



**From the
Minister's Mailbox**

A new year is upon us. Every turning of the year, I think of the 1996 Counting Crows song, "Long December", there's this couplet in the song: "A long December and there's reason to believe maybe this year will be better than the last".

We never know, if this year will be better or not. But it's part of the resilience of the human heart and spirit to believe that it is possible for things to get better. Sometimes, we say to ourselves or out loud that things will certainly get worse before they get better. Sometimes, we say to ourselves or out loud that there's no place to go but up. We have a lot of expressions in our English language that center around hope, and the notion that things might improve.

This past year was tough in many ways, for many of us. Beyond any concept of partisanship, many of us have seen things happening on the national stage, in our government, in our local politics, in our society, in our schools, everywhere, that we find disheartening. We have seen things that make us question the moral fiber of this nation, that make us long for the ideals that America has never quite yet lived up to. This year has brought concern, anxiety, fear and worry to the forefront for many of us. We have kept working, objecting, marching and writing and talking.

The challenge of this past year and the hope that this will be better than the last is what makes me so proud of the social justice RE unit that USR engages in in January. For me, this seems like a way to say to the world, to our children, to each other: we can do more than hope, we can start the year with the right intentions. We can do more than believe, we can work, from day 1 of this new year, to make this year better than the last.

I know we can't control things — not big national things and not the tragedies that befall us in our own lives. But we can determine that we will not be passive recipients of what the future holds but active participants in our lives.

And so I invite you, when you consider making resolutions, to consider that you might make on taking into account the full desire that this year be better than the last. And perhaps consider making one each on three levels:

What can I do, consistently over the year, to make my own life better?

What can I do, consistently over the year, to help my immediate community (family, congregation, town) have a better year?

What can I do, consistently over the year, to make 2018 a better year in the wider world?

You'll notice I said, "consistently over the year". I say this because it isn't enough to do one thing in January. When we commit to a better year, we are committing to the whole of that year. It's not easy, but that's what commitment is, a long-term, difficult endeavor the fruits of which are well worth it.

If you want to share your new year commitments, please do! Over facebook, or email. We'd love to hear what you'll be up to.

Blessings,
Rev. Sarah



Reflections

January is one of my favorite months of the year. The air is brisk, the world is quiet, and the entire possibility of the new year is stretched out before us. It is a perfect time to rest and reflect on how we would like to spend our time and energy for the coming year. It is also a wonderful time to reconnect with friends, family, and the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood community. If there has been an activity at the congregation that you have been wanting to try but have been putting off attending for any number of reasons this time of year is a great time to take the risk of trying something new.

In the world of Adult and Children's Religious Education we have quite a few wonderful offerings in the month of January that are great spaces for both new and more established members alike to find a home.

We are still seeking youth and adult volunteers for our annual Martin Luther King Day event (**Monday January 15**) in which we provide a meal and fellowship with children from C.A.M.P. YDP, an afterschool and family enrichment nonprofit located in Paterson, NJ. Please be in touch with Sean Brennan if you are interested.

Our monthly small groups continue to be wonderful times to get to know fellow congregants and engage in deep conversations. Friday Night Out, our dinner group for families and young adults will meet at USR at 6:30PM on Friday, **January 12th** and then walk into downtown Ridgewood to share a meal together. Faith Talks at the Steel Wheel, our monthly drop-in group for thematic theological discussion will meet at the Steel Wheel tavern in downtown Ridgewood at 6:30PM on Wednesday, **January 17th**. Finally, LIFFT, our bi-weekly group for elders and retirees, will meet on Friday, **January 5th** at 1PM at USR in the Fellowship Room.

If you or your family are interested in any of these groups please be in touch with me at usr.dre1@gmail.com. Please also keep your eyes peeled for new small groups sprouting up later this Winter and Spring.

Wishing you well in the spirit of the new year,
Rev. Dylan Doyle-Burke



Hello from your youth coordinator,

Happy holidays to all of our youth and families! I hope all of our youth have a great holiday break, and we are looking forward to a great 2018!

The Sunday meetings for our combined youth group have been going strong over the past month with discussions about consent, covenant, Beatles lyrics, and the history of the Christmas holiday. We sent 3 youth to the CER regional youth con in Cherry Hill, NJ and another 4 to a leadership development con last week at Montclair UU. We also had our Friday Game Night at the beginning of the month when we went to the Ridgewood Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

Coming up this month we'll be having our third annual Christmas Break overnight event at CUC on Wednesday, December 27th-28th starting at 6 p.m., including our "cookie decorating Olympics." Youth in grades 9-12 are invited to come out to church and relax, play games, eat cookies, and hang out with your fellow youth group members. Coming in the new year our next Friday Game Night is January 5th at USR from 6 to 10 p.m., and the next youth con will be over the MLK Day weekend January 12-14th at the Plainfield UU Church.

The youth group Sunday meetings will stay at USR in January and return to CUC for February and March. Thanks again to our adult volunteers for all of their great work this year!

James



2017 has been a year of enormous change. While a large part of the change that we have witnessed has been for most of us very troubling, the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood has been fortunate to experience some positive change.

This time last year the Ministerial Search Committee was about to post our Congregational Record on line in order to begin the process of finding a new minister. We were in the midst of a somewhat unstable period of time that had resulted in a loss of interest and enthusiasm for many of us. For others, it was an exciting but uncertain time. Would we find someone that suited our needs? Would we have to go into another year of search? Would we enter the next year with another deficit budget?

I encourage everyone to take a step back and recognize how fortunate we were to find a new minister who both possessed the qualities for which we were searching, and also chose to accept our call. This could have been a very different year. We should not take for granted that we would find such an intelligent, promising, and approachable new minister.

Finding Rev. Sarah was the best thing to happen to the USR in years. We have seen a marked increase in participation, the arrival of newcomers, and I think a general sense of enthusiasm that had been lacking. In a rather discouraging time, I think that the USR has increasingly become a place of hope.

I wish you a happy New Year, a better 2018, and I thank you all for working to make this place the beacon for justice and love that we aspire to be.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

Upcoming Services

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| January 7th | "Beginning Again" - Rev. Dylan Doyle-Burke
This will be a Time for All Ages service.
Musician: Ron Levy, piano |
| January 14th | "Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday" - Rev. Dr. Sarah Lenzi
Musician: Ron Levy, piano; Michael Caldwell and Theron Cromer, tenors |
| January 21st | "How we Resist" - Rev. Dr. Sarah Lenzi
Musician: Ron Levy, piano |
| January 28th | Lay-Led Service sponsored by the Sunday Service Committee
Musician: Ron Levy, piano; Tom Urich, Bass Trombone |

CIRCLE OF LIFE

Our offer condolences to Member, Sophie Noel for the passing of her father.

We wish to acknowledge the passing of three long-time members of the USR:

Laura Aitken
Robert Deniston
Diane Ringstad

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families.

A New Year's Potluck

Please stay for a potluck lunch after the service and Town Hall meeting on **January 7, 2018**. Bring sandwiches, salad or a dessert to share. Beverages will be provided. See you there!

STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL



Society Auction

Saturday evening, January 27, 2018

Come and celebrate 50 years of fun and fellowship at the largest USR fundraiser!

WE NEED:

- Your auction offering -- click [here](#) to fill out the Society Auction Offering Form. Please note the offering form is due no later than **January 5th**. Items to offer might include dinners, bbq's, picnics, tickets to theatre and sporting events, vacation/getaway homes, cocktail parties. Does your company have a unique asset they would like to share, like a tour and tasting at a beer brewery or vineyard? Be creative and your generosity will do wonders for the USR.
- Wine and cash donations for the wine pull — contact Ralph Pleasic.
- Baked goods for dessert -- contact Tae Teramoto.

Make your reservations for the night of at a cost of \$25/person. Contact Robin Ritter and let her know if you need child care.

Questions? Contact Jeff Summerville or Suzanne Willis.

MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL

Newcomer's Brunch

Please join us for a fun, social and informative opportunity to meet with Rev. Sarah and Rev. Dylan on Sunday, **January 21st** at 11:30 a.m. for our New comer's Brunch. Brunch will be provided as well as child care, if needed. Invitations will be sent out beginning of January. Open to all visitors.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES COUNCIL

Crafts in Ridgewood Crafts Fair

We had a lovely craft fair this past November, which brought in new visitors and yielded a \$3,600 check to C.A.M.P. I'd like to thank the village of people who helped to put this event together. Starting with Carol Loscalzo, who has provided support to me since I took this position. Sally Lewis and her volunteers took care of the money receipts and Marshall Katzman handled all our social media promotions. Nicole Threlfall kept our Facebook page updated regularly and Mike Patterson took the time to post fliers all over town. Karen Ramsahai, Jeri Cohn and Elisabeth Mannschott handled the wine and food for the Friday night reception and Judy Silver and her gang sold baked goods on Saturday. Bob Cohn, Mike Patterson and Doug Goodell helped set up the event while Anita Young and Kristin Plumley and some of the Lewis' crew greeted visitors and registered them for the door prizes. And, I couldn't get anything done without the incredible staff at the Society: Ann Pareti, Chandrika Chowdhry and Donna Barrett. Special thanks go to Carol Wolf, who never says no and to my extremely supportive husband, Jeff Cagan.

Marcy Cagan

And a special thanks to Marcy Cagan, chair of the Craft Fair. Her creativity and organizational skills are strong and she does an excellent job leading the team!

Carol Loscalzo

Racial Justice Committee



There will be two ways locally to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. on Monday, **January 15**. One is at USR, see notice below!

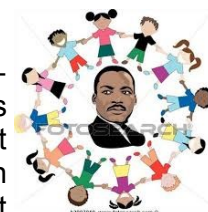
The other is to come to the 36th annual commemoration at the Ridgewood Methodist Church on Van Neste Square at 10 a.m. The theme this year is "The Fierce Urgency of Now" and the speaker will be the Rev. Calvin Samson, minister of the Shiloh Baptist Church in Harlem and a colleague of MLK. The service will be followed by a rally and a free lunch. It is sponsored by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Committee of Ridgewood and Glen Rock.

Please also know that the Racial Justice committee will meet on Thursday, January 4 at 7 p.m. Come join us.

Martin Luther King Day for Preschoolers, Children and Youth **January 15, 2018**

Let's celebrate our nation's diversity and host our friends in Paterson

For many years, our kids at the Unitarian Society have played with the C.A.M.P. YDP children for a day of fun. Preschoolers are downstairs directed by Karen Ramsahai, parents and C.A.M.P. staff. Elementary-age children are in Anderson where our youth will direct activities organized by Sean Brennan. Preschoolers through 12th grade can join the action at 9:30, and the lunch following. For all, there is professional entertainment beginning about 1:00. Make time to come for all or part of the day.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES COUNCIL

January Plate Collection



On Sunday, **January 14, 2018**, the plate collection will be donated to the People's Organization for Progress (P.O.P.). USR has had a long relationship with P.O.P. and it has become tradition to donate the collection on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday to this vibrant group. In 2017 POP continues to speak out powerfully against the killings of black citizens by police. These protests, all over the country, led to the Black Lives Matter movement of which POP is in the forefront in New Jersey, and our congregation supports and promotes. In 2017 POP continued a series of "Moral Mondays" marches to recall for all of us the principles on which our nation was founded.

On July 12, 2017 POP organized a Memorial March to commemorate the Newark uprising that occurred 50 years previously.

POP is an entirely volunteer organization. Checks payable to the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood, with POP on the memo line, may be placed in the collection plate on January 14, or mailed to the Society. Thank you.

Report from the Coming Together in Concert for Puerto Rico

The concert which was sponsored by Bergen Unitarian Universalist Relief Group (BUURG) and other community partners was a big success. The music was wonderful and the event netted \$7,000 for [Waves for Water](#). This incredible group focuses on bringing clean, portable water to those affected areas. Thanks to Mark Meding for representing USR at the event and to all who attended.

Save the Date: Women's March on NYC and Women's March on NJ

Women's Marches are planned for Saturday, **January 20** all around the country. The two closest to us are in Morristown (the NJ March from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.) and the Columbus Circle (NYC March from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) Both marches are publicizing primarily on Facebook. We will plan car pools to Morristown. Many are also taking public transportation into NY. Please contact Carol Loscalzo (clocalzo2@aol.com) if you want to be involved and would like to attend with others from USR. Is there anybody who would like to coordinate car pools, meeting places, etc.? All help greatly appreciated.

From NJ organizers:

We marched in Washington DC, our state capital of Trenton, and all across New Jersey one year ago. We showed the power, tenacity, and fierceness we have as women. This time we meet in Morristown on **January 20th** for the Women's March on New Jersey. Let us come together to celebrate our victories of the past year, charge our batteries for the new year, and send the message that our voices cannot be silenced.

NYC is using Eventbrite to gauge the numbers who will be attending.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-womens-march-on-nyc-tickets-39150171216>

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES COUNCIL

UU Outreach Auction Report

We are happy to report that the UU Outreach Auction raised \$34,000 for Bergen County charities, including Holley Center, Center for Hope & Safety, Bergen County Volunteer Medical Initiative, Family Promise and CoFiA, where Margaret White spends her time and energy.

Community of Friends in Action, Inc. (CoFiA) is a small 501 (c) 3 organization based in Eastern Bergen County working for better immigration policy and to support immigrant workers and their families. CoFiA provides a hot lunch once a week during the cold months, facilitates employment opportunities, assists in wage theft recovery, provides leadership training and support, offers individualized help with social services and other needs, English language instruction, and fosters positive communication between workers and communities. See www.cofia-nj.org for more information including volunteer opportunities.



Save the Date

Interfaith Celebration on Presidents Day

Please join us on **February 19th** at Bergen Community College, 4-8 p.m. to hear keynote speaker, Dr. Kusumita P. Pedersen. Learn about the following faiths: Baha'i, Hindu, Islam, Jain, Jewish, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Sikh, and our own UU faiths. All ages welcome. Free parking and free admission. Please see flyer on page 11 for additional details.

The Interfaith Brotherhood/Sisterhood Committee of Bergen County has been around for over 25 years. Unitarians have been invited to join this year and USR became a member a few months ago. The Peace and Justice Committee is looking forward to working with this committee and working with the organization on social justice issues. Please support this day.

We are also looking for volunteers to stand at the UU table on February 19th. Contact Anita Young if interested.

SAFE CONGREGATION RESPONSE TEAM

AED/CPR Training

Reminder to email usr.secretary@gmail.com if you would like to register for the AED/CPR Training offered by the Safe Congregation Response Team. See flyer on page 9.

SAVE THE DATE SAVE A LIFE



AED/CPR
Training Opportunity

The graphic features a red background with a white heart shape in the center. The text 'AED/CPR' is written in large white letters across the heart, and 'Training Opportunity' is written in smaller white letters below it. A white ECG line runs horizontally across the bottom of the red box. Below the red box is a dark red horizontal bar containing the date and snow date information.

Saturday, January 6th, 2018

Snow Date: Saturday, January 13th

FREE AED/CPR Training Opportunity

for USR Members and Friends

Certification will cover adults, children and infants

Saturday, January 6, 2018

9 am to 12 noon

(Snow Date: Saturday, January 13th)

Fellowship Room
The Unitarian Society
of Ridgewood
113 Cottage Place
Ridgewood, NJ

To register, please email the USR secretary, Chandrika Chowdhry at usr.secretary@gmail.com or call 201-444-6225.

Email Carol Loscalzo at closcalzo2@aol.com if you have any questions or require additional information.

Childcare available with two weeks notice:
email usr.dre1@gmail.com

Sponsored by the Safe Congregation Response Team

**SOCIETY CAFE
CONCERT SERIES
2017-18 SEASON PRESENTS...**



UPTOWN FLUTES

9-piece flute ensemble



Saturday, January 20, 2018

Concert at 8 p.m., doors open at 7:00 p.m.

The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood

113 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ

\$20 in advance via PayPal on our site:

www.societycafeconcertseries.com

\$25 at the door

\$5 at the door for ages 12-17, must be accompanied by an adult



**Please patronize
our sponsors**



INTERFAITH CELEBRATION

Pursuing Peace in Challenging Times

Presidents' Day – February 19, 2018

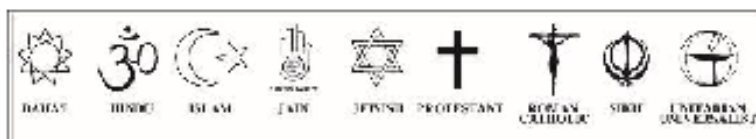
4 - 8 pm

**Technology Education Center, Room 128
(The Moses Center), Bergen Community College
400 Paramus Road, Paramus**

**Come learn about the Baha'i, Hindu, Islam, Jain, Jewish,
Protestant, Roman Catholic, Sikh and Unitarian
Universalist Faith Traditions**

- ◆ ALL AGES WELCOME
- ◆ FREE PARKING
- ◆ FREE ADMISSION
- ◆ REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

**Sponsored by Interfaith Brotherhood/Sisterhood Committee of
Bergen County &
Bergen Community College Center for Peace, Justice, and
Reconciliation**



INTERFAITH BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD COMMITTEE OF BERGEN COUNTY



**Keynote Speaker –
Dr. Kusumita P. Pedersen**

Kusumita P. Pedersen is Professor Emerita of Religious Studies at St. Francis College, New York, and has been part of the global interfaith movement for over thirty years. She was previously Executive Director of the Project on Religion and Human Rights and currently serves as Co-Chair of the Interfaith Center of New York. She is co-editor of *Earth and Faith: A Book of Reflection for Action*, and co-author of *Global Ethics in Practice*, and has published numerous essays on the interfaith movement, environmental ethics and human rights.

- ◆ Join the Interfaith dialogue
- ◆ Stroll through the Faith Fair
- ◆ Experience the meditation room
- ◆ Hear the perspectives of interfaith youth



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7:30 Connections/ Youth Rm	3 10:30-12:30 Coffee with Rev. Sarah at American Bulldog Café	4 7:00 Racial Justice Comm/ Conf. Rm	5 1:00 LIFFT/ Fellowship Rm 6:00 Friday Game Night/ Fellowship Rm 6:00 Friday Night Out/RE	6 9:00 AED/CPR Training/Fellowship Rm
7 10:00 Service “Beginning Again” - Rev. Dylan Doyle-Burke 11:30 Town Hall Meeting/Anderson 12:00 USR Potluck 12:30 Youth Group/ Youth Rm	8 12:30 Monday Lecture Series/ Fellowship Rm 7:00 Board of Trustees/Conf. Rm 7:45 Zen Meditation/Fellowship	9	10 10:30-12:30 Coffee with Rev. Sarah at American Bulldog Café	11 7:30 Adult Choir Practice/ Fellowship	12	13 9:00 AED/CPR Snow Date/ Fellowship Rm
14 10:00 Service “Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday” - Rev. Dr. Sarah Lenzi 11:30 Membership Mtg/ Conf. Rm 11:30 Reproductive Justice Mtg/Upstairs Rm 12:30 Youth Group/ Youth Rm	15 9:30 MLK Activities/Anderson and Fellowship	16 7:30 Connections/ Youth Rm	17 10:30-12:30 Coffee with Rev. Sarah at American Bulldog Café 7:30 One Book USR/Conf. Rm	18 7:30 Adult Choir Practice/ Fellowship	19 7:30 Film at CUC	20 7:00 Society Café Concert/Anderson
21 10:00 Service “How we Resist” - Rev. Dr. Sarah Lenzi 11:30 Newcomers Brunch/Conf. Rm 11:30 P&J Meeting/ Upstairs Mtg Rm 12:30 Youth Group/ Youth Rm	22 12:30 Monday Lecture Series/ Fellowship Rm 7:45 Zen Meditation/Fellowship	23	24 10:30-12:30 Coffee with Rev. Sarah at American Bulldog 6:30 Faith Talks at the Steel Wheel	25 7:30 Adult Choir/ Fellowship	26	27 6:30 Service Auction/Anderson and Fellowship
28 10:00 Service - Lay-led Service sponsored by the Sunday Service Committee	29 12:30 Monday Lecture Series/ Fellowship Rm 7:45 Zen Meditation/Fellowship	30	31 10:30-12:30 Coffee with Rev. Sarah at American Bulldog			

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Unitarian Society of Ridgewood

Mission Statement

Growing in mind and spirit,
We act together as a beacon for justice and love,
Transforming self and world. Adopted May 17, 2009

Invitation to Participate

Welcome! For over a hundred years this Society has been a place where free-thinking, broad-minded persons have come to participate in a vibrant, liberal religious community. In fulfillment of our current congregational mission we create a safe and loving environment that supports personal growth and provides ways for each individual to make a difference in the larger community.

We offer a stimulating Sunday service, an excellent religious education program for children and youth, and many educational, spiritual and social activities for adults. Every Sunday our Social Responsibilities Council has a table set up during Social Hour with information about social justice and charitable opportunities.

Anti-Racist Congregation

This Society is an [anti-racist congregation](#) committed to reflecting this commitment in the life and culture of the entire organization. Adopted May, 2002.

Living the Welcoming

We have been a Welcoming Congregation since 1998, supporting the rights of bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender people.

Safe Congregation

This Society is a Safe Congregation where practices and procedures serve to ensure all members, friends, adults, children and youth are treated with respect and protected from harassment and abuse.

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the
UNITARIAN
SOCIETY of
RIDGEWOOD

113 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ 07450



NOW accepting articles for January 24th deadline
@ usr.membership1@gmail.com