



## Services in the Meeting House

**Sunday, March 2      Our Race to Three Hundred**

**10:30a**

**Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

We will reflect on the spiritual health of our congregation through a reflection on our finances. James claims this will be a riveting exploration of who we are and what we might become. Come and see if he can pull it off.

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*



**Daylight Savings – Turn your clocks ahead one hour.**

**Sunday, March 9      In Defense of Barbarians**

**10:30a**

**Rev. Dr. William Schulz**

James has been working on bringing Bill Schultz here for several years and is just as pleased as punch to announce that the former president of the UUA; former president of Amnesty International, USA; and current president of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee will be our guest speaker. Bill will take up the cause of barbarianism and explain how we, too, may fall into that favored category, or at least be allied with it.

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, March 16      The Halcyon Days Are These:  
Seeing the Golden Haze in the Humdrum Here and Now**

**10:30a**

**Rev. Mary Margaret Earl**

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, March 23      Love Your Mother: A Call to the Heart of the Matter**

**10:30a**

**Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

James will preach the sermon that was snowed out last month. He will explore the intricacies of our relationship with the planet and our responsibilities in the face of climate change.

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, March 30      On the Good Samaritan**

**10:30a**

**Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

James finds the story of the Good Samaritan one of the most intriguing of the parables attributed to Jesus. He believes the good rabbi has an important message, particularly useful for religious liberals.

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, April 6      Annual Senior High Youth Group – Multigenerational Service**



We are a  
Welcoming Congregation

## Inside

Monkey Mind .....	2
Spiritual Pathways .....	3
Sight Lines .....	4
Annual Budget Drive .....	5
Community Life .....	6
General Assembly .....	8
Spiritual Development .....	9
Social Justice .....	10
Monthly Calendar .....	11

## 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  
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## Newsletter

- Posey Kooris, Managing Editor
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- Next Deadline: March 15

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## Monkey Mind

The Unitarian Universalist Association has unveiled a new logo. Maybe it's a tiny bit Madison Avenue for me, and certainly a move out of the box of our using a flaming chalice for "branding" our association. The chalice and flame are there but much more abstract in the new design. All that noted, really, it's just fine. I admit I rather liked the old "chalice of Guadalupe," as one wag tagged it. But these things come and go, and the new one does seem to fit the gestalt of the moment.

Now, if you haven't noticed, we UUs are a bit on the opinionated side. So, probably, of course, there's a brouhaha racing across the UU social media universe. Many people do like it. And a large number of people really dislike it. The reasons range from the old standard Why pay good money for something like this? to Why wasn't I consulted before the Association made this decision? to "Branding" is offensive to the purpose of a spiritual group. Why are they making us a commodity on the market?

My favorite is Why wasn't I consulted? Okay, mostly they actually say, Why weren't we consulted? But it doesn't take a sophisticated sense to hear the actually actual "I" meant, where "we" is written . . .

But more important to me are the objections based on the idea that we might want to advertise ourselves, that we might want to market our congregations and our message. Western spiritual traditions pretty much all have a touch of the Manichean in them; that is, a sense of the spiritual as opposed to the material, and that the spiritual is good and the material, well, not good. This most often comes up during the annual budget drive, where folk can get quite uncomfortable about us laying out the hard facts of budget and program.

Not all of us, of course. Mostly we know there is no separation between spirit and material, electricity, snow shoveling, building maintenance, salaries – that all are simply part of having a message of hope and manifestation and building a community out of that vision for a more whole life.

And yet . . . we – many? most? – have a little bit of us that would like our spiritual pure and untouched. I do. I admit it. So I, at least to some degree, get the annoyance at branding Unitarian Universalism, having a logo that some agency put together. But not much. In the bottom-line sort of way – not the ledger, but the whole of life way – I know it isn't true. We are what we do. We are verbs.

And actions matter. And paying attention to how we are present in the world in ways that we hope will attract folk to our message of hope in the face of despair, of love in the face of anger and hatred, of actions that heal and transform rather than hurt and tear down.

It is a worthy thing.

And there's no reason at all to hide our light under a bushel.

Fondly,

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](http://www.patheos.com/blogs/monkeymind)



## Deacons' Corner

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who offered their home for the General Assembly Bed & Breakfast program. We have about 35 homes, and over 50 rooms. We are now in phase II of the program. We are looking for volunteers to offer their homes on an as-needed basis. If for some reason one of the original homes cannot fulfill their obligation, we would like to have some backup options available. We would ask you to consider this option, if you are able.

Were you planning to attend GA? Would you like to let people know that you are from First Unitarian? We are considering selling First Unitarian T-shirts. If you have any interest in purchasing one, please see one of the Deacons.

We were snowed out of our first Communion service in February, but we will have our Maundy Thursday communion on April 17. This has been a tradition at First Unitarian for many years and should have something for everyone.

On a sadder note, Claire Rosenbaum has tendered her resignation due to changes in her work schedule. We thank her for her service; she will be missed.

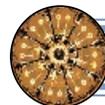
**The Deacons:** David Spemulli, Senior Deacon; Gerry Spemulli, Jacqui Nye, Ruth Arellana Steve McCloy, Shirley DiMatteo, Keith Brown, Claire Rosenbaum, Tom Getz and Mary Spere

## 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 March is Andy Barrett. Referrals or calls to the church will be passed on to Andy, who will call upon Care Crew volunteers.

**The Lay Ministry Team:** Margaret Balch Gonzalez, Andy Barrett, Pat Gifford, Kate Menard, Rick Richards, Tori Smith and Susan Weston.



## WHEEL OF LIFE

### Condolences to:

**Sean and Anne Connor** on the death of Anne's sister, Sara Louise Wheeler.

**Marge Evans** on the death of her daughter, Laurie Tilley.

**Nan Sumner-Mack**, now living in Hawaii, on the sudden death of her husband, Bob.

### Congratulations to:

**Kate Guilbault** on her marriage.



## Spiritual Pathways

### On the way to Spring

Even though it has been a snowy winter, I see signs of spring. In our Spiritual Pathways program, along with more daylight comes planning forward with nurturing along the way. This winter we offered a teacher appreciation and support event entitled "Faith Development – You Are an Important Piece of the Puzzle," led by master religious educator Patricia Ellenwood. Pat shared her philosophy with our volunteer RE leaders, and I include some excerpts here for you.



One of the most important qualities required in this undertaking is authenticity. Children and youth live close to their gifts. They know who they are and why they are here and how they are related to others. As the years go by, we may abandon that knowing but the knowing never abandons us. And I can testify to the fact that as we get older we may find ourselves being uber authentic.

Young people are watching the adults of the congregation. It matters less what we say than what we do. Expand on this: coffee hour, social events, talking to other teachers. They will pay attention to how we are living our faith.

I agreed with the passage in Parker Palmer's book from Thomas Merton, who claimed that "there is in all things . . . a hidden wholeness." Not one to relinquish my metaphor without a struggle, I would return to our puzzle. Each piece has its own integrity, its own authenticity which when joined with all the other pieces provides a coherent picture. This joining of disparate pieces models for our children and youth what it means to not only be authentic but to work with others in a way that honors our individuality without losing sight of our responsibility to the community. To reveal rather than hide our true identities from each other.

Stay warm. Enjoy the increasing light.

Take good care,

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



## Planning to Go to GA?

I am looking forward to participating in this year's UU General Assembly in Providence. And, I am happy to consult and assist so that you and your family can, too. Contact me through the church office by phone or email (dre@firstunitarianprov.org). Cathy Seggel, DRE

For more information about GA in Providence, see page 8.

## Coming of Age "Elegant Italian Dinner" - A Wonderful Event

Bravo to the 2014 Coming of Age community for hosting a very successful "Elegant Italian Dinner" fundraiser!

The head chefs, Lynette Kapsinow and Kimberli Gray, worked overtime to produce a fabulous meal for vegetarians and omnivores, with a yummy gluten-free option. Of course, servers were our charming eighth-graders. Entertainment included a popular raffle, shepherded by Victoria Richter, and a poetry reading and musical selections from Coming of Agers and some of the 1stU Community Band. Dan Gray was our tech master, and Moe Methot was the spirited MC for the event.

All eighth-graders and their parents were on board, setting and cleaning up and working the event.

Many thanks to the students, parents, teachers, mentors, musicians, and friends of COA who made this a warm and delightful evening. Huge gratitude to Parent Coordinators Ariadne Greenberg, Rebecca Alberg, and Melinda Van Lare for their organizing and just plain hard work. The students and teachers look forward to their UU heritage trip to Boston in early April, funded in large part by this effort.

## Renew Your Spirit This Summer at a UU Camp or Conference Center

Renew Your Spirit This Summer at a UU Camp or Conference Center  
Now is the perfect time to consider attending one of the many wonderful summer programs at UU camp and conference centers



around the country, many in the New England/New York region. The CU2C2 website offers links to UU centers offering a wide variety of programs for children, youth, and adults that gather Unitarian Universalists from many regions.

For links to individual sites, visit [www.cu2c2.org](http://www.cu2c2.org).

Cathy Seggel is happy to share her experience with some of these places and will be attending the Star Island Lifespan Religious Education Week in July. Contact her for funding options and with your questions.



## Sight Lines

### From the President

This winter has been especially cold and hard, but it has also been a time of major planning and activity at First Unitarian.

The Women's Alliance was formed in 1882 and incorporated in 1905. Its three-fold mission is to: serve the community, both locally and at large; provide friendship and spiritual and cultural stimuli for its members; and support the church and its denomination. The Alliance has evolved over time, but it has remained true to its mission. In recent months, the Alliance has considered several opportunities to provide support to the church. At our February Prudential Committee meeting, representatives from the Alliance made a very generous offer: The Alliance will bear the expenses for renovations to the Paneled Parlor in the Parish House during this coming summer. The once-beautiful parlor needs a facelift, and the PruComm accepted the proposal with thanks. Planning for church operations for the year 7/1/2014 to 6/30/2015 and developing a budget to fund those operations are well under way. The church's Finance Committee has been working hard to evaluate and balance needs with likely income. Concomitantly, planning for the annual funding campaign is progressing nicely. This year's campaign is designed to engage a broad spectrum of supporters. Information about the church and its needs will be provided in many ways beginning in March. Visiting Stewards and Cottage Meetings will form the core of our outreach efforts. If you have questions or suggestions, they will be most welcome. Your participation is needed and appreciated.

In June, Providence will serve as the host city for the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association. There are 1,041 congregations in the denomination, and most of them will be sending delegates to GA. As the largest UU congregation in Rhode Island, our church will have a special role in coordination and smooth functioning of many of the GA festivities. Visitors will have numerous opportunities to share their views and experiences with us, and we can share our history, culture, and views with them. All participants will have a good time and more. We will learn about and from each other. If you want to be one of the ten voting delegates from our church to GA, any member of the First Unitarian GA Planning Committee – Beth Armstrong, Stew Armstrong, Bob Cox, and Graham Nye – will help.

Respectfully yours,

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



## 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.

## Treasurer's Report

With a budget of over \$600,000, First Unitarian is very dependent on the income provided by members' pledges. Each month, we monitor the status of pledge payments to determine if we will complete the fiscal year with a balanced budget.



This year, as of January 31, we have received 63.7% of what we budgeted based on the total pledges. This is without a substantial pledge (that will not be paid) which represents over 3% of the total pledged. Of particular note is that we had 31 new pledges this year. This group is right on pace to pay their pledges in full. Also on a positive note, a number of individuals who did not pledge last year are making payments of record at a rate on which pledges could have been made.

The points below should be noted as we approach our Annual Budget Drive:

- We budget on the basis of pledges...if you plan to contribute to First U, a pledge is necessary for us to accurately set our budget.
- If because of reversal of fortune, you are unable to complete your pledge please notify the Treasurer or Walter in the office so we can adjust our spending.
- As we are anticipating the loss of several large pledges due to death and movement from the community, please review what you are currently giving.

Graham Nye, Treasurer



### 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!

## Annual Budget Drive

### Race to 300: The 2014 Annual Budget Drive

This year's Annual Budget Drive begins a seven-year initiative that honors our last 300 years and is our gift to the next 300. For nearly 300 years, this church has been a spiritual home to many. In these pews, our community has reflected on the Declaration of Independence, the Civil War, the March on Washington, and many, many other moments that have shaped our country and our world. As we move toward the 300th anniversary of the founding of our congregation in 2020, we have the opportunity to reflect on our own legacy as the keepers of this cherished place.

**Race to 300** aims to set modest annual goals to gradually eliminate our dependency on the endowment for our annual operating costs. By doing so, we can reserve these funds for needed capital improvements to our home. Over the past few months, the Budget Drive Committee has been hard at work preparing for a successful drive. Below is a recap of our work thus far and a preview of what is to come in March.

**In December**, the Budget Drive team presented the Race to 300 plan to the Prudential Committee and received the endorsement of our church leadership.

**In January**, we held an open Congregational Conversation in order to inform the congregation about our current state of giving, introduce Race to 300 Initiative and to get feedback on goals and strategies. The full minutes and survey results from the Conversation will be posted on the Parish House bulletin board throughout March.

**In February**, 40 members of our congregation stepped up to serve as Visiting Stewards and an additional six households committed to hosting Cottage Meetings around the state. In recognition of the leading financial supporters in our congregation, Anne and Sean Connor hosted a Leadership Reception at their home. This group was asked to kick off the Budget Drive season by making their financial commitments before the official start of the drive.

### March Is Annual Budget Drive Month!

On Sunday, March 2, we kick off the drive with our all-congregational event. Highlights will include a special sermon by our minister, James Ford, and testimonials by several members of our congregation.

In the following week, all members and contributing friends will receive their budget drive mailing. This week also marks the start of both Visiting Steward conversations and Cottage Meetings. If you have not chosen to attend a Cottage Meeting, we ask that you please welcome your Visiting Steward's call and invitation to meet.

Whether you meet with a Visiting Steward or participate in a Cottage Meeting, we ask that you be as thoughtful and generous with your pledge as possible.

We will wrap up the budget drive by the end of March so that the church can prepare a responsible budget for 2014-15 in a timely manner.

If you have questions about this year's budget drive, please feel free to contact one of the Annual Budget Drive Team co-chairs: Anne Connor (annewconnor@gmail.com) or Lisa Sampson (lisasampson2@gmail.com).

#### **Please Join the Conversation!**

As a part of this year's Annual Budget Drive, you are invited either to participate in a conversation with a volunteer Visiting Steward or to attend a Cottage Meeting so that we can all partake in a conversation about how to nurture and enhance our community. Here are some topics to think about.

What makes our congregation special?

What brought you here?

Was there a moment when you just knew that this was your spiritual home?

What has kept you coming back?

When you belong to this church, this church belongs to you.

#### **One voting member sums up why she pledges:**

I believe that communities of any kind are as good as the people in them. Over the years, I've been impressed with the people of this church. Before I became a member, I went to annual, budget, search, etc., meetings simply out of interest; and each time came away impressed with how thoughtful folks were and how open, respectful, and democratic their systems appeared.

Like art, jazz, tennis, woods, the sea, pruning, and more, Sunday service feeds my soul. With the sermon and music, I learn, think and feel. I'm happily drawn to the church's massive beautiful space and to the company of silent or singing strangers and friends. We're attentive each in our own way. It's good energy.

I value all this. By making a pledge payment each week, I can manage to make a meaningful contribution from a modest salary to help the church and the people it touches throughout the year.

#### **One of last year's Visiting Stewards reflects on her experience:**

I hate asking people for money. However, money was never mentioned in the meetings. We spoke about the church and its place in our lives. The conversations were wonderful and very real. New friendships have grown from the experience, and I'm eager to do it again.

#### **A Congregational Conversation participant expresses appreciation:**

I am proud and very appreciative that for the first time in 30 years there is a realistic plan to address the overreliance on endowment funds. Thanks to James Ford for moving us away from being afraid to speak about finances and to the fund drive team for its efforts and leadership.



## Community Life

### March All-Parish Supper

Friday, March 14

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 - The Problem of "Homelessness"**

Homelessness is a serious social problem in our society. Why is this? What is it like to be homeless? Is having a home a basic human right? What is being done about homelessness in America and in Rhode Island? How can we end it?

These issues will be discussed by a panel of experts including Eric Hirsch, professor of sociology at Providence College, our own Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, President of the Board of the RI Coalition for the Homeless, and Dan Kubas-Meyer, Executive Director of Housing First and a former President of our congregation. Several formerly homeless people will also be with us to share their experiences.

The Standing on the Side of Love Committee is sponsoring what promises to be a very interesting and enlightening program. Please plan to join us.

Reservations for the dinner are strongly requested. Please fill out the tear-off form in the Sunday Meeting House Times and put it in the collection plate, see Jim Estey at Coffee Hour, or call the church office in advance (401.421.7970). Childcare for infants and children to age 10 will be available for parents that request in advance; call Jim Estey (401.351.1748).

## Saturday Social Suppers

March 8, 2014 starting at 5:30p (note the second Saturday)

The March Social Supper will be hosted by Susan and John Weston in Providence.

People new to the church are always encourage to attend; it is a very nice way to meet others from our church family. For reservations, contact Shirley DiMatteo (shelly-dimatteo@verizon.net or 401.861.1537) with the number of people in your party and what you would like to bring.

The April 5 Supper will be held at the home of David and Doris Bridgehouse in Smithfield.

## Round-the-Table Dinners

Saturday, March 22

Our Round-the-Table Dinners feature several dinners at various homes on one evening. Each dinner accommodates 6 to 12 guests depending on how much room the hosts have in their homes. These dinners are an opportunity to get to know your fellow UUs in a more intimate setting.

We hope many of you can join us on March 22. If you would like to attend one of the dinners, please see Vikki Bristlin-Lax or Mary Frappier at the sign-up table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour, email Membership Coordinator Jenn Nardone (mem@firstunitarianprov.org), or call Vikki, (401.831.9888).

## April All-Parish Supper

Friday, April 4, 2014 (note the date: a week earlier than usual)

The after-dinner program will be "The Politics of American Health Care." Our speakers will be Rhode Island Lt. Gov. Elizabeth Roberts and Bryant University political science professor Richard Holtzman. Both are articulate and thought-provoking speakers. There are few issues in American politics today that cause greater controversy and confusion for Americans than Obamacare. Why are the politics of U.S. healthcare so contentious and difficult? How have Rhode Island citizens responded to the Affordable Healthcare Act? Join us for this timely discussion.

## College Hill Contra Dance

The dances will take place on the first Friday of each month at the Community Church of Providence rather than at our church. All are welcome.

## Our Coffee Hour

You don't have to be Irish to have good luck this month! Just sign up to bring goodies to our Coffee Hour to feel lucky. Our Coffee Hour depends on donations from our congregation of baked or bought goodies such as brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake, and more. To feed the ravenous crowd, we need eight people bringing donations that serve 24 each. Sign-ups are preferred in order to plan. Sign up in the first parlor during Coffee Hour and go home with a reminder.

## Be Part of Our First May Breakfast

May Breakfast is a welcoming, long-standing Rhode Island tradition. This year, First Unitarian will host a breakfast on May 17. **Rebecca Alberg, Jim Barfoot and Mary Frappier** are looking for at least 20 others to join them to make it a reality. All proceeds will go to support the **Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless**.

If you would like to cook, decorate, organize, or be a part of the crew for a couple of hours on May 17, talk to Rebecca, Jim, or Mary at Coffee Hour or call Rebecca (401.231.4104).

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### HATS OFF TO...

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Those preparing delicious food for our teacher lunch/program: Carol Drewes, Sandi Ackerman, Tara Anderson, Gail Brule, Sarah Cappelli, Amy Dolan, Shelley Stephenson and Nancy Brittain.

Thanks to some of our "wholly families" who shared their story at the annual worship service: Barbara Shipley, Jessica & Tiasa Litke-Shipley, Jean & Bill Dolan, Emily Bruce, Bill Zelazny & Patrick Griswold.

#### **Our Coffee Hour Providers last Month:**

Anne Connor, Tony Allen, Kelly Baraf, Vikki Bristlin-Lax, Mary Frappier, Pat Gifford, Tedessa Doff, Nori Duncan, Mimo Riley, Erica Hanson, Sarah Cappelli, Janet Noble, Ryk McIntyre, Elizabeth Roche, John Moran, Cathy Orloff, Paul Almeida, Sandra Ackerman, Mary Kollar, Michelle Dotzenrod, Lynne Fazzi, Jean Plunkett, Dee Reynolds, Shirley Brown, Marilyn Eanet, Arlene McGonagle and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.



## Community Life

### Last Path to Membership Class this Church Year

*Saturday, April 12 9:00a-12:30p*

If you are interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism and First Unitarian Church and seeing if membership is for you, please join us for our last Path Class of the regular church year. This session will be led by the Rev. James Ford, Jennifer Nardone, Membership Coordinator and Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education. You are encouraged to bring your questions – and your appetite, as a light supper will be provided during the class.

Please register by Sunday, April 6, by filling out a registration form, which you can find on the membership bulletin board in the Parish House, in the Newcomers' Café, by calling the church office (401.421.7970), or by emailing Jenn Nardone (mem@firstunitarianprov.org).

### 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 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 be happy to answer 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 Jenn Nardone (mem@firstunitarianprov.org) to sign on as a café host.

### Easter Desserts from the Women's Alliance

*Orders accepted until Sunday, April 13*

It is again time to choose a delicious dessert to top off your Easter dinner. There are three new desserts, along with three old favorites. Each will be freshly made by the Alliance and can be picked up after church on Easter Sunday. You can order your dessert at the Alliance table in the Atrium. Three of the choices are gluten free (\*).

**Chocolate Cream Mousse Verinne(\*)** – A verinne is a dessert served in a small cup. Ours will be done in clear plastic cups, but if you have decorative glasses or demitasse cups that you would like filled with our delicious Chocolate Mousse, we can do that. This is one of the prize-winning recipes in the First Unitarian chocolate recipe contest.

8 for \$26, 6 for \$22, 4 for \$18

**Grape Pie** – A rustic pie crust filled with a mélange of grapes covered by a nut streussel topping—colorful, delicious and unusual.

Serves 8...\$20

**Hummingbird Cake** – A pineapple-banana-spice cake with a delicious cream cheese frosting, decorated with dried pineapple ring flowers – the essence of a spring dessert. Popular because it is delicious and serves many, and it also freezes well.

Serves 16 easily...\$35

**Praline Pecan Torte** – A light, lightly spiced cake with a praline crust and whipped cream toppings. When served at an Alliance lunch, Posey Kooris said, "This just might be the best dessert I have ever eaten!"

Serves 8-10...\$30

**Walnut Nutroll Cake with Chocolate Ganache Frosting(\*)** – A flourless cake rolled with a smooth nut-cream filling and covered with chocolate. It is hard to believe that this is flourless!

Serves 12...\$35

**Yogurt Cardamon Panna Cotta with Raspberry/Strawberry Sauce or Fresh Orange topping(\*)** – The rich creamy panna cotta, paired with your choice of a raspberry-strawberry sauce or with fresh oranges scented with orange flower water. This is the perfect light dessert to serve after a big, festive meal.

8 for \$26, 6 for \$22, 4 for \$18

## Women's Alliance Programs

### The Women's Alliance

*Monday, March 3, 2014*

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

Current Events in Rhode Island

Speaker: Scott MacKay, Political Analyst, RINPR  
Scott will comment on recent news stories about politics in our state, and follow up by answering our questions.

*Formerly a political reporter for the Providence Journal, Scott MacKay has spent more than thirty years documenting politics in Rhode Island. Currently, he is a commentator on the Political Roundtable of Rhode Island Public Radio. He earned a BA in political science and history from the University of Vermont.*

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

### Antiques & Uniques – An Indoor Yard Sale

*Saturday April 26 – 10:00a-2:00p*

Put aside things now for donating to the Alliance Indoor Yard Sale in April. We are looking for household goods, small working appliances, toys, furniture, dinnerware, kitchenware, domestics, hard cover books, art, etc. Vintage clothing and accessories only please. Better items will be sold in a separate room as Parlor Specialties.

You can arrange for pick-up and storage now until the sale by calling Janet Downing Taylor (401.751.7969) or email (jdtaylo39@verizon.net) or Dee Reynolds (401.272.0880) or email (deereynoldsprov@gmail.com).

Sponsored by the Women's Alliance, all proceeds from the sale will be donated to local charities benefiting women and families.

### Support for Camp Street Ministries

Your Eastside Marketplace grocery receipts can benefit the programs at Camp Street Ministries. Bring them to the collection box at the back table of the Atrium near the Haynes Room. The Women's Alliance passes them on to 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.

### General Assembly (GA) news

Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly will be in Providence from June 25-29 this year. In previous years, attendance at GA involved not only the registration fee (this year it is \$335) but also, usually, airfare to the host city and a hotel room, not to mention meals and ground transportation. Next year, for example, GA will be in Portland, Oregon. So it is understandable that few Providence UUs have ever attended a General Assembly. However, this is our year! All we have to come up with is the registration. Registration opens on March 3, online at (<http://www.uua.org/ga/>).

There are opportunities for children, youth and adults, highlighted on the GA website.



Our religious educator is working with the senior high group and advisors to encourage participation and guide youth in navigating volunteer and other options. Contact Cathy for information ([dre@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:dre@firstunitarianprov.org)).

Once you have registered and paid your fee, you are eligible to act as a delegate, if you like, from our church. Delegates have the right to vote at the General Sessions (aka Plenary Sessions) at which important decisions are made that guide the UUA, including Social Justice topics that have been proposed for action. The Welcoming Congregation program came out of GA, as did the Green Sanctuary program, the Ethical Eating effort, Statements of Conscience having to do with economic fairness, racial equality, LGBT issues, immigration reform, and many other issues of interest. If you would like to be a delegate, we are urging you to apply to the Planning Committee. Please register first. You will be asked to fill out a short application form. That form will include an option to seek financial aid. We are entitled to 10 delegates; if we have more than 10 applications, the Executive Committee will choose based on the goal of wide representation of our various constituencies (age range, social justice concerns, leadership development, etc.).

The time has come to decide whether you would like to attend this year's GA. Speaking as someone who has attended 2 full ones and dropped in for a day at two others (which is not a good way to do it, believe me), I urge you to consider it. It can be an unforgettable experience. There are multiple workshops to attend, fascinating speakers, inspiring and diverse musical offerings, and amazing worship services. Plus you will be in a unique position to act as hosts to out-of-town guests, and to show off our beautiful home town.

Please do not let financial constraints cause you to reject the idea out of hand. The Prudential Committee included money in this year's budget to help offset the registration fee for some of our delegates/attendees. If you need financial assistance, please let us know. There is no charge for children entering 9th grade and younger. Older teens attend for half price. There are volunteer opportunities that offer financial assistance. Let us know if you want to participate and would like to talk about some ways we can help. We want to see as many Providence UUs at GA as possible

First Unitarian GA Planning Committee: Beth Armstrong, Stew Armstrong, Bob Cox, and Graham Nye



Worship Service



General Assembly Banner Parade

### GA Needs You To Volunteer!!!!

There are many opportunities to volunteer at GA. We are recruiting you to handle one of the many responsibilities needed to make GA Providence a great experience for the 6,000+ UU's who will be here in June. One major job is to act as "Greeters" and "Ask Me" volunteers. Graham Nye is coordinator for this effort. The general purpose of these volunteers is to welcome UU's to General Assembly, direct people to GA events, and to provide information about the host city/area.

Most "Ask Me" volunteers will be stationed around the GA site (possibly at the airport and the hotels) to welcome UU's and orient them to the facilities (meeting rooms in hotels, the Convention Center & the Dunk). Each "Ask Me" volunteer will have identifying hats, shirts, and/or signs. Please contact Graham ([courtstplace@hotmail.com](mailto:courtstplace@hotmail.com)) for further information.

Other opportunities include working with Judy Bowden to decorate the venue, helping with registration of attendees, work with Nori Duncan on the service project, usher at GA, as well as many other opportunities.

The General Assembly (GA) Volunteer Committee provides GA registration in exchange for volunteer work at GA. Volunteer Applications must be submitted by March 31. Adult volunteers are required to contribute 24 hours. Youth (grades 9-12) volunteers and those who qualify for reduced registration rates are required to contribute 14 hours.

- The online application will be available on March 1.
- The deadline for applications is March 31.
- Applicants will be notified of award decisions by April 23.



## Spiritual Development

### Conversations about Our Human Condition: Death and Dying

Let's try to tame a scary topic: Death. Dying. No one is exempt from it, yet so many of us carefully avoid the topic -- too morbid, too scary, too anxiety-provoking. Let's practice that conversation and explore what's meaningful and important to you during four Thursday evening sessions 7:00-8:30p on March 20, April 3, April 17 and May 1.

To sign up or for more info., contact Susan Weston (401.678.6994, susanweston@gmail.com).

### Talk-Back Sundays

Do you want to have rich, meaningful conversations about the week's sermon with other members of the congregation? On March 16 we will be discussing "The Halcyon Days are These: Seeing the Golden Haze in the Humdrum Here and Now." All talk-backs will begin directly after service in the choir room and will last approximately 25 minutes.

Also, mark your calendar for future Talk-Backs Sundays throughout the spring on April 13 - Rev. James Ford and May 18 - 8th Grade Coming of Age Service.

### Chalice Circle Update 2014 - Seeking New Facilitators!

While about six established chalice circle groups are doing well, about a dozen people are still on waiting lists from the fall of 2013. We're looking for several new or returning facilitators. We could use your help! There will be a brief training session available at a future date. Please contact a member of the Steering Committee, below, if you are interested.

Thank you, Janet Downing Taylor, Registrar (jdtaylo39@verizon.net); Jean Lawlor, chair (jeanlawlor@cox.net); Marilyn Eanet (meanet@cox.net); Dianne Mailloux (dkmailloux@cox.net)

### Summer Services 2014

Our worship services from mid-June to Labor Day weekend are led by members and friends of the congregation and occasional guests. They are planned by the Worship Committee.

Summer services are an opportunity for us to learn about the spiritual insights, passions, and life-changing events that are important to the people who share this religious community.

We are gathering ideas for speakers and/or topics. So please give us your suggestions, including yourself, who might like to share an aspect of their spiritual path with our community. We also want to hear from anyone who would like to share a musical talent.

Jim Barfoot, Neil Bartholomew (chair), Casey Duckett, Betty Finn, Lynda Gulley, Joan Richards, Sam Kennedy-Smith, Rev. James Ford

### Art in the Atrium

The March show will feature works by two artists of our Congregation: Mark Spemulli and Jess Duckett, both showing their photographs. The opening reception will be the same evening as the Parish Supper, March 14.

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

### Donate Flowers for Sunday Services

Flowers at the pulpit each Sunday are donated by members and friends 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

### 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, March 11 & 25, 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)

### UUMen

*Sunday, March 9 from 7:00-9:00p*

TOPIC: Growing up in society today with all the distractions we face? Where have we gone wrong? Are we giving our children the right tools they need to succeed in life? What has happened to respect for others? Are our schools part of the problem? Who is responsible for the upbringing of our children?

Facilitator: Paul Rossignol (tinman12345@hotmail.com)



## Social Justice

### Standing on the Side of Love

You'll be hearing from the Standing on the Side of Love committee as we continue creating a partnership with the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless. The Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless is composed of individuals and organizations that provide direct help and service to people in need "through advocacy, education, collaboration, technical assistance, and selected direct services..."



We at First Unitarian worked hard on the successful campaign for marriage equality in Rhode Island, and we can bring that same energy and dedication to the problem of homelessness. There are many ways we participate. 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 work.

We hope you'll join us to help create coalitions and working groups with other organizations and faith communities in Rhode Island. We can speak with one voice to end homelessness!

Please be on the lookout for messages from the Standing on the Side of Love committee.

## Neighborhood Social Justice

*Sunday, March 2 at 12:15p in the Resource Room*

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

## Delivering Food & Clothing to Harrington Hall Shelter for Men

*Tuesday, March 4, noon to 7:00p*

Again this month we'll be delivering good food and warm clothing to residents of Harrington Hall, a homeless shelter for men in Cranston. And just as we did last month, we'll be doing all the preparing, loading and leaving from First Unitarian, and using our own cars instead of the catering truck.

If you'd like to volunteer – and we hope you do; it's a wonderful experience – you can sign up for one of three shifts: sandwich crew from noon to 1:00p; clothing organizers and supply loaders from 3:00p to 5:00p; and delivery crew from 5:00p to 7:00p. Just visit the NSJC table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour.

## Join Us for Our Monthly Knit-In

*Sunday, March 9, 12:15 to 1:30p*

Would you like to learn to knit? Are your knitting skills a little rusty? Want to make something for our Mitten Tree? Come join Knitting for a Better World, our First Unitarian knitting group, for our monthly knit-in (light refreshments served). All ages and abilities welcome! No registration.

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

## The Mitten Tree

We will continue to keep the Mitten Tree stocked with hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks until the cold weather subsides.

This year, our own Knitting for a Better World knitters have 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)



The January Community Collection for Children's Friend brought in \$1,190.98. Thanks to all who so generously donated.

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

*Distribution Day: Monday, March 17*

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.

## 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.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>2</b> Sunday Service 10:30a at 12:00p History Comm. Mentor/Mentee at 12:15p Cottage Meeting Neighborhood SJ	<b>3</b> Women's Alliance 11:00a  Zendo 7:00p	<b>4</b> NSJC Harrington Hall Food Delivery 12:00-7:00p  Lay Ministry 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>5</b>  Prudential Committee 6:30p Meditation 7:00p	<b>6</b>  Worship Comm. 7:00p	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>  Saturday Social Suppers (Susan & John Weston)
<b>9</b> DAYLIGHT SAVINGS Sunday Service 10:30a at 12:00 Membership Committee at 12:15p Knit-In UU Men 7:00p	<b>10</b>  Zendo 7:00p	<b>11</b>  Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>12</b>  Meditation 7:00p	<b>13</b>  Deacons 5:30p Standing on the Side of Love 7:00p	<b>14</b>  All Parish Supper 5:45p Program 7:45p	<b>15</b>  Habitat Work Day
<b>16</b> Sunday Service 10:30a at 11:30a Talk Back	<b>17</b>  Food Pantry 2:00p-6:00p  Zendo 7:00p	<b>18</b>  Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>19</b>  Meditation 7:00p	<b>20</b>  Death & Dying 7:00p	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  Round the Table Dinners
<b>23</b> Sunday Service 10:30a	<b>24</b>  Zendo 7:00p	<b>25</b>  Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>26</b>  Meditation 7:00p	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> Sunday Service 10:30a	<b>31</b>  Zendo 7:00p	Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	Meditation 7:00p			