

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
WEEKLY CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

February 22-March 1, 2018



Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday, February 25, 2018 at 9:30am & 11:15am

“The Sound of Silence”

#metoo

Rev. Tina Simson, preaching

Note from Rev. Tina: *My sermon this Sunday is about the #metoo movement. It will be a hopeful but challenging sermon. If anyone feels they may be triggered by the topic, please feel free to skip church this Sunday, and know that we hold you gently in our hearts. Yours, Rev. Tina.*

Jill Poremba, worship associate

The 9:30am service will feature music by Orange Sky

Our plate collection will help support [our church](#).

Gratitudes, Joys and Sorrows

Please hold the family of **Susan Reynolds** in your hearts and prayers. Sue died last week unexpectedly. No service is planned at this time. Condolence cards can be sent to Sue's home (122 Holcroft Rd., Rochester NY 14612); her family will be checking the mail there.

If you have a concern about a member of our congregation, please don't hesitate to contact Rev. Tina at 585-271-9070 x104.

Special Interim Minister's Update by Rev. Joel Miller

I loved writing my update about how fun the “Our Road Ahead” sessions are. But, today, I’m rewriting this update to you after the shootings at the high school in Florida. I was just 2 blocks away when the shooting at the Columbine High School started 19 years ago. I spent that day with teens rescued from the school and their parents as they waited in torment for their children to return to them safely. Some did not return, as you know.

I find the ceaseless repetition of these tragedies almost unbearable. Each one takes me back 19 years to all I saw and heard. I find it would be so much easier to ignore all that’s happening around us and just forget it all. But that was a very real day for me – and for all of us. In these times, we’re all experiencing a lot of trauma.

This is why I come to church. To stay awake. To stay connected. To keep on being alive. And to remember joy when the world goes insane. Our ministry together gives me courage and hope in horrible times. First Unitarian is a lived, connected response to the horrors of a nation constantly threatened by violence, by corrupt political and business leaders, and by a bizarre hatred of people based on race and ethnicity. We need each other to stay connected to our lives and communities. These times and this world need our fierce love.

Our children need us to be this fiercely and lovingly connected. They need our example of being alive this way. It's one big reason why they come to church.

Your staff and your Board of Trustees need your guidance. We're not here to map the road ahead. That map has to come from you.

The road ahead for our nation is going to be hard. Discovering your road ahead, as First Unitarian, can make that national journey less painful and more life-affirming. And more reasonable. And give hope to our children.

I'm feeling passionate as I write, but these sessions for "Our Road Ahead" are joyful and a lot of fun. It's flat-out fun to share deep spiritual experiences and dream of how the world will be better because First Unitarian is here.

Sign up. Show up. Now is **not** the time to stay home and be disconnected. Show up for fun. Show up for joy. Show up for our children.

With Love and Gratitude,
Joel

Happening This Week

The Racial Justice Conference entitled "Diving into our White Culture to Surface Racial Justice" that had been scheduled for **Saturday, February 24** has been cancelled. The keynote speaker and workshop leader Kenny Wiley regrettably had to cancel; a replacement speaker could not be found.

Church Bookstore Open Sunday: Our church bookstore will be open this **Sunday, February 25, from 10:00am-1:00pm**. This week, we are again featuring two books: *It's Even Worse Than You Think - What the Trump Administration is Doing to America* by David Cay Johnston and *You Say to Brick: The Story of Louis Kahn* by Wendy Lesser. As always, we offer a selection of both fiction and non-fiction titles, covering topics ranging from race, politics, economics, inequality and environment to spirituality, human rights, history, fantasy and more. We also have an expanded selection of children's books. Stop in and browse, chat with the bookstore volunteers and other congregants; you're sure to find a book you'll love to read during these (hopefully) waning days of winter. We offer discounts of at least 20% off list price on all our books and as always, your purchases support our church. We gladly accept payment in cash or check.

News from the Nominating Committee: Since the wrap-up of the recommendation process, the Nominating Committee has been working diligently to assemble a Search Committee for our next senior minister. We are attempting, with great care, to compose a team that will represent the needs and goals of the entire congregation, and search thoughtfully for the best possible match for our church. On **Sunday, April 15, 2018**, at the congregational meeting, members will have the opportunity to vote on the slate of nine people put forward by the Nominating Committee. Please save the date for this important milestone in the life of our church.

Our next art exhibit in the Williams Gallery will feature works by the Arena Art Group. The mission of the Arena Art Group, founded in 1951, is to further the understanding and appreciation of abstract art in all its varied forms. Their artists are enriching the Williams Gallery walls in their exhibit "Expanding Dimensions" with their own individual styles and expertise in their chosen mediums. Just take a peek, and the diversity and quality of the artwork will draw you in. This exhibit runs from **February 28 through April 9, 2018**. Meet many of the artists from the Arena Art Group at the Opening Reception for the next Williams Gallery Art Exhibit on Friday, March 9, 6:00–8:00pm.

Honduras Task Force will meet for potluck on February 28 at 6:00pm in Gilbert Hall to celebrate the awarded Greater Good Grant to Global Health Program of Highland Family Medicine; announce the delivery of scholarships to 2018 recipients; discuss long range plans for the expanded scholarship program; organize curriculum for the May trip and possible school supplies collection; and the possible change in governance and the effect on the Task Force's relationship with the minister. Come and help outline the task force's roles in Advocacy, Direct Service, Education, and Spiritual Growth. For more information, contact Barbara Gawinski at barbara_gawinski@urmc.rochester.edu.

Calls to Action

First Unitarian Auction: Planning for the fundraising auction is under way! We are looking for volunteers to help with the planning as well as the day of the event. If you are interested in helping at one of our church's main fundraisers, please contact Jackie Lange at Jlange1015@gmail.com.

This Week's Green Tip from the Environmental Task Force: One important mission the Environmental Task Force has taken on this year is to address the overwhelming accumulation of plastic waste our poor planet has to absorb. We can help the effort by bringing our own stainless steel water bottle for a fill-up to go. Reduce, Reuse, Re-Purpose, Recycle.

Rummage Sale Donations/Storage: If you're downsizing, Janis Miner has graciously allowed us the use of her single car garage in the city. We can't take large furniture at this location, but we can take boxes and smaller items. There's still some space left on a first-come/first-serve basis. Contact Janis at 585-764-1903. For storage of larger items, please contact Kim Joy at kjoy@rochesterunitarian.org to make arrangements.

Rummage Sale Volunteers Needed! Volunteers are needed from **Sunday, June 10 through Wednesday, June 13** to help accept donations and setup, and also during the sale dates of **Thursday, June 14 through Saturday, June 16**. Sign up now to be the first to see the great treasures that will become available. Email Sandy Hollands at sandy.hollands@gmail.com to volunteer. Thanks! We can't do it without you.

Don't Leave Home Without It! (Something for the Brighton Food Cupboard, that is.) Soup, tuna, canned fruit or vegetables, cereal, baby diapers, whatever box or can a person in need might want. It will be appreciated! For more information, contact Alison Wilder at 585-342-2450 or awilder@frontiernet.net.

Other News & Reminders

Kahn's Corner: Louis Kahn, our building's designer, was a master architect. Did he have other talents? Yes, he could play music very well even though he never learned to read it; he learned by watching and listening. When he was a child, he sometimes hid nearby during a neighbor's piano lesson and was then able to reproduce what he heard. Once, a well-to-do friend gave Kahn a piano to help him develop his skills, but it wouldn't fit easily into his family's tiny apartment. Kahn's solution? To sleep on top of the piano!

First Wednesdays Book Club meets **Wednesday, March 7 at 11:15am**, to discuss *The Known World* by Edward P. Jones, a novel about black slave owners in pre-Civil War Virginia. This meeting was postponed from February 7 due to snow. Feel free to join the discussion. For more information, contact Joyce Henzel at joycehenzel@gmail.com.

The next meeting of Aging Gratefully is **Thursday, March 8, at 1:00pm**. The topic for discussion is "How Do We Say Goodbye to People and Places We Love?" Aging Gratefully is a discussion group open to anyone aged 60 and over that meets monthly, on the second Thursday of the month, to discuss a topic chosen by the group. Please note that the regular meeting time has changed and is now 1:00-2:30pm. For more information, contact Garry Mount at gmount@frontiernet.net.

UU's Reading Non-Fiction will next meet on **Wednesday, March 14, 7:00-8:30pm**. In her book *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*, liberal sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild shares the insights she gained while living among struggling bayou families. All are welcome to join the discussion. For questions, contact Audrey Perry at auperry066@gmail.com or 585-244-4013. On Wednesday, April 11, the group will discuss *Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel*, by Carl Safina.

Please save the date, Sunday, March 25, at 3:00pm in our Sanctuary, for an organ concert sponsored by the Ed Schell Crescendo Fund. This year the theme is "Words with Organ Friends: Organ Music from Many Eras Inspired by Human Language and Stories." Our own Zach Zwahlen will be joined by his organ friend, Caroline Robinson, to collaborate on this concert, which will include readings of stories and poems that go with the music. The concert will be free. Donations to the fund, which was created in honor of Ed Schell when he retired as our Minister of Music in 2012, will be accepted gratefully.

Kahn Book Discussion April 30: Join a discussion of Wendy Lesser's book *You Say to Brick*, about Louis Kahn, our church architect. The Kahn Building Appreciation Committee is sponsoring the meeting on **Monday, April 30 at 7:30pm**. For more information, contact Nancy Koch at nkoch@rochester.rr.com.