

Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

February 2012

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Our Outlook

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Inside

Minister & Choir Director	Pg. 2
DRE Letter	Pg. 2
The <i>UU World</i>	Pg. 3
Drop-In Schedule	Pg. 4
Library Book Review	Pg. 4
Small Group Ministry	Pg. 5
Auld Lang Syne	Pg. 6
RAIHN Dates & Thanks	Pg. 7

Sunday Services | February 2012

February 5 | *Engaging Our Theological Diversity*

Who is welcome here? How big is the theological "tent" at First Universalist? How big should it be?
-- Rev. Martha Munson

February 12 | *"Lust": What is it? Are you getting enough?*

Do you want more? Is its opposite love or something else? A service for Valentines Day.
-- Rev. Martha Munson

February 19 | Our pulpit guest this morning will be the venerable Susan B. Anthony. She returns to tell us something of her life and times.

-- Rev. Martha Munson

February 26 | *Recollections of a Southern UU*

In my years spent at All Souls in northern Louisiana and First Unitarian Church of Houston, I was a part in a variety of events that are connected to our UU principles including the trials of becoming a Welcoming Congregation, the after effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, being a progressive congregation in the Deep South and other adventures which left a lasting impression on me. I'd like to share these stories with you.

-- David Damico

AND + NOW + ABIDETH + FAITH
HOPE + LOVE + THESE + THREE + BUT
THE + GREATEST + OF + THESE + IS + LOVE



Joint Submission, Music Director & Minister

The music director and the minister confer briefly after the service...

Martha: Josiah, the choir was wonderful today! Thanks for your efforts.

Josiah: Thanks. I appreciated your message also. It gave me something to think about.

Martha: I could tell that the congregation was moved too. There was a lovely awesome, awe-filled silence at the end of the postlude.

Josiah: Yes, but then someone began to applaud.... (Slight grimace)

Martha: What? You don't like it?

Josiah: No. It's not a performance, and it can surely detract from the mood.

Martha: Well, that's very interesting. It bothers me too. I've been told that they always applaud at First Universalist. But some weeks it does seem to break the mood, the reverence, the silence. And nobody ever applauds the sermon. (Martha laughs. Josiah smiles in recognition.)

Martha: It's always seemed to me that the notion that we "always" applaud is no more meaningful than that we "never" do. If we "always" do, then it's not heart-felt, or a spontaneous expression, and it means little. If we "never" do it stifles the spirit when something is uplifting or overwhelmingly joy filled and suits the mood of the moment. I agree with you that it's not a performance.

Josiah: It's a worship service, not a concert.

Martha: I guess I just figured that since you're a performer, you must like and appreciate it.....

Josiah: Not really, at least not all the time.

Martha: Well, since you have special expertise in church music, and I'm only here for a short time, perhaps we could invite the congregation to join us in an experiment?

Josiah: An experiment of no applause.

Martha: I don't know, but we could ask them.

Josiah & Martha: We just have. We invite you to join us in an experiment of no applause at the end of the service on Sundays in the sanctuary.

Let's see how it feels for a couple of months. We're glad to receive your feedback, as are the members of the Music Committee and the Worship Associates. ❖



R.E.flections

Submitted by Kim Dehon,

Religious Education Coordinator

Adult Religious Education

"Our sources are what make us special."

This is what someone said to me at church recently, and as I thought about it more, I agreed--the sources of our faith are varied, rich, and unique. Unitarian Universalism's sources include our own experiences as the basis of our beliefs, the wisdom of prophetic men and women, the world's religions, including Christian, Jewish, and earth-based spirituality, and Humanist teachings. Join me in exploring these topics in a series of six classes entitled, "Introduction to Our Sources," which will include readings, discussions, and experiential opportunities in a multi-disciplinary format. Classes

begin Sunday, January 29th and will run every other Sunday from noon until two. Plan on bringing your lunch, an open heart, and a curious mind. Ideal for those new to Unitarian Universalism!

Please contact Kim Dehon, Director of Religious Education, for more information and to register (kimdehon@gmail.com or 789-0082). Childcare available upon request.

Faithfully, Kim ❖



The UU World

Submitted by Michael Scott

All members of First Universalist should receive copies of the UU World magazine four times a year. (If you're a member and you don't receive it, let Kris McCarty-White know: it accounts for \$21 of the \$56 in dues per member that our church pays to the Unitarian Universalist Association every year.) Together with the UUA website, UU World is the principal communication channel for the UUA today. The current magazine version dates from 1987. It was published six times a year until 2005, when it was split into a quarterly version (still mailed to all households) and an on-line version, posted weekly at uuworld.org. The current editor is Christopher Walton, who took over from Tom Sites in 2007. The organization and layout of the print version underwent a fairly significant update about a year ago.

I had always known that the UU World had a complicated history, but I didn't realize just how complicated until I looked into it for this article. On the Universalist side, the story begins with the Universalist Magazine, founded in 1819 and soon renamed the Christian Leader. In 1897 this became the Universalist Leader. Interestingly (and in keeping with the denomination's complicated self image), the name changed back to the Christian Leader in 1926, and to the Universalist Leader again in 1953. Many other Universalist periodicals, both regional and national, merged into the Leader over the years.

On the Unitarian side, the story was a little more straightforward. Here the Christian Register was founded in 1821, four years before the denomination itself (the American Unitarian Association). The magazine was renamed the Unitarian Register in 1957—hanging onto the Christian moniker four years longer than the Universalists.

With UU merger in 1961, the two periodicals combined to create the Register-Leader, which was renamed UUA Now in 1968. Available only by subscription, it was never widely read. When Robert West became UUA President in 1969, he moved to relaunch the publication as a free-to-all-members offering in newspaper format, named Unitarian Universalist World, and printed 19 times a year (bi-weekly except for summer). This format survived for 18 years, until then-UUA President Bill Schulz pushed a return to magazine format and a renaming as simply World, in an attempt to appeal to audiences beyond the UU fold. In 2000, near the end of John Buehrens's time as UUA President, the name changed once again, to the current UU World. The most recent overhaul—a change in layout and sections—occurred about a year ago.

In addition to the UU World, there are many other UU periodicals, both old and new. Of particular note is the Universalist Herald. Now edited by Rich Koster, the Herald has been in continuous publication since 1847 (as the Religious Reformer for its first 3 years). Rochester's own Joyce Gilbert is a member of the Herald board.

For more information, visit
uuworld.org
www.uuworld.org/2000/0900history.html
www.universalist-herald.net ❖

The Mitten Tree, 2012

Submitted by Sarah Singal

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the mitten tree this year, and special thanks to Kim Dehon and the RE folks for helping to recruit items. We donated more than 157 warm items for cold weather. These will warm the children of School 7 and Grace Urban Ministries, a community center serving the School 7 area. Every hat, mitten, and scarf was beautiful: so many different colors, textures, styles, sizes, many hand knit, many brand new store bought, some possibly used but looking like new--the diversity would make any UU proud!

Grace Urban Ministries is housed in a store front on Dewey Avenue at Driving Park Avenue, just a couple of blocks from School 7. They are grateful for all sorts of donations, and this time of year especially needed are coats, blankets, shoes and boots. Old dishes and pots and other housewares are always useful, too. Anyone driving to School 7 could easily drop off donations on the way over or back. Please keep this ministry in mind over the winter.

Drop-In Discussion, February Schedule

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday 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. Discussions are at 9:15 a.m.

Sunday, Feb. 5 | *Who Is Ayn Rand?*

Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion on the Objectivist philosophy of Ayn Rand, who said reason is the sole criterion of truth and selfishness is a virtue.

Sunday, Feb. 12 | *Open Forum Discussion.*

We'll meet for conversation without a set topic, or with a topic to be determined later.

Sunday, Feb. 19 | *What Liberals Believe*

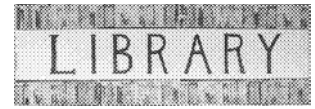
I describe myself as a liberal or progressive, some times, bleeding heart, at other times, leaning to the right. The website "Moral Compass" suggests that a simple left/right position is not enough; other factors are part of my makeup. Are you a self professed liberal? What do you believe? Is there such a thing as being "too" liberal? Come find out and share your thoughts, provocative as they may be! Based on the book *What Liberals Believe* by William Martin. Facilitated by David Damico

Sunday, Feb. 26 | *Our Flawed Nominating Process*

Is there a better way to choose Presidential candidates than the way we're going it? What would that be? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion. ❖



Serving with Grace



Submitted by Keith Stott

How well does our mission statement answer the question of why we exist as a congregation? If you are serving - or have been asked to serve - on a committee, how would the statement relate to your duties? For a perceptive, provocative consideration of this - and other ideas such as choosing your personal saint, and preparing emotionally for a meeting so you will *respond* more than *react*, check out *Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as Spiritual Practice*, by Erik Walker Wikstrom. Check this book out in our library, call number: 253 W. ❖

When the Spirit says "Sing" you can!

Submitted by Marie Sidoti

Just join our First Universalist choir. It's gratifying, inspiring and fun. Need help reading music? We help. Want extra practice, we have it. So give us a try! Sunday mornings at 9 am. Questions? 467-9135 ❖

Breaking The Record

Submitted by Sarah Singal

A message to the School 7 Community: We did it! We helped break the world record for the most people doing jumping jacks at the same time around the world! There was a total of 300,265 jumpers, beating the record of 20,425. We will be receiving a certificate signed by Michelle Obama... cool! Thanks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
MaryJo Schmitt, Physical Education Teacher / Mentor,
Virgil I. Grissom School #7 RCSD ❖

Coming soon: Budget Season!!

Submitted by Ann Rhody

Last year, we tried a new approach to budgeting by thinking first about our goals, mission, and dreams; and then developing a budget and stewardship goal which serve those needs. Most agree that this resulted in a better budget, less stress, and more involvement- so we're sticking with the process! If you are a committee chair or other church leader, watch for a budget request form coming soon. If you have ideas or initiatives that you think should be part of our budget, please contact Ann Rhody or Laretta Young **before February 15.** ❖

Building Community through Small Group Ministry

Submitted by Connie Valk

“I never imagined how Small Group Ministry could make me feel so a part of our faith.”

The quote is a common one for those who have participated in SGM. What is SGM? It is not a committee. SGM is an avenue for a spiritual, personal journey that fosters connection and caring with other UUs. SGM provides a way to explore faith more deeply. In the end it strengthens the fabric of our community. The Small Group Ministry program is open to anyone who wishes to participate. All that is required is that participants commit to attending the full series of sessions. Groups are led by trained facilitators and meet in people’s homes (or at church) for two hours each session.

The following sessions are scheduled:

Dates	Times	Facilitator
April 26, May 3, 10, 17	Afternoons 1:00 to 3:00 PM (Or evenings, if participants prefer)	Elizabeth Osta (at her home in Pittsford)
April 25, May 2, 16, 23	Afternoons 1:00 to 3:00 PM	Janet Rothbeind (at her home in the west side of the City)
February 21, March 27, April 24	Evenings 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM	Bill Elwell (This group, which meets at Bill’s home in Gates, has the potential for continuing sessions in the fall)

Sign up is on the Church website, or on the Church bulletin board.
Groups are limited to eight participants, so make your reservation now. ❖

A Caring Committee Reminder

When a family member enters the hospital, needs emergency meals, needs transportation to church, or wants home visits; please contact

Ruth Fitzgerald

rfitzgerald001@rochester.rr.com or 225-0555
or

Eileen Fernandez

eileenff2@yahoo.com or 225-2301.

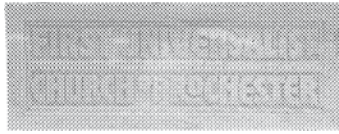


CAUTION

It appears that there have been two recent thefts of personal property on Sunday mornings. One from coat pockets, another of a purse. Please keep valuables near you, and be aware of folks around you. We do not want to be “easy marks” nor do we want to make it easy for folks who are in need to violate the law or the safety of First Universalist space. Thank you for your vigilance.

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



THE AUTHOR of this Soliloquy was Rev. Jacob Chase, an early Universalist minister in Rochester. He penned it in 1842, in his little tome “A Defence of Truth,” using the monologue format to describe how Universalism was so detested during this early time that women paid a very high price socially for having any connection at all with it. Early on I thought he had written tongue-in-cheek, but I quickly learned otherwise!

A Lady’s Soliloquy (excerpts)

“Well, really, I have been to a Universalist meeting. I wonder what people will say about it. I hope there are not many who know I have been there, for I shall be almost despised by all my present associates. They have often spoken of that meeting in terms of the utmost contempt; yes, and I have joined with them too. But I have been there and heard for myself. I don’t believe the doctrine, but I see nothing in the preaching that looks to me unreasonable; and certainly the preacher fully proved what he preached, from Scripture. I never heard so much of the Bible quoted in a sermon in my life before... Well, I don’t think I shall be seen there again; though, if it were not for the speech of people, and the overwhelming contempt which it would bring upon me from Mr. P.’s church [Rev. Joel Parker of Third Presbyterian, a fierce critic], I should [would] really take pleasure in dropping in once in a while and hearing what appears to me reasonable and consistent, though I do not believe it.

“O, there comes Mrs. H.—she has found out where I’ve been; she will feel very much disappointed and grieved, for she has frequently said that she would as soon go into a den of thieves as to such a meeting. (Jane, put that Universalist hymn book out of sight.) How shall I apologize?... Why, she has really gone by! I am heartily glad—for I have this time, at least, got rid of telling about a dozen lies, as an apology for doing no harm! But I want to be respected, and in order for this I must be a little hypocritical. Mrs. H.—told me the other day, that she...thought it was much better to be a hypocrite, respected by the popular classes, than to be a sincere Christian, disrespected, persecuted and despised. And she is not the only one who has intimated as much. And I suppose that I shall have to follow their rule. But I shall never forget the Universalist sermon... At all events, if I don’t go to that meeting any more, my neighbors can’t prevent me from thinking upon what I have heard. And if I am careful to keep my thoughts to myself, they will forgive me for the past, and honor me as usual for the future. Yes, I must be a hypocrite, or lose my good name and my popularity—there is no alternative.” ❖



The congregation honored Reverend Sally Hamlin at a reception in the Clara Barton lounge after the January 9 service, which marked the release of the covenant between the church and Reverend Sally. Sally is pictured here with Reverend Martha Munson.

A Thank You - RAIHN

Dear RAIHN,

November, 2011

I would like to take the time to thank you for the help I have received from you since I relocated to Rochester.

I moved to Rochester in February in hopes of pursuing a better life for my children and myself. I was fleeing a domestic violence situation with the only hope that the one friend I had here in the area could help me get on my feet and start over. After I had been here for a month, the friend decided that we could no longer stay [in her one-bedroom apartment].

With no direction to turn to, I got on the bus while my two sons were in school and went to DSS; [they could not help]. I was feeling hopeless and panicked, not knowing if I should just call my abuser back in Pennsylvania and try to go back home. A woman in the waiting area overheard ... and told me to go to the Salvation Army; she said they might be able to help me.

I got on the bus and went to Salvation Army. They said they would help me for a week, and what was I going to do after that? I had two sons, 9 and 10 at the time, and no DSS, so they did not think they could place me in a shelter. As I became more hopeless, a woman came out from the back and said there was a woman from a program coming to talk to me about maybe helping my boys and me. I did not feel relief until she showed up and we discussed a few things. That woman was Nancy Elliott [RAIHN Director]. I never met a more kind and caring person. I thought all hope was gone. She took me to gather some of my belongings and pick up my two children. I had the biggest sigh of relief looking at my two boys, knowing they would be warm, safe, and not go hungry.

I received a lot of help and support from RAIHN [while I was in the program]. I currently have my own apartment at the Greece Commons, and have been here since July 2011. My 16-year-old daughter, who stayed back in Pennsylvania, moved here. My family is back together.

I owe a lot of this to... the persistent help of RAIHN staff and volunteers. I continue to count my Blessings for all they have done and continue to do for my family and me. Thank you again, - Mary ❖

RAIHN Dates

Next Volunteer Training: Feb 1st,
6:30-8:30 pm, Twelve Corners
Presbyterian, 1200 S. Winton Road.

Training sessions orient volunteers to the philosophy of the RAIHN program and provide skills in building appropriate relationships. Ample time is provided for questions and discussion. These sessions are valuable not only for folks new to RAIHN but also for seasoned volunteers. All are welcome!

Next Host Week at First Universalist: April 1st – April 8th. Attend the training on February 1st so that you'll be ready to volunteer for this Hosting Week. We will have 87 volunteer slots to fill, so please try to set aside some time for RAIHN in April.

Questions? Please see Marti Eggers or Sarah Singal, or ask any one of the folks in the congregation who volunteer for RAIHN! ❖



“What lies behind us and what
lies before us are tiny matters
compared to what lies within us.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue

Rochester, NY 14604

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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 services and Religious Education classes begin at 10:30am Sundays

Minister | Rev. Martha Munson

Religious Education Coordinator | Kim Dehon

Music Director | Josiah Armes

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Kris McCarty 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>.