

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork

February
2015

977 Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike
PO Box 1444, Bridgehampton, NY 11932

www.uucsf.org

We are a spiritual community.

O, the Joy!

That's what Lewis and Clark wrote in their journal when the Pacific Ocean came into view. I had some of that same feeling on January 6, when I drove into our parking lot to see 50 gleaming solar panels on our west roof and the guys from *SUNation* working on the east side to complete the other 30. That, after more than six months of effort, was truly like a gift from afar, somehow appropriate for the day of Epiphany, the day the Magi came with gifts for the baby Jesus.

It all started purely by chance. Last spring, I happened to read an op-ed piece in the Times by the Nobel laureate economist Paul Krugman. He mentioned that the price of solar panels had come down significantly in the past five years. That led to a long journey of investigation, negotiation, and decision that had many potential detours. We avoided them all, and here we are at our destination with a 24-kilowatt system that is projected to save us \$4,500 a year on electricity and reduce carbon

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Installing solar panels at the meetinghouse.

Changes in the UUCSF Newsletter

Our newsletter will now be a seasonal newsletter, and should illustrate the spiritual purpose of the Congregation, as well as reflect its community, environmental, ethical principles.

We will continue to feature an article from our minister and our president as well as the green corner, but invite all members and friends of the congregation to submit writing pieces. All pieces should be limited to 600 words, which is one page of the newsletter. If you are using an illustration or picture with your writing reduce the number of words to 400. Photographers may also wish to submit pictures of our community, within and outside the congregation. These should be submitted in a *jpeg* format.

Writing pieces are due on March 15 for the spring edition, June 15 for the summer edition, September 15 for the autumn edition and December 15 for the winter edition. You may send them to me at any time before the due date. Bev Krouse our copy editor will review all copy.

Weekly Announcements: Our administrator Kelly Glanz will send out weekly announcements. These will include two weeks of events and worship services as well as assignments for greeting and hospitality. Weekly announcements can also be found on the information table at the Meetinghouse. Please also check our website at *UUCSF.org* and our Facebook page to find out what is happening at our Meetinghouse.

I look forward to hearing from you.
Martha T. Potter
Editor

From the Interim Minister



When the Worship Associates chose the worship theme for September through February, the expected remainder of our interim ministry, they elected to highlight one of the “Living Traditions” we share each month. I am a believer in the philosophy that *we*

may not get what we want, but we always get what we need. It follows then, that perhaps we need this additional time to ready the congregation for its next chapter.

That being said, the worship theme for February is the last tradition: *the “Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.”* It is a fitting theme for Black History Month that also includes the pagan Imbolc or Candlemas, (dedicated to Brigid, the Goddess of fire and inspiration) out of which the secular Ground Hog Day came.

“Earth-centered traditions” were added to the sources from which we draw at the 1995 UUA General Assembly, more than a decade after the formation of the original *Principles and Purposes*. At first, many of us didn’t understand what was meant by “earth-centered tradition.” Gradually we learned that they include not only Native American and early pagan philosophies, but the experience of women, people of color, and environmentalists. It was the late Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley who explained how “the legacy of slavery” with which she had grown up had deprived her of a full understanding of the interconnections of her spiritual and ethnic roots as an African-American woman.

Marjorie’s insight helped to clarify my own vision:

How one responds to the question of whether earth-centered traditions should be identified

as a source of our faith depends on how we think about the we of Unitarian Universalism. Indeed, this question begins to get at the heart of our identity – not only what the ‘UU norm’ represents, but the fullness of who we are and who we are seeking to become collectively. (Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley, UU World supplement)

Marjorie challenged us to be “open to new revelations, new understandings, and the larger we.” This is the challenge UUCSF faces at this time, and perhaps why we have been granted an extension of our interim ministry together. That is why the Worship Associates selected “We Journey Together” as the theme for the remainder of our shared ministry.

As “We Journey Together” with love and respect, may we be guided by the concluding statement of our Principles and Purposes:

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision...we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

Yours in faith,
Nancy
minister@uucsf.org



Consider the Cat

The radio was the only distraction on our family farm. We had no television; the nearest friend was a four mile walk from the farm. My younger brothers were always willing to talk to me, but a younger brother was, after all, a younger brother.

Because our welfare depended on them, the animals were the center of our attention. We fed and milked about 50 cows, led them to pasture, cleaned their stalls, raised their calves, slopped the pigs, gathered eggs; 12 hours of chores, from dark to dark. My brothers and I were released for school, but the sole break my father took was to talk to the chatty salesman who might arrive during the day.

The only animals that made no demands of us were the cats who lived at the fringes of all this activity. They lived on the mice or birds they caught, or the interesting waste scavenged near the calf pens and milking parlor. But it is safe to surmise that they never knew where to find their next meal.

In high school I needed no instruction about Darwin's theory of evolution; I witnessed it first-hand. A litter of seven kittens would become five before they left their nest. And a few months later we would have only two adolescents fighting for a place near the bowl.

If distemper didn't take them, one of the adult males might drive them off, or a cow might step on them or worse, lie down on them. The farm dogs tried to catch them when they ventured outside the limits of the barn, and inside they had to keep an eye out for rats that might outweigh them or children who might want to instruct them on the etiquette of drinking from the bowl we occasionally filled with milk tainted with medication or colostrum. We always felt the little ones should drink first, but our efforts only scattered them all and spilled the milk.

If human beings were forced to live like this we would quickly become nervous wrecks. Skinny, haggard, hollow-eyed and twitchy are words which only begin to suggest the misery we would feel. These cats, on the other hand, the cats who survived, were robust, clean and handsome; as if

they owned the barn and we humans were put there to help them.

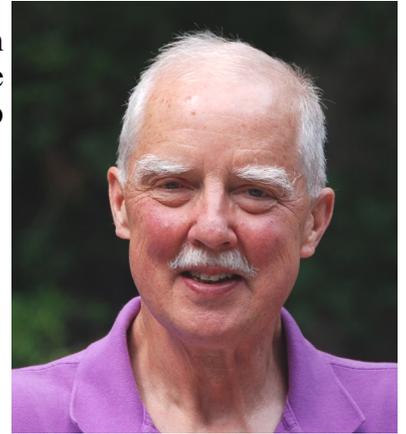
They had this extraordinary ability to curl up utterly content beside a sunlit wall, under the warm air compressor or atop a bale of fermenting hay.

Heads were tucked under a front leg or nodding over their paws, eyes cracked open just wide enough to warn of disaster: no remorse for the past, no anxiety for the future.

Is this why the ancient Egyptians worshiped cats? Their grace in action and their pose in rest seem to embody the Platonic ideal of sufficiency: as if they had a direct line to the mystery of life and knew they were in the best possible place, in the best possible health, at the best possible time.

Self satisfaction has its drawbacks, of course. Some of the dullest people I know are terminally complacent, and we would all still be crouching in caves if not for the discontent baked into our genes. It is this discontent that drives us to find a meaningful occupation, to make money, to make more money, to improve our homes and to improve our organizations.

But at times when the desire for change becomes a burden, I find it worthwhile to sit for a moment to stroke that cat in my soul; to admit how happy I am to be alive in this place, at this time, with these people I love.



February Service Calendar

We celebrate the Circle of Life by living in Harmony with the Spirits and Rhythms of Nature

February 1

How to tell a story no one wants to hear?

Guest Speaker: Minerva Perez

Worship Leader: The Rev. Nancy Arnold

What is it about domestic violence that allows such things to continue? Even with the media focus on it, why does it seem to surprise people when it occurs? And, “Why didn’t she just leave?”

Minerva Perez has been the director of the Retreat domestic violence services for the last five years.

February 8

Healing, Wellness, and the Life of the Spirit

The Rev. Nancy Arnold

Musician: Abby Fleming

There was a time when healing was an art that honored the connection between body and soul. The separation of the two began when discoveries about how the body works became aligned with a more mechanistic view of health, and the goal of curing what ails us replaced healing the whole. The unity that once existed between body and soul became split, leading us to view the body as a machine, and the soul as the purview of religion; if, in fact, it was deemed valid at all. How might we live with respect for the whole of our being, and cultivate the wellness we seek?

February 15 Our Elder Mother Earth

Worship Leader: Chris Epifania

Music: Traditional Native American Drumming

The Universe is a living, breathing being with interconnected systems, like our own human bodies. When we acknowledge the Earth as a living being we begin to understand the lessons that nature teaches us. From her we can learn about the cycles and systems that govern all. The weather teaches us about timing and preparation; the stars teach us how to navigate our surroundings; the animals teach us how to provide and care for our young. Our mother earth is our elder and should be treated and respected as such. We can do this by accepting her teachings and applying her lessons to our daily lives. She is a part of us and we are a part of her. It is this togetherness that makes a beautiful way of life. *Wame neetompeaug—All my relations.*

| Service Date | Greeter | Hospitality |
|--------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Feb 1 | Arden Edwards, Myrna Truitt | Kent Martin, Tina Curran |
| Feb 8 | Jim Thurman, Jeanne Wisner | Hilary Helfant, Ken Ettlinger |
| Feb 15 | Carol and David Holstein | Mark and Martha Potter |
| Feb 22 | Mark and Martha Potter | Sara Gordon, Jaki Jackson |

Should you need to arrange a substitute, please notify Kelly Glanz our administrator, of the change you have made. 631-537-0132

February 22

The Living History of Eastville and Sag Harbor

Guest Speaker: JoAnne Williams Carter

Worship Leader: The Rev. Nancy Arnold

One of the desires expressed last spring was to get to know our neighbors and the neighborhood around us. The stories of Eastville and Sag Harbor are intertwined, but it wasn’t always represented that way. Eastville has been integrated since the early 1800s when its residents worked for the wealthy whaling captains of Sag Harbor. Today we’ll hear about local African and Native American history, how the Eastville Historical Society began and developed into what it is today, and its plans for the future.



Ruth Jacobsen’s lovely mural graces the wall in front of our sanctuary.

At the Meetinghouse

Sunday, February 1, 1 pm

Edna's Spiritual Luncheon

.... "The Earth Plane is a wonderful Classroom..." This statement by Alan Cohen will be the focus of Edna Trunzo's spiritual luncheon. Edna is an inter-faith minister. Participants will be talking about how life lessons help build inner strength, and help to develop inner peace. Call (631)604 1080, or e-mail etrunzo_06@yahoo.com Contributions toward the cost of lunch are appreciated.

Wednesday, February 11, 2pm

***Wednesday Sharing Circle:** If you are interested in joining the sharing circle call Jaki Jackson 267-8556

Thursday, February 12, 7 pm

***UUCSF Board Meeting:** Board meetings are open to members and friends of the Congregation.

Sunday, February 14 at noon

Qi Gong for Winter: Free, and All Are Welcome! The cold of winter brings us deep inside, to the wellsprings of our qi energy. Like a tree whose roots are at work under the ground, absorb what you need into the deepest levels of your being. Join us for these ancient Chinese exercises and healing self-massages. For more info call Tina 723-1923.

Tuesday, February 17, 1 pm

***Monthly Conversation:** Monthly conversations led by The Rev. Nancy Arnold are held on the third Tuesday of the month and will focus on topics that members have asked to explore further, beyond the Sunday morning services. Please join us.

Sunday, February 22, noon

***Dress Down Sunday meeting:** Meeting to plan for the spring cleanup of the outside grounds (including major work to improve the front entrance) as well as the kinds of projects we want to embark upon to improve the look of the sanctuary.

*A UUCSF sponsored event

Meditation Classes

Each of the four monks from the Ocean Zendo will offer a meditation class to members and friends of the UUCSF, one class a month.

Dorothy Friedman, who will be leading the first class, sent the following description of mediation:

Meditation is a natural process utilizing our body/mind in an organic way. Whether a beginner or a very advanced practitioner, the same elements are necessary to help us to experience the deep levels of peace and joy that are our basic nature or what we refer to as Buddha nature; our true source; our birthright. These two elements are posture and breath, elements that we are born with, and sustain us from birth to death.

Meditation offers us the opportunity to find ways of quieting down from our busy lives and allows us to reflect on what new perspective we may encounter, as we quiet down to bring peace and joy into this very moment.

Please call or e-mail me if you are interested, mtpotter@optonline.net (631) 725-0450

Highlights of the Council

The Treasurer reports that general expenses may be higher, due to extending the Interim Minister's contract. We are on track with pledges. Next month will show the loan for solar panels.

There was discussion of ways to make Sunday morning experiences better, including repairs to building & grounds. Jim Thurman & Pat Gorman have joined the Nominating Committee. John Andrews is pursuing the Green Sanctuary project with UUA. Circle dinners will be in February or March. The Helping Hand Fund received a fund request for children's summer camp this year. The report from Social Justice will be in the newsletter. Reorganization discussions are ongoing, to determine whether there are too many committees for our small congregation.

Songwriter's Share, organized by Nancy Remkus, begins on Fridays in April, featuring individual songwriters who will perform. They will split fees with the congregation and local charities.

Myrna Truitt

UU Social Justice meeting - December 14, 2014

Present: The Rev. Nancy Arnold, Mark Potter, Martha Potter, John Andrews, Myrna Truitt, Grania Brolin, Sylvia Baruch

A number of areas of social justice were explored. There was agreement that we should pursue those areas where there is at least one person who feels strongly about it and is willing to move it forward. The 3 areas were:

1. Making the UU Meetinghouse a Green Sanctuary. John will develop this idea further.

2. Developing closer ties with the Eastville and other African American communities that are our neighbors. Mark will be the point person on this. JoAnne Carter Eastville Historical Society will speak at our February 22nd service. Both her daughter and Michael Butler were mentioned as possible speakers/contacts.

3. Immigration. An emphasis on Language Access (i.e. Working with the Towns of East Hampton and Southampton to have government agencies more responsive to the needs of those with limited English proficiency). Myrna and Sylvia will work on developing letters for members of the Congregation to send to Town officials. Another option is to speak at and attend Town Board meetings.

Regardless of the area, it was agreed that various technologies, especially movies, might be attractive to members of the Congregation. Mark agreed to speak to the Board about upgrading our technology, especially for movies. Carl would be a resource for advice. Other topics:

- The Gala and the possibility of splitting the income three ways: the pantry, the North Fork Spanish Apostolate, summer program and UUCSF. Make the Gala simpler; perhaps a pot luck
- Developing a program for children, perhaps with the Museum of Natural History and the Children's Museum, e.g. A day on the Turnpike
- Creating summer internships for youth
- Working with the Towns to develop more diverse police forces

** Contact Sylvia Baruch if you are interested in working on a social justice initiative.

Plan B for our Ministerial Search

The Council met on Thursday and reviewed the ideas listed below. The council felt strongly that we should continue to work with the Keith Kron and the UUA to find a Developmental Minister. The council also felt that we should communicate the ideas expressed at our congregational conversation with the entire congregation.

If you have any thoughts you would like to share with the committee, please speak to one of the committee members or email the committee chair John Andrews candrews40@optonline.net. In addition to John, committee members are Ken Etlinger, Diana Lindley, Tom Murphy, and Martha Potter.

The Ministerial Search Committee met immediately after last Sunday's congregational conversation to discuss possible alternative plans in case the current Developmental Minister track does not bear fruit.

The overarching comment from all of us is that any Plan B must involve the congregation as a whole. Roles need to be defined. It should not be assumed that the Search Committee will bear the entire burden.

The following ideas are based on the comments made in the congregational conversation. They are not given in any order of preference. There are potential reasons why any of them might not work. Our process was not to weed out any idea unless we all clearly thought that it was definitely lacking in merit.

1. Use a rotating group of outside ministers for sermons, with a paid coordinator to arrange same. Plan would need to account explicitly for pastoral care.

2. Share a minister with one of our nearby UU congregations (Southold, Jamesport, Bellport, Stony Brook).

3. Engage a UU minister-in-training. He/she would need to be mentored by an established UU minister.

4. Hire a full-time minister backed by sufficient funds for a three- to five-year commitment.

5. Ask our current Interim Minister to remain with us for an additional year.

What's Happening

Children's Program: Our *Children's Religious Education Program* meets for children kindergarten age and older. Children attend the first part of the service and leave for their program with our Religious Educator, *Jamie Wilson*, after the first message. You are welcome to accompany your children downstairs and get them settled before returning to the service.

Coming of Age: The COA group has had two meetings thus far, and the focus has been on building community within the group. We have four middle school girls participating and a middle school boy may be joining us next week. In January's meetings we will explore UU beliefs and spirituality, as well as begin to journal and prepare Credo statements. Mentors will be provided with an orientation as well, after which they will have their initial meetings with the COA participants. Mentors from the congregation include Margie Pulkingham, Chris Epifania and Don Schmitz.

Ocean Zendo: The Zendo holds weekly services at the UUCSF Meetinghouse on Monday, 5:00–7:00 pm, Wednesday, 8:00–8:40 am, Saturday, 8:00–10:00 am. All are welcome to all sittings and discussions. No experience is necessary. Please be on time. If late, enter quietly. Any questions, please call 631- 329-1127.

Food Pantry Donation-Gifts: Please bring a non-perishable food item for our food pantry box (located in the outside lobby). If we all just buy one thing extra each week when we shop, our basket will be full every week! It's no big effort on anyone's part, but it means so much to those who have so little.

Outside the Meetinghouse:

Marching in the Arc of Justice: Re-Visiting Selma: A conference honoring the 50th Anniversary of the Selma Voting Rights Campaign: March 6-8, 2015, also includes a pre-conference event on Thursday, March 5. All the details you need to know about the conference, including a detailed schedule, registration, costs, and lodging, are available at www.uulivinglegacy.org

UU Buddhist Fellowship Convocation 2015 With Stephen Batchelor: *After Buddhism: Recovering the Dharma for a Secular Age*, March 20-22, 2015, Garrison Institute, Garrison, New York. A former Buddhist monk, Stephen Batchelor is the author of *Buddhism without Beliefs* and *Confession of a Buddhist Atheist*. He teaches secular Buddhist meditation and philosophy worldwide, and lives in France. To learn more about him visit: www.stephenbatchelor.org To register visit: <http://capitalregionuu.org/welcome/uubf/>



Soup master Jeanne Wisner. Every week a new, healthy vegan soup after service. Thank you Jeanne!

Congregational Conversation, Jan. 4, 2015

The Rev. Nancy Arnold facilitated the meeting.

Ground rules: brief comments; listen; no interrupting; stay on topic

The following topics were suggested:

- What is Plan B if we do not get a Developmental Minister by spring, or if we do not like any of the candidates?
- How do we feel about a part-time minister?
- Possible changes to newsletter.
- What about reorganization?
- How do we handle low RE attendance? How can we support RE?
- The Ocean Zendo has offered us a meditation class. See Martha Potter, if interested.
- How are we reaching out to those who don't come to services?
- Changes in sanctuary; new office; ramp.

Plan B discussion, where we are: UUA informed the Search Committee they have received no applications for developmental ministers at this time. However, UUA will help us. Nancy has agreed to stay through July. Possibilities were discussed including: a student from seminary supervised by a minister; sharing a minister with another congregation; or alternative ministers once a month from other faiths. What if we invested in a full time minister for 3-5 years, and have faith that we could build our congregation. There was concern over pastoral care.

Other Questions: What is the difference between a developmental and regular minister? A developmental minister would reduce cost of a search, and would hone in on our specific needs. What is New Thought doing? Our cooperative event was successful. We should do more.

RE: Possible changes in curriculum to make it more hands-on, more attractive to kids; possibly an ongoing project, such as making a split rail long-house requiring an ongoing commitment and monthly activities for parents and children, such as the "Alternatives Day" for kids. The parents should get more understanding of what we're about.

It was suggested that we reach out to 20 or so

families and asking them what they would like. We are competing with school system, sports. They need not be members, and need not stay with their youngsters. John Andrews stated that a Green sanctuary program would include activities for kids.

Newsletter: Do we need a newsletter every month? We have a weekly email of events & worship. The newsletter could be bimonthly, quarterly, or seasonal. We can use the website for info. The consensus was for a seasonal newsletter, with articles on our community, the congregation and the environment. Writers are needed. People without email will be called about important events. Paper copies will also be available at the Meetinghouse.

Committee Reorganization: This was postponed until we get a Developmental Minister. Why can't we act now with Nancy's help? This will be discussed at the Council meeting.

Reaching out – Minister calls, fellowship contacts, Facebook with recording of sermons. Neighborhood groups should be emailed.

Changes to sanctuary: The Minister needs a separate office. We have received 3 estimates which would include extra storage, and could total \$10,000. We have capital funds. We also need a new ramp, which involves tearing out and replace footings, for perhaps an additional \$900. The ramp slant is too steep, and the railing should be replaced. The office could be extended by including the first sanctuary window.

Action Items:

Plan B – Considering that we aren't getting viable applications, the search committee and the board will look at alternatives. Someone will be needed to coordinate alternative suggestions and give the Search Committee options to decide. Look at suggestions and form a tentative list. The Board could prioritize. The Council could discuss.

RE – Jamie, Sue & Kent Martin will explore ideas. Ken Dorph volunteered to help. UUA has resources. Kids are experiencing stress; we can network with other congregations.

Reaching out – The Fellowship Committee will email neighborhood groups.

Myrna Truitt

UUCSF Seed to be swapped

The seed consortium of the East End is hosting the first **East End Seed Swap on Saturday, Feb. 7** in an effort to get people to begin to save seeds and develop regionally adapted varieties. This is important, since the seed industry has become so consolidated that there are few sources of locally grown seed, which is more suited for our local con-



ditions. Seed of "Childrens Red Cherry" tomato, which has reseeded and become more resilient every year since the beginning of the children's garden at UUCSF, will be distributed along with other locally grown seed. Most seed is free, but some include a donation request to support the consortium. If anyone has seeds to swap, we can make coin envelopes available at the swap to repackage them. It will be held at the Suffolk Community College.

Ken Ettlinger

Solar Panels, continued from page 1

dioxide emissions by 16 tons annually.

I hope that all will celebrate this accomplishment and use it to help build a *Yes, We Can* feeling at UUCSF. When one of us feels a passion for something good, the rest of us should welcome and abet it. We need to resist the natural impulse to find reasons why something won't work, and instead find ways to fix the inevitable drawbacks that any newly hatched idea will have. The passionate one may need guidance. I have benefited from the Board's insistence on a well thought-out plan. I needed to be open to advice. But I say again, passionate individuals on a mission to heal the world are what will make our congregation a truly inviting place where newcomers will want to invest their spiritual energy.

Many thanks to all who gave their time, expertise, and money in what has been a long process!

John Andrews



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President: Mark Potter
Vice President: Sue Penny
Secretary: Myrna Truitt
Treasurer: Imke Littman
Margaret Pulkingham
Pamela Wittenberg

Newsletter Information:
Deadline is the 10th of each month. E-mail copy, photos and events to Martha Potter mtpotter@optonline.net Please start subject line with "UU newsletter".

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Graphic technician: Mark Potter
Photographs by Edna Trunzo,
Ken Ettlinger

Surviving the Cold, Chickadee Style

I'm writing this wrapped in a blanket, just after coming inside from getting the mail. The thermometer on my WeatherBug phone app reads 15°F, and with the chill of the wind at 20mph, it feels like -2° F outside. It's very cold and very nice to have a warm house to come back to.

While I was outside, I spotted at least six black-capped chickadees flitting about in the white pine trees in our yard. It's quite remarkable how these little creatures, each weighing less than .4 oz., survive these extremely cold bouts of winter.

When the temperature drops low, chickadees need to consume a high number of calories to maintain their body temperature. Researchers have found that they eat a greatly varied diet in winter, including suet, maple sap icicles, pine cones, and have even been found scavenging the fat off road kill! Chickadees will easily empty a bird feeder of black sunflower seeds daily. They are also good at hiding and relocating caches of high-energy food.

Another strategy for survival is their winter plumage. At the end of the summer, chickadees replace their feathers with new ones. The new plumage is more dense, and when fluffed by the birds, it holds in their body heat, much like the thick blanket I have draped over my shoulders is holding in my body heat.

At night, black-capped chickadees seek out



small tree cavities to help them stay warm and out of the wind. But the most amazing adaptation for winter survival is, in my opinion, the ability of chickadees to lower their body temperature more

than 20 degrees! On extremely cold nights, they enter a state of hypothermia, therefore reducing the amount of fat consumed while the birds roost.

I'll anthropomorphize here.... They always seem to look so *happy* to me as they go about their chickadee business in the dead of winter.

I think I'll bundle up and go back outside to make sure the birdfeeder is full.

Anita Wright



Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of the South Fork

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