

Circle of Fellowship

Monthly Newsletter of the First Universalist Society of Central Square, NY

March, 2018

Our Mission Statement

The mission of the First Universalist Society of Central Square is to be a welcoming, diverse congregation which values spiritual growth and service to the local and world community

The First Universalist Society of
Central Square, New York

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Colleen Kattau Concert

Join us April 8th, 2018, 1:00-3:00 for a concert by Colleen Kattau. Colleen, Colleen Kattau is a bilingual singer-songwriter and guitarist and has given many concerts throughout the region. We welcome her to our church. Donations. Refreshments will be available. Check out Colleen's website [here](#).

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**Green Minute
Repair Cafes**

We throw away huge amounts of stuff and a lot of it is only slightly damaged. Thus in 2009 in Amsterdam Repair Cafes were born. Since then the concept has grown to many spots around the world and across the ocean to the United States.

Repair cafes are meeting places where community members can work side by side with a skilled "repair mentor" to fix broken items, for free. The mentors have all the tools, materials and knowledge to help you repair home electrical appliances, furniture, clothing, jewelry, computers, toys, and more. You can bring your broken items from home, and work with a volunteer specialist to have them repaired -- and learn how to do it yourself if they break again. Even if you don't have anything that needs repair, you can stop in to assist in repairs, or watch and learn. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yiox9SmKnqc> to see a quick NBC News Report on repair cafes.

If you go to Facebook and search for Syracuse Repair Café you'll find that they are held periodically around the Syracuse area at different libraries and senior centers. You can also find out more about these cafes and their origin at www.repaircafe.org.

Ellen LaPine

Social Justice Committee

**Red Cross Blood Drive
Friday March 23rd 2 – 6 p.m.**

There continues to be an urgent need for blood donors. Please consider giving at our Red Cross blood drive from 2 to 6 p.m. on Friday, March 23, 2018. We need both donors and volunteers to help with the blood drive. You can schedule an appointment to donate blood by visiting redcrossblood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS but no appointment is necessary. If you cannot be a donor, please tell others about the drive. If you can help with the drive, sign-up sheets will be in the dining room. Your donation and/or help will be very much appreciated.

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Social Justice News from Nancy Hallock

The Social Justice Committee met on February 11, 2018. We approved the report of our treasury balance. We then discussed the following issues:

We affirmed that we would hang the rainbow flag and the American flag at the front door when the weather improved. The sock donations will be taken to the Samaritan Center. We heard a report on the January 20th Woman's March. We were given information on the concert series at Camden Episcopal Church and Plainville Community Church in hopes we could use these as models for our concerts.

We will host a table at the Syracuse Peace Council Birthday Dinner on March 24. Details on participating will follow.

We had an update on our friends at home and at Greenpoint: Bob, Nancy, Chet ,Mary and Betty.

A super delicious pot luck lunch followed the service on February 11th with our presentation of the documentary " When Justice Isn't Just". Unfortunately, there was no time for discussion afterward. The next lunch and film is planned for March 11th. We will show another short documentary and hopefully have time to discuss it after the film.

We plan to continue with an SJC meeting on the second Sunday of each month. On April 8th we will have the Colleen Kattau concert after the service. Information on this concert is in a separate article in this newsletter.

Adopt-a-highway dates for 2018 are: 4/22 @ 8am.(Earth Day);7/8 @ 8:30; 10/14 @ 8:30

I am collecting pledges on behalf of Margaret Hart's Team for "Sclerosis Resources" which will hold a march on March 4th. The clip board for pledges is in the dining room. Donations can continue until the end of March.

We are arranging a monthly discussion group, similar to the video discussion which Bob Haskell used to lead. It will be on Friday evenings. Folks can meet early for dinner together, then proceed to church for a film and talk. The first one is scheduled on April 6th. Again, more information will be announced.

A collection of directory information, including emergency contact numbers will be conducted this month and kept in an index card file in the church office, available to all.

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March 2018 Sermon Schedule

Reminder: Please wear your nametags at services and coffee hour. Need one? Let Janie Garlow know.

March 4: Reverend David Weissbard

March 11: Ralph Singh- We welcome Ralph Singh to our pulpit on March 11. Ralph Chairs the Wisdom Thinkers Network. Ralph is an Author, Educator, Storyteller, and Community Builder. Ralph currently consults to develop curricula and resources to bring an understanding of shared values into schools, religious education, and public life, using the teachings and wisdom stories from the world's spiritual traditions and cultures. He has authored or edited five books, including his own stories from his early days at Baba Virsa Singh ji's feet, "A Path to Follow, A Life to Lead." His latest project, "Stories to Light our Way, Journey to the World of Good" a Parents' Choice award winning professionally produced audio CD of wisdom stories from 11 different traditions, is receiving great praise among educators and community groups as a way to foster a compassionate, engaged, pluralistic, civil society and achieve social cohesion.

March 18: Reverend Bud Adams

March 25: Reverend Libbie Stoddard

Ronna's Corner on Religious Ed

Meditation is important for everyone. It calms the mind and helps us find answers to problems we may have. The children have been learning how different religions use these practices. We will be complete our world travels with finger labyrinths and rain bottles.

With spring on its way we will turn our focus the helping our feathered friends. We will be making nesting boxes and nesting material screens that the children may take home.

It is time for spring cleaning and we need your help. As you clean and purge please consider bringing in items that are slightly loved and may be of use to someone else. The children are going to have a new to you sale. Everything will sell for a quarter and all proceeds will go to the stained glass window fund. We are shooting for May. We know it will be a big success with your help. uation

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Ministerial Musings

Arn and I are busy packing for what has become our annual trip to San Miguel de Allende. This is the fourth year we have made this journey and the second year that we will stay there for a month. Of course, we are looking forward to the sun and the warmth and the interesting life of the city, about the size of Syracuse, with its lovely squares and gardens. But we also go for the UU congregation where we find a home away from home.

The congregation is larger than Central Square's, over a hundred members, and, while most of us here come from upstate New York, the San Miguel congregation is drawn from across the U.S. and Canada. Some live there all year round while others are there for a quick visit or, like swallows, come back year after year for a month or a few. They do not have a permanent home, as we do, but rent space in a hotel.

However different the composition of the congregation or the setting, there are many things that let us know we are in a UU space each Sunday. Like us, the congregation is dedicated to social justice, sponsoring projects for the good of the community or the wider world. Like us, they are committed to diversity of opinion and a respect for the beliefs of others. They know how to light a chalice and how to run a coffee hour. We honor the same sources and principles. We sing from the same hymnal (the grey one).

This is what it means to be a UU, finding a welcome wherever we go, finding that, however different each UU gathering may appear, at the heart of it, we are linked and we are one. I'll be glad to see San Miguel and I'll be very glad to be home again in April. Happy March to everyone.

Reverend Andrea Abbott

Coffee Hour Refreshment Schedule

March 4: Ihlow

March 11: Potluck and Movies

March 18: Mary Fran

March 25: Open to sign up

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Church Calendar

Mark your calendars for Sunday, April 29, 2018 at noon in the sanctuary when NY Connects and the Oswego County Office for the Aging will give a presentation on their referral services.

March 11: Potluck and Movie after Services

March 23, 2018: Red Cross Blood Drive from 2:00-6:00 pm

Notable Pieces of Interest

I find pieces on the web and elsewhere I think would be of interest to UU audiences.

This month I have been reading **White Rage** by Carol Anderson. Anderson presents an overview of how the historic suppression by of African-Americans' efforts at equality have been thwarted by white domination.

Gun Violence continues to destroy the lives of so many people in our country. This essay gives an overview of how and why this kind of mass violence is a peculiarly American reoccurrence: <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/2/21/17028930/gun-violence-us-statistics-charts>

A new study, **How Democracies Die** by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, lays out a framework to see the conditions under which democratic rule is upended by authoritarian rule, how rapidly it can occur and what people can do to prevent it.

A New Buddhist Path by David R. Loy is also on the reading list for several UUs in our congregation, myself included.

Please let me know what you are reading.

UU Universe

The **UU World** magazine has made some significant changes in format and editorial policy. I would urge all UUs to check the new edition which arrived in mailboxes over the past week. See what you think of what they have done. The link to the web version is [here](#) but take a look at the print edition. Let the UUA know what you think of the changes.

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FUSoCS Board Splinters, from your Executive Board

The Window Fund has not been changing of late. Maybe a special Sunday event, like a pot-luck lunch might help. Please keep this in mind and watch for an appeal in the newsletter.

Andrea and Arne will be gone during the month of March, on their annual pilgrimage to Mexico (its a very challenging assignment). Our good friend Ralph Singh will be in the pulpit on March 11 and the Rev. Libbie Stoddard on March 25 .

The Membership Committee is planning to update the membership list onto a spreadsheet. You have probably already been asked to update your contact information.

On 02-11-18, we enjoyed a pot-luck lunch (always excellent food) and a short video on racism in the legal system. It was exceptionally informative.

Religious Education has been doing fine over the past few months. We have had a great gang of kids in attendance to keep Ronna, and her assistants, busy. We all hope that this keeps up. These children are the future of our congregation.

Letter of support was sent to the congregation in LaFayette IN for their support because of a hate crime (vandalism) committed at their church building after they hosted an anti-Trump event. The Board discussed whether we or should publicly display our support for victims of such incidents.

The Nominating Committee (headed by Winfield) is on the look out for next slate church officers and board members for next year. **IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO IN THE PAST, PLEASE CONSIDER STEPPING UP TO TAKE ON ONE OF THESE POSITIONS FOR OUR CONGREGATION. SHARING THE EFFORTS AMONG MANY HANDS MAKES THE WORK LIGHTER FOR THOSE INVOLVED.**

And it is that time of the congregational year, The Stewardship Luncheon. Marcia (our congregation Treasurer) will send out information, like past pledge amounts, and cards that people will use in making their pledge for the next year. The proposed date is April 15. As usual, it will involve a great spread of food to share. More planning will take place at next Board Meeting on March 4.

And finally, the next Board Meeting to be on March 4.

Winfield Ihlow, Recording Secretary of the Executive Board.