

# CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

## The First Universalist Society of Central Square

*A Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation*

3243 Fulton Street  
(Route 49, near Route 11)  
Post Office Box 429  
Central Square, New York  
13036-0429

*Our church building is  
handicapped accessible.*

Telephone: 315-668-6821

E-mail:  
uucentralsquare@gmail.com

*Church website:*  
*[http://www.  
centralsquareuu.com](http://www.centralsquareuu.com)*

Facebook page:  
[http://www.facebook.com  
/pages/UU-Central-Square  
/199139743511564](http://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square/199139743511564)



Please have articles for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than 5 P.M.  
on SUNDAY, JANUARY 31. He prefers to receive articles via e-mail.  
His e-mail address is [rhaskell@twcnny.com](mailto:rhaskell@twcnny.com).

**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.**

## **A MINISTERIAL MOMENT**

“I just did a newsletter piece,” I thought to myself when I got Bob’s reminder. “I mean, it must have been just last week!” But it wasn’t. As usual, Bob was right, and it had been almost a month. Kind of like finding I’d been sucked into a black hole in November and spat out again in late December. Where does the time go? I hear that from many people, particularly those about my age.



It could apply to a week, a month, or a lifetime. Time is very much on everyone’s mind as we meet the new year. Time is what the New Year’s celebrations are all about, making sure that we notice, that the stream of minutes and seconds are, at least in our minds, halted for a moment and due attention is paid to that inexorable flow. We look back and we see how change has happened all around us, many times unnoticed. We look forward and try to see down that misty road. We try to use the wisdom of our past to guide us. The past can be a good guide but at times it can be a misleading one. It takes all our discernment to know when the lessons of the past are applicable to this moment and when we are facing something that

has no precedent. I think we are confronting many issues for which the past does not prepare us. We have a unique history, as a religious group, of innovation. We are famous for blazing new trails, both in the way we relate to the wider world and the way in which we understand ourselves. I believe this is a time that cries out for those skills. May we be open to the challenge. Happy New Year.

The Rev. Andrea Abbott

## **THE REVEREND WEISSBARD CHOOSES “THE NAME OF THE HOLY” AS SERMON TOPIC**

The Rev. David Weissbard writes concerning his sermon for the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, January 3:

“Looking back over the sermons I’ve shared with you, I realize that there is a hole in my series on the Commandments. I have not addressed Number III, generally translated as ‘Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.’ So, what does that mean? What relevance does it have to 21st Century America? We’ll start the new year addressing those questions.”



## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP, MEDITATION**

Anyone who is interested in the Spiritual Development Group or in meditation is invited to contact Tim Hart via e-mail at [timhart@a-znet.com](mailto:timhart@a-znet.com) or via telephone at 315-439-2541.

**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote justice, equity and compassion in human relations.**

**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote acceptance of one another  
and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.**

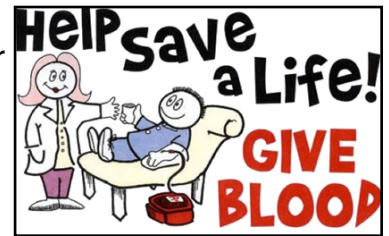
**GET A \$5 GIFT CARD WHEN YOU DONATE AT OUR RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE  
8 A.M. TO NOON ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 9**

Our last blood drive was quite successful. Let's keep that success going during our next blood drive scheduled from 8 a.m. until noon on Saturday, January 9.

In January, all donors get the added bonus of a \$5 gift card to Dunkin' Donuts.

For those of you who are able, please consider donating blood at this drive. It's easy and relatively painless, and it takes only an hour of your time and provides a life-saving gift to our community.

To schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-Red Cross, or you can sign up online by going to [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org). There is also a sign-up sheet in the church dining room where you can make an appointment.



I have placed a sign-up sheet in the dining room for volunteers to help with the drive. If you can help for even a short time on that day it will be much appreciated.

Please let your friends and neighbors know about the blood drive and be sure to tell them that we have one every two months. Many people like to get on a regular schedule when giving blood. If you have contacts within the community that might support us or partner with us for our drives, please get in touch with me and I will reach out to them.

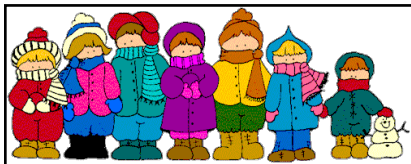
Thank you for your help.

Ellen LaPine

Social Justice Committee Blood Drive Coordinator

**WINTER COAT DONATIONS**

Thank you to everyone who donated winter coats this year. Because Catholic Charities of Onondaga County had enough coats for the people whom they serve this year, our contributions of coats were delivered to InterFaith Works of Central New York. InterFaith Works was holding a coat drive and was more than happy to have the coats. InterFaith Works provides many services for



refugees of all faiths. InterFaith Works provides new refugees with clothing, helps them find places to live, and furnishes their new homes with many of the basics that we take for granted.

The halls and rooms at InterFaith Works are filled with people who speak different languages and wear traditional attire from many different countries. Many of these people come from climates where they have never required warm outer clothing.

Your donations will help keep people warm in their first New York winter. Thank you.

Ann Peterson

**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote a free and responsible search  
for truth and meaning.**



**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.**

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

The Social Justice Committee did not have an official meeting during December. The January date is to be announced.

On December 1, a donation of \$100 was made to Pure World for the World from our congregation. This qualified for a matching gift.



We will continue to collect gently used, clean winter items, including coats, hats, gloves and scarves for the InterFaith Works of Central New York. Ann Peterson took our first donations to InterFaith Works the week of December 20.

Our collection of magazines and books was taken to the Justice Center during December. This is an ongoing project, with everyone invited to share the readings before the donation to the Justice Center.

Don't forget to sign up as a volunteer or a donor for the Saturday, January 9, American Red Cross Blood Drive. The hours for the drive are 8 a.m. to noon.

We will keep you up to date on the local Farm Workers and Fight for \$15 events.

Nancy Hallock, Social Justice Committee chairperson

## **UU CIRCLE NEWS**

We want to thank everyone who helped make our December bake sale a success. Thanks for contributing and taking your time to bake. The income from the bake sale will be given to help support the church.

The UU Circle is looking for new participants. We need help to hold fundraisers and to help support the church. We are looking for team members who can contribute some time to work on fundraisers during the year and to brain-storm for ideas. If you have questions or may want to join us, please talk to Janie Garlow, Nancy Hallock or Ann Peterson.

We have held several potluck luncheons this year and we thank everyone who has cooked and attended. We have also sent cards and gift certificates to those who have been ill or hospitalized. We have also sent sympathy cards this year.

We will hold a potluck luncheon and meeting to talk about UU Circle officers on Sunday, January 24. We hope that you will be able to attend.

The UU Circle plans social activities and does fundraising during the year. All church members and guests are part of the UU Circle and are invited to all activities.

Ann Peterson



**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.**



**UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.**

## **BOARD SPLINTERS**

The Executive Board met on Sunday morning, December 6

Ron Reed of the Central Square Fire Department visited the building during the meeting and gave suggestions on how we can develop an evacuation plan. He also suggested that we purchase more smoke detectors, which will be done soon. The Board will be working on the evacuation plan.

President Winfield Ihlow and the Rev. Andrea Abbott reported on a meeting they attended regarding the proposal to dissolve the St. Lawrence District (SLD) in favor of the Central East Regional Group (CERG) and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). They said the proposed Central East Regional Group would cover an area from Washington, D.C., to central Ohio and up through New England, and would include 200 congregations. They said that the regionalization is not being done to save money but will include 13 full-time staff members instead of the current part-time positions. They reported that the concern about small churches being lost in such a big organization was acknowledged.

The next Board meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Sunday, January 3.

Ellen LaPine  
Recording Secretary



## **DRUM CIRCLE TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR**

Help us drum in the New Year. Start your year off by banging on a drum. On Sunday, January 3, we will be drumming after the coffee hour.

We will have drums, rattles and other fun things to make noise with.

Children are invited to join us with adult supervision.

Ann Peterson

## **COFFEE AND CHAT**

Women and men of the church will gather for Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread on Route 31 in Clay at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 21.

All are welcome to join in casual conversation and to enjoy coffee or tea and other goodies.



**The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.**

**The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.**

### **GREEN MINUTE: IS IT SAFE TO EAT?**

According to the Department of Agriculture, Americans chuck about 10 cents of every dollar they spend on food into the trash. Food is the largest source of garbage in landfills and is a significant contributor to the production of methane, which, of course, is a cause of global warming. Valuable water, electricity, fuel, and other resources are also wasted on growing and producing the food we are throwing away.

One reason why we throw away food is how it is labeled. A lot of people don't realize that when a package is stamped "sell by," "use by," or "best by" it indicates more about food quality than when it should be thrown away. There is no federal requirement that foods carry a date label except for infant formula. Generally "sell by" is the date manufacturers suggest that retailers remove the product from the shelves. It can be several days to several weeks past that date, depending on the item, before the food spoils. My dad worked in the food business all his working life, and I learned this at a young age. To help make ends meet, we regularly ate out-of-date "sell by" foods and foods from dented cans that his company had him remove from shelves, foods that they would have otherwise thrown in the trash. "Best by" and "use by" give a date that the product can be eaten or frozen for best quality but it does not mean that it is spoiled after the given date. It just means that the food may not have the same color, freshness, crispness, etc. after that date.



The bottom line is that you may not notice any difference in some food's quality if you consume it after the date given by the producer, especially if you eat it not long after that date.

Ellen LaPine  
Outreach Committee



### **A NOTE OF THANKS**

Thanks to these people for volunteering to serve as greeters on Sunday mornings: Lucy and Arny Stieber, December 27, and Winfield Ihlow, January 10 and 17.

Thanks to Mary Fran Yafchak for volunteering to host the social time on Sunday morning, December 27.

Volunteers are needed to serve as greeters on Sunday mornings. Anyone with any questions is encouraged to speak with Winfield Ihlow. Volunteers are also needed to host the social time on Sunday mornings. Anyone with any questions is encouraged to speak with Judy Tennant.

**The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.**

**The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves.**

## **CHILDREN TO CREATE A STORYBOOK**

With the new year upon us it is time to review our Seven Unitarian Universalist Principles. Each week for the next seven weeks we will be creating our seven island principles storybook.

For January we will work on the first five principles: Everyone is important, be fair and kind, learn together, free to search for beliefs, and right to voice opinion.

Our storybook will reflect our discussions and include characters that the children have already chosen: a dragon, a dog, a split rainbow and a racing car.

Let the creativity begin.

Ronna Schindler, Religious Education Committee chairperson and older children's teacher



## **GUEST AT YOUR TABLE ENTERS FINAL MONTH**

Once again our congregation is participating in the annual Guest at Your Table program of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC).

Nancy Hallock, who is coordinating our congregation's participation in the program, points out that rather than individuals and families taking home "Guest at Your Table" boxes this year, they are asked to deposit contributions into a large box in the sanctuary.

The deadline to make contributions is Sunday, January 31.

Guest at Your Table is an annual fundraising and education program that supports UUSC's human rights work. The UUSC invites everyone to take part: individuals, families, small groups, congregations, and community organizations.

Over the decades, Guest at Your Table has raised millions of dollars for human rights projects that have made a real difference in people's lives.

This year Guest at Your Table highlights the empowerment of refugees and displaced people. One of UUSC's major focuses is serving the people who are most overlooked or discriminated against in the midst of humanitarian crises such as forced migration, large-scale conflicts, genocide, and natural disasters. In the wake of the 2010 earthquake, UUSC has made a long-term commitment to creating a recovery that advances justice for Haitians.

UUSC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Cambridge, Mass., that advances human rights in more than a dozen countries around the world through grassroots collaboration. While grounded in Unitarian Universalist values, UUSC is nonsectarian and open to all.



**The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against the idolatries of the mind and spirit.**



**The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.**

## **JANUARY 2016 CALENDAR**

**3** – 9 a.m., Executive Board meets. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. David Weissbard leads the worship service. Sermon topic: “The Name of the Holy.” Random Acts of Kindness. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. Noon, Drum Circle. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which the Social Justice Committee asks everyone to bring magazines to the church dining room to exchange them for others. The committee will continue the recycling process by passing on any magazines that are left to the Public Safety Building Jail in Syracuse every two or three months.

**10** – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., The Rev. Libbie Stoddard leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. Noon, The choir will conduct its monthly rehearsal in the sanctuary. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which the Social Justice Committee asks everyone to donate food items for our Downstairs Scotty, which later will be taken to the Downstairs Scotty thrift shop and food pantry at Divine Mercy Parish Center, 592 South Main Street, Central Square.

**17** – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time.

**21** – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.

**24** – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., The Rev. Andrea Abbott leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Potluck luncheon and meeting to talk about UU Circle officers.

**25** – 5 to 7 p.m., The Rev. Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church. The sanctuary will also be open for anyone who wishes to use it for a time of reflection, prayer or meditation.

**31** – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. The Rev. Andrea Abbott leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time.

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### **Our Mission Statement**

The mission of the First Universalist Society of Central Square is to be a welcoming, diverse congregation, which values spiritual growth and service to the local and world community.

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The Rev. Andrea Abbott	315-635-7122	Leigh Parry-Benedict	315-657-5904
The Rev. Libbie Stoddard	315-343-4352	Winfield Ihlow	315-342-5939
Ronna Schindler	315-623-7685	Janie Garlow	315-436-2238

**In Unitarian Universalism, you can bring your whole self: your full identity, your questioning mind, your expansive heart.**

**As Unitarian Universalists, we do not have to check our personal background and beliefs at the door: we join together on a journey that honors everywhere we've been before.**

## **INTERFAITH ASSEMBLY AT MOSQUE OF JESUS, SON OF MARY**

Women Transcending Boundaries, an interfaith women's group, and InterFaith Works of Central New York, a nonprofit that works with many refugees and people of all faiths, will join members and leaders of the Mosque of Jesus, Son of Mary (Masjit Isa Ibn Maryam), 501 Park Street, Syracuse, from 6:30 until 8 p.m. on Monday, February 8, to present a program for World Interfaith Harmony Week. A reception will follow.

The mosque, previously a Catholic church, was purchased after it stood empty for several years and has been remodeled to fit with the faith of Islam. When the mosque first opened, the members held a picnic for the neighbors and it was well attended.

The mosque is in my neighborhood, and there are restaurants of various cuisines in the area. If you wish to attend the program, you can park in my driveway and walk to the mosque.

Ann Peterson  
Adult Religious Education



### **RETURN THOSE BOTTLES**

You may continue to help the environment and make money for the Outreach Committee by leaving your returnable bottles at the church.

A barrel into which to place your bottles stands near the entrance to the church kitchen.

Nancy Hallock, committee chairperson, is returning deposit bottles and cans for the committee treasury.

### **DON'T FORGET THAT MEMO LINE!**

When you are writing a check for the church, please write on the memo line the purpose for which the check is being written.

For example: Pledge, Fair Share, Random Acts of Kindness, Window Fund. Such action makes it easier to record the check in its proper place.

Thank you.

### **RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS**

Random Acts of Kindness is the congregation's program to financially assist those in need, whether church members/friends or people in the wider community.

Finances are provided by the congregation through a special once-a-month offering, normally on the first Sunday of each month. Random Acts of Kindness envelopes are found on the back of the pews.

**Unitarian Universalists are united in shared experience: our open worship services, religious education, and rites of passage; our work for social justice; our quest to include the marginalized; and our expressions of love.**