

Powerline

*First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara*

639 Main Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
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March 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

March 7: Magdalena Nichols, MHA, CAGS, Chief Operating Officer at Jericho Road Community Health Center.

Nichols is the chief officer of development and strategic partnerships for Jericho Road Community Health Center, which provides medical care to refugees, immigrants and other low-income people in Buffalo. Jericho Road started as a clinic on the West Side, but added another facility on the East Side last summer. It also has opened health centers in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone, two countries where many of their patients and staff come from.

Speaker: Magdalena Nichols, MHA, CAGS

Coffee Hour: Pam Smith

Usher: Andrea Galipeau

March 14: “Stewardship”

To us, the word is primarily economic. But we'll be looking at some Native American beliefs about the individual's responsibility toward the community – the clan, the tribe, and the environment – and how we can relate this to being members of a Unitarian fellowship.

12:30 – 1:30 Religion Class:
Goddesses in the Stone Age and Beyond

In this session we'll look at how ancient goddess worship dealt with the harder questions of life and death. Then we'll see how the divine feminine was driven underground (to arise later in different forms)

Speaker: John Snodgrass

Coffee Hour Host: Marge Gillies

Usher: Teresa Labuszewski

March 21: "Beloved"

In a faith that calls each other "beloved ", what does that mean? What is our contract or covenant with each other when we use that phrase? Where does it come from? We explore what it means to be beloved in community and to each other in today's sermon.

Speaker: Susan Frawley

Coffee Hour Host: Paul Brundage

Usher: Linda Hurley

March 28: "The Numbers Behind Why Pride Is Still Needed"

Despite increases in LGBTQ visibility in the media and recent legal victories, there continue to be disparities in a number of important areas, such as employment, healthcare, mental health, and the law, where LGBTQ individuals, families, and youth fall short compared to their non-LGBTQ counterparts. This presentation will showcase some of those areas and demonstrate that continued need for celebrating Pride."

Speaker: Ronald Zenon Piaseczny, JD, LMHC

Coffee Hour Host: Betsy Diachun

Usher: Joan Davis

Art Alley

Niagara Falls USA



President's Report

FUUN Legacy Fund for Long Term, Very Long Term, Maybe Forever Continued Presence

The Covid virus pandemic shows how we have no way for foreseeing what the future has in store for us. We currently need to be assuring that critical thinking, independent thought, and free thinking will always be available. Our US Constitution guarantees freedom of speech which is essential. It only indirectly assures free thinking in its guarantee of no government establishment of religion and the freedom to practice the religion of choice. History has shown that these important liberties often are not practiced, much less protected by our government.

Laws against blasphemy have been prosecuted as late as 2010 (Pennsylvania (2010): *Kalman v. Cortes*). State laws are still on the books today. They have been enforced and caused great personal suffering in the past. More important is the historic ebb and flow of popular acceptance of free thought. This is clearly shown in our DVD series "American Freethought". We just showed the 2nd of this series on February 28. We can expect this cyclic acceptance of freethought to continue, but it has never been accepted by more than a small percentage of the people.

For 100 years the FUUN church has practiced, allowed, and promoted freethought with varying degrees of attention and enthusiasm. It was a major driving force in the establishment of the church 100 years ago. Many of us today feel it is a very important feature of our church. Not only does the church stand for freethought, but it also provides a place for the small percentage people who celebrate it to find and gain support from like minded people.

Some of us want to be assured that this church continue being such a refuge into the uncertain future. In order to do this we need to provide a sound financial base. This is a challenge for our small church. A few years ago we established a Legacy Fund for the unknown future of our church. It now contains \$125,000. For it to financially assure the long term continuation of the church as refuge in our community of freethought and our principles it needs to grow to at least 5 times its size. It is our responsibility to make this happen.

How can we do this? We can not hope to do it all at once, but we need to start now. FUUN's Members and Friends contribute to cover our expenses every year. In recent years without a Minister we have been able to do this successfully. We even generate a small surplus some years.

There are several sources for growth of the Legacy Fund including:

- Interest from the Legacy Fund itself
- Payments we receive from an endowment fund (Hammond Estate) which was set up years ago in the estate of a previous Member
- Contributions to the Legacy Fund from Members and Friends—cash, securities, or property
- Bequeaths from Members and Friends either for specific amounts of cash or property, or a residual or percentage of one's estate

We need to promote contributions and bequeaths from our Members and Friends to grow our Legacy Fund. I will be pleased to discuss either with anyone.

This church has been an important part Betsy's and my life. We want it to continue indefinitely beyond our life times. We will support the growth of Legacy Fund both by personally contributing and encouraging others to do so. In addition to our contribution(s) we will make a \$100 contribution for every contribution or bequeath of \$100 or more made by other Members or Friends. Furthermore we encourage others to join us by making similar commitments. Imagine 5 people join us: each contribution or bequeath would be increased by \$600.

It is absolutely essential that any funds raised for the Legacy Fund have no effect on our annual pledges towards the church's operating year. The Legacy Fund is for the future of the church.

100th Anniversary

Children's Chalice Lighting

This is the church of the open mind.
(cup both hands to make 2 UU's)

This is the church of the loving heart.
(Cross hands over hearts)

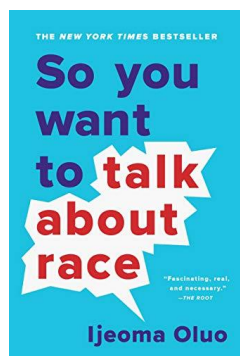
This is the church of the helping hands
(Stretch hands out, palms up)

Together we care for our earth
(Join hands)

FUUN Little Known Facts

At one time we had 3 couples in the congregation named Linda and Barry:
Linda and Barry Laub, Linda and Barry Lovejoy and Linda and Barry Taylor.

Book Group



The Book Group will meet in Unity Hall, observing masking and distancing guidelines, on Thursday, March 25 at 4:30. We will discuss the book: "So You Want to Talk about Race" by Ijeoma Oluo, This book was first introduced to us by Amanda Buonopane in her talk to us at the end of January. Amanda left some copies for us and it is also available on the Internet. If you aren't coming to the church at this time, let Betsy Diachun know and she will get a copy to you.

Annual Meeting

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

UUA

Beauty from Brokenness

By [Paula Gribble](#)

February 24, 2021

“I’m beautifully broken, perfectly imperfect, beautiful in my flaws. All together, I am a beautiful disaster.”

—Author unknown

I am broken. We are all broken. Now, stay with me: in meteorology, the term *broken* refers to the sky “being more than half, but not totally, covered by clouds.”

When I was a child, life was especially challenging. I suffered abuse, both verbal and sexual. I was poor, and sometimes hungry. I am broken.

I am not the only one. All of us sit with our own struggles, hard times, pains, and losses. You are broken.

It may be a natural response to hide this brokenness. You, like me, may have avoided certain topics with people so you didn’t have to talk about a painful time. You may have tried to hide the things you don’t like about yourself.



Let’s return to that meteorological definition: “being more than half, but not totally, covered by clouds.” Have you ever been outside on a cloudy day and then light shines through the clouds? And it’s particularly beautiful because it’s coming through all the clouds around it? Sunny days are great, but there’s something special about the light coming through the clouds on a broken day...something graceful.

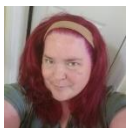
I offer to you that you do not have to feel like a cracked and flawed plate you drop in the kitchen—the one that will never quite work right. Instead, the things that have broken you also make you beautiful, special, graceful.

I am not saying that painful and challenging things are okay. They’re not. But I would not be the person I am today if I had not gone through those things. My broken is what makes me who I am today.

And you would not be the person you are without your brokenness. Your special, beautiful, graceful light couldn’t shine through without the clouds surrounding you. Beautiful creations born out of brokenness.

We have to take these parts of ourselves, and allow them to be broken, and from these broken pieces create something new. Something beautiful and special. Something born out of our brokenness. Something broken that is also perfect.

Prayer Spirit of Life and Love: Let us see ourselves with grace, knowing that we are flawed, yet also knowing that we are something beautiful born of brokenness. Broken...and perfect!



Paula Gribble (she/her) serves as the Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement for the UU Church in Cherry Hill in New Jersey, and as the co-president of the Joseph Priestley Chapter of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA).
<https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/beauty-brokenness...>

"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

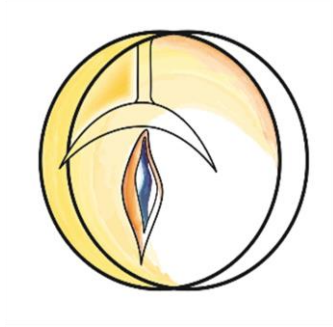


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