

Cobblestone News

Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland, 3 S. Church Street, Cortland, NY, 13045

uucortland.uuism.org

From the Minister

February Worship Theme:

The Fifth Principle – the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and society at large.

Earl K. Holt, III, one-time minister of First Unitarian Church in St. Louis, Missouri, remarked in an essay on the Fifth Principle: "It may seem unusual for a religious body to include a commitment to a political method in its defining principles." Holt goes on to say, however, that individual freedom of conscience is in our UU DNA and that the religious and political ideals of our founding fathers were "interpenetrate." "For example," he says, "the political notion that a people have the right to self-government grows out of a religious conviction that human beings have the capacity to shape their own destiny, that they are not mere puppets on a divine string." Holt summarizes, "Democracy, to put it another way, is more than a mechanism of governance. It is an expression of faith in the power of human beings to shape their own lives, a faith that is most explicit in the ideals of our religious tradition."

In our congregations, we honor in each other the right of consciousness in finding what is true and meaningful in our individual lives and we join not in uniform belief around a single sacred text, but we join together as a covenanted community committed to do our best in honoring the religious pluralism among and between us. Our religious forebears had little tolerance for rulers, kings, bishops, presbyteries, or anyone's claim to divinity or to THE absolute truth. That is why the idea of self-governance was so important to people like John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Rush who were first among Unitarians and Universalists in colonial America, and who were also signers of the Declaration of Independence.

So just remember, Unitarian Universalism is a denomination where religion and politics do mix; where one inspires the other, for in the words of James Madison, "What is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature?" In the ideal sense, government should be of the people, by the people, for the people. It is our UU prophetic imperative not only to protect but also to participate fully in the democratic process, inside our walls and in our society at large.

Blessings,

Rev. Kathy

Feb/March 2015
Volume 6, Issue 5

Inside this issue:

Children's RE	2
A Note from Joyce	2
Family Planning	3
Adult R.E.	3
Wayside Pulpit	3
Adult R.E. Continued	4
Programming	5

As Unitarian Universalists

we promote and affirm:

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

4th Principle: A free and reasonable search for truth and meaning;

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process in our congregations and in society at large;

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Children's Religious Education by Ashley Vormwald, RE Coordinator

The children's religious education class will focus on the third Unitarian Universalist principle this month. In case you need a refresher, the third principle is "acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations." One way we will look at this principle is by recognizing that none of us knows everything, we all have our own perspectives, and we will benefit from looking at other people's point of view and striving to learn more.

We will also look at how having different views can have advantages and lend to abundance and beauty in life. We will experience this as we explore a few different spiritual practices from different religions. You may consider reinforcing these lessons at home by identifying and discussing examples of when you have changed your own perspective as a result of learning or experiencing something new. I'm looking forward to a new month of growing and learning alongside the children of our congregation.

The hope of things to come: sunshine, blue skies, and green leaves!



A Note from Joyce by Joyce Morgan, Board President

Hello All – Last month I saw beauty in the shimmery snow on hilltops. But now it is February. The loveliness of snow covered branches ceases to enchant me. It's cold out. It's that time of year when the cold gets in your bones and you are ready to be done with it.

Tonight, it is quiet. As I put pen to paper, time seems to stand still. I reach somewhere inside to get glimpses of what really matters. I don't have to reach far to know that family is the one thing I hold most dear. But our first principle – the inherent worth and dignity of every person – matters to me also.

The people that I am thinking about tonight are those who are treated unfairly in the workplace. Undocumented workers are hired for jobs that no one wants because they are underpaid, work 12 hour days, receive no overtime and work in unsafe conditions. I am learning about how undocumented workers quietly endure injustices every day.

I visited the Workers Center of Central New York today. I learned a little about how workers are getting trained to know their rights and also in health and safety. I am also reading about immigration reform. You will probably hear more about these issues from me in the near future. If you have any thoughts on worker's rights or immigration, I would be glad to listen.

Until Sunday, Joyce.

Family Planning Advocacy by Rev. Kathy

On January 26, your minister attended Family Planning Advocates of New York State's Day of Action in Albany. I joined dozens of religious leaders through Concerned Clergy for Choice, and hundreds of others calling for laws and policies that protect women's comprehensive reproductive health care in New York State.

We met with policy makers to discuss the strong, deep and longstanding religious support for equal rights for women at the workplace and when caring for their families. We also spoke about protecting reproductive health care services, including access to birth control and keeping abortion safe and legal. As other states restrict a woman's ability to obtain this basic health care, New York State, a national leader, must do more to protect the life and health of each woman.

Our faith has long stood for civil rights and equality, as do many religious groups and leaders. Policy makers make important decisions and want to know what we believe. Please reach out to your representatives to express your support for comprehensive health care in New York State.

[51st District: Senator James L. Seward; District 125: Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton]

Introduction to Adult Religious Education

You asked for it and now you have it! Starting March 1, Julie Ganson and I are offering three exciting opportunities for spiritual growth and learning.

-The *TED Talks View and Discuss* will be led by Julie. The plan is for the sessions to be open to the public and hosted at the Beard Building downtown.

-The UUA's Community Read will be facilitated by Rev. Kathy. The book, *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness* is a short, easy read designed to generate lots of good discussion.

-Finally, back by popular demand is Rev. Dick Gilbert's *Building Your Own Theology* which Rev. Kathy will also facilitate.

Feel free to invite any friends or family who want to explore their own spirituality – no membership or UU identity required. If you have questions or need help getting started in one or more of these classes, please see Rev. Kathy or Julie Ganson.

Please see the next page for more information and details on these classes.

The Wayside Pulpit

I speak not for myself but for those without voice...those that fought for their rights...their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated.

-Malala Yousafzai

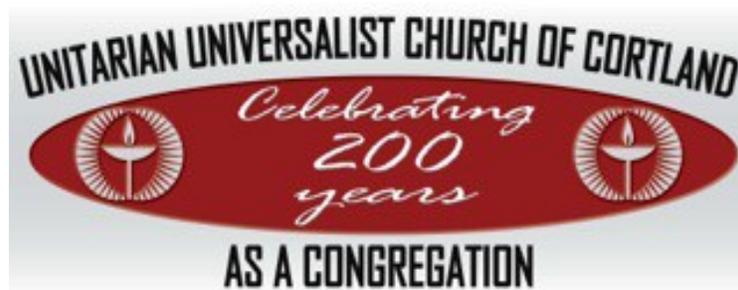
Upcoming Adult Religious Education Opportunities

<p>TED Talks: View and Discuss (Public invited)</p> <p>When: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. First Wednesdays Starts March 1</p> <p>Where: Beard Building Main Street</p> <p>Description: Adult Religious Education Committee will present various TED talk videos and facilitate group discussions afterward.</p> <p>Materials needed: None</p>	<p>UUA Common Read: <i>Paul Razor's Reclaiming Prophetic Witness</i></p> <p>When: 1:00-2:00 p.m. Four Sundays: March 1-22 (Bring your own lunch)</p> <p>Where: UUCF Fellowship Hall</p> <p>Description: Razor asserts that conservative Christianity is not the only valid religious voice in our national social policy. He invites UUs to explore and claim our contribution, as religious liberals, to the pressing moral and ethical debates of our contemporary world.</p> <p>Materials Needed: The book, which is available online at the UUA Bookstore. The cost is \$15.00. The book is also available electronically through eBook and GooglePlay.</p>	<p>Adult Religious Education: <i>Building Your Own Theology</i></p> <p>When: 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.; 10 sessions First and Third Sundays March 1 through June 21 (Except April will be 3rd/4th Sun)</p> <p>Where: UUCF Fellowship Hall</p> <p>Description: The classic Adult RE course by the Rev Dr. Richard Gilbert facilitating an exploration of personal theology; led by Rev. Kathy</p> <p>Materials Needed: A copy of Building Your Own Theology Volume 1 by Richard S Gilbert. It is available from the UUA Bookstore for \$16.00.</p>
--	--	---

**Unitarian Universalist
Church of Cortland**

**3 S. Church St
Cortland, NY 13045**

607-753-0020



Upcoming Programming

Join us for Social Hour downstairs after all 10:30am services.

Sun, March 1, 10:30am: Worship service, pulpit guest TBA.

*****Adult RE classes after service are post-poned until March 8*****

Wed, March 4, 7:00-8:30pm: Ted talk video @ the Beard Building.

Sun, March 8, 10:30am: Worship service with Kathy Tew Rickey.

1:00pm: Community read with Rev. Kathy.*

*Bring your own lunch.

2:15pm: Build Your Own Theology (BYOT) with Rev. Kathy.

Sun, March 15, 10:30am: Justice Sunday with Joyce Morgan.

1:00pm: Community read with Rev. Kathy.*

2:15pm: BYOT with Rev. Kathy.

Sun, March 22, 10:30am: Worship service with Kathy Tew Rickey.

1:00pm: Community read with Rev. Kathy.*

2:15pm: BYOT with Rev. Kathy.

Sun, March 29, 10:20am: Worship Service with Kathy Tew Rickey.

1:00pm: Community read with Rev. Kathy.* (last one)

2:15pm: BYOT with Rev. Kathy.

