



FIRST
UNITARIAN
SOCIETY OF
PLAINFIELD



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Established 1889 (Unitarian-Universalist)

November 2009

UPCOMING SERVICES

November 1 - Rev. Tracy Sprowls-Jenks

BEFORE YOU WERE BORN

Join me this morning as we ponder a few questions: Does destiny have anything to do with where we are now? How much does what we do today impact the future generations of Unitarian Universalists? Where does love fit into all of this? Our children will join us for the first part of the service.

November 8 - Welcoming Congregation Committee with Hannah Johnson

MARRIAGE EQUALITY - THE TIME IS NOW!

The Welcoming Congregation Committee welcomes Garden State Equality's top field worker, Hannah Johnson, back to FUSP today. She will join Rev. Tracy in the pulpit for this well timed service to bring this message: that after eight years of hard work, we are in the final weeks of the campaign to make marriage equality a reality in NJ. Well-funded opponents are here and busy, so THIS IS THE TIME for our members to become fully engaged in this historic effort to have the legislation passed into law!

November 15 - Rev. Tracy Sprowls-Jenks

MESSAGES FROM THE STARS

This year the world celebrates 400 years of Astronomy. Over these years, the theories of the universe have changed as have our understanding of God, the nature of humanity and the meaning of it all.

November 22 - Rev. Tracy Sprowls-Jenks

OUR BLESSINGS KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

Today we celebrate Thanksgiving with a multi-generational service. We will celebrate our blessings and offer our thanks for all we have received, "known and unknown, remembered and forgotten." Come hear a story, learn about the Guest at your Table program, enjoy wonderful music and give thanks.

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November 2009

WORSHIP MINISTRY

WORSHIP SERVICES — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

November 29 - Bonnie Rowan

WE REALLY ARE WHAT WE EAT

Does it matter what we eat beyond the obvious implications for personal health? Can our food choices reflect our deeper values? We will examine some of the global and ethical issues related to the foods we eat with ideas to help us make our choices more conscientiously. (Back by popular demand, this will be a reprisal of a Summer 2008 service.)

FORCES OF NATURE - THE DEVAS AND FAIRY ART OF D.S.TALIAFERRO

Westfield fantasy artist, D.S. Taliaferro paints and writes about devas and the hidden realms of nature. “Devas swirl in streams of energy that often give them an appearance of having wings. This fuels our folklore with tales of fairies and far-off places that only can be reached in dreams. I paint elements of worlds few eyes see,” says the artist. Diana’s dreamlike canvases are filled with unexpected subtleties and exotic images that command a second look.

The exhibit will be on display from October 18 to November 29.

OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Tracy Sprowls-Jenks will be in the office on Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 10:00 AM until 3:30 PM. She will be working from home on Thursdays and will answer calls & emails. On days when there is an evening meeting at FUSP that she needs to attend, Rev. Tracy may come in later that day. Please note that Rev. Tracy will occasionally be away from the office for meetings and visits during office hours so it is best to call and make an appointment to see her. On Fridays, Rev. Tracy writes her sermons from home. Monday is her day off. In an emergency, the office administrator (M-Th, 9AM-3PM) will be able to reach her & she checks voice mail on days she is not in the office.

These hours are flexible and experimental. Please be patient as Rev. Tracy adjusts her schedule to best fit the needs of FUSP and her travel time. Please feel free to call Rev. Tracy at the office or to e-mail her. The best e-mail to use is revtsj@fusp.org. She will return your call or answer your e-mail as soon as she can.

WORSHIP MINISTRY

BEYOND THE PULPIT - REV. TRACY SPPROWLS-JENKS

I have a hard time getting up in the morning. I simply am not a morning person. My husband's alarm goes off at 5:30 each morning and he pops up and out of bed with nary a groan. My alarm goes off at 7:00 and I immediately hit the snooze button. And then I lay there thinking how cozy it is in the bed. How comfy it is to have the cats for extra warmth! And oh how I wish I could stay here for another hour. Even though I am excited about the day, excited about my work and the people I know or will meet, it is hard to get up out of bed!

Over the years, I have decided to put a positive spin on that extra ten minutes (or more depending on the day!) I take just laying there in my bed. Instead of seeing myself as lazy or undisciplined, I have chosen to see those extra minutes as my time to be quiet, to prepare for the day. It is my time to be grateful for the day ahead and reflective of the day that has passed.

In this season of thanksgiving, I feel very grateful. I am grateful for work that is fulfilling and fun. I am grateful for the friendly, caring people at FUSP. Unitarian Universalists are simply the best people around! I am grateful for my family and friends. I am grateful I can read and knit and walk and love. I am grateful that I am learning a second language (thank you, Bonnie). I am grateful that I can go to sleep knowing I am safe and secure. I am grateful, if not reluctant, to wake up each morning.

I tend to be a positive person yet I am grateful for the hardships and difficulties I have had in the past, too, now that they are over. All of these have shaped who I am and I have to say, I like who I am.

During this season of thanksgiving, consider taking that extra ten minutes out of your day, be it the first ten minutes when you wake up or the last before you go to bed. Consider those things for which you are truly grateful and maybe even take some time to tell someone thank you.

Thank you all for our ministry together!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Many good wishes for a wonderful birthday to

Jeremy Betros

Nava Caluori

Meg McGrory

Matthew Reading

Nicolaus Schrum

Cady Tuite



WORSHIP MINISTRY

PASTORAL MINISTRY AND THE CARING COMMITTEE

Caring for the members of our congregation is a big job and yet it is one of the most important things that we do as a congregation. Our Caring committee, chaired by Sylvia Walker, has a long list of responsibilities. They send cards and notes, make friendly and supportive calls, prepare and deliver meals, purchase groceries, provide transportation, make visits to homebound folks or those in the hospital and more.

This is a tall order. Ideally the committee should have ten members but I think it falls far short of this. Do consider joining this committee and offer at least some sort of service to the members of our congregation who are in need—one day it could be you!

One thing the Caring committee does not do is provide pastoral care. That is my job! So, please, if you want the minister to visit or call or to just simply know what is going on with you, give me a call or email me.

To aid both pastoral care and the Caring committee, we are starting something new on Sunday mornings. When you stand to share a joy or concern, please also write it down on the white index card provided for this purpose in the pews. There are also other reasons you might want to write down something on the card:

1. Maybe you do not want to share out loud and have a candle lit. Now you can write your sorrow or joy on the card, ensuring that the minister will know what is going on with you. Write private on the card before you turn it in if you wish.
2. Writing the joy or concern/sorrow down on the card guarantees that we will have the right information about you and your share.
3. Everything will be recorded and so we are less likely to not acknowledge a joy or concern in the newsletter or webpage or in our pastoral care or Caring committee duties.
4. Some joys or sorrows do not seem “big” enough to share. Write these down and they will be acknowledged in some way.
5. Maybe you are concerned about someone else and don’t know how to draw attention to this concern. Write it on the card and turn it in.

I know this is something new, but let’s give it a try and see what happens! As usual, Sylvia and the Caring committee, and/or I will follow up as appropriate.

Rev. Tracy Sprowls-Jenks

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

NURTURING SPIRITUALITY IN OUR CHILDREN

A Prayer:

For simple things that are not simple at all
For miracles of the common way...
Sunrise...Sunset,
Seedtime...Harvest,
Hope...Joy.... Ecstasy
For grace that turns
our intentions into deeds
our compassion into helpfulness
our pain into mercy
For providence that
sustains and supports our needs
We lift our hearts in thankfulness,
and pray only to be more aware
and thus more alive.

- Gordon B. McKeeman

To explain spiritual intelligence to our children and youth I've chosen the prism as a metaphor. The prism takes light and reflects and refracts it onto surfaces near and far with variations of shades and hues of color. The energy from the prism is loud and subtle, sharp and smooth, and intense and calming all at the same time. Combining all these ideas results in a chorus of self-awareness, awareness of others, the impact of our actions and words, develops a spiritual responsiveness to being part of something larger than ourselves, and expands an intuitive sense of meaning and value, all of which results in a more developed sense of spiritual intelligence. The prism metaphor allows our children to experience spirituality and develop their own spiritual intelligence by embracing the emotional, intelligent and interconnectiveness of everything.

This year our religious education program offers our children and youth age appropriate classes in a wide variety of offerings such as; **Experiences in the Web of Life, U.U. Super Heroes, Celebrating the Origins of the Universe, In Our Hands**; social justice, **Our Whole Lives**--a curricula designed to promote self worth, sexual health, and responsibility, **Jesus and his Kingdom of Equals**; Jesus as a radical teacher and leader, **Neighboring Faiths**, and our **Coming of Age** class. All of these classes have one or more spiritual components that have developmental characteristics; acceptance, mystery, compassion, responsibility, personal and religious identity, empowerment, moral reasoning, and fostering independent thought and action.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

NURTURING SPIRITUALITY IN OUR CHILDREN — FROM PAGE 5

The means by which our children and youth engage in learning also promotes spiritual intelligence, some of these methods are; the sharing of ideas, the decision making process, using thought provoking analysis of relevant topics, operating as a group member, and finally enabling our youth to be empowered and to connect fully into their spiritual intelligence. We also celebrate and honor our children and youth in worship services (multigenerational), especially those related to the Unitarian-Universalist rites of passage; Naming Ceremonies or Baby Dedications, Coming of Age Service and Bridging Ceremony.

Utilizing the range of class offerings as well as the spiritual components, the worship experiences and the various methods of engagement creates a picture of spiritual intelligence. This is what I think makes our denomination and our church are wonderful place for children youth to cultivate their spiritual intelligence.

As a final note I'd like to share a few of quotes from Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall from their book, SQ: Connecting with our Spiritual Intelligence; "spiritual intelligence (SQ) is the soul's intelligence. It is the intelligence with which we heal ourselves and with which we make ourselves whole. SQ is the intelligence that rests in that deep part of self that is connected to wisdom from beyond the ego, or conscious mind. It is not culture-dependent or value-dependent. It is our deep, intuitive sense of meaning and value, it is our guide at the edge, our conscious."

Blessed Be,
Sue Fertig
Director of Religious Education

THE HAUNTED BASEMENT

Sunday, November 1st - Stevens Wing

To all children in the RE program (and adults, if you dare) The pleasure of your company is requested at The Haunted Basement presented by The Youth Group on **Sunday, November 1st**, after service. A small admission fee will be used for a Midnight Run to feed the homeless.

LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

SOMETHING IN THE AIR

Hello again FUSP, and welcome back to this current edition of “Something in the Air,” which unfortunately at this time of year always seems to include a variety of things that scratch my throat and clog my nose! The air that is, although sometimes my words alone seem to give people headaches too! So go grab a Tylenol and let’s get started.

There’s plenty of fun stuff to report on before we engage the more mundane aspects of church business, so I guess I’ll start with our in house fundraisers / community building events. We’ve relit the flame under the “Spaghetti Dinner” sauce-pot once again and welcomed about 40 people who took their seats in the Parish Hall to enjoy a hot pasta meal accompanied with crusty bread and the finest box wine money can buy.

The season finale churchyard barbecue was held under sunny skies as we bade goodbye to fair weather, and welcomed the newest addition to the FUSP barbecue team; namely a new gas grill that was purchased at an astonishingly low price from Sylvia and Lee Walker. I say, buy those Walkers’ a burger on the house and peel open a fresh box of wine!

Have you proselytized lately? Well I have, and so did a bunch of other church members when we set up shop at the Metuchen annual Fair. The FUSP tent at the Fair featured free animal balloon sculpting by yours truly, including my specialty, the Teddy bear on a stick; not to be confused with my pig in a box routine.

Other FUSP groupies assembled and handed out more than 500 yo-yo balloons with our name and website info proudly emblazoned on them, while others created puppet art and kept Fair-going children entertained. While we held the kids’ rapt attention, inquiring parents were offered information about our UU faith and our enriching RE program. We all did a great job, had tons of fun, met lots of folks, and I wouldn’t be a bit surprised if we all start seeing some new families at FUSP on Sunday mornings!

If you’ve been belly-aching about the cold temps in the Sanctuary and Parish Hall, well that’s OK. I’m just thankful it wasn’t from the spaghetti dinner or an under cooked burger from the barbecue! Now try a TUMS.

LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

SOMETHING IN THE AIR - FROM PAGE 7

Actually, Property is pleased to report that the glitches in the heating system have been addressed and we can now honestly say we offer everyone a warm welcome when they cross our threshold!

Last month I promised everyone a report on the Start-up meeting but I require some more time to consult with the Church Council and refine a report that expresses a more comprehensive interpretation of the meeting, which reflects all of our thoughts on that day, or more precisely, I just haven't found the time to do it yet.

The Building Restoration project is emerging from the planning stage, and by the time you are reading this we will be sending bid packages to four General Contractors who have been pre-qualified by Historic Building Architects (HBA) to conduct the specialized repairs to our historic building and grounds.

Pledges toward the Capital Campaign that supports the Building Restoration continue to be received, but the pledging effort could stand some re-invigoration to assure adequate funding of work as it proceeds. I urge all members to fulfill their pledge obligations as soon as possible, and for those who have not yet pledged toward this specific effort and wish to help support the restoration project, please contact Alice Logie, or me for a prospectus.

Remember, Board meetings are, and always have been, open to the FUSP membership; all members are welcome to attend each third Wednesday of the month, and observe how your leadership works to serve you.

Guy J Mastroianni, Board President

NEW DIRECTORY IN THE WORKS

We will soon be issuing a new membership directory so, if you want to make sure your information is correct, you need to look at the draft no later than November 15. The draft of the new FUSP directory is at the welcome table (piano) in the Parish Hall. Please feel free to make sure your name, etc. is correct. AND if you need a photo taken, please contact Sue Krisburg and she will arrange to have one taken.

LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE INSTALLATION OF REV. TRACY SPROWLS-JENKS AT THE FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY

The installation of a minister in a congregation after a successful call is a big event. An installation service is recognition of the bond between the minister and the congregation. It is a public ceremony declaring that the minister is settled in a particular congregation and that the congregation has called a particular minister.

Some people may have the impression that the installation is about the minister, but this is not true. The installation is a celebration of our ministry together. It is recognition of the history of the congregation as a place of ministry and an acknowledgement of a future that binds both minister and congregation.

In some congregations, the installation takes place within the first few months of the new ministry. In other congregations, the installation takes place later in the year. There is no “right” time to have an installation although it does take place in the first year of ministry together.

There are many factors that go into deciding on a date so let me share with you the factors I considered. First, I was called by this congregation a few weeks before the summer break. As you know, it is hard to make plans over the summer because people tend to take vacations over the summer holiday. Also, I was leaving one church and spent much of my summer in transition. So, I decided we would not have a fall installation because an installation needs many months of thoughtful planning to succeed and to do such planning over the summer was improbable. Second, my priorities for the fall are to get to know the people of this congregation and also to get to know how things run in our particular congregation. I presumed that this would take much of my time and so to have an installation in the late fall or winter also seemed out of line with my priorities. December is not a good month for an installation due to the fervor of the holidays. The winter months - January, February and March - seemed to me less than ideal due to the possibility of inclement weather. Also, these months tend to have less light due to the shortened winter days. I wanted the installation to be in a month full of light.

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LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

INSTALLATION OF REV. TRACY —CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

The earliest that I thought we could have the installation is in April. This gives us plenty of time to plan. It allows us to invite ministers from the area and from far away who can participate. The likelihood of their availability is high because we have given them plenty of notice. April is a brighter month and possibly even a warmer time so that we might even be able to have the tent set up for a reception outside.

The installation of a minister is an important event of the congregation and should be done well. I think putting some months between my starting with you and the actual installation allows us to be able to do the planning we need to do as well as have the people involved that we want. It also will mean a bit more to us because we will have had some time to get to know each other.

Joanne Macaluso and Angela Goldman have volunteered to get started on planning the installation but we need more people. If you are interested in helping out with the installation, please contact me or one of them. We will meet in the next month to begin plans and to create a budget for this special event in the life of our congregation. **The installation is on April 18, 2010.**

FINANCE MINISTRY

SUPERMARKET GIFT CARDS

Spending big on Thanksgiving or related holiday meals? You can give our church 5% of all your supermarket bills at no additional cost to YOU! How? Pay for all items with Supermarket Cards, which YOU can buy at church every Sunday to use at: Kings, Pathmark, Shoprite, Stop&Shop.

It is so easy: Buy Cards with check or cash at our table in the Parish Hall next to the office after services every Sunday. Think of them as store money useable for all goods sold by the store. We are waiting for you to put your money to work for FUSP.

We have cards in varying denominations; use cards for fixed dollar amounts, like a debit card. Any questions: See us at our table, or call Pat Heath or Ralph Braskett.

LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

COUNTING UP, COUNTING DOWN

In September only \$1,050 was paid on pledges to the Historic Building Preservation project. This is the least paid in one month since the Capital Campaign began. We need to do much better. I know that some of you pay tax deductible contributions in December but figure early! A bright spot, one member contributed in honor of Sue and Jim's wedding. Other of you can also make memory or honorary contributions. They will be acknowledged.

The COUNTING DOWN refers to expenses. Payments in October of about \$15,000 will bring recent amounts paid to over \$55,000. We can borrow money from the UUA but it is a lot cheaper to pay for the work soon to be done from our pledge payments. The church also earns interest on its bank account. So, please, bring your pledge payments up to date. Thank you!

Alice Logie, CFO Historic Building Preservation Project

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR

The FUSP Holiday Craft Fair will be held on **Sunday, December 6 from 9 AM until 4 PM**. This year we will be opening it to local members of the crafting community. Perhaps you know someone who would like to sell their handmade or creative wares. Tables will be \$25 for FUSP members and \$35 for non-members. If you would like to participate or need additional information, please contact Barbara Rall.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

FOOD PANTRY IN NEED OF DONATIONS

The Food Pantry account is getting low, and the Holidays, and our free Thanksgiving dinner are coming soon. We need donations to be able to provide families in need with turkeys as usual. Please consider picking up a few extra cans of food as you do your shopping this month and place them in the food pantry basket in the vestibule as you enter the building. If everyone buys a little something this decreases the shopping load for volunteers. Cash donations can also be made by placing cash or checks in the offering plate. Be sure to specify the food pantry on the memo line or envelope.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

THANKSGIVING DINNER FOR THE PLAINFIELD COMMUNITY

Parish Hall, November 26, 12 Noon to 3 PM — Do you have a favorite holiday dish or homemade pie you'd be willing to share at our dinner this year?). Here's what we're asking of you this year for Thanksgiving (feel free to do any or all of the following!):

- - prepare a roast turkey (cooked and carved, please)
- - prepare a side dish (most needed: sweet potato casserole, any potato casserole), enough to feed at least 10-12
- - make a homemade pie (not store-bought, if possible, but Mrs. Smith's is great!)
- - bring your item(s) to church on Thanksgiving morning
- - volunteer 2 hours of your time that day to help setup, serve or cleanup (we serve from 12 noon 'til 3 PM with 1 hour on each side for setup and cleanup)
- - donate \$\$\$ to the Food Pantry (checks made out to "FUSP" with "food pantry" in the memo section)
- - call Cass or Karleen and let them know what you'll do to help!

The Food Pantry will supply whatever you don't, so we need to know, in advance, what you'll bring to the table. Whatever homemade touches you can provide will be what makes this a special holiday meal for our neighbors. Come be with us and bring a memory! Cass Cochran and Karleen Roberts

CALENDAR SALES

For the next several weeks Women's Alliance will be selling beautiful calendars. We suggest you buy one for yourself and purchase extras as gifts. The PEACE CALENDAR, a wall hanging calendar, will appeal to activists and the WOMEN ARTISTS DATEBOOK is filled with beautiful art, poetry and inspirational quotes. Both contain a wealth of information about special events and multicultural celebrations. The prices are \$14 and \$15. With the proceeds Women's Alliance is developing an outreach project that will aid women and families in a third world country. We also hope to continue our recognition of our graduating high school seniors and our contributions to the holiday dinner project. Look for our table during the coffee hour. Thanks for your support!! Bonnie Rowan, Chairperson, Women's Alliance

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

FORUM ON THE UU LEGISLATIVE MINISTRY OF NJ

On **Sunday, November 22 from 11:45 to 1** the Social Justice and Outreach Committee will hold a forum in the **Steven's Room** on the UU Legislative Ministry of New Jersey.

The UULMNJ is a statewide network of UU congregations that provides a comprehensive structure, and resources to empower the moral voice and actions of our UU principles and values in the state public policy area. In other words, this organization helps UU congregations in New Jersey cooperate more effectively, and be heard by our representatives.

The board of FUSP is considering joining the 11 other UU congregations in New Jersey who have already affiliated with this organization. The meeting will present information about what UULMNJ does, how it operates, the benefits of affiliation to us, and our responsibilities as affiliates. The Social Justice committee has already benefited greatly from the contacts and information we have received by attending the UULMNJ meetings and workshops within the past year. We will be able to share about that, and we have invited members of the board of the UULMNJ to attend the meeting to answer questions. Please come and join the discussion about whether FUSP should commit to being a part of this organization. Food and babysitting will be provided.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY PHONE BANK

Join FUSP members and Garden State Equality on Sunday, November 8th for a marriage equality phone bank from **11:30 AM to 3 PM in the Steven's room**. New Jersey legislators are widely expected to consider a same-sex marriage bill after the November gubernatorial election and before the January swearing-in ceremony. Therefore this is perfect timing for us to contact people and ask them to contact key legislators during our Nov 8th phone bank. Training will be provided with lunch at 11:30. Please bring a cell phone and charger as we have a limited number of phones.

Everyone's help is needed whether you are a first-time volunteer or a veteran activist; together we can make a difference and live our Unitarian principles. Please contact Denise Soppas if you would like to sign-up for the phone bank or if you need childcare during the phone bank.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

WELCOMING A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

Each year at this time, friends and families in our congregation participate in the UU tradition of Guest at Your Table.

By bringing home a beautiful Guest at Your Table box, families and individuals learn about how the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee puts our shared principles into action in the United States and around the world. Through a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC promotes economic rights advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties, and preserves the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis. Sharing our blessings through Guest at Your Table ensures that UUSC's human-rights work continues, while building UUSC membership. UUSC members are vitally important, as UUSC is an independent, membership-based organization that receives no funding from the UUA or the U.S. government. Through the booklet Stories of Hope we connect with people in the United States and around the world who are working hard to advance human rights — and protect their own rights — in partnership with UUSC.

In each household, the Guest at Your Table box is placed in a prominent spot, often at the family meal table. When family and friends gather to enjoy their blessings, they can reflect on the contributions of their Guests to the movement for universal human rights and share generously. Each week, we can choose a different story to read, bringing our Guests to life and helping to celebrate our own rights.

If you would prefer not to bring home a box, you can take a donation envelope or support UUSC directly online at www.uusc.org. We will open our Guest at Your Table program with an intergenerational worship celebration on -----November 22

FALL CLEAN-UP

Have no fear, there will be a fall clean up of the church grounds this year. We have to see when the leaves drop before we can schedule one. Watch for announcements in the orders of service and e-mails for the date., probably towards the end of November.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

HANNAH JOHNSON TO PARTICIPATE IN NOV. 8 SERVICE

Just who is Hannah Johnson? Hannah tells us that after attending a workshop led by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force she was highly motivated to become a straight ally/activist for the BGLT populations. That caused her to travel from her Wisconsin home to become involved in the efforts to legalize same sex marriage in California, then Connecticut and, for over a year, here in New Jersey.

During that time Hannah has become Garden State Equality's TOP field worker and we, on FUSP's Welcoming Congregation Committee, can fully appreciate why. We have been the recipient of her enormous talent on many occasions. She presented a clear, concise plan of action for us at one of our committee meetings, led the committee in our first phone bank and came back a number of evenings to train Denise Soppas to lead the major phone bank that was held after our Love and Marriage?? Service last April. At the state level she has assumed leadership responsibilities for all of the many Garden State Equality's workshops.

Early on, our committee had the great idea of having a service to encourage marriage equality on the Sunday directly after the November election, during the lame duck session, when we heard that it would either pass or not likely come up again for years! We hoped that Hannah Johnson could be our speaker. We also wanted to set up another phone bank afterward.

Happily all of our plans are coming true! Hannah, who told us that she was asked by many other churches and synagogues to speak on Nov. 8, chose to be here because she had enjoyed her experiences working with our committee members and had been impressed with our efforts towards the cause. Rev. Tracy is fully supportive of all these plans and looks forward to adding some of her own stories at the service - all to mobilize FUSP members to become fully engaged NOW in pushing this historic legislation into law in NJ.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

MARRIAGE EQUALITY - IT'S TIME!

This testimonial article was written specifically for FUSP by Anita Young, UULMNJ Task Force Chair for Marriage Equality and her partner Betty. She humanizes the frustrating realities that she and her partner of 40 years have faced because they have not been able to marry in NJ.

Betty and I have been together for forty years. We have raised five children together; have 11 grandchildren and one great on the way. We have worked side-by-side to build a life, buy a house, save for retirement, deal with medical emergencies and long-term illness, and are hoping to have security in our retirement years. We have done all of this while fighting tooth and nail for our right to exist as a family. A lot has changed over the past forty years, and we are the first to admit that things are better now than they were, but we are still denied the legal recognition and benefits that most heterosexual couples take for granted when they marry.

We have, in fact, signed a marriage license together. We have a piece of paper that says "Certificate of Marriage" on it because we were legally married in Canada in 2004. One of the most joyous occasions in our lives was after we were married; we were walking hand in hand down the street in Montreal; it was like this weight was lifted. Here we were, hand in hand, just like any other couple, fully recognized for the first time. We had lived with discrimination and as second class citizens all our life together. It is almost like you own it. We had no sense of what freedom really felt like, until that moment. We wanted to sing out in praise, Free at last, Free at last! Our steps became lighter as we bounced along the streets of Montreal.

As we were leaving and began to get closer to the borders of NY, the yoke of oppression was slowly and gradually once again upon us. We sat in the car almost willing the car not to inch forward. Once we crossed over into the U.S. our marriage was no longer recognized. The paper may have said "marriage" but Betty was no longer recognized as my wife. That feeling of acceptance was gone. No matter how many times I tell this story, the tears well up in me, because for that brief time, we knew justice, freedom and the right to love each other unconditionally.

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SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

MARRIAGE EQUALITY - IT'S TIME! - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

What makes a family? We have had all the joys and sorrows like all families. We have had births, deaths, weddings, communions and bat Mitzvahs. We have had illness and sick parents to care for. Our lives are the same as any other family! The one thing that makes us different is we are two women loving each other.

Betty's perspective:

Language is important. Our first use of language is to communicate relationships. Mom, Dad, sister, brother, grandmother, grandfather, etc. We are denied this language. Who are we to our children? What names should they call us? What relationship do we have to each other? According to the state and federal government - none. We spend time validating our relationships, and finding unique words and names to identify ourselves, but mostly, we hide who we truly are. Betty was Aunt Betty to my children. Not mom, because that would have been too explosive and misunderstood at that time. One reason we need marriage is because it gives common language to our families and validates us.

We have been trying to get legal recognition and the language related to all families for over thirty years. We have obtained five different pieces of paper recognizing our relationship, starting with "A Certificate of Holy Union" from a church in Princeton in 1979. We had a wedding ceremony, and wrote up our vows and our children walked down the aisle with us. Anita's mother gave her away. We celebrated our love for each other and the family we had created. In 2000, we re-dedicated ourselves publicly in Washington and received "A Couple and Civil Rights Certificate of Participation." In 2004, we received "Domestic Partnership" in New Jersey and then a "Marriage Certificate" in Canada, which was recognized as a "Civil Union" in New Jersey in 2006.

How could NJ call our marriage something different? It is time for our marriage to be recognized for what it is, Marriage. Forty years and counting and we are looking forward to the day, when in NJ marriage will be a reality for us.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

PASTORAL CARE

Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of **Joan Sweet**, who died on October 11 after a long struggle with cancer. She is survived by three daughters, Diana Wilson, Jackie Alvarez, and Janet Sweet-Cermak as well as 5 grandchildren. Joan's caring and friendship will be greatly missed by all her family and by her many friends here at FUSP. A memorial service at FUSP will be announced at a later time..

Our good wishes for recovery go out to Eric Johnson, friend of **Gail Sweeney**, and his family who tried to commit suicide.

Best wishes for a speedy recover to **Allan Reading** who is undergoing knee replacement surgeries.

Caring thoughts to **Valerie Mead** whose brother is now in Hospice.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery and renewed good vision to **Alice Logie** who is anticipating eye surgery.

Best wishes for a full recovery to **Sally Young's friend**, Mary Jane, who had a heart attack.

Best wishes for full recovery to Jane Gowan's father who underwent kidney surgery.

And caring thoughts to **Bernie Mellies** for continued recovery from his accident. Bernie is now in Kessler rehab and has been able to communicate with Sarah. Our good wishes to **Sarah and Max** as well during this difficult time and to all Bernie's family.

STEEL MAGNOLIAS

Anybody who is anybody goes to Truvy's beauty salon. That means you! Come see Act IV's production of "Steel Magnolias" in the **Parish Hall on Nov.6, 7,13 and 14 at 8 p.m. and on Nov. 8 and 15 at 3 p.m.** "Steel Magnolias" is a very funny look at the lives of six southern women who were raised to be delicate flowers, but when needed, can handle anything with nerves of steel as well as well-kept hair. On opening night, Nov.6, there will be a free reception in the Stevens Room following the play!!!!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES FOR DECEMBER

Print/Advertising: Noon, Nov. 9

Electronic: 5 PM, Nov. 13

Assembling : Nov. 24

Submit to newsletter@fusp.org and

website@fusp.org to be included on the website & in the newsletter. —Priscilla

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

Women' Alliance will once again be devoted to current events and politics. Our discussion will be lead by Lilian Goss. Come share your knowledge and opinions on the most pressing issues of the day. The meeting will be on **Saturday, November 21 in the Steven's Room from 10 AM to 12 PM**. We welcome new women to our group. Please join us. Please notify Bonnie Rowan several days in advance if you need childcare.

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

Join us for our next game night on **Friday, November 13 from 7 to 10 in the Steven's Room**. Game night is held on the second Friday of each month and is a great opportunity to meet new friends or get to know some old ones better. Bowling and Beatles Rockband worked out so well we will probably bring the Wii game system again. Friends of all ages are welcome, and a variety of card and board games are also played. You can bring a game you love, or just come ready to learn a new one. Bring a snack or beverage to share. Please, no nuts. Contact Heather Brown for additional information.


MEN'S BREAKFAST

Within the past several years many at FUSP have spoken often and regularly that we should become a more multi-cultural, multi-racial society. Nice words, but what do they mean? What needs to be done to attain this? What do we change, if anything, to reach this? And lastly, do we mean what we say? All opinions are welcomed. Let's hear yours on **Saturday, November 14th, at 9 AM in the Stevens Room** at our next Men's Breakfast, to be lead by Pete Jones and Herb Goss.

JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF GOOD FOOD AND GREAT COMPANY!

The Bring A Dish Dinner for November will be at the home of Joanne Macaluso. It will be on Saturday, 21 Nov. at 6:30pm. We especially welcome new members and friends. It's a great way to get to know others. RSVP to and confirm what dish you plan to bring. Please bring your own wine or beer. There will be a small charge to cover expenses.

We still need people to host our dinner in December. It's an easy way to entertain since everyone else does the cooking. The dinners are usually the third Saturday of every month with some adjustments to work around holidays. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Daniel Zucker.



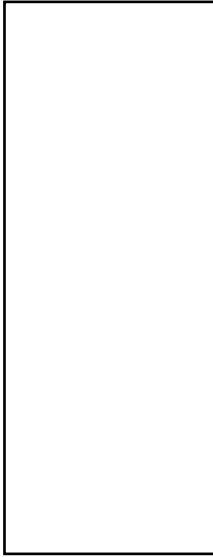
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