

The PowerLine

The Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara



May 2007

Issue 9 Volume 8

May's Sunday Services

6 - Rev. Frances Manly - **What the World Needs Now**

Does Unitarian Universalism have a saving message for the world? And if it does, why are we keeping it a secret? On this Chalice Lighters Sunday throughout the St. Lawrence District; come find out how you can help grow Unitarian Universalist by becoming a Chalice Lighter.

Ushers: A.J. McCabe

Coffee Hour Hosts: Skeeter Tower, Angela Flower
Flowers:

13 - Dr L. Boxer - Temple Beth Israel, Niagara Falls
Receiving the Commandments - Shavuot commemorates the greatest moment in human history-the Revelation of God on Mount Sinai

Ushers: Janet McKenna

Coffee Hour Hosts: Sunday School
Flowers:

20 - Rev. Frances Manly - **Free Speech in a Hateful World**

Does freedom of speech mean that anybody can say anything they want to, any time, anywhere? If not, where and how do we draw the line, and who draws it?

Ushers: Norm Rowlinson

Coffee Hour Hosts: Bonnie & Bill Soley
Flowers: Bonnie & Bill Soley

27 - Don Reidell - **Pentecost For Us**

What does this Christian holiday offer to us ?

Ushers: Susan Diachun

Coffee Hour Hosts: Joy & Norm Rowlinson
Flowers:



Annual Meeting

The 87th Annual Meeting of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara will be held on Sunday, May 20, 2007, at 12:30 P.M. following coffee hour. All reports and items to be included in the Annual Meeting booklet MUST be in the church office by Sunday, May 6 to be included.

If possible, please submit a Word file to uuniagara@yahoo.com.

President's Corner

I am pleased and proud that our church is like an extended family for many of our friends and members. However, we still must be run like a business. Once a year at our Annual Meeting, we review the past year, vote on a budget for the coming year and elect fellow members to serve on the Board of Trustees.

This year our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 20, at 12:30 PM. I encourage and implore everyone to attend, participate and help decided the future for our church family.

Before that, at the end of April, Frances, Peter and I will be attending the Annual Meeting of the St. Lawrence District of the Unitarian Universalist Assoc. Perhaps other members will be joining us also. This year the two day

conference is being held in Utica. Hopefully we will return with new ideas and enthusiasm to accomplish the goals to be set at our own Annual Meeting.

By the time this goes to print, most of you will know that Frances has announced her retirement as of July 2008. We need to prepare for that big change in our church life. Many options are open to us. Together we can decide where we want to go and how we will get there.

So, mark your calendars to be there on May 20th. Your extended family is counting on you!

As always, We believe in UU and You!

Betsy

The Big Read

We will join other WNY residents in discussing, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, by Zora Neale Hurston, on Tuesday, May 8, at 7 PM. We will publicize this event in the hopes that other members of the community join us.

Copies of the book or the CD with a readers' guide are available free of charge. Please see Betsy Diachun for the materials you need to join this entertaining and educational activity. This project is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Roswell Course

Roswell Park is presenting an 8 week series, from April 30 until June 25, on "Accompanying the Dying and Bereaved". The lectures will be held on Monday evenings from 6 to 7:30. Each talk is complete unto itself, presented by diverse individuals each evening. If there is enough interest, we can register for one spot, having different members or friends attend each week. If you are interested and would like to see the schedule, please see Betsy Diachun.

May Outreach Offering

Again on the third Sunday of the month, this one being on May 20, we will donate our outreach collection to the Child Advocacy Center of Niagara at NF Memorial Medical Center. The Center is a multidisciplinary program responding to reports of physical and sexual child abuse.

At the Center, criminal justice, child protection, medical and mental health services are coordinated from a single location that provides a comfortable, child-friendly environment for investigation and intervention, in order to reduce the trauma for children.

If you have suggestions for local groups or agencies we might want to consider for next year, please contact

Supreme Court, 5-4, Rules Against Administration in Warming Case

The Supreme Court, 5-4, rejected the Bush administration's arguments for refusing to regulate carbon dioxide in automobile emissions.

FUNN WINE TASTING CLUB

Next tasting: T.B.A.

Wine: T.B.A.



"In Vino Veritas"



Walking Together...



Rev. Frances Manly

“Change alone is unchanging,” wrote Herakleitos, an ancient Greek philosopher whose words appear as a reading in our hymnal. Although our religious quest, separately and together, is an ongoing search for what is real and true and permanent, we soon enough learn that the search goes on the context of constant change. All that lives, changes.

I recently wrote to some of you—the members and most active friends of the congregation—to let you know of a change that will be coming to our congregation. It is more than a year away, but I wanted to give you as much time as possible not just to prepare for change but to determine your direction and set your course for what will follow.

I first came to this congregation in the fall of 1996, as a very part time minister, after the church had been without a settled minister for several years. During our time together, the church has grown in many ways, not all of them easily measured by numbers. Today, it is a strong and healthy congregation, nurturing and challenging those within its walls and reaching out to let its voice and values be heard in the wider community. I would like to think that I, too, have grown through our life together, deepening and maturing into my ministry.



The minister is available at the church office by appointment and to visit members, especially those who are ill or unable to travel easily, in their homes. If you would like to speak with her, or you know of someone who would like a call or a visit, please call her at home, at 837-9230, or e-mail franly@mac.com. She is usually available at church on Thursdays, 10 am – 2, but it's a good idea to call ahead and make sure.

Lucille Plays for Us

On April 1 and on Easter Sunday we were provided with a super treat! Lucille McElwain returned to accompany us during our church services. In addition, we had an opportunity to listen to wonderful preludes, offertories and postludes. Seeing Lucille and hearing her play is an inspiration to all of us.



Now the time is approaching for both of us, the congregation and me, to prepare to move on to the next stage of our lives. On July 30, 2008—the end of the next church year—I will be retiring from settled ministry. I don't know exactly what will lie ahead for me, but I expect it will include music, more time with my family, and some travel. There will surely also be opportunities and challenges I have not even begun to imagine. The church, too, will have an opportunity to move ahead in new ways, and I look forward to seeing what the future will hold for you.

There will be much to do over the next year. Some of it will be taking care of whatever unfinished business remains in my ministry with you. A good part of it, for you, will be working together to decide what direction you want to take and seeking out the leadership that can help you get there. For both of us, it will be a chance to explore new directions as well as to honor the old ones. Later on, we will find good ways to say goodbye, but it is not yet time for that now. The Board and the Committee on Ministry stand ready both to respond to your current concerns and to guide the congregation into a strong and healthy future.

As always, if you'd like to talk with me about any of this (or anything else, for that matter), please let me know. I'm always glad to talk with you, in person or on the phone. Just give me a call.

Love and Blessings,

Frances

General Assembly Looks to UU's Future

This June, an estimated 4,500 Unitarian Universalists will gather in Portland, OR, for the 46th General Assembly, the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association. You could be among them.

In addition to a myriad of programs, worship services, business events and exhibitions, this year's GA will feature an unprecedented opportunity to shape the mission of our Association. GA attendees will engage in a unique open space meeting process where our own questions and passions will determine our direction for the 21st Century.

Other features of GA will include Ware Lecturer Rashid Kahlidi, a spectacular Sunday closing Worship service, presentations on government secrecy and race and class, and a workshop with noted spiritual writer Kathleen Norris.

Our congregation may send two voting delegates, but you need not be a delegate to attend.

For more information about GA, including registration and housing, see the brochure in the Narthex, or visit www.uua.org and click on the "GA 2007" button. If you are interested in being a delegate, please speak with Rev. Frances or Betsy Diachun

News From Noah

NOAH General Meeting: All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend the monthly general meeting of NOAH congregations; it's a great chance to meet people from other NOAH congregations and to find out first-hand how NOAH is starting to get the attention of our elected leaders and make a real difference in our communities. Who knows? You may even want to get more involved! The May meeting will be May 24, at 7 PM. Watch emails and order of service announcements for the place.

NOAH Leadership Training: several times a year, the Gamaliel Foundation, NOAH's parent organization, offers week-long training to those who are or will be active in their local organizations. The more people who get trained from as many congregations as possible, the more effective NOAH's work will be. Two trainings are offered this summer: one starting July 22 in Hampton, VA, and one starting August 12 near Chicago. NOAH will pay all fees, plus transportation, for any member of a NOAH congregation who attends. If you think you might be interested, please speak with Rev. Frances. For more information on what the training is like and the personal benefits of attending, speak with Bonnie Soley, who attended a training last year.

May Birthdays

6 - Tina Deakyne

9 - Elise Gray

27 - Barbara Faller

Seminar at UB: Long-Term Care Insurance

Save the Date: May 15

Long-Term Care Insurance: Can You Afford It? Can You Afford Not to Have It?

The UB Office of Planned Giving is pleased to invite you and a guest to join us on Tuesday, May 15 at 9:30 a.m. at the Center for Tomorrow on UB's North Campus for "Long-Term Care Insurance: Can You Afford It? Can You Afford Not to Have It?" Bruce D. Reinoso, Esq., a partner with the law firm Magavern, Magavern, & Grimm, L.L.P. and a graduate of the University at Buffalo Law School, will explore a number of topics including:

- Is long-term care insurance worth the expense?
- How much does it cost?
- Is it for everyone?
- How will recent changes in the law impact you?
- How can a good plan help you achieve philanthropic goals in the future?

This is a free program; however, space is limited. Please RSVP to dev-pg@buffalo.edu as soon as possible.

CRE

What's Happening in May

- May 6 Special Project - Sheen Rajamani and AJ McCabe
- May 13 Coffee Hour prepared by CRE - Kathy McCunn
- May 20 Yoga - Gary McCunn and Teresa Labuszewski
- May 27 Flower Theme - Kirstin Dixon

Thank You!

Thank you to Lucille McElwain and Ralph Robertson for sharing their memories and thoughts with our CRE class. Thank you to Erica Kopp, Kirstin Dixon and Gary McCunn for facilitating and recording the interview. Thank you to the CRE class for hiding all the Easter eggs and to all the adults who found them. Thank you to Sheen Rajamani for the Earth Day lesson. Thank you to Gary and Teresa for our continuing yoga series.



On April 1 our young people in our CRE Program interviewed Lucille McElwain and Ralph Robertson, two of our oldest members. The young people asked them questions like, "What was it like when you were in school?" and "What did you do for fun?"

If you would like to learn more about our classes please see Kathy McCunn during coffee hour.

Meeting The Challenge – An Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Conference
Ellen Asprooth, President, St. Lawrence District

How can our congregations best address racism and classism?

Looking for an answer to that challenge from last year's General Assembly, 30 members of St. Lawrence District congregations (16 out of 34) spent a day with Paula Cole Jones, a lifelong member of All Souls Church, Unitarian, in Washington, DC, and an independent antiracism consultant for the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Being leaders in a culture of transformation means being aware of where we are and where others are before we can encourage others to accept a new idea, according to Cole Jones. Transformation in the area of racial discrimination, she says, requires an understanding of the policies and practices that keep discrimination in place, the relationship between feelings and performance, and the relationship between beliefs and behavior.

We are in such segregated communities and situations that we don't see racism, Cole Jones says. "Now, geography does the work of Jim Crow laws," she says, pointing out that for the sake of community, we must use our principles to repudiate privilege in favor of solidarity with those who are marginalized.

As we work on this critical issue, the St. Lawrence District has been invited to participate in an Adult and Youth Religious Education Pilot Project, "Building the World We Dream About." We need twelve congregations to join in this project as it begins; representatives of several indicated interest at the conference. If your congregation would like to participate, please contact Rev. Lynn Ashley at lashley@nycap.rr.com, or (518) 475-0104.

District Offers Safe Congregation Workshop

In our communities of faith, families rely upon the congregation's leaders to provide an environment that is nurturing not only of their children's spiritual development, but of their emotional development and safety as well. As members of communities of justice, congregational leaders are responsible for creating structures and policies that promote safety and healthy boundaries. Keeping our most vulnerable members safe is a critical component of an overall vision of right relations, and the covenants we make with each other.

In recent years, this congregation began to work of creating a safe congregation but we have not yet developed a broad policy that supports a general culture of right relations rather than just responding to an immediate and particular crisis. On Saturday, May 19 (10AM – 4 PM), the Saint Lawrence District is offering a workshop on "Managing Risk in Our Congregations: Keeping Children and Youth Safe." The workshop will help participants understand these issues better and learn how to help their congregations develop the policies and procedures they need. Led by Debby Herman, Acting Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development for the St. Lawrence District, the workshop will include

- Step-by-step guide to creating and implementing safety policies and procedures
- Information on how to educate and advocate within the congregation
- Exploring how change occurs within a congregation
- Best practices for addressing building safety, transportation and health issues
- An overview of the resources
- An opportunity to share successes and challenges

Cost for the workshop is only \$10, including lunch. Child care is available by request. A flyer, with registration form, is on the bulletin board, or at www.sld.uua.org. Please speak with Betsy Diachun if you are interested in attending the workshop. Deadline for registration is May 5.

St. Lawrence District Social Justice Network
Presents

Be the Change You Want to Be

A Social Justice Conference
October 20, 2007--10am to 4pm
May Memorial UU Society - Syracuse

Theme Speaker
JAY GALLAGHER

Albany Bureau Chief Gannet News Service
Member First UU Society of Albany
Registration materials will be out in September.

UU Bed and Breakfast in Maine

The friendly folks of the UU Church of Belfast, Maine, invite UU visitors to the Penobscot Bay area of Midcoast Maine to take advantage of their bed and breakfast hospitality program. The area is known for its beautiful harbors and lakes, exceptional arts, crafts, music, dance, and theater, plus antiques, hiking, farmers markets, and small town New England charm.

For more information, visit their webpage at www.uubelfast.org/bb, email bb@uubelfast.org, or call (978)997-0502.

Invitation to Membership

If you are looking for a religious community in which to seek spiritual growth...

If you are eager to consider religious questions with others who are not always certain they have all the answers but who are determined to keep searching with an open mind...

If you would like the fellowship of others for celebration and worship, discussion and education, friendship and mutual support

If you want children to be helped to develop their own religious beliefs...

If you wish to preserve and extend the traditions of personal freedom and human dignity against the dangers they face today...

You may find that this church fills your spiritual and human needs.

If you wish to know more about us as you consider membership, please speak with our minister.

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PowerLine
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