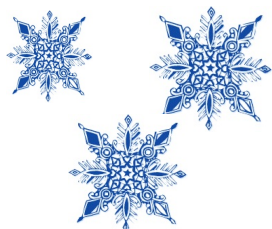


THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

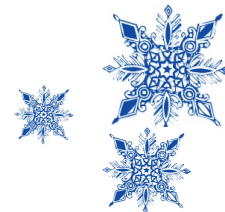
VOLUME 24 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2015



January Services

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



January 4

On Getting Along – *Rev. Jan Knost*

In the land of human relationships, nothing can be assumed to be stable. Things and people change.

Rev. Knost will take a look at the constantly shifting tides of folks living together, living alone but having friendships— all of the above and more.

A burning bowl ceremony, during which congregants symbolically rid themselves of the past year's burdens, will take place during this service.

January 11

Dreaming the Dream Alive – *Rev. Jan Knost*

The noble and high-minded words of our country's Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self evident . . .," have tragically been either ignored, avoided or forgotten. This is more true today than ever. One person did make a difference, a big difference. His initials were M.L.K. and his memory lives in our hearts with hope.

January 18

Walking with Dr. King – *Valerie Tutson*

Renowned storyteller Valerie Tutson will share the stories of some of the people who walked beside Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the civil rights movement.

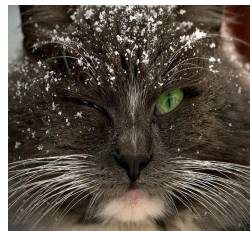
Valerie Tutson has a masters degree in theater arts from Brown University and has been telling stories at schools, churches, libraries, and festivals since 1991.

January 25

The Seventh Principle: A New Perspective – *Larry Kelland*

The Seventh U.U. Principle— "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part"— points to the many connections between ourselves and the world around us.

These connections have profound moral significance.



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 ■ **Michael Galib**, Music Director

Kathleen Carland, Office Administrator and Calendar Keeper

Board of Directors

Steve Harrison, President ■ Betsy Dalton, Vice President ■ Harry Buffum, Treasurer ■ Mary Fulton, Clerk
Randi Marten ■ Penny Hall ■ Clare Sartori ■ Nancy Rose, Past President

Committee Chairs

Linda Dupuis & Jenny Watson, Membership Committee ■ *Judi Marcy*, Caring Connection
John Glasheen, Social Action Committee ■ *Suzanne Paton*, Religious Education Committee
Mary Finnegan, Personnel Committee ■ *Marcia Boyd*, Finance Committee
Ed Burrell, Facilities Committee ■ *Susan Moreland*, Music Committee
Lisa McHenry, Hospitality Committee ■ *Linda Whyte Burrell*, Social Events Committee
David Floyd, Music at Lily Pads Coordinator ■ *Susan Strakosch*, Worship Committee
Roni Meyer, Flower Committee ■ *Jean Bowen*, Publicity

Coffee Hour Simplified!

A message from the newly-formed Hospitality Committee

Those who volunteer for coffee hour are now responsible *only* for making coffee and tea and putting out a full pitcher of water, and clean-up afterwards, of course.

All of the coffee supplies are now organized in a single bin in the kitchen. Complete instructions for making the coffee and tea are taped to the kitchen door.

Coffee, tea, sugar, honey, and half and half will be provided by the church.

We are asking the congregation as a whole to bring in snacks for coffee hour, as they wish.

One Small Group volunteered for the month of December and another has volunteered for January. We are hoping other Small Groups or groups of friends will volunteer for a month at a time. Two or three to set up and two or three to clean up is all that's needed. Single people can sign up, too—the more the merrier! There is a sign-up sheet on the snack table each Sunday.

We hope these changes will make the job of doing coffee hour less intimidating. Suggestions are always welcome.

– Thanks from Lisa McHenry, Val Follett, Jaime Gardner and Jessamyn LeClair



For the Time Being . . .

by Rev. Jan Knost

Christmas was only a memory. The New Year was hard upon the residents of the great city.

Struggling up the street was an old man. He wore a black overcoat but it did little to warm his heart. He scowled at the winter's harshness. He hoped for nothing. He was humorless, vindictive and angry at just about anything of consequence, and had been that way for a long, long time.

Suddenly he noticed a young couple coming toward him. They were shivering in the wind, which slowed their steps to a crawl. The old man stopped walking. Stood there. The couple were stopped, too, as he blocked their further progress.

He looked them up and down. "Your baby?"

"Si," said the young mother.

"What's your name?" "Maria," she replied.

"How 'bout you?" the old man said, looking at the young man.

"Si, senior. My name is Juan."

There was quiet. Then, unaccountably, the elderly man took off his overcoat and draped it over the young woman's shoulders. "That should warm you up, Maria."

"Oh, gracias, senior, gracias!" The couple then continued on their way.

The old man looked at them as they pushed against the wind. Then, for reasons he could only have imagined, the elderly gentleman, with a tear glistening in his eye, remembered happier days and, for the first time in a long, long time, he smiled.

"The Rev"

A message from the Stewardship Committee

We had a wonderful Christmas Eve service led by our fantastic minister and our wonderful choir led by an extremely talented music director. This service brought much joy and comfort.

To continue to enjoy this abundance, we must support our congregation with generous giving. To support a full-time minister, we have to put some of our Christmas giving into our "presents" for our spiritual home.

The President's Letter

For years I have been fascinated by the wild grapes that grow in our back yard along two stone walls. On one 50-foot wall the vines are only about 14 years old and were allowed to grow back after my son and I cleared the original wall of overgrowth and re-stacked it. In short order the vines re-emerged and within a couple of years they covered the wall with a dense mesh of vines under a lush blanket of greenery. They seemed unstoppable, so we let them go.

The other patch is along a long neglected stretch of tumbled-down wall, thick with vines, trees, and brush. Some of these old vines are about five inches in diameter. They wage a silent battle of survival with the wild cherry, willows, wild rose and spruce. Mostly the grape are winning. This bothered me for a long time. The grapes seemed such a pest, a bully even; but somehow I could not intervene. The slow drama that was unfolding between 30-foot-tall cherry and spruce and the shorter willows and rose seemed to tell me to wait and pay attention. Nothing was happening quickly. Every so often, I cut back the vines that threaten a bush I want to keep, but in general, I just watch and I learn.

The vines do have one redeeming quality. In the Fall, there are grapes—big bunches of fat, juicy, purple grapes.

They are not sugar sweet; instead, they have a subtle sweet tartness and an intoxicating aroma. The common term is fox grape, and these ubiquitous vines of eastern North America, *vitis labrusca*, may be what inspired Leif Erikson to call this place “Vinland.”



Vitis labrusca

Year after year the fruit appears, with no sign of pests or disease. They do have a couple of pesky seeds. I have become quite adept at extracting them from the pulp with some fancy tooth and tongue work. Applying skills I learned with watermelon seeds, I do my part to spread their gene pool as far as I can. The skin is tough, but that is to be expected. They are not like those tame and pampered vines trained and restrained in vineyards. These feral vines have to be tough to survive in the wild.

Slowly I began to see these vines as an asset rather than a pest. The last few years I finally started making jelly. My staple lunch is PB&J, and making my own jelly reminds me just how much sugar is in jelly, so I use

it much more sparingly.

Finally the years of watching paid off, and the lesson became clear. These vines are a food crop—a hardy crop that requires little care and is there for the taking. It was a bountiful resource right in front of me all those years and I pretty much ignored its value until I looked at it from a different perspective.

Interim time affords us the opportunity to look at every facet of our congregation from different perspectives. Interim ministers come in to shake things up and move us out of comfortable routines. They come with fresh eyes, challenge the status quo, and they tell us what they see. At times it is not an easy or pleasant experience. But we seem to be coming along nicely, thank you. It may take a bit longer than we first thought, but we have never gone by the book on most things anyway.

Now is the time for us to take another big step in our development. It is time to speak openly of money—spending money, making money, asking for money. We can talk and talk about our principles and our beliefs, and all the good things we do. We may find spiritual peace and fulfillment here. We may come here to find refuge from life's storms. But all that costs money.

continued on page 5

Two New Programs for the New Year

We are happy to announce that beginning this month, UUCSC will offer two new monthly programs designed to address some of the interests and needs of our congregation members and friends.

L.O.S.S. begins meeting in January

The death of a spouse or life partner is a deep loss like no other. If you have experienced such a loss, whether recent or not, and would like to gather to talk with others who share these same experiences, you are invited to attend the meetings of L.O.S.S. (Living On as Surviving Spouse), a new peer group that will meet on the first Friday of each month.

This group is open to all— UUCSC members, friends, and those from the larger community. It isn't a therapy group; it's a group of peers who have experienced a similar loss and would like to talk about it with others who have experienced the same type of loss.

The meetings will take place in the Oneto Community Room from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The first meeting is on Friday, January 2.

If you would like more information, please speak to Betsy Dalton after a Sunday service, call her at 529-8733, or e-mail her at elizabethmdalton@gmail.com.

Adult Enrichment Program returns!

This past Fall, after a short hiatus, our adult enrichment program returned with the Real to Reel Film Series organized by Iris Donnelly and Nancy Rose.

To continue growing and reaching out to the wider community, beginning this month we'll offer regular monthly enrichment events on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. The series will be called "Enrichment at UUCSC."

Every month a member of the UUCSC community or a guest will offer a presentation on a different topic. Our first evening, January 20, will feature a talk by Betsy Cook, one of our newest UUCSC members, on her experiences as a teacher on the Navaho Reservation. Betsy and some friends on the reservation started a program to preserve the Navaho language. You'll be fascinated by what she has to say.

Members and friends are invited to submit their ideas for programs. Please send your suggestions to Betsy Dalton, UUCSC Vice President, at elizabethmdalton@gmail.com.

The President's Letter

Continued from page 4

There are, no doubt, some who are uncomfortable about speaking of money. But we all must face reality. This place costs money to operate, and that should not interfere with or diminish the benefits each of us receives as members of this congregation. The reality is that for those benefits to continue, we must have a balanced budget.

The Stewardship Committee of Cindy Berry, Charlie Donnelly and Peter Himmel is gearing up now, and under its umbrella of responsibility is revenue generation. That includes pledging, fundraising, grants, or other endeavors to bring in money.

Let's all be creative in thinking of ways to generate revenue or save money. But don't come with the attitude, "Somebody should do this or

that." Come with the realization that you are that somebody.

Join one of the groups working under Stewardship or work on a small project yourself that can help balance the budget. Just let Stewardship know what you are planning to do.

It is harvest time for us. Are you ready to help pick those luscious bunches?

— Steven M. Harrison

Meet our new members

On Sunday, November 30, we welcomed three new members into our congregation. During the service, we read the statements they wrote to tell us why they decided to join us.



Dennis Bowman: *"Joining this congregation is an expression of my commitment to help build in some small way the strength and vitality of this U.U. community, while at the same time growing myself spiritually and intellectually through interaction with a diverse community."*

Carla Bowman: *"I join this congregation for all the usual reasons (social connections, the opportunity to contribute, intellectual stimulation), but mostly for the one thing that is unique to religious organizations: the opportunity for spiritual growth in the company of kindred spirits."*



Betsy Cook: *"I firmly believe in the Seven Principles of the Unitarian Universalist church and I am delighted to join this community of like-minded people."*



Religious Education News and Events

By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

Welcome to the New Year

How do you welcome a new year?

In our Religious Education classes, we created a winter wreath decorated with the hopes and dreams we would like to see come true in this new year. We chose to hang the wreath in a place where we could see it, reminding us of the opportunities each new year brings.

Naturally each new year brings with it a share of challenges, surprises, and setbacks along with anticipated joys. Together, as beloved community, we will celebrate accomplishments and support the struggles. These are the great joys of being part of a healthy, interested, and invested church community.

Our children feel this too. Spending time with their friends at church feels safe. Here is a time when we can share our joys and concerns. Here is a place where we can grow together, ponder the big questions, and learn to be the best person we can be. Here is a great place to be at the start of the year.

Welcome 2015, and all that you will bring.

COMING EVENTS IN R.E.

January 4 – Service Sunday. Our community service will be preparing a food drive with Youth Pride for homeless teens.

January 4 – RE Committee meeting

January 11 – Beginning of RE Session #2

Take a Mindful Journey with UUs to the hill towns of Italy from July 26 to August 4, 2015

Experience the enchanting hill towns of Tuscany and Umbria, view the awesome landscapes, admire the incredible art, taste the wine, enjoy fresh pasta, and take in all the delights that this area of Italy offers. Spend three nights in Florence, and three each in the hill towns of Siena and Assisi, staying in charming accommodations.

We'll explore Cortona, made famous by the movie "Under the Tuscan Sun," see the Renaissance architecture designed by a humanist Pope in Pienza, and meditate to Gregorian chanting at the 12th century Abbey of Sant'Antimo. The hill towns of San Gimignano, Montalcino, Montefalco, Bevagna, and Spoleto are also on our itinerary.



Because we are booking small monastery guest house accommodation, we need to make deposits by February 1, 2015. Please see the Itinerary and costs at <http://nuuc.ca/spiritual-growth/spiritual-practice/mindful-journeys/> or e-mail beverlz@me.com for more information.

– Beverly Carr, Neighbourhood UU Congregation, Toronto

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

When biting Boreas, fell and doure,
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r;
When Phoebus gies a short-liv'd glow'r,
Far south the lift,
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r,
Or whirling drift:

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked,
Poor Labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns, wi' snawy wreaths upchoked,
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or thro' the mining outlet bocked,
Down headlong hurl.

– from “A Winter Night” by Robert Burns (1759-1796)

Burns, born in Ayrshire, Scotland on January 25, 1759, is the national poet of Scotland, Although he never joined a Unitarian church, Burns was well known for his heretical religious views and was friendly with leading Unitarians of his day, including Joseph Priestley.