



# Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork

November  
2011

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

www.uucsf.org

**We are a spiritual community.**

## We Welcome Two New Members



**From left: Larry Darcey, John Andrews, Helen Fitzgerald, Alison Cornish**

Larry Darcey and Helen Fitzgerald joined our congregation on October 9, New Member Sunday. This month we profile Larry on page 6. We will carry Helen's profile in our December issue.

## Great Music and Fun at the Harvest Ball

The Harvest Ball included four tables of goodies for a silent auction, delicious food, great music, dancing, and 92 people enjoying themselves.

Thanks to generous help from the congregation and gifts from local merchants we kept our costs low, which meant we netted over \$7,000 and gave \$700 to the local food pantries. Who would think making money could be so much fun?



**Charleen Murphy and Mildred Granitz work the jitterbug.**

### A Concert and Fundraiser Starring Rhonda Liss

Saturday, Nov. 19, 7 pm at the meetinghouse



Rhonda Liss presents, "My Favorite Year," a musical potpourri of songs including those by Irving Berlin, Johnny Mercer, Rodgers and Hart, Leonard Cohen, Judy Collins, Randy Newman, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Stephen Sondheim, Marc Blitzstein, and Amanda McBroom. Suggested donation: \$20



**A few of the 92 attending. Margaret Logan and Marianne Koerner in the foreground.**

## Thoughts from Alison



In my reading in preparation for some of the activities that I described in last month's column, I came across a couple of sentences that just stopped me in my tracks. In *Claiming EARTH as Common Ground: The*

*Ecological Crisis through the Lens of Faith*, Andrea Cohen-Kiener writes:

*Can the religious save the environment? Can people of faith organize and act in sufficient numbers, with a deep enough impact, to transform our economy and our values as a culture? And can environment save religion? Can the shared concerns of the human project on earth trump the creedal and denominational interests we hold?*

Wow! I had long thought on the first question – is there enough strength in numbers, enough authority in our scriptures and traditions, grounding in ethical and moral beliefs and actions to give faith communities what was needed to help respond to the global climate crisis. But I have never entertained the second part of Cohen-Kiener's query: Does what is happening to Earth offer enough urgency, relevance, challenge that it might actually save religion from its self- and other-destructive actions? Could the recognition of the crisis we have before us save religion from staleness and impotence, giving it a new sense of purpose and energy?

These were the thoughts that I brought to the two workshops I attended last month that were led by Joanna Macy at Rowe Camp and Conference Center. Joanna ([www.joannamacy.net](http://www.joannamacy.net)) is Buddhist, though there were people of all faiths, (including many UUs) and no claim to religion, gathered there together. The work with the group was powerful beyond what I can offer in this space. Together, we named that for which we are grateful, but also our despair, anger and anguish for

what has been lost. We were encouraged to honor, own, even befriend our pain for the world. This was not easy, but it was real. And it helped me to awaken, to see the world with new eyes. It was a blessing to be with all these people who cared enough to grieve. And it is from there that new energy and resolve, even new ideas and imaginings, are born – at least, that was true for me.

There was much more to the week's work, to be sure, but in leaving Rowe, I realized that the thoughts I arrived with, from Cohen-Kiener, had been challenged further. We used to ask, can humans save Earth? Can we, together, work hard enough, fast enough, to respond to the global crises that are upon us? But a better question is this: Can the global climate crisis save humanity? Will we be awoken to new levels of commitment and consciousness we never thought were within us to finally eschew the destructive ways that have brought us to this point in our common history?

One of my favorite quotes from my week at Rowe that I scribbled in my journal is this: "This work is not about hope; it's not about being optimistic or pessimistic. It's about being seized by an invitation to take part in something you can't say 'no' to."

Right now, I am seized by these questions: Will the state of Earth save religion? Will it save humanity?

Stay tuned ...

Blessings,  
Alison  
[acornish@uuma.org](mailto:acornish@uuma.org)

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## Farewell to the Comstocks

In late summer, Bob Comstock announced to the congregation that he and Barbara, who had long spent summers in their charming house on the waters of Conscience Point, would be moving full time to Connecticut. We'll miss them and wish them many happy new experiences with lots of new friends.

## President's Letter

I'm writing this the day after our Harvest Ball. It was exciting to see so many people having such a good time. Equally exciting was the sight of so many new faces in the crowd. If last night's experience resulted in attracting one or two new members, wouldn't that be wonderful? To those of you who brought guests, why not follow up with them to see what their impressions of us were? If they have questions, answer them. If you don't have a good answer, Alison can help.

It was also a joy to see so many people pitching in to help set up and take down. Of course, a smaller core group has been working for months to pull this off. I hesitate to name any names for fear of leaving someone out, but I have to give special thanks to Mark and Martha Potter for taking ownership of this event and organizing it so well.

Some scenes come to mind: Tip Brolin, Charlie Coulter, and Mark Potter tying up the corn stalks in the parking lot. Chris Epifania and Carol Holstein working the fabulous food service like orchestra conductors. People poring over the silent auction tables, savoring the many fabulous opportunities on offer. The cabaret atmosphere of the little round tables—a real decorator's coup. Hilary Helfant's paintings enhancing the festive feel. The big pumpkin in the entryway that didn't quite make it to opening night. The music. Above all, the smiling faces of people having fun.

Time moves on, though. The work of the congregation continues. Some new initiatives are getting under way. For example, by the time you read this, the Living our Unitarian Universalist Values (LUUV) Team will have had its first meeting. As noted in a recent letter, the purpose of this team is to brainstorm new ways for our congregation to once again become a visible force for social justice in our community.

The Worship Associates are a going concern (though always welcoming new blood), and Alison is working to establish a companion group to enhance the pastoral care we offer to our members. Sue Penny is heading up an effort to help us figure out how to become more inter-generational and thereby add a younger segment of people to our

congregational community. And the folks on the Stewardship Team are already discussing what—after the smashing success of the Harvest Ball—we might do for

an encore. There's a lot going on, with something to do for all willing hearts and hands. As I've said before, each of us should contribute in ways that bring us satisfaction and joy along with the undeniable effort that our UUCSF village requires if we are to flourish.

Finally, there's good news about our mortgage. As you know, we paid off two-thirds of our principal last winter, bringing it from \$150,000 down to \$50,000. Since then, a series of donations has whittled away at this, and just this weekend a donor pledged an amount that will enable us to pay off the entire remainder of our mortgage by January. We will then own our meetinghouse free and clear.

This will, I believe, require yet another celebration!

Peace,  
John Andrews  
candrews40@optonline.net



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## Board Meeting Summary

The Board unanimously approved an additional expense of \$400 for the Communication Committee to upgrade the congregation's website. Funds for this project will be drawn from the reserve fund.

The Board authorized Mark Potter to find a plumber, and to move forward with the installation of a backflow valve in the pipe connecting the meetinghouse with the water main, pursuant to the new regulation of the Suffolk County Water Authority. The vote was unanimous.

Kent Martin, Secretary  
kmartin@npr.org

## November Service Calendar

### November Service Calendar

Services are on Sundays at 10:30 am, unless otherwise noted.

#### November 13

##### A Washington Update

**Representative Tim Bishop and Myrna Truitt**

**Musician: Sara Gordon**

As we welcome Tim Bishop, our Representative to the U. S. House of Representatives, we are offered opportunities to reflect on our Unitarian Universalist belief in the importance of democratic principles and individual conscience. There will be time for questions.

#### November 20

##### Talking Turkey... and Giraffe, and Jackal

**The Rev. Alison Cornish, Anne Fleming and Barbara Singer**

**Musician: Marianne Koerner**

How can we find the best possible words to help express what we feel and need, and hear likewise from those with whom we share our lives?

Anne Fleming and Barbara Singer have been leading workshops on Compassionate Communication at their South Nassau UU Congregation in Freeport for several years, and will be bringing a workshop to our meetinghouse this afternoon.

#### November 27

##### Less is More

**The Rev. Alison Cornish**

**Musician: George Cork Maul**

As we move into the season of Festivals, how can we live out our spiritual values of generosity and kindness, without being swept up in the tide of "bigger, and more, is better"?

#### Thursday, December 1, 7:00 pm

##### World AIDS Day Service

**The Rev. Alison Cornish**

Each year we honor those who have lived with, and died from, AIDS - as well as those who have walked together with their friends and families. All are welcome.

Service Date	Set Up/ Greeters	Hospitality
Nov 13	Logan/Coulter	Dailey/Martin
Nov 20	Thurman	Dalsimer/ Littman
Nov 27	Ewald	Lindley/Trunzo
Dec 4	Truitt	Garafano/Tusa

Want to help out on an occasional basis? Everyone new to these positions can count on having a veteran partner. To volunteer, please speak to Jeanne Wisner at 631-208-8154, jkwisner@optonline.net

#### December 4

##### Music and Meditations for Planet Earth

**The Rev. Ned Wight and Worship Associate Martha Potter**

**Musician: Abby Fleming**

Originally scheduled for late August (when Hurricane Irene had other plans for us), this service invites us to contemplate the natural world—and our relationship to it—through word and music. The world of nature brings us so much beauty to enjoy and to inspire us; and so much anxiety and pain as earthquakes, floods, storms, fires and other natural forces destroy property and threaten plant and animal life (including human beings). Come prepared to explore the perplexing power of nature.



**A three-dip dish of dogdom: licorice, caramel, and vanilla, caught by Hilary Helfant at our Annual Blessing of the Animals service.**

## Upcoming Events

Events are free, open to all, and held at the meetinghouse unless otherwise noted.

### Sunday, Nov. 13, noon

Qi Gong. Daytime's shortening can bring time for letting go and finding new inspiration. Restore and align your energy with simple classical Chinese movement and breathing. It's free, and all are welcome. For more info, call Tina at 631-723-1923

### Thursdays, Nov. 17, Dec. 1 and 8, 4:30 - 6 pm

Building Community, Pursuing Justice: book and study group sponsored jointly by UUCSF and Temple Adas Israel. The book for these sessions, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, is available at Canio's. Call 631-537-0132 for each week's meeting place.

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## Compassionate Communication Workshop

### Sunday, Nov. 20 noon-3pm

Workshop Facilitators: Anne Fleming and Barbara Singer

Rushing around to "get it all done," we often forget that our lives are more meaningful when we slow down, listen, and connect with one another, heart-to-heart. This workshop will introduce practical techniques that encourage us to speak honestly and to listen empathetically for what's behind our words: feelings and universal needs.

Working since 2005 with Marshall Rosenberg's *Nonviolent Communication—A Language of Life*, Anne Fleming and Barbara Singer have found that the practice of Compassionate Communication can create deeper connections between individuals in groups, and deeper connections between individuals, small groups, or an entire congregation.

Soup will be served between the morning service and this workshop. Suggested donation is \$10.

Sue Penny

[suepenny@optonline.net](mailto:suepenny@optonline.net)

## Other Events of Interest

### Saturday, Nov. 19, 7 pm at the meetinghouse

A Concert and fundraiser starring Rhonda Liss. See details on page 1.

### Sunday, Nov. 20, 3 pm

The Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Multifaith Thanksgiving Service and Potluck will take place at Old Whaler's Church, Union Street, Sag Harbor. All are welcome. Please bring a dish to share for our common table; dinner follows the service.

## Ruth Jacobsen overlapping lives

A retrospective of the artist's work spanning  
fifty years, including new works

Nov. 6 –27

Artist reception November 6, 2:30-4:30 pm  
Westhampton Beach Free Library  
7 Library Avenue



## New Member Profile

I began my interview with Larry Darcey by asking why he'd decided to join now, after attending services at the meetinghouse for more than three years.

"I've been nonviolent all my adult life and stood for social justice," he replied. "Plus, UUCSF meets my spiritual needs."

Talking with Larry, you see how passionately he has "walked the talk." He's been arrested six times for marching his conscience to protest wars and the military/industrial complex.

Led by his conscience, Larry even risked his 30-year career with the NYPD, from which he eventually retired as a lieutenant. In uniform, he monitored the anti-Vietnam War and civil rights marchers; off duty, he joined them. Larry once protested with Father Daniel Berrigan in front of a nuclear weapons manufacturer, where they were arrested. Larry demonstrated at the El Salvadoran Consulate in New York, when six Jesuit priests, the housekeeper, and her teenage daughter were killed by El Salvadoran soldiers. He later demonstrated in front of the gates of The American School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, where those soldiers had been trained. Larry was arrested, but if the NYPD had found out, he could have lost his job. During his final eight years with the police department, Larry was assigned to the investigative arm of the Internal affairs Unit. As a plainclothes investigator, his conscience prompted him to work unarmed, again risking his career.

I found it particularly interesting that Larry earned his Master's Degree in Theology while at the NYPD. When he retired, he prayed for and got a job teaching social justice at St. Anthony's High School in Huntington. He explained, "It was another miracle in my life: my dream job."

Often protesting alongside Larry, and even being arrested, was Pat, his wife of nearly 60 years. They met at a Bronx roller skating rink, and together they raised six children in Huntington. Today they have 22 grandchildren living from coast to coast. Larry and Pat even held back one-third of their taxes, in protest of the wars and the defense budget. And for ten years Larry has written letters

to the editor of the East Hampton Star, protesting war and the destruction of the environment. When I asked who nurtured his social activism, he cited Martin Luther King Jr.; Malcolm X, when he converted to Islam; the Dalai Lama; the Berrigan brothers, and Thomas Berry.

Larry's spiritual pilgrimage to UUCSF has taken several paths. Born a Lutheran, he agreed to raise their children in Pat's religion, Roman Catholic. Eventually he himself converted. However, he has also been inspired by Sufism; Creation Theology; the Benedictines and the Jesuit Orders; Pax Christi; and the Quakers, with whom he worshiped and was active for many years. And his relationship with Alison Cornish goes back 25 years, when both were part of a group that held meetings in their homes, studying Thomas Berry's Creation Theology and environmentalism.

Larry is also enriched by his love of nature, the locally famous roses he grows in his garden, and swimming in Sag Harbor's Trout Pond. And if you attend a live Metropolitan Opera simulcast, or a Paul Winter concert, you are likely to see Larry and Pat swooning to the music.

John Tusa  
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Editor's note: a photo of Larry is on page 1.

## The Green Corner

I love visiting gardens which have been created by the hands, muscle, and imagination of their owners. Recently I visited the garden of an open-hearted and witty lawyer, who, since her retirement six years ago, has lived year round near the Long Pond Greenbelt. To make her garden, she had to accommodate conditions of dry shade and acid soil low in nutrients. And, just to up the odds, this would be the very first garden she'd ever made.

My friend dislikes seeing her name in print, so I'll call her M, honoring the mosses of gloriously ranging shades and textures that sound the bass notes of her garden's song. The previous owner of M's house had attempted a lawn, but M, though new to gardening, could see that moss seemed more determined to thrive here than grass. What would happen if she encouraged a complete takeover?

She laid newspaper on the grass and kept it damp until the grass died. Like magic, moss soon formed a general cover that didn't mind being walked on. "Weeds sprout," she says, "but I'm spared the noise of a lawnmower, and what's a little spot weeding compared to that?"

Another major change was to clear the tangled undergrowth that lay beyond the former lawn. M's aim was to open views to the protected woodland at the rear border of her property, but this intention was much enlivened, as she discovered the true contours of her land.

Once revealed, these small hills and valleys suggested importing moss of all varieties from her walks in the woodland. A nearby friend has brought her so much moss over the years that he has a "lawn" named after him.

She also uncovered numerous ferns, a struggling hydrangea, a young birch tree choked in undergrowth, and a yew much chewed by deer, kept low by lack of sun. "My bonsai," she calls it.

Stones emerged. One, a large slabbed mass of dark gray, was at the back border; a buff colored one, almost as large, lay downgrade and close to the house. Continued clearing of the area between these large stones inspired using more portable ones to fashion a stone river that winds delightfully through the small valleys of the natural terrain.

All work was done by M herself, though she had a professional cut the lower branches of a dozen large oaks. The shade and strong verticals of these trees are important to the sense of a woodland garden, and limbing them up enhanced everything.

Over the years, M has added a variety of shrubs, grasses, spring bulbs, and perennials from local nurseries. Before planting, she spent a whole growing season sticking in flag markers on which she'd marked "AM" and/or "PM" according to sun, and recording changes as the months progressed. In these "sun islands" she now has bloom.

And additions keep arriving from nature herself. This year, for the first time, M had clusters of Indian Pipes, spooky white against the vivid moss.

Three years into gardening, she added a deer fence. "All my life I'd wanted a lilac," she explains. "Right after I planted one, they ate the buds. That did it for me."

Initially she was strictly against soil amendment, but now adds peat and compost in new planting holes to boost water retention. And weed killers? She's adamant. None whatsoever.

Margaret Logan  
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**Minister:** the Rev. Alison Cornish  
Office hours Wed. 1-5 pm and by  
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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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## Hamptons Hospitality News

High season in the Hamptons having ended, the HH Associates met to review progress since July 1, the start of UUCSF's fiscal year, and to begin planning for the year ahead.

This will be the HH Associates' sixth year, and, thanks to our numbers of gracious hosts within or connected to the congregation, we're in very good shape. Our basic operating systems have been time-tested. Guests from all over the country have supplied much evidence that one of our goals, enhancing fellowship among UUs, is being amply realized.

The expected income from HH in this year's budget was stated as \$5000. As of September, our gross income had reached \$5700, and we anticipate doing even better because June, traditionally a wedding season, will close out the fiscal year. Our significant support to UUCSF's finances relies, of course, on the generous willingness of members and friends to regularly make rooms available in their houses. The HH Associates are grateful for every offer of rooms, and no host is ever pressured to say yes when asked about a given date.

Fifteen percent of the income from each booking is returned to the host in order to compensate for any cleaning and expense of providing light breakfasts. ("Light" has meant coffee, tea, juice,

and some sort of muffins, bagels, or pastry. Easy does it is the basic idea.)

If you've not yet chosen to host some guests, here are a few points in favor of deciding to do so. All guests are either UUs or their friends. This decidedly enhances the possibility that you'll find your guests compatible and pleasant company. If you're worried about "having to entertain people," you needn't. Guests, in our experience, are here not to be entertained by you, but by their own sightseeing, bicycling, beach going, and different kinds of family gatherings. What they'll want from you is a comfortable room and that light breakfast. Yes, a real chord can be struck, and, rather often, hosts and guests do find one another entertaining. Fellowship usually happens, but hosts should never feel they have to create it on their own.

HH Associates: Ingrid Krinke, Diana Lindley, Margaret Logan, Charleen Murphy, and Myrna Truitt



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