



UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of February 20, 2019

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MINISTER'S MUSINGS

Welcome Our New Bookkeeper!

UUSO has a new Bookkeeper! We are pleased to welcome Taylor Czyzewski to our UUSO staff team. We received dozens of applicants for the position. The search committee interviewed the 6 most qualified and unanimously recommended Taylor for the position. Taylor works full time at Springbook as their Senior Staff Accountant. She has an advanced degree in accounting and has experience as a bookkeeper with companies and nonprofits of various sizes. Taylor is currently scheduled to work Monday and Thursday evenings along with some Sunday afternoons. If you run into her at the UUSO office or at one of our fundraising events, please welcome her to the community.



Black Lives Matter Banner - UPDATE

I've hosted several listening sessions on the topic of the Black Lives Matter banner. About a dozen or so people have attended and the conversations have been illuminating and engaging. I've also received emails from many who were not able to attend one of the listening sessions. Here is an informal summary of what I have heard so far.

- Many people were unaware of how weathered the sign had become.
- All of the people who have expressed an

opinion want the banner replaced.

- Most of those who want it replaced, want it to be another Black Lives Matter banner.
- Some folks have expressed a desire to have a banner or different banners that highlight other social justice issues we are engaged with.
- A few would like to see the wording on the banner changed to be more universal, or to better express who we are as a congregation.
- Even though the congregation doesn't have an active anti-racism group/activity, members are working on this issue in other ways in the community. Those active in this way appreciate the congregation's support and inspiration.
- The Oneonta chapter of the NAACP appreciates the banner and hopes it is rehung.
- If we are going to change the banner, then the congregation should vote on it.
- If we just replace the BLM banner with a brand new one, no vote is needed-- but, we should make an event of it and acknowledge our recommitment.

There is still time to share your opinion on what we should do once the banner comes down. Contact Rev. Craig via phone or email to share your thoughts.

Cooperatively,

Rev. Craig
revcraig@uuso.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This past Sunday, Rev. Craig and I had separately decided to do worship services on the topic of kindness. We crossed paths the morning before our respective services and Rev. Craig had the thought that it might be National Kindness Day. He looked it up and sure enough February 17 was “National Acts of Kindness Day.” How serendipitous! In fact I had real life example of a random act of just the day before when was purchasing oranges for our Children’s Worship at Hanford. A store manager overheard that I was buying snack for our group. He took an orange off of the scale as a gift to our children.

Our Children’s Worship Service was called, *Kindness and Connection*. As is traditional for us, the “Joys and Sorrows” part of our service is called “Stones of Sharing.” Children helped pour water into a basin. Each child picked a stone from a basket. We went around the circle, each having a chance to share with the group something important from their lives as they added their stone to the basin. It was also fine to pass by quietly placing a stone in the water. A stone was put in the water at the end for all of the things we didn’t say but were still important to us. We talked about how the ripples from each stone placed in the water remind us that whatever touches one of us touches us all. This was one example of our connection to each other.



Our art project was another example. We decorated strips of colorful paper with words or drawings of kindness. Amelia W. remembered there was a book in our Mara Kern Library that had drawings and words of children from all over the world showing their ideas of Peace. She found it for us. The book was, [A Million Visions of Peace](#), edited by J. Garrison and Andrew Tubesing, and was a good resource for our activity. Children also asked me to look up translations of words of kindness in other languages for them to include on their strips of paper. Some examples of the words we learned from translate.google.com were: “love” in Swahili is *upendo*; “care” in Irish is *cúram*; “rainbow” in French is *arc en ciel*; and “unicorn” in Spanish is *unicornio*. In additions to words there were drawings of hearts, rainbows, unicorns, and other beautiful designs. We made the strips of paper into circles and connected them together in a very long chain. This was a visual reminder of how we are all connected in caring community. We hope to bring this chain to our RE service in the spring. We plan to ask congregants at our RE service to add their own strips of paper with references to kindness. Once we have connected all of our links it will be a very long chain!

Here’s to our connectedness, our *cúram*, and our kindness,

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

FIRST SUNDAY COLLECTION DAY PROJECTS: BACKPACK BUDDIES + CREATIVE RECYCLING

The need continues for non-perishable food and personal-care items for Otsego/Delaware Counties' Backpack Buddies program. Our help is needed year-round, but especially in winter, any weather-related school closings mean no weekday breakfast or lunch for many children. Please continue to bring your kid-friendly food and personal-care donations to the collection basket at the front of the sanctuary on the first Sunday of each month. Our next collection day will be March 3. Cash or checks also welcome: Please make out checks to NENY Regional Food Bank, with "Backpack Buddies Otsego/Delaware Counties" in the memo line. Thank you!

In addition, Janet Sutta has proposed a new, small environmental project, turning plastic mesh bags into attractive, useful "pot-scrubbers." We need your help to fulfill the intent: Please save plastic mesh bags, the kind that lemons, oranges, potatoes, etc., come in from grocery stores, and bring them to church also on the first Sunday of the month, starting with March 3. Janet will join us during coffee hour to crochet pot-scrubbers from the bag netting and will show anyone interested how to make them. Completed pot-scrubbers will then be available to take home and enjoy using, at no cost. We're looking forward to your participation in this worthwhile recycling project.

--UUSO Social Action Team

“WHY DO I PLEDGE?”

Why do I pledge? Maybe it's commitment. Maybe it's habit. I can remember going to Sunday School each Sunday with my two-pocketed envelope and my quarter inside. My box of envelopes sat right next to "the big box" which my mother used. I wanted to have a "big box", too. Finally, I was confirmed and got my very own adult box.



There are no boxes anymore in which to place your weekly collection offering but the habit is still ingrained. During college and beyond, I would give an offering each week I attended a church service. Now I just write a check once a month. Why? For me it's because I'm a member. I believe in the UUSO and what it stands for. I want to support its programs and those who work diligently to keep our church going. If I cared enough to attend, no matter what religion or denomination, whether a member or not, I have always tried to give what I could to show my support. These days I have committed to the vision of our UUSO and so I pledge... I give... I support my spiritual home. I hope you will join me.

—Judy Tator, Stewardship and Fundraising Committee, Co-chair

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019

General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to send voting delegates. The 2019 General Assembly will be June 19-23 in Spokane, Washington. Most General Assembly events will be held in the Spokane Convention Center.

This year's theme is about collective power, "The Power of We," as well as the possibility, the purpose, the struggle and the joy of what it means to be together in faithful community. In the past two years, Unitarian Universalism has recommitted to the work of liberation inside and outside our faith community. The antidote to a time of dangerous dehumanization is a love that connects us to our deeper humanity. Come to Spokane to experience what our shared faith can become when we embrace the Power of We.

GA Registration and the GA Housing Reservation System open at 9 a.m. PST at www.uua.org/ga

MALI EDUCATION PROJECT

Have you ever tasted Githeri, Mbtata or Kachumbari? These along with other delicious Kenyan dishes will be served at this year's Mali Buffet Banquet to benefit Youchaou's School in Bamako, Mali. Mark your calendars for the 23rd of March and make your reservations so as not to miss this annual event. It's the only pop up African restaurant in Oneonta and will not reappear for another whole year.

In addition to the wonderful food, we will be showing a video of a conversation with Youchaou, recorded during his recent visit to Oneonta, and other footage taken by Zanna McKay of her time in Mali. It will give a taste of the scenery and culture of this West African nation, which in many ways is hard for us here in Upstate New York to imagine.

In a recent email pertaining to the annual transfer of support money to Youchaou, he writes, "I am more than happy to receive this huge amount of money. I sincerely thank all of you. I shared the information with my staff and they were all very happy and told me to send you their congratulations and profound acknowledgement. I am really grateful to you. Thank you very much. Please extend my deepest acknowledgement and gratitude to all the sponsors and to the team of the Mali Education Project. May God bless you all." And we on the Mali Education Project team feel that we are blessed to have such a strong commitment from our UU community and beyond to help us support this mission. See the attached flier for the details and join us for our celebration of this rare and wonderful intercultural collaboration.



Annual Benefit Buffet & Market

Kenyan Banquet

(non-spicy, GF, & vegetarian options available)
We will show a filmed conversation with Youchaou
as well as some glimpses of life in Mali

Saturday March 23rd
6 to 9 PM
Unitarian Universalist Society
12 Ford Ave. in Oneonta

Market Opens at 5:30pm, Banquet at 6pm
\$15 Adult, \$10 Child over 5, Family Rates Available
Free Childcare

Meal Reservations Required!
CALL (607)433-1272
email: mali@uuso.org

*Hosted by:
The Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta
Mali Education, Project to Benefit
Children at Youchaou's School in Mali*

FROM THE BOARD

As mentioned in our last newsletter, we have a new Conflict management and disruptive Behavior Policy, you can find it on our website at <http://uuso.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Conflict-Management-and-Disruptive-Behavior.pdf>. If you do not have internet access, please contact our office administrator in the church office and she will send you a hard copy.

UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



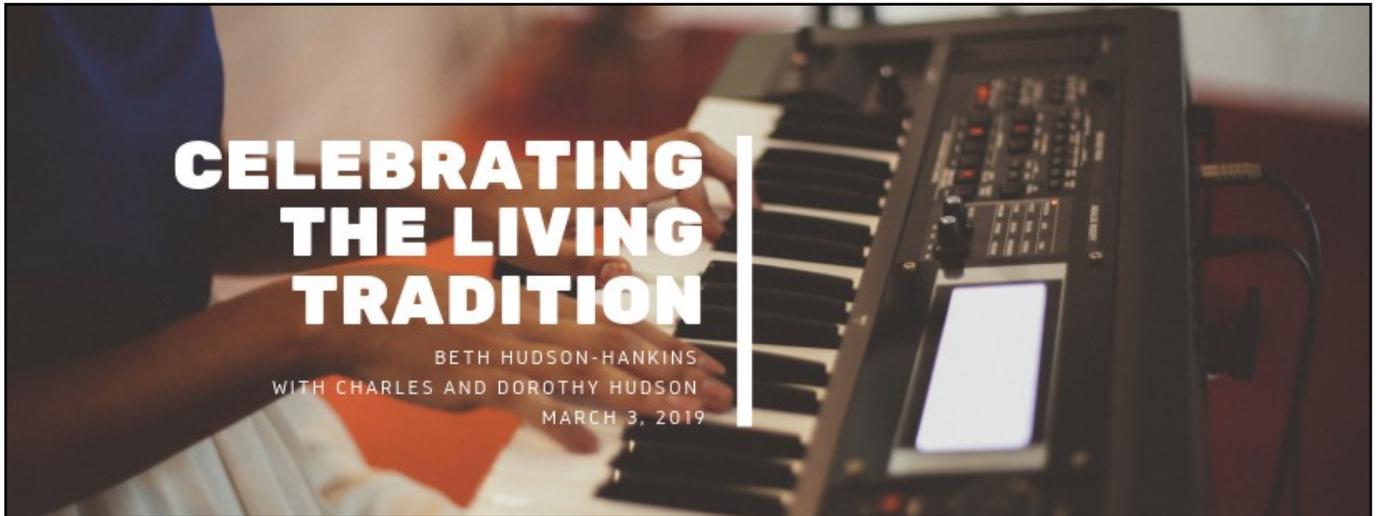
Join us as we celebrate 30 years of service from Tim Horne, our Music Director, and explore how water plays an important role in our lives and many of our rituals.

MUSIC SUNDAY

**Start Together Sunday*

With music by the UUSO Choir; Leah and Katy Bridgers, sopranos; and Music Director Tim Horne. Worship Associate: Cathi Wiltsey

Coffee Hour Host: Kim Yousey-Elsener
Ushers: Dave & Megan Ainsworth
Chancel Table: Jeane Bennett-O'Dea
Sound System: Nathan Elsener



A service to honor our hymnal. This Unitarian Universalist hymnal was wildly successful, and the story of its creation and content deserves to be told.

**Children to Classrooms*

With music by the UUSO Choir and Music Director Tim Horne
Worship Associate: Kevin Schultz

Coffee Hour Host: Megan Brennan
Usher: Arlana Young
Chancel Table: Dotty Hudson
Sound System: Nathan Elsener

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA**

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UUSO DEADLINES:

UU News Articles: Deadline for the week of March 6th issue is March 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

Using Green Practices to Beat the Winter Blues!

Here are 6 tips for keeping a bright outlook during dark winter days by applying your eco-ethics!

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/dorit-sasson/6-green-tips-to-help-impr_b_9300006.html

—Karen Palmer
Board President
Green Sanctuary Committee Chair

UUSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Mary Ruhoff	Moderator
Keith Willcox	
Nathan Elsener	
Arlana Young	
Jennifer Hyypio	
Rosemary Summers	

Congratulations on 30 Years

JOIN US THIS SUNDAY AS WE
CELEBRATE 30 MUSICAL YEARS
WITH TIM HORNE AS OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR