



# UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of February 7th, 2018

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## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

### **The Promise and the Practice of Our Faith Update**

During Sunday's (2/4) service, we took a 2nd collection for The Promise and the Practice of Our Faith campaign. This campaign is our Unitarian Universalist Associations effort to financially support the Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism. Our association is committed to fighting racism and white-supremacy in our institutions. Unfortunately, in past couple of years, we've come to realize that our own faith tradition is also acting in ways that support white supremacy. This should not have come as a surprise-- this is true for almost all institutions in our society. But, it is hard to notice when it has been our shared reality for so many years. As I've said before, the fish doesn't know it is wet. And so, the Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism are working with our UUA leaders to restructure and change our policies and practices to make us more friendly to all races and all marginalized people. They are working to help us close the gap between our ideals and principles and the reality we live in and co-create.

In the 2nd collection, we raised \$585. We will continue to accept donations in the UUSO office for the rest of February. If we manage to raise our donation to \$1,800, there is a matching grant that will double our contribution. If you would like to write a check for this campaign, please make it out to UUSO and write BLUU in the memo line. Thank you, to everyone who has already contributed. And my thanks to everyone who will contribute after reading this article. Together, we can and do make a difference.

For more information about this campaign, follow this link: <https://www.uua.org/giving/areas-support/funds/promise-and-practice>

### **Best Post Card Ever!**

As some of you may have noticed, I collect postcards. Whenever I officiate a wedding, I ask the couple to send me a postcard from wherever they are headed on their honeymoon. (Surprisingly, many of them do.) When a member of the UUSO community goes traveling somewhere exotic or unusual, I always ask them to send me a postcard. I post the cards on my office door and around my office. I've been doing this for over a decade now and I've received dozens of postcards of scenic or religious locations. Last week, I received the coolest post card ever from Beth Small. She is on sabbatical in South Korea and sent me a postcard of two beautiful pagodas (Tabotap, representing objective truth, and Seokgatap, representing subjective wisdom) dating from the 8th century. But what makes the card really special is that it is a 3-D holographic picture. I'm going to post the card on the bulletin board in the sanctuary for everyone to see before I put it in a place of honor on my office door.

Cooperatively,  
Rev. Craig

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*This is my home, this is my only home  
This is the only sacred ground that I have ever known  
And should I stray in the dark night alone  
Rock me goddess in the gentle arms of Eden*

From the song, *Gentle Arms of Eden*, by Dave Carter and Tracy Grammar

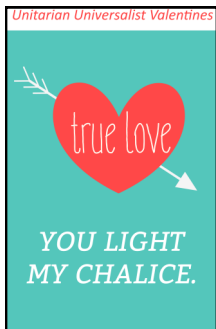
We are still glowing from the love and support of this congregation for the Religious Education's Intersession service about Origins. RE participants were happy to share their January workshop experiences with the congregation. In fact, they were joyful and enthusiastic! We thank Tim Horne, Amy Crouse-Powers, and Jon Powers for performing the perfect music. We also had music from CDs: the Pointer Sisters song, *Neutron Dance*, and *Viva la Evolución* by Brother Sun. Scott Segar deftly arranged all of our music from the sound booth. The January Intersession Service is organized each year by the Religious Education Committee.

Winter classes have begun. The Web of Life Explorers class (Grades K-3) braved the wintry wind to visit their "special spot" in the backyard of the Olympia Brown House. The Popcorn Theology class (Grades 4-5) is again watching movies, popping corn, and discussing UU principles and values. The mid-teens/COAST (Coming of Age Spiritual Trek) group (Grades 6-9<sup>th</sup>) is busy raising funds and working on social justice projects. They are beginning to look at creating individual faith statements. The group of high schoolers, YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) have plans to attend a Con (UU Youth Convention) in Buffalo March 11-13<sup>th</sup>.

We look forward to the adventures of future Sundays!

Susan Ryder  
UUSO Director of Religious Education

# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



## UUSO VALENTINES

Want to celebrate Valentine's Day with your UUSO friends? Why not be someone's Valentine this month? Pick up a folded heart at the back of the sanctuary and get your UUSO Valentine. (You can pick up multiple hearts if you feel extra generous this month.) Every heart has a name of a UUSO member or friend that could use a little token of appreciation. Give them a call. Send them a card. Do something nice for them. Whatever you have the time and energy and creativity for. If you don't recognize the name, than this is an ideal time to make a new connection. Everyone is listed in the Realm database. More hearts will be added to the chalice on the table on Sunday the 11th. Happy Valentines Month!

## UUSO NEEDS YOU!

There are many ways to get involved at UUSO and many ways to contribute to our shared ministries. Here are number of committees, teams, and events that need some assistance. Which need(s) fit your deep joy, passion, or talent? Contact Rev. Craig to help out.

**Connections Team** - The Connections Team is responsible for welcoming people to UUSO, helping them to become members, and facilitating membership transitions when necessary. Our Getting to Know UU classes are usually scheduled for the Spring and we currently have 1 person on the Connection Team.

**Fun Team** - The Fun Team is a loosely organized team of all those who organize the social activities here at UUSO. Currently we have Game Nights, the Thanksgiving Potluck, and the Holiday Workshop. In the past, we had Secret Valentines, a Mardi Gras party, Circle Suppers, Summer Picnics, and other social opportunities. These activities and events are an important part of our building community and forming connections, but they only happen if people organize them.

**Usher Team** - Our Safe Congregation Committee has recommended that we create a dedicated, trained team of ushers. If we had a team of 4-6 people, willing to commit to being an usher once a month for the next year, we could get this team started.

**Spiritual Development** - A member of the congregation is interested in trying a new program of Spiritual Development and adult programming at UUSO. If you are interested in helping them get this program off the ground and trying something new...

These are just a few of the ways UUSO needs you! IF you have an interest, a skill, a passion that you'd like to contribute to our shared ministry-- let me know. Together, we are doing--and can do even more-- amazing things!

## SHOW THE COASTERS SOME LOVE!

Get ready for Valentine's Day and show the COAST group some love! Next Sunday, Feb 11, we'll have the first COAST 50/50 raffle during coffee hour. Tickets will be sold throughout coffee hour and a drawing will be done before the crowd disperses. COAST is the Coming Of Age Spiritual Trek program, this intrepid group of 6 young people have been exploring their spiritual paths this year. In early May the group will take a pilgrimage to Boston to learn more about UU roots and themselves. Help them achieve their goals! If you have any questions please contact COAST coordinator Elayne Mosher Campoli.

### UUSO COFFEE HOST BRIGADE

We are once again going to try a new way to get coffee hosts for Sundays at UUSO. We have formed the Coffee Host Brigade. So far seven people have signed up.

This entails doing coffee hour about three times per quarter. That works out to about once a month. You can choose to do coffee hour by yourself or with a partner. Some people partner by dividing the tasks so that one person brings all the food and the other person does all the work. And some people partner by each person bringing some of the food and doing some of the work. Coffee hours don't have to be elaborate—something sweet (cookies or cake, etc.), something not sweet (bagels or cheese and crackers, etc.), some fruit and/or vegetables, milk, half and half, and juice. Reimbursement is available.

Please let me know if you want to join this brigade of fearless sociability warriors. I am really trying to create a renewed sense of hospitality and generosity in the congregation.

—Pam Strother

607.267.4280/[pstrother@stny.rr.com](mailto:pstrother@stny.rr.com)

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT: RELOCALIZING: WHAT IT IS AND WHY WE NEED IT- THIS SUNDAY, FEB. 11<sup>TH</sup>

What is "Relocalizing"? Come find out next Sunday, February 11, at our Food-for-Thought lunch, hosted by UUSO Social Action Team here in our sanctuary. Lunch at 12:15 pm, followed by invited talk at 1:00 pm by Eugene Marner -- social-justice, peace, and environmental community activist from neighboring Franklin, NY, with Q&A. All is free, public invited. Childcare available by contacting the church office [uusosocial@uusosocial.org](mailto:uusosocial@uusosocial.org) by Thursday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, with ages and number of children.

### GAME NIGHT POTLUCK

Friday, February 23 come to a potluck game night! We will provide an array of games for all ages and play styles but also feel free to bring your own favorites as well!

### DINING FOR WOMEN

The Oneonta Chapter of Dining for Women will have its next potluck dinner on Sunday, February 11th at 5:30 pm in the Education room at the Plains at Parrish Homestead, 163 Heritage Circle in Oneonta. Each month the group learns about and supports organizations that help women and girls in developing countries improve their lives.

The featured organization this month is Sacred Valley Health in Ollantaytambo, Peru. The purpose of the Dining for Women project is to address malnutrition and anemia in local communities by disseminating targeted nutrition education via specialized Community Health Workers.

All are welcome to come to the monthly meetings. Bring a dish to pass and your own table setting if you would like. For more information, call Linda at 433-2985.

This month's crafting group is meeting on: February 17th, 2-4pm in the Sanctuary All crafts welcome, please come no matter what you are working on. Let me know if you have any questions, Jen Riley, [tangledmania@gmail.com](mailto:tangledmania@gmail.com)



## SHARING OUR FAITH – SHAPING OUR DREAMS

The time has come for our Stewardship Campaign to begin! We'd like to share a little bit about what will be happening in the next few weeks.

On Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, we will hand out the pledge packets in church. Please review the packet which has helpful information and thoughts on the importance of Stewardship for the UUSO. Pledge packets will be mailed to those not in attendance on February 11<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about pledging, please contact a member of the Stewardship Committee who will be happy to help you.

February 18<sup>th</sup> will be **Pledge Celebration Sunday**. We would be grateful if you could take a week and reflect on what amount you feel comfortable pledging and return your pledge form during the service that day. We will hold a **Pledge Celebration Potluck** after the service. Please plan to attend the potluck even if you have not yet pledged. It takes time for some folks to feel comfortable with what they will give. Come and enjoy the food and company!

Our goal as the Stewardship Committee this year is to try to get 95% participation in pledging. Last year only 70% made pledges. We have two anonymous donors who have promised to each give \$1,000 more to their pledge if we reach our goal of 95% participation. Please help us to make our goal and to help support the ministries and programs of our church. With your pledges we hope to create a balanced budget for 2018-2019 and to continue making a positive impact on our church, our community and the world.

If you are not comfortable committing to a pledge and would rather make a one-time donation, that option is available to you. If you come to church occasionally and usually just put some money in the collection plate, why not consider using our new "pledge envelopes" which will be conveniently located for you to pick up on your way into the sanctuary. Place your cash offering in the envelope, write your name on the envelope and receive credit toward your pledge. Your pledge, *no matter how modest*, will help us in planning our budget and shaping our dreams.

Your Stewardship Committee: Judy Tator, Chairperson, Kari Reynolds, Paul Robinson, Pam Strother and Nathan Elsener, Board Liaison

## OUR MINISTRY WITHIN AND BEYOND OUR WALLS

In 2017, our congregation performed many acts of ministry within and beyond our wall. Here are some highlights of the UUSO ministries' accomplishments made possible by your pledges and service:



- Served approximately 732 meals during the five Saturdays we worked at Saturday's Bread.
- Donated over 300 pounds of clothing, blankets and other household goods to Salvation Army and Family Services after the Fall Rummage Sale
- Supported the international social justice work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee through the Guest at Your Table collection and the Social Action Team's Plates for Peace fundraiser for Syrian refugees in Croatia
- Facilitated 5 Small Group Ministries
- Made our meeting spaces available for 12 local non-profit organizations
- Rev. Craig's pastoral care visits included 25 in person visits, 8 walk-n-talks, 23 phone calls, 22 office visits, 8 on-line or text sessions. Many members and friends also provided pastoral care through visits and calls.
- Sponsored 52 students and funded other expenses at the Youchaou School in Bamako, Mali
- Provided holiday gifts to 4 families (which included 11 children and 7 adults) through the Family Services Adopt-A-Family program
- Our Religious Education Program provided education and childcare to 35 children with the support of 16 volunteer teachers and caregivers
- Offered 2 anti-racism presentations to the community
- Through our weekly Change for Change collection, funds were distributed to 16 local non-profit organizations
- Donated food and toiletries for children and families served by the Regional Foodbank and the Family Services Association through the Backpack Buddies and Personal Care Items collections coordinated by the Social Action Team
- The UUSO endowment funded 9 proposals for local organizations, projects, and unfunded non-operational UUSO expenses
- Provided information about social justice issues to the community through the Social Action Team's monthly film series
- Our members and friends supported women's and LGBTQ social justice issues through the Tri-County Women's Coalition and Otsego Pride Alliance
- The Social Action Team coordinated 7 petitions on social justice issued signed by members and friends
- An Energy Audit for UUSO buildings revealed positive evidence of our energy conservation
- Through our fundraisers, the Book Sale, Auction, Cookies and Crafts and the Rummage and Plant Sale we supported our vision of sustainability, recycling, supported local artisans, offered affordable goods and social interaction to the community

Thank you for your stewardship.

## COOKIES AND CRAFTS APPLICATIONS

I am preparing to send out artist applications for the 2018 Cookies and Crafts, a popular holiday market that is a fundraiser for the UUSO. It is open to fine crafts, and we are especially looking for children's items and anything new.

How it works- your application will be reviewed by a jurying committee. If accepted, 15% of your sales go to the UUSO, a \$10 application fee is required, and all sales are conducted by the UUSO. This is known as a "boutique" show. Artists get paid in the week following the sale.

If you would like an application, please email me at [kemperjl@aol.com](mailto:kemperjl@aol.com), or call me at 607-783-2895. —Jennifer Kemper

## MAILBOXES

Items that were not removed from the mailboxes when they were due for disassembly are in the coat closet in individually marked paper bags. A small amount of unknown items are in the office.

Mailboxes are coming! When they were assembled after the Christmas break, we discovered they were a bit too wide for the space, so we're looking at other options. Thank you for your patience. As a reminder, mailboxes will now be assigned to Board members, staff, committees and teams, to facilitate communication between the leadership of the church and the congregation.



The Stewardship Committee cordially invites you to join us and your fellow congregants for a celebratory potluck luncheon at 12 noon, in the sanctuary, on Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.

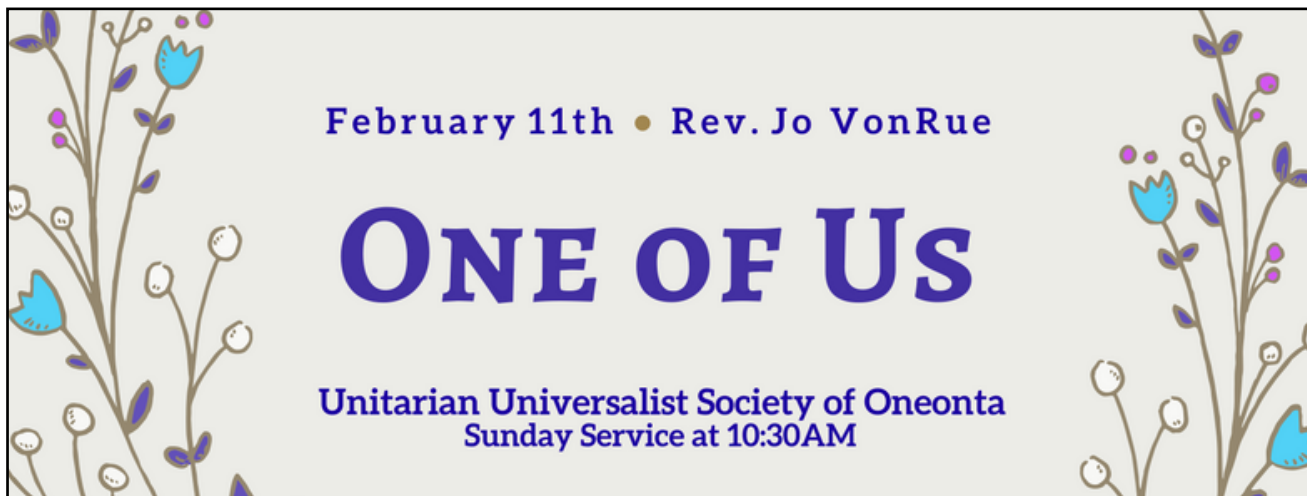
Please bring a dish to pass. Table settings and beverages will be provided.

It is our hope that most of the pledges will have been turned in during the service on that day and we can celebrate together the life of our church and each of us having made a monetary gift of personal significance.

There will be no lengthy speeches. The idea is to gather together so that we can all enjoy each other's company and have a good time.

—Pam Strother for the Stewardship Committee

UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES  
SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



What if God was one of us?  
 In these uncertain times it is important for us to consider God...  
 God as a stranger, God as a slob, God as a tree or spirit.  
 What does "God" look like to you and how does that image or representation help to renew your spirit?

*\*Start Together Sunday*  
 With Music provided by Music Director Tim Horne and the UUSO Choir  
 Worship Associate: Rev. Craig Schwalenberg  
 Coffee Hour Hosts: Carol Malz  
 Ushers: **Need Volunteers**  
 Chancel Table: Suzanne Miller & Walter vom Saal  
 Sound System: Patrick Rost



Our faith has always had much to offer those seeking more love, justice, freedom, and acceptance. And those offerings have never been needed more than they are right now.

*\*Children to Classrooms at 10:30*  
 With Music provided by Music Director Tim Horne  
 Worship Associate: Caroline Bagby  
 Coffee Hour Hosts: Pam Strother & Cathi Wiltsey  
 Ushers: **Need Volunteers**  
 Chancel Table: Stewardship Committee  
 Sound System: Paul Carter



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## UUSO DEADLINES:

**UU News Articles:** Deadline for February 21st issue is February 19th, by 9AM.

**Order of Service Announcements:**  
Wednesday a.m. before the Sunday Service

**Verbal Announcements:**  
Contact Worship Associate by Friday before Service

## Green Sanctuary Corner

Valentines day gifts with the planet in mind..



If Valentines Day is an important day for you or the one you love; then you can also show a bit of extra love for the environment by carefully considering what you buy. Here's some ideas:

- Cards made from recycled or tree-free paper (this will be indicated on the card)
- Consider sending an e-card instead using one of the many quality services around.
- Fair trade and/or organic chocolate
- Choose organic and/or locally grown flowers
- Make a donation to an environmental organization on behalf of the person.
- If you wish to give jewelry, consider pre-owned or purchasing from jewelers who are certified to be sourcing precious metals and gemstones in an ecologically and socially responsible manner. Or considering something really offbeat like a wooden ring – they look amazing.
- Buy the person a gift certificate for holistic therapies e.g. massage, naturopath, health spa.

### UUSO Board of Trustees

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