

Powerline

*First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Niagara*

May 2024

639 Main Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
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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 Nan Simon and Erica Kopp.

Sunday Services

May 5: "Pluralism as a Spiritual Practice"

In a world that seems hungry for inclusion and acceptance, can we as a society find ways to feel included and accepted, without sacrificing our individuality? Our speaker believes that there is always a way to create this living reality, without sacrificing anything of value.

Speaker: Ron Skowronski

Coffee Hours: Patty and Bill Lisk

Usher: TBA

May 12: John Snodgrass

Adult Education Class, May 12, 12:30 - 1:30

Speaker: John Snodgrass

Coffee Hour: Diane McNamera

Usher: TBA

May 19: "Why Does History Repeat Itself - A Post Mortem"

It appears that almost from the beginning, we have predominantly dealt with the Human Condition with violent solutions to our pressing problems. In this reflection, our speaker will walk us through some important history.

Hopefully, it will inform us of a better way to be fully human in a reality that appears more out of control than ever before.

Speaker: Ron Skowronski

Coffee Hour: Board

Usher: TBA

May 26: " "May I Have this Dance?"

We will be having an interactive all generation service with music and movement.

Speaker: Susan Frawley

Coffee Hour: May Pot Luck

Usher: TBA

President's Report

GED Graduation Ceremony

The GED graduation ceremony was a success, with a warm and encouraging atmosphere. The Mayor honored us with his presence and delivered an inspiring speech to the graduates, emphasizing the importance of their achievement and the new opportunities that lie ahead. It was a proud moment for all the graduates and their families, and I want to thank everyone who contributed to making this event special.



Celtic Concert, Four Shilling Short

Additionally, the Celtic concert was a great success. It attracted a large audience and received positive feedback from attendees. The performers were outstanding, and the event created a lively and festive atmosphere. I would like to thank Nan Simon and everyone involved in organizing the concert for their hard work and dedication.



Financial Outlook

I'm pleased to report that the finances are in good shape. Our budget is on track, and we are seeing positive trends across the board. A special thanks to Bill for his diligent work in managing our finances and ensuring we are in a strong position moving forward.

Erica

Nadja

Nadja received the letter from Poland in 1960 from a woman named Natalia (Natalie) talking about her bus tour in Poland. She was sitting next to a woman named Alexandra. While talking they realized they both knew Nadja. Alexandra from Dachau Concentration Camp and Natalie's sister from Lenin, Belarus. After re-reading this letter several times Nadja realized her sister Natalie and son survived Siberia and were alive living in Poland!

Natalie was sent to Siberia, by the SS Russian Army, along with her husband and young son Zygmunt. Nadja must have been around twelve or thirteen years old when Natalie was sent to Siberia. Nadja's father was taken away to be killed at the same time, by the SS Russian Army. Nadja's mother would send bread to Siberia for Natalie and family. Natalie had a baby girl while in Siberia. They were starving. They were surviving on this dried bread. Before the war had ended Natalie's husband and baby girl died.

After the liberation and end of WWII a Polish officer brought Natalie and her son Zygmunt home to Poland. Nadja had already taken the military ship to America as a war bride. Leaving behind her new husband Ted, a Polish American soldier at Dachau Concentration Camp until his tour ended. Nadja and Natalie both thought each other was dead like the rest of their family.

Nadja a widow now, took some of her in-laws with her to Poland to see her sister. Nadja made several trips to Poland, even after her sister Natalie died, in just two years after they found each other.

I recently wrote letters to Nadja's nephew Zygmunt and his daughter in Poland. Not sure if the addresses are still valid, telling them about Nadja approaching 99 years. As Nadja hasn't talked to them for many years.



UUA

Shifting Perspective

By [Kat Liu](#)

April 24, 2024

“A lot of times we base everything just on our immediate circumstance. We don't see a big picture for our lives. We don't love ourselves. We don't have a way of kind of gauging the future, so we count it lost.”

—Jennifer Holiday

Nowadays my attitude towards driving is arguably a little too cavalier, but there was a time when the responsibility of steering a 3,000-pound metal cage gave me sweaty palms and heart palpitations.

The first time I drove on a freeway was only at the insistence of my driving instructor, who thought that I was ready. I disagreed. Crawling along the I-80 at about forty miles per hour, annoying everyone behind us, I was able to stay in my lane only with extreme concentration and constant correction. Sensing that I was drifting too far to the right, I turned the wheel leftward and the car would drift too far to the left, forcing me to turn the wheel to the right, causing the car to drift rightwards again, and so on. It probably only lasted a minute or two at most, but felt like an eternity.



Then my instructor said, “Look up.”

“What?” I countered. Couldn't he see that I was too busy looking at the lines so that I could keep the car within them and us alive?

“Look further into the distance. Right now, you're focusing only on what's twenty feet in front of you and over-correcting. Look up and further out. Trust me.”

Gradually, I raised my gaze upwards, taking in the whole scene: where the road ahead was straight, where it curved, and how much. Almost magically our car's movement smoothed out. I was driving on the freeway, staying in my lane almost effortlessly, needing to make only small adjustments.

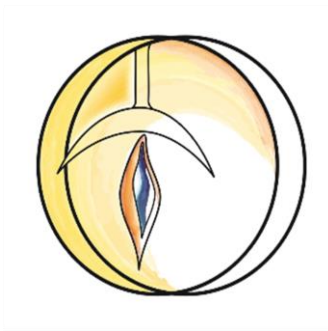
Broaden your focus. Oftentimes I find myself focusing on the things immediately in front of me, and as a result they may seem larger and more important than they actually are. When I remember to orient myself within the bigger picture, it recalibrates my perspective. I can better judge how important a problem is—or isn't. And even if it is a big problem, I can better understand how to respond to it, and also remember the reasons I still have to be happy.

Prayer: May we always keep in mind the bigger picture. May we always remember who we are, from where we've come, and where we want to go as we respond to life's challenges. May it be so. Amen.



Kat Liu (she/her/ta) is a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco as well as a practitioner in the Plum Village Buddhist tradition. At this stage in her life, the main things occupying her time are working for a Buddhist anti-racism organization, caring for her father, and making stained glass art.

<https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/shifting-perspective>



Return Service Requested
May 2024

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



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