

Circle of Fellowship
Monthly Newsletter of the First
Universalist Society of Central
Square, NY
May, 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
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(Route 49, near Route 11)
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Central Square, New York 13036-
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E-Mail for Reverend Andrea Abbott:
andrea279@verizon.net
Church website: centralsquareuu.org
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pages/
UU-Central Square/199139743511564](https://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square/199139743511564)



Do Remember They Can't Cancel Spring
An iPad Drawing by David Hockney

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May Ministerial Musing

Is there any other topic? If there is, I'm not aware of it. Every news story, on whatever medium, is about some aspect of life under The Virus. This is an unprecedented time, all the articles say, and who could disagree? While the spread of this disease appears to be slowing, at least in our part of the world, it's like waiting for the other shoe to drop. What will happen if restrictions are eased? *Will* restrictions be eased? How long can we go on with social distancing if it is not safe to lift restrictions? I wonder about things from the profound (what happens if the virus comes back?) to the silly (will I ever be able to get my hair cut?). Meanwhile, the trees are budding out as if they haven't got a care in the world. Humans have nothing to do with the new life unfurling at the end of each branch. The squirrels that really run our property come to the backdoor, waiting for their peanuts, but if we were no longer here, I'm sure they would carry on.

There has been much speculation over the years as to the role humans play in the world. Are we the height of creation? Are we necessary? Are we a plague, a virus ourselves? The two principles we most often cite are the first and the seventh; the inherent worth and dignity of every person and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Sometimes it seems difficult to hold those two principles in balance. Perhaps among other reflections, we can use this pause in our lives to consider how we can go forward from here with both those principles as our guides.

-Andrea Abbott

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Green Minute
Neonics and Spring Migration

Because bee populations have been collapsing, scientists have been researching pesticides and have identified a class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids (aka neonics) as one of the reasons. Scientists Margaret Eng and Christy Morrissey from the University of Saskatchewan have now provided the first direct experimental evidence that these pesticides can disturb bird migration as well.

Neonicotinoids were introduced in the 1990's and are the most used pesticides in the world. Neonics paralyze and kill insects by binding to their nerve receptors. One of the ways these pesticides are used is to pre-coat crop seeds before planting so neonics can be taken up into plant tissues as the plant grows, reducing or eliminating the need for further pesticide applications. According to an article in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's spring issue of *Living Bird*, past research has found correlations between bird population decline and increasing levels of neonic contamination in waterways near agricultural areas. They note that pesticide exposure that doesn't kill birds outright but harms their behavior or physiology have devastated bird populations in the past. As example, DDT was responsible for decimating Bald Eagle and Osprey populations because the pesticide caused them to lay eggs with thin, weak shells.

For the 2017 study, the scientists captured 51 White-crowned Sparrows during spring migration and measured how exposure to imidacloprid, the most widely used neonicotinoid, affected the birds. The sparrows were exposed to a dose equal to eating four seeds treated with the pesticide and within a day the captive sparrows slowed their eating and three days after the exposure the birds lost up to a quarter of their body weight. The birds also lost their ability to find north for about two weeks which the scientists believed would create a long delay as they migrate to spring breeding grounds. Therefore, in 2019 the researchers decided to do a field study to find out how neonic exposure might affect bird migration in the wild. This time they captured White-crowned Sparrows and outfitted them with tiny geolocators and then they planned to expose the sparrows to a dose of neonics then set them free. However, they were startled to find 28 of the 36 birds they captured already had detectable neonics in their blood before they were dosed. The birds in this field experiment exhibited the same loss of appetite and the dosed birds recorded unusually long stopover periods on their continued spring migration. The scientists suspect this is the result of the lack of food or neonics intoxication.

Following the release of Eng and Morrissey's 2019 study in September which was published in *Science*, David Fischer, the chief scientist for pollinator safety at Bayer Crop Science (a major manufacturer of imidacloprid), provided his thoughts on the study. He was quoted by the Associated Press as saying that the field experiments did not accurately represent the level of neonic exposure birds experience in the wild. Morrissey responded by saying "The amount we gave these birds was equivalent to a small bird eating less than a single treated corn seed or just a few canola or cereal seeds. In fact, we estimate the doses would be less than 1% of their daily diet. For context, a songbird can eat hundreds of seeds in a day." She insists, "There is no basis for Bayer's statement that the results are not representing real-world exposures."

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

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Dear Members and Friends:

Every year in the early spring we hold a stewardship luncheon to kick off our pledge canvass for the upcoming church year. Our church year runs from June 1 to May 31. Of course, this is not a normal year so as we observe social distancing by staying at home, we cannot have our luncheon. However we still need to invite you to contribute some of your time and financial resources by pledging for the new church year.

Churches exist because friends and members do the necessary volunteer work and pay the bills. If everyone does a little of the work it gets done in good order. Some teach religious education. Some maintain the building. Others serve on committees, come to work parties or help with community events. It becomes a way to not only help the church, but to get to know others. For now, we are staying connected through Zoom video Sunday services, discussion and chat groups. Of course, we all are looking forward to the time that we can get together again.

If everyone makes a financial contribution to our church we can continue to work to expand and grow, with old and new programs and community outreach. Our bylaws say: *An active member shall be expected to participate in the Church's activities and to make a recordable financial contribution or to contribute services to the Church during each fiscal year.* We know that people are in varying life circumstances. Some are caring for relatives or have health concerns or medical bills of their own. Others are between jobs. We do not ask that you place undue hardship upon yourself but neither should your pledge be easy. Rather it should reflect a serious commitment to the place you have chosen as your spiritual home. We know this commitment works both ways. We will continue to strive to provide a safe, welcoming environment where everyone is respected and nurtured.

A pledge form is included with this letter. Please fill it out and send it in the enclosed envelope so it is received by no later than May 15th so that we have the information as we prepare the budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. If you prefer, you can email your completed pledge form to Janie Garlow at mjgarlow@aol.com. If you'd like to consider other types of giving that might be a bit out of the ordinary, please feel free to contact our treasurer Marcia Burrell with any questions you have.

Best Wishes,
The Stewardship Committee

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passion in human relations

The First Universalist Society of Central Square
PO Box 429
Central Square, New York 13036

Please Pledge What You Can
June 1, 2020 through May 31, 2021 Pledge Form

As an expression of love and appreciation for the work of the church:

My annual pledge is: \$ _____ To be given in increments of \$ _____
() Weekly () Monthly () Annually () Regularly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

() The information above is an addition or change to the current directory.

() Fair Share Fund: This year, our contribution is approximately \$75/member. (Fair Share is our contribution to the UUA's Annual Program Fund. Go to <https://www.uua.org/finance/apf/why-we-give> for more information.)

I would like to give an additional donation to Fair Share. \$ _____.

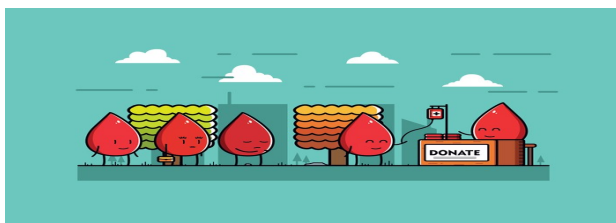
() I would like to give a one-time donation to the work of the church. \$ _____.

Signature _____ Date _____

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT IT IS YOUR INTENT TO COMPLETE PAYMENT OF THIS PLEDGE BY MAY 31, 2021. CIRCUMSTANCES DO CHANGE AND YOU MAY MODIFY OR CANCEL YOUR PLEDGE WITH A CALL OR LETTER TO OUR TREASURER.

THANK YOU.

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Red Cross Blood Drive
Friday May 15th 1:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Different Location – American Legion

Although the Red Cross has been able to meet needs, there is still an ongoing urgent need for people to give blood. You can donate blood at our Red Cross blood drive from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 15th. However, due to social distancing protocols, this drive will be held at the American Legion down the street at 3301 Fulton Ave. It is highly encouraged that you schedule an appointment because in an effort to control the number of people in the building at one time, walk-ins may not be allowed. You can schedule an appointment by visiting redcrossblood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS. .

Thank you.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

Yard Clean Up and Socially Distanced Time Together

We will have a socially distanced yard clean up and brown bag lunch at the church on Wednesday 5/13 starting at 10 a.m. Please bring your gardening gloves and any gardening tools you think you may need. Rain date Thursday 5/14 at 10 a.m.

Ellen

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Covid-19 Testing Available Through Order by Your Physician

Hi all,

One of the ways we can learn more abt covid and hopefully end this awful shut down is to get serological testing. **It's now available at Upstate. Your PCP can order it.** The announcement came to me just now. Pls feel free to share with others. I had it done Friday and will be happy to share results with anyone curious once they come in.

Sunny

From Upstate: We have ample serological tests available (at least 900 per week). This test can and should be offered to any interested patient. Please note the following caveats: 1) We do not know if the presence of IgG antibodies will protect a person from infection or disease, 2) IgG antibodies should not be used for diagnosis of acutely ill patients suspected of COVID-19, and 3) the test should not be used as a 'screening step' prior to procedures.

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**NOTICE OF ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
OF CENTRAL SQUARE, NEW YORK**

The annual congregational meeting of the First Universalist Society of Central Square, New York, is scheduled to be held in the sanctuary immediately after the worship service on Sunday morning, June 7, 2020 via Zoom.

The church bylaws specify that there shall be an annual congregational meeting on the first Sunday in June of each year.

The agenda for the meeting includes:

- Receipt of annual reports from incumbent officers and committee chairs.
- Consideration and adoption of the budget for the next church year.
- Election of officers for the next church year.

The bylaws provide that active members of the church 18 years or older shall have the power to vote. Any member of the church under 18 years shall have the right of voice, but not the power of voting or eligibility to hold office in the church.

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Upcoming Church Events

Zoom With Us in the Following Events

First UU Consider: The group will discuss the question, “What is the Common Good” on May 6th at 7:00 pm. Look for the Zoom link in the Weekly Announcements.

Coffee and Chat on Zoom, May 21st at 9:30 am. Check Weekly Announcements for the Zoom link

Sermon Schedule on Zoom, Sundays at 10:30 am

Check Weekly Announcements for Zoom Address

Rev, David Weissbard, Sunday, May 3rd: “With The Best of Intentions”

Rev, Andrea Abbott, Sunday, May 10th: “Hiding The Bodies-What Do We Do With Surplus People”

Rev. Bud Adams, Sunday, May 17th

Rev. Andrea Abbott, Sunday, May 24th

Rev. Libbie Stoddard, Sunday, May 31st