

CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

The First Universalist Society of Central Square

*A Unitarian Universalist
Congregation*

3243 Fulton Street
(Route 49, near Route 11)
Post Office Box 429
Central Square, New York
13036-0429

*Our church building is
handicapped accessible.*

Telephone: 315-307-3400

E-mail:
andreaabbottuu@gmail.com

*Church website:
[http://www.
centralsquareuu.org](http://www.centralsquareuu.org)*

Facebook page:
[http://www.facebook.com
/pages/UU-Central-Square
/199139743511564](http://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square/199139743511564)



Our Mission Statement

The mission of the First Universalist Society of Central Square is to be a welcoming, diverse congregation, which values spiritual growth and service to the local and world community.

UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

A MINISTERIAL MOMENT, OR MORE

Watching the snow fall outside reminds me that it really isn't too early to think about Christmas, however or whyever we celebrate that holiday. No matter how people try to curb its excesses, no matter how often or how much we tell ourselves that a simple holiday is best, or perhaps because we tell ourselves this, the lights and songs and tastes that are all around us invite us again into the festivities. Indeed, many of the books and movies of this season have as their villains, or at least their cautionary characters, those who do not give themselves over to the spirit of the holidays. And a big part of that spirit is the giving of gifts. Somehow, there is something in us that longs for one day of release in which we are allowed to indulge the part of us that wants not to take but to give. It seems as irrepressible an urge as the other, less virtuous urges that we struggle with. The people who run charities and non-governmental organizations know this about ourselves and count on that desire to keep them going throughout the rest of the year, when the giving spirit may have shrunk back into the shadows. Because of this understanding of human nature, my mail is flooded with appeals of one sort or another, some promising to send me something — return address labels, a key holder, a wristband, if I will give to their particular charity. This seems to be with the idea that we all want something in return. What is it that we really want in return for our generosity? If we think about it, we usually don't really want another plastic cup. We really want, somehow, to make a difference, whether that difference is to help someone we have never met and whose response to our gift we may never see or whether we want to put a smile on a beloved face. To be able to make a difference, to be able to move the world a little closer to happiness, this is indeed a great reward, whether it's now or at Christmas. Let us give ourselves that gift.



The Rev. Andrea Abbott



DEADLINE NEARS ON GIFTS FOR CHRISTMAS

Our church is collecting non-perishable food items for the Central Square Lions Club's Christmas baskets. Also, we are collecting mittens, hats and scarfs for the Central Square Lioness Club. The deadline to bring these items to church is Sunday, December 11.

UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.



THE REVEREND WEISSBARD TO DISCUSS THE CHALLENGE POSED BY THE ELECTION

The Rev. David Weissbard writes concerning his sermon, "Conscience and Compromise," for the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, December 4:

"So, finally, the election is over. The result is, as always, some are happy and some are feeling devastated. Never has there been an election about which all were delighted, and this one is certainly no exception. But where do we go from here? Canada? Costa Rica? Do we extend the utter logjam that has led the American people to such a low evaluation of Washington?"

Compromise, a now foreign concept, comes to mind, but then there is that virtue that has its own downside: principle. We will not resolve the issue on Sunday, but perhaps we can clarify the challenge."

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE TO FOCUS ON CAROLS AND READINGS OF PEACE

In anticipation of our church's annual Christmas Eve service this year, the Rev. Andrea Abbott writes:

"I was recently reminded that this year is the 100th anniversary of the Christmas Eve in which British soldiers and German soldiers ended two years of unofficial Christmas truces, which had included singing Christmas carols and football matches. Though we think of these truces as heartwarming moments in the midst of war's horror, what had followed was a series of court martial and firing squads as the men were accused of fraternization with the enemy. By 1916, the war had become more bitter and the truces were over.

"In recognition of the fragility of peaceful efforts, our Christmas Eve service will focus on carols and readings of peace. War still engulfs huge areas of our planet, and some thoughts about the way to peace are, unfortunately, still as timely as they were 100 years ago. The service will begin at 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve."



UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

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.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE SELLING CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Social Justice Committee met on Sunday, November 13.

We spent most of our time discussing how to promote our Christmas cards. Mary Fran Yafchak has set up an option to buy the cards on our church website. We also mailed a card and order information to several UU churches.

The Red Cross has scheduled the next blood drive on March 4. This is a 16-week gap between drives instead of the routine eight weeks, because of staffing concerns.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Guest at Your Table program will receive our contributions of coins in the offering plates during November and December. If you want to



make a larger contribution, you can do so online or place a check in an envelope labeled UUSC in the plates.

The next Social Justice Committee meeting will be conducted on Sunday, December 11. All our welcome to attend.

Nancy Hallock, committee chair

GENTLE YOGA: THURSDAYS 5:30 TO 6:30 P.M. BEGINNING DECEMBER 1



Gentle yoga, a form of Hatha yoga, is the science of bringing balance to the mind and body. In this class we focus on proper alignment to safely encourage movement in the joints and build strength and flexibility in the muscles. The goal is to promote overall health and relaxation of the mind and body. Classes will begin with centering and warming of the body, followed by yoga postures (asana), breathing exercises (pranayama) and meditation techniques, and will end with savasana (extended relaxation). Open to participants of all levels and abilities. Cost \$65 for 8-week session or \$10 drop-in. Email Joyce Green for more information: joycegreenyoga@gmail.com.

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.

GREEN MINUTE: LAVENDER SALT SCRUB

As I was looking through Mother Earth News, I ran across a recipe for Lavender Salt Scrub that was given to the magazine by a reader. This scrub is toxin-free, environmentally friendly and made with ingredients you may have at home or can easily obtain. It will exfoliate the skin with Epsom salts and moisturize with coconut oil. Also, Epsom salts has been known to soothe aching muscles, and lavender essential oil is considered a calming agent in aromatherapy. This scrub would make a wonderful gift for family and friends as well.



Two tablespoons coconut oil

One-half cup Epsom salts

Two fresh lavender sprigs

Five to 10 drops lavender essential oil

Spoon two tablespoons of coconut oil into a microwave-safe dish. Microwave the coconut oil for two to three 10-second intervals, stirring each time, until the oil becomes translucent. **BE CAREFUL**, the oil gets **HOT** quickly.

Scoop one-half cup Epsom salts into the coconut oil and mix well. You can add more melted coconut oil or Epsom salts, depending on how conditioning or exfoliating you want your scrub to be.

Strip the flower buds from the lavender sprigs and chop them into small bits. If you don't have lavender at home, most natural food stores will have it. When I made mine I left this out but I will include it when I have fresh in the spring.

Place the lavender bits into the oil and salt mix. Add five to 10 drops (depending on your preference) of lavender essential oil and mix well.

Spoon the scrub into a small jar. If giving as a gift, tie on a recycled twine, ribbon or yarn bow; make a tag out of scrap fabric or paper and label.

You might want to include a card with the recipe written on it so the recipient can make their own scrub.

If you want to include a holiday card, the Social Justice Committee is selling cards as a fundraiser with our tree design on the front dressed up for the holidays. The inside of the card says "May the spirit of life be with you this holiday season." The price is \$10 for 6 cards. Please see any Social Justice Committee member if you would like to purchase some cards.

Ellen LaPine

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.

CHILDREN TO OBSERVE UU EVENT

Happy Chalica, everyone.

In December we will be making our personal altar cloths. You can be guaranteed there will be much glitter involved.

The first Monday in December brings the seven days of Chalica. One day for each of our seven Unitarian Universalist principles. One thoughtful deed is done each day to honor that day's principle.

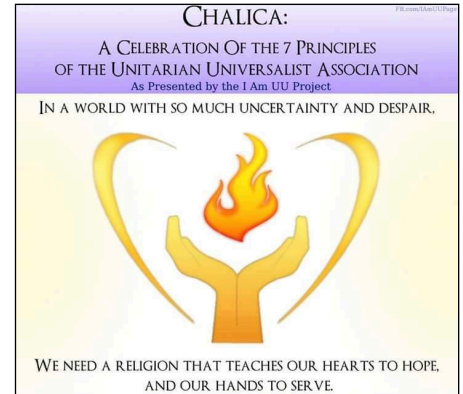
We have completed our scarves for the Lionesses, and packed glasses for recycling for those in need.

We are now working on bringing in canned goods for the Downstairs Scotty.

Our big project this month will be raising money to donate to the Heifer Project. The kids have already picked out the livestock they wish to purchase and will be selling pins to help raise the money.

Christmas Day will find the children helping to get our church dining room ready for the Christmas dinner.

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



A NOTE OF THANKS

Thanks to these people for volunteering to host the social times on Sunday mornings: Kurt and Ronna Schindler, November 27, and Mary Fran Yafchak, December 11.

Volunteers are needed to serve as greeters on Sunday mornings.

Anyone with any questions is encouraged to speak with Winfield Ihlow.

Volunteers are also needed to host the social time on Sunday mornings. Anyone with any questions is encouraged to speak with Judy Tennant.

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 Thursday, December 15. All are welcome to join in casual conversation and to enjoy coffee or tea and other goodies.



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.

Fifteenth Annual
FREE
CHRISTMAS
DINNER

12:00 – 4:00 Christmas Day

At

First Universalist Church

Central Square

(corner Routes 11 & 49)

We wish to share our bounty
with anyone who wants to share friendship, food,
or just a warm friendly place.

Need a ride? Have a question?

Call Kurt @ 315-247-0432

No reservations necessary, just come on down.

We'll see you there!

The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against the idolatries of the mind and spirit.

The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

DECEMBER 2016 CALENDAR

- 1 – 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Gentle Yoga.
- 4 – 9 a.m., Executive Board. 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. David Weissbard leads the worship service. Sermon topic: “Conscience and Compromise.” Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which the Social Justice Committee asks everyone to bring magazines to the church dining room to exchange them for others. The committee will continue the recycling process by passing on any magazines that are left to the Public Safety Building Jail in Syracuse every two or three months.
- 5 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome. In addition, the sanctuary will be open for anyone who wishes to use it for a time of reflection, prayer or meditation.
- 8 – 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Gentle Yoga.
- 11 – 9 a.m., Social Justice Committee. Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., The Rev. Andrea Abbott leads the worship service. Christmas tree decoration to be completed. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. Noon, The choir will conduct its monthly rehearsal in the sanctuary. Today is the deadline to bring non-perishable food items for the Central Square Lions Club’s Christmas baskets and mittens, hats and scarfs for the Central Square Lioness Club to church.
- 12 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome. In addition, the sanctuary will be open for anyone who wishes to use it for a time of reflection, prayer or meditation.
- 15 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay. 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Gentle Yoga.
- 18 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., the Rev. Tanya Atwood-Adams leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. The UU Circle will have its annual cookie sale.
- 19 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome. In addition, the sanctuary will be open for anyone who wishes to use it for a time of reflection, prayer or meditation.
- 22 – 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Gentle Yoga.
- 24 – 5 p.m., Christmas Eve service.
- 25 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:25 a.m., Announcements. 10:30 a.m., The Rev. Andrea Abbott leads the worship service. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. 11:45 a.m., Social time. 12 noon to 4 p.m., Christmas Day dinner.
- 26 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome. In addition, the sanctuary will be open for anyone who wishes to use it for a time of reflection, prayer or meditation.

2016 DECEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

In Unitarian Universalism, you can bring your whole self: your full identity, your questioning mind, your expansive heart.