



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

April 2014

Minister

Rev. Martha Munson

585.325.5092 (minister's study)

minister@uuroc.org

Director of Music

Bryan Holten

music@uuroc.org

Director of

Religious Education

Rev. Lori Staubitz

dre@uuroc.org

Office Administrator

Kris White

585.546.2826

office@uuroc.org

Our Outlook

Newsletter Editor

David Damico

uurocnews@gmail.com

First Universalist Church

150 South Clinton Avenue

(corner of Court St.)

Rochester, NY 14604

Visit us online www.uuroc.org

Inside

Minister's Message Pg. 2

Gleanings - RE News Pg. 2

RAIHN-10th Anniversary Pg. 3

Branding & UU Logo Pg. 4

Candidating Week Pg. 5

Finance Team Pg. 5

Transition Team Pg. 6

Auld Lang Syne Pg. 6

Drop-In Discussion Pg. 7

House Team Update Pg. 7

Sunday Services | April 2014

April 6 | *"Look Higher": How to run a marathon, or this is your life, or so now what?*

Stewardship is over. Great things await First Universalist. Where are you looking?

– Rev. Martha Munson



April 13 | *Thistles*

When faced with a big patch of thistles, what's the best way to get across?

– Rev. Martha Munson



April 20 | *Miracles! A multi-generational service for Easter Day.*

For people of all ages; bring your family and friends, children and grandparents.

– Rev. Martha Munson and friends



April 27 | *Mystery:*

What will happen in today's service is a mystery.

– Rev. Martha Munson

*If the Rochester Schools are closed, the church office is closed.
Sunday Service cancellations will appear on Channel 13.*

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





Walking With You

Message from the Interim Minister, Martha Munson

Some words about ministers, from my colleague,
Jack Mendelsohn

A Unitarian Universalist minister is a person never completely satisfied or satisfiable, never completely adjusted or adjustable – a person who walks in two worlds: one of things as they are, the other of things as they ought to be – and loves them both.

Ministers are persons with pincushion souls and elastic hearts, who sit with the happy and the sad in a chaotic pattern of laugh, cry, laugh, cry – and know deep down that the first time their laughter is false or their tears are make-believe, their days as real ministers are over.

Ministers are people with dreams they can never wholly share, partly because they have some doubts about them, and partly because they are unable to explain adequately what it is they think they see and understand.

A minister is a person who continually runs out of time, out of wisdom, out of courage, and out of money; a person whose tasks involve great responsibility and little power, who must learn to accept people where they are and go from there; a person who must never try to exercise influence that has not been earned.

The minister who is worthy knows all this and is still thankful every day of life for the privilege of being – a minister.

The future of the liberal church is almost totally dependent of these two factors: great congregations (whether large or small) and effective, dedicated ministers. The strangest feature of their relationship is that they create one another.

Yours, faithfully, *Martha* ❖



Gleanings

Rev. Lori Staubitz, Director of Religious Education

Rules to live by and *spiritual practice* are two topics that we have explored together over the course of the winter. As progressive religious people, our search is not for certainties. We do not demand set dogma or assigned “ways” but look to many sources to help move us closer toward centered lives.

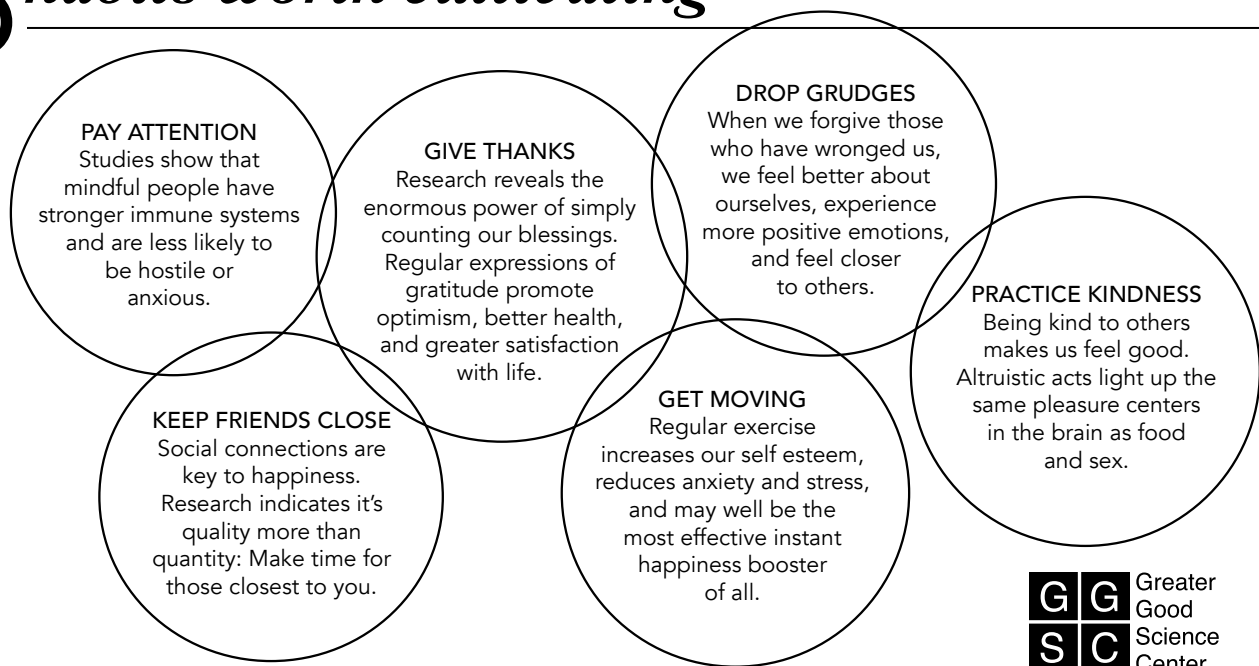
There are a wide range of “tools” available for exploration, deepening and commitment. Perhaps you pray, meditate, journal or immerse yourself in poetry? Maybe theological reflection by way of scripture reading, social justice advocacy or woodland retreat inspire larger living in your life. No matter what form your practice, each is designed to help encourage and strengthen our resolve toward living with greater intention and meaning; increasing our capacity to grow into beloved community.

While we may think all this “spiritual stuff” is the product of religion, you don’t have to look far to find like practices upheld by the sciences. Here is a simple list. The *Six Habits of Happiness* from the *Greater Good Science Center* may seem familiar (see next page). I hope you will join with me to add these to your tool box as together we get busy fix’in things up a bit!

- 1) *Pay Attention*: Studies show that mindful people have stronger immune systems and are less likely to be hostile or anxious.
- 2) *Give Thanks*: Research reveals the enormous power of simply counting our blessings. Regular expressions of gratitude promote optimism, better health and greater satisfaction with life.
- 3) *Drop Grudges*: When we forgive those who have wronged us, we feel better about ourselves, experience more positive emotions, and feel closer to others.
- 4) *Practice Kindness*: Being kind to others makes us feel good. Altruistic acts light up the same pleasure centers in the brain as food.
- 5) *Keep Friends Close*: Social Connections are key to happiness. Research indicates it’s quality more than quantity; Make time for those closest to you.
- 6) *Get Moving*: Regular exercise increases self esteem, reduces anxiety and stress, and may well be the most effective instant happiness booster of all.

Peace, Shalom-Lori ❖

6 habits worth cultivating



Happy 10th Anniversary, RAIHN!*

Submitted by Marti Eggers

During the past 10 years, RAIHN has offered rest and comfort for 299 families who were in the midst of some of the most difficult experiences of their lives. The gifts of friendship, shelter, security and food that have been offered to our guests are beyond price. *THANK YOU* to our volunteers, our supporters and the community for making the following possible during those 10 years:

- 935 family members, including over 500 children, received RAIHN services.
- Over 112,000 meals were served.
- Over 37,400 bed nights were provided to our guest families.
- 2,000+ volunteers were trained in 46 different faith communities.
- 120+ adults have found new employment through RAIHN services.
- 48 adults entered vocational training or community college programs.
- 87% of RAIHN graduate families remained out of homelessness for at least one year.

You can become part of this team of generous volunteers by attending one of the upcoming training sessions listed below, then signing up for our next **Host Week**. Training sessions orient volunteers to the philosophy of the RAIHN program, outline various volunteer opportunities, and provide skills in building appropriate relationships. Ample time is provided for questions and

discussion. These sessions are valuable for both new and seasoned volunteers. If you plan to attend or have questions, please see Marti Eggers, Sarah Singal or Chris DeGolyer.



- **April 8th, 6:30 pm** – Asbury First UMC, 1010 East Ave., Rochester
- **May 21st, 6:30 pm** – Mary Magdalene Church, 1008 Main St., E. Rochester

Our next Host Week – May 25th – June 1st

* **RAIHN**, the *Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network*, is a consortium of 14 faith communities that host families in temporary need of housing, and 31 faith communities that provide volunteers and other support to the host congregations. First Universalist is a host congregation, supported by St. Mary's, Aldersgate United Methodist Church of Greece and the Church of Love Faith Center. Four times a year, for a week each time, volunteers from these congregations work together to provide a welcoming, safe place for the 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 work day. ❖



“Branding” and the New UU Logo

Submitted by Michael Scott

The Unitarian Universalist Association has recently announced a new “branding” campaign, launched with a new logo. Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA, writes

Our new logo, for many, will be the first introduction to who we are. It’s meant to entice a person to learn more. And it’s doing just that. Our random testing groups of UUs and non-UUs described emotions and images evoked by this logo with words such as brave, enlightening, warm, spiritual, energizing, having integrity, welcoming and determined. Our logo is the first innovation among many that the UUA plans to implement to better tell our story.

Over the years, of course, we have used a great many logos: more per capital, perhaps, than any other religious group! Just a few are illustrated here.

(1) The old Universalist cross: a Greek cross with “UC” in the middle, used by many Universalist churches in the early 20th century.

(2) The off-center cross: introduced by the Humiliati, a group of young Universalist ministers in the late 1940s, it was meant to suggest a religion of Christian origin in which Christianity had moved to the side to make room for other things.

(3) The double-circle chalice: shown here in the form introduced by UUA President O. Eugene Pickett in the early 1980s. The two circles represent the historical traditions of Unitarianism and Universalism. The chalice emerged from the work of the Unitarian Service Committee in the depths of World War II; its stylized form in intended to evoke the off-center cross.

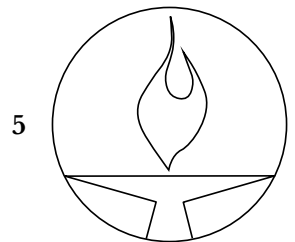
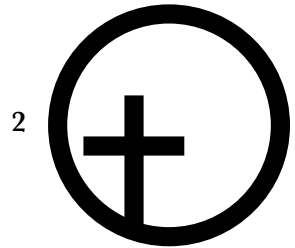
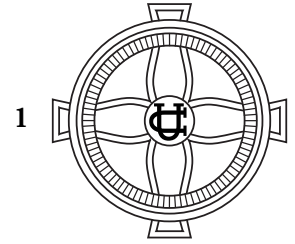
(4) The “starburst” chalice: introduced by UUA President William Sinkford in 2005, it was intended to update its predecessor with a more subtle double circle.

(5) The “First Universalist” chalice: an alternative rendering, reminiscent of the earthenware chalice in our sanctuary, and often used on local church publications.

(6) The new UUA logo: developed by a Boston ad agency, and with a double “U” instead of double circles, the new logo is supposed to be rendered in red whenever possible. Initial reactions to it on-line have been mixed: some people seem to like it; others say it reminds them of a tulip or a torch, or various things that wouldn’t win a PG rating. Personally, I must confess to being skeptical of “branding” initiatives. I find the new logo attractive, but the lack of a clearly identifiable chalice seems like a major loss.

The official brand announcement can be found at www.uua.org/news/pressroom/pressreleases/293249.shtml

Other information can be found at www.uua.org/vision/branding/index.shtml ❖



UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION

Save the Dates for Candidating Week

Submitted by the Search Committee

We have finished the pre-candidating process and are working to make the best choice from a group of excellent pre-candidates. The UUA has set April 3rd as the date when we can make the official phone call to our final candidate. We are already planning Candidating Week, when the candidate and his or her family will visit Rochester to meet the congregation. We expect that Candidating Week will be either the last week in April (April 26th to May 4th), or the first week of May (May 3rd to May 11th).

During Candidating Week, all members and friends of First Universalist will have a chance to meet the candidate in an informal setting. On the Friday of Candidating Week, please join us for a church-wide potluck supper with the candidate.

The pre-candidates have already gone through a grueling interview process with the search committee. We have already asked the hard questions and have received the answers that helped us choose our candidate for minister. We feel confident that the candidate has the qualifications that the congregation wants. So when you meet the candidate, you can relax and converse with the candidate, rather than grilling them with interview questions—we've already grilled them! At this stage, it's important that we make the candidate feel at home with us, so that the minister knows that this is the church she or he wants to serve.

From the Finance Team

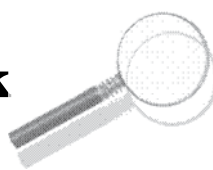
Submitted by Ann Rhody

Don't Forget- **Stewardship Sunday** is April 6!
Be sure to return your pledge card to the church (by mail or in the GIFT box in the Clara Barton Lounge) by Stewardship Sunday. Then join us for pie during coffee hour as we celebrate what an important piece of the "pie" comes from OUR pledges!

Offertory vs. Pledge: *What's the Difference?*

We are sometimes asked why it's necessary to make a pledge, when we put money into the collection basket each week. A look at the numbers helps to tell the story!

Our 2013-14 budget totals \$242,000 in planned expenditures. After help from the endowment, building rentals, the auction and other fundraisers, we are left with about \$181,000 which needs to come from the congregation.



We ask that each committee plan what you want to discuss with the candidate, so please add that topic to the agenda for your next meeting. The UUA recommends that a search committee member accompany the candidate to all meetings and events, so we plan to do that.

The candidate will lead services and give sermons on two Sundays, one at the beginning of the week and one at the end of the week. On the second Sunday, after the church service, we will hold a special congregational meeting where the congregation will vote whether to call the candidate to be our settled minister. Generally, a minister will accept the call only if the congregation's vote exceeds 90%. We strongly urge you to attend the meeting that Sunday.

You will hear more from us when we determine who the final candidate will be and also as we finalize the dates and schedule for Candidating Week. Dolores Da Lomba and Connie Valk are leading the planning effort for Candidating Week. Please contact them if you have questions or suggestions (contact Dolores at 482-0996 or dldrslmb2@gmail.com and Connie at 467-3191 or cvalk@frontiernet.net.)

We appreciate the support of our congregation as we work to bring a ministerial candidate to you!

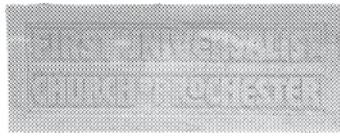
The Ministerial Search Committee ❖

If our average attendance is about 85 on a Sunday, that means that each person would need to put in about \$41 each and every week for 52 weeks to cover the costs of the congregation (and this means that a couple would need to put in \$82 per week).

The reality? We take in about \$5,000 in the plate collection each year (this amount does not include what we give to the community in our monthly social justice plate offerings). While the plate collection is an important source of income, it doesn't come close to what we need to operate the church! That's why we ask members and friends to make a pledge for each fiscal year... a plan for how much each of us is prepared to give to support the church. In this way, we can better plan our budget. So whether your pledge is \$50 per year, or \$5,000- we need each and every one of you to return a pledge card with your plan (and yes, we still welcome you to drop a few dollars into the plate each Sunday!). ❖

Auld Lang Syne

Submitted by Karen Dau, archivist



WHEN THIS congregation was founded in 1846, it was part of what later became known as The Burned Over District. The term Burnt District was used as early as 1845 to describe the area of upstate New York beginning in western New York and following roughly along the Erie Canal to the Adirondacks and southeast to the Catskills. In 1950 Whitney R. Cross published an influential history of religion in this section during the first half of the 19th century with the first-mentioned title. “Upon this broad belt of land,” wrote Mr. Cross, “congregated a people extraordinarily given to unusual religious beliefs, peculiarly devoted to crusades aimed at the perfection of mankind [sic] and the attainment of millennial happiness.” The thriving and detested followers of Universalism had a powerful role to play during this time of spiritual upheaval, as their theology called for universal salvation and rejected any belief in hell. Their more liberal stance on theology provided encouragement to those who were seeking more moderate expressions of religious faith. At the same time, their sometimes violent opposition to the prevalent religious enthusiasm aggravated its practitioners to even greater missionary zeal and persecution of their opposers. In Rochester, a loyal and determined band of Universalists struggled to survive during this era. The pre-eminent 19th century revivalist Charles Grandison Finney had spent six months in Rochester in 1830 at what was the high point of his career, and a string of revivalists had succeeded him all through the decade.

There were so many revivals during and after his residence here that the editor of a Universalist newsletter in Utica wrote in 1833, “How many times more, we would ask, is this unfortunate village destined to be scarred over with...Finneyism and all other kinds of fanaticisms that have brought reproach on the name and cause of Christianity? What have the citizens of Rochester done, that they should be singled out...above all people on the face of this earth?” While the Universalist faithful in Rochester found religious tolerance extremely difficult to practice on account of Finney’s revivals and their aftermath, they were not alone in this regard, and few of the Universalist congregations across the Burned Over District during this time escaped some level of oppression from religious zealotry. They did not accept this intolerance passively, however. Their papers of the time were often rife with lurid accounts of suicide and murder—complete with names and locations—committed by individuals crazed with notions of their inherent unworthiness, and by parents who maimed or even killed their children in a tragically misguided effort to save them from hell. Their papers called for an end to these kinds of horrors perpetrated in the name of God. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,” the Universalists preached, taking this theology from the very same Bible used by every other branch of Christianity. And in the end, revivalism and millennialism in the Burned Over District fell victim to their own excesses. ❖

From Your Transition Team

We’re almost “there!!” Are we ready? After all of the work we have done during our transition, we’re feeling great about our readiness to welcome a new minister. This does not mean we are perfect, but it DOES mean that we have taken a good look at ourselves, made changes small and large, and we’re feeling vibrant and excited about our future together.

One more thing that makes it possible to welcome a new minister and get off to a good start: a **GIFT**. That’s to *Generously Invest For Tomorrow*. By now, most of you have returned a pledge card to support the 2014-15 fiscal year, but if by chance you’ve forgotten, please return it to church right away. If you’ve misplaced your card or you never got one, please contact one of us. And thank you for your GIFT!!

Ann Rhody for the Transition Team

Karl Abbott, chair, Bill Elwell, Mary Louise Gerek ❖

Drop-In Discussion, April Schedule

Submitted by David Damico

Drop-in discussions are held each Sunday in the adult lounge on the second floor of our church at 9:15 a.m. except during the summer. 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 6 | *Open Topic*

April 13 | *The Real Solution to Rochester's Poverty*

Discussion of an article written by Bruce Popper, local labor leader, published in the 2/26/14 - 3/4/14 issue of *City Newspaper*. Facilitated by Beth Ares.

April 20 | *Milk... good or bad?*

Many people have asked "why choose vegan? ... I could never give up cheese... Isn't vegetarian or lacto-ovo diet healthy and helpful to the planet?"

These questions and more will be answered with informative quotes from leading doctors and researchers, and scientific facts from the book, *Milk - The Deadly Poison* by Robert Cohen. Cohen has researched milk's links to diabetes, cancer, leukemia, mad cow, and heart disease. Today's dairy products are not what our forefathers had! Facilitated by Shelly Adams.

April 27 | *Through Rain and Sleet, and Now, Gloom of Night*

The "US Postal Service," formerly known as The "US Post Office Department," goes everywhere, everyday. That's quite a feat when you think about it!

Janus Mary Jones has been a mail carrier since the late 1980s, experiencing dramatic changes in co-workers, customers and, regulations. In this discussion, she will share her stories on "moving the mail" for 25 years.

If you have a topic to suggest, or, better still, would be willing to present or facilitate discussion of a topic you are interested in, speak to David Damico. ❖

Book Club

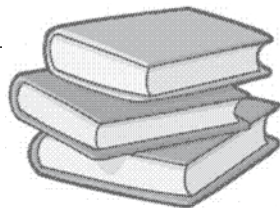
Submitted by Shirley Bond

The Book Club will meet
April 27th. @12:15 PM

Our selection for the month is : *The Grass is Singing* by Doris Lessing. We will be having a lively discussion.

No need to have read the book.

Any questions please contact Shirley Bond. ❖



House Team Update April 2014

Submitted by Ed Deller

Following the unanimous vote of support in the special congregational meeting of March 16, we are finalizing contracts for the exterior renovation project. Roof, carpentry and masonry will be addressed. The project is expected to start this July and be done in August. More specific details will be communicated when available.

The church has recovered well from the break-in that occurred in February. The damaged office equipment has been replaced, with special thanks to the Sentry Group for a generous donation, to Michael Scott for computer support and to Kris White for managing the insurance claims. We have contracted for fixing the doors and the stained glass window in the Clara Barton lounge. Timing for completion is somewhat weather dependent. Thanks go to Michael VanArsdale for coordinating these repairs.

After untold hours of service, Alain Perregaux has stepped down as chair of the House Committee. There may not be a single brick, pipe, window or board in the church that does not have Alain's fingerprint on it, and for this we are immensely grateful. The father and son team of Dave and Michael VanArsdale have graciously agreed to take the House reins on an interim basis and we are blessed to be in such capable hands.

Our spring cleanup has not yet been scheduled, but is expected to be in May. Stay tuned. ❖

LUUnch BUUnch

Submitted by Joyce Gilbert

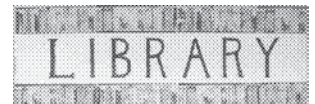
Sunday, April 27, 12:15 at the
Han Noodle Bar, 687 Monroe Ave.

Hope to see you there! ❖

Vital Issues!

Submitted by Keith Stott

Do you like to travel far – in scripture – to see what other people think about vital issues? Then our library has the book for you. If you are concerned about how ten world religions deal with the issue of contraception and abortion, check out Daniel C. Maguire's book, *Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions*. The call is **291.566 M.** ❖



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 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 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>.