



THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 24 ISSUE 11

DECEMBER 2015



December Services



SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES ARE AT 10:00 A.M.

December 6

Weaving Words, Connecting Cultures – Len Cabral

In an often disconnected world, stories help us connect with each other. Len will talk about what the power of the spoken word can do for our health and the health of our communities.

Len Cabral is an internationally-acclaimed storyteller.

December 13

Expanding the Limits – Rev. Jan Knost

A New Member ceremony will take place during the service.

Welcoming new members into our midst is an important part of keeping the flame of religious freedom alive.

Rev. Knost will look to our future by recovering some of the great ideals of our past.

December 20

The Darkest Day of the Year: A Sermon on the Winter Solstice – Rev. Jan Knost

Throughout history, the peoples of the Earth have faced the fact that at this time of year, the sun is lower and the days are shorter. Some find this cessation of growth depressing. But with those sobering thoughts comes the promise of light-filled tomorrows. The Winter Solstice actually is a time for regenerating hope for the human condition. Come and sing back the darkness!

Wednesday, December 23 at 7:00 p.m.

Our Annual Christmas Eve Eve Service

Again we will enjoy the songs of Christmas, the lights of Christmas, the stories of Christmas and the joy of hearing the good word and being together as a family to celebrate the ancient myth and the warmth of the season. This is definitely a “don’t miss” service, as so many of you know!

December 27

A Celebration of the Solstice in Song and Story

– Johnette Rodriguez, Nick Smith, and Helene Gersuny

At our annual Fire Communion, we'll bid a flaming farewell to the year past and say an optimistic 'hello' to the year ahead. Come prepared to sing songs about our indispensable star.



OUR HOME IS AT LILY PADS PROFESSIONAL CENTER, 27 NORTH ROAD, PEACE DALE, R.I.

THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Karen R. Ellsworth, Editor

Deadline: The 20th day of each month

Material should be submitted by e-mail to kellsworth6@verizon.net

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

www.uusouthcountyri.org

OUR HOME IS AT LILY PADS PROFESSIONAL CENTER

27 NORTH ROAD, PEACE DALE, R. I. 02879

(401) 783-4170 • uucscri@yahoo.com

Services and Children's Religious Education on Sundays at 10 a.m.

*We welcome all individuals without regard to race, color, physical challenge,
sexual orientation, age, or national origin.*

Staff Members

Rev. Jan Vickery Knost, Interim Minister

Pam Santos, Religious Education Director pamsantos@room35.com

Michael Galib, Music Director

Kathleen Carland, Office Administrator and Calendar Keeper

Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. ■ Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. ■ Friday 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

Betsy Dalton, President ■ Linda Whyte Burrell, Vice President

Steve Harrison, Treasurer ■ Mary Fulton, Clerk

Randi Marten ■ Elise Bender ■ Clare Sartori ■ Leah Canin

Committee Chairs

Suzanne Marcy & Carla Bowman, Membership Committee

John Glasheen, Social Action Committee • Judi Marcy, Caring Connection

Suzanne Paton, Religious Education Committee • Mary Finnegan, Personnel Committee

Marcia Boyd, Finance Committee • Ed Burrell, Facilities Committee

Susan Moreland, Music Committee • Linda Whyte Burrell, Social Events Committee

Lisa McHenry & Val Follett, Hospitality Coordinators

David Floyd, Music at Lily Pads Coordinator • Susan Strakosch, Worship Committee

Patience Peck, Flower Committee • Peter Himmel, Stewardship Committee

Dennis Bowman, Communications & Publicity Committee

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<https://www.facebook.com/UUCSC>

For the Time Being . . .

by Rev. Jan Knost

Perhaps it would be prudent for me to give you all a kind of progress report in regard to goals I am currently endeavoring to bring to fruition.

For some time I have been encouraging your leadership to streamline the way in which we greet incoming attendees on Sundays and the ways we cooperate to leave the Sanctuary as it was before the service. This primarily involves a working Corps of Ushers, on duty on a rotating basis, to be in the Sanctuary, armed with morning programs and able to hand out the hymnal or hymnals as needed for the service. They would be familiar with placement of fire extinguishers, able to take the plate offering smoothly, and be on hand for any disturbances that may occur during the service. In conjunction with that, we hope to establish a "Right Relations" committee to engage in conversation and counseling with those whose behavior needs counsel and advice.

Another issue dear to my heart is launching a program of deferred giving in order to create a fund for the future. It would encourage members and friends to consider ways they could remember the church in their wills, for example. This creates a way of meeting future needs as well as emergency needs that are impossible to predict. I am working with the Finance Committee to plan a Sunday around all aspects of such a program and I know you, the membership, will realize the importance of such an ongoing program of development.

I have and will be engaging various guest speakers to visit our pulpit in an effort to open the congregation's realization that there are many styles of preaching out there as you are looking to fine the perfect "fit" in your new minister. All of these guests are longtime friends of mine and Lorna's and we hope you will enjoy listening to their different approaches to our religious faith.

Finally (and I am happy to say that this goal is actually becoming fact), I have observed that the congregation needs more opportunities to engage socially in large groups. As a Sunday "captive audience," it just doesn't get it done. So you are planning Friday night dances with different musical support; the Board sponsored a "thank you" luncheon on November 22; and all manner of other possibilities are being discussed. My hope is that there will be those occasions when folks arrive home saying, "What a nice event that was! I met so many new people I never get a chance to speak to on Sundays . . ."

Now . . . if I can just get these all up and running by June . . .

With affection,

Reverend Jan

The President's Letter

Greetings go to all in our UUCSC community, and particularly to those who may be new.

We have entered a time when our hearts and minds will turn toward family and friends as we anticipate the coming holidays, the solstice, and the new year. I believe that we have so much to look forward to, and to be grateful for. We live in a beautiful area of the world where the scars of violence and war are not directly evident in our daily lives.

We are aware that the world is experiencing great hardship—hundreds of thousands of refugees from war are homeless and feel abandoned; hatred has taken hundreds of innocent lives in Paris, and elsewhere; the earth is so stressed by global warming that droughts and massive storms kill thousands each year and threaten our long-term existence; targeted discrimination exists against those whose language, culture, race, or religion is different. We so often feel powerless to impact these enormous problems—we say to ourselves, ‘what can I do? I am just one person and these issues seem so overwhelming.’

I, too, share these questions. What can I do as an individual to bring about

change, to help move the world in a positive direction?

My first response to these questions is to have hope. At times when life seems dark and bleak, and circumstances around the world seem to be spinning out of control, it is important that we remember that where there is life, there is hope.



Even when we or others have made the wrong choices, or said hurtful things, or taken actions that have harmed others, mentally, physically, or emotionally—even then, we must remember that there is hope: hope for change, hope for love, and hope for a better world. If we lose hope, our efforts to try to help will halt. In my life, and I hope in yours as well, hope can and will thrive, and in this hope, we find the strength for action.

My second response is ‘Just get started?’ When we do have hope, we can find meaningful ways, whether

large or small, to just get started to help the world. It may be that you make a meal for Welcome House. It may be that you donate to a family in need. It may be that you give someone a ride, or reach out and say hello to someone who looks alone. It may be that you join an environmental action group, or volunteer at your child's or grandchild's school. It may be that you help to shelter animals in need. Whatever touches your heart, when you have hope and belief that one person can make a difference, the world is a better place because of your action.

We feel hopeful about the changes to come—the changing of the seasons, the coming of the new year, and the changes that will come for us as a congregation as we search for our new settled minister.

Change is inevitable, but when we move forward together, embracing feelings of hope and understanding, we can trust that our anticipation, our planning, and our shared efforts will bear beautiful fruit.

Wishing everyone great joy, and peace, and hope in this holiday season,

In faith,
Betsy Dalton

A message from your Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral Care Team is here to visit with people in our congregation who are facing challenges. We support by listening—at home, in the hospital, or in between.

The members of the Pastoral Care Team are Barbara Beckwith, Paulette Chamberas, Penny Hall, Toni Littlestone, Barbara McKenna, Pat O'Reilly, Patience Peck, and Mary Lynne Rainy. If you or someone else in our congregation would like us to call and visit, please let us know by speaking to Rev. Jan Knost or to a member of the team.

Recently Patience Peck has gathered a lot of useful information about the services that are available in our area for health care, food assistance, senior citizens' needs, and more. Look for it in a binder on the Pastoral Care shelf in our library.



A Caring Community

I have served as a parish minister for more than five decades, and in my opinion UUCSC does a better job of caring for its members and friends than any other congregation I've been privileged to serve. That's not to say that those churches didn't have pastoral care services. It's just that UUCSC is so phenomenal in its ability to cover all the bases where people have needs—spiritually, emotionally and with hands-on services through the Caring Connection. I kid you not!

— Rev. Jan Knost

The members of the Stewardship Committee are grateful for the privilege of helping to maintain and deepen the financial roots of this spiritual community during the past year.

Doing everything we can to build a firm financial foundation for each other and for future generations is one of the ways we care for each other.

— Your Stewardship Committee: Charlie Donnelly,
Dennis Bowman, and Peter Himmel

We Hear You!

A progress report from the Ministerial Search Committee

We had a great turnout at the forum on Sunday, October 18 with the Ministerial Search Committee and the Board of Directors. More than 50 members and friends attended. Thank you for participating!

As you recall, in September 2014, we conducted a congregation-wide survey using Survey Monkey. Ninety members and friends took part in the survey, enabling the Ministerial Search Committee to get a good idea of the qualities you hope for in our next minister. During the forum on October 18, there was a question about ranking those qualities. We want you to know that the Survey Monkey results provided us with a very good picture of which qualities are more important and which ones are less important. If you'd like to see the survey results, they're posted on the UUCSC website. Just go to <http://uusouthcountyri.org/wp/?p=1247>, or go to the website home page, www.uusouthcountyri.org, and type "survey" in the search box at the bottom of the page.

Soon we'll post a timeline in the Oneto Community Room, so you'll have a visual of what the Ministerial Search Committee will be doing and when. We'll also continue to answer your questions and listen to your suggestions. We have a suggestion box in the Oneto Community Room where you can leave questions or comments. We check it regularly. You can also call or e-mail any of the committee members—Cindy Berry, Jean Bowen, Jean Burke, Amber Collins, Val Follett and David Fulton.
– Your Ministerial Search Committee

Our next Community Dance is on Friday, December 4

On Friday, November 6, UUCSC started a regular event that we hope will attract community members as well as members and friends of our congregation. UUCSC community dances will be held on the first Friday of each month from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Each month's dance will have a different theme. The theme of our November Community Dance was "Good Old Rock 'n Roll." Our December Community Dance will take place on Friday, December 4. The theme is "Dance Party." Participants are encouraged to bring their favorite dance tunes on an iPod and we'll do our best to play them.

There is no mandatory price for admission, but a small donation is requested. All proceeds will go to UUCSC and its Wellness Team programs.

Sarah Bell is the coordinator for the community dances. She is seeking volunteers to help with promotion, set-up, and cleanup. If you'd like to help, please e-mail her at sarahbell@earthlink.net or call her at 284-1819.





Religious Education News and Events

By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

December Dash

This year I saw Christmas decorations in the stores even before the Halloween costumes were stored away. It comes like a wave, a tsunami! The Holidays are thrust upon us like a swell of consumerism, a flurry of family expectations, and a fog of memories.

For families with little ones, this time of year brings exciting possibilities and great expectations. For parents, it can be a struggle to weed out the Holiday hype to reveal the simple beauty and gentle spirit that is possible. When overwhelmed with all that is the Holiday Season in America, please take a moment with your child, grandchild, niece or nephew to try some of these simple activities:

- ✦ String popcorn for the birds.
- ✦ Make a handmade ornament.
- ✦ Take a nature hike in the snow.
- ✦ Make a meal for the homeless shelter.
- ✦ Learn how people around the world celebrate the holidays, and find the countries on a map.
- ✦ Write a letter to someone in a nursing home.
- ✦ Together, bring used towels to an animal shelter.
- ✦ Play a Christmas album on a turntable, and dance.
- ✦ Together, create a poem about the Holidays, and then illustrate it.
- ✦ Make your own wrapping paper from a paper grocery bag, markers, glue, and glitter.
- ✦ Make cookies, and let your children to create their own recipe.
- ✦ Snuggle with your pet.
- ✦ Make a cozy fort under the table.
- ✦ Make puppets out of single socks.
- ✦ Go caroling to an elderly neighbor's house.

Give your child the most important gift of all, time spent with you.

Wishing you all a safe and warm Holiday Season filled with wonder, gratitude, and love.

Upcoming Dates in RE

December 6 – Service Sunday: Wrapping gifts for refugee family.

December 23 – Christmas Eve service at 7:00 p.m.

December 27 – No RE classes.

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27 NORTH ROAD
PEACE DALE, RI 02879



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“I have an almost complete disregard of precedent, and a faith in the possibility of something better. It irritates me to be told how things have always been done. I defy the tyranny of precedent. I go for anything new that might improve the past.”

Clara Barton (1821-1912)

Clarissa Harlowe "Clara" Barton (1821-1912) nursed Civil War soldiers, sometimes on the battlefield, and founded of the American Red Cross. Before the Civil War, she was a teacher and founder of the first free public school in Bordentown, N.J. Raised as a Universalist, Barton devoted her life to serving others. She was born in Oxford, Mass. on December 25, 1821.