

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork

January
2014

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

www.uucsf.org

UUCSF Hopes and Dreams

The Rev. Nancy Arnold led our service on November 17 entitled, "Honoring our Past." This service included a history of the congregation's hopes and dreams. As our congregation has grown, the physical space changed, yet our dreams continue. Today we have a meetinghouse. The mortgage is paid. It is now time to review our early dreams to see where we began, and look forward to where we hope to be in the future.

The Rev. Randy Becker was our first minister in 1987. In a newsletter article that November he wrote, "...But, more important to me is that we grow in depth....that we become known to our larger community as a religious group that cares about the society at large....that we are known as a group that is open to people as they are, without pretense or prejudice."

A year later in 1988 the congregation identified four areas of importance. First, to improve the aesthetics of the meeting space and to find a place for religious education to meet in the same building as the regular service. Second, the congregation wanted to strengthen the religious education program to attract young families. Third, the congregation aimed to improve worship services, stating that, "...more depth and spirituality were still desired. Music at services continued to be an important area to improve." Fourth, the congregation hoped to "...finally establish an ongoing program of community outreach, social action." When Randy left in 1995 he challenged the congregation to create a vision for the future.

In a retreat with the Rev. Don McKinney the congregation again addressed the question of hopes and dreams. A full or part-time Minister was wanted and for Sunday service the congregation wanted, "...good music keyed to the theme of the service....announcements to be shorter and only on

Continued on page 6.

We are a spiritual community.

Circle Dinners
Are returning by popular demand
Saturday evening

January 25

Put the date on your calendar.
More details on page 2



In our December 15th service titled "It's only Change," Sue Penny had each of us add a block to a community creation. Flynn Martin and Leyla Dorph-Lowrie pose beside it.



Celebrating the Winter Solstice.

From the Interim Minister



January brings with it transition, if only with the turning of the calendar page to a new year. It's a time when some people evaluate their lives and set some intentions for the year ahead. It's not unlike what we are doing in this interim period. We are in a discernment process that will lead to a new vision of what you want UUCSF to become.

To focus the Congregation in this time of reflection the Worship Associates decided that the UUCSF *Statement of Vision and Mission* will guide worship themes in the new year. Each month services will focus on one line from the statement, starting in January with: *We are a spiritual community...*

In conversations with many of you there are recurring themes, some of which have existed almost since the inception of the congregation in the 1980s. There are too few of you to maintain the spiritual home you want, and some are concerned about overtaxing your limited resources (financial and human) even more in a search for a new settled minister. There is a desire to attract new members, particularly families with children. There is also a desire not to lose the comfortable intimacy you experience as a family-size congregation (up to 50 adults and children at worship).

In a family-size congregation participation is based on who can do what. There are generally no formal committees; people just pitch in to do what needs to be done. The UUCSF Bylaws cite ten "Standing Committees" in addition to the Nominating Committee and the Board of Trustees. In reality, a lot of the "committee" work gets done by one or two individuals (if it gets done at all). Your formal structure is more suited to a larger congregation. That may be an indication that you anticipate growth in membership, something you have been

moderately successful at doing in the past.

For many years you made do with what you had, using rented space for worship and religious education. When you completed this meetinghouse in 2005, you were fulfilling a vision that had guided you for more than fifteen years: having a home of your own. Along the way were the arrivals and departures of ministers and members, goal setting and long range planning.

When you dedicated this Meetinghouse you set your next intentions to provide a home dedicated to: "the free faith that sustains" you, "the growing lives of children... the nurture of all families... the needs of a world beyond your walls... the worship and music and beauty that nourishes you... [and] your spiritual growth and inspiration." (from the *Service of Dedication*, May 21, 2006) As you continue to live into these intentions, I encourage you also to envision the UUCSF of the future, and your own place in it.

May the new year bring you clarity of purpose, and the wherewithal to see your intentions to fruition.

Yours in faith,

Nancy
minister@uucsf.org

Please note new e-mail address

Circle Dinners January 25th

Due to the many requests and favorable feedback, Fellowship is pleased to begin Circle Dinners on Saturday, January 25, as part of our congregational life together. Food and company are what we do best.

Circle dinners are hosted by several households, and the hosts are given their guest list for that evening. Hosts call their guests, and together they organize a potluck to share. Simple!

If you would like to be a host, or if you would like to be the household that hosts families with children, please see Jeanne Wisner or Pam Wittenberg, or call Jeanne at (516) 383-0415.

Happy

My cousin once owned a three-legged dog, a dynamo named "Happy." Apparently no one had explained to him he had only three legs. He bounded along the trails after us, splashed into the surf to retrieve sticks, and leaped into the air for snowballs, with a slobbery smile on his face from the moment he awoke until curled on his bed in the kitchen at night.

It was almost 50 years ago when I met that dog. I was in my early twenties, a bud among the first crop of flower children, and not accustomed to fretting. But I had recently graduated with a degree in English and no prospects at all, so that dog's fearless joy is an image stamped on me forever.

He felt no guilt for chasing the car that had crushed his leg, no shame for his silly appearance, no fear that his hapless energy would wear him out before his time; never considered what his life might have been had he stayed in the yard as instructed.

Though he was a shorthaired hound, mostly Labrador retriever, he had antifreeze in his blood and his greatest joy was the winter. As we bundled up for cross country skiing one February morning, he scratched at the door, barking to hurry us along. The snow was so deep we could follow a compass course, bushwhacking across the ponds and lakes and up the hardwood ridges, Happy running beside us where the snow had hardened, or swimming through the drifts and deadfalls.

I recall following the others off a steep wooded hill. Our lunch was in a knapsack on my back and their skis had packed the snow before me so I quickly picked up much more speed than I wanted...branches whipping my cheeks, trees flashing past. Hitting a snowdrift at the bottom, I crashed in a headfirst spectacle of metal teapot, cups, and a bundle of sandwiches. Happy thought this was the most wonderful stunt he had ever seen. As I disentangled myself, he danced about, yipping with joy.

He lived a long life, and is now fertilizing a rose bed somewhere in upstate New York near the outskirts of Troy. But whether or not he was aware of the secret he possessed, it is a safe guess that his

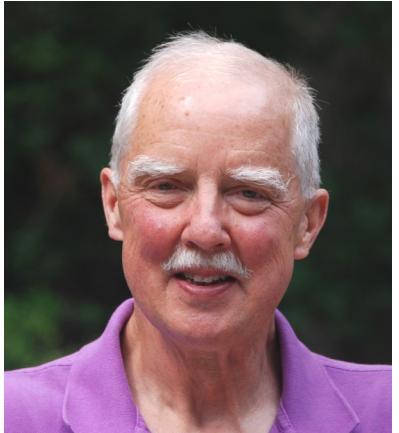
primitive wisdom came to him naturally.

As for me, I have to work at it.

Although not handicapped like Happy, over the years I have had my own peculiar lists of setbacks: backing my car into a tree, landing a speeding ticket, finding myself tongue-tied at just the wrong moment, or more seriously, discovering a cancer, or recently losing the tip of my little finger to an accident. When these things happen, I ask all the normal questions: *How can you possibly have done this? What did you do to cause this? Are you a fool? What were you thinking? Were you thinking?* All very calm. Then later I might consider what I can learn from the incident.

But if I find myself returning to these questions a third or fourth time, that is when I know it is time to stop for a moment, take a deep breath, and remember a three-legged dog I once knew.

Mark Potter



The Ministry Transition Team

The Ministry Transition Team met at the meetinghouse Nov. 21 and Dec. 8. The team continues to seek input from fellow congregants regarding ongoing and future ministerial needs and concerns they may have. As part of that process, we resolved to reach out to active members and friends to get their direct input on two topics:

- 1) What do we value about the UUCSF?
- 2) What challenges the UUCSF in going forward?

Team members will contact members and friends over the next three weeks to get their answers, ideas and thoughts. We ask that all make an effort to take advantage of this information gathering process. It will help the Ministerial Search Committee in its efforts to go forward if it has a clear sense of congregational priorities as compiled.

The team meets again January 5 after service.

January Service Calendar

Worship theme for January: *We are a spiritual community*

January 5 Everyday Sacred

The Rev. Nancy O. Arnold

There are many symbols of “the sacred” from which we can gain insight and comfort. Today we will consider ways in which we can be mindful of what we need to experience “the sacred” in the everyday.

Musician: Iryna Androskova

January 12 Buddhism and Unitarian Universalism-- Friends along the Path

The Rev. Dr. Linda Anderson

Worship Associate Chris Epifania

Many Unitarian Universalists look to Buddhism as a spiritual path. What does Buddhism give us? What is it about Buddhism that fits so well with Unitarian Universalism?

Musician: Peter Weiss

January 19 Was It Just a Dream?

The Rev. Nancy O. Arnold

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fostered the ideal of a “beloved community” in which all people are inherently good and equally deserving of justice and peace. Was the “beloved community” just a dream?

January 26 Inside Out: Spiritual Community as a Creative Process

Erling Hope

with Worship Associate Chris Epifania

We will test the boundaries of Spiritual Community as we explore the relationship between outsiders and inwardness, between creative expression and reflection.

Musician: Abby Fleming

Service Date	Greeter/Welcome Table	Hospitality
Jan 12	David & Carol Holstein	Mark Ewald & Edna Trunzo
Jan 19	Sylvia Baruch & Charleen Murphy	Bev Krouse Aubrey Burch
Jan 26	Carl & Pam Wittenberg	Tina Curran & Tip Brolin
Feb 2	Myrna Truitt & Jim Thurman	Tina Guglielmo & Anita Baskind

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

February 2 A Midwinter Tale

Jaki Jackson with Worship Associate Sue Penny
Our own Jaki Jackson brings us her book written about Groundhog Day. Reflecting upon the metaphor of whether the groundhog sees his shadow or not, she will evoke our own stirrings underneath and the promise of renewal. Her main message is about the importance of understanding our worth in the cycles of life and nature.



In the Dec 22 service our thespians read *A Winter Speech Choir*, by Lois Van Leer. From left: Kaylie Scott, Leyla Dorph-Lowrie, Maddie Knight, Flynn Martin, Elizabeth Lesser and Pat Gorman.

Upcoming Events

At the meetinghouse and open to all.

Sunday, January 5, 12:15 pm

Stone Soup Luncheon. On January 5, after the service, you are invited to a Stone Soup Luncheon. Please bring a ready-to-add vegetable for the soup pot. Your "admission" to the luncheon is your ***Guest at Your Table (GAYT)*** box or a donation to the **Unitarian Universalist Service Committee**. Envelopes for donations are available.

January 5, 12:15 pm

Transition Team Meeting. The Transition Team is the "brain trust" of the Interim Minister, and is helping her to plan the self-examination we will need in order to proceed with our search for our next called minister.

Sunday, January 5, 12:15 pm

Joint Meeting of Stewardship and Finance Committees. The main agenda item will be the planning for our upcoming pledge campaign and the development of a budget for the coming fiscal year.

Sunday, January 12, Noon

Qi Gong in Winter. Free, and all are welcome! Learn to love your body. Build strength and reserves for warmth and balance with these ancient Chinese exercises, walks, and self-massages, practicing the art of breathing your movement. For more information, call Tina Curran at 631- 723-1923.

Thursday, January 9, 7 pm

UUCSF Council Meeting. The UUCSF Council is composed of Board members and committee chairs. Its purpose is to facilitate communication between the Board and the committees, and to advise the Board on the needs of the congregation. It meets quarterly at the time usually reserved for Board meetings.

The Board meets at 6pm before the Council meeting. Board and Council meetings are open to all members and friends of our congregation.

Highlights of Board Meeting

The Treasurer reported that pledges are up to date. The Gala earned \$6,385. The President expressed concern about people who have moved, leaving 44 active members, with 18 people over 65. Those who left did so mostly due to aging issues, which emphasizes our need for growth.

A UU conference on leadership will be held at Shelter Rock, Jan. 28-30. We should encourage attendance for this, and also the General Assembly June 24-29, in Providence, RI. Pat Gorman proposed an ad campaign featuring famous Unitarians, and will come up with a budget and plan. Our service on history revealed that our congregation was founded by parents, and this could be a good way to involve parents.

The Minister reported that the Transition Team is making calls to ask what we value in our congregation. The worship theme for Spring will be our Mission statement.

Nancy's field work assignment may focus on ensuring work space for the minister. UUCSF has created a ListServ policy which will be stated at the bottom of ListServ announcements if possible: No political or commercial announcements should be included.

The Search Committee slate should include 5 members, 3 nominated by the Nominating Committee and 2 by the Board, and then the slate will be voted on by the congregation. Important dates for next year: Annual Meeting June 22, Celebration Sunday March 30. The January Board meeting will be a Council meeting focusing on growth, reorganization, and continuity for committees.



We strive for peace in our hearts and in the world around us.

Hopes and Dreams, continued from page 1

church issues.... a variety (of services) that included some nontraditional formats with occasional dance.... the services should be of high quality and have a richness to them."

A long-range planning committee was established. The question, "If you could wave a magic wand and have our fellowship be anything you want it to be, what kinds of changes would you make?" The key changes included hopes for live music, adult education, space, an improved RE program and community involvement.

In 1998, with the Rev. Christopher McMahon as part time minister, the congregation voted to buy land and the dream of a new meetinghouse began, becoming a reality during his ministry. "...the idea of a home of your own became increasingly compelling. No matter how creatively you designed programs for children and adults, or for social justice initiatives, the time and space constrictions on your rental could not be escaped..." Chris encouraged the congregation's aspirations.

In 2004, the Rev Alison Cornish led her first service. A member since 1989, Alison helped to articulate its hopes and dreams, emphasizing a commitment to shared ministry. "Together with you, we will complete our new home and establish it as a sanctuary for spiritual growth and a center for community betterment."

We now have our own meetinghouse, a talented RE coordinator and a music coordinator, with live music at most services. What is it we value now and what do we want? What are our hopes and dreams for our future?

The newsletter staff would love to hear from anyone who is part of our spiritual community. Send your thoughts to me: mtpotter@optonline.net.

Martha Potter

What's Happening

♦ Alternatives and the UUCSF sponsored a Fun Day for Kids. This day turned out to be a fun day for all youngsters, as well as adults. Opening with music led by Nancy Remkus, the group then divided into three workshops. An art workshop, led by Hilary Helfant let participants experiment with



spin art and stenciling tee shirts. Jacki Jackson led a workshop entitled "Being Me," guiding a group through yoga movements. Louise Wilkinson, a member of Alternatives prevention staff, led a workshop about stress busters, helping participants to understand what causes family stress. The entire group gathered for food and drumming led by Daniel Bailey, who grew up in the UUCSF Religious Education Program. The last workshop of the day was led by Tina Curran, who guided the group through Kung Fu games. Everyone left feeling less stressed. Thank you, Chris Epifania and Sue Penny, for organizing this day!



♦ The Art Committee is looking for ideas for new shows for the New Year. The current exhibition hung for the Blessing of the Animals will remain up through January. In spirit with the animals, Susan Bailey has generously brought in the work of two South African artists. Her contribution has met with such positive feedback that the committee has proposed a show for 2014 which will expand on the works represented. Myrna Truitt loaned her cat quilt and Egyptian cat picture*. Hilary Helfant did the dog illustrations leading into the sanctuary. If you would like to join the art committee, have a show, or suggest a show, please contact HHelefant@optonline.net

*Note: All of the artwork exhibited is available for sale, except Myrna's items.

RE Program

Masks, mandalas, murals and monsters; snow monsters, that is...just a few of the projects we explored in Our Religious Education program last month. Creativity and Craft Time is an essential part of our time together and it seems our Volunteers enjoy this time almost as much as the kids!

It has been a little over 6 weeks since we participated in the important Guest At Your Table (GAYT) program. GAYT is a fund and awareness-raiser for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the UU social justice organization located in Cambridge, MA. GAYT provides our children with the opportunity to learn



about people with whom UUSC is working. During our intergenerational service on 11/24 the children heard a brief presentation on GAYT and then each child was given a small box with a coin slot on top. The people pictured on the box are the child's "guests." By placing the box on the family dining table, the child then has the opportunity to feed the guests every time the family eats. What an easy and meaningful way to connect to and lift up UU values.

December was a special month in our program, beginning with the making of a universal holiday mural, Snow Creatures and snowflake ornaments. Just as no two snowflakes are ever the same, neither are our kids! We presented the spirited and encompassing "Winter Speech Choir" at our December 22 Service and wrote Holiday Wishes for Our Parents:

I wish that:

My parents have good luck all year round
My parents can celebrate 1,000 Christmases
My Mom and Dad get the present of their
dreams under the tree

They have more free time to enjoy fun things.

All of us at RE wish everyone a very Happy, and Fun New Year. Stop by and see what the kids are creating, and in the meantime, enjoy some photos of our Snow Creatures!

Valerie DiLorenzo

This I Believe

I believe in myself.

I believe in my intuitive thoughts and act on them.

I believe that all living things have a cloud of energy around them.

With attunement I can feel the energy.

I believe this energy connects all life.

I believe and sense that some people, who have died, help the living people.

I believe that living people can help others who are at a distance.

Jeanne Wisner



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Vice President: Sue Penny
Secretary: Myrna Pruitt
Treasurer: Imke Littman
Margaret Pulkingham
Pamela Wittenberg

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

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What's That? The Atlantic Ghost Crab

During an ocean beach field trip in mid-November, an observant student found a dead, almost completely intact Atlantic Ghost Crab, *Ocypode quadrata*. It smelled bad, so none of the students wanted it for a keepsake. But I was fascinated with the crab, so I took it home to observe it more closely.

The carapace, or body of the crab, measures 1.5 inches in length, (males grow to 2 inches at maturity) and it's the largest Ghost Crab I have ever seen. But that's not saying much, because I've only seen about three or four in my life, including the one pictured here! I realized I knew very little about Ghost Crabs, so I am sharing a few tidbits that I have learned in the past week.

Ocypode quadrata has a square-like shaped carapace, large eyestalks, unequal sized claws (in both male and female), long "hairy" walking legs, and is colored light tan or greyish white. It is very well camouflaged as it moves across the sand, and is active primarily at night, so that might be where the common name "Ghost Crab" originates. Its general range extends from Rhode Island to Brazil, but I found an article published in the Vineyard Ga-



zette that reports a recent surge in its population on Martha's Vineyard beaches. Local wildlife biologists speculate that climate change may be responsible for the crab's expanding range. Its growing population, coupled with the crab's aggressive nature, might mean that the Vineyard's nesting piping plovers (a threatened and even endangered species in some states) are contending with an additional predator. The Ghost Crab eats plover eggs and it has been observed chasing the chicks.

Ghost Crabs burrow in the sand and are generally terrestrial, heading to the water to wet their gills, and for females, to keep their eggs moist.

According to an article on the Chesapeake Bay Program's website, Ghost Crabs can rotate their long-stalked eyes 360 degrees! They can also make three sounds by either striking the ground with their claws, rubbing their legs together or emitting a bubbling sound.

The Ghost Crab found by that student is drying out on my deck. I'm hoping a hungry raccoon doesn't snatch it away, as I'd like to add this fascinating crab to our educator's specimen collection.

Anita Wright



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