

First Universalist Church of Southold  
PO Box 221 Main Road  
Southold, NY 11971



# The Free Spirit

Rev. Valerie Freseman, Minister

e-mail: [FirstUMinister@optimum.net](mailto:FirstUMinister@optimum.net)

Church Office: (631) 765-3494

Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 9:00am – 2:00pm

Church Web Page – <http://FirstUniversalistSouthold.org/>, e-mail address: [SoutholdUU@optonline.net](mailto:SoutholdUU@optonline.net)

March 1, 2021

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## **Services – Zoom Online**

March 7, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

**“A Love of Art”**

Suzette Reiss, lay speaker

March 14, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

**“Take Out Your Pencils, Please”**

Unitarian Universalism accepts ongoing revelation as a touchstone – but what has this meant for women in our faith?

Rev. Valerie Freseman

March 21, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

**“The Serenity Prayer”**

I never thought a phrase and little book could be so impactful in my life.

Chris Young, lay speaker

March 28, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

**“We Are the Weirdos, Mister”**

A celebration of our authentic selves

Rev. Valerie Freseman

## **Coming Attractions!!!**

**March 2<sup>nd</sup> – Covenant Group.** Online – Zoom, 4:00 p.m. Topic: “Commitment”

**March 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> – Afternoon Tea.** Online – Zoom, 4:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. A time for fellowship and connection.

**Coming Attractions (cont'd.)**

**March 10<sup>th</sup> – Morning Spiritual Practice.** Online – Zoom, 10:00 a.m.

**March 18<sup>th</sup> – 7 Principles Class: Inherent Worth and Dignity.** Online – Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

**March 23<sup>rd</sup> – Board Meeting.** Online – Zoom, 6:00 p.m. All are welcome.

**March 25<sup>th</sup> – Evening Spiritual Practice.** Online – Zoom, 5:00 p.m.

**March 26<sup>th</sup> – Fellowship Appreciation Event.** Online – Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

**Covenant Group**

All are welcome to join us on Zoom, Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4-5 p.m. I will send you the link that afternoon. Please e-mail me if you are not on my list. [ginc289@optonline.net](mailto:ginc289@optonline.net)

Our topic this month is "Commitment." Questions for your journal writing: What commitment has shaped you most? What commitment most deeply defines you? Do you have a secret commitment? A promise to yourself that no one else knows about? What are the covenants/commitments you were born into? What promises have you made to your spiritual life?

"Faith is a commitment to live as if certain things are true, and thereby help to make them so. Faith is a commitment to live as if life is a wondrous mystery, as if life is good, as if life is divine, as if we are responsible for the well-being of those around us." Rev. Galen Guengerich

In peace,  
Ginny Cornell

**Fellowship Appreciation Celebration**



Welcome spring with beginnings and transitions at our Zoom celebration of our church community, in lieu of a dinner, on Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, from 7 PM – 9 PM.

Join us for a fun-filled evening where we explore, care, and connect! Keep an eye out for further details to come in the mail!

**Spiritual Practice Classes**

Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 10 – 11:00 a.m., Online – Zoom.

Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 5 – 6:00 p.m., Online – Zoom.

Each month, Rev. Valerie will lead us in a spiritual practice to stimulate the mind and help us cope with the isolation of the pandemic. Each spiritual practice will be repeated twice a month, once in the evening and once during the day so that folks with different schedules can attend.

**Notes from the Building Team**

A Zoom meeting was held with Peter Marren and Stacy Paetzel to discuss ways to reduce overall costs of the project. The Building Team expects to meet with Peter, Stacy and Eugene Burger in the near future to firm up costs and examine further potential reductions in scope and/or costs.

Brian McManus is being included as “clerk of the work” in meetings and discussions moving forward.

We are still waiting to receive final approval from the Suffolk County Dept. of Health Services regarding the septic systems, and the NYS Dept. of Transportation regarding the driveway. Once those details are approved, we should be able to secure approval of our building permit from the town Building Dept.

Greetings to you all.

What are you committed to?

I have been moved by the ways in which people have committed themselves to social and racial justice – not just in our congregation, but elsewhere. There are as many ways to commit to witnessing for justice as there are individuals or faith communities.

One of the ways in which this has happened has been through weekly vigils held at congregations across the country. Many congregations have been gathering this way for years; it has become a spiritual practice for them. Others have shown up in other ways – by offering space for organizers to gather, by offering sanctuary.

During the pandemic, of course, we cannot meet in the same way; this is where creativity meets our commitment. And yet, we are in appreciation and gratitude to those who can gather and offer witness week after week, no matter the weather, for the work of social justice.

What are you willing to do, week after week, to construct a better world? What are you interested in?

This month we will explore the spiritual theme of commitment in the services I have planned for you, “Take Out Your Pencils” and “We are the Weirdos, Mister.” In addition, I am beginning a new series of classes on the 7 Principles, exploring their past and present. There will be discussion and video and reading, so please be sure to register when I send out the email. The class will be held on Thursday night, but there is no commitment to attend all of them.

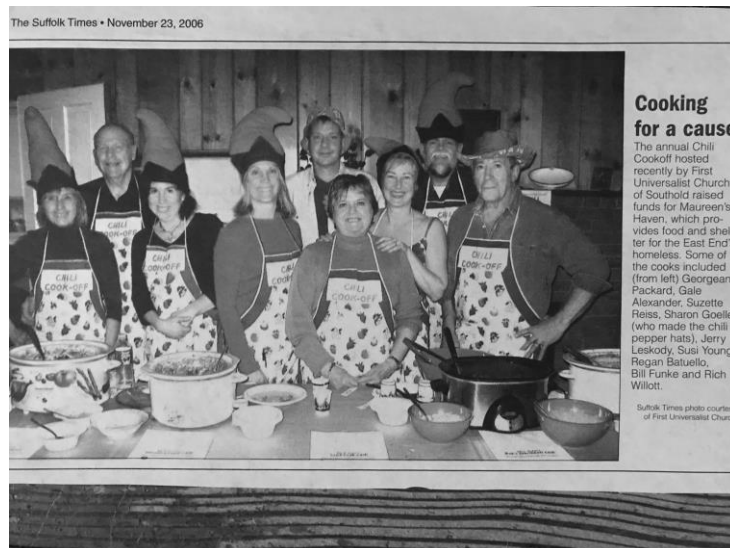
Spiritual practice classes in the evenings will move to Thursdays.

I am also excited for the opportunities the Membership and Outreach team are developing. The recent sock and food drives have been a tremendous success, and soon you will hear about other exciting virtual get togethers!

Be well and stay safe,  
Rev. Valerie

## Looking Back

For a number of years, we hosted a Chili Cookoff for the benefit of Maureen's Haven, which provides food and shelter for the homeless. This photo was sent in by Susi Young.



Left to right, Georgeann Packard, Gale Alexander, Suzette Reiss, Sharon Goeller, Jerry Leskody, Susi Young, Regan Batuello, Bill Funke and Rich Willott.

If you have any pictures from past events at the church, please send them to me, with the name and the event, [ginc289@optonline.net](mailto:ginc289@optonline.net).

## Thoughts on Spirit

### “Consideration”

“He longs to alert others to the riches that lie buried within him, unsuspected by patrons who barely look up when he takes their orders.”

I love this quote from Zadie Smith’s 2000 novel, *White Teeth*. It refers to the feelings of Samad, an immigrant Bangladeshi waiter in a London restaurant. He is aching with frustration; he wants to be perceived as the multi-dimensional person he really is.

For me, it gets to the heart of the lesson, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” I.e., **consider** Samad in his totality, and don’t treat him just as the guy with the annoyingly difficult to understand accent who is taking my dinner order. Obviously, time doesn’t permit me to learn all about Samad in this context. But I can look up, greet him warmly, and show him with my eyes and a few words that I appreciate that he “has a life.”

We are all multi-dimensional; we play many roles... in our family, in the workplace, in our community. We are *all* interesting. We all have strengths and weaknesses. It has been said that we each contain the potential for all the good and evil in the world; that we are, after all, but microcosms of the Universe, made in its image and likeness.

I can do my little bit to bring out the dimensional aspects of people, to give them a chance to shine. I can, in essence, ask them, “Who are you?”

In order to show consideration, we must pay attention to others. Full consideration includes listening, the most underrated element of love. When others are speaking, we must notice if we are listening to understand them, or to respond with our own thoughts. Attentive listening to understand is a requirement of being considerate. We can “take others in” with our ears!

And what does this kind of consideration get us? As with most of the loving aspects of communications, it can be a two-way street. The person receiving consideration feels noticed, humanized, perhaps ennobled. The one showing consideration, even in the smallest of matters, will sense that they are building karma, that they have committed a spiritual act.

Joe Mc Kay  
March 2021

### The Elegance

of an empty floor  
in the morning sun, when wood  
shines like a flower

– Mary James

### Minister’s Discretionary Fund

This is a reminder that the Minister’s Discretionary Fund exists for the purpose of giving small grants to folks in need of food, gas, or other living expenses, anonymously and at the minister’s discretion.

If you can think of anyone who would benefit from help, especially during these tough economic times, please do not hesitate to recommend them to **Rev. Valerie**.