



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.
Phone: 315-668-6821 E-mail: uucentralsquare@gmail.com
Church Web site: <http://www.centralsquareuu.com>

Photo courtesy of Village of Central Square

Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square/199139743511564>

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.

Andrea Abbott, Student Minister	315-635-7122	The Rev. Libbie Stoddard, Minister Emerita	315-343-4352
Leigh Parry-Benedict, Music Coordinator	315-657-5904	Ronna Schindler, RE Chairperson	315-623-7685
Robert Haskell, President	315-635-5294	Winfield Ihlow, Vice President	315-342-5939

JUNE 2014

STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPET

This must be the slowest spring on record! However, no matter how long it has taken, the leaves on the trees are fully out and the daffodils and tulips have come and gone. We now wait for the peonies and irises to put on their show. Change is all around us. Even in a slow spring, sometimes it seems to happen too fast. June is the time for change, traditionally for high school graduations and weddings. Change, indeed, as we see the baby we once held striding down the aisle in a robe and mortar board or in tux or white dress. How did they manage to do that? Shouldn't they be home in their playpens? We watch these events with joy but with some sadness for the quickly passing years. Some changes are not so pleasant and are not greeted with celebration at all. The changes associated with aging do not have their own ceremonies but they are very real. What would those ceremonies to maturing look like, I wonder. Perhaps we should devise some because these changes come to all who live long enough to experience them. Even mountains wear down in time. We are always in on-the-job-training where we are unprepared for the next step. Are there any constants that we can hold onto? We are not a church that offers false reassurance. We do not talk much about faith. But it seems to me we do offer the comfort of community and the faith that we have in each other. Real hands, real hearts. That's a lot to hang onto.

Andrea Abbott

A SERMON BY THE REVEREND WEISSBARD

The Rev. David Weissbard writes concerning his sermon for the June 1 service:

"Back when I was Senior Minister of the UU Church in Rockford, IL, our budget was supported in part by an annual 'Service Auction'. One of the things I offered in those auctions was the right to choose the subject of a sermon I would deliver. One year, the highest bidder asked me to preach on a subject I titled, 'Victims and Survivors'. This Sunday I'll be sharing the context of that request and my response to it."

Please have articles for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on MONDAY, JUNE 30. Bob would be grateful if everyone would not wait until the last minute to submit articles. His e-mail address is rhaskell@twcny.rr.com. His postal address is 29 Grove Street, Baldwinsville, NY 13027-2332. His telephone number is 315-635-5294.

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

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF CENTRAL SQUARE, NEW YORK**

The annual congregational meeting of the First Universalist Society of Central Square, New York, will be held in the sanctuary immediately after the worship service on Sunday morning, June 1, 2014.

The church bylaws specify that there shall be an annual congregational meeting on the first Sunday in June of each year.

The agenda for the meeting includes:

- Receiving annual reports from incumbent officers and committee chairpersons.
- Consideration and adoption of the budget for the next fiscal year.
- Election of officers.

The bylaws provide that active members of the church 18 years or older shall have the power to vote. Any member of the church under 18 years shall have the right of voice, but not the power of voting or eligibility to hold office in the church.

The Executive Board has agreed to provide for absentee ballots if requested.

Child care will be available if requested.

All are welcome.

(Related story: Affirmations of Faith scheduled to be voted on by the congregation: Page 4.)

PLEDGES FOR THE NEW YEAR

If you have not signed a pledge card for the new church year that begins on June 1, you are asked to do so as soon as possible. It is only with the financial support of everyone that we are able to have a church.

UU CIRCLE POTLUCK AND MORE

During the summer months, many of us will be camping, traveling or visiting, and we won't have as much time to share good food, good friends and good conversation for a while.

Join us for a summer kick-off potluck luncheon at noon on Sunday, June 22. People enjoyed sharing and telling their stories last year. So, bring a new or old story, a personal story, a folk tale, a poem, a reading, a joke or something that you would like to share, and a dish to share.

Ann Peterson, secretary-treasurer

DRUM CIRCLE

Drumming is fun and relaxing, whether you bang on a drum, shake rattles, clack spoons or rhythm sticks.

We will have a drum circle after the coffee hour on Sunday, June 15. Bring your drum if you have one, but there will be drums to share. No previous experience is required.

If you have questions, please ask me or Ginny Glahn.

Ann Peterson

A NOTE OF THANKS

Thanks to these people for volunteering to host the social times: Janie Garlow, May 25; Heather Rubinstein, June 1; Tracy Kinne, June 8; and Judy and George Tennant, June 22.

Thanks to these people for volunteering to serve as greeters: Judy and George Tennant, May 25 and June 22, and Renee Landers-Jennings and Susan Jennings, June 1, 8 and 15.

Thanks to these people for volunteering to place flowers in the sanctuary: Mary and Chet Perkins, May 25.

MEN TO GATHER AGAIN

The 23rd annual Gathering of Men will be held at Camp Unirondack, the Unitarian Universalist camp and conference center near Lowville, from June 6 to 8.

The brochure for the event may be seen at the Web site http://www.unirondack.org/wp-content/themes/unirondack/pdfs/2014_gathering_of_men_brochure.pdf

Kurt Schindler, Winfield Ihlow and Arny Stieber from our congregation have attended the gatherings in recent years and are able to provide further information about this year's event.

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.

OUTREACH/SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Not much to say this month. Only two members were able to meet on Sunday, May 11. We will have a meeting in June, the date to be announced.

This summer we will continue with the Pure Water for the World collections. The next Adopt-a-Highway pickup is scheduled on Sunday, July 13.

Margaret and Tim Hart say "THANK YOU" again for donations to their MS Walk Team. They raised \$1,200!!

Let's continue the book exchange through the summer. I recommend "Gone Girl," our Book Club selection, as a good read to start the sunny season.

That's all.

Nancy Hallock, chairperson

GREEN MINUTE: PLASTIC BAG RECYCLING

We've all seen the spot at our local supermarket where you can take back plastic shopping bags to recycle. What many of us don't know is that we can recycle all sorts of plastic bags. Most stores will accept the following:

Plastic retail bags with any string ties and rigid plastic handles removed

Plastic newspaper bags

Plastic dry-cleaning bags

Plastic produce bags

Plastic bread bags

Plastic cereal bags

Plastic frozen food bags

Plastic wrap from paper products (paper towels, etc.)

Plastic stretch/shrink wrap

Plastic zipper-type bags with plastic closing mechanism removed

All materials must be clean and dry, with all food residue removed

These items cannot be recycled with plastic bags:

Plastic bags with strings, rigid plastic handles, closing mechanisms or food residue

Plastic soil or mulch bags

Plastic bubble wrap

Plastic food containers

Plastic bottles

So if you forget your reusable shopping bags on occasion when you go shopping, just bring the plastic shopping bag you ended up with back to the store the next time along with your plastic bags and wraps for recycling.

Ellen LaPine
Outreach Committee

VIDEO DISCUSSION GROUP

The Video Discussion Group will view part 1 of the "United States of Secrets" when it meets at 7 p.m. on Friday, June 6.

The PBS "Frontline" program reveals the dramatic inside story of how the United States government came to monitor and collect the communications of millions of people around the world and the lengths it went to trying to hide the massive surveillance program from the public.

The video group plans to have supper at the Acropolis Restaurant on Route 11 just north of Central

Square at 5:30 p.m. on the same day. Please let Janie Garlow know via e-mail at mjgarlow@aol.com or via telephone at 315-436-2238 by Thursday, June 5, if you plan to attend the supper so that she may make a reservation. Everyone is invited to attend.

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 Wednesday, June 18.

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

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.

Affirmations of Faith scheduled to be voted on by the congregation on Sunday, June 1

Number 1

Love is the doctrine of this church,
The quest of truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer,
To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve humanity in fellowship,
To the end that all souls shall grow
into harmony with the divine,
Thus do we covenant with each other
and with God. Amen.

Number 2

Love is the doctrine of this community,
The quest for truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer,
To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve humanity in fellowship,
To the end that all souls shall grow
into harmony with Wisdom,
Thus do we covenant with each other
and all Creation.

Number 3

In the bonds of fellowship and love, we unite
To cultivate reverence,
To promote spiritual growth and ethical commitment,
To minister to each other's needs and to those of
humanity,
To celebrate the sacred moments of life's passage,
And to honor the holiness at the heart of being.
We welcome you to this community with all our hearts.

Number 4

Love is the Spirit of this church,
And service is its law.
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace;
To seek the truth in love;
and to help one another.

Number 5

We affirm that love is our greatest purpose.
Accepting one another is the truest form of faithful
living.

The search for truth is our constant star.
We pledge our hearts, minds and hands;
To challenge injustice with courage;
To find hope in times of fear;
And to live out our Unitarian Universalist values every
day as a beloved community.
Thus do we covenant with each other and with all that
is sacred in life.

Number 6

Mindful of our diversity and our need for greater
understanding,
We promise to open our hearts and minds
To foster a safe, inviting and loving community.
We will treat one another genuinely and respectfully
As together we share life's journey toward wholeness.

Number 7

Here we gather in covenant:
Nurtured by that which is highest and best in life;
Bound together by common humanity;
Led by the great spiritual teachings of the ages;
Finding salvation in character;
To the end that we may institute true peace and true
justice,
Here and now, here on Earth.

Number 8

WE CELEBRATE LIFE
as we experience
its birth and its death,
its sacredness and its profaneness,
its beauty and its ugliness,
its pleasure and its pain,
its joy and its sorrow,
its comedy and its tragedy,
its creativity and its destructiveness,
its strength and its weakness,
its longevity and its shortness,
its inclusiveness and its exclusiveness,
its perfection and its imperfection,
its simplicity and its complexity.
WE CELEBRATE LIFE

**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.

PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS

Dear Friends,

This is my last presidential reflection.

I have decided not to permit my name to be submitted as a candidate for re-election as president at the annual congregational meeting scheduled to be held at the conclusion of the worship service on Sunday morning, June 1.

My successor will assume the responsibilities of the presidency upon his election. I say “his” because the Nominating Committee has decided to nominate Winfield Ihlow as president for the traditional one-year term. I fully expect that he will be elected. I am sure that the congregation will fare well under Winfield’s leadership. I congratulate him and wish him all the best.

I know that I have often said it but I will say it here once again: I feel that the congregation has been quite fortunate to maintain a strong pulpit during the last three years. I do not think that there are many churches our size that are able to field such a strong starting lineup – to use an old baseball term – as the Rev. David Weissbard, Andrea Abbott, the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams and the Rev. Libbie D. Stoddard. It is my fervent hope that the congregation will be able to continue a strong pulpit for years and years to come.

The music program has been expanded during the past two years, and a religious education program has been offered each Sunday despite the frequent shortage of children.

I am pleased that the congregation was able to complete the restoration of the large plate-glass windows in the sanctuary. I am also happy that the congregation was able to remove four trees posing a peril to the religious education wing last summer. And the congregation was able to replace its aged stove in the kitchen this year. The congregation owes a debt of gratitude to many individuals who often acted on their own to enhance our building.

I have been especially pleased with the hard work, extensive programs and successes of the Outreach/Social Justice Committee. As many of you already know, the committee’s Voices for Worker Equality Series was an award-winner. The congregation’s other three committees – spiritual, administrative and religious education – also deserve much credit for making the church a successful one.

Of course, there are still improvements to be made in the church life. I think it might be good if the congregation was more active in the denomination, especially considering the realignment from a district to a regional setup.

I must add that I am grateful for the work of the Executive Board members during the past three years. They deserve most of the credit for these successful years. They have included Marcia Burrell-Ihlow, Betty Figie, Mary Jane Garlow, Nancy Hallock, Nancy Haskell, Arnold Hook, Winfield Ihlow, Barbara Kamerance, Cara Lajewski, Ann Peterson, Beth Sonnacchio and Sean Tennant. Of course, the ultimate credit goes to the congregation which has been generous both financially and in doing the actual labor.

There is more that I could say. Especially, there are many others I could thank. Many people and groups are often unintentionally overlooked when thanks and gratitude are expressed. For that, I deeply apologize.

I will conclude by saying that it has been an honor for me to have served as your president.

Thank you.

Bob

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.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

From giant chalk flowers for Mother's Day drawn on the pavement behind the church to learning about protected and endangered animals, we had a fun-filled month.

The kids learned the story of our first chalice and created their own personal chalice banners.

We talked about special memories and then created personal memory cords.

Wonderful things are happening in the RE classroom.

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

JUNE 2014 CALENDAR

1 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. David Weissbard leads the worship service. Random Acts of Kindness. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:30 a.m., Annual congregational meeting. 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.

3 – 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church.

5 – 6:30 p.m., The choir will conduct its monthly rehearsal in the sanctuary.

6 – 5:30 p.m., Supper at the Acropolis restaurant. 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group will view part 1 of the "United States of Secrets."

6-8 – The 23rd annual Gathering of Men will be held at Camp Unirondack, the Unitarian Universalist camp and conference center near Lowville,

8 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., Andrea Abbott leads the worship service.

10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. Noon, The "Step-12 Group" workshop based on Karen Armstrong's book "Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life" will meet. 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.

10 – 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church.

15 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. Libbie D. Stoddard leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. 12:30 p.m., Drum Circle.

17 – 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church.

18 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.

20 – 5:30 p.m., Supper at the Acropolis restaurant. 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group meets in the Goettel Room.

22 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., Andrea Abbott leads the worship service. Observance of Flower Communion. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., UU Circle potluck.

24 – 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church.

29 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. Libbie D. Stoddard leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time.

CHANTING AND MEDITATION

Anyone who is interested in chanting and meditation is invited to contact Tim Hart via e-mail at timhart@a-znet.com or via telephone at 315-439-2541.

IN CASE YOU MISSED A SERMON

We have audio CDs of most of the current Sunday sermons. These may be borrowed for your listening enjoyment.

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.