



Our Outlook

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Sunday Services | May 2026

May 3 | *Whose Side Are We On?*

As we begin the seasonal theme of Solidarity, let us pause to consider how far our loyalties reach. Ours is a faith that might make us reluctant to take sides, but should we? Whose side are we on, and who, exactly, should we be in solidarity with?

— Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

May 10 | *A Space for Children*

What happens when we decide to be in solidarity with children? What are the ripple effects of making a space hospitable to children and their needs?

— Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

May 17 | *Community Demands Discomfort*

It is through the many small discomforts of community life that we build the muscle for solidarity toward a greater good. How is our community life cultivating our skills for the liberation we dream of?

— Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

May 24 | *Turning the Wheels of Change: A Story of Solidarity*

As I look for rays of hope in our current world situation, I have found inspiration in a story from our US history that touched my life directly.

— Lisa Gwinner

May 31 | *Tending the Flame*

Our solidarity is practiced here and now, in the place we are planted. And it also lives across a wide expanse of time, including all the ancestors—spiritual and genetic—who struggled for liberation before us and everyone who will tend the flame after we are gone.

— Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

❖ Services begin at 10:30am ❖

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. ❖

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Solidarity

*A Message from
Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell*

My friends,

We are entering the final season of our program year and the theme of Solidarity. And I have been thinking about Rev. Shari’s gentle warning to us in our three-church theme brainstorm. They cautioned us to remember that solidarity is an action we choose to take (or not), rather than a feeling of support or alignment. Solidarity is not a sensation; it’s a showing up.

I’m holding on to that wisdom (and I invite you to do the same) as we consider carefully where to prioritize showing up in our justice work for the next year, as we dream about the church we will grow to be, and as we create the moral manifesto that is a church budget at the year’s end. Where do our hearts call our bodies to show up? And with whom? For whose sake?

I invite you to begin the season by showing up, on May 1 at a rally led by the Rochester Labor Council in Washington Square Park, across from the church, between 5 and 5:30pm. I’ll move inside to lead Dinner Church in the Clara Barton Lounge at 6pm, where I would also love to see you.

With whom will you show up this season?

With care,

Rev. Eileen ❖



Why are People at Church Talking About “Owls?”

*A Message from
Rev. Michelle Yates*

You are going to start hear more about OWL, as we are preparing to offer it next year for kids in grades 4–6. This curriculum focuses on preparing for puberty. Lisa Gwinner, Clinton Swingle, and I will be training to be facilitators.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education program co-published by the *Unitarian Universalist Association* (UUA) and the *United Church of Christ* (UCC). It offers accurate, age-appropriate information, focusing on self-worth, healthy relationships, responsibility, and sexual health for all ages, from kindergarten through adults.

Key Features of the OWL Program:

- **Values-Based:** Based on principles of self-acceptance, dismantling stereotypes, fostering healthy relationships, and social justice.
- **Secular Content:** While published by faith organizations, the curriculum is secular, medically accurate, and inclusive.
- **Lifespan Approach:** Available for different age groups: Grades K-1, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, Young Adult, Adult, and Elder.
- **Comprehensive Topics:** Covers relationships, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, sexual health, and sexual decision-making.
- **Trained Facilitators:** Programs are led by trained facilitators, often in Unitarian Universalist congregations or community settings.

OWL is highly regarded for being holistic and helping participants make informed, responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior.

If you or someone you know has kid that will be in grades 4–6 next year, or the homeschool equivalent, I would love to connect with them about the program. We will likely have an informational meeting about it toward the end of the month.

Let me know if you have other questions or interest about OWL or other Faith Development programming at First Universalist at edu@uuroc.org!

Yours in the Journey,

Rev. Michelle ❖



Dinner Church

Submitted by Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

Join us on Friday, May 1, in the Clara Barton Lounge for a new and different way of worshipping!

Come at 5:30pm to help prepare food and set up, or gather with us at 6pm for dinner, stories, songs, and conversation. Dinner will be provided.

This is an event for all ages; children and their noises are welcome! ❖



House Committee: Spring Cleanup is May 2!

Submitted by Sarah Singal & Moritz Wagner

If you are looking for a one-and-done way to help out at church while meeting members of the community, come join us! Cleanup Day is from 9am to 12pm (or drop in to help out for just an hour or two, we welcome any and all help).

There will be a sign up sheet with options of cleaning, fixing, or routine maintenance, both indoors and out!

You can bring your own supplies or use our church supplies. Also, ever-popular snacks are (of course) provided! We hope to see you there! ❖

Music Ministry News

Submitted by Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell & Dr Brock Tjosvold

Dear ones,

We want to let you know about an upcoming change in our music ministry here at First Universalist. Brock Tjosvold has led our music program with incredible grace, skill, and compassion for eight years now (he will want you to know that Rev. Eileen wrote that bit). And this is his third job. Gig work is often the norm for musicians, but Brock has been dancing on the edge of burnout for some time now. This job is small in time and compensation compared to his other work, but enormous in the space it occupies in his heart (he'll want you to know that bit is from him). He's not ready to leave, but can't continue as he has.

So Brock and Rev. Eileen have worked together to create a plan for a music ministry team, with two music staff positions. One will be held by Brock and the other we plan to fill as soon as possible. We'll offer Brock a sabbatical after the new hire is onboard, to let him refresh and renew his creative energy as he enters his 9th year with us, and to let the new musician find their footing among us.

This is a new and experimental way of being, and we think our continued relationship with Brock and Brock's continued good health are well worth the change.

In trust and love, Brock & Rev. Eileen ❖

June Scripture Study

Submitted by Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

Join Rev. Eileen on four Mondays in June for a deeper dive into stories of creation from religious texts around the world. We'll explore these stories and ask: What makes a creation story? How do sacred scriptures inform our understanding of creation/creativity? What are our modern creation mythologies?

We'll meet via Zoom on June 1, 8, 22, and 29 from 6:30-8pm. Please sign up in advance to participate here: forms.gle/eKCIQeXIACScPgwC8 ❖



Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by John Lukes

Drop-in discussions are held on Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30pm via Zoom, and in-person on the first Sunday of the month in the Chalice Room at 9:15am. Phil Ebersole is the contact for in-person discussions. Look on uuroc.org/drop-in-discussions for the link!

Sunday, May 3 | The Humanist Manifesto of 1933

In-person

Is it possible to be religious without believing in God? Signers of the Humanist Manifesto of 1933 believed so. The 34 signers included 15 Unitarian ministers and one Universalist. What did they believe? Were they right? What was their legacy? Phil Ebersole will present and facilitate.

May 5 | Daily Walks with Andy: Homeless Outreach

Since the beginning of COVID, we have walked the streets of Rochester—same day, same place, same time, year round. We have learned an immense amount about the neighborhoods: both the people living indoors and outdoors. Andy Carey will present.

May 12 | Tire Mom 2.0

We are taught only two elements of tire safety—but there are actually six. When I set out to buy a set of tires for someone in every single state, I didn't just learn about the road; I learned how to save lives on it. I'm sharing my journey born from loss and fueled by a mission to keep families safe. Tune in to hear the stories from the road and the safety essentials every driver needs to know. Presented by Diana Hubner.

May 19 | Approaches to the Sermon on the Mount

There are several different interpretations of Matthew 5:7 or Luke 6. It's not as simple and direct as some might assume. Come, let's explore the differences and nuances of these sermons. Presented by Daniel Chadwick.

May 26 | The Empowerment Controversy & Modern "Gadfly" Movement

You can tell a lot about a family or system by its controversies. The "family secrets" that are sources of gossip/shame, and if we don't learn we may be doomed to repeat them. Let's "spill the tea" about these two controversies in the UU family, separated by about 50 years. Presented by Rev. Michelle Yates.

Have a topic for us? Contact our team with your proposal at DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org. ❖

Protest Time!

Submitted by Adam Durand & Bridget Watts



Mary Durand and her son Adam Durand. Adam's mom told tales of protesting the Vietnam War when he was a child, and now he's thrilled to see her back in action!



Chris DeGolyer (top) and Bridget Watts (bottom) were out representing First Universalist as well at the Rochester "No Kings" protests on March 28.

FIAC: Voting Opportunity for Social Justice Plate Recipients

Submitted by Connie Valk

Each May your Faith In Action Council (FIAC) offers an online ballot (tinyurl.com/yeyxu5dx) for the congregation to choose Social Justice Plate recipients for the upcoming church year.

The list of choices was collected from your suggestions which were vetted according to criteria developed over the years—each must be a nonprofit organization, with preference for those with a local impact or connected to the UUA.



May 15 is the deadline for voting. The list of those chosen for the 2026-27 church year will be announced at the annual Meeting. ❖

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!

- **May 7 | Entre Tierra y Recuerdo (Between Homeland and Memory)**

Tenor Pablo Bustos and pianist Priscilla Yuen will perform the program centered on themes of memory, love, and cultural storytelling, drawing on music from Argentina, Spain, and Chile.

- **May 14 | New Horizons Chorus**

The New Horizons Chorus will journey through musical eras, sharing songs from medieval chant to Renaissance polyphony and a Bach chorale. They'll also perform several contemporary pieces inspired by the classics.

- **May 21 | Honors Finale**

Enjoy the final concert of the season, featuring more amazing young high school graduates from the Honors Program at the Eastman Community Music School. ❖

Social Justice Plate: Center for Teen Empowerment

Submitted by Emma Barry

Our May Social Justice Plate Offering is designated for **The Center for Teen Empowerment Rochester** and will be collected on Sunday, May 17.

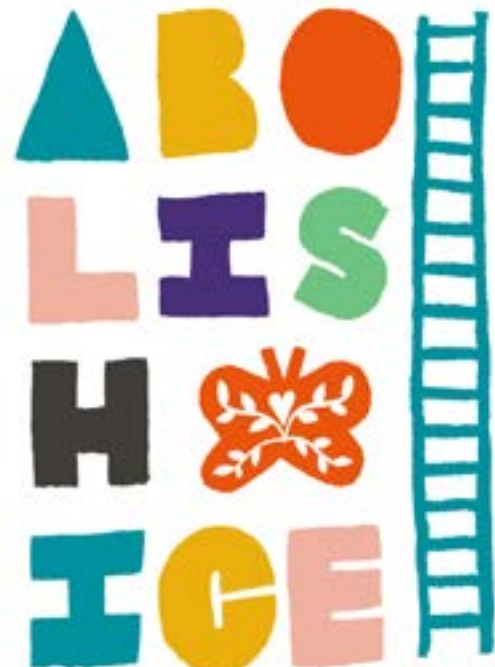
Since 1992, *The Center for Teen Empowerment* has worked to transform communities, create safe spaces, and invest in the power of youth and adult partnerships to build stronger and more socially just communities.

Please support this important work. For more info visit teenempowerment.org. ❖

Calling All Musicians!

Submitted by Ann Rhody

Music for summer services is provided by volunteers, starting on June 28. Could you be one of those volunteers? Even if you have just one piece you've always wanted to try to perform, we'll make a time for you to do it, whatever your voice or instrument! Please contact the summer music coordinator, Ann Rhody, at summermusic@uuroc.org for details and to get on the summer schedule! ❖



Queer Corner: Living Truth & Giving Forward

Submitted by Molly Bell

In our congregation, we talk about living our values out loud. The first UU principle—the inherent worth and dignity of every person—comes to mind this month as we observe the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia on May 17. This year, it feels more important than ever, but it has always been a vital need for the LGBTQIA+ community.



Our LGBTQIA+ elders lived queer lives in a world that offered them little safety and even less affirmation. They did not have Pride parades. They did not have affirming churches in most places. They did not have legal marriage, visibility in mainstream media, workplace protections, or broad public support. But they had various ways of courageously living their lives.

As Oscar Wilde wrote in 1891, “Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.” My great-aunt Ethel, born in 1888, was an example of that. Her family emigrated to the US from Canada in 1896, and she was the sixth of 11 children. (My paternal grandmother was her younger sister.) During her lifetime, as a quietly queer woman, she built a court-reporting business that was hugely successful. At a time when there were barriers to women in banking and business, she owned her own home on Lake Erie, and later had waterfront homes in Maryland and Florida. She set up college support for her many nieces and nephews, and took care of her family her entire life.

What she did not do was live “out loud” as a lesbian, but she set her own terms and did not follow most societal norms. She lived during a time when Wilde was imprisoned for “gross indecency” for his relationship with another man, showing authenticity could often come at a devastating cost. When I look around today, I see both great progress and renewed risk.

We have witnessed huge changes: marriage equality and greater representation in media and politics, among others. But for many LGBTQIA+ people, especially trans and nonbinary youth, living openly is still a courageous act.

We see the rising threats across our country—legislation targeting transgender healthcare, attempts to

restrict alternative books and curricula, and rhetoric that paints minorities as dangers rather than neighbors. The politics of fear are employing intersecting attacks on the LGBTQIA+ community and racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, and misogyny.

In spite of that, what feels different now, compared to my great-aunt’s generation, is visibility. Where earlier generations survived mostly in the shadows, today many queer people live in full color. In my own personal journey as a closeted lesbian growing up in the 1960s-70s who now has an amazing wife and a church family who has welcomed us with open arms, I am grateful every day for the opportunity to more fully be who I am.

Our affirmation of the inherent worth and dignity of every person demands our support—for queer youth in our schools, for elders who still may carry scars from their generation, and for families navigating fear in a shifting political landscape.

When I think about Aunt Ethel, I think about what she endured...but also what she gave forward. What will we give forward? ❖



News from the Coffee Hour Team

Submitted by MJ Curry

You can now make a contribution to our fund by using the QR code on the snacks table! Of course, cash and checks are always welcome.

We do have a budget, but it does not cover all of the costs of providing snacks and coffee, so we encourage your contributions as you are able.

We are always looking for new members to join the team; we are aiming now to have three people each Sunday for setup and cleanup. Training and all supplies are provided. Please contact MJ Curry to join the team!

We are moving away from providing plates and silverware to offering finger foods. This reduces the amount of work for our volunteers.

Thanks to everyone who has helped to provide coffee hour this year; our team keeps expanding, and we love welcoming visitors and new members! ❖

Spotlight on Committees & Groups: *Finance*

Submitted by Brian Mumey, Chair

In our UU community, so much of the heart and hands-on work happens behind the scenes — in our committees. That's why the Communications Committee is presenting *Spotlight on Committees & Groups*, a regular newsletter feature that celebrates the people and purpose behind these vital teams.

Each month, we'll lift up one committee's (or group's) mission, share what they're working on, and highlight ways you can get involved. Whether you're passionate about justice, music, spiritual exploration, care and connection, or the logistics that keep us running smoothly — there's a place for your gifts. Whether you're new to our congregation or have been here for years, we hope *Spotlight on Committees & Groups* will inspire you to get involved in a new way.

We hope this series will deepen your understanding of how we live our UU values through shared leadership and collaborative service — and maybe even spark your curiosity to join in!

Let's build beloved community, together.

Current Chair & Members: Brian Mumey (Chair), Ann Rhody, Dick Shroyer, Bill Jones, Dave VanArsdale, Richard Reed, & Grant Fish.

Your Group/Committee's mission or purpose: *From the Church's bylaws:* The Finance Committee has principle responsibility for the Society's financial assets and policies, fundraising activities, and capital and operating budgets.

Committee/Group responsibilities: Conduct annual Stewardship Campaign and fundraising activities and promote planned giving. Prepare a budget for review and approval by the Board and the Society. Make recommendations to the Board governing receipt, investment, and expenditure of all memorial and special funds. Oversee and establish policies for the Endowment Fund and Reserve Funds.

Something you wish people knew about your Committee/Group: We are available to answer any questions about the Church's funds/expenditures, including advice on funding special projects.

One big/special project your Committee/Group has been working on lately: Modernize our methods of accepting pledges and contributions by adding au-

tomated direct debit and Venmo.

Are you looking for new members? Yes!

Are members voted on by the congregation or do they volunteer? Volunteer

How often do you meet? Quarterly, unless an urgent matter arises.

How do you meet? By Zoom.

Are there any special qualifications/talents required to serve? Nothing required but knowledge of financial processes would be helpful! ❖

EcoJustice: Climate Justice Series

Submitted by Juanita Ball

Those who suffer the most from the effects of Climate Change are those who contributed the least to its cause. We, in the US, are all guilty (I may have solar panels, but I still drive a gas-guzzler car).

We need to change our habits, but change is hard and often painful. I propose a way to make small changes easier, challenging, and maybe even fun, based on what you enjoy doing. I will provide a list of categories with related suggestions. You then see what group or groups you could belong to. None of the choices require you to give up anything, just add to the things you already like doing. All the suggestions benefit the environment and many directly benefit your health and animals as well.

This is a small example: If you like to cook: buy local (within a 100 mile radius); for ingredients: shop at farm markets like the Public Market; buy seasonally available produce; buy organically grown food; challenge yourself by trying new locally grown food, maybe seeing how many ways you can cook cabbage; cook one vegan meal a month. Using the UUA Climate Justice database (found at tinyurl.com/m3xkma5) you could hold communal dinners with First Unitarian and UU Canandaigua churches. The What, How and Why portion explains how those suggestions benefit the environment: Cut down transportation and refrigeration, air pollution and the use of non-replaceable fuel. Vegan—eliminate the “Diseases of Affluence.”

We may be a small congregation, but what we do matters, can make a big difference, and may inspire other churches. ❖

Clara Barton Lounge Updates

Submitted by Marcy Klein, Welcome Team Chair

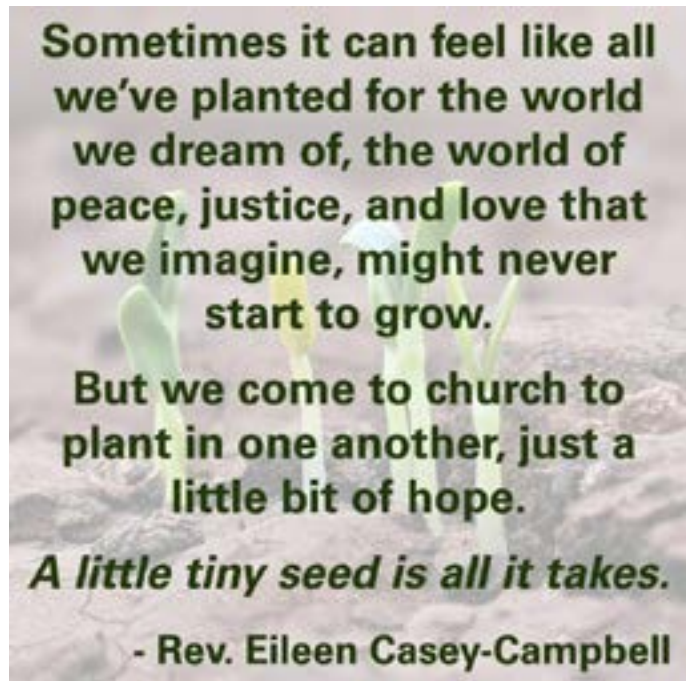
The Welcome Team has received very positive feedback about the new furniture arrangement with the additional tables and chairs. Every single seat was occupied during our Stewardship Sunday coffee hour! We will continue to monitor the situation, and brainstorm more ideas to help improve it even more. We do plan to buy matching tablecloths and plastic covers for the two rectangular dining tables and the large buffet table to dress up the area and protect the tables.

You might notice two small signs under the plastic covers of two round tables that announce "This Space Reserved for a Wheelchair." The Welcome Team wants to make sure that a wheelchair user can easily join the table conversations. We have moved chairs away from the spaces, and ask that other congregants be vigilant about keeping those two areas chair-free and open for those who might need them.



We have had an ongoing problem maintaining the correct table and chair layouts to allow maximum accessibility around the tables, in front of the coffee counter and down the main aisle, especially after the tables have been rearranged for seating at a special event. We have now posted a floor plan on the freestanding bulletin board next to the coffee counter; it shows the proper location for the furniture. If you use the room for a special event, please consult the plan and return the furniture to its original location. (The tables should be carried, not dragged, to protect the carpet.) The floor plan will be sent to all renters as well.

The Team will meet next in early June. If you have any comments or suggestions before then, you could talk to any Team member: Angelina Bell, Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell, Marcy Klein, Michael Scott, Sarah Singal, or Justin Wilson. ❖



Open Listening For All: Sponsored by Rochester Theater Organ Society

Submitted by Charlie Courtsal

Bring yourself, family and friends to listen and watch members of the *Rochester Theater Organ Society* practice on the pipe organ in our sanctuary.

From 1:30-4:30pm on Sunday, May 17, community organists will sign up to play the Hope-Jones, just for fun. Usually they play on the Wurlitzer organ at the Rochester Museum and Science Center, but it is under renovation at this time. So, we invited them to come to First Universalist. Church members are welcome to come and go, walk up to the console and speak with the organists, and listen as well at this free event. Contact Charlie Courtsal with any questions! ❖



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Rev. Angela D. Sims, Ph.D.
President



**Rev. Dr. J. Wendell
Mapson, Jr.**
CTS '70
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Preacher



**Rev. Dr. Keith A.
Russell**
CRDS '87
2026 Distinguished
Alumni/Ae Award Honoree



**Rev. Dr. Melany J.
Silas-Chandler**
CRCDS '06
2026 Peace, Service, &
Justice Award Honoree



**Rev. Eileen O.
Casey-Campbell**
CRCDS '17
2026 Emerging Leader
Award Honoree



**Dr. Aana Marie
Vigen**
Professor of Christian Social Ethics
Loyola University, Chicago
2026 Commencement
Speaker

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Event Highlights Include:

- ✓ Voices in the City: Leadership & Impact Celebration Dinner
- ✓ Alumni/Ae Chapel & Service of Remembrance
- ✓ Community Prayer Breakfast
- ✓ Special Recognitions:
 - 25th anniversary Class of 2001
 - 50th anniversary Class of 1976
- ✓ Class of 2026 Baccalaureate & Commencement Ceremony

and more!



View the full schedule and purchase tickets at:

www.crcds.edu/reunion

FREE BREAKFAST PLUS*



The Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.) of Rochester is sponsoring a FREE Breakfast Plus* for unhoused people at the

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH of ROCHESTER on THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026 - 10:00 am - 11:30am

The plus* includes free clothing, additional food, art, music (Eastman at Washington Square), case management & access to multiple local agencies including PCHO, Catholic Charities, Helio Health, V.A. Outreach, The Center for Youth, House of Mercy, Open Door Mission, Safe Options Support & La Madonna Del Strata.

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Registration Open!



New York State Convention of Universalists

2026 Annual Meeting

at the

UU Weekend at Silver Bay

October 9-11, 2026

Registration is open NOW!

Visit nyscu.org for registration form and information

UU Weekend at Silver Bay is a gathering of over 200 UU's, on the shores of Lake George. In addition to the NYSCU Business meeting, the weekend features workshops, music, activities, and meals, with opportunities for relaxation and fellowship. For more information on the weekend, click here: <https://albanyuu.org/blog/uu-silver-bay-weekend/>



The NYSCU Board of Trustees has approved a subsidy of \$300 toward registration for those who serve as delegates from a NYSCU member congregation and attend the annual meeting in person.

To check for your congregation's NYSCU membership status, use this link:

<http://localhost/About Us/joining.shtml>



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.

Minister | Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

Minister of Lifespan Faith Dev. |
Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

Office Manager | Mx. Emma Barry

Cong. Life Coordinator | Justin Wilson

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Worship begins at 10:30am on Sundays

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

More info is available on our website: uuroc.org

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