

# The UU Church of Buffalo



*Gather*

*Inspire*

*Transform*

June 2018 Newsletter

695 Elmwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14222

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



## Faith Matters:

### What does it mean to be People of Blessing?

Rev. Joan Montagnes

**Way back in the 1990's Dr. William Muir at Perdue University discovered something about diversity.** He thought he had discovered something about chicken productivity, but it was way more interesting than that.

**According to a lot of people, you can tell how productive a chicken is by how many eggs she lays each day.** Dr. Bill wanted to know what could make his chickens more productive, so he devised an experiment. First, he found an average, diverse flock of chickens, and he left it alone for six generations. Then he created a second flock of the most productive chickens – you could call them superchickens -- and he put them together in a superflock, and each generation, he selected only the most productive superchickens for breeding. That superflock just got more and more super!

**After six generations had passed, what did he find?** Well, the first flock – the average, diverse flock of chickens, was doing just fine. They were all plump and fully feathered and, strangely, egg production had increased dramatically.

**But what about the super-superflock?** Well, all but three of those chickens were dead. They'd pecked the rest to death. The superchickens were not only highly productive, it seems they were also bullies.

**Dr. Bill discovered that a bunch of diverse, average chickens are more productive than a bunch of uniformly, overbred egg machines.**

**And Dr. Muir was only measuring the value of those chickens by their egg production...**



**I wouldn't want my value measured by egg production**, and my bet is you wouldn't either. I think we live in the diverse, average flock and our diversity shows itself in all and every way. You are worthy because of who you love and who loves you, the shape of your nose, the foods you crave, the clothes you wear, the color of your skin, the music you sing to, your warts and all and everything else that makes you you. All that diversity, living right inside you, is a blessing.

# 2018 buffalo PRIDE

**We are blessed by all the diversity in our crazy, mixed-up flock.**

We are blessed by all the diversity in our wider and wider communities. Being a people of blessing means proudly celebrating the gifts we can offer one another every day.

**This month we have two big, rainbow opportunities to celebrate our diverse blessings.**

First on **Saturday, June 2 at 1:00 pm** we can join the **2018 Buffalo Dyke+ March that kicks off right here at our church**; and then, on **Sunday, June 3** we can join up with the **Pride Parade right after the worship service.**

**Our blessing is to live in a diverse world.** May we be curious, humble and welcoming as we explore the differences among us. Let us live to crack open our shells and discover the glory that lies beyond.

**Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes**



## Joys and Sorrows



**Congratulations go to Ginny Vaughn and Steve Wixson.** They are grandparents again with the birth of Sarah Lilla Blass. Welcome Sarah!

**We send Shaun Doyle healing wishes.** Shaun is at home recovering from spinal surgery.

**We send our sympathies to the family and friends of Sheila Brechtel** who passed from this life on March 31.

**We offer our compassion to the family and friends of Jeanne Ebling-Laing.** Jeanne passed away on April 13. She was a beloved member of the choir for many years

**Our condolences go to the friends and family of Judy Danforth.** Judy passed away on Sunday, April 29, in the early morning. Judy was an active member of the congregation, especially the Women's Society.



**Pulpit Previews**  
**What does it mean to be a People of Blessing?**  
**Worship Schedule**  
**June 2018**

- June 3**            **Proud and Blessed**            **Rev. Joan Montagnes**  
It seems difficult to love our whole selves. We all have faults. We have all made mistakes. And yet each of us is wholly loved, loving and lovable.
- June 10**            **Wrestling with the Spirit**            **Rev. Joan Montagnes**  
When you wrestle with a gorilla, you don't give up when you get tired. You keep wrestling until the gorilla gets tired. The same is true with your spirit. Wrestle until the spirit blesses you.
- June 17**            **A Communion of Life**            **Rev. Joan Montagnes and Sarah Martin**  
Flower Communion Sunday is one of our High Holidays. Bring a flower to share. Not only will this be a multigenerational service, we will also have the joy of a Child Dedication Ceremony.
- June 24**            **Get Out and Get Weird**            **Ed Harris**  
The weather is nice. Get out and enjoy yourself. Enjoy the culture, meet the people, and experience the land. Be mindful, take in all of it, and perpetuate kindness in the community.



UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray was among 165 protesters arrested on the first day of the Poor People's Campaign 40 Days of Action, in Washington, D.C., May 14  
(Photo credit: UU World/Vice)



# Religious Education and June Events

Sarah Martin, Director of Religious Education

**We have finished our Religious Education year** and the RE Ministry Team and I are looking forward to a few months of low key summer programming. Beginning June 3, Religious Education on Sunday morning will take place upstairs in the Alliance Room from 10:30 – 11:30 am. Children in PreK through Grade 5 are welcome to join us for games, activities, stories, and sometimes movies, too! Youth Grades 6 and up are invited to either join their families in the sanctuary for service, or come to the Alliance Room and help lend a hand with programming.

**Also, for the next month we will be collecting baby items for an expectant mother from Congo who is resettling** with her four children in Buffalo through Journey's End. If you can provide any of the following items, please contact Sarah Martin at [lifespan@buffalouu.org](mailto:lifespan@buffalouu.org).

## Baby Welcome Kit Wish-List

### These items can be new, or very gently used and clean

- 4-8 onesies (wide head openings and loose legs)
- 4-8 undershirts (snaps at neck or wide head openings, snaps under crotch)
- Diaper bag
- 4-8 one-piece footed pajamas
- 2 blanket sleepers (swaddle blankets) for winter baby
- 1-3 sweaters (front buttoned)
- 1-3 warm jackets if born during cooler seasons- if born during winter, a baby snowsuit
- 1-3 rompers or other dress-up outfits
- 4-7 socks or booties
- 1-3 hats (broad-brimmed for a summer baby, soft cap that covers ears for a winter baby)
- No-scratch mittens
- Bunting bag or fleece suit for a winter baby
- 10 bottles and nipples, both 4 & 8 ounce
- Baby grooming and first aid kit (comb, nail clippers, baby thermometer, etc.)
- 2-4 soft towels or hooded baby towels
- Soft washcloths
- Stroller or infant carrier made after 2007 – no broken, loose or missing parts
- Baby bathtub – very gently used; not moldy or smelling of mildew

### These items must be new and/or in original packaging:

- Pacifiers
- Burp cloths (15 is ideal – parents need lots of these!)
- Bibs for when baby is a little older
- Baby wipes (lots of these!)
- Disposable diapers for newborns (lots of these, too!). Other sizes welcome too, for when baby grows. Diapers are a huge expense, and refugees do not have easy access to laundromats to use cloth diapers.
- Baby wash, baby shampoo, baby lotion

## June 2018 Music Notes

Daniel Bassin, Music Director



### *What does it mean to be a People of Blessing?*

Our *Choir Season* runs from September's celebration of "Water Communion Sunday" through June's honoring of the ceremony of "Flower Communion". As we consider what it means to be a 'People of Blessing' this month, our music program presents something of a crescendo to the final Sunday of the choir season. Our Choir's presence, and the gift of their talents and commitments to our community, are one of the many overflowing Blessings at UUCB. The people of your UUCB Choir are indeed a *People of Blessing*, and we look forward to celebrating the singular blessing of complementary music and worship with each of you this June!

The month begins with "Proud and Blessed", a service celebrating the Buffalo Pride Festival and the blessing of loving community. Our music will include UU composer Clif Hardin's hymn to the truth in our hearts, "May Love Be Your Guide", and also the 1980's pop hit "Rise Up" by the Parachute Club. Instrumental selections from Billy Strayhorn and Franz Schubert will bookend the service. June 10's "Wrestling with the Spirit" service will feature Moses Hogan's rousing gospel arrangement, "Every Time I Feel the Spirit".

The Choir will also be featured at the June 10, 4:00 pm, ordination of Rita Capezzi, singing selections by Mendelssohn and U2.

The June 17 "A Communion of Life" service concludes our Choir Season with a richness of musical selections unique to our church's music program. Soloists Jessie Downs and Helen Lowry will perform the immortal "Flower Duet" from Léo Delibes' opera, "Lakmé". We will welcome percussionist, Liz Holland\* for this service as she accompanies the UUCB Choir in Abraham Kaplan's dance-like "Halleluya", and also performs alongside Jessie and Su in a set of variations on modern Hungarian composer, György Kurtág's settings of 16th Century bishop Péter Bornemisza's motto, *virag az ember...virag*. "Flowers we are, mere flowers". The Choir will also offer up Jean Berger's a cappella setting of the Pennsylvania Dutch text, "A Rose Touched by the Sun's Warm Rays".

Finally, the month finished with a fun service featuring our music program's professional staff: vocalists Jessie Downs, soprano; Helen Lowry, alto; Michael Harris, bass; Su Lee, keyboardist; and Daniel Bassin, Music Director and trumpeter. 'Get Out and Get Weird', Rev. Montagnes's June 24 sermon, will be filled with musical surprises and eclectic favorites.

\*Liz Holland is familiar to our congregation from her immersive Gong Bath Meditations, practicing sound healing meditations under the moniker, "Ancient Alloys". Liz and her family are moving to the Seattle area this summer, and we are delighted to host one of her final performances in our area following the service.

Sunday, June 17, at 1:00 pm, in the UUCB Sanctuary, Liz Holland's *Ancient Alloys 'Gong Bath' Meditation* – \$5-15 sliding-scale donations are accepted at the door. For more information, please visit <http://www.ancientalloys.com>

# Beyond the Hedge

## Denomination and Interfaith Connections

Sharon Walker

Registration Now Open!

June 20 - 24, 2018, Kansas City, MO

“All Are Called”



...Together, we'll ask:

- **Who and how** are we called to be at this time, individually and collectively?
- **How** are we called to act and to live?
- **How does our Unitarian Universalist legacy strengthen** us in living out our mission? In what way does our legacy present challenges and impediments to answering our call?

The call of our faith has a place for each of us. Join us in Kansas City to build courageous, collective leadership with tools, skills and connections." For more information and to register go to <https://www.uua.org/ga>.

Are you attending? Please contact me at [sharonw447@gmail.com](mailto:sharonw447@gmail.com).



## Faithfully Bringing Forth Justice

### Peace Conference and Peace Circles Training

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

The first Thursday of each month; 5:30 -7:30 pm

Registration and refreshments at 5:00 pm

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

If you are wondering how you could help with creating alternatives to arrest and suspensions, you might want to consider becoming a Peace Conference facilitator. Peace Conferences can be used in situations where a harm has been done that needs repair, and using the restorative practice of a Peace Conference will be more effective than using our criminal justice system. With that in mind you are invited to our monthly First Thursday Peace Conference Practice.

Our practice on June 7 will focus on an event involving high school youth since our partnership with the Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition is opening opportunities for trained Conference facilitators to work in public schools.

Interested in learning more? The Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition will be offering comprehensive training in both circles and conferences over three full days -- June 8, 9, and 15. Please check out their website <http://ecrj.org/> for all the details. You do not have to commit to all three days.

## Social Action Sunday Events (SASE) Ministry Team

**As end of the church year looms, the SASE team invites you to support a final flurry of events** – all to take place on the first weekend of June.

**One of the blessings of our congregation is the loving inclusion of our LGBTQ members**, and this becomes abundantly clear as we celebrate the culmination of Pride week with two (yes TWO) parades that pass by our church home.

**On Saturday, June 2, the Dyke+ March begins at the corner of Elmwood and West Ferry.** After a year of planning inside our building, this event walks out our door at 1:00 pm, then steps- or rolls-off at 2:00 pm to head toward Bidwell Parkway.

**The next day at 12:00 noon, the Pride Parade leaves the Buffalo State Campus to head down Elmwood toward Allentown.** While many from our congregation join the parade outside our church doors, we are always looking for more people to gather at Buff State to help carry our banner the whole length of the parade.

**Our final post card event for the year will focus on the appalling news** that prison assignment for transgendered individuals will now be based on gender at birth. As Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality says, “The extreme rates of physical and sexual violence faced by

transgender people in our nation’s prisons is a stain on the entire criminal justice system. Instead of leaving the existing policy alone, the administration is clearly prepared to encourage federal prisons to violate federal law and advance its own inhumane agenda.”

**Finally, as the SASE team starts to plan for next year,** we have two final opportunities for you:

**1. Share Your Experiences** – Drop me an email at [eparke@me.com](mailto:eparke@me.com) and tell your story about your experiences with this year’s SASE events. What did you like best? What would you like to see happen differently next year? What surprised you about your involvement? What made the biggest impression on you? I would like to provide an overview of the year in next month’s newsletter, and your stories will help paint a fuller picture of the impact of this ministry team.

**2. Join the Team** – There is room for new people to get involved with planning next year’s SASE events. We meet once a month, and team members each take charge of planning and running one or two events per year. If you think you might be interested, stop me on Sunday morning or email me at [eparke@me.com](mailto:eparke@me.com).

**Liz Parke, SASE Ministry Team Chair**

## Women’s Society - Reminder to Shaw Festival Ticketholders

**Wednesday, June 20 – Reminder to Shaw Festival Ticketholders.** Your ticket entitles you to the 11:00 am pre-show chat and the 2:00 pm performance of “Grand Hotel”. Please bring your passport or enhanced driver’s license for the border crossing. Meet in the lobby of the Festival Theatre at 10:45 am; you will be directed to the pre-show chat location. Lunch is on your own in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake.



## Is a Covenant Group Just What You've Been Looking For?

**At the heart of UUCB's Covenant Group Ministry is our commitment** to strengthen the culture of our church as one in which we listen to each other, respect each other, and trust each other.

**Led by trained co-facilitators, monthly Covenant groups create an opportunity** to develop relationships, explore our personal values and beliefs, and support and strengthen our community – one small group at a time. It is our time to talk about what really matters to us.

**Church membership is not required for participation in a Covenant group.** Our groups provide a way for us to welcome newcomers, help them make connections, and encourage their spiritual explorations in a safe sacred setting.

**In our groups, we explore topics that ask us to reflect deeply,** ever broadening our awareness of our own spirituality and our connection to others. Related to this month's theme of "What Does It Mean to be a People of Blessing", we offer you the opportunity to consider the following Spiritual Exercise, (adapted from "Soul Matters").

*Begin the practice of blessing strangers quietly, secretly. Offer a blessing to people you notice on the street, in the market, on the bus. (Silently say to yourself) "May you be happy. May you be at peace." Feel the blessing move through your body as you offer it.*

You might guess that this becomes more about what happens to *us* than what happens to others as we offer them a secret blessing. But how might this practice change us? By shifting our attention, we become more aware of those around us. It can change our attitude towards others. It can connect us to others as we notice and acknowledge common struggles. Just imagine going through your day looking for excuses to wish people well or to think the best of them.

*Do this for a day or two. Set a target for yourself, like "I will secretly offer blessings to 10 different people every day. Keep it simple, like "I wish \_\_\_\_\_ for you." At the end of the day, reflect on how offering those blessings have affected your day. Talk about this experience with someone else, or share it in your Covenant group.*

**Covenant groups are for both church members, as well as those who are considering** whether this may become your church home. If you are interested in

learning more about our Covenant Group Ministry, please contact us at [covenantgroups@buffalouu.org](mailto:covenantgroups@buffalouu.org).

## Ordination of Dr. Rita A. Capezzi

**The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo invites you to the ordination of our very own Dr. Rita A. Capezzi on Sunday, June 10, 2018, at 4:00 pm** in the sanctuary. A reception will follow immediately after the ceremony. All are invited to honor and celebrate this milestone in Rita's life. Rita has been called to the ministry of the UU Fellowship of Mankato, MN, and will be their settled minister as of August 1, 2018.



## Universal Access and Inclusion Ministry

Sophia Roberts



**My name is Jessica Levesque and I was born, raised, and live in Buffalo.** I have a high functioning form of autism. Autism comes in many different spectrums. Autism can be defined as "a mental condition present from early childhood, characterized by difficulty in communicating and forming relationships with other people, and in using language and abstract concepts". Autism can affect sensory processing, and some people may have atypically high or low sensitivity to sound, light, touch, or scent. Each person is different and is affected differently by autism.

**Growing up was very difficult.** When I was a child I did not speak for a long time. I was in special education and graduated with an IEP diploma. Now that I'm a full-grown adult, I'm an entrepreneur, an actress, I love fitness, stepping out of my comfort zone, and meeting people and activists in my community. I am very sociable, and people may not know I have autism. My adult years are way better than my childhood years, but there are a lot of things I need to still fight for. I have obsessions and compulsions. I love certain things, like meeting celebrities. That puts a smile on my face, and most of the time I become friends with them! Autism is just a piece of me, that's not the whole me. Take time to know me because I am a human being, with gifts and abilities too.

**If you are a parent of a child with autism, I know it's difficult to find help at times, but let me tell you, your children can succeed.** I know it's gonna take a while, but it's worth every risk. It's scary in the world, but you've got to really push yourself and push your kid to be as successful and happy in life as possible. Don't give up!

## Share the Plate for June Evergreen Health Services

**June's Share the Plate recipient is Evergreen Health Services.** Founded as **AIDS Community Services in 1983**, Evergreen Association historically addressed the crisis generated by HIV/AIDS and other sexually-related infections in WNY. As many of these illnesses have responded successfully to medical therapy, the Association has developed a wide range of life-enhancing services to support the ability of our clients to lead healthy, secure and satisfying lives as members of the regional community.

**Today, Evergreen has grown to support the entire community.** Increasingly, Evergreen works with underserved and/or stigmatized individuals dealing with multiple chronic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, diabetes and heart disease, mental health challenges and substance abuse; as well as with a variety of sexual minorities, many of whom are inadequately treated by mainstream providers.



## Fun and Fellowship Auction News!!

The 2018 Fun and Fellowship Auction was a great success, with over \$14,400 donated to support the work of this church community! Congratulations again to the winning bidders who will have the opportunity to be together in fun and fellowship throughout the year!

The good news: You still have an opportunity to bid! A few items have not yet sold out, and there are four all-church events planned for the Fall/Winter with all proceeds going to the Auction: *Gigi's Birthday Bash* on 9/22, the "Chillin' With Chili" Dinner For All on 10/6, *An Evening of Wine, Desserts and Poetry* on 11/16, and a *Cabin Fever Family Craft Night and Potluck* welcoming in the New Year on 1/12/19. Look for announcements closer to the time of these events! Ideas or questions? Contact the Auction Team at [auction@buffalouu.org](mailto:auction@buffalouu.org) or [JVW61@aol.com](mailto:JVW61@aol.com).



Thank you to all who participated as donors and bidders. We couldn't have done it without you!

## Share the Plate Seeks Nominations for 2018-19 Church Year!

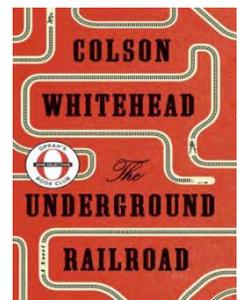


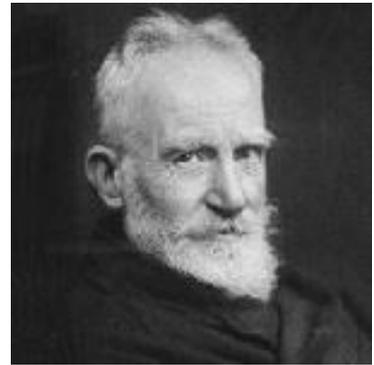
Each month our congregation shares a good portion of the Sunday offering with a local agency or organization that aligns with our social justice values. You can nominate local non-profits to be our Share the Plate recipients for the church year that begins in September! Pick up a nomination form at the Welcome Table or from the envelope on the Share the Plate bulletin in the Parish Hall near the Garden Entrance.

Nominations will be gathered through Sunday, July 1, 2018. Please leave completed nomination forms in the envelope on the Share the Plate bulletin board. If you have questions please contact Eve Holberg, [evect@waynorth.com](mailto:evect@waynorth.com). Thank you!

## UUCB Book Group

Monday, June 25, at 5:00 pm – UUCB Book Group Meeting. We will be discussing "Underground Railroad", a novel by Colson Whitehead. Newcomers who have read the book are always welcome to join us. Everyone who plans to come needs to bring a dish to pass and to tell our host-of-the-month, Paulette, at [paoletta666@gmail.com](mailto:paoletta666@gmail.com) that you are coming so that she may plan for seating. We also will be voting on next season's book choices at this meeting.





# SHAKESPEARE SHAW

## AND OTHER CULTURAL ICONS: A PREVIEW OF THE 2018 SHAW FESTIVAL

**MICHAEL HARRIS, INSTRUCTOR**

12 Sessions, from May 9 to August 1

Wednesdays – 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.; Alliance Room

Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

695 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222

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

For more information, call Church Office at 885-2136



### THE WAR TO END ALL WARS



1914-1918



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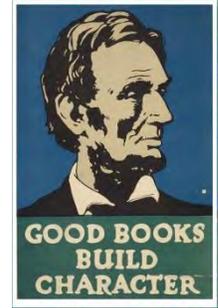
The spotlight of the 2018 Shaw Festival will be focused on some of our most significant cultural figures and events. Regarding the First World War, the Festival will present the Shaw one-act comedy “*O’Flaherty V.C.*”, the musical “*Oh, What a Lovely War*” and Shakespeare’s “*Henry V*” set in the trenches of WW1. They’ll also salute Napoleon Bonaparte in Shaw’s “*The Man of Destiny*”, Sherlock Holmes in “*The Hound of the Baskervilles*”, Anton Chekhov in “*An Orchard (After Chekhov)*”, and the world of Narnia in C.S. Lewis’ “*The Magician’s Nephew*”. Rounded out by the musical “*Grand Hotel*” and Stephen Fry recounting the ancient Greek legends in “*Mythos*”, we’ll see why the Shaw season rightfully can be called iconic!

**WEEK-BY-WEEK SYLLABUS**

Session 1 (May 9)	Creating Narnia – <i>The Magician’s Nephew</i> by C.S. Lewis, adapted by Michael O’Brien
Session 2 (May 16)	The Theatrical Illusion of Love – <i>Stage Kiss</i> by Sarah Ruhl
Session 3 (May 23)	People in a Hotel – <i>Grand Hotel</i> ; book by Luther Davis, music and lyrics by Robert, Wright and George Forrest, additional songs by Maury Yeston, based on the novel “ <i>Menschen im Hotel</i> ” by Vicki Baum.
Session 4 (May 30)	Napoleon and the Battle of the Sexes – <i>Of Marriage and Men</i> , comprises <i>The Man of Destiny</i> and <i>How He Lied to Her Husband</i> by George Bernard Shaw
Session 5 (June 6)	What He Wrote about the War – <i>O’Flaherty V.C</i> by Bernard Shaw
Session 6 (June 13)	Down-to-Earth Gods – <i>Mythos: Gods</i> by Stephen Fry
Session 7 (June 20)	Greek to Me – <i>Mythos: Men</i> and <i>Mythos: Heroes</i> by Stephen Fry
Session 8 (June 27)	The Sherlockian – <i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> , by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, adapted by R. Hamilton Wright and David Pichette.
July 4	Independence Day – No Class!
Session 9 (July 11)	Anton Chekhov Canadianized – <i>An Orchard (After Chekhov)</i> by Sarena Parmar
Session 10 (July 18)	Modern Metamorphosis – <i>The Baroness and the Pig</i> , by Michael MacKenzie
Session 11 (July 25)	War as a Music Hall Turn – <i>Oh What a Lovely War</i> by Joan Littlewood, Theatre Workshop and Charles Chilton
Session 12 (August 1)	The Bard Arrives at Niagara-on-the-Lake – <i>Henry V</i> by William Shakespeare

## Women's Society Used Book Sale

We're already looking to UUCB's annual book sale next Spring, and always collecting your books, i.e. hardbound and softcover books of all topics, children's and young adult books, art books, puzzles and games, books on CD. Please, no reference books or encyclopedias. You can leave them on the left-hand side of the steps inside the Elmwood entrance. If you have questions, contact Joyce Bol at [joukjebol@gmail.com](mailto:joukjebol@gmail.com).



## Turn Your Clutter into Clear Vision and Renewed Hope!

Our Women's Society has a collection bin at the Garden Entrance for donations of eyeglasses, sunglasses and hearing aids.



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

# The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

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Morgan Silver

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[newsletter@buffalouu.org](mailto:newsletter@buffalouu.org)

**A chalice alit since 1831**

**A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places**