



# The South County UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 11

DECEMBER 2018



## December Services



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

December 2

Living with Meher Baba – *Ken Richard*

Ken Richard has been a follower of Meher Baba (1894-1969), an Indian spiritual master, since 1970. Ken will share the beliefs that have become central to his spiritual life.

*Ken Richard lives in Narragansett and devotes his time to spiritual development and to his life-long avocation as a singer-songwriter. He is married to Rev. Betty Kornitzer, Minister Emerita of this congregation.*

December 9

A Season of Caravans and Seekers – *Rev. DL Helfer*

Life and story have merged this year, across the world, as those displaced from their homes wander en masse, seeking safety and sanctuary. What are the lessons we are meant to learn from the past and the present? How might we witness and respond to myths becoming reality?

December 16

Expanding the Mystery of the Season – *Rev. DL Helfer*

What if the Big Bang had never happened, and animals still ruled the world? What if some things we know are true will be disproved in the future? How would our lives be different if we knew how much we don't know? This pageant by the RE children and youth will help us answer some of life's most complex questions.

*The children will go downstairs to RE after their pageant. Childcare will be available during the entire service for those 5 and younger.*

Sunday, December 23 – The Day of Two Services

As Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, we will have a multigenerational morning worship service. Join us as we give ourselves over to the magic of Christmas in song, activity, and joy.

Our traditional Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 p.m. will feature story and music as we trace the path of love that brings us to this night each year. We will enjoy cookies and cider after the service.

*Nursery care for children 5 and younger will be available for both services.*

December 30

You and Kwanzaa – *Linda Whyte Burrell*

Kwanzaa is the week-long celebration of African-American heritage that begins each December 26. Why should you care about one more winter holiday?

*There will be no RE classes, but nursery care will be available for children 5 and younger.*

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. DL HELFER, MINISTER

Office telephone: (401) 284-3321 • [uucscminister@gmail.com](mailto:uucscminister@gmail.com)

Bethany Vaccaro, Religious Education Director [uucscdre2@gmail.com](mailto:uucscdre2@gmail.com)

Michael Galib, Music Director

Karen St. Peter, Office Administrator [uucscri@yahoo.com](mailto:uucscri@yahoo.com)

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

### *Board of Directors*

Linda Whyte Burrell, President (2017-2019) # Mary Fulton, Vice President (2018-2020)

Mary Alice Kimball, Treasurer (2018-2019) # Linda Dupuis, Clerk (2018-2020)

Elise Bender (2017-2019) # Kai Migliaccio (2018-2020)

Dave Hurdis (2017-2019) # Natalie Herbermann (2018-2020)

### *Committee Chairs*

Elise Bender & Betty Bogutt, Membership

Jean Bowen, Social Justice Team • Judi Marcy, Caring Connection

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

Marcia Boyd, Finance • Chris DePaola, Facilities

Susan Pavlow & Ann Seemann, Music • (vacant), Social Events

Mike Henry, Hospitality Coordinator • Dave Ruede, Stewardship

Johnnie Rodriguez, Worship • Cindy Cole Berry, Pastoral Care

Betsy Dalton, Communications & Publicity

*Karen R. Ellsworth*, Weekly E-News editor [kellsworth6@verizon.net](mailto:kellsworth6@verizon.net)

*Johnnie Rodriguez*, Coordinator, Music 'n' More at Lily Pads

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<https://www.facebook.com/UUCSC>

Betsy Dalton, Facebook manager

# *At the Water's Edge*

*Rev. David L. Helfer*



Dear UUCSC Members and Friends,

I'm aware that most of you see me on Sunday mornings and maybe, at most, once more that week. You aren't in the office when I'm working or at many of the same meetings I attend, so it might not be obvious how I spend my time.

This fall, as I'm seven-eighths time, I find the breadth of my work expanding.

There's the expected— staff supervision and administration, preparation of worship and the service itself, committee meetings, pastoral care meetings. Not to mention new initiatives, and special events, of which there are many.

There are regular meetings offsite as well— monthly UU minister meetings, meetings with topic-specific interfaith groups (e.g., the council on homelessness and poverty), serving as a board member for the Council of Churches, serving as a member the URI Chaplains team, and more.

There's also the anticipated with unknown timing— illness and death, crises of various sorts, or sometimes an opportunity to step in for the celebration of one of our own.

The work doesn't end there. I've had two op-ed pieces appear in the *Providence Journal* in the past few months, participated in and led vigils, begun to plan with Thundermist for an LGBTQ youth drop in group, and ministered to many, both here and outside our walls, who are feeling stressed by the realities of our world.

I'm noticing yet more need: congregants struggling with mental health during these times, a surge in illnesses among us this fall, and personal struggles between wanting to do more and trying to sustain one's own personal health and well-being.

The longer I am a minister, the more I realize I don't have all the answers to this. Nor do I need to.

More importantly, I'm realizing I'm not in this alone. As we head toward the midway point of our third year together, I'm appreciating how much YOU do, and what we are building together. In the past week, for example, I've heard three different women talk about the WOW lunch, and the power of that gathering.

There are so many ways you minister to each other. Beautifully.

I look forward to seeing what we build for the rest of this year and in the many years to follow.

With affection,  
Rev. DL

# A Note from the President

Here we are in the middle of the Holiday season— which now begins with Hallowe'en! Thanks to the retail world, Hallowe'en decorations appear during the summer . . . with Christmas immediately after the candy treats are received!

For me, the yellows after Labor Day slowly deepen into the oranges of Hallowe'en, then into the richer oranges of Thanksgiving (my favorite!), and then into the red, green and blue of the mid-winter holidays.

Along with the hard-sell pressure to shop, shop, shop, we are subjected to the media selling bad news 24 hours a day. These past two years have been clouded by stress, anger and fear-inducing barrages broadcast around the world.

Blessed are we who can find sanctuary in our faith community, and also within ourselves.

We at UUCSC have mid-winter treats and traditions we can share to strengthen our belief in community. One is our Holiday Fair. It is a wonderful time of mixing and mingling and building connections. Another is our holiday Labyrinth Walk. Whether Solstice or Advent in your spiritual practice, the labyrinth is an amazing experience shared by any age (over six) or gender who can appreciate, in silence, dark turning to soft light.

Our peak experience of the season is our Christmas Eve Eve Service. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and be there if you want a seat! It is simply THE BEST. Our staff puts together this special service, and we are all invited to bring cookies to share with each other and our many guests. A cookies-and-cider collation will complete the evening.

Our practice of seeking the silence, and the sacred within, strongly counter the madness which churns so many into the madding crowd. May we all find the silence, the still small voice within. May we all find and share Peace on Earth.

Peace'n'Luv,  
*Linda Whyte Burrell*



# Guest at Your Table fund drive is now underway

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is an annual tradition in which congregation members take home a box featuring people that the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has worked with recently. These people are your “guests,” and you are asked to share your blessings with them during each meal by putting your spare change in the box. You can learn about the people on the box by reading the Stories of Hope booklet that is available on the Social Justice table in the Oneto Community room. Boxes and envelopes are available there as well.

Our campaign will end on January 7, so please plan to return your heavy coin-filled box to UUCSC by then. Half of the donations made at the services on December 23 will be included in the GAYT donation from our congregation to the UUSC.

If you choose to mail in a check, please make it out to UUSC and mail it to UUSC, P.O. Box 808, Newark, NJ 07101-0808, or use one of the envelopes provided. Donations of \$40 entitle your family to membership benefits that include a newsletter. Donations of \$125 or more are doubled by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, N.Y., so this level of giving creates an even greater impact.

UUSC uses the funds raised through this program to support their human-rights work in the United States and around the world. Learn more about the work being done by going to the UUSC website at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).



## Labyrinth Walk is December 15

Our Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk will take place on Saturday, December 15 at 4:30 p.m.

We have offered this contemplative, meditative experience each Advent season for many years. A spiral of evergreens is laid out in the sanctuary. Each person takes a turn walking to the center, lighting a candle, and walking out, placing the candle along the spiral, while everyone present sits in silent contemplation. In this way we support each others' gentle entrance into the darkest days of the year.

All ages are welcome to participate, but children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

We need evergreen branches for the spiral. If you can bring a few cuttings, please drop them off Friday afternoon or Saturday morning on the tarp near the front door, or bring them to the sanctuary by 3:00 p.m. on Saturday.



## UUCSC and Thundermist offer drop-in group for LGBTQ youth

Thundermist Health Center in Wakefield and UUCSC are partnering to launch a bi-monthly drop-in

group for LGBTQ youth ages 13 to 18. The premise is simple and the need is clear— these are at-risk youth, often without sufficient community support as they come of age.

The group will launch on Monday, December 17 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. downstairs in the RE rooms. Rev. DL and staff from Thundermist and Youth Pride will be there, and other adult volunteers are welcome.

If you're interested in supporting this effort, please get in touch with Rev. DL. and help spread the word. – Rev. DL

## Learn about First Unitarian's sanctuary for undocumented

Learn about the sanctuary for undocumented immigrants created by First Unitarian Church in Providence on Sunday, December 9 at 11:30 a.m.

Members of First Unitarian's Side With Love team will talk about the purpose of the sanctuary and describe their journey through the challenging process of creating a dedicated space to provide asylum. They will tell us about hosting a guest family facing deportation and discuss ways that all of us can help support this important work.





The Music Committee presents



# A Christmas Carol

Told in narration and song by Updike's Rose

Sunday, December 9 at 3:00 p.m.

Suggested donation \$5

## New Year's Eve-ish Community Dance

Don't miss the Community New Year's Eve-ish Dance with live music by the Patterson-Smith Trio on Saturday, December 29 from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. The dance is hosted by the Wellness Committee. The suggested donation is \$15. Snow date is Sunday, December 30.



## Visit the Giving Tree

Help RE support a newly-arrived refugee family for the holiday season. We'll give Kapanda, a single dad from the Congo, and his seven kids presents and gift cards. Please visit the Giving Tree in the Oneto Community Room and take a tag. Purchase a gift for the individual named and return it, unwrapped and with the tag attached, to the Giving Tree no later than December 16.



## Would you dance?

The Christmas Eve candlelight processional is an opportunity to transform dance into an offering of prayer. It's a beautiful, serene element of our evening worship service. Participation is open to everyone ten years and older. Three rehearsals will take place before the service. If you're interested, call Sally Barney at 789-0723.





## Religious Education News and Events

By Bethany Vaccaro, Director of Religious Education

Happy Joyous Season to all of our RE Families & Friends!

One of my favorite aspects of this season is the opportunity for a few (brief!) moments of quiet reflection. In that spirit, I'd like to extend my warmest thanks and appreciation to the wonderful souls who have been supporting us down in RE.

This past session, our kids have benefitted from the commitment of our three classroom volunteers, who have given their time and attention to validate the importance of our kids' spiritual lives. Amber Collins has led the group through lively stories and blessings. Harry Buffum brought live guitar music and a sound meditation to us. And Sarah Toatley has sat alongside kids and fully engaged in the process of creative expression.

This team has created a peaceful, contemplative atmosphere in RE, where our focus is on being together and living our values of Beloved Community, rather than attempting to check off a number of learning objectives. It is learning through process, learning through creativity and community, learning through play... a beautiful experience for us all!

The members of our RE Committee also deserve our warmest thanks for using some of their previous time and attention to think about the direction our program is heading in, and thoughtfully adapt as we go along. Barbara Pagh has repeatedly dedicated time when we need it most, Etta Zasloff brought us into the modern era with some Google Drive assistance, and Kari Kurto and Amber Collins have provided valuable insight and a parents' perspective on our programming.

Our nursery is absolutely buzzing with activity these days, and my deepest thanks goes out to our lead staffer there, Lee Cowan, for her gentle presence and validation of our youngest members. We have just welcomed in a new staffer, Walker Atreyu, and have benefitted from Thea Henry's time there as well. Their work has allowed us to undertake new projects, such as play with sensory bins and paints, with our toddler friends.

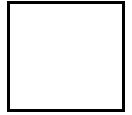
RE has also tremendously enjoyed some special programming this session, thanks to Sarah Bell sharing yoga and mindfulness with our nursery crowd and Marcia Boyd bringing in a sewing machine and equipment to assist on a service project. We look forward to many more wonderful collaborations with the rest of our UUCSC community! If you have skills you'd like to share, please don't hesitate to come forward!

And in the spirit of gratefulness and appreciation of this fullness we enjoy here, I'd like to invite you to visit our Giving Tree in the Community Room. This year, RE is sponsoring a refugee family, a single dad newly arrived from the Congo with his seven youngest children. We will be sending gifts and blessings their way for the holiday season. Please pick up a tag to buy a gift for one or more family member. Return the unwrapped gift with tag attached to the Giving Tree by December 16.

Many thanks for being a part of this vibrant community!

Bright Blessings,  
*Bethany*

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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*"If you seek the new, you will be likely to miss the true,  
but if you seek the true you will probably find the new."  
– Thomas Starr King*

Thomas Starr King, a Universalist and a Unitarian minister, was a lecturer and orator honored for his role in keeping California in the Union during the Civil War. He was born in New York City on December 17, 1824.