



# UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of August 8th, 2018

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## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

***For the next four months, this article will be handed off our sabbatical minister, Rev. Kimberley Debus.***

I know I am not alone in wishing this could be a simpler time, a time when yes, we knew racism, homophobia, misogyny, and greed were harming others — but we also knew the ground we were on was firm. We wish for time to contemplate the fullness and richness of life, to enjoy our families, friends, hobbies, occupations, nature — as a nourishing respite from the hard work of justice and compassion.

Alas, this is not a simpler time. The days are bombarding us with vitriol and violence, threatening our good sense, our moral centers, our principles, and our very lives. The ground we are on is no longer firm. The times are demanding action from us in ways we never imagined, our heads spinning. We live with anxiety, angst, and world-weariness, what the Germans call *weltschmerz*.

What we need most in these moments is something to help us be stronger, calmer, and better prepared to face the work of justice.

Allow me to introduce to you the Danish concept of *hygge* (*HEW-gə*). Loosely translated, *hygge* is coziness and togetherness. But it's more than that. *Hygge* is more of a mental coziness, an effect of how we are together. Writer Louise Thomsen Brits describes *hygge* as “the art of building sanctuary and community, of inviting closeness and paying attention to what makes us feel open hearted and alive, to create well-being, connection and warmth, a feeling of belonging to the moment and to each other, celebrating the everyday... *Hygge* is about appreciation. It's about how we give and receive. *Hygge* is about being, not having.”

In our personal lives, we know the power of *hygge* — gathering around the table for a shared meal, reading in a comfortable chair, watching the sunset with someone you care for. The things that keep us alert and anxious — the phone, the newspaper, CNN, Facebook — are distinctly absent in these moments of personal *hygge*.

But *hygge* is not just an absence of things that might be overwhelming. It is in fact a practical way of creating sanctuary in the middle of real, hard, complicated life. *Hygge* makes space for the heart and the imagination. It acknowledges the sacred in the secular —there is something extraordinary in the ordinary.

*Hygge* provides space for us to rejuvenate and reclaim what we know is true. As people committed to justice, equity, and compassion, we tend to get overextended so that overdoing becomes our undoing. Mystic Thomas Merton wonders if our modern rush to constantly do is a bit of self-violence. In these times, we need space to gear up again.

While we strive to create *hygge* in our homes, it is even more important that we create *hygge* in our religious communities. At its best, religious community is a shelter from the storm. It is a space set apart where we can breathe into the present moment. It helps us integrate our faith into the rhythm of our daily lives. It makes space for restoring loving and intimate connections with each other. It is the small rituals and gestures we undertake with each other in this sacred space that give everyday life its value and meaning, that comfort us, make us feel at home, rooted, and generous. It is the safe space for learning and discussion that prepares us for the tasks ahead. It is the ever-present invitation to stop, be still, and give thanks.

And it is intentional. *Hygge* doesn't seek to hide the darkness but rather provide a light that reminds us the darkness of pain, sorrows, and troubles is not all there is.

We need this reminder more than ever. It can be so easy to be so shocked we become almost inured to the horror; we are in danger of losing sight of our very souls— the very reason this matters in the first place.

As we enter this time of sabbatical — for Rev. Craig and for you — we can and should embrace this faith community, where the sanctuary of *hygge* can rejuvenate us. Let this place and time be a space to put down your burdens and shift your perspectives from alienation to interdependence, from anxiety to open-heartedness, from weariness to welcome.  
— Rev. Kimberley Debus

# SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD

The Board met for its annual retreat and July Board meeting on July 28 at Destination Oneonta. We reviewed the Strategic Board workshop attended by Karen, Keith, and Jennifer. We also discussed our vision for Outreach and Inreach, and developed three goals for the year:

1. Review and revise our fundraising activities and incorporate them more wholly into our Mission and Vision. Review our entire financial system and develop and/or update policies and procedures as appropriate.
2. More intergenerational focus—have committees, teams and other groups reach out more to youth.
3. Outreach-Inreach —more creative ways to have people find us. Increasing our word of mouth effectiveness—bringing more youth to UUSO. Welcoming and integration focus. Keep them coming!

During our July Board meeting we approved the June BOT minutes and reviewed reports of the Treasurer and Minister. We identified the board liaisons for committees and teams during the Sabatical period (see chart in separate article). We also developed the board calendar for the year. We were happy to appoint Kari Reynolds and Amanda Osterhoudt to the Finance Committee.

The Board will meet next on Wednesday, August 15 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. All UUSO members and friends are welcome to observe. We also encourage comments, questions, and concerns to be expressed during the “Sounding Board” held on Sunday, August 12.

Karen Palmer

UUSO Board President

[greenspeech3278@gmail.com](mailto:greenspeech3278@gmail.com)

### Board Liaisons for the Sabbatical Period

| <b>Committee/Team/Task Force</b> | <b>Board Liaison</b> | <b>Chair</b>   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Finance Committee                | Arlana Young         | Kari Reynolds  |
| Bylaws Committee                 | Mary Ruhoff          | Mary Ruhoff  |
| Endowment Committee              | Keith Willcox        | Margaret Davis   |
| Personnel Committee              | Rosemary Summers     | Rosemary Summers   |
| Properties Committee             | Nathan Elsener       | Duncan Smith   |
| Aesthetics Committee             | Nathan Elsener       | Kathy Paranya  |
| Stewardship Committee            | Adrienne Martini     | Judy Tator   |
| Safety Committee                 | Keith Willcox        | John Bagby   |
| Policy Review Committee          | Mary Ruhoff          | Mary Ruhoff  |
| Sabbatical Committee             | Amy Forster Rothbart | John Bagby   |
| Religious Education Committee    | Amy Forster Rothbart | Deb Bruce  |
| Small Group Ministry Team        | Jeane Bennett-O'Dea  | April Gates  |
| Social Action Team               | Karen Palmer         | Carol Malz   |
| Fun Team                         | Adrienne Martini     | Leah Bridgers<br>Julian Pecenco<br>Anthony Roefs<br>Justine Roefs<br>Alice Siegfried |
| Memorial Garden Committee        | Jeane Bennett-O'Dea  | Arlene Benedict  |
| Historian                        | Arlana Young         | Bob Brzozowski   |
| Worship Team/Audio/Music         | Rosemary Summers     | Pam Strother   |
| Pastoral Care Team               | Jennifer Hyypio      | To Be Determined   |
| Connections Team                 | Adrienne Martini     | Kim Elsener  |
| Green Sanctuary Task Force       | Karen Palmer         | Karen Palmer   |
| Mali Education Project           | Jeane Bennett-O'Dea  | Annmarie Hosnedl   |

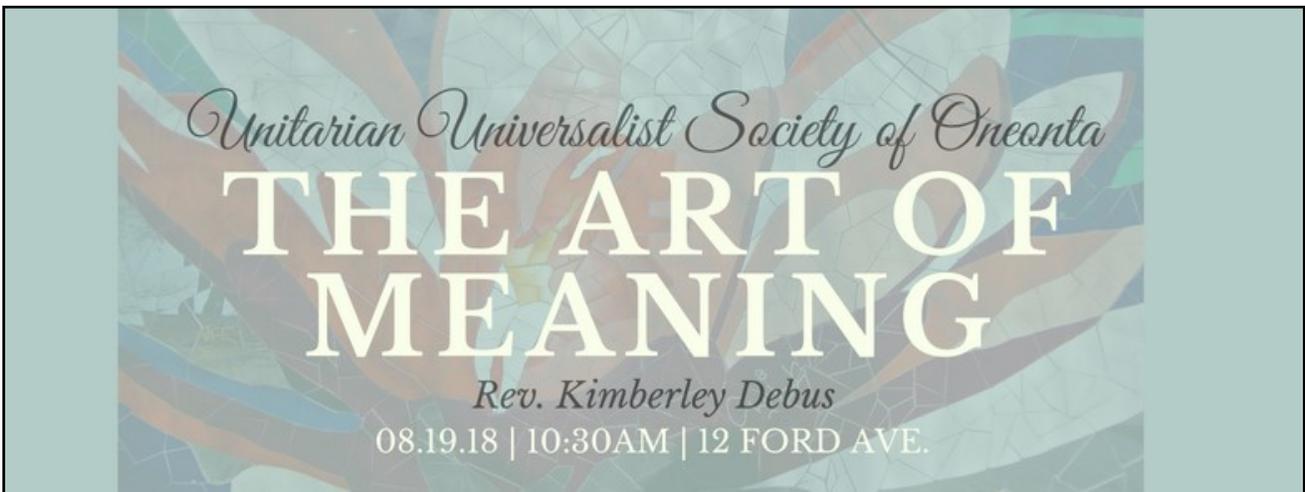
UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES  
SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



Rev. Joe Cleveland serves the Unitarian Universalist  
 Congregation of Saratoga Springs.  
 He is also a skilled banjo player.  
 With his banjo broken, he ponders how we cope  
 with the gifts of brokenness and limitation.

*\*No RE — Summer Break*  
 With music provided by Kathy Shimberg & Rev. Joe  
 Worship Associate: Rich Stelling

Coffee Hour Host: Carol Malz  
 Ushers: Sallie Han & Sue Troost  
 Chancel Table: Vickie Andritz  
 Sound System: Scott Segar



Art has power to move us and change our lives.  
 But what is it about the arts?  
 We'll examine the ways viewing, performing,  
 and making art helps us make sense of our  
 lives, our communities, and all of creation.

*\*No RE—Summer Break*  
 With Music provided by Kathy Shimberg & TBA  
 Worship Associate: Keith Willcox

Coffee Hour Host: Suzy Beddoe  
 Usher: Ben Friedell  
 Chancel Table: Dotty Hudson  
 Sound System: Patrick Rost

**UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY  
OF ONEONTA**

16 Ford Ave.  
Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-432-3491  
Email: [UUSO@uuso.org](mailto:UUSO@uuso.org)  
[www.uuso.org](http://www.uuso.org)  
Sanctuary at 12 Ford Ave.

**The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg**  
Minister  
On Sabbatical

**The Rev. Kimberley Debus**  
Sabbatical Minister  
[kdebus@uuma.org](mailto:kdebus@uuma.org)

Evelyn Warren  
Editor & Office Administrator  
[uuso@uuso.org](mailto:uuso@uuso.org)  
Tues-Fri: 10-3

Susan Ryder  
Director of Religious Education  
607-643-1927  
[dre@uuso.org](mailto:dre@uuso.org)

Karen Palmer  
Board President  
607-267-4793

Tim Horne  
Music Director  
607-432-7323

[Facebook.com/UUSOneonta](https://www.facebook.com/UUSOneonta)

**UUSO Board of Trustees**

Karen Palmer President  
Amy Forster-Rothbart

Vice-President

Jeane Bennett O'Dea Treasurer

Adrienne Martini Clerk

Keith Willcox

Nathan Elsener

Arlana Young

Jennifer Hyypio

Rosemary Summers

Arlana Young

Mary Ruhoff Moderator

Evelyn Warren Recording Secretary



**UUSO DEADLINES:**

**UU News Articles:** Deadline for August 22nd issue  
is Aug 20th, 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**

**The UUA's Green Sanctuary Accreditation  
Program has the following Vision and Mission:**

**Our Vision**

A world that is viable and just for humanity and for the whole of the web of life, including present and future generations.

**Our Mission**

The Green Sanctuary Program provides structure, leadership and support, in broad collaboration, for the UU faith community to engage in an ambitious Environmental Justice and Climate Justice movement that seeks to live fully our seventh principle and achieve our vision of a viable and just world for all.