

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.

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

Apr. 5 "Celebrating Easter...Diversely," Rev. Sam Trumbore and Leah Purcell

Easter is a Christian holiday celebrated during Jewish Passover at the time of the Pagan celebration of Equinox and the Humanist appreciation of the return of spring. We don't have to pick one as Unitarian Universalists. We can celebrate them all--finding meaning for our religious journeys, value for our community and joy for daily living.

Music: Adult chamber choir and children's chorus

Apr. 12 "Our Inner Fish," Rev. Joe Cleveland

What happens to a faith that believes in evolution? What inspiration, obligations, and dangers reveal themselves?

Music: Helderberg Madrigal Singers

Also today: Family Chapel for families with children in Pre-K-5th grade

Apr. 19 "New Year of the Trees: Of I and Thou," Rev. Lynn Ashley, with FUUSA's Green Sanctuary Committee

Inspired by the Jewish Holiday Tu B Sh'vat or New Year of the Trees, Martin Buber, and others, we are invited to consider the meaning of being in relationship as we mark Earth Day 2015.

Music: Intergenerational drop-in choir

Give Away the Plate: Capital Roots

Apr. 26 "Making a Commitment to Climate Justice," Rev. Sam Trumbore

Too often Social Justice issues are divided into silos. School funding, minimum wage, civil rights, prison reform, and fracking, to name only a few, don't seem to overlap with each other. Climate changes can touch many of them as the suffering from their effects is not equally distributed across all. How can we respond?

Music: Choir



WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian
Universalist Society of Albany

April 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)

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:

Family Chapel will be on April 12

Events happening every week in April

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 April

1-Apr Wednesday

10:30 AM Chair Yoga (Auction Event)..... B-3/B-4
 6:00 PM Reading Music with Ann Brandon B-7

2-Apr Thursday

7:00 PM PCA Training / Meeting B-8

3-Apr Friday

5:00 PM Multi-generational Potluck --
 Green SanctuaryChanning

5-Apr Sunday

11:45 AM Social Responsibilities Council Meeting..... B-7
 12:00 PM Annual Dinner Skit Rehearsal.....Emerson

6-Apr Monday

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

7-Apr Tuesday

6:00 PM Wellspring Foundation B-8

8-Apr Wednesday

10:30 AM Chair Yoga (Auction Event)..... B-3/B-4

9-Apr Thursday

12:00 PM All Sides Considered - Current Events Group B-8
 5:00 PM Wellspring advisor meeting Ann Lapinski B-5
 7:00 PM Program Coordinating Council..... B8, AV

10-Apr Friday

10:00 AM Wellspring advisor meeting--Perkins.....Stott

11-Apr Saturday

10:00 AM Lifespan Learning-Beloved Conversations B-3/B-4
 4:00 PM Youth Group Meeting Channing Hall, B-8
 6:00 PM Youth Overnight (ME) Whole Building

12-Apr Sunday

12:00 AM Youth Overnight (ME) Whole Building
 8:00 AM Nominating B-7
 11:30 AM Saturday Men's Group B-5
 11:45 AM Forum (Social Responsibilities Council)Emerson, AV
 11:45 AM Monday MenB-6
 12:30 PM Rite of Passage meeting..... B-8
 5:30 PM Walker Book Club Channing

13-Apr Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry - Patrick/Odell B-8
 1:00 PM Interfaith ImpactB-8
 3:30 PM Overflow Shelter Meal Preparation Kitchen
 6:15 PM April REC MeetingChanning
 6:30 PM Small Group Ministry - English.....Stott Lounge

14-Apr Tuesday

7:00 PM FUUSA HumanistsB-8
 7:00 PM UU ChristiansB-5
 7:00 PM Wellspring: Faithful Action.....Stott Lounge

15-Apr Wednesday

10:30 AM Chair Yoga (Auction Event)..... B-3/B-4

16-Apr Thursday

7:00 PM FUUSA Board Meeting Channing

17-Apr Friday

9:00 AM May Windows deadline
 6:00 PM Annual Fellowship Dinner..... Offsite

18-Apr Saturday

10:00 AM Lifespan Learning-Beloved Conversations... B-8

19-Apr Sunday

11:45 AM Green Sanctuary Meeting B-8

20-Apr Monday

10:00 AM Small Group Ministry Manning/Rohrbaugh .. B-5
 12:00 PM Channing Circle Lunch (ME) Channing
 6:30 PM Finance Committee MeetingB7, AV
 7:00 PM Meaning Matters Tuesday..... Stott Lounge
 7:00 PM Wellspring Foundation..... B-8

22-Apr Wednesday

10:30 AM Chair Yoga (Auction Event)..... B-3/B-4
 5:30 PM Endowment Trust Meeting Stott Lounge

23-Apr Thursday

12:00 PM All Sides Considered - Current Events Group B-8

25-Apr Saturday

8:00 AM Women for a Better World Breakfast(ME)Channing
 10:00 AM Lifespan Learning-Beloved Conversations... B-8
 6:00 PM Circle Dinner (ME) Offsite

26-Apr Sunday

11:30 AM Saturday Men's Group..... B-5
 11:45 AM Congregational Conversation on Budget B-8
 11:45 AM Monday Men B-6
 12:00 PM Youth group fundraiser Channing

27-Apr Monday

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

28-Apr Tuesday

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

29-Apr Wednesday

10:30 AM Chair Yoga (Auction Event)..... B-3/B-4



Sam's Outlook

On being an advocate for the earth

Rev. Sam Trumbore



Since the dawn of civilization, humanity has been looking backward to the good old days. In Genesis, we see the prototype for this human sentiment in the Garden of Eden. Everything was wonderful and perfect until human beings follow their curiosity, enabled by the serpent who puts doubt in their minds, and eat from the forbidden tree. It all starts unraveling from there and we've been trying to get back to that garden ever since.

From the natural selection perspective of evolutionary theory, humanity has been a supremely successful species. Big brains are a very powerful adaptive resource to increase our ability to survive. Our ability to remember opportunities and threats and then anticipate them has helped us, reproduce and not get killed or eaten. And we've also evolved ways to communicate that learning through language and retain that learning beyond our own deaths. We're still talking about scientific, religious and philosophic learning that happened thousands of years ago.

Sadly our success hasn't been very good for most other life forms on this planet, except for rats, ticks, deer and cockroaches. At the rate things are going, our dominance of the biosphere will likely drive 90% of species to extinction. Chickens, turkeys, goats, sheep, cows and pigs along with wheat, corn and rice, however, have had their genes do very well. (A version of humanities love of the 1%)

The threat we pose to the planet by driving extinction rates through the roof is the way we disturb ecosystems. Human intervention in a particular place hunting a species till it disappears or selecting one species we'd like to encourage to multiply can create an imbalance with the other species of plants and animals. Remove predators and the deer population explodes. Introduce a new species like fast growing Brazilian Pepper to Florida and it takes over, soaking up all the light and creating barren ground under it. Understory plants can't survive with this bush that has no enemies to contain it.

Systems theory has helped us understand and appreciate the delicate balance that supports a wide diversity of species to survive. Removing just one species or

introducing one new one can completely unbalance that system. Scientists think it takes a long time for that balance to reestablish itself since evolutionary change requires many generations of offspring to incorporate genetic changes to adapt. This could take hundreds or thousands of years.

Human activity happens much, much faster than that.

This imbalance between the rapid speed of human activity and the slow rate that nature can adapt to our changes has created significant discouragement by those interested in preserving the biodiversity that currently exists. And that has led to an anti-humanism that can be sensed in the new philosophy of Deep Ecology. This philosophy puts a higher value on planetary welfare than on human welfare.

And there is logic to this. If we destroy the planet's ability to support life, it will be rather negative for humanity as we'll face mass extinction too. The dilemma of our age is figuring out how to balance human wants and needs verses the needs of planetary diversity of species to survive and flourish.

Or, in other words, to survive, humanity must learn self-regulation.

Humanity does have this capacity to self-regulate ... but to make a commitment to this capacity **as a planetary organism** will require an evolution of consciousness. Every species puts its needs before all other species in the struggle to survive. It is eat or be eaten and grab as much territory as you can. The balance is created by the diversity of species not by any one species self-regulating. Humanity so far has operated outside this mechanism - to our peril.

Humanity is the first species that can consciously value diversity and actually take an active hand in helping it along. We are able to restore ecosystems after disrupting them. We have the power to stop polluting the air, land and water. We can recognize that increasing carbon dioxide will be a threat.

Commitment to interdependence is one of the highest priorities of our species and potentially one of the greatest gifts we can give our planet. We have the capacity to recreate the Garden of Eden through a commitment to the planet before our self-interest.

One way to make that commitment is to change our first principle from "The inherent worth and dignity of all people" to "every being."—Rev. Sam

News

New Nigel Wright Peace Fund

At its March 19 meeting, the Board of Trustees accepted a generous \$7,000 gift to the Society to establish the Nigel Wright Peace Fund. The Board also approved guidelines for use of the Fund.

Created in memory of long-time member Nigel Wright, the Fund will support programs that educate and engage our congregation in activities that create peace and develop awareness of obstacles to peace. These will include youth and family scholarships to programs that promote peace and intercultural understanding; educational events such as seminars and lectures; and other programs addressing the purpose of the Fund. To honor Nigel's passion for peace in the Middle East and his particular interest in Israeli-Palestinian relations, a portion of the funds will be allocated for this area of peace work.

The Nigel Wright Peace Fund will be managed by the Endowment Trust, and specific awards will be made by committees that include professional staff, the chairs of related committees and/or the Endowment Trust.

You're invited!

The **Annual Fellowship Dinner** will be held on Friday, April 17 at the Century House in Latham. Come join us for an evening of fun, food, fellowship and frivolity.

Where else can you enjoy a skit poking fun at ourselves and titled Frozen Assets, bookended by performances by the Musicians of Ma'alwyck and the Big Easy Revue? The Musicians of Ma'alwyck will provide music during the cocktail hour. Dance music after dinner will be provided by Matt Edwards and the Big Easy Revue.

Singles or couples, new-to-FUUSA or 'longtimers,' you can count on meeting or making friends at the Fellowship Dinner! You can tell us who you would like to sit with, or leave your table companions up to the seating committee. Childcare will be provided on site, by reservation, by fellow FUUSAns.

Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres begin at 6:00 PM (cash bar) and dinner's at 7:00. The cost is \$38 per person

Flyers in this issue

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

- ◆ Annual Fellowship Dinner
- ◆ Climate Justice Month

(\$40 after Apr. 12 deadline.) If you did not get an invitation in the mail, you can pick one up at the FUUSA office.

Budget time!

A Congregational Conversation about the proposed 2015-2016 Budget will be held on **Sunday, April 26** at 11:45 in Rm. B-8. Members of the Finance Committee will be available to answer your questions about the budget. You can get a copy of the draft budget on the AlbanyUU bulletin board in Channing Hall or here: <http://albanyuu.org/wp/pdf/2015draftbudget.pdf>.

FUUSA Annual Meeting and Elections Sunday, May 17

All members and friends of FUUSA are encouraged to attend this very important meeting. After all, the decisions to be made will impact our wonderful Society going forward!!! But, it's also important to be able to vote on the issues which come before the Society, for example: our budget for the upcoming year; and, the election of new leaders. In order to be able to vote you must be an active member for at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting on May 17, and have made a financial contribution to the Society. Of course, even if you are an active member, you may have a conflict on May 17, and for this reason we have an absentee ballot process. Absentee ballots can be obtained by active members from the FUUSA office. (Note—to be valid, they must be returned at least forty-eight hours before the election, this year by 11am on Friday, May 15.)

To help you identify candidates for elected office, watch for a Candidate Photo Board along with biography handouts. May 3 and 10 will also be Candidate Sundays, when special buttons will be worn to help you identify members running for elected office.

If you have any questions regarding this process, members of the Nominating Committee would be

Board notes

Shall we dance...?

Patti Jo Newell, Trustee

Albany UU is an experienced partner in the dance of service and community. When the music changes, sometimes you stay for the jitterbug and other times you sit one out or wait for the next waltz. Sometimes you want to dance every dance and other times you need to call it a night.

Like all good partners, we strive to be knowing and understanding: able to lead and anticipate, willing both to learn and to teach and, perhaps, most importantly, supportive and intuitive when a rest is needed.

The tradition and practice of service in our congregation is extraordinary. At the most basic level, we take care of business: budgets are managed and bills are paid, Sunday services and coffee hour are staffed, children and youth are nurtured, walls are painted and light bulbs changed. The list of activities undertaken to keep FUUSA operational is exhaustive; so, too, is the list of members and friends who give freely of their time and talent to ensure our basic needs are met.

But we are not merely operational. We value beauty and inspiration. Discourse and personal growth. Stimulation and reflection. These, too, are supported by an exhaustive list of members and friends who plant flowers and display art, present forums and lead discussion groups, conduct retreats and guide meditative and spiritual practices.

All this is for the maintenance and nourishment of our beloved congregation. Our service to the larger community is no less impressive. On a regular basis, we make and serve food for those in need; we are in local schools mentoring children and helping teachers; we collaborate with community partners on the environment, race, poverty, and advocating peace, among many other social justice issues; we advocate for policy changes regarding a livable wage, climate change, prisoners' rights and other issues too numerous to list; we add our voice to make the needs of the voiceless heard.

In short, our dance is the embodiment of our commitment to supporting service and to supporting the people who serve, service that is key both to a congregation and to personal growth for its members and friends. A congregation cannot be vibrant when people are overextended for lengthy periods of time, nor can it be vibrant when people are dormant for lengthy periods. Similarly, individuals cannot be fully whole without some dimension of service in their lives, even as the kind and scope of that service may evolve over a lifetime. Nor can individuals remain whole if their service is somehow depleting their essential inner resources. We strive to maintain this balance for the health of our members and friends, for the health of our congregation, and for the health of our community at large.

Your Board of Trustees is supporting new endeavors to better achieve this balance. We seek to better pair interests and personal and spiritual growth with opportunities for service and existing need through the Growth Through Service program, which is currently in its inception phase. We're exploring ways to better mentor those interested in undertaking new opportunities for service and the skills and knowledge necessary to do so. And we are evaluating our organizational effectiveness to ensure our structures and processes are designed to elicit your interest, your talent and your commitment...not just your time and tenure at meetings.

We are committed to our tradition of service, committed to providing meaningful opportunities for service, committed to a partnership of support for that service. We are committed to you.

Shall we dance...?



Stewardship Wrap Up

Thank you to everyone who has already made a pledge for next year. You can stop reading now.

We are trying to finish up the campaign before April 23rd because the Board needs to approve the draft budget at their April meeting. This budget will be voted on by the membership in May at the annual meeting.

You should have received information about the campaign. If you have made a pledge in past years, thank you. We hope you are planning on making a pledge for the 2015-16 fiscal year that starts on July 1, 2015?



There are a number of options for you to make your pledge :

1. Are you ready to make a pledge ? You can stop at the Stewardship Table in Channing Hall after the Sunday services and speak to a member of the Stewardship Committee.
2. You can pick up a packet of information on Sundays at the Stewardship Table to make a pledge later.
3. You can go online and fill out a pledge form.
4. We can set up an appointment for someone to come and visit you to discuss your financial commitment.

What would you like to do?

Here are the instructions for online pledging if you want to do this from the comfort of your own home.

Make your FUUSA pledge ONLINE!

We are trying something new with this year's FUUSA Stewardship Campaign. You can now go online to make your pledge. It's simple.

1. Go to <http://albanyuu.org/wp/>
2. Click on the red "Online Pledging" button on the right hand side of the page.
3. Please read the materials that are shown under "Pool Your Light With Mine We're Gonna Make It Shine".
4. Click the red "Enter Pledge Here" button at the bottom of the page to go to the form.
5. Submit the form, print it out and save it.

Thanks for your help and support – The Stewardship Committee

happy to talk with you. Committee members are: Laura Churchill, Molly Daniels, Donna Meixner, Dave Metz, Paula Moskowitz, and Sandy Stone.

Calling all families to the CROP Hunger Walk!

FUUSA families do an admirable job in encouraging our children to develop empathy and compassion for others. Participating in family activities that provide tangible and symbolic support for those in need is a great way to reinforce a message of caring. The CROP Hunger Walk raises dollars to support hunger relief programs, locally and around the world. The act of walking also puts us in solidarity with those who struggle every day to feed their families, who often must walk to get food, water and fuel.

The Albany CROP Hunger Walk is coming up on Sunday, May 3. It starts and ends about 3 blocks from FUUSA, takes place in early afternoon, and there's a lunch at FUUSA after the service, but before the Walk. The regular Walk route is about 3 miles, but there's a one-mile option, and the route can easily be shortened to accommodate the capabilities of your family. We encourage all families to sign up for FUUSA's CROP Walk team (Team UU). There will be a Walk table at coffee hour starting on April 12, and information can be obtained at any time by contacting Dawn Dana (xxxxxxx). Go Team UU!

GA is in Portland, OR June 24-28

Are you going to the UUA General Assembly (GA)? The Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly is on June 24-28 in Portland, OR. Regis-

tration and housing reservations are now open. FUUSA will cover the registration fee for delegates. You can get a delegate application on the AlbanyUU bulletin board in Channing Hall. Details on the GA can be found at <http://www.uua.org/ga>. And let FUUSA President Peggy Sherman and/or Denominational Affairs liaison Don Odell (xxxxxxx, xxxxxxxv know as soon as possible. Thank you.

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 helped organize everything, and to all the people who helped us set up the tables and chairs after the Auction. Without all of these people, this event would not have been a success.

Congratulations to the winners of the adult raffle: Gretchen Nortz won the first prize – two passes to the Mannings' Local Food dinner on Aug. 22. Paul Axel-Lute won the runner-up prize – a basket of Fair Trade "goodies".

Congratulations to the winners of the kids' raffle: Thora Halverson, Brodie Halverson 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 FUUSA has to offer you. We hope this helps you "Get Connected!"

Call to musicians

The Religious Services Committee is looking for musicians to provide accompaniments and solos for summer services (6/21 thru 9/6). Please contact Carol-Lynn Youtz at xxxxxxxbefore 5/1 if you are interested.

Chalice Lighters in the Sunday service

Would your child like to light the chalice in an upcoming service?

You can sign up in Channing Hall or you can go to www.AlbanyUU.org and click the "Sunday Hospitality" link under Volunteer Opportunities.



FUUSA gardens--when will they wake up???

The calendar may say spring but you wouldn't know it from the weather and snow we've had this winter! Still, if you are like me, you can't wait for your garden to wake up so you can "play in the dirt".

In late April or early to mid-May, weather dependent, the Gardening group will tackle our first spring task--cleaning up the gardens and getting rid of winter debris so that the plants can thrive. With enough volunteers, this task can be completed in just a couple of hours. If you would like to help with this one-shot, friendly, group activity, and you are new to FUUSA gardening, please let me know (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx or xxxxxxx) and I will add your name to our "dirty fingernail" list. Knowledge of gardening is not required as we are largely raking, cleaning off debris, etc. plus there will be experienced gardeners on hand. Come, learn some gardening skills and meet a group of friendly FUUSAns!!—Paula Moskowitz

Annual reports due mid-April

Committee and activity chairpeople--your reports are due April 13. If you have not received my emails and have questions, or if you would like a copy of your group's report from last year sent to you, please contact me at the FUUSA office (463-7135 or alent@albanyuu.org). Thank you! --Amy Lent

Growing Together

Interdependence: the theme for April

Our seventh principle is the inspiration for the theme for our services and Family Chapel in April. What does it mean to you to be interconnected with others

in our congregation? In your neighborhood? With all living things? I encourage you to reflect and discuss in your families, or friends or others at Albany UU. And I invite you, whatever your age, to add your answers in word or drawing on the bulletin boards in the second floor and basement hallways and in

Channing Hall.

As a way for us to connect to one another, I offer this table blessing by Elizabeth L Greene that we can all use in our homes. Let's think of our relationships as we pause before an evening meal.

Spirit who is all things to us; Presence in which we live and move and breathe and have our being:

What a gift to be here together, sharing our food,

our spirit, our selves! We ask no blessing upon this food, nor upon ourselves, because the blessing is always here, if we but pay attention.

What we do ask is for the courage and wisdom to be mindful of thy great blessings. We ask, O Holy One, that we remember to cherish this food, savoring the tastes, the smells, the feel, the miracle of nourishment to our bodies, gifts of our lovely earth. We ask, too, that we remember to cherish each oth-

Religious Exploration

Talking about race with our children

Leah Purcell, Director of Religious Education

My colleague, Aisha Hauser, recently shared her stories about racial identity and talking about race with children. She grew up in the only Egyptian family in her neighborhood in NJ. As a mom and UU religious educator much later she was surprised that her teenage daughter said she didn't identify with any particular race. In a post on the UUA blog "Call and Response" Aisha observes that "... **many Unitarian Universalist parents are very proud of how open and honest** they are when they talk to their children. However, the eagerness for clear and explicit conversation comes to a screeching halt with regard to race."

White children, even young children, need help from adults to process the racism they see in the world.

Aisha gives these starting points to talk to children

- ◆ *If you are white, live in an area that is homogeneous, and have little opportunity to interact with people of color, I would suggest you visit the Teaching Tolerance website for stories you and your family can read and reflect on together.*
- ◆ *Find opportunities to listen together to news stories about racial disparities and tensions. Talk with children to help them understand and process incidents, including related protests, public debates and the veracity and fairness of the media coverage itself.*
- ◆ *Familiarize yourself, on the Standing on the Side of Love website, with ways our Unitarian Universalist movement supports the Black Lives Matter movement. Tell children how our religious leaders and communities have been protesting and working toward transformation.*
- ◆ *Most importantly, talk about what it means to be an ally. Being a white ally means educating yourself about how black people in this country have been and continue to be treated. While the issues are systemic and complex, one step toward transformation is starting the conversation.*

You can read Aisha's post at <http://callandresponse.blogs.uua.org/talking-about-race-start-the-conversation/>

Are you interested in sharing your experiences in talking to your children about race? Our Social Responsibilities Chair, Jean Poppei and I recently attended a webinar on following up on the Black Lives Matter movement. She and I are working to find more resources for parents and teachers to start or continue conversations. Would you like to have a support group with others at our congregation? Let me know your thoughts - send me an email at dre@albanyuu.org or call me at the office 463-7135.

In joyful service,
Leah



er, to taste and savor our relationships, to understand that what we know of the sacred we know through these bodies and through these connections of friendship and love.

Grant us the wisdom to pay attention; grant us the generosity and the strength to open our hearts. So be it. Blessed be. Amen.

Circle of Trees Nature Walks

Let's find a few dates to gather at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center for fresh air, reflection and a nature walk.

Using materials from the Circle of Trees program, Leah will help people of all ages to create a deeper connection with trees, nature, and all of earth's living creatures. For each session, she'll send out a story for you to read at home ahead of time. Before and after the one hour walk, we'll pause to think about the ways trees bring us peace, joy and delight, and about how we are all connected by our religious community. Some folks might want to take a longer walk on their own afterwards.

The walks will be scheduled between late April and the end of June. A minimum of four households must commit to any one walk date in order for it to be a 'go'. Once the specific dates are planned, Leah will inform those who signed up, and open the walks to anyone in the congregation. Anyone is welcome to come to any or all dates.

Let's make this happen! Go to http://albanyuu.org/wp/?page_id=2611 to fill out dates that you are available.

Small Group Ministry opening

The Monday evening Small Group Ministry has some openings for new folks. These Small Groups meet twice a month using a topic selected by the group as a starting place for conversation. These groups are focused on sharing personal experiences, questions and insights connected with the topic chosen by the group. If you are looking for community, this is a good way to find it. If you are interest-

ed in joining the Monday evening group, call Ben English at xxxxxxxx.

Joy Library

Find these books in the new book section:

THE MORAL ARC: How Science and Reason Lead Humanity toward Truth, Justice and Freedom by Michael Shermer. Henry Holt. 2015 [170.9 SHE]

Bestselling author Michael Shermer's exploration of science and morality that demonstrates how the scientific way of thinking has made people, and society as a whole, more moral. From Galileo and Newton to Thomas Hobbes and Martin Luther King, Jr., thinkers throughout history have consciously employed scientific techniques to better understand the non-physical world. The Age of Reason and the Enlightenment led theorists to apply scientific reasoning to the non-scientific disciplines of politics, economics, and moral philosophy. Instead of relying on the woodcuts of dissected bodies in old medical texts, physicians opened bodies themselves to see what was there; instead of divining truth through the authority of an ancient holy book or philosophical treatise, people began to explore the book of nature for themselves through travel and exploration; instead of the supernatural belief in the divine right of kings, people employed a natural belief in the right of democracy. In this provocative and compelling book, Shermer ...explain[s] how abstract reasoning, rationality, empiricism, skepticism—scientific ways of thinking—have profoundly changed the way we perceive morality and, indeed, move us ever closer to a more just world. (Amazon)

DID JESUS EXIST? : the historical argument for Jesus of Nazareth by Bart D. Ehrman HarperOne, c2012. [232.908 EHR]

In Did Jesus Exist? historian and Bible expert Bart Ehrman confronts the question, "Did Jesus exist at all?" Ehrman vigorously defends the historical Jesus, identifies the most historically reliable sources for best understanding Jesus' mission and message, and offers a compelling portrait of the person at the heart of the Christian tradition.

Known as a master explainer with deep knowledge of the field, Bart Ehrman methodically demolishes both the scholarly and popular "mythicist" arguments



against the existence of Jesus. Marshaling evidence from within the Bible and the wider historical record of the ancient world, Ehrman tackles the key issues that surround the mythologies associated with Jesus and the early Christian movement. In *Did Jesus Exist?: The Historical Argument for Jesus of Nazareth*, Ehrman establishes the criterion for any genuine historical investigation and provides a robust defense of the methods required to discover the Jesus of history. [Amazon]

RISKING UTOPIA on the edge of a new democracy by Irshad Manji Douglas & McIntyre, 1997. [323.042

MAN]

In an era of mass disillusionment with democracy, 28-year-old political iconoclast Irshad Manji offers an alternative view of savvy citizenship. Drawing on her own experience and that of young Canadians she met on a journey across the nation, Manji unveils new ways for people to assert their individuality while building community. Progressive, positive and often heretical, this is a book that challenges us all to see beyond the conventional options—and risk utopia. [Douglas & McIntyre]

Our Community

6 to 9 at 6:09: Circle Dinner

Saturday, April 25

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. Please join us for dinner on April 25.

To sign up for the 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, April 12.* Assignments will be announced after that date. If you have questions, please contact Martha at xxxxxxxx or 518-xxxxxxx.

Please save this date for the last dinner of this church year: Saturday, May 23.

UU Christians meet on Apr. 14

The UU Christian group (searching our Christian heritage for personal truth) will meet at 7pm on Tuesday, April 14, to continue our discussion of Forgiveness and talk about what Easter means to us. Another lively discussion is almost inevitable!

Contact Sue Stierer xxxxxxxx, John Sherman, or Phil Rich for more info.

Walker Book Club

Sunday, April 12 at 5:30 pm

Join us in Channing Hall for a potluck and discussion of *The Selma Awakening: How the Civil Rights*

Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism by Mark D. Morrison Reed. Newcomers are always welcome and the book club is open to all.

We start with a welcoming shared supper which is followed by a lively discussion of the book of the month. Bring your favorite dish to share and a small contribution to cover beverages. Contact Linda Hunt at xxxxxxxx for further information or questions.

You can add your name to the Walker Book Club email list in ChurchDB. Find out how at www.AlbanyUU.org. Click on Answers to your questions about FUUSA online for detailed instructions to sign up for the Walker Book Club and other Church DB eGroups.

Channing Circle

Monday, Apr. 20

Channing Circle is a time for newcomers and recent retirees to get together, share conversation and a program. Join us on Monday the 20th at noon with your bag lunch. Barbara Warner will be providing the dessert and coffee and tea will be available.

Do you feel at home at FUUSA?

You've been attending church services for a few months, tried some events or classes, maybe even taken the orientation we call "Getting to Know UU". And you've begun to think you feel at home in this church community. You feel like it's time to really make it yours. Are you ready to become a member of FUUSA? You can find out more about membership by calling Barb Manning, chair of the Welcome Team (xxxxxxx or xxxxxxxx.)

FUUSA Humanists meet April 14

FUUSA Humanists meet on the second Tuesday of the month. Fifteen of us attended the March meeting. There was a lively discussion about what is meant by “humanism” and some suggestions about what we might do at FUUSA to further our efforts.

We will meet next on Tuesday, April 14 at 7 PM in Room B-8 at FUUSA. We will continue discussing what is meant by the word “humanism.” And we will discuss how we relate to the FUUSA community as a whole.



As to defining humanism, the following two approaches may be helpful:

From the American Humanist Association: *Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without theism and other supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity.* Link: <http://americanhumanist.org/Humanism>.

The Unitarian Universalist Humanist Association (formerly HUUmanists) is committed to Humanist principles of reason, compassion and human fulfillment enumerated in the Humanist Manifestos, and in the seven principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association. We seek (1) to promote a broad acceptance of Humanism in our society, particularly throughout the Unitarian Universalist Association and its congregations, and (2) to provide an active interface between Unitarian Universalists and the secular community.

The UU Humanists include among its core values the following: We are naturalists. Facts not faith. Free and responsible thought. Living with Joy and Love.

More detail is provided at: <http://humanists.org/about/history-and-mission>. There is so much more at <http://humanists.org>. Please go there and see for yourself.

If you wish to join the FUUSA Humanists conversations, please go to the FUUSA website and go to Groups and join, or call the FUUSA office, or contact Don Odell (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx) to be added to the egroup. And, see you on April 14. --Don Odell

**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.

Multigenerational potluck hosted by Green Sanctuary

Friday, April 3, at 6 pm, Channing Hall

This is a “potluck OR pay” event: you can choose to bring a dish or pay \$3 per person, \$2 for kids under 12, \$10 maximum per family. Either way, sign ups are preferred but walk-ins are welcome! Childcare will be available after the meal for parents wanting to attend the program.

Scott Kellogg of Radix Center will be talking after dinner. The theme is creating soil out of compost. By composting, we encourage the exciting cycle of life by giving back to the exploding beauty of nature and spring.

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 (xxxxxxxxxx.)

Social Justice

Council notes

The Social Responsibilities Council has the responsibility and privilege of donating the use of FUUSA’s facilities 13 times a year to outside organizations, usually not-for-profits. To qualify, the meeting or event must be consistent with at least one area of focus listed in the Strategic Plan:

1. Make a difference in the lives of children and families in the city of Albany,
2. Promote sustainable environmental practices, or
3. Promote public policies that are in line with our UU values and principles.

If approved by a majority vote of the members of SRC, the donation waives the room rental fee, but holds the organization responsible for fees such as those for building hosts, insurance, setup and take down. This year, SRC have voted to make donations to the League of Women Voters for a candidate event, to PAUSE (People of Albany United for

Safe Energy) for a presentation on controlling climate change, to the SUNY School of Criminal Justice for a forum on finding justice, and to Capital Roots for community gardener registration and to six other organizations.

Organizations may apply for a donation by completing the room rental and donation forms. The forms are available from Alyssa Yeager and should be submitted to her.

* * * * *

In keeping with the words of our FUUSA Mission Statement--...pursu[ing] justice through inspired action and cultivat[ing] compassion and love for all connected by the web of life—I invite you to consider what YOU can do for social justice. With recognition that people have different levels of passion and involvement, varying by temperament and/or life circumstances, I ask you to reflect on the following possibilities:

- ◆ Sign an online petition (check out the Faith for a

Fair NY FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/faithforafairny> ;

- ◆ Sign up for alerts from social justice websites that move you so that you can take action;
- ◆ Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper; show up for a vigil or rally—you never know how your presence may impact others (see *The New Selma* in UUWorld, spring 2005);
- ◆ Educate yourself on issues of white advantage and racial oppression;
- ◆ Become informed about the UUA Statement of Conscience on Reproductive Justice;
- ◆ Speak out about Climate Justice at town and city meetings;
- ◆ And remember, as Cornel West tells us: Social Justice is what love looks like in public.

--In justice and love, Jean Poppei, Chair (xxxxxxx)

IINYS Advocacy Day

Monday, May 4, 10 AM to 3:30 PM

Plan now to join with UUs from across the state and allies from other denominations for Interfaith Impact of NYS Advocacy Day in Hearing Room A of the Legislative Office Building, Empire State Plaza.

Our focus this year will be:

1. Standing Up for Reproductive Justice,
2. Transgender Rights, and
3. Humane Alternatives to Long Term Solitary Confinement (Black Lives Matter).



This is the one time a year when numbers make a difference. The greater the impression we make on May 4th, the greater our impact the rest of the year as we put UU values on the table in the Legislature and the Executive Chamber. Make your voice heard. Yes, it's really important. Be part of our beacon of compassionate government in New York State, and help give life the shape of justice.

Please sign up on the bulletin board in Channing Hall, or email Robb Smith, IINYS Executive Director, Robbsmith1@gmail.com. Questions? Give Robb a call, xxxxxxx, or contact Don Odell

(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx).

You can also go www.interfaithimpactnys.org where you can find position papers, register (no fee), access our calendar, and see our other issues. For an up-to-date account of what's happening and to join the discussion, like our Facebook Interfaith Impact of NYS group. For official announcements, see our Interfaith Impact of NYS Facebook page.

Solarize Albany kickoff to be in Emerson

Don't miss the big SRC-supported event on May 1 in Emerson Hall from 7 to 9 PM to kick-off the Solarize Albany outreach efforts. We hope to get Bill McKibben to speak along with our introduction to Solarize Albany. We plan some real cool music to inspire many of our audience to think seriously about getting on the renewable energy bandwagon with solar installation. We would like to fill the hall! Don't miss this opportunity.

FOCUS update

At the Get Connected! Sunday 29 bags of soup were created by our congregation and delivered to FOCUS. Our February monthly collection for the Food Pantry totaled \$355.00. The FOCUS Hot Breakfast Program will end on April 16, to be replaced by the Breakfast Express until we start again in early Nov. 2015. Many thanks to the FUUSA volunteers who helped to staff the pantry on Feb. 28!

From books to blankets

Be sure to check out all the books you can borrow on significant issues of our times at the Social Responsibility Council and Green Sanctuary Committee tables. Don't miss Naomi Klein's book (*This Changes Everything*)—an additional copy in the FUUSA library—a must read on our climate issue. We hope some of the books become topics of some good future conversation.

When you are spring cleaning, be sure to take advantage of the blanket collection compartment in the coatroom to remove some excess blankets, sleeping bags, comforters, afghans, winter coats, gloves, long underwear, etc. They are still needed for the homeless. The Interfaith Shelter on Sheridan Ave downtown Albany can use lots of other stuff, too. It is easy to stop by and drop it off. Don't let the landfill be burdened with useful things.

Look for the lists on the Green Sanctuary Committee table for you to note used items you are either looking for or gently used items you wish to share with others. Check it out!

Give Away the Plate

April 19: Capital Roots

To celebrate Earth Day, on April 19 we will Give Away the Plate to Capital Roots (formerly Capital District Community Gardens). A spokesperson from Capital Roots will speak on their programs to bring healthy wholesome food to the under-served. Thank you in advance for giving so generously.

Tree 'report'!

Last year, the Green Sanctuary Committee sold 50 little white spruce trees at the SRC table in a "Plant Your Own Christmas Tree" project, with an estimated reduction of half a ton of carbon dioxide during their expected lifetimes. Planting a Christmas tree is not a new idea for me: I have been doing it for years. I plant a 6 inch tree in my small city lot, then, with delight, watch it grow. Eventually, it becomes too big so I must move it or cut it down to use as a Christmas tree. A home-grown Christmas tree does not have a perfect shape, but it smells so good, and the needles don't drop as quickly. The tree can be a challenge to decorate--depending on the species--but my cats have always love having a fresh tree in the house. The white spruce I planted last year has survived this severe winter as you can see in the photo.



Another tree story, from Kathy Hodges: Growing up in Florida, I always looked forward to spring when my dad's small citrus grove was in bloom! The trees' leaves were bright shiny green and the orange blossoms themselves were incredibly fragrant! I would bury my face in a small bouquet of the beautiful blossoms and inhale their incredibly fragrant smell. Just heavenly! Many years later when I had been living in N.Y. for a long time and knew it was orange blossom time in Florida, I received a special package in the mail from my parents. Guess what it was! A fragrant bouquet of orange blossoms! Heavenly!

This year the Green Sanctuary Committee is hoping to have two serviceberry trees planted (by Earth Day, hopefully) along Washington Avenue near the Emerson addition. The serviceberry is an indigenous tree and is common to the Adirondacks. It's a small tree or shrub that has clusters of white flowers at the ends of its branches. The berries form by June, are edible, and are attractive to birds. The tree is called serviceberry because the blooms appear at the time when itinerant preachers used to hold their brush-arbor revivals. Serviceberries are also known as shadbush, shadblow, and Juneberries.

For more information on serviceberries, try this site:

[http://www.learn2grow.com/gardeningguides/trees/featuredplants/](http://www.learn2grow.com/gardeningguides/trees/featuredplants/AmelanchierAtYourService.aspx)

[AmelanchierAtYourService.aspx](http://www.learn2grow.com/gardeningguides/trees/featuredplants/AmelanchierAtYourService.aspx)

Contact Us

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email: board@albanyuu.org

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Matt Edwards, mge01@yahoo.com

Office Administrator

Alyssa Yeager, admin@albanyuu.org

Custodians

Hadiya Wilborn, Cameron Holloway

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

You're Invited to FUUSA's Annual
Fellowship Dinner

Friday, April 17, 2015
at The Century House
997 New Loudon Rd (Route 9), Latham, NY

- 6:00 p.m. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres (cash bar)
7:00 p.m. Dinner
And then... Entertainment as can be provided only by the FUUSA Players
Followed by ... Dancing to the smooth rhythms of Matt Edwards and The Big Easy Revue



Enjoy One Share One
For every entrée served, the Century House will provide one meal in each guest's honor through the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York.

Choice of Entree:

- ⌘ Chicken Dijon
- ⌘ Grilled Fillet of Salmon
- ⌘ Sirloin Steak
- ⌘ Eggplant Parmesan

\$38.00 per person (\$40 after April 12)

RSVP with payment by April 12, 2015

Persons needing transportation may call the church office at 463-7135.

Send your RSVP to the FUUSA office!

(Call the office at 463-7135 if you don't get the invitation in the mail by March 17.)

FREE childcare at The Century House, coordinated by FUUSA. This will enable parents of young children to enjoy the fellowship and the dinner, while knowing that their children are nearby. **RSVP for childcare on the reverse of your dinner RSVP.**

Climate change is the gravest danger facing humanity today.
As people of faith and conscience, we commit to respond.



COMMIT² RESPOND

Climate Justice Month

March 22–April 22, 2015

Celebrate
World Water Day



with UUSC's Climate
Justice Sunday

From **World Water Day**
to **Earth Day**,
join UUs everywhere
on the first steps of a
spiritual journey for
climate justice.

Prepare yourself to
SHIFT energy,
ADVANCE
human rights, and
GROW the movement.

Honor Earth Day

Commit to a future
of clean, renewable
energy



with resources from
UU Ministry for Earth

commit2respond.org

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