



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 2010

STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPETS

“Lo, the Earth awakes again,” so goes our Easter hymn, and the daffodils and hyacinths in my garden seem to agree. All the daffodils are actually no longer in my garden, however, since we have had some landscaping by S. Squirrel and Co. and some of our daffodils are now in the middle of the lawn. Wherever they are they are most heartily welcome. I wonder if people who have not been through a Central New York winter can ever properly appreciate spring. It is probably a little presumptuous of me to think that winter is really over. We’ve all known blizzards in April, and even snow in May. Not for nothing did T.S. Eliot call April the cruelest month. Our lives can also seem to be a muddle of hopes and disappointments, beginnings and losses, joy and mourning. When our lives are April-like, when sun is followed by rain showers (or snow showers), it is good to have a place to go for shelter and stability. We are a church whose foundations are sure, rooted in a commitment to the spiritual growth of its members. As we watch the Earth turn green again, we come together to celebrate our own renewal. Let us rejoice in the unexpected daffodils in our lives and in our lawns.

– Andrea Abbott

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

The Stewardship campaign got off to a great start last Sunday with a delicious luncheon prepared by Arne Hook. After the luncheon there was a discussion of church finances and a possible budget for next year. Entertainment was provided by a lively song sung by the church Executive Board and an “inspiring poem” read by Ellen LaPine.

We have received ten pledges for a total of \$11,160, which includes \$150 for Fair Share and \$310 for the window fund. There were three new pledges and five increased pledges. A GREAT START!

Please get your pledges in as soon as possible so that we can prepare a budget for next year. If you have not received a pledge form or have any questions, contact Janie Garlow or Chet Perkins.

– Finance Committee

Note: Please have items for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on SATURDAY, APRIL 24. His address is 29 Grove Street, Baldwinsville, NY 13027-2332; his telephone number is 635-5294; his e-mail address is rhaskell@twcny.rr.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

I have planned an Adopt-a-Highway pick-up Sunday, April 4. This is Easter Sunday, and I need to know who will be able to participate. Please contact me soon because I have to pick up signs from Mexico. We will meet at the church at 8:45 a.m., sign in, review the rules, don hat and vest (supplied by the highway department), and head out to Route 11. You need to bring work gloves and wear old shoes. You will be walking one mile. We should be back to church in plenty of time to wash up and change your shoes.

During the last week in April we will need volunteers to trim and mulch the 85 trees planted by Project Bloom in Central Square. The task is not as daunting as it sounds. I will provide more details and a sign-up sheet closer to that time.

Our presentation of the DVD of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture at the Baptist Church on Saturday, March 20, prompted a good discussion. We plan to continue to work to "Stop Torture Forever" and hope to educate our community about this issue.

We have had a beautiful spring this year and I have taken advantage of the warm weather to get out and walk. This is when I have seen a part of spring that is anything but beautiful: trash on the roadside. My husband and I have collected more than 100 deposit bottles and cans so far, plus many more bags of candy wrappers, paper plates, cigarette boxes, McDonald bags, and coffee and soda cups. You name it, and someone has thrown it out his or her car window. I wish I could convince people to stop littering. In the meantime I try to do my part. I suggest you enjoy the season and take a walk, maybe once a week. Be sure to take some plastic bags with you. Pick up the litter. You will feel proud to travel on clean streets. I know I do.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hallock, chair, Social Justice Committee, njh13042@yahoo.com

GREEN MINUTE: MEATOUT MONDAYS

We recently had our first vegetarian potluck luncheon. Many people said how good it was, and they learned a bit about how the meat we eat affects our environment. Here are some quick facts:

- Raising animals for meat, dairy and eggs produces more greenhouse gas emissions than all forms of transportation combined.
- The rainforest is being cleared to produce animal feed, while feed cropland and animal waste dump more pollutants into our waterways than all other human activities combined.
- Meat-based diets require 10-20 times as much land as plant-based diets, and nearly half of the world's grains and soybeans are fed to animals to produce meat.

Are you interested in eating less meat for reasons of better health? Here are some other facts:

- The naturally occurring trans fat in fatty beef and full-fat dairy foods is as harmful as the trans fat in partially hydrogenated oils.
- High intake of saturated fats from animal sources is linked to a greater risk of heart attack or stroke because these saturated fats raise bad LDL cholesterol and reduce good HDL cholesterol.
- Protein foods that are digested slowly, such as beans and legumes, do not produce the spike in blood sugar that stimulates over-eating.

Check out www.meatout.org. It offers a wealth of information on the grassroots efforts to make us healthier and our environment better by our eating less meat. It suggests that you start by declaring Mondays to be meat-free days and consuming only plant-based foods on those days. It also provides links to many other Web sites that will give you valuable information on such things as health issues, growing your own veggies, environmental impact, recipes, or pretty much any other subject you might be interested in.

We'll be having other vegetarian potlucks in the future. In the meantime, why not give Meatout Mondays a try, even if it's just once a month to start. You might just find that you really enjoy it and feel better physically and better about your impact on the Earth.

– Social Justice Committee's Green Team

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Well, it is official. We have let the whole world know that we have a religious education program! Thanks to Bob and Nancy Haskell, the church sign now reads Sunday Service Religious Education 10:30 All Are Welcome. Sounds like they did a lot of running around a couple weeks ago to find all the necessary letters in the correct size. Thank you, Bob and Nancy!

Pat Hellinger has come up with her schedule of educational and fun April programs for children's RE:

April 4 - Easter

April 11 - Animal Homes ("Tapestry of Faith")

April 18 - Our Worship Homes ("Tapestry of Faith")

April 25 - Earth Day

I will continue to implement the new Youth RE program in April that will utilize the Family Curriculum from the Unitarian Universalist Association religious education curriculum entitled "Tapestry of Faith." Also, the youth will celebrate Earth Day with a special outdoor session (weather permitting) on April 25. All late elementary, middle school, and high school youth are welcome to join in the fun.

Yours in nature,

– Chris Lajewski, chair, Religious Education Committee, and religious education youth group leader

EASTER SUNDAY CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I am trying to get an idea of how many children will at church for the Easter Egg Hunt. Please let me know by March 31st how many children you have attending or if you know of any who will be attending. Please e-mail me at pathellinger@msn.com or leave a message at 699-4824. Thank you, and Happy Easter.

– Pat Hellinger, religious education children's group leader

BOOK CLUB TO MEET ON APRIL 2

We have decided to meet to discuss the first Book Club selection, "Three Cups of Tea," at the church at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 2.

All 12 books from the Book Club kit are signed out. I am sure the library has more copies, if you are interested.

Please let me know if you plan to attend so that we will know how much pizza to order. You may contact me at njh13042@yahoo.com or at 675-8357.

Thanks.

– Nancy Hallock

THE CHOIR AWAITS YOU

An important part of our worship is the choir. The choir sings at the 10:30 a.m. service, and rehearses on Sunday mornings at 9:30. Come sing, and have a more personal and rewarding involvement in the worship.

– Rita Thornton, music coordinator

RETURN THOSE BOTTLES

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

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

DOWNSTAIRS SCOTTIE

The Executive Board has designated the second Sunday of each month as the date for the collection of food for the Downstairs Scottie.

The Social Justice Committee will take the contributions of food to the Food Bank at St. Michael's Church the next day.

The committee will continue to accept non-food items for the Downstairs Scottie 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.

The collection box is in the dining room downstairs.

Remember the Downstairs Scottie as you shop.

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.

OUR CHALLENGE IS TO NUTURE OUR SPIRIT ENERGY

My Dear Friends,

As I am writing this my husband is watching Syracuse basketball lose against Butler. It is March Madness and everything hangs on Syracuse winning, which it didn't. The aura in and around the La-Z-Boy recliner in front of the TV is not good; as a matter of fact, it is dark, and it is likely to remain dark for a while. I think I will keep my distance.

I believe we all have an aura of energy. These are powerful forces within each of us. I call this force: spirit energy. Our spirit is the breath of life, the mystery inside each of us. Our challenge is to nurture and refine this life force, this energy. We need to make choices to live the best possible life imaginable, to soar. No one can do this for us. It is up to us to be positive, to use our energy for the greater good. What goes on externally may be beyond our power to choose, but how we deal with our emotions is in our power, which brings me back to my husband in the recliner. There is no time in our life when we are faced with a choice-less moment. It is just more difficult to cultivate good energy at times, and this happens to be one of those times for my husband. We continuously make choices in order to cultivate good energy. The energy is contagious; even though it is invisible its intangible quality surrounds us and creates a positive atmosphere, our aura. We are naturally attracted to this positive energy. It directly adds to our sense of well being and is accumulative. Negative energy is counterproductive; this is why I'm staying clear of the recliner, at least for a while.

May your spirit soar,
– Janie Garlow

CHALICE LIGHTER SUNDAY MAY 2

May 2 has been designated as Chalice Lighter Sunday in our district and in our church. This is a day to bring attention to the Chalice Lighter program, to recognize our Chalice Lighters, and to encourage others to join us in helping Unitarian Universalism to grow.

What is a Chalice Lighter?

A Chalice Lighter is an individual (or family) who pledges to make a contribution, twice a year, to a congregation that has been dreaming big and planning reasonably for a specific growth or healthy congregation endeavor.

Chalice Lighters have helped congregations move into buildings of their own, and have helped provide professional leadership. They have helped new congregations get up and running, and they have helped existing congregations realize their dreams. Chalice Lighters helped us make our building handicapped accessible.

Chalice Lighter information is always available at church, or you may contact me if you have any questions at 668-6719 or at mperkins9@twcny.rr.com.

– Mary Perkins, Chalice Lighter Ambassador

“LEANING AGAINST THE WIND”

Our church has copies of the Rev. Max Coots's book, “Leaning Against the Wind,” for sale. All you have to do is give Janie Garlow or Chet Perkins a check or cash totaling \$13.

From 1958 to 1992 Max Coots delivered more than 1,400 sermons as minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton.

In 1991 a group of UU church members selected 59 of those sermons that they agreed were some of Max's best. First published in 1992, “Leaning Against the Wind” was re-printed twice, but for the last several years the book has been out of print. The fourth printing has just been completed and “Leaning Against the Wind” is once again available.

Max preached at our church for years after his retirement at Canton.

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 21.

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.

VIDEO DISCUSSION GROUP

The Video Discussion Group will meet in the Goettel Room at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 16.

Plans call for the showing of another segment from the PBS program, “Bill Moyers Journal.”

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.

SERVICES TO MARK MAUNDY THURSDAY, EASTER SUNDAY

Andrea Abbott, student minister, and Rita Thornton, music coordinator, will lead a Maundy Thursday service at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 1.

The Rev. David Weissbard will be in the pulpit at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 4. He has chosen as his sermon topic for Easter Sunday "The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith."

AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE REIKI

On Sunday, April 11, immediately following our church service. Sally Gewinner will offer information on Reiki. She will also offer the chance for people to experience Reiki at \$12 for 15 minutes.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our congregation to discover and experience this healing art of energy flow. Sally is a Reiki Master. She also has Ama Deus Energy as well as Karuna Reiki.

A sign-up sheet is on the big table in the East Room.

– Marilyn Nye, coordinator, UU Circle

TIME TO TURN IN THOSE ORDERS

Ann Peterson, secretary-treasurer of the UU Circle, is asking that orders for flowers, either for yourself or for your family, neighbors and friends, from the Flower Power catalogs be turned in to her during the week of April 4.

The program is a fundraising activity of the UU Circle.

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

The Executive Board, conducting its regular monthly meeting in the dining room on Sunday morning, March 28, named Chester Perkins and Arnold Hook as the church's delegates to the Saint Lawrence District Assembly to be hosted by May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse on Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24. Other Board members are expected to attend the Assembly.

The Executive Board agreed to conduct a membership orientation on Saturday, May 1, and Membership Sunday on Sunday, May 9. Board members voted to pay for the church Web site at a cost not to exceed \$100 a year. The Board agreed that money raised by the return of recyclable bottles be given to the Social Justice Committee to finance its various projects.

The Board voted that Sunday, May 2, be designated as Chalice Lighter Sunday in our church and that its observance be noted during the morning service.

The Board will conduct its next regular meeting at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 25.

UNIVERSALIST CONVOCATION 2010

Universalist Convocations will conduct its Universalist Convocation 2010 at the First Universalist Society, 150 South Clinton Avenue, Rochester, on May 14-16.

The keynote speaker will be the Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed; his topic will be "Dragged Kicking and Screaming to Heaven."

Universalist Convocations is an independent affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. Its purpose is "... to explore and draw

from the heritage of Universalist experience and faith to inform Unitarian Universalism today and help light its way toward the future."

Universalist Convocations is a membership organization, although membership is not required to attend its annual convocations. Membership dues are \$5 per year, and should be sent to Peggy Jones, Post Office Box 235, Seven Springs, NC 28578.

For more information you may go to nmuc.org/Convo.

– Richard Trudeau,
Universalist Convocations president

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.

CALENDAR

April

- 1 – 7 p.m., Maundy Thursday service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister, and Rita Thornton, music coordinator.
- 2 – 6 p.m., Book Club.
- 4 – 8:45 a.m., Adopt-a-Highway pick-up. 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. Easter Sunday sermon: “The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith.” Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
- 9 – 6 until about 8 p.m., Drum Circle.
- 11 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. 10:50 a.m., Religious education. Noon, Sally Gewinner will offer information on Reiki. This is also the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Social Justice Committee to donate food items for the Downstairs Scottie, which later will be taken to the Food Bank at St. Michael’s Church.
- 16 – 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group.
- 18 – 9:30 a.m., Religious Education Committee. 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
- 21 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat, Panera Bread, Route 31, town of Clay.
- 23-24 – Saint Lawrence District Assembly hosted by May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society, Syracuse.
- 25 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
- 30 – 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group.

May

- 1 – Membership orientation.
 - 2 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. Chalice Lighter Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
 - 9 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. Membership Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Social Justice Committee to donate food items for the Downstairs Scottie, which later will be taken to the Food Bank at St. Michael’s Church.
 - 14 – 6 until about 8 p.m., Drum Circle.
 - 16 – 9:30 a.m., Religious Education Committee. 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
 - 19 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat, Panera Bread, Route 31, town of Clay.
 - 23 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
 - 30 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.
- Chanting and meditation: People who are interested should call Tim Hart at 439-2541.

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 fund is administered by the student minister and two appointed lay persons.

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.

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

Ann Peterson has made arrangements for any cancellations to be broadcast over WSYR television, News 10 Now television and WSYR radio.

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.