

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit

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Detroit, MI 48201

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April 16, 2006

First Unitarian Universalist Church
Organizational Chart 2006-2007

Officers

Moderator
Jim Harvey
Vice Moderator
Dan Wiest
Immediate Past Moderator
Colleen Dolan-Greene
Board Secretary
Donna Walker
Treasurer

Staff

Interim Minister
Rev. Diana Heath
Minister Emeritus
Rev. Larry Hutchison
Director of Religious Education
Jennifer Teed
Music Director
Todd Ballou
Choir Accompanist
Janice Berry
Church Secretary
Wendi Winston
Building and Grounds
Joe Brimmer

Trustees

Lencha Acker
Alicia Biggers
Jim Brown
Linda Darga
Carolyn Ludwig
Mary Lou Malone
Jackie McNaughton
Irene Schultz

Newsletter Editor

Irene Schultz

Upcoming Services

Services begin promptly at 11:00 A.M.

Sunday, April 30, 2006 Big Music Sunday
Come and celebrate the 90th birthday of our Skinner Organ and Sanctuary at this all music service. See a more detailed program elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Sunday, May 7, 2006

Volunteer Recognition

Sunday, May 14, 2006

Mother's Day and Flower Communion
Please bring a flower



Newsletter Deadline:

The deadline for printed material is **Sunday, May 7, 2006** no later than **12:30 P.M.** or the following **Monday no later than 5:30 P.M.** for electronic material. Articles may be emailed, by the deadline dates and times, to ieschultz1945@yahoo.com If you email items they **must** specify they are for the Newsletter.

Minister's Musings

No Column

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness we report the death of long-time church member Cheaber Farmer. Cheaber died on April 16th and will be greatly missed.

Committees & Organizations

Book Group

We will meet again on Sunday, May 7th at 1:00 P.M. Our reading selection is *Saturday* by Linda Lay Schuler. Please come prepared to discuss the book and bring a snack to share.

Choir Schedule

Rehearsals are on Sundays beginning at 9:30 A.M. in McCollester Hall, unless otherwise noted. The schedule is as follows:

April 30 and performance on the 30th.

(May and June subject to change)

May 7, 21, 28 with performance on the 21st.

June 4 & 11 with performance on the 11th.

Thank you to the choir for volunteering to support our coffee hour the month of April.

Fundraising

Fifteen of us went to the Detroit Reparatory raising at least \$150.00 for the church budget. On an added note, I have a nice set of dresser drawers for sale. Any monetary contribution to the church is the price I'm asking. It is 1960's Mediterranean style and is currently taking up space in my garage that will be used for future garage sales. I also have two nice camping backpacks – one with the \$25.00 price tag still attached and a rowing machine. I need some help on weekends carrying things from my basement to the garage. I also need help on the days of the sale. Customers have a hard time believing the garage sales are fundraisers for the church when quite often I'm the only one working. Thanks to Janet Thompson, Jean Slazer, Janice Berry, Nicole Kozub, John O'Connoer, my sister's neighbor Julie and Ivan Cotman, the Bendures, as well as anyone else I overlooked, for contributing to this years sale. Margaret Beck

Holy Conversations

Holy Conversations will continue on alternate Sundays with the next meeting on April 23rd. We are grateful for your enthusiastic participation. Lencha Acker, for the Holy Conversations group.

Announcing

There is a congregational meeting scheduled for April 30, 2006 following the church service.

Music and Organ Tour Mark 90th Anniversary of Organ and Building Sunday April 30

On April 26th and 27th, 1916, Ernest Skinner's opus 233 4-manual organ was dedicated at the First Unitarian Church with a series of three organ recitals given by Mr. Gaston M. Deithier. Today this instrument remains the oldest unaltered Skinner organ left in the world, still in remarkably good condition without ever being restored. Of course it was installed in a brand new building, which remains the home of a remarkable congregation. We will celebrate the 90th anniversary of all of this on April 30, 2006 with a musical celebration!

The service will feature several selections from our choir, congregational singing, several quest vocalists, and of course as much organ repertoire as possible. Included will be the Finale from Widor's Fifth Symphony, which is characteristic of the repertoire on Mr. Deither's recitals. This is an excellent opportunity to invite guests to our church to enjoy the music.

After the service, and after the brief congregational meeting...and after you have a chance to grab some cookies and coffee, a tour and description of the historic organ will be presented by organist Todd Ballou at approximately 12:45 P.M. in the Sanctuary. Children are welcome with adult supervision.

Thank You...

Bob and Arlene Teed would like to thank everyone for the wonderful send-off party and cards. Their new address is 5455 Wild Oak Dr. – E. Lansing, MI 48823. Phone is 517-333-3514.

LOST

If anyone finds a pair of prescription sunglasses (last seen in a cloth “Machu Picchu” case) please call Marilyn Mitchell.

Editorial – by Lee Thume (a member since the late `60's)
Our Constitution? Are We Heading in the Right Direction?

While I appreciate the enormity of the task of reviewing/revising our governing documents, comparing the proposed Constitution and By-Laws to the 1997 version raises some troubling questions as to the direction in which the church may be heading. Some drastic changes are being suggested that may not serve us and that could result in our losing some of the democracy we so highly treasure.

As we are the **first** Unitarian Universalist church historically, it behooves us to retain as much of the UU tradition as is compatible with our current mission. When I read the existing documents, I was both surprised and impressed with how well some of what I consider to be our UU values was stated. I can see no reason to change those parts and thereby sacrifice some of that cherished heritage. This applies to the suggested change of adding a covenant of right relations. Our existing constitution contains under Purpose a succinct and thoughtful covenant in the form of our seven UU principles, which in my view covers “..right relations” and much, much more. What could be more relevant and fitting than for the historic first ever UU church to have such a wide-reaching and universally accepted document as its covenant? And, closely related, I liked the article on being inclusive as being a part of the Constitution. The word inclusive seems appropriate for an association of independent seekers, being

related to our first principle. (I don't think that economic status was included in the `97 version, though physical challenge and age (which are not in the proposed version) were mentioned. All of these need to be included.

A radical change being suggested is the identification of an Executive Committee within the Governing Board: It seems that this subcommittee would in fact have the deciding power of the Board, consisting of a majority of 5 out of 9. Then, with the requirement of a 2/3 majority of the entire Board to reverse any decisions made by this committee, the question arises as to why the other Board members need to be elected at all. Such a structure of the Board suggests decisions being made in secrecy, behind closed doors, rather than in open discussions with the wisdom and input of all elected officers and trustees being brought to bear. Such an approach seems out of harmony with our 5th UU principle and our policy of open Board meetings. It might be well to mention this policy somewhere in our document.

There is the matter of changing RE Committee membership from elected to Board-appointed status. Such an action would tend to erode the congregation's concern and interest in the RE program, which is so vital to our church and any growth possibilities we might have. Most importantly, it would seem like a further diminishing of our democratic process, since those most vitally involved would have less of a voice in what happens in religious education in our church.

These questions are most disquieting to me. If we degrade the democratic process under which we have been functioning, we will lose something very precious and uniting. We may also lose more church members who may not be able to accept giving up the voice they have had in their beloved church. Let's don't throw out the baby with the bath water, as the saying goes, but be sure to hang on to the good things and the good people that we've got.

From the Black Concerns Working Group

Thursday, April 13 was the last day of the Spring Fund Raiser at WDET. Our young people from the church were Pledge partners taking calls. Ed Love (Destination Jazz program) announced our names and our church over the radio. We thank everyone from the church who made pledges (and there were quite a few). Our diligent volunteers were: Sandra Thottakath, Mark Schwing, Mary Lou Malone, Glenn Maxwell, and Dr. James Robinson. Mildred Robinson – Chair

The Black Concerns Working Group Presents

A Be-Bop Jazz Concert

Sunday, May 21 at 4:00 P.M. at First UU Church in Detroit. This concert features James Wendell Robinson (son of Mildred and James) on drums, Claude Black on piano, Peter Domingus on bass, Derrick Gardner on trumpet and Steve Woods on sax. Donation is \$25.00 per person – children under 12 - \$5.00. The price includes an afterglow. For more information call 313-833-9107.

Save the Date – May 21 – 4:00 P.M.

2006 PeaceBuilder Celebration honoring Dr. Eugene Perrin and Jennifer Teed will take place at Focus: HOPE, 1400 Oakman Blvd. Detroit, MI. The speaker will be the Honorable David Bonier – member of U. S. Congress, retired. For more information call 248-548-3920.

Position Available

A part-time consulting minister position is available in Troy, MI. We are eager to fill this position by the summer. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 248-656-7526 if you have any questions. Diane Young



UU History in Detroit

Compiled by Alma King

In the spring of 2005 Ann Harvey and I began putting the church's archive/records in order after many years of neglect. Some material had not been organized since the 1970's. Other items had been searched, pulled out, but not replaced properly. We still have much more to do. I have always been fascinated by Detroit history and now the history of UU's in Detroit. From time to time, I would like to share some of what I find so interesting.

In January of 2006 the church received an email from an Allison Stuart Todd asking if we had any information about her great grandfather, the Rev. Reed Stuart. He was the Unitarian minister in Detroit from 1886 – 1909. She shared that she has a gold watch of his that was presented to him by the Unitarian congregation in 1906. It still works and she keeps it in a safe deposit box! I had no clue as to who Reed Stuart was or if we had any information about him. After all, he was from another century and he preached in other buildings – one of which is long gone and the other long abandoned. I did find some information about him. Wendy copied some items and I sent them on their way to Mrs. Todd a.k.a. "Taffy", located in Vermont. Taffy was very happy to receive the information because she has been working on her family history.

The following is from the thank you note she sent with a \$50.00 donation..."Dear Alma, Once again thank you so much for your help. The items you sent me have given me a lot of new information. As you said, they have also given me a view to the kind of man my great-grandfather was. I was also able to see in the program from the 1906 Celebration that my other great-grandfather, Elijah Wood Meddaugh, was a trustee in 1886 when Reed Stuart came to the church. Now I have new mysteries to solve about connections, etc. I hope someday, before too long, to get to Michigan and Illinois to try tracking the family in the places they lived. When I do I will certainly come to the UU

church and introduce myself. Though Reed Stuart preached in the “old” church I am sure his spirit is with his congregation which stretches over many years. I enclose a small donation. I wish it could be more. I would like the donation made in gratitude to you, Alma, and used for whatever in needed – from paper clips for the office to a bit of a help defraying some expenses. I know that’s how my great-grandfather would have wanted it. Gratefully, Taffy”

The “program from the 1906 Celebration” she refers to is a copy of a copy of the 1906 celebration of Reed Stuart’s 20 years at the Unitarian minister in Detroit that I found in the archives room. It seems likely to me that Rev. Stuart was given the gold watch as part of the celebration of his 20 years of service. Curious to me is the fact that we have a copy of the celebration program event, but not the original. So where is the original from which the copy was made? Hum, yet another mystery!

Next time: What I have learned about Reed Stuart.

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C

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May Birthdays

- 5. Mary Lou Malone
- 7. Alma King
- 8. Jerry Mitchell
- 10. Mary Li Secrest
- 11. Joe Brimmer
- 16. Rick Robinson
- 17. Andee Seeger
- 29. Valerie Lauer

Items From the Internet

Male or Female?

Tire – Male – Goes bald and often over-inflated

Sponges – Female – They’re soft, squeezable and retain water

Hot-air balloon – Male – To get it to go anywhere you have to light a fire under it, and of course, there’s the hot air part

Hourglass – Female – Over time the weight shifts to the bottom

Hammer – Male – Hasn’t changed much in the last 5000 years but handy to have around