

First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue

Rochester, NY 14604

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First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

Nurture the spirit and serve the community

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

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

Minister | Rev. Martha Munson

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, 8:30am–2:45pm. Telephone 585.546.2826

Board Of Trustees

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

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



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

May 2013

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Our Outlook

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Visit us online www.uuroc.org

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Sunday Services | May 2013

May 5 | *What Do We Worship*

What makes me look forward to our services each Sunday? -It's all here in the Affirmation of Faith
- Kitty Forbush



May 12 | *Mothers Peace Day*

So, it's Mother's Day. Do any of us ever make peace with our mothers? Might there be another, a different way to think about this day?
- Rev. Martha Munson



May 19 | *Wishin' and Hopin' and Thinkin' and Prayin'*

Along with planin' and dreamin': What's the difference? Do you do any of these? All of them? None of them?
- Rev. Martha Munson



May 26 | *Alabama 1965 Voting Rights Movement, Looking Back*

Experiences and insights learned as a field worker for Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Marches. Jailings. Federal Registrars.
- Tim Mullins and Worship Associate, Michael Scott



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





Walking With You

Message from the Interim Minister

This month marks the 33rd anniversary of my ordination, a day that stands out in my memory like few others. In my mind's eye, I can savor so much of it, even all these years later. And now we are engaged, First Universalist and I, for a second year of interim ministry. Almost 40 years ago, during my ministerial training, I read a book, *Spiritual Therapy*, by Young and Meiburg. In my journal, I copied this line, "Whenever we are allowed to 'walk around' on the inside of another person's life we should 'take off' our hats and pull off our shoes' and realize that we are on holy ground."

I am grateful to share this holy ground with you. I thank you for the privilege. My task, as I understand it, is to help you position yourselves strongly to call your next settled minister. Let us, together, be about the work. ❖

Faithfully,
Martha



Adult Religious Education is Branching Out

Submitted by Charlie Courtsal & Connie Valk

If you did not get to participate in the 3 seminars about Urban Forest Gardening sponsored by our congregation's Adult Religious Education (RE) Subcommittee, then you may not know that this First Universalist program is putting down roots in our community right now.

In preparation for these seminars, members of our Adult RE Subcommittee contacted the Maplewood YMCA, two community organizations and two library branches in northeast Rochester to spread the word about these seminars. As a result, we had good participation from outside the congregation. Since the Maplewood YMCA had received a grant for a community garden, but had no funds for training, the YMCA staff and Board members were thrilled to receive the invitation from our congregation.

Patty Love, from the Rochester Permaculture Institute, facilitated these seminars at First Universalist in February. As a result of Patty's expertise and Adult RE's outreach, urban forest gardening will get a boost in the City of Rochester. If you are interested in learning more about Adult RE's urban forest outreach program, please contact Rev. Lori Staubitz at dre@uuroc.org.

Representatives of First Universalist's Garden Committee also attended these seminars. They will be using their new knowledge of urban gardening and applying it to our congregation's present and future garden spaces. If you are interested in joining the Garden Committee, please contact Sarah Singal or Connie Valk. ❖

October Children's Sabbath Follow Up

Submitted by Elizabeth Osta and Brigit Hurley

Our advocacy worked..

"We made a difference! Thanks to the work of many advocates and members of faith communities around Rochester, including many of you who signed a letter last fall in support of child care subsidies for working families, the Governor and Legislature approved an increase of \$3 million in funding for subsidies! This is wonderful news to the families who, because of this assistance, will now be able to afford stable and safe child care. And we all win in the end when the children do better in school and life because of their experiences in high-quality care early in their lives.

On behalf of those children, THANK YOU! And please extend this gratitude to the Governor and legislators who approved this increase by making a quick "thank you" phone call or sending them a brief note; you can identify your legislators and find contact information at the following: Governor Cuomo - www.governor.ny.gov, Assembly member - www.nyassembly.gov and State Senator - www.nysenate.gov. ❖



News From The UUA

Submitted by Michael Scott

The UUA Board of Trustees voted on March 15 to purchase **new headquarters space** for the Association, and to sell its historic space on Beacon Hill. The new headquarters will be located at 24 Farnsworth St., in the Innovation/Seaport district of Boston, one mile SE of the current location.

The new building is a handsome 6-story, 75,000 sq. ft. structure originally built as a warehouse a century ago. It was later converted to a mattress factory, and has been an office building since 1988. The top three floors are currently rented to other tenants; the bottom three (which the UUA would initially occupy) have been gutted and are awaiting renovation.

When work is completed about a year from now, the new space will bring together workers currently spread across 16 floors in 4 separate buildings. Unlike the current space, it will be handicap accessible, and will have modern meeting rooms and telecommunications facilities.

Financial details have not yet been disclosed, but previous estimates suggested that the move would yield both significantly better facilities and a profit on the order of \$10M. Proceeds will be placed in the UUA endowment, and earnings used to help fund future programs.

Unfortunately, any increase will be neither large enough nor soon enough to offset a **major drop in UUA funding**—from \$26.6M to \$22.6M over the past two years. The drop stems from a variety of factors, including increased costs (for medical insurance in particular), decreased congregational giving, fewer bequests, and decreased individual giving.

In a sad but not-unanticipated move, UUA President Peter Morales announced on March 4 that the Association would be consolidating a variety of departments and eliminating 7 full-time and 8 part-time positions over the next few months. Perhaps the most significant change will be the closing of the Washington Office for Advocacy, though the UUA will still have a presence in DC via other programs, including the (endowment-funded) *Holdeen India Program*, the *Standing on the Side of Love* campaign, and programs funded independently through the UU Women's Federation and Ministry for Earth.

In other denominational news, **Kay Montgomery**, who has served as UUA Executive Vice President for 28 years, has announced she will retire at the end of June. She will be succeeded by the Rev. **Harlan Limpert**, formerly Director of Congregational Life, who will assume the title of Chief Operating Officer.

Finally, it's not too late to be thinking about the **UUA General Assembly**, to be held June 29–13 in Louisville, KY. Pre-registration for attendees ends June 7, and there are extensive opportunities to participate remotely. Many of the key events will be streamed live, including the opening and closing celebrations, the major worship services, plenary business sessions, the candidates' forum (among other things, delegates will be electing a new Moderator for the Association), and the Ware keynote lecture (to be delivered by Eboo Patel, founder & Executive Director of the Interfaith Youth Core).

For more on the new headquarters, visit uuworld.org/news/articles/284714.shtml

For more on staff layoffs, visit uuworld.org/news/articles/158972.shtml

For more on GA streaming and off-site participation, visit uua.org/ga/virtual/ ♦

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

Staying Engaged

Submitted by Ann Rhody for the Transition Team

It seems so long ago. I sat across the table from a tall, slender woman who struck me as very self-assured and businesslike. We talked salary and benefits, when to get started, the deadline for the Outlook. And how we would do a letter of agreement for four months of “contract ministry”. I remember how this woman’s demeanor reassured me in the midst of such upheaval at church.

Fast forward to more than a year and a half later, (and more upheaval) and here we are! Reverend Munson has been with us for longer than either of us anticipated, and her presence still reassures me. We know we are blessed to have had Martha here to guide us as her ministry has “morphed” from contract minister to a full interim minister.

But Martha is the first to say that the work of our interim time together is not **HERS**, but **OURS**. So what have **WE** done together this year?

The Transition Team organized “PEP” (People Engaging People) small group meetings this past Fall, and invited you to be part of this process. So many of you stepped up to be engaged! Results were shared and we got a greater picture of strengths and needs of this beloved congregation. We identified 3 areas of focus: hospitality and growth, infrastructure and trust, and dealing with our history. Each one of those items has been addressed in a meaningful way within a short time, and progress has been made.

Meanwhile, services have been wonderful. Music, sermons, children’s focus, and so on... they keep all of us coming back. And we’ve got excitement building about the sanctuary renovations.

It’s time to stop and say thanks- to Rev. Munson for her fearless leadership, to our staff for keeping things afloat, but most of all to one another for staying engaged, keeping the faith, and preparing for yet another year of transition, search, work, and forward momentum!!

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

Stewardship 2013

Love Will Guide Us

Submitted by Ann Rhody

Excitement... Commitment... Love.

These might sound like the feelings one has about a wedding, but in fact I’m talking about the mood here at church! Everywhere I go- services, meetings, social occasions, work sessions- there is positive “buzz” about the upcoming ministerial search, adult RE programs, sanctuary renovations, and so much more.

And I’m pleased to say that this excitement and commitment has translated into our Stewardship Campaign! The stewardship campaign has shown wide participation, timely return of pledge cards, some new pledges, and many increased pledges. What better way to show our love and commitment to this beloved community?

Of course, Love alone won’t get us through the 2013–14 fiscal year. If you have not yet returned a pledge card to support next year’s budget, we need YOU! Even if your funds are very limited, remember that a pledge of \$250 is only about \$5 per week. Every pledge helps us to fully embrace our future with excitement, commitment, and LOVE.

Please contact Bill Jones at jones@chem.rochester.edu for a pledge card or to pledge via e-mail. ❖

RAIHN at First Universalist Welcomes *Church of Love*

We are pleased to welcome another support congregation - the Church of Love - to our RAIHN family! Volunteers from the Church of Love attended the training session last year and have toured our church with co-coordinators Sarah Singal and Marti Eggers, and Rosemarie Horvath, coordinator from St. Mary’s, our other support congregation. We look forward to getting to know our newest volunteers as we work together to serve homeless families. ❖

Maria, on RAIHN*



Submitted by Marti Eggers

“I have learned the value of home. Sometimes family isn’t just blood; it’s a network of people who care.”

From May 12th through May 17th, First Universalist Church will provide a home for families who are homeless. Hosting these families requires a lot of personpower, a “network of people who care.” In fact, there are over 80 volunteer slots to fill each Host Week.

You can be part of this “network of people who care” by volunteering a few hours of your time during this upcoming *Host Week*. Please contact Christine DeGolyer at chrisdeg@frontiernet.net for more information or to sign up. If you are unsure, you can ask to shadow someone during a shift that interests you. If you have questions, please see Marti Eggers or Sarah Singal.

Next Training Date – May 15th at the Church of the Transfiguration, 50 W Bloomfield Rd, Pittsford.

* RAIHN, the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, is a consortium of 15 faith communities that host families in temporary need of housing, and 25 faith communities that provide volunteers and other support to the host congregations. First Universalist is a host congregation, supported by St. Mary’s and the Church of Love. Four times a year, for a week each time, volunteers from these three congregations work together to provide a welcoming, safe place for these families to come home to after a day at the RAIHN Center where they get help looking for housing and, for some, new employment. We prepare and serve a hot evening meal, help with homework, offer a lap, a story and a hug, a listening ear, a word of encouragement, overnight presence, breakfast and whatever else might be needed before the families return to their jobs or to the Center for another day of hard work. ❖

Universalist Herald

The oldest continuously published liberal religious magazine in North America.

Submitted by David Damico

I am very happy to announce that I have been chosen as the editor of the quarterly periodical, *Universalist Herald*. This publication has been in continuous publication since 1847 (barring a brief hiatus during the American Civil War). Originally known as the monthly newspaper, *Religious Investigator* in Wetumpka, Alabama in 1849, Universalist Minister Reverend John C. Burruss purchased the publication in January 1850, changing the name to *Universalist Herald* with a new edition published every Friday morning.

The Herald is now a quarterly publication in magazine format retaining its proud tradition of publishing news of interest to religious liberals. In the recent edition, George Tyger, former minister of First Universalist of Rochester, submitted an article entitled, *Things That Go Boom in the Night* drawing on experiences as an army chaplain during his last tour in Afghanistan and John B.

Buescher (*Spiritualism and the Nineteenth-Century Religious Experience*-Skinner House Books) has an informative article on *Unitarianism, Universalism and Spiritualism*. Other well-known Universalist thinkers such as Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed, Rev. Richard Gilbert, and many others have contributed to this interesting and informative publication.

I was asked in 2012 if I would be interested in becoming the editor by *Universalist Herald* board member, Joyce Gilbert. I decided that I wanted to know more about the Universalist side of my chosen faith so I agreed and was eventually asked. Although I have been associated less than a year with the Herald, I am enjoying learning about our UU Christian and religious liberal heritage. I’d invite you to share in your own discovery by becoming a subscriber. Sample copies are available to view in our church library. You can also contact me at the *Universalist Herald* email, univherald1850@gmail.com, visit us on Facebook at, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Universalist-Herald/135898219780099?fref=ts> or the website <http://universalist-herald.net/> ❖

Drop-In Discussion, May Schedule

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. 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. Here is the schedule.

May 5 | *My Hindu Experience.*

For the past six years Janus Mary Jones has been attending the Hindu Temple of Rochester. She is now a member of that congregation as well as 1st Universalist, where she has been a member for 23 years. Join Janus Mary for her presentation and discussion of what Hindus believe and how they worship, what brought her to Hinduism and her experiences as an "outsider" at the Temple. In her understanding of the faith, some schools of Hindu thought could be compatible with UUism; particularly our Universalist half.

May 12 | *The Righteous Mind.*

Jonathan Haidt, a psychologist, writes in his book, *The Righteous Mind*, that political differences are based on moral intuition, not reason, and that American conservatives have a broader moral intuition than American liberals do. Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion of Haidt's ideas and what liberals can learn from conservatives.

May 19 | *To be announced.*

May 26 | *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. This topic was rescheduled from February.

If you have a topic you would like discussed or, better still, would like to lead a discussion, speak to Phil Ebersole ❖

Library News

Submitted by Keith Stott



Hey, young folks, what would you do if your school had a fire drill and your teacher sounded the alarm with a cow bell and the stairway suddenly was blocked with cows?

OR

You opened a biography of America's greatest composer, who is hiking through the forest towards his camp in New Hampshire, and there is music - a piano duet about bears?

OR

You set out to capture and train every Pokemon you can find, but your assistant, brand-new, very powerful Pikachu, won't do a single thing you ordered?

WELL, YOU COULD

Look in the young folks' shelves in the church book store

FOR

Wayside School Is Falling Down, by Louis Sachar

AND

Edward MacDowell and His Cabin in the Pines, by Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher (for you piano players, bear duet is on pp. 116-119)

AND

Pokemon I Choose You!, adapted by Tracey West

Such bargains at 25¢ each - there are many more! ❖

Poetry Slam!

On April 7 Dick and Joyce Gilbert hosted a poetry slam. Poetry lovers met for readings and snacks, an auction item that helped to make this year's auction such a success. On this and the next page are two short offerings that relate to church.

OUTWITTED by Edwin Markham

He drew a circle that shut me out--
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!

House Report Highlights - May 2013

Submitted by Alain Perregaux

Sanctuary Renovation - Electrical

This work is nearly complete. The electricians are expected to move out in April

Sanctuary Renovation – Pews & Floor

The Exodus. On Sunday March 31st, all objects that were not anchored to the floor of the sanctuary had to be removed so that the carpenter could begin his work on Monday morning. It all went smoothly thanks to the participation of many. Millions of thanks to all these good souls who helped carry things. It all happened very quickly. It was the epitome of team work.

Week 1. The first order of the day was the protection of the organ which, we thought, could simply be done by somebody climbing on a ladder and stretching plastic sheets in front of the decorative pipes. It turns out that the height and the size of the parts to be covered made it unsafe to use ladders. Instead, scaffolding had to be installed. In turn, it required that most of the stuff stored on the choir loft be moved first.

Howard Spindler took care to protect the piano.

Week 2. The task of repairing the pews was in full swing. What a sight!

Three patches of stain for the floor have been prepared as suggested by the interior designer Arlene Wright. The final selection was to be made in the construction meeting of April 16.

A structural engineer suggested an approach to install a safety hook for whomever will be maintaining the new lights. Most likely, it will be a retractable cable held by a structure that will be welded to the steel beam above each balcony. Fortunately, most of it will be behind the beam as seen from the center of the sanctuary, i.e. very unobtrusive.

Use of the Lounge.

The first “in exile” event to take place in the lounge was the Thursday noon concert of April 4. With plenty of advanced planning, the proper signs on the doors and a touch of nudging, everybody found the right place to congregate and the event went flawlessly. It was the perfect dress rehearsal for the following Sunday service.

The second event was the Sunday service of April 7 which, with the help of some last minute improvising, made it look like we knew exactly what we were doing. *What a team!*

Unintended consequences. So far, two key drawbacks of this move to the lounge have been uncovered:

- there is no hearing induction loop;
- the speaker on the 2nd floor landing is not part of the sound system.

We may uncover more as we move ahead.

Routine Maintenance

The pressure problem in the water radiators has been fixed.

The steam consumption problem is still unresolved. The difficulty in heating the lounge and the office to the specified temperature is a new problem that needs to be addressed.

A roofer has been contacted to repair the damage caused by the winter weather on the roof. Several shingles have been blown away. The work will be done as soon as the weather allows.

The random behavior of the central parking lot light is yet another glitch that needs to be addressed. The intermittent nature of the problem makes it difficult to determine where to begin. ❖

Poetry Slam!

FLY ON, by Keith Stott
the congregation clapped
a blurring of hands
like the flapping wings of birds
gathering and settling
in a circle of caring
a circle grown wider
over the rippling water
of eternity

the older
the younger
no longer alone

after every postlude
another prelude