



# Our Outlook

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## Sunday Services | May 2024

### May 5 | *Joy in the Morning*

It's joyful for months here with our seasonal theme of Unabashed Joy, but what's up with this unabashed part? When and why did we learn to become embarrassed by our joy? And how do we get it back?  
— *Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan*

### May 12 | *Joy at the End of the World*

As the earth burns and prisons fill, oppression rages louder and louder, and every year is hotter than the last, what's the point of joy? Is it possible? Is it permissible? Yes, friends. Let us practice joy, especially in the hardest of times.  
— *Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell*

### May 19 | *Big, Big Joy*

To live into unabashed joy, we are not meant to be small. Joy calls us to bigness. How do we balance this call with humility? And how does joy call us to claim our space in the world?  
— *Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

### May 26 | *TBA*

TBA  
— *TBA*

❖ **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. ❖*



## Suffused with Joy

*A Message from  
Rev. Lane-Mairead Campbell*

Over the course of my five-month sabbatical this past year, I began to notice where queer joy was showing up in my life. Queer joy refers to “a concept that acknowledges the importance of joy and pleasure in the lives of LGBTQ+ individuals. It challenges the dominant narrative that being queer is exclusively rooted in pain or trauma and instead recognizes the resilience, resistance, and creativity of LGBTQ+ people.”<sup>1</sup> For months, I recorded instances in a tiny notebook and online (sometimes) of where I witnessed and experienced uniquely queer joy. It was a life force for me and something I knew to be a part of how I needed to be nourished while away from my professional life for rest and restoration.

As I began to pay attention to where uniquely queer joy was showing up for me—in time with my sibling, in moments at a dance party, in community, at events—I also began to notice life more, to listen and to pay attention to the contents of my life better. I found that the contents of my life could be suffused with joy if I was willing to go looking, if I was appreciative enough to pause to listen.

We celebrate Unabashed Joy for the next two months and it really feels like the season for it. After the harshness of winter comes the promise of spring and the sun and, yes, a focus on joy. Joy as a force that brings us all into our lives more, that can help us pay better attention to the contents of our days—who is with us, what surrounds us, where we are finding delight, where unexpected help can be found, how we feel most at home in our days. It is my hope that you can find joy unique to your experience in the world and that we can make room as a church for all of us to celebrate and share out our joys more.

In Faith and Courage,  
Rev. Lane-Mairead ❖

<sup>1</sup><https://online.ucpress.edu/jpms/article/35/4/111/197647/Sustaining-Queer-Joy-and-PotentialityThrough#>



## The Joy of Compersion

*A Message from  
Rev. Michelle Yates*

This past year I have had to call off plans many times. It was frequently a relief in that I gave myself permission to rest and not try to push through while not feeling well. Perhaps knowing that I wouldn't be able to enjoy myself if I went anyway helped me to move past jealousy or FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) towards compersion.

I first heard the word “compersion” in the sermon at an Interfaith Thanksgiving Service here in Rochester. The word “compersion” comes from the polyamorous community. You won't technically find it in a dictionary, yet, but I hope it gets there because it is such a fantastic concept.

The word “compersion” refers to the feeling of joy one has experiencing another's joy, such as in witnessing a toddler's joy and feeling joy in response. It is the “opposite” of jealousy or aversion, a strong dislike or disinclination.

Thanks to social media, even when I couldn't attend an event with friends and family this year, I was able to see pictures and posts about what happened. Their smiles made me smile; their laughter made me laugh. In this way we can share joy and make more joy.

As a parent I feel that so much of my joy is rooted in the joys of my children. My enthusiasm for holidays often is centered on creating moments of joy for my kids that become shared moments of joy for me. I know more than I would have ever expected about some YouTubers, monster trucks, and miniature games, not because of my own interest in them, but because of my love for people for whom these things bring joy. And their joy brings me joy: compersion.

In this next worship theme season of Unabashed Joy, I am excited to hear what joy you are finding for yourself, and what joy you are finding in the joy of others.

Yours in the Journey,  
Rev. Michelle ❖



## Finance News

*Submitted by Ann Rhody, Finance Chair*

Spring is always a busy time for Finance folks! Here's what we've been up to:

- Wrapping up our Stewardship Campaign, *Love Calls Us On*. Thanks to co-chairs Theo & Steve Munson for leading the charge this year, and thanks to ALL of you who pledged your piece of the “pie” to help sustain the church. If you missed it, it's not too late, and EVERY pledge is important. Please go to [uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org) and look for the Stewardship tab.
- Transitioning to having a Finance staff member! Maresa Carmody has been working hard with Dick Shroyer and Brian Mumey to take on the day-to-day finance operations. We are so pleased to have Maresa, and it takes a good deal of time on everyone's part to ensure continuity of our finance processes. Thanks, Brian, Dick, and Maresa!
- Working with the Minister and Personnel to consider adjustments in payroll and benefits. We want to ensure that we are honoring years of service and are staying up-to-date with best practices.
- Developing the proposed 2024-25 Operating Budget. This requires information gathering, collaboration, creative thinking, and “nips and tucks.” The process takes place over a number of weeks, with many emailed spreadsheets back and forth before the Finance Committee, and then the Board, gets close to the final version. The proposed budget will be presented and voted upon at the Annual Meeting on June 2.
- Working with the House Committee and the Board to determine how to fund upcoming projects, large and small.

Wow—that's a lot of action! Our Finance volunteers are so dedicated and generous with their time, and I'm grateful for each one of them—and all of you who support them. ❖

## Welcome New Members!

*Submitted by Donna Anderson, Membership Chair*



*Rev. Lane-Mairead, Katherine Mattice, Joy Perrone, Tom Kurzdorfer, Robin Doughty and Donna Anderson.*



*Cake to celebrate our new members!*



## Reminder: Spring Work Day, May 4, 9am-Noon!

*Submitted by Ed Deller, House Committee Chair*

Please join us for our Spring Work Day on Saturday, May 4, as we spruce up our building and prepare for the coming summer. Tasks for all skill levels! Contact [house@uuroc.org](mailto:house@uuroc.org) for details. ❖

# 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](mailto:DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org) for the link, or look on [uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org)!

## Sunday, May 5 | The Forever Wars \*In-Person\*

We have come to accept perpetual war as normal. What purpose does the U.S. war policy serve? Is it sustainable? Can it be stopped? Led by Phil Ebersole.

## May 7 | Open Topic Nite

Let's have another open discussion on any number of topics of interest. Some of us have shared that our Open Topic nites have been among the most interesting. Let's see what we come up with this week! Led by John Lukes.

## May 14 | What's In A Story?

During the regular church year, a "story" is part of our liturgy. Hear from Rev. Michelle about what she is looking for when selecting a story and what is the role of the story in the liturgy. What "stories" have stuck with you over the years that speak to you like a sacred text?

## May 21 | Diaries of Ordinary People from the Past

Over the years, Janus Mary Jones has accumulated and read diaries of 19th and 20th century people. She will introduce to you a melancholy 1840s carpenter from Lockport, NY, a sickly Livingston County teenager of 1868, a migraine-suffering lawyer from Northern Pennsylvania in the 1890s, a Philadelphia high school girl of the 1920s, and a rural Orleans County homemaker of the 1950s. Discussion will follow on what can be learned from the lives of these average people who took the time to record their thoughts and experiences.

## May 28 | Ending Loneliness

Our guest presenter, Giovanna Gutierrez from *Compeer Rochester*, will present the organization's mission, current programs, and lead a discussion on how many participants are on their waiting list, their current need for volunteers, and the options available for people to get involved.

Have a topic for us? Contact our team with your proposal at [DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org](mailto:DropInDiscussion@uuroc.org). ❖



# Membership Committee

Submitted by Grant Fish

The membership committee held listening sessions on February 18. We feel that it is important to share what people told us. We asked just three questions.

## What does our church have to offer new members?

The answers we received to this question were: *Community, music, coffee hour, a chance to talk with others, service, a non-Christian theology, social action, a welcoming space, friendship, intellectual stimulation, love, acceptance, a place to learn, smiles, kindness, an alternative to reactionary theology, location, a place to be your authentic self.*

## How are we willing to change to help our membership grow?

The answers to this question included: *Flexibility in theology, different speakers, different music, have a campus ministry—there are several local higher education institutions, reclaim Jesus, stop being a secret, communicate with community, be open more hours, stop being afraid of evangelizing, have a diverse music program, expand the types of worship, be willing to listen to other perspectives.*

## Why do we want to Grow?

The responses included: *Attract younger people, financial—increase the pledge base, so we can increase staff hours, deepen our commitment to our social justice work, expand our outreach. Additional people will allow us to do stuff, have a larger choir; the message of the church is worth growing, make more friends, increase diversity in the congregation.*

Membership Committee members: Donna Anderson, chair, Karen LoBracco, online ministry coordinator, Clinton Swingle, Shirley Malone, and Grant Fish.

We look forward to greeting all new people that attend either in-person or online. ❖

## Stewardship: *Thank You!*

Submitted by Theo & Steve Munson, Stewardship Chairs

The Stewardship Team extends its heartfelt thanks to all for your generous pledges! It was a joy to see so many present for the beautiful service, coffee hour and pie on Stewardship Sunday.

The Finance Team is already hard at work preparing the budget, which we will review at the Annual Meeting in June. Thanks again, everyone! ❖



## Eastman at Washington Square Concerts

Concerts are held at our church at midday on Thursdays. Each concert begins at 12:15pm and ends at approximately 12:45pm. Admission is free!

- **May 2 | "A Time To Remember"**

Spend an afternoon with a preview of Eastman's Holocaust Remembrance Concert. Works by Jewish composers who died in or survived the atrocities of WWII will be performed by Eastman faculty and students in a concert to mark Holocaust Remembrance Day on Sunday, May 5 at 7:30pm in Kilbourn Hall.

- **May 9 | Collegium Viol Consorts**

The Eastman Collegium Consort of Viols performs music from the Golden Age of the Viol. Join us for music by Byrd, Morley, Weelkes, Ward, Gibbons, and Tye.

- **May 16 | Piano Gems**

Join pianist Lorenzo Medel with selections from Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition". Through his artistic vision and creativity, he brings these paintings to life through music.

- **May 23 | ECMS Honors Finale**

Enjoy the final concert of the season, featuring the amazing young high school graduates from the Honors Program at the Eastman Community Music School. ❖

## Social Justice Plate: *May*

Submitted by Joy Leccese

Our May Social Justice Plate Offering is designated for The Black Community Focus Fund. The Fund was created by members of Spiritus Christi Church, with Rev. Myra Brown as its Executive Director.



Its mission is to provide direct support in housing, education, and economic opportunity to Black families in the Rochester community impacted by racism's history and current manifestations. Please contribute as generously as you can to support this important work. ❖

## Walking Tour: *Washington Square Neighborhood on May 4*

Submitted by Theo Munson

This tour, sponsored by the FIRE team of First Universalist Church, discusses the history of the Washington Square Neighborhood. Showcasing the area's iconic buildings and spaces (including us), the tour highlights our neighborhood as a hub of industry, transportation, culture, and reinvention.



Led by Emily Morry, library assistant, who has deep knowledge of city history and justice issues, the tour will begin at Rundel Library at 1:30pm, finishing up at Dinosaur Barbecue around 3pm. Refreshments will be served in the Clara Barton Lounge following the walk. For planning, please RSVP to Theo Munson or [fire@uuroc.org](mailto:fire@uuroc.org). ❖

# Housing For All Report

Submitted by Chris DeGolyer

## The Weather was Cold, but Breakfast was H.O.T.

Bill Schubmehl and Elizabeth Osta have been doing homeless outreach on Thursdays with H.O.T. (*Homeless Outreach Team*). H.O.T. is a collaboration of the Rochester Police Department, faith groups, and agencies who serve the homeless. On Thursday, February 29, First Universalist and H.O.T. hosted a free breakfast for unhoused people. The cold snowy weather probably contributed to reducing the number of guests, but, as Connie Valk said, “although the weather outside was frightful, the spirit inside the CBL was delightful.”



While eating breakfast, guests talked about their needs with various agencies, such as PCHO (*Person-Centered Housing Options*). Guests also picked up winter clothing at a table staffed by *Sisters of St. Joseph*.

In addition to the guests connecting with agencies, First Universalist volunteers, agency staff members, and the Rochester Police made new connections with each other. Many thanks go to Bill and Elizabeth for their excellent work organizing and coordinating this event, as well as to the rest of the volunteers. If you'd like to learn more about H.O.T.,



contact Bill or Elizabeth, or email [housingforall@uuroc.org](mailto:housingforall@uuroc.org)

## FPGROC Bowl-a-thon

On Sunday, March 10, six bowlers met the challenge of the anonymous donor who contributed \$1 for every point we scored collectively, up to 300 points. Thanks to our anonymous donor and other generous folks, we raised over \$900 for FPGROC (*Family Promise of Greater Rochester*). This is \$200 more than last year!



Family Promise's prevention, diversion, and shelter programs provide rent support, temporary housing and counseling for families with children who are facing homelessness. ❖

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## EcoJustice: Earth Day!

Submitted by Sarah Singal

In March our EcoJustice group participated in a program called *The Week*, which enables small groups to examine climate change and what can be done about it. We met three times and watched a video followed by conversation. We thought the experience was valuable and plan to offer it again as a hybrid meeting so folks can attend online. We hope to run it during May or June. Contact [ecojustice@uuroc.org](mailto:ecojustice@uuroc.org) to reserve a place!

EcoJustice meets on the first Sunday of each month after 10 minutes of coffee hour, in the Chalice Room. All are welcome! ❖



## Save the Date: Sunday, June 16 — Annual Church Picnic!

*Submitted by Karl Abbott*

The church picnic will be held on Sunday, June 16, 2024, from 1-4pm. The location is the Longhouse Shelter in Seneca Park (it is handicapped accessible, with bathrooms nearby). A map will be posted in church. If you need a map, or directions, contact please Karl Abbott.

Bring a dish to pass along with a list of ingredients for those that have food allergies (***note: please don't make any dishes containing nuts, or bring nuts***). Also, bring something to grill, along with something to hold what you grilled, and a beverage of your liking. Some grilling tools will also be available.

The church will provide:

- Paper plates
- Plastic utensils and serving utensils
- Cups
- Napkins
- Bottled water
- Condiments
- A charcoal fire (*aluminum foil will be available for vegetarian / vegan grilling*)

*Note: This will be the last picnic Karl Abbott will be coordinating. Anyone interested in taking this task over please contact Karl. To facilitate this transfer to a person, or group, Karl will guide them through this process, and provide a timeline for what needs to be done and when. ❖*

## Auction Action: Bakery Crawl!

*Submitted by Charlie Courtsal, Gluten Enthusiast*



*A horde of hungry UUs enjoyed this "sweet" 2024 auction item!*



## Zoom is Real Worship Too!

*Submitted by Karen LoBracco, Online Ministry Team*

Look around on Sunday morning. In addition to the folks you see in the pews, 20-30 individuals weekly attend the service on Zoom. While some congregations are cutting back, First Universalist continues to invest in staff and equipment.

I support the Online Ministry with my time facilitating the Online Coffee Hour as well as acting as Grusher (Greeter/Usher) by letting folks in from the waiting room and posting notices in the Zoom chat. Other volunteers are drawn to the more technical aspects that happen in the sanctuary.

Summer is a time of vacations, with more demand for substitutes. It's a great time to learn the ropes and shadow a regular! Consider dipping your toe into supporting the Online Ministry that allows you to help out wherever you live. Training provided, and "tell me more" inquiries welcomed [click HERE!](#) ❖



# 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

**Nursery Care Provider** | Carol Williams

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More info is available on our website: [uuroc.org](http://uuroc.org)

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