



Services in the Meeting House

Sunday, June 7 10:30a **On Herding Cats and Other Thoughts about Life within Liberal Religious Congregations** **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

James will share some of what he thinks about our liberal religious institutions – congregations mostly – but maybe a little bit about the denomination, as well. Could be interesting.

Last day of Chapel and Sunday School

Annual and Financial Congregational Meetings follow at 12:00p

Sunday, June 14 10:30a **Flower Communion – A Multigenerational Service**
Homily: On the Cure of Souls – A Meditation on the Nature and Practice of Ministry **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

James wants to indulge himself with a reflection on the nature of ministry as he has experienced and observed it over the past quarter of a century. He promises a joke or two in the mix, and only to be maudlin for a moment or so . . .

We will celebrate our annual Flower Communion.; please bring a flower to share.

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

Summer Services

NOTE: Summer worship services being at 10:00a. Childcare is provided every Sunday.

Sunday, June 21 10:00a **Precious Friend: In Memory of Pete Seeger** **First Unitarian Musicians**

Last year, we said good-bye to Pete Seeger, one of the greatest American patriots of the twentieth century. On this Father’s Day, we will remember one of the fathers of American folk music, of global activism, and of the American conscience. We will hear stories of Pete’s life; and since he loved nothing more than to get people singing, there will be lots of songs, most of them participatory.

Sunday, June 28 10:00a **Hindsight** **Keith Brown**

A familiar question: If you knew then what you know now, what would you have done differently? Less often asked: If you could unknow things that limit what you do know, would you? In this service, we’ll reflect on the connectivity of time past, present, and future (and, for T. S. Eliot fans, “... the hidden laughter/Of children in the foliage.”)

Keith has been a member at First Unitarian Church since 2003 and has served on the Worship Committee and the Board of Deacons. He lives in Edgewood with Shelley, Chloe, and Leo and works at the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University.



We are a Welcoming Congregation

I n s i d e

Monkey Mind	2
Spiritual Pathways	3
Sight Lines	4
Welcome New Members.....	5
Community Life	6
Spiritual Development	7
Social Justice.....	8
Monthly Calendar	9

S t a f f

- Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
- Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, Community Minister
- Rev. Gene Dyzlewski, Community Minister
- Rev. Gwendolyn Howard, 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

N e w s l e t t e r

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

First Unitarian Church of Providence
One Benevolent Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02906

Tel: 401.421.7970
Fax: 401.276.4291

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



Monkey Mind

I have been experiencing waves of emotion, of wildly mixed feelings, over the last weeks as I have been doing various things for the last time while serving as your settled minister. I'm already not settled, but I feel very much the tugs of affection and loss as I prepare to give up my role as minister of First Unitarian.

Today I am writing my last newsletter column while serving here.

I find myself thinking of these past seven years, of the many things we've been able to do together, of the occasional frustration, of the many successes, of the friendships, of being able to be with people at important moments in their lives, births, dedications, and deaths. So much, so much, all of it precious.

Of course, I'm also thinking of life ahead. For me, joining Jan and our cat, Helen, in a great move back to what I do in many ways think of as home. (And, let me tell you, I will not miss our New England winters. Not one tiny bit . . .) And I have a small vicarious thrill in seeing some of what will happen in the near future. The Prudential Committee has done a first-rate job in obtaining the services of the renowned Charlie Ortman to serve as interim minister. And while I know there could be any number of solid configurations for a successful Ministerial Search Committee, the one our Nominating Committee has brought to us and which has been confirmed in a vote of the congregation is astonishingly appropriate in range of experience and appropriate skill sets, and I'm confident in their ability to pull together and be a real team fully in service to the needs of this church as it goes forward on its next steps.

But for the moment, I'm mostly about feelings. Feelings of love. Feelings of loss. Tiny moments of regret, larger moments of anticipation for all of us.

Some years ago, Cy O'Neil stood in our Meeting House, pointed to the walls, and recounted some of what had happened within our sacred sanctuary: plots of insurrection, the run-up to the Civil War and every war since; panics and recessions and depressions, times of despair and times of triumph. This community has gathered together, sat together, worshiped together, plotted and schemed together. And we have flourished. And who we have been, who we are, and what we will become all have seeped into those old, old walls.

I think of those words.

I think of you.

I think of what has been, and I know that what will be, will be something wondrous.

I will have more to say before I'm gone, but right here, and now, mainly all I want to say is, Thank you.

Thank you,

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



W H E E L O F L I F E

Condolences to:

The family and friends of **Elesa Amand** on her unexpected and untimely death on May 18.

Congratulations to:

Members **Leslie Bostrom** and **Pat Maier** on their recent marriage.

Suzanne and **James Austin** on the birth of their second daughter, Abby.

Kate Guilbault, who grew up in this church, on the birth of her daughter, Natalie.

Sending Good Thoughts to: Susan Fisher on her recovery, return to church, and happy to have her back as newsletter editor.

Deacons' Corner

And so another year has passed. As the retiring Senior Deacon, raised at First Unitarian, I'd like to share several personal thoughts. I strongly believe that I am who I am today, and I like that person, because of the values I learned within these walls. The '50s, '60s, and '70s were amazing years of working for social justice and of activism. So much has changed in our country since then, yet so much has stayed the same. Much more work has to be done.

We are very good about helping others in the greater community. Can we do better about caring for those within our local community: those who are struggling, those who are ill, those needing physical and psychological support? The larger question is: Do we want to? Who do we want to be? As we begin a search for a new minister, this is a key question.

Caring for our community means we need to know each other better. We need to connect and communicate. We need to know, and care, who is missing on Sunday or from a group we attend. For those who like to interact with humans, take the time to talk; for the technologically inclined, let's use social media to better stay in touch. Communication is the key: effective, respectful talking and listening.

Finally, to be the best that we can be, we need to work on our culture of giving. With the up-coming anniversaries of our founding (300th anniversary in 2020) and our Meeting House (200th in 2016), we will need to give generously to maintain and improve our physical plant, not easy to do in our economy. But the physical plant is only *part* of the church. The Church is the people. We need to give to hire people who can increase our communication with the world around us to spread "our message." The world needs what we have to offer. Let's go out and make our message heard.

– Ruth Arellana, Senior Deacon
"Rabble Rouser Ruthie"

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 and Care Crew volunteers.

The Lay Ministry Team: Kate Menard, Rick Richards, Tori Smith, John Wilhelm



Spiritual Pathways

"A Compass Instead of a Bus Ticket"

June is a glorious month. Spring has finally sprung. The daylight remains later and later, and we can breathe in the fresh air – and pollen – through open windows. It is also the time when the cycle turns to reviewing the year in our Spiritual Pathways program, tweaking curriculum, thanking current volunteer teachers and mentors, seeking additional adult leaders, and forming next year's programs and teacher teams.

I am alert for signs; fresh ideas, direction, vision. I face the mistakes, the misses, the unintended consequences. I also take in the positive: what was meaningful, what made hearts sing, fed our soul work. I listen carefully to our children, youth, and adults as they share in chapel services, speak from the pulpit at recognitions and celebrations, complain and brainstorm better ways behind the scenes. Rev. Chris Buice calls liberal faith development "gem mining." One jewel I found was the quote at the top of this column from eighth-grader Patrick O'Mahoney, describing what he learned was a tool for navigating the living tradition of Unitarian Universalism. I use it with his permission.

The Religious Education Committee and I continue to work on ways to evolve our communications, practices, and programs in keeping with changing cultural and congregational needs. Committee priorities will continue to be focused on communications and multigenerational community building. I am confident that we will serve well, in collaboration with other staff, ministries, and our Interim Minister.

Sunday, June 7, is our closing Sunday school chapel and class day. As is tradition, we will honor each group and participant by sharing highlights of the year. We will sing and be silent, talk and listen, remembering why we gather.

Next, I will be preparing for the fall, including worship planning, volunteer recruitment and support, and curriculum development. I will attend UUA General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, representing our congregation as well as assuming duties as President of my professional organization, the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA). In mid-July I will be on staff for LRE Week on Star Island. This year's theme is Collaborative Leadership. After enjoying a few weeks away from work, I will dive into updating materials and programs for fall.

I wish James and Jan a happy and fulfilling move to California and thank them for a very successful ministry here in Rhode Island! And I look forward to collaborative and meaningful interim ministry work with the Rev. Charlie Ortman in the fall.

Thank you to the children, youth, and adults who shared time in our faith community this season. Please soak in this summer in ways that you love.

Take good care,

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

Registration for the 2015-16 Spiritual Pathways Program

Annual enrollment for our religious education program for children and youth begins in September, in person, on Homecoming Sunday, September 13, or by downloading the registration form from our website.

Please note: Families must register each year.

First Unitarian Resource Guide for 2015-16

Please check our website in August for our annual Resource Guide that includes a congregational calendar; information about programming for children, youth, and adults; and opportunities to connect and participate. Hard copies will be mailed to all member households in August.

Constantine's Corner

As the humid summer air takes on properties not dissimilar to those of morphine and an Amazon of perspiration runs down each muggy brow, the youth find that a year has once again nearly passed. For us, existing as we do in the context of an environment perhaps artificially constrained by invented age levels, this is a time of revolution and reaffirmation, of arrivals and departures, of tears and more hugs than I care to count. Sic transit gloria mundi.



Constantine

The final youth conference of the year, Constellation, occurred two weekends ago in Duxbury, Massachusetts. Providence was well represented, and the 2014-15 regional con community – defined anew with the entrance of each new freshmen class and the egress of each cohort of seniors – spent its last night together as a unit. There is to be a day event to celebrate our seniors' bridging to adulthood (as the district did not hold a "bridging con" this year for bureaucratic reasons), and many Providence youth plan to attend this ceremony; but the joy of seeing friends and spiritual partners at Duxbury was still compounded by a note of bittersweet finality.

This past weekend, a good number of youth watched from the Meeting House balcony in awe – I do not think that is an overstatement – as the eighth-grade graduates delivered their credos. Personally, this Coming of Age service never fails to send chills down my spine, and I know that many of the other youth feel the same way as we watch and then call our new friends from the balcony, exhorting them to join us on our quest to find out what exactly it means to have "come of age." Those of us who will be here next year hope that Providence First Unitarian's Youth Group can provide for these rising high schoolers all that it has provided for us over the years: security, community, empathy, hijinks, and ideas. It is truly an exciting time whenever we have the privilege of welcoming an extraordinary group of new blood to our basement covenant.

Soon, we will formally welcome these new faces to our community – and thus the journey continues. Some of us will be representing Providence at UUA GA 2015 in Portland, Oregon, next month – and thus the journey continues. Some of us are off to new UU communities while treasuring their spiritual upbringing here.

And thus the journey continues.

– Sandy Greenberg



Sight Lines

I am winding up my year as President of the Prudential Committee, and it has been a good year, that I have enjoyed. The PruComm is filled with smart, dedicated, hard-working people with a deep knowledge that benefits our church – finance, insurance, human resources, counseling, education, and more. We are lucky to have them on the team, and I feel blessed having them doing our work. My job was mostly letting the appropriate people loose on the appropriate issue. I look forward to another year on the PruComm with the multi-talented and very able Cynthia Rosengard at the helm.

We have dealt with many interesting issues this year, but the most intense – and satisfying for me – was the choosing of our interim minister for the coming year. Cynthia, Merritt Meyer, and I formed a subcommittee to make a choice among the eight names that the UUA sent us of people they felt would possibly be a good match for First Unitarian. We narrowed the list to three and interviewed (via Skype) all of them, then checked references and read sermons and other materials provided by the candidates.

Our choice, and we are thrilled about it, is the Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman. Charlie has been the senior minister at the UU Congregation of Montclair (New Jersey) for the past 20 years, after serving churches in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and Burlington, Iowa. Charlie and his wife, Judy, who retired recently from a career in social work and special education administration, are delighted to come to New England, where two of their children and a grandchild live. Before entering the ministry, Charlie had several careers, including social work, farm tire sales, and itinerant musician. He is an avid bicyclist and checked out our East Bay Bike Path during GA last year. He once rode his bicycle across the United States and wrote a book about it. You can learn more about him by going to the Montclair church web site.

Although we are sad to wish James a fond farewell, we feel sure that we will be in loving and capable hands next year while we search for our next settled minister.

We have a number of important issues to decide at the Annual and Financial Meeting on Sunday, June 7, at noon. Please plan to come. The agenda includes: passing the budget that has been proposed for FY 2015-2016; electing new members of the Prudential Committee, the Board of Deacons, and the Nominating Committee; agreeing to withdraw from the endowment an amount not to exceed \$20,000 for the costs associated with the search for a new minister and the costs over and above salary and benefits for the interim minister (mostly moving expenses); and agreeing to confer upon the Rev. James I. Ford the title of Minister Emeritus.

Lots to do! See you at the Annual Meeting!

Fondly,

Beth Armstrong
 President, Prudential Committee
 pres@firstunitarianprov.org

Notice of Annual Meeting and Annual Financial Meeting

Sunday, June 7 at 12:00 noon

The meeting to be held on Sunday, June 7, will be a combined Annual and Financial Meeting. Items that church members will vote on include candidates for elected positions and the proposed operating budget for FY 2015-16.

Under the bylaws, only those who have been a member for more than three months, who are over 16 years of age, and who in some recorded manner within the previous year have contributed to the financial support of the church are entitled to vote.

If you are not a Voting Member, you may still attend and speak at the Annual Meeting, but you may not vote. Robert's Rules of Order governs all duly called meetings of the church.

Treasurer's & Budget Committee Report



The budget proposal that will be presented for consideration at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 7, represents a balanced budget. The budget does not fully fund several initiatives, including the UUA and Ballou Channing fair share assessments or the Race to 300. We are in the second year of the seven-year Race to 300 initiative, which aims to eliminate our dependency on the endowment by our 300th anniversary in 2020. By increasing congregational pledges, we can reallocate these endowment funds toward capital improvements.

This year, there are several budget items that relate to ministerial transition and add \$20,000 to the budget as a one-time expense. Since this is a one-time expense, it will be put for a vote at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 7, that this be funded by drawing \$20,000 from the Consolidated Fund Endowment. The \$20,000 would be added to the revenue.

Proposed Budget Highlights

1. UUA and Ballou Channing assessments are at or above FY15 levels.
2. The Interim Minister's salary is at the settled minister's FY15 level.
3. Health insurance deductibles have been increased for employees.
4. \$1,500 is budgeted for each full-time employee to offset increased deductible costs.
5. A policy that requires employees who reach 65 to enroll in Medicare has been instituted.
6. Those employees enrolled in Medicare will receive payment for a supplemental insurance policy.
7. Fundraising receipts are set at \$2,500.
8. The Race to 300 budget item was reduced from \$30,000 to \$4,000.
9. Ministry requests were set at FY15 levels or less, as requested.

– Graham Nye, Treasurer

Annual Fund Drive

Thank you to all who so generously pledged to our Annual Fund Drive. We've sent a letter of thanks to everyone; however, if you pledged on line and have not received an acknowledgment of your pledge, please contact the church office.

There will be a full report at the Annual Meeting on June 7 and in the September newsletter.

With deep gratitude,

– Lisa Sampson and Anne Connor
 Co-Chairs of the Annual Budget Drive Team

Community Life

Welcome New Members

Seven new members have recently joined the church. Look for them on Sundays and add your personal greetings.

Janet Billane started attending First Unitarian about three and a half years ago in search of both community and quiet during a period of transition. She works in the area of affordable housing finance (rental). She hopes and intends to grow her involvement in UU activities over the coming years but is currently still constrained by the time demands of working and commuting into Boston. She is glad to have taken this step to join the congregation. Janet is a resident of Attleboro, where she raised her now-grown daughters.



Jess Dolan grew up in Massachusetts and subsequently lived in the Northwest and Midwest. A couple of years ago, she happily made her way back to New England and is now settled in Providence with her husband and two cats. She works as a physical therapist assistant and writes creative nonfiction. She is thrilled to be part of this welcoming community who make an effort to live their values.



Rev. Ralph Mero's last position before retirement in 2008 was on the staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston. Having moved to Providence last August, the Meros are delighted to be in the Summit neighborhood, just off Hope Street in Providence. Ralph is active in our end-of-life adult education program and the Lifelong Learning Collaborative.



Greg and Kristin Ivy Moses live in Riverside, where they are raising their 18-month-old son, Westley. Greg teaches piano and voice lessons at The Piano Key, in Seekonk, where he is codirector, as well as teaching music at a pre-K-8 school. Kristen Ivy educates people about harmful toxins in their personal and home care products and is the administrator at The Piano Key. Westley entertains his fans where ever he goes and he is slowly getting used to the church nursery. They are all looking forward to being a part of the church community.



Hillary Salmons discovered the church in 1996 when she moved to Providence from Japan. The community felt like the ideal place for her two sons, then in middle school, to become exposed to an open-minded spiritual community. She returned two years ago looking for the same thing for herself. Hillary leads the Providence After School Alliance, a public-private partnership of over 70 community organizations working together with the Providence schools to provide 2,000 middle school youth with relevant, fun, hands-on learning, arts, and sports programming. She spends her summers in Newfoundland kayaking and is looking forward to the UUA trip to Transylvania in June. Her son Peter joined the Providence Police Department as a recent Police Academy graduate in October, and son Nick has been promoting fuel-efficient stoves in India and Africa with a stove company headquartered in New York City.



Chris Sanzo has been coming to First Unitarian since 1993. He and his wife, Roberta Groch, were married here in 1994. Since then, they have remained in Providence, refurbished a house on the East Side, and are currently raising two teenage children, Henry and Lili. Chris is active in the UU Community Band, playing guitar, ukulele, and attempting to sing. During the week, Chris is employed as a Senior Principal Design Engineer for the Picor Corporation in North Smithfield. He is a graduate of Boston University and the University of Rhode Island.



Women's Alliance Programs

Women's Alliance Annual Outing

Tuesday, June 9

New Bedford Whaling Museum

18 Johnny Cake Hill, New Bedford, MA

Tour: 10:30a-12:00p, led by a docent

Dutch-treat lunch: 12:30p at a nearby restaurant

Located in the heart of New Bedford's Whaling National Historical Park, the museum features interactive exhibits, including the world's largest whaling ship model; displays of fine and decorative arts; collections of cultural artifacts, rare antiquities, scrimshaw, and logbooks; and five whale skeletons including the rare blue and northern right.

Admission is \$12 for seniors and free for members of the Whaling Museum. There will be a discount for members of the Alliance. Travel arrangements will be announced a week before the date.

Thanks to Our Yard Sale Helpers!

Thank you to the volunteers at our Indoor Yard Sale in April who came to our assistance at the busy times of Friday morning and Saturday afternoon. These strong able volunteers were Marco and Sabina Kapsinow, Khemirin Arnesto-Royston, Frido and Gary Rose-Petruck from the Youth Group; Steve McCloy, Tim Dawes, and Tony Allen from the Men's Group; and Tom Getz from the Deacons.

Enhance Your Summer with Gourmet Coffee – Iced or Hot!!

Having patio parties? Or just enjoying a summer afternoon with delicious iced or hot coffee? Increase your pleasure with the gourmet coffee sold by the Women's Alliance.

We sell several varieties of organic coffee – regular or decaf, beans or ground. Coffee sales support the Alliance's contributions to the church and donations to community groups. We're in the Atrium after the service.

Summer Coffee Orders: After the regular church year, you can order coffee by contacting Judie Knilians (401.246.0192, judiek3@aol.com) with your order and to arrange delivery.

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.



Community Life

A "Farewell to James" Party!

RSVP by June 1 to Beth and Stew Armstrong (bestar3@cox.net)

James's last Sunday with us will be on June 14, followed closely by his move to California. We need an opportunity to say goodbye in a fun way. Come to church on Saturday, June 13 for refreshments, a few short speeches, a little music, and chocolate!

Mark your calendars now!

Saturday Social Suppers

June 6 starting at 5:30p

On June 6 there will be two Social Suppers: one at the home of Dave and Gerry Spremulli and the other rescheduled from May at the home of John and Dolores Braica, both located in East Providence. People new to the church are always encouraged to attend; it is a very nice way to meet others from our church.

For reservations, contact Shirley DiMatteo (shelly-dimatteo@verizon.net, 401.861.1537) with the number of people in your party and what you would like to bring.

History Committee Sale

The bell – the chandelier – the pulpit and chalice – the organ pipes – the balcony bench – and more! The History Committee is offering sets of cards with images of the Meeting House taken by Richard Boober and Janet Downing Taylor. The cards are blank inside and suitable for greetings or notes to family and friends. They also make a great gift! Look for the History Table in the first parlor.

Cards are \$7.50 for a set of five, envelopes included. There are also framed 8"x 8" images available for sale at \$10 each.

The History Committee table also features booklets, pamphlets, and postcards for sale on church history. All proceeds help in printing costs for future publications.

Start Your Summer with a Picnic in the Park!

Sunday, June 14, 12:00p–3:00ish at India Point Park

Kick-off the summer with a picnic in the park after the Sunday service. Join old friends and make new ones during an afternoon of food and fun! Let's celebrate summer and play some games: we'll have kickball, face painting, and relay races. Pack a lunch and bring a blanket. The Membership Committee will provide drinks and watermelon.

Check out the event on our church Facebook page (search "First Unitarian Church of Providence" and click on Events) and add your input.

The Atrium Bookstore Will Close for the Summer

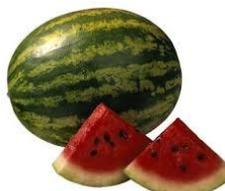
The Atrium Bookstore will be open through the regular church year, but will be closed over the summer months. Be sure to stop by during the first two Sundays in June to pick up some inspiring, entertaining, or educational reading for the summer.

Mark Your Calendar!

Welcome Back All-Parish Supper

Friday, September 18 (Note: third Friday of the month)

Watch for details about the opening program in the September newsletter.



Newcomers' Café

First Unitarian's Newcomers' Café is open every Sunday during Coffee Hour during the "regular" church year in the Paneled Parlor. The Café is hosted by a rotating cast of church members and offers coffee, goodies, and fellowship.

The Café will be closed for the months of July and August. There will be a welcome table at our outdoor after-service social hour.

Our Coffee Hour

For these last Sundays of our regular church year, don't forget to sign up and bring donations for our Coffee Hour. Remember that our Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort 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 eight people bringing donations that serve 24 each.

Sign up in the first parlor during Coffee Hour and go home with a reminder so you won't forget.

HATS OFF TO...

Our Coffee Hour Providers last Month:

Anne Connor, Tony Allen, Roberta Groch, Gaby Petruck, Yvonne Federowicz, Ann Boyd, John Dooley, Vikki Bristlin, Jessie Kingston, Steve McCloy, Sue Meyer, Gail Brule, Erin Newell, Jess Dolan, Marilyn Eanet, Dee Reynolds, Bela Teixeira, Lyn Bradford, Sam Cole, Sarah Cappelli, Bobbi Fislter, Elsie Buffum, and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.

The crew who helped weed and mulch the church grounds: **Nancy Weiss-Fried, Jaime Durango, Fred Jodry, Brian Paradis, Walter Sotelo, Amy and Phil Swayze, Bill Twaddell, and Greg Waksmulski**

Coming of Age (eighth-grade) community of students, teachers, mentors, and parents for a great year and a very wonderful celebration day!



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!



Spiritual Development

Meet Our New Interim Minister: The Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman

We are delighted to announce that Charles Blustein Ortman has agreed to serve as our interim minister next year – starting on August 15. Charlie has been the senior minister at the UU Congregation of Montclair (New Jersey) for the past 20 years, and previously served churches in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and Burlington, Iowa.

Charlie reports that he had the great fortune of falling in with the wrong crowd at a very early age which, in the end, opened up all kinds of wonderful possibilities for a life that he feels very grateful for. Alternative service as a conscientious objector during the Vietnam War led him into a career in social work for many years. Being a child of the '50s and '60s opened him to communication through music and a 20-year career as a singer/songwriter that took him around the world.

After graduating from Meadville/Lombard Theological School, Charlie was ordained to the UU ministry in 1992. He says, "For me, ministry is working collaboratively to promote ever greater opportunities for transformation – individually, in the community, and in the world. Ministry is promoting the possibilities and probabilities of goodness in what often seems like a broken world. Reaching out beyond ourselves and our homes, the strength of the religious community is where I find the greatest hope for working cooperatively and sustainably with other like-minded persons in helping and healing our communities and our world."

Charlie recently rode his bicycle across the country and published a memoir of his journey, *Moving On... Lessons from the Road*.



The Case of the Missing Kopjfa, Resolved

This winter, First Unitarian had an mysterious disappearance: what happened to the wooden kopjfa (ko-pia-fa) that was given to us by our Partner Church in Szentgyhaza, Transylvania? Was it "borrowed," used for fire wood, or taken as a prank by a local student? Well, actually, none of the above.



After weathering numerous New England summers and winters, the kopjfa was starting to show signs of wear. Although it was partially refurbished last summer, more work was needed to allow the beauty of the post to shine through. John Wilhelm (seen in the photo) volunteered to restore the post. He recaulked the splitting wood and carefully sanded and repainted it with a marine finish that will keep the post in good form for years to come. He did a great job, and the congregation thanks him for a job well done!

The kopjfa was presented to the congregation by our Partner Church when the current minister, Rev. Szabolcs Kelemen, visited us in 2010. The kopjfa was hand-carved by Istvan Simor and symbolizes feelings of peace, respect, and love that the Szentgyhaza church wishes to express to us. These memorial posts are still used in Transylvania and can be seen in Unitarian cemeteries and historical monuments throughout the region.

Art in the Atrium

June ends our Art in the Atrium season with a collective show of First Unitarian artists, including our youth from Sunday School.

The new season will start in September with our yearly Peace Show, organized by Ginny Fox of the Peace Flag Project. The calendar for next church year is filling up.

If you are interested, please contact Chiara Van Erp (romano-vanerp-design@cox.net).

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: Cindy Bapties & George Beshers
(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, June 9 & 23, 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 (tw2nd@aol.com)

UUMen

Sunday, June 14 from 7:00-9:00p

TOPIC: Random events and how they shape our lives. Most often, we use random to describe events/selections that are completely disconnected from our normal routines. According to statisticians, however, items that are randomly chosen all have the same probability of taking place. What seemingly random events have had the greatest impact on your life? In retrospect, how might those events seem not so "out of the ordinary"?

Facilitator: David Mellor (dem_mellor@verizon.net)



Social Justice

Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly Committee Meeting, Sunday June 14

The Neighborhood Social Justice Committee takes on projects to lighten the load of low income and homeless Rhode Islanders. NSJC invites those honorees to a reception on Sunday, June 14 at 12:15p in the Haynes Room,

as part of our final meeting of the year, where light refreshments will be served.

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.

Loaves & Fishes Outreach Mission

Every first Tuesday of the month year round (June 2, July 7 & August 4)

We will continue our outreach mission during the summer months, so please help out if your schedule allows.

There are three shifts:

noon-1:00p - sandwich crew;

3:00-5:00p - clothing organizers and supply loaders;

5:00-7:00p - delivery crew.

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.

Contact Joe Salvatore (joesuu@gmail.com) for details.

A Note of Appreciation

On Sunday, June 7, the Neighborhood Social Justice Committee will honor those who have volunteered with and/or donated food/drinks for the Loaves & Fishes Outreach Mission at Harrington Hall during this past church year. Your generous time and efforts over the past year are so much appreciated – most importantly by the men themselves, who constantly thank us and compliment the chefs, as well as by those on the NSJ Committee who coordinate the project. We are proud to have served an attractive and varied dinner each month, including entree, salad, bread/rolls, fruit, dessert, and choice of beverage, along with snacks and a small gift of new clothing (socks, etc.). We also leave sandwiches and snacks for those who arrive at the shelter after the regular dinner hour.

Without you, this mission could never happen!



Serving food at Harrington Hall



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

Distribution Day: Monday, June 15

The biggest social justice program at First Unitarian is the Food Share Pantry. It takes many volunteers to keep the program going! Volunteer for a shift on Distribution Day:

Set-up: 2:00p–3:00p,

Shopping: 3:00p–5:00p,

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

Contacts: Martha Manno (Mmanno7@comcast.net), Brian Paradis (briananddeacon@comcast.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.

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

Habitat for Humanity Work Day

Saturday, June 20

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

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Zendo 7:00p	2 Loaves & Fishes Outreach Mission 12:00–7:00p Lay Ministry 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	3 Meditation 7:00p	4	5	6 Saturday Social Supper (Sprenulli's & Braica's)
7 Sunday Service 10:30a at 12:00p Annual /Financial Meeting	8 Zendo 7:00p	9 Women's Alliance Outing to New Bedford Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	18 Prudential Committee 6:30p Meditation 7:00p	11 Worship Comm. 5:00p Deacons 5:30p	12	13 Farewell Party for James Ford 1:00–4:00p
14 Sunday Service 10:30a at 12:00p Annual Picnic at India Pt. Park at 12:15p Neighborhood SJ UU Men 7:00p	15 Food Pantry 2:00p–6:00p Zendo 7:00p	16 R.E. Committee 6:45p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	17 Meditation 7:00p	18 Finance Committee 6:00p	19	20 Habitat for Humanity
21 Summer Sunday Service 10:00a (note the earlier time)	22 Zendo 7:00p	23 Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	24 Meditation 7:00p	25	26	27
28 Summer Sunday Service 10:00a (note the earlier time)	29 Zendo 7:00p	30 Knitting for a Better World 7:00p				