

Powerline

*First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara*

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December 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 Betsy Diachun, Andrea Galipeau, and Erica Kopp.

Sunday Services

December 5: "Is this what we are?"

The Kyle Rittenhouse trial once again illustrated that America is a country with double standards -- justice is not blind. As we near the end of another year, how do we square our UU principle, "justice, equity and compassion in human relations" with the realities of the society we live in?

Speaker: Donna Evans-Deyermond
Coffee Hour Host: Stephen Wittkowsky
Usher: Patty Lisk

December 12: "Let It Marinate"

Winter approaches, a natural time to bundle up, slow down and ponder how we'll use our words and energies in the spring.

Speaker: John Snodgrass
Coffee Hour Host: Kathy McCunn and Wally Lamb
Usher: Bill Lisk

Adult Education Class 12:30 – 1:30

Adult Education:

Religions of the Great Plains: An exploration of Native American beliefs and traditions from the Midwest.

December 19: "Tis the season"

Winter brings us too many seasons; cultural and religious. We shall explore these, their roots and similarities

Speaker: Susan Frawley
Coffee Hour Host: Joan Davis
Usher: Kathy McCunn

December 26: We will celebrate Boxing Day through its origin and more recent adaptations. Starting this Sunday, Nov. 28, we will have an ALMS BOX in the Narthex. We shall collect Alms each Sunday until Dec. 26th. We will then open the box and count all that has been collected and decide as a group where the money will go. If you wish to write a check it can be written to "UU Church of Niagara" - we will then send a check equaling all the money and checks collected to the selected agency. If you send something via mail please make sure it says "Alms Box" somewhere so it goes to the right place. Come join us on December 26th for fun and to continue our legacy of giving back to the community at Christmas time.

Coffee Hour Host: Pam smith
Usher: Erica

President's Report

The Holiday Season is upon us yet again! I hope that everyone was able to enjoy a nice Thanksgiving with good food and great company. I am so very thankful for our church and for all the effort that our small but powerful group puts forth to keep us afloat. Your time, money and talents come together to make us one fantastic church.

As I write this I look outside and see that wintery weather has once again returned to Niagara Falls. For many folks it can be a struggle to stay warm during these cold months. Please consider donating to our Warm Clothing drive. We hope to provide our community members with hats, gloves, socks and such and make them accessible outside of the church. If you would like to contribute to this effort, please do not hesitate to ask.

For many reasons, in part due to the ongoing ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, this holiday season may be tougher than others. Many people have either lost or have been away from loved ones for a long time now. The uptick in cases in the Western NY region presents us with the uncertainty of when life will return to "normal". Let's keep that in mind and try to do what we can in our individual realms of power to help make others' lives just a little better!

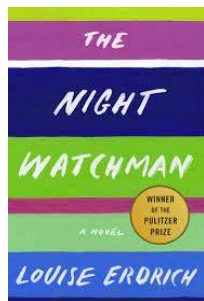
Wishing you a lovely holiday season,
Andrea

FUUN Warm Clothing Drive

During the months of November and December, FUUN will be collecting new or gently-used gloves, mittens, scarves, hats and/or coats for children or adults. Please consider donating new or gently-used gloves, mittens, scarves, hats and/or coats for children or adults, or donating your time to sort, organize and display the clothes. For more information, please call Andrea at 508.965.6608.

Book Group

Big Changes for the BOOK CLUB!



In an effort to have more participation we decided to move the one hour long meeting of the Book Club to the 4th SUNDAY of the month at 12:30 - after our church service and an abbreviated Coffee Hour.

Besides that change we will also have one member who will give a summary of the book for those who haven't read it.

January's meeting will be on Sunday, the 30th at 12:30. The book is "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich. It's a great novel and a good read.

UUA

We who believe in freedom cannot rest.

November 19, 2021

“Until the killing of Black men, Black mothers’ sons, becomes as important to the rest of the country as the killing of a White mother’s son—we who believe in freedom cannot rest until this happens.”

–[Ella Baker](#) (1903-1986)

In weeks like this one, it can be particularly heartbreaking to see just how far the aspirations of our faith and the realities of our society are from one another.

In Kenosha, Wisconsin, after a ghastly display of the racism inherent in our judicial process, the jury just returned a [verdict of not guilty](#) on all counts, acquitting a young white man of the murders of two pro-BLM protesters participating in the uprising that occurred after the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

In Brunswick, Georgia, the defense has just finished its arguments about why [three white vigilantes were justified](#) in murdering Ahmaud Arbery as he was out for an afternoon jog in his own neighborhood. And yesterday afternoon, while Governor Stitt of Oklahoma [commuted Julius Jones’ sentence to avoid execution](#), he pointedly denied any possibility of parole, in spite of vast evidence suggesting Jones’ innocence and against the recommendation of the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board.

White supremacy is deadly. It is dehumanizing, violent, and it continues to hold our nation in its death-grip. We know that the criminal-legal system cannot deliver real justice, policing will never truly keep us safe, and liberation will not be realized without a radical reimagination of our current structures. And still, events like these are a painful reminder of the inequity and hypocrisy that are at the foundation of our so-called “justice system.”

One of the most radical assertions of Unitarian Universalism is that every single human is endowed with inherent worth and dignity. We are all born from an unimaginable, unshakable Love that brought us into being, and from which we cannot ever be separated. Our faith insists that any system that works to erode our full humanity is unjust and harmful, and must be dismantled. Unitarian Universalism urges us to dedicate our hearts and our life forces toward dismantling white supremacy, and creating a world in which every single person has the ability to live free and thrive.

Simply: our faith unequivocally joins with all those who declare that #BlackLivesMatter, and who recommit our hearts and our hands to building a world in which that is true.

However your heart is today, Beloved, know that you are not alone. If you are receiving this message, you are already a part of a wide network of people who are working in a thousand ways to bring more justice and liberation into being. You are part of a cloud of witnesses and workers, living and dead, whose hearts are both cracked open by all that there is to mourn, and mended again and again by the power of Love to heal and connect us to one another.

If you are someone who needs to stop and make space for grief, rage, despair--we are with you in that pause, holding you and witnessing. It is true that we who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes -- but the “we” is so much larger than any individual, and all of us must take our shifts. If you need a moment to pause, know that others are ready to move and take their turns now. Perhaps this version of [“Ella’s Song”](#) will be a balm to your spirit, as it has been to ours.

If you are someone who channels your brokenness quickly into action, we are with you, too. March with your people in the streets. [Donate to the Milwaukee Freedom Fund](#), which will be providing jail and legal support to protesters fighting for Black liberation this week. Double down on local struggles to fight white supremacy and curb the deadly impacts of policing and the prison industrial complex. Visit our [Action Center](#) and support the People’s Response Act, a new federal bill that emphasizes an inclusive, holistic, and health-centered approach to public safety rather than the current system of policing, incarceration and punishment.

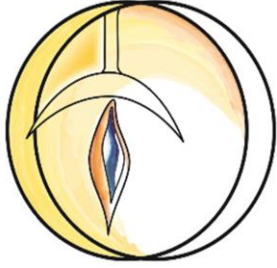
May you find what you need to hold your spirit today, dear ones. The struggle continues, and we are blessed to be in it together.

In faith and solidarity,

The Side With Love Organizing Strategy Team



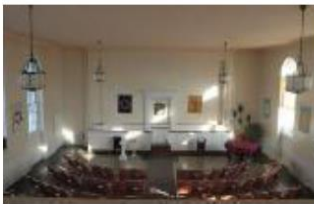
<https://sidewithlove.org/ourstories/2021/11/19/we-who-believe-in-freedom-cannot-rest>



Return Service Requested
December 2021

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



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