

Edited for the Web: Personal information and contacts removed, as well as children's last names. Web viewers needing more information are invited to contact the church office at administrator@albanyuu.org.

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!

Services

Dec. 3 "When the Yule Log Won't Light," Rev. Sam Trumbore

The December holiday season can be very difficult for those who suffer from depression and affective disorder. The expectation of joy and celebration can have the opposite effect. May we make room for those who are suffering this time of year as a way of practicing holiday goodwill.

Music: Albany UU Choir

Dec. 10 "The Holy Flame of Life," Rev. Sam Trumbore

Whatever one's beliefs or philosophy of life, celebrating light as the days reach their shortest length has universal appeal. Whether we celebrate Christmas, or Hanukkah or Divali or the Solstice, the light of a flame in the midst of a long and cold winter night brings warmth and hope. We need these times of renewal of the spirit especially when there are many threats that surround us. May this service be one to bolster our courage to face the dawning of another year in a couple of weeks.

Music: Richard Porterfield

Dec. 17 "Would You Like to Hold the Baby"

This Christmas Pageant revisits the timeless story of Mary and Joseph, the Kings and the Shepherds, with the addition of a new character—a young stable girl. As Mary invites the girl to hold her Baby, so we are invited to embrace the deepest meaning Christmas holds for each one of us.

Music: Albany UU Choir

Dec. 24 "Blue Christmas," Eileen Casey-Campbell (10:00 AM)

The holidays don't necessarily bring joy for all of us every year. Sometimes this season is also clouded by the losses we've experienced, a longing for those who aren't here to celebrate with us, or a despair at the absence of "peace on earth," and "goodwill." Together we'll make room for joy along with all the other mixed feelings we might be experiencing.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Services (6:00 and 8:00 PM, in the Sanctuary)

Music: Albany UU Choir

Services, continued on page 4

WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian
Universalist Society of Albany

December 2017

In this issue:

- 1 Services
- 2 Calendar
- 3 Sam's Outlook
- 4 News
- 8 Growing Together
- 10 Our Community
- 12 Social Justice
- 13 Flyers
- 15 Contact Us

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)

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 Hour.....Channing

Exceptions: No choir rehearsal Dec. 20, 27

Regular events and meetings

CHECK the weekly Preview email 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	Green Sanctuary Committee (1st)		7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal (almost weekly)
	11:45 AM	Social Responsibilities Council (3rd)	Thursdays	1:00 PM	All Sides Considered (1st & 3rd)
Mondays	12:00 PM	Channing Circle (3rd)		7:00 PM	Program Coordinating Council (2nd)
	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council (1st)		7:00 PM	Board of Trustees (3rd)
Tuesdays	10:00 AM	Philosophy Group (weekly)			
	1:00 PM	Bridge (weekly)			
	7:00 PM	UU Humanists (3rd)			

All other events happening in December

1-Dec Friday-Saturday

5:00 PM Youth Con Whole Building

3-Dec Sunday

12:00 AM Youth Con Whole Building
 10:00 AM Family ChapelSanctuary
 11:00 AM Coffee Hour/Holiday Bazaar -- Channing
 11:00 AM New Member Reception -- Emerson
 11:45 AM Green Sanctuary Meeting B-8
 11:45 AM pageant part selection..... 26 at 11:30 AM

4-Dec Monday

6:15 PM RE Council meeting Channing

6-Dec Wednesday

10:00 AM Community Singalong Channing Hall, B-6

9-Dec Saturday

8:45 AM Getting to Know UU -- B-7, B-8
 12:00 PM RoP Babysitting Fundraiser Upstairs classrooms

10-Dec Sunday

11:00 AM Coffee Hour Overflow Emerson
 11:30 AM Pageant Rehearsal Emerson
 11:30 AM Tree Decorating -- Channing
 11:45 AM Auction Committee Meeting..... B-3/B-4
 11:45 AM Inclusivity Team B-8
 11:45 AM ROP Mentor/Youth Meeting..... B1,B2,B6,B7
 12:30 PM Rite of Passage.....21
 5:30 PM Walker Book Group..... Channing

11-Dec Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry-Mon. AM group..... B-5
 3:00 PM Overflow Shelter Prep..... Kitchen

12-Dec Tuesday

6:30 PM Wellspring B-5

13-Dec Wednesday

10:00 AM Community Singalong Channing
 1:00 PM Holiday Decorating - Flower Committee
 6:00 PM Music Committee Emerson

14-Dec Thursday

5:30 PM Governance Working Group..... B-7
 7:00 PM Program Coordinating Council B-8

16-Dec Saturday

12:00 PM RoP Babysitting Fundraiser..... Upstairs classrooms
 4:00 PM Solstice Celebration Channing

17-Dec Sunday

10:00 AM Multi-generational Service and Pageant Emerson
 1:00 PM Holiday Caroling -- Offsite

18-Dec Monday

1:30 PM Meaning Matters - Third Monday Afternoon..... B-8

19-Dec Tuesday

5:00 PM Meaning Matters - Third Tuesday Group Stott Lounge
 7:00 PM Albany UU Humanists B-8

20-Dec Wednesday

10:00 AM Community Singalong Channing

21-Dec Thursday

7:00 PM Albany UU Board Meeting..... Channing

24-Dec Sunday

6:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service --..... Sanctuary
 7:00 PM Cookie Reception -- Channing
 8:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service --..... Sanctuary

25-Dec Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry-Mon. AM group B-5
 7:00 PM Meaning Matters - Fourth Monday Group B-8

26-Dec Tuesday

6:30 PM Wellspring..... B-5

27-Dec Wednesday

10:00 AM Community Singalong Channing
 6:00 PM Peace Team - CDCAI..... Channing

28-Dec Thursday

6:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting B-7
 6:30 PM Wellspring..... B-5

Sam's Outlook

Emerson is Not Our Future

Rev. Sam Trumbore

Two years ago in a sermon I quoted Emerson who, in 1829, wrote:

I think it cannot be maintained by any candid person that the African race have ever occupied or do promise ever to occupy any very high place in the human family. Their present condition is the strongest proof that they cannot. The Irish cannot; the American Indian cannot; the Chinese cannot. Before the energy of the Caucasian race all other races have quailed ...

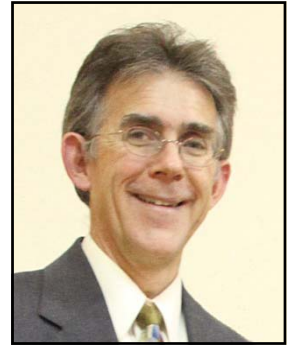
Clearly this quote is not the Emerson we think of when we remember his essay on Nature, or Self-Reliance or my favorite, The Over-Soul. Emerson did become a strong abolitionist after the Fugitive Slave Law was passed in 1850, twenty one years later. Some evolution of his thinking did happen over those years, especially through the influence of his second wife Lidian and his good friend Theodore Parker both of whom were ardent abolitionists, but not enough.

Using this quote brought to the attention of our congregation a side of Emerson that is not well known. Reaction to it started a controversy about using his name for the main hall in our 2007 building expansion. In the last two issues of this newsletter, Anne Marie Haber has shared more objectionable quotes from Emerson's journals that have stimulated a lot of discussion.

I've had a chance to do more research on Emerson's views and found an excellent article by Emerson scholar, Dr. Peter S. Field in the Spring 2001 journal of American Nineteenth Century History titled "The Strange Career of Emerson and Race." Dr. Field's in depth analysis revealed Emerson's lifelong belief in the superiority of Americans of English descent over everyone else. Though Emerson never approved of slavery, it took many years for him to decide that slavery must be actively resisted. Even after 1850, there is little evidence to show he believed in the value of an egalitarian society that embraced all peoples.

As we celebrate the tenth anniversary of our addition

in April, many are wondering if that room needs a new name. In a time when Confederate statues and monuments are being removed, we have less willingness to celebrate leaders with ambiguous moral character.



One concern I've heard is judging people from the past by contemporary standards is unfair. Reading Dr. Fields' analysis reveals that Emerson was not a leader among the abolitionists, far from it. When it became a freedom issue with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, that was when he stepped in, not when it was a human dignity issue before that. Emerson was very much a man of his day on this issue rather than a visionary thinker.

And I wonder if Emerson is even a visionary thinker for our times. His emphasis on freedom and independence that we read in his essay Self-Reliance is not what is needed in the twenty-first century. The libertarian attitude that a man's home is his castle doesn't cut it anymore in the era of climate change, powerful weapons of mass destruction increasing pollution and decreasing fresh water and arable land to share to support life. Endangered species need for protection should infringe on property rights. The seventh principle of the interdependence of all life becomes more and more important as a governing principle that trumps individual freedom.

We need not disrespect the contributions Emerson made to the advance of American thought, writing and culture during his time. His Transcendentalist appreciation of the human spirit continues to inspire me. Yet he is not the person I would look to for the future of Unitarian Universalism. Those who are envisioning a multi-faith, multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-gender future for Unitarian Universalism are the visionaries who should be guiding us. Out of that conversation and debate I expect to come new ways for us to be together. As Emerson was for his time, these are the people who are charting our future right now.

So, maybe we don't need to name spaces after **Sam's Outlook, continued on page 4**

News

We got “connected”

“Get Connected!” Sunday was a great success. Thanks to all of the people who sat at tables and shared their passions and interests for each group or committee that they represented. Everyone did a great job of making their table inviting and interesting. In particular, I want to thank my Co-Chair Paula Moskowitz who really “took the reins” this year and did the major portion of organizing while I dealt with my parents’ health issues. Without all of these people, this event would not have been a success.

Congratulations to the winners of the adult raffle: April Clas won the first prize – two passes to the Mannings’ Local Food dinner in August 2018. Don Odell won the runner-up prize – a basket of Fair Trade “goodies” (coffee, cocoa and chocolate).

Congratulations to the winners of the kids’ raffle: Diana Martocci, Amy Newberg and Nate Rehder each won a “Mystery Bag” of goodies.

And lastly, thanks to all who visited various tables and learned a little about what the Albany UU congregation has to offer you. We hope this helps you “Get Connected!”--Barb Manning

Holiday Music Jam

The annual Albany UU Holiday Music Jam will take place on Dec. 17 during coffee hour. We play from the books Festive Strings and More Festive Strings, by Joanne Martin. Music will be available in treble, alto, and bass clefs. The event is multi-generational, multi-level, and multi-instrumental. There will be a basket of shakers and other percussion instruments available for those who inclined to join in spontane-

Sam’s Outlook, continued from page 3

people but with words that evoke our aspirations and our values. Even though the road feels muddy and rough sometimes, I have great hope that we are going a direction that whole world needs to go if we are going to cultivate world peace. The world needs examples that people who are very different can live together respectfully in peace and be enriched by the experience.

May we grow into being that example.--Rev. Sam

Flyers in this issue

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

◆Holiday Events

ously.

If the instrument you play needs chord notation (guitar, accordion, etc.) or if you would like more information, please contact Anne Marie Haber at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Albany UU Parent Afternoon Out!

Sponsored by the Rite of Passage group to help raise funds for our trip to Boston

Fridays, Dec. 9 and 16, Noon – 4:00 pm

Drop off your kids at Albany UU and the Rite of Passage youth, adult mentors and Leah Purcell will entertain them while you have some time to yourself.

(Think holiday shopping, wrapping gifts, cleaning the house, taking a nap—you get the idea!)

Details:

- ◆Cost per child is \$10 with a maximum family cost of \$30
- ◆Care provided for infants through 11 year olds
- ◆Snacks provided

Sign up in Channing Hall or at registration @albanyuu.org

Services, continued from page 3

Dec. 31 “Out with the Old and In with the New!” Rev. Sam Trumbore

The last day of the year is an excellent time to decide what to leave behind and consider changes for a new year. Diet and exercise are perennial favorites for this. Let us go deeper in this service to explore our habits and patterns of behavior that no longer serve us and to consider inner callings we have put aside and responses of the heart we haven’t considered. May we be open to the flow of life and allow it to move through us.

Board Notes

Sanctuary and Albany UU

Matt Lesniak, Social Responsibilities Council chair and ex officio member of Albany UU board

Sanctuary can mean any safe space for a targeted person or people. The Sanctuary that the Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany concerns itself with, however, is more specific. In the words of the Unitarian Universalist Services Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Association,

“Sanctuary is a way to be in solidarity with the undocumented community by creating safe spaces for the prophetic voices of immigrant leaders to be lifted up as we together confront unjust laws. Through the Sanctuary Movement, faith communities can powerfully enact and embody their commitment to justice. A church that declares itself a Sanctuary congregation is one willing to engage on a spectrum of solidarity actions including welcoming undocumented people, advocating to help stop deportations, assisting with legal clinics, and physically sheltering an immigrant in danger of immediate deportation.” (Page 5 of the Sanctuary Toolkit, available at <https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/sanctuary-toolkit-2017.pdf>.)

This description of Sanctuary goes out of its way to make the point that Sanctuary is not something that a congregation performs FOR an immigrant or an immigrant community – instead, it is an act of conscience that a congregation engages in WITH an immigrant or immigrant community.

Part of honoring the immigrant’s role is to realize that, even in the best of circumstances, physical Sanctuary will be experienced as a form of house arrest. It could be a lengthy and uncomfortably intimate stay, with the immigrant dependent on others for everything from food, medical care, communications, and religious services.

Not all congregations can fulfill these needs, and so far only a few immigrants nationwide have been willing to suffer the privations of a house of worship’s Sanctuary setting. The hosting congregation needs to have a private living space on the same property parcel as the worship space, and enough volunteers to monitor the building on a 24-hour basis. Also, the congregation must have strong ties to

an immigrant or immigrant community, as it will need to have earned the trust of the person staying in the building.

Because of these common-sense requirements, offering physical sanctuary may not be the best way for Albany UU to participate in Sanctuary. There are many other forms of Sanctuary for which the congregation is well-suited. Albany UU boasts impressive organizing skills, a great capacity for advocacy, and a number of people who work with immigrants both professionally and as volunteers.

Currently, Sanctuary at Albany UU is something that members of the Social Responsibility Council (SRC) have been exploring, encouraged by a few Albany UUs who have expressed dismay that we are not already housing an immigrant or offering material support to another congregation housing an immigrant. On Monday, Nov. 12, Reverend Sam and a handful of SRC members participated in an inter-congregational planning meeting convened by Joe Paparone (of the Labor-Religion Coalition of New York State).

To date, the SRC has also not taken any formal action or made declarations regarding Sanctuary. The current goal that came from the planning meeting is to assess the Albany UU community’s willingness and capacity to participate in Sanctuary, and to build consensus toward a policy, statement, or commitment.

Can Albany UU really discuss Sanctuary at the same time as members are working very hard to understand white supremacy and to build a more inclusive community? We can, and the reason we can is that Sanctuary is a concrete action aimed at confronting racism and racist policies. The language and the policies used to persecute immigrants has recently become openly white supremacist. During last year’s Presidential campaign, words and images were used to contrast so-called “real” Americans with more recent interlopers. The default “real” American was, intentionally, white, male, and blue-collar, while the default immigrant was a dark-skinned mystery prone to gang

Sanctuary, continued on page 6



Remember the Holiday Bazaar—December 3
Shop the Bazaar for special gifts made by Albany UUs - aprons, table linens, jams, decorations, jewelry, candles, novels, stained glass, pottery, origami art, cloth gift bags, ornaments and more. Last chance to take home delicious home-made soups. Buy local - support our members and the good work of our congregation!

Art show in Channing Hall

Works by the Albany Artists Group are currently on display in Channing Hall for your viewing pleasure. The show will be up through Christmas. If you wish to purchase a painting or drawing, contact Kevin

Kuhne at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 20% of all sales go to Albany UU.

Budget Requests due Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018

Yes, it's time once again to figure out how much money your program, committee or group will need in the next fiscal year that starts on July 1, 2018 and ends on June 30, 2019. While it may seem far away, planning with a group takes more time than you think.

The budget form for submission can be found on the members.albanyuu.org web site, in the left column, under the Church Office tab, in the File Cabinet. The

Sanctuary, continued from page 5

violence or to terrorism. Despite all evidence to the contrary, unauthorized immigrants have been portrayed as violent, needy, under taxed, and generally corrosive to society. That this portrayal of immigrants was accepted by many Americans can only be explained by an underlying racism.

There are valid wage pressure and security issues involved in immigration. However, federal agencies have chosen to prioritize vindictive, inhumane actions directed toward immigrants over policies that might lessen economic inequality or enhance security. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other bodies do not explain how they choose where to raid and where not to raid, thereby threatening all immigrant communities everywhere. By undermining trust, raids and other actions preclude cooperation between immigrant communities and law enforcement, cooperation that could be the strongest line of defense against terrorist attacks. Racism has blinded some of the nation's top agencies from understanding where our collective security truly lies.

Therefore, Sanctuary can fold right in to Albany UU's on-going anti-white supremacy work. However, no one grappling with the issues of white supremacy should feel forced into working on Sanctuary simply because it is related – it is perfectly possible to get and stay “woke” without participating in Sanctuary. But considering that there are a few million people in our communities who are suffering daily, experiencing hate in the face of numerous, powerful federal agencies, and considering that racism props up that hate, shouldn't Albany UU offer Sanctuary activities to its members, and shouldn't

Albany UU go on record as standing against the racist hounding of our immigrant neighbors?

Another reason to be confident about Albany UU and Sanctuary is that the congregation offered physical Sanctuary to immigrants before, in the 1980s. Then, Sanctuary involved Latin Americans fleeing violence sponsored by our own allies in the Cold War. At a time when the Albany UU campus was half the size it is today, members made space for refugees (the building then was Channing Hall and the space we refer to today as ... the Sanctuary). Through the harboring project, Albany UU lived its values and helped bring about an end to the persecution.

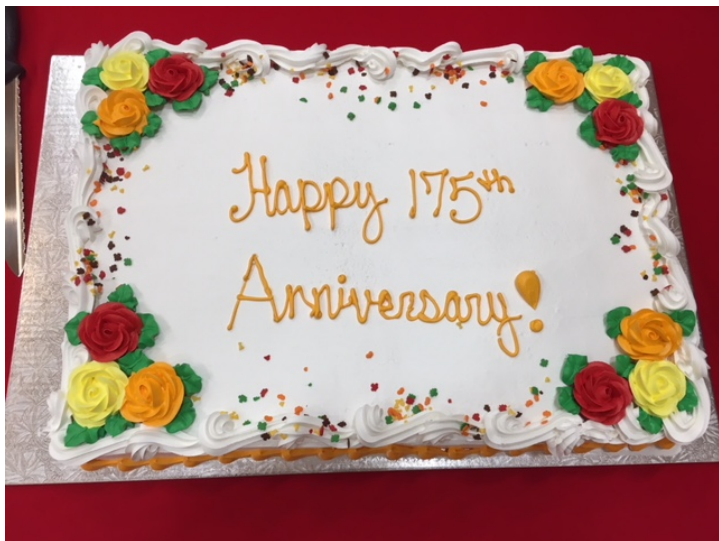
Albany UU can do this again, whether physical Sanctuary in the building is offered, or we engage in other Sanctuary activities. Our unique skills, history, and personal journeys have power to give to Sanctuary, and I am confident we will determine how exactly to stand up tall for our values within the movement.

Beside the toolkit referred to in the quote at the beginning of the article, here are three other sources of information about the Sanctuary Movement:

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/washingtonoffice/sanctuary_issuebrief.pdf

<https://albanypresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2017/03/PCUSA-OPW-Sanctuary-Final-6.21-Edit.pdf>

<http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/media/webinars/>



FUSA>FUUSA>Albany UU: from 1842 to 2017. We celebrated our 175th anniversary in the service and at coffee hour on Sunday, Nov. 12.

form is below the Financial heading. If necessary, the office can supply you with a printed form.

The Finance Committee and the Board use the completed form to help determine how much money will be needed to support your group's planned activities for next year. Combining all the submissions allows us to set a realistic annual canvass goal. If no form is submitted, it will be assumed that your group does not need any funds from the operating budget.

The form is self-guiding, however, if you have questions or need an alternate method of communication, please contact Steve Moskowitz at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. Regular mail and email submissions are welcomed. Submit your electronic budget request to xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx or on paper to the Finance Committee mailbox.

Welcoming a Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about UUSC's work to advance human rights around the globe. UUSC.ORG/GUEST UUSC works in over 25 countries with over 75 grassroots partner organizations. This year, UUSC is highlighting the following "guests" and partners:

- ◆ The Center for Social Integrity advances human rights in Burma through youth leadership development.
- ◆ RAICES provides legal aid and support for families

held in Karnes family detention center in Texas.

- ◆ Tulele Peisa supports Carteret Islanders being displaced by severe climate change impacts in the South Pacific.
- ◆ The Queer Detainee Empowerment Project supports LGBTQI+ immigrants in and outside of detention in New York

Families often place a donation box on their tables during the winter holidays and invite family members



to put money in as they are willing and able. The boxes will be distributed in Sunday School and at the RE Office window on Sunday mornings. You can also donate to the UUSC by writing check or donating on line. More at <http://www.uusc.org/welcome-to-guest-at-your-table/>

Contributions of any amount qualify for membership. Contributions of \$125 or more are eligible to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY. Please bring your boxes or checks to the RE Office Window by January 22. For more info contact Leah Purcell dre@albanyuu.org

Governance Changes

Six years ago, the Albany UU Board of Trustees began a process of evaluating our governance structure from the following perspective: are we spend-

ing too much of our time thinking about and organizing what we want to do rather than working towards creating the beloved community here at Albany UU and creating a better world for ourselves and our children? And how can we streamline our governance structure to be more effective? Wouldn't it be great if we could devote more of our volunteer efforts to social justice and direct service to our community, as well as working to become a more multicultural congregation?

After much research, discussion, and reading that centered on Dan Hotchkiss's seminal book "Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership," the Board held a retreat last August that was facilitated by the former director of our UUA Central East Region and governance expert Rev. Joan Van Becelaere.

At the retreat the Board agreed it was time to start a process to evaluate which governance changes would be best for our congregation how they might be implemented. In September the Board appointed a Governance Working Group (GWG) – Molly Daniels, Nancy Shay, Peggy Sherman, and Rev. Sam Trumbore – with the charge "to work with the Dan Hotchkiss model of governance, adapt it to our congregation's needs and aspirations, and propose to the Board changes to Albany UU's governance structure."

The Hotchkiss model of governance is an adaptation

of policy governance, which has long been a favored form of governance in the non-profit world. Dan has adapted it specifically for use by congregations. His model clarifies the different roles of ministry and governance in a congregation. This allows more effective goal setting, both near term (annual) and long term. It also assures that roles are closely matched with responsibilities, and that lines of accountability are clearly defined, making the carrying out of these goals easier.

The GWG has looked at congregations who have recently made governance changes using the Hotchkiss model, both locally (Schenectady in particular) and elsewhere. Last week the GWG met with Rev. David Pyle, our District UUA representative for governance, to get his opinion on some of their ideas. Next, the GWG plans to talk with Albany UU committee heads, council chairs, volunteer leaders, and staff to present their ideas, and to discuss how we could best implement them here.

There will be more information to come as this process progresses. The GWG will be planning a transition to more effective ways of organizing ourselves, with the goals of strengthening us as a community, furthering our journey towards creating the beloved community here at Albany UU, and better equipping us to continue our quest to create a better world for ourselves and our children. —Dick Dana

Growing Together

Getting to Know UU: orientation to UUism
Save the date: Saturday, Dec. 9, 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 Universalism 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 mem-

bership!

Childcare is available: please let us know you need it when you register. To sign up: See box. Please indicate if you need childcare.

Community Singalong
Wednesdays, 10:00 AM

Toddlers, preschoolers, and their caregivers gather on Wednesdays with loud, proud singing voices! Members, friends, and non-members are all welcome at this singalong led by Ministerial Intern Eileen Casey-Campbell. Check the Facebook page on Wednesday mornings for updates and possibly can-

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.)

Religious Exploration

Leah Purcell, Director of Religious Education

What Does it Mean to be a People of Hope?

Our Soul Matters Theme for December

Thoughts on the theme with help from Katie Covey, Our Soul Matters RE Resources Coordinator

Does it feel like you just hope to make it through the month? December becomes crammed like a cafeteria of holidays to choose from. And we have only two Sundays for Sunday School this month: Dec 3 which is Family Chapel for children in Pre-k through 6th grade and December 10th. Our multi-generational Christmas service is Dec 17 and there won't be Sunday school Dec 24 or 31.

That's why I like thematic ministry for RE. You can reflect on the question of "How are we a people of Hope?" at home, as a family too. I often hear that parents/caretakers feel unqualified to provide UU faith formation for their children. And I agree that it can be a challenge. Many of us are not accustomed to talking about religious matters with anyone. But don't worry about making mistakes on this with your children. Children and youth are always observing and absorbing how you interact with the world. If you simply verbalize that you wonder about things, you'll have a path to spiritual discussions.

I invite you to sit back, and think about what ways you would like to explore the theme of Hope as a family. In addition to talking at home, there are ways to join our religious community in this exploration. You might want to pick just one of these events or several, whatever works for your family. You might want to light candles each Sunday evening on an Advent Wreath, starting Dec 3. You might want to look up readings on the theme of Hope with your child and bring those to Family Chapel Dec 3. You can join our faith community for decorating the tree during Coffee Hour on Dec 10 or come caroling that afternoon. You might want to come to the Multigenerational Solstice Dec 16 at 4:00 – I'm telling a great story this year! Our multi-generational Christmas service with the pageant Dec 17 fits right in with the theme of Hope, and tells the story of the birth of a babe in a manger

and the hope for peace. You may want to come for the service on Christmas Eve with carols and candlelight. And don't forget about the Rite of Passage babysitting fundraisers Dec 9 and 16 from noon to 4:00, if you'd like to splurge on some time for yourself.



The possibility of hope is always available to us. Emily Dickinson's poem, *Hope*, gives us the image of "that thing with feathers/ that perches in the soul..." It's simple and short enough that you and your child might be able to learn it by heart, so that you can carry it in your heart.

Hope by Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -

That perches in the soul -

And sings the tune without the words -

And never stops - at all -...

May your winter season be as beautiful and soothing to you and your family!

Book recommendations to explore and celebrate hope:

One Candle, by Eve Bunting and. illustrated by Wendy Popp

For one family the traditional Hanukkah celebration has a deeper meaning. Their story reaffirms the values of tradition and family, but also shows us that by continuing to honor the tragedies and the triumphs of the past there will always be hope for the future. Tell this story with a candle to light.

The One Day House, by Julia Durango, illustrated by Bianca Diaz

Inspired by an action day in the community the author lives in, this book shows the power of community to help the elderly and those with disabilities live in safe and functional homes.

How to Heal a Broken Wing, by Bob Graham

In a spare urban fable, Bob Graham brings us one small boy, one loving family, and one miraculous story of hope and healing.

Religious Exploration, continued on page 10

cellations: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/423899504679713/about/>

Calendar of Holiday Events

Dec. 3 – selection of parts for the pageant from 11:30 to 12:00 in room 26

Dec. 10 – Holiday Tree decorating in Channing Hall during Coffee Hour; Pageant Rehearsal from 11:30 to 12:30 in Emerson Hall; caroling party gathers in Channing hall and leaves at 1:00

Dec. 16 – Multigenerational Solstice Celebration 4:00 in Channing Hall

Dec. 17 – Multigenerational Christmas service with the pageant.

Dec. 24 – A Blue Christmas service – No Sunday school; childcare for children – infants through 4th grade; children in 5th grade and older children and

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.)

youth will attend the service with their families

Dec. 31- Multigenerational Service

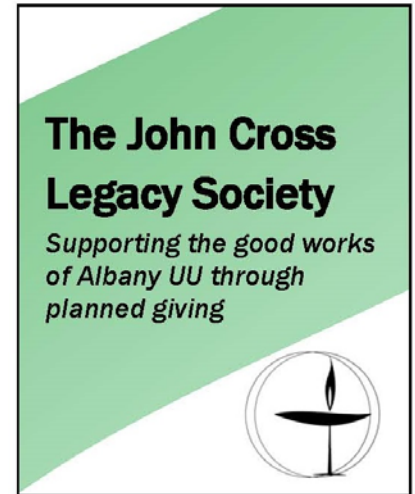
Mindfulness Meditation Workshop

led by Rev. Sam Trumbore

January 12-13, 2018

A great way to start the New Year is with a little silence, making room for awareness to stimulate insight. This meditation training and practice workshop will be led by Rev. Trumbore, on Friday 6:00pm to 9:00pm, and Saturday 8:00am to 3:00pm. It gives the participants an opportunity to learn Buddhist mindfulness meditation techniques and/or refresh and deepen their meditation practice. All are welcome from first timers to experts. There will be a vegan potluck lunch on Saturday and all are encouraged to bring something to share.

Please see box to register. (A voluntary donation can be offered at the end.) If you can't make this one, here are the next opportunities for this workshop: Feb. 9-10, Mar. 9-10 Mark your calendars NOW!



Our Community

Support our high school youth in a week-end long experience living in UU youth covenantal community Dec 1-3

We are hosting a youth con at Albany UU Dec. 1-3. It's being organized by the Upstate Youth/Adult Committee and is especially geared for those who have no or little experience in cons – like our youth and parents/caretakers! They need your support to

make it happen. I need sets of volunteers.

One role is Awake Chaperons. Adults from the hosting congregation (us!) volunteer in teams of two adults and one youth from the Youth/Adult Committee to check on sleeping areas and monitor an Awake Room. The shifts are midnight to 3:30 and 3:30 to 7:00am on Friday night/early morning and Saturday night/early morning.

The other role is kitchen workers to help cook food on Saturday Dec. 2 and a simple breakfast before

Religious Exploration, continued from page 9

Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey, by Doug Kuntz, Amy Shrodes, illustrations by Sue Cornelison

This book tells the true story of an Iraqi refugee family whose beloved cat, Kunkush, travels with them as far as Greece, hidden away for safety. But he's

lost at some point in the journey, and the heartbroken family must go on.

A Child's Garden: A Story of Hope, by Michael Foreman

Master storyteller Michael Foreman has created a timely and moving story of a child creating a garden of hope in the midst of poverty and war.

the services Dec. 3 and to run the dishwasher. We could have between 30-60 participants.

Contact Leah Purcell if you can help out with either role. dre@albanyuu.org

Walker Book Group

Join the Walker Book Group for a potluck and book discussion on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 5:30 pm in Channing Hall. Newcomers are always welcome.

Bring a dish to share for our welcoming supper, which is followed by a lively discussion of the book of the month. Participants frequently bring their own tableware and a small contribution to cover beverages.

Our December book is "Anything Is Possible," by Elizabeth Strout. The New York Times May 14, 2017 review states, "Strout is quietly offering us a kind of master class on class, starting with a title that ironically suggests its opposite. 'Anything Is Possible' might look like a sequel, since it takes place after the action of Elizabeth Strout's best-selling 2016 novel, "My Name Is Lucy Barton," and portrays many of the same characters. But it's actually something far more complex, reaching across space (think of Faulkner's work, or Louise Erdrich's) and through layers of memory. Where the earlier book turned on the crystalline austerity and reserve of its narrative voice, guided by Strout's unerring sense of what Lucy would omit, the new work almost literally undoes the older one. What Lucy omitted, we learn — what Lucy hid? — radically alters our understanding of what Lucy said."

The January 2018 book is The History of Wolves by Emily Fridlund. February's book is The Fortunes by

Caring Network

If you need the services of the Caring Network, **or to offer your services**, please call or text 518-512-9854 or send an email to caringnetwork@albanyuu.org

To submit your personal Joys and Sorrows for sharing with the church community: write on a yellow card in the service or online at members.albanyuu.org (under Ministry, select Joys and Sorrows).

Caring Network Coordinator: Todd Thomas

**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@albanyuu.org, contact Reverend Sam Trumbore, the Albany UU office at 518-463-7135, or one of them personally. They are: Chuck Manning, Phil Rich, Randy Rosette, Sandy Stone, Lisa Barron, Donna Meixner, Dee Van Riper, Eileen Casey-Campbell.

Peter Ho Davies.

Contact Linda Hunt at lhunt@nycap.rr.com for further information or questions.

Circle Dinner

Save the date for the next Circle Dinner on Saturday, **January 13!** In November, more than 40 UUs gathered at five different locations to enjoy sharing a meal and getting to know each other better. Mark your calendar now to join in the fun. Signups will start later in December.

Albany UU Humanists

Dec. 19, 7:00 PM

The Albany UU Humanists normally meet on the third Tuesday of the month at Albany UU.

On Nov. 5, Rev. Sam delivered a sermon on "Vulnerable Humanism of the Heart." Let's discuss it at our December meeting. Other ideas? Please share on the Albany UU Humanists eGroup.



To sign up go to members.albanyuu.org, ChurchDB Member Login. Log in, or retrieve your password if you are a new user, click Groups, and add your name to the Albany UU Humanists. Or you may contact Don Odell (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx), or the church office for assistance.

For further information on Humanism in Unitarian Universalism, please go to the UU Humanists website at <http://huumanists.org>. There you will find the

UU Humanist blog, feature articles and commentary, and some related Facebook groups. There is

also the American Humanist Association's website at <http://americanhumanist.org>.

Social Justice

Green Sanctuary Committee

During the past month, the Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) has discussed what issue to adopt as its emphasis of the year in 2018. One emerging issue is the support for the Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy (SHARE) and its opposition to the state's proposal for a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Plant and micro-grid for the Empire State Plaza.

The CHP plant would be located in the former ANSWERS plant in Sheridan Hollow adjacent to the existing steam plant and would use gas-fired turbines, which has proven to be a heavy pollutant. Without its elimination, there would be an overall increase in gas combustion and related pollution in Sheridan Hollow. Last month, the board voted that Albany UU would endorse SHARE.

The project is both an environmental justice and climate change issue. Other alternatives have not been adequately addressed. At a meeting held by state officials on October 25, Sheridan Hollow resi-

dents expressed legitimate complaints about the noise and pollution from bi-weekly, hours-long testing of the diesel backup generators currently used at the Sheridan Avenue Steam Plant.

So far a press conference has been staged and a petition against the plan as it exists circulated. Stay tuned for more developments and please contact the Green Sanctuary Committee to get involved. – Tim Kane

The GSC reminds you to recycle.

Remember, traditional Christmas wrapping paper cannot be recycled. What more perfect time to change to cloth wraps or bags? If you use cloth ribbon, it can be used again and again--even in a little girl's hair, or give it to Ps and Qs.

Albany UU is recycling the following in the cloakroom: hearing aid batteries, aluminum tabs from cans, inkjet cartridges, cell phones, Brita detritus, personal care products such as toothpaste tubes and brushes, paper egg cartons, blankets, coats, mittens, hats, corks and tyvek envelopes. Check out this site for more information - <http://mooncatchers.weebly.com/>.



Albany UU Holiday Events

December 2017

Decorate the Albany UU Christmas Tree

Sunday, Dec. 10, during Coffee Hour

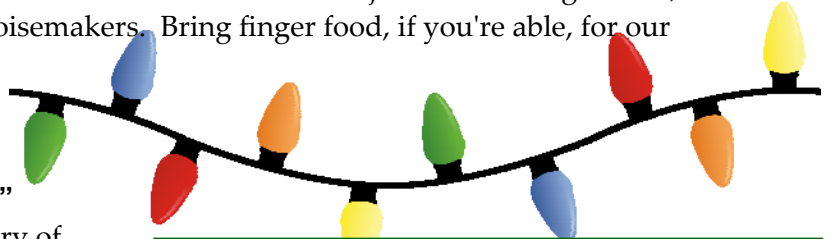
Channing Hall

Make something to hang on the tree, or bring an ornament from home to donate.



Solstice Celebration—Saturday, Dec. 16, 4:00 PM, Channing Hall

All are welcome—this is an event that children can join in on. Bring drums, if you have any, and noisemakers. Bring finger food, if you're able, for our gathering afterwards.



Sunday, Dec. 17

10:00 AM "Would You Like to Hold the Baby"

This Christmas Pageant revisits the timeless story of Mary and Joseph, the Kings and the Shepherds, with the addition of a new character - a young stable girl. As Mary invites the girl to hold her Baby, so we are invited to embrace the deepest meaning Christmas holds for each one of us.

(Pageant players: Selection of parts Dec. 3, 11:30 AM; Rehearsal Dec. 10, 11:30 AM)

11:00 AM Holiday Music Jam

Enjoy the sounds of "Festive Strings" as Albany UUs jam at coffee hour. Pick up a percussion instrument and join in!

1:00 PM Christmas Caroling

Come sing our favorite carols!

We will be visiting Albany UUs at their homes and group residences to share our Christmas spirit.

Meet promptly at 1:00 PM in Channing Hall to get maps and arrange carpooling. All are welcome.



First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany
405 Washington Ave, Albany, NY 12206
www.AlbanyUU.org

Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24

10:00 AM Service "Blue Christmas"

Emerson Community Hall

Eileen Casey-Campbell

The holidays don't necessarily bring joy for all of us every year. Sometimes this season is also clouded by the losses we've experienced, a longing for those who aren't here to celebrate with us, or a despair at the absence of "peace on earth," and "goodwill." Together we'll make room for joy along with all the other mixed feelings we might be experiencing.

6:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sanctuary

7:00 PM Cookie Reception

Channing Hall

Bring cookies to share!

8:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sanctuary

Contact Us

Board of Trustees 2017-2018

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 Kathy Harris, Treasurer
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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) Albany UU 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

Websites

General: www.AlbanyUU.org

Resources: www.members.AlbanyUU.org

Building use

To **reserve a room** for an Albany UU activity, contact Administrative Assistant Tammy Hathaway (518.463.7135 or office@albanyuu.org).

To **rent hall or classroom space** for a personal or non-Albany UU activity, contact Church Administrator Amy Lent (518.463.7135 or admin@albanyuu.org).

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

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

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

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