

# President's Report

October 2019

Dear friends,

Welcome to the 193rd Annual Meeting of the New York State Convention of Universalists. Please join me in thanking the First Universalist Church of Rochester congregation for its gracious hospitality. Nancy Gaede and Ann Rhody have gone above and beyond in coordinating this conference. I'm not sure whether to use She-ra or Xena for powerful women but I think Herculean needs a feminine version. Please share -- with the board members -- thoughts on how we might enhance these meetings in the future. But don't bother suggesting a Fiji retreat; the budget cannot handle it. I hope you find your time here both rewarding and productive.

I offer my special warm thanks to Mark Bunce, who graciously agreed to lead the Annual Meeting in my absence. I'm at the end of an Eastern European cruise, which was followed by an eight-day tour of Rumania. I discovered, only three years ago, that it is the birthplace of my dad's grandparents. Sorry about the timing but it was the only month my children could join us. Bob Arnold, who returned after the cruise, is representing me, as well as the Middletown UU Fellowship. He'll also be presenting the Service Gratuity Committee report.

I am delighted to announce that NYSCU's 194th Annual Meeting will be held in Oneonta at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta, in October 2020. We are in discussion with potential keynote speakers, which will determine our final dates.

You can find details on this past year's activities in the other reports in this delegate packet; the reports of the secretary, treasurer, the service gratuity chair, and the grants/loans chair will provide an excellent sense of what NYSCU has been doing.

Organized in 1825, the New York State Convention of Universalists continues to: support Universalist history and values, provide financial support to CER programs, and administer our Grants and Loans Program which has benefited both congregations and individuals within New York State and beyond. Since 2004, NYSCU has awarded grants of more than \$550,000 and offered no-interest loans (to congregations) totaling more than \$450,000. We're very pleased to say that during this time period, all loans have been repaid on schedule (or earlier).

We also offer retirement assistance (through our Service Gratuity Fund) to ministers (and surviving spouses) who served in New York State Universalist churches for a specified period of time prior to 1961.

Please join me in thanking the board and committee members who help get these projects funded and distributed.

If you have a vision for the growth of Unitarian Universalism or the affirmation of Universalist history, I hope your congregation will apply for a grant this year. If you have a bricks-and-mortar project, you could consider applying for a loan. We also have a category called

scholarships to leadership schools. The deadline for applications is January 31, 2020. Forms and information are available on our website [www.nyscu.org](http://www.nyscu.org) and a form is in your packet.

While you're at the website, take a longer look. The site includes other resources: names and contact information for board and committee members; links to member congregations and denominational contacts; annual reports for the past 10 years; a 10-year history of grants and loans, with links to some project websites; a guide to books that the Convention has helped to publish; and the history of the Convention, written by our archivist Karen Dau. From the book guide page, you can download *The Universalist Heritage*, a compendium of keynote addresses from 1976 to 1992, and *Remember Universalism Into Life*, the Leaders' guide for an 8-week adult discussion series based on those addresses. We offer our continued thanks to Michael Scott, our web-master. He maintains and invigorates our institutional memory.

Again I wish to thank Mark Bunce, our Vice President, for chairing the business meeting (and our Friday board meeting) in my absence. Margaret Maguire Davis will continue to serve as treasurer. Ann Rhody, Jim D'Aloisio and Rev. Sally Hamlin are continuing as board members. Please say hi to Rev. Dr. Lynn Ashley, our board secretary. Ronald Clupper will not be continuing as Grants & Loans chair; he has tendered his resignation due to new obligations. We send a fond farewell to Ryan Novosielski and Kimball Pierce, as they leave the board. Many thanks to Fred Boreali, nominating committee chair, and other committee members for presenting this year's slate of nominees. As usual I'd like to commend Karen Dau, our tireless archivist. You have the opportunity to visit with her in the Archive and at lunch as she presents a show-and-tell on Saturday. And thanks to Tom Hackett; he will continue to function in the important role of Clerk (and fellow Yankee fan).

It is a pleasure to serve with such a multitalented, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, caring group of people. If a member of the nominating committee calls you next year, or maybe next month, about serving on the NYSCU board, I hope you'll give the idea serious consideration. Giving money for creative causes and lending money for necessary repairs and upgrades does provide great pleasure. Who doesn't enjoy that?

Peace,  
Judith Adel  
President