



Our Outlook

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First Universalist
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Sunday Services | January 2021

January 3 | *Feeding the Fire*

Join us for our annual ritual releasing what needs to be released and setting intentions for 2021. This service will focus on feeding our passions in the year ahead and the slow steady ways of manifesting what we want to see in our lives.

— Rev. Lane Campbell

January 10 | *The Beliefs that Connect Us*

The recent Commission on Institutional Change report coming out of the UUA calls us to re-engage our theological legacy and dig deeper to center marginalized voices. Are there beliefs around which we can connect?

— Rev. Lane Campbell

January 17 | *Defying Borders*

Borders are boundaries that seek to divide geographically and socially. Let us explore where borders can be damaging to us all. Let us explore how borders function in our country right now.

— Rev. Lane Campbell

January 24 | *It's Bound To Happen...*

Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore proclaims that Unitarian Universalists are a people of orthopraxis (right behavior) rather than orthodoxy (right belief). While we certainly claim a variety of beliefs, is it true that we all DO the same things? Would we even want that?! Join our guest preacher from our sibling congregation as we explore how what we do together shapes our spiritual journeys, keeps us stuck, and how we find our way to freedom.

— Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan

January 31 | *Covenanting in the Midst of Conflict*

Unitarian Universalists are a people of covenant, meaning honoring the promises kept among us about how we are to be together. adrienne maree brown recently released a book, "We Will Not Cancel Us," addressing cancel culture or the action of dismissing people in the face of acts of harm. What does our covenant call us to in moments of conflict?

— Rev. Lane Campbell

❖ **Service begins at 10:30am** ❖

*Worship will be meeting online into the foreseeable future. Please join us—
Internet link: <https://zoom.us/j/131764422>; Phone number: 646 558 8656 with
Meeting ID: Meeting ID: 131 764 422. ❖*

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Connecting in 2021

Message from Rev. Lane Campbell

Well, what a year 2020 has been. As we usher in 2021, our Worship Committee at First Universalist chose the theme of “Connection.” What a relevant topic in this time period.

Have you felt a lack of connection to others in this past year? A lot of what I am hearing in this congregation is the grief over unstructured time to just have a conversation with someone. The way our church community does coffee hour has shifted. The groups we are a part of over Zoom often include structured sharing. It’s hard to just have informal chat when calling someone to check in on them. This kind of connection is missing in our world.

And it feels important to hold gratitude for the places and the spaces we can connect. For those Zoom groups or programs or learning opportunities we are a part of. For the ways we can still hold worship on our computers, tablets, and phones. For the informal chatting that happens in the church parking lot while dropping off supplies for the Nester Street Food Cupboard.

In the year ahead, the Board and I are looking at ways to offer folks space for deeper connection—on Zoom and off Zoom. We are working to plan regular opportunities for you to come by the church, to chat with one another masked and physically distanced outside of the building. Our Christmas Eve Bag collection and distribution was just the beginning for creating opportunities to see one another in person, however brief. This connection is a lifeline for us right now.

I wonder where you are finding space to deepen your connections. I wonder where you are finding space to share vulnerably and to be heard. I wonder how this time has asked you to shift how you connect with others. I wonder if this time has you paying attention to your connections in a new way.

I look forward to connecting with you in 2021. Happy New Year! ❖



Wired for Connection

Message from Rev. Michelle Yates

In researching ideas for our month of Connection I found this article by Erin Powers from 2017. You would think it was written this past month, and I can’t imagine saying it any better. Enjoy!

Yours in the journey, Rev. Michelle Yates

It’s a familiar scene each holiday: no matter how meticulously the strings of lights were put away, they always seem to come out a tangled mess. What happens to them all through the year?

And so the tradition of untangling the lights begins. We unwind them carefully, uncrossing and unlooping, stretching them out to their full length, all the while being mindful to not damage the bulbs which hold so much potential.

I find that people aren’t that different. We often feel like a jumbled mess of string lights: tangled up within ourselves, not knowing how to get undone or how to get back to our sparkly selves—especially when the holidays approach. Throughout the year, each struggle adds another tangle to the lights until by year’s end, we’re wound so tightly that we don’t even know where to begin. Sometimes we need a little help to sort ourselves out.

It’s said that it’s easier to untangle a string of lights if you plug them in; the brightness of the little bulbs help to guide our fingers through the tangles. It’s no different for people. Connecting with friends, family, therapists, or trusted advisors can shine a light to help us untangle ourselves, and to help us stretch out to our full potential.

Humans, like strings of lights, are wired for connection. It’s when we’re wound most tightly that we need connection most of. We’re at our best when we are plugged in to each other. We find our true purpose and spark with others—and it’s in these connections that we shine most brightly.

Great and endless mystery and wonder, may you never stop giving us opportunity for connections that light the fire inside each of us. And may we never stop seeking and reaching out for connections, even when we are so tangled and wound so tightly that we struggle to find the plug. ❖

Auction Amnesty

Submitted by Ann Rhody

AUCTION AMNESTY

Have you circled the date? January 31, 2021: AUCTION AMNESTY is coming!!

We clearly can't meet in person for a traditional Service Auction, and many of us have not even been able to redeem the events and items we bought LAST year! So instead, we bring you Auction Amnesty!

It's how we SAFELY get the FUN, FELLOWSHIP and FUNDS normally raised by the Annual Service Auction!

Here's how it works:

- Consider what you would spend to donate an item or host an event, and simply donate those funds to the church.
- Consider what you might spend at a typical Service Auction, and donate some of those funds to the church.
- Tune in for an Auction Amnesty celebration via Zoom after the church service on January 31. There will be entertainment, fun, prizes (no bidding involved), and Service Auction trivia!

Auction Amnesty donations are now being accepted! Please send a check payable to First Universalist Church, and write "Auction Amnesty" in the memo line; or donate online at uuroc.org, and leave a note letting us know the donation is for Auction Amnesty. We ask for your donation by January 25, so that we can announce the total on January 31!

We would like everyone to join us for the celebration on January 31, whether or not you are able to make an "Auction Amnesty" contribution. The fun and fellowship are needed even more than the funds!

Watch your mail for an invitation to our virtual Auction Amnesty celebration on January 31. Your invitation will include a special number which will be used in drawings for prizes, too!

One more thing: Do you have a favorite memory from Auctions in years past? A particularly fabulous, ridiculous, or special item that you successfully bid on? Pictures from a service Auction event? We would love to have you share those memories and photos! Please send them to finance@uuroc.org, along with any questions you may have about Auction Amnesty this year.

Thanks for joining us for Auction fun in the time of Covid!

—Katherine Flynn, Paula Marchese, and Ann Rhody ❖

Grief Support Group starting in January

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

A semi-structured support group will begin for congregation members who are experiencing grief following the loss of beloved family members. Chalice lighting, opening words, paper-and-pencil exercises, and closing words will lend to the sacred space and intimacy of conversations.

In order to do this work in covenant and build relationships, the group will be limited to 12 members who are asked to commit to attending all sessions. These sessions will be facilitated by Theo Munson, Rev. Lane Campbell and Rev. Michelle Yates and held virtually on Zoom.

The group will meet for 8 weeks on Thursdays from 10am to 11:30am beginning January 14, 2021. To sign up email Rev. Michelle at edu@uuroc.org. ❖

Archive Update

Submitted by Karen Dau

After 27 years as church historian, I retired from this position on December 31, 2020. I will be available for the time being to help with research when requested. ❖

Drop-In Discussion Schedule

Submitted by Beth Ares

Current drop-in discussions are held each Tuesday evening from 6:30 to 7:30pm via the church Zoom account. Contact DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org for the Zoom link!

Sometimes our discussions are based on certain books or articles, but you don't have to read anything or do any advance preparation to participate. Just drop in. People of all viewpoints are welcome to make presentations or join the discussions.

Check our website for more details as these dates approach!

January Drop-In-Discussion dates:

- January 5
- January 12
- January 19
- January 25

Do you have a topic for us? Contact our team members with your Drop-In Discussion proposals: DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org. ❖

EcoJustice News

Submitted by Sarah Singal

Many many thanks to Rev Lane for her support of the Virtual Rochester Area Interfaith Climate Action (RAICA) Summit, "Words of Spirit, Ways of Action". Here's the link to her excellent video: raica.net and scroll down to her picture.

To be honest, it is hard to keep up our church engagement with climate action in a downright brutal pandemic. But the effects of greenhouse gases, liberal use of toxins and plastics, squandering the planet's natural resources, disruption of complex ecosystems, and ignoring the suffering of animals and human populations—none of these is going away.

If you care about these issues, here's what you can do:

- Lobby virtually. It's much easier and more efficient than going to Albany or Washington DC. Training is provided. You will be part of a group that

cares as much as you do and has experience. And your legislators appreciate hearing what their constituents want.

- In New York State you can make a climate impact in two current issues. The first is New York Youth Climate Leaders' Lobby Day, January 11, 2021. You do not have to be a youth to participate. Registration deadline is January 4. [Bit.ly/fight4ourfuture](https://bit.ly/fight4ourfuture).

- The second is working with NYRenews for the Climate and Community Investment Act (CCIA) which would fund the already passed legislation Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, fighting for climate, jobs, and justice recovery. Send an email to John Keevert, jkeev@frontiernet.net, to sign up.

- You can follow the path a bill in New York State takes to become law. Go to Bills & Laws | NY Senate (nysenate.gov). You can put "climate" in the title box and see what comes up. In January pending bills are given numbers for identification; you can find the number assignments there.

- On a federal level you can join others from Citizens Climate Lobby calling your elected officials. They are making a special effort to achieve increased bipartisan support. They also recently started a State-Level Monthly Call Campaign, too.

- Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is coming to our region! In January 2021, the town of Brighton will be offering electricity supply from 100% renewable sources (hydro, wind, solar) at low fixed prices to their community. RG&E remains responsible for the distribution of the energy supply. Many communities in the Rochester area are also moving in this direction, including City of Rochester, Irondequoit, Penfield, Pittsford, Brockport and Canandaigua. Stay tuned.

- And finally, The Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee/Finger Lakes Region, formerly known as Rochester People's Climate Coalition, encourages local communities to Color Your Community Green, which might provide you with a way to work with your neighbors on local efforts to combat climate change. And if your town doesn't have that program you could help get one going. The Accelerator uses an email-like program called Slack. Contact ecojustice@uuroc.org if you'd like to join Slack and then go to the channel "all-calls-to-action." You will be amazed at all that's going on and will probably find something of particular significance to you. ❖

Finance News & Notes

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

So here we are, bidding a (perhaps not so fond) farewell to 2020, and welcoming a new year. As Finance Chair, I find myself sitting with a deep sense of gratitude about so many things:

- Halfway through our fiscal year, we are “in the black” by a good margin... thanks to our members and friends who have pledged and continue to pay pledges regularly

- We were able to provide a meaningful bonus for staff members in this difficult year, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our congregation members!

- Although I serve as Chair of the Finance Committee, the real “work” is done by the members of our team: Dick Shroyer (as Treasurer, he keeps all the bills paid and the accounts in order); Bill Jones (as our Collector, he makes sure that funds are deposited promptly and accounted for appropriately); and Beth Ares (as Payroll and Benefits Coordinator, she ensures that our employees are paid on time and accurately, and that we are complying with labor and taxation law). The church could not function smoothly without these dedicated volunteers!

- Katherine Flynn and Paula Marchese, who are hard at work planning an alternative to the traditional Service Auction (see the Auction Amnesty article in this issue, and don't miss out on the fun!).

- A 2021 Stewardship team, headed by Jim and Kathi Milch and Brian Mumey, who are gearing up for this spring's stewardship drive with some wonderful ideas!

- Our great minister, Rev. Lane Campbell, who is involved, interested, and supportive of the work of the Finance Committee.

As Church Finance Committee Chairs go, I'm among the very luckiest. Thank you all for so many blessings to count!

Ann Rhody, Finance Committee Chair

finance@uuroc.org ❖

Homeless Heartbeats

Submitted by Lois Baum

Homeless communities continue to struggle during the pandemic. Shelters have minimized to meet the virus' distancing requirements. Funded by the federal CARES Act, most houseless folks have now been placed in vacant hotels, where social workers can help get them the care they need.

Due to the coronavirus, most shelters can no longer have volunteers to sort and distribute donations. Some caring donors, unaware of this change, drop off clothing, etc, which only causes frustration as there is no one to oversee distribution. If you'd like to donate clothing and housewares, consider packing them in a box and setting that aside until shelters resume donations, or see this list of area shelters, with links to their "wish lists".

- Bethany House: bethanyhouserocny.org
- St. Joe's House of Hospitality: saintjoeshouse.org/blog/donate
- House of Mercy: houseofmercyrochester.org/want-to-help
- Person-Centered Housing Options: pcho.org
- REACH: reachadvocacy.org/donations

MEALS: Volunteers provide nightly meals in these hotels. Individuals drop off a dish (that serves 15) at the hotel entrance with a hotel guest/resident who takes it in. However, if you do wish to serve you may. (Note: Group meal planning requires a commitment not easily met these days, as most are quarantining. Contact Carole Hoffman about group meals.) Individuals willing to provide one dish, 1-2 times a month, please note:

- Inform Coordinator, Michael Gill (mpgillny@gmail.com), what dish you will provide. He will post that on his Facebook page list per day (please join FB: "Homes 4 the Homeless").

- Any Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, OR Thursday
- 5:15pm drop off dish (*no later than 6pm*)

Michael Gill states that the hotel address is on a need-to-know-basis only, to protect the privacy of the homeless folks living there. If you'd like to help, please contact Michael at: mpgillny@gmail.com, or Lois Baum: kissapawdaily@gmail.com. Many thanks!

Lois Baum, Leader

Homeless Heartbeats SJC ❖

FIAC Update

Submitted by Joy Leccese

Our First Universalist Faith In Action Council is happy to report that for the most part, our Social Justice Circles are staying active and meeting needs all over town and beyond.

School #7 folks are unable to work with children because of school closings, and volunteers for the Meals for Homeless Persons are unable to serve in the same way due to COVID-19 issues. However, they are pivoting, tweaking, amending, and otherwise making every effort to serve the needs of so many despite the challenges.

Our teams are collaborating with one another to feed the hungry, warm the cold nights, and help migrant workers in all kinds of ways. Blankets have gone to those providing medical help when needed during protests in the downtown area.

If you have time on your hands and would like to know more details about how you can use it to help others through the cold winter months, contact Joy Leccese at FIAC@uuroc.org. You can do a short stint, a one-time act of kindness, or sign on for a longer stretch. Any amount of compassion and loving kindness is enthusiastically accepted with gratitude and joy!

Best wishes to all for a peaceful and healthy New Year. Thank you to everyone who is helping us to live out our values by showing up for one another, week in and week out. You all rock! (UUROC!) ❖

Animal Ministry

Submitted by Lois Baum

When COVID-19 emerged in March of 2020, greatly affecting the economy, it became crystal clear that I must prioritize causes I care most about and support them more now than ever. At the top of my list are animals, and related nonprofits and businesses. In our area are two animal sanctuaries, several all vegan businesses, and many health professionals who promote a vegan diet. For the animals, for climate change, and for your health, please join me in supporting the following:

- Asha's Farm Sanctuary, Newfane NY
ashasfarmsanctuary.org
- Mockingbird Farm Sanctuary, Byron NY
mockingbirdfarmny.com
- Red Fern Restaurant (Park/Oxford)
redfernrochester.com
- Natural Oasis Restaurant (Monroe/Alexander)
naturaloasisny.com
- New Ethic Pizza (Titus Mall-DMV, Irondequoit)
newethicpizza.com
- Misfit Doughnuts and Treats (Gregory Street)
misfitdoughnuts.org
- Cinema Theater (Clinton/Goodman)
cinemarochester.com
- Rochester Area Vegan Society (RAVS)
rochesterveg.org
- Rochester Lifestyle Medicine Institute (RLMI)
rochesterlifestylemedicine.com

Ways to support the above include direct donations, buy their products, curbside take-out, thank an essential worker by buying gift certificates from any of the above, become a member, take Zoom classes for your health (RLMI) and once it is safe, plan a visit to any of them!

Peace begins on your plate. With every bite, a vegan diet is the most effective action you can take. If you need proof, ask any of the veg-friendly doctors listed on the RAVS website! In the meantime, here's something fun to do: make "vegan scrambled eggs" (or "vegan french toast")! Simply buy a bottle of "JUST EGG" found in the cooler section (Wegmans Nature's Market), a mung-based product, in a yellow bottle with black lettering. Prepare ingredients you normally add to scrambled eggs (ie: mushrooms and onions), then pour in the "JUST EGG". Bon appetit! You'll want to thank me for suggesting it, but the animals thank you now.

For a peaceful planet,

Lois Baum, Leader

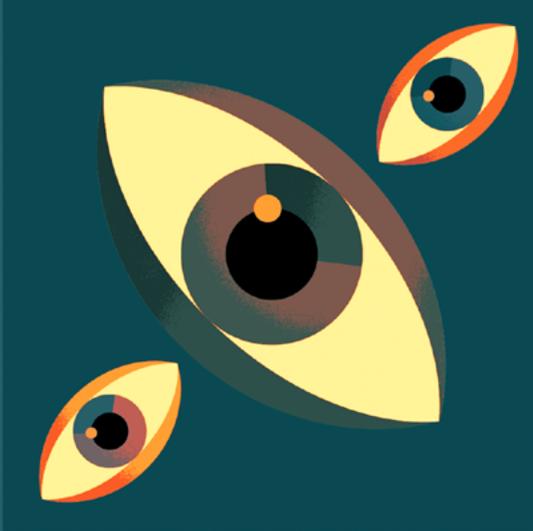
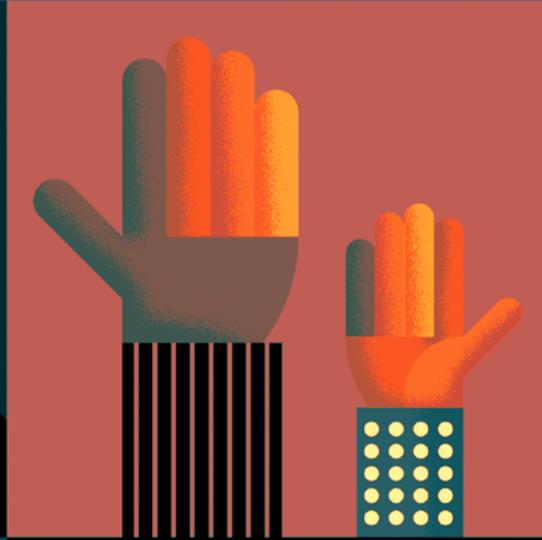
Animal Ministry SJC ❖



TAKE

WASH

WAVE



BE AWARE

BE KIND

CARE

by Paul Sizer on unitednations.talenthouse.com

PAULSIZER.COM 2020

Race in a Brave Space (RiBS)

Dialogues with Verdis L. Robinson

This series of dialogues creates a brave space to learn, grow, and act toward antiracism—all in the context of our UU principles—especially concerning the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Participants will engage in real talk about race in relationship to (1) American History, (2) the Unitarian Universalist faith, (3) local Rochester history, and (4) an inspiring meditation to lift up racial justice.

All sessions will be virtual from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Dialogue #1:

“What My History Teacher Never Taught Me” – Friday, October 16

Drawing from Mr. Robinson’s teaching African American history and decolonizing American history, we will explore hard truths by lifting up marginalized voices and experiences. We will learn what was intentionally left out of the historical narrative, why, and what to do about it.

Dialogue #2:

“Wilderness Journey” – Friday, November 13

Participants will preview the film, *Wilderness Journey: The Struggle for Black Empowerment and Racial Justice within the Unitarian Universalist Association, 1967-1970* (found on YouTube). We will reflect together on its lessons, what is currently plaguing our religious tradition, and imagine what our future as UUs could look like.

Dialogue #3:

Rochester’s History of Systemic Racism – Friday, January 22, 2021

From the fiery destruction of Frederick Douglass’ home to the uprising in July 1964 to the perpetuation of residential segregation, we will explore the systemic racism in Rochester’s history. What have we really learned? What is being done? What is OUR vision for our community?

Dialogue #4:

Enduring the Long Night: A Meditation – Friday, March 19, 2021

Mr. Robinson will share an interpretation of Psalm 30:5 “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.” What does it take for the joy to come? We will create a collective meditation on enduring the long night of racism to get to that glorious morning together.



Verdis Robinson’s guest leadership is being sponsored by the FIRE team of the First Universalist Church. Congregational members will receive Zoom links to the virtual seminars.

To make a donation, send a check to 150 S. Clinton Ave, Rochester NY 14604, or click the donate button on uuroc.org at the top or bottom of the page. Thank you!



2021 Eunice and Jim Eckberg Racial Justice Memorial Film Series

Third Sundays, 2-3:30 p.m.

This film series is named in memory of two beloved First Universalist members who shared an enduring quest for racial justice throughout their years together. Films are to be viewed on your own prior to the Zoom discussion on the date specified. Please view the film BEFORE the discussion to assure a quality experience.

October 18—A Tale of Two Schools (2017, 61 min, YouTube): An intimate and compelling documentary, narrated by Morgan Freeman, about children at risk in two struggling schools and the parents and teachers who care about them.

November 15—I Am Not Your Negro (2017, 1 hr. 33 min, Netflix, Amazon): Based on James Baldwin's unfinished book, this visual essay explores racism through the stories of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 17—The Hate You Give (2018, 2 hr.13 min, Hulu, HBO, You Tube, Amazon Prime): The uneasy balance between two worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.

February 21—12 Years a Slave (2013, 134 min, Netflix, Amazon Prime): This film "drives straight into the heart of the cruelties of oppression" (the NYTimes) and was an Academy Award Best Picture Winner.

March 21—Selma (2019, 2 hrs. 8 min, Netflix, Amazon): Chronicles the tumultuous three months in 1965 when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign and epic march from Selma to Montgomery to secure equal voting rights in the face of violent opposition. Directed by Ava DuVernay.

April 18—What Happened, Miss Simone? (2015, 1 hr. 41 min, Amazon Prime, Netflix): Classical pianist, dive-bar chanteuse, black power icon and legendary artist Nina Simone lived a life of brutal honesty and musical genius. Meet the mother, the activist, the tortured soul, and the legendary songstress.





First Universalist
Church of Rochester

150 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14604



First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

Nurture the spirit and serve the community.

First Universalist Church is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a liberal religion with historical roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Worship service begins at 10:30am on Sundays

Minister | Rev. Lane Campbell

Minister of Life Span Faith Development |
Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Brock Tjosvold

Office Manager | Emma Barry

Office hours: Tue.–Fri. 9am–4pm;
closed Monday.

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Carol Williams & Sundae Hodge

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More info is available on our website: uuroc.org

The usual deadline for all submissions to *Our Outlook* is the 15th of each month.