

THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 6

JUNE 2014



June Services



June 1

Worship and Annual Meeting

*Rev. Dr. Judith Smith-Valley & Steven M. Harrison,
President of the Board of Directors*

Our Fifth Principle says that we “covenant to affirm and promote . . . the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.” Today, we will combine our worship service with our Annual Meeting as a way to recognize the importance of this principle.

As a community of faith, our manner of governance is congregational polity. We are responsible for our independent congregation. Come and participate.

June 8

Bridging Ceremony

Rev. Dr. Judith Smith-Valley & Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

The Bridging Ceremony is an important Unitarian Universalist tradition that honors those of our youth who have reached the bridge to adulthood. We have nurtured their character and spirit.

Now we send them on their way, so filled with promise.

June 15

**Father’s Day and Farewell to Rev. Judy – *Rev. Dr. Judith Smith-Valley*
*Flower Communion Sunday***

This will be our Interim Minister’s last service at UUCSC. Join us to celebrate the end of this first interim year on Flower Communion Sunday. Bring a cut flower to share for this uniquely UU tradition.

This service will include a Child Dedication. It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child.

Come as we join together to dedicate ourselves to the youngest in our faith community.

June 22

Musings on Music and Religion

Members of the UUCSC Music Committee will share their thoughts on music and spirituality, and will share lots of music as well.

June 29 at 11:00 a.m.

Tentative:

Live-stream broadcast of the UUA General Assembly Sunday Morning Service
Rev. Mark Stringer of First Unitarian Church, Des Moines, Iowa, preaching

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.*

Rev. Dr. Judith Smith-Valley, Accredited Interim Minister

Staff Members

Pam Santos, Religious Education Director

Michael Galib, Music Director

Kathleen Carland, Office Administrator and Calendar Keeper • uucscri@yahoo.com • 783-4170

Board of Directors

(beginning on June 1)

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 Chairs

John Glasheen, Social Action Committee Chair

Suzanne Paton, Religious Education Committee Chair

Carolyn Hurdis, Personnel Committee Chair

Marcia Boyd, Finance Committee Chair

Ed Burrell, Facilities Committee Chair

Gene Jolie, Adult Enrichment Coordinator

Susan Moreland, Music Committee Chair

Judi Marcy, Caring Connection Chair

Linda Whyte Burrell, Social Events Committee Chair

David Floyd, Music at Lily Pads Coordinator

Susan Strakosch, Worship Committee Chair

Roni Meyer, Flower Committee Chair

Jean Bowen, Publicity (jeannbowen@gmail.com)

In Between Time

Rev. Dr. Judith Smith-Valley

Accredited Interim Minister



We come to the last month I serve here in South County. As I write this, the preliminary planning for the June services is done. The Annual Meeting has been incorporated into the Worship for June 1. The slate is prepared, the annual reports gathered, the minutes and Treasurer's report from the 2013 meeting are available. The budget is drafted, but will not be voted on until the fall because it was not ready to be sent within the thirteen day notice required by the UUCSC by-laws. Please read the packet sent with the notice of the meeting date. All other reports will be available that day. Only active members may vote.

Why were the Annual Meeting and the Worship combined? This is a way to uplift the significance we place on the democratic process (UU Principle #5) and to show us how to find spiritual meaning in doing the congregation's business. The congregation is a covenantal society. Covenants express clearly the relationship of the congregants and their promised behavior toward one another. We are non-creedal (no criteria of belief required to be a member) and have been by tradition since the earliest congregations were formed by the Puritans in the seventeenth century (later to become Unitarian or Universalist congregations). We say our covenant every Sunday, adapted from Singing the Living Tradition, #471 or #473:

Love is the spirit of this congregation,
And service is its prayer
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
To seek the truth in Love,
And to help one another.

It is a challenge to finish all the details of leaving. I cherish the period I am with you until my last service on June 15. We have shared a shorter time than we planned, yet we have been a ministry together. Mostly I plant seeds. The fruits will continue to mature after I am gone. The future is in process (and hopefully by the time you read this column you will have a newly hired interim for your second year). You continue your ministry here in South County. I move to join another.

Life happens!

Your heart-felt appreciation is much cherished. Many congregation members have commented on my input here. Thank you to each of you for finding time to speak with me. Of course there are so many things which cannot be known. You see things with different eyes and perspective. I'd love to hear how you feel UUCSC might change and embrace the future. Let us multiply the positive outcomes and trust the rest to the Spirit of Life.

I'm happy to announce that for the coming two years I will serve as accredited interim minister to the Starr King UU Fellowship, located in Plymouth N.H. I am excited to work with that congregation. There are new opportunities and challenges. A plus for myself and Paul is that the location will be only two hours from home in Kennebunk, Maine.

We complete our ministry together here in South County on June 30 (with a vacation month in July). This includes time to pack and to attend the UU Ministers Association

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The President's Letter

“Perceived value” is a marketing term that can be loosely defined as what a person thinks something is worth. It is linked to a product’s ability to satisfy one’s needs or expectations. It is not necessarily related to cost.

It is with the utmost care that I link a discussion of our congregation to economic theory. It is not meant to demean the values or the spirituality of this congregation. But economics are a part of our very existence, and our values and spirituality do have worth to each of us.

The question is, what does each of us, as a member or friends of the UUCSC, feel this congregation is worth? Start by asking yourself what brought you here in the first place. We all came with needs and expectations. How well are those needs being satisfied? If you feel that something is lacking, what do you plan to do about it? Of course we need to maintain a high standard of openness and respect with each other as we advocate for the things we want in this congregation; but we must all participate in these discussions. Being a Unitarian Universalist is not for the passively inclined.

The reason for our existence is built on seven simple principles that speak of a hope for a better place for all of humankind. We now have to choose what our future will be. Do we set our sights on growing into an organization with a larger presence that can have a significant impact in the world community, or do we remain as a small comfortable group

of familiar faces and established traditions?

During the past year, these two opposing viewpoints have moved to the forefront and created a difficult time for many of us.



On the surface, it seemed that the controversy was focused on our Interim Minister. But what were the underlying reasons for those strong negative feelings? Rev. Judy brought a message of what change would mean and she did it with a style of ministry that we were not accustomed to.

This was unsettling to some folks. A lot of energy was focused on the messenger. Soon we will have a new messenger, but the basic message remains the same; do we hold on to the familiar past, or do we move forward into the unfamiliar territory of change?

Rev. Judy did not have an easy time here, but she opened some important doors into the very core of our congregational soul. Now it is up to us to continue her work

with open and honest dialog about what we have discovered. I am grateful for the work Rev. Judy did with us. It was not easy, but it was extremely important. I also respect her decision to allow another interim minister to carry on the work she began. I wish her well as she begins again with a new congregation.

By affirming our seven core values in good times and bad, we will develop the ability to expand our focus outside of these walls. We could become a venue for helping those less fortunate than ourselves. We could become a voice for reason and compassion amidst the clamor of partisanship. We could build a place that is perceived as being valuable to the wider community. In so doing, we will build a place that is perceived as being valuable to ourselves. But one thing must not be forgotten: our financial contributions to this congregation must match our perceived value of this congregation if we are to survive.

Now is the time for us to look inward. We all need to stop, find a calm space, and think of how others may be feeling as we deal with the issues before us. Anger, frustrations, blame and finding fault will not solve our problems any more than they can solve the problems in the wider world.

Together let us find our collective value. It is there. A piece resides in each of us. Let us share it with each other. Our future depends on it.

– Steven M. Harrison

In Between Time

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(UUMA) Days and General Assembly in Providence. It is a special year professionally. I am honored to be included on June 25 at the UUMA Worship Service for twenty-five years as an ordained UU ministry. (Fifty year anniversaries are also recognized.)

I also officially retire (though will continue interim ministry), so I march in the Service of the

Living Tradition held on Friday evening June 27. An event open to the public, this is a worship service which honors new ministers in preliminary or final fellowship, retirees and those who have died during this church year. The preacher is always one of our best. I hope those who are going to GA will be with me (and perhaps some others since you can come without being registered).

Please feel free to say a proper "Good-bye." Let us find this a time of completion. May we discover that as we have shared this ministry, there has been a deepening and growth of soul. I keep a part of each of you with me.

Many Blessings,
Rev. Judy

The South County Unitarian Universalist is published once during July and August.

The deadline for the July-August issue is Monday, July 7.

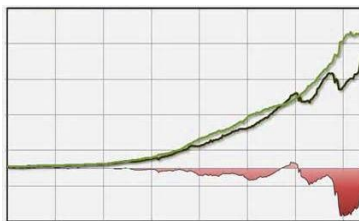
Newsletters will be mailed in mid-July.

Update from the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meeting on May 21 was the last one for three members whose terms expire on June 1. Clerk Susan Corkran and Trustees Gail Buchard and Barbara Pagh have made tremendous contributions to the UUCSC; Susan as liaison to Worship, Gail as liaison to the Transition Team, and Barbara with her work on the Communications and Publicity Committee and the web page re-design. Please remember to thank them for their service. We look forward to welcoming the new Board members at the next meeting on June 18.

Treasurer Harry Buffum noted that current year expenses are tracking as expected, but the

conversion to Quick Books is taking longer than expected. We decided to give it another month to see if the situation has improved so that reports are generated in a more timely manner.



Rev. Judy outlined her plan to combine the June 1 worship service with the Annual Meeting. It is a bold departure from previous years, but she has done this successfully at other congregations, and the Board agreed it was worth a try.

Finance Committee chair Marcia Boyd and committee members Cindy and Jeff Berry and Jean Burke presented some difficult information on our financial situation. Our pledges were not what we expected. The reserve funds we have been using to balance the budget are projected to run out in 2016 if we do not either increase revenue or decrease expenses. They noted that if each pledge were increased by an average of \$20 a month we would balance the budget.

We also missed the deadline for mailing next year's budget in time for approval at the Annual Meeting, so we will be operating with a provisional
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Update from the Board of Directors

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budget until we can call a special congregational meeting on September 14.

The Finance Committee requested that a Stewardship Committee be formed now so that a Canvass can be implemented in the fall. The Board will work on appointing that committee over the summer.

The Board appointed the members of the Settled Minister Search Committee by unanimous consent. They are Cindy Berry, Jean Burke, Amber Collins, David Fulton, Val Follett, Mary Iacobbo, and Gene Joli. These members have accepted an important task on our behalf. For them to do their job properly, we need to give them

the space to operate independently. But we must be ready to lend a hand if they ask for help with some task. We also wish to thank the folks who expressed interest in serving on this committee but were not selected. There are many other important responsibilities that can benefit from your enthusiasm and willingness to serve.

The Board is working on an Interim Minister Search Committee that will be in place by the end of May. According to the UUA, our prospects are good for finding an Interim Minister for next year.

The Board voted to approve three important documents pertaining to the use of our facility. They are:

- Facilities Use Guidelines
- Facilities Use Procedures for Internal Use
- Facilities Use Procedures for External Use

We thank Rev. Judy and Kathy Carland for all their hard work in compiling these documents. These documents clarify many details that will serve to protect our assets and they provide fair market rates for use of our facility.

Finally, we deferred a vote on Membership Guidelines that would clarify the financial responsibility of Membership. We sent that document back to the Membership Committee for their input.

– Steven M. Harrison,
President

The members of the Settled Minister Search Committee, appointed by unanimous consent of the Board of Directors, are Cindy Berry, Jean Burke, Amber Collins, David Fulton, Val Follett, Mary Iacobbo, and Gene Joli.

Everyone who attends a General Assembly event must be registered

All participants in General Assembly programmed events must be registered for the conference. Everyone in attendance of GA programmed events must also be registered. Everyone must be registered, including program participants, presenters, invited guests, performers, office support staff, relatives, hosts, and dignitaries.

GA registrants receive access to all workshops, performances, lectures, and events listed in the GA Printed Program, as well as an official name badge to identify them to fellow participants, event staff and security. GA name badges are required for admission to all GA programmed events, including evening entertainment, the Exhibit Hall (Wednesday-Saturday), the Opening and Closing Celebrations, and the Ware Lecture.

The only GA programmed events that will be open to the public are the Service of the Living Tradition, the Sunday Morning Worship, and, on Sunday only, the Exhibit Hall. Registration is not required to participate in Service of the Living Tradition, the Sunday Morning Worship, or to visit the Exhibit Hall on Sunday.

To register, go to <http://www.uua.org/ga/registration/index.shtml>.



Religious Education News and Events

By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

This past weekend I planted my vegetable garden. My husband Gene had prepared the garden by adding compost and turning the soil over. I gently coaxed the seedlings out of their little trays. The fragile roots trailed down, looking so very delicate. I tucked each plant into a little hole I had prepared and carefully pulled soil in around the tiny stems.

At this stage the plants look so tiny in my garden, so vulnerable. And they are. A hard springtime downpour could drown them, hail would snap their stems, a frost would freeze them. I have a fence around my garden, but I know we have clever woodchucks and rabbits who have figured out our fence before. Even our own chickens would make quick work of the seedlings, given a chance. The soil harbors grubs, cutworms, and caterpillars. The garden can be a dangerous place for a tiny seedling. Each morning when I look out the window I smile, seeing that the plants have endured during these first days of my garden.

Yet I know that despite the danger, the tiny plants need to be in the garden at this stage. They have outgrown their sheltered plastic container and need a place for their roots to spread wide. They need the open sky and bright sun to energize their growth.

I hope they all successfully grow at their own pace, reach skyward, feel grounded with deep roots, and bear fruit.

It is not so different for the children of our congregation. We watch over them as they play on the swing set in our back yard and laugh with them during the Conversation with the Children. We tenderly share with them our UU values through RE classes, and encourage them to find their own minds. We support them in their outreach efforts and encourage a life involving service to others. And we are proud of them as they share their thoughts and inspirations with us during the Youth Service.

Yet, around the age of 18, these children give us signs that they too need something different, something bigger, and something more challenging. Adult life is calling to them, and it is time for us to gracefully allow them to go.

I hope they all successfully grow at their own pace, reach skyward, feel grounded with deep roots, and bear fruit (in good time).

Please join me on June 8th in celebrating our graduating seniors at their Bridging Ceremony. We are so proud of all of them!

COMING EVENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

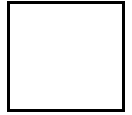
June 1 - Service Sunday. We'll be planting our own backyard garden.

June 8 - Bridging Ceremony; RE party celebration on the last day of RE classes.

Food and Feedback after the Service – a chance for families and children to share their thoughts on our RE program. Please join us!

June 15 - Multigenerational Flower Communion and Child Dedication

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“The grass is not, in fact, always greener on the other side of the fence. Fences have nothing to do with it. The grass is greenest where it is watered. When crossing over fences, carry water with you and tend the grass wherever you may be.”

– Robert Fulghum

Robert Fulghum is the Unitarian minister and best-selling author who shot to fame in 1986 with the publication of ‘All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten.’ The book stayed on the New York Times bestseller list for almost two years. Rev. Fulghum lives at Pack Creek Ranch in San Juan County, Utah. He was born on June 4, 1937.