



Services in the Meeting House

Our theme for May is **Truth**.

Sunday, May 5 **The Truth About Truth**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay

We often refer to truth as if it is some kind of clear and absolute value or quality. That's a very logical, modernist perspective. But as postmodernism has made confusingly clear (yes, that was – kind of – a joke), the truth about truth is that it exists in the space between us: contextual, relative, contingent, personal. Our service this morning will explore what the relativistic nature of truth means for faith – for our faith, in particular, that puts so much emphasis on our search for meaning, on defining questions and seeking answers. When an old UU covenant declares that we “seek the truth in love” what does that mean for us all these days?

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

Our Community Collection this Sunday is for the Girl Effect (see page 8).

Sunday, May 12 **In Our Hands**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Scott Lapham of One Gun Gone

In honor of Mother's Day, first founded as a holiday for non-violence, our service this year will again be part of a local interfaith coalition. All over the country, people of faith are rising up to demand gun control and the increased safety for houses of worship, families, students, and schools that real, responsible gun control brings with it. This morning we will celebrate the transformation of a firearm we dedicated last year into a gardening tool we can use to plant our new grounds in front of the church. Also, we welcome Scott Lapham, founder of One Gun Gone, as we remind ourselves of the sacred possibilities we hold in our hands and of our commitment to live in a world devoted, not to weapons, but to community and comity on which all peace depends.

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

Sunday, May 19 **Coming of Age Service**

10:30 am

Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Cathy Seggel DRE

Our annual recognition of eighth-grade Coming of Age honorees will be the centerpiece of the service. With mentors by their sides, the class will share reflections about their individual beliefs, and the congregation will celebrate and affirm the beginning of the next stage of their lifelong faith development. Please join us for this meaningful rite of passage.

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

Sunday, May 26 **Joint Worship Service with Bell Street Chapel**

10:00a (note earlier worship time)

With Brown's Medical School commencement exercises taking place on our campus, we have been invited to worship with fellow UUs at Bell Street Chapel.

No Sunday School classes.

Bell Street Chapel is located at 5 Bell Street, off Broadway, on the West Side of Providence.



We are a Welcoming Congregation

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Lately . . .

On very good days, I let go of email. On one such day recently, I took time to look up the name of someone who once wrote their name on the flyleaf of a book, long before it came into my keeping. Then I pondered questions and pursued their answers. I wrote. I looked out a window and discovered that a large and placid groundhog shares our plot of land.

It so happened it was the Sabbath. I looked in a book and discovered this poem. I read it, as the calling of a heavenly host of peepers was enveloping my house, while the cold rain of the cold day was still freshening the tender blades of young grass, while a strange and beautiful flowering plant in pink and purple raiment, suddenly present like a burning bush at the top of our unkempt back hillside, was keeping the secret of its name. The poet's spring, my spring, your spring – we cannot compel them. They come when they come. And often, across the years, they appear in perfect likeness of each other.

The First of May

Now the smallest creatures, who do not know they have names
 In fields of pure sunshine open themselves and sing.
 All over the marshes and in the wet meadows,
 Wherever there is water, the companies of peepers
 Who cannot count their members, gather with sweet shouting.
 And the flowers of the woods who cannot see each other
 Appear in perfect likeness of one another
 Among the weak new shadows on the mossy places.
 Now the smallest creatures, who know themselves by heart,
 With all their tender might and roundness of delight
 Spending their colors, their myriads and their voices
 Praise the moist ground and every winking leaf
 And the new sun that smells of the new streams.

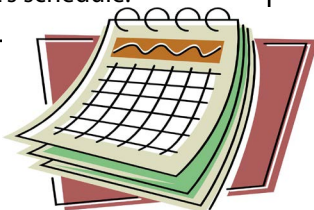
– Anne Porter

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.



May Birthdays



Jim Barfoot
 Carolyn Battle
 John Braica
 Marcia Bubol
 James Corbin
 Darlene Correia
 Peter Denison
 Andrea Dougherty
 Alison Duncan
 Suzanne Francis
 Ariadne Greenburg
 Tracy Hands
 Tom Harrall
 Chris Jeznach
 Kathy Killilea
 Mary Kollar
 Wendy Lavalee
 Kim Lee
 Dee Lovecky

Brenda Mallicoat
 Ruth Otto
 Erica Perkins
 Martha Rice Sanders
 Cynthia Rosengard
 Erika Rusley
 Tom Schade
 Barbara Westlake

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

Ask the Pru Comm

Sunday, May 5, during Coffee Hour

Representatives of the Prudential Committee, the governing body of our church, are on hand at Coffee Hour one Sunday each month to share information and answer questions about what is happening at First Unitarian. You're invited to stop by the Ask the Pru Comm table on May 5 to chat about church matters or to ask about church business or events!



"I had a miraculous dream in which our list of questions all had answers."



Spiritual Pathways

“And How Are the Children?”

May is bursting with transformation, in flora and in fauna. I sure appreciate soaking in the buds and blooms, colors and light of this season. It is also a time in our congregation for celebrating rites of passage and honoring leaders. The Spiritual Pathways Team (aka Religious Education Committee) and I are reviewing curriculum, policies, practices, and support systems. We will devote resources for next year’s program that support multi-generational, innovative, and adult learning experiences as reflected in the 2019-20 budget proposal. The RE community will continue to use technology and communication tools, like Zoom video conferencing, to help busy volunteers navigate their service to children, youth, and adults. We are in the midst of gathering teams of adult guides for our young people, often called volunteer teachers. There are some spots still available. If you are interested in finding out more about an opportunity to learn with children and youth, contact me in the church office. And please let me know of your interest in helping to present more adult faith development opportunities. I am working with Rev Liz, Fred Jodry, and Marcia Taylor to create theme-based ministry with monthly experiences in worship and learning for all ages.

You are probably aware of the traditional Masai greeting, “And how are the children?” Other cultures, including people from my own Jewish heritage, often greet one another with that lead question. An essay by Rev. Patrick O’Neil reminded me that, through that expression, the Masai acknowledge the high value always placed on their children’s well-being. Even warriors with no children of their own would always give the traditional answer, “All the children are well.” Meaning, of course, that peace and safety prevail, that the priorities of protecting the young, the powerless, are in place, that Masai society has not forgotten its reason for being, its proper functions and responsibilities. “All the children are well” means that life is good, that the daily struggles for existence do not preclude proper caring for the young.

I wonder if every adult among us, parent and non-parent alike, feels an equal weight for the daily care and protection of all the children in our community, in our state, in our country, in our world, for all children everywhere.

My answer, as connected to our congregation of children and youth, is that they are well. That we are called to live into our covenant to support and challenge them and their families through a lifelong process of Unitarian Universalist faith development. I am on the ground, observing and guiding our youngest children through our campus ministry people. Whether it is a pre-K child voicing their understanding of meditation as “resting your mind and opening your heart” or our senior highers grappling with their strong opinions on current events, fears, and resolve, or our college-age members supporting one another as they prepare to move out of their schooling bubble, I feel hope!

But it is not enough. There is much to keep us on edge, fearful, angry and worn out, even in a privileged demographic. There is much action needed to dismantle systems and cultures of oppression, of which we are a part. I am deeply aware of urgent needs for change that should directly inform our lives now and moving forward. We must hold the needs of diverse people of all ages, races, genders, classes, sexual orientations, abilities, and other identities. I promise to keep asking the question, “And how are ALL children?” Please join me.

Take care. I look forward to being with you this spring,

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



Spring Highlights

Coming of Age Trip to Boston

Our eighth-graders traveled on the MBTA to tour the UUA headquarters in Boston, met with the



Director of Youth and Young Adults, and took the T to visit the UU Service Committee to learn about all of the partnerships our Association has for doing justice making in the world.

Interfaith Youth

Here’s a glimpse of the inspirational Sunday in late March with our neighbors from the Muslim



and Jewish communities. Youth in our sixth/seventh Neighboring Activist group welcomed interfaith youth to Chapel, where they began relationships and, together, prepared snacks for our Community Food Share Pantry. This is just one chapter of ongoing interfaith connecting in our Spiritual Pathways Program.

Senior High Youth Service

Our Senior High Youth Service reflected on extremism and middle ground, with the congregation invited to participate in a “power shuffle” and to sing along with the offertory music, The Beatles’ “Hello, Goodbye.”



The traditional “bridging” of graduating seniors was supported by college students from our congregation’s campus group. There was a giant cake as a special Coffee Hour treat. Gratitude to the advisors, parents, college leaders, and, of course, our youth!



Sight Lines

Hello Everyone:

I've always had a love-hate relationship with May. This is the month where the dreariness of winter is replaced by lush vegetation and beautiful blooms of all varieties and hues. It is also allergy season, and for me that means shorter times outdoors to prevent runny nose, watery and itchy, red eyes, scratchy throat, and fatigue-inducing medicines that make me appear narcoleptic during the day. Still, the blooms are beautiful.

As I write this, the Commitment Drive, led by Cynthia Rosengard and Joe Fisler, is on track to exceed last year's pledge income. It's a significant accomplishment thanks to their leadership, the Commitment Drive team, and all of you who pledged.

The Budget Committee is developing a draft budget for the next fiscal year using the prioritization list we compiled earlier this year. They will unveil the draft budget during the Congregational Conversation meeting on Sunday, May 19. It is an opportunity to hear how much pledge income was raised and how we plan to fund church programs, staff salaries, and projects of interest to our church. I hope to see there.

Last fall, we hired a sound engineer to assess our sound system and provide recommendations. The Prudential Committee (PruComm) reviewed and approved the recommended sound system design. The Sound System Team, led by Neil Bartholomew, is reviewing cost-reduction options and determining what portions of the design to put out for bid. We are also exploring a variety of funding strategies to cover the approximately \$50,000 it will cost to implement a new sound system to meet our current and future auditory needs.

We made progress toward our goal of hosting facilitated Congregational Conversation meetings during the next church year. The primary objective of these meetings is to create an environment where members can share and be receptive to each other's perspectives on issues of importance to the congregation. We were assigned a facilitator from the New England Regional Facilitators Group, and we have formed a coordinating team to work with the facilitator. Planning activities will start this month.

Action on Staff Assessment Recommendations

During our April meeting, the PruComm made decisions on the recommendations in the staff assessment report, which was done by a consultant from the New England Region. The report covered the impact of our growth on the staff: how they have been doing a fabulous job supporting the growing needs of our congregation, even while working with outdated technology, tools, and equipment. The recommendations included

- hiring an assistant pastoral care minister;
- increasing, over the next two to three years, the working hours of nonsalaried staff members and the salary levels of all staff to UUA levels for a "large church";
- upgrading staff performance-assessment processes;
- implementing formal volunteer staff positions for office administration and buildings and grounds; and
- upgrading our technologies, including software and hardware for the staff, and capabilities for virtual meetings and remote working.

The recommendations also included required reading for the staff and PruComm and an assessment of the congregation's giving capacity so that the PruComm has a realistic picture of available financial resources as the church grows.

The PruComm approved the addition of three items to the budget process: the hiring of an associate minister for pastoral care, books and materials for staff and PruComm reading, and conducting an assessment of the congregation's giving capacity.

As the church year winds down, there are still social activities and ways to get involved. Your contributions of talent and time make a difference in the life of our congregation.

John Simmonds
 President, Prudential Committee
 pres@firstunitarianprov.org



Treasurer's Report

The end of April marks the completion of First Unitarian's annual Commitment Drive. With pledging complete, the budget team for fiscal year 2020 is now able to project full income and expenses for the upcoming year.

The great news is that congregational giving is exceeding last year's commitment drive level. This result reflects a combination of increased pledge amounts from existing congregants and an increase in pledging members as our congregation grows. At the same time, our expanding congregation is in need of additional services and infrastructure that will certainly increase expenses.

May will see our Prudential Committee coming to agreement on balancing our FY2020 projected income limits with our current and proposed service and infrastructure expenses. Most of the budget work will be complete in time for the May 15 Prudential Committee meeting.

A Congregational Conversation on the proposed budget will be held after services on May 19. The Conversation will include a short presentation on the current Fiscal State of the Congregation, the method of prioritizing expense requests above normal operating expenses, and the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The meeting will then be open for a question and answer period.

We encourage all voting members to attend the May 19 meeting in preparation for the congregational vote on approving the final budget during our June Annual Congregational Meeting.

In the meantime, as Fiscal Year 2019 draws to a close, we continue to see our expenses staying at expected levels, and income slightly ahead of projections. It is well.

– David House, Treasurer -
 dlhouse51@comcast.com

Mark Your Calendar Now!

May 19 following the service

A Congregational Conversation on the FY2020 Budget

It's your opportunity to review, discuss, question, and suggest alterations to the proposed budget for the next church year.

The congregational vote on the budget will take place at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 2.



Community Life

Our Annual May Breakfast

Sunday, May 5, 8:00a–10:00a

First Unitarian Providence will again celebrate the Rhode Island May Breakfast tradition this year. We will serve you breakfast on the first Sunday in May starting at 8:00a – to allow choir members and other early birds to

enjoy our bounty – and ending at 10:00a, 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. Contact Jim Barfoot or Rebecca Alberg to volunteer time or breakfast goodies.

Tickets are \$10 adult, \$5 children, under age 5 free. Proceeds go to our Loaves and Fishes ministry.

May Parish House Pot Luck Supper

Friday, May 17

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 Dinner in the Parish House parlors
Donation: \$2/person, \$5/family at the door

7:30p – Program in the Auditorium

The Atwater-Donnelly Trio

Rhode Islanders Elwood Donnelly, Aubrey Atwater, and Cathy Clasper-Torch will perform a unique and thrilling blend of traditional American and Celtic folk music and percussive dance. They blend gorgeous and unusual vocals with guitar, Appalachian mountain dulcimer, violin, cello, mandolin, tin whistle, harmonica, banjo, bones, spoons, limberjacks, and other surprises, including Appalachian clog dancing and French Canadian footwork.

Get your reservations in early to be sure of a seat for this exciting performance.

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.

UU Men

Sunday, May 12, 7:00–9:00p

Magic and the Man-Box: Is There Room in the Box for Magic?

All of our lives have moments of unpredictability and of magic. Some call it “grace.”

With Burr Harrison

Prostate Cancer Support Group for Men

Sunday, May 26, 7:00–9:00p

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



The Women’s Alliance

Monthly Meeting

Monday, May 6

Business Meeting: 10:00a

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

Who Cares If You Listen? Challenges in New Music – Performance and Reception Speaker: William Fried

A professional pianist, William will discuss the challenges and rewards of engaging with “difficult” contemporary compositions, using a piano piece by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Roger Reynolds as a representative example. *William Fried is Artist Associate in Piano at Davidson College in North Carolina. His specialty is “new music,” compositions of the past half-century. He has received critical acclaim internationally, particularly for interpretations of contemporary French music. He performs solo but also in an electro-acoustic duo with percussionist/multimedia artist Scott Deal.*

Our Coffee Hour Needs You!

Our Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort organized by the Women’s Alliance with peanut- and peanut butter-free donations of baked or bought goodies such as brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches, coffee cake, and more. Eight people bringing donations that serve 24 each are needed to accommodate the crowd. Sign-ups are preferred in order to plan for each upcoming Sunday. Sign up in the first parlor during Coffee Hour and go home with a reminder so you won’t forget.

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.

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 comfortable setting. If you’ve been around for a while, this is a great place to help new folks get acclimated.

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



Community Life

We're Shifting to a New, Lively, Weekly Electronic Newsletter in Late June

Get ready for a whole new way to find out what's going on and what's coming up at First Unitarian. Beginning in late June, First Unitarian is shifting from a monthly to a weekly newsletter. The new weekly update will merge our current monthly newsletter and the weekly *Meeting House Times* into a single source for all the news and announcements of upcoming events.

This change comes after many months of conversations with church staff and a Communications Summit in January with church members who contribute regularly to the current publications. The consensus is that our current communications are outdated and have become ineffective. This mirrors current research nationwide (as John Simmonds reported in his March column) that only 30% of *any organization's* communications are read by its target audience.

Our own tracking data confirms that many members have stopped reading the monthly newsletter as well as *The Meeting House Times*. In April, for example, of the 791 recipients of the Friday, April 5, email message, 364 (46%) opened it and 29 (4%) clicked on the link to open *The Meeting House Times*. The email announcing the April newsletter was opened by 333 (42%) of the 791 recipients, 152 (19%) of whom clicked to view the newsletter. Clearly, these communications are not reaching their target audience.

So . . . we're launching the new and improved *Meeting House Times* at the end of June. The new weekly update will arrive by email on Thursdays and can be viewed on any device – smart phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop. Its fresh new look will feature many photos and graphics with brief text and links to more information.

Staff members who spend many hours each week preparing these communications feel confident that the new weekly update will save a significant amount of staff time. In addition, considerable cost savings will result from less paper used and reduced photocopying.

Nancy Forsstrom, our Congregational Administrator, will continue as managing editor of the new weekly update. Submission deadline for entries in the electronic newsletter will be Tuesday noon for the Thursday distribution.

Please note: the small number of people who do not use email will continue to receive a paper copy by postal mail each week.

Tom Getz to Receive UUA Partner Church Award

Congratulations to Tom Getz, who has been named a recipient of the 2019 Steward of Partnership Award by the UUA Partner Church Alliance. A founding member of our Transylvania Partner Church Committee, Tom was nominated by the committee for his tireless efforts on behalf of its programs to promote understanding and participation in our partnership with the Unitarian Church in Szentegyhaza, Transylvania, which is part of Romania. Tom has been instrumental in organizing and leading our three previous pilgrimages to Transylvania as well as the upcoming trip this summer. In addition he has been ever-present in preparing the annual worship service commemorating our partnership and the programs following it that present the foods, the locale, and the people in the Szentegyhaza congregation.



Tom Getz

The announcement from Rev. Roger Birchhausen, Executive Director of the UUA Partner Church Council, reads: "This award recognizes individuals in the United States and Canada who have provided exceptional care to their congregation's partnerships. We know that long-term, vibrant partnerships don't just happen automatically. It takes attention, time, and loving care to maintain long distance connections and nurture friendship. Often this work is not publicly recognized even though it is this crucial grassroots work that keeps a partnership thriving and the congregation involved."

The award will be presented to Tom at next year's UUA General Assembly, which will be held here in Providence.




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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.

Hats Off to ...

Our Coffee Hour Providers last month: Sine Pounder, Lyn Bradford, Claude Leboeuf, Karen Keohan, Stacey Coyle, Mary Frappier, Tony Allen, Gerry Spremulli, John Dooley, Lori Bellavance, Ralph Mero, Anne Connor, Roxanne Stern, Ann Boyd, Tom Getz, Beth Anterni, Elissa Emerson, Steve McCloy, Carol Adams, Maureen Pryor, Syntyche Mashamba, and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.

Philip Swayze and Chris Sanzo for chaperoning our Coming of Age trip to UUA headquarters in Boston. Youth Group Advisors **Alison Green, Alex Vanderweele Ortman, and Rebecca Alberg** for their support of our high school worship service. **Katherine Ahlquist, Dena Quilici, Emily Connor, Meghan Smith, and many others** who provided refreshments, lunch for teachers, ushering and overall help to make the Emma's Revolution weekend so wonderful.

Welcome New Members

Eight new members joined the church during the most recent Path to Membership Class. They will be welcomed into the church on Sunday, May 5. Please look for them and give them a warm welcome.



Patricia Becker moved to Providence last year after 38 years in Wisconsin, where she was a member of the First Unitarian Society of Madison. Her journey with Unitarianism started in the 1960s, when she switched from Congregationalism to a Unitarian Fellowship in Storrs, CT. Patricia earned a doctoral degree in Developmental Psychobiology from the University of Connecticut and subsequently joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Nursing, with a specialty in early infant development. After retiring, she was active in Madison's lifelong learning organization, as now with similar organizations in Providence, and is finding Rhode Island rich ground for her avid interest in birding. Patricia moved to be near the youngest of three daughters, the others living in St. Louis and San Mateo, California. As she adjusts to Unitarianism in this large historic church building, she is delighted to find that it harbors a very warm welcome.



Francine Connelly is a native Rhode Islander, married to Andy deLong, and mother to four daughters and two stepdaughters, and grandmother of ten! Francine is very involved with her family, which she cherishes. Francine is a retired social worker who now volunteers three days a week at Higher Ground International with older Liberian women, where she is completing the circle her mother began as a Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia in the 1980s. Francine and her husband were also older Peace Corps volunteers in Botswana in 2008-2010, working on HIV and AIDS. Francine had a very fulfilling work life in many different areas of social work practice, including administering state government programs for teenage mothers and for child day care, doing refugee resettlement, having a private clinical practice, and working at Rhode Island College School of Social Work. She was also an AmeriCorps volunteer with the veterans treatment court. Francine and Andy love to travel and experience new cultures and countries.



Andy de Long is 79 years old and lives with his wife, Francine Connolly. They are a close family with six daughters and ten grandchildren, all in good health, which he's always amazed by. He considers himself very lucky, and finds their time together very rewarding. Andy has been attracted by the community feel of Unitarian Universalism, but wouldn't be here if he didn't also feel connected to its philosophy, ethics, and spiritualism. These really complement the life he's chosen as a social worker, appreciating, as they do, the humanity of the world. He's been a social worker for around 40 years, working mostly with families and children impacted by violence and by hardship; he specialized for several years in working with abusive men, which was surprisingly rewarding for him. Prior to that time, he taught sociology at Rhode Island College, the result of a strong intellectual interest in political and social movements.

Andy has been physically active all his life, since his grade school days. These proclivities, and a rabid love of the outdoors, have translated in later years into some fabulous backpacking wilderness trips, largely in the Arctic – northern Canada and Alaska. Travel, including two years in the Peace Corps, has been central for him and Francine, in both educational and spiritual ways. It's in Nature that his spirituality really grows.



Fred Fredricksen's given name is James, but his friends have always called him "Fred" because of his last name. Born in 1953 and raised as a Lutheran in Garden City, Long Island, Fred moved to the Big Apple after college to begin his working career. He met his future husband, Bob, in 1978. They soon moved to Flanders, near Hampton Bays on Long Island, and Fred commuted to Glen Cove. Later, career moves brought Fred and Bob to Tully, New York, just south of Syracuse, followed at the turn of the millennium to Charlotte, North Carolina. Fred and Bob married in Niagara Falls, Canada, in 2003 shortly after Canada recognized same-sex marriage. Bob passed away in 2008 after 30 years of sharing life. Fred circled back to the Northeast, moving to Providence in 2016 where he is newly, and happily, retired.



Stacy Grooters lives in Providence with her partner, Andrea Opitz, and their two seven-year old sons, Caden and Lukas. Stacy grew up in Dallas, Texas; Andrea is from Berlin, Germany. They met as graduate students at the University of Washington in Seattle. Stacy and Andrea both work at colleges in Massachusetts, and Caden and Lukas are in first grade at the Learning Community in Central Falls. Stacy's mom, Judy, recently moved to Pawtucket and is a big part of her grandkids' lives.



David Mellor lives in Cranston and has been attending services at First Unitarian for over ten years. A high school math teacher, David works part time at Bryant University. His hobbies include reading, exercise, and art. He holds degrees from Providence College, Springfield College, and Southern Connecticut State.



Mike Dumond and Kate McGovern "semi-retired" from their full-time jobs in New Hampshire last July and moved to Providence after a few years of flirting with the city's mystique (charming architecture and notorious rep). Seeking greater diversity, they chose to put down roots and explore the culture of Providence. First Unitarian seemed a natural complement to that quest – a community of abundant spirit and open minds. Mike's initial career was in social work/family counseling and then in public health. Kate has had jobs as a community organizer, union rep, training facilitator, and manager. They have been married for a dozen years and have five adult daughters, and five grandchildren.



Community Life

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 May 5 will go to support the work of **The Girl Effect**.

Many thanks to those who have contributed so generously 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**,
 - over \$1,600 for **Transylvania Partner Church**, and
 - over \$1,400 for **Day One**,
- totaling over \$9,600 so far this year!

Our remaining collection for this year is:

May 5 – The Girl Effect

The Girl Effect Task Force, a Social Justice group here at First Unitarian, raises funds for girls' education in less-developed countries.

Last year the Girl Effect helped five different groups of girls go to school: refugee girls in Kenya and in Afghanistan, girls living in the Kibera Slum in Nairobi, junior and senior high school girls in a Guatemalan village, and the Malala Fund's train-the-trainer program.

Our main fundraising event this year (2018-2019) was the Holiday Sale in November 2018. Donations this year will be made after the plate collection on May 5.

New Members (continued from page 7)



Lisa Rose and her family were members of the UU church in Franklin, MA, prior to moving to Rhode Island in 2001. Once they settled into their new home in Lincoln, Lisa and her daughter, Sarah, and son, Daniel, became active in the First Unitarian Religious Education program. In the early days of the Community Food Pantry, Lisa and her children volunteered as food sorters prior to each distribution. Over the years, Lisa has been involved in First Unitarian as much as time, family, and circumstances have allowed.

In addition to teaching in the church school, Lisa has volunteered with the Loaves and Fishes Mission, the Neighborhood Social Justice Committee, the Food Pantry, and, through membership in the Women's Alliance, Lisa has assisted with the Antiques & Uniques Indoor Yard Sale and has been a cook for the Women's Alliance luncheons. Lisa believes that the church services, music, activism for good, and especially the dear friendships she has made at First Unitarian have truly nourished her spirit.



Welma Capehart describes herself as "a child of a higher power, Mother, Girlfriend, Sister, Daughter, Aunt, and most important Myself!" Welma was born in Monrovia, Liberia in 1983 into a loving but unsupportive family. She eventually moved to Rhode Island, where she graduated from Rhode Island College. She is in a common-law marriage and has three children: a six-year-old daughter, a three-year-old son, and a brand-new baby. A church-goer, she works as direct-support staff. Her favorite food is rice and her favorite color (obviously!) is red.

Spiritual Development

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.

Visit our updated website at benevolentzen.org.

We have a new email address: 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)

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: Al Tringali, altringali@mac.com

Innate Wisdom and Compassion Meditation

Every Wednesday at 7:00pm

This drop-in group offers guided meditations of wisdom, love, and compassion. These practices are adapted from Tibetan Buddhism into new forms that can touch the hearts and minds of people from all backgrounds and faiths, to help each of us bring out the best in ourselves and in our service and social action.

Contact: Ken Bent (krbent108@gmail.com)

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

In the beginning of April, the Sanctuary Steering Committee held a meeting, reaching out to local congregations and community groups, asking if they would like to form a Sanctuary Coalition with us. The response was very encouraging. Twelve groups came to find out what we are looking for. Our conversation will continue in May, after they have the opportunity to bring the information to their respective communities.

Although we have not had any inquiries about our guest room since January, we want to be prepared when the next person or family comes. We have been reaching out to groups that work with immigrants and informing them of our availability, what we have to offer, and who we might be able to help.

After the declaration from President Trump that he is considering sending immigrants seeking asylum to Sanctuary Cities, we have also been in touch with the City of Providence to be reassured that they are having conversations about what preparations need to be in place should this threat become a reality. Two sources at Mayor Elorza's office have assured us they are thinking about this. They will keep First Unitarian posted if there is anything they feel we can help with.

Stay Tuned . . .

Side with Love: Opportunities to Make a Difference

A Busy April

The month of April was an active one for Side with Love members. There were three protests at the Wyatt Detention Center in Central Falls to oppose the holding of undocumented persons seeking asylum. These protests happened before the weather had warmed up, and we had several hardy souls who put time in making sure those held in the center knew there were folks on the outside pulling for them.

On April 8, the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry held its annual meeting at the Westminster UU Church in East Greenwich. After presentations, the group voted to actively support legislation in the State House surrounding the women's reproductive healthcare, protecting the environment, and strengthening Rhode Island's gun safety laws. Katherine Ahlquist from our Sanctuary Steering Committee gave a well-received update on Sanctuary at First Unitarian. The following Sunday, Side with Love had postcards at our table in the Atrium in support of getting the Women's Health Care Act passed and collected signatures encouraging Senate President Ruggiero to bring the bill to the floor for a vote. We collected many postcards and wrote cards to constituents encouraging them to call their senator and vote for this important legislation.

Later in the month, we were able to rest our feet and warm our hearts with a concert by activist singer and songwriting team Emma's Revolution. We are ever-grateful to Cathy Seggel for arranging for this inspiring and soul-nourishing team to play for us at First Unitarian.

Coming Up . . .

We hope you will join us on May 10 at 7:00p as we welcome Aviva Chomsky to speak at First Unitarian. She is Professor of Caribbean and Latin American History at Salem State University and author of several books, including *Undocumented, How Immigration Became Illegal* and *They Take Our Jobs, and 20 Other Myths about Immigration*. We are fortunate to be teaming up with the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County, thanks to one of our Sanctuary Hosts, Dorie Lawson. You will be able to purchase books from our Atrium Bookstore on Sunday mornings, and they will be available the night of the talk. Refreshments will be provided, and childcare upon request. Contact katherine.ahlquist@gmail.com for more information.

Side with Love is getting ready to show our PRIDE! Join us at our meeting on May 8 as we plan how we will participate in this year's PRIDE Festival and Illuminated Parade on Saturday, June 15. The festival runs from 12:00 to 5:30p on South Water Street, and the parade is at sundown. Save the date! We would love to have help with planning for the event, but if you can't help plan, please consider joining us on the June 15 for the fun!

Knitting for a Better World

We continue to meet on Tuesday nights from 7 to 9 pm. While we are working on various projects, we are asking the congregation to think about all those people who come to our food pantry when they are going through their summer clothing. We are seeking new or gently used and clean summer hats to distribute on food pantry days. If you happen to have too many lightweight "fashion" scarves, we will happily take those too. You may leave them in the basket in the atrium, by the front window.

Volunteer at Our Food Share Pantry

Distribution Day, Monday, May 20

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, May 5 at 12:15p in the Haynes Room

Loaves and Fishes Mission: Tuesday, May

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

May 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|---|----------|---|---|
| | | | 1 Meditation 7:00p | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 May Breakfast 8:00–10:00a Worship 10:30a Joyful Noise 9:30 & 12:15 Ask the Pru Comm NSJC 12:15p Campus UUs 5:00p | 6 Women's Alliance Program 11:00a Luncheon 12:00n Zendo 7:00p | 7 Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p | 8 PruComm 6:45 Side with Love 7:00p Meditation 7:00p | 9 | 10 Sanctuary – Aviva Chomsky 7:00p | 11 |
| 12 MOTHER'S DAY Worship 10:30a Guns to Plowshares Joyful Noise 12:15p UUMen 7:00p | 13 Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p | 14 Deacons 6:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p | 15 Meditation 7:00p | 16 | 17 Parish House Pot Luck 5:45p Atwater-Donnelly Program 7:30p | 18 |
| 19 Worship 10:30a COA service 11:30a Food Pantry Shuttle Congregational Conversation 12:00p Green Team Mtg 12:15p | 20 Food Pantry 3:30–5:30p Sanctuary Coalition 7:00p Zendo 7:00p Harry Potter 7:15p | 21 Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p | 22 Meditation 7:00p | 23 | 24 | 25 (Brown Commencement activities all weekend) |
| 26 WORSHIP AT BELL ST. CHAPEL (Brown Medical Graduation in the Meeting House) Prostate Cancer Group 7:00p | 27 MEMORIAL DAY Church Office Closed | 28 Reimagining Religion 7:00p Tai Chi 7:00p Knitting for a Better World 7:00p | 29 Meditation 7:00p | 30 | 31 | |