

ALL SOULS NEWS -January 2026

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church

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SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 A.M.

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

January Services

January 4 – Robert South: "Looking Backward." This will be a low key discussion service. Using prompt questions we will each be asked to comment upon various aspects of the year just passed, and to speculate on what the next year may hold.

January 11 – Rev. Cindy: "A Leap of Faith." - We will examine what it means to let go, and the role that faith plays in the process. We'll explore questions such as; "What might we be holding on to that we don't need to hold on to any longer" and "Can we learn to relax into our experience, including our fears and trust that we will be supported as we step into the unknown.?"

January 18 -- Rev. Andrea Abbott-Hook: - "Nothing Will Ever Be the Same Again." We have seen profound changes in our country this past year. However, what appears to be abrupt change usually has a long prologue. I'm hoping to trace some of the antecedents of the rise of MAGA and consider what may come next. And not just the scary stuff.

January 25 –Rev. David Weissbard returns.

Our Minister's Message

Rev. Cindy Terlazzo

New Year 2026 – Ready or Not, Here We Come



We all know that the world is in a time of tremendous transformation. We see and feel the impact of change upon change in our own lives and the lives of those around us. Much of what we see is unsettling. 2025 was a year filled with so much change and we have every reason to believe that 2026 will unfold with equal or greater changes.

In times like these it is especially important to do all we can to fortify ourselves with the people, the practices, the experiences that will provide us with a sense of sanctuary, of community and connection. That is why faith communities such as this one are essential.

If you find yourself feeling adrift – reach out, ask for what you might need. You are not alone.

I offer you these words from Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzettito for your consideration as we enter yet another new year – ready or not:

Nothing Is Static

The ground shifts, sometimes slowly,
sometimes like an earthquake,
reminding us that the solidity
we often love and seek
is always an illusion.

The crumbling dust of the desert plains,
the moist fertility of farmlands,
the eroding coastline of tidal shores,
all are changing.

Committees dissolve or are created,
leaders retire or step away, ministers come and go,
by-laws are amended.

Everything about our existence
points towards change,
flexibility, and
dynamic re-creation.

And it's hard because
change involves loss.

Can we hold the losses well,
while not holding ourselves back?

The ground shifts, sometimes slowly,
sometimes like an earthquake;
nothing is static.

New experiences
lead to new truths,
which foster
evolution;

the natural course of life
always pushing us
towards greater understandings
of what it means
to be human.



Rev. Cindy would like us to establish a Minister's Discretionary Fund: a separate account, funded by donations, for the minister to provide confidential, immediate financial aid for urgent needs like groceries, gas, medical bills, etc. when and if needed. We used to have such a fund when we had a minister in the past, but haven't recently. All donations to this account are voluntary, and records will be kept of any amounts paid out.

Since this is something new for us, we'll remind people during the Offering in the next few services. If you wish to contribute to this special account, please make sure to indicate what it's for on your donation. And thank you!

From the President's Desk

President's Report

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown New York is a religious corporation organized under New York law. The bylaws of All Souls are like the constitution of a country, whereas mere decisions of the congregation or the board are equivalent to statutes and ordinances. The bylaws are our highest law. We can amend our bylaws at official congregational meetings, in accordance with procedures detailed in the bylaws.



This month I'd like to introduce the proposed bylaw changes that will be the subject of a congregational conversation on January 11th. This is not a board approved proposal, though. I brought these ideas to the board and they suggested I first present them to the congregation. The process is that the congregation will informally agree to a proposed set of changes (which may have evolved from what I present), then the board will put them on the agenda for the next annual meeting, and then the annual meeting will vote up or down.

A peculiarity of our bylaws is that proposed bylaw amendments must be included in the notice calling the meeting, mailed out to all members ten days prior. My understanding of that is that proposed amendments cannot be changed at the meeting since that would be new wording that wasn't in the notice calling the meeting. So bylaw amendments can only be approved or disapproved, as is, without further alteration at the approving meeting. That's why a supermajority of the congregation has to be on board with the exact wording well before the meeting. Thus we do the amending unofficially ahead of time.

Major changes I am proposing.

1. Put the modern seven principles in the preamble instead of the old version of 6 principles.
2. Replace the purpose in Article 2 with the Mission Statement.
3. Eliminate youth membership (Section 6 of Article IV).
4. Replace Robert's Rules of Order with Democratic Rules of Order by Fred and Peg Francis (Article V, Section 5).
5. Change all officers and trustees to one year terms (Article V, Section 4).
6. Add provision that if there are fewer than 5 members the board can still make quorum if 100 percent of the members are present, even if that is 4 or fewer. (Article V, Section 5).
7. Change term limits to 5 years in one office for everyone (Article V, Section 6).
8. Allow a secretary pro-tem to perform the duties of the secretary (Article V, Section 11).
9. Memorial Garden committee appointed anew by each president (Article XI, Section 2).
10. There are numerous other small tweaks, eliminating excess verbiage or extra, additional, unnecessary redundancy that isn't needed, making this a total "revision" (replacing an entire document with another rather than just making one amendment in one place).

On the 11th I will provide a detailed markup of the bylaws including all my proposed changes exactly, and reasoning for them. Then you all can tear it up. In general, as explained last month, my main intent here is to proof us against declining population. Not to get elected President for Life. To be perfectly clear about that, I will ask the nominating committee to consider me for any position *other* than President next year.

Other things are also going on, but I've used enough space in the Newsletter. I urge everyone to go online to the All Souls website and read Janine's excellent minutes of board meetings. All members get a link to a hidden page on the website, appearing on the last page of the weekly post (which non members don't get). Follow that link and see what's going on. Unfortunately, those records are usually a month behind because only accepted minutes (after being approved at the following month's meeting) are posted.

From the Historian's Files

Sarah O'Connell



Looking back at our January 2013 newsletter, it is hard to believe that 13 years have passed since my beloved mother-in-law, Bernetta, passed away in December. She was truly everybody's grandma, whether she knew you or not. She would have adored her great-granddaughter, my son's daughter Lyla. We don't share photos of Lyla on social media, but my daughter-in-law Emily recently converted a photo to a drawing of our sick little girl on a swing, and I wanted to share it. (She's feeling lots better now, thanks.)

People News

Erica Gardner had a second eye surgery early in December. She says she came through it very well.

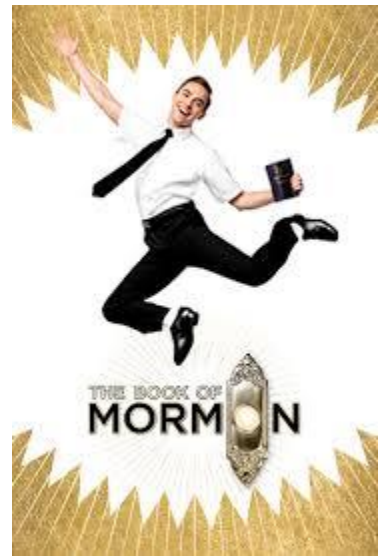
Around the Church

The Book of Mormon Comes to Syracuse! Let's go together to see The Book of Mormon musical in Syracuse, the weekend of March 20-22 in Syracuse!

Tickets range from a low of \$43 Friday and Sunday evenings to \$54 to \$112 for the other performances - and the best seats at each price are being reserved first.

Let Kelly Sackheim know in-person or by texting (916) 877-5947 if you are interested (ranking your preferred performance day/time for carpooling, and indicating whether you are inclined to sit in a higher price-bracket seat), and we'll try to get seats together before too many of the best ones have been taken!

To check out seat availability yourself, visit <https://nacentertainment.com/>



In the Kitchen

Olive Brandt's No Bake Cookies

More Like Fudge

2 cups sugar
1 stick oleo or ½ c. other margarine
3 Tablespoons cocoa
½ cup milk
Boil together for 1 minute.
Add:
½ cup peanut butter
3 cups oatmeal
1 teaspoon vanilla
Drop on waxed paper or foil and cool.
Will seem sticky when dropped.

Olive moved to Watertown, following her children. Her son-in-law had just bought into Cleveland Funeral Home (becoming Cleveland Spink.) She came from a Unitarian Universalist background, and jumped into church life. Like so many of the older women, she was an experienced homemaker, with lots of recipes.

Lorraine Payette's Nanaimo Cookies

- 1 cup butter, softened, divided
- 5 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ cup white sugar
- 1 ¾ cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 1/3 cup finely chopped almonds (optional)
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons custard powder
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 4 (1 ounce) squares semisweet baking chocolate
- 2 teaspoons butter

In the top of a double boiler, combine 1/2 cup softened butter, cocoa powder, and sugar. Stir occasionally until melted and smooth. Beat in egg and stir until thick, 2 to 3 minutes.

Remove from the heat and mix in graham cracker crumbs, coconut, and almonds. Press into the bottom of an ungreased 8x8-inch pan.

For the middle layer, beat remaining 1/2 cup softened butter, heavy cream, and custard powder until light and fluffy. Mix in confectioners' sugar until smooth. Spread over the bottom layer in the pan. Chill to set.

While the second layer is chilling, melt semisweet chocolate and 2 teaspoons butter together in the microwave or over low heat.

Spread melted chocolate mixture over chilled bars. Let the chocolate set before cutting into squares.

You can use instant vanilla pudding powder instead of custard powder.

Lorraine Payette,
multimedia
journalist for *A
Fresh News
Start* -
[http://afreshnews
start.com/](http://afreshnewsstart.com/)



Nanaimo bars are a classic Canadian treat named after the city of Nanaimo in British Columbia. Initially known simply as "chocolate squares," they were sold on the ferries to and from Vancouver Island. The primary flavors include chocolate, coconut, and custard powder-infused buttercream. The bottom layer features crushed wafers (or crackers), coco... Thanks to Lorraine Payette for the recipe.

Heather's Kitchen Au Gratin Potatoes A Favorite in her Home

Ingredients

1. 5 Tbsp unsalted butter, divided
2. ¼ cup all-purpose flour (I use Bob's 1:1 gluten free flour)
3. 2 ½ cups milk, any kind
4. 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
5. 1 ¼ tsp fine sea salt, or to taste

6. ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
7. 1 tsp onion powder
8. ½ tsp garlic powder
9. 2 cups grated Gruyere cheese, from a 6 oz block or white cheddar cheese, divided
10. 3 lbs. Yukon gold potatoes, scrubbed (peeled or unpeeled)
11. Chives to garnish, if desired

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 °F. Use 1 Tbsp butter to grease a 3 quart (9x13) casserole dish.

In a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat, melt 4 Tbsp butter. Add flour whisk for 2 minutes to cook off the flour taste. Gradually pour in the milk then the cream while whisking. Add salt, pepper, onion powder and garlic powder then continue whisking until sauce has thickened. Add more seasonings to taste. Remove from heat and stir in half of the shredded cheese until melted. Peel potatoes if desired and thinly slice to 1/8" thick (a food processor makes this quick and easy). Add potatoes to the cheese sauce and stir to coat, then spread the potatoes evenly in the prepared baking dish and top with the remaining grated cheese.

Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 60 minutes. Remove foil and bake another 15-30 minutes or until top is golden brown and potatoes are tender and can be easily pierced with a fork. You can broil for 1-2 minutes at the end if more browning is desired but keep an eye on it so it doesn't burn. Rest for 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with chives and freshly cracked black pepper if desired.

Lunch Anyone?



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 January 14 at 11:30

Craft Night

Kat Hammond

Craft Night: A Year In Review

What a year we have had! It's amazing that a new year is so close! Craft Night celebrated our 1 year anniversary! I can hardly wait to see what our crafters create in 2026. Above are a few pictures depicting what was made in 2025. Amazing! Several times our crafters donated their work to the church. Such generosity! Hopefully 2026 holds promise for a wonderful year full of kindness and beauty.

Stay tuned for our January 9th project announcement. See you from 6-8pm in the social hall! (Pictures of minors used with permission)

Kat Hammond



Craft Night: A Year In Review



Social Justice and Action

Kelly Sackheim

Stronger Together Helps Deported Family

Stronger Together, that has been meeting at All Souls since January, is supporting the family of the 3 adults to whom some donations were made by our congregation when Karen mentioned their detention earlier this year when leaving work at Aviagen Chicken Factory on Coffeen Street in Watertown.

After living in the US for 20, and 12 years respectively, the deported parents and adult daughter were reunited with the grandmother and 8- and 3-yr-old children who were accompanied back to Guatemala just a few weeks ago. It has been a traumatic and shocking transition back to the poverty, lack of sustainable work and living conditions in their rural village. A typical source of income from selling vegetables has not been possible as their return has been outside of the normal planting season in Guatemala. Mauricio is currently working, making \$13 per day to sustain a family of 5. This work is inconsistent. The home that Marucio was able to have built from his earnings in the US is in need of significant repair. Through a church in Webster, N.Y. we have been able to connect the family with a missionary from the US who lives about an hour away. LynnAnn Murphy, (15 years in Guatemala) is willing to help the family assess and find reliable help with the rebuilding. The family has been seeking help on their own but it is not without its own trials, inflated costs, questionable services and unreliable commitment.

At this time Stronger Together has made the decision to support the family in the following.

1. Stronger Together will send financial support twice a month for them to help re-establish and support themselves in their new life in Guatemala for the next year. Stronger Together will reassess this commitment in December 2026.
2. A separate fund is being created specifically for the house building project. Lynn Ann will meet with them in January to determine next steps and cost. She is bringing a trusted contractor with her to help with this assessment. Stronger Together will take her advice on how to proceed. The general community has been more than generous in their interest and support of this family and we are eternally grateful. That being said, Stronger Together will be continuing financial support for the next year, until December 2026.

Kelly has volunteered that her 501(c)3 nonprofit Experience A Reward is sponsoring this effort of Stronger Together and thus letters acknowledging that contributions to this effort are Tax-Deductible

Charitable Contributions can be produced upon request. Contact kelly@git-go.org for further information about how to make a financial contribution.

Christmas Eve 2025

Thanks to Lorraine Payette for the Photos





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.

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.

All Souls UU Church Board of Trustees

President: Robert South
Vice President: Harriet McMillan
Secretary: Janine LaClair
Treasurer: Eleanor Allen
Trustee: Mimi Litsche
Trustee: Rob Blankemeir
Trustee: Pat Sutherland
Trustee: Erica Gardner

Staff

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.

Newsletter Editor, Harriet McMillan
Office Administrator M, W, F, 10-1
Phone (315) 788-2742

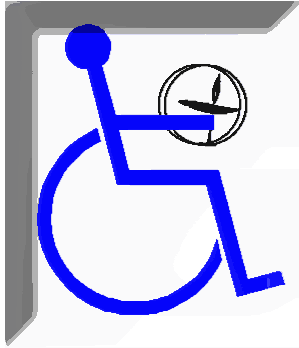
E-mail: allsoulsuuchurch@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.allsoulsuu.org>

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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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.
- 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.