



CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

The First Universalist Society of Central Square

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Andrea Abbott, Student Minister

315-635-7122

Janie Garlow, President

315-436-2238

Rita Thornton, Music Coordinator

315-699-4824

3243 Fulton Street (Route 49, near Route 11)

Post Office Box 429, Central Square, New York 13036-0429

Telephone: 315-668-6821

Church Web site: <http://centralsquareuu.com>

Our church building is handicapped accessible.

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.

APRIL 2011

STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPET

March has been a wild ride, hasn't it? As we see April up ahead, the immediate forecast calls for more of the same, uncertain conditions with early morning showers of ambiguity. April holds at least two sacred times, Passover and the week surrounding Easter. Both of these speak of the interplay between the dark and the light: between death and life. Both of them address issues of fear and hope. Both have been important to millions through the ages because most of us, on any given day, confront these issues. We spread our wings in the sun one day, and then find ourselves huddling from the snow the next. Like the weather in these parts, we find that our lives can change abruptly. It is tempting to go back to the nest, not to venture out of the egg, not to crack the hard seed covering that keeps us safe. But it's kind of dark and cramped in there. So let us face the wind and weather of this uncertain April together, with faith that spring will indeed come.

– Andrea Abbott

THE REVEREND WEISSBARD PICKS HIS SERMON TOPIC

The Rev. David Weissbard has chosen as the topic for his sermon "Christ the Clown" when he leads the service at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 3.

He writes, "We are nearing Easter which is the time the thoughts of many, even those who do not regularly do so, turn to Jesus. I believe few heroes or heroines are dishonored more than Jesus. Many, if not most, of those who claim to 'believe on (in) him' put him in a role that seems to have very little to do with what we think we know about him. That is obscene. Some wise, believing, Christians have suggested that Jesus might be better understood if we thought of him as a clown. That makes sense to me. We'll see if it might to you."

Note: Please have items for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on THURSDAY, APRIL 28. His address is 29 Grove Street, Baldwinsville, NY 13027-2332; his telephone number is 315-635-5294; his e-mail address is rhaskell@twcnny.rr.com

PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS

My Dear Friends,

Last Sunday we had a lovely stewardship luncheon after the church service. The delicious soup and sandwiches were prepared by chefs Kurt Schindler and Arne Hook, respectively. We served Betty Figie's wonderful chocolate dessert along with a variety of other scrumptious treats. Ann Peterson had the room festively decorated with a large hand-painted chalice from which we hung our mini chalices when we made our pledge. Chet Perkins presented a balanced budget for the next fiscal year, June 1, 2011, through May 31, 2012. We will vote on this new budget at our annual meeting on June 5, 2011. Pam Saraceni, Barbara Kamerance and Winfield Ihlow all spoke individually, each explaining what our church means to them. It was great hearing their stories. Chris Lajewski sang and played a beautiful ballad on his guitar and we closed the meeting singing songs. Then a quick clean-up with many hands pitching in. Thank you to all who were there.

Stewardship means that we are the stewards or, in another word, caretakers of this church. Our church was forged from the love and dedication of past generations, and it holds the hopes and dreams of future generations. Our church depends on committed individuals such as you to ensure the continuity of our liberal religious community. Whether you need Religious Education to support your family, music to fill your soul, a monthly newsletter to keep you informed, Sunday services to nourish and support your intellectual and spiritual growth or to gather in community with like-minded individuals, as we did last Sunday, our church needs your time, talent and financial contribution in the form of a pledge. A major benefit to pledging is that it provides a dependable, sustainable income with which to develop and support our church's programs, activities and the physical structure. How we choose to spend our money says powerful things about us, our priorities and our values. Max Coats once said, "As we ask for your pledge, think of it as an opportunity to be a part of our church's future." Additional pledge forms are available at church or will be sent in the mail. If you do not receive a pledge form and would like one, please contact me at mjgarlow@aol.com or at 315-436-2238.

Thank you for your much needed generosity and support.

– Janie

"We can tell our values by looking at our checkbook stubs." – Gloria Steinem

STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON

The annual stewardship luncheon was held on March 27. Excellent sandwiches and soups were prepared by Arne Hook and Kurt Schindler, and desserts by Betty Figie, Janie Garlow and Cara Lajewski. Thanks to all who helped.

This year's financial status was reported. For the first three-fourths of the year we are ahead by about \$3,000. However, we expect there will be a couple of big bills, including one for the repair of the recent water damage and one for a safety inspection and the needed safety improvements. A proposed budget for next year, with a projected increase in expenses of about 10 percent, was discussed. This includes increased payments for minister travel expense, snow removal and "Fair Share."

Pam Saraceni, Barbara Kamerance and Winfield Ihlow spoke, describing their religious backgrounds and why they have found a home at our church.

Chris Lajewski entertained with a song, and Rita Thornton led the group singing of several UU songs.

Pledge forms will be mailed to those who were not at the luncheon. If you do not receive one, pick one up at church or contact Chet Perkins or Janie Garlow. Please return the pledge forms by April 24.

– Chet Perkins

VIDEO DISCUSSION GROUP

The Video Discussion Group will view segments from the PBS program "Need to Know" when it meets in the Goettel Room at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 1.

Again, we plan to have supper before the discussion group at the Akropolis Restaurant on Route

11 in Central Square. Please let Janie Garlow know at mjgarlow@aol.com or at 436-2238 by Thursday, March 31, if you plan to attend so that she may make a reservation a day ahead.

Everyone is invited to attend.

OUTREACH (SOCIAL JUSTICE) COMMITTEE

The Outreach (Social Justice) Committee met on Sunday, March 13, and set the dates for its spring community projects.

On Sunday, April 10, participants will meet at 8:30 a.m., before the church service, for the first Adopt-a-Highway pickup of the year. There is a sign-up sheet in the church dining room.

The walk is one-half to a mile, depending on the number of participants. Hard hats, orange vests, signs and bags are provided by the Oswego County Department of Transportation. Participants will need work gloves and old shoes or boots.

A second sign-up sheet is for those willing to prune suckers and mulch about 100-plus village trees on Tuesday, May 10. The committee will report dead or damaged trees to the Central Square Village Board.

There is an information packet in the church dining room from the Cornell "Saving Energy, Saving Dollars" program. The packet contains helpful hints and applications for assistance with heating bills.

I am no longer collecting used batteries, but please recycle your batteries at Wegmans Food Markets. I have started a coupon basket in the church kitchen to encourage sharing and saving.

You can still recycle your magazines on the first Sunday of each month at church, and I will pass them on to the County Jail every two or three months.

We would like to start a "Change for Change" campaign. Some churches use any coins in the offering plate. Nancy Haskell and I suggest that you put the coins you empty out of your pockets or change purse each evening into a special jar to use for a special purpose. The coins can add up fast. Do we want to save for a church repair, or donate to a cause such as the Central New York Food Bank, a Unitarian Universalist Service Committee project for Haiti or Sudan, Oswego County SAFE, an International Women's charity, Guest at Your Table Let's discuss it.

The committee will meet again at 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 10. We hope to see some new people there!

– Nancy Hallock, chairperson

GREEN MINUTE: MOST OF WHAT'S IN THE GARBAGE ISN'T GARBAGE

Take a real look at what you toss in the garbage. Do you find that a lot of your stuff is organic waste? Maybe it's time to think about composting. If you cook a lot, this is where you can really make a dent in your trash. Check on line for companies that sell compostors and you'll get loads of information so you can decide what fits for you. Options range from an inexpensive wire bin to a weather-tight insulated container. Maybe all you want to do is designate a corner of your yard for compost and turn it every so often with a rake.

Cutting down on garbage doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing endeavor. Doing small things tend to add up. Maybe composting isn't your thing. Maybe it's time to concentrate on getting the paper out of your trash.

Convenience is everything. No child or adult is going to walk halfway across the house to properly dispose of a toilet paper roll or a gum wrapper, so establish satellite recycling stations, especially in every room. Don't disparage those who aren't as dedicated as you are or they may feel so intimidated that they won't bother doing anything at all. Any change that works for a family's lifestyle and budget makes a difference.

Recycling is not the only "R" in the puzzle. Don't forget to reduce what we bring into our homes and to reuse what we do bring in. You can sign up for online bill paying, put yourself on a no-junk-mail list and cancel the catalogs you don't use. Do you need a big plastic bottle of juice when a concentrated small can will do? Do you need to buy your cheese in individually wrapped slices when you can get the ones that aren't wrapped? Got a chicken carcass? Throw it in some boiling water and simmer some stock while you're cleaning up after dinner.

If you think about it, this is how our parents and grandparents lived when thrift was a virtue and no waste was a way of life. Let's raise our travel mug to a simpler, less expensive way to live.

– Ellen LaPine, Outreach (Social Justice) Committee

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.

Nancy Hallock, chairperson of the Outreach Committee, is returning deposit bottles and cans for the committee treasury. Please remember to participate in this ongoing fundraiser.

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.

BOARD SPLINTERS

Members of the Executive Board, conducting their regular monthly meeting in the church dining room on Sunday, February 27, discussed damage to the church recently caused by ice and snow. Arnold Hook, chairperson of the Administrative Committee, said that he would contact the church's insurance company about financing the necessary repairs.

Treasurer Chester Perkins said that the church had paid Kevin Ridgeway in full for his repair of the church's front doors.

The Executive Board voted to express its gratitude to Andrea Abbott, Arnold Hook, Cara Lajewski, Ann Peterson and others for making the "heart-to-heart" brunch held on Saturday, February 12, a success; to Winfield Ihlow, for occupying the pulpit on Sunday, January 30; and to Andrea Abbott, for occupying the pulpit on Sunday, February 20.

The Executive Board discussed plans for the annual church Stewardship Luncheon scheduled for Sunday, March 27. The committee includes Janie Garlow, Ann Peterson, Chester Perkins, Cara Lajewski, Andrea Abbott, Kurt Schindler and Arnold Hook.

The Executive Board also voted not to give cash to those requesting money from the church for gasoline. Chester Perkins volunteered to speak to additional business places about purchasing gasoline cards.

Janie Garlow reminded Executive Board members that the annual Saint Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Assembly was to be held in Ithaca on April 29-30.

The Executive Board will conduct its next regular meeting at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 3.

CNY CUUPS* presents

"Goddesses"

A narrated slide presentation by Sue Savion
History, Representations, Temples

6:30 p.m. Sunday, April 10
May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society
3800 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13214

Suggested Donation \$8; Students \$5

Contact Jody Brown for more information at 315-476-0447.

*CNY CUUPS is the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, Central New York Chapter

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, April 20.

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

The women's and men's groups meet separately.

For more information about the women's group, you may contact Nancy Haskell.

For more information about the men's group, you may contact Chet Perkins.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

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

Funding is 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.

The next Random Acts of Kindness will be observed on Sunday, April 3.

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.

Announcing . . .

Saint Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Annual Assembly 2011

“The Wider The Circle ... The Deeper The Way”
April 29 and 30 - Ithaca, NY

Friday's activities at the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca:

Registration

Dinner

Josephine Gould Discourse: “Becoming a Religion for Our Time” by Rev. Dr. Deane Perkins of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Glens Falls

Coffeehouse

Youth Worship

Saturday's activities at the Holiday Inn of Ithaca Downtown:

Registration

Opening Worship: Rev. David Grimm of the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

Keynote Address: “Mmm ... good!” by Mr. Barb Greve

10 thought-provoking workshops

District Annual Business Meeting

Closing Worship and Bridging Ceremony

For detailed information:

[District Assembly Brochure & Mail in Registration](#)

[Online Registration & Payment](#)

www.sld.uua.org

MEN TO GATHER

The 20th annual Gathering of Men will take place at Camp Unirondack near Lowville, NY, on June 10-11-12.

This year's theme is “On the Journey . . . a time to reflect.”

According to the program brochure, “Each year, there are men who have been returning for this weekend for years. Each year, there are men who come for the first time. There are workshops (always optional – you're also free to go hiking, canoeing, or just sit by the boathouse and relax), and shared cooking/cleanup chores, a “talent show” Saturday night in which you're invited (but not required) to share music, poetry, storytelling, standup routines, shaggy-dog stories, etc., alone, or with others. Weather permitting, there's usually a bonfire afterwards, and often there's drumming. ...”

The schedule:

Friday, June 10: 4 p.m. onward: registration. 6 p.m., dinner. 7:30 p.m., opening circle/getting (re)acquainted.

Saturday, June 11: 7 a.m., breakfast. 8:30 a.m., morning workshops and activities. Noon, lunch. 1:30 p.m., afternoon workshops and activities. 6 p.m., dinner. 7:30 p.m., talent show. 9 p.m. (more or less), bonfire.

Sunday, June 12: 7 a.m., breakfast. 8:30 a.m., morning workshops and activities. 10:30 a.m. (or thereabouts), worship service and closing circle. Noon, lunch and farewells.

The Men's Gathering is for adults 18 and older. Fees are \$100 per person.

[\(click here for online registration form\)](#)

[\(click here for brochure\)](#)

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.

IF IT'S SNOWING ...

To find out if church services will be held on a Sunday morning when winter weather is raging, you may call Janie Garlow at 436-2238 or Chester Perkins at 668-6719.

Ann Peterson, a member of the Outreach Committee, has also made arrangements with Channel 10 television, Channel 9 television and WSYR radio to broadcast a notice of any cancellations of worship services.

The decision as to whether services will be conducted or cancelled will be made by 8:30 a.m.

CALENDAR

APRIL

1 – 7 p.m., The Video Discussion Group will view segments from the PBS program "Need to Know" in the Goettel Room. Everyone is invited to attend.

3 – 9 a.m., Executive Board meets in the dining room. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. Sermon title: "Christ the Clown." Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Outreach Committee to recycle magazines in the church dining room. Nancy Hallock, chairperson, will pass the magazines on to the County Jail every two or three months.

10 – 8:30 a.m., Participants will meet for the first Adopt-a-Highway pickup of the year. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10 a.m., Outreach (Social Justice) Committee to meet. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Outreach Committee to donate food items for the Downstairs Scottie, which later will be taken to the Food Bank at Saint Michael's Church.

14 – 8:30 a.m., Spiritual Committee meets in the church dining room.

15 – 6 p.m. until 8'ish p.m., Monthly Drum Circle.

17 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams.

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

24 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister.

29 and 30 – Saint Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District Annual Assembly 2011 at Ithaca.

MAY

10 – Pruning of suckers and mulching of about 100-plus village trees.

CHANTING AND MEDITATION

People who are interested may call Tim Hart at 439-2541.

REMINDERS

If you have an announcement you would like to be included in the church's weekly e-mail announcements, please send it to Janie Garlow at mjgarlow@aol.com by 5 p.m. on Sundays. Earlier submissions would be appreciated.

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.