

# THE ADIRONDACK COMMUNITARIAN



A Monthly Newsletter of the Adirondack Unitarian Universalist Community

**Volume 160**

**May 2016**

## **Calendar**

**May 1**

Elaine Holmlund and Ginger Slater  
Water, Water Everywhere  
on the refugee crisis

**May 8**

Gary Alexander and Richard Kelly  
The 7 UU Principles as Applied to  
this year's Presidential election

**May 15**

Deborah Naybor\*  
Saving the World on Weekends

**May 22**

Russ Defonce  
Reciprocity of the Artist

**May 29**

Ginger Slater and Lee Gonyea  
Music and Poetry

\*The good news is that worldwide, poverty is decreasing, thanks to changes in international aid from "hand out" to "hand up." This presentation will examine the lives of 27 widows in rural Uganda and their daily struggles and triumphs to survive. Deb Naybor will show how small scale development programs have improved their lives with little investment and a lot of caring.

## **Events Calendar**

**May 14**

**Junquerama**

**May 22**

following the service  
Welcoming Congregation orientation

**May 28, Saturday 10 am - 3**

Plattsburgh UU Fellowship\*  
Multidisciplinary worship services workshop  
led by Rev. Erica Hewitt author of  
*Story, Song and Spirit* as well as *The Shared Pulpit*

*\*This workshop is for anybody – Religious Education volunteers, worship associates, congregational leaders, or members of the congregation – who has interest in bringing engaging, creative worship services to our congregation. We will be specifically focusing on creating worship services that are experiential or multigenerational, but current aspects of our worship service will also be discussed. Please let Phyllis know if planning to attend.*

## President's Message

One of the challenges for Unitarian Universalist worship is the number of religious traditions, cultural events, UU values and principles, and the societal concerns we acknowledge as worthy of address in our community's life and traditions.

Reviewing the calendar, we have just passed Earth Day and the beginning of Passover. Day of Silence this year was April 15, a day to raise awareness for bullying in LGBT Youth. May brings Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day and Memorial Day, as well as May 17, International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, and on May 22 Harvey Milk Day. Spring or early summer typically brings celebration of the Flower Communion. Oh...and then in May we also have International Workers Day, Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Memorial Day), Visakha Puja (Buddha's Birthday), UUA Founding Day, Emerson's Birthday. May is also Foster Care Month.

All of these worthy of our acknowledgment, all with some relevance to who we are as Unitarian Universalists as embodied in our principles of justice, compassion, world community and interdependence.

In reviewing our Sunday topics, past and to come, I find that we do in many different ways honor these celebrations of remembrance if not always directly. I invite you to identify any you would specifically like to have addressed in worship.

Blessings, Phyllis



## Recognizing our Youth

Congratulations to our youth Mary Reid and Witter Swanson, members of the Saranac Lake High School student council which was one of six in New York State to win the National Association of Students Councils' 2016 National Gold Council of Excellence Award. The award recognizes leadership, service and activities that strive to improve the school and community.

## Becoming a Welcoming Congregation

By Ann Mullen

What is a “Welcoming Congregation” and what is its relevance to the Adirondack Unitarian Universalist Community? To answer those questions, I have to go back in time a little. It might surprise you to know that, in the not too distant past, Unitarian Universalists were no different from 99% of all other faith organizations in the United States in the way they treated lesbian and gay people. UU congregations routinely discriminated against lesbian and gay people, including ministers, and discouraged them from participating openly in the life of the church.

Inspired by their participation in the civil rights movements of the 60’s and 70’s, lesbian and gay UU’s began to organize within the UUA and their own churches against this prejudice and exclusion. One outcome of their victorious efforts was the establishment of the Welcoming Congregation Program in 1987 by the UUA. Today, most large UU congregations, and 50% of those with 150 members or less, have met the requirements of the UUA to be designated as Welcoming Congregations. UU is now a recognized leader in the movement for justice for LGBTQ people and a good deal of credit goes to the grassroots, local efforts of Welcoming Congregations.

So, what is it?

- It’s a formal program has three main elements: *education, congregation and community*.
- There are three main steps we must take to achieve the designation of Welcoming Congregation: the congregation has to agree to undertake the program; the congregation has to participate in the program, and the congregation has to apply to the UUA for recognition as a Welcoming Congregation.
- It is an ongoing part of the congregation’s life; it’s not just a banner, designation or checkmark against a box.

Phyllis has asked me to lead the Welcoming Congregation program at AUUC. I’m happy to do it. As you can see, though, it calls for the help and the support of the congregation. I feel strongly that the leadership effort has to reflect our membership, that it cannot be an effort that only the LGBTQ people are responsible for, feel passionate about, and lead.

As a first step, I am going to lead an informational session after the service on *May 22nd*, at which I’ll explain the history, the process, answer questions, and get an idea from those who attend if they’d like to proceed and what they’re willing to do to help.

I hope that a large number of you will commit to participating in this informational session.

### A few questions and answers

- Aren’t we too small to undertake this effort?
  - Smaller than the Elkhorn, Wisconsin congregation which had 27 members when they decided to become a Welcoming Congregation? To read their story, click on this link: <http://www.uua.org/lgbtq/stories/191244.shtml>. It’s not as onerous as it sounds.
- We’re welcoming already. Can’t we just check a box?

- The designation, “Welcoming Congregation,” sends a powerful signal to LGBTQ people who are looking for a church. In addition, the program includes formal LGBTQ education that speaks to each person individually.
- We have other priorities that are more important; is this really as important?
  - Our commitments to social justice should be an integrated part of our spiritual practice in order for them to remain relevant and fresh.
- Is this really relevant? We have same-sex marriage now.
  - It is definitely relevant; the fact is that the NY State Legislature has yet to pass civil rights protection for transgendered people is tragic. The North Carolina “bathroom law” may seem extreme, but it’s a symptom. Whether or not transgendered people deserve to live honest, free lives is rapidly becoming a national conversation. I remember very well how the Republicans used ballot measures against same sex marriage in 2004 to drive voters to the polls and I wouldn’t be surprised to see something similar happen with rights for transgendered people.

I want to close with a personal comment. I belonged to a Welcoming Congregation in New Jersey. It was a signal to me that I could be myself, be open, express who I was within that congregation. Of course, there were members of that congregation who still had vestiges of prejudice, and I experienced it. But the idea that I and other LGBTQ people had the formal backing of the congregation was freeing. They had my back, not just in the congregation, but also in the greater world outside it.

For more information on the Welcoming Congregation Program, visit <http://www.uua.org/lgbtq/witness>.

Please join me on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 or so for this informational session. Thanks.



**LGBTQ**

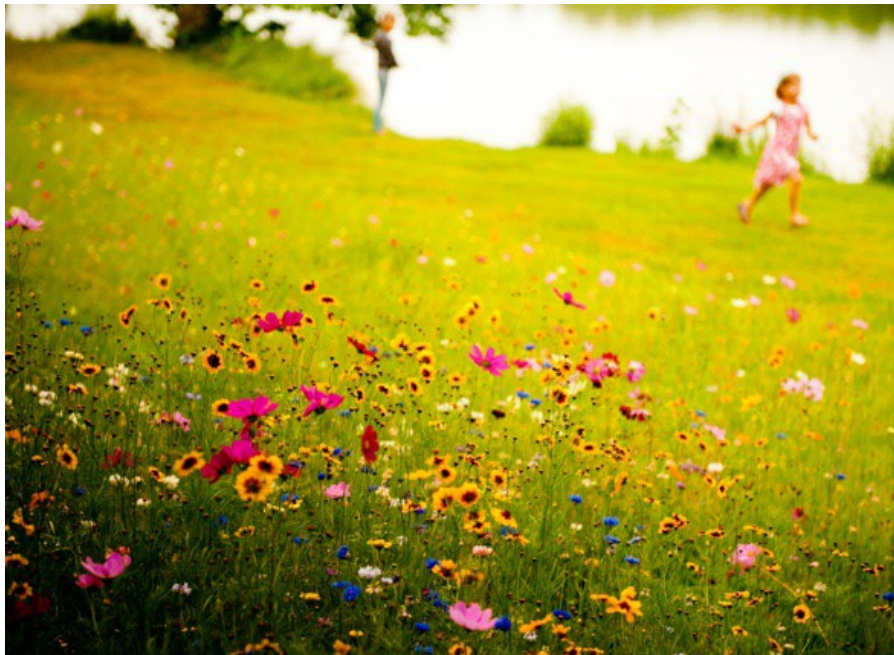
*Welcoming Congregation*

## Ecumenical Council Updates

Submitted by Ann Mullen

- Samaritan House - transitional housing for the homeless: zoning change language is in the process of working its way through the Saranac Lake Village Council and we are optimistic that we will receive the go-ahead for Samaritan House.
- Heating assistance - The Council has emergency funds available for heating assistance. These funds were raised from the Salvation Army kettle drive at the Christmas holiday. We use these funds to help those who cannot find other sources of help.
- Grace Pantry has seen an increase in clients - averaging 40 families a week. We need all sorts of donations, including diapers (size 5 or 6), toothpaste, deodorant, bathroom tissue, cleaning supplies and bar soap. Contact Vance Mortensen at [vance.mortensen@gmail.com](mailto:vance.mortensen@gmail.com) to learn how to donate. Vance and Maggie Mortensen could use two more volunteers on Wednesdays.
- The Council is involved with others on concrete solutions for the refugee crisis.
- The Community Lunchbox is looking for cooks; it serves meals to the community on Mondays and Thursdays.
- The “Meeting Your Muslim Neighbors” was a huge success. It was sponsored by the Martin Luther King Remembrance Committee of the Council.
- Next meeting of the Council is May 2nd at 5:00 in the Methodist Church Lounge.

The SoulMatters May theme is Blessings



Nourish beginnings, let us nourish beginnings.

Not all things are blessed,

but the seeds of all things are blessed.

The blessing is in the seed.

=> Muriel Rukeyser

## Mothering

The most common word association with mothering is nurturing — and this practice is not limited by gender or any other characteristic. All of us, male and female, single or married, old or young, have the potential to give birth and raise something in the world. In a prayer written for Mother's Day, Pamela Spence Bakker used the following images. Choose those you most identify with and reflect in your journal or in conversation about which you identify with.

Some of us give birth to:

- children
- ideas
- art
- music

Some of us raise:

- animals
- flowers or vegetables
- our friends
- our parents
- our brothers and sisters
- interest in a cause
- money for charity
- concerns
- our voices against injustice
- our eyebrows
- Cain

From SoulMatters *Spirituality & Practice* 'On Honoring our Mothers'



## After the Winter

Claude McKay

Some day, when trees have shed their leaves  
And against the morning's white  
The shivering birds beneath the eaves  
Have sheltered for the night,  
We'll turn our faces southward, love,  
Toward the summer isle  
Where bamboos spire to shafted grove  
And wide-mouthed orchids smile.

And we will seek the quiet hill  
Where towers the cotton tree,  
And leaps the laughing crystal rill,  
And works the droning bee.  
And we will build a cottage there  
Beside an open glade,  
With black-ribbed blue-bells blowing near,  
And ferns that never fade.

## Contact Numbers

[www.adkuu.org](http://www.adkuu.org)

President:	Phyllis Mangus	354-1379
Vice President	Joan Kelly	572-6054
Secretary:	Jean Chamberlain	354-8061
Treasurer:	Sue Grimm Hanley	637-2794
Trustees:	John Wood	946-2275
	Joyce Henklen	891-7761
Caring & . Membership:	Susan Arnold	891-3744
Communitarian:	Courtney Miller	<a href="mailto:starrypoetics@gmail.com">starrypoetics@gmail.com</a>
Double Ewe: Knitters	Joyce Henklein	891-7761
Place:	Randall Swanson	891-3512
	Glenn Arnold	891-3744
RE:	Vanessa Houghtlin	891-1195
	Julia Goren	845-216-3810
Social Justice:	Stephen DeHond	<a href="mailto:sdehond@hotmail.com">sdehond@hotmail.com</a>
Social Media:	Kelly Metzgar	891-0454
	Sue Grimm Hanley	637-2794
Worship Co.	Elaine Holmlund	891-6717



**We the member congregations of the Unitarian  
Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and  
promote**

*-The inherent worth and dignity of every person.*

*-Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.*

*-Acceptance of one another and encouragement to  
spiritual growth in our congregations.*

*-A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.*

*-The right of conscience and the use of democratic  
process within our congregations and in society at  
large.*

*-The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and  
justice for all.*

*-Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of  
which we are a part*



**From the "Church of the open mind, loving heart, and helping hand" to**

**Adirondack Unitarian Universalist Community  
89 Church Street  
Saranac Lake, NY 12983**