

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



The Free Spirit

Rev. Valerie Freseman, Minister
email: FirstUMinister@optimum.net Church Office: (631) 765-3494
Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 9:00am – 2:00pm
Church Web Page – <http://FirstUniversalistSouthold.org/> email address: SoutholdUU@optonline.net

April 1, 2022

Services – at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday, April 3, 11:00 a.m.

“Turn Back, Turn Back”

Rev. Valerie Freseman

Sunday, April 10, 11:00 a.m.

“On Turning 90”

Judith Speyer, lay speaker

Sunday, April 17, 11:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday

Rev. Valerie Freseman

Sunday, April 24, 11:00 a.m.

“Our High Resolve”

Rev. Valerie Freseman and Patte McManus, SAC Chair

Coming Attractions!!! ** Questions? Please email us at SoutholdUU@optonline.net **

April 5th – Covenant Group. Southold Library, 4:00 p.m. Topic: “Simplicity”

April 9th – Spring Clean-up. Church grounds, 10:00 p.m. – 12:00 p.m.

April 13th – Social Action Committee & 8th Principle Task Force. Online – Zoom, 4:00 p.m.

April 14th – Spiritual Practice. Online – Zoom, 7:00 p.m. Topic: “Sacred Text: Part 2”

April 19th – Board Meeting. Parsonage, 4:00 p.m. All are welcome via Zoom.

8th Principle Task Force Town Hall Q & A
April 24th, 12:00 p.m.

Please stay after the service at Holy Trinity on Sunday, April 24th, for questions and answers on our upcoming vote to adopt the 8th Principle. We will have a congregational conversation about what adopting the 8th Principle is, what it means in the larger UUA community, and what it will mean to us in practical terms.

Covenant Group

Please join us, April 5th, 2022, at the Southold Free Library (masks required), 4-5 p.m., upstairs. All are welcome.

Our topic is: "Simplicity." We will be reading Courtney Carver's *Soulful Simplicity: How Living with Less Can Lead to so Much More*. Simplicity is about subtracting the obvious and adding the meaningful. We will explore this premise and how it might apply to our daily living.

For the first Sunday in April, we will return to Holy Trinity. Please remember to save non-perishable food for the pantry and quarters for the laundromat.

In peace,
 Ginny Cornell (Ginc289@optonline.net)

Dear Community,

Each month as I consider the *Soul Matters* theme, which this month focuses on "Awakening," I sometimes find myself caught in perplexity. Whereas having a theme may seem like a way to narrow the focus, at times the themes do just the opposite. It may seem like this is the perfect pairing for the season of Easter and Passover, which are both holidays that have a significance in the history of Unitarian Universalism, but it is also a very broad theme that can conjure about almost anything, regardless of season or holiday or expectations in our culture.

Recently, I heard Dr. Cornell West speak in a YouTube video about the question of "wokeness" as a descriptor. This term has been used to describe (or really create a kind of slur around) a performative awareness of marginalized identities, particularly when a person in a privileged identity identifies themselves as being aware, or woke, to what marginalized identities, such as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, or LGBT people, endure. Dr. West counters this with the idea of "solidarity over identity" – not awakening, not just to be aware (what he jokingly calls insomnia) – but awakening because we must be fortified and in solidarity with all that needs our attention. A famous gospel song about the faithfulness to Christ, and the idea of the second coming of Christ, further conveys this idea to "keep your wicks trimmed and burning" – which for me is also about this idea of holding steadfast to your values. When we cultivate awareness of our values and hold them in readiness, then we can apply them to those situations when our lives are upended, or we will need to show concern and fellowship to those we know or those different than us. Keeping awake and alive to the possibility of all that is life-giving around us will be a solidarity and salvation in the end. Being awake is about action and reflection, and not just reflection alone.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you in person at Holy Trinity as we resume our services there. I have deep gratitude for your patience and your spirit of volunteerism as we work together to find ways to keep one another safe and live into our principles of inclusion, knowing that this will not be an easy process nor one that will be without hiccoughs.

Our Zoom experiment in sacred text study resumes this month and will continue the 2nd Thursday of each month for the time being. As always, if you have a concern or question, please do not hesitate to email me at fristuminister@optimum.net to set up a time to chat.

Brightest Blessings,
 Rev. Valerie Freseman

News from the Social Action Committee (SAC) & 8th Principle Task Force

The next meeting of the SAC & 8th Principle Task Force will be held on April 13, 2022 (the second Wednesday of the month), 4:00pm – 5:30pm, via Zoom.

At our 3/9/2022 SAC & 8th Principle Task Force meeting, we voted to bring (2) requests before the 3/22/2022 Board of Trustees meeting, both of which were approved unanimously.

Motion 1: that the First Sunday (STP) collection in April be donated to St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, in Riverhead, for support of Ukraine.

You are probably aware that St. John the Baptist Parish sponsored **The Rally for Support of Ukraine** on Monday, February 28th, four days after the 2022 Russian invasion. Since then, their website has posted a continually changing list of needed items, which as of 3/19/2022 only includes “MEDICAL NEEDS.” Due to restrictions on items by aid organizations and shippers, and daily changing of conditions in Ukraine and for the Ukrainian people, SAC thought it better to give funds and the Board agreed. The Parish is currently accepting monetary donations (cash and checks only) which will be forwarded “to appropriate charitable groups and to cover the purchase of needed items and shipping expenses.”

Since the Board approval, you’ve heard President Biden’s announcement of plans for the USA to accept 100,000 Ukrainian refugees. We will proceed with the April (STP) donation to St. John the Baptist Parish with an eye to other ways in which we may be of assistance. As per usual, please make you checks payable to our church and indicate on the “Memo” line: for “Support of Ukraine.”

Motion 2: that the First Universalist Church of Southold place on the agenda of our Annual Membership Meeting on Sunday, May 22, 2022 a congregational vote to adopt the 8th Principle. (A ballot will be included in the Annual Meeting Packet.)

In the lead up to that vote, Rev. Valerie and I are planning an **8th Principle Task Force Q&A / Teach-In / Town Hall on Sunday, April 24, 2022**. Since there are myriad issues that could be addressed, SAC & 8th Principle Task Force developed a brief survey that was emailed / mailed to members and friends of the congregation for input and direction. Your feedback will provide future direction to the 8th Principle Task Force and program planning.

We asked that completed surveys be returned to me: pattemcgoo@yahoo.com by April 3, 2022. The intent is to allow time to not only acknowledge where in the process we currently stand, but also to assess what the congregation needs to move forward. If you haven’t returned your survey yet, **or, if you haven’t received your survey, please contact Patte McManus at the email address above or by phone: (631) 997-9405. And remember, ratification of the 8th Principle is really just a step on our journey, rather than the ultimate goal.** For more information on the history and development of the 8th Principle, visit <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org>.

The last item on the monthly agenda was finalizing plans for our **Saturday, March 26, 2022 drive-thru collection of non-food items and monetary donations to benefit Shinnecock Families and Children**, in Southampton. Weather reports were predicting March would be going out with a roar rather than a bleat so hot chocolate was ordered. We had an hour of sun; an hour of drizzle; and, a great turnout! The downpour waited just long enough for the cars to be packed.

Prior to the drive-thru, First Sunday “Share The Plate” (STP) donations amounted to \$ 500.00 and that number climbed to a grand **total monetary donation: \$ 930.00**. And you weren’t done – **we also collected MULTIPLES of EVERY item on the needs list**. In addition, there were thoughtful donations of: **cleaning cloths and sponges for inevitable “oopsies;” bandaids & cream for the dreaded “ouch” moments; tissues for “tears” & “sniffles;” and, moisturizing foam for the too-infrequent “ah” moments.**

If this is the kind of work we can do after seven years without a building of our own, just imagine what we’ll accomplish. This congregation may be small in size, but it has a mighty tremendous heart. I haven’t mentioned this in previous reports because it was meant to be a surprise. SAC & the 8th Principle Task Force have been discussing for some time how we might express gratitude to each of you for ALL you’ve given this past year. The tote bag, part of this year’s Fellowship Appreciation Package, is a small thank-you for your Time, Talent, and Treasure. The words on the tote speak of this congregation – a warm, welcoming, loving and Beloved Community. The Chalice on the tote looks like open arms offering hugs – the hugs we’ve been unable to exchange during the pandemic – consider yourself hugged.

Moved by your endless generosity of spirit,
Patte McManus, Chair

News from the Building Team

Architect Ray Calamari reports the following progress:

Changes have been made to the drawings as per the last Building Team meeting at Burger Construction. The utility basement has been added, and the additional path as per the team's recommendation.

Our design team of architect Ray Calamari and owner's rep Brian Davis met with the landscape architect on March 21. They are working with John Verderber, based on recommendation from Eugene Burger.

A meeting with Cooper Lighting has been scheduled to review interior and exterior lighting fixture ideas, and our architect plans to contact the Planning Board to review progress.

The design team hopes to wrap up the landscaping and site lighting prior to another general meeting, by about the second week in April. By then, the construction documents will be about 95% complete and Burger should have a handle on the budget.

Mark Sisson, Chair

Thoughts on Spirit

"As New As Foam, As Old As Rock"

Emerson used this phrase to depict how we might best wake to welcome each day. The contrast between foam and rock is stark. At first glance, it might seem to be a dichotomous pair used in a moral lesson to demonstrate a choice we must make. The solidity of rock conjures steadiness, reliability, endurance... immutable truth, if you will, while the laciness of foam, formed as passing water tumbles by, hints of newness, fleeting fancy, irregularity, and openness.

But, no, Emerson is suggesting that we must consciously utilize *both* the old and the new, the certain and the uncertain, the permanent and the fleeting, as we build our lives, lives which grow and develop over time, lives from which we draw our sustenance, and our continuing well-being.

In this thinking, whim, playful musing, and serendipity are as welcome in our daily lives as are so-called enduring facts of life. The foam gives energy to the rock, and new perspectives on existing realities. The former encourage experimentation, risk taking, and invention. In such an atmosphere, questions are more often heard than answers, hopeful maybes more than certainties, and a sense of freedom and possibility reigns.

It's not a long reach to see in this an analogy to Spring, always an "iffy proposition," they say! You never know *what's* gonna happen... Change is in the air: what will be reshaped before it all settles down again? How will things be different from what they were before?? What advantages will be gained from the shakeup Nature has wrought???

"Spring Cleaning" is an ancient annual rite. As we refresh everything in our space, let's consider a facelift in our lives, too! Notice how the water in a stream or a wave depends in large part on the rocks over which it flows and crashes to create the beautiful, seeming endless patterns of foam which make life what it is.

Let's consciously welcome both the foam and the rock into our focus, watch and listen to what's happening, stir the pot a bit ourselves, and take joy and satisfaction in being a part of the dynamism of Life!

Joe McKay
April 1, 2022