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.

~SHELTER ROCK VISION STATEMENT

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, October 30, 2016 - 11:00 a.m.
“Dia de Los Muertos”
The Ministry Team

Inspired by the Mexican tradition of Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead), today we celebrate our loved ones who have died. In keeping with Mexican custom, we will create an ofrenda or altar of remembrance. Please bring photographs or personal mementos, flowers or other objects to place on our altar to honor your late loved ones. There will be time in our service for the sharing of remembrances. The first portion of the service will be multigenerational. Our youth and teachers will be invited to share their remembrances before leaving for their classes. Seeing that it is the day before Halloween, costumes (that are not too gory or racy) may be worn by people of all ages who wish to dress for the occasion.

* Please look on the ofrenda for items brought in years past that were inadvertently left behind.

Sunday, November 6, 2016 - 11:00 a.m.
“From Many - One”
The Rev. Natalie M. Fenimore

Our Unitarian Universalist faith in the US grew up alongside our nation’s democracy. The democratic process is enshrined in our Unitarian Universalist Principles. What does it mean for us, as a congregation, to engage in the democratic process? How are we, as a faith community, “democratic?”

Friday, November 11, 2016
Dinner - 6:30 p.m., Worship - 7:30 p.m., Free Coffee House
Soulful Sundown
The Rev. Jennifer L Brower

Contemporary Worship Service for all ages led by the Rev. Jennifer Brower. $4 dinner at 6:30 p.m. Contemporary Worship with a full band at 7:30 p.m. Featured performer at the free coffee house afterward is singer/songwriter Brad Cole. All are welcome.

TOUCHSTONES
The Rev. Ned Wight

“Purpose: an object or result aimed at”
(Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary)

A delegation of UUCSR leaders ventured to Williamsburg, VA in last July’s heat to participate in the Southern Unitarian Universalist Leadership Experience (SUULE). Among the wisdom they brought back to Long Island was the importance of asking a fundamental question, “Why are we doing what we do?”

This is a question of “purpose.” For what purpose does our congregation exist?”

It’s a great question — especially in this 75th anniversary year—because our purpose provides direction and motivation for all that we do.

I’m going to explore the question of purpose in two Touchstone columns, and I’m going to begin with the UUCSR Bylaws. Section 1.2 of Article I offers a summary statement of our purpose as envisioned by the congregation’s founders over 70 years ago:

The purpose of the Congregation shall be the promulgation and practice of the religious, philosophical, and ethical principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association . . . including, but not limited to, being a fellowship of free minds for the study and practice of liberal religion, with the objectives of developing the higher life of its members and of building a better community and world.

You’ve got to love those two “p” words—“promulgation” and “practice.” Our purpose is about both acting according to Unitarian Universalist principles (practice) and letting others know about them (promulgation)—both deed and word. And the specific “principles” in question are “religious, philosophical and ethical”—involving our spirit, our mind, and our will—in other words, our full selves. This statement of purpose goes on to lift up the importance of bringing “free minds” together for the “study and practice of liberal religion.” We’re committed to be a place for unfettered thinking, for learning about and using as a guide for action precepts and insights of “liberal religion”—a particular way of being religious that values freedom of thought and action, use of reason and tolerance of diverse viewpoints. And the ends toward which all these efforts are moving us are both inward-focused (“developing the higher life of its members”) and outward-focused (“building a better community and world.”) These ends presuppose change,

Touchstones continued on page 2
growth and development toward what's higher and better. Our purpose incorporates aspiration toward improving ourselves, our congregation and our world.

We affirm and promote the full participation of all persons in our activities, including membership and programming, without regard to race, color, gender, physical challenge, mental disability, sexual orientation, age (16 or older), or national origin.

This sentence within our statement of purpose affirms our commitment to be a radically inclusive congregation—to welcome and engage in our common life any and all who embrace our purpose and values, without regard to characteristics that have sometimes been used to exclude people. Of course this list could be further expanded to include "gender expression, socio-economic status, educational attainment, prior faith affiliation, political party affiliation . . ." the list could be very long, indeed. The bottom line is that we intend to be as boldly inclusive of individuals across the whole spectrum of human difference as it is possible for a "fellowship of free minds for the study and practice of liberal religion" can be.

In my next Touchstones, I'll offer some commentary about the second half of the Section 1.2 of our Bylaws, spelling out specific strategies to create such a fellowship—and realize its purpose.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE
Jim Smith, Chair

Our public relations firm Epoch5 and our marketing firm Austin & Williams have discussed with the publicity and promotion committee the possibility of using billboards at LIRR platforms for ads to stress the fact that we are environmental stewards of a 100-acre property. They say this is our "single best differentiator" — the thing that makes us different from other religious institutions in the area.

The professionals suggest that we could hold an Eco-Fest or some other big event during the 2017-18 church year to help publicize ourselves and draw visitors from within a five-mile radius. The hope would be that some of those visitors become members.

At our last meeting, we tossed around possibilities such as hosting a home designer showcase, a battle of the bands, an antiques appraisal show, an opera simulcast, a solar energy conference, a story hour, an NPR show or a dress-up ball.

Please send ideas for a big event to me at smithjimvet@gmail.com.

The following is the substance of a report given at the October 16th congregational meeting:

One of the duties of being Shelter Rock’s president is to keep the Congregation informed of anything that affects us. It’s always a pleasure when one gets to report good news. And, of course, the opposite is true. Today, I need to present to you some negative financial news. Before I do, there is a point I wish to emphasize—the Congregation is absolutely not in any financial crisis or danger. In fact, with over $350 million in our portfolio, just about every congregation in the world, if they were in our position, would get down on their knees and give thanks to whatever deity or deities in which they believe. That being said, it is my duty to bring you up-to-date on our financial position and prospects.

This year our royalties may total under $8 million. They are down to about a third of what they were just a few years ago. Most of the decline reflects the drop in oil prices from about $150 a barrel to about $50 a barrel and the increased production of gas due to fracking. We have no way of knowing how the price of gas will change in the future but have been given no expectation of a significant increase before our royalties run out. Obviously, this affects how much the Congregation can budget and spend. But this effect is more short term than long term, as the Stewardship model allows for royalties coming to a gradual end by the year of sustainability – 24-25.

The rate of return on our portfolio is of greater long-term significance. It not only affects us now but ever onward because the portfolio is planned to last in perpetuity. We use the return projected by Graystone, a division of Morgan Stanley, the same way we use the royalty projections of our royalty advisor. And we do so for a practical reason: We would rather have a single source of opinion from a professional organization then have to arbitrate our multiple and varying opinions on the subject. We also use Graystone’s projected rate of inflation following the same logic.

Their projected rate of annual portfolio growth for the next 6 years if we were not to withdraw from the portfolio is an average of 5%. This is below a long term historic average and reflects the current slow growth of the world economy.

Their projected rate of inflation in the United States for the same period is 2% annually. This is based on recent history and also reflects current slow economic growth. The actual rate of inflation during the last few years has been about 1% with the decline in fuel prices holding down inflation.

With 5% portfolio growth and 2% inflation we can withdraw an average of 3% annually from the portfolio without reducing its purchasing power – about $11 million. This year we may have to withdraw about $12 million, reflecting a spending limit based on last year's higher royalty projections.

Most importantly, Graystone/Morgan Stanley projected an average of 8% portfolio growth with 3% inflation beginning in about 7 years. That would allow us to withdraw up to about $20 million a year at that time without depleting the purchasing power of our portfolio.

President’s message continued on page 3
The projected increase in portfolio growth was based on what is called a reversion to the mean. It presumed that, because over long periods in the past, the average growth rate was very high, we would return to it at some point - something like a pendulum in motion. The laws of physics dictate that, no matter how far a pendulum swings each way, its motion always heads back to the center. Unfortunately, economies are not bound by the laws of physics which brings to mind the warning that appears on every mutual fund prospectus: “Past performance is no guarantee of future performance.”

Recently, there have been confusing statements from our financial advisors, Graystone/Morgan Stanley, as to when and if we could expect to return to an average growth rate of 8%. We will be working with Graystone to clear up their position on this matter. Today, some of us believe that the factors that led to the old average portfolio growth rate include ones that are no longer relevant — recovery from the Great Depression, the building of a war economy, the rebuilding of Europe, the breakup of colonial empires, expanded world trade, the industrialization of China, and periods of high inflation in the U.S.

We live under a capitalist system — the social and economic system that exists everywhere in the world with the exception of Cuba and North Korea. The history of capitalism is not one of steady growth but of long periods of very slow growth followed by periods of rapid growth and both interrupted by periodic economic crises. The periods of rapid growth have usually occurred as a result of the opening of new markets and/or of major technological improvements and the development of whole new industries. For example: In the 19th century, there occurred the building of canals, railroads, the telegraph, the development of steel manufacturing, mass production and steam powered factories. In the 20th century, we had the automobile and road construction, the spread of electric power, the airplane, etc.

A major change occurred with the development of automation in the 2nd half of the 20th century. This resulted in the elimination of millions of manufacturing jobs and has forced millions into lower paying service jobs — the new motto for many workers is, “Would you like fries with your order?”

The development of computer and internet related jobs has come nowhere near absorbing all who would once have had higher paying union jobs in industry. Indeed, those developments have even impacted service jobs. We have online shopping with warehouses serviced by robots and the loss of sales and warehouse jobs. It’s the reason you find many department stores short of sales personnel. They have to keep costs low to compete with online shopping. There is also online banking and banking via ATMs, online insurance purchasing, obtaining loans online, buying tickets to events online and printing them out at home. Some, like me, pay their bills online – no need for post office personnel to transport and deliver checks or for clerks to record the transactions. When my wife and I decided to draw up wills, we had no need for a lawyer. We just downloaded a will in New York State format, answered some questions it asked us and printed them out. Our only human requirement was for someone to notarize the wills.

There is a new technological development that is just beginning, of which most people are still unaware, and that threatens to eliminate a whole host of service jobs — even highly skilled service jobs. It’s called artificial intelligence. It’s where computers simulate human intelligence and interact with people in a way that people forget they are interacting with a machine. A very primitive beginning of this is what I can do with my smart phone. I can say, “Hello Google. Find me the nearest pizza restaurant.” And I will get a response, which means that somewhere there is a server that knows where I am, that I want a specific type of restaurant, where it is located and that it is the nearest to me — all without human intervention.

These factors are affecting almost every industrialized country. In the US, wages constitute about 70 percent of the purchasing power of the economy. And the failure of wages to keep up with inflation and the concentration of wealth in ever fewer hands are major factors in the reason to expect no more than slow growth in the future. Similar factors are occurring and have occurred in other industrialized countries. We only have to look at the fact that in the United States, and in many industrialized countries, the central banks are providing life support for the economy by significantly expanding the money supply and by keeping interest rates at historic lows. In some cases, the rates are actually negative, that is, below the rate of inflation.

Another very important factor in slow economic growth is the decline in population growth. The United States is a rarity among industrialized countries in having a population that is reproducing itself at a level to enable its population to grow. In almost every country in Europe, the rate of reproduction is less than the 2.1 children per woman that would allow the population to at least remain stable. In Italy, there are an average of only 1.3 children per woman. In the European Union as a whole, the average is 1.58. All face increasingly rapid declining populations beginning shortly if they do not allow significant immigration, and all face possible collapse before 2100. In China, the curtailing of the one child policy has not produced any meaningful increase in the number of children as most people simply cannot afford a second child. And births remain highly skewed in favor of boys due to the selective abortion of female embryos. The average number of children being born to women has even declined in many poorer countries as birth control becomes more available and women increasingly enter the job market. In Brazil, the number of children born to the average woman has declined from six to three.

Given the current economic situation and future uncertainties, Graystone, in its most recent email to us, advocated that it is “safer to have a 3% spending rate until valuations and interest rates normalize...” This means that our total spending (our budget) next year, in order to preserve our future, must be limited to about $19 million to consist of about $8 million in royalties and $11 million to be withdrawn from our portfolio. This is down from the about $21.5 million being spent this year. The $19 million must include just about everything — operating expenses, capital expenses, Veatch Grants and Large Grants. Just as important, assuming that our royalties do not for a time increase, we must be prepared for a gradual reduction in our budget each year in which our royalties decline until we reach a stable figure.

With this in mind, we have to look at how we are going to finance activities that were not in our spending limit this year — capital expenditures, Large Grants and the balance of the up to $5 million we have pledged to support Legacy Giving. These last matters are now before the Finance Committee for recommendation to the Board.

Our financial position is very far from bleak. But it does compel us to realize that our days of wine and roses are over and will not return. We no longer have abundant royalties that allow us to take on expenses without worrying. And it is also possible that the days of rapid portfolio growth are also over. The Congregation has been in existence for 75 years. With prudent financial management there is no reason why the Congregation will not be here 75 years from now.
The Quest

adjusts to this new promotional strategy which will be measured communication processes will be overcome as the congregation visitors to our website, it is the hope that any disruption from past warranted to best position the advertising campaign to succeed. aware that an 8-week lead time from the committee's event is development and placement. Program Chairs have been made a revision of marketing materials will take place. Working with an Once selected and recommended to the Board and congregation, Members of our congregation were interviewed as well as some members from the Summit NJ congregation (a congregation of reasonably similar demographics). Additionally, focus groups were held with non-religiously affiliated members of our local community. The results of this discovery have previously been shared with the congregation and can continue to be accessed on the MY UUCSR section of our website. Three prominent outcomes were identified. First, the congregation's property at Shelter Rock was seen as a differentiator when developing a message to the community; the ground represents a sanctuary for the spirit, a commitment to the environment and a place of intrigue and interest given its lack of visibility from the main road. Second, the congregation should consider one or more major “non-denominational” events repeated annually, that would introduce the congregation to the community and have them remember us as a place to visit at a certain time each year; think pumpkin picking, but something more unique. The expectation is that some of these visits will lead to a denominational connection with the congregation. Finally, greater digital exposure of the congregation is needed to help connect who we are and what we do to a larger audience. This means more engagement in Social Media such as Facebook, increased online advertising, and continued promotion of our website.

The Publicity and Promotions committee and the administration team are currently tackling the above recommendations. We have begun working with Austin & Williams on new advertising concepts which have been shared with the Program Council and the Board of Trustees. Austin & Williams is now providing their creative ideas to help the congregation advertise its activities in a generally consistent theme, yet maintaining the unique message of each event being promoted. Members may have seen the advertisements on Facebook or in the Long Island Weekly. The theme for each promoted event also remains consistent across all modes of communication for that event to include both paper and digital. Some members have provided opinions on the color scheme that is currently used. This is only an interim presentation while a new logo/tagline is being developed by Austin and Williams and is being considered by the Publicity and Promotions committee. Once selected and recommended to the Board and congregation, a revision of marketing materials will take place. Working with an outside consultant on creative design and media buys is new for the congregation. It requires more lead time to allow for advertising development and placement. Program Chairs have been made aware that an 8-week lead time from the committee's event is warranted to best position the advertising campaign to succeed. With greater event attendance, Social Media reach and increased visitors to our website, it is the hope that any disruption from past communication processes will be overcome as the congregation adjusts to this new promotional strategy which will be measured against past performance.

As referenced above, the Publicity and Promotions committee is also working on concepts for a “Big Event” to be held in FY 2018. Several great ideas are in discussion to include events that focus on the environment, music, and the Veatch House. Over time the Big Event may be several events, but in its attempt to focus on one event to consider for next year, the committee wants to hear from you. If you have a concept that would be repeatable each year with the intent of bringing in hundreds of community residents over a day or days. I refer you to the article in this Quest from Jim Smith, Chair of the Publicity and Promotions Committee, on additional information on this initiative.

Speaking on behalf of myself, Jim, and the committee, there is tremendous enthusiasm about developing a strong communications strategy to help fulfill the congregation's purpose, as stated in the bylaws of “promulgating Unitarian Universalism.” We look forward to continued engagement with the members on how we can best position the congregation to do that.

For this QUEST article I would like to focus on the communication of the congregation’s purpose and activities to the broader community. As I have shared in prior articles, the congregation, through the good work of the Publicity and Promotions Committee, engaged Austin & Williams, a marketing/advertising firm, to provide guidance and direction on a communications strategy. Their initial work focused on discovery. Members of our congregation were interviewed as well as some members from the Summit NJ congregation (a congregation of reasonably similar demographics). Additionally, focus groups were held with non-religiously affiliated members of our local community. The results of this discovery have previously been shared with the congregation and can continue to be accessed on the MY UUCSR section of our website. Three prominent outcomes were identified. First, the congregation's property at Shelter Rock was seen as a differentiator when developing a message to the community; the ground represents a sanctuary for the spirit, a commitment to the environment and a place of intrigue and interest given its lack of visibility from the main road. Second, the congregation should consider one or more major “non-denominational” events repeated annually, that would introduce the congregation to the community and have them remember us as a place to visit at a certain time each year; think pumpkin picking, but something more unique. The expectation is that some of these visits will lead to a denominational connection with the congregation. Finally, greater digital exposure of the congregation is needed to help connect who we are and what we do to a larger audience. This means more engagement in Social Media such as Facebook, increased online advertising, and continued promotion of our website.

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I am happy to announce the position of new chair of the Caring Committee – Rhonda Kessler. Rhonda has been an active member at Shelter Rock since 2005. Rhonda has accepted this new position which consists of a wide variety of tasks. She has already begun coordinating upcoming areas for caring within our community. Please give Rhonda your support by reaching out to one another with gestures such as meals, visits, occasional phone calls, or whatever form of caring suits you best. The work that we do together helps those who receive but also rewards the giver with goodness of the heart. Though at times the Caring Committee is a “behind the scenes program,” there are many ministries within caring which are coordinated by the chair. Please send your warm good wishes to Rhonda and give thanks and support for her important new role.

Are you a member considering deepening your involvement at Shelter Rock? The Member Resource Committee is devoted to finding opportunities to help you find and act on your passion to be more involved in our community, and to work for the good of all. Some members report that they “just didn't know how to start” or "would love to but no one ever asked." Please consider whether YOUR opportunity might be now! MRC can help to find the right place for your time and talents. Working with Program Committees, Administrative Committees, Religious Observance and Congregational Support and Service Committees can be extremely rewarding. Please think about deepening your involvement at Shelter Rock and contact me to discuss what is best for you. If you have a moment to browse the new 2017 Membership Handbook, you can see some of the many committees that just might be a fit for you! I will be delighted to hear from you! Barbara Dilsner (bdilsner@yahoo.com, 516.732.5711).
One Fair Wage for All!

Imagine the last time you went out for a good meal with friends or family. You just paid the bill and left what you believe was a good tip. What many of us don’t know is that your tip was split between the server who waited on you, the hostess who seated you, the bartender who prepared your drinks, and the busboy who cleared the table when you were finished. If your server was lucky, there may still be some money left over but, more often than not, it is not enough to make ends meet. Unfortunately, this is the reality for the 4.5 million tipped workers in the country, seventy percent of whom are women.

Unlike the minimum wage, the tipped wage for workers in the restaurant industry is an hourly wage of $2.13. This lower dollar amount is justified by restaurant owners who insist that the difference between the legal minimum and the tipped minimum wage will be made up by tips like yours. In some states the tipped wage remains stuck at as low as $2.13. Imagine now that you are that server and after splitting your tips with coworkers you don’t have enough for groceries to feed yourself or your family.

Did you know that the $2.13 tipped minimum wage has remained the same for 25 years? Or, that the 1938 minimum wage law originally included restaurant workers until powerful interests lobbied to have them remain excluded? Why? Because, the origin of the tipped minimum wage is actually a story about preserving economic inequality after the end of slavery. After the emancipation of slaves, restaurant owners lobbied to hire newly freed slaves and not pay them, forcing them to live on tips from customers. This legacy, rooted in slavery, remains the reality of millions of workers today.

ROC United (Restaurant Opportunities Center United), a long-time Veatch Program grantee, is working to change this through the One Fair Wage campaign. The One Fair Wage Campaign is organizing across the country to end the tipped minimum wage and pass new policies that demand a fair, living wage for restaurant workers. For more information, visit http://onefairwage.com.

UUCSR LARGE GRANTS PROGRAM

The "Dots" are Here...Please join us in the social hall on 10/30, 11/06, 11/13 and 11/20 to cast your 3 choices for the categories you would like to see considered for a Large Grant. Your participation and opinion is highly valued. Thank you!

UUCSR LARGE ADVISORY GROUP

Inviting Applications for the Large Grants Advisory Group: There is an opening for a 3-year term as member-at-large on the Large Grants Advisory Group. Applications are available from Executive Assistant Tammy Weil, tweil@uucsr.org or by calling 516.472.2913. Completed applications should be submitted to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees on or before the application deadline, November 11, 2016. The Board of Trustees will consider all complete applications and make its decisions at a November Board Meeting. The Board of Trustees will notify the applicant who has been selected to serve. The term of office begins immediately.

On October 14, 2016, the UUA Board of Trustees met at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in the Veatch Ballroom. It was an historic day in Unitarian Universalism as the board’s Facebook page attests:

“The UUA Board of Trustees affirmed our ongoing solidarity with, and support of, the Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism organizing collective (BLUU.) In a passionate discussion that included calls for attention to the beauty and religious nature of this work, the Board allocated $300k of immediate support for BLUU, as well as $5 million in long-term funding, guaranteed by the endowment against future fundraising. The presentation by Leslie Mac and Rev. Carlton E. Smith included both history of the movement and plans for the proposed funding. BLUU will be sharing their vision in upcoming months.

“This commitment is just one step in a long journey towards fulfilling promises made to Black Unitarian Universalists in the 1960s. The Board is fully committed to working collaboratively with the UUA administration to develop the funding sources necessary for this financial support of BLUU.

“The meeting ended with a laying-on of hands and prayer for the continued work of all those who are giving so much of their lives to building the beloved community.”
In celebration of the turning of the seasons, I share these words of the Bengali Hindu writer and poet, humanist and universalist, Rabindranath Tagore:

Today the peace of autumn pervades the world.
In the radiant noon, silent and motionless, the wide stillness rests like a tired bird.
Spreading over the deserted fields to all horizons its wings of golden green.
Today the thin thread of the river flows without song, leaving no mark on its sandy banks.
The many distant villages bask in the sun with eyes closed in idle and languid slumber.
In the stillness I hear in every blade of grass.
In every speck of dust, in every part of my own body, in the visible and invisible worlds,
In the planets, the sun, and the stars, the joyous dance of the atoms through endless time.

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Rev. Natalie M. Fenimore
Minister of Lifespan Religious Education

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NEIGHBORING FAITHS

The new US Postal Service forever stamp, scheduled for release this October, is the first to honor Hinduism. The stamp will mark the Hindu holiday Diwali. The stamp features a traditional diya oil lamp which is the iconic symbol of the holiday. It celebrates good triumphing over evil.

Diwali is the Hindu Festival of Lights observed with music, fireworks, and dance. This year Diwali will be celebrated at the end of October.

CALLING ALL LIFELONG UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS!

Announcing a special NEW program:

We often talk about our early experiences in our given faith traditions and what it means to become a Unitarian Universalist. We hear less about what it means to be brought up as a Unitarian Universalist. As adults, we don’t often have an opportunity to reflect upon what we bring to this world as long time UUs. How have we woven together the traditions and teachings of our youth with our need to adapt to the changes that Unitarian Universalism asks of us? What challenges did we face as children being raised in a lesser known faith? How has being brought up UU informed our life choices and social attitudes as adults? What perspectives and gifts do we possess that we can share with others in our UU community?

We are looking to connect with any of our members who had the unique experience of being raised in the extraordinary faith community of Unitarian Universalism. We want to hear and share stories and experiences as well as find ways to be of service to our Shelter Rock congregation.

Please join us and celebrate your birthright as a Unitarian Universalist!

When: Monthly beginning November 6, 2016; 12:30 p.m. – Bring your lunch to the Brides Room.

For more information contact Lauren Furst or Rev. Natalie Fenimore.

Religious Education and We Care Activities

As we move quickly through the golden days of Autumn, we are entering the beginning of a prolonged season of giving. Here at UUCSR there are so many ways to participate in the congregation’s values for giving and serving. The Religious Education program and Social Justice work closely together to provide service opportunities for RE families, youth, children and all congregants.

There are three ways of giving and serving here at UUCSR:

• Vote • Contribute • Direct Service

Every congregational member is invited to vote on where the Veatch grants are awarded. Members can indicate their preferences for areas of need by stopping by the table in the main lobby after worship on Sundays, October 30 and November 6, 13, and 20. The final votes occur during congregational meetings.

Every congregant, old and young, is invited to contribute to congregational initiatives. Here is a list of these activities occurring this Fall through the holidays:

• Food collection for Veterans at Beacon House. You can pick up a grocery bag with a shopping list at the welcome desk in the main lobby to take home and fill. Filled bags should be returned to the main lobby on Sunday, October 30.

• UNICEF boxes are distributed to all RE children and youth to be returned after Halloween.

• Holiday Meal Donations begin October 23 with the goal of raising $5000 to buy turkeys for guests of the North Shore INN Soup Kitchen in Glen Cove and families served by the AIDS Center of Queens County. Social Justice Committee members will be in the lobby each Sunday after worship to receive your donations.

• Guest at Your Table boxes are distributed at the Thanksgiving Family Service. Funds raised support our work as Unitarian Universalists to advance human rights through the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee).

• The Mitten Tree provides holiday gifts for children of families served by the AIDS Center of Queens County. The mitten tree will be in the lobby after Thanksgiving.

• In addition, there are many service activities embedded into our RE curriculum. Congregants are invited to be active with direct service-giving activities. RE families are invited to participate in the December Midnight Run, and there will be two opportunities for RE families to volunteer to cook a meal for the veterans served by United Veterans Beacon House in the new year. RE families may want to discuss at the family dinner table which activities they wish to support. May we all hold the needs of others in our hearts as we move through the various upcoming holidays.

Jeanne Nametz
Religious Education Education Coordinator

The Rev. Natalie M. Fenimore
Minister of Lifespan Religious Education
The Quest

I have a quotation in my black pocket calendar, author unknown to me, which states... "Given the power to create, it is no wonder the artist is found to be godlike."

I am continually wowed and inspired by the creative talent in our liberal religious community. In this congregation are published authors (Renee Silver and Jim Smith, to name only two), the creator of a compelling play about a now-deceased congregant who defied the Nazis (playwright: Wally Brown), a stellar one-man-show impersonator of Winston Churchill and Petrarch (Bob Nuxoll), and wonderfully talented musicians, instrumental and vocal, younger and older, too numerous to name.

But I want to focus here on the visual arts. As many of you may know, the congregational art exhibit is under way in the UUCSR Gallery. I count twenty one contributors, including children in our program with a beautiful quilt made last summer. Represented in the display are needlepoint, photography, ceramics, quilting, silk-screens, paper collage, acrylic paintings, and watercolors.

Dedicated to talented artist and congregant, the late Brian Foley, I feel moved to offer this shout-out, and pre-Thanksgiving gratitude, to Brigitte Mueller and the Art Committee, and to all the wonderful artists whose work graces our Gallery, now and for the next few weeks.

I also want to mention Marvin Brown, a recent UUCSR member, though a UU of long standing, whose art work is on display till November 1st at the Shirley Fiterman Art Center in Manhattan (near the World Trade Center Memorial).

The first event in the Bible, (and in many religious traditions), is the act of creation. Creativity is, to my mind, a sublime spiritual gift, an expression of aliveness, a mysterious mix of inspiration and perspiration, bringing beauty and magic into the shared human experience.

My thanks again to all who have contributed creatively to this congregation, lifting us emotionally and spiritually, and mazel tov to you all!

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Saturday, October 29, 2016

Halloween Party, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., Veatch Haunted Mansion

Sunday, October 30, 2016

Day of the Dead Multigenerational Service, 11:00 a.m., Worship Room

RE classes at 11:20 a.m.

Friday, November 4, 2016

Grade 6 Retreat, 7:00 p.m., Room 15

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Bring a Friend Sunday, RE Classes at 11:00 a.m.

Senior Seminar Parent Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Room 6

Young Peoples Choir (YPC) The YPC welcomes children who love to sing. The choir practices at 10:00 a.m. Sunday mornings and performs at some multigenerational and Family Services. Please note that the YPC will be rehearsing in the Chapel until further notice. Please contact George Weisman, our RE Music Specialist at GeorgeWeisman@gmail.com if your child is interested in joining.

Jazz Ensemble is a multigenerational ensemble that practices before Worship and RE from 9:00 -10:15 a.m. in the music rehearsal room, and performs at some worship services. (Please note the new time.) Contact Stephen Michael Smith, Music Director, at SSmith@uucsr.org if you or your child are interested in joining.

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Sunday, December 11, 2016

Senior Seminar Parent Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Room 6

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Saturday, October 29, 2016,

6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

in the Haunted Veatch Mansion

at UUCSR

DRESS IN COSTUME

$5 per person or $25 per family

Adults must be accompanied by a child!

Bring a non perishable food donation for the INN

SPOOKY FUN for all ages!

Pasta Dinner, DJ Music & Dancing

Halloween Crafts

Wicked Operating Room

Haunted House, Ghoulish Games, & much more!

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"BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME"

by TA-NEHISI COATES

This special work has topped the New York Times Best Seller List for over a year......

We have some copies left!!

Pick up a copy for yourself or as gifts.
Action of Immediate Witness (AIW)

Each year at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly (GA), the gathered delegates consider and vote on Actions of Immediate Witness (AIW), statements rooted in our faith and affirmed by the group. Unlike Congregational Study Action Issues (CSAIs) which result in Statements of Conscience (SOC) and are the outcome of a four-year process, AIWs are presented and affirmed over a period of a year or less.

According to the guidelines set forth by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), “Delegates at each annual General Assembly have the opportunity to take positions on issues that require immediate witness through the Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) process. An AIW expresses the conscience and carries the authority of the delegates at the GA at which it is passed. AIWs are initiated by individual delegates and move through their entire creation and adoption process during a single GA.”

At the 2016 General Assembly held in Columbus, Ohio from June 22 to 26, the three AIWs adopted are: “Build Solidarity with Muslims”; “Some Guns, All Guns: Legislating Appropriate Restrictions”; and “Stop The Hate: Protect and Support our Transgender Brothers and Sisters”. (Below you’ll find links to the complete texts of each AIW.)

“Build Solidarity with Muslims” recognizes the increased levels of discrimination and hate crimes directed at members of the Muslim community since 9/11, and the added layers of fear, prejudice and xenophobia following the terrorist attacks in both the USA and Europe. This statement also expresses an understanding of how the refugee crisis in Syria has become a target of this fear, prejudice and xenophobia. Finally, Muslim leaders have reached out to Unitarian Universalists asking for our partnership to combat Islamophobia, and congregations have responded with support.

For all these reasons, the GA 2016 delegates affirmed the following suggestions for concrete action that congregations and individuals can take:

• increase understanding of Islam within and beyond our local congregations especially in this political moment;
• learn more about and act on the realities of religious discrimination and the various refugee crises, and offer support to refugees (Syrian and other) within our communities;
• challenge acts and words of Islamophobia in solidarity and coordination with Muslims;
• advocate in opposition to Islamophobic bills and actions in our local and national governments, paying particular attention to increased surveillance and anti-immigration efforts; and
• work in this election cycle to foster greater inclusion of all peoples, regardless of their religious, ethnic, national, or racial identity(ies).

As I reflect on this AIW, I am struck by how its suggested actions line up with the goals of the CoUUrage to Defy Hate campaign we began with the premiere of the documentary, Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War. The group will be planning several more events, and I will propose that we refer to these suggested actions as we develop those activities.

I will summarize the other two AIWs in coming editions of the Quest. In the meantime, to review the statements, go to http://tinyurl.com/z7pd42m pages 4-8.

Grocery Collection for Veterans: Each year the Social Justice Committee sponsors a grocery collection for veterans of United Veterans Beacon House. We invite you to purchase some items from the special shopping list and return your bag of groceries on Sunday, October 30 to the special table in the main lobby. The veterans enjoy receiving decorated bags, so if anyone in your household could get out the crayons and add some color, you’ll be bringing extra smiles to the residents of UVBH.

Holiday Turkeys for Our Neighbors in Need: The Social Justice Committee has begun its drive to collect $5,000 to provide holiday turkeys for the guests of the North Shore INN Soup Kitchen in Glen Cove and the families served by the AIDS Center of Queens County. To make a donation, please stop by the table in the main lobby after worship or drop a check made out to UUCSR with Holiday Turkeys in the memo line in the collection plate. A $30 donation will provide for a family, but donations in any amount are welcome.

Transgender 101: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Transgender But Were Afraid To Ask, Tuesday, October 25, 7:30 p.m. in the Office Conference Room: The working group that organized the premiere screening of Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War, will meet to continue planning future events under the theme of CoUUrage to Defy Hate.

Cooking for the Guests of the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN): Thursday, November 3 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Main Kitchen. Mealscooked will be delivered to three shelters run by the INN. For further information, contact Verna Livingston, 516.883.7999.

Climate Justice Taskforce Book Discussion Series: This year the Taskforce has chosen 3 novels on the topic of climate change and its effects on life on earth. Flyers with information about the series are available in the lobby and books may be purchased by contacting Sharyn Esposito at 516.472.2960 or sesposito@uucsr.org.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARING

Non-perishable food donations: 500 pounds by Halloween to benefit the food pantry of the AIDS Center of Queens County (ACQC). Suggested items: boxes of cold cereal; canned meats and fish with pop tops: tuna, chicken, salmon, sardines; peanut butter; and soups with pop tops. (Plastic jars, only, please!) As of October 20 you have donated 176 pounds! Thank you!

UUCSR Used Clothing Bin and Clothing Closet: Please place items for children and adults (in well-secured bags) in the bin designated “Donations of Gently Used Clothing and Shoes,” located in the entryway to the coatroom. Items hanging in the back corner of the coat room are available to all; you are welcome to take anything you need. The bulk of the clothing will continue to benefit the United Veterans Beacon House. If you have any questions about donations or how to donate other items, please contact Social Justice Coordinator Claire Deroche at 516.472.2977 or cderoche@uucsr.org. Thank you!

SOCIAL JUSTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS
“Criminal” Behavior

Amy Goodman of “Democracy Now” is in the news. I can remember visiting headquarters of “Democracy Now” on a Veatch bus trip. Amy Goodman spoke to all of us after a tour. She even spoke here at Shelter Rock. On Monday, a North Dakota judge refused to sign a criminal complaint against the anchor for her coverage of a peaceful, anti-Dakota Access Pipeline protest by residents of the Standing Rock Sioux reservation. The pipeline would have crossed sacred burial grounds and potentially contaminated their drinking water. Amy Goodman said, “I feel vindicated. Most importantly, journalism is vindicated.” She faced a misdemeanor charge of “riot” as well as an arrest warrant for trespassing for what was simply describing actions of protesters and security personnel. Those actions included observations of a dog that had blood on his nose and mouth after having bitten a protester. Since this incident, three federal agencies of the Obama administration have slowed down the construction of the pipeline.

So just what is criminal behavior? We continue to hear cries of “lock her up, lock her up” to advance an opponent’s position. Admitted criminal behavior such as sexual assault is not followed with prosecution. At the same time, Amy Goodman, award winning journalist, was facing criminal charges for simply doing her job. Cardinal Timothy Dolan wants to give money to victims of priests’ sexual abuses as a settlement - with strings attached. What about the real criminals? Are they entitled to commit their crimes because of status, wealth and power? As many innocent sit in jails and detention centers, one wonders where is equality in America? For now, we are grateful that Amy Goodman has been vindicated. She faced a misdemeanor charge of “riot” as well as an arrest warrant for trespassing for what was simply describing actions of protesters and security personnel. Those actions included observations of a dog that had blood on his nose and mouth after having bitten a protester. Since this incident, three federal agencies of the Obama administration have slowed down the construction of the pipeline.

Are you a member of the UUCSR Women’s Group?
$30 dues covers a full year - now through June 30, 2017. Pick up a brochure to see all of the benefits, for both men and women! Call Lee Geisen at 516.365.6418.

CLEANING OUT?? Let us help you! Women’s Group Holiday Sale is Collecting Jewelry & trinkets. The proceeds of the Holiday Sale will be donated to the Boys & Girls Club in Hempstead.

Please leave your donations with Sharyn in the office. Thank you.

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Women’s Group TGIF discussion on BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

Friday, November 4, 2016, 7 p.m.

Elaine Peters for the Green Sanctuary Committee

Food Product Selection and Trade-Offs

Going shopping for food today is no easy task. This can be a real dilemma if you want to be an environmentally responsible shopper. Labeling or misleading labeling is one factor to consider. Unless you understand the real meaning of words, such as natural, USDA Organic, gluten free, cows not treated with BST, etc., you are clueless or being fed half-truths. In other words, hiding GMO labels (the Dark Act) by having to use a special APP rather than seeing a transparent large label saying Non-GMO sourced are just a few examples of ways to prevent consumers from knowing what and where their food comes from.

But another question to be answered is: Which food products cause more environmental degradation? Soy, for instance, comes from GMO seeds with pesticides utilized to keep them growing and safe from insects. The fertilizers needed plus the pesticides degrade our soil and water. But they are not responsible for greenhouse gas emissions (methane) which is the result of our meat industry. Next to fracking for natural gas, factory farmed cows count as one of the leading causes of methane production in the atmosphere. So if we were to weigh the issue of gas emissions of cow milk versus goat milk, the issues become moot. But add in the choice of soy milk, a plant-based alternative, there will be a reduction in our carbon footprint and also in the use of water by 70%.

It appears that plant-based alternatives, particularly non-GMO vegetables and fruits, do the least harm to the environment. But most people are not going to become vegetarians or vegans. All you can do is try to cut down on your meat consumption and buy healthier alternatives with organically grown food leading the way. The methods applied do not harm or erode our land or spoil the water.

Finally, to be a shopper who is more than environmentally conscious, you can become a socially responsible one, too.

Ask yourself: Which companies raise animals humanely or grow food sustainably? Which food companies put corporate interests first like taking local sources of drinking water and using them for sodas or golf courses when there are droughts? Which others are cutting down rain forests for palm oil to make their products?

Well, shopping for the right kind of food for you and your family is no easy job today. But if you want you and your family to stay healthy, the earth to give forth a sustainable bounty, then becoming savvy about the trade-offs and the need to have fair, clear labeling in the marketplace is one way to do it.

Elaine Peters for the Green Sanctuary Committee

Winter Coat Drive

Once again, we are having our Annual Winter Coat Drive. There is a large box located near the coat room where we will accept your gently used adult and children’s coats.

The Drive will run until the end of November. Donations will be delivered to the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN). Thank you for contributing.
Dear UUCSR Music Committee,
I wanted to take the time to thank you all so much for awarding me with the Edward Miller Music Scholarship and giving me the opportunity to perform at your service. It is an honor!

Sincerely, Samantha Filippone

Dear Unitarian Universalist Church:
This is Kiana Kerr, one of the scholarship recipients this year. I wanted to say thank you for providing me with a scholarship. This scholarship has truly made such a difference and eased the burden on my college expenses. Furthermore, I would like to say thank you for the warm welcome I received from the congregation. Everyone was so kind and still proud of me despite the fact that I messed up during my performance. Though I will be going to California, I hope to be back next year to participate in another wonderful service and perhaps redeem my performance. Much thanks for everything and I wish your congregation continued success and joy!

Sincerely, Kiana Kerr

Dear Rev. Brower and Soulful Sundown,
From all of us at the Soldiers Project, we thank you very much for your gift of cash and checks totaling $849 to help us continue to provide free and confidential mental health services to veterans and their families. On behalf of the men and women we serve, thank you. You have made a difference.

Sincerely, Andrea Schmitt

Defying Gravity 2016
Together We’re Unlimited!
Saturday, November 12, 2016
9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Rev. Dan Hotchkiss,
Author of “Governance and Ministry”
$10 Discount to UUCSR Members

Governance by Partnership
Effective ministry requires trust, cooperation, the ability to set goals and carry them out. A key factor in congregational effectiveness is trust between lay leaders and staff, and most particularly between the board and head of staff.

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Halloween Party sponsored by UUCSR, LIAC and UU Connect
6:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the Haunted Veatch Mansion at UUCSR. Dress in costume. $5 per person, $25 per family. Adults must be accompanied by a child. See back cover for additional details.

Sunday, October 30, 2016
- **Great Books Discussion - Imperfect Ideal: Utopian & Dystopian Visions** - Black Box by Jennifer Egan, 9:00 a.m.
- **Orientation** - 1:00 p.m., RE Room 15
- **Organ Recital with Judith Hancock** - 1:30 p.m., Worship Room

Monday, October 31, 2016
- **Being White in the Black in the Lives Matter Movement** - 7:00 p.m. First of four sessions with Oscar Sinclair, RE Room 15

Tuesday, November 1, 2016
- **Long Strange Trip** - Part six of six part video series on UU thought in history. 7:30 p.m. Special location this night only: RE room 4.
- “WHAT IF...?” A Shelter Rock Forum presentation at 7:30 p.m. in the Veatch Ballroom with Tarso Ramos and John Cavanagh, two Washington experts on the economy and social issues who will examine the possible outcomes of the coming Nov. 8 election, especially how America would be changed by a more right-wing government. It will be a one-hour panel discussion, followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer session, moderated by Shelter Rock Forum chair Bob Nuxoll. The Institute for Policy Studies and Political Research Associates are grantees of UUCSR’s Veatch Program.
- **Preparing Your Garden for Winter** presented by the Green Sanctuary Committee, 7:30 p.m., Art Gallery. Reese Michaels, Master Gardener, will share successful tips for watering, fertilizing, pruning, mulching, and much more. Free to all. Refreshments provided.

Wednesday, November 2, 2016
- **WG Women’s Talk Daytime** - Noon - 1:30 p.m., Art Gallery
- **Insifada Zen Meditation** - 7:30 p.m., Veatch Ballroom

Thursday, November 3, 2016
- **Winston Churchill** performed by Bob Nuxoll, 7:30 p.m., Veatch Ballroom

Friday, November 4, 2016
- **Tai Chi/Qi Gong** - 10:15 a.m., Art Gallery
- **Breaking the Political Glass Ceiling** - 7:00 p.m., presented by the Women’s Group TGIF. Program speakers including Veatch ED, Joan Minieri, plus light supper buffet. Veatch Ballroom
- **Friday Movie Night** - “Sustenance: Food and Spirituality. The Hundred Foot Journey,” led by Rev. Natalie Fenimore, 7:30 p.m., Room 6

Saturday, November 5, 2016
- **Yoga** - 11:00 a.m., Art Gallery
- **14th Annual Cabaret at the Rock** to benefit the Edward Miller Memorial Scholarship Fund, with Richard Bock as Music Director, 7:00 p.m., Social Hall.

Sunday, November 6, 2016
- **Great Books: Jon by George Saunders** - 9:00 a.m., Room 4
- **Celebrate Your Birthright as a Unitarian Universalist** - 12:30 p.m. See page 6 for this first session of a new monthly program.
- **Seasonal Cooking Class** presented by the Ethical Eating Group. 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. in the Veatch House kitchen. Be prepared to participate and bring your appetite. Children are welcome. Sponsored by the Social Justice Committee.
- **Orientation** - 1:00 p.m., Art Gallery
- **Memorial, Aileen Cox** - 1:30 p.m., Chapel

Monday, November 7, 2016
- **Being White in the Black in the Lives Matter Movement** - 7:00 p.m. led by Oscar Sinclair, Room 15

Wednesday, November 9, 2016
- **Resilience** - 7:30 p.m., Room 16

Friday, November 11, 2016
- **Soulful Sundown** - Worship for all ages led by the Rev. Jennifer Brower. $4 dinner at 6:30 p.m. Contemporary Worship with a full band at 7:30 p.m. Featured performer at the free coffee house afterward is singer/songwriter Brad Cole. All are welcome.

Annual Weekend Renewal held by the UU Women’s Association of the NY Metro District with support from UUCSR will be held November 11-13, at St. Josephat’s Retreat House in Glen Cove.

Saturday and Sunday, November 12 and 13, 2016
- **UUCSR Leadership Extravaganza**, begins Friday Evening and continues through Sunday Worship

Sunday, November 13, 2016
- **How and Why Do Unitarian Universalists Talk About the Bible?** with Rev. Natalie Fenimore, 12:30 p.m., Bride’s Room.
- **Walk the Line, Hike around UUCSR Grounds** - Dana Gumb will lead all who are interested in a walk around the boundary of the UUCSR property. Gather in the lobby at 1:00 p.m. Wear sturdy shoes or boots, and be prepared to walk over fallen logs! The hike should last an hour and a half.
- **Orientation** - 1:00 p.m., Art Gallery

Tuesday, November 15, 2016
- **Expedition to Whitney Museum** - Meet at the Whitney Museum, 99 Gansevoort Street, NYC, a few blocks from the 14th street stop of the A, C, and E lines, at 10:00 a.m. Lunch at “No Title Cafe” in the Whitney. Those who wish can visit the High Line after lunch. Call Ben Bortin for details, BBortin@uucsr.org, 516.472.2934.
Next Quest: Tuesday, November 8, 2016 | Deadline for Content: Thursday, November 3, 2016

14th Annual Cabaret
At the Rock

with Richard Bock as Music Director
Come enjoy an evening of
musical fare, desserts, wine and camaraderie
as we raise funds for the
Edward Miller Memorial Scholarship Fund

Saturday, November 5, 2016
6:30 p.m. Social Hall Doors Open
7:00 p.m. Show Begins

Reserve a seat now!
$20/$22 Member/Non-member
$20 Gets you on stage!

Tickets may be purchased in advance
Register online via link on UUCSR.org calendar or via check payable to UUCSR, with memo:
Cabaret XIV, Attn: Lea Titza. Deadline for complimentary childcare Tuesday, November 1.

Questions? 516.472.2975. Tickets will be available at the door!