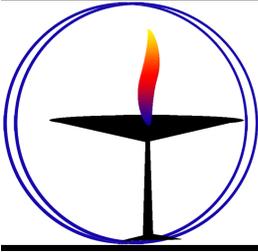


The UU Church of Buffalo

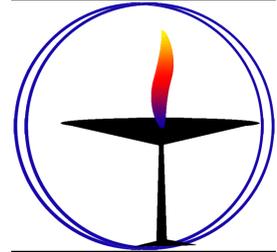


Gather – Inspire – Transform

January 2016 Newsletter

695 Elmwood Ave ∪ Buffalo, NY 14222

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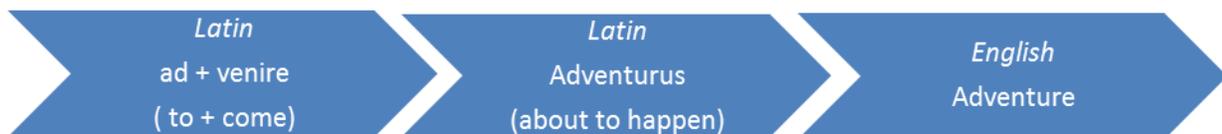


Faith Matters: Adventure!

*Allons! we must not stop here,
However sweet these laid-up stores, however convenient this dwelling we cannot
remain here,
However shelter'd this port and however calm these waters we must not anchor here,
However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us we are permitted to receive it but a
little while.
Allons! the inducements shall be greater,
We will sail pathless and wild seas...*

~ Walt Whitman, Song of the Open Road

Discoveries are so much fun! I was rolling the word “Adventure” around in my mouth the other day and realized that a lot of it tasted like the word “Advent,” the season of preparation that we have just left. The similarity of those two words sent me scurrying to my online dictionary and, sure enough ...



Apparently we are perched on a moment in time between “what has come” and “what is about to happen.” Shall we take on Walt Whitman’s challenge and “Allons!” He’s inviting us. He is saying, “Let’s go!”

Oh let’s. Let’s dive into the great adventure together – the great adventure of living, exploring, learning and growing together. Let’s taste and touch all that’s out there. Let’s plunge into justice-making even though we will fail and fail again. Let’s do it anyway. Everyone has failed before us; everyone has

died before us. Nobody gets out of this alive, but we cannot allow the past to discourage us or seduce us into false comfort. We cannot rest here, because we are on the great adventure. And we are on it together. Allons!

Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan

Joys and Sorrows

Paula McGirr has had cause for sorrow and joy during the last month. Her beautiful, life-long friend, Martha Herr recently died, and some days after that she celebrated her 34th wedding anniversary with her best friend, Rick.

We rejoice with Tracey Kassman and her daughter Annika. Annika is fully recovered from surgery and feeling better.

Our hearts are with the friends and family of Charlie Brothwell. Carlie was a member and former custodian of our church. He passed away recently. A celebration of his life will be held in the Sanctuary on January 30th.

Kaitlyn Steinberg asks us for prayers for her nephew, Alex who is not doing well and for her nephew, Nathan who is engaged to be married.

We offer sympathy to Val Anderson and Paul Zanolli. Their close family friend, Bernie Rice passed from our world last month.

We hold Jean Ott and her family in our hearts. Her mother passed away on December 12th.

Our thoughts are with Steve Wixson and his family as Steve's mother passed away on December 15.

We send healing wishes to Sara Kirkland as she recovers from pneumonia.

And our condolences go to Michael Shanahan and his family. Michael's mother, Shirley McCoy, passed away this month.

Religious Educator Search

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo is searching for a full-time, professional Religious Educator to facilitate religious exploration for children, youth and adults. A formal posting for this position will be listed on the LREDA website by the end of January.

Pulpit Previews

Worship Theme: Adventure

January 3, Boldly Going Where No One has Gone Before

We are tumbling into a new year. No one has ever been here before. How will you face the oncoming days? Are you afraid of the unknown or are you ready to face the future with courage?

January 10, How's that Working for You?

Do you ever feel like the same sort of @#\$\$%& thing keeps happening to you over and over again?

What would happen if you dared to step out of the box? That could change your life!

January 17, The Beloved Conversation

What makes building a truly post-racial world so difficult is that none of us have ever done it before. Every real conversation about race and multiculturalism is breaking new ground. We can only safely and creatively move forward through the pain if we hold each other in a deep and meaning-filled love.

January 24, Spiritual Whittling

Covenant Groups – Juli Van Woert

January 31, Into the Wilderness

The wilderness is not necessarily a place of spiritual solace. It is where the great ones from Jesus to Thoreau have gone to confront their own demons.

The Adventure Continues

Barbara Kloberdanz

The warm days have been continuing as I write this and each day as I awaken I wonder what surprises are in store for me and for our congregation. It might be something as simple as a realization that the weather has returned to normal and there are needs in our building that we might not have focused on recently.

Our dear Sara Kirkland has been out ill for a few weeks and many people have gained a clearer perception of all that she does for us on a regular basis that we have come to take for granted. Please take the opportunity to tell her that you appreciate her when you see her the next time.



The Christmas Pageant was joyous fun. This was a good reminder that it is not just for the youngsters. It brought us all together – our teachers, children, and those of us who usually stay upstairs. And the crowd was awesome. Thank you to Sarah Martin for her work as she has plunged into all the needs of our education program.

While it is not totally completed, Rev. Joan's office has definitely taken a leap forward in December. Definitely a good outcome on the road to having an office that is something that we can be proud to provide for our minister.

Now time to look forward. The end of January, the 31st to be precise, is our Annual Congregational Meeting. You will be receiving much information and I hope you will take the time to read the reports which will tell you where our congregation stands as we do the work to fulfill our mission. It will also remind you of our many committees, teams and activities, and perhaps you will find something that catches your interest. The true adventure for each one of us is in participation. Working together is definitely rewarding.

Please save the date. Have some lunch after the service and then join us in our meeting in the sanctuary.

Faith Development News: Stepping Lightly into the New Year

Sarah Martin

What a whirlwind of a first month it has been for me here at UUCB! I have received such a warm, welcoming embrace from the congregation here that I am truly overwhelmed. Thank you so much, all of you, for the kindness and hospitality you have extended upon my arrival.

As I look forward into January (in spite of this stunningly warm weather that makes it feel like anything but winter) I am inspired to shake off the clutter and pandemonium of the holiday season and slip into a place of quiet and harmony. Sometimes, for those of us with children, this is a task requiring an epic amount of effort. Currently, I'm settling into a second floor apartment with my four children, and this year it seems our loftiest New Year's aspiration is to learn to walk lightly, both figuratively and literally.

Though this new home affords us more storage space than we had previously, we have less day-to-day space, which seems to me the perfect opportunity to purge unnecessary items from our lives. Of course, convincing a six year-old to part with a box of broken Transformers, or pare down the massive collection of Legos, is one of those things that works much better in theory than practice. And I am, admittedly, just as reluctant to get rid of books, even those that I know I shall never open again.

So how do we go about finding harmony in our homes when we have to deal with the physical and emotional clutter of those we live with? Or even with the disharmony we bring to our own lives? How do we lighten our own heavy steps in a way that inspires our loved ones to follow suit? If we take just a few moments out our busy days to quiet our minds and focus on being right here, we can make a practice of slowing down and honoring our breath. Asking those we live with to join us can strengthen bonds and create more peaceful relationships.

One of my favorite family meditations is Thich Nhat Hanh's *Four Pebbles Meditation*. The joy of this meditation is that the pebbles keep little hands busy while the visuals are easy to conjure up and hold in one's mind.

*Breathing in, I see myself as a flower.
Breathing out, I feel fresh.
Breathing in, I see myself as a mountain.
Breathing out, I feel solid.
Breathing in, I see myself as still water.
Breathing out, I reflect things as they are.
Breathing in, I see myself as space.
Breathing out, I feel free.*

The following link provides a wonderful, contemplative audio experience of the meditation:

<https://soundcloud.com/thichnhathanh/four-qualities-of-happiness>

The full program can be found in the book *A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles* by Thich Nhat Hanh. This is a beautifully illustrated little volume with lovely, simple instructions and fabulous tips for family meditation practice. I have a copy of this book in my office and would be happy to let folks take a look.



Music Notes

Daniel Bassin

As we enter 2016, the theme connecting our January sermons is...*Adventure!* In the Choir, after an invigorating, rewarding, and most certainly *adventurous* autumn featuring a ministerial installation, an interfaith operatic collaboration, a return to the treasure-trove of musical brilliance that is the work of Johann Sebastian Bach, and our annual candlelit Christmas Eve service, we are truly looking forward to the journey and adventures that will come in 2016 – the first calendar year spent with our newly-landed minister!



In addition to the Choir and Music Program staff contributions to the five Sundays January will bring us, we will have some special musical presentations and will welcome guests from throughout our vibrant musical community. Stay-tuned for updates about our occasional *Recitals on Elmwood* series, in which we welcome local music students to share their talents in our visually- and acoustically-beautiful sanctuary. Details will be shared through our regular weekly bulletins, as well as through social media – did you know that in addition to our UUCB Facebook page, we also regularly update a page for the choir [www.facebook.com/UUCBChoir] as well as our page for visiting artists and non-Choir music events [www.facebook.com/UUCBuffaloMusic] ? Become a fan of these pages, and **always** feel free to make suggestions and get involved in our Music Team.

The formal Music Team will undergo important structuring work with Rev. Montagnes in the coming month, and we will also finalize our Choir Covenant with our minister, Choir volunteers, Music Director, and Music Program Staff. We invite interested members of our congregation to take part in the Music Team and to help shape the future of Music in our church.

Finally, mark your calendars for a special music and community event on the evening of Friday, January 15th, immediately following our *Third Friday Potluck*. We are organizing an event featuring a dynamic, live-improvised film scoring to the great Spanish filmmaker, Luis Buñuel's critically-acclaimed, 1965 film, *Simon of the Desert*, loosely based on the 5th century Syrian ascetic mystic who lived for 39 years atop a pillar. We will have an eclectic mix of some of Buffalo's leading improvisers on-hand for this event, and will collect donations to be shared with social justice charities.

Music With Michael

Michael Harris has fashioned for us, the stalwart and loyal fans of his courses, likely the most ambitious of his recent offerings! We are excited to see what will unfold. Please join us for as many Wednesdays as you can. (time off for vacationing, travel, visiting family, and snowboarding is allowed)

The classes are held each Wednesday morning at 9:30AM in the Alliance Room, where, good friends, hot coffee (caf and de-caf), a treat, and some very good music accompany Michael's talk. Please join us and fulfill your New Year's Res to "do something good for yourself"! Hope to see you on January 6.

Starting January 6, 2016; Wednesday, 9:30-11-30 a.m. Registration: \$75 for full course or \$10 per session

Continued on page 6

Week-By-Week Syllabus

Session One (January 6): The Overture Is About to Start! -- Shakespeare on Music & Music on Shakespeare
Session Two (January 13): Music at the Globe -- How Shakespeare Used Music
Session Three (January 20): Purcell's The Fairy Queen and Other Early Rewrites of Shakespeare
Session Four (January 27): Witty in Himself and the Cause of Wit in Others -- Salieri's Falstaff and Nicolai's Merry Wives of Windsor
Session Five (February 3): The Bel Canto Bard -- Rossini's Otello and Gounod's Romeo et Juliette
Session Six (February 10): Hector Berlioz's Shakespeare Fixation -- Romeo et Juliette, Beatrice et Benedict
Session Seven (February 17): Shakespeare & the Symphonic Poem: Liszt, Strauss and Tchaikovsky
Session Eight (February 24): Giuseppe Verdi's Shakespearean Operas -- Macbeth, Otello and Falstaff
Session Nine (March 2): Shakespeare and the English Musical Renaissance -- Elgar, Vaughan Williams, etc.
Session Ten (March 9): The Bard at the Ballet -- Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet, etc.
Session Eleven (March 16): Shakespeare & Contemporary Opera -- Britten's Midsummer Night's Dream, Reimann's Lear and Ades' Tempest
Session Twelve (March 23): Shakespeare Goes to the Movies -- William Walton, Dmitri Shostakovich & Patrick Doyle
Session Thirteen (March 30): Shakespeare and the Broadway Musical -- Rodgers & Hart, Cole Porter, etc.

SCOTT BEHREND TO SPEAK AT WOMEN'S SOCIETY PROGRAM

Mark your calendars for Thursday January 21 when Scott Behrend will speak on, "An Introduction to the Road Less Traveled Productions." He is the Artistic/Executive Director of the professional theater company in downtown Buffalo. Scott has been nominated five time by the Artie Awards as best director and he won in 2009. He has directed and produced three special event performances with award winning actor Alec Baldwin and also has worked extensively in Buffalo theater as a set designer and cultural advocate. Scott was named a 2010 honoree of Business' First's class of 40 under 40 and served as the President of the Theater District Association of Western New York in 2012.



Appetizers and beverages will begin 11. Our speaker will start at 11:30 followed by a catered lunch. The fee for the lunch is \$15. You can make a reservation at Josettepc50@gmail.com or in the Parish Hall on Sundays January 10 and 17. Payment can be made at that time or if you wish to mail in your check, make it payable to the U.U.C.B. and in the memo line write: Women's Society Program. Checks MUST arrive in the church office by Friday January 15. Mail to 695 Elmwood Avenue. Buffalo 14222. If you make a reservation on the final Sunday before the event, then payment is due in person. Once the catering order is called in on Monday morning, no further reservations or payment can be accepted. Kindly check in at our welcome table as you enter from our Garden Entrance.

Theater enthusiasts and all should not miss this informative program!

Beyond the Hedge

Denomination and Interfaith Connections

Regionalization

What is it? What does it mean to me?

Just as we have undergone reorganization and changes in the governance over the past several years, massive restructuring and changes are being made in the way our Association works. One major change is “regionalization.” In a nut shell, this means the joining of several districts into one. For us this means the congregations of our St. Lawrence District will join together with those of the Ohio-Meadville, Metro New York, and Joseph Priestly Districts into one “region;” the Central Eastern Regional Group or CERG. Our individual districts will no longer exist. Our UUA is already taking the necessary steps towards this happening administratively; but we, the congregation, will have a vote whether or not to accept these changes this spring. Before this happens there will be informational meetings (TBA) taking place here at UUCB and at congregations across the region. I will also attempt to keep you abreast of what is happening each month in our newsletter. Other ways you can become informed is to read your *UU World* and check out the UUA, CERG, and St. Lawrence District websites.



WNY Cluster

If you’ve been around long enough, you may have heard of this. Cluster as defined by our Association: “it is a group of congregations that come together that share ideas, inspiration and resources,” we work together, not compete. Many clusters are forming throughout the country and for us it would mean a reestablishing of old bonds. Rev Joan and I are working with Rev Renee Ruchotzke on a one-day session this March to bring together members of our local congregations to brainstorm and strategize on concrete ways we can “gather, inspire, and transform.” If you would like more information or to be a part of this; please contact me, Sharon Walker, at sharonw447@gmail.com.

Save the Date!

General Assembly 2016

It’s not too early to plan and Columbus is only a few hours’ drive. Be a part of this truly inspiring event.

June 22-26, Columbus, OH, Greater Columbus Convention Center, 400 N High St, Columbus, OH 43215

The theme for GA 2016 will be *Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect*. “...General Assembly 2016 in Columbus Ohio will assemble leaders and communities of many faiths to worship together, learn from one another, and create a new vision of faith that no longer divides us, but connects us to an interdependent future that works for all.”

The UU Church of Buffalo Staff
695 Elmwood Ave
Buffalo, NY 14222
716-885-2136
www.buffalouu.org

Minister:

Rev Joan Montagnes
minister@buffalouu.org

Director of Lifespan Faith Development:

Sarah Martin
lifespan@buffalouu.org

Music Director:

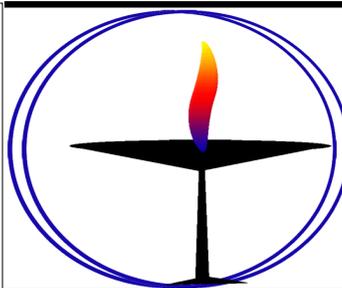
Daniel Bassin
music@buffalouu.org

Organist/Accompanist:

Su Lee
organist@buffalouu.org

Nursery Care Coordinator:

Beata Skonecki



Church Administrator:

Joshua Layton
office@buffalouu.org

Bookkeeper:

Donna Sentz
bookkeeper@buffalouu.org

Gatekeeper:

Sara Kirkland
office@buffalouu.org

Wedding Coordinator:

Paulette Notaro
weddings@buffalouu.org

Care Network:

Ginny Vaughan
716-768-1077
wixsonsg@gmail.com

Happening at the UUCB

PULPIT FLOWER MINISTRY

January Schedule:

January 3rd. Mary Beth Scott
January 10th. Don Shedd
January 17th. Michael Shanahan
January 24th. Joe & Jean Ott
January 31st. Tim & Gretchen Ashton
Happy New Year from Pulpit Flowers! If you have not already done so, please consider making a Sunday flower reservation for a Sunday during 2016. Please see us at the flower table after Sunday service, email us at pulpitflower@buffalouu.org or call us at 716-885-2136 x4 for more information and/or to reserve your flowers.



UUCB Yarnbusters

Our “Not for Knitters Only” group is celebrating its third year this month. We continue to meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month throughout



the year from 6:30ish to 8ish in The Women’s Lounge. For January, we will be gathering on the 12th and 26th. 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 on this; email, Sharon Walker, at sharonw447@gmail.com.

FOOD PANTRY

The requested donations for the month of January are rice and or boxed potatoes. Place food items in a bag and label it Women's Society. Then place it in the red storage bin which will on a side table during the program. At other times, the bin will be in the church kitchen.



Covenant Program Pot Luck

Covenant Group Member? Considering joining a group? Just curious?

Sunday, January 24 will be Covenant Program Day at UUCB!

Experience the morning service, presented by Covenant group facilitators and members. Then come back for the **Covenant program potluck** from **5:00-8:00 PM** to enjoy some food and fellowship, learn about covenant groups...and maybe even consider signing up to join a group.

During dinner, you can meet members and friends of UUCB, including the trained Covenant group facilitators. After dinner, we will experience a Covenant group session together. All members and friends of UUCB are welcome. Just bring a dish or beverage to share, and bring the family. Children are welcome during dinner. If requested in advance, child care will be available during the after-dinner program.

If the experience inspires you to learn more through participation in a group, we will help you choose a group that fits your schedule. Even if you are not sure that this is the right time for you to commit to a Covenant group, you will have a great meal and good company as you learn more about this Small Group Ministry.

To find out about this event, to RSVP, request child care, or to find out more about Covenant Groups in general, email covenantgroups@buffalouu, or stop at the Welcome Table in the Parish Hall.