

CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

The First Universalist Society of Central Square

*A Unitarian Universalist
Congregation*

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(Route 49, near Route 11)
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Central Square, New York
13036-0429

*Our church building is
handicapped accessible.*

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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)



Photo courtesy of Village of Central Square

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.

Andrea Abbott, Minister	315-635-7122
The Rev. Libbie Stoddard, Minister Emerita	315-343-4352
Leigh Parry-Benedict, Music Coordinator	315-657-5904
Ronna Schindler, Religious Education Chair	315-623-7685
Janie Garlow, President	315-436-2238
Janet Jenkins, Vice President	315--243-7273

Please have articles for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than 5 p.m. on SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27. He prefers to receive articles via e-mail. His e-mail address is rhaskell@twcny.rr.com.

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

A MINISTERIAL MOMENT, OR MORE

November means Thanksgiving and that inevitably means a spate of articles and sermons on gratitude. For me, gratitude is an emotion that has sometimes been misused. Many people have been told they should be grateful for things that they should not have had to be grateful for. The most common example is when the poor are given castoffs and leftovers and then are expected to show exaggerated gratitude. This demand for gratitude as a prerequisite for sustaining life itself is



misplaced, in my books, and leads to resentment and anger on both the side of the giver and of the recipient. And, too often, in other areas of life we are told to be grateful when that is not what we are feeling. Gratitude is an emotion that should not be forced,

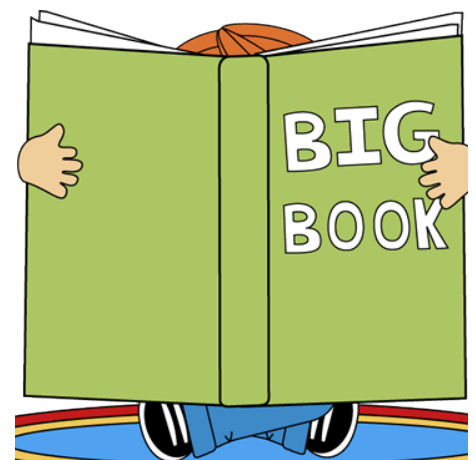
something like forgiveness. We forgive, or are grateful, when we have worked through the process that makes it an honest and authentic emotion. When that process has occurred, gratitude, genuine, unforced gratitude, is a necessary and life affirming emotion. Gratitude opens us up to the wonder of the complexity of existence. When we can be grateful, it frees us from the illusion of self-sufficiency, and that lets us truly participate in the circle of giving and receiving that is the essence of life. Give thanks.

The Rev. Andrea Abbott

THE REVEREND WEISSBARD IS READING A BIG BOOK

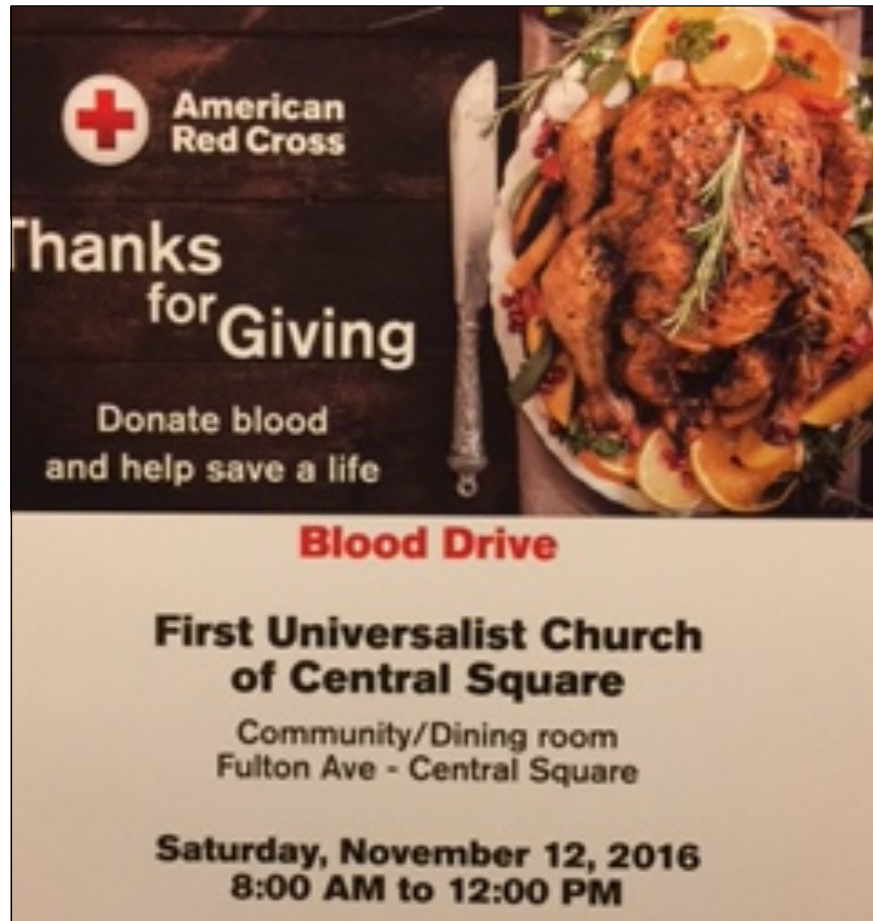
The Rev. David Weissbard writes concerning his sermon for the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, November 6:

“Here’s the situation: Early in October, I purchased a 750-page book that I thought would serve as the basis of the perfect sermon for the first Sunday in November. The problem is, with other things demanding attention, I have now read 350 pages. I do work well under pressure so I can finish it in time, but I am not certain that the sermon will come together as I hope, so I don’t want to tell you what it is lest you feel let down by the sermon I deliver if it’s not what I promised. So, all I can say is, ‘Trust me’.
“Dave.”



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.



ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF OUR RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVES

We will have one of our regularly scheduled blood drives on from 8 a.m. until noon on Saturday, November 12.

If you would like to donate blood, you can schedule an appointment by calling 1 800 Red Cross or you can sign up online by going to redcrossblood.org. There is also a sign-up sheet in the dining room where you can make an appointment.

I have placed a sign-up sheet in the dining room for volunteers to help with the drive. If you can help for even a short time on that day it will be much appreciated.

Please let your friends and neighbors know about the blood drive. If you have contacts within the community that might support us or partner with us for our drives, please get in touch with me and I will reach out to them.

Thank you for your help.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee blood drive coordinator

UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote a free and responsible search

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 MEETS

The Social Justice Committee met briefly after the Highway Pickup on Sunday morning, October 9.

We agreed to send a letter, composed by Tracy Kinne, to the Readers Page in local newspapers explaining the Green Light NY campaign and why citizens should support this and encourage legislators to do the same. We finalized details for our help with the spaghetti dinner and our own bake sale that same night.

We have added some redesign ideas to our T-shirt logo to express a Christmas theme

and use it for cards. Thanks to Aaron Jenkins for his expertise in this phase. The finished product is at the printers now and will be for sale soon.

The next committee meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Sunday, November 13. Everyone is invited.

Nancy Hallock, chair



UU CIRCLE NEWS

The UU Circle wants to thank everyone that generously volunteered time for this important fundraiser. We also want to thank people for donating food and cash that helped to make this a successful fundraiser. Thanks to everyone for all that you give. We could not do it without you.

If you need to be reimbursed for any purchases related to the dinner, please let me know. We do not have the final income figure yet, as we need to reimburse some people for their expenses.

Lunch and Chat:

Tabatha's Restaurant was very generous in providing for this dinner, so we are suggesting that we have our next Lunch and Chat at Tabatha's. We will announce a date and time very soon.

Ann Peterson



MEDITATION SERIES EXTENDED

There will be peer-guided meditation at the church from 6 to 7 p.m. on Mondays, starting on Monday, November 7. This is an extension of the Zen Center meditation series. All are welcome whether or not you participated in the series, and whether or not you have ever meditated.

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.

BOARD SPLINTERS

The Executive Board met October 2 and decided to keep the Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. Members also discussed cleaning and painting needs, and the Fair Share contribution to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The Rev. Andrea Abbott gave results from the survey conducted in September. The board had received a request to change the Sunday service to 9:30 a.m. Votes from congregants were: 2 in favor of changing the time, 17 against, 2 without a preference. Since about 25 people regularly attend services out of a membership of 45, the board decided the survey was representative.

Board members discussed replacing or cleaning the upstairs carpets or possibly tearing up the carpeting, refinishing the floor and adding runners. The board worried about the cost of some of those options.

Arne Hook will get a quote on cleaning the carpets. The carpeting on the church front steps needs to be replaced, and it's a job that must be done when it's warm enough for the glue to stick. Arne may do it himself or may get a quote for the work. It is a substantial project.

Board members discussed painting the sanctuary walls and not worrying about the ceiling for now. The price Arne got for painting the walls and ceiling was \$3,200. Winfield Ihlow may help. Board members discussed the challenges of an aging congregation -- members used to do all this work as volunteers, but now it takes more energy and youthful bodies than we have. Arne and Winfield will discuss these various projects with work on the belfry as priority. Arne said he still has no word from the contractor on the belfry.

Andrea, Arne, Chuck Lochner and Tracy Kinne attended the cluster meeting at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society in Syracuse September 18 and ended up with questions. What does the cluster do for us? Andrea was planning an October lunch meeting in Central Square with representatives from Auburn, Syracuse, Watertown and perhaps Utica churches to go over what the churches will do as a cluster and whether we actually are a cluster.

However, we do know the cluster churches are exploring joining together for advertising on National Public Radio, with churches paying toward the cost based on size. Smaller churches, such as ours, would pay about \$50.

Andrea noted that a Central East Region representative was at the September cluster meeting and said Fair Share contributions will remain the same for another year, being made on a per member basis, then will shift to a percentage of each church's budget. The UUA has figured out that the current scheme doesn't encourage people to become members. This change would decrease the cost to our church.

Marcia Burrell-Ihlow, our treasurer, reported that September costs were considerably higher than



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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.

BOARD SPLINTERS

(Continued from Page 5)

what was taken in (a net decrease of \$1,537.19) for several reasons, including the Fair Share:

- the church paid half of its Fair Share (\$1,320) to the UUA
- the church paid for snowplowing for the season (\$600)
- the church paid for Religious Education director Ronna Schindler to train at Star Island (\$365).

Discussion ensued about the church's Fair Share contribution. Marcia said the church always pays in full its contribution to CER (formerly the St. Lawrence district), which last year was \$668. But we pay only half of our Fair Share to the UUA.

The full Fair Share is \$2,640, based on 45 members, which board members agreed is high for a church of our size and resources. Marcia said few churches pay the full Fair Share. For example, the Albany church, which is large, pays its full Fair Share of \$22,800, as does Binghamton at \$13,000. Many churches pay half.



Arne reported that Mary Fran Yafchak is ordering posters of the Unitarian Universalist principles and sources, which will be hung in the sanctuary in place of the historical statements. The historical pieces will be moved to the hallway in the religious education wing, where they will flank the quilt.

Andrea said she took no vacation during the summer and instead will be gone March 15 to April 15, when she and Arne will be in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. While there, she will give two sermons and Arne will collaborate on a dreamwork conference. While she is gone, she will miss two sermons at our church. Suggestions about those Sundays should be directed to Spiritual Committee chair Patricia Cerro-Reehil, Bob or Nancy Haskell, Janie Garlow or Andrea.

Board members discussed how to use the singing bowl. Several prefer the bowl be circled once and the sound allowed to fade. Andrea will ask that this approach be used.

Andrea would love to go forward with the Zen meditation group. It is proving popular. But some classes aren't drawing 10 participants, which is the number needed to break even and pay the teacher, Janet Jenkins reported. Would the church chip in money, if needed? Arne and Janet said the idea is to move toward paid classes with a teacher perhaps twice a year -- in the spring and fall -- and be self-directed the rest of the year. The classes provide valuable outreach.

Janet is finishing revisions to the building use form. Board members will explore using Google forms to compile the data. Ellen LaPine will make a sign for the thermostat advising people not to change it, but to call Arne with concerns.

The next board meeting will be 9 a.m. Sunday, November 6. Everyone is welcome.

Tracy Kinne
Recording secretary

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.

GREEN MINUTE: JUST ONE THING

Andrea started her October 23rd sermon by pointing out that creepy clowns were getting a bigger headline in the news than the fact that climate change is taking place faster than originally expected. She talked about change and how hard it is, especially if we have to give up something. Making changes to positively impact the climate probably won't get a lot of headlines because as individuals we can only take personal steps that we hope as a whole will make a difference. One of the challenges to making these changes is that we don't see the instant results we Americans have come to expect. However, we do need to keep in mind that every small gesture does make a tremendous difference for our environment, as a model for others around us and for generations of plants and animals to come.

In this cold and dreary month of November during which we give thanks, I'm thankful that I have abundant water, that my air is clean, that the scenery often makes me smile and that my family and friends share these wonderful things with me. While I was growing up in the Adirondacks I took these things for granted. Now when I go there, the beauty will sometimes take my breath away and I am fortunate that I can go there whenever I want to. Another reason to give thanks.

As we give thanks for our beautiful piece of the planet, I'd like to also challenge you to look at the things you do and ask yourself if your actions are supporting all that this world has given you. For example, are you throwing away a lot of food? It takes energy, water, air and sunlight to produce that food and to get it to your table. Is there a change you can make to buy just what you'll use? Maybe you're using more gas than when the prices were higher. What did you do to conserve before? Was it so hard to conserve back then and why didn't you stick with it?

Thanksgiving is November 24. Show your thanks by committing to making one change this year that will positively impact our world, and then make that change a habit.

You'll never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is in your daily routine. — John C. Maxwell



Ellen LaPine
Outreach Committee

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.

CHILDREN TO FOCUS ON “COMMUNITY OF THE HEART”

Somehow November snuck up on us.

What a wonderful month we have ahead of us.

Sometime we do not realize how fortunate we are.

We will be discussing how even though we may not be large in numbers, we can make a big difference to others.

Our focus this month will be on community of the heart. We will be making scarves for the Lioness mitten drive and packing up used eye glasses to be given to the program, the gift of sight. The glasses will be refurbished and given to someone in need.

We will be learning how and why our chalice was created and designing altar cloths for the upcoming UU holiday Chalica.

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



NOVEMBER 2016 CALENDAR

6 – 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. Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. 10:50 a.m., Religious education program. Noon, The choir will conduct its monthly rehearsal in the sanctuary. 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.

7 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome whether or not you participated in the previous series, and whether or not you have ever meditated.

12 – 8 a.m. to noon, Red Cross Blood Drive at our church.

13 – 9 a.m., Social Justice Committee. 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. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which the Social Justice Committee asks everyone to donate food items for our Downstairs Scotty, which later will be taken to the Downstairs Scotty thrift shop and food pantry at Divine Mercy Parish Center.

14 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome whether or not you participated in the previous series, and whether or not you have ever meditated.

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

20 – 9 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.

21 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome whether or not you participated in the previous series, and whether or not you have ever meditated.

27 – 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.

5 p.m., Deadline to have articles for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell.

28 – 6 to 7 p.m., Peer-guided meditation at the church. All are welcome whether or not you participated in the series, and whether or not you have ever meditated.

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