



# THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2016

## February Services

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

**February 7**

### **Trans People and the U.U. Cornerstones – *Grace Alden***

Grace Alden, a corporal in the Lebanon, New Hampshire Police Department and a long-time friend of Rev. Knost and his wife Lorna, will talk about her experience as a transgender woman. *Grace Alden is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley in Norwich, Vermont, where her spouse, Sparrow J. Alden, is the Credentialed Religious Educator. They have two children.*

**February 14**

### **“What’s Love Got to Do With It?” – *Rev. Jan Knost & Pam Santos***

RE Director Pam Santos and the children and youth of the RE program will join Rev. Knost to explore the important sentiments often haphazardly shared on Valentine’s Day. *This is an multigenerational service.*

**February 21**

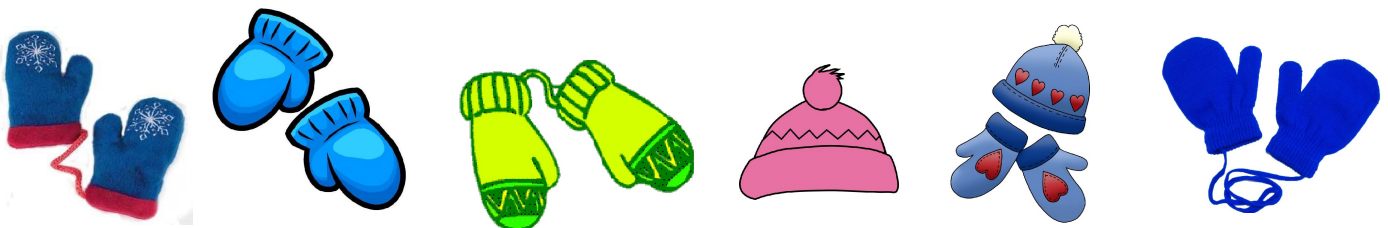
### **Connecting the Dots, Neighbor to Neighbor – *Wanda Brown***

Wanda Brown will speak about changing our perspective on the drug problem in our communities, making a greater effort to reach out to people in need, and closing the gaps between "us" and "them." *A licensed alcohol and drug counselor with a graduate degree in management and organizational leadership, Brown works in College Unbound's Prison Bridge Program, which provides inmates who are taking college-level courses in prison with the support systems they will need to complete their courses and receive a degree when they are released.*

**February 28**

### **Exemplars of Life: Emily Dickinson – *Rev. Jan Knost***

The reclusive poet, born in Amherst, Mass. in 1830, probed death, the wonders of nature, love, and other universal themes in a minimalism style that was far ahead of its time. That may be one reason why her words resonate with us today.



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](mailto:kellsworth6@verizon.net)

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## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

[www.uusouthcountyri.org](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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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# *For the Time Being . . .*

*by Rev. Jan Knost*

Lorna's father, William G. Smith, would have been 107 years old on January 27. Bill was a lifelong resident of Providence. He was 70 and barely into his retirement when he died of what I called "disastrous cancer." His coma lasted five minutes, but his suffering was interminably long— six months of a doctor's ministrations that could not stem the tide or check the advance. He was lucky and damned at the same time. No one should have to tarry so long.

Bill liked to refer to himself as "the Ol' Gent," but his love of others and his intellectual curiosity proved him to be a quiet giant. I have missed him over the years because his provocative questions always sent me on a mental journey I could never have predicted.

During his final hospitalization we received a call from Lorna's mother, Betty. She asked if when we came, I could bring Bill communion. Their minister was on sabbatical. I quickly agreed and we drove to Rhode Island Hospital. We entered his room, where he was for so long, and I was prompted to mumble some inadequate explanation of why we had come. Then I stopped. No, that was unnecessary. Bill understood. He only wanted to hear the ancient words read in his presence and feel the concern of others by his bedside. I carefully unpacked the various elements of the communion set my Dad had given me years back as an ordination present. Then I proceeded to read the Congregational communion service. It was surely painful for Lorna and me but we knew its importance.

Since Bill couldn't swallow, I could only touch his lips with the bread and wine chalice. But we knew he shared a substantive feeling that was more than bread and wine. And our two older children, Keith and Kristan, stood sharing it, too, in the medical chaos of that room.

Were I to have memorialized Bill Smith in a service, one of the first things I would have celebrated about him was his strong and unique support of women ministers. There had been three associate ministers at the church where he had belonged for 56 years, all women. He was always their champion. As a member, president for two terms and finally, as Deacon of Beneficent Congregational Church for fifteen years, he stressed the importance of the pastoral role in which women are uniquely effective. Two of them were there to celebrate his memorial service.

Barriers are so dumb. So are denominational labels that separate and divide. There are some in this world who leap over them or diminish them with their calm sense of "The Good."

Bill Smith was of those beautiful people.

I have always missed my "other Dad."

*Reverend Jan*

## International Folk Dancing

Friday, February 5 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary at UUCSC



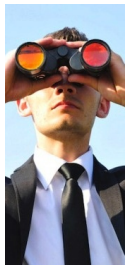
Everyone is invited! Instructors will be there to teach the dances.

Suggested donation \$5 to \$10. Proceeds benefit the Wellness Team programs

Snow date: Saturday, February 6

### News from the Ministerial Search Committee

As many of you already know, as of this writing, five candidates have contacted the Search Committee to explore becoming our settled minister. While we cannot give you details about the individuals on the list, we can say that the candidates tell us that they recognize that there's something very special about UUCSC.



Until the committee has a candidate to recommend to the congregation, committee members can only share information about the search process, not details about the candidates themselves. There are some good reasons for this policy.

First, an applicant who is already a settled minister in another congregation may not have told the current congregation that a move is contemplated. The members of that congregation are entitled to hear that news from their own minister.

Second, disclosing the identities of the applicants might lead to competition among them, damaging collegiality. It also could lead to hard feelings between neighboring congregations who are interested in the same applicant.

The Ministerial Search Committee — Cindy Berry, Jean Bowen, Jean Burke, Amber Collins, Val Follett, and David Fulton — is evaluating each candidate based on what congregation members have told the committee about the qualities they want in a settled minister and their hopes for the future of UUCSC.

### Welcome our new members!

We were delighted to welcome eight new members to our congregation during the New Member Ceremony on Sunday, December 13: Sky Kimball, Mary Alice Kimball, Audrey Shaw, Leroy Shaw, Angela Harvey, Roy Bergstrom, Carol Layne, David Ruede. We welcomed Carolyn and Patrick Gilligan as new members on January 17. You can see photographs of the new members on the Membership Committee bulletin board in the Oneto Community Room.

### The spring Path to Membership classes will begin on Sunday, April 10

The following dates have been set for the spring edition of our popular Path to Membership program:

Saturday, March 19 – Newcomers' potluck dinner

Sunday, April 10 – Unitarian Universalist history

Sunday, April 17 – Unitarian Universalist theology

Sunday, April 24 – How our congregation is organized

Sunday, May 22 – New Member Ceremony during Sunday service.

More details will be available next month.



## Religious Education News and Events

By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

### Community Service: A “Family Value”

On the first Sunday of each month, we gather downstairs in our RE space for Service Sunday. After a brief check-in and worship service, we learn about our community service project for the day. This year, we have talked about why people might find themselves without a home and who should take care of cats that no one wants, wondered how it would feel to travel to a new home and a new country as a refugee, and discussed how we can raise healthy food for ourselves and others in our own back yards.

It is important to know the story and issues behind a service project. Even our youngest congregants are able to express empathy toward those in need. For children and adults alike, the ability to help others in their time of need is a powerful, and positive, skill to grow.

Families often ask about the best way to encourage kids to care about others. Empathy and understanding are gifts. Children learn what they see. As parents, grandparents, and neighbors of children, we have an opportunity— even an obligation— to demonstrate the ability to reach out to those in need. I admire those families who dedicate one evening each week to work at a soup kitchen, or regularly walk the dogs at the animal shelter. But not all of us have the time or energy for such dedication. A community service project could be as simple as filling the bird feeders in the back yard, shoveling the driveway for an elderly neighbor, or donating food to the local food bank. It is my hope that each act of kindness is coupled with an explanation of why help is needed. Here is where the real lessons are learned.

It is important for children to know that they have the ability to help, even in truly difficult situations. It is also good for children to know that there are others willing to help them or their families if they ever find themselves in need. This is being part of a beloved community. This is truly living into our principles.

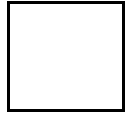
Love is the spirit of this congregation, and service is its prayer.

#### Upcoming Dates in RE

**February 7 – Service Sunday:** We’ll make comfort packets for the homeless.

**February 14 -** Multigenerational Valentines Day Service, everyone upstairs.

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY  
27 NORTH ROAD  
PEACE DALE, RI 02879



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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*“I have known a vast quantity of nonsense talked about bad men not looking you in the face. Don't trust that conventional idea. Dishonesty will stare honesty out of countenance, any day in the week, if there is anything to be got by it.”*

– Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens, born in Portsmouth, England on February 7, 1812, was the foremost English novelist of the Victorian era, as well as a vigorous social campaigner known for exposing the wretchedness of the downtrodden. His enduring comic characters are part of the culture. Although he remained attached to Anglicanism, Dickens denied the divinity of Jesus and attended a Unitarian chapel in London.