

UUCSI

NEWSLETTER

Religious Exploration
Page 2
Minister's Column, p.3

**Our Spirit, Our
Community,
Services**
Page 4, 5

Program Committees
Page 6, 7

President's Column
Page 8

www.unitarianchurchofstatenisland.org

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The Past is Prologue: the Future is Theirs!

*Last year R.E. small program members learned about their small worlds, Explorers and Youth helped in a food drive on MLK Day and Youth brought energy and commitment to help repair New Orleans. **This Year:***

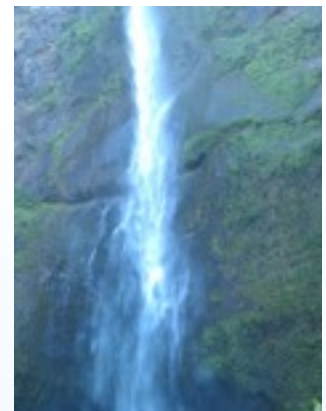
Sunday, September 18th RE Classes Begin!

Hold on to your hats as another year of exploration begins!

Our **Early Childhood Kids (2-6 years)** will experience Picture Book Bible Tales by Kate Tweedie Covey. This exciting curriculum uses picture books to teach young children about bible stories, relating them to our U.U. Principles. Each week we will sing songs, hear a story, participate in a sharing circle and respond through activities like a Hopscotch game, mummy making, a living Nativity, and a "we-ma-way" lions den.

Our **Explorer group (7-13 years)** will spend the year discovering Traditions with a Wink, also by Kate Tweedie Covey. This curriculum helps us understand how "We come from a long tradition of questioning and searching, loving kindness and good works." The lessons use diverse sources: the Internet, the bible, Judeo-Christian traditions, ancient myths and UU rituals including the Flower Communion.

Our **Youth Group (14-18 years)** will meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of most months. The direction of this programming is youth driven with leadership as the key word this year. Activities will be project-based, such as renewing and defining their loft space, assisting with the younger members, relating to the larger UU community.



Sept. 11th 10:45a.m.

On the 10th anniversary of the WTC attacks, our annual water ceremony takes on a deeper healing meaning as we consider the words of the prophet Amos, "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream".

We join our small offerings of water or virtual water from our spiritual journeys to help join our lives' journeys.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION PAGE 2

UCSI Religious Exploration Welcome Back Potluck!

On Friday, September 9th from 6:30-9:00, please bring a dish to share and join us in the parish hall for a celebration to kick off the new season of RE programming. All UCSI members and friends are welcome to attend and see first hand our exciting plans for the upcoming year.

Saturday, Oct. 1st! 9 am - 2 pm RE Start-up Day! led by Rev. Tracey Sprowls-Jenks

This day is designed to help Michael, his colleagues, lay leaders, and congregants to get to know one another better through an exploration of our church's history, its current "culture", and mutual hopes for the future. Through this process of sharing and familiarization, a set of goals and action steps can be identified to guide all parties through the initial period of adjustment. To make this successful we need you to attend!

Age of Reason, Oct. 2nd - Nov. 13th

Our Explorer Group will participate in this exciting supplemental curriculum where they will forge a deeper connection with our church by interviewing our Minister, Director of Music, RE Coordinator and Trustees. They will also learn the UU principles and create their own credo statements to be shared with the congregation in a special ceremony on November 20th.

From Michael Porter, R.E. Coordinator:

As a young man growing up in Ohio, my family valued spirituality and I was always interested in examining religion. I pursued that interest in college, graduating in religious studies, and also through theological studies in graduate school. Today, as a new father, questions of faith, philosophy and our responsibilities to one another seem even more relevant and fascinating.

I look forward to exploring these questions with the community at Staten Island, especially the youth I will work with in the religious exploration program. In the coming months, I hope you will learn more about our activities and become involved; we always need volunteers! Working together, we can continue to make our community a welcoming place that supports transformational thinking, dialogue and self-discovery.

September Schedule

Early Childhood

September 18th: Picture Book Bible Tales: Introduction to the Bible

1 pm Parent Meeting

September 25th: Picture Book Bible Tales: Adam and Eve

Explorers

September 18th: Traditions with a Wink: Opening Sunday

1 pm Parent Meeting

September 25th: Traditions with a Wink: Rosh HaShana

Youth Group

September 18th:

Parent Meeting at 1pm

September 25th: Youth Group meets

Sunday, Oct. 9th: Youth Car Wash

SIMPLY SUSAN

PAGE 3

Soulfully Susan

It feels like a long time since I've been in touch with most of you over these summer months. So much happens during the summer and I miss the opportunity to stay connected and tuned into the most significant aspects of our lives.

This summer, I have had several opportunities to reconnect with my elder relatives, and with friends and family I haven't seen in a long while. I have relished kayaking in the mangroves, and watching the baby birds thrive and grow in the birdhouse on our front porch.

I've found great free events in NYC. I've hiked, biked, read, danced and generally taken care of my spirit, health and well-being. I've been very active in community affairs, particularly with the passage of the Marriage Equality bill (we received more requests for weddings at the church and me officiating at weddings in one month than the previous three years I've been here) and immigration reform.

And I've thought a lot about this church, its direction, potential and promise.

The high point of the Unitarian Universalist annual meeting known as General Assembly was hearing Karen Armstrong, noted religious scholar and founder of the Charter of Compassion.

(www.charterforcompassion.org) after she won the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Prize. Her new book, *Twelve Steps To A Compassionate Life*, was the first book on my summer reading list.

She said that most of the people signing on to the Charter for Compassion (doing the work necessary to make compassion an integral part of their lives) were business people but she saw no reason why Unitarian Universalists should not be at the forefront of the Charter for Compassion.

I heartily agree after hearing her and digesting her book. I believe that compassion, connection and creativity are the Three C's at the heart of what makes a congregation meaningful, transformative, passionate and successful.

I invite you to think about these twelve steps and

how this congregation might work towards Compassion as a cornerstone of our faith in action and our individual and collective lives. The twelve steps are:

1. learn about compassion
2. look at your own world
3. have compassion for yourself
4. empathy
5. mindfulness
6. action
7. how little we know
8. how should we speak to one another?
9. concern for everybody
10. knowledge
11. recognition
12. love your enemies

Till we meet again,

Susan



OUR SPIRITS, OUR COMMUNITY P.4,5

Adult Religious Exploration

Late last spring, we gathered surveys about people's interest in Adult Religious Exploration courses. The results are in and the following are the top interests of the 32 responses we received: *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* was the top rated course. *Yogic Breathing* came in a close second and *Ethics Through Films* was the clear third choice. *Emerson As Spiritual Guide* and *Individual or Couples Enrichment* received significant interest. *Thoreau as Spiritual Guide*, *Fairy Tales to Recreate Our Lives* and *Weaving the Fabric of Diversity* also were major contenders.

Rev. Susan will begin a monthly class on *Yogic Breathing, Chanting, Deep Relaxation and focused Meditation* one Monday a month, TBA.

Wednesday, October 5th, 7:30 - 9:00 pm Rev. Susan and Larry Schwabacher will lead *Weaving the Fabric of Diversity* for 8 weeks.

Please let Rev. Susan know if you can facilitate *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

Whether you are a small group member, a former member, or interested in becoming a member, please come to the Small Group Ministry Potluck on Friday, September 23rd from 6-9 pm. Bring yourself and a covered dish to share.

Registration for the next session of Small Groups begins on October 2nd. Questions? Get in touch with Rev. Susan or see Judy Davison or Jill Hueckel.

September Services*

September 4 , 10:45 am

"Of Baby Birds & Wild Cats Rescued "

Annual Animal Blessing Celebration

Guest Musicians to be Announced

Multi-generational and multi-species, all non-humans safely leashed or in carriers, please; to be held in the churchyard, weather permitting.

September 11, 10:45 am *"Let Justice Roll Down' - these healing waters 10 years after" ,*

Our annual water ceremony takes on deeper meaning as we consider these words from the prophet, Amos. Please bring water for water ceremony and a dish to share at the opening picnic/barbecue after the service.



September 18, 10:45 am

"Immigration as a Moral Issue"

We look at immigration, a congregational study-action issue, from a moral perspective. After the service the Social Justice Committee will host a forum on this topic beginning at 1:00 pm.

September 25, 10:45 am

"Love Your Neighbor Interfaith Sunday: The Labyrinth Journey"

To celebrate Interfaith Sunday we will have an outdoor labyrinth open to all; walking this is said to help bring clarity, balance and centering.

** For more complete descriptions of the services, visit the UCSI website address on the cover. Unless noted Rev. Karlson is officiating, Dr. Clark playing the music.*

Larry's Women Speak Up!

Friday, Sept. 30th, 8:00 pm

21 monologues, Larry Schwabacher has written 15 brand-new ones added to 6 favorites!

Benefit for the Ben Jacobs fund to improve the lighting/performance space. Risa Anderson, Morna Martell, Ellen Simonetti and maybe other members are involved in this show - only \$10.00!

Flower Committee

The Flower Committee needs help with beautifying the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Create flower arrangements or donate flowers to honor a loved one. See Marilyn Brook or call the church office.

Sunday Service Greeters Sought

Kathy Santo, greeters@uucsi.org is looking for friendly folks to welcome members and newcomers to the UCSI on Sunday mornings. This is a great opportunity to get to know people and serve the church.

Special Note: If you need short term financial assistance from the Minister's Discretionary fund, call Rev. Susan.

The Social Justice Committee needs your help with projects/events.

Sept. 18th - 1:00 pm forum- see p. 4

Sept. 27th - check out flyer; come help.

Oct. 1st. - 9:30 am Monthly Breakfast Meeting - Library

Oct. 2nd - Peace Pole Dedication

2 - 5 pm Begins at St. Peter's Church

Oct. 24th - Food Day, 2011 - Hold the Date

The Unitarian Church of Staten Island (UCSI) Social Justice Committee & Staten Island LGBT Community Center

present

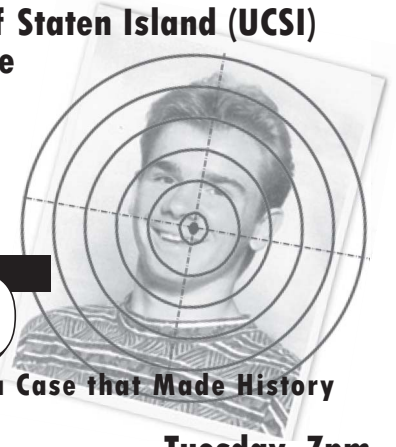
BULLIED

A Student, a School and a Case that Made History

Bullied is a 40 minute documentary film that chronicles one student's ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies and offers **an inspiring message of hope to those fighting harassment today**. It can become a cornerstone of anti-bullying efforts in middle and high schools. **Bullied** is designed to help administrators, teachers and counselors create a safer school environment for all students, not just those who are gay and lesbian or bullied because they are perceived to be gay or lesbian. It is also intended to help all students understand the terrible toll bullying can take on its victims, and to encourage students to stand up for their classmates who are being harassed.

Maureen Curran, who has over 30 years of social work experience, has been a long time activist for human rights, and is the advisor for the Gay Straight Alliance at Tottenville High School will lead the post-film discussion.

Bullied has been endorsed by National Education Association (NEA), NY State Union of Teachers (NYSUT), Anti-Defamation League, PFLAG National, Human Rights Commission Welcoming Schools and many other organizations nationwide.



**Tuesday, 7pm
September 27, 2011
LGBT Community Center
25 Victory Blvd.**

**FREE ADMISSION
& Refreshments**

Guided discussion follows showing

For more information, contact:

Elysa Fein, LGBT Center: (718) 808-1353

Elysa.fein@chasiny.org

www.silgbtcenter.org

or

UCSI: (718) 447-2204

socialjustice@uucsi.org

312 Fillmore Street at Clinton Street

Staten Island, New York 10301

www.unitarianchurchofstatenidland.org

There are so many ways to be part of the Unitarian Church of Staten Island. To get to know our community in a deeper way, consider working with a committee to forward the mission of our church. It is through the work of the committees that we actually open our hearts, extend our hands and support one another.

Here are the committees and their chairs for the coming church year. Join a committee and grow.

Ongoing Program Committees

Arts arts@uucsi.org

The Arts Committee arranges for the display of art in the church, creates a yearly Arts Journal and Arts Festival, and promotes other artistic performance events. *Co-chairs:* Larry Schwabacher & Risa Anderson

Buildings and Grounds

The Building and Grounds Committee monitors, maintains and restores all Church property to ensure safety, cleanliness and legality. *Chair:* John Adrian

Caring Team caring@uucsi.org

Our congregation now has a Caring Team. If you or your family is experiencing an extended illness, hospitalization, family death, birth, adoption, move or other transition, please let us know so that we can send a card, make a visit, or help with transportation, child care, meals or other miscellaneous needs. *Chair:* Ann Kalil

Please contact Rev. Karlson, at 347-466-0864, with any caring concerns. The Caring Team is part of the caring ministry of this congregation.

Church Council

The Council is a committee of committees which focuses our activities on the mission of the church and coordinates activities. The Council meets twice a year, convened by the Vice President of the Board. *Chair:* John Adrian

Committee on the Ministry com@uucsi.org

The COM listens to the concerns of the congregation about the church and minister, as well as the concerns of the minister, and serves as a liaison between the congregation and the minister. *Chair:* Linda Santlofer

Communications

The Communications Committee coordinates the newsletter, bulletin board, press and publicity, and the web site to ensure a healthy flow of communication between the Congregation, the Board, the Minister, and the surrounding community. *Chair:* Ruth Benson

Finance

The Finance Committee, working with the Treasurer, reviews and coordinates the business operations of the Church to ensure fiscal integrity. *Chair:* No chair at present

Flower

The Flower Committee provides flower arrangements for the Sunday services, with special flowers at Christmas, Easter and at memorials on request. *Chair:* Marilyn Brook

Growth & Long Term Planning

The Growth and Long Term Planning Committee addresses the long-term issues and growth of the church. *Chair:* No chair at present

Hospitality

The Hospitality Committee arranges for refreshments after the Sunday service.

Chair: Randy Leason

Membership membership@uucsi.org

The Membership Committee reaches out to welcome visitors to our church and its programs. *Chair:* Steve Nutt

Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden Committee administers the Memorial Garden. *Co-chairs:* Carol Lodato & Joan Pipkins

Music music@uucsi.org

The Music Committee works with the Music Director to assure wonderful music at Worship services, concerts and throughout congregational life. This committee is charged with maintaining the church's musical instruments and raising funds for special music. *Chair:* No chair at present

Nominating

The Nominating Committee nominates Executives and Board trustees for election by Congregation. Nominating Committee Members are elected at the Annual Meeting. *Chair:* No chair at present

Religious Exploration re@uucsi.org

The Religious Exploration Committee provides Lifespan Religious Exploration program for all ages of members from children to adults. *Co-Chairs:* Simone Andrews and Kate Howard

Social Justice socialjustice@uucsi.org

The Social Justice Committee identifies justice issues and initiates programs, church services and community action to raise consciousness and stimulate social action. *Co-Chairs:* Sally Jones & Raffaella Iosue

Welcoming Congregation

The Welcoming Congregation Committee ensures that the congregation remains open and inclusive to all people regardless of sexual orientation, background or ethnicity, by holding educational and social activities promoting a welcoming attitude. *Chair:* Larry Schwabacher

Worship Arts

The Worship Arts Committee designs and oversees the the format of the Sunday service in a way that ensures that the service meets the needs of the congregation. We work closely with the Minister and the Directors of Music. *Chair:* No chair at present

Members: Michael Anderson, Sarah Dolinar, Christine Johnson, Lisa Swan

If you are interested in serving on a committee get in touch using the email address listed; if there is none listed please email: president@uucsi.org.

Next month we will focus on the Board of Trustees and also list ad hoc committees and “committees of one”.



It is September and we are excited to be back together again at the beginning of our “regular” church year. This is always my favorite. Like returning to school after summer camp with so many new things to share; like buying a new loose-leaf binder and spending the night gluing on reinforcements; like a canvas that has just been primed. While, to my great regret, I no longer buy school supplies for me or my children, I have purchased a new notebook app for my Nook, a batch of teeny new Moleskines and some cool pens. It is September after all.

The hopes and dreams and intentions of September are not like those resolutions of January. Dreary January tastes of defeat and disappointment, “this time I’ll get it right” is always the flip side of, “this time I won’t screw it up like last time.” September tastes of infinite promise. In September we can all get A’s.

Many exciting new church projects are commencing this year. First, we have wonderful new picture directories that will begin to be distributed at our Ingathering and

Welcome Back Barbeque. Then, we will take part in Staten Island’s Civil War reenactment. We are a part of Food Day, a new national movement that will shine a light on food issues the way Earth Day brought awareness to ecological concerns.

The Board is working to develop a policies and procedures manual. We began a few years ago with the drafting and adoption of a gift acceptance policy that Maureen Curran worked with me to draft. Than last year Athena Huckaby worked with Raffaella Iosue on a building use policy that Kate Neilsen and Diane Sorowitz are now working on transforming in a building use procedure manual. Our personnel policies that were developed in 2008 are being brought up to date by an ad hoc Personnel Committee including Joan Pipkins, Tom Seluga and Patricia Murphy. The Finance Committee is working on a fiscal handbook for our congregation and comparing new data management programs. When Stella returns, some people will work with her to write down our office procedures and work on a data storage scheme.

Will this tremendous effort to make the Unitarian Church of Staten Island more businesslike benefit the congregation? I say “yes.” My September hope is that when we don’t have to handcraft a solution to every problem we will be free to experience deeper spiritual renewal. This tremendous effort should free us up to work less and enjoy deeper spiritual renewals. For what is the business of our church? We promote kinship among all people, both in and out of our community, and support one another in our personal growth and transformation.

I urge you to participate in the business of the church, by working with a committee, by participating in a small group, by joining a circle supper, by calling someone listed in our new directory and getting to know him better. I urge you to use coffee hour to practice hospitality by speaking with visitors and with members you don’t yet know.

I have high hopes. It is September!

Rona