



UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of June 27, 2018

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MINISTER'S MUSINGS

Report from General Assembly

Last week, the Unitarian Universalist Association held their annual General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri. The theme for this GA was "All Are Called" and the focus of the gathering was on our continuing work to dismantle white supremacy and other forms of institutionalized oppression and discrimination. While we have been working on this goal for many years, we have come to the sad realization in the last few years, that we need to "remove the beam from our own eye". Or, to put it less biblically, we need to clean up our own house, our own systems, before we can truly focus on the wider communities to which we belong.

Importance of Language

We've come to recognize that the language we use matters. In the 70s and 80s, the movement focused on changing the use of the word "men" to mean all people, and replace it with "men and women" in our Principles and Purposes. It seems a small change in retrospect, but it was a hard struggle at the time-- and continues to be a struggle for some. Women have been erased from our stories and our institutions so many times in our history (herstory?) that it became commonplace and accepted to not see them at all. Changing the language was the first step in bringing women back into the light and into our awareness.

This year, we focused on another limitation of that language, another class of people that was being left out by our use of language. The General Assembly voted to change "men and women" to "all people" to include all those who are not limited to the gender binaries. This has been an ongoing struggle for us in the past few years. While non-binary genders have

been a part of the human condition for all of recorded history (and likely before), we have managed to erase or ignore their existence. This has led to some horrible persecutions and violence against our non-binary siblings. So changing the language to include them has become our new frontier. It isn't easy for most of us, who have been raised to see gender as only male and female. And it is a challenge for those who worked so hard to get "women" added to "men" in our language, to see "women" disappear once more with the more broad category. Are we making women invisible once more? Or are we making room for everyone, including our non-binary gender folks, in our space and in our minds.

These changes are never easy or simple-- even when we are talking about "just words." The words matter. Words lead to thoughts. Thoughts lead to actions. So, we start with the words and work our way up. In this case, we have decided, as we are called to do as Unitarian Universalists, to draw the circle a little wider by making our language a bit more inclusive. An by acknowledging and remembering the struggle of women to reach that same space, perhaps we will continue to work on dismantling the systems that keep marginalizing and hiding and abusing our people-- all of our people.

There was a lot more than just semantics taking place at GA. Please look for future articles and gatherings to discuss and go deeper with some of the issues and presentations from our wider movement.

Cooperatively,

Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD

Special Thanks to John Bagby who completes his six years of service as a Board Trustee on June 30. John has been immensely helpful in so many ways as liaison to the Properties and Design Committees, past Vice President, Safety Committee liaison and member, and now the chair of the Sabbatical Committee. Bob Brzozowski and Adina Johnson are also completing their service as appointed Trustees. Their special talents and perspectives have helped moved our work forward and we are grateful for the brief time they have been on the Board. For example, after Bob did an exhaustive search for the lost key to our bank safety deposit box, his last act as a Trustee will be to develop a procedure so that we don't lose it again once we pay to have it re-keyed!

Acknowledging our Leaders: During the July 8 service we will be acknowledging a number of chairs and other dedicated leaders who have or will be stepping down from their positions this year. We are excited about the new leaders who have chosen to carry on their work. There are still some leadership vacancies in Personnel, Finance, and Properties that we are working to fill and we have a tremendous need for people to serve on the Connections Team, particularly as there has been an expressed interest in outreach recently by the congregation.

Outreach: The Board engaged in a lively discussion about expanding our outreach. We used the congregation's valuable input during the recent Listening Session as a springboard. In addition to voting that we continue the weekly Daily Star ad for our worship services, we discussed expanding our advertising to other newspapers, radio, area hotels, etc. We also talked about efforts to make sure ALL people feel welcome when they visit. We explored an idea for developing a team to transport people to services and other activities. It became clear to us that a reinvigorated Connections Team is critical to these efforts. We will continue this conversation during our Board retreat in July.

Financial Matters: The Board reviewed the March, April, and May profit and loss statements. We also voted to give appropriate Finance and Endowment Committee members access to specific bank privileges and appointed Alan Zimmerman, CPA to a 4 year term on the Finance Committee.

Sounding Board and Committees: The Board is in favor of purchasing chairs similar to those we have in the Sanctuary but with arms for people with physical challenges per Suzie Beddoe's request. This will be referred to the Aesthetics Committee. The Aesthetics Committee is progressing with presenting carpet color samples to the congregation including the same blue color of our current carpet. The plan at this point per the Properties Committee is to start the floor repairs around the first week in August. Cindy Squires inquired about when mailboxes will be back in Chapin. A new set of wooden mailboxes has arrived. When they are painted they will be mounted in the coatroom above the small table. April Gates and others have inquired about air conditioning in the sanctuary. Exploration of feasibility and costs will be referred to the Properties Committee. The Endowment Committee is exploring ways to decrease the bottle collection issues in the kitchen. The Board is in discussion with them about possible remedies. The Policy Review Committee will be reviewing a Gift Acceptance policy proposed by the Endowment Committee and a Conflict Resolution policy proposed by the Committee on Ministry.

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Continued from page 2)

Voices lifted up: At the end of each Board meeting, we discuss voices that may need lifting up. We lifted up the voices of those who may have an issue or concern but are too afraid or maybe just don't know how to express their concern. We also discussed the need for kindness and respect from both the person with the concern and the person hearing the concern. We talked about making the channels of communication clearer and supporting all who want to respectfully voice their concerns.

Next Board Meeting: Our next Board meeting is going to be combined with a Board Retreat (location to be determined) on Saturday, July 28. Members and friends of UUSO are invited to observe the Board meeting part of this day from 1pm to 3pm. We ask that if you are intending to observe, please let Karen Palmer know a week in advance so that the proper accommodations can be made for you. Board members are always happy to listen to your concerns or suggestions via the "Sounding Board" held after the July 22 service.

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

BACKPACK BUDDIES

Summer is upon us and the children are on their own for their meals. That means Backpack Buddies serves an additional purpose: Most of the kids aren't getting free breakfast or lunch anymore. Please donate kid-friendly, non-perishable, vaguely healthy food to Backpack Buddies. In addition, those less fortunate or homeless are in need of personal-care items to stay fresh through the summer. Please donate your sample-size items and any others you have. Monetary donations are always welcome -- cash or checks. Please make checks out to "NENY Regional Food Bank," with "Otsego/Delaware Counties Backpack Buddies" on the memo line. Our continuing help is greatly appreciated.

—Dawn Kilts for the Social Action Team

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE LISTENING SESSION

On Sunday July 15 we will be hosting a listening session to hear your thoughts on the new endowment fund. The event will take place at noon in the sanctuary. It will be the first of several opportunities for members and friends to express their hopes for this exciting initiative.

I moved here in 1981 as a single mother with a preschool child, a new job and no friends. I was registering Patrick for Y programs and noticed the UU SO marquee. I came to a service the following Sunday. It was a life altering decision, and that is why I look forward to establishing the new fund. I want UUSO to thrive in the future, so that it will always be available for those looking for a fresh start.

I look forward to seeing you on the 15th and hearing your stories and aspirations for the future.

Margaret Davis
Chair, Endowment Committee

HOMETOWN 4TH CELEBRATION

If you'd like to march in the July 4th parade for UUSO, or help out at our booth in Neawha Park, please contact our office administrator, Evelyn. uuso@uuso.org/432-3491

Press Release from Pat Wictor and Deborah Latz, who are performing at UUSO next month!



New Folk-Jazz Duo Comes to Oneonta

The Pat Wictor / Deborah Latz duo, a new collaboration between singer-songwriter Pat Wictor and jazz vocalist and performance artist Deborah Latz, will be performing a concert in Oneonta at 7pm on July 28, at Chapin Memorial Church, 12 Ford Avenue.

The duo's summer tour takes them through Virginia, New York City, Long Island, the Poconos, and Ithaca, NY. They are also releasing a new EP of live performances, with an eclectic array of songs by The Beatles, Irving Berlin, Phil Ochs, and Ornette Coleman. The recording can be pre-viewed online:

<https://soundcloud.com/patwictordeborahlatzduo>

Pat Wictor, acclaimed as one-third of the harmonizing folk "supergroup" Brother Sun, and Deborah Latz, respected on the jazz and performance art scenes, first met at an improvisational singing workshop led by Bobby McFerrin. Their musical collaboration is all about spontaneity and surprise. Coming from two different musical realms, Latz and Wictor meet over their shared love of melody, vocal harmonies, poetry, and improvisation.

Wictor first became known for his slide guitar playing and innovative interpretations of traditional and contemporary songs. He spent most of the last seven years touring across North America as part of Brother Sun. New York-based jazz singer, songwriter, arranger, and actress Deborah Latz brings uncommon imagination and vocal virtuosity to performances, ranging through ballads and uptempo scat-singing. Latz and Wictor's new duo pools their strengths to make each concert a unique musical experience.

For interviews or promotional copies of the new live duo EP (recording), contact Deborah at deborah@deborahlatz.com

More information at their websites:

www.patwictor.com

www.deborahlatz.com

UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES
SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



Within each of us lies an ember, waiting
to be a spark—to become a flame—
growing to a fire—hoping to spread beyond—
shining the light of truth—transforming the world.

**No RE — Summer Break*
With Music provided by Music Director Tim
Horne.
Worship Associate: Keith Willcox

Coffee Hour Hosts: Rosemary Summers
Ushers: NEEDED
Chancel Table: Suzanne Miller
Sound System: Patrick Rost



In their song, Dave Gunning and George Canyon ask,
“What shall we do with these hands of ours?”
We’re a small congregation, in the middle of the state;
what can we do with these hands of ours?

**No RE—Summer Break*
With Music provided by Music Director Tim Horne
Worship Associate: Rich Stelling

Coffee Hour Hosts: Patricia Engel LaFata & Jesse
Schwabe
Ushers: **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**
Chancel Table: Patricia Engel LaFata
Sound System: Scott Segar

**UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY
OF ONEONTA**

16 Ford Ave.
Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-3491
Email: UUSO@uuso.org
www.uuso.org
Sanctuary at 12 Ford Ave.

The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg
Minister
Office Hours by Appointment
revcraig@uuso.org
607-432-3491/607-287-7906

Evelyn Warren
Editor & Office Administrator
uuso@uuso.org
Tues-Fri: 10-3

Susan Ryder
Director of Religious Education
607-643-1927
dre@uuso.org

Karen Palmer
Board President
607-267-4793

Tim Horne
Music Director
607-432-7323



UUSO DEADLINES:

UU News Articles: Deadline for July 11th issue
is July 10th, by 9AM.

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

Verbal Announcements:
Contact Worship Associate by Friday before Service

Facebook.com/UUSOneonta

UUSO Board of Trustees

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Vice-President

Jeanne Bennett-O'Dea
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Evelyn Warren Recording Secretary



Green Sanctuary Corner

At UUSO, we talk a lot about stewarding the planet, but did you ever think about the fact that making the effort to conserve our precious resources may also be a

way to steward yourself! It's ok to be selfish in this way. You can help the Earth and help yourself and your loved ones as well. It's a win-win situation.

To learn more, check out this article with 20 green tips that will improve your health and your lifestyle!

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/20-green-tips-that-will-improve-your-health-and-lifestyle.html>