

THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 6

JUNE 2016

June Services

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

June 5

Music, Music and More Music – *The Music Committee*

Join the Music Committee and the choir for this year's Music Committee service. Instead of listening to a sermon, we'll sing along with some popular 60s and 70s music.

Pam Santos will share her appreciation for the volunteers who helped out with religious education this year.

June 12

Old Friends, New Connections, and the Consistency of Community – *Rev. David L. Helfer*

This week, as we bridge our senior youth into young adulthood, we'll reflect on what brought UUCSC this far, and the possibilities for our shared future.

A Bridging Ceremony for graduating youth will take place during the service.

June 19

I See You; I Am Here – *Rev. David L. Helfer*

These words, those of philosopher Mark Nepo, set the stage for today's service and vote.

What does it mean to see each other, fully, and where might that lead us?

After the service, there will be a special meeting of the congregation to vote on a motion to call Rev. Helfer as our settled minister.

June 26

Sweet Sorrow – *Rev. Jan Vickery Knost*

It's extremely difficult for Jan and Lorna Knost to say good-bye after two years of working with us, and it's nearly impossible for them to thank the many folks who've added to that experience with their energy, work and dedication. Let it not be said that Rev. Knost didn't try— that's what he intends to do at this service.

July 3

Money and Real Life – *Rev. Roger Jones*

Rev Roger Jones, the senior minister at the U.U. Society of Sacramento, California, will be a guest in our pulpit for this service. He readily acknowledges that we were the ones who shaped him into a minister in 1995 and 1996, while he was a seminary student and our ministerial intern.



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 (until June 5)

Betsy Dalton, President ■ Linda Whyte Burrell, Vice President

Steve Harrison, Treasurer ■ Mary Fulton, Clerk

Randi Marten ■ Elise Bender ■ Clare Sartori ■ Leah Canin

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For the Time Being . . .

by Rev. Jan Knost

A Letter to Another Era

July 4, 2016

To All Beloved of God, Anno Domine, 2116,

Greetings from your ancestors of the 21st Century. On this day, when we celebrate the beginning of a dream, we take pause to think of your future. To you who have received the bequests of the past, we can only imagine what life will be like in your world of the future.

When our forefathers fired “the shot heard ‘round the world” they were faithful to the trust they inherited from their past. We think of the high points of human vision: Pharaoh Akhenaten, who prayed to the one god, Aton, and brought his people to a better life; Micah, the prophet who foresaw a time when humanity would “beat its swords into plowshares” for world peace; Jesus, who lived and taught us to “love one another;” Martin Luther, who brought us hope ‘midst the orthodox; Channing and Parker, who lived for reforms for the betterment of humankind; and to Lincoln and King, who advanced a dream of brotherhood.

Our world has known its faults and follies. There have been tyrants, exiles, genocides created by the pride of sinful people. We’ve often killed heroes, burned our altars and books, and looked the other way. Tho’ mistakes have been grievous, we have learned.

Slowly, the spiral of history, oft’ broken in its ascent, has risen in the hearts of we who now reach across the years to the future to let you know of these simple truths. We have often cast our lot with faulty ideals, followed wrong paths, been given or led to believe what wasn’t true. Here, then, are some final thoughts given you in love.

The eternal verities remain unchanged. Problems arise from within the human heart.

Nevertheless, we have learned that humanity is inherently good. Though we’re not perfect, we are perfectible. This truth lives eternally in us and in the fact that you, too, will have discovered the beauty of the bud, the blossom, the plant which apparently wither only to re-seed the earth.

Mark this moment. Take this “Epistle from the Past” as a handclasp of challenge and hope. Break the barriers of silence that cause humankind to be a fear-filled ghost of what it might become. Move into *your* future with the torch of freedom and reason held high again. The past has spoken to you. Your future dream is in you!

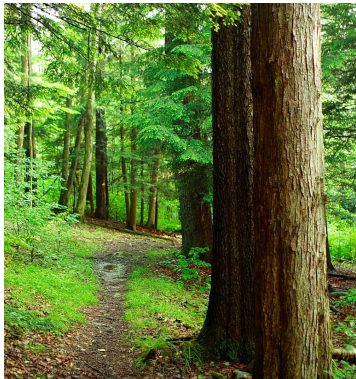
*- Jan Vickery Knost, for our generation
who hope for you sincerely!*

The President's Letter

For the past week now, I have been promising myself that I would sit down and write my "President's Message," and each day became filled up with other tasks, most of them UUCSC related. It should not have surprised me (and perhaps it does not surprise you), because we just have so much that is happening now in our congregation. We are in the final stretch of our ministerial search, and I know that everyone is waiting in eager anticipation to find out who our Ministerial Search Committee has identified as the person who may very well become our next settled minister. By the time you read this, the official announcement will have been made and you will have lots of information about the candidate, what his or her background and beliefs are, and the whole schedule for Ministerial Candidate Week, which will take place starting on Sunday, June 12 and continue through Sunday, June 19. After the service on June 19, all members of UUCSC will gather to vote on calling this individual as our settled minister.

This is a complex time for us, joyous and solemn, spiritual and celebratory, fearful yet brave, light-hearted and very, very serious. We are joyous that our fiercely dedicated MSC has emerged after two full years of hard work with a candidate that they are so very happy and excited about, and we are solemn in our sincere and honest desire to call the minister we are truly meant to have. We are

spiritual in our hopes to discover the person who can guide us in our personal searches for self-discovery and love, and we are celebratory about the fact that our long search may possibly be over. We are fearful about changes that we may not feel ready for, but we are brave in our desire to reach out beyond the "now" and into the future. We are light-hearted in our shared joys and undertakings with each other, and at the same time we are deeply serious in our personal and shared faith, and in our heartfelt belief in the Seven UU Principles. It is a complex time.



These next several weeks will be yet another turning point for our congregation. Many have been members of UUCSC much longer than I have, and have experienced so many UUCSC milestones personally. The calling of a new minister is one of the most important decisions that a congregation faces. The UUA provides guidance for how searching should take place, but the real work is done by the Ministerial Search Committee, and I must say that we could not have picked a better group of

individuals to carry out this task. I know that you all join with me to thank our MSC for their service, which has been above and beyond expectations. Having worked closely with the group, I know how close they have become, how supportive they have been of each other, and how focused they have been on coming to closure and not cutting any corners. They absolutely have been dedicated to bring the right candidate forward to us, one who they believe we have been destined to find. In a few short weeks, we will all have the opportunity to come to know the candidate as they have. I hope that everyone will set aside as much time as possible to participate in the multiple opportunities available to hear, meet, and interact with the candidate. It is perhaps the most important decision we will make together.

Finally, I must say a few words about our beloved Reverend Jan Knost. It's hard, because I could probably write volumes about the many ways in which Jan has helped us to heal, to grow, to develop, to feel, to love, and to truly care about each other in ways that we probably had lost for a little while. As president, I have thought of Jan as my guide, my confidant, my mentor, and my friend— and I know that my friendship with Jan, and with Lorna, too, will live on, as it will with so many of you. So I will be a little sad . . . but I am feeling excited about the future. I hope that you are, too.

In faith, Betsy Dalton

New Members

We were delighted to welcome these new members to our congregation during our New Member Ceremony on Sunday, May 22.



"I'm very happy to be part of this UU community. Everyone has been so warm and welcoming. I feel that I have found my spiritual home."

– Cindy McDonald

"We have been UUs for a long time in other places and now want to be a part of this community."

– Mary and John Miner



"We believe it is a great miracle to have been given the gift of a human life, and we are excited to be in a community that celebrates the beauty and preciousness of these gifts we share as we journey around the sun together."

– Nessa Richman and Michael Henry

Our candidate for settled minister

The Ministerial Search Committee has unanimously recommended the Rev. David L. Helfer as our next settled minister. Members and friends of the congregation will have an opportunity to meet him, speak with him, and hear him preach during Candidating Week, which begins on Sunday, June 12 and ends on Sunday, June 19.

Rev. Helfer has a unique blend of the qualities our congregation had hoped to find in a settled minister. He is a warm, spiritual leader who will be able to help us achieve the growth we want, but who will “lead from the side.” He is passionate about the social and environmental justice issues we care about, and he is enthusiastic about reaching out to our local community.

Rev. Helfer earned a bachelor’s degree in English literature from George Washington University in 1989, a master’s degree in environmental management and policy from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1994, and a master’s degree in business administration from the University of Maryland in 2002.



After two decades of work in the environmental field, mitigating the impacts associated with power production, he decided to change careers. He earned a master’s degree in divinity from Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California in 2012, and is currently a student in Claremont’s Doctor of Ministry program in Spiritual Renewal, Contemplative Practice and Strategic Leadership.

Rev. Helfer was admitted to preliminary fellowship by the Unitarian Universalist Association in 2013, and was ordained by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills, Mass. in 2014. He is a trainer in the UUA’s Beyond Categorical Thinking program, a member of the panel of the Unitarian Universalist Fund for a Just Society, and twice has been a presenter at the UUA General Assembly.

On the topic of climate change and other social justice issues, Rev. Helfer has faith that the inclusivity, dedication, and passion of Unitarian Universalism can, in fact, save the world. He joins us from a place of utter joy, ready to work collaboratively toward building a beloved community with everyone in our congregation and in the larger community. The Ministerial Search Committee believes he will inspire us and work with us to grow, stretch, imagine, and effect positive

change.

Rev. Helfer is a transgender man who is engaged to be married in the fall. His fiancée, a woman who grew up in Southern Rhode Island, has two teenage sons. Having lived and worked in Massachusetts, New York, the District of Columbia, Southern California, and Washington State, Rev. Helfer is thrilled to be making his home permanently in New England, and especially in Rhode Island.

A special meeting of the congregation will take place on Sunday, June 19, immediately after the service, to vote on whether to call Rev. Helfer as our settled minister.

What is “candidating”?

The terms “candidate” and “candidating” have long been used in Unitarian Universalist circles. For those who may find these terms unclear, here are a few words of explanation.

The “candidate” is the minister our Ministerial Search Committee has chosen for the pastoral leadership of the congregation. “Candidating” is the process by which the congregation meets the candidate and, as far as possible in the time available, becomes acquainted with his or her personality and professional capabilities. At the end of the candidating period, a business meeting of the congregation is held, at which members vote to ratify or to reject the search committee’s choice. During this “candidating” week, our candidate will deliver the Sunday sermons on June 12 and June 19. Between those dates, members and friends will have a number of opportunities to meet and talk with the candidate.

Keep in mind that the candidate will not present a program of any kind at the various meetings that have been scheduled. Instead, he will be listening and getting to know us and our concerns and interests. There are two main purposes behind the activities chosen for candidating week. The obvious one is for us to meet and get to know the candidate. Equally important is the opportunity afforded the candidate to meet us and learn about our committees, our practices, and our whole operating structure.

We look forward to this enlightening process and hope you will all join us in welcoming our candidate.

– Amber Collins, for the Search Committee



Religious Education News and Events

By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

Discovering Simple Wonders over the Summer Months

It is true that traditionally UU congregations do not hold Religious Education classes for children over the summer months. Yet that should not keep us from learning, exploring, and making incredible discoveries on our own. Here are some ideas for families to do together over the summer.

Keep a record of different kinds of butterflies you see
Take a new hike every week
Create your own prayer for the world
Plant a garden
Make a village of fairy homes in your back yard
As a family, work on a community service project together
Dance
Invite another UU family over for a cookout
Watch the sun rise over the ocean
Camp out under the stars
Come to church on a Sunday morning— services will continue!
Visit someone who could really use a visit, and bring them cookies
Together, learn one of the hymns from the hymnal
Read a book together
Have a picnic in a big field
Do a science experiment
Meet someone who is completely different than yourself
Find a bird nest
Walk barefoot in a river
Share your thoughts and ideas about the creation of all things
Experience joy every day

I look forward to seeing everyone in the fall, when we will celebrate community and wonder together again.

Upcoming Dates in RE

June 5th - RE Volunteer Appreciation

Community Service - Planting our backyard garden

June 12th - Bridging Ceremony for our seniors

June 19th - RE End of the year party! Last day of RE.

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



South County Contra Dance

Saturday, June 11

7:00 to 10:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Live music by the South County Old Time Jammers

Dance caller: Paul Wilde • A donation of \$5 to \$10 is suggested.

