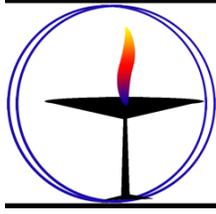


The UU Church of Buffalo



Gather – Inspire – Transform

June 2016 Newsletter

695 Elmwood Ave • Buffalo, NY 14222

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Faith Matters: The Rest All Comes Out in the Wash

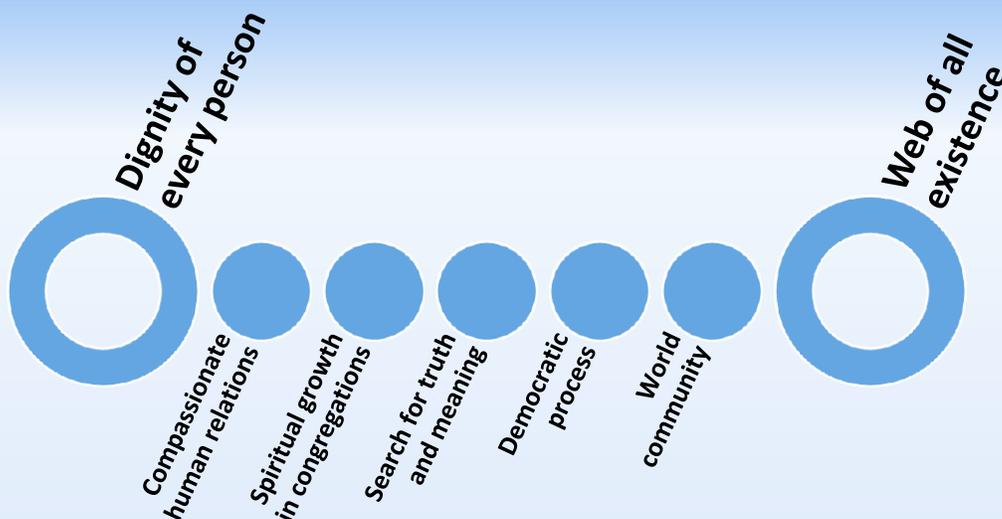
Worship Theme: Dignity

Rev. Joan Montagnes

For a long time, Unitarians expressed our beliefs with a handy three-part slogan: *“The Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, and Salvation by Character.”* Needless to say, with the advent of women’s liberation in the 1960s and 1970s, the old slogan began to fall a little flat. By the 1980s, those uppity ladies in the Unitarian Universalist Women’s Federation got all creative and came up with a document which eventually became the covenant we hold so dear among our congregations today: **The Seven Principles**.

The Principles are a covenant and not a creed. While creeds define common beliefs, covenants are promises we make to one another as we walk together in community. While creeds are written in stone, covenants are living documents which change over time as the community grows and changes. Our Unitarian Universalist Association By-Laws require us to review the Principles on a regular basis just to make sure they remain current.

Below you can see a model of an abridged version of the Principles we affirm and promote as a people of faith. Notice how they gently begin with the individual as they speak of the “Inherent worth and dignity of every person” and gradually encompass larger and larger communities of being from “congregation” to “society at large” to “the world” and eventually “all existence.”



I like to say that if you pay attention to the first and seventh Principle, the rest all comes out in the wash. If you affirm and promote the dignity of every person and the web of all existence, then compassion, acceptance, exploration, democracy, peace, liberty and justice will naturally arise.

This month we will be exploring our First Principle – the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We will be joyously marching in the Pride Parade; explore universal inclusion and accessibility; ponder what it means to live as a blessing; and finally, on June 19th, we will weave the first and seventh Principles together in our Flower Communion Ceremony.

In the meantime, think about what it means to live your life knowing that you have inherent worth and dignity. You are good right down to your very core. How would the world be different if we recognized each other's dignity? How can we nurture relationships that reflect our first Principle?

We have come a long way from our handy, 19th century three-part slogan. Our covenant has changed. It is more inclusive and considerably more complicated. It is more focused on our relationships with each other and our world, than on our beliefs. We have come a long way, we have a long way to go, and you have something to add to the journey.

Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes



Joys and Sorrows



Our thoughts are with Ellen Moomaw's brother who is recovering from brain surgery.

Chandra and Orla Ramirez O'Donnell are joyful to share the news they are settling in their new home and are very grateful for this church community for all the support.

Our sympathies are with Margaret Phillips and her family. Margaret's mother, Emily Phillips, passed away Tuesday, April 19th.

We remember long-time church member Diane Lawrence who also passed away on April 19th. Diane was a co-founder of the church Book Club over 20 years ago.

We send condolences to the friends and family of Wanda Hickok, long-time member of this congregation. Wanda passed away on January 22nd, and we held a memorial service for her here at the church on May 14th.

We send healing wishes to Mary Coleman who broke her ankle last month, **Bobbie Baker** who had knee surgery and **Tom Yots** who had surgery on his hand.

Congratulations to Fran Manly who recently celebrated her 75th birthday!

We send condolences to the family of Susan Adamucci. Susan's beloved grandmother recently passed away.

We wish Linda Lover and Olga Ruiz much happiness. After decades of sharing a loving partnership, they were officially married on May 15th. Meanwhile, we hold Linda's brother-in-law in our hearts. He is in dialysis three days a week, but sadly is doing poorly.

We wish continuing health to Kaitlyn Steinburg. Kaitlyn suffers with a chronic illness and the symptoms have been under control over the last three months.

We are heartened to hear that Grace Myhre is home after a stay in nursing care. She and John would welcome cards.

June Pulpit Previews

This month our worship theme is “Dignity”. A solid belief in one’s own dignity is the foundation upon which we build strength and courage in the face of a broken and imperfect world. A solid belief in the dignity of others is the foundation upon which we can build the beloved community.

June 5 – “A Sanctuary for All of Us” Universal Access and Inclusion and Guest Speaker: Tami Moore

For LGBTQ people, for those born with different abilities or who have acquired a disability at some point in their life, and for anyone who experiences a life that is somehow seen by others as outside the norm, church communities can be blessed sanctuaries in the struggle to live with integrity. When a congregation accepts the call to be a place of peace and respite, succor and rejuvenation, what have they gotten themselves into? Is THIS congregation ready live this vision into reality?

June 12 “You are a Blessing” Speaker: Rev. Joan Montagnes

At the end of all our worship services, Rev. Joan says each of us is a blessing. What an unusual statement in a world that more often tells us that we are imperfect, insufficient, and generally disappointing.

June 19 “You are Not Alone” Speakers: Rev. Joan Montagnes and Sarah Martin

During this last service in the regular church program year we will joyously celebrate, in story and song, our annual Flower Communion with our whole multigenerational congregation. Bring a flower (or a whole bunch) to share in this ritual of colorful ritual of life. We will remind ourselves, once again, especially when times are tough, that we are not alone. Don’t worry! We don’t eat the flowers.

June 26 – “Bounded or Centered” Speaker: Rev. John Rex

While we Unitarian Universalists claim to have a “creedless faith,” we affirm and promote Purposes and Principles that some people perceive as our creed. Are they?

Religious Education and Faith Development

Sarah Martin, Director of Lifespan Faith Development



June is finally here and our regular children and youth Religious Education programming has drawn to a close. I would like to take a moment to thank our Religious Education Volunteers of the Year for 2015-2016, **Meghann French** and **Paul Zanolli**, for all of their time, effort, and dedication to our program this year.

Each and every volunteer who took part in our Religious Education program has my utmost gratitude and admiration. Without you, we could not keep this wonderful program thriving.



Excitingly, we have some openings left in a few of our 2016-2017 teaching teams! Full teaching teams mean that each volunteer only has to be in the class room twice a month at most. That gives you at least two Sundays a month to attend the service. Here are some of the details of our open volunteer positions:

If you are interested in our alternative K/1 class, which will be a movement-based curriculum for our active and kinesthetic learners, there is plenty of room on that teaching team!

We have two spots available on our 4th/5th grade Stepping Stones teaching team. This curriculum addresses children who are taking their first structured steps in forming religious identities and concepts. The children will explore myths and stories from all over the

world, including tales of historically significant Unitarian Universalists.

There are also two spots available on our 6th/7th grade Neighboring Faiths team! This curriculum (with some modifications from its original form) will give our students a broader understanding of what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist while introducing them to the beautiful diversity of many other religious traditions. This class will take field trips to visit various religious organizations in our area and is an excellent opportunity for teachers to learn right alongside students!

And finally, we have three spots available on our Coming of Age teaching team. The Coming of Age curriculum will be used in our 8th/9th grade class, to help them "go deep" and learn to tend to their own spiritual needs. They will learn about Unitarian Universalism, how it is practiced in our congregation, develop their own faith credos, and end their year with a trip to Boston. (We're also looking for 8th and 9th grade parents who may be interested in helping coordinate fundraising for the Boston trip!)

If you think you'd be a good fit for any of these positions, please email Sarah Martin at sarahmartin@buffalouu.org or see us at the Religious Education table in the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings!



Participating in the Religious Education program gives you a chance to connect with our children and youth in a multigenerational way, and it also gives our young people a chance to experience the depth and variety of knowledge and experience contained in this

congregation. There are so many other ways to participate if you can't commit to teaching this fall!

Each Sunday, we need an adult volunteer in our nursery, to sit with paid nursery caregiver Morgan Silver, and help watch the babies. If this appeals to you, please contact Sarah at your earliest convenience and we can pick a few dates for you to join our nursery crew.

If you're interested in helping to chaperone or arrange field trips for our Neighboring Faiths class next year, we'd love to have you on board.

If you can help with First Sunday pancake breakfasts, before the service every first Sunday of the month, or Souper Sunday preparation on the second Sunday of each month, you are welcome. We could still use hands in the garden this summer.

Also, our fall and winter Third Friday Potlucks are looking for hosts. If you'd like to host a potluck, or find out what that entails, please contact Sarah Martin.



There are so many ways to be a part of this dynamic, exciting program. We offer something for everyone! And if volunteering with children and youth programming isn't your style, we have multigenerational and Adult Faith Development classes and events just for you.

Fourth Friday Game Night is a great way to meet UUCB members of all ages. Bring your favorite board game or card game, meet us in the Parish Hall every fourth Friday of the month from 7-9 pm, and enjoy great community and pizza!

Our Adult Faith Development program offers everything from Intro to UU classes, to writing groups, book clubs, Michael Harris's wildly popular music series, knitting groups, folk dancing, and we just finished a four part Harry Potter-themed series for adults! Keep your eyes open for our summer and fall course offerings, to be announced soon!

Notes From The Board

Liz Parke, UUCB Board President

Over the past month or so, the Board has been working on creating our **Playbook** to create a focused goal for the Board and the Congregation. Highlights include:

Playbook Highlights for 2016

We exist because people need a space that fosters a connection to each other and to what is holy.

We will succeed by providing joyful ministry to the spirit, by growing a vibrant and visible Social Justice ministry, and by developing engaging pathways to membership, volunteerism and leadership development.

Our immediate goal is to create financial stability and growth to become independent from Special Endowment draws.

It's a big goal, and an important one. Our endowment and our building are our two biggest assets - providing the foundation for our programs, now and in the future. If we can avoid chipping away at them, they will remain vibrant and strong for future generations. The best way to do this is to deliberately match our program growth (so many exciting new opportunities are emerging) with the financial support of our annual pledges (thank you to all who contributed to our successful annual pledge campaign for 2016).

Now that we have a goal, we need to figure out how to accomplish it. Fortunately, the Strategic Advisory

Committee is eager to help, and will meet with the Board in June to start this work.

We look forward to sharing our plan and asking you to join us in the resulting work. Be sure that there will be a place for you in this plan, whether as an individual, a member of a Ministry Team, or a member of an Advisory Committees of the Board.

This is an exciting time to serve our congregation.

**In loving faith and service,
Liz Parke, Board President**

Music Notes for June

Daniel Bassin, Music Director



Summer is nearly upon us, but this June we're fortunate to have three of our four Sunday services still within the 'Choir Season' which will conclude with the Flower Communion Sunday service on June 19th. As you've read in previous months' columns, we've been busy at work in the UUCB Music Program, building towards an exciting 2016-2017 season, and initiating both outreach and internal programs of an unprecedented scope to keep this valued program thriving, strong, and vital well into the future. One piece of happy news that I have not been at liberty to share until now relates to my work outside of UUCB, which I will detail below.

Our June service music will be richly-varied, and will highlight our beloved Choir as we close out a joyful,

musical season which featured the cycle of *Seven Principles* by UU composer Mark David Buckles, a continuation of our Bach Christmas Oratorio project with the sublime and pastoral Part II for our December Music Sunday service, and a Spring Music Sunday of brilliant rarities by musical geniuses from three centuries.

The month begins with a service led by our Universal Access and Inclusion team, and also falls on Pride Sunday. The Choir will present an English-language version of one of Beethoven's hidden treasures for chorus, his *Elegiac Song*. Our in-house trumpet and piano duo will also share a work by Billy Strayhorn, whose early advocacy for civil rights and living openly should serve as an inspiration for all. The two remaining

Choir services will include a selection of our many musical blessings and benedictions on June 12th, and a few of our flower-themed choral treasures for June 19th. That service will also feature several of our vocal soloists in familiar tunes and beautiful gems. And, of course, the music doesn't stop at the conclusion of the Choir Season. This summer's services will include guest instrumentalists and vocalists, and an expansion of our somewhat-sporadic recital series, so read our upcoming July-August newsletter carefully, and look out for updates on our Facebook page and weekly bulletins.

On a personal note, we're now approaching the end of my third season as your Music Director, and I couldn't be more proud of the work of our volunteers, the artistry and dedication of our professional staff, and the genuine thirst for great music that this community has! – I look forward to many, many more wonderful seasons of joyous and heartfelt music-making to come. **Just last week I was out in Portland, Oregon, attending my colleague Mark Slegers' final Music Sunday** service at the First Unitarian Church of Portland, where he has served as Minister of Music for 39 years. That program is uniquely robust in our denomination, as over 300 members of their 1,028-strong church participate in the various choirs and ensembles. There's much I've



learned from the experience of that service, and much more I'll still be 'chewing on' for a while, considering the most effective ways to grow and develop our program, which we are absolutely right to be proud of. Finally, I have heard from many of you since my April 21st profile in *Artvoice*, entitled, "Daniel Bassin's UB Farewell." (<http://artvoice.com/2016/04/21/daniel-bassin-ub-farewell/>) After six years of working there as an adjunct instructor, I am delighted that I can now officially announce that I've accepted a position as Upper School Instrumental Music Teacher at the Nichols School. This full-time position, in concert with my work at UUCB, will allow me to keep my professional focus here in Buffalo, and I am truly grateful to each of you for your support over these years.

Here's to the summer, here's to 2016-2017, but first, let's all enjoy this last month of the 2015-2016 Choir Season together!

June 5th Guest Speaker, Tami Moore

The granddaughter of a deacon, niece of a Baptist preacher, and descendant of a generation of "good Christian women," Tami Moore has served in UU congregations for seventeen years in Idaho and Oklahoma. She currently attends All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, where she sings with the New Dimension Chorale, participates in the small group ministry initiative, and serves on the church's core team for the local Industrial Areas Foundation affiliate.



Prior to entering the academy, Tami worked for non-profit agencies serving domestic violence and sexual assault victims and survivors, and addressing homelessness and economic justice in rural communities. She served two terms as a national service volunteer through the Corporation for National Service/AmeriCorps and VISTA, and provided community development consulting to non-profit agencies and community groups in the Pacific Northwest. Through the Pride Foundation, she provided administrative support for leadership development for woman-identified people participating in the Washington Lesbian Organizing Project, a project of the Pride Foundation in Seattle.

Today, the lay ministry and social justice work is made possible by Tami's paid work as associate professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs and co-coordinator of the undergraduate minor in Civic Leadership at Oklahoma State University.

News from the Universal Access and Inclusion Team (UAIM)



In 2013 the UUA started to develop a certification process with the goal of making all folks with disabilities welcome in our congregations. UUCB has been participating as a pilot congregation since that time. In the late 1990s our congregation went through a process to become a Welcoming Congregation. The efforts of that process were to welcome and gladly include people who identified as lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgendered or queer.

Over the last three years our UAIM team has led or participated in a number of activities. We have led worship services, held workshops to talk about welcoming those with both visible and invisible disabilities. Our team has looked at aspects of physical access. Issues like making our restrooms more accessible for people that use wheelchairs or other mobility devices. We are exploring Sanctuary seating. We want those who use mobility devices to have a range of options as to where they sit just like everyone else. These are some of the issues the UAIM team is working on.

Sunday, June 5 is Pride Sunday and we have the opportunity to lead Service. It seems like a great opportunity to explore the intersection between the LBGTQ community and the disability community. How do we support individuals who happen to be members of both communities? Are there barriers that both communities may share and perhaps how can we address those barriers?

Come join us as we celebrate Pride Sunday.

UUCB's Ministry for Earth is born!



Our mission is to inspire action that is bold, creative and compassionate, guided by a vision of a life-sustaining world for all. We do so honoring our pain, and our gratitude for one another, our Earth and for life itself. **See Dana or Sandy for details and visit our team @ coffee hour!**

A Racial Justice Extravaganza



Saturday June 4th from 11AM to 3PM

Please plan to attend the Racial Justice Ministry Team's time of fun, fellowship and learning at our intergenerational potluck. Activities for all ages.

We will be discussing: **How our life circumstances impact our experiences, How to support one another when racism shows up around us, and Raising racially aware, resilient children.**

Please sign up at sarahmartin@buffalouu.org and let us know that you are coming.

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.**

Family Promise Host Week is Coming on June 17



This is the time when our church provides a safe, secure home for two or three homeless families. We will need lots of volunteers - to make and serve meals, to provide friendly company and to stay overnight. **Look for the Family Promise sign up table during the Coffee Hour for the next few Sundays.** We only give a little - the families get a lot of shared community and intimate connections that are sometimes difficult to achieve in a congregation of our size.

N4KO:

“Not for Knitters Only”



Our UUCB Yarnbusters group continues: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, from 6:30ish to 8ish in The Women’s Lounge. In June, we will be gathering on the 14th and 28th. 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 “layette” to our newborns or at dedications. For more information please email Sharon Walker at sharonw447@gmail.com

UUCB Covenant Group Program is Growing!



On Sunday, January 24th, members of the UUCB Covenant Group program participated in a worship service which was followed that evening by an All Church Pot Luck dinner in the Parish Hall. These two activities generated a great deal of interest in covenant groups. We are pleased to report that a total of 82 people are now participating in 10 different groups.

Covenant groups have been part of the fabric of our congregation for over 12 years. Groups consist of 7-10 people who come together to seek deeper connections and spiritual growth. These groups help foster a sense of shared community and intimate connections that are sometimes difficult to achieve in a congregation of our size.

Typically, each group meets monthly and follows a specific format designed to encourage reflection and sharing related to a specific topic. **If you would like to learn more about covenant groups, stop by the Welcome Table following the worship service or you can send an email to covenantgroups@buffalouu.org.**

Fellow WNY UU Organizations



I am the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst Faith Development Committee chair. Our church is currently seeking to hire a new Director of Faith Development to start in the upcoming church year.

If possible, please share the following job posting within your congregation as you see fit:

[UUCA Job Posting: Director of Faith Development \(Amherst, New York\)](#)

Feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions. Thanks so much for your help!

Best ... Tara Kaye (716) 874-2393



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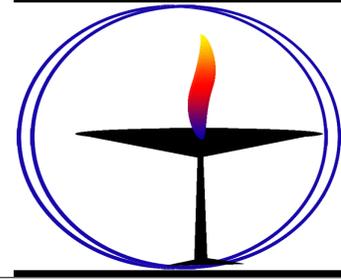
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