



Sundays at Albany UU

Please join us on any Sunday for:

Mindfulness Meditation, Religious Education for children and youth, the Service, Coffee Hour, or any combination thereof. Other programs on Sundays include Forum (social justice and environmental topics), Family Chapel, social events, and adult education.

All are welcome!

WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian
Universalist Society of Albany

April 2016

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Sunday Schedule

- 9:00 AM
Mindfulness Meditation
- 9:45 AM
Nursery/Toddler rooms open
- 10:00 AM
Service
Family Chapel
(1st Sunday/mo. Oct.-May)
Religious Education
- 11:00 AM
Coffee Hour
- 11:45 AM
Forum (as scheduled)

Services

Apr. 3 "Fragility Is Life", Rev. Joseph Cleveland

It is painfully clear that life is fragile. What if it is also true that fragility is life? Rev. Trumbore will be swapping pulpits with Rev. Cleveland who serves the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Music: Matt Edwards, piano

Apr. 10 "Creation and Re-Creation," Senior High Service

The Senior High youth are excited to present this service. Children and youth in Grades 5-9 will attend the entire service with their families.

Music: Elena Karpoff, piano



Apr. 17 "Radical Hope in the Face of Climate Change," Rev. Fred Small, 10:30 AM in Rensselaer

This is the annual joint service of the four CRUUNY congregations, held this year at the Doane Stuart School in Rensselaer. Details on page 5.

As we come to understand the gravity of climate disruption, it is easy to be disheartened. Facing this crisis will demand the best of us. It will call us to courage, creativity, kindness and love. How can we sustain hope and help build a just and sustainable society?

* * * No service at FUUSA today! * * *

Apr. 24 "Climate Change...and You...and Us," Rev. Sam Trumbore

With each part per million increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and degree of global temperature increase we lock in devastating climate changes that will diminish and deplete the lives of future generations. There are individual steps we can make to slow down that process. The most important steps however must be collective changes. How can we be part of a solution? Which ones are possible now?

Music: Helderberg Madrigal Singers

Calendar

Events happening every Sunday at Albany UU

9:00 AM Mindfulness MeditationSanctuary
 10:00 AM ServiceEmerson
 Family Chapel (1st Sunday/mo. Oct.-May)Sanctuary
 Religious Education Classrooms
 11:00 AM Coffee HourChanning

Exceptions: Family Chapel: Apr. 24.

No Choir rehearsal Apr. 20.

Regular events and meetings

CHECK the calendar below for changes to date, time and location

Sundays	5:30 PM	Walker Book Club (2nd)	Wednesdays	10:00 AM	Projects & Quilts (weekly)
	11:45 AM	Social Responsibilities Council (3rd)		12:00 PM	All Sides Considered (1st & 3rd)
Mondays	12:00 PM	Channing Circle (3rd)		5:30 PM	Green Sanctuary Committee (3rd)
	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council (1st)		7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal (weekly)
	7:00 PM	Earth Spirits (2nd)	Thursdays	7:00 PM	Program Coordinating Council (2nd)
Tuesdays	10:00 AM	Philosophy Group (weekly)		7:00 PM	Board of Trustees (3rd)
	1:00 PM	Bridge (weekly)			
	7:00 PM	UU Humanists (2nd)			

All other events happening in April

1-Apr Friday
 6:00 PM Multi-gen Potluck hosted by Green Sanctuary.Channing

2-Apr Saturday
 6:00 PM Albany UU Annual AuctionEmerson

3-Apr Sunday
 11:00 AM Get Connected Activity FairEmerson

4-Apr Monday
 5:00 PM Membership Committee..... B-7
 6:15 PM RE Council meetingChanning
 6:30 PM White Privilege Study Group..... B-8

5-Apr Tuesday
 6:30 PM Wellspring Sources B-5

6-Apr Wednesday
 6:30 PM Practice group for Nonviolent Communication..... B-8

7-Apr Thursday
 7:00 PM Congregational Conversation Financial Priorities B-3/B-4

8-Apr Friday
 6:00 PM Green Sanctuary Potluck/Presentation.....Channing
 7:00 PM Senior High service rehearsal.....Emerson

9-Apr Saturday
 6:00 PM Circle DinnerOffsite

10-Apr Sunday
 10:00 AM Family ChapelSanctuary
 11:45 AM Annual Dinner Skit Rehearsal..... 26
 11:45 AM SRC and Black Lives Matter Task Force B-8
 11:45 AM Congregational Conversation on
 Financial Priorities..... B-3/B-4
 11:45 AM Forum (Social Responsibilities Council)Emerson
 11:45 AM Nominating Committee Meeting.....Stott
 5:30 PM Walker Book ClubChanning

11-Apr Monday
 10:00 AM Small Group Ministry (Patrick/Odell) B-5

12-Apr Tuesday
 7:00 PM UU Humanist Group..... B-8

14-Apr Thursday
 6:30 PM Consider the Conversation B-8
 7:00 PM Program Coordinating Council.....Channing

15-Apr Friday
 6:00 PM Annual Fellowship Dinner Franklin Terrace

16-Apr Saturday
 5:00 PM Youth Overnight (Tentative)Whole Building

17-Apr Sunday
No service or activities at Albany UU today!
 10:30 AM CRUUNY Service at the Doane Stuart School..... Offsite

18-Apr Monday
 12:00 PM Channing Circle Lunch Channing
 2:00 PM Meaning Matters Third Monday Afternoon B-8
 7:00 PM Earth Spirits..... B-8

19-Apr Tuesday
 5:15 PM Lifespan Learning Committee B-7
 6:30 PM Wellspring Sources B-5
 7:00 PM Meaning Matters (3rd Tuesday) B-8

20-Apr Wednesday
 5:30 PM Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting Offsite
 6:30 PM Finance Committee B-7
 6:30 PM Practice group for Nonviolent Communication B-8

21-Apr Thursday
 5:30 PM Religious Services Committee B-7
 6:30 PM Consider the Conversation..... B-8
 7:00 PM Albany UU Board Meeting..... Channing

22-Apr Friday
 7:00 PM GSC Film "This Changes Everything" Emerson
 3:00 PM UU Passover Seder Channing

23-Apr Saturday
 5:00 PM Youth Overnight (Tentative)Whole Building

24-Apr Sunday
 12:00 AM Youth Overnight (Tentative)Whole Building
 11:45 AM Congregational Conversation on Limited
 Access Agreement Emerson

25-Apr Monday
 10:00 AM Small Group Ministry (Patrick/Odell) B-5
 7:00 PM Meaning Matters (4th Monday) B-8

27-Apr Wednesday
 5:30 PM Endowment Trust Meeting Stott

Sam's Outlook

Meaningful Creativity

Rev. Sam Trumbore

Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed walk into a bar to compare their histories, experiences and beliefs. Moses orders wine, Jesus orders water and turns it into wine, Mohammed orders Nabeez (his favorite drink made from soaking raisins and dates) and the Buddha drinks whatever is put in his glass with equanimity and gratitude. They are amazed by the modern world and the religious traditions created to honor and preserve their missions and messages. "So much change, so much growth of knowledge, interfaith dialogue, and scientific understanding," they marvel. But what really blows their minds is what they see on one of the screens. There is the picture from the Hubble Space Telescope of one of the oldest galaxies, thought to be created when the universe was only a billion years old.

What do they say to each other given what they see and hear doesn't match up with their cosmologies?

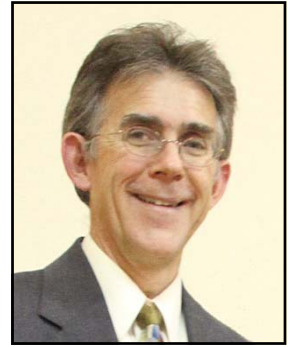
This imaginary conversation would be really helpful given Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam are all founded on obsolete cosmologies. Yet their antiquated views of creation and its purpose still strongly influence the religious traditions, values and beliefs of the religions founded in their names.

One theologian who has updated the ancient thinking of Judaism, Christianity and Islam is mathematician Alfred North Whitehead. His thinking and writing evolved and developed during the time Albert Einstein was changing the world's perception of space and time with his theories of relativity. Creativity has a special place in Whitehead's thought.

It is beyond my scope here to explain his theory of creativity and how he relates it to how he understands space and time. (His theories are right on the edge of my understanding as it is!)

A key idea, however, is the centrality of creativity as an absolute principle of existence. Everything that exists from rocks and lichen, to daffodils and daisies, to rodents and monkeys and humans, has the capacity for what he calls "novelty." Nothing from the sub-atomic particle to the biggest mountain is absolutely determined. Each has some degree of free-

dom to choose that cannot be completely constrained with causal or mechanistic laws. That freedom may be as small for a rock, for example, as when a radioactive isotope in it decays (which cannot be precisely predicted). Or it could be as significant as the choice of kindness rather than aggression by a monkey.



Most importantly, creativity and freedom are not absolute. They are limited, often severely limited, by the structures in which they exist. But those constraints, severe as they may be, do not eliminate the possibility of creativity and novelty.

Having creativity as a freedom available to me, even though it might be constrained, sometimes severely constrained, I find very liberating and meaningful.

There is something awful about how evolution has shaped our minds. We are biased toward paying more attention to negative inputs and tend to discount the positive inputs. This makes sense from a survivalist perspective. Threats are far more important than delights. The latter we enjoy. The former can get us killed. So when we take that negative biasing and look into the future, we are programmed to see more limits than possibilities.

Whitehead's ideas about creativity and novelty are wonderful counterbalances to the narrowing of our expectations and imagination. Our potential for novelty is often far greater than our imaginations will permit. Our willingness to be open to the creative urge that appears in an unguarded moment can disrupt our expectations.

We live in an intensely creative time with monthly, even weekly, advances in science and technology. The changes in understanding of culture, ethnicity, race and gender keep me constantly learning and growing. Climate change is happening dramatically faster than the expectations of researchers. Sometimes it doesn't feel like there are solid places to stand that will not shift under our feet. The buzz word in Silicon Valley is disruptive change.

Sam's Outlook, continued on page 4

News

Get Connected Activity Fair! Sunday April 3, in Emerson Community Hall

How do we make connections at Albany UU? Let me count the ways!

Come to the Get Connected Activity Fair after the service on April 3 and count the opportunities yourself! See the many diverse activities and programs at Albany UU and learn how you can find opportunities that meet your personal interests while also deepening your connections within our wonderful community. Raffles for kids and adults—and a chance to see the recently produced Albany UU Growth Through Service video. Come and hear your fellow Albany UU members talk about why they volunteer and what service to our community means to them.

All are invited!

The **Annual Fellowship Dinner** will be held on Friday, April 15 at the Franklin Terrace in Troy. Come join us for an evening of fun, food, fellowship, and frivolity. There will be a cocktail hour and hors d'oeuvres, dinner, a few short (we hope) speeches, a musical skit where we poke fun at ourselves, followed by dancing.

The invitation is at the end of this newsletter. If you haven't yet sent in your RSVP—with your all-important dinner choices!—clip it and send it today!

You can send in your RSVP by US Mail, or drop it off at the sign up table. Or you can call the Albany UU office (518-463-7135) to make your reservation!

Sam's Outlook, continued from page 3

Whether fast or slow, change is always happening. But would we have it any other way? Hell, for me, would be being stuck with the way things are for an eternity.

Let us be grateful for change because change implies novelty and creativity. Rather than passive pawns of the Gods, we are absolutely free to participate in the ongoing creativity of which we are a part. Our presence leaves a mark on the universe that is beyond measure.

May we choose those marks wisely.—Rev. Sam

Flyers in this issue

At the end of this newsletter you will find full page items on:

- ◆ Annual Fellowship Dinner invitation
- ◆ Combined CRUUNY service, April 17

Annual Fellowship Dinner RSVPs and payments must be received by Monday, Apr. 11.

UU Passover Seder—save the date!

Saturday, April 23, 3:00 – 5:00pm

After several years without a UU Passover Seder, it returns! Details are still being worked out as the organizing committee is just beginning to meet. Save the date! Look for the signup sheet in Channing Hall. For more information or to offer to help, please contact Rev. Sam Trumbore minister@albanyuu.org or 518-366-4532 (cell) or Meredith Andrews mandrew5@nycap.rr.com

Diversity in our pulpit

The Religious Services Committee is seeking a diverse pool of volunteers to occasionally act as the Announcers for Sunday Services. The Announcer typically introduces him/herself, welcomes guests and visitors, invites the congregation to greet neighbors, and reads the announcements. The committee is creating a list of names of people willing to be called, generally with a week's notice, to become the Announcer for a specific Sunday. If you would like to be available for this duty, please drop a note to Dawn Dana, the committee chair, at ddana1@nycap.rr.com.

WON'T YOU JOIN US

at the Auction Royale?

Goods and Services Auction

Saturday, Apr. 2 at 6:15 pm.

\$5 at the door

UUs gathering for “Radical Hope in the Face of Climate Change” on Sunday, April 17, in Rensselaer
8th Annual Capital Region UU Combined Worship Service

Unitarian Universalists from across the Capital Region will be coming together on **Sunday, April 17**, for the 8th Annual Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of NY Combined Worship Service entitled **“Radical Hope in the Face of Climate Change.”**

So mark your calendar now to travel to the Doane Stuart School, just off Interstate 90 in Rensselaer, on April 17 instead of Albany!

UU minister **Rev. Fred Small** will lead us in worship. He is a singer-songwriter and former environmental lawyer who recently left his position as senior minister at First Parish in Cambridge, MA, to devote his energy full-time to climate justice. Rev. Small notes that “As we come to understand the gravity of climate disruption, it is easy to be disheartened. Facing this crisis will demand the best of



Rev. Fred Small

us. It will call us to courage, creativity, kindness and love. How can we sustain hope and help build a just and sustainable society?”

Instrumentalists and choir members from the UU congregations in Albany, Glens Falls, Saratoga Springs and Schenectady will perform. This service is designed to be welcoming and engaging for all ages. Nursery and child care will be available for children through second grade, and the service will include an activity area with floor pillows for those who need to move around quietly.

The Doane Stuart School is handicapped accessible and has a beautiful Interfaith Chapel. The school is very easy to find at 199 Washington Ave, Rensselaer. It is only 3 blocks from exit 7 of Route 90, immediately off the eastern end of the Patroon Island Bridge.

Did you know?

You could help out on any given Sunday--from supplying the flowers to ushering to greeting fellow UUs--volunteers are always welcome!

To get more information on any of these roles contact the person listed.

To sign up: Sign up at the Sign Up Site bulletin board in Channing Hall *OR* call the office at 463-7135 *OR* go online to Volunteer Spot and sign up there (albanyuu.org—The link is under Volunteer Opportunities.)

Interested in doing this?	Here’s the person to talk to!	Phone	Email
Greeter	Barb Manning (Welcome Team)	439-4226	Barbaracmanning@hotmail.com
Welcome Table	Barb Manning (Welcome Team)	439-4226	Barbaracmanning@hotmail.com
Announcer	Dawn Dana (Religious Services)	446-0382	ddana1@nycap.rr.com
Usher or Lead Usher	Dawn Dana (Religious Services)	446-0382	ddana1@nycap.rr.com
Chalice Lighter	Leah Purcell (DRE)	463-7135	dre@albanyuu.org
Flowers	Sandy Stone (Flower Cmte.)	489-8293	dsalba-ny@nycap.rr.com
Coffee Host	Dick Dana (Program Coord. Council)	446-0382	rhdana@nycap.rr.com

Recent changes in the Coffee Host instructions have the role starting after the service—no need to get here early! If you want to donate flowers, you have the choice of arranging them yourself, or having the committee do it. If you’re game to learn

something new, a Lead Usher will show you how to Usher. Greeters get to smile and say Good Morning (how easy could it be?) And a Chalice Lighter can be ANY age! There are many ways *you* can volunteer and be present.

New art show!

Come see the new art show hanging in Channing Hall. There are paintings by Albany UUs George Shear and Terry Way, and also by Ruth Young and her daughter Candace Young (a recent RIT graduate). There is also some mixed media work by Paula Drysdale Frizzel.

Board notes

Visioning the future as a beacon of liberal religion

Peggy Sherman, President

Ten years ago, our congregation broke ground for the construction of Emerson Community Hall. Next year, under the terms of our agreement, we must refinance the mortgage that helped fund that construction. The Board of Trustees is recommending that we use available assets, including an additional loan from the Endowment Trust, to refinance our mortgage and achieve a lower annual payment.

The way we refinance that loan will affect our annual budget and fundraising in the future. But it goes beyond spreadsheets. By reducing our annual mortgage burden, we can open up other possibilities for Albany UU to live our mission and to grow in impact and in numbers. The Board invites you to participate in two upcoming congregational conversations, on Thursday, April 7 at 7 PM and Sunday April 10 at 11:45 AM, so that you can better understand and weigh in on our recommended approach to this refinancing. Childcare will be available for the April 10 meeting.

It's hard to remember Albany UU without Emerson Community Hall! Emerson gave us the larger space that we needed for Sunday services and Albany UU gatherings - but it also allowed us to open our doors wide to the community and host lectures, forums, concerts and other events sponsored by many different organizations. Our building is far more accessible and functional, thanks to the elevator, ramp to our Washington Avenue lobby, additional classroom and office space, and restrooms on all floors. Many years in the making, this project reflected our aspiration to become a beacon of liberal religion in our community.

What are today's activities and projects that reflect our aspirations for Albany UU? Our mission statement adopted two years ago calls on us to welcome everyone, seek truth and deeper meaning, pursue justice through inspired action, and cultivate compassion and love for all connected by the web of life. Dedicated volunteers in our congregation provide many examples of the ways that we live out our mission: they are teaching our children UU val-

ues, advocating at the State Capitol and planning a new playground for Sheridan Preparatory Academy. Our Sunday service and religious education program provide the foundation, with programs throughout the week that connect us as a religious community.



But how can we do more to live our mission? How can Albany UU reach out to more people, both within and outside our congregation? The Board and Rev. Sam have discussed some exciting ideas over the last two years:

- ◆ regularly supporting a ministerial intern who would serve in our congregation
- ◆ developing a second service at an alternate time
- ◆ expanding our programs and services to reach out, welcome newcomers and integrate new members into our community
- ◆ developing satellite locations to extend our congregation's reach

Which are the right ideas for our congregation? That's a discussion that the Board of Trustees must continue to have. Ideas only become possibilities and then realities with research, discussion, planning and hard work, as our experience with the Emerson construction project showed. It's clear that each of these ideas would require time and energy from our hard-working minister and staff. And as the Personnel Committee has reported, even with efforts to improve salaries and benefits over the last few years, we still are not compensating staff at a level that meets the UUA Fair Compensation guidelines.

Our Finance Committee carefully crafted the original financing plan for the construction of Emerson, and over the last year, the Finance Committee has diligently reviewed possible refinancing scenarios and shared information and advice with the Board. The Finance Committee has endorsed an additional Endowment Trust loan to pay down the mortgage, but they have recommended a higher annual **Board Notes, continued on page 7**

Board Notes, continued from page 6

payment in order to pay off the bank loan and the Endowment Trust sooner.

The Board feels it is more important to reduce the pressure on our annual budget. In 2015, our annual stewardship campaign fell short of its goal, and the Board reduced spending by cutting the hours of our administrative assistant position from full to half-time. In the current fiscal year, our congregation's budget is about \$5,000 lower than our spending in 2014-15.

Reducing the annual mortgage payment will open up opportunities in our future budgets, both for new projects that will help our congregation grow in impact and in numbers and for fulfilling the goal of fair compensation for Albany UU staff. Come to one of the upcoming conversations to learn more and share your questions and feedback for the Board as we finalize a proposal for the congregation's annual meeting on May 15.

Additional background on mortgage refinancing proposal

To finance the Emerson Community Hall expansion Project, Albany UU members and friends generously contributed to a capital campaign, and in the end, donations provided about half of what was needed. We borrowed the rest: \$1.2 million from Berkshire Bank, and another \$575,000 from ourselves - from our congregation's Endowment Trust.

In developing the financing plan for this project, the Finance Committee knew that our congregation's budget could not withstand a \$79,000 increase to cover annual mortgage payments - at least, not all at once. So the Finance Committee incorporated a "sinking fund" into the plan, to cushion the impact and spread it out over a period of years. Funds were set aside in a separate Building Fund (the sinking fund) to allow us to gradually increase mortgage payments from the annual budget.

To illustrate how this works, in our current 2015-16 budget, about \$44,000 is allocated for mortgage payments. The Building Fund pays an additional \$35,000, so that Berkshire Bank will get its full annual payment of \$79,000. Each year since we took out the mortgage, the amount paid out of the Building Fund has decreased, as the amount paid out of our

annual budget has increased. Even so, we only pay 56% of the mortgage payment from the annual budget.

When it's time to refinance in March 2017, the mortgage balance will be about \$860,000. The Board recommends that we pay down that balance with the remaining amount of the Building Fund (expected to be more than \$300,000). The Board also recommends borrowing an additional \$250,000 from the Endowment Trust, to further reduce the mortgage balance to about \$310,000.

Although we can't know what interest rates will be next year, we can estimate that a \$310,000 ten-year mortgage might require an annual payment of around \$39,000. That's about \$5,000 less than the \$44,000 that we currently pay from the Albany UU annual budget and \$40,000 less than the \$79,000 total that we currently pay from both the budget and the Building Fund.

By using the Building Fund and the Endowment Trust loan to reduce the amount to be refinanced, Albany UU will avoid paying about \$40,000 to the bank for each of the next ten years. After the bank loan is paid off in 2027, we would make payments of \$40,000 per year to the Endowment Trust, until the amount borrowed is fully repaid.

The Endowment Trust was created in 1993 to promote the long-term financial security of our congregation. Its five elected trustees accept and manage gifts and bequests and make grants from investment earnings to programs and projects of our congregation. Recent Endowment Trust grants helped our youth participate in a service trip to Guatemala and helped a large Albany UU delegation attend General Assembly in Providence, RI.

Our congregation must approve any use of the Endowment Trust principal. We could vote on an additional loan from the Endowment Trust at our 2016 Annual Meeting on May 15. The additional loan would leave a remaining balance of about \$70,000 in the Endowment Trust, with loans to the congregation totaling \$825,000.

The original \$575,000 loan was intended to be repaid to the Endowment Trust by 2032. Under the Board's recommended approach, with a lower annual payment, this repayment period would be extended by ten years. The new \$250,000 loan would be repaid after that, between 2042 and 2048.



UU gardening, please let me know (pgmosk@earthlink.net or 439-6347) and I will add your name to our "dirty fingernail" list. Knowledge of gardening is not required as we are largely raking, cleaning off debris, etc. I hope to welcome new and "seasoned" gardeners to this very important task. Watch the Sunday Order of Service for information about the actual day and time of the clean-up. If you are anxious to get started, it's fine to come in and rake away last year's leaves from the gardens behind the ramp and on West Street. Come, learn new gardening skills and meet a group of friendly Albany UU members and friends!--Paula Moskowitz

May Day Celebration—save the date

The first part of the service on May 1 will be a May Day Celebration—for people of all ages. If you have creative ideas on how to make a May Pole for Emerson Hall, contact Leah Purcell at dre@albanyUU.org.

Albany UU gardens—ready for a brand new season!

Plants started emerging from the ground VERY early this year, now let's just hope they are brave and make it to the actual growing season. In late April or early to mid-May, weather dependent, the Gardening group will tackle our first spring task--cleaning up the gardens and getting rid of winter debris so the plants can thrive. With enough volunteers, this task can be completed in just a couple of hours. If you would like to help with this one shot friendly group activity, even if you are new to Albany

Fight Hunger in our Community

The CROP in CROP Hunger Walk stands for "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty." Will you join our community in raising funds to alleviate hunger at home and around the world? Come together with your fellow Albany UUs and hundreds of your Capital Region neighbors in the CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, May 1st. We're also looking for people to work on registration on Walk Day, so there's a way to help even if you don't want to walk. See Dawn Dana at coffee hours starting on April 3rd to sign up to walk, help, or pledge your support.

Seeking musicians for summer services at Albany UU

The Religious Services Committee is looking for musicians to provide accompaniments and solos for summer services (6/19 through 9/4). Please contact Randy Rosette at rosette_jensen@juno.com before May 1 if you are interested.

Growing Together

White Privilege Study Group Book Discussion: *Waking Up White* by Debby Irving

Monday, April 4 at 6:30pm

The White Privilege Study Group's goal is to help those society identifies as white to investigate the privilege America has given to them and not given to those whom the society does not identify as white. The goal of the group is to help those who society identifies as white to **recognize** this situation, **learn**

in detail and specifics, generally and personally, how bad this is for everybody, and **motivate** members and friends of our congregation to work to dismantle

Three ways to sign up for a class or event:

- Send an email to Registration@AlbanyUU.org
- Sign up at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall
- Call the church office, 463-7135

If childcare is offered, please let us know you need it when you register. (Include names and ages of children.)

and end the whole racist system. We alternate between reading a book and media presentations to facilitate the recognition and learning process that will lead to participation in action. Led by Rev. Trumbore. To register, please see box.

Understanding Islam in Today's World

Saturday, May 14, 9 to noon

What do you know about Islam and how do you know what you hear is correct? What distinguishes a Shia from a Sunni Muslim? What is Jihad? What is the role of women in Islam? Join us for a continental breakfast followed by an informational presentation and round table discussions on Islam. Bring your curiosity and your questions about Islam. Try on a head scarf, get a henna tattoo – children welcome and childcare available. To register, please see box

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If childcare is offered, please let us know you need it when you register. (Include names and ages of children.)

sation,” a “powerful and inspiring film on the American struggle with communication and preparation at the end of life ... not a story about death, it’s a film about living life to its fullest up to the very end.” Learn about “The Conversation Project,” part of a national initiative created by Ellen Goodman in partnership with the IHI (Institute for Healthcare Improvement), and take home resources to help you to identify your values and goals for care.

Session II: Learn about and discuss Advance Care Planning steps and documents. Begin to explore the many options for memorializing and final arrange-

ments. Resources to continue this journey will be provided. Light refreshments will be served at this session.

To register, please see box. For questions contact Sharon at sharonbabala@gmail.com or Mary at [\[larkuu@yahoo.com\]\(mailto:larkuu@yahoo.com\). We’re looking forward to discussing this important topic with you!](mailto:meadow-</p></div>
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Please, consider The Conversation.

Have you had “The Conversation”? Most Americans think it’s important to talk with their loved ones about end of life care, yet less than 30% have done so. Do the people closest to you know what matters most to *you* near the end of life? It’s never too early to think about these things, but it can be too late. Without knowledge of your wishes, the default hospital mode is aggressive care, which may not be your choice.

Join Sharon Babala and Mary Myers on Thursdays, April 14 and 21 from 6:30-8:30 PM to learn how to start your conversation and to document your wishes. Attendance at both sessions is strongly recommended.

Session I: View and discuss “Consider the Conver-

Updated RE Calendar for April

April 3 - regular session of Sunday school (because we can't use the Sanctuary for Family Chapel that day)

April 10 - Youth group service – Children in Pre-k through 3rd grade attend the first part of the service; 4th graders and older attend the whole service – the youth group is excited to create a service that engages older children, middle schoolers, and teens.

April 17 - Multigen service at Doane Stewart School

April 24 – Family Chapel for children in Pre-k through 6th grade; Parent Support Group

Our Community

Getting to Know UU: orientation to UUism Saturday, May 7, 8:45 AM-noon

We invite you to join us for “Getting to Know UU”. We’ll start with coffee and snacks and getting to know each other. You’ll learn about Unitarian Univer-

salism and about our congregation, and you’ll get a chance to ask all the questions you’ve been collecting. We’ll talk about how to get involved in the Albany UU community and about becoming a member. All in all, it’s a fun morning of conversation and fellowship, and a pleasant first step on the path to membership!

Religious Exploration

Creativity and preparing the soil for revisioning

Leah Purcell, Director of Religious Education

Creativity is simply our ability to dream things up and make them happen. — Peggy Taylor

2016-17 will be my 10th year serving the congregation. The Religious Education Council and I, along with the Board of Trustees would like to capitalize on this milestone. Perhaps this would be a good moment to have a revisioning process of Religious Education with the whole congregation, focusing on Sunday school and other programming and ministry to children, youth and families.

We're not sure what the revisioning process would look like, let alone what the vision might be. Some of my colleagues around the country are also in the process of doing a congregational revisioning for RE; others are planning to start. So resources for a process are available. But before we begin, I invite you to do some reflection on to prepare your spiritual soil for us to dream and imagine together.

Happily, coincidentally, or not coincidentally(?), the writings from Soul Matters on the topic of Creation are appropriate materials for this reflection:

Creativity It is about dreaming and imagination. It is about being able to envision what others haven't. It is about noticing connections that haven't been drawn. Even connections between us and the earth, and us and each other. To be a people of creation is indeed to dream the "not yet."

But what about that other part? "...and make them happen." There's something in there that sometimes gets short shrift. Yes, creation requires the ability to imagine the "not yet," but it also requires the courage to live into it.

Which means that this month is not just about imagination, artistry and self-expression, but also about bravery. It takes courage to offer a unique expression. It takes courage to try new things and fail. Heaven knows it takes courage to create and plant seeds for that which won't be finished in your lifetime. Creativity asks us to leave the familiar, to break with the pack, to risk being singled out. Yeah, there is joy, beauty and play in creation, but there is also insecurity, isolation and the sheer exhaustion of trying again and again until you finally stumble on that one and lucky moment of getting it right.

And so maybe that's why we also better talk about "co-creation" this month. Something as daring as creativity is dangerous if we try to do it alone. Indeed, where did we get that silly idea that artists and inventors are isolated, independent geniuses?! If there ever was a myth, that is definitely one. There is no such thing as a "person of creation"; only "people of creation"! New ideas are created in the clash of debate. New art occurs only when inspired by those who have gone before. New and better forms of community are built on the back of those who have toiled and sacrificed long before we put ourselves on the line. Simply put, there are no creators without companions.

So this month, let's honor the bravery that allows the creative instinct to come alive. But let's also give thanks for the companions that make it all possible. And, yes, ok, let's go ahead and indulge a little in the sheer joy and sacred fun of dreaming things up!

In joyful service,

Leah



Childcare is available: please let us know you need it when you register.

To sign up: Send an email to registration@albanyuu.org, call the office at 463-7135, or sign up in Channing Hall. Please indicate if you need childcare.

6 to 9 at 6:09: Circle Dinners

Circle Dinner on Saturday, April 9

Circle dinners provide Albany UUs and visitors the opportunity to socialize over a delicious potluck dinner in a private home and become better acquainted with fellow UUs. Everyone is welcome, singles and couples, regardless of dietary restrictions. We can

also provide rides, as needed. The next circle dinner will be Saturday, April 9. Please join us.

To sign up for an April dinner, you may email Martha Musser at mussermartha@gmail.com or complete the form on the sign-up board in Channing. *The deadline for signing up is Sunday, March 27.* Assignments will be announced after that date. If you have questions, please contact Martha at 518-434-2246 or by email.

I have cancelled the March circle dinner, because I will be in vacationing in New Zealand and won't be able to organize the dinners. To prevent this happening in the future, I could really use a backup to help with circle dinners. Would one of you lovely volunteers like to learn the procedure? Please email me.

Save this date for the last Circle Dinner of the church year: Saturday, May 21

Earth Spirits—change in date!

April 18, 7:00 pm

We are moving from the 2nd Monday of the Month to the 3rd Monday of the Month for April and May. On April 18 we will be meeting in room B-8 at 7:00 pm.

Our topic will be Conscious Evolution. According to Wikipedia, Conscious Evolution refers to the claim that humanity has acquired the ability to choose what the human species will evolve into, based on advancements in science, medicine, technology, psychology, and spirituality. This topic is addressed in depth in a book "Conscious Evolution" by Barbara Marx Hubbard. It is not necessary to have read the book or done any other reading to attend. Betsey Miller will lead a discussion using some readings from Hubbard's book. Discussion will focus on how evolution has worked to date, and where it is going and what role we see humans playing in the next step along the evolutionary path. Everyone is welcome, please join us. If you have any questions please contact Betsey Miller, 461-1177 or bmiller15@nycap.rr.com.

Volunteer Opportunity Summer Garden Coordinator

The Summer Garden Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring volunteer sign ups during the prime growing season--late May to mid September. Since

**Need to talk?
FUUSA Pastoral Care
Associates are here
to listen!**



Our Pastoral Care Associates have been trained in compassionate listening skills and are available to all members and friends of our congregation. To contact a Pastoral Care Associate, email listeners@albany-uu.org, contact Reverend Sam Trumbore, the FUUSA office at 518-463-7135, or one of them personally. They are: Dave Munro, Chuck Manning, Phil Rich, Jan Satin, Randy Rosette, Sandy Stone, and Lisa Barron.

the volunteers actually sign up online for the weeks they want to garden, the coordinator mainly monitors the sign ups by logging into Volunteer Spot and sends out notices when specific weeks are lacking gardeners. The Coordinator also notifies volunteers of any special conditions in the gardens. Since this coordination can be done on your own computer, it can also be done at any time convenient for you.

Paula Moskowitz, who has done this job for nine years(!), will tell you all you need to know to do this job, and partner with you to ensure that the green space surrounding our building is welcoming and inviting. Contact Paula at 439-6347 or pgmosk@earthlink.net.



Albany UU Humanists

Albany UU Humanists regularly meet on the second Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, April 12 at 7 PM** in Room B-8 at Albany UU.

At the March meeting seven of us discussed what we consider to be "Humanism".

We look at Humanism in a number of different ways at Albany UU. Come and share your perspective on Humanism with the group, and share the definitions we might use in our exploration. Also, what do we consider to be a Humanist service? In April we will continue to explore Humanism from different perspectives, The discussion ranges widely, and there are usually handouts. You are also encouraged to join the Albany UU Humanist church egroup (see

below) for additional entries and information,

For those interested in learning more about Humanism in Unitarian Universalism, please go to the UU Humanists website at <http://huumanists.org>. There you will find the UU Humanist blog, and some related Facebook groups. There is also the American Humanist Association's website at <http://americanhumanist.org>.

If you wish to join the Albany UU Humanists conversations, please go to the Albany UU website (albanyuu.org) and click on Groups and add your name to the Albany UU Humanists. You may also call the Albany UU office (463-7135), or contact Don Odell (odell.don@gmail.com, 482-4574) to be added to the egroup. I will see you on April 12, and around Albany UU on Sunday mornings. -Don Odell

Channing Circle, gathering of retired folks

Channing Circle meets next on Monday, April 18 at noon. Bring your favorite sandwich or salad and Linda English has volunteered to bring dessert. After our lunch, we will exchange views on the future of Channing Circle with a new facilitator, as I will no longer be able to facilitate after our June meeting. So come with your ideas and suggestions. Look forward to seeing you. Thayer Heath

Walker Book Club

Join the Walker Book Club for a potluck and book discussion on Sunday, April 10, 2016 at 5:30 pm in Channing Hall. Newcomers are always welcome! We start with a welcoming shared supper which is followed by a lively discussion of the book of the month. Bring your favorite dish to share and a small contribution to cover beverages.

In April we will discuss the novel, *The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle, which is a timely account of immigration in central California.

Our May tradition is to discuss a book considered to be a classic. We will read the novel, *Catch-22*, by Joseph Heller. Set on a made-up island off the coast of Italy during the Second World War, where an American bombing group is stationed, Colonel Cathcart keeps raising the number of missions his men must fly to impress his superiors. The hero, Yossarian, desperately wants out after flying 50 missions. He's thwarted by *Catch-22*, a clause which

states that pilots don't have to fly if they are certified as insane, but that being driven mad by fear is fundamentally rational. This comically tragic novel describes the folly of war and bureaucracy.

Contact Linda Hunt at <mailto:lshunt@nycap.rr.com> for further information or questions.

UU Weekend--early registration now!

Who says the cost of everything keeps going up? Here's your chance to beat inflation! Register now for the UU Weekend at Silver Bay from October 14-16, 2016 to lock in last year's rates! **Any registrations received by May 29 pay last year's rates** for adults and children.

Make UU Weekend the eagerly awaited highlight of your fall season! This retreat conjures up images of stimulating workshops: goofy plays, family togetherness, music floating over the mountains, cozy conversations by the fireplace, the sights and smells of fall, and silent auction skirmishes.

While the Silver Bay committee is still tweaking the weekend schedule, here is a preview of a few confirmed workshops and activities to whet your appetite. New workshops include Dances of Universal Peace, a Workout Workshop, and Shamanic Journey. Some well-received workshops that will be offered again include Star Island Beads, a Goddesses workshop, Drawing or Painting; and Photography as well as a full schedule of children's activities. We have secured two fabulous folk musicians, Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen of Compass Rose Music, for one evening's entertainment!

As the Presidential election nears, we've lined up a highly recommended and timely presenter as the Jeanne Blank speaker: Professor Bruce Miroff from the Department of Political Science at SUNY Albany. Professor Miroff teaches and writes on the American Presidency, American Political Development, American Political Theory, and Political Leadership. Expect a lively discussion!

And don't forget that perennial favorite....the Silent Auction, a hotly contested event for young and old! As you are doing your spring cleaning, put aside your gently used items **now** and bring them with you. Favorite items include small electronics, collectibles, nice serving dishes, books, jewelry, and artwork. And don't forget the kids! Children's items are some

of the most sought after auction articles.

Don't miss out on all the fun! Sign up next Sunday at the UU weekend table or fill out the registration form and send it with a deposit to Linda Way. (Her contact information is on the form.) And don't forget to sign up to volunteer....volunteers are needed for many different roles, including assisting Silver Bay staff who will conduct kids' programs for all age levels.

Joys and Caring Corner

A note from Malcolm Bell: **Nancy Bell** is in the Evergreen Commons nursing home in East Greenbush and would welcome visitors. Afternoon is best.

If you need the services of the Caring Network, please call the office during regular hours at 463-7135.

Items of personal joy or caring may be submitted during the service on the yellow cards provided, or directly to Mary Ann Randall (mabrandall@gmail.com.)

Social Justice

SRC notes

The Social Responsibilities Council is most grateful for the \$400+ gift for the Sheridan Prep playground from fund-raising efforts by some of the RE classes. Thank you! And speaking of funding, we would love some ideas (and maybe some help!) for securing more funds from community organizations. We've heard that the Rotary Club might be a possibility—does anyone have a connection and could give us some advice? Ideas about other philanthropic local organizations? If so, please contact Jean Poppei, poppei@sage.edu, or Martha Musser, Chuck Manning, Lois Griffin.

SRC recommends:

March 30, Wednesday, 7p Rev. William J. Barber, Siena College, Sarazen Student Union

“Moral dissenters are a necessity for destiny, choosing the path to higher ground”

April 12, Tuesday, 5:30p **“Say Her Name: Law Reform and Activism at the Intersection of Race and Gender,”** Law professor Donna Young, Albany Law School, Bdg 1928, Room 200.

Information on Raise the Age (NY is one of just two states that prosecutes 16-year-olds as adults and sends youth to adult prisons) Find out about important legislative action at <http://raisetheagency.com/>

Black Lives Matter taskforce Sunday, Apr. 10

Lots continues to happen. The April meeting on the second Sunday of April at 11:45 we will be combined with SRC members. Till then, read, think, attend the various programs at Albany UU.--Ed

Green Sanctuary hosts potluck

Friday, April 8, 6 PM potluck, 7:30 presentation

The Green Sanctuary invites you to “Keep Fossil Fuels In The Ground”—a potluck and presentation on heating without fossil fuels. A renewable energy expert will tell us about how we can get our electricity and heat with greatly reduced use of gas, oil or coal (and even wood, still a carbon emitter).



If you can come early and help set up for the potluck, or help clean up after, please contact Carol Butt

Raise your voice for choice

Do you want terminally ill New Yorkers to have end-of-life choices that are safe and legal? Come to the SRC table on Sundays to learn about pending legislation and to sign letters to support choice, or contact Thayer Heath at 878-1533 or Nancy Willie-Schiff at 459-4981. Save the dates, and join the campaign with our partners to learn and advocate:

MAY 3, 4:00-6:30, Colonie Library Stedman Room. HOW TO DIE IN OREGON, a film followed discussion, sponsored by Death with Dignity Albany.

MAY 9, 9:30-3:30, New York State Capitol. LOBBY DAY sponsored by Interfaith Impact of New York State.

MAY 10, 11:00-3:00, New York State Capitol. LOBBY DAY sponsored by Compassion and Choices.

Questions? Contact Thayer Heath (878 1533) or Nancy Willie-Schiff (459 4981).

Contact Us

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email: board@albanyuu.org

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Regular meeting days

Check current calendar for time and location

Board of Trustees, 3rd Thursday
Program Coordinating Council, 2nd Thursday
Religious Education Council, 1st Monday
Social Responsibilities Council, 3rd Sunday

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

Phone: 518.463.7135

Address: 405 Washington Avenue, between Robin Street and Lake Avenue, Albany, New York 12206

Main entrance is on Washington Avenue. Rear entrance is on West St. Both have ramp access. The building is fully handicapped accessible.

Parking: Parking is available on the street. On Sundays (and for some special events) FUUSA has permission to use the University at Albany's Hawley Parking Lot on Robin Street at Washington Avenue.

Office hours

September-June: Monday-Friday, 9:00-3:00

July-August: Monday–Thursday 9:00-1:00

And by appointment

Website

www.AlbanyUU.org

Building use

To **reserve a room** for a FUUSA activity, contact Church Administrator Amy Lent (463-7135 or administrator@albanyuu.org).

To **rent hall or classroom space** for a personal or non-FUUSA activity, contact Church Administrator Amy Lent (463-7135 or administrator@albanyuu.org).

Windows is the newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany. It is published monthly, except July and August, in the offices of the Society at 405 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12206, and distributed to members and friends of the Society. Church office phone is 518-463-7135.

Editor: Amy Lent

Send submissions for all publications to:
Windows@AlbanyUU.org or to the church office.

Publication deadlines

FUUSA Preview email: 9:00 a.m. Wednesdays

Order of Service: 9:00 a.m. Thursdays

Windows: 9:00 a.m. 3rd Friday of the month

You are cordially invited
to Albany UU's Annual
Fellowship Dinner

Friday, April 15, 2016

at Franklin Terrace
126 Campbell Avenue, Troy NY

6:00 p.m. **Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres** (cash bar) **\$33.00** per person

7:00 p.m. **Dinner** **RSVP** with payment by April 11, 2016

And then... **Entertainment** as can be provided only
by the UU Players **Persons needing transportation** may call the
church office at 463-7135.

Followed by ... **Dancing**

Choice of Entree:

- ☞ Chicken Dijon, pan seared, in a tarragon dijon cream sauce
- ☞ Grilled Filet of Salmon, in a citrus chardonnay beurre blanc
- ☞ Sliced Sirloin Steak, char-grilled, center cut, cabernet demi-glace
- ☞ Eggplant Parmesan with penne pomodoro

Gluten Free: Steak and Chicken can be made gluten free without the sauces; Salmon is gluten free.

FREE childcare at Franklin Terrace. This will enable parents of young children to enjoy the fellowship and dinner, while knowing their children are nearby. Dinner for children will not be provided. A gratuity for teen childcare providers is appreciated. **RSVP for childcare with your dinner RSVP.**

Your RSVP with food choices, payment, and childcare needs **must be received** at the Albany UU office **by Monday, April 11.**



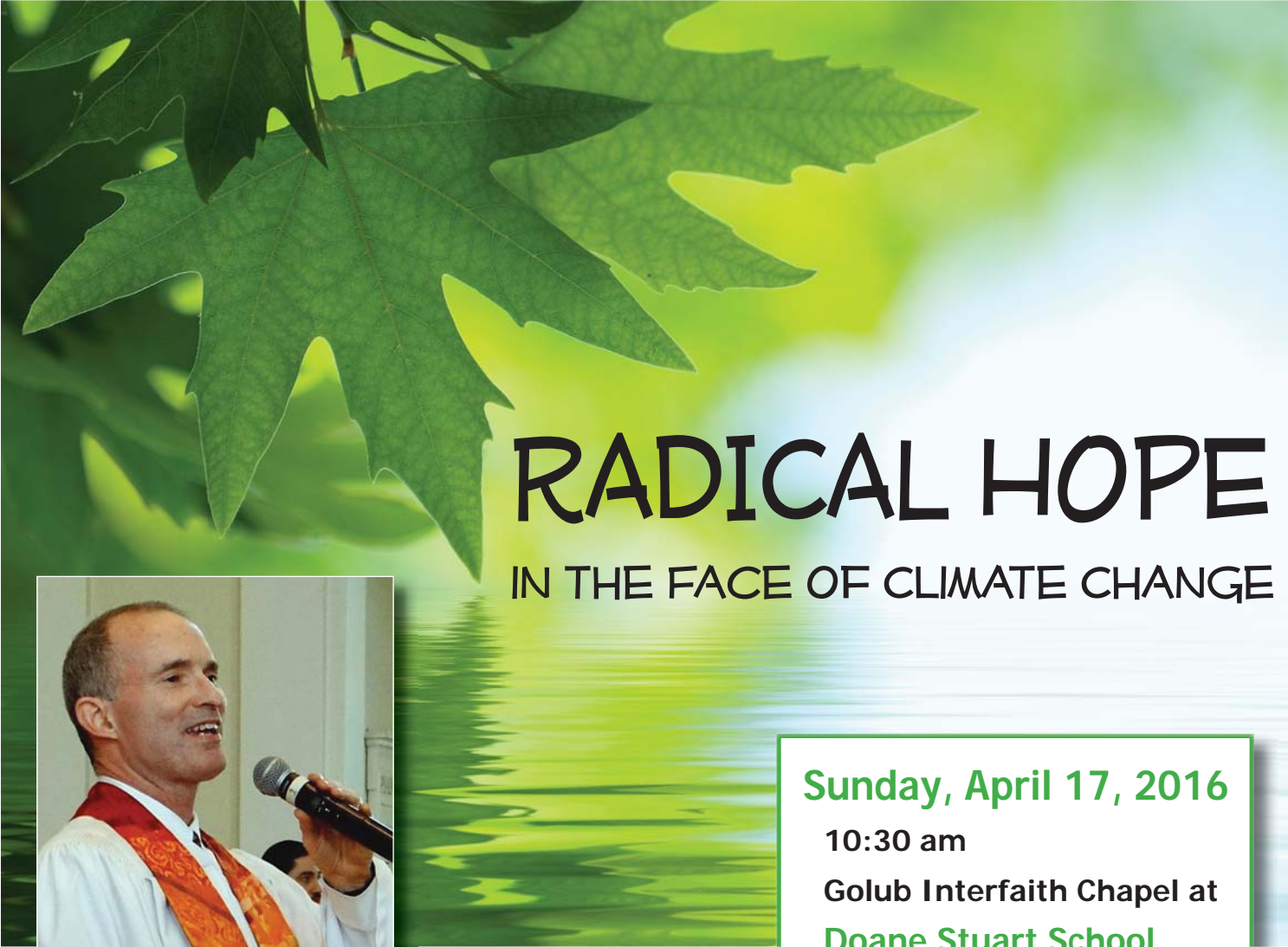
RSVP M _____ and M _____

will attend Albany UU's Annual Fellowship Dinner at Franklin Terrace, Troy, NY.

1. Print first name(s) beside dinner choice(s). Please mark "GF" as needed for gluten free.
 - ☞ Chicken Dijon _____
 - ☞ Grilled Filet of Salmon _____
 - ☞ Sliced Sirloin Steak _____
 - ☞ Eggplant Parmesan _____
2. **\$33.00 per person**
\$ _____ check enclosed, payable to Albany UU
3. Print name(s) of children needing childcare:
 - Child's name _____ Age _____
 - Child's name _____ Age _____
4. Please try to seat me/us with:

5. Bring **RSVP** and payment to sign-up table at Coffee Hour **OR Mail** to Albany UU, 405 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12206.

The 8th Annual Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of NY Combined Worship Service



RADICAL HOPE

IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE



Sunday, April 17, 2016

10:30 am

**Golub Interfaith Chapel at
Doane Stuart School**

199 Washington Ave.

Rensselaer, NY

As we come to understand the gravity of climate disruption, it is easy to be disheartened.

Facing this crisis will demand the best of us. It will call us to courage, creativity, kindness and love. How can we sustain hope and help build a just and sustainable society?

All ages and faiths are invited to worship together on April 17. Join us in reflection and song as we are inspired by **Rev. Fred Small, a UU minister, singer-songwriter, and former environmental lawyer.** Rev. Small recently left his position as senior minister at First Parish in Cambridge, MA, to devote his energy full-time to climate justice.

The service will feature a Joint Choir from the Capital Region Unitarian Universalist congregations in Albany, Glens Falls, Saratoga Springs, and Schenectady. Child care will be provided. Doane Stuart is handicapped accessible and is located 3 blocks from exit 7 of Interstate 90. For more information, contact your nearest UU church, whose info can be found at northeastuu.org/wp/congregations/

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