

Powerline

*First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara*

January 2023

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.

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Many thanks to our contributors Shelley Baxter and Erica Kopp.

Sunday Services

January 7: "A Heritage of Heresy"

As this is the first Sunday of January, many of us have already made the so-called New Year Resolutions. Have we made any "resolutions" on behalf of our church? Our speaker will reflect on our heritage of doubt. Can doubt really be a spring board for growth and change? Come, participate in this timely topic.

Speaker: Ron Skowronski

Coffee Hours: Marge Gillies

Usher: Susan Diachun

January 14: John Snodgrass

Adult Education Class January 14, 12:30 - 1:30

Speaker: John Snodgrass

Coffee Hour: Meg Goodrich

Usher: Susan Diachun

January 21: Craig Mokhiber

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craig_Mokhiber

Craig Gerard Mokhiber (born in 1960) is an American former United Nations (UN) human rights official and a specialist in international human rights law, policy, and methodology. On October 28, 2023, Mokhiber stepped down as the director of the New York office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), four days before he was due to retire.[1][2] In his final letter to High Commissioner Volker Türk, he harshly criticized the organization's response to the war in Gaza, calling Israel's military intervention a "textbook genocide" and accusing the UN of failing to act.[3]

Al Jazeera English, Q&A: Former UN official Craig Mokhiber on Gaza and genocide
<https://youtu.be/unGr3yLVTwY?si=UA5vQo2S5QMBSgv5>

Speaker: Craig Mohkiber

Coffee Hour: Patty and Bill Iisk

Usher: Susan Diachun

January 28: “Broadway blessings”

Combining songs of Broadway with UU spiritual ideas, this will be magical musical morning.

Speaker: Susan Frawley

Coffee Hour: Potluck

Usher: Susan Diachun

President's Report

I hope this report finds you all in good health and high spirits as we approach the end of the year. As the president of the board, I am pleased to share some updates with you regarding the recent activities and upcoming plans for our beloved small church.

Christmas Eve Service:

It gives me great joy to inform you that our Christmas Eve service was a resounding success. The church was beautifully adorned. Many thanks to Kathy, Teresa, and Betsy. The service was filled with love, fun, and music.

Year-end Reflection:

As we near the close of this year, let us take a moment to reflect on the achievements and challenges we faced as a church community. Our commitment to supporting and uplifting one another in trying times has been commendable. It is in times like these that our unity and resilience shine brightly.

Looking Forward to the New Year:

As we approach the New Year, let us embrace it with open hearts and a sense of renewed hope. In light of the unknown that lies ahead, let us remain steadfast in our resolve to strengthen our church community. We shall continue striving to nurture our faith, serve our congregation, and make a positive impact in the lives of those around us.

Exciting Speaker Event:

I am happy to announce that we have invited Mr. Craig Mohkiber, a distinguished speaker from the United Nations, to address our congregation. His insightful perspective on global issues promises to be thought-provoking and transformative. I sincerely hope that all of you will join us for this special event, as it presents a unique opportunity to broaden our knowledge and engage in meaningful dialogues.

As we embark on the New Year, let us continue to keep our hearts open, support one another, and work diligently towards fulfilling our mission as a church.

Erica

Nadja

Theodore, went by the name Ted. When Ted came home from WWII, he moved into the apartment with his bride above the bar on Cudaback Street in Niagara Falls. The owner of the bar John Soho, was like an Uncle to Nadja. She would go down to help out cooking and cleaning. Ted also continued his military during the Korean War.

Ted and his brother bought the bar when John retired. The bar was called Walt & Ted's Bar. Nadja worked in the bar full time while Ted worked on his education. Ted decided to be a science teacher and was a teacher at LaSalle High School.



About a year into their marriage Nadja said to Ted “I don't know why I'm not pregnant.” She was upset. Ted said “come here honey sit here on my lap” and he explained to her the surgery the Germans did on her sterilized her and she would never have a baby” Nadja was just a young girl in Dachau Concentration Camp and had no family to teach her the basics of her how own body worked. Nadja cried for the loss of having her own family.

As time passed Nadja decided she wanted total control of the bar and they bought out Walt. Some of the family doubted Nadja because she never owned a business. Her English was still very limited. Nadja closed the bar down for a few weeks. Cleaned the place out and put up knotty pine walls. She got help from her regular customers with business and the man who sold the alcohol helped her with ordering and buying. She named her bar Nadja's .

Ted and Nadja built a house in Lewiston. Ted teaching and Nadja a business owner.



UUA

Fear Not and Hallelujah

By Marcus Liefert

December 20, 2023

“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not...”

—Luke 2:9-10a

I could use an angel popping by every now and then to tell me to fear not. Instead of waking up and doomscrolling, I want each morning for my phone to alert me to a baby born. It would be sort of like an obituary in reverse:

A light-skinned Black person's arms cradle a tiny infant whose bare foot soles face the camera. Today in San Rafael was born Ella Rae Riley.

She may, my phone would declare, with little shooting star emojis bursting across the screen, help find a cure for cancer, engineer food systems that end world hunger, or negotiate peace treaties.

Fear not, it would gently remind me: another human life has begun; another newborn messiah has been welcomed into this world.

Undoubtedly, the angel would alert me, she will touch other lives. She will care deeply, and others will feel excitement when they see her, sorrow at her absence. Perhaps she will teach children, drive buses, fight fires, steward libraries, or manage cities. Or maybe she will inspire people around the world for millennia to come by preaching a message of transcendent love and a holy vision of peace on earth.

She may, it would conclude, live a quiet life with a few close friends, a cat or maybe chickens, who depend on her to feed them each day, and a case of treasured books she turns to when the rest of the world is too much to face.

Fear not, it would gently remind me: another human life has begun; another newborn messiah has been welcomed into this world.

I'd still read the science and politics of climate change and feel my heart lurch for our planet in peril. I'd still read about police departments propping up white supremacy and high courts stripping women's rights, or love separated by borders, our country still ruthlessly declaring: no room at the inn.

But in the back of my head, I'd also hear the angel song, imagining that miraculous life full of spectacular greatness or simple, ordinary, human wonder.

Fear not, the angels would text me.

Hallelujah, I'd write back. Hallelujah, as all of us move forward, doing the next thing that is to be done, which is about all you can ask.

Fear not, the angels say. Hallelujah, we write back. Let heaven and nature sing.

Prayer

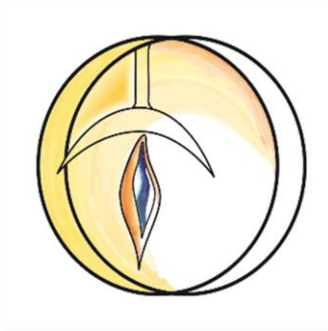
God of newborn child and new parents, of life in the midst of winter, be with us in our fear and our joy. When the world is too much with us and worry or grief, numbing or cynicism, threaten to smother all hope of magic from our lives, bless us with the reminder that new life arrives. May our hearts open to receive it; may our hands find gifts to honor it; may our voices find songs to rejoice in it.



Marcus Liefert

Rev. Marcus Liefert (he/him) serves as minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, CA. He's a lifelong UU whose ministry was shaped by growing up at First Unitarian in Oakland, squandering his teenage years as a leader in Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, and studying at Starr King School. He is a trained leader of InterPlay, a creative community practice for unlocking the wisdom the body, and a facilitator of Restorative Circles, an approach to building justice systems rooted in anti-oppressive values.

<https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/fear-not-and-hallelujah>



Return Service Requested
January 2024

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



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