



Services in the Meeting House

**Last Summer Sunday, September 6 Unicorns, Mermaids, and Dragons:
The Quest for the Perfect Minister**

10:00a

Martha Manno

As we enter the coming church year with our interim minister, the Ministerial Search Committee is hard at work. Who will they find?

Martha Manno has been a member of First Unitarian for almost 25 years. She is a former President of the church and chaired the search committee that brought us James Ford.

Sunday, September 13 A Multigenerational Water Communion Gathering

10:30a

**Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman, Cathy Seggel, DRE and
Fred Jodry, Music Director**

As we gather together, we'll share a story for children of all ages; we'll meet our interim minister, Charlie Ortman, who will share a homily, "You Get to Say Who"; and we'll have music and singing. Our Annual Water Communion will be celebrated with those of us who are returning and those who are here for the first time. Bring a small amount of water to pour into our communal basin, and a word about the spirit and meaning with which you bring it. And if you forget, don't worry; we'll have enough "symbolic/surrogate" water on hand for you to use.

Our Community Collection will be for Strong Roots School in the slums of Kathmandu, which teaches children two and a half through seven years of age who would otherwise not be educated.

Childcare for infants–three-year-olds will be open on the second floor of the Parish House.

Sunday, September 20 Observing the Jewish High Holidays When Black Lives Matter

10:30a

Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman

First day of Sunday school. Grades K and older begin in the Meeting House for the first portion of the service.

Origins and Play Circle /Pre-K (infants–four years) meet in classrooms on the second floor in the Parish House.

Following the service, we will offer a chance to discuss the sermon topic in a sample Chalice Circle, our UU spiritual practice groups.

Sunday, September 27 Beyond Categorical Thinking

10:30a

Rev. Keith Kron

Our Sunday service will wrap up the weekend-long UUA program designed to encourage congregations to promote inclusive thinking and to help prevent unfair discrimination in the ministerial search process. (See the sidebar on page 5 for a description of the program.)

Rev. Keith Kron is the Transitions Director for the Unitarian Universalist Association; his office provides support for ministers and congregations in search. He previously served as the Director of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Following the service, we will offer a chance to discuss the sermon topic in a sample Chalice Circle, our UU spiritual practice groups.

And don't forget the Annual Ice Cream Social following Coffee Hour!



Sunday, October 4 Interim Ministry: A Shared Experience!

10:30a

Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.



We are a
Welcoming Congregation

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Staff

- Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman, Interim Minister
- Rev. Gene Dyszlewski, Community Minister
- Rev. Gwendolyn Howard, Community Minister
- Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
- Frederick Jodry, Music Director
- Posey Kooris, Administrator
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From My Window . . .

Where to begin? Ah, yes, here is the place to begin. And from here we can already see the finish line. Interim ministry is a somewhat odd moment in the life of a congregation. It is a time for taking note of the past – where the congregation has been and what it has done. It is a time for claiming the present – recognizing and affirming purpose and mission. It is a time for envisioning the future – what the congregation aspires to do and become, and what sort of ministerial leadership it will want in order to fulfill its dreams and ambitions.

Even though this may be something of an odd moment in the congregation’s unfolding story, it need not be an awkward or uncomfortable or nonproductive one. What this moment calls the First Unitarian Church of Providence to be is intentional. My ambition in ministering with you over the next year is to help provide a lens of intentionality as you regard the past, own the present, and envision your future. First Unitarian is your church. Our interim time together will, indeed, be over not so very many months from now. My hope for this time is that the whole congregation will have a greater sense of who you are, what you are here for, and how you can work together in community toward the greater good of the congregation, the wider community, and even of the world itself.

What might we pay attention to this year that could help you to discern the meaning of this congregation? I think the object of our attention may well lie near what I consider to be a root purpose for all religious associations. One edition of the *Providence Journal* or of *All Things Considered* or of the evening TV news is all the evidence we need to recognize that things are going to have to change if they are going to get better. Who do you want to be in this unfolding process of change that is demanded by our moment in time? Who and what do you want your church to be? I believe that not only those who gather together in the pews on Sunday morning, but the wider community and the world, all have need of the salvific message that Unitarian Universalism has to offer. They all have great need of our good work that we can generate from that message of affirming and promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every person, of affirming and promoting the interdependent web of existence of which we are part.

The title of my news column – “From My Window . . .” – is one that I have used since my earliest days in ministry. In this column, my intention will be to provide a perspective on things that I feel the congregation might want to pay attention to. I will share my perspective of the processes and transitions you are going through, the challenges I feel you’ll need to face, and how I see the congregation using its many resources in promoting transformation – within its members, in the congregation itself, in the community and in the world.

This world we live in is both magnificent and menacing. I look forward, during our time together, to celebrating the magnificent and to working our way through the menaces. I trust that we will accomplish some good work together. And I fully expect that we’ll have a good time in the process. Yes, a place to begin . . .

Please pray and act for peace and justice.

See you at church,

Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman, Interim Minister
Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday
min@firstunitarianprov.org

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 Lay Ministry and Care Crew volunteers. Please contact Posey in the church office (admin@firstunitarianprov.org, 401.421.7970).

Lay Ministry Team: Kate Menard, Martha Rice Sanders, Tori Smith, John Wilhelm

Deacons’ Corner

As we start our church year, the Board of Deacons is launching the Deacons Calling program. We will be contacting as many members of the congregation as we can to seek a sense of the community and how our needs are being served. This year, the ten Deacons have divided up the lists of members, whom we will contact by phone or electronically. We seek your ideas for this interim year and will try to supplement the efforts of the Search Committee as they begin to seek a new settled minister. Please respond. It’s important.



Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman will join our first meeting of the year on September 10. Charlie notes: “The manner in which I envision working with all groups within the church is in processing with you your mission, role, and goals.”

Sunday Salon This year the Deacons will be hosting a Sunday Salon the last week of each month during Coffee Hour. We hope to offer an opportunity for discussion of matters of spiritual interest, as well as for bringing forward any other matters you would like to discuss with us.

For the first Sunday Salon on September 27, we will host a book swap. We are asking anyone who is interested to bring in a book that you have read that has deeply touched you spiritually, philosophically, or in relationship to the UU principles. Almost all faiths have their books of faith: UUs find their paths through many sources, as Nancy Green so artfully presented in her August 16 Summer Service. Anyone who is interested may bring in one or two books, and in return may take one from those brought in.

Details 1. Please just one important book. A second book can serve as a donation for someone who is not able to bring a book. **2.** You may bring your book any time in September and hand it to a Deacon, or leave it in the box in the Atrium (please leave your name with it so you will be on the list to be able to take one at the swap). **3.** Please include a line or two on an index card about why you chose this book and leave it in the book. Include your name only if you wish. **4.** Anything not chosen will be donated. Ariadne Greenberg has volunteered to facilitate this Salon.

The Deacons: Shirley DiMatteo and Steve McCloy, Senior Deacons; Rebecca Alberg, Stew Armstrong, Jim Barfoot, Kate Bowden, Tom Getz, Ariadne Greenberg, Sharon Kernan, Mary Speare



Spiritual Pathways

Of Birds & Sweet Spots

It still feels like summer, despite back-to-school marketing and hints of earlier sunsets. I am feeling predictable patterns, including heat waves, attempts to grab more beach time, and late-season reunions with family, friends, and nature.

In my role as your religious educator and as president of LREDA (Liberal Religious Education Directors Association), my summer was chock full of experiences at professional conferences and gatherings, beginning at a summit on sustainability of UU ministry in St. Louis. There, in addition to deep discussion about the meaning of membership and taking our faith beyond church walls, I was able to witness testimonials and a call to “Black Lives Matter” action from local clergy. Then, at General Assembly in Portland, OR, themed “Building a New Way,” I heard the Ware lecturer, Cornell West, and the Fahs speaker, Susan Katz Miller. I was proud and inspired by four of our own youth participating in the youth caucus. Imagine being with thousands of UUs when the U.S. Supreme Court decision on marriage equality was announced.

Next, Star Island Lifespan RE Week with 14 people from our congregation, focusing on collaborative leadership. Outreach Director Carey McDonald began each session with this mantra: “The world is changing, church is changing. Collaborative, effective teams are a key to thriving in this new era. Religious education is a growth strategy to jumpstart a new era of creative teamwork in congregations, and beyond.” I co-led a week-long workshop on collaborative leadership that began with discovering our own leadership styles through a bird metaphor. From the work of BJ Gallagher, we are some combination of hawk, peacock, owl, or dove, as are our organizations. I look forward to sharing this process. I also hosted UUA staff, including Keith Kron, Transitions Director, and Susan Lawrence, Chief Editor of faith development curricula, in conversations about change and growth. Then, I consulted with colleagues at the comprehensive training site, Central Eastern Regional Group RE Week at The Sea, in Ocean Grove, NJ. And last but not least, I traveled to Ferry Beach, Universalist Conference Center on the coast of Maine.

At each of these places, I was inspired to challenge myself beyond the usual fall focus and to help find ways to evolve in response to our changing world. There was a convergence of a basic concept of finding our “sweet spot,” that place where our passion and our purpose overlap. Theologian Frederick Buechner calls it “the place where your deep gladness and the world’s hunger meet.” Current events, both locally and beyond, certainly call me to reconnect with my faith community and to our work together. Isn’t this the big reason why we come together in faith communities?

I am so looking forward to working with Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman, our Interim Minister, and to the teamwork with all of our staff in service to this congregation of children, youth, and adults.

It still feels like summer. And I am filled with positive energy to greet this church year, even though I will find ways to swim in the warm September and pick those last raspberries.

Take good care,

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



First Unitarian Resource Guide for 2015-16

Our annual Resource Book will be mailed to member households in September. This guide includes a congregational calendar, information about our staff; about membership; about programming for children, youth, and adults; about opportunities to connect and participate; and much more.

The Resource Book (with post-publication corrections!) is available on the church website (www.firstunitarianprov.org).

Registration for the 2015-16 Spiritual Pathways Religious Education Program

Annual enrollment for our religious education program for children and youth begins, in person, on Homecoming Sunday, September 13. The registration form can also be downloaded from the church website (www.firstunitarianprov.org) and mailed or emailed to the church office. Please note: Families must register each year.

Schedule of Opening Events

Sunday, September 13

10:30a – Homecoming/Water Communion: A Multigenerational Worship Service

Childcare for infants to three-year-olds open on the second floor of the Parish House. Registration for Sunday School begins before church and continues during Coffee Hour in the Atrium.

Tuesday, September 15

6:30p – Teacher Orientation in the Parish House

Sunday, September 20

10:30a – First Sunday school session
Grades K and older begin in the Meeting House for the first portion of the service, leaving with teachers for classes.
Nursery/Toddler & Pre-K begin in classrooms.

Sunday, September 27

12:30p – Coming of Age Parent Orientation

Bedtime Stories

An important offering from my colleague Jessica York, UUA Director of Lifespan Faith Development, appears on the Call & Response blog (<http://callandresponse.blogs.uua.org>). The first sentence reads, “As parents and caregivers, we sometimes have to hold difficult conversations with children.” She goes on to tell the story of how she educated her own daughters about the history of and current life of racism in America. I hope you will read her cautionary tale and let me know your own. What are you saying to your children in your home, your congregation, or community about racism against black people? One of the jobs of a faith community is to support each other in hard times. What support do you need to help young people understand the need for the Black Lives Matter campaign? Do not let the fear of saying the wrong thing keep you silent. As Martin Luther King said, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good [people] do nothing.”



Sight Lines

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 2015-2016 church year. I am very much looking forward to serving as President of the First Unitarian Church of Providence during what will definitely be an exciting and dynamic year. This year, we will have the pleasure of enjoying the interim ministry of Charlie Ortman, who joins us following his 20 years in Montclair, New Jersey. I look forward to working alongside Charlie and the Ministerial Search Committee, headed by John Simmonds, as we all navigate the process of self-study and discernment toward selecting and calling a new settled minister.

For those of you who do not know me well, I have been a member of First Unitarian since 2004. The majority of my time here has been spent working in Religious Education – first as a church school volunteer teacher (first and third grades), then as a member and co-chair of the Religious Education Committee before joining the Prudential Committee as President-Elect last year. I attend First Unitarian with my children – Owen Swayze (youth group) and Sadie Swayze (seventh grade). When I am not attending to church business, I split my professional time between a private psychotherapy practice and serving on the faculty of the School of Public Health and Alpert Medical School (both at Brown University).

This summer, I had the privilege of spending Lifespan Religious Education week on Star Island (please ask me to tell you more about it!). The theme of this year’s conference was “Collaborative Leadership,” which seemed well timed for me and for First Unitarian. We find ourselves in an exciting time in our history, and it is my hope that we can streamline communication among the many wonderful committees and groups that are active in our church community and beyond to leverage our resources toward achieving the important goals of our enriching programming and important work.

In the midst of the changes that will occur this year and in the coming years, we will also have many opportunities to celebrate and hold up with gratitude all that we have in our community. In 2016, we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of our Meeting House, and in 2020, we will celebrate 300 years as a congregation. Preparing for these milestones and shaping what the next chapter in our community’s history will look and feel like will require all of our participation. I welcome and value input from all of you. Please do not be shy in coming to talk with me on Sundays. Also, you can reach me easily by email (pres@firstunitarianprov.org).

Until soon,



Cynthia Rosengard
President, Prudential Committee
pres@firstunitarianprov.org

Treasurer’s Report

Fiscal year 2015, which ended June 30, is the first year in the last several ending with a surplus! While the surplus is small (\$19,304), it was certainly a plus as we search for a settled minister.

Income for FY15 exceeded what was anticipated by 2.6 percent. Receipts from rentals were 45.1 percent above the budgeted amount, while pledge receipts were 8 percent below the total amount pledged and 1 percent below the anticipated (budgeted) amount. (Note that, in our budgeting process, the total amount pledged is reduced by 7 percent [based on past experience] to arrive at the anticipated amount of pledges.) In addition, receipts from the Bed & Breakfast effort (spearheaded by the Deacons) for the 2014 General Assembly provided the cushion for lower-than-budgeted amounts from fund raising.

Expenses were 1.1 percent below what was budgeted, despite the increased costs for snow removal. Our Administrator, Posey Kooris, did an excellent job of managing those accounts related to property, rentals, and supplies.

– Graham Nye, Treasurer

Community Collections 2015-16

The Community Collections for this Church year will be:

September 13 Strong Roots School – A school in the slums of Kathmandu that teaches children two and a half through seven years of age who would otherwise not be educated.

October 18 City Year Providence – A partner organization with five Providence public schools to address issues related to the risk of students dropping out of school.

November 22 Loaves & Fishes Mission – Monthly prepared food distribution from First Unitarian to the homeless men at Harrington Hall in Cranston.

December 24 First Unitarian Community Food Share Pantry – Monthly client-choice food pantry at First Unitarian.

January 17 Senior Agenda Coalition – A group that helps agencies that assist senior citizens with key programs such as Meals on Wheels.

February 14 Crossroads RI – An organization in Providence that helps the homeless and less fortunate with housing, shelter, and healthcare needs among other services.

April 10 Children’s Friend – A non-profit agency in Rhode Island providing services for vulnerable children and their families.

Annual Budget Drive – Consider Joining Our Team!

Stewardship at First Unitarian is year-round. Our team concluded its successful FY 2015-16 Annual Budget Drive with a celebratory evening at McCoy Stadium in June. Lisa Sampson and Bill Koteff, elected by the congregation to serve on the Ministerial Search Committee, will take back-seat roles in the coming year’s drive, and Erin Newell and Gregory Wakszulski have agreed to join our team.

Please let us know if you are interested in joining our efforts to plan for the spring Annual Budget Drive. We will continue to explain stewardship at the upcoming Path to Membership classes.

–Emily Bruce and Anne Connor, Co-Chairs



Our Ministerial Search

First Unitarian will be conducting a search for a settled (long-term) minister during the 2015-16 church year, and the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) will be leading this multi-step, year-long process. The seven-member MSC was nominated from among dozens of names submitted by members of the congregation to the Nominating Committee and was elected at a special meeting of the congregation in spring 2015. The Nominating Committee vetted all those recommended and developed a varied, representative slate that included strong backgrounds in areas pertinent to the search. The members of the committee are (L to R): Wendy Oliver, Bill Koteff, Rick Richards, John Simmonds (chair), Shelley Stephenson, Lisa Sampson, and Dominic Napolitano.

During the search, the MSC follows guidelines set out by the Unitarian Universalist Association, assisted by a UUA consultant. Our consultant is Transitions Director Rev. Keith Kron, who oversees all ministerial transitions for the UUA.



We're Already on Our Way

The initial research and planning phase of the search occurred over the summer, with the MSC meeting several times to plan events for the months ahead. In the early fall, we will be asking church members to complete detailed questionnaires about what you hope for in a new minister, and we'll hold cottage meetings for the same purpose. Additionally, to help the MSC prepare a full profile of First Unitarian for prospective candidates, we will be asking questions regarding your thoughts and opinions on various aspects of church life including worship, religious education, Chalice Circles, social justice activities, social events, and much more.

As an educational step to prepare us all for an equitable search, we will be hosting a special workshop on diversity, led by Keith Kron. This three-hour Saturday workshop, paired with a Sunday worship service, is designed to help our congregation discuss prejudices around racism, sexism, heterosexism, ablism, agism, and other "isms" that may prevent equal opportunity in our search process. (See details on this all-church event in the sidebar.)

Before Thanksgiving, we will prepare and submit our "Congregational Record," or church profile, to the UUA, to be posted on a website especially for "ministers in search" or "ministerial search candidates." Here we compile information gathered from the congregation, along with descriptive information about the church and the Providence area. Candidates will look at the postings and begin applying for their preferred jobs beginning in January.

Then Things Begin to Get Exciting!

Our committee is charged with reviewing all of the applications and narrowing the field to three or four "pre-candidates." During the spring, we will invite each of these ministers to visit for a few days, giving the committee time to interview them and spend time with them, as well as hear them preach in a "neutral pulpit" within driving distance of Providence. The candidates do not meet other First Unitarian congregants at this time for reasons of confidentiality.

The MSC then moves into the final phase of the process and selects the top candidate who will be invited to come for a week-long visit. S/he will meet with many groups and individuals, as well as preaching on two Sundays. The congregation then has the opportunity to vote on whether to "call" the candidate as our next minister. Typically, ministers will only accept a call that has a high level of "yes" votes (95% or higher) among the membership, so as not to create a schism in the congregation. We have every expectation that, given the size and prominence of our church, we will have an excellent applicant pool from which to draw, and that we will have several outstanding applicants from which to choose.

Your Participation Will Be Vital

We look forward to your participation in the ministerial search process and will begin asking for your input in the early fall. We will be providing regular updates on the search process in the monthly church newsletter, the *Meeting House Times*, and on the hallway bulletin board.

- Wendy Oliver for the Ministerial Search Committee

Beyond Categorical Thinking

An All-Congregation Workshop

*Saturday, September 26, 9:00a-12 noon
In the Parish House, Child Care Available*

Beyond Categorical Thinking is a highly recommended part of the search process for every congregation. In seeking the person who would be the best match for our minister, we could potentially overlook or even let biases keep us from knowing that a particular person would be the best match for us.

Other congregations have assumed that their ideal minister looks a certain way, and often ministers who are not white or male or heterosexual or able-bodied or of a particular age or class are discounted and seen as "less than" in some ways. Even today, credentialed ministers in our faith who are people of color, bisexual, gay, lesbian, female, transgender, differently-abled, young, old, ethnically "different," or of a "different" class still face discrimination as part of the ministerial search process.

To facilitate an inclusive search process, we will have trainers come to meet with our search committee and facilitate a three-hour conversation with the congregation, where we will have a chance to examine together how we can avoid letting prejudice become a part of our search process. This is yet another way for us to put our faith into lived experience and improve the odds that, regardless of identity, we will find the minister who is the best match for us and will serve us well.

This opportunity allows the entire congregation fuller participation in the search process. We will be able to explore our hopes and concerns for a new minister, learn more about the search process, and see how our own history (both personal and congregational) might interfere with our efforts in this search.

UUA minister and Director of Transitions Rev. Keith Kron will be leading the experience. Keith will also lead our Sunday worship service that weekend on September 27.

We hope to see you there!



Rev. Keith Kron

To sign up for the workshop, please visit our MSC table during Coffee Hour on September 13 and 20. Or you can call or email the church office (admin@firstunitarianprov.org, 401.421.7970) by Monday, September 21, to reserve a space and to let us know if you would like childcare.



Community Life

September All-Parish Supper

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

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: "Many Welcomes"

This event will give us a chance to greet old friends and welcome newcomers as our congregation gathers once again for our new church year. It also offers us a special opportunity to welcome and to begin to get to know Charlie Ortman, our new Interim Minister.

We will be welcomed by Cynthia Rosengard, our Church President, who will give a brief overview about what's been happening at our church and what's ahead for us. Sandy Greenberg will give a report from his time at General Assembly.

Our main speaker will be Charlie Ortman, who will introduce himself to us briefly. He will also reflect on his ideas about interim ministry and its importance within the UU movement and will share some of his visions about what we might accomplish together. There will be plenty of time for Q&A. Don't miss this special evening!

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 who request in advance; call Jim Estey (401.351.1748).

Saturday Social Supper

September 12 starting at 5:30p

The September Social Supper will be held at the home of Ruth Arellana in Riverside

People new to the church are encouraged to attend; it's a very nice way to meet others from our church family.

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.

The October 3 Social Supper will be hosted by Shirley DiMatteo and Mel Shelly.

Looking for Performers!

First Unitarian Variety Show Fundraiser

Saturday, November 7 (put this date on your calendar)

Comics, musicians, theater freaks, poets, magicians, story tellers, take note! November 7 is your chance to share your performance art and help raise funds for our church community's mission.

This hour-and-a-half show is designed to provide crisp entertainment for all church members and their friends. We're looking for funny skits, joyous music, and performances that engage the mind and raise our spirits.

Those interested in participating should contact David House (dlhouse51@comcast.net) for more details.

Save the Date!

Members and friends of our community, please mark your calendars for 7:00p on November 7 in the Parish House Auditorium for an all-ages performance you won't want to miss! There will be a suggested donation. All proceeds will be used to support the mission of our church community.

A Note from Mary Margaret Earl

Dear First Unitarian,

I am formally acknowledging what has been under way since last fall: my resignation as member and community minister of First Unitarian.



As you may know, I accepted a ministry in Boston, which requires reaching out to, and preaching in, churches in the Greater Boston area.

I have been deeply grateful for the gift of community ministry in Providence and with your wonderful faith community, and I thank you for welcoming me for the past several years.

Wishing you many blessings in all the transition times ahead of you.

Warmest regards from Mary Margaret

Two October Parish Suppers Supper and Contra Dance

Friday, October 2, 7:30–10:00p (one week earlier than usual)

After dinner, we will celebrate a lively evening of contra dancing in the UU tradition. An event for all ages (10 to 110), both beginners and experienced dancers are welcome. You can participate or observe and enjoy. Paul Wilde will be our caller; live musicians will include Andy Grover and friends. Bring your friends and wear your dancing shoes! Suggested donation for dancers is \$5.

Supper and Special Transylvania Program

Friday, October 23 (Note: the fourth Friday)

Our after-dinner program will celebrate our "Transylvania Connections." During the past seven years, our church has been developing a relationship with the Unitarian congregation of Szentegyhaza in Transylvania. Eight of our members made a pilgrimage there this past June, and they are excited to share their findings and experiences with us, including a PowerPoint presentation, "testimonials," and foods. Come and learn about our Hungarian Unitarian cousins.

Atrium Bookstore

The bookstore reopens on September 13 and will be open every Sunday during the regular church year in the Atrium at Coffee Hour. 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 inter-faith publisher of various faith traditions. And don't forget: we also carry books written by several church members.



Community Life

Welcome Back Ice Cream Social!

Sunday, September 27 after Coffee Hour (12:00–2ish)

It is that time of year again! Come to our Ice Cream Social to celebrate the start of the new church year, enjoy some music, eat some ice cream, say hi to some old friends and meet some new ones on

the front lawns. Bring a picnic or buy a hot dog as a pre-ice cream lunch.

Invite a friend! We'll see you there!

Sponsored by the Religious Education and Membership Committees



Welcome, Newcomers!

If you are new to the First Unitarian community, I look forward to welcoming you as we begin a new church year. Our Newcomers' Café is open every Sunday in the Paneled Parlor just beyond the fireplace in the Parish House. Please come by and say hello. I'll be happy to answer any questions and introduce you to others in our community.

I look forward to meeting you!

– Jennifer Nardone, Membership Coordinator

Newcomers' Café

Every Sunday during Coffee Hour

Held in the elegant and intimate Paneled Parlor, the Café is hosted by a rotating cast of church members and offers coffee, goodies, and fellowship. If you're new to the church, this is a great place to meet people in a less daunting setting than the regular Coffee Hour. If you've been around for a while, this is a great place to help new folks get acclimated.

To sign on as a café host, contact: Jennifer Nardone, Membership Coordinator (mem@firstunitarianprov.org)

Path to Membership Classes

Tuesdays, October 6, 13, 20 & 27, 7:00–9:00p

The Path to Membership class is for anyone who is interested in membership, in learning more about Unitarian Universalism or about First Unitarian. This four-session course is offered three times during the year. The classes are led by our Interim Minister, Charlie Ortman, our Director of Religious Education Cathy Seggel, and our Membership Coordinator, Jenn Nardone.

Classes will be held on Tuesday evenings in October, February, and the end of May. For anyone unable to attend the Tuesday evening sessions, arrangements will be made to provide a "mini-course" as an alternative. Childcare will be provided if requested in advance.

To register contact: Jennifer Nardone, Membership Coordinator (mem@firstunitarianprov.org) or call the office (401.421.7970).

Our Coffee Hour Co-op Needs YOU!

Our Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort organized by the Women's Alliance with donations from our congregation of baked goods, brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake, and more. These donations can be made at home or bought at a store. Each Sunday we need eight 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 you'll go home with a reminder so you won't forget.



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!

If you are interested in posting a church-related event, email to Membership Coordinator Jenn Nardone (mem@firstunitarianprov.org) or contact the church office.

The Women's Alliance

September Is Membership Recruitment Month

Established in 1882, the Women's Alliance is unique among the organizations of the First Unitarian Church in that it has been an autonomous society of dues-paying members and has its own endowment. Many of its members played leading roles in education, suffrage, and social services. In 2014 the Women's Alliance became an affiliate of the church. Its mission continues to be serving the community, both locally and at large, providing friendship and spiritual and cultural stimuli for its members, and supporting the church and its denomination.

The Women's Alliance meets monthly from October through June and features a variety of speakers followed by a catered luncheon. Other activities include fundraisers throughout the year to provide financial donations to local charities that support women and families. Service activities include providing a tea at nursing homes, a garden project partnership with the Tockwotton Courtyard Residents, and signing up donations for the church's Sunday Coffee Hour. The Alliance also monitors the maintenance of the Parish House parlors.

Find out more at the Alliance Coffee Sales table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour and pick up a membership packet if you are interested in joining.

– Janet Downing Taylor, Alliance President

Women's Alliance Coffee Sale

Coffee Lovers Can Rejoice!

The First Unitarian Women's Alliance Coffee Sales are back! The Alliance purchases its gourmet coffees locally from New Harvest Coffee Roasters in Pawtucket, RI. Because of its close proximity, New Harvest can deliver their freshly roasted coffees just a few days before we sell them.



The Alliance only sells organic coffee. The selections are regular and decaf, in both ground coffee and beans. Our coffee prices have increased a little due to the increase in the prices we pay. The monies from the sales are donated to community charities and support projects in the church. We hope to see you at the Alliance coffee table in the Atrium!



Transylvania Partner Church Update

Ten adventurers, eight from First Unitarian, experienced a magical trip to Transylvania and a visit to our partner church in Szentgyhaza. Our group consisted of Joan and Rick Richards; Janet Downing Taylor; Nori Duncan; Mary Speare; Hillary Salmons; Betty Finn and her two teenage grandnieces, Lilly and Caroline; and Tom Getz.

The trip started out in Budapest, and after a short visit there, we caught a train to Koloszvar, home of the Unitarian Church in Europe. We visited the Church headquarters, where we found out that the Hungarian Unitarian Church had recently merged with the Unitarian Church in Transylvania. We also learned it's a small world: in the Consistory, or Meeting Room, we saw a portrait of Anna Eddy Richmond, 1818-1881, a member of our church who funded the Channing Chair at the University in Koloszvar.

From Koloszvar, we headed due north and visited a number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Our initial focus of the trip was to see some of the oldest wooden churches in the world. The churches we visited were between 400 and 500 years old. Some of the churches still have active congregations. One of the steeples towered over 300 feet high – a very imposing sight.

As we continued east, we followed a road along the Ukrainian border, where we toured the famous Painted Monasteries. These spectacular churches were breath-taking, beautifully painted with stories of the New and Old Testament both inside and out.

Of course, the highlight of the trip was the weekend visit to our Partner Church in Szentgyhaza. When we arrived at the village, we were greeted by old friends and soon-to-be-new acquaintances. We were introduced to our host families, shared a welcoming greeting, and went on our way to get to know our families.

The home village stay is a truly heart-warming experience. The people are interested in making connections; language is not a stumbling block. It was easy to get to know each other with the help of a bit of English, Hungarian, German, or sign language.

On Saturday, we went to the Festival of the 1,000 Sekler Girls. This festival celebrates the cultural heritage of the Sekler Region, of which our village is a part. It is a festival where most people are dressed in authentic Transylvanian village costumes. There was singing and dancing, arts and crafts, food and drink, and lots of laughter and joy.



Sunday morning we celebrated services in their small but lovely church. At the end of Sunday services, we presented our partner church with our gift, a beautiful hand blown glass chalice made by fellow First Unitarian member and artist extraordinaire, Chris Belleau.



We hope we have whetted your appetite about this trip with this small snapshot of our marvelous journey. So, please join us at the October 23

Parish Supper and find out more about this remarkable trip. Hope to see you there!

Are You a History Buff?

In preparation for the upcoming 2016 and 2020 anniversaries of the church, the History Committee is looking for members of the congregation who have research and writing skills and who would like to share those skills with the History Committee. There will be a table set up in the Atrium with past projects of the History Committee where you can sign up. The first meeting will be announced when there is a time that works for all who are interested. Anyone with archival skills is also encouraged to visit the table to help with this part of our work.



WHEEL OF LIFE

Condolences to:

The family and friends of **Sally Ann Johnson** on her death in June. A member of this church since 1974.

The friends of **Eugenia Bialek** on her death in June. A member of this church since 2003.

Nancy Ferrazza on the death of her father, Robert, in June.

Frank Corrigan and Kristen Peterson on the death of Frank's father, Thomas, in June.

John & Nancy Green on the death of John's father, George Washington Green, in July.

Judy & Paul Bowden and family on the death of Judy's father in July.

Joe Salvatore on the death of his father in July, who was 100 years old.

Nancy Worthen on the death of her daughter Maggie in August.

Marilyn Meardon and her family on the death of her brother in Kentucky in August.

Michael James former church member, now living in Nebraska, on the death of his wife, Judy.

Judy and Lenny Bento, their family, and friends on the death of Larry Bento, member since 1989.

Robert Owen Jones and his family on the death of his brother in August.

HATS OFF TO ...

Our Garden Mulchers: Nancy Weiss-Fried, Bill Twaddell, Phil and Amy Swayze, Gregory Waksmulski, Fred Jodry, Jaime Durango, and Walter Sotelo.

Lyn Bradford, Elissa Emerson, and Carol Giliberto for sorting extra dishware and cleaning the cabinets in the kitchen.

Mary Frappier for emergency phone coverage during summer vacation when the church was closed.

Mary Frappier, John Wilhelm, and Terri Smith for greeting this summer.



Spiritual Development

A Successful Summer Program

This summer's services featured a wide variety of interesting speakers and beautiful music. Thanks to Neil Bartholomew, Keith Brown, Paul Barfoot, Rev. Tony Lorenzen, Steve McCloy, Greg Kniseley, Joan Richards, Lorena Garcia, Nancy Green, Rev. Sarah Napoline, Rev. Gwendolyn Howard, and

Martha Manno for their stimulating talks; and to Chris Sanzo, Lynda Gulley, Gregory Waksmulski, the StrongHousian Quartet, Village Harmony, Claire Rosenbaum, John Moran, Phip and Jacqui Wheelock, and Neil Bartholomew for the wonderful music.

Peace Flag Project and the Month of Peace

Peace Art Gallery Opening

Friday, September 18, 5:00p in the Atrium

This is the twelfth year our Peace Flag Project has organized events in celebration of the UN International Day of Peace. Once again, we will have a lovely exhibit of Peace Art in the Atrium Gallery at the church. Our own Dena Quilici and Amy Webb will each have pieces in the exhibit. Gallery opening will be Friday, September 18 at 5:00p prior to the Parish Supper.



Peace Fest RI

Saturday, September 19, 1:00-4:30p at Burnside Park and Kennedy Plaza

Our main event will be Peace Fest RI on Saturday, September 19. There will be Activities for Peace (1:00-3:00p), Dances for Peace (3:00p) and our annual Walk for Peace (3:30p). Please join us. There's something for everyone at every age to enjoy. Come celebrate peace, experience peace, be peace.

Please see (www.thepeaceflagproject.org) and/or our Facebook events page (www.facebook.com/events/934050263307960/). Or contact Ginny Fox (ginfox32@yahoo.com).

Chalice Circle Samplers and Sign-up

This Small Group Ministry Program at the First Unitarian Church is for those seeking connections as part of our church community. This experience fulfills the need for intimacy and spiritual growth of members in our large faith community.

Small groups of eight to ten people enhance connections and provide an avenue for religious growth and spiritual meaning. Most groups meet twice a month for two hours in the Parish House or in a member's home. Group members are asked to commit to eight or ten sessions.

Chalice Circle Samplers

On Sundays, September 20 and 27, there will be opportunities to experience a brief Chalice Circle sampler after church and to sign up for a fall session, depending on space availability.

For more information, contact Registrar Janet Downing Taylor (jdtaylor39@verizon.net).

Flowers for Sunday Services

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

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

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



Glass flowers at the pulpit by Chris Belleau from the Gallery Belleau on Wickenden Street

Continuing Programs

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 and George Beshers

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 and in our service and social action.

No previous meditation experience required. You can visit our website (foundationforactivecompassion.org/audios-videos-texts).

Contact: Ken Bent (kenbent@cox.net)

Tai Chi

Every Tuesday at 7:00p

Tai Chi class for beginners to advanced, children to seniors. All inclusive. Instruction and performance. For information or to sign up, contact Sean Connor (seanconnor@cox.net).

UUMen

Sunday, September 13, 7:00-9:00p

Beginning again. Over 20 years ago a small group of us gathered to initiate what became UUMen. Similar to Chalice Circles, we help each other deal with the issues of being male in our culture. We meet to confront gender injustice; loneliness; racism; homophobia; distrust between men, against women, and against children.

This month we gather to explore those things you would like to begin again. Maybe anew. Maybe differently. Have you changed over the summer? How? We can expect that check-in will take a good amount of time. I've had a good summer and it's exciting to welcome one another back. We can plan our year and volunteer to lead in the topics we want to explore together.

Facilitator: Steve McCloy (dadzone43net@aol.com, 401.244.5321)



Social Justice

Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly Meeting

Sunday, September 13 at 12:15p

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

Loaves & Fishes Mission

Tuesday, September 1, noon to 7:00p

During the summer months a dedicated group of volunteers hosted several barbecues for the men at Harrington Hall. This month, as always, we could use your help – whether time, goods, or money – with carrying out our monthly Loaves & Fishes Mission. On the first Tuesday of every month, volunteers deliver food, clothing, and respectful companionship to the men of Harrington Hall, a homeless shelter in Cranston.

Since Harrington Hall may shelter some sex offenders at times, children under 18 are not allowed there, but they are more than welcome to come to the church at 12:00p to prepare sandwiches or at 3:00p to collect clothes and help to load food and clothes in the cars.

There are three shifts:

noon–1:00p: sandwich crew

3:00–5:00p: clothing organizers and supply loaders

5:00–7:00p: delivery crew

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

Y'All Come Community Lunch

Saturday, September 26, from noon at Beneficent Church, Providence

We will be partnering with Beneficent Church in downtown Providence on Saturday, September 26, as they host the Y'All Come Community lunch. It's a fun way to participate in helping others, as we serve a delicious meal to those who come by. The event lasts the entire afternoon, and there's wonderful live music.

First Unitarian Legislative Ministry

Our Legislative Ministry is a member of the UU Legislative Ministry–RI, the statewide organization for many local UUs to become involved in social and economic justice causes in the RI General Assembly and the US Congress. It is one of ten UU Legislative Ministries from New England to the Pacific Coast, that serve as a visible force in the “public square,” as guided by our UU Principles. UULM-RI has been an advocate for justice – and peace – since November 2002.

Activities include letter-writing campaigns, meeting with local legislators, and, of course, lobbying at the RI General Assembly. UULM-RI's initial efforts focused on Separation of Powers, affordable housing, economic justice, and peace. More recent efforts included opposition to the Iraq war, attempting to make the executive branch a co-equal power within state government, and marriage equality legislation.

Our current work is to see that the 2016 General Assembly acts on the following issues: housing and homelessness, guns and violence, sustainable communities, and restoring Ethics Commission jurisdiction over legislators.

All are invited to devote a few hours to advocating for personal and community interests in social and economic justice. It is one reason we are Unitarian Universalists.

Contact: Bob Cox (rcox45@cox.net)

First Unitarian's Food Share Pantry

Volunteer at Our Food Pantry

Distribution Day: Monday, September 21

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) 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 from 7:00-9:00p

Come join fellow knitters for a casual evening of knitting and conversation. Work on your own



project or knit for one of First Unitarian's social justice projects. Drop in any Tuesday evening. Beginners are always welcome. We have yarn

and needles to get you started.

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

Coming in October

The Economics of Henry George

Sundays, October 4, 11, 18 & 25 at 12:15p

A great economic philosophy awaits you! Although most think it inevitable that we live in a society with ugly divisions between rich and poor, in fact it is not. There is a peaceful, democratic way we can assert everyone's right to work at high-wage jobs of their choice in a non-government-controlled, market economy. The economics of Henry George will make poverty and fear of poverty a thing of the past.

Join Cathy Orloff for a discussion-oriented seminar on the four Sundays of October right after Coffee Hour.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>1</p> <p>Loaves & Fishes Mission 12:00–7:00p</p> <p>Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Last Summer Worship 10:00a</p>	<p>7</p> <p>LABOR DAY Church Office Closed</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p World Affairs 7:00p</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Prudential Committee 6:30p Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Deacons 5:30p Search Comm. 7:00p</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Saturday Social Supper (Ruth Arellana)</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Homecoming Service 10:30a</p> <p>at 12:15p Neighborhood Social Justice UU Men 7:00p</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Teacher Orientation 6:30p</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Worship Comm. 6:00p</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Peace Art Exhibit Opening 5:00p All-Parish Supper 5:45p Program 7:45p</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Peace Fest RI 1:00–4:00ish (Kennedy Plaza)</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Worship 10:30a Sunday School begins</p> <p>at 12:00p Chalice Circle Sampler</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Food Pantry 2:00p–6:00p Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Search Comm. 7:00p</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop 9:00a–12:00p</p>
<p>27</p> <p>Worship 10:30a at 11:30a Deacons Salon at 12:00p Ice Cream Social Chalice Circle Sampler at 12:30p CoA Parent Orient.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>			