



# CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

The First Universalist Church  
of Central Square  
*A Unitarian Universalist Congregation*

The Rev. Margaret Hart, Minister  
Andrea Abbott, Lay Speaker  
Janie Garlow, President  
Rita Thornton, Director of Music

668-1268  
635-7122  
668-1631  
699-4824

Our church building is handicapped accessible.

Routes 49 West & 11, Post Office Box 429, Central Square, New York 13036 Phone: 668-6821

## 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.

FEBRUARY 2009

## MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

Dear friends,

As you know by now, I have been home most of the past month with a broken ankle. It has been humbling and good to be on the receiving end of your care. Thank you for the numerous cards with their get-well wishes. They meant a lot to me. Thank you also to the UU Circle for the generous gift certificate to Akropolis Greek Restaurant in Central Square. I had my son bring me take-out, and look forward to enjoying the rest when I get out of my cast.

The church has been going through a lot of changes recently. Some people have left the church in the past few years for a variety of reasons. It might be that the church has changed and is no longer Christian enough, or it might be that it isn't experienced as spiritual enough. It might be that personal things draw adults, or their children, away from the church and into other activities. There are lots of reasons drawing people away from our church, but there are also things that draw people to the church.

Whichever way you are being drawn, it is helpful for those of us in leadership positions within the church to understand how you are feeling about our church. The church is much more than a structure; it is made up of all of us. So, please take a few minutes (and perhaps a lot of courage) to drop me or a board member a note.

As we have been undergoing changes, I understand that people have been stepping up to fill needs in creative ways. I thank you for that. I am sorry that I haven't been able to do more, myself, but it seems to have been the time for me to rest, reflect, and rejuvenate. I have been doing that, and look forward to being with you again soon in person. I get my cast off on February 6, and expect to be present more after that. In the meanwhile, I hope you will feel free to e-mail or phone me ([marghart@a-znet.com](mailto:marghart@a-znet.com), 668-1268).

We have a Membership Conversation scheduled after church on February 15. If you have been considering joining the church, or would just like to find out more about membership, I hope you will join the conversation. There is a sign-up sheet on the East Room table; if you can't sign up there, please let me know if you plan to come. I especially need to know in advance if you need child care. Thank you.

See you in church.

With love and respect,  
Margaret

Note: Please have items for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28. Bob would be grateful if everyone would have articles to him as soon as possible and not wait until the last minute. 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](mailto:rhaskell@twcny.rr.com)

## GREEN MINUTE: THE BIGGER BETTER BOTTLE BILL

Now that the new year is here, we have the best opportunity yet to see passage of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill (BBB). Governor Paterson has put it into his budget, Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Grannis is urging its passage. Perhaps most important is that it enjoys the most support it has seen in recent memory in both the Assembly and finally in the Senate where it has been blocked for years. New Senate Majority Leader Malcolm Smith has told the governor that he supports the bill. So what might hold it up? The lobby supported by the bottlers who currently keep any unclaimed deposits. The BBB would send those funds directly to the state Environmental Protection Fund. Some estimate that it could be as much as \$119 million per year.

Today non-carbonated drinks make up 1/4 of all beverage sales. It's time to update the very successful 1982 bill which placed a 5-cent deposit on carbonated soft-drink containers. The new bill includes non-carbonated soft drinks and would remove 2 billion containers from the waste stream this year and save 3.3 million barrels of oil.

The Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCRRA) has made it easy for all to voice their opinion in support of the BBB. Go to [www.OCRRA.org](http://www.OCRRA.org). It claims that 80 percent of plastic soda bottles are recycled in Onondaga County but only 16 percent of the plastic water bottles are recycled. It contends that people respond to the 5-cent incentive to recycle as evidenced by the current recycling rates and that the time is now to pass the BBB. It provides a link to an online BBB petition as well as a list of state representatives so that you can write to the people who represent your area. A nice feature of this list is that it provides a link to each representative's e-mail for your convenience.

Please help put passage of this very important bill over the top by contacting your representatives and telling them that we need the BBB now more than ever in this time of economic hardship for New York and for the extremely important environmental needs of this beautiful and diverse state we live in.

— Social Justice Committee's Green Team

## UPCOMING DREAM WORKSHOP

I will be facilitating a dream workshop on two Saturdays, February 14 and 28, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon each day. This will be a time to explore our spirituality through dreams using the work of UU minister and dreamworker, Dr. Jeremy Taylor, as a guide. Jeremy has been working for more than 40 years with dreams. I attended Jeremy's workshop in Buffalo in the fall. It was a truly enjoyable, rewarding experience. Jeremy encouraged all of us to share it with others. Everyone is invited. Sign up on the sheet in the East Room.

— Arnold Hook

## WHERE ARE YOU NOW? OR, KEEPING IN THE LOOP

With all of the new activities going on at church, it is important to keep in touch. We want to keep you informed about the potluck dinners, the religious education workshops, coffee and chat and all of the other activities that are happening.

The last directory is already a few years old, and many of you have changed your postal addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Please use the sign-up sheet in the East Room of the church to indicate any changes in your information. If it is just

the same, please let us know that, too. If you have been attending church lately, but were never in the directory, you can give us your information to receive the monthly newsletter and weekly e-mails with updates on church activities. We will be publishing a supplement very soon.

Thank you to everyone who has already updated the information.

— Ann Peterson, trustee, the Executive Board

## TO OUR CHALICE LIGHTERS

The last Chalice Lighter call went out in November with a request to help the Glens Falls church. I have received a note from District Growth Committee Chair Eileen Hamlin letting us know that the response has fallen short of expectations. We understand that economic conditions may be making difficulties for some Chalice Lighters, but we also are considering the "busyness" and distractions of the holiday season. This is just a reminder that if you have neglected to send your pledge it is still needed.

Our thanks to those who have sent in their donations.

— Mary Perkins  
Chalice Lighter Ambassador

## SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

Members of the Executive Board gathered in the Community Room for the regular monthly meeting on Sunday morning, January 25.

The Rev. Margaret Hart said that she plans to conduct a "Conversation on Church Membership" after the morning service on Sunday, February 15, for those individuals who are interested in joining the church. She offered to work with the teens in the religious education program in creating their credo statements. The Reverend Hart said that the cast on her broken ankle is to be removed on February 6.

Chester Perkins presented a seven-month treasurer's report. He said that income had been above budget, that expenses had been below budget and that pledges had either been paid up or were being paid on schedule. He expressed concern about the coming church year. He said that he expected the church would not receive \$4,000 in income next year that it had received this year.

Trustee Ann Peterson, as secretary-treasurer of the UU Circle, reported on plans for the Circle potluck luncheon and annual meeting scheduled after the worship service that day and an Un-Birthday Party planned in February. She also said that it been proposed that the church put on community smorgasbord dinners as a way to raise money.

Trustee Arne Hook reported that he had begun to set up a database with the postal and e-mail addresses of church members and friends. Trustee Ann Peterson said that she would continue to collect updated data for the project.

Trustee Arne Hook, as chairperson of the Building and Grounds Committee, said that he was continuing to seek prices on a uni-directional microphone and a CD recorder that church members might be able to install on their own to improve the quality of sound in the sanctuary.

The Board agreed that a letter of gratitude should be sent to Arne Hook for installing a new thermostat in the sanctuary for one of the church furnaces.

President Janie Garlow announced that a Stewardship Luncheon will be held after the worship service on Sunday, March 15. She also announced that she had appointed George Tennant as chairperson of the Ministerial Relations Committee. She also reported that she had certified to the Unitarian Universalist Association that the church has 50 members.

Lay Speaker Andrea Abbott said that she would prefer to delay leading the workshop on Emergency Preparedness Training for Congregations until after she had completed this semester at the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, probably in the middle or late May.

The next monthly meeting of the Executive Board will be held at the church at 9 a.m. on Sunday, March 1.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Everyone is invited to attend the regular monthly meeting of the Social Justice Committee at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, February 8.

We will be discussing community efforts to stop torture and pass the Bigger Better Bottle Bill.

— Nancy Hallock, chairperson

### HOLISTIC WELLNESS FAIR

Ginny Glahn reminds everyone that the Holistic Wellness Fair will be held at the church from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 21.

### "STRIKE FOR PEACE"

Sign up in the dining room to bowl from 2:30 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 1, as a team from our church to

support this fund-raising event of the Syracuse Peace Council. It has always been much fun!

— Nancy Hallock

### CALLING ALL SINGERS

If anyone is interested in singing in the choir, or singing and/or playing an instrumental solo, please talk to me after church on Sundays, or call me at 699-4824.

— Rita Thornton

### SAVE THE DATE

Event: 2009 Saint Lawrence District Annual Assembly

Date: April 24 and 25

Where: Albany

Theme: "Building The Beloved Community"

Keynote speaker: The Rev. Tom Owen-Towle

## A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

My Dear Friends,

We have experienced several changes at church and we are meeting these challenges with joy and hope. We are moving forward, and the energy is good. Many people are stepping up to volunteer and lend their thoughts and ideas. Recently at two committee meetings, ideas were flying. Nancy Hallock suggested that we host a smorgasbord for the community with a minimum fee or donation. Nancy and Steve Hallock attend a church in the Adirondacks that offers this on a monthly basis. This may be a simpler way to replace our roast beef dinners which were declining in attendance over the last few years. It is always good to step out of the box and try something new or different. Instead of making pies for dessert, which are time consuming, we would offer brownies; anyone can make brownies and have someone scooping ice cream. We would ask you to double or triple a favorite recipe and bring it to the table. We will offer hot tea and coffee, cold lemonade or ice tea, and rolls. Think about what you could make or bake -- macaroni and cheese, ziti, veggies, salads, whatever. It will be fun with all participating and not too work intensive. It will be a great way to connect with our surrounding community, have fun and help our church in many ways. Save the date for our first smorgasbord on March 28.

Last Sunday we held a potluck luncheon and the UU Circle election of officers after the Sunday service. I want to thank all those who volunteered their services and joined the Circle. Again, the energy was high. The food was plentiful and delicious; we were in spiritual union with each other, sharing, laughing and having fun. A dog and children were crawling on the floor and under the tables at our feet. Everyone was lending a hand to set up and clean up. I heard one person say, as he was washing dishes, this is so much fun! I couldn't have agreed more. It was a great way to spend a cold winter afternoon. The UU Circle is planning monthly potlucks and events such as this. Save the date for the UU Circle's Holistic Wellness Fair on March 21. Ginny Glahn is still collecting contracts if you know of anyone who might be interested in participating.

We have several people who have offered their services to assist Winfield Ihlow with our religious education program. If you want to be involved, there is a place for you. We have a great Executive Board and several active committees that always appreciate new members and ideas. If you would like to offer your talents or have anything you want to address, please contact someone on the Board or a committee. Mary Perkins has posted the names of Board members and committee chairs on the bulletin board in the church office. Check it out. May we continue to meet new challenges for the future of our church.

As always, thank you for your goodness.  
Janie Garlow

### LOOKING FOR ANOTHER MUSICAL OUTLET?

How about Spiritual Circle Dancing? Think of it as a gentle healing way to bring body, mind and spirit together. Relieve daily stress. Release creative energy and feel centered and connected. Watch out! It could be addictive.

The circle dance is the oldest dance form on Earth. The circle allows each and everyone of whatever age or background to feel safe to relax and discover the joy of dancing. The circle is a symbol for unity. The dancers hold hands and the circle moves as a unit, so there are no worries about being watched or making a fool of yourself. It's not about getting steps right, but enjoying the spirit of the dance and the sense of oneness and peace that moving physically in a supportive circle can bring. This will be open to everyone of all ages. Yes, children are welcome.

On Sunday, February 8, immediately following church service in the sanctuary, a brief meeting will be held to answer questions and to find an available time to get together.

Swaying to the music,  
— Rita Thornton

### 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  
Chet Perkins at 668-6719.

The decision will be made by 8:30 a.m.

Ann Peterson has also made arrangements for cancellations to be broadcast over WSYR television and WSYR radio.

## UU CIRCLE NEWS

On Sunday, January 25, we had a wonderful, delicious potluck luncheon. What a great variety of foods we had to enjoy. Mmm ... mmm.

Ann Peterson and I will remain on the UU Circle committee, and it is a pleasure to have Cara and Chris Lajewski and Rosemary Squires join our committee.

All meetings are open to all. The next two meetings are scheduled for Sundays, February 15 and March 15, at 11:45 a.m. after church downstairs.

We also have some coming events to save on your calendar that are sure to be fun and you won't want to miss.

On Sunday, February 22, after church there will be an UnBirthday Party for all. We do, however, need some volunteers to make birthday cakes. Please sign up on the sheet in the kitchen or contact me at 699-4824 if you can help. Thanks in advance. What is an unbirthday party? You must attend to find out what it's all about.

On Saturday, March 21, we will be having our Holistic Wellness Fair. There will be vendors and activities.

On Saturday, March 28, we will be having a Smorgasbord Dinner from 4 to 7 p.m. It will be opened to the community. Be on the lookout for more details.

The UU Circle wants you to fall in love with our activities.

— Rita Thornton, UU Circle president

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## A CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

A significant anniversary for Unitarian Universalists will be celebrated in Syracuse on October 31. This day will mark exactly 50 years since final negotiations were completed and a plan was adopted for merging the American Unitarian Association (AUA) and the Universalist Church of America (UCA) to create the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). To commemorate this event, the Saint Lawrence District of the UUA is sponsoring a conference on Friday and Saturday, October 30 and 31.

The dramatic events of the "1959 Conference at Syracuse" occurred in downtown Syracuse. In celebrating this pivotal moment in the history of Unitarian Universalism we will return to the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Syracuse, the central site of the conference where general sessions were held. The 2009 conference will be a celebration of our history and a quest to advance our future by exploring the meaning of "What Happened at Syracuse?", examining the development of Unitarian Universalism in the past 50 years, and addressing the challenges that face us.

The conference will:

Relive the music, liturgy, faith practices and actions of that historic period.

Revisit significant events leading up to the Conference at Syracuse.

Explore the growth of the movement in the past 50 years.

Consider the nature of our faith and the threads that weave our theological diversity into a common identity.

Help us embrace the challenges we face in working to advance our future as a unique religious people with something to offer the world.

Four prominent UU scholars will be on hand to provide their insights and perspectives about the meaning of "What Happened at Syracuse?" David Bumbaugh, David Parke, Richard Gilbert and Elizabeth Strong have each played important leadership roles in the growth of the Unitarian Universalist movement. They will bring a considerable body of experience and great insight to share in advancing our quest.

Don't miss the party -- join fellow UUs in Syracuse on October 30 and 31.

For more information, contact:

Saint Lawrence District Office: <http://www.sld.uua.org>

Alexa Carter, [garlex@aol.com](mailto:garlex@aol.com)

Suzy Farrell, [snjnyfar@rochester.rr.com](mailto:snjnyfar@rochester.rr.com)

Barry Lent, [belsyr@aol.com](mailto:belsyr@aol.com)

(For more information, also visit our web site at [www.geocities.com/centralsquareuu](http://www.geocities.com/centralsquareuu).)

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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.

## WE'LL OBSERVE EVOLUTION WEEKEND

The First Universalist Society of Central Square will be one of more than 890 congregations from across the country and around the world to participate in Evolution Weekend, February 13-15, a period designed to recognize that religion and science, two fields of critical importance to humans, should be seen as complementary rather than confrontational.

The fourth annual Evolution Weekend event is particularly timely this year since this is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin and the 150th anniversary of the publication of his book, "On the Origin of Species."

Fourteen countries on five continents, as well as all 50 states in the United States, will be represented. Scientists on six continents, representing 29 countries, have signed on as consultants.

During Evolution Weekend, the Rev. Margaret Hart of Central Square will lead worship focused on questions of the compatibility of evolution and religion. Such questions have become a lightning rod in the Culture Wars. Her hope is to find common ground, mutual understanding and respect.

Michael Zimmerman, founder of Evolution Weekend and dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Butler University in Indianapolis, praised the participants.

"Religious leaders around the world are coming together to elevate the quality of the discussion about this important topic. They are demonstrating to their congregations that people can accept all that modern science has learned while retaining their faith," said Zimmerman.

"They are also demonstrating that those who are promoting their narrow religious views as the norm, are not speaking for most of the world's religious community. Evolution Weekend shows that the disagreement is actually not between religious leaders and scientists, but rather between those who believe that their particular religious views should be incorporated into the science curriculum and clergy who recognize and respect the diversity of different faith traditions."

Evolution Weekend is sponsored by The Clergy Letter Project, which Zimmerman started in 2004. The Clergy Letter has been signed by more than 11,800 members of the Christian clergy who agree that "religious truth is of a different order from scientific truth. Its purpose is not to convey scientific information but to transform hearts." Companion Letters by Rabbis (with more than 400 signatures) and Unitarian Universalists (with more than 100 signatures) have recently begun circulating as well.

The letters urge school board members to preserve the integrity of the science curriculum by affirming the teaching of the theory of evolution as a core component of human knowledge. It asks "that science remain science and that religion remain religion, two very different, but complementary, forms of truth."

"With clergy members and scientists banding together to proclaim that their two fields have much to teach us about the world and the people in it, with the two groups demonstrating that they can work collaboratively, there is now hope that we can put the divisiveness that has been the hallmark of this struggle behind us," said Zimmerman, a biologist by training. "We can look to a future in which it is no longer controversial to teach our children the best science has to offer. We can create a future in which experts in different fields respect one another and the ideas each has to offer."

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## HARTLEY V. MARTIN DIES

Hartley V. "Doc" Martin, 90, of Gaithersburg, Maryland, died peacefully in his sleep on January 19. Hartley was a long-time resident of Central Square, and a tireless volunteer for our church for many years before his retirement to Fort Myers, Florida. Many of you may remember his love of gardening and golfing. A teacher of agriculture for more than 30 years, Hartley had also been employed by Cornell Cooperative Extension and the New York State FFA Leadership Training Foundation. He is survived by his wife, Jane Collins Martin; his son, David (Dorothy) Martin of Rochester, New York; three daughters, Susan (Harold) Tomlinson of Ballston Spa, New York; Catherine (Michael) Hall of Poolesville, Maryland; and Linda (Harium) Martin-Morris of Seattle, Washington; 15 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Memorial services are being planned at the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Fort Myers and at our church. Burial will be in Rochester at the convenience of the family.

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.

## CALENDAR

### February

- 1 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service. The Rev. Elizabeth Williams, guest speaker. Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 8 – 9:30 a.m., Social Justice Committee. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. 11 a.m., Religious education. 11:45 a.m., Spiritual Circle Dancing meeting.
- 13 – 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group.
- 14 – 10 a.m. to noon, Dream workshop led by Arne Hook.
- 15 – 9 a.m., Religious Education Committee. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Margaret Hart. Evolution Sunday. 11 a.m., Religious education. 11:45 a.m., Conversation on Church Membership. UU Circle meeting.
- 18 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.
- 22 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker, with focus on UU principle number 2. 11 a.m., Religious education. 11:45 a.m., UnBirthday Party.
- 28 – 10 a.m. to noon, Dream workshop led by Arne Hook.

### March

- 1 – 9 a.m., Executive Board. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. The Rev. David Weissbard, guest speaker. Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 11 a.m., Religious education. 2:30 to 5 p.m., "Strike for Peace."
- 8 – 9 a.m., Social Justice Committee. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. Association Sunday. 11 a.m., Religious education. The Rev. Margaret Hart will be at All Souls Church in Watertown.
- 15 – 9 a.m., Religious Education Committee. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Margaret Hart, with focus on UU principle number 3. 11 a.m., Religious education. 11:45 a.m., UU Circle meeting. Stewardship Luncheon.
- 18 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.
- 21 – 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Holistic Wellness Fair.
- 22 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service. Guest speaker, Kevin White of SUNY Oswego, Native American Spirituality. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 28 – 4 to 7 p.m., Smorgasbord Dinner open to the community.
- 29 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker, with focus on UU principle number 4. 11 a.m., Religious education.

### April

- 5 – 9 a.m., Executive Board. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Margaret Hart. Palm Sunday. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 12 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. Easter. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 19 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service. John Rogers, guest speaker. Bluebird presentation. The Rev. Margaret Hart facilitates the service. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 22-25 – The Rev. Margaret Hart attends UU Ministers' Retreat and Saint Lawrence District Assembly.
- 24 and 25 – Saint Lawrence District Annual Assembly, Albany.
- 26 – 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. 11 a.m., Religious education.

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## 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, February 18.

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 information about the women's group, you may contact Nancy Haskell. For information about the men's group, you may contact Chet Perkins.

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 idolatries of the mind and spirit.

