

ALL SOULS NEWS -September 2026

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church

1330 Gotham St.

Watertown, NY 13601



Life starts all over again
when it gets crisp in the
fall.

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SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 A.M.

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

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

September Services

September 6 – Labor Day weekend, no service

September 13 – Joanne Harter: "Our Traditional Rock and Water Service."

Bring a rock and water from your travels. And of course, the tales behind them!

September 20 – Rev. Cindy Terlazzo: "Turning Points - Facing the Future with Love and Commitment"

September 27 – Harriet McMillan & Robert South: The board will report back to the congregation about the August board retreat, and in-person board meeting September 26.

From Our Minister

Rev. Cindy Terlazzo

As we all get ready to enter into a new church year it is my hope that you all have had a summer filled with exactly what you needed. As you know I was off the month of July. I was able to spend time with family and friends. I spent time exploring many local offerings of music, nature and history. I took part in a very soul nourishing retreat and enjoyed simply being at home (and trying to outwit and keep my garden safe from the neighborhood groundhog and squirrels).



The month of August has invited me back into church work. I have been busy reconnecting with various committees, visioning with the board at the board retreat, meeting with colleagues, planning worship and thinking about what might best meet the needs of this community in the coming year.

The biggest project on my radar for this community in the coming year is helping All Souls UU develop a process and a timeline to explore what the next chapter of this beautiful community might hold. We have spent time in the past year considering the various paths that could be taken – from continuing to do what has been a maintenance course, to engaging in a full front effort to grow, or to consider what it would mean to right size operations (this could mean anything from figuring out how to make better use of sharing the physical space with other organizations in the Watertown area to considering selling the building and reestablishing operations in a space that would be easier to maintain).

What needs to be at the center of any of these paths is for this community to clarify its reason(s) for being. Having clarity about why this community exists will help tremendously as the various paths are explored. I know this sounds like a lot of work – and it is. And I believe that it is very good and necessary work to engage in.

All Souls has had many points throughout its history when the community needed to make decisions about its future – from rebuilding after several fires, dealing with flooding of the current location and making it through a pandemic. I believe that All Souls is at another inflection point and I have absolute faith that this community can and will find a path that leads from simply surviving to thriving.

Stay tuned for details as leadership works to develop a process through which all paths can be explored and considered and through which all who are interested in helping create the next chapter can be involved.

It is my honor to journey with you.

In Loving Service,
Rev. Cindy

From the President's Desk

Harriet McMillan

Oh my gosh--my grandchildren are growing up. The first is getting married and the last is going back to college for her sophomore year. This is not unexpected but it still catches me by surprise.

At the same time, our church year is beginning. As we look at the status of the church, it seems as if we are at a point where decisions need to be made.

At our August retreat, we spent the first part "visioning" our future. We seem to have three options:

- Continue doing as we have been, maintaining our building and enjoying our Sunday services.
- Make a concerted effort to grow, which we think we have been doing.
- Sell the building and move and/or close the church.

That's laying it out bluntly for us all. With Rev. Cindy's help, the board looked at the possibilities and what comes next. Stay tuned.

Regardless of what we choose, there are things we need to do in our church home. Have you been by the nursery lately? Boxes are stored there with items stored after the second flood. We need to get that emptied out. I would love to have a volunteer to paint and freshen up the rolling bulletin boards. Then I'm hoping volunteers will change the bulletin boards to something current. Talk to me! I'll be glad to sign you up for any job!

From Collectorland

Warren Allen Thanks for your time in working in our congregation, and thanks for your dollars to help pay our bills.

Here's an update on our prior fiscal year, to include also the dollars which we brought in during the final three weeks, after our Annual Meeting ~

- ~ Towards family annual pledges, we brought in a total of \$32,612.
- The currency in the plates, plus checks marked "Generosity Project", totaled \$3,147.68.
- Donations towards our Fair Trade coffee were \$105.
- Unpledged checks from those that didn't do pledges ahead of time totaled \$4,331.
- Rent donations from some of the groups which met here totaled \$1975.
- Then there were two "pass-throughs", of \$316 donated which we turned over to Rev Cindy so that she can use it for special needs which she sees,
- and \$150 for the planting of a special tree on our grounds.
- And some of us also brought in \$4,143 in special gifts towards our costs of re-siding the building to overcome leaks left after too-short staples had been used to attach the previous siding.
- And we got a rebate of \$47 from Panera from a number of meals which some of us got there. I deposited \$5,000 grant which we were granted by NYSCUU last March.
- There were also two amounts which did not go through my fingers. A generous long-term friend gave us monthly gifts totaling \$180 last year through PayPal. And a

pledger directly donated funds which covers our second monthly bills from National Grid, which is just for our outside lighting in our parking lot.

- For this current 2026-27 year, 20 families have pledged a total of \$43,130, including generous anticipated gifts so that we could finish the siding. One of these pledges came from a friend who had pledged in some prior years, but last year just sent unpledged generous checks.
- A few of us who had pledged during our prior years have not yet pledged for this year.

If you now better see how your own income is expected, feel free to write out a pledge on some recycled envelope. Thank you!

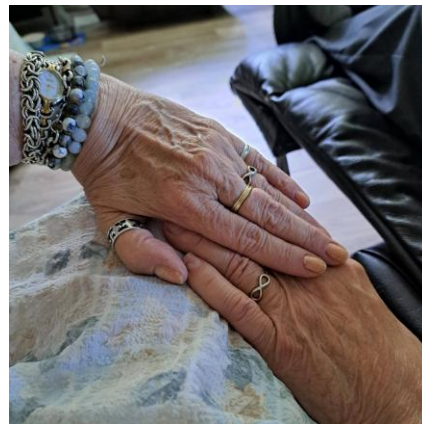
~From the Historian's Files –Sarah O'Connell

Our Memorial Garden was dedicated on September 27, 1992. Pictures from this summer.



People News

Scenes from a handfasting! Joanne Harter and Neil Tianan, July 19, 2026





(A true example of "in sickness and in health: Neil is currently at his home in St. Paul, Minnesota. He had fallen at his home after I had returned to Watertown, went to the ER to be sure he had no further head trauma (there wasn't any) and entered "Transitional Care" where he received both Physical and Occupational Therapy upon discharge from the hospital. Neil has now returned home from "Transitional Care", He's very happy to be back in his own place, and looks forward to resuming his usual routine, and my next visit, probably in later September. The original fall, leading to the subdural hematoma, happened in early July at the beginning of his visit with me. The hematoma developed very slowly, causing gradual weakness, but no typical head trauma symptoms. Healing vibes to Neil!)

On the Mend

Rev. David Weissbard on the mend from heart surgery



Thanks to Joanne Harter for reposting this photo of Dave, soon after his surgery.

Heather's Kitchen

Heather Winn

My mama's seafood salad

1 pkg crab meat (real or imitation)

1 pkg small shrimp

1 pkg lobster meat

1 lb box of pasta o's or any kind of pasta

1 cup each of chopped celery, onion, green pepper, cucumber, radishes.

3 cups mayonnaise (or 1 cup of mayo and 1cup Italian/ creamy Italian dressing)

**Cook pasta, chopped meat and vegg. mix together
add mayonnaise and chill.**

Memorial Garden Fall 2026

Summer is winding down and school will be starting before we know it! But some things don't end with summer.

Our Memorial Garden has come a long way this year. Instead of an overgrown place full of weeds and hosta, we have worked very hard this year. We brought in some new plants and removed lots and lots of weeds. The dangerous metal edging has almost totally been removed and we are in the process of repairing and beefing up the fencing around the garden. Additional new fence posts and deer deterrent measures are in the works. A new gate is also being made and should accent the area nicely. I hope you will find a few minutes to enjoy the beauty and changes taking place!

Around the Church

Lunch Anyone? September 9!



Note from Harriet McMillan and Eleanor Allen: We went to lunch at the Crystal in mid-December and enjoyed ourselves so much that we thought it would be fun to establish as a routine for church people who would also like to get together for lunch. Weather permitting, join us at the Crystal on Public Square in Watertown on Wednesday, September 9 at 11:30.

Craft Night September



September 11th 6-8pm

Autumn Tea Towels with Leaf Imprints

Join in as we start getting ready for Autumn. What?! Autumn? Where did Summer go? Wake up! It's August already!

This year has just been zipping by and, as we have our end of Summer Picnics and Family Get Togethers, Craft Night starts to think of cooler weather, school, and Fall Type Event Crafting.

Join in with a fun project which takes Plain Tea Towels and turns them into Colorful Fall Decor!

Choose your colors and leaves. Wear outdoor shoes, sneakers etc. to collect a few leaves outside the church or bring your own. Other materials supplied.

We are using **paint**. So, please **dress down!**

Kids Welcome!

Let's have some FUN!

Semi-Annual Road Cleanup in October

The All Souls semi-annual cleanup will be Saturday, October 10 at 9 am. Please come and help clean our adopted highway from the church out to Route 12. If you want to participate, sign up on the clipboard which will start being circulated in the Eaton Social Hall. 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!

Rummage Sale in October

The Membership and Activities committee is planning a Rummage Sale for October 17th. As we have it conceived right now, the sanctuary will be open for storage of sale items on the 12th and 14th during office hours, then on Friday the partition will be opened up and the sale space set up for people to bring in items and place them for sale all day. The sale will have two modes. Members can have their own table where they are the cashier and keep the proceeds and have to take away what they don't sell. Or, people can bring in donated items to be sold by the church for the

church. These will be placed on tables with prices for everything on that table, so there may be a 5 dollar table, a 20 dollar table, etc. Shoppers bring items to a central cashier, who trusts which table they got it from and all proceeds from this stuff go to the church. The regular sale will run from 10 to 1 Saturday. From 1 to 3 Saturday, everything at the church tables is free and from 2 to 3 all tables are church tables. That means get your stuff out of there by 2 or we give it away. We will only advertise that the free hour is 2 to 3, but the church tables will start early.

That's the current plan.

Notes from Harriet about Board Retreat...

Rev. Cindy gave us an assignment at our retreat:
Put what you are feeling about the task ahead in 6 words.

We decide on how to decide

compassionate, creative explanation of next chapter

Beginning Foundation Change Flounder Decisions Growth

Stepping into the mystery with love

Prepare Arrive Vision Repeat Process Hope?!

Help, grace, trust lead the way

We're happy in our rocking chairs

All manner of things will be well

Dedication Growth Plateau Falling Catching Surviving

Don't forget to laugh and cry

Avon Shoes becomes All Souls

Make our building serve our community

To reverse decline we choose change

Do any of these sentences represent your feelings? Can you think of 6 words that describe how you feel about the coming task before us?

-Harriet McMillan

Membership & Activities Committee

Kelly Sackheim, Chair

Thanks to all who participated in our Sunday, July 26 in-person Membership & Activities Committee open meeting after Robert's Service. Folks are invited any time to make suggestions for member activities.

My notes reflect that the following ideas were brought up for ways to engage our members/friends and prospective participants - between Newsletters, we'll be trying to keep people informed with the Weekly Post.

Our regular monthly activities now include 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Fridays (CUUPs x2 and Craft Night), and 4th Saturday (Game night), plus 2nd Wednesday Lunch at the Crystal.

Eleanor recommended we try, perhaps in September, a weeknight "Soulful Sundown" of the UUA (AI Overview: Soulful Sundown is a regular contemporary Friday evening service series featuring poetry, reflection, and live music held by Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations—most notably led by Rev. David Carl Olson with The Cosmic Orchestra at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock (UUCSR) in Manhasset, New York, alongside other regional UU groups like those in Southold and Santa Monica.) - could we select a date and get some help organizing?

Perhaps in October, we could try what was done in the past, to have members volunteer to host a home potluck, for which folks would sign up.

November brings Thanksgiving and we'll definitely have dinner again at All Souls UU.

Since Kat offered to do a youth-oriented craft, it was suggested that in December there could be a Christmas cookie decorating activity.

Kelly mentioned familiarity with ongoing get-togethers of a smaller group of members, such as a "Friends on the Path" UU discussion (monthly topic, same group, usually no more than 8 individuals) or a monthly rotating meal at the home (or alternate location?) of each member of the group.

Following up on Robert's service, and perhaps scheduling on Sunday as we have periodically had discussions in the past, one or several small groups could be formed to have a discussion of beliefs on a recurring basis.

Social Justice and Action

[Ed. Note (Sarah): Kelly puts in an incredible amount of time and energy working with the immigrant population with their legal cases as well as many other personal services – she says she does it for the great food, but I think we all know better. She has meticulous records for all she does and I am just wowed. This is just a small bit of that.]

An Immigrant Work Update

The number of Detainees with whom I have been in contact since October 2025 has approached 70 in July. TWO immigrants whom I had gotten to know well (in contrast to those I saw once being granted Bond-Release while observing Court hearings via WebEx, or one Individual for whom I facilitated travel home when I was contacted after he had been granted Bond) were released from Detention!

1. **Freddy** from Venezuela was transferred from Batavia to Massachusetts just before his hearings, but remained in contact and was supported by Pro Bono attorneys to return to his

wife in Plattsburgh, NY after he had first reached out to me from detention in late May. I am continuing to support Freddy's appeal of his Asylum case that was denied while he was detained in Massachusetts without an opportunity to present a detailed case, and anticipate that when my schedule permits we will finally meet in Plattsburgh.

2. Haitian **Bradley** (with whom I communicate in Spanish) initiated his Pro Se Habeas Corpus Petition by signing and submitting forms that I had translated to English (two weeks after Ecuadoran Alcivar who is still awaiting a final judge's decision, and concurrent with forms that he assisted Guatemalan Oscar in preparing) and only retained an Attorney for a hearing at the end of the two month process that resulted in his release.

I picked Bradley up from Batavia, and was limited to visiting with only two of the 17 other detainees with whom I had been in contact that week, and after 3 days in Watertown, drove him to Brooklyn for his first post-Detention ICE-check-in. His sponsor, who was planning to move from Nevada was forced to be present, and the two were then ordered to leave for Nevada within 24 hours!), after spending the night at the home of an immigrant-activist in the Bronx. After dropping off Bradley, I met in Manhattan with the Dominican-US dual citizen aunt of another Batavia Detainee, and enjoyed carry-out Latin American dinner in the park.

Guatemalan Pedro Baltazar, with whom I first established contact in December, continues to face obstacles to be released from Batavia Detention. He had been briefly transferred to Louisiana, from which his attorney was able to obtain his return before deportation. His wife shared with me a news report from WGBH about the mental health consequences of ICE Detentions - that includes a picture of their family at the end.

<https://www.wgbh.org/news/local/2026-08-07/silent-detention-mental-health-impact-of-ice-arrests-on-families-reaches-crisis-point> (see image from end of article)



Silent detention: Mental health impact of ICE arrests on families reaches crisis point

Immigrant families are facing an unprecedented mental health crisis due to detention, and the barriers to getting help are both structural and cultural.

🔗 wgbh.org



Monthly at All Souls

CUUPS (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans)

CUUPS will be meeting on the first and third Friday of each month. Gathering begins at 6:30 PM, the meeting begins at 7 PM.

Craft Night

*Unless noticed otherwise, 2nd Friday

~~Around the second Tuesday~~ 6-8 p.m., watch the Weekly Post for changes.

Lunch at the Crystal

We're meeting at the Crystal Restaurant on the 2nd Wednesday at 11:30 for conversation and community.

Game Night

*Unless noticed otherwise, 4th Saturday

6-8 pm

~~Join us on the third Friday of the month from 5-7~~ to play games. There are many games available for us all to play. We provide pizza, and you can feel free to bring a treat.

And Every Week at All Souls

The basket for your donations to the Urban Mission Food Pantry is always available for your donations. 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 three because the votes were so close. We chose the New York State Zoo, the Victims Assistance Center, and Community Dinners at Emmanuel Congregational Church. Each organization receives 1/6 of the uncommitted funds for the year.

Unitarian Universalist Association

Rev. Kimberly Debus

Hold My Chalice , excerpted from her monthly column

Rev. Debus authors this column in the UU World. She also will serve the Canton UU Church this coming year as its interim minister.

Like many organizations, AUUMM has had its ups and downs, and while the support and the ministries have continued, there were some rough times for leadership in the first part of this decade. By the time I returned to regular conference attendance in 2024, a lot had been identified and new leadership was in place, but you could feel the heaviness of what the organization had been going through, and mostly heard of the commitment to address the issues.

Now I don't know what all the issues were, and that's not my story to tell. But I can tell you that despite the joy of being together and the beauty of our music making, you could feel the weight of them bearing down on the leaders.

A year later, in Atlanta, much work had been done to resolve issues, and there was a sense of relief; it's that feeling when you reach a goal on something hard and breathe that heavy sigh but can't quite celebrate yet, because not everything is done yet. As a simple example, it's like cleaning out the garage, but then there are piles of things still in the driveway that have to be taken to the dump or put away, or prepped for the yard sale.

So now, another year, and we're in Milwaukee. We've wrapped up more of that work, we've put processes in place, and we've even hired someone to help with marketing and outreach so we can continue to thrive. As a result, we blew past our goal of 250 attendees and had over 300 (online and in person) - with 116 first timers! Leadership has seen us through the storm, has tackled the work, and in two years went from "maybe we should just burn it down" to "the state of AUUMM is strong."

How? How did a continental organization of people who are artists, not accountants,

policy wonks, and conflict managers change course so quickly, strongly, and elegantly? And how can congregations who also have issues like this wearing them down not let them fester for a decade or more?

It was AUUMM president Jen Heyman who said it best: "if you're going to do hard things, do them with people you love and trust."

TRUST.

How many of our congregational leadership teams actually trust one another?

Oh, there's history? No organization is without it. Oh, your systems are complicated? Every system is. Oh, no one has time to dedicate to it? Our leaders are religious professionals. But we're so small... no one wants to volunteer... no one can agree. Okay, so start small.

Start with a small group of committed people, willing to trust the process, trust each other, and put in the work. I will tell you that the road will be hard, and there will be naysayers, but results speak volumes, so be transparent. Here's what we have done, here's what we are facing, here's what we're going to try next. That small group has to trust each other. Loving each other helps too - that cuts down on the tiny resentments and frustrations. But trust - that's the key.

If a far-flung professional organization can turn around in two years, so can a single congregation. But you have to be committed to the work, committed to the trust, committed to following through.

When you do that work, you become attractive and appealing. I'm beginning to think that system health is the X factor in attracting and retaining new folks; it's stealthy, but it seeps through the pores of the place, and folks can tell.

And now if you have this in your head, my work here today is done

All Souls UU Church Board of Trustees

President: Harriet McMillan
Vice President: Robert South
Secretary: Kelly Sackheim
Treasurer: Eleanor Allen
Trustee: Mimi Litsche
Trustee: Rob Blankemeir
Trustee: Chris Coughlin
Trustee: Kat Hammond
Trustee: Mimi Litsche

Staff

Minister: Rev. Cindy Terlazzo
Office Manager: Robert South
Custodian: John Crupi

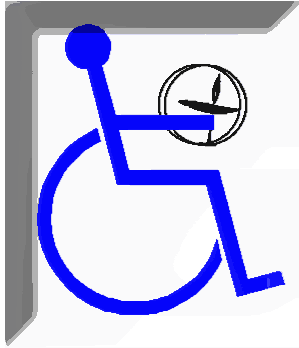
Board meetings are held the fourth
Saturday at 9:30 AM via Zoom.
Meetings are open to all members
of the congregation. Zoom link is
available on the website.

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

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Watertown, NY 13601
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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.