

Rev. Karen G. Johnston
Minister

Jillian Post
Director,
Religious Education

Nicholas Place
Music Coordinator

Linda Jay
President
Board of Trustees

The Unitarian Society, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation

176 Tices Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816
732.246.3113

www.unitariansociety.org
#ueeastbrunswick

Sunday Services 10:30 a.m.

January 7, 2018 Four Essential Things Rev. Karen G. Johnston

We'll explore what 2017 Ware Lecturer Bryan Stevenson has to say about what is necessary to bring about justice. This death row lawyer and MacArthur Genius Grant recipient says there are four essential things: 1) get proximate, 2) change the narrative, 3) stay hopeful, and 4) be willing to be uncomfortable. And there just might be a visit from god and Love in the mix.

January 14, 2018 A Service in Service of Service: Appreciation Sunday Leadership Development Committee and Rev. Karen

Service is the rent we pay for living on this earth. It's also the rent we pay to ensure and enrich community and this very congregation. This service will be one of appreciation for all who serve this congregation, as well as one of inspiration to grow our sense of service even bigger. At this service, we will be conducting a Reverse Offering – all present will be given the chance to Do Good in the World by using our congregation's resources to make a difference in the community.

January 21, 2018 The Promise & The Practice The Racial Justice Team

Responding to the call from within our larger faith movement, aware of our own history, listening to our hearts and minds, we turn towards what is our part to make the world whole -- how do we address white supremacy in our midst? How do we lean into our best selves?

January 28, 2018 What Price, Dignity? Rev. Dawn Fortune

The first principle of Unitarian Universalism affirms and promotes the inherent worth and dignity of all people. That is a lofty declaration of intent, but what does it look like in real life? Cornel West tells us that justice is what love looks like in public. So what does human dignity look like in our world? What does it cost us to treat people with dignity? Join us to examine the many ways we can affirm the dignity of our neighbors and ourselves.

Rev. Dawn Fortune is a Unitarian Universalist minister serving as ¾ time minister to the UU Congregation of the South Jersey Shore, in Galloway, NJ. Ze is a graduate of Andover Newton Theological School and studied sexuality and religion at the Pacific School of Religion.



Table of Contents

Sunday Services...1

Musings from
Your Minister...2

Religious
Education...3

Stewardship...4

Save the Date...4

Child Dedications...5

Children's Hymn...5

Reverse Offering...6

New Member
Corner...6

Aging with Grace...7

TUS News &
Notes...7, 8

VanWickle
Memorial...9

Detention in
Elizabeth...10

Bathroom Signage...10

TUS Happenings...10

TUS Calendar...11

Information...12

Musings from Your Minister:

We ask new visitors what brought them to TUS. The answers might surprise you. It surprised me. The number one answer: our new visitors decided to drop in and check us out after driving by. That's cool to know. But it's also pretty amazing for two reasons.

Reason #1: current wisdom is that new visitors spend up to a year checking out congregations online (web site, Facebook, even Yelp reviews) before they ever set foot in the place. What our new visitors are reporting seems to buck this trend.

Reason #2: we don't make it easy for folks passing by to know who we are, what we do, or when we meet! Have you ever noticed that our beautiful sign on Tices Lane is, indeed, beautiful, but also not particularly well-lit? And sometimes hard to read? And if you don't know what a "Unitarian Society" is, you can't figure out much by the sign? Have you noticed that we don't say anything that tells people what time or day we meet?

In my Christmas Eve sermon, I told the story of multiple strangers who have contacted us over the past couple of month to share their appreciation for the signs we have put out on Tices Lane. Not the big blue one. The ones with the affirming message that convey our Unitarian Universalist values. Originally, we had two yard signs along Tices (and there's the one close to our building entrance), but one from along the road was stolen. You can see at the bottom of this page what they say – they're small and are hard to read unless you are up close.

Our values matter to us. And, it turns out, they matter to others in the wider community. It is a positive thing that we put out an affirming message in a public place – that we make our values and ourselves more visible. For us and for others out there waiting to hear just this message.

I wonder if the new year that is upon us might bring opportunities for us to choose to be more visible, to make our values and our message more widely available? It can happen, but it won't do it on its own. It's really up to us to make it happen.

I'm blessed to be on this journey with you,

Rev. Karen

IN THIS CONGREGATION, WE BELIEVE:
LOVE IS LOVE
BLACK LIVES MATTER
CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL
NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL
WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS
ALL GENDERS ARE WHOLE, HOLY, & GOOD

 UUJ.ORG/IMAGES

WE ARE:

ALL CONNECTED

STRONGER TOGETHER

LOVE'S HANDS IN THE WORLD

CALLED TO CREATE JUSTICE

**RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE
ANOTHER AND THE EARTH**

 UUJ.ORG/IMAGES

**WE LOVE OUR
NEIGHBORS**

IMMIGRANT LGBTQ

OF COLOR WITH DISABILITIES

OF ALL AND ANY FAITHS

 UUJ.ORG/IMAGES



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS



FROM YOUR DRE, JILLIAN POST

Book Drive/Hot Cocoa Sale on January 7th and 21st

The Harry and UU class of 3rd through 6th graders will be holding a Book Drive/Hot Cocoa Sale on Sunday January 7th and Sunday, January 21st. The purpose of this event is to help our kids learn how to organize a social action project and address illiteracy in our global/local community. Contribute “a book or a buck” and get a cup of hot cocoa. If you miss this event on the designated Sundays, you can contribute books throughout the month of January. We’re looking for easy reader books but will accept any new or used books. The collection will be distributed to local organizations that need to increase their supply. Any proceeds will be used to buy even more books for the drive. Thank you in advance for your support.



2018 Mystery Pals coming soon!

Wow, how time flies. This intergenerational program will kick off on February 4th by matching congregants with the RE children. Post messages to our Mystery Pals board (anonymously at first) and get to know some cool things about each other. We’ll end with another yummy brunch on February 25th. If you are interested in participating, the sign-up sheets will be available by mid-January and will be featured on a table in the lobby.



Save the Date – March 25th Congregational Town Hall

Join the Religious Education Program for a provocative Congregational “Town Hall” on March 25th, after coffee hour. Preparation for this event includes four parts:



- 1) Lynn Fryer, Rev. Karen and I attended a Fall professional workshop entitled, “A New Vision for Faith Formation”.
- 2) I have been part of a 6-part webinar series based on a white paper called, “The Death of Sunday School”!!
- 3) Outreach, I’m calling “Conversations with Your DRE” is ongoing. TUS families can learn about changing demographics and new RE models, while sharing their wants and needs as we hone our congregational vision.
- 4) Finally, on March 25th, the town hall will take place with what promises to be a fruitful discussion on the direction of Religious Education programs in our faith tradition.

We need your input, so mark your calendars!

Giving Tree Gifts Delivered—THANK YOU!

The Religious Education Program completed this year’s Giving Tree Project on December 19th with the delivery of our gifts to the Ozanam Family Shelter. (Thank you Marie Phelan for the timely delivery.) We “adopted” 6 families this year for a total of 24 gifts. Congregants also contributed some special care bags and even a few spare gifts which will all be distributed to families at the shelter. We’ve received a preliminary emailed thank you from the project director at Ozanam and a thank you card is on the way to the congregation. Thank you TUSians for helping to make a few families’ holidays a little brighter!!





**For All That
Is Our Life**
**STEWARSHIP OF
THIS PLACE & PEOPLE**

SAVE THE DATE:

**MARCH 4
CANVASS BREAKFAST**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- 2/7 Community Meeting—Memorial to Victims of VanWickle Slave Ring
- 2/18 Congregational Meeting -- Presentation of Budget
- 2/25 Mystery Pals Luncheon
- 3/4 Canvass Breakfast (morning)
- 3/4 Death Cafe (late afternoon)
- 3/17 St. Patrick's Day Fellowship Fest
- 3/25 Town Hall: Death of Sunday School

Stewardship Season

February 1 through April 30 is Stewardship Season, where we reflect on our financial care of this place to ensure its vibrancy now and into the future.

One of the responsibilities of membership is to fulfill a financial pledge each year to sustain the work of this place. We know that there are some who are giving all they can. For you, we thank you and are blessed by your presence.

We know that there are others who might give more, knowing that we are the only ones who will give to sustain this place -- while other worthy causes may have a large donor base, we know who are donor base is: it is each of you, a small and mighty group of people committed to this congregation.

Please save March 4 in your calendar, whether friend or member, to attend our annual Canvass Breakfast.

For All That Is Our Life

"Closer to home..."

"I had been giving a considerable amount of money to larger causes, national causes, environmental groups, things of that sort.

Last year, I made a concerted decision that I would be bringing my charity money closer to home. I made my ten percent pledge increase last year by decreasing my contribution to the Smithsonian. At the same time, I gave more to Philomusica and my local public radio station and to TUS.

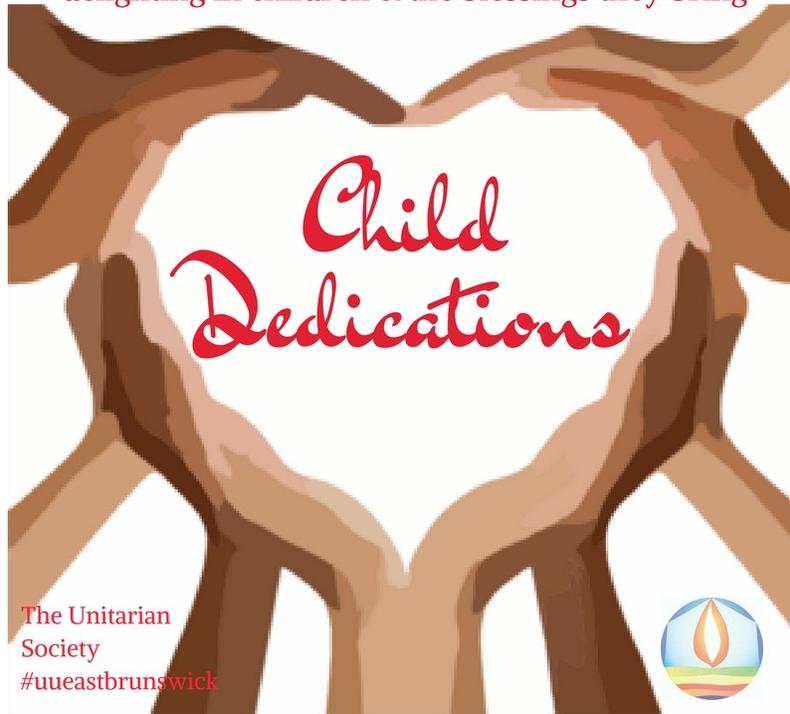
It wasn't just that I was thinking of this congregation. I was thinking of making my charitable contributions closer to home and less to faceless, larger organizations."

~ Clif Ashcraft, TUS member



STEWARSHIP OF THIS PEOPLE & THIS PLACE 2018

celebrating families in all their many variations
delighting in children & the blessings they bring



At the request of parents, we conduct child dedication ceremonies for infants, recently adopted children, or children whose families have recently become members of the congregation or who never got around to having a dedication. Sometimes these are called Child Blessings or Child Naming ceremonies.

Child dedications are joyous occasions with elements that commonly include:

- A blessing for the child
- An expression of the parent or parents' hopes for the child
- A promise by the congregation to support and nurture the child in its spiritual life
- The presentation of a rose to symbolize the balance of beauty and hurt that are part of every life.

Parents have the option to invite others (children, guardians, godparents, etc.) to participate. In consultation with the minister, parents typically have a choice whether to hold the dedication in private or during a Sunday worship service. Because these ceremonies involve a commitment from the congregation to the child, ceremonies that take place during Sunday service are reserved only for families whose parents or grandparents are members of TUS. There is no fee for this.

For those who are non-members, or folks in the wider community, Reverend Karen takes great joy in crafting a private blessing. There is a fee for this service. Please contact Megan, our Office Administrator at uutus@comcast.net if you are interested.



We are very excited to be introducing three new children's recessional hymns to the congregation. From these three, we will together decide which hymn best fits our needs and will become our regular hymn.

We have been singing the "Reeb Children's Benediction" hymn since November. In January we'll begin our next 2-month try out with "Children's Blessing" and in March, 2 months of "As you Journey" to the tune of "Frere Jacque." We look forward to hearing your thoughts!

- Nick Place, Music Coordinator

Reverse Offering: Do Good in the World

By experiencing generosity, we grow it within ourselves.

What is a Reverse Offering?

As part of a Sunday Service, instead of congregants putting money into the offering baskets (with it going towards pledges or Cash-in-Basket), money is in the offering baskets and is given out to Do Good in the world. The board of trustees, in conversation with Rev. Karen, have made the bold decision to invite you into this Reverse Offering, TUS Style.



The Guiding Rules

- 1) **Do Good** by giving it away.
 - 2) **Magnify the Power** (strongly encouraged): Join your offering with others to grow its impact. Match it with your own money. Ask your friends/family. See if your online communities will join in with their generosity.
 - 3) **Tell Them It's from TUS** – either directly or with a sticker provided (optional).
 - 4) **Tell Your Story**: At our February 18 service, there will be a chance to share stories of Doing Good.
- If you look on the internet, you will see that this is not a new idea. Many houses of worship have done this. Many UU congregations have done this. Here's a video from one in Texas detailing what they did with their reverse offering: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsXFuHqetEM>

IMPORTANT: to take part in this Reverse Offering, YOU MUST BE PRESENT at our January 14 service. We look forward to seeing you there. If you have questions about the logistics or financials of our Reverse Offering, you are welcome to reach out to Rev. Karen or to any member of the board.



NEW MEMBER CORNER

The newest member to sign the Membership Book is actually not a newcomer to TUS.

Tony Razzano had been an active member in the past, and we are so happy he has returned.

Tony was raised in South River, and after attending Jersey City State College to study elementary education and history, he returned to South River where he taught junior high and middle school for 35 years. He has now retired from teaching.

Tony has been married to his wife, Linda, for 29 years. They have a son and a daughter. Tony shares his home with his wife, Linda, his daughter, Angela, and two cats, Lily and Maggie.

Tony says he was originally drawn to Unitarian Universalism because he didn't believe in the tenets of any of the major organized religions. He says he finds the people in our community to be very welcoming, and he values the UU principle of acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.

In his spare time, Tony loves to read, usually nonfiction. He is currently reading *1775: A Good Year for a Revolution*. He loves Broadway shows. After his retirement from teaching, he began a new career.

Tony works as a psychic entertainer/mentalizer.



Aging with Grace: Ourselves, Our Loved Ones

This two-part conversation group, facilitated by Esther Barcun, MSW, long-time Friend of the congregation, is an opportunity to talk about the process of aging in ourselves and in our family members in a safe space. While you can come to either one, we encourage you to come to both to grow the conversation from one Sunday to the next.

January 21 and 28.



We'll start at 12:15 in Room 4.

Light lunch will be provided.

This is part of our ongoing conversation about how to live fully our mortal lives.



Weather Preparations

If there is a state of emergency, automatically the service will be cancelled.

At other times, Rev. Karen and the Board chair, will consult about the weather.

Otherwise, keep a look out on our **web site**, our **Facebook page**, and for an **email** to everyone currently on our email list -- if we are closing or cancelling service, we will announce it in all those places, aiming to have the word out no later than 9am.

If we do cancel the Sunday service, a link will be sent out that day on Facebook and in the email to the congregation, if you would like to join the virtual service on Zoom.

Christmas Eve Service 2017:

Spiritual Nourishment for Leaders

Spiritual Nourishment for Leaders is cancelled for January

It will be back **February 6**, reading chapter 3, "Leadership Makes It or Breaks It."

If you haven't attended yet, you can still join up. There's a copy of the book we are reading, Mike Durrall's, "The Almost Church Revitalized" in Rev. Karen's mailbox.

We meet 6:30 -8:00 -- bring your own dinner with you and we'll break bread and share our thoughts with each other.





TREASURERS TIDBITS

Bob Munson



You May Have Wondered: Can the Treasurer use some help? Yes! “Plastic Wrangler” handles all things dealing with Credit/Debit cards. You’ve seen how we can read Credit and Debit cards for Scrip purchases, pledges and CIB donations. We’ve also issued Debit cards to Megan (Office Administrator), Jillian (DRE) and Susanne (Montessori Administrator) to make vouchering simpler. The “Plastic Wrangler” can pretty much set their own schedule one or two hours a week.

See Bob Munson or a member of the Leadership Development Team for more information!

Scrip

Grocery store card (aka “scrip”) purchases by credit/debit card (Visa, MC, Discover or AmEx) are now available. We offer \$50 and \$100 cards for Stop and Shop and Shop-Rite. Of course cash and checks are still accepted (and preferred, since we don't share the 5% profit with credit/debit card companies).



See Lynne, Judy, or Harriet in the lobby before or after the service to purchase cards —and remember, they make great holiday gifts!

Cash In Basket for January

Jan 7 - Elijah's Promise

<http://www.elijahspromise.org>

Jan 14 - First Friends NJ and NY

firstfriendsnjny.org

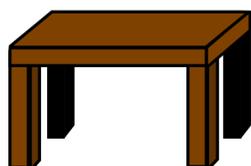
Jan 21 & 28 - Black Lives of UU

<https://www.uua.org/giving/areas-support/funds/promise-and-practice>



Our updated directory is now available for distribution to congregants. Thank you Judy Grasberg, Jackie Held-Rubin, and Megan Britton, as well as Angela Pineiro for her business' work on publishing it, for the numerous hours they put into making sure that we are able to be in touch with each other. The directory is such an essential tool to building and sustaining community in this congregation.

Old Conference Table—Yours for the taking!



The large, heavy table in the meeting room opposite the TUS office is being replaced in January with a lovely, more functional oval conference table with plenty of leg room.

If anyone would like the old table (63" X 48") it is yours for free as long as you take it away. Please contact Cindy Mussman (cindymussman@gmail.com) if interested.

TUS now has a YouTube Channel



Did you miss last week's sermon? Not to worry, you can now watch the sermon on our very own YouTube Channel. Go to the website (www.unitariansociety.org) and click on YouTube Channel on the top menu.

Most sermons will be posted here along with videos from other TUS activities. Check back often!

TUS Office Hours for 2018 are:

Monday—Friday, 10am-4:30pm



**Memorial to the Victims
of the Van Wickle Slave Ring:
We Can Build It**

**Memorial to the Victims of the Van Wickle Slave Ring:
You Can Help Make It Happen**

In October, the East Brunswick Township Council has decided to not even vote on changing the name of Van Wickle Road, even though it is named after a judge who sent nearly one hundred African Americans into permanent slavery in 1818, at a time when they would have experienced freedom if they had stayed in New Jersey.

TUS member, Peter Kahn, has proposed to the Council the idea of ensuring we cannot forget this infamous deed in our history by creating a memorial. This is one way we can not be burdened by our local history, but liberated from and by it. Early indications are that there is support for this.

We would like to have more folks at TUS be a part of this project, as well as to help build community support for such a memorial. We've been in conversation with a public historian at Rutgers, the head of the Middle Passage Project (a national organization), and the primary organizer behind the recent installation of a slave memorial marker in Camden – all of whom want to support local efforts for a memorial.

It will take planning and fundraising, community organizing and education. The nation continues our active conversation about confederate monuments (the New Yorker just had an article on December 4, plus there was much attention in August due the presence of white supremacists in Charlottesville). We can be at the forefront of shaping the conversation locally, in our own backyard.

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 9, at 7pm in the Minister's Office. You are welcome to attend and become active in this exciting project.

~ Rev. Karen revkarentus@gmail.com

Update

Restroom Inclusivity Task Force was created with a charge outlining their purpose. The board is in the process of inviting three people to staff this task force.

It will be up to this task force to develop what the signs look like and how to implement the change to permanent inclusive signage



**FRIENDLY FOR
ALL GENDERS**



**FRIENDLY FOR
ALL GENDERS**

SENDING NOTES OF COMFORT &
FRIENDSHIP TO THOSE IN
DETENTION IN ELIZABETH

Our service on January 14 is about being of service - our appreciation for all of you who serve this congregation and inspiration for those of you to step into new roles or tasks to sustain this place and people. In keeping with the theme of being of service, at Coffee Hour there will be the opportunity to write notes (or making drawings) that will be collected and passed onto immigrant detainees, being held by Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Elizabeth.

Thank you, Rosemary Szedga, for organizing this on behalf of First Friends.



TUS Happenings

Buddhist Meditation Group

Saturday, January 6

daylong silent meditation retreat
(registration closed)

Sunday, January 21 at 12:15 pm

we will sit in meditation together. All adults are welcome to join, find us in the sanctuary at TUS.

Any question, contact Jackie at:
Jacalyn21@aol.com



Socrates Café®

Come and join our exploration of life's most profound and universal questions. More than just a conversation, we use Socrates' questioning approach to explore and challenge our assumptions, broaden our understanding, and consider different viewpoints relating to an infinite number of philosophical questions.

It's a great time for mental stimulation and fellowship. A rare chance to exercise your mind and challenge your thinking – just for the fun of it.

Socrates Café® takes place the second Sunday of every month

Next Meeting: **Sunday, Jan. 14**

Bagels & Coffee at 8:30 AM

Discussion Starts at 9:00AM - Ends at 10:00AM

Questions: Contact Doug at:
dougliebau@gmail.org



Art Exploration Group

Meets Wednesdays
at 7pm in classroom 8
1/3, 10, 17, 24, 31
weather permitting

Souper Sunday

Join us for our next Souper Sunday on
January 14!



Our soup makers have served up some fabulous soups each year and this is a great way to raise some money for TUS while also warming up your belly. Souper Sunday is usually the second Sunday of each month and is served right after the Sunday service. We can always use new soup makers, so please contact Carol Church at car227ol@hotmail.com if you want to share your soup making talents!



Shakespeare Reading Group

The Shakespeare Reading Group will take a break during the month of January, so no meetings are scheduled. We will resume meeting in **February**, 2018. Watch the February Newsletter for the dates. For more info, contact Harriet Lindblom (732-846-3395 or Dhindblom@aol.com).



Women's Group

Meeting **Thursday 1/25 at 1pm**
weather permitting, TUS Kitchen.
Contact Joyce Browning for more info.

TUS CALENDAR

For The Fridge



JANUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 TUS Office Closed New Year's Day	2 Lockbox Change	3 7:00 pm Art Experience Lab	4	5	6 9:00am-5:00pm Buddhist Meditation Retreat
7 10:30 a.m. Sunday Service 12:00 pm Membership Mtg 12:15 pm Buddhist Meditation Group	8 7:00 pm UU Faith Action NJ 7:30 pm Philomusica	9 7:00 pm UMS Board	10 7:00 pm Art Experience Lab 7:15 pm Sunday Service Committee	11 4:30 pm Elijah's Promise	12	13
14 8:30 am Socrates Cafe 10:30 am Sunday Service 12:00 pm Souper Sunday 12:15 pm RE Committee	15 7:30 pm Philomusica TUS Office Closed Martin Luther King Jr Day	16 7:30 pm TUS Board Meeting	17 7:00 pm Art Experience Lab 12:00 pm Membership Committee	18	19	20
21 10:30 am Sunday Service 12:15-2:15 Aging With Grace Workshop	22 7:30 pm Philomusica	23	24 Newsletter Due 7:00 pm Art Experience Lab 7:00 pm Committee On Ministries	25 1:00 pm Women's Group	26	27
28 12:15-2:15 Aging With Grace Workshop	29 7:30 pm Philomusica	30	31 7:00 pm Art Experience Lab			

The Unitarian Society,
a Unitarian Universalist
Congregation
176 Tices Lane
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
732.246.3113
www.unitariansociety.org
#ueeastbrunswick

Welcome All Into Our House

NEWSLETTER FACTS: The deadline for the February 2018 newsletter is **Wednesday, January 24th.**

Leave a submission in the newsletter box in the TUS office or send by email to uutus@comcast.net.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS: Announcements are sent out on Wednesday afternoon. Please submit your information to uutus@comcast.net no later than 10:00 am Tuesday.

UU WORLD MAGAZINE: If any TUS member is not receiving their free copy of UU World, or if you have a change of address, please contact Office Administrator, Megan, at uutus@comcast.net.

SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEKLY: The list is sent typically on Tuesday. Please send suggested events or meetings to sj.ueeastbrunswick@gmail.com no later than Monday evening.

THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY

President	Linda Jay
Vice President	Kathy Scarbrough
Treasurer	Bob Munson
Secretary	Barbara Kubey
Trustee	Clif Ashcraft
Trustee	Doug Liebau
Trustee	Rich Phelan
Trustee	Eldridge Dunn
Youth Representative	Vacant
Montessori School Board Chair	Marty Mussman

UNITARIAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL BOARD

Marty Mussman, Chair
Paula Lieb, Vice Chair
Joyce Browning
Eileen Chant
Kathy Huston
Rose Vydelingum
Joy Ward
Himanshu Pandit

TUS STAFF EMAIL ADDRESSES

Rev. Karen G. Johnston, Minister—revkarentus@gmail.com

Megan Britton, Office Administrator—uutus@comcast.net

Jillian Post, Director of Religious Education—tusdrejillian@gmail.com

Nick Place, Music Coordinator— NickPlaceTUS@gmail.com

Susanne Biancamano, UMS Director—sbiancamano@comcast.net



If you're not receiving your Wednesday weekly emails or newsletter by email, check your secondary email boxes, such as junk, promotions, social, to make sure the emails aren't going there. If you're still not receiving emails, and should, or want to, please reach out to Megan, the Office Administrator, at uutus@comcast.net to add you to the email list.

Rev. Karen is available for Pastoral Care at (732) 649-8110 (voice message or text is fine). Mondays are Rev. Karen's day of rest and Thursdays are her day for writing sermons/focusing on worship. She limits responses to email and phone calls on these days and does not attend TUS meetings. If you would like to see her, it is best to email her to set up a time. Please go to this link to make an appointment: calendly.com/revkarentus For emergencies call or text.