



Services in the Meeting House



Sunday, January 4 When in Doubt Tell the Truth: a Meditation on Mark Twain
10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

The whole quote from Mark Twain goes, "When in doubt, tell the truth. It will confound your enemies and astound your friends." Today James will preach on the wisdom of Samuel Clemens.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, January 11 The Jesus Sutra
10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

James will explore some unique texts surviving from the early Christian mission to China, and reflect on what might have been.

Child Dedications will be celebrated during the service (see page 8).

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

Origins/Play Circle (infants–three years) meet in classroom on the 2nd floor, Parish House.

Sunday, January 18 A Song for Martin
10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

Today James thinks about Martin Luther King, Jr; both the myth and the real person. He believes doing so can help us find important lessons for us in these hard times.

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

Origins/Play Circle (infants–three years) meet in classroom on the 2nd floor, Parish House.

Sunday, January 25 A Song for Francis
10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

Today James wants to explore the life and teachings of the great Reformation Unitarian minister Francis David.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Our Community collection will be for the Transylvania Partner Church. We would encourage everyone to be generous in their support of the building of their new church.

Sunday, February 1 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!

Origins/Play Circle (infants–three years) meet in classroom on the 2nd floor, Parish House.

We are a Welcoming Congregation



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S t a f f

- 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

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Monkey Mind

It may seem surprising at how often people ask me how I liked my last sermon. I make various replies. But in my heart I'm almost always thinking I hope my next sermon will be better. There's an old Zen saying about the spiritual life being "one continuous mistake." Now the Zen lesson is deeper than the one I'm looking for here, but not a lot deeper. Here at the beginning of the year, in the midst of some very hard times for many, I want to write about optimism.

Optimism. For some of us it comes naturally, for others it can be hard slogging. But I think it helpful to try. In the great mess that is our lives, it can help if we can get up in the morning and hope this time, it'll be better. This time I'll do better. I know with my sermons I do the best I can and then how I always look forward to the next chance, the next opportunity, and how this time I will try to make it better.

And sometimes I succeed. Now nothing wrong with savoring the moment. Time flies, and soon I want to be about doing better.

I guess that's why I love the beginnings of a new year. I like that Sunday after Labor Day when the church year begins. I love Rosh Hashanah, which happens not long after, and when we're called to observe the days of awe, such a lovely term, and how it all culminates in a rite of repentance and renewal. And I love the New Year that begins on January 1st, dating to the mists of Roman culture and enshrined in the Julian and its reform the Gregorian calendars.

It's all about a new blank canvas, and endless possibility.

Okay it's never actually a blank canvas. There are some hard facts we have to live with. Over the long haul we humans don't have a particularly good track record. Technology has improved. Sadly along with that we've gotten a lot better at killing each other. Human nature, however, doesn't seem to have changed much, if at all. But, with each New Year I think, this time, we'll do better. Yes, I'm aware that one definition of crazy is doing something over and over while expecting a different outcome. But we can do better.

And so I prefer that warning at the bottom of stock offerings: "Past performance is not a guarantee of future results." Like my friend who says that should she walk out into some one's back yard and steps into a pile of horse manure, her first thought is "Where's the pony?" Probably the wisest of the sayings is that one attributed to the Prophet Mohammed, "Trust in God, but remember to tether your camel." There is a place for hope.

I think it important that despite our sorry record since we started keeping them, we humans have some hope that this time we can get it right. For a couple of reasons, for one, if we long to get it right, and we keep trying, then maybe we won't just repeat our actions. Instead maybe we'll think about it all, we'll feel deep into our hearts, and we'll act from that place which knows the connections.

And, as they say, "let there be peace, and let it begin with me." May we each find that small hope, that desire for the good in this coming year, and may it begin with us.

Happy New Year!

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

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.

Referrals or calls to the church will be passed on to the Lay Ministry, who will call upon Care Crew volunteers.

The Lay Ministry Team: Holly Dobbs, John Dooley, Kate Menard, Rick Richards, Tori Smith and John Wilhelm

The Deacons' Corner

Welcoming a New Deacon. We are joined by Ariadne Greenberg. Ariadne is filling the term of a Deacon who could no longer serve. We are hoping and trusting that her experience will encourage her to consider nomination for a full term. She has had substantial experience in RE and has two sons in the program. Her fresh insights at her first meeting in December confirmed the Deacons' asking her to serve.



Deacon Calling. No surprise: we did not get it all done in December. Amazing how the holidays absorb our time. We try to contact members of our congregation once a year just to touch base and see how our church is serving them. We do not ask for money. We want to assess the opinions and needs of the congregation. Your input provides ideas for the sustenance of our community's growth. Thank you for your response.

Retention of members. We share with the Membership Committee the responsibility to help new members feel welcome and to integrate them into our community. Indeed, doesn't everyone at First Unitarian share this responsibility? The Membership Committee focuses on the first two years and then hands over the third year "class" to the Deacons. We are working with our data cruncher Walter to find a reliable means to identify just who those are so that we can learn if they are still part of church life or have gone out the "back door." Our church community has grown over the years, but that has been mostly due to the influx of new members. We have not found a way as yet of diligently looking after the third year class. Are they engaged with church life? Are they still in the community or did they move? Was there something in our church life that attracted them? Or, something that they hoped to see but did not? We can be proud that our population remains stable and even grows a little. That is opposite to the trends nationally where membership and attendance are sagging. Think what it would mean if we could plug that leak! In December we studied some aspects of this question with a special guest Lisa Sampson from the Annual Budget Drive Team. We are hoping to learn more about this problem as we explore with other members and other ministries within our community.

The Deacons: Ruth Arellana, Senior Deacon; Kate Bowden, Sally Caruso, Shirley DiMatteo, Tom Getz, Ariadne Greenberg, Sharon Kernan, Steve McCloy, Mary Speare



Spiritual Pathways

The new calendar year is a time to look backward and forward, just as Janus (the Roman god of doors, openings, beginnings, and endings) implies in the name of the first month.

In the Spiritual Pathways Program we will pause to appreciate what we have accomplished, while seeking to engage challenges and change.

This winter, the Religious Education Committee will review goals, evaluate curricula and safety practices, and stretch our creative energy toward new and fresh ideas. I will continue to work on comprehensive communications and explore opportunities for a full week faith. In chapel worship for children and youth, we will reflect on balanced messages of hope and action.

Of course, we can always do more, make fewer mistakes, cover different bases. However, as the daylight ever so slowly creeps back, why not consider assessing recent best efforts and inspirational achievements? It is an energizing and effective practice. And, our children are watching and learning from how we live and care for ourselves and others.

These are just a few highlights of uplifting experiences in the congregational lives of our children, youth and adults:

* Marcia Taylor's Joyful Noise Singing Group, with the Community Band, performed beautiful music at the Thanksgiving Sunday service. It was a fun-filled experience for many of us! *Stay tuned, another opportunity soon.*

* The Preschoolers visited our classrooms, jingling bells, singing holiday carols.

* The sixth grade *Neighboring Faiths* group have already visited the Providence Vedanta Society and Temple Beth El. They coordinated a successful Recycled Toy Sale, raising funds for UUSC Ebola Relief.

* The senior high youth had a wonderful Coffee House and led a gift card drive for Dorcas International Institute, hosting staffer, Sarah Stangl, who taught about that agency.

* The eighth grade Coming of Agers and their mentors have been building relationships as they shepherd the UUSC "Guest at Your Table" effort.

* The seventh graders did a wonderful job selling UUSC products this holiday season.

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

It helps me to remember Annie Lamott's analogy that life is mostly like a game of Chutes & 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 & peaceful 2015,

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

A Beach Luau Evening ~ Pasta Supper & Entertainment

Saturday, January 24, 6:00-8:00p

Your hosts, the First Unitarian Coming of Age families, invite you to celebrate *A Beach Luau Evening* featuring a fun pasta supper and a variety of entertainment. Relax, unwind and mingle as your hosts and their families serve you. To further spice up your time, purchase a ticket or two for a chance to take home one of a variety of specialty items. Bring your family and invite your friends!

Individual Ticket // \$8.00 or Family Ticket (four) // \$25.00. Tickets will be available in the Atrium during Coffee Hour beginning Sunday, January 4.

Constantine's Corner



Constantine

Those impetuous youth have much to report; Much liveliness of our usual sort! Our coffeehouse went well, or so it would seem, Not least when one counts the dollars we gleaned – Several hundred units of capitalistic slop, To help us attain the Occident Express' last stop. We'll be in Portland, just wait and you'll see, At GA dancing and chalice-ing with so much esprit. Profound thanks go out, unto all those who came, Would that we could commend each one by name! While coffee was swilled and pastries engorged, Youth shared their skills; their world to be forged. From making music to writing to the creation of art, Each youth thought to herself "How interesting, thou all art!" Other things too are proceeding apace, Striking to apathy a coup de grace. The Dorcas house gift card drive's conclusion this Sunday, Help a refugee whilst wandering this midwinter fray! CON planning begins for our Flying Earth Circus, Working with Sharon youth for our Pythonian purpose. In these interesting times, let us finally say – Happy solstice to all, and to all a fine day.

- Sandy Greenberg

Guest at Your Table Box Return

Sunday, January 4



UU Service Committee Guest at Your Table boxes will be collected on January 4 by the members of our eighth-grade class. With their mentors they will roll the coins so the contributions can be deposited and a check sent to the UUSC.

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

Opportunity to Participate in the Wholly Family Service on February 1

It could be your family's turn this year.

We are looking for families interested in participating in our Wholly Family Service on Sunday, February 1. 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 in the church office (421.7970 or dre@firstunitarianprov.org)



Sight Lines

From the President

As I write this, Christmas is 10 days away, and the season is just as magical to me now as it ever was when I was a child. I still turn off all the lights in the house just to gaze at the lit tree; I still tweak the ornaments so they are just so, and tell myself the stories of their provenance; I still read recipes for breakfast treats (my mother called them num-nuns) to decide what I will serve on Christmas morning; I still get excited thinking about the white velvet cape I bought for our 4 year old granddaughter who wistfully said, while watching *Frozen* for the hundredth time, "I wish I had a cape;" I still rehearse with the church choir to be ready for our lovely Christmas Eve service, and know I will tear up again as I always do that night.

For me, church has always been a big part of Christmas. But church is now a big part of the whole year, and it has become if anything more important in my life than ever before. And so as we begin 2015, I think about the year ahead and feel excited and a little challenged to help to make it a banner year for First Unitarian. We have new members to welcome, a search committee to choose, a budget to formulate and a drive to meet it, a beloved minister to celebrate, and all the while our community cries out for our help and support. We "do" church by feeding the hungry, knitting mittens for the cold, helping out the homeless, writing letters on behalf of the imprisoned, welcoming the stranger, and ministering to each other as circumstances warrant. I look forward to being a part of a community that understands this, and seeing how we can do it a little better, this year, and every year.

Happy new year to you and yours.

Love,

Beth Armstrong
President, Prudential Committee
pres@firstunitarianprov.org

Report from the Annual Budget Drive Team

The Annual Budget Drive Team hosted legacy donors, in appreciation for their generosity and vision, at the December Parish Supper's performance of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* by the Aurea Ensemble. Thank you! If you are interested in including First Unitarian Church in your estate plan, please contact Posey (admin@firstunitarianprov.org) in the office for more information.

Lisa Sampson and Anne Connor, Co-Chairs



A Testimonial from Frank and Arlene McGonagle

There's an old axiom: price is what you pay, but value is what you get. Over the years we believe our contributions to First Unitarian Church have been wisely used for a variety of worthwhile causes relating to church property, worship and social functions, plus important charitable causes in need of our support. I can only wish that our federal and state income taxes were being spent with equivalent efficiency.

Treasurer's Report



On December 1, with 41.6% of the Church year completed, we had received 45.3% of our anticipated pledge income. This was without several of our largest pledges, which have since been paid in full to take advantage of the year end tax benefits. Remember any payments made prior to the end of the tax year (December 31) can be used as a deduction from your 2014 tax liability.

All indications are that our pledge income for the FY15 (July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015) will be on target if the current pace of payment is continued.

Rental income is coming in better than originally anticipated and the parking lot is filling up. All of these are good signs for the end of the budget year.

Graham Nye, Treasurer



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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

January All-Parish Supper

Friday, January 9, 2015

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. The theme of this concert will be “Celebrate Being American.” We will celebrate what’s right and quirky and lovely about our American heritage in song, musical instruments and dancing. Their selections 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. Families are welcome.



Saturday Social Supper

January 3, 2015, starting at 5:30p

There will be two suppers held in January. One at the home of Beth and Stew Armstrong in Bristol. The other at the home of Janet Downing Taylor in Providence. People new to the church are always encouraged to attend; it is a very nice way to meet others from our church family.

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.

February All-Parish Supper

Friday, February 6, 2015 (one week early than usual)

The topic of our after-dinner program will be GLOBAL CLIMATE JUSTICE. Our speaker will be Timmons Roberts, Professor of Environmental Studies and Sociology at Brown University, who is a dynamic and provocative speaker. His powerpoint presentation will include a review of how and why climate change creates injustice and who suffers first and the most. Also, who is responsible for the problem, and who is acting to address the issues. Timmons will describe the current state of UN negotiations on climate justice. And the urgent need for strong action at the national, state and local levels. Don’t miss this important and timely presentation and discussion.

Save the Date: Annual May Breakfast

Saturday, May 16, 2015

May breakfast is a welcoming, long-standing Rhode Island tradition. This year First Unitarian will be hosting its 2nd May breakfast here. Rebecca Alberg, Jim Barfoot, and Mary Frappier are starting the process. For it to be successful, 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.

First Unitarian Cook-off followed by Community Band Sing-a-long & Jam Sunday, February 1, during Coffee Hour

This year’s cook-off will feature casseroles. 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, February 1. 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 John Wilhelm (jfwilhelm99@yahoo.com) or Sarah Leonard (sarah.leonard@iconplc.com).

Immediately following this year’s Cook-off join the Community Band for a first ever fire-side sing-a-long and jam. If you like to sing or play or hang around people who are singing and playing, this is your chance! Come one and all and all ages. We will have song sheets and welcome suggestions in advance. Enjoy the cook-off and then join the band for some music! Contact Kate Bowden (kbowdenesq@gmail.com).

HATS OFF TO...

Ann Boyd, Nori Duncan, Mary Frappier and the Deacons for organizing the largest Thanksgiving Dinner that the church has ever had. Just about 70 people attended including new friends.

Helen Haynes, her grandson Adam and Carol Giliberto for so beautifully decorating the Meeting House for the holidays.

Janet Downing Taylor for the cast iron fireplace backing that adds warmth to our Sunday fires.

Our Coffee Hour Providers last month:

Tony Allen, Gaby Petruck, Marilyn Eanet, Mary Kollar, Anne Connor, Mary Frappier, Spence Hobbs, Ralph Mero, Steve McCloy, Danny Kirschner and Erin, Roxanne Stern, Carol Giliberto, Bobbi Fisler, Elissa Emerson, Betty Finn, George Beshers, Carol Adams, Lyn Bradford, Yvonne Federowicz, Suzanne Austin, Enca Hansen, Christine Boucher, Jacqui Nye, John Moran and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.

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

Our readers at the Christmas Eve services.



Community Life

The Women's Alliance

Monday, January 5, 2015

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

Changing Year, Changing Life

Speaker: Rev. Gwendolyn Howard

The new year gives us a chance to reflect on the past year and contemplate the coming year, which may bring changes that we can embrace or fear.

Gwendolyn is a UU minister who has served congregations in Illinois and central New York. She teaches business ethics as an adjunct faculty member of a local university, as well as maintaining a small private practice as a clinical social worker. She now serves as our Community Minister at First Unitarian.

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

UUA Common Read Discussion ~ Save the Dates, Read the Book

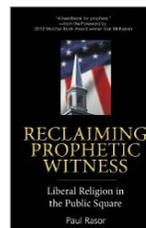
Wednesday evenings, January 21 & 28, 2015 from 7-8:30p

The 2014-15 UUA Common Read is "Reclaiming Prophetic Witness: Liberal Religion in the Public Square" by Paul Rasor. Leading UU theologian, Paul Rasor, dispels the myth that conservative Christianity is the only valid religious voice in national debates on social policy. A Common Read invites participants to read and discuss the same book in a given period of time.

The book is available at our Atrium Bookstore or through www.uuabookstore.org

Convener: Rev. Ralph Mero, retired Unitarian minister who has recently moved to Providence.

Sign-up is appreciated. Contact Cathy in the church office (dre@firstunitarianprov.org).



An Evening Path to Membership Class

Thursday, January 22, 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 this month! 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, January 22.

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



Transylvania Partner Church Update

There are a lot of things to report from the Partner Church Committee. This year we received word that the Szentegyhaza Church congregation constructed a small gazebo on their existing church property. This gazebo will be used for wedding ceremonies, church events and can be used as a general meeting area for after services fellowship.

The planned trip to visit Transylvania is well under way. About twenty people have shown an interest in going this

summer, with ten people already committed to go in June. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Tom Getz (thomas1getz@prodigy.net) for further information about the trip.

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)

Our Coffee Hour

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.

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.

Community Life

Welcome Our Newest Members!

Since September 2014, ten (10) new members have joined the church. Look for them on Sundays and add your personal greetings.

Lyn Bradford



Lyn has been attending Unitarian churches since about the age of 12. She had wonderful times as a teenage with the LRY (Liberal Religious Youth). She has lived in RI for several years and has two grown daughters and two granddaughters. Although originally from Massachusetts, she was lured here by her older daughter needing help with her two young children.

She had not been attending church for the last 15 or so years and realized something was missing in her life. She found First Unitarian Church in Providence to be most welcoming with many wonderful people and finds it a real pleasure and honor to become a member of such a church. She looks forward to becoming more involved.

Diana Cole



Diana moved to Warren, RI over three years ago from Massachusetts to be with her partner, Mark. A life-long Unitarian, she enjoyed an active career as a professional singer and teacher in the Boston area and as soloist at the Follen Church (Unitarian) in Lexington, MA.

She is now working as a stained glass artist and writing poetry and is a member of Grace Note Singers, a bedside singing organization. She is enjoying the choir at First Unitarian and looks forward to being part of the community and ongoing spiritual adventure here.

Kristin Kolesar Fabris



Kristin just moved back to the area with her husband Barret after living in Dublin, Ireland. While she enjoyed attending UU services there, she is happy to be back in Rhody and to join this wonderful congregation. She currently resides in Barrington, where she also works in private practice as a chiropractor.

Yvonne Federowicz



Yvonne is glad to officially join this wonderful and warm community. She has been enjoying her visits to First Unitarian Church ever since she attended an Earth-centered spirituality seminar around 15 years ago. She has degrees in Mathematics from Brown and Geography from Boston University, and works as a web programmer in the Brown Libraries. Non-work hours often find her gardening, at the gym or riding, followed by time with friends, scifi, cats and coffee.

She also works toward the restoration of our native American chestnut trees, including field work, outreach and coordination, but also... baking and testing experimental chestnut desserts, for which friends are often recruited.

Joe & Bobbi Fisler



Joe and Bobbi moved to Providence this fall from Williamsburg, VA where they became UUs. They came to Providence to be near their only grandchild Tara, who makes life magical and special every day! Tara is 6 years old and the daughter of Kathi Fisler, a member of First Unitarian and the Prudential Committee.

They are retired educators from the NYC Board of Education. Joe's supervising career also brought him to work in the Westwood, NJ school system. They were born and raised on Staten Island where they raised their two daughters, Kathi and Jodi. Joe, a graduate of Brown, is an avid bridge and tennis player. Bobbi loves sewing and cooking. They both love traveling and being with family.

Carol Giliberto



Carol is married to William Tilchin and they have two children, Lizzie and Benny Tilchin. Her family has lived in Rhode Island since 1978. She has worked as an attorney in private practice and for the Rhode Island Department of Health and Human Services. Carol is a landscape painter, enjoys the outdoors, gardening and her volunteer activities. Becoming active in the Women's Alliance was her introduction to Providence First Unitarian Church. From there she became interested in the greater community which led her to join as a member this year.

Jean Plunkett



Jean lives on the East Side of Providence and first came to First Unitarian years ago when her daughter was small. After a gap of more than 20 years she started coming to services again nearly two years ago and decided this was where she belongs. She has been a newspaper editor, a librarian, and a social worker, still does freelance editing, and is an adjunct professor in the Journalism Department at the University of Rhode Island. However, her greatest joy is in being a grandmother to her two grandsons, August, nearly 4, and Leo, 6 weeks.

Brett Summers & David Anthony



Brett and David live in Providence with their three children, Willa (14), Jasper (12) and Hazel (6, going on 11). They have been attending First Unitarian for the past four years, and are pleased to now affirm their involvement in the community by signing the book (though they were sad to miss the cutoff for the first book, which dates back to

the church's origins). Brett has worked in education at several levels, including primarily as a high school English teacher. Dave is an academic family physician who teaches at Brown and sees patients in Pawtucket. Their children go to three different local schools and bring them joy on a (nearly) daily basis!



Spiritual Development

Child Dedications

Sunday, January 11, 2015

Dedications of children of members of the church will be celebrated during the worship service on January 11. If you are interested in having your child(ren) dedicated, contact Religious Education Cathy Seggel (dre@

firstunitarianprov.org).

Mid Winter Week of Worship

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; January 13-15 from 7:00-8:00p

Were you inspired by the intensive worship experience of UU General Assembly last June? Did you miss that opportunity for deep inspiration? In either case, come enjoy an intensive worship experience at First Unitarian Providence and feel revived!

- Rev. Mary Margaret Earl will reflect on Social Class and its effect on our lives.

- A good ol' Fashioned Hymn Sing from the Silver and Teal Hymnals.

- A Contemplative Experience with Fred and James.

Families are welcome at all times. Think about singing together! Childcare will be available. Energy, Warmth, Caring Community!



Tai Chi

Tuesdays from 7:00-8:30p

Tai Chi class for Beginners to Advanced. Children to Seniors. All inclusive. Instruction and Performance. Please contact Sean by email (seanconnor@cox.net).

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.

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 13 & 27, 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, January 11, 2015 from 7:00-9:00p

TOPIC: The Importance of Role Models

Discussion will concern role models and how their influence affects our lives. Emphasis will be on strong role models and their impact on our development – how they foster good decision making which ultimately leads to happy productive lives. Consideration will also be given to weak role models whose legacy can undermine traditional values and increase the disconnect of individuals from their communities and wider society.

Facilitator Paul Bazin (pbazin11@gmail.com)



Social Justice

Standing on the Side of Love

Sunday, January 11, 2015 at 12:15p

We have several projects on the table. The legislature will be in session soon, and changes in the State House make the situation for homeless people more dire than ever. Our partner, Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, conducted a survey of the homeless population in November, and will ask us to join them in legislative work and direct action.

The Elder Village planning group is in full swing. They are establishing a highly successful community-based system that supports older folks in living independently in their homes for as long as possible. Watch for them at the SSL table in the atrium after services.

We're also in support of the Gun Sense movement, and welcome some organizing at First Unitarian. Stop by our table after Sunday service and let us know if you'd like to join forces with others in the congregation.



Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly meeting, Sunday, January 4, 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.

First Unitarian Mobile Loaves & Fishes

Tuesday, January 6

Thanks to all who helped with our Mobile Loaves & Fishes mission to Harrington Hall last month. As you may know, First Unitarian is part of an 11 church coalition whose mission is to feed the hungry & homeless in RI. Every month, on the first Tuesday, we are responsible for serving the men at Harrington Hall, who would otherwise not have a meal. We transport the meal and serve the men there. We rely on YOU, our fellow congregants to assist us in this mission. And you have been both gracious and generous with your time and donations, and we thank you. Your work and donations helped us feed almost 100 homeless men.

For the December run, we prepared a hot entrée of pasta & homemade meatballs, with a dinner salad, roll and beverage. Additionally, the men were given a sandwich, a protein snack, fruit and choice of various toiletries, as well as a new pair of socks & boxers. Lastly, hot coffee and holiday pies topped with whipped cream completed their meal. Their gratitude was overwhelming, and they ask that we pass on their thanks and prayers to all who helped make the evening possible - it truly was a special and moving experience for all involved.

We are always looking for volunteers, as well as donations. Specifically, we need seasonally appropriate clothing, large cans of tuna or chicken, protein snacks (hard boiled eggs, cheese snacks, trail mix, nuts), and FRUIT.

Please stop by our table in the Atrium at coffee hour, to learn more about us and this meaningful mission, and to see how you can help.



The Mitten Tree

On December 28, 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 will be collecting hats, either knit, purchased, or gently used. 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 19

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: Nori Duncan (nori.duncan@gmail.com) or Martha Manno (Mmanno7@comcast.net)

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.

Volunteer Opportunity: Staff the Magazine Recycle Table

1 Hour/week on Sundays

Earn money for the Food Pantry

Put out magazines before church. Put away at the end of coffee hour. People donate used magazines; others pay \$.50-\$1 for a magazine. Money goes directly to the food pantry to buy more food for those in need. Yearly donations collected: \$450-\$500.

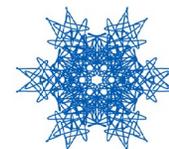
Call or see Ruth Arellana (401.383.0385)

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 NEW YEAR'S DAY Church Office Closed	2	3 2 Saturday Social Suppers (Armstrong's in Bristol & Taylor in Providence)
4 Worship Service 10:30a <u>at 12:00p</u> Mentor/Mentee <u>at 12:15p</u> Neighborhood SJ	5 Women's Alliance 11:00a Zendo 7:00p	6 First Unitarian Mobile Loaves & Fishes Lay Ministry 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	7 Prudential Committee 6:30p Meditation 7:00p	8 Deacons 5:30p Worship Committee 7:00p	9 All Parish Supper 5:45p Program 7:45p	10
11 Worship Service 10:30a <u>at 12:15p</u> Standing on the Side of Love UU Men 7:00p	12 Zendo 7:00p	13 Finance 6:00p Winter Worship 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	14 Winter Worship 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	15 Winter Worship 7:00p	16	17
18 Worship Service 10:30a	19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Church Office Closed Food Pantry Open 2:00p-6:00p Zendo 7:00p	20 Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	21 UUA Common Read 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	22 Path to Membership Class 6:00-9:00p	23	24 Coming of Age Pasta Supper 5:30p
25 Worship Service 10:30a	26 Zendo 7:00p	27 Tai Chi 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	28 UUA Common Read 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	29	30	31