

Two congregations, one big breakfast

Speakers from each to share at meal

By Kate Day Sager 4/3/13
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ALLEGANY — For seven months, the First Presbyterian Church of Allegany and the Unitarian Universalist congregations have shared space under the same roof, but haven't had opportunities to socialize or learn more about each other.

That will change later this month, however, when the two groups host a joint pancake breakfast in the church.

Sadie Jay-Edwards, a member of the Universalist group, said the breakfast will be at 10 a.m. April 21, between the two groups' services.

Mrs. Jay-Edwards said the breakfast will be held after the members of the Presbyterian congregation finish their regular 9 a.m. service and the Unitarians begin their 11 a.m. service.

"We will enjoy the hour-long breakfast with speakers from each congregation sharing with everyone," she said, noting the special speaker for the Universalist group will be Karen Dau.

She said Ms. Dau is the historian of the First Universalist Church in Rochester and will share the part that the Universalist Church played in local history." Her presentation is titled "Old Universalism in Cattaraugus County."

"This really sounds like a fascinating talk that many people in the area might find interesting and want to join us," Mrs. Jay-Edwards said. "We also welcome those who would enjoy a good pancake breakfast" before or after attending one of the services.

Rosanna Bonfilio, a Universalist member, said she and the other members of her congregation have enjoyed having services at the Presbyterian church the past several months.

fast for the two groups to bring people together.

"We even invited them to come (to our congregation meeting) and see what our services are about," Mrs. Bonfilio added. "(The Presbyterians) asked us to explain what we are about."

Mrs. Bonfilio said the local Universalists are a small group with a core membership who regularly attend meetings held at 11 a.m. the first and third Sundays of each month.

"We even have a member whose family went to the Presbyterian Church and now are attending our services," she said. "We love people to come in and find out what we're about."

Ms. Enderson said she is looking forward to the breakfast and learning more about the church's new tenants.

"We'll be hearing from them and what they're all about. I'm anxious to attend," Ms. Enderson said of the Universalist presentation.

"We believe both groups will participate and make this a real joint effort. We'll also make sure everyone mingles. I think it will also be good for the public to see how people can work together."

She said a Boy Scout group also has been using the church building since the holidays, and other entities have inquired about setting up operations at the facility.

Mrs. Jay-Edwards said other upcoming Universalists' events include:

► **Sunday** — Presentation by Joann McAndrew of the Mental Health Association in Cattaraugus County; and

► **April 26 and 27** — District Assembly 2013 at the Niagara Falls Convention Center. This year's theme is "Out of Bounds: Moving Beyond Our Boundaries." The program is a joint activity.

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Rosanna Bonfilio, a Universalist member, said she and the other members of her congregation have enjoyed having services at the Presbyterian church the past several months.

"I thought it was so cool to have that space," Mrs. Bonfilio said. "Since we started attending (the church), we have been talking about the two groups getting together with a potluck dinner" or other meal.

She said Barb Enderson, a member of First Presbyterian, suggested the pancake break-

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(Contact reporter Kate Day Sager at kates_th@yahoo.com)