

convenient access for those parking on Morven and walking to church.

Walking up the stone path across the Lower Parking Lot and towards the church, two rows of oaks line the entrance from Aberthaw Road. Along the wooden stockade fence is a selection of sedum with interesting leaf forms and color variations. In warm months, plants rim the parking lot – cotoneaster, iris, poppy, sedum and tulips.

The Front Entry Courtyard welcomes us as we end our tour. Beds of daffodils and myrtle surround the Kwansan cherry trees. Containers filled with summer flowers provide an attractive display throughout the growing season. A Sculpture Garden to the right of the entrance features work by various artists.

This concludes the walking tour of the Gardens of the First Unitarian Church.



### **Additional Comments:**

To view the Gardens throughout the seasons, check the church's web site: [www.rochesterunitarian.org](http://www.rochesterunitarian.org). Under Our Ministries and Activities, click on Building and Grounds, then, Our Landmark Site.

If you are interested in learning more about the work of The Gardeners, contact Nancy Koch, Coordinator, 624-3958.

Contributions to the Landscape Fund are always welcome. For information on Memorial opportunities, call the church, or Dick Fitts, Chair of the Landscape Team, 586-1936.

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## A Self-guided Walking Tour through the Gardens of the First Unitarian Church



The extensive garden areas that surround the First Unitarian Church, a world-class building designed by Louis Kahn, were developed over the past thirty years, largely through the efforts of Madlyn Evans. Recently a comprehensive landscape plan was developed with the assistance of local landscape designer, Stuart MacKenzie. Volunteer gardeners provide the majority of the care of the Gardens.

## Where to begin:

A stone dust pathway with handrails leads downhill from the parking area at the south side of the building. A wood chip path also leads down the slope through the Upper Shade Garden. Here you will find bleeding heart, goatsbeard, hosta, lilies, myrtle, rhododendron, Solomon's seal and trillium.

The path continues down towards the gently curved Memorial Wall, a gathering place for services of marriage, commitment ceremonies, child dedications, worship and memorials. Over one hundred families have chosen to have the ashes of their loved ones scattered throughout the Garden. On the Wall is inscribed the phrase, "*To live in hearts that love is not to die,*" words that express a Unitarian Universalist view of life and death. No individual markers are found in the Garden. The names of the deceased, and a page about each one, are found in the Susan B. Anthony Lounge in the church.

A handicap accessible path makes easy access to the Wall from the lower parking lot. A bench near the wall bears a plaque: "*To be is to be for others - Richard and Joyce Gilbert -Thirty-two years of service.*"

Next, the wood chip path divides, the left branch passes by the three Peace Cairns symbolizing the human desire

to build something from the "rubble" of violence and war. The right branch of the path curves around the Middle Garden, passing the lacy Japanese maple collection and a massed planting of Oregon grape holly.

The paths meet at the grassy area where one of the several benches in the garden provides a welcome opportunity to rest. Here, one can look back and see the impressive design of the church building. To the right you can view the stone dust path, flanked with Stewardia trees, winding its way towards Nunda Boulevard.

Looking to the left, one sees a Dawn redwood and a copper beech situated on the East Lawn. This is the planned site of summer musical performances and outdoor worship services. To the right, is "*The Lady with the Veil*" by local sculptor and church member, Patrick Kester, the first of a series of sculptures we plan to add to the Garden. An Art in the Garden group was recently formed to guide the selection and placement of additional art throughout the gardens.

Shortly after the "*Lady,*" the path leaves the lawn and descends into the Lower Woodland Garden. Immediately on the right is a bench which bears a plaque, "*In recognition of Madlyn Evans' Vision and Dedication.*"

The Lower Woodland Garden is a serene deep shade area in its natural state, covered with forget-me-nots, hosta, sweet woodruff and violets. If you go to the right, you will see the beginning of the Pine Grove with several Lace-bark pines and Green Giant arborvitae. Straight ahead is the Hollow, with bird friendly ground cover, shrubs and small trees. A contemplative space, this is the eastern most point of the church grounds.

To the left, the path approaches the Labyrinth, the outline of which is defined by bricks embedded in the lawn.

The bank to the left is the Sunny Slope – a Butterfly Garden. The hillside features unusual flowering trees and shrubs in the springtime, surrounded by colorful perennials, including butterfly bush, daylily, lilac, iris, redbud, and viburnum. Just to the right, is the special Monarch Garden, a registered Waystation for monarch butterflies. An assortment of the monarch's favorite plants and shrubs provides them with a welcome destination.

A stone dust path leads down to Morven Road. At the foot of the path is a Rock Garden with blooms of the season – ajuga, iris, phlox, lilac, redbud, Rugose rose, Solomon's seal, and various annuals. The path provides a