



Summer Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork



We are a spiritual community.

Blue Coral and Other Ordination Tales

When Kimberly announced one winter day that she'd like to be ordained at our Meetinghouse, the Fellowship committee stepped up to take on the task. A team was formed, followed by many volunteers, which snowballed into my becoming an "ordination coordinator." I didn't know what an ordination coordinator did, but I knew that Fellowship could throw a good party, and that Grania Brolin and Ingrid Krinke could pull *anything* together. Off we went on this remarkable endeavor with the congregation's collective commitment of support. Little did we know we'd have a part in the many tales yet to be told, or that "blue coral" even existed (it does), or that Kimberly's *Sankofa* would someday require us to "go back and get it."

This ordination was a celebration that drew family, friends, ministers, reverends, congregants, and dignitaries from far and near (*and near and dear*, like The Rev. Nancy Arnold) to answer Kimberly's call to ministry. It is not a congratulatory type of celebration for Kimberly's achievements or graduations or degrees. Rather, it is a blessing that intertwines Kimberly's calling to a higher purpose with the work of our congregation.

To the rhythm of Daniel Bailey's drumming, the marshals Sue Penny, Vice President of our congregation, and Margaret Pulkingham, Board Member, led a procession down the aisle to their seats in the front rows of the sanctuary. To name a few, "Legislative Minister" Mia Morris gave greetings

from the Metro District board. The Rev. Will Feinberg of UUMA taught us the 1-2-3 hug to promote mindfulness, healing and happiness, an essential practice as we embark on doing the work we are called to do as UUs. The Rev. Karen Campbell, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church of Sag Harbor, came as part of an interfaith group and lunch club. The Call to Celebration was brought by The Rev.

Natalie Fenimore, UU at Shelter Rock, who encouraged us to walk together into a multi-cultural future. Kimberly's sister, Tara Johnson and nephew, Matthew, lit the chalice. The Rev. Ned Wight, Executive Director of the UU Veatch Program at Shelter Rock, helped to lead the hymns along with our own ordination choir. From there followed several readings, offerings to The Living Tradition Fund,

and music by Nancy Remkus and other fabulous musicians discovered by Kent Martin.

The riveting ordination sermon was presented by The Rev. Alison Miller, Senior Minister of the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship (NJ). She expounded upon *Sankofa*, the symbol Kimberly chooses to wear as a necklace and to symbolize her ministry. Unitarian Universalism is a tradition of deeds and not creeds, with lives based on a practice of love, and a shared ministry that holds the promise that we can transform lives. Our strength comes from returning to our history of UU people who came before us. The Welcoming Congregation,



The Reverend Kimberly Quinn Johnson with a few of the ministers who helped to ordain her.

Continued on next page.



The Rev. Kimberly Quinn Johnson with her mentor, Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt.

Standing on the Side of Love, Black Lives Matter, are but a few of the endeavors calling us to our better deeds as well as our “refusal to leave any sibling outside the house of love.”

Thus began our Act of Ordination led by our president, Mark Potter, and the presentation of Kimberly's two stoles, one by our Carol Mason and a second by her beloved congregation in Montclair. Once be-

decked, Kimberly stood before The Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt, President of Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, CA, who gave her strong words of advice, caution, and love in her Charge to Minister. “Above all else,” the reverend advised, “guard your heart.” Then came the Right Hand of Fellowship by The Rev. Judy Tomlinson of Montclair and the Charge to Congregation by The Rev. Charles Ortman, in which he equated ministry to having 110 volts of electricity running through your veins. (No wonder Kimberly was advised to guard her heart.) He charged us with taking the highest road to which we are called, to be the best humans we are called to being, to seek the possibilities of goodness in the universe, to participate democratically, to promote the religious visions of the community as good news to share, to work to-

gether to undo the injustices, and to “go back and get it *right*.” Amen.

And then we partied together, surrounded by the most beautiful flowers (thank you Ken Etlinger, Carol Mason, and Grania Brolin), beautiful music (Grania), mounds of the best catered food and drink set on tabletops of “blue coral” linen, And it was *fine*!

After The Reverend event, I looked up the word “rejoice” in the dictionary. Rejoice is an experience of joy which one shows and expresses. That surely describes Kimberly. Here we have her, with her amazing and amazingly challenging human justice experiences in all shapes, assortments, and colors. Her ordination emanated from a deep and abounding joy for our UU faith and its potential for great good.

On the other side of our May 21, 2016 celebration is work, and work is a blessing. Parties are great fun, but work is the reward in the form of The Reverend Kimberly Quinn Johnson, whose human, social, and divine work befits that described on the back of our Order of Service under “UUCSF Statement of Vision and Mission” and our “Unitarian Universalist Principles.” Let us be called to our better deeds and to be part of the tales yet to be told.

Thank you everyone, and especially to Carl Wittenberg for technical expertise, and to Martha Potter, our Newsletter Editor, for taking the notes for this article during the ordination and for her dedication to our Journal.

Pamela Wittenberg, Fellowship Chair



Sue Penny opening the service.



Thoughts from our Minister

Since long before my ordination, I have had a steady refrain drumming in my head: *where do we come from, what are we, where are we going?* We sang this song (beautifully) at my ordination. And we sang it again a few weeks later in a worship service sponsored by the Committee on Ministry.

These questions frame much of what I do as an individual, and I think they are even more fitting for us as a congregation. They require first that we look at our past; history, tradition, and heritage are important. Decisions about our building; stands we have taken; ways of welcoming new people and caring for each other—we look to the people, decisions, practices, and values that have shaped who we are as a congregation. At the same time, we resist the urge to rest on our laurels, or the temptation to be stuck in the past. Can we look at who we are today with clear eyes, and open hearts and minds? Examining who we are means acknowledging things that aren't working. It may mean letting go of habits that no longer serve us well. This can be difficult, but it can also be liberating. Examining who we are also means celebrating those things that do work. It can mean figuring out how to live our values in the larger world and at home. All of this helps to ground us for the future. Where are we going? What and who are we here for? This year we have focused a lot on our mission. But what about vision? While a mission statement says what we are doing today, a vision is our inspiration for tomorrow. A vision says what we and our world will be like because of how we execute our mission.

In actual practice, these three: past, present, and future are not always so discrete. We rely on our

past in ways that we don't even consider. We are too busy living life to spend hours reflecting on the hows and whys of it. And most of us live with an unspoken vision for the future that guides our present action. This month, a number of us participated in a community vigil to remember the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando. By the time you read this, I hope that some of us will have attended an informational meeting to consider how our congregation might be more involved with Maureen's Haven. Ken Dorph has initiated an interfaith community *Iftar*—for Muslims, the breaking of fast during Ramadan. Margi Pulkingham has led us into a new community racial justice collaboration, and we are joined in leadership by Pam Greinke.

All of this work draws on this congregation's rich tradition of public witness and social justice. It meets us where we are and allows us to use our skills and talents to deepen our individual and shared interests. For me, this work has been guided by a vision of love, equity and justice in the world. It is guided by a vision of us as leaders in our community. It is guided by a vision of a people who support each other and who care deeply about each other.

What is *your* vision for us as a congregation? Who and what are we here for?

I am so honored and humbled to be a part of this congregation, and I look forward to seeing how our vision for ourselves and our world will shape our work in the coming year.

The Reverend Kimberly Quinn Johnson



Don Schmitz demonstrates s'more technique during the Summer Solstice celebration, June 19 at the Meetinghouse.

Green Sanctuary— Green Justice Projects Underway

In order to emphasize that we look outward as well as inward, we've added *Green Justice* to the name of our program.

We are proceeding along two tracks. One is to get some projects going right away. The other is to gather the information needed to apply for certification under the Unitarian Universalist Association's Green Sanctuary initiative. You'll be hearing more about the latter soon. For now, please consider joining one or more of the following projects. Contact information for the leaders is provided, and they'd love to hear from you by phone or email.

Green Solstice Leader: Sue Penny

(631-725-6435 or suepenny@optonline.net)

We are expanding our seasonal celebrations to include a summer as well as a winter solstice. We will mindfully incorporate positive themes of appreciation and gratitude for the earth with the celebratory experience of our solstice events.

Environmental Lessons for Children

Leader: Sue Penny

(631-725-6435 or suepenny@optonline.net)

A year ago we focused on the Religious Exploration program's planned "tree house" project, a part of which we would use to develop small educational units on energy efficiency in the home, using the structure as a prop. The project is now not so well defined, but Sue has volunteered to coordinate ideas and resources for a project involving children; either children of our own members and friends, or in cooperation with other children's programs which share our environmental values.

Adult Programs on Environment

Leader: John Andrews

(631-725-3367 or candrews40@optonline.net)

We will produce several forums/discussion sessions on environmental topics having a spiritual dimension. These will include the following:

"What is Environmental Justice?"

"Good Science vs. Voodoo Science: How to Tell the Difference"

"Energy Update: How are the U.S. and the World Doing on Carbon?"

Recycling the Hard-to-Recycle

Leader: Hilary Helfant (631-537-0212 or hhelfant@optonline.net)

We will create an aesthetically attractive display for our Fellowship Room which will include bins for recycling items that are small in size and do not present a toxicity problem within the building. We'll also have a poster describing all means of recycling that are available in our community.

Butterfly Garden Coordinator: Diana Lindley

(631-287-5266 or dlindley@optonline.net)

We are putting in a garden beside our Meetinghouse with plantings attractive to butterflies. The Group for the East End has funded the initial group of plant species, for which we are grateful. Diana is coordinating this aspect of the project but will need leadership help if the project is to expand beyond butterflies to include other beneficial insects such as honeybees, as well as other plantings that would have environmental benefits.

Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

Leader: John Andrews (631-725-3367 or candrews40@optonline.net)

We will look for and implement ways to reduce energy use in our Meetinghouse through improved efficiency and conservation. We will plan in advance for the time when our heating and air-conditioning system needs to be replaced. We will also set up a program of energy audits in the homes of our members and friends, with recommended actions to reduce their carbon footprints. We will monitor the performance of our solar energy system and promote the use of solar energy in our homes.

Climate Change Activism Leader: Tip Brolin

(631-237-4821 or ebrolin@me.com)

We will work with the East End chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) to promote national policy changes that will mitigate America's impact on the global climate. We will also cooperate with groups in the UU orbit having the same objective. The specific immediate objective is to promote the Carbon Fee and Dividend proposal that CCL leader Don Matheson explained at our April 24 service.

John Andrews



Ken Ettlinger shows off our resident garden pond frog.



A Few Words From our New President

You are entitled to know some of my qualifications to be your next president. This has been my spiritual home for more than 22 years. My husband Carl and I raised our two children here as UUs since their births. We have both been involved in the Religious Education Committee and have been to many retreats, Circle Dinners, parades, some protests, hundreds of talks and meetings, solstice celebrations, Coming of Age ceremonies, funerals and memorials, and concert series. I have chaired the Fellowship Committee since 2012 and have been a volunteer on that committee since 2010. I have served on the Board since 2013. Wherever we are needed, we try to fill the gap, be it for hospitality, greeter, gardening, or cleaning.

I believe my family has worshiped with six different UUCSF ministers and have witnessed the coming and going of seven presidential 3-year terms. I distinctly remember Roger Smith's and Jeanne Wisner's presidencies in the Water Mill Community House; Chris Epifania's skillful leadership; Sue Penny and Stuart Lowrie's smooth co-presidency; John Andrews' mastery; and of course, Mark Potter, who has kept it all together. It is an honor to become the next in line.

This congregation serves as my bedrock, fountain, and sky. It has been my guiding force in making sense of the best and worst of times. I appreciate having the opportunity to help us to make sense of the good that we can do together.

Thank you for your support.

Pam Wittenberg



We break ground for the butterfly garden.



Charles Coulter 1926-2016: A Remembrance

“Lovers’ leap.” That’s what Charlie called the move while teaching me his beloved game of backgammon. If you open with a roll of 6 and 5 you can move one “man” 11 points. Thereafter, I was always excited to roll the lovers’ leap. Only later, when Charlie recommended that I read *Backgammon, The Cruellest Game*, did I discover that the 6-5 roll was an unfavorable opening. But I loved playing the game with Charlie, and with his guidance, we became more or less evenly matched. We liked to discuss backgammon strategy and talked one another through potential moves. In a flash, Charlie could see and process all the options.

Shortly before his death at the age of 90, I visited him near Philadelphia. Over two days, we talked about many things:

politics and family, travels and work. We played several cliff-hanging games of backgammon. Oh, how I wish we could still play together!

Charlie was gentlemanly; a modest man possessed of an apparent innocence, generous with his praise, his time and his money. As a long-time member of the Southampton Village Planning Commission, he was instrumental in the creation of a bike path, one of the few in the village. A loyal member of the UU Congregation of the South Fork, he served for many years on the finance committee. In addition to his role in finance, he rolled up his sleeves and, along with Margaret, planted and tended the Meetinghouse flowerbeds, weeding and raking for hours. I can still see him, a tall, elegant patrician, working like a field hand. Among many causes over the years, Charlie made a significant contribution toward a children’s summer camp for West African children who lived in a homeless shelter. How many of his generous acts of kindness went unknown and unacknowledged?

For Charlie, Southampton would be high on his list of favorite places. So would London and Paris,

where he worked for Honeywell, heading an early program to bring computers to Europe. He loved Venice. He relished his European bicycle trips with Margaret, the spark of his life.

And Charlie was a storyteller. After the Big Crash, his father loaded their young family into a custom-made Chrysler convertible, won with a \$100 raffle ticket, and left for Europe. Some of you

may remember riding in that magnificent car, Old Faithful, in the Fourth of July Parade. In his four years traveling the Continent with an entourage that included maid and tutor, he learned French. He passed within a stone’s throw of a strutting Hitler. The family returned to the US in 1936. Charlie, now a young teen, was sent to a New England boarding school in



1938. Alone on the train trip, Charlie ordered a glass of wine with his meal, the ordinary practice in Europe. The waiter politely declined his request because of his age. Charlie, in his customary quiet way, accepted that he would need to dine without his beverage of choice.

On his 18th birthday, Charlie was drafted into the Army. At the end of the war, he entered Japan with General Douglas McArthur.

Returning to school, he partly earned his way through Harvard by playing cards and relieving his richer roommates of their cash. Charlie loved games.

In the current climate of public ego and braggadocio, we remember Charlie, the gentle man of accomplishment, who never felt it necessary to fill the air with self-importance and arrogance, but rather with kindness, graciousness and gratitude. I learned so much from him.

Charlie, I miss you.

Bill Dalsimer

Living with “the Other”

In the early 1700s, as France and England struggled for control of the New World, Iroquois Indians carried off more than 1,600 New Englanders to Canada, many of them children. Two of these were a great-aunt and uncle of mine.

At war's end, the New England parents and families made a great effort to bring the captives home. To their surprise and disappointment many of the children, 30% by some accounts, chose not to return home, preferring to remain with the Indian families who had adopted them.

Although my ancestors were ransomed during an armistice and returned to their homes, the fact that so many children refused to return tells a story of cultures.

To better understand this story, consider first the Iroquois custom of adoption. When they lost a family member to disease or warfare they commonly adopted enemy captives, children and young adults, as replacements for those they had lost, giving them all the love and respect of a full family member.

In addition, the family which a captive joined was not the male-dominated nuclear family of Puritan New England. Instead, the newly adopted youngsters found themselves living in longhouses with large matrilineal families of grandmothers, mothers, and aunts sharing the responsibilities of child rearing, love and feeding. Fathers, who often left for months at a time to hunt or in war parties, did not control the life of the household.

Perhaps most telling, the Iroquois regarded children as a precious gift, to be cherished and indulged, whereas the Puritan believed the child was born a willful sinner. You will recognize expressions such as *Spare the rod and spoil the child*, or *Children are meant to be seen and not heard*, common fare when I was raised. It was the responsibility of the parents to guide their children to righteous behavior, with shaming when possible, or with the switch if otherwise. The children of New England farmers were very familiar with the switch.

Try to imagine how a Puritan family reacted to the news that their own child chose to remain with the Iroquois. The colonists believed the natives they found living here in America were truly “the Other;” savages, heathen, devoid of human feelings. Fifty years earlier this belief had freed the European settlers from the constraints of their Christian religion, yet freed them to destroy entire tribes

of New England natives, slaughtering men, women and children, and selling captives into slavery on the Caribbean sugar plantations.

If their children's decisions raised any doubts in the Puritan family about themselves or their understanding of the Iroquois, we find little evidence of this. Instead, they believed their children had temporarily lost control of their senses, or that the natives were perverting the child's will. Or, if it were a neighbor's child who chose not to return, perhaps there was something lacking; some love or righteousness, in your neighbor's home.

In an historical perspective this is easy to understand. When I first learned this story as the teenage son of a 20th Century New England farmer, I was delighted, understanding completely why children would have preferred the Iroquois longhouse to the dawn-to-dusk labor of a farm.

What is not so easy to understand is the place of “the Other” in our own lives. Take your pick: for some of us “the Other” are the radical Islamists; for some “the Other” are the 2,000,000 felons imprisoned without hope in our own communities; for some “the Other” are the gun-toting cowboys of the NRA; for some “the Other” are the gay and LGBT community; or anyone of a different color; or of a different social status.

These groups help us to make sense of reality. When we need someone or something to blame they are ready at hand. The risk we run when we take this easy path is to forget that these people are human also, with hopes, fears, loves and pain identical to ours. To the extent that we dehumanize them, we lose our ability to understand them, to talk to them, or even at times to see them. If they view themselves as our enemies, we underestimate them, to our great peril.

Worse by far, we create a world view which we ourselves have populated with demons.

Mark Potter

New Member Profile

Michael Francis Daly

Michael has been a successful real estate agent for over sixteen years. He has lived in the area for many years, and prides himself on being a good listener who can usually decipher what people are looking for in a new home. Still, he feels that he has something more to contribute and would like to educate people about the benefits of adopting orphans, particularly in places like South Korea. Partly due to a recent change in the laws making foreign adoption much harder, combined with Korean social taboos on adoption, orphanages are often filled with children who never leave.



Michael first heard about the Unitarian Universalist community in Bridgehampton two years ago. He liked our principles, and the message – that we live *together* on this earth, and we need to love each other and make it a better place. He decided to become a member almost immediately, and looks forward to getting more involved, particularly in the area of social justice.

Raised Roman Catholic, Michael was a choir and altar boy, and attended parochial schools. As he matured, he began to question Catholicism's doctrine of exclusion and the concepts of sin and damnation. He searched for a religious experience that would have meaning for him, and attended both a Presbyterian church, and a community Bible church. He is a born-again Christian, and accepts Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Drawn to the UU's emphasis on inclusion and openness, he agrees that love is more important than doctrine. The belief in original goodness, with the understanding that sin is sometimes chosen, often because of pain or ignorance, resonates with him.

The photos on Michael's iPhone feature sunsets, the ocean and dogs, among many others. His handle on Instagram is "Hamptons Shutterbug." He enjoys taking photos during our services, and hopes to see some of them posted on our Facebook page. Social networking is important to him, and he

hopes that the congregation will eventually become more involved with the internet. An avid dog lover, he has rescued several dogs from Last Chance, including a Samoyed, and recently, a white shepherd named Leche.

A full time resident of Sag Harbor for eighteen years, Michael has been spending

summers on the East End since he was two years old. Divorced, he has raised three sons, now all in their twenties, with the help of his mother, father and aunt, and says "it takes a village" to raise a child. He was on the Board of Cormaria, and has been active in the Southampton Music Festival as well as the Parrish Art Museum and the Anti-Bias Task Force. He was a producer for the "Neopolitical Cowgirls," a not-for-profit company of women dedicated to creating innovative dance theatre which explores the female voice.

Michael is a vegetarian and is experimenting with various new recipes. He is a fearless ocean swimmer and loves to body surf, but hopes to start paddleboarding this summer. He loves to drive and to take road trips, and is even flying to Florida just for the pleasure of driving back to New York with a friend. He has driven across the country seven times, and visited all forty-eight states. Most importantly, he would like to see the world become a kinder and gentler place.

Diana Lindley

New Member Profile

Eva Roberts-Vazquez

Eva became a member of UUCSF after first enjoying the *EcoFest* held at the Meetinghouse in March of 2015. She later came for Qi Gong and was encouraged after attending several services which specifically addressed race and justice. She enjoyed the experience of coming each Sunday and she began to consider it a place of sanctuary and spiritual renewal.

Eva loves the physical space with its abundance of natural light, golden colors, and woodland setting. She was excited to see a Green Initiative, which resonated with her personal values. She was likewise drawn by the Vision Statement,



particularly the part about "opposing exclusion, oppression and violence", and the principle of "respecting the inherent worth and dignity of every person". Eva found a welcoming congregation here, and has long felt a resonance with UU views on spirituality and faith.

Eva works in the field of mental health recovery, first working as a peer, sharing her own life experience in mental recovery to help others. Professionally she has also been a career counselor, an advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities, and as a youth counselor. Her work experience

includes providing home care, child care, retail sales, corn-picking and, yes, tobacco packing. She has a passion for learning about rights and resources in human services, and sharing this information with others. One of her mottos is, *Knowledge is Power!*

She enjoys living on the East End, having moved

here to be near her mother over a decade ago. She advocates the importance of taking care of our East End resources, by decreasing fertilizer and pesticides that contaminate the aquifer. She encourages the use of public transportation, having given up her car a year ago. She even envisions slogans such as *I go places with*

Suffolk County Transit, and *I Love Riding the Bus*, to promote public transportation. Eva has two ferrets, Bongo and Methia, and a cat named Peek-a-Boo.

Myrna Truitt



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Free minds, open hearts.



Chris Epifania, Jim Thurman and Michael O'Neal at the Vigil.

UUCSF at the Vigil for Orlando—Montauk Highway, Bridgehampton, on Sunday June 12.



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