



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

MINISTER

Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell
minister@uuroc.org

MINISTER OF LIFE SPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Rev. Michelle Yates
edu@uuroc.org
(585) 310-2484

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Dr. Brock Tjosvold
music@uuroc.org

OFFICE MANAGER

Emma Barry
office@uuroc.org



**First Universalist
Church of Rochester**

150 South Clinton Ave
Rochester, NY 14604
585-546-2826
uuroc.org

Sunday Services | February 2023

February 5 | *The Borders and the Beast*

Borders are often created around a sense of identity for a place or a location. But what happens when borders take on a mind of their own, when they seek to exclude rather than identify or even welcome in? The walls that are created have so much to say about the people who reside on either side.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

February 12 | *The Distance From Which I Can Love You and Love Myself at the Same Time*

Prentis Hemphill writes, “Boundaries are the distance at which I can love you and me simultaneously.” On this Sunday before Valentine's Day, let's explore what it looks like to set loving boundaries for others and ourselves.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

February 19 | *Preparing to Let Boundaries Go*

As Christians in our community look ahead to Ash Wednesday, there is ever the reminder, “From dust you came and to dust you shall return.” The dissolving of boundaries is a core aspect of living a spiritually grounded life. And when we are reminded of the thinness of the veil between death and life, let's explore the boundaries that have to be released.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

February 26 | *“Time, Death, and the Space Between the Stars” - Medical Aid in Dying in New York*

Aging definitely helps to clarify the mind. I've often preached on how we live; this sermon considers how we die. I'll discuss medical aid in dying legislation in New York in the broader context of the meaning of life and death. “The wonder is that it has happened at all.”

— Rev. Dick Gilbert

❖ Services begin at 10:30am ❖

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Worship will be online and in-person at First Universalist Church. Check our website for more updated info! Please join us – Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/131764422>; Phone number: 1-646-558-8656 with Meeting ID: 131 764 422. ❖



St. Brigid's Day and the In-Between

*Message from
Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

At the beginning of February, those who observe Celtic and pagan traditions are celebrating St. Brigid's Day. Brigid is an ancient goddess of hearth, homemaking, and babies. This is meant to be the first day of spring, but I'll tell you—February 1-2, doesn't quite seem like the beginning of spring where we live. It feels like the mighty dead of winter, when the gray gets particularly grayer. A seasonal boundary set for a different time or a different climate, now turned into in-between time.

St. Brigid is important because she represents respect for women and children and respect for labor that happens within the home. Observations of her day are spent gathered in community making dolls and crosses out of straws and grasses, with women gathering to be with one another and people who do not identify as women invited in to offer respect to the feminine figures in their life. It is a time for reflection and a time in-between.

This is an in-between time for us and there are times when I get tired of saying it. But it is true. This is an in-between season in yet another liminal year. I think we are getting better at navigating the moments of unknown, the uncertainty. And yet, I am certain of these things at this time of year—the touchpoints of our years continue, the seasonal cycles continue, there is joy to be found in one another, there is space to be made for quiet reflection, women are still worthy of respect and have been adamantly denied such luxuries by the western paradigm we find ourselves in, and this hurts each one of us, no matter what our gender identity is.

In this season of boundaries, when we begin to explore what barriers have been erected, and what needs to dissolve—let's take some time at the top of this month to reflect in our homes. Let's take time to honor the feminine in our lives and especially the women who make our days better, who challenge us, and whose labor is too often not honored. Let's spend a little time in-between together.

In Faith and Courage,
Rev. Lane-Mairead ❖



Boundaries: Mission Statements and Guides in the Trenches

*Message from
Rev. Michelle Yates*

When I said yes to marry my husband, his kids were 4, 5, and 7. I was not particularly experienced with young kids. I asked my grandmother, who had been a kindergarten teacher for 23 years, what advice she had for me going into being a stepmom. She said, "Don't have a lot of rules, but enforce the ones you do have". And "Love them. Wherever they are at, whatever is going on, love them".

It can also apply very well to yourself, the rules you hold yourself to, the boundaries you set for and around yourself. "Love yourself, and love others". It sounds kind of biblical, doesn't it? The most important thing with boundaries and love I have found is that it means protecting each person, their needs and well-being.

As the kids and I and our family have grown over the past 11 years, this has been my guiding principle for setting and holding boundaries (especially in times of chaos). I'm not saying we are perfect. Our principles like this can help things stay calm, but they also need to serve us when the waters get rough.

A parenting mantra I developed more recently is that it is "my job is to keep them safe, learning, and growing". It applies to a lot, and it is helpful to have a mission statement to guide your boundaries when you are in the trenches—a litmus test for making choices when under fire.

I invite you to consider an area of your life that could use a clearer boundary. Consider the times things have gone well, and times when it has not. Based on that info and your key goals, develop a mission statement or mantra for future situations. Make it something easily remembered and write it down so that you can cling to it when you find yourself needing to set or hold a boundary.

Please let me know how it goes or if you would like someone to talk to. I have lots of examples of ones I've used throughout my life. I'm here to help.

You can do it. We can help.
Yours in the Journey,
Rev. Michelle ❖

Finance News & Notes

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

Thank you!

The special Christmas Eve offering for the Minister's Discretionary Fund brought in over \$1,000! Your generosity will enable our Minister to assist people in need within our congregation and the wider community.

The Holiday Treat Sale brought in over \$700 and some comfort and joy to bakers and buyers alike. Thanks to all who participated!

Finance Happenings.....

Our Slow Rolling Auction is in process as of this writing—we are hoping for some fun, lots of connections, and funds to support our church's mission!

The 2023 Stewardship Campaign, "Draw the Circle Wide," is being planned now. Stewardship Sunday is April 16.

We have established a new reserve fund for Ministerial sabbaticals—for short and long-term needs. The initial funding includes \$10,000 from the bequests received this past fall.

The Board is still considering the use of the remaining bequest funds, but the decision has been made to devote 2/3 of the funds to our endowment, helping to support future budgeting needs.

Please contact finance@uuroc.org with any questions or concerns. ❖

Family Ministry Discussion: *Sunday,* *February 5*

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

Programming for children and families is changing throughout mainstream religions. How do we meet the needs of families for spiritual community in this new world?

Join the Children's Faith Development Team from noon to 1:30pm in the Sanctuary and via Zoom to watch a clip from a webinar and discuss what Family Ministry might look like in our church. ❖



Leadership Opportunities

Submitted by the Nominating Committee

Are you looking for ways to be more involved in church leadership? Getting involved can help you connect with the church and its members/friends. The Nominating Committee is starting to identify candidates for open leadership positions for the 2023-2024 church year. Those positions are listed below. If you are a church member and interested in being considered as a candidate for these positions, or in learning more, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee at nomcom@uuroc.org.

Current committee members are Janus Mary Jones, Bill Elwell, Dwight Montague, Janet Rothbein and Charles Courtsal.

Board Of Trustees:

The Board of Trustees represents the congregation for setting church policies and for fiduciary responsibility with a view to sustaining the church for the long term. Two board seats will be open for three-year terms.

- Candidates must be members of the church and have been active in the congregation for at least a year.

Nominating Committee:

This committee is responsible for recruiting qualified members for certain church leadership roles as described in the bylaws. Two positions will be open for two-year terms.

- Candidates must be members of the church and have been active in the congregation for at least two years.

Committee On Ministry:

The COM is the committee that monitors how the minister, lay leaders, and congregation work together for the best possible fulfillment of the congregation's mission and covenant. One position will be open for a three-year term.

- Candidates must be members of the church for at least three years. ❖

Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by Beth Ares

Drop-in discussions are held Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:30pm via the church Zoom account, and in-person on the first Sunday of each month in the Chalice Room at 9:15am. Phil Ebersole is the contact about the in-church drop-in discussions. Contact DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org for the Zoom link, or look on uuroc.org! Sometimes discussions are based on books/articles, but you don't have to do any prep to participate. Just drop in!

Sunday, Feb. 5 | Democracy & Ignorance **In-Person**

In our democracy, should the ignorant and uninformed have an equal voice with the educated and well-informed? Presented by Phil Ebersole.

Feb. 7 | Why go to Mars?

Elon Musk's SpaceX is building giant rockets specifically to build a self-sustaining city on Mars in the next few decades. Is making human life multiplanetary a good idea? Hank Stone presents.

Feb. 14 | Watch Your Language

"The president of the American Dialect Society says that "ax" is "not a new thing; it is not a mistake. It is a feature of regular English." A conversation about our own racism—how we laud the Native American nations that are preserving their language, but label other cultures as "uneducated". Theo Munson and Beth Ares present.

Feb. 21 | The Gadfly Movement

Unitarian Universalism has a growing movement of people challenging the ways the UUA is embracing anti-racism work and some of the changes the denomination is intentionally undertaking. Explore with Rev. Lane-Mairead some of the history, context, and challenges this group is bringing to Unitarian Universalism.

Feb. 28 | Open Topic

Join us and see where the conversation goes!

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

Stewardship: Draw the Circle Wide!

Submitted by Kitty Forbush and Brian Mumey

The Stewardship Campaign for 2023 is upon us! Stewardship Sunday set for Sunday April 16. The theme for this year is **Draw the Circle Wide**. Each Sunday when we extinguish our beautiful chalice, a gift from Rev. Lane-Mairead, and the symbol of our Universalist faith, we say these words.....

"We extinguish this flame, but we keep its light in our hearts, with its message of love and justice, taking it outside these walls to the world we live in, until we are together again."

We draw the circle wide! Taking the love we feel with us all week until we can gather again in our amazing church.

You are the reason that we get to keep coming week after week to feel the love, hear the music, meditate, share the joys and sorrows, and listen to words that touch, heal, and inspire us. You are the reason that our church is so committed to social justice—understanding and dismantling racism, supporting the LGBTQIA+ community, and supporting the houseless and food-challenged people in our community.

Your financial support of this church is what helps to **Draw the Circle Wide**.

The Stewardship team is planning to have some Cottage meetings for those of you who want to meet in person to hear more about Stewardship. Stay tuned, there will be more to follow.

With love,

Kitty Forbush & Brian Mumey
Co-Chairs-Stewardship 2023 ❖

UU Theology

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

You've asked for it, and finally its time has come!

What is Unitarian Universalist Theology and what is your theology as a UU? How does this connect to our covenant and values statements?

Join us for five sessions on Zoom, Wednesdays, February 15 to March 15, 10:30am-12noon. To sign up, contact Rev. Michelle Yates at edu@uuroc.org. ❖

Small Group Ministry: Opportunities for Connection

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

Are you looking to get to know members of our church community better? Our Small Group Ministry (SGM) groups have openings and welcome you to join one that fits your schedule.

Each group is led by a trained facilitator and generally meets twice a month, whether in-person or virtually. Current groups meet every other Monday or Thursday afternoon, or Wednesday evenings.

Members covenant to share, listen and build beloved community while exploring topics both thoughtful and light-hearted to achieve greater self-awareness and spiritual growth, and to support each other in our respective life journeys. Meetings are an occasion to reflect and recharge.

For further information, find the SGM description on our website uuroc.org by clicking on the “Connect” tab, then “Small Group Ministry” or you can email Rev. Michelle at SGM@uuroc.org. ❖

Eastman at Washington Square Concerts

Concerts are held at our church at midday on Thursdays. Each concert begins at 12:15 pm and ends at approximately 12:45pm. Admission is free!

- **Feb. 9 | Something Old, Something New**

Bassoonist Blaire Koerner and pianist Zack Peterson will be returning to Eastman at Washington Square. Don't miss this much anticipated reprise!

- **Feb. 16 | Piano Extravaganza I**

Come hear the students from the studio of Professor Douglas Humpherys perform fabulous works for solo piano.

- **Feb. 23 | Piano Extravaganza II**

A second installment of masterpieces for piano performed by students from the studio of Professor Douglas Humpherys. ❖



FIRE Social Justice Circle: Upcoming fundraising

Submitted by Elizabeth Osta

The FIRE Social Justice Circle brings you this upcoming event!

Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson, president and CEO of the renowned Children's Defense Fund and CDF Action Council, will be the guest speaker at Spiritus Christi Church from 1 to 3pm on Saturday, February 25.



Through Dr. Wilson's talk, “Our Hope for Years to Come: Toward a Vision of Child Well-Being,” audience members will learn more about the nation's strongest voice for children. CDF advocates for children, particularly the most vulnerable, and, according to its website, “envisions a nation where marginalized children flourish, leaders prioritize their well-being, and communities wield the power to ensure they thrive.”

Spiritus Anti-Racism Coalition (SPARC) is sponsoring the talk as a fundraiser for the Minister Franklin D. Florence Civil Rights Heritage Park. Tickets will be \$25 for general admission (\$100 including a VIP reception); \$30 for families (\$100 with the reception); \$10 for students (\$75 with the reception). Sponsorships for families will be available. For more information, please contact SPARC members Mary Heveron-Smith, Elizabeth Osta, or Rev. Myra Brown. ❖



Sign up to help MOCHA: Ministry of Coffee Hour Activities

Submitted by Nancy Gaede

Would you be willing to help support our coffee hour some Sunday? All supplies will be provided. Here's what you'll need to do:

- Come in about a half hour early so that you can have things ready to go when the service ends.
- The coffee maker needs to be plugged in and heating up for at least 10 minutes before making coffee. Each pot of coffee takes about 5 minutes to brew. Each coffee carafe takes about 2 pots to fill.
- Set treats out on the table. They are currently prepackaged, so this is quick and easy.
- Napkins and paper plates available as needed.
- Set the coffee dispensers up on each end of the table, along with half-and-half, non-dairy creamer, powdered creamer, sugars, spoons. The contribution box needs to be set out, as well.
- Continue to check on coffee and creamers, refilling as needed, during coffee hour. Please stop making coffee and consolidate the pots when it seems like coffee hour is winding down.
- When the crowd starts to thin, let folks know that you'll be picking up so that they can grab that last cup, if they want to.
- Wash up the mugs, spoons, pots, etc., and put everything away.
- Put the contributions in an envelope, seal it, and leave it in in the MOCHA tray in the volunteer office.

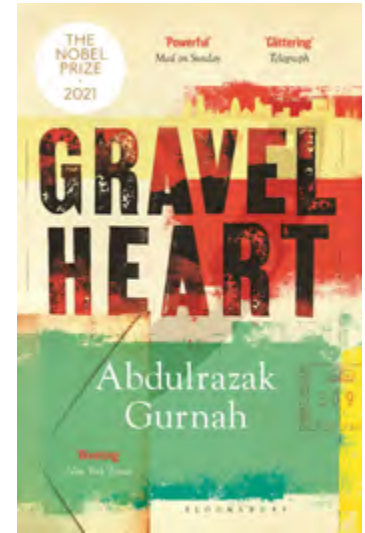
There is a signup sheet on the refreshment table. We'll send you a reminder before your date, along with more detailed instructions. We appreciate any help that you can give.

Thanks in advance! ❖

Book Group

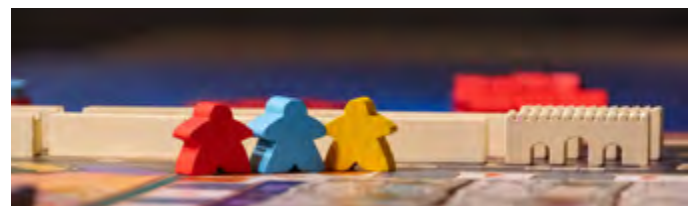
Submitted by Shirley Bond

The Book Group will meet on February 12 at noon in the Chalice Room to discuss "Gravel Heart" by Abdulrazak Gurnah. It is a book not to be missed. The author won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2021 for this fascinating read. The main character knows his father did not want him so when his beloved Uncle Amir invited him to study in London, he accepted. After a very lonely childhood and teen years in a strange city the loneliness just kept getting worse for this chap. The author shows us that there is nothing romantic about the immigrant experience.



We should be able to have a lively discussion about this novel so please consider joining us. We love piquing interest and we certainly appreciate seeing you there.

We meet on the second Sunday of most months. Any questions? Contact bookgroup@uuroc.org. ❖



Multigenerational Game and Craft Night (with food)!

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

Let's bring back the potluck, and welcome our families with young children to just come and be fed! We are inviting our youth to have "first pick" of games or crafts.

Have a game to bring or craft to share? Please sign up with Rev. Michelle at edu@uuroc.org. ❖



EcoJustice

Submitted by Sarah Singal

The EcoJustice group invited Brady Fergusson to attend the first Tuesday drop-in discussion of 2023; Brady is director of public engagement at Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee/Finger Lakes. Do you realize that the 9-county area around Monroe county has a climate action strategy, complete with 8 pages of mitigation measures with actions, co-benefits, and ways for individuals, organizations and municipalities to get involved? This strategy was formed collaboratively listening to voices from all sectors of people who comprise the population. There is a mitigation measure in there for you!

The easiest way to get started upping your game for climate action, defined as achieving net zero carbon economy by 2050, is to sign the Accelerator's Individual Climate Action Pledge. It names four areas of involvement: educating myself; collaborating with others on equitable solutions that improve our community; advocating—speaking out for systemic changes that make it easier for everyone to act; and adopting behaviors—changing what I do day-to-day to be better for the climate. You can start by addressing only one area. The most important part is to increase your awareness of what can be done and joining in where it seems best for you.

Come by our EcoJustice Bulletin Board at coffee hour and you will find a copy of the mitigation measures and brochures to explain the climate action pledge. You can get details online at climategfl.org/climate-action-strategy (The mitigation measures are on pages 45-53).

Pledge Links:

- Individual: climategfl.org/individual-pledge
- Organization: climategfl.org/organizational-pledge

Global warming is already having drastic impacts. Everyone can take some action. Don't you want your children to know what you did to make our community a better place to live and the planet a safer place for life as we know it in an uncertain future? ❖

Living Our Values, Making a Difference

Submitted by Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell



Flush Forum: 24/7 Toilet Access Event!

On Saturday, January 14, we hosted a Flush Forum in our sanctuary and via Zoom. To become the welcoming city that Rochester would like to be, it must have 24/7 restrooms available to the public. For example, Washington Square Park, with numerous rallies and public events like the annual Dachshund Parade, has no public facilities nearby. Rochester's homeless population have no place to "go", and so use local church grounds, sidewalks, and landscaping as their toilets.



A moderated panel included Sarah Singal, a member of our church; Nicholas Coulter, co-founder of *Person Centered Housing Options*; Andy Carey, a social worker at *MC Collaborative*; Julie Domaratz, mayor of Fairport, and Bryan Aptekar, communications liaison with *Safe Rest Villages* in Portland, Oregon, a city that has successfully set up 24/7 restrooms. The audience also heard from Evan Madden, a sales manager at *The Portland Loo Inc.* The panel provided vision and discussion on helping Rochester succeed in this endeavor. ❖





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-Mairead Campbell

Minister of Life Span Faith Development |
Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

Office Manager | Emma Barry

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Week at First Universalist* (digital): Emma Barry

More info is available on our website: uuroc.org

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