
January 2019

UNITER

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SILVER SPRING
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Inside this issue...

Inspire	2-5
Learn	5-6
Connect	6-9

Sunday Worship Services—10:30 AM

January 6: *Fire Celebration* DRE Catherine Boyle & Rev. Lyn Cox

In this multigenerational service, we will celebrate a ritual of letting go of the past year and making commitments for the new year. In story and song, we will remember that we are capable of change, individually and collectively. Our capacity for change brings us hope. This service culminates in going outdoors together to kindle a flame of hope that symbolizes transformation.

January 13: *Stardust* Rev. Lyn Cox

Everything we are, everything we touch, everything we pass through and that passes through us was once part of the burning heart of a star. Transformation is the way of the universe, and has been the way of the universe since before time began. The assurance of change over time, and our kinship with all matter, may lead us to hope for unimagined possibilities.

January 20: *Martin Luther King, Jr.*, DRE Catherine Boyle

UUCSS reflects on the legacy of Dr. King and how the fight against white supremacy continues on.

January 27: *We Yet Shall Be*, Rev. Lyn Cox

In the weekly Song of Exultation, the congregation remembers, "What we love we yet shall be." How is love leading us to become what and who we are called to be? We bring our hopes and aspirations to the task of spiritual growth.

Nursery care and religious education for children through grade 12 are offered during the worship service. ASL interpreting is provided during the service. There is one service at 10:30 a.m. followed by coffee hour.



INSPIRE

Interim Minister's Column by Rev. Lyn Cox

HOPE

The calendar pages turn, we let the old year go, and we renew our commitments, and we make a fresh start. Most of us are facing some combination of challenges, those we have taken on voluntarily, those that have come to us through circumstance or systemic inequality, and those that come from our efforts to increase the degree of right relationship in our lives and our world. Living through these challenges, celebrating life through these challenges, is what hope looks like.

Hope can be reduced to sentimentality. If our sense of hope comes from quote-a-day calendars or oblivious positivity, it may be subject to wishful thinking. Hope that waits for an external source to rescue us is similarly flawed. These forms of hope are delicate, and we humans are capable of ignoring facts and minimizing the consequences of our behavior in order to defend this kind of hope. If fragile forms of hope are betrayed, they might transform into cynicism or apathy.

There is another kind of hope, and that's the hope that's more like a verb. We "do" hope, we act out hope, when we work together with others toward a concept of wholeness. When we do our best to repair systems or relationships, when we participate in healing, when we begin recovery from something, our actions are hope. When we join with others to infuse more love into our community or our government, even if we don't have an assurance of the outcome, we are doing hope.

Rev. Dr. William Barber, known for his co-leadership of the Poor People's Campaign with Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharris, has spoken about hope as a verb. He writes:

"When I was growing up in eastern North Carolina, I used to love to sit in my grandmama's kitchen and listen to her sing as she made dinner. Whenever she was done cooking, she'd give me a plate to eat. Then she and some of the other sisters from the church would make up some to-go plates and, with their aprons still on, they'd head out the door to visit the sick and shut-in. 'We going to hope somebody,' Grandmama would say."

At UUCSS, I observe people doing hope in a variety of ways. People check in with each other, bring casseroles, send thoughtful emails. People make coffee, greet those arriving for worship, bring patience and compassion to Religious Education. People advocate, agitate, and allocate energy toward justice. I worry that sometimes we minimize the value of our hope in action. Not everyone sees themselves as a social justice reformer, yet the compassion they put into the world matters. Not everyone is called to share musical gifts, yet their time and talent still sustain the congregation.

Manifesting the power of love in the world, leveraging and increasing the power of love, staying connected with the Source of Love: all of these make a difference. We need to team up so that different aspects of doing hope are covered. Social justice reformers need a congregation where they can find renewal and theological tools to continue their work. Families need a congregation where their beauty is celebrated and their caring is shared. Artists need a congregation so that their sense of beauty can find an outlet that connects with meaning and purpose.

UUCSS is giving some thought to your collective hopes. Who and what do you want to be as a people? How do you, as a community, want to channel love into visible, tangible forms? There are many choices, and many ways for people to add their time and talent to that shared direction. UUCSS has the power to lift people out of despair, to bring the good news of acceptance and inherent human dignity to people who have been lied to and told otherwise. UUCSS can do its part to bend the arc toward justice and create sacred space. How do you want to do hope?



Update From the Search Committee

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop in early December. We had more than 60 people who participated, which is a larger number than our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) workshop facilitators have seen in much larger congregations! We appreciate the commitment to our beloved community this demonstrates.

Participants appreciated the opportunity to consider how their privilege affects their decisionmaking; the critical qualifications we would be looking for in a minister—knowledge, experience, leadership stance, etc.; and to share perspectives and hear from other congregants. One participant noted, "it is hard for us UU's to face our own

INSPIRE (continued)

Search Committee Update continued

prejudice. The workshop made us look at ourselves and the reality that white supremacy and racism exists deep in our unconscious minds and the structures of our religious denomination and institution.”

We will share the synthesized themes from the cottage meetings and the survey that we conducted early in the fall in the next few weeks. Then we will share the congregational record that we submitted to the UUA. The congregational record is a UUA-designed online system that includes more than 80 questions; the answers provide a comprehensive overview of our church and our hopes for the future. Ministerial candidates review the congregational records and then submit their applications to churches that interest them.

Over the next month, the Search Committee will be reviewing minister application packets to identify the people we will interview via videoconference. Then, from this first round of interviews, the committee will identify the “pre-candidates” to host for a weekend that includes in-person interviews as well as observing them lead a worship service at a “neutral pulpit.”

You’ve heard from us and our transition coach that a time would come when we wouldn’t be able to share much information with you. We’ve been communicating openly and frequently all fall, but this begins our period of silence. We won’t be able to tell you how many applications we received, how happy we are with the applicants, how many we’ve decided to interview, the schedules of their interviews and visits—and certainly no hints about who these applicants might be. Confidentiality is crucial to a successful search. We appreciate your understanding during these next several months.

Be sure to keep the week of April 28–May 5 and May 5–12 marked in your calendar. We expect one of those two weeks will be our candidating week when the congregation will have the opportunity to meet our ministerial candidate. You can find a timeline of the search process here:

https://uucss.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/UUCSS_Search_Timeline.pdf

Any questions? Contact: search@uucss.org.

In search, **Alice-Ann Beachy, Carol Hamilton, Janne Harrelson, Maggie Hayes, Carl Miller, Susannah Numa, and Colin Riggs**

Message From Tamara Bowman, Board President

We are continuing to work with Francis Scott Key Middle School to help support their needy families. For December, we were able to deliver gifts for 12 students. Thank you to everyone who put together gifts, and especially to **Sharon Snyder** for taking on coordination. Our neighborhood middle school also needs support throughout the year for things like job fairs or tutoring. They have expressed an interest in helping us in some way, perhaps to set up or tear down at an event. We will keep you posted.

I would like to celebrate everything we have done so far this church year. Beyond our wonderful, engaging worship services, the church staff and volunteers support a variety of activities inside and outside the church. There are the large events—for example, our annual Catoctin Retreat, where we strengthen our community ties and all lend a hand, and the auction, where we have a great time and raise money to support UUCSS goals. There are the smaller connections fostered through book groups, inreach groups, history teas, and creative aging groups.

These are all the ways we welcome members, new and old, to the church: the Sunday Support team members, who set up for Sundays and are the first to greet people; the Membership Committee, answering questions at coffee hour and holding the Pathways to Membership and UUCSS 101 classes; and the continued nurturing and care we provide our children through our RE program, Our Whole Lives, and Coming of Age.

We continue to work for justice and work to dismantle the culture of white supremacy—Defending Democracy coordinated phone banking and canvassing to support restoring voting rights to felons who had served their time in Florida and to support Democratic candidates in Northern Virginia. We held Study Circles to have the difficult discussions on how white supremacy pervades our culture and the different ways it affects persons of color. We are in the process of renewing our welcoming congregation certification for our LGBTQ+ members.

We are mindful of our accessibility. In addition to the ASL interpreters to support our commitment to welcome our deaf members, the A/V team works to provide sound accessible to those who are losing their hearing.

INSPIRE (continued)

Board President Message continued

We are looking toward our shared future with the ministerial search team hard at work assuring that UUCSS is well represented in the search process. Our commitment to the search was clear in the attendance at the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop. We are developing our first 3-year rolling strategic plan. Everyone, staff and committees, are providing input to the strategic planning task force.

We are working to take care of our buildings and grounds through labor brigades, blue-jean Sundays, and the continuing hard work of our Operations committees. Green Sanctuary makes sure we care for our grounds in a manner that is mindful of our interdependent web.

In addition to the wonderful music during worship, the Music Committee is active in outreach through the Jazz@UUCSS program and continued work with Strathmore.

I am certain I have left a number of worthy projects/committees off this list. For that I apologize. We have done, and continue to do, all of these things and more with the support of our volunteers. UUCSS has a small staff; without significant volunteer support, a majority of the work we're currently doing would not be done. Thank you to everyone who continues to support UUCSS in making a difference in our community.

The December Board meeting was held early due to the holidays, so I am reporting on November and December together. At the November and December Board meetings, we received updates from the Capital Improvements Committee, the Search Committee, and status of the tasks from the leadership retreat. We are continuing to work on the proposed budget for the Annual Budget Drive (ABD). We approved the use of emergency funds to cover unforeseen property repair and replace expenses. These are not funds from the capital improvement budget but a separate emergency fund that was created prior to the capital campaign. We fleshed out our submission to the strategic plan task force.

On the agenda for January's Board meeting is approval of the target budget for the ABD, discussing policy for a committee on shared ministry, and policy on conflict of interest.

UUCSS History: Calling Paul Johnson by Jo Paoletti

The fall of 1980 was a watershed moment in the history of our congregation. As our 30th anniversary approached, UUCSS had only had one minister whose tenure lasted more than 3 years: Rev. David McPherson, who helped establish the original fellowship and served for 10 years. Since then, we had called three settled ministers between 1963 and 1967 and operated with no minister for 4 years before hiring Rev. Alice Blair Wesley part time in 1977 to help us transition to a called minister once more.

In September 1980, the UUCSS Board and the Ministerial Relations and Ministerial Options committees met with Joan Goodwin of the UUA Department of Extension to discuss what to do when Rev. Alice's contract ended that coming spring. In a *Uniter* article later that month, Board chair John Barker reported that the group had set the following priorities for the coming year:

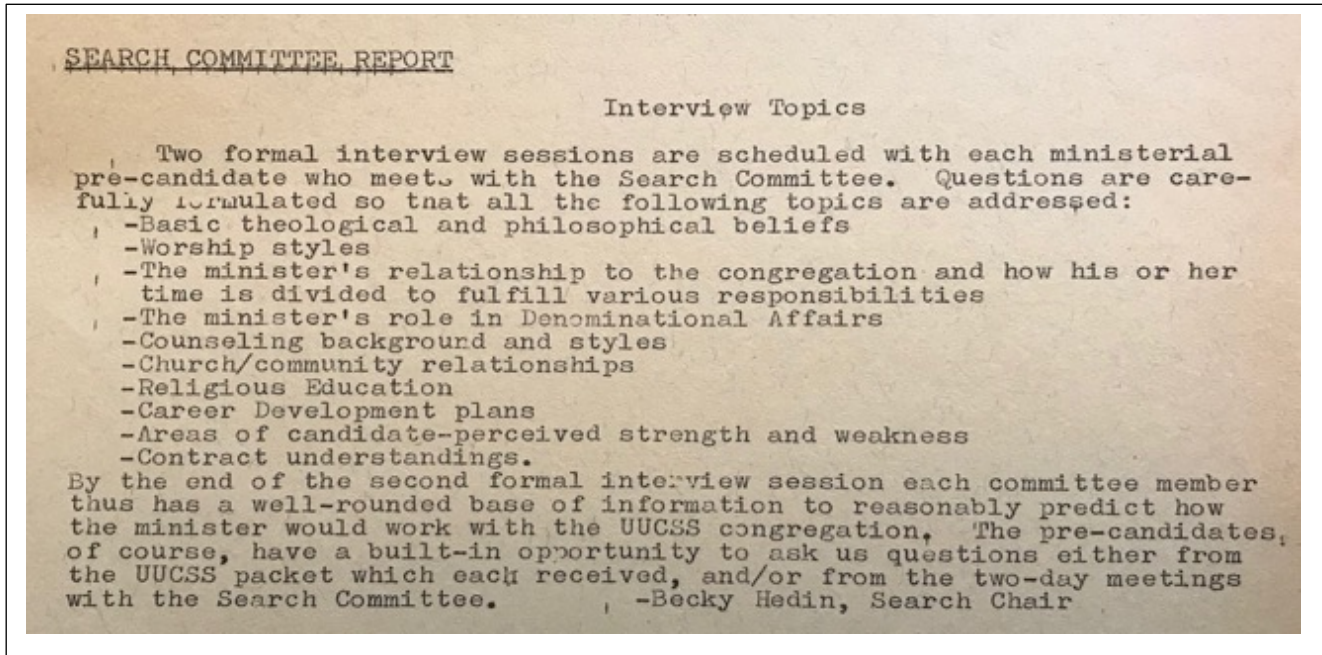
- Calling a three-quarters-time minister
- Increasing membership by 15 percent
- Developing a set of procedures for financing capital improvements that are not a part of the regular budget
- Continuing necessary building improvements such as plans for a parking lot and handicapped access to the buildings.

The Search Committee, approved in October, consisted of **Becky Hedin** (chair), **Daphne Holden**, **Jeff Cordiano**, **Steve Castles**, **Mary Lew Tonks**, **Susan Schreurs**, and **Neill McKay**.

This search seemed much more similar to the process we are currently following, especially the timeline, stretching across the church year. By mid-April, the committee was bringing in pre-candidates for 2-day interviews, which included a sermon in a neutral (and secret) local pulpit. The article in the *Uniter* (image at the top of the next page) provides the list of questions asked of each minister, which my in-house search expert says were pretty much what they would have asked in 1999.

INSPIRE (continued)

UUCSS History continued



In early May, the committee announced that **Rev. Paul Johnson** would be candidating at UUCSS at the end of the month. He came to us from the UU church in Hanska, Minnesota, and had also served as interim director of the UU Washington Office of Social Concern.

The *Unitarian* article goes on to describe him as so many of us “old-timers” remember him: “Paul, a minister’s son, impressed the Search Committee with his clear sense of vocation; his ability to articulate the history, meaning, and relevance of Unitarian Universalism; the profundity of his own spiritual journey; and the solidity of his character. His style is low key, his leadership participatory, and his wit quiet and warm.”

The congregation voted nearly unanimously (with just two dissenting votes) to call Rev. Johnson, but had to wait until the following April for him to arrive. His Minnesota congregation was celebrating its centenary and he was committed to serving them through the end of 1981. **Rev. Alice Blair Wesley** moved on to a position in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, with the good wishes and gratitude of UUCSS.

More about Alice Blair Wesley, including her lecture series “The Lay and Liberal Doctrine of the Church: The Spirit and the Promise of Our Covenant” can be found at: <http://minnslectures.org/archive/wesley/wesley.php>
Paul Johnson’s final sermon at the Shelter Rock UU congregation (8/14/2016) is available on *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwefw74MC2A>.

LEARN

Message From Catherine Boyle, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

Revamping Resolutions

Over December, I asked the industrious members of the UUCSS’ RE Committee, “Do you make New Year resolutions?” The table filled with resounding guffaws. With stories of month-long rushes to change only to fade quickly as the busy-ness of everyday life got in the way, New Year resolutions were summarized to be resolutions to be forgotten. I liked the comment of one person who said, “I don’t make New Year resolutions: I make daily resolutions.” I love this idea of each day being a new opportunity to be full of love, to be forgiving, to be just, to be creative. Perhaps the reason New Year resolutions are so popular is that a year’s worth of blank pages represents 365 days’ worth of new chances, every 24 hours. If you plan for any New Year resolutions, this daily practice may be the one. In our continuing faith journeys, focusing on the present and how we intend to operate in it centers us in the here and now. It mirrors to our children and youth that morals are not something just to be talked about but lived.

LEARN (continued)

Message from DRE continued

Here are two more ideas for revolutionary resolutions in 2019:

Social Media Fast

Never have we been more connected. Scrolling through your phone, replying to tweets and hearting pictures now are second nature to us. Thus, taking a week (or even a day!) off of our networks may seem like a behemoth task. However, cutting the digital cord for a few days offers you a chance to reconnect to the aspects of your life you may have been neglecting. It is easy these days to get lost in the curated world of social media feeds. By intentionally disconnecting, what makes up the beauty of your own life becomes visible. Think of it as a Catocin Retreat for your brain. Lots of UUs take a break from social media during Lent, but the best time to do it is when you feel it is the best for you.

Go Green

Intentional living means being aware of our relationship with the Earth. It also shows to the younger generation the value of the planet they'll inherit. If you are looking for a way to incorporate living the 7th Principle in your life, respecting the earth can start right here at UUCSS with the Common Read, *Justice for the Earth*. With fellow UUCSS members and UUs across the nation, this book provides a framework for living this way. Buy the book at the book shop and join in our discussion of it on January 12.

Do you make New Year resolutions? If so, what are yours? How do you plan to live with more intention each day? I hope your 2019 is full of love. Blessed be, Catherine

Comparative Religions Lunch and Learns

Please join Adult RE for classes on world religion this year. Bring a bag lunch. Each class runs on Sunday, 12 noon–2:00 p.m. on the dates listed below.

January 6 January 20 February 3 February 17
March 3 March 17 April 14 April 28

For more info, contact Catherine at DRE@uucss.org

Adult Programs Committee Re-Forming

While we have many activities and events for adults at UUCSS, it has been a while since they have had the organizational support of a lay-led committee. I have decided to put aside my well-documented dislike of c_____s and take a stab at reestablishing a stable group to foster and support adult religious education.

To this end, I need your help with two things.

First, if you are interested in offering (or are already offering) a workshop, course, or ongoing activity for adults, please send me a description (no more than 200 words), a short bio of yourself, and some idea of where in the church and when you would like to schedule it. Deadline: January 3. (I want to have these available to display the weekend of January 5–6).

Second, if you would like to help me foster and support these and similar activities, consider joining this— um— committee. (gulp) The likely tasks are editing and publicizing announcements, helping to register participants, the usual event logistics (food/beverage/Green Sanctuary concerns, childcare/ASL/accessibility, AV), and evaluations. We will be having our first meeting in early January.

Thank you and wish me luck!

Jo Paoletti jo.paoletti@gmail.com

CONNECT

Save the Date: January 5, 9 a.m. to Noon

Quiet Day is just a few days away! If you haven't signed up yet, please do it NOW so we have enough coffee and juice ready for you on January 5. The registration form can be found at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc6vRYQQtlksiPiGjMnfgFOrpvPI3Loekoz-G2I7qeEtADhvq/viewform>.

For workshop descriptions, go to

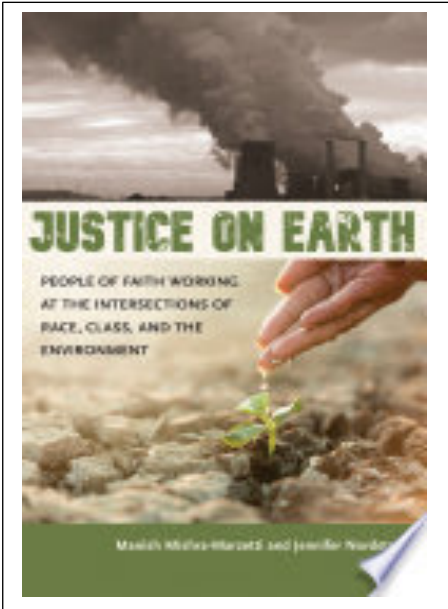
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fxyWI8VedwcXxO1V_1Glyk2-AcibTY_2TII6k23qns4/edit.

UU Common Read—*Justice on Earth*

Discussion on January 12, 2019 1:00–3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

“We can come to know the world as paradise when our hearts and souls are reborn through the arduous and tender task of living rightly with one another and the earth.”

— Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker, *Saving Paradise*, quoted by Sheri Prud'homme, “Ecotheology,” (excerpt from *Justice on Earth*, page 32)



UUs around the country are reading *Justice on Earth*. Have you started reading yet?

The book is full of provocative ideas like the one above! Please join fellow congregants on Saturday, January 12 from 1:00–3:00 p.m. for a discussion about the ideas in the book and ways we can work toward greater justice for our planet and all living beings.

The book is available in our bookstore during coffee hour, as well as from the UUA bookstore online.

(Note: you'll get a 20 percent discount and support our congregation if you buy it from our bookstore!)

For more information about the Common Read program, see:

<https://www.uua.org/books/read>

For information about UUCSS's participation in the Common Read, please contact Catherine Buckler: bucklercath@gmail.com

UUCSS 101 for UUCSS Visitors

Sunday, January 13, 2019

If you are a visitor who would like to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and UUCSS in particular or about the process for becoming a member, please join us at our monthly UUCSS 101 for an informal gathering with folks from the Membership Committee. We meet following the service in the Triangle Room, which is adjacent to the Community Hall where coffee hour is underway. Grab a cup of coffee or tea, and bring your questions. We look forward to seeing you!

Save the Date!

WORLD CAFÉ-STYLE FEEDBACK

On **January 27** after the service, the UUCSS Strategic Planning Task Force will hold a World Cafe-style feedback event as part of the process of preparing our first 3-year rolling strategic plan. We will present a synthesis of data gathered from committees and other sources and pose crucial questions to the congregation. Feedback gathered will be critical in informing the construction of the final Strategic Plan. Please plan to come and contribute your voice to the UUCSS Strategic Plan!

Jazz@UUCSS



A Herbie Nichols Centennial Celebration

with

THE DAN ROBERTS QUARTET

Sunday, January 20, 2019 ♦ 4-5:30 pm

Dan Roberts, Piano

Matvei Sigalov, Violin

Dave Sanders, Guitar

Tom Baldwin, Bass

Join us for the Winter edition of **jazz@uucss** as we celebrate pianist **Herbie Nichols** (1/3/19–4/12/63). This concert will be the first in a series of centennial tributes and will include some of Herbie's unrecorded compositions. **Dan Roberts** is a pianist, arranger, and composer living in Washington, DC, performing at many of the top jazz venues in the area, and sharing the stage with nationally and internationally celebrated jazz artists.

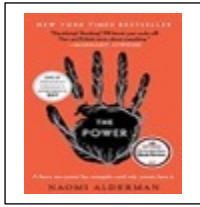
Suggested donation \$10 (\$5 students/seniors)

Children 12 and under free

jazz@uucss is a quarterly concert series produced by the UUCSS Music Committee and jazz scholar Bertrand Uberall to provide an affordable, listener-friendly venue for jazz in the DC area, create new audiences for outstanding young musicians, and foster connections between UUCSS and the local jazz community.

CONNECT (continued)

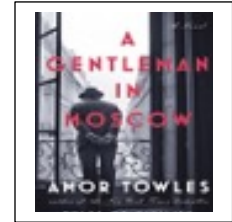
WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP



The Women's Book Group meets on the fourth Monday of each month. We are an informal group that has been meeting since 2000, and we are open to interested readers; there is no long-term obligation. Please contact dweiner04@gmail.com for additional details. At our next meeting on January 28, we will discuss *The Power* by Naomi Alderman.

MEN'S BOOK READING GROUP

We are reading *A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Towles, described by many as “delightful,” “brimming with humor,” and “a salve” for our “disordered world.” We will meet to discuss the book at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 13, at the home of **Richard Lorr**, 302 Windsor Street, Silver Spring, MD. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Richard (rlorr4@gmail.com), get the book, and come to the next meeting. Hope to see you there!



EVENTS IN BRIEF

JANUARY 5, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon. Quiet Day, begins in Sanctuary.

JANUARY 6, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

JANUARY 12, 1:00–3:00 p.m. Discussion of UU Common Read, *Justice on Earth*, Sanctuary.

JANUARY 13, 12:00 noon. UUCSS 101 for visitors, Community Hall.

JANUARY 20, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

JANUARY 20, 4:00–5:30 p.m. jazz@uucss, Dan Roberts Quartet, Sanctuary.

JANUARY 27, 12:00 noon. World Café-style Feedback on Strategic Plan, Sanctuary

FEBRUARY 3, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

FEBRUARY 17, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

MARCH 3, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

MARCH 17, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

APRIL 14, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

APRIL 28, 12:00 noon–2:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn, Comparative Religions, Chapel.

APRIL 28–MAY 5, 2019. Candidating Week—Final ministerial candidate preaches at the worship service on April 28, meets with congregants and staff throughout the week, and preaches again on May 5. Congregational meeting on May 5, vote on the motion to call the candidate. (Hold May 5–12 as backup.)

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

The UUCSS Staff wishes all our UUCSS members, friends, and visitors a very Happy New Year!

Melinda Yalom, Church Administrator,
Catherine Boyle, Director of Religious Education,
Michael Holmes, Music Director





UUCSS

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Submissions to the *Uniter* are due by the 20th of the prior month. Send information and visuals to uniter@uucss.org.

Format guidelines for submissions: Text must be in a form that it can be edited, either in a Microsoft Word file or in the body of an email that can be copied and pasted. Graphics must be in a format in which they can be repositioned and resized—jpeg is greatly preferred.

The newsletter is published September–June by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring.

Co-editors are **Jane Larrick** and **Stephanie McConachie**.

To receive a PDF email version of the newsletter, contact the church office at administrator@uucss.org.

To receive a mailed copy of the *Uniter* for the year, please send **\$24 to UUCSS, Attention: Collector**.

Church office hours

Monday: 1–4 p.m.

Tuesday–Thursday: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Church website: www.uucss.org