

Powerline

First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara

July 2018

639 Main Street
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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 Teresa Labuszewski, Erica Kopp, and Betsy Diachun.

Sunday Programs

Summer Programs are Sundays 11:00 – 12:00

President's Message

A lot of ideas come to me when I am out running. There is a megachurch not even a mile from my home that I run past several times a week. A few weeks ago, a sign appeared in front of the church that stuck in my head. It bothered me. It said, "Looking to win this summer? SUMMER OF ONE (with the one crossed out and replaced by WON). Win friends. Win battles. Win Opportunities." The first time I ran past it, I did not really think about it much, except that I thought it a strange sign for a church. Each time I passed it, it bothered me more and more. When did religion get to be all about the individual and winning? What happened to the greater good and the golden rule? What happened to community? This sign did not convey to me what I thought religion was all about. And then I forgot about the sign.



That is, until I presented the first summer service on June 24th. There, I discussed what brought me to Unitarian Universalism. In the religion I had been raised in, church was church and had nothing to do with one's daily lives. I loved the mystery and pageantry and ritual-but I also saw that the people who were the most "religious" did not practice their faith in their interactions with others. In the UU tradition, we are called to take our seven

principles into the world and live them. In my presentation, I said that I felt we were led more by reason and thought than by being “moved by the spirit” as happens in other religions, and that we did not have a lot of rituals to bring us to a spirit of worship. And perhaps that is why our church remains small. But there is one ritual that every UU church shares - lighting the chalice. The flaming chalice is the symbol of our faith in action. Here is a blurb from the UUA website.

“The chalice and the flame were brought together as a Unitarian symbol by an Austrian artist, Hans Deutsch, in 1941. Living in Paris during the 1930s, Deutsch drew critical cartoons of Adolf Hitler. When the Nazis invaded Paris in 1940, he abandoned all he had and fled to the South of France, then to Spain, and finally, with an altered passport, into Portugal.

There, he met the Reverend Charles Joy, executive director of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC). The Service Committee was new, founded in Boston to assist Eastern Europeans, among them Unitarians as well as Jews, who needed to escape Nazi persecution. From his Lisbon headquarters, Joy oversaw a secret network of couriers and agents.

Deutsch was most impressed and soon was working for the USC. He later wrote to Joy:

There is something that urges me to tell you... how much I admire your utter self denial [and] readiness to serve, to sacrifice all, your time, your health, your well being, to help, help, help.

I am not what you may actually call a believer. But if your kind of life is the profession of your faith—as it is, I feel sure—then religion, ceasing to be magic and mysticism, becomes confession to practical philosophy and—what is more—to active, really useful social work. And this religion—with or without a heading—is one to which even a 'godless' fellow like myself can say wholeheartedly, Yes!

The USC was an unknown organization in 1941. This was a special handicap in the cloak-and-dagger world, where establishing trust quickly across barriers of language, nationality, and faith could mean life instead of death. Disguises, signs and countersigns, and midnight runs across guarded borders were the means of freedom in those days. Joy asked Deutsch to create a symbol for their papers "to make them look official, to give dignity and importance to them, and at the same time to symbolize the spirit of our work.... When a document may keep a man out of jail, give him standing with governments and police, it is important that it look important."

Thus, Hans Deutsch made his lasting contribution to the USC and, as it turned out, to Unitarian Universalism. With pencil and ink he drew a chalice with a flame. “

So, every time we light and extinguish the chalice, I think of why it was created and I am reminded that I should take that light out into the world. And while I was working on my presentation, I realized why that sign in front of the church I pass when I run bothered me so. It implied that winning and the individual are what is important, not the community nor the greater good. At the service, I was so heartened to hear everyone wanting to do something for the immigrant children taken from their parents. I was thinking that we should start a letter writing campaign to our elected officials for the things we believe in as a church community, and then, at the July 1st service, I met a young couple visiting from Virginia. They told me about Advocacy Corps, a subset of UUs for Social Justice and the Write Here! Write Now! Program. Many of us would like to do something about causes we care about, but feel we are just one person. Erica and Robert Steele said that a hand written letter from one of their constituents is given careful attention by your senator or representative. And that Advocacy Corps actually hand delivers these letters to your congressman or senator. Check out the Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice online. This is a way for those of us who cannot get out and attend rallies and protests to have a voice. This is a way to light our chalice out in the world and let that light shine and illuminate our community.

With faith in you, Teresa Labuszewski

Our People

Bob LaVallee

To First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara:

I was invited to serve South Valley UU Society [in Salt Lake City, Utah] which of course means that I can't preach this fall in Niagara Falls.

It's difficult for me to fully appreciate all the ways that FUUN has supported my formation. I'm so lucky to be part of the heritage of this church and our time together will form my ministry for the rest of my career. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

I'm wishing you and the rest of the congregation the very best.

Bob LaVallee



Visual Art

Lasalle Waterfront Park, Niagara Falls NY

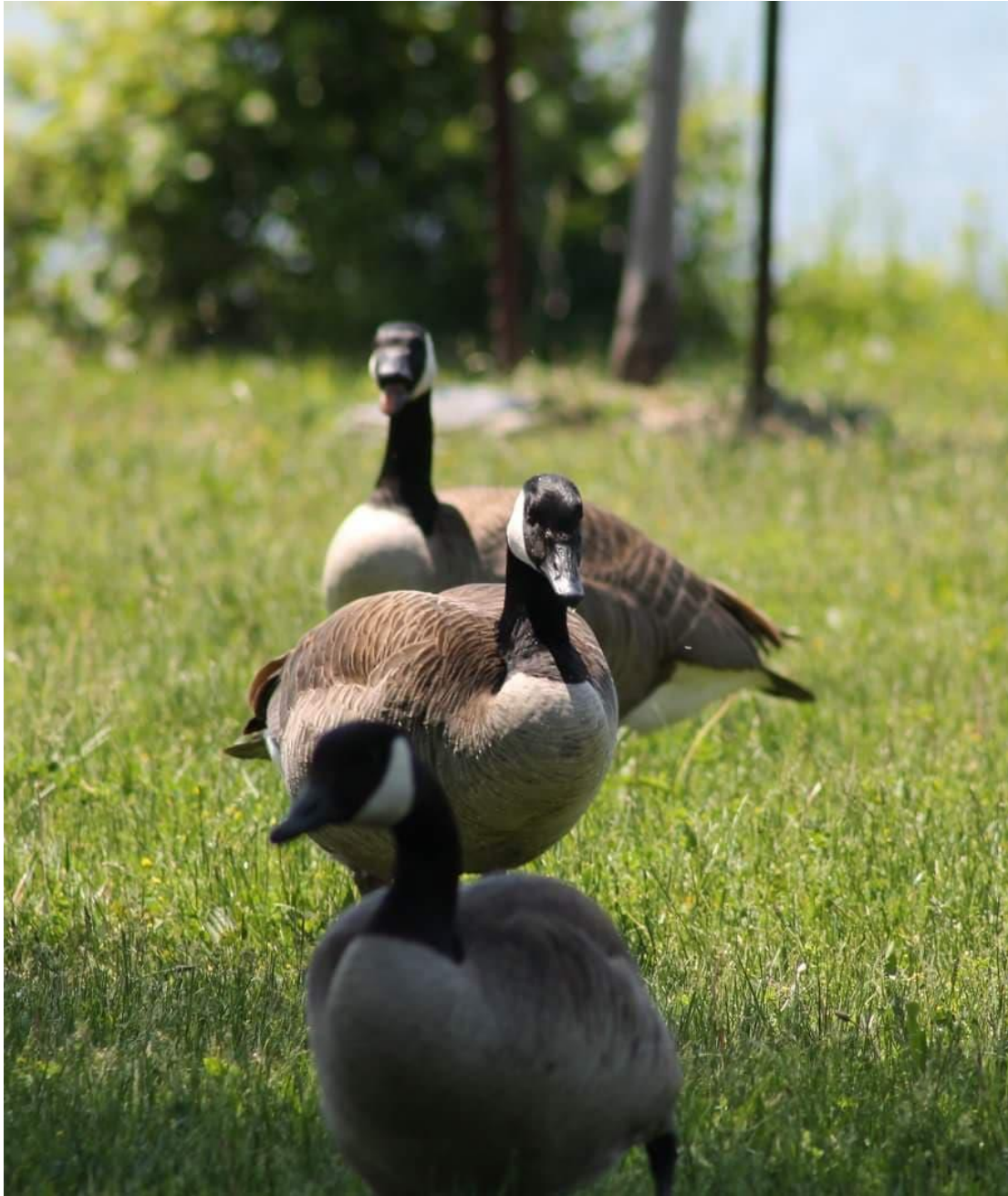


Photo by Erica Kopp

UUA

WE MUST BE BOLD IN OUR RESISTANCE

June 22, 2018

We at Love Resists know three things are true: We know that there is no limit to how low the current Administration will stoop in their drive to criminalize people who migrate. We also know, from Congress and Trump's attempts to temper the outrage on family separation, that our voices are having an impact. Finally, we know that we must be resolved, now more than ever, to continue to be bold in our resistance.

Unitarian Universalists are being called in this moment. The recent revelations about child separation at the U.S. border highlight just how cruel and oppressive the U.S. Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement are. These institutions have no place in the Beloved Community. That's why we support Mijente's prophetic work to #AbolishICE and to resist a fascist future. Will you answer the call?

We also continue to support the powerful organizing collective of Families Belong Together. We know that when we take to the streets and lift our voices together, people in Washington DC hear us. Rallies, marches, and other events are being planned for June 30 in locations across the United States.

Take Action

- [Join Mijente's prophetic campaign to #AbolishICE](#)
- [Find a Families Belong Together event near you on June 30](#)
- [No More Deaths Faith Floods the Desert](#): Answer the call for people of faith to go to the Arizona desert to resist the criminalization of activists and those providing humanitarian aid on August 3-5.
- [Protect children, end family separation and detention](#): Tell the President and Secretary Nielsen that we will not allow them to harm members of our community in the name of immigration enforcement. We demand better.

The Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee are proud to follow the amazing leadership of these immigrant- and women-led movements. Follow [@ConMijente](#) on Twitter, [Families Belong Together](#) on Facebook, and join in the conversation using #LoveResists to stay in the loop as events develop.

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



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<http://firstuunf.org>
Find us on Facebook



"Singles Social Club" established over 36 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

*If you have comments or articles you may submit them to
ericakopp@yahoo.com with the subject "Powerline*

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Return Service Requested
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