

September Worship Calendar

September 9 ~ Homecoming Sunday
Rev. Carlos R. Martinez

September 23 ~ Sufi Day Service
Sheikha Fariha Fatema Jerrahi

September 16 ~ Yom Kippur Service
Rev. Carlos R. Martinez

September 30
Rev. Wendy Bartel & Rev. Lynn Gardner
Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady



Rev. Carlos R. Martinez, Interim Minister
Esther Rosado, Director of Lifespan Religious Education
Gerald A. Brown, Director of Music
Valerie Lynch, Membership Coordinator
Jeff Loveland, Church Administrator
Rev. Bruce Southworth, Minister Emeritus

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The Community Church of New York

An Independent Congregation Affiliated with the
Unitarian Universalist Association
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Minister's Corner

September 23 & 30, 2018 Issue



Come to the Sufi Day Service

The creation of the Sufi Day Service, taking place at Community Church on Sunday, September 23rd, had a very organic beginning.

It was about one year ago when our members Nafisa Degani and

Leslie McKenzie approached me excitedly asking if they could use the Community Church banner. They wanted to represent the church in the Muslim Day Parade that was kicking off that afternoon on Madison and 38th Street.

I could see the excitement in their eyes at the prospect of being part of the festivities. Somehow they managed to quickly organize themselves and participate in the event, representing the congregation. It was then that I thought about how it was a pity we couldn't have done more as a congregation to honor a special celebration which was happening right at our doorstep.

Later in the church year, I approached Nafisa and asked how we could bring the richness of the Muslim tradition to the congregation's attention. Nafisa, being Muslim and a practicing Sufi, suggested we organize a worship service at Community Church with Sheikha Fariha. To prepare for this possibility, Nafisa invited me to experience a Zikr, or worship service, at

the Sufi dergah in Tribeca. During a Zikr, participants repeat aloud short phrases or prayers. The intention of the worship is to release oneself from the ego and come together with fellow worshippers as one gathered body. The evening, which can go to the early hours of the morning, is filled with chanting and music. The whirlers spin in synchrony with the rotation of the Earth to become one with the universe and ultimately with God.

Nafisa explained to me that the central tenet of Sufism is love, and my experience that evening made this amply evident. Participants in the worship were of all ages and from all walks of life; they ranged from the newly curious to longtime adherents of the faith. The hospitality was supremely gracious—all were offered snacks and copious cups of tea and the conversation was warm and welcoming.

The leader of the evening was Sheikha Fariha who is the spiritual guide. Born in Houston, into a socially committed, eclectic Catholic family, she found Sufism through her teacher at the age of 29. Shaykha is of a lineage which offers the nectar of teachings of the Prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him, which guide the seeker to self-knowledge and immersion in God. The faith's sacred practices include Zikr, prayer, charitable living, fasting, and retreat.

During the Sufi Service at Community, it is my hope that you will have an opportunity to experience the transcendent and loving nature of the Sufi tradition.

Rev. Carlos

Church Events

- Sufi Lecture
Sun., Sept. 23, 12:45 pm
- Breathing Exercises with Nafisa
Mon., Sept. 24, 2:00 pm
- Social Tea
Tue., Sept. 25, 2:00 pm
- Yoga with Nafisa
Tue., Sept. 25, 6:00 pm
- Esperanto Society
Fri., Sept. 28, 7:00 pm
- Yoga with Nafisa
Sat., Sept. 29, 10:30 am
- "From New York with Love"
Art Party for Kids
Sun., Sept. 30, 11:30 am
- Art & Card Making Circle
Sun., Sept. 30, 1:00 pm
- Breathing Exercises with Nafisa
Mon., Oct. 1, 2:00 pm
- Yoga with Nafisa
Tue., Oct. 2, 6:00 pm

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



This past Sunday, as is customary at this time of year, the sound of the Shofar was heard in the Hall of Worship. RE/FM always looks forward to hearing this lovely, mystical sound. I like to describe it to the youngest children as "The Great Alarm Clock", where the Jewish people awake from their spiritual slumber and examine their deeds and correct their ways, (as referenced by Chabad). Our lesson outlined the body of a "Peaceable Being" so as to begin speaking about promises we want to make to each other in the year – our class covenant. We have posted our "peaceable being" with positive attributes that we want to internalize. Stop by and maybe these attributes are what we might consider improving in ourselves.

Mark your calendars, September 30th we will have the Camp Art Project presenting an art party for kids – "From New York With Love". After worship we will proceed to the Community House Gallery, from 11:30-1:00 pm. The art work will then be sent to displaced Syrian children living in Turkey.

Paz, Esther

Sunday School ~ Join us in the RE Room downstairs at 11 am.
Fellowship Hour ~ **Assembly Hall, 12:15 p.m.** Please join us after worship.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR SUNDAY–September 23

- 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 am Worship Service
- 11:00 am Religious Education
- 12:15 pm Fellowship Hour
- 12:45 pm Volunteer Choir Rehearsal
- 12:45 pm Cottage Meeting Search Committee

WEDNESDAY–September 26

- 6:30 pm Board of Trustees

SUNDAY–September 30

- 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 am Worship Service
- 11:00 am Religious Education
- 12:15 pm Fellowship Hour
- 12:45 pm Volunteer Choir
- 12:45 pm Cottage Meeting Search Committee

THOSE WHO ALSO MINISTER—SEPTEMBER 23

Pulpit Flowers—Given by Joyce Mantyla in loving memory of her husband Jack L. Weissman
Welcome Table—Virginia Brody

Hospitality—Melinda Schroeder and Neil Blonstein
Bookstall—Ken Wachtell

THOSE WHO ALSO MINISTER—SEPTEMBER 30

Pulpit Art—Chalice Art by Onna Johnson, West Valley UU in Arizona

Hospitality—Sophia Whitney
Bookstall—Ken Wachtell

September Coordinator Helene & BJ's Homeless Shelter—George Garland— 917-796-5388
Shelter volunteers always welcome.

SUNDAY—October 7

Rev. Lisa Friedman, will preach.

SUNDAY—October 14

Rev. Carlos R. Martinez will preach.

FROM OUR COMMISSIONED LAY MINISTER



I believe that each of us is accountable to all of us. We need to see our reflections in each other's lives; in each other's eyes. Articulations of the heart call us to build bridges of community with empathy and compassion. They call us to love boldly, knowing that such living leaves its indelible footprint in the lives of others for grace-filled generations to come.

Each of us brings a collection of life-affirming stories. Together we are creating and learning, telling stories that will inform the generations to come. And we are called to learn each other's stories, to honor the

wellspring from which they come. Each story strikes an indelible chord. Each story adds to our collective story. As we create and share faith-filled stories, we affirm being integral to the interdependent web of all existence.

There's more! Relationships matter greatly. When we listen to each other's stories, we learn to care about each other. Knowledge and awareness can lead to behavior change from small to huge as evidenced in the hymn, *Amazing Grace*. Transformation comes from changes in behavior plus changes of the heart. May our commitment to care serve to hold us accountable to each other in tender and transformative ways.

Masakhane, Janice

"Masakhane" is a rich and resonant word from the Nguni family of languages of South Africa, of which Zulu and Xhosa are two. Loosely translated into English it means, "Let us build together."



Rumi (Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī) was a 13th Century Sufi mystic and poet, from Persia. (Rumi was born in modern day Afghanistan and lived for a while in Turkey). Rumi's poetry expresses his longing for union with the Divine. It is a personal mystic journey he invites us all to join. May these quotes open up your heart and mind to the beauty that lies within you.

*Raise your words, not your voice.
It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder.*

Stop acting so small. You are the universe in ecstatic motion.



The Community Church of New York Unitarian Universalist

Web: Visit our website at www.ccnny.org – Visit in person at 40 East 35th Street

Our Mission: TO GROW AS A CARING, JUSTICE-MAKING, ANTI-RACIST, DIVERSE, SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY