



# 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 | September 2023

### September 3 | *Only Thing You Can Count On Is Change*

Our one guarantee in life is that change WILL happen. Join the “Fearsome Threesome”: Kitty Forbush, Patti Goodwin and Tom Williams, who will try to tackle this subject. *This service begins at 10am*  
— *Tom Williams, Patti Goodwin, & Kitty Forbush*

### September 10 | *Water Communion*

Join us for our annual water communion ritual!  
— *Worship Associates*

### September 17 | *Tuning Back In*

With all of the noise swirling around us in our day-to-day lives, how do we practice tuning into our inner selves? For some of us this involves meditation, prayer, or some other internal process. For others of us, connecting with the outside world is just what we need. Together we will explore what our core beings need and how we might tune back in to tend to them.  
— *Rev. Margaret Weis*

### September 24 | *A Life of Integrity*

What does it mean to live a life with integrity and how does our definition of the ideal shape the ways we live into it? Join us for a service where we explore these ideas together.  
— *Rev. Margaret Weis*

❖ **Services begin at 10:30am** ❖

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



## On Beginnings

*A Message from  
Rev. Margaret Weis*

I come from a family of educators. My parents taught in public school for their entire careers, and my siblings and other family continue to work in education. For this reason and many others, September means the beginning of a new year for me. Also, now that I've returned to the classroom as a graduate student, this sense of beginning is amplified.

This is true for many of our congregations. September signals a new beginning and opportunity to gather, reconnect, and recommit ourselves to one another and this shared faith tradition.

I am grateful to be part of this new beginning with all of you! As we embark on our three months of shared ministry, I look forward to worshipping with you and serving as your sabbatical minister. Together we will explore our monthly themes of belonging and rest—which are two of my favorite topics. I hope you will actively engage with these ideas and arrive at uuroc with an open mind and heart.

You may be wondering about me and what brings me to First Universalist for the fall season.

A bit about me: I am a lifelong UU originally from the Boston area. My wife, Susan, and I currently live in Ithaca and have a rescue dog named Bader. Prior to my preparation, formation, and ordination in ministry, I trained as a counselor and worked primarily with folx with PTSD in the VA hospital system. I have since served hospitals and congregations in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York. Currently, I am pursuing a Master of Public Administration degree at Cornell with a focus on human rights and social justice.

Some of you might know me from previous preaching in your sanctuary, including at your installation of Rev. Lane-Maired a few years back. They are a dear friend and colleague of mine, and I am so grateful to be able to fill the pulpit while they seek essential rest and renewal.

I look forward to being with you on Sunday, September 17, and through November! In the meantime, let's soak up these last bits of summer!

With gratitude, Rev. Margaret ❖



## Belonging and Beloved: Welcome Home

*Message from  
Rev. Michelle Yates*

The series "Secret Invasion" on Disney Plus recently introduced me to the poem below. The Marvel Comic series focuses on the plight of the shapeshifting Skrulls, whose home planet has been destroyed, trying to make a home for themselves here on Earth.

*"Late Fragment"* by Raymond Carver  
And did you get what  
you wanted from this life, even so?  
I did.  
And what did you want?  
To call myself beloved, to feel myself  
beloved on the earth.

This poem came immediately to mind when I learned about our fall worship theme of "Belonging Together." In the series "Secret Invasion," all the Skrull factions are trying to figure out their place, their way forward through tragedy and lost identity; to not only come to a place of belonging here on Earth, but wondering if they can come to a place of feeling beloved.

Being seen, heard, and known are some of the essential human cravings for belonging, but these are also essential parts of being beloved. I am still teasing apart, beyond bare definitions, what the difference and connection is between these words and feelings.

But in this time of homecoming and ingathering, of coming back to the church year together, I am keenly feeling both a sense of belonging and beloved in my relationship with First Universalist and Unitarian Universalism. I am grateful to have been able to attend our denomination's General Assembly in June, and feel part of our call to making a more just and loving world. I am grateful to strive for and wrestle with this challenge with each of you. I am grateful to feel that I belong and am beloved, with you and on this earth.

You are too! Welcome Home!

Yours in the Journey,

Rev. Michelle ❖



## Finance News: *Lessons from the Dusty Heap*

*Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair*

It has been clear for some time that the finance materials and files in both the volunteer and inner offices need to be cleared and reorganized. In July, we finally got to it! A team of Finance Committee members (Grant Fish, Brian Mumey, Kevin Parkes, and Ann Rhody) as well as Board member Jim Milch worked to get rid of the old and re-organize what stays.

Here's what I learned from that experience:

- The move to “paperless office” was definitely a smart one! The IRS requires that we keep records for 10 years. The sheer volume of paper for ten fiscal years is overwhelming! We got rid of everything prior to 2012, but that required cumbersome storage and shredding solutions. Thanks to our Treasurer, Dick Shroyer, we've been almost paperless for about 7 years now. No more paper storage or shredding needed after we hit that 10-year mark!
- Boxes stored in the boiler room will definitely become dusty. Really, really, dusty.
- Many hands really do make light work! Cleaning, sorting, and decision-making are easier with a crew.
- Finally, a powerful reminder of the impact of legacy and planned giving. We ran across a statement from the early 2000's that showed our endowment at under \$150,000. Now? It's well over a million dollars. Yes, some of that has been investment growth, and we've had some really good fiscal years when we didn't need to draw as much as we planned from the endowment. BUT the biggest factor has been major bequests from 3 individuals.

This reminder prompted me to assess my own plans. Naming the church in one's will is not a difficult thing, AND you don't have to be wealthy

to make a difference. As with pledging or any other fund-raising, many people doing small things equates to BIG results.

When a future finance team looks at the records from our era, I'd love for them to be able to look back and see that I made a difference by leaving something to the church. Please join me in this effort! Contact [finance@uuroc.org](mailto:finance@uuroc.org) for more information about how to name the church in your will or estate plans.

Here's to lighter file cabinets, wonderful volunteers, and full hearts! ❖

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## From the Board of Trustees: *Fall Leadership Assembly—You're Invited!*

*Submitted by Bridget Watts*

Please mark your calendars and save the date for our Leadership Assembly on Saturday, September 30, 9am to 12:30pm.

If you volunteer in any capacity in the church, or if you are just interested in learning more about what we're all up to, or how you can get involved, you are invited. Please come. We especially encourage Committee Chairs and team leaders to attend. If you can't, we hope you can arrange for someone to represent your committee or group.

This will be an opportunity for us to share information and ask each other questions about what is going on in every area of church ministry, and to reflect on the intentions we set for ourselves based on discussions at Leadership Assembly last year. We will also be looking ahead at the calendar for the rest of the church year.

Since our settled Minister began their sabbatical at the end of June, it has become abundantly clear what a huge role they play in connecting people and activities and sharing information. In their absence, we need to make an extra effort to connect and communicate. One way we can do this is by coming together for our Leadership Assembly.

This will be a hybrid event. You will be able to participate in person at church, or online via Zoom. More details to follow. ❖

# Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by Beth Ares

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

## Sunday, September 10 | Artificial Intelligence & ChatGPT \*In-Person\*

A discussion of artificial intelligence, ChatGPT and what these technologies may mean for our future. Tim Mullins, who teaches computer science, will present. Please bring your cell phone.

## September 5 | Open Topic

What's on your mind? School is back in session; is summer really over? Our new church year is starting, hopefully we can expect coffee back for coffee hour!

## September 12 | Chasing the Ditch from Albany to Buffalo, but not in that order.

An historical, spiritual and romantic journey through history and the beauties of New York State. Janus Mary Jones has been step-by-step following the two earlier versions of the Erie Canal. If she finishes, she will have (mostly) walked across the great state of New York. What are your memories of the canal? Is there something you have been driven to do?

## September 19 | What Does the Bible Say About Relationships and Belonging?

What does it mean to belong together? What is the role, purpose or ideal for relationships between two or more people according to the Bible? Rev. Michelle will facilitate.

## September 26 | Cop City

The city of Atlanta, Georgia, is divided over a proposed police training center, nicknamed Cop City. Protesters object to it because they see it as a vehicle for police militarization and also on environmental grounds. The controversy raises many issues concerning the role of the police, the role of protesters and civil liberties. Phil Ebersole presents some background info and will lead a discussion.

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

# Social Justice Plate for September 19

Submitted by Connie Valk

The SJ Plate goes to *Rural & Migrant Ministry* (RMM) this month. Farmworkers won minimum wage rights and overtime, fresh water and access to toilet facilities in the fields and orchards due to this organization's diligence, with the support of other allies.



RMM continues to lead support for farmworkers' rights. The children of farmworkers enjoy a two-week day summer camp in western NY in July. In August many of the older children attend an overnight camp that emphasizes leadership development. Other programs sponsor a women's cooking co-op, ESL classes in the winter months, and assistance to teens as they apply for higher education.

RMM's Justice Organization for Youth (JOY) will present "Theatre of the Oppressed" at our church on September 23 at 3:45 at a Fringe Event.

Your offering supports the important RMM programming in WNY. ❖

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## MOCHA Team: Many Thanks!

Submitted by Sarah Singal

We would like to thank the following amazing people who signed up to host refreshments after services:

Ann Rhody	Eileen Fernandez
Clint Swingle	Kathi & Jim Milch
Brian Mumey	Bill Elwell
Sarah Singal	Tom Williams
Shirley Malone	Cara, Johara & Roman
Bill & Heather Jones	Gagliano

Their willingness to serve as hosts made hospitality after church possible this summer. ❖

# EcoJustice News

*Submitted by Sarah Singal*

The Ecojustice Group is considering some new, some familiar campaigns for the church year of 2023-2024. Come join us for planning and action on first Sundays of the month, starting 15 minutes after the end of the service so you can enjoy some coffee hour. We meet in the Chalice Room on the second floor. We face the disturbing realities of climate upheaval together, and together we share inspiration and support.

In the meantime, we suggest you read about, then sign, the individual climate pledge from Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee/Fingerlakes ([climategfl.org/individual-pledge](http://climategfl.org/individual-pledge) [www.climategfl.org/individual-pledge](http://www.climategfl.org/individual-pledge)). Once you've signed the online pledge please add your name to the chart by the EcoJustice News bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge. ❖

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## Pet Proxy

*Submitted by Lois Baum*

Remember the first time you laid eyes on the one who would become your next animal companion? Maybe they were a rescue, or perhaps you sought out this new friend. Or were you the automatic recipient when a family member could no longer care for them. It could be you weren't considering a new pet at all, until one day it became clear how this story would go.

Think back to what you did at the beginning—you carefully selected a vet, revised your budget, bought food and toys, and chose a name! Remember all the energy, money, time and care that went into bringing a new pet into your life.

Suddenly, you're unable to care for your pet. Perhaps you can't return home for several days, or had an accident, maybe you fell ill and have been hospitalized, incapacitated, or died! No longer can you tend to the life of your pet who relies on you for everything. If you're lucky, you have someone who is ready, willing, and able to be there in your absence.

But what if you don't have someone? You're gone in an instant and hadn't planned ahead, so now what happens to your companion? All too often in these situations, people struggle frantically to find someone to take in their pet, begging friends, placing ads,

seeking no-kill shelters with that very rare vacancy. Some people choose to discard their pet outdoors and carelessly leave their survival to fate. Planning ahead can prevent such situations.

You have, however, prepared your other documents for sudden illness, or death—Living Will, Health Care Proxy, Power of Attorney, and Will, that specify who, what, when, where, and how. You put thought, money, care, time, and energy into preparing those forms. But now you are absent, and your pet is home all alone. If only you'd prepared for pet care beforehand...well, yes, you can!

A Pet Proxy is a form you can create yourself (or ask me for one). Complete a Pet Proxy for each and every one of your pets. Include your vet's contact information on the form. First, decide who you would like to be responsible for your pet in your absence. Start by asking that person's permission. If they agree, then put their info in writing on your Pet Proxy form, and have them sign it next to your signature. Your Proxy should have a copy of the signed form to take to the vet, if/when needed. Inform your vet verbally, and give them a copy to keep in your pet's records. (Note: Some vets will only honor a Pet Proxy if they have it in writing beforehand, that someone other than you is acting on your behalf). Finally, be sure to file your Pet Proxy with your other important papers. Plan in advance, prepare it in writing, before you need it.

Dignify your pet's life by preparing a Pet Proxy, just as you have with your other important documents. You already committed to caring for the life of this innocent thus far, don't stop there. This way, you can rest assured that your sweet dependent will continue to be safe and loved, should anything interrupt your daily lives together. It is worth the effort for all beings. ❖

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## Fanning the Flames of F.I.R.E.

*Submitted by Elizabeth Osta*

Join F.I.R.E. social justice circle co-leaders on Sunday, September 24 in the Clara Barton Lounge after the service. We hope to hear your stories and ideas about racial equity. We'll have books for loan, food to chew on, and a questionnaire to help guide your thoughts!

Looking forward to listening! ❖

# Sabbatical Update

Submitted by Bridget Watts

As you know, our Minister, Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell, is on Sabbatical through November 21, 2023. During their absence, worship—and just about everything else in the life of the church!—continues.

## Upcoming worship:

Our final summer service, at 10am on Sept. 3, and our fall Ingathering Service, at 10:30am on Sept. 10, will be led by Worship Associates, our lay worship leaders. Our Sabbatical Minister, Rev. Margaret Weis, will lead worship starting Sunday, Sept. 17.

Many thanks to Summer Minister Peter House for leading us in worship over the summer.

## Pastoral care:

Beginning in September, pastoral care will be provided by Rev. Margaret Weis and our Caring Committee.

**KEY CONTACTS** (*Also see the church directory for committee chairs, etc.*)

## Questions about Worship:

Sabbatical Minister Rev. Margaret Weis (Sept. 1-November 20, 2023), [sabminister@uuroc.org](mailto:sabminister@uuroc.org).

## Communications

If you have information to share with the congregation, send it to our Office Manager/Admin, Emma Barry, [office@uuroc.org](mailto:office@uuroc.org).

## Building Concerns

House Committee Chair, Ed Deller, [house@uuroc.org](mailto:house@uuroc.org).

## Building Use or Rental

Office Manager/Admin, Emma Barry [office@uuroc.org](mailto:office@uuroc.org).

*Note: before scheduling a meeting or event, please check the church calendar on our website for possible conflicts, and fill out a room and/or Zoom request.*

## Pastoral Care and special needs

Sabbatical Minister (see above), or Caring Committee Chair, Paula Marchese.

## Child Care and Religious Education

Rev. Michelle Yates, Minister of Life Span Faith Development, [edu@uuroc.org](mailto:edu@uuroc.org).

## Church Policy

Bridget Watts, Board President (July - December,

2023), [BoardPresident@uuroc.org](mailto:BoardPresident@uuroc.org).

## Security

Speak to our custodian, Albert Lawson, and/or consult the laminated Safety Procedures posted by entrances to church building. ❖

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# Membership News

Submitted by Donna Anderson, Chair

HAPPY SEPTEMBER! We hope everyone has had a good summer traveling, seeing family and friends and relaxing. NOW the church year has begun! Membership Committee will be busy getting ready for the UUA Consultant and the Membership Professional to come once Rev. Lane-Mairead returns from Sabbatical at the end of November. We hope everyone is thinking about questions, ideas and getting energized for this forward-thinking endeavor.

People have mentioned they like reading people's journeys that brought them to our church. We would like to continue publishing people's stories this year in the *Outlook*.

If you'd like to share YOUR story please contact one of the Membership Committee members: Donna Anderson, chair, Karen Lobracco, online coordinator, Grant Fish, Shirley Malone, and Clinton Swingle.

We look forward to greeting everyone in-person or online! ❖

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# Book Group

Submitted by S. Bond and Pam T.

On September 10 at 12 noon the book group will be meeting to discuss "Orphan Train" by Christina Baker Kline. The author does a great job explaining some little-known facts about some American history that affected children's lives. Between 1854 and 1929 orphan trains ran regularly from the cities of the east coast to the midwest, carrying thousands of children whose fate would be determined by sheer luck.

Come to the book group to find out what happens to some of the children. Please be aware that you do not have to have read the book to attend!

We like to pique interest and get other ideas. So join us, it will be fun, we promise! ❖

# PRIDE Parade 2023

*Submitted by Connie Valk*

Over thirty First Universalists participated by marching or rolling or cheering from lawn chairs on the corner of Buckingham and Park Avenues.

Each year our church participates with other UUs in this event. ❖





# First Universalist Church of Rochester

150 South Clinton Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14604



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

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

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

**Sabbatical Minister** | Rev. Margaret Weis

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

**Music Director** | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

**Office Manager** | Emma Barry

**Nursery Care Provider** | Carol Williams

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2023–2024

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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.