

ALL SOULS NEWS -May 2022  
All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church  
1330 Gotham St.  
Watertown, NY 13601



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**SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 A.M.**

"All Souls—the church that puts its faith in you"

**May 1 – Robert South: “Nurturing Beauty.”** The word "beauty" can mean many different things, so we will analyze what characteristics make something objectively aesthetically beautiful. It boils down to engagement with harmonious patterns in both time and space: patterns that interact with each other. But in the end, the patterns we appreciate the most will invisibly extend partly within us, and through us to all others we are connected with. So even though there are commonalities to beautiful things, it's only a tendency, and thus beauty really is in the eye of the beholder.

**May 8 – Reverend David Weissbard** returns for another service.

**May 15 – Sarah O'Connell: “Algorithms of Beauty.”** The Soul Matters theme, our resource for worship service ideas, is "Awakening Beauty," and Robert started the month off with a discussion of how we determine what beauty is as individuals. I'll be carrying that theme a bit further with a sermon presented by the Rev. Joan Javier-Duval about how we may include the recognition of beauty in our lives as a discipline in a way that benefits our minds, bodies and souls.

**May 22 – Reverend Dr. Kathy Hurt** was engaged by our Transitions Team to come help us figure out our direction as a congregation. We have a lot of deep decisions to make and she is highly qualified to help with this. This will be the start of her time working with us.

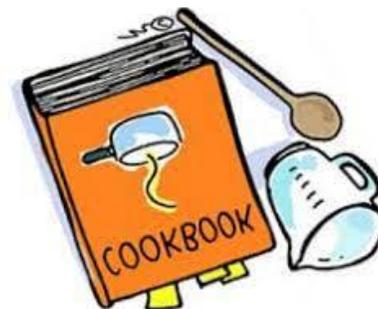
**May 29 - Robert South: “War vs Justice.”** War is the opposite of justice. In war the coin of the realm is group punishment. In justice, we are careful to blame only the guilty. In war, the brave and noble and innocent do most of the suffering, while cowardly bullies prevail. In a peaceful, just

environment we strive to protect and promote the success of the brave and noble and innocent. Problems occur when we see war presented as justice, and justice presented as war.

## Wondering Center

### What's Happening at the Wondering Center?

Again, sorry that we can't be together in the church because of the water damage and restoration work. Keep submitting those recipes of favorite winter or "Social Hour" recipes for an All Souls "Soul Feeding" Cookbook Originally, I suggested: Let's share our recipes for our favorite winter dishes. But I have expanded that suggestion to share your winter favorites and other favorites, especially the recipes for the foods you have taken to the Sunday social hour that were a big hit. You can also send a drawing. I'll put them all together in an All Souls "Soul Feeding" Cookbook. This is an activity for all ages — I would like to hear from children, youth and adults. Email me at my new email address (mercersarahfrances96@gmail.com) or write me at 179 Bishop Street, Watertown, NY 13601 or even call me at 315-788-4508.



-Frances Mercer

## Collector

### Warren Allen



Thank you for your support of our ASUU congregation, including any financial support which works in your finances. For the current 2021-2022 Fiscal Year, some of us pledged to try to pay \$38,702.24. As of April 26, this FY is now 81% gone, and we have thus far brought in pledge payments of \$33,331.33, which is 86% of the total of our individual goals. Twenty-one of our pledging families have by now fulfilled their own pledge including some who have paid more than their original pledge. And some of us don't pledge, but make donations when they can; donations thus far total \$760. And some of us give to our Generosity Project, which we treat as half funds to help our bills, and half is divided between two other charities for which we voted last June, and this project thus far this year is \$488.44. And then we received some rent donations, when we were socially distant before Flood II. The rents totaled \$1000, which was mostly Ann Halback passing on most of her income from leading t'ai chi classes. (After this flood, Ann moved her classes to a basement room at Asbury Church, plans to do them in the Park this summer, and says she looks forward to being back to our lovely building this fall.)

If you've looked in a window, you've seen the flood damage stabilized by removal of the soggy sheetrock along the floors. It's almost like going to a picnic, when we can be surprised to see our friends' ankles and knees underneath their usual kind smiles. At the moment, we can see our building's ankles and knees. We just recently got from our mutual insurance company two checks totaling \$210,837.76, of which a part is for what was quickly done months ago by our contractor and his crews.

Thus far, I've gotten nineteen pledge cards for the coming fiscal year. There were 36 pledges for this year ending soon; of them four moved or seemed to move away. Other pledges are welcome, as soon as families feel able. We have a lot that we can try to do together. Thanks

## *Opinion*

**Robert South**

### **Bylaw Tweaks**

A few weeks ago, I sent an email to the board proposing we put some minor bylaw changes before the congregation. We have decided to review policies this year, and put off focus on the bylaws for another time. After all, we just recently did a complete revision. Another one may be needed, but there are a couple of matters that I consider urgent. One corrects a minor but confusing oversight that could have big implications if interpreted wrong. The other represents a change to a long standing and important feature of our bylaws, yet one I consider vitally important for our ability to function and survive. There was a third proposal, but I've dropped it. The only board members who responded were the executive committee, and while they had questions about the first two items, they generally approved of them. The third item was more in question, so given that we weren't really planning on messing with the bylaws at all this year I guess we can put it off.

The way our bylaws are changed is that the board agrees on proposed changes, then presents them to the congregation in writing in advance of the meeting. The bylaws say the planned amendment must be included in the notice calling the congregational meeting, which is usually a postcard. To me, this implies that the members at the congregational meeting cannot amend the bylaws at the meeting. In fact that was the subject of the third proposed change I chose to drop. But my point in explaining this is to explain that I plan to bring these suggested changes to the board of trustees at the next meeting. If the board chooses to put them

before the congregation at the annual meeting, they will need to be included in the notice calling the meeting, usually sent out in May. The congregation should be made aware of these proposals as early as possible if they are going to be on the agenda in June, as I hope.

The first change I would make is to Article IV, Section 3, where it says, "All members of the Church shall have the power of voting on all matters and shall be eligible to hold any elective or appointive office. "

This is a problem, because it contradicts Article IV, Section 5, which says,

**"Section 5.** The policy of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church shall be to consider as active voting members only those who have signed the membership book and from whom, within the current fiscal year, there has been a recorded financial contribution or for whom there is a current signed pledge card on record."

Can people who have signed the book but not made a donation vote, or not? My solution is to make this change: **In the first sentence of Article IV Section 3 insert the word "active" between the word "all" and the word "members".** One of the main questions asked by the executive committee concerned the definition of active members, but that is very well defined. With my one word change, it's unequivocal that only active members can vote.

The other change regards quorum. "Quorum" is the minimum number of members present for a meeting to continue operating without breaking the rules. Our bylaws say that our quorum is set at 20.

**"Article V Section 3.** Twenty members qualified to vote shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting of the Church. At any meeting of the Church a lesser number than a quorum may vote only to adjourn the meeting. "

In the past we have floated dangerously close to losing quorum, and thus not being able to function or hold a meeting. I've heard that people who rarely attend have had to be called in historically, and during the most recent annual meeting we may have lost quorum several times as people came and went or went to the bathroom. This doesn't mean we *had* to adjourn the meeting: we could still keep meeting, we just couldn't do anything officially like take votes until we had 20 again. This flat quorum of "20" is out of step with how quorum usually works in

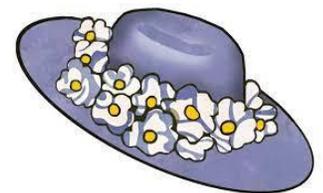
parliamentary procedure. Usually, quorum is a majority of the voting members. If you have 30 members, your quorum would be 16, for example. But bylaws trump rules of order, so our quorum is always 20. I want to change that in this way : **Article V Section 3 first sentence: Strike the word "twenty" and insert "A majority of active members."**

Thus, if our numbers dwindled to 9 active members, 5 of us could meet and do business if necessary. At cluster meetings I've met people from congregations this small. Now is this change based on pessimism? Am I saying we need to make this change because we are on a downward spiral that won't end? Not at all. I think it's more like a roller coaster. We'll come back up, there will be a resurgence after all our current troubles end. But if we dip too low to be able to function, we might not be able to do the things needed to come back up. We need to remove this straight jacket of 20 and make our quorum float depending on our population.

## *From the Historian's Files*

Here at All Souls we've been sporting our Easter bonnets for probably about 20 years and always trying to grab a group photo. Even COVID was not enough to break the tradition, as people were invited to show off their fancy headwear during the Zoom service.

I remember as a child wearing my beautiful Easter hat to Trinity Episcopal. My father also would give each of his 3 girls an orchid corsage. I found this little piece about the tradition of the Easter Bonnet:



"When celebrating Easter, many Christians don their best [apparel](#) to attend church services and family gatherings. On Easter Sunday, gentlemen often put on their best suits and [women](#) their fanciest dresses. Children, too, [wear](#) formal [clothing](#) on Easter Sunday. Girls in particular tend to [wear](#) an item of interest that seems to only appear once per year. Bonnets are part of the Easter attire for many girls, and even some women. Bonnets are part of long tradition of wearing new clothes on Easter that originated in parts of Europe, such as Great Britain. In fact, the tradition even dates back to Shakespearean times, as an "Easter suit" is referenced in "Romeo and Juliet."



2023 Easter Bonnets, by Sarah O'Connell

## News from the Transition Team

Reverend Dr. Kathy Hurt, a minister who is very well qualified in helping congregations sort out their futures, will be coming in person the weekend of May 19th - 22nd to begin some very important discussions with us. She'll meet with the board and also with as many members of the congregation as possible. You are invited to come to a gathering with her on Friday, May 20th, from 7 - 8:30PM. The location is still to be decided, but there will be refreshments and lively conversation! All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Rev. Hurt is making plans to travel to Watertown for the weekend of May 22nd. Her current plans are as follows:

**Thursday** -- arrive, settle in

**Friday morning/afternoon** -- we meet to clarify logistics/meet others who will be leading parts of the weekend

**Friday evening** -- congregation is invited to a first conversation. I'll have some general remarks about transitions in churches and some questions to get a conversation started. If you're sharing food at this point, maybe some snacks for the gathering. Timing might be 7-8:30.

**Saturday morning** -- gathering with Board or with committee chairs/key leaders for a focused conversation on steps in a transitions, outline specific challenges to be met to prepare for a new minister/options instead of a new minister. Afternoon free or a further gathering of key leaders if



desired, and I can take the group through a process that is intended to elicit the first elements of a vision.

**Saturday evening** -- potluck supper? Fellowship time?

**Sunday morning** -- lead worship. Congregation is invited to stay afterwards for an open question/answer time.

And following this, I'd prepare a report for the transitions team and the Board that summarizes what I learned, what next steps you might consider, major challenges, etc.

-Sarah OConnell



### **Red Cross Still Needs Blood**

Julie Jeffers reminds us that even though we can not host a Red Cross blood drive because our building is not available, there is still a need for blood. A little searching around will enable you to find a donation site in the area.

## *Around the Church*

### **Building and Grounds**

Things are moving along.

We received a couple large checks from the insurance company that have been deposited in our checking account.

Our reconstruction contract is in its final draft and will be ready to sign sometime today (4/20/2022) Work will begin within a couple weeks BUT will take a few months to finish.

We should be back in action sometime in August, if there are no further complications. ...

Our custodian, John Crupi, is still with us. He will begin cutting grass when it is ready and eventually back inside maintaining the building.

There has been a scurry to find alternate sheltering areas for a couple events that are coming up before the church is ready. One of the local churches will lend us space for one event and a tent will be rented for the other.

There will be a tree planting around Arbor Day in honor of Lois Creed. An ad hoc committee is working on the this.

The B&G ad hoc committee has selected a new wall paint color for the RE classroom; same light blue as found in the sanctuary/social hall.

New flooring cover has been selected. The Office, LaMothe Lounge, Informal Lounge, RE hallway, RE classroom, Archive room and Custodians room will receive an epoxy floor with scattered, colored flakes (blue, dark blue, silver, black). We are still working on the appropriate base color.

-Rebecca Carr



## Rummage and Trunk Sale in the Yard, May 7, Raindate May 14

All Souls will be holding a combined rummage/trunk sale in the parking lot of All Souls Church, Watertown, on Saturday, May 7 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a dollar bag sale from 1-2 for the rummage sale only. The church is located at 1330 Gotham Street, Watertown. (In case of rain, the event will be postponed until May 14.) No early birds, please.

The rummage sale is for people who have items they wish to donate with all proceeds going to the church. Because our building is currently closed, the sale will be held beside the parking lot. Participants will put their items on their individual assigned tables or parts of tables that morning (to be ready for the opening at 10 a.m.) and will be required to take away any unsold items after the event. We are not able to take items in early nor dispose of them afterwards.



People shopping at these sales will take their selections to a central cashier to pay. Items should have prices marked on them or the price will be considered "make an offer". **It is noted that no items should be included that are broken, soiled, etc.**

The trunk sale will be held in a different section of the parking lot. People who have items that they feel are more valuable can make direct sales from their own assigned tables. It will cost \$10 "rent" per vendor space, payable to All Souls, to participate in this section, and vendors will each be responsible for collecting payment but can keep whatever they make. Again, no items may be left behind. Vendors can also have a sale in the rummage section of the parking lot with proceeds going to the church. For more information or to reserve a rummage or vendor space, please contact All Souls at 315-788-2742 or [allsoulsuuchurch@gmail.com](mailto:allsoulsuuchurch@gmail.com).

## Spring Highway Cleanup May 21

The All Souls semi-annual cleanup will be Saturday, May 21 at 9 am. Please come and help clean our adopted highway from the church out to Route 12. If you want to participate, please send an email to Sarah O'Connell at [doon45@aol\(dot\)com](mailto:doon45@aol(dot)com). Wear work clothes and sturdy footwear. We will provide vests, hard hats, and gloves. Bring a "picker-upper" if you want. With four groups of 2 people each, it takes just a little over an hour, and makes for a great photo op!

-Sarah O'Connell



## Annual Reports

It's time to begin thinking about getting our annual reports in to the office. Our annual meeting falls on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in June. The faster you can get your report to the office, the easier it is to get the report together.

## **Every Month at All Souls**

### **CUUPS (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans)**

We will resume our meetings once the building is open.

## **And Every Week at All Souls**

The basket for your donations to the Urban Mission Food Pantry are always available for your donations. Also, Joanne Harter collects the orange bags in which our newspapers are delivered. She then delivers them to the SPCA to be used to keep the grounds clean.

We serve fair trade coffee during our pot luck coffee hours.

As always, Joanne Harter, our CDO (Chief Decorating Officer) appreciates help with the altar decorations.

## **Generosity Project**

Every year we choose two organizations to share half of our uncommitted plate collections. It works as follows: the collector tracks the uncommitted funds, and the congregation selects the organizations. At the end of the church year, we divide the uncommitted funds in half, retain one half, divide the remainder in half and send those monies to the chosen organizations. This year we chose Hospice and Planned Parenthood. Each organization receives 1/4 of the uncommitted funds for the year.

## **Find Us**

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ASUUCWatertown>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/allsoulsuuwatertown/>

315-788-2742

[www.allsoulsuu.org](http://www.allsoulsuu.org)

[www.facebook.com/AllSoulsUUWatertownNY](https://www.facebook.com/AllSoulsUUWatertownNY)

## **Phone Tree**

The default method of notifying the congregation of cancellations is to put the information on the website and email it out. However, some people would like to also be called on the phone. Rather than trying to call absolutely everyone, we are putting together a list of just those who prefer to be notified by phone. If that's you, then either reply to this email or call 315-921-1162

# Unitarian Universalist Association



## Unirondack

Registration is now open for the summer camping season. To check the schedule, go to [Unirondack.org](http://Unirondack.org)

## General Assembly

In-person Registration is required for all live GA events and programming taking place in Portland, Oregon. In-person registration includes access to virtual content available on the GA app, powered by Whova. In-person registration is the same process for delegates and non-delegates; delegates may register before or after determining their delegate status. General Assembly registration is required for all in-person participants, including in-person delegates. Register now! Full Virtual Registration is required for access to virtual GA programming, including workshops, worship services, the Ware Lecture, featured speakers, opening and closing celebrations, exhibits, entertainment, and networking. Virtual GA programming will be streamed on the GA app, powered by Whova. Delegates will use the GA Delegate Platform for discussion and voting during General Sessions. Virtual registration is the same process for delegates and non-delegates; delegates may register before or after determining their delegate status. Register starting March 1 Business-only Virtual Registration provides access to the GA Delegate Platform for discussion and voting during General Sessions. Payment is not required but a donation to offset production and platform costs is suggested. Business-only registrants will access to delegate chat rooms but will not have access to GA programming, the GA app, networking opportunities, or the exhibit hall. GA delegates are strongly encouraged to register as Full Virtual Registrants. Register starting March 1



## UN Envoy News

Allison Hess, who has spoken at All Souls, is leaving her position at the UU office in the UN. She has held the position for 7 years. She is being replaced at the monthly meeting for Envoys by UU@UN Director Bruce Knotts.



The 2022 Intergenerational Spring Seminar will take place April 22 – May 1, 2022, focused on the theme “Displacement and Human Rights: All in for Climate Justice. It is hosted by the UUA Office at the United Nations in partnership with UU Ministry for Earth, UU Service Committee, and Side with Love. For those not registered to attend, a few programs during the event will be open to the public, including the Theme Panel at the UN on Tuesday, April 26. Beyond the Spring Seminar, opportunities to engage with this topic

will abound, including around United Nations Sunday (October 23) and the upcoming COP27 UN Climate Summit in November.

**Community Outreach: [www.assistedliving.org](http://www.assistedliving.org)**

- Senior Care Resources in NY
- <https://www.assistedliving.org/new-york/>
- <https://www.assistedliving.org/assisted-living-near-me/>
- <https://www.assistedliving.org/cost-of-assisted-living/>
- <https://www.assistedliving.org/senior-housing/>
- <https://www.assistedliving.org/independent-living/>

**All Souls UU Church Board of Trustees**

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Office Administrator: Volunteers  
Custodian: John Crupi  
Music: Toni Zygadlo  
Childcare:  
Religious Education: Frances Mercer

Board meetings are held the forth Thursday at 9:30 AM via Zoom. Contact the office for the link. Meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

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PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER NO LATER THAN THE 15<sup>TH</sup> OF THE MONTH. ITEMS ARE APPRECIATED AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

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## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



We affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

### Our Principles

#### **Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:**

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

### Our Mission

- The mission of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church is to create an environment in which personal and spiritual growth is encouraged; and where each of us is free to explore our individual beliefs and search for meaning.
- We strive to be a warm, supportive, nurturing and inclusive religious community where all people are respected and honored because of their uniqueness.
- We promote acceptance, diversity and social justice through our dealings with each other and our actions in the local and global community.

Visitors are welcome! If, as a visitor to our church community, you find yourself in agreement with Our Principles, please consider joining our church community. Just sign our membership book in the presence of two board members.