

CIRCLE OF FELLOWSHIP
Monthly Message for All Ages
December 2021

We tend to forget that happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have.

Frederick Keonig

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
3243 Fulton Street
Post Office Box 429
Central Square, NY 13036-0429
Church Phone: 315-307-3400
Email:
Website: centralsquareuu.org
Facebook:
[www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central Square](https://www.facebook.com/pages/UU-Central-Square)

Board Officers & Trustees
Ellen LaPine – President
Janie Garlow – Vice-President
Winfield Ihlow – Recording Secretary
Marcia Burrell – Treasurer
Ann Peterson – Corresponding Secretary
Susan Woods – Registrar/Trustee
Nancy Hallock – Trustee
Janet Jenkins – Trustee
Arny Stieber - Trustee

UUA promotes and affirms seven Principles 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.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday, Dec 5th, 9 AM - Board Meeting
(in-person & Zoom)

Sunday, Dec 12th noon – Holiday Concert
(in person & Zoom)

Sunday, Dec 19th during service - Child Dedication
Thursday, Dec 29th, 7 PM - Book Club (Zoom)

"Count The Ways"

SUNDAY MINISTERIAL CONVERSATIONS

Dec 5th - Rev. David Weissbard

Dec 12th -No 10:30 service

12 noon Holiday Concert

Dec 19th – Rev. Bud Adams

Dec 26th - Soul Matters Discussion

*** Lucy Stieber will lead a congregational discussion based on five thoughtful questions. See the last article of the Newsletter (p. 6) for the questions.**

Please review prior to the 26th

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

Nov.28th - Dec 6th – Hannakah

Dec 21st – Winter Solstice

Dec 25 – Christmas

Dec. 26 – Kwanzaa begins

Dec 26 – Boxing Day (Canada)

BOARD NOTES

We are very happy to note that our building is open for in-person service. Masks are required unless seated. Our zoom option will continue to be available as well. Members, friends and groups who want to use the building are free to do so but with the following limitations:

* CDC and NYS protocols: vaccinated people do not need to wear a mask but unvaccinated people and those under the age of 12 must still wear a mask; use hand sanitizer and maintain social distancing. *Please feel free to continue to wear a mask if it makes you more comfortable. Your comfort is our primary concern.*

*Groups using the church may meet by following the same guidelines plus their group's specific protocols.

*All surfaces must be wiped clean using the provided disinfectant wipes before leaving the building.

Holiday Concert

On Sunday, 12/12/21 we are honored to have musicians Juliet Forshaw and Michael Judge playing a concert in our sanctuary at 12:00. They form the duo, The Avalon Underground. This is free and open to the public. All are welcome. Feel free to invite your friends and family.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

*The collection of hats, mittens and scarves will continue through 12/12. Lioness says the need is most noted for ages 6-11y.

*We continue to collect coins and cans for PW4W. Our PW4W contribution made 11/30 is being doubled by a matching donor. Newsletter available at:

www.purewaterfortheworld.org

*Plans are being made for 2022. Call me to discuss any ideas you may have. A brief mtg. will be held after the Planning Mtg., which is after the service on Sunday 12/12, so it's difficult to predict an exact time to invite you. Bye for now. Nancy Hallock

UU CIRCLE

The UU Circle will be holding the Second Annual Unbake Sale this December. Remember the ingredients you bought, the time you spent baking and cleaning up, then packaging your baked good for previous sales. Then of course you would always buy somebody else's baked goods. This could add up to a fair amount time and money.\

In memory of Mary Perkin's no nonsense approach to things, please send in whatever you would have spent on ingredients and purchases to this year's Unbake 'Sale.

If you write "Unbake Sale" in the memo line of your check it would be appreciated. All money that is earned is turned over to the church Treasurer to help with the expenses of running our church.

All donations are appreciated.

Thank You, Ann Peterson, UU Circle

Haunted Farwell

As a tribute to our departing minister Rev Andrea Abbot and her love of Halloween, the congregation donned costumes to celebrate the day.



There are so many holidays to celebrate in December.

Hanukkah, Chalisa, Bodhi Day, Pasada Navidenas, Yule, Christmas, Kwanza, and Omisoka.

Each filled joy. It can be created, shared, found, celebrated, given or received. We find joy everyday in many small ways. We share from our hearts, giving or giving snack to those we know and those we have yet to meet.

We will be finding our joy through whimsy and maybe a little silliness.

Sharing our own traditions and learning about their histories. Why do they give us joy. How do we create our own tradition. Now that we are again meeting in person we will again be collecting prescription bottles, eyeglasses, used inkjet cartridges and grocery receipts.

May you find your joy

Happy Holidays Ronna Schindler



Our Story for All Ages

Our guest presenter Rev Peg Peck joined Ronna and the children for our Story for All Ages. During her sermon Rev. Peg shared the history of "Dark People" as slaves in Constanina.

UU BOOK CLUB

The UU Club typically meets (at church & zoom) on the last Wednesday of each month at 7PM. We will be meeting on December, 29th.

The group shares their views on the book selected each month. The December book is, "Count The Ways". We are considering other books for future reading. The selection is based of the interests of the group, and the group is open to all suggestions. It is not necessary to be member of the church to participate. Most books are readily available through the library or on-line, or discount books. Please contact Nancy Hallock if you are interested in participating.

All life is interconnected. From the forest to the sea to humanity itself, each thread of being is woven into a single fabric of existence. We embrace nature's beauty and are in awe of its power. We care for our environment so that it may sustain life for generations to come. We do this in partnership with those most impacted by environmental destruction, whom are often marginalized in the larger culture. Often these "frontline" communities are impacted hardest and have fewest resources to recover. We collaborate because it is only with the knowledge and experience of these communities that equitable and sustainable change can happen. Access to an adequate supply of healthy food and clean water is a basic human need and right. Many people do not have adequate food, while others have a surplus. In many locations, poor distribution of food is a major contributor to hunger and malnutrition. The effects of climate change, weather conditions, and armed conflicts can also expose many people to starvation. Paradoxically, an abundance of food does not guarantee access to healthy food. Environmental justice includes the equitable distribution of both environmental burdens and benefits for populations of residents and workers. Marginalized people have often been able to find housing or work only in areas exposed to environmental pollutants, with consequent negative health and quality of life effects. Aware of our interdependence, we acknowledge that eating ethically requires us to be mindful of the miracle of life we share with all beings.

REFLECTIONS

**Joy is the spirit of the season
and our Soul Matter focus**

OPENING TO JOY (from Soul Matters)

It's easy to get tricked, taken for a ride, convinced that joy is a possession. Something to be opened just by us. As if it's a holiday special delivery, waiting for us to unwrap it and keep forever. And who can blame us, with pain being so prevalent. Sadness seems to stay. Why can't joy? But maybe it's elusive for a reason. Maybe it's slippery in order to help us understand that it was put here to fly. Or better yet: To be flung! To be passed, not possessed. To be spread between you and me, between the ones who received its gift and the ones that have been looking for its treasure for a very long time. Maybe it's a beautiful and elegant contagion, over which we have more control than we think. If only we

share it.

If only we notice that joy is not ours to keep, but ours to give.

Maybe joy opens us as much as we open to it. Maybe that's the way light leaks into our world.

SOME UU HUMOR

*Fran: How much do you weigh?

Stan: About 200 pounds with my glasses on.

Fran: How much do you weigh with your glasses off?

Stan: I don't know. I can't read the numbers

*The existence of broccoli does not in any way affect the taste of chocolate

*You know you are old when you clean to music you used to drink to

READING SUGGESTION FOR RELAXATION

"The Scent Keeper" by Erica Bauermeister
Emmeline lives an enchanted childhood on a remote island with her father, who teaches her about the natural world through her senses. What he won't explain are the mysterious scents stored in the drawers that line the walls of their cabin, or the origin of the machine that creates them. As Emmeline grows, however, so too does her curiosity, until one day the unforeseen happens, and Emmeline is vaulted out into the real world—a place of love, betrayal, ambition, and revenge. To understand her past, Emmeline must unlock the clues to her identity, a quest that challenges the limits of her heart and imagination.

READING FROM UUA

"The Behavioral Code"

by Benjamin Van Rooij & Adam Fire

Why do some laws radically change behavior whereas others are consistently ignored and routinely broken? Why do we keep relying on harsh punishment against crime even though it continues to fail?

The Behavioral Code offers a necessary and different approach to battling crime and injustice that is based in understanding the science of human misconduct—rather than relying on punishment to shape behavior. Drawing upon decades of research, the authors reveal the behavioral code: the root causes and hidden forces that drive human behavior and our responses to society's laws.

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

**Soul Matters Discussion
Sunday, December 26, 2021**

We will have a discussion in the dining room on Sunday, November 28, 2021 beginning with announcements at 10:25 lead by Lucy Stieber. The children may attend religious education as usual during this time.

Following December's theme of "Opening To Joy" we will be discussing the questions below. As advice on how to work with these questions Soul Matters recommends:

Don't treat these questions like "homework" or try to answer every one. Instead, make time to meditate on the list and then pick the one question that speaks to you most. The goal is to figure out which question is "yours." Which question captures the call of your inner voice? Which one contains "your work"? And what is that question trying to get you to notice or acknowledge?

Often it helps to read the list to a friend or loved one and ask them which question they think is the question you need to wrestle with!

1. Who helps you see the joy in front of you?
2. How has your definition of joy changed as you've grown older?
3. Are you mostly a creator of joy, receiver of joy, notice-er of joy or spreader of joy?
4. What needs, if removed from your life, would provide for joy to expand, or return?
5. When was the last time you did something "useless"? Might joy be waiting for you there?
6. **What's your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to find it.

The following resources are not required reading. We will not analyze these pieces in our group. Instead they are here to companion you on your journey this month, get you thinking and open you up to new ways of imagining the spiritual practice of Opening to Joy

*Ingrid Fetell Lee, encourages everyone she can to intentionally look for joy every day. She adds life to this simple practice by calling it "Joyspotting." In her article she explains the impact it's had on her.

<https://aestheticsofjoy.com/2019/06/27/joyspotting-101/>

Check out these additional two resources to create a joy filled home and let them inspire you:

* 10 Ways to Make Your Home Feel More Joyful
<https://www.houzz.com/magazine/10-ways-to-make-your-home-feel-more-joyful-stsetivw-vs~108690393>

*13 Tiny Changes That Will Make Your Home Instantly Happier <https://www.rd.com/list/be-happier-at-home/>

Poem by J Drew Lanham
[Joy Is The Justice We Give Ourselves](#)

Companion Pieces

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection