



## Services in the Meeting House

**Sunday, December 2**

**Hanukkah for Adults, Part II**

**10:30 am**

**Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay**

Though Hanukkah is commonly thought of as a holiday for children, it holds a lot of lessons for us all. This Sunday we'll kindle Hanukkah lights and sing songs while our children and youth join us for the beginning of the service and the dedication of several children in our congregation. After they depart for Small Groups, we'll explore more aspects of the narrative, including its nature as a true story that happened in recorded history – one that holds flaws and inspiration both – and what we can make of its fallible, fascinating unfolding.

*Grades Pre-K and older begin in the Meeting House.*

*Nursery (infants–three years) meet in Parish House, 2nd floor*

**Sunday, December 9**

**Woyaya: Peace as a Means**

**10:30 am**

**Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay**

We know people hold peace as an ultimate goal. But in some ways, perhaps peace is even more a means than a goal. Peace promises safety, comfort, capacity – and then the question is what opportunities and realizations does peace offer? What art, what understandings, what relationships, what spirit, when we are not defended or anxious or afraid? Amidst all the turmoil in the larger world, we have this congregation where we commit to compassion, comity, relationship, love, aspiration, and inspiration . . . also known as peace. This service will explore what came from our work with the Rev. Thandeka, and what those ideas and understandings offer us on this shared journey that we shape as we go. We'll also celebrate and welcome a number of new members who have recently joined our congregation.

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, December 16**

**Bits and Peaces**

**10:30 am**

**Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Cathy Seggel, DRE**

"Peace! The perfect word is sounding like a universal hymn under oceans, over mountains, to the world's remotest rim," says the hymn in our grey hymnal. But peace is more complex than that. Personal or national, shared or solitary, spiritual or political . . . peace comes in many forms. Our worship this morning will explore the idea and experience of peace across religions and philosophies, and how our own bit of peace can contribute to the whole.

*Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, December 23**

**Solstice Multi-generational Celebration**

**10:30 am**

**Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Cathy Seggel, Fred Jodry**

Following on last year's joyful experience together, we will again celebrate the season with story, song, and craft. Moving through our spaces as well as the morning, we'll sing, share, and use all our senses as we enter this time of year when nature offers us little light. Join us, bring your friends, as we prepare for this time of cold and dark with all those timeless tools that lift the heart and warm the soul.

*Childcare open for infants-3-year-olds in the Parish House, second floor*

**Monday, December 24 Christmas Eve Services 5:00p and 9:00p** See details page 2

**Sunday, December 30**

**How We Celebrate**

**10:30 am**

**Rev. Nicholas Boke**

Just a few days before the New Year, we will look into "How We Celebrate." Since all people everywhere, as far back in time as we can tell, have celebrated – births and weddings, harvests and holy days, new moons and revolutions – celebrations clearly matter. Why do we do it? What do we hope will come of it?

*Rev. Nicholas Boke is the former minister of the First Universalist Parish of Chester, Vt, and has spoken from UU pulpits in New England and beyond. He currently works as an international education consultant, and lives in Providence with his wife, Buffy, who recently retired from her ministry at First Parish UU in Canton, MA.*

**No Sunday school - childcare available.**



We are a Welcoming Congregation

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Next Deadline: December 15

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## Lately . . .

I spent the holiday with my family, and an unexpected highlight of our days were some walks in the woods near the cottage where we stayed. There's never anyone else there, so the dogs run off-leash, tearing up and down the path. One day it was just Tim and me; one day his father joined us. We saw the skin of ice barely formed on the pond. We saw the rich brown oak leaves, still sturdy and intact, carpeting the woods and trails. We saw the strong blue sky and clouds that hinted of snow, and the flat quality of the light that is always present in New England winters. We saw the bare, moss-covered trees; the odd hardy plant that still held its green leaves; the sandy ground that still gave under our feet, not yet frozen to rock-like hardness; the mist that lay above the ground at night.

And I thought of this poem by Robert Frost, so perfect for these days as we feel the first kiss of winter, the landscape settling into its bare and harsh hibernation, the December holidays still before us, all the winter still to come, the coming of the snow.

### My November Guest

My sorrow, when she's here with me,  
 Thinks these dark days of autumn rain  
 Are beautiful as days can be;  
 She loves the bare, the withered tree;  
 She walks the sodden pasture lane.

Her pleasure will not let me stay.  
 She talks and I am fain to list:  
 She's glad the birds are gone away,  
 She's glad her simple worsted grey  
 Is silver now with clinging mist.

The desolate, deserted trees,  
 The faded earth, the heavy sky,  
 The beauties she so truly sees,  
 She thinks I have no eye for these,  
 And vexes me for reason why.

Not yesterday I learned to know  
 The love of bare November days  
 Before the coming of the snow,  
 But it were vain to tell her so,  
 And they are better for her praise.

I hope you had some grace and goodness this Thanksgiving and I look forward to seeing you soon as we get ready for the challenge and charms of the month ahead.

See you in church,



Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister  
 Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday  
[min@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:min@firstunitarianprov.org)

## Sandy Hook Vigil

Thursday, December 13, 7:00p

First Unitarian is hosting our annual vigil in memory of the terrible events at the Sandy Hook elementary school on December 14, 2012. This year we will be receiving and presenting the art made from firearms we took in last spring as part of our Guns into Plowshares initiative. We're also honored to welcome Scott Lapham, and a number of area youth from the One Gun Gone program, as speakers at the vigil that evening. Please come and bring friends and family to participate in this poignant and powerful observance.

## Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay  
 Cathy Seggel, DRE

5:00pm

This joyful, multi-generational worship is for all ages, featuring the telling of the traditional Christmas story with an interactive, lively pageant. And, of course, there will be the magic of carols and candlelight in a special space. Come celebrate and invite your friends and neighbors to this spirited service.

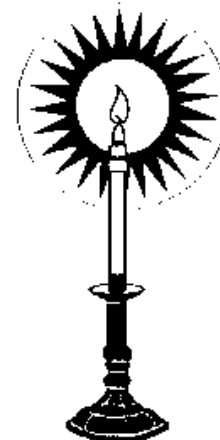
9:00pm

Our late Christmas Eve service will be full of candlelight atmosphere, marvelous music, beloved carols, festal readings, and Christmas spirit. All are welcome to this traditional celebration of song and story, darkness and light, reminding us that even in the coldest, hardest times, hope arrives and claims its place, again and again, in legend, in history, in our own hearts and minds. Come celebrate, bring your family, friends, and visitors to this service of beauty and joy.

## A Special Christmas Eve Celebration

At both Christmas Eve services, we will honor all infants born to families in the church in the past year, by naming them and lighting a candle for each to lift up the blessing and hope of their new lives.

If you have a baby born into your family whose name you would like share, please contact Cathy Seggel ([dre@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:dre@firstunitarianprov.org)) by Monday, December 17.





## Spiritual Pathways

Peace is joy at rest. Joy is peace on its feet.  
 – Anne Lamott

This season can be one of hope as well as a challenging time for children, youth, and adults struggling to live healthy, happy lives while being tuned in to the pain, fear, and violence that is everywhere. I suggest that we model and teach being accomplices for real justice and peace, while practicing self-care and everyday happiness along the way. No small feat, I know. And we realize that our children and youth are watching, learning, forming their own ideas of what is most important.

There are ways to be in community at First Unitarian that might help us to ignite our own flames to find the way. On December 2, we will dedicate children in a ceremony that affirms the connection between the child, family, and congregation. And after the service, we will sing our hearts out at a Sing-along for all ages in the Atrium. On December 23, we will mark the longest night by experiencing winter solstice in craft, story, and song. On Christmas Eve, we will celebrate the hope of Christmas in pageantry, candlelight, and breathtaking music. We will continue to provide sanctuary to people who need our care, feed some hungry folks, and collect funds to support on-the-ground justice making in the name of our faith.

So, perhaps this season, we can dually embrace the rest and action of peace, as in the quote at the top of this column.

An image that encapsulates my hopes . . .



Taking time for what we value is a spiritual practice. Whatever your brand of celebration might be, my wish is that you will feel warmth, love, wonder, renewal, and the courage and will to make peace.

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

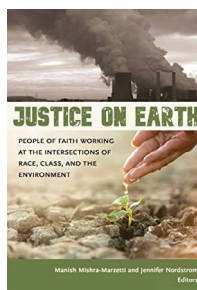
## UUA Common Read Discussion Rescheduled

Thursday, January 17 at 7:00p

Our Common Read discussion, originally scheduled for November 15, has been rescheduled due to inclement weather.

The Common Read invites participants throughout our UU congregations to read and discuss the same book in a given period of time. This year's selection is *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersection of Race, Class & the Environment*. The book features 14 activist ministers and lay leaders who apply a keen intersectional analysis to the environmental crisis. The book can be purchased on Sundays at the Atrium Bookstore or online.

Please let Cathy know if you plan to participate (401.421.7970 or dre@firstunitarianprov.org).



## UUSC Guest at Your Table

Our eighth-graders look forward to collecting your full boxes on Sunday, January 6!

Guest at Your Table is the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's annual program to raise support for and awareness about key human rights issues. The 2018-19 theme is Justice across Borders.

From the Northern Triangle of Central America to the deserts of Mexico and Arizona to detention centers in the U.S., the road away from danger is paved with injustices. Partnering with grassroots allies along the Central American migration trail, UUSC addresses root causes, supports migrants in transit, and protects the right to seek asylum.

Boxes were distributed at the Thanksgiving Service in November. If you need one, you can still grab one on the RE table in the Atrium.

## Harry Potter and the Sacred Text

Mondays, December 3, 17 & January 7, 7:15p

Join us as we use methods of sacred text analysis to explore the Harry Potter series. There are groups popping up all over the world. Come experience Harry Potter First Unitarian-style!

We are currently working on *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. Here is the schedule.

December 3, 7:15p	Chapters 13 & 14 Discipline
December 17, 7:15p	Chapters 15 & 16 Doubt
January 7, 7:15p	Chapters 17 & 18 Freedom

Please let Cathy know that you will participate (401.421.7970 or dre@firstunitarianprov.org).

## All-Congregation Sing-Along

Sunday, December 16 during Coffee Hour

The Spiritual Pathways Team is happy to invite everyone to a sing along. There will be songs from a variety of traditions as the winter season of celebration draws near. All ages are encouraged to come share their voices. We are looking forward to being with you. Small groups (classes will end early, at 11:45, to join the fun.

## UU Service Holiday Card Sale

Sundays while supply lasts

The sixth/seventh graders are selling beautiful greeting cards from the UU Service Committee. at the RE table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour. Proceeds benefit justice efforts of the UUSC. By buying these cards, we choose compassionate consumption and support human rights.



## Sight Lines

Hello, Everyone:

Winter came early. Were you prepared? I was not prepared for the amount of snow that fell nor the below normal-temperatures on the days surrounding Thanksgiving. I have come to expect the unexpected when it comes to New England winters. This year I was hoping to ease into winter. But there is nothing like a push or nudge to get one to

accept the change that is coming.

I continue to receive many questions about the Love Beyond Belief™ program. Some of the questions have dealt with why we brought this program to First Unitarian. Some questioners were expecting something to happen by now. Some felt it was not money well-spent or even why it was approved. But most of the questioners wondered what would happen next. These are great questions. I want to thank you for your questions and feedback and address some of them here.

During the last fiscal year, we held two leadership retreats and we agreed on four strategic goal categories for our church: increase membership; become a multicultural/multiracial congregation; deepen faith and justice; and celebrate our 300th anniversary/General Assembly 2020. These aren't easy goals, and they would require some transformation in our congregation if we were to achieve them. We saw the Love Beyond Belief™ program as an important tool in our transformation.

The Prudential Committee approved the program and the congregation voted to fund it at the Annual Meeting last June. Love Beyond Belief™ is a journey – a series of steps we will need to take. We may experience this transformation differently. But collectively, we should begin to see changes in the way we worship on Sunday.

So, what's happened since the retreat ended? You may have noticed changes in our worship service, including announcements/invitations, offering, music, and the way the worship service ends. Other changes include the way we are preparing for our next Commitment Drive, and how the staff and lay leaders collaborate to the benefit of the congregation. We began incorporating Rev. Thandeka's advice in our strategic planning process. Affinity groups/Chalice Circles, according to Rev. Thandeka, are important for increasing member interactions and growth, and our minister, Liz Lerner Maclay, met recently with Chalice Circle facilitators to discuss an evolution of our Chalice Circle program.

These are just a few of the steps we have taken on our journey and there will be more. Some steps may require additional financial commitment. Others may require us to explore doing things differently. But all will invite us to embrace some form of change. All of this is being done to provide our minister, staff, and lay and church leaders with tools to revitalize congregational life, increase our interactions and participation in church life, and create opportunities for us to achieve our strategic goals.

This month, we will continue repaving the parking lot (weather permitting), installing additional parking lot lighting, and adding/extending hand rails down to the parking lot. We are also doing some emergency repairs to secure the glass wall in the Parish House Atrium. Staff, lay and church leaders, greeters, and ushers will be meeting with the Providence Police to discuss ways to better secure our campus; and, for the first time, we will be participating in Giving Tuesday.

This is also the month when we celebrate a variety of festivals and secular and religious holidays, and spend time with family and friends. It's also a time to celebrate the end of 2018 and reflect on the many things we have accomplished during the year. However you celebrate during this month, I hope you have happy and safe holiday celebrations.

John Simmonds  
President, Prudential Committee  
pres@firstunitarianprov.org



## Treasurer's Report

Our congregation's income continues to keep pace with budget expenses. Thanks to generous giving by members and friends, strong endowment investment returns, and rigorous efforts to keep expenses down, all planned church programs and activities are fully funded for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2019.

In a scheduling change, we began work on the Fiscal Year 2020 budget this fall. FY2020's budget process starts by predicting staffing and operating costs necessary to keep First Unitarian up and running next year. Your Treasurers and Prudential Committee Ministry Liaisons are also soliciting church work improvement suggestions from staff and volunteer program/project leaders. Improvement suggestions will be reviewed to select those that best enhance our congregation's overall mission. The projected cost for selected improvement suggestions will be used to help form the upcoming budget.

By January 1, we will present a Fiscal Year 2020 proposed budget for the Pledge Commitment Drive to use in explaining the relationship between increased pledge giving and becoming the church community we want to be. The proposed budget will consist of normal operating expenses plus projected expenses for additional programs/activities selected as most mission-beneficial.

By identifying what expanded program budgeting will bring to members and friends of our congregation, the benefits of increased giving should make it easier for us all to increase our annual pledge.

**To suggest activities/programs . . .** that would improve church life or outreach, please contact the Ministry Liaison responsible for the area your suggestion will impact. Each Ministry is described on our web site ([firstunitarianprov.org/about-us/our-governance/four-ministries/](http://firstunitarianprov.org/about-us/our-governance/four-ministries/)) and in our Resource Book. Information on how you can contact liaisons is available at [firstunitarianprov.org/about-us/our-elected-leaders/](http://firstunitarianprov.org/about-us/our-elected-leaders/).

In the meantime, should you have any questions regarding this year's budget, please contact me at [dlhouse51@comcast.net](mailto:dlhouse51@comcast.net).

See you in church!

– David House, Treasurer





## Community Life

### Sixth/Seventh-Grade Recycle-a-Toy Sale

*Collection: Sunday, December 9; Sale: December 16, 12:00p*

Our Children's Toy Sale offers a way for young people to buy gifts for family and friends on a very small budget. Prices range from 25 cents to \$2. We hope that our children will seize the spirit of the season and shop for those the love. The sale is open to the church community.

Please help by donating gently used, or even new, toys, games, and books for preschool- through high school-age children. Our goal is to encourage children to recycle their toys and help their community. Through a democratic process, our young people will choose the recipient for the funds raised. Toys not sold will be donated to Camp Street Ministries in Providence.

The sixth/seventh-grade class is organizing this event, with help from teachers. If you have questions, contact John Dooley (dool@cox.net).



### Is It Tax Time Already ???

*Workshop, Sunday December 2, 12:15p*

The year is fast drawing to a close, and if you are anything like us, you are making lists, checking them twice, especially being sure that your favorite charities are among the big items that need attention now. This year is especially complicated because many of the rules about charitable giving have been changed. Are you up-to-speed on what's new?

The Commitment Drive Team is here to help. On December 2, we are presenting a workshop on Charitable Giving Under the New Tax Laws. Among the topics to be discussed will be new limits on deductions, ways to use IRA funds to reduce your taxable income, long-term suggestions for tax savings, and planned-giving.

You owe it to yourself to be up-to-date on these significant changes. Mark your calendars!  
 – Joe Fislser & Cynthia Rosengard  
 Commitment Drive Team Leaders

### December Parish House Pot Luck Supper

*Saturday, December 8 (note the change of day)*

Everyone, young and old and in between, is welcome at these monthly gatherings of members and friends of the congregation for food, fun and fellowship.

**4:45 Reception in the Atrium**

**5:00 Pot Luck Supper in the Parish House parlors**

*Food Donations:* Bring a dish that serves eight to ten people: a main dish, vegetable, salad, or dessert. Use the sign-up form to indicate what food you will be bringing.

*Reservations:* Use the sign-up form to indicated how many will be attending.

*Volunteer Task Force:* Be sure to check off on the sign-up form where you want to help.

*Donation:* \$2 per person / \$5 per family at the door

**6:30 Program in the Auditorium** – Holiday Fun Games Night & More!

To kick off a festival holiday season, come share a meal and then play some family-friendly games! The December Potluck is focused on fun for all ages: we're gathering on a Saturday and starting an hour earlier than usual so folks with younger kids can participate. Dinner starts at 5:00 with revelry to follow. The "program" will to be an assortment of games in the Auditorium. We'll have Balderdash, Pictionary, and a craft/coloring table for kids. Feel free to bring your own games, too – or instruments if you want to have a hootenanny. Carols could break out . . . Really anything can happen when people come together to share some joy of the season. We hope you join us!

Reservations for the dinner are strongly requested. Please fill out the tear-off sign up form and take it to the Parish House Pot Luck Suppers table in the Atrium during coffee hour or call the church office in advance (401.421.7970). Childcare for infants will be available for parents who request in advance.



### Newcomers' Café

*Every Sunday during Coffee Hour*

Held in the 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)

### Don't Let the Grinch Steal Our Coffee Hour!

When shopping or baking for these special times, remember to make or buy extra for our Coffee Hour! This cooperative effort is organized by the Women's Alliance, with donations from our congregation of **peanut- and peanut butter-free** baked goods, brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake, and more. We welcome donations made at home or bought at a store. 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 handy reminder so you won't forget!

### Atrium Bookstore

The Atrium Bookstore is open every Sunday during Coffee Hour, offering an eclectic mix of titles for kids and adults on meditation, social justice, spiritual paths, inspirations from other religious traditions, and environment concerns, including *Justice on Earth*, the UU Common Read.

– Irene and Tony Allen

### Hats Off to ...

Many thanks to our **Coffee Hour Providers** last month:

Claude LeBoeuf, Lynne Fazzi, Dolores Braica, Tracy Hands, Tony Allen, Mary Kollar, Nancy Shand, Maureen Johanson, Mary Frappier, Craig Wood, Suzanne Frances, Shirley DiMatteo, Jude Sonder, Lucille Riccitelli, Lisa Rose, Suzanne Craig, Christopher Belleau, Cynie Linton, Elissa Emerson, Kelly Baraf, Kristina Schrag, Vicky Bristlin, Erica Rusley, Roberta Groch, Keri Calhoun, Lynda Gulley, Anne Connor, David Riley, and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.



## Community Life

### Meeting House Renovations

On November 12, the final payment was issued for all Meeting House contracted exterior work. It is with great joy that I can report that there is a \$6,000 balance remaining in the Restoration Fund, with yet another round of pledge payments due in 2019. I am still amazed at our enthusiastic response to the call for Meeting House restoration funding. Letters will be sent out before the end of the year to all those contributing, with heartfelt appreciation for the support given to date.

#### Foyer Restoration

The appreciation letters will also request that any remaining pledge amounts be sent to the church office by March 31, 2019, so that we might begin restoration of the foyer (the Benefit Street entrance way) this coming spring.

The estimated cost for foyer restoration – from the granite steps doorway entrance to the ceiling at the base of the bell tower – is \$140,000. The outstanding balance of capital campaign pledges will cover this cost, once again with no need for loans or additional fund raising above the original campaign amounts already pledged.

#### Additional Restoration Work

Turning to other necessary restoration work on our properties, we have signed a \$27,000 contract with E. F. O'Donnell for the restoration of the Benevolent Street Parish House glass wall entry way into the Atrium. That work will be completed as soon as weather allows, but no later than spring of 2019. Restoration work on the rear peak of the Parish House Annex is complete and was paid off at the end of October. Finally, the Revere bell clapper and damper mechanism was removed and is being restored in Cincinnati, Ohio. We expect bell work to be complete before the end of this year.

#### Looking to the Future

The total cost for all the work listed in the previous paragraph is \$71,000. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, payment for this work will come from three years of operating budget surplus resulting from unused employee medical expense reserves. This surplus was placed in a major repairs funding account, specifically to take care of the emergency repair work. After the \$71,000 payments, the major repairs funding line will have \$37,000 remaining for other large restoration purposes.

One such purpose is providing \$20,000 of seed money for the establishment of a Church Preservation Endowment fund designed specifically to provide funding for future large-scale restoration projects. This Finance Committee initiative will be presented in more detail to the congregation in the near future. Contact David Francis for details.

In the meantime, we can rejoice in the fact that our church facilities are in better shape than they have been in years. Thanks for all that you have done and continue to do to ensure our congregation has a safe and beautiful home.

Please contact me (dlhouse51@comcast.net) with any questions regarding this report.

– David House

### The Women's Alliance

#### Monthly Meeting

Monday, December 3

Business Meeting: 10:00a

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

The Challenges of Running a Small Theater

Speaker: Kevin Broccoli

Kevin will talk about the work that goes into wearing multiple hats while creating theater year-round. He'll answer questions about the inner workings of a small theater company in Rhode Island, including what goes into choosing shows, picking actors, and putting it all together. Kevin Broccoli is a writer, actor, and the Artistic Director of Epic Theatre Company in Cranston, Rhode Island.

All are welcome to attend the Women's Alliance monthly programs.

### Camp Street Ministries

Save your grocery receipts from Eastside Marketplace and place them in the collection box at the back table in the Atrium near the Haynes Room. The Women's Alliance collects them for the benefit of Camp Street Ministries.

### Gourmet Coffee Sales



Why settle for any old coffee? You can create your very own unique coffee with the gourmet coffees sold by the Women's Alliance. They sell two bold coffees, one medium, and two decafs. All types come in both beans and drip-grind 12 oz. bags. And all are organic and freshly roasted in Rhode Island! Your purchase helps the community – the Alliance donates proceeds from its sales to worthy causes. Visit the Alliance table in the Atrium.



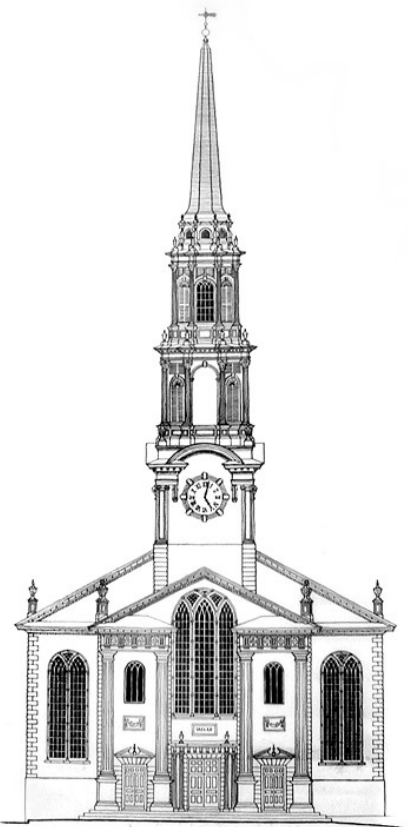
### Wheel of Life

Congratulations to

**Lily and Chris Jeznach** on the birth of their daughter, Mabel Evelyn, on November 2.

Condolences to

**Gerry Boone** and his family on the death of his father on November 8. Notes may be sent to Gerry at 1192 South Broadway, #7, Providence.





## Welcome Our Newest Members

After taking the Path to Membership class this fall, 12 individuals signed the Membership Book on November 18. They will be recognized at the Worship Service on December 9. Please make sure to greet these newest members when you see them at Coffee Hour.

### Alan and Annice Correia Gabel



Alan and Annice began their spiritual journey toward UUism when they were married in 2015. With the help of an incredibly dedicated UU minister-in-training, they were able to design a ceremony and celebration that represented both their religious upbringings (Jewish and Catholic) and their shared values.

After their wedding, in Cambridge, MA, they left their steady day jobs for a six-month backpacking trip around the world. Then they briefly crashed with Alan's parents in New Jersey, intending to find work in New York City, but a job opportunity led them to Santa Fe for a year. They finally settled down in Providence and are beyond happy to put down roots.

Alan loves math, physics and, solving equations for fun. Annice is passionate about education policy, social justice, and feminism. They both enjoy trying new restaurants (while still eating at Apsara way too often) and playing with their pup, Ollie. Alan and Annice are excited to meet other church members and to get involved in the community!

### Aimee Dufresne



Aimee lives in Barrington with her husband, Gary, her two daughters, Julianna and Sylvie, and two dogs, Duke and Luna. She teaches biology at Johnson & Wales University and loves spending time with her family, weightlifting, reading at night, and eating vegan chocolate all day long. Aimee was raised Catholic, but for many reasons,

she is grateful to have found the First Unitarian Church of Providence – clearly a welcoming and supportive community engaged in such critical social justice work. She looks forward to working with the Green Team in particular!

### Kendall Jones Kiera Roche



Kendall and Kiera are high school seniors and both are members of the Senior High Youth Group at First U.

### Josh Hyman and Syntyche Mashamba



Syntyche and Joshua live in Pawtucket. He's from the northeast, and she grew up in Zimbabwe, outside Masvingo. Josh does construction; Syntyche is in the healthcare field. They both like to dream. They have three children

– Jonah, Margaret and Jacob. Often the family will go celebrate the sabbath at a church or synagogue. They are pleased to be part of our congregation with friends and family.

### Laura Luttrell



Laura joins First Unitarian with her three-year-old daughter, Lulu. Laura grew up in Rhode Island and moved back to the Ocean State in February 2018, after living elsewhere for nearly 15 years. Laura's career has focused on helping people work, play, and learn in the outdoors – including selling outdoor gear, promoting statewide hiking programs, managing backcountry trail crews, and coordinating urban farm education. On her days off, Laura is usually en route to a kid-friendly trail or one of the many fabulous libraries in the area for some literary fun. Laura lives with her husband and Lulu in Edgewood. They are all grateful to live in such a great neighborhood with plentiful playgrounds, friendly neighbors, and surprising wildlife encounters. Be sure to say hi to Laura if you have a good vegetarian recipe to share, want to discuss the Grateful Dead, or can help her learn how to identify birds better.

### Lisa Maloney



Lisa is happy to officially join the wonderful community at First Unitarian. She has been visiting and attending this grand church on and off for years, since her kind friend Chris introduced her to First Unitarian in back in 1996. Lisa moved away and then back to southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island during those years, and never found a community quite like the one here. As

an environmental educator and naturalist, Lisa values all life forms, and is especially drawn to the Unitarian Universalist principle about respecting the interdependent web of existence we all depend upon. Lisa appreciates the warm welcome into the church community she has received!

### Jack Rusley



Jack, his wife Erika, and his daughters Meg (5) and Josephine (3) live in Providence. He is a adolescent medicine physician and researcher at Brown and Rhode Island Hospital. A Brown graduate, he returned to Providence after living in Portland, Maine, and Baltimore. Originally from Denver, he enjoys biking, skiing, and cooking.

### Richard Fields and Karen Grant



Richard and Karen moved to Providence 2 1/2 years ago from Massachusetts. Karen worked at Women & Infant's Hospital as a nurse; Richard had worked as a meteorologist for the Dept of Environmental Protection in Boston.

Richard is a late-to-life drummer, but is now retired and is always open to meeting others who like to play. Karen loves being outdoors doing most anything.

When the kids left home, Richard retired and Karen was still working in Providence so they decided to move here. Even though it felt difficult to leave their UU family in Franklin, they wanted to become part of a UU Community in Providence. They are happy to have joined a church where social justice is at the forefront. After ten minutes of listening to their first sermon with Liz, they knew they were in the right place!





## Spiritual Development

### We Are Refreshed and Ready to Travel!

The Refresh Weekend held in October, led by Rev. Roger Bertschausen from the UU Partner Church Council, did indeed give us a refreshing look at what partnership means and how it can make our congregation stronger. Several new ideas emerged about how to draw members of our church into

awareness of our partnership with the Unitarian Church in Szentegyhaza, Romania, and engage them in deepening our relationship with our partner. We discussed developing intercultural competencies, strengthening ties between our churches, expanding communication, and involving youth and young adults in our efforts.

Being aware of our cultural differences and making sure we understand our partner's background is critical to deepening our relationship. We can strengthen the ties between our churches by developing a long -book club, sharing texts that engender conversation, and exploring more deeply our commonalities and differences. A joint Facebook page, which provides translation, was suggested. Youth and young adults, in particular, are perfectly poised to assist in this effort, due to their technology competencies. Consistent communication for major holidays, such as Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, and Flower Communion was emphasized.

We also explored ways to engage families and young adults, particularly on the trips to visit our friends in Szentegyhaza. Providing enough lead-time for youth to fund-raise to help defer the cost of travel will be important. Perhaps designing trips especially for youth and young adults will create a draw. Focusing on spiritual development during a trip would enhance the experience. These are all solid ideas our Partner Church Committee intends to pursue.

Our recent meeting to plan for the spring trip to Transylvania drew interest from about 16 people, families and youth included. And, of course, Liz is very supportive of the partnership and plans to join us. We are in the process of selecting a date. After school ends in June looks like the best time. We will be sending out emails to those interested in coming along and will start the planning process; all participants will be involved in deciding where we visit and what we see in this amazing country. It is usually a ten-day trip, with four days in the village. So keep your eyes out for more notices of our travel plans and get ready to pack your bags!

– Tom Getz for the Transylvania Partner Church Committee

## UUMen

Sunday, December 9, 7:00pm

### Male Empowerment

The Man-Box: What's the difference between true male empowerment and the cultural "man-box" assumptions? In what ways does the culture discourage or distort true empowerment? How do men overcome cultural obstacles? What is positive about cultural interpretations of male power?

For 26 years, we have met for personal exploration and intimate conversation. Please join us!

Tony Allen (tonyallenri@gmail.com) will be this month's facilitator.



## December Birthdays



Ellen Anderson	Dave Lewis	Bob Schacht
Doris Bridgehouse	Steve McCloy	Frank Scheel
Stuart Carr	Odile Mattiauda	Kelly Sheehan
Skip Farinha	John Moran	Tori Smith
Claude Leboeuf	Brian Paradis	Pam Steager
Donna Lee	Tiffany Reed	Charlie Sweigart

Haven't seen your birthday listed? Do we know when it is? Contact the church office if you want your church friends to celebrate your special day with you!

## Ongoing Programs

### Benevolent Street Zendo

Most Monday nights, 7:00–8:30pm

We continue to practice with monthly visits from resident teacher James Cordova Sensei and occasional guest teachers for talks.

We have a book group reading: Larry Yang's *Awakening Together*. Many of us got to hear him speak and join in a discussion about how to better welcome diversity in our community.

All are welcome these sessions. For a brief orientation, please arrive at 6:45p on Monday evening.

This is an activity of First Unitarian but is part of Boundless Way Zen ([www.boundlesswayzen.org](http://www.boundlesswayzen.org) Benevolent Street Zen.)

Contact: Practice leaders Cindy and George Beshers at [benevolentstreetzen@gmail.com](mailto:benevolentstreetzen@gmail.com).

### Reimagining Religion

Second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00pm

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

Leader: Tom Hall ([tw2nd@aol.com](mailto:tw2nd@aol.com))

### Tai Chi

Every Tuesday at 7:00pm

Tai Chi class for beginners to advanced, children to seniors. All inclusive. Instruction and performance. Make the connection between mind, body and spirit in a manner that embodies the concepts of Taoist philosophy with the practice of an old internal martial art.

Contact: Al Tringali ([altringali@mac.com](mailto:altringali@mac.com).)

### Innate Wisdom and Compassion Meditation

Every Wednesday at 7:00pm

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.

Contact: Ken Bent ([krbent108@gmail.com](mailto:krbent108@gmail.com))





## Social Justice

### Global Write-a-Thon for Human Rights: Writing Letters for Human Rights for Over 30 Years

*Open House, Sunday, December 9, 1:00–5:00pm*

**Snow date:** December 16

The Global Write-a-thon for Human Rights is the world's largest letter-writing event. First Unitarian hosts this annual event (our 31st) in celebration of International Human Rights Day. Write-a-thons (also called Write For Rights) are held across the U.S. and in over 50 countries.

Everyone is welcome to join in writing appeals for nonviolent prisoners of conscience in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Vietnam, and other countries, including a UNHCR-registered refugee from Sudan who is being detained in Egypt because the U.S. will not accept a Muslim refugee.

Our guest speaker will be Kamal Elias, a Kurdish-Yazidi refugee who escaped the 2014 ISIS genocide of the Yazidi people of Iraq. The event is free, and the public is welcome. All material is provided for writing letters. Refreshments, prizes, inspiration! No registration necessary.

The Providence celebration is sponsored by the First Unitarian World Affairs Committee, in collaboration with the human rights organizations Amnesty International and the Benenson Society. Contact: Marcia Lieberman (Marcia.Lieberman@gmail.com)

## Sanctuary Update

After accepting a family into our Sanctuary space at the beginning of November, there has been a whirlwind of activity going on in our church. Hosts are in the church 24/7 to make sure things are going smoothly for our guests, and the Sanctuary Steering Committee has been meeting every week to help ensure that things continue to run smoothly for guests, hosts, and our church community.

While we have been fortunate to have the assistance of several different groups during our start-up, one group, the Brown Immigrant Rights Coalition, or BIRC, has really been stepping up to help us out. They have been filling up our schedule wherever help is needed, so we have been able to have two people on as hosts for most of our shifts. During the Thanksgiving holiday, we were made aware of just how often they volunteer, when our committee found themselves scrambling to cover shifts. With the upcoming Holiday Break at the end of December, we are already making plans about how we will cover shifts during this time.

On the first two Sundays in December, we will be holding trainings in other faith communities, one in Providence and one in South County. We hope this will help bring us closer to the number of people we will need to get through the month when the students will be away.

**If you are interested in hosting**, but haven't been able to attend a training, contact the Sanctuary Steering Committee at [firstsanctuary@gmail.com](mailto:firstsanctuary@gmail.com). We will help get you up to speed so you can join our Host Team. If you know of friends who would be interested, or other faith communities we can talk to, please email us! This is a journey we can not make alone!

As the holidays approach, many people have asked what they can do to help the family. At this time they are busy trying to raise funds for their legal costs, so a gift of money is most helpful. We will be meeting with the family about specific things they might need; when we know, we will send an email to our Sanctuary email list. If you want to receive that information, contact us at [firstsanctuary@gmail.com](mailto:firstsanctuary@gmail.com), or stop by the Sanctuary table during Coffee Hour.

## Dedicating Our Mitten Tree

*Sunday, December 30, following the service*

On the first Sunday after Christmas, our Mitten Tree will start to bloom outside the front door of our church – although, wait! Have you noticed our tree is no longer there? In its place is a baby tree, which won't be able to hold all of our warmings without getting damaged. So this year, we will be having a Mitten Fence. The fence will give us a foundation for our gifts and provide a little protection for our tree.

You don't knit, you say? No problem! We will be accepting donations from all sources, handmade or lovingly pre-worn or purchased, from January through March in a basket in the Atrium. If you would like to learn how to knit, join us on Tuesday nights, 7:00 to 9:00p.



## Our Food Share Pantry

*Distribution Day, Monday, December 17*

The Food Pantry only works as well as it does because of our wonderful volunteers.

Curious? Come and see it in action the third Monday of every month between 2:00 and 5:30. We are especially looking for people with strong backs and some muscle power to help with clean-up. If you're looking for a leadership role, we can train you for that, too.

Questions? See Martha Manno, Amy Grant, Ann Boyd, or Judy Ortman or email the church office.

## Side with Love

The Side with Love Committee took a break in November so that several of our members could focus on the immediate needs of the Sanctuary Committee. A small subgroup did meet to help put together a plan for the January Parish House Pot Luck Supper. There are plans for a talk on race, privilege, and power in both American society generally, and Unitarian Universalism specifically, with a panel of speakers and a lively discussion.

## Neighborhood Social Justice

*Monthly meeting, December 2, 12:15*

*Loaves and Fishes, Tuesday, November 4*

The Neighborhood Social Justice Committee (NSJC) was founded to provide volunteer opportunities to work beyond our church doors with those who are socially, economically, or legally marginalized. The NSJC sponsors a monthly outreach mission to Emmanuel House, a homeless shelter in Providence; we meet on the first Tuesday of every month to deliver food, clothing, and respectful companionship.

The NSJC also sponsors various other outreach and/or educational programs, including the "Y'All Come Community Lunch" for the homeless, held in collaboration with the Beneficent Congregational Church.

Many volunteer opportunities are available. We are members of Loaves and Fishes Rhode Island, an organization of various churches coming together to help those in need.

The monthly Loaves and Fishes mission:

- The Sandwich Brigade meets at noon to make sandwiches for homeless community in Providence.
- The Outreach mission meets around 3:00p to prepare the lunch bags for distribution.
- The Serving Crew gathers at Emmanuel House (239 Public Street) around 5:00p to prepare the meal and then serve the homeless men staying at the shelter.

For more information on these and future programs (meeting locations, contact information, etc.), see details in the church newsletter at [www.firstunitarianprov.org](http://www.firstunitarianprov.org)

## December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>2</b> Worship 10:30a Mentor/Mentee lunch 12:00p at 12:15p Tax Workshop Sanctuary Training NSJC History Campus UUs 5:00p	<b>3</b> Women's Alliance Program 11:00a Luncheon 12:00p  Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	<b>4</b> Loaves & Fishes 11:00a-2:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>5</b>  Meditation 7:00p	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>  Athenaeum program	<b>8</b>  Parish House Pot Luck 5:00p Program 6:30p
<b>9</b> Worship 10:30a Toy Collection 12:00p Green Team 12:15p Write-a-thon 1:00-5:00p Campus UUs 5:00p UUMen 7:00p	<b>10</b>  Zendo 7:00p	<b>11</b> Deacons 6:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>12</b> PruComm 6:45p Side With Love 7:00p Sanctuary Steering Comm 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	<b>13</b>  Sandy Hook Vigil 7:00p	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> Worship 10:30a Sing-along 11:45a Toy Sale 12:00p  Campus UUs 5p	<b>17</b> Food Pantry 2:00-6:00p  Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	<b>18</b>  Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>19</b>  Meditation 7:00p	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> Worship 10:30a  <b>30</b> Worship 10:30a Mitten Tree Dedication	<b>24</b> <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> Services at 5:00p and 9:00p  <b>31</b> <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b> Church Office Closed	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>  Church Office Closed	<b>26</b>  Church Office Closed	<b>27</b>  Church Office Closed	<b>28</b>  Church Office Closed	<b>29</b>