



THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 26 ISSUE 9

NOVEMBER 2017

November Services

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

November 5

The Christians and the Pagans, or, What are These Holidays All About?

– Rev. David L. Helfer

Borrowing this service title from one of his favorite seasonal songs, Rev. Helfer is reminded of the joy possible in our religious education. What are all these holidays late in the calendar year, where do they come from, and why should we care?

November 12

Vietnam: Fifty Years Later and Still Wondering – Bob Kerr

Everyone who went to Vietnam has tried to figure out how much of it stayed with them and how it affected the rest of their lives. Bob, who served there as a Marine from 1968 to 1969, is no exception. *Three years ago, Bob Kerr retired involuntarily from his job as a columnist at the Providence Journal, where he specialized in writing about regular folks. You can now see him occasionally on the radio.*

November 19

The Many Tales of Thanksgiving – Rev. David L. Helfer and RE Director Bethany Vaccaro

This intergenerational service will consider all the aspects of Thanksgiving. Prepare to be surprised— and grateful.

November 26

A Many-Year Journey – Bev Center

Bev, who grew up in the South, is a story teller, a profession she loves because, she says, “Seeing my listeners’ response to the characters and their generous, unusual, amusing or idiotic actions in my stories lifts my spirits.” Her life is a story in itself.



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

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

Karen St. Peter, Office Administrator

Office Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday

Board of Directors

Linda Whyte Burrell, President (2017-2019) ■ Emily Jacobs, Vice President (2017-2018)

Aline Couture, Treasurer (2017-2019) ■ Mary Fulton, Clerk (2016-2018)

Randi Marten (2016-2018) ■ Elise Bender (2017-2019)

Sally Barney (2016-2018) ■ Dave Hurdis (2017-2019) ■ Natalie Herbermann (2016-2018)

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Barbara Pagh & Etta Zasloff, Religious Education • Mary Finnegan, Personnel

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Betsy Dalton, Facebook manager

At the Water's Edge

Rev. David L. Helfer



Dear beloveds,

For the past few weeks, there's this small, intermittent thump outside my living room window. It's the sound of the acorns falling from the tall tree above and landing squarely on my car. And yes, this seems to happen no matter where I park the car!

Each morning, I get to watch the squirrels speeding around, grabbing the acorns and zooming up the trees to store their bounty. Or they stop, grab one of the random mushrooms from my lawn, and nibble away.

Some nights, the neighborhood skunk stops by, somewhere between 2 and 3 a.m., and sprays, it seems, right outside my window.

Always, I know to drive slowly down my street, because of the elderly Labrador who has decided, apparently with the neighborhood's concurrence, that he may nap anywhere, including in the middle of the street.

Of course, there's my rescue cat, Milkshake, who opens several of my cabinets each day looking for his food . . .

All this and more grounds me in place. It reminds me that this is home. It is good.

It makes me wonder, what grounds you? As the seasons shift, and we begin to head inward both physically and spiritually, what nourishes you, comforts you, and guides you?

With so much going on in the world, this matters more than ever.

There's a well-known Zen quote, "Meditate every day for an hour. If you don't have time, meditate for two hours."

I wonder if you might join me in an experiment, to that end.

Let's all turn off the radio, phone, and television. For at least an hour a day. Every day.

Whatever it is that nourishes you— be it dance or yoga or laughter with family or friends— make time for that. Let it fill and refill you.

And when November ends, check in with yourself and each other. My guess is that we will all find ourselves more centered, less fearful, and with increased resiliency.

Will you join me?

In love and acknowledging the need for self-care for us all,

Rev. David

A Note from the President

As the weather and leaves change, I think too of the changes at UUCSC. A year ago we began our new ministry with Rev. David L. Helfer. Thank you, Universe, for bringing us together!

And, as the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations advises, expect changes when a new ministerial settlement begins. After several lovely events to celebrate the 25th year of UUCSC, our wonderful Director of Religious Education, Pam Santos, announced that she would be resigning her position at the end of the church school year. A big change. Pam had served us well, restructuring our RE program and reordering our RE space. Her family of origin needed those same fine skills she possesses. Thank you, Pam, for moving our Religious Education program to such a solid state.

So, with a few months' notice we began to seek a new DRE. Advertising and interviews brought no "good fit" to us. RE committee members stepped up and stepped in to carry out the tasks of running our program, with a good deal of help from Rev David.

And then our beloved office administrator Kathy Carland got offered the job of her dreams! Having only the option of "take the job now," she left us in just a couple of weeks. A very big

shocking change! Thank you, Kathy, for years of giving so much stability and organization to UUCSC.

Rev. David put on yet another hat, and with others, kept UUCSC running surprisingly smoothly. Thank you, all, for a supreme effort!



We were then blessed to connect with the charming Karen St. Peter—who, while learning the details of UUCSC, has taken over as office administrator in a most capable and professional way. While RE continued in search for a Director, things settled down with the office regaining full efficiency.

Then our Treasurer and Past President Steve Harrison announced that he and wife Linda are selling their home and moving to warmer climes. Okay . . . another change. Thank you, Steve, for your years of leadership in two major areas of our congregational life.

This time our highly-skilled Finance Committee assessed the situation and determined that committee member Aline Couture would carry out the responsibilities of the Treasurer.

Then, as sometimes happens, another Board member resigned. Leah Canin decided that the time was right for her to move to work with the Communications Committee. Thank you, Leah, for your contributions to the workings of UUCSC.

We now have a complete Board of Directors. Aline's agreement to serve as Treasurer has been followed by Dave Hurdis's agreement to serve out Leah's term. We thank you both for your kind willingness to serve the congregation.

Change after change has occurred. While most have been unexpected and undesired, each has, of course, brought new opportunities and new energies.

None has caused insurmountable obstacles. Each has presented a hurdle that has strengthened us as a community. We are repeatedly able to change course and improvise. We pitch in and work together, finding new ways to work for the common good . . . most often with good spirits and in good humor. We truly are a loving and Beloved Community.

And like the weather and the leaves, we change and we cycle on—and like the New England weather, if you don't like something, wait a minute! It'll change!

Peace'n'Luv to All,
Linda

Local legislators to discuss issues at Social Justice forum

State Representatives Kathleen Fogarty, Carol Hagan McEntee, and Teresa Tanzi and State Senator Susan Sosnowski are scheduled to attend the UUCSC Legislative Forum on Wednesday, November 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Social Justice Team members will introduce five priority issues chosen by the Rhode Island UU Legislative Ministry—racial justice, climate change, women’s rights, gun control, and immigration— discuss some related legislation from a Unitarian Universalist perspective, and ask the legislators to discuss the issues and answer questions from the audience.

The forum is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.



You’re invited to Thanksgiving Day buffet



Thanksgiving Day is on Thursday, November 23. If you’re planning to spend the day by yourself, why not stop in at John Jackson and Vikki LePree’s buffet dinner?

Once again this year, John and Vikki will host their traditional Thanksgiving Day buffet meal beginning at 1:00 p.m. at their Green Hill home.

Everyone in our UUCSC community is invited. You may bring a favorite dish if you’d like to.

Everybody always has a great time, and John and Vikki look forward to seeing friends old and new.

Please get in touch with Vikki at vlepree@gmail.com or 793-1640 to RSVP.

Honduran human rights activist to speak at UUCSC November 7

Honduran human rights activist Gaspar Sánchez will speak at UUCSC on Tuesday, November 7 at an event co-sponsored with Witness for Peace and the Tomaquag Museum.

Sánchez is the sexual diversity coordinator for the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). He will talk about how the struggle for LGBTQ rights among Indigenous communities plays a vital role in the dismantling of patriarchal and militaristic structures. COPINH is the first Indigenous organization in Latin America to establish LGBTQ rights as a priority in its work.

Sánchez will also talk about what people in the United States can do to help COPINH and others facing repression in Honduras, including supporting the Berta Cáceres Human Rights in Honduras Act (H.R. 1299), a bill pending in the U.S. House of Representatives that would prohibit the United States from providing financial support to Honduras for police or the military until the State Department can verify that Honduras has taken specific steps to stop human rights violations by its security forces and to prosecute members of the military or police who have committed murders and other human rights abuses.

The event will take place in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public.





Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair is December 2

Our second annual Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair is on Saturday, December 2 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

This year's fair has some new features. You can have lunch (New England clam chowder, gluten-free vegetarian soup, corn bread, pizza, or mac and cheese) while you shop, and you can purchase plants and new or gently-used books, scarves and purses, jewelry, and gift items, all donated by UUCSC members.

Arts and crafts items such as paintings, photographs, wood carvings, jewelry, cards, soaps, ornaments, and origami will also be available for purchase. The Equal Exchange table will be open so you can purchase fair trade coffees, teas, and chocolates, and the baked goods table will offer a variety of goodies..

A few more vendor spaces are open. The registration deadline is Wednesday, November 16. Vendor tables are \$40 for adults and \$20 for youth. Contact Betsy Dalton at elizabethmdalton@gmail.com to register.

If you'd like to donate items for sale, contact the following: Jean Bowen for jewelry, Cindy Berry for purses and scarves, Helene Gersuny for plants, Virginia Carter for books, Mary Finnegan for baked goods, and Clare Sartori for gift items. Can you help out on the day of the fair? Contact Marie Younkin-Waldman at teawithmarie@cox.net.

Come to the fair and bring your family and friends for a wonderful day of arts, crafts, great food, and community.

Share the Plate with Planned Parenthood

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England is our Share the Plate partner for November and December. Half of the collection at the services on November 5 and December 3 will go to the organization.

Planned Parenthood delivers vital reproductive health care, sex education, and information and promotes a common-sense approach to women's health and well being that is based on respect for each individual's right to make informed, independent decisions about health, sex and family planning. A representative of Planned Parenthood will be at the service on December 3 to talk about the organization's work.

Time to break up with your bank?

As indigenous peoples around the world continue to fight to protect their land, air and water from destructive projects, individuals— and some cities— are taking their money out of banks that fund those projects.

Bank of America, Citibank, Wells Fargo, and 61 other banks provide funding to the Dakota Access pipeline and four proposed pipelines for petroleum extracted from tar sands. If you use one of these banks, your money is supporting those projects.



The UUCSC Green Task Force would like you to consider moving your money to a community bank or credit union that supports small local businesses. In December and January, the Green Task Force will deliver "severance letters" to some of those banks from UUCSC members who are closing their accounts and moving their money to locally-owned banks.

To have your "severance letter" delivered to your bank, contact Lisa Petrie of the Green Task Force.



Religious Education News & Events



By Bethany Vaccaro, Religious Education Director

Dear Families and Friends at UUCSC,

Yesterday, my heart broke to see posts of "Me too" flood through my Facebook feed as part of a social media campaign to bring awareness to the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault on women (and sadly, many stories showing that this experience is not limited to one gender or orientation).

For anyone with kids in their life, this is scary.

I've heard many parents around me question how we can keep our children safe in the midst of so much darkness in the world, when it's depressing just to turn on the news. How can we empower them to claim their own sovereignty? And beyond that, how can we ensure that they will not become the perpetrators of harm? How can we better prompt them to use the power of critical thinking to navigate the world we live in?

Figuring out how to do all that is a tall order for anyone, and it's easy to get discouraged.

Since yesterday, I have wrestled with my own anger and fear as a parent, a woman, and a person of the world. But when I was putting my girls down for their naps today, the solution to this dawned on me. We were singing a well-known kundalini yoga chant, and suddenly, I felt comfort for my fears.

May the long time Sun shine upon you.

May all love surround you.

May the pure Light within you guide your way on.

The beauty of that blessing came not just from my desire to protect my daughters, but in the acknowledgement that it is not just me doing this.

It reminded me of the importance of providing opportunities for children to connect to their own pure Light. As I've watched our kids experience their interconnection with each other as we explore our Session 1 theme of "Beloved Community," I see glimpses of this Light in each of them. They have their own inner compass; all we are doing is oiling it.

It's a privilege to be in a place where I am part of fanning these inner flames; my wish is for each child to burn brighter as they find their own path to the Light within.

Bright blessings,
Bethany

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“When women are the advisers, the lords of creation don't take the advice till they have persuaded themselves that it is just what they intended to do.”

– Louisa May Alcott

The feminist, abolitionist, and author of *Little Women* was raised as a Unitarian. She was born in Germantown, Penn. on November 29, 1832.