

# ALL SOULS NEWS -October 2024

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

## *October Services*

**October 6- Frances and Kelly - "Deep Listening."** Exploration of what is meant by deep listening as a UU value. Valuing and engaging consistently in deep listening is essential to effective and caring communication. Effective and caring communication is essential to creating and sustaining the All Souls mission "to be a warm, supportive, nurturing, and inclusive religious community where all people are respected and honored because of their uniqueness".

**October 13 –David Weissbard: "To Tell the Truth."** Dave says--One of the things that troubles me is the charge of dogmatism with which we UU's are sometimes accused. Obviously, it wouldn't trouble me if I didn't fear there might be some truth to it. I got thinking about it because of an article on "In formulacra" I stumbled upon on the internet. I remember addressing the issue in a sermon 17 years ago which offers me a framework for sharing my thoughts on the subject on my next Sunday in your pulpit. I hope you'll join me.

## **October 20 – Sylvia Stuber Heap and Frances Mercer: “Celebrate United Nations Day.”**

United Nations Day is celebrated world wide on October 24th each year. Unitarians and Universalists were actively supportive of the creation of the United Nations in 1945. The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres statement for United Nations Day in 2022 emphasized that “The UN is the product of the hope—and resolve—following the Second World War to move beyond global conflict to global cooperation...let us renew our hope and conviction in what humanity can achieve...” The sixth UU principle states : ...covenant to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.” The world is in crisis—global conflict is pervasive. Is the United Nations still the world’s best hope for global cooperation based on deep listening?

## **October 27 – Rev. Philip Lund with Frances Mercer guide: “*The Change We Hope To Bring.*”**

This service focuses on successful outreach to potential “customers” for smaller congregations, with some intriguing strategies, guidelines and attention to the importance of deep listening and being with. This is a test of whether a new worship resource that the Worship Committee has asked All Souls to invest in works for us. This new resource is “Sermon of the Month” created by the Mid America Region of the UUA. The sermon and resources for all elements of a service are provided. Rev. Lund is a Congregational Life Consultant with the UUA. He has 20 years of experience serving congregations in the area of faith formation and spiritual growth. Rev. Lund will speak with us from a prerecorded video.

## ***From the President’s Desk***

### **Robert South**

Last month I relayed a lot of information about major changes and projects. There will be a lot more detail in the upcoming congregational meeting, which will be over by the time this newsletter is published. The board hasn’t met since the last newsletter, but we’ve been pretty busy anyway. We do things by email between meeting in several different ways.

- First, there’s just the constant exchange of information and ideas, basically adding up to the next meeting’s agenda.
- Second, our policy is that during a meeting we can agree to vote on an upcoming decision by email. The motion has been made and the only thing that is deferred is the vote. The secretary reports the outcome at the next meeting, so it gets recorded in the minutes as a summary of that report. An example, is that we agreed to vote on a proposed policy about hybrid congregational meetings. The exact wording of the policy was still being worked out, and was finished by email, and then we voted. This took effect immediately, see below.
- Finally, when things come up unexpected with a short time frame we can take a straw poll to avoid having to call a special meeting (which should be reserved for important and possibly controversial matters that must be dealt with immediately, such as when we suddenly had to shut down the building in March of 2020). A straw poll just means that a member of the board wants to do something without asking for formal permission, and is asking the board who will vote to ratify it at the next board meeting. An example is just this month when Eleanor took a straw poll regarding taking out an ad in the program for the

Northern Blend Chorus “Sing Fling” performance. We all voted to say we would surely ratify her decision at the next board meeting.

Our building is getting a lot of use. We have Little Theater rehearsing a play on weeknights all autumn. In addition, we’re having Friday night events of our own every week, including Craft Night, Game Night, and Discussion Hour (now third Fridays 5 to 7, see Weekly Post).

Using email voting, the board adopted a new policy on hybrid congregational meetings. What this means is that when we have a congregational meeting people can participate online as permitted by the chair of the meeting, but if any member has a problem and thinks somebody being counted as present isn’t actually there on Zoom then that can be brought up and ultimately the congregation can decide the matter. This policy was necessary because the state law says we can have electronic participation in our congregational meetings, but the board has to have a policy defining it. We’ve been winging it, now we have rules.

### **Board Policy on Electronic Congregational Meetings**

In reliance upon the Consolidated Laws of the State of New York, Chapter 51 Article 2, Section 28, this policy of the board of trustees establishes guidelines and procedures for meetings conducted partially or solely by means of electronic communication. The person acting as chair of a meeting of the congregation is authorized to count individual online participants as present or absent. Any active member present may object to such declarations or raise a point of order regarding the legitimate presence of an online participant, in which case a simple majority of voting members present can decide the question, with or without debate (at the discretion of the chair). The secrecy of ballots cast online is unreliable, so online participants cannot expect vote privacy.

**Developed 1/9/24**

### **Postscript to President's Message:**

Following on from the Special Congregational Meeting of September 29<sup>th</sup>, the congregation accepted the board’s report on its annual goals and amended the bylaws to allow members to opt into email notifications. There was some sense that many members of the congregation expected more detail than was provided, and a more interactive discussion, but Roberts Rules, which are called for by the bylaws, are only so flexible. To begin to answer the gist of the desired depth of explanation, I’ll say this.

The board went with just three goals because you have to focus, or you can do nothing. We could have made a wish list, but instead we made a feasible list. Our criterion for picking these three goals was to serve the mission. Initially we started to formulate a long-term plan, which may have included a more extensive wish list, and then intended to base our annual goals on that long term plan. But we realized that our mission statement IS our long-term plan. So, we picked the three most feasible goals that contribute to our mission.

Regarding curiosity about the building, we have multiple, extensive contractor proposals in hand. This meeting would have been a great opportunity to bring those big spending contracts to the congregation, but we decided to wait until after we have a report from the architects we’re hiring to do a thorough inspection of the building and its needs.

We’ll continue to have congregational conversations to inform the congregation and sound everyone out as things go forward.

## Collectorland

**Warren Allen**

**Paging Megan O'Brien or Megan O'Meara**

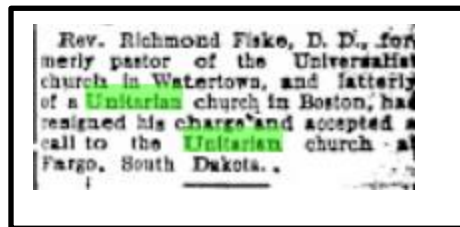
This kind person has been making modest monthly gifts to us for years. Does anyone know how to reach her, so that we can say thanks. (Or perhaps she'd like an indulgence?)



## Historian

**Sarah O'Connell**

I've been trying to find my way around old Watertown Times archives online, and I recently found this little snippet from 1922 about the Rev. Richard Fiske, who was one of the ministers at the brick church on Public Square from 1884-1892. "Rev. Richard Fiske, D.D., formerly pastor of the Universalist church in Watertown, and latterly of a Unitarian church in Boston, has resigned his charge and accepted a call to the Unitarian Church at Fargo, South Dakota."



## People News

### Two New Babies!

Their names are included because neither baby lives in our area.

Elizabeth Grace Davenport, granddaughter of Janine and Thomas LaClair, born September 5, 2024 to Katie and Tyler Davenport. She is welcomed by her older sister Mackenzie.



Sarah O'Connell is DELIGHTED to announce the arrival of her granddaughter (to Dennis and Emily (Rubinstein), Lyla Ruby O'Connell, on August 2, 2024. Lyla is perfect, from the crown of her head to the tips of her toes.

## Recently Joined All Souls

### Meet Serena Soldani

Serena answered questions for the newsletter.

Where are you originally from?

Pisa, Italy

What is your occupation here in Watertown?

Accountant

What are some of your hobbies/interests/specialties?

Textiles, including basketry and other dyi

How did you get to All Souls?

Veronica Hartman

Other comments about our church community?

There is a rich knowledge of the outer community. UU has a lot of good things.

## Around the Church

### Calling All Crafters



Craft Night has been a successful and fun time! Each month we get together and have a different theme or project going on. There have been many repeat attendees, and an absolutely wonderful variety of creations made by those who come! The time has been slightly changed to 6-8pm in the church Social Hall, on the 2nd Friday of each month. Projects to date include; Gift Mason Jars for Mothers Day, Alcohol Ink Mugs for Fathers Day, Make a Watercolor Card(s) and Bookmark(s) in July, Origami in August, and Bring and Share Your Fiber Arts in September. This **October 11th** there will be a Halloween theme including a **Costume Competition** and **Table-sized Luminaries** to make! There are some snacks provided, and a drawing each month for door prizes! If you have an idea that you think others would like as a crafting event, please contact Kat for consideration. In **November 8th** the planned event will be **Pop-up Christmas Cards**. Just in time to mail out for Christmas! Come and join in the fun! **\*\*No experience necessary! All ages welcome!\*\***

### **Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup**

The All Souls UU semi-annual cleanup will be Saturday, October 19, 2024 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 be 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! If the weather is SO terrible, it will be rescheduled for October 26, but we have done the job in light rain...

Thanks - Sarah O'Connell



**To the Person who Straightened the Banner Outside Making it Easier to Read**

Thanks! I tried several times to make it look better but wasn't successful.

-Harriet McMillan

## **Every Month at All Souls**

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

Chalice Circle CUUPS, a Pagan organization which falls under the auspices of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown will be holding a reorganizational meeting on Friday, October 4 in the Social Hall. We will start gathering at 6:30 pm, with the meeting to run from 7- 8:30 or 9 pm. The Mission Statement and By-laws of the previous iteration of the chapter will be available for consideration, and we will share ideas for future meetings.

All who would like to learn more about CUUPS, educate themselves about Pagan spirituality, or find a community of like-minded individuals on a positive, nature-oriented path are welcome to attend meetings. Joanne Harter will moderate this first gathering.

### **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: Amy Summerville-Loomis

Secretary: Karen Hall

Treasurer: Eleanor Allen

[eleanora.asuuc@gmail.com](mailto:eleanora.asuuc@gmail.com)

Trustee: Janine LaClair

Trustee: Erica Gardner

Trustee: Kelly Sackheim

Trustee: Alabama Dane

## **Staff**

Custodian: John Crupi

Music: Toni Zygadlo

Religious Exploration:

Office Volunteers:

Robert South,

Board meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7PM by Zoom. Meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

Newsletter Editor, Harriet McMillan, [harriem@allsoulsuu.org](mailto:harriem@allsoulsuu.org)

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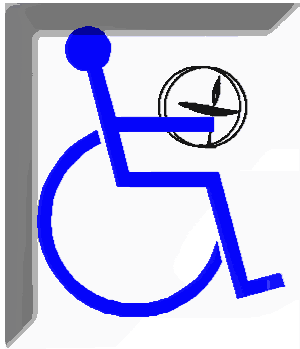
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Website: <http://www.allsoulsuu.org>

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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ALL SOULS NEWSLETTER October 2024  
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.