

UCSI

NEWSLETTER

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www.unitarianchurchofstatenidland.org

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March 13, 10:45 a.m. *A Small Group Ministry Sampler*

In the pulpit: Facilitators and Members of the Small Group Ministry program and the Rev. Susan Karlson

Music: Dr. Carolyn Clark

Small Group Ministry is a vibrant and strong part of the Unitarian Church of Staten Island. This morning, we celebrate the breadth and depth of these groups and invite you to experience these groups. We also welcome our New Members in a Membership Recognition Ceremony.

March 20, 10:45 a.m. *The Spring Equinox*

In the pulpit: Athena Huckaby and the Rev. Susan Karlson

Music: Dr. Carolyn Clark

The Vernal Equinox will occur in just a few days, come and participate in a ceremony heralding all things Spring!

March 27, 10:45 a.m. *To Be Announced!*



March 6, 10:45 a.m.

Mardi Gras Celebration:

In the Wake of the Katrina Blues

In the pulpit: Rev. Susan Karlson

Guest Musician: David Jones

Next month, our youth will leave for a service trip to New Orleans. Mardi Gras is a big deal all along the Gulf Coast. In this post-Katrina landscape, the people of the Gulf Coast are so resilient—balancing the blues, grief and a passionate zest for living. Join us as we salute the spirit of the people living along the Gulf Coast.

Spaghetti Dinner!!!! March 12th

Each year the RE Family invites us all for feasting and fun; this year on Saturday March 12th at 6:00 pm. in the church hall. This yearly RE fundraiser supports programming and administrative costs for the program. Head chef will again be Sue Flynn ably joined by Sarah Dolinar and Linda Santlofer . Suggested donation is \$10.00 a person, \$20.00 per family.

Visit to the Museum of Chinese in America

Twelve kids and 11 adults spent most of a late January day in Chinatown touring the this museum. They participated in a gallery program to learn more about the the stories and traditions surrounding the Lunar New Year. The visit also touched on the immigration station of Angel Island and explored Chinese puzzles. Afterwards many of our group had our own feast in Chinatown.

This month RE Explorers and Youth will visit Sandy Ground Historical Museum right here on Staten Island.

On Our Way!!

“New Orleans, Here We Come” was a rousing success on March 4th. The production, directed by award-winning playwright Morna Murphy Martell, had everything: music, words, laughter and tears and raised \$422.00 toward the New Orleans trip.

The young people thank all the UCSI community for its continued support. The current estimate of funds raised for the trip is \$ 3,778. The Youth and their guides look forward to sharing experiences, insights and pictures with all of us when they return.

March Schedule

Early Childhood

March 6 - “I Can Listen”

March 13th - “I Can Pretend”

March 20th - “People Know Me”

March 27th - “My World Has Birds”

Explorers

March 6th - Sandy Ground Historical Museum

March 13 th, 20th, 27th
“Toolbox of Faith” curriculum

Youth

March 6th - Sandy Ground Historical Museum

March 20th - An exploration of conversations about race; preview of future schedule
Richard & Simone, guides

Photo of Interior: Sandy Ground Historical Museum: (SILIVE photo)



MARCH EVENTS

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Gonzalo Mercado of El Centro will meet with the S.J. Committee on Saturday, March 5th, 9:30 a.m.

Everyone is welcome to this breakfast meeting of the Social Justice Committee [SJC] as we meet with Gonzalo to discuss the practicalities of being partners in the Staten Island Community. We will learn more about each other's programs and trade ideas as to how we can best work together to make Staten Island a better place.

"Larry's Women Speak Up" on March 11th!

The Arts Program Committee [APC] presents a series of monologues at 8:00 p.m. in the Church Hall. Written by Lawrence F. Schwabacher and co-directed with APC co-chair, Risa Anderson, "Larry's Women.." illuminates the experiences of contemporary women in a lively and somewhat irreverent fashion.

The cast includes church members Carolyn Clark and Maureen Curran. New monologues have been added to the presentation which debuted last year at the ETG Cafe and was later presented on Broadway. Admission is \$15.00.

March to the Future

It is said that an army marches on its stomach, losing often due to lack of food supplies and other resources.

A church also marches into the future supported or not by resources its members provide.

During March each program committee is asked to determine what resources it needs to carry out its mission and contribute to the overall mission of the UCSI. The more specific we are during this process the more likely we are to be able to find those resources.

On March 20th the proposed budget for 2011-2012 will be reviewed at 12:30 in the Sanctuary.

Become a "finder" by participating in the April Stewardship Drive; visiting steward training will be held on March 13th, and,

Save April 2nd for the Fellowship Dinner. to help in the kitchen contact Jill Hueckel or Steve Nutt Dinner Co-Chairs.

March Calendar

- 3/1 - Membership Com. at Ann Khalil's; 7:30
- 3/5 Social Justice - 9:30 am Church Library
- 3/7 Arts Com. 7:30 church hall
- 3/9 Board of Trustees 8:00 pm - Library
- 3/11 Larry's Women - 8:00 pm - church hall
- 3/12 Spaghetti Dinner - 6:00 pm; see RE, page 2, for details
- 3/13 Steward Training 1-3
- 3/20 Budget Review 12:30, Sanctuary

APRIL 2nd FELLOWSHIP DINNER!

Note: Pres. Rona announces a Canvass Buyback : April's 4 week pledge drive will be shortened by one week for every \$20,000 in pledges collected by April 2nd!

SIMPLY SUSAN

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“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” ~Jesus from Matthew 6:21

I first saw the movie, *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*, in the early 70’s.

The film depicts the life of Francis of Assisi, the patron of ecology and animals. In one scene, Francis and his rag-tag band of friars travel barefoot to meet with the Pope. Surrounded by the finery of the Pontiff and cardinals, Francis begins to recite from the Gospels, ending with the quote from Jesus—“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

During my youth, when I took something to heart, I often took things a little too literally. So when Francis says to his father who is consumed with material wealth—“do as I do, father, it’s all so simple. Give it all away”, I occasionally did just that. I gave it all away, even a thoughtful spiritual present my mother brought me from Mexico.

It took me some time to reinterpret the meaning of this film and that passage from Matthew—“for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

I learned something about responsibility and stewardship as a student of yoga.

Swami Satchidananda would encourage us to leave a place better than we found it, starting with the public rest rooms. I

began to wipe out the sink and put paper towels dropped on the sink or floor in the waste can. I still do that today—just a little thing I can do to care for the environment and be mindful of those who come after me. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Today I awakened to a treasure I wasn’t expecting when I walked Lilly, our dog, and my eyes fixed on the bold yellow forsythia blossoms and the bright green grass, recently freed from the snow and ice built up these past two months.

Do I recognize tangible and intangible treasures in my life? Am I sufficiently grateful for the gifts that come to me—mostly small things like a smile, a hug, or green grass in the middle of February? “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Am I aware the treasure that I have in a spiritual community that calls me to be the best person I can be and that supports me in my life journey? What can I do to be more aware and proactive in my care for this treasured church home?

What about countless small spontaneous caring acts I can do—wash a dish left in the sink or food left in the vestry, without being asked, put away the tables and chairs after coffee hour, weed a small corner of the church yard in

the spring, rake leaves or take a turn providing child care though I have no children of that age.

This next month, each of us will have a chance to consider that saying from Jesus—“for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” as the Unitarian Church of Staten Island begins its annual spring canvass and stewardship drive.

What does this church mean to you?

How can you give back to this community without “giving it all away”?

How can you show where your treasure is even when our lives are encumbered by the chaos of the economy?

It’s all a matter of commitment and love—“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”



COMING ATTRACTIONS

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Photo Directory Coming Soon

We're excited to announce that we are going to create a new photo directory of our church family. The directory will help us to connect names and faces. It will also capture the history of our congregation at this particular moment in time.

You will be hearing more about signups for taking photographs. This directory is provided at no cost to you, your family or the church.

Please save time on Friday, April 29th and Saturday, April 30th to get your photo taken for the photo directory.

If you have any questions, please contact the minister: minister@uucsi.org or call her at 718 442-1012.

**April 3, 10:45 Yoga as Union - Beyond Pretzel
Twisting and Aerobics**



In the pulpit:

Rev. Susan Karlson

Music:

Dr. Carolyn Clark

Yoga is an ancient practice that includes much more than the physical postures or asanas. Join us to find out the profound effects of yoga on body, mind, breath and spirit.

General Assembly is Coming! General Assembly is Coming!

The 50th Annual General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, from June 22nd through June 26th, 2011. The UCSI will have three (3) lay delegates, one (1) alternate lay delegate and two (2) ministerial delegates (Rev. Susan Karlson, Minister; and Rev. Ben Bortin, Minister Emeritus).

Who will be UCSI's lay delegates? You could be one of them.

General Assembly is not just a convention with an amazing opportunity to see and participate in true representative democracy, but a chance to talk with fellow UUs who share your interests and ideas. Attending GA can be costly so there are possible scholarship/work combinations available nationally and from the UCSI. Apply by March 31 - <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/registration/financialaid/15005.shtml>. and if you are interested in a UCSI grant, speak to Rona Solomon.

You can always find a UCSI member who'll be willing to share a hotel room with you. Because GA 2011 is being held here in the East, Harry Hicks and others may drive to Charlotte.

GA reservation service, for both GA and for hotel space, opens at 9:00 am on March 1, 2011, at <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/index.shtml>. **Prime** hotel space goes quickly.

Board of Trustees News

Please note: This is a digest of the principal January, 2011 actions in the Minutes as approved on February 9th.

Religious Exploration: Board voted to ask Finance Committee to include the budget request of \$9750.00 in 2012 budget for RE, including \$7500 for a coordinator. Only \$500.00 more needed for New Orleans trip. Treasurer Hicks will arrange Insurance coverage.

Other Committees: Social Justice Mission statement approved; Facebook Page approved in concept until actual FB design, etc. submitted; approved decision to collect items for Haitian Orphanage.

Building Issues: Certificate of Occupancy being worked on by architects & engineers. Building Use Policy tabled.

Film company may use church hall for movie scenes; must have contract; producer will make a donation to church.

Social Justice Committee

More than a third of the congregation completed the SJ survey indicating enthusiasm for selecting projects and causes for future action. National and local issues were pretty evenly divided. The SJC will plan an "Opportunities for Action" forum for the fall.

Small Group Ministry [SGM]

Registration for SGM will be held in March with new 6 month groups forming in April. See Rev. Karlson for more information and go to the website for a fuller description of small groups and what they mean.

**Green Covenant: Living in Right
Relationship with Earth
Saturday, March 19th
9:00-4:00
\$25**

**Sponsored by the NY Metro
District and UU Ministry for Earth
Held at Community Unitarian
Church at White Plains**

Register Today!

[https://www.formdesk.com/
uuforms/green](https://www.formdesk.com/uuforms/green)



NEWS AND NOTES

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Superbowl Party

T'was the night of the Superbowl and Laura Martocci our chef created delights for the feast, while Brendan Spillane and Mike Stein stood by to assist. Mark Semanchik was busy, setting up the projection for this big screen event.

Joey Bostrom and Ralph Curcuru greeted our guests, while Stan Hellman and Tom Seluga were offering a hand here and there. Viv Vassar, Linda Traubman, Diane Matyas, Kathy Santo and Lisa Swan came with delights in hand to help with the feast.

The game was exciting and at the end, all helped to clean up; we are grateful for that. To all who attended and to all who helped, or donated an item, especially those not mentioned here, the men's group thanks you and hopes everyone will join us next year.

This event raised \$374 for the UCSI and \$200 for Sustainable Orphanages while providing a fun event for around 60 people.

Committee on Ministry

Did you recognize the members of the Committee on Ministry [COM] playing the Three Wise Women in the Kate Howard Christmas Eve production of Los Pasados? Claudette Duff, Linda Santlofer, and Jill Hueckel were overjoyed to play these roles.

They are also working diligently on the role of COM which serves as a support for the various ministries of the church.

Everyone plays a vital role at UCSI. From greeting or listening to a newcomer at coffee hour to participating in the service, you show how much you care for our church. You're helping to Build a New Way.

To COM, the theme of Building a New Way this year has involved studying direct and non-violent communication in the goal of right relations. Members and Friends are encouraged to speak to COM members about both the strengths and weaknesses of the various ministries.

Along with Reverend Karlson, COM members will make themselves available to help keep the connections between individuals, committees, lay leaders and the minister healthy and strong. You may reach them at com@uucsi.org.



Members News

Not one but two exhibits featured work by Steve Nutt [see pic at left] both at Wagner in February and at the newly named ArtHaus, formerly Casterbridge Fair, at 143 Beach St.

Those prolific playwrights Morna Murphy Martell and Lawrence F. Schwabacher share the bill on March 18th at the ETG cafe, 8:00 pm with plays "a bit racy", hmm?

Megan Lee has been accepted at Cornell University the college of her choice - rejoice!

Ruth Leason has been a bit under the weather and would love to hear from us - we are all anxious for her to return to church.

We welcome four new members into our church community and look forward to knowing them better.

*"Your beliefs become your thoughts.
Your thoughts become your words.
Your words become your actions.
Your actions become your habits.
Your habits become your values.
Your values become your destiny."*

— [Mahatma Gandhi](#)

In March at the Unitarian Church of Staten Island, Gandhi's quote is writ large for all to see. This is our budgeting month – a month when our values become our destiny.

During March, the Council members will let the Finance Committee know where on the belief- to- action-to- value continuum their activities lie and just how much they believe it will cost for the Unitarian Church of Staten Island to reach our destiny.

Our vision is to be a welcoming spiritual community guided by our UU principles – affirming the universe from affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all humans to respecting the web of the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

How can we become our vision and what does that cost?

Our mission is to enrich our community and make the world a better place, while we support each other in our search for truth and share the responsibility for

sustaining our cherished church home. How do we do this? By opening our hearts and home, and extending ourselves to help.

This comes with a relatively minor price tag. Almost our entire budget supports programs - the shared ministries of our community – and the administration of our programs.

Our church, with just over a hundred members, operates on a budget similar to a middle class household. What we do with those funds is a small miracle!



*We house the homeless;
We speak for justice;
We search for truth together
every Sunday in the spirit of Love;
We nurture curiosity and fierce
fairness in our children;
We care for the infirm;
We feed the hungry;
We create art;
We enjoy each other's company;
We maintain our cherished church
home.*

When I was in public administration graduate school, so long ago our notes were in cuneiform, we learned that a budget was not just a shopping list, but a public policy document that lets people know the values of an institution.

Please participate this March, to contribute to the budgetary process and make sure that your beliefs have the resources to become our destiny.

Rona

SPRING ARTS FESTIVAL!

Saturday, April 16th at the UCSI

*Rhyme, reason and rhythm in words and shapes
and sound!*

SUNDAY MORNING SEDER

April 17th, 10:45 in the Church Hall,

as the service of the day.

CELEBRATE MAY DAY

at the UCSI Auction!

Sunday, May 1st from 4:00 to 7:00pm

*Time to plan what goods or services you can
donate and then come to bid and buy.*