club (www.sjac.us) which has open membership and public stargazing events.
- Learn about science in a fun hands-on way. Stockton PAC is hosting Franklin Institute events on July 10: Storms; July 24: Flight; and July 31: Life In Space. See Stockton PAC website (www.stocktonpac.org) for more details.

Hopefully, these suggestions have sparked some summer curiosity and a need for learning. May you find the time to rest, to learn, and to grow in faith this summer.

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Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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