



# 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.

MARCH 2010

### STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPETS

The snowbanks have begun to shrink. This may not be as much of a sign of spring as we would like, but it is a small ray of hope. Even the wind seems kinder, hinting at the promise of warmer weather, of growth, of a renewal of life. Just when things seem completely inert, there is the faint stirring of something new. So it often seems in our lives. Just as we think that nothing will ever change, a new wind blows from an unexpected quarter. Under the snow the earth is waking up and we are called to wake up with it. Sooner than we think, the busy, bursting, humming time of growth will be upon us. We are called to renewal. This month will see a call to us to renew our dedication to our church when we celebrate Stewardship Sunday on March 14th. We are called to think of ways to sow the seeds of hope that we find here so others can share what we have here. Let's prepare the garden.

– Andrea Abbott

### “LIGHT THE FLAME”

My Dear Friends,

We are preparing our Annual Stewardship Campaign. It is that time of year when we ask you to support your church through your generous giving. The concept of stewardship speaks to “how” and “why” we support our church. Our giving reflects our values and what is important in our lives. This year our theme is: “Light the Flame.”

The UU Circle has been our fundraising engine, having planned many successful fundraising events over the years. At a recent UU Circle meeting we decided to do less fundraising; yes, that is correct, less. It is not that we don't need fundraising money to support the church but that the constant fundraising took the FUN out of fundraising. It became apparent to rethink fundraising. One family stated in an exit interview: “the constant fundraising was tiresome.” I know many of us felt the same way. We will still do fundraising but less of it. How then can we support the church??? We are hoping to pick up the slack with pledges. When you pledge you will be given a paper chalice to post on the wall. Let's fill that wall with paper chalices. We can do it!

When the whole congregation becomes motivated to improve its annual budget, great things are possible. Let's light the flame. We will kick off our stewardship campaign with a free luncheon on March 14 immediately after the Sunday service. Arne Hook will be the chef. You are warmly invited and all are welcome.

The energy in church is very positive with good attendance. We are blessed to have the Reverends Tanya Atwood-Adams and David Weissbard in the pulpit and, of course, our student minister, Andrea Abbott. Each Sunday is one not to miss. Let's keep this momentum going! It is too important not to do so!

With sincere appreciation and blessings,  
– Janie Garlow, president

Note: Please have items for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on SATURDAY, MARCH 27. 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)

## SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE NOTES

The Social Justice Committee sponsored two events in February. On February 7 we staffed a table to write Valentines to our New York State legislators. We encouraged them to support gender equality and to renew efforts to pass a same-sex marriage bill.

Then on Valentine's Day we had a successful potluck luncheon with a wonderful variety of delicious vegetarian dishes. Thank you to everyone who cooked, ate and cleaned up that day. We will definitely plan another meal in the spring.

Spring reminds me that in April (near Earth Day) we will need to schedule our village tree project. I will need many helpers.

Our committee has planned a joint meeting with the Central Square Baptist Church on March 20. We will review a DVD from the National Religious Campaign Against Torture and discuss why torture is a moral issue. More details will be provided soon.

If you have an issue you want us to explore, please contact any member and join us.

– Nancy Hallock, Social Justice Committee chair

## GREEN MINUTE: GET ORGANIZED

Most of winter is now behind us and we're itching to make a change in our winter surroundings. This is a good time to get organized. While you're cleaning out your old stuff you can give it new life by contributing it to worthy organizations.

**Home Goods:** Animal shelters are often in need of soft blankets, thick towels and linens to use in their animal cages. Got bigger items? The National Furniture Bank Association ([nationalfurniturebank.org](http://nationalfurniturebank.org)) provides furniture to victims of hurricanes, floods and earthquakes and helps families living below the poverty level as well as women and children who are starting over after fleeing violent homes.

**Electronics:** To find local organizations that accept used computers, television sets, cell phones and empty ink cartridges, visit [Earth911.com/electronics](http://Earth911.com/electronics). The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence ([ncadv.org](http://ncadv.org)) accepts used cell phones and gives them to women who might need one in an emergency. Games for Heroes ([gamesforheroes.com](http://gamesforheroes.com)) will send handheld electronic gaming systems to U.S. soldiers stationed in Afghanistan and Iraq. Also, the Get-Well Gamers Foundation ([getwellgamers.org](http://getwellgamers.org)) collects video games systems and games and distributes them to a network of more than 40 children's hospitals and treatment facilities across the country.

**Clothing:** Locally, the Salvation Army, Rescue Mission and many churches accept gently used clothing. Nationally you can donate suits, dresses and work appropriate clothes and accessories to [DressForSuccess.org](http://DressForSuccess.org) which helps disadvantaged women find and maintain employment. Clients receive one suit when they get an interview and are eligible for another after they land a job. For men, [careergear.org](http://careergear.org) is a similar program that collects used men's clothes. The charity [Soles4Souls](http://soles4souls.org) ([soles4souls.org](http://soles4souls.org)) accepts gently used footwear and sends it to people in need here and around the world.

**Sports Equipment:** At [iLoveSchools.com](http://iLoveSchools.com), teachers post wish lists for items they need that are beyond their school budget. [SportsGift.org](http://SportsGift.org) uses your donations to create community sports programs for underprivileged children worldwide.

**Books and Media:** The Salvation Army and some libraries will accept used books as well as DVDs. The Global Literacy Project collects used books for its worldwide literacy programs. [ProjectNightNight.org](http://ProjectNightNight.org) provides children's books inside a tote bag along with a security blanket and stuffed animal to homeless children. Before you recycle that stack of magazines, pass them along to someone else by giving them to a local hospital, women's shelter or retirement home.

**Glasses:** The local Lions clubs have drop-off containers in select locations to drop off old eye glasses. [UniteForSight.org](http://UniteForSight.org) accepts non-prescription sunglasses and sends them to people in Africa who don't have access to eye care.

**Musical Instruments:** Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation ([mhopus.org](http://mhopus.org)) refurbishes used instruments and gives them to underfunded school music programs.

Don't forget that for many of these donations you may be eligible for a deduction on your income tax, which is an added bonus as we de-clutter, organize and gain a feeling of more freedom within our own homes while keeping our unwanted items out of landfills.

– Social Justice Committee's Green Team

## UU CIRCLE NEWS

On April 11, immediately after 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. A sign-up sheet will be available in the East Room. Sally is a Reiki Master. She also has Ama Deus Energy as well as Karuna Reiki.

Flower Power Fundraiser: You may have glanced at the Flower Power catalog as it has circulated. Spring is around the corner and it is time to think of planting blueberries, growing tomatoes, having the scent of lavender and enjoying the sight of new flowers in your garden. We are ordering more Flower Power catalogs so that you can order for yourself and take orders from neighbors, family and friends.

– Marilyn Nye, UU Circle coordinator  
– Ann Peterson, UU Circle secretary-treasurer

### TREASURER'S REPORT

It doesn't seem possible that our church year is three-quarters over. During the last nine months we had an income of \$21,349 with expenses of \$20,462, leaving a positive balance of \$887. The main sources of income were pledges, \$15,407, and building usage, \$1,820. Several families have paid their pledges ahead and some have paid for the full year. Our major expenses were salaries, \$9,755; furnace loan payments, \$2,463 (now paid off); and utilities, \$2,348.

It is the time of year that we start to plan a budget for next year and begin our stewardship campaign. The kick-off will be a lunch prepared by our expert chef Arne Hook after the church service on Sunday, March 14. This will give everyone a chance to discuss the plans for next year and how we will meet the needs of the congregation. There may be musical entertainment after the lunch.

Hope to see you all there.

– Chet Perkins

### 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](http://nmuc.org/Convo).

– Richard Trudeau,  
Universalist Convocations president

### CUUPS TO CELEBRATE

Everyone is invited to join the Central New York Chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) in celebrating the vernal equinox, also known as Ostara, at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society, 3800 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 21.

For more information, see our Facebook page or contact Jody Brown at [jfb523@gmail.com](mailto:jfb523@gmail.com).

– Rachael Whitney

### FUNDRAISER FOR HAITI RELIEF

The Central New York Chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS), the Church of the Greenwood and Student Pagan Information Relations and Learning (SPIRAL, the Syracuse University pagan group) extend their thanks to May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse for the use of its Social Hall on Saturday, February 13.

Our "Dessert & Divination" fundraiser brought in more than \$600 for the Haiti Relief Fund through the Red Cross. Additionally, the leftover desserts brought in an additional \$135 at a bake sale held the next morning after the church worship service. Your support and generosity are truly heartwarming.

– Jody Brown

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.

### “LEARNING THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES”

March will be an exciting time for our religious education program! We will begin to incorporate the Unitarian Universalist religious education curriculum entitled “Tapestry of Faith” into our program. Embodying a faith development focus for our congregations, “Tapestry of Faith” is a series of programs and resources for all ages that nurture Unitarian Universalist identity, spiritual growth, a transforming faith, and vital communities of justice and love. We feel that all our children will benefit greatly from this curriculum.

Starting March 7, older children (youth) are invited to attend a religious education program, following the children's story, that will be geared toward middle school and high school-aged children. The youth program is still in its infancy, so this will likely be the one youth program for March. I am still working out the details to get additional educators (parents and members of the congregation) lined up to help develop and implement this important program. To that end, if you are interested in working with our youth for one Sunday a month or even more, I'd like to hear from you! I anticipate that additional youth programs will be offered in April. Stay tuned.

Pat Hellinger has an exciting month planned for the younger children. Here are topics for the upcoming children's religious education program:

March 7 - What is a home?

March 14 - St. Patrick's Day: Why do we celebrate?

March 21 - Spring: Beehives

March 28 - Palm Sunday

Yours in nature,

Chris Lajewski, chair, Religious Education Committee

### ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The next Drum Circle will be from 6 until about 8 p.m. on Friday, March 12. Our plan is to schedule the Drum Circle for the second Friday of each month. If you cannot make it at 6 o'clock, just drop in when you can. If you don't have a drum, but are curious about the experience of a Drum Circle, there are drums, rattles, rhythm sticks and maracas available.

We have all looked forward to and been inspired by sermons given by the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams. So, here is some good news. She will be giving an adult religious education workshop series in May and June. More information on the workshop will be coming soon.

– Ann Peterson, Adult Religious Education

### SERMON TO FOCUS ON “NUMBNESS”

The Rev. David Weissbard has chosen “Numbness” as the title of his sermon for the worship service at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 7.

David writes, “We are bombarded daily by the 24-hour news channels and by the internet, with the challenges of threats to our environment, economy, national security, and personal welfare, among others. It is easy to understand why so many people are overwhelmed and experience numbness. It is tempting to turn it all off and retreat into virtual caves. I'll address the challenge of confronting that personal and collective numbness.”

### MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC

Isn't it nice to hear and see a choir? Rehearsals are scheduled for 9:30 on Sunday mornings. We can

always use more singers and/or musicians. Also, if anyone is interested in sharing his or her musical talents in other ways during the service, please contact me. Music always adds something special to the service. Join us and enjoy how the music makes you feel. See you Sunday.

– Rita Thornton, music coordinator

### 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.

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.

You are warmly invited  
to join your friends and neighbors  
to view the following video,  
followed by a discussion:  
“Ending U.S.-Sponsored Torture Forever”  
A Study for People of Faith  
Produced by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT)  
at the First Baptist Church in Central Square  
at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 20.  
Refreshments will be served.  
This is free and open to the public.  
All are WELCOME.  
For more information, contact:  
Nancy Hallock at 675-8357

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### BOARD SPLINTERS

The Executive Board, meeting in the church dining room on Sunday morning, February 28, discussed plans for the Stewardship Luncheon scheduled for noon on Sunday, March 14. President Janie Garlow agreed to serve as master of ceremonies for the luncheon. Treasurer Chester Perkins offered to speak about church finances. Board members agreed to present a musical segment. Trustee Arne Hook said he will prepare food for the luncheon. Janie Garlow said that she and others would make desserts.

Board members also voted to express their appreciation for the work of committee chairs Nancy Hallock, Social Justice Committee; Patricia Cerro-Reehil, Worship Committee; Christopher Lajewski, Religious Education Committee; Ann Peterson, Adult Religious Education and UU Circle secretary-treasurer for several years; Arnold Hook, Building and Grounds Committee; Chester Perkins, Financial Committee; Mary Perkins, Organizational Task Force; and George Tennant, Ministerial Relations Committee.

The Executive Board also adopted the following policy:

“The First Universalist Society of Central Square permits the use of its property for activities authorized by the Executive Board. The primary purpose of such activities should be for the religious, educational or social benefit of individual members and friends or outside groups and organizations. Because the Society does not wish to endanger its non-profit corporate status or its charitable, tax-exempt status, the primary purpose of such activities should not be for the financial benefit of individual members and friends or outside groups and organizations.”

The Executive Board decided to conduct its next regular meeting in the church dining room at 9 a.m. on Sunday, March 28.

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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, March 17.

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 Chester Perkins.

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### 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.

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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.

## 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 Saint 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 approximately \$74 per member (\$56 for the UUA, and \$18 for the SLD).

Our congregation has a line item in our budget, which covers \$1,000 of our contribution. Each year we try to pay our Fair Share in full. We made part of our contribution during December.

We are asking members if they are able to do so to write a check for \$74 payable to the church and to designate "Fair Share" in the memo. This would help us reach our goal.

For more information, you may call Chet Perkins at 668-6719.

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## CALENDAR

### March

7 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. Sermon topic: "Numbness." Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.

12 – 6 until about 8 p.m., Drum Circle.

14 – 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, Stewardship Luncheon. 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 Scotty, which later will be taken to the Food Bank at St. Michael's Church.

17 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat, Panera Bread, Route 31, town of Clay.

20 – 10 a.m., Forum on torture at Central Square Baptist Church, co-sponsored by our Social Justice Committee.

21 – 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.

28 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. 10:50 a.m., Religious education.

### April

4 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. 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 Scotty, which later will be taken to the Food Bank at St. Michael's Church.

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 to be held in Syracuse and hosted by May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society.

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.

### May

17-July 19 – The Rev. Dr. Thomas Chulak, Saint Lawrence District executive, on "sabbatical," part 2 of 2.

Chanting and meditation

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

The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.