



Our Outlook

First Universalist Church of Rochester

MINISTER

Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell
minister@uuroc.org

MINISTER OF LIFESPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Rev. Michelle Yates
edu@uuroc.org
(585) 310-2484

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Dr. Brock Tjosvold
music@uuroc.org

OFFICE MANAGER

Emma Barry
office@uuroc.org



First Universalist
Church of Rochester

150 South Clinton Ave
Rochester, NY 14604
585-546-2826
uuroc.org

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Sunday Services | September 2024

September 1 | *The Power of Words*

Come and share the end-of-summer service with the Gleesome Threesome: Kitty Forbush, Patti Goodwin, and Tom Williams as they explore the power of words from their unique perspectives.

— *Kitty Forbush, Patti Goodwin, & Tom Williams*

September 8 | *Abundant Water, Abundant Life*

Earth contains abundant waters, flowing forth through rivers, oceans, and streams. How can we be responsible to this generosity? A service of gratitude for the abundance of the waters. Please bring water from your travels or your experiences to share during our annual Water Communion.

— *Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

September 15 | *Growing Generously*

This weekend First Universalist will be learning a lot about church growth from a Congregational Growth Consultant, Rev. Thom Belote. Come hear why UU churches need to grow, and what the purpose of growth is. A discussion will be held after the service to talk about next steps.

— *Rev. Thom Belote*

September 22 | *Generosity of Spirit*

In this time we are called to offer grace, to be generous with one another, and be gentle. And yet, sometimes it feels so hard, especially when those around us are frustrating, especially when things are not going our way, especially when we are tired, uncertain, irritable; the list could go on. How do we cultivate generosity of spirit?

— *Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

September 29 | *Keeping Love at the Center*

The 2024 UUA General Assembly passed a resolution calling on congregations to take COVID precautions seriously, as there are people living with long COVID and compromised immune systems. Four years after the onset of COVID in the US, we are still living in a time when folks get ill, and treatment and vaccinations are more readily available. How are we called as a community to keep love at the center as we live through this phase of COVID-19 together?

— *Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell & Bridget Watts*

❖ **Services begin at 10:30am** ❖

Worship will be online and in-person at First Universalist Church. Check our website for more updated info! Please join us – Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/131764422>; Phone number: 1-646-558-8656 with Meeting ID: 131 764 422. ❖



Exploring the 6 UU Values

*A Message from
Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

We sat around a circle table, each person sharing ideas and generating creative solutions. What would the themes be for the 2024-2025 church year? First Universalist shares these themes and this task with our sibling UU congregations, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canandaigua and the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, so there were many voices present. And out of the midst of laughter, making points, a small amount of arguing, and the deep thoughtfulness that is always present at this collaborative table—an idea emerged. There are six themes throughout the year (themes explored for two months at a time) and there are six values that the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations just voted to adopt in Article 2 of our bylaws during the 2024 General Assembly. The themes just wrote themselves.

So, we begin our church year exploring Generosity. And the rest of the themes for 2024-25 are as follows:

- **September-October: Generosity**
- **November-December: Transformation**
- **January-February: Equity**
- **March-April: Interdependence**
- **May-June: Pluralism**
- **July-August: Justice**

Excited and delighted to be exploring these themes with this church and with all Unitarian Universalists in our greater Rochester area.

On Sunday, September 8, First Universalist will begin the 10:30am worshiping year with a water ingathering service. Please be sure to bring some waters from your travels as we pour out water together to honor the many experiences we have had throughout the summer, and as we celebrate the abundance of our Earth, holding gratitude for the ways this planet nourishes us. Looking forward to being with you all for this blessed and beautiful ritual.

In Faith and Courage,
Rev. Lane-Mairead ❖



Generosity & Hospitality

*A Message from
Rev. Michelle Yates*

This summer I had an amazing opportunity to connect with and deepen my relationship with my half-sister. She is 10 years younger and we grew up living an hour away from each other so we haven't had a traditional sibling relationship.

She was having major surgery, so I offered for her and my nephew to stay with us while she recovered. It was important to me that she felt welcome.

I put time into prepping a bedroom, but our chaise lounge ended up being more comfortable for her with the raised head. I hadn't thought of that.

The living room was also a better place because she was used to having the TV on to sleep for background noise. I hadn't known that about her.

We ended up having to have our sons sleep in different rooms because they would keep each other up way too late, and both needed that quiet alone time to not be cranky.

AND..... I could not have possibly done it alone! Many times throughout the two weeks I needed the rest of my family to make food, watch kids, run to the store, help figure out what is wrong with the internet, not to mention the town recreation program.

When we think about a ministry that serves children and families this is a great analogy. We know there are families in need of the Love and Grace that Unitarian Universalism has to offer. People who are longing for the healing, belonging, and care that is possible in a faith community like First Universalist.

To be as generous and hospitable as we hope to be, we will need to put in time and effort to prepare a place for them. We will need to be prepared to adapt those plans when they arrive, not just to serve them, but to deepen our connection and relationship with them. Finally, if we really want to welcome new families, we need to prepare a space in our hearts for them as if preparing for a new member of our family.

Wondering how you can help and what might be needed? Email me at edu@uuroc.org.

Yours in your Journey,
Rev. Michelle ❖

Finance News

Submitted by Brian Mumey, Finance Chair

Dear Friends,

As my first *Outlook* article as Chair of the Finance Committee, I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself and highlight all the people who are critical to the financial life of our church.

My name is Brian Mumey. My husband, Clinton Swingle, and I joined First Universalist shortly after we moved to Rochester from Dallas, TX in 2018. I was a computer programmer by trade (luckily now retired) so kind of “finance adjacent.” I was invited to join the Finance Committee by Ann Rhody (Finance Chair Emeritus) in July 2020. In June of 2022 I took on the role of Assistant Treasurer and helped handle the day-to-day financial tasks (mostly paying bills). Luckily for me, we hired Maresa Carmody last year to act as Finance Administrator which freed me from those duties. This March Ann asked me if I’d be willing to step into the role of Chair. Which I did on July 1 of this year.

Enough about me. Let’s turn to the people who really make the financial engine tick. I’m not going to say how long these people have been involved in our church’s finances (because I don’t know!). Suffice it to say, they were working long before I joined the committee.

Our Treasurer, Dick Shroyer, is the Excel master. Able to manipulate a spreadsheet like nobody’s business. His work and years of knowledge and experience are the bedrock upon which our financial wellbeing rests.

Bill Jones is our Collector, which is a role you might not be familiar with (I know I wasn’t). If you send the church a check or contribute via PayPal, Bill is the guy who records those transactions and gets the money into the bank account. He’s also instrumental in our annual stewardship campaign.

I’ve already mentioned Maresa Carmody, our new Financial Administrator. She has assumed many of the tasks and responsibilities previously performed by our overworked volunteers. Welcome, Maresa!

I would be remiss if I failed to mention Ann Rhody, Finance Chair Emeritus. She has provided leadership, guidance, intelligence, and common sense to the Finance Committee for many, many years. Ann, I promise I won’t copy you on every finance email I send this year!

And last, but certainly not least, the people who make up the rest of the Finance Committee. These generous volunteers give their time and talents to guide our finances, some for many, many years. Thank you Beth Ares, Dave Van Arsdale, Grant Fish, Karen LoBracco, Karl Abbott, Paula Marchese, and Richard Reed.

That’s all for this month but watch this space in the coming months for some exciting (well, exciting to me) announcements. ❖



Join the MOCHA Team!

Submitted by MJ Curry, MOCHA Coordinator

Our new approach to hosting MOCHA (the Ministry of the Coffee Hour) is working well, using a Google Doc as the place to sign up and expanding the team so that hosts serve less often (if they desire).

Hosting a coffee hour involves about an extra two hours of your time on a Sunday morning. Snacks/supplies are provided by MJ Curry, coordinator, so you only need to arrive about 45 minutes early to set up and stay about 75 minutes after the service to host and clean up. Please contact MJ Curry with questions or sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/3etvhwvc>. ❖

Social Justice Plate: September

Submitted by Joy Leccese

Our September Social Justice Plate Offering is designated for *Climate Solutions Accelerator*. Their mission is to create a healthier, more equitable, and regenerative community by catalyzing local efforts to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and address the effects of climate change. Their focus is on “Organizing and empowering concerned citizens at the local level to facilitate individual action, nurture the development of effective community leaders, and build the power of our local climate movement.”

Please consider donating to this essential work. For more info, visit their website at climategfl.org. ❖

Drop-In Discussion

Submitted by John Lukes

Drop-in discussions are held Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:30pm via the church Zoom account, and in-person on the first Sunday of each month in the Chalice Room at 9:15am. Phil Ebersole is the contact for in-person discussions. Contact DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org for the link, or look on uuroc.org!

Sunday, September 8 | Tony Seba: Great Transformation *In-Person*

Tony Seba is an economist, author, and futurist. He has been guessing right for years on electric vehicles replacing internal combustion cars. He accurately predicted renewable electricity becoming the cheapest energy source in the world. Seba says the world is experiencing “The Great Transformation of Humanity.” Hank Stone presents.

September 3 | Global Health Program

Moritz Wagner recently completed his fourth trip to Honduras with the Global Health Program of the URM Department of Family Medicine, representing the Honduras Ministry of First Unitarian Church and will share with us some of his reflections about this work over the years.

September 10 | What Did You Just Say To Me???

Rev. Lane-Mairead will lead a discussion about navigating conflict in groups. We will talk about what to do when we witness or experience conflict and how we can be guided by our covenant to engage with one another.

September 17 | Crimes Against Humanity?

The government of Israel faces charges before the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court of violation of international human rights law, including the Genocide Convention. Phil Ebersole will summarize the charges, the evidence and the defense, and lead a discussion.

September 24 | Saving Our National Parks & Services?

Our 429 National Park Service sites and 63 National Parks are challenged by climate change, over-visitation, misuse, and invasive species. We will discuss how preservation and conservation can conflict. Kevin Parkes will present..

Have a topic for us? Contact our team with your proposal at DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org. ❖

Membership News

Submitted by Donna Anderson, Membership Chair

The Membership Committee and Personnel Committee are reviewing resumes and conducting interviews to find the best Congregational Life Coordinator for us. We hope to be close to hiring someone by the time this *Outlook* issue comes out!

GROWTH. GROWTH. GROWTH!

There will be an exciting weekend September 13-15 with Rev. Thom Belote, editor of the *Skinner House Anthology*, *The Growing Church*, and UU minister for the past 20+ years with growing congregations; he will be coming to work with us!

The schedule for the weekend will be:

- Friday September 13, 6-9pm: A potluck dinner with Board members and church leaders
- Saturday September 14, 10am-2pm: A catered lunch and program for ushers, greeters, and leaders about **Meaningful Engagements with Visitors, New Members and Existing Members**. *Childcare is available if requested a week ahead of time*
- Membership Committee will host MOCHA (coffee hour) Sunday morning of the 15th.
- Sunday September 15, 12-2pm: Conversations, debriefing and **Identifying Next Steps**. *Childcare is available if requested a week ahead of time*

If you want to attend the Saturday workshop please RSVP to membership@uuroc.org with your dietary needs so we can be sure to have enough lunch for everyone!

This next year our church community will be focused on growing our church and ways to nurture the spirit. Come join the venture! ❖

Did You Know: Large-Print Orders of Service!

Submitted by Emma Barry

Ushers have large-print copies of Sunday's order of service available. If you would like one, please ask an usher! ❖



New UU Pamphlets!

Submitted by Marcy Klein, for the Library Committee

Ten brand-new UU pamphlets are now available in the church library. For now, the rack is located on top of the bookcase on the far wall in the Clara Barton Lounge. Chosen by the Library and Membership Committees along with both ministers, this group of pamphlets will interest longtime members and new visitors alike.

- **Belief and Belonging** — An introduction to our open and inclusive community
- **Environmental Justice** — For anyone interested in this important work, with examples of UU organizing
- **A Home for Multifaith People and Families** — A warm welcome to families with multiple faith backgrounds and beliefs
- **A Spiritual Home for LGBTQ People** — Welcomes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, and others on the spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations
- **To the Point — Quick! What's Unitarian Universalism?** Here is a diverse collection of responses that can inspire your own “elevator speech.”
- **Values in Our History** — Highlights of Unitarian Universalism’s history and long-held values
- **We Are Unitarian Universalists** — An introduction to Unitarian Universalism including our beliefs, our history, and our community. Perfect for a visitor.
- **The Work of Antiracism** — Two pamphlets,

one for people of color (**Unitarian Universalists of Color**) and one for white people (**Beyond Diversity**), to help us create new multicultural, anti-racist faith communities

- **You Are Not Alone** — Those holding counter-cultural values or identities can find a spiritual home and sense of belonging in a UU congregation

Please feel free to help yourself and share with friends, or direct visitors there for more info about our faith. You’ll also find free past issues of the *UU World* and *Universalist Herald* in the same location.

Starting in September the library will be open during Coffee Hour the first Sunday of the month for browsing, buying, or borrowing. Members or longtime visitors can borrow any book in the collection for four weeks. If the library is not staffed, refer to the instructions taped to the library desk; they explain the process for checking out and returning a book. Remember that the library is no longer accepting used books to sell; you can still bring books and leave in the church’s Little Free Library on Clinton Avenue. ✦

HFA: Second Saturdays at Family Promise

Submitted by Chris DeGolyer



On July 13, three of us met with volunteers from other churches at *Family Promise* (FPGROC) to begin clean-up on apartments in buildings that FPGROC acquired this spring. *Family Promise* plans to hold volunteer sessions on the second Saturday of each month to renovate these apartments to rent at below-market rates as transitional housing for families. *Family Promise* helps the families save money and to prepare for permanent housing. This is an opportunity to use all kinds of skills, like cleaning, carpentry, painting, and weeding. For example, Pam Jacobstein took window measurements to make curtains.

The next volunteer session is Saturday, September 14, from 1-4pm, although it's not necessary to stay the whole three hours. We will meet at the FPGROC office, 142 Webster Avenue. If you plan to join us RSVP at fpgroc.org/second-saturdays so they can plan appropriate projects. We hope to see you there! ✦

Dream Project: A Progress Report!

Submitted by Jim Milch, Board of Trustees Clerk

The Stewardship Committee asked you last year to Dream—to recommend investments that we should make in our Church. You came through! We got a long list of potential projects, big and small, long-term and short-term.

Your Board has been studying the list and initiating action on some of them. Many of the suggestions deal with our church building. We are particularly interested in these because they have a triple payoff: our current members will benefit from these improvements; prospective members will see a more attractive space; and we can more easily rent our spaces to outside groups. It will take time to implement these changes, but we are moving forward with them.

Here are some of the actions we have taken or are planning to take. Many of these are being planned and executed by the amazing House Committee.

- Improve ventilation throughout the building: In May we hosted a nationally-recognized engineering firm at the church to initiate improvement of our air quality. We have their recommendations and are working on next steps.
- Renew public spaces: We plan to redo the back of the Clara Barton Lounge where the library is housed with a new layout and new furniture. We will update the furniture in the Chalice Room. Finally, we plan to renovate the Clinton Ave. vestibule. We won't do all of these in a single year.
- Improve accessibility: The House Committee has installed an automatic door opener between the coatroom and the sanctuary. The House Committee plans to add handrails to the Clinton Ave. entrance.
- Improve parking: This is a hard one. Rev. Lane-Mairead has initiated discussions with our neighbor, REOC, about using their parking lot on Sunday mornings.
- Offer classes on how to tastefully evangelize: A class is planned for the coming year.
- Improve communication about what committees and teams are doing: We have initiated a regular "Leadership Assembly" to facilitate discussions between committees, teams, and the Board.

- Print a church brochure with more info about us and our faith: Done! Your feedback is requested: do we need more than a tri-fold brochure?
- Swap Sunday worship leadership outside of UU, occasionally: Yes, we are doing it occasionally.
- Increase funds for guest musicians: Done!
- Include more Gospel Music: Brock led a discussion to explore this issue. It is hard to do well. One suggestion was to work more closely with First Unitarian to achieve this. ❖

House News

Submitted by Ed Deller, House Committee Chair

The House Committee has taken advantage of the summer months to tackle some big projects.

- Tom Ruganis and Moritz Wagner replaced a hot water heater.
- A heat exchanger part was replaced in our steam heating system.
- Marcy Klein ordered railings for the Clinton and Court St entry steps.
- Moritz coordinated getting new storm windows for the Clara Barton lounge which should be installed before this fall.
- Michael Scott installed wi-fi thermostats in several rooms, which required some challenging rewiring.

We are grateful for their work!

Thanks to volunteers who helped with sexton duties while our Albert was away on a medical leave: Beth Ares, Sarah Singal, Clinton Swingle, Brian Mumey, Karen Dau, Kitty Forbush, Brendan Courtsal, Grant Fish, Dwight Montague, & Ed Deller.

Mark your calendars for a Fall Work Day at the church on Saturday, October 19, 9am-noon. ❖

Learning New Skills

Submitted by Karen LoBracco, Online Ministry Coordinator

September is when schools start up again and students learn new things and hone their skills. It's also a great time to learn how to be a Grusher; the person who attends worship services online as the Greeter+Usher! Be paired with someone experienced to try out this new way of doing church, and help support our online ministry! ❖

A Social Justice Plate Thank You Note

Submitted by Connie Valk and Joy Lecesse

After our treasurer sends out the check from the Sunday Social Justice plate collection, we always receive a thank you email or letter from the recipient. The FIAC team thought you might like to read the email from Rev. Myra Brown, director of the *Black Community Focus Fund* to remind us of how meaningful this monthly donation to nonprofit organizations.



"We just received your donation. On behalf of the Black Community Focus Fund, we offer our deep gratitude for your generosity that supports our work. Your contribution will help us continue the work of getting to zero on racial disparities and creating Rochester's first outdoor Civil Rights Park.

We deeply appreciate you thinking about us during these challenging economic times. This coming year we hope to begin the journey of wrapping up our current City of Rochester's GBI program and plan for the next one. With the new Living Water GBI program, we hope to support a GBI pilot program for families of school aged children over the next five years.

Again, thank you a thousand times over for your generous donation."

FIAC collects a list of nonprofit organizations suggested by the congregation each year, vets them according to criteria: 501(3)c standing, connection to present or past Church Projects (Housing for All, First Universalist Initiative for Racial Equity — F.I.R.E.), local recipients, or those with a connection to the UUA.

The congregation votes from the list of vetted organizations from an online ballot each May, and results are announced at the Annual June Congregational Meeting. ❖



Spiritual Deepening: 3-Church Brainstorming & Potluck!

Submitted by Rev. Michelle Yates

To be held on Friday, September 20, 2024, 6-8 pm, at First Universalist. Join in community to share a meal and generously offer your thoughts, ideas, perspectives to the 3-church worship team and the spiritual deepening packet team on Transformation, Equity, Interdependence, Pluralism and Justice. All are welcome. RSVP at edu@uuroc.org for childcare. ❖

Climate Justice Revival: Sept. 28-29 in Fredonia

Submitted by Karen LoBracco

The Green Sanctuary Team at UU Congregation of Northern Chautauqua in Fredonia, NY plans to host a Climate Justice Revival over the weekend of September 28-29. Any attendees or collaborators from other UU congregations are heartily welcomed to attend! Contact Janey Wagner at (716) 785-7526 with questions or to offer assistance. ❖

EcoJustice: Sept. Events!

Submitted by Sarah Singal

Two important events in September: please save the dates and attend if you can!

- **March to End Fossil Fuels, Friday, 9/27/24.** The march begins and ends at Washington Square Park. Meet at 4pm, march at 4:30pm; return to Washington Square Park at 6pm, tabling from 6-7pm. First Universalist will provide bathroom facilities; see Connie Valk to volunteer. We need marchers carrying our First Universalist banner; hope to have other UU local churches and RAICA (*Rochester Area Interfaith Climate Action*) congregations, *Color Your Community Green* groups, *Climate Solutions Accelerator*, and more!

- **Cooked: A Film of Survival** by Zip Code. Shown at First Unitarian at 7pm, on Thursday, September 19.

Contact Sarah Singal for more info. ❖



First Universalist Church of Rochester

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 in the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Worship begins at 10:30am on Sundays

Minister | Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell

Minister of Lifespan Faith Development |
Rev. Michelle Yates

Music Director | Dr. Brock Tjosvold

Office Manager | Mx. Emma Barry

Finance Admin | Maresa Carmody

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More info is available on our website: uuroc.org

The usual deadline for all submissions to *Our Outlook* is the 15th of each month.