

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@fuusalbany.org.

WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian
Universalist Society of Albany

January 2015

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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)

Sundays at FUUSA

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

Jan. 4 "Getting Real with What's Real," Rev. Sam Trumbore

One way to start a new year is to pause and ponder where we are on our journey through life. Have we been **paying attention to the reality** of who we are and where we seem to be going ... or are we **living in a dream** of who we want to be and what we want to do? Is the beginning of the year a time to bring dream and reality closer together...or further apart?

Music: Jay Sager brings his amazing talents on the marimba.

Jan. 11 "Fighting For Lost Causes," Rev. Sam Trumbore

The right and the just may not appear to be the plausible and the possible. Living in a political town like Albany can make one more than a little cynical seeing money and favors influence people in power away from the public good. The good fight against institutional evil is never a safe bet. Thankfully, sometimes justice and mercy do prevail.

Music: "Drop In Choir!" Show up in Emerson at 9:00, learn some easy but impressive sounding choir pieces. All ages and abilities welcome.

Jan. 18 "Love, Power, and the Song at the Sea," Matt Meyer

As people of faith we're called to work together to create the world as it might be. Living the change we wish to see can bring us through discomfort and troubled water. In the midst of a status quo that can push us down, join us this Sunday as we honor the legacy of Dr. King with a service of rhythm, song, as well as a challenge to live our values and lift each other up.

Music: Percussionist Matt Meyer

Jan. 25 "Fulfillment through Passing the Bucket," Rev. Sam Trumbore

Unitarian Universalists don't plead with God to fix the world for us. We roll up our sleeves and get to work serving the cause of human need. But do we realize and appreciate the ways helping others can help us grow and develop mentally, emotionally, even spiritually?

Music: FUUSA choir



Calendar

Events happening every Sunday at FUUSA _____

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

Exceptions:

Events happening every week in January _____

Tuesdays 10:00 AM Philosophy GroupB-8
 1:00 PM Bridge.....B-8
 Wednesdays 10:00 AM Projects & QuiltsB-8
 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal..... Emerson

Exceptions:

All other events happening in January _____

4-Jan Sunday

11:45 AM Nominating..... B-1
 11:45 AM SRC Meeting..... B-7

5-Jan Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry Manning/Rohrbaugh ... B-5

6-Jan Tuesday

1:00 PM Bridge..... B8
 6:00 PM Wellspring Foundation B-8

7-Jan Wednesday

6:00 PM Nonviolent Communication Practice Group .. B-8

8-Jan Thursday

5:00 PM Wellspring advisor meeting Ann Lapinski B-5

9-Jan Friday

10:00 AM Wellspring advisor meeting--PerkinsStott Lounge
 6:00 PM Mindfulness Meditation Workshop Emerson

10-Jan Saturday

8:00 AM Mindfulness Meditation Workshop
 Emerson , B-7, B-8
 9:30 AM Women for a Better World Breakfast ... Channing

11-Jan Sunday

10:00 AM Unirondack Board Meeting..... Stott Lounge
 11:45 AM Auction Committee.....21
 11:45 AM Forum (Social Responsibilities Council) Emerson
 11:45 AM Growth Through Service Presentation B-2
 12:00 PM 4th/5th Grade OWL info meeting for families
 12:00 PM Unirondack Board Meeting..... B-7
 12:30 PM Rite of Passage meeting B-8
 5:30 PM Walker Book Club Channing

12-Jan Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry - Patrick/Odell B-5
 1:00 PM Grannies for Peace B-7
 1:00 PM Interfaith Impact B8
 3:30 PM Overflow Shelter Meal Preparation Kitchen
 6:30 PM Small Group Ministry - English..... Stott Lounge

13-Jan Tuesday

7:00 PM FUUSA Humanists..... B-8
 7:00 PM UU Christians B-5
 7:00 PM Wellspring: Faithful Action..... Stott Lounge

14-Jan Wednesday

6:00 PM Long Strange Trip Series Channing
 7:00 PM 4th/5th Grade OWL info meeting for families B-8
 7:00 PM Childcare for 4th/5th OWL orientation.....26

15-Jan Thursday

7:00 PM FUUSA Board Meeting..... Channing
 7:00 PM Martin Luther King Service (Offsite) Offsite

16-Jan Friday

6:00 PM FUUSA CommUUnity Group..... Channing

18-Jan Sunday

11:45 AM Green Sanctuary Meeting B-8
 1:00 PM Drumming & Spirituality workshop Emerson

19-Jan Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry Manning/Rohrbaugh ... B-5
 12:00 PM Channing Circle Lunch Channing

20-Jan Tuesday

6:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting B-7
 7:00 PM Meaning Matters Tuesday..... Stott Lounge
 7:00 PM Wellspring Foundation..... B-8

21-Jan Wednesday

6:00 PM Long Strange Trip Series Channing
 6:00 PM Nonviolent Communication Practice Group .. B-8
 7:00 PM Forum -SUNY School of Criminal JusticeEmerson

23-Jan Friday

6:00 PM Circle Dinner Offsite
 7:00 PM Growth Through Service presentation B-8

24-Jan Saturday

8:30 AM Growth Through Service Retreat..... Channing
 6:00 PM Circle Dinner Offsite

26-Jan Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry - Patrick/Odell B-5
 3:30 PM Overflow Shelter Meal PreparationKitchen
 6:30 PM Small Group Ministry - English Stott Lounge
 7:00 PM Meaning Matters Monday..... B-8

27-Jan Tuesday

7:00 PM Wellspring: Faithful Action..... Stott Lounge

28-Jan Wednesday

5:30 PM Endowment Trust Meeting Stott Lounge
 6:00 PM Long Strange Trip Series Channing Hall

31-Jan Saturday

5:00 PM Youth OvernightWhole Building

Sam's Outlook

Resetting our moral compass

Rev. Sam Trumbore



“On some questions, Cowardice asks the question, “Is it safe?” Expediency asks the question, “Is it polite?” And Vanity comes along and asks the question, “Is it popular?” But Conscience asks the question, “Is it right?” And there comes a time when we must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but we must do it because Conscience tells us it is right.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Forget the resolutions this year. How about doing a character inventory and making a decision to live with a higher degree of integrity.

I doubt very many Unitarian Universalists would question the value of being honest and having strong moral principles. Unitarian founder, William Ellery Channing, advocated for developing our character as the way we do religion. Rather than ask God to do the work for us, we decide to investigate what good, evidence-based, moral principles are and make a commitment to practice them. Some of us might solicit God for some assistance in that process, but would recognize their personal responsibility to make the commitment and choose to follow the good.

I love **the idea** of being of upstanding moral character. I'm committed to following its guidance and do a fair job at making good on that commitment. But, well, sometimes I miss the mark I'm aiming at. And Dr. King's quote gives a few of the reasons why.

One personality factor that makes me a good minister also interferes with being courageous. I'm very sociable and enjoy being liked and liking other people. I have over a thousand "friends" on Facebook. I have over a hundred meditation friends on my meditation app.

I especially enjoy being part of a group, especially a community like our congregation. Being accepted into a group often means going along with the group norms and expectations to maintain the group's sense of connection and appreciation. Standing against the group and criticizing its norms and expectations puts all those relationships at risk. Having a strong inner desire to be liked can interfere with being a prophetic voice in a

community.

Now, if illegal activity were happening here or if our funds were not being used correctly, I promise you'd hear my voice ring out loud and clear. I regularly stand up against our congregation taking sides in the hundred year old theist-humanist controversy that continues on here. Being a non-creedal congregation, we must make room for both voices. I advocate for individual and human rights, inclusion of a wide diversity in our congregation and the larger community, and for concern for our neighbors who are marginalized by society. It's a personal commitment...not there yet...more to do.

On the other hand, I bend a lot on some of our inner processes. I'm flexible about whether we do spoken Joys and Sorrows and Announcements in the Sunday Service. I tell people I maintain a rigid "no opinion" policy on things like arts and aesthetics, especially paint colors and wall hangings. I am your minister not your decorator.

I'm all about collaboration. When many minds are effectively combined through skillful group process, a greater intelligence can emerge and guide the group. Some humanists might call this “an emergent phenomenon” of group process. Some theists might call it the will of God becoming known. In practice, done well, what matters isn't the source but the results. Wherever inspiration comes from, more of it is available when we effectively put our heads together to solve the world's problems and our problems. And that process can be very enjoyable because everyone "owns" the outcome. This kind of group mind designed and built Emerson Community Hall.

Collaboration works better when the members of a group are personally committed to good character and following a shared moral compass together. What makes for good morality is also what makes communities work well together. When people of integrity come together they create a great community together.

I am committed to this kind of group process. The leaders of our congregation are also committed to this kind of group process. Our challenge is being attentive to our moral compass and recognizing when we are lost or stray off the path.

Whether you are on track or off the track, let us help you find your way home.

Rev. Sam

News

Finishing your Guest at Your Table effort

It is not too late to contribute to the FUUSA Guest at Your Table effort. Our program will conclude on



Sunday, Jan. 11. You may return Guest at Your Table boxes, and/or checks in envelopes available in the RE office on Sunday mornings, or to DRE Leah Purcell up to that time. If you prefer, you can make your contribution online at uusc.org/givetoguest.

Please contribute to this Unitarian Universalist program of a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots human rights leaders, UUSC promotes workers' rights, upholds the human right to water, and protects communities at risk. And remember, donations of \$125 or more are eligible for a match, dollar for dollar, thanks to a generous grant by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY.

Questions? Please contact FUUSA UUSC local rep Don Odell (xxxxxxx).

Guest in our pulpit, and workshop presenter

Matt Meyer will be in our pulpit on January 18, and leading a workshop that afternoon on "Drumming and Spirituality". Matt is a musician and community organizer who has led hundreds of services for UU congregations across the country. He has a degree in music and has studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana and Central America. Matt is also a founding resident of the Lucy Stone Cooperative in Boston.

Here's a little more from Matt's website:

"When I first went to Cuba to study percussion I was faced with the stark reality of life in the "two-thirds world," where most of our human family lives. Looking out the window on that short bus ride from the airport to the music school shifted the way I understood how the world works. Music had been the door that welcomed me into the house of another culture. When I stepped in though, I learned that the house was much, much more than just a doorway."

Unitarian Universalists have a begun a journey toward becoming a multi-cultural denomination. ... Welcoming the diversity of people in our congrega-

Flyers in this issue

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

- ◆ Drumming and Spirituality workshop

tions means making our differences visible, in addition to our commonalities. Setting the context of our music acknowledges the past inequalities that have shaped our cultures as well as the current inequalities that so often act as barriers to authentic relationship." Read more at www.RhythmRevelations.com. Read about the workshop in the [Growing Together](#) section of this newsletter.

(Not) talking about suicide

Forum, Jan. 11, 11:45 AM

Suicide remains a subject that most of us are uncomfortable talking about. When a friend is affected by the suicide loss of a loved one, we may not know how to deal with the survivor's complicated feelings in a comforting way. We have put together a Forum that promises to bring much insight into this issue.

The Forum panel will include Amy Biancolli, Times Union writer and author of the recently published book "Figuring Sh!t Out – Love, Laughter, Suicide and Survival," in which she shares very openly the impact of her husband's suicide on her family, and her friends' efforts to support her. Also on the panel will be Fred Meservey, who is the retired Director of the Suicide Prevention Center of New York, a volunteer in a suicide survivor outreach program and facilitator of survivor support groups. And we are particularly grateful for the participation of FUUSAns Joe Lemmond and Jan McCracken who are themselves survivors of the suicide of a loved one. This promises to be an enlightening and valuable discussion! Join us on January 11th at 11:45 in Emerson Hall.

Budget requests due Sunday, Jan. 11, 2015

The 2015-16 budget request form can be found on the FUUSA web site, in the left column, under the Church Office tab, in the File Cabinet. The form is below the Financial heading. If necessary, the office can supply you with a printed form.

If you have questions, please contact Steve Moskowitz, at xxxxxxx or xxxxxxx. Submit your electronic budget request to Alyssa at admin@albanyuu.org

Board notes

No bishops!

Ben English, Trustee

I had the good luck to come to FUUSA with my family in 1956, when I was twelve. As a young adult in the 1960s and 70s I left the Capital District and found community on other terms. But in the early 1980s I returned to the Albany area, and I also returned to this church, quite casually at first.



As time went on I participated in more events and activities. 405 Washington Avenue was always there, always providing a place to meet and share with people committed to a genuine search for truth and meaning.

I confess I took FUUSA for granted. But over time, I have come to understand that our society only exists because so many people work to keep it a healthy ongoing institution. It is only here because we, the members, see to it that it grows and prospers as a venue for liberal religious exploration, practice and fellowship.

Ultimate responsibility to ensure that the institution survives, and exactly how to accomplish that, falls to the Board of Trustees. The Board is entrusted with FUUSA's very existence. Now I find myself appointed to fill out an unfinished term on the board, trusted with maintaining a long tradition and building for a healthy future.

This task is known as "church governance", and much has been written and said on the subject, and not just for UUs. Any congregation of a denomination which provides that each congregation manages its own affairs must decide how to manage on its own.. No bishops to tell us how to do things!

FUUSA has bylaws and other prescriptions of how to accomplish this. As my journey with FUUSA has progressed, I have learned about the roles of the board and the many committees which carry out our mission. And, again, I took it for granted that "this is how it is done."

But the Board has recently learned about some principles which could perhaps better serve our organization. Could we streamline governance, be more effective in pursuing our goals and purposes, and make the efforts of our many volunteers both more effective and less onerous?

Answering these questions is not simple. Some things we do by tradition, and that may have a value in and of itself. Some practices come well recommended, but on analysis may not be appropriate to FUUSA. What works for large congregations of many hundreds or even thousands, or for smaller groups, may not work for FUUSA with its membership hovering around 400.

The size and structure of the board itself may come into question, and certainly the many committees, some with overlapping or poorly defined missions, all can be scrutinized and perhaps recast.

The board does not take this lightly, and it does not seek change for change's sake. But opportunities are in the offing to organize FUUSA so that less time and energy are spent on planning and administration, and more on growth and activism. We would fail our mission if we did not explore this path. We have recently had the opportunity to learn from experts well experienced in the governance of UU and other liberal churches, and great care will be taken to study what ideas can be applied here.

This work is in an early stage, but we do expect to have beneficial proposals in the year to come.

or on paper to the Finance Committee mailbox.

MLK Interfaith Memorial Service: "When Hope Is Not Enough"

7:00 PM, Thursday, Jan. 15

All are invited to the 42nd annual interfaith memorial service for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches. The service this year will be held at Macedonia Baptist Church at 26 Wilson Avenue in Colonie (formerly Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Church,) Reverend Leonard D.



Comithier, Jr., Pastor. A free will offering will benefit the CACC's Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Scholarship Fund for high school seniors.

Planning for weather emergencies

We have rarely cancelled Sunday services or other programs at FUUSA due to snow or other weather emergencies, but we do have a plan for those situations.

In the event of a big winter storm or other weather emergency, the decision to cancel any program will be made far enough in advance so you will be able to make your plans. Notice of cancellations will be distributed three ways:

- ◆FUUSA homepage: www.AlbanyUU.org
- ◆Email sent to "Preview" list
- ◆School Closings Network (on local television)

New year, new opportunities!

Happy New Year!!! Among the many tasks that await us as we begin a new calendar year is preparation for our new church year. The "new year" for FUUSA does not actually begin until July 1, after our Annual Meeting in May when we elect officers; approve a new budget; and discuss issues critical to our congregation. In preparation for the Annual

Meeting, the Nominating Committee has begun the process of seeking candidates for positions that will be vacant as of June 30, 2015. We start this process 5 months in advance because we are seeking your help--the selection of candidates for open positions is not done by a small group behind closed doors. To the contrary, developing the strongest possible list of candidates occurs with your input. We encourage all members to consider how you might play a leadership role in our congregation, how you would like to apply your talents and interests while helping to guide our Society.

We anticipate vacancies in our: Board of Trustees (the body invested by our Bylaws to determine matters of policy and management;) Religious Education Council (the group that fosters and maintains a religious education program for the children and youth of FUUSA;) Social Responsibilities Council (our guide and coordinator when it comes to social issues of moral and ethical significance;) Nominating (the committee responsible for publicizing the nominating procedure and presenting a slate of candidates for open positions;) and Endowment Trust (the group that manages gifts and bequests to our society and makes decisions regarding investments and use of designated portions of the money in our Trust fund.) This is not an exhaustive list of positions that will become available in the next several months; however it is a start. Please make your interest, capabilities and willingness known to any of the members of this committee.

One point of particular note--only active members of our Society can run for elected office. If you are not currently an active member of FUUSA-- if you have not signed the membership book and made a pledge --you have time to do so. Per our Bylaws, you have until April 17 (30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.) If you are currently a "visitor" or "friend", and would like to become more involved in the operation of FUUSA, please formally join our Society.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this process, please talk with any member of the committee: Laura Churchill, Dave Metz, Donna Meixner, Paula Moskowitz, and Sandy Stone.

Newcomer orientation

Saturday, Feb. 14, 8:45 a.m. to noon.

We invite you to meet with others who are new to the congregation at our next "Getting to Know UU" session.

Learn about Unitarian Universalism and our congregation, and ask all the questions you've been collecting. It's a fun morning of conversation and fellowship, coffee and snacks.

To register: Send an **email** to Registration@AlbanyUU.org; **sign up** at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall, or **call** the church office, 463-7135. Childcare is available: please let us know you need it when you register.

Do you want to be involved in Unitarian Universalism beyond FUUSA?

There are a number of upcoming activities and meetings in which the denomination wants to hear from you.

Here are a few with links.

Feb. 1: Deadline for congregational poll ballots (a quorum of 25% participation required), and for submission of comments on the draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) on Reproductive Justice. If a quorum has been reached, the UUA Commission on Social Witness (CSW) then prepares a revised draft of the SOC on Reproductive Justice, and places this revised draft on the Final General Assembly Agenda. Link: <http://www.uua.org/reproductive/calling/209016.shtml>. There will be information at the Social Responsibilities Council table during January. Questions? Contact Don Odell.

Mar. 27-28: Joint district assembly of the St. Lawrence and Ohio-Meadville Districts at the Niagara Falls Convention Center. Registration is now open. Go to <http://www.sld.cerguua.org/conggrowth/districtassembly.html> for details. Registration is now open. The theme *Broad Wings Deep Roots*.

June 24-28. The Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly in Portland, OR. Further information is available at <http://www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml>.

Interested? Questions? Please contact you Denominational Affairs liaison Don Odell (xxxxxxx, xxxxxxx)

Music notes for January

Jan. 4 - Back by popular demand! **Jay Sager** brings his amazing talents on the marimba. If you missed him last time you will enjoy the varied repertoire of classical, jazz, and contemporary music he plays on the large pitched percussion instrument.

Jan. 11 - New musical experiment.... "**Drop In Choir**"! You can be a member of the chorus for one Sunday. Just show up in Emerson Hall at 9:00 and Matt will teach us a couple of easy but impressive sounding choir pieces. All ages and abilities are welcome.

Jan. 18 - Percussionist **Matt Meyer** will lead the service and present a workshop in the afternoon on spirituality and drumming. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Jan. 25 - FUUSA **choir** returns ready to reach even greater heights in 2015. Remember, it's never too late to join the choir!

Growing Together

watch a one-hour video and then discuss the concepts presented and their implications for this liberal faith tradition today.

We plan to watch the video over dinner starting at 6:00 PM and start the discussion at 7:00 PM after cleaning up.

To register send an email to registration@AlbanyUU.org, sign up in Channing Hall, or call the office (463-7135). Bring your own dinner to the first meeting; the group will decide how to manage future dinners.

"Long Strange Trip"—An Exploration of UU History

6:00-8:00 PM, six Wednesdays, Jan. 14 – Feb. 18
Co-Facilitators: Tom Mercer, Sam Trumbore, Leah Purcell

Long Strange Trip is a six-part video series exploring the history of Unitarian and Universalist thought and practice from its early, liberal strands at the beginning of the Christian era to what we know today as Unitarian Universalism. In each class, you will

Religious Exploration

Practicing integrity as an act of joy

Leah Purcell, Director of Religious Education



“May what I do flow from me like a river, no forcing and no holding back, the way it is with children” – Rainer Maria Rilke

We often think of integrity as doing the right thing. Being with children and youth can force us adults to consider what we really value. We want children and youth to act in certain way, so we become more mindful of our own actions than we might otherwise. When cooking with children, we might take an extra moment to use a hot mitt rather than to take a tray out of the oven rather than plucking something off it barehanded. We are most likely to come to a full and complete stop at the 4-way when we have teens in the car who are eager to learn to drive themselves. And then there's the swearing ...

Joyful integrity

I think that the children and youth also show us that integrity can also be defined by doing what naturally brings joy. We think of children as being self-centered, and they are. As they get older, their world is filled with “ah-ha!” moments of discovery and knowledge. They are constantly creating and testing ideas and theories and morals and testing them against their experiences. We often hear from our senior high youth that it is only in our Congregation, at youth group meetings and events, that they feel they can be their true selves. They know they don't have to fake anything in order to be accepted. And they wholeheartedly welcome everyone, just the way they are.

Children and youth also are real. Young children don't hide behind masks. They are naturally motivated by curiosity and compassion for others. Older children and youth can learn to be aware of the forces that are exerted on them and name them for what they are. Youth can develop skills to unmask themselves.

Facing a power-filled world

Hugo J. Hollerorth, Unitarian Universalist religious educator, professor and author writes in his 1974 essay *Relating to Our World*, what can be seen as a working Unitarian Universalist explanation of integrity for children, youth and adults, “For Unitarian Universalists, existence is a never ending endeavor of relating to and dealing with the multitude of powers within the self and world.” Hollerorth also writes of Religious Education in this essay, “Merely to become aware, however of these powers leaves the child or young person mired in a myriad of entanglements. He must also be helped to discover a process for relating to and dealing with the variety of ways in which they affect him. Unitarian Universalism is such a process, and a Unitarian Universalist religious education program would provide the young with a compelling experience of its power to help them create a life-enhancing orientation to the power-filled world.”

Our Religious Education program at FUUSA has become more experience-based with the introduction of the Tapestry of Faith program and Workshop Rotation. Children are learning how to relate to the world, guided by the values articulated in our Seven Principles. I'm working to provide families with materials online to use at home to articulate their values and live more joyfully in endeavoring to live those values.

The story for this month is *The Empty Pot* by Demi: <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session13/sessionplan/stories/60162.shtml>. All characters in this story, the emperor, the children, the families, are dealing with the forces around them. Where do you see yourself in the story?

In joyful service,

Leah

"Drumming and Spirituality" workshop

Sunday, Jan. 18, 1:00 PM

Emerson Community Hall

This workshop is an extraordinary opportunity to explore rhythm and spirituality with Matt Meyer, one of the most prominent musicians of our denomination. Matt will be presenting the service at FUUSA on Sunday, Jan. 18, and then offering this 1 ½ hour workshop at 1:00 PM.

Matt's "Drumming and Spirituality" workshop is a chance for people of all skill levels to participate in hands on rhythm-making. We will experience the connection of community music-making through different activities, stories, games and discussions, as well as look at how rhythm and music intersect with Unitarian Universalist values. Bring your own drum if you have one—for those who don't, enough will be provided.

Childcare will be available for children under 12: please let us know when you register how many children you are bringing for childcare and their ages.

Suggested donation: \$10 for an individual and \$20 for a family. Proceeds above the cost of the workshop will support the FUUSA Rite of Passage program. **Sign up by email** to registration@AlbanyUU.org or call 518-463-7135. Learn more about Matt at www.RhythmRevelations.com ...and come play drums with him on January 18!

Can't make the date? This workshop will also be presented at UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs on Feb. 15.

Learning the Language of Love: an Introduction to Nonviolent Communication

9:30 - 4:30, Saturday, Feb. 14

Co-Facilitators: Jan McCracken and Philomena Moriarty

What better way to spend this next Valentine's Day than to discover how to infuse compassion into your self and your interactions with others? In this workshop you will find the tools and support you need to translate judgments, criticisms, and right-wrong thinking into a language that speaks from the heart. Nonviolent communication taps into the energy of feelings and needs to transform relationships with self and others. Come with a partner, a friend, or

your very own self to learn the fundamentals of this practice in an engaging and supportive setting. The workshop is based upon the work of Marshal B. Rosenberg.

To register, send an email with your name and telephone number to registration@AlbanyUU.org by Feb. 8. Specify "Feb. 14 NVC Workshop" in the subject line. A \$10 workshop fee will be collected to cover basic costs. Scholarships are available. Child-care can be arranged as needed with advance notice. Please contact Jan at xxxxxx for more information.

Mindfulness Meditation Workshop

Friday-Saturday, Jan. 9-10

This Intensive practice and training session, will be led by Rev. Trumbore, on Friday 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and Saturday 8:00am to 3:00pm. It gives the participants an opportunity to learn Buddhist mindfulness meditation techniques or refresh and deepen their meditation practice. All are welcome from first timers to experts. There will be a potluck vegan lunch on Saturday and all are encouraged to bring something to share.

To register send an email to registration@AlbanyUU.org, sign up in Channing Hall, or call the office (463-7135). (A voluntary donation can be offered at the end.)

Rev. Trumbore has practiced Buddhist insight meditation for 30 years and is Past President of the Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship. This meditation technique is one of the best for Unitarian Universalists. It helps people train their minds to strengthen concentration and intensify moment-to-moment awareness. Regular practice of this technique quiets and sharpens the mind, opens the heart and can improve one's physical health.

NOTE: The **Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship** will be having a weekend event **March 20-22, 2015**, in **Garrison, New York** at the Garrison Institute with featured presenter, Stephen Batchelor. For more information, visit their web site: <http://uubf.org> Register before Feb. 1 for a discount!

Experience Beloved Conversations!

Saturdays, Mar. 7 - May 9, 10:00 - 12:00

Beloved Conversations seeks to facilitate honest

conversations about race and ethnicity as a vehicle for faith formation and spiritual awakening. We are fortunate to have trained facilitators, Michael Hornsby and Patti Jo Newell, willing to give their time and talents to bring this powerful small group series to FUUSA, beginning on March 7 and running through May 9.

The curriculum for Beloved Conversations was developed by Dr. Mark Hicks, Professor of Religious

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School. According to Dr. Hicks, the series of ten discussions is framed in the spirit of small-group ministry or a covenant group. Unlike diversity seminars, Beloved Conversations is a spiritual practice. As people of faith and human potential, success is measured by one's ability to be curious when one is unsettled by the expression of a new idea or experience.

The size of the group will be limited to 12 participants. TO REGISTER Send an **email** to registration@AlbanyUU.org, **sign up** at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall, or **call** the office at 463-7135.

JOY in the LIBRARY: we have A NEW BOOK-CASE!

We are excited to report that we have a new bookcase, which we gratefully appreciate. First, a big thanks to DAVE METZ who made the arrangements to make this happen and to DAVE VADNEY, the master cabinet maker, who created our beautiful new shelves. What will this do for the Joy Library? We plan to reshelve the cataloged collection to leave space for many books now in the new books area for which there is no room on the shelves. We will catalog a number of books currently in boxes and in cabinets. And we will be able to continue acquiring new books to fulfill our library's mission.

New books

This changes everything : capitalism vs. the climate by Naomi Klein Simon & Schuster (2014) 363.738 KLE "... Naomi Klein argues that climate change isn't just another issue to be neatly filed between taxes and health care. It's an alarm that calls us to fix an economic system that is already failing us in many ways. Klein meticulously builds the case for how massively reducing our greenhouse emissions is our best chance to simultaneously reduce gaping inequalities, re-imagine our broken democracies, and rebuild our gutted local economies. She exposes the ideological desperation of the climate-change deniers, the messianic delusions of the would-be geoengineers, and the tragic defeatism of too many mainstream green initiatives. And she demonstrates precisely why the market has not—and cannot—fix the climate crisis but will instead make things worse, with ever more extreme and ecologically damaging extraction methods, accompanied by rampant disaster capitalism." *Library Thing*

Being mortal : medicine and what matters in the end by Atul Gawande. Henry Holt & Co. (2014) 362.17 GAW "...Gawande, a practicing surgeon, addresses his profession's ultimate limitation, arguing that quality of life is the desired goal for patients and families. Gawande offers examples of freer, more socially fulfilling models for assisting the infirm and dependent elderly, and he explores the varieties of hospice care to demonstrate that a person's last weeks or months may be rich and dignified. Full of eye-opening research and riveting storytelling, *Being Mortal* asserts that medicine can comfort and enhance our experience even to the end, providing not only a good life but also a good end. ." *Amazon*.

The meaning of human existence by Edward O. Wilson. Liveright Publishing. (2014) 128 WIL "This compact volume packs a great punch—particularly in its new compelling argument that it would be the gravest of mistakes to reengineer our minds to make ourselves supermen. It understands our limited brains as the right tool for building the kind of future we require, and with this 'existential conservatism' gives us new reason to celebrate the wonder that is us." (*Bill McKibben, author of Enough*)

—SK

Our Community

Welcome, new members!

Cindee Herrick grew up in the Unitarian Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, and joined the congregation at age 13. Since then she has been a member of First Unitarian in San Francisco and All Souls in New London, Connecticut. Cindee moved to Albany this past summer intending to settle here permanently. Therefore, membership in FUUSA is part of her process of settling into a community.



Cindee is a professionally trained maritime curator and adjunct history lecturer. She chose Albany for the easy access to the Adirondacks and Berkshires, the hip street scene reminiscent of Portland, Oregon, and mostly, proximity to friends and family. She owns a duplex in the Delaware Avenue neighborhood which she shares with two golden retrievers, a couple of cats, and enough garden space for asparagus and tomatoes.

Matthew Lesniak and Vanessa Cayford met while working for the Homeless Action Committee 17 years ago and have been a couple ever since. Matt is an archeologist, and originally from Herkimer County. Vanessa is a clinical social worker, originally from the Jersey Shore. She is Laura Cayford's older daughter.

Vanessa was raised a UU in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County, so it was inevitable that she would find her way back to Unitarian Universalism someday. Matt was raised a Roman



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

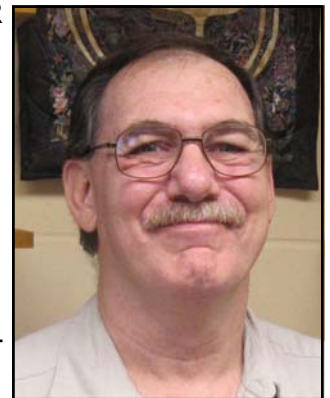


Our Pastoral Care Associates have been trained in compassionate listening skills and are available to all members and friends of our congregation. To contact a Pastoral Care Associate, email listeners@albany-uu.org, contact Reverend Sam Trumbore, the FUUSA office at 518-463-7135, or one of them personally.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

Catholic so it was inevitable that he would find his way to Unitarian Universalism someday!

Vanessa and Matt's daughter xxxxxxx

Paul Reese is originally from Dallas, Texas where he was raised until age 9 when he moved to Houston. At 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served for 2 years. He was an OTR trucker until 1987. For the next 27 years, he was incarcerated, serving his time until 2014 when he was paroled back to Albany.



Paul loves animals and currently volunteers at the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society where he walks dogs. He loves the outdoors and enjoys camping, fishing, and hiking. As he was incarcerated during the "new age of electronics" and didn't have access to cell phones, he now loves his cell phone, talking, texting and surfing the web. He enjoys walking around Albany and loves spending time with friends in Albany as well as Troy and Saratoga Springs. Sleeping in a real bed, playing music,

and raiding the fridge anytime are real pleasures.

Paul learned about Unitarian Universalism from a fellow prisoner 3 years ago and joined the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) at that time. Since coming to Albany, he has been a regular at FUUSA. He attended the recent Silver Bay Weekend and he stated he loved the experience and the awesome beauty of that place and the UUs at the weekend!

Rodger Fink and Laura Paris Laura retired in December 2012 from a career that included teaching special education and administering professional development programs for teachers at the State Education Department. She has two daughters and a grandson who is a college freshman. Always an avid gardener, she is enjoying planning and planting the yard around the home in Guilderland shared with her partner, Rodger. She's a former member of the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady, where she served for several years as a member of the Social Action Council.

Rodger is here after a difficult year coping with a broken hip, which he survived with the help of his partner, cook, washer woman, nurse and sweet-



heart, Laura. After nearly 20 years teaching high school and college English, he came to Albany to work for the state, speaking, writing, editing and even web mastering. He has been retired for ten years. His interests include cycling, kayaking, gardening, reading, bridge, soccer, volunteering and discussing all kinds of subjects with all kinds of people.

Nancy Croce was born in New York City where she went to Catholic schools. Her educational background is in Sociology. She has taught at colleges downstate, was an educational analyst in the New York State Senate, and worked with migrant stu-

dents and their families statewide. She is interested in pursuing the relationship between Unitarian Universalism and Buddhism, and looks forward to participating in the congregation and to meeting you.

Emily and Micah Ilowit first began coming to FUUSA in the Spring of 2014. Emily was raised Episcopalian and Micah, who spent his first couple years of life living on an Ashram, was raised in an Eastern

Religion which originated in India. Neither of them has actively practiced their respective religions for some time. Needless to say,



once they found out they would be having a child they agreed they should find *something* which would provide a supportive community with a focus on teaching kindness and acceptance--FUUSA fit the bill!

Emily, a nurse, Micah, a social worker, and xxxxxx enjoy time with their family (including 2 adopted pit bulls), and spending as much time outside as their busy schedules will allow.

Young adults to gather at Unirondack

Have you ever wanted to relive the joys of youth camp days as an adult with your peers? Have you been wanting to connect with like-minded young adults in the UU community? Are you finding it difficult to create a faith-based peer group experience in your community?

On June 5-7 at Camp Unirondack, young adults from throughout the region will be coming together to reconnect with friends and make new ones. Join us for a lively weekend in the gorgeous woods of the western Adirondacks, where our activities will be self-selected from such shenanigans as a masquerade ball, quidditch lessons, deep discussions, mu-

sic, and much more! The weekend is open to 18-30 year-olds from the UU community and like-minded people.

Contact Tracy Hollands at tlhollands22@gmail.com to help organize workshops and activities to make this weekend great!

Register now at unirondack.org to reserve your spot! Email director@unirondack.org for further registration info. Fee: \$50 (\$45 before April 1).

Thank you!

To Rev. Sam and other Carolers-

A very special thank you to singers from FUUSA who entertained folks, including me, at Eddy Memorial Geriatric Center on December 21. The music was much appreciated.

Also, I am grateful for a thoughtful present from Sunday School students.—Eva Gemmill

6 to 9 at 6:09: Circle Dinners

Saturday, Jan. 23 and Saturday, Jan. 24

Circle dinners provide FUUSAns and visitors the opportunity to socialize over a delicious potluck dinner in a private home and become better acquainted with fellow FUUSAns. Everyone is welcome, singles and couples, regardless of dietary restrictions. We can also provide rides, as needed. We encourage families with young children to attend or host a multi-generational dinner. Please join us for the dinner on January 23 or 24.

To sign up for the January 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, Jan. 11.* Assignments will be announced after that date. If you have questions, please contact Martha at xxxxxxxx or xxxxxxxx.

Please save these dates for future dinners: Friday, Mar. 20 and Saturday, Mar. 21; Saturday, Apr. 25; Saturday, May 23.

FUUSA Humanist news and next meeting

After a weather cancellation for our December meeting, we plan our next FUUSA Humanists meeting at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, Jan. 13, in Room B-8 at FUUSA and hope for more cooperative weather. We will

continue our discussion about the state of humanism, whether secular, religious and/or spiritual, in the denomination and at FUUSA. For now we have settled on the second Tuesday of each month. We welcome all to join us. Questions? Contact Don Odell (xxxxxxx, xxxxxx).

Channing Circle shares poetry: Jan. 19

Our annual poetry session will occur on Monday, Jan. 19 and will be led by Abby Sugarman. As usual, bring your lunch at noon, and coffee and tea will be available. Peg Slocum is bringing dessert for us to share. Bring your own poetry or favorite poems that you want to share. Newcomers are always welcome: Channing Circle is a monthly gathering of retired folks.

Walker Book Club

Sunday, Jan. 11, at 5:30 pm

Join the Walker Book Club for a potluck and book discussion in Channing Hall.. Newcomers are always welcome and the book club is open to all. Bring your favorite dish to share and a small contribution to cover beverages. Be green and bring your own dishes etc., or use dishware at FUUSA and help with the dishwasher.

On January 11 we will discuss *TransAtlantic*, a novel by Irish author Colum McCann. This novel explores 150 years of American and Irish history through a fictional setting based on three real-life stories.

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

Joys and Caring Corner _____

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 (xxxxxxx.)

Social Justice

Social Responsibilities Council

Martha Musser reports that a number of people from FUUSA are volunteering at Sheridan Preparatory Academy this year, but many students need individual attention and help with reading and math. We encourage other FUUSAns to volunteer. We know you will find it a worthwhile experience, as well as just fun to engage with these lively young students. Sheridan Prep is located at nearby 400 Sheridan Avenue, Albany 12206 and serves children from preK through fifth grade. For more information, contact Martha Musser or Lois Griffin.

SRC sends congratulations to all the people who have worked so hard on the fracking issue in NYS issue. We send a special thanks to Karen Kaufmann for arranging a Dec. 1 visit to the Governor's Office to discuss the FUUSA Fracking Resolution. The meeting was attended by Chris Bystroff, Karen Kaufmann, David Musser, Martha Musser, Reese Satin, Robb Smith, Sandy Steubing and Reverend Sam. They met with Peter Walke, Assistant Secretary for the Environment. The group discussed the development of FUUSA's resolution on fracking, its foundation in UU principles, and the conditions that the resolution laid out for fracking to be acceptable. They also urged the Governor to be a leader in fighting climate change by promoting a rapid transition from fossil fuels to alternative energy sources. Mr. Walke was pleasant but did not comment on the Governor's intentions..... But now we know!

Can you imagine living--let alone supporting a family—on New York State's minimum wage of \$8.00/hour? While it is good news that on December 31, 2014, it will rise to \$8.75/hour, it is still challenging for so many workers, especially for women, recent immigrants, and people of color. A coalition of labor, community, and faith organizations are working on this issue. Please look for online petitions, rallies or vigils that address this issue and give them your whole-hearted support.

The **Social Responsibilities Council** meets on the first Sunday of the month at 11:45 in B7. Join us! Questions or comments can be addressed to Jean Poppei, Chair xxxxxxx

Green Sanctuary tips

Why not recycle old holiday lights at the Green Sanctuary end of the Social Responsibility table on Sundays in January. Replace them with LED lights as these come on sale after Christmas. LED lights



use up to 75% less energy than old-fashioned lights and do not burn as hotly.

An idea to increase heating efficiency for those of you who have radiators: purchase aluminum bubble insulation, cut it, and insert it behind your radiators. (You could also use just plain aluminum foil.) The aluminum will reflect the heat into the room, and the insulation will help prevent heat loss through the wall behind the radiator. In the summer, you can take the pre-cut aluminum bubble insulation and use it to block penetration in sunny windows. Doing this really makes a room cooler.

Green burial—the natural way to go

In recent decades we've become increasingly conscious of the importance of green practices that leave a minimal footprint on the environment. We realize the importance of recycling, buy more fuel-efficient cars, choose china over paper plates, and try to remember to bring reusable tote bags on our shopping trips so as to minimize the use of those pesky plastic bags that pile up in our landfills. But for the most part, our funeral practices aren't yet in synch with our growing environmental consciousness. The green burial movement seeks to change that.

The Green Burial Council (www.greenburialcouncil.org) states that "Green, or natural burial is a way of caring for the dead with minimal environmental impact that aids in the conservation of natural resources, reduction of carbon emissions, protection of worker health, and the restoration and/or preservation of habitat. Green burial necessitates the use of non-toxic and biodegradable materials, such as caskets, shrouds, and urns."

The Dell at Vale Cemetery in Schenectady recently became the first green burial cemetery in the Capital Region to be certified by the Green Burial Council. Only six are certified in New York State, and only

340 nationwide, but that number is certain to increase as awareness of green burial grows.

Several years ago I visited Greensprings (www.naturalburial.org), sited on 100 acres of rolling hilltop meadows south of Cayuga Lake in the Finger Lakes region. The grave markers there are inconspicuous, lying flat and embedded in the ground, surrounded by grasses, wildflowers and trees indigenous to the area.

Funeral director Amy Cunningham, who spoke at the Memorial Society's annual meeting at FUUSA in 2013, writes, "Some people think cremation is 'greener' than burial because cremation generally requires no cemetery space. Actually, . . . you can be *protecting* rural property by burying yourself in it. Cemetery laws prohibit highways or shopping malls from coming to land that has deceased people in it,



Greensprings Natural Cemetery Preserve

so in using a green cemetery, you are helping to keep gorgeously-wooded, rural properties safe from development. You can also be buried in a shroud (without a casket) in a green cemetery, something most conventional cemeteries don't yet allow. No herbicides are used on the grass, as a rule, and the setting of a registered green burial ground is kept much as it was found: wild, natural,

frequented by birds, squirrels, and deer. Folks who bury a family member in a green cemetery are sad a death has occurred, but elated by their participation in an end-of-life ritual that signals a return to the simpler burial practices of 200 years ago."

To learn more about green burial and other end-of-life issues, visit the Memorial Society of the Hudson-Mohawk Region at www.hudsonmohawkfca.wordpress.com.--Julie Lomoe

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, 1st 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 downtown campus parking lots: the Hawley Lot on Robin Street at Washington Avenue and the Thurlow Terrace Lot on Western 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 Office Administrator Alyssa Yeager (463-7135 or admin@albanyuu.org).

To **rent hall or classroom space** for a personal or non-FUUSA activity, contact Office Administrator Alyssa Yeager (463-7135 or admin@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

Drumming and Spirituality

workshop with
Matt Meyer

Sunday, Jan. 18, 1:00 PM

Emerson Community Hall



This workshop is a chance for people of all skill levels to participate in hands on rhythm-making. We will experience the connection of community music-making through different activities, stories, games and discussions, as well as look at how rhythm and music intersect with Unitarian Universalist values. Bring your own drum if you have one—for those who don't, enough will be provided.



Goodwill donation to cover the cost and support the Rite of Passage program. Suggested donation: \$10 individual / \$20 family.

Sign up by email to registration@AlbanyUU.org or call 518-463-7135.

Childcare will be available for children under 12: please let us know when you register how many children you are bringing for childcare and their ages.

*Leah Purcell says
"Matt is AWESOME!
Do not miss this!"*

Matt Meyer is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist. He graduated from Berklee College of Music where he studied hand drumming and world music, including studies abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America. Since then, Matt has led music and worship for hundreds of services in congregations all over the country, workshops for UU Musicians' Network conferences and multiple UU district events. He has also led music for the last ten General Assemblies.

Matt is honored to have performed a diverse repertoire with Ysaye Barnwell (of Sweet Honey in the Rock), Pete Seeger, Emma's Revolution, Peter Mayer, Jim Scott, Nick Page, The Halalisa Singers, Samba Tremeterra, and Bloco de Afrobrasil.

Learn more about Matt at www.RhythmRevelations.com ...and come play drums with him on January 18!

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