

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BUFFALO

November 2022 Newsletter

Gather - Inspire - Transform



Minister's Column: What does it mean to be a People of Change?

Once upon a time the Buddha taught us that there are Four Noble Truths:

All life is suffering. Even when you are thoroughly enjoying yourself, you are miserable. Life is agony all the time.

All life is suffering because you are clinging to something you can't have. You have desire for something you can never attain. You thirst, yearn, and hunger for an impossibility.

All life is suffering because you are clinging to things that change hoping, beyond hope, that they will stop changing. And by the way, everything changes all the time. Without fail. Like even glaciers and tectonic plates change, move, shift. Sorry.

You can stop suffering by stopping your clinging. You can stop clinging to the ever-changing phenomenal world by following the Eight-Fold Path. The Eight-Fold Path is very prescriptive and goes on at length about how to live so you can have peace of mind which is all anyone could ever want.

This month, as we explore what it means to be People of Change, we could do well by just paying attention to Noble Truths 1 through 3, which say: we suffer because we resist change. What would it mean for you to stop resisting change? What would it mean for you to lean into change? What would it mean for you to *be the change*?

The Japanese concept of *wabi-sabi* was developed in the 15th century in reaction to the lavish, ostentatious ornamentation of the aristocracy. *Wabi-sabi* centers around three principals: "nothing is perfect, nothing lasts, and nothing is finished."

In practice, *wabi-sabi* implies that life is worthwhile and beautiful not because it's perfect and unwavering its perfection, but because it's imperfect and fleeting.



Have a look at This Guy. A moment of balance and beauty. Light sea breeze filling his lungs. A chorus of gulls praising the morning light. Salt spray gently ruffling his hair. He looks perfect. Don't you wish you could be This Guy?

But wait a minute, what's he doing? He's fishing. Maybe he's hungry. Maybe the water is cold and he hasn't felt his toes in three hours. Maybe he would rather be napping or maybe he is worried

about his child's safety back on the mainland. Maybe he's grieving a lost partner. Maybe he is at complete peace with himself and the universe. Maybe he's about to fall into the water and drown. We know nothing. This is just a moment.

Any idea about a present moment is just that: an idea. Everything is change. Nothing is perfect, nothing lasts, and nothing is finished. And that's okay. Breathe. Lean into the change. Be the change.

Living *wabi-sabi* is living more simply, less forced, more in harmony with your surroundings. Try appreciating asymmetry and roughness as natural and therefore beautiful. Not mistakes, not flaws, not brokenness, not decay: just beauty.

You have some options this month. You could spend this month of change going full-on *wabi-sabi* Zen. You could rest your meditative, soft focused eyes on a perfect November pear as it slowly crumples into moldy, fruit fly infested, sticky, brown ooze. You could spend this month of change in contemplative reflection on imperfection, impermanence, and unfolding existence. You may, even find some peace of mind... for a while. Have fun.

Or you could, as we explore what it means to be People of Change, use the concept of *wabi-sabi* as you stumble through this excruciatingly beautiful world. You could, as you risk being part of the solution, remember that everything is in flux. Release your resistance to change and lean into impermanence. When you dare to live well and answer the call of justice, you will be imperfect. Imperfection is simply nature's *wabi-sabi* way. When you boldly go out into this world to create beauty and justice, find strength in remembering that nothing is perfect (not even you), nothing lasts (not even you), and nothing is finished (not even you)... there is always change, and you can be part of the change you want.

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

Joys and Sorrows

We send healing thoughts to Rachel Krajna, John Marohn and Valerie Anderson all of whom are recovering at home after their various surgeries in mid-October.

We welcome Christine Slocum to membership in our congregation!

Our world was blessed by bouncing baby [Genevieve](#) Lee Lewis on October 4. Little Genevieve is the daughter of Maddie McCauley and Billy Lewis, granddaughter of Rebecca and Peter McCauley, great-granddaughter of Paul Ziebarth! Four generations of fabulousness. We're honored to be part of Genevieve's upcoming Dedication Ceremony on Sunday, November 27 during the service.

Pulpit Previews

Nov 6: Welcoming Dignity, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Imagine a more just and joyful world. Start small. Begin by building a safe place where the stranger is welcomed as they are. Respect and honor everyone's inherent voice and nature. Engage conflict and repair harm. From this place, this moment, we can create a beloved community for all.



Veteran's Day Service: Nov 11, 11am

Join us in the sanctuary for a worship service of music, poetry and reflections to remember our veterans, the fallen, and to rededicate ourselves to peace in our lives and in our world.

Nov 13: Musical Sunday, Jessie Downs

November 13th is Musical Sunday – our new tradition of a musically rich service that is the smaller production in comparison to our Spring "Music Sunday," as the Music Ministry juggles both this event and preparation for the holidays. Never fear, though, for this service – entitled "Singing as Spiritual Practice" will be a very special experience. Our Music Director Jessie Downs will be sharing readings, a story, and a sermon

about the spiritual power of vocal practice, and the two featured choral numbers will help illustrate these ideas. The first of the two pieces - “Talismane-Charm” - was written by Jessie about 10 years ago and has been revised specially for this group and this event. It is partnered with the piece that inspired it - “Talismane” by Robert Schumann. The Prelude and Postlude are a similar pairing – excerpts from “Variations” by Downs, modeled after the “Geister Variations (Ghost Variations)” by Schumann. At the Offertory, our special guest instrumentalists – Megan Kyle (oboe) and David Abbott (viola da gamba) - will join Chris Sierzchula (harpsichord) in a piece by G.P. Telemann. With three different keyboard instruments and a double choir featuring 7 special guest vocalists, this is not an event to be missed!

Nov 20: This Precious Day, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Our Thanksgiving Communion Service. A deliciously joyful morning of hymn singing flavored with gratitude for all our blessings.

Nov 27: Beautiful and Agonizing Impermanence, Rev. Joan Montagnes

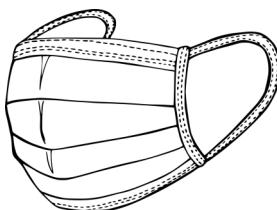
A meditative service on the nature of change in our lives.

Transgender Day of Remembrance and Resilience: Nov 20, 7pm



At the time of this writing, 2022 has seen at least 31 transgender and gender non-conforming Americans killed by violent means. We say “at least” because too often these stories go unreported — or misreported. In previous years, the majority of our murdered siblings were Black and Latinx transgender women. Trans folx are doubly victimized even after death when society pointedly disrespects their living gender identity. Join us in the sanctuary for our annual observance to honor the memory of the transgender people whose lives were lost to violence and hatred. Our hearts are with those who mourn and those who live in fear. We recommit ourselves to the safety, dignity and worth of every person.

Our Current Masking Status



Our church is currently open for in-person services, and masks are optional. We do ask that masks continue to be worn should you meet any of the following circumstances:

- You are not fully vaccinated;
- You are moderately-to-severely immunocompromised or have discussed the need to mask with your healthcare provider;
- You feel more comfortable wearing a mask for personal reasons;
- You have had a known COVID-19 exposure within the past ten days; or
- You have left isolation following a COVID-19 infection within the last five days.
- We also ask that if you display any symptoms of COVID-19, please join us virtually until your symptoms subside, regardless of a negative COVID-19 test.

Our VIRTUAL YouTube link is <http://live.buffalouu.org>. Sunday services start at 10:30am. Past services can also be found at the YouTube link.

Religious Education & Faith Development News



Greetings from the Religious Education Ministry!

Jess Pond, Director of Religious Education

It's never too late to register for Religious Education! Please complete this form if you would like to register your child for Religious Education classes: <https://forms.gle/4LzWAX73L8vwNQWV6>

Check out the RE Calendar here: <https://rb.gy/hxvmju>

Special RE news:

Elementary Our Whole Lives (OWL) Training in Wooster, OH, Friday, December 2 to Sunday, December 4 – Are you interested in being trained to teach OWL in Grades K-1 or 4-6? Now is your chance! All costs for the training will be covered by UUCB. The deadline to apply is November 11, limited spots available. Please contact Jess as soon as possible to sign up!

Adult Education Programs:

Starting Sunday, October 23 at 3:00 – Intro to Sufism-Islamic Mysticism with Yunus Kumeck! In this course, we will examine the practical aspects of Sufism in our everyday life, especially focusing on meditative, philosophical, and psychological practices that have relevance and meaning in personal spiritual journeys. The class will meet on Sundays, 3:00-4:00 in the Marge Gardner room, beginning October 23. Registration is \$30. There will be six sessions – 10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13, 11/20, 11/27

Monday, November 7 at 6:00 on Zoom – Post-Roe Reality: What Can We Do? – Even as the recent U. S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade upends many areas of American life, it is a significant attack on "the wall of separation between church and state" and the ability to follow the teachings of a spectrum of faiths and personal conscience. Rabbi Dennis S. Ross, director of Concerned Clergy for Choice for Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts, will discuss "Post-Roe Reality: What Can We Do?" via Zoom on Monday, November 7 at 6 PM for the UUCB. Please email Jess to receive the Zoom link.

If you are interested in any of the classes, projects, or other groups that we are starting please contact DRE Jess at jpond@buffalouu.org.

Bright Blessings, Jess

Banned Book Club with Mary Lou Hill and Sharon Walker



We will be meeting Wednesdays, Nov. 2 and 16 in the Marge Gardner Room, wrapping up our discussion of "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison. Our next selection will be the young adult novel "Melissa" (previously published as "George") by Alex Gino. "Melissa" (originally published as "George") was the most banned book of 2021. We will be starting this book after the first of the year with time and dates TBD. If you have any questions about the group or its selections, please drop us an email at uucbbbc695@buffalouu.org.

Folk Dancing

Folk dancing is a fun experience for all ages. Simple dances are taught or reviewed each week. We do walking dances from 9:30-10:15, regular folk dances from 10:15-11 and more complicated dances from 11-11:30. We laugh a lot and get exercise while learning a bit about the world's cultures. No experience or skill is needed! All are welcome! Martha Malkiewicz has taught folk dancing for 6 years at the UU Church.

Contact Martha at martmalk2@mac.com to confirm schedule.

Mondays, 9:30 am, Parish Hall, \$2.00 per class. Pay at the door.

Registration not required



'S WONDERFUL, 'S MARVELOUS, 'S GERSHWIN! THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC

Michael Harris, instructor

Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo
695 Elmwood Avenue; Buffalo, NY 14222
Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m., \$10 per session

The course will start remotely using the Zoom platform, with the option to move to in-person meetings at UUCB. To register, send your check, made payable to UUCB, to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo; 695 Elmwood Avenue; Buffalo, NY 14222. [Put 'Gershwin Course' on the memo line of the check.] For information, call 716-885-2136, or email us at office@buffalouu.org.

"I like a Gershwin tune, how about you?" Music lovers have been saying that for a century and 'that certain feeling' should continue into the next one. George Gershwin was our first great cross-over artist, with his feet in Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, Hollywood, the concert hall and opera – doing them all supremely well. We'll trace his career from early hits like "Swanee" and "Stairway to Paradise," to Broadway standards like "The Man I Love" and "I Got Rhythm," to concert works like Rhapsody in Blue and An American in Paris, crowned by his unique opera Porgy and Bess. With George's sophisticated music and brother Ira's witty lyrics, "who could ask for anything more?"!

Course Syllabus

Session Eight (Nov. 2): "Wintergreen for President" – The Political Satires [Of Thee I Sing, Let 'em Eat Cake]

Session Nine (Nov. 9): "Hang on to Me" – Gershwin and Friends

Session Ten (Nov. 16): Classical Gershwin 2 [Second Rhapsody, Cuban Overture]

Session Eleven (Nov. 23): The Road to Catfish Row – Porgy and Bess

Session Twelve (Nov. 30): "Oh Lord, I'm on My Way" – The Afterlife of Porgy

Session Thirteen (Dec. 7): "Love Is Here to Stay" – Hollywood and Last Works

Session Fourteen (Dec. 14): "They Can't Take that Away from Me" – Posthumous Gershwin Broadway Musicals [My One and Only, Crazy for You, Nice Work If You Can Get It, An American in Paris]

Music Notes

Dr. Jessie Downs, Music Director



November 13th is Musical Sunday at UUCB this year, and the other Sundays, two additional services, and our Casual Concert this month will all offer further musically enriching experiences.

On November 6th, the music staff will share a preview of our Musical Sunday's featured classical composer – Robert Schumann. The service will open with a transformation of Schumann's "Widmung (Dedication)," composed by our own Chris Sierzchula. At the Offertory, Michael Harris will share a setting of the poem "Talismane (Charm)" by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a text about a universally welcoming God. This text will make further appearances in the choral offerings on Musical Sunday. As a Reflection, Taryn Goehrig will sing another Schumann song, "Die Stille (Silence)," about finding reverie in stillness. Finally, Chris will play a different version of "Widmung," this time by Schumann's contemporary, Franz Liszt.

On Friday November 11th at 11am, Michael and Chris will share music of healing and solace for our Veterans' Day service.

November 13th is Musical Sunday – our new tradition of a musically rich service that is the smaller production in comparison to our Spring "Music Sunday," as the Music Ministry juggles both this event and preparation for the holidays. Never fear, though, for this service – entitled "Singing as Spiritual Practice" will be a very special experience. Our Music Director Jessie Downs will be sharing readings, a story, and a sermon about the spiritual power of vocal practice, and the two featured choral numbers will help illustrate these ideas. The first of the two pieces - "Talismane-Charm" - was written by Jessie about 10 years ago and has been revised specially for this group and this event. It is partnered with the piece that inspired it - "Talismane" by Robert Schumann. The Prelude and Postlude are a similar pairing – excerpts from "Variations" by Downs, modeled after the "Geister Variations (Ghost Variations)" by Schumann. At the Offertory, our special guest instrumentalists – Megan Kyle (oboe) and David Abbott (viola da gamba) - will join Chris Sierzchula (harpsichord) in a piece by G.P. Telemann. With three different keyboard instruments and a double choir featuring 7 special guest vocalists, this is not an event to be missed!

On Saturday November 19th at 2pm, come support soprano Julia Anne Cordani – one of our Musical Sunday guests – and her newly formed choral ensemble *Incipio* as they present a variety of choral repertoire for this month's Casual Concert.

Sunday November 20th brings with it another special service – a gratitude hymn sing-along! This service's music will feature familiar hymns from our hymnals and provide everyone in the congregation an opportunity to practice raising their voices in thanks and praise.

That same day at 7pm, Liam Allen and Paul Zanolli will share contemplative numbers to enrich our Transgender Day of Remembrance service.

On Sunday November 27th, the choir will grace our sanctuary again with two numbers from our Elmwood Arts Festival performance - "Muss I denn" and "Going Home," as well as "Wanting Memories" by Ysaye Barnwell - all pieces about life, loss, love, and remembrance. Additionally, Taryn and Helen Lowry will sing the beloved duet from the musical *Wicked* - "For Good," which also deals with these same themes.



November Share-the-Plate: [Big Big Table Community Cafe](#)



Big Big Table Community Cafe opened on October 11, 2021 at 292 Hudson St., with a focus on addressing hunger, reducing food waste, and building community. Healthy, seasonal food, portion sizes, and flexible pricing allow for guests of ALL ages and incomes to receive delicious meals. With pay-as-you-can pricing and a significant volunteer component in day-to-day operations, everyone can earn what they need by giving what they have in abundance. Whether a guest has cash, time, or groceries to exchange for their meal, Big Big Table is a restaurant that welcomes everyone who comes in the door. After all, our motto is "Everybody eats. Everybody gives. Everybody matters." Hy Carrel will be dining at Big Big Table around noon on November 8th, 9th, and 14th and he enthusiastically welcomes anyone to join him for lunch.



UAIM NEWS

Community Conversation on LGBTQ and Disability Hosted by UUAIM & Center for Advocacy



UUAIM was scheduled to host a community discussion with Center for Advocacy on October 8th. The workshop was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. It is now scheduled for Saturday, November 12 from 1-3:30 in the Sanctuary.

UUAIM Hosts a Community Conversation on LGBTQ+ and Disability UUAIM has been convening people from the disability community, people from the LGBTQ+ community, and people who identify with both communities, to talk about the experiences people have had in Buffalo being both disabled and LGBTQ+. You are invited to join in this conversation on Saturday, November 12, from 1-3:30 pm in the Sanctuary and Livestreamed on You Tube. UUAIM, together with the Center for Self-Advocacy, GLYS, People Inc Prideability, the Self-Advocacy Association of NYS, and the Buffalo Niagara LGBTQ History project, will host a community conversation led by a panel of people who are both LGBTQ+ and disabled, and leaders in organizations that serve the community. - How can we build more inclusivity and accessibility in the gay community: agencies, services, venues and events? - What is the experience of people who are LGBTQ+ and disabled? - What are the ways in which ableism affects LGBTQ+ people, stigmatizing and pathologizing what is natural in human diversity? Historically, both LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities have been told there is something wrong with them. We have at times been seen through a medical model which labels anything that appears different from a limited standard of norm as deviant or in need of a cure. In many ways that has changed and is changing. How can we be a part of that change, heal the wounds caused by exclusion and oppression, and move in the direction of a society that recognizes the dignity and worth of all people? Join us to explore these and other questions, build relationships and broaden perspectives. ASL interpretation is available upon request. Please send your request to western@sany.org by November 1st.



Pulpit Flowers



Floral bouquets for the pulpit can be ordered for 2023. Please contact Sandra Bissontz at smp1127@yahoo.com to inquire or place your order. Cost is \$50 and the flowers are yours to take home after the service. If you chose not to take them, they will be given to Veteran's Hospital.



Tuesday Coffee Klatch

Join Rev. Joan for a cup of joe (or tea, or cocoa) Tuesday mornings 10am-11am in the parish hall. No program, no agenda, just fellowship and good company. All welcome! Someone might even bring cookies!

Legacy Creation info session—November 6 at 12pm in the Alliance Room

As part of UUCB's post Covid resurgence, the Endowment Committee is inviting interested UUCB members to attend an informational session on legacy creation through establishing commitments to UUCB's Endowment Fund. UUCB's endowment, which totaled \$1,275,484 as of August 30, 2022, is a safeguard against extraordinary circumstances and an indication of strength and stability for our UUCB community. The informal presentation will take place at 12 pm (after service) on Sunday, November 6th in the Alliance Room. Light refreshments will be offered. For questions, contact Andrea Burke-Harris, Chair, Endowment Committee at 716-812-6102; aburkeharris@gmail.com.



One of Trinity's tenants is the Stained Glass Association of America ([recently written up in Buffalo Rising](#)). They are throwing a party at Trinity on November 4 to raise funds for their foundation and a little for our windows restoration fund. It would be very kind of you to include the publicity in your parish communications.

The whole campus will be filled with glass making demonstrations and activities, including a hot glass demonstration in the church. Also, glass artists from across the country have been contributing pieces of art to be raffled or auctioned.

[**Get tickets here**](#)

How to be in touch with your Board of Trustees:

- To reach the Board, email board@buffalouu.org.
- Attend Board meetings (3rd Wed at 7pm in the Alliance Room or via Zoom):
<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/97736244745>.
- To view Current Board of Trustees members click here: [Board of Trustees](#).

Always be aware that Rev. Joan's Identity can be Used and Abused!

Many emails that look like they are from Rev. Joan are not! Rev. Joan will never: Ask you for gift cards via an email or send you an email on an account ending with gmail.com – **trust only her buffalouu.org account**. If you receive one of these emails, block the sender so they will be unable to send you any more requests. Sadly, there is nothing the church can do to stop the emails because they do not come from the church.



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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Nursery Care Coordinator: TBH		Monthly Newsletter (submissions due by the 15th) newsletter@buffalouu.org	Weekly Announcements (E-Blast) (submissions due by NOON Wednesday) announcements@buffalouu.org



A chalice alit since 1831
A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places

