



CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

The First Universalist Society of Central Square

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Andrea Abbott, Student Minister

315-635-7122

Janie Garlow, President

315-436-2238

Rita Thornton, Music Coordinator

315-699-4824

3243 Fulton Street (Route 49, near Route 11)

Post Office Box 429, Central Square, New York 13036-0429

Telephone: 315-668-6821

Church Web site: <http://centralsquareuu.com>

Our church building is handicapped accessible.

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.

JUNE 2011

STUDENT MINISTER SNIPPET

June, the month of so many things: Father's Day, weddings, graduations. For me, the most wonderful event occurred each June. Summer vacation began. Summer vacation, days and days of nothing in particular. I understand that the tradition of summer vacation is threatened. Its agricultural origins are over. Families do not need their children home for haying. Even the whole idea of summer vacations may be a thing of the past, with lives that are expected to be busy 24/7/365 (366 on leap years). The concept that the devil still finds mischief for idle hands seems present, if not spoken. But time to do nothing is as essential to humans as food, water, and silence. We are all in need of some corner into which we can retreat and find renewal. For adults as well as for children, this is the fertile ground for creation, for ideas and thoughts and dreams. I wish for everyone some time for a hammock, a gentle walk, a tree, some clouds.

– Andrea Abbott

THE REVEREND WEISSBARD TO FOCUS ON "RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM"

The Rev. David Weissbard will be in the pulpit for the service at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 5.

He writes, "My sermon for June is about 'Religious Enthusiasm'. We are in a funny place in regards to that subject. Our history looks back to people who were very enthusiastic about their religion, and sometimes died for it. On the other hand, contemporary Unitarian Universalists tend to look askance at people who are too enthusiastic about their religion – it's just not 'cool'. We are calm and rational – the opposite of enthusiastic. I will encourage us to wrestle with the contrast between the two attitudes."

Note: Please have items for the next newsletter to Bob Haskell by no later than NOON on THURSDAY, JUNE 30. His address is 29 Grove Street, Baldwinsville, NY 13027-2332; his telephone number is 315-635-5294; his e-mail address is rhaskell@twcny.rr.com

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 5

The annual meeting of the First Universalist Society of Central Square will be held immediately after the Sunday service on June 5, 2011.

The agenda includes:

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

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.

Child care will be available upon request.

All are welcome.

Respectfully, Janie Garlow, president

BOARD SPLINTERS

The Executive Board, conducting its regular monthly meeting in the church dining room on Sunday morning, May 1, appointed Janie Garlow as moderator for the annual congregational meeting to be held immediately after the morning service on Sunday, June 5.

Board members agreed to mail, postal and e-mail, minutes of last year's meetings to members before this year's meeting so that the minutes would not have to be read at the meeting. They also agreed not to allow absentee or proxy ballots at this year's meeting.

Janie Garlow announced that the Spiritual Committee, headed by Patricia Cerro-Reehil, had arranged for Arny Stieber to deliver the sermon during the worship service on May 29; Ralph Singh to lead the service on July 31; and the Rev. Robert Cleveland to speak sometime during July or August.

Chester Perkins reported that the Jerome Fire Equipment Company had installed six new fire extinguishers and two emergency lights, with Arnold Hook to install two more emergency lights.

The Executive Board voted to express its appreciation to the Outreach Committee, headed by Nancy Hallock, for all of its work; Laura Brazak, for her work at the educational program on hydrofracking; and Nancy Haskell, for playing the piano that day in the absence of Rita Thornton, music coordinator.

Ellen LaPine, Chalice Lighter ambassador, said that she would distribute information to the congregation when Chalice Lighter Sunday was observed during the worship service later that morning.

CHURCH SURVEY

If you haven't filled out a church survey form, please take the time to read one and do so.

This is a chance to have some input on what you would like to see our wonderful church doing.

– Ann Peterson, adult programs,
Religious Education Committee

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WORKSHOP

What do Episcopalians, Quakers and Unitarian Universalists have to do with a 16th century pope?

This question will be the topic of a workshop to be held in the church dining room on Sunday, June 26.

We will have our usual potluck; then the workshop will follow immediately afterwards.

Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation (NOON) will present information on the Doctrine of Discovery.

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) materials on the topic will also be available.

– Ann Peterson, adult programs,
Religious Education Committee

DRUM CIRCLE

The next meeting of the Drum Circle will be held from 6 until 8'ish p.m. on Friday, June 10.

Don't be shy if you are a beginner or are just curious. There are drums and rattles available for use by those who haven't been bitten by the Drum Circle bug yet.

– Ann Peterson, adult programs,
Religious Education Committee

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED FOR SMORGASBORD FUNDRAISER JUNE 4

The UU Circle is sponsoring a smorgasbord in the church dining room from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 4. Remember to sign up for this fundraiser. Our smorgasbords have been great successes, and you can be part of this event. Decide on a dish to bring and on which hours you can work setting up, cleaning up or working in the kitchen. Thank you ahead of time; your help will make this fundraiser one of our best.

Spread the word and hang a poster in your neighborhood.

– Ann Peterson, secretary-treasurer, UU Circle

VIDEO DISCUSSION GROUP

The Video Discussion Group will view “Stonewall Uprising” when it meets in the Goettel Room at 7 p.m. on Friday, June 3.

The video is from the PBS history series “American Experience.”

According to the series description, “When police raided the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay bar in the Greenwich Village section of New York City on June 28, 1969, the street erupted into violent protests that lasted for the next six days. The Stonewall riots, as they came to be known, marked a major turning point in the modern gay civil rights movement in the United States and around the world.”

Again, we plan to have supper before the discussion group at the Akropolis Restaurant on Route 11 in Central Square. Please let Janie Garlow know at mjgarlow@aol.com or at 315-436-2238 by Thursday, June 2, if you plan to attend so that she may make a reservation a day ahead.

Everyone is invited to attend.

COFFEE AND CHAT

Women and men of the church will gather for Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread on Route 31 in Clay at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 15.

All are welcome to join in casual conversation and to enjoy coffee or tea and other goodies.

The women’s and men’s groups meet separately.

For more information about the women’s group, you may contact Nancy Haskell.

For more information about the men’s group, you may contact Chet Perkins.

MEN TO GATHER

The 20th annual Gathering of Men will take place at Camp Unirondack near Lowville, NY, on June 10-11-12.

This year’s theme is “On the Journey . . . a time to reflect.”

According to the program brochure, “Each year,

there are men who have been returning for this weekend for years. Each year, there are men who come for the first time. There are workshops (always optional – you’re also free to go hiking, canoeing, or just sit by the boathouse and relax), and shared cooking/cleanup chores, a ‘talent show’ Saturday night in which you’re invited (but not required) to share music, poetry, storytelling, standup routines, shaggy-dog stories, etc., alone, or with others. Weather permitting, there’s usually a bonfire afterwards, and often there’s drumming. ...”

The schedule:

Friday, June 10: 4 p.m. onward: registration. 6 p.m., dinner. 7:30 p.m., opening circle/getting (re)acquainted.

Saturday, June 11: 7 a.m., breakfast. 8:30 a.m., morning workshops and activities. Noon, lunch. 1:30 p.m., afternoon workshops and activities. 6 p.m., dinner. 7:30 p.m., talent show. 9 p.m. (more or less), bonfire.

Sunday, June 12: 7 a.m., breakfast. 8:30 a.m., morning workshops and activities. 10:30 a.m. (or thereabouts), worship service and closing circle. Noon, lunch and farewells.

The Men’s Gathering is for adults 18 and older. Fees are \$100 per person.

Those seeking more information may speak to Kurt Schindler or Winfield Ihlow.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Random Acts of Kindness is our congregation’s program to financially assist those in need, whether church members/friends or people in the wider community.

Finances are provided by the congregation through a special once-a-month offering, normally on the first Sunday of each month. Random Acts of Kindness envelopes are found on the back of the pews.

The next Random Acts of Kindness will be observed on Sunday, June 5.

The fund is administered by the student minister and two appointed lay persons.

UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE HAS BEEN BUSY

The Outreach (Social Justice) Committee gathered volunteers for its spring tree project on Saturday morning, May 7. Heather Stevens, from the Village Board, thanked me repeatedly for our work and gave us four left-over bags of mulch to use in our Memorial Garden.

We have one summer Adopt-a-Highway date to be announced toward the end of July.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the hydrofracking presentation on April 29.

Anyone with a strong interest in a social or an economic justice issue that he or she would like to discuss with the committee, please contact me. I know there is talk of expanding our landscaping of the church property.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hallock, chairperson

GREEN MINUTE: AM I CLEAN YET?

How much water do you really need to get your body clean?

Many people spend 10 minutes or more in a shower. Heating the water for a 10-minute shower can generate as many as 4 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂). Ever try to cut a 10-minute shower down to 5 minutes?

Did you know that a bath can use up to twice the amount of hot water that you need for a 5-minute shower?

Here's action you can take to lower your shower's carbon footprint:

If you don't already have low-flow shower heads on your showers, purchase and install them.

Time your average shower.

Reduce this time so that you are consistently at 5 minutes or under.

For each person in your household who reduces his or her shower time to 5 minutes or less, you can realize a CO₂ reduction of 300 pounds per year per person!

Each low-flow shower head you install reduces annual CO₂ emissions by 250 pounds per year!

The typical American household generates 55,000 pounds of carbon dioxide annually and collectively directly produces about 8 percent of the planet's carbon dioxide emissions. Further, we are indirectly responsible for an additional 17 percent through our purchases. The typical German household contributes only 27,000 pounds, and the average Swedish household only 15,000 pounds. Clearly, we need to pay attention to what our lifestyle is doing to the planet.

Let's assume that there are two people in your house and two showers. If you follow the action outlined above, you've reduced your carbon footprint by 1,100 pounds per year! That's a pretty big dent in that 55,000-pound average as a result of a couple of simple actions. When you look at it that way it becomes easy. Use an efficient shower of 5 minutes or less with a low-flow shower head to get clean, and use a bath or occasional long shower for relaxation. Reduce your carbon footprint and save some money in energy costs, too.

– Ellen LaPine, Outreach (Social Justice) Committee

DOWNSTAIRS SCOTTIE

The Executive Board has designated the second Sunday of each month as the date for the collection of food for the Downstairs Scottie. The Outreach (Social Justice) Committee will later take the contributions of food to the Food Bank at Saint Michael's Church.

The committee will continue to accept non-food items for the Downstairs Scottie on the second Sunday of each month and at all other times. Such non-food items include soap, detergent, bathroom and facial tissues, toothpaste, and the like.

The collection box is in the church dining room. Remember the Downstairs Scottie as you shop.

RETURN THOSE BOTTLES

You may continue to help the environment and make money for the Outreach (Social Justice) Committee by leaving your returnable bottles at the church.

Nancy Hallock, committee chairperson, is returning deposit bottles and cans for the committee treasury. Please remember to participate in this ongoing fundraiser.

UU congregations covenant to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.

PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS

My Dear Friends,

We are all born with an incredible gift, a gift so magnificent that words can barely describe it. This gift is the spark of infinite wisdom that lives within us. This spark of life is often called spirit or soul. It is the part of us that is eternal and connects us to the universe. It is our key to living the life we were meant to live ... the key to living a healthy and happy life. Unfortunately in our busy and hectic lives, we can get disconnected from our essential spirit. When this happens to us, it is time to go on a spiritual retreat. Time away from your daily routine to reconnect with your spirit more fully. A time to let the beauty and energy of the universe wash away any tension or stress. It could be as simple as Sunday morning at church, a walk in the woods or sitting by the ocean on a summer holiday. It is important to be quiet and still in order to hear your intuitive voice. Perhaps, most importantly, it is a time to evaluate where you are and where you are going to make sure you are aligned with your soul purpose.

A couple of years ago while on vacation in Maine, I had a profoundly peaceful experience. As I was standing overlooking the ocean, I noticed there were many little piles of stones that had been carefully stacked one on top of the other. They seemed to have a spiritual or magical quality, as a fragile sculpture along this magnificent rocky coast and ocean. When I stood with these little stone gnomes, I felt as though I was in a sanctuary. These little gnomes were all facing the ocean as if in meditation. I stood silently with them in my own state of meditation and reflection. I knew in that one moment that I was connected to everything in the Universe. I knew that I was right where I needed to be in my life. What a wonderful feeling that was! While it is certainly easier to choose these feelings while on vacation, we can choose these feelings whenever and wherever we are and nurture our spirits.

This is my last newsletter article as president of the Executive Board. It is time to pass the gavel. It has been an enjoyable ride. I highly recommend it. I want to thank all the Board members who have presided with me through the years. You are a wonderful team of people who care deeply for our little church. It is people like you who have made the difference when at times it would have been easier to walk away. Thank you!

Namaste,
Janie

“The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.”

– John Muir

“We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us.”

– Joseph Campbell

RECYCLE YOUR MAGAZINES

The Outreach (Social Justice) Committee is asking everyone to recycle magazines in the church dining room on the first Sunday of each month. Nancy Hallock, chairperson, will pass the magazines on to the County Jail every two or three months.

“LEANING AGAINST THE WIND”

Our church has copies of the Rev. Max Coots’s book, “Leaning Against the Wind,” for sale. All you have to do is give Janie Garlow or Chet Perkins a check or cash totaling \$13.

From 1958 to 1992 Max Coots delivered more than 1,400 sermons as minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton. In 1991 a group of UU church members selected 59 of those sermons that they agreed were some of Max’s best. First published in 1992, “Leaning Against the Wind” was re-printed twice, but for the last several years the book has been out of print. The fourth printing has been completed and “Leaning Against the Wind” is once again available.

Max preached at our church for years after his retirement at Canton.

The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.

The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.

JUNE CALENDAR

3 – 5:30 p.m., Supper at the Akropolis Restaurant. 7 p.m., Video Discussion Group meets in the Goettel Room to view “Stonewall Uprising.”

4 – 4:30 until 6:30 p.m., Smorgasbord fundraiser in the church dining room.

5 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. David Weissbard. Sermon topic: “Religious Enthusiasm.” Random Acts of Kindness Sunday. Annual congregational meeting immediately following the worship service. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Outreach Committee to recycle magazines in the church dining room. Nancy Hallock, chairperson, will pass the magazines on to the County Jail every two or three months.

9 – 8:30 a.m., Spiritual Committee meets in the church dining room.

10 – 6 until 8’ish p.m., Drum Circle.

10-12 – Annual Gathering of Men will take place at Camp Unirondack near Lowville, NY.

12 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. This is the once-a-month Sunday on which everyone is asked by the Outreach Committee to donate food items for the Downstairs Scottie, which later will be taken to the Food Bank at Saint Michael’s Church.

15 – 9:30 a.m., Coffee and Chat at Panera Bread, Route 31, town of Clay.

19 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by the Rev. Libbie Stoddard.

26 – 9:30 a.m., Choir practice. 10:30 a.m., Worship service led by Andrea Abbott, student minister. 11:45 a.m., Potluck luncheon, followed by a workshop presented by Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation (NOON).

CHANTING AND MEDITATION

Anyone who is interested in chanting and meditation is invited to contact Tim Hart at timhart@a-znet.com or at 315-439-2541.

REMINDERS

If you have an announcement you would like to be included in the church’s weekly e-mail announcements, please send it to Janie Garlow at mjgarlow@aol.com by 5 p.m. on Sundays. Earlier submissions would be appreciated.

Don’t forget to send your articles for the July newsletter to Bob Haskell at rhaskell@twcny.rr.com by noon on Thursday, June 30. Earlier submissions would be appreciated.

We have audio CDs of most of the current Sunday sermons. These may be borrowed for your listening enjoyment.

Copies of Max Coots’s book, “Leaning Against the Wind,” are available for purchase at \$13 each.

The living tradition which Unitarian Universalists share draws from many sources, including wisdom from the world’s religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.