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JULY 1, 2015

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JUNE 30, 2016

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Sunday, December 6, 10:30am

*Waiting in the Dark*

Rev. Margret A. O'Neill

Music: Matt Kane, fiddle and Sten Isachsen, guitar

The nights grow longer, the cold intensifies, and we wait – in a time of Advent, a time of Hanukkah, in the growing dark we await a return of light to our lives. How do we sustain ourselves and each other in times of darkness; how do we nurture the light toward its return?

Sunday, December 13, 10:30am

*Sounds of Joy*

Rev. Margret A. O'Neill

Music: Junior Choir and Society Choir, Russ Myer, percussion, Jim Stagnitti, percussion  
Gary Griffiths, Director of Music with the Society and Junior Choirs

The Christmas season offers many gifts of spirit, especially the music that engages our memories and dreams, our hopes and longings. Lifting our voices together, we fill the space with the sounds that lighten our spirits in this season of darkness and light.

Sunday, December 20, 10:30am

*Season of Light*

Rev. Margret A. O'Neill with the UUSS children and youth

Music: Society Choir

All around the world, peoples of many cultures light fires to bring hope in the darkness. Together we celebrate the rituals of the pagan Yule log, the lights of Divali, the candles of Hanukkah, the Advent wreath and the Christmas tree, Kwaanza and Chalica -- all the ways we light our lives with hope and love.

Tuesday, December 22, 7:00pm

*Winter Solstice Observance -- Earth Circles*

Join us to celebrate the Return of the Sun with song, poetry, procession, candles, dance, drum, and ceremony. We carry forward traditions of long standing with new material to illuminate our spirits and remind us that we are all One. This observance is open to all and children are encouraged to attend. Each year, we strive to introduce a moment of magic to renew the wonder in each of us. This gathering is the perfect way to introduce the spirit of the season in a community of loving souls. Bring drums and rattles if you have them; dress for celebration if you like and if you can; bring a finger food to share.

Thursday, December 24, 7:00pm

*Glad Tidings*

Rev. Margret A. O'Neill

Music: Karlinda Caldicott, harp and Norman Thibodeau, flute  
and Tori Gernert-Dott and Ella Levasalmi, sopranos

In the darkest season of the year, we rejoice in the miracle of new birth with hope and joy. The traditional rituals of story, song, and candlelighting are rich with meaning as we turn the cycle of the year and celebrate our love together. All ages are welcome and nursery care will be provided. Bring a finger-food treat to share in the reception after the service.

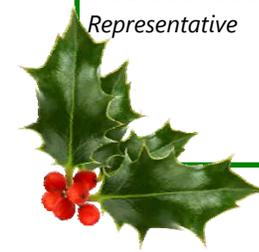
Sunday, December 27, 10:30am

*Poetry is For Everyone* — Gary Feinland, Worship Associate

Music: Sonja Dahl, piano

"Poetry is language at its most distilled and most powerful." (Rita Dove) For many, poetry is a way to connect with our most precious values (including the value of wit and mirth). Poetry lovers of all ages are welcome to participate in reading their own original poems or sharing the writing of favorite poets -- or just come listen and enjoy! If you would like to read, please contact Gary Feinland at [feinland.g@gmail.com](mailto:feinland.g@gmail.com) or 242-9801.

## December Worship



## CIRCLES



*Rev. Dr. Margret A. O'Neill,  
Interim Minister*

## MARGRET'S MUSINGS

### Vision and Intention

On Sunday, November 8, about 130 people completed interviews with each other in the Great Hall, exploring their vision for the future of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady – what and how this church would be at its best at some future date. They then discussed their ideas around tables over lunch in the Dining Room, and recorded the common themes they found in their separate visions for the church of their dreams. In coming months everyone will be invited to participate in shaping those ideas into a shared vision for the future of this congregation. Your vision will inform your leaders and volunteers as they determine their priorities; in this time of ministerial transition, your vision will also tell prospective ministers where you are heading, so they can judge how they might support your priorities and plans.

I don't believe that simply stating a mission or a vision has any magic that suddenly transforms an organization into something it was not before. However, I do believe that the process of listening and paying attention to everyone's

dreams, and finding the common ground in those dreams of the future, can tap into energy and resources that have been hidden from sight. Like the Wizard of Oz, whose gift was in helping the lion, scarecrow, and tin man realize the courage, intelligence and heart they already had, a vision helps to focus the courage, intelligence and heart of a congregation to live more fully into who they might be.

A small example from my own experience here at UUSS: last Spring I had a stewardship conversation with Don and Lois Porter, long-time members of the congregation. Don has built and managed the church's website for longer than anyone can remember, and when I asked him what he would like to see happen at the church, he said his one desire was that someone else step up to take over the website. And I told him we could certainly do that for him, and that we would get a new website team into place by January, before he and Lois left for their winter stay in Mexico. As I drove away, I thought, "What the heck did I just promise? How are we going to do that??" But I knew I had made a commitment, and that I had set an intention in place.

Since I had no idea how to find a new website team, I did nothing – nothing except to watch for what resources might be right in front of me, unnoticed. But I kept the intention alive. Then in a Green Sanctuary meeting, Catherine Miller volunteered to become the

liaison for the Climate Justice page on the church website. Seizing the moment, I simply turned to her and asked, "Would you like to be part of creating a new website here?" And she said, simply, "Yes!" With that auspicious beginning, it became increasingly easy to invite people to join the team: Mark Hyland agreed to serve as a liaison to the new database; Deb Best will link to social media; Christy Multer brings her sense of public relations; Gigi Gabriel-Dillman, Rebecca Rouse and Sal Prizio all have extensive experience with WordPress and are excited about helping us adapt the new UUA WordPress template to this congregation. Suddenly we not only have a new Website Development Team, but we have a collaborative group of folks with the courage, intelligence and heart to create a resource that will help the church move forward in new ways.

An amazing future begins with asking what we want, crafting a vision of what might be possible, and holding the intention to pay attention to the resources that are hidden in plain sight. It is a pleasure to be in this congregation full of courage, intelligence and heart, as you chart your course into the unfolding future. See you in church!

**Margret**





*Julie Rigano,  
Director of Lifespan Religious  
Education*

### ***Is it the holiday season yet?***

On October 30th, I was in CVS looking for the final touches for my Halloween costume. I went as Tina Belcher from the animated series “Bob’s Burgers” on FOX and I still needed my glasses. After finding an acceptable pair, I walked through the seasonal aisle to head towards the register. I was looking forward to see what Halloween decorations, toys, and other knick knacks they still had left. Instead, I was greeted by a large Santa, a plethora of reindeer, and more fake wreathes than Rachel Ray would be able to handle, next to a pitifully small shelf of Halloween items.

I am very strict when it comes to my December holidays. I refuse to start celebrating or listening to holiday music before Thanksgiving, so seeing this display before Halloween sent me in a tizzy. I took a picture of it and sent it to my friends with the caption “Seriously?!” How dare they push this on me? This was wrong and I was right.

The next day, I received a picture from my sister-in-law’s sister, Coley, grinning from ear to ear next to a reindeer display. “It’s the most wonderful time of the year!!!” was her caption. I smiled remembering

that her first tattoo was of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. Still a tiny part of me thought, “That’s nice, but it’s still wrong.” I knew how happy it made her though, so I tried to focus on that. That isn’t to say that I didn’t send her a teasing reply reminding her of the date because I absolutely did.

It reminded me of a sermon I heard Meg Barnhouse give at last year’s Liberal Religious Educators Association Fall Conference. She was preaching and singing with her partner when she explained that sharing music with her community was her church. It was where she felt the most in sync with her faith. Some people get their church from the sermon, or from hearing the joys and sorrows of the community, but for her it was music.

Everyone knows that you can’t please all the people all the time and that is certainly true at a church. Not everyone is going to like every service. The person who loves hearing music in worship may delight in one of our guest musicians one week. That same person may not feel quite as uplifted the next week when there is less music in the worship, but the chancel has been decorated to fit the theme of the sermon. Likewise, someone may leave a music-heavy worship wishing for something more and delight in seeing the chancel newly decorated the following week.

I think this speaks to the tension of the individual and the communal which is so essential to our faith. We are each on our individual path to truth and meaning supported by a community. Part of supporting that journey, I believe, is understanding that sometimes what is offered on Sunday might support someone else on their path even if it feels lacking to you that Sunday.

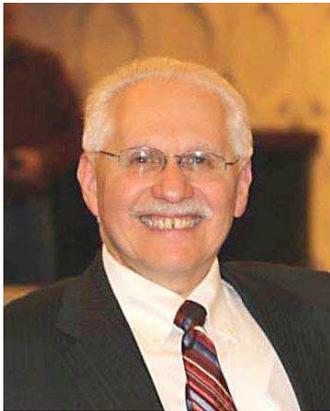
So as Coley sends me selfie after selfie with new holiday decorations, I remind myself to smile because this is her happiness. How can I be upset about something so innocent that makes someone else so happy, even if it used to irritate me?

That’s right. “Used to.” After six years of debating the official start of the holiday season with Coley, I decided to focus on the happiness. I still need a reminder each year, though. My first instinct when I see wreathes next to vampire fangs is mild outrage, but then I imagine what Coley would say if she were next to me. “Stop. This is amazing. Take my picture. 1, 2, 3 - CHRISTMAS!!” It softens the edges. By the time you are reading this, though, Coley and I will agree that we are officially in the holiday season, and so a happy and healthy holiday season from both of us.

***Julie***



## CIRCLES



*John Reschovsky  
Board of Trustees President*

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As we approach the end of the year, I ask you to ponder what is the most important thing that we need to do as a Congregation in 2016. Is it governance change, developing a new vision statement, maxing out our stewardship campaign or increasing member engagement? All these things are vitally important. But none is more important, in my opinion, than starting the process of selecting the next minister--because that selection will probably do more to shape our future than anything else we might do.

How will we attract the very best candidates? How will we sell them on the appeal of UUSS, and how will we select the very best fit for our congregation?

Of course, all of the positive actions we are taking during this time of transition are useful in positioning us for the ministerial search. But the real work begins with the formation of a seven member Ministerial Search Committee in April. Members of this committee are elected at a special congregational meeting, probably in April, from a slate of 12 nominees selected by a Special Nominating Committee plus any additional nominations from the membership. Given the importance of the

Ministerial Search, this selection is also of paramount importance. We will be putting our future in the hands of seven members, who will serve us over an intensive year-long search.

UUA guidelines suggest that Search Committee members should have an overall perspective and commitment to our nature, purpose, values and activities; they should be patient consensus builders, who are widely respected and who can represent the wishes of the entire Congregation, not just a special interest or limited focus.

I mention all this because it is such a critical decision for us, and it is not too early to start thinking about who you think might make good Search Committee members. I know that the Special Nominating Committee will be seeking your thoughts.

As we enter the holiday season, the pace of life seems to intensify. Please take some time to slow down, enjoy and make a special effort to be generous in the spirit of the season, whether it be through your gifts to those less fortunate, through your kind actions or through just an expression of love.

Peace,  
**John**

### **Mission:**

*Connecting in spiritual community, we  
celebrate life with joy  
grow in compassion  
create justice*



## WINTER SOLSTICE OBSERVANCE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22 AT 7PM



### Winter Solstice UNDER THE DOME IN THE GREAT HALL

Join us to celebrate the Return of the Sun with song, poetry, procession, candles, dance, drum, and ceremony. We carry forward traditions of long standing with new material to illuminate our spirits and remind us that we are all One. This observance is open to all and children are encouraged to attend. Each year, we strive to introduce a moment of magic to renew the wonder in each of us. This gathering is the perfect way to introduce the spirit of the season in a community of loving souls. Bring drums and rattles if you have them; dress for celebration if you like; and if you can, bring a finger food to share. *-Earth Circles at UUSS*

## UOSS PHILOSOPHY GROUP



382-5982 or [mfoster9@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mfoster9@nycap.rr.com).

The Philosophy Group is currently reading and discussing Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* from 1790. We meet every Wednesday (except at holiday times) in the Emerson Room at 10:00am. New members are always welcome. If you have questions contact Michael Foster at

## DINING FOR DOLLARS LASAGNA DINNER DECEMBER 16TH



On Wednesday, December 16, 2015, volunteer cooks, pastry chefs and delivery drivers will present the ninth annual **Dining for Dollars** lasagna dinner benefit.

This year's **Dining for Dollars** program will help the people of New Orleans continue to recover from Hurricane Katrina, and it will support The Mooncatcher Project which provides reusable menstrual pads for girls in Africa to help them stay in school.

**Dining for Dollars** — delivers dinner — vegetarian lasagna, garlic bread, salad and dessert right to your door. You don't have to cook or even go out. Eat in to help out - at home, in your PJs or sweats!

### In order to do this work we need food underwriters.

Donors that are willing to pay for the groceries needed to prepare hundreds of meals by using only donated food, Dining for Dollars maintains its perfect record of delivering 100% of the funds raised to our beneficiaries. To donate NOW to Dining for Dollars grocery costs contact Ellie von Wellsheim at 518-859-5114 or by email at [gipsywort@aol.com](mailto:gipsywort@aol.com). Thank you.

For more information and to order online, go to <http://bit.ly/Dining4Dollars2015>



Join us for the UOSS Annual

# Holiday Party!

Saturday, December 5th  
5:30pm-9pm in the Great Hall

Adult Programs Council invites you and your family to our **Annual Holiday Party** to be held in the Great Hall on Saturday evening, December 5th. **We are planning games and movies for the kids under adult supervision**, and hope everyone will bring a plate of something yummy to share. Beverages will be provided.



**Come celebrate the season with friends old and new!**

*Sponsored by the Adult Programs Council*



## CIRCLES



**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!**

Your next two opportunities to help feed the hungry and work with some great volunteers at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen are Mondays, December 14th and February 22<sup>nd</sup>. And Soup Kitchen volunteers will be preparing our famous Chili Soup right here at UU Schenectady to feed you and raise funds for our mission on January 24th, 2016. Hope you'll join us. To help in preparation and serving, contact Kendra at [kendra.pratt1@gmail.com](mailto:kendra.pratt1@gmail.com).

**SUNDAY MORNING YOGA AND MEDITATION!**

"Every body" is welcome to relax and stretch at Guided Yoga with Mati every Sunday morning from 8:00-9:15am in the Emerson Room. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays, Mati leads Guided Mindfulness Meditation in the Emerson Room at 9:30am. This 20 minute seated meditation is followed by a period to share experiences and ask questions for further information. For more information contact Mati at [mihackett@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mihackett@nycap.rr.com).



**WE NEED HELP! FOR CUPID'S CABARET  
JANUARY 31ST**



**Sponsors:** Like Revels, we are asking for UUSS members to sponsor the cabaret as "Cupid's Comrades." You'll earn free admission and plenty of praise from our performers. See the sponsorship form in this issue of *Circles* or contact Christy Multer at [cmulter12@gmail.com](mailto:cmulter12@gmail.com).

**Bakers:** We need plenty of bakers of all abilities. Whether you have a favorite cookie recipe or a spectacular cake, we need tasty cookies, bars and slices to serve at the Cabaret, as well as fancy desserts for our silent auction. If you can help, please contact Robyn Salvin at: [robynelaine23@gmail.com](mailto:robynelaine23@gmail.com).



**Volunteers:** We'll be leading a raucous sandwich-making party in the kitchen before the service on January 31st. If you can help, please contact: Sarah Bilofsky at: [sbilofsky@nycap.rr.com](mailto:sbilofsky@nycap.rr.com).

**CIRCLES SUPPERS - JANUARY 9, 2016**

*Interested in getting to know other members of the UUSS family a little better? Interested in good food? Interested in good conversation?*



Join us for the Pot Luck Circles Suppers! This is the dinner series we formerly called Silver & Gold. We will meet in groups of four to twelve at 6pm in members' homes for good conversation and great food. Each adult brings an assigned dish and a beverage of choice. It is a great opportunity to meet new folks or get better acquainted with folks you already know. Please join us! We hope to see you there!



**Date:** Saturday, January 9, 2016  
**Sign up by:** Saturday, December 19, 2015  
**Sign up at:** Adult Program Council (APC)  
 Table in the Great Hall, after services  
**More information:** [apcouncil@uuschenectady.org](mailto:apcouncil@uuschenectady.org)

**LOOKING FOR BAKERS!**



Dining for Dollars is looking for cookie-makers for the big fundraising dinner, delivery date December 16th. Cookies are needed by December 15th. If you've never baked for this event before, please contact Jill at [mcgrathjm@icloud.com](mailto:mcgrathjm@icloud.com) or call 868-9768 to volunteer to bake. (If you have baked before, we'll be in touch!) Thanks so much.



**Please Note:**

**The church will be closed**

**Friday, December 25th thru Friday, January 1st**

**We are here Sunday, December 27th**

**for the traditional Poetry Service --**

**come and share or enjoy!**

**Thank you.**

# Lifespan Faith Development

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE SAMPLER

### SESSION #2: CHANTING

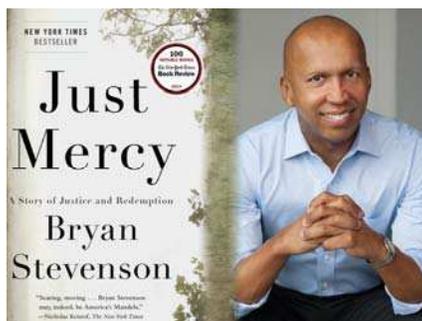
DECEMBER 3RD 7-8PM FIREPLACE ROOM



No special voices needed...there has never been a culture that didn't chant--until ours. Lois Porter and Mati Hackett will be leading with accompaniment on Harmonium. In order for this session to materialize, a minimum of 5 sign-ups are needed. Sign up at the Lifespan Religious Education table at the back of the Great Hall or by emailing Lois at [lois.s.porter@gmail.com](mailto:lois.s.porter@gmail.com)

## *JUST MERCY: A STORY OF JUSTICE AND REDEMPTION* BY BRYAN STEVENSON

FIRST DISCUSSION: JANUARY 17 AT 9:30AM



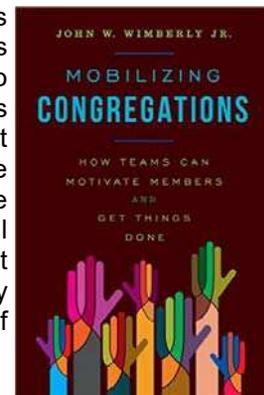
Join UUs across the nation in learning about the pressing issues of our time with the UUA "Common Read," *Just Mercy*, a powerful true story by the lawyer who founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice

dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. *Just Mercy* explores the potential for mercy to redeem us, and issues a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice, from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time. **There will be multiple opportunities to discuss this book beginning at 9:30am on Sunday January 17, with other dates to be announced through the winter and spring.** To get involved, simply purchase and read the book *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (paperback or e-book format), and indicate your interest by signing up at the Lifespan Faith Development of Social Action Council table in the Great Hall after Sunday services, through the UUSS website: <http://goo.gl/pAcvP0> or by calling the church office at 374-4446.

## MINISTRY TEAMS STUDY PROCESS GET INVOLVED ANY TIME!

FOUR SUNDAYS AT NOON, JANUARY 3-24

The concept of "ministry teams" is part of the new thinking about ways to mobilize congregational energy to tap into members' commitments and passions, and to support mission-responsive initiatives. The Board of Trustees' work on the process of governance change will be complemented by learning about ways to create and use ministry teams to support the vitality of church programs and activities.



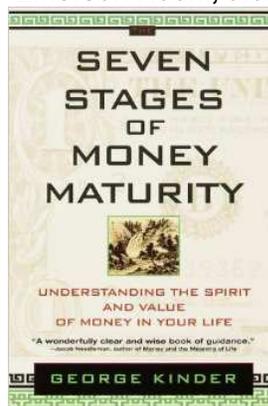
This will be a four-session book-based discussion, beginning Sunday 1/3, with meetings each Sunday at noon (after morning services) through January 24. This process of exploration and inquiry will build the foundation for decisions and experiments with an exciting new model for organizing congregational life.

Anyone interested is welcome to participate at any time. To get involved, simply purchase the book *Mobilizing Congregations: How Teams can Motivate Members and Get Things Done* by John Wimberly, Jr. (paperback or e-book format), and register at the table in the Great Hall after Sunday services, through the UUSS website at <http://goo.gl/nFVCWs> or by calling the church office at 374-4446.

## SEVEN STAGES OF MONEY MATURITY THREE SATURDAYS:

JANUARY 9, FEBRUARY 6, MARCH 5

Emerson Room, 9:00am – 12:00pm



Our Seven Stages of Money Maturity book discussion will explore the issues author George Kinder raises about the spiritual, psychological and practical concerns that surround money. Can we find ways to see our experiences with money as steps toward understanding our relationships with others and with ourselves? We will also discuss the book's practical advice on budgeting and investing and the foundation of financial planning :

the identification of goals and choices. Is it possible to attain greater peace, freedom, and security in our money lives? Register at the Adult Faith Development table and purchase the book in hard copy or for your e-reader.

## Mark Your Calendar: Cupid's Cabaret is coming January 31st!

Life is a cabaret, old chum! Join us as we “stand on the side of love” on January 31st following the Sunday morning service.



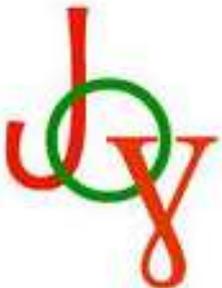
You'll enjoy tempting treats, sensational songs and a few surprises at Cupid's Cabaret and the Just Desserts buffet. Sponsored by the Music Committee, we'll be tapping both the baking and performing talents of our own USSS members for a truly delicious event

to get you in the mood for Valentine's Day. You never know who will grace the Cabaret stage!

Cupid's Cabaret and Just Desserts is the major fundraiser for the church budget this year, so please make every effort to attend – and bring a friend! Tickets are: \$10/adult and \$7/children (maximum of \$30/family).

After the service, a light lunch will be served in the dining room, while the Great Hall is transformed into a decadent den of desserts. You'll sample tables of tasty treats, and have the opportunity to bid on special desserts, all prepared with love by USSS bakers. Food is love, so bring one to your family, school or co-workers and earn extra brownie points!

Come see what a talented congregation we are – mark your calendar for a January 31st event that will warm your heart and please your palette!



## GREEN SANCTUARY: ADVOCATING FOR CLIMATE ACTION



Our new Climate Justice Project has led us in the direction of presenting information about the Climate Summit, scheduled for 11/30-12/11 in Paris. Also known as COP21, this is the 21st Session of the **Conference of the Parties** to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Green Sanctuary set a table up for the Climate Justice Project at USSS on November 15 & 29 and at the Schenectady Greenmarket on November 22.

The Kyoto Protocol was formulated at COP3 in 1997 and is expiring in 2020. The main objective of the COP21 is to reach a universally binding agreement to limit greenhouse gases enough to keep temperature rise below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels. To achieve this aim, the 195 participating countries must take appropriate measures to curb Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Most have already submitted their commitments, which are not sufficient to attain this goal. But we'll be closer than at present.

The second equally as important objective is the issue of financing. The Paris agreement must mobilize \$100 billion per year to help enable developing countries to combat climate change while promoting fair and sustainable development. So far, only \$4 billion have been paid out by a few of the developed countries.

To show citizen support for world climate action, go to: <http://goo.gl/FyrTv2>

One of the main platforms of the US commitment toward GHG reduction is the EPA Clean Power Plan which sets first-ever limits on global warming pollution from power plants. Currently this legislation must get through Congress. Senate Joint Resolutions 23 & 24 and House Joint Resolution 71 serve to undermine the EPA and the Clean Power Plan. Our table at USSS and at the Greenmarket encourages people to contact their representatives to advocate for the Clean Power Plan. To advocate for this bill, you can go to: <http://goo.gl/HzSBgQ>

At our Green Sanctuary table, we have a large “Thank you” card to President Obama for taking a stand against the Keystone Pipeline. We wish to encourage him for taking this step towards climate leadership, and you're welcome to sign it.

Over the holiday season, we challenge you to think back to our Green Christmas carbon reducing actions from previous years. As individuals, families, and a congregation, we can continue to add together our “Tens of Millions of Little Things” as well as advocate for our leaders to do a few Big Things.

## RIPPLES: SOCIAL ACTION COUNCIL

### Family Promise begins at UUSS

By Mary O'Keeffe



After months of planning and preparation for our first week of hosting homeless families at Waters House, every part of our congregation has embraced Family Promise in diverse and wondrous ways. Welcome signs made by RE classes greeted our guests. Their first night's dinner included Hungarian goulash made by our senior youth. Dozens of trained congregational volunteers of all ages contributed to making and serving the meals throughout the week or stayed overnight with the families. Many congregation members generously donated bedding and curtains, dining and kitchen supplies, hygiene items and baby equipment. The Buildings and Grounds Committee's tireless efforts as well as Helen and Ed went above and beyond to make Waters House a very special, safe and comfortable space. Our guest families told us that they especially loved their beautiful bedroom window views of our sparkling fountains lit up at night. The families trick or treated in the neighborhood and later enjoyed giving out treats to those who knocked on Waters House door on Halloween. The week before we hosted, Reverend Margret and our DLRE Julie both held wonderful Family Promise services, in the Great Hall and Children's Chapel, respectively, filling us all, adults, youth, and children alike with empathy and a better appreciation of the challenges facing homeless families.

In our first week, we hosted two families. Both families loved their October stay at UUSS and have returned for a second week in November. We expect a third family will be joining them soon. The parents in one of the families are political refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo: they will probably be in the program for a while, as Family Promise day center staff work with Congressman Tonko's office to help get their immigration paperwork resolved.

Another family we hosted, JaQuai and her five year old son Joshua, will probably not be guests much longer, for reasons she explains in the heartfelt statement she has given me permission to share.

*Continued .....*

*.....Continued*

### Family Promise begins at UUSS

*My son and I joined Family Promise on June 19. It was a particularly rough time in our lives and I had just moved to the area. I was given [the number for Mary Giordano, Executive Director of Family Promise] and was told she would be able to help us. In the beginning, I was a bit apprehensive but I am a firm believer that God puts people in your lives for a reason. In the first few days, I met some amazing people [volunteers at other Family Promise congregations] who were warm, caring, willing to listen without judgment, and genuinely nice. ... This journey was not easy and many times I have wanted to give up, but your tough love, encouraging words, thoughts and prayers kept me focused. I am happy to say that on October 19, the four-month anniversary of my entry into Family Promise, I got a job as a dental assistant and hopefully soon Joshua and I will be moving into our own home. However, none of this would have been possible without the support of Family Promise, the host congregations, and all the volunteers.*

JaQuai says her experience has been so transformative and inspiring that she is committed to becoming a Family Promise volunteer herself after she and her son move into their own home.

The Family Promise day program in Albany, staffed by two professionals and a number of volunteers, provides intensive support



to homeless families hosted by UUSS and the other 27 member congregations of Family Promise as well as helping all homeless families with services and advocacy. For more information about Family Promise of the Capital District, <http://capitalregionfamilypromise.weebly.com/>. Our third Sunday in December collection will go to Family Promise. Checks can be made out to Family Promise of the Capital District. Thanks to Mike MacLaury, gifts are eligible for GE More Gifts/More Givers matching funds.



## CIRCLES

### NOAH BEST – ANINGER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT!

Hello UUSS, this is Noah Best of the Coming of Age group class, recipient of an Aninger Scholarship. Recently I have had the opportunity to attend the Goldmine Leadership School, roughly a week-long conference that is designed to teach UU youth the skills necessary to become leaders in their churches and in life.

One of these skills was how to be the leader of a community. We discussed ways to be an inclusive community and how to maintain inclusiveness. The community the youth created with one another followed all of our UU guidelines. One of the first things we did was to create a covenant. We employed a system to ensure that people would know when they were breaking the covenant and how they could take responsibility for what they did, which was achieved by an “ouch and oops” system. When the covenant was broken, the person hurt said “ouch”, and the person who broke the covenant said “oops” and gave the hurt person a compliment. We set rules we all agreed on to ensure no one was hurt, and the rules were upheld. I didn’t hear any ouches or oops, so that says something about how all the rules were followed. We did work around the campus, and that was definitely a device for bonding. We did tasks such as picking lettuce that had gone to seed and feeding it to the chickens, as well as moving boxes of tee-shirts. The sense of community permeated as we grew to respect one another. I can surely say I want to meet with everyone that was there again, probably through more community involvement.



Secondly, we learned much of the formation of the UU movement. An activity we engaged in was to prepare an “elevator speech,” which is a one minute speech to explain what Unitarian Universalism is. This activity allowed us to surmise what we thought being UU was to us, which was a great way to allow our opinions to be shown. The best part of learning about our history and the current movement was that our opinions fueled the conversations we had about the movement, making each discussion relevant to each person. During these sessions, we learned many skills necessary to be a leader, like facilitating a meeting and writing formal emails. These skills combined with our evaluation of our faith and allowed us to be a unique leader with our own style, while practicing good leadership technique. The teaching of leadership technique was done by demonstration of such techniques, as they were employed to teach us! For example, to learn about how to create an inclusive community, we brainstormed ideas about how to achieve this ideal, with everyone encouraged to share their ideas.

In summation, the skills I obtained in Goldmine can and will be used to help the congregation. These skills can be utilized in a number of ways, such as assisting with service work and other youth-involved projects. As these opportunities present themselves, I will be glad to take them. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend this valuable workshop.



## EBWA PROGRAM - DECEMBER 17TH

### YWCA – Its First 125 years in Schenectady



**Rowie Taylor** has been Executive Director of the YWCA of Schenectady (dba the YWCA Northeastern NY) since November 1993. In particular Rowie will discuss the establishment of the

Domestic Violence Shelter 40 years ago, with the presence and help of YWCA Board members Mary Pritchard and Shirley Readdean. They will revisit the events leading up to establishing the shelter in the early 1970's.

Other UUSS women who were heavily involved in women's issues in Schenectady include Julia Norton, Betty Dietz, Dot Peterson and Susan Eggenberger – names that will be recognized by many EBWA women. It was Susan who established our very successful annual panty drive during the holiday season, to which you can contribute by bringing some new panties to donate; larger sizes are needed most. Socks, camisoles, or sports bras are also welcome. They should not be gift-wrapped, so that the shelter staff can direct them to the most appropriate women. We celebrate the accomplishments of the Schenectady YWCA, and its Domestic Violence Shelter, at this time of year; it'll be a party!

To make reservations for the vegetarian meal served at 6:15pm, contact Gabrielle Reals at [ellegr3@gmail.com](mailto:ellegr3@gmail.com) by Monday December 14, or call her at 382-5685 by 8pm Tuesday, December 15. If you require a gluten-free meal please include that information when you make your reservation. Cost of the evening including the meal is \$15; program only is \$3. Accommodation can be made for women on very limited income: When you make your reservation, indicate that you need an accommodation in the fee, and the treasurer will accept a 'pay as you will' donation. You may also bring your own meal if you prefer, and only pay \$3 for the program.

If you plan to come for the program only at 7:45pm, plan to arrive about 7pm for networking, an opportunity for connecting with other women by briefly sharing something of interest with the group.

**Looking Ahead: January 28, 2016.** *Guilty as Charged: Writing from a Woman's Point of View* with **Amy Biancolli**, award-winning *Times Union* columnist and author.

## WOMEN'S ALLIANCE - DECEMBER 3RD

Rosemary (Rowie) Taylor Executive Director of the YWCA will be addressing our luncheon on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Turf Tavern. The title of her talk is "The 50 Year Connection between the YWCA of Schenectady dba the YWCA NorthEastern NY and Selma, Alabama". Public policy and advocacy work has always been a passion for Rowie. She has spent countless hours working to put the YW's mission and Women's Equality on the forefront of legislative agendas. She will be bringing with her a guest, DeLois Ford who will share her moving story and explain her connection with the YWCA.

We will be collecting items suitable for the Domestic Violence Center which is supported by the YWCA. Items can include: **bedding items for twin beds, towels, wash cloths, clothing such as mittens, socks, sweatpants, sweatshirts, tee-shirts, underwear (large sizes needed), soap, shampoo, deodorant, small cooking pans, and small food storage containers.**

Bring your friends (*men and women*) to the Turf Tavern on Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Lunch is served promptly at noon, so come a little early. The luncheon choices for that day will be citrus salmon, baked glazed ham steak or vegetarian (upon request). Lunch reservations can be made through Pat Lambert at [patricialambert21@gmail.com](mailto:patricialambert21@gmail.com) or 377-8917. The lunch cost is \$13.

you ring it. A song is no song till you sing it. And love in your heart wasn't put there to stay. Love isn't love till you give it away.

put there to stay. Love isn't love till you give it away. A bell is no bell till you ring it. A song is no song till you sing it. And love in

A bell is no bell till you ring it. A song is no song till you sing it. And love in your heart wasn't



# You can be a Sponsor of Cupid's Cabaret

After the service on **Sunday, January 31, 2016**, UUSS members, families and friends will enjoy a light luncheon, then gather in the Great Hall for our four biennial **Cupid's Cabaret & Just Desserts Buffet**. This day will be the major fund raising event in the 2015-16 church budget, but also a whole lot of fun for all ages, with singing, dancing and comedy as well as scrumptious desserts.

You can participate in the cabaret and demonstrate that you too "Stand on the Side of Love" at UUSS by becoming a cabaret sponsor. Our sponsorship levels were chosen to honor those who have taught us how to love one another better. (See descriptions over.)

**Martin Luther King, Jr.: \$600**

**Albert Schweitzer: \$400**

**Rodgers & Hammerstein: \$300**

**Jane Austen: \$200**

**Masters & Johnson: \$100**

**Elmo: \$50**

**(Plus business sponsor ads: \$75)**

All sponsors will be admitted free to the cabaret and acknowledged in the cabaret program (unless anonymity is requested). Contact Christy Multer with your questions about sponsorship at 399-2050.

The deadline for becoming a Cupid's Cabaret Sponsor is Sunday, **January 24**. Please fill out the form below and return it to the church office along with your check made out to Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady. **Be sure to indicate "Cabaret Sponsor" on your check memo line.**

Cupid's Comrades



*Yes, I do stand on the side of love, and I want to help sponsor Cupid's Cabaret!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Level / dollar amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) as you wish it to appear in the program: \_\_\_\_\_

your heart wasn't put there to stay. Love isn't love till you give it away. A bell is no bell till



# Cupid's Cabaret Sponsorship Levels



## **Martin Luther King, Jr.: \$600**

A clergyman, activist, civil rights leader, and brilliant writer and orator, Martin Luther King probably did more than any other American to help us learn to love and respect one another. He used civil disobedience to stand up to racial segregation and the desperate inequalities it created, and in the end paid for his courage with his life.



## **Albert Schweitzer: \$400**

After achieving success as an organist, musical scholar and theologian, Dr. Albert Schweitzer decided to become a doctor and spent most of the rest of his life as a “medical missionary” in Africa. Reverence for all life was his central belief: “Until he extends his circle of compassion to include all living things, man will not himself find peace.”



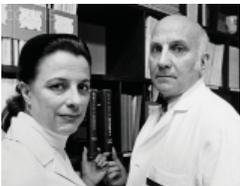
## **Rodgers & Hammerstein: \$300**

OK, so Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein never won the Nobel Peace Prize like the two worthies above. But who else taught us about love and life the way this song-writing duo did when they created the characters and lyrics of *Oklahoma*, *Carousel*, *The King and I*, *Flower Drum Song*, *South Pacific*, and *The Sound of Music*?



## **Jane Austen: \$200**

Without Jane Austen's *Emma* and *Pride and Prejudice*, would we have had *Clueless*, *Bridget Jones' Diary* or the now endless line of Austen sequels and imitations? Austen's heroines and their struggles to find true love within the confines of 19th century English society remain as true and as instructive to us today as they were to her first readers.



## **Masters & Johnson: \$100**

The team of William Masters and Virginia E. Johnson taught us about love through their 30 years of research. They debunked many myths and showed that sexuality is a healthy and natural part of the human condition, calling not for fear or shame but for openness and communication.



## **Elmo: \$50**

If you're older than 10, you may have forgotten Elmo, but don't worry, “Elmo loves you!!!” He loves you unconditionally with the innocence and whole-hearted enthusiasm of a three-year-old. A regular on *Sesame Street* for 30 years, this little red monster remains the perennial favorite of millions of toddlers and teaches them about love, friendship, and optimism.

## **Plus - Business Sponsors: \$75**

Show your love of UUSS by purchasing a business card-size ad for your business in the cabaret program for \$75. Give your business card or other camera-ready artwork to Christy Multer or email to [cmulter12@gmail.com](mailto:cmulter12@gmail.com)

# Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady

## December 2015

December 2015							January 2016						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 29 - Dec 5	<b>Nov 29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Dec 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
			Art Down DLRE's Day Off Minister's Day Off 10:30am Alliance Board (E) 7:00pm Wellspring: Faithful Action (F)	Margret Off Site 9:30am EBWA Steering Committee (F) 10:00am Philosophy Discussion (E) 7:00pm Wellspring: Sources (F) 7:00pm Wellspring: Sources (E)	7:00pm Spiritual Practice Sampler (F) 7:00pm Stewardship (E) 7:00pm World Religions: An Introduction (DR)		5:00pm Holiday Party
Dec 6 - 12	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
	8:00am Guided Yoga Flow (E) 9:15am Choir (DR) 9:30am CC&C (E) 10:30am RE Classes in Wa 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Jr Choir (E) 12:00pm Fireside Chat (F) 6:30pm Worship Team (E)	7:30pm FUSSBudgets (E)	DLRE's Day Off Minister's Day Off 7:00pm FF/GLBT (F)	9:30am Green Sanctuary (F) 10:00am Philosophy Discussion (E) 5:30pm Rental (DR/Kitchen) 7:30pm Men's Group (WH)	1:00pm Staff 7:00pm REC (WH 2nd Floor) 7:00pm World Religions: An Introduction (DR)	7:00pm Memorial Jazz Concert (GH/K/F/DR)	3:00pm Homemade Holidays (DR)
Dec 13 - 19	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
	8:00am Guided Yoga Flow (E) 9:15am Choir (DR) 9:30am CC&C (F) 9:30am Guided Meditation 10:30am RE in Worship (Gr) 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm COA Parent/Child 12:00pm Fireside Chat (F)	7:00pm Trusts Committee (E)	Dining For Dollars (DR/K) Circles Items Due DLRE's Day Off Minister's Day Off 5:30pm Niskayuna Coop (E) 7:00pm Ex Committee (DR) 7:00pm Wellspring: Faithful Action (F)	10:00am Philosophy Discussion (E) 7:00pm Membership Committee (DR) 7:00pm Wellspring: Sources (F) 7:00pm Wellspring: Sources (E)	12:15pm Men's Lunch (Edison Club) 6:00pm EBWA (DR/K) 7:00pm Buildings & Grounds (WH) 7:00pm Finance Meeting (E) 7:00pm Herb Group (WH) 7:00pm World Religions: An		
Dec 20 - 26	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
	8:00am Guided Yoga Flow (E) 9:30am CC&C (E) 10:30am RE in Worship (Great Hall) 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Fireside Chat (F)	1:30pm Caring Team (F) 5:30pm Adult Program Council (E) 7:00pm Board of Trustees (E)	DLRE's Day Off Minister's Day Off 7:00pm Winter Solstice (GH)		Christmas Eve 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service	Church Closed	
Dec 27 - Jan 2	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Jan 1, 16</b>	<b>2</b>
	8:00am Guided Yoga Flow (E) 9:30am CC&C (F) 9:30am Guided Meditation Practice (E) 10:30am RE in Worship (Gr) 10:30am Worship Service 12:00pm Fireside Chat (F)	7:00pm DLRE (WH) 7:00pm Social Action Council (F)	DLRE's Day Off Minister's Day Off		New Year's Eve (United St)		



1221 Wendell Avenue  
Schenectady, NY 12308

*Forwarding Service Requested*

# DECEMBER



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and

[www.facebook.com/UUSSchenectady](https://www.facebook.com/UUSSchenectady)

## PURPOSE OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF SCHENECTADY

The members of this Society covenant to maintain and foster in Schenectady a non-creedal religious society whose purpose shall be to:

- Encourage a free and responsible search for truth, knowledge, and understanding;
- Nurture the religious growth of all who participate in the life of this Society;
- Serve the community;
- Seek the realization of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Affirming the individual right of conscience, freedom of belief and the democratic process, with reverence for life and respect for the profound mystery of existence, we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

**Sunday Services and Religious Education**  
**10:30AM every Sunday Morning**

**Minister:** Reverend Margret A. O'Neill  
**Hours:** Monday, Wednesday & Thursday  
10am-4pm (by appointment)  
**Phone:** 518-374-4446 #2  
**Email:** [revmargretuuss@gmail.com](mailto:revmargretuuss@gmail.com)

**Director of LRE:** Julie Rigano  
**Office Hours:** Monday: 1pm-4pm  
Tuesday Off  
Wednesday, Thursday: 11am-3pm  
**Phone:** 518-504-0684  
**Email:** [JulietheDRE@gmail.com](mailto:JulietheDRE@gmail.com)

**Music Director:** Gareth Griffiths  
**Phone & Fax:** 518-395-9381  
**Email:** [ggriffiths1739@gmail.com](mailto:ggriffiths1739@gmail.com)

**Office Administrator:** Susan Marino  
**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm  
**Phone:** 518-374-4446 #0  
**Email:** [uadmin@nycap.rr.com](mailto:uadmin@nycap.rr.com)

**Bookkeeper:** Carolyn Sabol  
**Email:** [uubookkeeper@nycap.rr.com](mailto:uubookkeeper@nycap.rr.com)

**Custodians:** Helen Freeland & Ed Holen  
**Phone:** 518-605-5551