

Edited for the Web: Personal information and contacts removed, as well as children's last names. Web viewers needing more information are invited to contact the church office at administrator@albanyuu.org.

WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian
Universalist Society of Albany

December 2016

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Sunday Schedule

- 9:00 AM
Mindfulness Meditation
- 9:45 AM
Nursery/Toddler rooms open
- 10:00 AM
Service
Family Chapel
(1st Sunday/mo. Oct.-May)
Religious Education
- 11:00 AM
Coffee Hour
- 11:45 AM
Forum (as scheduled)

Sundays at Albany UU

Please join us on any Sunday for:

Mindfulness Meditation, Religious Education for children and youth, the Service, Coffee Hour, or any combination thereof. Other programs on Sundays include Forum (social justice and environmental topics), Family Chapel, social events, and adult education.

All are welcome!

Services

Dec. 4 "Minimalist Christmas?," Rev. Sam Trumbore

Minimalism strives to strip down an aesthetic experience to its essential elements to communicate meaning. Often this includes simplifying and eliminating what distracts and embellishes. When it comes to applying minimalism to Christmas, less can be more.

Music: Choir

Dec. 11 "A Path of Presence," Rev. Sam Trumbore

Ever felt inhibited by anxiety and fear in stressful situations? Frustrated by being able to bring forward the best of who we know we can be? Let us learn to cultivate presence as a way of bringing our full selves to life.

Music: Elizabeth Huntley, Harp

Dec. 18 "The Thread That You Follow," Rev. Sam Trumbore

These are the first five words of a poem by William Stafford titled, "The Way It Is." What threads might be running through each of our lives that hold it together and give it unity, purpose and meaning?

Music: Choir

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Services

- 4:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service and Pageant
- 7:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Dec. 25 "Hanukkah Halleluiah," Rev. Sam Trumbore

Some of our members and friends will not be making a big deal out of Christmas – and this Sunday will be the first day of Hanukkah. So instead of a regular service, Rev. Trumbore will be making latkes for all who show up, maybe play with dreidels, and share a few memories of past holidays.

Jan. 1, 2017 "Begin Again in Love," Rev. Sam Trumbore

The New Year is another chance to review our lives and then start, stop, continue and modify directions, behaviors, patterns and habits. Rather than setting up unrealistic expectations for making big changes, there are ways to begin again by leading with our heart rather than our head.



Calendar

Events happening every Sunday at Albany UU

9:00 AM Mindfulness MeditationSanctuary
 10:00 AM ServiceEmerson
 Family Chapel (1st Sunday/mo. Oct.-May)Sanctuary
 Religious Education Classrooms
 11:00 AM Coffee Hour.....Channing

Exceptions: No choir rehearsal Dec. 28

Regular events and meetings

CHECK the newsletter for changes to date, time and location

Sundays	5:30 PM	Walker Book Club (2nd)	Wednesdays	10:00 AM	Projects & Quilts (weekly)
	11:45 AM	Social Responsibilities Council (3rd)		12:00 PM	All Sides Considered (1st & 3rd)
Mondays	12:00 PM	Channing Circle (3rd)		5:30 PM	Green Sanctuary Committee (3rd)
	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council (1st)		7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal (weekly)
	7:00 PM	Earth Spirits (3rd)	Thursdays	7:00 PM	Program Coordinating Council (2nd)
Tuesdays	10:00 AM	Philosophy Group (weekly)		7:00 PM	Board of Trustees (3rd)
	1:00 PM	Bridge (weekly)			
	7:00 PM	UU Humanists (3rd)			

All other events happening in December

1-Dec Thursday	6:30 PM	Nonviolent Communication TrainingChanning	14-Dec Wednesday	5:30 PM	Endowment Trust Meeting Stott Lounge
2-Dec Friday	6:00 PM	Potluck, host Green Sanctuary Cmte.Channing	15-Dec Thursday	5:30 PM	Religious Services CommitteeRoom B-7
3-Dec Saturday	8:45 AM	Getting to Know UU Room B-7, Room B-8		5:30 PM	SURJ Education & Outreach Meeting .. Room B-3/B-4
	2:00 PM	Cathy Perkins Memorial and Reception..... Emerson		7:00 PM	Albany UU Board Meeting..... Channing
	6:00 PM	Circle DinnerOffsite	17-Dec Saturday	4:00 PM	Albany UU Solstice Celebration Channing
4-Dec Sunday	10:00 AM	Family Chapel Sanctuary	18-Dec Sunday	11:30 AM	Pageant Rehearsal..... Emerson
	11:00 AM	Coffee Hour and Holiday BazaarChanning		11:45 AM	Social Responsibilities Meeting.....Room B-7
	11:00 AM	New Member Reception Emerson Alcove		1:00 PM	Christmas Caroling.....Meet in Channing
	11:30 AM	SRC Forum - End of Life Choices....., Emerson	19-Dec Monday	12:00 PM	Channing Circle Lunch Channing
	11:45 AM	Pageant Part SelectionRoom 26		1:30 PM	Third Monday Afternoon Meaning Matters ..Room B-8
	11:45 AM	Update from Standing Rock (ND pipeline) .. Room B-8		7:00 PM	Earth Spirits.....Room B-8
5-Dec Monday	2:00 PM	End of Life Choices Project..... Room B-8	20-Dec Tuesday	7:00 PM	Capital Campaign committeeRoom B-7
	6:15 PM	RE Council meetingChanning		7:00 PM	Third Tuesday Meaning Matters..... Stott Lounge
	7:00 PM	Music Director Interview..... Stott Lounge	21-Dec Wednesday	6:30 PM	Wellspring Spiritual PracticesRoom B-8
6-Dec Tuesday	7:00 PM	Capital Campaign committee.....Room B-7	22-Dec Thursday	6:30 PM	Finance CommitteeRoom B-8
	7:00 PM	Rabbi Dennis Ross PresentationRoom B-8	24-Dec Saturday	4:00 PM	Multigen. Christmas Service and Pageant .. Emerson
7-Dec Wednesday	6:30 PM	Wellspring Spiritual PracticesRoom B-8		7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight ServiceSanctuary
8-Dec Thursday	7:00 PM	Music Director Interview.....Stott Lounge		8:00 PM	Cookie Reception..... Channing
	7:00 PM	Program Coordinating Council..... Room B-8	25-Dec Sunday	10:00 AM	Multigenerational Hanukkah Party..... Channing
10-Dec Saturday	9:00 AM	Mindfulness for Managing Stress..... Room B-8		10:00 AM	No Sunday School.....
11-Dec Sunday	11:00 AM	Holiday Tree DecoratingChanning		10:00 AM	No Sunday Services.....
	11:45 AM	Auction Committee Meeting.....Room B-7	26-Dec Monday	10:00 AM	Small Group MinistryRoom B-5
	11:45 AM	Nominating Committee Meeting.....Room B-8		3:00 PM	Overflow Shelter Meal PrepKitchen
	5:30 PM	Walker Book ClubChanning		7:00 PM	Fourth Monday Meaning MattersRoom B-8
12-Dec Monday	10:00 AM	Small Group Ministry..... Room B-5	27-Dec Tuesday	5:30 PM	Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)..... Emerson
	3:00 PM	Overflow Shelter Meal Prep Kitchen	31-Dec Saturday	2:00 PM	Family Friendly New Year's Eve Party .., Emerson
13-Dec Tuesday	7:00 PM	Capital Campaign committee.....Stott Lounge			

Sam's Outlook

The power of presence

Rev. Sam Trumbore

The experience of presence lures me the way peanut butter focuses the mind of a mouse and draws it to the trap.

At Buddhist mindfulness meditation retreats, I've experienced a delicious kind of presence that doesn't happen to me so much in daily life. It is a heightened kind of awareness of everything around me while my mind remains calm and quiet. I don't want anything and have deep acceptance for what is arising and passing away in the moment. There is a deep peace and compassionate warmth for all beings.

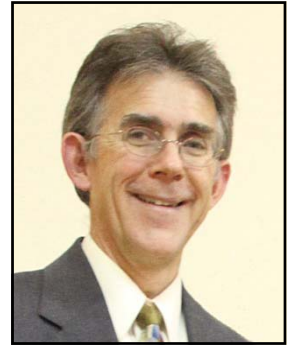
Then a horse fly lands on my arm and starts cutting a hole through my flesh to feed with its proboscis. My sense of equanimity vanishes. I start hating the fly while shooing it away with my hand and wanting that delightful experience of presence to return.

I haven't just experienced presence after meditating for a few days waiting for the mind to settle down. Sometimes people have brought me into this experience. I've listened to masterful lecturers and public speakers who have opened up my mind while at the same time connected me to the flow of the present moment. This definitely happens with meditation teachers but I've had similar experiences in college lectures or public forums.

Some gifted musicians can touch our hearts and emotions in ways that open us to a kind of presence that connects us with that which is greater than ourselves. The songs can resonate with an inner chord that vibrates our spirit with the greater rhythms of life. Sometimes very simple repetitive melodies can lull me into a peaceful place where the boundaries between the world and me feel more porous.

And there are places people commonly report this expansive sense of presence. Places like the top of Mount Washington, the quiet strength of the redwoods in Muir Woods, the drama of Niagara Falls, the spaciousness of the Grand Canyon, the glass and steel canyons of New York City and the sandy beaches of Cape Cod come to mind. And much more humble spots that are not well-known vortexes for psychic and spiritual energy come to mind for each of us. I'm moved by the Indian Ladder trail in

the Helderbergs, sitting at daybreak at the Atwater's Camp in Maine watching mist rise off the lake in July, and remembering my morning walks in the tiny Bozenkill Park across the street from our former home in Altamont.



How I miss that daily walk. It wasn't just the pleasantness of the cool earth under my feet in the heat of the summer crowded by green leaves reaching for the sun. Every seasonal change heightened my attention to subtle changes that happened just about every day. In winter, each walk on the snow and ice encrusted, rock-hard ground was slightly different. In early spring, the first green shoots appeared out of the mud and puddles soon to be followed by an orchestrated sequence of flowers and insects. In the fall, small changes ornamented the leaves from the outer tips inward. Then one day, they started to drop. Suddenly the paths were covered and hard to find. And gradually vistas appeared through the tree branches. A greater perspective of place opened up I hadn't noticed before or remembered enhancing a sense of presence.

In the seasons of the year, December can bring a strong sense of presence – if we pause in all the preparations to let it in. The stillness and barrenness of the frozen landscape with or without snow, the quiet, dark mornings without bird songs, the early sunsets without much color, all draw us inward as we wrap ourselves up in warmer layers. The weather forces us to slow down a little if we let it. In a way December can be for us a little bit like the experience of a meditation retreat where life becomes simpler creating more space in our awareness for the present moment.

When we slow down, pay attention and open up to what is true in this moment, this experience of presence can be more available to us. And in that experience of presence we may find rest and renewal that can reconnect us with the Spirit of Life and Love that we embody. The great spiritual teaching found in many of the world religions directs us to seek peace within while we strive to create peace in the world. In the interplay of inner and outer peace work, we will find the spiritual core of the December holiday season.--Rev. Sam

News

Ministerial Intern selected for 2017-2018

With pleasure, the Ministerial Intern Search Committee announces their selection of our ministerial intern: **Eileen Casey Campbell**. She has accepted our offer and will begin August 21, 2017. She will do a ten month, full-time internship, preaching regularly, offering classes and pastoral care to our congregation, as well as being involved in social responsibility activities of our congregation, Interfaith Impact and the Hudson Mohawk UU Cluster.



She will come to us from Rochester where she attended Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. Eileen grew up in Rensselaer County. Her husband, who also grew up here and their 8 month old son are looking forward to

returning here again. She brings valuable skills to us having worked for the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and the First Unitarian Church of Rochester. At the Episcopal Diocese, she worked as the Coordinator for Community Development. She consulted with 47 churches on creating strategic plans for outreach and growth. She also coached churches on social media use and web presence. At the Unitarian Church, she was responsible for welcoming visitors, teaching introductory UU classes and helping newcomers on the path to membership.

Living in a working class neighborhood in Rochester, she feels her heart has been broken open by the disparity of wealth in her community. She writes, "I feel a particular passion for working to bridge that disconnection in the kind of social justice ministry Albany UU seems to be devoted to. As the state capital, Albany is a uniquely situated place for doing the work of social action and advocacy."

Our congregation was fortunate to attract the attention of ten candidates who applied for the position. The Search Committee came to a unanimous deci-

Flyers in this issue

At the end of this newsletter you will find full page items on:

- ◆ Holiday Events at Albany UU

sion that Eileen has the right skills and fit for our congregation. We look forward with anticipation to a great year of growth and learning together.

Memorial Service

A memorial service for **Cathy Perkins** will be held at 2:00 PM on Saturday, Dec. 3 in Emerson Community Hall, followed by a reception in Channing Hall.

Contributions of finger foods for the reception are welcomed.

Thanksgiving has passed, but Albany UU will still be thankful for your pledge to the Looking Forward campaign.

In September Albany UU began the Looking Forward campaign to help pay off the mortgage on the construction of Emerson Community Hall. The campaign is about to end, so please get your pledges or contributions in to the office. The campaign has been reasonably successful in that we will not have to borrow money from the Endowment Trust, but we will not be able to retire the mortgage. Gifts and pledges to this campaign will reduce costs we have to cover in the future by over twice as much as the gift, and allow us to invest that money in other things. Please get your pledge forms into the office as soon as possible but before December. Thanks from all of us at Albany UU.

Music search

The search for a new Albany UU Music Director is moving forward smoothly. After a very robust and informative survey process, we posted an advertisement with many local organizations as well as on multiple on-line platforms. To date we have several very interesting applications and will be interviewing with those people in the coming weeks. Our hopes are that the best candidates will "audition" for the choir and for the congregation during January at Wednesday rehearsals and Sunday services. Upon completion of the entire vetting process, we hope to bring our new Music Director on board in February.

We welcome the choir members' and congregants' input to this process. Feel free to reach out to us, attend the auditions, and give us your thoughts.-- Albany UU Music Search Committee: Ann Brandon, Kathy Harris, Annika Pfluger, Randy Rosette, Sam Trumbore

Pageant news

The Christmas pageant this year will be part of a multi-generational service to be held at 4:00 PM on Christmas Eve. Important dates for pageant participants:

Dec. 4 – selection of parts for the pageant from 11:30 to 12:00 in room 26

Dec. 18 – Pageant Rehearsal from 11:30 to 12:30 in Emerson Hall

Dec. 24 -4:00 PM service!

Calendar of Holiday Events

Dec. 11 – Holiday Tree decorating in Channing Hall during Coffee Hour



Dec. 17 – 4:00 PM Multi-generational Solstice Celebration, Channing Hall

Dec. 18 – 1:00 PM Caroling party gathers in Channing Hall

Dec. 24 – 4:00 PM Multi-generational Christmas service with the pageant, in Emerson Hall; 7:00 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve service, in the Sanctuary, 8:00 PM Cookies!, Channing Hall

Dec. 25 – 10:00AM Multi-generational Hanukkah Party

Dec. 31- 2:00 PM Multi-generational New Year's Eve Party

A different kind of presidential campaign

Wouldn't you like to see an "issues-based campaign" for president, a campaign that is "respectful, trusting, and honors interdependence among the candidates and their supporters"? Wouldn't you like to see a woman elected to the presidency for the first time? Then you should take a look at the campaign for the presidency of the Unitarian Universalist Association! The quotes are from a covenant agreed to by the three candidates. The candidates

are Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, lead minister at the UU Congregation of Phoenix; Rev. Alison Miller, senior minister of the Morristown NJ Unitarian Fellowship; and Rev. Jeanne Pupke, minister of the First UU Church of Richmond.

Current president Peter Morales will complete his term next June, and congregational delegates to the UUA General Assembly will elect his successor. You will be hearing more about the election and other agenda items for General Assembly 2017 from our new **UU Connections Team**. The Albany UU Board of Trustees recently approved this team to promote our congregation's active engagement with the Unitarian Universalist Association, as well as with other UU congregations and organizations.-- Peggy Sherman, chair UU Connections Team

Budget requests due Sunday, Jan. 8

Yes, it's time once again to figure out how much money your program, committee or group will need in the next fiscal year that starts on July 1, 2017 and ends on June 30, 2018. While it may seem far away, planning with a group takes more time than you think.

The budget request form can be found on the Albany UU members resource site (members.albanyuu.org), in the left column, under the Church Office tab, in the File Cabinet. The form is below the Financial heading. If necessary, the office can supply you with a printed form.

The Finance Committee and the Board use the completed form to help determine how much money will be needed to support your group's planned activities for next year. Combining all the submissions allows us to set a realistic annual canvass goal. If no form is submitted, it will be assumed that your group does not need any funds from the operating budget.

The form is self-guiding, however, if you have questions or need an alternate method of communication, please contact Steve Moskowitz at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxt. Regular mail and email submissions are welcomed. Submit your electronic budget request to xxxxxxxxxxxx or on paper to the Finance Committee mailbox.

Revels at Schenectady UU

Come join the dragon, knight, and wizard at the medieval Yuletide Revels presented under the Whisper Dome of the Unitarian Society of Schenectady (1221 Wendell Ave.) on Friday, Dec. 9 at 7:30 PM

Board notes

The Reverends Theodore Parker and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr....and Us

Patti Jo Newell, Vice President

Unitarian minister and abolitionist Theodore Parker said in 1853, *“I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one...but from what I see I am sure it bends toward justice.”* Our religious tradition is shaped by our Seven Principles, oriented in the bend toward justice and rich with shining testaments to our vision. Yet our arc, too, is a long one. Bound by the limits and failures of our understanding, stalled by self-interest and apathy, and hamstrung by the unavoidable indoctrination of racism and myriad other injustices.

And that indoctrination is truly unavoidable. Society assaults us from the outset with the images, stories, assumptions and lies that infect our way of thinking about ourselves and those who are different from us. The best-intentioned parents cannot protect their children from that virus. We are all dipped in the same brine.

We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now.—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

So, we put our oars in the water. Toward the goal of becoming a more welcoming congregation, a beloved community, for all our members and visitors and for all who have yet to grace our doors, the Board of Trustees is launching an initiative to embark Albany UU on a journey to fulfill that vision. In many ways, our congregation has already started. We have twice offered Beloved Conversations and our minister hosts an ongoing White Privilege Study Group to promote a habit of introspection about white privilege. Our Social Responsibilities Council has a sub-committee on Black Lives Matter to help us become better allies to that movement in our community. And twelve members, primarily trustees, recently attended a Navigating Whiteness workshop hosted by the New England UU Region.

But it is not enough. The work is never really done, and these are exceptionally challenging times.

History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident

clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

So, what will this look like?

The Board has already charged a small team with developing a process toward the creation of a congregational covenant. Right relations is at the core of our Seven Principles, at the core of any meaningful covenant and at the core of realizing a more welcoming congregation.

Another team is forming to plan activities that will facilitate an exploration of white privilege, to create opportunities to identify and challenge our assumptions and to learn about the cumulative impact on people of color of seemingly small offences – micro-aggressions, and to identify and provide resources for our ongoing education and reflection. White people must endeavor to see what is too often invisible to them, but painfully apparent to people of color.

Once embarked, the tools we will need are these:

- ◆ Discipline of an open mind and an open heart
- ◆ Ability to check our assumptions and resistance
- ◆ Fortitude to explore our complicity in the marginalization of others
- ◆ Courage to challenge and be challenged
- ◆ Willingness to be uncomfortable
- ◆ Humility to be uncertain, confused, or just wrong
- ◆ Persistence to look at things a new way
- ◆ *And most important: A practice of love...for ourselves and for others in this work that will be done imperfectly and will never be complete.*

The Board of Trustees looks forward to joining the congregation on this journey. We all have much to learn.

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



and again on Sunday morning Dec. 11 at 10:30 AM. Seano from Circus Theatricks will entertain one half hour before each performance. There is a suggested donation of \$15 for adults and \$5 for children.

The Yuletide Revels is a rollicking medieval celebration of the Winter Solstice – with period costumes,

processionals, music, dance, and drama. The church is transformed into a medieval Manor Hall complete with lords and ladies, musicians, a Mummer's play, Morris dancers, a knight, jester, wizard, and dragon! This is a don't-miss holiday show for all ages.

Growing Together

Getting to Know UU: orientation to UUism Saturday, Dec. 3, 8:45 AM-noon

We invite you to join us for "Getting to Know UU". We'll start with coffee and snacks and getting to know each other. You'll learn about Unitarian Universalism and about our congregation, and you'll get a chance to ask all the questions you've been collecting. We'll talk about how to get involved in the Albany UU community and about becoming a member. All in all, it's a fun morning of conversation and fellowship, and a pleasant first step on the path to membership!

Childcare is available: please let us know you need it when you register. To register, please see box. Please indicate if you need childcare.

UUA Common Read discussion of:
The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement, by The Rev. Dr. William Barber II and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove .

Monday Jan. 30, Feb. 6 and 13, at 7 to 8:30PM.
Childcare is available by advance reservation. To sign-up see the box.

Please contact the office regarding purchasing this book. In addition, some copies may be available for loan; if interested please inquire by also contacting the Albany UU office.

Three ways to sign up for a class or event:

- Send an email to Registration@AlbanyUU.org
- Sign up at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall
- Call the church office, 463-7135

If childcare is offered, please let us know you need it when you register. (Include names and ages of children.)

Mindful Living for Health and Well-being (aka Mindfulness for Managing Stress)

Saturday, Dec. 10, 10:00 AM-noon

Connect to your inner self and learn how to manage the stress of the holiday season and beyond. Scientific research increasingly reveals the importance of lifestyle for minimizing the risk of and mitigating the effects of chronic diseases including heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, etc. This 2-hour workshop introduces participants to mindfulness meditation, healthy eating, physical exercise core elements and simple chair/ standing yoga poses done without special clothing or a yoga mat. These elements of the lifestyle approach can help maintain physical health and a general sense of well-being even during challenging times. Childcare is available by advance reservation. To sign up see the box.

Parent Support Group

Potluck and meeting Jan 8; RSVP for childcare by Dec. 18

At Parent Support Group, I lead activities to help parents learn compassionate communication. And we have a check in around the topic for each month. We have found that the meeting time during Sunday school is really short and I'd like to include parents who serve as RE volunteers.

Sunday, Jan. 8 will be our first lunch potluck and parent group meeting. We'll gather for lunch in Channing Hall at noon; and we'll meet from around 12:30 until 2:00, with childcare. I'll make a big pot of vegan soup. You all can bring things to go along with. Grownups will be in room 26; childcare in room 24/25.

You can come just to the potluck, if you like. Do let me know by Dec 18 if you'd like to come to the potluck, to the meeting, or to both. There is "wiggle room" on letting me know if you want to come just to the potluck - you could even decide the morning of, if you like. But Dec 18 is a firm deadline to let me know

Religious Exploration

What does it mean to be a Community of Presence?

Leah Purcell, Director of Religious Education

“Presence” is the theme of the month from the Soul Matters program. Rev Sam uses this program for his Meaning Matters groups.

Spiritually, presence can mean two radically different things. One the one hand, contemplatives talk of “being present.” Presence from this perspective is all about awareness and remembering to “live in the moment.” On the other hand our lives flow on, relentlessly it seems sometimes, so we can bring meaning to our daily lives when we notice a transcendent Presence that is woven through all moments.

Do we have to choose between being present in the moment and being present to all that is around us? Isn't it true that, more often than not, these awarenesses dance together more than they compete? Isn't it true that when we are most present, a powerful presence emerges? Pay attention to your child and slowly a confidence and unique joy unfolds. Pay attention to the flow of your breathing or the flow of the ocean and something bigger than yourself en-

ters the scene. Look for a long time at a singular tree and eventually it presents itself to you as a world in and unto itself.

The underlying message here is that the world is full of unnoticed gifts and grace. It's a message perfectly fit for this month that so often celebrates presents over presence. In the face of commercials and billboards that tell us our lives will finally be complete if we stuff them with a few more shiny objects or plastic gadgets, our spiritual traditions come along and remind us that our lives are already complete. Their message: The greatest gift of the holidays is noticing the many gifts that have been sitting there all along.

So how will you engage this dance? What powerful and meaningful presence is waiting for you to be present to it? What gift is waiting and wanting to emerge? What will your awareness bring into being this month?

In joyful service,
Leah



if you'd like childcare. Reply to me at dre@albanyuu.org . I'd like to offer this potluck and parent group meeting monthly after Coffee Hour on the second Sunday of each month. If you can't come to the January meeting, but you're interested in others, let me know that too. Thanks, Leah Purcell

UU Jams coming in January

Not strawberry jam – although if strawberry jam-making is your thing, maybe you could lead a how to workshop for our children in Sunday School in January.

In January we like to shake things up a bit. Each year I plan special activities around the theme of the month and ask parents and other volunteers in the congregation to share their talents by leading workshops.

In the past parent and congregational volunteers have led workshops on yoga, science, storytelling, music making, drama, and special crafts. The regular RE volunteers help with the workshops.

The theme for January from Soul Matters or Meaning Matters is Prophecy. As UUs this doesn't mean divinely inspired predictions, necessarily. I'll be inviting the children to do some introspective thinking; discern what's important to them; share their ideas in their groups; and then guide them in activities to take action on those important matters.

If you have a talent that you think could be turned into a workshop for either the 3rd - 5th grade group or the K-2nd grade group, let me know. The Pre-k group will have their own special programming - a month of Teddy Bears - led by the regular volunteers.—Leah Purcell

Exploring the Bible: The Old Testament

The Dickinson Series Part Two

Six Tuesdays, Jan. 10- 14, 7:00 pm

Led by Rev. Sam Trumbore and Karen Greene

Based on interfaith curriculum developed by the Massachusetts Bible Society (that has UU's on its Board of Directors), this class will open up the

wealth of stories, guidance, inspiration and cultural history that informs and shapes Western Civilization found in the Bible. The six sessions focusing on the Old Testament this time will cover:

1. Older Than Dirt (Genesis 1-11)
2. Who's Your Daddy? (Genesis 12-50)
3. Laying Down the Law (1799 – 1019 BCE)
4. United We Stand (1030 – 922 BCE)
5. Divided We Fall (931 – 586 BCE)
6. Age of Empires (606 – 4 BCE)

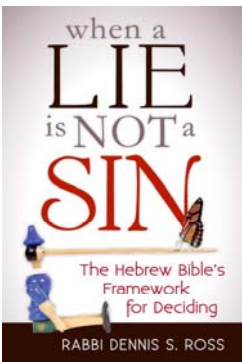
To sign up, see box...or just show up!

When a Lie Is Not a Sin: An Ethical Framework for Deciding

**Presentation by Rabbi Dennis Ross
7pm Tuesday, Dec. 6**

Is omitting the truth the same as lying? Why is lying OK when life is at stake? Do I have to be honest

about a friend's new tie or dress? Do kids need to be told the whole truth? Taking ancient teaching as a prism to daily living, this provocative yet compassionate examination of ethical decision making addresses fine distinctions surrounding common but complicated personal situations and shows how a smaller lie can sometimes serve a higher moral purpose.



Rabbi Dennis S. Ross is the author of *When a Lie Is Not a Sin: The Hebrew Bible's Framework for Deciding*, to be released by Jewish Lights Publishing, May 2016. He also author of *God in Our Relationships: Spirituality between People from the Teachings of Martin Buber* (Jewish Lights) and *All Politics Is Religious: Speaking Faith to the Media, Policy Makers and Community* (SkyLight Paths). Rabbi Ross has written for *The New York Times* and blogs for *Rewire*. He has served synagogues in Chappaqua and Albany, New York, Washington, D. C., Pittsfield and Worcester, Massachusetts, and is currently Intentional Interim Rabbi at East End Temple in Manhattan. Rabbi Ross also directs Concerned Clergy for Choice at Family Planning Advocates of New York State and Planned Parenthood. He travels from the Northeast to speak about spirituality

with Jewish groups and many other faith communities.

To sign up see box.

Mindfulness Meditation Workshop

led by Rev. Sam Trumbore

Jan. 13-14

This meditation training and practice workshop will be led by Rev. Trumbore, on Friday 6:00pm to 9:00pm, and Saturday 8:00am to 3:00pm. It gives the participants an opportunity to learn Buddhist mindfulness meditation techniques and/or refresh and deepen their meditation practice. All are welcome from first timers to experts. There will be a vegan potluck lunch on Saturday and all are en-

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- Sign up** at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall
- Call** the church office, 463-7135

If childcare is offered, please let us know you need it when you register. (Include names and ages of children.)

couraged to bring something to share. To sign up, see box. (A voluntary donation can be offered at the end.)

Future workshop dates: Feb. 17-18, Apr. 28-9. Mark your calendars NOW!

Rev. Trumbore has practiced Buddhist Vipassana or insight meditation for over 30 years and is Past President of the Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship. This meditation technique is one of the best for Unitarian Universalists. It helps people train their minds to strengthen concentration and intensify moment-to-moment awareness. Regular practice of this technique quiets and sharpens the mind, opens the heart and can improve one's physical health.

Our Community

Potluck and movie "Before the Flood" Friday, Dec. 2

Potluck at 6pm, film at 7:15pm

The Green Sanctuary Committee invites everyone to a multigenerational potluck supper in Channing Hall, followed by a free showing of Leonardo DiCaprio's new film, *Before the Flood*, followed by discussion.

Before the Flood presents a riveting account of the dramatic changes now occurring around the world due to climate change, as well as the actions we as individuals and as a society can take to prevent catastrophic disruption of life on our planet. The film follows DiCaprio as he travels to five continents and the Arctic speaking to scientists, world leaders, activists and local residents to gain a deeper understanding of this complex issue and investigate concrete solutions to the most pressing environmental challenge of our time.

Bring a dish to share for the potluck. There is no admission charge, thanks to a special distribution of this National Geographic production by Interfaith Power and Light. Childcare will be provided.

Be a Caring Network Helper

We'd like to hear from folks who might have some time on their hands and would like to help out our members who don't get out much and who might benefit from a visit, a meal, a shopping trip, transportation, or a card. If you attend service regularly, you might consider being our Joys and Sorrows column writer.

Additionally, if you are looking forward to retirement volunteer work, we will need a new Caring Network coordinator by the Fall of 2017.

Please contact Eileen Hoffman at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx or fill out a card at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall.

Walker Book Club

Join the Walker Book Club for a potluck and book discussion on Sunday, December 11, 2016 at 5:30 pm in Channing Hall. Newcomers are always welcome.

We start with a welcoming shared supper which is followed by a lively discussion of the book of the

Need to talk? FUUSA Pastoral Care Associates are here to listen!



Our Pastoral Care Associates have been trained in compassionate listening skills and are available to all members and friends of our congregation. To contact a Pastoral Care Associate, email listeners@albany-uu.org, contact Reverend Sam Trumbore, the FUUSA office at 518-463-7135, or one of them personally. They are: Dave Munro, Chuck Manning, Phil Rich, Jan Satin, Randy Rosette, Sandy Stone, and Lisa Barron.

month. Bring your favorite dish to share and a small contribution to cover beverages.

In December, we will discuss *Three Junes* by Julia Glass. A review in *The New York Times* states: "Free of gimmickry, "Three Junes" brilliantly rescues, then refurbishes, the traditional plot-driven novel." The book's plot unfolds over the course of three Junes (in 1989, 1995 and 1999), "as each part pushes forward and backward in memory, allowing the lives of one scattered Scottish family to emerge."

Contact Linda Hunt at Ishunt@nycap.rr.com for further information or questions.

Albany UU Humanists

The Albany UU Humanists next meet at 7 PM on Dec. 20 in Room B-8 at Albany UU, the third Tuesday of the month. Our conversation continues as to what constitutes Humanism in Unitarian Universalism and at Albany UU. One proposed question is what does Christmas mean to a Humanist? Please come and join us.

We spent an interesting hour and a half discussing what faith means to a Humanists at our November meeting. If you want to see some links referring to that conversation, please join the Albany UU Humanists. See below for instructions.



For further information on Humanism in Unitarian Universalism, please go to the UU Humanists website at <http://huumanists.org>. There you will find the UU Humanist blog, and some related Facebook

groups. There is also the American Humanist Association's website at <http://americanhumanist.org>.

Also, please feel free to join the Albany UU Humanists conversations on the Albany UU website (member.albanyuu.org) by clicking Groups and add your name to the Albany UU Humanists. You may also call the Albany UU office (463-7135), or contact Don Odell (xxx) to be added to the egroup.

Social Justice

SRC Notes

Reflections and news from the Social Responsibilities Council:

When I (Jean Poppei) was growing up, my fervently Unitarian mother looked forward to the arrival each month of *The Catholic Worker*. I share these words from her hero, Dorothy Day, *Commitment*:

“ People say, what is the sense of our small effort.

They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.

A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that.

No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There's too much work to do.”

Thus, in these challenging times, we invite you into the social justice work that lies ahead—whether it's working on:

- ◆ Climate Change
- ◆ Dismantling systemic racism
- ◆ Intervening in the school-to-prison pipeline
- ◆ Standing up for immigrants
- ◆ Developing affordable housing
- ◆ Opposing the corruption of our democracy
- ◆ AND SO MANY MORE LEFT UNNAMED

SRC meetings are held the third Sunday of the month, 11:45a to 1:15p, in B7. Join us and raise your voice for social justice. We are still learning to use our new AlbanyUU website, but hope to have social justice events posted there and encourage your active participation. There is strength in community. And, be sure to look for forth-coming information on the UU Common Read: *The Third Reconstruction*, by Rev. William J. Barber and a relat-

About Us

The Helderberg Madrigal Singers, including Albany UU members **Dawn and Dick Dana and Dave Metz**, will present a free concert “Songs and Carols for a Winter's Day” on Sunday, Dec. 4 at 2:00 pm at the Bethlehem Public Library.

ed Lifespan Learning class that will begin in late January. Don't forget to check out our SRC table for fair trade items, petitions, & information after the Sunday Service (thank you, Thayer!) --Jean Poppei, Chair of SRC, poppei@sage.edu

Showing Up for Racial Justice

Albany now has a local chapter of Showing Up For Racial Justice (SURJ). SURJ is a national network of groups and individuals organizing White people for racial justice. Albany UU is donating our space for the group to hold their monthly local chapter meeting here and all are welcome. More at their Face Book page <https://www.facebook.com/CDSURJ/>. Contact Ann Von Linden if you have questions. xxxxxxxxxxxx The Blue Group (4th grade) recently formed an Action Club to promote and partner with Albany UU social justice events and initiatives. They chose SURJ as their first project to support and they urge you to attend their events and meetings.

Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table is the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about the committee's work to advance human rights. This year's program theme is “Defying Hate.” One way you can support the work of the UUSC is to learn about their work. You can defy hate by reading and discussing the Stories of Hope – the stories of four people that the UUSC partners with. You can pick up your copy at the SRC table at Coffee Hour or read it on line at <http://tinyurl.com/jharay7>. Another way to support the UUSC is to make a monetary donation. Families often place a donation box on their tables during the winter holidays and invite family members to put money in as they are willing and able. We're asking families to use templates from the UUSC to make their GaYT boxes at home.

You can pick up a printed template at the SRC table during Coffee Hour or download it at the UUSC website <http://www.uusc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Template-for-Homemade-GAYT-Box.pdf> You can also donate to the UUSC by writing check or donating on line. More at <http://www.uusc.org/welcome-to-guest-at-your-table/> Please bring your boxes or checks to the RE Office Window by January 22. For more info contact Leah Purcell xxxxxx or Jean Poppei xxxxxxxxxx

Raise your voice for End of Life Choice

In 1988, the UUA General Assembly passed a Death with Dignity Resolution, the only national religious organization to ever do so, and many Albany UUs have been committed to the cause for decades. Now, we can make history. The efforts of the Compassion and Choices New York campaign, with its many partners, including End of Life Choices New York, and Death with Dignity Albany, led to the May 2016 introduction of the Medical Aid in Dying Act in both the Senate and Assembly, which was passed by the Assembly Health Committee. With strong momentum and public support, the bill will be introduced again in the 2017 session of the newly elected legislature. Last year, Albany UUs sent nearly 150 letters to their lawmakers and visited them in their district and capitol offices. This year, our 19-member, and growing, Albany UU **Task Force on End of Life Choice** has donated countless hours of behind the scenes advocacy work. We thank you for all your support, welcome you to join our campaign, and urge you to attend the Forum on December 4.

On **Dec. 4**, the **Forum** in Emerson Community Hall from 11:45-1:00 features attorney Corinne Carey

and physician David Pratt, leaders of the Compassion and Choices New York campaign, who will discuss ***The Need for Expanding End of Life Choice in New York State***, the details and status of pending legislation, and how you can help New Yorkers get the same right to medical aid in dying now available in six other states (OR, WA, MT, VT, CA, and, as of November, CO) and pending in the District of Columbia. We welcome folks from across the capital region, so spread the word.

On **Dec. 5**, in Room B-8 from 2:00-6:00, we will continue our **Postcard Project** to help address voter postcards urging their state lawmakers to support of medical aid in dying. At the State Fair this summer, over 4,000 postcards were signed by voters who were not sure who their lawmakers were, so we are addressing their postcards for them. Bring friends and family, and, if you can, a laptop or tablet.

On **Dec. 7**, at the Colonie Library from 12:15-1:45, **Death with Dignity Albany** is offering another of its excellent programs. David Pratt, MD and MPH, will discuss ***Palliative Care and Hospice***. If you can't attend, find it on Colonie TV Online at <https://vimeo.com/user7518947/videos>. The interfaith September 29 program, *Clergy Perspectives on End of Life Options*, is at <https://vimeo.com/188313601>. Get on the Death with Dignity Albany 500+ member mailing list by writing to info@deathwithdignityalbany.org.

May 9, 2017 at the State Capitol, from 10-4, will be Compassion and Choices New York **Lobby Day**. Mark your calendar now!—Thayer Heath and Nancy Willie-Schiff



Albany UU Holiday Events

December 2016

Decorate the Albany UU Christmas Tree

Sunday, Dec. 11, during Coffee Hour

Channing Hall

Make something to hang on the tree, or bring an ornament from home to donate.



Solstice Celebration

Saturday, Dec. 17, 4:00 PM

Channing Hall

All are welcome—this is an event that children can join in on. Bring drums, if you have any, and noisemakers. A guided activity will take us to a place within ourselves and back and then all may dance in celebration and renewal. Bring finger food, if you're able, for our gathering afterwards.



Christmas Caroling

Sunday, Dec. 18, 1:00 PM

Come sing our favorite carols!

We will be visiting Albany UUs at their homes and group residences to share our Christmas spirit. Meet promptly at 1:00 PM in Channing Hall to get maps and arrange carpooling. All are welcome.

Hanukkah Halleluiah

Sunday, Dec. 25, 10:00 AM

Join Rev. Sam making (and eating!) latkes on this the first day of Hanukkah. Play with dreidels, share stories of Christmas and Hanukkah past.



First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany
405 Washington Ave, Albany, NY 12206
www.AlbanyUU.org

Christmas Eve, Saturday, Dec. 24,

4:00 PM Multi-generational Service and Pageant
Emerson Community Hall

In the pageant we enact the traditional story of Christmas with Mary, Joseph, the three royalty, and a host of angels, shepherds, sheep and barn animals. The story is told in a Unitarian Universalist context, inviting wonder, curiosity and hope.

7:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Sanctuary

8:00 PM Cookie Reception

Channing Hall

Bring cookies to share!

New Year's Eve Party

Saturday, Dec. 31, 2:00 PM

Join in the fun at this multigenerational New Years Eve Party with games, food, music and a suspense-filled count-down to the New Year—sponsored by the Religious Education Council

Contact Us

Board of Trustees 2016-2017

email: board@albanyuu.org

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Custodians

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Regular meeting days

Check current calendar for time and location

Board of Trustees, 3rd Thursday
Program Coordinating Council, 2nd Thursday
Religious Education Council, 1st Monday
Social Responsibilities Council, 3rd Sunday

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

Phone: 518.463.7135

Address: 405 Washington Avenue, between Robin Street and Lake Avenue, Albany, New York 12206

Main entrance is on Washington Avenue. Rear entrance is on West St. Both have ramp access. The building is fully handicapped accessible.

Parking: Parking is available on the street. On Sundays (and for some special events) FUUSA has permission to use the University at Albany's Hawley Parking Lot on Robin Street at Washington Avenue.

Office hours

September-June: Monday-Friday, 9:00-3:00

July-August: Monday–Thursday 9:00-1:00

And by appointment

Websites

General: www.AlbanyUU.org

Resources: www.members.AlbanyUU.org

Building use

To **reserve a room** for an Albany UU activity, contact Church Administrator Amy Lent (463-7135 or administrator@albanyuu.org).

To **rent hall or classroom space** for a personal or non-Albany UU activity, contact Church Administrator Amy Lent (463-7135 or administrator@albanyuu.org).

Windows is the newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany. It is published monthly, except July and August, in the offices of the Society at 405 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12206, and distributed to members and friends of the Society. Church office phone is 518-463-7135.

Editor: Amy Lent

Send submissions for all publications to:
Windows@AlbanyUU.org or to the church office.

Publication deadlines

FUUSA Preview email: 9:00 a.m. Wednesdays
Order of Service: 9:00 a.m. Thursdays
Windows: 9:00 a.m. 3rd Friday of the month

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