



# THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2010



## January Services

SERVICES AND CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BEGIN AT 10 A.M.



### January 3

Creation Spirituality: A Theology of Wonder – *Rev. Betty Kornitzer*  
We'll explore another heretical theology with roots firmly grounded in Christianity.

### January 10

The Rewards of Self Reflection and Assessment – *Rev. Betty Kornitzer*  
Taking inventory and assessing our performance are vital to spiritual well-being.  
As the new year begins, we'll explore the gifts of personal and congregational self-reflection.  
*At 11:30 in the Sanctuary, the Committee on Ministry will enlighten us about the Evaluation of our Ministry that will take place during February. Questions are welcome.*

### January 17

The Food Roots of Immigration – *Susan Letendre*  
Susan Letendre uses her experience as a fair trade importer from Guatemala and Mexico, as well as her certification as a Global Business Professional from Bryant University, to teach about sustainable and socially just purchasing decisions and sustainable social action.

### January 24

“Let it Shine”— A Celebration of Inner and Outer Light  
– *Rev. Betty Kornitzer, Debby Hedison, Deanna Camputaro & the UUCSC Children and Youth*  
*An Intergenerational Service*

In this first month of a bright new decade, we will focus on the light within and the boundless ways that light is shared with the world. Come prepared to shine together!

### January 31

Covenant: A Sacred Promise – *Rev. Betty Kornitzer*  
In Unitarian Universalist circles we talk a lot about “covenant.”  
The concept of covenant is central to our faith tradition. It's time we took a good look at the roots and the practicalities of being a covenantal faith.

### February 7

“Carpe Diem” – *Rev. Betty Kornitzer*  
Many of us learned the expression “carpe diem” (“seize the day”) in the film *Dead Poet's Society*.  
This one short expression can change the course of a lifetime. Let's explore!

OUR HOME IS AT LILY PADS PROFESSIONAL CENTER, 27 NORTH ROAD, PEACE DALE, R.I.



# THE SOUTH COUNTY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

P.O. BOX 5473, WAKEFIELD, RI 02880 • (401) 783 -4170

PUBLISHED ELEVEN TIMES A YEAR

KAREN R. ELLSWORTH, EDITOR ♦ VAL FOLLETT & GERRE ALDERWICK, PUBLISHERS

DEADLINE: THE 20TH DAY OF EACH MONTH

---

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY

[www.uusouthcountyri.org](http://www.uusouthcountyri.org)

### Rev. Betty Kornitzer, Minister

Bkornitzer@aol.com • Minister's Study 284-3321 • Urgent calls: 932-1515

Office hours Wednesdays 3 to 6 and Thursdays & Fridays 9 to noon, by appointment

### Debby Hedison, Religious Education Director

### Board of Directors

Tracy Hart, President • Charles Donnelly, Vice President

Will Bender, Treasurer • Carole Driver, Clerk

Aline Couture, Finance Committee Chair

Ed Burrell, Jr. • Tom Magliocchetti • Ali Buffum • David Hamel – Trustees

Amber Kelley, Past President



Val Follett & Barbara Pagh, Membership Committee Chairs • John Glasheen, Social Action Committee Chair

Elizabeth Donovan, Publicity Committee Chair • Kathy Swink, Worship Committee Chair

Pam Santos, Religious Education Committee Chair • Nick Smith, Personnel Committee Chair

Sally Barney, Facilities Committee Chair • Penny Hall, Jean Burke, & Nancy Dean, Committee on Ministry



Peter Himmel, Adult Religious Education Committee Chair • Harry Buffum, Music Committee Chair

Judi Marcy, Caring Connection Chair • Eileen DeMaio, Social Events Committee Chair

Marie Younkin-Waldman & Lisa McHenry, Hospitality Committee Co-Chairs



### OUR HOME IS AT LILY PADS PROFESSIONAL CENTER, 27 NORTH ROAD, PEACE DALE, R. I.

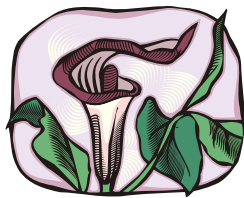
(401) 783-4170 • P.O. Box 5473, Wakefield, RI 02880 • e-mail address: [uucscri@yahoo.com](mailto:uucscri@yahoo.com)

WEBSITE: <http://www.uusouthcountyri.org/> • Webmaster: David Crockett

Services and Children's Religious Education on Sundays at 10 a.m.



*We welcome all individuals without regard to race, color, physical challenge,  
sexual orientation, age, or national origin.*



# *The Minister's Message*

By Rev. Betty Kornitzer

## *2010, a New Year—Now is the Time*

As I write, it's almost the New Year, and I am disappointed. I am so sad about the tepid results of the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. I am also disappointed in my own lackluster efforts to rescue the planet. Copenhagen was a real wake-up call. I am beginning to really get it that we can't expect world governments to fix the climate problem. I am beginning to get it that every person, every single person is called to action on the climate issue. This is sobering, it can also be invigorating.

The latest issue of *Yes* magazine focuses on climate change and ways to reverse the damage. The magazine cover highlights an article called "10 Ways to Change Your Life (Not Just Your Light Bulbs.)" It is filled with dozens of ideas for action. But how much will I act? Much depends upon my state of mind, and how I'm feeling about myself. Let me explain:

The New Year is a fertile time for self-reflection. A true and clear look in the mirror of our lives is a powerful spiritual practice. The great Western philosopher Socrates took as the cornerstone of his philosophy the maxim: "Know thyself." He did not say "criticize thyself." The distinction is important. We human beings tend to be very self-critical, which is both hurtful and nonproductive. When was the last time that a strong dose of self-criticism inspired you to constructive action? I find self-criticism to be depressing and debilitating, and certainly not motivating. In this New Year, I hope we can all be inspired to make positive changes. Resolutions based on self-denigration won't work.

Inspiration and enthusiasm are great fuel for positive climate action. The key may be dropping the self-criticism and changing that behavior to self-reflection. With self-reflection, the gentler cousin of criticism, we can see ourselves both truthfully and clearly. This is the state of mind that most inspires us to action. This is the state of mind that is needed to save our planet.

We cannot wait for world governments to protect the earth. With inspiration and enthusiasm, I see it is I who must begin.

### **It Is I Who Must Begin**

*by Vaclav Havel*

*It is I who must begin.  
Once I begin, once I try –  
here and now,  
right where I am,  
not excusing myself  
by saying things  
would be easier elsewhere,  
without grand speeches and  
ostentatious gestures,  
but all the more persistently  
– to live in harmony  
with the "voice of Being," as I  
understand it within myself*

Peace and Love,

*Betty*

# The President's Letter

While my philosophy follows the "each day is a new beginning" sentiment, in January I power boost my resolutions with the collective New Year's energy for change.

UUCSC can certainly benefit from a jolt of can-do attitude as well. It comes in handy when life is so rich with opportunity, a list a mile long manifests.

Okay, that didn't sound 100% positive, did it?

Perhaps my first priority will be to energize my spirit.

My UUCSC community supports this: Sunday mornings of shared serenity and inspiration; Wednesdays at 10 a.m., free hour-long meditation (first timers welcome); and the third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m., Spiritual Deepening.

There's also a fund raising "sober" dance planned for Saturday, January 30th—with a band that always gets the blood rushing! (By the way, at the December Board meeting, we started a conversation about whether UUCSC events will be alcohol free. This will be a congregation-wide discernment and decision-making process. We'll focus on this after the upcoming Committee on Ministry's facilitation of the Evaluation of the Minister and our Shared Ministry.)

Other avenues for spiritual refreshment that call to us and need "stewards" (folks to help ideas evolve into realities), are planning for the creation of an outside labyrinth, and drumming and healing circles.



One of the top two goals visioned at the Board retreat is for strong, meaningful, and rewarding connections to the larger community—weaving our loving presence into community by film, music, talks, or social action. Plans for a Common Ground film series, as well as family cooking for Welcome House, are just a couple of ways UUCSC fulfills this vision.

Additionally, to support this, a new e-mail communication vehicle will be coming. [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) is making technology for creating petitions available to everyone! This will enhance UUCSC's ability to support legislative action in Rhode Island to promote UU values.

Gail Mathews has stepped forward to oversee this process.

Shortly, everyone with an e-mail address will be asked if they'd like to participate in this system, as well as an inter-UUCSC community announcement board. Sometimes non-UUCSC events or opportunities come up that members and friends wish to share with each other, such as an interesting meeting, a social action opportunity, an item for sale, or a need for assistance. We will create a designated gmail distribution list that you may sign up for. Clyde Scanley will monitor the messages, so he won't be keeping the congregation's calendar, as previously announced.

The calendar process may need to be tweaked, but we will try enabling committee chairpersons who have access to post events. Charlie Donnelly, as vice president, will oversee the system and be available to resolve conflicts that may arise.

Returning to the mile long to-do list, I resolve to remember that one of the benefits of beloved community is that one is not expected to shoulder the responsibility for accomplishing everything alone.

In friendship and gratitude,  
*Tracy Hart*

If the weather is frightful . . .

Here's the plan in case of snow storms: The safety of our congregants is our first priority. Please take good care of yourselves, and stay at home on Sunday mornings if travel is unsafe for you. Tracy Hart and Betty will determine if Sunday services should be cancelled due to bad weather.

Cancellations will be publicized in three ways:

- A message will be sent out on the church e-mail list.
- A notice will be posted on the UUCSC web site.
- A message will be broadcast on Eyewitness News Pinpoint Network, TV Channels 12 and 64.

Radio Announcements will be made on AM WHJJ (920) and FM stations WWBB (B101), WHJY (94.1) and WSNE (93.3).

. . . enjoy a virtual worship service

*Sunday morning worship is an important part of our experience of Beloved Community . . . even in the midst of winter storms.*



*If Sunday morning worship is cancelled due to bad weather, Betty will send a "Virtual Worship Service" over the UUCSC e-mail list.*

*The idea is that at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, all who wish may read the service and participate, knowing we are all together in spirit.*

# Introducing our newest members

The Membership Committee is happy to present our newest members, who joined our congregation on December 6, 2009. We welcome them heartily and wish them well on their spiritual journey at UUCSC.

If you are thinking about joining our congregation, or just curious about who we are and what we stand for, please watch for the dates of the next Path to Membership series in the spring. – **Val Follett and Barbara Pagh**

**Hank and Pat O'Reilly**



***"I am so happy to find a spiritual/peace filled place where I can grow in my faith." – Pat***

***"Reverend Betty is tops, the members are open, friendly, and caring, and the theology makes more sense than any I had encountered." – Hank***

**Lynne Collette**



***"I am very proud to be part of such a wonderful family who allow me to pursue my personal and spiritual growth."***

**Barbara McKenna**



***"Joining and centering in local community as a way to work, share and play while extending awareness and responsibility to global community."***

**Peter Migliaccio, Erika Steele,  
and children Allegra and Teal**



***"We are choosing to join the UUCSC to be a part of this community and to provide our family with an opportunity to explore the many aspects of Unitarian Universalism. We feel very welcomed."***

Photos by Al Dussault

# A chance to reflect

*Every five years, the UUA asks that we pause and reflect on where we are as a congregation. We have an opportunity to explore what we mean by shared ministry and how this ministry helps our spirits to grow.*

*We have seen some enormous changes in the last few years! What is working especially well in the UUCSC, and what changes do you think would make things better? In February, everyone will have an opportunity to think, talk, and write about these questions and more, as we carry out an evaluation of the minister and our work with each other as a congregation. The lay members of the Committee on Ministry will guide the process.*

*Because the cottage meetings were so successful in getting your input and involvement in moving to our new home, we will use that model for our congregational evaluation. In January, all members and friends of UUCSC will be invited to choose a date in February that is convenient to attend a cottage meeting. Meetings will occur at different times of day or evening to accommodate different schedules. Current and past members of the Committee on Ministry will facilitate the meetings, at which everyone will be encouraged to share their insights and inspirations. There will be an optional opportunity for your written thoughts. All communications will be confidential. Our youth and children will also be involved in the evaluation process in an appropriate way.*

*The lay members of the Committee on Ministry will pull together all the responses and comments and send everyone a summary with recommendations. The*

*board and the minister will work with the congregation to address the concerns and suggestions identified during the evaluation.*

*We look forward to working together to make UUCSC the best it can be!*

– The lay members of the Committee on Ministry:  
*Nancy Dean, Jean Burke, and Penny Hall*

## COTTAGE MEETING SCHEDULE:

*Date, Time, Place, Facilitators*

**Wednesday, Feb. 3,** 9:30-11:30 a.m., Linda White-Burrell's house in Hope Valley (Linda Whyte-Burrell and Nancy Dean)

**Friday, Feb. 5,** 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Sally Barney's house in Kingston or Jean Burke's house in West Kingston) (Sally Barney and Jean Burke)

**Sunday, Feb. 7,** 11:30- a.m to 1:30 p.m., church nursery (Linda Whyte-Burrell and Nancy Dean)

**Tuesday, Feb. 9,** 7 to 9 p.m. , church youth room (Karl Seemann and Penny Hall)

**Thursday, Feb. 11,** 7 to 9 p.m., church youth room (Harry Buffum and Charlie Donnelly)

**Monday, Feb. 15,** 7 to 9 p.m., Sally Barney's home in Kingston or Jean Burke's in West Kingston (Sally Barney and Jean Burke)

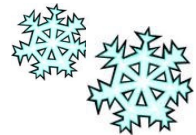
**Tuesday, Feb. 23,** 7 to 9 p.m., church youth room (Karl Seemann and Penny Hall)

**Sunday, Feb. 28,** 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., church nursery (Harry Buffum and Charlie Donnelly)



## Mid-Winter Dance

**Saturday, January 30, 7 to 10 p.m. at Lilypads**



Mike Monahan and Friends (with our own Nick Smith on electric guitar) will play blues and rock 'n roll from the 50s 60s and 70s, with some folk and country music thrown in for good measure.

Bring friends and neighbors—the whole community is invited to this fun sociable night!

Coffee, cold drinks, snacks and deserts will be served.

Suggested donation: \$10. No childcare provided.

*This event is a UUCSC fundraiser organized by the Social Events & Music Outreach Committee*



## Religious Education News and Events

By Debby Hedison, Director of Religious Education

*"....go with Wisdom, go with Wonder...."*

Happy Holy New Year!

We will begin our second Sunday school session this month. Session 2 runs from January 3rd through February 28th. I encourage Session 2 teachers to contact last session's teachers to help orientate you to the classroom and curriculum. Please contact me and I can help arrange this for you!

We also are so happy to welcome all the new families who have been visiting our program! Here is the programming for this session:

*Pre K/Kindergarten through Second Grade – "Walking the Rainbow Path"*

This is an age-appropriate introduction to our UU Principles that aims to help children begin to name their own religious and spiritual experiences, to give them stories and language that create a framework on which to build their own belief system, and to nurture their ethical growth.

*Third Grade through Fifth Grade – "Spirit of Adventure: UU Identity"*

This curriculum features exciting activities using themes in engineering, exploration, medicine, sports, holidays, food and nature. These themes give children a chance to explore the lives of famous Unitarians and Universalists and talk about applying the seven UU Principles to everyday life activities.

*Sixth Grade through Eighth Grade – "Compass Points"*

This curriculum guides adolescents on a yearlong journey to explore their feelings about themselves and their world as they begin to create their adult selves. They will work to discover what they believe about life's big questions, the nature of humanity, beliefs about life and death, how to think independently and assume responsibility. The program examines UU values, history, polity, and theology.

### Contact Information for Rev. Betty Kornitzer

*Regular Office Hours:*

Wednesdays: 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Thursdays and Fridays: 9:00 a.m. to Noon,  
and other times, all by appointment.

*Days Off:* Monday and Tuesday.

Office Telephone (non-urgent calls): 284-3321

Cell Phone (urgent calls): 932-1515

Email (very effective): bkornitzer@aol.com

Please be sure to call before dropping by the church during Betty's office hours. Sometimes she is called away on business away from her office, even during "office hours.

*Rev. Betty will be on vacation January 11 through January 21. She will not be in email communication during that time. Board members can contact her in case of an emergency.*

### The Caring Connection

... provides assistance to members and friends of the congregation who need a little

help dealing with medical issues or physical limitations. We meet on the fourth Thursday of each month at 10:15 a.m. We are always looking for new members, and we always welcome

volunteers. If you would like more information, please call Judi Marcy.

— Judi Marcy



# The 11th Hour

*"An unnerving, surprisingly affecting documentary about our environmental calamity . . . essential viewing."* – Manohla Dargis, *The New York Times*

## Free showing on Sunday, Jan. 31

Global warming. Resource depletion and degradation. Mass extinction. How have we come to this pass, what's at stake, and what can we do to change course before it's too late? Through the voices of more than fifty leading scientists, thinkers, leaders, and innovators, this film explores the fundamental mismatch between the economic systems we've created and the living systems of which we are a part. Despite the direness of the situation, the film offers plenty of hope, showing how existing technologies can pull us back from the brink of disaster, and how emerging paradigms can lead us to a more sustainable and sustaining way of life. Interviews alternate with striking images of natural beauty and human-wrought devastation.

This 2007 documentary was written and directed by sisters Leslie Connors Peterson and Nadia Connors, and produced and narrated by Leonardo DiCaprio. It features interviews with Stephen Hawking, James Hansen, David Suzuki, Sylvia Earle, Bill McKibben, David Orr, Mikhail Gorbachev, and many, many others.

The Adult Religious Education Committee is sponsoring the screening, which will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. (immediately after the service). Pizza will be served. Child care will be available. Registration is not required but will help with planning. If you plan to attend, please contact Lisa Petrie and let her know how many will attend and the number of children for whom child care is needed.



## Spiritual Deepening:

*An introductory series  
for unfolding a soulful life*

*Facilitated by Rev. Betty Kornitzer and Christine Phoenix-Green, this series meets on the third Wednesday of each month (except for January when the meeting is on the fourth Wednesday) in the Sanctuary from 7 to 8:45 p.m. These sessions will help us experience and deepening our spiritual lives, inviting us to explore new ways of living authentically from the center of our depths, where peace and wisdom reside. All are welcome to attend any of the programs. Prior attendance is not required. The tentative schedule of future topics and dates:*

*January 27 – Poetry*

*February 17 – Dark Nights of the Soul*

*March 17 – The Feminine Face of God*

*April 21 – A Practice: Prayer*

*May 19 – Nature*

*Pre-registration is very helpful (though not required) for preparation. To pre-register, e-mail Christine Phoenix-Green at [cphoenixrising@earthlink.net](mailto:cphoenixrising@earthlink.net).*

## BOOKS and BAGELS

Saturday, January 23 at 10:30 a.m.

Join us as we share our favorite books read in 2009

while enjoying bagels and cream cheese, muffins, fruit, tea and coffee. Please bring one or two books and tell us why you chose them. You may also read aloud a short selection from each book (optional). Our facilitator will be Linda Whyte Burrell. Registration is helpful but not necessary. Sponsored by the Adult Religious Education



Committee.

## Guest at Your Table

By the time you read this we hope to have all the Guest at Your Table Boxes in and counted. We plan a special coffee hour at which to make the big announcement about how much money our congregation—children, youth, and adults— have raised for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. I am able to say that the boxes that have been going around with the collection plate have collected \$325, a fine showing indeed. Thanks go to Miss Debby and Rev. Betty for their hard work on behalf of the UUSC.

– Gerre Alderwick

# John Quincy Adams: Two views

Adapted from the profile of Adams in the Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography (© Unitarian Universalist Historical Society):

John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) spent most of his youth and adult life in public service to the United States, as senator, diplomat, secretary of state, president, and congressman. The second of John and Abigail Adams's five children, John was born in the North Precinct of Braintree, Massachusetts (later Quincy).

His parents' home in Quincy remained his own home throughout his life, though he was often away for extended periods in Europe and Washington. He was strongly influenced by his fiercely dedicated and brilliant parents. At home, issues of government, politics, world affairs, literature, religion and morality

were all considered immediate and pressing.

It was during his years in Congress that he gained his greatest political respect, by defending, successfully, the rights of the African captives who in 1839 overwhelmed the crew of the Spanish slave ship *Amistad*, by opposing, unsuccessfully, the Mexican War and statehood for Texas, and by opposing, again unsuccessfully, the gag rule

denying the right of petition on issues involving slavery. In the end, however, his opposition to the gag rule can be counted as successful, for his unwavering efforts against slavery had a powerful effect that outlived him.

His parents were members of the First Parish Church of Quincy, part of the liberal wing of New England Congregationalism that became Unitarian as a result of a schism. John, however, was religiously more conservative than his parents. As he matured, he struggled to develop his own system of beliefs, with his diaries containing rebuttals of both optimistic Unitarianism and intolerant Fundamentalism. Near the end of his life he summed up his personal credo in these few words: "I reverence God as my creator. As creator of the world. I reverence him with holy fear. I venerate Jesus Christ as my redeemer; and, as far as I can understand, the redeemer of the world. But this belief is dark and dubious."



From *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (W.W. Norton & Co., 2008), by Annette Gordon-Reed, winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for history:

The Adams family is well known for some of its members' strong and, even heroic, stances against slavery, particularly that of Abigail's son, John Quincy. Yet it has long been apparent that being antislavery is not the same as being nonracist, and the example of the Adams family reinforces that observation.

We get a very telling glimpse of Abigail Adams's own views about one aspect of race relations in a letter she wrote upon seeing the play *Othello* in 1786. By her own admission, Adams was simply undone by the play's depiction of the marriage between a Moor, portrayed by a white man done up in black face, and a white woman. Adams wrote of her "horror and disgust" every time the "sooty" actor touched the "gentle" actress who played Desdemona, even though she knew they were just actors on a stage. She was not sure why she felt that way and seemed discomfited by her response, but her reaction against racial intermixture was visceral and extremely powerful.

Her son John Quincy saw *Othello* thirty years after his mother. He offered more detailed responses to the play in two essays in which he was able to put into words, in a way his mother could not in 1786, exactly what was troubling about the play. Adams wrote:

*"Who can sympathize with the love of Desdemona? The great moral lesson of the tragedy of Othello is, that the black and white blood cannot be intermingled in marriage without a gross outrage upon the law of Nature, and that in such violations, Nature will vindicate her laws. The character takes from us so much of the sympathetic interest in her sufferings, that when Othello smothered her in bed, the terror and the pity subside immediately into the sentiment that she got her just deserts."*

The only reasonable reading of this passage is that Adams was saying that Desdemona deserved death for race mixing with Othello. As it happens, he made exactly that point very graphically to the renowned actress Fanny Kemble at a dinner party in Boston in 1839. Kemble described Adams's face as displaying "the most serious expression of disgust" as he told her that Desdemona should have died for marrying, in Adams's words, "a nigger."

## Discuss the Seven U.U. Principles

Every other Friday between January 8 and April 2, Rev. Betty Kornitzer and members of the Adult Religious Education Committee (Al Dussault, Charlie Donnelly, and Peter Himmel) will lead a discussion on the Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles.

Information about each principle will come from the book *With Purpose and Principle: Essays about the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism*, Edward A. Frost, ed. The readings will be available in advance and at the discussion.



Past reviews found these groups to be very helpful for new members and those interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism. The series begins on Friday, January 8 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room. Pizza will be served.

## The Clear Heart Sangha

*The Clear Heart Sangha is a meditation group with teachings in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hahn, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk. The Sangha is led by dharma teacher Joanne Friday. The Sangha is a group of people from all traditions who come together to study, practice and be a part of a mindful community. Its practice consists of sitting meditation, walking meditation, and dharma discussion.*

*The Clear Heart Sangha will meet at UUCSC on the first Sunday of each month from 6 to 8 p.m. All who are interested in meditation practice are welcome.*

*The Clear Heart website is:  
<http://www.clearheartsangha.org/>  
– Betty Kornitzer*

## Social Action Committee meets on January 18

Everyone is welcome to attend the Social Action Committee meeting on Monday, January 18 at 7 p.m. Come and meet the folks who organize the Amnesty International letter-writing, the Welcome House meals, and the fair trade coffee exchange, as well as the members of Common Ground. We are always looking for people to join us in our efforts to make a positive change in our world.

At this meeting, we will report on our activities and plan for the coming year. Please contact Gerre Alderwick, the chair of the January meeting, for more information.



## Welcome House

Wednesday, January 13th is our day to provide a meal for the 20 residents and staff of Welcome House. Volunteers from our congregation bring a salad, an entree, or a dessert to the house by 5 p.m. This can be a fun project for your family. Children have enjoyed decorating cupcakes and cookies for Welcome House. A couple of families could

volunteer together to provide an entire meal. Please contact Gerre Alderwick if you would like to volunteer or if you would like more information.

---

## THE MEDITATION GROUP

*. . . meets in the sanctuary every Wednesday from 10 to 11 a.m. We practice sitting and walking meditation and share a reading and time of discussion. All are welcome; no meditation experience is necessary. – Betty Kornitzer*

---



## Silence and thanks

The following was contained in an Order of Worship for a UU Church I attended a while ago:

Silence after musical offerings enhances the spiritual nature of the music. Please offer your appreciation to the musicians after the service.

I really like that suggestion because I strongly feel that musical offerings are an integral part of a whole that we call Worship. At concerts, we do not applaud individual movements of symphonies or sonatas, but rather save our approval for the end of the work. So too, do I respectfully request that you seriously consider not interrupting the carefully planned entity of our services. Afterwards, the musicians will warmly welcome any comments, enthusiastic or otherwise, for their contribution to what we always hope “enhances the spiritual nature” of the service.

– Helene Gersuny,  
UUCSC interim pianist

# "Why is the newsletter always late?"

As the editor of the *South County Unitarian Universalist*, I try to stay in the background so all of you will have enough space to express yourselves. But sometimes I feel I need to communicate with you myself.

Recently, Tracy Hart told me that some congregation members have asked why the newsletter seems to arrive so late each month, and the Board members have asked if there is anything the congregation might do to help the newsletter arrive earlier each month. It occurred to me that knowing more about the monthly process of creating the newsletter might help everyone understand why the newsletter sometimes arrives in your mail later than it should.

The deadline for each month's issue is the 20th day of the previous month. I know that everyone makes an effort to deliver material to me on time, but often I do not receive everything until five or six days after the deadline.

When I receive the material (by e-mail), I remove the formatting and store it electronically. I edit every item for grammar, syntax, and spelling. I remove redundant words, separate run-on sentences, recast the passive voice to the active voice, make sure that subjects and verbs match, and correct erroneous uses of the word "which," among many other things. I can hear you saying, "Is our stuff really so badly written?" The short answer is yes. The only person who has ever sent me perfect copy is Amber Kelley. (Thanks, Amber!) Am I too picky? Maybe. As a former newspaper reporter and copy editor, I am probably more sensitive than the average person to errors that will appear in print.

While I am editing these items, I sometimes find inconsistencies, factual errors, or omissions, and I must follow up with the person who sent the item. I also check every book title and author's name, and every website address, to make sure they are correct. (Sometimes they are not.) The item that invariably causes the most delay is the calendar. If you are scheduling an event, you must tell both me *and* the calendar keeper the date and time. If

you don't, I must reconstruct the calendar myself each month.

The newsletter contains twelve 8½ by 11 inch pages, including front and back covers. If I receive more copy than can be fitted into the newsletter and it is not practical to add pages, some items are edited for length. Rarely are items edited for content. I make every effort to include every item substantially as it is submitted.



After all the copy is edited, and I have tracked down missing items, I lay out the newsletter and insert clipart and photographs. I prepare two versions of each page—one for the printed newsletter and one for the version posted on the congregation website. In the website version, which is in color, I delete every telephone number and e-mail address except Rev. Kornitzer's to protect your privacy.

Some items are sent to me in identical form month after month. If they look the same every month, who will bother to read them? I have to vary the layout, illustrations, and fonts so they look fresh instead of stale. Sometimes, you do not send me enough material to fill all the pages, but too much material to print an eight-page newsletter. That means I have to search for copy to fill the extra space.

How long does all this editing and laying-out take? Generally it takes from ten to fifteen hours. Could it be done in less time? Sure. I would never criticize someone who is less exacting. But if this job is worth doing, and if the newsletter is going to have my name on it, I want to do it right.

Usually I do not begin to put the newsletter together until four or five days after the deadline, but that can vary a lot depending on my schedule. I practice law full-time, and sometimes it is simply impossible for me to start putting the newsletter together as soon as I receive all the material. For

example, if the 20th falls on a Monday, I probably won't be able to begin until the following Saturday.

When the layout is finished, I deliver the printed version to PrintSource in Wakefield, where it is printed on six 11 x 17 inch sheets. It is then folded and stapled (which PrintSource does for us at a substantial discount). Usually this takes one day. Val Follet and Gerre Alderwick, the Publishers, pick up the finished newsletters (usually as soon as the newsletters are ready), fasten the edges, attach mailing labels, and bring them to the post office in Wakefield for bulk mail delivery.

The printed version almost always gets to PrintSource before the end of the month. At the same time, I finish the website version, which is in pdf format, and send it to Dave Crockett. Dave usually can post it right away—so even if you do not receive a printed copy by the first of the month, you can read a copy on line.

The postal service gives first class mail priority over bulk-rate mail—that's why it costs less than half of what first class delivery would cost. Once we drop the newsletters off, we have no control over how quickly they will be delivered. Sometimes it takes only two days. Other times, especially around Christmas, it can take much longer.

How could this process be shortened? The deadline could be moved back, but that would result in a less timely newsletter. We could print it ourselves, avoiding the delay when PrintSource is closed, but we would have to have a copier that prints 11 x 17 pages, we would have to fold it ourselves, and we would not be able to mail a stapled newsletter without a machine that performs that function. We could mail it by first-class mail, but we would have to spend roughly \$600 more on postage annually than we spend now.

Or you could hire a new editor who is not as picky (the pay is terrific!), but to be honest, I really like this job. I'm open to any suggestions you have.

— Karen Ellsworth

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CONGREGATION OF SOUTH COUNTY  
P.O. Box 5473  
WAKEFIELD, RI 02880

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Wakefield, RI  
Permit No. 21

---

*“Faith is taking the first step, even when  
you don't see the whole staircase.”*

*– Martin Luther King Jr. (1929 - 1968)*