

THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 24 ISSUE 9

OCTOBER 2015



October Services

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



October 4

To Be Overdone is to Be Undone – *Rev. Jan Knost*

Returning to the days of yesteryear, we will enter the lives and times of the Puritans, when Unitarianism was in its infancy in this country. We will conclude with some startling caveats about continuing to grow liberal religion in this day and age. Come and visit, and explore some new horizons for our faith.

October 11

A New Manifesto for Humanism – *Rev. Jan Knost*

Humanism is the belief in the beauty, potential and ultimate source of solutions to all problems that human beings and nature create; a doctrine or way of life centered on human interests, ideals or values. Rev. Knost will discuss the implications of this philosophy and consider how its existence has impacted on orthodox and fundamentalist religion over the years.

October 18

The Search is a Spiritual Practice – *The Ministerial Search Committee*

The transformative process of our search for spiritual leadership is revealing.

What have we learned and what is the path that lies ahead?

After the service we'll repeat the "Theological Statements" exercise we did last spring, and we'll have a question and answer forum with the Search Committee and the Board of Directors.

October 25

America's Taliban – *Rev. David Weissbard*

Jesus of Nazareth is said to have asked, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" Rev. Weissbard would not suggest that the Muslim Taliban represent a "speck," but he thinks we seem to have difficulty recognizing the danger represented by their American cousins who seek to do to us what the Taliban have done in their culture, and are showing some progress toward their goal.

The Rev. David Weissbard, a native of Albany, N.Y., earned his bachelor's and master of divinity degrees at The St. Lawrence University in Canton, N.Y. Now retired and living in Canton, he has served congregations in Bedford, Mass., Fairfax, Virginia and Rockford, Illinois.

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.*

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Pam Santos, Religious Education Director

Michael Galib, Music Director

Kathleen Carland, Office Administrator and Calendar Keeper

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For the Time Being . . .

by Rev. Jan Knost

A writer by the name of Tony Sousa, a retired public school teacher and coach who lives in South Kingstown, wrote an op-ed commentary that was published in the Providence Journal on September 21. In it he urges his readers to consider ways to be more civil and considerate to each other. I found it an exemplary effort, and here's why.

All of us, I am sure, experience instances where folks are just plain inconsiderate of others. They seem to feel, and believe, that theirs is the only way. That they're "entitled."

Drivers are that way. I've noticed that the operators of expensive cars sound their horns more readily and take to the roads more aggressively than is safe. It's also true of individuals waiting for anything and thinking that they count more than others. To quote a portion of Mr. Sousa's column:

Examples observed in everyday life abound . . . Motorists, lacking the proper sticker on their cars, parking in a handicapped spot. Patrons talking during a play or movie on cell phones! . . . Twenty items on a supermarket conveyor, despite the neon sign just above saying it's an express lane . . . ((One could go on!))

Entitlement. It's a word that is sadly true today. Although I'm happy to say I haven't witnessed it here at UUCSC, I'm sure its members have done so when out and about.

What is it that causes people to be so selfish and inconsiderate? Has our world, our "civilized" society, claimed a moral "low ground" when it comes to getting along? Sad to say, I believe it has. And if you don't believe me, try driving in a busy parking lot these days. Ah me! Sigh . . .

"The Rev"

How about that coffee hour?

We enjoy it; do you? To keep it happening, we need you to volunteer at least once a year. Easy? You bet it's easy. The written directions are in the kitchen and will be e-mailed to you when you sign up. Coffee hour hosts need bring no food, though you can if you want to. You will need to make regular coffee, decaf and hot water for tea, set out all the 'fixins' and then clean up at the end. Two or three people are enough for these jobs. If other congregants bring food, and we hope they do, we ask them to be responsible for plating it and taking the left-overs home. We are trying to make coffee hour an easy way to share hospitality. The sign-up clipboard will always be on the refreshments table, unless Lisa or Val is walking around with it.

Please help us keep coffee hour happening.

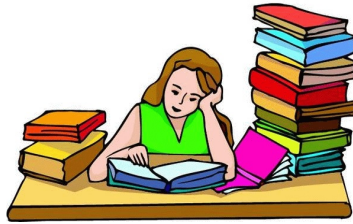
Thanks from your Hospitality Coordinators, Lisa McHenry and Val Follett.

The President's Letter

Hello everyone. Welcome to October, and welcome back to UUCSC, if you were not with us during the summer months. It looks like a beautiful year to come—one that is filled with hope and anticipation for our congregation, as we ready ourselves for the search we are about to begin in earnest for a new settled minister. We are truly fortunate, since as we move into this year-long search we do so with the support and guidance of Rev. Jan, whose loving and caring nature has permeated throughout our community and changed our spiritual lives. Transitioning to a new minister will be bitter-sweet for me (and perhaps for you, too), since we have come to love Rev. Jan very much and will miss him in so many ways. But as my father would say to me, "Change is one thing you can always count on." I agree with him. Change is one thing that we can count on, as sure as the rising of the moon and the movement of the tides. Some of us anticipate and embrace change; others don't. Many may accept change as a reality of life, and some may fear it. Wherever you are in your feelings about change, I would remind you of two other, very basic things that you can count on: yourself, and each other.

As a girl growing up in New Jersey, I lived in a typical suburban town. I was one of three children, two girls and a boy. At that time it was unusual for women to hold full-time jobs away from the home if they had a family, but my mother was a high school teacher in Newark for more than 35 years. Louise grew up in the heart of the depres-

sion, but she had a very forward thinking father who believed that women, too, should have the



opportunity for higher education. Perhaps this was because he worked his whole life at the Thomas and Betts factory, making and later supervising the manufacturing of industrial tapes of every shape, size, and kind. He believed that there was a life out there for his daughter beyond the factory or basic housework. In another life my grandfather, Charlie Flagge, would have gone to college himself and had a different career, I'm sure. I knew him as a brilliant and resourceful man, one who was self-educated and as clever as they come. He could make anything, build anything, repair anything. One thing that I remember about my grandfather is that he always read the Reader's Digest. He would love "Word of the Day." He was always seeking to learn and to expand himself, even as he went to work each day in an urban New Jersey factory. He was an independent man, and he raised (along with my grandmother, which is a story I'll save for another time) an independent daughter, and she went on to give birth to and raise an independent daughter. Why do I share this story from my life? Well, I suppose it's to offer one person's experience in growing up and learning to count on myself—

to have the self-confidence to know that I can do things on my own, that I can make decisions, that I can handle what comes around the corner that was not expected, that life is a process of change. But one thing that is steady is my knowledge and confidence in myself. Perhaps my story makes you think about yourself, your own family, your own life, and your own path toward believing in yourself.

There is another part of the picture, however, that we have not talked about yet, and that is the confidence that we have in each other.

As a congregation, we have come together for many, seemingly-different reasons. Some seek spiritual connections, some seek personal support, some seek social action, and some seek cultural enrichment—but I would propose that we all share a common desire to be part of something that is bigger than ourselves: a Community. I looked up the definition of community and found this: "A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals." This definition fits our UUCSC quite well, I think. I know that I feel that feeling of fellowship as I look out into your faces each Sunday from choir and that joyful feeling comes rushing in. Ours is a beautiful community—a beloved community. We have a big year ahead of us and together, we can embrace the changes that are coming, and rejoice in them.

In faith,
Betsy Dalton

Where would you put your sticker?

As part of our ongoing effort to determine the theological attitudes of our congregation, the Ministerial Search Committee conducted a “theological statements exercise” at the service on May 24.

Inside each Order of Worship was a strip of five circular stickers. Fourteen positive statements that could apply to someone’s personal theology were written in large letters and posted around the sanctuary in random order. Each person was asked to put the stickers on the statements that best described his or her beliefs. All stickers could be put on one statement, or they could be distributed among different statements. A person who didn’t see a statement he or she felt strongly about could write down his or her own statement and put stickers on it. One person chose that option.

Seventy-six people were present. The number of stickers used added up to seventy-two participants. Here’s how the stickers were distributed:

The concept of God has meaning for me. 27

I don't believe in God. 5

I don't know if there is a God. 12



There is more to life than what we can see. 48

Our UUCSC rituals have meaning for me. 35

I like to hear Bible-based themes in sermons. 0

I like to hear Earth-based themes in sermons. 34

Jesus is an inspiration to me. 9

Nature is an inspiration to me. 59

Music is an inspiration to me. 50

I consider myself a Buddhist. 9

I consider myself a humanist. 25

I consider myself to be Jewish. 4

Social justice is an important part of my beliefs. 43

Many people said they found it difficult to choose only five statements. Although frustrating, this challenge made participants choose carefully.

We arranged this exercise to get a clearer picture of our theological leanings, especially as they apply to worship topics. We want to know ourselves so that we are better able to provide meaningful worship, and so we can show a new minister a snapshot of who we are.

Thank you to all who participated. We will repeat this exercise immediately following the Ministerial Search Committee Service on October 18.

– Amber Collins, for the Committee

Equal Exchange Fair Trade coffees, teas, cocoas on sale every Sunday



Equal Exchange Fair Trade coffees, teas, and cocoas are again available for sale every Sunday at Coffee Hour in the Community Room. We have seven varieties of coffee, four types of tea, and two different selections of cocoa in stock. We are proud to be a partner of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee as a supporter of these farmers’ cooperatives that produce these coffees, teas, and cocoas, and we are pleased that all of our profits (40% of sales) are donated to UUCSC. See you soon!

– Essjay Foulkrod, Pam Brightman & Lisa McHenry

ENRICH at UUCSC begins again on Tuesday, October 20

Did you miss out on traveling abroad when you were younger? Didn't have a "gap year"? Are you young, or young at heart, and still want to travel affordably?

On Tuesday, October 20 at 7:00 p.m., Gail Burchard will talk about the connections she has made with others around the world that have enabled her to learn about different cultures by traveling and volunteering. Gail says that to do what she did, you don't need a lot of money— you just need to be in relatively good health, be somewhat of a risk-taker, and have the desire to visit

unfamiliar places and help others.



Gail, a UUCSC member, is a registered nurse. She began working as a flight attendant in 1963. She has continued to travel and volunteer inside and outside the United States, and operate a women's retreat in Vieques, Puerto Rico, while working

and raising her family.

Gail's talk is the first in this year's ENRICH adult enrichment series. The talks will take place on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The series will resume in January, with talks each month through May.

If you have a topic you're passionate about and would like to talk about as part of the ENRICH series, or if you would like to suggest a topic that might be of interest to the UUCSC community, please get in touch with Betsy Cook at 284-2906 or nlr_betsycook@outlook.com

Beyond Categorical Thinking

"Beyond Categorical Thinking" is the name of a workshop we'll present on Saturday, November 14 that will help us "think outside the box" when we're looking for our new settled minister. It's a highly recommended part of the search process for all congregations. Trainers from the UUA will help us examine how we can avoid letting prejudice become a part of our search process. We'll explore our hopes for, and concerns about, a new minister, learn more about the search process, and see how our history (both personal and congregational) might interfere with our efforts. Please plan to join us for this important workshop. The time will be announced.

Free screening of "Gen Silent"

Join a free screening and discussion of "Gen Silent," an award-winning documentary film about seniors who must remain in the closet or re-enter the closet out of concern for their safety or quality of life. It follows the lives of six LGBT seniors who face discrimination by caregivers or bullying by fellow seniors and must choose whether to hide their sexuality in order

to survive in the long-term-care system.

A screening of the film and a discussion about it will take place on the following dates:

Sunday, October 18 from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Channing Memorial Church, 135 Pelham St., Newport. A potluck dinner will take place before the film.

Thursday, October 30 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, One Benevolent St., Providence.

Thursday, November 12 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Woodridge Congregational United Church of Christ, 30 Jackson Rd., Cranston.

For more information, contact SAGE-RI at sageriinfo@gmail.com

"The Invisible Sun"

Our beloved Interim Minister, The Rev. Jan Knost, has offered copies of his book of poems, entitled "The Invisible Sun," for sale at UUCSC. The books are available every Sunday during Coffee Hour in the Community Room. The price is \$10.00. Rev. Knost is keeping only 40%, and donating 60% of all proceeds to UUCSC. Rev. Knost has signed each copy, and will add a dedication at your request.



Religious Education News and Events

By Pam Santos, Director of Religious Education

How to make a Religious Education Program we are all proud of

First, prepare the physical space with safety, cleanliness, and comfort.

Next, welcome sunshine, natural beauty, and connection to the great outdoors.

Bring inspiration through beautiful artwork, music, and sacred texts.

Gently introduce various belief systems, religions, and faith practices.

Be sure to include laughter, smiles, fun, and understanding.

Add a healthy dose of questioning.

Marinate in a long established tradition of social justice.

Allow to sit still for contemplation and discovery of personal direction.

Sprinkle with dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers.

And finally, share with everyone you know!

We begin our RE Program with an enthusiastic welcome to our new families.

How have new families learned about our children's programs? So often it is simply word of mouth. Families are often looking for an opportunity to get together with others to ponder big questions and allow their children to do likewise. Parents are looking for meaningful community and a safe place for their children to ask questions, and discover their own moral pathway.

Conversations about our RE program take place in the grocery store, at a soccer game, in a waiting room, while walking on the beach, or waiting for the PTO meeting to begin. These are gentle conversations, not pushy, but inviting. Sometimes folks don't know what Unitarian Universalism is, but like the idea of questioning, especially for their children. Don't be shy— if you are happy with our RE program, tell a friend! We welcome visitors and look forward to meeting newcomers.

Upcoming dates in Religious Education

Friday, October 2 - International Day of Non-Violence

Sunday, October 4 - Service Sunday - Harvesting our own garden for the food bank.

Newcomers' Potluck Dinner on October 23

Twice each year, a member of the congregation hosts a Newcomers' Potluck Dinner for those who consider themselves newcomers and would like an opportunity to meet others in the congregation in a small, informal setting. Dennis and Carla Bowman are the hosts of the Newcomers' Potluck Dinner on Friday, October 23 at 7:00 p.m. at their home at 183 Twin Peninsula Ave., South Kingstown. Please bring a dish to share. If you're planning to be there, please contact Carla at (401) 792-1116, (804) 380-9936, or cbow5@aol.com

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Theme in Yellow by Carl Sandburg

I spot the hills
With yellow balls in autumn.
I light the prairie cornfields
Orange and tawny gold clusters
And I am called pumpkins.
On the last of October
When dusk is fallen
Children join hands
And circle round me
Singing ghost songs
And love to the harvest moon;
I am a jack-o'-lantern
With terrible teeth
And the children know
I am fooling.

Carl August Sandburg (1878-1967), a Universalist, won three Pulitzer Prizes, two for his poetry and one for his biography of Abraham Lincoln.