

South Nassau Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Open Line

April 24, 2007 A Bi-weekly Publication

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The mission of the South Nassau Unitarian Universalist Congregation is to provide a sanctuary of beauty and harmony where: We search in freedom for meaning and truth; we draw inspiration from many religious and philosophical sources while acknowledging the Judeo-Christian heritage of Unitarian Universalism; we embrace diversity and welcome people of all ages, races, and orientations; we affirm that our children and youth are an integral and important part of our religious family; we strive toward a social awareness that leads to transformative action in our community and to living in balance with the environment. Ours is a nurturing congregation where children and adults find acceptance and fellowship, feel empowered and grow spiritually.

Sunday, April 29, 2007
Worship 10:30 am

SURPRISED BY PRAYER

Learning how and why to pray
from those who actually do it

Hollis Huston

Fifth Sunday Giving

Greeters: Jojo Granoff & Ilene Corina

Ushers: Rita Tancredi

Coffee: G. Rosenberg, C. Teachout & E. Lazo

Youth Snack: Chris Sherrock & Family

Welcome: Betty Shelton

Social Action: Diane Hawkins

Ways & Means: Fylice Larsen

Lock-up: Carrie Mason Draffen

Sunday, May 6, 2007
Worship 10:30 am

MUSIC'S EFFECT ON OUR SPIRITUALITY

Senior Youth Group

Greeters: Lisa & Bill Bryson-Brockmann

Ushers: Josh Granoff & Matt Keller

Coffee: Bonny Levenson & Lynn Gross

Youth Snack: Paula Rosenberg & Family

Welcome: Martha Chamberlain

Social Action:

Ways & Means: Lynn Gross

Lock-up: Rita Hines

Goods & Services Auction & Cinco de Mayo Fiesta - Saturday May 5th

EVERYONE is invited to our Cinco de Mayo Fiesta and Talent Auction beginning at 5PM
Dinner for Junior Youth to Adult \$10 Children ages 5 & up \$5 Children under 5 eat free!

DINNER IS BY PAID RESERVATION ONLY & INCLUDES YOUR BIDDING NUMBER.

Bidding number without dinner is \$5 and includes dessert!

BIDDING BEGINS AT 6PM SHARP!

This is our biggest fundraiser of the year! Let's make it the best one ever!

See page 3 for more information

**Our Budget Hearing will be on May 6 after service in the Sanctuary.
The Finance Committee states the proposed budget has a large deficit.
Your attendance at this meeting is important.**

Our Annual Meeting will be on May 20 after service in the Sanctuary
There will be a vote on proposed changes to the By-Laws at the Annual Meeting

Minister's Office Hours

Tues and Thurs 10-3, Wednesdays 12-6

I also welcome meeting at other times, as possible. Since I'm sometimes in meetings, or away at minister's gatherings, it's always best to call before dropping in.

Office Manager Hours

Alternate Mondays &
Tuesday through Friday 9:00 -1:00

Director of Religious Education Hours

Susan Nykolak

By appointment 623-1204

Youth Coordinator Hours

Paula Rosenberg

By appointment 623-1204

Next issue deadline: May 6
It will cover Sundays May 13 & 20

Musings from the Minister

Dear friends—

This week, I am in Bethesda, Maryland for the last of a three-part course at the Center for Family Process. The Center teaches how family systems theory applies to work systems, particularly religious congregations. Rabbi Edwin Friedman was a family therapist and recognized that his synagogue functioned much the way families do. When a child, for instance, is brought to a therapist and the parents say, "Fix her," the therapist knows that it's never about "fixing" one member of the family. Rather, they try to find the dynamics in the family that are resulting in behaviors that are distressing.

In the same way, congregations—and any group of people—work as a system. This course in Maryland reminds me of how much we influence (and are influenced by) one another. I was speaking with a friend recently who is an acting teacher. One of her students was "on stage" in class, trying to do a monologue, but not doing very well. At the same time, the teacher was distracted by the other students, who were not being attentive to the one performing. She interrupted the young man on stage to ask the class to pay close attention to him and be supportive. When the young man resumed, she was amazed at how much better he was able to perform in a room where everyone was fully present with him. My friend commented, "It's amazing how the atmosphere we create helps or hinders others." How true a statement that is!

Yours in faith, hope and love, Catherine

OUR BOARDWALK

Board doings:

We continue our efforts with respect to finding a suitable replacement for Susan Nykolak. The board received a report from the Religious Education Visioning Task Force, which was discussed at our April 18, 2007 meeting. Based upon the findings of the task force, the board voted to seek an interim replacement for Susan. The interim position will be for one year and the interim will not be eligible for hire at the end of the term. In addition, the board voted to re-define the position for the interim period as "Children's Religious Education Coordinator". This person will be responsible only for the 0 through 6th grade program and would not have any supervisory responsibilities over the Youth program. Of course, this is a transitional position and may be defined and re-defined over the coming year to reflect the needs of the congregation. The board also plans to nominate a slate of members to serve as the search committee for the permanent position at a special meeting on September 30, 2007. Please mark your calendars.

On a related note, the board is crafting a hiring policy to address the concerns of staff who are also members of the congregation. The policy will be geared toward limiting staff positions to non-members only, except for extreme circumstances.

As we reviewed the budget in preparation for the budget hearing on May 6, 2007, we were advised that the cash flow from pledges is at an all time low for this point in the year. If you have overlooked your pledge, please bring it up to date as soon as possible. This will greatly assist us in preparing an accurate budget for next year.

Lastly, the By-laws revisions are just about ready for congregational approval. We anticipate presenting them at the annual meeting on May 20, 2007.

That's the update for now. For more info on the board's doings, you can find the meeting minutes in the binder in the office and on the bulletin board in the hall.

Be blessed, Jean

Adult RE!

The next **Great Decisions** class is scheduled for Friday afternoon, May 11 at 1:00 in the foyer. The topic is "The Plight of Children Worldwide". If you would like to participate, please buy the book from Catherine and read the section in advance.

Tuesday, May 1 at 7:30 is the next installment of "**Readings in Liberal Religion**". We'll be reading Ralph Waldo Emerson's Harvard Divinity School Address. Get a copy from Catherine, or download it www.emersoncentral.com/divaddr.htm

"Free Minds, in a Free Congregation, working for a Free World" Canvass 2007

The Stewardship Canvass team is energized and reaching out to all of us in the coming weeks. When your Canvasser calls, open your free mind to the spirit of the Rev. Carleton Fisher's lovely phrase, and open yourself to having a thoughtful conversation about what you treasure of SNUUC, and about the financial support you will pledge to give in the coming year.

Support Our Faith — Pledge Generously

* **Committee Chairs** are reminded *
* that printed copies of your Annual Reports are *
* due on May 13 so that copies will be available *
* at the annual meeting. They can be e-mailed or *
* delivered to the office. *

5th Sunday Giving

Fifth Sunday Giving is a program that allows the members of SNUUC to contribute to outside organizations or agencies of their choice in the months when there is a fifth Sunday. Speak to Doug Breiding or Gail Compton if you have an idea for an organization that may benefit from our collection.

Our next 5th Sunday Giving will be Sunday, April 29 when we will ask for donations to an organization called "Smile in a Bag". This group makes up gift bags for hospitalized children.

Flower Communion

Keep an eye on your spring buds.
The May 13 Mother's Day service will be
Flower Communion Sunday.
Each person is asked to bring a flower to give away.

Among Ourselves

Congratulations to Julia Nevitt who recently participated in the All County Concert at the Tilles Center at CW Post.

Dana Reinecke and Bobby Newman have a new phone number. Call the office for the information.

Mattie Colice has a new address in Illinois. Her daughter Michelle says she is well and happy.

Our Thrift Shop on Merrick Road is looking for people and trucks to move items to the shop. Speak to Dorothy Curran or Joe McAuley if you can help.

We welcome new member Alex Larsen. Alex is an active youth in our congregation.

Committees at Work

George Jackson will lead a **focus group discussion** on the proposed By-Laws revisions and the Policy on Disruptive Behavior on Sunday April 29 at noon in the foyer.

Social Action Committee meeting on Sunday, April 29 at noon in room 1.

Joint RE Council meeting, Sunday, May 6 at 9am.

Ways & Means Committee meeting, Sunday May 6 at noon.

Membership Committee meeting, Tuesday May 8 at 7:30 in the foyer.

Ways \$ Means

Goods & Services AUCTION & Cinco de Mayo Fiesta - MAY 5th

Our biggest fundraiser of the year is almost here!

Everyone is invited to our Cinco De Mayo Fiesta dinner at 5pm (doors open at 4:30). Junior youth to adult \$10, children ages 5 & up \$5. Children under 5 eat free! Dinner is by paid reservation only and includes your bidding number. Make your reservation at the Ways & Means table on Sunday or call the office. Bidding number without dinner is \$5 and includes dessert!

Bidding begins at 6pm sharp! This is our biggest fundraiser of the year! Let's make it the best one ever!

Auction booklets are available at the Ways & Means table – be sure you get yours so you can study what's being offered and plan your purchases. If you cannot attend, assign a bidding proxy so you won't miss out on all the fabulous and creative offerings. Contact Rosemary Olander Beach if you require childcare during the auction. Bring your checkbook to settle your account before you leave!

UU RE Summer Camps: Look on the rack in the foyer for information on Sophia Fahs RE Camp, Star Island RE Week, UUMAC, UNIRONDAK, and other camp options.

Geoffrey Canada

The Geoffrey Canada lecture and reception is rescheduled for Thursday, June 14 at 7pm. If you already have purchased tickets and are not able to attend, please contact Billur Weigell or Laura D'Angelo. If you need tickets, please also contact Billur or Laura as we have a waiting list and we will try to accommodate everyone we can.

DRE Search Update

It's not too late to complete and return your RE survey. Completed surveys can still be mailed to or dropped off at the office. Your responses to the survey are critical to the future of our RE program. If you have any questions or would like to speak to a committee member, contact Rosemary Olander Beach, Denise Hibbert, Arden Fekett or Tom Weingarten.

more SNUUC happenings

The last "Seasons of the Soul" workshop will be held on Sunday May 6 from 1-4pm. Please contact Susan Nykolak or Paula Rosenberg to reserve a seat. \$20/person includes meditation, light lunch and materials.

If you choose, your creations will be exhibited at our South Ocean Art Gallery with an opening reception on Friday, May 18 from 7-9pm. You must frame and wire your art and bring it to be hung on May 9 at 6:30pm.

At that exhibit we would also like to include all artists of any age who are SNUUC members. If you have a piece you'd like to include, or for more information about the exhibit, please contact Billur Weigell.

SAVE THE DATES

The retirement party for Susan Nykolak will be at SNUUC on Saturday, June 2 at 5:30. Join us for a gourmet potluck and celebration of Susan's time here as our DRE.

Also, our annual end of the year barbeque/picnic will be on Sunday, June 3 after service on the front lawn. Come and celebrate SNUUC and especially our senior members. Please speak to Bonny Levenson if you can help with either of these events.

Chair Yoga

Are you interested in participating in a gentle yoga class but cannot easily get on the floor? You can receive the benefits of yoga while sitting on a chair or standing while holding on to a chair. Ivy Greenburg, a registered yoga instructor who teaches a popular yoga class at SNUUC, will give a free one hour talk and chair yoga class to interested members of the congregation on Wednesday, May 2 at 9:30am in the foyer. If there is an interest, they will continue for a 4 week session (price to be discussed). Speak to Bonny Levenson for more information or call Ivy 546-5827 to let her know you will attend.



How do we remember things? people? events? How are memories put together? I think perhaps that it is done with "mirrors." Through the senses, we process the essence of a memory. Is someone gone from us simply because they are not in a body any longer? This is a somewhat controversial subject for UU's as it addresses one's concept of spirit, or soul. I personally find "soul" in art and music and in the love and camaraderie between people. Smells, sounds, sights, feelings feedback, mirror or make memories for me.

This is the time of the year that we may honor the memory of Donald Brantley and Richard Hagan. The anniversary of Don's death is in early May. For those too new to remember, Donald was a special friend to us at SNUUC before his death in 1994, and then after it through his generous bequest to RE. All of our RE furniture had been purchased through this endowment. Our Youth Advisor Program had been seeded by it as well. When he was with us in body, Donald composed very beautiful music for SNUUC RE plays and performed for us at services and at coffeehouses here. I miss him and I know others here do as well. I want us to remember him. We had the RE wing piano keys redone through the bequest particularly because he liked to play that piano.

When I play a piece of his taped music for the children during service, it gets very, very quiet. Most of the children are too young to remember him, but his love and "soul" seemed to emanate from the music as they listened raptly. I tell them about Donald and Ritchie; show pictures of him and tell how his generosity and love for us has manifested all around us in RE. They are moved. They share about pets and people whom they loved and lost, and how they still felt their presence somehow, through memories. We have a moment of silence to remember those whom we wish to remember. It is again, very, very quiet.

As we near the end of our year together, it reminds me of Joni Mitchell's song, "Circle Game". Marilyn Magnussen was the minister when I joined SNUUC in 1988, and that was her favorite song. She has also passed on. This is a time of endings and beginnings here at SNUUC. May our memories stay with us as we make our transitions.

See you at our many events this season.
Fondly, Susan



What a great way to start Earth Day!! My green hat is off to the members of the Jr. Youth Group and Catherine for sharing an informative, caring, special service. It was an amazing transformation to see these super charged energetic youth so mature; dressed beautifully, and speaking clearly, loudly and professionally. I am so proud of every one of them! They should all beware, now that the congregation knows what they are capable of! After the service many members of the congregation went to lunch at the Solar Café to continue their celebration of Earth Day. In the words of Corey Bilello "We all need to change the we could to WE SHOULD!" While Earth Day is still lingering in our minds and hearts, lets do a little more to take care of it. Shouldn't Earth Day be every day?

The May Foyer Art Show is quickly approaching and ALL are invited to be part of it! The art show for May will feature works from the yearlong seminar that Susan Nykolak and I facilitated. This was a spiritual journey through meditation and art to create collages of our inner thoughts and conquering our obstacles so we can get a clearer look into our future. The Youth are going to have this fabulous opportunity to indulge in this process on April 29 during RE time, so please bring magazines, photos and mementos that you would like to include in your collage. Everyone of all ages is invited to participate with us. The art reception will be held on May 18. Everyone is invited and musicians are needed, please contact Billur Weigell for more information.

Looking forward to the May 6 service from the Senior Youth. I overheard them talking about music and how it effects them and us spiritually. Sounds like a great service in the making with youth playing music and sharing readings and thoughts. Mark your calendars now, seats will go fast!

Yours In Faith & Fun!
Paula Rosenberg

Schedule

- April 29 10:30 Soul Collage help wanted!
- May 4 Senior Youth Service Rehearsal TBA 5-6ish
- May 5 Talent Auction 5pm
- May 6 Senior Youth Service
- May 11 DARFUR-A-PALOOZA!!!
- May 13 Intergenerational Mothers Day service

AWARDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS The Bess and Maurice Forge Memorial Scholarship honors the life and work of two of our former members. It is awarded to young people in our congregation who have demonstrated concern about social and political issues, are interested in activism, and have been involved in community service.

Graduating high school seniors may apply for the Forge Scholarship. The applications will be e-mailed to the students. Please complete and return via e-mail by May 14. The presentation will be at the June 17 Sunday service. If you have questions or want to receive an application, please call a member of the Forge Scholarship Committee; Rita Tancredi, Ilene Corina and Susan Okun.

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

The Social Action Committee will be reviewing the policies and procedures for the committee at their April 29th meeting at noon. If you are interested in being part of social action and have ideas about how to develop the committee to better suit the needs of the congregation, please join them at the April meeting.

Help wanted for the upcoming IFCO/Pastors for Peace Caravan! Planning has already begun for the next caravan sending humanitarian aid to Cuba. Please contact Don or Mirna Obers if you can help in the following ways.

- 1) Help raise money to purchase a school bus or arrange for a tax-exempt donation of the following other types of vehicles: ambulances, trucks or bookmobiles
- 2) Help locate and gather medical equipment and supplies
- 3) Consider applying to travel on the caravan to Cuba during the period July 1-28, 2007

The price of stamps are going up again. But don't fret - we will again be selling stamps on May 13 after service. See Ilene Corina.