



# UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

November 22, 2017

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## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

### Giving Thanks

As we gather to celebrate Thanksgiving this week, with family and friends, with fabulous feasts and heartfelt greetings, I hope everyone has time to pause and truly give thanks, time to meditate on the spirit of gratitude. For some, it has been a trying year. There are always struggles and setbacks, always tragedies and trials. And it is easy to get caught up in the next bit of bad news. This is one of the reasons we have holy days and holidays. They are a reminder to take a break and focus on the positive experiences of our lives, the blessings we each experience. Thanksgiving is about being grateful for what we have, every blessing, every person in our lives. If you are traveling this holiday, may the roads and weather be clear. If you are hosting travelers, may your ministry of hospitality rejuvenate those in need. And if you are gathering with folks here in town, perhaps joining with the UUSO family at the annual Thanksgiving dinner, then may the gathering be one of good cheer, warm hearts, and tasty treats. Cheryl and I, as we celebrate with part of our family, will keep you all in our hearts and minds, and in our own prayers of gratitude. For we are thankful, indeed, for the loving support of all those that make our ministries possible. Happy Thanksgiving, one and all.

Gratefully,

Rev. Craig Schwalenberg and Cheryl DeDecker

P.S. Thanksgiving greetings from Opal, Spirit, and Harmony, too.

### Holiday Celebrations at UUSO

Here are just a few of the holiday-themed events taking place at UUSO and the wider community this season.

- UUSO Thanksgiving Dinner 11/23 @ 2:00 p.m./3:00 p.m.

Beverages and appetizers will be served at 2 p.m. with the main meal being served at 3 p.m. All are welcome to attend, though it is asked that people sign up/RSVP with Leah Bridgers and Julian Pecenco.

- Cookies and Crafts at UUSO 12/2 @ 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The longstanding event of the season, Cookies and Crafts, will take place on Saturday, Nov. 2. Come get your handcrafted holiday gifts and get some delicious cookies for yourself.

- Stories of the Season Service & Holiday Workshop 12/10 @ 10:30 a.m./ 11:30 a.m.

The annual service of stories from cultures and holidays around the world followed by the return of fun holiday crafting for all ages. If interested in helping with the Holiday Workshop, contact Leah Bridgers.

- Christmas Worship Services 12/24 @ 10:30 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Our family-themed Christmas service with a no-rehearse pageant will take place on Christmas Eve morning at our regular service time, 10:30 a.m. The meditative Christmas service will be held that evening at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome to both services.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*...It is the dance of the spiraling generations, in which the old empower the young with their experience and the young empower the old with new life, reweaving the fabric of the human community as they touch and turn.*

—Parker J. Palmer

I am grateful for our UUSO congregation. This is a place where we can be accepted for who we truly are. We support each other to grow and learn. We help each other cope with hard times as well as celebrate the joyful times. We strive to be our best selves with each other. We, of all ages, are a blessing in each other's lives.

As adults we have an important role to play in being present for our children in times of hard news and tragedy. I've been sifting through some of the information that my fellow DRE's from other UU Churches are discussing with regards to talking to children about tragic and frightening news events. I think the following is the most important: We do whatever we need to find calmness in ourselves and project it to our children; we limit or stop watching the news; and we do special things together that help us feel the love of our family, friends, and church community. We make sure our children know they can talk to us. (I think it is important to listen deeply in order to succinctly address what our children are specifically worried about and not "overshare"). We can work with our children to lift up the positive and notice beauty in our lives. This is a place where children can help us adults because they often are very good at noticing things. All of us can feel more hopeful by doing projects that help others in some way. And in the words of Albus Dumbledore:

*Happiness can be found,  
in even the darkest of times,  
if one only remembers  
to turn on the light.*

Our children are very good at turning on lights.

Finally, if you would like more information, I like this article from Public Broadcasting System's Mister Rodgers Neighborhood called *Helping Children with Scary News*: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/rogers/special/scarynews-thoughts.html>

With Thanks and Appreciation for our UUSO Community,

Susan Ryder  
UUSO Director of Religious Education



### **COAST CHILDCARE FUNDRAISER**

How would you like some time to yourself on December 2, 2017?

Then Come to Parents' Half Day - Finally the adults get a turn!

If you have kids ages 2-9 then come drop them off at The Olympia Brown House (16 Ford St) to support COAST. There will be snacks and activities (crafts, games, cookie decorating, and coloring). You can pay by donation. Just show up at 12 o'clock and you can pick your kids up between 12 and 4.

Hope you enjoy some time off!

—by Caitlin Wiltsey

### **HOLIDAY WORKSHOP: DECEMBER 10TH**

The Holiday Workshop will once again be happening after the service on December 10. If you haven't yet experienced a Holiday Workshop, you are in for a treat. This is a time when all generations of our church family come together to do festive holiday crafts. It's a time to sit down and make something with our hands in celebration of the holiday season. We need your help to make this fun event happen.

You may be saying to yourself right now, "This sounds great! How can I help?" I'm so glad you asked! We need people to help getting the sanctuary arranged after the service. We need people to volunteer to lead a craft. If you have an idea of a craft you'd like to lead people in, great! If you'd like to lead a craft, but aren't sure what to make, this is not a problem, we have several ideas, one of which is sure to appeal to you. We also need people to help clean up after the workshop is finished. If you can help with any of these things, please contact Leah Bridgers at [LCBridgers@gmail.com](mailto:LCBridgers@gmail.com).

# SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD

The Board of Trustees met for our regular meeting on November 15 and again during a special meeting on November 19. After reviewing minutes and reports, we voted to approve three projects for the End of Year appeal: New carpet and flooring repair for Chapin Memorial, another Endowment Challenge grant, and a sermon with UU minister Rev. Chris Antal followed by a workshop and lunch focusing on drone warfare. Congregants will be receiving the appeal letter shortly after Thanksgiving.

We also approved a new policy regarding the use of our credit card charging system and a revised building use policy. These are published in this newsletter and will be posted on our website under the member tab (no need for a password). We also approved a building request for a family Nar Anon group and waived their building use fee until our January meeting when we will re-assess.

Questions from congregants concerning the board's experiment with a new governance model have arisen and will be addressed by the Board President during a special session to be arranged.

The board finalized plans for the Next Steps Weekend and provided a charge to our Covenant and Safety subcommittees. They are as follows:

Safety subcommittee charge: The Board charges the Safety Sub-Committee to investigate resources from the UUA Safe Congregations program, our Insurance provider and other source and bring back a proposal(s) for the Board by the January 2018 meeting.

Covenant subcommittee charge: The Covenant subcommittee will create opportunities for the entire congregation to provide input on our congregational Covenant.

At our regular meeting we discussed two Endowment grants applications that had been referred to the board, one for the purchase of an AED and one for the purchase of a TV/DVD. We agreed we needed some more information before approving these. During our special meeting, we approved both of these grant applications and referred them back to the Endowment Committee.

During our special meeting we also approved Jeanne Bennett-O'Dea for the office of Treasurer beginning January 1, 2018 on a six month trial basis. Lynn Beken will continue on as our accountant. Jeane will forgo the Treasurer stipend for now as it would violate our conflict of interest agreement while she continues to serve on the board.

The board will not be meeting during the busy month of December. Our next Board meeting is Wednesday, January 17 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. Members and friends of UUSO are invited to observe. Board members are always happy to listen to your concerns or suggestions at the "Sounding Board" after the January 14 service.

Karen Palmer, President  
UUSO Board of Trustees  
607-267-4793  
greenspeech3278@gmail.com

## **POLICIES**

Two policies were approved at the November Board meeting. You can find them and our other policies on our website at <http://uuso.org/uuso-policies/>

Two revisions were made to our Building Use and Rental Policy at November's Board of Trustees meeting (the entire policy is not published here due to space constraints):

### **Building Use and Rental Policy November 15, 2017**

**“Please follow these Policies whenever using UUSO facilities.**

[...] 3. Nothing may be affixed to the walls (painted areas and wood) of the sanctuary or loft. (No tape, glue, tacky putty, nails, tacks, etc.) The only exception is sticky notes (of any size).

[...] 15. Do not use Religious Education classroom or nursery art supplies, worship materials, or snacks. Be sure to leave the classroom or nursery as you found it.”

### **PCI\* Compliance, UUSO Policy November 15, 2017**

Vanco, our charge card processor, requires that we comply with the \*Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. Vanco has developed a PCI document, “Information Security Policy,” which we will follow as our policy. This PCI policy is to be followed by anyone processing charge card payments on behalf of UUSO.

After reading the PCI document, available at the church office, one will then sign the statement below thereby agreeing to the conditions stated in the “Information Security Policy.”

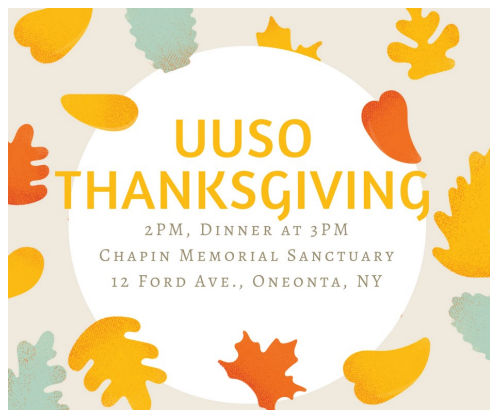
I agree to take all reasonable precautions to assure that UUSO internal information, or information that has been entrusted to the UUSO by third parties such as customers, will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons. At the end of my service for each event with the UUSO, I agree to return all information to which I have had access as a result of my position. I understand that I am not authorized to use sensitive information for my own purposes, nor am I at liberty to provide this information to third parties.

I have access to a copy of the Information Security Policies (located at the UUSO office). I have read and understand these policies, and I understand how it impacts my service. As a condition of continued service, I agree to abide by the policies and other requirements found in the UUSO privacy policy. I understand that non-compliance will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including possible criminal and/or civil penalties.

I also agree to promptly report all violations or suspected violations of information security policies to the event coordinator(s).

# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## THANKSGIVING DINNER AT UUSO



It's not too late to sign up for the UUSO Thanksgiving dinner (assuming you're reading this before Thanksgiving, of course)! In order for us to have enough place settings, however, it is important that you let us know that you plan to attend.

The annual UUSO gala Thanksgiving dinner will once again be held on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 23. This annual tradition is a wonderful way to spend the Thanksgiving holiday. You'll get a sumptuous meal without having to cook it all yourself, and you'll get to spend the afternoon in the company of UUSO family and friends.

We'll gather in the sanctuary at Chapin Memorial at 2 p.m., starting with appetizers and beverages, followed by a full sit-

down dinner buffet promptly at 3 pm. Feel free to invite your friends, neighbors, and relatives. All who wish to attend are welcome at the feast.

We need all parts of the meal from beverages and appetizers to desserts. Bring a family favorite, or try something new. (If at all possible, try making your dish gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, and/or nut free, so that guests of all dietary needs will be able to enjoy the bounty.)

We also need as many people as possible to stay after the meal to help with cleanup. If you haven't yet signed up to help with clean-up, please consider staying after the meal to ensure that the sanctuary is ready for the next event.

To sign up via e-mail ([jp.pecenco@gmail.com](mailto:jp.pecenco@gmail.com)), please provide the following information:

Name(s)

Number of People Attending

Any dietary restrictions

Your contribution(s) to the meal

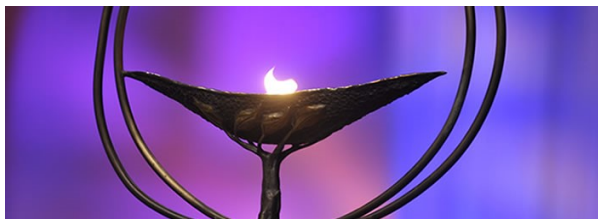
If you are able to help with either set-up and/or clean-up.

If you have any questions or you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Julian ([jp.pecenco@gmail.com](mailto:jp.pecenco@gmail.com)) or Leah ([LCbridgers@gmail.com](mailto:LCbridgers@gmail.com)).

## ANNUAL MUFFINS FOR MALI

Muffins for Mali sales will once again take place in the Sanctuary on the four Sundays between Thanksgiving and Christmas, starting on November 26th and continuing on December 3, 10, and 17. Fresh, home-baked muffins, including gluten free varieties, will be available each Sunday after services. Also our unique African jewelry and gift items make lovely holiday presents and stocking stuffers. All of the proceeds will benefit Youchaou's School in Bamako, Mali to help support the education of our sponsored students as well as the student body as a whole. We hope that you will visit our table to help keep the Mali Education Project alive and flourishing. As always, we appreciate the continuing support of the congregation, so thank you again.

## CIRCLE OF LIFE



Our condolences to Sherry Gillette and her family as they grieve the death of her daughter, Kimberlie Gillette. After a long struggle with cancer and diabetes, Kimberlie died on November 5, 2017. A visitation with the family was held at the Bookhout Funeral Home on Nov.

10th. Memorials in Kimberlie's name may be made to the local Susquehanna Animal Shelter or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

## DRUM ROLL PLEASE..

Saturday December 2nd is fast approaching. The Cookies and Crafts team is excited to re-introduce you to many tried and true vendors and to introduce you to a few new crafters. The juried crafters for 2017 include:

1. Linda Herring—Fabric arts: Aprons, ornaments, bags, wallets, pillows
2. Claudia Koeppel—Block-printed designs on recycled garments and original knitwear
3. Nancy Wolters—Quilting and fabric crafts
4. Bonnie Laugen—Jewelry and silk scarves
5. Joanne Sharkey—Jams, preserves, mustards
6. Julie Koch—Bead jewelry, pottery, notecards, Pysanky eggs
7. Marie Cummings—Artwork, paintings, collage, gifts
8. Jennifer Kemper—Pottery items
9. Katherine Somelofski—Beeswax candles and stained glass
10. Betty Bryden—Calendars and artwork, felting
11. Jeane Bennett-O'Dea—Wool mittens

Looking forward to seeing you all on Saturday December 2nd from 10-3.

Thank you for your help making this event happen ☺

## PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND THE NEXT LAST WEDNESDAYS FILM SERIES ON PEACE AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.

On Wednesday, NOVEMBER 29 "The Economics of Happiness" (2011) explores 2 familiar buzzwords: Environmental sustainability, and Localization. We've heard these words What do they mean? What do they look like in practice? A prelude to an exciting guest speaker coming soon to UUSO--you won't want to miss this uplifting film! As always, doors open at Chapin at 5:30. Vegetarian meal at 6, screening at 7:00, followed by discussion. Childcare available by contacting the church office by Monday, Nov. 27.

-Lisa Barr

## ADOPT-A-FAMILY

This year the UUSO will again participate in the Adopt-A-Family Project. We will provide holiday gifts and help for four families who have been chosen for us by the Family Service Association. Beginning on November 26<sup>th</sup>, there will be a tree at the back of the Sanctuary. The tree will be laden with tags listing the needs and wishes of the children and parents. It is again time for us to show the true holiday spirit by demonstrating our generosity. Let's all take a tag or two and purchase what it lists. Thanks to all who plan to participate and make this a happy holiday season for our four families.

—Rhannon Ham (437-5788) and Carol Malz (278-5438).



## NEXT STEPS WEEKEND A SUCCESS!

Nearly 50 UUSO members and friends participated in the Next Steps Weekend with Liz Coit, our consultant from Stewardship for Us hired by the decision of the Board of Trustees. Liz provided a summary of her insights gained from pre-weekend phone calls, document review, and her interactions during the weekend. Overall, she is impressed with the many ways we make a difference in our community and world and affirms that we are a generous congregation with our financial giving. She has also identified specific ways we can improve the health and sustainability of UUSO through some changes in our stewardship practices. Liz will be providing a comprehensive report within the next couple of weeks and has recommended that it be made available to every member and friend in our congregation. The Board will inform the congregation when that report is available and how to get a copy if desired.

The Board is grateful to all who took their precious time on Friday and Saturday to meet with Liz or engaged in a phone call with her. We also want to acknowledge Rev. Craig and David Ray for handling the set up and clean up of the Saturday luncheon. No one can ever say that our minister doesn't do dishes! We especially want to thank Liz Coit for going above and beyond for the set fee of \$2000 plus travel that UUSO is paying for her consultation. It is very good we are not paying by the hour! We expect that her recommendations will enable us to continue to strengthen our culture of generosity and stewardship toward fulfilling UUSO's Mission and Vision.

## 'TIS THE SEASON...TO SHARE OUR LOVE AND GOOD CHEER.

Sunday, December 3 is First Sunday and time again for our collection for Backpack Buddies and Personal Hygiene Supplies. The children will be facing a long vacation and hopefully we can help supply food for the time they are away from school. This is an especially hard time for those who are less fortunate and we can bring a little light into their lives. Let's let them know we are thinking of them. Please bring your non-perishable, kid friendly, vaguely nutritious food and personal care items to help those in need. Of course, monetary donations are always welcome-cash or check. Please make checks out to NENY Regional Foodbank, with Otsego/Delaware County Backpack Buddies in the memo. Thank you so much and the happiest of holidays.

—Dawn Kilts for the Social Action Team

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE'S GUEST AT YOUR TABLE PROGRAM



Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about our work to advance human rights. Working in over 25 countries, more than 75 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work made possible through your donations. GAYT is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership, support human rights, and learn about just four of these individuals – the "guests" in Guest at Your Table. This year's guests include a leader of local efforts to respond to climate change in the South Pacific and a Burmese human rights activist.

Guest at Your Table envelopes were given out on Sunday, November 19. If you did not receive one, or if you would like a Guest at Your Table box to collect your donation, stop by the Social Action Team table during social hour. Please fill in the information on the envelope. You may write a check or fill in the credit card information and return the envelope to the Social Action Team table by Jan. 7, 2018.



## UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM

### Troubleshooting and Honoring Surprises

C H E R Y L P E T E R S E N

November 26th, at 10:30 PM  
Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta

Sometimes we get surprised.  
Whether they're good or bad,  
we can use surprises to our advantage.

*\*No RE Classes*

With Music provided by Bill Mayer  
Worship Associate: Keith Willcox

Coffee Hour Hosts: Pam Strother & Deb Bruce  
Ushers: Suzanne Miller & Walter Vom Saal  
Chancel Table: Carol Malz  
Sound System: Lisa Barr

### Evolution Defined

MARK VAN LAEYS

DECEMBER 3 • 10:30AM | UUSO

What is evolution?  
Is it a viable option for this planet?  
And, why does it have to be so painfully  
slow?

*\*Children to Classrooms at 10:30AM*

With Music provided by Music Director Tim Horne  
Worship Associate: Caroline Bagby

Coffee Hour Hosts: Beth Small  
Ushers: Kim Elsener & Kay Stuligross  
Chancel Table: Mary Ambrose  
Sound System: Paul Carter

**THE UNITARIAN  
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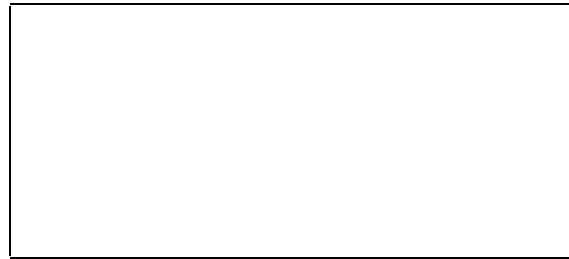


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**UUSO DEADLINES:**

**UU News Articles:** Deadline for December 6th issue  
is December 4th, 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**



**FAIR TRADE HOLIDAY GIFTS**

We are in the midst of that potentially stressful time of holiday shopping with hard to find parking spots, crowded stores, long lines at the cashier counter and bombardment with all manner of crass commercialism. Here's a pleasant alternative to all of that and a way to be consistent with your sustainability and social justice values.

Buy Fair Trade gifts on line! Click on this link to see a long list of Fair Trade on line stores courtesy of Global Stewards.

<http://www.globalstewards.org/fair-trade-shops.htm>