

Circle of Fellowship

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

March, 2020

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

3243 Fulton Street

(Route 49, near Route 11)

Post Office Box 429

Central Square, New York 13036-0429

Our Church is Handicapped Accessible

Church Phone: 315-307-3400

E-Mail for Reverend Andrea Abbott:
andrea279@verizon.net

Church website: centralsquareuu.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Stewardship Committee has placed sign up sheets in the dining room of 4 members who are willing to host a mini meal in their home during the month of March.

Chet Perkins - Mar 4 supper at 4:30

Janie Garlow - Mar 11 brunch at 10:00

Marcia & Winfield - Mar 18 supper at 4:30

Andrea & Arne - Mar 25 lunch at 12:30

You are cordially invited to attend one or more of these meals. It will be a way to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere outside of church. Hoping you will participate.

Religious Education

Each of us have only to open our eyes to see that we can make greater changes than we have ever imagined possible.

Peace making begins with peaceful solutions to our problems.

March will be a month of I can. I can make positive choices, I can forgive, I can use my words for good and I can to say "I'm sorry"

We will explore many other "I cans" and create our own list of the choices we make and the actions we will take. These we will share with the congregation and challenge you to create your own "I can" list.

Together we can make a difference.

Ronna Schindler

RE Director

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Green Minute
BYOBagNY

I'm sure you know that the plastic bag waste reduction law took effect March 1st. You need to bring your own bags when grocery shopping, clothes shopping or at a home improvement store. This new law was enacted to address the pollution and threats to fish and wildlife as well as the litter caused by improperly disposed of bags. In New York alone, people used 23 billion single use plastic bags annually!

Many people have pointed out that plastic is still in use when you buy any number of items. NYS still requires stores to collect plastic bags and other film plastic wraps that come over cases of beverages, paper towels and other similar items as well as bread bags and other film plastics. You can still help reduce the amount of plastic that ends up in our landfills by recycling these items at participating retailers.

If you have questions you can email plasticbags@dec.gov.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

Social Justice Committee Report

The SJC met on 2/9. We discussed an opportunity to sponsor a CSHS educational climate change contest.

Would like to celebrate Earth Day. Info about Styrofoam bans in Oswego and NYS's future are posted on bulletin board.

Plans for some attending SPC's 84th B' Day dinner 3/28.

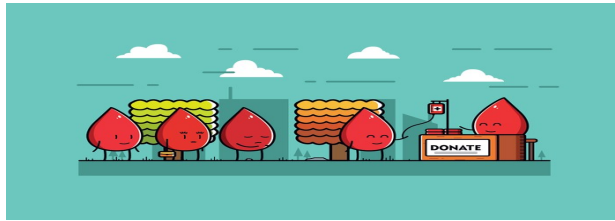
I will post details on our collection of school age kids underwear and sox to donate to CUMC Back to school event.

We are watching movie schedules at the libraries and theaters to plan a fun afternoon lunch and movie day.

We meet Sunday 3/8 t@ 9:00 to review updates on the HS plan and to prepare for summer rummage sale.

Nancy Hallock
Social Justice Chair

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**Red Cross Blood Drive
Friday March 20th
1:30-6:30 p.m.**

Did you know that five units of blood are needed every minute of every day to help someone going through cancer treatments? Cancer patients use one quarter of the blood supply – more than patients fighting any other disease.

We will have another of our regularly scheduled Red Cross blood drives on Friday, March 20th from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. 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. There is a sign-up sheet in the dining room for volunteers to help during the drive. 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

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2nd Discussion Course on Sustainable Living

The church previously received funding to offer two discussion courses on sustainable living. The first of these took place last fall and the second is ready to be scheduled - "Choices for Sustainable Living," developed by the North West Earth Institute (more recently ecochallenge.org):

Choices for Sustainable Living

The term "sustainability" is used so freely, it's difficult to understand what it can mean. At its essence, sustainability embodies hope for a healthy, just and bright future for us all. Choices for Sustainable Living provides participants a powerful opportunity to explore sustainability more deeply and learn its unique meaning from individual, societal and global perspectives. Choices for Sustainable Living helps you discover new ways of living and together, making change more possible and powerful.

The course is open to both congregation and community members but will be limited to 12 participants in order to foster effective sharing and learning. The course will meet once per week for 8 weeks, the time of day can vary, and a meal will be served as part of each session. There is no cost to attend and the cost of food and a course book for each participant is covered by the grant.

IMPORTANT! Final scheduling will depend in part on the availability of people who will commit to attend. If you are interested in taking this course, please let Mary Fran know as soon as possible - in-person, myafchak@twcny.rr.com, or 315-593-7786.

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Church Events Calendar

Sermon Calendar

March 1st: Reverend David Weissbard

March 8th: Reverend Andrea Abbott

March 15th: Reverend Bud Adams

March 22nd: Reverend Andrea Abbott

March 29th: Reverend Libbie Stoddard



Guess Who is Having a Birthday!?

It's Finn! And to celebrate, the entire congregation is invited to a birthday bash on Saturday, March 28th at 2:00 pm in the church dining hall. See you there!

REFRESHMENTS FOR COFFEE HOUR

3/8 George & Judy Tennant

3/15 Theme for potluck: Irish Food

3/22 Mary Fran

We need refreshment volunteers. See Judy Tennant.

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Notable Pieces of Interest

Andrea and I spent February in San Miguel De Allende, a city of about 150,000 in Guanajuato State, Mexico. San Miguel is home to a wonderful UU Fellowship comprised of US ex-pats and Mexican citizens. The fellowship devotes about half of its annual revenue to wide ranging community social programs including dental and medical programs for children in the campo, water systems and libraries for schools, English language instruction and support for hundreds of migrants/deportees now in refugee programs in the region. The energy and compassion of the fellowship is inspiring.

One program supported by fellowship members is [Caminamos de Agua](#), an NGO devoted to developing water resources access for villages and school in the region. I worked two consecutive Saturdays to help install two large water tanks and roof rainwater collection system at a school outside San Miguel. Here is one photo of what an amazing crew of village men and women did over two Saturdays. The tank in the photo will hold about 2500 liters when full.

The people who worked on the project were amazing in their energy and efficiency. I learned a lot from them. They were very kind, generous and tolerant of my clumsiness. A You Tube Video on this project is available at:

<https://youtu.be/JJKwTv8ZMLg>

AJH



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"First U Consider" - A Monthly Sharing Event

The first of what we hope to make a monthly event will be held on [Wednesday, March 25], starting at 6 p.m.. "First U Consider" group meetings are envisioned to be informal but thoughtful explorations on a variety of topics. The format will include facilitated sharing followed by discussion as we get to know each other better while considering things that matter to living our best life. The first topic will be a reflection on this simple truth from **Annie Dillard - "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives."** This event will also be advertised the community so please help spread the word, and we hope you will attend!

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Ministerial Musings

A friend in New Jersey recently sent me a picture of crocus flowering in her yard. She also sent an encouraging message, "Warm winds headed north, despair not." She grew up in northern New York but seems to have forgotten how March is around here. It's less like lion and lamb making a graceful dance of entering and exiting and more like two giant beasts locked in mortal combat. One day is lovely and warm and the next day we've got the snowblower going again. March seems to me the month that illustrates how hard change really is. We want to welcome May blossoms but somehow January still has a grip on our minds. During a long, cold, grey winter, it's easy to become discouraged and once discouragement sets in, it's hard to see the good that may be coming. We're afraid to let down our guard, afraid that each nice day is only a tease. We gird ourselves against the storm that we're sure is coming so that we can't even enjoy the sunshine when it's here. Waiting for the other shoe to drop, is how we put it. Of course, if we wait long enough, the other shoe is sure to drop. Life is never a smooth road, a calm sea. I have to remind myself to notice the joys that do come my way, to cherish the good times and file them in my memory to pull out when things go badly. As one of my favorite children's books, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, reminds us, some days are just like that, even in Australia, or Mexico or Central Square. We notice those terrible, horrible days; if we don't watch out, we can dwell on those days. The trick is to pay as much attention to the quieter, gentler pleasures that are also there. Arne and I had a good time in Mexico but we are also happy to be back, to see Spring unfolding, even if in fits and starts. And, of course, we are glad to be back with our family and with all of you who are close to our hearts. Warm winds are headed our way. Despair not.

Reverend Andrea Abbott

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Church Calendar for March, 2020

1. March 1 – 9:00 a.m. Board Meeting. 10:30 a.m. Rev. David Weissbard.
2. March 2 - 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Outreach and Planning Meeting 6:00-7:00 p.m. Office Hours with Rev. Andrea Abbott
3. March 8 - 9:00 a.m. Social Justice Committee Meeting. 10:30 a.m. Rev. Andrea Abbott
4. March 9 - 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Outreach and Planning Meeting 6:00-7:00 p.m. Office Hours with Rev. Andrea Abbott
5. March 11 – 5:30 Pagan group meets in the dining room.
6. March 15 - 10:30 a.m. Rev. Bud Adams. Monthly potluck, Irish theme
1:00 p.m. - Beth Thompson, Director of Behavioral Health Services at Oswego County Opportunities, will speak about services for individuals and families in Oswego County who are homeless or on the verge of homelessness.
7. March 16 - 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Office Hours with Rev. Andrea Abbott
8. March 18 - 5:30 p.m. Pagan group meets in the dining room.
9. March 19 - 9:30 a.m. Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread in Clay. Pagan group meets at 6:30
10. March 20 – 1:00 - 6:30 p.m. Red Cross Blood Drive
11. March 22 – 10:30 a.m. Rev. Andrea Abbott.
12. March 23 - 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Outreach and Planning Meeting 6:00-7:00 p.m. Office Hours with Rev. Andrea Abbott
13. March 23 – 7:00 p.m. Alzheimer’s Support Group to meets in the Goettel Room
14. March 26 – 6:30 Pagan group meets at church
15. March 29 - 10:30 a.m. Rev. Libbie Stoddard