

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Rochester, Minnesota

Ministerial
Search Packet 2016

1727 Walden Lane SW, Rochester MN 55902 • 507-282-5209 • uurochmn.org



Our Mission: To be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice.

First Unitarian Universalist Church Rochester, Minnesota

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Available in Google Drive:
A. Draft Ministerial Agreement
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D. Survey Results
E. History (1886-1991,
 and 1991-2016)

Letters of Welcome



The Search Committee Welcomes You

Dear Prospective Minister,

Thank you so much for considering First Unitarian Universalist Church in your search for a Settled Ministry. As Ministerial Search Committee Chair, I could not be more excited to share our congregation with you. Since beginning this process in June, our Search Committee has had many fantastic conversations with congregants and learned valuable information about who we are as a community.

First and foremost, we like to be together. From coffee hour on Sunday mornings to fellowship events to volunteering throughout the community, we do it together. This leads to wonderful relationships among people in our congregation.

Secondly, because of these strong relationships, we care for each other. Our Caring Congregation Committee is active and organized. There is a communication system in place for providing rides to Sunday services and providing meals for congregants during their times of greatest need. Coupled with having a Coordinator of Congregational Life on staff, our congregation is well cared for.

Finally, if you were to ask congregants what they are most proud of, most would say our work with social justice throughout the greater community. So many of our members and friends walk-the-talk of our faith by participating in a wide variety of social justice activities.

We are excited about the possibilities the future holds for us. Leadership at our church has been working hard to prepare for our next Settled Minister. From improving ways to communicate and updating technology to taking steps toward Policy Governance and updating Bylaws and Policies, we are preparing for the future of our liberal religious community.

I want to thank you again for your interest in our congregation.

Amy L. Nelson

Chair, Ministerial Search Committee





Search Committee Profile

Mary Amundsen

Mary is a lifelong UU, who grew up a Universalist before the merger. She has been active in churches in Wisconsin, Albuquerque, and Denver. Since moving to Rochester in 1980, she has been involved in most aspects of our church, from finance to services to education. She served on our Board as Treasurer and President, and then served on the Prairie Star District board for ten years, several as treasurer and president. A retired nurse and counselor, Mary most recently was a member of the Committee on Ministry and led a support group for caregivers at First UU.

Aleta Borrud

Aleta is a retired geriatrician who was drawn to the church 20 years ago by its commitment to equity and respect for the world's diverse religious beliefs. Besides her commitment to many UU social justice projects, she has been a sexton, RE teacher, Board member, and Sunday Hospitality Team member.

Judy Jensen

Judy joined First UU in 2006. She is a retired special education teacher and has particular interest in growing our youth Religious Education program. She chaired the Fellowship Committee for three years and continues to serve as a sexton, teach children's RE classes, and lead one of the five Hospitality Teams, which staff our weekly Sunday services. Her special project is to host the annual Thanksgiving Dinner, open to all church members, with her husband, Jim.

Amy Nelson, Chair

Amy has been a UU her entire life. It just took her 30+ years to figure it out. Amy and her family began attending First UU in 2008, after hearing about Unitarian Universalism from their teenage babysitter. Amy and her husband, Garth, became members in 2009. She has been involved in all aspects of church life, including facilitating OWL, being

on the Worship Committee, and serving on the Board for four years, two of them as President. Amy and Garth feel so lucky to have their children grow up in this liberal religious community.

Dave Siljenberg

Dave and his wife, Pat, began attending First UU in 2003 because their son B.J. wanted to check it out. Visiting a friendly place that was free of dogma hooked them after the first visit, but it took five more years before they could "unhook" themselves from some obligations at their previous church. Dave has been involved with the audio system, stewardship drives, the Service Auction, and Finance Committee, most recently serving as Finance Chair.

Robin Taylor

Robin is a former "None," who has been a devoted member of First UU since bringing her family here in 1992. She has chaired Religious Education and Fellowship, served as a sexton and member of several social justice committees, and writes for the *UU Revue*. She chaired the Program Committee for the Annual Meetings of the Prairie Star District for three years. She enjoys the weekly inspiration from the pulpit and the constant support and challenges from her amazing fellow congregants.

George Thompson

George retired from IBM as an engineer/manager after 25+ years and has stayed active in the community as a diversity leader for over 15 years. He continues to serve on several statewide boards. Some years ago he developed a personal mission statement (based on Steven Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*), which guides his key decisions, including those about his spiritual involvement. He has been committed to First UU since 1997, appreciates its past, and is delighted to support its vision of the future.



Greetings!

Welcome to the “portal” for prospective ministers of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester, Minnesota. I’m glad you are interested in our congregation.

Our Ministerial Search Committee has prepared a packet describing our church and the larger community of Rochester. As you read through the packet, you will find lots of information about who we are, where we’ve been, and where we want to go. You will learn that the Universalist flag was planted in Rochester over 150 years ago and that our congregation is still vital and strong. You will learn what the city of Rochester has to offer and about the beauty of southeastern Minnesota. This past year we celebrated our sesquicentennial anniversary and also completed a very energetic first year of a 2-year interim ministry. As you learn more about our congregation, I hope you will feel the same excitement of this moment that I feel.

The Ministerial Search Committee has the full confidence of our congregation and Board of Directors. They are a diverse group of members that has collective knowledge of all aspects of our congregation. As you enter this search with us, they will help answer your questions and ask for your help in understanding your approach to ministry. In their diversity, the Search Committee is a microcosm of our congregation, but they share what all of us have in common: the desire to find a good match and settle a new minister in the 1st UU Church. Most of us have taken different paths to the denomination and to our church’s door. I hope that as you read more about our church, you will also find our door and will enter, rejoice, and come in. I look forward to meeting you and wish you good luck.

Jerry Katzmann
President, Board of Directors



Jerry Katzmann



Dear Colleague,

You are perusing the packet of a congregation most worthy of your thoughtful consideration.

This is a congregation with many strengths. There is a strong sense of caring community, UU identity, and commitment to children and families. The people of the congregation have high and wide expectations of themselves and their minister. Like any congregation, this one has its own challenges and opportunities for growth. It is a congregation that is willing to work hard and also likes to have fun.

My ministry with First UU Rochester focused on helping them understand what it means to be a mid-sized program congregation, rather than a pastoral-sized congregation. We worked on the concept of shared ministry and together we developed an award-winning Social Justice ministry. In the last years of my ministry with them, we began a program of group spiritual direction.

Rochester is the third largest city in Minnesota. It actively nurtures its diversity, has a world class medical center, and is not too far from the Twin Cities Metro Area, with its lively theater scene and great UU colleagues. Rochester itself is a very livable city that is growing rapidly, has increasingly interesting cultural opportunities, and is nurturing a growing food scene. The Rochester Public Library is very good. Natural areas are very close by.

This congregation offers a rich and fertile ground for UU ministry.

If I can be of further help, please feel free to be in touch with me. The easiest way to reach me is at chepokoski@gmail.com.

Best wishes in your discernment process....

Carol Hepokoski

The Rev. Dr. Carol Hepokoski
Minister at First UU Rochester, 2006-2015



Rev. Dr. Carol Hepokoski



Dear Candidate,

Even though I haven't been the minister in Rochester for more than eleven years, I still feel a great affection for the congregation. It was an honor and a pleasure to serve them for thirteen years. I recommend this congregation heartily.

From this distance I still enjoy reading the newsletters and the other publications distributed by this vital, active congregation. The publications are just one aspect and example of the good communication that the members afford each other. The *UURevue* that began with the celebration of the church's 150th anniversary year continues to highlight both current activities and the beloved history of the church and its members.

Any minister will be fortunate to choose this congregation to serve. They are welcoming to ministry, enthusiastic about working with good ministerial leadership. They know how to "do church." That's my phrase for taking care of each other, serving the larger community, being willing to serve the congregation, and being welcoming to strangers at the door. They understand what a religious community is about.

The past year was a marvelous celebration, informing both their members and the larger community of their history of which they are rightly proud. The church grew with the city and has continued to serve as a liberal religious beacon for all who come to Rochester. They will continue to attract those who are interested in the activities they value: sound services, religious education for all, a fine presence in the community and beyond for social justice, a dedicated staff, a building they cherish; an enviable music program; grounds reflecting both their concern for aesthetics and the environment, caring for each other, lively social events, a beautiful memorial garden, and much more.

Also, I recommend Rochester as a place to live. Can't be beat. Art; music; diversity in people, cultures, religions, food; a great farmers' market; unbeatable health care; schools; industries; recreation; good walking and biking city—it offers so much. As a southerner I came to love the weather, the beautiful winters—which those snow-plow people really know how to handle. I confess I truly miss winter now that I am back in the South.

Even though I'm far out of the loop in time, in that we moved away five years ago to be near our adult children, if you have questions, feel free to ask.

Cordially,

Dillman

Rev. Dillman Baker Sorrells
Minister at First UU Rochester, 1992-2005
dillmanbak@gmail.com
703-307-9113



Rev. Dillman Baker Sorrells





Dear Colleague,

Building on its smashing full-year sesquicentennial celebration last year, this church is energetically re-imagining and re-creating itself for coming generations.

- It has enthusiastically engaged in its interim ministry tasks: processing its past, claiming its strengths & challenges, updating its leadership systems, renewing its vision & stewardship.
- Its professional staff team, for both program and support, is cohesive and super-competent.
- The Rochester community is in an exciting expansion mode.

I have every reason to encourage you to ask seriously whether there's a productive partnership in ministry for you here.

To help you answer this question, at this "packet stage," two suggestions occur to me:

First:

Plumb the profile for future ministry that our search committee offers you here, and TRUST it. This committee was chosen in a thorough, widely participatory, and highly democratic process. They represent this congregation very well. If your spirit is electrified by theirs, you will do well here. If you sense a tension somehow between your spirits, ask seriously whether such tension can be creative.

Second:

Respect the particularity of gifts, passions, challenges and gaps in your personal approach to ministry, and respect the realities of your personal desires and needs for life beyond ministry.

This community, this congregation, is a fertile field for many ministries—but not all. Our search committee understands this. Serve yourself well—serve our congregation & our faith best—by exploring your "fit" here fully and openly with them. Then let the Spirit make Its choice.

One more thing, should you move to further stages in this quest—to an "electronic interview" or a "pre-candidating visit" here—my experience, my perspective, I'm confident, could be quite helpful as you further assess your "fit" here. Any conversation we have will be confidential and candid, of course. And, I believe, s/he who draws well on the ministerial legacy here—my predecessors' and my own—will best serve Unitarian Universalism's future in Rochester.

Best wishes,

Fritz Hudson

Interim Minister at First UU Rochester, 2015-present
(cell) 402-617-3055 (email) fhudson@uuma.org



Rev. Fritz Hudson





2355 Fairview Ave N. #312
Roseville, MN 55113

Fall 2016

Dear Colleagues,

I am so glad that you are considering coming to the MidAmerica Region!

MidAmerica was created in July 2013, when the Central Midwest, Heartland, and Prairie Star Districts merged to become a new regional structure. We are excited to have accomplished much in our first three years as a region—it no longer feels new, but more the way we do things around here. Pretty soon we will forget that we were ever separate entities. We have a strong and vibrant staff team dedicated to discovering even more ways of helping congregations do what they wish to do, and do it better. We say that our job is to build congregational capacity, rather than being the congregations' capacity.

We do coaching and cheerleading, mentoring and educational webinars, and workshops. We delight in getting to know the congregations across our region, and congregations have the ability to reach out to any of us to learn more—the person you call might not know the answer, but they will get you to the person who can answer that question!

We have 180-some certified member congregations (The number keeps changing!) located in all parts of thirteen states. We are creating a policy-based Board that brings forward the best in generative leadership. We have six program staff, all with the title of Congregational Life Consultants. We approach our work as “deep generalists”—we each have generalized knowledge of the basics of congregational life, and then, each of us goes deep into particular areas of responsibility and congregational skills. You can see the staff biographies and areas of responsibility and expertise on the MidAmerica website: go to <http://www.midamericauua.org/aboutus/staff>

Our work is augmented by our administrative staff and by a cadre of adjunct consultants who can help your congregation move forward with its mission, vision, and dreams.

We value the congregations that pay their full fair share regional contributions and honor them by offering many services for free or at a reduced cost. We also realize that MidAmerica was hard hit by the economic downturn, and congregations are still struggling to come back, so this reality is in the forefront of our planning for trainings and

programs. Many of our trainings are now on-line or provided in cluster settings throughout the region. We hold an annual Regional Assembly, and the separate UUMA Chapters meet together prior to the Assembly. It's great!

Within the region there are three active UUMA Chapters—they are open to attendance at their meetings from any of the ministers in MidAmerica. Depending on which chapter, you'll find that you can meet with colleagues 2-3 times a year in retreat settings, and there are also many clusters that meet monthly. The same is true with the LREDA chapters—they meet in a variety of ways to try to help connect faith development staff within the region. We are seeking to reduce the “silo” mentality that too often separates ministers and religious educators, and we try to serve the staff in a team approach that we believe helps foster great relationships within the congregations.

The new minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester has an opportunity to work with the congregation to open an exciting chapter. It is a great congregation with dynamic worship, strong leaders, and deep involvement in social justice. The plan for the city of Rochester and Mayo Clinic is to become a destination medical center—even more than it is at present—and is likely to explode in population. A large number of jobs are likely to be added that will attract many younger professionals to the area. The challenge of the congregation is going to be to reshape its culture, its way of doing church, and its mission in the community in ways that will attract and build on these developments. In the past two years the congregation has done a lot of work with their interim minister, Fritz Hudson, to begin this. The next chapter will be exciting. It will also be a lot of work.

I hope that you will be in touch as you continue your search so that I can begin to get to know you and welcome you to MidAmerica. We can provide you insights into the congregation you're considering, so please be in touch with me. If I'm not the person with the in-depth knowledge of this particular congregation, I'll connect you with others who can give you that information. Here in MidAmerica we strive to make our Unitarian Universalist congregations ever stronger so that we can offer what the world so badly needs. We look forward to you joining us.

In faith,

Lisa Presley

Rev. Dr. Lisa Presley
Transitions Program Manager
MidAmerica Region
(cell) 248-514-5458 (email) lpresley@uua.org



First Universalist Church
of Minneapolis

October 11, 2016

Dear Colleague,

I am delighted that you are interested in learning more about the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester, Minnesota, and that you are considering joining us here in the Prairie Star Chapter of the Unitarian Ministers Association. As I'm sure you already know, the Twin Cities Metro Area is a hub of thriving UU congregations and ministerial colleagues, and if you were to join us, you would be welcomed with open arms. We take collegial support seriously in the Twin Cities and in our UUMA chapter, operating with the assumption that if you ever need something, or are asked to do something by a colleague, the answer will be "Yes," unless significant circumstances preclude it. Our chapter includes ministers in formation, new ministers, ministers of many sized congregations, community ministers, and some of the most seasoned ministers in the association. We laugh together, study together, share resources and take risks together.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions, or if you just want to talk and learn more about what life is really like here in Minnesota. We are with you in this time of discernment, and I offer you these words from John O'Donohue from his blessing, "For the Time of Necessary Decision:"

May we (you) have the courage to take this step
Into the unknown that beckons us;
Trust that a richer life awaits us there,
That we will lose nothing
But what has already died;
Feel the deeper knowing in us sure
Of all that is about to be born ...

May a deep knowing of all that is about to be born arise in you. We look forward to being with you in this calling of joy and service.

In faith,

Rev. Jen Crow
President, Prairie Star Chapter
Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association

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Rev. Jen Crow



Who We Are



Historical Timeline



- **1854** The community of Rochester, a mere stop on a stagecoach line, was settled by George Head and his family, a year after the Dakota/Sioux officially “relinquished the area” to the Territory of Minnesota.
- **1860** Rev. Isaac M. Westfall of Lafayette, Indiana, preached the first Universalist sermon in Olmsted County. Families attending the services in those days drove in from area farms. Meetings were held in a frame building on Broadway. Rev. Westfall moved on after three years and Universalist meetings were suspended during the Civil War.
- **1863** Dr. William Worrall Mayo emigrated to Rochester and became an examining surgeon for Civil War draftees.
- **1866** Rev. Silas Wakefield of Elkader, Iowa, was called to serve a newly formed congregation after the Civil War. The original Universalist Chapel was built on the current site of the Mayo Clinic’s Plummer building.
- **1871** Rev. Eliza Tupper Wilkes, the church’s first female minister, was ordained in Rochester and served the church for three years. She went on to found 11 Universalist congregations in the West and Midwest.



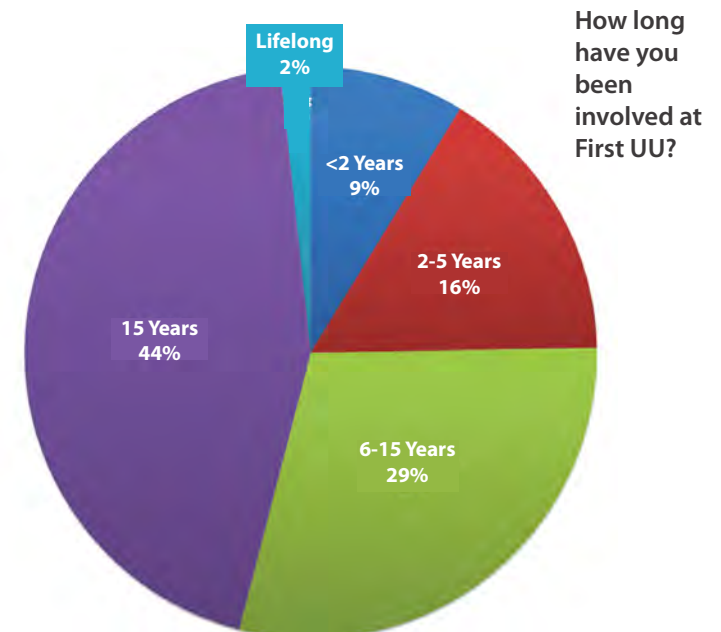
Congregational Profile

Who Are We?

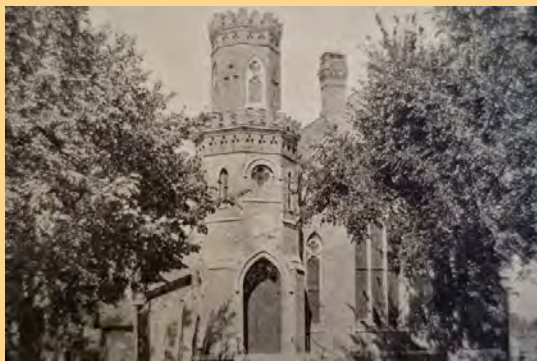
First Unitarian Universalist, one of the oldest congregations in the area, has been the heart of liberal religion in Rochester for over 150 years. We have always counted many community leaders among our members and have been recognized for our contribution to many social justice efforts over the years. In the words Rev. Homer Gleason, who held our church together through the Great Depression, we just “keep on keeping on.” We are resilient, resourceful, creative, and fun. We are an active and energetic congregation, held together by the strong bonds of fellowship we have developed through our work within the church and out in our community.

In August of 2016, we sent out our survey to everyone in our data base. We received responses from 244 members. Out of 306 members who could have taken the survey, that meant a response rate of 80%. We also received responses from 45 friends of the congregation, for a total of 289.

For most of us, this congregation was our introduction to Unitarian Universalism, but we have 15 members who are lifelong UUs and 5 members who have been members at First UU all of their lives (2%). Almost half of our members have belonged to the church for more than 15 years, with nearly 80% of members attending for 6 or more years. Members are steadfast and loyal.



- **1877** Grace Church was built during the ministry of Rev. George Deere.



- **1883** A great tornado destroyed much of Rochester, inspiring the Sisters of St. Francis to promise Dr. William Worrall Mayo that they would build a hospital, if he and his sons, Drs. William and Charles Mayo, would staff it.
- **1889** The first pipe organ in Rochester was bought for Grace Church.
 - o Laying the foundation for the Mayo Clinic, the newly built St. Mary's Hospital, staffed by the Mayos and other doctors, opened its doors.
- **1894** On May 13 the church observed the 25th anniversary of its formal organization in Rochester. Membership was 175 people.
- **1915** Grace Church was sold to Drs. William and Charles Mayo, and a new church, First Universalist Church, was built at 3rd Avenue and 3rd Street SW. First Universalist Church was dedicated in 1916. The structure was planned to closely resemble its predecessor.



Demographics

Members tend to be older than those who identify as friends of the congregation, with two thirds of members over 55 years old. However, many younger people are visiting each Sunday, and our goal is to entice them to stay!

Like the community we live in, we are mostly white.

We lack the diversity that we welcome, being 92% non-Hispanic white, in a community that is 82% white. Six respondents checked more than one category. One respondent identified as African-American, four listed Native American, one selected Asian, and five selected Hispanic/Latino.

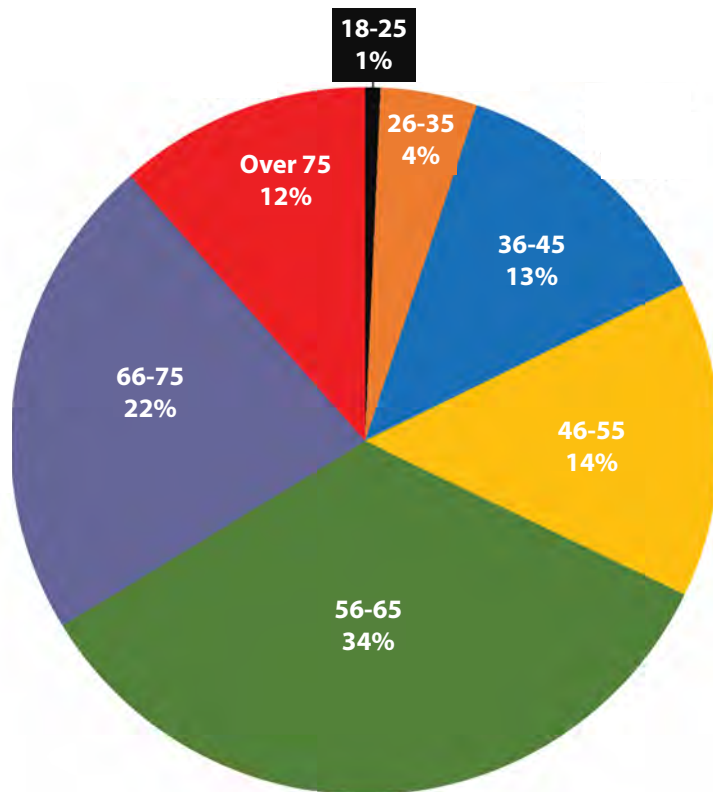
Most of us are part of a couple.

Approximately 77% of the adults are in a committed partnership or are married. Although 84% of those partners attend First UU, we have several members whose partners stay home or attend elsewhere.

We have more women on board.

Although 67% of our respondents were women, we do know that a few women reported that they could not get their male partners to fill out the survey, so attendance on Sundays is not quite as lopsided as the survey might indicate.

What is Your Age?



We are a Welcoming Congregation.

Of the 270 people who answered the question about their sexuality, 18 (almost 7%) identified as LGBTQ+.

That is higher than the nationally reported average of 3.5%, and Minnesota's reported average of 2.9%.

- **1920s** Even before the Great Depression, the church experienced financial difficulties. Rev. Owen Eames called for pledges to be increased, or the church “will go down like a sinking ship.”
- **1930** Membership stood at 74 and the annual budget was just under \$5,000. The church received financial assistance of \$300 from the Owatonna Universalist Church.
- **1940s** When Rev. Horton Colbert came in 1940, a new parsonage was purchased. Rev. Colbert and his successor, Rev. George Lapoint, both had radio ministries to explain liberal philosophy and Universalism to the community.



Orvis Ross served as music director from the late 1940s to the early 1970s. Mr. Ross had a profound effect on the music program through his active participation as choral director, organist, pianist, composer, and teacher.

- **1950s** Under Rev. Lapoint’s leadership, the Beacon Curriculum of the Universalist Church was adopted as the religious education program.



- **1961** Member Alicia Claggett helped the denomination secure property on Star Island at Cass Lake in Northern Minnesota. This property later became Camp Unistar.

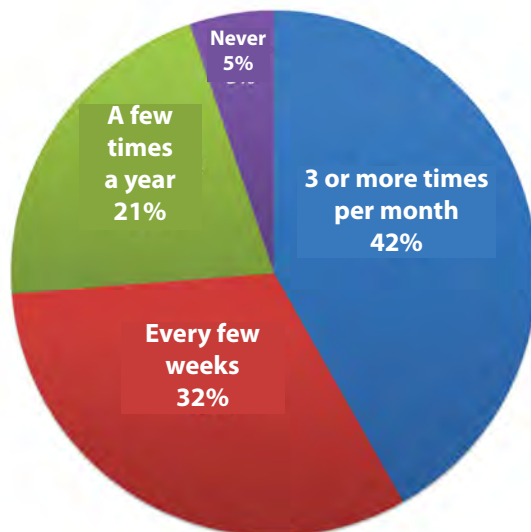
We are lifelong learners!

Over 50% of us have participated in some type of Adult RE. About half of us have four years of college or less, with many still engaged in learning, both formal and informal. Among us, 35.6% have a master’s degree and 15.9% have an MD, PhD, JD, or other advanced degree. While Rochester is a community with a large number of highly educated professionals, our membership is more educated than the city population as a whole.

Highest level of education completed



How often do you attend church on Sundays? (Members and Friends)



Most of us attend fairly regularly.

At least 42% of members and friends consistently attend three or more times a month. (When we separate the data for members only, 68% come at least monthly. Despite not yet taking the plunge to sign the membership book, many friends also attend regularly, with 38% visiting at least monthly.)

- **1962** The church formally changed its name to First Unitarian Universalist Church to recognize the 1961 national merger of the Unitarian and Universalist denominations. The Rev. Vernon Curry attended the first General Assembly after the merger.
- **1964** Sue Bateman was hired as the first paid director of RE. The church sold its property to the Mayo Foundation. Five and one-half acres of wooded hillside were purchased on the frontage road west of Highway 52.



- **1965** The congregation raised funds to send Rev. Curry to Selma, Alabama, for a civil rights march following the death of Rev. James Reeb.
- **1968** We moved into our new building on Walden Lane, a street named by Rev. Curry. Stained glass windows from the old church were rescued from the Historical Society and are a highlight of the current church building.



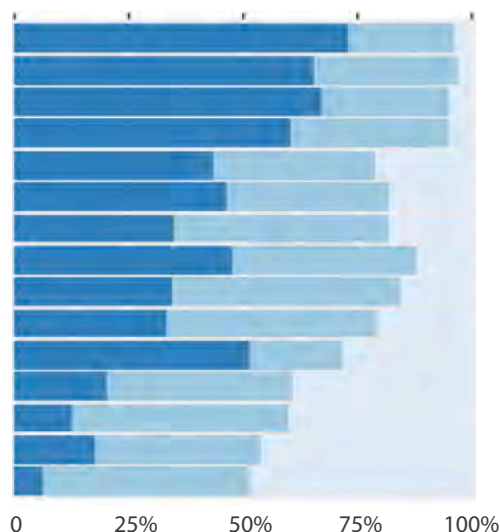
- **1973-83** Under the leadership of Rev. Alexander "Scotty" Meek, Jr., the church initiated a parent cooperative nursery school for the community, began holding forums on

Shared Values, Warm Welcome

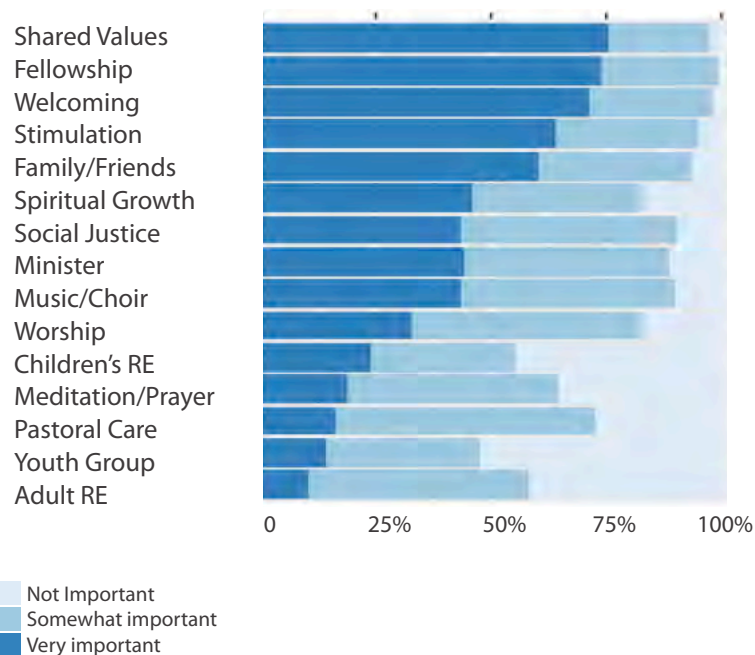
Most who attend are drawn to our church for a message that resonates with our shared values and challenges our thinking. We stay because we find fellowship and a warm welcome in a community of like-minded people who support each other and the social justice causes we value. Many also come because we have children, and want to give them a religious education respectful of world religions and the UU principles we hold dear.

No matter what drew us in initially, we become more attached to the people in our congregation the longer we stay. We develop deep relationships within this beloved community that encourage our spiritual growth, inspire us to action, and keep us coming back. As our own children grow and leave home, Religious Education and Youth Group are less a factor in our attendance, but most of us still highly value these opportunities for others.

Why did you **FIRST** start coming to First UU Church?



Why do you continue to attend First UU Church?



matters of public interest, paid off the building mortgage, built an 18th century reproduction Flemish harpsichord, and sponsored the resettlement of a Vietnamese refugee family. In 1983, we hosted the annual meeting of the Prairie Star District.

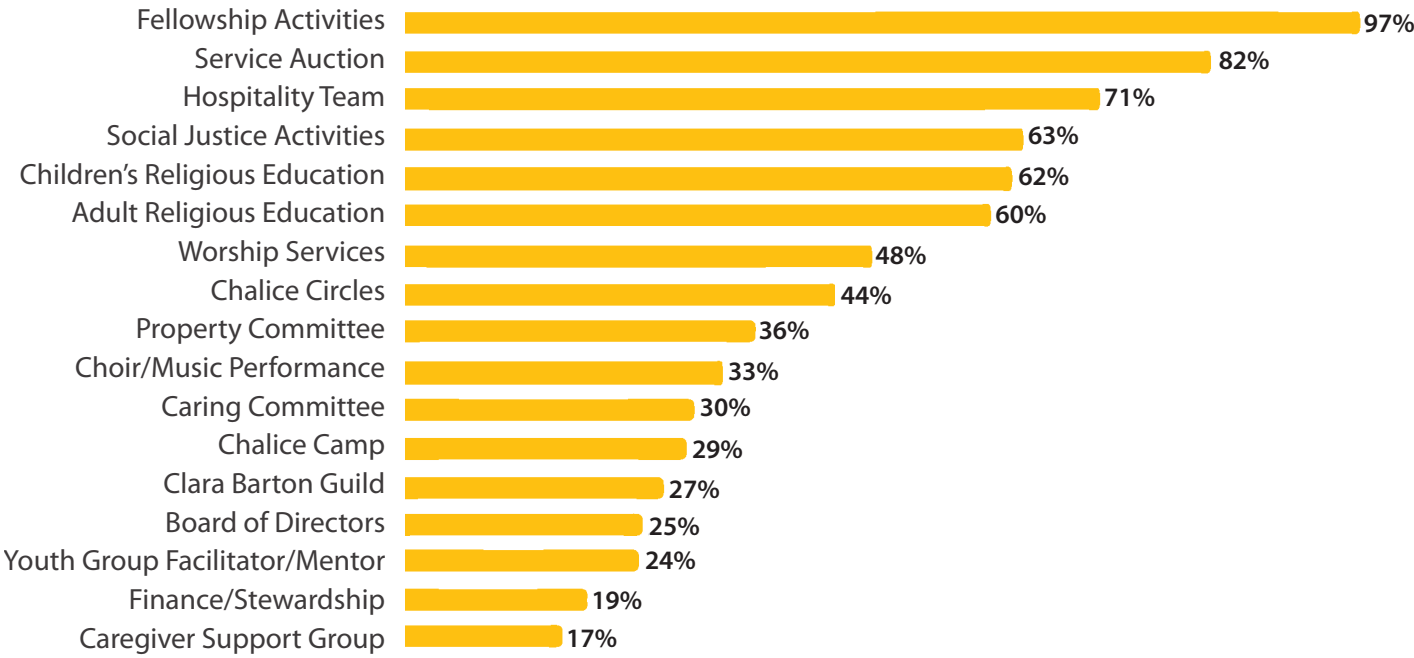
- Merrill N. Davis served as director of music from the early 1970s to 1984. During this time, the church installed our Hendrickson tracker organ, which was a gift from Mary Kahler Hench.
- **1984** Kevin Dobbe served as our music director until 1993. He continued the tradition of an active music program with the creation of the Walden Hill Vocal Ensemble, Children’s Choir, Hand Bell Choir, and Young Musicians program. He also composed our “Children’s Benediction.”
- **1985** The church called Rev. Fred F. Campbell as minister. The Caring Congregation was developed, which helped provide assistance to members in times of need.



This period was marked by extensive building improvements, the founding of a chamber concert series, the revival of the Boar’s Head Feast, plans for a memorial garden, and the beginning of summer lay-led services.

- **1987** Church member Erv Miller was elected to the Unitarian Universalist Board of Trustees, representing the Prairie Star and Western Canada Districts.

In which of the following church activities have you participated?



We are an active and participatory bunch.

Almost all of us have participated in some sort of fellowship activity, and 82% have attended the service auction, or purchased and attended one of the activities for sale. Over two thirds of us have helped on a hospitality team, either greeting, ushering, or making coffee for a service, and 63% have participated in some sort of social justice activity with the church. We tend to choose activities that build community.

We are called to service. A full 25% of respondents have served on the church Board of Directors at some point. Respondents in the 18-55 age group were more likely to have helped with Chalice Camp than the older age groups.

At least half of the respondents have participated in 7 activities, and 31 have participated in 12 or more activities. We are willing to try new things, and expand our focus! In fact, 91 of us (31%) have attended a UUA General Assembly, MidAmerica Regional Assembly (formerly Prairie Star District) or participated in a regional/UUA activity at least once.

- **1999** A million-dollar renovation project made the building accessible with new doors and an elevator, a larger entrance, and other aesthetic improvements.

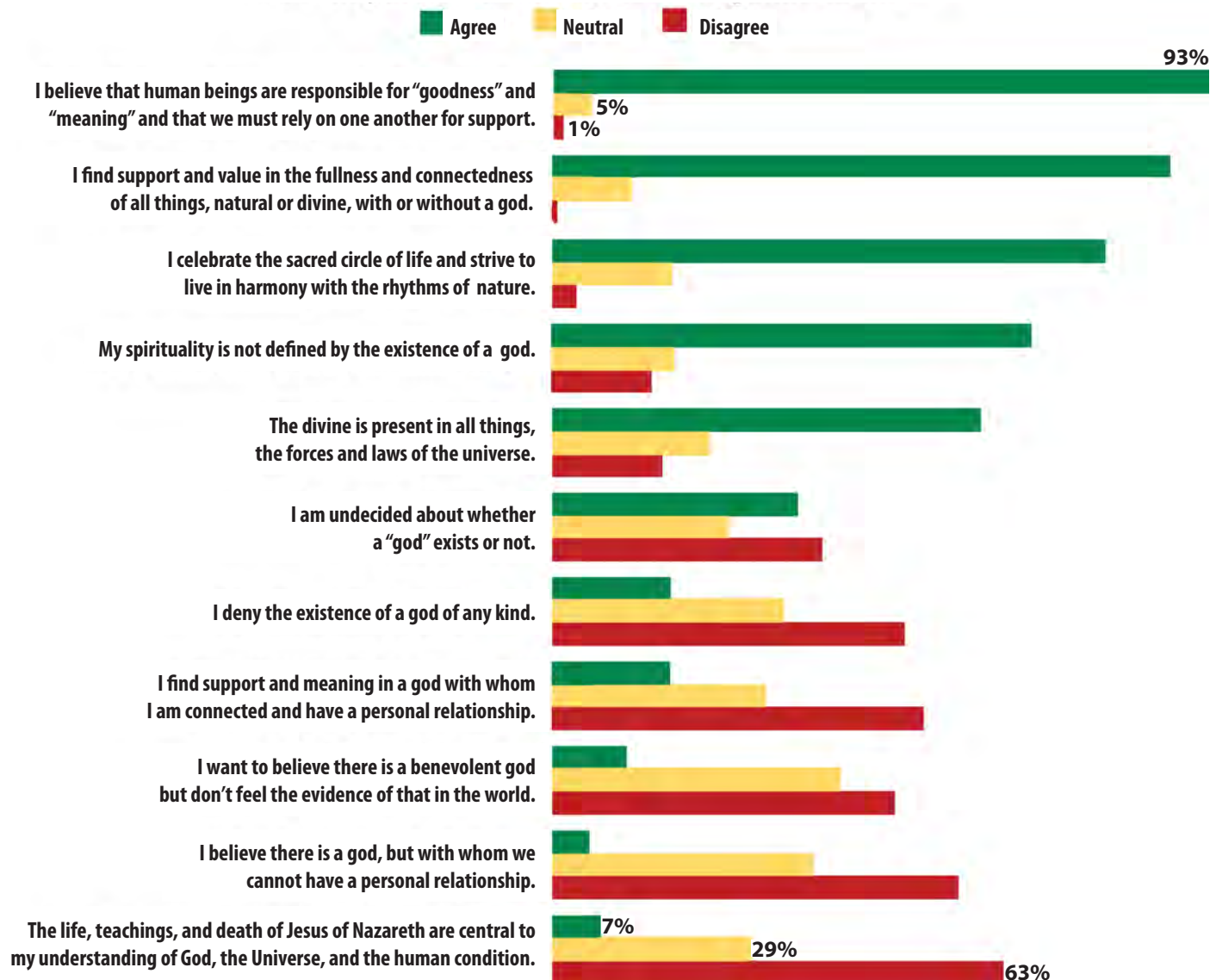
- **2001** The congregation officially became a Welcoming Congregation.



- **2003** Our church hosted the Prairie Star District annual conference for the third time. We introduced Covenant Groups, the predecessor to Chalice Circles, which continue to be active today.
- **2005** Pastoral Care Coordinator position was created, and Christy Gonenne was hired.
- **2005** Rev. Sorrells announced her retirement as of August 1, 2005, and at the annual meeting she was bestowed the title Minister Emerita. Rev. Sue Turner was called as an interim minister and served for one year.
- **2006** The congregation called Rev. Dr. Carol Hepokoski to be its new minister. She was installed in April 2007, and served for nine year,
- **2008** A two-day Social Justice Empowerment Workshop was attended by 100 members and friends. As a result, several task groups were formed to address social justice issues—poverty, racism, disabilities, health care, the environment, international justice, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender (GLBT) rights.



How do you feel about the following statements?



Our personal theologies vary.

Many people agree that their spirituality is not defined by the existence of a "god." A majority of our congregants respond to a Humanist understanding that humans are responsible for goodness and meaning, and that we must rely on one another for support. We respond to our UU principles and feel a deep connection to the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Young people tend to be more theist. Many of our longtime members tend to be more Humanist.

- **2010** A process for considering Congregational Resolutions on social justice topics (and accompanying bylaw changes) was adopted by the congregation at the annual meeting. Our congregation participated in the Interfaith Build for Habitat for Humanity to construct a new home from start to finish.



- **2011** David Kraemer became our ministerial intern. Following a long appreciative inquiry process, we approved a church mission statement: *to be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice.*

We established the Sophia Lyon Fahs Library in the former nursery, and created our first week-long Chalice Camp.



- **2012** In April, we passed our first Congregational Resolution, the Congregational Resolution for Marriage Equality, which enabled us to advocate for the successful statewide vote the following November. Our minister, Rev. Dr. Carol Hepokoski, suffered an injury in September and went on partial medical leave for the rest of the church year.

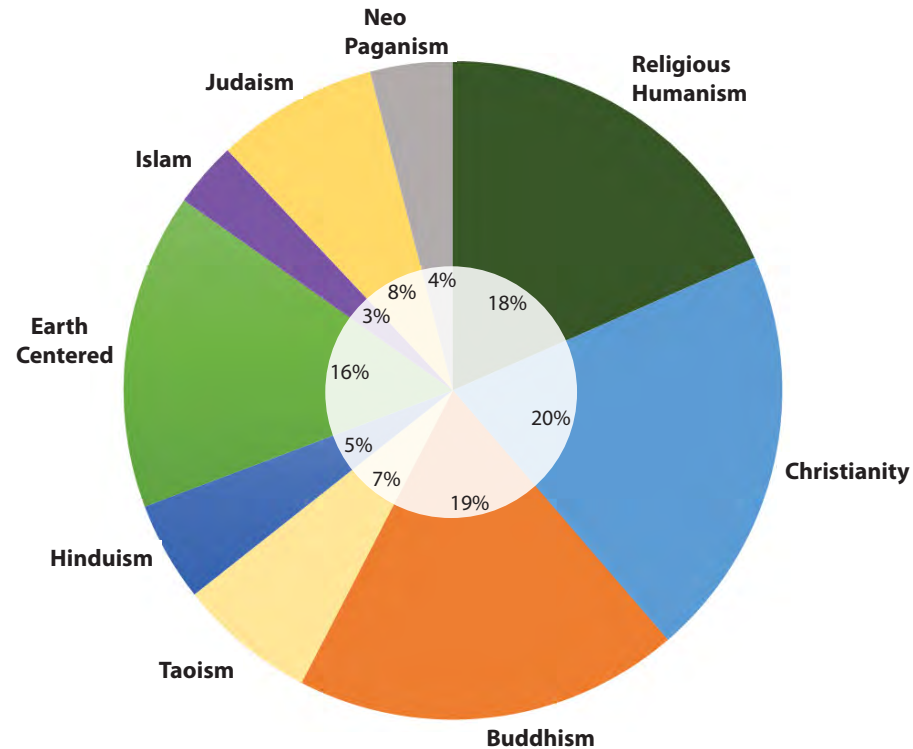
We value many faith traditions.

The majority of us were raised in Christian households, so it is no surprise that Christian traditions are important to us. Several members also belong to our UU Buddhist interest group or the Rochester Meditation Center and regularly practice a type of Buddhist meditation, so Buddhism naturally ranked very highly, followed closely by Religious Humanism.

Several of us observe some traditions of Earth-Centered Religions. For many years, fueled by the incredible energy of one of our members, we have hosted a Winter Solstice celebration (pictured at right) for the community.

Of the 232 people who answered this question, 21 marked that none of these traditions were important to them, and 20 checked several boxes. This may reflect our openness and recognition that there are many paths to our personal spirituality.

What other faith traditions are important to you?



Winter Solstice 2015:
Burning Oni Paper Masks

- **2013** To assist Rev. Hepokoski's return to work, we hired a half-time consulting minister, Rev. Charlotte Cowtan, for a six-month period. The Walden Hill Youth Group took a Heritage trip to Boston with our DRE, Ryan Shriver.
- **2014** We hired David Kraemer as our Summer Student Minister. With the help of a landscape architect and a master gardener, we created a rain garden in front of our church to prevent run-off into our parking lot.
- **2015** In April, we ordained Rev. David Kraemer, the second minister to be ordained at our church. In May Rev. Hepokoski retired, and we called Rev. Fritz Hudson as Interim Minister.



We spent a year celebrating our church's 150th anniversary, culminating in April 2016 with the dedication of our new stained glass window, a banquet, and a Sunday sermon by UUA President Peter Morales. We began publishing a quarterly magazine, *UU Revue*, focusing on the positive work done by First UU members and demonstrating our congregation's commitment to the Seven Principles.

- **2016** In May, we elected seven congregants to serve on our Ministerial Search Committee. In July, our church rain garden was featured on the citywide Master Gardeners Annual Tour.



Recent Awards

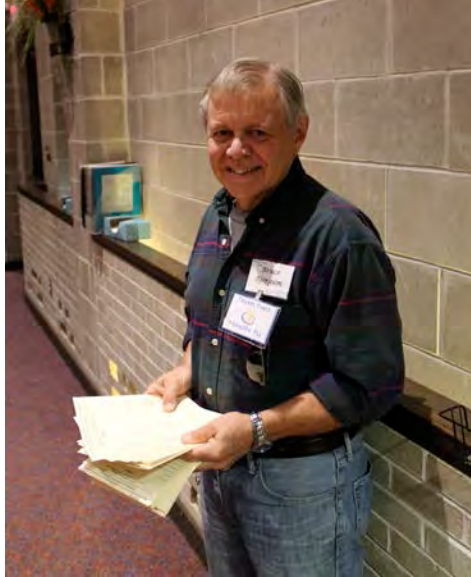
- 1989 & 1990 Elizabeth Katzmann, our DRE, won the Ellie Morton Award (Prairie Star District) for developing the religious education curriculum on the "Rainbow Path of UU Principles and Purposes."
- 1991 Florence Barker won a Prairie Star District Social Justice Award for lifetime achievements, including starting a community food shelf.
- 1995 Ruth and Luther Boie won a PSD Unsung UU award for their contributions over the years.
- 1995 Our church won both the PSD and UUA O. Eugene Pickett Award for Growth.
- 1999 Phyllis Layton won the Unsung UU Award from the PSD for her lifetime contributions to Unitarian Universalism.
- 2004 Linda Horton won the Unsung UU Award, at both the PSD and UUA levels for translating "Singing the Living Tradition" into Braille.



- 2011 Our church won the UUA Bennett Award that recognized over half our congregants' involvement in social justice work through the church. We also created a Rapid Response Team with over 70 congregants ready to respond to social injustice in our community, and we involved the RE youth in several social justice programs.

What We Do





Sunday Mornings

The first to arrive on a Sunday morning is usually our volunteer sexton, who opens doors, turns on lights, and makes sure the building is secure and ready for the morning's activities. Our hospitality team arrives next to make coffee, set out hymnals, and staff the lobby with greeters and the sanctuary with ushers.

During the school year, we offer two identical services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., switching to a single 10 a.m. service from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Our minister leads the services about three Sundays a month, with a guest minister or lay leader taking responsibility for the rest. Guests or members of the congregation lead the summer services from approximately mid-June until mid-August so that the minister can attend General Assembly and take a well-deserved vacation and study time.



Worship Services

In a typical service, a Worship Associate from the congregation sits next to the Worship Leader in the pulpit. Following the gathering music, the Worship Associate begins the service with Welcome and Announcements and Opening Words for the Chalice Lighting.

We take a minute or two to greet one another, and then bring ourselves back into worship mode with the singing of a hymn. Our Director of Religious Education (DRE) invites the children to the front of the sanctuary for a children's story or activity that also introduces the theme of the service. Then we sing our own Children's Benediction (written in 1987 by former Music Director Kevin Dobbe) to signal the time for them to go to their classrooms.



Our Coordinator of Congregational Life usually conducts Embracing Meditation, which includes the recognition of those known to be experiencing joys and sorrows, acknowledging who contributed the flowers, notice of the person who is serving as the week's Caring Coordinator, as well as anyone else deserving special recognition. After a minute or so of silent meditation, our Worship Leader asks for the names of those we are holding in our hearts with special concern or gratitude, and repeats them so everyone hears the names. We are still experimenting with this alternative to the tricky business of "Joys and Sorrows," the bane of many a Worship Committee.

Carefully chosen readings, hymns, and instrumental music support the Worship Leader's Message, which constitutes the core of our service. After a final hymn, we extend our hands to our neighbors to connect for the Benediction, and then the Worship Leader and



Worship Associate leave the sanctuary to greet the congregants as they exit. Many people choose to remain seated to enjoy the Postlude.

We have also enjoyed many different service formats: panel discussions, plays, a reader's theatre, all-music services, and services that require much more participation from the congregation. We like variety and we are open to the many ways we can worship together.

Worship Rituals at First UU

Water Communion – On the last Sunday in August, people to bring special water to collect in a communal bowl as we share seven words to highlight the significance of this (often virtual) water. The “water” can signify everything from a lake or river on a special trip to the sweat of a physical challenge. We have learned that you can say a lot about your water in only seven words.

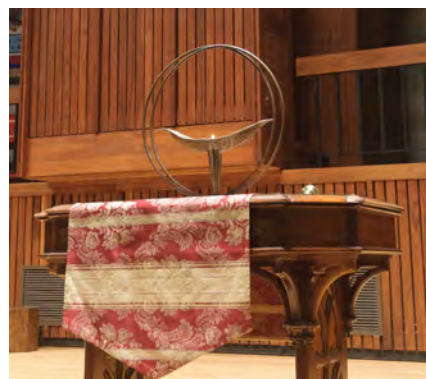
Ingathering Service – On the first Sunday after Labor Day we celebrate the return to two services and the start of the RE program. A Welcome Back potluck between services gives attendees from both services a chance to visit with each other.

All Souls Service – We celebrate the lives of those among us who have died during the past year, and we light candles of remembrance for all those whose lives have touched ours.

Winter Solstice – This lay-led tradition combines pagan elements with traditional food, drink, and crafts of the season, and culminates in a celebratory fire outside.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – We celebrate with traditional songs and stories, light candles to fend off the winter darkness, and gather for cookies and punch between services.

Ritual for Change and Growth – On the first Sunday in January, we take advantage of the good intentions of the New Year to “burn our baggage” and rededicate ourselves to new ideals and habits.





Our UU Stories – Once a year, we usually have a lay-led service where members of the congregation talk about their own spiritual journeys, how they came to be UUs, and what this church means to them. This service provides us with an opportunity to connect with others and explore our varied perspectives.

Founders' Day - Held in early March, we recall and revive the spirit of our founders, and recognize and honor our long-time members.

Maypole Ceremony – On the first Sunday in May. We play special music, and people of all ages gather at our giant maypole in front of the church to grab colorful ribbons and weave ourselves in and out, tightening the bonds of community (literally and figuratively)--a beloved tradition for many at First UU.

Coming of Age Service – To complete their year of study, the COA class members plan a worship service, during which they present their faith statements. We celebrate their accomplishments with a reception following the service.

Flower Communion – Held in late May or early June, this ritual of beauty and friendship provides a chance to re-gift the flowers we receive from each other to someone in the congregation we would like to honor.



PrideFest Sunday – Held in conjunction with Rochester's week-long Pridefest, usually the second weekend in July, this service celebrates the LGBTQ+ community and their families.

Other rituals include Child Dedications and Welcoming New Members, which occur as the need arises.



FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Our Mission: To be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth & practices justice.

October, 23, 2016 – Souvenir
Rev. Fritz Hudson, Worship Leader



Gathering Music	"Old Man, Old Woman" (trad) "Greenleaf Fancy" by Norman Blake	Greenwood Tree Duo
Welcome		
Opening Words & Chalice Lighting		Rev. Fritz Hudson, Minister
Greeting One Another		
* We Sing #336	"All My Memories of Love"	
Introduction	"The Color of Home" by Mary Hoffman	Joyce Rood Religious Education Director
"Children's Benediction (Gray Hymnal, Inside Back Cover)		
Responsive Reading #718	"All Souls"	by May Sarton
Offertory	Wals voor Polle" by Wim Poesen	
Embracing Meditation		
Interlude	"The Minstrel Boy" by Thomas Moore "Simple Gifts" (trad)	
Message	"Souvenir"	
*We Sing #295	"Sing Out Praises for the Journey"	
Benediction		
Postlude	"Alla Hornpipe" by G.F. Handel	

**Please rise in body or spirit. Following the service, you may leave hymnals on chairs as you recess.
Available from Ushers, Hearing Assistance Devices & Large Print Bulletins & Hymnals*

WE, THE MEMBER CONGREGATION OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION COVENANT TO AFFIRM AND PROMOTE ...

- ≈ The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
- ≈ Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.
- ≈ Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
- ≈ A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
- ≈ The rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
- ≈ The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
- ≈ Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

THE LIVING TRADITION WE SHARE DRAWS FROM MANY SOURCES ...

- ≈ Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.
- ≈ Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront power and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.
- ≈ Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.
- ≈ Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves.
- ≈ Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- ≈ Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythm of nature.

Halloween / Day of the Dead / All Souls Party

Friday, October 28, 6-8 p.m.

Bring the family to church for some ghoulish fun. There will be food and drink in the Commons along with music and games in the RE wing. Come in costume for the parade/contest. Bring an already-decorated or carved jack-o-lantern to be displayed and judged in a contest.

We still need more adult/youth volunteers to help out. Sign up in the RE wing or let DRE Joyce Rood know if you can help (dre@uurochmn.org). The party is from 6-8 p.m., but volunteers should arrive between 4:30-5 p.m. and plan to stay after to help with clean-up/take down.

Order of Service, inside (pages 2 and 3).

THIS MORNING ...

Worship Leader Rev. Fritz Hudson

Musicians Greenwood Tree Duo; Connie Schuelka
Greenwood Tree, based in the Twin Cities, is the duo of Bill Cagley (guitar, mandolin, bodhran, and limberjack) and Stu Janis (hammered dulcimer, bowed psaltery, and concertina). Musical partners since 1985, Greenwood Tree's unique sound is a blend of lively traditional Celtic-flavored jigs and reels, sweet waltzes, and American folk songs.

Audio 9 a.m. – George Thompson; 11 a.m. – George Huston

4th Sunday Ron Chrishop, Team Leader

Hospitality Team Sue & Paul Anderson; Beth Atkinson; Sara Felts; Linda Fuller; Anna Lovrien; Lilly Medoria; Kirk & Jo Payne; Ray & Laurel Phelps-Bowman; Tammi Tacinelli; Robin Taylor & Joe Lobl; Chris, Nina & Anna Wendt; Joyce Wood; Kathe Yoss

THIS WEEK'S VOLUNTEERS ...

Care Coordinator October 16-29 Kay Eberman & Jo Payne

Building Sextons Today Jim & Judy Jensen
October 24-30 Randy Crawford

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30 ... *Times of Turning: In Remembrance*

A Full-Hour Multi-Generational Service

In this time of All Hallows (Halloween, All Souls Day, All Saints Day) we honor our life-changing memories. Please bring something small (a photograph? an object?) to display that recalls a time, place or person that re-shaped your life.

Rev. Fritz Hudson, Worship Leader

Walden Hill Vocal Ensemble

Joe Mish, conductor; **Connie Schuelka**

EMBRACING MEDITATION ...

If you have a joy or sorrow that you would like to have shared during an upcoming Sunday service, contact Sarah Rothwell, 282-5209 or pastoralcare@uurochmn.org

HAPPENING THIS WEEK ...

Sunday, October 23

10:10 a.m.	Children's Choir Practice	Chapel
10:15 a.m.	Info Meeting: Bylaws Changes	Hearth Room
11 a.m.	RE for Children & Youth	Chapel
7 p.m.	Principle 4 Study Group	Hearth Room

Monday, October 24

9:30 a.m.	UU Mah Jongg	Chapel
10 a.m.	Course in Miracles	Commons

Tuesday, October 25

6:30 p.m.	Pathway to Membership Class	Hearth Room
7 p.m.	Chosen Faith Study Group	Clara Barton Room
7 p.m.	Memorial Garden Committee	Conference Room

Wednesday, October 26

9 a.m.	eNews Deadline	
6 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal	Sanctuary
7 p.m.	RE Council Meeting	Conference Room
7:15 p.m.	Buddhist Interest Group	Clara Barton Room

Friday, October 28

1 p.m.	Mah Jongg group	Commons
6-8 p.m.	Halloween/Day of Dead/All Souls	Commons

Informational Meeting – Proposed Bylaws Changes

10:15 -10:45 a.m. Today in the Hearth Room

Please come, listen, and ask questions about the proposed Bylaws changes to prepare for the vote* at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 30. These changes to our Bylaws are intended to bring our written documentation into line with our current practice and, more importantly, make us more attractive to possible ministerial candidates. We will be including these changes in our ministerial packet. Childcare will be available during the meeting.

Congregational Meeting – Sunday, October 30

12:15 in the Sanctuary

It's important that you participate in this meeting, as we work to clean up items in our Bylaws. The Board and the Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee will present seven amendments to the Bylaws to be voted* upon. Snacks will be provided for adults and Children. Childcare will be available during the meeting.

** Voting privileges are conferred 60 days after signing the Membership book*

How Can We Keep from Singing?



The Music Program at First Unitarian Universalist Church



Our church community values having a strong music program, which provides quality as well as diversity in the musical offerings each Sunday. Over the course of a year, we are proud to feature everything from a jazz quintet to an Eastern European folk band to singer-songwriter Lucy Wainwright.

Our program is administered by our Co-Directors of Music, Joseph Mish and Connie Schuelka. Connie has been an integral part of our music program for almost 30 years, starting out as the choir accompanist in the late 1980s. A talented pianist and versatile accompanist, she is responsible for playing piano, organ, or harpsichord for all services, or finding a substitute to fill in when she is absent. Connie also arranges for all guest musicians and provides accompaniments for our choirs and guest musicians.



Joe has been Co-Director of music for 16 years. He conducts the adult and children's choirs, plus instrumental ensembles, and occasionally performs on bass or cello. He selects choir music in collaboration with the minister and other worship leaders. Our adult choir is the Walden Hill Vocal Ensemble (WHVE), which averages around 20 singers on a Sunday and performs about twice a month. The Walden Hill Children's Choir (WHCC) sings about once every other month.

We also enjoy a wide variety of guest musicians. We draw from our talented congregation, musicians traveling through the area or performing at Harmony for Mayo, and other musicians and groups who reside in our part of the state. Examples include our own Nodding Wild Onions, specializing in cross-over blues; David Roth, a singer-songwriter from Massachusetts; and the Polished Brass Quartet, a local Rochester group. Guest musicians rave about the acoustics of our space and the quality of our instruments.



Our sanctuary features a three-manual Hendrickson pipe organ, a 7' 4" Yamaha grand piano, and a French double manual harpsichord. We also own a four-octave set of handchimes.

To learn more about Co-Director of Music, Joe Mish, see page 8 of the fall issue of *UU Revue*. www.uurochmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/FallMagazineOnline.pdf

To read about the Nodding Wild Onions, see page 10 of the summer issue of *UU Revue*. www.uurochmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Summer2016online.pdf

*Harpsichord,
built by our
congregants*



*Walden Hills
Vocal Ensemble*



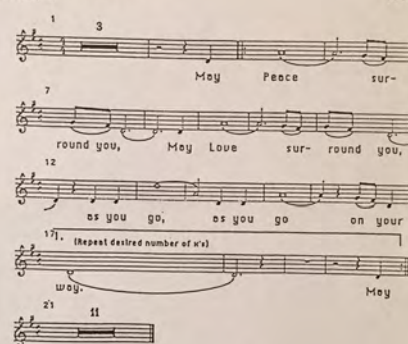
*Joe Mish and
Connie Schuelka*



Children's Benediction

For the Unitarian Universalist Church,
Rochester, Ma

Kevin Dobbe
1987



Connie Schuelka

Lucy Wainwright



*Connie accompanying
David Roth*



Religious Education for Children and Youth





Ramona Barr and Kate Thompson-Jewell
Summer Co-Directors of Religious Education, 2016



Dear Prospective Minister,

For many of our members and friends, Religious Education for Children and Youth is what brought them to our congregation. Parents need help in raising their children, and are attracted by our strong UU values and the promise of love and acceptance for all. Many parents also appreciate that our religion allows exploration of different faiths through our Seven Principles.

Over the past few years, our RE Program has experienced some decline in attendance. As Summer Co-DREs, we (Ramona Barr and Kate Thompson-Jewell) were tasked with putting in place some plans to improve attendance and ease volunteering, while creating an inviting RE experience in the RE wing. Next, we were tasked with hiring a new Childcare Coordinator and the next DRE!

After hiring Beth Curtin, a qualified and experienced Childcare Coordinator, we found a highly qualified and experienced educator to be the new DRE: Joyce Rood. Though new to UUism and to being a DRE, Joyce is willing to learn and train to be all we hope she can be. Our Interim Minister has arranged a mentorship program for her with another UU DRE in the Twin Cities area. We are now back to our volunteer / member status, but remain resources and aides to the new DRE. She'll introduce herself later.

Sunday Programs During the School Year

Religious Education classes for children and youth begin at three years old and continue through high school. We call our program the "Rainbow Path Faith Journey," which is a nod to the Rainbow Path curriculum written by a past DRE from our congregation. Though outdated and no longer used, it holds many positive memories for our congregants and we think using this title for our spiritual journey together ties in well with the travel-inspired classroom names we use. The actual curriculum we use is the Tapestry of Faith, a UUA curriculum which we rotate every two years.



(Above) DRE Joyce Rood reading a story during “Introduction” time in the Sanctuary.



With the arrival of our Interim Minister, the congregation went through a “visioning” process which identified a desire to focus and strengthen our RE Program. To that end, we have been trying some different ways of worshiping with children.

The first 15 minutes of each Sunday service, called the “Introduction,” includes our children. While this looks different each Sunday, we definitely have enjoyed having the children in the service with us! We also cut the length of the lessons to 45 minutes to allow the children to begin each Sunday in the Sanctuary for “Introduction” time. Every week, we sing the children out of the Sanctuary as they go with their RE spirit guides to their classes.

The Interim Minister worked with the us to align his sermon topics when possible to the RE Tapestry of Faith curricula being used in the classrooms at all grade levels. Family letters go home each Sunday with the children to further the sermon/ classroom discussion at home. To aid the Sunday morning classroom spirit guides, we have enlisted a volunteer to coordinate materials for every class. All of this has been well received and attendance has increased.

One Sunday a month, our RE students work with members of our Social Justice Council to do a social justice learning project. Projects have included decorating placemats for Meals on Wheels, collecting toilet paper and hand sanitizer for a local “cupboard” at Hawthorne Helps, and learning what it’s like to be a refugee.

In December, the DRE has often coordinated a multigenerational service which includes children and youth in all aspects of the experience.

Summer Religious Education

We have tried a variety of summer programming over the past few years. Most recently, the children attended the service, then left with a volunteer spirit guide to listen to stories, do crafts, or head outside to enjoy hiking the grounds or playing on our playset. Typically, attendance is down in the summer, so children get to have the time to explore and get to know the other children at the church.



High School Programs

Our church has been very consistent in offering Our Whole Lives (OWL) at the 7-9th grade level. In the past five years, we have also periodically offered elementary school OWL, senior high OWL, and adult OWL. We have a number of volunteers who are trained OWL facilitators.

Coming of Age (COA) is a rite of passage for many of our 9th graders. The students work hard throughout the year to construct their faith statements. A highlight of the year is always the Coming of Age service in May, attracting many friends and members of the congregation.

Our Walden Hill Youth (WHY) group has always been a favorite of the youth. Though it has experienced some decline with members graduating, it has hopes to reenergize and to set a goal of another heritage trip to Boston to see our UU roots.

Communication

One perennial challenge we face is figuring out how best to communicate with the RE families. We have a diverse group who prefer different methods of communication, and we are still trying to find the best means to spread the word. We've used Constant Contact for our reNews via email. We also use Facebook for some events and postings, as well as GroupMe for group texting for the youth group youth, while their parents prefer email.

RE Council

The RE Council, the governing body of our RE program, approves curricula, supports and works with both the Childcare Coordinator and the DRE to maintain quality RE programming and connections between children and youth within our congregation. The RE Council has recently redrafted its charter and is in the process of updating RE policies.





Midwest Leadership School Graduates:
Nate, Megan, Autumn, and Jackson
(pictured below with Jess and Maria)



In short, the lessons have been prepped, the volunteers have been trained, the RE wing has been painted and refreshed, the Nursery has been rearranged and sanitized, the policies have been updated, and the baton has been passed to the new DRE to usher us into a bright future for Religious Education for Children and Youth at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester. We remain a resource for the new minister on all things RE.

Yours in faith,

Ramona Barr & Kate Thompson-Jewell

Summer Co-DREs



Dear Prospective Minister,



Joyce Rood
Director of Religious Education

Having just been hired mid-September, I am still getting acclimated to the position of Director of Religious Education, as well as the general culture of the First Unitarian Universalist Church in Rochester. From the minute I walked through the door to attend a worship service, through the interview process, and now as the new DRE, I have always felt welcomed and supported by the staff, the board, and the congregation.

My experience as a teacher for the last 14 years has prepared me for many of the duties of this position. I am getting familiar with the Tapestry of Faith UUA curricula, and I am continuing to build on the work of the summer co-DREs. One of my goals is to make the lessons more fun and engaging so the children want to show up each Sunday to explore new endeavors and then share their experience with friends who may be inspired to attend. I also aspire to make it easy for the teacher volunteers by providing user-friendly, age-appropriate lesson plans, as well as all the supplies necessary to carry out the lessons. Furthermore, I want to make sure the teachers feel fulfilled by giving them many opportunities to interact positively with the children through creative activities in the lesson plans. Finally, I hope to make teachers feel appreciated by having occasional celebrations with inspirational speakers and, of course, delicious treats.

I am currently working with the DRE of the White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church as my mentor. She has provided me with resources to build upon the current curricula. A couple ideas we have discussed include Soul Work Sundays for the children and a new Social Justice/Community Service program for the youth.

I enjoy working with the Interim Minister planning the “Introduction” part of the service that includes the children. I am looking forward to seeing what ideas the new minister will share.

Respectfully,

Joyce H. Rood

Director of Religious Education



"My child has attended other organized summer activities this year and Chalice Camp was far and away his favorite!"

Chalice Camp

In 2011, the first Chalice Camp was held at a local Girl Scout camp with the support and guidance of a church member who had experience coordinating day camps. She has continued to do this very successfully every year since, using UU curricula, which she customized to fit the site and schedule.

In 2015, the camp moved to our church, offering a different variety of opportunities and community building. Each year, the camp has grown, often attracting many non-church families, some of whom continue to come to the church.

This camp provides a unique opportunity for our children to build relationships with our youth and gives our middle school youth (the junior counselors) and our high school youth (the senior counselors) a chance to develop their leadership potential. The camp also provides intergenerational connections as many adults from the congregation volunteer during the week to support the camp in a variety of capacities.





Chalice Camp Themes

- 2011: History & Identity
- 2012: Identity & Justice
- 2013: Hogwarts School of Magic & Fun
- 2014: Backyard to the Universe: Dr. Seuss and UUs
- 2015: UU Superhero Academy:
Social Justice League
- 2016: Ye Olde Chalice Camp (UU World Religions)



How We Communicate with RE Families

Each Friday, our DRE sends out the "Weekly reNews," a take-off on our weekly eNews, which is emailed to all members.



RE
for
Children
& Youth

The Rainbow Path Faith Journey



Our Mission: To be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice.

This Sunday, October 30, 2016
Times of Turning: in Remembrance

A Full-hour Multi-Generational Service
(No RE for children & youth today. Everybody meets in the sanctuary.)

In this time of All Hallows (Halloween, All Souls Day, All Saints Day) we honor our life-changing memories.

Please bring something small (a photograph? an object?) to display that recalls a time, place or person that re-shaped your life.

Nursery

Nursery care is available during both the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services for children 6 mos to 3 yrs old.

Notices:

From the Social Justice Team:

Last Sunday was our 2nd RE Social Justice Sunday. Our focus was refugee support. We had a fun time and hopefully helped the children learn a bit more about what a refugee is and what the families go through getting here. After a brief discussion we all packed up our bags with clothes, towels, blankets, food & water and headed out for a journey around the neighborhood. We talked about what children need to feel safe and asked that the children pick out an item to bring to the church for the Welcome Baskets that our Refugee Support task group will be assembling. Some Ideas are new art and school supplies, simple books to help with learning English, small toys. We'll be collecting items the next couple of weeks. Thanks!

Elizabeth Katzmman and Julie Gilkinson

Our Whole Lives classes for 2016-2017

This year we will offer classes at the K-1st grade level and 4th-6th grade level.

K-1st grade - Supports parents in educating children about birth, babies, bodies and families. Following a Parent Meeting and Parent/Child Orientation, the 8 sessions engage children with stories, songs and activities and include a weekly a homework project for parents and children to do together. Promotes dialogue between parent and child. (Facilitators: Molly Dennis & Sam Olson)

4th-6th grade - 8-session program for learning about and discussing the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Participants will examine topics such as values and sexuality, communication and decision making. Each session includes a homework activity for parents and children to complete together. (Facilitators: Natasha Vermilyea & Kate Thompson-Jewell)

Register your child [here](#). There will be a Parent Meeting for each class offered in November and the classes will be held over the winter and early spring months. The parents and facilitators will decide which days and times work best.

RE Classroom Volunteers

All adults, parents especially, are urged to participate whole-heartedly in the children's religious education program. With the exception of our Director of Religious Education and our Childcare Coordinator, our program is staffed entirely by volunteers. Every adult has some wisdom to pass on.

User friendly lessons and materials for the lessons are supplied and waiting for you in the classrooms on Sunday morning.

Make a difference and sign up today.

[RE Classroom Volunteer Sign up sheet](#)
(note the specific classroom tabs at the bottom)

[RE Registration](#) (please remember to click "SUBMIT" at the bottom of the page once done)



Requesting Childcare

To request childcare for non-Sunday church events, contact the Childcare Coordinator, Beth Curtin, via the childcare email: childcare@uurochmn.org. Two weeks advance notice is appreciated to be able to find staff to cover the event. Adult/youth staff are paid for their time even if no children are present. Budget accordingly. Contact the [DRE](#) with questions.

Walden Hill Children's Choir

The Children's Choir is open to children ages 6-13. For more information contact [Joe Mish](#) To register for children's choir, click [here](#).

Hospitality & Fellowship





A visitor's first introduction to our hospitality is usually the warm welcome they receive as soon as they enter the front door. Our greeters welcome visitors and direct them to the Visitor Table, where they find information about our church, introductions to other members, and any help they need finding the sanctuary or religious education wing. They are invited to the coffee hour between services, where we offer tea and free trade coffee, as well as cookies or treats provided by volunteers. We encourage visitors to jump right in and participate in our many fellowship offerings. Our regular activities include:

Arts & Crafts Groups

Caring Crafters

UU Creative Spirits

Book Groups

Great Books Club

UU Book Club

Social Justice Book Club

Chalice Circles

We have a number of active Chalice Circles, including a men's group, a couple of co-ed groups, and several women's circles, which generally meet monthly.





Clara Barton Guild

Game Groups

Horton Bridge Club
Mah Jongg Group

Social Groups

Ethnic Lunch Outings
Monthly Nature Walks
Winter Moviegoer's Group

Spirituality Groups

The Women We Become
A Course in Miracles

Study Groups (also part of Adult RE)

Buddhist Study Group
Chosen Faith Study Group
Humanist Interest Group
Principle Four Study Group

Support Groups

Caregiver's Support Group

Yearly Events

Welcome Back Potluck
Mike Podulke Memorial UU Service Auction (November)
Thanksgiving Dinner Potluck
Holiday Cookie Exchange
Christmas Eve Candlelight Reception
Quasi-Annual Phil Wheeler Chili Cook-Off
UU Women's Valentine Tea
Maypole Sunday
Mother's Day Picnic & Bluebell Walk
Summer Ice Cream Socials & Picnics
Fellowship Dinners
Down by the Riverside Free Summer Concert





Special Fellowship Activities

Over the years, we have tried all kinds of fun things: an All-Church Talent Show, outings to concerts and plays, Hearth Room Happy Hours, themed potlucks, game nights, and parties. One of our favorite events is the Boar's Head Feast, which takes so much effort to turn our church into a medieval castle that we only do it every few years.

The most popular offerings at our annual service auction are the creative gourmet dinners, themed game nights, hikes, concerts, and social gatherings. We have had everything from an All Potato Dinner to ethnic meals from around the world; hiking at Whitewater Park, paired with wine tasting at Whitewater Wines afterwards; moonlight cross-country skiing or Celebrity Game Night. It is possible to buy your social life around the year, and support the church at the same time!

*"There is, within this congregation,
a welcoming atmosphere that rivals
none other."*





The Boar's Head Feast

Revived in 1985 by members Stephanie Podulke and her late husband, Mike, the Boar's Head Feast began as a way to raise money for the church. The cinder block interior of our sanctuary is easily transformed into a medieval castle with banners, swords, and candlelight. For our 150th Anniversary last Fall we held a 14-course Boar's Head Feast, complete with madrigals, pageantry, and skits. The production involves participation of at least half the church members, and thus is held only once in a very special while.

"Fellowship activities are VERY enjoyable."





We currently have 66 people willing to provide meals; 45 who will do hospital visits, etc.; 50 who will run errands; and 50 who will provide rides.

Caring Congregation

Caring for each other is one of the things we do best at First UU. Think of the Caring Committee as “love in action,” but really well organized. We draw on dozens of volunteers to provide person-to-person care for members and friends of our congregation.

Over 20 people serve as Care Coordinators, either alone or on a team of two, for half a month at a time. They organize meals for ailing members, provide rides to medical appointments, make hospital visits, run occasional errands for shut-ins, and carry out other small acts of kindness.

We send cards for birthdays, congratulations, milestones, and on the first anniversary of a loved one’s death. When a serious emergency befalls a church member that requires longer-term help, the committee has set up special teams to provide regular meals or other help for weeks or even months. These personal connections and supportive actions fulfill our vision of what congregational life should be and make us feel more like family.





Memorial Garden

Located on the east side of the church courtyard in a secluded area, the Memorial Garden is a place of tranquil beauty where we may pause and remember loved ones who have gone before us. In the Memorial Garden, we inter the ashes of members or friends and their families. A "Garden Panel of Names" lists the names of those whose ashes are interred.



"It is comforting to be there and remember my family members who are gone. I feel closer to them then."

Love Is the Spirit of this Church ...





"I love that our members are so civic-minded and social-justice oriented, and so many are leaders in the community. They are my role models!"

Social Justice

Bringing our values to life is a core part of our congregation's mission and vision. We seek not only personal transformation, but also transformation of the world around us, based on our UU values and principles. We strive to make a difference through providing Service, Education, Witness, Advocacy, and Community Organizing. Our active programs include:

- **Community Service** (partners with outside organizations on an ongoing basis)
 - **AARP Foundation Tax-Side Program** (tax assistance for low income people)
 - **Community Food Response** (citywide second-harvest program)
 - **Family Promise** (emergency shelter for homeless families)
 - **Hawthorne Helps** (filling the SNAP gap)
 - **Saturday Noon Meals** (feeding the hungry)
- **Racial Justice Task Group** (combats racism in its various forms and holds local institutions accountable for eliminating institutional racism)
- **Refugee Task Group** (works with Catholic Charities to support new refugee families)
- **Share the Plate** (contributes to outside organizations selected to receive support through our Sunday offerings)
- **Standing On the Side of Love (SOSL) / Welcoming Congregation** (uses love's power to end oppression and biases; maintains commitment to the LGBTQ+ community; raises awareness of economic inequality; facilitates a timely response when situations call for united UU actions; participates in the MLK March)



Rev. Barbara Meyer and Paula Horner
GA, 2015



Teaching children what it's like to be blind



Grog the Service Dog

Disability Awareness

In 2008, a Social Justice Empowerment workshop held at First UU ignited a fire among a group of parents, professionals, and people living with disabilities, and the Disability Task Group was formed. For many years, we were the only congregation in the district working on issues related to disability rights.

In 2013, we became one of eight congregations within the UUA to pilot the Disability / Ability Action Program, a credentialing process similar to becoming a Welcoming Congregation: This is now called AIM (Accessible and Inclusive Ministries), part of EqUual Access/UUA. We were invited to present our results at General Assembly 2015.

As part of the credentialing process, we held several workshops and worship services, both for adults and children. We offered our congregation insights into the limited services for people with developmental disabilities; the challenges of living with a traumatic brain injury; the distinctive journeys of those affected by mental illness; and the healing promise of therapy dogs. We celebrated the Champions of Disability Awareness in our own congregation, and challenged ourselves to advocate, educate, provide witness, perform service, and organize in our own community with a number of projects and initiatives.

As we grew in our awareness of different needs for different abilities, we instigated many changes at our church, including the installation of handrails up to the pulpit, automatic door openers, and automatic paper towel dispensers. We purchased height-adjustable tables for the Commons and books on disability for our church library. And we lobbied hard for improved audio and visual equipment, which was finally installed in our sanctuary this fall.

Most notable, however, is a culture of greater awareness of the needs of a variety of people within our congregation. Most congregants automatically clear paths from the elevator and set up tables to accommodate wheelchairs. Fellowship hosts know to ensure that dinners away from church are accessible for those with mobility issues. And the entire congregation is quickly becoming aware of the need for a gender neutral bathroom so that caregivers and their opposite gender partners have access to facilities!

How We Get Things Done



Meet Our Staff

Joe Mish **Co-Director of Music**

Joe directs both the adult and children's choirs and is responsible for the selection of music for Sunday services.

Joe sang with our choir for years before becoming the Co-Director of Music in 2000. A talented bass player and composer, Joe occasionally performs in jazz, bluegrass, and classical ensembles, and was commissioned to write an original piece for the choir in celebration of the church's 150th anniversary. Joe has taught orchestra for the Pine Island Schools since 1986. He earned an MA in Music Education from the University of St. Thomas in 2006. In 2011, he was recognized as the Pine Island Teacher of the Year.



Connie Schuelka **Co-Director of Music and** **Congregational Co-Administrator**

Connie is responsible for accompanying choirs and soloists; playing the organ, piano, or harpsichord for services; and booking guest musicians. She works closely with her Co-Director of Music and the minister to program suitable music for each service.



Connie began as our church choir accompanist almost 30 years ago. She holds a BA in Music from Iowa State University where her performance instrument was piano. She has played the organ ever since high school when her church organist trained her as a substitute.

Connie began as our Bookkeeper in 1993. She has gradually taken on more responsibilities in financial areas and church record keeping. In 2016, she and Jody Tharp were named Congregational Co-Administrators. They work collaboratively to carry out their duties. Connie began her dual career as a musician and bookkeeper in college when she was a music major at Iowa State University and worked as a bookkeeper for an auto dealership. After graduation, she continued combining music and finances as a piano teacher and bookkeeper for a music store and later a piano studio. She is now responsible for administering all financial aspects of the church as well as keeping membership, attendance, and visitor records.

Jody Tharp **Congregational Co-Administrator**

Jody works fulltime to oversee the busy day-to-day office operations of the church, manage the church's internal and external communications, and coordinate building use.

A former Associate Director of the Women's Shelter, Jody has served both nonprofit organizations and businesses with her skills in administration, human resources, project management, communications, grant writing, and program development. She has a BS in Management from Cardinal Stritch University. Jody worked at the church as Office Manager from 1997-2004, and returned as Office Administrator in 2012.



Joyce Rood
Director of Religious Education

Joyce oversees the curriculum and programming for children and youth (in collaboration with the Religious Education Council for Children and Youth). She trains the adult volunteers and creates an environment in which our children and youth are encouraged to question and explore.

Joyce joined our staff in September, but has appreciated our approach to religious life as a periodic visitor to the church over the past four years. She has 14 years of experience as an 7th and 8th grade English & Social Studies teacher and team leader in the Rochester schools, where she has taught units on World Religions. She holds a BA in Marketing from Winona State University, and an MA in Instruction from St. Mary's University, with licensure for teaching grades K-8. She is excited to collaborate with us in fostering spiritual growth for all ages.

Sarah Rothwell
Coordinator of Congregational Life

Sarah assists the minister, staff, and committees in providing pastoral care for members and engaging visitors, friends, and members in the programs and activities of the church.

Sarah earned an MS from Winona State University in K-12 School Counseling. She has served as a child and youth bereavement counselor at Seasons Hospice and has taken adult bereavement support group training at Mayo Clinic Hospice. In addition, she has attended trainings and conferences relating to pastoral care, families and loss, crisis care assessment and referral, and building caring communities. She has also taken small group ministry training.



Elizabeth "Beth" Curtin
Childcare Coordinator

Beth supervises childcare in the nursery on Sunday mornings from 8:45-12:15 a.m., and coordinates childcare for special UU events from a roster of trained UU teens.

Beth joined our staff this summer, and is an experienced day care provider and early childhood special education support teacher in the school district. She is currently a preschool teacher at Aldrich Memorial Nursery School in Rochester. She comes to us with a BS in Psychology from Argosy University and an MA in Human Resources from St. Mary's University. She is First Aid and CPR certified.

Tom Rud
Custodian

Tom ensures that our building is in tip-top shape for our programs and activities. He not only keeps our building clean, but also fixes nearly everything that doesn't require a professional license.

Tom worked in road construction for Rochester Sand and Gravel for many years and then as a custodian at Mayo Clinic for about 10 years before his retirement in 2009. When he's not fishing, he's helping his many friends with odd jobs. He can't say exactly where he learned all his skills, but seems to have an amazing knack for putting things back together.



Meet Our Board of Directors

Our Board has four officers and five at-large members (pictured below). Our president and vice president are long-term members and seasoned church leaders. The Board is moving toward **Policy Governance** so we can focus on vision, connecting with the congregation, and fostering church stewardship. Rev. Fritz Hudson has been an important advisor for this transition, and we anticipate that the Board and new minister will continue this work.

The Board is making incremental moves toward Policy Governance by using our mission to define visions and by clarifying our bylaws and policies. If we have clear visions and policies, our councils, committees, and staff can all help move us to where we see our future.



Front Row: Greg Turosak, Jerry Katzmann (President), Ann Hutton (Secretary), Eric Eggler
Back Row: Rob Harveland (Treasurer), Angela Davey, Randy Crawford, Charyssa Cobb, and Gail Bishop (Vice President)

As part of this process the Board has established a **Program and Administrative Coordinating Team, or PAC-Team** to help committees and staff stay focused on the congregation's mission and visions. The PAC-Team is currently staffed by Gail Bishop (VP), Rob Harveland (Treasurer), and Rev. Fritz Hudson. It relies on the visions, policies, and guidelines set by the Board to coordinate and help guide the day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month management of the church, and the team reports to the Board at our monthly meeting.

To date, the PAC-Team has helped the Finance Committee adopt policies for the use (and limits-of-use requiring Board approval) of our Reserve Funds. The PAC-Team has recruited members for open committee chairs and continues to coordinate the quarterly meetings of the Program Council, which is made up of the chairs of all committees and councils. It has inventoried the membership to determine that 80% are involved in at least one type of volunteerism at church, and (with the help of the Program Council) has attempted to reach out to the remaining 20% to invite them to volunteer in some capacity at church.

The establishment of the PAC-Team has freed the Board to focus on longer-term issues. We have initiated one-on-one communication with congregants and are planning small cottage meetings as we move into "stewardship season."

We have identified two visions for this year: 1) supporting young families and youth, and 2) fostering community outreach. We are beginning the process of simplifying and clarifying our bylaws and policies.

"We are a church that rolls up its sleeves and does something when we see something that needs to be done. I feel relaxed in the company of friends and like-minded people. I am proud of the people and activities that we are associated with, and that make our community a better place for all people to live."

As we focus on these issues, we are publishing Board agendas in order to be transparent to church members and to be open to congregants attending Board meetings of interest.

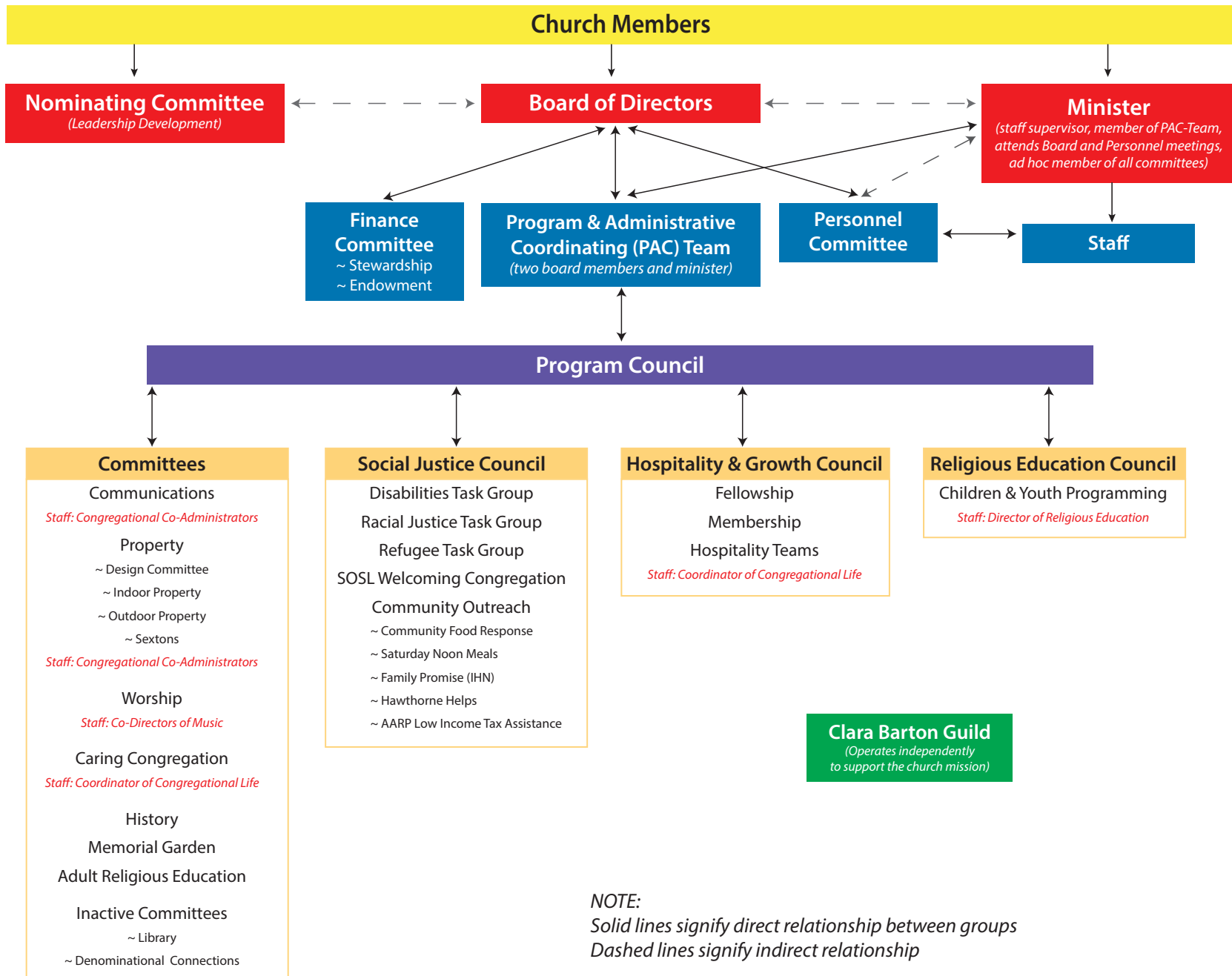
The Board is working closely with our minister in our transition to Policy Governance. As supervisor of the staff and a member of the PAC-Team, the minister is an integral part of our church management. The Board looks forward to our new minister's leadership and collegiality.

~ Jerry Katzmann, Board President



"In the future, I would like a minister that can build on our experiences, actively facilitate our continued growth and does not feel threatened by the knowledge, talent or expertise of congregants and staff."

Our Committees and Councils



Welcome to Our Space



Facilities & Grounds



Our church was designed by Connecticut architect Victor Christ-Janer. Built in 1968 on the side of a hill, it sits on a five and one half-acre wooded lot. It has a flat roof and is covered with concrete shingles. The church spreads out on five levels.

The main entrance opens to a reception area with the administration wing to the right and the Commons down a half flight of stairs to the left. The sanctuary is up a half flight of stairs above the Commons.

The two-story religious education wing is in the rear, and includes a small Children's Chapel.

In 1996, we engaged architect Robert Cline to improve the entrance and make all five levels accessible by elevator. We also installed air conditioning in the sanctuary, administration wing, and reception area.

We invite you to take a (virtual) tour of our building...

"This congregation has brought me and my family in. They have loved us unconditionally. They are concerned about me and who I am. We have received hugs, talks, and genuine concern."





Welcome!

We are glad you are here. When congregants walk through our front doors, they pluck their nametags off the rack in the entryway and enter the reception area. In the cold weather, they stop in the Coat Room, where we just installed a stained glass window to celebrate our 150th Anniversary, made and designed by members of the church.

Visitors are met by a team of Greeters and brought to the Visitor Table, where they can ask questions, pick up information, and sign up for our mailing list. They are directed upstairs to our Sanctuary (accessible by elevator), or to the Hearth Room, where they may listen to the service in a more intimate setting.





Sanctuary

Our sanctuary is up a half flight of stairs, but is also accessible by elevator. We enter from the front on two sides, passing by stained glass windows reclaimed from our previous church, First Universalist. We still use wrought-iron candle holders and an altar table from our old church.

Our sanctuary seats about 152 with adequate space for wheelchair access. The chairs allow for a variety of configurations, which maximizes our use of the space. Both musicians and congregants appreciate the wonderful acoustics. We have WiFi throughout most of the building, and with our brand new sound system and screen, we can use up-to-date technology in our services.



Minister's Office

From your desk, you have a lovely south-facing view of the rain garden below and the steps leading up from the parking lot to the front entrance.

A small couch and two comfortable chairs provide a relaxed setting for pastoral counseling, small meetings, or conversation with congregants.

When your office door is open, you are able to see who is walking down the hall to the main church office. When your office door is closed, you can even sneak cat naps as needed!



Administration Offices

The main church office (top left) is directly across the hall from the minister's office. Jody occupies this office.

Next door is the other Congregational Co-Administrator's office, (bottom left) which Connie shares with her Co-Director of Music, Joe.

From either office, Jody and Connie can keep an eye on who comes in the front door. An outside security camera shows them who is ringing the doorbell when the church is locked, and either of them can buzz in the visitor from their desks.

The Coordinator of Congregational Life's office (above) is located closer to the RE Wing. Sarah has decorated the space with colorful quilts and art to create a cozy and tranquil setting for pastoral counseling.



Hearth Room and Commons

In between services we gather for coffee and social time down a half flight of stairs in the Commons, which is visible over the railings in the reception area.

The Hearth Room, which has a working fireplace and our second grand piano, also makes a cozy place for coffee and conversation. Our sound system brings the Sunday Service into both rooms.



"The people who attend are very committed to social change and making the world a better place. Also, they are fun to be around."





Library and Conference Room

From the Hearth Room, the ramp up past the office of the Congregational Care Coordinator leads to the RE Wing. To the left is a nicely appointed conference room, which doubles as a dressing room for brides when we host weddings.

Next door is our church library, which offers a diverse collection of books for adults and children. Subject matter is aimed at deepening our understanding of Unitarian Universalism, gaining skills in church leadership, exploring social justice issues, and a variety of other topics. The library has comfortable chairs for relaxed reading, or books can be checked out on the honor system.



Entrance to the RE Wing



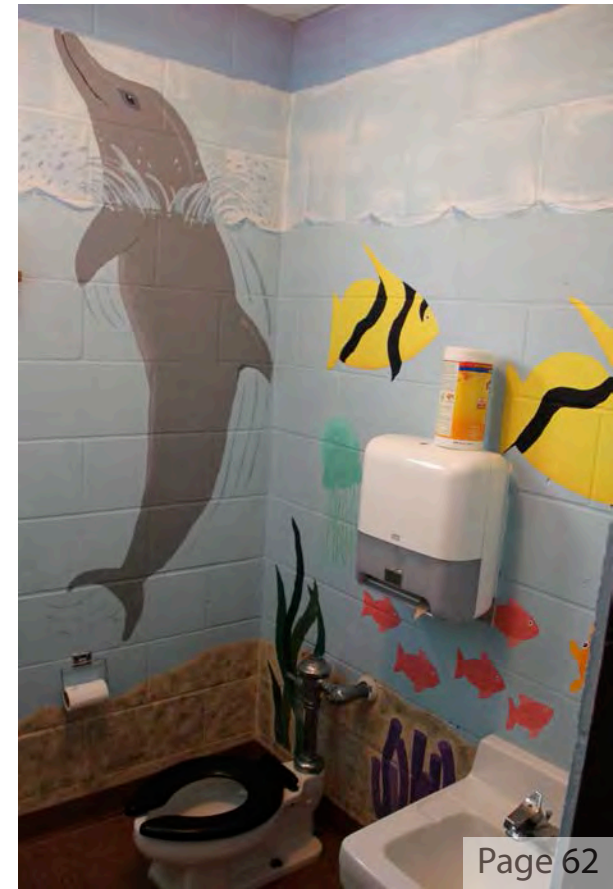
*"I love that my children are welcomed
and loved whenever they
enter the church."*

Nursery

We have an excellent nursery for infants and toddlers. For children ages 6 months to 3 years, childcare is available every Sunday.

Our Childcare Coordinator welcomes children each Sunday and manages the volunteers and youth assistants who ensure the youngest members of our community are cared for in a safe, engaging, and positive atmosphere.

Next door to the nursery we have a toddler bathroom with a tiny toilet. A Coming of Age student and her mentor painted the walls with fish and marine animals years ago.



First Floor RE Wing

Down the hall of the RE Wing is the DRE's office, where Joyce can meet with families or work at her desk and always be close to the action. The three classrooms on the first floor are used for the younger children.





Upstairs RE Wing

The elevator to the second floor opens to a cozy nook where the youth like to hang out, and a hallway lined with book-cases that has been designated the Kenneth Alex Ramage Memorial Archives (KARMA), after a beloved youth who died just after graduating from high school.

Three more classrooms with comfortable couches are located on this floor. The Children's Chapel is at the end of the hall.



Children's Chapel

The Children's Chapel is a lovely space used by the RE youth for worship, and for intimate weddings and memorial services. Church youth created the stained glass window in memory of a teen who was struck by a car. Joe uses the piano here for youth choir rehearsals.



Rain Garden and Courtyard

Our beautiful rain garden was created in 2014--a creative solution to an old problem of erosion on our steep slope, combined with our impervious parking lot. Church member Kay Eberman envisioned a rain garden that would collect storm water runoff and naturally filter it through plants and soil. The project took over a year, and involved 32 volunteers, 535 hours, and 340 plants! This past summer, our rain garden was featured in the Rochester Master Gardeners Annual Tour. For more information, see www.uurochmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/UU-Revue-Spring-2015.pdf

From the garden, a staircase leads up to the back of the Administration Wing to the Memorial Garden and Courtyard.



"I love the warm and caring community at First UU Church. I love the values we espouse of caring for each other, as well as all people of the earth, and the earth itself."

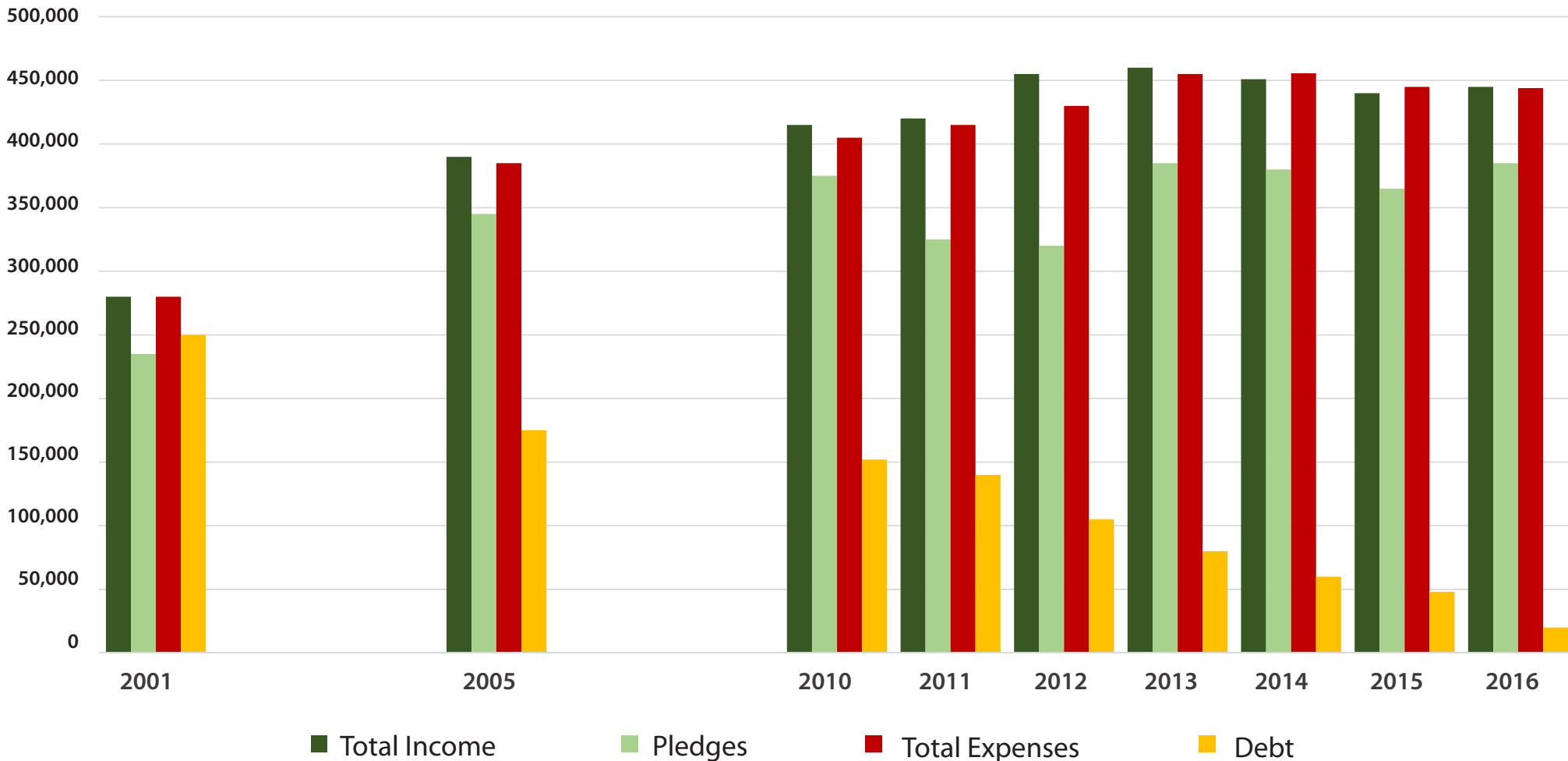


By the Numbers

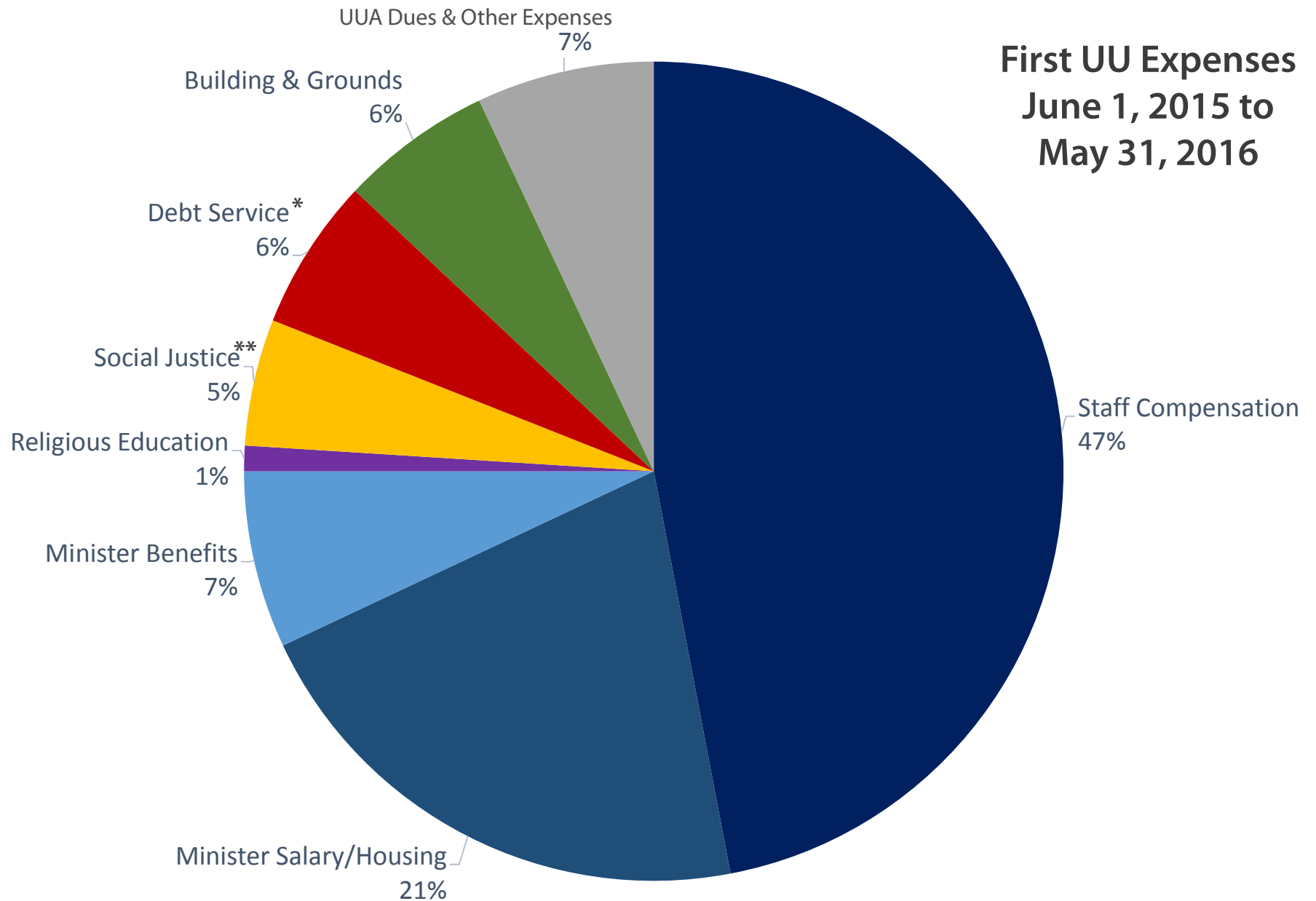
As you can see, First UU has a steady pattern of growth, and our income exceeds expenses in most years.

We stopped being a Fair Share congregation for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 fiscal years due to shortfalls in our fundraising, but for 2016-2017 we approved a budget with Fair Share giving to the UUA. Last fiscal year, all but 3.5% of our members pledged to the church.

First UU Income, Expenses & Debt



First UU Expenses June 1, 2015 to May 31, 2016



*Our debt service will drop to zero this year, since we paid off our mortgage in July, 2016.

**Our Social Justice donations are largely collected from monthly plate donations and special annual service auction donations.

Membership & Attendance



Membership and Attendance

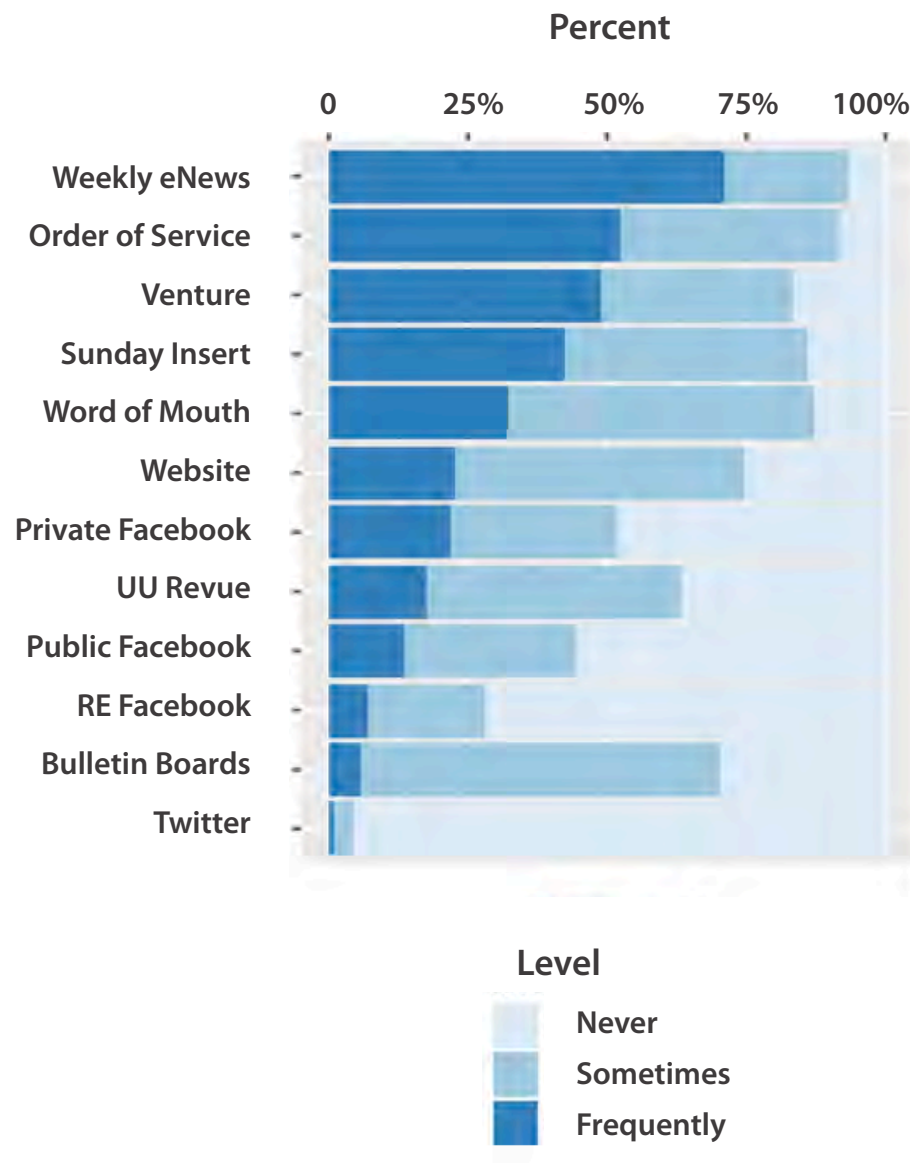
Our membership climbed steadily until 2009, when it peaked at a little over 400 members. We began to see a slight decline from 2010 to 2014, but it has leveled off over the past three years to an average of 350 dedicated members. Sunday attendance in RE peaked in about 2003 and has been slowly declining ever since. However, we are poised for growth this year with a new DRE, clean and redecorated classrooms, and an easy “Take and Teach” plan for volunteers.

How We Communicate

In order to inspire, inform, and invite participation in the life of the Church, we reach out to the congregation through several communication channels. The increasing number and ever-changing modes of communication, together with vast differences in communication preferences, have been challenging for us, because we do not have unlimited personnel and technology resources. We work hard to find the “sweet spot” that enables us to reach the most people in the most effective ways.

It is said that the average person needs to see information three times before they remember it, so we use multiple ways to inform our congregation about church happenings and events. Almost 72% of our survey respondents frequently read the *Weekly eNews*, a Constant Contact publication, which goes out on Thursday afternoons, and another 23% read it sometimes. Half our respondents frequently read our monthly newsletter, *The Venture*, which is also distributed via email (though many still lament that we no longer print a paper version). Half seek information in the Sunday Order of Service, and 25% use the website or Facebook. Rarely do people get their information from bulletin boards. Although few church members use Twitter, we actually have several followers outside of the church, and our 31 Tweets earned 2,383 Tweet impressions in September. We post flyers about fellowship and educational events on the tables in the Commons and throughout the building. Word of mouth is also a valuable source of information for about 30% of our respondents.

We began printing a quarterly magazine in 2015, *UUU Revue*, which does not contain “news,” but rather stories about our congregation. Articles feature the positive work done by First UU members as it relates to our Seven Principles. Since we began publication during the year of our 150th anniversary, we have also incorporated articles about the history of our church. An annual subscription costs \$32. It is also available online at no cost.



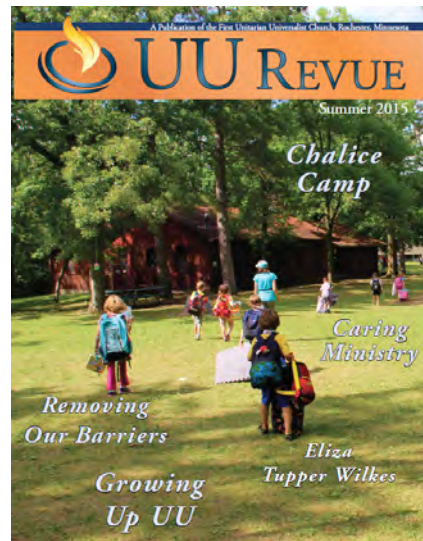
Check out our website at: www.uurochmn.org

Our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/FirstUnitarianUniversalistChurchRochesterMn

Our Twitter account: [@FirstUURochester](https://twitter.com/FirstUURochester)

In addition, we have a private Facebook page for members and an RE Facebook page used to communicate with parents. (Youth prefer to receive their communication by text or Snapchat--this month, at least!)

Here are some samples of our *Weekly eNews*, *UU Revues*, and Facebook page.



Our Mission: To be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice.

Sunday, October 30

Services at 9:00 am and 11:00 am

Nursery care available during service for children 6+mos to 3 yrs old



Times of Turning: in Remembrance
A Full-hour Multi-Generational Service
(No RE for children & youth today)

In this time of All Hallows (Halloween, All Souls Day, All Saints Day) we honor our life-changing memories.

Please bring something small (a photograph? an object?) to display that recalls a time, place or person that re-shaped your life.

Rev. Fritz Hudson and DRE Joyce Rood,
Worship Leaders
Walden Hill Vocal Ensemble
Joe Mish, conductor
Connie Schuelka, accompanist

Congregational Meeting - Bylaws Changes
12:15 pm - Sanctuary

Please attend the specially-called Congregational Meeting to vote* on proposed changes to our Bylaws. It's important that you participate in this meeting, as we work to clean up items in our Bylaws. These changes are intended to bring our written documentation into line with our current practice and, more importantly, make us more attractive to possible ministerial candidates. We will be including these changes in our ministerial search packet.

The Board and the Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee will present seven amendments to the Bylaws to be voted upon. The report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee can be found here: [Proposed Bylaws Changes](#).

Snacks will be provided for adults and children. *Childcare will be available during the meeting.*



Who We Seek

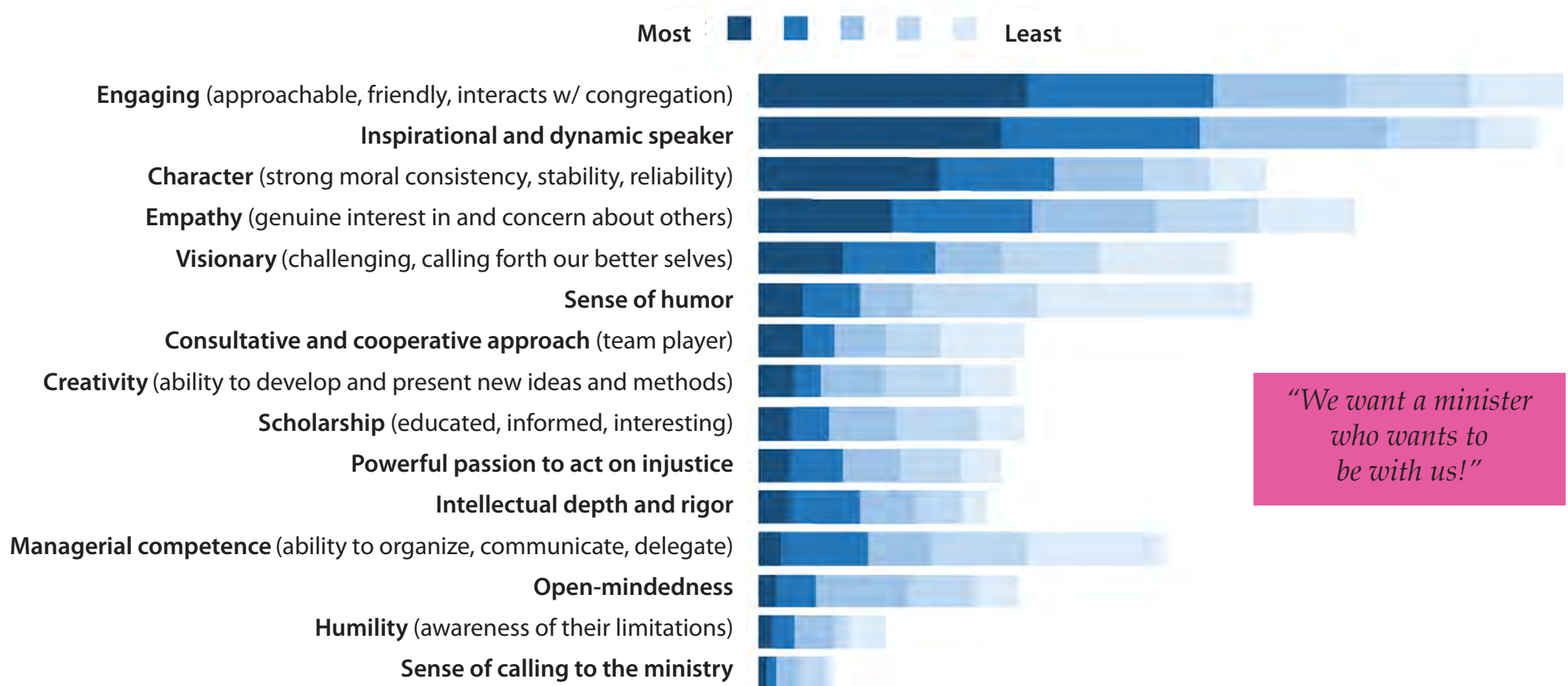


Our “Ideal Candidate”

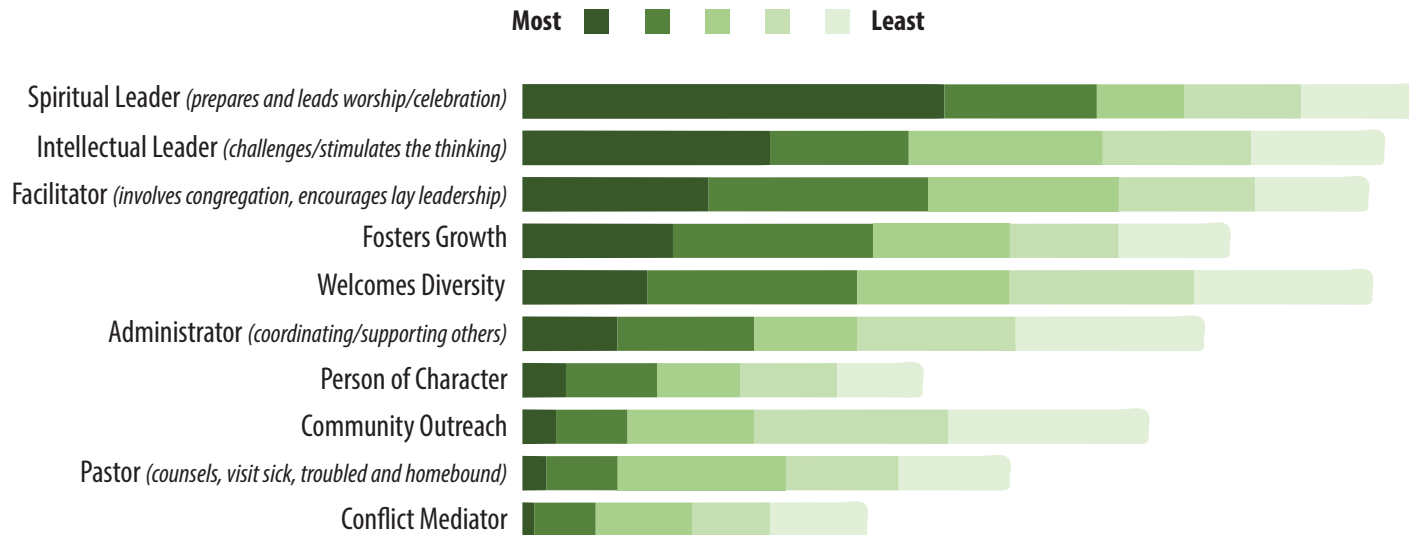
While our survey respondents enjoyed describing their perfect minister (an engaging, friendly, intelligent, inspired speaker and spiritual leader with a sense of humor, deep compassion, and a passion for social justice, who can leap tall buildings with a single bound . . .), we are actually quite realistic in our expectations.

We look forward to working with you and helping you grow in the job, as we hope you will help us to toughen our moral fiber and grow stronger spiritually. Our ability to listen to each other and learn from each other will be key to our solid relationship.

Which of the following qualities do we feel are most important for our congregation’s new settled minister? (Rank)



How important are these ministerial roles to our congregation? (Rank)



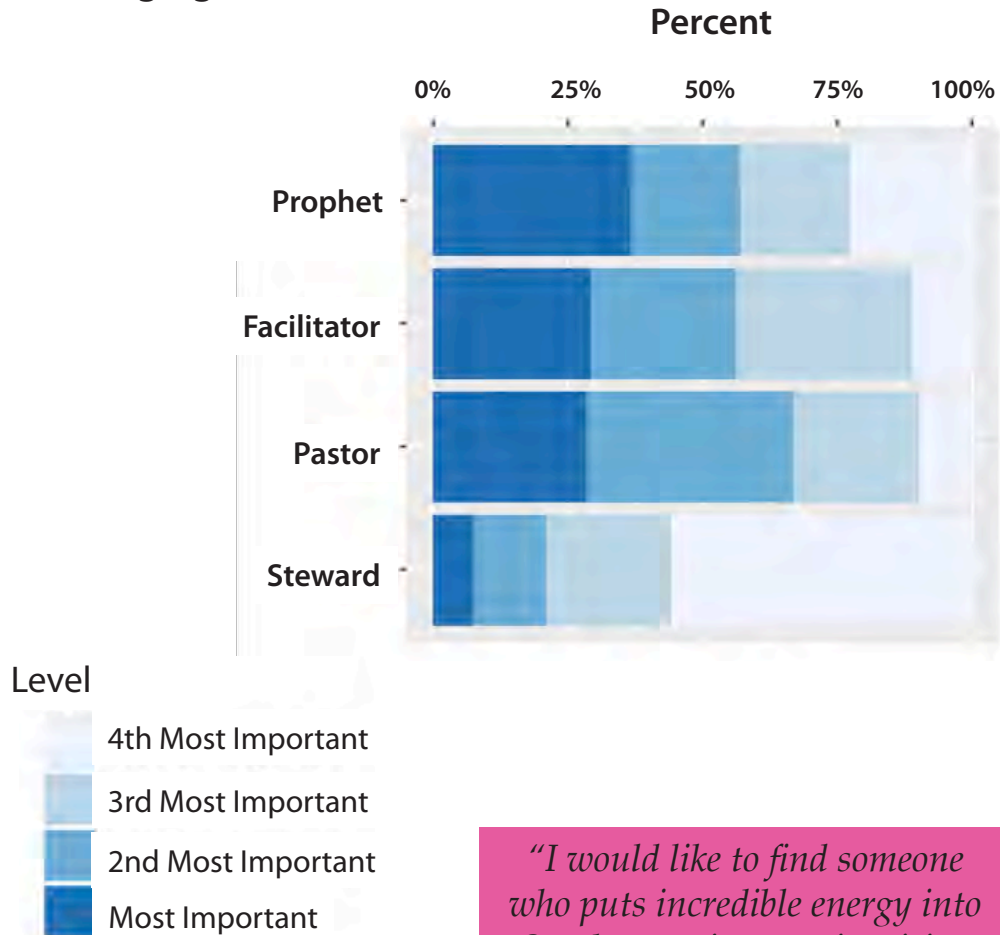
Our Minister's Role

The congregation as a whole seeks a minister to stimulate us intellectually and lead us in our spiritual practice and growth. Older and longer-term members also acknowledge the important roles of a minister in encouraging and supporting lay leaders and effectively coordinating the work of the staff. Younger members hope our minister will help build a stronger, more vibrant congregation.

"Although I have no children in the RE program, I ranked Children's RE & Youth Groups as important because the lack of an adequate program to integrate our youth into our beloved community has had me in tears before. For me it is a critical issue."



What style of ministry do we think is most appropriate for our congregation?



"I would like to find someone who puts incredible energy into Sunday services--an inspiring speaker who genuinely cares about the congregation, and will feel their personal energy replenished by partnering with our strong and appreciative congregation."

Our Preferred Style of Ministry

Preference for a ministerial style also diverges slightly among different age groups. The oldest members feel very strongly that we need a facilitator, the youngest want a pastoral style of leadership, and the middle age group wants a prophet. Recognizing the strength of our experienced staff and lay leadership, all age groups agreed that the least important role we need is that of steward.

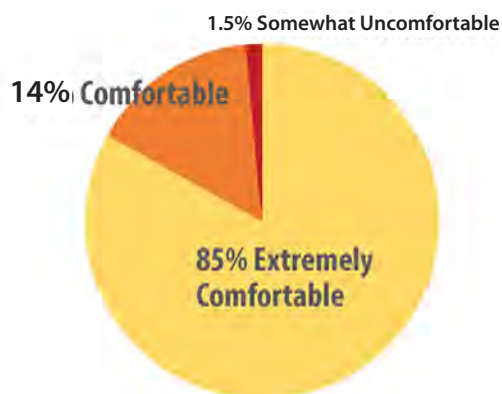


Freedom of the pulpit

Most of us support freedom of the pulpit for our minister on theological and social issues. Although we are aware that ministers do not engage in partisan politics in the pulpit, when a politician crosses a moral line we seek guidance from our UU principles in how to respond.

In 1989, the UUA General Assembly adopted an equal opportunity policy which supports “ministerial settlement procedures without discrimination because of race, color, disability, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, age or national origin.”

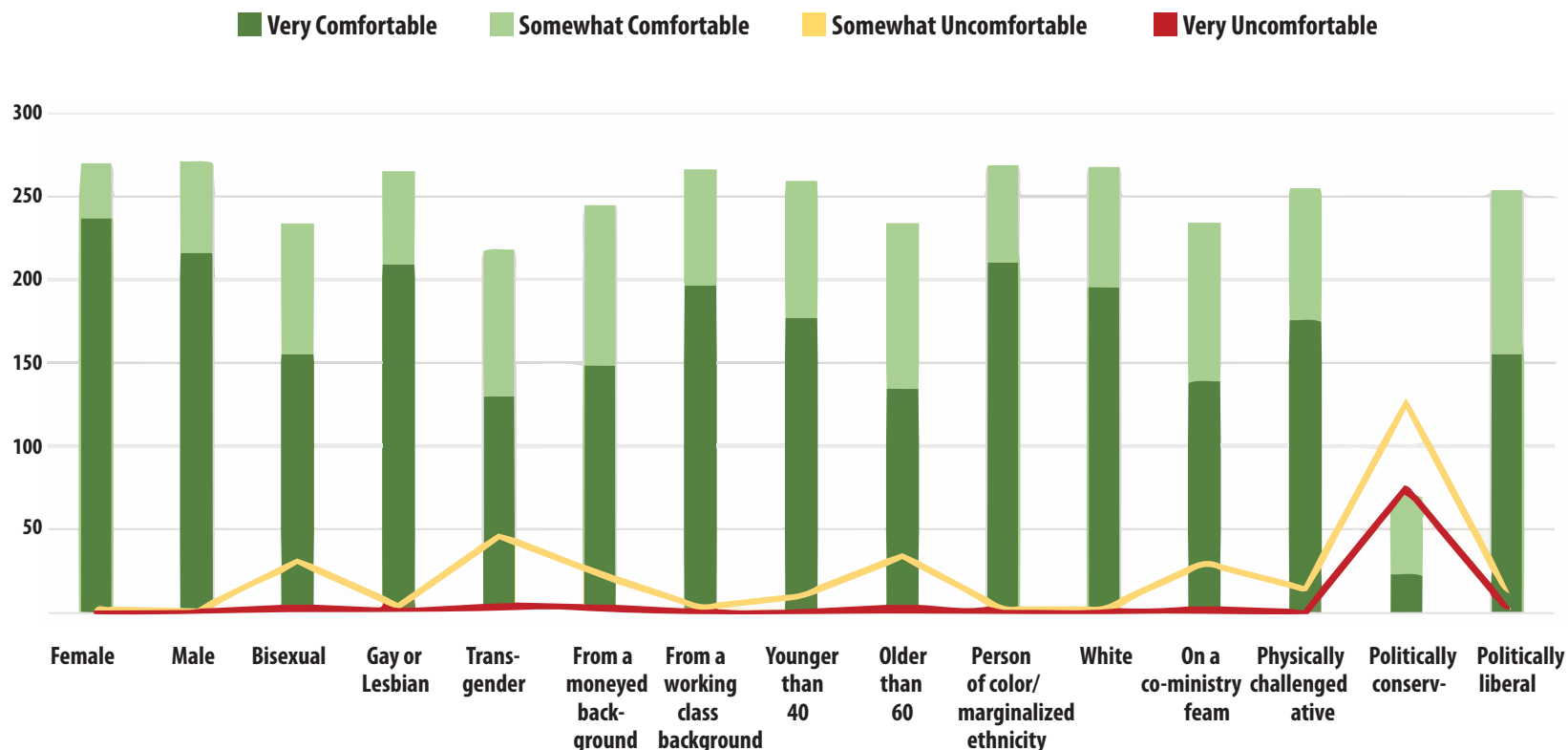
How comfortable are you with the application of this policy in regard to our next settled minister?



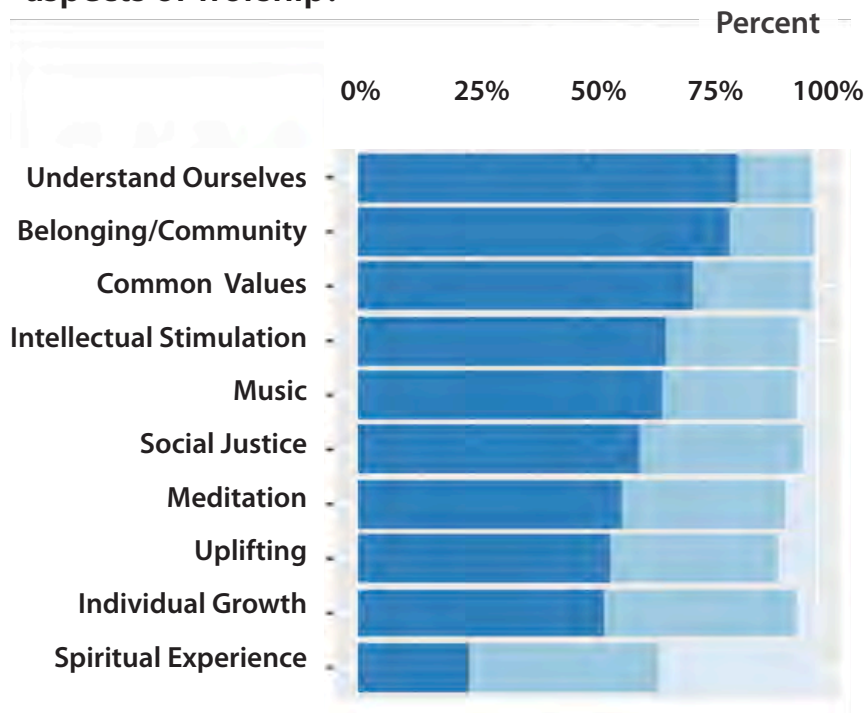
We are extremely comfortable with the Equal Opportunity Policy.

We concur with the UUA’s equal opportunity policy, which supports “ministerial settlement procedures without discrimination because of race, color, disability, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin.” Of those surveyed, 83% are very comfortable, 15% are comfortable, and only 1.5% are somewhat uncomfortable, and the majority of that discomfort would be with a person who is politically conservative. A much smaller number indicated some discomfort with calling a minister who is transgender or bisexual, but further discussions with our congregants revealed that this is mostly due to a lack of information about these issues.

How would you personally feel about our congregation calling a minister who is ...



How important to you are the following aspects of worship?



Our Worship Services

We are comfortable with our Sunday morning routine, but enjoy trying new things and being exposed to different worship styles.

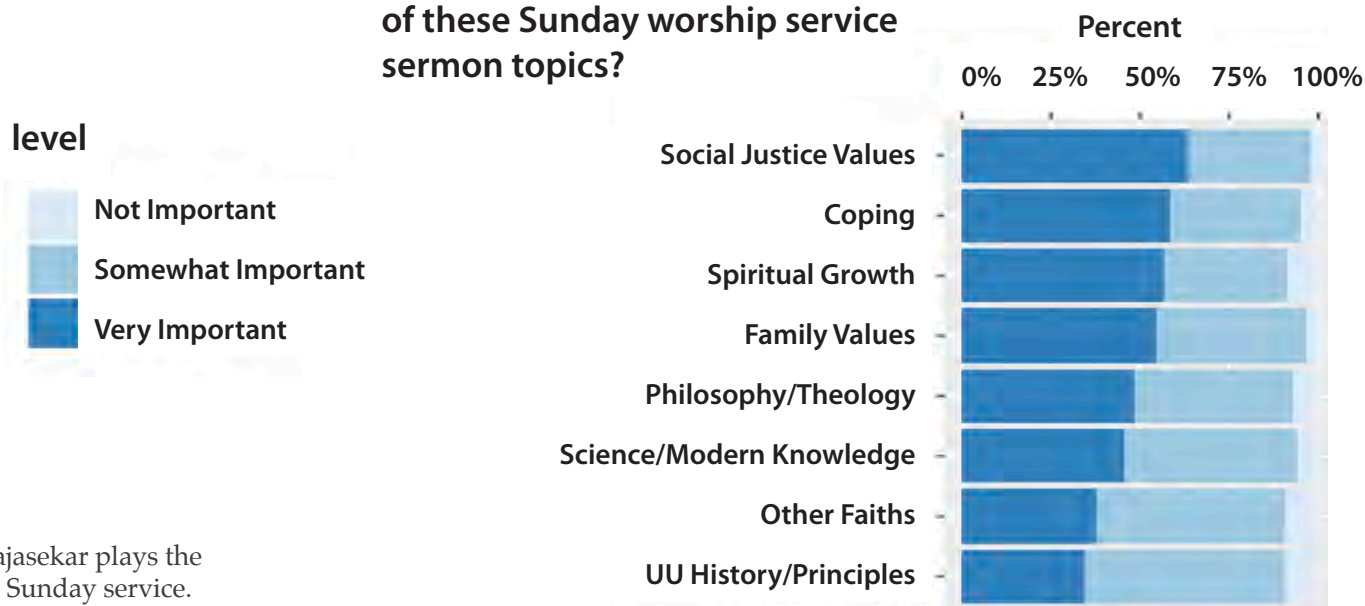
We look to worship for insights into improving our understanding of ourselves, our relationships with others, and how to cope with current events. We appreciate our congregation as a special place where we are able to acknowledge our common values and build community. In consonance with our humanist leanings, most do not look to our services for a mystical experience. The Christian UUs and theists among us long for a little more “God-talk” and mention of Jesus, but the atheists and humanists would be uncomfortable if there was “too much.”

By far the most important aspect of our worship service is the message from our minister, whom we expect to provide direction on our spiritual growth and “give us something to think about and discuss all week.” The second most important part of our service is the music, which is a rich experience indeed at First UU.

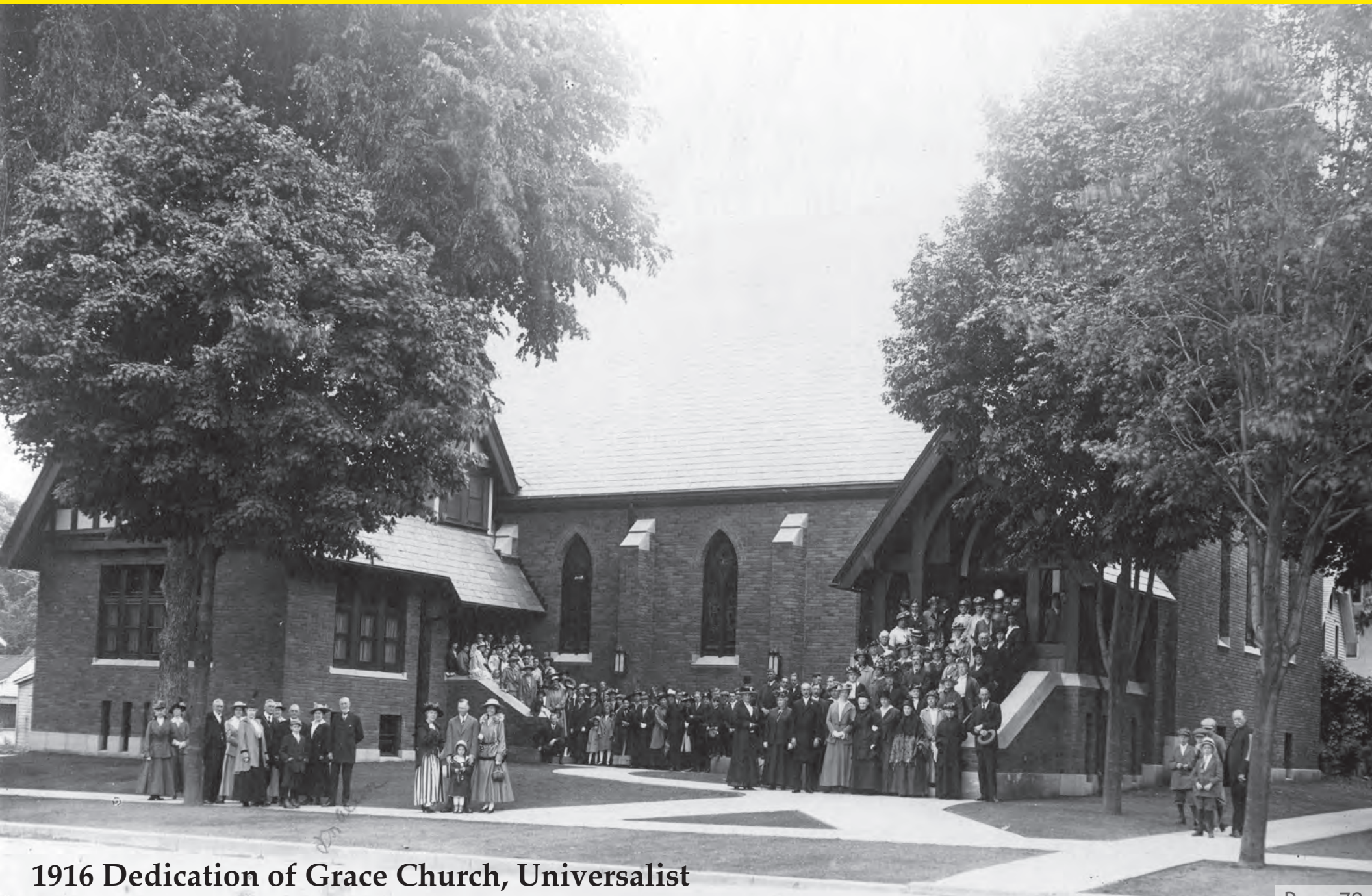


Nirmala Rajasekar plays the veena for a Sunday service.

How important to you are each of these Sunday worship service sermon topics?



Where We've Been / Where We Want to Go



1916 Dedication of Grace Church, Universalist



1990 First UU Rochester Family

"I would like to see our social justice emphasis grow. But I would also really like to see our engagement with other faith communities. We can't do it alone. And a minister who is a leader, out there in the community acting for social justice, would be welcome."



Where We Have Been

For 150 years, we have been a voice for justice and equity in the city of Rochester. Our members have contributed significantly to the community as founding members of civic organizations such as Planned Parenthood, Channel One (food shelf), Family Service Rochester, and our local Diversity Council. Congregants have served as board members of the NAACP, the Public Library, the Rochester Art Center, the School Board, Family Y, NAMI Southeast Minnesota, Gay & Lesbian Community Services, Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association, Rochester International Association, and United Way, to name a few. We have always had members involved in the city, county, and state legislature. We are proud of our involvement in the community, and we want to keep that momentum going.

Where We Want to Go

While our last settled minister helped us grow our social justice ministry as a congregation, we find ourselves on the brink of a new era of political and social uncertainty. We have seen a surge in bullying, mockery, racism, and violent behavior, and we worry for the safety of those living in the margins.

Our members belong to a variety of political parties, and although we may disagree with each other on routes to solving the nation's problems, we all strive to hold the inherent worth and dignity of every person most sacred. We want our new minister to help us understand what is going on in our world and how we can respond with love and thoughtful action to build a more just society. We hope that we will find inspiration in the pulpit, and we promise a posse of committed individuals ready to turn those words into action.

"People want to feel important in the church and acknowledged by the minister."



"This congregation is hungry for compassionate leadership, for inspiration, for a minister who feels a true calling to serve."



What current issues and problems concern us?

We agree that the biggest problem facing our church is the aging of the core leadership, and the challenge we have in retaining new members. Older members are getting burned out and volunteers are hard to recruit, as young families seem busier than ever.

We are concerned about the small numbers in our RE program, and we have already begun to address it. When we lost our Youth Programs Coordinator a few years ago, our youth involvement dropped off in response. A variety of issues in our RE program probably led to a decline in enrollment. But our 2016 Summer DREs worked hard to revise and reenergize the RE program, and our brand new DRE is determined to engage children and parents. She is striving to make RE lessons easier to teach and to involve children more in the church. We are already seeing positive results.

We would also like to be more inviting to people who are socio-economically and racially diverse. This fall, a number of us took a workshop entitled "UU Class Conversations" with the hope of becoming more sensitive to classism. Although we sincerely hope that our new minister will challenge us intellectually, we want to avoid an academic sermon style that might be perceived as elitist, and turn away some of the very people we hope to attract.

"I would like to see a minister who brings the congregation together and inspires members and visitors to become involved. I would like to see a minister who brings joy and enthusiasm to her/his duties but also knows when and how to provide personal words of comfort and empathy when needed."



"My hope is that we are open to accepting a minister who will challenge us to be even more active in addressing the issues that face our world and lead us to embracing the changes that will bring more people into engagement with us and UU principles."

What do we hope our congregation can achieve in the next 3-5 years?

We want to grow. We want to fill our sanctuary with people flocking to hear inspiring sermons, and our RE classrooms with children who are engaged in their spiritual growth and moral development. We envision ourselves reaching into the community and letting people know we exist. "There are many UUs in Rochester who just don't know they are UUs!" exclaimed one survey respondent.

We would like to "be identified as a community of love and justice supporting the spiritual journeys of all," and "be a leader in movements for peace and justice, as UUs were during the 1960s."

All this requires energy, and "a sense that we embody our mission to be a welcoming and inclusive community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice," said one survey respondent, "except that we will inspire spiritual growth and create justice."

And we intend to have a lot of fun doing it!



Where We Live





Visitors relax in the sunshine outside the Mayo Clinic.

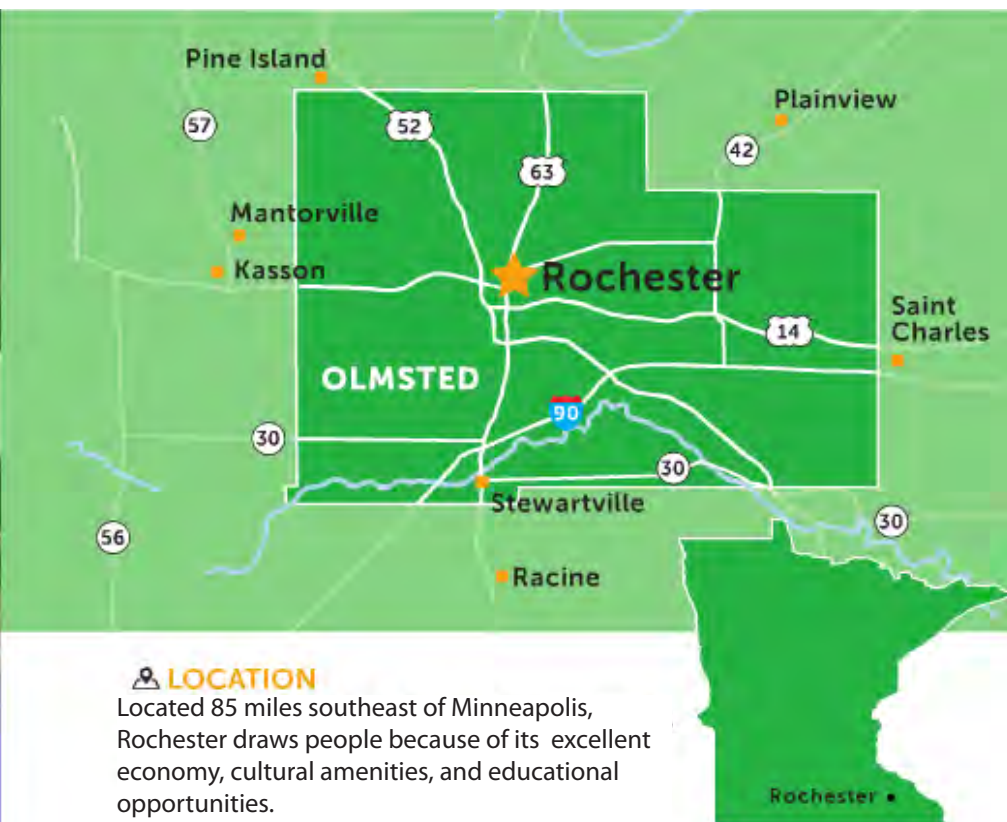
Welcome to our Community!

Rochester is the county seat of Olmsted County, surrounded by beautiful limestone bluffs, remnant prairies, and farmland in southeastern Minnesota. As the home of the world famous Mayo Clinic, our community takes its mission of welcoming and caring for others very seriously.

Recently designated a “Destination Medical Center” by Governor Mark Dayton, the DMC economic development initiative will provide \$5.6 billion in public and private investments over the next 20 years to improve infrastructure, beautify our city, and make it more hospitable to visitors seeking the latest innovations in medical care. People already visit Mayo from all over the world, so Rochester has a small International Airport complete with customs and immigration facilities just 12 minutes from First UU.

Mayo Clinic is not just our city’s largest employer, it is the largest employer in Minnesota. People commute here from all over southeastern Minnesota, as well as neighboring Iowa and Wisconsin. A number of our congregants work in the healthcare field, or in other vocations that support the work of the Clinic, such as the hospitality industry. Many patients come here for long-term treatment, so it is not unusual to find them or their families in church on Sunday looking for spiritual sustenance and connection at a trying time in their lives. Our minister will need to develop a sensitivity to what it means to be part of the larger caring community of Rochester.

Mayo Clinic influences the culture of the city in many subtle ways. Rochester is more international than surrounding communities, with a selection of ethnic restaurants, a handful of mosques, a Hindu temple, two synagogues, and a Buddhist temple. Rochester Public Schools report 80 different languages spoken at home. We also have one of the highest physicians per capita rates in the world, so if you ever find yourself calling for a doctor in the house, don’t be surprised to get multiple volunteers. We also have a steady stream of transient people who are here for training or residencies, who then move on when they complete their programs.



LOCATION

Located 85 miles southeast of Minneapolis, Rochester draws people because of its excellent economy, cultural amenities, and educational opportunities.



Cross-country skiing at Soldier's Field Memorial Park in the middle of town (above) and our Government Center on the Zumbro River (left). Rochester has many attractive neighborhoods (below).



Our Weather

Minnesotans get to enjoy all four seasons. We have stunningly beautiful springs, warm summers (sometimes quite hot and a little muggy in July and August), gorgeous falls, and you can usually count on a White Christmas. We get an average of 53" of snow a year and 33" of rain. Yes, January can be bitterly cold, with an average high of 24 degrees and an average low of 8. But these temperatures give us our bragging rights! We have learned to dress for the weather, and many people enjoy getting outside in the winter to snowshoe, sled, cross-country ski, or even go ice fishing.

Quality of Life

Rochester's population of 112,216 (and 151,436 in all of Olmsted County) is an increase of 34% from 16 years ago. We are growing, and our strong local economy is reflected in our quality of life. Out of 87 counties in Minnesota, Olmsted ranks 5th in adult educational attainment and 9th in median household income.

In 2016, Rochester ranked #1 on Livability's list of "Top 100 Best Places to Live," out of more than 2,000 cities with populations between 20,000 and 350,000:

www.livability.com/best-places/top-100-best-places-to-live/2016

For the second year in a row, CNN declared, "Minnesota reigns as the most kid-friendly state to raise a family, according to an Annie E. Casey Foundation study released in June of 2016.

www.cnn.com/2016/06/22/health/best-worst-states-raise-children

Housing

Compared to the coasts, housing prices are very reasonable: the median home price is \$178,500. For more information, visit:

Rochester Area Economic Development (RAEDI) provides the Rochester Data Book, Community Profile, Salary Survey, Real Estate Market Report and other information for Rochester.

www.raedi.com



Willow Creek Middle School (above);
Riverside Elementary (below).



Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce represents area businesses.
www.rochestermnchamber.com

Southeast Minnesota Association of Realtors (SEMAR)
www.semnrealtors.com

Rochester Public Schools

Rochester Public Schools' (RPS) mission is to inspire, challenge, and empower all students with the knowledge and skills required to reach their full potential, to contribute to future generations, and to become involved members of a global community. To achieve its mission, RPS offers a variety of programs for ages birth to adult.

The K-12 program includes more than 17,000 students in 17 elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. Five of the elementary schools are District-wide choice schools (45/15 year round, Spanish immersion, Montessori, Core Knowledge, and a thematic approach using multiple intelligences) in which enrollment is based on a lottery.

The high schools offer honors classes, post-secondary options, and AP courses. Students can be referred to the Rochester Alternative Learning Center where there are a variety of programs that support students via non-traditional, vocational, and computerized curricula. High school students can also enroll in courses offered at the Career and Technical Education Center (CTECH at Heintz); a collaboration between RPS, Rochester Community and Technical College, Winona State University, and the professional community.

RPS's Community Education offers classes from birth through adult. It also manages School Age Child Care and Hawthorne School, which is dedicated to adult and family literacy.

www.rochester.k12.mn.us

Quarry Hill Nature Center is owned by the City of Rochester. RPS provides partial staffing to provide science enrichment courses for each K-8 student twice a year. www.qhnc.org



College students banding Saw-whet owls with Quarry Hill staff (top); University of Minnesota-Rochester campus (middle); and Chihuly glass chandeliers at Mayo Clinic (bottom).



Colleges and Universities

Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) is one of the oldest community colleges in the country. It offers more than 130 degree options and more than 300 online classes.

www.rctc.edu/about

University of Minnesota - Rochester (UMR) is a small downtown campus of the U of M system, with about 750 undergraduate and graduate students, all specializing in health sciences and biosciences.

www.r.umn.edu/about-umr

Winona State University-Rochester Center (WSU-R) partners with RCTC to enable students to complete bachelor degrees in the areas of accounting, business administration, computer science, education, individualized studies, nursing and social work. WSU-R also offers graduate programs from the College of Education and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

www.winona.edu/rochester/majors.asp

Arts and Entertainment

Rochester has a vibrant and growing arts community. The Rochester Art Center features visual art exhibits by artists from all over the world, but always designates the third floor of the museum to nurture and support Minnesota artists. Many musicians and theatrical productions make Mayo Civic Center a stop on their national tours, and in the summer, our free Riverside Live concert series attracts thousands of concertgoers to the park behind the Civic Center. Several local theatres showcase the acting and musical talent of our community members. We also have our own symphony, the Rochester Symphony Orchestra & Chorale, and a Children's Museum--pretty impressive for a town this size!

The community enjoys coming together weekly in the summer at Thursdays on First & 3rd Summer Market and Music Festival, which blocks off a couple of streets downtown for over 100 food and craft vendors, with three stages for music and dance. In February, we look forward to a two-week concert festival called WinterFest, and



A local band plays at Thursdays on First & 3rd (above); the Rochester Art Center (left); and UU Anne Black-Sinak displays her art at a local gallery (above).

SocialICE, which features outdoor ice bars where people can go to enjoy live music outside.

Exploring outside of Rochester yields some delightful surprises in the region: fabulous art, quirky concert venues, and internationally famous theatre. And at the end of the summer, almost two million people will make the pilgrimage to St. Paul for the Minnesota State Fair, dubbed “The Great Minnesota Get-Together.”

Visual Arts:

Rochester Art Center
Minnesota Museum of Marine Art

www.rochesterartcenter.org
www.mmam.org

Theatres:

Rochester Civic Theatre
Rochester Repertory Theatre:
Absolute Theatre
Mantorville Theatre Company
Guthrie Theatre
Children’s Theatre Company

www.rochestercivictheatre.org
www.rochesterrep.org
www.absolutetheatre.org
www.mantorvillain.com
www.guthrietheater.org
www.childrenstheatre.org

Music:

Rochester Symphony
Orchestra & Chorale
Rochester Chamber
Music Society
Lyra Baroque Orchestra
Riverside Concerts
Folk Forum
Crossings at Carnegie
Choral Arts Ensemble

www.rochestersymphony.org
www.rochesterchambermusic.org
www.lyrabaroque.org
[www.rochestermn.gov / music-riverside-concerts-1513](http://www.rochestermn.gov/music-riverside-concerts-1513)
[www.oakcentergeneralstore.com / folk-forum](http://www.oakcentergeneralstore.com/folk-forum)
www.crossingsatcarnegie.com
www.choralartsensemble.org

Family Fun:

Minnesota Children’s
Museum Rochester
Minnesota Renaissance Festival
Minnesota State Fair Rochester
Trolley Tours
Water Ski Shows

[www.mcm.org / visit / rochester](http://www.mcm.org/visit/rochester)
www.renaissancefest.com
www.mnstatefair.org
www.RochesterMNTours.com
[www.fishermaninn.com / events](http://www.fishermaninn.com/events)



Chester's outdoor dining patio at the Galleria (above left), A to Z "Pizza Farm" (above right), and the Mayowood Trail in May, when the bluebells are at their peak (below).



Food Scene

Rochester's popular Farmer's Market runs weekly from May through October, and then moves indoors every other week for the winter. It serves as a community gathering space, as well as a great place to pick up fresh organic produce, baked goods, and local cheeses.

www.rochesterdowntownfarmersmarket.org

Dining out in Rochester gets better every year as the variety of ethnic and locally owned restaurants and pubs has increased. A special trend in this part of the country is "Pizza on the Farm"--homemade pizza baked in woodfired ovens and topped with the farm's organic produce and meats. You can taste it at the nearby Squash Blossom Farm, Dream Acres Farm, or A to Z Produce and Bakery across the Mississippi in Stockholm, Wisconsin.

Parks & Recreation

Rochester is home to over 100 city parks and playgrounds, including three city-owned golf courses, and maintains over 100 miles of off-road trails for walking, biking, or inline-skating. The city has several indoor facilities, such as the Rec Center (swimming and ice skating), the National Volleyball Center (yes, NATIONAL!!), Pipsqueaks (Indoor Play Zone), and the Plummer House (a historic home with a ballroom and gardens, rentable for events.) There are many organized sports leagues for youth and adult recreation, including active adult single-sex and co-ed basketball, softball, soccer, hockey, and tennis leagues.

www.rochestermn.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation

Just outside of Rochester, some of our favorite parks include:

Chester Woods, 15 minutes east, is a 1,000-acre county park with a lake and campgrounds. Ideal for hiking, swimming, canoeing, and birdwatching, with one of the largest native prairies in the state.

www.co.olmsted.mn.us/pw/parks/chesterwoods

Oxbow Park, 20 minutes west of Rochester, has 620 acres of native woodland and prairie, and a zoo featuring animals native to Minnesota, including black bear and buffalo.

www.co.olmsted.mn.us/pw/parks/oxbowpark



UU's Biking on the Douglas Trail overpass (above), and fall colors from Inspiration Point at Whitewater State Park (below left). Squash Blossom Farm in Douglas (bottom right) serves pizza on Sunday afternoons, making it a popular destination for bikers in the summer.



Douglas Trail, a 12.5-mile level, paved path from Rochester to Pine Island, for walking, biking, and inline skating.

www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_trails/douglas

Root River Park, 20 minutes south of Rochester, is a tidy parcel of 125 acres along the beautiful bluffs of the Root River for hiking, relaxing and picnicking.

www.co.olmsted.mn.us/pw/parks/rootriverpark

The Region

Southeastern Minnesota is known for its verdant rolling hills and the beautiful Mississippi River Valley that borders our state. Many parks and outdoor opportunities invite your exploration further afield.

The Root River in SE Minnesota is an easy river to canoe, kayak, and tube. It features 45 paved miles from Fountain to Houston.

www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_trails/root_river

Carley State Park, half an hour northeast of Rochester, is especially known for profuse bluebells and wild flowers in the spring. It also has hiking trails, campsites and the Whitewater River winding through it.

www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/carley/index.html

Whitewater State Park, half an hour east of Rochester, features over 2,000 acres of limestone bluffs, ravines, hiking trails, camping sites, and great trout fishing.

www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/whitewater





UUs canoeing in the iconic Boundary Waters Canoe Area (above), and Target Field (below), home to the Minnesota Twins.



Boundary Waters Canoe Area: Over a million acres of lakes and forest for camping and canoeing along the Canadian border, this iconic park has come to symbolize Northern Minnesota. Worth the six-hour drive!

www.bwca.com

Minnesota Sports

Whether you are a sports fan or not, *some* of your congregants are quite serious about their teams, and don't even dream of scheduling a big event when the Vikings are playing.

The Minnesota Vikings play at the indoor US Bank Stadium, which opened in fall of 2016. They have played in four Super Bowl games.

www.vikings.com

The Minnesota Timberwolves play in the newly renovated Target Center in downtown Minneapolis.

www.minnesotatimberwolves.org

The Minnesota Twins won the World Series Championships in 1987 and 1991. They play in downtown Minneapolis at Target Field.

minnesota.twins.mlb.com

The Minnesota Wild play at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

www.nhl.com/wild

The Minnesota Lynx play in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and have won three National Championship titles. They play at the newly renovated Target Center.

www.lynx.wnba.com

Minnesota United is a professional soccer team with plans to build a new soccer stadium in St. Paul. They hope to start playing in 2017 at the US Bank Stadium at the University of Minnesota

www.mnufc.com

The Rochester Honkers is a collegiate summer baseball team that plays in the Northwoods League at Mayo Field in Rochester.

www.northwoodsleague.com/rochester-honkers



The corn-shaped water tower that stands at the Seneca Foods packing plant is a Rochester landmark.

Rochester: Acknowledging the Challenges

The DMC initiative holds great potential for transformational and intentional development. However, this very growth brings challenges for our city* that engage our liberal and compassionate congregants.

The last three decades have seen an influx of younger, less affluent families, including families of color in our city, which our schools have not handled well. Although our schools are generally ranked very highly, the federal Office for Civil Rights is working with our public school administration to resolve a compliance review that found unequal disciplinary action against Black and Latino students. Our Racial Justice Task Group has collaborated with other community groups to support positive changes in policy. In collaboration with the local NAACP, congregants are volunteering in the elementary schools to support minority students in learning to read--a small effort to help close the well-documented education achievement gap in Rochester.

Our church has also hosted workgroup meetings for In the City for Good, a community initiative formed to bring the voice of citizens into the development process, advocating for such issues as affordable housing and multi-modal transportation options.

These are some of the ways in which our church members recognize that Rochester reflects the larger struggles within the U.S. for a more just society and play a role in advocating for social good. We hope that a our new minister will be excited by our dynamic community and energized by the prospect of helping us to shape and improve it.

*For more information about the demographic and economic challenges facing our community, we recommend the PDF on Olmsted County's future trends from our own Phil Wheeler, former Planning Director of the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department: "The Future is Gaining on Us."

www.co.olmsted.mn.us/yourgovernment/demographics/Documents/The%20Future%20is%20Gaining%20On%20Us.pdf



Why You'd Want to Join Us



Root River Park, 20 minutes from First UU



Why Rochester?

Rochester, Minnesota, is a mid-sized city located in a beautiful part of the world, with a strong economy and world class health care. Living is relatively easy from day to day. Rush hour lasts for about 10 minutes each morning and afternoon and it takes no more than 10 or 20 minutes to drive anywhere in city limits, yet you can be in Minneapolis-St. Paul in only an hour and a half.

Yes, we get snow in the winter, but our city keeps the roads cleared quickly so patients can get to the Mayo Clinic. It takes a lot to shut us down. We have only had to cancel our Sunday services a couple of times in the last 25 years.



Left: Summer view fom the Minister's parking space.



UUA President Rev. Peter Morales pictured here with Rev. Fritz Hudson celebrating the installation of our 150th Anniversary stained glass window in April 2016.

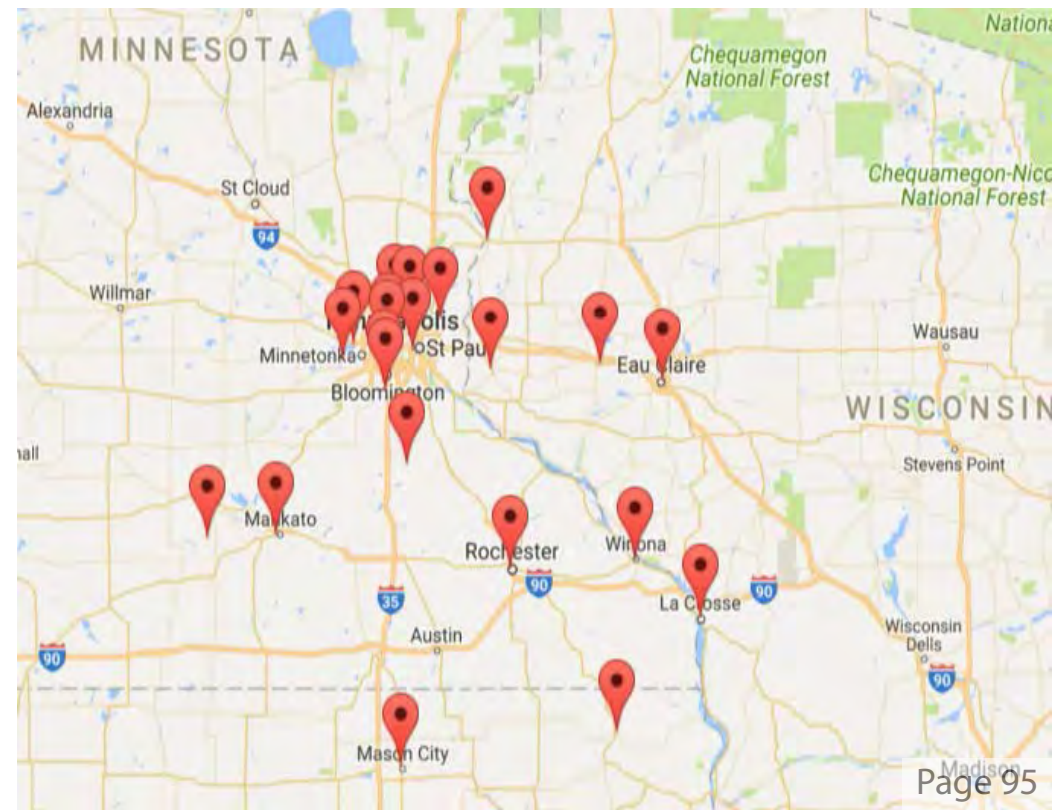
Where are your colleagues?

A quick search of the MidAmerica Region website turns up 22 UU congregations within 100 miles, from tiny fellowships of a dozen or more to the flagship churches of our denomination, Unity Church Unitarian in St. Paul with 870 members, and First Universalist of Minneapolis, with 934. The president of the Prairie Star chapter of the UU Minister's Association is the Rev. Jen Crow, Executive Minister of First Universalist in Minneapolis, whose letter appears at the beginning of this packet.

When our last settled minister suffered an injury and went on extended medical leave, UU ministers from the area took turns pitching in and preaching in our pulpit. You will be part of a very supportive network of colleagues!

In addition, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities is 90 miles north of Rochester. United was chartered by the United Church of Christ (UCC) as "an ecumenical seminary that would embrace the universality of all Christian denominations and include faiths outside of Christianity." Many UU ministers begin or continue their ministerial studies there, and a handful of UU ministers are among the Adjunct Faculty.

Visit www.unitedseminary.edu to learn more.



There are 22 UU Congregations within 100 miles of Rochester, Minnesota.

Top Ten Things We Do Exceptionally Well



10. We are very friendly and welcoming.

Most people comment on the welcoming embrace they find here. We were also one of the first churches to receive our Welcoming Congregation designation back in 2001.



9. We are a UUA Fair Share Church.

Although we had to drop our dues for a couple of years due to financial strains, we are back in good standing. Yay!!

8. Our music program is marvelous!

We have wonderful music staff, a talented choir, and access to a variety of local and national touring musicians who come to perform at Mayo Clinic. We also have fabulous acoustics.



7. We are a creative and artistic bunch.

We count among our members a number of professional artists and musicians who enrich us with their time and talents.



6. We have a strong and talented staff.

Our staff gets along well and enjoys working as a team. We have a couple of new additions this year, but some have worked together for a long time, and friendship and familiarity pay off.

5. We have a well-functioning and visionary Board.

We have made great strides in implementing Policy Governance this year and increasing communication and transparency between the Board and the congregation.



4. Our Chalice Camp is amazing!

Our camp has given children ownership of our church, youth a path to becoming counselors and young leaders, and it has been a great source of outreach in the community.

3. We practice Social Justice with gusto!

We enjoy the shared spiritual practice of acting on our UU Principles, and our church leadership makes it easy to step in and work on a variety of good causes.



2. We are in \$olid financial \$hape.

We have a well-maintained building on beautiful grounds. Last spring we kicked off a \$150,000 Jumpstarter Campaign for our 150th anniversary (clever, right?) and exceeded our goal by \$20,000!



And the #1 reason you'd want to join us??

1. We take care of our beloved community.

And our ministers have always been a part of that community.

In uncertain times, it is important to know that we will be there for you.





Thank you for
considering our church!

The Ministerial Search Committee
First UU Rochester

Dave, Mary, Robin, Amy, Judy, Aleta, & George

We would like to thank the many congregants who contributed to the making of this packet:

Paulette DeMers, for her countless hours of graphic design work; Beth Atkinson for her statistical analysis; Angie Joyce, Kathy Brutinel, Ron Chrisope, Melissa Eggler, Barb Foss, Jennifer Harveland, Amy Nelson, Robin Taylor, George Thompson, Sue Wheeler, and many others for their photographs; and Ramona Barr, Kathy Brutinel, Jodi Edmonson, Phil and Sue Wheeler for providing extraordinary editorial assistance.



