



Services in the Meeting House

Our theme for March is **Letting Go**.

Sunday, March 3 **Love Will Guide Us**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay

While organized religion has a lot to atone for, it also has a lot to be proud of. At its best, rooting us and binding us together in shared journeys toward meaning and care, it offers us strength, inspiration, growth, challenge, a net to catch us when we're falling, a current to flow with when we're rising. This service of story and celebration will explore what it can mean to be part of a community that really manifests love, how it can shape us – our own future or a larger future – when we really make our faith and our church part of how we live.

Young people begin in small groups in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, March 10 **Letting Go of What We Don't Have**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay

 Remember to set your clocks AHEAD one hour.

"Letting Go" is our theme for March. It's also a principle common to many faiths, particularly Buddhism – letting go of attachment to things and expectations. In this world of fallibility and change, how can we find our balance and an ability to reconcile ourselves to this world that requires, on the one hand, so much commitment in order to negotiate our way and our living as we believe we should, and on the other hand, the ability to let go when that's what living requires of us?

Come at 10:20a to hear special prelude music by Atwater-Donnelly.

Young people begin in their small groups in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, March 17 **Saints Preserve Us**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay

As St. Patrick's Day falls on this Sunday, we'll look at some of the character of saints in Irish beliefs – their rootedness in earlier pagan religions, the intimacy of the theological relationship between saints and mortals, some surprising twists and turns in Irish beliefs, and what we might gain from considering these truths and traditions.

Young people begin in their small groups in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, March 24 **Purim, A Multigenerational Service**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Cathy Seggel, DRE

In this lively, multigenerational service, we'll consider the story of Purim using balloons, participation, music, and more to explore our capacities for defiant joy and how we can hold onto it even – perhaps especially – when things are tough.

Come at 10:20a to hear special prelude music by the High Society Hot Jazz Orchestra.

Childcare open for infants to three-year-olds in the Parish House, second floor

Sunday, March 31 **Let the Mystery Be**

10:30 am

Kevin Carson

Inspired by Iris DeMent's quirky song with the same name, we will explore the limits of human understanding, how we respond to life's ambiguities, and how we might make peace with the Great Mystery.

Kevin Carson was a member of First Unitarian before entering seminary. He is currently serving as our Ministerial Intern for Pastoral Care. In his "regular" job, he works at Hasbro, Inc.

Young people begin in their small groups in classrooms and worship in Chapel.



We are a Welcoming Congregation

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Staff

- Rev. Elizabeth Lerner Maclay, Minister
min@firstunitarianprov.org
- Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
dre@firstunitarianprov.org
- Frederick Jodry, Music Director
- Rev. Gene Dyszlewski, Community Minister
- Rev. Gwendolyn Howard, Community Minister
- Kevin Carson, Ministerial Intern for Pastoral Care
kmcarson@aol.com
- Nancy Forsstrom, Administrator
admin@firstunitarianprov.org
- Walter Sotelo, Administrative Assistant
- Jenn Nardone, Membership Coordinator
mem@firstunitarianprov.org
- Jaime Durango, Building Manager
- Pedro Vasquez & Ruben Delgado, Evening Security & Sunday Building Managers

Newsletter

- Nancy Forsstrom, Managing Editor
- Susan Fisher, Proof Editor
- Design Consultant, Amy Webb
- Next Deadline: March 15

First Unitarian Church of Providence
One Benevolent Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02906
Tel: 401.421.7970
Fax: 401.276.4291
Web: www.firstunitarianprov.org
Email: admin@firstunitarianprov.org



Lately . . .

Two of the most important aspects of the relationship between a minister and a congregation are trust and communication. Really, those are lifted up in our connection from the very first. The search process is rooted in communication with each other throughout its many phases, and in trust that we're being open and honest with each other as we establish

and grow our relationship.

That carries through as we commit to each other and move forward together. It's humbling, as your minister here at First Unitarian, to receive your confidences, stories, concerns, and hopes. The beauty, power, and pain of human living is one of the most extraordinary things to witness and support. It is part of what makes ministry so compelling, and such a privilege. This church is so full of commitment, energy, capacity, and care that pretty much every day something happens that reminds me how much I love being here with all of you, and how fortunate I feel that we are joined in this relationship of spirit and faith.

Of course, in choosing to accept your call, I also come to you in commitment and trust, believing in this ministry we do together. I don't just love you, I believe in you. And while I'll always do my best, that doesn't mean everyone will always love everything that I do, or that the church does. This isn't a surprise. None of us is perfect or wonderful all the time. And it's never possible to please every single person all the time, and that's okay. Especially in a large and thriving congregation with a wide range of programs and experiences, we don't have to love everything that happens; we can choose to focus on what feeds our lives and minds.

But if there's something I'm doing, or that we're doing together, that you're loving – or not loving – I trust you'll let me know. It's so good to hear from you about experiences and programs that are really meaningful or helpful. And it's important for me to know if people are feeling unhappiness about something. A couple of you have come in to talk to me about a concern or frustration. I really appreciate that, not only because it gives me a chance to hear about it directly and to make sure I really understand your concern, but also because it gives me the best opportunity to respond in a way that can help improve the situation. I'm happy about how those conversations have gone, and the results they generated. As well, experience has taught me that when we check in directly with each other, understanding where each of us is coming from can also sometimes help us accept it if, in the end, we retain differing views.

As your minister, it is my job to serve the whole church, to do my best to nurture its strengths and capacities, to respond to current challenges, and help position the church for long-term thriving. There is a lot of good happening on many fronts in our church. And much is beginning or evolving. Making beginnings and moving through change can be hard in many ways, including emotionally and spiritually, especially in a large community. I'm here for all of you and I want to hear from you. If you'd like to get together and talk, our administrator, Nancy Forsstrom, handles my schedule. Please email (admin@firstunitarianprov.org) or call her at the church (401.421.7970) and she'll set up a meeting as soon as possible.

See you in church,

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday
min@firstunitarianprov.org

Liz's work days are Sunday through Thursday. She is available for appointments Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday (Sunday is, well . . . Sunday, and Thursday is writing/study day). The best way to catch up with her is to make an appointment, even if it is simply a specific time to connect by phone... Contact Administrator Nancy Forsstrom and she will find you a time in Liz's schedule.

Pastor's Fund Available for Food/Shelter Support

Did you know First Unitarian has a Pastor's Fund? We do! This fund is administered by the minister, in order to help people who need immediate financial assistance for food and/or shelter for themselves or their families. A new disbursement is budgeted at the beginning of each church year. Funds are available to members and friends within the First Unitarian community and beyond. Anyone who needs help in order to meet the costs of food or shelter for themselves or their families is warmly encouraged to reach out to Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay at min@firstunitarianprov.org.

Sunday Services Are Online

Our Sunday services are live-streamed on Facebook. If you can't come to church, join us on your smart phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop. Go to "First Unitarian Church of Providence" on Facebook at 10:30a on Sundays to see the live video. You can also see videos of past services.

Later in the week, both the text and audio of Sunday sermons are posted on our church website (firstunitarianprov.org). Go to Worship, scroll down to Past Services, and click on the sermon you would like to hear or read.



Wheel of Life

Condolences to:

The family of **Jim Cowan** on the death of his wife, Amanda Cowan.

The family of **Maia Bailey and Bruce Boucek**, on the death of Maia's mother.

Winter Storms and First Unitarian

In case of extreme weather, the staff decides if worship will be canceled. If the City of Providence announces a ban on street parking, the church will be closed. A cancellation decision will be made by 8:00am Sunday, posted on our website and Facebook page, and conveyed to the major local media outlets.

If the church is open during a storm, no one should make heroic efforts to get here. Use your best judgment about whether it is safe to drive or walk.





Spiritual Pathways

What's the greater risk? Letting go of what people think – or letting go of how I feel, what I believe, and who I am? – Brene Brown

As spring equinox approaches, I begin an annual ritual of searching for balance. I move away from the appealing urge to cuddle up indoors and aim to risk the adventure of going out into nature, even though it may be slippery, muddy, chilly. It's also a time when I intend to review my work/self-care/family priorities. So many professional continuing-education gatherings, podcasts, and trainings along with a physical exercise imperative and my addiction to hugging our grand babies. And, of course, I can't forget the protests, legislative actions, rallies, and dire needs outside of my privileged bubble.

I imagine that families are challenged to find balance, too. Children thrive on play and creative unscheduled hours, along with more explicit educational opportunities, sports, and arts experiences. There is peer pressure coming from friends and the media that certainly affects people of all ages. Kids want to belong and parents are driven to insure their offspring don't miss out. I don't have the answer, but I can share a possible path. At this time in the wheel of the year, in young people's worship, we share what is in our hearts and minds around ways to find balance. In fact, we honor the messages that can be found in the concept of Sabbath.

There is wisdom for Unitarian Universalists in keeping a Sabbath practice. A UU congregation that I am familiar with has an ongoing Sabbath project, helping one another remember to pause. Some of their suggested Simple Sabbath Rules are:

- The first rule is to have rules! Make some simple agreements with yourself and your family about the things you will try to do to observe your Sabbath.
- Write your rules down and hang them up. That way, when you come upon a challenge – and you will – you have something to fall back on.
- Do...
 - Spend time with the people you love, or spend time alone.
 - Spend time enjoying the spaces and things you already have in your life.
 - Something spiritual. Attend church, commune with nature, read a sacred text, meditate, pray, sing hymns, dance, or write poetry.
- Don't...
 - Work or worry.
 - Schlep, shop, or stress out.
 - Try to get things done.
 - Use phones, laptops, tablets, social media, etc.

Do you find balance? Do you practice Sabbath? What must you let go of in order to do so? I look forward to being able to answer those questions myself and to knowing your stories.

Maybe this spring I will find my way.

Take care –

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

Save the Date

Emma's Revolution – A Resistance Concert

Friday, April 12 at 8:00p in the Meeting House

Mark your calendar now to be sure you don't miss this exciting concert featuring Emma's Revolution with Brian Simms, keyboard/accordion.

Sponsored by the Side With Love and Spiritual Pathways Teams
Tickets on sale during Coffee Hour in the Atrium beginning Sunday, March 3.

Or buy online: <https://emmasrevolution.com/concerts>



Emma's Revolution

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

Now is the time for families to consider attending a wonderful summer program at a UU camp or conference center in the New England/New York region and beyond. The UUA website links to UU centers that offer a variety of programs for children, youth, and adults with Unitarian Universalists from many regions.

Visit (www.uua.org/directory/where/camps-retreats-and-conferences).

Faith Development Conference on Star Island

Cathy Seggel and others from our congregation will be attending the Star Island Faith Development Week, July 13–20. The 2019 theme is "Deepening Faith."

For information, contact Cathy (dre@firstunitarianprov.org or 401.421.7970) in the church office.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UUA General Assembly 2019

This year's General Assembly of UU congregations will be held in Spokane, WA from June 19 to 23. This year's GA theme, "The Power of We," explores the power, possibility, purpose, struggle, and joy of finding the path forward together as Unitarian Universalists.

First Unitarian has nine delegate slots, based on membership. Delegates are chosen by the PruComm from those expressing interest.

Online registration for GA and housing begins at 12 noon EST on March 1.

For information, go to uua.org/ga Or contact Cathy Seggel dre@firstunitarianprov.org or 401.421.7970

Annual Gift Card Drive Continues

The Senior High Gift Card drive will continue through the month of March. Partnering with Dorcas International, the high schoolers are collecting gift cards for the people served by Dorcas. Most appreciated are gift cards such as Walmart, Target, Price Right, and Visa – stores that are fairly inexpensive and accessible by bus. You can give gift cards directly to one of the Senior High Youth or Cathy Seggel in her church office. And thank you so much!



Sight Lines

Hello, Everyone:

I attended a communications conference recently and one of the things I learned is that only 30% of an organization's communications are read by its target audience. The low amount surprised me. I thought about First Unitarian and the myriad ways in which we communicate: newsletter, email, Facebook, church website, etc. If the statistic is accurate, only a small portion of the congregation is reading the materials that are generated and communicated. It means that only 30% of the congregation will read this newsletter, even fewer will read it cover to cover.

So, what should we do to increase readership?

This is not a new problem. Low readership of the newsletter, the *Resource Book*, the church website, emails, and the *Meeting House Times* has and continues to be a challenge and a source of some frustration. Much effort goes into producing interesting, timely, and relevant content and distributing it across a variety of media. Better tools help us to assess readership, adjust content, or determine which communication medium is effective. But in spite of everything we've tried, readership remains lower than expected.

So, what should we do to increase readership?

Solving that question is more important now than ever. We are growing and the profile of our congregation is changing. The ways we communicate with you are also changing. Our Communications Team hosted a Communications Summit in January and they plan to leverage many of the ideas generated as part of their comprehensive communications strategy. Some of those ideas may be implemented before the church year ends.

Effectively communicating what we are doing, how we are doing, and our needs helps, we hope, to engage you – whether to attend events, provide feedback, share your experiences, or volunteer – to stay informed and connected. This is important for inspiring and supporting each other as we live out our faith, mission, and vision.

So – what should we do to increase readership?

I would love to hear some of your ideas. How do you get your information about the church? How would you like to get it? You can reach me at the address below.

John Simmonds
President, Prudential Committee
pres@firstunitarianprov.org

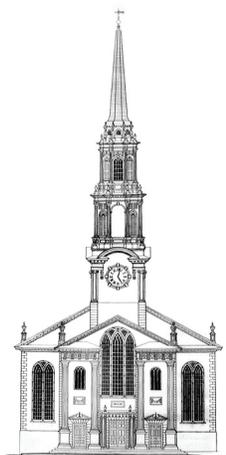
Meeting House Renovations

Response to our request to finalize Capital Campaign contributions by March 31 has been wonderful! As of February 15, we received \$91,000 of the \$140,000 required to complete the Benefit Street entryway of the Meeting House. If Capital Campaign contribution completion continues at this rate, the entry way could be complete by the beginning of summer.

Thanks so much to those of you have already responded to our March 31 Capital Campaign completion deadline. And thanks in advance to those of you planning to make your final contribution by March 31.

Our Revere Bell's new clapper and damper springs were replaced Saturday, February 8. Fine-tuning work remains to be done to eliminate a double strike while the bell swings. That work is scheduled to be complete by the end of April.

Finally, plans for landscaping the greenway leading from Benefit Street to the Meeting House entrance are in the design phase. Please see Fred Jodry or Nancy Weiss-Fried for details.



Treasurer's Report

As February ends, congregational income is slightly higher and our expenses slightly lower than budgeted, continuing our congregation's trend of strong

support for church activities and our staff's constant efforts to keep costs down. We are blessed on both counts.

March is a financial planning pause period for First Unitarian. We discover if our financial planning was accurate (it was and is) while we wait for the results of our Annual Commitment Drive to see what we can afford in the upcoming year.

As mentioned in February's newsletter, staff, church groups, and individuals have proposed new programs, events, and building improvements which, if fully funded, would cost more than this year's business-as-usual spending. Since last month, two additional funding requests – for lay-pastoral-care training and strategic planning – have been submitted, increasing the gap between requested funding and current operational spending. A listing of these funding requests is available at the church office.

We should be encouraged about the enthusiasm these funding proposals represent. There is so much we can do to increase our work with and for our members, our local community, and the world at large. We are fortunate to have leaders who are willing to spearhead the work identified in the proposals.

Of course, all of these proposals require funding. Our hope is that the enthusiasm spurring growth in membership and participation in church programs will be reflected in increased pledge totals during this Spring's Commitment Drive.

Once the drive is complete at the end of March, the Prudential Committee will work through April to complete a Fiscal Year 2020 budget proposal. The proposed budget will be available for congregational review by mid-May. A Fiscal State of the Congregation conversation is scheduled for Sunday, May 19, after the service to discuss particulars. We hope all who are interested in the financial health of First Unitarian will attend!

– David House, Treasurer
dlhouse51@comcast.com



Community Life March Is Commitment Drive Month!

The Commitment Drive Team is excited to begin our month of generosity and discernment of how Love Will Guide Us within our beloved community.

LOVE WILL
GUIDE US

Here is what you need to know:

Priorities Identified by Leadership:

- Quarter-time pastoral care staff person
- Building greater technology capacity for business office/Parish House
- Expansion of Neighborhood Social Justice, Side with Love, Anti-Racism, and Green Team initiatives
- Continuing to maintain our magnificent 200-year-old Meeting House

How Commitment Drive Team Will Communicate:

- “Invitations” during Sunday services
- Stories shared by members of their love of First Unitarian, how they have felt love here, and the difference that has made in their lives
- Musical guests at Sunday services
- Coffee Hour table with displays and heart stickers available for name tags of pledgers
- Personalized materials (distributed on Sunday, March 3, and mailed to homes)

Ways of Pledging:

- Mail in or drop off your pledge card (to office or to Coffee Hour table)
- Pledge on-line: <https://firstunitarianprov.org/member-information/commitment-drive/annual-pledge-form/>

Ways of Fulfilling Your Pledge (starting on July 1, 2019):

- Set up auto-debit from your bank account or credit card (preferred) by going to <http://bit.ly/DonateFirstUPVD> or by downloading the GivePlus+ app to your phone.
- Pay by personal check by mailing or bringing in to the church office or putting in the collection plate. Be sure to write “pledge payment” on the memo line.
- Pay by cash using pledge envelopes with your name written on them and given to church office or put in collection plate. Envelopes are available on Sunday morning in the Meeting House.
- Pay through auto-pay through your bank by working with your bank to set up payments. They should send checks to First Unitarian Church of Providence, One Benevolent Street, Providence, RI 02906

Enlarging our vision for what we can be and do in the world requires resources of time, talent, and treasure from each of us. With your support, we will be able to continue to experience powerful worship and music, engage in quality religious education programming, take good care of our beautiful spaces, and put our values into action in the world.

Thank you for your generous support
of our beloved community!

Please direct questions to: Cynthia Rosengard (crosengard@gmail.com)
or Joe Fisler (jfisler1@gmail.com)

Path to Membership Class

Mondays, March 18, 25, April 8

Are you interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism, the First Unitarian Church of Providence, and membership here at First Unitarian? If so, please join us for our upcoming Path to Membership class on Mondays, March 18, 25, and April 8 from 7:00 to 9:00p.

This three-session course is offered several times during the year. The classes are led by our Minister, Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay; our Director of Religious Education, Cathy Seggel; and our Membership Coordinator, Jenn Nardone.

To register for the class, please fill out a registration form by Thursday, March 14. You can find a form on the membership bulletin board in the Parish House hallway, at the Welcome table in the Newcomers’ Café, or by emailing mem@firstunitarianprov.org. Childcare is available for those who request it in advance; please let us know the age of your child when registering.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Questions? Contact: Jenn Nardone, Membership Coordinator (mem@firstunitarianprov.org) or call the office (401.421.7970). Jenn can be found in the Newcomers’ Café on Sundays.

Newcomers’ Café

Every Sunday during Coffee Hour

Held in the Paneled Parlor (behind the fireplace), 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)

Coffee Hour Luck

You don’t have to be Irish to have good luck this month! Just sign up to bring goodies to our Coffee Hour – a cooperative effort organized by the Women’s Alliance with donations from our congregation of *peanut-butter and peanut-free* baked or bought goodies such as brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake and more. We need eight people bringing donations that serve 24 each. Sign-ups are preferred in order to plan for each 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

Variety Comes to the Parish House Auditorium!

Saturday, March 23, 7:30p

This year's Variety Show has expanded its performance base to feature some of the best performers in the entire

Providence area! Come celebrate our community with . . .

Music by: Our Community Band, Jim Chapin, Down to the River Quartet, Eve Grady, Alison Green, Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Janice Okoomian Trio, Kelley Smith, and more!

Comedy, Stories, and Poems by: Bob Colonna, Burr Harrison, Roxanne Stern, Claude LeBoeuf, Ryk McIntyre, and David Riley!

Don't miss this fully staged show utilizing the Auditorium as the theater it was designed to be! And join the cast for a reception after the show.

Admission is free for members and friends of the First Unitarian community. Doors open at 7:00p.



Annual First Unitarian Cook-Off – Soups and Stews

Sunday, March 24 during Coffee Hour

The Membership Committee invites you to cook up a batch of your best hearty stew/soup. Folks will have the chance to taste all entries and vote on a favorite! All are welcome to join in. Last-minute dishes will be accepted; however . . . we will greatly appreciate your letting us know in advance, so we can plan for set-up, etc.

Tickets to vote for your favorite dishes will be available at the Cook-off. Proceeds raised from voting-ticket purchases will go to the Loaves and Fishes Mission.

You can sign up to compete in the Cook-Off at the three Coffee Hours preceding the event: on March 3 and 17 at the sign-up table in the Atrium; on March 10 on a clipboard in the Newcomers' Café.



Parish Care Team Is Seeking Volunteers

Caring for each other is an essential part of what we do as a faith community. You never know what kind of challenges life will present, and it is good to know that you have friends to reach out to at First Unitarian. Our Parish Care Team (formerly known as the Care Crew) is looking for fresh volunteers to assist the dedicated folks who have been helping others for years. The Parish Care Team provides help with logistical needs such as rides, meals, and errands. This is a different mission from the Lay Pastoral Care Team, that is focused on the spiritual needs of others, but there is sometimes a referral from one team to the other as needs overlap. If you are interested in joining the volunteers with the Parish Care Team, please contact me. We welcome more help.

Kevin Carson
Ministerial Intern for Pastoral Care
Kmcarsen@aol.com
401.837.5221

The Women's Alliance

Monthly Meeting

Monday, March 4

Business Meeting: 10:00a

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

Second Chances: The Reentry Campus Program

Speaker: James Monteiro

The Reentry Campus Program works both within and outside the Adult Correctional Institutions of Rhode Island to ensure that adults in transition have an affordable, accredited postsecondary degree path that is integrated into the support systems needed upon release. The program strives to help currently and formerly incarcerated citizens chart a new course through education, mentorship, advisement, and successful social networks of their peers.

James Monteiro is the founder and director of the Reentry Campus Program. After dropping out of eighth grade and serving time in prison, James beat the odds by earning an Associate's Degree in Psychology while in prison and, upon release, a Bachelor's in Community Development. James won an Echoing Green Fellowship and is a 2018 Just Leadership USA fellow. He is also part of John Legend's Unlocked Futures program and one of Rhode Island's "15 to Watch" for his work in youth programs that address violence.

Coffee Sales Every Sunday

The Women's Alliance sells 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 Women's Alliance table in the Atrium at Coffee Hour.



Camp Street Ministries

Save your grocery receipts from Eastside Marketplace and put 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.



Community Life

March Parish House Pot Luck Supper

Friday, March 8

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.



5:45p **Reception** in the Atrium

6:00p **Pot Luck Supper** in the Parish House parlors

Sign-up Forms: at the Pot Luck Suppers table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour

Food Donations: Bring a dish to share 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.

Volunteer Task Force: Check off on the sign-up form where you want to help.

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

7:30p **Program in the Auditorium**

“Voting Rights and Wrongs in Politics and the Courts”

Speaker: Steven Brown, Executive Director of the ACLU

Efforts to limit voting rights by cutting back early voting, closing polling places, purging voter rolls, restricting voting to camera-perfect registration, and denying the vote to released felons is a threat to our democracy. Steven Brown, of the American Civil Liberties Union, will address these issues and take our questions.

Reservations for the Pot Luck Supper are strongly requested. Please fill out the tear-off sign-up form at the Pot Luck Suppers table in the Atrium during Coffee Hour or call the church office (401.421.7970). Childcare for infants and children to age 10 will be available for parents who request in advance.

Nominate an Organization for a Community Collection in 2019-2020

Once a month for several years, First Unitarian has donated the non-pledge Sunday offering to a cause or charity. Nominations are open for these collections for the next church year. The nomination must come from a church committee or from a group of at least three church members who are actively involved in the organization.

There are five slots open in the coming year. Submissions for the 2019-2020 fiscal year are due in the church office by April 29; they will be reviewed by the Community Collections Committee, and decisions will be announced by the end of May. Application forms are available on request. Stop by the office or contact Church Administrator Nancy Forsstrom (admin@firstunitarianprov.org) to get a submission form.

UU Men

Sunday, March 10, 7:00–9:00p

Topic: Men and Health

How do we relate to our bodies? Do we protect them? Do we loathe them? Does the ManBox prematurely put us in the Box?

Facilitator: Rusty Beatty



Prostate Cancer Support Group for Men

Sunday, March 24, 7:00–9:00p

We meet together on the fourth Sunday of each month in the Parish House to help one another with the challenges of prostate cancer and the effects of surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy on ourselves, our loved ones, and our daily lives.

For more information, contact Steve McCloy (401.486.0333 / steven.mccloy43@gmail.com) or visit www.meetup.com/Prostate-Cancer-Mens-Support-Group/

March Birthdays

David Anthony
Dolores Braica
David Bridgehouse
Nancy Robert Dooley
Janette Greenwood
Jon Henson
Hannah Rosenbaum
Judy Sheehan
Kathie Vitolo



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!

Community Collections 2018-19

On several Sundays during the year, First Unitarian donates its non-pledge Sunday offering to a charitable cause. Many thanks to those who have contributed to these collections.

So far this year we have donated:

over \$2,000 for **Resilient Power Puerto Rico**, over \$1,600 for **Sojourner House in Providence**, over \$2,000 for our **Loaves & Fishes Mission**, over \$1,100 for **Providence Village**, and over \$1,600 for **Transylvania Partner Church** – totaling over \$8,200 this year.

Our remaining collections for this year are:

April 7

Day One

May 5

The Girl Effect

Hats Off to ...

Many thanks to those who signed up to be **Coffee Hour Providers** last month:

Claude Leboeuf, Beth Anterni, Betty Finn, Mary Frappier, The Transylvania Partner Church Committee, Anne Connor, Lucille Riccitelli, Tony Allen, Steve McCloy, Elissa Emerson, Angela Simas, Lyn Bradford, Caroll Adams, Sally Barker, Sine Pounder, and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.

Thanks to the **families who shared their stories at our Wholly Family service:** Judy and Len Cabral; Louise Sloan, Scott Farinha-Sloan, and Skip Farinha; Andrea Dougherty, Sami Dougherty-Rogers, and T. C. Rogers.



Community Life

Welcome New Members

After taking the Path to Membership class this winter, 19 people have signed the Membership Book. At the New Member Recognition ceremony on March 10, we will welcome them into the congregation. Please be sure to greet our newest members when you see them at Coffee Hour.

Grace Doyle Dayian is honored and excited to officially join the First Unitarian Church after years of intermittent attendance. Grace and her husband, Daryl, have two kids: Hannah (7th grade) and Henry (2nd grade). They live Providence with their dog, Buddy, and cat, Cleo. Grace is a clinical social worker in private practice on the East Side.



Aisling S. Dugan knows all the U.S. presidents in chronological order, can do a head stand, sold grilled cheese sandwiches at Phish concerts one summer, is very bad at packaging for trips, and after four years of studying Latin can awkwardly recite “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep.” Originally from upstate New York, Aisling (pronounced Ash-ling) now also lives in Lincoln, Rhode Island, with her husband, Joe, who is a therapist; two children: Vivian (age 6) and Xavier (age 3), and dog, Pepper (age 4 months). Aisling studied virology at Brown University and is now a Professor of Biology at Assumption College in Worcester, MA. She looks forward to becoming part of this UU community and getting to know many of you.



Shirley Dufresne was born in Pennsylvania; at age six, she moved to Fall River, where she and her parents and three siblings lived upstairs from her Irish Catholic grandparents. She attended a Catholic elementary school and lived very close to many cousins, aunts, and uncles, where the church was a central part of their lives. When Shirley was seven, her Dad left her Mom, and life for the family became a difficult financial and emotional struggle. She was able to attend nursing school with scholarships, married at age 20 to her husband, Robert. They have six children, 11 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Both Bob and Shirley were able to earn B.S. and M.S. degrees while raising their children. They have lived in Brockton, Tiverton, Westport, Hawaii, and now in Somerset. Shirley taught nursing at UMass-Dartmouth and maintained a clinical practice. Now retired, she did volunteer nursing in Honduras, Dominican Republic, and Tanzania. Over the years, she gradually grew away from the Catholic Church and recently has been drawn to the philosophy of Unitarian Universalism.



Catherine Jameson moved to Providence from San Francisco to join her partner (a Brown graduate student) and to work at a design firm. Raised Methodist, she is delighted to have found a wonderful spiritual community and excited to take on her search for truth and meaning at First Unitarian. She is a mechanical engineer and product designer, with a focus on consumer products and electronics – in San Francisco, she worked for Fitbit. She also enjoys yoga, cooking, biking, hiking, and singing, both in the choir and independently. Find her around town drinking lots of tea and seeing as much theater as possible.



Jen Kiluk and Ben Haas live in the Fox Point neighborhood of the East Side with their two cats, Huxley and Gertie. They met while working in Baltimore and moved to Providence in 2012. They are both avid readers and lifelong learners. Jen and Ben are excited to be a part of the UU community here in Providence and look forward to taking part in groups and activities!



Ellen Laprocina lives in Warwick with her two daughters, Sarah and Rachel, and their two very spoiled pets, Gracie and Luna. She is an art teacher in the Cranston Public School system and also works for Kidventure, an enrichment program that runs after school and throughout the summer. Ellen graduated from Rhode Island College with degrees in Psychology and Art Education. Her hobbies include gardening, yoga, art making, and vegan cooking. She has been a friend of the First Unitarian Church for about a year and a half and is excited to become a member of such a welcoming and socially conscience community.



Rees Robinson moved from Seattle to Warwick in November to live closer to her three children, who are all living in the New York City area. Until four years ago, Rees worked as a structural engineer and project manager. She left that work to pursue her interest in working with individuals and groups in support of empowering them to age and die in a way aligned with their personal values and beliefs. Rees is excited to be joining the First Unitarian community and is looking forward to seeing how her life in Rhode Island will unfold.



New Members (continued)

Nancy Nicholson is delighted to become a member of First Unitarian after several years of attending and taking part in the church’s musical life. Music is her passion. She has performed as a piano soloist here and abroad at Royal Festival Hall’s Purcell Room in London and at the Salle Cortot in Paris. She was twice a featured performer at the prestigious French Piano Institute in Paris. Currently, she has a piano studio in Providence and also teaches at Roger Williams University in Bristol. Originally from the Midwest, where she attended college, her interest in different cultures and peoples led to service in the Philippines as a Peace Corps Volunteer. She was drawn to First Unitarian because of its wonderful congregation and support of social justice, in addition to its fine music program. Nancy is a nature lover and enjoys gardening and cooking. She is addicted to reading, with mystery novels high on the list. She recommends a recent book she read: *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers.



Emily Spitzman and Mike Waugh live in Providence with their children, Ezra (8) and Emmett (5). Originally from the Northeast, they came to Rhode Island after several years of travel. Both Emily and Mike work in higher education and are passionate about engaging their students in social justice issues. The whole family enjoys traveling, staying active, and being involved in the community.



Sadie Swayze has been coming to First Unitarian for around 14 years. She is the youth representative for the Spiritual Pathways Team and an active member of the youth group. Sadie is a sophomore at Barrington High School. She loves listening to music as well as singing. She enjoys rowing with East Bay Rowing in the spring and fall. She loves animals and has four adorable cats.



Leigh Waldron-Taylor grew up in a tiny town in Massachusetts where the deep toll of the Unitarian Church bell ordered and kept time for all its residents, humans and dairy cows alike. Leigh later graduated from Brown University with a degree in Religious Studies, often admiring First Unitarian on her way to class in the last century. She presently lives and makes art at AS220, a nonprofit arts organization in downtown Providence. Leigh looks forward to participating in the work of the First Unitarian congregation.



R. Craig Wood is a 77-year-old dentist, retired since 2012. He grew up in Westbury, Long Island, and earned a B.A. from Dartmouth College in 1963 and a dental degree from Tufts in 1971. He came straight to Rhode Island and has lived and practiced here ever since, so he’s “almost” a native. He lived in Barrington for 40 years and now lives in Riverside with his partner, Ruthie. Craig has three grown sons, two in Rhode Island, one in New Hampshire, and six grandchildren, all of whom share his life-long love of the outdoors. He is an avid fisherman and boater, and still enjoys playing tennis every week.

About a year ago, Craig came to the First Unitarian Church from the Congregational Church in Barrington. He has always been looking for a home where he can be free to express his spirituality in a way that nourishes him, and he’s very happy to have found that here.

Kah Yangni moved to Providence in 2009 for college, and then just stuck around. They (preferred pronoun) grew up Baptist, but stumbled onto Unitarian Universalism as an adult. Kah has been coming to First Unitarian on and off for a long time, attended BUUUG as an undergraduate, and is very excited to take this next step. Kah is an avid artist and educator; they have taught in youth art programs all over Rhode Island, and helped organize local arts events like PRONK. They recently picked up the trombone and will talk to you about it at length if you let them. Kah plays with the Extraordinary Rendition Band (alongside a few First Unitarian members) and What Cheer? Brigade.

Also joining the church on March 10 are:



Welma Capehart



Marcia Fowler

Karen Kemp, who teaches first grade in the Spiritual Pathways program.



Spiritual Development

Join the Pilgrimage to Our Partner Church in Transylvania

First Unitarian is organizing a pilgrimage to visit our partner church in Transylvania, Romania, for June 17–28, 2019. We will explore and experience the historic roots of Unitarianism and to reconnect with our co-religionists in Eastern Europe. We will spend 12 days/nights traveling across the Transylvania region of Romania, visiting significant Unitarian sights, learning the complex stories of our denominational origins, and having fun.



The trip is open to all, young and not so young. Through this trip we hope to foster a new understanding of our historical roots and build deeper relationships with each other and our co-religionists overseas. The tour logistics will be coordinated by the UU Partner Church Council Pilgrimage Service, which has two decades of experience facilitating the visits of North American UUs to Eastern and Central Europe.

The 12 day/11 night land package offered by the UUPCC Pilgrimage Service. will be in the neighborhood of \$1359, double occupancy + \$150 registration fee. Add \$215 for single supplement. The land package includes ground transportation, accommodations, most meals, tour director, guide(s), interpreter(s), and entrance fees to programmed tourist sites. The package does *not* include airfare, gratuities, alcoholic beverages, personal expenses incurred during free programs, arrival airport transfer before/after specified start date, or departure airport transfer.

If you are interested in joining the trip, please contact Tom Getz (thomas1getz@prodigy.net) or Janet Downing Taylor (jdtaylo39@verizon.net).

Soul Circles



In response to an expressed desire for more opportunities to become connected/engaged here at First Unitarian, we will be building on our small-group ministry program to include additional groups, affinity groups, and shared activity groups. Interestingly, we've heard this desire for more connection from a cross-section of the of the congregation: some newer folks, but also people who've been members almost 10 years, and even people who've been part of the church for decades.

It's important that our church is a place where our wish to know and be known deeply can be fulfilled. These groups will be starting in the fall of 2019. We're looking forward to building this into the fabric of our congregation and believe it will offer an exciting range of ways to plug in further to this church. We will be calling this new initiative "Soul Circles."

Your input will shape these first stages as we unfold this program. Once we have compiled the results of the survey, which was sent to everyone by email, we will determine the groups with the greatest interest and the schedule that works best for most and begin identifying facilitators to be trained for groups that will be offered for registration in the fall. Our expectation is that more groups will be added and the program will continue to grow over time.

Please take a few moments to complete the survey to indicate your *top three choices* from among groups that have been suggested by our congregation (through our Congregational Census and our work with Rev. Thandeka). Also let us know what days of the week and times of day work in your schedule.

Please be in touch with any questions: Cynthia Rosengard (crosengard@gmail.com)

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.

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

Contact: Practice leaders Cindy and George Beshers at 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 21st century.

Leader: Tom Hall (twh2nd@aol.com)

Tai Chi Returns!

Every Tuesday at 7:00p

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: Sean Connor, seanconnor@cox.net

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)

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.

– Irene and Tony Allen



Social Justice

Our Sanctuary Program

On February 8, the Sanctuary Steering Committee sponsored a pot luck supper to show our appreciation for all those who helped out with our first foray into Sanctuary. Many people from First Unitarian attended, as well as supporters from AMOR, Brown University, Temple Agudas Achim, and the South County and Westminster UU churches. It was nice to be able to recognize many of those who helped to make it possible to house someone in our space. We would not have been able to do it well without the help of so many generous people.

We continue to try and stay in touch with our beloved Benitez family, but communication has been difficult. We do know that the family has a support network where they are now living, but that the transition has not been easy.

Since January, a few people have contacted the Sanctuary Steering Committee inquiring about our living space, but no one has asked to be housed as of the middle of February. The committee has been using this down-time to review procedures and update our manual through responses to a survey sent out to all who were trained or helped with hosting while there was a family at the church. We have listened to input from the Prudential Executive Committee and the staff about what we can do to improve our communications and intake procedure and will continue to improve these areas as well.

Overall, most people who participated in supporting our Sanctuary program felt that the operation went well and found it to be a deeply rewarding experience. The Sanctuary Steering Committee is grateful for the help and involvement of the many people in our congregation and beyond, and look forward to making things work just as smoothly for our next guest.

Save the date!

UU Legislative Ministry of RI

Annual Meeting

Sunday, April 7, 2:00–4:00 p at the Westminster Unitarian Church in East Greenwich

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Michael Fine, author of *Health Care Revolt*. Issues on the agenda to be discussed are: Reproductive Rights, Gun Violence; the Environment, Redistricting, Sanctuary (with our own Katherine Ahlquist), and Nuclear Power. Plan to attend!

Contact Derek Smith (dsmith0813@gmail.com) if you have questions.

Side with Love: Supporting Reproductive Rights

Rev. Gene Dyszlewski, our community minister, joined us at our February meeting to inform us about the progress of the RI Women’s Reproductive Health Care Bill, which is being introduced in the RI House and Senate this year. The RI Coalition for Reproductive Freedom has designed a postcard that can be signed and sent to representatives to let them know you support a woman’s right to reproductive health care. You can sign one of these cards at the Side with Love table located in the Atrium on Sundays. While you’re there, sign up for our email list to keep informed about important social justice actions happening in Rhode Island.

Save the date!

Emma’s Revolution will be returning to First Unitarian on **Friday, April 12** at 8:00p. Side with Love is co-sponsoring this event with the Spiritual Pathways Committee.

If you would like to help out during this event, contact katherine.ahlquist@gmail.com

Our Mitten ‘Tree’ Keeps Blooming – Thanks to You!

Thanks to all who responded to our call for warmings for our mitten fence. We filled it with over 100 items for the President’s Day Food Share. Many of the items were gratefully taken.

As the weather turns warmer and you start putting your winter wear away, remember you can leave any outgrown or no longer needed items in the basket in the Atrium. Please be sure they are clean and new or in like-new condition. If it is still cold in March, we will continue to put mittens, hats, gloves, scarves, and socks on the fence until the weather turns warm.

Our Food Share Pantry

Distribution Day, March 18

Our next food pantry distribution day is Monday, March 18. We’d love to have you join us as a volunteer. If you’re in need of food, you can join us as a client. Either way, we’ll be happy to see you! Doors open for clients at 2:30 and we finish at 5:30.

Contact Judy Ortman to volunteer (judyortman@gmail.com) or show up to get food.

Neighborhood Social Justice

Monthly meeting: Sunday, March 3 at 12:15p in the Haynes Room

Loaves and Fishes Mission: Tuesday, March 5

The first Tuesday of every month, the NSJC sponsors Loaves and Fishes, a monthly outreach mission delivering food and clothing to Emmanuel House, a homeless shelter in Providence.

- Contribute food items, new or gently used clothing of any size and type, toiletries, and/or financial donations
- Volunteer your time to assist in the mission:
 - 11:30a–1:00p - Sandwich Brigade at church
 - 2:30p–4:00p - Outreach Mission (sandwich distribution)
 - 5:00p–7:00p - Serving Mission (dinner at Emmanuel House)

NSJC sponsors other outreach and/or educational programs and volunteer opportunities. For more information, stop by the NSJC table in the Atrium any Sunday after worship service.

Green Team

Sunday, March 10, 12:15p

All are welcome to join the Green Team for ongoing discussions of how we can “green” our church and our own lives.



TRASH TALK: Wet-Strength Fiber

Although most clean paper and cardboard can go (flattened) in your recycle bin, some cannot. That includes “wet-strength” fiber, which is designed to resist moisture and so does not break down in water, making it not recyclable.

Wet-strength paper or cardboard includes:

- fridge or freezer boxes (e.g., six-pack carriers, frozen food boxes)
 - paper cups (e.g. coffee, soup)
 - powdered detergent boxes
 - kitty litter boxes
 - parchment or wax paper
 - sticker, contact, or photo paper
- Please put these items in your trash bin.

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

March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Worship 10:30a Mentor/Mentee/ Parent Lunch 12p NSJC 12:15p Campus UUs 5:00p	4 Women's Alliance Program 11:00a Luncheon 12:00p Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	5 Loaves and Fishes Mission 11:30a, 2:30p & 5:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	6 Meditation 7:00p	7	8 Parish House Pot Luck 6:00p Program 7:30p	9 Daylight Saving Time Begins  Set your clocks AHEAD 1 hour
10 Worship 10:30a Ask the PruComm 11:30a Green Team 12:15p Campus UUs 5:00p UUMen 7:00p	11 Zendo 7:00p	12 Deacons 6:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p	13 PruComm 6:45 Side With Love 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	14	15	16
17 Worship 10:30a Food Pantry Shuttle 11:30a Campus UUs 5:00p	18 Food Pantry 3:30-5:30p Path Class 7:00p Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	19 Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	20 Meditation 7:00p	21	22	23 First Unitarian Variety Show 7:30p
24 Worship 10:30a Cook-off 11:30a History 12:15p Campus UUs 5:00p Prostate Group 7p 31 Worship 10:30a Mentor/Mentee 12p Campus UUs 5:00p	25 Path Class 7:00p Zendo 7:00p	26 Tai Chi 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	27 Meditation 7:00p	28	29	30