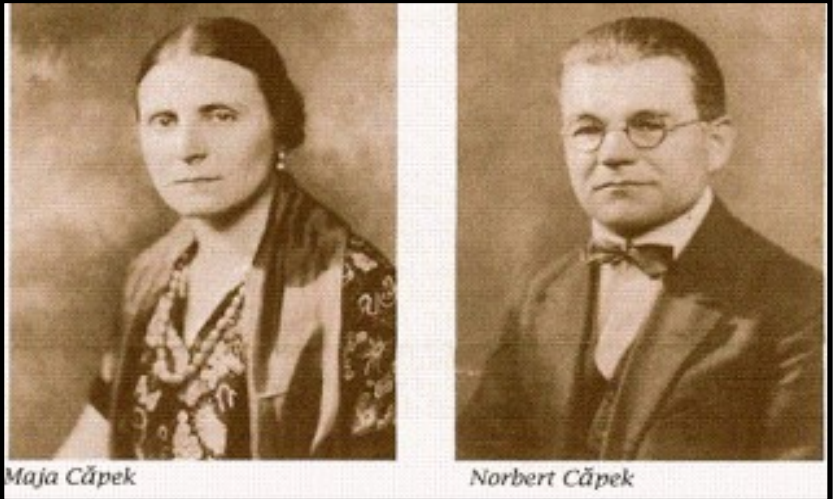


Circle of Fellowship
Monthly Newsletter of the First
Universalist Society of Central
Square, NY
June 2018



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

Read a brief history of how the Capeks' created Flower Communion by The Rev. Meredith Garmon of the White Plains, NY UU congregation. Click here: www.liberalpulpit.org/

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UU-Central Square/199139743511564](https://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square/199139743511564)

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Ministerial Musings

June marks occasions for many people. Traditionally, it has been the month for weddings. It marks high school graduations. All of these events mark the change from one status to another. In our church, it is the month for the annual congregational meeting, an event which marks one year from another and provides the opportunity for everyone to participate in the future of the church.

It is no secret that this past year has seen us need to cope with some challenges. Attendance is down. Membership is down. We have no new people coming in to replace those who are now unable to attend due to infirmities. It would be nice to pretend this is not happening. Though I ,superstitiously, worry about saying this out loud lest I call the demons of defeat closer to us, it would also be the height of denial to ignore these trends. The brave (some might say fool-hardy) people who have volunteered for positions of leadership in the church should have both our gratitude and our support as we face these realities.

Despite these difficulties, we have a lot of strength in this church. We are still here. Despite our rural location, despite the decline in the population of the wider community, we are still here. We are like a tree who has suffered damage from high winds but whose core is healthy. We are supportive of each other and supportive of the work and the life of the church. Our values, our message of compassion, diversity and respect for all is needed, now more than ever. We are in Central Square because we are needed in Central Square. This is the beginning.

The Reverend Andrea Abbott

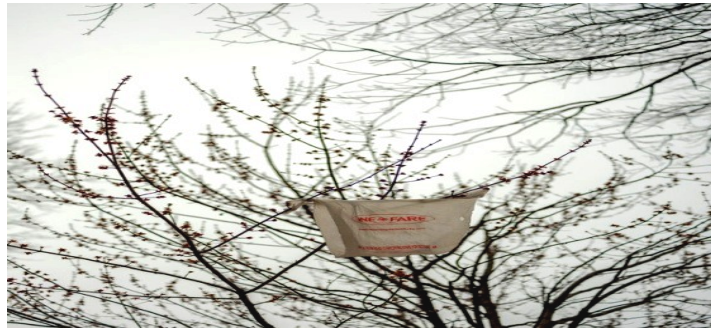
Sermon Calendar

[View Past Sermons at Our Church Website Click Here](#)

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| June 3 rd | Rev. David Weissbard | <i>You've Got to be Kidding</i> |
| June 10 th | Rev. Andrea Abbott | <i>Dark Side of the Moon</i> |
| June 17 th | Rev. Bud Adams | |
| June 24 th | Rev. Andrea Abbott | Flower Communion: <i>Egg or Stone?</i> |

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Green Minute
Urban Tumbleweeds



You may have heard the term “Urban Tumbleweeds” when people refer to the single use plastic bags you typically get at the grocery store. They received that name due to them tumbling when they are caught by the wind then they end up stuck in trees, in ditches and in our lakes, streams and the ocean. Plastic doesn't biodegrade like paper. It breaks into smaller and smaller bits that are showing up in increasing numbers in our waterways and are being eaten by sea birds and fish. There's also evidence that microplastics are now creeping into our own food chain and can contain toxins like Bisphenol A, an endocrine disrupter.

On April 23, 2018, Governor Cuomo announced a bill to ban most single use plastic bags. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/PlasticBagBan.pdf> He said that the bill comes as a result of a report released in January by a task force who studied the problem which was lead by DEC Commissioner Basil Siggos. You can find the report at http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials_minerals_pdf/dplasticbagreport2017.pdf. It is interesting reading.

California enacted a law over a year ago banning these types of bags. The Los Angeles Times says that Californians used 13 billion less bags during the year and during their annual costal clean-up day; litter from these bags was reduced from 7.4% in 2010 to 3.1% in 2017.

Retailers like Wegmans argue that the bill could have unintended consequences since people may switch to paper bags that are heavier and use up to 90% more resources to produce and transport. Wegmans says that they feel their efforts at reducing single use plastics are working since they recycle up to 50% of the plastic bags they use and continually recommend that customers bring their own reusable bags. However, California radio station KQED says that Alameda County enacted a plastic bag ban in 2013 and in a review of the purchasing data of 69 chain stores in the county; they went from using 50 million total paper and plastic bags each year to using just 10 million. The number of paper bags used went from 13 million to 8 million, and the number of plastic bags went from 37 million to 2 million.

The Governor's bill is to take effect in January 2019. It faces a tough battle in the legislature, especially the Senate. Please contact your state representative and tell them that passage of this bill is an important step in reducing single use plastic waste.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

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SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018

We continue our ongoing donations to PURE WATER FOR THE WORLD with participation of the congregation. We support the EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE and CNY WORKERS CENTER philosophically and financially. We organize the Adopt-a-highway pickup three times a year. We encourage donations to the Divine Mercy's Downstairs Scotty with non-perishable food and toiletries.

This past year we collaborated with the Membership Committee to host two concerts (Mike Powell and Colleen Kattau).

We presented two films after pot luck lunches. The Bob Haskell "Supper Out and Video/ Discussion @ Church" tradition has been revived in April and May.

Ellen LaPine deserves special credit for her "Green Minute" submissions to the newsletter. Plus her skill and hours to organize the Red Cross Blood Drive every other month.

All interested folks are invited to join our meetings and EVERYONE is encouraged to participate in our projects and events.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Hallock

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2018 Annual Meeting

We had our Annual Congregational Meeting yesterday, June 3. The new budget for 2018/2019 passed without a hitch, thank you Marcia, as well as the nominations for the new slate of officers.

Here are your board members for 2018/2019

Co – Presidents - Ellen LaPine and Janie Garlow

Vice President – Chuck Lochner

Treasurer – Marcia Burrell-Ihlow

Recording Secretary – Winfield Ihlow

Corresponding Secretary – Ann Peterson

Registrar – Arne Hook

3 Trustees:

Susan Woods – 1 year

Janet Jenkins – 2 years

Nancy Hallock – 3 years

3 Nominating Committee Members:

Nancy Hallock - 1 year

Ronna Schindler - 2 years

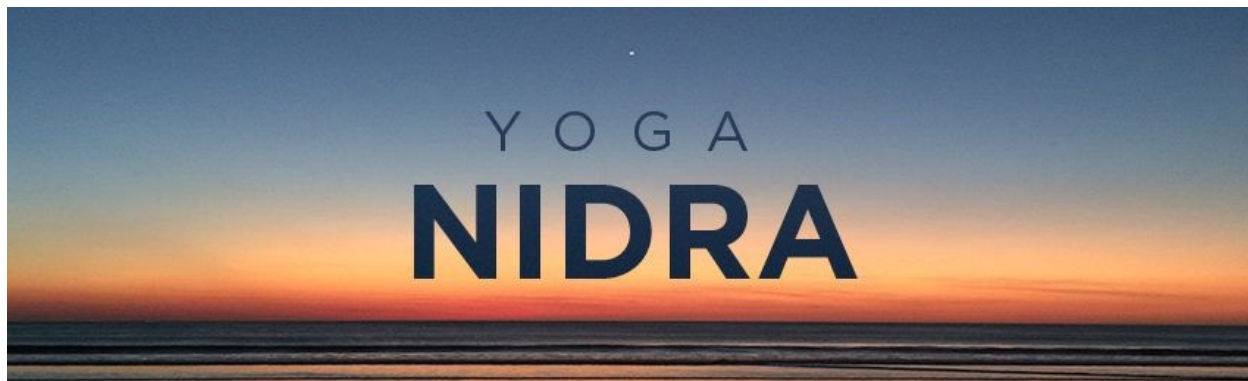
Linda Begoske - 3 years

The building and grounds committee will be preparing some of our beautiful stained glass windows for protective screening. When we had the large windows repaired several years ago, some of the smaller windows did not get completed. Arne Hook and Winfield Ihlow are tackling this project and are seeking help. If you think you can help, please contact Arne or Winfield.

Thank you for their generous pledges, dedication and continued efforts to keep our church vibrant and healthy and most of all the love you show our church community.

Janie Garlow
Board President

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Yoga Nidra
Thursday June 28 at 5:30 p.m.

Yoga Nidra is a relaxation technique that allows a person to relax physically, mentally, and emotionally. Also known as ‘yogic sleep’ or ‘sleepless sleep’, we aim to enter a state between sleep and wakefulness without the loss of awareness. This one hour guided practice will systematically relax and restore the body and mind, and can be more beneficial than several hours of regular sleep. Suitable for all levels of ability. Fee \$10.

Refreshments Schedule

June 10 - Mary Fran

June 17 - Pot luck Luncheon

(Soft taco bar - there will be a sign up sheet for toppings to bring next Sunday)

June 24 - Judy & George Tennant

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UU Universe

The Huffington Post published this article on the generosity of a Texas mosque offering space to a UU congregation in need. Click on the link:

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/texas-mosque-recovering-from-arson-welcomes-displaced-church_us_5b1695ace4b093ac33a21de3#

Notable Pieces of Interest

Mythohistory is a term historians use to refer to the conventional stories that repeatedly appear in many histories and are considered as absolute truth. Yet the historic events these narratives purport to describe and understand are often distorted and false. Howard Zinn's **A People's History of the United States** offered a challenge to the mythohistory of the US.

Two more recent works give new insight into our history as a nation and our continent:

Stamped From The Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi is a powerful look at how racist practices and policies have shaped all of US history from colonial times to the present. Our view of our history can never be the same after reading Kendi. I highly recommend we all read it.

When Montezuma Met Cortes: The True Story of the Meeting that Changed History by Matthew Restall examines the encounter of the Spanish with the Aztec and their allies. Restall gives a new account based on exhaustive analysis of documents, archaeology and linguistics. You can see the emergence of a new synthesis of knowledge bases in Restall's work

Bob Haskell (Thank you, Bob!) sent along this information for those interested in secular humanism On Mar 16, 2018, at 4:26 PM, secularactivism.org <admin@secularactivism.org> wrote:

The Secular Academy has new online classes at SecularActivism.Org

Dr. Richard Carrier's one-month course on [Naturalism as a Worldview: How to Build a Sound Philosophy of Life](#) is offered during April – \$79.

Classes at SecularActivism.Org are accessible online 24/7, so you can participate at any hour of the day when you have some time. There's nothing 'live' to be missed, and you aren't using video, just text-based forums. Instructors respond individually to all questions and love extended conversations.

The Secular Academy is a project of Partners for Secular Activism, a 501c3 nonprofit educational organization started in 2014 by John Shook, PhD. For several years Dr. Shook worked with the founder of secular humanism, Paul Kurtz, to develop online education for the growing secular community. Take a look at his new book on [science's epic victory over religious ignorance](#).

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Magic of the Mind - Intro to shamanic techniques

Shamanism is an ancient spiritual system that stresses living in harmony with all of Nature while providing an enhanced ability to provide answers in a troubled world. It teaches us how to explore and connect to Self, Nature and Spirit.

This experiential class will enrich your life with powerful techniques for tapping the hidden resources of your mind. Enhance your physical and psychic sensory perception while you explore the world of spirit, connect with your inner teachers and understand your intuition more fully. Discover and enhance your innate healing abilities.

Participants may choose to bring blankets or yoga mats. The use of audio recording devices will be permitted. For men and women, age 18 and up. All religious & spiritual practices honored.

Date: Mondays starting June 4

Time: 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Duration: 2 hours x 5 weeks

Tuition: \$50.00 (First UU Members deduct 20%)