



MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

# First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

Winter 2018

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Where every mind is free and every soul is welcome!

## Editorial: The Word Spreads by Gregory Giacobe, editor

Last fall was a busy time for HUUB staff and members of First UU as we hit the road to tell our story of how we developed our new style of urban ministry here in Orange, NJ. As word spread, other congregations, UU and otherwise, began to ask if we could speak before their congregants to explain how the HUUB came to be.

First up, First UU President Mindy Fullilove spoke before the Essex County Ethical Culture Society in Maplewood NJ on Sunday, 8 October 2017. Facing similar challenges as First UU, Essex ECS is considering different paths to remain active in their community. Mindy's comment were received warmly.

Next, HUUB Managing Director Charlie Wirene spoke from the pulpit at The Unitarian Society in East Brunswick NJ, where he shared his story, as well as the church's, of how the HUUB came to be. Charlie, along with Board Secretary Greg Giacobe, then traveled up to Albany NY on the weekend of 20 October 2016 to host a workshop on the HUUB at the New York State Convention of

Universalists. The HUUB was a recipient of a NYSCU grant last year, totaling \$5000.

In November, Charlie and Mindy met with Rev. Ann Marie Alderman and members of the Board of Trustees of the First Unitarian Society of Plainfield NJ to explore ways the HUUB's projects could be expanded to their community.

Returning home, Charlie reprised his sermon story at the FAITH+WORKS service on 12 November. He and the HUUB staff welcomed and escorted Revs. Anya and Scott Sammler-Michael, the new co-ministers at the UU Congregation at Montclair. Both would be excited about the what the HUUB is doing, and are interested in working more closely with First UU on coordinating with HUUB activities.

We trust that this is just the beginning of a new chapter in the 125-year history of First UU. As we face a new year, we hope Members, Friends and guests will join us as we go forward to a new, more promising future. Happy New Year!

## MARK IT DOWN

- ◆ *Building Solidarity Potluck*, Monday, 15 Jan, 6 PM, Parish Hall
- ◆ Board of Trustees, Monday, 22 Jan, 7:30 PM, Sonen Room
- ◆ Monthly Sunday: FAITH+WORKS, Sunday, 28 Jan, 5 PM, Sanctuary
- ◆ *Building Solidarity Potluck*, Monday, 12 Feb, 6 PM, Parish Hall
- ◆ Monthly Sunday: FAITH+WORKS, Sunday, 25 Feb, 5 PM, Sanctuary

*Right:* FUUCE President Mindy Fullilove speaking before the Essex County Ethical Culture Society on 8 October 2017 on "Faith + Works".



Monthly Sundays

Gatherings will starting at 5 PM

**FAITH + WORKS**

First UU has taken to heart the Bible saying "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). We are learning to live our faith through works via the HUUB, which opens our buildings to our Orange neighbors. But to sustain that effort, we know we need more FAITH. Invited guests speakers will tell us of how their faith motivates their work, and how we can do the same. Please join us on the dates below.

**28 Jan Jim Gilbert — *Gatherings of the Good People: A Journey* Leader - Mindy Thompson Fullilove, Usher - Gregory Giacobbe, Social Hour Host - Mindy Thompson Fullilove**

A child of turbulence – a high school dropout, dope fiend, alcoholic and ex-con, Jim Gilbert began a journey of hope in 1969 by way of safety net experiences (that are no longer available in the twenty-first century). The transition from utter despair to peace of mind was a redemptive experience, made possible by many gatherings of good people - which include peace activists, educational mentors, a Twelve Step community, and UU congregations. Beginning his life's work as an assistant counselor in the Narcotic Addiction Control Commission and then proceeding to embark on a Social Work career - GED, City University, graduate and post graduate studies, he worked for thirty-five years in the South Bronx, where he was privileged to meet a young man named Kalief, who was an exceptional person, destined for greatness.

Jim speaks of the end of that time, "Kalief took his life in 2015 and as a 'corrective action', my employers terminated my job. Kalief's passing and the forced retirement left me in a state of grief and anger. My good friend, Mindy Fullilove, has been suggesting for years that I write a memoir. In that unemployment provides much discretionary time, Mindy suggested that I join her and a group of writers in monthly discussions and begin writing. This group provided an important addition to 'gatherings of good people' - resulting in a life's story that thematically produced parallels between Kalief's life and mine, which added much clarity to the burning question of why Kalief died and I survived. I would be honored to share an overview of this story with fellow UU's."

**25 Feb Black History Month - *Voices of A People's History* Leader - Mindy Thompson Fullilove, Usher - Gregory Giacobbe, Social Hour Host - Mindy Thompson Fullilove & Molly Rose Kaufman**

Join us for this special celebration of Black History Month. Participants will read selections from *Voices of A People's History*, an anthology edited by Howard Zinn and Anthony Arrove.



Left: HUUB Managing Director, Charlie Wirene, speaks from the pulpit of The Unitarian Society in East Brunswick NJ on 15 October 2017 on "The HUUB: Building an Urban Ministry".

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Editorial [cont.]



*Above Right:* Mindy Fullilove speaking at the Essex County Ethical Culture Society.

*Below Right:* Charlie Wirene leading a workshop at the New York State Convention of Universalists at the First Unitarian Church of Albany NY on 21 October 2017 on "FAITH+WORKS: Finding and embracing our role in the heart of the community".



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*Below:* In Memoriam, Joseph J Thomasberger.



## ABOUT THE CHURCH

ABOUT THE CHURCH highlights important events in the lives of our Members. If you have a joy or concern you would like to share with the church membership, please contact the Church Office at [office@essexuu.org](mailto:office@essexuu.org) or 973-674-0010. We have updates below:

- At our Monthly FAITH+WORKS service on 10 December 2017, five new members joined by signing the Church Membership Book: Camille Guyot-Bender & Charlie Wirene (with their son Liem), Molly Rose Kaufman, Aubrey Murdock and Doug Farland. We welcome them with great joy. Their contact information will appear in the next edition of the Church Directory. Or you can access the Directory on the church website in the Members Only section.
- Email addresses for Carl and Susan Hazen have changed. They are [Alphacorus@gmail.com](mailto:Alphacorus@gmail.com) for Carl, and [NJDevgrl@gmail.com](mailto:NJDevgrl@gmail.com) for Susan. Please make note.
- Belated Birthday wishes to new member Charlie Wirene (23 December), past minister Gordon Clay Bailey (24 December), Bill Slezak (28 December), and member Ton Dorman (1 January). We wish a Happy Birthday to Trustee Darcy Hall (7 February), Gregory Giacobe (15 February) and friend Rebecca Doggett (8 February).
- We wish Mary Jo Guy a speedy recovery. She was hospitalized as on 9 December for an unspecified ailment. Please contact Karl Weston at [karl.weston@yahoo.com](mailto:karl.weston@yahoo.com) for further details.
- Our deepest condolences go out to long-time Friend Rebecca Doggett on the passing of her husband, Joseph Thomasberger, on 21 December 2017 at the age of 87. A retired Baptist minister, Joe had spoken from the pulpit at First UU and other UU congregations for many years. Both members of the UU Congregation of Montclair, Becky and Joe have connections with First UU since the 1960's. Donations may be made to [Advocates for Children of NJ](#), or the [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee \(UUSC\)](#).

# January 2018

- 15 Solidarity Potluck, Parish Hall, 6 PM
- 22 Board of Trustees, Sonen Room, 7:30 PM
- 28 FAITH+WORKS: Jim Gilbert, Sanctuary, 5 PM

# February 2018

- 12 Solidarity Potluck, Parish Hall, 6 PM
- 25 FAITH+WORKS: *Voices of A People's History*, Sanctuary, 5 PM

# March 2018

- 12 FAITH+WORKS: Darcy Hall, Sanctuary, 5 PM



*Right:* Charlie Wirene speaks to an interested audience at NYSCU Annual Meeting in Albany NY on 21 October 2017.

*Below:* Charlie leads a discussion on the HUUB's 2nd Anniversary at the Building Solidarity Potluck on Monday, 16 October 2017.



## Newsletter Schedule &

The First UU Newsletter is on a quarterly schedule. Deadline for submissions will be on the 23rd of the month before publication. The table below summarizes the new schedule:

| Issue  | Publication Date | Submission Deadline |
|--------|------------------|---------------------|
| Spring | 1 March          | 23 February         |
| Summer | 1 June           | 23 May              |
| Fall   | 1 October        | 23 September        |
| Winter | 1 December       | 23 November         |

**MINORITY REPORT: UU Multiracial Unity Action Caucus**

**Editor's Note:** The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the First UU Church of Essex County, the HUUB or its staff, leadership or members. We present it as an alternative view to the problem of the intersectionality of racism in our society, how to deal with it, and promote further discussion.

Longtime friend of First UU, Rev. Findley Campbell, recently sent an update on the activity of [Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Unity Action Caucus](#) (MUAC) leading up to, including, and just after last year's General Assembly in New Orleans. As some readers might be aware, MUAC rejects the dominant view held by other action groups in UUism, such as the [Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries](#) (DRUUMM), [Black Lives of UU](#) (BLUU) and [Allies for Racial Equality](#) (ARE). It criticizes their outlook as "neo-racist", and promoting an ideology of "White-supremacy-ology" which MUAC defines as "that form of neo-racism which argues that all white people, especially antiracist whites who live within a racist imperialist system, are white supremacists, either overtly or covertly, a view based on a pseudo-scientific document called the 'Spectrum of White Supremacy'". Rather, MUAC seeks to gather people of all colors in good faith to combat racism in its myriad forms in unity. This differing view has led to some contention, and even bitterness, between the two camps.

At the UU MidAmerica Regional Gathering last April, MUAC was out in force, presenting two workshops that they report were well attended, despite some acrimony. It also developed three resolutions intended to be presented at GA: oppose fast-tracking the "[8th Principle](#)"; oppose giving funds carte blanche to BLUU without a description of how it will be spent; and the

racial audit proposed by the UUA interim leadership team. These were prevented from being presented at the Gathering, but the first two were eventually taken up by [UUs for Social Justice](#) (UUSJ).

While at GA, MUAC did work presenting an unofficial "fifth track" of multiracial programs, actions and events which met with varying amounts of success. The most notable were the two workshops on neo-racism, and an unsuccessful attempt to oppose to the 8th principle resolution during the GA Business session. Arguments with DRUUM, BLUU and ARE continued. However, their last event, a Conversation About Racism held at Hobart UU Church as a part of the UUSJ Summer Quarterly meeting, was not well-attended.

Finally, a MUAC associate traveled to Kenya to meet with tribal elders and African UUs who have an interest in the message and platform of MUAC. Holding a series of workshops, he was encouraged by the feedback and agreed to discuss ways MUAC can have a more ideological and organizational connection with friends and contacts over there.

For further information on MUAC, upcoming events, or to comment, please contact Rev. Findley C Campbell at [finleycampbell5222@comcast.net](mailto:finleycampbell5222@comcast.net).



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN

BY DANA SIMPSON



**We are on the web: [essexuu.org](http://essexuu.org)**

## MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

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**President: Mindy Thompson Fullilove**

**Vice President: Frank Barszcz**

**Treasurer: Bill Slezak**

**Secretary: Greg Giacobe**

**Administrator & Newsletter Editor:  
Greg Giacobe**

**Sexton: Tony A Jones**

**HUUB Director: Charlie Wirene**



**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 Society of Newark in 1834.



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Orange NJ 07051-0998

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