



Our Outlook

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Inside Page

Rev. Eileen, Rev. Michelle	2
Spring Cleaning Donation ...	3
2026 Stewardship	3
Drop-In Discussion	4
Fellowship Club.....	4
Dinner Church, Eastman.....	5
Rev. Eileen Award	5
Welcome Project Updates	6
Spotlight: Tech Team	7
Social Justice Plate.....	7
Queer Corner.....	8
Free Breakfast+	8
Open Listening—Organ	9
Membership, EcoJustice.....	9
House Committee, FIAC.....	10
Colgate Alumni Reunion.....	11

Sunday Services | April 2026

April 5 | *The Story of a Miracle - Easter Sunday*

Join us for Easter Sunday when we tell miracle stories from long ago and less-long ago! In hard times, our hearts need stories of great imaginative power.

— Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

April 12 | *All in the Telling*

Humans have always used stories to explain the world around them, to explore the human experience, and sometimes to justify their point of view. They can be sources of wisdom and truth, but they can also be great tools for considering other perspectives and reframing the narrative.

— Rev. Michelle Yates

April 19 | *Rooting for One Another - Stewardship Sunday!*

We are a community that holds one another in many ways. At the close of our Stewardship Season, we'll think about how we support one another—all the ways the Earth teaches us community care.

— Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

April 26 | *Truer Than True*

Do facts matter? Do they matter to us? We have some reckoning to do with the pedestal we've placed Reason upon. Come, let us reflect on where truth really resides.

— Rev. Eileen Casey-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. ❖



False Spring

*A Message from
Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell*

Beloveds,

Every year I get fooled by that special fiend of the northeast, False Spring. I remind myself over and over that the cluster of sunny warm days in early March is a trick, and that winter is most certainly not over. But my spirit never listens. Inevitably, I build up all the hope and promise of spring warmth inside myself, and then...it snows again. Five or six more times.

Sometimes, my friends, hope is a slog.

Sometimes there is nothing to do in a hard time but move through it. Even though they haven't arrived yet and it may very well snow several more times, we know bright warm days are coming. Even when our dreams exceed our budget, we inch down the path of generosity during Stewardship season once again. Even when our dear friend Rev. Shari Quan reminds us that it will take all of us showing up for our neighbors again and again, for a decade, to overturn an authoritarian regime, we show up. We trudge toward liberation, toward the world we long for, even when it looks to be so far away.

So let us slog on together, carrying hope through the mud (and ice), knowing that new life will indeed bloom again.

With care,

Rev. Eileen ❖

MIGRATION



How Do We T.H.I.N.K. About Truth?

*A Message from
Rev. Michelle Yates*

In Children's Worship this year, we've often introduced Bible stories and discussed what they could be trying to tell us. We try to look at different perspectives or interpretations of what the story means. I'll share how some other kids might have heard one interpretation from their families or church, and what wisdom we as Unitarian Universalists see in the story.

Personally, I have found it hard to feel like I'm hearing "the truth" when listening to many news sources today. Often, I react like our kids do to hearing a weird story. "Wait...What?!" And just like with the Bible stories, I have to turn the news over, to look at it this way and that, at different perspectives to try to figure out what is going on.

This month in Children's Worship we will be introducing the acronym and tool "T.H.I.N.K." Check out the graphic! I've seen this tool in schools before and think it is a great way not only to determine what is "appropriate" to share but to consider that the "truth" of what someone says is more than just weighing if it's a fact.



We can use these questions as we "T.H.I.N.K." about what to share, AND we can also use it as a lens to look at what others share with us! Ask news stories, factual, fictional and sacred stories these questions. Use T.H.I.N.K. especially when the speaker or the story makes you feel uncomfortable or weird.

If a person's communication is hurtful or confusing, first get yourself safe, then ask yourself "why?" Why are they angry or calling someone names? Do we really know why this person is "bad?" Or is it just that the speaker doesn't like them? What are they trying to tell us, and what does that message tell us about them?

Yours in the Journey,

Rev. Michelle ❖



Spring Cleaning Donation Requests!

Submitted by Justin Wilson, Congregational Life Coord.

Starting your spring cleaning? We could use new, remnant, or gently used items for upcoming projects!

Arts and Crafts supplies:

- Paper: reams, rolls, or bundles
- Pencil Sharpeners: basic handheld, electric, or vintage metal wall-mount
- Yarn: unopened skeins or cakes
- Buttons: larger buttons are better, 2- or 4-hole only
- General Arts & Crafts Supplies—no crayons please!

Housewares:

- Ice Crusher/Snow Cone Maker: working, metal blade apparatus (not the ‘toy’ types)
- Linens: washcloths, handtowels, napkins
- Two Matching Medium-to-Large Baskets: natural materials and color
- Disposable Tableware: cups, bowls, plates

Children’s items:

- Board Games: complete items only, ‘cooperative’ and/or classic games preferred
- Marble Run Tracks and Kits
- Wood Building/Stacking Blocks: plain/unpainted preferred, newer than 2009
- Mega Bloks, Duplo Blocks, LEGOs
- Pretend Play Sets: especially play food
- Figurines: one solid piece, no sharp edges or choking hazards (e.g., Little People style)

Other:

- Magazines: any subject, nothing above PG
- Paper Towel/Toilet Paper/Wrapping Paper Tubes/Cardboard Rolls: any length
- Shirts: adult sizes; button/snap shirts (clean, no holes)
- Microscope: in working condition

Please contact Justin at conglife@uuroc.org to arrange a donation! ❖



Stewardship: Faith is a Forest, Help Us Grow!

Submitted by Kathleen Shaffer & Adam Durand, Stewardship Co-chairs

It is that time of year again to water and nurture our beloved community by pledging to First Universalist!

Like a forest where fungal networks pool resources among all living things, our pledges allow us to feed and support each other. By sharing what we can spare, we trust that our collective abundance will lead to a flourishing community.

Our wonderful church is funded primarily through pledges—financial commitments made by members and friends. While every leaf helps, pledges are the deep roots that allow us to plan ahead, providing about 75% of the funds needed to operate, compared to just 2-3% from the weekly collection.

Ready to plant your seed? You can make your pledge by filling out a card at church or by visiting uuroc.org/stewardship.

Don’t forget to save the date:

• **April 19—Stewardship Sunday:** After the service, let’s celebrate the network that keeps us strong—and enjoy a slice of pie! ❖

Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by John Lukes

Drop-in discussions are held on Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30pm via Zoom, and in-person on the first Sunday of the month in the Chalice Room at 9:15am. Phil Ebersole is the contact for in-person discussions. Look on uuroc.org/drop-in-discussions for the link!

Sunday, Apr. 5 | Open Forum; Proposed Amendment to Drop-in Covenants

In-person

We will have an open forum combined with discussion of a proposed amendment to the drop-in discussion covenants. All are welcome. Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

Apr. 7 | Big T, Little T

Trauma: There's Big T, and little t. What triggers you? What calms you? Here are two tools you can use on the spot for soothing the soul and thriving through the tough times. Joy Leccese will present.

Apr. 14 | Origins & Purpose of World Religion Day

Our friend Munir Bahá'í will share the early history of World Religion Day which was established in 1950 by the Bahá'í faith and is celebrated on the third Sunday in January each year. Presented by Munir Bahá'í.

Apr. 21 | Making a Difference in Affirming Immigrant Families

Our guest presenter, Rev. Richard Witt, has been at the forefront of fighting for the rights of farmworkers and rural workers as the Executive Director of *Rural & Migrant Ministry*. For two decades he was a powerful force in gaining passage of the Farm Laborers Fair Labor Practices Act, and is well-known throughout New York State and across the country for his long-time advocacy for marginalized workers and their families.

Apr. 28 | Tools for Spiritual Deepening

Let's talk about and explore together the small group packets our three local UUA churches create. Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell presents and leads our discussion. All are welcome!

Have a topic for us? Contact our team with your proposal at DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org. ❖



Fellowship Club: Starting April 7!

Submitted by Jason Wilson, Congregational Life Coord.

In Germany, there is a cultural custom called “Stammtisch,” literally standing table. It refers to a standing gathering where friends can meet at the same time, same place. There is no expectation to show up every time, no need to RSVP to attend, no pressure to explain yourself if you are late. Sometimes lots of people show up, sometimes nobody does. But the point is that you are always welcome, come as you are, there is a place for you here.

In this spirit, we are launching a new Social Club. This group meets the first Tuesday of the month, in the Library section of the Clara Barton Lounge, from 12-1:30pm. We are starting on April 7, and you are all invited!

Coffee will be provided, but feel free to bring any snacks or other refreshments you would like. Show up, socialize, get to know one another, play a board game—or don't! You'll still be welcome next month. We hope to see you there! ❖





Dinner Church

Submitted by Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

Join us on Friday, May 1, in the Clara Barton Lounge for a new and different way of worshipping!

Come at 5:30pm to help prepare food and set up, or gather with us at 6pm for dinner, stories, songs, and conversation. Dinner will be provided.

This is an event for all ages; children and their noises are welcome! ❖

Eastman at Washington Square Concerts

Concerts are held at our church at midday on Thursdays. Each concert begins at 12:15pm and ends at approximately 12:45pm. Admission is free!

- **April 2 | Piano Extravaganza I**

The students from the studio of Professors Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers will dazzle you with piano masterpieces.

- **April 9 | Piano Extravaganza II**

The students from the studio of Professors Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers will dazzle you with more piano masterpieces.

- **April 16 | Woodwind Chamber Music**

Come and enjoy fabulous music for woodwind ensemble performed by ESM students.

- **April 23 | All American**

Soprano Tyler Cassidy-Heacock and composer/pianist Daniel Pesca will present a program of vocal music by American composers using texts from American writers.

- **April 30 | Fulton Chamber Players**

Violinist and ECMS alum Addison Teng and violist Amy Hess present works for violin and viola by Classical stalwart Anton Hoffmeister and little-known late-Romantic Emil Kreuz. ❖

Rev. Eileen is a Winner: Emerging Leader Award!

Submitted by Peggy Meeker

Each spring, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School celebrates three outstanding alumni, and this year, our Rev. Eileen is one of them!

She has been chosen to receive the **Emerging Leader Award**, which is presented in recognition of faithful contribution to ministry in church and society, and is open to alumni who have graduated within the past ten years. Rev. Eileen just squeaked through with respect to the latter, as she graduated in 2017.

On the former—her faithful contribution to ministry—her qualifications are many and strong. Her worship services are creative and her sermons brilliant, on topics ranging from social justice to body image to the power of the Love that holds us all.

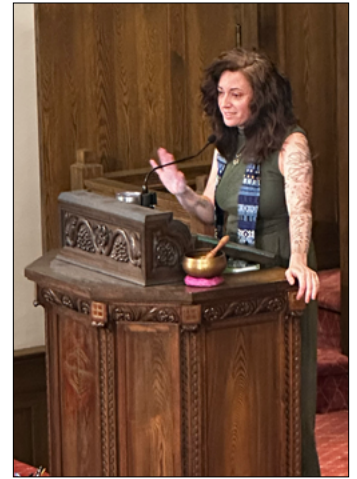
She has a gentle pastoral presence as well as a fierce devotion to justice and compassion.

She knows how to talk with children, she understands youth and young adult programming, and she has experience with membership and church growth, all of which are contributing beautifully in her service to our congregation.

Plus, she quickly became active in the wider Rochester community, responding to an ICE raid in October of 2025 and preaching at the annual Rochester Interfaith Thanksgiving service in November of 2025, to cite just two examples.

Rev. Eileen, along with the two other honorees, the Rev. Dr. Keith A. Russell and the Rev. Dr. Melany J. Silas-Chandler, will be honored at a dinner and awards ceremony on Thursday, May 14 at The Penthouse at One East Avenue, which is Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School's new location.

Anyone wanting to know more about the school, the awards, or the dinner can find additional information at crcds.edu/news. ❖



Welcome Projects: Updates!

Submitted by Marcy Klein, for the Welcome Team

The Welcome Team and House Committee are excited to announce that they have completed some improvements this winter to make our building more attractive, welcoming, and accessible. Other planned projects are well on their way to completion, so it's time for an update.

Clinton Vestibule

- **Strip the floor.** Years of wax buildup had discolored the beautiful quarry tile. We had the floors professionally stripped and cleaned to restore some of the original colors. The tiles have been left unsealed, as quarry tile is extremely durable and the unsealed look is the most authentic.
- **Build a radiator cover.** The bare radiator is an industrial-looking eyesore and burn hazard. Our carpenter Ted Robertson is building a beautiful radiator cover in the appropriate Arts and Crafts style and will have it stained to match the refinished doors. He expects to have the cover completed and installed by May.
- **Fix the windows.** We would like Ted Robertson to make operable five of the nine windows facing Clinton Avenue and add custom-made screens to help with ventilation in the sanctuary. Those windows, as well as the inoperable ones, will have new custom storm windows built as well. The existing storms are pitted from environmental wear and are permanently cloudy. The new ones will allow more light into the vestibule and improve visibility. The congregation will be invited to vote on authorizing the expense, \$11,715, at a special meeting after the service on Sunday, April 12.
- **Repaint the outsides of the four exterior doors.** This spring or summer we plan to repaint the exteriors of the vestibule doors, and the Court Street door to match. The existing paint is worn and marred, and the black and white color combination is stark and not authentic. We have chosen brighter, more appropriate colors to make the entryways more attractive. If you would like to help with the painting, please contact Michael Scott or Marcy Klein.



Clara Barton Lounge

A dramatic increase in attendance at coffee hour has overcrowded the room, so improving the traffic flow and increasing our gathering space and seating capability quickly became a priority. The Team brainstormed with Rev. Eileen, then we redesigned the room layout and recently implemented our changes.

- **Flip the layout.** The buffet table was moved to the library end of the room to be closer to the kitchen door, for greater convenience for setup and cleanup, as well as reducing the bottleneck at the entry doors.
- **Reconfigure the tall screen.** We opened up more gathering space in the library by removing several panels of the screen and shrinking the storage area. The smaller storage area can house a few tables and the vacuum cleaners, and continue to hide the marred wall behind it until that can be repaired. Extra tables and chairs were moved to storage in Room 25. The piano and committee table were relocated as well.
- **Rearrange the dining tables.** One round table, seating eight, was moved to the library area behind the buffet table, and the remaining tables spaced properly to accommodate seven chairs at each plus space for a wheelchair. Two rectangu-

lar tables, each seating six, were placed at the entry end of the room. A wide central aisle between the tables allows direct access to the buffet table, even for wheelchairs, and reduces congestion in the coffee area.

- **Accommodate parents.** Special seating was arranged near the children's table for parents watching or helping their children, and we provided a small table for their drinks and snacks.
- **Create secluded seating.** One of our library easy chairs was placed in the corner behind the welcome table bulletin boards, to create a quiet haven for reading, or nursing, or for a shy or neurodivergent person to relax and feel comfortable.

New Member

The Welcome Team is delighted to welcome Angelina Bell; she joins other members Marcy Klein (leader), Michael Scott, Sarah Singal, and Justin Wilson.

If you have any questions about any of these projects, feel free to contact a team member, or email house@uuroc.org. ❖



Social Justice Plate: Center for Teen Empowerment

Submitted by Emma Barry

Our April Social Justice Plate Offering is designated for **The Center for Teen Empowerment Rochester** and will be collected on Sunday, April 19.

Since 1992, *The Center for Teen Empowerment* has worked to transform communities, create safe spaces, and invest in the power of youth and adult partnerships to build stronger and more socially just communities.

Please support this important work. For more info visit teenempowerment.org. ❖

Spotlight on Committees & Groups: *Tech Team*

Submitted by Charlie Courtsal, Chair

In our UU community, so much of the heart and hands-on work happens behind the scenes — in our committees. That's why the Communications Committee is presenting *Spotlight on Committees & Groups*, a regular newsletter feature that celebrates the people and purpose behind these vital teams.

Each month, we'll lift up one committee's (or group's) mission, share what they're working on, and highlight ways you can get involved. Whether you're passionate about justice, music, spiritual exploration, care and connection, or the logistics that keep us running smoothly — there's a place for your gifts. Whether you're new to our congregation or have been here for years, we hope *Spotlight on Committees & Groups* will inspire you to get involved in a new way.

We hope this series will deepen your understanding of how we live our UU values through shared leadership and collaborative service — and maybe even spark your curiosity to join in!

Let's build beloved community, together.

Current Chair & Members: Charles Courtsal (Chair), Karen LoBracco, Michael Scott, Lisa Gwinner, Jim Milch, David Schuh, Oliver Annon.

Your Group/Committee's mission or purpose: To support the technological needs of our congregation.

Committee/Group responsibilities: Support our Tech Assistant, schedule tech support for Sunday Services (and other tech requests for church events), maintain our tech infrastructure, and support our online community.

Something you wish people knew about your Committee/Group: People can share their talents with the Tech Team, even if they have no tech experience!

Are you looking for new members? Yes!

Are members voted on by the congregation or do they volunteer? Volunteer

How often do you meet? About every 6 weeks.

How do you meet? By Zoom.

Are there any special qualifications/talents required to serve? No. ❖

Queer Corner: My Final Stage

Submitted by Kitty Forbush

I have reached what I am calling my FINAL STAGE—and I don't mean this in a maudlin way.

I turned 75 this year and what I have found to be so freeing at this point in my life is that I get to speak my truth—without fear and without reservations. I am ready to accept and respect what speaking my truth might elicit in those I am speaking to and I welcome the honesty that this brings to my relationships.



However, this was not always the case—certainly not 26 years ago when I realized that I was not living my truth.

I had been with my husband for 25 years, but it was when I was 49 years old that I knew I was a lesbian.

How was I supposed to speak this truth? Suffice it to say that the days, weeks, months that followed were terrifying.

My family and friends were in total disbelief. I was cut off and shut out. But I knew I was doing the best thing for myself.

I had to be authentic. I had to be real. The pain and losses were the price I paid to be true to myself.

Now, 26 years later, I am so happy to be accepted for who I am. I “don't regret the past or wish to shut the door on it” (AA) but I'm so proud that I was able to get through the chaos and disruption that I caused. I lived into my lesbian life and found peace.

I addressed my alcoholism, embraced AA, and celebrated 18 sober years this past June! Living a 12-Step program continues to assure me that coming out and being uniquely, earnestly and honestly myself is the best thing I ever did.

And to find a church that loves and supports me is the icing on my cake! ✦



Free Breakfast Plus for Unhoused People: May 28, 10-11:30am

Submitted by Bill Schubmehl

Free Breakfast Plus will be held in the Clara Barton Lounge on Thursday, May 28 from 10 to 11:30am; sponsored by the *Homeless Outreach Team of Rochester*. Plus includes free clothing, art, music (Eastman at Washington Square weekly concert), and access to multiple local agencies including *Person Centered Housing Options (PCHO)*, *Catholic Charities*, *Helio Health*, *V.A. Outreach*, *House of Mercy*, *Open Door Mission*, and *La Madonna Della Strada*.

We need volunteers, please contact Bill Schubmehl or Elizabeth Osta for additional info. Thanks! ✦

**YOU HAVE THE
RIGHT TO REFUSE
TO REMAIN SILENT.
RECORD. GET LOUD. TALK BACK.**





Membership Committee

Submitted by Donna Anderson

The Membership Committee is working with Rev. Michelle Yates to make our church community more intergenerational by training kids to be helpers!

The training sessions will be lead by Rev. Michelle. Grant Fish and Kathi Milch will assist and help with what the training would look like. The class will be titled: *How to be a Sunday helper*. Look for more details in the weeks ahead.

Kathleen Shaffer and I have been hard at work contacting the friends and members that our Stewardship Committee needed updates for. This will help our list of pledging folks be more accurate.

We have requested a bigger budget in the upcoming church year, as we are increasing the number of our events. For example: look for details when our next church supper will be. The food is delicious and it's a great way to get to know folks better! Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell will also lead a mini service. Come one and all for food and fellowship!

Having Justin Wilson on board has been a huge success! He and Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell have been streamlining our calendar of events so we have a focus. If you have an event you'd like to have happen, contact us! Our committee will offer our support in organizing it. Justin Wilson and Kevin Parkes have been keeping track of our visitors and updating the membership lists. So glad to have Justin on board!

Our monthly meetings are generally the third Thursday of the month at 1pm, usually in the Volunteer Office. If you have concerns, questions, or suggestions let us know at membership@uuroc.org! ❖



Open Listening For All: Sponsored by Rochester Theater Organ Society

Submitted by Charlie Courtsal

Bring yourself, family and friends to listen and watch members of the *Rochester Theater Organ Society* practice some of their favorite pieces on the pipe organ in our sanctuary.

From 1:30-4:30pm on Sunday afternoon, April 19, community organists will sign up to play the Hope-Jones, just for fun. Usually they play on the Wurlitzer organ at the Rochester Museum and Science Center, but it is under renovation at this time. So, we invited them to come to First Universalist. Church members are welcome to come and go, walk up to the console and speak with the organists, and listen as well at this free event.

They plan to return on May 17, so save the date! Contact Charlie Courtsal with any questions. ❖



EcoJustice: Earth Month & Earth Day!

Submitted by Sarah Singal

April is Earth Month and April 22 is Earth Day! Come to the EcoJustice bulletin board during coffee hour for ideas on advocacy and sustainability. On April 26 experience an interactive video documenting various effects of climate change. The April meeting of the EcoJustice Group will have occurred on March 29. The May meeting will be May 3 at noon in the Chalice Room. All are welcome! ❖



House Committee: *Spring Cleanup is May 2!*

Submitted by Sarah Singal & Moritz Wagner

If you are looking for a one-and-done way to help out at church while meeting members of the community, come join us! Cleanup Day is from 9am to 12pm (or drop in to help out for just an hour or two, we welcome any and all help).

There will be a signup sheet with options of cleaning, fixing, or routine maintenance, both indoors and out!

You can bring your own supplies or use our church supplies. Also, ever-popular snacks are (of course) provided! We hope to see you there! ❖



This world breaks our hearts. But this world needs our hearts in all their brokenness.
May they never harden.
And may Love find its way through every fracture.
- Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell



Fundraiser for Family Promise on March 8. Clinton Swingle, Brian Murney, Cindy Gibson, Tom Williams, Bill Elwell, and Dwight Montague bowled spectacularly!

FIAC: FPGROC Bowl-a-thon a Big Success!

Submitted by Chris DeGolyer & Bill Elwell

Many thanks to First Universalist's bowling team and to everyone else who donated to the March 8 Bowl-a-thon to benefit Family Promise! The Bowl-a-thon raised \$42,000 in total, which means more families in danger of homelessness will have a place to live. Go team! ❖





Colgate
Rochester
Crozer

DIVINITY SCHOOL

**ALUMNI/AE & FRIENDS
REUNION**
May 14 - 16, 2026

**GREAT IS
God's
FAITHFULNESS**
LAMENTATIONS 3:21-24, NRSVUE



Rev. Angela D. Sims, Ph.D.
President



**Rev. Dr. J. Wendell
Mapson, Jr.**

CTS '70

*Alumni/ae Chapel
Preacher*



**Rev. Dr. Keith A.
Russell**

CRDS '67

*2026 Distinguished
Alumni/ae Award Honoree*



**Rev. Dr. Melany J.
Silas-Chandler**

CRCDS '06

*2026 Peace, Service, &
Justice Award Honoree*



**Rev. Eileen O.
Casey-Campbell**

CRCDS '17

*2026 Emerging Leader
Award Honoree*



**Dr. Aana Marie
Vigen**

*Professor of Christian Social Ethics
Loyola University, Chicago*

*2026 Commencement
Speaker*

PEACE. SERVICE. JUSTICE.

Event Highlights Include:

- ✔ Voices in the City: Leadership & Impact Celebration Dinner
- ✔ Alumni/ae Chapel & Service of Remembrance
- ✔ Community Prayer Breakfast
- ✔ Special Recognitions:
 - 25th anniversary Class of 2001
 - 50th anniversary Class of 1976
- ✔ Class of 2026 Baccalaureate & Commencement Ceremony

and more!

**SCAN
ME! >>>**



View the full schedule and purchase tickets at:

www.crcds.edu/reunion



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.

Minister | Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell

Minister of Lifespan Faith Dev. |
Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

Office Manager | Mx. Emma Barry

Cong. Life Coordinator | Justin Wilson

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Worship begins at 10:30am on Sundays

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2025–2026

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Adam Durand, & Clinton Swingle

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.**