

Circle of Fellowship

The First Universalist Church
of Central Square
A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Rev. Margaret Hart, Minister 439-8375 (cell), 668-1268 (home)
Andrea Abbott, Lay Speaker 635-7122
Janie Garlow, President 436-2238
Ronna Schindler, Religious Education Coordinator 623-7685
Rita Thornton, Director of Music 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.

SEPTEMBER 2008

MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

As I sit to write this, we are approaching Labor Day, and the end of summer. Soon the young people (and teachers) will be heading back to school. Soon our church will shift from summer mode into the greater activity of autumn.

It has been a pleasant summer. I vacationed and went to Vermont to visit family and friends, stopping in Canton to visit the Rev. Anne Marsh on the way up, and the Rev. Max Coots and his wife Charlotte on the way home. Max sends his fond greetings to friends in Central Square.

We had a wonderful playful service last Sunday, coming dressed as our favorite hymns, helping each other get "dressed," guessing which hymns others had chosen, and singing and laughing a lot together. During one hymn, Rita alternated playing the piano and the drum! Thanks to Rita for leading us, and to all who participated.

As many of you know, I am now doing ministry quarter-time, as that is all the church budget would allow. I will use the extra time to take care of my physical and spiritual health and spend more time with my family. But doing ministry quarter-time will be a challenge. I will be only leading worship once a month. I expect to be in church most Sundays. I will continue to do pastoral care and counseling as appropriate. If you want to or need to talk, or if you are aware of someone else who could benefit from a call or a visit, please let me know. You can e-mail me at marghart@a-znet.com or call me at 439-8375. I am not scheduling regular office hours, but I would be glad to connect with you at a mutually convenient time and place.

Something for us to think about is what this church means to us, what we think about ministry, and how we can support our church in being a healthy, growing community. Do we think it is important to grow? If so, what does growth mean, and how will we accomplish it? Is quarter-time ministry adequate for this church, or do we want to plan for how to grow our ministry? As I think about the time when this church will have to replace me as the minister, I become concerned. If you want a well-qualified and well-trained minister, you will need to increase the budget to attract one. Because of my circumstances, I have been willing to work part-time for a relatively low salary and without benefits. It might be difficult to attract someone else in similar circumstances. I am also aware that the broader economic environment is difficult, and that many churches and not-for-profit organizations, as well as families, are struggling financially. But it would be good for us, as a church, to establish our goals and a concrete plan for achieving them ... financial goals and leadership development.

Some may say that this is not my concern as a quarter-time minister, but I would argue that it is my concern, as someone who has recently been reduced to quarter-time ministry. Let me know what you think!

With love, respect, and hope, Margaret

Note: Please have items for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4. 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

GREEN MINUTE

Summer is winding down and it won't be much longer before all the good fruits and veggies that are grown locally will have reached the end of their season. Even after you've bitten into the last juicy peach or eaten that last amazing tomato you don't have to give up that wonderful taste. You might want to try canning your favorite fruits and vegetables so you can enjoy our wonderful local food all year round. Buying local is the best way to support family farms and workers. Local Harvest, a non-profit Internet database of farmers' markets and local food resources, reports that when you buy produce from a large supermarket, only 18 cents of every dollar spent goes to the grower, and the rest is shared by various middle merchants in shipping and sales. Buying local cuts out the middle merchants. And an added bonus is that you'll save money, too.

Canning may seem like a long-forgotten art but there is no need for intimidation. To can foods like tomatoes, green beans or even peaches, all you need are glass jars and a pot of boiling water. Here are a couple of recipes to get you started.

Apple Preserves

Cups peeled, cored, sliced apples

1 cup water

1 tbs. lemon juice

1 pkg. powdered pectin

½ lemon, thinly sliced (optional)

4 cups sugar

2 tsp. ground nutmeg

Wash your jars in hot water and detergent, then sterilize the jars by submerging them in boiling water for 10 minutes. Combine apples, water and lemon juice. Simmer in a covered pan for 10 minutes. Stir in pectin and bring to a full boil. Add sugar and (optional) lemon slices. Return to a full boil, stirring frequently for one minute. Remove from heat, and add nutmeg.

Fill glass jars with the mixture. Leave a 1/4-inch space at the top of every jar. Seal jars with airtight lids, and load them into a boiling water or pressure canner. The water should be 1-2 inches above the jars. Make sure not to tilt your jars. Put the lid on your canner and bring the water inside to a boil, and continue to process for 5 minutes. Take the canner off the heat source and remove the canner lid, letting the jars sit for five minutes. Remove the jars from the canner with tongs, and set them on a flat surface with a towel around all of the jars so they cool slowly. Store in a cool place, away from direct light and moisture.

Tomatoes

Peel and remove hard center top of tomatoes. (They are easier to peel when left in a bath of very hot water until skins split.) Place tomatoes in sterilized jars leaving 1/2-inch space at the top of jar. (Optional: place salt on top of the tomatoes, approximately 1/2 tsp. per pint. Use salt that is not iodized.) Seal jars and place in canner with enough water to cover tops of jars 1-2 inches. Bring to boil and process for 20 minutes. As noted above, after sitting for 5 minutes, remove jars and cool slowly.

— The Social Justice Committee's Green Team

WATER COMMUNION

Please remember to bring a small vial of water and a short sharing with you to the in-gathering service on Sunday, September 7. Thank you.

— The Rev. Margaret Hart

CONGRATULATIONS!

Pam Maloof and Rob Hurder were married in Syracuse on August 16, with the Rev. Hart officiating. May their marriage be a happy one.

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

REFLECTIONS BY OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings Dear Friends,

Summer is flowing into fall ... the seasons are turning once again. Church will be back into full swing with our ingathering and water communion service on September 7. Remember to bring a small container of water from your summer travels. The following Sunday, September 14, will be our church picnic at Goettel Park in the Square immediately following the service. It will be great to see everyone again. We all bring our own energies into our church community to be as one. May we walk together on this spiritual journey with our hearts open to one another. We are preparing the church calendar, putting in lots of fun stuff and we welcome your input and suggestions.

August has been a whirlwind of summer fun and blessings for me. Our son and family and their two pooches drove to our home from Austin, Texas. Our days were filled with love and joy from picking blueberries in the morning dew to climbing Bald Mountain and being rewarded with a phenomenal view at the top. We played cards and games late into the evening. Our screen room proved to be the perfect place to gather. The following week we met in northern Michigan for a family wedding. Following the wedding celebration, Steve and I continued to Mackinaw Island for my annual sibling reunion with my three brothers. We value these times together knowing that we are not getting any younger. I had to remind myself to stay in the moment, to soak up all the blessings of these moments. I do feel as I age that I am happier. I read a recent study that shows people feel happier as they age. The percentage of people who reported being "very happy" grew along with their advancing age. Could it be that youth really is wasted on the young? I know each stage of life has its own blessings but as I age my life has grown more fulfilling, more exciting and more rewarding. We may lose a little speed with the passage of time, but we pick up life skills of understanding, and knowledge that give us more compassion for others and ourselves. As I age, I hope to continue to learn and grow and find ways to make a difference in the world, which gives a deeper meaning to happiness. Hopefully, we meet the change of aging with joy and hope.

Look forward to being with you in church!

In Peace,
Janie

FIRST UU OF CENTRAL SQUARE ANNUAL PICNIC

The picnic will be held on Sunday, September 14, at Goettel Park on Route 11 in Central Square. It will take place immediately after church services. There will be a small donation of \$5 per family. Included will be Hofmann hots, hamburgers, veggie burgers, chicken, drinks, cold potato salad, Italian pasta salad and watermelon. You are invited to bring a dish to pass if you wish. Fun for all. Please bring your own table setting. Questions? Please see or call Kurt at 247-0432 or 623-7685.

— Kurt Schindler

UU CIRCLE ANNUAL AUCTION

It is coming soon. See the Promotion Boards with some of the items offered for auction at church. Thank you for your avid participation.

— Kurt Schindler

UU CIRCLE RUMMAGE SALE, FUN DAY OCTOBER 18

Our rummage sale is still on. You may bring any and all donations to the church at any time. We can arrange for truck pickup of large volume or large-sized items from your home.

Please be open and generous when we call hoping to arrange for a pickup from your home. Thank you in advance for your generosity and assistance on this project to keep our church warm, toasty and loving.

— Ann, Rita, Larry and Kurt

AN AUGUST 8 NOTE FROM SHEILA EMBORSKI

Hi everyone!

We have sold the house and are moving to Ithaca. This time it's for real. The move is set for next Thursday. We have rented a small two-bedroom house on Cayuga Lake until we build a house. Our new address will be 709 Lansing Station Road, Lansing, NY 14882. We'll be using our cell phones as house phones. Bob's cell is 315-427-2214. Mine is 315-427-4589.

I've spent 49 of my 58 years in the Syracuse area, 27 of them on Oneida Lake. We will miss our friends and the area very much, but consider this move the next adventure in life. Please keep us on e-mail lists. We want to stay in touch with people here.

May the sun shine on all of you, and may you have just enough rain.

— Bob and Sheila

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.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM RESUMES

Summer comes to an end and religious education classes begin.

We have many wonderful things in store for the children this year, starting with their creating their own personal altar, finding out what prayer means and what our rituals are. Both personal and as a UU.

We will be working with the curriculum "Tapestry of Faith" and hopefully be interacting on some level with an orphanage in Mexico. This is still in the planning stage.

As parents I understand that there are many things you wish your children to learn about themselves and their religion. Your help and suggestions are always welcome; let us as a community guide and teach our children.

— Ronna Schindler, religious education coordinator

UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION STILL ACTIVE

The New York State Convention of Universalists, which will hold its annual meeting in Poughkeepsie on October 10 and 11, was organized in 1825.

Prior to the creation of the Unitarian Universalist Association, it served as the principal denominational body for Universalist churches in New York state.

Today the Convention administers two endowments. One provides gratuities for retired New York State Universalist ministers and their families; the other is used to promote the growth of the Unitarian Universalist movement generally, and to preserve, nurture and enhance the Universalist tradition within the movement.

The Convention upholds the Universalist heritage, most notably through annual meetings and through a program of grants and loans.

In addition, the Convention appoints the majority of the Board of the Saint Lawrence Foundation for Theological Education, which administers a third endowment for the support of students studying for the UU ministry.

The Convention maintains an archive at the First Universalist Society in Rochester. The Convention encourages UU societies to preserve their historical records through workshops and grants.

DOWNSTAIRS SCOTTY

Remember the Downstairs Scotty as you shop.

Our congregation's contributions to this local program are non-food items: soap, detergent, bathroom and facial tissues, toothpaste, and the like.

Our collection box is in the East Room, under the water dispenser.

RETURN THOSE BOTTLES

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

PRINTED COPIES AVAILABLE

If you are receiving an e-mail copy of this newsletter but would prefer to receive a printed copy instead, please inform Bob Haskell. A few printed copies are available each month on the table in the East Room of the church.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

As many of our members and friends are aware, the church is experiencing some financial difficulties this year. One expense that the church incurs is the cost of printing and mailing copies of the monthly newsletter. Any contributions to help defray this cost would be appreciated. Contributions may be given to Chet Perkins, our treasurer. Checks designated for this purpose may also be left in a collection plate on Sunday mornings.

NEW WAYS TO LEARN AT MEADVILLE LOMBARD, A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SEMINARY

Weekend and Week-long Formats
Allow Flexibility for Ministers
and Lay Leaders

Meadville Lombard is now offering courses in formats that make it easier for working religious professionals and lay leaders to broaden or deepen their theological and congregational understanding.

These on-campus courses were designed in a format best suited to developing religious leadership skills--a format that is face-to-face and heart-to-heart.

They include both weekend courses and week-long courses.

Visit our web site for a full listing and course syllabus and to register online.

Contact Erika Chavez, Director of Admissions, at 773.256.3000 x 250 for more information.

Meadville Lombard Theological School
www.meadville.edu

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.

UU CIRCLE AUCTION NOVEMBER 9

The auction will be held on November 9 after the Sunday service. Rita Thornton will possibly be serving as the auctioneer, and snacks will be provided. It is a lot of fun! We will start the advance bidding on November 2. Please get your donation forms in by October 19. If you would like suggestions on what you might donate, contact Kurt, Rita, Ann or Larry. Donations that have been very popular in the past were food items (prepared meals, breads, desserts), handyman or home repair labor, services such as computer work, car detailing and window washing, musical performances, outings (bird watching, rock hounding), gift baskets and hand-crafted items. Other items that might be of great interest are computer instruction/help, rental of sporting equipment, boat rides, fishing trips, specialty dinners, lawn mowing, yard work, child care, garage and basement cleaning, gardening help, have truck -- will haul, nature walks, etc. Most local businesses will donate gift certificates. Please ask your local businesses if they would like to donate.

UU CIRCLE AUCTION DONATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

I/We would like to offer the following services/items:

Suggested minimum bid (optional) _____

____ Check if you want your service/item offered only to the immediate church family.

Thank you for your contribution!

Please return by October 19 to the Auction Box at the church or to Rita Thornton, 8043 Trina Circle, Clay, NY 13041.

CHOIR SINGS AGAIN SEPTEMBER 7

The choir will resume rehearsals at 9:30 a.m. before the service on Sunday, September 7. Please arrive sharply as I would like to work on some fun music for Water Communion service, which is the same day. All are welcome. Just show up for rehearsal or call Rita Thornton at 699-4824 if you have any questions or concerns. Looking forward to seeing you and hearing you then.

Also, the choir will rehearse the second Saturday every month from 10 a.m. to 12 noon beginning September 13.
Peace and harmony,
— Rita Thornton

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

September

- 7 – 9 a.m., Executive Board. 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Margaret Hart. Water Communion. 11 a.m., Religious education resumes.
- 10 – 8:30 a.m., Worship Committee.
- 11 – 7 to 8:30 p.m., Central New York Cluster at our church.
- 12 – 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group.
- 13 – 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Choir practice.
- 14 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. 11 a.m., Religious education. Church picnic at Goettel Community Park after the service.
- 17 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.
- 21 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. To be announced. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 28 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. 11 a.m., Religious education.

October

- 4 – Social Justice annual conference in Schenectady.
- 5 – 9 a.m., Executive Board. 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. Melinda Grube, guest speaker. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 8 – 8:30 a.m., Worship Committee.
- 10-11 – New York State Convention of Universalists annual meeting in Poughkeepsie.
- 11 – 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Choir practice.
- 12 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, lay speaker. Association Sunday. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 15 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, Clay.
- 18 – Fun Day sponsored by the UU Circle.
- 19 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Margaret Hart. 11 a.m., Religious education. Please return donation forms for Service and Merchandise Auction by today.
- 26 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. Kathryn Ryan Warwick, guest speaker. 11 a.m., Religious education.
- 27-29 – Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Retreat, minister away.
- 31 – 50th anniversary of Unitarian Universalist conference in Syracuse (consolidation).

November

- 9 – 9:30 a.m., Choir rehearsal. 10:30 a.m., Worship service. 11 a.m., Religious education. Service and Merchandise Auction after the service.

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.

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.

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.

Visit our church Web site at <http://www.geocities.com/centralsquareuu/>

