

Circle of Fellowship

Monthly Newsletter of the First
Universalist Society of Central
Square, NY

February, 2019

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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Thanks to Ann Peterson for sharing the above quote

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

Ministerial Musings

"If you are more fortunate than others, it's better to build a longer table than a taller fence." I was very grateful to the congregation member who sent this quote for the newsletter. It is particularly appropriate because in a few days we go to Mexico to enjoy the sun and to enjoy speaking to the U-U congregation in San Miguel de Allende. This is the fifth year we have done this and we feel more and more at home. The congregation in San Miguel spends a lot of their time building longer tables. They are involved in caring for those sent back to the United States, often destitute, as well as projects involving dental and health care, education and sustainable living in the campos, the villages which are sometimes close to San Miguel but who do not share in much prosperity.

While the congregation is engaged in building longer tables, the Mexican people are hammering away at some as well. Everywhere we have gone in Mexico, we have been treated with courtesy and generosity. People who have very little are eager to share what they have. Though the cynical may attribute this to the desire to please potential benefactors, we have found this to be the case even among people who do not benefit from tourist dollars. It seems to be a natural instinct to want to be good hosts, to want to give hospitality. It is both pride and generosity that open people's hearts and homes to strangers. May we, on this side of the border, do all we can to help build tables at which all may share together.

The Reverend Andrea Abbott

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Social Justice

SJC met 1/13. In 2019, we will continue collecting for PW4W (Pure Water for the World) and food donations to Divine Mercy Church. We set the following dates for Adopt-Highway Pickup: 4/14, 6/30, 10/13 and invite all to help.

We are working with the UUC to promote fundraising events this year.

I recommend you follow NYS legislation successes this year.

The next meeting is scheduled for 2/10.

Nancy Hallock
Social Justice Chair

Religious Education

We will be exploring how disabilities are really just different abilities.

From Kyle Maynard to Albert Einstein, we all have disabilities.

Some we can see and others we can't.

How a person learns has nothing to do with how smart a person is.

Learning about different abilities is the first step to accepting someone who may be different from ourselves. We will be learning about people who have made a difference even with their different abilities and how we also can make a difference.

Ronna Schindler
RE Director

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Church Events Calendar

February 3 – 9:00 Board Meeting. 10:30 Rev. David Weissbard.

February 10 – 9:00 Social Justice Committee Meeting. 10:30 Rev. Libbie Stoddard

February 13 & 20 - Two separate Pagan groups will meet at the church on the second and third Wednesday of each month at 5:30.

February 14 - 10:30 Rev. Bud Adams and monthly pot luck

February 21 - Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread in Clay at 9:30

February 24 - 10:30 Chuck Lochner

February 25 - Alzheimer's Support Group meets at 7:00 in the Goettel Room. (Subject to change)

March 22 – 1:30 – 6:30 Red Cross Blood Drive

April 27 - 9:00 – 3:30 AARP Safe Driving course

April 28 - Clarinet Concert

Website: centralsquareuu.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed as greeters and to host the social time on Sunday mornings. **Anyone with any questions is invited to speak with Judy Tennant.** The Spiritual Committee invites anyone who wishes to place flowers near the pulpit for the morning service on Sundays to do so. There is a sign-up sheet for all volunteers in the dining room.

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Green Minute
A Plastic Challenge

According to an article in *Popular Science* <https://www.popsoci.com/plastic-not-recycled-statistic>, 90.5% of all plastic waste has never been recycled. They say this figure "...comes from a 2017 study in the journal *Science* called "Production, use, and fate of all plastics ever made." The authors estimate that as of 2015, there had been 6.9 billion tons of plastic waste generated around the world, 79 percent of which ended up in a landfill or in nature and 12 percent of which got incinerated."

They provide several charts within the article. One of the charts says that we have produced 6.3 billion metric tons of plastic waste in the last 60 years of which 5.7 billion tons were never recycled. They claim that if this waste had been recycled, we could have provided 3623 shirts to every person on earth made from the recycled plastic.

So here's the challenge. One day, try to keep track of the number of times that you come in contact with items made of plastic. Things like Keurig pods, desk accessories, keypads, lunch bags, blister packaging, appliances, items in and on your car, paint brushes, toys, food containers etc. When you go to the store, look down the aisle, on the counters and at the signage, as well as the carts and dollies used to move the items. It won't take you long to find over 100 things during your day and you'll probably end up closer to 200.

What can we do? As consumers we can take action by thinking not only of the product, but also how long it will be used, how it is packaged, where that packaging will wind up, and what the consequences may be. Let the businesses you frequent know that you would like them to influence their suppliers to minimize plastic packaging and of course, please recycle at home.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

UU Universe

Take a moment to look at the news from the UUA on border issues and other issues of social justice concern here: <https://www.uua.org/>.

I highly recommend the social justice work of The Reverend Dick Gilbert and available for all of us to become involved with on this site: <http://www.interfaithimpactnys.org/Background.html>

Take a look at the Central East Region UUA page here, <http://uua874.activehosted.com/index.php?>

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Sermon Calendar

February 3rd Reverend David Weissbard: **Defending Democracy**

Sometimes it's hard to see the forest through the trees. Most of us are aware of the various threats to democracy, but until I read Nancy MacLean's "Democracy in Chains," I did not realize what a serious threat we are facing, and according to our principles, that is a religious issue. It's a matter of basic religious values. It is important that we understand the magnitude of the threat. This is not a partisan issue.

February 10th Reverend Libbie Stoddard

February 17th Reverend Bud Adams

February 24th Chuck Lochner: **A House as a Home**

Many of our ministers past sermons are archived at our website, [centalsquareuu.org](http://www.centalsquareuu.org), on the Sermon Archive page, <http://www.centalsquareuu.org/sermons/>. Check them out!

Notable Pieces of Interest From the Web and Other Sources

Oxfam has released a report on wealth inequality and its effects on the world's people. See the original report here:

<https://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2019-01-18/billionaire-fortunes-grew-25-billion-day-last-year-poorest-saw>

Vox's Dylan Matthews has a summary of the Oxfam report and its implications here:

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/1/22/18192774/oxfam-inequality-report-2019-davos-wealth>

I think I referred people to the volume, [The Name of War](#), by historian Jill Lepore which explores how history of Native Americans becomes mythologized and exploited during and after King Phillips' War. I would equally recommend a fascinating volume, [White Savage](#), by Fintan O'Toole, an Irish journalist, about Sir William Johnson. O'Toole also explores history, mythification and emerging identities in this volume depicting events that happened right in our region in places like Oswego, Onondaga and the Mohawk Valley shaping who we are.

Two upcoming SU humanities events that might be of interest in this regard are listed here:

<http://humcenter.syr.edu/event-items/2019/2019.03.05-Haudenosaunee.html>

<http://humcenter.syr.edu/event-items/2019/2019.03.06-HaudWkshp.html>