



The Quest

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION AT SHELTER ROCK

We aspire to be a loving religious community where we can grow
spiritually and build a more just and joyful world.
—UUCSR Vision Statement



December 7, 2022
Monthly Theme:
Wonder

WORSHIP SERVICES

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2022, 7:30 PM

Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore

SOULFUL SUNDOWN AT SHELTER ROCK

WHERE MUSIC RESIDES AT THE HEART OF THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Soulful Sundown Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore weaves spoken word with music from the Cosmic Orchestra. Special Guest Musical Artist Lucy Kaplansky will be featured in a special onsite-only Soulful Sundown. Coffee House follows. Coffee, tea, cookies. All are welcome. FREE and open to all. Video and podcast will be available ASAP.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022, 11:00 AM

Rev. Jaye Brooks

Star of Wonder December is a month of wonder: Hanukkah in the Jewish tradition (Dec. 18–26); Yule and Solstice in pagan traditions (Dec. 21); and Christmas in the Christian tradition (Dec. 25). So let's pause to contemplate the nature of miracles. Whether it's the magic of light in the darkness, the turning of the year, or the birth of a baby, we human beings experience wonder. There's wonder, too, in the Fibonacci numbers that predict the spiral shape of our galaxy and in the ever-renewable light made possible through solar technology. Join in the spirit of curiosity, discovery, and wonder as Rev. Jaye Brooks shines a little light on the mysteries and miracles of the season.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022, 11:00 AM

Rev. Dr. Natalie M. Fenimore

Love Makes Miracles The winter holidays are full of the stories of miracles. These miracles are a product of love and faith. Can it be that love and faith continue to make miracles happen all around us now? Our First Graders will present their annual Nativity Play.

Lunch will be a celebration of the first day of Hanukkah. PLEASE SEND recordings of your Hanukkah memories to be shared in the Social Hall to Steve Schwartz (sschwartz@uucsr.org).

TOUCHSTONES

Rev. Jaye Brooks



As we approach the end of four years of Developmental Ministry together, I look both back and into the future. For more than a year, we've been testing a new leadership structure with a Lead Minister—Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore—whose responsibility, authority, and accountability is clearly defined in writing. In addition to weekly Ministry Team meetings, the Lead Minister participates in leadership meetings every other week with the congregation's president, vice president, and congregational operations administrator.

This change has been breathtakingly beneficial. In the past, even with a minister designated as "Senior Minister," there was no clear responsibility and authority for that minister to participate in leadership meetings and speak on behalf of the Ministry Team. Now we see that it's essential to include the unified voice of ministry and congregational life in regular leadership meetings. In about a month, at the January 8 Congregational Meeting, the Board will ask members to affirm this leadership structure—which I hope you will do.

And then there's the new Strategic Plan. When I arrived, many of our members said that they longed for a more heart-centered congregation. In our first Vision and Budget meetings, the emphasis wasn't on what money could do to foster loving religious community, but on what members and leaders could do. In the Purpose Conversations, members reiterated how necessary it is to build community, encourage spiritual growth, and act locally, through advocacy and service, to build a more just and joyful world.

That's what shines through in the Strategic Plan. It will provide purpose-driven direction for the next five years—spanning different Boards and guiding them all.

In light of these significant advances, I've recommended (and the Board has agreed) that Shelter Rock move from a Developmental Minister to new third minister who by contract is permitted to stay on—as I am not. I expect to depart in July 2023 for a transition ministry post elsewhere.

More Services and holiday events on page 2

Touchstones continues on page 2

TOUCHSTONES

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It is hard to write those words.

I am weary but deeply content. Despite years of a global pandemic, lockdown, and vast disruptions in congregational life, you have steadily moved toward Shelter Rock's developmental ministry goals. This progress is attributable both to the efforts of this congregation's leadership and to your willingness to participate.

I have come to know you. I can say without reservation: I have come to love you. And it has been an honor and a joy to work with my Shelter Rock ministerial colleagues.

With a Strategic Plan as a guide, an effective leadership structure that lifts up the health and meaning of congregational life, and renewed engagement of members and newcomers, I expect Shelter Rock will move into the future with zest and vitality.

With hope,
Rev. Jaye Brooks

WORSHIP SERVICES

continued from page 1

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2022, 3:30 PM
Rev. David Carl Olson

Winter Solstice Celebration Onsite outdoors, if weather permits, and online, with Erol Delos Santos, Green Sanctuary Committee members, and Willow Interfaith Women's Choir.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2022, 5:00 PM
The UUCSR Ministers

Together in Song and Light will be a Christmas Eve Family Service full of music, with the Young People's Choir joining with the Adult Choir and Jazz Ensemble to present the music of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. There will be candlelighting and Silent Night. Onsite, in-person and online.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2022, 7:00 PM
The UUCSR Ministers

Christmas Eve Vespers Service will be a meditative evening service with music, readings, and candlelighting. Onsite, in-person and online.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022, 11:00 AM
Rev. Jaye Brooks

Christmas Stories on Christmas morning will be in the Art Gallery at the fireplace for all ages, featuring some lovely, mostly true, Christmas stories. Onsite, in-person and online.

MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS COMMITTEE

Katy Schall, Chair

A Long Island Tradition Returns!

Messiah Sing at Shelter Rock

Sunday, December 11, 2022
2:00 PM

The Orchestra at Shelter Rock
Stephen Michael Smith, Music Director

with acclaimed soloists

Sarah Moulton Faux, soprano
Michael St. Peter, tenor
Leah Wool, mezzo-soprano
Brace Negrón, bass-baritone

Nathaniel LaNasa, harpsichord

OPEN TO EVERYONE

FREE ADMISSION!

VOCAL SCORES PROVIDED

Sing along or simply listen

Reception to follow
in the
Shelter Rock Art Gallery

MEN'S GROUP
Larry Hass, Chair

THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY

SING-ALONG & DESSERT TASTING PARTY!

Saturday, December 17, 2022
6:30 PM • Art Gallery

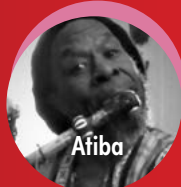
*Sing Christmas,
Hanukkah
Kwanzaa Songs*

\$5 DONATION **OR**
BRING A DESSERT TO SHARE!

❄️ **Caroling**
❄️ **Holiday Beverages**
❄️ **Dessert Tasting**
❄️ **Kwanzaa storytelling and
music performed by Atiba**

Sandwich bites and desserts
will be served

Richard Bock
Pianist



RSVP at uucsr.org/singalong2022

MEMBER EVENTS COMMITTEE
Katina Manko-Mitchell, Chair

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA

AT SHELTER ROCK

**Roll Out the Old
with the
Best Entertainers
in Town**

Emcee
Suzanne Viverito

Rockin' DJ
Andrew Viverito

Charles Henry, piano

**Best Menu in Town!
Best Price in Town!**

\$60 Members
\$65 Non-Members
Cocktail hour in the Art Gallery at 7:30 PM

Incredible Appetizer Buffet
Festive piano music by Charles Henry

Catered Dinner by Antonino's
(vegan option available)
Midnight Champagne Toast

Bring your family and friends
to fill your own table for eight.
(Table request required at registration)
Childcare available

Register at uucsr.org/NYE22



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



If you are a current Shelter Rock member and have not yet made a pledge for the Congregational Year 2022–2023, and/or you have not made a payment of any amount toward your pledge, ***you must do so now to remain on the membership rolls.***

It's easy to renew your membership: Visit www.uucsr.org/renew or reach out to a Sue Kimler at skimler@uucsr.org, 516.472.2919 if you have a question or need help. If you are experiencing financial hardship, renew your membership with a financial waiver by checking the box on the renewal form or by reaching out to the ministers, ministryteam@uucsr.org. Please renew by December 15, 2022.

MILESTONES

We mourn the death of... UUCSR member Hank Arond, husband of Ronnie Arond. Hank died on Saturday, November 19, 2022. He was a World War II veteran and a musician. A date for a Celebration of Life to be held at Shelter Rock has not yet been set. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Ronnie at her home.

SUNDAYS AT SHELTER ROCK

Bagel Breakfast Is Back! Sundays, 9:00–10:30 AM

Every Sunday you can, once again, stop by the Social Hall for a bagel breakfast for just \$1! Coffee and tea are FREE. Remember: No food or drink is permitted in the Worship Room.

Every Sunday | 10:45 AM–12:15 PM | Join using just one link. Worship Service is livestreamed and shared in the Zoom room. Afterward, stay on during online Coffee Hour. Join [HERE](#), or call: 646.558.8656, Meeting ID: 829 6436 6095

Fellowship Hour After Worship Service Every Sunday

Let's break bread together after Worship in a UU way with Coffee Hour and Sunday Café luncheon series in the Social Hall. Details regarding menu and cost is publicized on the UUCSR calendar and in the Sunday morning eblast. All are welcome.

UUCSR offers transportation assistance to Worship Services for members who are unable to travel. Email ministryteam@uucsr.org, or call 516.472.2941 for an application.

Worship Services are in-person AND livestreamed! Masks are encouraged and required for singing. Livestreams available on uucsr.org/worship, [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#). Podcasts available afterward. ***The Sunday Morning Experience is available online using just one link!*** Beginning at 10:45 AM, join via Zoom, then stay for live Worship Service and Coffee Hour. Join [HERE](#).

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

Jana North, President of the Congregation



A Message From the President

In 2019 after reviewing congregational surveys and holding congregational conversations about ministry at UUCSR, the Board of Trustees agreed to search for a Developmental Minister after Rev. Ned Wight's interim ministry ended. It became clear to the Board that there were specific areas of congregational life which needed special focus: Strategic Planning,

Governance and Organizational Structure, Membership, and the Role of Money. After months of meetings and interviews, a search committee recommended that the Board of Trustees offer a 3- to 5-year contract to Rev. Jaye Brooks.

This July will be the end of Jaye's fourth year at UUCSR and she will be moving on to another ministerial adventure with a new congregation. She has been part of the work of many Shelter Rock Committees over the past three years, as well as a vital part of our Worship. She initiated the Purpose Conversations that led to a 5-year Strategic Plan for the congregation. After organizing a retreat to allow for a deep discussion of Governance and Organizational Structure, with Jaye's support, the Board of Trustees has initiated work on both the policies and bylaws that currently govern our congregation. There have been significant changes made to both the process and timing of our membership renewal campaign and the board has taken time in the last few years to talk meaningfully about how our money might be best used toward funding our mission and vision.

I have been lucky enough to work alongside Jaye on all of these important issues at Shelter Rock and was especially gratified to have her perspective and unending support throughout the pandemic, when only Zoom conversations were possible. Those of you who have also gotten to know her will agree that her warmth, humor and accessibility during these difficult years has been invaluable and her willingness to step in whenever needed has allowed Shelter Rock to not only move ahead but grow during her time here.

With Rev. Brooks' departure next summer, the Board of Trustees will be organizing a Ministerial Search Committee this January to look for a new contract minister to begin in September. Our next minister will join Rev. Olson as part of the UUCSR ministry team under Rev. Fenimore whose ongoing role as Lead/Senior Minister will be brought to the congregation in January for affirmation.

These last few years at UUCSR have not always been easy, but I am optimistic about the path we have taken with the incredible support of Rev. Brooks. I hope that many of you will take time in the next six months to let Jaye know what her ministry at Shelter Rock has meant to you. If you haven't had the opportunity to get to know her, please make a point of introducing yourself. She's worth the effort.

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

Jana North, President of the Congregation

Board Of Trustees Agendas

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

7:00 PM I. Opening Words: Ministers

7:05 PM II. Consent Agenda: Jana North, President

- November 2022 Minutes
- 8th Principle Task Force Report
- Amended Finance Committee Charge

7:10 PM III. Audit Committee: Brian Muellers, Chair

- CY22 Draft Audit

7:40 PM IV. Nominating Committee: Klaus Masuch, Chair

- Trustee Recommendation

8:10 PM V. Minister's Report: Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore,

Rev. Jaye Brooks, Rev. David Carl Olson

- Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore's Colloquy Committee Report: Monica Schlichting
- Membership Update
- Ministerial Transition Update
- Ministerial Separation Checklist
- Calendar Year 2023 Housing Allowance—Executive Session

8:40 PM VI. President's Report: Jana North

- January Congregational Meeting Agenda
- Friday Evening Recap
- Sunday Café & Bagel Breakfast Update

9:00 PM VII. Good of the Order: Jana North, President

Thursday, December 15, 2022

7:00 PM I. Opening Words: Ministers

7:05 PM II. Socially Responsible Investment Committee:

Leona Handelman, Chair

- \$1,000,000 Loan to Calvert Impact Capital

7:20 PM III. Denominational Affairs Committee: Barry Nobel, Chair

- General Assembly Guidelines
- Update on UUA Bylaws Article II

7:45 PM IV. Member Events

- CY23 All-Congregation Retreat Update: Paul Drezner
- Discussion on Board Policy for Behavior Expectations of Members at Offsite Events: Jana North, President

8:15 PM V. Land Management Leadership Team: Carol Garbarino

- Draft Sustainable Land Management Statement

8:35 PM VI. Life Safety Leadership Team: Adam Barshak, COA

- Selection of Member at Large Candidates
- Confirmation of Full Team Membership

8:45 PM VII. Committee/Teams Nominations: Jana North, President

- CY23 Committee Chair/Member Nominations

9:00 PM VIII. Good of the Order: Jana North, President

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (DAC)

Barry Nobel, Chair

An Update From UU@UN



I write to you in a time of transition for the UU office at the United Nations (UU@UN). As you know, Unitarian Universalism has cultivated a historic engagement with the United Nations. Our values have been instrumental in shaping the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Criminal Court, a strong LGBTQA+ program, interfaith collaboration as well as action resisting anti-blackness

and climate chaos. We remain committed to Unitarian Universalist engagement and advocacy at the United Nations with collaboration with interfaith and grassroots partners.

The retirement of Bruce Knotts as the UU@UN director has left us with a vibrant foundation upon which we will continue building in order to :

1. Connect with civil society aligned with our justice priorities .
2. Advance the ethical framing for the work of Unitarian Universalism at the UN.
3. Hone the ethical framing for the work of Unitarian Universalism at the UN.

The Rev. Alicia R. Forde will be filling in as the director of the UU@UN and Carey McDonald will continue as the executive vice president. The UU@UN internship program also continues in conjunction with the UU Service Committee.

Additionally, planning for the 2023 Intergenerational Spring Seminar is underway. We anticipate powerful collaboration with various congregations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who are committed to examining militarization, state-sanctioned violence, and abolition. We will be posting more on this in the weeks to come.

In the coming months, we will be in contact with you, our valued stakeholders.

We are grateful for your partnership and investment in this work.

Submitted by UU@UN Envoy Janet Bendowitz

STAFF UPDATE

Cornell Carolina joined the Facilities Team in early November as a fulltime Technician.

Jamie Walowitz and **Jeannie Gross** join the RE Team this month as Youth & Adult Faith Engagement Coordinator and RE Administrative Assistant, respectively. We are excited to have them join UUCSR and look forward to working with them!

Sharyn Esposito will be permanently taking on the role of Assistant to the Ministers/Caring Assistant, a role that she has supported for several months. As many are aware, Sharyn has been with UUCSR for over 15 years and will continue doing amazing work! A transition plan is being developed. Until then, Sharyn will continue supporting all of her current committees.

UUCSR's Very Special Parcel of Woodland

The Land Management Plan is a collection of projects that support the sustainability of the Congregation's property. This article introduces one of those potential projects, a conservation easement for Shelter Rock's woodlands.

The UUCSR woodland is about 75 acres of oak-tulip tree forest that is a unique and important parcel of land. The neighboring Greentree Foundation, has 200 acres of woodland. Together, the parcels make up the largest tract of intact woods in Nassau County. So? The woods allow for replenishment of the aquifer as rain percolates through open ground. Trees grow by drawing carbon from the air thereby reducing atmospheric carbon. Tree cover moderates temperature and flooding. Over 60 species of birds visit or live there, as do coyotes, deer, raccoons, opossum, and spotted salamanders, to name a few. Oak tulip tree forests have been in decline these past decades harmed by logging, clearing for farming, and development. The LMLT cannot emphasize enough how unique this parcel of land is in Nassau County.

So, how do we protect and preserve this wooded oasis? By entering into a conservation easement. In doing so, UUCSR would be selling their development rights of a defined portion of our woods, likely to NY State. This process would then preserve the woods from future development. We would still have control and use of the land with some oversight and supervision. The land could not be developed into a golf course, or housing community, or gated condo community. It would remain woods. The conservation process typically takes years to complete. Although limited funding for such easements existed, voters in NY State just voted to approve the 2022 Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs bond act. This huge, \$4.2 billion bond will support, preserve, and enhance NY State natural resources and funding for green projects such as conservation easements will become more available.

The process would start by performing a survey of the woodlands, define the parcel to be protected, then get a real estate appraisal. This initial phase was approved by the Congregation as part of the current year's capital budget. The next step would have us partner with the appropriate municipalities and nonprofit partners that would act on our behalf furthering the easement process up through Albany for approval. Upon easement completion, we could expect to receive fair market value in exchange for giving up our development rights. Funds received might be set aside to defray costs of maintaining our property.

The LMLT looks forward to discussing this project and the entirety of the Land Management plan with members over the coming months to prepare for a vote on a sustainable land management commitment at the March 19, 2023, Congregational Meeting. Stay tuned.

Stephen Ruocco for the Land Management leadership Team

Fundraising Kickoff

The Rev. Dr. Christine McKenney Wetzel was a long-time religious educator, and Minister of Religious Education and Minister Emerita at UUCSR—serving this congregation from 1971–1992. Chris died on October 14, 2019, at the age of 91. She was ordained into the Unitarian Universalist ministry by the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Society (the previous name of UUCSR) in 1979. She is remembered with great affection and respect by those who knew her.



Chris was very involved in leadership in Unitarian Universalist religious education. Among other leadership roles, she was President of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) from 1967–1969. (Noteworthy is that former UUCSR Minister of Religious Education Rev. Dr. Barry Andrews and I have also served as LREDA Presidents.) In 1978, Chris was awarded the UUA Angus MacLean Award which is the highest award given to the work of a Unitarian Universalist religious educator. (Barry Andrews was also a MacLean Award recipient.)

Another lasting contribution Chris Wetzel gave to UUCSR religious education was Star Island, off the coast of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Chris believed that the experience of learning about UU religious education while in Star Island's unique environment was a gift. Star Island is a UU Camp and Conference Center where UU religious educators gather each summer.

Star Island's Faith Development Week (formerly Lifespan Religious Education Week) has been an important training ground for many religious educators—as it was for Chris Wetzel. During her years at UUCSR, Chris welcomed many to this wonderful conference.

And so, to honor Chris Wetzel's legacy and her relationship with Star's RE week, UUCSR will sponsor the Rev. Dr. Christine M. Wetzel Memorial Scholarship to enable a professional religious educator from another UU congregation to attend Faith Development Week. The Wetzel Scholarship will be supported solely by individual contributions and not by congregational funds.

Please consider making a donation online at www.uucsr.org/give. Click on the dropdown window for the "Wetzel Scholarship Charitable Donation." If you prefer, checks can be written to "UUCSR" with "Wetzel Scholarship" in the memo line.

The Wetzel Memorial Scholarship Sub-Committee is comprised of Karen Hartman, Frank Teltsch, Laura Torff (chair), Jessica Vega, and Mark Hartman (advisor). You are welcome to contact them.

Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

Carson Jones, Lifespan Religious Education Coordinator

Peace, and Good Will Toward All

Every so often, I have an encounter with a stranger that reminds me of the true meaning of “good will toward all.”

Just last week, on the last leg of my commute home after a sleepless night and a hyperactive day, I was spacing out at the corner of 34th Street and 8th Avenue when I felt a gentle touch on my shoulder. As nonthreatening as it was, still I looked over in confusion and mild annoyance at this unwanted physical contact, until I realized that I had stepped off the curb (as New Yorkers do) and there was a crosstown bus about to traverse the intersection. I returned to the curb with an “Oh...thank you!” just as the light changed before the bus made it through and it was safe to cross the street. The kind soul and I shared a laugh and I made sure to say “Thank you” again. Too many of us, myself included, get caught up in our own little world and those who look outside of themselves with care for others should be effusively commended.

So, as this holiday season appears to be returning to the wild hullabaloo of the Before Times, I invite us all to get a good night's sleep, stay on the curb, look both ways before crossing the street, and keep an eye out for one another. You just might help someone like me who sometimes forgets to follow their own guidance.

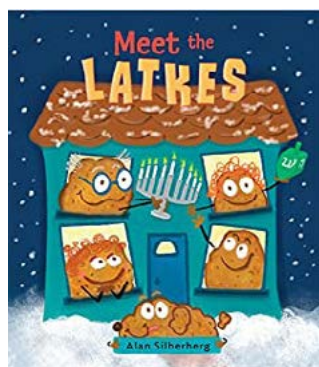
Wishing you peace, love, and glad tidings in this and all seasons.

Hanukkah and Christmas Bedtime Stories!

Wednesday, December 14, 2022 | 7:00 PM

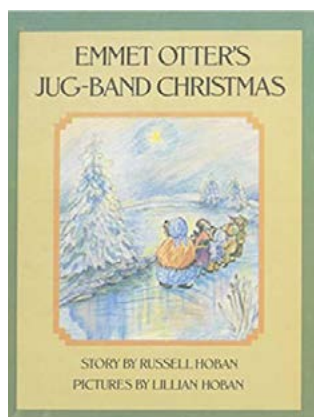
[Live on Zoom HERE](#)

Join Carson Jones for an interactive storytime as he reads two family-friendly stories celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas!



Meet the Latkes
written and illustrated
by Alan Silberberg

Emmet Otter's Jug-Band Christmas
written by Russell Hoban
illustrated by Lillian Hoban



UU Kids Connect: Game Time! Game Three Celebrates Winter Solstice Wednesday, December 21, 2022 | 6:30 PM

Registration is free and the fun is priceless!

The third Wednesday of the month just got more exciting! Kids of all ages, from any congregation are welcome to come together for game time! Come make new UU friends from all over North America! Join on Zoom. Please [Register Here](#) to receive the link and all UU Kids Connect updates!

UU Kids Connect is an inter-congregational collective led by professional religious educators. Current leaders are Carson Jones (Shelter Rock, NY), Judith Hogan (UU Montclair, NJ), Jeanne Nametz (UU Ridgewood, NJ), Jennie Stillwell Belmonte (UU Somerset Hills, NJ), and Jil Novenski (Community Church, NY).

ADULT PROGRAMS

Dramatic Readings | Saturday, December 10, 2022 | 6:00–9:00 PM

The Audience by Peter Morgan

About the play: “For sixty years, Elizabeth II met each of her twelve Prime Ministers in a weekly audience at Buckingham Palace. Both parties have an unspoken agreement never to repeat what is said, not even to their spouses. *The Audience* breaks this contract of silence and imagines a series of pivotal meetings between the Downing Street incumbents and their Queen.”

Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#). Or join via telephone: call 646.558.8656 Meeting ID: 817 7007 7772 Passcode: 798549 Please RSVP to Carson Jones at cjones@uucsr.org, if you would like a PDF of the play emailed to you or to receive a physical copy in the mail.

Great Books Discussions | Fridays | 12:00–1:30 PM

Come together for conversation that is also a fun learning experience promoting civil discourse, critical thinking, and meaningful interpersonal connection. [Live on Zoom HERE](#). All are welcome.

The anthology for the next few weeks is *Great Conversations 3*, available through the [Great Books Store](#). Please e-mail Carson Jones at cjones@uucsr.org if you would like to receive email notifications about Great Books Discussions.

Medical Qi Gong for Senior Health | Mondays, 9:00–10:00 AM \$50 for 5 classes, \$12 per drop-in class ([See info HERE](#))

Instructor Ashley Baldwin offers online classes that strengthen your balance and overall body confidence! Exercises are taught standing, with equally effective guidance for those who prefer to sit. Ashley Zooms in every Monday morning to help you center your body and mind, directly from Thailand. [Register HERE](#) or email tqh.Ashley@gmail.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

Claire Deroche



Write a Letter, Free a Political Prisoner

In December each year, Amnesty International sponsors a campaign that they call Write for Rights. Across the country, thousands of people write letters to governments urging the release of political prisoners. People like Magai Matiop Ngong of South Sudan. He was condemned

to death at age 15 for the accidental killing of his cousin. Magai Matiop Ngong was one of the political prisoners highlighted in the 2019 campaign. Over 700,000 Amnesty International (AI) actions were taken on his behalf, and in 2022, he was released.

Another political prisoner highlighted by AI in 2021 was Bernardo Caal Xo. He worked tirelessly defending Guatemalans whose existence was threatened by hydroelectric projects on the Cahabón River. For his human rights work, he was sentenced to more than seven years in prison on bogus charges. In 2021, over half a million AI actions were taken on his behalf, and in March 2022, he was released from prison.

These are just two of the many stories of political prisoners released because of actions taken by Amnesty International Volunteers. On Sunday, December 11, UUCSR members will have the opportunity to take part in this year's campaign. After lunch in the Social Hall the Social Justice Committee will provide information, paper, and pens so that our community can write the letters that will set someone free.

This year's political prisoners are from 10 different countries. Maybe this year's letters will free Dorgelesse Nguessan of Cameroon who is being held for attending a peaceful protest. Maybe the government of Paraguay will make it legal for transgender people to change their birth names to their chosen names, transgender women like Yren Rotela and Mariana Sepúlveda, because volunteers wrote to the government of their country. Maybe this year's letters will keep Aleksandra Skochilenko of Russia from being imprisoned for protesting the war in Ukraine.



In addition to writing letters to government officials, volunteers write letters of support to the prisoners and their families. It's an opportunity to join with others to bring about real change in the lives of real people who are being treated unjustly by their governments.

SOCIAL JUSTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Claire Deroche, Social Justice Coordinator

Cooking Meals for Guests of the Shelters Run by the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN)

On first Wednesdays and fourth Thursdays of the month from 9:00 AM–12:30 PM, volunteers gather in the UUCSR Main Kitchen to cook nutritious meals delivered to three INN shelters. Check the *Quest* newsletter for any schedule changes. Register with Sharyn Esposito, sesposito@uucsr.org

Supporting Those Experiencing Hunger

The Social Justice Committee invites you to bring donations of non-perishable food items to the red basket inside the Main Lobby. The congregational pantry by the kitchen door is for anyone in need. Once that pantry is stocked, we donate to local food pantries.

Friday Nights with the LGBTQ+ Group on Zoom

The UUCSR LGBTQ+ Subcommittee sponsors a weekly get-together on Friday nights for its members and allies. Check in at 6:30 PM and gathering for facilitated conversation is at 7:00 PM. On Friday, December 9, we will have time for conversation. We'll start at 6:00 PM and finish at 7:15 PM so that anyone who wishes to go to the onsite-only Soulful Sundown may do so. Friday, December 16, Tamer Shelby will facilitate a conversation on "Pets." Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#), or call 646.558.8656 Meeting ID: 940 8603 7651 Passcode: 290509

Monday, December 19, 2022

Racial Justice Sub-Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM on Zoom. The Sub-Committee has changed from an afternoon to an evening meeting in the hopes of better accommodating members' schedules. Please join us if this work interests you. Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) or call 646.931.3860, Meeting ID: 821 3238 1519

LONG ISLAND AREA COUNCIL (LIAC)

Student Activity Fund Seeks Part-Time Program Director

The Student Activity Fund (SAF) of the Long Island Area Council of UU Congregations (LIAC) seeks a Part-Time Program Director, beginning March 1, 2023. Deadline for applications has been extended to January 15, 2023.



SAF is a student internship program that pays UU students to work at self-selected nonprofits that encourage them to live their religious values and that focus on social action, advocacy, or social services. SAF is supported by the UU Veatch Program at Shelter Rock.

For more information about the SAF program, visit liacuu.org. To see the full job listing, click [HERE](#).

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST VEATCH PROGRAM AT SHELTER ROCK

Joan Minieri, Executive Director



Research from Veatch Grantee PRRI Shows Support for Reproductive Freedom

Recently, [Public Religion Research Institute](#), a Veatch grantee that studies social issues as they relate to religious values, released the results from its 13th annual [American Values Survey](#). The results of this research helps inform journalists, policy

makers, stakeholder groups, scholars, clergy, and the general public about the important role religion plays, across the political spectrum, in American life and in shaping public policy.

In a [recent article for The Hill](#), PRRI CEO Melissa Deckman wrote about one particularly striking finding from this year's results that helps illuminate how Americans, across religious and political ideologies, view the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade this past summer. According to the research, just 35% of Americans favored this decision. Tellingly, for those who might seek to further restrict reproductive freedoms in the coming year, the results also found that majorities of all religious groups—except white evangelical Protestants—opposed the decision to overturn Roe.



PRRI CEO
Melissa Deckman

PRRI's American Values Survey is an intensive and comprehensive undertaking that takes place each year. Over the course of 10 days in September, PRRI interviews thousands of adults about a wide range of policy issues and perspectives. This year's survey included a representative sample of 2,523 adults, ages 18 and up, living in all 50 states.

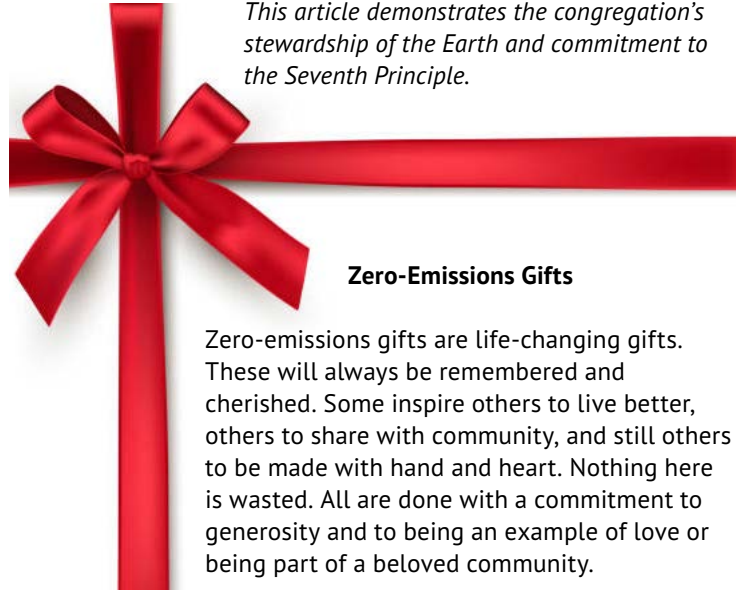
PRRI's research helps bring a more informed understanding to counter the popular notion that religious groups, as a whole, don't support reproductive freedoms. PRRI, under the new leadership of Melissa Deckman, ensures that high-quality public opinion surveys and qualitative research, at the intersection of religion, values, and public life in America, can be conducted. Veatch support directly ensures that this research includes the experience and perspectives of Unitarian Universalists.

To read the results of this year's survey, [click here](#). Be sure to sign up for Veatch News Updates [here](#).

The Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock provides support for efforts within the religious and spiritual mission of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock where their purposes are best served by outside agencies acting under the Veatch Program and the Congregation.

GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE

Stephen Ruocco, Chair



This article demonstrates the congregation's stewardship of the Earth and commitment to the Seventh Principle.

Zero-Emissions Gifts

Zero-emissions gifts are life-changing gifts. These will always be remembered and cherished. Some inspire others to live better, others to share with community, and still others to be made with hand and heart. Nothing here is wasted. All are done with a commitment to generosity and to being an example of love or being part of a beloved community.

The gifts that inspire others can happen through mentoring. We can teach anything from math and science, cooking, ways of ethical living, agriculture to plant seeds of the future for food or beauty. Regenerative agriculture is vital to grow a wildflower and community garden, and needs people doing no harm to the land. Similar to our ReWild program this past summer at UUCSR, we mentored young people. We taught how to use tools, ways to eliminate invasive plants, build blueberry cages, grow and tend a wildflower or community garden, walk safely through the woods avoiding ticks and poison ivy, etc. We can teach animal husbandry or how to raise a pet: training it, protecting it, feeding it. Learning to care for another creature is a great gift.

Sharing with community can be achieved in many ways. In the Lobby, there is a Mitten Tree. Each paper mitten corresponds to a gift for an anonymous child or teenager in need. Anonymity in giving is a potent ingredient to showing caring and love. Helping out at a soup kitchen is another way by either preparing food or serving. Twice a month, cooks prepare meals for the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN). Of course, donations of clothing are always welcome. The UUCSR bin is located in the Lower Level Parking Lot. As always, we can feed those who are hungry with donations of non-perishable food. Island Harvest disperses donations every week. Also, we can easily donate in the collection basket in Shelter Rock's Main Lobby.

Finally, another vital zero-waste gift is the handmade one, not a store-bought finished product. How easy to buy essentials for a craft: paper, colored pencils or crayons, paint, paste, scissors, wool, or fabric, etc.! Teaching a child or adult your hobby or craft, like playing an instrument or playing baseball, is even more meaningful and memorable when doing it together.

Zero-emission gifts are those inhaled with thought and exhaled with purposeful sharing.

Elaine Peters for the Green Sanctuary Committee

Women's Film Discussion Series

Third and Fourth Fridays monthly | 7:30 PM

With co-hosts Maria Ceraulo and
Victoria Pilotti, Center for the Women of New York

Friday, December 16: *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Netflix)
Friday, December 23: *Catherine Called Birdy* (Amazon Prime)

Watch the films in advance, then join Zoom meetings
for lively conversation [HERE](#)

Book Series

All are welcome.

Third Fridays Monthly | 3:30 pm | Join [HERE](#).
Please contact Sharyn Esposito to learn more.
sesposito@uucsr.org or 516.472.2960

December 16, 2022	<i>Personal Librarian</i> by Marie Benedict Discussion led by Aida Nema
January 20, 2023	<i>Search</i> by Michelle Huneven Discussion led by Patti Paris
February 17, 2023	<i>Rogues: True Stories of Grifters, Killers, Rebels and Crooks</i> , by Patrick Radden Keefe Discussion led by Ursula Salamone

Please visit uucsr.org/wg for additional details including a full list of titles, discussion leaders, and a printable flyer.

Women Talk Daytime

Sandra Hazel Frank, facilitator

Onsite in the Veatch Conference Room and online on Zoom. First and third Tuesdays monthly at 12:00 Noon. Bring your lunch and coffee/tea will be provided.

The first Tuesday of the month, the topic is Current Events. On December 20, the topic is "Pros and Cons of Marriage. What keeps couples together. Relationships."

Wisdom, companionship, and compassion are what we bring to one another through conversation. Come share your insights. We will all be together! You are welcome to attend in person at UUCSR or join online [HERE](#).



An Historic Result— Millions Out of Poverty

One of the most remarkable, positive outcomes of the Covid epidemic was the Child Tax Credit. Child poverty was reduced by almost 50 percent! Monthly checks to families with children guaranteed income for millions during the pandemic. As reported by the

Agriculture Department, food insecurity and hardship reached a record low. Columbia University found that the level of hardship for New Yorkers was the lowest in five years. One might expect that the program would continue indefinitely.

Efforts to extend the payments failed. Then the checks stopped coming.

What could have been reason enough to stop the program? What were the downsides? Some were cited in the *New York Times*. Studies found that the ability to pay rent was unaffected. There was little effect on depression or stress. The least educated parents showed an employment decline of 2 percentage points. Because conditions were so unusual, there can be little predictive value. Spending all this money would reduce the amount available for other needed services. Sound like good reasons to discontinue? In spite of the downsides, most would agree that people's lives were much easier.

Where do we stand in relation to the rest of the world in regard to child poverty? The United States has higher rates than many advanced countries. When families received the payments, however, we ranked 21 of 53 nations, from 40th. In addition, many countries offer cash aid to subsidize child-rearing costs. *The Economist* ranked nations on generous childcare policies. America was second to last in the ratings of 41 countries.

In New York City alone, there were more than 104,000 homeless public school students in the last school year. One in ten lived in shelters, in cars, in abandoned buildings, or simply outdoors. After the lapse in school-time due to closures during the pandemic, instead of a boost, funding was actually cut.

The New York State Council of Churches urges us to demand that Congress expand the Child Tax Credit to protect millions of children. The estimated 19 million children under 17 who do not currently receive the full credit are disproportionately Black, Latino, and American Indian, or Alaska Native.

As the current Federal Spending Resolution nears, we need a last minute push to urge Congress to include improvements to the Federal Child Tax Credit. You can send a letter to US Senate Majority Leader Senator Charles Schumer urging action to improve and enhance the [Federal Child Tax Credit](#) and include it in the final Federal Appropriations Bill due to pass this month.

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL PROGRAMS ARE ONLINE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

Please see [UUCSR.org/calendar](https://uucsr.org/calendar) for additional details. See [LIACUU.org](https://liacuu.org) for other area congregations.

Thursday, December 8, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
1:00 PM, Not Just Bridge, Veatch House
7:00 PM, Member Resource Committee Meeting
7:00 PM, Food & Water Watch Holiday Potluck, Veatch Ballroom
7:30 PM, Messiah Sing Rehearsal, Worship Room and Art Gallery

Friday, December 9, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
12:00 PM, Great Books - *Great Conversations 3*
6:00 PM, Friday Nights with the LGBTQ+ Group Gatherings Online
7:30 PM, Soulful Sundown, Social Hall (Onsite Only)

Saturday, December 10, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
10:00 AM, Caring Committee Meeting
10:00 AM, Cookie Baking with New Hour and WORC, Main Kitchen and Social Hall
11:00 AM, Messiah Sing Rehearsal, Worship Room and Art Gallery
6:00 PM, Dramatic Readings: *The Audience*

Sunday, December 11, 2022

9:00 AM-3:00 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, Bagel Breakfast & Coffee Hour, Social Hall
9:00 AM, Shelter Rock Jazz Ensemble Rehearsal, Choir Rehearsal Room
9:30 AM, New Member Book Signing Ceremony, Veatch House
10:00 AM, Choir Rehearsal, Worship Room
10:00 AM, Young People's Choir Rehearsal, Chapel
10:45 AM, Sunday Morning Experience
11:00 AM, Religious Education (RE) Classes, RE Wing
11:00 AM, Sunday Service *Star of Wonder* led by Rev. Jaye Brooks, Worship Room
11:05 AM, Children's Worship for All Ages: Peace In, Peace Out, Chapel
12:00 PM, Sunday Cafe, Social Hall
12:00 PM, Write 4 Rights, Social Hall
12:30 PM, Nominating Committee Meeting, Office Conference Room and Online
1:00 PM, Love & Stitches, RE Room 15
2:00 PM, Messiah Sing: A Long Island Tradition, Worship Room and Online

Monday, December 12, 2022

9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, Medical Qigong for Senior Health
7:30 PM, DAC Meeting

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, CSA - Community Supported Agriculture Program, LL Lobby
3:00 PM, Art Committee Meeting
7:00 PM, Board of Trustees Meeting
7:00 PM, Tech 'n Talk Program - The James Webb Space Telescope

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Building Hours
10:00 AM, Building a Better Brain for a Better Life
11:00 AM, Crafting for Sanity and Community Online Get-Together
2:00 PM, Wednesday Conversations
6:00 PM, Ukulele Group Practice
7:00 PM, Hanukkah & Christmas Bedtime Stories!

Thursday, December 15, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
1:00 PM, Not Just Bridge, Art Gallery, Social Hall
7:00 PM, Board of Trustees Meeting

Friday, December 16, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
12:00 PM, Great Books - *Great Conversations 3*
3:30 PM, WG Online Book Series Discussion
6:30 PM, Friday Nights with the LGBTQ+ Group Gatherings Online
7:30 PM, Women's Group Online Film Discussion - *All Quiet on the Western Front*

Saturday, December 17, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
6:30 PM, Men's Group Holiday Sing-Along & Dessert Tasting Party, Art Gallery

Sunday, December 18, 2022

9:00 AM-3:00 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, Bagel Breakfast & Coffee Hour, Social Hall
9:00 AM, Shelter Rock Jazz Ensemble Rehearsal, Choir Rehearsal Room
9:30 AM, Childcare, RE Room 1, 2
10:00 AM, Choir Rehearsal, Worship Room
10:00 AM, Young People's Choir Rehearsal, Chapel
10:45 AM, Sunday Morning Experience
11:00 AM, Worship Service *Love Makes Miracles* led by Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore, Worship Room
12:00 PM, Sunday Cafe, Social Hall
5:00 PM, Soulful Salutations - Restorative Yoga & Yoga Nidra enhanced by Live Music

Monday, December 19, 2022

9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, Medical Qigong for Senior Health
6:15 PM, Membership Meeting
7:00 PM, Care for the Caregiver
7:00 PM, SJ Racial Justice Online Subcommittee Meeting

Tuesday, December 20, 2022

9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, CSA - Community Supported Agriculture Program, LL Lobby
12:00 PM, Women Talk Daytime Meeting, Veatch Conference Room and Online
3:00 PM, Online NAMI Criminal Justice Meeting
7:00 PM, Living With Cancer

Wednesday, December 21, 2022

9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Building Hours
11:00 AM, Crafting for Sanity and Community Online Get-Together
2:00 PM, Wednesday Conversations
3:30 PM, *Winter Solstice Service & Celebration*, Main Lobby Lawn, Chapel, RE Room 15
6:30 PM, Social Justice Virtual Committee Mtg
6:30 PM, UU Kids Connect: Game Time!
7:00 PM, Green Sanctuary Online Meeting

Thursday, December 22, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
9:00 AM, INN Cooking (registration only), Mn Kit
1:00 PM, Not Just Bridge, Veatch House

Friday, December 23, 2022

8:00 AM, BUILDING CLOSED-Holiday
6:30 PM, Friday Nights with the LGBTQ+ Group Gatherings Online
6:30 PM, Together to End Solitary Confinement Online Program
7:30 PM, Women's Group Online Film Discussion - *Catherine Called Birdy*

Saturday, December 24, 2022

9:00 AM-9:00 PM, Building Hours
5:00 PM, Worship Service *Together in Song and Light* led by all Ministers, Worship Room
7:00 PM, Worship Service *Vespers Service* led by All Ministers, Worship Room

Sunday, December 25, 2022

10:00 AM-1:00 PM, Building Hours
10:45 AM, Sunday Morning Experience
11:00 AM, Worship Service *Christmas Stories* led by Rev. Jaye Brooks, Art Gallery

Monday, December 26, 2022

8:00 AM, BUILDING CLOSED

Quest is published twice a month, except once each in July and August. Copies are available in the UUCSR Lower Lobby, <https://uucsr.org/on-demand/quest-newsletter>, and via email. Sign up for email at <https://uucsr.org/on-demand>.

Quest Mission is to connect readers to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock, to Unitarian Universalism, and to each other. *Quest* is produced by staff members Jennifer Sappell and Linda McCarthy, with the invaluable assistance of volunteers: Claire Z. Bock, and Jessica K. Vega.

Submissions: communications@uucsr.org

Quest Guidelines: <http://j.mp/quest-gl>

Quest may include views or opinions that do not necessarily reflect official policy, views of the respective boards or committees, or editorial staff.

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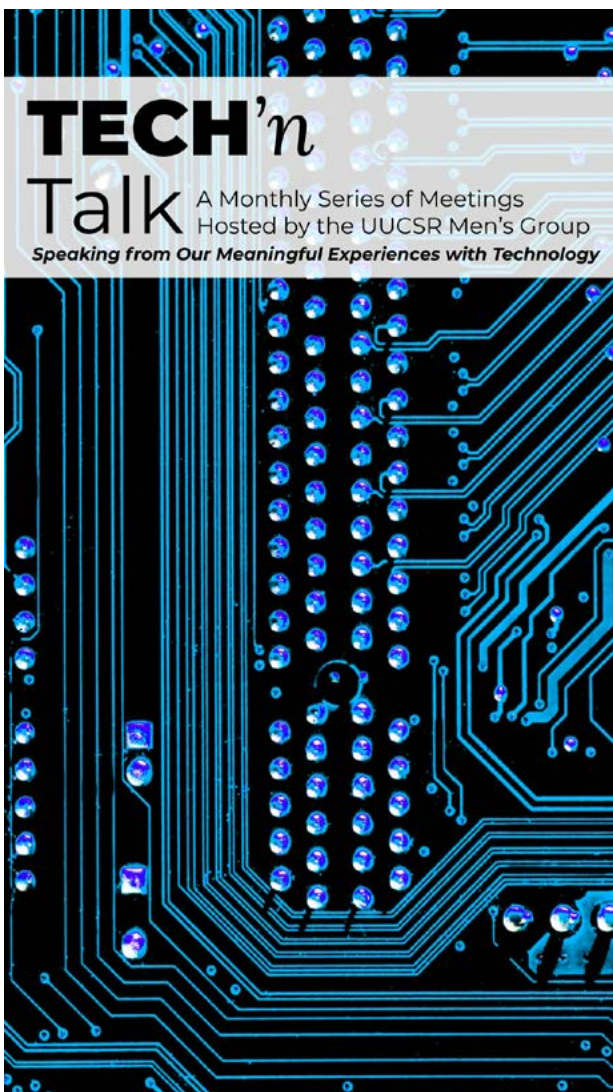
December 7, 2022

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
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Next Quest: Wednesday, December 21, 2022 | Deadline for Content: Thursday, December 15, 2022

MEN'S GROUP

Larry Hass, Chair



Tuesday, December 13, 2022 | 7:00 PM

The James Webb Space Telescope:

Astrophysics and Spiritual Implications

Presented by Queens College Astrophysics Professor Fred Cadieu, Shelter Rock member, supplemented by a ministerial discussion of the spiritual aspects.

This new space-based telescope is a marvel, now in its first year of use. It is capable of seeing small objects on Mars and can also look across the universe at distances that let us see conditions just a few hundred-thousand years after the Big Bang began our current universe. Fred has many images and videos available to help us understand this remarkably designed telescope and its diverse purposes.

After Fred's presentation, experience a pre-recorded conversation between Rev. David Olson and Student Minister Erol Delos Santos. They will discuss interesting spiritual questions about the origins, nature, and destiny of humankind in relation to the universe.

Join the online meeting [HERE](#) or call +1 646 558 8656,
Meeting ID: 829 6783 9221, Passcode: 058360

UPCOMING:

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Its Gifts and Challenges, and its Nature and Development
Presented by Herb Klitzner and Gerry Matusiewicz.

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

Space Voyages Future and Past:

A Look at Futurist Proposals for a Mars Mission and Past
Preparations for the Successful 1969 Moon Landing
Presented by Gerry Matusiewicz, Herb Klitzner, and guests.