

**Circle of Fellowship**  
**Monthly Newsletter of the First**  
**Universalist Society of Central**  
**Square, NY**  
**April, 2018**

**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

The First Universalist Society of

Central Square, New York

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Our Church is Handicapped Accessible

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**The Central-East Region of the UUA is sponsoring the 2018 Seaway Spring Gathering at First Universalist in Syracuse on April 13th and 14th, 2018. Click [here](#) for information and registration.**

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

**Green Minute**

**iNaturalist App**



You're walking in the woods and you see a plant you've always wondered about or maybe you're at an outdoor yoga class and a butterfly lights in a shrub but you have no idea what type of butterfly it is. The butterfly sighting happened to me last summer. It turned out to be a Giant Swallowtail, which is pictured above. It took a lot of research to figure this out since the butterfly is not native to our area but I learned that we are at the northern fringe of its range. I just learned that there is an app for your phone which may have saved me the research. The app iNaturalist will give you an easy way to find out what plant or animal you have seen. You take a picture, send it off to iNaturalist.org via the app on your phone or once you've taken the picture you can send it from your computer. iNaturalist will then help you identify what species most closely resembles the photo you have taken. You will also have the information entered into a data base to help iNaturalist track where different species are appearing.

iNaturalist says: "From hikers to hunters, birders to beach-combers, the world is filled with naturalists, and many of us record what we find. What if all those observations could be shared online? You might discover someone who finds beautiful wildflowers at your favorite birding spot, or learn about the birds you see on the way to work. If enough people recorded their observations, it would be like a living record of life on Earth that scientists and land managers could use to monitor changes in biodiversity, and that *anyone* could use to learn more about nature." They also say, "iNaturalist made its internet debut 10 years ago in March 2008 as part of a Masters project by Ken-ichi Ueda, Jessica Kline, and Nate Agrin at the UC Berkeley School of information. Since then, it went from a website used mostly in California, to a platform with international portals, multiple languages, mobile apps for iOS and Android, and observations from every country in the world." There is a blog at the site that will put you in touch with other naturalists so you can see what they are saying and thinking as well as converse with them. This site/app appears to be a good option for anyone who wants to know more about their immediate surroundings or other places around our beautiful, diverse world. The iNaturalist app is available here: <https://www.inaturalist.org/>

Ellen LaPine  
Social Justice Committee

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### **Sermon Calendar**

April 1: “The Rabbi from Nazareth” by The Reverend David Weissbard

April 8: “ Two Kinds of Nothing” by The Reverend Andrea Abbott

April 15: “Return to Your Garden” by The Reverend Bud Adams

April 22: Sermon by The Reverend Andrea Abbott

April 29: Sermon by The Reverend Libbie Stoddard

**Click [here](#) to Read Reverend Weissbard’s most recent sermon on our website along with many sermons from our other ministers.**

### **Coffee Hour Refreshment Schedule**

April 8th: Snacks for the Colleen Kattau Concert

April 15th: Judy and George Tennant

April 22nd: Mary Fran Yafchak

April 29th: Open– Judy welcomes volunteers for doing the coffee hour. Please sign up and see Judy for more information.

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### **Social Justice Committee**

The first Adopt-a-Highway pickup of 2018 is scheduled for Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00 am. The sign-up sheet is in the dining room. Please wear clothing appropriate to the weather and bring lawn gloves, and old shoes. We have hats, vests and bags.

We continue to collect coins for Pure Water for the World donated in loose change during Sunday service collections. We are also collecting food and any household paper items for the Divine Mercy food bank.

The UUC and SJC met April 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss future plans and to prepare for Colleen Kattau's concert.

The next SJC meeting will be Sunday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, the second Sunday in May. All are welcome.

Nancy Hallock  
Social Justice Chair

### **Notable Pieces of Interest**

Barbara Ehrenreich, always an acute observer, has a new book coming out. Her recent essay in The Guardian, drawn from her latest work, talks about health, poverty, blame and our obsession with self-improvement. Take a read [here](#).

The writer, Prakaj Mishra, writes in his book, [The Age of Anger](#), that we have entered an era of global civil war. Now the writer, Rana Dasgupta fills an another part of the current era in a provocative essay, [“The Demise of the Nation State”](#). As UUs it is important we learn and understand the world as it now exists. Let’s all talk and act.

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### **CHURCH CALENDAR**

March 11 - Potluck luncheon and movie following the Sunday Service. Ralph Singh will lead the Sunday Service this day.

Two separate Pagan groups will meet at the church on the second and third Wednesday of each month at 5:30.

March 15 - Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread in Clay at 9:30

March 23 - Next Red Cross Blood Drive from 2:00 to 6:00

March 26 - Alzheimer's Support Group meets at 7:00 in the Goettel Room.

April 8 at 2:00 - Concert with singer guitarist Colleen Katau

April 15 – Stewardship Luncheon.

April 22 – Adopt-a-Highway pick up at 8:30.

April 29 – Presentation by NY Connects and the Oswego County Office of the Aging on their referral services at noon in the Sanctuary.

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**Ministerial Musings**

I'm sure it's coincidence but has anyone else noticed that the day of our Stewardship Lunch is very close to Tax Day? This is said not to discourage people from pledging generously to the church. I would certainly never want to discourage that! However, the fact that the two dates were so close had me thinking about taxes and pledges. They are not the same, of course. Taxes are only indirectly voluntary. They certainly don't feel voluntary at all, but we do elect our representatives to, well, represent our wishes about how our money is spent, don't we? Don't we? Pledges are entirely voluntary. The members of the congregation give or don't give as they choose. No one is coming after anyone to put anyone in jail if they don't cough up. The congregation also votes directly on expenditures, except for very small ones, unlike how our taxes get spent, as has been noted. However, in both cases, there is a merging of resources, a sense that we can do more when we pool our funds. We can do more good when we do good together. Sometimes we may feel that our government is not really ours. I assure everyone that the church is really ours. Everyone here has a voice in how the church is run, how much we wish to put into various endeavors and how we can keep this whole enterprise going. This is kind of a roundabout way to encourage everyone not only to support the church (though that is what we hope for) but also to take part in its governance and in determining its direction. No one else can do this except ourselves. And, the Stewardship Lunch is usually pretty tasty. I hope to see everyone there.— Andrea