



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

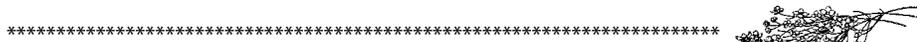
MARCH 2016

Services in the Meeting House

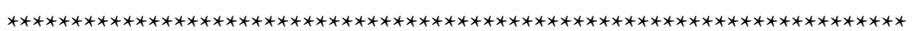
Sunday, March 6 Canvass Kickoff: "A Charge to the Congregation!"
10:30a **Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman**
Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Daylight Savings – Turn your clocks AHEAD one hour.
Sunday, March 13 "Guns: The Erosion of Civility"
10:30a **Rev. Gene Dyszlewski**
Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

After the service, our Standing on the Side of Love Committee is sponsoring a letter-writing event to advocate for passage of a domestic violence bill to remove firearms from the hands of domestic abusers (see page 11).

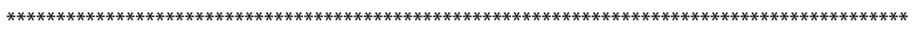


Springing Our Spirit
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, March 15, 16 & 17, at 7:00p
If you enjoyed our Winter Week of Worship last year – or if you missed it – save the dates for another series of varied mid-week worship experiences. Like last year, each evening will feature a different style and flavor, and each will be something different from what we usually do on Sunday mornings (including another hymn sing).
For more information, contact Jacqui Nye (funjac@hotmail.com)



Sunday March 20 Turning Over a New Leaf, or Just Waving a Palm?
10:30a **Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman**
Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, March 27 Easter Sunday: "You Just Can't Keep a Good Person Down!"
A Multigenerational Service
10:30a **Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman**
*We will celebrate Earth Communion and Child Dedications (see below).
Newborn–three-year-old room is open.*



Child Dedications

The next child dedication ceremony will take place during the Easter Sunday service on March 27. Church members with a baby or smaller child who needs dedicating can contact the church office (401.421.7970).



We are a Welcoming Congregation

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S t a f f

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
Walter O. Sotelo, Administrative Assistant
Jenn Nardone, Membership Coordinator
Jaime Durango, Building Manager
Paul Webber/John Forde, Evening Security
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From My Window . . .

It's time to get comfortable talking about money! In an effort to support your pledge drive, which is in full swing this month, I want to share a few thoughts pulled from my February 7 sermon. My hope is that you can all take the opportunity of this transitional year to think well outside the box (or the collection plate) in determining your financial relationship to this, your religious community. Go to this link (<http://www.firstunitarianprov.org/worship/sermons.shtml>) in order to review that full sermon. Here is some of what I said about why stewardship matters . . .

I don't want to mention that your staff is underpaid or even that you are understaffed, though both are true. I don't want to talk about the much lower than average high pledges here at First Unitarian, or even the substantially low average pledges, although both of those are true as well. And I don't even want to talk about how the church has, for a long time, been operating its day-to-day budget by borrowing from the bequests left by those, now gone, who wanted to secure the future of these facilities for both you and for those who will come after you, though that is true as well. [I was reticent in mentioning these things in early February; now it is time to take them seriously!] . . .

Please think of your church as a place where you come to find and make meaning of your life experiences, a place that inspires transformation of what has been into what yet can be. I hope you will think of your financial support here as a way of securing this spiritual home for yourself and your family. I hope you won't think of your opportunities for stewardship here in terms of fees for services. I hope you will think of your potential for stewardship by considering yourself to be a keeper of this house. You needn't consider that you're doing this alone; together you are all keepers of this house, this place that exists for connection and support, this place that exists for your shared efforts in making a focused and consequential impact on the world around you. . . .

As a consulting minister during this interim year, I can tell you what I think your church needs of you. It needs even more than your pledge campaign team will ask. They'll be asking for a 5% to 10% increase. For some of you, that would be substantial. For others, I would suggest that what is needed is far more than that. Maybe you can surprise them with your born-again understanding of stewardship. Your church needs for those of you with deep pockets to dig significantly deeper. It needs those of you with more modest means to consider seriously the value and potential of this congregation in your life, in the community and in the future, and then to support it at a level which shows your gratitude, your faith and your hope. Perhaps that level is 100% to 200% higher than what you might be contributing at this point. To get where I think you want to be, it's time to think of stewardship in a whole new light. . . .

It would be irresponsible of me to fail to mention that this church needs those of you who live under stressed financial circumstances to recognize that you are not in a position to provide the level of financial support that might be available from others. This church needs you to appreciate that your presence provides substantial support for all the aspirations that this congregation holds. "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." (Karl Marx) . . .

Finally, after you consider the significance of the church to you in this moment, please consider those of the future who will need to find what you have found here. Please consider leaving them a sound legacy, appreciating that you are not the founders, but the stewards, of a community whose sturdy foundation was left here for you by those who came and went before those of us who are here now.

This is *your* pledge drive. I hope you have the best one ever!

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

Deacons' Bench

First Unitarian addresses racism. Last month's congregational vote confirmed our support of the Black Lives Matter movement. As *The New Jim Crow* book groups are ending, we are looking at meaningful ways to combat racism around us. At our last Deacons meeting, we considered voter registration as a potent equalizer. We are exploring ways to involve this community in registering voters in schools.



Some candidates for high office are promulgating another form of racism by directing us to hate and fear our Muslim brothers and sisters. How wonderful it was to see such a turnout at the Friday night supper on February 12 when we welcomed friends from the Islamic faith!

Deacons Calling. The Deacons made a decision early in the year that we would not directly call those persons on our lists. The reason was simple: we knew that you would be hearing from the Search Committee in the fall and from the Annual Budget Drive folks in March. We did not want to create "call fatigue" and so decided not to. But we still want to hear from you and will be reaching out via email. Contact information is available in the form of small cards at the table in the back of the Meeting House and on the visitors' table in the Newcomers Cafe.

Communion. The Deacons have a historical connection with the Communion Services that were once held monthly in this church, celebrated with silver communion vessels attributed to Paul Revere. Now held occasionally, the next service will be on Maundy Thursday, March 24, at 7:00p.

Caring Network and Mindful Grieving. The church office continues to be the first contact for any member who needs help. Senior Deacons Shirley DiMatteo and Steve McCloy are taking on the coordinating functions of the Caring Network. In the past, meals and rides were provided to members of First Unitarian.



The "Mindful Grieving" group continues under the leadership of Rick Richards, Bruce Amand, Pat Gifford, MD, and Elissa Emerson, PhD. Rev. Ortman provides pastoral contact with each participant. It is apparent that another series will be needed and will be launched later in the year.

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



Spiritual Pathways

Telling Our Stories, Sharing Our Gifts

March heralds hints of spring, with weather so changeable that it seems to follow our theme of transitions and transformations. This month we focus on generosity and gratitude, ideas important enough to be held up anytime. Young people, their teachers, and advisors have been busy and thoughtful, blending conversations around current events and congregational life with explicit curriculum for each class. The younger congregation and volunteer teachers have been building trusting relationships where they feel safe to share their stories and make connections. At press time, we are looking forward to an appreciation event for volunteer teacher teams led by storyteller Len Cabral. He will share the importance of telling our stories. That is why we gather.

The Annual Budget Drive is about to begin to fund programs – including religious education, social justice projects, and staffing – to fulfill congregational goals. In Chapel worship, we will explore the concept of generosity and what we bring with us when we come to church. It might be our singing voices, our smiles, a word of advice or comfort. Sometimes our bucket is empty and we hope to fill it on Sunday. You get the picture. What I hope they take away from this Chapel lesson is this: our gifts, of time, of caring, our love, our ideas, and our money, in their best use, all make it possible for our congregation and our Unitarian Universalist Association, our religion, to be a sacred presence in the world. Why? To be able to be with each other, on full and empty days, as we learn and grow to be our best selves and to help make positive change in our world.

As we approach the spring equinox, a natural balance in nature, I am counting on the generosity of our congregation to fund and support the next chapter of this faith community. Our Unitarian Universalism is evident each day of the week, not only on Sundays. It is evident in what we care about, what we do or don't do, in what we fund, support, and stand for. When healthy and welcoming, a faith community is a safe place where we can make connections, be valued and treasured.

Come tell your story and share your gifts.

Take good care,

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

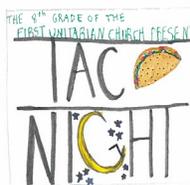
Coming of Age Taco Fiesta — A Wonderful Event!

Bravo to the 2016 Coming of Age community for hosting a fun Taco Fiesta fundraiser. The shoppers, chefs, and parent organizers worked overtime to produce a fabulous meal. Of course, servers were our charming eighth-graders and their ever-faithful mentors. All eighth-graders were on board and working the event.

Entertainment included the ever-popular raffle, shepherded by Kristen Curry.

Many thanks to the students, parents, teachers, mentors, and friends of COA who made this a warm and delightful evening. Huge gratitude to parents for their patience and just plain hard work.

The students and teachers look forward to their UU heritage trip to Boston in April, funded, in large part, by this effort.



Welcome back to **Jennifer Huntley, RE Assistant**, after recovering from surgery.

Family Game Night

Friday, March 4, 5:30–7:30p

The RE Committee is excited to announce that they will host an early evening of games, food, and fun for all ages (yes, even the toddlers) on Friday, March 4.

You are welcome to bring a favorite table game in addition to the games that will be provided.

Hope to see you there.

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

Now is the perfect time to consider attending one of the many wonderful summer programs at UU camp and conference centers in the New England/New York region and around the country. These UU centers offering a wide variety of programs for children, youth, and adults, gathering Unitarian Universalists from many regions.



The UUA website offers links to individual sites; visit (www.uua.org/directory/where/camps-retreats-and-conferences)

One site is Star Island, just off the New Hampshire coast. Cathy Seggel is happy to share her experiences there; she will be attending the Star Island Lifespan Religious Education Week in July. The theme is Sustainability and Faith with speaker Tim DeChristopher. Contact her for funding options and with your questions.



Results of UU Service Committee Guest At Your Table Effort

Thank you to all who contributed to this annual social justice project. The total donation was \$619.00.



Sight Lines

From the President

This being human is a guest house
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing
and invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

– Rumi

The other day, I found myself thinking about the concept of hospitality. The dictionary definition of *hospitality* is “the friendly reception and treatment of guests or strangers”; the secondary definition is “the quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way.” The past few months have provided many examples of the radical hospitality that I believe we, as a congregation, are striving for.

One example is the Parish Suppers in November and January that invited us to learn from members of our larger community in support of the Black Lives Matter (#BLM) movement, which in turn supported our congregational vote to hang our #BLM banner and begin a period of intentional self-reflection and action toward ensuring racial justice. The Parish Supper in February invited Muslim members of our community to share their religious beliefs and customs with us along with their personal stories of being Muslim in Rhode Island. Being able to share a meal with our neighbors and the wonderful program that followed has begun the process of forging interfaith friendships that, I hope, will be long-lasting.

The promise of a new settled minister, along with our efforts as a congregation to be welcoming of all, is likely to result in many visitors coming to check us out and determine if we are the spiritual community that they have been seeking. As a frequent greeter, I have the privilege of speaking with many of these visitors and hearing their reasons for making time to attend services. Some have heard about our ministerial search, others are drawn by the recent energy around racial justice, and a number of young families are interested in our excellent religious education program. Whatever the reasons why newcomers are visiting, I think it is exciting and I challenge each of us to remember when we were here for the first time and the welcome that we received that kept us coming.



Cynthia Rosengard
President, Prudential Committee
pres@firstunitarianprov.org

The 2016 Annual Budget Drive Is On!

Two important Budget Drive dates:

March 6: Annual Budget Drive Kick-off

March 8: Giving Tuesday – Pledge Online!

Watch for your pledge invitation in the mail.

A Testimonial from Suzanne Alden

When I first walked into First Unitarian on a cold New Year’s Day, I experienced a warmth and welcome that I couldn’t have imagined. It felt like people were coming out of the woodwork just to greet me. Four years later, this church has become woven into the fabric of my life. As each year passes, I find myself becoming more involved, because I recognize that the continuation of our congregation lies in our willingness to help.



This year, I am increasing my pledge by 5%, because this church can only continue to provide that warmth that I experienced to other visitors – and keep all of our programs flourishing and making a difference in the community – if we all do our part by giving the most we possibly can.

Treasurer’s Report

Rev. Ortman’s recent sermon about stewardship highlighted how important it is to look closely at our individual commitment to First Unitarian. Churches cannot survive without strong financial support from all who attend.



We currently are not a congregation with unlimited resources. There are not the number of wealthy members there were in the past. We have a congregation of academics, social service providers, artisans, and more. However, if each of us is able to increase our giving by 5%–10% each year, we would be able to fully fund our obligation to maintain our facilities, continue to provide adequate compensation for our staff, and fully pay our annual assessment to the UUA.

This year we are seeing pledges being paid as promised, which will insure that our budget will be balanced at the end of the fiscal year. We can be proud of this effort. It bodes well for the Annual Budget Drive which begins this month.

– Graham Nye, Treasurer



Our Ministerial Search

The Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) has been working hard to prepare for the pre-candidating phase of the search process. This is the period when our three top candidates visit Providence for in-depth interviews and other activities lasting from Friday night through Sunday afternoon on three different weekends. Our candidates are all white females, ranging in age from 34 to 62; one is married, two are single. They were selected from a field of 25, about half of whom were women.

Before selecting our top three candidates, we selected a “top nine” group, which included both men and women, and one woman of color. We planned Skype video interviews with each of them in order to ask each some questions and also allow them to ask questions of us. We called and spoke with a minimum of three references for each candidate before the video interviews began and shared all the reports from the reference checking among the group. Two of the nine candidates withdrew before the interviews began. The video interviews were extremely helpful in allowing us to see and interact with each candidate.

While the interviews were taking place, there was a lot of activity behind the scenes. Some of us were charged with finding lodging for the candidates, and others booked transportation. Our candidates come from three different areas of the country, so air travel was necessary for two of them. Restaurants and catering services were booked, and some committee members volunteered to host events at their homes. Transportation of the candidate from location to location was examined closely so that there would be someone available for each trip during the weekend.

The pre-candidating weekends will end with a worship service conducted by each minister. Our three “neutral pulpits” were booked long ago; lunch at a local restaurant has been planned with each candidate in the town where she is to preach. Once we selected our top three candidates, we put each of them in touch with the minister in the corresponding neutral pulpit, so that each could get more information about the church and the service. We also booked a real estate agent to take each candidate on a tour of housing in the Providence area and to get a feel for neighborhoods and prices. In addition to interviewing with the MSC, the candidates also have a short interview with the church’s three senior staff members.

We look forward to meeting the candidates in person. These visits will give us the opportunity to spend a fair amount of time with each candidate in both formal and more relaxed settings and will allow us to introduce them to Providence. Each candidate reflects many of the skills and qualities you have told us are important in our next minister, and we look forward to finding the candidate that is right for our church.



Ministerial Search Committee: (top, l to r): Wendy Oliver, Rick Richards, Shelley Stephenson, Domenic Napolitano; (bottom) Bill Koteff, John Simmonds (chair), Lisa Sampson

Spiritual Development

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 inter-faith 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.

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

Contact: Ken Bent (kenbent@cox.net)

UU Men

Sunday, March 13, 7:00–9:00p

All those questions you wanted to ask but haven’t. We will have a leaderless session and will choose our own topics to pursue and discuss. It will be awesome.



Reimagining Religion

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:00p

Reimagining Religion is an ongoing attempt to employ the best recent scholarship in coming to grips with issues raised by radically new developments in the study of religion and thereby achieving a fuller appreciation of what religious literacy entails in the twenty-first century.

Leader: Tom Hall (twh2nd@aol.com)

Art in the Atrium

The March exhibit features the work of five local artists who meet monthly at the Meeting Street home of one of the artists to create art and enjoy time together. The show includes multimedia seaside, country, and city themes.

If you are interested in showing your work in the Atrium next church year, (September to June), please contact Chiara van Erp (romano-vanerp-design@cox.net)



Community Life

March All-Parish Supper

Friday, March 11

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: Concert of Irish Music

Our after-dinner program will feature an exciting musical event with Aubrey Atwater, Elwood Donnelly, and guest artist Cathy Clasper-Torch. This talented trio of Rhode Island folk singers and instrumentalists will perform a concert of Irish Music in America in celebration of St. Patrick's Day. In this program they will convey the history of the Irish in America and the impact of the Irish on American culture. Lots of beautiful songs, tunes, and dance numbers . . . and some Irish humor. Please plan to join us.



Reservations for the dinner are strongly requested. Please fill out the tear-off form in the *Sunday Meeting House Times* and put it in the collection plate; see Jim Estey at Coffee Hour; or call the church office in advance (401.421.7970). Childcare for infants and children to age 8 will be available for parents who request in advance; call Jim Estey (401.351.1748).

Saturday Social Supper

Saturday, March 5, starting at 5:30

The March 5 supper will be at the home of Marida Hollos and Jim Anderson in Providence. 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, 401.477.9668) with the number of people in your party and what you would like to bring.

On April 2, the Supper will be held at the home of Doris and David Bridgehouse in Smithfield.

Getting to Know Your UU Neighbors

(Formerly Round-the-Table Dinners)

Saturday, April 30

Multiple potluck dinners will be held on the same night in the different towns where our community members live. These small gatherings (8 to 12 guests) are a great opportunity to get to know fellow UUs in a more intimate setting than the Saturday Suppers or Parish Suppers.

Can you host one? Please let us know. We want to have a dinner going on in every town our community covers, more than one in heavily populated areas.

To host/attend one of these small dinners, please look for the sign-up table with Terri Smith, Mary Frappier, or Kim Ziegelmayr during Coffee Hour or email Membership Coordinator Jennifer Nardone (mem@firstunitarianprov.org).

Save the Date!

First Unitarian Musicale Fundraiser

Saturday, April 23, 7:30p

Sunlight is returning and so is First Unitarian's Musicale! Our congregation's pool of accomplished musicians continues to grow, and this year's fund-raising performance promises to outshine last year's wonderful experience. Please, mark your calendars to celebrate the end of winter with a song.

Our Mitten Tree Blooms All Winter

Thanks to all who have donated warm items for the mitten tree this season. There were so many lovingly knitted warmings this year! Through your generosity,



we were able to distribute nearly 200 items to those in need who visit our food share food pantry or walk by our church.

Although the cold weather will soon be a memory, please keep our mitten tree in mind as you sort through your gently used hats, scarves, mittens, gloves and socks in preparation to pack them away until next winter. If there are things you will no longer be needing, drop them off in our basket in the Atrium. Knitting for a Better World will store them, and we'll be off to a good start next winter. The basket can be found in the Atrium until the middle of March.

April All-Parish Supper

Friday, April 8

Worlds in Motion: The Refugee Crises in Europe and the Middle East

The flow of refugees and economic migrants into Europe have posed enormous strains on the infrastructure of border control and placed major demands on the citizens of countries affected. Drawing on first-hand experience in refugee camps in Syrian and Jordan, and on what has become known as "the refugee trail," our panelists, all Brown University faculty members, will share stories and provide insights on the ongoing crisis.

Program presented by the World Affairs Committee. Please plan to join us.

Can You Help Put On Our Annual May Breakfast?

Saturday, May 14

May breakfast is a long-standing, welcoming tradition in Rhode Island. Our breakfast is coming up sooner than you think (yay spring!), and we need to have volunteers ready to make it happen.

We need several people who can cook complicated dishes like scrambled eggs, pancakes, etc. We need a few people to serve, some who can help with set-up and dishwashing, and others who can contribute muffins, donuts, and breads.

If you would like to be part of this fun event, let us know by **March 20**. Please talk to any one of the organizers at Coffee Hour or call Rebecca Alberg (401.231.4104).



Community Life

Donate Plants for the Easter Sunday Service

If you would like to give plants in memory or celebration of a loved one for our Easter Sunday service on March 27, please look for the form in the *Sunday Meeting House Times* or contact Posey Kooris in the church office (admin@firstunitarianprov.org, 401.421.7970). There is a requested donation of \$20 per name. Donors can take their plants at the end of the Easter Sunday service.

Women's Alliance Easter Desserts

Sign up in the Atrium at the Alliance Coffee Sales table through Sunday, March 20. Pick up your dessert on Easter Sunday, March 27, during Coffee Hour.

Dark Chocolate Almond Orange Cake—Last year we offered a chocolate orange tart; this year it is a chocolate almond orange cake. It is gluten free, using almond flour instead of wheat flour, and melts in your mouth. Serves at least 16 because it is so rich. \$35

Decorated Easter Egg Cake—Back by popular demand (a children's favorite), this is a yellow cake shaped like an egg and covered with a white chocolate mousse frosting and decorated like an Easter egg. Serves 12-16 \$25

Grape Pie—This unusual pie has been highly requested. It is a rustic pie crust filled with a mélange of grapes covered by a nut streussel topping – colorful and delicious. Serves 8 \$22

Lemon Kiwi Tart—A light lemon chiffon is covered with beautiful green kiwi to make a dessert that is the colors of spring. Serves 8-10 \$22

White Chocolate Espresso Torte with Hazelnut Praline—This fancy take on tiramisu is an espresso-laced genoise cake covered with white chocolate ganache (known in the Easter Egg Cake as white chocolate mousse) and filled with espresso mousse. The outside of this loaf-shaped torte is decorated with hazelnut praline. Serves 12 \$35

Yogurt Cardamom Panna Cotta with Apricot Sauce—This is the perfect dessert after a heavy meal. It comes in individual portions with an apricot sauce on the bottom and a cookie on the side. Serves 8 for \$26; 6 for \$22; 4 for \$18

A Night at the Theater with the Women's Alliance

Thursday, March 10, 7:30p

The Alliance is hosting a night at the theater for a performance of *A Murder Is Announced* by The Players at the Barker Playhouse on Benefit Street. The Alliance has purchased half the house (50 seats) and is inviting members of the congregation to join us. There will be a dessert reception before the performance, at 7:00p.

Discounted, limited-seating tickets are \$20 (a theater bargain!). Tickets may be purchased at the Alliance Coffee Sales table. The net proceeds from this event will be donated to the 200th Anniversary Celebration of our Meeting House.

Contact: Janet Downing Taylor, Alliance President (jdtaylor39@verizon.net)



Save the date!

Antiques & Uniques – Third Annual Indoor Yard Sale

Saturday, April 16, 10:00a-2:00p

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

You can arrange for pick-up and storage now until the sale by contacting Janet Downing Taylor (401.751.7969 or jdtaylor39@verizon.net). Items can be brought to the church the week of the sale only. The sale is sponsored by the Women's Alliance.

The Women's Alliance

Women's Alliance Monthly Program

Monday, March 7

Business Meeting: 10:00a

Program: 11:00a followed by luncheon (\$10)

Rhode Island's Lighthouses

Speaker: David Kelleher

David will recount the history of Rhode Island lighthouses, with photos portraying their unique design, and will describe restoration efforts.

David Kelleher is a member of both the American Lighthouse Foundation and the East Providence Historical Society and is a Board member of Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse near Riverside. A retired elementary school principal, he helped restore the Pomham Rocks lighthouse and narrates lighthouse tours offered by Save the Bay.

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

Gourmet Coffee Sale in the Atrium

Create Your Own Unique Coffee

Why settle for any old coffee. You can create your very own unique coffee using the gourmet coffees sold by the Women's Alliance. We sell two bold coffees, one medium coffee, and two decaf coffees. All types come in both beans and drip-grind 16 oz. bags. And they are all organic and freshly roasted in RI! Perhaps you'd like a reduced-caffeine coffee but with just the right amount of caffeine for mental alertness. Or you might like to blend together several coffees for Your Special Coffee. It's fun to experiment on these cold winter days. And you are helping the community. The Alliance donates the proceeds from the coffee sales to worthy causes. Check out the Alliance coffee table in the Atrium.



Coffee Hour Donations

You don't have to be Irish to have good luck this month! Just sign up to bring goodies to our Coffee Hour to feel lucky. Our Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort organized by the Women's Alliance with donations from our congregation of baked or bought goodies such as brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake and more. In order to feed the ravenous crowd each Sunday, we need 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 go home with a reminder so you won't forget. You will feel lucky all day!



Community Life

The Meeting House Clock

by Cyrus O'Neil

This is the first in a series of articles about the Meeting House as part of its 200th anniversary on October 31, 2016.

At the back of our Meeting House hangs an old clock. It has probably hung there since the Meeting House was dedicated in 1816. During the silences in our Sunday services, I like to listen for the clock, as it marks the moments in the life of our congregation.

That clock has quietly hailed those moments for almost 200 years now, as our congregation has gathered together on Sunday mornings. Many of those years were good years. But not all. During those 200 years, financial panics swept through people's lives. A civil war rolled across this land, along with two world wars and a great depression. Most of us have never lived through days like that. But the life of our congregation has. Our congregation has been through it all.

And through it all, the old clock has continued to hail the arrival of each moment of all of those Sundays, when people in our congregation paused in their daily tasks of work and family, to come together in this Meeting House. They gathered for the same reasons we come together now: to affirm and draw strength from a shared faith in those things that really matter in life: the web of connection that binds us to one another; and the power of generosity, tolerance and compassion to make a real difference.

Next time it's really quiet during Sunday service, listen for the clock. It's not marking the passing of time. No, not that clock. That clock is announcing the arrival of yet another moment in the endless stream of the present. In its own quiet way, it's hailing the arrival of our moment, of our time. May we live large in the possibilities of this moment that we share. May we pass on something as precious and sustaining to this congregation as those who come after.

The Meeting House clock was made by Simon Willard (1753–1848), a celebrated U.S. clockmaker from a family of clock makers near Boston, MA. He is best known for inventing the eight-day patent timepiece that came to be known as the gallery or banjo clock. Similar Simon Willard gallery clocks are in the White House and the Old South Church in Boston, MA.

(adapted from "Simon Willard Clocks," Wikipedia, October 2008)



Easter for our Transylvanian Unitarian Partners is a significant time in which they honor Jesus Christ as a prophet and great man. Just as Jesus was giv-

ing palms, flowers adorn the church symbolizing new life and the promise of spring. "As nature wakes up from winter sleep, we wake up to Jesus' teaching in us," says Rev. Kellerman.

In the village of Szentagaza, there is a three-day celebration with festive workshops and Bible studies. Maundy Thursday is a time for reflection on the Last Supper. They have a meal and read poems and give lectures about the importance of two of the teachings of Jesus that influence their church practices: Baptism and the Last Supper. On Good Friday, the day Jesus died on the cross, the church has a simple memorial service in the afternoon.

There are various village customs that are shared with many Unitarian churches in Transylvania. On Saturday before Easter Sunday, young men visit with young woman and sprinkle them with perfumed water so they will blossom all year. The tradition of dyeing eggs is a universal custom in the Christian world, but in Romania it has become an art form. Dyeing eggs red to symbolize the blood of Christ is customary, and young girls give these eggs to young men who sprinkle them with scented water. In the past, eggs were boiled in red onion and covered with traditional patterns. Today eggs are dyed in every color and decorated using a device called an egg writer.



Services on Easter Sunday celebrate the life of Jesus as an important prophet and teacher, a man of wisdom and love. Generally, people celebrate after church with a feast of roast lamb or rabbit and enjoy church fellowship.

– Betty Finn for the Partner Church Committee

Support Posey's Humanitarian Venture

Our Office Administrator, Posey Kooris, has been given a sabbatical which she will take in July of this year. She will be traveling to Tanzania with Missions for Humanity, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing medical, dental, and humanitarian aid to those in the world's neediest communities. The group will consist of doctors, nurses, dentists, and educators. Her trip will entail going to a different village each day. Over 2,500 people will be served.



Every person going on the trip will be collecting items in large quantities. In the Atrium you will find a large blue rolling suitcase to be filled with medical supplies such as infant vitamins, infant Ibuprofen, infant Motrin, anti-fungal cream, eye drops, antibiotic/first aid creams, Hydrocortisone cream, toothpaste, toothbrushes, sunscreen (high SPF), and bars of soap. Smaller, travel-size items are preferred, but any donation will be greatly appreciated.

For more information about Missions for Humanity, visit www.missionsforhumanity.org.

HATS OFF TO ...

Those who delivered 100 lunches to Crossroads RI, prepared by the RE community, including Michael Currier, Sarah Owens and Rick Jardon.

Cassandra Thayer for speaking to our Coming of Age mentors and mentees about the mission of Crossroads RI.

Those who prepared delicious food for our volunteer teacher lunch/program.

Thanks to our "wholly families" who shared their stories at the annual worship service: Stu and Riley Carr; Samantha and Carson Cole and Kelley Smith; Bela and Alexia Texeira with Marilyn Meardon and Bob Frederiksen; and Erica, Colby, and Myles Napolitano, who was presented with his Religion and Me scout badge.

Our Coffee Hour Providers last month: The Cook-Off Soup-er Cooks, Tony Allen, Mary Frappier, Joyce Boober, Anne Connor, Rita Rossi, Beth Anterni, Carol Adams, Bobbi Fisler, Elissa Emerson, Nancy Shand, Kathleen Vitolo, Gaby Petruck, Karen Boulanger, Shirley Brown, Tiffany Reed, Lyn Bradford, Betty Finn, Kate Mashburn, Cynthia Rosengard, Nancy Dooley, Mimo Riley, and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.



Community Life

Our Newest Members

Since the start of the church year, 16 new members have joined the church. Look for them on Sundays and add your personal greetings.

Eva Amanda Agudelo



Eva lives in South Providence with her husband, Mattie, and 18-month-old son, Morgan. She grew up in New York City and has since lived in Vermont, Washington State, Western Massachusetts, and Boston. As a teenager, she attended youth conferences modeled after YRUU cons and has always considered herself “culturally Unitarian.” She and her family moved to Providence two years ago, and they have been falling in love with the city and its food, culture, and spirit. Eva has worked in the nonprofit food-systems sector on Buy Local campaigns, beginning farmer training programs, and low-income food access. She is passionate about social justice from an intersectional perspective and believes community is both essential and revolutionary. She joined the church after attending for a month (!) and is so glad to be part of this with all of you.

Sherrie Andre



Sherrie was born and raised in RI and has attended First Unitarian off and on since she was a child – but is excited to form a solid consistent relationship with the church. She is the co-founder of and works as an organizer with FANG: Fighting Against Natural Gas, a grassroots organization/network that works to build and support nonviolent resistance to the natural gas industry and other movements for justice. Sherrie’s time professionally and leisurely are spent working toward and developing new skills to dismantle systems of oppression, connecting sexual violence and climate change, and raising up the intersections of environmental destruction and racism.

Michael Brady



For decades Mike has been attracted to the accepting and holistic nature of UU communities throughout New England. His personal attraction toward UU comes from his own searching and open nature.

He grew up Catholic, the fifth child in a family of six with an Irish father (who died of cancer when he was 10) and a French Canadian mother, who raised his family by building over 100 homes and selling real estate in nearby North Attleboro, MA. He left the church (in spirit), disenchanted by its brainwashing doctrines, at the age of 13. In the 1970s he traveled, experiencing many of that era’s movements. From those early beginnings he found himself in search of a deeper meaning to life – in several Zen Buddhist centers, yoga ashrams, ships made into “floating universities” traveling around the world. He has made a living as a sailboat captain in Newport, Providence, and Boston as well as an independent show producer of regional expos, with a background in media.

Mike is very happy to have such a welcoming community of diverse open souls as part of his greater family.

Annette Casparis



Annette grew up in Copenhagen, Denmark, and matured in the United States. She immigrated here to be with her fiancé, who was studying for a Ph.D. at Brown. This church is the very place where they were married in 1962. They have a daughter and a son. After moving around, she settled in Binghamton, NY, to raise her family. After graduate study she opened her private practice as a licensed psychiatric social worker and an adjunct at Binghamton and Syracuse universities. Upon retirement, she and her husband moved to Barrington. Her daughter and two grand daughters also live in Barrington.

Being back in the church in which she was married and affirming its values, she feels at home again. Her interests are social justice, cooking, knitting, sewing, and being a good neighbor. She feels this church is a very good place for her.

Corey Duefield



Corey lives in Providence with his inspirational wife, Dee, and two beautiful daughters, Elizabeth and Zaria. The motivating choral service, the history of tolerance and respect for human dignity, and the strong and friendly sense of community within its diverse community are some of the reasons he has attended services at First Unitarian since

1997. After leaving Rhode Island in 1999 and working around the world for 12 years, his family has settled in Rhode Island and they are looking forward to becoming more active members of this UU community. They are interested in the ongoing quest for truth and understanding, regularly attending Sunday services to share interconnected perspectives with other friends, all the while helping to continue the democratic traditions at First Unitarian.

Jack Fanning



Jack is British and moved to New York in 2008 for graduate school. There he met Courtney, his beautiful wife, with whom he moved to Providence in 2014 for a job at Brown teaching economics. Jack first attended First Unitarian in January 2015 after reading an article about it in *The New York Times*. He quickly found himself drawn to the church’s liberal religious message and is now looking forward to becoming a full participant of the First Unitarian community. Jack and Courtney currently share a home in Providence with two very adorable cats.

Jonathan Lewis & Ashley Sigmon



Jonathan and Ashley are a couple who have recently joined the church. They are looking forward to becoming active members of the community.

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Community Life

Our Newest Members continued . . .

Jill and Peter Malin



Jill and Peter live in Harmony, RI, having moved to the Providence area three years ago because of Peter's work with Fidelity Investments. It was, indeed, a providential juncture, as their youngest child (they have two daughters, Charlotte and Rebecca) had just graduated from high school and Jill was on the edge of a career pivot. After working as a professional vocalist, most notably with the Handel and Haydn Society for 18 years, she began training as a Montessori teacher and now works in the Children's House Montessori school in Massachusetts.

In addition to their beautiful daughters, the Malin family includes two dogs, two cats, and eight chickens. They enjoy hiking, cooking, reading, and music. Both Peter and Jill spent many years involved with King's Chapel in Boston and are thrilled to be welcomed so warmly into this new active spiritual community.

Max and Sine Pounder



Max and Sine have been Unitarian Universalists for 51 of their 53 years of marriage, starting with their Syracuse, NY, membership in May Memorial UU church in 1965.

Max is a registered architect (MA). Sine completed her MA degree in child development and psychology at Syracuse University, during which time their first child, Evan, was born. They then moved to Boston and were soon caught up in the life of the city. Max worked for a large firm, then opened his own small practice in Boston. Sine worked with other parents on improving the schools, opening libraries, bringing new programs to the classrooms. Those parents were able to develop, in a local vacant school, an ungraded public school with resources from the multicultural base of parents and the community in which it was located. Their two children, Evan and Kirsten, were raised in the South End and attended this school and other Boston Public Schools. Later Sine was asked to join the citywide effort with the court to desegregate the Boston Public Schools.

The Pounders moved to Cohasset, MA, in 1981 and joined First Parish Cohasset UU church. They served on many committees, including the choir and the Parish Committee. Sine loves to make bread and in 1983 opened a bakery in the village and both their children and other young people were employed there. Max loves to garden year-round and keeps the flowers coming summer and winter! He is on the Warwick Historic District Commission. They have lived in Pawtuxet Village, Warwick, for four years, where they are near their daughter and nine-year-old grandson, a major source of joy for them. They enjoy visiting their son and daughter-in-law on Cape Cod during the summer and fall.

Kelly Robinson



Originally from New York, Kelly moved to Barrington, RI, 18 months ago. She has three children ages 13, 15, and 17. For the last 20 years she has worked as a therapist, professor, and certified Life Coach. Her practice focuses on coaching adolescents and college students with ADHD/Executive Function challenges and supporting adults as they navigate the process of change to achieve personal and professional success. Kelly also holds a certificate in Social Justice Mediation and went through Mindfulness Training with Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. When she is not in Rhode Island, Kelly spends her time on a small island in Canada where there is no internet and no cell phone.

Eddie and Elizabeth Roche



Eddie and Elizabeth moved to Barrington from Munich, Germany, about two and a half years ago. They had long sought the right church environment for their family and were delighted when they found First Unitarian. It has provided the perfect balance of peace, warmth, community, and welcome! Their daughter, Kiera, attended the Coming of Age program last year and their son, Aidan, will attend next year.

Eddie is originally from Cork City, Ireland, and Elizabeth is from rural Oklahoma. They met in Germany 25 years ago when Elizabeth was there on exchange. After a number of years in Germany, they moved to Kansas City, where both of their children were born. After ten years there, Eddie and Elizabeth found that Europe was calling them back, so the family moved to Germany for five years before returning to the US and landing in Barrington.

Jon Sweet



Jon is supposedly a fourth-generation Unitarian (great-grandfather on his mother's side was a minister in Boston). He grew up going to the White Plains (NY) Unitarian Church as a child. He worked on Star Island for two summers and went also as a conferee to Life on a Star. He has not belonged to a church since childhood but feels the time is right to come back and rediscover his beliefs and give and receive fellowship. He has a wife, Julie, who is Quaker, and two children. Marja, his daughter, works with him at his company, Oakleaf Wealth Management; his son, Noah, is a sophomore at Proctor Academy in NH.

Elesa Turner



Elesa is a third-generation UU who was dedicated at First Unitarian 17 years ago. She is currently a junior at Barrington High School. She loves history and social science and plays tennis for her school. In her free time, she loves skiing, hiking, and being outdoors. She also volunteers for a local hospice organization and tutors students at her school. She is an active member of the youth group here at First Unitarian as well as Youth Conferences in the Ballou-Channing District. In addition to her involvement with the youth group, she will be working as a chaplain on the Youth Caucus Staff at General Assembly 2016 in Columbus, Ohio.



Social Justice

Standing on the Side of Love (SSL)

Voter Registration Training, Sunday, March 20, 12:15–1:15p

Monthly meeting, Wednesday, March 30, 7:15p

SSL needs more members to help execute all of our anti-racism efforts! Please come to our meeting to hear more about our plans. We are exploring possible workshops to host, as well as planning a book discussion and film screening – so come help us pick the book and movie!

SSL is collaborating with the NAACP and other groups on a voter registration effort. If you are interested in helping people register to vote, please come to our training on Sunday, March 20, at 12:15p. Training will last one hour. Please RSVP to tiffa-n.e.reed@gmail.com.



Domestic Violence Advocacy Program

Sunday, March 13, following Sunday service

The Standing on the Side of Love Committee is sponsoring a letter-writing event on March 13 to advocate for passage of a domestic violence bill removing firearms from the hands of domestic abusers. The program has been developed by the Religious Coalition for a Violence-Free Rhode Island in conjunction with the RI State Council of Churches, the Board of Rabbis of Greater Rhode Island, and other partners. Several congregations have signed on to host letter-signing events.

Domestic violence is harmful to families and particularly toxic to children. A child in a home where there is domestic abuse is negatively affected merely by witnessing an act of violence. Victims of domestic violence, assault, and abuse are predominantly women. When the abuser owns a gun, the victim is 5 to 6 times more likely to be killed. Tragically, American women are 11 times more likely to be murdered with guns than women in any other developed country. This legislation will specifically disarm persons who are clear threats to the lives and well-being of women and children.

There will be several letter-writing options advocating for action on the issue of domestic violence. The letters can be used in two ways: first, signed as is; second, all or part may be used as a guideline for a personalized letter. Anyone wishing to go off on their own and totally construct a new letter is welcomed to do so.

Letters will be addressed to: Rep. Nicholas Mattiello, Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives. Individuals who know their legislator may also choose to write to them.

Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly Meeting

Sunday, March 6 at 12:15p

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

Loaves & Fishes Mission

Tuesday, March 1, noon to 7:00p

This month, as always, we could use your help – whether time, goods, or money – with carrying out our monthly Loaves & Fishes Mission for the men at Harrington Hall. On the first Tuesday of every month, volunteers deliver food, clothing, and respectful companionship to the men at 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 to help.

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.

First Unitarian's Food Share Pantry

Distribution Day: Monday, March 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.

2016 UUA General Assembly

Columbus, OH, June 22–26

Registration for the Unitarian Universalist Association's annual General Assembly will begin on March 1. This national gathering is open to clergy, members, and friends of all 1,000-plus UU congregations.

For online information, go to uua.org/ga, or contact Cathy Seggel in the church office (401.421.7970, dre@firstunitarianprov.org).

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)



For more information on these and future programs (meeting locations, contact information, etc.), see details in this newsletter.

March 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>1</p> <p>Loaves & Fishes Mission 12–7:00p</p> <p>Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Prudential Committee 6:30p Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Annual Budget Drive 5:30p Search Committee 7:00p</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Game Night 5:30–7:30p</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Saturday Social Supper (Hollos/Anderson)</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Worship 10:30a at 12:00p CoA Mentor Mentee Neighborhood SJ at 12:15p <i>The New Jim Crow</i></p>	<p>7</p> <p>Women's Alliance Meeting 10:00a Program 11:00a</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Knitting for a Better World 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Amnesty Int'l 7:00p Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Annual Budget Drive 5:30p Deacons 5:30p Search Committee 7:00p</p>	<p>11</p> <p>All-Parish Supper 5:45p Program 7:45p</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13</p> <p>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS</p> <p>Worship 10:30a at 11:30a Domestic Violence Letter Writing</p> <p>UU Men 7:00p</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Spring Worship 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Spring Worship 7:00p Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Spring Worship 7:00p Annual Budget Drive 5:30p Search Committee 7:00p</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Worship 10:30a at 12:15p Voter Registration Training</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Food Pantry Open 2:00p–6:00p</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Knitting for a Better World 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p</p>	<p>24</p> <p>MAUNDY THURSDAY</p> <p>Annual Budget Drive 5:30p Maundy Thursday Service 7:00p Search Committee 7:00p</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>EASTER SUNDAY Worship 10:30a Child Dedications during the service</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Knitting for a Better World 7:00p</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Meditation 7:00p SSL Meeting 7:15p</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Worship Comm 5:45p Search Committee 7:00p</p>		