



UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of September 5, 2018

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MINISTER'S MUSINGS

Journeying Together

It starts with water.

Everything. Life itself. Many creation stories begin with water coming out of the void. Biologists teach us that life on earth emerged out of water, and astrophysicists look for signs of water as a clue that a distant (or not so distant) planet might be able to sustain life.

In fact, water is so important, that without it, we cease to exist – and thus, the conservation of water and finding ways to bring water to people living in drought-stricken lands is vital. There is perhaps no better way than water to understand the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Many of us think water when we think of journeys – from canoes, kayaks, and dinghies to sailing boats and schooners, to yachts and cruise ships. And it's a good metaphor – whether the water is an ocean, a sea, or a river, or a lake – there is a sense of movement, both on the surface and in the undercurrents. Even most still ponds have water moving somewhere. Water travels, and so do we.

Sometimes a geographic journey is significant – maybe it involves a move to a new place. Others have yearly journeys to homes down south, or to see family. And sometimes they are rote, but sometimes they color a year – like the year of my cross country trip. But our journeys aren't just geographical – from, say, Plymouth, England, to Plymouth, Massachusetts, from Minneapolis to New Orleans, or from one end of the lake to the other. Our journeys take other forms as well.

Sometimes the journey that marks our year is emotional. Perhaps there was a significant gain – like a child or relationship or freedom from an addiction – or perhaps there was loss – like a divorce or a death or a struggle with depression. Perhaps this was the year of significant emotional distress, or significant emotional healing. Perhaps you got physically sick – or physically healthy – which also contribute to our emotional journeys. While you may have stayed in one place geographically, that journey probably took you many inner places, and colors how you view the year.

Other times the journey might be vocational. Perhaps this is the year of your retirement, or starting a new career, or getting a promotion, or perhaps losing a job. Maybe you have taken up a new avocation – a new hobby or activity. These are rarely one-time events; they too require a journey through the learning, the adjusting, the regrouping, the releasing. And then there are the significant spiritual journeys. As Unitarian Universalists, we prize the free and responsible search for truth and meaning, as well as the acceptance and encouragement for spiritual growth. And so often, we might spend a year exploring a world religion, a theological question, or a spiritual practice. They might change how we see ourselves and the Divine, or simply inform our own theologies – but we are never still as we read, think, do, and experience.

Each of us has a journey – or many journeys – we have been on over the past year and over our lives. Our journeys are unique to us and hold meaning that is ours alone to know. But that's not the whole story. As a religious community, we bring our individual

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lives together on a weekly basis – whether we come to UUSO each week or join celebrations at other locations, we recognize that we are a part of something bigger than ourselves whenever we walk through the doors of a sanctuary or fellowship hall or chapel.

And however alone we may feel on these journeys, coming together helps us see that we are not alone, and that we make our journeys in the midst of people we know deeply as well as people who touch our lives for just an hour or a day.

After all, the journeys we take are rarely completely free from stress, angst, pain, sorrow, trouble, or crisis. Even the joyful ones – like going to see beloved family members – often include a hassle at the airport, or an inappropriate question from a cousin, or seeing how sick an aging aunt has become. Other journeys, even taken up in a spirit of joy – like retirement, or a fitness regimen – will often be colored with uncertainty, frustration, or other unexpected pitfalls or injuries.

And of course, less joyful journeys – like getting through the loss of a loved one, or the loss of a job, or the struggle of illness – are bramble-filled paths, with treacherous conditions and hazards at every turn. And while we may seek help from family, or friends, or doctors, or therapists, or ministers – we often find ourselves carrying some part of the burden alone. Perhaps we think “people are suffering more than me, I shouldn’t complain about my inconveniences” or we worry that “people will think I am falling apart” or “if I tell them, they’ll think I want them to fix it” - or worse, “no one will ever understand what I’m really going through.” And so we keep some of our burdens to ourselves.

That’s natural. We are taught to be strong, to suck it up, to think about suffering conditionally. And so we tend to share only those things with our friends and fellow worshippers that we think they can handle hearing about without making us look weak or whiny or needy.

And for everything else, we do our damndest to get rid of it. We work hard – really hard – to make changes, to remove problems, to heal. Easier said than done, obviously.

But what happens when we turn to this religious community for help?

Think about those people you will gather with on Sunday – some who have been around all summer, but also those who are returning after summers away. Think about your own journeys – and theirs. And imagine how much lighter your own burden – and theirs – will be, if you share them in a community built in love and covenant?

On September 9th, we will join thousands of other Unitarian Universalists as we celebrate an Ingathering and Water Communion – we will come together as we do each September to celebrate our connections, sharing our journeys, committing to another year of witnessing each other’s lives, bearing each other’s burdens, celebrating each other’s joys. The journeys we have been on will come together once again, creating a new river of life that we may travel on together.

Rev. Kimberley Debus
UUSO Sabbatical Minister
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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

UUSO welcomes us all with an intergenerational Ingathering Service on Sunday, Sept. 9th called, “Where the Rivers will Never Run Dry.” This is a wonderful time of fellowship across the ages.

The Religious Education Program begins the following Sunday, Sept 16th, with our annual kick-off celebration at the Olympia Brown House, 16 Ford Ave. We’ll start the year off with a drumming workshop! We will have special guest drumming teachers and leaders as well as many drums at hand. (If you have one to lend us, please do!) We will also make our own drums and have a special drumstick snack. (It is rumored that these are chocolate drumsticks donated by Honeydukes of Diagon Alley in London). This workshop is for all in K-12th grade.

The RE groups begin their fall schedule on Sept. 23.

The Nursery is available until noon for babies up to age five. All ages are also always welcome to attend the service in the sanctuary.

Children’s Classes: There are two children’s classes: **The Explorers Class** for those in K-3rd Grade and meets downstairs in their UU Spirit of Adventure Classroom. **The Seekers Class** for those in 4-6th Grade and also meets in a downstairs classroom at Chapin called “Hogwarts Oneonta”.

Children can begin their Sunday in a few different ways. You will need to look at the glass bulletin board just to your left as you enter the church. This information will also always be listed in the order of service.

Here are the possibilities:

1. Children go to their classrooms right at 10:30.
2. Children stay with families in the sanctuary until after “Time for All Ages”
3. Children stay with families for the entire Intergenerational Service
4. Children go to Children’s Worship with me.

I am very grateful to Chava Granett who has been our RE Greeter all last year. She has helped guide families with children to their correct spot on each Sunday morning. For this year we are going to try having parents and children look left as they enter the church to see where to go. I know you can do it!

Youth classes will always begin at 10:30 in their classrooms at the nearby Olympia Brown House with the exception of some Intergenerational Services and the January Sessions. I’ll tell you about January Sessions later.

OWL, aka Our Whole Lives, is an award-winning sexuality education program for those in 7-9th grade. It is only available to those who have registered. (See me if you would like to know more about OWL- or if you are in 7-9th grade, not in OWL, but would like something else to do.) Here’s what the curriculum creators say about OWL:

OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It helps adolescents address their attitudes, values, and feelings about themselves, their sexuality, and others’ sexuality. Participants are guided by trained facilitators through an engaging curriculum that addresses topics most important to young adolescents, including those typically excluded from sexuality education and health classes.

YRUU, aka Young Religious Unitarian Universalists will be meeting in the back classroom upstairs at the Olympia Brown House. They will work with adult advisors to create their program for the year.

I’m looking forward to all we will see, do, and be together this year!

Susan Ryder
UUSO Director of Religious Education
dre@uuso.org

Please register your nursery child, child, or youth for their RE classes this year. Please do this even if you have already done so. There will be an RE Committee Member available on Sept. 9, Sept. 16, and Sept. 23, at coffee hour who will have registration forms and samples of curricula.

ONEONTA SUICIDE PREVENTION “OUT OF THE DARKNESS WALK” ON SAT. SEPT. 22ND

Each year the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention/AFSP sponsors “Out of the Darkness Walks” around the country to raise money for its work. The Oneonta Walk will be on Sept. 22, 2018, at the Moose Lodge at 119 West Broadway. Check in/registration is 9:00 and the Opening Ceremony is 11:00. The Walk begins at 11:30 and is about a mile. The Closing Ceremony is 1:00. You can join our UUSO team by registering to walk or donating online by going to <https://afsp.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.teamParticipants&teamID=189598>. Contact Suzanne Miller for more information at Suzanne.Miller@oneonta.edu. The South Central New York Chapter of AFSP will also be the Change for Change recipient at the worship services for the month of September.

CHAIR MOVERS NEEDED!

Providing all goes smoothly and the carpet is installed by Friday, we will need a contingent of 6 or more able bodied people to move the sanctuary chairs from the stage back to the main floor on Saturday, September 15 at 10am. Please let Duncan Smith, Chair of the Properties Committee, know you are available. If by chance things do not go so smoothly and the carpet is not yet installed by Friday, you will be notified via UUSO News as to the status. This help will be much appreciated as we welcome a brand new carpet upgrade to our Sanctuary!

—Karen Palmer, President

WANTED:

FUN LOVERS,
CREATIVE TYPES,
ORGANIZERS &
WORKER BEES

Joins us for a brainstorming session on social and fundraising events on **Sunday, September 9** at noon in the front of the sanctuary. We need to come up with a new major fundraising event to replace the rummage sale as well as some new or recycled social events to make the UUSO a livelier and more fun place for all generations. Please bring your ideas, interest and enthusiasm. We look forward to working with you.

The Stewardship & Fundraising Committee
& The Fun Team

RE Kick-Off Event!

*March to the Beat
Of Your Drum!*

Sun. Sept. 16th at 10:30

Olympia Brown House

*Come Start the Year
Together with a
Drumming Workshop!*

*We'll also make drums and
enjoy chocolate drumsticks!*

*(Generously provided by Honeydukes Sweets
from Diagon Alley)*

UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

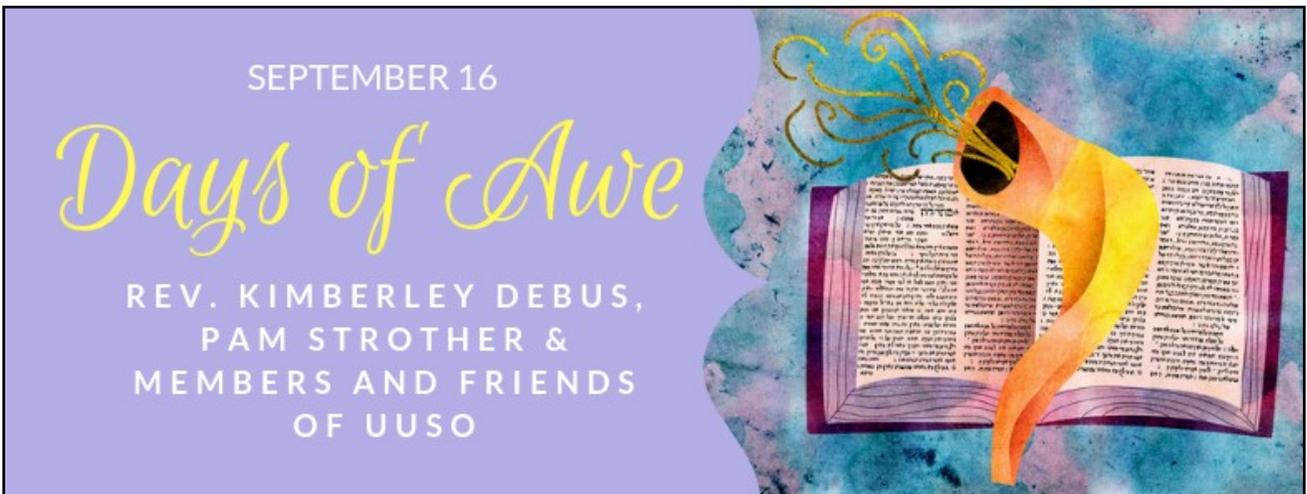
SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



Join us for our Ingathering Celebration!
We will honor the many journeys we
have taken and are on,
and join our hearts together in this place
of nourishment and replenishment.

**Stay Together Sunday*
With music provided by Music Director Tim Horne and
the UUSO Choir.
Worship Associate: Rich Stelling

Coffee Hour Host: UUSO Board of Trustees
Ushers: UUSO Board of Trustees
Chancel Table: Pam Strother
Sound System: Paul Carter



Jews around the world celebrate the time
between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
as “The Days of Awe” – a time of for-
giveness, reconciliation, and preparation
for the new year. Together, we will cele-
brate our own version of these holy days.

**Children to OBH for RE Kickoff*
With Music provided by Music Director Tim Horne
Worship Associate: Keith Willcox

Coffee Hour Host: Suzy Beddoe & Mary Ruhoff
Usher: Kim Yousey-Elsener & Arlana Young
Chancel Table: Pam Strother
Sound System: Nathan Elsener

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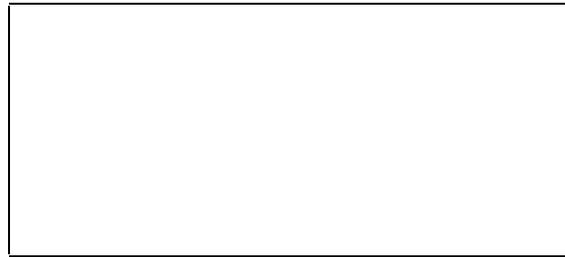
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UUSO DEADLINES:

UU News Articles: Deadline for the week of September 19th issue is September 17th, 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

Food for Thought: Climate Change—What Can I do?

Is Climate Change real? If so, is it simply due to natural phenomenon or human impact? What can you do about it?

To get some concrete answers to these critical questions of our generation, Please join Hartwick College Associate Professor of Physics, Dr. Kevin Schultz, and Solstice representative, Jackie Burke, on Sunday, Sept 23, from noon to 2:30pm in the Sanctuary.

Dr. Schultz will provide a graphically illustrated presentation of the scientific facts to date on the subject and Jackie Burke will follow this by discussing one substantial means of reducing carbon emissions through subscribing to the new local solar garden being constructed right now in Laurens, NY. Several people from our congregation have attended these presentations with enthusiastic reviews. Don't miss the opportunity to be educated and motivated!

Lunch and child care will be provided.

Co-sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Task Force and Social Action Team