

## 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*

---

### **Board Of Trustees 2014–2015**

Ed Deller (President), Joy Leccese (Vice-President), Karen Ruganis (Clerk), Michael VanArsdale, Janet Rothbeind, Kitty Forbush, Tim Mullins, Minister, ex-officio

Editor, Weekly *eOutlook*: Kris White; Monthly paper *Our Outlook*, David Damico/Marcy Klein  
More information is available on our website: <http://uuroc.org>.



# Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

February 2015

**Minister**

Rev. Celie Katovitch  
minister@uuroc.org

**Director of Music**

Bryan Holten  
music@uuroc.org

**Director of Life Span  
Faith Development**

Michelle Yates  
edu@uuroc.org

**Office Administrator**

Kris White  
585.546.2826  
office@uuroc.org

**Our Outlook**

**Newsletter Editors**

David Damico/Marcy Klein  
uurocnews@gmail.com

**First Universalist Church**

150 South Clinton Avenue  
(corner of Court St.)  
Rochester, NY 14604

**Visit us online** [www.uuroc.org](http://www.uuroc.org)

**Inside**

Pastor's Ponderings	Pg. 2
Walking Together, DRE	Pg. 2
Membership Orientation	Pg. 3
Social Justice Committee	Pg. 3
District Assembly, 2015	Pg. 3
Music Sunday	Pg. 4
RAIHN: The Gift	Pg. 5
Finance: <i>It's About You</i>	Pg. 4
Auld Lang Syne	Pg. 6
Drop-In Discussions	Pg. 7
House News	Pg. 7

## Sunday Services | February 2015

**February 1 | *Joining AAA***

A wise acquaintance once summed up her philosophy for leading a good life when the going gets rough. "You just join AAA," she said. The rest of the story, this Sunday.  
-Rev. Celie Katovitch



**February 8 | *To Fall in Love with the World***

Across the centuries, we Unitarian Universalists have striven to change the world for the better. Can we do this while simultaneously loving the world as it is?  
-Rev. Celie Katovitch



**February 15 | *To Seek a Blessed Life***

The approaching season of Lent is associated with a call to center down, and to pray. What's a good UU to make of the practice of prayer? Today begins a sermon series inspired by that question.  
-Rev. Celie Katovitch



**February 22 | *Help!***

UUs and prayer, part II.  
-Rev. Celie Katovitch

AND + NOW + ABIDE TH + 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

The other day, walking through a plaza, I looked up and saw ahead of me a large sign propped up outside the door to one of the shops. The words on the sign were painted in red block letters, and they stopped me in my tracks. "Redemption Center."

It took a second to register their meaning. The shop was a place where recycled cans and bottles could be returned-- "redeemed" for quarters and nickels. But I kept studying the words. How easy it all seemed. If only redemption were always so accessible, and its whereabouts so clearly labeled!

I wonder how many of us are looking for a "redemption center": a place we can bring everything about ourselves that is used-up or battered, empty or flawed, like so many old cans-- to be free of them, and to extract from them some value, some goodness. But for whatever reason, we have a tendency to decide that redemption is out of reach.

What would we have to do to be worthy of its liberation? Often, tiny mistakes loom so large in our own minds that we decide we would have to do something Nobel Peace Prize-worthy to make up for them.

There is a story about Alfred Nobel, the founder of that prize. Nobel spent nearly all of his life in the business of arms manufacturing, patenting chemicals used in explosives. His most notable achievement was inventing dynamite. It was only a few years before his death that, looking hard at the work that had constituted nearly all of his life, he had a change of heart, and devoted himself to ensuring that the legacy he left would be one of peace. The Nobel prizes were established in his will. It was for this posthumous act that he has been remembered, by a world that has long since forgotten his vocation.

It is never too late. Goodness can always emerge from bad. No error or wrong is the final summation of who we are. May we know that redemption awaits us everywhere-- in honest conversations, in small acts of kindness, in the care of community: these things that remind us that we are of worth, even when we feel broken, even when we stumble.

In faith, – Celie ❖



## Walking Together:

Director of Life Span Faith Development

Submitted by Michelle Yates, DRE

### *Faithful-*

In a month bedazzled with hearts, cupids and glitter, considering "love" as our faith development theme might seem forced or superficial. So, for the month of February, let us consider what it means to be "Faithful."

The dictionary defines "faithful" as: 1. Deserving trust : keeping your promises or doing what you are supposed to do, 2. Being loyal: steadfast in affection or allegiance, 3. Conscientious: firm in adherence to promises or in observance of duty, 4. Binding: given with strong assurance, or 5. True to the facts, standard, or original.

Many UU congregations offer a Coming of Age Program to their youth before they graduate from high school. A key part of this program is inviting the teens to write their own credo or belief statement; to spend the time to considering what they believe.

In a faith tradition that offers space to grow and evolve in our beliefs throughout our lives, it seems fitting that each of us take time now and then to really give our personal list of principles, values and beliefs a "once over." This month's Cozy Supper will be addressing this through the topic "Build Your Own Principle" on Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> 5:30-7:30pm. Food and fellowship will be served.

Let us consider what it means to be Faithful, individually and together:

- **Who do you love?** Who or what do you value, hold dear, or consider sacred?
- **How do you love?** How do your values, beliefs, and promises affect how you express love and caring?
- **For better or worse?** How do you show love, keep promises and remain faithful when the going gets tough?
- **I swear...** What promises or vows have you made, to yourself or to others, as to how you will live your life?
- **Standing on the Side of Love-** How can we show we are faithful in relation to African American History Month, current issues in our world and community, and in a midst of our daily lives?

*Keep the conversation going...* As you find or think of songs, books, TED talks, etc. that relate to this topic let me know! I'll post it on our easel in the CB lounge, on our Facebook page, or in next month's newsletter.

Yours in Faith, Michelle ❖



## Michelle Yates Becomes Permanent Director of Lifespan Faith Development

We are happy to announce that Michelle Yates, formerly our Acting Director of Lifespan Faith Development, has now become our official Director of Lifespan Faith Development! Michelle switched from an acting to a permanent basis in January. Thank you, Michelle, for your wonderful work, and again-- welcome!! ❖

## Path to Membership

*Submitted by Nancy Gaede and Membership*

Have you been coming to First Universalist for a while? Do you feel like you've found a spiritual home here among us? Are you considering becoming a member? There are two ways to make this happen.

- No. 1: contact Reverend Celie and speak with her about becoming a member.
- No. 2: take part in our *Path to Membership* series.

The series will continue in March, dates to be determined, exploring social justice and church governance. Childcare will be available for both sessions.

**On Saturday, April 11, we will hold our "Path" class in the Clara Barton lounge from 9:30-12:30.**

Following a delicious brunch, we will delve more deeply into faith development, stewardship, and the meaning of membership. If you plan to attend and need childcare, please contact Nancy Gaede at [flower50@frontiernet.net](mailto:flower50@frontiernet.net) by April 5 so that arrangements can be made.

Those who have decided to formally join our membership will be welcomed during the service on Sunday, April 12. ❖

## Social Justice Committee

*Submitted by Eric Van Dusen*

The Social Justice Committee would like to thank all those who took the time to fill out our recent survey form. The purpose of this survey was to identify individuals interested in different social justice issues, as well as help the Social Justice Committee develop a strategic focus that will guide our priorities going forward. A total of 45 surveys were received – a great response rate! The issues that received the most interest were Homelessness, Books and Films for Social Justice Causes, and Poverty & Economic Inequality. The Social Justice Committee will be reaching out to those individuals who expressed interest in these areas to see if they would like to form subcommittees. The purpose of each subcommittee will be to develop and implement a plan of action. Creating active subcommittees, passionate about the issues they are focused on, gives us the opportunity to deepen our commitment to justice and expand our connection to the community. Based on the level of interest expressed on the surveys we received, that commitment and connection has all the promise of making 2015 a very meaningful year. ❖

## District Assembly, 2015 Registration now open.

Theme this year is 'Broad Wings Deep Roots' and will be held in Niagara Falls **March 27-28**. If you are interested in being a delegate from First Universalist please contact Tom Williams. ❖





## Music Sunday

Submitted by Bryan Holten

Music Sunday is March 15. I am very excited about the program that is taking shape. At the American Guild of Organists Convention this past summer of 2014, I met a composer named Mark Miller, and attended a gospel worship service that he coordinated and led from the piano and organ. As I listened to this music, I remember thinking how great of a fit it would be at Clinton & Court. You might, then, think of this year's Music Sunday as a "spin-off" on the gospel worship theme, with what I hope will be a nice dose of UU "flavor." Our program in March will include quite a few works inspired by African-American traditions, including André Thomas' stirring introit on "Keep Your Lamps," Paul Halley's foot-tapping anthem "Sound Over All Waters," and Miller's rousing "Toccata on 'Lift Every Voice'" as an organ postlude. Mark your calendars now! ❖



## New Year, New Songs:

In response to our charge to honor both the flow of our order of service and the evolving spiritual needs of our members, we will be introducing two or three new "hymns of contemplation" on Sundays. We hope to learn these together as a congregation over the coming weeks, so that soon there will be several contemplative hymns that we all "know by heart" (in addition to our beloved standard, "Spirit of Life," which we will continue to sing regularly). We welcome your feedback during this trial period, and thank you for trying this with us!

Sincerely,  
Your worship staff  
(Celie, Bryan & Michelle) ❖



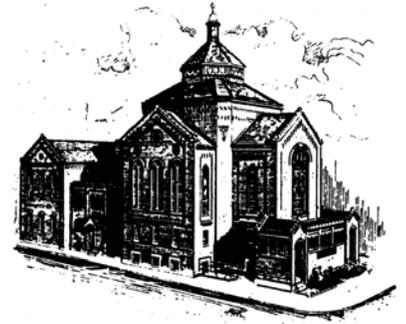
## Eastman at Washington Square Thursday Lunchtime Concerts

### Winter 2015

12:15 p.m.–12:45 p.m.

Free admission.

Brown Bag lunches are welcome.



#### February 5 | *Piano Extravaganza I*

Don't miss hearing the students of ESM Professor Barry Snyder in recital!

#### February 12 | *Piano Extravaganza II*

Enjoy the second concert featuring students of Barry Snyder!

#### February 19 | *Cello Day*

Join us for a recital of music for cello and piano duo performed by Jack Peterson, cello, and Chiao-Wen Cheng, piano.

#### February 26 | *Fresh Winds*

Hear some of Eastman's finest freshmen wind players (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn) in a dazzling display of wood wind quintet repertoire, coached by Eastman professor Anne Harrow.

#### March 5 | *Dance Music from Long Ago and Far Away*

Enjoy this recital with the Nonesuch Early Music Ensemble: John Heyer, hurdy gurdy, hammered dulcimer and recorders; Mitzie Collins hammered dulcimer; Roxanne Ziegler, celtic harp.

#### March 12 | *Piano Classics*

ECMS faculty Olga Krayterman performs piano music of Bach, Liszt and Chopin.

**Concerts continue to the end of May!** ❖



# RAIHN: *The Gift*

*Submitted by Marti Eggers*



It was the week before Christmas. It was her 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, and she and her family were homeless. But earlier that day another homeless family, a couple with two small children who were RAIHN\* guests at First Universalist that week, moved out of the church and into their own place. Now there was a room for the Birthday Girl, her parents and her siblings, and they moved into First Universalist that very afternoon. They were extremely grateful to be together and to be safe and warm again.

It was too late to put on a birthday party that day, but a few days later dinner volunteers prepared a cake and some special birthday cupcakes. There were candles and birthday napkins. A few little gifts also appeared – a journal, a sticker and crafts book, a Jamaican piggy bank – all to the surprise and delight of the Birthday Girl. Her parents were overcome with appreciation, and the volunteers were happy to have been able to serve.

Remember the young family that moved into their own place earlier in the week? They were overcome with joy the following day when they received a Christmas tree along with some ornaments and lights from a Secret Santa. (Remember the tree that used to adorn the front of the sanctuary at First Universalist? Shhhh!)

Gifts abound in this true story. Which do you think is the greatest gift, a family finding safe shelter, the birthday party, the little birthday gifts, the pleasure the party volunteers felt, the Christmas tree and all the trimmings? Maybe it was this note from the Birthday Girl –

\*RAIHN, the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, is a consortium of 14 faith communities that host families in temporary need of housing, and 25 faith communities that provide volunteers and other support to the host congregations. First Universalist is a host congregation, supported by St. Mary's, Aldersgate United Methodist Church of Greece and the Church of Love Faith Center. Four times a year, for a week each time, volunteers from these congregations work together to provide a welcoming, safe place for the families to come home to after a day at the RAIHN Center where they get help looking for housing and, for some, new employment. We prepare and serve a hot evening meal, help with homework, offer a lap, a story and a hug, a listening ear, a word of encouragement, overnight presence, breakfast and whatever else might be needed before the families return to their jobs or to the Center for another day of hard work. ❖



## Winter in Finance- *It's about YOU!*

*Submitted by Ann Rhody*

- Our annual Service Auction is February 1! Plan to stay after the service and enjoy the fun!
- The finance team is beginning to develop the 2015-16 budget. Do you have ideas or input? Is your committee planning something special that will require a change in funding? If there is anything you'd like to let us know, please contact Ann Rhody (annrhody@yahoo.com) or any member of the finance team by the end of February.
- Don't forget to claim your contributions to church, including PACT, on your 2014 taxes!! If you need a statement, please contact Bill Jones or Ann Rhody.
- Stewardship 2015 is coming soon! Co-chairs Glenda Brayman and Howard Spindler will be asking you to make beautiful music with them as we join in support of our beloved church community. Watch for more details in February and March! ❖

# Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



**D**uring 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 2 of 2.

Mar 1995: Bonnie Viegard begins a 6-month assignment as intern minister. She is a student at the Meadville-Lombard Theological School in Chicago. After some 2½ years of renovation efforts, the organ is once again playable.

Apr 1995: Plans are underway to establish a weekly concert series during the school year, to be held at our church in cooperation with the Eastman School. It is to be called Eastman at Washington Square.

Oct 1995: As a bonus of the new concert series, the church now has free use of a Baldwin 9-foot concert grand piano! Sometimes it will travel during the week, but will always be "home" on Sunday.

Mar 1996: The Web Repair Committee decides to offer services to the Webster Avenue Family Resource Center in a church-wide effort to respond from our theology to create hope in our wider community. Meanwhile, panhandling at the church, outside and inside during services as well, has become disruptive and threatening enough that the Board has consulted with human service agencies and the police department for recommendations, which they are publicizing to the congregation.

Apr 1996: As part of the church Sesquicentennial celebration, Rev. John Buehrens, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association, preaches in our pulpit on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Sep 1996: The church now has a small but growing website. We are getting ready for the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

1997: Beth Banks leaves for a sabbatical in January and returns in July.

Jun 1998: General Assembly [GA], the annual meeting of our denomination, the Unitarian Universalist Association, is held in Rochester this month. First Universalist Church, however, is not an approved event site because it is not handicapped accessible. Nevertheless, the Covenant of UU Pagans holds a

benefit concert; UUs for a Just Economic Community hosts its annual meeting in the Clara Barton room; our minister Beth Banks takes part in a presentation on the unique urban partnership between Eastman and the church; "Eastman at Washington Square" holds a special evening dinner and GA Urban Concert; and the premier Rochester choral group Madrigalia sponsors a spaghetti dinner and concert as well. Our own Norman LeMieux serves as one of the GA accompanists.

Aug 1998: Norman LeMieux resigns as music director to continue his studies in Princeton, NJ.

Dec 1998: After a newly hired music director repeatedly declines to sign a contract, Camilla Tillerkvist, an Eastman student from Sweden, assumes the post.

May 1999: At the annual meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the congregation votes approval of a Capital Projects campaign with a target of \$400,000. Rev. Kathy Sage is voted approval as Affiliate/Community Minister. She has a full-time position at Sojourner House, a women's shelter.

Dec. 1999: Unknown to any of us, Beth Banks is leading her final Christmas Eve service in this congregation. She will take a position in California the following June. ❖

.....

## Library News

Submitted by Keith Stott



### Justice for the Natives

We might not be the church we are today if it weren't for the 1965 civil rights demonstrations in Selma and Montgomery, Alabama involving the murders of Rev. James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo – which caused Unitarians and Universalists to reverse their "words, not deeds" to "deeds, not words". In his detailed, well-researched, inspiring book, *The Selma Awakening*, our former minister Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed helps to bring us to where we are today. You will be changed forever after you read Mark's book. (Just ask Rev. Richard Gilbert. He was 29 when he attended James Reeb's memorial service.) The call number for *The Selma Awakening* is **289.173 M.** ❖

# Drop-In Discussion, February 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.

## February 1 | *Sanctuary Village*

George Payne is the founder and director of *Gandhi Earth Keepers International* based here in Rochester. For the past three months he has been actively involved with the downtown homeless encampment referred to as "Sanctuary Village." He will speak about his experiences working in Sanctuary Village and discuss the effort to pass a Homeless Bill of Rights in Monroe County. For more information about George and his work, visit <[www.gandhiearthkeepers.org](http://www.gandhiearthkeepers.org)>

## February 8 | *Are We Charlie?*

The recent killing of the staff of the satirical French magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*, raises a number of questions, including the limits of free speech and of religious toleration. Phil Ebersole will facilitate a discussion.

## February 15 | *UU Prophetic Witness*

Phil Ebersole will review and facilitate a discussion of *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness: Liberal Religion in the Public Square* by Paul Raso, which is the UUA's recommended "common read" for 2014-2015.

## February 22 | *Inside Saudi Arabia*

Janus Mary Jones will review and facilitate a discussion of *In the Land of Invisible Women* by Dr. Qanta Ahmed, a liberal British Muslim who spent two years as a physician serving women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She told of restriction, overt racism and oppression, as well as kindness, charity and humor.

If you have a topic you'd like discussed or, better still, would like to do a presentation or lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole. ❖



# House News

February 2015

Submitted by Tom Ruganis

The start of winter has been accompanied by continued quiet for the House Committee. The following are the highlights.

- In spite of what seems to be a colder start to the heating season, our steam usage is down but our consumption is still much higher than the 2010 era. The mystery continues.
- It also appears several of our thermostats are failing. Please let the House Committee know of any problems.
- A meeting was held to review the hearing loop in the sanctuary. Brighton Sound provided very useful information and good ideas were developed. Thank you Elizabeth Osta for leading this effort. More to follow.
- The project to find a replacement for the carpet cleaner is nearing completion. A used commercial model has been located and will be tested for suitability to our needs.
- The six month inspection of our LULA (Limited Use, Limited Access) elevator was completed without problems.
- You may have noticed that some plaster has been falling from high in the sanctuary. It appears to be superficial but is being closely monitored. ❖



## The LUUnch BUUnch February 2015!

**Burger Bar** at the Pittsford Plaza Wegmans.  
3195 Monroe Ave.  
12:30 on Sunday, February 15.  
Decent parking! Come one, come all.

Joyce Gilbert ❖