

CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP

Monthly Message for All Ages
Together We Can, Together We Will
December 2022

This seems to me the main problem... How can we contrive to be at once astonished at the world and yet at home in it?... How can this world give us at once the fascination of a strange town and the comfort and honor of being our own town? - G.K. Chesterton

OUR MISSION

To be a welcoming diverse congregation that values spiritual growth and service to the local and world community.

The First Universalist Society
of Central Square New York
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Website: CentralSquareUU.org
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Trustees

Erin Barry	Marcia Burrell
Janie Garlow	Nancy Hallock
Winfield Ihlow	Ellen LaPine
Ann Peterson	Ronna Schindler
Arny Stieber	Lucy Stieber
Paul Wenham	Susan Woods

We are more than a "church". We are a community that believes in the **Seven Principles** which are grounded in the humanistic teachings of the world's religions.

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for meaning and truth.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



DECEMBER EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday, December 4th 9AM -Trustee Meeting
(in person & Zoom)

Tuesday, December 15th 1PM – Planning Meeting
(Zoom only)

Wednesday, December 28th @ 2PM – Book Club
"The House on Mango Street" by Sandra Cisneros
(Zoom only)

See COMMUNITY EVENTS at the End of the Newsletter

SUNDAY MINISTERIAL CONVERSATIONS

December 4th- Rev. David Weissbard

"The Empty Creche"

It's that time again, when that poor, beleaguered, religious minority, Christians, is being attacked by evil secularists and humanists. Yes, friends, the "War on Christmas" is heating up again, as it always does after Thanksgiving. The problem is, as with all civil wars, it is not easy to determine which side is the enemy. In an attempt to rescue the spirit of that holiday, and to prepare for its celebration, we will be considering the roots of the controversy and our place in it. I hope you will join us.

December 11th – Rev. Kurt Hohmann

Yuletide Community – service in the dining room
Yule is a time for coming together as a community. In that light, I will once more be leading the members of the congregation in the Germanic ceremony of sumbel. As a community, we will pay honor to our guiding spirits, heroes, ancestors, and each other. Optionally, you may also wish to share something of yourself (poem, story, song, etc) or perhaps a promise for the coming year. I hope you will join us!

December 18th– Rev. Bud Adams

December 24th – Rev. Andrea Abbott

Music service with Leigh

Pastoral Care

Rev. Bud Adams is the minister to call if someone needs pastoral care. If you or someone else you know needs to speak with a minister please contact Bud at (315) 395-1926 or (315) 637-0468. His email is bud.adams.1@juno.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

*The hats and mittens were delivered to the Lion Ladies of Hastings, 3 large bags and they were thrilled. Very appreciative and happy with our beautiful donations.

*I also delivered 3 bags to Divine Mercy's food bank. The collection is on hold till Jan.2023.

*PW4W coins will continue to be saved as an ongoing charity.

*The church donated \$100 to the Annual Northshore Christmas program.

*The Xmas Tree is up in the sanctuary.

*Happy December The Plowshare Fair is Dec. 3 and 4 @ Nottingham HS. Hope you can attend



EDUCATION FOR YOUTH & ADULTS

Monthly Story for All Ages



December is a month of wonder and light. The ordinary can be extraordinary.

There are many types of light this time of year. House lights, Christmas lights, the Hanukkah menorah, Solstice, Advent candles and inner light.

There is wonder in inherent worth. Each of us is a wondrous miracle. We will explore this along with the paths we chose to take. We will make chalice snowflakes and celebrate our winter holidays.

Yule, Solstice, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Teng Chieh, Diwali, Soyal, Los Pasadas, Zagmuk, Saturnalia, and Chalica.

Happy Holidays

Ronna Schindler

Marketing Committee Report

The Congregational survey revealed eleven areas that are hindering our growth. We presented these areas to the Trustees. Some of the areas need deliberation and others need implementation.

One implementation area is that our beliefs are not know to the community. Therefore, we are now using the non-parking lot side of the outdoor sign to convey our Seven Principals. We will put up one condensed Principal every two weeks. In addition, we will put the condensed Principals, in 4" letters, on the parking lot side of the building. *Amy Stieber, Committee Chair.*

UU BOOK CLUB

The UU Club typically meets (in building & zoom) on the last Wednesday of each month at 2PM.

The reading schedule is:

December 28th - House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

January 25th - Funny Farm by Laurie Zaleski

February 22nd - The Boys, a Memoir by Ron Howard

March - Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng

It is not necessary to be member of the congregation to participate. Most books are readily available through the library or on-line, or discount books.

Please contact Nancy Hallock (315) 533-7067 if you are interested in participating.

WHO DO YOU KNOW?

We are in need of speakers for the 4th Sunday of each month. We are using the Soul Mater theme but a presenter is not bound by them.

If you know someone who can speak (in person or via Zoom) on an appropriate topic for our community, please let Lucy Stieber know.

SOUL MATTERS THEME **THE PATH OF WONDER**

The path of wonder seems well worn. It's a journey that brings us down to size. Just think of those pictures which reveal that our galaxy is just one of billions more. Or think of when you've stared into the empty darkness of a midnight sky or an endless ocean. Such images remind us that the universe is more vast than we can imagine. They leave us with a sense of wonder that overwhelms. In the face of such an incomprehensible abyss, one can't help but feel humbled and small.

As astronomers tell us, contemplation of the vast universe doesn't make them feel smaller; it makes them realize the larger story of which they are a part.

We are stardust, as they say. From the vastness we came and to it we will return. In other words, the path of wonder is not so much about feeling small; it's about feeling connected.

And not just connected to the stars, but also to each other. Wonder, and its cousin awe, reduces us *in order* to make room for something more than our *self-centered* needs, wants and worries. With our narcissism shrunk down to a reasonable size, it becomes possible to notice that we are *not* the only ones up there on the stage. It's in this way that looking up into the cosmos allows us to look across at each other. Which is, of course, a huge gift, because while being center stage and center of the universe can feel powerful, it's also a very lonely place to be.

Steps to Wonder

* *Make an ode to an ordinary moment*

"One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, 'What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?'" Rachel Carson

* *Take an Awe Walk*

An "awe walk" is a stroll in which you intentionally shift your attention outward instead of inward. So instead of thinking about your to-do list you contemplate the world around you.

* *Connect With the Wonder of the Stars*

When it comes to contemplating wonder, star-gazing tops the list. For scientists and mystics alike, its one of the primary ways we humans sort out our mysterious place in the universe and the mystery of who we are. As we connect with the wider universe, we connect more deeply with ourselves.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

The Red Cross wants people to stay safe from home fires—the nation's most frequent disaster—by testing their smoke alarms and practicing their home fire escape plan with free resources at [redcross.org/homefires](https://www.redcross.org/homefires). In addition, you can follow these 10 simple safety tips as you put up lights and ornaments:

1. Check all holiday light cords to make sure they aren't frayed or broken. Don't string too many strands of lights together—no more than three per extension cord.
2. If are buying an artificial tree, look for the fire-resistant label. When putting it up, keep it away from fireplaces, radiators and other sources of heat.
3. If getting a live tree, make sure it's fresh and water it to keep it fresh. Bend the needles up and down to

make sure no needles fall off.

4. If using older decorations, check their labels. Some older tinsel is lead-based. If using angel hair, wear gloves to avoid irritation. Avoid breathing in artificial snow.

5. When decorating outside, make sure decorations are for outdoor use and fasten lights securely to your home or trees. If using hooks or nails outside, make sure they are insulated to avoid an electrocution or fire hazard.

6. If using a ladder, be extra careful. Make sure to have good, stable placement and wear shoes that allow for good traction.

7. Don't use electric lights on metallic trees.

8. Don't forget to turn off all holiday lights when going to bed or leaving the house.

9. Keep children, pets and decorations away from candles.

10. If hanging stockings on the fireplace mantel, don't light the fireplace.

Have a Happy Holiday!

COVID PROCEDURE

Beginning Sunday, September 4th, and until further notice please observe the following:

- If you don't feel well, please do not come to church.
- With the upsurge of the new Omicron Variant BA-5, our protocols have changed. Mask wearing is recommended but not mandated. There are masks available at church.
- All people are encouraged to continue to use hand sanitizer.
- Groups using the church may meet anytime when ready following the same guidelines plus their group's specific protocols.
- We will have coffee and cookies resume Sunday, September 4th after the service, outdoors or in the dining room. If you bring homemade treats please also include a packaged choice.
- If you come down with COVID-19 after attending a church service or gathering, please contact Nancy Hallock at (315) 533-7067 or at njhallock@gmail.com.

We will review these guidelines periodically as the situation changes and will provide updates as needed.

READING FROM UU

"All Labor Has Dignity"

by Martin Luther King

Covering all the civil rights movement highlights--Montgomery, Albany, Birmingham, Selma, Chicago, and Memphis--award-winning historian Michael K. Honey introduces and traces Dr. King's dream of economic equality. Gathered in one volume for the first time, the majority of these speeches will be new to most readers. The collection begins with King's lectures to unions in the 1960s and includes his addresses made during his Poor People's Campaign, culminating with his momentous "Mountaintop" speech, delivered in support of striking black sanitation workers in Memphis. Unprecedented and timely, *"All Labor Has Dignity"* will more fully restore our understanding of King's lasting vision of economic justice, bringing his demand for equality right into the present.

**Central Square 75th Annual
Tree Lightening Ceremony
Sunday, December 4th
5PM to 7PM
Goettel Park, Rt 11 Central Square**

**Syracuse Community Choir Winter Solstice
Concert: "Resilience"
7 PM on Saturday, Dec 17th
St. Paul's Cathedral, Downtown Syracuse**

Please send all newsletter items or suggestions to Lucy Stieber at lastieber@aol.com or call 734-678-653

A Sunday of Special Arts

November 27, 2022

A beautiful musical Service by Avalon



PAINTING PARTY With Erin Barry



COMMUNITY EVENTS