

March 2015 **POWERLINE**  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara  
**Sunday Services (11:00am)**



**March 1:** “Empty Lives”

Do we expect our lives to have more meaning, or is this all there is?

—Rev Donald Reidell

**March 8:** Why am I still trying to drive my Karma and curb my dogma ?

This will be a light hearted (with serious insights) reflection on the spiritual journey. It will strive to answer the question: How can we find peace through religion when there appear to be so many "land mines" along the way?

— Rev. Ron Skowronski

**March 15:** Just "Like..."

It is human nature to try to understand something new in terms of what we already know: it's "just like"..... What happens when the "something new" is a something called Unitarian or Universalist or Unitarian Universalist that functions in an unfamiliar setting?

— Rev. John Rex

**March 22:** Changing Idolatries

Unitarian Universalists have always claimed that their faith is not THE truth but the QUEST for truth. This is indeed admirable, but we must at all times be alert to the temptation to create our own gods.

—Rev Donald Reidell

**March 29:** You Must be Present to Win”

In the great “lottery” of life, you must be present to win! That’s right – if you want a chance at the big pay off, you’ve got to show up. Whether it’s being in community, connecting with friends and loved ones, or tackling your vocation, it is all better when we are fully engaged, attuned, and mindful. Today we explore what being fully alive and present means in a life where we can be so easily distracted.

— Rev. Victoria Ingram

## **All Members and Friends of 1<sup>st</sup> UU Church of Niagara:**

Our Sunday Morning Programs are a most important part of our Church. Now that we are functioning without even a part time minister, the complete responsibility of producing high quality programs falls upon the Congregation. This year the Sunday Morning Program Committee has scheduled a variety of speakers. We are now starting to schedule speakers for next year. The full participation from those who attend, or would attend, on Sunday mornings is needed. Which specific speakers you like best and least, and what kind of speakers do you want us to try to find? The importance of your input can not be overemphasized. You can strongly influence and control the speakers we have. Members of the Committee and of the Board will listen to your preferences and requests. Decisions about next year's speakers will depend on what is heard.

Speak with or write to Bill Lisk, Teresa Labuszeski, Paul Brundage, Steve Wittkowsky, Peter Diachun, Betsy Diachun, Marge Gillies, or Erica Kopp.

To refresh your memory a list of our speakers this year is provided.

9/7/2014	Water Communion	3/1/2015	Don Reidell
9/14/2014	Jerry Kent	3/8/2015	Rev. Ron Skowronski
9/21/2014	Destin Radder	3/15/2015	Rev. John Rex
9/28/2014	Don Reidell	3/22/2015	Don Reidell
10/5/2014	Rev. Ron Skowronski	3/29/2015	Victoria Ingram
10/12/2014	Will Crago	4/5/2015	Peter Diachun
10/19/2014	John Mayer	4/12/2015	Terry Kime
10/26/2014	Don Reidell	4/19/2015	Steve Aschmann
11/2/2014	Don Reidell	4/26/2015	Don Reidell
11/9/2014	Tom Flynn	5/3/2015	Don Reidell
11/16/2014	John Mayer	5/10/2015	Will Crago
11/23/2014	Don Reidell	5/17/2015	Darcey Laine
11/30/2014	Joseph Rautenstrauch	5/24/2015	Don Reidell
12/7/2014	Tim Madigan	5/31/2015	Donna Evans-Deyemond
12/14/2014	John Mayer	6/7/2015	Jenny Hill & Paul Bradford
12/21/2014	Sunnie Thomas	6/14/2015	Terry Kime
12/28/2014	Don Reidell	6/21/2015	Flower Communion
1/4/2015	Renee Ruchotzke		
1/11/2015	John Mayer		
1/18/2015	Frances Manley & Doug		
1/25/2015	Don Reidell		
2/1/2015	Drorah Setel		
2/8/2015	Martin Moleski		
2/15/2015	CANCELLED		
2/22/2015	Don Reidell		

## **EVENTS**

Please spread the word

On Wednesday, March 4, the first of our “TABOO TOPICS” discussions will take place at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara, 639 Main Street at 6 PM. All are welcome. Our mission is CONVERSATION – not conversion. As UUs, we find it most important to minister with each other. This outreach is an opportunity to converse with our community, to help us all gain a better understanding of our neighbors' views and opinions, in order to break down barriers and build bonds between us. Coffee and light refreshments will be served.

At this first discussion we will talk about euthanasia, the act of helping someone take his or her own life. We will begin by watching a moving speech by Brittany Maynard's mother. Brittany is the young woman diagnosed with terminal brain cancer who decided to take her own life. Helping her to do so is a crime in many states. New York is considering changing their laws. Because of Brittany, California now has a law on the books making it legal to help people, in full capacity of their faculties, to choose their time of death. This seems to be a timely topic to discuss.

A follow up to that topic will be held on April 1, when we will discuss other end of life options with Hospice and Palliative Care programs. In all cases the patient should be a part of his/her treatment and care. There are now medical specialists who work exclusively in this area.

Set for May 6 is a discussion of Trans\* people. Come and learn about this designation of humans. Historically, sexuality and gender identification issues have long been a part of society. These issues are now gaining some level of cultural understanding and acceptance.

These are all important topics which are often difficult to bring up and discuss within families and amongst friends. Respectful listening and sharing will be encouraged during these talks.

Future topics for discussion will be determined by the needs and ideas of the group. Possibilities might be abortion, domestic violence, or addictions.

## **Social Event**

Again this year some of us will go to the South Wilson Fire Hall, on Chestnut St Wilson., to enjoy one of their fabulous Lenten Brunches. See us there at 9 AM on Sunday, March 22, back in time for church at 11. If you have never experienced this before it is a delicious treat with bits of Americana similar to a Norman Rockwell painting. Cost is around \$10 per person. Contact Betsy if you have questions or need a ride.

## **District Assembly Fund Raiser**

Below is an announcement which went out to all who might be attending the District Assembly this year. If you can help with this let Peter Diachun know. [754-2830 or [peter.diachun@gmail.com](mailto:peter.diachun@gmail.com)]

March 27-28, 2015 are the dates set for the District Assembly in Niagara Falls, NY. The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara is offering a special Niagara Experience for participants. At the close of the District Assembly programming at 5:00 PM Saturday March 28, those registered for the UUNEX2015 may convene at the First UU Niagara Church for a cocktail hour with an open bar followed by a pork tenderloin banquet with a grilled portabella mushroom vegetarian alternative. After the banquet, tours of the lights over the Falls will be led by Church members for those who are interested.

On Sunday morning our guests will be fed scrumptious brunch before our 11 AM Sunday Church service.

If there is interest church members will be available to take people to attractions within the county: The Aquarium; Old Fort Niagara, and evidence of Underground Railroad activities in the area.

Cost is \$75 per person for the entire UUNEX2015. This price includes meals, tour guides and lots of story telling. Guests will be expected to stay over an additional night at their hotels at their own expense. The Church is located a short distance from the Convention Center where the DA will be held and close to the major hotels. It is approximately 1 mile from the Falls themselves.

## **Up, Up and Away**

This is the theme of our Annual Commitment Drive. Things will start happening in March and culminate, hopefully, in April. Stay tuned

*“Would You Like Summer? Taste of Ours —”*

-- Emily Dickinson, 1862

Come explore Emily Dickinson’s passions as poet, gardener, and cook July 17-19, 2015 in Amherst, Massachusetts. Beginning Friday in late afternoon and concluding Sunday morning, a new program devoted to the life and works of one of America’s greatest poets will feature:

- Presentations by Dickinson scholars Marta McDowell, Aífe Murray and Jane Wald
- Hands-on activities to help guests delve more deeply into Dickinson’s love of botany and baking.

Offered by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst for \$400 per person, the program also includes private tours of The Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens (home of her brother Austin and his wife Susan); visits to the poet's gardens and grave; a trolley tour of Dickinson landmarks; poetry discussions and readings; musical performances; and optional visits to the Dickinson collections at Amherst College, The Jones Library and the Amherst History Museum.

The program fee of \$400 per person includes all admissions, tours and activities, refreshments and four meals. **Optional lodging is available for \$75 per person per night** in the homes of members of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst.

For more information, visit

<http://www.uusocietyamherst.org/EmilyDickinsonEducationalWeekend.aspx>, email [office@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:office@uusocietyamherst.org), phone 413-253-2848 or write to Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst, P.O. Box 502, Amherst MA 01004-0502.

Marta McDowell, landscape historian, garden writer and author of *Emily Dickinson's Gardens*, will present "**Would You Like Summer?**" She will discuss the fruits and vegetables that graced the poet's garden and table. Learn which heirloom produce you can grow in your own kitchen garden in celebration of Dickinson. On Saturday, she will lead "**Have you made an herbarium yet?**" In this "make-and-take" activity inspired by the poet's extensive album of pressed flowers, participants will learn the basic techniques for mounting herbarium specimens and creating flower-decorated cards.

Aífe Murray is the author of *Maid as Muse: how servants changed Emily Dickinson's life and language*. In "**Taste Of Ours!**" she will lead participants in making Dickinson family recipes while she describes some of the baking challenges of the poet's 19<sup>th</sup> century kitchen, the role played by household chores in Dickinson's literary process, and how baking served as literary inspiration. The morning's culinary treats will be tasted at a Victorian tea that afternoon over a discussion of Dickinson's poetry.

Jane Wald has worked with The Emily Dickinson Museum for 14 years, and been its Executive Director for the past nine. On Sunday as part of the UU service, she will present "**I am glad there are Books. They are better than Heaven**": **What did the Dickinsons Really Read?** Dickinson refused to become a full member of her family's church and called herself a "pagan," but she knew the Bible backwards and forwards and often spoke of faith in her poetry. Her poems and letters chronicle a lifelong struggle with issues of faith and doubt, suffering and salvation, nature and deity, mortality and the eternal. An examination of her family's libraries can cast more light on Dickinson's personal theological explorations in the context of 19<sup>th</sup> century religious movements. Were they better, to her, than Heaven?

This event is a fundraiser for the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst. Program subject to change.

## **District Assembly**

### **Deep Roots, Broad Wings March 27-28, 2015, Niagara Falls, NY**

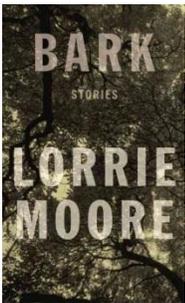
This year's District Assembly is a joint effort with the Ohio-Meadville District and the St. Lawrence District. District Assembly will take place March 27-28, 2015 at the Niagara Falls Convention Center, Niagara Falls, NY.

The Rev. Scott Tayler is the keynote speaker. His keynote address is titled *The Space Between: Building a new day by strengthening the ties that bind*. Gould Lecturer is Rev. Thomas Chulak, speaking on *The Sum of the Parts*.

Eleven workshops will be offered in two time slots covering an array of topics important to congregational life. CERG (Central East Regional Group) staff are attending as workshop presenters and to answer questions by members about CERG services and resources. There is time allotted for conversations about regionalization and what it means to our congregations, clusters and districts.

<http://www.sld.cerguua.org/conggrowth/districtassembly.html>

## **Book Club Wednesday March 18:**



At 7PM the book club will meet to discuss the book, *Bark Stories*, regardless if you have read it all. Come and join the lively discussions.

## **Facebook and Website**

**USERS:** Remember to like us on Facebook: Just go to Facebook and type in First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara. We'd also like you to go to our Website frequently. We are looking for ways to update and improve it and are open to suggestions. See Erica Kopp. Our address is: [firstuunf.org](http://firstuunf.org)

## **TOPS CARDS**

A new supply of TOPS cards is available. Contact Erica ([ericakopp@yahoo.com](mailto:ericakopp@yahoo.com)) or Betsy ([ediachun@gmail.com](mailto:ediachun@gmail.com)) to purchase. Help the church finances while shopping as you normally would.

## **Special Meeting**

At the special meeting on Sunday, Jan. 25, we voted to hold a fundraiser to entertain people attending the DA. Below is the invitation issued to possible DA attendees on March 27, 28, 29. Depending on how many responses we get, this may be a BIG undertaking. It will be a mini UUNEX which we held with great success for many years. As the time approaches we will want to know your availability and capability to help. Thanks!

## **Unitarian Universalist Niagara Experience 2015 (UUNEX2015)**

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There is limited space available for UUNEX2015. Please register as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. We are excited about hosting you for this special event.

## **Website**

Have a look at the new website <http://firstuunf.org/>

It still needs some changes. Please email Erica with any thoughts or suggestions: [ericakopp@yahoo.com](mailto:ericakopp@yahoo.com)

## **Library**

I have a large collection of classic lp records and cds and a video library of over 3000 videos of classic movies and tv shows and concerts. I am 83, do not plan on dying soon but i have no one to leave this great library to. If you are truly interested or know someone who is call me at 716-743-4059 and we can discuss it.

Arnie Shafer

## **Heating the Church in Winter**

We are now in the heating season. There are two important actions all members must understand.

1. Anyone using the Church building must be aware that it will be cold unless a request is made to bring up the heat at least 24 hours ahead. It takes at least that long to heat the auditorium. Unity hall heats up in about 6-8 hours. If you want any part of the building heated you must let Peter or Erica know at least a full day before so it can be reprogrammed to meet your needs. It can be programmed up to 6 days in advance. The Founders' Room (Office) is an exception. It automatically senses activity and will be up to temperature in about 10 minutes after someone enters. You can use the Founders' Room any time with out any prior arrangement for heat.
2. In order to conserve heat, all the inside doors which now have spring closures on them must be kept closed except when people are going through. Please do not prop them open. Treat these doors as you would an outside door—that is closed during the heating season.

## **FUNDRAISING**

The church is listed as a charity on Ebay. Anyone can sell items on Ebay giving 10-100% of the proceeds directly to the church. Ebay discounts the seller's fees at the percent of the donation. There is also an option to make a direct donation. Proceeds are directly deposited in the Church's checking account. So far we've raised \$200 from the first few of Jeanne Aydelotte's Hummels. We also have a beautiful ornament from Patty Lisk listed. Sometime - will be listing a number of items donated by Mamie Simonson and Judi Bongiovanni. Ebayers in the church can check out:

<http://givingworks.ebay.com/charity-auctions/charity/first-unitarian-universalist-church-of-niagara/58459/>

If you have comments or articles you may submit them to [ericakopp@yahoo.com](mailto:ericakopp@yahoo.com) with the subject "Powerline"



First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara  
 639 Main Street  
 PO Box 2566  
 Niagara Falls, NY 14302  
 Return Service Requested  
 March 2015

### UU Niagara Activities – March 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Don Reidell	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Rev. Ron	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Rev. John Rex 12:30pm - Board	16	17	18 7pm - Book Group @	19	20	21
22 Don Reidell	23	24	25	26	27 SLUUD - youth	28
29 Rev. Victoria Ingram	30	31	1	2	3	4