

Circle of Fellowship

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

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

Ministerial Musings

It's New Year's Eve day, and I'm preparing myself for the fact that, in less than ten hours, we will be celebrating the arrival of 2019. I have to remind myself that 12:01 will probably not be a lot different from 11:59, or at least so I hope. Changes arrives both suddenly and slowly and in a minute or two, life altering events do take place. However, they take place no matter where the hands of the clock (or the numbers on the digital display) stand. Like so many things, it is we humans who have constructed the demarcation that separates one year from another. In the same way, we make meaning out of all the seconds of our lives. As Unitarian-Universalists, we celebrate that we are able to create meaning rather than having meaning proscribed for us. May we use this freedom wisely and well and may 2019 be a most meaningful and rewarding year for all of us.

-Andrea Abbott

Social Justice

The SJC did not formally meet but connected on many issues. Many of us are on the UU Circle Committee and helped coordinate the McCarthy Concert and Bake Sale plus plan our monthly Pot Luck Lunch. We encouraged donations for the Lions Club, winter hats, mittens and scarves for CS schools, and Guest at You Table. We will meet next on the second Sunday of January, (the 13th) at 9:00am. We will set our 2019 schedule for the adopt-a-highway pickup and discuss issues important for all of us to concentrate on this year. All are welcome.
Nancy Hallock-SJC Chair

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Green Minute
Our Paper Towel Obsession

The United States of America holds a special distinction – at a whopping \$5.7 billion, we spend nearly as much on paper towels (\$12 billion) as every other country in the world combined! According to an article in *The Atlantic*, “No other nation even comes close: France, the runner-up in nationwide spending, only purchased about \$635 million worth of paper towels last year, and the U.K., Germany, and Italy rounded out the top five paper-towel-buying countries.” Go to <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/12/paper-towels-us-use-consume/577672/> to see a chart illustrating this huge difference according to Euromonitor International.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, in 2015 the U. S. generated about 7.4 billion pounds of waste consisting of paper towels and other “tissue” materials, like toilet paper and napkins. Besides the trees, water and fossil fuels it takes to make and distribute the paper, the amount of space it takes up in landfills is significant.

The article says that the average American spends \$17.50 per year on paper towels. Our closest competition is Norway at \$11.70 per person. They also predict that global spending on paper towels will increase by 4% by the end of 2022.

An internet search on how to reduce paper towel use gives some suggestions. Use cloth napkins. Keep less paper towels around the house and in less convenient places. Use a single folded paper towel instead of a wad of them. Make your own rags from old shirts, pillow cases and other old clothing and then designate their use such as which rags are only used at the kitchen sink or in the bathroom. You can also compost the paper towels and napkins that you do use. This will also help you realize just how many paper towels and napkins you are using.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

AARP Smart Driver Course
Saturday, January 19th 9:00 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.

Refresh your driving skills with the AARP Smart Driver Course at the church from 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 19th. You will learn defensive driving techniques, proven safety strategies and upon completion you can save at least 10% on your car insurance and remove up to 4 points on your license. Pre-registration is required. Please call (315) 307-4438 to register.

The cost for this one day course is \$20 for AARP members or \$25 for non-members. Preferred payment method is by check or money order. Bring your driver’s license and up to date AARP card. Lunch will be available from the church for a free will gratuity.

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Sermon Calendar

January 6 :Rev. David Weissbard- “Myths of The Ministry

January 13:Rev. Andrea Abbott :“Always Winter and Never Christmas: Simplicity or Austerity?”

January 20 :Rev. Bud Adams

January 27 Rev. Andrea Abbott: “Herod's Children: The Lives of Pawns in Power Games”

Red Cross Blood Drive
Friday January 18th 1:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. Whether a patient receives whole blood, red cells, platelets or plasma, this lifesaving care starts with one person making a generous donation. We will have another of our regularly scheduled Red Cross blood drives on Friday, January 18th from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. Presenting donors will receive a \$5 Dunkin’ Donuts email gift care. Please consider donating or volunteering You can schedule an appointment to donate blood by visiting redcrossblood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS but no appointment is necessary. Even if you cannot be a donor, please tell others about the drive.

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

Thank you.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee Blood Drive Coordinator

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Church Events Calendar

- January 6th: Church Board Meeting, 9:00 am
- January 18th: Red Cross Blood Drive: 1:30-6:30 pm
- January 19th: AARP Safe Driving Course, 9:00am-3:30pm

Notable Pieces of Interest

I wanted to suggest a few of the great reads from 2018. I have already noted several in past writing so I won't repeat those. A book I read recently I would highly recommend is Michael Pollan's [How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence.](#) Pollan explores the renaissance in developing the use of psychedelics in mental health, addiction treatment, death and dying and for general well-being. It is a surprising look at the past and present of psychedelics.

Two books I would recommend on the Native Americans I recently read. The first is [Killers of the Osage Moon](#) by David Grann, an account of the multiple murders of native people and the theft of their resources in the twentieth century. The second is [The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity](#) by Jill Lopate. Lopate examines how an oft forgotten war in eastern North America shaped the cultural identity of the colonists through the genocide of Native Americans.

Let me know what you would recommend. Happy New Year reading. AJH