



MAKING THE  
CONNECTIONS

# First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

December 2011

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Page 2 From Darrell's Desk
- Page 3 Social Witness
- Page 4 December at a Glance
- Page 5 Sermon Teasers
- Page 6 First UU Newsroom

## MARK IT DOWN

- Dec 4 Sermon: "That All the World Should be Taxed"
- Dec 11 Sermon: "'Huzzah!!! The Tale of a Good King"
- Dec 18 Winter Celebration Service
- Dec 21 Board of Trustees Meeting, 7:30, Sonen Room
- Dec 25 Sermon: "Christmas Morning"
- Jan 1 New Year's Day Late Morning Brunch



## FROM THE EDITOR

*Angela Randall-West*

The mention of traditions in the December 18 sermon teaser (pg. 5) reminds me of my childhood during the holidays. While growing up, I was quite a tomboy. The rural countryside of Northern Neck, Virginia, and a bunch of male cousins will do that to a girl. My grandfather endearingly referred to me as "Lil' Boy." Mind you, I liked my girly fun as much as I liked climbing trees. According to my kid's perspective, my sun-baked mud pies were known all over town. But, when Christmas came the gifts I received were just what I wanted, pants with knee patches and building blocks.

I remember receiving a set of blocks made of 3-dimensional, primary colored, geometric shapes. Some shapes had a cutout replaced with colored plastic to resemble stained glass. I would play with those blocks for hours.

Not much has changed. Rather than dress up, I still prefer to get dirty and build things. Traditionally I get tools for gifts. I have been nice this year, and a laser compound miter saw is at the top of my grown up Christmas list. What are some of your holiday traditions? Come to the Winter Celebration Service on December 18. Share your stories. Send your email to [office@essexuu.org](mailto:office@essexuu.org).

# From Darrell's Desk

## A Landmark Wedding

David and Raj have been together twenty years. I came to know them several years ago, as they are friends and colleagues of Kathleen's. They have become my friends, also. They have a four-year-old daughter named Sonia. On Saturday, November 26, at their brownstone in Brooklyn, I performed their wedding, the first legal, same gender wedding I have performed.

They never did a ceremony of union or commitment. They wanted to wait until they could be married legally. This was an ethical and political statement I entirely respected, which made November 26, that much more special.

David is from Beaver, Pennsylvania, outside Pittsburgh. Raj was born in New Delhi. Wedding guests came from as far as India, and as close as next door. About one hundred people crowded into their living/dining room area, from which all furniture had been removed. The ceremony was held

in front of their fireplace. Sonia contributed a poem called "Love." "I love my daddies...." began each line.

The Unitarian Universalist approach to weddings was very helpful. The acceptance of gay marriage is obvious. I invoked "the ten thousand names of god" in the opening and closing words. The diversity of the event was apparent from the words spoken and songs sung by relatives, and in the various clothing of those attending. David and Raj wrote and recited their vows, then exchanged rings and flower garlands—an Indian tradition.

I emphasized at the end that by the power invested in me by the state, I declared this marriage *legal*, to a great round of cheering and applause. The reception that followed rocked!

In American history, it was a landmark event when a Black person voted for the first time, when a woman voted, and when a mixed race couple was allowed to marry in a southern state. I missed those landmarks, but

not this one. Like its predecessors, this landmark event will change America for the better. Like those others, this event will have to be watched vigilantly, lest it be taken away. Unitarian Universalists have been part of the fight. "Standing on the Side of Love," we call it. That's a good name for it. There is still work to be done, though. There are many places—like New Jersey—still awaiting this landmark.

Minister's email  
[minister@essexuu.org](mailto:minister@essexuu.org)

Issues for the final agenda...make your voice heard

## Commission on Social Witness

by Greg Giacobe, Poll Coordinator

This year begins a new four-year cycle in our Unitarian Universalist social witness process. UUA Commission on Social Witness (CSW) bi-annually sends to all member congregations a list (up to 10) of **proposed Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAIs)**. Congregations are asked which issues should appear on the Final Agenda of the upcoming General Assembly. Each congregation has the option to vote “Yes”, “No”, or “Abstain”. In the spirit of living out our Fifth Principle (“The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large”), the First UU Church of Essex County Social & Earth Action is undertaking the task of gauging the views and opinions of church members on which proposed CSAIs to vote for or against on the official “Congregational Poll” Ballot. The church’s Board of Trustees at its January 2012, meeting will review all actions by Social & Earth Action.

CSW recently alerted congregations

that five proposed CSAIs have been received and approved to undergo the study/action process. These are:

1. Climate action and adaptation plans: Why greenhouse gases and their effects matter to us;
2. Ending slavery;
3. Exploring class barriers;
4. Families, population, and the environment; and
5. Reproductive justice: Expanding our social justice calling

The text of each proposed CSAI can be viewed at <http://www.uua.org/statements/current/index.shtml>.

A graphic description of the Social Witness Process can be seen at <http://www.uua.org/documents/csw/socialwitnessprocess.pdf>

UU congregations have until 1 February 2012, to cast their vote in the Congregational Poll.

A Members’ Ballot email, which lists these proposed CSAIs, was recently mailed to you. Please review your email, save the file, then open the

document, and follow the directions. Hard copies of the ballot will be made available beginning December 4, 2011.

**Deadline for returning your ballot is Sunday, January 15, 2012, by 6:00 PM. This is a members only ballot, and only one vote per member will be accepted. Please return your ballot at your earliest convenience.**

To learn more about this poll, the CSAI process or any of the proposals, please contact either Georgiana Hart, S&EA Chair (973-902-1701 or [luchahart@verizon.net](mailto:luchahart@verizon.net)), or Gregory Giacobe (201-823-2459 or [ggiacobe@optonline.net](mailto:ggiacobe@optonline.net)). You may also visit the Commission on Social Witness web page at <http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/csw/index.shtml>.

**Make your voice heard!**

## Social Hour and Altar Flower Volunteers Needed

Many of our church’s activities are run and coordinated by volunteers—members and friends who give their time and talents to help make the church a pleasant experience. Would you like to help? We are currently looking for volunteers to serve as hosts for our Sunday Social Hours held after services, as well as to bring flowers for our altar table each Sunday before service. For Social Hour, please contact the coordinator listed in this month’s newsletter, or contact the church office at (973) 674-0010 or [office@essexuu.org](mailto:office@essexuu.org). You will be contacted to confirm your date. Thank you.

## December 2011 at a Glance

December 2011 at a Glance													
Sun		Mon		Tue		Wed		Thu		Fri		Sat	
								1		2		3	
4 Sermon: "That All the World Should be Taxed"		5		6		7		8		9		10	
11 Service: "Huzzah!!! The Tale of a Good King"  Green the Church after morning Service		12		13		14		15		16		17	
18 Winter Celebration Service		19		20		21 Board of Trustees Meeting @ 7:30, Sonen Room		22		23		24	
25 Sermon: "Christmas Morning"		26		27		28						Mark Your Calendar – New Year's Day Late Morning Brunch	

# Sermon Teasers

4 December

*That All the World Should be Taxed*

**Darrell Berger**

This sermon title was taken from the beginning of the Christmas story as told in the Book of Luke. The sermon itself was inspired by the opinion I sometimes hear and read these days: The problem with taxes is not that the rich pay too little, but that the *poor* pay too little! I find this a very interesting perspective—especially when voiced by Christians. As the holiday season builds, this worship will focus on those aspects of Christianity that sometimes get forgotten among the glitter.

11 December

*“Huzzah!!! The Tale of a Good King”*

**Darcy Hall**

**Musician: Dave Braham**

Fast, fun, and funny, loaded with music and songs, this program features church members in a Holiday Play about Good King Wenceslas. Interactive, inter-generational, and inter-galactically appealing. Performed by the Willing and Able Theatre Company. Huzzah!!!

18 December

*Winter Celebration Service:  
Honoring Family, Tradition & Community*

**Lakesha Groover, DRE**

**Musician: Bill Stafford**

Our service will focus on the various holidays traditions celebrated during the winter season, including but not limited to Kwanzaa and Christmas. This will be an intergenerational service filled with stories and songs, highlighting the importance of family and honoring the our many traditions.

25 December

*“Christmas Morning”*

**Darrell Berger**

Christmas morning has a special flavor to it. This worship recalls Christmases past and reflects on what might make Christmas 2011 memorable.

1 January, 2012

*New Year's (Late) Morning Brunch*

**Gregory Giacobe**

Bending to experience, there will be no formal service this morning. Instead, the Celebrations & Music Committee would like to invite our members and friends to a **New Years' Morning Potluck Brunch**. We ask that a few people bring something--nothing fancy—to share with five others. Coffee, tea and juice will be provided. Brunch will start at 11 AM. Contact Gregory Giacobe at 201-823-2459 or [ggiacobe@optonline.net](mailto:ggiacobe@optonline.net). Have a joyous and prosperous New Year!

# Meetings & Events

## Meetings & Events:

Board of Trustees, Wednesday, 21 December, 7:30 PM, Sonen Room

Social & Earth Action, Sunday, 4 December, 12 Noon, Parish Hall

2012 Congregational Poll Starts, 4 December (See attached article)

Green The Church, Sunday, 11 December, After Social Hour, Sanctuary & Parish Hall

	<u>Senior Ushers</u>	<u>Musicians</u>	<u>Flowers</u>
4 December	Paul Axel-Lute	Dave Braham	Carol Bernard
11 December	Greg Giacobe	Dave Braham	TBA
18 December	Anne Mille	Bill Stafford	TBA
25 December	TBA	Carolyn Warren	TBA
1 January	none	none	none

*Coffee Hour Coordinator(s) for December: Darcy Hall*

# FIRST UU NEWSROOM

## **HOLIDAY CARDS DISTRIBUTION**

Have some holiday cards you would like to give to other members and friends of First UU? Save a stamp. Deposit them in our Holiday Card file box. The box will be available in the Blodgett Room (formerly the Church Office) beginning Sunday, December 4, 2011. Members and friends, please collect cards addressed to you no later than Sunday, January 15, 2012. Uncollected cards will be discarded.

## **PLEASE FULFILL YOUR PLEDGE**

At the November Board of Trustees meeting, the Treasurer reported that the church has collected only 17% of pledges so far this church year. The church year is now 38% over. So, the church is noticeably lagging behind in collecting pledges. Please fulfill your church pledge. Make your check payable to "The First UU Church of Essex County" and write "Pledge" in the memo line.

## **BOOK DISCUSSION CONTINUES: DEATH OF JOSSELINE**

*December 18, 2011*

Please join Georgiana Hart, Social & Earth Action Chair, for the next discussion of *The Death of Josseline* on Sunday, December 18, 2011, in the Parish Hall during Coffee Hour. Assignment: Read Chapters 3 & 4.

## **IN MEMORIAM: NANCY REDPATH**

The First UU Church of Essex County notes the passing of longtime member Nancy Shaw Miller Redpath. Ms. Redpath died Tuesday, November 1, 2011, at the Brookhaven Retirement Home in Lexington, MA. She was 104, and is survived by her children, Robert III, Nancy, William and Jeannie, and four grandchildren, Sara Becton Ardrey, Ian Redpath, Wilson Becton and Liza Becton, as well as two great-grandchildren, Campbell Ardrey and Hayden Ardrey. Nancy joined the First UU of Essex County on November 20, 1953. Donations can be made to Brookhaven Staff Fund, 1010 Waltham St Lexington, MA 02421-8047.

## **ALTAR FLOWER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Many of our church activities are run and coordinated by volunteers - members and friends who give their time and talents to help make the church a pleasant experience. Would you like to help? We are currently looking for volunteers bring flowers for our Altar Table each Sunday before service. Call the church office at 973-674-0010 or at [office@essexuu.org](mailto:office@essexuu.org). We will contact you to confirm your date. Thank you.

## **NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY AVAILABLE**

As of 1 December 2011, a new Church Directory will be available on the Members' Download Page: <http://essexuu.org/members/downloads.html> in either plain text or in booklet layout. Only a few hard copies will be available for those without email access and new Members.

**WHERE EVERY MIND IS FREE AND EVERY SOUL IS WELCOME!**

**MAKING THE  
CONNECTIONS**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH OF ESSEX COUNTY**

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 998  
Orange NJ 07051-0998

Meeting Address: 35 Cleveland St.  
Orange, NJ 07050

Church Phone: (973) 674-0010  
Minister's Email: minister@essexuu.org

Office Email: office@essexuu.org



**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 1892-93. 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.

**Darrell E. Berger, Minister**  
**Flore Dorcely: President**  
**Greg Giacobe: Church Administrator**  
**Angela Randall-West: Newsletter Editor**

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

**First Unitarian Universalist Church  
of Essex County  
P. O. Box 998  
Orange, NJ 07051-0998**

