



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

Minister

Rev. Lane Campbell
minister@uuroc.org

Minister of Life Span Faith Development

The Rev. Michelle Yates
edu@uuroc.org
(585) 310-2484

Director of Music

Brock Tjosvold
music@uuroc.org

Office Manager

Emma Barry
office@uuroc.org



First Universalist
Church of Rochester

150 South Clinton Ave
Rochester, NY 14604
585-546-2826
uuroc.org

Sunday Services | December 2020

December 6 | *The Need for Stillness*

Rev. Lane has been away for a week of retreat and will be sharing reflections on stillness. As this season slows our world down, let us explore stillness as a spiritual discipline.

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

December 13 | *Do You Hear What I Hear?*

As we continue how to care for ourselves and our souls, listening is deeply central to our growth, to the feeding of and tending to our souls. How is this complicated when we are hard of hearing? What are the many ways we can listen?

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

December 20 | *A Celebration of Light*

First Universalist's annual Winter Solstice service, celebrating the longest night of the year. With stories, song, and ritual, we will observe earth-based practices for honoring the return of the light and honoring this time of year.

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

December 24 | *That Glorious Song of Old*

It's Christmas Eve! Complete with a no-rehearsal Christmas Pageant, a time to tell the stories and sing the songs. In advance of this service, please send us a photo of you holding a candle in the dark—it will be used during the service.

— *Rev. Lane Campbell*

December 27 | *The No-Resolutions New Year*

Congratulations—we've made it (almost) to the end of 2020! How might it feel if, instead of making resolutions and plans for self improvement, we choose to step gently into the New Year with no expectations, just letting ourselves be who we are?

— *Bridget Watts*

❖ **Service begins at 10:30am - Christmas Eve at 7pm** ❖

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. ❖

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Self-Care as Self-Preservation

Message from Rev. Lane Campbell

As you are reading this, it is likely I am away on retreat or returning from a retreat I am taking in late November. With the seasons' changes, with all that has transpired this fall, it feels like a ripe time to get away for some stillness and for some tending to the soul. It is my deepest wish for all of us to have a moment of pause, to take a break of some sort, and to just get grounded in this moment.

Our theme for the month of December is Care of the Self, Care of the Soul. Following a busy election season, with holidays that are funky and outside of our norm, this time of year feels like the perfect time for self-care. So often, we are spending time caring for the needs of others, making sure folks are remaining connected, checking in on the most vulnerable in our lives. Where have you been able to make space for you alongside all of that?

In my kitchen, there is a wall hanging with a quote from Audre Lorde on it and it says, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation and that is an act of political warfare." I love the way she reframes self-care in the midst of a capitalist system that would tell us we are not worthy of care, that to care for ourselves is self-indulgence. She turns it around to be self-preservation, to be an act of honoring our own worth and dignity. We are worthy of preserving. And the only way we are going to make it through a pandemic and remaining political uncertainties and economic devastation is through caring for ourselves, tending to our spirits, tending to our souls.

I look forward to sharing with you all some of what I experience while away on retreat during my first sermon in December, "The Need for Stillness." Please continue to take good care of yourselves. ❖



Care of Self, Care of Soul

Message from Rev. Michelle Yates

This time of year, as I put an extra blanket layer on the bed, I often feel a connection to bears and other animals that settle in to hibernate for the cold dark months. How I long to stay snuggled in safe and warm, and rest when it is cold outside...and that was before 2020!

One might think that the only reason some animals hibernate is to survive the winter; to hide from the dark and the cold. Perhaps it is more a part of the balance of nature. As Ecclesiastes describes "there is a time to every purpose under heaven." It feels very different to think about winter as permission to or a call to rest and be still.

Animals do not sleep well when it is not dark, and the lack of good rest has serious health effects and can even lead to death. We found this out when my daughter used her fish tank light as a night light. Our brains and bodies need that rest to integrate change and things we have learned; to renew and heal. I used to stay up late studying for school, and my mom would threaten to turn off the circuit breaker to my room. "But I need to get this information in my head!" I would say. "But you need rest so that it will stay there!" she would answer.

The world is shutting off the circuit breaker and telling us to stop. We all have so much to process, and we need rest and care to be able to do that. If there was ever a time to break unhealthy habits or unsustainable patterns, now is the time.

So, make your bear cave. Bundle up, grab an extra blanket, make a pillow fort. Take this time to feel into your body and soul to listen to what care it is needing from you at this time and DO IT!

From my bear cave to yours, much warmth and love!

Yours in the journey, Rev. Michelle Yates ❖



The Chalices of First Universalist!



Welcome New Members of First Universalist!



Name: Ezekiel McGee

What drew you to First Universalist?: A few years ago I was feeling very disconnected, and wanted to find a place where I could take time to think about what my values and ethics were. I had friends that spoke with me about UU in the past, so I thought it would be worthwhile to look into local churches. When I attended a service I enjoyed the space, and was enamored with how kind everyone was. Life got in the way, and I wasn't able to come back for a few years. When the pandemic happened I saw that virtual services had started and I took it as a sign to try again.

Tell us something interesting about yourself: I am from Michigan originally, and came to Rochester for grad school. Right now I work at St. John Fisher, and am studying to become a librarian. I have an adorable cat, Sid.



Name: Julie Kleinhans

What drew you to First Universalist?: What really drew me to First Universalist was the welcoming community. I've attended sporadically since moving to Rochester, and was greeted by someone each and every time. Last year at this time I joined the choir and began attending regularly. The choir also is such a welcoming group and I love the music program at church. I'm looking forward to singing together in person again, in our beautiful sanctuary!

Tell us something interesting about yourself: I have two cats and a dog. I sing with Eastman Rochester Chorus and volunteer at WXXI. I love to bake, knit, hike and forage. The past several years I've been volunteering at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory.



Name: Monica Tyne

What drew you to First Universalist?: Philosophy. Many service opportunities. Friendly parishioners!

Tell us something interesting about yourself: I play banjo and I like to sing, hike, make things.

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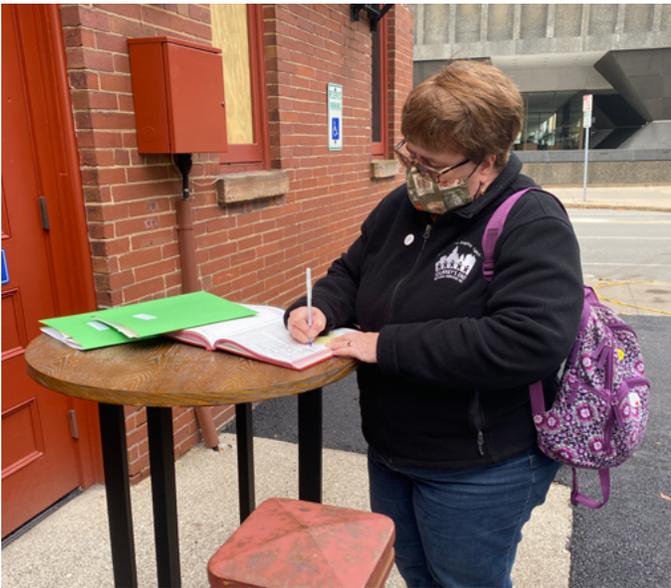
Welcome New Members of First Universalist *Continued*



Name: John Palocy

What drew you to First Universalist?: Universalism is not exclusive, in most respects. I have included various world views, and spiritual groups in my life. Currently my daily practice is around the Buddhist tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh, and am also a member of the Blooming Lilac Sangha. I spent the last 20+ years as a music director/key-boardist in a local church. Fellowship is also a strong pull to our new church. I need to be with a group of like-minded people to help me stand up. First Universalist has a wonderful ministry, rich activities, outreach opportunities.

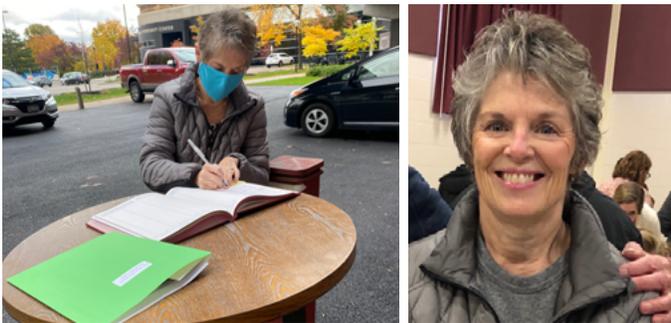
Tell us something interesting about yourself: I grew up in a small house in the hills above Syracuse. My father and grandmother spoke Hungarian around the house.



Name: Jean Ott

What drew you to First Universalist?: As soon as I moved to the Rochester area, I knew I would become a member at First Universalist. My mother and my grandfather were raised as Universalists at this church. My grandmother and uncle were members until their deaths. Three members of my family have attempted to become UU ministers. My grandfather and my uncle both went to St. Lawrence to become ministers; neither did. I have my Masters of Divinity degree from United Theological Seminary. I got further along than they did and I am very glad I attended divinity school.

Tell us something interesting about yourself: I currently volunteer with Keeping Our Promise. The mission of KOP is to provide comprehensive resettlement assistance to our wartime allies. These wartime partners were former local interpreters and support personnel of the U.S. government in conflict zones.



Name: Susan Keefe

What drew you to First Universalist?: I heard Rev Lane at the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and enjoyed hearing her, and wanted to come to First Universalist. I really have enjoyed coming even if only in person for 5 weeks due to COVID. I am enjoying attending with Zoom. Everyone has been so welcoming.

Tell us something interesting about yourself: I am married to Maurice Keefe. We just celebrated our 17th anniversary. I have four children and ten grandchildren. I am a retired nurse. My interests are reading, exercise, and music. Before COVID I enjoyed volunteering at Foodlink, and one of the city schools and look forward to being able to volunteer again when its safe.

Drop-In Discussion Schedule

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 for the Zoom link!

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 the discussions.

Check our website for more details as these dates approach!

December Drop-In-Discussion dates:

- December 1
- December 8
- December 15
- December 22

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

Christmas Bags for First Universalist



Submitted by Rev. Lane Campbell

As we prepare for Christmas Eve services, First Universalist will be distributing some bags the week-end before Christmas with a candle to light during the service, a printed order of service, a special role for our no-rehearsal Christmas pageant, and some cookies! We are hoping to really re-create elements of

the service for everyone as we remain physically distant, even the usual cookie reception.

- **Cookie Collection** on Wednesday, Dec. 16 from 3-6pm. Come by the church parking lot and drop off a plate or package of cookies. Vegan and gluten-free cookies are appreciated.

- **Bag Assembly** on Friday, Dec. 18 from 12-2pm. We need 4 volunteers max to remain masked and physically distant inside the Clara Barton Lounge to assemble the Christmas Eve Bags

Christmas Bag Collection Times:

- *Friday, December 18 from 3-6pm*
- *Saturday, December 19 from 10am-12pm*
- *Sunday, December 20 from 1-3pm*

Please come by to pick up a Christmas Eve Bag at the times listed above and say "Hello!" to folks from our church community in the parking lot. ❖

Caring Committee

Submitted by Paula Marchese

During the last eight months we have been blessed to be healthy and safe in our homes. The needs from the committee have been minimal but we continue to reach out with calls and cards. As always, please let us know if you need help; simply go to the website and send a message through the "Care" link.

Now is a good time to assess our home safety needs, and with that in mind we've compiled a list of safety measures:

- Do you need an alert button for emergencies?
- Does a relative/friend/neighbor have a key to your home?
- Do you need additions to the home (such as railings, grab bars in the bath and other areas)?
- Do you have a current Health Care Proxy/Living Will in place?
- Do you have contact info on file with the Church Office?
- Is your home set up for comfort and safety?
- Do you carry your cell phone with you on walks?

The Caring Committee extends warm holiday wishes and thanks to our congregation, without whom we could not serve our church community. ❖

Finance News & Notes

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

• **Thank you for keeping those pledge payments and contributions coming!** We are more than 1/3 of the way through this strange and uncertain fiscal year, and as of now, we are “in the black,” with both income and expenses running below budget.

• **Would you like to help thank our wonderful staff by contributing to a Holiday bonus for them?** Instead of doing a Sunday plate offering for this purpose, we are inviting all who are interested to mail a check to church, or contribute online for staff bonuses. Please indicate “*staff bonus*” in the memo line of your check, or use the “leave a note” option on the donation link on the website when you contribute. In order to process the donations and get them to staff in time for the holidays, please be sure to send your contribution by Sunday, December 13. Please contact Ann Rhody at finance@uuroc.org if you have questions.

• **The 2019-2020 Treasurer’s report is available.** This is a final accounting of the fiscal year which ended on June 30, 2020. If you’d like to receive a copy of the report, please contact finance@uuroc.org, and we’ll provide you with one! Thanks to Treasurer Dick Shroyer for producing the report, and for the work he does all year long to keep the church’s finances running smoothly. ❖



Created by Vanessa Santos on unitednations.talenthouse.com

RAIHN Update

Submitted by Marti Eggers

Homelessness doesn't take a break. Families experiencing homelessness are still being hosted by RAIHN congregations while families are being safely housed in a supporting motel.

From the RAIHN Director

We are reaching out to share some important and exciting news. Over the course of the next six months, RAIHN (*Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network*) will be transitioning its name to **Family Promise of Greater Rochester**. Our mission remains the same: to provide services to vulnerable families in the community, while recognizing the promise each family has to realize their potential. RAIHN started as a shelter program in 2004 and has expanded its programming to include an aftercare program and eviction prevention program. As a 16-year affiliate of Family Promise, this is an opportunity to formalize our relationship, which will further enhance our services to truly reflect the five points of the Family Promise star: shelter, stabilization, prevention, community, and promise:

• **Shelter Program** unites diverse faith organizations, volunteers and social services to provide shelter and food. It has grown to include a move to a new Day Center in 2017 and the addition of a transitional bridge apartment.

• **Aftercare & Stabilization Program** provides case management services for each family as they transition from shelter to permanent housing and has an 85% success rate of keeping families housed.

• **Prevention & Rehousing Program** has provided 127 families with funding assistance to prevent an eviction, divert a homelessness episode, or regain housing. This program has been especially imperative during COVID-19.

• **Community:** our 1,800 trained volunteers are the backbone of our work. This powerful resource of volunteers is called to action to serve those with needs greater than their own.

• **And finally promise**, which indicates the promise we make to the community to continue to grow and address the needs of families holistically, while recognizing the promise that each family brings to catalyze their strengths into success.

Please continue this journey with us and know that community gives families a chance to build a better future. Thank you! ❖

Someone Deserves Hearty Congratulations

Submitted by the Committee on Ministry

Our own Reverend Lane Campbell recently learned from the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) that she has achieved Full Fellowship. This does not simply mean a passage of time since Divinity School, although it does include passage of time, and it is not an easy path.

Michael Scott, a current member of the Committee on Ministry, has summarized aspects of the path to ministry:

“In addition to academic training, candidates for fellowship must have the sponsorship of a UU congregation, and must complete a career assessment program, a year-long internship under the direction of a senior mentor, an intensive unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (ministry in a health-care setting), and an extensive reading list. Finally, they must survive a grueling review before the Ministerial Fellowship committee. Only then do they receive preliminary fellowship, at which point the Transitions Office will assist them in finding a settled pastorate. Preliminary fellowship lasts a minimum of three years, at which point a successful candidate may be promoted to full fellowship with the UUA.”

To advance to full fellowship, a minister must apply for renewal of fellowship three times; each renewal is the result of a year of reflection and evaluation. For a parish minister, the church's board of trustees, Committee on Ministry, and the minister herself complete evaluations that are submitted to the UUA. For Rev. Lane, the first year of this process took place at her former congregation in Columbus. The second and third years were completed here at First Universalist.

Rev. Lane, after completing seminary training and then all steps for preliminary fellowship, successfully found a settled pastorate, which we all know was a long involved process in itself, and moved to Rochester and First Universalist. Then began two more years of personal and professional scrutiny.

Rev. Lane, our Board of Trustees, and the Committee on Ministry each focussed on eight aspects of ministerial competence. Three lengthy reports were submitted to the MFC at the end of the first year. Rev. Lane's preliminary fellowship was

successfully renewed—and then we did it all over again! The eight areas of ministry are: Counseling and Pastoral Care, Practical Arts, Organizational Ministry, Personal and Professional Growth, Teaching (All Ages), Worship, Denominational Activities, and Prophetic Outreach.

Congratulations, Reverend Lane on achieving this milestone! So glad you are here with us! ❖

Grief Support Group starting in January

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

A semi-structured support group will begin for congregation members who are experiencing grief following the loss of beloved family members. Chalice lighting, opening words, paper-and-pencil exercises, and closing words will lend to the sacred space and intimacy of conversations.

In order to do this work in covenant and build relationships, the group will be limited to 12 members who are asked to commit to attending all sessions. These sessions will be facilitated by Theo Munson, Rev. Lane Campbell and Rev. Michelle Yates and held virtually on Zoom.

The group will meet for 8 weeks on Thursdays from 10am to 11:30am beginning January 14, 2021. To sign up email Rev. Michelle at edu@uuroc.org. ❖

House News

Submitted by Ed Deller

Although we haven't been able to worship together in the church building, the House Committee has continued to work on necessary maintenance and improvements. Some key activities to note:

- The parking lot has been repaved. No more pot holes! Thanks again to Moritz Wagner for all the leg work on this project.
- We passed the fire inspection in October
- Work on the glass cold blast barrier in the Clara Barton Lounge has started and should be done in December.
- The building and garden are ready for winter!

Thank you to all our excellent volunteers and staff who keep our building running! ❖



by Chevron Beckley on unitednations.talenhouse.com

It is important to be aware and take care of your mental health during this pandemic.

THINGS TO DO TO AVOID THE BLUES

Race in a Brave Space (RiBS)

Dialogues with Verdis L. Robinson

This series of dialogues creates a brave space to learn, grow, and act toward antiracism—all in the context of our UU principles—especially concerning the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Participants will engage in real talk about race in relationship to (1) American History, (2) the Unitarian Universalist faith, (3) local Rochester history, and (4) an inspiring meditation to lift up racial justice.

All sessions will be virtual from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Dialogue #1:

“What My History Teacher Never Taught Me” – Friday, October 16

Drawing from Mr. Robinson’s teaching African American history and decolonizing American history, we will explore hard truths by lifting up marginalized voices and experiences. We will learn what was intentionally left out of the historical narrative, why, and what to do about it.

Dialogue #2:

“Wilderness Journey” – Friday, November 13

Participants will preview the film, *Wilderness Journey: The Struggle for Black Empowerment and Racial Justice within the Unitarian Universalist Association, 1967-1970* (found on YouTube). We will reflect together on its lessons, what is currently plaguing our religious tradition, and imagine what our future as UUs could look like.

Dialogue #3:

Rochester’s History of Systemic Racism – Friday, January 22, 2021

From the fiery destruction of Frederick Douglass’ home to the uprising in July 1964 to the perpetuation of residential segregation, we will explore the systemic racism in Rochester’s history. What have we really learned? What is being done? What is OUR vision for our community?

Dialogue #4:

Enduring the Long Night: A Meditation – Friday, March 19, 2021

Mr. Robinson will share an interpretation of Psalm 30:5 “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.” What does it take for the joy to come? We will create a collective meditation on enduring the long night of racism to get to that glorious morning together.



Verdis Robinson’s guest leadership is being sponsored by the FIRE team of the First Universalist Church. Congregational members will receive Zoom links to the virtual seminars.

To make a donation, send a check to 150 S. Clinton Ave, Rochester NY 14604, or click the donate button on uuroc.org at the top or bottom of the page. Thank you!



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—BlackkKlansman (2018, 135 min, Netflix, Amazon Prime, YouTube, Apple TV): An African American police officer successfully infiltrates the local Ku Klux Klan branch with the help of a Jewish surrogate who eventually becomes its leader. Directed by Spike Lee and based on actual events.

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.

To Register: email your film choices to FIRE@uuroc.org to receive the Zoom discussion link.

To Donate: go to uuroc.org and click on DONATE (at the bottom of the page). Thank you!





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

Office hours: Tue.–Fri. 9am–4pm;
closed Monday.

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Carol Williams & Sundae Hodge

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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.