



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
Winfield Ihlow, President	315-342-5939	Janie Garlow, Vice President	315-436-2238

MARCH 2015

STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPET

March, in like the lion, out like the lamb, or the other way around, depending. This is the month in which we finally reach the spring equinox, the time when day and night are balanced. Paradoxically, this is also the month of wild and unexpected weather, a month during which days of beautiful spring breezes can change to a blinding blizzard and the first glimpse of grass is soon covered over by yet more snow. Just as we begin to hope, our hopes are dashed. The drama of the weather is played out in March to an apprehensive, anxious and sometimes very unappreciative audience.

March holds what is often the paradox in our lives. As we face our own wild weather, the events which buffet us throughout our days, how do we find our personal equinox? How do we learn to see the light in what seems like endless night? It is there, just as, even now, beneath the huge drifts of snow, some seed is preparing to burst forth into the spring that it anticipates in faith.

Andrea Abbott

THE REVEREND WEISSBARD TO ADDRESS "THE SELMA MARCH"

The Rev. David Weissbard writes concerning his sermon for the Sunday, March 1, service:

"We are approaching the 50th anniversary of the March on Selma, in which Unitarian Universalists played a significant role. I am sorry to say that I was not there, although I seriously considered going. I knew many of the major UU presences well -- some VERY well. I will be sharing my understanding of the context of UU participation and its impact on our movement when I address 'The Selma March'.

"(By the way, Paul Riley contacted Nice 'n Easy regarding my unhappy January experience at their Gouverneur station on the way to Central Square. This week I received an apology and a generous gift card from the corporate offices.)"

Please have articles for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on MONDAY, MARCH 30. Bob would be grateful if everyone would not wait until the last minute to submit articles. He prefers to receive articles via e-mail. 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.

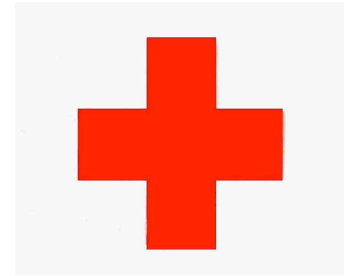
BLOOD DRIVE SATURDAY, MARCH 7, FROM 8 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

March is Red Cross Month. Help the Red Cross continue providing its life-saving work by donating blood. We will have one of our regularly scheduled Saturday blood drives from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 7. You will be able to give either whole blood or double red cells during this drive.

You can make an appointment by using the sign-up sheet that is in the dining room, by visiting www.redcrossblood.org or by calling 1-800-REDCROSS. Walk-ins are also welcome.

We need volunteers to help during the drive. There is a sign-up sheet in the dining room if you would like to help during the drive. Please contact Ellen LaPine if you have any questions.

Thank you,



Social Justice Committee

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Social Justice Committee met on Sunday, February 8, and again on Sunday, February 22. This latter meeting was to finalize our plans for the St. Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Assembly. Two delegates will attend with church support. We have reserved a table to sell our SJC merchandise that includes a new item, tote bags. All are imprinted with our "logo."

We have signed on as a co-sponsor for the Workers Memorial Breakfast in April and are preparing an advertisement for its program.

Our next speaker has been confirmed for our Voices for Worker Equality series. He is Peter Meyers from the Tompkins County Workers' Center, an active and effective agency. Save the time and date – noon on Sunday, March 29 – for the presentation. A light lunch will follow his talk.

We are still collecting magazines, books, coats and bottles. Receptacles can be found in the dining room. Thank you.

Nancy Hallock, committee chairperson

BOARD SPLINTERS

The Executive Board met on Sunday morning, February 8.

Student Minister Andrea Abbott reported that she would participate in an Ash Wednesday community ecumenical service. The service was at the Central Square First Baptist Church. The Board encouraged people to attend this community gathering.

Winfield Ihlow reported that several people said that they enjoyed the service during which some of those attending read their favorite poetry or prose. Andrea Abbott said that this type of service is being considered for one Sunday during the summer.

Nancy Hallock reported that the Social Justice Committee will have a table at the St. Lawrence District Assembly to sell its shirts and aprons. If anyone in the church would like to purchase a shirt or apron, contact a Social Justice Committee member.

There was discussion about membership and bringing new members into the church in response to a suggestion sent to the Board by Barbara Kamerance. This will be taken to the Membership Committee for that committee to consider as well.

Again there was discussion about starting soon to come up with the possible slate of officers for next year. If you are interested in helping with the running of the church beginning in June, see Nominating Committee members Steve Garlow, George Tennant or Marcia Moore.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Sunday, March 1.

Ellen LaPine
Recording secretary

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

WORKER RIGHTS ACTIVIST TO SPEAK MARCH 29

Pete Meyers, coordinator of the Tompkins County Workers' Center, will speak about the center's accomplishments and the challenges of advocating for worker rights as part of the Voices for Worker Equality series at our church at noon on Sunday, March 29.

The public program will be followed by a soup and bread luncheon. The program and luncheon are free, but donations will be accepted to support the Ithaca-based workers' center.

The workers' center has been instrumental in gaining a living wage for thousands of workers in Tompkins County and has helped bring unions to several workplaces. It maintains a Workers' Rights Hotline, which handles about 300 cases a year.

The organization educates workers about their rights, including safety and health issues. For instance, this year the center has raised awareness of the prevalence of abuse of "salaried" versus "exempt" laws.

Many employers misclassify workers as salaried to avoid paying overtime. A worker in New York state can't be considered salaried if the worker earns less than \$656.25 per week.

A program begun by the workers' center recognizes employers who pay a living wage to all their employees, and the national nonprofit Interfaith Worker Justice is trying to take the program to other areas across the country. The center has certified 90 employers as paying a living wage, as determined yearly by a local credit union.

The city of Ithaca and Tompkins County have adopted living wage policies, in part due to activism spurred by the workers' center.

Meyers has been coordinator of the organization since 2003. He formerly worked for Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga.

He has a bachelor's degree in journalism and communications from Point Park University in Pittsburgh and a master's in psychology from Duquesne University, also in Pittsburgh.

Tracy Kinne

GREEN MINUTE: PACKAGING WASTE

Landfills are filling up with things that make our life easier. With just a small amount of extra effort you can do your part in helping to reduce the enormous amount of waste we create each year and at the same time maybe save money. Here are five packaging culprits to think about.

K-Cups are all the rage but are quickly becoming a waste nightmare because only 5 percent of the cups used can be recycled. Why not use a refillable pod and put the coffee grounds or tea leaves in your compost. It costs a lot less, too.

Pre-portioned snacks are very handy to grab and go but the wrappers are not recyclable. Instead, buy less expensive family-sized packages and portion out the amount you need ahead of time in reusable containers.

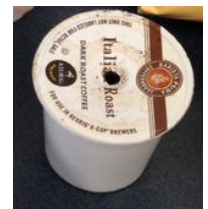
Plastic bottles are still a huge problem. It is estimated that each American uses 167 of these bottles each year. Homemade teas are usually better for your health because we control the amount of sugar. There is a machine that you can purchase to make your own soda that will pay for itself over time. Of course, tap water is safe and costs nothing. Invest in a few reusable bottles; then use your own beverages to take along with you.

Frozen foods often come in plastic. If you purchase a multi-pack, the plastic packaging is often wrapped in more plastic packaging so now you have two times the waste. Be mindful of double packaging of any type when you shop.

Finally we come to shipping materials. We are ordering more and more online, and those boxes, tape and padding add up. Some companies have recognized this and are trying to minimize their packaging and/or use biodegradable cushioning items. If you are doing the shipping yourself, try to use old newspaper or other biodegradable padding and stay away from non-biodegradable Styrofoam peanuts.

Being mindful about packaging will go a long way toward reducing our ever increasing footprint on the Earth.

Ellen LaPine
Outreach Committee



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.

ADULT AND FAMILY PROGRAMS AT UNIRONDAK

Unirondack, our Unitarian Universalist camp and conference center in the Western Adirondacks, has added exciting new opportunities for fellowship for adults this summer, in addition to its usual family and youth camps.

Two special Monday to Friday programs are planned.

The first is a Womens' Week from August 24 to August 28. The week will focus on creating community and intentional self care. Women will gather to share the warm days and cool nights in great conversation, art-making, yoga and meditation, music and nightly campfires.

The second new opportunity is an Outdoor Adventure Week from August 31 to September 4. Participants can rock climb with a certified instructor, hike in the forever-wild Adirondacks and learn about foraging and plant identification, join in the worldwide game of "geocaching," take day-long excursions by canoe or kayak, or just relax and enjoy being in nature with new friends.

Both weeks are being offered at a special first-time cost of only \$350 for the week, which includes housing and Unirondack's usual outstanding food.

In addition to these two week-long programs, Unirondack will offer a weekend retreat for Young Adults age 18-30 from June 5 to 7 in collaboration with the UU Congregation of Binghamton. As part of Unirondack's commitment to supporting the participation of young adults in our faith, the weekend is being offered to young people at only \$45 if registration is completed before April 1.

Of course Unirondack continues to offer extraordinary summer camp programs for youth from ages 9 to 18, as well as a wonderful week for families from August 16 to 22, a weekend for families and friends over Memorial Day, and a Mens' Gathering on the weekend of June 12-14.

Programs fill up fast so if you are interested visit Unirondack's Web site at Unirondack.org to learn more and to register.

And don't forget to also check out all the wonderful programs offered by our other UU camps and conference centers, Rowe in western Massachusetts, Star Island in New Hampshire, The Mountain and Shelter Neck in North Carolina, DeBenneville Pines in California, Ferry Beach in Maine, Unicamp in Ontario, and Murray Grove in New Jersey.



Dan Gottfried, executive director

DRUM CIRCLE

The Drum Circle group will meet again on the usual third Sunday of the month, March 15.

Of course, all are welcome to participate. There are extra drums available as well as rattles, rhythm sticks and maracas.

Yes, we have zills, too. What are zills? Come and find out.

Ann Peterson

MISSION STEPS WALK

The annual Mission Steps walk will take place at Destiny USA in Syracuse on Sunday morning, March 1.

Nancy Hallock has once again offered to coordinate pledges/donations from folks at church this year. Thank you for your generosity as we raise

funds for Multiple Sclerosis Resources of Central New York, Inc. (MSR of CNY). This agency does great work in support, education, and advocacy in Central New York. Last year you all gave a total of \$150. Thank you.

If any of you want to join me, Tim Hart, Ann Peterson and other friends on Team Hart, please let me know via e-mail at marghart@a-znet.com or via phone at 439-8375 as soon as possible so you can get registered.

The. Rev. Margaret Hart

BOOKS NEEDED

The library at the Veterans Hospital in Syracuse is always in need of books for patients and for those living there.

Please bring books to donate to the box labeled for them in the dining room. Barbara Kamerance will be taking them monthly to the VA.

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.

CHILDREN COLLECTING COUPONS AS WELL AS EYEGLASSES

Ever wonder what you could do with those little coupons on your food boxes that say "Official coupon, Box Tops for Education"?

Well, our religious education class is collecting them.

For every "coupon" given to our local school, the school is given 10 cents to purchase things needed to help in our children's classroom. Can't get much easier than that. So check those boxes and cans before you recycle them, cut out the coupons and bring them in. We will have a basket in the dining room for the coupons. This is to be an ongoing project.

We will continue to collect eyeglasses. Dr. Frio, our local optometrist, is working with the Lions Club and will be accepting all the glasses that we collect.

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



DISTRICT ASSEMBLY TO BE HELD ON MARCH 27-28

The St. Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Assembly will be held at the Niagara Falls Convention Center in Niagara Falls, New York, on Friday and Saturday, March 27 and 28.

The Executive Board would like to know if any church members are planning to attend.

The Social Justice Committee has reserved a table to sell its aprons and T-shirts at the District Assembly.

This year's District Assembly is a joint effort with the Ohio-Meadville District and the St. Lawrence District.

The Rev. Scott Tayler is the keynote speaker. His keynote address, to be given on Saturday morning, is titled "The Space Between: Building a New Day by Strengthening the Ties That Bind." The Josephine Gould Lecturer is the Rev. Thomas Chulak. He will speak on "The Sum of the Parts" on Friday night. The Reverend Chulak is the former St. Lawrence District executive.

Eleven workshops will be offered in two time slots covering an array of topics important to congregational life. Central East Regional Group (CERG) staff members are attending as workshop presenters. They will also answer questions by members about CERG services and resources. There is time allotted for conversations about regionalization and what it means to our congregations, clusters and districts.



"SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT"

Andrea Abbott is planning a different service for March 22 and would like to have three volunteers to help out. Anyone interested in something a little different is asked to speak to her after church.

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

If you are interested in serving as an officer of the church during the church year beginning in June, now is the time to make your wishes known to any of the Nominating Committee members: Steve Garlow, George Tennant and Marcia Moore.

Positions to be filled at the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, June 7, are president, vice president, treasurer, registrar, recording secretary and corresponding secretary, all for one-year terms, and trustee, for a three-year term. The congregation will also elect a Nominating Committee member for a three-year term.

The congregational bylaws specify that only an active voting member of the church who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years may serve as an officer.

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.

UU CIRCLE NEWS

If you attended the potluck luncheon on Sunday, February 22, you ate lots of really good food and talked a lot, too. The conversations were a bit about the weather, but mostly about the food. What is in this soup? It is so good, or I need to get you recipe for this. Oh, this just hits the spot, or my only complaint is that I have no more room so I can have another dish of that.

Thanks to the people who set the tables, cleared the tables, washed the dishes and the tables, and tidied the kitchen up. Thanks to everyone who brought food to share and made this a great day to warm up with friends.

There was a suggestion that we should plan a dinner and movie afternoon. If you think that sounds like a good idea, please let someone on the UU Circle know. Also, what movie would you like to see? How about a good comedy? We welcome your input, so please talk to me (Ann Peterson), Janie Garlow or Nancy Hallock, and give us some feedback.

MARCH 2015 CALENDAR

1 – 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. His sermon topic: “The Selma March.” Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. 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.

5 – 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church. 6:30 p.m., The choir will conduct its monthly rehearsal in the sanctuary.

7 – 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Red Cross Blood Drive at the church.

8 – 9 a.m., Social Justice Committee. 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. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which the Social Justice Committee asks everyone to donate food items for our Downstairs Scotty. The committee also accepts non-food items for the Downstairs Scotty on this Sunday and at all other times. Such non-food items include soap, detergent, bathroom and facial tissues, toothpaste, and the like. All items will be taken later to the Downstairs Scotty thrift shop and food pantry at Divine Mercy Parish Center, 592 South Main Street, Central Square.

12 – 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. Tanya Atwood-Adams leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. 12:15 p.m., Drum Circle.

19 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay. 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church.

22 – 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.

26 – 5 to 7 p.m., Andrea Abbott will hold office hours at the church.

27 and 28 – The St. Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Assembly will be held at the Niagara Falls Convention Center in Niagara Falls, New York.

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. Noon, Voices for Worker Equality series to feature a talk by Peter Meyers, coordinator of the Tompkins County Workers’ Center, followed by a soup and bread luncheon.

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.

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.