



# The South County UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

Volume 27 Issue 3

MARCH 2018



## March Services



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

March 4

### You Don't Have to Fix the World! – *Rev. David L. Helfer*

Sometimes, Unitarian Universalism feels like one big social justice group, rather than a faith community. The calls to action sometimes outnumber the opportunities for reflection.

How, then, do we balance the needs of a struggling world with our own growth?

March 11

### While on the Journey: Sensing Spirit in Times of Struggle – *Rev. Nikita McCalister*

As social justice warriors, we have a reflex to rely only on ourselves. In those moments, we don't recognize the role of Spirit, of God, in our lives. How would the journey change if we recognized that accompaniment? *Rev. McCalister, senior pastor at Bethany Baptist Church in Pawtucket, is Associate Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island. She received her B.S. from Central Michigan University, her MBA from the University of Detroit Mercy, and her Master of Divinity degree from Boston University.*

March 18

### Growing Pains, or, "Because I Said So" – *Rev. David L. Helfer*

At times, a growing congregation (or a faith tradition) feels like a hungry, growing teen— constantly hungry, resisting rules, and much more grown-up than we generally acknowledge. Let us explore, together, what trusted intergenerational shared leadership might look like, and why that matters. What, I wonder, would our

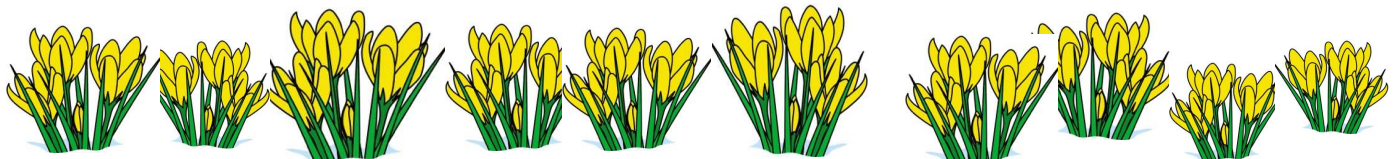
UU ancestors think of where we find ourselves now?

March 25

### My Journey from Immigrant to Legislator – *Rep. Grace Diaz*

Grace Diaz's 2004 election to the state House of Representatives from District 11 in Providence made her the first Dominican-American woman elected to state office in the United States. She will talk about what motivated her to run for office and how her work as a legislator makes a difference in the lives of others.

*Rep. Diaz immigrated to Providence in 1990. In 2008, she was appointed vice-chair of the Rhode Island Democratic Party, the first Latina woman in the state to serve in a high-ranking party position. Last year, she was appointed chair of the House Democratic caucus. She has five children and six grandchildren.*



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](mailto:kellsworth6@verizon.net)

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## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

[www.uusouthcountyri.org](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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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Betsy Dalton, Facebook manager

# *At the Water's Edge*

*Rev. David L. Helfer*



Dear UUCSCers,

On January 20th, about 100 others and I viewed “Awake: A Dream from Standing Rock,” brought to us by our Green Sanctuary team and a number of partners.

It was a beautiful and painful evening.

The evening was an unquestionable success, with Lorén Spears, Executive Director of the Tomaquag Museum, and a number of “water protectors”—those who participated in the Standing Rock protests—in attendance, answering questions, and sharing from their heart’s core the purpose and power of Standing Rock.

Like many of you, I had known of the protest encampments in opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline but really, I had only known a small sliver of the story. I watched “Awake,” heartbroken at the sheer level of police brutality. Rubber bullets, water cannons, tear gas, mace and more, all level at unarmed and peaceful protestors. Police rushing into crowds to tackle children, elders, and others who were singing, drumming, and praying for the protection of all.

This, this is the United States? And remember, we can't blame this one on 45 . . . President Obama could have, and should have, interceded on behalf of our indigenous communities.

But the truth is that this isn't new, or truly surprising. From the time of the Doctrine of Discovery (and if you don't know what this is, I'm going to make sure you do), it has been affirmed that white imperialists are supported in their raping, killing, and pillaging of our indigenous communities around the world.

Standing Rock isn't over. It has spawned non-violent protests, and water protectors, worldwide. And those who stood at Standing Rock are still suffering— from emotional and physical harm, from litigation and prosecution, and from the loss of sacred land. Underneath all of that is historical harm, the history and knowledge of the sheer brutality we wreak onto our native peoples.

Our Unitarian Universalist faith is a living faith. We are called to stand with the marginalized, ally with the oppressed, and understand that there is no hierarchy of worth. We need to live into this faith with abandon. As you've heard me quote from UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray, “This is no time for a casual faith.”

As we continue to resist the hateful laws being wrought upon so many, let us remember our indigenous neighbors and friends— of the Wampanoag, Narragansett, and Sakonnet tribes, to name but a few— who deserve our full commitment to our shared heritage. And to ending the continued destruction of those who have far more right to this land, these waters, that surround us.

With faith and love,

Rev. David

# A Note from the President

The weather is breaking! Warm days here and there. Some with sun! Winter is ending. I know. There could still be serious snow. We've all seen snow as late as May. But I'm ready for spring.

Energy is building, in the earth, and at UUCSC. Read the minutes of the Board Of Directors meetings. They are on the website, and on the bulletin board in the Oneto Community Room. There are lots of interesting things on those boards. I suppose one could read one bulletin board each time one is in the room. There is information about our congregation, about the Unitarian Universalist Association, about the South County and Rhode Island communities and about the world. There are news and announcements about individuals and organizations. Some news is that we are

going to try, again, to list birthdays each month. We've had celebrations over the years for four 90th birthdays. We missed one or two elders on January 28th, when we honored most of our Elders.



With this list of birthdays, even you 37-year-olds and 53-year-olds could receive a few e-mails or birthday hugs if we know your special day. I just found out that I share my birthday with someone in the congregation! So send an e-mail to Karen St. Peter . . . whose birthday was a few weeks ago. She will publish

birthdays in the Order of Service announcements. If you like, you can inform her of the last digit in the year you were born, so we know when you celebrate a "decade" or "round" birthday. For instance, those born in any year ending with an eight would be 10, 30, 70, etc. this year.

There are many other plans afoot for the rest of this church year ending on June 30th; and there are plans for beyond. Check out the many ways in which we share "all the news that's fit to" share: newsletter, website, E-News, Sunday announcements in the Order of Service, bulletin boards and face-to-face chats with Board members. We're telling and sharing. Hope you're reading and listening.

Peace'n'Luv to you all,  
*Linda*

## End-of-life planning information and discussion on Sunday, April 15

End-of-life planning will be the topic of discussion on Sunday, April 15 after the service. Rev. David L. Helfer will provide guidance and insights on spiritual and ethical considerations. Louis Rubenstein, M.D., F.A.C.P., Medical Director of Hospitalist Services at South County Hospital and UUCSC friend, will answer medical questions and explain how the medical profession guides patients and families when medical intervention and active treatment is no longer beneficial. Marcia J. Boyd, Esq., an attorney in private practice in the areas of elder law, probate and trusts, and a UUCSC member, will provide information on the legal aspects of end of life planning, including Health Care Power of Attorney and Living Wills, Funeral Agent Designation, and Five Wishes. There will be plenty of time for questions.



# Taking good care

Within a faith community, there is a strong desire to help each other in times of need. That is an excellent impulse.

Some years ago, two groups were created for that purpose—the Caring Connection and the Lay Pastoral Associates Team. The vision was that the Caring Connection would provide structural help where they could, in terms of meals, rides, and the like. The Lay Pastoral Associates Team was intended to provide a listening ear for those times when the minister's schedule didn't allow them to do so.

For a long time, that approach worked well.

Since I arrived, I've wondered, sometimes out loud, if this continues to be the best way for us to care for each other. Because in reality, the expectations and needs of the congregation have become outsized to the abilities of these committees to provide such

care.

It's time for us to rethink this together. I invite those interested to e-mail me, and to join me as part of a small team rethinking the parameters and processes by which we provide congregational care. Before the summer, we'll share those thoughts with the congregation.



Let me be clear: My door is open. You are always welcome to come speak with me, about anything you're holding in your heart.

I do, however, feel compelled to offer some boundaries about what the committees can offer. To the extent that the Caring Connection offers food or rides or the Lay Pastoral Associates

Team time and presence, such is a gift, not an expectation. We are by no means a social service agency, and are not able to provide care for ongoing medical or other unmet needs. If you find yourself or a loved one in a position where you need more assistance, let me know. We can provide some information on local resources that may be able to help.

We're here for you. In times of immediate crisis— illness, death, short-term crises, and visiting those homebound due to illness or age. But it is not feasible nor the purpose of faith community to provide ongoing medical or assistive care.

My prayer is that you hear these limits with love, and as the words of a minister who wants the best for each and every one of you. Sometimes, “I can't do that” are the most loving words we can offer. In faith and love,

– Rev. David

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## Path To Membership classes start March 18

Rev. David L. Helfer and the Membership Committee will begin our spring Path to Membership classes this month. These classes are for newcomers who would like to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and for those interested in becoming members of our congregation. The dates and times for these classes are:

Sunday, March 18 - U.U. History and Theology with Rev. David Helfer, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the nursery. Refreshments will be provided.

Sunday, April 8 - How Our Congregation Functions, led by the Membership Committee, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the nursery.

On Sunday, April 29, a New Member Ceremony will take place during the service. If you'd like to enroll in the Path to Membership classes or if you have any questions, please contact Carla Bowman (804-380-9936, [cbow5@aol.com](mailto:cbow5@aol.com)) or office administrator Karen St. Peter (284-2297, [uucscri@yahoo.com](mailto:uucscri@yahoo.com)). If you will need child care, please inform us when you sign up.



## Share the Plate: How we share our resources with the community

Our Share the Plate program enables our congregation to share its resources with nonprofits whose work is compatible with our goals and values. A recipient usually receives half of the collection on the first Sunday of the month for two consecutive months. Special collections sometimes take place for disasters or emergencies.

When choosing the recipient, the Social Justice Team favors local nonprofits and programs that will benefit and help grow local movements, with the additional goal of increasing our visibility in the communities from which we draw members. The emphasis is on the environment, race and culture justice, women's rights, LGBTQIA rights, and economic, disability and aging concerns.

The table below shows the donations during the past year.

Month	Recipient	Amount
January 2017	Haiti relief	\$176.50
February 2017	Crossroads Rhode Island	\$144.75
March and April 2017	Tomaquag Museum	\$487.50
May and June 2017	Domestic Violence Resource Center	\$536.50
July and August 2017	Thundermist Access Team	\$321.50
September and October	UUA & UUSC Hurricane Harvey relief	\$801.50
November and December	Planned Parenthood of Southern N. E.	\$562.00
Christmas Eve Eve 2017	The Woman Project	\$706.50
January and February 2018	Narrow River Preservation Association	\$431.50

These are the initiatives for 2018:

March and April - Race and culture justice. AMOR RI, formed in January 2017, is the Rhode Island chapter of the Alliance to Mobilize Our Resistance, a rapid response network that addresses acts of violence against individuals and general acts of state-sponsored violence such as a local ICE raids.

May and June - The environment. The Social Justice Team plans to choose a recipient that helps provide good locally-sourced foods. The following organizations are under consideration: Farm Fresh RI (<https://www.farmfreshri.org/>), Food On the Move (<https://riphi.org/food-on-the-move/>), and Northeast Organic Farming Association of Rhode Island (<https://nofari.org>).

July and August - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex issues. SAGE (<https://sage-ri.org>) addresses issues related to aging among members of the LGBT community.

September and October - Disability. Gaits of Harmony (<http://www.gaitsofharmony.org/>) is a Hopkinton-based nonprofit that provides therapeutic riding for the disabled.

November and December - Community involvement. Members of the congregation will be invited to donate gift cards from local businesses. Welcome House of South County and the Jonnycake Center of Peace Dale will distribute the gift cards to their clients.

The Social Justice Committee invites members and friends of the congregation to suggest other Share the Plate recipients who are helping to fulfill our mission. Please get in touch with Mary Alice Kimball ([maryalice9@aol.com](mailto:maryalice9@aol.com)) Essjay Foulkrod ([sjgraymare@aol.com](mailto:sjgraymare@aol.com)), or Jean Bowen ([jeannbowen@gmail.com](mailto:jeannbowen@gmail.com)).



## Religious Education News and Events

By Bethany Vaccaro, Director of Religious Education

Dear Families and Friends of RE,

It's the time of year when winter isn't quite over, but we can begin to feel the earth tingling as she moves towards spring. With the hopes of warmer weather to come, we may be feeling some extra energy and have difficulty sitting still!

With that in mind, I want to let you know about a few subtle shifts we're experiencing in RE as we continue to evolve into the kind of program that welcomes kids just as they are. It's important to me that we create a program that respects the neuro-diversity of our kids.

Some of our youngest have been enjoying the new "sensory corner" in the Nursery, with a beautiful canopy, sequined pillows (the latest and greatest go-to for busy fingers), board books, and animal friends.

In our classrooms, we're moving and shaking with songs, rhythm, and art projects. The educational world is coming more and more to understand that there is no "right" way to learn, that there are multiple forms of intelligence, and that most kids crave sensory experience and creative expression. We want RE to truly be an inclusive space for all our kids, whether or not they can sit through a traditional "lesson."

I think it's safe to say that most of us have busy lives— our kids not the least! I hope that coming to RE can be just the antidote we all need to constant stream of activities. Sunday mornings are a chance to light a candle, express our joys and concerns among caring friends, and get out the glitter as we let the creative energy take over. Over the last month, we've brought meditation and visualization into our RE time, to give our kids the tools they need in the rest of their lives to dial inward and connect to their own Divine light.

It's been a pleasure to be downstairs this month, and I'm so excited for all we have in store! Please keep these dates in mind for the month of March:

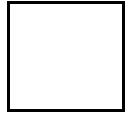
Sunday, March 4: *As a Service Sunday, kids start downstairs at 10:00 a.m.*

Sunday, March 18: *A multi-generational worship service for kids that will make UU history exciting*

We are also looking for a few extra parent volunteers to help with some upcoming special events, such as our annual May Day celebration. Please let me know if you are willing to help out!

Bright Blessings,  
*Bethany*

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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*“I despise making the most of one's time. Half of the pleasures of life consist of the opportunities one has neglected.”*

– Oliver Wendel Holmes , Jr.

Holmes served on the U.S. Supreme Court for 30 years. Born in Cambridge, Mass. on March 8, 1841, he was an active layman at First Parish (Unitarian) in Cambridge.