



# Our Outlook

## First Universalist Church of Rochester

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**First Universalist  
Church of Rochester**

150 South Clinton Ave  
Rochester, NY 14604  
585-546-2826  
[uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org)

## Sunday Services | April 2021

### April 4 | *Easter | Into the Depths*

It is hard to understand the Easter story, the story of Jesus's death and resurrection, without going back to its historical roots of Ostara and the spring equinox. Come join in an exploration of the roots of this day and the practices. As we celebrate the joy of this day, let us also hold some of the old stories that give Easter its richness.

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

### April 11 | *Forward Through the Ages*

First Universalist is 175 years old!! Come celebrate in a spirit of generosity, story telling, and singing. This is also Stewardship Sunday, where we will be celebrating all of the pledges and gifts we have received over the past month.

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

### April 18 | *Into the Unknown: The Gospel (Good News According to Frozen II*

This "hero's journey" story shares lessons that speak deeply to each of us. You don't have to have watched it to appreciate and receive its wisdom. (But I recommend it!) If you know it, please share with me what gems of wisdom you take away from it at [edu@uuroc.org](mailto:edu@uuroc.org), that we might share and learn together. Families, contact me if your kiddos would like to participate.

— *Rev. Michelle Yates*

### April 25 | *The Future of Our Planet*

As we look towards the future of our planet, much is largely unknown. And yet, what could environmental devastation actually look like within our lifetime? How do we spiritually come to terms with the fact that our planet is dying at our own hands?

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

❖ **Service begins at 10:30am** ❖

*Worship will be meeting online into the foreseeable future. Please join us—  
Internet link: <https://zoom.us/j/131764422>; Phone number: 646 558 8656 with  
Meeting ID: Meeting ID: 131 764 422. ❖*

Inside	Page
Rev Lane, Rev. Michelle.....	2
Stewardship News .....	3
EcoJustice .....	3
Worship Associates .....	3
Drop-In Discussion, FIAC....	4
House, Finance.....	5
Earth Day .....	5
Family Promise (RAIHN)....	6
Leadership Opportunities ...	6
Eckberg Film Series.....	7
Pets of UURoc .....	8-11



## Gazing Into The Unknown... Together!

Message from Rev. Lane Campbell

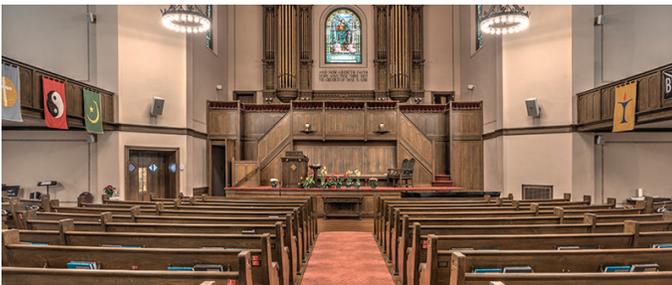
I am not always the best observer of modern art. Sometimes, it is hard for me to know exactly what I am looking at. If a piece has a straightforward connection to a known object of reference in my life, I am able to relate to it. Splashes of paint and layers of color in the abstract often confuse me. I like things to fit into neat and tidy boxes with identifiable labels. I like to have the certainty of knowing exactly what I am looking at. And yet, I am finding ways to sit with what I do not know and cannot see in the present day. I am sitting with a hazy future and I imagine all of us are. What is to come? What will be happening in the next year? The next month?

It's not just one of us—it's all of us.

As a community, our unknowns are about when exactly we will be meeting in-person, what exactly that will look like, and how we will go about making that transition. At this point it is not yet known. But, perhaps, if we continue to gaze into the future together, we might be able to gain more clarity about what we are looking at.

There have been moments when I am in a museum, confused about what I am looking at, and another person comes by and gets this great joy from the piece or they know exactly what it is about. They can see possibility when all I can see is a bunch of splashes of color. They can glean emotion from a piece that just doesn't do it for me.

This is us. All of us. Approaching an unknown with our own perspective and being in conversation with one another about what we see, what we hope and dream about, and what our possibilities for the future could be. ❖



## The Unknown

Message from Rev. Michelle Yates

*“Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”*

— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,

Let Nobody Turn Us Around: Voices on Resistance, Reform, and Renewal an African American Anthology

In February, when we explored the worship theme of "embodiment", I shared a video on Facebook of my three-year-old, Walter, enjoying hiding his body in our linen closet. One of Walter's favorite things to do is to find hiding places that only he can fit into.

Even though it was his fourth or fifth time going up and off the shelf when I took the video, he still stopped, hanging an inch from the ground. I needed to encourage him, with my hand on him, to hop down. A colleague, the DRE from the UU Church of Amherst, commented, “So scary that last inch when you don't believe you're really going to hit the ground and you have to trust the knowing voice.”

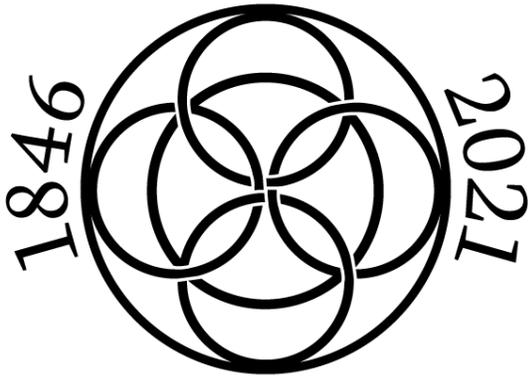
This so perfectly captures the experience of facing the unknown!

The scariest part is that when you are the one dangling, you cannot tell if it's just an inch. You have stretched down as far as you can, and your toes still don't touch. You feel stuck! That is one reason we “come” to church and engage in a supportive faith community. In those times, we need another perspective, a supportive hand to encourage us in that next step, and to be there to catch us if we fall.

Communities of faith don't just have faith in the Divine or magic (though that is totally a thing, too.) We have faith in each other. We know we are all human and imperfect, but we are also all striving to live into our covenant of love, care and commitment. As Brené Brown says, “We are all doing the best we can with the tools we have.” But it's that much better when we do it...together!

Yours in the Journey,

Rev. Michelle ❖



## Stewardship News

Submitted by Brian Mumey, Kathi Milch, & Jim Milch

Our 2021 Stewardship campaign, “*Forward Through the Ages*,” is in its final weeks. Last year’s campaign “*20/20 Vision*” could not have foreseen the trajectory of our lives 2020-2021, even with “spiritual spectacles.”

Now extraordinary times call us to action. This year, more than ever, our church has been a life-line—enabling us to nurture the spirit and serve the community. Your generous financial pledge to First Universalist last spring helped us not only survive, but thrive. Your ongoing support moves us further toward realizing the values we profess. We look forward to witnessing the results of our collective commitment.

Remember, YOUR financial pledge makes us stronger. Your pledge packet came in the mail a few weeks ago. Thank you if you have already submitted your pledge. If not, there is still time to do so before the end of our campaign on April 11, along with the celebration of our 175th anniversary.

You may complete the pledge card and mail it to the church, or go to the church website, [uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org). Look for a “Stewardship” link at the top or at the bottom of the page that links to an online pledge card. You will also find next to the pledge card a link to a short explanation and FAQ on the pledging process. If you have any questions, please contact one of us.

In place of our traditional “*Pie Sunday*” celebration, we are planning a “*Park and Pie*” event for Saturday, April 10, in the church parking lot. You can hand in your pledge card, drop off your food donation for the Nester Street Food Cupboard, and pick up a special treat to take home. Join us on Saturday morning from 11am to noon!

Please pledge generously before Stewardship Sunday, April 11. Every pledge, small or large, moves us forward. ❖

## From the Worship Committee:

### *Seeking Worship Associates*

Submitted by Bridget Watts

Are you interested in serving as a Worship Associate? Worship Associates assist the Minister with worship services, by speaking, and sometimes writing, elements of the service. WA’s are also responsible for coordinating with our staff and guest speakers to create the script and order of service when Rev. Lane is out of the pulpit.

To be selected for the WA team, you must be a member of First Universalist who attends worship services regularly, interested in learning about UU theology and worship, and willing to be a reliable and supportive member of the WA team. Public speaking skills and experience are preferred.

In selecting WA’s, consideration will be given to balance in the makeup of the WA team. New WA’s will begin serving in fall 2021. If you think you might be interested in serving our church in this way, please email Rev. Lane Campbell, [minister@uuroc.org](mailto:minister@uuroc.org). ❖

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## EcoJustice News:

### *Get the Scoop on Solar!*

Submitted by Sarah Singal

Rochester Area Interfaith Climate Action is proud to bring you our latest Virtual Summit installment on April 7 at 7pm. Register at [raica.net/events](http://raica.net/events).

Join GreenSpark Solar as we debunk the myths around going solar in Rochester. Whether you are interested in solar energy for your home or for a house of worship, the GreenSpark team will share the opportunities available. A Q & A session/discussion will follow.

*"GreenSpark Solar, loyal to people and loyal to planet, is a local, employee-owned Certified B Corp in Ontario, NY. For nearly 20 years, GreenSpark has created fiercely local, cost-effective clean energy options in the Greater Rochester Community and beyond. As a member-owner of the Amicus Solar Cooperative, GreenSpark is able to provide industry-best pricing on quality equipment for our customers while using our business as a force for good."* ❖

# Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by Beth Ares

Current drop-in discussions are held each Tuesday evening from 6:30 to 7:30pm via the church Zoom account. Contact [DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org](mailto:DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org) for the Zoom link, or look on [uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org)!

Sometimes our discussions are based on books/articles, but you don't have to do any preparation to participate. Just drop in. People of all viewpoints are welcome to make presentations or join.

## April 6 | *What Would a just New York look like?*

Dick Gilbert will lead a discussion of issues in Albany as prioritized by the new social action group, New York UU Justice: criminal justice, environment and medical aid in dying. Learn about democracy in action and what you can do.

## April 13 | *Boycott? Divest? Sanctions?*

Supporters of Palestinian Arabs have called for a boycott of Israel, similar to the boycott of South Africa in the apartheid era. Supporters of Israel say this is anti-Semitic and a threat to that nation's existence. Phil Ebersole will do his best to give an impartial account of the background of this issue, and lead a discussion.

## April 20 | *From War to Peace*

The world is in transition. One thing we must do is end the war system of dispute settlement. But since WWII our society has been oriented toward getting the fear, and the funding, in place for the next war. So, can we get to world peace? Hank Stone presents.

## April 27 | *What does the Bible say regarding the owning of slaves and what verses did American slave holders use to justify the practice?*

Love of neighbor is one of the fundamental teachings of the Bible. Love, however, is diametrically opposed to the concept of oppressive slavery. Hence, some people are puzzled by the mention of slavery in the Bible. In ancient times God allowed his people to own slaves. (*Genesis 14:14, 15*) Even in the days of the apostles, some Christians were slave owners and some were slaves. Rev. Michelle Yates presents.

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

# FIAC News: *Social Justice Efforts via Circles*

Submitted by Connie Valk

Many of our usual activities have come to a halt during COVID but our Social Justice efforts have continued. Besides the very active F.I.R.E. initiatives, there are other efforts taking place through our Social Justice Circles.

- The **EcoJustice Circle** has continued to partner with other organizations to press the governor to include climate issues in the state budget.

- The participants in **Crafting Blankets for Our Homeless Neighbors** knit and crochet their creations for the House of Mercy and other needs.

- Tutoring at **Virgil L. Grissom School #7** has been on hold due to remote learning, but this Circle will be needed even more when schools fully open.

- **Meals for the Homeless** which has provided meals to the homeless was changed to a "drop off food" model during the past year.

- **Homeless Heartbeats** has supported the housing-deprived with financial contributions, and drop-off food at the hotel where they are housed, thanks to the CARES Act.

- **Harvesting Justice** partnered with First Unitarian Immigration Council and Refugees Helping Refugees to make and distribute masks to farmworkers.

- **Animal Ministry** participants continued to support vegan businesses and nonprofits during COVID.

- **Roc/ACTS** works with places of worship and other organizations in the Rochester area on critical issues through various task forces.

Social Justice Circles can be focused on systems change, helping those in the community with particular needs, or both. Perhaps you would like to join one of the circles, or are interested in starting a new circle. The Faith in Action Council members can walk you through the process. Contact [FIAC@uuroc.org](mailto:FIAC@uuroc.org). ❖



# Finance News & Notes

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

## Auction Amnesty Afterglow

When the Service Auction team was considering what to do as a replacement event for a traditional Service Auction, I wasn't concerned or hopeful about raising a whole lot of money. The real thing we needed to replace was the fun and fellowship we enjoy at this signature event for our congregation.

So imagine our pleasant surprise to see that we not only had fun and fellowship at our virtual event, BUT, we exceeded the amount of income we hoped to gain from a regular Service Auction! We have now exceeded \$6,500 for the event. Wow!

And now, with more and more people getting vaccinated, hopefully we'll be able to plan those long-delayed events and gatherings from the 2020 Service Auction. What a congregation we are!

## And the fiscal year goes on....

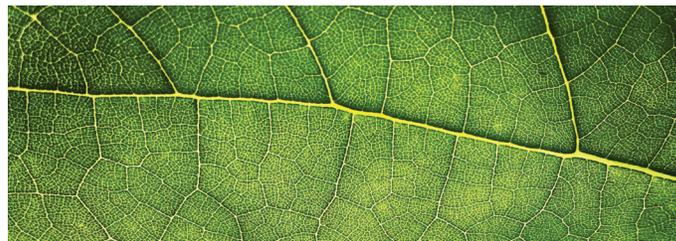
When the congregation passed the 2020-2021 budget way back in June, there was so much we did not know. As Finance Committee chair, I pledged to keep the congregation informed about how things are going, and whether we need additional financial help to get through the fiscal year. As I've been reporting, the numbers have been very favorable! As of this writing, we are almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way through this fiscal year, and we are "in the black" by a good margin. Two main contributors: people continuing to pay their pledges, and the costs saved by not being in the building (this includes the fact that we have not yet hired a Sexton, since we aren't in the building). In addition, the PPP loan we received back in the spring has been fully forgiven, helping us to guard against any bumps in the road as the year goes on.

## And next year awaits!

In addition to all of the other signs of spring, it's time for budget requests! We are beginning to formulate the 2021-22 budget. Board members, staff, and church leaders have been asked to provide budget requests by April 15. If we missed you, and you have a question, idea, or request for the Finance Committee to consider, please get in touch! You can reach us at [finance@uuroc.org](mailto:finance@uuroc.org).

Thank you all for keeping our church financially healthy!

Ann Rhody, Finance Committee Chair ❖



## Sharing on Earth Day

Submitted by Sarah Singal

Happy Earth Day, April 22, 2021! Here we are, our second Earth Day with no in-person church. So there's a virtual booklet to tide us over until we can be together to celebrate in the Sanctuary, write letters in the Clara Barton Lounge, and rally in Washington Square Park. Find the booklet on our website homepage, or at [raica.net/post/earth-day-slide-show](http://raica.net/post/earth-day-slide-show). ❖



Tom Ruganis helps to repair the broken window in the volunteer office

## House News

Submitted by Ed Deller

You may recall that one of our beautiful stained glass windows in the volunteer office was damaged in the rioting of last September. The window was recently repaired and looks wonderful again. Tom Ruganis (*as seen in the photo above*) and I installed the repaired window in early March.

Our traditional Spring Cleanup Day will not be held given the ongoing COVID prevention guidelines. However, we continue to keep up with the routine maintenance of the building and grounds. My thanks to Tom, Sarah Singal and Karen Dau for these weekly building checks. ❖

# Leadership Opportunities at UUROC

*Submitted by the Nominating Committee*

Are you looking for ways to be more involved in church leadership? Committee and team opportunities are available and can help you connect with the church and its members. While most committee involvement requires little more than time and interest, some leadership positions require approval by the congregation at its annual meeting in June.

The Nominating Committee is starting to identify candidates for open leadership positions for the 2021-2022 church year. Those positions are listed below. If you are a church member and interested in being considered as a candidate for these positions, or in learning more, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee at [nomcom@uuroc.org](mailto:nomcom@uuroc.org). Current committee members are Joy Leccese, Rachel Irato, Bill Elwell, Kathi Milch and Ed Deller.

**Board Of Trustees:** The Board of Trustees represents the congregation for setting church policies and for fiduciary responsibility with a view to sustaining the church for the long term. Two board seats will be open for three-year terms.

- Candidates must be members of the church and been active in the congregation for at least a year.

**Nominating Committee:** This committee is responsible for recruiting qualified members for certain church leadership roles as described in the bylaws. Two positions will be open for two-year terms.

- Candidates must be members of the church and been active in the congregation for at least two years.

**Committee On Ministry:** The COM is the primary agent of the congregation to encourage the minister, lay leaders, and congregation to work together for the best possible fulfillment of the congregation's mission and covenant. Two positions will be open for up to three-year terms.

- Candidates must be members of the church for at least three years.

**Faith In Action Council:** FIAC guides the social justice mission for First Universalist, working with the board, the congregation, and Social Justice Circles. Two positions will be open, each for up to two-year terms. ❖

# Family Promise of Greater Rochester: *Not Just RAIHN Anymore!*

*Submitted by the Nominating Committee*

RAIHN (*The Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network*) is now *Family Promise of Greater Rochester*. RAIHN has been an affiliate of Family Promise National since 2004, and its new name better represents the broad range of programs offered to assist families in achieving sustainable independence.

RAIHN was established in 2004 as an emergency **Shelter Program**. Families experiencing homelessness were housed in houses of worship, with social workers supporting those families during the day. Some years later, RAIHN established the **Aftercare & Stabilization Program** to provide a year or so of support to families who had been in the Shelter Program and who were now in their own places. Recently, RAIHN received a grant to administer the **Prevention, Diversion & Rehousing Program**, providing one-time rental assistance for eviction prevention or security deposits for new rentals for families not part of the RAIHN shelter program, often diverting families from a shelter stay.

The traditional model of congregational shelter was halted in mid-March, 2020, due to the pandemic, but family homelessness didn't stop, so RAIHN's Shelter Program transitioned to hotel shelter, all while still being supported by RAIHN volunteers and staff. When the pandemic eases, Family Promise envisions going back to hosting families in congregations, supplemented by some apartments, to support the expanding needs of homeless families in Rochester.

## **Here are the numbers for 2020:**

- Shelter Program: 26 families, 3,639 bed nights.
- Aftercare & Stabilization Program: 22 families were supported after graduating from the Shelter Program.
- Prevention, Diversion & Rehousing Program: 128 families received funding.

**Family Promise of Greater Rochester (FPGROC)**  
*Keeping families together. Getting families home for good.* ❖



## 2021 Eunice and Jim Eckberg Racial Justice Memorial Film Series

Third Sundays, 2-3:30 p.m.

This film series is named in memory of two beloved First Universalist members who shared an enduring quest for racial justice throughout their years together. Films are to be viewed on your own prior to the Zoom discussion on the date specified. Please view the film BEFORE the discussion to assure a quality experience.

**October 18—A Tale of Two Schools** (2017, 61 min, YouTube): An intimate and compelling documentary, narrated by Morgan Freeman, about children at risk in two struggling schools and the parents and teachers who care about them.

**November 15—I Am Not Your Negro** (2017, 1 hr. 33 min, Netflix, Amazon): Based on James Baldwin's unfinished book, this visual essay explores racism through the stories of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.

**January 17—The Hate You Give** (2018, 2 hr.13 min, Hulu, HBO, You Tube, Amazon Prime): The uneasy balance between two worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.

**February 21—12 Years a Slave** (2013, 134 min, Netflix, Amazon Prime): This film "drives straight into the heart of the cruelties of oppression" (the NYTimes) and was an Academy Award Best Picture Winner.

**March 21—Selma** (2019, 2 hrs. 8 min, Netflix, Amazon): Chronicles the tumultuous three months in 1965 when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign and epic march from Selma to Montgomery to secure equal voting rights in the face of violent opposition. Directed by Ava DuVernay.

**April 18—What Happened, Miss Simone?** (2015, 1 hr. 41 min, Amazon Prime, Netflix): Classical pianist, dive-bar chanteuse, black power icon and legendary artist Nina Simone lived a life of brutal honesty and musical genius. Meet the mother, the activist, the tortured soul, and the legendary songstress.



# Pets of First Universalist!

*Submitted by Emma Barry & Pet Lovers of First Universalist!*

Throughout this past year, our furry and not so furry friends have been such a joy and have given us sanctuary from the troubles of the world. I hope these pics of First Universalist members' pets cheer your day up! Please send pictures of your animal friends that have been helping you get through this past year to [office@uuroc.org](mailto:office@uuroc.org) to be included in future newsletters!



◀ Meet Sunshine, Patti Goodwin's cockatiel, showing off a smile!

Connie Valk's adorable kitty, Tigie, takes a much needed break. ▶



◀ The cutest coworker ever, Noah, is an esteemed colleague of Cassy Bocanegra.



Chico (left) & Cookie (bottom) are expert box inspectors and roommates with Eileen Fernandez.



Hershey, Marti Egger's adorable pup, is always as sweet as the name implies, even after a bath!

# Pets of First Universalist! cont.

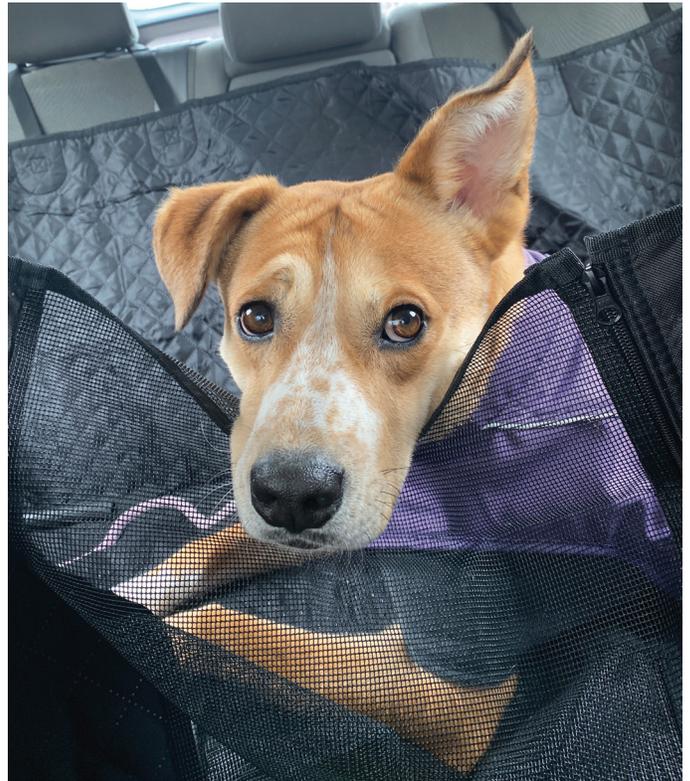


◀ The Connellys snuggle up to Winston (*left*) and Emma (*right*).

The intrepid Rowen likes to go on climbing adventures with MJ Curry! ▶



◀ Daisy gives a cheeky wink while lounging with Karen LoBracco.



- ▶ As you can tell, both Flash Gordon (*left*) and Goose (*above*) are quite surprised.
- ▶ What kind of face was Rev. Lane making at them as she took these pics?!



- ▶ Piper (*left*) is more a lover than a fighter, while Phoebe (*top*) is ready for fisticuffs if the Scotts need protecting.



# 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

**Minister** | Rev. Lane Campbell

**Minister of Life Span Faith Development** |  
Rev. Michelle Yates

**Music Director** | Brock Tjosvold

**Office Manager** | Emma Barry

**Nursery Care Providers** |  
Carol Williams & Sundae Hodge

### Board of Trustees 2020–2021

Eric VanDusen (*President*), Theresa McFarland-Porter (*Vice President*), Nancy Gaede (*Clerk*), Jillian Beaman, Steve Munson, MJ Curry, Richard Reed, Rev. Lane Campbell (*ex-officio*)

Editor, monthly newsletter *Our Outlook*, & *This Week at First Universalist* (digital): Emma Barry

More info is available on our website: [uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org)

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