

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit

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April 30, 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 Admin

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

I enjoy irony, usually. Especially the comedic irony that surrounds our lives. Then there is the tragic sort, as played so well in Greek theater. Nothing that dramatic is going on, thankfully, but it seems worth mentioning one thing relevant to our work together as a church.

As I often say, I'm all about change. Of course that is why I am here, to assist with a shift in how we do things, to utilize my natural gift of being comfortable with change to help us all move into a healthier future. At this moment, as I write, I am on my way to a workshop on change in Colorado - a brief intense session on advancing the interests of organizations in the midst of what we are doing in Detroit - changing and improving the odds for a vibrant future.

The irony is that I have not entirely kept up with the changes within and around me! Just this week seven people joined the church (welcome!); we repaired the long dysfunctional office door (again); emptied a room in the lower basement that had a deep layer of original dust in it; rearranged, repainted, and performed significant repairs on the second floor of the house; and we now welcome a new long-term tenant to occupy four of the offices on that floor. At some point I will have a functional office again, but for now it is a victim of the rearrangement.

That is a lot to be happening in one week, and if we consider the month as a whole there is a great deal more! This is always true this time of year - your Board of Trustees is preparing for the Annual Meeting, and this year April started with congregational input to the planning process. The Board is working to accomplish as much as possible on the plan. This year's bylaw revisions are minor, but they did not happen automatically. Most of your Trustees have put in a lot of extra time and effort this year and I commend them for their commitment. Have you considered doing the same?

Easter arrived mid-month and a fine breakfast enriched our Sunday morning together. Would that we could feed ourselves that well every Sunday! Gratitude to all who pitched in to make that happen.

A few days later we had the vibrant workshop "TG 101: Beyond Two Genders." Not only was it well-attended, it also had a lively energy that has some folks still reflecting on their learnings that day. The next day was tense for me as I publicly named my own reality of being transgender. Although a couple of folks expressed a deep discomfort with that, many of you have been delightfully kind. I am full of gratitude for all of you. There are several ways we can utilize what we are learning to strengthen our church, our community, and individuals who need to know about us.

It's a lot of change for one month! As individuals we are growing and learning. As a church we are doing well. As an organization needing change we are being wise and successful in moving forward. As for the city, the state, the nation, and the world . . . this column is not long enough to address those realms.

Although I am almost caught up with the changes so far, I continue to look for more irony (of the comedic kind).

See you in church!

Reverend Drew

Rev. Lynda's Lyrics

Sunday, April 26th, was an inspiring day. It began with worship—centering and deepening—with music from Hannah Waterstone (guest musician)—and words from Senior Minister, Drew Johnston. Music of beauty and words of truth and power propel me to reflections and action during the week. I know who I am; but I also want to test out what I can do with some awareness—and that circles back to affect who I am.

I hope everyone who comes to church, who participates in programs, even who volunteers on a committee, will find beauty and meaning that help them through their week. Returning to Sunday, April 26th, we were affirmed as a congregation—seven people decided to commit to being church members. Membership is a commitment that comes with responsibilities and benefits—I'd encourage you to speak with Drew or someone from the Membership Committee. The inspiring day concluded with a Q and A time with Board members, staff, and congregants about issues of communication, finances, programs, and growth.

Then I finished off my day going to a friend's engagement party and being asked to offer grace before we ate. One of the couple is Catholic, the other Buddhist—making my Unitarian Universalist grace altogether fitting.

Please check out the *Volunteer Table* during Coffee Hour after Sunday worship. You'll find helpful guides about what areas of congregational life need help. As was said recently by a new

member, "After I volunteered to help, I really felt like I belonged." So ask yourself young and old, newer and longer-time members—"where is my niche in the congregational life?" If you haven't found your place, come talk to me and we'll see what can be done. We all have something to contribute and something to learn. Every week.

Rev. Lynda Smith, Assistant Minister

President's Ponderings

I noticed something has changed at 1st UU Detroit! When participating in meetings, I witnessed the groups struggled with finding open and available dates for meetings! I have also seen activities where we have run out of chairs! What a wonderful challenge to have these days!

Working with the Board of Trustees and our staff, including our 3 ministers, we have worked hard to listen to you, the members of 1st UU, and to begin to work on our long term plan while supporting programs that focus on our principles and mission. From the Evensong program to "How We Lead" sessions, I hope you have taken advantage of the opportunities from spiritual learning to our governance process.

I wish to thank all those who participated in our earlier Congregational Activity where you provided your "strategies and actions" to our draft plan goal statements. After reviewing the data collected at the Board's on-going Saturday Planning session, we discovered that your ideas are aligned with the plan.

So when will you see a "final draft" of the plan? That will be our Annual Meeting which is scheduled for Sunday, May 31, 2009 at 12:45pm in McCollester Hall (Social Hall).

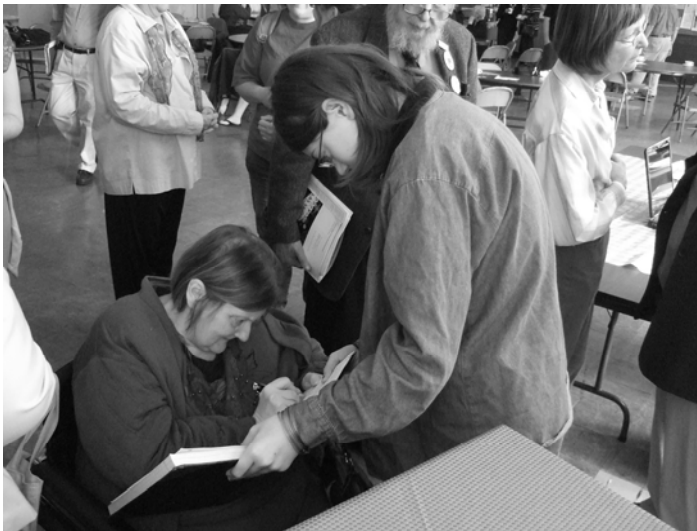
Meanwhile, there are more opportunities for you to participate with the life of our Church! On Sunday, May 3rd and Wednesday, May 6th, you will have the opportunity for input into our 2009-2010 FY Budget as well as review some "functional" changes to the By-Laws. Both of these items will be on our agenda for a vote at the Annual Meeting.

Then we have our annual CLEAN UP FIX UP DAY scheduled for May 2, 2009 between 9am and 2pm. We welcome volunteers of all ages and skill levels. There are small groups ready to help with our bathrooms, kitchen, hang pictures, plant flowers, weed, and overall help make our buildings shine on the corner! Please contact the office or Rev. Lynda Smith if you are planning to help out on Saturday!

P.S. If you have annuals that need to be split or want to share your "green thumb", we would welcome the addition of annuals to the grounds of 1st UU Detroit.

Our future is ours to create and we are only limited by ourselves. I, along with your Board of Trustees, look forward to your active participation in our Church's life and future!

Alicia Biggers



Membership Committee Meanderings

Our church continues to grow in spirit and in numbers. On Sunday, 4/26/09, seven more people signed the membership book and we are pleased to welcome them to the 1st UU community. Please welcome our seven new members:

Linda Barton, Carole Hosey, Linda Kernohan, Brian McMichael, Suzanne and Ian McGill and Sharon Mills.

Look for their pictures and more information about them on our bulletin board soon.

Any potential new members who have been attending to awhile or returning members, who want to rejoin the church, please talk to Rev. Drew, Sally Borden or Nora Holt about signing the membership book. Feel free to ask any member of the Membership Committee if you want more information about UUism or the church. We welcome your questions.

We also want your feedback on what member activities you want to see, along with those that are already going on.

Join us on Wednesday, May 27th, for Game Night, and plan to attend the upcoming S.O.U.L. concert on Friday, June 5th, 7:00pm, at the church. Singers of United Lands (S.O.U.L.) is a group of professional musicians from around the world. Last year's show was exceptional. This event is followed by a mini-afterglow. A \$10 suggested donation is requested. Check with Membership Committee members at coffee hour for tickets.

The Membership Committee now meets the first Thurs. of each month in the church house. Our next meeting will be 5/7/09 at 7 pm. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Sally Borden

Blood Drive Confirmed!

The 1st UU Detroit blood drive has been confirmed! It will be held on Thursday, June 11, from 1-7pm, at the American Red Cross main office at the intersection of Mack and Woodward Ave. People are asked to come on Thursday as a group and let the Red Cross staff know that you are from the 1st UU Church. There will be members of the 1st UU women's alliance to greet you. Those who cannot make it on Thursday are invited to donate on Saturday, June 13 from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Blood drive committee:

Yvonne Fowler, Ruth Seifert and Nora Holt



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, Mussorgsky, 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

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE NEWS

We will be concluding our monthly meetings for this church year with interesting programs and we hope you will join us. All are welcome!

Our May 20 meeting will have Rev. Athena Kolbe as our program guest speaker. We look forward to getting to know her better.

Our June meeting will be the second Wednesday, June 10. This is the final meeting for the year before vacation time and to celebrate traveling we will hear from church member Toni Tront. She will talk about her recent trip the Galapagos Islands. Lunch is at NOON for \$10.

Our programs begin about 1:00. Reservations for the lunch portion can be made with the Church office or Eiko Takemoto by noon on the previous Monday.

We will assist with some other spring activities, also. We will be helping with receptions after upcoming musical events. On May 9 we will provide refreshments for the Organ Concert. On Friday evening, June 5 we will provide refreshments after the S.O.U.L. (Singers of United Lands) concert. Of course, we would welcome extra donations of goodies like cookies, cheese and crackers, or cut-up fruit.

Finally, we are sponsoring a Red Cross Blood Drive in June, thanks to the persistence of Nora Holt, Ruth Seifert and Yvonne Fowler. See details elsewhere in the newsletter.

Alma King

TG 101: Beyond Two Genders

If you were to ask any of the 30 guests who attended the Transgender 101: Beyond Two Genders workshop on April 18, they would tell you it was truly a transformative experience! No one volunteered to change genders on the spot (nor were they expected to do so). However, many members of the 1st UU congregation took the time to reach out in understanding to persons who are "beyond two genders." A warm "thank you" to all who attended.

We began the workshop by breaking into small groups to explore our own experiences with gender. We then learned from our guest, Dr. Julie

Nemecek (www.julienemecek.com), a distinguished educator and former consultant to the Michigan Supreme Court. She educated us on the social construct of gender and ways we can include those who do not fit into the arbitrary, binary two-gender construct. Most importantly, Dr. Nemecek spoke from the heart about her own experience as a transgendered person. Your congregational support of this workshop inspired an excellent sermon the following day from Rev. Drew Johnston, who shared with us his own experience of being transgender. We lived our mission of liberating truth, radiating kindness, and loving courageously.

It is notable that several guests attended the workshop and the service the following day. One guest was Michelle Fox-Phillips of the Detroit chapter of Soulforce, a national civil rights and social justice organization, with a vision of freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless nonviolent resistance. (www.soulforce.org).

The Social Justice Committee (especially Lee Gaddies) and Membership Committee (especially Alma King) collaborated to make TG 101 a success. The two committees will continue to help us advocate for LGBTQ rights issues. Stay tuned for other event invites such as an upcoming lobby day at the State Capitol in Lansing for Matt's Safe Schools law, an anti-bullying bill.

Ryan King



“IN HARMONY”- A poem by Lee Thume

You may feel that you lack a vital role to play,
That your input does not count much in the
scheme of things.
If missing, would it matter in the dream of things,
Or would it make no difference either way?
At times we fail to see the larger picture;
We cannot see the forest for the trees:
For every person has a voice, just as each one has
a choice
To use your talents every chance and way you
please.

For it takes a lot of voices to sing harmony,
People singing different parts to make a choir,
But if you sing bass or alto, maybe tenor or
contralto,
Your line alone leaves much to be desired!

But it takes those different voices to sing
harmony;
The beauty comes in blending all those parts.
How we listen to each other, thus enhancing one
another,
Brings the blissful gift of music to our hearts.

It isn't just in music that this law applies;
We use it every day in work we do,
When we choose to work together with our minds
and strengths and eyes
To make decisions, work on problems, see them
through.

For it takes a lot of hearts to create harmony,
People taking different parts, both great and small,
And by listening to each other and supporting one
another
We'll keep making gains, whatever should befall,
And achieve the greatest benefits for all.

© 4/13/09 by Lee Thume

Disability Cupboard

The Church Disability Cupboard is ready for use by our church members. Items available are:

- Canes
- Crutches
- Walkers
- Bath Chair
- Leg lasso
- Pick-up gadget

Call the church office if you are in temporary need of any of these.

Guidelines for Borrowing:

1. Equipment is available free to First UU members in good standing and family residing in the home. For other family members, a donation to the church is requested.
2. To borrow an item, phone the church office, 313-833-9107, to check availability of equipment and get phone number of lender.
3. Borrower is responsible for transporting equipment and returning it promptly when no longer needed.
4. Lenders should notify the church office when item is returned.

Janice Berry

"About Us"

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

"About Us"

Laurel Hoa was raised in Rockville, Maryland, and her Christian parents decided to enroll their four children in the Unitarian Church there. She was active in that church and was a youth delegate to three General Assemblies, as a teenager.

When she moved to Boston to study psychology at Boston University, she attended a UU church there. Laurel and her husband, Michael Hoa, who is from the San Francisco area, met at Boston University while both students there.

Laurel relocated back to Maryland to be closer to her mother and siblings; her father died of cancer 6 1/2 years ago.

Laurel joined the Paint Branch UU Church, and participated in lay-led sermons and she helped organize young adult groups.

She enrolled in graduate school at the University of Maryland in the Developmental Psychology PhD program and will be defending her thesis on May 21.

Michael was in an accelerated medical program at Boston U. and completed his studies there in 7 years. He is now finishing his residency at W.S.U. as an Ear, Nose, and Throat Surgeon. They will move to the Los Angeles area in June to accept a new position. Laurel plans to teach and do research.

"I am sad to leave. First UU helped me find roots in Detroit: I am on the Worship Committee, and enjoyed helping to organize our Young Adult group here. We now have about 20 active members, and I will miss them, as well as many people that I have met at our church."

We at First Church congratulate Laurel and Michael, and while sorry that they are leaving Detroit, wish them success and happiness in this new phase of their lives together. During coffee hour on June 7, we will have the opportunity to say farewell.

Mary Neale

Toni Tront Honored by Women of Wayne

Marie (Toni) Tront was honored on April 25 by the Women of Wayne, a Wayne State University Alumni Association. She was given the Service Award for her outstanding service to the Women of Wayne. Her numerous volunteer activities included: Docent at the Detroit Institute of Arts, Head Usher at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Docent at the Detroit Zoo. She is also a past president of the Dearborn- Dearborn Heights League of Women Voters, and remains active in that organization. Toni graduated from Wayne

State University with a degree in Business in 1978, and a Master's Degree in Liberal Arts in 1982. She recently joined our church and attends when her volunteer activities don't conflict with our Sunday services. Congratulations, Toni!

Mary Neale

Correction of Article on U.S./U.N Flags

The last newsletter included an article that incorrectly stated that Commander Ross Fowler "realized that it was time to replace our flag, and took action." It is more accurate to say that the Worship committee realized that it was time to replace our flag, and Commander Fowler was acting at the request of the worship committee.

Thank you for your generosity, Ross!

Further, the UN Flag on display in the sanctuary is actually quite new. It was donated by Sherry Wells. Thank you for your generosity Sherry!

Todd Ballou and Ryan King

Passing of Roy Calcagno

We sadly report the passing of Roy Calcagno. Roy died March 5, 2009 in Charleston, SC. He had been associated with 1st UU for over 50 years; his name was listed in our 1959 directory. While he and his wife Ilse were not active members of our church in recent years, they remained as friends of the church, and continued to be members of "The Study Club", a social group formed by 1st UU members many years ago. Several current 1st UU members also continue as active participants with that group.

Roy was a retired Chrysler engineer. He and Ilse, a retired dentist, have been very active supporters of the Detroit symphony Orchestra and Michigan Opera Theater. An engaging man with a hearty laugh, Roy will be missed.

Bill McKnight

Update from Faye Colling

Greetings from Arizona,

Many of you may remember my sister Elberta coming to our church the last few summers while she vacationed in Michigan. I want you to know that my big sister Elberta died on Wednesday, March 18, 2009. We held a small, private family memorial service.

For the past year, Elberta has been at a Memory Care Center with staff trained in dementia in addition to extra hospice services. Both my brother and I believe my sister had special loving care.

Elberta earned a Master's Degree at the University of Michigan where she was a member of the Kappa Phi Honorary Society. She taught 35 years in the Flint School District, retiring in 1967.

My sister loved the Arts. She was an accomplished photographer and professional artist. Elberta and her husband Robert were known for the philanthropic efforts in Sun City where they were charter members of the West Valley Art Museum.

She will be missed by the many community organizations in which she was involved and sorely missed by all of our family and me. It will be tough without her.

Loyally,
Faye Colling
April 13, 2009

Friends who would like to communicate with Faye may reach her at the following address:
14211 Antelope Dr
Sun City West AZ 85375
623-584-1808

Invitation to Niagara Falls- July 2009

Join UUs from around the country in Niagara Falls, July 19 -22, 2009. Come experience the wonder of Niagara Falls including some great educational opportunities while being taken care of like royalty. The UU Church of Niagara is

conducting a four day UU Niagara Experience which is a lifetime opportunity to encounter the Falls up close from every perspective. Spend four days with us exploring the rich history and natural beauty around the Falls. For information visit our website : <http://www.uunex.net/> You don't have to be UU to join us!

MAY BIRTHDAYS:

May 5- Mary Lou Malone
 May 7- Alma King
 May 8- Jerry Mitchell
 May 11- Joe Brimmer
 May 17- Anee Seeger
 May 29- Valerie Lauer
 May 31- Ryan King

Upcoming Activities

Note: This is a selection of upcoming 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>

Clean Up Fix Up Day

May 2 (Saturday) 9am-2pm- Meet in McColleston Hall

See newsletter article above.

How We Lead: Budget Input and By-Law Revisions

May 3 (Sunday) 12:45pm- Memorial Hall

How We Lead: Budget Input and By-Law Revisions

May 6th (Wednesday) 7pm- Memorial Hall.

Membership Committee Meeting

May 7th (Thursday) 7pm- First UU Detroit, Memorial Hall

1st UU Organ Concert

May 9 (Saturday)- 7pm

See newsletter article above.

Meditation Workshop

May 13th (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.

Church Board Meeting

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

Detroit Tigers Game

May 16th (Saturday) 7pm – Comerica Park

Tickets have been confirmed. Please obtain your purchased tickets by seeing Ryan King at church. You will be informed of details regarding the planned tailgate. Make sure Ryan has your email by pre-emptively emailing him at newslettereditor@1stuu.org

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.

Social Justice Committee Meeting**May 26th (Tuesday) 7pm- First UU Detroit****Game Night****May 27th (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.

Annual Congregational Meeting- Save the Date!**May 31st (Sunday) 12:45pm- McCollester Hall****S.O.U.L. (Singers of United Lands) Concert****June 5 (Friday) 7:30pm- Church Sanctuary**

Come enjoy this popular concert in the First UU Detroit Church Sanctuary. Singers of United Lands (S.O.U.L.) is a group of professional musicians from around the world. Last year's show was exceptional. This event is followed by a mini-afterglow. A \$10 suggested donation is requested.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for printed material is Saturday, May 23 no later than NOON or the following Monday, May 25, no later than 9:00 a.m. for electronically submitted material. Please send articles to the Newsletter Editor at newslettereditor@1stuu.org. Your feedback is welcomed and appreciated in the spirit of liberating truth, radiating kindness and loving courageously.