



Services in the Meeting House

Sunday, February 1 Wholly Family, a Multigenerational Service

10:30a

Cathy, James and Representative of Our Families

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

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

Sunday, February 8 "Awakened Ways"

10:30a

Rev. Parisa Parsa

Times of transition are often looked upon as things to get through - a bridge from here to there, with no value except in speeding transit. Spiritual traditions have long taught us that times of transition are actually rich teachers. Whether we are traveling through grief, uncertainty, from one phase of life to another, or making a physical journey, we have an opportunity to see ourselves, our world, and our place in it anew. This morning we will explore the rich time of transition between ministers as a spiritual journey for the congregation.

The Rev. Parisa Parsa is our ministerial settlement representative. She is also a well known and widely respected preacher within our Association.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

After Sunday service, there will be a workshop to introduce you to the process of searching for a new minister and answer questions about the journey.

Sunday, February 15 The Middle Way of Liberal Religion

10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Today James will reflect on the Fourth of our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes, our call to a "free and responsible search for truth and meaning." He believes that our do-it-yourself spirituality is found precisely within the tension between free and responsible.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, February 22 Imperfectionism

10:30a

Rev. Ellen Quaadgras

We are surrounded by messages telling us what success looks like and how to achieve it - perfection is an ideal toward which we are to strive. Yet all of us are also imperfect, vulnerable, and human. How do we cultivate an appreciation for our unique and irreplaceable selves in this often unforgiving world?

Today our pulpit guest is the Rev. Ellen Quaadgras, minister of our sister congregation the Westminster Unitarian Church, in East Greenwich. Ellen and James are engaging our Free Church tradition of pulpit exchanges, while she is with us, James will be visiting with the Westminster congregation.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, March 1 On Belonging to A Spiritual Co-op

10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Today James will be speaking on the joys and complications of our "barely organized" religion, where we have wild freedom, but also responsibilities. He will outline some of what that means.



We are a Welcoming Congregation

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Staff

- Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
- Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, Community Minister
- Rev. Gene Dyszlewski, Community Minister
- Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
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Monkey Mind

Recently I stumbled upon a sermon by the Reverend Dr. Augustus Mendon Lord (you can see his portrait in the “ministers parlor,” the big one over the fireplace), who served here between 1890 and 1931. I’ve often wondered about someone with the name Augustus Lord, and what that must have meant in his life.

I was very taken with his sermon “Bolshevism and the Churches,” preached in 1919. He began his sermon with an anecdote I was unfamiliar with.

“Dr. William Ellery Channing, the founder of the Unitarian Church in America, had a brother who was a physician. One day when the physician was crossing Boston Common a stranger hurried after him and touching him on the shoulder said, ‘Someone has just told me that you are Doctor Channing, sir, and I want you to know how thoroughly I approve of a sermon of yours I read in the paper a day or two ago.’ ‘You are mixing me up with my brother,’ was the smiling answer. He preaches. I practice.”

I liked that. And it set up the rest of his sermon rather nicely. He went on to describe how in Russia religion and its clergy of all stripes were condemned as parasites. Something in the news of the day.

He then stated, “I am no apologist for things as they are.” He described “...unjust privilege and arbitrary social and political distinctions, and against a hierarchical church and an exclusive theology which exalted such distinctions into a religion, and gave them divine sanction...” which he underscored, justly deserves the rebuke of those thinking people of whatever class.

These days we have a reputation in our town as “the social justice” church. I know it isn’t entirely deserved, nor should that title be ours alone with that “the.” But, also, it does speak to how we are generally seen, and some of how we see ourselves for the most part.

And, I know that my own small contribution to this sense of activism which I feel very much a part of, is to over and over again recall us to the fact that we are not a “social justice church,” but rather a spiritual community of reflection, who find ourselves called by virtue of coming to this church to that backward turn, to put the light on our own selves, to see who we really are, and how we really are connected. And, then, and then: from that to reach out to the world. From that great insight of connection, to work as best we can toward the healing of the world.

And I find in that hundred year old, almost, sermon, something of the same spirit.

And so we continue.

See you in church!



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

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 Ministers, who will call upon Care Crew volunteers.

The Lay Ministry Team:

Holly Dobbs, John Dooley, Kate Menard, Rick Richards, Tori Smith, John Wilhelm



Deacons’ Corner

This cold weather will pass.



Who are the New Deacons? We

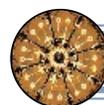
continue to seek persons who will join the Board of Deacons in place of folks who found they could not fulfill their commitment. As we look at this need, we also recognize the importance of youth as part of the structure of our church community. Clearly our youth were galvanized by this year’s General Assembly and are seeking to add their insights and energy into the work of our community. Should there not be room for a youth member in all of our committees and boards? We trust in the vision of our Prudential Committee to promote this ideal.

Deacons Calling. We try to contact members of our congregation once a year just to touch bases and see how our church is serving them. We continue to reach out and hoped to complete our calls by the end of January. Feedback has generated some good new ideas and demonstrated the strength of the ties that hold us together. When we call YOU, please respond. 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.

Engagement. What does it mean to be “engaged” with the church community? This topic arose in our January meeting. What does it mean to you? We think it’s not about money (though money’s important). It’s not about being a worker bee (though that’s important). We think it has something to do with Showing Up.

What Talents Can You Share? What First Unitarian gets done comes from the backs and hands of the many volunteers who show up and do things. If you have something you’d like to share simply contact one of the Deacons. Stay warm.

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



WHEEL OF LIFE

Congratulations to: Rachel and Lach Franquemont on the birth of their daughter Emily Helen on January 2, 2015.



Spiritual Pathways

Be The Love

February means dark, short days and chilly temperatures. As someone who thrives in sunny, hot weather, I search for sources of light and warmth and they can be found.

Locally, I am inspired by our program's involvement in the Crossroads RI Sandwich Brigade, the outdoor mitten tree, stocked by Knitters for a Better World with help from kindergarten and children of all ages. I feel the weekly sharing of positive energy during our chapel worship services, with junior-highers leading and preschoolers dancing. There is the Coming of Age community's hard-working, creative accomplishment of their Beach Luau Pasta Supper fundraiser. And, by the time you read this, our senior high youth group will have hosted their 2 day Monty Py Con - Flying Earth Circus, an Eco-Minded UU Youth Conference for teens and their advisors from regional BCD congregations right here on our church campus.

Virtually, I recently found a new resource "for those who seek to live 'divided no more' as Parker Palmer says, and to connect you to others who feel this same passion for possibility." From the website (<http://bethelove.net>): "Be the Love is a mirror for those seeking to live into Beloved Community. Through this site, we offer stories & tools to help you choose love." It is an online initiative meant to inspire hope, courage and transformative practice. You may want to check it out.

Professionally, I continue as LREDA President, leading monthly sessions of its Board in our mission to support the field of liberal religious education. I serve on multiple guiding teams with UU minister and musician leaders and attend sessions including the UUA Board and Meadville Lombard's Fahs Collaborative. This month, I look forward to my colleague, Karen Bellevance Grace, coming to lead a program about *A Full Week UU Faith* for our volunteer teachers. Karen is the New England Region's Life Span Faith Formation Consultant.

My heart is warmed by my vision of serving as an architect and curator of networks and resources that support individual, congregational and denominational needs to transform ourselves and our world.

Valentine's Day is coming, that Hallmark holiday, sometimes with chocolate and flowers. I prefer to envision it as Friendship Day, a pause to appreciate and celebrate our friends, family and beloveds. February may be a bitter cold month, climate-wise, but it is full of warm possibilities in this congregation. There are unlimited opportunities to help make positive change in Providence, RI and far beyond.

Stay warm, Be the love and Take good care,

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

UU Service Committee

Another worthwhile resource is the Standing On The Side of Love's Thirty Days of Love effort, a spiritual journey for social justice. Their website showcases ideas for a month of living, sharing, building, reflecting and celebrating courageous love. It includes calendars for families. (www.standingonthesideoflove.org/30daysoflove/)



First U Family Game Night

Friday, February 27 from 5:30 - 7:30p

The RE Committee is excited to announce that on Friday, February 27 from 5:30-7:30p they'll be hosting a night of games, pizza and fun for all ages (yes even the toddlers).

You are welcome to bring a favorite table game, but there will be games provided. Hope to see you there.

February Means Crossroads RI Sandwich Brigade at First Unitarian

Each February, our Sunday School participates in the Crossroads RI Sandwich Brigade, preparing 100 sandwich lunch bags on each Sunday this month. The mission of Crossroads is to assist the homeless and disconnected on their journey toward a better quality of life through the provision of essential life services, advocacy, and referral.

The Sandwich Brigade is a collaborative effort between our Spiritual Development and Social Justice ministries. This year, the seventh-graders, eighth-graders, senior high youth, and young adults will prepare the lunches. Parents from the RE program help purchase supplies and deliver the lunches.

On Sunday, February 1, a leader from Crossroads RI be with us to talk with the Coming of Age community after church in the Auditorium. All are invited to attend.

A Special Request for 100 Juice Boxes on a month of Sundays!

Drop-off on Sundays during February

Our third grade class is helping to coordinate a Juice Drive as part of fulfilling our Crossroads RI Sandwich Brigade project to provide 100 drinks per week in 100 complete lunch bags for a month of Sundays. Juice boxes, small cans, pouches, or small bottled waters are all welcome. Donations can be dropped off in our Atrium Food Pantry Barrel or brought to RE Chapel or 3rd grade classroom.

Guest at Your Table Drive

Thank you to all who contributed to this annual social justice effort. The eighth-graders and their mentors are counting the donations in the boxes that were returned. The final results will be reported soon. Stay tuned.





Sight Lines

From the President

I am teaching myself how to knit this winter. I am not a detail-oriented perfectionist – more like a big-picture kind of person – so I willingly let go of small mistakes as I knit. Knitting makes me feel less guilty about watching television in the evening, and it keeps my lap warm. The results are nothing to brag about, but so what? The first efforts, which were not designed to be anything in particular, just rectangles that used up some leftover yarn from my crocheting days, are filled with pretty obvious mistakes. But I decided they worked as doll blankets for my granddaughters' American Girl dolls, so they got wrapped up as Christmas presents. Then I decided to make a scarf. It turned out better, not good, but when I finished it off, I messed up, and the last row is full of open stitches that will unravel if you so much as look at them. Then I decided to try again, another scarf, and this time for the Mitten Tree at church. Knowing that someone might actually wear the fruits of my labor made me more careful and also made me feel better about trying. I brought it to Kathy to hang on the tree last week.

I love that there is a Mitten Tree. I love that there is a Food Pantry. I love that we help with the Mobile Loaves & Fishes ministry. I love that we have a Caring Crew to help with parishioners' problems. I love that we have an Amnesty International Write-a-thon every year. I love that we participate in the Guest at Your Table fundraiser for UUSC every winter.

I sometimes think of the number of people whose lives are touched in some way by the efforts of members of First Unitarian. Our programs have a ripple effect throughout our Rhode Island community and beyond, and we and our children should feel good about it. We matter. Our little world would be poorer without us.

So it is important that we stay strong and committed to our ideals. For this we need a warm, welcoming, and functioning building. We need staff: a minister, of course, and Religious Education professionals, musicians, custodians, membership coordinators, and security. We need materials for worship and education. We need heat and lights and gas and snow shovels. We need to publicize ourselves and make newcomers welcome. It all takes money. I think it is important that we remain viable and that we be prepared to grow in our impact on our community. I hope you are thinking about this, too, and I hope that you are proud of what we are, and what we can be. And if you are knitting, add a pair of mittens or a scarf or a hat to the Mitten Tree. Someone might be a little warmer for your efforts.

Beth Armstrong
 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

Keep up the good work!!! With 50% of the fiscal year completed, we have received 55% of all pledges. This is about 5% above last year's receipts as of January 1. Contributing to this are the numerous individuals who paid in full to take advantage of tax deduction benefits. Our Sunday cash collections are still 5% below what is anticipated.



Another area of strength are rentals (parking & facility) which appear on a course to exceed what was anticipated. It is helpful to notify the office if you will not be able to complete your pledge due to family needs. We aim for a balanced budget and work closely with Posey to see that expenditures do not exceed receipts.

Graham Nye, Treasurer

From the Annual Budget Drive Team

A Testimonial:

Shelley Stephenson and Keith Brown



We feel we've learned a lot over 11 years attending First Unitarian. On the spiritual side, we've come to appreciate how the community weaves together different faith traditions to provide soul sustenance and foster mindfulness. And on the practical side, through work on the budget and other committees, we know that there is nothing given or accidental about what the church offers us--it is a product of hard work and careful stewardship. We know all too well that we are drinking from a well we did not dig; we don't want to feel bad when today's youth grow up to ask us what happened to the water. So, though aware it's never enough, we give what we can.

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Find Us on Facebook!

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

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



Community Life

February All-Parish Supper

Friday, February 6 (note the date: a week earlier than usual)

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: Global Climate Justice

Our after-dinner program will feature a discussion and analysis of climate change and how it creates injustice. Who suffers first and the most, who is responsible for the problem, and who is acting to address the issues?

Our presenter will be Dr. Timmons Roberts, Professor of Environmental Studies and Sociology at Brown University, who is a dynamic and provocative speaker, and who is the leader in current efforts to pass Rhode Island's first comprehensive climate change legislation. He will emphasize what we as citizens can do about climate change. Timmon's powerpoint presentation will also describe the current state of UN negotiations on climate justice, and will emphasize the urgent need for strong action at the national, state and local levels. What can WE do? Don't miss this important and timely presentation and discussion.

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).

Valentine's Saturday Social Suppers

February 14 starting at 5:30p (note one week later than usual)

There will be two suppers held in February, both with a Valentine's Day theme. One at the home of Beth and Stew Armstrong in Bristol. The other at Elissa Emerson's 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, 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 March 7 Supper will be held at the home of Neil & Cheryl Bartholomew in Providence.

March All-Parish Supper

Friday, March 6 (note the date: a week earlier than usual)

The topic of our after-dinner program will be THE THREAT OF ISIS. This program will involve a description and analysis of the dramatic rise of the self declared "islamic state" (IS), it's violent and brutal takeover of major areas of Iraq and Syria and it's continuing threat to the region and to the world. The international community's response has seemed both inadequate and haphazard.

Our speaker will be Professor Emily Cury. She is a Carnegie visiting scholar of Arab Regional Studies at Northeastern University, specializing in Muslim American relations. This program is sponsored by the World Affairs Committee.

Save the Date:

Conversation about Education in Rhode Island

Friday, March 20

Our Congregation has been invited to be part of a statewide conversation on the future of education in RI. This highly interactive event will be lead by Andrea Castaneda of the RI Dept. of Education. All are welcome and parents are urged to attend. Childcare will be available.

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 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



Be Our Valentine this month and bring treats for our Coffee Hour. 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. You just might get a kiss!

Atrium Bookstore

Besides the books that we get from the UUA's own Beacon Press and Skinner House, we have begun to offer books from Skylight Paths Publishing, an interfaith publisher of various faith traditions. And don't forget: We also carry books written by several church members and by our own minister.

HATS OFF TO...

Our Coffee Hour Providers last month:

Janet Noble, Bobbi Fisler, Elissa Emerson, Marilyn Eanet, Nancy Ferrazza, Holly Dobbs, Anne Connor, Spence Hobbs, Mary Frappier, Dan & Kimberli Gray, Marcia Lieberman, Katherine Ahlquist, Tony Allen, Kelley Smith, Karen Boulanger, Russell Gifford, Mary Kollar, Lyn Bradford, Vikki Bristlin, Chiara Van Erp, Tom Getz, Dee Reynolds, The Transylvania Partner Church Committee, Roberta Groch, Sue Meyer, Robert Schacht and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.



Community Life

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. The cook-off will be held during Coffee Hour on Sunday, February 1. All are welcome to join in and last minute casseroles will be accepted.

Immediately following the Cook-off, join the Community Band for a 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. Contact Kate Bowden (kbowdenesq@gmail.com)

New Programs:

Vegan Cooking

Rev. Mary Margaret will offer two vegan cooking classes in February:

February 5: A Very Vegan Brunch

Learn how to make a brunch that will satisfy everyone in your family.

February 19: The Vegan Baker

Come learn how to make your favorite sweets dairy free!

Suggested donation of \$10 will cover the cost of the food and contribute to the Minister's emergency fund to help those in need.

Vinyasa Yoga

1st and 3rd Thursdays monthly at 7:00p starting February 5

A new Yoga class will be offered partly with the help of the youth group, and will be taught by Ariadne Greenberg. Ariadne is a senior yoga teacher with thousands hours of teaching experience. The class will be an all levels vinyasa style class open to youth and adults, whether experienced or beginner. Please bring a mat.

Contact Ariadne (ariadne15@cox.net)

Save the Dates:

Round-the-Table Dinners: Can You Host?

Saturday, March 21

Round-the-Table Dinners offer six to eight potluck dinners on the same night at multiple locations around the state. These small gatherings (8 to 12 guests) are a great opportunity to get to know fellow UUs in a more intimate setting than the Saturday Suppers or Parish Suppers.

We are looking for hosts for our upcoming Round-the-Table Dinners. To host one of these small dinners stop by the signup table during coffee hour or contact John Dooley (dool@cox.net) or Membership Coordinator Jenn Nardone (mem@firstunitarianprov.org).

Annual May Breakfast

Saturday, May 16

May breakfast is a welcoming, long-standing tradition in Rhode Island. This year First Unitarian will be hosting its second May breakfast. 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, or organize for a couple of hours? If you 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).

Women's Alliance Programs

The Women's Alliance

Monday, February 2

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

Topic: Changing Year, Changing Life

Big Nazo Lab: Unique Puppets and Spectacle

Speaker: Erminio Pinque

Erminio will discuss the inspiration for the characters created by his puppets, masks and wearable sculpture, and how he collaborates with other artists to perform in a variety of venues here in Rhode Island and throughout the world.

Erminio Pinque is founder and artistic director of the Big Nazo Lab, based in Providence. His larger-than-life-sized aliens, robots and animal-hybrid characters have performed in parades, festivals, television projects and stage shows throughout the USA, Europe and Asia.

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

Antiques & Uniques – Indoor Yard Sale

Saturday, April 25 – 10:00a-2:00p

Put aside things now for donating to the Alliance Indoor Yard Sale. 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 contacting Janet Downing Taylor (401.751.7969, jdtaylor39@verizon.net) or Dee Reynolds (401.272.0880, deereynoldsprov@gmail.com). Sponsored by the Women's Alliance, proceeds after expenses 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 St. 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.



Spiritual Development

Summer Services 2015

Our worship services from mid-June to Labor Day weekend are led by members and friends of the congregation and occasional guest speakers. They are planned and hosted by the Worship Committee. Summer services are an opportunity for us to learn more about the spiritual insights, passions, and life-changing events that are important to the people who share this religious community with us. We have not yet decided on a theme that will tie together the 2015 summer services, but we are nonetheless ready to gather ideas for speakers and/or topics. So please give us your suggestions about possible speakers, 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.

Worship Committee members: Neil Bartholomew (chair), Jim Barfoot, Elissa Emerson, Betty Finn, Lynda Gulley, Jacqui Nye

Art in the Atrium

The February show will exhibit 2 familiar artists from our congregation. Bruce Whyte will show his photographs and Irene Allen her acrylic abstract paintings. Irene has chosen some of her work that features red or pink, in order to celebrate Valentines Day! We will be strictly enforcing our rule that the art be ready to hang.

The opening will take place on Friday, February 6 prior to the Parish Supper at 5:00p. Please contact Chiara Van Erp (romano-vanerp-design@cox.net)

Interested in Buying One of the Pieces of Art in the Atrium?

From time to time people have asked if they could purchase a piece exhibited in the Atrium Art Gallery. In response, the Art in the Atrium Committee and the Prudential Committee instituted a policy for exhibitors.

Exhibitors will be allowed to sell their pieces. The artists will give 25% of the price of their sale as a donation to the church.

If you are interested in a piece, look for the binder on the coffee table in the Atrium for prices and contact information; you can then contact the artist directly.

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 (funjac@hotmail.com) will be glad to explain how you can provide an arrangement and to schedule your donation. Your flower offering will be greatly appreciated. Please put "Sunday Flowers" in the subject line when contacting her.



Glass Flowers by
Chris Belleau
from the Gallery Belleau
on Wickenden Street

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)

Tai Chi

Tuesdays from 7:00-8:30p

Tai Chi class for Beginners to Advanced. Children to Seniors. All inclusive. Instruction and Performance.

Contact Sean Connor (seanconnor@cox.net).

UUMen

Sunday, February 8 from 7:00-9:00p

TOPIC: "Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me" though a valuable self-affirming mantra, shares the same reality as Santa and the Easter Bunny.

Few of us have escaped being teased but not all have been bullied---or have we?

The February UU Men's group will take a look at the definition, process and impact of teasing/ bullying and when the former crosses over to the later. Participants are encouraged to share personal experiences in the safe and supportive setting our group provides.

Facilitator: Tim Dawes (dawg1280@gmail.com)



Social Justice

Winter Hibernation Land Rights Seminar

Starting Sunday, February 22 for 5 weeks at 12:15p

Title: In honor of newly-elected officials seeking RI's economic renewal:

"JOBS!-The Land Offers Full Employment at High Wages!"

Text: Free 10-page SUMMARY of Henry George's 599-page "Progress & Poverty."

Contact Cathy (cathorloff@cox.net) during coffee hour for a copy.



Standing on the Side of Love

Please join us at our next meeting after service on Sunday, February 15. We have partnered with Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless on a project to end homelessness among military veterans by 2016. This project is called 0:2016, and Rhode Island is one of a number of communities selected for this goal. We are inspired by the success of New Orleans in eliminating homelessness completely. In this small state, this is an entirely reachable goal!

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

Senior Agenda Coalition of Rhode Island

Standing on the Side of Love is supporting the work of the Senior Agenda Coalition of RI. The At our Governor's Candidates Forum on August 4, 2014 all six candidates, including Governor-Elect Raimondo, agreed to:

1. Achieve the state-mandated goal of "balancing" Medicaid-funded long-term care by increasing the share of Medicaid funding for home and community-based services to 50%.
2. Restore \$2.8 million in funding to restore Meal on Wheels, Respite for Caregivers, and Senior Centers to FY2007 levels in the FY2016 budget.
3. Improve salaries and benefits for home and community-based direct care service workers.
4. Create a more robust, higher-quality information and referral service for all senior programs and services.
5. Meet with advocates for seniors to seek our input during the transition period.

We respectfully request that Governor Raimondo identify the improvement of Rhode Island's senior services system, including "balancing" long-term care.

Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly meeting, Sunday, February 1, 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 this and every 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, February 3

Thanks to all who helped with our mission to Harrington Hall last month. Your work and donations helped us feed almost 100 homeless men. Intake starts at 5:00p, and we start serving about 5:45p. We prepared Italian Wedding Soup, with a salad, roll and beverage. Additionally, the men were given a sandwich, a protein snack and fruit. For dessert, we had holiday pies, with whipped cream, and coffee. Each man received a pair of new boxers & socks, as well as a small toiletries kit (donated to us by the Statewide MLF)

As always, their gratitude was genuine and overwhelming, and they ask that we pass on their thanks and prayers to all who help make the evening possible. This mission is truly a special and moving experience for all involved.

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

Stop by our table in the Atrium at coffee hour, to learn more and to see how you can help.

The Christmas Eve Community Collections for the First Unitarian Food Share Pantry brought in \$3,292. Thanks to all who generously donated.

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

Distribution Day: Monday, February 16

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.

Knitting for a Better World

Every Tuesday, 7:00–9:00p

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

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

The Mitten Tree

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)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Worship Service 10:30a at 11:30a Cookoff & Sing-a-long at 12:00p Mentor/Mentee at 12:15p Neighborhood SJ</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Women's Alliance 11:00a</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>3</p> <p>First Unitarian Mobile Loaves & Fishes</p> <p>Lay Ministry 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Prudential Committee 6:15p</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Vegan Cooking 7:00p Yoga 7:00p</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Atrium Art Opening 5:00p All Parish Supper 5:45p Program 7:45p</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Worship Service 10:30a at 12:00 Ministerial Search Conversation</p> <p>UU Men 7:00p</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Reimagining Religion 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Worship Comm. 5:00p Deacons 6:00p R.E. Committee 6:45p</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>  <p>Saturday Social Suppers (Armstrong's & Emerson)</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Worship Service 10:30a at 12:00 Chalice Facilitators Lunch at 12:15p Standing on the Side of Love</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Presidents' Day Holiday Church Office Closed Food Pantry Open 2:00p-6:00p Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Vegan Cooking 7:00p Yoga 7:00p</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Habitat Work Day</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Worship Service 10:30a at 12:00 Teacher Lunch & Program at 12:15p Land Rights Seminar</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Reimagining Religion 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Game Night 5:30-7:30p</p>	<p>28</p>