

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork

July/August
2013

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

www.uucsf.org

We are a spiritual community.

A Tribute to Alison

I have wondered for a long time what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. There is no holy scripture to follow or divine statue to pray to. I don't even think there is any holy water. As a UU since my birth 19 years ago, I'm not sure if I will ever find the answer to this question. However, what kept me coming back to the meetinghouse every Sunday was the promise of a community that passed no judgment, where each person was free to express joy or loss. The congregation has forever been a place of free flowing ideas, ideas that are not rooted in any one rigid set of beliefs, but instead coming from all walks of life and the experiences that we bring with us.

To me, Alison Cornish embodies everything that I have ever sought in a congregation. Her enthusiastic spirit and warm, comforting tone made me look forward to Sunday services. I remember that I was always eager to tell Alison all that may have been on my mind, even if at the time it was nothing more than an upcoming fifth grade spelling test, or tractor pull in Bridgehampton. When I was a young child going through the religious education program, Alison quickly became a very familiar face in the congregation. I felt that I was never forgotten or left unheard. I was comfortable enough to voice my opinion on matters in the congregation, such as suggesting that the new meetinghouse design needed larger windows (they listened).

I cannot necessarily speak in great detail about the many logistical accomplishments of Alison throughout her time as minister here, although I do know that there are many. However, what I can say

is that as a growing child I needed a community and a congregation that I knew I could rely on. I needed a place where I could explore myself and be the curious child I wanted to be. I am forever grateful to Alison because she helped me to realize that I was allowed to be whomever I may have chosen. From a child's point of view, that is the greatest gift an adult can give you. I will miss walking into the meetinghouse on a beautiful Sunday and seeing Alison standing at the door. At the time, it gave me the reassurance that some things never changed.

Alison, although you may be moving on, I know that the impact you made on me will last forever. I will miss you and will forever be grateful for all that you added to the congregation. Perhaps that is what it means to be a UU: to be able to walk into the meetinghouse knowing that each and every person there sees you for everything that you are. Thank you for giving me that opportunity.

Eric Wittenberg



Sunday, July 28 Farewell luncheon and service for the Rev. Alison Cornish

Our luncheon will be potluck except for dessert, so please bring a main dish or salad serving four. Consider bringing your own chair and musical instruments. Family and friends are invited.

Luncheon at noon, Sunday service at 10:30 AM
all are welcome.

*Please respond to Jeanne Wisner by July 6,
jkwisner@optonline.net 516-383-0415*

Thoughts from Alison...

And, now?

Since I announced my decision to conclude my ministry with you at the UUCSF, there have been plenty of questions about next steps – yours, mine, and ours. Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll read about the Reverend Nancy Arnold, the interim minister who will begin walking with you on your next steps September 1. Since her arrival on Long Island a few years back, I've spent time with Nancy at ministers' gatherings. I have every confidence that you have much to offer one another, and that she will not only be a huge help to you as you search for your next permanent minister, but will also minister well to you all.

Some of you have asked me, "*Why are you leaving ministry?*" Well, the short answer is, I'm not! I, and the UUA, and my new employer, all consider my new work to be a *community ministry*. That is, I sense that the call that tugged me into ministry in the first place is simply drawing me in to a different setting. Many ministers serve in non-congregational settings – as hospital or prison chaplains, with social service agencies, in educational institutions. Partners for Sacred Places is simply another place to offer my knowledge, skills and passion. As the UUCSF was the body that ordained me in 2004 – with my title of Reverend, I carry you with me wherever I go.

You've also asked me, "*What exactly will you be doing?*" A slightly harder question! While I know some of what my job as Senior Director of Programs will be, this is a brand new position, so I will be both shaping it and learning as I go. What I do know is that the position will include travel to different parts of the country where, together with other staff, I will offer training and resources to congregations of all denominations so that they can better care for and utilize their historic properties. I'll also be teaching how to build stronger connections with community organizations that provide essential services and can "partner" with a congregation in doing so. I hope I'll be meeting and working with a lot of people who are, well, like you: committed, interesting, hopeful folks who want to see and help congregations to thrive and

grow and serve.

And, many of you have asked, "*We will see each other, right? Won't we stay in touch?*"

The answer here is a clear one: no. This is the hardest part of leaving, especially as our Unitarian Universalist tradition is so much about relationships; and ministry is formed and forged through our connecting, one to another. So it seems very strange to say that our relationship won't continue. But it is our practice, as UU religious professionals, to completely and mindfully "vacate the pulpit" out of respect for our incoming colleagues. Once we leave a position, we agree to refrain from having any contact with members of that congregation. Nancy and I will have a covenant with each other in which I will agree to not have contact with the congregation after my departure at the end of July. This is a practice born of wisdom and experience, and one I fully intend to honor out of respect for my colleagues and the tradition which we serve. Once a new minister is settled, it's possible that I might have some contact with the congregation – but only by her or his invitation and permission, and only after a new covenant of relationship is established.

Now, Pat and I will be living both here in Noyac and also in Philadelphia as we enter into another round of commuting in our relationship. So it's entirely possible that you and we might encounter one another in the aisles of King Kullen, or walking on Long Beach (we all know that's where the stuff of life happens!). And yes, we will greet one another, but we will not talk about UUCSF, nor will we seek to rekindle a relationship that has concluded.

Something that we share right now is that we are all in a time of transition – you, me, and us. So let us embrace the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson (slightly adapted) –

Not in one's goals but in one's transitions, one is great.

Blessings,
Alison

Meet our new interim minister

(Reprinted from our ListServ announcement.)

You'll be happy to know that the board has come to an agreement with an interim minister: The Rev. Nancy O. Arnold.

Nancy will join us September 1 of this year and is hired for 18 months through February 2015. Her task is to guide us in our transition from Alison to a new settled minister. She comes to us from a successful effort as the interim minister of the Huntington UU.

The Rev. Nancy O. Arnold served congregations in Connecticut and Ohio as a parish minister for seventeen years prior to returning to her native New York in 2008. For three years she worked as a hospice chaplain with Visiting Nurse Service of New York and as Pastoral Care Minister for the Bay Shore congregation before becoming the Interim Minister with the UU Fellowship of Huntington in February 2012.



The Rev. Nancy Arnold

Nancy's roots in Unitarian Universalism are in Amherst, Massachusetts where she served as an active lay leader for ten years before studying for the ministry. She is a 1984 Women's Studies graduate from UMass, Amherst, and a graduate of Harvard Divinity School. She is also certified as a Spiritual Director and as a Grief Recovery Specialist.

Nancy and her partner Jerry have been together 17 years and live with Annie, their adopted cock-a-poo rescued from a puppy mill. Nancy has a grown son living in Massachusetts who will be married in November.

If you have any questions please feel free to address them to me or any of the board members: Sue Penny, Imke Littman, Myrna Truitt, Margi Pulkingham or Pam Wittenberg. For finding Nancy we owe thanks to our interim search committee: Stuart Lowrie, Jeanne Hoenig, Bill Dalsimer, Imke Littman and John Andrews.

Mark Potter

Highlights, June Board Meeting

- Treasurer's Report. Finances were sound last month, especially pledges. We did well preserving funds and kept administrative expenses low. Our Yard Sale generated over \$3,000.

- Planning for Alison's party July 28 is underway, with some special events in the works.

- Our Safe Congregation policy needs to be amended to include background checks for minister and RE director.

- Nominating Committee noted the need for two additional people to serve, and proposed that they nominate a ministerial search committee. The

Board decided to make this decision in September, inviting the interim minister's input.

- Since the Committee on Ministry is now disbanded until we have a called minister, there is a need for a Transition Committee; this will also wait for the interim minister's ideas.

Myrna Truitt, Secretary

July Service Calendar

Sunday services begin at 10:30 am.

The August calendar will be sent out electronically in a few weeks;

In August you may also call 631-537-0132 for services information.

July 7

**Faith - Is it a Gift,
or Does it Keep Us from Reality?**
The Rev. Chris McMahon
with Sue Penny, Worship Associate

Faith is often considered an integral part of any religion. Is this also true for Unitarian Universalists? We extend a warm welcome back to Chris McMahon, who served as UUCSF's minister from 1987-2004, and now serves the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Great South Bay in Sayville.

Sunday, July 14

Living the Questions - a Question Box Service

The Rev. Alison Cornish
Marianne Koerner, musician

In Letters to a Young Poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, urges "living the questions," not seeking answers, before one is ready to act on the answers. And Unitarian Universalism is often about the search, more than the destination. It seems fitting, then, to devote a service to your questions: about this faith; about life; about our times together. There will be a box at the meetinghouse where you can submit your questions, or e-mail them to Alison at acornish@uuma.org

Sunday, July 21

Bittersweet Life

The Rev. Alison Cornish
Abby Fleming, musician

No ending is without sadness; no beginning without joy. But these two feelings are like the yin and yang symbol as well. They each carry within them something of the other. As we prepare to part and go our separate ways, what's bitter? What's sweet?

Service Date	Greeters	Hospitality
Jul 7	Ewald, Truitt	Corliss, Dalsimer
Jul 14	Mason, Liso	O'Neill, Andrews
Jul 21	Hoenigs	Wittenbergs
Jul 28	Holsteins	Gordon, Dalsimer
Aug 4	Dalsimer, Truitt	Holsteins
Aug 11	Krinke, Edwards	C Giordano, L Giordano
Aug 18	Wittenbergs	Liss & Strieby
Aug 25	Thurman, Ettlinger	Potters
Should you need to arrange a substitute, please notify Kathleen Furey, administrator, of the change you have made. 631-537-0132		

Sunday July 28

Reversing the Charges

The Revs. Donald McKinney, Ned Wight and Alison Cornish

Peter Weiss, musician.

At Alison's installation as our settled minister on April 6, 2008, Don delivered the charge to the congregation, and Ned delivered the charge to the minister. On Alison's final Sunday as minister of UUCSF, Don and Ned will return to offer reflections on "Reversing the Charges." At this time of significant transition for the congregation and its minister, Don and Ned will focus on "where you've been, where you are now, and where you're going." The service will lead directly into a picnic to mark the ending of one chapter and the beginning of another; for Alison, and our congregation as well.

Upcoming Events, July and August

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

Thursday, July 11, 7 pm - UUCSF Board/Council meeting . Note: the Council includes the chair or other representative from each of our committees.



Saturday, July 13, 8:30 am - Worship Associates meeting

Sunday, July 14, noon

Qi Gong Class. Open to the wisdom of the heart in summer's fullness, connect to your inner joy. Renew and restore with these simple ancient Chinese movements and self-massages. All are welcome. For more info, call Tina Curran, [631 723-1923](tel:6317231923)

**Sunday, July 21,
Dress Down Sunday.**

Come to service dressed for garden work at the meeting-house after service. Tools will be available, but bring your favorite hand tools, gloves, and whatever else you need personally.



Thursday, August 8, 7pm - UUCSF Board meeting

Sunday, August 11, noon

Qi Gong Class. Details in July 14 announcement.

August 18

Dress Down Sunday. Clean up and gardening. Details in July 21 announcement.



Margaret Logan leaves us this summer. She has set a high standard for this newsletter which we will attempt to uphold.

Martha Potter has agreed to take Margaret's position as editor, gathering the articles for the newsletter. Bev Krouse will continue her superb work as copy editor. Bob Hoenig will contribute his photographs, and Mark Potter will continue to prepare the graphics with the help of John Andrews. John will also gather the information on the monthly events and services.

A new friend and staff member Anita Wright will write the Green Corner, sharing her experience writing for the Group for the East End. We will also receive help with interviews and columns from Pam Wittenberg, Diana Lindley, Tina Guglielmo and John Tusa. With all these competent contributors, our newsletter should remain an important vehicle of communication for our congregation.

New Column

A new column begins in September entitled "This I Believe," after the NPR broadcast. Each month a different person from our congregation will write a column about his or her beliefs. This should help us understand who we are as we transition to a new minister. Ken Dorph has agreed to write the first column.

Martha Potter

New Member Profile

Arden Edwards sometimes wears a cap from Canyon Ranch with a card in it, which asks, "Have you received joy today, and have you given joy today?" She likes to try to incorporate these two questions into her daily life in Sag Harbor.

Arden's unusual name derives from Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden.

She was born in Maine, and describes herself as "an army brat" who moved every two years. Her parents were both army personnel, and they had three tours of duty in Fort Benning. Arden married Navy Lt. Olin Miller Edward III in March of 1957. They had two daughters, one of whom lives in Sag Harbor, several grandchildren, and enjoyed forty six years together until his sudden death in 2011.

Arden is full of surprises. She casually mentioned that she had a short-lived stint with a seaplane. She first went up for the fun of it at the age of 22. It was a single engine, no radio, Aronca Champion, which flew 90 miles an hour – a simple craft. After she flew solo for her pilot's license, she logged in about 500 miles flying in the New York and New Jersey areas. At the time, she had a full-time job as a travel agent with American Express, but eventually decided to leave the flying up to Pan Am, which was free for her. Arden's mother was the only person courageous enough to go up with her, and she let her license expire.

Her husband was born in Sag Harbor, and, after living in a number of other places, they decided to return to a place where they had some roots. Arden joined the Sag Harbor Presbyterian church, and later the one in Southampton. As some thirty years went by, however, she realized that "His eye was not on the sparrow."

Interestingly, Alison was her teacher long before she became her minister. Arden had studied historical architecture with her in Sag Harbor and loved it. She decided to pay a visit to UUCSF, Alison's church, and immediately felt that she was headed in the right direction. Her search for secu-

rity was answered in the community she feels here. Sometimes she finds herself feeling emotional and somewhat tearful in the meetinghouse, not knowing what kindled it. Her thought is that perhaps it is a response to the banner stretched across the front of our sanctuary, "Standing on the side of love."

Although she finds it somewhat challenging to articulate her Unitarian faith, it is something that she enjoys thinking about. She has attended UUCSF's nonviolent communication classes, volunteered during our two most recent yard sales, served as greeter, signed up for after-service hospitality, and is eager to get involved with more activities at the meetinghouse. She has ideas for adult programs and is interested in organizing a singing group.

In the larger community, Arden has volunteered with various women's organizations, including a long stint at the Suffolk County of Aging. A counselor for Medicare options with the HIICAP, (Health Insurance Information Counseling & Assistance Program) she worked in both Southampton and East Hampton town offices. She is an expert in the complexities of the changing Medicare system.

A recent widow, Arden has joined "The W Connection," a group of eight widows who meet in Bridgehampton once a month. Each week they are asked to talk or write about a topic such as, "What is an important thing that you have learned since you became single?" It has turned out to be a helpful and social support group.

Arden very much likes this quotation from an AARP magazine: "...people who belong to a faith-based community – regardless of religion – and attend services more than once a week, live as many as seven years longer than people who don't...if you belong to a faith community, you will benefit even more if you volunteer..."

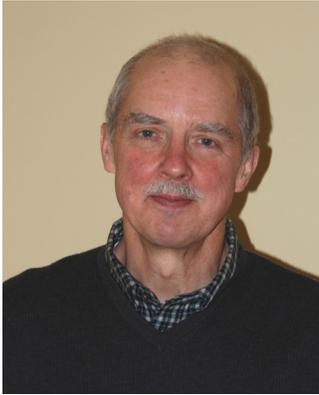
She interprets the concept of "services" as being a presence at the church for some other working reason. According to AARP's research, Arden Edwards should indeed enjoy a long life.

Diana Lindley



President's Letter

"Aunty Em, Aunty Em!"



How many of us remember where Aunty Em hid during the tornado that swept Dorothy into the Land of Oz? To me it appeared to be a root cellar. We had a root cellar on our farm in Connecticut, built into a hill over 100 years ago. The beams above the cellar were of

American Chestnut, almost impervious to rot; the ceiling was a mass of roots from the grass and brush growing on the hill above.

Only many years later did I realize that root cellars were not named for the roots growing through the ceiling but for the root vegetables: potatoes, turnips, onions, carrots, parsnip and a few others we would not recognize when served as dinner.

When I first saw that root cellar it was already a relic of the past, used for storing old tools. Green grocers and the trucking industry had made them obsolete.

I wonder if people living in today's suburbs of Oklahoma City have ever seen a root cellar? It is likely that the last root cellar they saw was on a distant family farm like mine. Yet because these structures are built into the ground they are the very best shelter in a storm.

When we wonder why our southern neighbors have forgotten the value of a root cellar, we ignore how easy it is for all of us, when faced with a frightening event, to forget the lessons of the past.

For those of us who have only known Alison as our minister, there are moments when we might feel like a deckhand on the *Santa Maria*, not entirely certain we can stay afloat beyond that distant horizon, which appears so flat.

It is easy to lose the lessons of the past. In the history of our congregation, two other ministers have served nearly as long as Alison, and we thrived with them. These successful ministers, and later Alison, helped to move us from a small room in East Hampton to the historic Watermill Community House, and then provided moral support in raising the funds to build our pristine Meetinghouse here on the Turnpike.

Two current board members, and over a dozen other members of the congregation have been through this evolution. Although I see that they are as sad as the rest of us at losing Alison, they can share with us the lessons they have learned, and offer their strength in keeping this communal fire warm.

Mark Potter



Minister: the Rev. Alison Cornish
Office hours Wed. 1-5 pm and by
appointment
Phone: 631-804-7850

UUCSF Contact information:
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631-537-0132 admin@uucsf.org

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

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

Editor: Margaret Logan 283-1586
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What's Happening (In the Words of Those Making It Happen)

- RE has secured Cindy Amodio to provide child care for the summer. She was with us previously and has a lovely relationship with the kids. No program will be in place but they will enjoy spending time with her!
- Charleen Murphy is graciously hosting a number of Hamptons Hospitality guests for a mid-August wedding. Charleen has hosted many guests over the years and has enjoyed meeting new people who are mostly UU's from other congregations, or friends of people from our meetinghouse. Some of the members/friends at the meetinghouse have generously offered their guest rooms to visitors. All proceeds benefit our congregation. The host/hostess simply provides a continental breakfast, and all financial transactions are handled by a member of Hamptons Hospitality. We are always looking for more rooms to add to our program, especially in the Sag Harbor area. More information is available on our website, or you can speak to Ingrid Krinke, Jeanne Hoenig, Diana Lindley, Charleen Murphy or Myrna Truitt if you have questions.
- The third Sunday after service each month, weather permitting, might be a good time to get together to tend the grounds and work in the garden. We will see if smaller groups of people interested in particular projects want to meet at other times. So, that would be July 21 and August 18 for the next two months for the grounds care and gardening group.
- The yard sale brought in \$3,213. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this a success.
- It's all about Alison: the Fellowship Committee, the Board and the Committee on Ministry are in the midst of preparations for our farewell service and luncheon July 28. If you want to help please talk to Pam Wittenberg or Jeanne Wisner. And put it into your calendar.



A few of the many yard sale volunteers among their treasures.



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