



Universalist Society of Strafford

Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

October 2018 Newsletter

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

Worship Services

Sunday, October 7th at 10am at the Church. *Ancient Rights*

led by Rev. Telos Whitfield. Indigenous Peoples Day is honored on October 8th and we will honor the ancient and ongoing relationship people have with the environment and the land. There are sacred sites, evidence of ancient peoples living all around the world and indigenous communities who have lived on the land for centuries. How do we preserve and honor our connection to the lands we live on, and seek to understand this vital and ongoing relationship and support these rights. We will also honor our own dear fur and feathered friends with a blessing of the animals in our lives! Bring a photo and a story...

Sunday, October 21st at 10am, at Barrett Hall *Stories of Struggle and Hope*

led by Valerie Miller, a former director of Human Rights at UUSC, will share some of her stories of activism and social change -- the struggles and hopes that have shaped her life and times and continue to do so today -- being a Peace Corps volunteer in Panama, a paramedic in Somoza's Nicaragua and later a senior literacy advisor under the Sandinistas to Father Fernando Cardenal, being a leader of Congressional delegations to Central America under Reagan, a coordinator in national peace campaigns, being a product of women's empowerment of the 70s and an advocate and popular educator supporting women's movements around the world in the new century. She will be reflecting on these and moments in between.

Message from our Minister

*We are living in the great big dipper, we are washed by the very same rain.
We are swimming in the stream together, some in power and some in pain.
We worship this ground we walk on, cherishing the beings that we live beside.
Loving beings will live forever, we are swimming to the other side....*
song by Emma's Revolution

Let us remember the indigenous and original peoples, whose ancient history, practices and living has stretched back in time for thousands of years. Vermont joined Minnesota and Alaska, along with many cities around the country to recognize October 8th as Indigenous Peoples Day this year, a time honor the courage and resilience of original peoples. We can take time to pause and contemplate the ground we walk on and the environment we live in. What people lived here originally, fishing the streams and lakes, hunting in the forests, and creating a life that often worked in harmony with the lands and environment. What does it mean to live a sustainable life? What would it require to honor indigenous peoples all around the world - heeding their call and concern to plan for future generations far beyond where we are?

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

According to his proclamation in 2017, Gov. Phil Scott says the state will recognize the contributions of Vermont's first residents. *"I'm pleased to recognize the historic and cultural significance of the Indigenous Peoples here in Vermont, with an understanding our state was founded and built upon the lands they first inhabited,"* Scott wrote in a prepared statement obtained on Friday. *"With this proclamation, we, as a state, aim to acknowledge and celebrate indigenous heritage."* Gov. Peter Shumlin issued a similar proclamation in 2016 after Brattleboro resident Rich Holschuh suggested the idea. Holschuh, a member of the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs, says he reached out to Scott's office earlier that year to extend the proclamation. At least 1,700 members of the Nulhegan-Memphremagog tribe of the Abenaki still live in several areas of Vermont. The tribe has its own government and constitution. "The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has passed many resolutions on Native peoples' rights since the 1970s when the effort began to adopt an Indigenous Peoples Day. In 1993, the General Assembly passed a resolution on Justice for Indigenous Peoples, where the UUA resolved to learn from indigenous peoples about the richness of their cultures and about the problems and issues they face, support local indigenous peoples' political action committees in their struggles for social justice and religious freedom, and act individually and through coalitions to respect and support indigenous peoples in preserving their cultural pride and heritage and in protecting their natural resources. In 2007, the General Assembly passed a resolution on Truth, Repair, and Reconciliation, and in 2012, the General Assembly passed a resolution repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery, where the UUA resolved to expose the historical reality and impact of the Doctrine and eliminate its presence in the contemporary policies, programs, theologies, and structures of Unitarian Universalism; to invite indigenous partners to a process of Honor and Healing (often called Truth and Reconciliation); and to call on the United States to fully implement the standards of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the U.S. law and policy without qualifications." (www.UUA.org) What can we learn from these actions that our UU association has taken, and how can we support and honor the indigenous peoples of Vermont whose land we now live on? What does it mean to honor the earth and all of its inhabitants? Let us worship this land we walk on, and cherish the beings that we live beside....

Blessings, Rev. Telos

Holy Days, Days to Remember

October 2nd - Simchat Torah - Jewish*

October 8th - Indigenous People's Day

October 9 - 18th Navaratri / Dassehra - Hindu

[*Holiday begins at sundown on the night before]

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 will be changing 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.

Universalist Society of Strafford
Business Meeting September 19th, 2018

Members Present: Suzanna, Katy, Marissa, Andrew, John, Telos
Meeting Convened: 6:40 pm

Opening Words: Telos

Review and approval of Minutes of August business meeting

Ministers Report: Telos shared. Busy August with memorial service for John Thomson, outdoor movie night and community UU worship in Barnard, VT with local congregations.

Treasurers Report: None in September

Old Business:

- Switchover to Barrett Hall
 - First Sunday in October will be weather dependent, but we are set up for winter months.
 - Third Sunday in October will definitely be in Barrett Hall
 - November Services - exploring alternative locations for 1st Sunday in November, as Barrett Hall has weekend yoga retreat. Thanksgiving Service with other congregations in town.
- Building Report:
 - shed cleaned out
 - checked on wood rot at base of building
 - Fall cleanup possibly on 1st Sunday in November.
 - John to do paint touch-up
 - Dottie did the sign board and it looks really nice.
- Childcare ideas:
 - Andrew will reach out to local teen; Telos to reach out to other UU RE directors for ideas
 - Shared work by adults in the community? People could take turns leading RE; Telos to develop a thematic program for people to use

New Business:

- Services:
 - How to bring more people to church?
 - Work to have consistency each month with 1st and 3rd Sunday services
 - Increase Outreach efforts
 - Music scenario
 - Use recorded music for some of service, but honor and invite the musicians to play
 - How to help Joys and Concerns flow better:
 - Reminder of brief remarks and sharing to be appropriate for all audiences
 - Different candle set up?
 - Discussion about length of services
 - Flow between elements of service
 - 10:00 start and 11:15 end. Work to arrive at 9:45 in the winter so we're seated at 10:00.
 - Message to promote - come as you are able, and all are welcome!

- Short and long term financial visioning
 - Send out information/ invitation about pledges for the 2018-2019 year.
 - Suzanna will send out a treasurer’s letter
 - Share information about pledging, filling out the form.
 - We should make October “pledge month”
 - Possible Go Fund me page to support window effort - Marissa to explore
 - Plan to have another outdoor movie or a series. Fun and introduces people to our community.

- Another UU World group read discussion opportunity or other Adult RE discussions this winter...
 - Idea of a group read was exciting and engaging - could be suggested book or another one

Adjourned at 7:54 pm

Our Next Business Meeting will be held on the first Wed. in November, location to be announced.
Join Us! We welcome everyone’s ideas and involvement in the work of our community.

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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