

First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit

4605 Cass Avenue

Office phone: 313-833-9107

Detroit, MI 48201

Website: www.1stuu.org

May 12, 2010

Email: office@1stuu.org

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

Linda Darga

Staff

Minister

Rev. Drew Johnston

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Cantor

Gwen Foss

Office Admin

Jenn Hurtt

Building & Grounds

Joe Brimmer

Leonard Swint

(Sunday)

Trustees

Dessa Cosma

Dan Rebb

Elayne Sikelianos

Sally Borden

Newsletter Editor

Ryan King

Worship Services

held every

Sunday at

11:00

DREW'S VIEWS

The end of this church year will quickly be upon us! I've been thinking about some of the surprises of this year, mostly unanticipated developments and the consequences that follow them. As I prepare my last annual report for the May meeting, I thought this would be a good time to preview some of my findings that are the basis of that report.

I think with appreciation of Suzanne McGill who briefly served as treasurer. Because of her experience and skill in bookkeeping she made a huge contribution in a very short time just by pointing out several things that did not make sense. Her observations got us on the path to correcting many details in our bookkeeping and also led to one of my strongest recommendations to support the future of the church: get an experienced treasurer even if you have to hire one! The errors that accumulate over time are very costly in money, morale, and possibly hurt feelings. Expecting anyone to be able to deal with the church treasury if they do not already have the skill set that is required is an invitation to disappointment.

I also talked to the Board about my future participation in their meetings. Since they are heading in a different direction from what we have worked on since I arrived, it seems that my presence at their meetings is an obstacle, and I don't see why they should have to wait for me to get out of the way. So I offered to be on-call during future Board meetings (after all, I do live next door!) and just be available if they want some information from me. That way they may be able to articulate where they are going sooner, which I recommended to them as an immediate need.

That brings me to a recommendation to the entire congregation: the church needs you to participate and pay attention! So I strongly encourage you to start attending Board meetings in order to understand what is going on. Right now the Board has several appointees who came in without the benefit of any orientation or training in current practices, and this is so similar to the way a treasurer can be set up to fail by expecting them to just somehow understand standard practices are without having a chance to learn them first.

Overall, this is an oft-repeated pattern at our church, putting people into positions that require some orientation or training, but not providing that training. This leads to the recommendation that you make sure to equip yourselves for success by doing all you can to provide the right skills to those doing the work. There are several folks here who have been sent off to various leadership training, but I'm not sure if any are currently in leadership positions. There must be a couple of people here who have some amount of bookkeeping experience, and the church needs such experience to maintain quality financial records and management.

I've been compiling all the significant records from the last few years and scanning them so that any church member who wants to know what has happened will have that information available on a disk. This is related to a general recommendation I have: that more people step up to pay attention to the decisions that get made here and the basis for those decisions. I've noticed that even some people who wrote some of my contracts are talking about them as if they were some kind of secret event. There aren't any real secrets in a system the size of this church, so I'll make sure to do my part to provide accurate information. You do your part, too, by checking the facts, helping the Board by paying attention to them, and equipping your volunteers with the training they need to succeed.

This congregation can move forward with integrity and honesty, and I count on you to make that happen!

See you in church (until June 13th, my last Sunday!) -

Reverend Drew

Honoring Reverend Drew

We will honor Drew and his time with us at a gathering after church, on Sunday, June 13.

Mary Lou Malone

First UU Board will seek Interim Minister

The governing board, at it's meeting on April 14th, has decided to apply to the UUA for an Interim minister for the church year beginning July 1, 2010.

Jenn Hurtt

Annual Congregational Meeting on May 23

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on May 23rd after Sunday service at First UU Church. Mark your calendar!!

Jenn Hurtt

Nominating Committee reports candidates for Church leadership

In preparation for the upcoming Congregational Meeting, the Nominating Committee has been busy seeking and evaluating candidates for the various positions of leadership in the First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit. The Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday May 23.

The Nominating Committee nominates the following candidates for leadership positions in the church:

President--Marilyn Mitchell

Vice-President--Bill McKnight
 Secretary--Kathleen Johnson
 Treasurer--Linda Darga
 Trustee (2 year term)--Dan Rebb
 Trustee (2 year term)--Sally Borden
 Trustee (1 year term)--Dessa Cosma
 Trustee (1 year term)--Elayne Sikelianos

Nominating Committee
 (5 members to be elected for one year term)
 Ruth Seifert
 Ivan Cotman
 Don Clark
 Toni Tront
 Edie McKnight

Memorial Funds Committee Member
 (1 to be elected for a 3 year term)
 Janice Berry

General Assembly Delegate--Mary Lou Malone

The Committee is advised that the church is not entitled to representation at the Heartland Conference which is to occur in the Spring of 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

James Harvey, Chair
Ruth Seifert, Member
Ivan Cotman, Member
Sally Borden, Member
Don Clark, Member
Nominating Committee

President's Column

In the past couple of weeks, I have come to appreciate the warmth and caring of our congregation more than ever. The church indeed is the congregation. Thank you. As long as we stay together, it doesn't matter where we meet, but I am hopeful that we will be able to meet at the corner of Cass and Forest indefinitely. The memories of good times and sad times are so strong here.

Right now a brainstorming group is meeting to consider three issues: (1) establishment of First Church as the site of liberal religion in Detroit, getting our message out and attracting like-minded people to join us; (2) finding additional sources of funding for programs and salaries for professional staff; and (3) exploring alternative physical locations in Midtown should we be unable to maintain our sanctuary. If you are interested in working on any of these issues, contact Lee Gaddies for the date and time of the next meeting. The program launched after the social hour on April 18th and was well attended. Be an important part of shaping our future.

Marilyn Mitchell

US Social Forum in Detroit

From June 22nd-26th the US Social Forum, with over 20,000 attendees from all over the world, will be in Detroit! (For more info about the USSF, check out www.ussf2010.org) This exciting social justice focused event will be happening primarily at Cobo and Hart Plaza, but also throughout the city, including our church neighborhood. We have a task force of 1st UUsers working to make the most of this opportunity- meaning we're hosting guests at 1st UU during the Forum, we'll be presenting a workshop at the USSF about UU Social Justice efforts, and we're planning a UU contingent in the opening march of the Forum. Because we registered 1st UU as a supporting organization of the USSF, we can get tickets for the entire four day event for just \$10 each. You do not have to have a ticket to attend the opening march on June 22nd, but if you would like a ticket so you can attend workshops and cultural events, please write a check to 1st UU and give it to Dessa, Sally, Lynda, Linda, Mary Lou or Nora, letting them know that you want them to register you for the Forum. We'd love to have lots of 1st UUsers represented and it's guaranteed to be an amazing experience! Thanks,

Dessa Cosma

First UU at Motor City Pride

Motor City Pride is June 6th in Ferndale, and 1st UU Detroit will be having a table again this year. If you're interested in joining us that day to outreach to potential new members and enjoy this festival with us, please contact Dessa at DessaCosma@gmail.com. Thanks!

Dessa Cosma



OUR MUSICAL ADVENTURES CONTINUE ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 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. This June 2, we will have an Organ Tour!

Todd Ballou

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

First UU Fundraiser Theater outing

I am organizing another theater outing fundraiser for First UU. The play is My Soldiers at the Detroit Repertory Theatre, June 19th at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$15 each with \$5 going to 1st UU Alliance. Please contact Margaret Beck at 313-882-7775 or email margretbeck@comcast.net. We will have dinner together if anyone would like to join us at the ShangriLa restaurant in the old Twingo's after the play. Hope you can join us. The play is written by Richard Kalinoski and is about a young woman army medic suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after serving in Iraq.

Margaret Beck

Jon Mitchell Memorial Service

There will be a Memorial Service for Jon Mitchell, son of Marilyn and Jerry Mitchell, at First UU on Saturday, May 15th, at 2:00 pm.

Rev. Lynda Smith

Passing of Bessie Mercer

We grieve the passing of Bessie D. Mercer, who died Friday, April 16th at age 88 in Ann Arbor. Bessie was a member of the First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor in recent years and was a member for over fifty years of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit. She was active in Unitarian Universalism in southeast Michigan and nationally with her husband Alex Mercer who preceded her in death. The two attended many General Assemblies as congregational delegates. She is survived by daughters Katherine Linea Mercer and Erica Mercer and several grand children. Condolences for the family may be sent to Erica's husband, Mark White, at 1925 Hogback Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105.

Jennifer Teed

NEXT NEWSLETTER

First UU is seeking volunteers to publish the newsletter. 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.