



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

August 2014

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Our Outlook

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Inside

Minister's Message	Pg. 2
RAIHN Dates	Pg. 2
Leadership Assembly	Pg. 2
Michelle Yates-MRE	Pg. 3
Capital Campaign	Pg. 3
RE, Faith Development	Pg. 4
Exterior Renovations	Pg. 4
Greetings... Hello	Pg. 4
Drop-In Discussion	Pg. 4
Auld Lang Syne	Pg. 5

Summer Sunday Services | August 2014

August 3 | *Getting to Know the Tree Trimming Guys*

It's easy to judge, dislike, mistrust, and fear strangers. However, even brief interactions nearly always change us from "demonizers" into "humanizers", and make the world feel like a safer, friendlier, and more compassionate place.

– Summer Minister, Peter House



August 10 | *A Status Update*

We live in a society which bombards us with messages about how we should be living in order to be happy and fulfilled, and all of us succumb to following the message to some degree. But why do we follow it, who are we following it for, and what price do we pay?

– Summer Minister, Peter House



August 17 | *To Carry With Me*

Exploring what becomes important as we go forward in life.

– Guest Speaker Elizabeth Osta



August 24 | *Competing ENDS*

We all strive to live ethical lives, but is it really possible to be completely and totally ethical all of the time? I will apply a different framework to looking at this ancient dilemma.

– Summer Minister, Peter House



August 31 | *I'm Sticking to the Union*

There is currently an assault on the middle class which is bolder and further reaching than any we have experienced in modern times. This Labor Day, we will honor the contributions of average women and men, and explore the spiritual rewards which result from sticking together.

– Summer Minister, Peter House

Our summer service begins at 10:00am.



Peter House - August Message

Message from Summer Minister, Peter House

Last summer, I told you of my “media holiday” in which I “took the summer off” from following the news. It made for a restful summer in which I rejuvenated my soul, and reprogrammed my brain a bit. Among other things, I saw that the world went on without my constant attention, and that my keeping on top of every piece of legislation being written in Albany and Washington, knowing of every conflict and tragedy around the globe, and emailing my representatives daily, was doing greater harm to my sense of purpose and well being, than it was contributing to the well being of the larger world.

I realize that this sounds counter to what we are all taught in civics class. We all got the message as we were growing up that it’s crucial to be informed, get involved, and make a contribution. And, of course, that’s true. But most of us grew up in a far different era than the one we live in today – a time when the world visited us just a few times a day via the daily newspaper which was left on the doorstep, and the half hour of news that our parents watched on television. The rest of the time, we lived in relative solitude, and there was space between us, and the wars and disasters which were going on everywhere.

Over the last ten to fifteen years, things have changed rapidly, and we are now “wired and plugged in” from the moment we wake up, until the moment we fall asleep. This new way of being connected has destroyed the relative mental and psychological seclusion we used to enjoy. And this new technology isn’t going to go away. So, it’s up to US to manage it.

My challenge to you THIS August is to spend the month examining how you respond to this new connectedness, and how it makes you feel. It is my hope that you will see that it’s possible to be an informed and contributory member of society, while also making space and time to be “out of touch” when you need to be.

*Peter House
Summer Minister ❖*

Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network



Submitted by Marti Eggers

Where Are You?

It’s the last week of August. Summer is winding down. Where are you? On an end-of-summer vacation? Or maybe you are enjoying this last week at home, sleeping in your own bed, safe and sound, savoring the last cookouts and fruits of the summer with family and friends.

It’s the last week of August. Four or five families in need of safe shelter and food will be spending the week at First Universalist, sleeping on inflatable mattresses, safe in the shelter of the church, sharing meals prepared and served by RAIHN* volunteers.

If you are in town during the last week of August, please consider giving a few hours of your time to serve these families. Over 80 volunteer slots need to be filled. Do you like to cook? Read stories to children? Do a “sleep-over”? Maybe you’d like to help prepare the rooms for the families? Or help take down the rooms or do laundry after the guests leave?

Learn more about RAIHN and the many ways you can help by attending a 2-hour orientation session on Tuesday, August 12th, 6:30 pm at Aldersgate United Methodist Church of Greece, 4115 Dewey Avenue. Then go to <http://vols.pt/DcCrNe> to sign up. You’ll be glad you did!

(If you can’t attend the session but want to help, you can shadow an experienced volunteer. Contact Chris DeGolyer - chrisdeg@frontiernet.net – to arrange it.)

Questions? Please see Marti Eggers, Sarah Singal or Chris DeGolyer.

***Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network –**
Keeping families together; bringing families home. ❖

Leadership Assembly

Submitted by Ed Deller

Hold the date: **First Universalists’s annual Leadership Assembly** will be held Saturday, October 18. The tentative time is 9am–1pm. All committee chairs, board members and others in church leadership roles are encouraged to attend. More details to follow. ❖

First Universalist Welcomes Michelle Yates

Submitted by Charlie Courtsal

First Universalist welcomes **Michelle Yates**, our new Minister of Religious Education / Faith Development!



She has had a long association with Unitarian Universalism from her days as a Youth Advisor at Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church of Amherst, NY. She did field education/supervised ministry at the First Unitarian Church of Rochester and has served as Consulting Student Minister at the UU Church of Hamburg, NY. She earned her BA at the

University of Buffalo and has just completed her Masters of Divinity at the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School this Spring.

Having grown up in the Buffalo area, Michelle now lives in the South Wedge with her husband and three amazing step-kids.

She is looking forward to starting her 1/4 time position with First Universalist when Rev. Katovich begins her ministry with us in August. ❖

Capital Campaign...

Some Good News About Funding!

Submitted by Ann Rhody

As we wait for our major exterior renovation project to begin in the next few weeks, there's been a good deal of interior activity to be sure we are financially prepared.

As you know:

- The entire project is budgeted at \$400,000
- We are raising the funds through a Capital Campaign, entitled "Preserving A Cultural Treasure," or PACT
- The "major gifts" phase of the Campaign is under way and has already secured pledges of over \$300,000. Donors may elect to spread payments for major gifts over 3-5 years
- We planned to use the remainder of the Beryl Haas renovation funds, a \$50,000 interest-free loan from the New York State Convention of Universalists, and a line of credit from Canandaigua National Bank to cover immediate cash flow needs as the project will happen this summer and fall.

Now for some NEW information! Due to the success of the major gifts phase of the Campaign, as well as some unanticipated borrowing costs associated with the Canandaigua National line of credit, the Board and Finance leadership will be recommending that we do any necessary borrowing from our own Endowment rather than pursue a loan from a bank.

Why the recommended change in plans?

- *We will need to borrow LESS than we originally thought.* Our interest in borrowing from a bank was to keep from depleting the Endowment too much. However, the pledges are coming in more quickly than we expected, reducing the amount we will need to borrow.
- *The Endowment is very healthy,* due to good performance of investments, excellent management by our financial team at Geovest, and a generous gift from a congregation member. The endowment can easily withstand some light borrowing, especially with repayment within three to five years.
- Borrowing from ourselves rather than a bank will *save us over \$2500* in fees during the first year alone, as well as up to \$7500 interest during the project.

The congregation will need to approve any borrowing done from the Endowment. To that end, there will be more detailed information coming in September, followed by a congregational meeting on Sunday, September 21 after the service to seek a vote on this single issue. Save the date and watch for more information to come. In the meantime, if you have questions about the PACT Campaign or its funding, please contact Ed Deller, Connie Valk, or Ann Rhody. ❖



Summer Thoughts Turn To Religious Education Faith Development

Submitted by Charlie Courtsal

Have your summer thoughts turned to sharing your faith with future generations? If your answer is YES, please contact Charlie Courtsal, our Religious Education / Faith Development Committee Chair.

First Universalist is looking for 1 more Children's Worship leader, 1 more Children's Worship assistant and, 1 more adult to help advise the YRUU group (teen group). Charlie can be reached at < gwincourt@frontiernet.net > ❖

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Exterior Renovation Update

Submitted by Ed Deller

The exterior renovations for the church roof, masonry and window frames are planned to start the week of August 4. The project is expected to be completed by early October. During this time the church parking lot will not be available. We regret the inconvenience, especially to those with special needs. For Sundays, parking on Court Street will be the closest alternative during this period. We will work with the contractors to free up the parking lot as soon as possible. ❖

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Greeting... Hello!

Submitted by Nancy Gaede

Are you looking for a way to get involved at First Universalist? Summer services have begun, and we're always looking for new folks to greet on Sunday morning. This would be a PERFECT time to try out this important service opportunity. We would be happy to team you up with an experience greeter on any Sunday morning. If you sign up, an Email reminder will be sent to you which includes the date you selected and some helpful hints about greeting. Contact Nancy Gaede at flower50@frontiernet.net to be added to our greeter list. ❖

Drop-In Discussion, August Schedule

Submitted by David Damico

Summer Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday after the service at 11:15 a.m. in the adult lounge on the second floor of our church. You don't have to read anything or do any advance preparation to participate. Just drop in. People of all viewpoints are welcome.

August 3 | *The UU Philosophy of Life*

After a lifetime of specialized study, David White sees the early eighteenth-century Anglican bishop, Joseph Butler, as a major player in the Trinitarian controversy in the UK and the US, and as having a continuing relevance to the flourishing of a common faith of conscience and reason.

August 10 | *Not Religious but Spiritual?*

It is a common refrain heard more and more as the nation sees a rise in secularism and a decline in attending churches and synagogues. But what does it mean to be spiritual? We'll examine that very human search for something deeper? Bill Elwell will facilitate.

August 17 | *Overpopulation - Is It A Legitimate Concern?*

Why should we care about population size? How do you define overpopulation? Is it really an issue? Doesn't the earth have a natural way of population control? Will there be enough resources to go around? Come join us for a lively discussion. Shelly Adams facilitates.

August 24 | *The Problem of Evil and the Problem of Good*

People who believe in an all-powerful, all-wise, all-good deity struggle with the question of how evil arises in the world. But atheists and materialists struggle with the opposite question. How is it that goodness and the desire to be good arose in the world? Phil Ebersole facilitates.

August 31 | *TBA.*

If you have a topic you would like discussed or, better still, would like to lead a discussion, speak to or email David Damico (uurocnews@gmail.com). ❖

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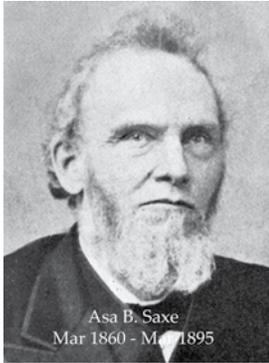
India House, 998 Clinton Ave S, Rochester
Sunday, August 17. *See you there!*

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



ASA SAXE, the third minister of this congregation, served here for an astonishing 35½ years. He was born at Greenfield, Saratoga Co. on November 23, 1827,



one of six sons. His Hessian grandfather, who as a mercenary soldier in this country deserted the British cause, subsequently served in the War of the Revolution and became an American citizen. Young Asa grew up in Belleville, Jefferson Co. and later worked his way through the Union Academy, preaching his first sermon in 1848 at the Universalist Church in Aurora,

Erie Co. The Black River Association of Universalists conferred ordination upon him in Ellisburg, Jefferson Co. around 1850. For his first charge Saxe was given two Jefferson County congregations, one at Depauville and one at South Rutland, which he served for two years. He was then hired by the Universalist Church at Dexter, Jefferson Co., where he remained a year, and for the next three years served the parish at Madrid, St. Lawrence Co. In 1856 he was invited to the church at Clifton Springs, Ontario Co., where he remained until accepting a call to this congregation, beginning here on March 1, 1860. That same year he received the degree of D.D. from St. Lawrence University at Canton.

He came to a small congregation worshipping in a South Clinton Avenue church that had been completed in 1847, at a time when Universalism was still a greatly despised belief. He was a public-spirited clergyman who served both his church and the city where he lived. His obituary noted that he “was able through special talent to serve his church well. He was a pulpit orator of distinction, with a big musical voice that filled his church to the doors, and attracted, when he preached away from home, great crowds to hear him. He was the orator of the day on many great civic occasions, among others the laying of the corner-stone of the present City Hall...” The parochial school system was the subject of an ongoing debate he undertook with Father Lewis Lambert that was followed by a local paper for most of a year, and although their readers inevitably took sides, the two men remained lifelong friends. Saxe befriended Rabbi Max Landsberg early on and supported the establishment of Temple B'rith Kodesh, and in 1874, with Landsberg

and Rev. Newton Mann of the First Unitarian Church, organized the interfaith Thanksgiving service which is still celebrated annually. Unhappily there is little other surviving information about his labors in building the congregation and establishing Universalism as a respected faith tradition.

For most of his ministry Saxe was a leader in both the New York State Convention of Universalists and the Universalist General Convention, serving as an officer and traveling all over the country for missionary work and fundraising. In addition he was a frequent contributor to the denomination's publications. In 1885 the church held a banquet in honor of his 25 years in the pastorate, at which toasts were presented by the city mayor and the University of Rochester's president. He resigned in June of 1895 because he could no longer carry the load of such a sizeable congregation, but believing his work was not finished, he served the small Passover Universalist congregation in Albany without salary for two years.. In 1900 the Rochester congregation honored him and his wife Celestine Holley Saxe with a reception and banquet in recognition of their 50th wedding anniversary. The couple's little son Burton had died at the age of about four months in Ellisburg, and their adopted daughter Florence married Henry S. Hanford and was the mother of five children. Dr. Saxe died in Irondequoit on June 5, 1908, just months before the dedication of our present church building, and is buried in Mt. Hope Cemetery with his extended family. ❖

Book Club

Submitted by Shirley Bond

The Book club selection for the month of September is:
Year of Wonder by Geraldine Brooks.



“A glimpse into the strangeness of history that simultaneously enables us to see a reflection of ourselves”.

No in-depth analysis... Just interesting conversations.
Different opinions welcomed.

Sunday September 28th, 12:15.

For further information please see or e-mail
bondshirl@yahoo or Sarah Singal@rochester.rr.com ❖

First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14604

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

Nurture the spirit and serve the community

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

Summer worship services begin at 10:00am Sundays

Summer Minister | Peter House

Minister of Religious Education | Michelle Yates

Music Director | Bryan Holten

Sexton | Brandon Fagan

Nursery Care Provider | Carol Williams

Office Administrator | Kris White

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

Board Of Trustees

Ed Deller (President), Joy Leccese, Shirley Bond, Michael Scott, Michael VanArsdale, Howard Spindler, Janet Rothbeind, Rev. Martha Munson (Interim Minister, ex officio)

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

Drop in Gardening.

Thursday mornings at 10.
Commune with veggies,
weeds, flowers and, people.
Stick around to take a walk.
No experience needed.

