

THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 24 ISSUE 3

MARCH 2015



March Services



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

March 1

A Sermon on the A-mount – *Rev. Jan Knost*

At the request of our Stewardship Committee, Rev. Knost will address an issue vital to this congregation's vitality and future—the annual canvass. UUCSC is currently at a crossroads in its history. In the Fall, the Ministerial Search Committee will complete the packet of materials to send out to potential candidates to become UUCSC's settled minister. What they are able to offer in the ministerial “package” will depend heavily upon how the members and friends respond to this need.

March 8

“It's about time!” – *Joan Youngken*

With the biannual ritual of changing the clocks— an illusion that we can regulate time—we'll reflect on time as a non-renewable resource, and on how we use it as an important element in our spiritual lives.

March 15

How Did We Get This Way? – *Rev. Jan Knost*

Permit Rev. Knost to take us back in our denomination's history to trace the earliest efforts to consolidate the American Unitarian Association (AUA) and the Universalist Church of America (UCA). He will also share his own memories of that happening. It has been fifty-five years since he witnessed that happy event. Be prepared to join him on a reverie of remembering.

March 22

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.

March 29

Children's Service

An intergenerational service with the children in the Religious Education program.

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

Sunday Brunch with guests from Masjid Al-Hoda on March 8

On March 8, we'll host members of Masjid Al-Hoda (the Mosque of Guidance) at our Sunday service, followed immediately by a Sunday brunch. To insure that the food conforms to Islamic dietary laws, the brunch will not be a potluck. The Men's Group will prepare the meal.

Members and friends of UUCSC are invited to attend. If you plan to be there, please reply to uucscsocialevents@gmail.com or to the church office (783-4170) by Tuesday, March 3 so the Men's Group will have an accurate count for shopping and cooking. If you would like to help the Men's Group cook or clean up, please e-mail Steve Harrison at chefsteve@cox.net.

For the Time Being . . .

by Rev. Jan Knost

Shortly before this most unpleasant weather situation, I met with my Transition Team. The initial question was, "Do you have any concerns to share with this committee where we can help?" I replied that things were going well generally, but that there was one thing that was bothering me. It had to do with my trying to limit my working time to 20 hours a week.

No matter the situation, folks feel their project is important to them (and I don't blame them), but I can't attend everything. When one adds up the time spent at the office and on Sundays, not to mention sermon preparation, reading and answering countless e-mails, pastoral calls, staff meetings, etcetera, it is difficult to keep to a 20 hour per week time. Frankly, it's a lot more.

Thus, with the support of our Transition Team, I am writing this letter to you to assist me in identifying ways we might reduce this pressure. I don't think it is fair to you or to Lorna and myself to exceed the contractual agreement even though the needs are there, to be sure.

Our Stewardship Committee is working toward making it possible for this wonderful congregation to have a full time minister who would be able to assume more duties and address these needs. As a caveat to this happy eventuality, as your membership grows, the task will take on new avenues of importance for your settled minister to consider.

Here are a few suggestions to reach this goal of reducing my schedule. We need to identify meetings I should attend every month (Board of Directors, Transition Team, Stewardship, Staff, Pastoral Concerns). All other committees can request my presence ahead of time for specific meetings where they need my input. Chairpersons could refrain from copying me on every e-mail. Just send me a brief summary of decisions. Finally, when an organizer of a church activity or evening wants me to attend, plan the event at a time that keeps my office hours in mind. (Wednesdays 3 to 9 and Thursdays 10 to 12).

One more fact needs to be stated. I truly enjoy the privilege of working among you and would never knowingly hurt any feelings regarding important programs. Just give me a call and we can discuss any issues or requests you might have.

With love and sincerity,

"The Rev"

(P.S. Sure missed being in the pulpit on February 15th!)

The President's Letter

This month's President's Letter is a shared endeavor with our Vice President, Betsy Dalton, who will become President in June. While her term doesn't officially begin until then, there are important issues coming up next year that need our attention now. In order to have a transition that is as seamless as possible, we are blending our thoughts in this letter to focus on the primary task of the Interim time, preparing to call a settled minister.

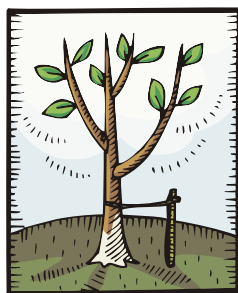
Two critical decisions must be made this year as we begin our March Pledge drive:

1. Do we need a full time minister?
2. Can we afford a full time minister?

Members and friends will have an opportunity to voice an opinion on the second question in the coming month, and the means to be heard is through your pledge card. Our Stewardship Committee has been working diligently on this year's canvass, which is our main source of funding for the operations of the UUCSC. They will be providing ample information on the financial requirements to fund our current level of operations as well as the additional money needed to hire a full time minister. Currently we have a half-time minister who has been giving more than what would be considered half-time service. We must not expect to find a settled minister who will do the same.

Calling a settled minister will be a new experience for many of us, including our President next year. Much of the work is being done by the Ministerial Search Com-

mittee. They have taken on a nearly full-time job that will span almost two years. They must prepare the informational packet that will provide potential candidates with the picture of who we are and what our community has to offer. This packet will be posted to the UUA in late fall, and open for candidate review in December. The Ministerial Search Committee will do extensive



screening and interviewing of candidates during January 2016. If they find a likely candidate, they will invite him or her to visit us for a week during May 2016, including two Sundays. The candidate will preach two sermons and will experience a whirlwind of meetings so we can get to know each other. At the conclusion of that "Candidating Week," we will vote at a special congregational meeting to decide if we will call that candidate as our next settled minister.

This leaves us with the question of whether we need a full time minister. As your current and future leaders of the congregation, our answer is a resounding "Yes, we do!" During the past year, the Board and the congregation have truly come together—we have gone through a difficult yet valuable first year of Interim,

and in so doing have experienced a process of self-growth, both individually and with each other, and we have emerged as a community that has reaffirmed our love of each other and of the UUCSC. With this feeling of spiritual optimism, we are convinced that many fabulous candidates will be drawn to our beloved community. However, if we are going to continue on this path of growth as a faith community, we believe we will need a full time minister in the pulpit.

Much of the minister's work is not readily apparent to congregation members. In addition to delivering Sunday sermons, there is the extensive preparation for those sermons, involvement with committees, pastoral care, and outreach to the wider community. To continue our expanded service to both our congregation and to the wider community, we must have a full time minister to lead us. The most qualified candidates will likely be looking for full time positions that offer competitive salaries.

Both of us are honored to serve as your Presidents, current and future. Now is the time to consider your own financial commitment to the church and the congregation that you love, and that loves you. This month is the time for real action. We CAN do this—but we can only do this together. Help with your financial commitment and be a part of building a great future for the UUCSC.

– Betsy Dalton, Vice President
& Steven M. Harrison, President

What comes next in our search for a settled minister?

Since the congregation's vote in November to extend our search another year, the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) has continued to meet twice a month and has spent hundreds of hours writing the content of our Congregational Record and information packet. In very broad brush strokes, this is what we anticipate:

June 2015 – Based on the results of our upcoming pledge campaign, the Board will determine the compensation we can offer our next minister. The MSC will draft a Ministerial Agreement and propose it to the Board.

October 2015 – The MSC will finalize the Congregational Record, a summary of what is important about us and a description of the minister we seek.

November 2015 – The MSC will offer a Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop to the entire Congregation to help us identify and deal with any prejudices that may interfere with calling the best candidate for us. The MSC will finalize our information packet, a greatly expanded version of our Congregational Record.

December 2015 – The Congregational Record “goes live” and is shared electronically with all ministerial candidates.

January 2016 – The MSC learns which ministerial candidates are interested in UUCSC and exchanges information packets with those candidates. The MSC identifies the top three or four candidates.

February 2016 – The MSC invites top candidates for pre-candidating weekends, during which committee members observe each candidate preach in a neutral pulpit and get to know the candidate, and vice versa.

March 2016 – The MSC performs extensive research on the candidates, checking references and reviewing information from the UUA.

April 2016 – The MSC makes an offer to its top candidate at noon on the first Thursday in April. That candidate spends a week in May with the congregation, including preaching on two Sundays. The congregation votes on whether to call that candidate.

Now we hope to continue to learn from you—we only represent you and only search for the candidate you want. So your input is critical. Look for our Suggestion Box in the Oneto Community Room and, if you like, use our Virtual Suggestion Box, which will be introduced in the Weekly E-News. Next month, we hope to use this space to answer all of the questions we have received.

– *Gratefully, Your Ministerial Search Committee*

Fair trade foods now on sale to benefit UUCSC

As a cooperative venture with Equal Exchange Fair Trade, the Green Task Force and the Social Action Committee have launched a program to sell fair trade items directly to UUCSC members, with the profits going to the congregation.

This cooperative program, which already includes many other UU congregations, buys fair trade food items directly from the small-scale farmers around the world. Equal Exchange Fair Trade pays the farmers a fair price for their goods, and then sells the goods directly to non-profits at a reasonable price, eliminating the cost of a middleman. We then sell the goods to you with a moderate mark-up. The prices are competitive with what you would pay in a local store for the same item. In addition to feeling pleased that we are supporting these small-scale farmers and producers through our purchases, we can also feel good about the fact that when we buy these goods, the entire profit will be passed along as a donation to UUCSC.



The start-up funds for this project came from the Green Task Force and the Social Action Committee. We look forward to providing you with an opportunity to “do good,” enjoy excellent food items, and donate to UUCSC, all at the same time!

Our Equal Exchange Fair Trade organic coffee, tea, cocoa, and chocolate bars will be available for you to purchase every Sunday during coffee hour in the Oneto Community Room.

– Essjay Foulkrod & Lisa McHenry, co-chairs

Do we really need a full-time minister?

You may have heard people talking about our need to increase the salary we will be able to pay our next settled minister. But you might be having a difficult time picturing how it would affect you and your family.

What would a full-time minister do that a part-time minister can't do? Would you even notice the difference? These are some (but not all) of the important things a full-time minister would do:

- Prepare sermons.
- Plan and conduct worship services.
- Conduct marriage ceremonies, funerals, memorial services, and child dedication services, and participate in ordination ceremonies for other clergy.
- Keep vital records, including the congregation's birth, child dedication, membership, marriage, and death records and the marriage records required by state law.
- Provide support, including emergency support, to people experiencing crises such as illness, bereavement or family breakdown.
- Refer people to community support services.
- Visit sick and elderly members of the congregation to provide counsel and comfort to them and their families.
- Develop and maintain relationships and networks with other UU clergy and with clergy of other faiths in our area.
- Assist in coordinating, training, and advising volunteers for church, community and youth leadership.
- Take part in community service activities and develop and maintain relationships with community leaders.
- Supervise discussion groups, retreats, and seminars, and provide instruction on spiritual and theological topics.
- Attend board of directors meetings, committee meetings, and other congregation gatherings.
- Study and research theological and denominational issues.
- Provide encouragement and advice to the organizers of congregational programs and events.
- Supervise and assist in the operation of the church office and other administrative duties and coordinate with the RE director, the music director, and other staff members.



Right now, Rev. Jan Knost, our interim minister, is paid for a 20-hour work week, but he actually works substantially more than 20 hours because he has found it virtually impossible to accomplish everything he needs to do each week in 20 hours. He spends 8 hours a week keeping office hours. He preaches twice a month, which requires between 5 and 10 hours of preparation time. He takes telephone calls at home, including emergency calls, and counsels and visits with congregation members. And he attends as many meetings as he can manage.

There's something else to consider when we're thinking about what kind of minister we want. Most ministers who are looking for a congregation are looking for a full-time job. The number who are looking for a part-time job is much smaller. The larger the compensation package we can offer a potential minister, the larger the pool of potential ministers will be, and the greater the number of candidates from which we'll be able to choose.

The Finance and Stewardship Committees have estimated that each pledging unit (a family or an individual) will have to increase its current pledge by 25% for the congregation to afford to pay a full-time minister. Keep in mind that a considerable number of members and friends do not pledge. They might put a few dollars in the collection plate on Sundays, but they're not covering what it costs us to have them here. If they became pledging members or friends, the rest of us would not have to increase our pledges as much. Do you know someone who falls into this category? Maybe you should gently remind him or her that this is a group effort. Unlike many places of worship, we don't require members to pledge or pay dues. But we have expenses that must be covered, and when some people don't share in the responsibility of meeting those expenses, the burden falls proportionally harder on others.

How important is it to you to be able to look forward to hearing a well-composed, well-delivered, thought-provoking sermon on Sunday? How important is it for you to be able to call the minister on the phone and speak to him or her that day or the next day? Would a minister's presence have a positive influence on your committee meetings or your efforts to develop new church programs?

Will we be a more functional, more joyous, more satisfied congregation if we have a full-time settled minister? It's up to you.

– Peter Himmel, for the Stewardship Committee



Religious Education News and Events By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

A Child's Sense of Wonder

My UU grandmother, Georgiana MacArthur Hansen, never lost the ability to wonder at life's simple joys. She shared her insights through photography and poetry. In a book she published, she wrote a poem about her young granddaughter Pam (that's me!). I would like to share this poem, as I feel she captures the sense of wonder that all children possess, and that we as adults wish we were able to retain.

Pam

*She who steps as light as air
Finds her treasures everywhere
Downy feathers, fossiled stones
An ancient weather whitened bone
Tiny lizards, dainty frogs,
Repellent creatures under logs
And through her wonder widened eyes
Each day I see a new surprise
I know how fortunate I am
To spend a day with little Pam.*

During times when I think adults have lost this sense of wonder, I look at those within our congregation who are able to openly ponder the big questions, knowing that none of us truly has the answers. So why not wonder? Ponder creation, dream about our connection to each other and to nature, daydream about what happens to our energy after our bodies fail, wonder about it all. Who knows what is possible?

This sense of wonder is what will be reflected at our first Children's Service on Sunday, March 29. If your child, or grandchild, is interested in participating in this service please contact me. There are many ways to be involved, and all children are welcome.

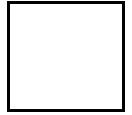
Coming Events in RE

March 1 - Service Sunday - Making a meal for Welcome House

March 20 - Senior Youth Group hosts a Youth Conference

March 29 - Children's Service: a multigenerational worship service

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“James Reeb was martyred in the Judeo-Christian faith that all men are brothers. His death was the result of a sensitive religious spirit. His crime was that he dared to live his faith.”

– Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the memorial service
for Rev. James Reeb in Selma, Alabama on March 15, 1965

Reeb, a Unitarian Universalist minister, was viciously beaten hours after taking part in the second Selma to Montgomery march with about 45 other U.U. ministers on March 7, 1965. He was struck in the head with a club, and died two days later in a Birmingham hospital.