



# Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

April 2017

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## Sunday Services | April 2017

### April 2 | *Circles*

Membership Sunday. As we welcome those who have joined our community in the past year, we'll reflect on our covenantal tradition - and one of its famous discontents.

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

### April 9 | *"We'll Build a Land"*

Today we reflect on the world we're called to build, in light of our Stewardship theme, Passover, and Palm Sunday.

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

### April 16 | *Into the Coracle*

Easter Sunday. We ponder the enduring mystery of rising to new life.

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

### April 23 | *Earth Day Sunday*

Join us for a service featuring story, song, creativity, and a skit by our green group, EcoJustice. We'll consider the many ways the earth gives us life, and learn some actions we can take to preserve the life we share.

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

### April 30 |

Guest speaker Lynn M. Acquafondata is a mental health counselor and joins us from First Unitarian where she serves as a community minister.



*"The coming of Spring is like the creation of the Cosmos out of Chaos and the realization of the Golden Age."*

*~ Henry David Thoreau*





## Pastor's Perspective

Message from Rev. Celie Katovitch

Dear friends,

April begins with that peculiar would-be holiday, April Fools Day: a time for the tricksters and pranksters among us to try out their repertoire. I thought a lot about this day as we approached it this year. Maybe that's because another kind of foolishness has been on my mind. In many of the world's religions, there is the tradition of the "holy fool." Such people are spiritual eccentrics, known for unusual behaviors that often include voicing paradoxical sayings or riddles, giving away their possessions, and living radically generous lives oriented toward others. (Think Francis of Assisi among Christians, with his vow of poverty and kindhearted preaching to the animals; think Nasruddin among Sufis, with his mystical bent and surprising stories.) The scholar Jaroslav Pelikan writes, "The Holy is too great... for people of normal sanity to be able to contemplate it comfortably. Only those who cannot care for the consequences run the risk of the direct confrontation of the Holy." This is the holy fool's trademark: she is willing to risk living her faith, even if that means going against convention and accepted social norms. She is willing to opt out of the selfishness, appearance-drivenness, cynicism and consumption that society defines as "wisdom," in order to embody the mind-bending, self-giving, joyful, justice-seeking, loving nature of the divine. I think about the faithful fools who have gifted us with their unusual wisdom down through the ages, and I can't help but think that they lend us powerful guidance. In these days when our politics continues to insist that narcissism and callous non-concern for the vulnerable is what is "normal," we need to remain maladjusted - willing to live bravely outside the norm. Perhaps we are called to step more and more out of our comfort zones: to cultivate the creative courage of the holy fools, and so embody a counter-culture of love and compassion. If we take this risk, surely we will meet the wild presence of holiness, in new and unexpected ways.

In faith and foolishness,

- Celie ❖

## Spring Office Hours at Java's

Rev. Celie's community office hours will be held at Java's Cafe on Gibbs Street, Thursdays from 1-2. Come enjoy a cup of coffee or tea in the cozy atmosphere of Java's. ❖

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## A Promise

by Hal Borland

By April's end there is no doubt of the season. Early or late, it is definitely Spring, and no matter how dogged have been the frosts back in the hills, no matter how deliberate have been the early flowers. May is at hand and the grass is green and the buds are opening, leaf and petal. Robins sing, daylight lingers, and the world gets on with its vernal business.

It is perhaps significant that April, back at the root of the word, meant "open air," the air out-of-doors. So it is only reasonable that we should expect much of April after Winter and March when the open air was somewhat less than hospitable. April is an opening up, not only of the bud but of the heart, for of all the seasons this is the one in which we have the most urgent need to participate. We must have a part in the new awareness, the partnership with time and sunshine.

So we come to the end of April, even a chilly April, with bird-song around us and some of Spring's color; and we feel the strengthening sun, we sense the open buds, we know again that no Winter lasts forever, no Spring skips its turn. April is a promise that May is bound to keep, and we know it. ❖





# Walking Together

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

Our Faith Development theme for April comes from the seventh line of our Affirmation of Faith that we say during service each week: **“To the end that all SOULS shall grow into harmony...”**

Here are some questions to ponder this month:  
**What is a “soul?” What might we and other Unitarian Universalists mean when we use the word “soul?”**

Many religions or religious people use this word, but often they mean something different than we do. Most people might define a “soul” as a human being or person, the disembodied spirit of a deceased person, or the spiritual part of humans in our moral aspect believed to go on after a person’s death and be subject to happiness or misery in a life to come.

While UUs might use “soul” to refer to a person or being, it is more likely they mean: - the principle of life, feeling, thought, and action in humans, - the emotional part of human nature; the seat of the feelings or sentiments, - a noble warmth of feeling, spirit or courage, - the animating principle, essential element or part of something, or one’s innermost self.

In the past 10 years, I have heard Unitarian Universalist leaders talk about the way that our faith “saves lives” and “saves souls.” Again, they would define this differently than a person from another faith. Almost every UU I’ve ever talked to has a story like this. They can describe a time in their life where they felt lost, unwelcome, unloved, or unknown. Sometimes this felt normal until they encountered a UU theology, a faith community, or social justice project. Some people describe that they felt broken or in despair from the way of the world, but they were saved by finding a community that found in them worth and dignity, and

gave them hope for making the world a better place. This is often not a one-time event, but a part of a person’s faith development over time.

A feeling of belonging and being beloved can save a person’s life; literally and qualitatively. Hope and Love can save our souls, our innermost selves, our hearts, our strength for and will to live, that we might create and cultivate more hope and love in the world.

**What is your story of how being a Unitarian Universalist has changed your life and touched your soul?**

**How can you reach out and connect with the souls you encounter every day? ❖**

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## The Children's Worship Team is Expanding!

Have you noticed more regular faces among the kids at our church?

Attendance is up, and we are looking to train a few more adults to lead and assist with Children's Worship. No teaching experience necessary! If you have ever been curious about what we do in Children's Worship please contact Rev. Michelle at [edu@uuroc.org](mailto:edu@uuroc.org) or talk to one of the other team members about "Being Our Guest" and shadowing on a Sunday. This is a great way to learn about our program first hand, and consider if joining the team might be a good fit for you. ❖



# April is Earth Month

*Submitted by Sarah Singal*

Celebrate Earth Day on April 22<sup>nd</sup>! Join a caravan bringing household recyclables to

**EcoPark.** Meet at the lower level parking lot of First Unitarian, 220 Winton Road South, at 10am, April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Check which items can be brought (just about everything with some exceptions) by stopping by a table after church on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, looking on the bulletin board under Social Justice, or visiting the web site at [monroecounty.gov/ecopark](http://monroecounty.gov/ecopark).



Come to a **Fair Earth Fair** during coffee hour on Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Get information, sign petitions, find out the names and addresses of your legislators, and more!

**March!** There are two important marches happening this month. On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the March for Science will be held in Washington DC. The scientific community calls for political leaders and policymakers to enact responsible evidence-based policies in the public interest. Satellite events are planned in Rochester and other cities around the world. Rochester Marchers will gather at Martin Luther King Jr park at 9:30 am, and march toward the Hyatt Regency at 10:30, where you are cordially invited to attend the first Rochester Science Expo. Before going, check for the latest updates at [MarchforScience.com](http://MarchforScience.com) and [rocmarchforscience.org](http://rocmarchforscience.org).

The second march is April 29<sup>th</sup>. The People's Climate Mobilization March in Washington DC calls for climate action, jobs, and justice. Contact [peoplesclimate.org](http://peoplesclimate.org) for information on transportation. There will be sister marches across the country and abroad. In Rochester, meet at Washington Square Park at 10am, St Mary's Place at 11am, on April 29<sup>th</sup>. More information is available for the DC and sister marches at [peoplesclimate.org](http://peoplesclimate.org). ❖

# 20/20: Seeing Clearly with Mindfulness and Meditation

*Submitted by Joy Leccese*



Back by popular demand! Attendees at the February 25<sup>th</sup> workshop on Mindfulness and Meditation asked for more! Join us on the following Saturdays for any or all sessions: April 15, May 20, and June 17. This is a monthly series on cultivating Mindfulness and practicing Meditation: it's science and spirituality without the PhD or a stint at the Monastery. Learn, practice and master powerful mental tools to thrive in turbulent times. Attend one or all sessions. Invite your friends and family to come along. Free. Donations to First Universalist Church happily accepted but not required. Prior experience and 3D vision not required either. Sign up on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge, or e-mail Joy Leccese at [coachingjoy@gmail.com](mailto:coachingjoy@gmail.com) with any questions. ❖

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## UU<sub>n</sub>AMOR News

*Submitted by Lois Baum, Founder & Chair UU<sub>n</sub>AMOR*

Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministries of Rochester NY (UU<sub>n</sub>AMOR ~ pronounced you-nah-more) tabled at (Winton Road) First Unitarian's PETITION WEEKEND, March 11-12, 2017. Lois Baum created our petition and prepared postcards (environmental move to save on paper envelopes). Many people came through, before and after all three church services, and signed the petition and postcards. They have been mailed to our NYS Legislators, specifically the Assembly, requesting that they PASS A.1596 ... Kirby and Quigley's Law. Amazingly, it is not (yet) illegal to harm or kill a companion animal in the midst of another crime (ie: burglary, arson, etc). This bill, A.1596, would make it a felony to harm or kill companion animals during a crime, on top of the charge for the crime itself. If you want to see that A.1596 passes, please contact your NY State (not federal) representative (<http://www.lwv-rma.org/>). Visit [www.uuam.org](http://www.uuam.org). ❖

# A car should not be a replacement for a home...



Submitted by Marti Eggers

Join us for an evening to raise awareness of family homelessness and a fundraiser to benefit the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN). Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 5 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. at Asbury First United Methodist Church (1050 East Ave., Rochester). Sleep overnight in your car to experience what many families must resort to in Rochester. Similar to the idea of a walk-a-thon, participants in Car City raise a registration fee plus pledges to benefit RAIHN. See <http://www.raihn.org/car-city/> for information about ways to participate.

If you don't want to sleep in your car but you want to participate in the effort, you can simply donate to Team VirtUUal! See accompanying article.

Evening Program includes RAIHN Family Graduate Panel, Photography By Michele Ashlee, Car-Aoke and Photo Booth with Creekside Entertainment, Car Decorating Contest (Best Craftsmanship, Most Colorful,

and Most Reflective of RAIHN's Mission), Bedtime Yoga with Yoga Drish Ti, supper and a light breakfast, sundae bar, games, prizes and fun!

...and an experience you won't forget! ❖

## Join Team VirtUUal! Keeping families together. Getting families home for good.



Submitted by Marti Eggers

You don't have to sleep in your car overnight on May 6<sup>th</sup> in order to support RAIHN Car City 2017! I can't be there myself, so I have created Team VirtUUal as a way for me and others to "participate" in raising funds and awareness of family homelessness from the comfort of your home. Here's how:

You can participate by donating to my Team VirtUUal online: Go directly to the Team VirtUUal page by going to <http://bit.ly/2nEViv2> and click on the Support Us button. - or -



- Go to [www.raihn.org](http://www.raihn.org).
- Click on DONATE NOW above the Car City logo on the right side of the page.
- Click on the "Donate To This Event" box.
- Enter Team VirtUUal or Marti Eggers in the Search Box.
- Click on Search.
- Click on the Teams tab to see how we're doing.
- Click on Donate Now!

The rest is up to you. A donation in any amount, large or small, will be gratefully received and will help get families home for good. ❖

# Living Our Values, Making A Difference

Submitted by *Newcomb Losh*

## Cozy Night Supper

On March 3, our Cozy Night Supper, organized by Katherine Flynn and Kathy Russell, featured a potluck supper for about 20 people followed by discussions and exercises from the Race to Justice religious education program.

**Rev. Michelle Yates** (far left), our Director of Lifespan Faith Development, clarified the directions for a group exercise to (l to r) **Ed Deller, Jeannie Gloss, David Gloss.**



## Chili Cook-off

Nourishing the body helps nourish the spirit. Chili Cook-off organizer **Bill Elwell** (left) awarded the Best Chili popular vote prize to **Janine Casillo** for her pepperoni chili. Yum!



*Have an action photo or two of our members and friends being inclusive, living our Unitarian Universalist values or making a difference? Send them to Newcomb Losh at [jnewcomb.losh@yahoo.com](mailto:jnewcomb.losh@yahoo.com).*

All photos by Newcomb Losh unless otherwise noted.

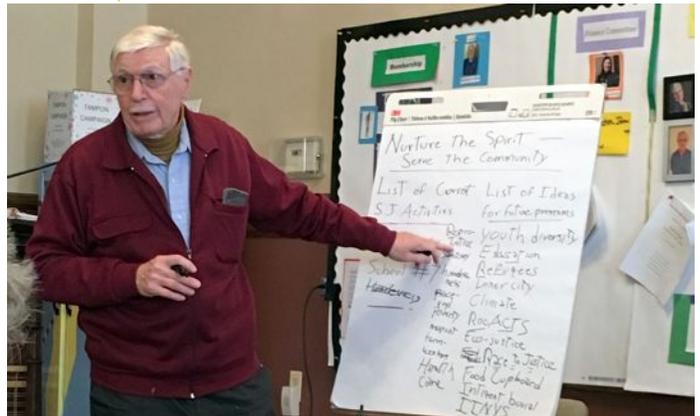
## Social Justice Workshop

About 30 people participated in Dick Gilbert's social justice strategic planning workshop on March 11 to identify potential congregational social justice projects using an UUA-developed strategic planning template.

(l to r) **Eleanor Siegfried, Connie Valk, Don Zimmer, Kathy Russell** and **Karen Ruganis** addressed a problem affecting refugees, migrants and immigrants.



**Dick Gilbert** asked the participants to identify problem areas, then had them self-sort into program teams to develop strategic plans.



**Katherine Flynn** (l) and **Shirley Bond** (r) worked on a reproductive justice plan with **Kitty Forbush** and **Carole Hoffman**.



## Petition-Postcard Sunday

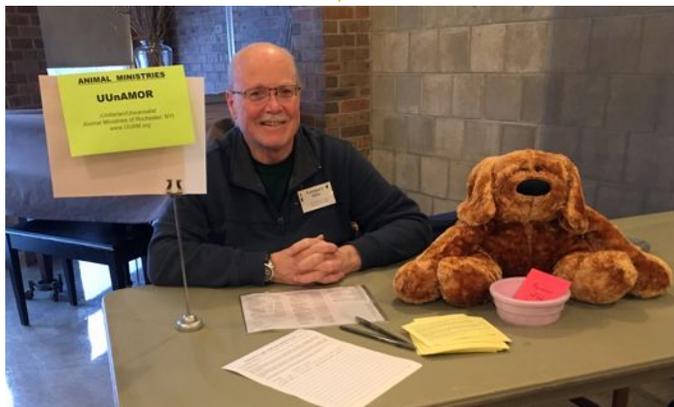
On March 12, **Lois Baum** advocated for people who were homeless by participating in First Unitarian's Petition Sunday, an event that encouraged political activism through petition-signing, letter/postcard-writing and more. ▼



At First Universalist, **Newcomb Losh** encouraged political activism by providing #TheIdesOfTrump postcards to members and friends to write to Pres. Trump in a non-violent way. ▼



**Greg Baum** encouraged animal rights activism through UUnAMOR (UUAM.org). ▼



## Remembering Jim Eckberg

With sadness, we share news of the passing of beloved friend of the church, Jim Eckberg, on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Jim will be dearly missed by our community.

A memorial service and celebration of his life will be held at First Universalist on Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

We send our love to Jim's family, especially his wife Eunice. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.



The members of the Tuesday night Race to Justice class valued Jim's insights, were saddened by his death and will miss his gentle spirit and good humor.



# We'll Build a Land: Stewardship Campaign 2017

*Submitted by Ann Rhody*

Our church has as its mission to nurture the spirit and serve the community. And we do! We give shelter, work for social justice, and encourage one another's spiritual growth in an atmosphere of acceptance and love. We'll Build a Land is a hymn which expresses our vision of a world of justice and peace.

Stewardship Sunday is April 9! What does this mean for you? On or before Stewardship Sunday, we ask all members and friends to return a pledge card, letting the church know what financial support we can expect during the 2017-18 church year.

Pledges make up, by far, the largest amount of income for the church to fulfill its mission. Our congregation represents a real diversity of financial circumstances, and as such, pledge amounts vary widely. All pledges are welcome and important as we "Build the Land" we seek.

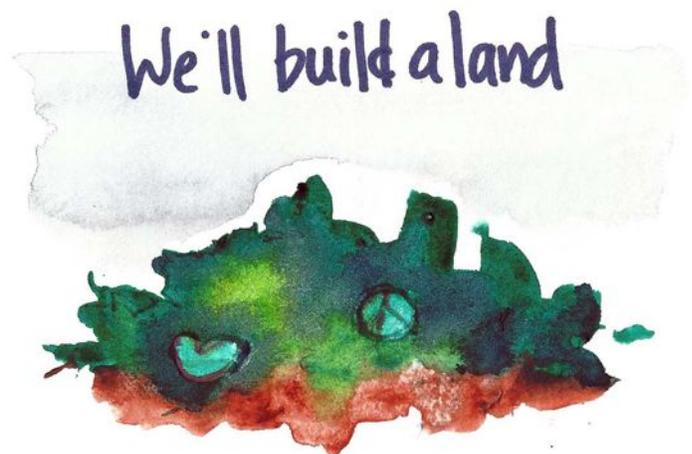
By now, you should have received a letter in the mail inviting you to pledge as well as a brochure and pledge card. If you haven't, pledge materials are readily available at church, or you can pledge online at [uuroc.org/stewardship](http://uuroc.org/stewardship).

If you're new to the church, a "stewardship basics" brochure is also included online and at church.

Whether you've pledged in the past or are brand new, we welcome and value all that you bring to us with your presence among us. We hope you'll join us in making a pledge, and will be with us on Stewardship Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup> to enjoy a piece of pie as we celebrate all who give to make our mission possible.

Thank you!

Ann Rhody for the Finance and Stewardship Teams  
Rachael Baldanza and Heather Jones, 2017 co-chairs ❖



*Artwork by Rachael Baldanza*

## Social Justice Plate News *Submitted by Shirley Bond*

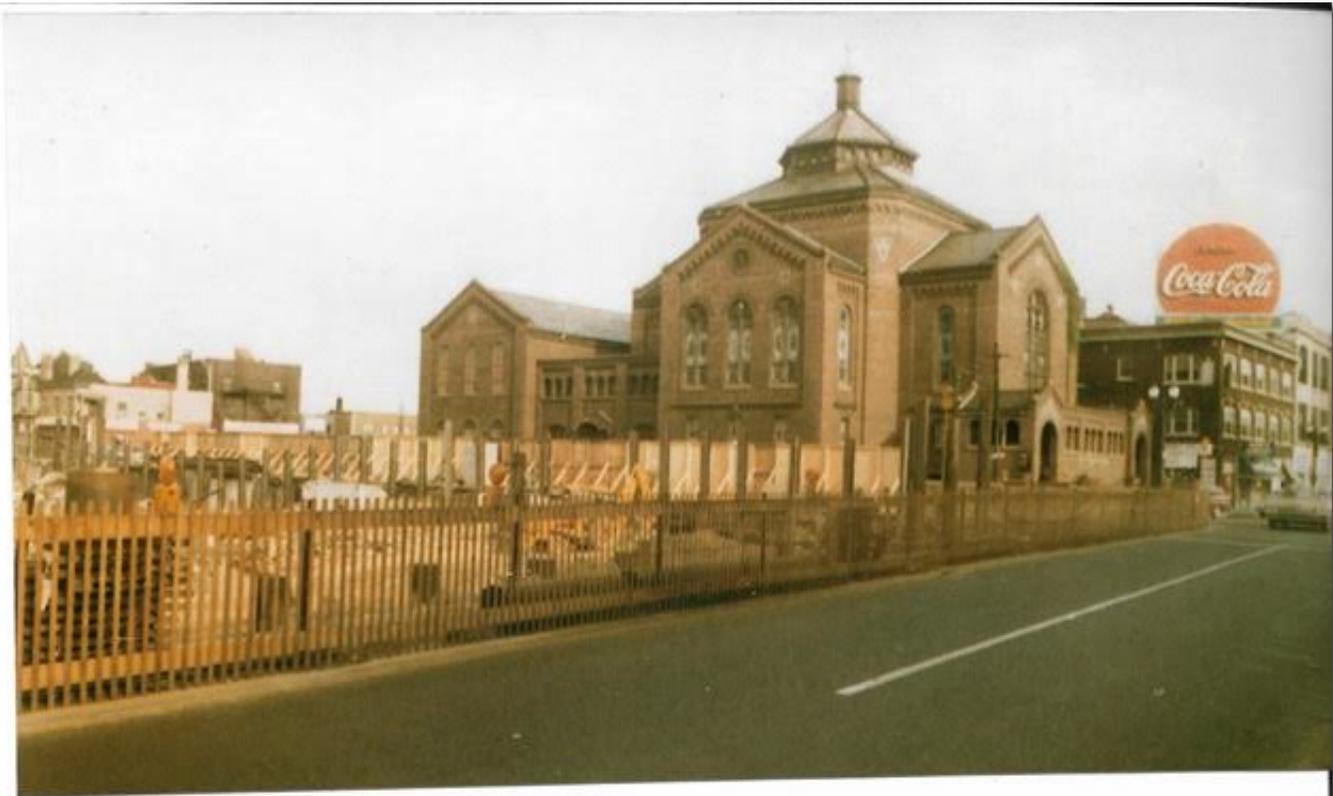
In honor of Earth Month, the Rochester People's Climate Coalition (RPCC) has been chosen as the recipient of April's Social Justice Plate Offering. RPCC is a non-profit, non-salaried alliance of over 100 local organizations, including business, faith, social justice, labor, and environmental groups, and is fully funded through donations. RPCC is dedicated to promoting energy efficiency, green transportation, the transition to renewable energy, and sustainable land management and food choices. They educate us at our libraries, organize peaceful marches, confer with our local representatives, and support local action on sustainable life choices. Your donation to this critical and urgent cause is very much appreciated.

Social Justice Plate Committee Members: Becky Elwell, Marcia Weaver, and Shirley Bond. ❖

# Auld Lang Syne

*Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist*

This photo of the church was taken in 1965 by long-time member Lillian Kellogg, and is published with her permission. The two-story brick building to the immediate right of the church was the Argyle Apartments, torn down in 1974. The red Coca-Cola sign is perched atop what was then the Rochester Business Institute, razed in 1986. In its place is the orange-brick building formerly occupied by Frontier Corporation. The large excavated, fenced space on the north side of the church is the site of present-day Xerox Corporation. ❖



## Save the Date

*Submitted by Melissa Davies, Office Administrator*

A quick-reference list of upcoming events and activities. For details and times, see the church calendar online at [uuroc.org/calendar](http://uuroc.org/calendar).

**April 15** - Mindfulness & Meditation Class  
- EcoPark Caravan (offsite)

**April 20** - UU Common Read Book Discussion

**April 22** - Jim Eckberg Memorial Service

**April 23** - Fair Earth Fair

**May 4** - UU Common Read Book Discussion

**May 13** - Spring Clean-up Day

**May 18** - UU Common Read Book Discussion

**May 20** - Mindfulness & Meditation Class

**June 4** - Annual Congregational Meeting

**June 11** - Annual Church Picnic

**June 17** - Mindfulness & Meditation Class❖

# Drop-In Discussion Schedule

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

Drop-in discussions are held at 9:15 a.m. (except during the summer) each Sunday in the Chalice Room 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.

**April 2** | *Landslide*. In 1975, Stevie Nicks wrote the pop hit, *Landslide*. The song is currently enjoying a resurgence by the Dixie Chicks. The lyrics contain a reflection of sort, "Oh, mirror in the sky, What is love? Can the child within my heart rise above?" Have you given thought to what she is singing about; do you have an answer? David Damico will facilitate.

**April 9** | *Fake News and Critical Thinking*. What news sources do you trust? What are your criteria for judging the accuracy of news reports? We'll share thoughts. Phil Ebersole will facilitate.

**April 16** | *Open Forum Discussion*. No set topic

**April 23** | *Friendship*. What are the characteristics of a true friend? How do you make friends? How do you lose friends? How important is friendship. Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

**April 30** | *Weeds Can Be Our Friends*. Weeds are not the enemy. They can be attractive to look at, they often provide ground cover, they contribute to enriching the soil, they can give clues as to the type of soil you have. Many are edible and some are medicinal. Kate Fleury will explore weeds in all their glory.

**May 7** | *The State of the State, According to Interfaith Impact*. Dick Gilbert, President of Interfaith Impact of NYS, will describe the work of IINYS in Albany and around the state. He will touch on such issues as reproductive freedom, eco-justice, church/state separation and fair taxation, among others. He welcomes involvement by members and friends of this congregation.

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



## Poems of Ric Masten

How much time do you spend with your flowers – and why? One of our now deceased UU ministers-at-large, Ric Masten, says:

"time and time again  
i need to spend an hour  
with my sunflower friend  
sunflowers light the way  
put a touch of color  
in the long dark day"

Ric, in his book *Speaking Poems*, gives us much upon which to meditate. *Speaking Poems* is in our church library. Call number is **811 M**. Find someone to sit down with and share a read-aloud or a sing-aloud. Some of the poems are set to music! ❖

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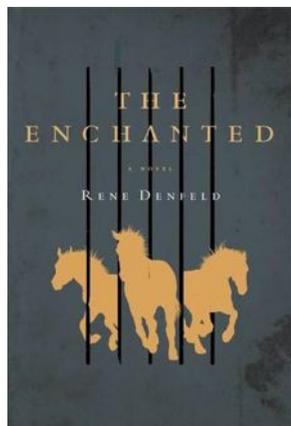
The First Universalist Church library and bookstore are open each Sunday, except in the summer, during coffee hour for browsing, borrowing, and buying.

The books along the wall shelves are part of our lending library. Books may be borrowed for four weeks by members, and also by friends who have attended long enough to have name tags. If you have an overdue book, we'd appreciate your returning it.

The books on the freestanding shelves are part of our bookstore. We have donated books for sale for 50 cents each and purchased books for sale at half price. We also have a shelf of free children's books and a free magazine exchange. We appreciate donations of books in good condition that you think others would be interested in reading. ❖

## Book Group *Submitted by Shirley Bond*

My goodness, is it April already? Tell me it isn't so! The book selection for April is *The Enchanted* by Rene Denfeld. The author writes, "I feel that fiction can tell a broader, more nuanced truth than non-fiction. I liked writing this story because it gives a sense of redemption and magic that is possible in life, no matter what our circumstances!"



So sit outside, soak up some sun, and read this book; and if you are so inclined, please join us on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon in the second floor Chalice room. You don't have to have read the book, but hopefully our stimulating conversation will inspire you to do so!

Never hesitate to contact Sarah Singal ([ssingal@Rochester.rr.com](mailto:ssingal@Rochester.rr.com)) or Shirley Bond ([Bondshirl1@gmail.com](mailto:Bondshirl1@gmail.com)) with any questions you might have. ❖

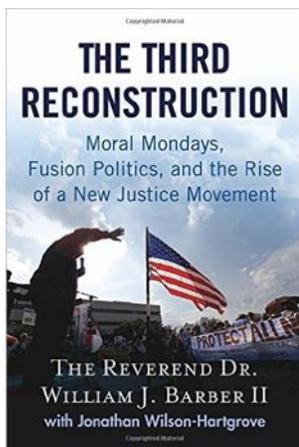
## UU Common Read Book Discussion

April 20<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup>, & May 18<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm in the Chalice Room.

*The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement*, by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II with Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove.

The book tells the story of the Moral Mondays movement, and embeds the current movement in the larger story of racial and economic justice movements since the Civil War. Books can be purchased or ordered through the church bookstore.

Facilitated by Rev. Michelle Yates, Phil Ebersole, and Suzie Gutierrez. Please contact Rev. Michelle at [edu@uuroc.org](mailto:edu@uuroc.org) with questions and interest. ❖



## House Committee News

*Submitted by Tom Ruganis*

The transition to LED bulbs in the Sanctuary is complete! A big Thank You to Michael Scott for his leading this project. And thanks also go to all who helped lower the chandeliers to replace the bulbs. The Sanctuary is brighter and is saving money. The church's energy footprint was reduced by over 6000 watts!

Not only is the church lowering the electric consumption we are also changing our electric supplier and going to a green alternative. Starting in April the church is switching to Energy Cooperative of America who provides a 100% renewable energy supply option at a reduced cost. This clean source of energy is comprised of wind, hydro, and bio mass.

The Clara Barton Lounge renovation committee continues to progress. A preliminary project plan has been received and is being reviewed. Sample replacement chairs have received very positive comments. Please continue to stay tuned. Spring clean-up day has been scheduled for Saturday May 13<sup>th</sup>. Please consider stopping by to help with cleaning and small repairs. If there is anything you would like to see addressed please let the House Committee know.

As always, if you are interested in the above or have any other repair or project you would like to see completed, or would like to take on, please let anyone on the committee know. The Committee is currently: Tom Ruganis, Chair ([tom.ruganis@frontier.com](mailto:tom.ruganis@frontier.com)), Sarah Singal, Marcy Klein, Michael Scott, Ed Deller and Shirley Bond. We would love to hear from you! ❖



## **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.

### **Worship service begins at 10:30am Sundays**

**Minister** | Rev. Celie Katovitch

**Director of Life Span Faith Development** | Rev. Michelle Yates

**Music Director** | Stacey Yang

**Sexton** | Brandon Fagan

**Nursery Care Provider** | Carol Williams & Jameelah Barnes

**Office Administrator** | Melissa Davies

*Office hours, Tuesday - Friday, 9-3:15. Closed Mondays. Telephone 585.546.2826*

### **Board Of Trustees 2016–2017**

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Editor, *This Week at First Universalist* (digital) and monthly newsletter *Our Outlook*: Melissa Davies.

More information is available on our website: <http://uuroc.org>.