

# Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

January 2013

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## Sunday Services | January 2013

**January 6** | *Fire Communion Service*

A symbolic gesture involving writing things you want to say goodbye to from the past year, clearing the way for the new.

-- Patti Goodwin will be leading this service



**January 13** | *To be announced*



**January 20** | *Spirit*

What does it mean to be a person of spirit? Clearly, The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was one such soul. First Universalist aspires in its mission statement to "nurture the spirit". What, exactly, might this mean? As our Quaker Friends might ask, "How is it with thy spirit?"

-- Rev. Martha Munson



**January 27** | *Community*

First Universalist aspires in its mission statement to "serve the community". What, exactly, might this mean? Who comprises our community? Who comprises yours? Who or what do you serve?

-- Rev. Martha Munson



Our regular morning service as well as Religious Education classes begin at 10:30am.



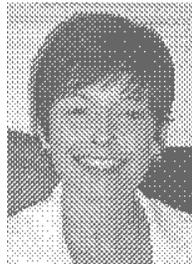


## Walking With You

Message from the Interim Minister

As we begin this New Year, 2013, together I want to thank and appreciate all of you who participated in Transition Team events this fall. – And I offer my heartfelt thanks to the Team: Karl Abbott, Ann Rhody, Mary Louise Gerek, Bill Elwell, and Santosha Kuykendall. A stellar group! At the last sharing of the P.E.P (People Engaging People) Rally Summary event, I was asked about how to promote a sense of belonging among newcomers. I know how to do this! I said, something like, “If I tell you, will you do it?” Herewith what I would propose..... If you want folks to become a part of First Universalist, there are several things you might do. These are things we might do to welcome newcomers. First, we engage them! We sometimes call these people “visitors” but I am increasingly convinced that to think of them as “guests” is more fitting. One visits, is a visitor, in museums; one is a guest, an honored guest, in someone’s home. The building on the corner of S. Clinton and Court is home to your congregation, the women, men, boys, and girls, who currently attend. If you think of newcomers as guests in your home, you bear special responsibility to help them feel welcome. If people come to visit you at your house, you do not ignore them (or greet them briefly and then move on to other things). You do not fail to offer them the opportunity to join you in something to eat (coffee hour), nor talk business with other family members while they are there. Rather, you focus on them. You greet them, share with them, and try to help them feel comfortable. Further, if you are expecting guests, you do not fail to be home. So, I invite you to be present in this New Year to welcome your guests, to help them feel comfortable, to show them that you are a friendly, inclusive, life-giving community of faith. **Perhaps the most important thing you can do is to be present on Sunday mornings.** I look forward to seeing you each and all again at First Universalist in 2013. ❖

Faithfully,  
*Martha*



## Gleanings

from Religious Growth & Learning

Submitted by Rev. Lori Staubitz, Consulting Religious Educator

Have you ever asked yourself “Why am I doing this? Do you ever question the reasons behind your efforts to get up on Sunday mornings, get dressed (helping others to do the same), head out the door and come to church? Consider spending a Sunday morning contemplating the question of “Why?”

Your answer is important. No matter what structure, function or strategy, every effort to create, build, sustain and grow a ministry will ultimately arise from a personal yearning for “something beyond the self”, most often universal desires we all have for wholeness, communion (connection), justice, growth and love.

Organized “religion” is our way of helping this well-spring of spirituality rise to the surface and find expression through our shared endeavors.

If you find it difficult to come to Worship each Sunday or perhaps you can’t see yourself as a regular participant in Adult Education classes or Small Group Ministry, consider this poem by Hafiz of Persia (1320-1389). He often poked fun at religion to get to the deeper heart, mind and body of human spirituality.

### “STOP BEING SO RELIGIOUS”

What do sad people have in common?

It seems they have all built a shrine to the past

And often go there and do a strange wail and worship.

What is the beginning of happiness?

It is to stop being

SO religious

Like That.

In these winter months we have shared opportunities for adult religious growth and learning. Please consider the spirit and power you bring to our common experience! Explore with us as we expand participation beyond the Sunday morning worship experience to continue to tap into the deeper yearnings of the human mind, body and spirit through our Adult Religious Growth and Learning programs. Bring a friend... have fun “being religious together!” See you on Sunday - Rev. Lori Staubitz ❖



## The Church of the Larger Fellowship

*Submitted by Michael Scott*

Quick: where can you find the largest congregation in the Unitarian Universalist Association? Answer: nowhere in particular, but everywhere at once, and mostly online these days!

The Unitarian Church of the Larger Fellowship, a “church by mail,” was founded in 1944. A vision of the Rev. Frederick May Eliot, then President of the American Unitarian Association, it provided worship materials and a sense of connectedness for geographically isolated Unitarians, including members of the armed forces. Three years later, the Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship was founded by the Rev. Clinton Lee Scott, Superintendent of the Massachusetts Universalist Convention. When the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged in 1961, the two CLFs joined as well.

Under the leadership of the Rev. George Marshall, and with financial support from the UUA, CLF grew to some 5000 members by the late 1960s. In the throes of a denominational financial crisis, it was spun off in 1970 as an independent member congregation of the UUA.

In 1985, CLF called as minister the Rev. Eugene Pickett, who had just completed two terms as President of the UUA. Under Pickett’s leadership, the congregation

expanded its mission to serve not only isolated individual UUs, but also small groups and even members of local congregations who sought a wider connection.

Shortly before the turn of the century, with the Rev. Jane Rzepka at the helm, CLF took a leap onto the World Wide Web. As online communication supplanted postal mail, the web gradually became the congregation’s principal means of connection.

Today CLF has more than 3500 members, in 60 nations around the globe, and an annual budget in excess of \$600,000. Its staff of 12 is led by the Rev. Meg Riley, formerly Director of Advocacy and Witness for the UUA. The congregation sponsors an astounding variety of programs and materials, and offers counseling through a 1-800 number.

While CLF is currently the UUA’s only official member congregation without a geographical location, it seems unlikely to remain so for long. With the continued growth of online communities and social media, other informal congregations have begun to organize (see, for example, the First UU Congregation of Second Life).

In 2011 and 2012, delegates to the UUA General Assembly approved changes to the UUA Bylaws that systematically replaced the phrase “local churches and fellowships” with “member congregations,” paving the way for future congregations whose members are tied to one another not by shared location, but simply by mutual interest.

For more on CLF, visit [questformeaning.org](http://questformeaning.org) ❖

## Cozy Friday Night Suppers with Multigenerational Religious Education

*Submitted by Connie Valk*

The second in a series of Suppers with Religious Education will be held on January 25 at 5:30 PM. The topic, in fitting with the new year, is “*Beginnings*”.

Supper is provided by the RE Committee, with help from others in the Church. Childcare is provided for children under age six, if you let Connie Valk know one week in advance.

Sign up on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge, on the website:<http://uuroc.org>, or call Connie at 467-3191. ❖

# First Universalist Church Adult Growth & Learning

As part of our Adult Religious Education program, we have designed several offerings to complement the online International event "Winter Feast For The Soul". We invite you to participate online for a personal time of spiritual practice and attend the Adult Religious Education offerings we have here in our home church to complement your experience. What a wonderful way to "dive deeper" as we together we tend to the body, mind and spirit in the New Year!

## ONLINE INTERNATIONAL EVENT

### *2013 Winter Feast For The Soul*

winterfeastforthesoul.com, Since 2008  
January 15th - February 23rd, 2013

## FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH EVENTS

"Winter Feast For the Soul" Adult RE Offering:

### • *Permaculture As Spiritual Practice*

This three session workshop is an Introduction to Urban Edible Forest Gardening (otherwise known as Permaculture). Permaculture is a design science meant to provide for human needs in ways that are regenerative for The Earth and humans. The ethics of permaculture are: Earth Care; Human Care; Resource Share. Join us for a community learning experience in the practical applications of permaculture both in our gardens and our daily lives as we explore the connections between permaculture and UU principles. We will learn about designing patterns, building guilds, and creating sustainable community through facilitated discussions and hands-on exercises.

**When:** Wed. Evenings - Feb. 13, 20, 27<sup>th</sup> - 6:30-8:00 p.m.

**Who:** Facilitator Patty Love, Rochester Permaculture Ctr.

**Sponsor:** First Universalist Church of Rochester

**Where:** First Universalist Church; Clara Barton Lounge  
150 S. Clinton Ave., Rochester, NY 14604

**Cost:** No charge; free to all members of the community  
Sign-up to reserve your spot by February 1, 2013

**Contact:** RSVP by calling (585) 546-2826 or Email  
dre@uuroc.org

### • *"I've Got A New Way To Talk"*

As part of our celebration of the "Winter Feast For the Soul" we invite you to join in this three part adult series on developing tools for creative Life change.

- What if you learned the secret to limiting destructive family drama?
- How would it feel to have your new ideas being encouraged and supported!
- Surprise yourself on how well you can handle a difficult situation?
- Come join in this joyful and interactive time as we think outside the box and develop some new ways of being in relationship with others.

**Facilitator:** Rev. Lori Staubitz;  
Director of Religious Education

**Location:** First Universalist Church of Rochester;  
Clara Barton Lounge

**Dates:** March 6th, 13th, 20th

**Time:** 6:30p.m-8:00p.m.

**Registration:** No charge;  
Respond by February 27, 2013  
Sign-up by calling 585 546-2826 or e-mail  
DRE@uuroc.org

### Session #1

One Among Many; New Tools for Empowering Relationships

*Systems Thinking / Conflict Management  
Personal Assessment*

*Social Dynamics / Leading in Anxious Times  
Triangulation*

### Session #2

Imagine This Is Heaven; The Beauty That Is Before Us

*Daily Practice for Health and Leadership  
Universal Meditation / Mindfulness Thinking*

### Session #3

The Art of Creative Problem Solving

*Appreciative Inquiry: "A Positive Revolution in Change"  
I've Never Thought this Way Before! ❖*



# Transition Team: *Time For Action*

*Submitted by Ann Rhody*

Well, we've spent the Fall hearing from members and friends at our PEP (People Engaging People) rallies, and now we've shared the results with the Board, leaders, and the wider congregation. Based on the results and the rich conversations that followed, the next step in our process is an action plan!

We, as the Interim Minister and Transition Team members, view the most critical work of the congregation as follows: To clarify who we are, what we do, and be excited, effective, and energized about sharing that with others. To that end, we've identified several areas of specific focus:

- More clearly defining our mission statement of “nurture the spirit and serve the community” to ourselves and others. What exactly does it mean, and what are some ways we can better express it in our church life?
- Coming to honor the past while keeping an eye to the future. This will include work on processing any lingering congregational wounds, and releasing them so that we can focus solidly on what our church is today as well as what we want it to be tomorrow.
- Becoming more practiced in the best ways to attract, welcome and integrate visitors. While we are very good at initial welcoming (many of us go out of our way to welcome a new person during the service), we'll learn ways to provide a “gentle warmth” that continues as we help newer friends become part of the congregation.

- Finding ways to enhance the effectiveness of church operations, including communication and how to better support and trust our leaders, both lay and professional. The ongoing Bylaw work will help, so this area is already well under way!

Note that our strategies will not include complicated and long-term processes and plans, but will focus on specific things we can do NOW to move ourselves ahead in all four of the areas above. More detailed plans and action steps will come from sermons, Our Outlook, and in a variety of other forms.

The Interim Minister and the Transition Team will facilitate these efforts, but as Martha so often reminds us, these changes are ours as a congregation to make. After all, it was the congregation which identified the areas where changes are needed. That means that without us (and by us, we mean YOU), each and all of us, it cannot be done. So let's join hands, hearts, heads to lead our beloved congregation forward!

Ann Rhody for the Transition Team: Karl Abbott, chair; Bill Elwell, Mary Louise Gerek, Santosha Kuykendall. ❖



## What About 1,300,000 Children?

*Submitted by Marti Eggers*



That's how many children will be homeless next year. Homeless families are often hidden from our view—they are living in shelters, cars, campgrounds, or doubled up in overcrowded apartments. The Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN) was established to provide shelter and support to such families as they work toward returning to independence.

First Universalist will be hosting homeless families in our church from January 13<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>. In this season of giving, please consider giving a few hours of your time in the New Year to RAIHN. You can start right now by signing up with Chris DeGolyer - [chrisdeg@frontiernet.net](mailto:chrisdeg@frontiernet.net). Let's fill all the volunteer slots before the end of the year! ❖

# Drop-In Discussion, January Schedule

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday 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. Our discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 a.m., preceding the Sunday service. Here is the schedule.

## January 6 | *Surprising Turkey*

Modern Turkey is a land of contradictions: it's both Asian and European, both Moslem and secular, with a history of great brutality and great beauty, and both burkhas and bikinis on the beach. Marcy Klein will share some pictures and surprising insights from her recent trip to Turkey..

## January 13 | *What Is Morality?*

Is there anything that is absolutely right or wrong, or are morality and ethics a matter of opinion? Do you have to believe in a church, a creed or a sacred book to have a foundation for morality? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

## January 20 | *Open forum discussion* or to be announced.

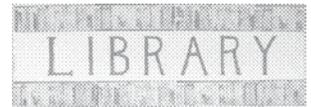
## January 27 | *The New Jim Crow*

Michelle Alexander argues in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* that the so-called war on drugs is an attack on the civil rights of black people. African-Americans are much more likely to be imprisoned for minor drug offenses than whites, which becomes an excuse for discrimination in employment, housing and much else. Phil Ebersole will summarize the book and lead a discussion.

Topics are subject to change. For updates, check the bulletin board in First Universalist Church's Clara Barton lounge or the Schedule of Drop-In Discussions on <<http://philebersole.wordpress.com>>. ❖

# Library News

Submitted by Keith Stott



*Olympia Brown: The Battle for Equality*, is the biography of the first woman in our country to receive formal recognition as a minister by a denomination – ours!

Brown (1835–1926) was strongly supported by her mother Lephia, a staunch Universalist, when she decided to attend St. Lawrence Theological School and become a minister after having to deal with many orthodox evangelicals at Mount Holyoke and Antioch Colleges. In a letter to her daughter Lephia advised “Don't regard the notion sometimes advanced that it is wrong to use reason in religious opinions.”

After many years of campaigning for women's rights, Olympia, along with Antoinette Brown Blackwell, who “inspired her to be all that she could be when she was but a young girl,” cast their first ballots on November 2, 1920.

You can see just from her portrait on the book jacket what a determined person Olympia Brown was.

**Call number is 921B.** ❖

## LUUnch BUUnch



Submitted by Connie Valk

The LUUnch BUUnch will gather on January 20 at Dac Hoa, 230 Monroe Avenue at noon after the service. The prices on the menu are modest; the food is yummy. There are also over a dozen vegetarian options. All are welcome!

## UU ladies Who Lunch

Submitted by Elizabeth Osta

On Tuesday, January 22nd at 12 noon at Monroe's restaurant, 3001 Monroe Avenue (the old Spring House), a group of lucky UU ladies will lunch together as a first in a monthly luncheon event. The group will decide each month where to go next and the Outlook will have the details.

For January UU ladies who lunch please contact Elizabeth Osta ([elizabethosta@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethosta@gmail.com) or 586-9947 with your reservation by Friday, January 18th.

Hope you can join in this time of camaraderie and fun. ❖

# House Report Highlights - January 2013

*Submitted by Alain Perregaux*

## **Sanctuary Renovation.**

1. **Sound.** The addition of four speakers above and below the balconies is causing more resonance in the sanctuary space than we had in the past. Based on the feedback from church members, we are making small tweaks every week with the hope that we will eventually find a acceptable compromise.
2. **Fire Detection.** The bid request process has begun. In these discussions we learned that there is no such thing as a standard, fits all approach to installing a fire detection system. As the Fire Marshall suggested during his recent visit, we must first imagine how and where a fire is most likely to start. Then, a system is developed based on this assumption, and based on the available budget. The process will take much discussing and negotiating. In the end, we would like to receive quotes from three installers.
3. **Lighting.** The documentation for the installation of two sets of three "theatre type" lights above each balcony, facing the chancel, was made available to three electrical contractors. The goal is to get three quotes.
4. **Floor and Pews.** All the documents are being assembled. The project will go for bids probably in January. The plan is for the work to begin on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. By that date, we expect the fire detection and the lighting to be installed.

## **Routine Repairs and Maintenance.**

1. The exterior sill of the stained glass window facing North, off the choir loft, is now repaired.
2. **Radiator Valve.** On Saturday 12/1, Martha discovered that a valve on the NE radiator of the sanctuary was spewing steam and hot water. Bill Taillie came over a couple of hours later and determined that the packing in that particular valve was completely missing.
3. **Parking Lot Light.** The center light stopped working a few weeks ago. We feared that the ballast had died. The electrician came on Wednesday 12/5 and discovered that the problem was a corroded contact.

4. **Downspout.** While touring the building with an electrician, we discovered that a downspout in the SE corner of the choir loft, just inside the organ chamber, was wet. It looks as though there is a blockage under the floor of the kitchen or of the lounge. A plumber was scheduled to come Friday 12/14 to snake the drain traps as well as look at this new problem at the same time.

## **Third Floor Temperature Control.**

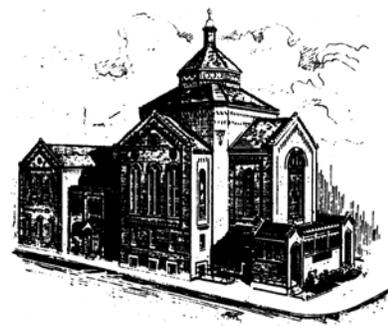
Most of us remember that Sunday morning in February 2010 when water was found to leak from the radiator in room 35 and to continue its journey down to room 25.

It was caused by a combination of three circumstances:

- extremely cold weather;
- too much air in the heating pipes;
- a radiator valve that was nearly closed.

On that day, the water in the radiator froze and caused the pipe to burst.

- **Recent Discovery.** The door to room 31 (where the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor thermostat is located) was shut and all the valves on the radiators in rooms 33, 34 & 35 were in the fully closed position. It was the perfect recipe for another frozen radiator.
- **Recommendation.** During the week, when the thermostat in room 31 is set at 55 deg., all doors of the third floor must be kept wide open and the radiator valves in rooms 33, 34 & 35 must be kept at the position 3 or above (out of 8). The purpose is to equalize the temperature on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and to make it very unlikely that a pipe will freeze again. ❖



## **First Universalist Church**

150 South Clinton Avenue

Rochester, NY 14604

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# **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 services and Religious Education classes begin at 10:30am Sundays**

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**Minister** | Rev. Martha Munson

**Director of Religious Education** | Rev. Lori Staubitz

**Music Director** | Bryan Holten

**Sexton** | Brandon Fagan

**Nursery Care Provider** | Carol Williams

**Office Administrator** | Kris McCarty White

*Office hours, Tuesday through Friday, 8:30am–2:45pm. Telephone 585.546.2826*

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### **Board Of Trustees**

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