

UU News

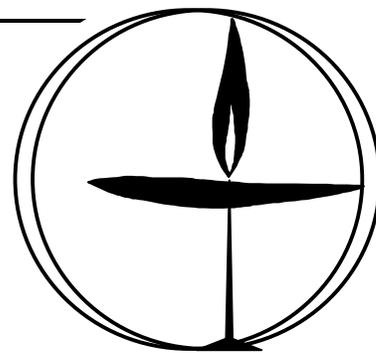
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF ONEONTA
16 Ford Ave., Oneonta, NY 13820 (607) 432-3491

www.uuso.org uuso@uuso.org

SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 AM

Love is the doctrine of this church, the quest for truth is its sacrament, and service is its prayer

September 23, 2015



Minister: Rev. Craig Schwalenberg—432-3491 or 287-7906
revcraig@uuso.org

Board President: Karen Palmer—267-4793

Music Director: Tim Horne—432-7323

UUSO Church Building—433-7329

Director of Religious Education:

Susan Ryder—643-1927—dre@uuso.org

Editor & Office Administrator: Robin Ahearn—432-3491
uuso@uuso.org

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING—SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

All UUSO members are encouraged to attend the fall Congregational meeting on Sunday, October 4, at noon, in the sanctuary. Items on the agenda include:

- Treasurer's Report: Presentation of 2015-2016 Budget for approval.
- Board of Trustees: Membership affirmation policy statement.
Proposal for expenditure of \$7500 for a new marquee.
Proposal for a Task Force and to place a banner:
Motion: “UUSO will display a Black Lives Matter banner on the front facing outside wall of Chapin Memorial and the Black Lives Matters Task Force will provide ongoing education to the congregation and larger community regarding the Black Lives Matter movement.”
- Social Action Cmte: Proposal for Task Force to study the feasibility of a micro-loan program that would loan money to local people in need.
- Mali Task Force: Proposal to support Youchaou's School in Mali.

—Robin Ahearn

MINISTER'S MUSINGS

All Beings Matter

One of our ideals, as Unitarian Universalists, is the belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all people. A radical concept of boundless inclusivity. All people are worthy; all people are saved; all people are loved; all people are equally divine. This is not an easy belief to hold in the best of times. When things are going wrong, or worse—it can be a real struggle to hold this ideal in our hearts.

Being responsible seekers of truth and meaning, we know this ideal we affirm and promote doesn't match the reality surrounding us. The world is not ideal. Our treatment of one another is not ideal. There is much left to do before we reach the Beloved Community we hope and strive for. The vision statement we created over a year ago acknowledges these understandings. We have committed ourselves to building a world where all beings matter. That is a tall order, a high bar. And it should be... visions are supposed to be hard to reach. Our shared vision should be something just beyond our grasp. (And then, when we actually reach it—after our surprise, we can pick a new unattainable goal to strive for.) Our vision statement is an acknowledgment that things are not as they should be. Things could be better. We could live in a world where all beings matter. We should live in a world where all beings matter. But, unfortunately, we do not.

Black Lives Matter

The Black Lives Matter movement is similar to our own vision statement. With those three simple words, the founders and followers of this movement acknowledge the painfully wide gap between our ideal and our reality. They cry out, “Our Lives Matter!” as they mourn the death of an unarmed black child. (Which dead unarmed black child am I referring to? Think about what it means that we have to ask that question...) They are not describing things as they are. They are not making an argument for one race over another. They are stating an ideal. They are yelling their pain at how far away from that ideal we are every day. “Black Lives Matter” is a cry for justice and a cry for help. They are crying to us for help.

Why us? Because the systems we live in, the systems created so long ago, are specifically and deliberately designed to keep some people in power and some people out of power. We are the beneficiaries of this unbalanced system. Because the systems give us power, we are the ones that can dismantle the systems. This is the conversation we need to have as a society. This is the discussion we need to be having. The Black Lives Matter movement is trying to bring racism back out into the light of day. The movement is calling liberal, progressive white allies and asking them to recognize their power, and then use that power to change the systems and end the violence.

UUSO Matters

At the congregational meeting on October 4, the members of UUSO will be asked to vote on a proposal to hang a Black Lives Banner over our sanctuary entrance. In addition, a Black Lives Matter task force is proposed with the purpose of educating the congregation and the community on these issues—and looking for other ways we can engage and work on this issue.

Our mission as a congregation is nothing short of the transformation of the world—personally, individually, and globally. We are a white, middle class, liberal congregation in a predominantly white community. It would be easy for us as a congregation and us as a community to ignore or dismiss the issues being raised by the Black Lives Matter. Our position and status and, yes, our race makes that an option. But in not addressing the institutions that are racially unjust, we become complicit in their actions. That's what “We The People” means. I want us to be a congregation that matters, that makes a difference.

UUSO Newsletter—September 23, 2015

This is one way we can do that—if we choose to do so. We are a democratic faith and the power rests not with me, your minister, nor with the Board, your elected trustees; it rests with you. On October 4, at the congregational meeting, you will have the opportunity to make the decision. Shall we answer the call and put ourselves forward as opposed to the people, institutions, and systems that are dividing us and killing our black neighbors? Or shall we let this issue pass us by and look for some other more pressing issue to address?

There is much to discuss before that vote. There are questions to be answered and objections to be addressed. The Board and I are having four gatherings to discuss these proposals. The first was last Sunday at noon. (We had a good conversation—thanks to those who attended.) These meetings will take place in the UUSO Sanctuary on the following dates:

Wednesday	September 23 @ 7 pm
Friday	September 25 @ 5 pm
Wednesday	September 30 @ 11 am

I hope you will be able to join us at one of those meetings. If you need childcare to attend a meeting, please let me know and I will make arrangements. If you can't make it to any of these meetings, please strike up a conversation with one of our Board trustees or one of the people wearing Black Lives Matter buttons. I hope to see you at the congregational meeting. —Cooperatively, Rev. Craig

SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD

At our board meeting on September 16, we moved once again toward greater transparency by voting to publish the board meeting agenda prior to each meeting on UUSO Chat. We agreed to ask the congregation for approval of the expenditure for a much needed new marquee and to hang a Black Lives Matter banner on the front wall of Chapin Memorial, as well as approve a task force to provide education about this movement. A larger number of people utilized the Sounding Board this month and responses have been sent or are being prepared for the individual congregants who voiced their questions and ideas. In some cases, responses will come from committees with members who can best answer the questions presented. We would like to be more visible to the congregation so that you can seek us out as needed. To this end, the board will be hosting coffee hour and ushering on the day of the congregational meeting, which is October 4. Board members will be standing up during coming Sunday services when the worship associate mentions us “friendly folk with orange buttons.” Additionally, photos of new board members and the new moderator are being posted on the website to join the photos of veteran board members. We thank Sandy Shertzer for donating his professional services to take the photos.

Our next board meeting is Wednesday, October 21, 6:30 pm in the sanctuary. Members and friends of UUSO are invited to observe. Board members are always happy to listen to your concerns or suggestions and two board members will be present at the “Sounding Board” table after the service the Sunday before the board meeting. —Karen Palmer, President, UUSO Board of Trustees, 267-4793/kpalmer14@hughes.net

ATTENDANCE:

June 14	62	July 26	64	September 6	74
June 21	71	August 2	62	September 13	95
June 28	71	August 9	61	(Ingathering)	
July 5	56	August 16	70	September 20	60
July 12	65	August 23	66		
July 19	67	August 30	76		

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

This last Sunday, September 20, the Religious Education Program hosted the Annual Fall Kick-off Event. This year we worked with *Minecraft*. The theme of the day was to create OUR version of Chapin Memorial Church. This task included thinking about what we need from our worship space, what makes a church community, and what kinds of changes we would most like to see happen for our church building.

What is *Minecraft*? you ask. It is a video game.

According to [Minecraft Wiki](#): "Minecraft focuses on allowing the player to explore, interact with, and modify a dynamically-generated map made of one-cubic-meter-sized blocks. In addition to blocks, the environment features plants, mobs, and items. Some activities in the game include mining for ore, fighting hostile mobs, and crafting new blocks and tools by gathering various resources found in the game. The game's open-ended model allows players to create structures, creations and artwork on various multiplayer servers or their own single player maps."

I began our time together by reminding everyone of our seven UU Principles and that our task would be a reflection of these principles in action.

Here is a brief, child-friendly, version of our Unitarian Universalist Principles:

1. Each person is important.
2. Be kind in all you do.
3. We're free to learn together.
4. and Search for what is true.
5. All people need a voice.
6. Build a fair and peaceful world.
7. We care for earth's lifeboat.

Perhaps you noticed that these can conveniently be sung to the tune of "Do Re Mi" from *The Sound of Music*, but I digress . . .

The Chair of the Religious Education Committee, Sallie Han, then went over ground rules for using the computers and the Carriage House space, as well as the importance of being respectful of each other and each other's creations.

Our excellent tech leaders, Michael Bagby and Ben (an RE class member) went over ground rules for working together in the virtual *Minecraft* world. For instance, it wasn't OK to build "butter armies" or to go to the "Netherworld" or to travel to an alternate dimension. Anyone who wanted to add fire or water needed to speak with Michael or Ben first. There was a small bit of protest but ultimately everyone agreed to these ground rules.

We played *Minecraft* on five laptops that were connected to a large screen monitor. Doug Hallberg, of the Carriage House Art Studio, was gracious enough to let us use the equipment. Michael and Ben created a UUSO building shell for us to augment and change. We used a version of *Minecraft* where the mobs, fighting hostile mobs, and other nasty elements were turned off. There were unlimited building supplies so we didn't need to do any mining or making tools. This left our game in a purely creative mode. We did need to be careful when adding elements like fire or water but that would be sensible in any world. Bunnies occasionally appeared at random but there were no hostile creatures. It did snow a lot but that's fairly common in our area.



UUSO Newsletter—September 23, 2015

It was necessary to have those who already knew how to navigate through the game be the "Builders." Five Builders each had a small group of "Visionaries" who worked out what would be built. Each group had a virtual person on the big screen who was moving around and building things together with the other four virtual people. We were a large group so we traded spaces in the middle of the hour to give everyone a chance to participate with visioning and/or building. The rest of the group drew pixel art on graph paper.

What follows is the group evaluation when our task was completed:

The church we built with *Minecraft* includes a Pizza Place so we can share food and people can enjoy social time together. This will also be used during "Pizza and Games." A cake dispenser and a water dispenser will also add to our social time together. There are various trampolines to provide exercise because "people's legs get crampy" during services. The trampolines will also be used for "Jumping Worship Services." There is a track inside the building with carts to help people get around. There are many chalices. The downstairs, although small, is now decorated with beautiful paintings. There are flowers and a cat (in addition to the randomly appearing bunnies) to help people relax during church. These are also an important part of our interdependent web of life and it is good to for people to take care of them.

The group decided there were some problems encountered by our new designs. Some wished they could have built rockets and fireworks for celebrations. (The leaders of our groups unfortunately limited the fire creations.) In our *Minecraft* Church there is no stage area, the sanctuary is a bit too small, there aren't any seats besides the moving train carts. Only five people attend services, the balcony is too small, and the floor keeps breaking. There was a bit of trouble creating the stairs but it was decided that flying is always a good option. It's too bad it keeps snowing and that freezes any outside swimming pool. Someone was sad that there was no respect for the "Ice Princess." I'm not sure who she is (probably one of our five church members) or I would have helped smooth out the problem. That is my job, after all.

When we walked out of the Carriage House we could see our historic, solid, Chapin Memorial Church right across the street. We now see it in a new light. We appreciate that it has many more building materials than just blocks and that it doesn't split into lines. We are grateful that the walls and floor are so solid. It's nice that it isn't very complicated to walk around in there. We still wish it had more bunnies and trampolines. Despite former complaints of disrespect, we wish we had our own Ice Princess. We hope our work has sparked some new ideas and future plans for changing the worship space at Chapin Memorial.

All Religious Education Classes begin this Sunday, September 27. The website has been updated at uuso.org. Look under "Children/Youth" in the blue bar at the top of the page. Check out the "Next Sunday's Classes" part. I will update this by Wednesday for the following Sunday of each week. You can download a complete fall schedule by clicking "RE Calendar." Registration forms are also downloadable there. In keeping with a green sanctuary, I am sending out fewer paper mailings. Please register soon, if you haven't already!

—With Creativity and Joy for a New Year Together,
Susan Ryder, UUSO Director of Religious Education, dre@uuso.org

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING

The Social Action Committee (SAC) will meet on Tuesday, October 6, at 6 pm at the home of Alice Siegfried, 67 Church Street, with a potluck dinner to follow the meeting. New members are welcome.

—Suzanne Miller for the Social Action Committee

Seventh Annual Wine Tasting Evening!

**Saturday, October 17th, from 7 to 9 PM
Chapin Memorial Building**

Taste 11 wines paired with delicious complementary foods
(Sparkling Cider for non-Drinkers)

Followed by coffee, tea, decaf, and sumptuous desserts

**Piano music throughout the evening provided
by Tim Horne and Michael Frye-Hunt**

Free Childcare is available in the Olympia Brown House
(Please let us know if you need childcare.)

**Designated Drivers in the Oneonta Area:
Please reserve at \$5 per person**

Advance Sale Tickets:

\$30 for wine drinkers (or 2 for \$50)

\$15 for non-drinkers

(Will be \$35 and \$20 at the door)



**Tickets on sale during Coffee Hour on September 27, October 4, &
October 11, or contact Robin at 432-3491 or UUSO@uuso.org**

Bring your friends to this great event!!!

UUSO ENDOWMENT FACTS & FIGURES

It can be fun to talk about money, especially when the figures look good. Looking back at the UUSO Endowment figures for the past five years is one of those experiences. The Fund grows through investment and donations, and it annually provides grants to community organizations and projects as well as for Society requests. Here's the news worth bragging about: Over the past five years, the socially responsible, conservative investment of our funds has produced an annual return of just over 8%.

The Endowment Fund receives approximately \$4,000 annually from direct congregational donations and our very successful can and bottle refunds. The formula used to calculate the money available for grants restricts the expenditure to no more than 4.5% of the increase in the principal averaged over 48 months less any deposits. This formula means the money used for grants must come as a fraction of the growth produced through investments.

Here is how the Endowment Fund has grown through its investments since 2011:

2011 : \$ 66,227.00	2014 : \$107,248.00
2012 : \$ 73,427.00	2015 : \$112,307.00
2013 : \$ 88,292.00	

Many of you remember when the Endowment Fund was just a “mote in god's eye.” Thanks to all of you who have helped this fund grow. It can be rewarding to take small steps on the path to the future.

—Grace Smith & all the Committee members

UU RESPONSE TO ONGOING REFUGEE CRISIS:

UUSC President Rev. Bill Schulz and UUA President Rev. Peter Morales have issued this joint statement in response to the ongoing refugee crisis:

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) remain gravely concerned about the global refugee crisis and are committed to taking action. That's why today we're announcing two new initiatives:

- A special UUSC-UUA Refugee Crisis Fund, with the goal of raising \$250,000 over the next 15 days;
- A petition drive to pressure the Obama administration to substantially raise the number of refugees admitted into the United States to 200,000.

Donations to our UUSC-UUA Refugee Crisis Fund will go directly to our partners operating on the ground in countries receiving refugees. Our work will focus on ensuring the safe passage of refugees seeking safety, and helping refugees access their rights in host countries.

Raising the general refugee admission ceiling to accommodate the growing number of people seeking asylum from Syria and other countries in crisis is a simple policy change that will have a huge impact. Right now, 11 million Syrians have been forced to leave their homes after four years of civil war. Worldwide, an estimated 60 million people have been displaced, leading to the largest crisis of forced displacement since World War II. The United States must step up as a leader in aiding these vulnerable people.

It is our moral imperative to act during this tragedy, and the UUA and UUSC will continue to respond in the coming weeks and months. The UUA and UUSC have a long history of aiding people who are fleeing violence and persecution—a history rooted in helping refugees fleeing Nazi oppression during World War II. Today, we are building on that tradition.

See more at: <http://www.uusc.org/updates/uusc-and-uua-respond-to-the-global-refugee-crisis#sthash.UPqy3M4Z.dpuf>.

—Suzanne Miller for the Social Action Committee

UUSO Newsletter—September 23, 2015

THROUGH THE STAINED GLASS...

Our stained-glass window restoration project has been completed! Led by Rich Stelling and crafted by Gene Mallard, the restoration has been in the works since 1999. The original artisan of our windows is unknown. To the best of our knowledge the windows to the left and right of the chairs date back to the current building's construction in 1894.

More detailed records presumably existed and were lost when the steeple was struck by lightning in 1941.

The amber windows framing the pulpit were added sometime during the late '60s/early '70s. The congregation at the time considered the depiction of angels to be inappropriate and had them removed. These two windows were the only remaining from the congregation's original building of 1879. We have a single, grainy picture of the angel windows.

Our stained-glass windows feature various dedications in honor and in memorial—a literal window into the past. The late congregants Bill Kratzenstein and Geppy LaFata did some research into the dedications. Bob Brzozowski plans to supplement their research and eventually produce a brochure telling the stories behind the dedications.

The next time you're in the sanctuary take a moment to consider all our windows have seen; take a deep breath and marvel. —Katie Ahearn

NAACP CONFERENCE

On September 29, 2015, at 7:30 pm, an interactive "Know Your Rights" civil rights presentation will take place in the Center for Multicultural Experiences on the SUNY Oneonta campus. It will be led by the NAACP New York State Conference's Criminal Justice Chair, Leroy Gadsden. The intent of the session is to make individuals more knowledgeable about their civil rights and to provide them with a forum to voice their concerns. The community is welcome to attend. —Regina Betts

NOTE OF THANKS...

August 26, 2015

Dear Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta, Inc:

Thank you for Many thanks for your continued support of OCCA (Otsego County Conservation Association) and your confidence in our work. Your contribution will be a great help in allowing us to fulfill our mission to protect and conserve the natural resources of Otsego County as well as to inform residents and voters about these resources—what makes them worth preserving and what threatens them. Having you on board with us gives us more strength.

Below is a summary of your donation:

Date	Amount	Deductible	Fund	Payment
8/26/2015	\$127.50	\$127.50	General Fund	Check

Darla M. Youngs, Executive Director

RUMMAGE SALE

There will be a rummage, book, and bake sale at First United Methodist Church, 66 Chestnut Street, Oneonta, on Thursday, September 24, 9-6, and on September 25 from 9am-1 pm. Proceeds from the sale benefit the many missions and outreach ministries of the church.

—Virginia Wilson, 1st United Methodist Church

CALENDAR SEPTEMBER

Sep 23		12:30-5 PM/Building Use/OBH Dining Rm
		7 PM/Black Lives Matter Task Force Mtg/CM Loft
Sep 24	Thu	10:30 AM-12 PM/Jung and Yoga/CM
		7-9:30 PM/Building Use/CCS/CM
Sep 25	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		5 PM/Black Lives Matter Task Force Mtg/CM Loft
Sep 26	Sat	10 AM-12 PM/UUSO Intergenerational Art Day/Carriage House Art Studio
Sep 27	Sun	10:30 AM/Service: "Coping with Conflict"/Rev. Craig/CM
		12 PM/Religious Ed Registration/CM
Sep 28	Mon	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		6:30 PM - 8:00 PM/Zen Meditation/CM
Sep 29	Tue	9:00 AM/Hearing Loop Demo/CM
Sep 30	Wed	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		11:00 AM/Black Lives Matter Task Force Mtg/CM Loft

OCTOBER

Oct 1	Thu	10:30 AM - 12:00 PM/Jung and Yoga/CM
		5:30 PM - 6:30 PM/Yoga/CM
		6-8PM/Sm Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		7-8 PM/Membership Cmte/OBH Dining Rm
		7:00 PM - 9:30 PM/Building Use/CCS/CM
Oct 2	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
Oct 4	Sun	10:30 AM/Service: "Our Power, Our Promise"/Rev. Craig/CM
		12 PM/CONGREGATIONAL MTG/CM
Oct 5	Mon	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		9:00 AM/Newsletter Deadline
		6:30 PM/RE Cmte/OBH Dining Rm
		6:30 PM - 8:00 PM/Zen Meditation/CM
Oct 6	Tue	1-3 PM/Sm Grp Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		6:00 PM/Social Action Cmte/67 Church St
		6-8 PM/Sm Grp Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		7:00 PM/Web Cmte/OBH Dining Rm
Oct 7	Wed	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM

		6- 9:00 PM/Building Use/GOHS/CM
Oct 8	Thu	10AM-12 PM/Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		4:30 PM - 6:00 PM/C&C/OBH Dining Rm
		5:30 PM - 6:30 PM/Yoga/CM
		5:30- 8:00 PM/NAACP/OBH Living Rm
		7:00 PM - 9:30 PM/Building Use/CCS/CM
Oct 9	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
Oct 11	Sun	10:30 AM/Service: "Fact or Fiction"/Cheryl Petersen/CM
		12:00 PM - 2:00 PM/RE Children's Teacher Training/OBH Living Rm
		1:30 PM - 2:00 PM/Building Use/CM
		2-4:00 PM/Dining for Women/CM
Oct 12	Mon	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		6:30 PM - 8:00 PM/Zen Meditation/CM
Oct 13	Tue	5:30 PM - 7:30 PM/Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
Oct 14	Wed	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		6:00 PM/Scrabble & Potluck/CM
		6-8 PM/Sm Grp Ministry/OBH Living Rm
Oct 15	Thu	5:30 PM - 6:30 PM/Yoga/CM
		6:00 PM - 8:00 PM/Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		7:00 PM - 9:30 PM/Building Use/CCS/CM
Oct 16	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		10:00 AM - 11:00 P/M/Building Use/CM
Oct 17	Sat	9:00 AM - 7:00 PM/Building Use/CM
		7:00 PM - 10:00 PM/Wine Tasting/CM
Oct 18	Sun	10:30 AM/Service: "Seeking the Light: A Quaker Photojournalist Bears Witness"/Michael Forster Rothbart/CM
		10:30 AM-11:30/Children's Worship/OBH
		12:00 PM/Finance Cmte/OBH Dining Rm
		12:00 PM - 2:00 PM/ Childcare Training/CM Seekers Rm
		12-2 PM/Mali Task Force/OBH Living Rm

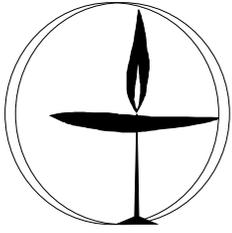
CM=Chapin Memorial/OBH=Olympia Brown House

Rev. Craig's Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10-2

Office Administrator's Hours:

Mon, Wed & Fri, 9-2; Tues & Thurs, 11:30-2



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
12 Ford Ave.
Oneonta, NY 13820

UPCOMING SUNDAYS at the UUSO

September 27, 2015

"Coping with Conflict"

Start Together Sunday

Being a people of passion and varied beliefs invariably leads to disagreements, differences, and even conflict. Where do we stand when common ground is hard to find?

Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

**Music provided by
the UUSO Choir and
Music Director Tim Horne**

Ushers: Ann Marie Mills & Beth Rowland

*Coffee Hosts: Patricia Engel LaFata &
Jesse Schwabe*

Worship Associate: Cathi Wiltsey

*(Please submit announcements to
Cathi via email by 9/25.)*

October 4, 2015

"Our Power, Our Promise"

Start Together Sunday

Unitarian Universalism is not a simple faith or an easy religion. Our creedless tradition has always made a solemn promise, a promise our faith empowers us, calls on us, to fulfill..

Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

**Music provided by
Music Director Tim Horne**

Ushers: UUSO Board of Trustees

Coffee Hosts: UUSO Board of Trustees

Worship Associate: Keith Willcox

*(Please submit announcements to
Keith via email by 10/02.)*