



# Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork

February  
2013

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

[www.uucsf.org](http://www.uucsf.org)

**We are a spiritual community.**

## Visit to the growing All Souls Congregation of New London

On a Sunday in early December John Andrews, Sue Penny, Mark Potter, Myrna Truitt and I visited All Souls Congregation of New London, Connecticut. This is a congregation which has grown from 135 in 2001, to 255 today. We met with leaders of the congregation after their service. They all felt that their Sunday service is the most important driver of their growth.

Traditional worship services often move at a deliberate ceremonial pace. Their service is lively and fast moving, although it contains many of the same elements of traditional worship services. We all left the service energized and excited about our future.

Small group ministries (sharing circles) are used as a way for members to become better acquainted with each other and discuss the ideas presented on Sundays. The groups discuss the monthly service theme and other selected topics related to the services. These groups meet for eight weeks and rotate every eight weeks. Congregants sign up for available times, giving them an opportunity to join and meet a wide group of people.

All Souls rents part of their space to a nonprofit that runs a homeless shelter and although this contributes to some diversity, the congregational leaders did not feel it was the key factor of their growth. The largest evidence of diversity is age diversity. Their children's program is so successful they have hired a Minister of Religious Education.

It is important to note that New London has a demographic advantage, being located in the heart of a city with access to the Coast Guard Academy, a university and a wide variety of employment opportunities.

**Continued on page 8**

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Free Two-Day Holistic Healing Clinic at the Meetinghouse



Step in from the cold and be open to receiving a free treatment from practitioners at our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Holistic Healing Clinic (HHC).

Two hours are set aside on the first day of the Clinic, Friday, February 22 from 4pm to 6pm for a group healing. The group is made up of integrated modalities. The intention is to create healing through this creative process for each individual participant.

The HHC offers a variety of healing practitioners on Saturday, February 23 from 9am to 1pm. Joining the Clinic on Saturday are:

- Nurse Practitioner Anna Marie Wellinis from Meetinghouse Lane Medical Practice. Ms. Wellinis screens for sleep apnea, hypertension and general health and wellbeing.
- Healer, Rachel Rudansky, offers CranioSacral therapy, a gentle hands-on modality that assists one's body in reorganizing into a balanced alignment: physical, emotional, and spiritual.
- Returning to the HHC, Stephen Braun, D.O. is highly respected for his specialties in family practice and Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine (NMM). He provides an over-all health assessment to individuals participating in the Clinic, after evaluating their present health condition. Joining Dr. Braun is Dr. Amy Suesslea, also board-certified in NMM.

**Continued on page 8**

## Thoughts from Alison



*\*Editor's note: In order to interrupt Alison's sabbatical month as little as possible, the newsletter asked for this brief review. Her regular letter will resume in March.*

I am writing this on the exact midpoint day, January 15, of my month's sabbatical. It has already been a very rich time.

The month started with travel to Connecticut to have a late holiday celebration with my family. (As you can imagine, families with ministers often must delay these gatherings.) Then Pat and I headed to Chicago - he to the museums, me to a class about Community Ministry at Meadville Lombard Theological School. It was terrific to explore a new city - in unseasonably mild weather - as well as to learn together with a class of students preparing for our UU ministry. Unfortunately, the mild weather departed before we did.

Right now I am at Pendle Hill, a Quaker retreat center in Wallingford, Pennsylvania (near Philadelphia), meeting with the group of GreenFaith fellows I have been studying with since the fall of 2011. I am always inspired by the work these fellow religious leaders are doing all over the U.S. and Canada, in every context and culture. Great energy!

Later this month I will travel again, to Trenton, New Jersey and Philadelphia, to continue a project with Partners for Sacred Places which currently involves working with the capital district of the United Methodist Church, helping a dozen congregations to be better stewards of their historic buildings and sites, and to relate more intentionally with their surrounding communities.

So, I have not been idle. But I have very much enjoyed the change of pace and contact with new people and ideas.

This month's activities have required much

reading and web browsing, and several of the materials I highly recommend to you. *Sacred Service in Civic Space*, by Kathleen Parker, is a history of Unitarian, Universalist and Unitarian Universalist public ministries. I particularly appreciate the connections Parker makes between our theology and our actions. And, she's a great storyteller. (The book is also available as a pdf for your mobile reader, so let me know if you'd like the link.) The artwork of Chris Jordan, <http://chrisjordan.com/gallery>, offers a whole new take on consumerism. And, in my few quiet moments, I've been riveted to Barbara Kingsolver's new novel, *Flight Behavior*, which touches on the very subjects I've been grappling with this month: climate change, the risks of speaking out, cultural norms, science, and religion.

Blessings,  
Alison

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### Congregational Business Meeting

On January 6, after service, three bylaw changes were passed unanimously, including a change in the quorum requirement from 50 percent to 40 percent; changing the phrase, "voting members;" to "members," and reorganizing the Finance Committee to have all its members be proposed by the Nominating Committee and elected by the congregation at our annual meetings.

A discussion involving changing the name of our congregation showed that most of us were in favor. Geographical indicators such as "the South Fork;" or "the Hamptons," weren't considered essential. The idea was raised that our building might be named separately from our congregation. "Bridge" and "Greenbelt" were among the suggested concepts. That any new naming would align with our vision statement was generally agreed. As planned, no votes were taken, and all appeared to enjoy the lively exchange of ideas and hopes.

## President's Letter

I've been thinking about Confucius lately. Confucius lived 2500 years ago, before there was anything like Unitarian Universalism, but if he were alive today, he would likely be one of us. For one thing, his idea was to take care of the here and now and let what might come after take care of itself. You didn't have to "believe" anything to be a Confucian. All you had to do was live a virtuous life.

Confucius didn't identify virtue with following any rigid set of laws. Instead, his idea was that if we strove to develop right attitudes and ways of living, then, when crunch time came and hard decisions had to be made, we would do the right thing instinctively. Confucius described several different virtues, but didn't make a checklist anywhere, so that modern scholars give different numbers of Confucian virtues, ranging from as few as three to as many as six.

The description of Confucian virtue that I've been most attracted to is the one given in Huston Smith's classic book, *The World's Religions*. He describes five Confucian virtues: *Ren*, *Li*, *ChunTzu*, *Te*, and *Wen*.

*Ren* is the most important of the Confucian virtues. *Ren* is often translated as "benevolence," and embodies what is best in human relationships. It means caring for the other as much as for oneself. Our first UU principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every human person, is what the individual possessing the virtue of *Ren* values most highly. *Ren* is the essential liberal virtue.

*Li* is the second universally recognized Confucian virtue. It is usually interpreted as having two related meanings. The first is *propriety*; that is, doing things right. This includes not only acting in accord with honored traditions, but also giving things their right names. In the language of the 1960's counterculture, it's "telling it like it is." The second meaning of *Li* is *observance of the rites*. Confucius believed that traditional ceremonies are important to our social life, not just frills to be observed or discarded according to whim. *Li* expresses the conservative side of Confucius.

*ChunTzu* represents in large part what Ralph Waldo Emerson meant by self-reliance. The term

*ChunTzu* originally meant "nobleman."

Confucius re-interpreted it to mean, not hereditary nobility, but inner nobility. The *ChunTzu* is

poised and confident, but is not at all arrogant, mean-spirited or petty.

*Te* (pronounced "day") means the virtuous application of power. Confucius knew that most powerful people of his day were more or less corrupt, yet he also recognized that the exercise of power was often necessary for the public good. The person possessing *Te* is not afraid to wield power when that is called for, but has no desire to hold on to power when it's time to give it up.

Finally, there is *Wen*. Roughly speaking, *Wen* is culture. Confucius recognized that the appreciation of music, art, and poetry is essential to a flourishing, creative, and good society. On the political level, *Wen* also includes the arts of peace as opposed to the arts of war. Examples of *Wen* in the life of our congregation are our music (in worship and in concerts), the art that makes its appearance on our walls and grounds, and our Non-Violent Communication program.

Confucius has much to teach us. We should revere him as a Unitarian Universalist forerunner.

Peace,  
John Andrews



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## Art Exhibit Opens

Hilary Helfant, artist, teacher, and chair of UUCSF's Arts Committee, has organized an exhibit of children's artwork. It will be on display from February 2 until March 9.

Included is artwork which adults in the congregation created as children, or which their children created before the age of 18.

## February Service Calendar

Services begin at 10:30 am. (Due to school vacation, there will be no children's program Feb 17.)

### February 10

#### Embracing the Tao

**Worship Associates Pat Gorman and Stephen "Tuna" Flores**

#### George Cork Maul, musician

An intergenerational celebration of the Chinese New Year, through an exploration of the Tao, or path of life. In this celebration we will include traditional poems, stories and the wonderful Dragon Dance and Wishing Tree.

### February 17

#### Accessing Health

**Doug Mercer, Founder of the Wellness Foundation in East Hampton**

**Worship Associate Margaret Pulkingham**

#### Sara Gordon, musician

"I am a living nutrition experiment," Doug Mercer says. Having researched the benefits of good nutrition for the last eight years, he now hopes to share his enthusiasm and knowledge with the East End community.

### February 24

#### Mixing it Up for Purim

**The Rev. Alison Cornish**

#### Louise Pecoraro, musician

The holiday of Purim, sometimes dubbed "the Jewish Mardi Gras," invites us to take a look at our world through the lens of parody and bold humor. And when we do, new insights may well emerge. Come, join in the fun!

### March 3

#### Healing the Green Blues

**The Rev. Alison Cornish and Trebbe Johnson**

#### Peter Weiss, musician

How can we cope with the destruction or demise of a beloved place? Trebbe Johnson's home, in a rural area of Pennsylvania, is now much altered by fracking. By joining with others there, and in other wounded places, she has found surprising ways to transform loss, making new beauty and new relationships.

Service Date	Set Up/ Greeters	Hospitality
Feb 10	C. Murphy, Truitt	Krouse, Burch
Feb 17	Jacobsen, Epifania	McCabe, T. Murphy
Feb 24	Trunzo, Thurman	C. Giordano, Lindley
Mar 3	Wittenbergs	L. Giordano, Krinke

Should you need to arrange a substitute, please notify Kathleen Furey, administrator, of the changes you've made 631-537-0132

## Jan 10 Board/Council Meeting Highlights

- The Board will appoint a team to work on our congregation name change followup, with a deadline of possibly the 2014 Annual Meeting.
- The group visit to the New London Congregation has led to our new Welcoming Table, and sending newcomers a welcoming note. Since New London attributes its growth to various worship practices, our Worship Associates will review their findings. Other visits are encouraged: to the new Brooklyn congregation, for example.
- Fellowship will contact families of deceased members about Memorial Bricks.
- RE: Children's Christmas play was excellent.
- Helping Hand: no comments yet from materials sent to its members.
- Treasurer: Everything good through December, pledges coming in on schedule.
- Building & Grounds: The elevator is operational, but needs a buddy system for additional safety. Ken Ettlinger is working to improve this.
- Nominating Committee is meeting once a month.
- Stewardship: Celebration Sunday is scheduled for March 17. We will ask for pledges to be made that day, along with fun and food.
- We voted for the UUA Statement of Conscience on Immigration to be added to the agenda for the General Assembly.

Myrna Truitt,  
Board Secretary

## Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise noted, events are at the meeting-house, open to all comers, and free of charge.

**Friday, Feb. 8 and 22, 10-11 am**  
**Nonviolent Communication Practice Group**  
For details, call Jaki Jackson, 631-267-8556.

**Saturday, Feb. 9, 9-10:30 am**  
**Caregivers' Circle** for congregants and others in the larger community who are caring for aging family members.



**Chinese New Year's Qi Gong Sunday, Feb. 10, noon.**  
Come celebrate Chinese New Year's with these energetic, playful and traditional Qi Gong exercises and movements. Begin the celebration with us at the

10.30 service, *Embracing the Tao*, or arrive at noon for Qi Gong class.

**Thursday, Feb. 14, 7 pm**  
**UUCSF Board meeting**

**Saturday, Feb. 16, 7 - 9:30 pm**  
**Community Coffeehouse**

Card and board games, chess, checkers, Scrabble, and backgammon. Conversation and open mike. Admission and refreshments are free. Bring yourself, your family, and your friends.

**Friday, Feb. 22, 4 - 6 pm and Saturday, Feb. 23, 9 am - 1 pm**  
**Holistic Healing Clinic**, details page 1.



## Metro District News

"CERG UU Disaster Relief Fund" has raised \$306,000 for victims of Hurricane Sandy. The most helpful donation you can make right now is money. See [cerguua.org](http://cerguua.org) to find out how to donate.

The 8th Annual Young Adult Winter Retreat, February 15-18, 2013, at Frost Valley YMCA Camp in Claryville, NY is coming up! To check on details for your eager youth, see [http://uumetrony.org/events/Winter\\_Retreat\\_2013.pdf](http://uumetrony.org/events/Winter_Retreat_2013.pdf).

Feel like you could use some renewal at a retreat? Murray Grove Retreat and Renewal Center is offering a variety of programs this spring such as "The Dreaming Mind and Our Collective Journey Toward Wholeness."

See <http://uumetrony.org/metronymminute/dec12/MurrayGrove.pdf> for the full list of available programs and how to register.

If you are interested in a congregational-type job, don't forget to periodically browse <http://uumetrony.org/district/jobs.htm>.

The 2013 District Annual Meeting is coming up May 3-4. Here's a list of keynote speakers: <http://www.uumetrony.org/am13/>.

The District Environmental Justice Council continues to meet on February 9, 2013, 10:30-1:30 @ Community Church New York UU (Manhattan). Great for justice work: See <http://www.uujusticeweb.org>.

The second annual "30 Days of Love," sponsored by Standing on the Side of Love, ending February 17, is celebrating a month of love, witness, action, and reflection.

The UUA has collected book references on preventing gun violence: <http://www.uua.org/liberty/guns/index.shtml>

Talk about name changes close to home! UU Fellowship at Bellport, NY has changed its name to "The UU Congregation of the Great South Bay." They've been doing some great things, including donating the use of their new facility to help with Hurricane Sandy relief.

The UU Fellowship at Stony Brook, NY now has The Rev. Margie Allen as its new settled minister.

Unirondack, a UU camp and conference center, is accepting applications for summer staff positions (must be over 18): <http://www.unirondack.org>.

Pam Wittenberg

The Green Corner...

## A Long Winter's Nap

In the naked limbs of the oaks near our house a band of crows roosts, silhouetted against the evening sky like a grim species of winter fruit. One hops to a lower branch for an unobstructed view of the walkers below; otherwise they are quiet, perhaps exhausted from the cold, and their vain search for food.

Only an astronomer might suggest that winter begins on December 21. For these crows it began after the first frost in early November, when the smorgasbord of road kill dwindled, with smaller animals, the snakes, frogs, worms, mice and even lowly worms taking shelter below the frost.

For the adult osprey, winter began in October, so long ago I can hardly remember their wild calls. Their young headed south a few weeks later, shortly followed by goldfinches, robins and the hordes of grackles. During the most recent cold snap the wood thrush who once rattled among the leaves in alarm every time I opened my front door has also disappeared.

In the woods I no longer hear the cheerful calls of the insect eaters, out of sight in the leaf canopy. If not for the tracks of deer and fox the forest might seem empty of life, until I hear a distant squirrel checking his hidden caches, or catch sight of dark figures moving in the distance: a flock of turkeys, uncountable until they sift through the trees closer to me, scratching among the leaves, business-like, quietly clucking and complaining. Like crows under the stress of winter they, too, have banded into large groups. There are over thirty of them here, mothers and their helpers with broods of juveniles.

When I quit my desk job five years ago I generally gave up the habit of alarm clocks and have come to depend on the sun to wake me. Recently I noticed a peculiar phenomenon. We all know that we enjoy more sunlight after the Winter Solstice. But now that I have slowed down in the morning, rising like primitive man, I discover that the sun is as late as ever in the morning. By February 21, two months after the solstice, we will have gained an hour of daylight in the afternoon, and only half that in the morning. After a few overcast mornings, I



### A January hellebore surprised by the snow.

sometimes feel like one of those Russian peasants who were reported in a 1906 British Medical Journal to sleep through an entire winter in a kind of hibernation, rising like bears in March to see if the snow has melted.

But then the sun arrives, luring the squirrels from their nests, and the chickadee, titmouse and nuthatch to our feeders. But we do have our winter blessings. The cold has stunned the ticks so we can walk in the woods, or even sit in the leaves without protection. The buffleheads have arrived in our bays in their formal black and white morning coats. What a strange name for such an elegant character, happily ducking in and out of the dark water, then rising up in a flutter to dry his feathers, as if we wouldn't notice him. And over the ocean beaches flocks of exotic Arctic visitors have decided the Hamptons are far enough south for them.

Although it is January and we have many cold days ahead of us, the hellebore blooming in our garden and the snow drops already beginning to spear through the icy soil promise that March will soon follow, with the smell of wet soil and the first buds on the willows.

Mark Potter

### Snowdrops



## Readers' Forum

One reader responded to January's entry:

"When I went to prep school in Brooklyn in the 60s we had a rifle club and range. I would take the New York City public bus with my nickel bus pass, books in one hand and my rifle (in a case) over my shoulder. I was 13 years old. We were taught respect for our guns. We shot at paper targets. No one asked if we were going to kill someone. At 13 we were taught about guns as if we were grown men.

"At 15, I got a car. I loved driving fast and lost my license more than once. Those days are over. Driving can still be exhilarating, but I follow speed limits.

"And guns? I still own several and still find shooting exhilarating. But I am in favor of strict gun laws and bans on assault rifles and large clips.

"Like a speed limit for driving, a smaller clip would not deny Patrick Mason, the Las Vegas shooter who likes to send 20 rounds into watermelons. He'd merely have to reload more often. He might even find that this would extend his electric charge of excitement so that he'd need a steak, not just a burger.

"Speed limits and gun controls are important to protect people from others and sometimes from ourselves. Sometimes we must create and adapt to rules that are for the good of mankind."

February weather offers harsh tests of the human soul, so your editors offer some lightness from a list going around the internet:

1. What if there were no hypothetical questions?
2. Where do forest rangers go to get away from it all?

3. What do you do when you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?
4. Should vegetarians eat animal crackers?
5. Is there another word for "synonym?"
6. Why do they put Braille on drive-through bank machines?
7. What was the best thing before sliced bread?
8. How do they get deer to cross the road only at those yellow signs?
9. One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.
10. If one synchronized swimmer drowns, do the rest drown too?
11. If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?
12. Can an atheist get insurance against acts of God?

It's always good to hear from readers. Send comments to [marlogan@optonline.net](mailto:marlogan@optonline.net)



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**Newsletter Information:**  
Deadline is the 15th of each month. E-mail copy, photos and events to Margaret Logan [marlogan@optonline.net](mailto:marlogan@optonline.net)  
Please start your subject line with "UU newsletter".

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### New London visit continued from page 1...

After our visit we decided to experiment with some of the strategies we observed.

Our children's service on December 23 started with lively music and this continued throughout the service. We have instituted a Welcome Table with a sign-up sheet, instead of the welcome speech at the beginning of service. Those of us who sit at the Welcome Table will be asked to send a prepared note to newcomers who sign up. These notes will be available in the communication mailbox.

Martha Potter



Our new table welcomes newcomers.

### Holistic Clinic continued from page 1...

- Don't miss the opportunity to experience Classical Five Element Acupuncture with nearly painless needles; or pain-free acupuncture with essential oils practiced by Pat Gorman and Steve "Tuna" Flores.
- Adele (Rob) Kristianson, Brennan Healing Science Practitioner, uses hands-on and distant energy healing.
- Enjoy a relaxing massage with Margaret Pulkingham, RN.
- Activate your own healing powers with a Reiki treatment by Joan Garro.
- Megan Chaskey offers Eden Energy Medicine, plus NAAM Yoga and meditation.

Stop by the meetinghouse at 977 Bridgehampton/Sag Harbor Turnpike., just south of Scuttle Hole Road. Find something for everyone at this wonderful community outreach event, on a "first come, first served" basis.

Jeanne Hoenig



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