

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

January 2019 Newsletter



Gather ~ Inspire ~ Transform

695 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222 * Phone: 716-885-2136, Website: www.buffalouu.org

Faith Matters: What does it mean to be a People of Possibility?

Rev. Joan Montagnes

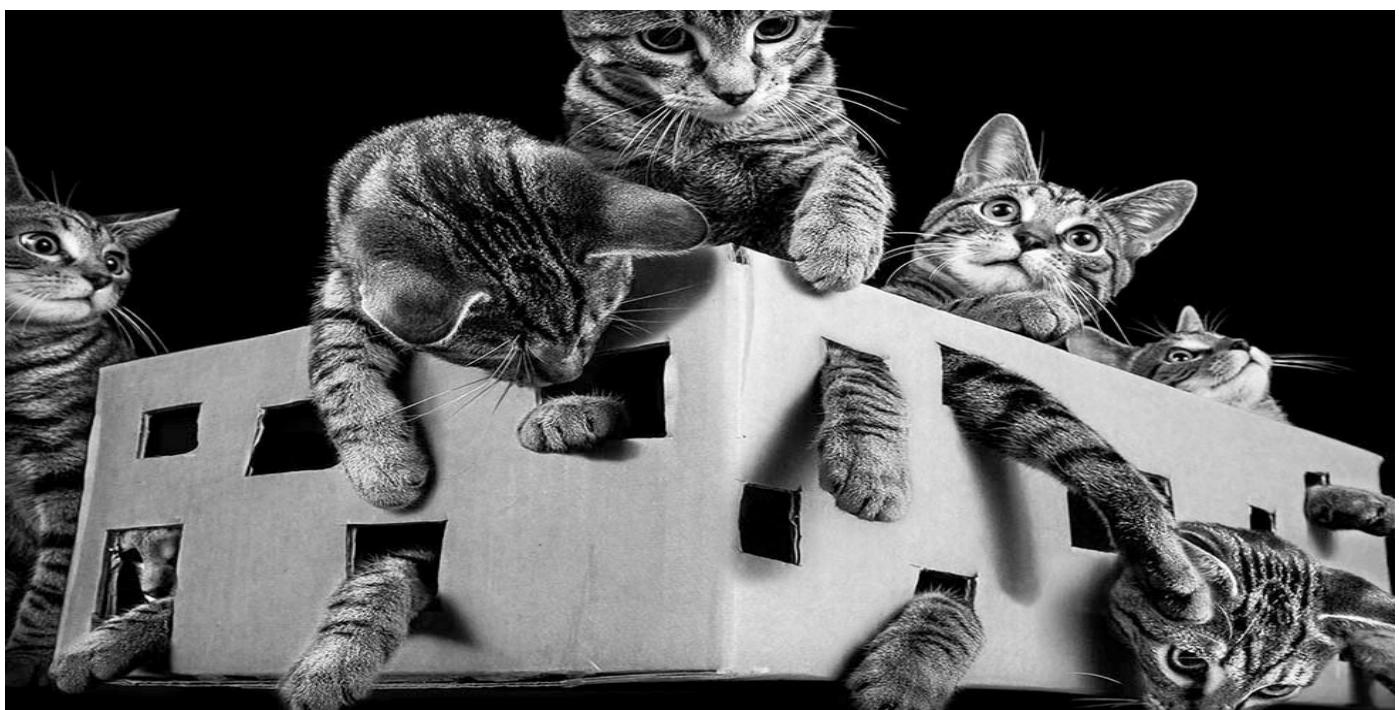


It seems to me that Erwin Schrodinger was a pretty sick individual. He may have been smart, he may have wanted to demonstrate the problematic nature of living in a world of possibility, but he was also seriously twisted.

Schrodinger, you see, came up with this great thought experiment that threw the whole world of quantum mechanics on its ear – as if the world of quantum mechanics wasn’t turning everything upside down already. He told everyone to shut their eyes and quietly imagine a cat in a box.

Okay, easy enough. But there is more. Also in the box, is a tiny bit of very low level radioactive material, so low level that, in the natural course of events, within an hour one atom of this material may or may not degrade. If the material degrades by even one atom, it triggers the release of a poison and the cat dies. Boo. If the material does not degrade within the hour, the cat lives. Yay!

The absurd notion is that for the hour the box is sealed, and we don’t know whether the poison has been released or not, the atom has both degraded and not degraded, the cat is both alive and dead. Both possibilities are occurring at the same time. Yeah, I know, sounds stupid, but Schrodinger proved it all with math, so it must be true.



I think what gets me, is why did he choose poison? Why not choose catnip? Then the cat could be simultaneously sober and pleasantly tipsy. Much nicer than being simultaneously alive and dead I should think (unless the afterlife really is as great as some suggest).

For that matter, why not just talk about atoms, since you are talking about quantum physics and math. Why bring cats into it at all? What a provocateur.

But my main objection to the entire thought experiment (and thankfully it is just a thought experiment) is that there are just two possibilities – alive or dead. The true beauty of quantum mechanics is that there are an almost infinite number of atoms in the universe, they are constantly degrading, interacting and dancing with each other in fabulous and exciting ways. There are never just two possibilities, every moment is staggeringly bursting with possibility and thanks to Schrodinger, we now understand that all those possibilities are available to us at the same time.

Realists will cry that we are restricted by the circumstances of our lives. True, the box is there, but you do not need to be constrained completely. There are always options. Yes, there are poisons out there. Best to avoid them.

There are also delicious treats of all kinds. Reach for those possibilities as you pave your path into the new year. Each step will present you with a new set of circumstances and choices. If we, as a people of faith, as people of possibility, make choices of peace, creativity, justice and compassion, then the cat will be out of the box for real and we will, in fact, transform ourselves and the world.

The year is new! We are at the beginning! Do not lose hope. Endless possibilities lie before us.

- Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Pulpit Previews

January 6: Music Sunday. Dan Bassin, UUCB choir and members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra will ring in the new year with a special Epiphany Music Sunday service. Our five-year survey of J.S. Bach's epic seasonal masterpiece, his *Christmas Oratorio*, comes to its joyous conclusion on Sunday, January 6th, commemorating the Feast of Epiphany for which this sixth and final cantata was written.

January 13: Who is the Stranger? Rev. Joan Montagnes

Since ancient times, communities asked, "Who are my Neighbors?" To that age-old question, we might add, "Who are we?" and, perhaps more importantly, "Whose are we?" As we reach for answers, we might surprise ourselves.

January 20: UU Access and Inclusion Ministry Service with Andrew Marcum, PhD

Andrew is an Adjunct Professor of Disability Studies for the City University of New York and Program Coordinator at the Center for Self Advocacy in Buffalo. Andrew was a 2018 Open Buffalo Democracy Fellow where he developed an annual leadership forum dedicated to increasing civic and community engagement among people with disabilities in Buffalo and Erie County so that our community can become more inclusive, open, and accessible to all People.

January 27: Boundless Possibility, Rev. Joan Montagnes

A meditative service to dwell on the possibilities open to us and the hope those possibilities offer. As Yogi Berra said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it!"



January Religious Education News

Sarah Martin, Director of Religious Education

After a super busy December, I'm taking a little breather! You can still find updates for Religious Education in the weekly announcements. Wishing you all a safe and happy New Year!

Adult Faith Development

New Memoir Writing Group Forming!

There has been some interest in starting a new memoir writing group due to the popularity of Fran Manly's original group, Stories of Your Life. If you would like to be a part of this group, or if you are interested in getting more information, please email Sarah Martin at lifespan@buffalouu.org or catch her at the Religious Education table on Sunday morning. As soon as we have critical mass, we will try to pick a time and day that works for everyone!

Weill and Wonderful Wednesdays at UUCB!

FROM BRECHT TO BROADWAY == THE MUSICAL THEATRE OF KURT WEILL

Michael Harris, instructor

Virgil Thomson called Kurt Weill (1900-1950) the most original workman in the American theatre. After becoming the toast of Berlin's theatre scene, Weill immigrated to America and reinvented the Broadway musical. We'll examine his collaborations with Bertolt Brecht, Ira Gershwin, Alan Jay Lerner and Lotte Lenya – his wife and greatest song interpreter, hear backstage tales about *The Threepenny Opera*, *Lady in the Dark* and *One Touch of Venus*, and savor such hits as "Mack the Knife" and "September Song."

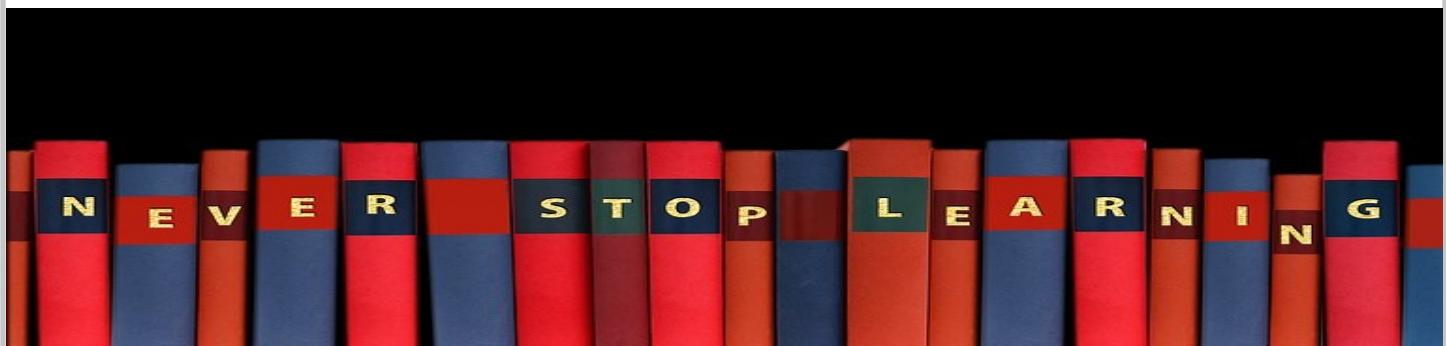
14 sessions -- Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m., January 9 to April 10, 2019

Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

695 Elmwood Avenue; Buffalo, NY (Alliance Room, 2nd Floor)

Cost: \$75 for full course, or \$10 per session

For more information, call Church Office at 885-2136.



Music Notes – January 2019

Daniel Bassin, Music Director



At the beginning of this new year, we consider what it means to be a community of *Possibility*. And, for our first service of 2019, your UUCB Choir and Music Program staff are delighted to ring in the new year with a special Epiphany Music Sunday service. Our five-year survey of J.S. Bach's epic seasonal masterpiece, his *Christmas Oratorio*, comes to its joyous conclusion on Sunday, January 6th, commemorating the Feast of Epiphany for which this sixth and final cantata was written.

Bach's setting of the Christmas story's Adoration of the Magi concludes the musical depiction of their Journey, heard last month at Music Sunday. In considering our monthly theme of *Possibility*, a reflection on the various meanings of the word, *epiphany*, is fitting. James Joyce considered the term outside of its Christian context, framing it as the sudden realization of "the *whatness* of a thing." Bach's Epiphany cantata will frame a service that includes congregational hymn singing, readings, and also music from other members of the Bach family: a violin concerto by his cousin, Johann Bernhard Bach, and a symphony movement from his son, Carl Philipp Emmanuel.

The service on January 13th, led by Rev. Joan Montagnes is entitled, *Who is the Stranger?* We'll hear a rendition of The Doors' classic, *People are Strange*, as well as Jean Berger's choral setting of Langston Hughes' *Lonley People*. On January 20th we pay homage to hommage to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., featuring tenor soloist, Matthew Spaulding, in Bob Chilcott's lush arrangement of the U2 song, *MLK*. Our Universal Access and Inclusion ministry team lead this service, and our other service music selections will highlight the legacies of composers and musicians who experienced disability.

Finally, we conclude our month with Rev. Montagnes's service *Endless Possibility*. January 27th also happens to be the birth anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, whose music will feature in the service.





Joys and Sorrows

We send healing thoughts and support to Elizabeth Randall and Corky Rosan. Elizabeth arrived at church on Dec 2 feeling poorly. She and Corky went home and when Elizabeth worsened, she entered the hospital to discover she was having a heart attack. She is home now and on the mend.

We also send healing thoughts to Carl Granger. Carl is recovering very well from an episode that occurred December 5.

Our hearts are with Joe and Jean Ott and their family. Joe's father, Bernard Ott, gently passed away on December 12.

Reminder: New Rental Contracts starting this January!

We have a new comprehensive rental contract- this will include new pricing for renting of the facility. We will need all groups presently renting to sign new contracts at that time and will begin asking for payments for the use of our facility based on the new pricing at that time. If anyone has any questions about the changes, please contact Bridge at brauch@buffalouu.org.



Pay part of your IRA required minimum distribution directly to UUCB as a charitable donation!

Are you 70 1/2 or older? Did you know that having a portion of your IRA required minimum distribution paid directly from your IRA to UUCB to pay on your pledge or to the Endowment Fund may qualify as a charitable distribution for income tax purposes? Check with your financial advisor to learn if this approach could be advantageous to you. - Jane Armbruster janearmbruster@gmail.com, Endowment Committee.



January Share-the-Plate: Friends of the Night People

Friends of the Night People is a charitable organization that helps the poor, homeless and destitute here in Buffalo. FoNP provides food, clothing, medical care, counseling and hope to those in need.

In June, July and August, 40,206 meals were provided by FoNP. A new mobile pantry is held at the DePaul Apartments located at 238 Ontario St. in Riverside on the first Friday of each month serving 100 families. Since November 2017, FoNP's community meals, in partnership with Asamblea de Iglesias Cristiana, provides meals at 213 Ontario St. every Tuesday and Thursday from 4 to 6 p.m.

Help FoNP make a difference today by serving meals, contributing clothing or hygiene products, or making a donation. Because of you, help is available to those experiencing homelessness and poverty in our community 365 days a year.

Please visit FriendsofNightPeople.com for more information and to volunteer.

Social Action Sunday Events (SASE) News

Share the Plate Update: We want to provide you with the results of our fall Share the Plate.

In September we contributed \$1,224.89 to the Mindful Alliance.

In October, Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition received \$1,144.98.

In November, Veterans One-Stop, received \$1,063.61.

It is impressive how generous our congregation can be!

Our heartfelt thanks to all contributors, SASE, and the Share the Plate team.

We are always looking for new members to our SASE team. We meet the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Our current team members are Liz Parke, Sharon Walker, Sandra Dunbar, Leo Mitchell, and Rev. Joan. Steve Wixson Chair wixsongs@gmail.com



UAIM NEWS



Every year the UAIM team creates a worship service touching on some aspect of disability. It's part of our effort to maintain our certification, but more importantly we want to remain connected to the congregation. On January 20 the UAIM team will present the Service. This year we have asked Andrew Marcum to speak at our service. Andrew has his PhD in Disability Studies. He is Adjunct Professor of Disability Studies for the City University of New York and Program Coordinator at the Center for Self Advocacy in Buffalo. Andrew was a 2018 Open

Buffalo Democracy Fellow where he developed an annual leadership forum dedicated to increasing civic and community engagement among people with disabilities in Buffalo and Erie County so that our community can become more inclusive, open, and accessible to all People.

We're looking forward to hearing Andrew in the context of our worship service.

Beyond the Hedge: Denomination and Interfaith Connections

Sharon Walker



Two Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition Trainings available!

INTRO TO RESTORATIVE PRACTICE AND CIRCLE TRAINING

January 16-17

INTRO TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND CONFERENCING TRAINING

February 26-27.

See flyers on the next pages for more info. You can also learn more at ecrjc.org.

Ongoing Peace Conference and Peace Circle Practices

Sponsored by VOICE-Buffalo and the Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition

Using Restorative Practices to create effective changes in our criminal justice system, Peace Circles build community while Peace Conferences can be used in situations where a harm has occurred that needs repair. With that in mind, you are invited to experience and take part in our monthly Circle and Conference practice sessions that build community and take on real issues.

Peace Circle and Conference Practice, First Thursday of each Month

R Healin Center, 1057 Kensington Ave., Buffalo, NY 14215

January 6, 2018

Registration and refreshments at 5:00 pm

Practice; 5:30-7:30 pm

Peace Circle, Second Tuesday of each month

UU Church of Buffalo, 1st Fl., "Marge Gardner Room", 695 Elmwood Ave.

January 8, 2019

Registration and refreshments at 6:00 pm

Peace Circle Practice; 6:30-8:30 pm

One of our guideline reads "What is said here, stays here. What is learned leaves here." For the past four months we have been meeting and talking, discussing, sharing and opening our hearts on the topics of race, community and gentrification, gender issues, and gratitude. By developing the ability to come together to tackle difficult topics our Circle Practice builds community with the long-term goal of UUCB becoming a community Peace Hub.

For more information on the Peace Circles taking place at UUCB email
uucb.wny.specevents@gmail.com.





Intro to Restorative Practices and Circle Training

This two day training is for participants interested learning about the philosophy and principles of Restorative Practices while learning skills to facilitate Restorative Circle. The training is designed for all levels of restorative interest and is very interactive.

Training will Include:

- ❖ An understand the core principles of restorative justice and restorative practices and how they differ from traditional or punitive approaches.
- ❖ Become knowledgeable of the relationship between Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices.
- ❖ Experience value-driven Restorative Circles.
- ❖ Participant in a variety of Restorative Practice Circles for relationship building.
- ❖ Specific focus will be on education, criminal justice and community empowerment.
- ❖ Certificate for Restorative Circle

LEARN MORE @ ECRJC.ORG/TRAINING

**Location:
Renovation Church
567 Hertel Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14207**

**Dates: January 16 - 17,
2019, 9 am- 3:30 pm**

FEE: \$100





Intro to Restorative Justice and Conferencing Training

Location:
Renovation Church
567 Hertel Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14207

Dates: February 26 – 27, 2019 9 am-3:30 pm

FEE: \$100



Schools that have embraced Restorative Practices are looking to gain the skills and resources needed to effectively facilitate responsive circles and a formal Restorative Conference. Courts are embracing restorative justice practices as an alternative to court sentencing and community members are applying these facilitation skills to resolve community conflict.

Training will Include:

- ❖ An Introduction to Restorative Justice
- ❖ Introduction to Conferencing
- ❖ Identify stakeholders necessary for a conference.
- ❖ Skills to plan and coordinate pre-conference.
- ❖ Skills needed to effectively facilitate conferences.
- ❖ Active participation through role-plays
- ❖ Recognizing the benefits of Restorative Conferencing and their positive impact on the community.
- ❖ Certificate for Restorative Conferencing
- ❖ Next Steps on Restorative Justice in the community

**LEARN MORE @
ECRJC.ORG/TRAINING**

Join Us!
Covenant Group Orientation
Sunday, January 20, 2019
12:00 – 2:00 PM
Alliance Room

The Covenant Group Ministry is welcoming new members to our groups.

Covenant groups are for both church members, as well as those who are considering whether this may become their church home. Each group, consisting of 8 committed members, with two trained facilitators, meets monthly. Topics relate to the monthly ministry theme and encourage deep reflection and broadening awareness of personal spirituality and connection to others both within the church and in the greater community.

Each month, we welcome each other as we return to the safe sacred space that we have created together, where we can reflect, share and deeply listen.

“There is a quality of listening that is possible among a circle of human beings, who by their attentiveness to one another create a space in which each person is able to give voice to the truth of his or her life. There is the miracle of authentic narrative, made possible by listening that holds still long enough to let the truth be told. Where there is this kind of listening and speaking, a new kind of community is born - a community of life.”

- Rebecca Parker, Unitarian Theologian

The Covenant Group program is an established small group ministry in UU churches all over the country. If you are interested in learning more, please stop by the Welcome table where you can pick up a brochure, talk to a representative, and ***register for the Orientation session.*** You may also contact us at covenant-groups@buffalouu.org.

Widows and Widowers Circle

A monthly gathering of Women and Men who have lost their partners



Our next meeting will be Sunday, Jan 6, at noon in the Marge Gardner Meeting Room.
All widows and widowers are welcome to attend. You are invited to come once, twice or every time we meet. Bring lunch and a friend if you would like.

So far we have talked about our reactions to our loss and adjustment to our new identity as well as our feelings about our own deaths. We are discovering that grieving in a group can be more comforting than grieving alone.

This session we hope to share funny stories about our significant other to start out the new year with a laugh! For more information call or text Bonnie Collins at 716 867 9628 who facilitates the group as well as being a widow herself.

UUCB WOMEN'S SOCIETY's SPEAKER-LUNCHEON SERIES for January 17:



UUCB WOMEN'S SOCIETY's SPEAKER/LUNCHEON series continues on January 17: The Luncheon Speaker is **Jackie James Creedon, Executive Director of Citizen Science Community Resources, Inc.** Jackie will speak on "**How Citizens Used Science and Advocacy to Stop Tonawanda Coke.**"

Refreshments at 11 am (\$3 donation); Jackie Creedon's talk at 11:30; Prepaid luncheon at 12:30;

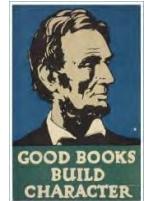
Cost: Women's Society members - lunch \$15, no cost for speaker only;

Non-members - \$5 at the door.

Paid lunch reservations accepted Jan. 6 and 13 at the Women's Society table in the Parish Hall after the service or, if by mail, we must receive your check by noon on Friday, Jan. 11. Make check out to UUCB and put WS luncheon on the memo line. Mail to: UUCB Church Office, 695 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222.

Women's Society Used Book Sale

We look forward to the annual book sale every spring and are now collecting your books, i.e. hardbound and softcover books of all topics, children's and young adult books, art books, puzzles and games, books on CD. Please no reference books, encyclopedias, textbooks or magazines. If you have questions, contact Joyce Bol at joukjebol@gmail.com



Turn your clutter into clear vision, better hearing, and renewed hope



Your Women's Society maintains a collection bin year-round to receive your un-needed eyeglasses, sunglasses and hearing aids. The bin is located in the Garden Entrance foyer on Sundays and in the Parish Hall during our Thursday luncheons September - April.

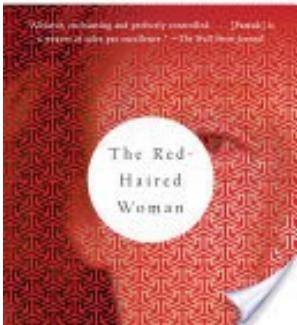
Non-Perishable Food Items for the Food Pantry

Please Bring a Non-Perishable Food Item for the Food Pantry each time you come to church year-round. The donation box is in the Garden Entrance foyer.



ORHAN
PAMUK

Winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature



UUCB Book Group Meeting

January 28, 2 pm, RED-HAIRED WOMAN by Orhan Pamuk

Looking ahead: Feb. 25 at 2 pm, ELEPHANT WHISPERER by Lawrence Anthony.

Questions? Ellen Gibson at 882-3488.



"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action."

- Martin Luther King , Jr.

**We gather in loving community ~ inspiring one another ~ to transform ourselves
to create a more just and compassionate world**

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

695 Elmwood Ave. Buffalo New York 14222

716-885-2136 www.buffalouu.org

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Administrator for Finance: Donna Sentz donnasentz@buffalouu.org	Nursery Care Coordinator: Morgan Silver	Newsletter: newsletter@buffalouu.org Weekly Announcements: announcements@buffalouu.org	



A chalice alit since 1831
A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places

