



Our Outlook

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First Universalist Church of Rochester, NY

June 2017

Sunday Services | June 2017

June 4 | *Flower Communion*

Bring a flower (or several) to share in this beloved annual ritual. This will be a very special day, as Ben Baldanza, Thalia DeFrancesco, Lucian Proctor, Henry Reynolds, Kaitlyn Reynolds, and Connor Young, will be Dedicated! Join us in blessing the children of our community.

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

June 11 | *Bridging Sunday*

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

June 18 | *Lean Toward the Light*

Reflections on our time together, in light of the Summer Solstice.

- Rev. Celie Katovitch

June 25 | *TBA*

- Rev. Peter House

"I go forth to make new demands on life. I wish to begin this summer well; to do something in it worthy of it and of me; to transcend my daily routine and that of my townsmen; to have my immortality now, that it be in the quality of my daily life; to pay the greatest price, the greatest tax, of any man in Concord, and enjoy the most!! I will give all I am for my nobility. I will pay all my days for my success. I pray that the life of this spring and summer may lie fair in my memory. May I dare as I have never done! May I persevere as I have never done! May I purify myself anew as with fire and water, soul and body! May my melody not be wanting to the season! May I gird myself to be a hunter of the beautiful, that naught escape me! May I attain to a youth never attained! I am eager to report the glory of the universe; may I be worthy to do it; to have got through with regarding human values, so as not to be distracted from regarding divine values. It is reasonable that a man should be something worthier at the end of the year than he was at the beginning."

~Henry David Thoreau ❖



Pastor's Perspective

Message from Rev. Celie Katovitch

Dear friends,

I write with a full heart as we near the end of our time together. Already I am missing you. But beyond the grief, I am excited for you, too. There are so many signs of promise on the road ahead. (How fitting that we begin this final month together with a Child Dedication ceremony - a tribute to life ever growing and new!)

It has been a rich three years. The church has grown, and as that's happened we've also taken important maturing steps organizationally. The life of the spirit has thrived here at Clinton and Court. We have expanded and strengthened our ties to our neighbors - including our neighbors who are homeless - and to the larger Rochester justice community. Looking ahead, you have the exciting prospect of a shared congregational engagement aimed at dismantling structures of racial injustice, as well as a vision and set of priorities to work toward.

As always, First Universalist's greatest strength is its people: the loving community that makes this place a true spiritual home. It has been one of the great gifts of my life to have gotten to know many of you in my time here. I will miss you so very much.

It will be important for me to step away for a time, as you navigate this period of transition. Until you are settled with a new minister, I will be off the radar in most ways, as required by ministers' guidelines of professional practice. This really is a good and necessary thing, as it is important that you and your interim minister, and then your new settled minister, have plenty of space to build a relationship and get off to a great start together. But know I will be looking on from afar, rooting for you in all that you do. While I will no longer be your pastor, and we won't be able to talk about church, after some time has passed I expect we will hear from one another now and then. And while we can't meet deliberately, I'm sure we'll also run into one another around town, and I will be happy when that happens - by chance or by grace.

As the poet e.e. cummings wrote, "I carry you with me (I carry you in my heart)."

With love and blessings always,

--Celie ❖

Extended Office Hours

In addition to my regular community office hours at Java's Cafe on Gibbs Street, Thursdays from 1-2, I will be offering extended community office hours on Tuesday, June 6th, 5-7, at the Finger Lakes Coffee Roasters in Pittsford

It is okay to come with something in particular that is on your mind, or just to talk without any specific agenda. Please know that I am available to meet one-on-one as well.

With love,

--Celie



"Journey to Justice" Launching June 10th

Submitted by Joy Leccese

With the congregational approval of the topic of racism as its Social Justice Project for the next two years, we are ready to delve into details. On Saturday, June 10th, Jon Greenbaum from RocACTS will lead a workshop here at First

Universalist. He will focus on how we as individuals and as a congregation can engage in these efforts to eradicate discrimination and work together toward greater justice, and build a wider tent for the beloved community, of which we are all a part. We hope you will register to attend! 9:30-noon, with coffee served. Sign up on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge, or speak with any members of the FIAC team (Joy Leccese, Becky Elwell, and Heather Jones).

Many have wondered aloud to FIAC how we are to address such a broad – and seemingly vague – topic. That is the question we'll address on June 10th. Also, we want to focus on the positive efforts we make, not the problems racism causes. Hence, our naming the project "Journey to Justice: Facing Systemic Racism." Our emphasis as we move forward is just that: how we can move forward mentally, physically, and spiritually, while living our faith. Faith in Action. ❖





Walking Together

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

Our Faith Development theme for June comes from the ninth line of our Affirmation of Faith that we say during service each week: **“Thus do we Covenant with each other and with all.”**

Covenant is the primary focus of our faith communities as Unitarian Universalists. Early Puritans first voiced in the Cambridge Platform of 1648 a belief that not everyone has to believe the same things to be a church community together. More important than theological beliefs are the ways we believe we should be together; **how we promise to treat each other.**

A Covenant is an agreement or promise. As Unitarian Universalists, our congregations covenant to affirm and promote our seven principles. Our individual congregations and groups are encouraged to develop covenants to help create a safe space and clarify our expectations for behavior. While covenants can be seen as laws or ground rules, UUs appreciate that we are all human and will make mistakes. *“We are a covenant making, covenant breaking, covenant remaking people.”*

The most important thing to remember about living in covenant with each other is that **we are promising to keep “coming back to the table”**, to work together, to be accountable, to make amends, and to begin again in love. Living in covenant is not always easy.

When have you felt someone broke a promise to you?
When did you act out of covenant with another person or group?
Was it hard to “come back to the table” to work it out?

The last three words of our Affirmation of Faith are unique and significant: **“and with all.”** In most covenants or agreements, all the people involved “sign on.” Not everyone in the world has agreed to these ideals or will aspire to live by them. In these few words, we are saying that we believe in these ideals so strongly that we are going to try to live them out in the world with everyone, because we believe it’s the right thing to do, even if others do not believe this or treat us this way in return.

I believe that this is what makes us “people of faith.” That we try to live out our values in the world every day, especially when it is not easy.

What is a value you often struggle to live out? Think of one way you can try to do this better this month. ❖

UUA General Assembly Livestream

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

Interested in seeing some General Assembly (GA) Events Livestreamed at Church? Wish you could go to UU GA this year or at least see some of the highlights?

Rev. Michelle, our Director of Lifespan Faith Development, can only be present for some events, but is happy to support others in setting up the technology to livestream some of the highlights at church. Please email Rev. Michelle at edu@uuroc.org if you are interested and want to help in making more of the evening and weekend events available to all. ❖

The Children's Worship Team is Expanding!

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

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 needed! We will be holding our Children's Worship Team trainings Sunday, June 25th 11:15am-12 noon (part 1), and Sunday, July 9th @ 11:30am-12:30pm (part 2). Please feel free to come to get more information and feel out if this ministry is a good fit for you.

Also we are looking for members to share a craft, memory or life experience by being our "Guest" on one Sunday. This is a great way to learn about our program first hand, and get to know the youngest members of our community.

Contact Rev. Michelle with questions or to sign up at edu@uuroc.org. ❖

EcoJuustice News

Submitted by Sarah Singal

The next meeting of the EcoJuustice group will be Sunday, June 4th at noon in the Chalice Room. We will review the past year's activities and plan for next year. All are welcome.

Recycling tip from Karl Abbott: what to do with your Easter plants that have passed their prime? If it's a bulb, try replanting it. If not, knock the root ball dirt in the garden, put the plant into your composter, clean off the plastic pot and put it in curbside recycling, ditto for the foil covering. Voila – nothing in the trash! ❖

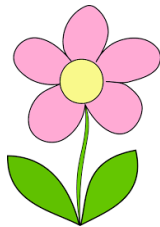
Garden Update

Submitted by Sarah Singal

It's finally gardening time again. We have a fresh, deep layer of woodchips all round the garden beds thanks to our awesome woodchip-spreading crew, Shirley, Marcia, Connie, Janine, Debbie, Sarah, Tom, Karl, and Richard. Thanks also to the fierce windstorm we weathered recently, and to the city for free woodchips and delivery. Lastly, thank you to the city for providing annual plants for our Court Street planters. Now it's time to get growing.

Right now, late May and early June, the flower garden is in-your-face. You can't miss it and the passersby often appreciate it. Around the southwest corner of the church, the veggie garden looks like a wanna-be flower garden. The white flowers are strawberries, and the blue flowers are comfrey, a nitrogen fixer and natural fertilizer. But a transformation is about to take place.

We need your help: gardeners will be meeting once a week to plant, weed, harvest, and pick-up; we will need waterers to sign up for a week of watering, as needed; we will decide where our donations will go, and we will probably need to deliver them. And thanks to Karl, we now have a composter – we could use help with that. For many, gardening is uplifting, joyous, and life-affirming. Join the crowd! See Sarah (ssingal@rochester.rr.com). ❖



Mindfulness and Meditation: The Language of Compassion and Loving Kindness

Submitted by Joy Leccese

What's in a word? In a word, lots. Join us on Saturday, June 17th, from 9:30 a.m. to noon. We'll explore in more detail the Four Noble Truths, with a focus on language. It's not just what we say, but how we say it. Being mindful of "Right Speech" (step one of the Noble Eightfold Path) we practice awareness of our thought patterns, and the language of compassion and loving kindness. With many outrageous comments being tweeted at 3:00 a.m. these days, it's important for us to notice and make small changes that over time effect big change. Sign up on the bulletin board, or email Joy Leccese at coachingjoy@gmail.com. Hope to see you there! ❖

WSPCA News

Submitted by Newcomb Losh

Alert folks may have noticed the Washington Square Park (WSP) stage is gone. We at Washington Square Park Community Association (WSPCA) have yet to hear what, if anything, will replace it. Rest assured, the WSPCA has a good relationship with the City and will be involved.

Be ready to c'mon down to WSP on July 4th – details TBA in a future This Week at First Universalist e-newsletter. WSPCA is planning a cannon rededication ceremony – history lesson included – that day to celebrate its refurbishment. The canon will then be removed to allow the base to be repaired.

The WSPCA has submitted a \$25,000 Historical preservation grant request to the Rochester Area Community Foundation (RACF) for Phase I Pre-planning to refurbish Washington Square Park. Thank you Nancy Gaede, our church's Board of Trustees President, for your letter of support. RACF will tell us their decision in August. ❖

RAIHN Q&A

Submitted by Marti Eggers

Q. What is RAIHN anyway?

A. RAIHN (the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network) , is a consortium of 13 faith communities that host families in temporary need of housing, and 32 faith communities that provide volunteers and other support to the host congregations.

Q. Why is RAIHN needed? Aren't there shelters in our community?

A. There are shelters for men and shelters for women, but there are very few safe places where families with children can stay together. The RAIHN program keeps families together while also helping them get back on their feet and into a home again.

Q. What part does First Universalist play in this?

A. First Universalist is a Host Congregation. St. Mary's, Aldersgate United Methodist Church of Greece, and the Church of Love Faith Center are our support congregations. Volunteers from all four congregations work together in a variety of tasks before, during and after a Host Week.

Q. What happens during a Host Week?

A. Families arrive at our church on Sunday afternoon with their belongings and are greeted by volunteers who help them settle into one of the RE rooms that will serve as their home during the week. Families spend their days at the RAIHN Center where they get help looking for housing and, for some, new employment. At the end of each day, families return to First Universalist. Volunteers 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. Families move on to the next Host Congregation on the following Sunday.



Q. How many volunteers does it take for a Host Week?

A. There are over 80 volunteer slots to fill!

Q. How can I volunteer?

A. Volunteers are expected to attend a training/ orientation session before participating in a Host Week. Training sessions orient volunteers to the philosophy of the RAIHN program and provide skills in building appropriate relationships. Ample time is provided for questions and discussion. These sessions are valuable not only for folks new to RAIHN but also for seasoned volunteers. Folks interested in learning more about how RAIHN works can "shadow" seasoned volunteers before attending a training session.

Q. When is the next training session?

A. **June 7th** at 6:30 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 25 Westminster Road, Rochester

Q. When is the next Host Week?

A. **June 25th – July 2nd**

Please consider becoming a RAIHN volunteer, a wonderful way to nurture the spirit and serve the community! To learn more, contact Chris DeGolyer, chrisdeg@frontiernet.net. ♦

Social Justice Plate News *Submitted by Shirley Bond*

The Social Justice Plate Committee has selected [ROCovery](#) to be our June 18th recipient. This Rochester-based non-profit organization has just refurbished a donated firehouse on Dewey Avenue that encourages a healthy lifestyle committed to activities such as kayaking, hiking, yoga, and strength training. This is a space where people in recovery can give each other encouragement and not worry about being judged.

The SJP Committee is overwhelmed again by these past two months' donations to Mary's Place in March (\$573), and the People's Climate Coalition in April (\$476). The amount for Girls Rock! is not in yet but we will let you know.

Sometimes there are no words that truly capture the meaning of gratefulness and thankfulness, but here is our humble attempt: Thank you congregation!!! The Social Justice Plate Committee is Shirley Bond, Becky Elwell, and Marcia Weaver. ♦

Living Our Values, Making A Difference

Submitted by Newcomb Losh

National Equal Pay Day - On April 4th, **Newcomb Losh** (holding sign) advocates for equality at a NOW rally held at Coffee Connection on South Ave. in Rochester. To make a point, the coffee shop charged men extra for the same size cup of coffee women bought. ▼



House of Mercy - Sweats & Scrubs Drive - **Franky Gutierrez** loads new and gently used sweats and scrubs collected by Homelessness Task Force leader Lois Baum for delivery to the House of Mercy shelter on April 9th. ▼



City Clean Sweep - **Sarah Singal** and **Shirley Bond** (not pictured) joined 25 others in Washington Square Park for the City of Rochester's Clean Sweep on May 3rd. ▼



Seder - Lew Ward-Baker hosted this year's potluck Seder service and ceremonial dinner on April 17th to commemorate Passover. Judaism is one of the six sources from which Unitarian Universalists draw wisdom. (l to r) the **Rev. Celie**, **Lew Ward-Baker**, **Pat Ward-Baker** and the **Rev. Dick Gilbert**. ▼



(r to l) **Jason Long** (rt), **Bill Elwell** and **Marie Sidoti** enjoy their time at the Seder dinner. ▼



Earth Week Sunday - Our Eco-Juustice Group, with member **Juanita Ball** at the lectern, performed an Earth Week skit during the Sunday service on April 23rd. **Marcia Weaver** held a REUSE sign aloft as (l to r) **Howard Spindler**, **Sarah Singal**, **Shelley Adams**, **Karl Abbott** and **Michelle Yates** looked on. ▼



All photos by Newcomb Losh unless otherwise noted.

People's Climate March - On April 29th **Michael Scott** (l) and **Ed Deller** joined more than 200,000 others in the People's Climate March in Washington DC.



(l to r) **Tom Ruganis**, **Karen Ruganis** and **Newcomb Losh** were ready to head down Pennsylvania Ave and circle the White House with fellow People's Climate Marchers who staged a 100 second sit-in, chanting "I can't breathe" to mark President Trump's 100th day in office on April 29th.



Albany Advocacy Day - Interfaith Impact of NYS board president the **Rev. Dick Gilbert** (far right) gives a final briefing on the NY Health Plan, Clean Energy and HALT Solitary Confinement issues to volunteers who were assigned to visit specific legislators on May 1st.



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.

Annual Picnic

Submitted by Karl Abbott



Sunday, June 11th will be the annual picnic starting around 1 pm. The picnic will be held at the Long House Shelter in Seneca Park. [Maps](#) are posted on the bulletin board in the Clara Barton Lounge. Bring a dish to pass, something to grill, and your drinks. Please make a sign, for your dish to pass, with the ingredients for people with food sensitivities. The shelter and toilets are handicap accessible. Questions, contact Karl Abbott at Karl47@frontiernet.net. ♦

Finance Committee News

Submitted by Ann Rhody

Church Budget to be presented at Annual Meeting June 4th

June is the month of the church budget – we approve a spending plan for the coming year and wrap up the current year. You'll find that this year's budget proposal will fund church programs at or above the level of funding for this year, and that our current financial situation is strong. You'll also find a new format with more rationale and information regarding the amounts in the budget. Be sure to join us for the annual meeting on June 4th, and if you have any questions about church finance, don't hesitate to contact treasurer Dick Shroyer (fuctreasurer@frontier.com) or finance chair Ann Rhody (annrhody@gmail.com).

We'll Build a Land – thank you!

Thanks so much to Rachael Baldanza and Heather Jones, this year's stewardship co-chairs. Their creative spirit and willingness to share their joy at being part of this beloved community helped to make the stewardship campaign a success: many new and increased pledges, and a total that supports the needs of our church. Thanks for your generosity! We are still missing a few pledges from last year... did we miss yours? If so, it's never too late to make a pledge. Please contact Bill Jones at jones@chem.rochester.edu or see any member of the finance team. ♦

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.

June 4 | *Racism, White Supremacy and the UUA*. Our denomination is engaged in a difficult discussion of racism within our own ranks in the wake of leadership decisions regarding hiring. Our UUA President and two top aides have resigned and a caretaker team has been put in place. What are the meanings of this controversy? Dick Gilbert will lead a discussion.

June 11 | *Health Care for All*. We'll talk about the need and the possibility for universal health care in the U.S. Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion, drawing on T.R. Reid's *The Healing of America*.

June 18 | *Trumpocalypse*. We'll share our thoughts and vent our feelings about the drama unfolding in Washington. Phil Ebersole will moderate.

Drop-in discussions will begin at 11:15 a.m. during our summer schedule, which is June 25 through August 27.

June 25 | *On Tyranny*. Bill Elwell will do a presentation and lead a discussion based on Yale historian Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny*.

July 2 | *Patriotism*. What loyalty do we owe our country? What constitutes loyalty and disloyalty? Is there a difference between nationalism and patriotism? Can you have dual loyalties? Can you be both a patriot and a citizen of the world? Phil Ebersole will lead a discussion.

If you wish to have a topic discussed or, better still, are willing to lead a discussion, contact Phil Ebersole at discussions@uuroc.org. ♦



Margaret Fuller

Why was Unitarian Margaret Fuller at odds with her nineteenth century society and how are the issues she raised still important to today's women – and to all of us? For an inspiring, thought-provoking, readable biography of this brilliant and passionate teacher, journalist, author, lover, mother, and intellectual, sign out from our library



Margaret Fuller: From Transcendentalism to Revolution by Paula Blanchard. Call number is **921 F**. Let Margaret teach you to “think justly and act firmly” [Journal entry 1833]. ♦

Library Schedule for Summer

Submitted by Phil Ebersole

The library and bookstore will be open in the Clara Barton lounge during coffee hour on June 4, closed on June 11 and open again on June 18. During the summer they will be open on only two Sundays - July 16, with Marcia Weaver as librarian, and August 13, with Keith Stott.

These would be good times to stock up on inexpensive summer reading. They also would be good times to return overdue library books. They're due back after four weeks. ♦



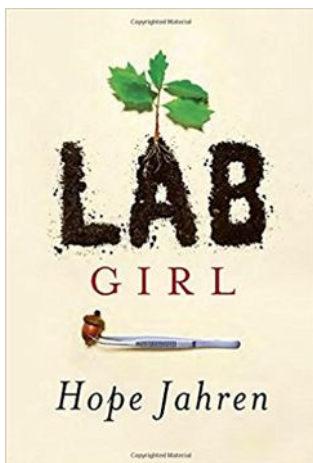
Book Group

Submitted by Shirley Bond

It has been a wonderful church year! We read some really interesting books and had various interpretations. It is so inspiring that we can agree to disagree about the selections and yet still enjoy different perspectives.

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren is our June book selection. The author has spent her life studying trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. This extremely readable book will draw us into the world of geobiology. She wants us to join her in her love and understanding of our environment.

This book is a perfect read for the beginning of summer. Please plan to join us on June 25th at 12 noon in the Chalice room. It is not necessary to have read the book. We will be happy to have piqued your interest! ❖



Thank You

Submitted by Stacey Yang

Music director, Stacey Xiaoyu Yang, will graduate with an MM degree (organ performance and literature) from The Eastman School of Music on May 21st and she would like to thank you for the wonderful support and encouragement she received from the church leadership, the choir, and the congregation.



Stacey will present a 25-min recital on the Italian Baroque Organ at the Memorial Arts Gallery (MAG) on Sundays 5/28 and 6/25. It will be presented twice each day at 1pm and 3pm respectively. The recital will feature the works by Bach, Sweelinck, and Frescobaldi, and a brief history of the organ. ❖

House Committee News

Submitted by Tom Ruganis

Thank you to all that helped with the spring cleanup day on May 13th. A lot of cleaning, smoke alarm testing, and small projects were completed, including assembling the new, higher-height pub tables.

The Clara Barton Lounge renovation project is getting closer and some results are just beginning to show with the addition of the tables mentioned above.

On a last note, thanks for all of the assistance cleaning during our Sexton's absence. As of this writing we are interviewing temporary replacements. Thank you all for your patience during this period.

As always, if you are interested in the above, please contact anyone on the committee. The Committee is currently: Tom Ruganis, Chair (tom.ruganis@frontier.com), Sarah Singal, Marcy Klein, Michael Scott, Ed Deller and Shirley Bond. We would love to hear from you! ❖

You Are Invited

Submitted by Elizabeth Osta

I hope you can join me for the launch of *Saving Faith*, a memoir about my nine years in the Convent.

Friday, June 30, 2017

2:30 - 5:00 P.M.

Book signing with 4 pm. Program

Nazareth College Golisano Academic Center
(former Sisters of St Joseph Motherhouse)

4095 East Avenue

Rochester, NY 14610

Light refreshments will be available ❖



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

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