



Photo courtesy of Village of Central Square

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>

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 Benedict, Music Coordinator	315-303-4760	Ronna Schindler, RE Chairperson	315-623-7685
Robert Haskell, President	315-635-5294	Winfield Ihlow, Vice President	315-342-5939

MARCH 2013

STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPET

I heard a story the other day. Two men were traveling through Ohio soon after a tornado had struck the area. They stopped in a small town to get gas and one man drew his companion's attention to the remains of a tree next to the gas station. It had been a huge tree, an old tree, many, many feet in diameter and it had been snapped off about thirty feet up. The man pointed to the tree and said, "And we think we're in charge."

March is here to remind us, I hope in a gentler way, that we are not always in charge. In like a lion, out like a lamb or vice versa, that's the old folk saying about March. In reality it's more like a few lamb days, a few lion days. March is changeable, unpredictable. Just like our lives. When we think we are most in charge, we often get a reminder that this is a big, complex world filled with other people who also think they're in charge.

When we feel this, usually, is when we are at our most vulnerable, when the huge landmark trees in our lives have been torn apart. We sometimes fail to notice the happier ways in which our lives change unexpectedly. We pay attention to the lions; we often ignore the lambs. That is why we have each other. One person is not in charge of much. Many people together can be. We can help each other tame our lions and build on our lambs. So, if you will forgive me, I call on us all to March together.

Andrea Abbott

THE REVEREND WEISSBARD TO SPEAK ON "RESPECTING PROPERTY"

The Rev. David Weissbard writes regarding his sermon at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 3:

"'Everyone knows' that the eighth of the historic Ten Commandments instructs that we 'shalt not steal'. It is, of course not that simple. Over the centuries, religious scholars have explored far ranging implications of that phrase for individuals and societies. Sunday, March 3rd, we will be looking at some of that history and what the commandment might mean for us today."

Please have articles for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26. 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.

SOCIAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

The Social Justice Subcommittee will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 10. Everyone is invited.

We will discuss a plan to research the needs of rural workers in Oswego County. Once we have educated ourselves, we will identify how we can help. One idea is to present a public panel for discussion and instruction. We may partner as volunteers with active groups in our county. We will move forward as we learn more.

I have signed another renewal of our contract with the Department of Transportation for the Adopt-a-Highway program. Dates are to be announced.

We will discuss our spring "Tree" project. Shall we continue this commitment? Is there another way we can serve the community or shall we work on our own church property?

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hallock, chairperson

BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS "THE TORTILLA CURTAIN"

The Book Club will discuss "The Tortilla Curtain" by T.C. Boyle when it meets at noon on Sunday, March 10.

Before that date, we should review our suggestions for the next selection, maybe by e-mail.

I will need the books to be returned to me by March 10 because I plan to return them to the library on Monday, March 11. Thank you.

Nancy Hallock

STRIKE FOR PEACE BOWLATHON

The Syracuse Peace Council will conduct its annual Strike for Peace Fundraising Bowlathon at the Flamingo Bowl, Oswego Road (Route 57), just north of Liverpool, on Sunday, March 24.

As in recent years, Nancy Hallock and Janie Garlow are trying to organize one or more teams of four to six people from our church.

Session A is from noon to 2 p.m.; Session B is from 3 to 5 p.m. Registration is due by Friday, March 15. Lanes are guaranteed only to teams that pre-register.

The cost is \$15 per adult person, but \$10 for children 12 and under. For the early-bird discount, those registering by March 6 may take off \$2 per person!

Bowlers are encouraged to ask friends and family to donate in the name of their teams. Anyone raising \$50 or more in pledges will receive a special prize. Teams raising \$75 or more as a group will be listed in the "Pledgers Hall of Fame!" Pledge forms may be downloaded at www.peacecouncil.net/bowl.

Those not bowling this year are asked to consider pledging in support of another bowler.

Costumes and clever team names are encouraged. Last year's prize-winning names were "The 199%ers" and "Emma Goldpins!". Prizes will be awarded for team spirit, best team name, best costumes and more. Every child will receive a prize.

Great skill in bowling is not required. Bumper lanes are available.

Individuals are welcome; they will be put on a team. Such persons should contact Amelia at the Peace Council in advance. Only those doing that will be guaranteed a space on a team.

For more information, those interested may contact Nancy Hallock or Janie Garlow, or Amelia via e-mail at amelia@peacecouncil.net or via telephone at 315.472.5478.

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, March 20.

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

For more information about the group, you may contact Nancy Haskell or Chet Perkins.

Everyone is invited to attend.

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.

GREEN MINUTE:

SAFER UNITED STATES PRODUCTS

A vocal but misinformed friend of ours who supports hydraulic fracturing recently asserted with confidence that people put more chemicals down their drains every day than will be introduced into the environment by hydrofracking. While there are many responses for the friend about the unknown “stew” of chemicals used for hydrofracking, what those chemicals will do to the environment, to people and to our health, I also know that two wrongs don’t make a right. Therefore, he did get me thinking about just what we do put down our drains, in our environment and on our bodies in our day-to-day life.

There are toxins that make their way into thousands of everyday products such as body care items, art supplies and food packaging. There are Phthalates and bisphenol A (BPA) in windows, plastics and food can liners that cause potential health effects such as cancer and metabolic disorders. Perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) are found in non-stick cookware, carpeting and pizza boxes, and can also cause potential health effects such as cancer. Mercury and lead in paint, toys, fish and microwaves can cause developmental disabilities in children. This is a short list, and it’s pretty scary stuff.

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) was introduced in 1976 to allow the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to obtain information from chemical companies, assess the safety of their products and regulate those found to be dangerous. Unfortunately, about 62,000 chemicals were “grandfathered in,” allowing companies to keep making and using them without any safety testing. Today, most chemicals on the market are among those original 62,000, and we have little information about their safety. TSCA also allows chemical companies to label virtually any of the information they submit to EPA as “trade secrets.” As a result, EPA cannot share these data with anyone. The chemical industry has used this loophole to claim that about 95 percent of the information regarding the new chemicals be kept secret. The companies even make the same claim about many chemicals for which they are required to submit health and safety data.

Under TSCA, the EPA must contest the thousands of “trade secret” claims on a case-by-case basis. The agency can’t keep up, and only manages to examine a small number of the claims made each year. As a result, the identities of almost 20 percent of the tens of thousands of chemicals in commercial use in the United States in products from air fresheners to paints are kept secret from the government and from us. Currently under TSCA the EPA must prove a chemical poses an “unreasonable risk” to health or the environment before it can be regulated. Something like closing the door once the horse is out of the barn.

The Safe Chemicals Act and the Toxic Chemicals Safety Act proposed in Congress would finally give TSCA some teeth. Both would require safety testing of all chemicals in use in the United States showing that chemicals are safe to use prior to manufacturing the product for consumption. Both bills would also establish a new program for the EPA to identify communities where chemical exposure is grossly disproportionate and to develop action plans to alleviate these exposures.

While TSCA covers individual chemicals, the FDA regulates “cosmetics,” which is a legal term that includes a broad range of personal care products. However, the FDA does not review their ingredients; as a result, the majority of the products we use on our bodies may have never been tested for safety. The Safe Cosmetics Act, also proposed in Congress, would phase chemicals linked to cancer and developmental harm out of personal care products. It would require full ingredient disclosure and would require data sharing of safety tests to avoid duplicate testing.

Find out more at “Green America,” “Natural Resources Defense Council,” “I Am Not a Guinea Pig” or just put the name of any of the three proposed acts in your web browser. Don’t forget to get in touch with your congressional representatives and encourage them to support these bills by going to www.House.gov and www.Senate.gov.

Ellen LaPine
Outreach Committee

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.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXPERIENCES A QUIET MONTH

Life in the world of religious education this past month has been quiet, with vacations and the dreaded spring round of flu and colds.

The children have been working on how to create a greener planet and continue to learn “Spirit of Life” in American Sign language.

Adult religious education is going strong with video discussions, book readings and the spiritual discussion group along with meditation.

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

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

February 4, 2013

Bob,

Nancy Hallock gave me four hymnals from your church. She said the Board met and decided to give us Camden UUs these four in addition to the previous ones. We have four on loan, to be returned at a future date, too.

I don’t know if you want to mention in the newsletter that we thank you very much for the gift. It is so thoughtful of you and very much appreciated.

Paul Riley

February 12, 2013

To Central Square Unitarian Universalist
Congregation,

Camden Area Unitarian Universalist Church is
thanking you wholeheartedly for the hymnals. Your
donation is greatly appreciated.

In faith,
Nadia Greasley
CAUU

Feb. 17, 2013

Dear Nancy,

Once again the Camden Area Unitarian
Universalists thank the Central Square Universalist
Society. Your Board approval of the gift of 4 additional
“Singing the Living Tradition” hymnals is very much
appreciated. They were already put to use at our last
Sunday’s service.

As an emerging congregation, we welcome any
help. You have been most supportive.

With gratitude,
Paul Riley
Camden Area UU musician

VIDEO DISCUSSION GROUP

The Video Discussion Group will view “Foul Play
in the Senate, and Today’s Abortion Debate” when it
meets in the Goettel Room at 7 p.m. on Friday, March
1.

At the top of the “Moyers & Company” show, Bill
Moyers digs deeper into a New York Times story about
a cost-control exception provided to Amgen, the
world’s largest biotechnology firm. According to the
report, the exception – hidden in the Senate’s final
“fiscal cliff” bill – will cost taxpayers half a billion
dollars. Moyers talks with Representative Peter Welch
(Democrat-Vermont) about the bipartisan bill he
recently sponsored to repeal that giveaway, and the
political factors that allow such crony capitalism to
occur.

Later in the program, as the 40th anniversary of
Roe v. Wade is noted, Moyers discusses the fierce
challenges facing the reproductive rights movement
with Jessica González-Rojas, executive director of the
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, and
Lynn Paltrow, founder and executive director of
National Advocates for Pregnant Women. Though a
majority of Americans now believe abortion should be
legal in most cases, anti-abortion forces are showing
no sign of relenting.

The video group plans to have supper at the
Akropolis 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, February 28, if
you plan to attend the supper so that she may make a
reservation.

Everyone is invited to attend.

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.

UU CIRCLE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 3, 2013

Summary of Planning and Calendar of Events:

Sunday, February 24, 2013:

Potluck luncheon and guest speaker program on ancient Egypt religion and mummification. Luncheon is after the Sunday service; Egyptian program starts at approximately 12 p.m.

Ethical Living Workshop: to be announced.

Sunday, March 24, 2103:

Stewardship Luncheon of soup and sandwiches organized by Arne Hook, followed by stewardship discussion and pledges.

Saturday, April 13, 2013, 4 to 6 p.m.:

Fundraising Spaghetti Dinner and a silent auction. Each church member will be asked to sell 10 tickets. Desserts from congregants would be requested.

Sunday, May 5, 2013:

The Three-S Festival (Show, Share, and Salad)

Following the Sunday service, there will be a potluck luncheon of salads. After lunch, congregants will have the opportunity to show any talent they want to share. It could be poetry reading, a story or experience from life, something musical, singing, dancing or perhaps "show and tell."

Projections for the Remainder of the Year:

Garage Sale, Fundraising Pancake Breakfast, Renaissance Group and potluck near Christmas season.

Barbara Kameranace

BOARD SPLINTERS

Steve Garlow informed the Executive Board at its regular monthly meeting on Sunday morning, February 24, that the restored large stained-glass window would be installed on the north side of the church sanctuary by Edward Dehors the next morning. Acting on the advice of Steve, a member of the church's Administrative Committee, the Executive Board voted to install new covering on the outside of the three large stained-glass windows in the sanctuary at a cost not to exceed \$1,200. He pointed out that this would protect the windows from the elements of nature and the investment that the church had made in the restoration of the windows. He added that the colors of the windows would be seen through the new covers. The installation of the covers is expected to take place in the spring.

The Executive Board also agreed to pay program fees and room and board for Ronna Schindler so that she might attend a religious education program to be held for a week at Star Island this summer. Ronna, the church's Religious Education Committee chairperson and older children's teacher, has attended this annual program for a number of years.

The Executive Board designated Winfield Ihlow, vice president, as a delegate to the annual St. Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Assembly to be held at the Niagara Falls Convention Center, Niagara Falls, N.Y., on Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27. This year's District Assembly is a joint effort with the Ohio-Meadville District and the St. Lawrence District. The Rev. Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, will be the keynote speaker.

Board members expressed their appreciation to the Rev. Libbie Stoddard for preaching at the services on February 10, 17 and 24, and to Steve Garlow for coordinating the restoration of the large stained-glass windows.

The Executive Board received letters of appreciation from the Camden Area Unitarian Universalists for the church's recent donation of several hymnals.

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.

PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS

Dear Friends,

I believe that there are four aspects of church life that need attention during the coming months and years.

The first one is that there needs to be a continuing effort to draw people who have stopped attending church for one reason or another in recent years to return to the church. I have made a small effort, mostly via e-mail, on this aspect of church life. Some of those who responded had good reasons for not returning to church, reasons that I respected. Some had made new commitments that they did not wish to break; some had health issues. Some to whom I reached out did not respond at all. But all of those to whom I reached out continue to receive the monthly newsletter and other church news, so I am sure that they retain an interest in the church.

The second aspect which I feels need attention during the coming months and years is to find ways to make it possible for parents to bring their children to the religious education program on a regular basis. I realize that today almost all parents face enormous demands in their lives. By the time Sunday mornings roll around, many are simply too tired and need to rest. Sometimes there are athletic activities for the children. But the children represent the future of the church. And I have observed that they seem happy to be in church when they attend.

The third aspect that I feels needs continued attention is that of making our church better known in the community. Individuals have certainly made diligent efforts toward that goal in recent years. Perhaps the church needs to spend much more money to publicize itself in the media. Perhaps there needs to be more activities besides Sunday morning services to attract the public.

The fourth aspect that I think needs continued attention is that of the financial picture for the church. I think that it is amazing that the church has been able to survive for more than 100 years considering the size of its membership and the money that has been available. Many other churches have not been that fortunate. But the church must find a way to boost its income to carry out its present activities.

As I said, I believe that continued attention needs to be paid to these fourth aspects of church life not only now but in the months and years ahead.

Bob

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.

DOWNSTAIRS SCOTTY

The Executive Board has designated the second Sunday of each month as the date for the collection of food for our Downstairs Scotty. The Outreach Committee will later take the contributions of food to Downstairs Scotty thrift shop and food pantry at St.

Michael's Church Parish Center, 592 South Main Street, Central Square.

The committee will continue to accept non-food items for the Downstairs Scotty on the second Sunday of each month and at all other times. Such non-food items include soap, detergent, bathroom and facial tissues, toothpaste, and the like.

Our collection box is in the church dining room.

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.

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.

COVENANT REGARDING RIGHT RELATIONS

If you have not signed the Covenant of Right Relations adopted by the congregation at its annual meeting in June 2012 and wish to do so, it is on the large table in the church's East Room.

The covenant reads:

First Universalist Society of Central Square Covenant of Right Relations

As members of the First Universalist Society of Central Square, the following guidelines are in place in order to create our own welcoming, respectful, safe and vibrant spiritual community where each person can search for truth and meaning in an environment that builds connections, renews spirit, and inspires action. While realizing that we do not always live up to our ideals, we know we can choose to grow in a manner that promotes a religious community grounded in love and justice. In pledging to follow these guidelines, we will serve our own spiritual development, one another, our religious home, our local community, our larger faith, and our world.

Members will strive to do the following as they participate in the life of the congregation:

Welcome and engage members and visitors alike, encouraging them to join in congregation activities.

Value and express our own emotions and differences in a way that respects the worth and dignity of each person.

Express gratitude for the efforts of others.

Listen attentively to appreciate fully one another's point of view, valuing the perspective of others.

Support and encourage the personal and spiritual growth of others, acknowledging that each person has a unique path and truth.

Support and respect the contracts and/or agreements with the minister, staff, Executive Board and congregational committees.

Value confidentiality.

Ask for help, support and collaboration when needed and encourage others to do the same.

Build courage and commitment to voice our values in the world, and work toward positive relationships with other faith communities.

Provide opportunities to share diverse ideas in a safe place.

Approach disagreements and conflicts constructively, communicating with others in a direct, caring and responsible manner.

Advocate for resolution processes agreeable to all parties, when conflicts and misunderstandings arise within the congregation.

Acknowledge that everyone makes mistakes. Seek and offer forgiveness.

This covenant is a living document. It can be reviewed by the congregation at any time in the future and adapted to fit changing needs and circumstances. It represents a commitment to thoughtful, active participation in the life of this religious community; caring and respectful relationships with one another and with visitors; cooperative support for the minister, staff and volunteers; and individual and collective contributions to the wider community.

(Approved by the congregation at its annual meeting on June 3, 2012)

A REMINDER TO ALL

All or parts of our church building can be rented by non-members and organizations.

Examples include non-member weddings, community activities, fundraisers, etc.

We have a building use policy and fee schedule that is available from Bob Haskell.

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.

MARCH 2013 CALENDAR

1 – 5:30 p.m., Supper at the Akropolis restaurant. 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group to view “Foul Play in the Senate, and Today’s Abortion Debate” when it meets in the Goettel Room.

3 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. Sermon topic: “Respecting Property.” 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which you are asked by the Social Justice Subcommittee to bring magazines to the church dining room so that you may exchange them for others. The subcommittee 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.

9 – 9:30 to 11 a.m., Choir practices.

10 – 9 a.m., Spiritual Committee meets. 9:30 a.m., Social Justice Subcommittee meets. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott. 10:50 a.m., Religious education. Noon, The Book Club will discuss “The Tortilla Curtain” by T.C. Boyle. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Social Justice Subcommittee to donate food items for the Downstairs Scotty, which will be taken later to the Downstairs Scotty thrift shop and food pantry at St. Michael’s Church Parish Center, 592 South Main Street.

15 – 5:30 p.m., Supper at the Akropolis restaurant. 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group meets in the Goettel Room.

17 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 9:45 a.m., Religious Education Committee meets. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.

20 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.

24 – Palm Sunday. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott. 10:50 a.m., Religious education. Noon, Stewardship Luncheon. Afternoon, Syracuse Peace Council Strike for Peace Fundraising Bowlathon at the Flamingo Bowl.

28 – Maundy Thursday service.

31 – Easter. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Libbie D. Stoddard. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.

CHURCH WEB SITE/FACEBOOK PAGE

Please remember the church Web site at <http://www.centralsquareuu.com/> and the church Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square/199139743511564>. You can also reach the Facebook page by clicking on the Facebook link at the Web site. To see the posts on the Facebook page, you have to click on “Most Recent Posts By Others” and “See All.” To view the church’s electronic calendar, just click on “Calendar” at the church Web site or click on “About” and then on “Products” on the Facebook page.

FAIR SHARE APPEAL

The Fair Share is the amount of the contribution our congregation is asked to give each fiscal year to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) and its St. Lawrence District (SLD).

These contributions finance programs, services and resources that directly benefit and strengthen our congregation and the Unitarian Universalist movement as a whole.

Fair Share is based upon the number of members a congregation certified for the UUA General Assembly the previous February. This year’s combined Fair Share contribution is expected to be about \$75 per member.

Our congregation has a line item in our budget, which covers \$2,000 of our contribution. Each year we try to pay our Fair Share in full. We are asking members if they are able to do so to write a check for \$75 payable to the church and to designate “Fair Share” in the memo. This would help us reach our goal.

Visit our church Web site at <http://www.centralsquareuu.com>