

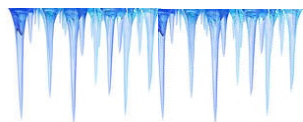


THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2018



January Services



Sunday Morning Services are at 10:00 a.m.

January 7

The Epiphany We've Been Waiting For: Faith
and Self-Determination – *Rev. David L. Helfer*

The question often arises, “. . . but who do Unitarian Universalists worship?” Today we lift up some of those who have shaped our faith tradition, as well as those on the front lines of change today.

Please join Rev. David and Bethany Vaccaro, Director of Religious Education, after coffee hour to hear about proposed service work with the junior and senior youth groups and preliminary plans for an intergenerational service trip to Puerto Rico.

January 14

Carrying the Work Forward – *Rev. David Helfer and Bethany Vaccaro, DRE*

In this multigenerational service, we honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and consider how his legacy lives on in the movements of our time.

January 21

One World, One People . . . One Story – *Teju the Storyteller*

There are seven and a half billion people on earth. That's seven and a half billion versions of the same story. What do all those stories have in common? What do all those people have in common? How can we adjust our perspective to celebrate that?

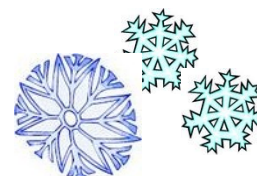
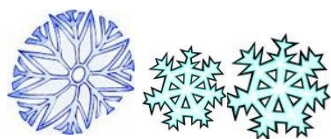
Tejumola Ologboni, a folklorist and oral historian, is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison who has taught at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and at Marquette University.

His mother and father, his grandmothers, one grandfather and one great-grandfather were storytellers, so you could say he went into the family business.

January 28

Love Across the Ages – *Rev. David Helfer*

Consider this a healthy alternative to Valentine's Day, a way to share and express some of the love we carry in our hearts. Today's service will include baby and child dedications, as well as an honoring of some of our elders.



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

REV. DAVID L. HELFER, MINISTER

Office telephone: (401) 284-3321 • e-mail: uucscminister@gmail.com

Bethany Vaccaro, Religious Education Director ■ Michael Galib, Music Director

Karen St. Peter, Office Administrator

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday

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At the Water's Edge

Rev. David L. Helfer



Dear UUCSC members and friends,

I keep thinking about the shifting of 1999 to the year 2000. It makes me think of the late great musician Prince, of course, and his much danced-to song, “1999.”

There was also a lot of apocalyptic fear that year. Computers, it seemed, hadn’t been designed to foresee the shift to the year 2000, and the public worried that the change to the new year would set off a technical cavalcade of problems ranging from the accidental release of nuclear weapons to the refusal of ATMs to issue cash.

It feels a lot like where we find ourselves now— in fear about what might be.

As 2017 winds down, there are many fighting against increasing fascism or concerns about taxes, and climate change, and immigration, and persecution of those most vulnerable among us.

These and more are real and present dangers.

This should anger you. It should scare you. And it should motivate you to do ever more to resist the authoritarian intentions of this Administration, and the space it has created for identity, racial, and economic persecution.

And yet that can't be our sole focus.

As I walk into the local yoga studio each week, I am greeted with the a sign reminding me that I am there to create peace in myself, and to extend that peace into the world.

One might think that care for one’s spirit in such times is a luxury. But that is exactly when it is most needed.

In tumultuous times, our practices of self-renewal require extra attention. And not for ourselves alone, but for a world that needs our grounded, open, and loving energy.

As we begin 2018, if any of you are standing on the sidelines, this is your call to action. The world needs you.

And for all that who are doing the work, deeply in the resistance already, I ask you to commit yourself to extra time each day to care for yourself. Know that this practice is every bit as important as the work you do in and for the larger world.

With love and hopes for the tide to turn in this new year,

Rev. David

A note from the President

One year winds to an end, and we prepare for a new one. Winter holidays are past. We are grateful for all joy and fun and happiness experienced during the Season. Hopefully, we've been able to forgive and move beyond any hurt or sadness that was endured.

New beginnings, and continuation of any good in our lives, is ahead of us. Let us all avoid resolutions and promises likely to fade from consciousness during the first weeks of the year. Rather, let us consider what part we played in any negativity of the past year. What action—or inaction—did we contribute to the suffering of others, or ourselves? What change in our own behavior

or thinking can minimize negativity?

What good, what pleasure, what fun did we have during the year? Again, what did we contribute? Our ability to create, or allow, positive energy in our lives is what we want to nurture and increase.



My wish for the new year? Increased awareness of everything in our lives. Especially, awareness of our power to influence whatever

we experience.

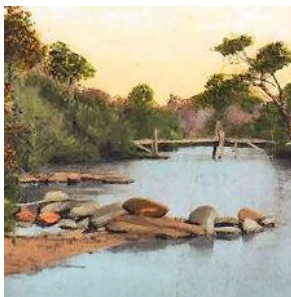
There is a Buddhist koan in which a person is chased by a tiger. To escape, the person jumps off a cliff and grabs onto a root which is growing out of the cliff face. The tiger is looming above. A fatal fall awaits below. As the person is facing imminent death, he notices a strawberry growing on the cliff face. He picks it and eats it. How sweet it tastes!

And so in our lives, may we be aware of the immediate beauty. May we each, regardless of all that is going on around us, have an attitude which recognizes and appreciates the present beauty, whether strawberry or cloud formation.

– Linda Whyte Burrell

Narrow River Preservation Association is our January Share the Plate partner

Narrow River, also known as the Pettaquamscutt River, is a seven-mile-long tidal inlet connected by a narrow channel to a series of kettle basins fed by a small stream. Since 1970, Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) has worked to preserve the river's rich biodiversity of animal and plant life and protect the quality of life in the estuary and watershed.



The nonprofit association's work includes an extensive river monitoring program in which volunteers test water at fourteen sites on the river and its freshwater inputs; educational programs and recreational events that build awareness of the watershed and the need to protect its environment; public outreach through publications, speakers, a newsletter, a website, and social media; and support of and cooperation with other non-profit environmental and cultural groups in the three watershed towns of South Kingstown, Narragansett, and North Kingstown.

NRPA (<http://narrowriver.org/>) is our Share the Plate recipient for January and February. Half of the collection at our service on Sunday, January 7 will go to the NRPA.

Our congregation welcomes nine new members

We welcomed nine new members to our congregation in a New Member Ceremony during the service on Sunday, December 10. A reception with cake and coffee took place after the service. Here's what they said when we asked them why they decided to join us.



"I've been searching for a community of like-minded people for many years and always came back to Unitarian Universalist churches. I've been coming to UUCSC with David Damon since August and feel that this is where I belong. – *Elaine Airoso*

"I came to the UUCSC this past spring seeking a spiritual community where my strengths and weaknesses are accepted and I am welcomed and appreciated for who I truly am. I have come home. Thanks for welcoming me to the UUCSC." – *Dave Damon*



"I'm interested in joining UUCSC because it's so nice to be a part of a community that's open, welcoming, caring and that uses its energy and resources to help others." – *Jessica Avizinis*



"I look forward to being a part of loving and accepting community that is always willing to learn and grow." – *Ed Avizinis*



"In finding your congregation, I've found a place where dogma does not govern religion, where everyone is welcome and where faith and freedom co-exist in perfect harmony." – *Betty Bogutt*

"I came to UUCSC because I found out I was dying. I join UUCSC because it is a community in which I live." – *Dorothy Devine*



"I came here looking for a spiritual connection, and found a welcoming and enthusiastic community. I look forward to joining with you all spiritually and personally, and to contributing to the work of the congregation." – *Jody Ferland*



"We were drawn to this church in response to these challenging political times. We feel at home with the values of the congregation, and leave Sunday services feeling uplifted and replenished." – *Tom and Dorie Lawson*

Help fill "blessing bags"

Beginning on January 7, the children in the Religious Education program will collect items to fill "blessings bags" for the homeless. At our annual Poverty in the Pulpit Sunday on February 4, the children will share the bags with the congregation for distribution. Please put your donations in the box next to the RE bulletin board in the Oneto Community Room. We've found that many items often included in these bags are not the most useful items for this population, so we've done some research about their needs and compiled a list of items to include and items to avoid.

Toiletries - YES: Travel-size baby wipe packs, lip balm, lotion, sunscreen. NO: Soap, hand sanitizer, mouthwash, shampoo. **Food** - YES: Applesauce, pudding cups, trail mix, beef jerky. NO: Crunchy granola bars, sticky food, candy. **Miscellaneous** - YES: Travel coffee mugs, gift cards. NO: Cash, used items, literature.

A letter from Johnnie Rodriguez about “Music ‘n’ More at Lily Pads”

Dear UU friends,

Our Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair last month created a real sense of community, and I have a dream that something similar can happen with our performance series, “Music ‘n’ More at Lily Pads.” I strongly believe that this series can accomplish all of the things the holiday fair did— raise money for UUCSC, draw our members together to work for a common purpose while having lots of fun, and attract outside community members to learn about UUCSC.

There are many ways you can help make this endeavor a success. Here’s what’s needed:

- Someone who knows how to manipulate graphics and text to make a poster for each show.
- Someone who can help put up lights.
- Someone who understands the sound system and can make it work correctly.
- Someone who can round up young strength to put the stage together, under David Floyd's supervision the first time around.
- People to move chairs, if there's dancing.
- People to take tickets and make refreshments.
- People to deliver posters around the South County towns and talk to friends about attending. This is absolutely crucial (and easy!).
- People to serve on a Music at Lily Pads Committee that will make programming and operating decisions.

Our first performance of 2018 will be "I've Got a Song," on Sunday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m., featuring stories and music from Nancy Hood and Barry Brown about Hood's childhood during the McCarthy era. This living history spans the mid-1940s to the early 1960s.

I can book the events, and I can make contact with the media. But I need all the help you can muster to make it all happen! – *Johnnie Rodriguez*

Share a meal and help women in developing countries

Dining for Women, a non-profit organization, provides grants to organizations and projects in developing countries that promote gender equality. The money comes from members of local chapters who meet regularly to share a meal. A new local chapter is forming now. Gail Burchard has volunteered to become the chapter leader, with Val Follett and Kate O’Kula as co-leaders. An informational meeting will take place at UUCSC on Wednesday, February 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Women's March at State House on Saturday, January 20

Women from around the country made history in January 2017 by coming together for the Women's March on Washington. To mark that historic event, another march is scheduled for Saturday, January 20, 2018 from noon to 2:00 p.m. at the Rhode Island State House.

On January 7, the children and youth in the RE program will discuss participation in the women’s march and learn about protesting in peaceful ways. If you are interested in joining the children and youth in making signs for the march, please contact RE Director Bethany Vaccaro at uucsdre2@gmail.com.

If you plan to attend the march, carpooling will be available at the UUCSC parking lot at 10:00 a.m. Please contact Jean Bowen at jeannbowen@gmail.com to let the Social Justice Team know you’ll be going.



Religious Education News and Events

By Bethany Vaccaro, Director of Religious Education

Dear Families and Friends at UUCSC,

Community is a dynamic force. I like to think of it as a verb, rather than a noun. When we DO community, when we are IN community, what happens?

In the coming year, Rev. David, the RE Committee, the Worship Committee, and I will be collaborating on a number of multi-generational services, in which RE kids will remain “upstairs” for the whole service. This is the creation of community, and the living enactment of our commitment to the value of each person. But a different routine can always bring extra challenges. And in case there is any anxiety about what to expect, I'd like to share some helpful tips.

Guide to the Multi-Generational Service

In a “multi-gen,” kids are often invited to the front, and to participate in several ways.

The goal is not for the children to perform or display any kind of excellence, but rather to contribute to worship in a way that is heartfelt and meaningful for everyone.

Families, do not worry if you arrive late; you are welcome at any time!

Kids are invited to sit in front, but are not required to. If they (and their families) come to the front, they do not have to remain up front and are welcome to return to a pew at any time.

Do not worry if your kids make noise. We use a variety of tools to keep the kids engaged, including coloring, “busy boxes,” and facilitated participation in the service. Every multi-gen is a learning experience and we will work to remove any stress from the experience.

Additionally, the Nursery is always open and staffed by loving friends who will happily play with babies and toddlers. Parents are welcome to drop their kids off in the Nursery or welcome to stay if they wish.

There may be growing pains as we all feel our way into the best practices for our multi-gens, but it's an exciting journey to be on together! I so appreciate the cocoon of community that is wrapped around our kids at UUCSC. I'm proud to be part of a group that not only says our kids are valued, but acts that way too!

Be well,
Bethany

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Gather the stars if you wish it so
Gather the songs and keep them.
Gather the faces of women.
Gather for keeping years and years.
And then . . .
Loosen your hands, let go and say good-bye.
Let the stars and songs go.
Let the faces and years go.
Loosen your hands and say good-bye.*

Carl Sandburg

Carl August Sandburg (1878-1967) won three Pulitzer Prizes, two for his poetry and one for his biography of Abraham Lincoln. A Universalist, he was born in Galesburg, Illinois on January 6, 1878.