



First Universalist Church of Rochester

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Sunday Services | September 2022

September 4 | *Fortitude* (This Service begins at 10am)

Oh what a time we have all had...but we have gotten through, although perhaps a little shaken and bruised...what has helped to fortify you over the last two and a half years?? Tom Williams, Patti Goodwin and Kitty Forbush will share the service together to pay homage to how strong we really are.

— Kitty Forbush, Patti Goodwin, & Tom Williams

September 11 | Bathing in the Waters of the Beginner's Mind

Zen Buddhist tradition calls upon us all to cultivate a beginner's mind—an openness to what comes, a non-attachment to what we know. At this beginning of the church year, bring a bit of water from places you have been or to represent different experiences you have had over the summer. We will pour out waters and explore what it looks like to truly embrace a stance of beginning again.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

September 18 | Celebrating Our Own Foolishness

If we cannot laugh at ourselves, we are likely in deep trouble. To examine ourselves and our lives can lead towards the absurd and the foolishness when we are being honest. This is a service to celebrate the trickster, the humorous, and the innocent as we explore the archetype of the fool.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

September 25 | God as Holy Fool

At the beginning of the year 5783 in the Jewish Tradition, we will explore the idea of God as a Holy Fool at the beginning of a journey, just as we are all holy fools at the beginning of whatever journey we might be traveling. What does it look like to look to the divine as an entity just beginning each moment? How does this connect with Unitarian Universalist principles and values?

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

Most Services begin at 10:30am

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



Embracing the Holy Fool

Message from Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

As we enter into a season of exploring Holy Fools through October 9, I imagine you might be wondering what exactly I mean. I want to get to that, but first I need to tell you something: our themes are seasonally happening in coordination with our sibling congregations, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canandaigua, NY, and the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY. All three congregations will be exploring the same themes during the same season, creating ways for us to partner and also to engage in pulpit swaps easily. The hope is to create a common conversation amongst Unitarian Universalists in our Greater Rochester area.

Now, onto Holy Fools or even just the Holy Fool. Each deck of tarot cards, commonly used for divination purposes though beginning as playing cards, begins with the Fool, the card numbered "0". In their description of this card, Charlie Claire Burgess writes, "The Fool is tabula rasa, the blank slate waiting to be written. But we humans so often try to etch the tablet in advance, to play a longguessing-game of statistics and worst-case scenarios, to pre-plan every step before we're even on the path." The Fool is the invitation to pause and to embrace emptiness at the beginning of a new journey. The ultimate expression of the beginner's mind, open to what may come, open to what's in store. The Holy Fool is a challenge to many of us.

It is a holy act to come back to the beginning, to embrace the unknown. And it feels spot on for where we are right now-beginning again as a community, being invited to release what we have already written and to move into new ways of thinking and being. How could this archetype of the Holy Fool help us grow as a community? How could embracing emptiness and new beginnings teach us something about ourselves and about First Universalist? As we seek connection, we also know deep wisdom comes from meeting one another with an open mind and an open heart. Let's be Holy Fools together.

In Faith and Courage,

Rev. Lane-Mairead .

NYSCU: Seeking Justice, Finding Joy

Submitted by Ann Rhody

NSYCU Annual Meeting—coming to our church October 21 and 22!

The New York State Convention of Universalists will conduct their Annual Meeting on October 22, right here at First Universalist Church of Rochester!

Help us welcome Universalists from around the Northeast as we celebrate our heritage of Justice AND Joy.

Our out-of-town guests will be staying at the Holiday Inn Express University Area on Friday, October 21. There will be a dinner for the NYSCU Board of Trustees, and some social time at the hotel.

Then on Saturday, October 22, our own church will be the site of all the fun! There will be a keynote address by immigration attorney Sheila Starkey Hahn; a NYSCU business meeting; and workshops on how we might keep the thread of joy running through our social justice work.

Find a message from NYSCU President Ann Rhody here: https://youtu.be/zfrDSKMsTck

See the invitation flyer on page 11 and visit the website at nyscu.org. And remember, you can attend the meeting as a delegate from our church! Please reach out to a church Board member for details, and watch for more announcements to come, including how to volunteer to help on October 22. •







How many Universalists does it take to hang up a couple giant screens? Three! (Plus one to take a photo).

House News

Submitted by Ed Deller

House Committee members were busy this summer with several major projects:

- Two large-screen TV's were mounted in the sanctuary and the main speakers were moved to accommodate the TV's. Much wiring work was required to provide power and signals to the TV's. Running wires in a 115-year-old building is no easy task!
- The choir loft speakers had failed and were replaced.
- LED lights were installed in the parking lot to replace the existing failing lights.
- Lighted fire exit signs were installed in the sanctuary to meet fire marshal guidelines.
- The east wall of the choir room (room 25) and the door trim for the Clinton Avenue sanctuary doors were painted.

Special thanks go to Michael Scott, Moritz Wagner and Tom Ruganis for their many talents and for their agility on high ladders!

Thanks also to Charlie Courtsal for help mounting the TV's. •



Finance News & Notes

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

2021-22 Fiscal Year—That was a close one!

After all of the positive financial news, including large surpluses and no endowment draw for the past few years, it was jarring to see the 2021-22 fiscal year end with a deficit of a few thousand dollars, even AFTER taking the whole budgeted endowment draw! Thankfully, a few late pledge payments put us back "in the black" and we finished a few thousand dollars to the good. Whew! Financial times have definitely changed, but we are still doing well.

A full accounting for the 2021-22 fiscal year will be available in the Annual Treasurer's Report, published in October.

We're looking for a few good.... IDEAS!

For many years, our Annual Service Auction was our one major fundraiser. It provided an opportunity for fun, fellowship, and relationship building; AND would typically bring in \$5,000-\$7,000 of income to support the annual budget.

We are now facing the reality that the traditional model—having a live Service Auction with 80+ people cozy together in the Clara Barton Lounge is no longer workable. How can we retain the fun, fellowship, and raise funds with a workload that is not crushing for our volunteers?

We are putting together a team to work on an alternative fundraiser for this year. We need YOU to help! Email finance@uuroc.org to add your name to the group or to share an idea. Please note that signing up to be on the team to consider ideas does NOT commit you to work on whatever fundraiser is chosen (although we would welcome that, too!). We'll gather the team soon to start planning.

Let's Gather the Spirit, Ideas, and the Funds! •



Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by Beth Ares

Current drop-in discussions are held each Tuesday evening from 6:30 to 7:30pm via the church Zoom account. Contact *DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org* for the Zoom link, or look on *uuroc.org*! Sometimes our discussions are based on books/articles, but you don't have to do any prep to participate. Just drop in!

September 6 | Open Topic

Gather, greet, and converse. We will dive into an asyet-to-be-identified but meaningful conversation.

September 13 | "We Acknowledge With Respect"

Each Sunday we note that our church stands on the ancestral land of the Seneca Nation. Let's give some thought to how we can address contemporary Native Issues as non-natives. Resource: Native Hope, Chamberlain, SD. Beth Ares presents.

September 20 | UU General Assembly June 2022

Our delegates report back: elections, issues and outcomes, and what it all means for our congregation. Karen LoBracco, Jean Ott, and Verdis Robinson present.

September 27 | Election 2022

The mid-term elections are coming up; Who do you think will win? Who do you think should win? And what about 2024? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion. People of all viewpoints are welcome to participate!

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



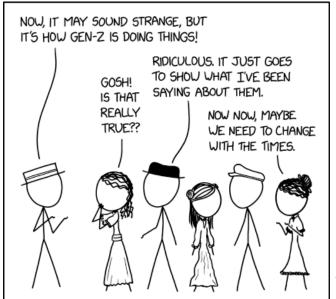
Online Ministry Team

Submitted by Karen LoBracco

The magic of the internet makes it possible for you and me to participate in worship at First Universalist from the comfort of our couches, or while traveling far from home. A group of volunteers welcomes participants, provides the necessary links and information during the worship service, and facilitates the Coffee Hour discussion afterwards.

Some members of the Online Ministry Team ONLY attend online, while others alternate. Some members volunteer frequently, others occasionally.

If you are comfortable with Zoom, then you have the prerequisite skills to be part of the Online Ministry Team! Please contact Karen LoBracco (karenlobracco@gmail.com or 585-730-0686) to learn more about this great way to connect people and serve the community. .



PEOPLE ASCRIBING QUALITIES TO "GEN Z" HAVE THE SAME ENERGY AS SMALL-TOWN SALESPEOPLE IN 1905 TALKING ABOUT WHAT THE LADIES IN PARIS ARE UP TO.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY MULTIPLATFORM / PORTLAND • 2022

Thoughts from GA 2022

Submitted by Jean Ott, Verdis Robinson, and Karen LoBracco

General Assembly 2022 was held in Portland, Oregon from June 22-26, 2022. This UUA annual event allowed our congregational delegates (Jean Ott, Verdis Robinson and Karen LoBracco), and religious professional delegates like Rev. Lane-Mairead, to help make governance decisions, as well as immerse themselves in inspirational worship and informative workshops. The theme was *Meet the Moment:* Reimagining a Radical Faith Community. It was both in-person and virtual, and this year virtual attendees outnumbered in-person attendees. Going forward GA will remain in a hybrid format. To address longstanding criticism about affordability, this year the UUA added the option of being a business-only attendee and paying a donation rather than a full registration fee. Next year's GA will be in Pittsburgh, PA, from June 21-25. Folks, that's close enough we can drive to it!

Some Topics and Issues We Paid Attention To:

A business resolution asking GA to endorse the board's plan to do a rewrite of the UUA bylaws to remove overly complicated and inefficient governance passed overwhelmingly."* This will probably be a multi-year effort, but the delegates required a report at next year's GA. UUA Board member (and Rochester resident) Barbara de Leeuw has this massive task as part of her portfolio.

Another massive and multi-year project is the

Article II Study Commission. This group is charged with examining the part of the UUA Bylaws that contains Principles, Purposes, and Sources. Most is the same as when it was adopted as a compromise during the 1961 merger, with a major re-write in 1984. The goal is to develop something that will serve the denomination into the future. Be ready to see proposals to radically change this foundational document!

Another business resolution, to re-envision the role of the GA Planning Committee (GAPC), also passed overwhelmingly.*

There were two elections for the UUA's Board of Trustees. Both candidates nominated by the UUA's Nominating Committee won. They are Rev. Justine Sullivan and Rev. Suzanne Fast. Their challengers represented a group of UUs opposed to the current UUA emphasis on social justice, and those concerns were voiced in policy discussions.

Voting on Actions of Immediate Witness, which shape the UUA's social justice commitments, was among the business conducted during GA 2022. UU delegates overwhelming voted for social justice resolutions that support reproductive justice (PDF, 3 pages) (99 percent) and anti-racism and reparations via restorative justice (PDF, 2 pages) (95 percent), and that oppose the privatization of Medicare (PDF, 2 pages) (77 percent).* Prior to GA, the proposals for AIWs were presented at a Tuesday Discussion Group, and your delegates took those preferences into account when voting.

Our Board asked us to pay attention to the experiences of congregations who voted to adopt what is known as "The 8th Principle", an affirmation of being an anti-racist institution. Jean found that taking at least three years to intentionally work through what adopting the 8th Principle means to a congregation is a good idea.

Coming next year will be an election for a new UUA President for a 6-year term. In November we should hear about 2 candidates nominated by the Search Team.

While GA was in session, the Supreme Court decision striking down Roe was announced, which evoked anger, resolutions, and calls to action.

At the online Drop-In Discussion Group on Tuesday, Sept. 20, at 6:30-7:30pm, your congregational delegates will further unpack their GA experience and answer your questions. Please join us! 💠

*drawn from UU World article by Elaine McArdle https:// www.uuworld.org/articles/ga-business-experience-no-other

EcoJustice: Where does faith intersect with Climate Action? In the garden!

Submitted by Sarah Singal

September is the time of year when the garden starts winding down. We begin to look at what has worked well, what has thrived (radishes!), and what hasn't (broccoli—no heads!), what we might do differently next year (concentrate on food that can be eaten raw, forget about strawberry plants that mysteriously disappear). The unstoppable garden progression from early spring to late fall keeps us busy, but now is time for reflection. How does our garden fit in with a bigger picture?

Garden care brings us to creation care. No matter what name we give the Divine, creation stories tell us how the universe came to be and how we are caretakers. At the RAICA* Tree Planting Walk in 2019, we were reminded of our responsibility to the Earth by local Islamic, Christian, Jewish, and other leaders.

We need to care for the natural world, including each other. Here in Rochester, as well as all over the world, there is a pressing need for equity in human opportunity, as well as access to safe, healthful places to live and work. The transition to sustainable power represents a massive series of changes and a chance to get it right, ensuring that those most affected by climate change are not left out of climate solutions.

As we garden, we learn practices that promote sustainability. Food choices matter, and a home-grown plant-based diet is ideal. You can't help but notice (or miss) the pollinators and you cannot help notice (or miss) the marginalized among us. When your soul feels smothered, there is nothing like a morning outdoors planting, watering, weeding, harvesting, and sharing beauty and food.

Join a Celebration of Urban Agriculture Saturday, September 17, 10am-3pm. Further info will be posted on the *Urban Agriculture Working Group* Facebook page.

If you want to get involved, our EcoJustice meetings are usually the first Sunday of each month, or email ecojustice@uuroc.org. •

*Rochester Area Interfaith Climate Action









2022-2023 Social Justice Plate Info!

Submitted by Jean Ott, Social Justice Plate Committee

In consultation with Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell, our Social Justice Plate Offerings on the 3rd Sunday of each month are as follows:

- Sept. '22: Reconnect Rochester
- Oct. '22: Being Black in the Burbs
- Nov. '22: Metro Justice
- Dec. '22: Staff Bonuses
- Jan. '23: Rural and Migrant Ministry
- Feb. '23: BLUU, Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism*
- Mar. '23: YWCA of Rochester
- Apr. '23: DRUUMM, Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries*
- May '23: Compeer Rochester
- June '23: Rochester Community Bikes
- July '23: Center for Youth
- Aug. '23: Climate Solutions Accelerator

We've given generously throughout the previous church year and received wonderful thank you notes. Below are comments from only a few of them.

Family Promise of Greater Rochester thanked us for "continuing to remember families". They also noted that "6 families were currently in Shelter and 56 families had received FPGROC funding in 2022 through Prevention and Diversion. As we serve those in need now, we know that there will continue to be family homelessness until there is systemic change in Rochester."

Robert Harker, Executive Director of Genesee Orleans Ministry of Concern, wrote: "The stress and frustration of living in poverty impacts many children and families in our community. Your support does make a significant difference. On behalf of the Ministry of Concern, "Thank you!"."

Madeline Para, Executive Director of Citizen's Climate Education, wrote: "Your generous donation will help provide critical training, support and tools

to our growing coalition of volunteers, so that they can be successful in their climate advocacy work. Thank you for all that you do to ensure a livable planet!"

Let's continue to be generous this year! •

*Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell asked that the BLUU and DRUUMM organizations be added to our Social Justice Plate Offering schedule. Both are national UU organizations; BLUU supports Black UUs and DRUUMM supports BIPOC** UUs.

**BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, People of Color



BIG FALL BOOK SALE: September 11!

Submitted by Phil Ebersole, Library Committee

The church library and bookstore will be open once again for browsing, borrowing, and buying after Sunday services on Sept. 11.

If you want book bargains or are interested in UU books, this is your chance. The library and bookstore won't be open on a weekly basis until coffee hour resumes.

Used books will be for sale for whatever you wish to pay. New books will be for sale for half the list price. Exact change is requested, but we accept checks made out to the church.

Books may be borrowed from the church library by members and those who've attended long enough to have a permanent name tag. If you currently have a book you've borrowed, this would be a good time to return it. You can also return books by leaving them in the marked box on the library desk

Donations for the sale are welcome! If you have a book you're finished with, but think others would like, leave it on the library desk.

We also have a free magazine rack. Feel free to take magazines at any time. •



Universalist Convocation 2022: Honoring Our Past, Shaping the Future

Submitted by David Damico

Janus Mary and I attended the 2022 Universalist Convocation at All Souls UU Church in Bellville, Ohio, July 29 through 31. Although I was primarily representing the *Universalist Herald*, I also enjoy meeting new, like-minded UUs from different churches around the country.

Jay Kiskel, board member of UU Studies Network, gave a talk on "History of the Young People's Christian Union (Y.P.C.U.)." In the later 1800s and early 1900s, the Y.P.C.U. was a grassroots organization of youth and young adults which grew quickly and did a lot of successful missionary work spreading the Universalist message and establishing churches. He noted that the youth organizations of the Unitarians and the Universalists formally merged in the 1950s, nearly ten years before the consolidation of the two denominations in 1961. The last national UU youth organization, the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), was disbanded by the UUA Board of Trustees in 2008.

Rev. Dr. V. Elaine Strawn, Co-chair of the regional Commissioned Lay Ministry Council, gave a talk titled "Breaking Open Our Hearts." She noted how often it is that we might say to ourselves, "That man cut me off in traffic. What an idiot!" or "That woman voted for so-and-so. What an idiot!" She suggested that we should add three words to our internal monologue, "just like me!"

Rev. Schuyler Vogel, Senior Minister of the Fourth Universalist Society in New York City, started with the observation that mainline churches in America are in

decline, and that UUism is also in a decline, although at a slower pace. He described how reaching out to the wider community can save Universalism both as an ethic and in physical terms. In the case of the Fourth Universalist Society in New York, it actually helped obtain a new roof and thereby save the church building.

On Sunday, All Souls Church celebrated its 200th anniversary. Rev. William Humphrey, asked the question in his sermon, "What is Universalism?" Many answers involved personal theology. Given that many churches, including All Souls, are surrounded by evangelical Christians and Biblical literalists, to say that Universalism is about "including all people" would be a vague answer. At present, when the prevailing message is that God will send a person to Hell if they did not believe a certain way, the response of the Universalists was that God, who is love, will not send anyone to eternal torment in an everlasting Hell. Examples of Putin and Hitler were mentioned.

A big part of the Convocation was the chance to talk with many people informally. It so happened that Janus Mary and I had a chance to chat with Rev. Vogel on Saturday night at length while enjoying the B&B house, grape wine. How sweet, literally!

Other attendees included UUs from Texas, Atlanta, New York City, the midwest, east coast and further west. The host church, All Souls of Bellville, was gracious, helpful, and felt part of the events presented throughout the weekend. I met several new friends and we thoroughly enjoyed our time in Bellville.

As editor of the Universalist Herald, I shared info on the publication, how it serves the wider community of those who call themselves UU or Universalists, and how I come up with topics and obtain articles. I feel/have felt, a renewed energy in Universalist thought as daily tragic world events occur. The energy in the room towards this renewed commitment was evident. If this sounds of interest to you, please consider checking out the Herald (universalist-herald.org/).

Special thanks to Russ Araujo of All Souls UU Church in Bellville for providing details on the speaker content.

The 2023 Universalist Convocation will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (For more info, see universalistconvocation.org/.) •

Summertime with First Unversalist

Submitted by Emma Barry





First Universalist celebrated its Annual Church Picnic on June 19. We got lucky with lovely weather, and even better company!



We had a group march in the Rochester Pride Parade this summer, the first one they have held since 2019! It was also the 50th anniversary of Rochester Pride. So much to celebrate!







First Universalist had several outdoor summer Sunday services again this year. Our MOCHA team was thrilled to be able to share goodies with the congregation again.

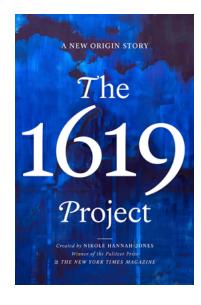




Book Group

Submitted by Shirley **Bond**

"The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story" will be our book selection for September 11. We discussed this book in August but felt that to do the book justice we should really devote a little more time to it.



The main reason we decided to revisit this book is to give everyone a chance to share what part personally spoke to them. "Project 1619" by Nicole Hannah Jones is an outstanding accomplishment. Please come and join us for what promises to be a lively discussion. By the way reading the book beforehand is not required. Our goal is to pique interest and acknowledge different opinions. So meet you up in the Chalice Room after Sunday service. Questions answered by: Shirley B., 325-6084 or Pam J., 738-2558. •

Membership Committee

Submitted by Shirley Malone

Membership is getting ready for the new church year. We are looking forward to seeing all of you again after this hot, event-filled summer. Some of you we will see in-person, others on Zoom. We welcome everyone back for our new year.

NEEDED: Ushers and Greeters for in-person church Sunday mornings starting September 11. Each Sunday we have a need for one greeter and two ushers. If you have no other in-church obligations please sign up for one of these roles at multiple times through the church year. Please see Donna Anderson, Shirley Malone, or you can leave a message at office@ *uuroc.org*. We welcome your participation, and your commitment to First Universalist!

Other info for those new to First Universalist or

members and friends who would like a refresher, or just to meet others: Watch for notices about both "UU and You" and the "Path to Membership" dates. With both of these you learn more about the church. Those dates will be set soon.

We are finding ways to keep our sense of community alive after the COVID epidemic. We welcome your ideas also. •

FPGROC (RAIHN): Racial Equity at FPGROC

Submitted by Chris DeGolyer & Ed Deller

Over the past year, Family Promise has focused on promoting racial equity and has examined barriers

to achieving it. Each month, FPGROC focuses on a specific area of inequity and provides resources to help us understand how these impact the families we serve



and all of us. This August the focus was on education as we collected school supplies for FPGROC guest children. Family Promise suggested a TEDx talk that impressed us: Kandice Sumner's "How Public Schools Keep Kids in Poverty" at https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=707BMa9XGXE. Ms. Sumner compares the educational resources she enjoyed through her city's urban-suburban program with those of the city school where she now teaches. She describes how these inequities affect her students.

Housing inequity is a huge and historic problem. Inflation has added to this problem, raising rents and making affordable housing very scarce. One FPGROC staff member told me that guest families now are having a harder time finding apartments, and when they do, they often spend 70% of their income on rent.

Education and housing are just two of the barriers to racial equity that FPGROC has examined. For other topics, see FPGROC's web page on racial equity at fpgroc.org/racial-equity. •



You are Invited!



New York State Convention of Universalists ANNUAL MEETING

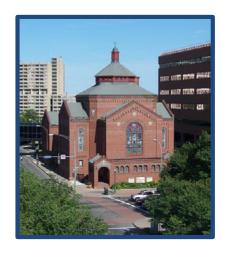
Seeking Justice, Finding Joy

October 21 and 22, 2022 First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

Keynote speaker Sheila Starkey Hahn, Immigration Attorney

Workshops on racial equity, LGBTQ + justice, and more—all with an eye to finding joy in and around our work.

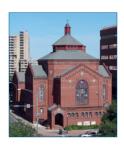




Registration, housing, and delegate information to follow, early September 2022.

Visit nyscu.org for more details!





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-Mairead Campbell

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 2022–2023

Steve Munson (*Pres.*), Bridget Watts (*Vice-Pres.*), Jim Milch (*Clerk*), Theresa McFarland-Porter, MJ Curry, Richard Reed, Clinton Swingle, Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell (*ex-officio*)

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

More info is available on our website: uuroc.org

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