

ALL SOULS NEWS -March 2025
All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church
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Watertown, NY 13601



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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

Snow!

In the event we need to cancel a service because of the weather, a notice will be posted on the opening page of our website www.allsoulsuu.org.



March Services

Through All Souls' subscription to the Soul Matters Sharing Circle, the Worship Committee has access to many resources for planning and carrying out Sunday services. Each year Soul Matters suggests monthly worship themes—the theme for March is "trust". In the materials for March, Rev. Michelle Collins, Soul Matters Worship Researcher, says "The practice of trust has deep roots in UU history, particularly in the movement's emphasis on religious freedom and the democratic process. Early Unitarians and Universalists trusted individuals to seek truth for themselves, rejecting authoritarian creeds and doctrines. ...early Universalists trusted in the ultimate reconciliation of all souls, emphasizing the boundless love of God instead of fear or judgment. These theological and historical commitments to freedom and love reflect an enduring trust in human agency and in the divine."

March 2nd - Frances Mercer - "Trust, Everyday Sacred, and Begging Bowls." Inspired by Sue Bender's book, *Everyday Sacred: A Woman's Journey Home*, Frances will guide us through an exploration of "trust" as an essential beginning for and the sustaining essence of a human journey towards understanding and experiencing our everyday as sacred.

March 9 – Rev. David Weissbard: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil . . ."

I was told many years ago that a minister can repeat a sermon after seven years. The theory behind that is that congregations do not remember anything a minister says for that long. I have another theory, which is that "There is nothing new under the sun. If it was worth talking about seven years ago, it is still an issue." [You can quote me.]

The title above was the subject of the 5th sermon I delivered from this pulpit. [2007] Actually, while there are things in it that are out of date, there is, sadly, much about it that is just as relevant today. We'll see if you agree when I offer an updated version on March 7th.

March 16th Rev. Caroline Bright The Worship Committee is very pleased that Rev. Bright will be presenting in person and very appreciative to Karen Hall who encouraged the Committee to contact her. At the conclusion of a two-year internship, she was ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister in September 2024 by the Main Line Unitarian Church in PA. She earned a Master of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School.

She has been asked to speak from her heart and passions. Some of her passions are highlighted on her website — "creating inclusive spiritual spaces", "building a welcoming and supportive community for people at every stage of life", "deep commitment to nurturing spiritual growth", "dedicated to supporting new parents and empowering women as they navigate life's transitions and challenges", "proving leadership for *The Wherever Congregation* initiative." There are other details in the text of the website and the several video samples of her sermons that fully support her "vibrant and diverse background": "A proud Vermonter crowned Miss Vermont in 2010", "dual citizenship—Canada and United States", she and her husband "balance life between Philadelphia and Vermont, raising their three young children", "alongside ministerial work, works as a flight attendant", "brings her trademarks humor, warmth, and adaptability to every facet of her busy life". Watching the videos of her sermons was delightful—they were full of humor, currency, insight, challenge and inspiration. We have much to look forward to.

March 23rd – Frances Mercer: "How can we use what we learn from Brene Brown's "Anatomy of Trust"?" Brene Brown is Ted-Talks-and-Netflix-Documentary famous. She is also a researcher, author, and consultant. One of the features of her website is SuperSoul Sessions. The one we will be viewing is entitled "The Anatomy of Trust". Based on research and analysis, she discusses the elements that are necessary to create and sustain individual, group and community relationships characterized by trust—BRAVING (boundaries, reliability, accountability, vault, integrity, nonjudgment, generosity). To learn not only from the presentation but also from each other we will break into small groups to share and process our reactions to and take aways from "Anatomy of Trust".

March 30th – Frances Mercer: "How might reflection and sharing in small groups enrich the Sunday morning experience at All Souls?" Sunday is the day we gather for an hour-long Sunday celebration in the sanctuary followed by another half to full hour of potluck eating and conversation. Sometimes on Sundays we also meet for congregational conversations or committee meetings.

Sundays we interact with each other face to face. Sunday is a good day to be together for most of us. A day of pause, a day of reconnecting, a day of reflection and renewal, a day to appreciate our search for meaning. But for me, and maybe for others, I still feel something is missing. I still yearn for more ways to build supportive people connections within my spiritual community. One of those ways could be small groups for reflection and sharing or small group ministry. I will share my thoughts and research on the various ways this might be done at All Souls.

From the President's Desk

Robert South

The board has taken the advice of Bernier Carr Associates, and two Congregational Conversations, and we are proceeding with plans for building stabilization. The BCA report says some areas need to be done within the next couple of years, others can wait up to five years. We are going with vinyl siding. BCA will draw up detailed plans for all the work they told us to do, but we will only solicit contractor bids for the west and south sides of the building initially. This would include siding and work on the rain chain area. The north and east sides, including removal of stone walls, would wait. We will take the plans and request proposals from various contractors. Work might start this year or wait till next year. It's still undecided exactly what we will do for a "clerk of the works."

A paragraph sharing classified information has been omitted here.

The pledge drive starts on March 9th and continues until April 13th. Outside of those times we will not accept your money. Please also return the card about what kinds of activities (volunteering) you are interested in.

Pledge Drive: What's Your Vision for the Future, Starting with the Coming Year?

The annual All Souls pledge drive starts on March 9th. The Membership and Activities committee (Robert, Kelly, Harriet, and Warren) is acting as the Pledge Drive committee this year. Until April 13th, we will make a themed presentation every Sunday regarding some aspect of stewardship. We have also revised the pledge card. A block was added to offer an opportunity to make an extra donation for needed building repairs. You will have the opportunity to clarify which household members are covered by your pledge. Also, an additional card will be included asking which kinds of volunteering activities you would be interested in. These will be available for pickup on March 9th, and those not picked up will be mailed. The Member Data Card will be sent out separately later in the year.

Collectorland

Warren Allen



We met via Zoom on Feb 16 and took no collection that day, so here are the figures through Feb 9. This fiscal year goes until the end of June. For this year 27 families had pledged a total of \$35,497, plus one other pledge was towards some of our electricity costs. Of that \$35,497, by February 9 we have brought in \$25,982. That date was 62% through this fiscal year, and we had received 73% of those pledges, including twelve families who have already brought in at least their annual pledge. Thank

you!

And some of us don't do a pledge for the coming year — we bring in financial support when we can. These unpledged donation checks total \$2375 thus far. Thanks! And sometimes we put cash into the tray by the coffee pot, towards our free trade coffee; this total is thus far \$67.01. And there is the cash put into the collection plates, for our Generosity Project (of which we keep half towards our own expenses, and this year have voted to give a quarter each to other charities Zoo NY (across the road) and Citizens Advocates (down the hill). The total of currency donated thus far is \$1721.02. Thank you!

And then we have received rent donations from two groups who use our building long-term. Our t'ai chi classes are free to our members, and we get a share of the cash left by nonmembers; plus a modest monthly check from the AA group meeting here; for a total of \$755 thus far for rent donations. And there are sometimes "pass-throughs" — one friend has this year donated \$560, which we forwarded to Newsjunkie, for their advertising of our weekly offerings.

Thank you all!

Historian

Sarah O'Connell

March has traditionally been celebrated as Women's History Month, so 10 years ago, several of our March services featured female speakers and topics (the month had 5 Sundays as it does this year). They included Kim Domenico, who was teaching communication at SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Utica, the Rev. Azande Sasa from Fort Drum (who was then leaving to become the Chaplain at Arlington National Cemetery, and Laurie Rush, Archeologist at Fort Drum, who spoke about the roles and contributions of Native American women to their societies and families.

Craft Night

Kat Hammond

Last month Craft Night was changed due to weather. Our focus was "It's the Little Things That Matter". This March we will be honoring St Patrick's Day and the 'Wee Folk. Our theme is "The Luck of the Irish" by making Celtic inspired "Stained Glass" Window Pendants. As always, your host will make every effort to help you learn and enjoy the crafting process. Children are welcome yet, may need some adult supervision when working with sharp objects. Come join in and get to know like minded crafters.



Heather's Kitchen

Heather Winn

This month I had a hard time deciding which recipe to include so I let Payton decide. Payton settled on one of her favorite soups,

Gumbo

Ingredients • 1 lb. Andouille sausage •
2 cups Chicken, cooked (we usually omit the chicken) •
1 lb. Shrimp, raw large •
3 Bay leaves
2 Bell peppers, large •
2 Celery stalks, large •
5 cloves Garlic •
1 cup Okra, fresh or frozen •
1 tsp Thyme, dried •
1 (14 ounce) can Tomatoes, fire-roasted •
1 White onion, small •
6 cups Chicken stock •
1 White or brown rice •
1 cup All-purpose flour (I use Bob's 1:1 gluten free)
1/2 tsp Cayenne (adjust to liking. I usually omit) •
1 tbsp Creole seasoning • 1
Sea salt and freshly-cracked black pepper • 2/3 cup Vegetable or canola oil (I prefer butter)



INSTRUCTIONS

Brown the sausage. Heat a large heavy-bottomed stockpot over medium-high heat. Add the sliced sausage in a single layer and briefly cook for 1 to 2 minutes per side, until lightly browned. Transfer the sausage to a clean plate and set aside for later. •

Make the roux. Add the oil to the stockpot and whisk in flour until combined. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture reaches a dark brown color (similar to milk chocolate), about 2 to 3 minutes. Keep a very close eye on the roux as it cooks, adjusting the heat if it seems to be browning too slowly or too quickly, and whisk it constantly to be sure that it does not burn. (Gf flour will not achieve the dark brown color)

Sauté the veggies. Once the roux reaches the dark brown color, immediately stir in the bell peppers, celery, and onion until combined. Continue to cook, stirring every 10 to 15 seconds, until the vegetables have softened, about 6 to 8 minutes. Add in the garlic and cook for 1 more minute, stirring constantly.

Chalice Circle CUUPS news:

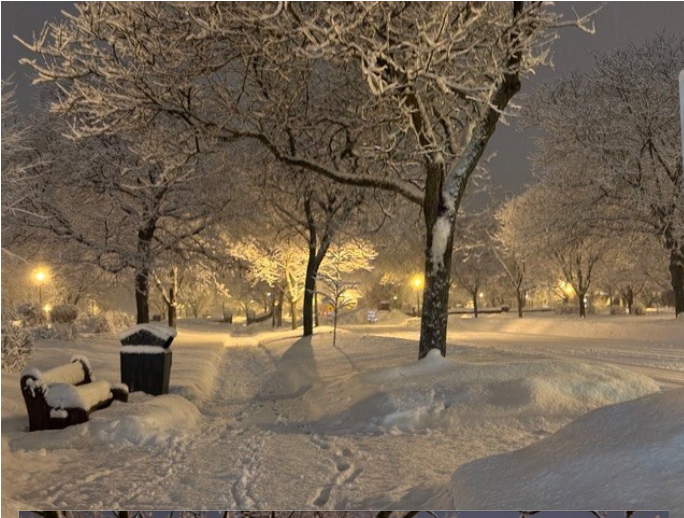
Joanne Harter

UUPS Chalice Circle has exciting news! Canton UU Church has some folks who are interested in forming a CUUPS chapter, so it looks as though they want our advice and mentorship! They plan to attend our First Friday meeting in March, and have asked for me (Joanne) to speak to their congregation in April about our experiences as Chalice Circle and Chalice Circle CUUPS.

We also continue to meet on the third Wednesday of the month, gathering both times at 6:30 pm, with the meeting from 7-8:30 or 9. Come join us!



Winter Scenes of Our Neighbor, Thompson Park



Thanks to Warren Allen for the photos.

Every Month at All Souls

CUUPS (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans)

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

Game Night

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 Citizens Advocates and Planned Parenthood. Each organization receives 1/4 of the uncommitted funds for the year.

Unitarian Universalist Association

More than 375 UU Congregations Join First-Ever Climate Justice Revival

The Revival, entitled "Reimagine Together: From an Extractive Age to a New Era," invites UUs to recommit to climate justice and collective liberation.

[Elaine McArdle](#) 9/30/2024

The first-ever UU Climate Justice Revival invited Unitarian Universalists to collaborate in moving from an age of extraction to a future with love at its center.

© Alison Kendall

More than 375 Unitarian Universalist congregations across the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Virgin Islands are hosting UU Climate Justice Revivals. The Revivals kicked off on September 28 and 29, 2024, and will continue throughout the year and beyond.

Congregations and community members are coming together to recommit to climate justice and collective liberation. They are reimagining their communities thriving, mapping the connections between the challenging realities of climate justice and other social justice issues, and identifying opportunities to build community care.

The first-ever such revival, entitled “Reimagine Together: From an Extractive Age to a New Era,” was envisioned and organized by the [UU Climate Justice Coalition](#) and friends. They provided congregations with materials and support needed to host Revivals in their communities, including discussion guides and materials for all ages, training, worship resources, and advocacy actions designed to transform communities through climate justice.

At the [UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs](#), New York, about fifty congregants and friends gathered on Sunday, September 29, to host the Revival during the worship service.

“We are joining over [375] UU congregations all over the country for a time of renewal and recommitment at the intersection of the climate crisis and the justice commitments of our congregation,” said Lucy Manning, a member of the congregation’s Social Justice Team, who helped organize the local event. “Today, let’s especially think of everyone in the Southeast who is affected by [Hurricane Helene](#). Flooding, emergency evacuations, and vast power outages remind us that our climate concerns are not hypothetical! And those impacted most are historically people that are underserved by their communities.”

The story hour was a video of [Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt](#), UUA president, reading the children’s book *What Do You Do with a Problem?* by [Kobi Yamada](#). Instead of the usual live music during worship, the special service used video performances provided by the Climate Justice Revival coalition, including an anthem commissioned for the Revival, “Part of It,” by musicians Lea Morris and Adam Podd. And the sermon, read by Manning, was “Here,” written by Edward Lynn, a thirty-year member of [First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor](#), Michigan.

Revival organizers at the Saratoga Springs congregation chose Lynn’s sermon from among six available to congregations that were submitted in a sermon-writing contest that was part of the Revival.

Among other things, Lynn highlighted that there will be millions of climate refugees within the United States itself in the years to come—moving from the Southern states when they become too hot or difficult to live in—and that UU congregations in relatively safer locations should be welcoming to them. “[O]ur presence here as a strong clear voice for progressive liberal religion will be essential,” wrote Lynn.

The second part of the revival will be held during a worship service next March or April that will be interactive and include youth, says Manning.

Congregations can host the Revival when it works best for them, say organizers. Many congregations are hosting Revivals after the election or in 2025. The materials are evergreen, and many plan to first host a Revival in-house, then invite the broader community to participate.

Photos: UUs Gather During First Climate Justice Revival

About the UU Climate Justice Coalition

The UU Climate Justice Coalition consists of UU organizations coordinating and collaborating to enact climate justice including the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the Coalition of UU State Action Networks, UU Animal Ministry, UU College of Social Justice, UU Women's Federation, UUA International Office, UUA Side with Love, UUs for a Just Economic Community, UU Ministry for Earth, UU Young Adults for Climate Justice Caucus, UU Service Committee, and UUs for Social Justice.

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Board meetings are held the fourth Saturday of the month at 9:30 AM by Zoom. Meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

Newsletter Editor, Harriet McMillan
Office Hours: Mon 9-11, Wed 11-1, Fri

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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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ALL SOULS NEWSLETTER March 2025
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.