

Powerline

First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara

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December 2019

Learn, Love, Build a Better World

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The Powerline is a monthly publication of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara. It is free online to anyone who wishes to subscribe- members, friends, and anyone else anywhere in the country and beyond.

It's a simple one step process: Just email your request to uuniagara@gmail.com or click the link. Please spread the word.

Many thanks to our contributors Peter Diachun, Erica Kopp, and Betsy Diachun.

Sunday Programs

December 1: Joan Davis is conducting our Dec. 1 service to start the Advent Season. It is a program filled with love, courage and grace straight from South Africa. She will read a sermon created by Rev. Alan Storey a Methodist minister in Cape Town. Rev. Storey believes that to take the whole bible literally is an absurdity. Jesus would much rather be taken seriously than worshipped; the division of the world into saved and "un-saved" is hate speech; the holy land is not a place to visit but a place to value; and inequality is a weapon of mass destruction.

Coffee hour host: Stephen Wittkowski
Usher: Patty Lisk

December 8: "In a Manger"

Can Unitarians still celebrate the birth of you-know-who?

John Snodgrass

Coffee hour host: Kathy and Wally
Usher: Bill Lisk

Adult religious education discussion

December 8, 2019 12:30PM -1:30PM

<http://www.firstuunf.org/john-snodgrass.html>

Women in Islam

What does the Qur'an say about Adam and Eve, and about marriage? What is the Qur'anic teaching about how women should dress in public? And what were the circumstances of Muhammad's own marriages? Recommended Reading: Saleh, Fatma - Women in Islam.

December 15: "One Love"

Inspired by this Bob Marley song and the actions of Christians, Jews and Muslims in Israel who came together to sing this song; the idea of what is one love and examining how this informs what we think about our faith of love.

Susan Frawley

Coffee hour host: Joan Davis

Usher: Kathy Mccunn

December 22: "Of the Birth"

Does the Birth interfere with our shopping? Has it any spiritual renewal for you?

Don Reidell

Coffee hour host: Marge Gillies

Usher: Erica Kopp

December 29: "Is your soul malnourished?"

Although membership in formal religions is decreasing, the pursuit of spiritual nourishment is alive and well. Some spiritual practices -- such as pilgrimages -- are very old. A few are newer concepts. Timothy Egan recently wrote an article in the NY Times called, "The cure for the malnourished soul." Egan went on a pilgrimage from Canterbury, England to Rome. That's not possible for most of us, but there are things we can do here to nourish our souls. Can a malnourished soul be cured, or is this a chronic condition?

Donna Evans-Deyermond

Coffee hour host: Betsy Diachun

Usher: Shelley Baxter

President's Message

We have been struggling for several months with establishing a White Privilege initiative. This has not ignited our Congregation as I thought it might. As we discussed this at the last Board Meeting we concluded that we need to narrow our objective, and concentrate on grasping the concept ourselves before we even think about trying to lead a White Privilege or White Fragility initiative outside the Church.

White Privilege and White Fragility are hard to understand. They are new concepts for all of us. It is hard and uncomfortable to have to confront our own racism and our benefits from being in a racist society. I do not know anyone in our Church who is proud being a racist or from benefiting from the established racist system in which we all live. Yet this is exactly what apparently is the case.

The Board decided to devote the next open, Sunday Morning Church Program to understanding this together. This will not be to plan what to do. We are not ready, and may never be ready, for that. First we need to understand what White Privilege and White Fragility are. These are new concepts for all of us. It will be difficult and painful. We need to do this together so that we can support each other. The date will be Sunday, January 5. There will be no outside speaker. We will share with each other what we have learned and how we feel. Each of us needs to prepare to listen and to share. The more each person finds out about White Privilege and White Fragility before January 5, the better. We now have lots of information to read or watch on videos shown on a page of our our website:

<http://www.firstuunf.org/white-privilege.html>

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Thanks to those of you who wrote a card indicating what you like to do. I was surprised to learn about some of the things you like to do. As I expected they were diverse which is good. It means we have people who like to do things which others do NOT enjoy doing. If each of us did for the Church only what we liked to do, much of what needs to be done, would get done.

If you have not written a card, please do so. Send or give it to me or put it in the collection plate.

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Help us build a champion Church!

Holiday Giving

SOCK IT TO US! And help us warm up some folk through the Magdalene Project! Our clothesline is up in the Narthex awaiting your gift of socks.

We just realized that many of you are too young to know "SOCK IT TO ME" jokes from Laugh In. Please see the link below to understand why we are asking you to Sock It to Us for our collection of socks for the homeless. Whether you understand the joke or not, please continue to bring in warm sox.

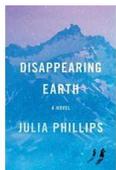
<https://youtu.be/n6HIzYXZzI0>

Or, bring in rolls to help us create another “bathroom tissue” tree to help families at Carolyn’s House who may be on food stamps. Do you know that basic paper products are NOT included in items subsidized by the government?

Announcements

Christmas Eve

There is no service scheduled at the church for Christmas Eve but what about going caroling? See Betsy if you wish to join us or have ideas of people we could visit. Don’t worry if you don’t sing well – neither do we! We’ll end the evening early with cocoa, eggnog and cookies.



Book Group January 15, 2020 at 4:30 PM, Disappearing Earth by J. Phillips. An intriguing novel first mentioned in Donna Evans-Deyemond's November Sunday service. All are invited to attend our meetings since the philosophical discussions which are brought up because of our reading tend to range far from the subject and can be participated in by all.

UUA

Impact > Intention

By [Misha Sanders](#)

November 13, 2019

“What one does is what counts. Not what one had the intention of doing.”

—Pablo Picasso

I heard the incoming screams from the far end of the parking lot of the home improvement store. The vehicle swerved crookedly into the lot and abruptly stopped. Someone inside was forcefully hitting the driver for a few frightening moments, and then emerged from the passenger side and fell to the asphalt, continuing to scream.

I drove slowly to the driver’s side of the vehicle, and asked the woman weeping behind the steering wheel if she was okay, and asked how I could help. She told me that she was a new respite caregiver for this young man, and did not know what might be triggering his discomfort. Shaken but unhurt, she was calling his parents and would appreciate me waiting with her.

Another man had by this time stopped and gotten out of his truck to see if he could help. I felt immediate relief at having more back-up.

To my naive surprise, upon seeing a large white man walking quickly toward us, unmistakable fear returned to the face of that shaking young black woman in hijab. She screamed, "No! He has autism! Please do not touch us!" She flinched and lifted her hands to her face against this man’s approach just as instinctively as she had earlier, when her agitated young charge had been striking her.

Thankfully, the man graciously backed away, hands up in a gesture of peace, drove to another part of the lot and parked, keeping watch.

After parents of the man with autism arrived and he willingly got into their car, his caregiver wept and said to me, “I don’t know who scared me more,” gesturing to the now-calm young man and then to the other man in the truck still parked across the lot.

Oh, my dear fellow people of privilege. We have more damage to undo than we realize. Even in our efforts to help, we can so easily strike terror in the hearts of our beloveds in the margins. We will not always get it right. But can we strive to have the grace to back away when our presence doesn’t feel like safety?

Prayer

Spirit of Humility and Grace, help us remember that sometimes, despite doing our best, our intent and our impact do not match. Teach us when to keep watch from a distance just in case, and ultimately to trust that those we have come to help may have been just fine before we showed up.



Rev. Misha Sanders is feeling very blessed to be the Senior Minister at Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation in beautiful Sandy Springs, Georgia. She is a fiery preacher of the good news of Unitarian Universalism, and believes that the whole world is built and rebuilt by the stories we...

For more information contact braverwiser@uua.org.

<https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/impact-intention>

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara
Facilities available for Wedding Services,
Receptions, and Celebrations



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