

Circle of Fellowship
Monthly Newsletter of the First
Universalist Society of Central
Square, NY
February, 2021

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

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Amanda Gorman reading her poem, "The Hill We Climb"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZ055iIlIiN4>

In This Issue

Page 2: Ministerial Musings

Page 3: Ellen's Green Minute

Page 4: Social Justice

Page 4: Wedding Plan Cancellation due to Covid

Page 5: Church Events Calendar

Page 6: Sunday Sermon Calendar

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Ministerial Musings

February 2021

February is stuffed with holidays, from Groundhog Day to Presidents' Day. Perhaps because it is also a fairly dreary month in our part of the world, as well as when the lights of Christmas have really faded, we are trying to celebrate something. As well as particular days, this month is Black History Month. Our current conflicts, with some progress I hope, with the issue of racism have me more aware than ever of how the past determines our present. When we ignore history, we are unable to understand our present times and are unable to work towards a more viable future. The disputes currently tearing our country apart are like those issues which tear families apart and which tear each of us apart, internally, unless we are willing to endure the painful work of resolution. Those issues which we try to ignore always resurface in more virulent forms later. Perhaps this is the time when we will be able to face this fundamental flaw in our nation with honesty and compassion. Perhaps spring will finally come.

Andrea Abbott

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Green Minute
Great Backyard Bird Count

I love watching the birds in my yard. Since I'm home more than I have been in the past I have taken much more notice of the visitors at my feeders and when my feeders suddenly get very quiet, I look for the Hawk that flies in from the neighboring field to perch in my ash tree looking for a meal. With this rediscovered joy in mind, I have decided to participate in the 24th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) which is being held this year on February 12-15th. Whether you are a novice or an expert birder, anyone can contribute. Go to <https://www.birdcount.org/> for details.

To participate, you will need to count birds for at least 15 minutes (or longer if you wish) for one or more days of the four-day event. You can participate from your backyard, or anywhere your travels take you. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the National Audubon Society and Bird Canada learn more about how birds are doing and how to protect them. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before one of their annual migrations. Last year, almost 270,000 people participated in the GBBC and it is growing every year. If you happen to get photos you can share them to but it is not required. A fun feature is you will be able to see little flashes of light on a world map as your sightings, as well as those of folks around the world, come in.

The website has a lot of other information such as web courses, last year's results and some interesting articles. There is also information on how to download Merlin and/or eBird to your mobile device to report your sightings as well as how to enter your observations via your computer.

Ellen LaPine
Social Justice Committee

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Social Justice Committee

I have collected \$132, (your checks and bottle/can returns) since our last donation in 2020. I will make a contribution on 2/15. If you want to count your coins and send me a check, please do so soon. Janet Jenkins deserves recognition for her donation of 100's of cans.

Thanks to All. Nancy Hallock

Wedding Plans Cancelled

Hilary and Zach Dornton has regretfully had to cancel wedding service originally scheduled for later this year due to the pandemic. We are sad for Hilary and Zach.

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Church Evets Calendar

Notice to Our Members and Friends Regarding Continuation of Virtual Services.

We will continue to meet virtually for the foreseeable future.

Our Zoom link for the Sunday Services at 10:30 am is:

<https://zoom.us/j/94662078732?pwd=V3d6eWlvSWMyUUlaNlhUNIRQK2Z4UT09>

2/7 Executive Board Meeting

The Executive Board will meet at 9:00 via Zoom. All are welcome.

SAVE THE DATE

2/10 Connect and Consider

We'll engage the topic of Interpersonal Communication. How do we communicate? What are the barriers to communication? What does it mean to listen? When should we speak? How do we find balance? We'll explore these and other questions in our dialogue.

2/24 Connect and Consider

TBA

2/24 Book Club on Zoom

On 2/24 @4:30 we will review "Unorthodox" by Deborah Feldman
Nancy will continue to update folks as to what we're reading. Meetings will be on the last Wednesday of each month @4:30

Thank you for your pledges and for continuing to help us get through these difficult times.

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Sunday Sermon Calendar

Sunday, February 7th: The Reverend David Weissbard will speak to us via Zoom starting with announcements at 10:25.

Dave writes: Thought I would preach on **"Why I'm Not a Christian."** In our culture, the word "Christian" is considered a synonym for "good." "Oh, that's so Christian of you." There are, of course, UU's who consider themselves to be Christians -- "the REAL Christians.." At the moment I can't remember which of our heroes clarified that "UU's teach the religion OF Jesus -- not the religion about him. I can honestly say that "Some of my best friends are Christians." [I trust you hear the irony..] So, I thought I would speak to why it is that I do not wish to claim membership in that club.

Sunday, February 14th: The Reverend Andrea Abbott: "Be Brave"

Sunday, February 21st: The Reverend Bud Adams

Sunday, February 28th; The Reverend Andrea Abbott