

Circle of Fellowship

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

March, 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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Ministerial Musings

Last Wednesday, Ash Wednesday, I met with people from the Central Square Community Church. While I was on vacation, a group of clergy and congregants from our church (thank you, Janie), First Baptist and the Community Church met to work on a series of ecumenical services for Lent and Easter. I am thrilled to see this group re-forming and was really pleased to be at the first event, the Ash Wednesday service. I learned a lot at this gathering. In the first place, this was designed not as a service but as a discussion and it was a discussion that roamed far and free, encompassing people's spiritual journeys as well as thoughts about the Lenten season.

As U-U's we can often be either indifferent or wary of events in the Christian calendar. We either ignore them or find a way to make them our own. I found that those who were part of this discussion were also trying to find new meaning for themselves in the idea of giving something up, which has been the hallmark of Lent. One proposal was to give something up that would be meaningful to others, not just giving something up as an individual ritual. An example was giving up plastic for forty days, which would help the earth. We also read Pope Francis' suggestions for Lent, which involve giving up destructive habits of thought toward others. But, most interestingly to me, one person brought the practice of Lent back to the idea of change. If, he said, we can give something up for forty days, that might mean we could give it up forever. What changes would each of us like to see, in ourselves or in the world? And what is worth giving up to accomplish those changes? -Andrea Abbott

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Thanks from The Reverend Margaret Hart

Many thanks to Nancy Hallock, and all who contributed to the MS walk this year. Although I can't see you very often, you , the church community, are always in my heart.

A Note From Marcia, Our Church Treasurer

Dear Church Members,

It has been a while since I thanked you for your contributions to our church. When I think about the cost of the parking lot upkeep, and our insurances, and the church maintenance, I wanted to make sure that you knew that any contribution you make for our congregation is appreciated. Sometimes we only think about the large, donations, but your donation, any donation, is extraordinary. I hope you know that.

Also, we are drawing close to the end of the pledge year, (May 2019), and in April we will begin the canvass for the coming 2019- 2020 pledge year. Do the best you can to complete your pledge.

Marcia Burrell
Church Treasurer

Social Justice

The SJC arranged for the "New Hope for NY Budget" teach-in tour to stop at our church on 3/2. It was well presented and encouraged conversation with the audience.

Nancy Hallock
Social Justice

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Religious Education

Kids and social justice go hand in hand. Just serve them different amounts of cake and see what happens.

They can and have changed the world.

A child knows no boundaries unless they are told they cannot do something. Then they will try to do it anyway. They are kind and loving and only want the best for those they love.

As adults we can help raise these amazing social and environmental advocates.

Kids are kind, let's model that kindness in our own actions. Putting kindness ahead of personal gain. A wise person once told me to be kind whenever it was possible. It is always possible.

Kids can be conscious consumers. They are always asking questions, use this as a teaching moment. Should we try to use what we have or go out and buy more stuff. Should we make a gift from what we already have or go out and buy one. Give them options.

Even a small child knows the difference between rubbish and recycling. Give them a high five. Involve them in family decisions. Teach them to sew on a button rather than replace a shirt. Encourage them to recycle toys, clothes and mend things to give them a new life.

We are handing down this wonderful world to our children, let's help teach them how to take care of it.

These are our lessons for this month

There is no such thing as away.

When we throw anything away it must go somewhere. ~ Annie Leonard

Ronna Schindler

RE Director

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Green Minute
Thinking About a New Cell Phone?

Today's technology seems to become obsolete within a week. Advances are happening at a whirl wind pace. This is happening with cell phone technology as well. But do we really need the latest cell phone?

I encourage you to go to <https://www.greenamerica.org/what-phone-should-i-buy?> and check out the information they provide. They admit that there will always be cell phones and they will contain the toxic chemicals required to run them. They give a chart to help you decide if it is time to replace your phone, fix it or just continue to use it.

They link you to ifixit, a website that gives you instructions on how to fix just about everything. If you decide not to fix your phone, they also link you to e-Stewards which will tell you where to recycle your phone or you can take it to a Staples store to recycle. They also recommend that if you need a new phone, consider a refurbished one.

A little effort prior to deciding whether to get a new phone can pay off in you spending less, even if you decide you do need a new to you phone, for the effort to protect people who handle ewaste and for the environment.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

Red Cross Blood Drive
Friday March 22nd 1:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Did you know that approximately 36,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the United States? These units are collected one person at a time so there is always a need for new and regular donors. We will have another of our regularly scheduled Red Cross blood drives on Friday, March 22nd from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. 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

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Church Events Calendar

Church Closings

If the church decides to close because of inclement weather, please check channel 9, WRVO or your email.

Sermon Calendar

REFRESHMENTS

3/10 Kurt & Ronna
3/17 Monthly potluck
The theme is Irish food.
3/24 Ashli Johnson

March 3rd Rev. David Weissbard :The End of Innocence
March 10th Rev. Andrea Abbott :The Bones Within: Skeletons and Lent; a few words following a trip to Mexico
March 17th Rev. Bud Adams
March 24th Rev. Andrea Abbott :Tick-Tock: Thoughts about spring and climate change.

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.

Church Calendar

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

Easter Ecumenical Services with local churches

March 14

Planning meeting at the Community church at 3:30

March 6

Ash Wednesday at the Community Church at 10:00 am

April 18

Maundy Thursday at the First Baptist Church at 6:00 pm

Followed with a simple meal of soup and bread.

April 19

Good Friday at the Community Church at 7:00 pm

Easter - April 21

Sunrise Service at Goettel Park at 7:00 am

with the Reverend Andrea Abbott officiating

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

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SPC 83rd Birthday Dinner - Saturday March 30

with speaker Brittany Ramos DeBarros

University United Methodist Church*, 324 University Ave., Syracuse

Doors open at 5:30, dinner starts at 6:00, program starts at 7:30.

Suggested donation is \$30, with a sliding scale of \$10-60 (more if you can, less if you can't); no one turned away for lack of funds.

You may come for the program only - please donate what you can.

To RSVP, please fill out the [RSVP form](#) online, call SPC (315-472-5478), or send email spc@peacecouncil.net.

We're very excited to have Army Reserve Captain Brittany DeBarros as our speaker. Brittany is co-director of About Face: Vets Against the War's "Drop the M.I.C." campaign (M.I.C.= military industrial complex), and organizer with the NYS Poor People's Campaign (PPC).

We met her during the sit in at the War Room in Albany last summer organized by the PPC. From one of her speeches: "I'm a woman, I'm White, I'm Latina, I'm Black, I'm Queer, and I'm a combat veteran. As a person existing at the intersection of these identities, I carry a grave conviction in my core that there can be no economic, racial or gender liberation without addressing the militarism that is strangling the empathy and morality out of our society."

Note that we will offer vegetarian, vegan and meat options. For more on our reasoning to add meat, please see the [March/April 2018 PNL](#), page 18.

* Leaders of the world wide United Methodist Church voted to strengthen the ban on LGBTQ weddings and clergy recently. The decision now goes to the church's judicial council, which is like the denomination's Supreme Court. In the past, the council has said these bans were unconstitutional within their faith.

Check out the University United Methodist Church [facebook page](#) for their reaction and statements. Pastor Alicia Wood stated publicly that "God loves everyone, including LGBTQ people. We didn't want the world to think that because the Methodist Church made this ruling that that is what God thinks."