

THE ADIRONDACK COMMUNITARIAN



A Monthly Newsletter of the Adirondack Unitarian Universalist Community

Volume 184

December 2018

Calendar at a Glance

(Note the Friday, December 21st Solstice Service)

December 2: Ginger Slater, "What Does it Mean to be a People of Mystery?"

December 9: Russ DeFonce, "Conflict Resolution"

December 16: Gary Alexander, "Can Women and Men Co-exist?"

Friday, December 21: Solstice Celebration, 6pm

December 30: Linda VanSlyke

Events

December 12: Decorating the John Black Room for the Holidays; 10:00-11:30am. Please join us!

December 21: Solstice Service, open to the public 6pm, John Black Room. Celebrate the 2018 Winter Solstice with us Friday, December 21 at 6:00pm. After the kid friendly service we will share the spirit of the season with fondue, wassail, desserts, and more! Hope to see you there!

April 25-29, 2019: "Making the Invisible, Visible – An Exploration of Race and Racism in the US through a Buddhist Lens." Sponsored by the UU Buddhist Fellowship. For More details, see the flyer in this issue of *The Communitarian*.

December 21: – Deadline for the next Communitarian. Please help us keep this a vital and timely newsletter.

President's Message

Greetings! It has been a year since the idea first entered my head to take on the position of president of the AUUC board. My how time flies!

During these past several months I have seen much of how our small community functions, and I've developed a huge appreciation for the folks who put their heads, hearts, and hands into keeping us afloat and moving forward. Many thanks to our board members Gary Alexander, John Wood, Liz Defonce, and especially our treasurer, Sue Grimm Hanley and our secretary, Vincine Fallica. Many thanks also to our RE Committee coordinators/teachers (Julia Goren and Donna Wood), our Soul Matters Leader (Ginger Slater), *Communitarian* team (Ann Mullen and Karen Graff), our devoted Welcoming Congregation Committee, our wonderful Worship Committee, our Site Committee, and our Membership Coordinator (Susan Arnold) and Caring Committee leader (Joyce Henklein), and all those who've participated in any way to our community!

Here we are, looking ahead to another year, with a major decision to make as a community. As you know, early this summer we were approached by Dave Filsinger with the opportunity to move from the Historic Saranac Lake building on Church St. to a new location. Dave plans to purchase a large building in Saranac Lake with the intention of creating a community music center. He has invited us to join him as renters and has kept our needs in mind as he has conducted his search for a building that serves his own needs. Dave recently put in an offer on a building on Woodruff St. and if all goes well for him he will close on the purchase before the new year. Once that happens he will be in a position to offer us a tour of the facility. We will then be able to meet as a congregation to decide whether a move from Historic Saranac Lake is the right choice for us. The logical time for us to discuss this is at our upcoming annual meeting in January. Please take some time between now and then to think about the issue and ask questions of the site committee members and the AUUC board.

The new year will bring other changes to AUUC, as well. Our board will be losing two of its valued members. John Wood and Vincine Fallica have both decided to step down, leaving two vacancies to fill. We are thrilled to have a volunteer for one of these positions, but now need each of you to consider whether you can commit to a 2- or 3-year position on our board, to work with me, Gary Alexander, Liz & Russ Defonce, and Sue Grimm Hanley.

Our worship committee is composed now of Elaine Holmlund, Rosalie Fontana, and (new to the group) Carly Terreberry. The Worship Committee does the essential work of investigating new possibilities for visiting ministers and lay people who provide us with thought provoking and soul nourishing services each week, and then coordinating with and supporting that provider during the service. They would love help as well, so if your interests lie in the creation of wonderful weekly services, please consider joining with the Worship committee team.

In addition to the board position, the AUUC will need one or two folks to take on the tasks of our Membership and Caring Committees as we say farewell to Susan Arnold and Joyce Henklein. The membership person keeps track of our membership list and members' contact information and occasionally conducts a signing ceremony for new members. Caring committee folks have done everything from contacting visitors with interest in joining our AUUC, to sending cards and visiting ill and infirmed members, to collecting money for

members in need of financial help. Please let me know if you'd be willing to devote some time to either of these positions.

Many of our current members have taken on one or two (or many!) of the above responsibilities over the years. I look out at the congregation each Sunday with such gratitude and love for the folks who have served on the board and/or on our various committees. We've built our little AUUC into a strong liberal presence in Saranac Lake and the surrounding area. We have much to be proud of.

In addition, we have built a tight community of AUUC members and friends. Through working together, we have created lifelong bonds. I treasure my dear AUUC family. Please consider strengthening the bond by offering your services to the AUUC. You are guaranteed to get out of it much more than you give!

With warmest love,
Laura Reid, AUUC Board President

[Tribute to Courtney Miller](#)

Over the years, Courtney Miller has been a valuable volunteer for the AUUC and that continued, even when she left the North Country and settled in Rochester. Now, our current and past two presidents offer their gratitude to Courtney for her many contributions to the AUUC:

Courtney, you have been an invaluable member of our community for years and years now. I remember listening in awe to your beautiful poetry that you shared from time to time at our biweekly (in those days) services. You took on the arduous task of laying out our *Communitarian* and even after moving away to Rochester you continued the job with love and devotion. We are forever grateful.

With love,
Laura

Every month for two years, Courtney and I had some "back and forths," often initiated by a gentle nudge from Courtney reminding me that it was time for "Communitarian" submissions. Then began the rounding up of calendar items, scheduled service topics and blurbs, news items. They came in various fonts and article lengths. Courtney was masterful in laying it out, filling open spaces with graphics and sometimes poetry. She patiently waited for that one last item. So... a big thanks to you Courtney for continuing to be a part of AUUC after you moved away. I so appreciated your work with me. Wish you the very best.

Phyllis

Working with Courtney on *The Communitarian* while I was president was wonderful! She took charge so gracefully and every month, she put it together in such a seemingly easy way. We were so lucky to have her – and her lovely poetry and artwork. Courtney, you were a joy to work with. Thank you always!

Susan Arnold

[Update from the Ecumenical Council](#)

Heating Assistance Fund

- People who can't afford heat during the winter months can apply for a grant from the federal HEAP program; however, the grant is a one-time-only form of assistance. Thus, after the HEAP grant runs out, many families still don't have the funds to heat their homes after the grant is depleted during out bitter winters. The Council's heating assistance fund steps in to help these people. We used to get a sizable donation to this fund from a local organization, but now we're in a position of having to raise all the funds ourselves. This has already been a challenging winter. If you'd like to contribute to this program, make your check payable to the Ecumenical Council, put "Heating Assistance" in the memo portion, and mail it to P.O. Box 194, Saranac Lake, 12983. Any amount - \$5, \$10, \$20 or more - will help!

Salvation Army Bell-ringing

- We raised \$800 for Hurricane Relief during October.
- The winter holidays bell-ringing has begun. We'll be ringing at the Post Office, Kinney's and one other location TBD.
- Cathy Moore of the Enterprise is handling the scheduling. She can be reached at 518-891-2600 or via email at cmoore@adironackdailyenterprise.com . Please consider taking a shift – each shift is only two hours long.
- Last year, we raised \$12,000 at three locations and **90% - well over \$10,000** - of the money stayed with the Council to help those in need in the Saranac Lake area. This money is used to help those in need, for example a family that can't meet their rent payment for a particular month, or whose electricity is going to be turned off, and for emergency food vouchers (for example, when the Food Bank is closed), and for school clothes for children who have few, and much, much more. Each emergency situation is different.
- We use all the money each year to help others – so, you can see the need is high!
- **Despite what you may see in a FB meme, or hear elsewhere, I can assure you that the money is distributed by the Council without discrimination of any kind – the only requirement is dire need. I personally attest to this.**

Grace Pantry – Thank you to everyone who donated dish or laundry detergent! We gave 45 units to the Pantry and they were very, very grateful.

Highlights – We send out highlights after each of our monthly Council meetings. If you'd like to be on the email list to receive these highlights, contact me.

Ann Mullen

[UUA – Just a click away!](#)

The UUA website is an inspiring place to visit, especially for those of us here in the North Country, where it is so easy to feel that we're not part of a vibrant, caring, independent religion. Here are two links to interesting sections of the UUA website:

Racial Justice: “Every person has value as a member of the human family. The suffering caused by racism must be ended if we want to create fair and loving communities. We work to end racial discrimination and injustice, starting within ourselves and moving out into the world around us....”

To learn more about what concrete steps the UUA and individual UU congregations are taking, and to inspire you, click <https://www.uua.org/racial-justice> .

UUA General Assembly 2018: We may feel isolated from the general population of other UUs. However, we don't need to be!

Last June in Kansas City, the annual UUA General Assembly attracted thousands of delegates and visitors. If you're curious about what GA is all about, what decisions were made, what worship services were like, click <https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2018>.

For 2019, we should consider participating in GA online. We can send official delegates to GA, but have them participate without incurring the expense of traveling to Spokane, this year's convention site.



Next year, this could be us! We could present our banner, too, only in the comfort of our homes and perhaps even in our pajamas!

[Book Review: Why Read Hannah Arendt Now? by Richard Bernstein](#)

Hannah Arendt was one of the most important political theorists, philosophers and writers of the 20th century, as well as the one of the most controversial. Her books on totalitarianism, Zionism, war, and human rights are still read and studied today.

Now, in one small volume, scholar Richard Bernstein presents her writing to us in clear prose and makes her thinking accessible. This is from the description of this book on Amazon:

“Bernstein argues that Arendt should be read today because her penetrating insights help us to think about both the darkness of our times and the sources of illumination. He explores her thinking about statelessness and refugees; the right to have rights; her critique of Zionism; the meaning of the banality of evil; the complex relations between truth, lying, power, and violence; the tradition of the revolutionary spirit; and the urgent need for each of us to assume responsibility for our political lives.”

As I read this book, I was particularly drawn to the chapter on “The Right to Have Rights,” in which Bernstein illuminates Arendt’s thinking on refugees and the “stateless” condition of many refugees. She was writing from the perspective of a post-WW II world. Since then, the numbers and situations of refugees has reached catastrophic proportions. The UN Refugee Agency reports that:

- **68.5 million** people in the world have been forcibly displaced, of which 40 million have been displaced in their own countries;
- there are over **25 million refugees**, of which 5.4 million are Palestinian, and over 3 million are asylum seekers;
- **85% of displaced people** are physically located in developing countries; and
- **10 million** are “stateless.” Here is how Bernstein presents Arendt’s thinking on these kinds of refugees: “The calamity of the [stateless] is not that they are deprived of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, or of equality before the law...but that they no longer belong to any community whatsoever. Their plight is not that they are not equal before the law, but that no law exists for them....”

I highly recommend this book, and in fact, I would love to join with others to collectively read and discuss Arendt’s ideas and their relevance to today’s world. Let me know if you’d like to join this book group. Timing: last Spring.

Ann Mullen

[Holiday Fun – A Recipe!](#)

Master Sugar Cookie Recipe – 5 variations, one dough

Casey Barber

COOK TIME:10 minutes

PREP TIME:15 minutes

YIELD:4-5 dozen cookies

Make it ahead: The cookie dough can be refrigerated for up to 3 days before baking. The dough can also be frozen up to 1 month in advance of baking. Tightly wrap each piece in plastic wrap, then in foil. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight before rolling or shaping.

Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour	6 tablespoons powdered sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt	12 tablespoons (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar	2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	

Preparation

1. Whisk the flour, powdered sugar, and salt in a medium bowl and set aside. Beat the butter and granulated sugar with a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (for best results) or an electric hand mixer on medium speed until the butter is very pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
2. Scrape the sides of the bowl and the beaters, then stir in the eggs one at a time on low speed until incorporated. Stir in the vanilla extract. Scrape the bowl and beaters one more time, then add the flour mixture in 1/4-cup increments, waiting until the flour is just incorporated before you add the next cupful. Divide the dough into 4 pieces and wrap each piece tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone liners.
3. To make cutout holiday cookies, dust a clean work surface with flour. Roll 1 piece of dough out until it is no more than 1/4-inch-thick and cut shapes out of the dough with your cookie cutters. Place the cookies on the prepared baking sheet. If decorating the cookies with sprinkles or sanding sugar, sprinkle them evenly with those now. Bake for 8-10 minutes, just until the cookies are matte and starting to turn golden at the bottom. Cool the cookies completely on a wire rack. Spread icing on the cookies, if desired.

Chocolate Dough: Reduce the amount of powdered sugar to 4 tablespoons (1/4 cup) and whisk 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder into the flour mixture.

Peanut butter dough: Reduce the amount of butter to 8 tablespoons (1 stick) and beat 6 tablespoons creamy peanut butter (do not use natural peanut butter that might separate into the dough before adding the egg. Add 1-2 tablespoons milk after stirring in the flour to moisten the dough as needed and prevent it from crumbling.

Oatmeal-orange dough: Whisk 1/2 cup quick oats into the flour and replace the vanilla extract with orange extract.

Crunchy peppermint dough: Replace the vanilla extract with mint extract, and stir 6 crushed candy canes into the dough after adding the flour.



Making the Invisible, Visible:

**A Multi-medial Exploration of Race and Racism
in the U.S. through a Buddhist Lens”**

April 25 - 28, 2019

**at Garrison Institute,
in Garrison, NY**

featuring Dr. Jan Willis Professor Emerita of Religious Studies
at Wesleyan University, CT and author of several books on
Tibetan Buddhism including *“Dreaming Me: Black, Baptist,
and Buddhist - One Woman’s Spiritual Journey”*



For more information and registration visit the
UU Buddhist Fellowship at:

www.uubf.org or
<https://www.facebook.com/uubf.org/>

The Adirondack Unitarian Universalist
Community

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**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
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