

First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit

4605 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48201

November 14, 2010

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First Unitarian
Universalist Church
Organizational Chart
2010 – 2011

Officers

President

Marilyn Mitchell

Vice President

Bill McKnight

Immediate Past President

Dan Wiest

Board Secretary

Kathleen Jacobs

Johnson

Treasurer

David Lingholm

Staff

Minister

Rev. Bill Neely

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Cantor

Gwen Foss

Office Admin

Jenn Hurtt

Building & Grounds

Joe Brimmer

Leonard Swint

(Sunday)

Trustees

Dessa Cosma

Robert Johnson

Julie Brock

Sally Borden

Newsletter Editor

Robert Johnson

Worship Services

held every Sunday at
11:00am.

My Question

By the time you read this column, we'll have already enjoyed *The Question Box* worship service on October 24. As I write this column, however, that service is still a few days away. I find myself wondering what sorts of questions you'll write down and submit early in the service for me to respond to during the sermon piece of the liturgy. Will you ask about theology? First Church? My background? My interests? Will you be silly? Serious? I hear that this is the first time that you've had a *Question Box* service. Will you even know what to make of it?

Time will tell, and by the time you read this, many of those questions will be answered. But this month, I'd like to ask you my own question. It's a question I've thought about quite a bit since I've been here (and before), and I've heard you speak about it in many ways. It has framed our work in addressing the very significant financial and building dilemmas that demand our immediate, careful, and faithful discernment, and yet I wonder what your very direct responses would be. In a few days, I'll stand in the pulpit and respond to your questions, but if the roles were reversed; if you were to stand in the pulpit and invite a question from me, I'd write this down:



For what purpose does First Church exist?

I have ideas, and I'm sure you do as well. I warmly invite your responses and thoughts. Next month, I'll reflect your responses in this column (anonymously), adding my own comments and considerations, and we'll see what happens when we lean directly into this fundamental question in any church's life. For once you are financially self-sufficient; once your facilities and expenses match the abundance of your stewardship, you will find a surplus of energy and leadership to direct toward your central purpose in the great city. The proud history of this congregation will smile upon that even more vibrant and transforming tomorrow. And I wonder; what purpose will guide that church's ministry?

President's Column

As Rev. Bill said in his wonderful November 7th sermon, the Board of Trustees has been working very hard on some difficult issues confronting First Church. The most critical, of course, is our finances. First Church has an aging membership and a large campus to maintain. Significant changes in the way we operate will have to occur, and the Board is working on these issues to bring them to you in the next several weeks. We contemplate a series of meetings, beginning in January, to present alternatives to the congregation and ask you to decide the direction(s) we will take.



The Board held a special meeting on November 4th to agree on issues of concern and to assign Board members to investigate each. This was followed by an all-day workshop with the Rev. Joan Kahn Schneider to discuss other priorities and strategies for our church. Both meetings were very intense, but the Board is remarkably cohesive in its approach to the issues that must be dealt with and to investigation of the means to achieve our existence as an urban church.

One important achievement of our Saturday meeting was agreement on the wording of our Central Organizing Principle, which will tell the world what First Church is. The principle is:

First Unitarian-Universalist Church is an urban center for spiritual renewal and social justice in Detroit

What message could be more clear? This announces who we are, what we stand for and what we do. You will be seeing this message increasingly over the coming weeks.

Finally, the Canvass is in full swing and initial returns are encouraging. Please respond with enthusiasm to your canvasser. Julie Brock is coordinator of the Canvass.

Marilyn Mitchell

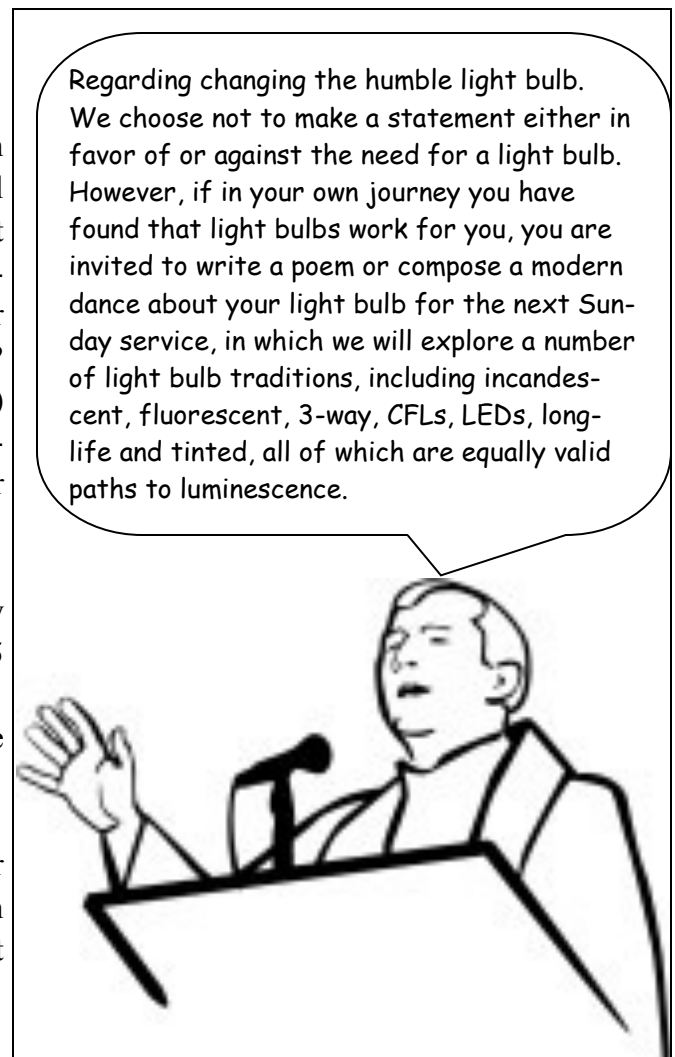
Activities Table During Social Hour

In the next couple of weeks, look for new Social Action and Activities tables in McColleston Hall during the social hour. On it you will find happenings connected with First UU. Looking to sign a petition for an Amnesty International campaign? Look no further. Want to help out for Noel Nite? Looking for the birthday/get well card to sign? This is the place. (We'll even provide a writing instrument.) What's the UUSC up to these days? Skip the pesky internet. Go old school - Read a brochure. See Dan Wiest for details or if you have materials to distribute.

Bring friends and family to our annual Thanksgiving day potluck dinner. It will be at 2:00, Thursday, November 25 at the church.

Call Linda to coordinate the dish you will bring and reserve a seat at the table.

Long time member, Dores McCree, is residing in Glacier Rehabilitation Hospital, Room 212, 1200 Earhart Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105. She is not allowed to have visitors but



I have the body of a god.



will appreciate cards. Her granddaughter, Sarah Lewis, will be married in our church in early December, just as her parents were.

Upcoming Human Rights Celebration

The local Amnesty International group which meets at First UU on the third Monday of the month is holding its annual celebration of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Friday, December 10 at 7:30 in Memorial Hall. Some of you may remember that the local chapter was started in part by First UUer Vic Schumacher some 35 plus years ago. Come and celebrate area efforts for the past year with Freedom House, the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, music by local artists and more.

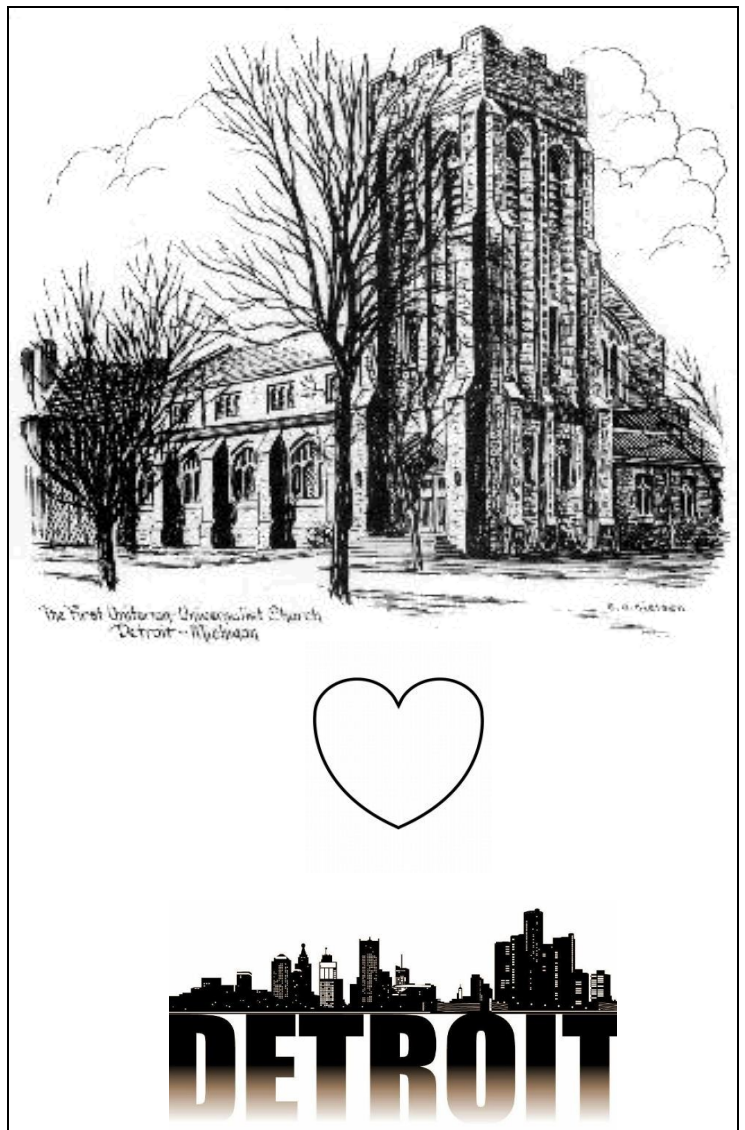
November Worship Calendar

Sunday, November 7, The Transience and the Permanence of First Church, Rev. Bill Neely
Serving as your Interim Minister means that our ministry together is rooted in transition. First Church today is unlike First Church yesterday, and probably First Church tomorrow, too. Amidst all this change, what abides about First Church's ministry in Detroit?

Sunday, November 14, Guest

Sunday, November 21, Spider Woman, Rev. Bill Neely
The Native American story of Spider Woman weaves together themes of beauty, vocation, obsession, and love. As part of Native American Heritage Month, this service will reflect on this timeless and provocative tale.

Sunday November 28, Worth the Wait, Rev. Bill Neely
With today's beginning of Advent and the upcoming celebration of Bodhi Day on Dec. 8, both Christians and Buddhists turn toward the spirituality of waiting at this time of the year. In such a fast-paced world where busyness defines many lives, how might the practice of waiting deepen and soothe us? What might be worth the wait?



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