

South Nassau Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Open Line

May 22, 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, May 27, 2007
Worship 10:30 am

TRUE CONSERVATISM

Why religious liberals can be political conservatives

Hollis Huston

Greeters: Ellen Minzner

Ushers: Gail Compton

Coffee: Robin Norris

Welcome: Bobby Granoff

Social Action: Don Obers

Lock-up: Rita Hines

Sunday, June 3, 2007
Worship 10:30 am

COMING OF AGE

Rev. Catherine Torpey

Join us at our Picnic on the front lawn at noon!

Greeters: Laura D'Angelo & Brian Larkin

Ushers: Suzy Diggle Fox

Coffee: Lisa & Bill Bryson-Brockmann

Welcome: Lori Strumeyer

Social Action: Leslie Farrington Griggs

Lock-up: Jean Smyth Crocetto

With Pride and Joy we invite you to share a special day

as we honor Susan Nykolak on her retirement,

Saturday, June 2 at 5:30 pm at SNUUC

Bring your memories and stories to share!

Gourmet pot luck

► If you haven't yet, it's important that you
RSVP to Bonny Levenson to tell her the special dish you will bring

Join us at our annual end of the year picnic

Sunday, June 3 after service on the front lawn

Come and celebrate SNUUC and especially our senior members

Plenty of hamburgers & hotdogs on the grill

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share

Speak to Bonny Levenson to see how you can help

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: June 3
It will cover the summer services

Muusings from the Minister

The front page of a website I frequent has the following headlines this morning: 7 Killed on Bus in Iraq; Israeli Airstrike Kills 8 in Gaza; Dozens Killed in Lebanese Fighting.

It is difficult to live in a world where we are constantly confronted with the chaos and misery of so many people so far away. With so many American men and women being stationed in Iraq, Afghanistan and other foreign locations, the horrors of war are our horrors, and yet our lives go on day to day as though parents weren't losing children, children weren't losing parents, and soldiers weren't losing limbs. Because of our all-volunteer military, there are segments of our population who have many friends and family in overseas, and other segments who have none. I'm part of the latter group. One young man I knew at Manhattanville College went to Iraq very early in the conflict, and we worried a great deal about him—especially when he did a second tour. After I left Manhattanville, he started a program called "My Soldier," to connect people here at home with soldiers serving abroad by matching soldiers with pen pals. I finally signed up, because it's something small I can do to keep myself from being immune from the effects of conflict around the world. Now for the next step: to stop the killings. This will take much fortitude and vision on all of our parts.

Yours in faith, hope and love,
Catherine

Adult Education

Join Catherine for **Readings in Liberal Religion**, Tuesday June 5 at 7:30 in the foyer.

The next Great Decisions class is scheduled for Friday afternoon, June 8 at 1:00 in the foyer. The topic is the Middle East. If you would like to participate, please buy the \$16 book from Catherine and read the section in advance.

Free Minds, in a Free Congregation, Working for a Free World Canvass Results!

We are pleased to report that our congregation has pledged \$133,790 to SNUUC for the 2007/08 fiscal year starting on July 1, 2007.

We invite you to read our committee's annual report on file in the office, or available on request. We are proud that we bettered our Canvass goal by \$1,499 as of this writing (with one pledge still to close). This result provides SNUUC with a solid and realistic base upon which to manage the budget just adopted for fiscal '07-'08. It is testament to SNUUC members' generosity that 39 pledges were increased, and noteworthy that the number of pledges in the \$3,000 to near \$5,000 range continues to grow each year (as published in a recent Open Line).

We heartily thank our wonderful team of Canvassers: Barbara Singer, Gloria Yuin, Ron Nanos, Sharon Nanos, Jean-Smyth Crocetto, Rev. Torpey, Alice Spatt, Gail Compton, Laura D'Angelo, and Rita Hines. And, we heartily thank SNUUC congregants for sharing meaningful canvass conversations with us, and for such generous giving.

Respectfully, SNUUC Stewardship Committee:
Ellen Zaehringer-Gach, Carl Spatt,
Arlene Brown, Jim Crocetto

OUR BOARDWALK

Hi everyone.

So much has gone on this past year. We have experienced loss and renewal, crises and resolutions. We are a solid bunch. Over the past year this congregation has proven itself to be healthy and generous as well as compassionate and kind. I am especially proud of the manner in which we have handled our financial priorities. Sunday's bi-annual meeting proved fruitful and creative. We will clearly be able to meet all our needs, and more, even if we don't know exactly which options for doing so we will choose. The key is that we do have options and are willing to explore them with open minds.

I am also impressed with our approach to the upcoming changes in our Religious Education program. With Susan's departure, many of us feel a great deal of anxiety. But we trust each other and that trust will see us through this transition. The interim search is underway and we will seek candidates for a permanent search committee over the next few weeks. If you are interested in serving on the permanent Religious Education Coordinator search committee, please submit your name to the Board as soon as possible. If you would like to nominate someone to serve, submit his/her name to the Board as soon as possible. We will hold a special congregational meeting on September 30, 2007 to elect a committee.

On behalf of the board, I would like to thank everyone who put their time, effort and financial support into taking care of this congregation this past year. Your efforts and pledges mean so much. I would also like to thank the people on the finance committee who worked so hard to put together recommendations for our budget, as well as the stewardship committee for stirring up the generosity in our community. Of course, thanks also go out to all of you who responded to the stirrings of generosity with your pledges this year. This made our budget process go more smoothly, and has helped round out our year of progress on a positive note.

On a final note, I thank Susan Nykolak for her years of service and dedication to the future of our faith, SNUUC's children.

Blessings to you all. Have a fun and fulfilling summer.
Jean

Search for RE Leadership

We are currently in search for an interim Children's RE Coordinator. Denise Hibbert and Laura D'Angelo have agreed to interview interim candidates and make a recommendation to the Board. Please distribute the job description widely so that we widen our pool of candidates. It is included with this Open Line.

The search for the permanent replacement for our Director of Religious Education will take place during the year to come, and will include input from all segments of the congregation. The Board is currently seeking nominations (including self-nominations) for a search committee to find the permanent DRE. This committee will be asked to organize focus groups in the congregation in the fall in preparation for a spring search. The term will begin in the Fall of 2008 (or Fall 2009 if we decide to continue with an interim for a second year). Please submit your names to Jean Smyth-Crocetto, President of the Board of Trustees.

Among Ourselves

New Junior Youth member Tess Larsen, who is now a 6th grade student at The Progressive School in Merrick, saw a documentary on TV about the war victims of Darfur and was horrified by what she learned. She decided to get involved and help.

Tess organized "The First Ever Darfur Fashion Show" a fundraiser to help the women and children of the civil war and to immunize Darfur babies from preventable diseases. Tess and her classmates modeled, her guest speaker presented photos and information about Darfur and of course there were raffles! She raised over \$2,000!! Money raised will go to UNICEF and savedarfur.org. Congratulations and thank you Tess!!

Committees at Work

There will be a **Social Action Committee** meeting next Sunday, May 27 at noon.

Committee Chairs are reminded that there will be a Congregational Council Meeting and calendar setting on Wednesday, June 6 at 7pm. If you cannot attend please be sure someone from your committee goes to this meeting.

The Gay/Straight Dialogue's next meeting will be on Sunday, July 8th. It will be a field trip at 12 noon, following the service. The location will be decided soon but we're thinking perhaps of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens. **All are invited!!** Call Bob

YOGA

We are offering a 3-week mini-session of Gentle Yoga at SNUUC on Mondays (June 4th, 11th, and 18th). All classes in this mini-session run from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the foyer.

We are also planning to offer a summer 6-week session which will be on Tuesday mornings (July 17th, 24th, 31st, August 7th, 14th, and 21st). The summer session classes will run from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. in the foyer.

Enrollment fees for these two programs are \$30 (mini-sessions) and \$60 (6-wk sessions). This fee is payable at the first class. Since space is limited, please contact Anne Fleming to reserve your space.

Ways \$ Means

The Talent Auction open item list is available at the Ways & Means table and on line. If you see something you like, contact the bidder to reserve your space. Give your check to Ways & Means. If every item sells out, this will be a record-breaking Talent Auction!

Shopping on amazon.com? Click on SNUUC.ORG before making your amazon.com purchases and SNUUC gets a percentage of your purchase free and clear! Don't forget to buy your SNUUC stained glass stationary. It's perfect for thank-yous and Coming of Age announcements. And last but not least, why not sign-up for automatic grocery store gift cards to be mailed to your house every month? It's easy and helps to raise funds for SNUUC without costing you a penny!

Movie Night

Join us at SNUUC Movie Night, Saturday, May 26 at 7:30pm. Save the date to attend a screening of the documentary entitled *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* about events in Venezuela. Two independent filmmakers were inside the presidential palace on April 11, 2002, when Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez was forcibly removed from office. They were also present 48 hours later when, remarkably, he returned to power amid cheering aides. Their film records what was probably history's shortest-lived *coup d'etat*. It's a unique film and an extraordinary portrait of Chavez who is a hero to many in Latin America. Following the film will be a discussion moderated by Dr. Stanley Kaster who has heard Chavez speak and recently traveled to several countries in Latin America, and Jorge Renderos, a songwriter for peace who recently visited Venezuela and belongs to CAUSA, the Salvadorean organization based in Brentwood that recently helped organize the April 14 cultural event at SNUUC. For more information, contact Don Obers.

Geoffrey Canada

As you know, the Geoffrey Canada lecture and reception is rescheduled for Thursday, June 14 at 7pm. Before you see him live you can catch him on *Oprah* on Thursday, May 31, channel 7 at 4pm and channel 10 at 7pm.

Help Needed Please

Would you be willing to go out of your way bit to help a fellow congregant? The Membership Committee is trying to coordinate rides for congregants who need transportation to SNUUC. This might be on a Sunday or for a special event or maybe a meeting during the week. If you can go out of your way once in a while to help out please call Lori Strumeyer or Martha Chamberlain. Thank you from the Membership Committee.

Building Use Etiquette

If you are part of a group or committee that uses the building during the week please be sure to clean up after yourselves, wash any dishes and check all of the outside doors to be sure our building is secure.

Pop Tops

Please remember to save aluminum can pop-tops in support of kids with kidney disease. Our collection is forwarded via a local dialysis center to Stony Brook University Hospital which coordinates the effort. The scrap aluminum is sold and money earned pays for summer camp where kids with renal failure can enjoy themselves while continuing dialysis. You can still return the can and get your deposit back so it's a win-win situation! Bring your collected pop-tops to SNUUC and place them in the giant Coca-Cola can in the office.

UN Day Celebration

On October 21 we will celebrate UN Day by having a multi-faith worship and a forum put together by the Multi Faith Forum of Long Island. The forum will be fun and interactive and will last until 2pm.

If you are interested in helping put this event together, please speak to Catherine Torpey or Paula Rosenberg.



BRIDGING

Words from Susan Nykolak 2007

Thank you. This is my beloved community ~
my extended family of choice, for the last 18 years

My own children have grown up here;
our closest friendships were created here

What we have built together
I know, will stand forever
in our minds, hearts and memories
as we all move forward.

I thank you...each one, for letting me... inviting me,
to share in your lives,
in your joys and in your sorrows,
in the circle of your children's dreams
and in your family's journeys.

This has been a magical place
A place where dreams have been born
and realized.

Congratulations to our graduating seniors:

Sam Bryson-Brockmann
Rachel Bryson-Brockmann
Matthew Levenson
Dean Gross
William Stevens
Melissa Fox

Congratulations to our Coming of Age participants:

Brandon Lazarus
Julia Nevitt
Miranda Sherrock
Steven Corina
Matthew Corina
Joshua Granoff
Daniel Tiller
Matthew Keller

Many thanks to Bonny Levenson, Paula Rosenberg
and the RE committee members and to all the
members and friends of SNUUC for my upcoming
Retirement Celebration!



SNUUC YOUTH YOUTH NEWS

To say time flies is an understatement! To watch 6 youth that I have worked closely with for 6 years graduate High School and go off to College is an overwhelming experience. You become involved with their lives on many levels, spiritually, religiously, personally, academically and then you turn around and they are moving on. Seems so sudden, so final, and so unreal! You are so happy and proud of them, yet so reluctant to let them go. I guess if I could I would leave them all back a grade so I could share another year of their laughter, commitment, and leadership. I know that's not doable but I can wish! I wish them all a successful journey to what nurtures their souls and minds. I see a long life of satisfaction ahead of them and the people they come in contact with. I'm confident that we all gave them the tools they need to make this next transition a smooth one. Will, Matt, Sam, Melissa, Dean and Rachel continue your search for truth and justice and continue to be the BEST people you can be!! I will miss you all. You have left huge shoes to fill!! Stay in touch!

More time flying by.... To bridge out Susan to her new life without looking back over our shoulders at the one we shared here at SNUUC with her would be impossible. Susan has created and left a legacy of talent, education, charisma and magic. Susan had taken me under her wing and taught me how to follow my heart and give till it hurts. Susan you have succeeded! It hurts bad. I guess I never thought this little book of ours had an ending, I was enjoying each chapter each year as our families and children grew. It has been an amazing journey being your understudy, your colleague, your friend. Your job as my mentor will keep us tied together (in pretty ribbons of course) forever! Thank you for your support, your encouragement and your guidance as I found my way on this journey. I wish you peace, happiness, love and sunny days on the beach forever! Thank you!

As always, as we send some of our kids off to college we welcome in new kids. I'd like to say welcome to our new Junior and Senior Youth. They have a very exciting road ahead of them as they embark on their new journey.

And finally we had our yearly BBQ for the day laborers at Eisenhower Park. We shared community, food, and had lots of fun playing soccer, softball, frisbee and badminton. The day was full of sharing and education and fun. Looking forward to next year!

Have a safe and happy summer!

Paula Rosenberg

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

As the Community Achievers in Residence CAiR program comes to an end this year, I am amazed at myself how attached I became to this community of children who came for only 3 hours a month so their foster families could have some respite time to nap, shop, pay bills or get a haircut.

I remember the first day that most of the children came in and looked at the walls and slowly started playing checkers or cards with our youth and adult volunteers. By the last day just a few months later, they made themselves at home and jumped right into the friendships they had made with each other and our youth and adult volunteers.

By this last session, the kids were opening up to us and we learned that some siblings were reunited this one afternoon a month because they were separated in foster care. We learned from the foster care agency that one little boy was given hope that he will some day be adopted when he spoke to one of our youth about her adoption. Another little girl wore the beads she made at the CAiR program "all the time". And, each month they brought home projects that they could keep, share with someone or just remember that they had fun with us.

Many of the kids hugged us goodbye on the last day, as we have to wonder where they will be in their lives next year. And hopefully, with your help from SNUUC, we will be able to do this again and bring some joy to their hearts as well as our own. Special thank you to Doug Breiding for helping to coordinate this and Linda Breiding from the Nassau County Department of Social Services Division of Foster Care for entrusting SNUUC and the Social Action Committee to open our hearts to those less fortunate right here in our community. If you would like to help next year for 3 hours a month, there will be a mandatory orientation for anyone involved. Please look out for dates and times or call Ilene Corina.