



Universalist Society of Strafford

Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

November 2018 Newsletter

"To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides." David Viscott

Worship Services

Please Note: different locations for services this month.

Sunday, November 4th, 10am at the Strafford Masonic Lodge. (site of former cafe) *Honoring Our Differences* led by Rev. Telos Whitfield. In the search for common ground, we might shy away from learning and honoring the ways we are different, and the challenges that people overcome. Hearing stories of struggle and reliance can bring us closer together in a time of national division and fear, strengthening our resolve and offering courage. To seeing the beauty and possibility that lives within difference....

Sunday, November 18th, 10am at Barrett Hall. *Justice Across Borders.* From the Northern Triangle of Central America, to deserts of Mexico and Arizona, to detention centers in the United States, the road away from danger is paved with injustice. Partnering with grassroots allies along the Central American migration trail, the UU Service Committee addresses root causes, supports migrants in transit, and protects the right to seek asylum. We will explore ways to support dignity and justice, together.

Thursday, November 22nd, 10am. Our Community Thanksgiving Service held at Our Lady of Light Chapel. We gather each year for a special service with members of our faith community to share gratitude with words, silence and music. We hope you join us!

Message from our Minister

In these hard times, let us look first to the response of love. In the midst of challenge, may our chalice flame bear witness to the inherent worth and dignity of every human being. In the midst of uncertainty, may our chalice be a beacon of encouragement, that our values may guide our choices. Let us look first to the response of love.
offered by Maureen Killoran

It can be hard to have our first response be love in the midst of fear, struggle and tragedy. We are grieving for the lives lost at The Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh on November 27. Eleven members of the congregation died at the hands of a shooter, and members and police officers were injured. We are learning of letter bombs that thankfully did not ignite that were sent to President Obama, Hillary Clinton, and high-ranking political and public leaders. There are people traveling toward our borders, fleeing violence and poverty and we yearn for their experience and humanity to be valued. We are together, working to make sense of the violence and division that seems to be rearing its ugliness on a daily basis. How do we hold these unfolding events, these tragedies and struggles in our hearts? What response can we offer? A place to begin might be to open ourselves to the inherent opportunities presented by the ways we are different even from our neighbors, and seek to know each other on deeper levels. From cultural and physical differences, to our varied traditions and heritage; we live in a country that is steeped in difference, and over the generations, we have celebrated this abundance of experience, seeing it as a strength that bound us together and made us stronger. And indeed it has.

ALL ARE

WELCOME!

Services

1st and 3rd Sundays
at 10 am

*Childcare and
spiritual exploration
offered for our
young ones.*

*Coffee &
Conversation
following services*

We hold our
Summer Services
in our Church at
2 Justin Morrill
Highway, Vt. Rte. 132
in South Strafford.

**Fall and Winter
Services** across the
street at Barrett Hall.

Contact Information

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2016-2017 Church Officers

Moderator – John Freitag
Assistant Moderator –
Marissa Mazzucco
Treasurer –
Suzanna Liepmann
Secretary – open
Trustees – Katy Botsford
Andrew Lane and
Lee Funston

But the fears around difference seem to be building, and regrettably, violence is becoming a tool that people are using to express their fear and hatred. What can we do? How do we gently hold the chalice of our own heart? We have opportunities to help build each other's courage. We can look for openings where love is needed, where our voices and collective compassion can be offered. "In the midst of uncertainty, may our chalice be a beacon of encouragement, that our values may guide our choices. Let us look first to the response of love." with care, Rev. Telos

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, released the following statement in response to the mass shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh:

We grieve with those who are mourning the horrific mass shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh.

We grieve the lives lost to senseless violence at the hands of domestic terrorism. We grieve for those who were injured in body and spirit during this shooting.

In our grief, we will also speak truths that need to be named. This was anti-Semitism. This was extremism. This mass shooting was a hate crime. This mass shooting reflects unapologetic bigotry that we are all called to denounce and resist.

May Jewish communities, both within and outside of Unitarian Universalism, feel especially held in tender love and care today and in the days to come. We are in this together.

May we all hold each other especially tight, knowing this life is tender and precious, and love will help us find a way.

Holy Days, Days to Remember

Monday, November 12th - Veteran's Day

*Tuesday, November 20th - Mawlid-al-Nabi (birthday of Mohammad)**

Tuesday, November 20th - Transgender Remembrance Day

Thursday, November 22nd - Thanksgiving Day

[*Holiday begins at sundown on the night before]

Guest at Your Table Program - Supporting the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee!

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about key human rights issues. Since UUSC works in over 25 countries, with over 75 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. The program is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership, support human rights, and learn about four of the "guests" in stories of hope. This year's 2018-2019 Theme is *Justice Across Borders*. From the Northern Triangle of Central America, to deserts of Mexico and Arizona, to detention centers in the United States, the road away from danger is paved with injustices. Partnering with grassroots allies along the Central American migration trail, UUSC addresses root causes, supports migrants in transit, and protects the right to seek asylum. Join with UUSC for Guest at Your Table to learn more about UUSC's and our nation's involvement in Central America – historically and presently – and our courageous Migrant Justice partners. We will be highlighting stories of hope and supporting the efforts of the U.U.S.C. in the coming weeks!

Elements of our Worship - *Joys and Concerns*

Each time we gather, we set aside time for sharing pieces of light, uplifting experiences that we are celebrating; or people and situations that are weighing on us, causing us concern or sorrow...

*Joys and Concerns are a time for sharing **briefly**, lighting a candle or placing a stone on our altar table.*

We changed this ritual of our service in October so that each person may have a time to share if they choose.

When you share, please remember that comments and stories need to be appropriate for all ages.

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We did not hold a Business Meeting in November. If you have questions or ideas about the work of our congregation, please contact John Freitag, Marissa Mazzucco, Suzanna Liepmann, our trustees - Andrew Lane, Katy Botsford, and Lee Funston, or Rev. Telos Whitfield.

Our Next Business Meeting will be held on Wed. December 5th, location to be announced.

We welcome everyone's ideas and involvement in the work of our community.

It's pledge time!

Our society, like most in the Unitarian Universalist faith, conducts an annual pledge drive asking for the support of our members and friends for the current church year. Your pledge is your commitment to support the work of the church over the course of the year. Pledges form the foundation of our budget; they allow us to contract for ministerial services, religious education, building repairs and insurance. In short, your pledge is vital to everything that we do.

How you choose to pay your pledge is up to you. As suggested on the pledge form below, contributions can be made in any amount and paid in any number of installments. Simply indicate what would work for you on this form and return it to church on October 7th or send an email to our treasurer at s.liepmann@tsxis.com with your pledge. Thank you!

**Universalist Society of Strafford
Annual Fund
2018/2019**

- Enclosed is my/our gift of \$_____ to the Church
- I/we pledge \$1 per day to the Church, for a total of \$365
- I/we pledge \$50 per month to the Church, for a total of \$600
- I/we pledge \$_____ to the Church for the year, to be paid _____

Name(s)

Date