

Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

May 2016

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Sunday Services | May 2016

May 1 | *A Kind Word for Kindness*

On this Sunday we will also recognize our RE teachers, and celebrate our youth who are beginning new chapters.

- Celie Katovitch



May 8 | *Heroines*

On Mother's Day, we will look to the stories of some of the women who shaped our faith, in ways large and small, and the legacy they have left to us today.

- Celie Katovitch



May 15 | *The Moment of Truth*

The sermon purchased by Sarah Singal at the February auction. Sarah's topic: Truth. Can we know what is true? If so, how? What does truth mean for us, in this age when professed "certainty" too often breeds intolerance and violence?

- Celie Katovitch



May 22 | *The Universalist Home Repair Manual*

Our Universalist faith proclaims the good news that we are always whole, held as we are by unconditional love. Yet it also recognizes the parallel truth: that we are also always broken.

- Celie Katovitch



May 29 | *How Connected Are We?*

Our 7th principle speaks of "the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part." Many faith traditions proclaim some version of this idea. But how interdependent are we? Might we all be truly connected somehow? How would that feel? How then should we live?

- Rev. Peggy Meeker and Worship Associate Tom Williams

Regular service begins at 10:30am





Pastor's Perspective

Message from Rev. Celie Katovitch

In 1977, we launched the Voyager spacecraft. On it, we placed the famous "Golden Record": a phonograph with an assortment of sounds, the goal of which was to convey a sense of life on earth, in all its breadth and its wonder. In a statement accompanying the record, President Jimmy Carter wrote: "We cast this message into the cosmos ... Of the 200 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy, some – perhaps many – may have inhabited planets and space faring civilizations. If one such civilization intercepts Voyager and can understand these recorded contents, here is our message: This is a present from a small distant world, a token of our sounds, our science, our images, our music, our thoughts, and our feelings."

What a task-- to try to capture, on a single record, the essence of life and of being human! An impossible one, to be sure.

Nonetheless, the result was beautiful and thought provoking. The contents of the record includes:

Human greetings, in 55 languages.

The sounds of wind, rain, and surf; crickets chirping and dogs barking; laughter... heartbeats... a kiss.

Music, from Bach to Chuck Berry; the sounds of drums, panpipes, Navajo chant.

Images of space, the Red Sea, the Great Wall of China.

Images of snowflakes, fall leaves, spring flowers.

Photos of human faces from around the world.

Sounds or snapshots of planes, trains, automobiles... x rays and art museums... a picture of an astronaut in space.

I recently heard a song by a band named Gungor called "One Wild Life." (The title recalls a phrase from a well-known poem by Mary Oliver.) It includes the lines

"See [life] as a fight

Or as a gift.

You can call it circumstance

Or call it magic...

Is it random chemistry

Or is it poetry?"

How to describe what makes us human? How to describe the creativity, beauty, and harmonies both within us and around us in the world?

No description could be adequate. But like those who compiled the golden record, we can do our best to appreciate the mosaic of meaning in this world. In its multiplicity we catch a glimpse--here and there, if we're lucky-- of the oneness that weaves it all together: the poetry of the universe, and of our own wild and precious lives.

In faith, --Celie ❖

Understanding Homelessness In Our Downtown Neighborhood

Rev. Celie, the Homelessness Task Force, and the Board invite all members and friends of the congregation to a presentation at noon on Sunday, May 22nd, in the Sanctuary. Several local experts will speak with our congregation about the diverse factors influencing homelessness in downtown Rochester. People without a permanent home are among our closest neighbors here at Clinton and Court. We encourage all members to attend who are able; the hour may be especially helpful to those with limited prior experience with homelessness beyond RAIHN. We also hope you will treat this a safe space to bring your own questions, concerns, and wonderings. The primary goal of this hour is not to come to decisions or solutions, but simply to take one more step in learning more about this complex topic. Thank you for your attendance.

Sincerely,

--Rev. Celie, the HTE, and the First Universalist Board





Walking Together:

Director of Life Span Faith Development

Submitted by Michelle Yates, DRE

There is nothing like moving to show you how much STUFF you have, OR when you are trying to live while not settled in, how essential some items are. In my family's recent move I've learned that I have an excessive amount of books. What seemed reasonable at one time, is now a burden to be gone through and let go. I also learned, that I need my bowls, and I'd appreciate if the moving fairy would reveal to me their location so I can start my day with a bowl of cereal again.

As our church community is engaging with increasing our awareness of racial justice issues, the lessons of moving often apply when "moving" or shifting from one viewpoint to another. As we educate ourselves we may often discover beliefs we may have never considered before, that now seem burdensome or a hindrance to being a Justice Ally. We may also find that there is certain information or support that we need in order to feel comfortable or better prepared to do this important work.

Starting this month we will have the opportunity to discover and challenge our ideas about race, and find support in community as we deconstruct these complex issues in our Spring Adult Religious Education Offering (see ad in this newsletter).

For this month's Faith Development Work, I encourage you notice your beliefs, and the behaviors they influence. Ask, "Where did this belief come from?" "Who gave it to me?" "Does it make sense when I give it a closer look?" Not all beliefs are bound for the garbage, but as part of our UU value of "the free and responsible search for truth and meaning" (our 4th Principle) we are challenged to do our homework; to utilize our reason, conscience and experience to ask, "Is this who I want to be?" "Is this what I want to believe?" After all, it matters what we believe.

It Matters What We Believe

By Sophia Lyon Fahs (the great grandmother of liberal religious education)

Some beliefs are like walled gardens. They encourage exclusiveness, and the feeling of being especially privileged.

Other beliefs are expansive and lead the way into wider and deeper sympathies.

Some beliefs are like shadows, clouding children's days with fears of unknown calamities.

Other beliefs are like sunshine, blessing children with the warmth of happiness.

Some beliefs are divisive; separating saved from unsaved, friends from enemies.

Other beliefs are bonds in a world community, where sincere differences beautify the pattern.

Some beliefs are like blinders, shutting off the power to choose one's own direction.

Other beliefs are like gateways opening wide vistas for exploration.

Some beliefs weaken a person's selfhood. They blight the growth of resourcefulness.

Other beliefs nurture self-confidence and enrich the feeling of personal worth.

Some beliefs are rigid, like the body of death, impotent in a changing world.

Other beliefs are pliable, like the young sapling, ever growing with the upward thrust of life. ❖



A Heartfelt *Thank-You...*

...to all who helped make our series of Earth Week events such a great success. Special thanks to Sarah Singal for her leadership of the team; to Shirley Bond, Becky Elwell, and Marcia Weaver, for their coordination of many details relating to our two film showings; to our wonderful speakers, Sarah Scott and Eric Van Dusen; to John Akers for his musical leadership at our Service in the Park; to Melissa Davies, who oversaw publicity and scheduling; and to Connie Valk, Newcomb Losh, Lois Baum, and all who lent support in varying ways. Finally, gratitude to all who attended. May we continue to find ways to live in harmony with the Earth. ❖

News from Your Board

Submitted by Ed Deller

The First Universalist board has had a productive church year so far and we want to share some recent fruits of our labor. At the church Leadership Assembly last fall two significant actions were taken by the board: 1) to shore up our committee descriptions and 2) to create long term vision priorities to help guide our actions. Good progress has been made on both. The committee descriptions are mostly done.

Vision Priorities: At our March meeting the board approved the following long term priorities linked to our mission to “Nurture the spirit, serve the community”. These priorities are distilled from the many inputs at the Leadership Assembly and also build on the *Love Reaches Out* project from last year:

- Build visibility of 1st Universalist with diverse groups in the Rochester community.
- Build our connections to diverse groups to promote better mutual understanding
- Spread awareness of our beliefs
- Live our values in relevant ways
- Increase opportunities for spiritual/soul growth.
- Nurture new, inclusive leadership.

Next steps in this process will be to create action plans to support the priorities, building on many great activities already in progress.

Panhandler Policy: From time to time panhandlers come to the church asking for money, food, or other items. Church members and friends are sometimes confused about how best to interact with these guests. After research and discussion, the board has approved the following policy for this situation:

As a downtown church, First Universalist will from time to time be visited by people in need of food, shelter or other care. We will treat them consistent with the church’s mission to serve the community and our first UU Principle which tells us to respect the dignity of all. To that end, unless there is a safety concern, we will welcome them for food or fellowship. We will provide suggestions for nearby shelters, food pantries or other care facilities. However, members and friends are discouraged from giving money directly.

Governance and Ministry: We have started to explore the Hotchkiss book on this topic with a view towards the role of the board in a growing congregation.

As always, please feel free to ask any board member for more details about these items or other board related activities. The board minutes are available to church members and friends and can be found at the Board of Trustees section of the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge. ❖

Editor’s Note: The original article submitted by Ed was inadvertently left out in the April issue of *Our Outlook*.

St. Lawrence District Assembly: Regionalization

Submitted by Ed Deller

The St. Lawrence District (SLD) Assembly was held April 1-2 in Syracuse. A key topic for the assembly was a vote for dissolving SLD in favor of the Central East Region Group (CERG). The results were an overwhelming majority in favor of moving to the CERG structure. Nancy Gaede and Ed Deller were delegates from First Universalist and voted in favor of this position, as previously approved by the board.

The impacts of this change to our church are expected to be minor, but net positive, especially for supporting resource availability.

Another highlight from the assembly included a thought-provoking keynote from Rev. Sue Phillips regarding the importance of a collective UU identity for long term health of the faith.

Other attendees from our church included Rev. Celie, Rev. Michelle Yates, Newcomb Losh, Karl Abbott, Robert Remley and Michael Scott. ❖

Gratitude

Submitted by Rachael Baldanza

We thank you all for your help with this year’s stewardship campaign. We are certainly growing together. This community is wonderful and we all help our beloved church move forward. On behalf of the stewardship team please accept our gratitude for every commitment of support.

Peace and thanks,
Rachael, John, Ann, Paula, Karl, and Bill ❖

Curious about Community Ministry?

Submitted by Rev. Sarah Gillespie

I've been sitting in the pews with you all since September with this name tag that says "Rev. Sarah Gillespie, Community Minister." Many of you have expressed your delightful curiosity about this. And I am glad you have! Community ministry is a term our association uses to refer to ordained ministers whose work lies outside the parish or congregational setting.

My work and calling is healthcare chaplaincy. Many of you who've met me during greeting time or coffee hour know that I work as a Chaplain Resident at the University of Rochester Medical Center full time. Other community ministers serve in social justice settings, the non-profit world, the military and beyond.

I wanted to host an open time of discussion, questions, and conversations around community ministry, chaplaincy, and how the congregation plays a role in supporting folks like me (and how I play a role in the congregation). Please join me with your open hearts and minds for the Sunday Forum on May 1st at 9:15am to learn more. Otherwise I'll see you during worship or coffee hour sometime soon. Looking forward to more conversation together!

Blessings,
Rev. Sarah ❖

Membership

Submitted by Nancy Gaede

On April 10, the congregation recognized and entered into covenant with those who had become members of First Universalist during the past year. Jared Van Cor, Lois and Greg Baum, Shelley Adams, Janet Clarke-Hazlett, Shirley Malone, Robert Remley, Brad Freeman, Kate Fleury, Jim Van Loon, Martha Welch, and Peter Perine were warmly welcomed, as were our newest members: the Reverend Peggy Meeker and Juanita Ball. On April 17, Chris and Jodi Reynolds signed the membership book after the service. Please join us in welcoming Chris, Jodi and their children Henry and Katelyn.

Membership at First Universalist is possible at any time. If you feel that you have found a spiritual home at First Universalist, please contact Reverend Celie and make an appointment to discuss becoming a member. ❖

Adult Religious Education Offering

Submitted by Michelle Yates

Race: the Power of an Illusion

Will meet the following Thursdays from 6–8pm

May 12th- Part 1 : The Difference Between Us

May 26th- Part 2: The Story We Tell

June 9th- Part 3: The House We Live In

We will have the opportunity to watch California Newsreel's 3-part documentary about race in society, science & history, to be followed by facilitated discussion and conversation. Teens are welcome and encouraged to attend "Adult RE" programs!

Feel free to come to one or all sessions as you can.

Please RSVP so we can plan for enough space /seating to Michelle Yates at edu@uuroc.org or 585-310-2484.

Childcare available if requested a week in advance. ❖

Delegates for UU General Assembly

Submitted by Marcy Klein

Are you interested in attending this year's UU General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, June 22 to June 26? The theme will be "Heart Land, Where Faiths Connect," and the meeting will celebrate our multi-faith world. We are looking for three delegates. Please let Shirley Bond or Marcy Klein know by May 15th if you are interested or if you need further information.

Have you thought of serving on our Nominating Committee? We are looking for two new members to join us. Committee members must be active members of the church for at least two years. This committee does not require a huge time commitment; we meet 4 to 6 times a year when needed. We work together to select nominees for all elective offices, and official delegates to denominational meetings. Any Nominating Committee member will be happy to give you whatever information you need. Please let Shirley Bond or Marcy Klein know by May 15th if you are interested. Thanks for thinking of us! – Shirley Bond, Glenda Brayman, Marcy Klein, Virginia Sykes and Howard Spindler. ❖

Living Our Values, Making A Difference

Submitted by Newcomb Losh, Communications Committee



Members of our choir, led by Music Director **Carol Xiong** at the piano, rehearse for the **Tenebrae** service held March 25. Tenebrae is a quiet, healing service of music and readings, which honors the sacred darkness in our lives.

REACH Home Easter Dinner - March 27

Joined by REACH Home staff member **Jacob Hicks** (3rd from left), a crew of volunteers is ready to serve the Easter dinner they prepared and brought to REACH Home. L to r: **Ed Deller, Debbie Pfeiffer, Jacob Hicks, Carole Hoffman, Janet Clarke- Hazlett, Marti Eggers, Connie Valk** and **Margaret Gallagher**.



The Reynolds family – mom **Jodi**, dad **Chris** and kids **Henry** and **Kaitlyn** – hosted a sumptuous after-service Coffee Hour on April 3rd. Welcome to First Universalist Church!



Several of our intrepid members and friends participated in a **Fight for \$15** rally in Washington Square Park on April 14th to support the *Day of Action* nationwide strike by fast food workers to raise the minimum wage. A reliable source said numerous police were on hand and stayed with the ralliers as they marched to a nearby poverty-wage employer.

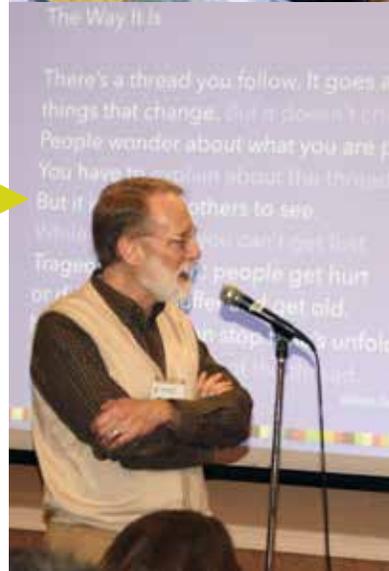
Photographer: an unnamed rally participant



Nancy Gaede and **Rev. Celie** voted “Yes” along with the majority of delegates on Apr. 2 to dissolve SLD to complete the move to regionalization.

Michael Scott (right) offered an observation sparked by the keynote speech on Heresy, Hubris & the Future of Our Faith at the St. Lawrence District (SLD) Assembly held in Syracuse on April 2.

Michelle Yates, our Director of Lifespan Faith Development and friend.



All photographs by Newcomb Losh unless otherwise noted.



Some of our attendees pictured: (from left) **Karl Abbot**, **Nancy Gaede**, **Rev. Celie Katovich**, **Ed Deller**, and **Robert Remley** (also representing Brockport UU Fellowship).

Earth Week – April 15 – 23. Our sanctuary was home to three Earth Week events; two are pictured here. At left, **Eric Van Dusen**, chair of our Social Justice Committee as well as Director of Community Initiative at NeighborWorks Rochester told us how to get involved in climate justice. Below, **Sara Scott**, Rochester’s Horticultural and Environmental Programming Coordinator reviewed notes as others helped Rev. Celie set up a video on urban farming.



Have an action photo or two of our members and friends being inclusive, living our values or making a difference? Send them to Newcomb Losh at jnewcomb.losh@yahoo.com.



Future RAIHN* Dates

Submitted by Christine DeGolyer

We had another successful RAIHN Week in April, thanks to the many wonderful volunteers who set up, cleaned, cooked, slept overnight, played with kids, washed sheets, and worked together to make our guests feel safe and welcome. It's not all work--we had fun talking with our guests and fellow volunteers and getting to know each other better.

Please mark your calendar for the remaining two RAIHN Weeks scheduled for this year: **July 10–17** and **October 9–16**. A two hour training session for new volunteers is being planned for June--watch for more details in Sunday orders of service or *This Week at First Universalist* e-newsletter.

*Rochester Interfaith Hospitality Network ❖

Finance Notes

Submitted by Ann Rhody

- Last call for 2016-17 budget suggestions! With the stewardship results almost finalized, and budget requests made, all that's left is to put in the numbers and get things balanced. The congregation will vote on the budget at the annual meeting in June, but if there are things you'd like to see in the budget, please contact Finance Chair Ann Rhody at annrhody@gmail.com as soon as possible.
- Looking to get involved- but not TOO time-committed? The finance committee would love to welcome some new members! Meetings are as needed, a few times a year, with much electronic communication in the interim. We work on budgeting, fund-raising projects, investments, and stewardship, and advise the Board of Trustees on financial matters. Believe it or not, we have fun and develop great camaraderie as we do it! Please contact Ann Rhody if you'd like to join us.
- A special thank you to a special Finance leader: Paula Marchese. Paula worked tirelessly on fund-raising projects this year, especially on the annual Auction. Thanks to Paula and her cadre of helpers, we have surpassed our fundraising expectations for the year. Thank you, Paula! ❖

Interfaith Impacts Advocacy Day-Albany

Submitted by Carole Hoffman

As Universalists/Unitarians, we have the opportunity to tell our NY State legislators of our shared liberal religious values when we visit Albany for the annual Advocacy Day on Monday, May 9th, 2016.

We represent Interfaith Impact of NYS, which is a progressive statewide interfaith organization. It is made up of congregations, clergy, and individuals from Protestant, Reform Jewish, Unitarian/Universalist and other faith traditions.

Each year, we have 3-4 issues that we seek the support of our legislators. This year they are: (1) moratorium on more petroleum infrastructure (2) criminal justice reform (3) reproductive justice.

Details of Advocacy Day: car pooling is available, departing the parking lot of the Unitarian Church (Winton Rd) at 6 AM., on May 9th. Upon arrival in Albany, we meet with the director of Interfaith Impact, Rob Smith, where we learn how to engage our legislators. Attire is business casual, focusing on comfortable footwear. Cost is nominal, as we defray the drivers cost (approx. \$20/pp) and cover own meal expenses. We return to Rochester at approximately 7 PM.

If interested in attending this year's Advocacy Day, please contact Carole Hoffman at choffman002@rochester.rr.com or 585 678 4525 or Rev Dick Gilbert at rsgilbert@uuma.org. ❖

Beginning Meditation Practice Continues

Submitted by Kathy Russell



A **Beginning Meditation Practice** will take place in the rear of the sanctuary each Wednesday from 5:15-6:30pm. This 10 week session began on March 23rd and extends through May 25th. It is not necessary to attend all sessions - come when you you can. No experience needed. Punctuality is appreciated as the church doors will be open at 5:00 and locked at 5:20. For more information contact Kathy Russell krussel6@frontiernet.net or join us on Wednesdays. ❖

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



THIS IS THE first of two columns highlighting the 1980s, a busy and productive decade for this congregation.

May 1980: Rev. William DeWolfe, Interdistrict Representative for the denomination, reports, “With the first half-year ministry of Mark and Donna Morrison-Reed, this church has moved from the list I have of the ones I worry about to the list of those where significant things are happening.”

May 1981: The small lot between the church and the Rochester Business Institute building next door now has a name—Pocket Park. (The Argyle Apartments were formerly located there and were torn down in August 1974.) The Treasurer closes the books on the first balanced budget in twenty years.

Dec 1981: After having languished for six years in the lounge and later in an unused religious education room, the water-damaged “Hope” tapestry has been restored by member Victor Jelin and is now mounted in its accustomed place in the sanctuary.

Sep 1982: In preparation for a massive capital campaign, architect John Bero addresses the Board and gives a slide presentation to the congregation.

Oct 1982: At its semi-annual meeting on the 3rd, the congregation votes to approve the sale to a developer of our half-section of the former Cortland Street, on the east side of the building. Later a skyway will be built over the space and connected to Xerox across the street.

Apr 1983: Our Outlook is created on a computer for the first time. The first word processed issue goes out on the 17th. That computer is housed in the third floor attic of our ministers’ home.

Oct 1983: Reaching for the Infinite, a new history of the church, is “hot off the press” and available for purchase.

Feb 1984: The church receives a loan from the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and will apply the money to the installation of boilers, as the church will no longer use steam heat from Rochester Gas and Electric.

Dec 1984: “Free the Morrison-Reeds.” Give a Christmas present to your church so a computer can be purchased for the church, and parishioners will no longer need to invade their ministers’ home on virtually a daily basis.

Nov 1985: The main basement room will be renovated for use as a daycare center. Up to 50 children will be using the facility on weekdays.

Dec 1985: The former ash pit under the Court Street sidewalk has been cleaned out in preparation for filling. This pit was from former days when the church used a coal-burning furnace.

Summer 1986: Electricians are removing and replacing the old circuit box connected to the sanctuary lights. They find a large black hole burned into the wall behind it that could have been the source of a disastrous fire.

Sep 1986: Maureen Thitchener begins as an intern minister for the church year. She is a second-year student at Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

Oct 1986: Announcement: the new headquarters of Rochester Telephone will be built in the lot directly south of the church, where the Rochester Business Institute building had been demolished in January. ❖



Book Club News

Submitted by Shirley Bond



Our Book Club selection for the month of May is “The Garden of Evening Mists” by Tan Twan Eng. The story takes place in Malaya in 1951 and is filled with all the components that draw readers to books. The author writes eloquently and captures ‘stillness on paper.’

We will meet in the discussion room on the second floor on May 29th at 12 noon. You do not need to have read the book. Please join us.

Any questions please see or email

Shirley Bond at Bondshirl1@gmail.com or

Sarah Singal at ssingal@Rochester.rr.com ❖

Drop-In Discussion Schedule, May 2016

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. (except during the summer) 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.

May 1 | *Life of a UU Chaplain*

Come hear from Rev. Sarah Gillespie, our affiliated community minister, about what's it's like to be a hospital chaplain and a UU minister. Bring your questions about community ministry, chaplaincy, and more to this open conversation.

May 8 | *South Africa Revisited*

In 1980 and 1981, the Rev. Richard Gilbert was part of a Rochester, NY, group that explored the minority white government of South Africa's apartheid policy and its effect on that country. They applied for visas to visit South Africa, but visas were never granted. In April 2016, he finally got to South Africa, now ruled by members of the black majority. In this drop-in, he'll describe his experience.

May 15 | *Guilt vs. Accountability*

Kate Fleury will lead a discussion of guilt vs. accountability, drawing on her personal experiences and John Steinbeck's *The Winter of Our Discontent*.

May 22 | *The Trouble With the Democrats*

Phil Ebersole will discuss the ideas in Thomas Frank's new book, *Listen, Liberal: What Ever Happened to the Party of the People?*

May 29 | *Reproductive Rights*

Kate Queary, public affairs organizer for Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York, will discuss the role of clergy and people of faith in advocating for laws and policies that safeguard and strengthen access to reproductive medicine. In addition, she will give a brief overview of recent legislative activity and goals for 2016. This is rescheduled from April 3.

If you have a topic you'd like discussed or, better still, would be willing to lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole. If you have an outside speaker in mind that you think should be invited, give contact information to Phil Ebersole. ❖



News

Submitted by Keith Stott

Musical Offering

Thanks to Robert Hope-Jones for creating our beautiful organ. How many more are his? In the biography *Robert Hope-Jones* by David H. Fox installations in France, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and Calcutta, India are described. Also described is the way his wife Cecil took an active part in Robert's organ work affairs and how helpful his brother Frank was. The many interesting photographs include not only Hope-Jones' organs and the buildings where they were installed, but portraits of the inventor and – of all things! – a photo of Frank consulting with Albert Einstein. For a fascinating read check out Fox's biography of Robert Hope-Jones. Call number is **921 H.** ❖



New Additions to Church Library

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

The newest additions to our First Universalist Church library are:

- *Landscapes of Aging and Spirituality* by Kathleen Montgomery (242.65)
- *The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry: Saving the World Ten at a Time* by Robert L. Hill (253.7)
- *Listening Hearts: Fourteen Gatherings for Reflection and Sharing* by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins (253.7)

The church library is open in the Clara Barton lounge during coffee hour during the regular church year. Books are arranged on the shelves in order of Dewey decimal numbers. They may be checked out for one month, and renewed monthly, by church members, and by friends who've attended long enough to have a name tag. ❖

Gardens and all things green

Submitted by Sarah Singal



Thank you, Rev. Celie for providing splendid Earth Week programs at First Universalist this year. One evening program centered around urban gardening and we watched salad after salad materialize from ground to supper table in the blink of an eye. We saw a variety of gardens from raised beds like ours to window vertical gardens and rooftop gardens. The mushrooming interest in urban gardens all across this country is impressive, and we are glad to be part of a growing movement. Sara Scott, Rochester's director of horticultural and environmental programming, shared with us a long list of free opportunities: Saturday gardening workshops such as Rain Barrel Building Workshop on May 21, and Wednesday workshops such as Composting Basics on June 22. And did you know there is a Rochester Urban Agriculture Garden and Training Center (RUAGTC) at 500 Norton Street? Printouts are available in the Clara Barton Lounge.

Another Earth Week evening activity centered on sustainable energy and the desperate need to combat climate change; there is interest in our congregation regarding these issues and questions are being raised: should we think about a Green Sanctuary program from the UUA or formation of a Transition Initiative, similar to a program in the Beechwood neighborhood?

Interested? Here are things you could do in the month of May. Enjoy our bulbs and early flowers. Come to Spring Clean-up Day May 7. Tidy up. Help spread compost, and by the end of May help plant veggies. Anyone interested in starting seeds indoors could do so. Weed. Sign up for summer watering. Tell Sarah or Shirley or Connie that you'd like to join the Garden Committee. And for now if you are interested in figuring out how we could promote climate justice see Sarah Singal. ❖



House News-May 2016

Submitted by Tom Ruganis

The **Spring Cleanup day** is only a few days away! Saturday May 7th will be when many Church members and friends will spend a morning cleaning and doing small repairs. This year includes converting the Clara Barton Lounge to all LED light bulbs! Please let anyone on the house committee know of any cleaning or small repairs that you would like addressed. If you would like to lend a hand and experience a close up view of our wonderful building please let us know or just show up. Morning snacks and a light lunch will be provided.

In other news...

- The burned out light in the sanctuary theater lighting system was successfully replaced and an emergency lighting battery was replaced.
- Alarms were installed on the doors to the fire escape on the second and third floor of the RE Wing. A local alarm will sound when the doors are opened. The primary benefit is that parents and volunteers during RAIHN week will be alerted if a child wanders onto the fire escape.
- Board approval has been received for three priority projects. They are the updating of the signage in and outside the church, the Church Office renovations and the plaster repairs in the sanctuary. Look for these improvements over the summer!

As always, if you are interested in the above or have any other repair or project you would like to see completed, or would like to take on, or join the House Committee, please let anyone on the committee know. The Committee is currently: Tom Ruganis, Chair (tom@ruganis.net), Sarah Singal, Marty Vyverberg, Karen Dau, Marcy Klein, Mike VanArsdale, Michael Scott and Ed Deller. We would love to hear from you! ❖

The LUUnch BUUnch May, 2016

12:30, Sunday
May 22nd.

Suggestions on restaurants?

Contact Joyce Gilbert at JTGilbert@frontiernet.net.

*Mt. Hope
Diner,*

1511 Mt. Hope Avenue



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 | Rev. Celie Katovitch

Director of Life Span Faith Development | Michelle Yates

Music Director | Carol Xiong

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Melissa Davies

Office hours, Monday – Friday, 9:30–2:30. Telephone 585.546.2826

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Editor, *This Week at First Universalist* (digital): Melissa Davies; Monthly newsletter *Our Outlook*, David Damico. Church photo on cover by Tom Ruganis.

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