



Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

February 2024

Gather-Inspire-Transform



Musings

Rev. Cathy Harrington, Interim Minister

What does it mean to be a people of justice and equity?

Dear ones,

Unitarians Universalists have a legacy of “deeds not creeds” that has led us to be the first to ordain women (Olympia Brown), the first to become welcoming to gay, lesbian, and bisexual people, and to support racial justice and marriage equality. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Who were they? Some you may recognize:

Four United States presidents: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Millard Fillmore and William Taft. Other courageous forebears were George Bancroft, P.T. Barnum, Béla Bartok, Clara Barton, Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Bergh, Charlie Bird, Ray Bradbury, William Cullen Bryant, Luther Burbank, Norman Cousins, e.e. cummings, Clarence Darrow, Charles Darwin, John Dewey, Charles Dickens, John Dietrich, Dorthea Dix, Charles William Elliot, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Fannie Farmer, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Fulghum, Margaret Fuller, William Lloyd Garrison, Charlotte Gilman, Horace Greeley, Edward Everett Hale, Henry Hampton, Andrew Hallidie, Francis Ellen Watkins Harper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, John Haynes Holmes, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Mark Hopkins, Julia Ward Howe, Samuel Gridley Howe, Abner Kneeland, Lewis Lattimer, Margaret Laurence, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, James Russel Lowell, Horace Mann, John Marshall, Herman Melville, Samuel Morse, John Murray, Paul Newman, Florence Nightingale, Thomas Paine, Theodore Parker, Linus Pauling, Beatrix Potter, Joseph Priestly, Elliot Richardson, James Reeb, Paul Revere, Horatio Alger, Louisa May Alcott, Susan B. Anthony, Adin Ballou m Robbins, Benjamin Rush, Carl Sandburg, Margaret Sanger, May Sarton, Pete Seeger, Rod Serling, Charles Steinmetz, Adlai Stevenson, Henry David Thoreau, Joseph Tuckerman, Kurt Vonnegut, Daniel Webster, William Carlos Williams, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

When I learned about UU history, I knew without a doubt that this was a faith tradition to which I could commit. Our history is rich with “community outreach” ministry. The social work movement, as we know it today can be traced back to Unitarian Joseph Tuckerman in the early 1800’s. Tuckerman’s Ministry at Large earned him the title, “Friend of the Poor.” Universalist Dr. Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, was noted for clearly defining the concept of alcohol addiction. Unitarians founded the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1865.

Unitarian laywoman Jane Addams founded the world-famous social settlement Hull-House in Chicago in 1889. Universalist Clara Barton organized the American Red Cross. Susan B. Anthony was a member of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester New York for more than forty years as she fought for the rights of women.

In the 21st century, and in this moment in history when our democracy is in peril, Unitarian Universalists are once again being called to act.

Beginning February 18, I’m offering a 2-part sermon series on the history of racism followed by a celebration of Black lives and their immeasurable contributions to our lives and our culture.

My understanding of America’s history (not taught in our schools) was fractured after I took a chronological African American Literature course at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. How could I share everything I had learned in that semester in one sermon? I begged the professor, Dr. Earl Braggs to do it for me but he declined. Instead, he outlined how it might be feasible in 3 sermons.

With deep humility and trepidation, I asked the members of color in the Gainesville UU Fellowship to help me, and

their participation and enthusiasm for the project evolved into a month-long event. We were able to acquire an art history exhibition from the University of Florida that chronicled the successful and thriving history of the all-Black Lincoln High School from its inception to its federally mandated closing in 1970. It turned out to be a powerful experience for the entire congregation and community.

During an interim ministry, anti-racism work is an important element of preparation for the future and the calling of your new settled minister. Coming to terms with our history is best accomplished in a safe, beloved community. These three services, Feb 18, Feb 25, and March 3 are only the beginning, and I hope you will join me on this journey that can unlock a future of true justice and equity for all.

In faith and love,

Cathy

Pulpit Previews



Feb 4: Heart to Heart by Rev. Cathy Harrington

Saturday, Feb 10 A Workshop with Liz James *Church of our imagination*

Society is changing, and so is the face of church! Beginning in 2012, the team behind Mirth and Dignity has been doing “UUism outside the box”. Their projects include everything from viral videos to social enterprise to an online community of 200,000 people. To do these things, they had to learn an entirely different way of doing things... They had to learn how to market, fundraise, grow communities in novel ways, and more. The “Church of Our Imagination” workshop covers the things that they learned that apply to modern congregations. Come learn about how other congregations (and other types of communities) are adapting successfully to change!

Feb 11: Inherent Mirth and Dignity

What do you do when the life you’d imagined for yourself is stuck in committee? Join us for the story of the UU Hysterical Society—a 200,000-person group on Facebook. It’s a story of feeling lost, finding yourself, and a practical joke gone right.

Liz James is the founder of a 200,000-person online UU community called the Unitarian Universalist Hysterical Society (UUHS); half of *The Cracked Cup* podcast; and working on a book with Skinner House Press.

Liz is based out of Saskatchewan, where she is building a tiny house with her own two hands. She believes in a Unitarian Universalism that is filled with meaning and joy, and that sees change as an adventure.

Feb 18: A History of Racial Injustice I, presented by Rev. Cathy Harrington

This week we will focus on the stories of enslaved people and the inhumane conditions they were forced to endure. We will also share stories of courage, resilience, and hope.

This is an opportunity to learn about our sometimes painful history and to commit to building a racially just future. We live in perilous and frightening times, but the time is now to join our hearts and minds together to reverse the downward spiral in which we find ourselves.

Feb 25: A History of Racial Injustice II, presented by Rev. Cathy Harrington

This week we will look at the Reconstruction Era, followed by Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Movement.

March 3: Celebrating Black Lives, presented by Rev. Cathy Harrington

This week we will honor African Americans who have changed the world. We will celebrate those African Americans who have enriched America through their art, literature, music, and courageous leadership. We will also explore the way in which racism impacts People of Color today.

Religious Education & Faith Development News



Greetings from the Religious Education Ministry!

Jess Pond, Director of Religious Education

Hello UUCB!

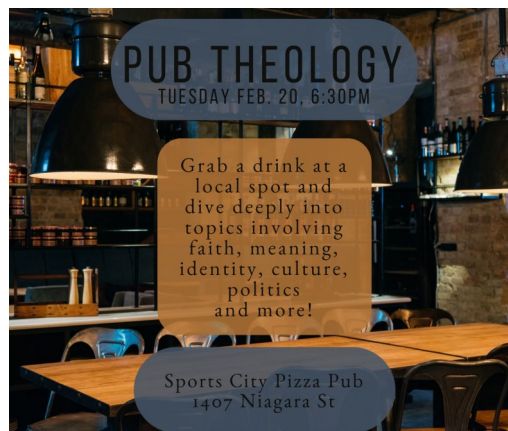
Register for Religious Education here: <https://forms.gle/4pCR9yikK9fAJgrA9>

Check out the Lifespan Religious Education Calendar here: <https://shorturl.at/hpyV5>

We can always use more volunteers in RE, especially for the Youth Group. If you're interested in volunteering, please email me at jpond@buffalouu.org.

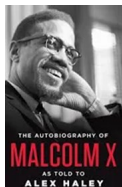
I hope you'll join us for some of the activities we have going on this month!

Sundays, February 4 & 11	Introduction to Sufism, 12:00-1:00 Harvard and Buff State professor Yunus Kumek will lead this course to 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. Sufism is generally referred to as Islamic mysticism or Muslim spiritual teachings in popular Western discourses. The meeting on 2/4 will meet in the Marge Gardner Lounge, and the meeting on 2/11 will meet in the Library.
Saturday, February 10	Community Potluck, Parish Hall, 5:00-8:00 Come share food, fun, and conversation with the UUCB community!
Saturday, February 11	SuUper Sunday, Parish Hall, after service Second Sundays are SuUper Sundays! If your children or youth would like to volunteer to setup, serve soup, or cleanup, please let Jess know at jpond@buffalouu.org .
Sunday, February 18	Special All-RE Program, Alliance Room, 10:45-11:45 On this Sunday, all children and youth will come together in the Alliance Room during usual RE class time to engage in a special program.
Tuesday, February 20	Pub Theology, Sports City Pizza Pub, 1407 Niagara St, 6:30-8:00 Grab a drink at a local spot and dive into topics of faith, meaning, identity, culture, and more! Please contact Jess at jpond@buffalouu.org to get updates on locations.



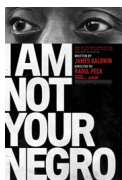
Adult Faith Development

UUCB Banned Book Club with Mary Lou and Sharon.



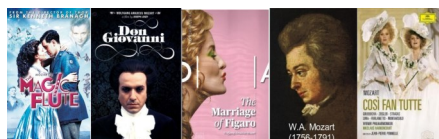
We meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month in the Marge Gardner Room, 7:00-8:30pm. All are welcome. Join us at any time. For more information, contact Mary Lou Hill and Sharon Walker at uucbbbc@buffalouu.org or DRE Jess Pond at jpond@buffalouu.org.

This month we're reading and discussing The Autobiography of Malcolm X as told to Alex Hailey.



We continue in March with Patricia McCormick, Sold.; April, Salman Rushdie, The Satanic Verses. May: we finish of the year with Alison Bechdel's Fun Home.

Special Banned Book Event: A special viewing February 4 following the service in the Sanctuary of "I Am Not Your Negro." Please join us for this 2016, award winning, documentary of James Baldwin's story of modern America with his unfinished novel, Remember This House.



ZAUBERMUSIK! MOZART'S MAGIC MUSICAL THEATRE MICHAEL HARRIS, INSTRUCTOR

Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo, 695 Elmwood Avenue; Buffalo, NY 14222

14 Meetings; Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m., January 10 to April 10, 2024

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

The course will look at all of W.A. Mozart's operas, and **we'll be holding class on Zoom only**. To register, send you check (made payable to UUCB) to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo; 695 Elmwood Ave.; Buffalo, NY 14222. [Put 'Mozart Course' on memo line of check.] For information, call 716-885-2136, or email: office@buffalouu.org.

Course Syllabus

Session One (January 10: Precocious Beginnings – *Die Schuldigkeit des erste Gebots* (1766-7)) and *Apollo et Hyacinthus* (1767)

Session Two (January 17): Early *Opéra Buffa* – *La finta semplice* (1769) and *La finta giardiniera* (1774-5)

Session Three (January 24): Early *Opéra Seria* – *Mitridate, re di Ponto* (1770), *Lucio Silla* (1772)

Session Four (January 31): Shepherds and Serenades – *Ascanio in Alba* (1771) and *Il re pastore* (1775)

Session Five (February 7): Mozart and Metastasio – *Il sogno di Scipione* (1772)

Session Six (February 14): The German Mozart – *Bastien und Bastienne* (1768) *Thamos, König in Ägypten* (1773, 1779), *Der Schauspieldirektor* (1786)

Session Seven (February 21): Masonic Fairy Tale – *Die Zauberflöte* (1791)

Session Eight (February 28): *Opéra Seria* Triumphant – *Idomeneo, re di Creta* (1780-81)

Session Nine (March 6): Metastasio Transformed – *La clemenza di Tito* (1791)

Session Ten (March 13): Toward a National German Opera – *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782)

Session Eleven (March 20): The Incomplete Mozart – *Zaide* (1779-80), *L'oca di Cairo* (1783), *Lo sposo deluso* (1783-4)

Session Twelve (March 27): Marrying the Comic and the Serious – *Le nozze di Figaro* (1785-6)

Session Thirteen (April 3): The Legendary Seducer Punished – *Don Giovanni* (1787)

Session Fourteen (April 10): Betting on the Battle of the Sexes – *Così fan tutte* (1789-90)

Music Notes

Dr. Jessie Downs, Music Director



This February, music of many kinds will come streaming from our sanctuary – choral arrangements of pop classics, guest jazz artists paying tribute to blues legends, romantic pieces for piano four-hands, and an opera from 1791 thoroughly reimagined for 2024.

On Sunday February 4th, the UUCB Choir will come back from a well-deserved break to share excerpts from Johannes Brahms's Liebeslieder-Waltzer and Neue Liebeslieder song cycles, accompanied by congregation members Bruce Pfeffer and Martha Malkiewicz on piano four-hands. These stunning romantic pieces capture the magic of falling and being in love.

Have you ever thought about joining the UUCB choir but have been too afraid to take the plunge? Music Director Jessie Downs invites anyone who might consider joining the choir to join the group's weekly rehearsal on Thursday February 8th from 7:30 to 9:45pm (leaving early is fine) to put together arrangements of "Blackbird" by The Beatles and "Anthem" by Leonard Cohen.

On Sunday February 11th, the UUCB Choir will sing these two beloved pop classics in the service featuring guest speaker Liz James. Pianist Christopher Sierzchula will also share a piano Prelude by enigmatic composer Alexander Scriabin. Bass Soloist Michael Harris and Chris will close out the service with a mirthful excerpt from one of W.A. Mozart's unfinished operas.

On Sundays February 18th and 25th, Reverend Cathy will be speaking about the "History of Racial Injustice." For both special services, the Music Ministry will feature guests that can help tell this story through song. While the music for the 18th is still in the works, local jazz legends Alex McArthur and George Caldwell will share the music of Billie Holiday on the 25th.

As many of you probably already know, **local opera collective Sotto Voce is putting on a reimagined production of W.A. Mozart's The Magic Flute in our sanctuary on Friday February 23rd at 7pm and Sunday February 25th at 3pm.** Come out for an unforgettable event weaving together live performances of Mozart's memorable music with dynamic original short films in English. [Tickets are available online](#) and in the Parish Hall after services between now and the show (\$25 general, \$50 VIP).

This month's Casual Concert on Saturday February 17th at 2pm will serve as a pre-event talk for the opera. This lecture recital will feature insight into the original elements of this production from stage and film director Alex Huddleston, and special sneak previews of Alex's films and Mozart's musical numbers. This is also a great opportunity to learn more about Sotto Voce, whose musical offerings have served as a part of UUCB's extended ministry to the Buffalo community through music and educational programming since 2016. The company also features many of the talented artists who serve our church community on a regular basis, including Jessie Downs (Pamina/Director, Music Director), Taryn Goehrig (First Lady, Soprano Soloist), Beth White (Second Lady, Choir Member), Helen Lowry (Third Lady/Production Designer, Alto Soloist), Shaun Doyle (Monostatos, Tenor Soloist), Leo Mitchell (First Armored Man, Choir Member), Phil Nicolai (Second Armored Man, Choir Member), Will Botsford (Priest/Production Assistant, Choir Member), and many other artists who support of our Music Ministry at special events throughout the year. Thank you from us all for supporting your local artists!



Announcements, Events and Opportunities, Oh My!

February Share-the-Plate: [Peaceprints of WNY](#)



Peaceprints of WNY is a Buffalo-based nonprofit helping individuals returning to the community from incarceration. With a mission of "strengthening communities by rebuilding lives", the agency is dedicated to providing resources, services, and support to justice-involved individuals and their families. In December, many of you joined with dozens of volunteers at Blessed Trinity church to assist Peaceprints in filling Christmas gift bags for hundreds of local prisoners, a little act of kindness that means a lot.

[Little Acts of Kindness - YouTube](#)

Women's Society Luncheon and Speaker Judge E. Jeannette Ogden, February 15th



Celebrating Black History Month, we are thrilled that Judge Jeanette Ogden has accepted our invitation to speak at our monthly luncheon. Our news is filled with legal matters, suits, barring of candidates, challenges to the abortion ban, and so many others, we are hoping that Judge Ogden will shed some light on all of it and model the courage to move forward. Reservations for the lunch which costs \$20/\$25, will be taken after the services on Feb 4 and Feb 11. This promises to be a stimulating and worthwhile event. Please join us!

Pulpit Flowers



Please consider sponsoring pulpit flowers for this year. Flowers cost \$50, and you can take them home to enjoy, or choose to donate the flowers to a local hospital. If possible, please return the plastic pot to Ted Bieniek, the head usher, or to me at a Sunday service. The florist can re-use the pot, and we can help save the planet. Please email **Sandra Bissontz** at smp1127@yahoo.com



Here Comes the Sun UUCB Fun & Fellowship Auction (In-person and On-Line) Sunday, April 21st

We've set the date: The auction will be both on-line and in-person. The in-person event will be on **Sunday, April 21st** before and after church. Stay tuned for details.

Be a Donor: Deadline for donations is **Sunday, April 7th**

Be a "Creative Force": Share your ideas for how to make the 2024 Auction a success! Contact the Auction Team through Juli Van Woert JVW61@aol.com and Andrea Burke-Harris aburkeharris@gmail.com.

Don't miss out on the fun! Thank you for your generosity and support

Greetings from the Board!

Dear friends, fellow congregants, and supporters of UUCB –

As we enter a new year with bright ambitions, let's take a moment to celebrate a wonderful 2023. Though we bid farewell to our beloved minister, Reverend Joan, we also welcomed in an exceptional interim minister, Reverend Cathy; our religious education programming has continued to expand and blossom, with exciting new events for kids and adults alike, including a monthly Pub Theology meetup, a recent church sleepover with the youth group, and plenty of game nights and potlucks; and our musical program continues to awe churchgoers and community members at Sunday services, monthly concerts, and special events, like the beautiful Prayers for Peace Collaborative Choral Concert in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We painted the kitchen! We were awarded a \$250,000 grant to support our upcoming capital campaign. And we've continued to welcome more community groups into the church.

Through our Sunday Share the Plate and the efforts of the social justice committee, we donated more than \$12,000 to local nonprofits. We rounded out the year with 250 active members and received generous pledges from 169 individuals and families and many additional donations and contributions for which we are so grateful as we could not operate our church or host our many programs without this support. Thank you!

Dear members, if you still need to make your pledge for 2024, please do so! It is so helpful for the Finance Advisory Committee and the Board of Trustees to have pledges in hand to estimate how much income we can expect for the year. If you don't know if you've made your pledge or have questions about what it is and where it goes – please talk to Rev. Cathy or a board member.

Please don't forget – board meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in the Alliance Room, and ALL MEMBERS are welcome to join us! We love company. We also can be reached at board@buffalouu.org (but please remember human volunteers are reading the emails and practice kindness).

And if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback about the budget or anything else, please catch me or any other board member after church on a Sunday or send us an email.

Many blessings,
Thea Hassan, BOT Treasurer

One last note!

We are delighted to welcome three new very accomplished board members: Denise DiPietro, Bill Parke and Paul Zanolli, and to also confirm the continued service of Christine Slocum as an elected Board member.

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, unless it's an Executive Meeting): <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/97736244745>. (If attending via Zoom, please email the board in advance)
- To view Current Board of Trustees members click here: [Governance](#).



The **UAIM (Universal Access & Inclusion Ministry)** team is planning a workshop in 2024 on



[Neurodiversity](#). We would like to have a panel discussion composed of people who identify as being neurodiverse. If you would like to be on the panel, please contact Ginny Vaughan at wixsonsg@gmail.com.

Pastoral Care & Support Ministry Team

We are the Ministry Team who send cards to members/friend who are experiencing a Joy, Concern or Sorrow. We also write cards twice a year to members/friends who cannot attend service or social events for various reasons. Some of our members have moved to be closer to their family but enjoy receiving cards from UUCB. If you would enjoy being part of the team or would like more information contact Ginny Vaughan at wixsonsg@gmail.com.

Gathering of Grievers

There is a Gathering of Grievers that meets regularly the second Sunday of the month. We meet in the Marge Gardner Room (next to kitchen) at noon. We welcome anyone who is grieving the loss of a loved one because we know that grief needs to be shared. For more info, contact Bonnie Collins at 716-867-9628.

Tuesday Morning Coffee Klatch



Paul Zanolli hosts a Tuesday Morning Coffee Klatch each week from 10am to 11am. Coffee and tea are available at the church. No program, no agenda, just a time to get together with good company.

Collage Club at UUCB!



Buffalo Collage Club Member and art educator Julie Carter is hosting the Buffalo Collage Club at our Church! Be ready to use varied materials and play with shapes, textures and colors to create a unique collage each month. Julie will provide guidance and a changing theme. No experience necessary. Feel free to bring any materials you'd like to use or simply work with what is provided. This class is free of charge.

We meet at Church on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 7pm to 8:30pm. See you there!

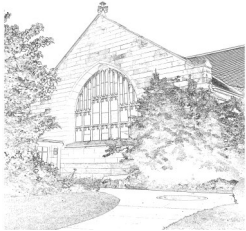
A reminder: Rev. Joan's Identity can still be Abused!

Be very cautious about any emails you may receive from Rev. Joan Montagnes (or any version of her name). Many emails that look like they are from Rev. Joan are not! If you do not trust the email, please do not respond. Instead, move to your spam/junk folder and report it to your email provider.

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,
695 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, New York 14222
716-885-2136, www.buffalouu.org

<p>Interim Minister: Rev. Dr. Cathy Harrington minister@buffalouu.org</p>	<p>Office Manager: Jennifer Cunningham office@buffalouu.org</p>	<p>Director of Religious Education: Jessica Pond jpond@buffalouu.org</p>	<p>Music Director: Dr. Jessie Downs jdowns@buffalouu.org</p>
<p>Pastoral Care & Support Network: Ginny Vaughan 716-768-1077 wixsonsg@gmail.com</p>	<p>Gatekeeper: Sara Kirkland office@buffalouu.org</p>	<p>Administrator for Finance: Donna Sentz donnasentz@buffalouu.org</p>	<p>Organist/ Accompanist: Chris Sierzchula</p>
<p>Nursery Care Coordinator: TBH</p>		<p>Monthly Newsletter (submissions due by the 15th) newsletter@buffalouu.org</p> <p>Weekly Announcements (E-Blast) (submissions due by NOON Wednesday) announcements@buffalouu.org</p>	



A chalice alit since 1831

A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places

