

# Powerline

First Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Niagara

April 2018

639 Main Street  
Niagara Falls, NY 14301  
716-285-8381

*Learn, Love, Build a Better World*

## Contents

Sunday Programs .....	2
President's Message.....	3
Our People.....	4
UU Announcements.....	4
Canvass Sunday.....	4
Visual Art .....	5
UUA.....	6

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](mailto:uuniagara@gmail.com) or click the link. Please spread the word.

Many thanks to our contributors Marge Gillies, Betsy Diachun, and Judy Bongiovanni.

## Sunday Programs

**April 1:** “This Is Us: How UUs use jokes to cultivate understanding and spiritual growth.”

There once was a UU minister who loved to change the lyrics of “We are a gentle, angry people” to “We are a highly verbal people.” Humor builds self-awareness while taking the sting out of examining our foibles. In this sermon, Bob LaVallee will tell some of his favorite UU jokes (hopefully they will be funny).

**Bob LaVallee**

*Coffee Hour: Betsy Diachun*  
*Usher: Jesse Higuera*

**April 8:** “FUUD”

In modern times are we increasingly disconnected from the processes by which our food is grown and prepared. How does this affect our relationship with land, food, and our own bodies?

**John Snodgrass**

*Coffee Hour: Kathy McCunn and Wally Lamb*  
*Usher: Joy Rowlinson*

**April 15:** “Well Balanced”

Come ready to move, breathe and meditate. We will participate in exercises to realize our balance as humans and as UU's. Don't miss the fun to experience it, it will be fun and delicious.

**Susan Frawley**

**Canvass Sunday. Plan on staying for lunch and fun.**

*Coffee Hour: Stewardship Committee*  
*Usher: Kathy McCunn*

**April 22:** “The Never-Ending Quest”

In religion, we might borrow an image from Nietzsche where the Cosmic Dancers leap instead of resting in a single spot.

**Donald Reidell**

*Coffee Hour: Pat Velky*  
*Usher: Betsy Diachun*

**April 29:** “To Bend the Knee,”

Poet Anne Sexton wrote in a poem, “There is joy in all.” She goes on to catalog the many daily wonders we encounter but often don’t notice. What might we do to remember joy so that we may live spirit-filled lives?

**Theresa Kime**

*Coffee Hour: Nan Simon and Glen Herman*  
*Usher: Marge Gillies*

## **President’s Message**

What a busy spring we are having! On March 18<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated Bob LaVallee’s ordination as a UU minister with a stole created by member Judy Bongiovanni and friend, Alison Dorries. Judy embroidered the stole with the religious crests shown on our banners. Alison created the white stole upon which they were embroidered. There were over 100 people in attendance at the service. Nan Simon and other members of the congregation prepared food for them all. It was a glorious “spread”!

We thank all the people who helped put on a stupendous Ordination!

Now in April, Peter Diachun will be adding to our fame by demonstrating the hearing loop he has installed at our church, and several others, at the Seaway Spring Gathering [formerly known as the District Meeting] on April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. He will help the Syracuse church install an inductive loop to demonstrate at a workshop on Saturday. This is our way of including all members and friends in our services. Reservations and details can be found on the notice hanging in Unity Hall or talk to Betsy Diachun.

And on April 15 immediately following the service the Stewardship Committee will be introducing “This is Us”, the theme of our pledging this year. Per usual there will be robust singing and fun followed by a luncheon. The pledge cards for our fiscal year, which begins August 1, will be mailed to you with pertinent financial information before that time. Please feel free to talk to any of the Stewardship Committee members regarding this. Then, on the 15<sup>th</sup>, we hope that people will return their filled out pledge cards, making a commitment they can afford and one that will help our church to grow and sustain itself. In the mean time learn more about who we are!

~Betsy

**We Love UU and You!**

## Our People

With great sadness we report the death of Barb Hathaway on Feb. 28, 2018. Barb had moved to a retirement home in Rochester, to be closer to her son and family, Mike and Amy and the boys. We all remember with pleasure the fun picnics we had on their lovely grounds in Youngstown. RIP, Barbara.

## UU Announcements

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

We have the workshops lined up for the April 14 Seaway Gathering (The event formerly known as District Assembly)! Here is the information and a new flyer:

### **You Can't Spell Church without J - O - Y 2018 Seaway Spring Gathering**

Come join UUs from across New York for a day of worshipping, learning and connecting!

#### **Friday, April 13**

7:00 Gould Lecture with Sheila Schuh  
8:30-11:00 Reception & "UUs Got Talent"

#### **Saturday, April 14**

8:00 Registration  
9:00 Banner Parade and Opening Worship  
9:30 Keynote with Rev. Megan Foley  
10:45 Workshop Session 1  
12:00 Lunch with Affinity Groups  
1:15 Meet Your Neighboring Congregations  
2:00 Open Space Conversations  
3:00 Workshop Session 2  
4:30 Closing Worship and Youth Bridging  
5:00 Safe Travels

**Registration:** <https://tinyurl.com/UUSeaway18>

**First UU Society of Syracuse**  
109 Waring Rd  
Syracuse, NY 13224

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

Our annual meeting will be held on May 20, 2018 after Coffee Hour at 12:30.

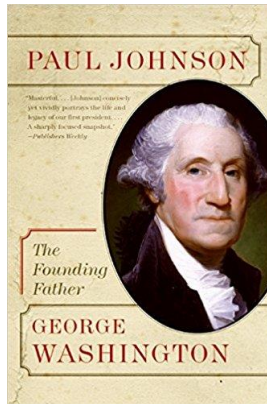
### **Heart, Love, and Soul**

BASKETS are back in Narthex for small personal hygiene items to be given to Heart, Love and Soul for their clients. Don't forget to share shampoo, deodorant, soap etc. which you might get in your travels and don't plan to use.

### **Canvass Sunday**

APRIL 15 will be our Canvass Sunday. Hopefully all pledges will be made on that day, or before, so that a budget for 2018-19 can be created. Our Annual meeting at which it will be presented will be held on Sunday, May 20th, immediately following the service.

## Book Discussion Group



Our readers and talkers will meet at April 17 at 7pm in Unity Hall. We will be discussing George Washington by Paul Johnson.

Our group tends to talk about ideas presented in our books so it is not necessary to have read the book to attend and share your opinions (although it helps). Everyone is welcome so join us for a chat

## Visual Art



*Watercolor,*

*Mountain Shadows*

Bonnie Soley



### Opportunities To Say Yes

By Nathan Ryan

March 14, 2018

“There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have. And if you cannot hear it, you will all of your life spend your days on the ends of strings that somebody else pulls.”

—Howard Thurman

For forty days, I refused to say no.

Last year for Lent, I decided to say *yes* to any request. I had only two rules: the request must do no harm, and to keep the practice authentic, I couldn't tell anyone about it until it was over.

When I came up with this Forty Days of Yes, which I thought of as a fast, I prepared myself for transformation. I imagined gathering sermon-worthy anecdotes that would melt hearts and change souls. I silently dared people to ask me for things that would lead me on great adventures, and confront my assumptions.

Ash Wednesday came and went without a single request. Then several more days passed without a chance to practice my fast, then weeks.

In fact, I made it all the way to Easter without really having to honor my fast.

When I wondered how I went forty days without anyone making a request of me, I dismissed the self-congratulatory explanations (like, maybe I live a life of *yes* so consistently that I rarely tell people no).

More likely, it's my identities, both assigned and chosen, that are the culprit. I'm male and white: very few people ask me for things. Add “clergy” to the mix, and my guess is that people feel uncomfortable asking me for things.

On the rare occasion that someone does request something from me, I'm too often absorbed in my own privilege to even notice. Being a white man, for example, it's easy to forget the power I carry with me. Because I'm able to ignore the potential risks that a person from a traditionally marginalized community takes by asking me for something, I'm certain I overlooked opportunities to say *yes* because they weren't phrased as explicitly or directly as my cultural privilege demands.

I'm prone to think of my Lenten practice as a failure: I didn't pick something rigorous enough to help me grapple with the realities of my own mortality and the temporary nature of all of existence. Then again, maybe transformation shouldn't be measured in forty-day increments. What I do know is that to this day, I'm much more likely to say *yes* when someone asks, and I'm slightly more aware of my privilege.

#### Prayer

God that we know when we experience love and justice and compassion, bless your people. Help us to be more compassionate, more engaged, and more committed. Help us to know the world as it is, and to work for it as it could be.

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



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E-mail [uuniagara@gmail.com](mailto:uuniagara@gmail.com)  
<http://firstuunf.org>  
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"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

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Return Service Requested  
April 2018

