

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit

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March 29, 2009

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First Unitarian
Universalist Church
Organizational Chart
2008 – 2009

Officers

President

Alicia Biggers

Vice President

Dan Wiest

Immediate Past

President

Linda Darga

Board Secretary

Alma King

Treasurer

Sharlene Gage

Staff

Minister

Rev. Drew Johnston

Minister Emeritus

Rev. Larry Hutchison

Minister of Faith and Development

Rev. Athena Kolbe

Assistant Minister

Rev. Lynda Smith

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Cantor

Gwen Foss

Office Administrator

Linda Kernohan

Building & Grounds

Joe Brimmer

Leonard Swint

(Sunday)

Trustees

Trey Greene

David Lingholm

Bill McKnight

Dessa Cosma

Newsletter Editor

Ryan King

DREW'S VIEWS

This column is a simple list of "Did You Knows?"

Did you know that there is an energetic group working to revive the use of Pullman Hall? The once fabulous room well hidden under the Social Hall has not seen a lot of action in recent years. Planning and work have begun to refresh the space and arrange for movies, other performances, perhaps artwork, and just maybe a space that will be as busy or busier than you can imagine.

Did you know that pledging this year comes with a money back guarantee? Congregations aren't immune to hard times, but individuals are more vulnerable. Many churches look to cut operating costs and reduce staffing and programming when times are tough. In a contracting economy, the churches that thrive may well be the ones that reach down and increase their pledging levels. The other option is to cut staff and program to match declining institutional income --- a downward cycle. How can we call forth a greater contribution to the church at a time like this? How about a money back guarantee? At the last regular meeting of the Board, your Trustees decided that future pledges you make will be met with a pledge from the church to refund what you have paid if you lose your job during your pledge year. There are reasonable details involved, but the simple system idea is that you can pledge as if your job is stable, and the church will be here for you if your job disappears. I applaud your Trustees for this outreach to those who support the church!

Did you know that the first ever International Transgender Day of Visibility is about to occur and we are taking a significant part in the event? As part of our effort to understand forms of marginalization and oppression and how such forms are linked together in many ways, your Social Justice Committee and Membership Committee are helping to bring some attention and understanding to this particular area. The International Transgender Day of Visibility has originated right here in the Detroit area and events will be occurring through the world. Although the exact date is March 31st, we will be using the weekend of April 18th & 19th.

Did you know that there is a new way to use the alarm system? We have just had our alarm system reprogrammed so that it will be much more user friendly and provide greater security to our building. One of the realities of having a large facility in an urban setting is that we have to tend to security and monitoring of the space at all times. The main part for most people to know about is that warning noises from the keypads indicate that the alarm is about to sound if a proper code is not entered. This could result in a visit from armed police officers who probably have better things to do than respond to false alarms. So, if you believe you should have access codes please let the office know immediately.

Obviously we cannot issue codes to every person or it would be the same as not having an alarm system at all. But if we work together we can make our space more usable and safer. Stay alert for more information about these and other events and changes at our church! It is a great time to be a part of First Unitarian Universalist and I am glad you are here!

See you in church-
Reverend Drew

Rev. Lynda's Lyrics

The First International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women was held in Houston, TX (2/26-3/1). I was lucky to attend with three church members, Alma King, Carolyn Ludwig, and Mary Lou Malone. The themes that emerged over the four days covered a range, from education and health care to violence and discrimination. Just what you would expect. Two unexpected and welcome themes were: 1) we do not impose our values on our good intentions; we ask what would help—what most needs doing; 2) gratitude to coalitions of women and men doing such work. These arose from the commitment to right relationships. In fact there was a Right Relations Team of nine women who were available to speak with and who reported to the convocation once a day to let us know when something has gone wrong and how they hoped the community would respond. The report also identified what went well and we could feel good about. The goal of such a team and report is to support respectful communication and accountability. There were issues of unintended oppression and hurtfulness that came up. These were addressed openly because fighting oppression involves taking risks. When we fear doing just the right thing, we may not speak up when we see oppression. And since all the members of the Right Relationship Team wore rainbow stoles they were easy to identify. Right relations and anti-oppression work had rainbows to help us learn from each other in this difficult work.

Rev. Lynda Smith, Assistant Minister

Note from our President: You're Invited!

I would like to invite you to **our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, May 31, at 1 p.m.** in McCollester Hall. All members and friends of First Unitarian Universalist are welcome to attend; however, to be eligible to vote at the meeting, you must be a member who has made a donation of record during the twelve months beginning June 2008.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Alicia Biggers

Membership Committee Meanderings

The Membership Committee tries to stay as busy as the rest of our church members! We meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7 pm right after Vespers. We now welcome another new member of our committee, Dan Rebb, who joined the church last fall.

On 3/1/09, we held another UU Orientation led by Rev. Drew Johnston, which was attended by about 14 people. As a result, Kathleen and Robert Johnson signed the membership book, so please welcome them as the newest official church members.

For any of you who were previously members and want to reinstate your membership, please talk with the Rev. Johnston on how to best do this. We welcome all our new visitors and members and encourage you to become involved in whatever aspects of church life that pique your interest.

And remember that the 4th Wednesday of every month is Game Night, so bring your favorite board game or deck of cards, plus snacks if you wish, and join us in McCollester Hall after the Vesper service.

We have recently heard from some former members and wanted to share their greetings with all of you. If you want more information about these folks, please contact Sally Borden. Susan Miller-Anderson remains in Dearborn and we invite her to return to a more vital church. Charlotte Allen sends greetings from Falls Church, VA and hopes to visit us soon, and long

time member, Helga Herz,, who moved to Silver Springs, MD., says she thinks of First UU often.

Sally Borden

Ways to Help Out!

All who can, please put Saturday, May 2nd on your calendar for a Church Work Day. There are jobs both inside and outside that can be done!

Don't forget to check out the *Volunteer Table* in McCollester Hall during the Social Hour after Sunday Worship. It will give you an easy way to see what needs to be done to keep the church running smoothly. Think of these as opportunities, a way to get to know other interesting people who come to church.

There is a *Volunteer Log Notebook* at the table to make it easy for you to record what you've done. This will give us some data for grant writing and information for the next people who step in to give you a break or an opportunity to try something different.

Rev. Lynda Smith, Assistant Minister

Easter Breakfast Announcement!

YES FIRST UU'ers THERE WILL BE AN EASTER BREAKFAST! So mark your calendars and whet your appetites. Continuing our new tradition from last year (Earl and Ann Harvey can't be convinced to leave Florida early) we'll be serving various Brunch Casseroles, bowls of assorted fruits, waffles and pancakes (courtesy of Alicia Biggers and Lee Gaddis) sweet rolls, cereal, juice, and coffee. We'll begin serving at 9 am to accommodate choir members and continue until 10:30. Cost is \$10... but we have a few scholarships if need be. All you need to do (and we know this is asking a lot) IS TO MAKE A RESERVATION IN ADVANCE. Please call the church office or speak to Al Acker or Maysel Brooks during coffee hour at church or email Al at ackera@hotmail.com by Thursday April 9. We look forward to seeing you there!

Maysel Brooks and Al Acker, Easter Breakfast Co-Chairs

ORGAN CONCERT at 1st UU Church of Detroit

Saturday, May 9 7:00 PM

Here's something fun to do on Mother's Day weekend! Todd Ballou and Linda Kernohan will present a program of music featuring our Skinner Organ. Music by Bach, Gershwin, Holst, Moussorgsky, and more! Interesting stories and trivia about our 94-year old instrument will be included. \$10 suggested donation at the door. Additional information, call the church office at (313) 833-9107.

Todd Ballou

FREE EXERCISE OPPORTUNITY!

April 4, 10:00 AM We are seeking able bodies to help with some moving projects at 1st UU Church. Work will include moving furniture-sized items. Lunch will be provided to offset any possible benefit of the exercise. For additional information, contact Todd Ballou at (734) 276-2110.

Todd Ballou

"Finding the Burnett Heart" Theatre Ticket Fundraiser



Some of us enjoyed the play, *Radio Gulf* at the **The Detroit Repertory Theatre** (www.detroitreptheatre.com, (313) 868-1347) Sunday, March 22. The play was a four star play and was well attended and so enjoyable. \$80 was turned in to our treasury.

I am planning another fund raiser at the Detroit Repertory Theatre to see *Finding the Burnett Heart* by Paul Elliott Out of the Closet for Saturday, April 18th at 3 pm. tickets are \$15 with the church earning \$5. I have 11 tickets but could possibly get more. I'll be selling them at coffee hour or you can call Margaret Beck (313) 882-7775 or email margretbeck@comcast.net.

The story is about Tyler Burnett, a teenager having to share his bedroom with his 80 year old dying grandfather who seems to base his life on making others miserable. During one of their exchanges, Tyler forces the grandfather to face that his first son, Jimmy, was gay. In reacting to the old man's homophobia Tyler defends his Uncle Jimmy and loses his entire support system. Hope you can come and enjoy this wonderful little theatre. We can go out to the *Traffic Jam* for dinner if enough would like to go. You can also enjoy homemade soup, cookies, soft drinks and wine at the theatre. It opens one hour before the show.

Margaret Beck

Additional donors needed for Blood Drive

The date of the blood drive at 1st UU has not been confirmed by the Red Cross pending a need for additional donors. The likely time will be 12-8pm, so if you work 9-5 your donation can be accommodated. The Red Cross has recently informed us that a minimum of 70 donors are needed and approx. 47 have signed up to donate. Please sign up at the Blood Drive table in McColleston Hall after the Sunday service, or contact Nora Holt, Ruth Seifert, or Yvonne Fowler.

Ruth Seifert- 313-340-0671

"About Us"

This is part of an ongoing series of profiles of members of 1st UU Church of Detroit.

"My mom was teaching herself to play the piano when she was pregnant with me; you could say that I was destined to become a musician from the womb." said Linda. If you heard her play organ and/or piano on one of the three Sundays that she has played in church since September '08, you heard how masterfully she plays. She started playing at about age 4, when she was able to climb up on the piano bench.

Linda was raised as a Missouri Synod Lutheran in Napa, California, where her mother, was employed by her church for 20 years as the church secretary. (Linda now performs that job at our church.)

Linda graduated from U. of C. Berkeley with a B.A. in Music and studied Piano and Composition there. She then majored in Music Composition and obtained her M.A. at New York University.

Linda returned to California and entered the Ph.D. program in Music Composition at U.C. San Diego, and she has completed 90% of the program.

She has written music for many different orchestral instruments as well as piano, chorus, and voices - ask her about the THERAMIN.

In 2003 Linda journeyed to Rome with a Catholic choir and played the organ at St. Peter's Cathedral at the Vatican. She has also served as church organist for Lutheran and Episcopal churches.

In 2006, Linda and Brian McMichael were married the day after he graduated from Medical School at U.C. Irvine. A week later they drove to Michigan, and settled in Detroit last year. Dr. McMichael is presently a resident at Detroit Medical Center.

While in college, Linda began questioning her church's theological teachings, and exploring other religions. In Michigan, she attended Detroit's Still Point Buddhist Temple.

The couple will be moving to Boston in July, and Brian will be training in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Linda hopes to teach at the college level and to become involved with Boston's classical music community.

Linda is a vegetarian and enjoys cooking, and arts and crafts such as decoupage, papier-mache, and acrylic painting. Her cat, Piccolo, keeps her company while she enjoys non-fiction books. You can check out her music project, where she wrote a short music piece every day for a month, and posted it on her website: 30 Days Project at missmusicnerd.wordpress.com.

Linda says, "I find people here to be friendly and welcoming; they speak to each other on the street. I can connect with people here in terms of shared values, and I will certainly miss the First U-Uer's of Detroit."

Mary Neale

Ross Fowler Donates Flag

Many have noticed the new American flag that drapes so beautifully at the left chancel steps in church. This flag was provided by Retired Commander Ross Fowler, and is a gift from the 182nd M.L.R.S. National Guard Unit. We appreciate that Commander Fowler realized that it was time to replace our old flag, and he took action.

The United Nations flag on the right side of the steps was given many years ago by long-time member Elizabeth Weideman, who is now deceased. Has anyone thought about replacing it?

Mary Neale

Sending Your Thoughts to Benita Mullins

We miss long-time member Benita Mullins and she misses us. This winter, Benita moved to Skokie, Ill. to be close to her daughter, Wendy Mullins (who was in our church school). Benita can be reached at:

8124 Keystone Ave.
Skokie, Ill. 60076
313-331-6448

Elayne Sikelianos is in touch with Benita, and assures us that Benita looks forward to hearing from her 1st U-U friends.

Please contact me if you have news about any First Unitarian-Universalist member of friend that you would like to see in our newsletter.

Mary Neale

Invitation to WhaleCoast Alaska 2009

WhaleCoast Alaska 2009: The WhaleCoast Alaska registration deadline has been extended to April 15. Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to experience our program featuring UU homestays, Native Alaskan culture, bears, whales, and other wildlife. For more information, visit www.whalecoastak.org, email dfrey@whalecoastak.org, or call 907-322-4966. Alaska UUs would love to share our awe-inspiring state with you!

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for printed material is Sunday, April 26, 2009 no later than noon- or the following Monday, no later than 9:00am for electronically submitted material. Please send articles to the Newsletter Editor at newslettereditor@1stuu.org. Your feedback is welcomed in the spirit of liberating truth, radiating kindness and loving courageously.

LIST OF UPCOMING EVENTS ON FOLLOWING PAGES

Upcoming Faith Development Activities

Note: This is a selection of upcoming R.E. Activities. For a full listing of church events, please read the articles above, and, please visit the 1st UU Church of Detroit's website and check out the events calendar at <http://www.1stuu.org/calendar.php>

Unitarianism in Transylvania: A Story of Strength and Endurance

April 1st (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit

The responsible search for truth and meaning, for freedom in matters of faith has been planted far and wide, but the seed planted in Transylvania has endured for over four hundred years. Transylvanian Unitarianism has weathered many storms and, in spite of often unfavorable conditions, continues to grow in strength and beauty. Explore the history, culture, and contributions that the Unitarian community brings to the international movement of Unitarian Universalists during this informal workshop.

The Big Dance

April 5th (Sunday) 1pm until 8:30pm – Detroit Riverfront (East of the RenCen)

Join us for an afternoon and/or evening of live music include performances featuring Fergie, Staind, Gym Class Heroes, Janelle Monáe, and Parachute. This event is free!

Meditation Workshop

April 8th (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit, Memorial Hall

Meditation is a universal spiritual practice. The physical, psychological and spiritual benefits are now even documented scientifically. In this workshop we will explore several ways to meditate--silent, guided, walking, chanting. There will be time for practice and time for well-balanced discussion. This free workshop will be held 7pm - 8:30pm the 2nd Wednesday of January & February. The workshop will be facilitated by Rev. Lynda who is the Assistant Minister at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit and a Buddhist Teacher.

UU Community Passover Seder

April 11th (Saturday) 6pm – First UU Detroit, Memorial Hall

You are invited to the fifth annual UU Community Passover Seder. Join us in this holiday meal as we celebrate liberation, justice and peace for all! People of all ages and faiths are welcome. The evening features dinner, an interactive social justice themed passover seder, and, of course, four glasses (or more!) of wine... Attendees are asked to RSVP if possible to the church office or by emailing re@1stuu.org and to either bring a dish (we will give you the recipe of needed dishes) or contribute \$8 per adult/\$4 per child towards the cost of food.

Theology Roundtable

April 15th (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit

Spend an evening discussing topical theological issues. Explore and clarify your own beliefs. This is a drop in group and is open to everyone who wants to take a deeper look at their own faith in an open and accepting atmosphere.

Earth Day Service Project

April 22nd (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit

An exciting service project is in the works for Earth Day. This is the first in a series of occasional workshops focusing on the Seventh Principle (Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part). Stay tuned for more updates on this event.

Game Night**April 29th (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit, McCollester Hall**

Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit, Outburst... Everyone needs a night of board games once in a while. Bring yourself and your favorite board game (if you have one). Invite your friends! Come early for Vespers and Dinner.... This event is sponsored by the Membership Committee.

Getting Down n' Dirty in the D**May 3rd (Sunday) 1pm**

The second in a series of occasional workshops promoting the Seventh Principle (Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part). We will meet at a private home near the church to participate in a short discussion about urban gardening. Participants will also be able to create a mosaic stepping stone for their garden.

Unitarianism in Hungary: The Struggle to Survive**May 6th (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit**

When Stephen became Hungary's first king in 1000 C.E. he adopted Roman Catholicism as the state religion. But as the Protestant Reformation movement of the 1500s spread to Hungary, many Hungarians became Unitarians. Life was not easy. Unitarians holding government posts were ousted. Unitarian ministers were prohibited from publicly debating religious questions, going outside their parishes to perform pastoral duties, giving religious instruction to children, building or repairing churches or publishing books without royal approval. Unitarian children were removed by force from their homes and enrolled in Catholic schools. Find out how the Unitarian movement in Hungary went from persecution to today's thriving church community during this workshop on UU's around the world.

Meditation Workshop**May 13th (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit, Memorial Hall**

See April 8 above.

Detroit Tigers Game**May 16th (Saturday) 7pm – Comerica Park**

Join other 1st UU members and friends at the Detroit Tigers vs. Oakland Athletics baseball game at Comerica Park. Tickets have been requested for the Upper Box Infield section, meaning this is an upper deck seat with a great central view of the field. Also you will have the pleasure of seeing "Welcome First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit" flash across the Comerica Park scoreboard. A tailgate before the game is also being planned. A donation of \$30 is requested per ticket. Face value is \$22 plus service fees- the remainder will be a contribution to 1st UU, making this a fundraiser. We have several persons confirmed already. Seats may be limited! Please confirm your tickets by seeing Ryan King on Sunday, March 29, after service, or Wednesday, April 1 at Church Night, or emailing Ryan at newslettereditor@1stuu.org. Don't wait! Ryan intends to confirm the ticket purchase with the Tigers group sales office on the afternoon of Friday, April 3.

Theology Roundtable**May 20th (Wednesday) 7pm – First UU Detroit**

Spend an evening discussing topical theological issues. Explore and clarify your own beliefs. This is a drop in group and is open to everyone who wants to take a deeper look at their own faith in an open and accepting atmosphere.