



The South County UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

Volume 28 Issue 11

DECEMBER 2019



Sunday Services



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

December 1

Imperfectionism – Rev. Ellen Quaadgras

When we think of awe we may imagine something meticulously crafted, like the ceiling of the Sistine chapel, or a Bach concerto flawlessly played. But sometimes the things that touch or move us most are far from perfect. Join us for a sermon on the power of "imperfectionism."

Rev. Quaadgras has been the minister at Westminster Unitarian Church in East Greenwich since 2012. Today she exchanges pulpits with Rev. DL Helfer.

December 8

The Clarity of Winter Light: An Unobstructed View of the World That Holds Us – Rev. DL Helfer

Many speak of the darkness of this season, but what Rev. DL notices is the special winter light, the way trees seem to almost glow as the sun sets each night. It's a beauty that leaves Rev. DL awed each time.

This worship service is an invitation to stop, notice, and let the beauty enter our beings.

December 15

Blue Christmas, or Why the Holidays Are so Hard – Rev. DL Helfer

For some, this is the season of loneliness, of being reminded of not feeling like part of a family structure, of rejection and loss, of what was but no longer is. By remembering that, and holding it with love, we offer not only space for healing, but also a deeper connection among us all.

December 22

Back Through the Ages: Solstice and Pagan Celebrations of the Season – Rev. DL Helfer and Bethany Vaccaro, Director of Religious Education

Long before the idea of Christmas existed, this time of year was celebrated, honored, and shared. Join us for a multigenerational service to remind ourselves of these long-existent practices and rituals, and why they still matter.

This is a multigenerational service. Childcare will be available for children under 5 years of age.

December 23 at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Eve Celebration – Rev. DL Helfer, Michael Galib, and the UUCSC Choir

Join us for our festive annual Christmas Eve Eve celebration. All are invited to attend, though childcare available for children under 5 years of age. Please join us after the worship service for refreshments and conversation.

December 29

Fire and Bells

Passing through the gate into the New Year, we pause to look back and then, turning, prepare to step forward. At this service, we will be invited to join in rituals and meditations to help us lovingly forgive ourselves for past failures, release and purify them with fire, and celebrate the renewal of our hearts' aspirations with the joyful ringing of bells. A sound meditation with gongs will be included.

Please bring a bell to this service, which will be led by Sally Barney, Sarah Bell and Tracy Hart.

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

<https://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. DL HELFER, MINISTER

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Office hours: Wednesdays 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., Thursdays 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and by appointment.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Thursdays from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Board of Directors

Natalie Herbermann, President (2019-2021) • Mary Fulton, Vice President (2018-2020)

Mary Alice Kimball, Treasurer (2019-2021) • Linda Dupuis, Clerk (2018-2020) • Kai Migliaccio (2018-2020)

Bill Rodriguez (2018-2020) • Dave Hurdis (2019-2021) • Rosemary Galiani (2019-2021)

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Charlie Donnelly, Personnel • Susan Pavlow, Music • Linda Whyte Burrell, Social Events
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Heidi Kranz & Sarah Bell, Wellness Team

Karen R. Ellsworth, Weekly E-News editor kellsworth6@verizon.net

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

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

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

Betsy Dalton, Facebook manager

Will Bender (wxb@cox.net), Webmaster

At the Water's Edge

Rev. DL Helfer



Dear UUCSC Members and Friends,

In the end it won't matter how much we have,
but how generously we have given.
It won't matter how much we know,
but rather how well we live.
And it won't matter how much we believe,
but how deeply we love.

John C. Morgan

Of all that we talk about, work on, commit to, it comes back to how we act, live, and love.

It's that simple. And that profound.

In this season of reflection, celebration, and gathering, I invite each of us to consider: are we acting, living, and loving as we wish to? Are there changes we wish to make? Are there things left undone, unsaid?

As I write this, my mother is preparing to die. Hers has been a complicated life, full of love and adventure, but also pain and fear. In the last two decades of her life, she did what she could to act, live, and love from a place of self-love, with some measure of self-compassion.

I think that's all we can do. And that it is enough.

This season isn't about tangible gifts, but about the gifts of kindness, extension of self in support of another, and about recognizing that intention rather than perfection is the goal.

If we return to biblical stories, it was the kindness of strangers and beloveds both that made Joseph and Mary's journey bearable. While I am by no means a biblical figure, I see the parallel here, the ways in which your generosity and love has made this moment in my life somehow beautiful amidst the many losses.

This is your gift to the world, and it is a huge one. You are kind, good, loving people. You act, live, and love in ways consistent with the words you profess. Most importantly, you are true to yourselves and those you encounter.

This year, you are the light, you are the gift at the end of a long journey.

And that is so much to be grateful for.

With love,

Rev. DL

A note from the President

As many of you know, the UUCSC Board of Directors is a talented and energetic group. I feel so fortunate to work with each and every one of them. Each time we gather I learn a little bit about these interesting folks and I always want to know more.

It occurred to me that the congregation might also like to know more about our current leadership team. I have decided to interview each of them over the next year and share what I learn with our congregation. I asked Bill Rodriguez if he would go first.

Bill Rodriguez and I sat down after service. We enjoyed a cup of coffee together and a lot of laughs. I learned that he grew up Catholic in Passaic, New Jersey, son of Gertrude Donna Crucificia Loggia. It has been a long journey from altar boy in Passaic to the UUCSC. I asked him why he decided to serve on the Board. He said that he likes to be helpful and welcomes the idea of taking on tasks that the congregation needs done.

I will certainly not let him forget that he said that. One of the challenges for me as President is writing these monthly columns. I now know that I am working alongside an accomplished writer and editor that can help me over this

hurdle.

For me, writing is a chore that I try to avoid if possible. Bill has been writing since he was old enough to hold a pencil. One of his proudest moments was in fourth grade when one of his classmates was positive that he could not have written the extraordinary piece he had shared in class.



Bill spent many years writing for one of my favorite publications, *The Providence Phoenix*. Interviewing and writing about creative people is his specialty. He was also the editor of the Arts and Leisure section of the *Narragansett Times* and has had pieces published in the *New York Times*.

In addition to writing, Bill enjoys spending time with his wife Johnnie, who you might know as the coordinator of the amazing Music 'n' More at Lily Pads.

I bet you're wondering how Bill met Johnnie. In the late 1960s after

finishing his studies at Northeastern and Boston University, Bill was a self-described scruffy taxi driver. Bill's best friend Jerry was dating the lovely young Johnnie at the time. After Jerry returned from a visit to California, he found that Bill and Johnnie had kept each other company in his absence. They have continued to enjoy each other's company and recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. If you're wondering how Jerry made out, just ask Bill, because they have remained close over the years.

I asked Bill what brought him to the UUCSC. He said he needed the strength of community after the tragedy at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. In the seven years that he has been attending, he values our Sunday worship service and the comfort that it brings. He especially enjoys watching the children listen to the stories each week. It gives him hope about the future.

I appreciated Bill sitting down with me and sharing his story. Everyone at UUCSC comes with an interesting story. We should take the time to ask each other what has brought us together and why we keep coming back.

Warmly,
Natalie Herbermann

This month's Soul Matters theme is Awe

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed." - Albert Einstein

The Soul Matters Sharing Circle is a network of Unitarian Universalist congregations that adopt the same monthly theme, enabling them to more easily share resources for worship, sermons, music, covenant groups, and children's religious education.

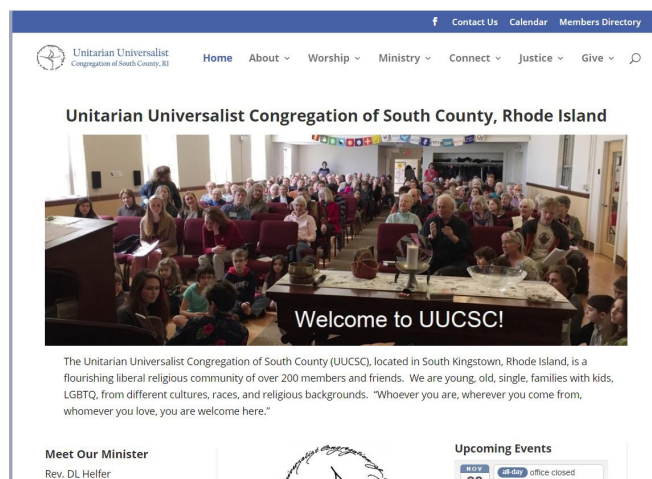
Welcome to the new UUCSC website

The previous website, which had served the congregation well for approximately seven years, was not mobile-friendly and had other limitations due to the template it used. The new website design allows the site to be read easily on your smartphone, tablet, or computer.

Much planning went into the development of the new website design— two years of discussion, one year of research into the best tools to use for website development, and at least five months of designing the new site. The site address is: <https://uusouthcountyri.org/>

All of the work for the new website was accomplished using volunteer hours from our UUCSC Communications Committee. Everyone helped!! We developed the site using WordPress with a DIVI interface, and we control updates, editing and management of the site, free of charge to the congregation.

Much care has been taken to use the most current information about UUCSC to develop the site, and to link it together logically for easy access. See the homepage screenshot below.



The Communications Committee realizes that websites are dynamic and must grow and change. Also, at this time, there may be information important for the site that is missing, or may not be exactly correct. If you identify something that needs to be changed or added, please let us know. Send your recommendations directly to one of the website management team members: Will Bender, webmaster (wxb@cox.net); Etta Zasloff, lead designer (zasloff.etta@gmail.com); or Betsy Dalton, assistant designer (elizabethmdalton@gmail.com).

When you visit the site, you will find lots of information can be available to you by clicking on linked words (shown in blue) and linked pictures. On your computer, when you scroll over each page with the cursor, if you see a hand icon, you can click on that word or picture and it will take you to more information about that topic. If you are using a smartphone or tablet with touch access, just tap any blue words or any pictures to connect to the linked information. Also, check out the upper and lower menu bars shown on every page of the website. Many links are there, including the UUCSC calendar, directory, and so much more.

Finally, if you can't find what you are looking for, click on the icon of the magnifying glass at the top of every page on the far-right, at the end of the tabs. This opens up a search box where you can type in what you want and click the enter/return key to find it. Enjoy exploring all that is on our new website. It's fun and easy!

We hope that you will enjoy visiting the new UUCSC website, that you will use it often to find information and also to learn more about what is happening at UUCSC. Please share the website address with others!

If you have any questions or comments about UUCSC Communications or the new UUCSC website, please contact Betsy Dalton, Communications Committee Chair at elizabethmdalton@gmail.com – Betsy Dalton

Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk on Saturday, December 21

The Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk is a contemplative, meditative experience we have offered during the Advent season for many years. This year's event is on Saturday, December 21 at 4:30 p.m.

A spiral of evergreens is laid out in the sanctuary and each individual takes a turn walking into the center, lighting a candle, and walking out, placing the candle along the spiral, while everyone present sits in silence. All ages are welcome to participate, but children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

We need five helpers to set up at 3:00 p.m. and five helpers to stay and re-set the sanctuary. Please contact Sally Barney at sbarney07@aol.com, or sign up in the Oneto Community Room if you can help. If you have evergreen branches or clippings to share, please drop them off on Saturday, Dec. 20 on the tarp near the front door, or bring some by at 3:00 p.m. on Dec. 21.



Dining for Women— a global giving circle

Dining for Women is a nonprofit dedicated to transforming lives and eradicating poverty among women and girls in the developing world through the power of collective giving. The local chapter meets in the Oneto Community Room from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month for a potluck dinner.

The grant recipient for December, Super-Nurses for Maternal Health, Kenya's first nurse mentor training center, will receive \$47,000.

This month's meeting takes place on Tuesday, December 3. Everyone is welcome.

Good news and bad news from the book sale corner

Thanks to the generosity of UUCSC members and friends, the ongoing book sale in the Oneto Community Room has netted more than \$400 this year to support the work of the congregation. But donations far exceed the available shelf space, and there is no storage space within the building. Because of the super-sized inventory of more than 1,000 books stored off site, no book donations will be accepted until further notice. Questions? E-mail Joan Youngken at mjyoungken@yahoo.com.

Would you like to dance?

The candlelight processional during our Christmas Eve service is an opportunity to bring dance into the worship service as an offering of prayer. It's a beautiful, serene element of our evening service. Participation is open to all— any gender, ages 10 and up. Three rehearsals will take place before December 23. If you'd like to take part, please e-mail Sally Barney at sbarney07@aol.com

Thanks for all the help!



The Facilities Committee— Pam Brightman, Jean Burke, Chris DePaola, Dave Hurdis, Pete Migliacchio, and chair Sally Barney— offers many thanks to those Heart-y Helpers who participated in the fall work party in October. The group was able accomplish much, including some projects long on the "to do" list, including cleaning the kitchen stairwell, hanging storage shelves and a curtain in the Nursery alcove, washing windows in the RE hallway, painting the outside door in the RE area, repairing the Oneto Community Room door to the foyer, repairing the door to the women's room, deep cleaning the RE area bathrooms, and removing unwanted items. Old friends working side by side with new UUCSCers to build community is an extra benefit of volunteering at the committee's work events. There are plans to hold three work parties per year, with the next one to take place in January.



Religious Education News and Events

By Bethany Vaccaro, Director of Religious Education

*This month we celebrate Awe.
In experiences of wonder, we find ourselves.*



Sunday December 1

Kids start downstairs at 10:00 a.m.

Show & Tell + the Wishing Well

All kids are invited to bring something to share with the group. We will also celebrate the group ritual of the Wishing Well. Kids are invited to the Wishing Well one by one and can make two wishes— one for themselves and one for someone else.

Junior Youth Group will meet today at 10am in the Youth Group room.

Service Project: Cards of Encouragement: Handmade cards for Black & Pink, a prison abolitionist non-profit supporting incarcerated LGBTQ youth.

Sunday December 8

Stars: Finding Awe in the Sky

How does looking at the night sky help us contemplate the web of existence?

Come make some cool galaxy crafts celebrating the wonder all around us.

Sunday December 15

Pageant Art Making

Get ready to paint! We'll be crafting in preparation for our upcoming Winter Pageant.

Sunday December 22

Back Through the Ages: Solstice and Pagan Celebrations of the Season

Everyone is invited to join in this contemplative family-friendly, multi-generational service.

We will also share our no-rehearsal pageant, A Solstice Celebration. All kids are invited to participate.

Nursery care will be available downstairs for those under 5.

Monday, December 23

Christmas Eve Eve Service at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for our annual festive celebration! Nursery care will be available for those 5 and under.

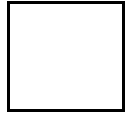
Sunday December 29

There is no RE, but nursery care will be available.

Kids ages 5 and under are welcome to visit our Nursery, where our trained staff are ready to play and connect. Kids in grades K-8 are invited to our main classroom.

We begin upstairs with the congregation on every Sunday except the first of the month.

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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“Neutral men are the devil's allies.”

– Edwin Hubbell Chapin

Edwin Hubbell Chapin, a hypnotic Universalist preacher, was a star of the Lyceum lecture circuit. He was born in Washington County, New York on December 29, 1814.

Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's annual intergenerational program to raise support for, and awareness about, key human rights issues. It is the UUSC's oldest fundraising and educational program for UU congregations. Here at UUCSC, this year's Guest at Your Table program opened on Sunday, November 24 and will continue through early January.

UUSC is proud to work with women leaders throughout the world whose experience and imagination embolden communities and inspires lasting change. Women lead half of UUSC's partner organizations. This year's Guest at Your Table theme is "Women Leaders, Strong Communities."

Highlighted this year are four inspiring women leaders from UUSC partner organizations who are transforming what freedom and justice look like in their communities.

Kiribati, a tiny nation in the central Pacific Ocean with a population of just over 110,000, has been severely affected by climate change. Frequent flooding is driving people from their homes. Human right leader **Pelenise Alofa** is the director of Live & Learn Environmental Education Kiribati. She travels to meet with communities in person, hearing about the issues they are facing and providing direct services. During these site visits, Live & Learn Kiribati staff install water tanks to increase access to clean water, help individuals build sea walls on their properties, and advise them on how to advocate for their rights at the local level. They also collect stories to inform national advocacy efforts so that the government's response can be better informed by community experiences. Throughout these activities, Live & Learn emphasizes the importance of education and community-led programs. Pelenise explains, "They need to know they have a right to clean water, to food, and to protect their land."



Marta Velasquez is a well-known human rights defender— in Spanish, a defensora. She leads an all-volunteer feminist organization several miles north of San Pedro Sula in Honduras. "We started to build community feminism from the grassroots," she says, to make "women empowered and aware of their rights." Marta's group joined with other women's organizations in Honduras to form Foro de Mujeres por la Vida (Forum of Women for Life). Together, they work to empower women and eradicate gender-based violence, which is prevalent in Honduras and is one of the primary drivers of migration from Honduras to the United States.

At the age of 18, **WaiWai Nu** was imprisoned with her whole family in Burma (Myanmar). While in prison, Wai Wai met others who had been arrested unjustly and listened to their stories. Shortly after she was released at the age of 25, ethno-religious violence erupted with Islamophobic propaganda targeting Rohingya men, who were portrayed as violent threats to the country. Noting that the propaganda focused only on Rohingya men, WaiWai founded Women Peace Network, an organization that works to uphold the rights of women and minorities through advocacy, training in international law, peace-building education, and organizing meetings of Burmese civil society organizations.

Monica Curca is the founder and director of Activate Labs, an organization based in Washington, D.C. that brings art, music, and storytelling into spaces that migrants pass through en route from Central America, such as food kitchens, shelters, transit points, and border walls. Art supplies and boombox in hand— "ingredients for joy," as she calls them— Monica and her team from Activate Labs travel to these politicized and often-violent spaces with the goal of bringing peace and healing.

The good work done by UUSC and its partners around the world depends on donations like yours. Please return your GAYT box or envelope by January 12, 2020. If you have questions about GAYT, please speak to Mary Fulton.