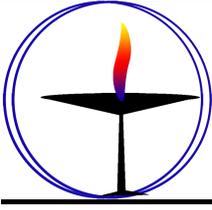


The UU Church of Buffalo



Gather – Inspire – Transform

May 2016 Newsletter

695 Elmwood Ave ∪ Buffalo, NY 14222

716-885-2136 - www.BuffaloUU.org



Faith Matters: Living our Mission



We begin worship by reciting our congregation's mission statement together:

*We gather in loving community,
inspiring one another
to transform ourselves*

to create a more just and compassionate world.

This is the summary of our aims and values as a congregation. That's powerful stuff! Have a look at the underlying, active verbs: Gather.

Inspire. Transform. Do you notice that each of those verbs demand something of each of us?

“Gather” implies that we are expected to show up. We show up not just for ourselves, but for others as well. We gather not only to be cared for, but also to care for our friends and for visitors who are searching for a spiritual home and a welcoming harbor. We show up to care for our children as they grow and explore in a safe, religious education program. We show up when concerns in the wider community require our attention and solidarity.

“Inspire” implies we are not expecting to be spoon-fed our religion. Rather, we inspire one another. We teach, preach, listen, explore, discuss, lead, sing, play and write with each other all in service of inspiring one another and, ourselves, and in turn, always becoming more inspired.

“Transform” implies change and that is the real kicker. Notice how we state that we have to transform *ourselves* if we are to make the world more just and compassionate. Oh dear, now we are getting serious about sacrifice. We have to change *ourselves* in order to change the world. We have to face the dirty, little truth: we are all part of a broken system and we can't heal the system unless we also heal ourselves. We need to take good long looks at all our relationships and we need to learn how we can transform ourselves to be in better community with the family of all things. This is the only way we can create a better world for our children's children and bring about the beloved community of which we dream.

Our worship theme this month is “Service.” We will be exploring how our commitment to gather, inspire one another, and transform ourselves requires us to offer service to the world. And just to keep our moral obligation to the future in mind, our children will be heavily active in our worship services – chalice lightings, the Youth Worship Service, and Bridging Ceremony. We will also celebrate our Church School teachers and our volunteers. May is going to be an exciting month with many opportunities to live our mission.

I have no doubt that more service opportunities will arise throughout May. Moreover, there are always Ministry Teams that would welcome you as they serve the church and the world. That's just the kind of church we are. Service is our prayer.

Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Joys and Sorrows

A belated congratulations for Bill Gardner! On March 10, OUTLaw, a SUNY Buffalo Law School organization that promotes a positive atmosphere for LGBT students and their allies, honored Bill at their annual dinner gala. This beloved and long-term member of our congregation was also an early champion of gay rights and changed the course of history when he successfully litigated one of the most important lawsuits in New York State — *People v. Uplinger* — before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1984. We are so very, very proud that he is part of our lives.

Our condolences go to Ellie Lawson and her family. Her husband, Bill passed away on February 29th.

We send sympathies to Becky Humphry and her family. Becky's mother passed away on April 13th.

We send healing wishes to Barbara Kloberdanz who sprained her knee last month.

We hope Jean Gunby heals quickly from a broken wrist.

We wish speedy mending to Kate Bell-Schwede who is recovering from a broken leg.

Our thoughts are with George Block as he recovers from a fall.

We are keeping Grace and John Myhre in our hearts. Grace has broken a hip and John remains in nursing care.

Both would appreciate cards to cheer them up.

Western New York Unitarian Universalist Congregational Cluster Gathering “Chicken Little Goes to Church!”

May 21, 2016, Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst
6320 Main St, Williamsville, NY 14221

“The sky is falling! It's the end of church life as we know it!!!!”

Perhaps....But there is exciting congregational life to create and enjoy today.

Learn about current trends that impact American religion. Explore differences amongst generations in our congregations. Embark on an adventure of discovering your congregation's tomorrow.

Register with the Amherst church at 716-634-3010



Pulpit Previews

May 1 “Better Together”

This year's Youth Service is about human connection, how we relate to each other, and why it's important. The youth will be providing music, and senior sermons for the congregation.

May 8 “Who Me?”

Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life? These beautiful words, from Mary Oliver's poem, “The Summer Day,” are practically scripture for many Unitarian Universalists. We ponder at life's purpose. But once called, we often doubt our ability to shine.

May 15 – “The Starfish and the Baby”

Saving the world is a complicated and daunting proposition. You could help one person at a time, but find more broad approaches paralyzing in their scope. You could address justice issues systematically, but find hands on ministry way too intimate. Is it better to bring a can of peas to a food drive, or write your legislator about peace?

May 22 – “Teacher Appreciation and Bridging Sunday”

Join us for a multigenerational service to celebrate the end of our Religious Education year and to pay tribute to our dedicated, hard-working volunteers who have made this year so special and memorable for our children and youth. Afterward, join us in the Parish Hall for a cookie share and cake!

May 29 – “Decorating Memories”

Memorial Day is set aside for remembering the people who died while serving in the country's armed forces. We also take time to remember all our beloved dead whether they served in the military or not. This Sunday we decorate the memories if not the graves themselves.

Faith Development News

Sarah Martin

As we launch into May, I am thrilled and excited to announce that I have accepted the position of settled Director of Religious Education here at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo. I have had such a warm and wonderful welcome as your acting DRE and I am very much looking forward to continuing on here. Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve your congregation.

We have some fun and exciting programming still to come this year in Religious Education. Please be on the lookout for ballots for Religious Education Volunteer(s) of the year, which you will find inserted in your order of service over the next few weeks. If there is someone you would like to nominate who is not on the ballot, there will be a write in option!

On May 1, please join us for a host of exciting Sunday activities! It is the first Sunday of the month, and that means a pancake breakfast for all. Pancakes will be served in the Parish Hall from 9:30 to 10:15 on Sunday morning before the service. If you'd like to come early to help or have a griddle you can share for the event, we begin preparation at 8:30 am! Donations of juice and milk are always appreciated.

First Sunday Pancakes will be followed by the Youth Service! The theme for this year's Youth Service is "Better Together." Please come out in support of this lovely service, entirely run by our youth. There will be fabulous music, senior sermons, and you'll have the opportunity to connect with some truly amazing young people from our congregation. And if that's not enough, following the May 1 service, join us out on the lawn for a Maypole celebration in honor of Mayday! Music, Maypole dancing, and some great community building awaits! We can't wait to see you there!

There are still a few spaces left in the Harry Potter and UU for Adults class that I will be running on Wednesdays from 6:30-8 pm, May 4 - 25. We will spend each week exploring a different Hogwarts house and how the values championed by that house relate to Unitarian Universalism. There will be snacks and some fun activities as well! Please email me at sarahmartin@buffalouu.org if you are interested!

May 22 is Religious Education Sunday. This multigenerational service will celebrate our Religious Education program and honor those volunteers who keep it running smoothly all year round. We have so much to be grateful for with this thriving program and we're looking forward to the chance to share our gratitude with the congregation!

Heading into June, we're looking forward to even more Harry Potter! RE classes on May 29, June 5 and June 19 will be Harry Potter themed workshops and we are looking for adult volunteers to help facilitate. If you think you might be interested, please let me know in person or by email!

Once again, I am so excited to begin working with this congregation in the settled Director of Religious Education position! See you all on Sunday!



Notes From The Board

Last month, at District Assembly, we voted to dissolve the St. Lawrence District in order to join with the churches from the Ohio-Meadville, Joseph Priestly, and Metro New York districts and create the Central East Region Group (CERG). It was a historic, but slightly disconcerting vote. The district that supported us through the long interim years will no longer exist. Who will support us now?

Time to pause and remember the words that Reverend Joan often uses to close our services, “Take courage friends, for you are not alone. You are never alone.”

And we are not alone. We will now be supported at two very different levels.

All staff that formerly worked for the district is still available to us from the UUA, through our new regional group. They have been creating more on-line resources and courses for us.

At the same time, the cluster of Western New York congregations has been revitalized, beginning with a meeting at our church in April. It was exciting to meet members of five different churches and create joint activism plans in three realms of justice: racial, environmental and LGBTQ. Our neighboring churches are full of committed, caring people who are ready to work side by side to create a more just and compassionate world.

Consider joining me at the next cluster event – Chicken Little Goes to Church: The Once and Future Church. The Amherst Church will host on Saturday, May 21st. This is a chance to learn how faith and church trends in the 21st century might require us to shift how we “do church” in the future.

Finally, I invite you to join the growing group of UUCB people (myself included) who will attend General Assembly in Columbus OH from Wednesday, June 22nd through Sunday, June 26th. Sing and worship with other UUs. Take advantage of the hundreds of programs. And, if you are a delegate, participate in national decisions that affect our religious community.

This is an exciting time to serve our congregation.

In loving faith and service,
Liz Parke, Board President



Music Notes

Daniel Bassin, Music Director

This month of May we'll feature a number of 'choir favorites' in our service music – time-honored anthems and songs near and dear to our Choir membership. We're also in the midst of a number of important initiatives in our Music Program, this spring, which you won't necessarily *hear* from service-to-service. We hope always to continue to share with you – our beloved community – the beautiful, touching,



rousing, and engaging music whose traditions of excellence are a cherished part of our church's ministry, and the backbone of our musical reputation throughout the greater Buffalo area. But, this all takes work! We are truly blessed to have the dynamic, dedicated, and brilliant professional staff of this program, supporting and bolstering our core group of volunteers. Some of the recent work we've been up to behind the scenes has included the launch of our Music Ministry Team, under the guidance of Rev. Montagnes. Another important step has been the organization and cataloguing of our immense choir library holdings, with a huge forthcoming project of expanding our database to include the piles and piles of music in 'deep storage' in the undercroft of our church. Along with finding volunteers to assist in these labor-intensive efforts, I've enlisted the entire Choir to amass a list of pieces near and dear, new and old – those aforementioned 'choir favorites.'

On May 8th, Mother's Day, we'll share a very special piece which several choristers named as a favorite, the *Ave Maria* by Franz Xaver Biebl, a 20th century German composer. This work makes special feature of our Soloists and vocal leaders, as it casts its gorgeous musical lines for a spatially-displaced solo quartet in *antiphony* (alternating, responsive singing) to the full choir. Later in the month we'll also hear the touching *Earth Song* by American composer, and USC composition professor, Frank Ticheli, as well as Canadian actor-and-composer, Leon Dubinsky's rousing anthem, *We Rise Again*. Actually, while getting our 'choir favorites' list together over the past several weeks, we've been peppering-in some of these treasured pieces into recent services – perhaps you've recognized some of the tunes from years past. It's been a fun part of the end-of-year, post-Music Sunday work we do, and it's a welcome contrast to the physical labors of sorting through old piles of music, as well as the determined, forward-looking, challenging-yet-rewarding work of building our Ministry Team and developing our Choir Covenant.

There's only one thing that would make all of this even more rewarding, even more fun, and richer an experience for our Music Program and congregation as a whole. And that's... **YOU** – we're actively recruiting for UUCB Choir general membership, and there's no better time to get your feet wet and join the excitement than in the last few weeks of our season. Please say 'hi' before or after a service, come to the Choir table (which we'll have out at Coffee Hour this and next month), or email me at music@buffalouu.org – we rehearse Thursday evenings from 7:30-9:45pm, as well as an hour before service on Sundays. It has been a true joy to see our regular weekly church attendance grow by leaps and bounds since Rev. Montagnes' installation, and we're eager to continue this trend in the Choir! Even if you don't think this is for you, I encourage each of you to make this May as musical as possible – sing those hymns with abandon, look-out for our annual hymn-sing service this summer, and stay tuned for some fun community-oriented music events which will take place at our church following the conclusion of the 2015-2016 Choir Season.

Finally, remember that we begin May with our annual Youth Group service, and also please mark your calendars for a special concert in our sanctuary on Friday, May 13th at 8pm: a dynamic local group of vocalists, composers, and improvisers (each of these fine musicians are all three!) will present a program entitled, *Translations: 3 new works for voices*. A free-will donation will be shared between the musicians and to support the ministries of our church.

Music with Michael

EMINENT (AND NOTORIOUS) VICTORIANS: A Preview of the 2016 Shaw Festival

George Bernard Shaw was a creation of the Victorian Age, but also one of its leading social critics. The 2016 Shaw Festival offers a panoply of both the famous and infamous who exemplified the era. We'll examine Shaw's scandalous indictment of 19th century prostitution in Mrs. Warren's Profession, as well as his satiric religious parable The Adventures of the Black Girl in Search of God. Another notable girl's adventures are on view in the world premiere musical version of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland. Onstage as well will be some of Shaw's eminent playwright contemporaries: Oscar Wilde (A Woman of No Importance), W.S. Gilbert (Engaged), August Strindberg (Dance of Death), and Anton Chekhov (Uncle Vanya). And on the notorious side of the ledger is the ultimate Victorian nightmare -- Sweeney Todd: the Demon Barber of Fleet Street, Stephen Sondheim's masterful musical thriller. All in all, an eminently entertaining line-up. Queen Victoria might not be amused, but *you* surely will be!

9:30 am - 11:30 am, Alliance Room

Wednesdays, 11 Sessions beginning May 11

\$70 for full course, or \$10 per session

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.)



Did you know we strive to be a chemically - free environment?

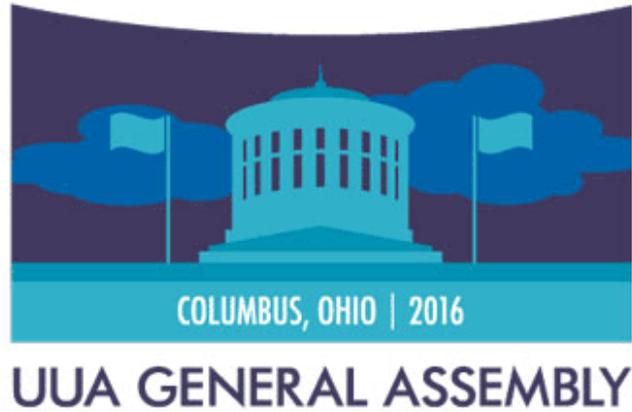
For many years, our church has made a concerted effort to purchase chemical/fragrance-free cleaners. (Thank you, Ms. Kirkland!) This effort has been made to make our church more welcoming to people that struggle with chemical or fragrance sensitivity.

This type of distress can affect the respiratory system and/or the skin. The smell/ chemical can cause severe headaches, asthma attacks, rashes, nausea, or inflammation of the skin or lungs. Its effect can be short or long-term.

The problem is more difficult to correct than it appears. Many botanicals do not legally need to be listed on product labels. Unless people mention their sensitivities, others are not aware of it. Once a need is determined, there are a lot of things that a congregation can do. A general appeal can be made to our congregation to eliminate fragrances. We can designate certain areas as fragrance-free in our sanctuary and parish hall. Do you know people sitting at home that are unable to join because they are too chemically sensitive? Contact UAIM (Universal access and Inclusion Ministry) so accommodations can be made.



Lynn Mancuso, UAIM (Universal Access & inclusion Ministry)



General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to send voting delegates. The 2016 General Assembly will be June 22-26 in Columbus, OH. Most General Assembly events will be held in the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

GA Theme: "Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect"

The faith world is increasingly multifaith. People are crossing borders of religion and spiritual practice to create wholeness in their lives. Leaders and communities of many faiths will assemble 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 for all.

Excellent Programming

GA will offer more than 175 programming selections over the course of five days. Workshop topics include interfaith bridge building, the Movement for Black Lives, anti-racism and anti-oppression, congregational leadership and stewardship, building multicultural congregations, and much more! Several workshops will be suitable for a multigenerational audience.

Krista Tippett, prominent author, journalist and creator/host of the public radio show *On Being*, is the 2016 Ware Lecturer.

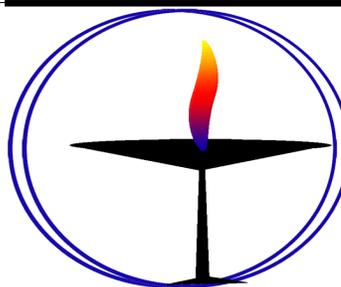
Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism Workshops

A workshop series emerging from the recently established online network of black Unitarian Universalists, other UUs of color and their white allies will be offered at GA. Come for a deeper understanding of the Movement for Black Lives (including Black Lives Matter), the contributions of black UUs, and the impact of anti-blackness in daily life.

Financial Aid Available

UUA is committed to the goal of making GA accessible to as many attendees as possible. Go to uua.org/ga to learn about scholarships to support delegates - particularly those from marginalized groups - and volunteer opportunities (work in exchange for registration).

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wixsonsg@gmail.com

Happening at the UUCB

UUCB Yarnbusters

Our "Not for Knitters Only" group continues: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, from 6:30ish to 8ish in The Women's Lounge. In May, we will be gathering on the 10th and 24th. 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.



Baby Blankets and Hats for Newborns of UUCB Families

Knitters and crocheters, looking for a project? Minister to our families and give the gift of a baby blanket for our newborns and at dedications. For more information please email Sharon Walker at sharonw447@gmail.com\

Share The Plate

We socked it to them!! During the month of March UUCB collect 247 pairs of socks for Friends of Night People. They were delivered just in time for some chilly spring weather. The January UUCB Share the Plate donation was \$1,185! Marcy Rose, the Board President of NAMI in Buffalo and Erie County, was thrilled to accept this generous gift and the funds will be used to help complete an updated version of "The Mind Matters: A Practical Guide to Services for the Mentally Ill in Erie County".

This resource will be offered in print and online versions to help the public and healthcare professionals locate specific mental health resources in WNY.

Coming Attractions

On Saturday June 4th the Racial Justice Ministry Team will be hosting an intergenerational potluck brunch. Lots of fun, fellowship, and learning experiences for all ages. So save the date and time -- 11AM to 3PM. Be there or be square!

Maypole

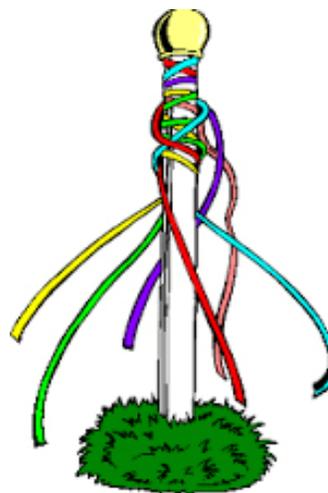
Please join us Sunday, May 1, after the service, for a Maypole celebration out on the lawn! There will be music and Maypole dancing and some great community building. We'll see you there!

ROY ZIMMERMAN: THIS MACHINE

Friday, May 6 at 6pm in the Parish Hall

"This Machine" is ninety minutes of Roy Zimmerman's hilarious, rhyme-intensive original songs. The title is a reference to Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger to be sure, but also an acknowledgement that songwriting does good work in the world.

"Sometimes I think satire is the most hopeful and heartfelt form of expression," says Roy, "because in calling out the world's absurdities and laughing in their face, I'm affirming the real possibility of change." Roy's songs have been heard on HBO and Showtime. He's shared stages with Bill Maher, Robin Williams, Ellen DeGeneres, John Oliver, Kate Clinton and George Carlin. He's been profiled on NPR's "All Things Considered," and he's a featured blogger for the Huffington Post.



WOMEN'S SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS

Reservations can be made starting this Sunday in the Parish Hall for our Friday May 13 field trip to the Masjid Noor Mosque located at 745 Heim

Road in Getzville. The tour will start at 11:30. Lunch will be prepared for us by the Muslim Community followed by their prayer service at 1:30. There is no fee, but donations will be accepted at the time of making your reservation.

Reservations can also be made starting this Sunday for the field trip to NOTL on Wednesday June 8. Payment must be made at that time. Tickets are \$40. for "Mrs. Warren's Profession." More

information will be coming soon.

WOMEN'S SOCIETY BOOK SALE

This year our book sale will be held on Sunday July 10 AND Saturday July 16 and Sunday July 17. Hardcover books, trade paperbacks, regular paperbacks, children's books, puzzles and games and CD audio books can be dropped off at the church. This year we will NOT accept any records, DVD's, CD's, music tapes nor any text books. For any questions contact Sally Metzger, our book sale sorter chair, or our co-chair people, Joyce Bol, Ellen Gibson and Lucy Sloan

Memorial Pathway

Orders for paver inscriptions in the Memorial Pathway are processed only once a year. They are due by May 8, 2016. It seems like a long time away, but you will miss it if you keep putting off ordering. Inscriptions may be one, two, or three lines long. Each line may have up to 14 letters and spaces. One or two I's allows one more letter per I. The cost of the paver is \$150 each. Submit text and checks to the office made out to UUCB and the word paver in the For or Memo line. Any questions call Tony Keller at 838-3716 or keller447@gmail.com.