



First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

June 2016

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MARK IT DOWN

- ◆ Flower Communion, Sunday, 5 June, 2 PM, Front Lawn
- ◆ Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday, 5 June, 3 PM, Parish Hall
- ◆ Board of Trustees, Monday, 20 June, 6 PM, Don Juan Bar & Restaurant, West Orange, NJ
- ◆ General Assembly, 22-26 June, Columbus, OH

Where every mind is free and every soul is welcome!

Spiritually Speaking: The Honey Springs UU Worship Committee Plans Its Easter Service By Rev. Meg Barnhouse

The Worship Planning Group at Honey Springs Unitarian Universalist Congregation—a mythical UU congregation where we are all the way we are, only more so—was seated around the table in Classroom 6 discussing the upcoming Easter Intergenerational service. Someone had put a scented candle in the chalice, and the room was beginning to list a little to the raspberry side. The Rev. Cotton Lovingood, the new minister, was having a little trouble breathing, and briefly wondered if it would be seen as sacrilegious to ask if it could put the chalice out for the rest of the meeting. Mindful of his previous two very brief settlements since seminary, and wanting to have a brightly successful ministry here at Honey Springs, he decided to endure.

“It’s in the name,” a tall woman dressed in gauzy green layers was saying. “Easter is from Eostre or Ostara, the Saxon goddess of spring. In ancient Greece she was called Astarte, in Assyria she was called Ishtar. Hear it? Easter, Ishtar, it’s the same word. Her worshippers would have egg hunts at dawn on the day of the Equinox, and the rabbits were sacred to her, too.” She looked at the minister.

“Easter is about Jesus, people!” A slender young man leaned both of his forearms on the table. “Why is it so hard just to let the church talk about Jesus once in a while? Is Honey Springs going to be like that place where the only time the name of Jesus is uttered is when the minister stubs his toe?” He looked at the minister.

“Let’s just have a Flower Communion and be done with it,” a blue-eyed man in his seventies said, spreading his open hands and smiling.

“Norbert Capek invented it as a purely Unitarian ritual, so I say we use it and teach the children to be Unitarians.” He looked at the minister.

“Unitarian Universalists,” a couple of people murmured, with the air of barely realizing they had spoken aloud.

Wondering if it was time for him to say something, Cotton Lovingood scrunched his toes against the cork bed of his Birkenstocks. He opened his mouth, but an elderly woman in the corner beat him to it. Her name was Phoebe Something-or-Other.



Impeccable British accent. (Cotton’s mother would have fallen upon her like a long-lost sister. A shameless Anglophile, Cotton’s mother had been.) “The Langari people didn’t have spring, but every time the river flooded they made a nice stew of rabbit with a puree of mashed fire ants for a bit of zing. When Adrian and I were living with them we used to watch them try to keep the little ants in the mortars long enough to get mashed. Used to take bets in the beginning, Adrian did, on the ratio of dead ants to stings. Of course the cooks were highly skilled.” Everyone looked at her. Cotton couldn’t remember what he’d been about to say.

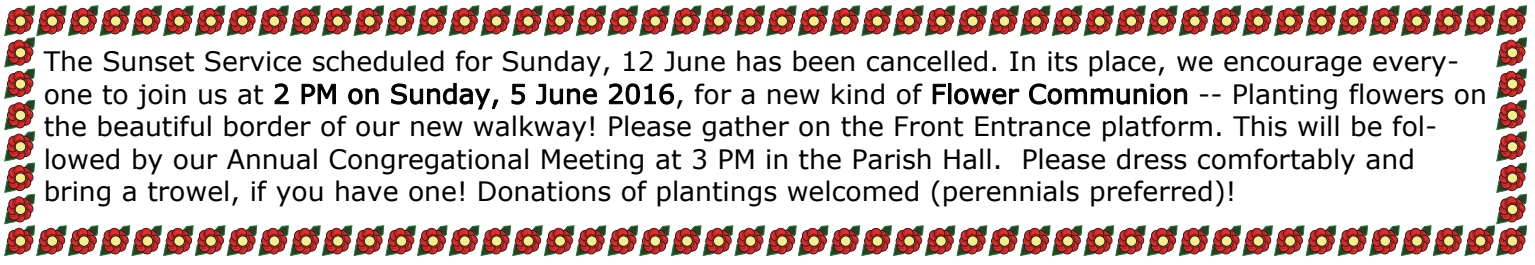
“Easter is about resurrection,” he began.

“Yes, new life! Green shoots! Bulbs!”

“The resurrection of Jesus. A particular resurrection,” said the young man.

Flower Communion

Service in Front Lawn start at 2 PM



The Sunset Service scheduled for Sunday, 12 June has been cancelled. In its place, we encourage everyone to join us at **2 PM on Sunday, 5 June 2016**, for a new kind of **Flower Communion** -- Planting flowers on the beautiful border of our new walkway! Please gather on the Front Entrance platform. This will be followed by our Annual Congregational Meeting at 3 PM in the Parish Hall. Please dress comfortably and bring a trowel, if you have one! Donations of plantings welcomed (perennials preferred)!

DATE THEME

05 Jun Flower Communion Coordinators & Hosts — Darcy Hall & Mindy Thompson Fullilove Musician -
 2 PM Bill Stafford, Usher - Wayne Eastman



Spiritually Speaking [cont.]

"You don't really believe in that literally, do you?" the blue-eyed man asked.

Cotton held up his hand. "Tell me what the resurrection of Jesus means to you," he asked the young man.

"Well, he was dead and now he's alive—in our hearts. The Christ-principle is an engine of love and compassion in the world, and love can't be destroyed. That's what it means to me."

"So, love lives on?" Cotton asked.

"How can that be true?" sighed the woman in green. "Love ends. Everyone's been in a relationship where love ended."

"But love itself," the young man stretched his hands toward her imploringly. "Love itself can't be destroyed. It emerges like a green weed from the tiniest crack in the cement, and if there is no crack it will make one."

"We could give the children seeds, I suppose," the woman said. "Life, like love itself, unable to be destroyed."

"We're destroying life as we sit here," the man at the end of the table said. "Do you know what the carbon footprint of this building is?"

"Love itself," Cotton repeated.

"Yes," the young man said. "And that is a perfect theme for an intergenerational Easter service. You all have got to stop marginalizing the Christians."

"Isn't that what the Flower Communion is about, too?" the man at the end of the table said. "We are all different. We don't have to think alike to love alike? The strength of nature to stand up to the way it's been treated these past two hundred years. And—speaking of marginalized! The Humanists are being pushed out of this movement by Christians and astrologers."

Cotton smiled. "I would certainly say love is at the center for me."

"So you're a Humanist like I am," the man said. "I'm a Humanist UU, and Jill is a Pagan UU. Jim is a Christian UU, and Phoebe is an anthropologist."

"Oh, I don't know if I'm just pagan," said the woman in green. "I like Jesus just fine. I have felt marginalized about that. Well, about being Pagan, too," she said, with the look of wounded righteousness that can bring a whole roomful of UUs to their knees.

"I certainly could do without hearing about Jesus any more for the rest of my life," said the anthropologist emphatically. "So what are you?"

Cotton sighed. "Listen," he said, "I'm just a plain old middle-of-the-road Unitarian Universalist. I think the human spirit is magnificent, and science is a great way to think about the world. It has limitations, though, and I'm comfortable with the idea of mystery, even mystery that may never be understood. The teachings of Rabbi Jesus are fine with me, especially the Sermon on the Mount, which, if it were all the scripture a person had, would be plenty to go on for an entire life. I feel connected with nature, and I think humans live more richly when they learn how the earth works, when they dance by bonfires at night, when they have a sense of awe at the wonders that inhabit this planet and beyond. I do not think that nature is sweet, nice, benevolent, or motherly, though. You'd have to have stayed indoors your whole life to believe that."

His voice was beginning to rise.

"I also like to practice paying attention to my breathing and detaching from outcomes, but that doesn't make me a Buddhist. I'm UU, which means I have access to all of that, and the freedom to draw on all of it. Unitarian Universalism is more than our history. It's a big tent with room enough for me to have the faith I've just laid out and for you to have the faiths you've laid out, too, and we can all just call ourselves Unitarian Universalists and imagine ourselves at the center of this big free faith and not squeezed into its corners feeling marginalized." His fingers had made sarcastic air-quotes around the word. He hated air-quotes, and here he was doing it. Wasn't that always the way?

The anthropologist looked at him for the first time. The others suddenly became fascinated by the top of the table.

A BUSY MONTH: The HUUB Takes Off!



April turned out to be a busy month for First UU as the HUUB, the church's new urban ministry arm, stepped out into the forefront and showed how it can be of help to those in the immediate Orange community.

On 17 April, the HUUB was officially launched with a forum on "The Church At The Heart of the Community", featuring Rev. Dr. Om Prakesh John Gilmore, a UU minister from Philadelphia, life coach and bodywork specialist, who first recognized that the greatest asset First UU has in offering itself to the community is its physical space. About 30 were in attendance representing three community organizations and four neighboring UU congregations. First UU Trustee Frank Barszcz, who also serves as President of the HUUB Board, and HUUB Managing Director Charlie Wirene introduced Om Prakesh.

The evening before, on 16 April, the HUUB, in cooperation with ORNG INK, hosted a talent show/fundraiser for the World Fellowship Center, a conference and retreat center in New Hampshire. Attendance was approximately 50, and an entertaining time was had by all.

Next, on 25 April, the church's Parish Hall served as the venue of debate for the three candidates running for the mayor of Orange. Over a hundred were in attendance as each candidate had a cheering section. Despite a few incidents, a respectful decorum was maintained.

Finally, on 30 April, the church served as a place of memorial for Jordan Bryan, a young adult resident of Orange who lived on Cary Street, and was killed by gunshot on 18 April. Originally planned to be held at the nearby YWCA building on Main Street, the office of the mayor abruptly cancelled the event. The victim's sister, Shaniqua, who is working with ORNG INK, reached out for help, and in a very turnaround, was able to offer our space. The Parish Hall was filled to capacity at about 150 people attended the event. First Church and the HUUB extends their condolences to the Bryan family, and is grateful it could be of serve in their time of need.

It is hoped that this is just a sample of the use First Church and the HUUB can be to the Orange community as we walk into a new future.

Counterclockwise from top right: Charlie Wirene, HUUB Managing Director, starts off the HUUB Forum, "Church At the Heart of the Community" on 17 April 2016; Frank Barszcz gives some background on how the church came to form the HUUB; Om Prakesh speaks on "Transformation in an Emergent Society"; a capacity crowd turns out for the Orange mayoral debate, present by RADICAL Orange, and hosted by the First UU Church on 25 April 2016.

Spiritually Speaking [cont.]

"So you want to do something about love's power to create new life?" he continued meekly. That would be wonderful, everyone agreed.

The members of the planning group managed to get over their surprise at the new minister's outburst, and they planned a nice mash-up of Passover, Easter, flowers, love, diversity, and new life. One of the readings and one of the hymns mentioned Jesus or the tomb. After the meeting the young man and the woman in green got to talking about relationships that had gone wrong. The blue-eyed man gave the anthropologist a ride back to her apartment. Cotton went home and wrote PATIENCE on a sticky note and put it on the bathroom mirror. Then he thought about the

kindness of the people, about their being at an evening meeting they hadn't been paid to come to, about their quickness to forgive his somewhat edgy description of his own faith, and he realized that wasn't the whole truth about the meeting. He took another sticky note and wrote GRATITUDE.

Rev. Meg Barnhouse, a UU World online columnist, is senior minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin, Texas, and the author of several books, including Broken Buddha. She is also a humorist and singer-songwriter. This article was originally post on UUWorld.org in the Spirit section on 29 March 2013.

June 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 FLOWER COMMUN- ION, Front Lawn, 2 PM ANNUAL MEETING, Parish Hall, 3 PM	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Board of Trustees Don Juan Bar & Res- taurant, 6 PM	21	22 General Assembly begins, Columbus, OH	23	24	25
26 General Assembly ends	27	28	29	30		

THE CELEBRATION SPACE

As this church year draws to a close, it's time to reflect on how our worship program is doing. This has been a year of experimentation, trial and error as we transform our church while remaining an active and committed liberal religious community in Orange. Our new urban ministry organization, the HUUB, is now up and under-way, and proving itself both popular and useful to both other UU congregations and in the community of Orange.

In September, we unveiled our new monthly worship format, "Sunday Sunset Services" at a new time and venue, 6 PM on roughly the second Sunday in the Parish Hall. The structure of these services was semi-formal, preserving some elements of the older, more formal services, but experimenting with a themed core portion. Darcy Hall presented and led the core portions while I selected appropriate songs and readings to complement. It was hoped that these more thematic, less-structured services would keep core members coming while encouraging friends and guests to attend. Results, however, proved a mixed bag. Though there were a number of members who attended regularly, they were the only ones who attended after about the midpoint of the church year. The number of guests who showed was only a handful. In April, Darcy decided to step back from presenting services after the end of this church year.

Looking ahead to next year, plans for the worship program are still in development at this time. But this much can be revealed. Wayne Eastman will present and lead services, acting as "lay preacher". These services will complement the HUUB's upcoming focus, "The 100-Year-Old House", by underscoring themes of house and home, community, nation and world. Participation by congregants (members, friends and guests) will be invited and encouraged. Music will be a mixture of both live accompaniment and pre-recorded selections that will underscore the theme of the service. The structure will remain semi-formal with many familiar elements retained for continuity. The date and time of the services will remain roughly the same, held on the second Sunday of each

month from September to June, starting at 7 PM. However, the venue of services will return to the Sanctuary.

As was the case last year, this is an on-going experiment, and much depends on those who come out and participate. We still want to find out if there is still enough interest, even among our own members, to continue holding services at all. If we believe we have a critical mass, we will continue. If we gather enough of our own members back, we can consider resuming services that are more formal. And, if we grow, we may even look at the possibility of looking for a new minister.

In this year of trial and error, a few things have become clear. First, all of us on Celebrations are more appreciative of the role a minister plays in congregational life. The prospect of running a lay-lead worship program is labor intensive, and can be quite exhausting to the few of us involved in putting these services together. Secondly, those involved in organizing and promoting the HUUB to non-UUs have realized their Work needs, and relies heavily upon, our liberal Faith. Having a way to express that faith has become very important. FAITH + WORKS. If for nothing else, this is the reason the worship program at First UU continues. I hope you can become part of this exciting new experiment as we celebrate 125 years in Orange.

Interested in becoming involved? LET US KNOW! Contact the church at info@essexuu.org.

Thank you all. See you at church.

--Gregory Giacobbe
Chair, Celebrations & Music
ggiacobbe@optonline.net



Annual Congregational Meeting 5 June 2016 at 3 PM



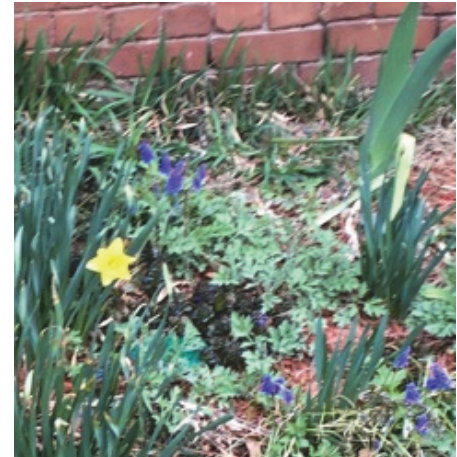
The First UU Church of Essex County's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, 5 June 2016 at 3:00 PM in the Parish Hall. Among the items planned to be presented are:

- Approval of the minutes of the 2015 Annual Congregational Meeting, and the 18 October 2015 Special Congregational Meeting. The text is available for review on the church website, www.essexuu.org. Hard copies will be available in limited supply at the Annual Meeting. We urge those with web access to review these minutes and send any corrections, additions or omissions to the Secretary at secretary@essexuu.org by 6 PM Monday, 29 May 2016.
- Reports from Officers, staff and committee chairs. These will be combined in an Annual Report that will also be available on the church website no later than 31 May 2016. Please review periodically for updates.
- Approval of the budget for the 2016/17 church year.
- Presentation of the Nominating Committee's slate for the 2016/17 Church Year.
- Election of Officers, Trustees and Nominating Committee members.
- Presentation & Discussion of Bylaw Revision on Dissolution (This revision will only provide a structure to dissolve, and not dissolve the church by its passage).
- Determination of & Informal Poll on Choosing New Church Nickname.

If you have any questions, please the church office at 973-674-0010, or e-mail at office@essexuu.org.

DE COLORES, DE COLORES

New growth and activity abound at First UU. One part frequently overlooked is the church garden - a colorful place to work (for someone with a green thumb) and relax (for those without one). But nothing goes unnoticed - or unappreciated. The church has received comments that many of the children at Rosa Parks Community School next door love to look through the fence to admire our garden. We extend our thanks to Georgiana Hart and Donna Blaine for all the hard work and care they have given to the garden for the past few years. It is greatly appreciated. If you would like to help out, please contact the church office at office@essexuu.org or 973-674-0010. Photos by Georgiana Hart.



Heavenly Nostrils by Dana Simpson



COVENANT OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST PAGANS



Convocation 2016 Awakening Our Tribe

at First Church
Unitarian Universalist
in Historic Salem, MA
August 26-28, 2016

Awaken the spirit of Pagans, Nature & Earth Centered Unitarian Universalists as we return to roots of our inspiration.

Activities

Friday Afternoon Activities:

- ◆ Registration
- ◆ Self Tour the Witch City
- ◆ Welcome & Opening Ritual
- ◆ Keynote Speaker Presentation
- ◆ Movie & Discussion

Saturday Daytime

- ◆ Keynote Speaker Presentations
- ◆ Morning & Afternoon Workshops
- ◆ Community Meal & Ritual
- ◆ Evening Concert

Sunday Morning

- ◆ Special Presentation
- ◆ Closing Community Ritual
- ◆ Self Tour the Witch City

Register at CUUPS.org & Pay Online!

Our Speakers for the Weekend

Rev. Shirley Ranck – UU Minister
Author of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*

Byron Ballard – NC Appalachian village witch
Author of *Staubs and Ditchwater & Asfidity and Mad-Stones*

John Beckett – Druid from Texas
Author of Blog *Under the Ancient Oaks*

Rev. Amy Beltaine – Convening UU seminarians & ministers interested in Earth-Relating Spirituality.

Gypsy Ravish – Song Writer & Singer from Salem
Recordings include *Enchantress & Spirit Nation*

CUUPS Board Members... and others!

How to Get There!

Salem, MA is about 17 miles north of Boston Logan Airport. Public transportation via train and ferry is available. Check schedules and fares on MBTA.com or SalemFerry.com. Book ahead of time!

Places to Stay

Go to Salem.org for a list of places to stay in the area. There are many affordable options. Camping is available at Winter Island for RV's and tenting. Call (978) 745- 9430 to reserve a campsite.

Food & Meals

First Church UU is in the heart of downtown Salem's huge restaurant scene. In the evening you are close to venues with a variety of food, drink, and music. For lunch on Saturday we are planning a simple community meal for event participants.

Registration Fees for the Weekend

Register by May 15, 2016: \$100.00 Adults
 \$ 60.00 Teens

Register by July 15, 2016: \$125.00 Adults
 \$ 60.00 Teens

How Do You Register?

Register via CUUPS.org. Click on Convo banner. Pay online! All major credit cards welcome.

We Look Forward to Seeing You All!

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IS TORTURE

Help End it in New Jersey

Sunday, June 12th • 1-3:30 pm

(light lunch will be served from 1:00-2:00)

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair
67 Church St., Montclair**

Panel Discussion and Art Installation

Headline Speaker:

NJ State Senator Raymond Lesniak – sponsor of S.51 restricting solitary confinement and co-sponsor of other criminal justice reform measures.

Panel Speaker:

Bonnie Kerness, Director of Prison Watch Program of American Friends Service Committee and advocate against mass incarceration

Panel Speaker and Artist:

Ojori Lutalo, former U.S. political prisoner and inmate in NJ solitary confinement unit for 22 years. He is also a recognized social commentary artist.

View Ojori's compelling collages created while in solitary confinement and experience what it feels like to be inside a solitary confinement cell by spending a few minutes inside our replica cell.

Co-sponsored by UUC Montclair's Undoing Racism Committee, UU Legislative Ministry of NJ, and BlueWaveNJ.

RSVP: finnflynn@verizon.net





Welcome to **Garden State Equality's**

7th Annual *Equality Walk!*



The DAY: **Saturday, June 18, 2016**
The TIME: **10:00 am** registration begins
The PLACE: **Kennedy Park in Asbury Park**
Grand Avenue between Cookman & Lake Ave

Register: GSEquality.org/Walk

Meet us in Kennedy Park
Grand Avenue between Cookman Ave and Lake Ave
RAIN OR SHINE!

The walk will be a roughly 2 mile circle to & from the boardwalk in Asbury Park.

Your support keeps GSE strong and ensures **we are able to fight for** every member of **the LGBT community** and those who need our focus such as **LGBT youth, senior citizens** and the **transgender community**.

We fight every day to protect students all over New Jersey from bullying, harassment, and intimidation.

Prizes! Special Guests! Fun!

If you can't physically be at the Equality Walk, we invite you to be a Virtual Walker. You can still register and collect donations online!

Register at: GSEquality.org/Walk

If you have questions, email us at Walk@GardenStateEquality.org or call our headquarters at (973) 509-5428

Garden State Equality, 40 South Fullerton Ave, Montclair, NJ 07042

www.Facebook.com/GardenStateEquality Twitter: [@GSEquality](https://twitter.com/GSEquality) Instagram: [@GSEquality](https://www.instagram.com/GSEquality)

We are on the web: essexuu.org

MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

Mailing Address:
PO Box 998.
Orange NJ 07051-0998

Church Phone: 973-674-0010

Office Email: office@essexuu.org

Web: essexuu.org

Acting President: Mindy Thompson Fullilove

Vice President Pro Temp: Frank Barszcz

Treasurer: Bill Slezak

Secretary: Greg Giacobe

Administrator: Greg Giacobe

Sexton: Tony A Jones

HUUB Director: Charlie Wirene



First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

PO Box 998.

Orange NJ 07051-0998

Making the connections



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.