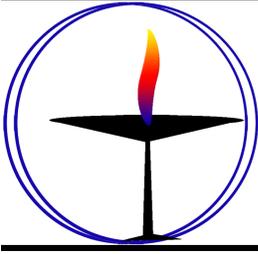


# The UU Church of Buffalo

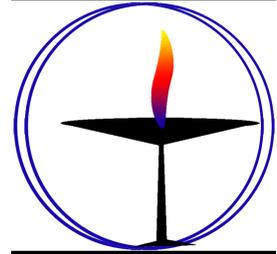


*Gather – Inspire – Transform*

**Spring 2015 Newsletter**

695 Elmwood Ave ∪ Buffalo, NY 14222

716-885-2136 - [www.BuffaloUU.org](http://www.BuffaloUU.org)



## **Congratulations!**

The time of waiting and wondering and wishing has come to an end! It was just about four years ago when the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo came to understand that you would collectively be entering a period of intentional transition. When you began you probably had little idea of all that this could hold.

The Interim journey for UUCB has been extraordinarily long, and included both some steep up-hill climbs and winding paths that led the church through some unexpectedly challenging terrain. It has required just about everyone to develop a certain comfort in the midst of what naturally seems to us to be very uncomfortable – to learn the art of making peace with existence in the “between times” especially when we really do not know how they will conclude.

Completing this transition has taken sustained courage and persistent work, but more importantly, it required the will to maintain connection with one another when conditions became difficult or at best, seemed uncertain. There have been moments of significant loss and there was a need to pause to honor this fact. There have been occasions for disappointment, confusion, and, hurt that also required time and patience to address. You have listened to things you really did not want to hear. And, you were not overwhelmed! You have passed many landmarks, made tough decisions, sought advice, and shared credit for accomplishments. All of these things bespeak an underlying resilience. This is some of the hardest work a congregation can do together and it should be treated as such.

You have reached the shore of a new land and by all accounts, a promising vision of UUCB’s future is unfolding before your eyes. You are honestly ready to welcome all that is coming into view now with greater joy now that you know for certain that The Rev. Joan Montagnes will be your next Settled Minister.

During the next few weeks, we will be doing our best to bring our interim work to a state of completion and closure. We will assess our experience so that it aids in future planning.

The Staff and I will be coordinating efforts to support the congregation during summer months and will plan in advance for Joan’s arrival in Buffalo on August 1, 2015.

I expect also that in various configurations we will find proper ways of saying our thanks and farewells.

June 14 will be my final service in the pulpit at UUCB. This will be a Flower Communion Service. After that I plan to attend the Interim Ministry Network Meeting and then meetings associated with UU Minister’s Association and the UUA General Assembly in Portland, Oregon.

May All Be Well,  
Mary



# *Happy Days it's May*

**Barbara Kloberdanz**

During this past year we found ourselves looking at what seemed a distant goal with our Ministerial Search Committee working hard to reach April 2<sup>nd</sup>, which many of us knew was the first date that we could ask a candidate if they would like to be considered to become the next settled minister at UUCB. We were thrilled to learn that we had a candidate who had been our first choice and that amazingly we were her first choice.

Then came April and now May.

I feel as if I am in Oscar Awards speech mode because I have a long list of people who I wish to thank for all the hard work that took place to make our candidating week successful. But if I name you all I know that the music will start to play and I will have to get off the stage. Therefore I hope you will forgive me if I only name some –

At the top—Josh Layton and Sara Kirkland—our staff members who were tasked with so much extra work. We couldn't have done it without you. Steve Wixson, of the Ministerial Search Committee, Doris Poodry, Kristina Church, and Trevor Moomaw who I worked with to plan the calendar of activity--they were troopers. Besides planning they gave time to be available to be at many events to make certain that things were running as smoothly as possible. Liz Clark, who was kind enough to offer her home for one of the evenings—special thanks to you.

Thanks to those who stepped up to help with Pot Lucks and who came and participated in all the wonderful meet and greets.

Thanks to those who helped with the vote on Sunday.

Thank you Ministerial Search Committees – yes, both years.

*And now it is May and we have voted to call Rev. Joan Montagnes as our settled Minister.*

Thank you UUCB – it is my privilege to be President of the Board of Trustees at this exciting time.



# News from the Ministerial Search Committee

Rita Capezzi, on behalf of Dave Batt, Gigi Helliwell, Richard Leimbach, Martha Malkiewicz, Juli VanWoert, and Steve Wixson

Just in case you have not heard: WE HAVE A NEW SETTLED MINISTER!!!

She is the Rev. Joan Montagnes, most recently of Bellevue, Washington and a native of Ontario.

The Special Congregational meeting was held on Sunday, May 3 with around 190 members in attendance. Here are the words which introduced the motion to vote on calling Rev. Joan as our next settled minister:

We, the members of the Ministerial Search committees, covenanted with all of you, and with each other, to dedicate ourselves to the search for a settled minister who would be the best good fit for this beloved congregation.

We were guided by who **you** expressed that this minister should be - their skills, talents, personal qualities and - above all - their integrity. Your hopes and your trust in us sustained us.

And now - after nearly two years of search and discernment, we recommend to the Board of Trustees and to you, the members of this congregation, the Rev. Joan Montagnes as *the first woman settled minister in the over 175 year history of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo.*



## The vote was unanimous!

We, the Ministerial Search Committee, are grateful for all the love and support we received from you over the last 11 months. We are grateful to the members of the 2013-2014 Ministerial Search Committee for the groundwork they did upon which we were able to build this year. And we are grateful that our work is completed in such a wonderful way. Praise be that we can now begin our walk with the leadership and commitment of Rev. Joan, creating together a vibrant and fulfilling reality for UUCB.



# Faith Development News

Sonja Jensen, DFLD

May is an exciting month for Faith Development!

On May 10, we'll be making our banners which will be used the following week in the banner parade and having class celebrations as well as putting finishing touches on items for our service.

On May 17 we'll have the Faith Development Festivities, including the banner parade, Rites of Passage (Stepping Stone, COA, and Bridging) and teacher appreciation. And the band will be taking Dr. Seuss to a funky new extreme! There will be a picnic for our teachers after church. If you were not a teacher and can volunteer for set up and clean up, please contact Sonja at [lifespan@buffalouu.org](mailto:lifespan@buffalouu.org). Non-teaching parents are especially encouraged to help with this as a sign of appreciation to our teachers.



On May 24 we'll have a special visit from Dr. Nerdy (aka Joe Ott) who will be opening his mad science lab.

And don't go away, because on May 31 the youth will present their annual worship service! Be sure to hang around after church to help with the planting of our UUCB community garden.

The UUCB garden is a multi level service project

- It's Faith Development which give our children and adults alike the opportunity to connect to the interdependent web by participating in the cycle of the season and the miracle of tending a seed into a plant that feeds them, bringing awareness of a power greater than ourselves.
- It's a spiritual practice. Gardens are on "slow time" and tending them can be a meditative practice as we nurture what is healthy and weed out that which does not serve.
- It's Social Justice to raise awareness of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's 100 Gardens project. Cash donations for produce will go to the UUSC to help people in Haiti grow gardens.
- It's service, providing an opportunity to cook for our church community from the food that we have grown
- It's a social justice project as the food we pick and do not use is donated to Food Not Bombs or Soul of Buffalo to feed people in need and raise awareness of peaceful ways of bridging our differences.
- And most of all, it's community building, bringing together people of all ages to accomplish making all of these things happen.

Our Director of Lifespan Faith Development is encouraged to take most of her vacation and study leave time in the summer. It is important to have many volunteers to help keep our church active and vibrant for children and families throughout the season as it is a time when many of our neighbors decide to visit our church for the very first time. This summer, Faith Development classes will consist of time in the Garden, Spirit Play classes, special crafts, game days, spiritual practices and community gatherings mostly provided by lay volunteers. If you have a program that you'd like to offer, please contact Sonja at [lifespan@buffalouu.org](mailto:lifespan@buffalouu.org) or call her at 716-885-2136 by May 15 to sign up for a date so that we can announce the schedule in June.

# Music Notes

## *Looking Forward...*

*Thoughts on the concluding Choir season, a musical Summer, and an exciting future!*

As I write this newsletter column, I'm less than half a day away from an exciting collaboration between members of our Choir, including our soloists and Su Lee, and my student orchestra at UB. My colleague, the wonderful choir director, Harold Rosenbaum, and I initiated an annual collaboration between my students and his UB Choir, when I first came to Buffalo five years ago. Tonight we get to celebrate in the best way possible (with Beethoven!) the richness of connection and the abundance of cultural treasures we have in our greater community.

Last summer Maestro Rosenbaum brought his dynamic and engaging choral conducting workshop to Buffalo, and I was delighted not only to participate as a singer and to audit the course, gleaning all I could from the young choral conductors grappling with challenges of the repertoire and technique, but it was also deeply gratifying that a few members of our Choir were able to participate, as well. These community connections can be so valuable – I truly believe that our Music Program outreach efforts can contribute in a significant way to our Church's visibility throughout our wider community, and as we share our musical gifts with new partner organizations, we'll do our part to spread the word of our principles, our values and commitments to social justice. The fledgling series of *Recitals on Elmwood*, begun last spring, invites local college students and other musicians to concertize in our sanctuary space, and is a similar outreach effort.

This is a way of saying that these initiatives have only just begun, and while there's one major operatic collaboration for our Choir on the horizon for November, 2015 that I'd love to share with you now, I don't want to make any official announcements here until our partners have done so. **However, please don't think of the activities of our Music Program as some autonomous part of our Church** that the rest of us merely get to hear on Sundays. With the end of the Choir season in sight, there's much work to do in planning music for the summer, and **I would like to reiterate my call for a Music Team** consisting of members of our congregation who love music and who would like to contribute to the organizing, brainstorming, and planning of music in and out of our church. This Team would be distinct in structure and goals when compared with our extant Choir Team, and it would be wonderful to have this framework in place before Rev. Montagnes begins her work with us, later this summer. With the flexibility that our summer schedule allows for music planning, the time is ripe for our Music Team to come together!



# Beyond the Hedge

Sharon Walker

## Denomination and Interfaith Connections

Back on March 27 and 28 about a dozen intrepid UUCB members attended this year's joint St. Lawrence and Ohio Meadville District Assembly. This is the third year for this event and the second time it has been held in Niagara Falls. Our group was a mix of first time and "seasoned pros" at one of our Assemblies. When we returned I sent each an email "survey" asking these three questions: 1) Did you feel it was worth your time? 2) What did you like the most about it? 3) What will you bring back to your UUCB involvement/connection?

To number one the answer was a unanimous Yes! Whether our member attended the entire conference, just Friday, or was only able to attend Saturday each felt it was well worth their time. Additionally, one comment was: "I needed to reconnect with my faith in UU and this did all of that and more. Fellowship and interesting conversation about things I care about made it more than worth my time."

What did we like the most? An overwhelming number of us answered the worship service with Rev Kaaren Anderson from First Unitarian of Rochester. Others were Rev's. Tom Chulak and Scott Taylor. Meeting UUs from around the District and greeting old friends. Workshops Bridging Ceremony, and experiencing it all with their kids.

What will you bring back? Ideas and a better understanding of "multi-sites" and regionalization. A better way to present our budget. An inspirational way to encourage volunteerism and develop new leaders in our congregation.

Do remember this when you think of taking part in one of our UU Assemblies.

Your next opportunity will be at our Association-wide gathering, General Assembly, on June 24-28, in Portland, OR. The theme for GA 2015 is *Building a New Way*. Knowing travel may be prohibitive, it is possible to register and live stream the event. Go to [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga) for more information.

In the fall, you will have an opportunity to connect with your Universalist roots by attending the 2015 New York State Convention of Universalists Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held October 23-24 at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta, NY. Keynote speaker will be Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed. More information to follow

Please email me at [sharonw447@gmail.com](mailto:sharonw447@gmail.com) if you will be attending this year's GA; it has become a tradition of getting together with fellow UUCBers for a dinner or two. Also, let me know by June 1<sup>st</sup> if you would like to represent UUCB as a delegate.



## Sharing the May Plate with The Veterans One-Stop Center of Western New York



In keeping with our mission to create a more just and compassionate world, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo shares our weekly collection plate with a local agency, living out our generosity in the Buffalo community. The May share-the-plate recipient is The Veterans One Stop Center of Western New York. The Veterans One Stop Center is a community based, independent, nonprofit collaborative, offering U.S. veterans, service members, and their families the convenience of a barrier-free One-Stop Center in which to access a coordinated, individualized suite of services.

The VOC of WNY offers personalized assistance in an environment that is welcoming, affirming, and responsive to each individual veteran's specific needs. Through innovative public and private partnerships the VOC uses a collaborative approach to serving the entire veteran by linking them with community resources and providing an individually tailored plan designed to meet the specific needs of the veteran and their family. As our nation's involvement in over eleven years of combat begins to wind down, the need for the Veterans One-Stop Center of WNY could not be more pronounced nor more immediate. The VOC works with veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan as well as veterans of past conflicts. Complementing the efforts of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense along with state, county and local public and private resources the VOC exists in order to provide a full network of services in an integrated, coordinated manner – from comprehensive outreach and intake, through case management and support services. The Veterans One Stop Center provides solutions to many of the challenges our WNY veterans, service members and their families face in the successful achievement of their goals and reintegration into our community.



In the Share-the-Plate program, the church donates half the unrestricted donations made during each Sunday's offertory to a designated charity or organization identified by the Social Justice Task Force under policies formulated by the Board of Trustees. Recipients of the UUCB Share-the-Plate program must be either a 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 non-profit organization, and they must do work that is consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles. Any

member of the congregation may nominate a recipient organization through the UUCB Social Justice Task Force.

Pledge payments may still be placed in the collection plate, either in a donation envelope or clearly marked "pledge" in the memo line. All undesignated cash goes to Share the Plate. If you wish to donate to Share the Plate by check, or with cash in an envelope, please note "Share the Plate" or just "Share" in the memo line or on the envelope. Envelopes are available from the ushers.

On going efforts by the Social Justice Task force are the collection of non-perishable food donations for the Network of Religious Communities as well as recycling of old cell phones and printer cartridges. Donations can be left in the baskets at both entrances to the sanctuary. The next meeting of the Social Justice Task Force will be Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:15 PM.

# The Woman's Society May and June Field Trips

On Thursday May 14 we will visit the Buffalo Transportation Pierce Arrow Museum. A special guided tour will be given by Jim Sandoro who is the founder and owner of the museum. The fee is \$20. per person. The museum is located at 263 Michigan Avenue. We will gather there at 10:30 and the tour will start at 11. Reservations and payment

must be made in person at the same time on Sunday, May 10 after the church service. No prior reservation can be made and funds cannot be received in the office. Pay directly at the Woman's Society table in the parish hall. Board members will be at the table. This will be a great opportunity to learn about the history of transportation in Buffalo. The museum and its contents will be a feast for our eyes!



On Friday June 5 we will have our much anticipated field trip to the Shaw Festival in Niagara on the Lake to see the production of "Sweet Charity" There is a limited number of tickets (40) at \$50 each. Reservations and payment must be made at the same day. Tickets will be sold starting Sundays May 10, 17, 24 and 31. No prior reservations can be made and payment cannot be received in the office. We will meet at the Festival Theatre foyer at 11. We will be treated to our own private talk which will certainly enhance our experience of the play. We can have lunch in town and be back well before the 2 P.M. production.

NOTE: We will be selling tickets for the museum and NOTL simultaneously on May 10. You are welcome to purchase tickets for both events on that days, if you wish.

## Great for the Savvy Niagara-on-the-Lake Playgoer!

### **DIVINE DIVAS & THEATRICAL DREAMS: A PREVIEW OF THE 2015 SHAW FESTIVAL**

**Michael Harris, instructor**

There's a stellar list of 'fair ladies' in this year's Shaw Festival line-up: Eliza Dolittle in Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion, Ellida Wangel in Henrik Ibsen's The Lady from the Sea, Charity Hope Valentine in the hit musical Sweet Charity, as well as the ultimate diva – Sarah Bernhardt in the world première of Michel Marc Bouchard's The Divine. They're joined by Caryl Churchill's Top Girls, in which great women of history converse with the aspiring females of today. The season is supplemented by Moss Hart's witty valentine to the theatre Light up the Sky, the acclaimed prequel to Peter Pan – Peter and the Starcatcher, and Tony Kushner's epic Shavian 'play of ideas' The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a

Guide to the Scriptures (whew!). Each week, we'll analyze one of these theatrical dreams and discover that they turn out to be good guides to our own waking reality. See you at the Shaw – and pleasant



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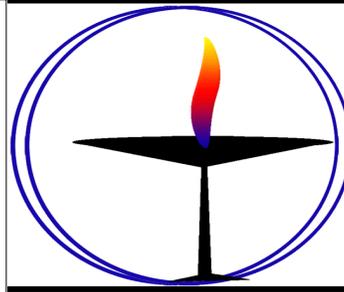
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## Happening at the UUCB

### Join the Network!

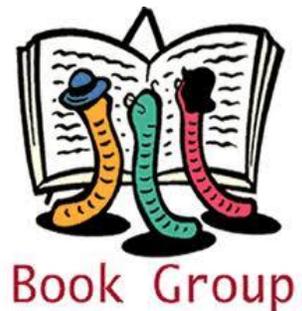
The UU Small Group Ministry Network (SGM) facilitates networking among SGM practitioners and makes current, practical information and resources available to ministers, program coordinators, and facilitators. The Network is financially independent of the UUA. Your membership funding enables us to continue this important work. Download a Membership form or join online: <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/membership/index.html>.



### UUCB Book Group Meeting May 18 at 2 PM

Join us in the Alliance Room to discuss *The Lowland*, a novel by Jhumpa Lahiri. Newcomers who have read the book are welcome. Please call Ellen Gibson, our host-of-the-month, at 882-3488 to let her know you are coming so that she may plan for seating and refreshments.

Looking ahead, our annual planning meeting and potluck is on June 29 at 5 PM in the Alliance Room. We will be discussing *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski.



## **Pulpit Flower Ministry**

### **May Schedule:**

May 3rd: Ronald Houk  
May 10th: John Prisaznuk  
May 17th: Ellen Gibson  
May 24th: Carol Condon  
May 31st: Marjorie Girth

Only 3 more dates  
remain available

for your pulpit  
flowers in this  
program year!

They are June 28th,  
July 5th and July  
12th. Please

consider the

possibility of sponsoring flowers for one of  
these Sunday services. The cost is just \$35.00  
and includes your text dedication in the OSS.

Then, after the service, you may choose to take  
the flowers with you, or donate them to a local  
hospital. For more information, or to reserve a  
day, please stop by the flower table, email us at  
[pulpitflowers@buffalouu.org](mailto:pulpitflowers@buffalouu.org) or call us at 716-  
885-2136 ext. 4. If you have reserved flowers  
for this month, please be sure that we have  
received your dedication and payment at your  
earliest convenience.



## **It's a new day and we keep stitching along!**

This "Not for Knitters  
Only" group meets the  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays  
of each month. In  
May we will meet on  
the 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> from  
6:30ish to 8ish  
tentatively in The  
Women's Lounge.



Can't make it at 6:30? No problem. This is not  
a meeting, drop in when you can. So whether  
you knit, crochet or cross stitch give us a try.  
This is an open group, church membership not  
required, so please forward to any friends or  
family that may be interested. For more  
information email me, Sharon Walker, at  
[sharonw447@gmail.com](mailto:sharonw447@gmail.com).

## **Grief and Renewal**

### **May 17at 11:45am in the Library**

Everyone is welcome. Whether you are dealing  
with a divorce, illness, unemployment, death,  
or any other life change that has left you  
bereaved and in flux. For more info please feel  
free to contact Nicole S. Urdang:

[info@nicoleurdang.com](mailto:info@nicoleurdang.com)

