



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

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Sunday Services | November 2023

November 5 | *Restful Intention*

What does it look like to take an intentional break? What does the concept of Sabbath teach us about resetting, refueling, and reconnecting in an intentional way?

— *Rev. Margaret Weis*

November 12 | *Lessons from the Trails*

In 2021 my family traveled around the country in our RV. We spent a lot of time hiking and exploring nature. In this service I'll reflect on the lessons I learned from the trails, the importance of rest, and rekindling our spark for life.

— *Rev. Margaret Weis*

November 19 | *On Grace and Beauty*

Together we will reflect on the beauty of grace that comes from community. We will practice noticing beautiful things and how that awareness can lead us to a deeper appreciation for the world around us.

— *Rev. Margaret Weis*

November 26 | *TBA!*

TBA

— *Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

❖ **Services begin at 10:30am** ❖

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



Winter Preparations

*A Message from
Rev. Margaret Weis*

Whelp! There is a change in the air—it is decidedly autumn. Those of us who live in the Northeast have entered that annual competition where we battle it out to see who can keep their heat off the longest.

Chilly? Put on another sweater.

Can see your breath? Put on another sweater.

Perhaps you are one of the brave ones who touch-es that thermostat early in the season. Or perhaps you are one who will tough it out to the bitter end.

Whoever you are, welcome, friends, it's autumn.

And now we begin the holy work of creating community by fires and tables adorned with casseroles and hearty stews.

We turn our intentions toward prepping for another cold winter—not only for ourselves but for those in our communities who are experiencing homelessness or other challenges.

We turn our intentions to a season that beckons for us to slow down, relish in community, and create structures of warmth to nourish us in these colder months.

This month we will continue to reflect on the ways we build community and find belonging together. We will sing together, and laugh together, and create worship together each week.

Indeed, we will create our own warmth each week simply by gathering as authentic, brave, and curious souls. I'm looking forward to spending some more time with you all on Sundays in November.

However you mark these colder days, I hope you find time to breathe the crisp air, notice the foliage, and connect with the natural world.

May we all be reminded of the beauty that comes with the circles of life and the ways we find new life through them.

Stay well, Rev. Margaret ❖



Rest

*A Message from
Rev. Michelle Yates*

I am excited to share with you the **Worship Theme Resource Packet for November and December**. In this season of darkness, our theme is Rest. If reading a printed version of this newsletter, please contact office@uuroc.org for this packet.

I have always viewed one of the roles of our church and the UU faith as “being countercultural.” Saying “no” to the status quo. This melds well with the theme of Rest. But this is also very relevant in a time where we are also being called to action in so many ways. How do we find ways to rest and rejuvenate; to refill our cup so that we may act with love and justice in the world? This season’s packet also has good ideas for rejuvenation and simplifying your life so that less is pulling on you.

During the pandemic, I learned to frame rest in two different ways. First, being still and answering your body’s needs. These are the kinds of things that most people think of as self-care. Eating good food, doing something that feels good, taking time to do nothing, etc. I see these as “pressure release valve” activities to prevent yourself from exploding or burning out. Be wary of activities that involve “checking out.” These can tend to be addictive, and not offer a way towards the second kind of rest.

The second form of rest are activities for “resilience building”. These are the activities for “refilling your cup” with energy, joy, hope, calm, inspiration, etc. Some of these can be the same as the first kind of rest, but you will know the difference in that you will feel you have “more” than what you started with. For many people a walk out in nature can be both kinds of rest.

Think of what kinds of rest you have experienced that fit into each of these categories. What kinds of activities help you to “release pressure?” What kinds of rest “refill your cup” or help you to be more resilient? And what kinds of rest are traps for you, where they feel good in the moment, but they actually don’t make you feel better or even make you feel worse later? I would love to hear from you about your insights or wisdom gained on this topic!

Yours in the Journey, Rev. Michelle ❖



Finance News: *the 2024 Service Auction!*

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

It's back....

It's beautiful.....

And it's better than ever!!

Announcing...The 2024 Service Auction!!

Let's face it...the fundraisers of the past few years were nice and all, but there is nothing like our traditional First Universalist Service Auction. So we're going back...to the future!

Plans are still being formulated, but we are working with a tentative date of Sunday, February 4 after the service, so pencil in that date and plan to be there!

This year's Service Auction will be LIVE in the Clara Barton Lounge, and our virtual participants will be with us via the OWL camera. There will be services and events up for bid, music, fun, and food, as well as some new elements (like raffle baskets and door prizes).

Besides planning to attend, where do YOU fit in?

We need helpers! It's a great short-term and fun way to get connected—volunteer to help with the event!

Be thinking of what you might be able to offer up for bids. A special event? Teaching others how to do something? A home-cooked specialty meal? As always, we avoid “garage sale” type things—our Auction is not the place to get rid of old household items.

Our Service Auction is designed to build fun, fellowship, and to include everyone. There will be items in every price range, and no one will be left out, whether online or in-person!

We are looking forward to returning to the great fun of the Service Auction. Stay tuned for more info...to volunteer or ask questions, please email finance@uuroc.org! ❖

November Social Justice Plate Offering: *Family Promise of Greater Rochester*

Submitted by Joy Leccese

As most of you know, RAIHN (Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network) is now Family Promise of Greater Rochester (FPGROC). While this may seem to be a much less user-friendly acronym, the organization itself is even more user-friendly than ever. They have weathered the upheavals of Covid with amazing grace, perseverance, and creativity, and with the help of many volunteers (including our congregation), they are thriving in their now FPGROC-owned home on Webster Avenue. Families experiencing temporary homelessness are now housed in apartments instead of churches, and the day center continues to be the hub for activities. Our congregation is still committed to this organization as part of our overall effort to eradicate homelessness. Please give generously to our November Social Justice Plate Sunday collection. Thank you. ❖



What makes me a superhero? I am a strong mother. A single mother, that's number one. Prevention & Diversion Program recipient of a security deposit.



Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by Beth Ares

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

Sunday, November 5 | What Is Love? **In-Person**

We say Unitarian Universalism is a religion of love, but just what do we mean by love? Are there different kinds of love? Can love be in conflict with other values—justice or democracy? Phil Ebersole presents.

November 7 | Polygamy, Polyamory and Ethical Non-Monogamy (ENM), oh my!

The “Parents as Sexual Educators” series Rev. Michelle did a few years ago had an optional session on “Ethical Non-Monogamy.” The parents had heard about it as a growing movement that their kids were talking about. A *ScienceDirect* article from Dec. 2022 states, “Estimates are that approximately 3–7% of the North American population are currently engaged in consensual non-monogamous arrangements with approximately 20% having ever engaged in CNM. Interest in having a CNM relationship is also high.” What do ethically non-monogamous relationships look like? How might we start seeing them in general society? And how does this interact with the general societal norm of monogamy?

November 14 | The Best Care Possible at End of Life

“The Best Care Possible at End of Life” by Ira Byock, MD, will be the base for our discussion. When it comes to end-of-life decisions, there are few easy answers and limited legal options. Medical Aid in Dying legislation in New York State is pending: come to share your point of view. Theo Munson presents.

November 21 | Fear of Free Speech

Why is free speech important? Why do some of us fear it? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

November 28 | Open Topic

A freeform discussion while enjoying the company.

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

House News: Many Hands = A Productive Fall Work Day!

Submitted by Ed Deller, House Committee Chair

A dedicated crew of members and friends gathered on October 28 for our annual Fall Work Day. We prepared the church for winter by installing the storm windows, removing the nursery air conditioner, bringing in garden hoses and putting the garden to bed.



We spruced up the church with deep cleaning and polishing of the kitchen and sanctuary. Storage areas were decluttered to the benefit of Goodwill and EcoPark. Smoke alarm and emergency lighting were checked, items

repaired and various other projects accomplished for the church safety and aesthetics.



Thank you to Tom Ruganis, Marcy Klein, Michael Scott, Karen Dau, Grant Fish, MJ Curry, Howard Spindler,

Connie Valk, Heather and Bill Jones, Moritz Wagner, John Snyder, Sarah Singal, Bridget Watts and Robert Remley for their talents and good work in support of our sacred space. ❖



HFA Happenings

Submitted by Chris DeGolyer and Marti Eggers

Housing For All (HFA), our two-year social justice project, is a church-wide effort, and various church members are already actively involved. Please check the HFA section of the bulletin board in the church vestibule to view the various initiatives in the works, and to sign up for the projects that interest you.



Tuesday Drop-in Discussion

On Tuesday, October 2, the Drop-in Discussion group hosted Melissa Berrien from the *Rochester Housing Authority* (RHA) to learn about its role in supporting low-income housing in Rochester.

HOT Lunch at Nick Tahou's

The *Homeless Outreach Team* (HOT), a collaboration of the Rochester Police Department, social service

agencies, and faith-based organizations, held a free hot lunch at Nick Tahou's for people experiencing homelessness on Thursday, September 28. Over 100 guests ate a free lunch, and, while eating, they met with agency staff members to discuss what they need. They also picked up free socks, underwear, and personal care items. Many thanks to Bill Schubmehl and Elizabeth Osta for serving as waiters, and to the church members who provided new socks and underwear for the give-away. We'll keep you posted on more HOT events to come.



▲ Bill Schubmehl waiting on guests at Nick Tahou's.

Eastman at Washington Square Concerts

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

- **Nov. 2 | Summer Music for Woodwind Quintet**

Enjoy music by Samuel Barber performed by Eastman students Alexander Day, flute, Lauren Smith, oboe, Lauren Enos, clarinet, Weverton Santos, horn, and Adrian Whittmer, bassoon.

- **Nov. 9 | Early Brass: Eastman Sackbut Quartet**

As a part of the Rochester Early Music Festival, we welcome students of Eastman Trombone Professors Larry Zalkind and Mark Kellogg.

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

Featuring students from the piano studios of Professors Lomazov and Rackers.

- **Nov. 30 | Piano Extravaganza II**

Featuring students from the piano studios of Professors Lomazov and Rackers. ❖

Coming This November: Sock it to me!

Winter is coming, that's for sure, but people experiencing homelessness aren't sure of much of anything. Where can I sleep tonight? How can I stay warm and safe? Housing For All is gearing up its service arm by collecting socks to distribute to organizations that provide shelter and/or assistance to these folks. You can begin your participation in Housing For All by bringing new, white socks to a collection box in the Clara Barton Lounge during the month of November. Let's fill it to overflowing! Thanks! ❖

EcoJustice

Submitted by Sarah Singal

The next two meetings of the EcoJustice Group are November 5 and December 3.

All are welcome. We meet at noon or 15 minutes after the start of coffee hour in the Chalice Room. If you need to meet online contact ecojustice@uuroc.org ASAP so we can make tech arrangements. ❖

Paying it Forward

Submitted by Lisa Gwinner, Music Committee Chair

Early in 2022, some members of the congregation sent Music Committee a report from NPR about a congregation in New England which was addressing the issue of reparations to the descendants of Americans of African descent who had been enslaved, and honoring the musical contributions of Black Americans, by putting aside some money every time their congregation sang a hymn that was a Spiritual. The money was used to support Black musical initiatives in their community. The Music Committee was asked to look into doing something similar, to further our church's work to address systemic racism in our own community.

We spent some time discussing what this sort of initiative would look like coming from our congregation. We had already been putting a priority on purchasing, playing, and singing music by Black composers. We wanted to make sure our efforts were making a sustainable impact on our community. We discussed local music groups that were serving the Black community.

Our Music Director, Brock Tjosvold, met with the Eastman School of Music's Dean for DEI, Crystal Sellars-Battle, and she recommended supporting music education, particularly for young children. She suggested we investigate ROCmusic, a local group dedicated to music education. Their mission is "Providing equal access to exceptional music education and performance experiences to youth residing in the City of Rochester." (quote from their website).



Brock then contacted their Executive Director, Rachel Mills, who responded with an overview of their program and some ways that we could make a difference for them. Among these are funding the

repair and purchase of musical instruments for their students, and providing paid training for their staff. They also hope to purchase a van so that they can help get students to lessons when their families aren't able to. We were very impressed by ROCmusic's work and feel it lines up with what we want to support, so we have decided to make them the recipient of our "Paying it Forward" project.



Since we want to make sure the funding for our "Paying it Forward" is sustainable over time, rather than depending on yearly fundraising, we asked the Finance Committee to add a yearly donation to our budget. To our delight, they have added \$500 to our budget, to be donated to ROCmusic on a yearly basis, with the intention that we'll be able to increase this over time, both by additional fundraising and increasing the budget line as our church budget allows.

I am grateful to Brock and the Music Committee, Jillian Beaman, Dolores Da Lomba, Kitty Forbush, Nancy Gaede, Howard Spindler, and Lew Ward-Baker, for the research, exploration, and conversations that led to "Paying it Forward" becoming another way that our congregation lives its values and serves our community.

<https://www.rocmusic.org> ❖



FIAC: Grazie, Merci, Danke, Gracias, Shukran

Submitted by Joy Leccese for Faith in Action Council

No matter how you say it, the message is clear. We as a congregation are making a difference. We are living our mission to nurture the spirit and serve our community. This month, we focus on the many reasons we are grateful, and the organizations that we donate to each month for our Social Justice Plate Offering are grateful for what we do. We receive letters from them in response to receiving our donation, and the Faith In Action Council wants you to know how much you mean to them!

- The Nester Street Food Cupboard serves 160 seniors monthly with our donations of non-perishables, and 150 families with their emergency programs.
- The People's Pantry also writes in gratitude for our gift of \$250.
- Rural and Migrant Ministry thanks us for helping them nurture leaders, stand with the disenfranchised and work toward a better system of support for our essential, treasured farm workers and their families. We've sent a total of \$1,241.03 from May 2022 through May 2023.
- REACH Advocacy is grateful for our support in providing shelter for those experiencing homelessness/houselessness. They help an average of 160 men and women manage their situations year-round. We sent them \$170.24.

Of special note, *Family Promise of Greater Rochester* (formerly RAIHN) received a total of \$11,633.67 from two gifts—one in May for \$5,550.67 and a previous gift in honor of Rosemarie Horvath, in the amount of \$6,083.

It matters a great deal that our individual contributions—while they may seem small when collected during the service—make a collective difference to so many persons and their families. Our generous congregation is made up of generous individuals like you, and we are grateful in every language. Blessings and good health as we enter our next winter season. ❖



Welcoming Neurodivergent Children: Video & Discussion

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

The UUA sponsored an excellent series on understanding and welcoming neurodivergence in our congregations. Please join us to view the session on “*Welcoming Neurodivergent Children*” on Sunday, November 19, from 11:45am-1pm in the Sanctuary. We will discuss how it might apply in our congregation with children we already have and help us to be ready to welcome others. Please direct any questions to Rev. Michelle Yates at edu@uuroc.org. ❖

Banned Book Display!

Photo submitted by Connie Valk





First Universalist Church of Rochester

150 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14604



First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY *Nurture the spirit and serve the community.*

First Universalist Church is a member of the *Unitarian Universalist Association*, a liberal religion with historical roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions.

**Worship service begins at 10:30am on
Sundays**

Sabbatical Minister | Rev. Margaret Weis

Minister of Life Span Faith Development |
Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

Office Manager | Emma Barry

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More info is available on our website: uuroc.org

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