

Services in the Meeting House



Jim Scott

Sunday, January 5 **Envisioning a Season of Peace** 10:30a

In story and song, UU composer Jim Scott brings his optimistic message celebrating the new year and a prayer for peace. Jim has visited 600 UU congregations. His beloved songs are in our hymnals. He helped to create the UU Green Sanctuary Program. Among other accomplishments, in his years as guitarist for the Paul Winter Consort, Jim led thousands in the song "Common Ground" and his own eco-anthem, "A Song for the Earth." We are very happy to welcome him back to First Unitarian.

Grades Pre-K and older begin in the Meeting House for the first portion of the service.

Sunday, January 12 **Thinking of Agatha** 10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Today would have been Agatha Christie's one hundred and twenty-fourth birthday. And it has set James to thinking about the whole murder mystery genre. When he was a kid and a young man, he read science fiction; but as he has aged, his taste in relaxation reading has shifted pretty much exclusively to murder mysteries. He has come up with a theological explanation. We shall see . . .

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, January 19 **Recalling Martin, Karamchand, and Nelson** 10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

James will reflect once again on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., how he and Mohandas Gandhi and Nelson Mandela all have witnessed, each in their own way, a better way. Together we will consider that better way.

Our Community Collection is for Children's Friend, which provides emergency assistance to low-income families.

Grades Pre-K and older begin in the Meeting House for the first portion of the service.

Sunday, January 26 **Lelio and Fausto Sozzini and the Dawn of the Unitarian Reformation** 10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Before the English-speaking Enlightenment-era Unitarianism, before the Hungarian Reformation-era Unitarianism, there was Lelio Sozzini. His, and later his nephew Fausto's, influence would spread throughout Europe and influence both Hungarian-speaking and English-speaking Unitarianism. As we celebrate our sister congregation in Transylvania, we will spend a little time exploring these two remarkable men and their spiritual journeys.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, February 2 **Wholly Family, a Multigenerational Service** 10:30a

Cathy Seggel, DRE, Rev. James Ishmael Ford
and Representative of Our Families

This annual event is a celebration of the many ways we are family. Over the years, we've heard from members of our community of many ages and races and economic conditions, gay and straight, "traditional" couples, families with one parent, a single-person family. And, most important, how all are worthy. Come, celebrate with us!

Infants-three-years-olds room open on the Parish House second floor.



We are a
Welcoming Congregation

Inside

Monkey Mind	2
Spiritual Pathways	3
Sight Lines	4
Community Life	5
Welcome New Members	7
Spiritual Development	8
Social Justice	9
Monthly Calendar	10

Staff

- Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
- Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, Community Minister
- Rev. Gene Dyszlewski, Community Minister
- Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
- Frederick Jodry, Music Director
- Posey Kooris, Administrator
- Walter O. Sotelo, Administrative Assistant
- Jenn Nardone, Membership Coordinator
- Jaime Durango, Building Manager
- Paul Webber/John Forde, Evening Security
- Pedro Vasquez/Anderson Correa
Sunday Building Managers

Newsletter

- Posey Kooris, Managing Editor
- Susan Fisher, Proof Editor
- Design Consultant, Amy Webb
- Next Deadline: January 15

First Unitarian Church of Providence
One Benevolent Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02906
Tel: 401.421.7970
Fax: 401.276.4291

Web: www.firstunitarianprov.org
Email: min@firstunitarianprov.org
dre@firstunitarianprov.org
admin@firstunitarianprov.org
mem@firstunitarianprov.org



Monkey Mind

The actual New Year, that celebration where the old year passes and the new year begins, has become a bit of a complicated thing for me. These days, my wife, Jan, usually packs up and leaves for California a couple of days after Christmas to be with her mom and then returns a bit after the New Year, leaving Auntie and me on our own for the duration. Being homebodies who never did anything big for the New Year before – well, maybe one of us being wakened by the sound of fireworks around midnight, but, well, you get it, not much – on the one hand it really doesn't matter. But, now, it is tinged a little with the family scattered.

Not unlike the situation, I find, for many of us. Something is missing. Someone is missing. And with the various good things about a new year – second chances, hope bursting forth, all that – there's also, for some, maybe for all, a hint, a sense, of longing for something, or for some one.

Makes me think of the great Tai Chi, what we usually call the yin-yang symbol, the two tadpoles in their eternal dance. And, specifically, how each has an eye that is composed of the other, a black eye in the white tadpole and a white eye in the black tadpole.

It is the hint of the dynamic, I guess, the mechanism that keeps the clockwork in motion, although it feels a lot more organic than that clock metaphor implies. It feels visceral. It feels.

That's the New Year for me. Filled with hope and optimism and the thought that maybe this time I'll get this or that right. And somewhere in the back recesses of my heart, a small hint of loss, of knowing the sands flowing, grain after grain, to the bottom of the hourglass.

Life.
Sweet.
And bitter.

And when I take it whole, I see it really is magical. Like knowing winter will turn to spring. In the smallest of ways, the New Year is something wondrous.

There is sadness. And there is hope. And hope gets the bigger part of the heart, I find. For me. I hope for you, too.

Here is where I find the New Year becomes an invitation into the whole lovely mess.
Not bad.
See you in church,

Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday,
9:00a-12:00p. Appointments are recommended.
min@firstunitarianprov.org
James's blog: www.patheos.com/blogs/monkeymind

Deacons' Corner

Offering Home Hospitality for General Assembly Participants

With the coming of the new year, we draw one month closer to UUA General Assembly in June. As most of you are aware, the Deacons are co-coordinating the Home Hospitality portion of the GA. If anyone still wishes to participate, we need to know by the middle of January, to give us time to visit the homes to check the information we receive.

Just to review, you can open your home from two to five days between June 25 to 29. The charges range from \$25 to \$80, depending on the type of accommodation. You are required to provide lodging and breakfast, which could range from cereal and toast to a full breakfast, your choice.

The church will receive 90% of any monies raised, with the remaining 10% going to the UUA for administrative costs.

The Deacons: David Spremulli, Senior Deacon; Gerry Spremulli, Jacqui Nye, Ruth Arellana Steve McCloy, Shirley DiMatteo, Keith Brown, Claire Rosenbaum, Tom Getz and Mary Speare

The Lay Ministry and Care Crew

The Lay Ministry and Care Crew help those in the congregation in need of calls, cards, visits, rides to the doctor's office, emergency babysitting, emergency elderly companionship, or meal delivery.

The on-call Lay Minister for January is Tori Smith. Referrals or calls to the church will be passed on to Tori, who will call upon Care Crew volunteers.

The Lay Ministry Team: Margaret Balch-Gonzalez, Andy Barrett, Pat Gifford, Kate Menard, Rick Richards, Tori Smith



WHEEL OF LIFE

Congratulations to:

Cindy Bapties on the engagement of her son Erik Fearing to Erik "Rick" Gullard.

Condolences to:

Calvin Bell and his family on the death of his wife, Rosary. The Bells have been members since 1976.

Healing thoughts to:

John Braica who had back surgery in November.



Toward

300

Consider becoming a Visiting Steward for the 2014-15 Annual Budget Drive. Training provided.



Spiritual Pathways

Chutes & Ladders

It is said that January got its name from Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and endings. Even though I know this, I still seem to ask more of myself than is realistically possible, year after year. Of course, we can always do extra, make fewer mistakes, cover other bases. However, as the daylight ever so slowly creeps back, why not also consider assessing our best efforts and inspirational accomplishments from the past months? I'll try. It actually feels good. And our children are learning from how we live.

Here are just a few fine examples of uplifting experiences in the congregational lives of our children, youth, and adults:

- The preschoolers visited all of our classrooms, jingling bells and singing holiday carols.
- The sixth-grade Neighboring Faiths group has already visited the Providence Vedanta Society, Providence Zen Center, and Temple Beth El.
- The senior high youth led the gift-card drive for Dorcas International Institute and hosted staff member Sarah Stangl, who shared information about that agency.
- The eighth-grade Coming of Agers with their mentors have been building relationships as they shepherd the UUSC "Guest at Your Table" effort.
- Several groups look forward to creating Peace Flags, symbolic of waging peace!

I am grateful and proud of our volunteer teachers, advisors, and RE Committee members who share their time and loving energy with our children and youth.

In the second semester, we will continue on our way to welcoming UU General Assembly to Providence this June. The theme is "Love Reaches Out." That is certainly an inspirational thread that can inform us as we embrace our challenging work, together.

Annie Lamott reminds me that life is mostly like a game of Chutes and Ladders, with no guaranteed gains. If that is the case, as we open doors to this new year, I hope that your chutes are safe and gentle and that you find strong, trustworthy, and loving ladders.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and peaceful 2014,

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
401.421.7970
dre@firstunitarianprov.org

Youth Music Ensemble (YMe)

Calling All Voices – It's time!

The Youth Music Ensemble, fondly known as YMe, kicks off 2014 with drumming, theater games, and singing. We'll be preparing to share in the Wholly Family service on February 2.

If you have not tried YMe, this would be a great time to check it out. We'll have rehearsals on January 5, 12, 26 and February 2. Rehearsals are in the upstairs Auditorium from 9:30a sharp until 10:15a. Youth from grade 3 through high school are welcome, as are younger children with a parent in attendance.

Come one, come all, and have a musical blast!

Questions? Contact Marcia Marcia Taylor, YMe Director
(mdt.renn@gmail.com)



An Evening of Italian Elegance: Pasta Dinner & Entertainment

Saturday, January 25

Aperitivo begins at 5:30p

Dinner seating at 6:00p

Your hosts, the First Unitarian Coming of Age youth, invite you to celebrate An Evening of Italian Elegance, featuring a fine selection of pasta and a variety of musical entertainment.

Relax, unwind, and mingle as your hosts and their families serve you the finest pasta dinner this side of the Providence River. Musical entertainment will be provided throughout the evening.

To further spice up your evening, purchase a raffle ticket or two for a chance to take home one of a variety of specialty items. Bring your family and invite your friends!

Proceeds from the dinner support the Coming of Age class trip to UUA headquarters in Boston in the spring.

Tickets available in the Atrium during Coffee Hour each Sunday through January 19.

Tickets: Individual: \$8; Family (four) \$25.

Time to Return the Guest at Your Table Envelopes

Sunday, January 5

The UU Service Committee Guest at Your Table envelopes will be collected on January 5 by the members of our eighth-grade class. With their mentors they will count the bills and roll the coins so the contributions can be deposited and a check sent to the UUSC.

Please leave your filled envelopes in baskets outside the Haynes classroom in the Atrium.

Opportunity to Participate in the Wholly Family Service

Is it your family's turn this year?

We are looking for families interested in participating in our Wholly Family service on Sunday, February 2. This multigenerational service has become an annual tradition when we share diverse family stories, connecting us as a community. Singles, couples, step, adopted, multicultural, GBLTQ – all kinds of families (with or without pets!) are encouraged to participate.

Interested? Please contact Cathy Seggel in the church office (401.421.7970 or dre@firstunitarianprov.org)

Toward
300

Like to share stories?
Become a Visiting Steward.



Sight Lines

From the President

As we move into the new year, it's time to reflect a bit on where we have been – what worked and what could have worked better – and where we want to go.

The year 2013 has been a busy and productive time for the First Unitarian Church of Providence. While most denominations in the USA have experienced significant declines in membership, Unitarian Universalists as a group have shown limited growth overall. Membership at First Unitarian Church has increased nearly 20% over the past four years. We now have almost 500 members. Various programs and committees within the church have expanded modestly, offering many ways for members and friends to become engaged and to make contributions to the church and the broader community.

First Unitarian's finances are fairly healthy, but they should be stronger. With more dollars pledged than any other drive in our history, our 2013 fundraising campaign was largely successful. Nevertheless, we were unable to provide our full Fair Share in denominational support, and we had to settle for a "bare bones" budget that provided almost no funding for much-needed capital improvements.

In 2014, we should see good progress on several fronts. Membership should continue to grow, and our finances will improve as well. Our committees and programs will remain strong and afford our members and friends opportunities to become better engaged in our work. Of course, holding the UUA General Assembly in Providence will take time, planning, and considerable effort from our members. This event will allow our community to shine. The annual gathering of thousands of UU members from all parts of the country will help us to become more effective advocates for our ministries.

In sum, 2014 promises to be challenging and productive. Your efforts to improve our church community and to help in our work and our care for each other is most welcome and appreciated.

Respectfully yours,

Merritt K. Meyer
 President, Prudential Committee
 pres@firstunitarianprov.org

General Assembly Is Coming to Providence: June 25–29

Well, it's 2014, and you know what that means! The UUA's annual conference (GA for short) will be in Providence from June 25-29, although some folks come earlier. The Ballou Channing District, of which we are the largest church, is the official host, but they need a lot of help from those of us who live in and around Providence. You can get involved now by remembering to grab an extra menu – eat-in or take-out – from downtown Providence restaurants you visit. Folks from out of town will be looking for food that is tasty, interesting (think ethnic), inexpensive, fast, and convenient to the Convention Center/Dunk area. High-end places, too. There is a basket in the back of the Meeting House for you to toss them in.

There will be at least one other large convention in Providence that week/weekend, so hotel rooms will be at a premium. If you have a bed you can offer to an out-of-town UU, please talk to one of our Deacons (see page 2) and ask how you can volunteer to make your home a bed and breakfast for a few days. Guests will get a nice, inexpensive place to stay, you will make a new friend, and our church will get a percentage of the "rent," so it's a win-win-win!

There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer during the convention. If you are interested, see Graham Nye. You will need to apply to the UUA GA Committee to be officially chosen; sign-ups start March 1, so it's time to think about this now.

Most important of all, plan to attend GA this year! It will never be easier, or less expensive, to see what GA is all about. Full information at www.uua.org/ga.

Beth Armstrong for the First Unitarian GA Planning Committee

Annual Budget Drive Congregational Conversation

Sunday, January 12 at noon
 in the Auditorium

All members and friends of the church are invited to help inform the Annual Budget Drive for 2014-2015. There will be a strategic dialogue around the long-term financial planning for our growing congregation.

Come and share your ideas and aspirations with our budget drive team. Light refreshments will be provided.

Please direct any questions to Lisa Sampson (lisasampson2@gmail.com) or Anne Connor (anneconnor@gmail.com).

Treasurer's Report

At the December Prudential Committee meeting, I provided a primer on First Unitarian's various endowments and separate investments. Included in the report were our regular endowments, which are managed by Washington Trust Investors, and individual funds, managed by the Ocean State Incubator.

As of October 21, our total endowment value \$4,413,413. This is divided among the Property Endowment, the Sunday School Endowment, and the Consolidated Fund. For budget purposes, the church follows a 5% rule, taking no more than 5% of the endowment's three year average to support the budget.



Over the past several years, both the Budget Committee and the PruComm have discussed further limiting the draw on the Property Endowment to reserve this endowment for investment in capital projects and major repairs to the facilities. This would only be possible if our Annual Budget (pledge) Drive were to grow enough to fill the gap currently filled by the draw on the Property Endowment.

The Sunday School Fund is designated for religious education and is applied to those accounts.

The Consolidated Fund was built from undesignated bequests and gifts and may be used for the general operation of the church.

In future reports, I will review the other funds, which are outside our basic endowment.

– Graham Nye, Treasurer



Toward
300 Lean in...Become a Visiting Steward.



Community Life

January All-Parish Supper

Friday, January 10

Everyone, young and old and in between, is welcome at these monthly gatherings of members and friends of the congregation.

5:45p Social Hour – Bring hors d'oeuvres to share and/or wine for your own party if you wish.

6:15p Potluck Dinner – Please bring a dish to share that serves at least eight people. You can bring a main dish, a vegetable, a salad, or a dessert.

7:45p Program in the Auditorium – A Concert of American Folk Songs

After dinner, we will celebrate the new year with a concert of traditional American folk songs and dances, performed by Atwater and Donnelly, a talented duo of Rhode Island folk musicians. Their selections will provide glimpses of people and places in US history, and will include funny songs, beautiful songs, patriotic songs, sing-a-longs, and thought-provoking commentary. Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly, who began their musical career together here at First Unitarian in the 1990s, create lovely harmonies in their music, and they also play on a wide variety of instruments. And their performances are always exciting, moving, and of high musical quality. You won't want to miss this great free concert.



Saturday Social Supper

January 4, starting at 5:30p

The January Social Supper will be hosted by Dave and Gerry Spremulli in East Providence. For reservations and menu planning, contact Shirley DiMatteo (shelly-dimatteo@verizon.net or 401.861.1537) to indicate the number in your party and what you would like to bring.

There will be two Social Suppers on February 1, one hosted by Janet Downing Taylor (Providence) and one by Beth and Stew Armstrong (Bristol).

Contra Dancing at First Unitarian

Friday, January 3, 7:30p–10:00p

Everyone is invited to our First Unitarian New Year's contra dance to be held on Friday, January 3 from 7:30 to 10:00p in the Auditorium of the Parish House. Both beginners and experienced dancers are welcome.

We will be joined by the College Hill Contra Dancers. The caller will be Paul Wilde. There will be live music with Andy Grover and friends. Please plan to join us and bring your dancing shoes.

Admission is \$5 for students and for people in our church family; \$10 for others. If you have questions, call Jim Estey (401.351.1748).

February All-Parish Supper

Friday, February 7 (note the date: a week earlier than usual)

The topic of our after-dinner program will be "The Politics of American Health Care."

Our speaker will be professor Richard Holtzman, who teaches American Politics at Bryant University and is a popular and thought-provoking speaker. There are few issues in American politics today that are causing greater controversy and confusion for Americans than Obamacare. Why are the politics of US healthcare so contentious and difficult? What might be done to resolve some of the issues? Join us for this timely and important discussion.

Toward
300

First Unitarian is a collection of stories. Share yours and hear others' stories – become a Visiting Steward.

HATS OFF TO...

Ann Boyd, Nori Duncan and Mary Frappier for organizing the largest Thanksgiving Dinner that the church has ever had. Just over 50 people attended including new friends.

John D'Abate for forging and installing a new stair rail to the Meeting House basement choir room. It is a reproduction of the one that he built and installed many years ago to the lower level mens' and ladies' room.

Helen Haynes, her daughter Holly and several grandchildren for so beautifully decorating the sanctuary for the holidays.

Our Coffee Hour Providers last month:

Roberta Groch, Sue Meyer, Janet Downing Taylor, R. Owen Jones, Gerry Boone and Bruce Whyte, Mary Frappier, Gerry Spremulli, Shirley DiMatteo, Elissa Emerson, Gaby Petruck, Anne Connor, Lisa Rose, Marilyn Eanet, Kelly Baraf, Sarah Cappelli, Brenda Mallicoat, Paul Hossfield, Tony Allen, Cathy Orloff, Claire Rosenbaum, Edie Warren, Jacqui Nye, Nori Duncan, Mary Speare, Nancy Ferrazza, Sandra Ackerman, Melissa Guillet, Tiffany Hogan, Paul Almeida and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.

Those who acted as "veggies" for our Thanksgiving Community Soup.

Elias Ellison for doing a reading in the December 8 worship service.

Kim Zeigelmeyer whose "Moms Against Gun Violence" rally at First Unitarian was a great success.

Everyone who organized and participated in our Almost Traditional Christmas Pageant.

Our readers at the Christmas Eve services.



Find Us on Facebook!

First Unitarian's Facebook page is loaded with updates, useful links, photos, and more!

Type "First Unitarian Providence" in the search box and check it out!



Community Life

The Women's Alliance

Monday, January 6

Business Meeting: 10:30a; Program: 11:00a followed by lunch (\$10)

What Is This Thing Called General Assembly?

Speaker: Dr. Elisabeth McGregor

Democracy in action. A worshipful experience. A UU "family reunion." A mind-stretching feast of ideas and learning. A huge celebration. An affirmation of who we are and what we stand for. This annual gathering of thousands of Unitarian Universalists from all over the country – and beyond – is all of these. Beth will share memorable moments from GAs past and offer a taste of what's to come in Providence this June.

Beth McGregor has been near the heart of General Assembly for close to twenty years, as Ballou Channing District President, UUA Trustee, General Assembly Planning Committee member and chair, and now as District Coordinator for GA 2014. She's an active member of the Unitarian Church of Sharon, MA.

Non-members are always welcome to join us for our monthly programs and luncheon.

Join Us for Our Monthly Knit-In

Sunday, January 12, 12:15 to 1:30p

Have you always wanted to learn to knit? Or maybe your knitting skills a little rusty. Knitting for a Better World, the knitting group at First Unitarian, is holding its monthly knit-in on the second Sunday in January. No matter your age or ability, join us for light refreshments and knitting. No registration required.

Contact: Kathy Ahlquist (katherine.ahlquist@gmail.com)



Annual First Unitarian Cook-Off – Think Chocolate!

Sunday, January 26 during Coffee Hour

The votes are in and the winning ingredient is *chocolate!* For this year's cook-off, all entries will need to incorporate chocolate into their recipe of choice. Contestants should prepare their recipe item to be served in small taste-size portions for at least 50 tasters and be available to present them on the day of the event. The annual cook-off will be held during Coffee Hour on Sunday, January 26. Anyone interested in participating in the Membership Committee sponsored cook-off may sign up, during Coffee Hour, in the Newcomers' Cafe or by sending an email to Kim (kimgoldthwait@gmail.com).

Registration for the event will be open until January 19.

An Evening Path to Membership Class

Thursday, February 27, 6:00–9:00p

Have you been wanting to attend a Path to Membership Class but not able to make it on a Saturday morning? There is an opportunity coming up in February! If you want to learn more about Unitarian Universalism, the First Unitarian Church of Providence, and to see if membership is for you, please join us for our next Path class on Thursday evening, February 27.

For details, contact: Jenn Nardone, Membership Coordinator (mem@firstunitarianprov.org)

Save the Date: First Annual May Breakfast

Saturday, May 17

May breakfast is a welcoming, long-standing Rhode Island tradition. This year First Unitarian will be hosting a May breakfast here. Rebecca Alberg, Jim Barfoot, and Mary Frappier have started the process. For it to become a reality, they need at least 20 others to join them.

Would you like to cook, decorate, organize, or have breakfast for a couple of hours? If you have questions or would like to be part of this fun event, please talk to any one of the organizers at Coffee Hour or call Rebecca Alberg (401.231.4104).

All proceeds will go to support the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless.

Newcomers' Café

Every Sunday during Coffee Hour

If you're new to First Unitarian, please come by our Newcomers' Café, where I look forward to welcoming you. It's a great place to meet people in a less daunting setting than the regular Coffee Hour. Held in the elegant and intimate Paneled Parlor (just beyond the fireplace in the Parish House), the Café offers coffee, goodies, and fellowship and is hosted by a rotating cast of church members who will also be happy to answer your questions and introduce you to others in our community.

If you've been around the church for a while, this is a great place to help new folks get acclimated. Contact me to sign on as a café host.

– Jennifer Nardone, Membership Coordinator
(mem@firstunitarianprov.org)

Women's Alliance Programs

Camp Street Ministries Benefit from Eastside Marketplace Grocery Receipts

If you shop at Eastside Marketplace, please save your receipts and place them in the collection box on the table in the Atrium outside the Haynes Room. The Women's Alliance collects them for the Camp Street Ministries.

Gourmet Coffee Sale in the Atrium

The Women's Alliance sells delicious organic gourmet coffee each Sunday during Coffee Hour. We offer several varieties of both beans and ground coffees from New Harvest Roasters, including a bolder decaf: French Roast.

Your purchases help the Women's Alliance support community charities and church projects.

Make a Coffee Hour Resolution!

Happy New Year! Here's a great resolution for the New Year: Sign up regularly to bring food to the Coffee Hour! Remember that our Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort organized by The Women's Alliance with donations from our congregation of baked or bought goodies such as brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake and more. In order to feed the ravenous crowd each Sunday, we need 8 people bringing donations that serve 24 each. Sign-ups are preferred in order to plan for each upcoming Sunday. Sign up in the first parlor during Coffee Hour and go home with a reminder so you won't forget.



Community Life

Welcome Our Newest Members!

On Sunday, November 3, the congregation recognized 14 new members with a ceremony of covenant and welcome. Look for them at church and add your personal greetings.



Karen Rameaka lives in Warwick with her two children, Jack, 10, and Lena, 7. Former members of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady in upstate New York, the Rameakas have been attending First Unitarian Providence since moving to Rhode Island in 2009. Karen is a special education teacher at Hope High School in Providence and is excited to finally become a full-fledged member of this congregation.



Kristen Curry and Justin Maytum have been enjoying First Unitarian for nearly 20 years, since she came to a wonderful Easter Service with a friend – followed by coffee on the porch at the Coffee Exchange, an inspired combination. Kristen and Justin have been attending regularly since their boys, Callan and Caleb, joined the Religious Education program five years ago (where Kristen has volunteered as well). Over the years, they even became “Unitarian godparents” for the son of friends . . . now they are happy to officially join the congregation. Kristen works in communications and is an avid reader. Justin enjoys history, coffee, and time with family. They live in the Edge-wood part of Cranston and enjoy the outdoors and traveling with their kids.



Tim Burns and Carolyn Sammon

Tim is from Fort Collins, Colorado, and grew up in the Foothill Unitarian Universalist Church. He has lived in Salt Lake City, St. Louis, and now in Lincoln, Rhode Island and is interested in music, fencing, and Zen practice. Carolyn moved to Rhode Island with her husband, Tim, in 2002 for training, and they decided to stay. She has a busy psychiatry practice in Woonsocket, and an even busier home with children Sylvia and Meredith. When she has two free hands, she enjoys knitting, gardening, and kayaking. She is grateful to find a new spiritual home.



Brian and Sandy Ackerman met in Newport over 10 years ago. They have two children, George and Isabella, and are passionate about family and education. Prior to motherhood, Sandy worked in network security but now remains home, where she is devoted to raising her children, with a special area of interest in nutrition and childhood development. Brian has worked in special education for over 12 years and is currently a principal in West Warwick. Hobbies they enjoy as a family include ice skating, yoga, cooking, and music.



Arlene and Frank McGonagle live on College Hill and have been attending First Unitarian for over 20 years. Arlene has an MFA from UMass, is a fiber sculptor, basket maker, and teacher, working from her studio in Warren, Rhode Island. Frank is semi-retired, but owns a television production business in Tampa. Arlene is an active and ardent tennis player. They have recently retired from the sailing life for more sedate activities ashore. Their five adult children have provided much action from eleven grandchildren.

Joseph and Eve Caron are from Bristol and have four young children. They moved here from New York a couple of years ago, and Joseph still works and commutes from NYC. They homeschool their children and Eve is a stay-at-home mom. They love to take family adventures big and small. Joseph spends his free time playing with his children and learning to play the ukelele. Eve loves to bake and is an aspiring photographer. They are all so glad to have found this amazing church.



Mark Stiles



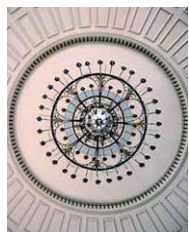
Hannah McIntire



John Moran

Toward
300

Make new connections . . . become a Visiting Steward.



Spiritual Development

Talk-Back Sundays

Have you ever wanted the opportunity to discuss the Sunday sermon with other members of the congregation? You are not alone.

On designated Sundays, talk-back discussions will begin directly after the service in the Meeting House and will last approximately 25 minutes.

Stay tuned for the new schedule in 2014!

Art in the Atrium

The January art exhibit will feature paintings by Elizabeth O'Connell and mixed media work by Jim Barfoot.

There is still room in this year's calendar for artists who would like to show their work.

Please contact Chiara Van Erp at: (romano-vanerpdesign@cox.net)

Flowers for the Sunday Services

Flowers at the pulpit each Sunday are donated by members and friends of the congregation in honor or memory of a loved one. Donors are acknowledged in the order of service. Whether the flowers are a florist's arrangement or picked from a garden, people always comment on how they brighten the pulpit.

Jacqui Nye will be glad to explain how you can provide an arrangement and to schedule your donation. Your flower offering will be greatly appreciated.

Contact: Jacqui Nye (funjac@hotmail.com) with "Sunday Flowers" in the subject line.

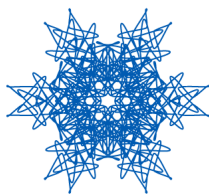
UUMen

Sunday, January 12 from 7:00-9:00p

TOPIC: Escaping your COMFORT ZONE

By escaping your comfort zone you can be happier, more confident, and more satisfied with life.

Facilitator: Paul Bazin (pbazin11@gmail.com)



Winter Storms and First Unitarian

In case of extreme weather, the minister and staff decide if church will be cancelled. If the City of Providence announces a ban on street parking, church will be cancelled.

A cancellation decision will be made by 7:00a on Sunday and conveyed to these media outlets: TV channels ABC 6, NBC 10, WPRI 12, Fox Providence, RI PBS and radio stations 630WPRO, 920WHJJ, 1180 CCNX News Radio, WRNI, Lite Rock105, B101, 94HJY, 92ProFM, 98.1Cat Country, 93.3Coast FM, 95.5 WBRU.

If church is open during a storm, no one should make heroic efforts to get to church. Use your best judgment about whether it is safe to drive or come to church on foot during any stormy weather.

Benevolent Street Zendo: An Ongoing Zen Meditation Group

Every Monday at 7:00p

Benevolent Street Zendo is a member community of the Boundless Way Zen Sangha, an interfaith Zen community that maintains close ties with the Soto Zen Buddhist Association and the American Zen Teachers Association.

Everyone is welcome. Brief instruction available at 6:45p.

Leaders: Jan Seymour-Ford and James Ford (benevolentstreetzen@gmail.com)

Innate Wisdom and Compassion Meditation

Every Wednesday at 7:00p

This drop-in group offers guided meditations of wisdom, love, and compassion. These practices are adapted from Tibetan Buddhism into new forms that can touch the hearts and minds of people from all backgrounds and faiths, to help each of us bring out the best in ourselves, within our relationships, and in our service and social action.

No previous meditation experience required. You can visit our website for a preview of the practices with Benefactors (foundationforactivecompassion.org/audios-videos-texts)

Contact: Ken Bent (kenbent@cox.net)

Reimagining Religion

Tuesdays, January 14 & 28, 7:00p

Reimagining Religion is an ongoing attempt to employ the best recent scholarship in coming to grips with issues raised by radically new developments in the study of religion and thereby achieving a fuller appreciation of what religious literacy entails in the twenty-first century.

Leader: Tom Hall (twh2nd@aol.com)





Social Justice

Standing on the Side of Love

Come to an open meeting on January 19 from noon-1:30p to learn more about ending homelessness in Rhode Island. The Standing on the Side of Love committee is creating a partnership with the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless.



Jim Ryczek, the Executive Director of RICH, will be joining right after Sunday service.

This is an informational meeting about RICH's legislative work in RI, and how we at First Unitarian can help. Our commitment and energy brought marriage equality to our state, and Jim Ryczek and our own community minister, Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, will explain how we can use our skills to address homelessness.

Our part in this partnership with RICH would call for work at all levels of participation. It can be as simple as showing up after services to write advocacy letters. For those with time and dedication, it could even include lobbying legislators. In between these poles, there may be rallies and organizing and other work. There's room for all degrees of time commitment in this important undertaking.

We hope you'll join us to help create coalitions and working groups with other organizations and faith communities in Rhode Island. Please join us on Sunday, January 19, to help end homelessness in Rhode Island!

Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly meeting, Sunday, January 5, 12:15p in the Haynes Room

The Neighborhood Social Justice Committee takes on projects to lighten the load of low-income and homeless Rhode Islanders. Please join us – on the first Sunday of each month – to learn more about our work and perhaps to contribute some ideas of your own.

Mobile Loaves & Fishes

Tuesday, January 7 at Open Table of Christ, 1520 Broad Street, Providence.

The MLF crew at First Unitarian will again be helping Open Table. The onset of cold weather intensifies the need for generous donations of food and clothing, so in this season of giving please be generous.

To learn more, drop-off donations, or sign up to help, visit the NSJC/MLF table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour, or contact Joe Salvatore (joesuu@gmail.com).

The Community Collection for Mobile Loaves & Fishes on November 24 brought in \$2,260. Thanks to all who so generously donated.

Knitting for a Better World

Every Tuesday, 7:00–9:00p

Come join fellow knitters for a casual evening of knitting and conversation. Work on your own project or join in one of our many group efforts: hats, socks, mittens, scarves, and more for local groups in need of warm clothing and for our own Mitten Tree come winter.

Beginners are always welcome. We have plenty of yarn and needles to get you started.

The Mitten Tree

On December 29, our Mitten Tree began to bloom once again. We will continue to keep it stocked with hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks until the cold weather subsides.

This year, our own Knitting for a Better World knitters have set a goal of collecting 300 hats, either knit, purchased, or gently used. Can you help us reach our goal? Look for our collection basket in the Atrium through the winter months and help us warm the heads, hands, and hearts of our neighbors in need.

Contact: Kathy Ahlquist (katherine.ahlquist@gmail.com)



First Unitarian's Food Share Pantry Volunteer at Our Food Pantry

Distribution Day: Monday, January 20

The biggest social justice program at First Unitarian is the Food Share Pantry. It takes many volunteers to keep the program going! Volunteer with your van or truck to transport food from the RI Food Bank to the church, or volunteer for a shift on Distribution Day:

Set-up: 2:00p–3:00p,

Shopping with clients: 3:00p–5:00p,

Restock, recycle, and clean up: 5:00p–6:00p.

Contacts: Martha Manno (Mmanno7@comcast.net), Amy Webb (amy.webb7@verizon.net), or Nori Duncan (nori.duncan@gmail.com)

The Pantry Is Open to All

You probably know that volunteers at First Unitarian run a very well attended food pantry. But did you know that members of the congregation who are in need are also welcome to take part and receive food? You do not have to be receiving government help or otherwise demonstrate need. Just come to the church after 2:30p on the third Monday and fill out a brief registration form.

Your Recycled Magazines = Food for the Food Pantry

Donate your high-interest magazines for others to purchase for just 50 cents to \$1. Popular categories: science, gardening, kids' magazines, handyman, *Geographics*, cars, yoga, fishing, cooking, craft, foreign affairs, current events, and personal improvement, just to name a few. No catalogs, please. Last year this program earned close to \$370. for our Food Pantry.

Donate Calendars and Notecards

Please gather those random calendars and cards sent out by charities at the end of the year and donate them to the Food Pantry for our clients. They are in great demand. Drop them in the office.

Habitat for Humanity Work Day

Saturday, January 18

First Unitarian's Habitat Work Group volunteers once a month with the Providence chapter. Volunteers of all skill levels are welcome; the only requirements are a willingness and ability to do physical work and a minimum age of 16. Sign-up is required as space is limited.

Contact: Peter Van Erp (401.351.4881 or petervanerp@cox.net)



January 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 New Year's Day Church Office Closed	2	3	4 Contra Dance 7:30-10:00p Saturday Social Supper (Spremuelli's)
5 Sunday Service 10:30a <u>at 12:00p</u> History Comm. Mentor/Mentee <u>at 12:15p</u> Neighborhood SJ	6 Women's Alliance 11:00a Zendo 7:00p	7 Mobile Loaves & Fishes at Open Table of Christ in Providence Lay Ministry 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	8 Prudential Committee 6:30p Meditation 7:00p	9 Deacons 5:30p Standing on the Side of Love 7:00p	10 All Parish Supper 5:45p Program 7:45p	11
12 Sunday Service 10:30a <u>at 12:00p</u> Cong Conversation on Annual Budget <u>at 12:15p</u> Membership Com. Knit-In UU Men 7:00p	13 Zendo 7:00p	14 Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	15 Meditation 7:00p	16	17	18 Habitat Work Day
19 Sunday Service 10:30a <u>at 12:00p</u> Standing on the Side of Love - RICH Presentation	20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Church Office Closed Food Pantry 2:00p-6:00p Zendo 7:00p	21 Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	22 Worship 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	23	24	25 Coming of Age Pasta Supper 5:30p
26 Sunday Service 10:30a <u>at 11:30a</u> Annual Cook Off	27 Zendo 7:00p	28 Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	29 Meditation 7:00p	30	31	