



# UUU NEWS

A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF ONEONTA

Week of February 6, 2019

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## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

### Minister's Musings Our Heart Work...

The Stewardship Committee's theme for this year is "Stewardship is Heart Work!" While the pun may seem a bit corny, the sentiment is spot on. I learned early in my career as a minister that all ministry is better when it comes from the heart. Whether it is stewardship, worship, pastoral care, prophetic witness, potluck meals, religious education, or building maintenance -- all ministry is best when it is done with and for LOVE. It isn't as obvious as it may seem. Many people throughout the years have practiced ministry out of fear, out of obligation, and even out of greed. But ministry is, at its root, about service. It is about serving one another and the greater whole. Stewardship, at its root, is about caring for resources in service to some greater mission or ideal. Ministry and Stewardship are almost synonymous in their core meanings-- and both are matters of the heart.

There is a lot of Heart Work for UUSO to do. Our creation of a covenant was Heart Work. Our focus on what it means to be kind to one another is Heart Work. Our continuing assessments of our ministries are Heart Work. Every committee and every team is doing Heart Work. Every person that contributes to our UUSO mission and vision is doing Heart Work. When we struggle with an idea or engage each other over tough decisions, we are doing Heart Work. When we recognize our errors and call one another back into right relationship with forgiveness and compassion, we are doing Heart Work. When we listen openly and try new things, we are doing Heart Work. The list is long—

almost endless—and inspiring. Some might call all this work that needs to be done daunting. But, when you remember that all of this Heart Work is motivated by and practiced with LOVE, the work becomes something else entirely. It becomes Life. It becomes Community. It becomes Ministry. And the capacity of our Hearts and our Spirits is boundless. In service together, we have done great things. Working "Heart" together, we can do even more. We CAN Build the Beloved Community where everyone is truly welcome.

### Lunch With the Minister

The parlor chats with the minister are continuing, but they are moving to a different time and a different place. All are invited to join me for lunch in the Olympia Brown House dining room on Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. (starting on February 19<sup>th</sup>.) Bring your own lunch and let's have a faithful conversation.

### Monthly Read – White Fragility

This month, I'm reading *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. If you would like to read it, too, you can buy it from inSpirit, our UUA Bookstore, at [www.uuabookstore.org](http://www.uuabookstore.org) for \$16.00. I'll be hosting a discussion of the book at some point near the end of the month. If you are planning to read the book, or have already read the book, and would like to participate in the discussion group, please let me know.

Cooperatively,

Rev. Craig

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our January sessions have ended and classes are beginning again. The Explorers (grades K-3) will be learning about some famous Unitarians, Universalists, and UU's. (Universalist and Unitarian churches merged in 1961 to form the Unitarian Universalist Association.) The Oneonta Hogwarts class (grades 4-5) will continue to look at UU principles through the lens of the wizarding world of Harry Potter. Our Whole Lives, OWL, (pre-registered youth in grades 6-8) will continue to work on their comprehensive sexuality curriculum that focuses on self-worth, sexual health, responsibility, justice and inclusivity. YRUU, Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (grades 9-12), will continue to work with their adult advisers to set their own schedule.

Suzanne Miller, Prue Stelling, Chava Granett, Deb Bruce, and I are looking at ways for help us make better use of our wonderful Mara Kern Library. Chava is helping to pick out books that are brought to children at the beginning of class. You may see Suzanne sitting with the books in the downstairs hall at Chapin where she is helping the children to check them out. Please look for these books as they come home and help your child remember to bring them back to church. You will also see books at the front of the sanctuary that can be checked out by signing a card and leaving it in a nearby basket. Everyone is also welcome to check out and return books at the Mara Kern Library at the nearby Olympia Brown House at 16 Ford Ave. There is a wonderful children's collection in the front room as well as a great adult collection in the dining room area.

This church quarter the Explorers class will learn about: Domestic Scientist Fannie Farmer; Astronomer Maria Mitchell; Inventors of the telephone Lewis Latimer & Alexander Graham Bell; Inventor of the first train steam engine (and Jello) Peter Cooper; and Architect Frank Lloyd Wright. They will have many hands-on activities. One such activity will be the ever-popular Take-Apart-Party on February 24. We need donations of safe, yet broken, electronic items for them to take apart. These are things such as broken radio -controlled toys, toasters, radios, clocks, typewriters, coffee pots, keyboards, DVD players, old printers, and "dancing" solar toys. How about an old Billy Bass singing "Take Me to the River" that you just don't want to hang on your wall anymore? Things that would be unsafe include TVs, microwaves, computer monitors, laptops and cell phones. We will take out all batteries, cut the power cords off and wear safety goggles. Please ask me if you have any questions about if we could use an item. We are also looking for volunteers from the congregation who have a good understanding of electronics and could help that day as things are taken apart. Items can be left downstairs at Chapin. This party is a celebration of inventiveness and ingenuity and is much-loved by the children.

Here's to another fine quarter in UUSO Religious Education!

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



## BLACK LIVES MATTER BANNER COMING DOWN

During the worship service on Sunday (Feb. 3), I informed the congregation that the Black Lives Matter banner had to be taken down. The banner has hung over our sanctuary doors for almost 2 years now (with only a small break for maintenance and cleaning.) The banner has lasted much longer than I expected it to. Unlike many other congregations, our Black Lives Matter banner was neither stolen or vandalized. Unfortunately, two years of sun, wind, rain, and snow have left their mark on the now-fading banner. And so, it is time to take the Black Lives Matter banner down. The banner will be taken down at the end of this month.

At the same time, as I noted on Sunday, in the two years since we put the banner up, there has been an increase in racially motivated hate crimes, an increase in the number of hate groups, and a disturbing “normalization” of racism by our country’s elected officials. How are we, a self-appointed, Anti-Racism congregation, responding to these disturbing changes? In the past year, as a congregation, what have we done to address white supremacy in our culture and institutions? How did we fight against racism? Our Black Lives Matter banner is coming down-- the question we have before us is this: What are we going to do next?

A number of suggestions have already been made. Order a new banner and put it back up. Order a bigger, more inclusive banner. Put up a smaller banner on the wayside pulpit. Leave the banner down. Put up flags. Perhaps you have a suggestion or thought of your own about what we should do. I’m going to be hosting 3 different listening sessions on the topic in the coming weeks. Come on by and let me and others know your thoughts. All opinions are welcome in these sessions.

The listening sessions will be Tuesday (2/12) at noon  
 Sunday (2/17) at 1:30p  
 Wednesday (2/20) at 7:00p

Others in the congregation are organizing their own gatherings to discuss this issue-- and that’s great! We put the banner up as a congregation, we should decide what to do next as a congregation.

—Rev. Craig

SUNDAY MARCH 17TH - AFTER SERVICE

# PIE SUNDAY

A raffle of donated homemade pies  
 to support our mission.



**WHAT: UUSO PIE SUNDAY**---a raffle of donated homemade pies to support our mission

**WHEN:** Sunday, March 17 at noon during coffee hour

**WHO:** Everyone who loves pie (who doesn’t?). Invite your friends.

**HOW:** Donations of sweet, savory, vegetarian, vegan, and gluten free pies, tarts, quiches are requested from our members and friends.

**VOLUNTEER:** Co-chairs are needed to solicit donations and coordinate the raffle pie display and ticket sales. Please contact Kari Reynolds, Stewardship and Fundraising Co-chair, if you can help.

## STEWARDSHIP IS HEART WORK

Again? Didn't we just make a pledge? Give me a break! Your stewardship committee has heard all of these responses. We've also heard, "Yes, we'd love to ...", "What can I do to help?", "Whatever you need". We know talking about money and budgets isn't everyone's favorite topic but it's a necessity for any organization.



This year the committee has created a campaign called "Stewardship is Heart Work". We will be collecting your promises of support for the work of our congregation both within our building and outside in the greater world. Each of you has either received or will receive a pledge packet which contains helpful information to assist you in making a pledge. Our hope is that you give as much as you can without overextending yourselves. It's better to think about what you truly can afford and not be tempted to pledge beyond your means.

Last year we had a challenge. If we reached a goal of at least 95% of you pledging, we would get a bonus donation. As you remember, you helped us exceed the goal with 98% participation. We will have the same challenge this year BUT... this year it comes with another caveat. We need to encourage 50% or more pledgers to raise their pledge from last year. How much? It's entirely up to you. Can you afford an extra dollar a week? Ten dollars a month? A penny a year? Any increase helps us reach our goals. Would you like to help us raise the challenge amount? Your donation could be public or anonymous. It would make the challenge sweeter.

Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup> will be our Celebration Sunday. We would like to collect as many pledges as we can during the service and then, afterward, invite everyone to a potluck after the service. We'd appreciate your bringing a dish to pass and a place setting but please plan on attending even if you don't bring a dish. We always have more than enough. The potluck is just another way to share our time together and celebrate our wonderful UUSO.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask any member of the committee.

With gratitude,

Stewardship and Fundraising Committee

## CANDLELIGHT DINNER REPORT

Three dinners were hosted Saturday January 26 by Rosemary Summers and Bob Baker, Molly Swain, Leah Bridgers and Julian Pecenco. On Sunday January 26 Alice Siegfried hosted. The Family Dinner was rescheduled to February 10 at Kim and Nathan Elsener's home.

Next dinners will be May 4 and 5. Hope you can be part of one of them.

—Justine Roefs and Alice Siegfried

## BOTTLE AND CAN FUNDRAISING ANNOUNCEMENT

In the words of Perry Como's song, "Oh hot diggity, dog ziggity, boom what you do to me" comes to mind as I offer a New Year's resolution with this bottle and can fundraising announcement. Please make returning your empty bottles and cans to our ongoing fundraising effort for the Community Endowment fund part of your personal resolutions for this year. Your recycling is good for the environment, helps to continue building our Community Fund, and makes you feel good about yourself. So continue throughout 2019 donating your bottles and cans to our Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta as part of a personal resolution. Thank you for heeding this message.

Bill Benedict,  
Alias Captain Clynk

## **CELEBRATION SUNDAY POTLUCK**

On Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, following the social hour, the Stewardship and Fundraising Committee will be hosting our Celebration Sunday Potluck.



What you need to know:

- All are welcome.
- Please bring your own table service and a dish to share.
- Beverages will be provided.
- There will be NO speeches.
- It's a time to gather and celebrate with fun and conversations with your church family.

We hope everyone will attend. If you would like to volunteer to help with set up and/or clean up, please contact Pam Strother at [pstrother@stny.rr.com](mailto:pstrother@stny.rr.com) or 607-267-4280. Looking forward to seeing you there.

### **FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE**

**You are our people, our family, and we don't want to miss anything you want to share with us.**

**Starting this week, you can send your newsletter items, website page updates and OOS announcements to specific church inboxes. This lets us streamline the process and help ensure no message ever gets missed!**

Please send your newsletter article submissions to [newsletter@uuso.org](mailto:newsletter@uuso.org), website update requests to [website@uuso.org](mailto:website@uuso.org), and items for the Order of Service to [OOS@uuso.org](mailto:OOS@uuso.org)

### **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY SHIFTING FOCUS:**

With the completion of the Congregational Covenant and the new Policy on Conflict Management and Disruptive Behavior, the Committee on Ministry (COM) will start to re-direct its focus from that of one primarily dealing with interpersonal disagreements to one focused on the big picture of UUSO and the mission of our ministry. To that end, the COM will be embarking on a "listening tour" with all of the committees and teams that operate within UUSO. The goal is to gain a fuller understanding of the mission/goals of each committee/team and how those goals align with and support the ministry of UUSO. In the coming months the COM hopes to meet with as many committee and team members as possible to hear as many perspectives on the following questions:

- What is the mission of your committee/team?
- How is the work you're doing fulfilling that mission?
- How does the mission and work of your committee/team support the m/v of UUSO?
- What is the impact of the congregational covenant on your committee's interaction and work?
- What could the congregation/UUSO do to further support you committee/team?

We are looking forward to many informative and meaningful conversations with all of the committees and teams!

Sincerely,

The Committee on Ministry – Scott Segar, Carolyn Cooper, Kate Seeley

## SAWDUST FROM THE BOARD

The Board met on January 23 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. We approved the November minutes and reviewed staff and financial reports.

### **Kindness, Covenant, and Change**

After numerous conversations with leaders and other congregants following his sabbatical, Rev. Craig recommends that the congregation focus on implementing our covenant with particular attention to kindness. He also encourages the Trustees be very intentional about answering the questions that the Board President has suggested prior to making changes:

1. What is the process for developing the specifics of this change and who has been included in discussing the change?
2. What are the potential benefits of the change in light of our Mission, Vision and Principles.
3. What is the history of the current way of doing things and how will the change be an improvement over the current way.
4. Who will be impacted by the change?
5. What are some possible negative reactions to the change and how might these be lessened?
6. Who has the authority per our congregation's Bylaws, policies, and procedures to finalize the decision to move forward or not move forward with the change, and when and how will it be finalized?
7. If going forward with the change, when and how is the change being communicated to all concerned prior to implementation with sensitivity and respect while honoring those who have been highly involved in the current way.
8. What feedback mechanism is in place once the change is implemented and how is this communicated?
9. Will there be an assessment of the results of the change at a planned future date and how will that assessment be conducted?
10. What is the proposed change specifically (finalized in writing)?

### **Policy**

We passed a revised Disruptive Persons policy developed by the Committee on Ministry which will appear in the next newsletter.

### **Future Events**

The Board approved NYSCU to hold its annual convention in the Fall of 2020 at UUSO. On April 6, UUSO will also host a regional UUA workshop on Restorative Practices.

### **Next Board Meeting**

Our next BOT meeting will be on February 27, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. Congregants are welcome to observe. We will hold the Sounding Board on February 24 after the service to hear any comments, questions, or concerns to be brought to the Board.

# UUSO UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30AM



*"..we commit to get involved, stay engaged, be honest and kind, be respectful and open-minded, grow and learn together."*

Just how deep and how wide  
is our commitment?

## Stewardship Sunday

*\*Start Together Sunday*

With music by Music Director Tim Horne.  
Worship Associate: Kevin Schultz

Coffee Hour Hosts: Brian Bendlin & Pam Strother

Ushers: Sue Troost & Bob Brzozowski

Chancel Table: Stewardship & Fundraising

Sound System: Patrick Rost



Last year, Rev. Kimberley Debus started a "campaign of kindness" here at UUSO.

How's that campaign going?  
What does kindness look like  
in the wider world?

*\*Children's Worship at OBH*

With music by Michael & Dorothy Frye-Hunt  
Worship Associate: Keith Willcox

Coffee Hour Host: Beth Small

Ushers: Che Baysinger & Susan Woerner

Chancel Table: Rosalind Thomas

Sound System: Scott Segar

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## **UUSO DEADLINES:**

**UU News Articles:** Deadline for the week of February 20th issue is February 23rd, 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**

Here's a source from "Good Energy" with a lot of tips for "eco-friendly living"!

<https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/blog/2017/08/22/ultimate-guide-eco-friendly-living/>

—Karen Palmer, Chair, Green Sanctuary Task Force

### **UUSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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