

Powerline

*First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara*

639 Main Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
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April 2021

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 Marge Gillies, Peter Diachun, Betsy Diachun, and Erica Kopp.

Sunday Services

April 4: “Western New York Land Conservancy”

On this Easter Sunday, now that spring is officially here, the speaker will focus upon the natural beauty of our region that has been improved by the efforts of the Western New York Land Conservancy.

Mr. Semmel is the Communications Manager for the WNY Land Conservancy. He will tell us about current projects in which the Conservancy is active such as the Niagara Gorge, Stella Niagara, and selected projects in our region. He grew up in Livingston County on thirty acres of land. There, he learned to appreciate the beauty of nature by wandering through the woods alone or with his siblings.

He served as the Executive Director of Writers and Books in Rochester, NY. He is a writer and literary translator whose fiction, non-fiction, translations, and literary criticism have appeared in the Washington Post and other outlets. He has translated 12 books from Danish and Norwegian and is a 2016 Translation Fellow.

Speaker: Kyle Semmel: Western New York Land Conservancy via ZOOM

Coffee Hour: Linda Hurley

Usher: Bill Lisk

April 11: “Renewal”

Whether we are more spiritual or natural in our beliefs, spring can be a time of awakening and renewal. We'll examine ancient legends and rituals celebrating rebirth and rejuvenation, and see how these have been shaped by natural processes of emerging from winter.

12:30 – 1:30 Religion Class:

STONE AGE GODDESSES

The earliest traces of humanity's spiritual development are not a search for a male god in the sky, but a female goddess of survival and abundance on earth. In this session we'll be examining how European Goddess worship continues in modern Wicca.

Speaker: John Snodgrass

Coffee Hour Host: Erica Kopp

Usher: Betsy Diachun

April 18: "Showers"

April showers bring May flowers. What will the showers of this spring bring? What do we hope will grow and blossom in our faith garden? What weeds and obstacles get in the way of growing a healthy community? Let this service shower you with answers to these questions and prompts for other questions about faith community growth.

Speaker: Susan Frawley via ZOOM

Coffee Hour Host: Carolyn and Winnie

Usher: Erica Kopp

April 25: "Alternate Approaches to Death and Mourning"

Flo Kane is the maker behind FloMade and FloMadeMourning. She's been creating art about grief and death for 7 years. Flo states, "I want my work to be an invitation to you to look at your own fears and beliefs about death and loss. I want to create pieces that spark meaningful conversations about your hopes, fears and curiosities about death and dying. I am an advocate of planning your 'good' death, of home funerals, and of natural burial and recomposition. I feel these desires very keenly. I feel deep love and deep sadness around the death of my father. I carry that experience around inside of me and it is the seed of my interest in how we die and how we support the dying. In how we grieve and support and recognize grieving."

Flo lives in a wee red house in a big green field. She reads avidly, walks daily and marvels at the natural world and all of her gifts. She loves learning by doing, sewing, embroidering, writing and reveling in domesticity. She shares her life with one temperamental cat and my spouse, who is in love with our land and the many gardens she cultivates on it. She is so fiercely beloved by me that I am always contemplating the good death I hope she will experience, and where I can bury her body on our property (if she pre deceases me, of course). Thankfully, this does not terrify her. We share the land with two hives of bees, deer, foxes, countless birds and a feral cat colony.

<https://flomademourning.com/>

Speaker: Flo Kane via ZOOM

Coffee Hour Host: Shelley Baxter

Usher: Patty Lisk

Mural in the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Area, designed in 2020, paying tribute to the Black Lives Matter Protests that have been happening continuously since the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis



President's Report

As we continue to celebrate the church's 100th birthday, I am impressed with the purposefulness of the founders to establish a liberal religious body. During its 100 years the position of the church has changed substantially from a creed-less branch of the Christian Church to a secular church available to all. The constant element has been promotion of rational free thinking without submitting to any authority or imposition of any limit on individual free thought. The religious practices of members and participants have ranged from tolerant acceptance of the deism of Thomas Paine to the atheism of today. The emphasis has been on truth and facts based on an ever changing body of knowledge.

Our church has been a defender and proponent of free thinking by individuals no matter where it leads. As in the past we have not been afraid to think for ourselves. This has not been popular. Most people reject the responsibility of free thinking. They want to submit to authority. Our small church has from its beginning stood for, defended, and promoted free thinking.

I am proud of this history and am willing to work to continue it now and into the future.

Peter

100th Anniversary Celebration: Remembrance of Ralph A. Robertson

Ralph became an active member of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara when Barb and Peter Skelton attended. I remember Ralph really could not wait to join us officially. We are so glad he did.

He was an educator and an administrator for many years after he returned from active duty in the army during WW II. I wish we knew more of that story. His obituary noted his service from 1943-1946. During that time, he was in stationed in North Africa, Italy, France, and Germany. One can only imagine what that must have been for him during that tour of duty.

In the early years in education, he taught at Amherst Central School and Park School. Later he served as principal with the Ken-Ton School District until his retirement in 1973.

One of the fondest memories I have of Ralph was on the anniversary of Robert Burns, he donned the appropriate plaid trousers and blazer, and then recited a selection from Robbie Burns-as if he were Robbie himself! Ahh, pure bliss for every Scot!

Once he retired, he spent a good deal of time at the Local History Department of the Niagara Falls Library. In the years following, he assembled several etchings by Amos Sangster that were added to a previous release of "Arcadia Revisited: Niagara River and Falls from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario." 1981).

For many years, he lived in a lovely apartment suite at the Red Coach Inn on the first floor. There he often dined with his best friend, Paul Reid, Jr., a lawyer with the firm, Rice, Reid, Broderick, and Wattengel. Mr. Reid was his lawyer, yes! More than that, he was also Ralph's closest friend. Ralph and others who owned the suites were asked to move so the restaurant could make them available to visitors. To make the move easier during his later years, careful attention was made to set the new apartment with the same furniture in roughly the same location that it would have been at the Red Coach. Several members of First UU Niagara helped him move and visited him at his new home.

Before he moved out of the home he treasured, several of us were invited to take or purchase something from him as a treasure. He gave me an autographed book of Sangster's etchings and a print that was painted by his late wife, Barbara. That painting proudly hangs in the guest room of my home in Provincetown.

Sadly, his dear friend died suddenly, and he was overcome with grief. He wrote, "Paul was the most ethical person I knew, and I shall miss him greatly. I am an old man and an old friend whose admiration for Paul cannot be expressed in words. We understood one another. Enough said. For Lois and their children, I can only say the hardest farewell of all. I miss you, Paul, and I will until I am gone, too."

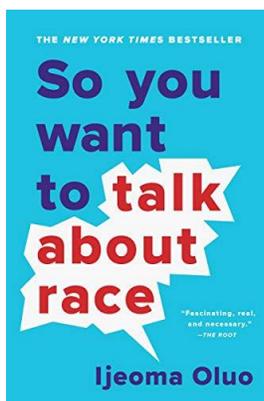
RAR 3/2/2019.

Marge Gillies

FUUN Little Known Facts

Our membership grew from 1921 to the height of our growth in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Middle and upper management of many chemical companies were located in the local area and swelled our numbers with adults and young people. Physical expansion to the building took place at that time too with additional classrooms and office space being added.

Book Group



The Book Group wants to get active again. We are planning to meet on Thursday, 4/22, at 4:30 in Unity Hall for about an hour to discuss "So You Want to Talk About Race" by Ijeoma Oluo. Our speaker Amanda Buonopane left copies for us after her talk in January. It can also be found on Kindle and in paperback. There may still be copies available in Unity Hall. There are discussion questions in the back which might be useful. We will meet in Unity Hall where we can easily be 6 feet apart. Masks should be worn as needed.

Please remember that our discussions range, sometimes off topic, so you do not need to have read the book to attend. The subject matter is obvious from the title. If you have questions contact Betsy Diachun or Kathy McCunn.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday May 23, 2021.

Stewardship

Sunday, MAY 2, please plan to attend church in person if you can, and to stay for lunch after church for our Campaign Sunday. You'll have a chance to play Jeopardy from 100 years ago. We guarantee fun and food as YOU decide how you can support FUUN, Rev. Terry Kime will be the speaker.

Our People

Joy and Norm Rowlinson are living in North Tonawanda with her daughter and son-in-law, Gary and Kathy. Norm is returning from a stay at Elderwood later this week. Their contact information is 69 Pine Woods Drive, N.T. 14120 or by phone 260-1377.

UUA

UUA Condemns Attacks on Democracy, Recommits to Protecting Voting Rights March 29, 2021



Take Action Today

- **Work to pass national voting rights legislation.** [Join Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice](#) in urging your Senators to take action in passing S1, the For the People Act, and [identify your U.S. House Representative](#) and ask them to vote YES on HR 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.
- **Organize for voting rights in your state.** Know [what voting-related measures](#) are on your state's legislative agenda this year, and work with your [UU State Action Network](#) to organize UUs in your state in support of a pro-democracy agenda.
- **Join other UUs to learn and organize for democracy together.** Follow Side With Love on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) as we connect UUs with opportunities for education and action in support of democracy. Join our [UU the Vote Facebook community](#) to connect with others working to combat voter suppression and ensure all people have a voice and a vote.

For more information contact pr@uaa.org.

See full article at <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/condemns-attacks-democracy>

"Singles Social Club" established over 40 years ago. We are a friendly group that welcomes newcomers to our activities, game nights, dances, picnics, restaurants and much more....come join us! (Ages ranging 50 to 80 years old now, but all welcome) Call for more info 716-550-1232. Find us on facebook: Singles Social Club

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

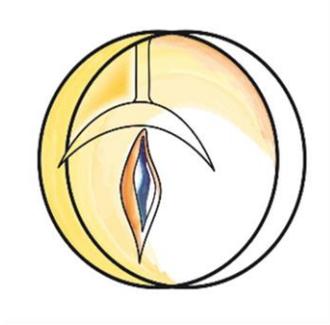


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