

# First Unitarian-Universalist Church

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November 6, 2009

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First Unitarian  
Universalist Church  
Organizational Chart  
2009 – 2010

**Officers**

**President**

*Marilyn Mitchell*

**Vice President**

*Bill McKnight*

**Immediate Past**

**President**

*Alicia Biggers*

**Board Secretary**

*Alma King*

**Treasurer**

*Suzanne McGill*

**Staff**

**Minister**

*Rev. Drew Johnston*

**Minister Emeritus**

*Rev. Larry Hutchison*

**Assistant Minister**

*Rev. Lynda Smith*

**Music Director**

*Todd Ballou*

**Cantor**

*Gwen Foss*

**Office Admin**

*Jenn Hurtt*

**Building & Grounds**

*Joe Brimmer*

*Leonard Swint*

(Sunday)

**Trustees**

*Dessa Cosma*

*Dan Rebb*

**Newsletter Editor**

*Ryan King*

**DREW'S VIEWS**

As we all, always, stand on the edge of something we may think we can choose, and as we enter a season even better for appreciation than the rest of the year, this time I offer, simply, this poem by James Broughton (Packing Up For Paradise: New and Selected Poems 1946-1996). I am filled with gratitude for you, this church, and our time together!

See you in church - with love,

*Reverend Drew*

Having Come This Far

I've been through what my through was to be  
I did what I could and couldn't  
I was never sure how I would get there

I nourished an ardor for thresholds  
for stepping stones and for ladders  
I discovered detour and ditch

I swam in the high tides of greed  
I built sandcastles to house my dreams  
I survived the sunburns of love

No longer do I hunt for targets  
I've climbed all the summits I need to  
and I've eaten my share of lotus

Now I give praise and thanks  
for what could not be avoided  
and for every foolhardy choice

I cherish my wounds and their cures  
and the sweet enervations of bliss  
My book is an open life

I wave goodbye to the absolutes  
and send my regards to infinity  
I'd rather be blithe than correct

Until something transcendent turns up  
I splash in my poetry puddle  
and try to keep God amused.

### **Lynda's Lyrics**

The Halloween Party after Vespers (10/28) was lots of fun--even for me and I'm not a party person.

What made it fun was the care and good spirited environment--good homemade food, great decorations, making sure all felt included and welcomed. Thanks very much to Robert and Kathleen Jacobs Johnson and Julie Brock for contributing so much. The costume contest was hilarious--the runaway bride and the waltzing witch got my vote, but all those costumed added to the enjoyment.

Thanks also to Robert and Kathleen for leaving the decorations up in the Social Hall for Coffee Hour on 11/1, the Family of Saints/El Dias de los Muertos worship service. I tried to be as sensitive as possible in honoring deceased loved ones. If the service raised touchy issues for you, please feel free to call Drew or myself to talk. This is the Shakespeare quote I used: "When he shall die--take him and cut him out in little stars. And he will make the face of Heaven so fine that all the world will be in love with night. And pay no worship to the garish sun."

After a Board meeting the night before writing this column, I've been reflecting how dedicated and serious the church leadership is about doing church business mindfully. Now, hearing the first report of the Search Committee for a called minister, I feel great hope for the future of First UU Church.

With gratitude for the past and present energy and time church leaders have generously offered for the common good. And for the many other tasks volunteers have done that make our church safe and hospitable. If you want to volunteer for anything, please make your wish known!

In faith,

*Rev. Lynda Smith*

### **Presidential Ponderings**

This is my "maiden" (don't laugh) venture in writing a monthly column for the *Newsletter*. Perhaps I will come up with a catchy title as time goes on. "My Day" was already taken.

Your Board of Trustees and your Search Committee are running smoothly with much challenging work ahead for each body. Please welcome the new church Treasurer, Suzanne McGill, who has taken on a major task while at the same time going to school and working two jobs. Suzanne's husband, Ian, is one of the Searchers while also going to school and working. What's that old saying about giving jobs to busy people? This couple joined only last April and have fully engaged with the work of the church. Dan Rebb is a new Trustee and also a relatively new member, who has shown not only great interest in all aspects of church life but also awesome organizational skills. They and other relative newcomers on the Search Committee, as well as old church hands, are an inspiration for the rest us. Please let them know you see and appreciate their work. I am confident in the future of First Unitarian-Universalist Church. Now, a brief history lesson.

Note the hyphen between Unitarian and Universalist. The name of our church is First Unitarian-Universalist Church. Period. There is no "of Detroit" in the corporate title, and there has always been a hyphen since the Articles of Association were filed with the State of Michigan on October 24, 1934. The Articles were signed on September 24, 1934 by Augustus P. Record, then minister, and thirteen other members. The church's

name in 1934 was Church Of Our Father (Unitarian-Universalist). The name was changed to First Unitarian-Universalist Church by amendment filed June 24, 1960.

The hyphen in our church name and the designation of “First” is important in two respects, it seems to me. One, this church was the very first church in the United States to merge the distinct but sympathetic denominations of Unitarians and Universalists. Adding “Detroit” to the name is not only incorrect but inappropriate because it suggests that there is another “First” church in some other city that shares our unique heritage. Second, without the hyphen to signify the merger of two independent religious bodies, “Unitarian” would just be a modifier of “Universalist”, as in “What kind of Universalist are you?” “Why, I am a Buddhist Universalist,” or “I am a Unitarian Universalist.”

So let’s celebrate our diversity within our unity and honor our distinguished heritage by using the legal name for our church as we all move forward into a very bright future.

**Mark your calendars now for an important Congregational Meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010. At that meeting you will hear a report from the Search Committee before voting on the comprehensive plan for the future of our church and an amendment to the By-Laws to transition the Trust to an Endowment. WE WILL ENJOY A POTLUCK (one week earlier than usual) prior to the meeting.**

*Marilyn Mitchell*

### **Ministerial Search Committee Has Formed**

As stated in our church by-laws, your Board of Trustees has the responsibility to appoint a Ministerial Search Committee. We identified 8 members and all 8 members accepted this opportunity. Their work will help build our solid, strong future here in the city of Detroit.

It is your board's honor to confirm to you the Search Committee:

Ruth Siefert, Al Acker, Mary Lou Malone, Ian McGill, Carol Hosey, Sharon Mills, Alicia Biggers.

*Alicia Biggers*

### **Women’s Alliance News**

There was a good turn out to hear Dr. Marjorie Sarbaugh-Thompson from Wayne State’s political science department share her research about legislative term limits in Michigan at our October meeting. It explains one piece of the puzzle as to why some things unfold in Lansing the way they do.

On a lighter side, church member Toni Tront will talk about Quilts for our November 18 meeting. For our December 16 luncheon and program we will share holiday cheer and festivities.

We have gathered many ideas from our September planning meeting with Rev. Drew’s help. We plan to work all year on our long range goals and next steps. Be on the lookout for a name change by the end of the year!

In December we will be calling on congregation members to help with donations of baked goods for our Noel Night Bake Sale and for a reception after the Christmas Eve Service.

As always, remember our monthly events are open to all. We ask for reservations for the luncheon portion so we know how much food to prepare. In case you don't know, our luncheons are more like dinners than a lunch!

*Alma King*

### **Noel Night 2009 – Happenings @ 1<sup>st</sup> UU Detroit**

Can you believe it! It's already time for Noel Night 2009!! Not familiar? The 37th Annual Noel Night will take place on Saturday, December 5th from 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in Midtown Detroit's Cultural Center Area which just happens to be our neighborhood! We will open our doors to everyone to see all that is wonderful about our Church.

Everyone is welcome to join us to make this a great event. Contact Katie McIntosh (email address: [as4064@wayne.edu](mailto:as4064@wayne.edu)) who is our staff volunteer/marketing coordinator for the Church. Katie can let you know about all the opportunities and times to volunteer. You can give an hour or just give cookies – all ages and skill levels are welcome.

We will kick the season off with dining and decorating (think pizza) on Friday, December 4, 2009 at 6pm. This is where we add the “wow” and charm by decorating the Sanctuary, Church House, and McCollester Hall.

Saturday, December 5, 2009 we will be offering the following activities:

Church House (Memorial Hall) – Child at Heart

- Pictures with Holiday Elf
- Writing wish lists / letter to Santa
- Kid friendly crafts
- Holiday sing-a-longs
- Cookies & Cider

McCollester Hall – Holiday Art Bazaar

- Fine Artist Market
- Cookies & Cider
- Fine Bake Good Sale – Culinary Bake Off

Sanctuary – Sounds of the Holidays

- Musical performances from local schools
- Cookies & Cider

Plus other activities outside too so plan to bring your family, friends and neighbors to enjoy Noel Night @ Church!

*Alicia Biggers*

### **A call to holiday charm....**

That's right, we are calling all who love the holidays, love to charm and just love our Church and its community. Sounds like you? Then have we the opportunity for you!

Noel Night 2009 (<http://www.detroitmidtown.com/05/noelnight.php>) is scheduled for Saturday, December 5, 2009 between 5pm and 9pm. Our Church's participation is an annual tradition so if you are new to the Church or a season veteran, the opportunities are there for you.

We have immediate needs for

- 1) **Cookies** – every kind, every type, every size, every amount – you name it, we can use it. Cookies can be home baked, store brought, baked by mom or brought by the husband. Doesn't matter we need lots and lots and lots and lots of cookies.
- 2) **Cider** – yep, gallons and gallons and gallons and gallons – store brought, orchard brought, or just brought at the corner store. Bring your cider – half gallon or whole gallon – bring your cider!! Did I state we need cider?
- 3) **Decorations** – do you have new or “gently” used holiday decorations? Please consider donating your “last year” decorations to the Church for our holiday decorating party (that's Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm)
- 4) **Donations** – so do you not bake, sip cider or decorate for the holidays? No problem, we still need your help. Please consider donating dollars and we'll do the shopping for cookies, cider and decorations. Dollars are always a welcome donation to the Church. Consider giving a few dollars to the Noel Night Fund.

So, you have cookies, cider, decorations and dollar donations and wondering where to drop off the goods?? Cookies and cider can be dropped off on Friday, December 4, 2009 after 4pm or Saturday, December 5, 2009 after 4pm. We will also have a box for goods set up in McColleston Hall too. Just remember perishable goods need to come into the buildings closer as we have no cold storage. Funds can be given to the Church Office (note for Noel Night).

*Noel Night Team – Katherine, Rebecca, Dan W, Ruth S, Gladys, Alicia and Katie and **you!***

### **Holiday Art Bazaar @ Noel Night 2009 @ 1<sup>st</sup> UU Detroit**

Are you an artist? Do you paint, draw, sculpt, or create jewelry, clothing, or furniture? Consider offering your fine art work at our Noel Night Holiday Art Bazaar! This will be a great opportunity to showcase your art work as well as sell pieces to patrons who pass through our event during Noel Night. The event will be Saturday, December 5, 2009 between 5pm and 9pm with set up starting at 3:30pm. There are no fees, however, we are asking for a donation to the Church. If you are interested, please see **Katherine** or Rebecca or Alicia to get your name in our “Holiday Artist Directory” and space reserved. Space is limited to register now!!

*Alicia Biggers*



### **OUR MUSICAL ADVENTURES CONTINUE ON WEDNESDAY, DEC 2, 7-9pm**

Todd Ballou, 1st UU Music Director

Church Night is the place to be! MUSICAL ADVENTURES is a series of discussions, lessons, and demonstrations facilitated by Todd Ballou for musicians in our community to build musical skills, network, become involved, and share musical ideas for the benefit of our Sunday morning experience at 1st UU church. Topics will be driven by participants so bring your favorite musical inspiration on CD, or even perform it for us; bring a musical question you'd like discussed, or bring your most musical friend. Topics will include reading music, learning about rhythms, exploring our hymnal, finding your singing voice, sharing your musical inspirations, planning musical experiments, discovering the organ, choir repertoire, providing feedback, and instrumental music.

Mark your calendar for these upcoming topics:

Dec 2- Stop Vocal Abuse!: Singing 101 & Christmas carols for Noel Night

Jan 6- Herding Cats & other choir topics

Feb 3- Instrumental service music- Piano, Organ & Beyond ...yond...yond..yond

Mar 3- 2nd chance: Reading music 101: pitches & rhythms

Apr 7- Reading music 201- The "Key" to listening

May 5- The Musical Psychic- the magic & mystery of selecting music for next Sunday

June 2- If we don't have anything better to talk about, we'll have an Organ Tour!

*Todd Ballou*

### **Cool Congregations**

Solving Global Warming One Family at a Time

Are you concerned about Global Warming? Wish you could do something about it? "Cool Congregations" adds a new dimension to regular stewardship programs in which interested congregants pledge to implement energy efficient measures in their own homes. They choose just three or four actions from a list of many researched options. In doing this, they are pledging to reduce their personal family contribution to global warming, and often save money in the process!

In a series of three small group sessions, "Cool Congregations" participants first measure their carbon footprint, and then choose steps to take to reduce it by 10% and submit this in the form of a pledge card to their congregation. At the end of the project they meet once again to calculate their results and celebrate.

Stewardship is more than just giving time or money, its taking good care of what we have been given - this fragile earth, our island home. We keep the faith in part by keeping the earth.

Contact Alicia Biggers or Lee Gaddies to sign up or leave your name, email and phone with the Church office.

"Cool Congregations" is a program of Michigan Interfaith Power & Light, one of twenty-eight state affiliates with Interfaith Power & Light. Interfaith Power & Light gives religious people tools to become better stewards of Creation.

The introduction and kick-off was held on Sunday, October 18. More sessions will be held in Memorial Hall on the following dates:

Sunday, November 15th @ 1pm - Cool Congregations - Carbon Footprint Calculations & Pledge

Sunday, January 17th @ 1pm - Cool Congregations Pledge Support - what is working, what is not? Calculations, tips

Sunday, March 14th @ 1pm - Cool Congregations - Pledge Winner - Who reduced their carbon footprint the most?

Then we will meet in McCollester Hall on Saturday, February 20, 2010 for an all day Cool Congregations "Green Day" event so between 8am and 5pm. This event will provide you resources and information on how to be more energy savvy and save money yet live comfortable too!

*Alicia Biggers / Lee Gaddies*

### **Social Justice at First UU of Detroit - What's New?**

Interested in getting involved in Social Justice? The Committee is looking for you!

Social Justice Committee (SJC) just wrapped up the previous Church year hosting a series "isms" panel discussions as well as a series of Candidate Forums featuring Detroit candidates for City Council, Charter Commission, and Mayor.

Continuing on an Education theme, SJC is planning a monthly series of speakers and panel discussions around such themes as Workers' Rights, lowering our carbon footprint, and Foreclosures/Transitional Housing. Our first discussion for this Church year will take place Sunday, September 27th at 1:00pm in Memorial Hall. Our series will follow with an action item where you will be informed and make a difference.

SJC monthly meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm and are open to all who are interested in getting involved. We welcome you to be a part of the Social Justice Committee and here are a few ways: attend an SJC meeting to make the series a reality, attend one of the series, complete an action

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around one of our themes, or stop by our table during Coffee Hour for relevant leaflets. Together we can put our values, our faith, into action!

*Kathleen Johnson*

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

The deadline for all newsletter submissions, both printed and electronically submitted material, is Wednesday, December 16 no later than 9:00pm. Please send articles to the Newsletter Editor at [newslettereditor@1stuu.org](mailto:newslettereditor@1stuu.org). Your feedback is welcomed and appreciated in the spirit of liberating truth, radiating kindness and loving courageously.