



UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

July 20, 2016

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MINISTER'S MUSINGS

Troubling Times

Last Thursday, I sat in the Temple Beth El with members of this congregation, members of the Oneonta community, political leaders, police officers, and religious leaders and the members of their congregations to be present and bear witness to the violence that had occurred in this country the week before. Two more men killed by police officers in appalling ways. And five police officers killed in a mass shooting targeting the police at a protest/vigil about the aforementioned deaths. And as we sat there, as a community, lamenting this tragic loss of life, dismayed at the continuing violence, and committing ourselves to doing what we could to put an end to these tragedies-- a terrible act of violence was occurring in Nice, France. A man drove a truck through a Bastille Day celebration killing nearly a hundred people of all ages and injuring many more. And as I prepared to head out of town, trying to wrap my head around this newest tragedy, wondering what words I could say-- I heard about the attempted coup in Turkey, resulting in more violence and death, and fear.

I've been traveling the past two days, traveling and listening to people in stores, restaurants, and on the streets. I'm a few states south, so things are bit more conservative and lot less UU than I'm used to back home. And yet, the things I'm hearing aren't that different than in Oneonta. People are afraid. They are angry. They are upset. They are feeling a bit numb. Several times, I've heard people wonder aloud, "When will it ever end?" There is, in those words, a true sense of dismay. I heard it at the vigil Thursday night, as well. There have been so many vigils. So many deaths. So many acts of violence. People are beginning to think this is just the way it will be. That thought is natural in such troubling times. But... it isn't a helpful thought. It isn't a thought that will lead us to a better time, a

workable solution, or even to a better place for our spirits to dwell and heal.

In times like this, we need hope. Not a misguided, vague hope based on platitudes and wishful thinking. No, we need a hope based on spiritual conviction, intent, and action. I believe the moral arc of the universe does move towards justice. I believe the violence we are seeing in the world is a direct result of the progress we have made in bringing rights to more people and more segments of our population. I believe we are hearing about racial violence more now because more of us are actually paying attention and more of us are ready to accept our role in creating the system that is killing our brothers and sisters and marring our souls. And these religious and spiritual convictions give me hope. They also give me the strength to keep moving forward. Through anger. Through fear. Through the numbness. One step at a time, one word at a time, one person at a time-- forward. That way is the way of hope. And hope is what we need most right now.

I'm proud to be a part of this congregation surrounded by people who share these convictions and the intent to build the Beloved Community. It isn't going to be easy, it isn't going happen over-night, but it is happening, it will happen. And when I'm at a loss for words, when my spirits sag, when I feel like giving up-- I think of all of you, and I remember I'm not alone in this and together we are so much more than we are on our own. Thank you for being my hope. Take heart, my friends. These are troubling times, but we have each other and together we have hope.

With Deep Love and Care,

Rev. Craig



SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD

What a wonderful summer we are having—many sunny days with rain showers at night for the gardens and a healthy high attendance at our Sunday worship services. We now have a newly formatted newsletter that will continue to be published on a bi-weekly schedule throughout the summer thanks to expanded hours for our tech-savvy new office administrator, Evelyn Warren.



Members and friends of our congregation have shown up in large numbers to the vigils held to show our support for the victims of the national tragedies of late. Our anti-racism task force is working on monthly plans for activities to continue our work toward being an anti-racist congregation.

We offer support to Saturday's Bread, Habitat for Humanity, Oneonta Community Health Clinic, and Youchou's school in Mali, Africa. Rev. Craig, Evelyn, and Suzanne Miller have returned from a great General Assembly and are sharing their learnings with us. The busy Social Action Committee has met for its annual retreat to plan for another active year. The Properties and Design Committees are finalizing their hard work designing the new Marquee and also provided much needed support for the hanging of our Black Lives Matter Banner not to mention all of the other behind the scenes projects that keep our properties in good shape. We are providing support for the creation of a community Pride Center and initiating the Green Sanctuary accreditation process. Our Worship committee is already planning quality services for the coming

year. Naturally there is much more I have neglected to mention and I apologize but there's not enough room in the newsletter! Our UUSO community just doesn't know how to stand still. Our Mission is too important!

I want to add a special acknowledgment for Kathy Paranya, our Office Committee Chair of over a decade. Kathy has decided that it is time for her to step down in this role but will continue to support the office through her expertise. On behalf of the congregation, we thank her for dedicated long standing service to helping the office stay updated with modern tools and help with the transition of Evelyn to her new position.

In keeping with the reality that UUSO doesn't slow down during the summer anymore, the Board of Trustees will be meeting in July instead of skipping this month. Our next Board meeting is **Wednesday, July 27, 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 and a Trustee and member of the Committee on Ministry will be present at the "Sounding Board" table after the service on July 24.

Karen Palmer, President
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UUSO NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHANCEL TABLE

Please consider arranging the Sunday chancel table with flowers, plants, sculpture, or something to creatively illustrate the sermon topic. Vases, table coverings, candles and candlesticks are in the closet next to the stage. Just call or e-mail so that we can fill the Sundays.

—Alice Siegfried/607-432-8673/alice.pott@icloud.com

WE **NEED** YOUR BOTTLES & CANS!



BOTTLES AND CANS IN CLEAR PLASTIC BAGS ONLY

The Endowment Committee LOVES deposit bottles and cans, but the redemption center will only accept them in CLEAR plastic bags. They need to see that there are no flies, dirty bottles or non-returnable items in the bags. Clear bags are provided next to the collection barrel for you to use.

—Grace Smith, Endowment Committee

Privacy Policy:

People who publish articles in the UUSO newsletter and include contact information need to be aware that the newsletter is posted to the web and therefore that their contact info may be available via internet search engines.

New Office Hours

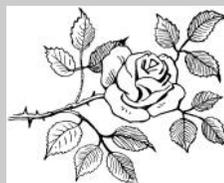
At UUSO, we frequently have church events our Office Administrator must attend outside of our normal business hours. (I.E. the monthly Board of Trustees meeting) Our aim is to provide a consistent office schedule for our congregants, and give our staff the flexibility to do their jobs. Starting July 25th, the office will be closed on Mondays. Some hours will be spent working off-site, so continue to expect emails and requests to be responded to in a timely manner. Any questions should be directed to the minister, who is the staff supervisor.

Where did the calendar go?!

Don't worry, so many of you loved that new feature, it's not disappearing! It'll be included in the first newsletter of each month, along with the month's Worship services and Monthly Meetings list. Our calendar is also available on our website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/uusocalendar>

Save the Date!



Memorial Service - Howson "Hap" Hartley

There will be a memorial service in celebration of Hap Hartley's life and in honor of his death held at UUSO on July 30th at 2 p.m. Rev. Craig Schwalenberg will be leading the memorial service and will be offering the eulogy. If you have a special memory or story you would like to share with Rev. Craig to add to the story of Hap Hartley's life, please contact him. There will be a reception after the memorial service. Diana Friedell is coordinating this reception; if you can offer assistance or items for the reception, please contact her.

Hap's obituary can be found here:
<http://tinyurl.com/haphartleyobit>

UUSO NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let's Fully Divest New York State from Fossil Fuels!

Among the petitions currently on our Social Action table is one addressed to NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli for divesting NYS pension funds from fossil fuels. If you haven't already signed it, please consider doing so. Several websites also have versions that can be signed online -- for example, at https://act.350.org/sign/NYS_divest/, which includes explanation excerpted here:

"... At \$160 billion, our state's Common Retirement Fund is the third largest pension plan in the country, ...[and is] heavily invested in the fossil fuel industry. Climate change is real, it's here, and it's endangering the biodiversity and natural resources we depend on, as well as the physical infrastructure that makes our state run.... [W]e're calling on [Comptroller di Napoli] to use our money for the common good: to benefit people, the economy, and the environment. Divestment has the power to rein in the fossil fuel industry and support our transition to a clean energy economy. With the evidence mounting that fossil fuel stocks are overvalued, divestment also protects our public funds from serious financial risks. ..."

—Kathy Shimberg, Social Action Committee

ENDING DRONE WARFARE?

During my PhD studies I read about the extensive training undertaken during World War II to turn farm and factory boys into warriors. Turns out humans instinctively lack the 'kill' instinct. During Vietnam, the problem remained, so Mattel created the first video game to make what happened at the end of a gun seem okay. But they couldn't change GI's hearts and minds fast enough. As the long-suppressed documentary "Sir! No Sir! explains, there were troop, officer, and high-ranking intelligence-gathering mutinies in Vietnam. Finally, aircraft-carrier based bombings could no longer make the U.S. war against Vietnamese Loyalists palatable. Flash forward to today's use of drone warfare—some of the joystick riders are based out of Syracuse. I believe militarized drones are out of step with Unitarian Universalist values. Please consider signing the petition to end drone warfare on the Social Action Committee table on Sundays.

—Lisa Barr, Social Action Committee

July 24 — Service at 10:30AM
"Meaning and Spirituality in Nature"
 Florian Reyda

Our modern day-to-day living is enhanced with the wonders of technology. Some of these, however, can disconnect us from our environment. Since we cannot always take time to get back to nature, I advocated finding meaning and spirituality in the tiny natural wonders that are around us.

Music Provided By: Music Director Tim Horne
 Worship Associate: Kevin Schultz
 Ushers: Cathryn James & Pat Knuth
 Coffee Hour Hosts: Jim Johnson & Linda Wilcox
 Sound System Operated By: Scott Segar

July 31 — Service at 10:30AM
"Declaration of Independence Part 2: Inalienable Rights"
 Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

Inspired by the last sermon written by our own Hap Hartley, I'll explore the concept of inalienable rights.

Music Provided By: Michael Frye-Hunt
 Worship Associate: Cathi Wiltsey
 Ushers: Duncan & Grace Smith
 Coffee Hour Hosts: Barbara Sue & Paul Agolia
 Sound System Operated By: Beth Small

UUSO NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS



Those standing represent the different faith communities that attended the vigil this past week at Temple Beth El, in honor of the recent victims of the police shootings in Louisiana and Minnesota and the sniper shooting targeting officers in Dallas.

Some of the crowd that turned out for the community vigil. It quickly became standing room only. The Mayor, members of the Police force and over 25 UUs from UUSO attended.



Rev. Craig and a fan at the UUA General Assembly in Columbus, OH last month, waiting for the banner procession through the great hall to begin.

**THE UNITARIAN
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OF ONEONTA**

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The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg
Minister

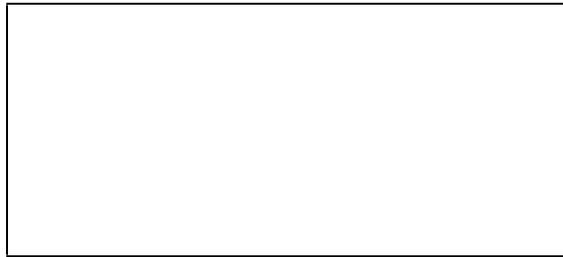
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UUSO DEADLINES:

UU News Articles: Deadline for August 3rd issue is August 1st

Order of Service Announcements:

Wednesday a.m. before the Sunday Service

Verbal Announcements:

Contact worship associate by Friday before Service

Green Sanctuary Corner



**Still want to receive a mailed hard copy of the newsletter?
We're refreshing our list!**

In our efforts to be greener and gain 'Green Sanctuary' status, we're reducing the amount of paper resources used around the office. We are looking to reduce the cost to the congregation and the environment involved in our printing, stamping, and mailing of copies of the newsletter. Get yours instantly in full color online on our website at uuso.org/newsletters. Those who are subscribed to our UUSO News email list receive a notification when it's been published.

If you'd still like to receive a mailed copy, please give the office a call or send an email to uuso@uuso.org. If you take no action, we will assume you no longer would like to receive a printed copy, and you will be removed from the list as of the August 15th newsletter.

UUSO Board of Trustees

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