



## Services in the Meeting House

Our theme for April is **Salvation**.

**Sunday, April 7**      **"Sacred Words for the Journey"**  
**10:30 am**

**Lisa Garcia-Sampson**

In her book, *Fluent in Faith*, U.U. minister Jeanne Harrison Nieuwejaar explains that the language we have at our disposal, and regularly use, shapes how we perceive and experience life. This Sunday we'll reflect on our personal relationship with religious language and explore how sacred words can help us make deeper meaning of the ordinary and extraordinary moments in our lives.

*Lisa Garcia-Sampson is a graduate of Boston University's School of Theology and currently serves as the ministerial intern at First Church Boston. Lisa first discovered Unitarian Universalism at First U and she forever considers this to be her spiritual home, and, more importantly, her family.*

*Young people begin in small groups in classrooms and worship in Chapel.  
We will have a Community Collection this Sunday for Day One (see page 7).*

**Sunday, April 14**      **What Saves Us?**  
**10:30 am**      **Getting Past What Dooms Us and Other Adventures**  
**Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay**

In this time full of holidays and stories and weather that all remind us that life goes on and people do get saved sometimes, how does that work for us in the here and now? Our sermon will look at some unlikely saviors - maybe all saviors are unlikely? - and what salvation (such an old-timey word for a timeless need) - looks like in the here and now.

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

**Sunday, April 21**      **Easter Sunday**  
**10:30 am**      **Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Cathy Seggel DRE, Fred Jodry**

Just when we need to remind ourselves of how much there is in the world and life to renew us, Spring comes, bearing Easter with it. Our multigenerational service will explore the Easter's theme of hope amidst the harshest circumstances, and the most essential blessings that are here for us - when we are here for them.

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

**Sunday, April 28**      **Senior High Youth Service - A Multigenerational Service**  
**10:30 am**      **Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Cathy Seggel, DRE**

Youth are shapers of our UU living tradition. Please come support our youth, and participate in their creative worship experience which will include a recognition of graduating seniors.

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

### CHILD DEDICATIONS

*Easter Sunday, April 21*

*Our next congregational child dedication ceremony will take place during our beautiful worship service on Easter Sunday.*

*Church members who would like their baby or child to be dedicated, please contact Cathy in the church office 401-421-7970, dre@firstunitarianprov.org*



We are a Welcoming Congregation

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## Lately ...

At the invitation of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Gun Violence, I spent a long afternoon and evening at the Statehouse to testify in support of sensible gun control. The experience was intense from beginning to end. I stood in a long line of almost all large men with short hair and long beards, wearing yellow t-shirts with quotes from Thomas Jefferson on the back: "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants." I guessed that my kind were the 'tyrants' in this scenario, the gun rights folks were the patriots, and that they were prepared to both shed and spill blood on this issue. That was intimidating.

As we got to the security station, a young man in front of me had to remove his belt which was in the form of a bandolier, filled entirely with bullets. I didn't see if the officers gave it back to him to wear; I was preoccupied with a security officer who was unhappy that I had neglected to remove a decorative safety pin that holds my winter coat closed.

In the chamber where the Judiciary committee would hear testimony, I was seated among people on both sides of the issue, right behind my friend, the Rev. Jamie Washam from First Baptist, and next to Sydney Montstream-Quas, founder of the RICAGV. It was nice to have a chance to talk to and get to know Sydney better, and to literally have Jamie's back as we traded whispers of support, concern, or frustration as the long day turned to night.

But it was also stressful - the yellow (gun rights) vs. red and orange (gun control) colors meant you knew where someone stood as soon as you looked at them. The legislators' questions showed that they were mostly gun rights people, often with a military or law enforcement background. All of the control-friendly legislators left by the middle of the evening, long before I spoke.

Two men behind me in yellow shirts were coughing so I offered them cough drops. They both looked surprised, but also appreciative, and one accepted my offer. When I had to get up to make a phone call, a long line of yellow-shirted people got up politely to ease my exit, and then again to ease my re-entry. I thanked them profusely, apologizing for discommoding them.

While some of the professional advocates turned me off with their language and their specious arguments, the regular folks were earnest. The order of advocates was government officials first, then 'expert witnesses' (I was one, submitted by the RICAGV), then citizens. When the gun rights citizens testified, most of what they talked about was that they really believe not just that they have a right to guns, or that guns are important to them, but that they truly believe they are good guys with guns, and their presence will deter gun violence and massacres, which they also deplore. The first yellow-shirted regular citizen to speak at the hearing was one of the really big guys. He broke down in tears during his testimony, saying that all day people had looked at him like he was a monster, making it clear that this issue is painful to him, and he too feels vulnerable in the sea of colorized, polarized engagement.

As I listened to the many other speakers, I modified my testimony to make it more practical, more respectful, and less ideological. In the end, I made five points I felt good about:

1. That it was clear to me that a lot of us want the same goal, we just have deep difference about how to attain that goal.
2. That a lot of us don't want to live in a weaponized society, with weaponized solutions to the issue of gun violence.
3. That teachers neither have, nor want, the training to be appropriate, dependable armed responders in an emergent tactical situation.
4. That our legislators who have questions or criticism for proposed gun control legislation have a right to those questions and criticisms - but they can't stop there. It's not enough, either in religion or legislation, to content ourselves with questions. Questions have to be the place we start from, and it's our responsibility to get to the answers that will work and that we can stand behind.
5. That we don't need legislators' thoughts and prayers. We clergy have that end of things covered, and legislators can count on us to do our job, offering thoughts and prayers and companionship to the devastated. We count on them to do their job, which is passing legislation that makes us feel, and be, safer.

But also I thanked the gun control folks for their kindness. I spoke about how fractured we feel, and how we have to offer each other respect as we work (Cont'd, right...)

## Trans and Non-Binary 101

Wednesday, April 24, 7-8:30 pm

The latest issue of UU World magazine has given rise to deep hurt and unhappiness about misinformation and inappropriateness in an article about trans and non-binary people within and beyond our UU communities. Here at First U, our commitment to being a Welcoming Congregation (<https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/program>) includes our dedication to and appreciation for our own trans and non-binary members and friends here in this church and in our communities at large. As part of supporting that commitment we will be offering an evening session on Wednesday, April 24: Trans and Non-Binary 101.

This session will be led by Monique Paul. Monique is a board member of the TGI Network, a peer support group leader, and has led many trainings, including at the police academy. Monique is also part of the local trans and non-binary community. Co-leading this session will be our own community minister, the Rev. Gwendolyn Howard. Rev. Liz will also be helping to support the evening, along with DRE Cathy Seggel. The program will include a presentation and Q & A.

We hope many First U'ers will come. This evening is open to everyone in our faith community, trans or non-binary, questioning, people with personal experience of this journey for themselves or a loved one, people without that experience who want to learn more, people who want to be good allies and friends to those in our church or in other circles in our lives for whom this is part of who they are - all are welcome!

### Lately, Cont'd...

to find common goals and achieve those goals After I spoke one gun rights person was rude to me, but everyone else made a point of thanking me for my remarks. One young teen agreed to send me his testimony so I could learn his story and why he feels as he does. I gave him my card and I really hope to find his testimony in my inbox sometime soon.

The whole day was tough and tiring and very long. I got home after 11 pm. But also it was educational, and in a strange way, heartening. We know we need to find ways to reach out across all that divides us. On that day in the Statehouse I tried, in small personal ways, and publicly with my words, to do that. And... it helped. That it helped at all matters a lot to me. It gives me hope.

See you in church,



## Spiritual Pathways

### Peace, Salaam, Shalom, & Pansy Faces

April has always been a full and promising month in my work and life in UU faith development. We move from the glimmer of spring through increased daylight hours to treasured times of the Coming of Age journey to Boston, Easter, Passover, Earth Day, and more. This year, there is more reason than ever to practice our UU faith at home, in church, and out loud in the public arena.

I have to remind myself of the delicate dance that is going on, in both work and play arenas. The calendar says it's spring, but the weather isn't quite there yet. In our process, spring means back-and-forth choreography with careful review of curricula, staff, budget, and goals, followed by looking forward to renew and enhance vision and programming. There's mindful consideration of foundational elements anchoring our faith development programs for children, youth, and adults through lenses of possibility as well as capacity. Evaluation means we must hold up accomplishments as well as challenges.

April highlights will include the Senior High Youth Group Service and the annual Coming of Age Boston UU Heritage trip. Spring holidays and recognition services are on the horizon.

One of my favorite rituals this season is the giving of pansy plants to our young people on Easter. Looking at the delicate faces on those early blooms reminds me of people's glances, filled with a variety of emotions. And our priority of building meaningful relationships between generations, cultures, races, abilities, and all diversities is affirmed. As we make meaning in life, we need others to accompany us we navigate. Our faith community can be a place to both offer and receive that support.

In the midst of these times of challenge, I am thrilled that a treat this month will be a Friday evening concert on April 12 and Sunday morning with a teacher/leader lunch featuring Emma's Revolution, who live their lives in activism through music. Their songs, including "Peace, Salaam, Shalom" and "Keep On Movin' Forward" have been guides for many as they spread peace and justice with courage and action. In order for all of us to remain focused and resilient and do justice work that really matters in a culture transforming way, I feel that the beauty of music can be an energy-spreading balm. Please join me in this opportunity sponsored by the Side With Love and Spiritual Pathways Teams.

Take care,

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

## 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 are on sale now during Coffee Hour in the Atrium.

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



Emma's Revolution

## Joyful Noise: A Singing Opportunity for Children, Youth, and Adults Together

We are very happy that Joyful Noise will gather, beginning after the service on Sunday, April 21, to begin singing together. The group will share during the Meeting House service on

Sunday, May 19. All are welcome.

Questions? Please contact Marcia Taylor, Youth Music Director [met.renn@gmail.com](mailto:met.renn@gmail.com) or Cathy in the church office.



## Interested in Volunteering on a Teacher Team?

Some team-teaching opportunities, beginning in September, are available for interested adults in the congregation. Our Sunday small groups for children and youth are a cooperative venture, with parents and non-parents sharing their time and gifts with our young people. Current volunteers have first choice to remain on teams. Spring is when we explicitly seek interest from everyone. We look forward to your involvement. To learn more, stop in to the RE office during coffee hour or contact Cathy [dre@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:dre@firstunitarianprov.org) 401.421.7970.

## Is This Your Year?

### It's time to sign-up for General Assembly and Star Island

There are wonderful opportunities for individual adults or youth and families to attend UU gatherings this summer. These settings, like Star Island in July and UUA General Assembly in Spokane, WA in late June, are wonderful ways to nurture your spirituality while having fun and making connections. I



am happy to help people

navigate registration,

funding, or seeking more information.

Cathy [dre@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:dre@firstunitarianprov.org). For helpful information about UUA GA, please consult <http://www.uua.org/ga/>

I particularly draw your attention to Star Island Faith Development Week in July. [www.starweek.com](http://www.starweek.com) The theme is Deepening Faith: Healthy, Whole, Inspired. This summer treat is a perfect way to enjoy a magical, beautiful island experience that is relaxing, inspirational, and fun! There is plenty of time to explore island treasures, sing, play, and rest. New friendships are forged and relaxing rejuvenation happens. Funding is available for first-time attenders and others. Please contact me soon for details and help in navigating registration and funding. Or, talk with folks like Michael Currier, Cynthia Rosengard, Sadie and Owen Swayze, Cynthia or Kai Roberts, Ellen Anderson, or Adele Andrews, the Ackerman or Moses families who have fallen in love with Star.

Cathy



## Sight Lines

Hello Everyone:

Spring is finally here. At least I hope the snow and cold weather are over by the time you read this. It is the time of year to do spring cleaning, to pack away winter clothes, to open windows and let in fresh air, to clean windows, and to see new perspectives.

In my January newsletter article, I broached the topic of polarity mapping – viewing and discussing polarizing disagreements, problems, or topics from “both/and” rather than “either/or” perspectives – and the desire to host congregational conversations on a variety of topics that are important to the congregation and to the development of our next round of strategic planning.

I worked with individuals from the Unitarian Universalist Association and our New England Region to identify options for moving forward, and during the March Prudential Committee meeting, I presented and received approval for a proposal to engage the New England Regional Peer Facilitator Group. Our goal is to work with the Group to plan and facilitate a series of congregational conversations in the late summer and fall. These conversations will be a critical part of our transformation and can provide invaluable information and insights to our leaders and decision-makers.

We are the second-largest UU congregation in New England. This will translate into more dedicated support from the UUA and New England Region. It will also challenge First Unitarian to be a leader and a beacon for liberal religion.

As we continue to grow, we are encountering challenges and opportunities that are imploring us to reflect on the vision of the church we want to have in the years ahead and what short- and longer-term actions we should take to realize our vision.

Last fall, we engaged a UUA regional consultant to do a staff assessment. It was in response to the increasing impacts on Rev. Liz Maclay, the staff, and volunteers as they do their best to serve our growing congregation and increase our community involvement. The preliminary draft report we received in December identified staff, volunteer, and technology recommendations. We recently received the final report, and during the April PruComm meeting, we plan to review and discuss the final recommendations and determine what steps to take around staff augmentation and configuration.

We will need to review our volunteer organization and discern what changes we should recommend to increase recruitment, minimize burnout, enhance communication within and between committees, and improve volunteer satisfaction. The demographic profile of the church is slowly changing to a younger, more diverse, and less wealthy congregation. We will need to understand the impacts this may have on the ways in which we connect with each other and on our communication and fundraising strategies. We will need to look at our ministry and governance structures, including the PruComm. We are outgrowing the current structures and will need to evaluate and transition to models that are better aligned to serve larger-size congregations.

We have been consistently growing for years, and the time is right to consider how we change. Change will not happen immediately. Change may feel uncomfortable. Change will require us to revisit our mission and vision. Change will call us to invest and to act. We are on a journey, and we will need your inputs, insights, talents, and patience as we deliberate, discern, and decide.

I'll end with a quote from Joel A. Barker. “Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”

John Simmonds  
President, Prudential Committee  
pres@firstunitarianprov.org



## Treasurer’s Report

At the completion of 75% of our fiscal year, congregational expenses are generally in line with budgeted amounts. Pledge and facility rental incomes are slightly above

what was projected. Barring any unexpected weather or emergency facility-repair expenses, we can expect a slight budget surplus by the end of June.

April sees the start of our budgeting process for the 2020 fiscal year. The proposed budget for the 7/1/19 through 6/30/20 fiscal year will be presented for congregational approval at our June Annual Meeting. The proposed budget is scheduled to be available for congregational review by mid-May.

The Prudential Committee has already received funding requests for projects, programs, and staffing to meet the needs of our growing faith community for the upcoming year. These requests reflect the desire to expand the congregation’s work within our church and the larger RI community, while promoting greater participation in national and world affairs.

Many of these requests require funding above our current business-as-usual expenses. Congregational income would have to increase by about 20% to fund all the new requests. Next month, we will report on how the results of our current commitment drive will impact our ability to fund an expansion of our congregation’s work.

In the meantime, we are a solvent, vibrant, and growing community! Aren’t we blessed to be part of it?

See you in church!

– David House, Treasurer  
dlhouse51@comcast.com

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### Hats Off to ...

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... **Derek Smith** for his tech expertise in support of RE and the Spiritual Pathways program.

... **our Coffee Hour Providers last Month:** Marilyn Eanet, Jude Sonder, Claude Leboeuf, Elissa Emerson, Nicole & Ethan Weeks, Edie Warren, Gerry Spremulli, Mary Frappier, Roberta Groch, Dolores Braica, Lisa Rose, John Dooley, Roxanne Stern, Lisa Maloney, Joan Richards, Tony Allen, Anne Connor, Janet Taylor, Sine Pounder, Phyllis Cole, Jessica Duckett, Beth Anterni, Steve McCloy, Suzanne Francis, Lyn Bradford, Karen Longteig, and all those lucky leprechauns who brought something in to surprise us.



## Community Life

### Parking – and No Parking! – on Sundays

There are three nearby parking lots available to us on Sunday mornings.

- Our own **church parking lot**, which fills up quickly. So be an early bird if you would like the best parking available. *Remember:* except for staff and 3 visitor spaces, our parking lot is rented out on weekdays.
- The **Hope Club lot** across Benevolent Street from the church, which is available to us until noon *on most Sundays*. A few times a year, when the Hope Club is hosting an event, the lot is not available; they usually tell us ahead of time, and the office puts an announcement in the Friday email.
- The **Brown University Horace Mann lot**, which is next to the Horace Mann building on George Street, is also available.

**BUT PLEASE NOTE: The John Brown House lot is NOT available for church parking on Sunday morning, or at any other time.** The Rhode Island Historical Society has contacted us repeatedly about church people parking in their lot on Sunday mornings; they have not given us permission to use their lot. Please respect their property and wishes.

On-street parking is always a choice when parking on Sunday mornings.

## Art in the Atrium

### April Exhibit

During April, Art in the Atrium will feature the photography of Richard Boober. He will show photos of our church and our Transylvania Partner Church, as well as a few of his own favorites.

### Call for Artists: Art in the Atrium 2019-2020 Season

*Deadline for proposals: Sunday, April 28*

The First Unitarian Art Collective is now accepting proposals from artists to exhibit their work for the Fall 2019 through Spring 2020 season/church year. We welcome all submissions! The season will be reviewed by the Art Collective Committee and confirmed by Sunday, May 26.

Shows change monthly and can be solo or shared-artist exhibits. Works are not juried except to consider family-appropriateness for a shared public space in our church community. Due to limitations in the Atrium space, two-dimensional work is preferred. Work must be wired to comply with the hanging system. 3-D work is possible with bases, but there are only a few spots where they can be safely displayed.

All church community and Art Collective members are welcome to submit proposals. Priority will be given to members of the Collective and members who have not shown the previous year. Artists from the community at large can participate for solo or shared exhibits. The Art Collective will reserve one or more opportunities for group exhibits by members of the Collective and will request submissions for those shows closer to the show date. Exhibitors are not required to sell their work, but works can be offered for sale; we request 25% of the sale price as a donation to the church. Anyone who exhibits in the space is encouraged to pay the Collective's annual fee of \$10.

The Art Collective coordinates individual artist and group exhibits monthly in the Atrium. Our hope is to support and nurture a healthy spiritual community by giving the gift of beauty and offering a window into an artist's visual sense of meaning and search for truth. Anyone is welcome to join the Art Collective at any time for an annual fee of \$10 per year to support reception and exhibition expenses. Renewals begin in September of each year.

**To submit a proposal:** Proposals must be received by Sunday, April 28. Please include two images and a brief description and/or theme of your work. You may specify a preferred month, though final confirmation and scheduling is determined by the committee. Email your proposal to Amy Webb (Amy.webb7@verizon.net) and/or Chiara Romano Van Erp (romano-vanerp-design@cox.net)

For questions or further info please contact:

Chiara Romano Van Erp, romano-vanerp-design@cox.net;

Amy Webb, amy.webb7@gmail.com; or Jim Barfoot, barfootjim@gmail.com

## The Tech Team Is Gearing Up – Can You Help?

We are getting ready to modernize the church's software platforms, and we need some help! We want to migrate office and committee operations to a combination of Google Suite and a yet-to-be-finalized church-management platform. We need people experienced with related tools and data migration to help with these efforts.

If you have time or questions (or ideas), please contact Kathi Fisler (kfisler@gmail.com) or Bill Koteff (bill.koteff@gmail.com).

## Consider Planned Giving



The Benevolent Society reminds you that there are many ways to give to our church. Our new booklet, "An Introduction to Planned Giving," is available on the corner table outside the church office. The booklet describes a number of ways to designate gifts to be left to the church after death. An insert in the booklet addresses several frequently asked questions and describes the church endowment funds to which you can designate gifts. An information form at the back of the booklet can be used to let the church know of your intentions. Send or deliver the completed form to our Church Administrator, Nancy Forsstrom, in the church office.

Thank you for considering a legacy gift to First Unitarian.

## 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 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.





## Community Life

### Antiques & Uniques: Women's Annual Indoor Yard Sale

Saturday, April 27, 10:00a–2:00p

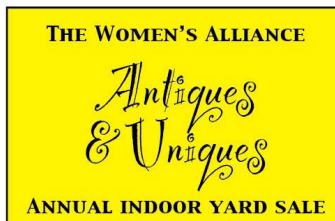
The First Unitarian Women's Alliance is once again sponsoring its now-famous Indoor Yard Sale, featuring some antiques, lots of "uniques," books, jewelry, and hundreds of useful and decorative items at spectacularly low prices.

All items are donated by church members and friends. So put aside things now for donating to the Yard Sale. Give us those items you don't use or need anymore but are too good to give away. Donating them to the Alliance ensures that they will find a good home and provide the financial donations we give to those local charitable organizations that support women and families.

Suggestions for donations: home goods, small working appliances, toys, furniture, tools, books, art, etc. Better items will be sold separately in the Paneled Parlor.

You can drop items off at the church Monday through Thursday the week of the sale (April 22–25). Please do not bring any items (unless previously arranged) on Friday or Saturday.

Questions? Contact Janet Downing Taylor: jdtaylor39@verizon.net



## 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 Team provides help with logistical needs such as rides, meals, and errands. This is a different mission from the Lay Ministry Team - which 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 or 401.837.5221

## Save the Date

### Our Annual May Breakfast

Sunday, May 5, 8:00a–10:00a

If you didn't grow up in Rhode Island, you might not be familiar with May Breakfasts. They began in Cranston in 1867 when the Old Quaker Meeting House originated the event to raise funds for a new building, borrowing the idea from the English May Day celebration. Four hundred and sixty-six people attended the first May Breakfast, helping to raise \$155.50. Every year since then, churches in Rhode Island have continued to treat one morning in early May as a fund-raiser for church programs.

First Unitarian Providence will again celebrate that tradition this year. We will serve you breakfast on the first Sunday in May, starting at 8:00, to allow choir members and other early birds to enjoy our bounty, and ending at 10:00, to allow for clean-up before services begin.

### You Can Help!

We will need some volunteers to help with set-up, cooking, serving, clean-up, and, especially, contributions of breakfast baked goods. All nine Deacons have already volunteered. Look for the May Breakfast table in the Atrium during April, where you can sign up for the various ways you can help.

Tickets (\$10 adult, \$5 children, under age 5 free) will be available through April during Coffee Hour. Proceeds go to our Loaves and Fishes ministry.

## The Women's Alliance

### Monthly Meeting

Monday, April 1

Business Meeting: 10:00a

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

### Is My News Fake or Not?

Speaker: Saundra McMillan

Saundra will review changes in censorship and disinformation techniques through the last century, focusing on current technologies that make it increasingly difficult to tell what is factual and what is not. She will suggest some ways to protect ourselves from an information apocalypse.

*Professor Emerita Saundra McMillan earned a Ph.D. in Communication at the University of Southern California and taught media courses at California State University–Long Beach for 30 years before recently moving to Rhode Island.*

## Meeting House Renovations

By March 30, we expect to have \$125,000 of the necessary \$140,000 required to restore the Benefit Street Meeting House entry way. (We have received word from some who pledged that they will complete their capital



campaign commitments later in 2019.) After the entry way work is completed and paid for, and all pledge amounts are collected by the end of 2019, we can expect a balance of \$85,000 for another phase of Meeting House restoration work in 2020.

Based on the consistent honoring of pledge obligations throughout this process, we are entering into a contract with E. F. O'Donnell to complete the entry restoration work by early-summer of this year - work has already begun. What a way to celebrate our congregation's 300th anniversary!

In the meantime, for those of you who plan on completing your capital campaign contributions during 2019, please consider making your final payment by June 30. Your early final contribution will enable us to avoid taking out a small bridge loan for final payment to O'Donnell while waiting for the final pledge amounts to come in.

What a joy it has been to work on this project! Thanks to all of you who have made our Meeting House shine once again!

– David House, M H Restoration Coordinator



## Community Life

### April Parish House Pot Luck Supper

Saturday, April 13 (note day and time change)

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.



Times: 4:45 Reception in the Atrium

5:00 Pot Luck Dinner in the Parish House parlors

6:30 Program in the Auditorium

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

#### Program: Family Fun Game Night

This special Saturday evening Pot Luck Supper is a time for families and those young at heart to gather at an earlier hour for supper and then move upstairs to the auditorium for an evening of table games.

**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.

**April showers...** won't spoil our coffee hours this month thanks to the generosity of those in our church community bringing delicious donations for our enjoyment. Our Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort organized by The Women's Alliance with donations from our congregation of peanuts and peanut butter free baked or bought goodies such as brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake and more. In order to feed the ravenous crowd each Sunday, we need 8 people bringing donations that serve 24 each. Sign-ups are preferred in order to plan for each upcoming Sunday. Sign up in the first parlor during Coffee Hour and go home with a reminder so you won't get wet.

### Nominate an Organization for a Community Collection in 2019-2020

Once a month, First Unitarian donates the non-pledge Sunday offering to a charitable cause or organization. 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 church office or contact Church Administrator Nancy Forsstrom (admin@firstunitarianprov.org) to get a form.

### UU Men

Sunday, April 14, 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, April 28, 7:00-9:00p

"A discussion of vitamins and supplements. Do they help? Do they hurt?" 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/](http://www.meetup.com/Prostate-Cancer-Mens-Support-Group/)

### April Birthdays



Suzanne Alden  
Bruce Boucek  
Len Cabral  
Michael Cappelli  
Sam Cole  
Holly Dobbs  
Jim Estey  
Kathi Fisler  
Martha Manno  
Kate Mashburn  
Kate Menard  
Erin Newell  
Wendy Oliver  
Gaby Petruck  
Sine Pounder  
Cynthia Roberts

Meghan Smith  
Mary Snowden  
Willa Summers  
Alison Weber  
Kersti Yllo

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.

Our Collection on April 7 will go to support the work of **Day One**, an organization dedicated to combating sexual assault.

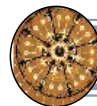
So far this year we have donated:  
over \$2,000 for **Resilient Power Puerto Rico**,  
over \$1,600 for **Sojourner House in Providence**,  
over \$2,000 for our **Loaves & Fishes Mission**,  
over \$1,100 for **Providence Village**, and  
over \$1,600 for **Transylvania Partner Church**  
- totaling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

Our remaining collection for this year is:

#### May 5

#### The Girl Effect

Many thanks to those who have contributed so generously to these collections.



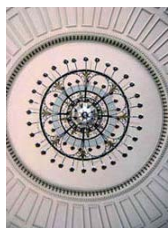
### Wheel of Life

#### Condolences to:

**Laurie Bellavance**, Karen Boulanger's daughter, whose husband, Paul, died last year. A memorial service will be held at the church on April 13 at 1:00p.

**Lauri and Christopher Ontso, and Eleanor**, on the death of Christopher's mother.

**Congratulations to Welma Capehart** and family upon the birth of Lincoln Nathaniel.



## Spiritual Development

### Transylvania Partner Church Pilgrimage

*Last day to register for the trip, April 2*

Plans are under way for a visit to our Partner Church this June from the 17th to the 27th. A number of folks from our congregation will be traveling to the village of Szentegyhaza in Romania and visiting many important stops

along the way and back.

The trip begins and ends in the Transylvanian city of Kolozsvár, which houses the headquarters of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church. From there, we travel to several other cities. The trip is called a pilgrimage because some of these sites are part of our Unitarian heritage.

The best part of the trip comes when we visit our partner church in Szentegyhaza for almost four days. The home-stay portion of the trip allows us to learn more about our partner church's congregation, their families, and their lives.

On our way back to Kolozsvár, we will visit three other cities and a fortified castle. The last major Unitarian site we visit is Torda, where the famous Edict of Torda was developed, proclaiming the Christian people in Transylvania free to choose the religion of their choice.

Come learn more about our Partner Church trip this June at the information table in the front parlor during Coffee Hour. We will have a poster board of photographs from past trips taken at many of the sites on the itinerary.

If you are interested in going, you need to act now. Registration for this trip closes on April 2.

– Janet Downing Taylor (jdtaylo39@verizon.net), Tom Getz (thomas1getz@prodigy.net)

Co-chairs Transylvania Partner Church Committee



## Soul Circles



Our sessions with Rev. Thandeka last fall revealed a clear interest in finding more ways to become connected/engaged here at First Unitarian. In response, we asked the congregation to let us know what kinds of activities they would like to see. Thank you all those who completed the Soul Circle Survey; between February 14 and March 14, we received 185 responses. Most folks indicated their top three choices from among an array of more than 50 group ideas that had been generated by the congregation.

Our next step will be building on our small group ministry program (Chalice Circles) to include Soul Circles. We want to stress that the Soul Circle program is intended to complement our current Chalice Circle program. It won't replace or impose any changes on those current Chalice Circles that are going strong. Rather this program will build on, and expand, our small group ministry program. We are fortunate to be a community with such a long and successful history of this work, and we are excited to expand this ministry.

In the end, almost half of the possible groups (22 in all) received interest from at least 10 members/friends of the congregation. The groups with the most endorsements included affinity groups, interest groups, and activity groups. These groups will form the basis for the Soul Circles that we will develop for our launch in the fall.

During the month of March, we have been developing a picture of the qualities we want to seek for Soul Circle Leaders. We have also begun inviting individuals who possess those qualities, along with our current group of amazing Chalice Circle facilitators, to attend a weekend leadership training program with Rev. Thandeka, which will take place at the end of April.

We'll be sure to keep you posted as more unfolds. In the meantime, thank you for your responsiveness and enthusiasm – and stay tuned!

If you have kudos, questions, or concerns, please be in touch: with Cynthia Rosengard (crosengard@gmail.com)

## Ongoing Programs

### Benevolent Street Zendo

*Most Monday nights, 7:00–8:30pm*

The Benevolent Zen practice group has re-affiliated with Greater Boston Zen Center. We continue with guidance from teacher James Cordova, sensei, who visits twice a month for practice interviews and a dharma talk. Please visit our updated website at [benevolentzen.org](http://benevolentzen.org). We have a new email address which is [benzen.pvd@gmail.com](mailto:benzen.pvd@gmail.com). You can also contact Cindy Bapties by phone or text at 401'573.0881.

### 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](mailto:twh2nd@aol.com))

### Tai Chi

*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](mailto:seanconnor@cox.net) or 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 ([krebent108@gmail.com](mailto: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 Reaches Out

*Informational meeting, Monday, April 8 at 7:00p*

While we are awaiting a new person or family who is in need of our sanctuary space, the Sanctuary Steering Committee has been reaching out to faith and community groups inviting them to consider forming a sanctuary coalition with First Unitarian. There will be a meeting on Monday, April 8, at 7:00p in the Auditorium for groups interested in learning more.

We have heard from Daisy that her family is doing well and adjusting to being back in Mexico. Daisy has applied to law school and is currently teaching children out of her family home. Danny is having difficulty settling in at school, and Vikki is busy having fun. They say hello and send their love!

## UU Legislative Ministry of RI

### Annual Meeting

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

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Michael Fine, author of *Health Care Revolt*.

Issues presentations include:

- Women's Reproductive Rights,
- Gun Violence
- the Environment,
- Reforming Redistricting,
- Sanctuary church / Immigration
- Advanced Nuclear Power.

Plan to attend - Contact Derek Smith (dsmith0813@gmail.com) if you have questions.

## Side with Love: Opportunities to Make a Difference

It is a busy time in the Rhode Island political scene. There are weekly opportunities to take action at the State House on items as diverse as the Rhode Island Healthcare Act, Gun Legislation, and Water Rights. Side with Love encourages you to participate in any way you can, making your voice heard. Post photos to our Facebook page to show how you participate!

The City of Providence has embarked on a campaign to sell the Providence Water Supply Board to a private entity. Side with Love will be showing up at meetings with the mayor, along with the Water Is Life/ Land and Water Sovereignty Campaign, to protest this action which will affect cities and towns all over Rhode Island. We are also planning a letter-writing campaign. Please look for events listed on our Side with Love Facebook page and the *Meeting House Times*, as well as at our table during Coffee Hour.

Showing up for Social Justice is hard work! A great way to reward yourself for all you do is to attend the concert by Emma's Revolution on April 12, 8pm in the Meeting House at First Unitarian. It is sure to be a treat for the spirit, as well as the ears! Hope to see y'all there!

## Knitting for a Better World: Collecting Summer Headgear

The weather has finally warmed up, so no more need for winter warmings. Thanks to the many people who donated warm things for our mitten fence. We had so many donors this year that we were able to hang over 200 items, which were gratefully received by passersby and food share clients.

Now that the warmer weather is setting in, we would ordinarily close down our giving operation until next winter. This year, we would like to try something different. The need for head protection doesn't end in the winter. The summer sun can be brutal on the head and face. So we are calling all hat wearers to clean out their summer-hat collections. You can leave your new or gently used, clean summer hats in the basket in the Atrium. We will collect them until June, hanging them on our fence until Food Share day.

## Celebrate Earth Day by Supporting the First Unitarian Green Team!



*Monthly meeting, Sunday, April 7*

*Reusable utensils sale, Sunday, April 14*

The Green Team has assembled sets of reusable utensils slotted into beautiful napkins. Great for eating on the go, an afternoon at the park, or a weekend camping trip. And they make great gifts for Easter or Mother's Day!

Get your set(s) for \$10 each on April 14 during Coffee Hour. Proceeds will support the environmental program at First Unitarian.

## Volunteer at Our Food Share Pantry

*Distribution Day, Monday, April 15*

We'd love to have you join us as a volunteer for our next food pantry distribution day on Monday, April 15. 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 2:30p and we finish at 5:30p.

To volunteer, contact Judy Ortman (judyortman@gmail.com) or just show up to get food.

## Neighborhood Social Justice

*Monthly meeting: Sunday, April 7 at 12:15p in the Haynes Room*

*Loaves and Fishes Mission: Tuesday, April 2*

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.

Here's how you can help:

- 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 on the first Tuesday of the month:
  - 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)

The NSJC was founded to provide volunteer opportunities to work beyond our church doors with those who are socially and economically marginalized.

For more information, stop by the NSJC table in the Atrium any Sunday after worship service.

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)

## April 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> Women's Alliance: Program 11:00a Luncheon 12:00p Path to Membership Class 7:00p Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	<b>2</b> Loaves and Fishes Mission 11:30a, 2:30p & 5:00p  Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>3</b>   Meditation 7:00p	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Worship 10:30a Comm Collection 12:15p NSJC Green Team Mtg Legislative Min Ann Mtg 2-4  Campus UUs 5:00p	<b>8</b>  Path to Membership Class 7:00p  Sanctuary Coalition 7:00p Zendo 7:00p	<b>9</b> Deacons 6:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p	<b>10</b>  PruComm 6:45 Side With Love 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>  Emma's Revolution 8:00p	<b>13</b> Paul Bellavance Memorial 1:00p  Parish House Pot Luck 5:00p Program 6:30p
<b>14</b> Worship 10:30a  11:30a Food Pantry Shuttle Ask the PruComm Green Team Sale  Campus UUs 5:00p UUMen 7:00p	<b>15</b>  Food Pantry 3:30-5:30p  Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	<b>16</b>  Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p	<b>17</b>  Meditation 7:00p	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> EASTER SUNDAY Worship 10:30a Child Dedications Joyful Noise 12:15p  Campus UUs 5:00p	<b>22</b> EARTH DAY  Zendo 7:00p	<b>23</b>  Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p	<b>24</b>  Meditation 7:00p  Trans 101 7:00p	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>  Indoor Yard Sale 10:00a-2:00p
<b>28</b> Worship 10:30a Youth Service  History 12:15p Joyful Noise 12:15  Campus UUs 5:00p Prostate Cancer Group 7p	<b>29</b>  Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p	<b>30</b>  Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p				