

Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

August 2012

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Our Outlook

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Inside

- Adult Education Event Pg. 2
- Universalist Convention Pg. 2
- General Assembly Recap Pg. 3
- Drop-In Schedule Pg. 3
- Board Happenings Pg. 4
- RAIHN Volunteer Training
- Auld Lang Syne Pg. 5
- House Report Pg. 7

Sunday Summer Services | August 2012

August 5 | *Beloved Conversations*

Unitarian Universalists are extremely dedicated to social justice and equality for all people. But are we the most effective agents for change? We will discuss how privilege may be getting in our way.

— Peter House



August 12 | *Intentions Rarely Equal Results*

It has been said that the road to Hell is paved with good intentions. Some self-help gurus teach that intentions always equal results. I will debunk both of these assertions.

— Peter House



August 19 | *Whatever Became of American Civil Religion?*

As the national election draws closer, and as rhetoric about religion likely ramps up, let's explore what the Founders intended.

-- Rev. Martha Munson



August 26 | *Shifting from Consumers to Citizens*

We are living in tough economic times and it does not seem that it will ever be 1999 again. Is this something to mourn or celebrate? We will celebrate the upside of a down economy.

— Peter House

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



More than a Hymn Sandwich

Submitted by Rev. Martha Munson

On Saturday morning, August 18th from 9:15 until noon, there will be an adult education event about crafting meaningful and coherent services. Curious about candles? Wondering about Joys and Sorrows? Why do we take an Offering? How are Opening Words different from Closing Words? If you're curious about what makes a "service" different from other events you might experience, this workshop is for you. If you're thinking

that you'd like to deliver a sermon sometime, or to apply to be a Worship Associate, this workshop is for you. Only your interest/curiosity is required for attendance. (No commitment!) Facilitated by the minister and Worship Associates. Signups are required. On the bulletin board outside the office, by Sunday August 12th, or, by the same date to the minister by e-mail at minister@uuroc.org. ❖

Caring: for Ourselves, for Each Other and for Our World. Many Aspects of Ministry in the Early 21st Century

All UUs in New York and adjoining states are invited to attend the 184th Annual Meeting of the New York State Convention of Universalists to explore ministry's many forms and how they impact both congregations and individual UUs in our time.

Hosting: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of
Saratoga Springs, NY
Dates: October 12 & 13, 2012

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The Rev. Dr. Lee Barker, President
Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago, IL

In their modern center-city facilities, Meadville Lombard's faculty and staff are developing a new model of theological education. Lee Barker describes this model, contemporary seminarians and their professional intents, and the implications of all this for Unitarian Universalism.

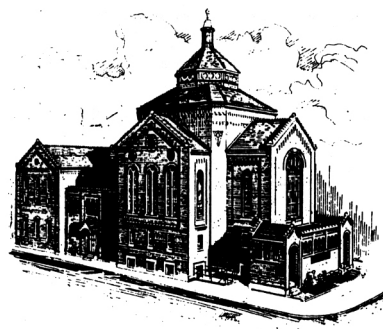
Members of the Saratoga Springs congregation are organizing a special guided tour of their charming and historic city for October 12. More details will be available from co-chairs Susan Bender and Aaron Broadwell in mid-July.

All congregations in the two districts will receive registration information in August; the packets for *member congregations* will include delegate details.

Special notice!!

2012 marks the 150th anniversary of the NYSCU's chartering under the laws of the State of New York. What a grand occasion for a celebratory cake!

Please contact NYSCU president Joyce Gilbert (JTGilbert@frontiernet.net) with questions. ❖





General Assembly Recap

Submitted by Michael Scott

The 51st annual General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association was held June 20–24 in Phoenix, AZ. The final count shows 3714 registrants, including 1723 delegates representing 530 of the UUA's 1000+ congregations. Our own Connie Valk was among those in attendance.

Unlike past GAs, the meeting in Phoenix was focused almost exclusively on issues of social justice, and of immigrant rights in particular. Under bylaw changes adopted in 2011, the business agenda was stripped to the bare essentials to make room for additional workshops, theme speakers, and direct action.

Though she had been to parts of the GAs in Rochester in 1986 and 1998, Connie describes this as her first “full time” General Assembly. The highlight for her, she says, was a candlelight vigil held at the infamous “tent city” where Sheriff Joseph Arpaio has imprisoned more than 2000 undocumented immigrants. Following a day of temperatures well over 100 degrees in the shade, some 2,400 demonstrators—UUs and allies—gathered the night of June 23 to sing, to pray, and to call for justice and humane treatment for all those entangled in the web of US immigration enforcement.

In setting the agenda for GA, the Planning Committee devoted considerable attention to the “Doctrine of Discovery,” a series of 15th and 16th Century Christian edicts that have shaped 500 years of international policy in Europe and the United States. Briefly put, the Doctrine of Discovery justified (and in many cases continues to justify) the “claiming” by Christian nations of lands and resources help by non-Christian peoples.

Many workshops addressed the topic and, at the request of partner groups working for immigration reform, the UUA Board placed a “responsive resolution” on the Assembly’s business agenda. Passed overwhelmingly, the resolution repudiates the Doctrine on religious grounds and calls on the government of the United States to fully implement the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In other business, the Assembly selected the next issue for the UUA’s four-year “Study/Action” process. (New topics are chosen every other year. We are currently halfway through the process on the current issue: Immigration as a Moral Issue.) In keeping with historic UU positions and in recognition of its continuing (and recently increasing) importance in modern society, the issue for 2012–2016 will be Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling. Look for more coverage of this issue in a future column.

Video of most of the major events from GA—workshops, worship, lectures—is available for viewing on-line. Visit uua.org/ga for these and many more resources. ❖

Drop-In Discussion, August Schedule

Submitted by David Damico

Summer Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday after the service at 11:15 a.m. in the adult lounge on the second floor of our church. You don’t have to read anything or do any advance preparation to participate. Just drop in. People of all viewpoints are welcome.

August 5 | *Doctrine of Discovery*

The UUA, at the 2012 General Assembly, repudiated the *Doctrine of Discovery* -- dating from the 15th century, justifying white Christian Europeans to claim lands of non-Christian people. We will discuss this Doctrine as it pertains to the present.” For more information, go to <http://tinyurl.com/cn9zkau>. Facilitated by Connie Valk.

August 12 | *HSP: The Highly Sensitive Person*

August 19 | *Sermon Discussion*

August 26 | *Sermon Discussion* ❖



Board Happenings

Submitted by Shirley Bond

What a wonderful board meeting we had on July 9th! We met at the 'House of Joy'. Everyone brought a dish to pass and after a delicious dessert of strawberry, rhubarb, and blueberry pie we got down to business only 20 minutes behind schedule.

After an extremely short discussion, John Wellin was elected Board Chair; Joy Leccese, Moderator; Shirley Bond, Vice Moderator; and Michael Scott Clerk. All positions ran unopposed.

The board signed a covenant whereby we pledged to be nice. Nice matters. We also pledged to support each other and to be present and accountable when possible.

Ann Rhody had made a suggestion that we increase the bookkeepers hourly rate from \$20 dollars to \$25 dollars an hour. The board approved. The Finance Committee recommended that we change our bank from Bank of America to Canandaigua National Bank. This change was approved by the board. As you all probably know Lauretta Young is our new treasurer as noted in the official minutes of our society.

John Wellin announced that the transition team for the interim period has been chosen. I am sure we will hear more about that in the near future. The transition team replaces the Committee on Ministry.

A great deal of time was spent discussing the Sanctuary Restoration. So many decisions to be made. A special Board meeting has been organized for Sunday July 22nd to give us an update on progress. Howard, Michael and Mike are on top of the plans and thank goodness communication has been forthcoming. By the time you read this more information will be known.

So that is all for now folks, have a great rest of your summer and I almost forgot: Next Board meeting is Monday August 27th. No meeting in September is planned so next meeting will be the first Monday in October. All are welcome. ❖

Michaela, on RAIHN

"I didn't know there were angels in the world. They treated us like family."

During the last week of June, First Universalist, supported by St. Mary's, hosted 5 families in need of housing, including one family new to RAIHN. The family arrived mid-week with some trepidation, not knowing what to expect. They were warmly greeted by friendly volunteers, were shown their own room and were given a tour of the building before sitting down to a delicious hot meal with the other guests. The family quickly realized that this is not a "shelter." Rather it is a safe and supportive place for families while they work toward returning to sustainable independence. As they were leaving on Sunday to go to the next host congregation, the mother gave us a big hug and said, "This has been wonderful! As soon as we get settled again, I would like to come back here as a volunteer!"

You can join her as a volunteer. Here's how –

Volunteer Trainings will take place from 6:30–8:30pm on Wednesday, August 15th at Irondequoit United Church of Christ on Titus Avenue and from

6:30–8:30pm on Wednesday, October 3rd at Greece Baptist Church on Long Pond Road. Training sessions orient



volunteers to the philosophy of the RAIHN program and provide skills in building appropriate relationships. Ample time is provided for questions and discussion. These sessions are valuable not only for folks new to RAIHN but also for seasoned volunteers. All are welcome!

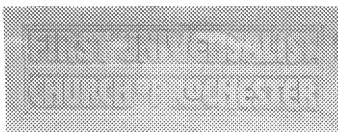
Next Host Week at First Universalist:

October 28th – November 4th. Attend a training session in August or October so that you'll be ready to volunteer for this Host Week. We will have 85 volunteer slots to fill, so please try to set aside some time for RAIHN during our Fall Host Week.

Questions? Please see Marti Eggers or Sarah Singal, or ask any one of the folks in the congregation who volunteer for RAIHN! ❖

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



JOHAN R. B. Szala was born on September 30, 1935, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and died on January 1, 2008, in Plymouth, New Hampshire. He was a Polish Catholic by heritage and had been a Carmelite monk and a teacher before being called in October 1974 to this church, his first pastorate and the congregation's fourteenth minister. It was a personal calamity for him when his newly married wife refused to move with him to Rochester. Rev. Szala came here during a time of uncertainty about the future of the congregation after its failure, following a four-year search, to find a buyer for its Claude Bradgon building, and the devastating financial blow in consequence of this failure to a number of parishioners. In addition, a number of divisive issues arose, along with building crises including a major leak in the roof, which led to the removal of the Hope tapestry

from the sanctuary wall and its storage in an unused Religious Education room—and to some, the removal of hope itself. One year Rev. Szala led an informative interfaith series one including a speaker from the LDS (Mormon) community, a visit to an evening service at the local Polish Catholic church, and a wonderful all-day excursion to The Abbey of the Genesee, a Trappist monastery in Piffard, Livingston County, where the resident monks make bread and other food products. Rev. Szala also once escorted a group of members on a weekend excursion to the headquarters of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston, MA. He was interested in the culture of flags and was a well known vexillologist. He left this congregation in August of 1978 to take the pastorate of First Church in Salem, Unitarian, in Salem, MA. ❖

House Report Highlights - August 2012

Submitted by Alain Perregaux

Sanctuary Renovation

At the time of this writing on July 8, 2012, the sanctuary renovation project is under a dark cloud of uncertainty. We knew all along that our schedule was tight and that our target date of late September was ambitious but we were led to believe that everything remained in the realm of realistic expectations, until the architect presented us with a new schedule that shows the renovation work begin on July 30 and extend until November. The Renovation Committee went into emergency mode on July 5 and settled on two initial trains of thoughts.

Approach 1. Push things along as hard as possible and remove all obstacles that would prevent us from finishing the work before November 2012. The downside it that it would interfere badly with our church life and potentially inflict pain and damage to the congregation.

Approach 2. Postpone the whole project until the summer of 2013. The two most obvious consequences are increased costs and a black eye for having to push the organ restoration by another year.

There are obviously a number of in-between solutions where a bit of the work in done this summer and the rest is postponed until next year.

The Board and Rev. Munson met Monday 7/9 and will develop their recommendations.

In the meantime the bidding process will proceed. The bids from various contractors are due on July 19. Under normal circumstances. We should be able to select a general contractor by July 20. With the information that comes with the bids, we will have a much better sense of the costs and time frame that we will have to deal with.

Much will happen between the time of this writing and the time this piece of prose reaches its readers. It may look quit obsolete by August. Alain Perregaux ❖



First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue

Rochester, NY 14604

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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.

Summer worship services and Religious Education classes begin at 10:00am Sundays

Summer Minister | Peter House

Director of Religious Education | Rev. Lori Staubitz

Music Director | Josiah Armes

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Kris McCarty White

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

Board Of Trustees

John Wellin (Chair), Howard Spindler (Moderator), Shirley Bond (Vice Moderator), Paul Brew (Clerk), Chris DeGolyer, John Akers, Margaret Gallagher, Michael Van Arsdale, Joy Leccese.

Editor, Weekly *eOutlook*: Kris McCarty-White; Editor, Monthly paper *Outlook*, David Damico

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