



# Fall Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork



Free minds, open hearts.

## From the Minister

*“If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy; if the world were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I wake up each morning torn between a desire to save the world and a desire to savor the world. This makes it very hard to plan the day.” — E. B. White*

### What is the purpose of the church? Is it to savor or to save?

Is the purpose of the church to help us to respond to the seductiveness of the world? Or to help us respond to its challenges? To develop the spirit and feed the soul? Or to be the voice and the hands of justice in the world? Is the church to attune our spirits to what is holy and beautiful in the world? Or is the church to engage us in the issues and struggles for justice in our community and in the world beyond? When *you* come to worship on Sunday mornings, are you coming to feed your spirit; to be reminded of life's seductive beauty; and to find comfort in the face of life's pain? Or are you coming to be inspired—to be fired up? To learn not just about what ails the world, but what you can do to save it?

In religious communities, we are sometimes faced with this false choice: *to savor the world, or to save it*. Are we here to feed the spirit, or are we a social justice organization. Most Unitarian Universalists would agree that we are called to save the world. We are committed to the idea of social justice in our individual lives and as a congregation. Social justice work is an important part of who we are as a faith. Unitarian Universalism is the religion of “deeds not creeds.”

Like many of you, what I found in Unitarian Universalism were like-minded people who shared my commitment to making the world a better—more just—place. In my first Unitarian Universalist

congregation, I could work on undoing racism, homelessness, reproductive justice, immigrant rights, environmental justice, and more. Not only could I learn about the issues of the day, I could join in with people who had a plan of action. I could **Be The Change**.

*At the same time*, like many of you, what I found in Unitarian Universalism was a community of caring and concern—not simply for each other, but for the whole planet and all of humankind. What kept me in Unitarian Universalism was that, here, I have found a place where my commitment to justice—to transforming the world—can be grounded in a spiritual commitment of deep connection to each

other and the planet. This means I am challenged every day to consider needs beyond my own. I am challenged to consider justice from a global perspective. I am challenged to act on these considerations. *And*, I am supported to act on these considerations. I am supported in the heartbreakingly slow pace of change. Justice work can be hard. We don't always win—not right away. In religious community, I am supported—through practices of connections, ritual, appreciation and gratitude—in building the spiritual resources to keep at it.

The church is here to feed the soul. And it is here to inspire our hearts and to ready our hands for the fight for justice in the world. The purpose of the church is to savor *and* to save.

Rev. Kimberly Quinn Johnson



## My Journey

I've never been accused of being anything but a "nice" boy or man. While having what some might consider the misfortune of being left in a Brooklyn hospital at birth, and being an orphan for the first two years of my life, I had the great fortune of being adopted into a wonderful, God-loving(fearing) Irish Catholic family who loved me as much as any child was ever loved. Frank and Muriel Daly weren't able to have children of their own, and I was lucky to become Michael Daly on my second birthday, when the two-year abandonment period which my birth mother had to claim me, expired. The first two years of my life are still a mystery to me because those records are sealed. But that doesn't matter; I know that I am loved. I also know that I was born white and was always told that "I could be whatever I wanted to be".

I grew up in Elmhurst, Queens, a true "melting pot" of immigrants from the early 1900s. My maternal grandparents immigrated to New York over a hundred years ago and my grandfather opened a grocery store in Manhattan on the upper West Side, which closed when the Depression and a serious illness struck. I had classmates from Puerto Rico, Haiti, El Salvador and Korea (many other adoptees), but I lived in a "white" world. I had Irish, Black, Italian, Latin "Spanish", German, Jewish and Asian friends. I always thought that everyone had a similar life to mine, with similar opportunities. Some may have been richer, or poorer. Maybe they liked different foods but, hey - we're all people right? Born in 1958, I experienced the social unrest of the 60s and 70s. I recall the JFK and MLK assassinations. The SLA, Black Panthers and Howard Cosell's famous firing for his "look at that little monkey run" comment on Monday Night Football. Yet, despite being exposed to so many people of different cultures, I lived in a white world. I lived in a bubble, but didn't realize how strong and opaque that bubble was, until recently.

I've been fortunate to have developed close relationships with some people of color in recent years. Not just the "hey, how you doing?" type of

friendships, but to the level where we could each share our own personal history, fears, tears and joys. And realizing that someone I care about, or their father, mother or relatives have not had the same opportunities that I have had, at least in part due to my own blindness, has caused shame and embarrassment in me.

Then came the interview with a woman from Ferguson, Missouri, Michael Brown's community. She told how all of their streets had been barricaded so that the only entrance and exit were right where Michael Brown had been shot dead. She also told of the lack of policing in the community, where robberies and assaults and drug trafficking were commonplace, yet not investigated or solved by local police. "They don't want to come in here," she said. The news reporter noted that the community was used as a "checkpoint" for police to issue tickets to residents, in order to generate income from fines. In essence, this community had become a prison without walls.



And I remember exclaiming, "What?" In *this* country? In *my* country? This is actually going on *today*? And the bubble, that had started to weaken after the Trayvon Martin shooting and the Not Guilty verdict of George Zimmerman in Florida, burst.

Then came Walter Scott, who was shot as he was running from a police officer in North Charleston, South Carolina. I remember having thought, "Well, he was running - he *MUST* have done something wrong!" Now I know that he was running because he feared for his life. And Sandra Bland, and Amadou Diallo, and Manuel Loggins Jr., and Ronald Madison, and Kendra James, and Sean Bell, and Eric Garner, and Alton Sterling, and Philando Castile. Not all were saints, but neither am I. But I'm white and I'm still alive.

Now that my bubble has burst, figuring out what to do is another thing, entirely. Google "*white tears*", "*cultural appropriation*" and "*white fragility*". But compassion for those who have been victimized does nothing. They don't want to hear it. They want us to **do something!**

I'm attending East End Social Justice meetings locally; I'm reading the book The New Jim Crow;

and recently have been appointed as a member of the Southampton Town Anti-Bias Taskforce; I have not yet attended any Black Lives Matter rallies... I need to bring myself to do that. I've been exploring the Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice for courses and programs that might help me to figure out how I can contribute meaningfully to a kinder and gentler world.

I'm always inspired by something said, shared or sung at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork weekly service. This past Sunday, the closing song was like an arrow to my heart, especially the first verse:

I am alone and I am searching,  
Hungering for answers in my time  
I am balanced at the brink of wisdom  
I'm impatient to receive a sign  
I move forward with senses open  
Imperfection, it be my crime  
In humility, I will listen  
We're all swimming to the other side.

*Swimming To The Other Side*  
1990, 1992 Pat Humphries

I once was blind, but now I see. This journey has just begun, and there is no turning back.

Michael Daly

---

### Green Justice

Our Green Sanctuary program is now Green Justice. This reflects our desire to link environmentalism with the wider cause of social justice both locally and worldwide. Here are highlights of our steps so far:

- ◆ Solar panels on our Meetinghouse saved 21 tons of carbon dioxide last year.
- ◆ We are developing a plan for heat pumps to replace our air conditioners.
- ◆ We'll be offering home energy audits to members and friends.
- ◆ We're supporting a movement to legislate the Carbon Fee and Dividend through the Citizens' Climate Lobby.
- ◆ Other projects include a butterfly garden which Diane Lindley is coordinating, and a recycling project led by Hilary Helfant.

We have much to celebrate and much more still to do. Each of us has something to contribute.

Your Green Justice Team: John Andrews, Tip Brolin, and Sue Penny



### From the President

One of the biggest surprises of this presidency has been the discovery that our Meetinghouse is busy all the time. We have so many services and people to thank for taking care of our electric, irrigation system, elevator, landscaping, clean interior, garbage pickup, phone and internet service, security and fire alarms, air conditioning and heating, and more on a daily basis. There are those who have done the recent major structural work culminating from the goals set by the previous board. Guichay & Guichay built the ramp, stairs, and walkway. Colin of Hooger Design & Build built our beautiful office. Then there are those who are on our committees to bring us the best Sunday experiences imaginable. We are witnesses to the tremendous effort of time and work it takes to keep our Meetinghouse a vital place for anyone who comes through our doors. Mostly, we have so many people to thank every day because they make it possible for us to focus on the big picture of fulfilling our spiritual growth.

Your elected Board is committed to keeping us connected to our larger purposes. In the midst of the myriad details of being in a congregation together, we are there to listen, listen, listen to each other with respect and dignity. What each of us is doing is important. Every screw in the wall is holding something up, giving us the space to do our work. If we stay mindful of what everything is for, and why we are doing it, we will not lose sight of our path.

Pamela Wittenberg

## Happy INTERDEPENDENCE Day July 4, 2016

Oh, what a perfect day for a parade! Sunny and bright; warm but not too hot; not too humid, but definitely Summer. So on Monday, July 4, an intrepid group from the Congregation marched in the Southampton Parade. Led by The Reverend Kimberly Quinn-Johnson, the hardy marchers included Sue Penny, Don Schmitz, Jeanne Wisner, Carl and Pam Wittenberg, Eva-June Velasquez, Ken Ettliger, Mark Ewald, Kent Martin and Aubrey Burch.

This year, the theme was *Interdependence*, and our banner read: "Happy Interdependence Day".

Many thanks to Tuna Flores for the design and production of the banner, and for the use of some of his excellent bamboo for the carrying pole! We had 2 additional banners: our own congregational banner and our flag with the blue background showing the earth from space. This was one of the photographs taken by the Apollo astronauts, which very graphically shows how everything in our closed-system planet is interconnected and interdependent.

Our band of marchers gathered at 8:30 am (per the Parade Committee's directions) and then wait-

ed, and waited, and waited. We didn't actually start to march on the parade route until nearly 11 am. Walking the route takes about 90 minutes from the Southampton RR station to the reviewing stand at Agawam Park. Marching in parades is not for the faint of heart or weak of kidneys!

Along the way we saw other members of the congregation at various points, and we all generally had a fun time waving to the substantial crowds cheering on all the participants and groups. Most of our marching group expressed the sense of camaraderie and unity gained from participating in the event.

From this marcher's perspective, the reactions of the crowds along the route were, by far, the most interesting. Bystanders were typically glad to see each marching unit, and no doubt read our sign as *Independence*. However, a sizable number could be seen reading the sign carefully again (sometimes with a slight double-take) and then signaling their understanding and approval as the actual message became clear. On the entire route, only one bystander complained, "*You spelled it wrong*".

I look forward to participating in the parade again, and I know that Kimberly is already thinking about what our next theme should be.

Aubrey Burch



## Racial Justice East End

Back in March, a few of us thought about how we could start a conversation about race in Sag Harbor. Even though our town has been the star of a novel about black and white Sag Harbor (by Colson Whitehead), and includes beach communities that were refuges for members of the Harlem Renaissance and what W.E.B. DuBois called "the talented tenth"; century old-black churches and cemeteries; these places and people are largely invisible in the daily life of the Harbor to white people.

That is a strong statement perhaps, but nevertheless true. Something about whiteness, and how we think about ourselves as the dominant culture pushes a true dialogue with Others out of the conversation....but it doesn't have to be that way.

Canios Books very kindly hosted our first meeting, where we read the first third of Ta Nehisi Coates' book **Between the World and Me**. The Reverend Kimberly moderated that event, as she has moderated many of our subsequent meetings, sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork, Canio's, and initially Temple Adas Israel. Many of our meetings have been packed houses and we have always at least fifteen to twenty people. When that book was finished we read Coates' *Atlantic* article, "The Case for Reparations" June 2015. This article documents the history of the financial and moral depredations by majority white culture against black people since the first importation of slaves from Africa, up until our own times.

One of his arguments, and perhaps the most moving to many of us in the group, is that as a multicultural society, we cannot act justly until we



acknowledge the past. Reconciliation and reparation can occur when we, people of white privilege, acknowledge our false consciousness. The consequences of this disdain for Others who are different have been injustice, bodily suffering and alienation from what Coates calls "the dream". To ensure equity between all of the members of our society, we must acknowledge that black and brown people have been systematically oppressed, and continue to be so.

Some time in June, our reading group decided to begin that conversation of reckoning, and our reading group became "Racial Justice East End".

In the past two months we have been reading Michelle Alexander's **The New Jim Crow**. This book recounts how a backlash against the Civil Rights Movement, and white fear of the Other, particularly young black men, has resulted in a justice and prison system which makes Victorian England look benign. The privilege of whiteness assures that if white kids commit DUIs or are caught with marijuana or drugs, they get a fine or do community service and are released, while black kids are often tried as adults, have mandatory sentences and come out with *Felon* marked on their records. The disparity between white and black here is huge. And as our group acknowledged last Sunday, very few of us (white people) know that 2.3 million people are in prisons in 2016, *the majority of whom are people of color*.

Finally, our group feels called to action. In July we marched to Bridgehampton with Black Lives Matter, and we are planning to help with Voter Registration before October 14, the cut-off date. We need you, too!

Please join us at our next meeting October 23 at the Hampton Library, Bridgehampton 3 pm.

Leah Oppenheimer

**Racial Justice East End organized a march in July from our UUCSF meetinghouse to Bridgehampton supporting the Black Lives Matter movement, protesting the recent police killings of black men.**

## UUCSF hosts the East End's first community Iftar

During Ramadan, a month in the ancient Arab calendar, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. The fast, *saum* in Arabic, is one of the five pillars of Muslim practice. During daylight hours, those who fast take no food or water and refrain from harmful actions or words. Iftar, the sunset-breaking of the fast, is a joyous occasion. Family and friends gather for special meals, often beginning with the traditional dates.

Some time ago I befriended a young Egyptian squash player, Muhamed, while waiting for my daughter Leyla's gymnastics lessons, and happened to run into him on the third day of this year's Ramadan. I asked how it was going. He shrugged and said, okay, but he was usually alone during Iftar. Sometimes he Skyped his family in Alexandria, but normally did not. I looked at him and said, "That's not acceptable. We have to do something!"

I toyed with the idea of hosting an Iftar at our home, but then thought, no, this should be a *community* effort. The next day I brought up the idea of a community Iftar with Kimberly, our Minister. She jumped on it. By coincidence, I ran into Rabbi Dan of Sag Harbor's synagogue the following day and shared the idea. He was on it. The same evening we saw Reverend Karen of the Episcopal Church at the dog run. She, too, loved the idea.

We agreed that the Episcopalians in Sag Harbor would host the event. They could handle about sixty people. I drafted an invitation to our congregation and local progressives as well as to some Muslim friends to test interest.

That very day the attacks in Orlando Florida happened. Perhaps because of that, perhaps not, the response to the email was overwhelming. Within a few days, we had almost a hundred yes responses. I was flabbergasted. We decided to move the event to the UUCSF Meetinghouse, which has more



space and is handicapped accessible. I was actually glad; it seemed like a very UU event.

By the day of the Iftar, we had 120 responses, including thirty Muslims. I never attempted Plan B, ad-



vertising through social media or other channels. Word of mouth was enough. The enthusiastic response proves that most folks, in times of fear and anger, are hungry for a response that shows love.

An hour before sundown the afternoon of the Iftar, I ran over to the Meetinghouse, worried about the mass of people expected, fearing chaos. I walked in the door and was greeted by calm and beauty. Superstars Grania Brolin and Ingrid Krinke had put together a setting worthy of the most elegant event. Suddenly, I could envision 120 souls breaking the fast together, happily.

People arrived and placed their dishes in the entrance room. The array was mouthwatering. We'd soon taste delicacies from Morocco, Turkey, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Iraq. Guests were asked to refrain from eating or drinking until the signal. In the waning moments of the day, I shared this idea with the expectant crowd: "If someone throws a brick of hatred through your window, you are afraid. If the larger community says nothing, you feel they are complicit. If the larger community defends you, you will feel embraced; less alone. *A part of the community.*"

This evening we embrace Muhammad of Egypt.  
We embrace Firas from Iraq.  
We embrace Hamra from Turkey.  
We embrace Nouredine from Morocco.  
We embrace Ali from Pakistan.  
We embrace each other, friends and neighbors.

We take a stand. As the last line of this Congregation's mission puts it beautifully, *when fear strikes, we stand on the side of love.*

Ken Dorph



## The Songwriters Share Concert Series

Music: A Vehicle for Social Justice

*“Music can change the world because it can change people.”*

-Bono-

One sunny summer day, while driving down Scuttle Hole Road with my daughter Siena at the helm of her Subaru, her car stereo hummed with a plethora of sounds old and new. Our musical tastes and selections are quite diverse; yet there is definitely common ground as this generation has discovered the magic of the music of a generation past. Quite suddenly tears came to my eyes, mystically brought on just by the sounds-the intervals-the timbre-I’m not really sure what it was. Music is like that.

There is a place where all things meet; a common vector that connects us. Perhaps that place can be found in music: a universal language that in an instant can lift us off our feet, or within a note or two, bring us to tears. And though each country, family and culture has its own musical foundation, we find a place there, where we can appreciate and celebrate each other’s sounds.

History lives in music; healing lives in music; the very soundtrack of our lives is there as well, and on this level playing field the “Songwriters Share Concert Series” was born. It is here that music is a vehicle for social justice.

The inspiration was to partner local songwriters with a local charity of their choice; to have their music bring people together, bringing awareness to the needs of people in our community and giving all of us a chance to hear what inspired them to write their songs. Here music builds community and raises money for many organizations that focus on social justice in our area.

After its second successful year, the “Songwriters Share Series” continues to evolve. The organizations that have benefitted are: The Retreat, Maureen’s Haven, Katy’s Courage, Project Most, The Bridgehampton Child Care and Recreation Center, Community Action of Southold Town, and The Sag Harbor Community Food Pantry. Representatives from the charities have often attended the concerts and shared information about their organizations with concertgoers.

At each concert we waited with eager anticipation, hoping the parking lot would fill up and bring in lots of monetary support for each charity. But as time passed, I realized that there was much more to



**Caroline Doctorow and band performing in The Songwriters Share Concert Series, for the Bridgehampton Child Care Center March 4th at the Meetinghouse.**

it than that. I heard stories from some of the musicians on how the series helped to rekindle their passion for performing and sparked their creativity. I saw people smiling in the lobby while breaking bread and rekindling old friendships, I watched concertgoers dance and sing and tap their toes to the music of life, and realized what value there is in bringing people together, especially for a good cause.

With the help of Sue Penny, Margaret Pulkingham and many supportive members of the UUCSF Congregation, we worked together as a team and successfully hosted twelve concerts. The Songwriters Share concert series has been a heartwarming and rewarding experience that I have been grateful to be a part of. It has been an inspiring and powerful place where social justice, community and music meet. I hope that next year we can all spread the word and help this series to grow and continue to be a vital part of our community and our work for social justice.

Nancy Remkus

## Letter from John Andrews to the Editor of the East Hampton Star Published September 8, 2016

*The New York Times* recently published two articles about problems which arise as renewable energy sources expand their share of the market. One highlighted disagreements within the environmental movement, while the other told of difficulties in integrating large amounts of intermittent power into the electric grid.

In each case I wrote a letter to the editor advocating a fee on carbon emissions as the best solution to both problems, and both happened to be published. My intention here is not, however, to argue once again for that solution. Don Matheson did that very eloquently in *The Star's* "Guestwords" column not long ago. Instead, it's to draw your attention to three of the other letters which appeared in the same editions of the *Times*.

In the July 19 issue, a correspondent named Vien Truong pointed out that disadvantaged communities are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. He wrote, "Low-income communities and communities of color live with higher levels of pollution and greater vulnerability to climate-fueled disasters. Underserved neighborhoods are consistently left behind while green investments are prioritized in more affluent communities." Think about the effects that global warming will bring to America—droughts, tropical diseases, rising sea levels and increasingly severe storms—and then guess who will be hit hardest. Mr. Truong had it exactly right.

A similar disparity exists on a planetary level. Climate change will have the most harmful effects on people who live in the tropical regions of our planet, most of whom have few economic resources to adapt to the impacts and whose climate is al-

ready closest to the edge of livability. Moreover, they have no place else to go.

To take one example, India and Bangladesh face a fourfold threat: rising sea levels, cyclones of ever-increasing ferocity, depletion of the water-giving Himalayan glaciers, and—perhaps most ominous—failure of the monsoons, with consequent agricultural collapse.

Climate change is far and away the greatest environmental injustice in the world today. It's too big a problem for the developed world to solve alone, but we have a moral obligation to lead and to hope that others will act in their own long-term best interest.

Then, in the August 1 issue of the *Times*, high-level staff members of two different environmentalist organizations each called for an end to the fight between renewable energy and nuclear power. Michael Goggin, Senior Director of Research at the American Wind Energy Association, wrote, "We hope that nuclear proponents will work with us to solve the real problems holding back all low-carbon energy, rather than waging internecine warfare." And Laura Wisland, Senior Energy Analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists, wrote, "We would do better to focus on reducing fossil fuel production instead of pitting nuclear against renewables."

Could it be that common sense is beginning to win out over ideology? Let's stop fighting yesterday's energy wars and unite with people of conscience; whatever forms of carbon-free energy they may advocate, and wherever they might be on the political spectrum; to bring about a just and livable world.

John Andrews



**Minister:**

The Rev. Kimberly Quinn Johnson  
Phone: 201-892-7151  
kj419@gmail.com

**UUCSF Contact information:**

Administrator: Kelly Glanz  
631-537-0132 [admin@uucsf.org](mailto:admin@uucsf.org)

[Find us on Facebook.](#)

[Go to our web page.](#)

**UUCSF Board:**

**President:** Pamela Wittenberg  
**Vice President:** Sue Penny  
**Secretary:** Carolyn Holstein  
**Treasurer:** Ken Ettlinger  
Tip Brolin  
Ingrid Krinke

**Newsletter Volunteers:**

Editor: Martha Potter 725-0450  
Copy Editor: Bev Krouse  
Graphic technician: Mark Potter  
Photographs by Ken Ettlinger

## **Maureen's Haven Homeless Outreach**

UUCSF is one of three houses of worship in our area to volunteer services this winter for Maureen's Haven Homeless Outreach.

We will be working together as one team with Christ Episcopal Church and Temple Adas Israel, both of Sag Harbor. The host church shelters will be scheduled at either Christ Church or Most Holy Trinity in East Hampton.

Mark Potter and Pam Wittenberg are co-coordinators for UUCSF to help organize volunteers from our congregation. We have 14 so far, and more are welcome. Here's a snapshot of what we do:

- ◆ From 3:00-5:00pm, volunteers help in setting up the shelter: inflating the mattresses, making the beds, and setting up for dinner.
- ◆ Volunteers cook dinners in our own homes (each person cooks for 6-8 people) and arrive from 5:00-5:30pm with food for the tables.
- ◆ Guests arrive from 5:30 to 6:00pm. We have hors d'oeuvres set out for them.
- ◆ We serve dinner from 6:30-7:30pm. Volunteers help serve and sit at the tables with the guests for conversation.
- ◆ We begin cleaning up dinner at 7:30pm, and then the volunteers leave.
- ◆ From 7:30-10:00pm, the majority of our guests will retire to bed. The sleep-over crew also shows a movie for those who want to watch.
- ◆ Lights out from 10:00pm to 6:00am.

- ◆ The next morning the breakfast crew of volunteers arrives around 6:00am, and our volunteer cleanup crew by 7:00am. We send the guests off with a lunch bag of food, sandwich, fruit, small water bottle, and goodies. Maureen's Haven vans pick the guests up at 7:30am.

The Sag Harbor joint team will be hosting Sundays at either Christ Church or Most Holy Trinity: November 27 (Thanksgiving weekend), December 25 (Christmas), January 29, February 26 and March 26. If the weather turns harsh in November we may open the shelters earlier. We will also host two Fridays at Most Holy Trinity, dates still to be decided.

The first event will be the Maureen's Haven Annual Auction at St. Luke's in East Hampton, Sunday, October 30, 4-6pm. The UUCSF will donate an Auction Basket and as many items as possible for the live auction. If you would like to volunteer or offer an item for the auction please email Pam [pawittenberg@optonline.net](mailto:pawittenberg@optonline.net) or Mark [mpotter@optonline.net](mailto:mpotter@optonline.net).

Pam Wittenberg  
Mark Potter



**Unitarian Universalist**  
Congregation of the South Fork

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

Fall 2016 Journal