



# Our Outlook

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**First Universalist**  
Church of Rochester

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## Sunday Services | March 2024

### March 3 | *Betwixt and Between*

The theme for our Unitarian Universalist congregation for the next two months is, “Living in Between.” How can we live better in-between as individuals and as a community? What does our UU theology contain that can help us in our endeavors to live in-between?

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

### March 10 | *Theodicy: Suffering, Impermanence and Humility*

How can we find solidarity in the questions of, “Why me?,” “What have I done to deserve this?,” “Why do bad things happen to good people?” An exploration of human suffering and how we respond.

— Rev. Kelly Spahr

### March 17 | *The Both/And of In-Between*

Queer theology and queer theory invite us to break down binaries and explore what can be learned from both/and thinking. In-betweenness encourages us to live between seeming opposites or even between one thing and another. The spiritual gifts of embracing a queer ethic can help us to be more comfortable living in-between.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

### March 24 | *Entering with Ambiguity*

Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem to mixed reviews—some excited he had arrived, others ready to be sure he would not survive this trip. In a culture of looking to others for approval and being encouraged to compare ourselves to those around us, we are entering so many situations with ambiguity. Let us explore how Jesus's story can teach us to be authentic no matter what.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

### March 31 | *Between Death and Resurrection \*Easter Service\**

The disciples in the Easter narrative had to live in-between: between knowing and not knowing, between belief and disbelief, between the death they witnessed and the resurrection some continually experienced. Their stories have something to teach us this Easter about doubt, certainty, and living in-between.

— Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

❖ **Services begin at 10:30am** ❖

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

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## In Between Knowing and Not Knowing

*A Message from  
Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

The space between knowing about something big and figuring out what to do about it can be vast and brief. I think especially of those of us who have had loved ones with a serious medical diagnosis. There are times when a diagnosis is discovered and the time to act is NOW. And times when one waits and waits for more information, for further testing, for the end of a life, for so many things.

To live in between knowing and not knowing can call us towards a deeper reliance on ourselves and others.

This past fall, my grandmother died. In the days she was in palliative care, we all knew what was coming. The waiting in the in-betweenness of awaiting a loved one's death brought my family closer together. We were checking in on each other more, exchanging pictures and stories, and being sure everyone was up-to-date on any change in status for her health. For me, this was an extremely rich time, spiritually, where I was holding her in my heart during my daily practice—leaning in to spirit while preparing myself for life without her physically present.

Where has learning to live in the in-between given you a chance to draw nearer to those around you? How about drawing nearer to yourself?

As we continue to move forward into 2024, the ability to live in-between continues to be an ever-pressing issue.

In-between crises in our country.

In-between crises across the world.

In-between knowing who is running for President and the election.

In-between acceptance and surrender.

Let us help one another to live in the in-between together.

In Faith and Courage,

Rev. Lane-Mairead ✦



## Living in the in-Between

*A Message from  
Rev. Michelle Yates*

Everyone is always growing between this moment and their next moment. This is especially true during the growth of your first 26 years of life. Physical growth, mental growth, frontal cortex and executive functioning growth.

I notice this in having children who I am encouraging toward new levels of functioning while understanding that setbacks happen. Some days I see teens headed towards young adulthood; some days we are all afraid they won't do their own laundry if they ever move out. Somedays I see independence, and some days regression. No longer a toddler, but not yet a "big kid." We hit milestones, but most of the time we live "in-between."

When I married my husband, my step-kids were five, six, and eight years old. My mom told me that life patterns, especially with kids, last about 2 months. In these two months we are working on the morning routine, but after about two months we'll have it down and be ready for something else. The kid has taken up a particularly challenging behavior or loves a uniquely obnoxious TV show? In about two months it will change to be a different challenging behavior or obnoxious TV show. Kind of like a common joke here in Upstate NY, "don't like the weather, wait a little while, it will change."

Often we have a set idea in mind of how we want life to be, but even if we were to achieve it, the natural flow of change means it won't stay forever. Over the next two months, we will be exploring what it means to live "In-Between."

Yours in the Journey,

Rev. Michelle ✦



## Finance News: *Auction Action returns to First Universalist!*

*Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair*

Our Service Auction returned this year in a big way! If we were wondering whether people still want to come together to engage in this event, we need wonder no longer. February 4 made it clear that the answer is YES! The Clara Barton Lounge was filled with food, laughter, fun, work, and joy as we conducted our more traditional model of the Service Auction, with new elements added!



The event raised well over \$5,500 for the church's programs! But the value of the fellowship and connection for our members and friends was priceless. Thanks to the Service Auction, some folks will be enjoying a private airplane ride, help in the garden, vegan treats, nature hikes, and more! And all with friends from First Universalist.

No major event can be carried out without help from many people. Thanks so much to Katherine Flynn and Paula Marchese, who helped to plan the event. Office Manager, Emma Barry, helped us with online functioning, and Dave VanArsdale produced the Auction booklet and kept track of the bidders and bidding. Bill Jones managed the bidding, while Kitty Forbush and Ann Rhody served as Auctioneers. Connie Valk headed up the proxy team, and Jim Milch supervised the tech for our online folks. These leaders were assisted by Karl Abbott, MJ Curry, Eileen Fernandez, Nancy Gaede, Sue Keefe, Kathi



Milch, Marty Muggleton, Brian Mumey, Richard Reed, Howard Spindler, and Tom Williams. Many folks donated items for the Auction or the raffle, or bid on items and services.



What a joyful time! We are always looking to improve the Service Auction experience, if you have suggestions, please let us know at [finance@uuroc.org](mailto:finance@uuroc.org). ❖



## Save the Date: *Passover Seder*

*Submitted by Richard Reed*

For the first time since 2019, First Universalist is hosting a Passover Seder!

Mark your calendars for Friday, April 26, when we will gather to celebrate. Soup, matzo, wine, grape juice, and themed dinnerware will be provided.

You are being asked to provide a salad, entree or dessert to share. Sign-up sheets will be available beginning Easter Sunday, March 31. For more info, please contact Lew Ward-Baker or Richard Reed. ❖

# Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by John Lukes

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 come.

## **Sunday, March 3 | The Next 100 Years \*In-Person\***

What do you think may happen in the next 100 years? What changes do you foresee in cultural awareness, climate change, genetics, technology, AI, and more? Join David Damico as we discuss.

## **March 5 | Religions vs Cults: What's the Difference?**

Along the NY Thruway there are billboards proclaiming a certain religious organization a cult. We've heard political commentators talking about the personality cult around Trump. What is a cult? What is religion? Can a religious organization be a cult? John Lukes will define terms and lead our discussion.

## **March 12 | Controversial Bible Verses Pt. 1, Genesis: Creation, the Fall and the Flood**

Rev. Michelle Yates will lead a discussion taken from a list of "21 Controversial Bible Verses." We will look at verses from Genesis, particularly from Creation to the Flood. Bring your questions and observations regarding the text and its context within history, culture, theology, and more.

## **March 19 | The Agonizing Death of Newspapers**

Daily newspapers were once avidly read in most American homes, but are now in sharp decline and heading toward extinction. Nine thousand newspapers are down to about six thousand (nearly five thousand are weekly-only). Since '05, those that remain have reduced page-count and cut their staff. Do newspapers have a future? Do you care? Our guest presenters are retired journalists and media educators, Mary Gottschalk & Paul Lukes.

## **March 26 | Open Topic—Do we have off-limit topics?!**

John Lukes will lead an open-topic discussion, starting with an open question about whether we have any off-limit topics, or at least how best to handle and recover from any 'crossing of boundaries' that might occur — and then let's see where we go from there!

Have a topic for us? Contact our team with your proposal at [DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org](mailto:DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org). ❖

# Housing for All News: Bring Rent Control Back

Submitted by Marti Eggers, HFA co-coordinator

Did you know that Rochester and all of New York State had expansive rent controls from 1943-61 and from 1971-73? After 1973, only New York City and its surrounding counties currently have rent controls. Upstate landlords can price-gouge tenants or price them out altogether, often onto the street or shelters.

After a reform in 2019, upstate municipalities can now opt into stronger tenant protections as provided by the *Emergency Tenant Protection Act* (ETPA).

The ETPA provides rent protections (Rent control), eviction protections (No evictions without cause) and maintenance protections (Tenants can apply for a reduction in rent if the landlord reduces services, including maintenance).



To opt into the ETPA, a municipality must first conduct a valid rental vacancy survey to determine if the rental vacancy rate is less than 5%, which would then allow a municipality to declare a housing state of emergency. The City of Rochester did such a survey in 2021, but it was vastly flawed. A new vacancy study needs to be done, using a stronger methodology consistent with new state standards. The 2021 survey does not meet those standards. The new survey would cost the city about \$40,000,

*Reach Advocacy*, one of the organizations supported by First Universalist and the *Housing For All* (HFA) social justice project, is collaborating with the *City-Wide Tenant Union* (CWTU) to urge City Council to adopt a new vacancy survey that would more accurately reflect the vacancy rate in the city. Keeping people in their homes is far less costly than having people living in the streets or in shelters. Housing is a human right, and preventing homelessness is living social justice. ❖



## New Gender Studies Display

Submitted by Marcy Klein, Library Committee

Please stop by and check out the church library's new Gender Studies display! It gathers together about a dozen books from our collection that focus on gender issues, especially those concerning the experiences of gays and lesbians and their families. The books are not recent releases but they do offer a wide historical perspective. The display is located on the top of the bookcases near the library desk; look for the "Gender Studies" sign.

These books can be checked out when the library is open—during coffee hour on the first Sunday of the month—and borrowed for four weeks. As a reminder, books may be borrowed by members and anyone who has attended long enough to have a permanent name tag.

To pique your interest, here is a list of the books.

- *Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds*, by Judy Grahn
- *Beyond Acceptance: Parents of Lesbians & Gays Talk About Their Experiences*, by Carolyn W. Griffin, Marian J. Wirth, Arthur G. Wirth
- *Coming Out to Parents: A Two-Way Survival Guide for Lesbians and Gay Men and Their Parents*, by Mary V. Borhek
- *Coming Out: An Act of Love*, by Rob Eichberg
- *Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary, in Which Is Contained, in Chronological Order, Evidence of the True and Fantastical History of Those Persons*, by Jonathan Ned Katz
- *Gay Marriage, Real Life: Ten Stories Of Love And Family*, by Michelle Bates Deakin
- *Gays/Justice: A Study of Ethics, Society, and Law*, by Richard D. Mohr
- *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, by Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus, George Chauncey, eds.
- *Lesbian Ethics: Toward New Values*,

by Sarah Lucia Hoagland

- *Let My People in: A Lesbian Minister Tells of Her Struggles to Live Openly and Maintain Her Ministry*, by Rose Mary Denman
- *Loving Someone Gay*, by Don Clark

Many thanks to Phil Ebersole, who gathered the books and arranged the display. If you have any questions, see a Library Committee member—Shirley Bond, Johanna Connelly, Phil Ebersole, or Marcy Klein. ❖

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## Introducing: Our new Finance Administrator!

Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair

It is with great joy that we welcome Maresa Carmody to the staff of First Universalist Church! Maresa comes to us with a wealth of education, experience and skill in the world of all things financial.

In planning for a finance staff position, we knew that we needed more than just a "check-writer/bookkeeper." The Finance Admin we were seeking would need to deal with payroll, benefits, collections, deposits, reporting, lots of tech, and most importantly, interact with the people behind all of those functions. Maresa Carmody comes to us with not only an MBA from St. John Fisher, but with years of experience in managing all of the aspects we identified in our job description.



Maresa has been getting started with Treasurer Dick Shroyer, Assistant Treasurer Brian Mumey, Payroll Coordinator Beth Ares, and Finance Chair Ann Rhody, as well as Rev. Lane-Maired Campbell and the rest of the staff at church. As time goes on, Maresa will take on most of the regular finance operations, freeing our finance volunteers to focus on policy, oversight, and long-range financial planning.

If you have any questions during the transition, please email Ann Rhody at [finance@uuroc.org](mailto:finance@uuroc.org).

Finally, thank you to all of you who pledge each year to support our annual budget. YOU have made it possible for us to achieve the longtime dream of having staff support for Finance operations. A dream come true! ❖



## Nominating Committee

*Submitted by Nancy Gaede*

Our congregation is fortunate to have so many dedicated and talented people in its midst. That's what it takes to keep a church alive and vibrant.

It also takes leadership. The congregation gets to elect individuals for these leadership positions at the annual meeting in June: Board of Trustees, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee.

The Board of Trustees oversees the business of the church. To be on the Board, an individual must have been an active congregation member for one year. The term of service is 3 years. A trustee can be elected for two consecutive terms.

The Committee on Ministry keeps an eye on the overall health of the congregation and works with the Minister, the Board, and lay leaders to further the mission of the church. To be on this committee, a person must have been a member of the congregation for three years. A committee member may serve for up to three years.

The Nominating Committee is tasked with developing a pool of candidates for each open elected position. The committee also works to find delegates for official denominational meetings. To serve on this committee, you must have been a congregation member for two years. The term of service is two years, and a committee member may serve two consecutive terms.

Each of these positions requires a commitment to the congregation, the ability to problem-solve, and a willingness to work collaboratively to further the mission of the church.

If you have any questions or if you might be interested in being considered for one of the open positions, please contact the Nominating Committee at [nomcom@uuroc.org](mailto:nomcom@uuroc.org) or get in touch with any Nominating Committee member: Nancy Gaede, Janus Mary Jones, Micky Toker, Paula Marchese, or Dwight Montague. ❖

## EcoJustice: “The Week”!

*Submitted by Sarah Singal*

“One week. Together. To make sense of the defining crisis of our time. To get ready for the defining adventure of our time.”

Our EcoJustice Group is planning to take part in a group experience called *The Week*, which combines learning about climate change, what can and is being done, and deciding what you can do. It is both sobering and positive; there are things you can do to make a difference. It began with friends during COVID, and now has a website ([theweek.ooo](http://theweek.ooo)) and a multinational presence.



*The Week* is designed to be a small group experience, of 5-10 individuals that meet three times over the period of about a week. Each session begins with a one-hour video followed by a discussion of half an hour (or more). Some members of the EcoJustice Group will meet Sunday, March 17, Monday, March 18, and Friday, March 22, in the Clara Barton Lounge, 2:30-4pm. We invite members and friends to join us! Please let Vicki Venn or Howard Spindler know if you would like to come; our limit is 15.

We will try using the OWL for people who cannot come in-person. If any folks cannot make the above dates we will try another session in April, Earth month. We look forward to this adventure! ❖

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## Save the Date: Sunday, June 16 — Annual Church Picnic!

*Submitted by Karl Abbott*

Time: 1 - 4pm.

Location: The Longhouse Shelter in Seneca Park

More details to come!

*Note: This will be the last picnic Karl Abbott will be coordinating. Anyone interested in taking this task over please contact Karl. To facilitate this transfer to a person, or group, Karl will guide them through this process, and provide a timeline for what needs to be done and when. ❖*

# Social Justice Plate: March Offering

Submitted by Joy Leccese

Girls Rock! Rochester is our designated Social Justice Plate recipient for March 2024. It is dedicated to using music as a vehicle for personal growth and positive change for girls, women, and the LGBTQIA2S+ community. Believing that music is a powerful vehicle for personal growth and positive change, they offer programs year-round for girls and teens and young adults, as a way to teach constructive ways to fight sexism and foster healthy mindsets and social skills.

They promote collaboration and community to foster diversity in all forms. They also provide programs, summer camps, and musical events throughout the community all year, encouraging girls and young women to own their talents and share their voices.

Amanda Ashley Rodriguez (she, her, hers) is a writer, singer-songwriter, and a national touring/recording artist from Long Island, NY. She is the current Program Director at Girls Rock! Rochester.

Amanda's footprint on the Rochester music community stems from years of teaching privately, performing, hosting, and organizing a plethora of social opportunities which encourage growth, community, and education; all while providing a platform for artists to be showcased.



Kaci Smith, a local drummer, initiated a week-long day-camp in July 2012; there campers receive instruction on the instrument of their choice, attend workshops, form a band with new friends, write an original song together, and perform in a showcase at a local venue. Please give generously. For more info, go here: [girlsrockrochester.org](http://girlsrockrochester.org). ❖

# Getting Connected

Submitted by Clinton Swingle

If you feel like First Universalist is your spiritual home, and you would like to become a member, we welcome you to join us!

As you explore your relationship with the church and seek connections, we encourage you join us for the *Getting Connected* class on Saturday, April 13, from 9:30am to noon at the church in the Clara Barton Lounge.

When you become a member of this church, you make a decision to participate in being part of beloved community at a deeper level. Membership entitles you to vote, to have a voice in the direction of the church, and to be a leader. It is the members who create our church. ❖

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## Stewardship: Dates to Remember!

Submitted by Theo & Steve Munson, Stewardship Co-chairs

**This year's Stewardship Campaign formally begins on March 24.** There will be a whole church meeting after our service on that Sunday. This will be our one and only chance to talk about our church expenses and our dreams of how *Love Calls Us On* toward our future. We will hear a presentation about our sources of income as well as estimated costs for 2024-25. We will have a chance to ask questions and discuss the results of our dream initiative. Pledge materials will be available. This will be a hybrid meeting allowing folks to participate fully online as well as in-person. During an expanded coffee hour, we will even have time to complete our pledge cards!



And don't forget: **Stewardship Sunday is April 14.** You will want to be here for the celebration of our Stewardship success with our tradition of enjoying the "Fiscal Pies." See you then! ❖



# 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 begins at 10:30am on Sundays**

**Minister** | Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

**Minister of Lifespan Faith Development** |  
Rev. Michelle Yates

**Music Director** | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

**Office Manager** | Emma Barry

**Nursery Care Provider** | Carol Williams

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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.**