



MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

February 2015

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MARK IT DOWN

- ◆ Board of Trustees, Thursday, 12 Feb, 7:30 PM, Sonen Room

Where every mind is free and every soul is welcome!

Spiritually Speaking: Celebrate, Remember, Resolve By Rev. Gordon Clay Bailey

The involvement of Unitarian Universalist ministers and laypeople in the civil rights struggle and, in particular the march between Selma and Montgomery, AL in 1965, is often regarded as a highpoint in Unitarian Universalist social justice efforts. During this time, three people were killed by white supremacists. Jimmy Lee Jackson, a young African American, was shot defending his family from the Alabama State Police. The two others, Rev. James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo, both white Unitarian Universalists, were in the south for the marches responding to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call for support. Reeb's assassination is credited by many with drawing national attention to the struggle for voting rights and prompting passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. President Lyndon Johnson sent yellow roses to Reeb's hospital room and Dr. King preached Reeb's eulogy.

The eulogy by King summed up the vision of the integrationist arm of the civil rights movement, "He was a witness to the truth that men of different races and classes might live, eat, and work together as brothers." It is in this same spirit that I believe all

Americans should celebrate Black History Month. Throughout this month, I think that all Americans should pause to reflect, learn and celebrate our rich and wonderful tapestry. We should examine the highlights and the history of the African peoples in America. And we UU's ought to learn about the personalities, trials and forward progress we have made in social and racial justice within our own association.



I believe it is time to celebrate our collective strength as a nation and as a religious

community that values its entire people and celebrates the enormous contributions to society all Americans have made. This month I hope each of us will look deep into our spirits, hearts and minds, and find out where we really stand on the social justice issues that continue to confront our nation.

It is my hope that out of the services and discussions, movies and social action committee meetings that we as a congregation will have the resolve to step up stand out and make a difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Essex County and beyond that need us.

In faith and love,
--Gordon

February Sunday Services

Services start at 11 AM

01 Feb ***Return to Selma 2015*** **Rev. Gordon Clay Bailey** **Musician - Bill Workinger,**
Usher - Gregory Giacobe, Social Hour Host - Mindy Thompson Fullilove

Fifty years after the historic march Selma is back in the national spot light. Join us at FUUCE as we remember what was; consider what is and dream about what may still come to be.

08 Feb **BELOVED COMMUNITY SUNDAY: FAMILYConnections** **Discussion Leader: Mindy Thompson Fullilove**
Social Hour Host: Georgiana Hart

Guest speaker Ruth Antoine from FAMILYConnections will speak on her organizations programs, specifically those aimed at the Haitian community.

FAMILYConnections is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) community-based counseling and family service agency specialized programs for all ages from infants to seniors. They deliver research-based therapeutic services in their offices and on-site in preschools, schools, and directly in the home that reduce child abuse, drug abuse, gang involvement, and crime; increase social and coping skills, school success, and employability; and heal emotional pain, helping individuals and families grow strong and independent. FAMILYConnections is a growing family of more than 30 programs delivering professional counseling, skills building, and prevention services to over 4,000 children, adults, and families each year in Essex and surrounding counties. They are licensed by both the NJ Division of Mental Health Services and the Division of Addiction Services.

15 Feb ***A People Without a Vision Perish*** **Rev. Gordon Clay Bailey** **Musician - Bill Stafford, Usher - Georgiana Hart, Social Hour Host - Gregory Giacobe**

Proverbs 29:18 may be one of the most misapplied verses in all the church's rhetoric of today. Many a congregational leader has used it to imbue their strategies with a "do it this way or we will fail" consequence. Today, I am going to lay out for you a dream of mine and maybe yours. We have been down the road of Entrepreneurialism, Vision statements, Mission statements and more. Now it's time to decide where we as a congregation are going. Will we make it? Or shall we over time perish, limp along? Or shall we do great things and be the change agents I think we are called to be? Join us for a serious look at what's possible.

22 Feb **EAST/WEST SUNDAY: *Chinese New Year*** **Discussion Leaders: Wayne Eastman & Darcy Hall**
Social Hour Host - Darcy Hall

Friends, members and families of all ages are invited to join in celebrating Chinese New Year. We will learn about the life of Confucious, sample delicious Chinese food and participate in an active and fun creative project.



Board Secretary's 2015 Report



This report is intended to update members and friends on the state of our liberal religious faith community here in Orange, NJ. As a matter of certification, all UU congregations must submit statistics on their membership, pledging income and total expenditures to the Unitarian Universalist Association. Deadline for submitting these figures this year was Monday, 2 February 2015. They are used to calculate the Annual Giving level for each congregation to the UUA as well as the UU District of Metropolitan New York in which the congregation resides. It also certifies that our church can send the allotted number of delegates to the UUA General Assembly in June. For the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County, the following figures were reported to the UUA on 29 January 2015:

Current Membership: 31
RE Enrollment: 0
Pledging Units: 24
Pledging Income: \$27,400
Average Weekly Attendance: 18
Non-member Friends (if known): 12
Total Expenditures: \$90,250
Fiscal Year Starts: 7/1

Compared with the last year's figures, membership has decreased by 6%. Pledging units have remained unchanged. Financially, our expenses have decreased substantially, by almost 18% over last year. This was mostly due to a budgeted expense for a new ramp being delayed to the current year. Pledging income decreased by a little over 3%, continuing a long-term decline, but slowing from last year. In brighter news, average weekly attendance rose by nearly 40% over last year. Whether this is attributable to our new minister only time will tell.

Over a longer term, membership has decreased by over 40% in the last five years (as well as twenty years), and over 50% in the last decade. The number of pledging units has decreased by a third in the last five years, over 40% in the last decade, and nearly that over the last twenty years. Our expenditures decreased noticeably (12%) from five years ago, and by nearly 30% over the decade. In twenty years, they have increased by nearly 60%. Conversely, pledging income has dropped by over a quarter in five years, and by 55% from a decade ago. We are roughly where we were in pledging income 20 years ago. Attendance has decreased by 36% in the five years.



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Share-The-Plate Winter/Spring 2015 Recipient Chosen

At its 11 January 2015 meeting, First UU's Social Action Committee chose the next recipient for our "Share-The-Plate" program. There was one submission for First Friends. First Friends is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that upholds the inherent humanity and dignity of all immigrants. They provide visitors and non-legal assistance for immigrants held in detention and work for improved conditions. They also advocate for the end of arbitrary, mass detention believing detention is morally wrong, legally suspect and wasteful of taxpayer funds. First Friends regularly coordinate volunteer visitations at immigration detention centers in Kearny, Newark & Elizabeth NJ, providing postage stamps & phone cards to help detainees remain in contact with family, friends & legal support. The committee endorsed this proposal and it was confirmed by the Board of Trustees at its 15 January 2015 meeting.

The collection period will run from 1 February through 14 June 2015. Share-The-Plate requires that at least half of the cumulative unrestricted donations made during the Offertory of any formal Sunday service will be set aside for a designated charity. Checks made to the church as part of members' pledge fulfillment, or for any other previously announced appeal (such as Chalice Lighters), will not be included.

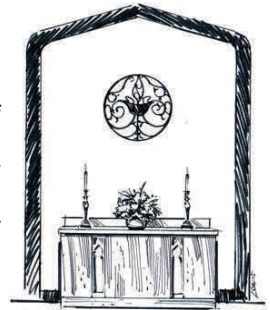
The goals of Share-The-Plate is to promote the congregation's stated vision "to be a life affirming liberal religious community where people of diverse beliefs, ideas and backgrounds come together to provide spiritual and intellectual growth to one another and to work together in Orange, New Jersey for a greater good in the world", and to fulfill the congregation's mission "to study and practice religion in freedom and fellowship", and "[t]o provide support and care for

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February 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 SERVICE: <i>Return to Selma 2015</i> 11AM	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 BELOVED COMMUNITY 11 AM	9	10	11	12 Board of Trustees Sonen Room 7:30 PM	13	14
15 SERVICE: <i>A People Without a Vision</i> Perish 11AM	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 EAST/WEST SUNDAY: <i>Chinese New Year</i> 11 AM	23	24	25	26	27	28

Happenings @ Montclair



- **6th Annual Concert for Haiti — 7 February, 7:30 PM (Sanctuary).** Come together for an evening of music, community building, and support for the Haitian people. A diverse line-up of musicians will perform for the Edeyo Foundation, the Haitian Education and Leadership Program (HELP) and Lamp for Haiti. Montclair students will be part of the event, learning about how their efforts can help improve the lives of students in Haiti. This year the celebrated singer, Grammy-nominated Steve Forbert will be joined by Haitian roots band Zing Experience, Melissa Walker with Jazz House Kids, the Passing Notes and other local favorites. Tickets are \$22. Contact Jerry Fried at 862-596-3492 or jerryfriedhome@gmail.com.
- **Senior Lunch Bunch — Wednesdays, 11 & 25 February, 12 Noon (Peierls Room).** We generally choose a topic at each meeting for the next meeting, but the conversation usually wanders over several topics of interest to the group assembled that come up spontaneously (and with plenty of laughter thrown in). Everyone is welcome! For info, email Gary Sanderson at gwsanderson@verizon.net.
- **Solo UU's — Friday, 13 February, 7 PM (Rotunda).** Solo UU's are adults living the single life from our unique perspective within the UU community. We find many opportunities to connect socially, while we build a support network with adults currently living solo. Activities include joining together for discussions and dinner, and going to a movie, concert or play. To find out more, join us on the second Friday each month at UUCM where we meet at 7:00 PM for drinks and appetizers, and then socialize at a restaurant in Montclair. Newcomers are welcome! For info, call Ed Harris at 973-783-7645.
- **Men's Group — Saturday, 14 February, 8:30 AM (Peierls Room).** Are you a man? Are you a UU man? Would you enjoy getting together with other UU men? All UU men are welcome to join a thoughtful, mutually supportive group. Friendly, fraternal conversations provoke reflection, insight and more than a little uplifting humor. Visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/uucammen/> to learn more about our group.
- **Undoing Racism Committee — Tuesday, 17 February, 7:30 PM (Alliance Room).** We are a long-standing committee of UUCM whose goal is to work with our congregation and the wider community to develop, strengthen and act upon anti-racist, multicultural perspectives through worship services, educational programs, lectures, book & film discussions, other cultural events, and community involvement. For more information, contact Betty Doggett at R.Doggett@comcast.net or 973-651-6396.

February 2015 INTERFAITH CALENDAR

- 1 Triodion begins (Orthodox Christian)
- 1 Four Chaplains Sunday (Interfaith)
- Candlemas (Christian)
- Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Anglican)
- 2 St Brigid of Kildare (Celtic Christian)
- Imbolc /Lughnassad [northern hemisphere/southern hemisphere] (Wicca/Pagan) (begins at sundown on 1)
- 3 Setsubun-sai (Shinto)
- 4 Tu BiShvat (Jewish) (begins sundown on 3)
- 14 Saint Valentine's Day (Christian)
- Nirvana Day (Buddhist/Jain)
- 15 Transfiguration Sunday (Christian)
- Meatfare Sunday (Orthodox Christian)
- 17 Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
- 18 Ash Wednesday (Christian)
- 19 World Religion Day (Baha'i)
- Chinese New Year (Confucian/Taoist/Buddhist)
- 22 Cheesefare Sunday (Orthodox Christian)
- 23 Clean Monday - Great Lent begins (Orthodox Christian)
- 26 Intercalary Days (Baha'i) (begins sundown on 25 thru 1 March)

Board Secretary's 2015 Report

Comparison with selected past years is tabulated below.

FY	Cert Mbrs	% Δ	Pldg Units	% Δ	Total Expenses	% Δ	Pledge Income	% Δ	Avg Wk Attd	% Δ
2016	31	--	24	--	\$90,250	--	27,400	--	18	--
2015	33	-6.06	24	0	\$110,000	-17.96	\$28,350	-3.35	13	38.46
2011	52	-40.39	36	-33.33	\$102,850	-12.25	\$37,200	-26.34	28	-35.71
2006	66	-53.03	41	-41.46	\$127,300	-29.11	\$61,000	-55.08	N/A	--
1996	52	-40.39	39	-38.46	\$56,500	59.74	\$24,700	10.93	N/A	--
1981	120	-74.17	65	-63.08	\$35,000	157.86	N/A	--	N/A	--
1961	189	-83.6	N/A	--	\$14,000	544.64	N/A	--	N/A	--

The updating of our membership roster also insures you will receive your copy of The UU World, the denominational magazine. You may also subscribe to the magazine's weekly e-mail update at <http://www.uuworld.org/subscriptions/emailnewsletter.shtml>. If you are having a problem receiving your copy of the UU World, please contact me at secretary@essexuu.org.

2015 Congregational Poll

In addition to the above statistics, the congregational certification process also lets UU congregations give input on the UUA's Social Witness process. This year, congregations were asked whether to place the draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) on Reproductive Justice on the final agenda at this year's General Assembly. However, because the church's attention has been devoted to the issue of changing the focus of our ministry, Social Action at its 11 January 2015 meeting decided to leave the decision to the Board of Trustees. In addition, with declining membership, Social Action also decided to suspend any future polling of the congregation on proposed Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAIs). The decision on whether or not (or abstain) to place these items on the agenda of future General Assemblies will revert back to the Board and lay leadership. At its January meeting, the Board decided to vote in favor of putting the draft SOC on the General Assembly's final agenda.

Share-The-Plate Winter/Spring 2015 Recipient Chosen, Cont.

our [religious] community and the community at large". It will also be seen as a way to enhance the meaning of the church's relationships with and among partners in the larger local community, build awareness, learn more about ourselves and the projects the church gives to, and to develop a philosophy of giving within the church community. However, the program is not intended to not displace other regular and special funding appeals.

Members can submit potential candidate organizations and programs to the Social Action Committee, either directly, by mail or through the church web site (http://essexuu.org/share_the_plate.html). The committee will review submissions to see if they fit with the church's mission, vision and the program's goals, before sending their choice to the Board of Trustees. All charities must be submitted by a church member, be either a 501(c) 3 or 501(c) 4 non-profit organization, do work that is consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles, supply a name and description of the charitable organization or project, and supply contact information.

Separate checks for the charity, either given during the Offertory or sent to the church for this purpose, should either be made out to the charity or to "The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County" with "Share the Plate" in the "memo" line. To the extent allowed by law, checks written to the church will be acknowledged as a tax deductible donation. A church check for at least 50% of all unrestricted donations given during Sunday collections, as well as any received checks to be forwarded, with be sent with an acknowledgement letter no later than ten days after the last collection for that charity.

For more information, contact Georgiana Hart, Social Action Chair, at 973-902-1701 or luchahart@gmail.com.

Small Wonder: A Day of Learning and Sharing for Small Congregations

Saturday February 7, 2015

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Stamford, CT

Facilitated by

Rev. Karen Brammer, Former Small Congregation Consultant (UUA)

Mark Bernstein, Congregational Life Staff (CERG)

Pat Infante, Congregational Life Staff (CERG)

- Network with leaders from other congregations in your area
- Discuss ideas for more effective ways of strengthening and growing your congregation
- Learn about new initiatives at the district and regional level of the UUA
 - Plan strategies for greater collaboration among congregations

Morning coffee and lunch provided.

Registration is \$25 each for the first and second person to register from the same congregation and free for all others from the same congregation to register.

Register at <https://www.formdesk.com/uiforms/smallwonder>.

Questions? Contact Mark at 610-639-3389 or mbernstein@uua.org.

We are on the web: essexuu.org

MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

Mailing Address:
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Orange NJ 07050-2907

Church Phone: 973-674-0010

Office Email: office@essexuu.org

Minister's Email: minister@essexuu.org

Web: essexuu.org

Minister: Rev. Gordon Clay Bailey

President: Georgiana Hart

Vice President: Mindy Thompson Fullilove

Treasurer: Bill Slezak

Secretary: Greg Giacobe

Administrator: Greg Giacobe

Sexton: Tony A Jones

WE VALUE: Community... Exploration... Fellowship... Spirituality... Liberal Religious Education... Diversity... Freedom... and Action.

OUR VISION: To be a life-affirming liberal religious community where people of diverse beliefs, ideas and background come together to provide spiritual and intellectual growth to one another and to work together in Orange, New Jersey for a greater good in the world.

OUR MISSION: To study and practice religion in freedom and fellowship. To provide support and care for our community and the community at large.

Founded in Orange in 1890 as the First Unitarian Church of Essex County, the congregation has worshipped in the present Sanctuary since its construction in 1892-3. The Church continues the ministry of the Union Universalist Society (also known as the Church of the Redeemer), founded as the First Universalist



**First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Essex County**

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