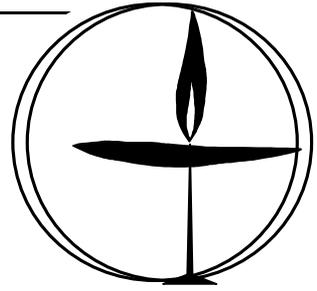


# UU News

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*

**December 2, 2015**



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

Board President: Karen Palmer—267-4793

Music Director: Tim Home—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

## BLACK LIVES MATTER

The Black Lives Matter Task Force invites you to its ongoing series of conversations held every Sunday (except December 13, which will be in the OBH Living Room) at noon in the Chapin Memorial loft. Upcoming conversations:

December 6: Kay Stuligross will lead a conversation on White Privilege, at noon in the loft, with inspiration from Dominique Marti's "Why I'm Absolutely an Angry Black Woman" (Huffington Post). PRIVILEGE: A special right or privilege granted to specific groups or individuals (Miriam Webster). Privilege surrounds us: male privilege, wealth privilege, location privilege, to name but a few, but White Privilege may be among the most obvious and yet the most insidious. How do we experience it? How do we unknowingly promote it? Copies of "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" and "Why I'm Absolutely an Angry Black Woman" will be available for discussion.

December 13: Duncan Smith will lead a conversation on Micro-Aggression. (This conversation will be held in the Olympia Brown living room.)

December 20: Patricia Engel LaFata will lead a conversation on Color Blindness.

December 27: Karen Palmer will lead a discussion of what is happening in our association with regard to racial equity and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Join us for stimulating conversation. You may come away with new ways to think about racial equity in America. Childcare will be provided. —Patricia Engel LaFata

## COOKIES AND CRAFTS!

Cookies and Crafts is coming up this Saturday, December 5, from 10-4! A big THANK YOU from the Cookies & Crafts Committee to everyone! —Liz Jacob Carter, Cookies & Crafts Cmte

## MINISTER'S MUSINGS — CELEBRATING THE SEASON

It was a great pleasure to be a part of the **Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** last week. I had the great joy of sitting between the Rev. Judith Thistle and our own Jeane Bennett-O'Dea, both of whom did fabulous pieces of the service. Looking out at the ~100 people in attendance, I was amazed to see so many UUSO members and friends. Thank you, all, for attending the service and for your kind words afterwards. We've been invited to host the service at UUSO next year and I'm looking forward to sharing our hospitality with the community.

Many thanks to Leah Bridgers and Julian Pecenco for organizing and hosting the annual **UUSO Thanksgiving Meal** this year. Thanks, also, to everyone who contributed to the shared bounty and assisted with setting up and/or cleaning up.

**Cookies & Crafts** is this Saturday, December 5, from 10 am-4 pm. Cheryl and I will be there early to try and find last-minute Christmas gifts and to enter the raffle. (Last year, we won some of the tasty jams and mustards.) I'm going to miss seeing the magic C&C hat after this event is over. I hope it returns next year.

The **Stories of the Season** service and the **Holiday Workshop** will take place on the following Sunday, December 13. This special intergenerational service is a favorite of mine every year. I love finding new stories from around the world to celebrate the holidays of the season. The Membership Committee has recruited many enthusiastic volunteers to share their holiday crafts and activities for the workshop after the service. It will be fun for all ages.

We will once again have two **Christmas Eve Services** this year. A family oriented service will be at 6:30 pm and a more meditative service will be at 10:00 pm. Tim Horne, our Music Director, will be providing/coordinating music for both services as Michael and Dorothy Frye-Hunt are likely to be a bit busy that evening. (Their first child is due Christmas Eve.)

However you celebrate this holiday season, whatever holy day inspires you, I hope you find yourself with family and friends. I hope the warmth of love and good cheer surrounds you. I hope the lights we kindle together this season bring you hope, joy, and faith.  
—Gratefully, Rev. Craig

## FROM THE OFFICE...

Please note: **The December 16 newsletter will be the last of 2015** (*the deadline is December 14*). The deadline for the first newsletter of the New Year is January 4. Please be sure to submit articles on time. Thank you!  
—Robin Ahearn

## Sawdust from the Board

As the holiday season begins, it gives us a chance to take stock of those whom we care about, the blessings of our lives, all that we are grateful for. My gratitude extends to our UUSO congregation and all of the people that move our UUSO Mission forward, whether by providing coffee hour, ushering, participation in gatherings and meetings, sharing joys and sorrows, visiting and comforting those in need, offering leadership, or simply sharing the worship experience. Let me take this moment to lift up our committee members and chairs, our task force members and leaders, our minister, our staff, and our trustees who work continually to make sure that we are moving forward together in health and vibrancy. Every member and friend of UUSO is an essential thread woven into the fabric of our community of faith!

In addition to being briefed on the state of our finances, Religious Education program and congregational ministry during our November 18 board meeting, we also thanked our staff for ushering UUSO through an extremely busy fall season, read our new “UUSO Leadership Covenant,” approved a guest welcome letter, approved a revised Animals at UUSO Policy (below), formed a subcommittee to develop a charge for a new Personnel Committee, formed a subcommittee to develop a fundraising/giving policy, agreed to participate in a winter board retreat, discussed a building rental request, and reviewed Sounding Board input from the congregation.

Our next board meeting is Wednesday, December 16, 6:30 pm in the sanctuary. We will miss Susan Turell’s leadership on the board. She has been a true asset by providing sensible insights and solutions to complex issues. She will continue to lead the Black Lives Matter Task Force. We will welcome Sandy Smith who will be available to assume her elected board position at December’s meeting and will continue acting as board liaison for the Social Action and Stewardship committees. 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 on December 6 (a week early this month to allow for the festivities of the Holiday Workshop on December 13).

—Karen Palmer, President, UUSO Board of Trustees, 267-4793 kpalmer14@hughes.net

### **ANIMALS AT UUSO POLICY\***

No animals will be allowed in any UUSO buildings except for:

1. Service/Companion/Assistance Animals required due to a disability;
2. Certified Therapy Animals with prior approval of a UUSO staff member;
3. Animals being used as part of a worship or Religious Education program.

*\*This is the revised policy approved November 18, 2015, by the UUSO Board of Trustees.*

## **Members and Friends,**

Hard to believe but it's been five years since we had sittings for our last photo directory! It's time to make a new one and we need you to make the UUSO Directory complete! To celebrate the church family and strengthen the bond within our congregation, we welcome you to be a part of our upcoming new directory.

### **A New Photo Directory:**

- **Preserves this special time in the life our church**
- **Becomes a lasting record of our current membership**
- **Introduces our church to friends, the community and new members**
- **Enhances fellowship by helping us connect faces with names**

We are partnering with Lifetouch for this important project. Lifetouch is providing the directory at no cost to our church. Every family photographed receives a complimentary directory and an 8x10 portrait. You can sign up for photography online at the church website ([www.UUSO.org](http://www.UUSO.org)) under Upcoming Events on the home page.

### **Photography Dates:**

<b>Wednesday, January 27</b>	<b>2-8:50 pm</b>
<b>Thursday, January 28</b>	<b>2-8:50 pm</b>
<b>Friday, January 29</b>	<b>2-8:50 pm</b>
<b>Saturday, January 30</b>	<b>9 am-4 pm</b>

For your convenience, all photography and portrait viewing will take place at the UUSO with NO sitting fee. You will have a variety of poses taken. One pose will be selected for the directory. In addition to your complimentary 8x10, you will have the opportunity to purchase additional portraits on the day of your portrait session. Lifetouch's portrait price lists are available in the church office for those who would like them prior to photography and will also be available during social hour after Sunday services.

This professional photography session is a great opportunity to invite your extended family and get portraits with everyone together. In addition, it's a great reason to invite friends and neighbors to the church (*Guests will not be included in the Directory*). Each visiting family will receive their own complimentary 8x10 portrait.

Be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to be professionally photographed. Lifetouch offers so many ways to capture the memories. Seniors and military and first responder families will receive a 20% discount off any photos purchased. Your portraits are sure to become valued family keepsakes.

We are looking forward to seeing you in the UUSO Directory!

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We are now officially through with Thanksgiving and entering into Winter Holiday times. As I've written in previous newsletter articles, this year the children's classes have added a (more than usual) social justice theme to their regular curricula. The Explorers class (children in kindergarten through fourth grade) are learning about their Unitarian Universalist heritage. In addition to exploring ways specific Unitarians, Universalists, or UU's have already made a difference in our world, class members are thinking of ways they personally want to offer help and to make a difference. They have a social justice wall in their classroom. This is an ongoing place to add things they are already doing as well as ideas for new projects. These include anything from helping a friend at school to helping children at Youchaou's elementary school in Bamako, Mali. I encourage you to take a look at their display in the double classroom downstairs at Chapin Memorial.

On November 22 Suzanne Miller presented the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee project, "Guest at Your Table," during the Time for All Ages part of the adult worship service. Children passed out brochures and boxes to the congregation. These boxes can be on our dinner tables representing "guests" who we want to include in our world family. We can help by donating money that will go to the work of the UUSC and ultimately to those who need it most. You can find a "Guest at Your Table" box and more information on the membership table at the back of the sanctuary.

We continue to collect used markers (of any brand) that the children will send off to the Crayola Company for recycling. Please bring these to the collection boxes the children have made and placed prominently in each of our church buildings.

We completed decorating the gift tags that the UUSO Social Action Committee has placed on a tree in the back of the sanctuary. These are for the Adopt-A-Family project of Oneonta Family Service Association. We are grateful to all who helped us finish the decorating. Each tag has information about an individual who needs a gift this holiday season. Please take a moment to look these over and, if you can, choose one to help a family here in our local community to have a better holiday.

Our latest endeavor is RE's annual collection of warm mittens, gloves, hats and scarves for Oneonta Family Services. Children's classes have placed a large basket by the Adopt-A-Family tree in the back of the sanctuary. Please use this for any warm items you wish to give to people in our community. The last time for collection will be during the Christmas Eve Services. We will deliver these to Family Services in the beginning of the new year. It has become a tradition for some families to bring mittens to this basket as part of their Christmas Eve worship at church.

During these holiday times (and always), may we be warmed by the love of this church community and by the fire of our commitment to make the world a better place for all.

—Susan Ryder, UUSO Director of Religious Education

## PETITIONS TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE TO \$15 AN HOUR

Stop by our Social Action Table in the back of the sanctuary where you will find petitions to members of Congress to support the “Pay Workers a Living Wage Act” now in Congress. You will also find an information sheet on this important issue. —Suzanne Miller, Social Action Cmte

## GUEST AT YOUR TABLE BOXES FOR SUPPORT OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE

If you haven't received a Guest at Your Table box, pick one up at the Social Action Table as well as the pamphlet “Stories of Hope” about each of the people featured on this year's Guest at Your Table box. This is a project of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee which supports marginalized and struggling people throughout the world, from refugees to people affected by natural disasters, to supporting workers in our own country by raising the federal minimum wage. Boxes with donations will be collected in early January. —Suzanne Miller, Social Action Cmte

## ADOPT-A-FAMILY PROJECT

The tree with decorated tags is in the back of the sanctuary. Our church is helping three families this holiday season. Please take a tag or two, buy the gift, and bring it to church by Sunday, December 13. Do not wrap the gift; but return the tag with it. If you cannot shop, we will do it for you if you make a monetary gift. Thanks for participating in this worthwhile project.

—Martha Robinson, 432-6649; Prue Stelling, 433-1272

## UUSO THANKSGIVING DINNER A SUCCESS!

The annual UUSO Thanksgiving dinner was a huge success, with well over sixty people in attendance for this wonderful tradition! We would like to thank everyone who attended, and especially those who helped out in various ways. Our set-up crew was Steve Berman, Annemarie Hosnedl, Carly Hosnedl, and Tom O'Brien. Julia Gregory once again beautified the space with her lovely autumnal decor. Brian Bendlin, Annemarie Hosnedl, Maureen Tarry, and Shelly Hilts cooked the three turkeys, which were carved by Shelly Hilts, Steve Berman, Tom O'Brien and Chris Davidson.

Keith Willcox shared a blessing before the meal. We collected contributions in the Guest at Your Table boxes for the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee). Cindy Squires provided empty containers for the leftovers. Vicki Rickard entertained us with a delightful impromptu piano performance. And our amazing clean-up crew of Keith and Nadene Willcox, Barbara Sue, Paul and Adam Agoglia, Amish Talwar, Ted Zelnick and Tom O'Brien sprung into action so quickly that we didn't even realize they were already hard at work while the rest of us lingered over dessert. Thanks also to everyone else who helped with the clean-up. You were all working so efficiently that we couldn't keep track of everyone, but your efforts are gratefully appreciated. Dave Ray prepared the sanctuary and coffee and cleaned the sanctuary afterwards so that everything was ready for worship on Sunday morning. Finally, a huge thanks to Pam Strother, who in addition to starting the planning process, provided the tablecloths and napkins, and gave us all of the information (and inspiration) we needed to smoothly transition into our new roles as the coordinators of the dinner.

—Julian Pecenco and Leah Bridgers

## COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS ANNUAL CANDLE LIGHTING

On Sunday, December 13, at 7 pm, the Oneonta Region Chapter of The Compassionate Friends will join other chapters worldwide to observe the Compassionate Friends Annual Candle Lighting. This year, the ceremony will be held at the UUSO.

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites families and friends around the globe in honoring the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. Believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual ceremony creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone.

This year marks the 19th annual Candle Lighting for the TCF worldwide community; however this is the 20th year the Oneonta Chapter has hosted a candle lighting. The annual event is a time to remember our departed children and to openly acknowledge the special place they have and will always have in our hearts. This simple act of remembrance helps make the holiday season more bearable. It is meant to be a celebration of love! Anyone who has lost a child of any age is invited to attend. Grandparents, siblings and other close relatives and friends are also welcome.

Parents are encouraged to bring a small picture of their son or daughter and to place the picture behind one of the individual votive candles that will be arranged on a Memory Table. During the ceremony, each family will come forward and light the candle in front of their child's picture at which time they will be presented with a long stemmed rose.

The program includes readings, music, and sharing time. However, the focal point of the evening will be the candle lighting. Candles will be provided and refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Once again, local artist David Geer has been commissioned to create original hand painted ornaments for each family to personalize with their child's name. The ornaments will be displayed on a Memory Tree and are a gift from the Oneonta Chapter of TCF to each family in attendance.

For more information, call Diana or Ben Friedell at 433-2089 or Kathryn or Al Davino at 746-7396. You can also visit the local TCF web site: <http://external.oneonta.edu/tcfoneonta/>.

—Diana Friedell

## NOTE OF THANKS...

Dear Rev. Schwalenberg and all of the members of the UUSO,  
We in the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Otsego County want to thank you for your donation. This contribution will help us continue our efforts in the community by being able to sponsor presentations, offer scholarships for training and purchase educational materials...

Thank you again, Rev. Craig Schwalenberg, for being a member of the Fierce Goodbye panel.  
Best, Ginnah Howard, President, NAMI-Otsego

# CALENDAR DECEMBER

Dec 3	Thu	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		4 - 5:00 PM/Building Use/CM Loft
		7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Membership Cmte/OBH Living Rm
Dec 4	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		12:00 PM/Building Use/C&C Prep/CM
Dec 5	Sat	8:00 AM - 10:00 AM/Building Use/CM
		9:00 AM - 10:30 AM/Black Lives Matter Task Force/OBH Living Rm
		<b>10 AM-4 PM/Cookies &amp; Crafts/CM</b>
		4:00 PM - 6:00 PM/Building Use/CM
Dec 6	Sun	<b>10:30 AM/Srvc: "Glaciers, Icebergs, and Black Ice"/Rev. Craig/CM</b>
		<b>12:00 PM/Black Lives Matter Discussion/Kay Stuligross/CM Loft</b>
		12:00 PM - 2:00 PM/Building Use/Robotics Team/CM/Explorers Rm
Dec 7	Mon	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		6:30 PM - 8:00 PM/Zen Meditation/CM
Dec 8	Tue	5:30 PM - 7:30 PM/ Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
Dec 9	Wed	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		<b>6:00 PM/Scrabble &amp; Potluck/CM</b>
		6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
Dec 10	Thu	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		4 - 5:00 PM/Building Use/CM Loft
		<b>5:30 PM/NAACP/OBH Living Rm</b>
Dec 11	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
Dec 12	Sat	9:00 AM - 10:30 AM/Black Lives Matter Task Force/OBH Living Rm
		12 - 2 PM/Building Use/OBH 1st Floor
Dec 13	Sun	<b>10:30 AM/Service: "Stories of the Season"/Rev. Craig/CM</b>
		<b>11:30 AM/Holiday Workshop/CM</b>
		<b>12 PM/Black Lives Matter Discussion/Duncan Smith/OBH Living Rm</b>

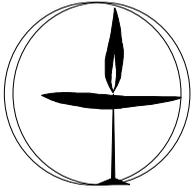
		12 PM/Finance Cmte/OBH Dining Rm
		12:00 PM - 2:00 PM/Building Use/Robotics Team/CM/Explorers Rm
		5:00 PM - 7:00 PM/Building Use/CM
		<b>7:00 PM/Compassionate Friends Candle Lighting/CM</b>
Dec 14	Mon	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		<b>9:00 AM/Newsletter Deadline</b>
		6:30 PM/RE Cmte/OBH Dining Rm
		6:30 PM - 8:00 PM/Zen Meditation/CM
Dec 15	Tue	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
Dec 16	Wed	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		<b>6:30 - 8:30 PM/Board of Trustees/CM</b>
Dec 17	Thu	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		4 - 5:00 PM/Building Use/CM Loft
Dec 18	Fri	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
Dec 19	Sat	9:00 AM - 10:30 AM/Black Lives Matter Task Force/OBH Living Rm
Dec 20	Sun	<b>10:30 AM/Service: "Magic, Mystery, Myth, and Meaning"/Rev. Craig/CM</b>
		<b>12 PM/Black Lives Matter Discussion/Patricia Engel LaFata/CM Loft</b>
		12:00 PM - 2:00 PM/Building Use/Robotics Team/CM/Explorers Rm
		12-2 P/Mali Task Force/OBH Living Rm
Dec 21	Mon	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		6:30 PM - 8:00 PM/Zen Meditation/CM
Dec 22	Tue	5:30 PM - 7:30 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
		6:30 - 9:30 PM/Stop the Pipeline/CM
Dec 23	Wed	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM/Aerobics/CM
		6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Small Group Ministry/OBH Living Rm
Dec 24	Thu	<b>6:30 PM/Christmas Eve Family Service/Rev. Craig/CM</b>
		<b>10:00 PM/Christmas Eve Meditative Service/Rev. Craig/CM</b>

CM=Chapin Memorial/OBH=Olympia Brown House

*Rev. Craig's Office Hours: Tues, Wed, & Thurs, 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

December 6, 2015

### "Glaciers, Icebergs, and Black Ice"

*Children to Classrooms at 10:30*

Winter is here and we ignore it at our peril. Would that we had the same awareness of the dangers we are facing in the changing seasons of our society and in the wider world.

**Rev. Craig Schwalenberg**

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

*Ushers: Deb Bruce and Chava Granett*

*Coffee Hosts: **Volunteers Needed!***

*Worship Associate: Kevin Schultz*

*(Please submit announcements to  
Kevin via email by 12/4.)*

December 13, 2015

### "Stories of the Season"

*Stay Together Sunday/Holiday Workshop*

There are many stories told during this season of holy days and holidays.

Tales of hope and love,  
joy and generosity.  
Come, let me tell you a tale  
or two or three...

**Rev. Craig Schwalenberg**

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

*Ushers: Karin and Thomas Russell*

*Coffee Hosts: Eileen and Peter Hill*

*Worship Associate: Cathi Wiltsey*

*(Please submit announcements to  
Cathi via email by 12/11.)*