



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

April 2018

Sunday Services | April 2018

Minister
The Rev. Peggy Meeker
minister@uuroc.org

**Minister of Life Span
Faith Development**
The Rev. Michelle Yates
edu@uuroc.org

Director of Music
Stacey Xiaoyu Yang
music@uuroc.org

Office Administrator
Andrea Lewis
585-546-2826
office@uuroc.org

Our Outlook Editor
Andrea Lewis
office@uuroc.org

First Universalist Church
150 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14604

Visit us online: www.uuroc.org

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April 1 | *Through Death to Resurrection.* The Easter story insists, along with all the major religions, that there is life on the other side of death. We'll look for meaning(s) in this message of creativity, transformation, and hope.

—Rev. Peggy Meeker

April 8 | *Chaos.* How much of life is chaos—or chaos management—as opposed to order? How do we live with chaos? How do we make meaning from it? Is the experience of chaos the human condition? What would that tell us?

—Rev. Peggy Meeker

April 15 | *Racism, Reconciliation and the Resurrection.* Gaynelle Wethers will share her experience of being born and raised in segregation in New Orleans, Louisiana, her reconciling with dealing with racism then and now, and her understanding of the Resurrection in addressing the experiences of her life's journey.

—Guest Preacher Gaynelle Wethers

April 22 | *Earth Sunday.* With the help of our Eco-Justice folks, this service and sermon will honor both our Earth's bounty and her injuries, highlight the need for sustainable energy, and celebrate our energy-giving, life-giving Sun.

—Rev. Peggy Meeker

April 29 | *A Universal Love.* Our Universalist heritage challenges us to love and to know that we are loved—both things. This may be life's central challenge. We do a lot to try to offer love to the world. But do we believe or feel that there is a Universal Love that holds each of us?

—Rev. Peggy Meeker





Pastor's Perspective

Message from
The Reverend Peggy Meeker

April brings spring (finally!) and the gathering formerly known as District Assembly and the moving forward of our ministerial search process. Plus, all the other things that are going on this month! As I write this, the Search Committee has just finished their process of meeting with and evaluating their chosen pre-candidates, and very soon one of those pre-candidates will be selected to become our candidate, the person we eagerly anticipate will be our next called and settled minister.

The gathering is the 2018 Seaway UU Spring Gathering, and I hope many of you will join me there at the First UU Society of Syracuse. The event will follow the twice-annual UU Ministers Association gathering, which is always a rich and inspiring time for me, and which will be held about an hour's drive southeast of Syracuse from Wednesday through Friday. Then I'll drive to Syracuse, where I'll have the privilege of joining some of you to represent our congregation. There's a banner parade at opening worship Saturday morning, and I'm just now realizing that I don't know whether we have a banner! I'll check into that.

The spring equinox is a time when night and day are equal in length. It is a time not only of nature's awakening and new life all around us, but a time of balance. For us, at this time in the life and history of our congregation, one of the ways we might seek balance is in the amount of looking back we do—which is always part of the work of an interim year—and the amount of looking forward—to what we do not yet know! — and the amount of being in this moment. It is this particular here and now, this moment, in which we live. This moment when we glance out the window and see our first robin. This moment when we head off to work or school, when we're washing the dishes, when we greet one another at a meeting or rehearsal or rally or hospital room.

Wherever you are right now, this is the moment in which you are alive. Blessed be this moment.



Walking Together

Submitted by
The Rev. Michelle Yates,
Minister of Life Span Faith Development

This year, in Children's Worship and beyond, we will be exploring our Unitarian Universalist Principles which we covenant to affirm and promote. Our Faith Development theme for April is the Sixth Principle, **"The Goal of World COMMUNITY with Peace, Liberty, and Justice for All,"** or in our children's version of the principles, **"We believe in working for a peaceful, fair and free world."**

Last month the children discussed "consensus" as one of the ways a group can make a decision or select an option that everyone "consents" to. We recognized that it can be difficult to find something that works for everyone, but that the process of working together, seeing the value in each person and compromising is good for relationship and community building.

In Kenneth Collier's reflection on the sixth principle he picks out "community" as the most essential word. That it is only as a whole community that we can work for peace, liberty and justice for the whole community, and that the key to achieving these is 'community building.'

Collier says, "Alone, we're not much; together we have power. Community is about the kind of dynamic, creative tension that requires people to move together in a sort of dance. The core of a family is also the core of a community, and that core is love, the profound understanding of connection and the possibility of transformation within a nurturing and supportive context." He is also supportive of families of all shapes and flavors. However long you have been at First Universalist, we hope to help you find your fit in our church family.

Have you found your niche in our church community for working toward peace and justice? How about for community building; sinking in your roots within the congregation? How might you as an individual, or us as a church community, work to be part of "World Community" and for a peaceful, fair and free world?

"What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love."

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



MSC Report: Interview Time!

Submitted by the Ministerial Search Committee

As we write this near the end of March, we are wrapping up our pre-candidating weekends. April is the month we choose a candidate to recommend to you, the congregation!

During April, we will plan Candidating Week, the time when the candidate and family will visit Rochester to meet the congregation. The candidate will lead two worship services, one for the Sunday at the beginning of the week and one for the Sunday at the end of the week. The week will include meetings with committees and social events where every congregant will have a chance to meet the candidate.

On the second Sunday, after the church service, we will hold a congregational meeting where members will vote whether to call the candidate to be our settled minister. Please plan to attend and vote that Sunday. We have tentatively set the date of Candidating Week as April 28th through May 06th.

We have met some delightful pre-candidates and have enjoyed thoughtful, enlightening discussions with them. We have asked the hard questions and have received the answers that will help us choose the candidate who is the-best-fit-for our church. So, when you meet the candidate, you can relax and have a good time getting to know the candidate, rather than grilling them with interview questions—we've already done that. At this stage, it's important that we make the candidate feel at home with us, so that the minister knows that this is the church he or she wants to serve.

We ask that each committee plan what you want to discuss with the candidate, so please add that topic to the agenda for your next meeting. The UUA recommends that a search committee member accompany the candidate to all meetings and events, so we plan to do that.

You will hear more from us very soon as we finalize the dates and schedule for Candidating Week. Thank you for your patience and support!

Illuminating Justice Film and Discussion Series

Submitted by The Rev. Michelle Yates

On the **second Sunday, April 8th**, a film clip on the immigration justice issue called *DREAMers Among Us* will be shown **in the sanctuary after service at 12 noon**. The film will last no more than 45 minutes to leave time for discussion.

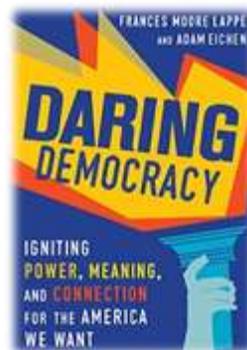


Final UU Common Read Book Discussion

Submitted by The Rev. Michelle Yates

Please join us to reflect on and discuss *Daring Democracy: Igniting Power, Meaning, and Connection for the America We Want*, by Frances Moore Lappé and Adam Eichen. It is an optimistic book for Americans who are asking, "What do we do now?" This book is available through the church bookstore and library. You don't have to have read the book to participate.

Tuesday April 10th from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Chalice Room—theme "Finding One Another."



The Membership Committee of First Universalist Church

Submitted by Connie Valk

Membership Committee views the process of “drop-in visitor to member of First Universalist Church” as an opportunity for others to experience the power of the faith and community that longtime members have long embraced.

The “Path to Membership” session in March introduced participants to the aspects of belonging to a faith that opens venues for Faith Development, Stewardship, and Social Justice as well as Unitarian Universalist history. New members as well as seasoned members were honored during the Sunday service and with a celebration cake at coffee hour.



Peter Perine, Membership Chair, and Rev. Peggy Meeker welcome new members Jessica Isaac, Patricia Wollan, and Jillian Beaman.



Save the Dates for the UUA

2018 Seaway UU Spring Gathering:

This is the event that used to be known as DA. It will be held Friday and Saturday, April 13-14th, at the First UU Society of Syracuse. The theme of the gathering is “You Can’t Spell Church without J-O-Y.” Come hear First Unitarian’s Sheila Schuh present the Gould Discourse, and enjoy worshipping, learning, and connecting with UUs from around the state. For more information and to register, click here – <https://www.uua.org/central-east/events/region/2018-cer-st-lawrence-seaway-spring-gathering>.

General Assembly:

This year’s GA – *All Are Called* – will be held June 20-24th in Kansas City, MO. Information is available at <https://www.uua.org/calendars/uua/general-assembly-2018>.

“But History is Boring!”

Submitted by Karen Dau

As I prepare to retire as church historian, I hope by my last day to have the archive well organized and accessible to those in the future who want to make use of its treasures. To this end the Board has requested that I solicit the efforts of those who are willing to help me finish my work, and also hopefully pique the interest of some who might consider serving for a time as my successors. And yes, I have deliberately used the plural here. I believe that the day is past when one person can manage the archives singlehandedly—not because the collection is so large, but because the work of archiving itself has become so multi-faceted in an increasingly technological world.

In the future I think that preserving the viability of this storehouse will be so much more successful with a small history team that can bring diverse perspectives to the tasks at hand. This team will soon come to see how our past has been and always will be a prologue to the future of the church. Its members will discover that the congregation joins in to add to the holdings. And if they did once find history boring, they won’t any longer!

You can reach me via office@uuroc.org, by leaving a message in the historian’s mail slot in the volunteer office, or by speaking to a board member. I look forward to connecting with you.

2018 Stewardship News

Submitted by Richard Reed and Ann Rhody

THUS DO WE COVENANT

By the time you read this article you should have received your pledge card and information. We hope that you have made your pledge and submitted it already. If you have not made a pledge yet, we ask that you do so soon. These pledges are for the fiscal year 2018 - 2019, which begins July 1st. The pledges are integral in the budget process, which begins May 1st.

This year's Stewardship Sunday is April 8th. We will celebrate after church with our annual Pie Fest. Please join us as we are all a part of making our Church so wonderful. Again, it is our honor to serve as your Stewardship co-chairs.



The Church Budget— Don't be Afraid!

Submitted by Ann Rhody

For those of us who are not part of the Finance Committee, the words “budget” and “finance” can often spark dread. Fear! Boredom! Eyes glazing over at endless columns of numbers.

Fear not, brave church folk! The First Universalist Church budget need not be a source of mystery and dread. While it's not important to understand every detail of the finance world at church, members DO vote on the budget at the annual meeting in June. The church is YOU, and you have a say in how money is raised, spent, and managed.

Here's how it works when we create the church budget:

1. We take a look at how much it costs to maintain our building: the heat, utilities, maintenance, and so on. We can usually tell how much we're going to need based on previous years' costs.
2. We calculate what it costs to call our Minister and employ our staff. While we have some flexibility, we strive to be a “Fair Compensation” congregation and offer competitive wages.
3. We look at what it costs to operate: postage, paper, cleaning supplies, salt for the winter, and so much more.
4. Committee requests are considered and funded—from faith development to worship to social action, money is needed to run our programs.

And now, the fun part: We look at how much money will come in to the church to fund everything above! THAT's where your pledge comes in. While plate collections and contributions are good sources of income to help the church operate, together they account for only about 6.5% of income for the year. The biggest portion of income is from **pledges from members and friends like you.**

Making a pledge to the church helps us to know how much money we can count on for the coming year, just as our own household budgets rely on predictable income.

Spring is budget time, and we'll be starting to build the budget soon! So, get those pledges in, and if you'd like to participate in the budget process, you are welcome to join us. Contact Finance committee chair Ann Rhody via office@uuroc.org for more information.



Living Our Values, Making A Difference

*Photos by J. Newcomb Losh
unless otherwise noted*

Girl Scouts - RAIHN - February 17, 2018



Accompanied by RAIHN coordinator Marti Eggers, Girl Scouts Bethany Adler and Haleigh Booth carry the toy box the troop made to hold the donated toys for RAIHN to the third floor.



RAIHN Volunteer Coordinator Christine DeGolyer (r) helps Girl Scouts Bethany Adler and Haleigh Booth position the toy box in a classroom.



RAIHN Co-Coordinator Marti Eggers (2nd from rt) listens as Girl Scout troop 60418 leader Jill Fisher (rt) shows toys collected and donated by the troop for RAIHN children who stay at First Universalist as scouts (l to r) Valerie Adler, Bethany Adler, and Haleigh Booth look on.



Finished! The toy box, built by Girl Scout Troop 60418 and filled with toys they collected, is ready for children who stay with us in the RAIHN program (l to r: Valerie Adler, Marti Eggers, Bethany Adler, Haleigh Booth, Christine DeGolyer and RAIHN Co-Coordinator Sarah Singal).

Project Team Update

Submitted by Dolores Da Lomba

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” Debby White quoted these words of James Baldwin in her preface to the Rethinking Key Concepts section of her book, *Waking-up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race*. Our Journey to Justice begins with our being willing to face the barriers of misunderstanding, misperception, and fear that have been erected as walls that keep us separate from one another. Our Journey requires us to tear down these walls and build bridges of understanding with the love and respect that honoring our First Principle requires.

About 15 people gathered in the Chalice Room on March 18th and shared their perceptions and experiences. The discussion was lively and enlightening. It will continue on Sunday, April 22nd. If you weren't able to join the discussion in March, try to join us at the April meeting. As the book is so popular, library copies are difficult to get. If you don't wish to purchase a copy, I would suggest putting a hold on the title as many copies are listed as overdue. Because of its popularity, we are thinking of offering a second discussion of the book in the fall.

For those who are looking for additional reading, I recommend Nell Irvin Painter's *The History of White People*. Russell Banks calls it “Deeply researched, intelligent, and wonderfully common-sensical..., it locates race where it actually exists, inside our heads, and shows us how recently it came to reside there.”

We apologize for forgetting to put out the Project Team Suggestion Box last Sunday. We were excited to receive a suggestion the first day it was out. Hal Bauer brought our attention to the high mortality rate of infants of color in Rochester. Connie Valk noted that WXXI had done an excellent program highlighting that problem which is accessible on line. Thank you Hal and Connie. More on this later after the Team has had an opportunity to discuss how we might best be useful.

The Project Team is excited about having Gaynelle Wethers as a guest speaker in mid- April. You will be hearing more about that very soon, and we look forward to hearing more of your suggestions, ideas, and preferences.

Finally, Marian Anderson said, “No matter how big a nation is, it is no stronger than its weakest people, and as long as you keep a person down, some part of you has to be down there to hold him down, so it means you cannot soar as you might otherwise.”

FIAC

Faith In Action Council

Dialogue on Privilege:

□ White □ Other

Submitted by Joy Leccese

A recent blog article by John Pavlovitz, a Christian minister, describes “Five Truths about White Privilege for White People” (<http://johnpavlovitz.com>). He is straightforward: privilege just *is*. And White Privilege is a fact of life—in America and in many countries around the globe. Responses on his blog run the gamut from terse rebuttal to biographical illustrations of discrimination and white privilege. Over 50 pages of commentary means he has struck a nerve. Eye-opening comments illustrate how divided we are in our opinions, beliefs and assumptions. The best things about this article? First, it gives voice to an issue that is at the core of addressing systemic racism. Second, it engages people in dialogue—whether we agree with one another or not.

The greater good is served when we engage in dialogue—in civil discourse, which is sorely lacking in our government's highest ranks. How do we change things up? Change begins with awareness, asking questions, and being open to exploring our own biases, beliefs and assumptions, which can lead us to deep listening, understanding, and the cultivation of compassion. We don't “lose” privilege (as one reader posted) by naming it, seeing it operating in our own lives. We name it to get out of delusion; to get clarity on what is; and to inspire us to “Get action,” per Teddy Roosevelt.

Our congregation's Faith In Action Council (FIAC) and the Project Team will be bringing you numerous opportunities in coming months to expand your awareness, engage in dialogue, and then, “Get action.” Watch for signs of growth: it sneaks up on you, just like the Spring flowers we hope to see in Spring. (Soon, we hope!)

For more information on our Social Justice Ministry events, see the Bulletin Board on the Court St. wall, or contact a member of FIAC or the Project Team. (Names and contact info on the Bulletin Board.)

RAIHN

Rochester Area *Interfaith Hospitality Network*

*Keeping families together.
Getting families home for good.*



Submitted by Marti Eggers

RAIHN Works—Mary's Story, November 2011

Dear RAIHN,

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; ... they might be able to help me.

The Salvation Army 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 and have been here since July 2011. My 16-year-old daughter, who [had] 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

*First Universalist was one of the congregations hosting Mary. RAIHN works!

House Committee News

Submitted by Tom Ruganis

It's that time of year again! The spring clean-up day is scheduled for **May 5th**. Please consider coming to the church to clean and polish our building in preparation for the upcoming **Candidating Week**. In addition to cleaning, routine maintenance and small projects will be done. Particular attention will be given to the Minister's office. More information to follow.

Two locksmiths have been contacted to quote the replacement of the lock on the door to the parking lot. New keys will be provided to all staff, Board members, and committee chairs as well as others as needed. If you are not in one of these groups and need a key, please notify Tom Ruganis.

A vendor has been selected to replace the storm windows in the Minister's office. Morse Lumber has been chosen to provide tight fitting wood storm windows with replaceable screens. Also, now that the cold and snowy March is behind us we will address the roof and plaster issues in that area.

A second quote for Clara Barton Lounge storms has been received and a decision will be made shortly.

As always, if you are interested in joining the House committee or helping out with on-going support of the building please feel free to contact anyone on the committee.

The House Committee is currently: Tom Ruganis, Chair (office@uuroc.org), Sarah Singal, Marcy Klein, Michael Scott, Ed Deller and Shirley Bond. We would love to hear from you!



Eco-Justice: Mining Our Garbage

Submitted by Kate Fleury

I have a nightmare vision that one day we could be mining our landfills. Not in a "good" way, rather as zombie-like wraiths picking over the detritus of former generations. Looking for food (Ugh!), metal, cloth, scraps of anything we might need to survive. "Miners" would have short life spans, due to toxins in the garbage and the instability of the material underfoot.

But ... what if there were other ways to "mine" a landfill? In the book, *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*, edited by Paul Hawken (2017), several methods of using garbage are shown. Perhaps one of the least beneficial is waste incineration, the so-called "trash to cash." Burning mixed trash containing plastic, paper, organic materials, metal, and junk creates energy, but also pollutants. These days the United States burns 29 million tons of garbage a year. Poorly controlled incineration plants release toxins like mercury, lead and dioxin. Better controlled plants "only release carbon dioxide."

Methane, a gas which is 34 times more harmful in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide, is released from landfills. It is produced by anaerobic bacteria that feed on organic material. What if the methane could be captured and used for fuel? "Biogas," or methane, is tapped from inside landfills, and can be a fuel used similarly to natural gas. Many landfills are designed from the start to capture the biogas so it will not be released into the atmosphere and can be used instead for fuel.

A third remedy, on a smaller scale, is already in use all over the world. A "methane digester" is a sealed tank that allows anaerobic bacteria to digest organic wastes. The biogas produced in this way is used for light, heat and cooking. A byproduct in the sealed tank is "digestate," a solid that settles to the bottom. It is used for fertilizer on gardens and farms.

I used to feel so discouraged about the future of humans in this, our floating jewel of life. Since exploring some of the science-based solutions in *Drawdown*, I am hopeful again. I am looking forward to seeing how we develop and evolve to stay alive!

Drop-in Discussion Schedule

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday morning in the Chalice Room on the second floor of our church, *starting at 9:15 a.m. during the regular church year.* 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.

April 1 | Open Forum Discussion. We'll meet and talk without a set topic. Phil Ebersole will facilitate.

April 8 | *Russiagate*: Did the Russian government meddle in the 2016 election? What impact, if any, was there? What, if anything, should be done about it? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

April 15 | *Solar Energy*: A representative from Suncommon will discuss how individuals can incorporate solar energy in their households. Come with questions about solar energy and to learn more about the Eco-Justice Task Group.

April 22 | *Medical Aid in Dying*: One of the most controversial topics at the NYS Legislature is medical aid in dying legislation. What are the pros and cons—and the moral basis for support? Dick Gilbert, a member of the Compassion and Choices Clergy Advisory Council, will lead the discussion.

April 29 | *Chaos Theory*: How can a theory labeled "chaos" help us understand the world? What is the "butterfly effect"? Phil Ebersole will share what he knows and lead a discussion.

May 6 | *Liberating Women*: How does educating women help the entire world? Kate Fleury will talk about how, when women, especially women in poor countries, have hope for the future, they may have fewer children, and they may start businesses and be better able to care for their families and contribute to their communities in other ways.

If you wish to have a topic discussed or, better still, are willing to lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole.

Nominating Committee

It's that time again!

In June, the UUA's General Assembly takes place. If you would like to attend as a delegate from our congregation, please contact Shirley Bond as soon as possible. Non-delegates are welcome to attend as well, of course. Check out the UUA website for more information on this year's topics and keynote speaker: <http://uua.org>.

Social Justice Plate

Submitted by Marcia Weaver

April 15, 2018

In honor of Earth Month, our Social Justice Plate collection for April will go to the Rochester People's Climate Coalition (RPCC).

RPCC is a network of over 100 local business, faith, civic, labor, and environmental groups committed to identifying and implementing effective climate solutions. A current priority for RPCC is providing leadership in bringing clean, affordable, renewable energy to our region through programs such as Community Choice Aggregation (CCA).

Please give generously to this great cause. Visit them on Facebook and check out their Earth Day Event on April 22!



Community-Wide Climate Action Plan
Rochester, NY



Efficient. Clean. Healthy. Connected. Inclusive.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
for a resilient and sustainable future.

Roc/ACTS

Submitted by Shirley Bond and Robert Remley

Spring is Here!

**Annual Banquet
Harro East Ballroom
155 N. Chestnut Street**

**April 22, 2018
3:30 pm**

Tickets \$50

The guest speaker will be Rev. James Simmons, pastor of the Baber AME Church. We hope to get a couple of tables (that seat 8) together. Everyone said they had a good time last year and it was fun to be with hundreds of like-minded people in Rochester who have the same goals, to work on making our community a model for the nation to follow. Sounds lofty but it can be done.

I will have tickets so don't be shy, just step right up to purchase one or more!

Hard to believe that it is April! Roc/ACTS is working hard on the various task forces. They have four main ones and I am hoping to generate church interest and have us get involved. The march from a church in Corn Hill to Liberty Pole on a Saturday afternoon in February was well-attended by UUs. Likewise, the Police Accountability Board's open forum on March 19th at the Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word was very successful.

I continue to be proud to work with the First Universalist Church, representing us in the community and getting them to know us. Thank you for your patience while I learn the ins and outs of organizing for racial justice.



Recap of Earth Month Activities at Church

Submitted by Sarah Singal



April 1: Easter: *Plan your garden*, plan to compost; plan to waste less food.

April 8: *Recycling demo* at Coffee Hour.

April 15: *Drop-in Discussion* seminar on solar energy with Suncommon representative. Find out how you can use solar energy at home at 9:15 am in the Chalice Room.

April 22: *Earth Day:* Songs, a Message for All Ages, the sermon, and other elements of the service will focus on solar/renewable energy.

April 28: *Saturday: Eco-park road trip.* Meet at church by 10 am with items to recycle such as bulky Styrofoam, plastics, and by appointment, prescription drugs, driveway sealer, paints and much more. Follow the leader in your car.

Rochester Environmental Events in Earth Month

April 13: *Fast Forward Film Festival.* Local environmental films shown at the Little Theater, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. See Fastforwardroc.org.

April 14: *March for Science:* Martin Luther King, Jr. Park at Manhattan Square. Rally from 12-1pm, then march to the science expo at Riverside Hotel. See rochestermarchforscience.org.

April 22: Earth Day Celebration at Parcel 5, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. Join us for an epic Earth Day celebration! There will be music, games, food, and fun for the whole family. Multiple organizers, including Rochester People's Climate Coalition. See Actiontogether-Rochester.org.

April 24: Review of *Drawdown*, edited by Paul Hawken, at the Kate Gleason Auditorium, Central Library, 115 South Ave., 12:12 to 12:52 pm. Reviewer Kelly Neely, from Mothers Out Front.

Important websites for UUs concerned with climate change:

interfaithpowerandlight.org. This is a multi-faith organization recommended by Dick Gilbert.

uuministryforearth.org. This site has material for inspiration, activation, connection, and education.

interfaithimpactnys.org. Look for position papers on current issues: 100% clean renewable energy by 2030, and Climate and Community Protection Act; and look for Dick Gilbert's backgrounders: 4 background papers apply.

Coffee Hour

Submitted by William Elwell



Sunday Coffee Hour needs new volunteers. Too few people are doing this yeoman service. The volunteers, who are reimbursed for their expenses, usually provide a variety of cookies, bagels, veggies, crackers and cheese and perhaps a cake. The coffee is made by the sexton and keeping the coffee refilled is required as is clean-up. So, if you like Coffee Hour on Sunday, please consider serving at least one Sunday a year. Contact Bill Elwell via office@uuroc.org for complete instructions

Benefit Piano Recital

Submitted by Patricia Stott



Keith Stott will present a recital of his compositions plus two songs by his piano teacher Leah Murphy April 29th at 1:00 pm in the sanctuary. This recital was offered at the Service Auction as item A7 for a cost of \$10.00 per person. Many seats are still available. You may pay cash at the door or make a check payable to First Universalist Church and mark Service Auction on the memo line. All proceeds will benefit church programs. Hope to see you there!

Church Library and Bookstore



Submitted by Phil Ebersole

The First Universalist church library and bookstore are open each Sunday during coffee hour for browsing, borrowing and buying.

We have an extensive collection of books of liberal religious interest arranged along the wall shelves in order of Dewey decimal number. They may be borrowed for up to four weeks by any church member or by any friend who has attended long enough to get a name tag. If you have overdue books you're not done with yet, they can be renewed.

We also have a collection of books ordered from the UUA Bookstore, which are for sale at half price. They are on the outward shelves of the freestanding bookcase. On the bottom shelf are used UUA books for sale for 50 cents. We have books donated by members, which also are for sale for 50 cents each. They are on the inward shelves of the freestanding bookcase.

If you have books in good condition that you think others would like to read, we welcome donations. If you have a handful or bagful of books to donate, please leave them on the library desk. If you have multiple boxes of books you'd like to donate, please speak to Phil Ebersole, and he'll come to your place and make a selection.

We have shelves of donated children's books, which are free for the taking at any time. We have a magazine exchange rack, with magazines that are free for the taking at any time. We often have overflow books in boxes along the entrance ramp at the Court Street entrance, which are free for the taking at any time. But if you want to borrow or buy a book, we ask that you please wait for Sunday coffee hour.

If you like people and like books, you might want to consider joining the Library Committee. Speak to Phil Ebersole or any Library Committee member.

Cozy Night Supper

Submitted by Kathy Russell

Our final **COZY NIGHT SUPPER** for this church year will be held on Friday, April 20th from 5:30 pm until 7:30 pm in the Clara Barton Lounge. This will be a **potluck** so please indicate the type of dish you will be bringing (main dish, vegetables, fruit, salad, bread, dessert) when you sign-up. Beverages will be provided. The interactive program, beginning at 6:30 pm, will focus on unintentional racist language and situations which can convey unintended negative messages.

Consider adding some different strategies to your communication repertoire! Childcare can be arranged if requested a week in advance. Your **RSVP** allows us to plan and set up appropriately. Contact **Kathy Russell** for further information and to let her know you will be attending. You can also sign up on the hall bulletin board.



Foodlink Road Trip

Spend 90 minutes touring **Foodlink** facilities and learn of positive efforts combating hunger in our community. We will meet at Foodlink, 1999 Mt. Read Boulevard at 9:50 am on Tuesday, May 1st. Heather Newton, Associate Director of Community Engagement, will lead a tour and share program initiatives. Heather spoke at our February Cozy Night Supper. Wear comfortable shoes and bring good questions!

Contact **Kathy Russell** for further information and to let her know you will be attending. You can also sign up on the hall bulletin board.





Thursday Lunchtime Concerts

The Eastman at Washington Square concert is held here at First Universalist Church every Thursday during April. Join us on the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th starting at 12:15 pm and ending at approximately 12:45 pm. Brown bag lunches are welcome during the performances, and admission is free.

For more information and the schedule, visit www.esm.rochester.edu/community/events/lunchtime.

A Message about Jim Sittnick and Kidney Transplants

Submitted by Rev. Peggy Meeker

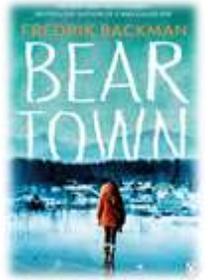
Jim Sittnick has been dealing with kidney disease for a while, and over the last couple of years it has worsened to the point where he is needing either dialysis or a transplant. Jim has now been approved to be placed on the transplant waiting list at Strong Memorial Hospital. Unfortunately, the average wait for a kidney from a deceased donor is five or six years, and for many people, the transplant doesn't come soon enough to save their lives. Jim has recently been looking for a living donor, which would mean that the transplant could happen much sooner. He has written about what's involved on his Facebook page, in the hope of both finding a donor for himself and spreading the word about the need for organ donations in general. Many lives could be saved if all our driver's licenses identified us as organ donors.

If you'd like to learn more, check out the National Kidney Foundation's website at <https://www.kidney.org/transplantation/livingdonors>, go to Jim's Facebook page, or email him via office@uuroc.org.

Book Group

Submitted by Sarah Singal and Shirley Bond

The Book selection this month is *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman. Some people might say that *Beartown* is a sports novel, but that would be selling it short. As his characters try to breathe new life into a small Swedish town, an incident happens that makes going forward almost impossible. Backman's characters are well developed and a pleasure to know. Please join us April 29th at 12 noon for a friendly stress-free hour while we ponder some of life's good questions! One does not have to have read the book to join the discussion group. All are welcome!



May's selection will be *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd.

Auction Buffet 2018

Submitted by Joyce Gilbert

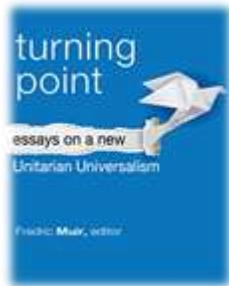
Reserve your place at the table! Ten tickets are still available for the annual fund-raising buffet! Join us for the Auction Buffet 2018 in the Clara Barton Lounge at the First Universalist Church on Sunday, May 6th, starting at 5:30 pm. There will be a wide-ranging menu, from Herbed Tomato Soup through Spiced Apple and Havarti-Stuffed Turkey to Home-Made Zabaglione, with tasty stops in between, accompanied by a selection of beverages. Vegetarians will have choices. Only \$25 per person. Please make checks payable to First Universalist Church, with notation Auction #H8. There may even be live music!

Sign up in the Clara Barton Lounge after services throughout April—until all places have been filled. Questions? Contact Paula Marchese, Katherine Flynn, or Joyce Gilbert via office@uuroc.org.



A Unitarian-Universalist Good Read

Submitted by Phil Ebersole



TURNING POINT: Essays on a New Unitarian Universalism, edited by Fredric Muir (2016)

Unitarianism in Great Britain was a flourishing movement in the 19th century, and included Charles Darwin, Florence Nightingale and other famous people. But in 2010, it was down to 3,690 members. UU minister Fredric Muir estimates that British Unitarianism has at most three generations left before it dies out entirely.

The same thing could happen to Unitarian Universalism in the USA, he warns, unless it changes course. The UUA has fewer than 196,000 members and church school enrollees, down from 229,000 when Unitarians and Universalists merged in 1961, and despite population growth from 184 million to 327 million.

Muir, who is senior minister of a UU church in Annapolis, MD, edited this collection of essays to chart that new course.

He says the problem with our movement goes back to Ralph Waldo Emerson, who famously said, "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind."

Emerson inspired Americans in general and Unitarians in particular with his call to individuals to be true to themselves, to disregard tradition, conventions and institutions, and to find their deepest moral and spiritual insights within themselves.

The result, Muir writes, is an "iChurch," a collection of individuals each on their own separate paths. What we need, he says, is a Beloved Community, bound together by a covenant of love and loyalty.

He sees Unitarian Universalism, like the US as a whole, as trapped in what he calls a "trinity of errors"—individualism, exceptionalism and anti-authoritarianism, which prevent us from uniting for a common good.

To survive, Muir says, Unitarian Universalism must become a religion of generosity, pluralism and imagination. How to do this? The main ways described in this book are (1) small group ministry, (2) the creative arts and (3) emotionally intense worship.

In one chapter, Nathan Alan Hollister tells how a group of food service workers in Carrboro, NC, started getting together on Monday nights (their schedules ruled out Sunday mornings) to talk about the deep questions of life. Being mostly low-income, they helped each other out with paying rent and with child care and transportation. That grew into the Sacred Fire community, which is made up of small group ministries. One of their projects is to create a food justice system, in which they collect food and distribute it to families in need.

Other chapters describe Original Blessings, a "spiritually ambitious" community in Brooklyn, based on "praise of creation" and "our communal relationship with God"; The Sanctuaries in Washington, DC, in which creating art is a form of spiritual practice; the Lucy Stone Cooperative, a UU residential community; The Sanctuary in Boston, a non-congregational community that seeks generational diversity; AWAKE Ministries in Annapolis, which teaches emotional literacy; and others. They're following their hearts, without regard for precedent, which actually seems very Emersonian.

This book is available for borrowing and buying in the First Universalist church library and bookstore during coffee hour after the Sunday service.

First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, New York 14606

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

Nurture the spirit and serve the community

First Universalist Church is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a liberal religion with historical roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Worship service begins at 10:30 am Sundays

Minister | The Rev. Peggy Meeker

Minister of Life Span Faith Development | The Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Stacey Xiaoyu Yang

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Providers | Carol Williams & Sundae Hodge

Office Administrator | Andrea Lewis

Office hours, Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 am - 3:45 pm.

Closed Mondays. Telephone 585.546.2826

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Editor, *This Week at First Universalist* (digital) and monthly newsletter *Our Outlook*: Andrea Lewis
More information is available on our website: <http://uuroc.org>.