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THE COMMUNITARIAN

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Meredith's Musings

Our theme in December was "Letting Go." But there are some things that we resist letting go of. Which led to January's theme, "Resistance." But if there are some things we resist, there are other things that we actively pursue. Which led to February's theme, "Desire." Is there a way to be free of all this resisting and desiring that seems to rule our lives? That leads to March's theme, "Liberation." From there we move into April's theme, "Creation," and then to May's theme, "Blessing." Are these continuations of the evident progression from "Letting Go" through "Liberation"? Surely so, in some ways.



Liberation (March) must begin with the question, from what do we seek to be liberated? What are the chains holding you? In parts of the world, full-scale slavery is still going on. Probably, none of the members of our congregation have ever been enslaved in that full-scale way. Even so, I would guess that there was a time in your past in which you were bound to something from which you now are liberated. What further liberation is called for? Resentments, desires, fears, small or large, bind us. We stand midway between full-scale slavery and full-scale liberation. The unfinished work of freedom lies before us.

Creation (April) is the act or process of creating, of bringing something into existence. "Creation" also refers to the world and everything in it – as in "all creation groans under the agony of death," or "all creation sings the joy of being." Thus the concept "creation" invites us to reflect on the role of our own creativity in our lives, and also invites us to explore reverence for the created world in which we live, breathe, and have our being. How does eco-spirituality (reverential care for all creation) engage our creativity? How do our creative activities lead back to connection with our created Earth?

Blessing (May) further explores the relationship between what we make ourselves and what we don't. Saying a blessing is an acknowledgment that that you didn't make the thing yourself – an

acknowledgment that situates us within our interconnections. Blessing affirms and reinforces our sense of place within a web of mutual care. Through blessing we help ourselves and one another see that web, realize the beloved community. “Realize,” as in “become aware of.” And at the same time “realize,” as in “make real.” When we’re talking about what blessing does, to become aware of the beloved community is also at the same time to make it real.

Yours in the faith we share,

—Rev. Meredith Garmon

Chair’s Report

So many things are going on at CUUC right now – how to choose which to mention? I believe you all know about the exciting things such as our efforts to support racial justice, Day in Place, music concert, chili brunch, and other highly visible programs. Here are a few things that you may not have heard as much about.

In January, I joined eight other CUUC members and staff for a trip to Albany to lobby our legislators for issues affecting families and women’s rights. While so much progress has been made in the last few decades, so much still remains to be done. The energy was palpable, and the strength of our numbers seemed to make a veritable difference. The involvement of UU’s and our clergy was an added benefit to this cause, where the “religious” are often assumed to be taking a conservative stand. This trip was inspirational, and I look forward to hearing about events and actions from our other Social Justice Teams as they move their plans forward.

Westchester UU’s Collaboration The five Westchester UU congregations have had a few initial meetings regarding ways we can work together. These discussions have included talks on joining forces on things such as social justice, youth programming, music, and communications, among other things. These discussions will likely continue, and we will see what wonderful opportunities we can all share as UU’s in Westchester.

Building Assessment We recently completed a building assessment using a qualified engineering firm. The study looked at our plumbing, electrical, and structural systems, providing estimates for our near and middle-term replacement needs. As expected, the needs are quite significant, and the Board’s next steps are to brainstorm on strategizing ways to meet these needs.

Parking Lot We are engaging an engineering firm to drive the parking lot repaving. We anticipate this project occurring during the summer. We initially planned to execute this project in the spring. We’ve been advised, however, not to start before June, so that ground waters can recede, and the best possible product outcome is achieved.

In faith,

Karen Schmitt, Board Chair

CUUC 2016-2017 ANNUAL GIVING

Today at Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation there is a lot of excitement and energy! Journey groups are in full swing, Social Justice Teams are engaged in activities supporting their focus areas, Summer Services have had their highest attendance ever, the RE program has many new and inspiring programs, and Rev. Meredith Garmon is well placed and giving thoughtful sermons each week!

In the coming year, your Board of Trustees has set its budget priorities in several key areas:

- Grow the overall programming (Social Justice, Religious Education, Congregational Events, and Summer Services)
- Continue to competitively compensate our staff
- Continue to contribute our “fair share” to the UUA and Metro-District
- Hire a Ministerial Intern and Youth Advisor
- Carry out building repairs

This year’s Annual Giving theme is “Strength in Numbers.” In meeting the above goals, we have set a total pledge goal of \$440,000. Our programming and services are supported only by us:

- Putting a child through RE costs approximately \$2,400 per year
- Running a service costs approximately \$4,000 per week

To meet our Annual Giving goal, it is important that we receive a pledge from every member and friend!

The 2016-2017 Annual Giving Campaign will kick off on April 3 with a full Sunday of activities. Following the service, there will be brunch for all CUUC members and friends and we hope you all will attend.

CUUC is an important part of our lives, and we ask that you pledge and help fund our shared aspirations for CUUC.

Sincerely,

Creighton Cray, Chair of the Annual Giving Campaign

Karen Schmitt, Chair of the Board of Trustees



Religious Education

Perry's Ponderings

“We have the same heart,” one woman said to another during Coffee Hour, as they matched the valentine heart halves they held in their hands. The children had created decorative hearts, cut them in half, and handed them out, along with questions to ask your “other half.” It increased the pulse of Coffee Hour circulation and was a wonderful way to make new connections. We shared our hearts more intentionally on Valentine’s Day morning.

The children learned that February 14 is “Friendship Day” in Finland. Gifts and feelings of appreciation are shared with many people, rather than one special valentine. In RE, we took the opportunity to talk about the meaning of friendship and responded to the question “What is friendship?” The children explained that it is “liking the same things but accepting your differences.” They recognized common interests creating a link, but acceptance as the true nature of friendship.

In the Children’s Worship story, Michael says that Rosie likes him when he says silly things and not just when he says smart things. We do not always think that our friends say smart things; yet, we still hold appreciation for them in our hearts because our bond is greater than any one thought. There is a saying in UU circles, “We need not think alike to love alike.” In a congregation of open minds and freedom of thought, we have an array of strongly expressed viewpoints. Our opinions on a topic are varied, but there is something that holds us together. We often struggle to explain the essential “love alike” aspect.

A group of us planning for the April 24 “Bring a Friend Sunday” spent some time attempting to put the uniqueness of Unitarian Universalism into words. Our 7 Principles capture our common love expressed in foundational values that we uphold – respect, compassion, freedom, peace, and interdependence. Other concepts came up in our conversation: religious democracy, welcoming the questioner, reason in religion, making the world a better place, and real connections with the real you.

When you are able to bring your authentic self, with its struggles and imperfections, into a faith community, the inner discovery and spiritual path that unfold have true meaning in your life. At our Teacher Development Day, RE teachers contemplated what it means to be a “relevant faith.” In a relevant faith, you connect with the purpose of your life and how it relates to the current culture we live in. As a community, we discover how to respond to all that is happening in the world in the context of our purpose. In creating a more just, compassionate world, we may have different ways of approaching the issues, but we share the same heart.

Religious Education

CUUC Variety Show – Sat May 7 at 5 p.m.

Sing? Juggle? Dance? Tell jokes? Bake? Paint?
Share your talent and raise money for a social justice cause.
Contact Liz Suvanto at elizabethsuvanto@hotmail.com to
join the show or help out.



Cooking/Prep Help Needed



120 youth and adults will be at CUUC for the district Jr. High Youth Con on Sat Mar 19.

We are responsible for preparing lunch and dinner. Would you be available to lend a hand?

Please contact John Schwam at jgschwam@gmail.com or 914-774-4204.

Don't flip! Pancake Brunch is coming...

April 24 after the service, hosted by the CUUC youth.
Support their social justice fundraiser.
\$5/adult, \$3/child, \$15/family



Religious Education

Special Services & Events

Mar 6: Social Justice Voting for Variety Show
 Mar 27: Child Dedication & Easter Egg Hunt
 Apr 10: Youth Group Multigen Service
 Apr 24: Earth Day in RE & Pancake Brunch
 May 1: Flower Multigen Service
 May 7: Variety Show
 May 21 (Sat): Coming of Age Family Service –
 All Congregants Invited
 May 22: Coming of Age Multigen Service

Building Your Own Theology - Adult RE

Sun Feb 28, Mar 6, Mar 13 at 9 a.m.

Facilitated by DLRE Perry
Montrose

Discern your personal theology, as you come to terms with human nature, ultimate reality, your personal history, and religious meaning.

UU Summer Camps & Retreat Centers for Children, Youth, and Families

Whether you are looking for a place to go as a family or somewhere for your kids to experience a fun camp, there are many amazing Unitarian Universalist summer destinations:

Ferry Beach is oceanfront in ME.
ferrybeach.org

The Mountain is atop the Blue Ridge Mountains in NC.
mountaincenters.org

The Rowe Center is in the Berkshire Mountains in MA.
rowecenter.org

Sophia Fahs RE Camp is one week in August on Shelter Island.
www.liacuu.org/Fahs

Star Island is a 46-acre island off the NH coast.
starisland.org

Unirondack is in the NY Adirondacks.
unirondack.org

Murray Grove is a Universalist retreat center nearby in NJ.
<http://www.murraygrove.org/#!camping-in-the-grove/c15no>

UUMAC Retreat is one week in July at DeSales University in PA.
uumac.org



Tag Sale

Our CUUC tag sale is scheduled for **Saturday, April 30!** We need your gently used clothing, jewelry, housewares, lamps, art work, tools, small electronics, toys, games, children's books, general fiction and DVD's. We do not accept large electronics, computers, stereos or exercise equipment. We will accept donations in the sanctuary beginning Sunday, April 24 after service. (We have some limited off-site storage space. Please contact us for details.)

We need your help to:
organize and sort the week before the sale
set up and price on Friday April 29
sell at our various tables during the sale
at checkout
provide baked goods
clean up after 3pm when the sale is done.

Sign-up sheets will be on the bulletin board during April.

Any questions, or to volunteer, please contact Paula Meighan at 914- 834-6454 or paula@changingplaces.info, or Johanna Bauer at 914 -636-1047 or johbauer@msn.com.

Bring a Guest Sunday – April 24

Share your love of CUUC with a friend(s)! We are betting you know someone who doesn't know much about what being a UU means. Sunday, April 24 is just the right Sunday to invite them to join us; it's Bring a Guest Sunday. Reverend Meredith's sermon topic will be "The Faith of a Religious Liberal." The Religious Education classes will focus on Earth Day. Visitors will also have an opportunity to sit in on a journey group after service if they are interested.

We invite families to reach out to other families who might be looking for a spiritual home. Perhaps you know someone who has been struggling with answering their child's questions about God or neighboring religions. Wouldn't you like to invite them to CUUC, a religious institution where the dignity and worth of every person is emphasized and they have the opportunity to learn about all religions?

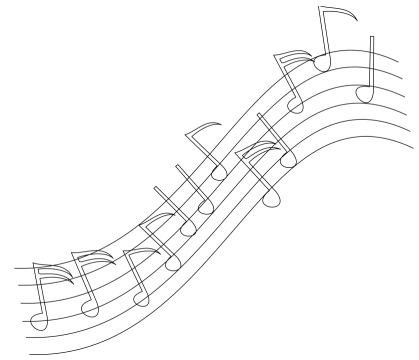
Unitarian Universalist Congregations welcome all to explore their beliefs in a diverse but inclusive environment. Many of your friends would appreciate our faith community for the same reasons you do, so let's spread the word! Bring a guest to CUUC on Sunday, April 24!

CUUC Music Beyond CUUC

Did you enjoy our all-Granados concert on January 31? Did you miss it, but want to hear and learn more about this wonderful Spanish composer? You're in luck!

Thursday, March 10, 2016

The Foundation for Iberian Music at the CUNY Graduate Center at 365 Fifth Ave. at 34th St. presents a day-long international symposium on Spanish composer Enrique Granados. At 11:30 a.m., CUUC Music Director Adam Kent delivers a paper on the composer's trio performed at CUUC on January 31. At 5:30 p.m., the symposium screens Enrique Granados: Portrait of a Composer, a documentary film featuring interviews and performances by various Spanish music specialists, including Adam Kent. More info at: <http://brookcenter.gc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/Granados-conference-program2.pdf>



Saturday, March 12, 2016 at 5 p.m.

5@5, a new series of piano recitals at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music at 450 W. 37th St. in Manhattan, presents pianists Adam Kent, Vanessa Perez, and Jose Menor in a marathon program of works by Granados. Tickets are available at the door for \$5.

Sunday, April 3, 2016 at 3 p.m.

Adam Kent plays Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 19 in F with the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey directed by maestro Robert Butts, at the College of St. Elizabeth in Morristown, NJ. For more info, visit: <http://www.baroqueorchestra.org/>

Sunday, April 17, 2016 at 2 p.m.

The White Plains Public Library (100 Martine Ave.) presents the 17th annual Clarice Wilson Memorial Concerto with violinist Alejandro Mendoza and Adam Kent. Works by Mozart, Brahms, and Franck to honor the memory of long-time CUC member Clarice Wilson. Free admission, no reservations necessary.

Jazzfest!

Saturday, May 14 at 8 p.m.

Jazz legend Valerie Capers returns to CUUC with her wonderful trio for an evening of standards all transformed by Ms. Caper's inimitable touch and style. Tickets are \$20 at the door (\$10 students and seniors). Come hear Valerie at our Sunday morning service on Mothers' Day as well!

More info at: <http://www.cucwp.org/concert-series> and <http://www.valeriecapers.com/>

Unitarian Universalist Choir Festival

Saturday, April 2, 2016 at 7 p.m.

A festival of voices from choirs in the Westchester-area UU congregations will join together to perform an evening of choral music from all genres. The congregations include the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester, UUFNW Choir of Mt. Kisco, conducted by Marshall Schor, the First Unitarian Society of Westchester, FUSW Coffee Hour Choir of Hastings-on-Hudson, conducted by Richard Slade, and the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation at White Plains, with Pianist Georgianna Pappas and Director Lisa N. Meyer.

The concert promises an evening of diverse music which begins and concludes with all choirs coming together to perform meaningful and joyful works that will resound with the power that only a large massed choir can provide. Each choir will also perform some of their own favorite repertoire that will appeal to all tastes in choral music. A portion of the proceeds will benefit local charities of the various participating congregations. Childcare will be provided during the performance; please call 914.946.1660 to reserve child care for that evening.

Admission is \$20, \$10 seniors and students.



Adam Kent Celebrates 25 Years at CUUC!

On December 20, 2015, during our Sunday morning service, the music committee recognized our Music Director, Dr. Adam Kent, for his 25 years of service at CUUC. In addition to a special coffee hour celebration, Adam was presented with a new piano bench for the sanctuary.

For 25 years, Adam has shared his remarkable musical talents with us on Sunday mornings in the sanctuary. In addition, he has enhanced our musical offerings by bringing an equally talented but diverse range of musicians to our services and through our concert series. Outside of the hours he spends with us, Dr. Kent is on the piano faculties of the Brooklyn College Conservatory, the Manhattan School of Music Pre-College Division, and New Jersey City University. He also works individually with piano students. In the summers, Adam is director of a music festival in Spain on the faculty of the Summit Music Festival at Manhattan College. Adam is a founding member of the Damocles Trio, an award-winning chamber music ensemble that have performed here at CUUC.

Next time you see Adam, congratulate him on his 25 years of service to our congregation!



CUUC Facebook Forum

Don't miss out—make sure to join the Facebook CUUC Forum! This is a group open only to CUUC members and friends, where you can share opinions, photos, ask for advice, or just offer a lovely thought for the day.

To join, search for “CUUC Forum” in Facebook. Select the group and click “Join.” An administrator will send you an approval within 24 hours.

Questions? Contact Julie Gans at juliegans@gmail.com or Karen Schmitt at schmitt8@verizon.net.

Sunday Services

Not sure what time service starts? Here's what you need to know:



10:00 a.m. — Musical prelude begins / RE classes start

10:10 a.m. — Gathering hymn

11:15 a.m. — Service ends

11:30 a.m. — RE classes end

STITCHING IN SPIRIT: CUUC Continues Its Monthly Crafting Circle

Come join fellow CUUC stitchers for this religious exploration of what it means for people in our particular faith community to be “stitching in spirit.” Our meetings are held the last Sunday of every month from 11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m. in Youth Room #14; they are coordinated by the Rev. Kelly Murphy Mason and Sabrina Cleary.

This shared time starts with a chalice lighting and spoken meditation, followed by check-in and show-and-tell with works in progress, and then ends with a “Blessing of the Hands.” Handicrafts have long figured significantly in people’s communal and spiritual lives. This has been especially true for women, historically, although the fiber arts now hold a rather broad-based appeal. Today we see this resurgence gaining ground in the “maker movement,” and recent media reports have highlighted studies finding considerable benefit from activities such as knitting, crochet, and weaving. It turns out that stitching is good for us—mind, body, and soul! Feel free to bring with you any crafting projects you might have underway, or else just bring an open and inquiring mind. Extra yarn, needles, and hooks are always brought to the gathering, and handouts are available, too.

Contact Sabrina Cleary for additional information at clearytheory@gmail.com. We also have a group page online at Ravelry: www.ravelry.com/groups/cuuc-stitching-in-spirit. Anyone with any degree of interest is welcome to this circle at any time, so grab some yarn and catch the spirit! Upcoming SIS meetings are scheduled for Mar. 27, Apr. 24, and May 29.



Committee Budgets

It's time to start looking toward the next fiscal year that begins July 1, 2016. Committees and other interested parties are asked to submit budget requests for consideration ASAP to Nicole Klemens at nsklemens@optonline.net. All committee chairs should have already received an email request. The Board of Trustees will review the proposed budget requests several times prior to its presentation to the congregation in June at the annual meeting for approval. There will be a budget forum open to all on Sunday, May 1 following services.

Any questions, concerns or ideas? Please contact Nicole Klemens, CUUC Treasurer.

ANNUAL MEETING – SAVE THE DATE

The Board of Trustees will call the Annual Meeting of the Congregation following the service on **Sunday, June 5, 2016** for the purpose of:

- receiving Annual Reports;
- voting on the Board of Trustees slate presented by the Nominating Committee;
- the election of members to the Nominating Committee;
- voting on CUUC's operating budget for July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

More details will follow in the coming months.

Save the Date for Our COOPERATIVE SEDER Sat., April 9, 5-8 p.m.

Come join us for a full Seder! We welcome everyone: those who would like to remember and honor their heritage, those who are curious what a Seder is all about, and of course, those who just want to be in community with some great food!

RSVP Required.

We ask everyone who attends to bring a dish to share. Sign-ups to follow.

For more information, contact Christine Haran at
Christineharan@yahoo.com.

UU Happenings

Save the Date: Here are chances to meet UU's both near and far.

UU UNO - Reduced rate until March 10. Registration closes March 17.

The UU United Nations Office Intergenerational Spring Seminar for Adults, Young Adults and Youth is scheduled for April 7-9 in NYC. The 2016 Spring seminar will be "The Colors of Inequity: Costs and Consequences." The seminar will focus on income inequality and racial discrimination around the world. Youth (14-18) and their youth advisors are also welcome to attend. <http://www.uua.org/international/events/seminar>

General Assembly - The 2016 General Assembly will be June 22-26 in Columbus, Ohio.

Ware Lecturer will be Krista Tippett, Author of *Speaking of Faith*, host of the radio show "On Being," journalist.

The Housing reservation system will open March 1 at 9 a.m. <http://www.uua.org/ga/travel>

Metro NY Junior Youth Con will be held at CUUC March 19-20. There are many opportunities to be involved in hosting this conference of 120 youth and adults. Middle school youth (6th-8th grade will be invited to attend), high school youth (10-12th grades are invited to apply to be staff leaders for the event), high school youth and adults to cook, serve and cleanup lunch and dinner on March 19 (contact John Schwam). Questions, e-mail Denice Tomlinson.

Kris Fiore, Director of Camp Unirondack, will be present throughout the weekend and available to discuss summer camp opportunities for children, youth, and families. <http://www.unirondack.org/>

The 2016 District Annual Meeting will be held May 1-2 at the Hyatt Morristown in Morristown, NJ. The theme is "Better Together" and our delegates will be voting on the proposal to regionalize. To learn more about regionalization watch the video on the CERG website - <http://www.cerguua.org/>

Please contact Denice Tomlinson if you are interested in attending any or all of these events: denice1uu@yahoo.com.

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS

Our Social Justice Teams — How will you engage in service?

The third part of the CUUC mission statement is to “engage in service to transform ourselves and our world.” Which Social Justice Team would you like to be a part of? They all address important issues, so choose the one that resonates most powerfully with you.

Many teams are still identifying issues or projects that they want to explore, while others are involved in specific tasks. **All teams welcome new attendees at their meetings.**

A reminder: the teams are structured with at least five core members. When an action is called for, we are all expected to participate, as we are able.

Here is a report of what’s been happening with each team with the name and email address of a contact person for each team.

Economic Justice

The gap between rich and poor is growing in many countries around the world, and disturbingly, as this happens, measures of social health, such as life expectancy, infant mortality, imprisonment, and educational performance, get worse. Even though we spend far more on health care than any other country in the world, it doesn't seem to help us on these metrics. They are getting worse. These facts and others come from a book called *The Spirit Level, or Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, which Reverend Meredith used as a cornerstone for a compelling sermon on economic justice a year ago. Can these facts really be true? If so, how do we fix it? What can we do? The

UUA has taken up income inequality as one of their social action missions. The Economic Justice Team has also taken this up as an initial focus, and we plan to offer an education and discussion session on this topic, along with some ideas about where we go from here. We have also planned a similar session with our fourth grade RE class to discuss how economic disparity among students affects the social fabric in the classroom, on the playground, and in social interactions. Please plan to join us for a congregational forum (date and time to be announced) as we try to tackle some of these questions, and learn what we are doing to try to effect change.

Next meeting: Feb. 28 at 9 a.m. Contact: Randy Marshall rmarshra@gmail.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS

Education

The CUUC Education Social Justice Team worked with a Westchester domestic violence (DV) shelter, where one of our members is tutoring a teen, to provide Christmas gifts to its children. Another member has approached an organization about supporting teens in foster care who

are heading to college. We are currently exploring: having a fundraiser with local celebrities to sponsor a reading program, engaging in a letter writing campaign about state education legislation, and asking RE youth to choose a book for a child in need and write a note to the recipient. Next meeting: Feb. 28 at 9 a.m. Contact: Irene Cox irene.cox@gmail.com

Environmental Practices Group

Over the past few months the Environmental Social Justice Team has developed a draft charter and mission statement and has renamed itself the Environmental Practices Group, which reflects the intended actions of this committee. Our initial project was in the area of environmental education. We developed a list of actions titled "What You Can Do To Help the Environment". (This list is available to download on the CUUC website, linked via the Social Justice page: www.cucwp.org/our-social-action-and-community-service)

Next we focused on recycling, with the purchase of additional recycling bins for the building and we are turning our attention to promoting the concept of "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." Near-term plans include creating a bulletin board in the coat hallway with "tips" and involving the children as we approach Earth Day, April 22. We welcome additional support from the congregation. Please join us at any of our meetings, which are generally scheduled on the first Sunday of the month. For additional information please contact Janet Bear (jsbear1@gmail.com) or Charlie McNally (mcnally@pobox.com).

Hungry and Homeless

The team has laid out its plans for the winter and spring of 2016. In late February we will sponsor a drive to fill 50 shower caddies that are being donated to the Open Arms Men's Shelter. Later in the spring, a lamp and small appliance drive will be coordinated with

CUUC's own tag sale to be held on April 30. Lastly, a smaller group of the team is working to develop an educational program to increase awareness of the housing situation for low-income residents of Westchester County. Contact: Jane Dixon lilrhodie@gmail.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS

LGBTQIA

The LGBTQIA Social Justice Team changed the name of our Social Justice Team to include QIA (queer, intersex, asexual or ally).

The team is considering a renewal of our UUA Welcoming Congregation status. This process would offer opportunities for education, awareness, and outreach within the congregation and even in the larger community.

Local UU congregations will once again be participating in the Prideworks conference for youth of middle & high school age.

This year the event will be held on March 23 at SUNY Purchase. In the past, UUs have met the buses with a Standing on the Side of

Love banner. Protesters have often met the buses, so the youth appreciate our presence. UUs also staff a table during the day.

Prideworks also needs people to help with morning registration, monitoring classrooms to help presenters as needed, and handing out conference evaluations at the end of the day. On March 20, the Sunday afternoon before the conference, we meet to assemble conference packets and name tags. These volunteer opportunities are open to the entire congregation. If you are interested in assisting on March 20 or 23, or if you want more information, please contact Mary Cavallero at marycava4@gmail.com.

Next meeting: March 27 at 9 a.m. Contact: Joann Prinzivalli at joannmp@outlook.com or Bennett Rink at brink@alvinailey.org.

Racial Justice

Resolution of Support for the Black Lives Matter Movement

The Racial Justice Social Justice Team has brought before the congregation a request that CUUC officially and formally support the Black Lives Matter movement. Board policy adopted in 2004 requires that the congregation take no stand on an issue of social advocacy unless the congregation votes—by an 80% or more majority—to take that stand. After a number of “whereas” clauses establishing rationale and context, the resolution, in its current draft, states

that: “Therefore be it resolved that the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation of White Plains supports and is a majority-white ally of the Black Lives Matter movement and its Guiding Principles; be it further resolved that Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation authorizes expressions of that support, including but not limited to: public statements from Congregation leaders of support and advocacy for Black Lives Matter and its Guiding Principles, and the public display of a “Black Lives Matter” banner to be clearly visible to traffic on Rosedale Avenue.”

Continued...

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS

Racial Justice (Continued)

Last June delegates at our UUA General Assembly passed an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) declaring support for the Black Lives Matter movement. The AIW affirms that Unitarian Universalists strive for justice, equity and compassion in human relations, that we have a goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all, and that allowing injustice to go unchallenged violates our principles. The AIW also calls on member congregations to take action, and to engage in intentional learning spaces to organize for racial justice with recognition of the interconnected nature of racism coupled with systems of oppression.

Last month the Racial Justice SJT gave up their usual first Sunday of the month meeting to allow time for a congregational wide forum on white privilege. The forum was well attended.

For those not at the forum, the 1990s Diane Sawyer/ABC news piece, "True Colors," was shown. (Search for it on Youtube.) The piece captures white privilege in action painfully well: a black male tester receives despicable treatment in every domain of life over what the white male tester of the same socio-economic status, dress, and manner does. The cumulative toll cannot be underestimated; it's life threatening, especially for those of little means.

The message of Black Lives Matter may not be clear to all people. A *New York Times* editorial (2015 Sep 3) explained: "The 'Black Lives Matter' movement focuses on the fact that black citizens have long been far more likely than whites to die at the hands of the police...Demonstrators who chant the phrase are making the same declaration that voting rights and civil rights activists made a half-century ago. They are not asserting that black lives are more precious than white lives. They are underlining an indisputable fact—that the lives of black citizens in this country historically have not mattered, and have been discounted and devalued."

On Sun Feb 28, both during and after the service there will be an opportunity to learn more about what the Black Lives Matter movement is and what it stands for.

On Sun Mar 6, immediately after the service, there will be a discussion on the resolution proposed by our Racial Justice SJT. **If it seems that we as a congregation are ready to support the resolution then the Board of Trustees will call a Congregational Meeting for a vote on Sun Mar.13.**

Please participate in the forums and discussions, and do so with an open mind and a loving heart. Next meeting: Mar 6 after the forum. Contact: Jeff Tomlinson jefftomlinson8@gmail.com.

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS

Women's Issues

On January 25, nine CUUC members including Rev. Garmon, Rev. Deb Morra, Johanna Bauer, Pam Cucinell, Julie Gans, Norm Handelman, Karen Schmitt, Lauren Taylor, and Joan Traber joined Planned Parenthood (and 500 others) for their annual Day of Action trip to Albany in order to lobby our New York state government officials. The group met with various New York State Representatives to discuss four main issues:

- Increase the Family Planning Grant by \$2.4 million to keep family planning services available to all New Yorkers;
- Safeguard the health of incarcerated pregnant individuals;

- Allow employees to provide family care with pay when needed; and

- Pass the Comprehensive Contraception Coverage Act (CCA) to ensure New Yorkers are not denied access to the methods of contraception that are best suited to meeting their health needs.

Several of the team members were in the Senate when the New York State Senate voted and passed the CCA. Overall, it was a great day for CUUC. It was very exciting to have CUUC members present for the vote as well as to see how women's voices can be heard in our state government.

Next meeting: March 6 at 9 a.m. Contact: Deb Morra getreal714@verizon.net or Julie Gans julieagans@gmail.com.

For general questions, contact the Social Justice Coordinating Committee:

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Watch your weekly e-mail blast and inserts in the Order of Service for updated information.

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