



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

January 2015

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Sunday Services | January 2015

January 4 | *Annual Fire Communion...*

Starting a fresh new year.
-Kitty Forbush and Tom Williams



January 11 | *To Dwell, To Seek, to Serve*

A meditation upon these three pivotal words of our covenant, and how they might guide our vocational and spiritual lives.
-Rev. Celie Katovitch



January 18 | *Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday*

This Sunday we will reflect upon Dr. King's legacy in the era of Ferguson.
-Rev. Celie Katovitch



January 25 | *Think Small*

We're usually encouraged to "think big" ...today we turn the tables, and explore one particular area where we, as churchgoers in the age of church decline, need to think small(er).
-Rev. Celie Katovitch

AND + NOW + ABIDETH + FAITH
HOPE + LOVE + THESE + THREE + BUT
THE + GREATEST + OF + THESE + IS + LOVE

Worship service begins at 10:30am Sundays





Pastor's Ponderings

Message from Rev. Celie Katovitch

There is a saying--well-worn now--that in the languages of the indigenous peoples of Alaska and northern Canada, there are at least 100 words for "snow." This is probably a linguistic over-simplification, colored by Western anthropologists' understandings as much as indigenous views. That being said, the core idea of this old chestnut is one worth thinking about. Among the 100 words, there is a word that conveys the meaning of wet snow; another the meaning of crystalline, powdery snow; another that means something like "snow that is good to drive a sled on." One source suggests there is even a word for "remembered snow."

Here in upstate New York, we sometimes adapt a similarly colorful and creative language in talking about measurements of snow (we are, after all, in lake effect country, a land where terms like "inches" and "feet" cease to be meaningful after awhile, and references to "truckloads" and "bushels" of snow begin flying even from the lips of professional meteorologists). But what the naming of the snows themselves teaches me is a lesson about the layers of truth in our experience. It is easy to breeze past a landscape we see every day, and label it generically, our eyes gazing at a world we've carved into blocks of sameness-- where snow is just "snow," a bare fact, without much further meaning. If we look a little more deeply, however, we find that everything we see is woven of finer threads, and small crystal intricacies. Everything is distinct. This is true not only of the observed world around us, but of the world within us as well, the "inner weather" of what we sense and feel. In both, smaller component pieces, and aspects of association, memory, and hope, interact.

If we take time to listen to our experience, we might find that the scenery around us breathes with new life, even when it is drawn in winter's quieter, starker palette. We might find, too, a new courage in being able to name our experiences more fully for what they are-- through being able to name, in sadness, the layer of longing; in uncertainty, the hidden crystals of possibility; in joy, the sheen of calling, of purpose.

May you listen to your life with courage and attention.

In faith, - **Celie** ❖



Walking Together:

Director of Life Span Faith Development

Submitted by Michelle Yates, DRE

In the month of January, our to do lists might be a bit shorter; the overall hustle and bustle of life a bit less. After three months of mounting holiday frenzy, we find ourselves in a month with no holidays requiring decorations, cards, costumes, gifts, or coordinating of schedules. It's a chance to truly embrace the lessons of silence and stillness this season offers us. Breathe!

For our January Faith Development theme let's embrace "Stillness." For our stillness practice, try some of the ideas below to get you started. Then share your ideas, what you did, and most importantly share your experience! What did you discover? Insights? Love it? Hate it? What was most enriching for you?

You can share your thoughts with each other directly, email them to me, on a sticky note on our Faith Development bulletin board, or reply to the posting on our church facebook page.

Some options/ideas for experiencing "stillness":

-Throughout the day, or at certain times take just a moment (30 seconds) to be still: take a slow breath, perhaps close your eyes, settle into your chair, listen to the sounds around you, and be present in the moment. Try this in the morning, before meals, when you transition from one activity to another, in the midst of a chaotic or stressful situation, or before bed.

-Take seven slow breaths.

-Breathe in or out for each letter in your first, middle and last name (ie: M-in, I-out, C-in, H-out). Visualize each letter or writing each letter as you go. You can actually write it while you breathe if you prefer.

-Consider any source of scripture that speaks to you of stillness, silence or listening: religious scripture, poetry, books, music, movies, media, etc. Here are some ideas:

- "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

- "G-d was in the stillness/ 'gentle whisper' not in the great wind, the earthquake or the fire," from I Kings 19:11

- "Violence is the language of the unheard" ML King Jr.

- "Be still. Stillness reveals the secrets of eternity" - Lao Tzu
<https://www.ted.com/read/ted-books/the-art-of-stillness>

Shalom, ~Michelle ❖

A Year of Thanks

Submitted by Ann Rhody

From the Finance Team to our wonderful congregation:
Thank you...

- For your generous contributions for **staff bonuses!** The Board was able to distribute a meaningful bonus to each of our employees, who were greatly appreciative.
- For your support of **PACT**, which enabled us to pay for exterior renovations AND establish a special fund for future building needs.
- For your support of our fall **Change Drive** and **Holiday Shoppe**, both of which raised funds that will help our church's mission!

and please...

- *Save the date for our upcoming Service Auction:*  Sunday, February 1 after the service! Donations for the auction are being accepted NOW through January 21- with forms available on pages 5-6, at church or via e-mail (pmarchese@rochester.rr.com) OR online at uuroc.org. Watch for more information in the e-Outlook and at church during the next few weeks. Don't miss out on the fun! ❖



Membership Orientation

Submitted by Nancy Gaede

If you are new to First Universalist or to Unitarian Universalism, we invite you to take part in an orientation session. **On Sunday, January 18**, we'll discuss our order of service and hymn book...the meaning behind different parts of our service and what resources you can find in our hymnal. The session will begin at **11:45am** in the Adult Lounge and last for about an hour. Child care will be available. We look forward to getting to know you better. ❖



Communications Committee

Love Reaches Out Update

Submitted by Newcomb Losh

We have picked a Sweet Spot!

A Sweet Spot is a niche, an intersection of what keeps us coming to First Universalist and the exciting or the painful places in Rochester. December's Our Outlook detailed the two Love Reaches Out (LRO) workshops we held to become aware of the signals we send about our church and generate a list of Sweet Spots. Workshop participants identified 18 potential niches.

Communication Committee members reviewed the list and chose "connect with music festivals." We will start by connecting to the 2015 Rochester International Jazz Festival with a jazz music service called Jazz Sunday at our regular service time on June 21, 2015.

Our Music Committee, chaired by Joyce Gilbert, enthusiastically agreed to take on the work of organizing Jazz Sunday.

To aid the planning of Jazz Sunday and any future Sweet Spots events, the Communication Committee will hold a follow-up LRO workshop on Sat. morning Jan 24, 2015. We will focus more deeply on the signals we send and incorporating intentional signals into what we do. Anyone who is interested in spreading the word that we are caring, welcoming, inclusive and supportive people is welcome to attend. And mark your calendars for **Jazz Sunday** on June 21, 2015.

For more information, contact Lisa Gwinner, Newcomb Losh, Connie Valk, or Nancy Gaede

Presented by the Communication Committee. ❖

Celie's Office Hours For the Spring

For the month of January, Rev. Celie's office hours at **Java's Cafe on Gibbs street** will be from 1-3 on **January 15th**.

For the remainder of the church year, Java's office hours will be from 1-3 on both the **first and third Thursdays** of each month. Drop by to chat about whatever is on your mind or just to say hello and visit a while. ❖

Drop-In Discussion, November Schedule

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. (except in July and August) in the adult lounge on the second floor of our church. 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 in the discussions.

January 4 | *This Changes Everything*

Hal Bauer will lead a discussion of climate change <<http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>> in New York, including conservation, renewable energy, the rising ocean, waterfronts, water and food, along with Naomi Klein's new book, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*.

January 11 | *Are We Diverse?*

If you saw a church member's car in our parking lot with a bumper sticker stating a belief contrary to that generally attributed to UUs, what would be your reaction? David Damico will facilitate a discussion.

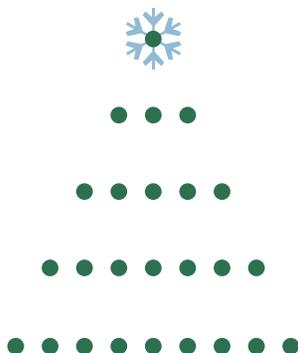
January 18 | *Free Will*

Is human behavior determined by heredity and circumstances? Or do we have a spirit that is independent of these realities? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

January 25 | *Mark Morrison-Reed*

Janet Rothbeind will review Mark Morrison-Reed's memoir, *In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby*, with emphasis on his ministry here at First Universalist Church. Those who remember Mark are invited to come and share their memories.

If you have a topic you think should be discussed or want to lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole. ❖



Library News

Submitted by Keith Stott



Justice for the Natives

Who was the first non-native to see what is now the United States? Leif Ericsson? Christopher Columbus? Amerigo Vespucci? Bartolome? The author of a self-published book, *Rodrigo's Land* - our own Steven Farrington! - relates the possibility that Rodrigo de Triana was the first to spot land on Columbus's 1492 trip." But Rodrigo had many other adventures, including partying with gypsies, befriending a determined Jewish girl (although he was supposed to be studying for the priesthood), and dealing with the enslavement of native people. There is much to contemplate in Steve's thought-provoking book. For example, Universalist philosophy seems to be entering Rodrigo's mind when he thinks, "Maybe Jesus was talking about making a Paradise for ourselves while we lived", whereas Rodrigo's unpleasant parents had created Hell for themselves. Also, Rodrigo's teacher says, "Sometimes you will need to allow yourself the chance to live with the questions for a while so that you can find your way into the answers."

The call number for *Rodrigo's Land* is **FIC FAR**. ❖

Book Group Plans



Submitted by Sarah Singal

There will be no December meeting of the book group. We will begin the 2015 New Year reading novels written by church members. Bring a copy to the meeting and the author will sign it. We love to support our homegrown authors!

For January 25 we will read Heather Menzies Jones' *Nanoman*; this is available from Amazon (you will need her middle name). We will also have a copy or two to pass around. The novel takes an irreverent look at modern American life with a great deal of humor while it also tells a good story.

For February we will read Steven Farrington's *Rodrigo's Land*. It is also available from Amazon in both paperback and ebook editions. This historical novel is set in Cuba, 1514. Intrigue and mystery... ❖

First Universalist Church Service Auction

Sunday, February 1, 2015

Donation Form

Please submit your form *on or before Wednesday, January 21!!!*

Forms can be put in envelope on bulletin board in Clara Barton Lounge.

- Donate Online!!! Go to www.uuroc.org. Click on the auction donation link and follow the easy instructions!
- Phone donations are also accepted at 585-415-5684
- e-mail your donation to: annrhody@yahoo.com *Please indicate 'service auction' in the subject line.*

Items received after the deadline might not be included in the booklet for proxy bidders.

Proxy bidding will be available for those not able to attend! Watch for proxy information in late January.

Donor Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Auction Item: _____

Approximate value: _____

Suggested opening bid: _____

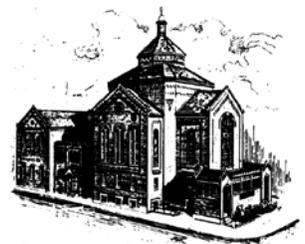
Number of items available: (eg. if a dinner, how many seats are available) _____

Date of Event: _____

(if possible include day and date of event to allow bidders advanced planning)

Description: (Please describe why this is a “not to be missed” event or item.) Item descriptions may be edited for length and sales appeal.

For questions, ideas, concerns or to help contact **Ann Rhody 585-415-5684** or annrhody@yahoo.com



**First Universalist Church
Annual Service Auction
February 1, 2015**

What's it all about?

Our annual Service Auction is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Funds raised go to support all church programs, from Music to Religious Education to Community Outreach. A vigorous and successful auction helps us fulfill our mission to “nurture the spirit and serve the community.”

Our auction is for **everyone**: Long-time members, newer friends, visitors and guests. Even if you've never participated in an auction before, we've made it very user-friendly and easy instructions are provided. We'd love to have you get in on the action!! Here's how it works:

1. Members and friends donate services or items to the auction. Some examples would be a home-made dinner, baked goods, yard work, or an outing of some kind. **YOU can donate until January 21** using the hard copy form available at church, or online via our website, uuroc.org.
2. Donations are compiled into a booklet which will be available starting January 25. You can “shop” for the items that catch your eye, and decide how much you'll spend on them. Our auction bids range from a few dollars to a hundred or more. There's something for everyone!
3. On **Auction Sunday, February 1**, we'll have the worship service and then go to the Clara Barton lounge and enjoy a low-cost lunch. You'll sign in to the auction and receive a bidder number.
4. When we get to the items you want, hold up your number to make a bid! We all enjoy the laughter, fun, food, and fellowship with others at the auction.
5. You'll receive a statement of the items you bid on successfully, and you can pay the day of the auction or in the weeks that follow. Checks can be made payable to the First Universalist Church.
6. If you cannot attend the auction on February 1, fill out the proxy form at the back of the donation booklet and drop it off at the Auction table in the lounge.

We sincerely hope you'll join us for the service Auction on February 1! Information, donation forms, donation booklet, and proxy forms are also available by contacting Paula Marchese at pmarchese@rochester.rr.com

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



DURING THE 1990's a major accomplishment of the congregation was attention to the needs of our historic building. What follows are highlights from that decade. Part 1 of 2.

Feb 1990: "The Beautiful Necessity" on the 4th is an event devoted to the relationship between mathematics and music as seen in the architecture of Claude Bragdon, designer of the church.

Aug 1990: Rev. Beth Banks begins as minister on the 1st.

Sep 1990: Scaffolding is being put in place for exterior renovations to the building.

Oct 1990: To encourage waste reduction, congregants are encouraged to bring their own mugs for the Sunday coffee hour. Even though paper cups are more expensive, Styrofoam cups will no longer be provided.

Mar 1991: Our across-the-street neighbor Xerox makes a payment of \$5,000 as compensation for sandblasting grit that clogged the church roof drains and now must be cleaned out.

Apr 1991: The carpet in the foyer is replaced. At the annual meeting on the 28th, the church is officially declared a smoke-free building.

Jun 1991: Harold Weiss retires; he has been the music director for 34 years. Most people in the congregation remember no other.

Feb 1992: A picture of Beth Banks in a hard hat makes the local paper. She wears it while the sanctuary is full of scaffolding and pews are being shifted around, to encourage patience during the months of painting.

Mar 1992: The current nursery will be divided to accommodate an archive in the back and a high-school-age classroom in the front. The nursery will be moved to the partitioned room down the hall. The S.A.V.E.I.T. capital campaign is anxiously awaiting the final Environmental Quality Bond Act payment, and word "through the grapevine" is that the State considers us a model recipient, apparently because of superior organization of our campaign.

May 1992: Roto-Rooter, the plumbing company, says the leak in the sanctuary is not caused by a clogged drain pipe. The newly re-plastered wall will have to be torn up from the inside to see if the source of the leak can be detected from there. [Ed. note: the problem turned out to be a consequence of Bragdon's system of internal/infernal roof drains. It was with us again in 2005.]

Aug 1992: The remaining assets of the Capital Campaign are rolled over into the newly designated Harold Weiss Organ Restoration Fund. The campaign eventually brought in an astounding \$750,000.

Sep 1992: John Rex begins a 6-month assignment as intern minister. He is a student at the Starr King School for the Ministry in California.

Sep 1993: The Board hires its first-time child care provider for nursery-age children. James Douthit begins as music director.

Apr 1994: The congregation votes approval to restructure the Board and establish a new position as Board Chair.

Aug 1994: James Douthit resigns to take a position in West Virginia.

Oct 1994: The boilers are worn beyond repair. The Board votes approval to return to the use of steam for heating, to be obtained from the Rochester District Heating Cooperative. Pipes will be placed under Court Street to connect the church to the RDH boilers. Norman LeMieux begins as music director. ❖

The LUUnch BUUnch January 2015!

A new year and a familiar restaurant. All are welcome at **Napa Wood Fired Pizza** in the South Wedge on **Sunday, January 18**, at 12:30. 573 S. Clinton Ave.

Joyce Gilbert ❖

First Universalist Church

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 from the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Worship service begins at 10:30am Sundays

Minister | Celie Katovitch

Minister of Religious Education | Michelle Yates

Music Director | Bryan Holten

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Kris White

Office hours, Tuesday through Friday, 8:30am–2:45pm. Telephone 585.546.2826

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More information is available on our website: <http://uuroc.org>.