

# The UU Church of Buffalo



*Gather*

*Inspire*

*Transform*

July-August 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 Story?

Rev. Joan Montagnes

**If you know me, even just a little, you know I don't always stick to the facts.** I was once a scientist who spent all day dealing in facts – tiny, brain-numbing, irrelevant facts. Often it crossed my mind, as I sat with my eyes glued to the microscope, recording micrometers of cell size, that if I made up a bunch of data, nobody would know, and I could escape the lab for the afternoon to eat ice cream by the pool. No kidding, facts are overrated.

**For this, and other reasons that I'll share with you on other days, I left science and headed for religion** – that bastion of fact-less myth and legend. In many ways, story carries truth that is more real than fact. Stories, good stories, are transcendent. The stories of our lives travel the ages, across cultures, beyond memory; whereas the facts are true, but are buried with us when the end comes.



**We can really place our trust in a good story.** It holds a truth that is often difficult to speak about, but when we hear it, we recognize from the depths of our guts. Do you laugh or cry? Does it catch your breath with beauty or surprise? Do you want to share the story so it lives forever? Does it change you?

**What does it mean to be a people of story?** It means we create a safe space to share our stories with one another. It means creating a safe space for the stranger to share their story. It means we listen as if our hearts and lives depend on it – because they do. It means not hiding your truth. It means telling your story to loving companions who journey with you through life. We are nothing without each other.

**Being a people of story means sitting around the fire** (and sometimes the fire is held in a chalice) just as our ancestors did and relating the events of the day as well as the myths, legends, folklore and fairytales.

**Summer is here. The days are gloriously long.** Breathe deep. Swim. Spend time with people you love. Pour yourself a tall, icy drink. Squeeze in a little refreshing lemon. Ask someone how their day went and listen with your whole precious being.

Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes

### Minister's Vacation

I will be out of the office from mid-July to mid-August. Exact dates have yet to be determined - Joan

"In a time when democracy is literally for sale to the highest bidder, people of faith have to find new ways to organize and witness in order to bring the demand for justice, equity and human dignity to the forefront of the public conversation."

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray



#PoorPeoplesCampaign





## Pulpit Previews

### What does it mean to be a People of Story?

#### Worship Schedule Summer 2018

**July 1**      **Seeds for the Sowing**      **Kristina Church**

UUCB member Kristina Church is in seminary. Worshiping with this congregation inspired her dream of becoming a UU minister. Share in her impressions of her first year; a time of planting seeds that may someday yield a fruitful harvest.

**July 8**      **Our Magical “Mythtery” Tour**      **Rev. Joan Montagnes**

Our stories define us. This is especially true for historical stories. After many tellings, we might find ourselves enjoying our truth so much, that the facts can be pushed aside.

**July 15**      **The Covenant of Story**      **Julie Taylor**

A covenant is what binds us all together as Unitarian Universalists in this building we call a church. But the words of a covenant are only a small part of the meaning of why we’re together. It’s really the complexities of our stories, the rising action of a plot coupled with the cast of characters, that make us come back for more, with the realization that in the web of story, we are not alone.

**July 22**      **Stories that Trouble**      **Rev. Terry Kime**

One of the most troubling stories we find in the Abrahamic scriptures is the one about a father (Isaac) being asked to sacrifice his son (Jacob) to God and his agreement to do so. Today we'll consider some of the many facets of this story.

**July 29**      **Who tells Your Story?**      **Sarah Martin**

We think we know our own stories, but what are the stories others tell about us? What stories do our actions tell others? Join us for a multigenerational service about the ways we leave our marks on the world and the stories we leave behind.

**August 5**      **Mercy Now**      **Rev. Fran Manly and Doug Yeoman**

“Mercy” is not a word we hear a lot about, but maybe mercy is one of the things our world needs most of all, and one of the most important things we can offer each other. This service will weave together song, story, and reflection to explore the intersections of mercy, grace, and justice.

**August 12**      **From You I Receive**      **Bill Parke**

You may recognize this sermon title from its appearance in a song in our hymnal. It is nice to imagine human interactions as simple, affirming give-and-takes. But rarely are things so tidy in the times we live in. This service will explore how interpersonal interactions have moved to new frontiers, and how we might better navigate this new terrain. After all, "it's not all about you."

**August 19**      **Circles of Peace and Justice**      **The Social Action Sunday Events Ministry Team**

Grace breaks into our lives when we share honestly with each other and act from our deepest values to transform society. Experience a little grace this morning. All you need is your sweet self and a caring community. From there you can change the world.

**August 26**      **Love Me Tender**      **Rev. Joan Montagnes**

It could be argued that Love is the saving grace of the world. But where there is love there is pain.

**September 2**      **Seeing Nature**      **T.J. Snodgrass**

If nature is like a “mother,” are humans her favorite children? Do we have to play by the same rules as the other animals? And if we don't clean up our messes, will she take away our toys?



## Liberal Religious Educators Association

Sarah Martin, Director of Religious Education

**As I write this month's newsletter submission, I have just returned from the UUA's General Assembly** in Kansas City, MO. It was a full, busy week for the religious educators in attendance, and I'd like to use this space this month to tell you about it, to give you a glimpse into what it is that religious educators do when they come together, and how it shapes and contributes to the future of our Unitarian Universalist faith.

**The organization to which I belong, LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association), is a continental organization dedicated to advocating for and supporting professional religious educators,** promoting and advancing the UU faith, engaging in shared ministry, and challenging systems of oppression. On this last item, the challenging of systems of oppression, LREDA often takes the lead in UU spaces, offering experiences like the White Supremacy Teach In, which our congregation engaged in last fall, supporting other UU institutions, like Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism, and assessing and auditing its own place in supremacist systems, constantly working to learn, do better, and engage in the dismantling of all oppressions.

**LREDA Continental holds a Fall Convention each year,** usually in November, where religious educators from across the United States and Canada can come to engage in professional development presentations, workshops, and celebrate professional milestones together. Attached to General Assembly each June is a professional day for religious educators sponsored by LREDA which includes our annual business meeting. This year, we attended a workshop with Juana Bordas, author of *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit*, on multicultural leadership.

**I currently serve as Chapter Chair for LREDA's Seaway chapter, which encompasses all the congregations in New York State outside of the Metro NY area.** As a chapter, our religious educators meet twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, for collegial support and ongoing education and professional development.

**In addition to all that LREDA already does to support religious educators,** the organization also offers professional guidelines, support for religious educators, continuing educational opportunities in the form of Renaissance modules and trainings, and, in conjunction with the UUA, the Religious Educators Credentialing Program. All of these wonderful things are available to religious educators currently serving UU congregations with active memberships in LREDA.

**The one thing that has been missing for the last 50 years, however, has been the right to automatic delegate status at General Assembly.** Previously, a religious educator had to be a member of the congregation they were serving, or credentialed at the Masters Level (a long and costly endeavor) in order to be a delegate. This year, with the support of the UUMA (Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association), many of our congregational delegates, and the formidable support of the Youth Caucus, religious educators received the right to automatic delegate status by an overwhelming majority of votes at General Assembly. I'd like to express my deep gratitude to our delegates from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo who helped make that vote such a landmark moment for religious educators.

**If you would like to support the work of LREDA, please know that you can donate at any time to the LREDA Endowment Fund,** or any of LREDA's scholarship funds, by visiting [www.lreda.org/donate](http://www.lreda.org/donate). This year at General Assembly, UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray presented LREDA with the President's Volunteer Award. If you'd like to learn a little more about what LREDA has done to support and enrich our Unitarian Universalist faith, you can find the presentation of this award at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygcSNbzBj6E>. I encourage everyone to follow that link and spend 8 minutes watching the video and listening to the words of Susan Frederick-Gray and LREDA Board President Annie Scott.

**And once you've done that, do yourself a favor and take an hour to watch this year's Ware Lecture, by activist, educator, writer, and speaker Brittany Packnett,** whose powerful, truthful words cut right through to the essence of the work in which UUs need to engage in order to dismantle systems of white supremacy, patriarchy, and economic and environmental oppression. In the coming year, I would love to see our congregation answer her call for us to show up, to evaluate each and every action we take, and to step into our own discomfort to recognize who we have always been as a nation and take a stand in the face of injustice. I will work my hardest to make sure that the programming provided by our Religious Education Ministry Team and Adult Faith Development respond to her charge.

**The Ware Lecture can be found here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkV2fNuN1C4>

# Summer 2018 Music Notes

Daniel Bassin, Music Director



Our 2017-2018 Choir Season has come to a close, and we can look back on a remarkable year of music-making and community building. And, with the echoes of our Duke Ellington collaboration concert, the Barbara Wagner tribute performance of Ola Gjeilo's "Sunrise Mass", and our multi-year cycle of J.S. Bach's remarkable "Christmas Oratorio" still reverberating, we now look forward to a summer season of varied and engaging musical complements for our weekly worship. Summer services will feature our in-house brass-and-piano duo, plus special guests throughout July and August – so stay tuned to our weekly updates for specifics!

It all kicks off on July 1, when UUCB Choir member and seminarian, Kristina Church, leads us through her journey from proud Unitarian Universalist to the call of ministry. *Seeds for Sowing* will feature classic hymns and beloved musical selections from our church's rich musical legacy. Rev. Montagnes leads us in worship on July 8 for *Our Magical "Mythery" Tour*, in a service that will feature music on mythological themes, as well as a tune or two by a certain band from Liverpool. Julie Taylor's July 15 service, *The Covenant of Story*, will feature selections that pair words and music, as well as music of a deeply narrative character.

The theme of storytelling continues through Rev. Terry Kime's service on July 22, *Stories that Trouble*.

On Monday evening, July 23 at 8:30 pm, we will host a special evening concert by visiting musician, Matt Endahl. His program is entitled, "*It's after the end of the world, don't you know that yet?*" and will feature the *Doomsday Philharmonic* for the Buffalo premiere performance his experimental work "*Jacob's Ladder*", an improvisational exploration of life's building blocks: DNA.

Sarah Martin, Director of Religious Education, will lead an intergenerational service on July 29 concluding our July services on the theme *What does it mean to be a People of Story?*

In August, UUCB Keyboardist/Accompanist, Su Lee, will take her well-earned summer vacation, and we look forward to featuring the talents and musical purviews of a number of gifted substitute musicians. The wonderful musical selections of the month of August are kicked off with Rev. Fran Manly and Doug Yeoman's annual summer service, *Mercy Now*. The power of song will be held up in that service, highlighting themes of mercy, grace, and justice. UUCB Music Director, Daniel Bassin, will be out in Portland, Oregon, attending the annual Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network conference during Fran and Doug's service, so be sure not to miss this August 5 service, and share your stories when he returns the following week.

UUCB Historian Bill Parke leads the August 12 service, *From You I Receive*, and service music will explore the give-and-take of musical duets to complement his message. When our Social Action Sunday Events Ministry Team (SASE) ascends to the pulpit on August 19, our music will pay homage to vital protest songs throughout the ages for their *Circles of Peace and Justice* service. Rev. Montagnes returns on August 26 for her service, *Love Me Tender*. Our service music that Sunday will form a neat bookend to the music of The Beatles of her service earlier in the summer. Finally, T.J. Snodgrass leads our final summer service during Labor Day weekend. Sunday, September 2 will be an opportunity to contemplate the various meanings we all find in nature.

Our Choir will return on Sunday, September 9 for our annual Ingathering and Water Communion Sunday.

In the meantime, we look forward to sharing our summer music selections with each of you!

# Beyond the Hedge

## Denomination and Interfaith Connections

Sharon Walker

### Coming this Fall:

**September: Restorative Practices in our UU Congregations seminar** with Rev. Renee Ruchotzke, UU Church of Amherst, Saturday, September 29.

**November: UU Class Conversations with Denise Moorhead;** "Create Justice-Not Walls: Class and Race in UU Settings", Saturday, November 10, UU Church of Buffalo



## Faithfully Bringing Forth Justice

### Peace Conference and Peace Circles Practice

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

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

Registration and refreshments at 5:00 pm

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

### Additional New Peace Circle Site Starting July 10

**UU Church of Buffalo!**

Registration and refreshments at 6:00 pm

**Second Tuesday of each month; 6:30 - 8:30 pm**

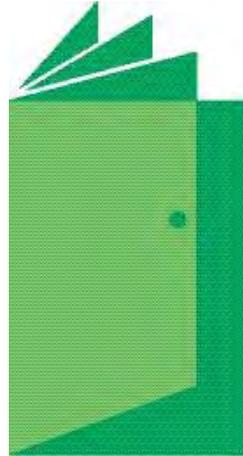
**Wondering how you could help with creating alternatives to arrest and suspensions?** Consider becoming a Peace Circle/Conference facilitator. Using Restorative Practices to create effective changes in our criminal justice system, Peace Circles build community while Peace Conferences can be used in situations where a harm has been done that needs repair. With that in mind, you are invited to experience and take part in our monthly Circle and Conference practice sessions that build community and take on real issues.

**Information on training to become a certified facilitator** is available at each session.

## Share the Plate – July Recipient Read to Succeed Buffalo

July's Share the Plate recipient is *Read to Succeed Buffalo (RTSB)*. RTSB improves student achievement by creating a community-wide priority on literacy from birth to age eight. RTSB focuses on creating a comprehensive, high-quality early learning network that equips and challenges partners to support children in learning to read, enabling them to read to learn by the end of 3rd Grade.

RTSB provides support to educators and parents working through classroom, family, pre-school, child care and community settings. After a successful inaugural launch RTSB is seeking applicants to be part of Experience



**Read to Succeed Buffalo**  
Community Alignment for Reading Excellence

Corps, volunteer tutors

age 50 and over who mentor struggling students in kindergarten through third grade. RTSB is the local affiliate for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library book distribution program, and Vroom, a program supported by the Bezos Family Foundation that helps parents with affirming and reinforcing activities and tips that inspire positive and brain-building interactions with their children.

## Rita Capezzi (a.k.a. “The how could I say no to Rita”) Ordination Committee Chair: Sharon Walker

**Thank you to all that made this such a joyous event.** To the committee; Dave Batt, Mary Coleman, Marjorie Girth, Lisa Jones, Tracey Kassman, Kathleen McGriff Powers, and Liz Parke, this couldn't have been done without you. To all who “schlepped”, baked, decorated, Doris and her kitchen crew who stood for hours setting up and out the food, the ushers, the greeters, the servers, those that set up and those that cleaned up, and everyone that showed up and celebrated. Special thanks go to our indispensable Sara Kirkland.

**Rita, thank you for all you have given us** over the years.



## Accessible Seating in Sanctuary - Project Update

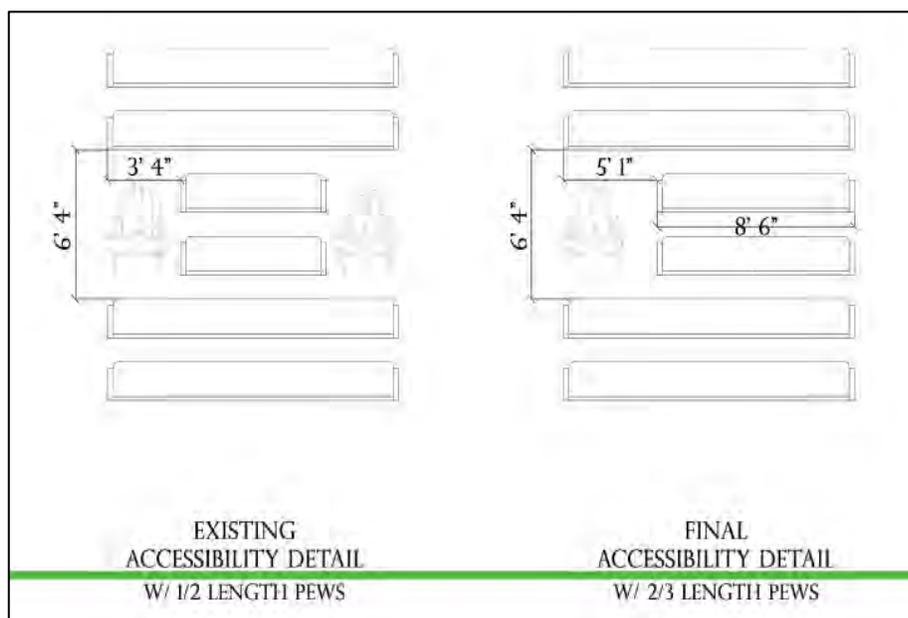
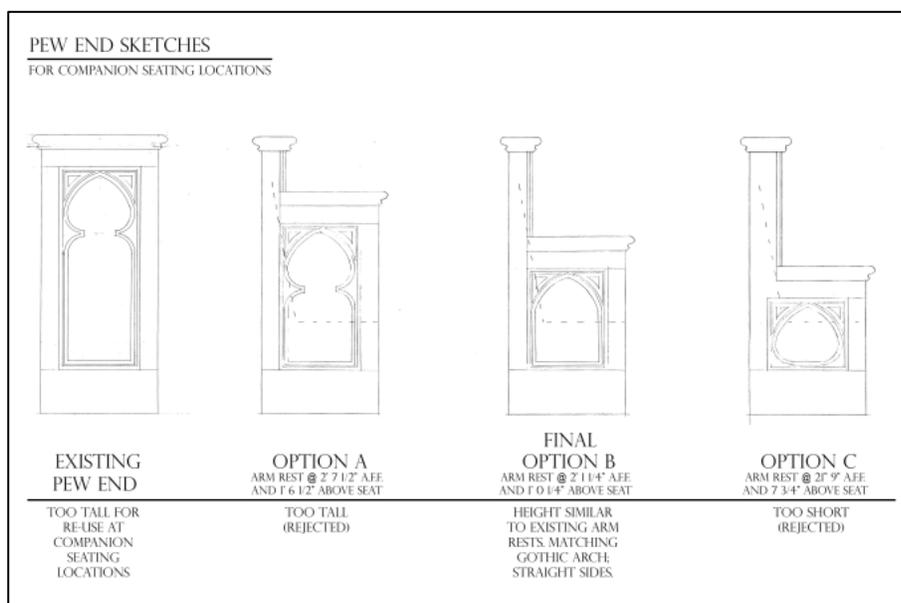
The Universal Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (UAIM) and UUCB's Fixed Assets Committee are moving forward with a new configuration for accessible seating in the sanctuary.

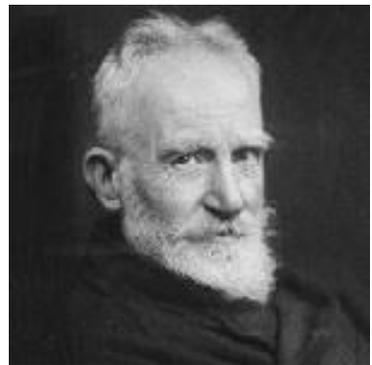
We have a great contractor who cares about sacred spaces and are confident he can successfully re-configure the designated pews. We anticipate work will begin by the time you receive this newsletter.

Our ministry team and Fixed Assets, along with support from the Board of Directors and Rev. Joan, have agreed to make changes in the length of the pews to be shortened. The existing short pews in the sanctuary were originally proposed to have space for a person using a mobility device/wheelchair on either end of the pews. The revised pew length will be longer and will have accessible seating on one end only. The revised pew length gives wheelchair users more room to maneuver and keeps the opposite end of the pew open for others to enter. *See Diagram.* Using UUA guidelines, the plan provides seating locations for six persons using mobility devices/ wheelchairs.

The plan will utilize pews that have the armrest at two thirds of the pew length. The contractor will cut the pew at that point, preserving the cushion. He will fabricate and attach a new pew end that will be at the level of the current armrest. The new pew ends will be similar to but not identical to the current pew ends, to provide a more open design for companion seating at accessible locations. *See diagram.*

The contractor anticipates removing two pews at a time from the Sanctuary and we will replace the missing pews with pews from the back of the Sanctuary, so most folks will not miss the removed pews. The contractor will purposely select pews in need of repair, incorporating repairs as part of the re-configuration process. *See Diagram below for the final accessible seating configuration.*





**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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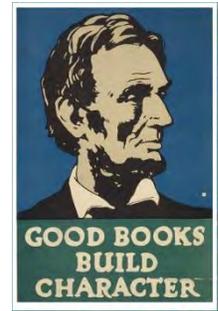
The spotlight of the 2018 Shaw Festival will be focused on some of our most significant cultural figures and events. Regarding the First World War, the Festival will present the Shaw one-act comedy “*O’Flaherty V.C.*”, the musical “*Oh, What a Lovely War*” and Shakespeare’s “*Henry V*” set in the trenches 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

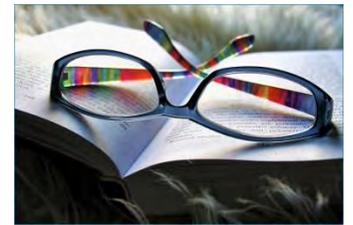
## Women's Society Used Book Sale

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

**Newsletter:**  
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**A chalice alit since 1831**

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