



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

December 2014

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Our Outlook

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Sunday Services | December 2014

December 7 | *Status: Grace*

Ours is a religion of character and good works. Yet there's nothing like the holidays to make us realize that we might still need to make room for a little of this thing called "grace."

— Rev. Celie Katovitch

December 14 | *The Unexpected Guest*

Through this season of Advent and Hanukah, there is woven a thread of questions about hospitality: What does it mean to welcome the stranger? What does it mean to be at home in the world?

— Rev. Celie Katovitch

December 21 | *Thou Art That*

Who are we? Something in us keeps asking that question, and society is happy to try to answer it for us through marketing and advertising. The great spiritual teachers, from Jesus of Nazareth to the ancient authors of the Upanishads, have whispered their own riddle-like answer.

— Rev. Celie Katovitch

December 24 | *Christmas Eve*

In this 7:00 service, we gather in community to celebrate the magic and mystery of the season through story, song, and candle-lighting.

— Rev. Celie Katovitch

December 28 | *A Rose in the Wintertime*

On the last Sunday of 2014, as we begin the journey from the depths of winter to the season of new life and renewal, join First Universalist's worship associates for a service of poetry and music celebrating the twin themes of midwinter and spring.



Worship service begins at 10:30 am Sundays.





Pastor's Perspective

Message from Rev. Celie Katovitch

Next time you are sitting in the sanctuary, I invite you to find your way to #244 in the hymnal. It is the classic carol “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear,” and it was written by a minister of our faith: the Rev. Edmund Hamilton Sears. Sears served several congregations near Boston (including one I served while in seminary) during the middle 1800s. This hymn is no doubt his most famous work. Every year I keep an ear out for its haunting opening verse: *“It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold. Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heaven the news they bring. The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.”* How sweet I find that call to stillness amidst the bustling of the holidays.

It’s that first verse that rings in my memory. But the hymn actually has four verses, and while it begins in quiet contemplation, it also sounds notes of lamentation—for the violence in the world, for what is divided and broken, for all that wearies us in body and in soul. At the time of its writing, Sears, in addition to feeling dismayed at the United States’ recent entrance into war with Mexico, was struggling with depression. I suspect the “midnight” in the song referenced his own dark night of the soul as well as the dark of a winter night. Yet the song closes on a note of hope for brighter days ahead, hope for a time *“when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.”*

I think we feel more keenly both our joys and our sadnesses during the holidays. The reality of brokenness in our world does not disappear during these weeks. But at the heart of this season is a message of peace, goodwill, and possibility; a spirit of love which embraces us just as we are: with our tears and our laughter, all our human complexity and all our human potential to heal and to help others. That is heavenly news indeed.

May abundant love bless you this holiday season.

In faith,
~ Celie ❖



Walking Together:

Director of Life Span Faith Development

Submitted by Michelle Yates, DRE

I am a native Buffalonian! You don’t realize how much your identity is wrapped up in a place until you are not present for one of its defining moments. This is the first serious snow storm to hit Buffalo since I moved to Rochester, and it is **KILLING ME** not to be there. I imagine what I would be doing right now: checking in with neighbors and family; coordinating dig outs, hot food, and medical needs; creating memories and “where were you…” stories to share for years to come; reestablishing the bond of the “city of good neighbors”; building the Beloved Community.

Lots of people diss on Western New York for its snow, heck even we do, but blizzard season is where we really shine. In my experience, snow brings out the best in people in Western New York. Race and class and economics seem to take a back seat to people facing the elements together, doing what needs to be done, and shaking our shovels at the sky daring it to “do your worst!”

What I realize is that it is easier to come together and support each other when we are all in the “same boat.” It’s harder to remember that crisis hits all of us at different times of year, at different times in our lives. But how can we know that someone is in crisis and could use our support if we can’t see it; if it’s not obvious; if it’s not on Facebook? Perhaps it’s the person who stays quiet during the conversation, who yearns for a child, misses a loved one, or longs for closer relationship, especially during the holidays. How do we build relationships that assure us all that we can call on each other in times of crisis?

It’s an unwritten rule in Western New York to get to know your neighbors at least on a basic level, to lay a foundation for a relationship, just in case. To say I’m here if you need anything: help shoveling, to share an extension cord over the fence, to know that it’s not imposing, that being a good neighbor is what it’s all about. Through the holidays and the year, I encourage you to be good neighbor. Look for signs that maybe the person sitting next to you is snowed in with loneliness, flooded by sorrow, or hungry for connection. Check in on each other. Remind each other it’s not an imposition; it’s what being a community of neighbors is all about. ❖

Love Reaches Out

— *Newcomb Losh, Communications Committee*

In late August, the Communications Committee had begun discussing ways to increase our church's visibility when it learned of the UUA's new **Love Reaches Out** (LRO) program. LRO is designed to improve our outreach by giving us the tools to identify the signals we send, find a niche in Rochester and represent a shared identity of our faith. Some call this branding. We call it visioning. We eagerly joined 74 other UU congregations in the program.

Love Reaches Out, coordinated by Carey McDonald, UUA's Outreach Director, is in the beta-test phase. It consists of three workshops that end in the identification of a niche or Sweet Spot and assignment to a Learning Circle with other UU congregations that have a similar niche.

The first workshop, **Sharing Who We Are**, was done as a take-home activity on brand identity for our board members, committee chairs, minister, DRE and interested members to complete before the October 18 Leadership Assembly. It raised questions about who are we, what do we do, and why it matters.

Communications Committee members facilitated the second workshop, **Identity and Signals**, during the Leadership Assembly on October 18. Participants learned how we perceive ourselves and what goes into the unspoken signals we send through our newsletters, website, Facebook page and Orders of Service. We found that we felt that our church is its best whenever we are caring, welcoming, inclusive and supportive.

The third workshop, **Sweet Spots and Taking Action**, was held November 7 and was open to anyone interested in participating. Eighteen members and friends brainstormed ways to find our Sweet Spots—our niches, those intersections of the joy and energy that keep us coming to First Universalist and the exciting or painful places in Rochester.

This group buzzed with energy as they identified 18 potential Sweet Spots ranging from flashmobs for social justice issues, to opening our doors for Landmark tours, festivals, First Friday art events, and the Washington Square Neighborhood Association, to a travelling hospice and nursing home choir and more. Participants developed To Do lists to flesh out the scope of each Sweet Spot.

The Communications Committee is compiling workshop results, prioritizing them, looking for ways to involve the congregation and recommending action for approval by our Board of Trustees. The UUA Outreach folks tell

Reverend Celie's Installation Celebrated

— *Elizabeth Osta*

Over one hundred people were in attendance at the installation ceremony of Reverend Celie Katovitch on Sunday, November 16, 2014. Special guest Dollie Katovitch, Celie's mother, was on hand for the occasion. The Rev. Richard Gilbert served as Grand Marshall for the procession of clergy from the St. Lawrence District. Messages of welcome and support were received from Senator Joseph Robach. Mayor Lovely Warren and County Executive Maggie Brooks. A letter of welcome was also read from Congresswoman Louise Slaughter.

Dr. Daniel McKanan from Harvard Divinity School gave the charge to the congregation and Rev. David Blanchard from First Unitarian gave the charge to Reverend Katovitch after The Rev. Daniel Budd from Cleveland, Ohio, gave an address titled "The Art of Ministry." Reverends Marcus and Emily Hartnett Leifert led the Laying on of Hands and the Right Hand of Fellowship as those assembled were invited to come forward in support, after President Edward Deller invoked the Act of Installation, making formal our call and our commitment to collaborate with Reverend Celie.

Those in attendance were invited to a reception where

Reverend Celie was presented with a singing bowl and stole, as symbols of our hope as we journey forward together. The party was completed by a special welcome song composed and performed by congregation member and great talent, Ann Rhody.

We hope to help celebrate the Color Purple as noted in Reverend Celie's floral bouquet as we nurture spirits and serve the community together. ❖



us there is no one perfect niche, that the way to strengthen our vision is to develop and refine the process of being aware of the signals we send, find niches, and increase our community outreach.

The Communications Committee will keep you informed of our progress through *Our Outlook* articles and the bulletin board in the Clara Barton lounge.

We have great potential. We're excited! ❖

PACT and Exterior Renovation Project: A Resounding Success

— Connie Valk and Ed Deller

We did it! The PACT (Preserving A Cultural Treasure) capital campaign came to a close November 9. Our goal was to raise \$400,000 to support the Exterior Renovation Project for a new roof and window and masonry repairs. Through the generosity of many we raised \$478,000. Of this, \$450,000 was from congregation contributions including a significant challenge gift from Dick Brush. Another \$28,000 was received as grants from the Rochester Area Community Foundation and the New York Landmarks Conservancy. We also benefitted from a generous loan of \$50,000 from the New York State Convention of Universalists (NYSCU) to help with cash flow.

We celebrated this success on November 9 with song, fellowship and, of course, cake. Reverend Celie blessed the generosity and dedication of the congregation in preserving our sacred space. Ann Rhody provided a rousing parody to the tune of “My Favorite Things,” which was sung by Ann, Kitty Forbush and Ed Deller as the service postlude. Connie Valk and Ed thanked the PACT committee for their hard work and creativity to achieve our goal. The committee and other supporters included:

Connie Valk: Major gifts co-chair
Ed Deller: Major gifts co-chair
Ann Rhody: Finance and collections
Bill Jones: Finance
Kathy Russell: Gifts
Marcy Klein: Graphics and loan request
Elizabeth Osta: Honorary Board support
David Damico: Communications
Michael Scott: Case statement
Karen Dau: Loan and grant request

The planned work for the Exterior Renovation project was completed in October and was within budget. House committee members were thanked for their months of work in planning and coordinating with the contractors for this project, in particular Michael VanArsdale, Tom Ruganis, Alain Perregaux and Michael Scott.

Our new roof should stand up to all Rochester weather has to offer for decades to come! There will be some continued window repair and painting into next spring, but this is already factored into the existing budget.

Although the official portion of the PACT campaign is completed, donations are still welcomed. PACT funds in excess of those needed for this current project will be included in an endowed building fund. ❖

My Favorite Church Things — Special PACT edition

*A parody by Ann Rhody
To the tune of “My Favorite Things”*

Music and readings and sermons with power
Then comes the postlude and then coffee hour
Generous donors who make our hearts sing
These are a few of our fav’rite church things.

Celie’s our minister and we’re delighted!
New possibilities have us excited,
All of you people and joy that you bring!
These are a few of our fav’rite church things.

Great volunteers come for RAIHN and School 7
Helping each other we make our own heaven
All kinds of people who like how we sing
These are a few of our fav’rite church things.

When the roof leaks, When the floors creak
When the heat bill’s bad
We stop and remember our fav’rite church things
And then we all feel so glad!!

Now we’re preserving a cultural treasure
And you’ve been generous way beyond measure
All of those pledges add up, and “ka-ching!!!”
That’s really one of our fav’rite church things.

Our sanctuary has never looked better
Though in the winter you’ll still need a sweater
Inside and outside our place has some “zing”
Now we have more of our fav’rite church things!

Workers have done all the hamm’ring and drilling
And our campaign had results that were thrilling
Our roof now will last many winters and springs
These are just some of our fav’rite church things!

~~When the roof leaks,~~ No more roof leaks! When the
floors creak
When the heat bill’s bad
You’ve helped us remember our fav’rite church things
And now we all feel so glad!! ❖



Another Cultural Treasure: *Why the Hope-Jones Organ Matters*

— Bryan Holten

On Friday, October 24, theatre organist and organ builder Jonathan Ortloff played a short demonstration recital on our Robert Hope-Jones organ, in conjunction with this year's Organ and Film Festival at the Eastman School of Music. It was truly a joy for me to sit in the "house," where I was able to hear the organ speaking fully into the room. Just a few weeks prior, I had taken the same opportunity when David Peckham gave a presentation and recital for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society. Both occasions reminded me how much of a gem we have at Clinton and Court. The noble tuba, elegant flutes, and keen strings never fail to please me.

First Universalist's organ is labeled Opus 2, that is, the second "work" completed by the Hope-Jones organ company. The firm would close its doors after producing little more than a handful of instruments. In 1914, after a series of disappointing business relationships with several American organ companies, Hope-Jones ended his own life (in Rochester, of all places). He would not live to see the full impact of his innovations, many of which laid the groundwork for the ubiquitous Wurlitzer theatre organ.



Here is what impresses me: for all of its theatre-oriented features, Opus 2 works just as well for accompanying congregational singing, and for realizing a variety of musical styles. It serves as living, breathing proof that a well-made organ can withstand the test of time, of flighty fashions and fads. A notable example is the Neo-Baroque era following World War II; countless organs of supreme



1 in 30

— Marti Eggers

One in every 30 children experienced homelessness in the United States in 2013. But you may not have seen them. They may have doubled or tripled up with family or friends. They may have slept in dark hallways or in cars. They may have slipped into a coffee shop or a McDonalds or an all-night drugstore to wash up and change clothes before school. The lucky ones found a bed in a homeless shelter but could stay there for only a limited number of nights.

Homeless children are in the shadows here in Rochester as well. The **Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN)** is a non-profit organization of faith communities assisting homeless families in achieving sustainable independence by supporting them with resources of food, safe shelter, personalized case management and a broad network of caring volunteers. Thirteen faith communities host RAIHN guests in their place of worship for one week at a time, three or four times a year.

First Universalist is a Host Congregation, supported by volunteers from St. Mary's and Aldersgate United Methodist. We will be providing meals and safe shelter for four or five families with children from Sunday, December 14 through Sunday, December 21. Homelessness doesn't take a holiday.

If you can give a few hours of your time to our RAIHN guests during the week of December 14, please contact Chris DeGolyer at chrisdeg@frontiernet.net. Questions? Contact Chris DeGolyer, or Marti Eggers (Mceggers@gmail.com) or Sarah Singal (ssingal@rochester.rr.com). ❖

quality went to the dumpster. First Universalist took the long view by preserving a cultural treasure (sound familiar?) at a time when "out with the old and in with the new" prevailed.

We have in our building a one-of-a-kind instrument, a witness to the past, a living recording of an old (and high-quality) sound. Even more, it is a symbol of reverence to what came before us. I will miss very much playing this organ when the time arrives that I am called elsewhere. My hope is that future generations will continue to appreciate this gem of an instrument, for it is truly a cultural treasure. ❖

New Building Endowment — A Dream Realized

— Ann Rhody, Finance Committee

The First Universalist Church of Rochester's Board of Trustees made history at their November meeting by establishing a new Endowment, solely for the building's needs. The **Beryl Haas Building Fund** is named in memory of the wonderful woman whose generous bequest allowed for the renovation of the sanctuary and more. This endowment will allow funds to grow over time so that our building will have some long-term resources.

Initial funding will come from funds remaining from the sanctuary renovation project, as well as funds raised during the PACT campaign over and above the current bills due. Future contributions can come from any source, and may be a special place for designation of bequests and gifts.

Although the fund will not necessarily eliminate the need for future Capital Campaigns, it will give the church much more flexibility and long-term stability in caring for our architectural, cultural, and historic treasure. Thanks to all who made it possible! ❖



Shop 'til You Drop

— Marti Eggers

Tuesday, December 2, 5—9 pm
Pittsford Plaza – Monroe Avenue

Proceeds will benefit RAIHN • Helping Homeless Families Achieve Sustainable Independence

Bennucci's Italian Ristorante Wine Bar and Pizzeria, offering fine food from all regions of Italy, will donate 20% of your check if you mention that you're dining for RAIHN when you arrive. Reservations suggested. 264-1300.

Why all of the Fund-raisers?

— Ann Rhody, Finance Committee

When we raise money, where does it go? What is it used for? In general, funds go to support our church's programs as designated in our budget. Our annual operating budget provides for all of our church's ministries: Sunday Services, Music, Faith Development, Social Justice, and so on. **In other words, ALL funds raised go to support our mission to "nurture the spirit and serve the community."**

AND we have some fun and fellowship in the process! Here are the latest:

- ★ The **Change Drive** brought in over \$750! A wonderful showing and one of our highest totals ever!
- ★ The **Holiday Shoppe** will run during coffee hour on Sundays, November 30—December 21. We are seeking donations of craft items, gifts, and baked goods. We welcome items that can be sold for \$20 or less, and donations can be dropped off any Sunday (including the Holiday Shoppe Sundays) at church. Contact Paula Marchese (pmarchese@rochester.rr.com) for additional information, and plan now to do some of your holiday shopping at church (it's so much better than the mall.... trust us!!)
- ★ Our annual **Service Auction** will be held on Sunday, February 1, 2015, and donation forms will be available in late December. Think about items or events you can offer to add to the fun, and mark the date on your calendar! ❖

One World Goods, a fair trade gift store that sells quality handcrafted items from around the world. Your purchase provides vital income for our global neighbors as well as a donation to RAIHN.

Hobby House Toys, a unique toy store for kids of all ages. Family owned, specializing in educational toys, games, puzzles, science, puppets and much more. A portion of your purchase will be donated to RAIHN.

Steffan Otter Fine Art Jewelers, creators of award-winning designs, crafting one-of-a-kind jewelry. Demonstrations will be held each hour on the hour. RAIHN shoppers will be offered an additional 10% discount on purchases that evening. ❖

Mark Morrison-Reed's *The Selma Awakening*

— Phil Ebersole

Mark Morrison-Reed, in one of his books, remarked very truly that we Unitarian Universalists are ordinary people with grand ideas about themselves.

Like some of his earlier works, his newest book, *The Selma Awakening: How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism*, is about how we white UUs sometimes succeeded and often failed to live up to our grand ideas. It also is about the transformative experience of participating in Martin Luther King's Selma to Montgomery civil rights march in 1965.

I remember Mark from when he and his wife Donna were co-ministers here at First Universalist Church in the 1980s. Mark was a black American, Donna a white Canadian. They were fresh out of seminary when they were called.

The church was in decline and, due in large measure to their leadership, the congregation turned itself around and assured its survival.

Mark and Donna went on to parish ministry in Toronto, when they led the secession of Canadian Unitarians from the Unitarian Universalist Association. Since then Mark has been an author, workshop leader and instructor at Meadville Lombard Theological Seminary, while Donna is a Jungian psychotherapist in Toronto.

Mark's other notable books include *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination* and *Darkening the Doorways*, which are about the frustrations and lack of acceptance of black Unitarian Universalist ministers and others in our supposedly liberal denomination, and *In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby*, which is about his experience as someone brought up to live in a color-blind world that doesn't exist.

These books made me uncomfortable, as did *The Selma Awakening*. While we white UUs think of ourselves as progressive, we have harbored the same prejudices as the larger society. Even when we think we are above prejudice, we are so accustomed to an all-white world that we often fail to notice the absence of black people. Even when we try to do the right thing, our life experience is so different from that of African Americans that we can't connect with them. All these things are true of me.

The UU ministers and others who responded to Dr. King's call were plunged into a situation in which they shared the experience of black people in the South in that

era—the experience of being the targets of hate and discrimination and of being outside the protection of the law.

In that situation, they had to look to African American clergy for direction on how to survive. The white UU clergy and others were in Alabama for a limited tour of duty; the African Americans were on the front lines on a permanent basis.

Two Unitarian Universalists were killed. The Rev. James Reeb was clubbed on the street, and died of his injuries. The recent UU convert Viola Liuzzo was shot while riding in a car. The book does an excellent job of conveying the tension and sense of danger the ministers faced.

The intensity of the Selma experience was unforgettable. So was exposure to the African American religious tradition, which, in Mark's opinion, has much to teach us.

The UU commitment to freedom, reason and tolerance is not enough, he wrote; we need the depth of spirituality, passion and commitment to be found in the black church tradition. Although I have reservations on that point, I think this is a book every Unitarian Universalist should read.

Copies of *The Selma Awakening* are available for sale in the Clara Barton lounge during Sunday coffee hour, and will be added to the library in due course. ❖

Library News

— Keith Stott

As we approach another Christmas, what are you seeking? What will you find? What will find you? Look for some answers in the life of Jesus and in some other events. They will be found in "Rejuvenation," a section of *Some Poems* by Keith Stott. "Yes, dare to reach out again to stare down the spectre of oblivion." Take new hope on the eve of Jesus' coming and of the New Year. Seize new opportunities for growth in 2015! The call number of *Some Poems* is 811 S. ❖

Book Sale

— Phil Ebersole



Jan Hickman is moving and has to dispose of her books. Everything must go! Her collection, which includes a huge selection of cookbooks, will be offered for sale in the Clara Barton lounge during coffee hour on Sunday, Dec. 7. Proceeds from the sale will benefit the church. ❖

Drop-In Discussion Schedule – December

— Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 am (except in July and August) in the adult lounge on the second floor of our church. Sometimes our discussions are based on certain books or articles, but you don't have to read anything or do any advance preparation to participate. Just drop in. People of all viewpoints are welcome to make presentations or join in the discussions.

December 7 | *Fight for Fifteen*

Shirley Bond will discuss the arguments for a minimum wage of \$15 an hour and the campaign to make it so.

December 14 | *Information Bubbles*

Phil Ebersole will discuss what's called "epistemic closure," the process by which people protect themselves from hearing things that would challenge their world view. Do UUs do this? How can we avoid it?

December 21 | *A Vision for 100% Renewable Energy*

Hal Bauer will present a study of how to achieve 100 percent renewable energy by a team including his son, Zachary Bauer, for the Stanford University Solutions Project.

December 28 | *Stages of Faith*

Many of us experience changes in our belief and world view as we mature. James W. Fowler says in his book, *Stages of Faith*, that "faith is a person's way of leaning into and making sense of life." David Damico will share the fundamental ideas of Fowler's book and how our subjective path can benefit from its assertions.

If you have a topic you think should be discussed or want to lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole. ❖

Social Justice Plate

— Sarah Singal

The Social Justice Plate is collected on the third Sunday of the month. In September the RAIHN (Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network) program at First Universalist received \$338; in October Metro Justice received \$450. Thank you for your contributions! The recipient in November was Interfaith Impact's efforts against hydrofracking.

A running tally of recipients and donations will be placed on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge. If you would like to suggest a charity to receive a social justice plate please fill out a request form found on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge. The emphasis is usually on local organizations with limited funding. Members of the Justice Plate Committee are Shirley Bond (chair), Becky Elwell and Sarah Singal. ❖

Mitten Tree

— Sarah Singal

A Christmas tree will be placed on the chancel in early December. Please bring in mittens, gloves, hats and scarves, and place them on the tree. These will be distributed in January. This year, in addition to children at School 7, we will collect items for adults, and hope to provide warmth for the difficult-to-serve homeless population that often seek shelter around our church. Please bring bulky items directly to the House of Mercy at 725 Hudson Avenue (546-2580). Last day to drop off items is Sunday, December 28. ❖



Holiday Collection for First Universalist Staff

— Ed Deller

The plate collection on December 7 will be used for holiday bonuses for our staff at First Universalist in appreciation of the wonderful work they do. Please give generously. ❖

Auld Lang Syne

— Karen Dau, archivist



What follows are observations about three people I knew in this congregation who are no longer among the living: Marie Holzwarth, Bill Lennox and Bernice Cook.

When **Marie Bastianelli Holzwarth** died in 1983 she was 99 years old. During her teens she studied violin at Germany's Leipzig Conservatory and under the leadership of her father, played as a member of the Bastianelli Trio with her sister as cellist and her brother on the piano. They played at a number of upscale locations in Rochester and their concerts also received air time on local radio stations during the 1920's and 30's. In addition they performed for public affairs in Washington, DC, and gave concerts at the Library of Congress there. Marie was a long-time church member and I knew her during the 1970's as a gracious, lively-spirited elder who blessed my youth with her interesting and inspiring observations about life.

William C. "Bill" Lennox was a lifelong Universalist and later UU who was raised in this congregation along with his five siblings. His father had inherited the Rochester Electrotype and Engraving Company from his own father James Lennox, a native of Scotland who had founded the company in 1857. Electrotyping was a process that used chemicals to create an exact metal replica of a model, and in duplication technology it was a precursor to offset printing.

In time Bill and three of his four brothers followed their father into the business and later became his successors. Bill married Lois Killup and the couple were the

parents of four children. For a number of years he taught religious education classes. Bill was sadly predeceased by his wife. At the time of his death in 2004 at the age of 102, his direct surviving descendants were his children, 11 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. His memorial service was highlighted by lively renditions of traditional Scottish music.

Bernice Cook was born in Florida to a family of 13 children. Their mother brought them to Rochester during the 1960's and settled them in the neighborhood where the Manhattan Square apartment complex now stands. Later Anna Louise, wife of our minister Rev. John Brigham, began bringing some of the Cook children to religious education classes, and Bernice considered herself a birthright UU. During the 1980's ministry of Revs. Donna and Mark Morrison-Reed, Bernice's mother sponsored a number of memorable after-service "soul food" luncheons that were not to be missed.

Bernice married young and was the mother of three sons, and later after a divorce she resumed the use of her maiden name. As an adult she worked all over Monroe County as a home health aide until thyroid cancer forced her out of her employment. Recovering, she came to enjoy traveling to the annual meetings of the NY State Convention of Universalists and the St. Lawrence District, and feasting on conversations with other attendees. Then in 2009 she was fatally struck down by ovarian cancer. Besides her sons she was survived by a humongous host of relations, and her beloved minister, Rev. Sally Hamlin. ❖

Deck the Halls with... Christmas Poinsettias!

— Marti Eggers

Please help make the sanctuary beautiful for Christmas by ordering a poinsettia plant for \$9. You can take the plant home with you after the Christmas Eve service or donate it to our Congregation without Walls. If you'd like to dedicate the plant in memory or honor of someone, we'll list his/her name in the Order of Service on Sunday, December 21 and on Christmas Eve. Please place your order with Marcy Klein or Eileen Fernandez by Sunday, December 14. ❖

House Report

— Tom Ruganis

November was a fairly quiet month. The following are the highlights.

- All heating system leaks have been repaired.
- A new coat of paint was added to the main level coat room area.
- The hole in the plaster of the sound closet was repaired.
- The AV storage room was reorganized to allow addition of a file cabinet to be used for church archives. ❖

First Universalist Church

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 from the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Worship service begins at 10:30 am Sundays

Minister | Rev. Celie Katovitch

Director of Life Span Faith Development | Michelle Yates

Music Director | Bryan Holten

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Kris White

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

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