

THE ADIRONDACK COMMUNITARIAN



A Monthly Newsletter of the Adirondack Unitarian Universalist Community

Volume 187

March 2019

Calendar of Services at a Glance

March 3: “Would you Believe?” - Reverend Jeff Frank

March 10: “Soul Matters: “Journey” - Ginger Slater

March 17: “Gratitude” - Rosalie Fontana

March 24: TBD Liz Defonce

March 31: “Reflections of an Erstwhile Activist” Paul Siskind

Events

March 29, 2019

Potluck 6pm.

April 14, 2019

Board of Directors ‘Meeting
After services

Message from the President

Greetings!

Sweet February slips by so quickly with her mere 28 days! How is it that being only 3 days shorter makes such a difference? And in her short visit she brings longer brighter days and hope for the return of Spring. I love February!

March is another story. March plods along on her 31 day journey. March teases us with a day or two of warm sunny weather when we can shed the scarf and mittens and feel the sun on our skin, and then whams us with a snowstorm, dipping temps, and sinking heart. I try to tolerate March, but she tries my patience!

Maybe I need a change of attitude. March *does* do us a couple of favors, after all.

I'm not a snowbird who migrates to warmer climes, so I can't speak from that perspective, but enduring an entire Adirondack winter does give me a profound appreciation for the spring and summer that I don't think I'd have if I didn't winter here.

And secondly, March does allow us time to accomplish a few things before springtime comes. Before we know it we'll be rushing to do yard work, gardening, window washing, and trade our snow shovels and coats & mittens for kayaks and shorts & t-shirts.

So maybe we can put the plodding days of March to good use getting some things accomplished for our dear AUUC. There are a couple of projects we could work on.

Our coffers are seriously low this year and a few good fundraising efforts would go a long way. We should put our heads together and plan some fundraising projects for the year ahead.

Also, few years ago Joyce Heinklein put together a history of the AUUC which should be brought up to date. I'd love to go through our archived Communitarians and Board of Directors meeting minutes to update our history records.

Both projects sound fun to me and I'd love to work on them with other AUUC members this month. If you are interested, let me know.

Let's enjoy the coming month for the blessing of time and perspective.

Much love to you all,
Laura

UU History & Historical Figures

Viola Liuzzo and Rev. James Reeb

UU's murdered on the Selma-Montgomery March
Selma's Challenge by Rev. Mark Morrison Reed, UU World Magazine, 1/2015
<https://www.uuworld.org/articles/selmas-challenge>

From Tapestry of Faith, A Chorus of Faiths, The Beloved Community, The March at Selma
<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/chorus/workshop3/173645.shtml>

We honor and mourn the UU's who were murdered while taking part in the Civil Rights March this month in 1965. We also recognize, with sadness, that it wasn't until whites were killed that our country really began to take notice of what was happening in Alabama. The current movements, Black Lives Matter and Black Lives of UU, are educating us about the skewing of reporting and remembrances. As we collect stories of People of Color, we resolve to live and work so that Black Lives Matter.

Heating Assistance Needed

Although there are federal and state programs (HEAP – Heating Assistance Program) to assist those who have trouble paying for heat in the winter, these grants are limited and the income qualifications are strict. The Saranac Lake Ecumenical Council has a heating assistance program to help folks who don't qualify for HEAP or have used their one-time grant. Consider making a donation to this program to help those in need make it through this tough winter.

How to donate: mail checks to the Ecumenical Council of Saranac Lake, PO Box 194, Saranac Lake, New York 12983; or visit the donation page of the Council at <http://slecumenical.weebly.com/donations.html>. Be sure to note that your donation is the heating assistance.

Reflections on the United Methodist Church Conference Vote

On February 26, the United Methodist Church voted to further tighten its ban against ordaining LGBTQ people, to continue to forbid ministers who are actively LGBTQ to serve openly, and to continue its ban on same sex marriages. As well, the vote included the imposition of a yearlong, unpaid forced leave on those clergy who perform same sex marriages, with expulsion from the clergy for a second such offense. The vote was 53%-47%. Most observers see an imminent split in the church in the United States, where seven million of the worldwide total of twelve million Methodists reside. This vote isolated the Methodists as the only "mainline" (non-Evangelical) Protestant religions in the US that still take these positions.

From the *Washington Post*, February 26, 2019:

Jerry Kulah, head of the UMC Africa Initiative, said he was sorry the church had spent so much time and money debating questions about homosexuality. "The progressive groups are loud, but they don't have the numbers," he said. If the church had voted to affirm LGBT inclusion, he said, it would have become a "laughingstock" in Africa.

"I'm happy to go back to old ladies and old men in villages who received the Bible from missionaries and let them know that the Bible hasn't changed," he said.

Other delegates at the Conference described the impact of the vote on a healthy future, given that numbers of congregants at all of the mainline Protestant religions has fallen precipitously over the past twenty years. The *Post* article goes on:

"The United Methodist Church will very soon lose an entire generation of leadership in the United States," lamented Kimberly Ingram, speaking at the meeting on behalf of Methodist seminaries and theological schools, which had argued that their students strongly approve of including LGBT people fully in the church. "The future of the United Methodist Church in this country is at stake."



Heartbroken delegates after the Methodist Conference Vote – Photo by the Associated Press

We UU's can be proud of our long history of LGBTQ inclusion in all aspects of our religion: clergy, religious education for adults, teens and children, membership and life celebrations. It wasn't always that way, but beginning in 1970, there was a flurry of gay/lesbian-affirming activities, General Assembly resolutions, and new, GL-friendly curricula, such as:

- the creation of an Office for Gay Concerns in 1973;
- the call to ministry of the first openly gay minister by a UU parish, Douglas Morgan Strong, in 1979;
- a resolution establishing the right to same sex commitment ceremonies in 1984;
- the establishment of the Welcoming Congregation Program in 1989;
- the change in the name of the Office of Gay Concerns to the Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender concerns to show its commitment to transgender communities.

Those are just a few highlights. To view the complete timeline of LGBTQ affirming activities, click here: <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/witness/policy/timeline>; for more historical information, click here: <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/witness/policy/facts>.

In 1994, Karen and I had a commitment ceremony in the UU church in Lincroft, NJ. We weren't Unitarian Universalists then – we just liked the space, and we knew we and our guests would be welcomed there. When we were planning the ceremony, we knew we wanted someone experienced to conduct the ceremony. We lit upon the idea of asking a close friend, "X," who was a Methodist minister.

So, we asked X to preside, and in response, we received a dinner invitation. After dinner, we sat down with X and X's spouse, and the two of them asked us one question after another: why we wanted to have this ceremony, how strong our commitment was to one another, if we thought it would be "lifelong." It felt to me, a former Catholic, very similar to the meeting my soon-to-be husband and I had with the priest of my parish weeks before we married in 1968.

On the way home, I asked Karen why X had subject us to what felt like a grilling. She said, "You have to understand. X could be kicked out of the Methodist ministry for doing this."

It all made sense. X would be taking a huge risk. Why do it unless X knew our intentions were as serious as the risk X was taking?

That was 1994. For Methodists and their clergy in the United States, nothing has changed. Because of this, I'm using "X" to stand in for the name of the courageous Methodist minister who presided over our ceremony, because, even now, X could face the severe consequence of losing ministerial status. Now, 25 years later, I still stand in awe of the risk X took to help us join together in a union we both wanted so much.

So, put your thoughts (and prayers, if you say them) towards the Methodists this week. So many millions of them are suffering because of this disastrous vote. As Rev. Will Ed Green, a Methodist minister, wrote in the *Post*:

"The United Methodist Church is today a more exclusionary, judgmental and queer-phobic denomination than it was when I preached Sunday from one of its pulpits. Not only has it not flung open its doors to queer people and those who love them. It also has closed and locked a door that was until this conference just barely cracked — and perhaps ripped itself apart in the process."

Ann Mullen

UU Jokes

UU Prayer: "Dear God, if there is a God, if you can, save my soul, if I have a soul."

What do you get when you cross a Unitarian Universalist with a Jehovah's Witness?

Someone who knocks on your door for no apparent reason.

Three children were talking about their religions. "I'm a Catholic," said one, "and our symbol is the cross." "I'm Jewish," said the second, "and our symbol is the Star of David." The third child said, "I'm a Unitarian Universalist and our symbol is a candle in a cocktail glass!"

Another UU Prayer: "To whom it may concern...."



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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
89 Church Street
Saranac Lake, NY 12983**

