



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

March 2013

Minister

Rev. Martha Munson

585.325.5092 (minister's study)

minister@uuroc.org

Director of Music

Bryan Holten

music@uuroc.org

Director of

Religious Education

Rev. Lori Staubitz

dre@uuroc.org

Office Administrator

Kris McCarty-White

585.546.2826

office@uuroc.org

Our Outlook

Newsletter Editor

Marcy Klein (this issue)

mklein5@rochester.rr.com

First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue

(corner of Court St.)

Rochester, NY 14604

Visit us online www.uuroc.org

Inside

Page

Minister's Message 2

Gleanings 2

District, General Assemblies 3

Stewardship 4

Transition 4

New Bylaws 4

House Report Highlights 5

Drop-In Discussions 6

Adult Growth & Learning 6

Winton-Clinton Play 7

Sunday Services | March 2013

March 3 | *Going Forward, Looking Back*

If I know your "story," I know something about who you are and perhaps some things about why you are who you are. It's the same with families and institutions. We'll consider the place of a congregation's "story," and why it's important.

— Rev. Martha Munson

March 10 | *Universalism for a New Day*

Universalism was founded on a faith in an all-loving deity. Or, as one wag observed, it was a church with "soft seats and no hell." What might this mean in our time?

— Rev. Martha Munson

March 17 | *Ministry Does*

You are moving towards the search process for your next settled minister, a process that has evolved over time. Though you will select a team that you trust to do the nitty-gritty detail work, this process involves the whole congregation. Ministry is all that we do together—it is a verb.

— The Rev. Priscilla Richter & Rev. Martha Munson

The Rev. Priscilla Richter is serving the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady in her seventh year, and has been the Ministerial Settlement Representative for the St. Lawrence District for five years. In this work, she is coach, consultant, and cheerleader to the board and search committee throughout the process. Please plan to stay after the service for questions and answers and to find out how you fit into this process.

March 24 | *As This Bill Sees It*

After 25 years of sobriety what has this member of the congregation learned from attending all those A.A. meetings? Our speaker this morning will reflect on what he has learned about life in general and as a recovered alcoholic from attending those meetings. He will quote extensively from a book he has written on those same lessons.

— Bill

March 31 | *The Glad Surprise of Spring*

A service for all ages.

— Rev. Martha Munson

Our regular morning service as well as Religious Education classes begin at 10:30 am.



Walking With You

Message from the Interim Minister

One of the interim time tasks is for a congregation to “come to terms with history,” the good and the bad. History includes the facts, of course. When buildings were purchased and sold, when ministers arrived or departed are usually easily identifiable dates. (Thank you, Karen Dau.) History also includes nuance, meanings, and feelings about events and activities. Why was an addition built? Why did Rev. Perfect leave? There may be significant differences of opinion (perspective) about these sorts of things. The sharing of these perspectives serves at least two important purposes. One might be that newer folks are able to get a fuller picture of the congregation by hearing the stories of those who have been around longer. A second might be that all are enlarged and enlightened by hearing the thoughts and feelings of others. Sometimes there are “surprises,” even for those who believe they know what happened and why.

On Saturday, March 9, from 10 to noon, the Transition Team and I invite you to be part of an interactive history project in the Clara Barton Lounge. We hope that it will be fun, helpful, and healthful. Like everything else in this interim time, your participation is the most important thing. Please plan to come if you can!

Faithfully,
Martha ❖

Joys & Sorrows

— from Elizabeth Osta & Eileen Fernandez

Dave, Elizabeth and Michael are grateful for the many cards and expressions of sympathy received upon the January 13 death of 100-year-old **Georgiana VanArsdale**. Her life was rich and full and continues to inspire.

Marti Eggers is recovering at home from shoulder surgery. She welcomes calls, cards and visits.

We extend our sympathy to **David Damico**, whose mother died recently. ❖



Gleanings

Reflections on Religious Education and Race

— Rev. Lori Staubitz

President Barack Obama has started his second term and the celebrations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks are behind us. However, our national struggle with race is ever before us... despite the facts.

Our social experiences of race are very significant. There is a very good chance that you have been marginalized or granted privileges depending on your skin tone and color. However, there is a critical “racial” fact that has been altogether ignored It IS a REAL game changer and has the potential to radically shift the ways we experience one another.

Years ago I heard the following quote from a public TV series entitled “HUMAN DIVERSITY—GO DEEPER: The Power of Illusion”, Public Broadcasting System (PBS), March 2000: “There is not one gene, trait, or characteristic that distinguishes all members of one race from all members of another. We can map any number of traits and none would match our idea of race. This is because modern humans haven’t been around long enough to evolve into different subspecies and we’ve always moved, mated, and mixed our genes. Beneath the skin, we are one of the most genetically similar of all species.”

You can’t imagine how excited I was to know that once again, science was confirming human unity and connectedness... ideas that are so foundational to our Unitarian Universalism!

This past month, after visiting our congregation one Sunday, Karen LoBracco, our District Program Consultant for Lifespan Faith Development and I went to the Rochester Museum and Science Center on East Avenue to see the new exhibit on Race. It is a wonderful, interactive experience that certainly brings home the facts that can help us dissolve the illusions we have created about “others.”

As a people of this liberal faith, we have long held the concept of the universal human family. Our tradition upholds both the uniqueness of each life and the unity of all life.

In the next few months, I encourage you to explore

Continued on page 3



Saint Lawrence District Assembly

— Michael Scott

Unitarian Universalists from across the Saint Lawrence District (roughly, Upstate New York) gather on the last weekend in April every year for a gala weekend of worship, lectures, workshops, and social events. This year's meeting will be held at the far western edge of the District—Niagara Falls—and will be shared with the Ohio Meadville District to our west. Highlights include the Friday evening Gould Lecture, delivered this year by the Rev. Douglas Taylor of Binghamton, and a Saturday morning keynote address from the Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA.

Sixteen workshops will be offered in two time slots covering an array of topics important to congregational life. The closing worship on Saturday will include a “bridging ceremony” for youth transitioning into young adulthood.

The Board of Trustees is eager to encourage as large a group as possible to attend. Limited funds are available to help defray registration, travel, or housing costs for those who may need such assistance (contact John Wellin for details: jdweme@rit.edu).

Some two dozen members of First Universalist have attended District Assembly in recent years. If you have any doubts, corner one of them and ask: they'll tell you it's a whole lot of fun, and a great way to deepen your faith. For more information and registration materials, visit www.sld.uua.org/conggrowth/districtassembly.html. ❖

Gleanings, *continued*

this exhibit as a part of your faith journey. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the subject! Who knows where this journey will take us as we walk forward together.

Singer, song writer Sara Thomsen put it best in her song “By Breath,” which speaks to our ultimate connection, “By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit, we are all one.”

May it be so.

See you in church! ❖

UUA General Assembly

— Michael Scott

Every year in late June, delegates from the 1000-plus congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association meet to conduct the business of the Association and to share five days of worship and workshops, concerts and lectures, singing, dancing, and fellowship.

This year's General Assembly (GA) will be held June 19–23 in Louisville, Kentucky. If you've never been to GA, it's hard to imagine the level of excitement and the wealth of program opportunities. Some time slots have a single huge event (the signature Ware Lecture, for example, will be delivered by Eboo Patel, founder and Executive Director of the Interfaith Youth Core); other slots have dozens of competing events. Many of the most exciting programs are scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, to accommodate people who can attend for the weekend only. For those of us accustomed to a church with 150 members, the opportunity to interact with literally thousands of other UUs can be incredibly empowering.

If you've ever thought about doing something special to energize your faith, this may be the chance you've been waiting for. Visit www.uua.org/ga to learn more. ❖

School 7

— Sarah Singal

Right now School 7 has ten volunteers from First Universalist: members, friends, and friends of friends. Here is the roster—feel free to ask these dedicated volunteers about their experiences.

- Katie Comeau—tutor in 6th grade
- Bill Elwell—classroom aide in 2nd grade
- Eileen Fernandez and friend—tutors in kindergarten
- Jose Fernandez—tutor in 3rd grade
- Paula Marchese—library assistant
- Tim McGrain—tutor, classroom aide in 6th grade
- Tim Mullins—classroom aide in 4th grade
- Sarah Singal—tutor in kindergarten and 3rd grade
- Friend—math tutor in 5th grade

“Bending down to help a youngster in a reading program is an example of prayer in action.” — From Bill Elwell's soon-to-be-published book, *As This Bill Sees It*. ❖

Stewardship Campaign 2013: *Love Will Guide Us*

— Ann Rhody

Love Will Guide Us. This meaningful hymn says it all! As we look ahead during our time of transition, we know that Love Will Guide Us. This spring, with the help of Reverend Munson and the Transition Team, we are striving to clearly embrace and promote our mission to “Nurture the Spirit and Serve the Community.” Stewardship offers us the way to give real support to that work as we care for each other within our walls, and further expand our reach to the wider community.

We welcome Heather and Bill Jones as co-chairs of this year’s stewardship campaign. Watch for an invitation to make your pledge, an updated DVD about this year’s campaign, and a short informational “Money 101” session after church on April 7 (specially designed for those less familiar with how we financially support the church as members and friends). You’ll hear stories of commitment from members and friends during the service in the weeks of the stewardship campaign.

You’ll want to plan to make your pledge sometime before Stewardship Sunday, April 21. On this day we’ll be celebrating our support and our love during and after the worship service.

During each service, we affirm that “Love is the doctrine of this church.” And that same Love will guide us as we consider our own support of this beloved community. So get ready to forge ahead with Love! ❖

Letting Go: *The Fear, the Faith, the Facebook!*

— Ann Rhody for the Transition Team: Karl Abbott, chair;
Bill Elwell, Mary Louise Gerek, Santosha Kuykendall

It is somewhat embarrassing to admit that I sometimes find spiritual wisdom on Facebook. Several friends post inspirational things, and I’m a sucker for a great quote! A recent one that really caught my eye is this one:

You can’t start the next chapter if you’re busy re-reading the last one.

In light of the recent sermon about change as well as our upcoming work of looking at our congregational history, this really spoke to me. Our past makes us who we are today, and we must honor it. And yet, if we stay stuck there, or we try to re-write our last chapter, we can’t move ahead.

Martha shared a reading about the necessary process of letting go of the old to make room for the new. The image of a trapeze was used to describe it: we get comfortable swinging back and forth, and at some point we have to let go and grab that new trapeze bar that is coming our way. If we hold on too long, or we are too busy watching the trapeze bars behind us, we’ll miss the next one.

Sometimes letting go takes “faith above all fear.” There’s a reason that our fire communion service in January asks us to name something we’d like to let go of. That in the famous New Year Carol of Britten, we are instructed to “turn the old year go” before we “let the New Year in.”

Let’s honor our past, feel our past pains, celebrate our past joys. But let us not live in them. Let us live in the moment that is now, the opportunities that are now, the promise that is our future. After all, that moment between the trapeze bars is when we are truly soaring! ❖

New Bylaws for the Church!

— John Wellin, on behalf of the Governance Subcommittee, and the Board of Trustees

At the special congregational meeting held February 10 after services, the revised bylaws were passed by an overwhelming majority of the members present. This event was the culmination of nearly a year’s work by a very dedicated group of individuals.

It is our sincere hope that the simplification of the church’s organization, as embodied in the new document,

will enable us to focus our leadership talents more efficiently, and significantly clarify the reporting structure. A number of major changes are in store, but we expect these to roll out in a measured way. For instance, the Board has been reduced to seven members from nine, but we will achieve that number by the attrition of two members who will reach the end of their terms this June anyway. We expect much of the structural changes to be in place after the formal proceedings of the annual meeting this June.

In the meantime, if you are involved in any sort of leadership position in the church, please continue in that capacity as we move forward. Thank you, everyone, for helping to make this happen. ❖

House Report Highlights

— *Alain Perregaux*

Sanctuary Renovation

Out of the 11 quotes mentioned in last month's newsletter, two were retained: one for the lighting and the fire detection, and one for the pews and floor repairs.

Landmark Electric (Dave Lawson) was selected for the lighting and fire detection. This work should begin very soon in order to be completed by April 1, when the repair of the pews and floor is supposed to start. What is holding us back is a number of details that need to be ironed out; for example, as we were establishing contacts with light suppliers, we learned of a new type of dimmer which could simplify the operation and improve the aesthetics of the hardware. Now they have to be worked into the design of the installation.

Kirkwall Construction (Ted Robertson) was selected to do the repair of the pews and the refinishing of the floor. Ted has done carpentry for the church for years; he knows our old building well and does excellent work. This work is set to begin Monday, April 1. We will hold services in the Clara Barton Lounge in April, May and June. The pews will undergo repairs and cleaning, some will be modified for wheel chair seating; they will all be slightly repositioned to meet today's standards. Keep in mind that our goal is to have our beautiful 100+ year-old sanctuary look well-cared for and well-loved; it will not look like a brand new sanctuary. Some imperfections, which reflect the many years of congregational life, will still be seen in the pews and floor.

The fabrication of the new carpet and cushions has just started. They will probably be installed as soon as

Holiday Shoppe

— *Paula Marchese, for the Finance Committee*

A word or two of thanks to those whose donations (books, pillowcases, scarves, First Universalist prints, baked goods and household sundries) to our Holiday Shoppe brought in almost \$900.00!!! So thank you, Nancy Gaede, Patti Goodwin, Lisa Gwinner, David Damico, Richard Gilbert, Bridget Watts, Ruth Fitzgerald, Ann Rhody, Jan Hickman and anyone we may have forgotten. Your talents and generosity helped make a big dent in our fund-raising goals for 2012-2013. ❖

the pews are in place. The details of this synchronization have not been worked out yet.

Please note: If you have not seen the samples for carpet, cushions, and cushion design, they are being stored in the church. Tell a member of the Renovation Committee that you'd like to see them and it will be arranged.

Steam Consumption

The audit of the steam system by an engineer from RDH was conducted on December 18. The report was received on January 7. The repairs suggested in the report were completed on January 15. To our greatest disappointment, the trend in the steam consumption failed to show any improvement. We are now back to brain storming mode, trying to imagine where the steam might be going.

Routine Maintenance

The yearly check of the fire extinguishers took place on January 31. The next critical activity will be the elevator inspection, which is due on February 28. ❖

Auction 2013

A great time for all—and there's more!

— *Ann Rhody*

Our Annual Service Auction on February 3 was a great success! The Auction and the lunch together raised over \$6,000 for our church! And just as important—we shared a great afternoon of food, fun, and fellowship.

The people who helped in this effort are too numerous to name in a short article—if you helped in any way, please know that you are deeply appreciated! Special thanks to our auction planning crew—the trio of Paula Marchese, Ann Rhody, and Laurretta Young, as well as luncheon planner Tim Mullins.

We do have some items and events which remained unsold, so it's not too late to get in on the action. The unsold items are listed on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge. If you are interested in making a bid, or you'd like more information, please contact Paula Marchese at pmarchese@rochester.rr.com. ❖

Drop-In Discussion Schedule

— 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. Our discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 am, preceding the Sunday service.

March 3 | *Life as a Drop-In Discussion*

Hal Bauer suggests thinking of drop-in discussions as a metaphor for life. We arrive unprepared; sometimes, sadly, leave early; make a contribution; listen to and share with friends, family and others; try to be kind while speaking truth to power for justice. Beyond youth, life is often too short for most to fully grasp. Hal Bauer invites you to share yours.

March 10 | *Violence and Mental Illness*

In the light of all the gun-death tragedies this past year, psychological issues have not been covered as well as gun ownership issues. Janet Perregaux will help us explore the traits and behavioral characteristics that may tell us over time what to watch for in people who are having difficulties in their lives that might in time tempt them to violence against themselves or others.

March 17 | *Saying Goodbye*

David Damico's mother recently passed away. He said the weeks he spent with her as her health declined and the moment he looked into her eyes at the end has left a memory that he will cherish forever. What's your story of saying goodbye? Did the event bring you closer to family as his did? How did you experience the passing? Do you believe in angels, babies being born near the time of passing, a spiritual connection? Come share with us this insight and belief. David Damico will facilitate.

March 24 | *Antifragile*

Nassim Nicholas Taleb in his book *Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder* says that avoiding risk can be dangerous, avoiding stress can be unhealthy and maximizing efficiency can lead to collapse. Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion of these ideas.

March 31 | *Open forum discussion or to be announced.*

Topics are subject to change. For updates, check the bulletin board in First Universalist Church's Clara Barton lounge or the Schedule of Drop-In Discussions on <<http://philebersole.wordpress.com>>. ❖

Adult Growth & Learning

"I've Got A New Way To Talk"

As part of our celebration of the "Winter Feast For the Soul", developing tools for creative life change...

- Want to know the secret to limiting destructive family drama?
- Want to be a part of a community where new ideas are encouraged and supported?
- Surprise yourself on how well you can handle a difficult situation!
- Come join in this joyful and interactive time as we think outside the box and develop some new ways of being in relationship with others.

Facilitator: Rev. Lori Staubitz, Director of RE

Location: First Universalist, Clara Barton Lounge

Dates: March 6, 13 & 20, 6:30 pm—8:00 pm

Registration: Free. Sign-up now by calling 585-546-2826 or email DRE@uuroc.org

Session #1

One Among Many; New Tools for Empowering Relationships

- *Systems Thinking / Conflict Management* • *Personal Assessment*
- *Social Dynamics / Leading in Anxious Times* • *Triangulation*

Session #2

Imagine This Is Heaven; The Beauty That is Before Us

- *Daily Practice for Health and Leadership*
- *Universal Meditation / Mindfulness Thinking*

Session #3

The Art of Creative Problem Solving

- *Appreciative Inquiry: "A Positive Revolution in Change"*
- *I've Never Thought this Way Before!* ❖

History Project!

— Rev. Martha Munson

On Saturday, March 9, from 10 to noon, the Transition Team and I invite you to be part of an interactive history project in the Clara Barton Lounge. We hope that it will be fun, helpful, and healthful. Like everything else in this interim time, your participation is the most important thing. Please plan to come if you possibly can! And do let us know in advance if you need childcare. It can be arranged. There is a sign-up sheet outside the office. ❖

LUUnch BUUnch

— Connie Valk



The LUUnch BUUnch will gather on March 10 at Dac Hoa, 230 Monroe Ave. at noon after the service. The prices on the menu are modest; the food is yummy. There are over a dozen vegetarian options. All are welcome! ❖

Cozy Supper

— Connie Valk

The March Cozy Supper with Multigenerational Religious Education will be held on March 29 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. The topic is “Renewal,” in keeping with the coming of spring and the Easter season.

Supper is provided by the RE Committee, with help from others in the Church. A vegan option is available. Childcare is provided for children under age six, if you let Connie Valk know one week in advance.

Sign up on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge, on the website: <http://uuroc.org>, or leave a message at 585-467-3191. ❖

RAIHN* Dates

— Marti Eggers



Upcoming Volunteer Training Sessions

- March 21, 7–9 pm at Temple Sinai, Penfield
- May 15, Church of the Transfiguration, Fairport

Volunteers are expected to attend a two-hour training session before or soon after volunteering for the first time. Training sessions orient volunteers to the RAIHN philosophy and the expectations of guests and volunteers. There is ample time for questions as well. Seasoned volunteers are also welcome and provide valuable input based on their personal experiences

Next Host Week at First Universalist: May 12–19 (note corrected date)

Attend one of the training sessions listed above so that you’ll be ready to volunteer for this Hosting Week. We will have 80 volunteer slots to fill, so please try to set aside some time for RAIHN in May!

**RAIHN, the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, is a consortium of 14 faith communities that host families in temporary need of housing. ❖*

Winton-Clinton Joint Event

— Karen Dau

First Universalist Church of Rochester and First Unitarian Church of Rochester unite to celebrate Women’s History Month with a play commemorating civil rights activist Virginia Foster Durr, wife of Clifford Durr, attorney for Rosa Parks. This one-person drama titled “Too Many Questions” takes place in the Durr’s Montgomery, Alabama, home in 1955, following the incarceration of Mrs. Parks for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white person. The play reveals the transformation of Mrs. Durr from a pampered southern belle to a civil rights activist as she entertains company and fields calls from her husband about Mrs. Parks’ plight—except that when the phone rings, it isn’t always her husband on the other end....

This play will be performed on Saturday, March 23, 2013, at the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, 220 Winton Road South, at 7:30 pm. It will be preceded at 7:00 pm with several musical selections from the era, sung by our own Glenda Brayman and her jazz trio Company B. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Williams Gallery at the Unitarian Church, where the actress will be on hand to greet audience members.

Tickets, which are \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door, and \$7 for students, can be ordered at <http://www.showclix.com/event/TooManyQuestions>, or Karen Dau can email you a direct link. This is a fundraiser for First Universalist, so do plan to attend! ❖

Library News

— Keith Stott

If centuries ago, as four-year-old John Butler, you were kidnapped, raised, and loved by the Lenni Lenape Indians, and grew up “to think, feel, and fight like an Indian, to reverence their god,” how would you react when you were returned to your own people?

In his dramatic, suspenseful, yet fair-minded novel for nearly all ages, “The Light in the Forest,” Conrad Richter gives us much to ponder. You may well find this a rare reading experience. Keep the Kleenex handy! Call number: FIC R. ❖



First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue

Rochester, NY 14604

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Rochester, NY
Permit No. 1351

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 10:30 am Sundays

Minister | Rev. Martha Munson

Director of Religious Education | Rev. Lori Staubitz

Music Director | Bryan Holten

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Kris McCarty-White

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

Board Of Trustees

John Wellin (Chair), Joy Leccese (Moderator), Shirley Bond (Vice Moderator), Michael Scott (Clerk), Margaret Gallagher, Michael VanArsdale, Howard Spindler, Janet Rothbeind, Ed Deller, Rev. Martha Munson (Interim Minister, ex officio)

Editor, Weekly *eOutlook*: Kris McCarty-White; Editor, Monthly paper *Our Outlook*, David Damico / Marcy Klein. More information is available on our website: <http://uuroc.org>.