

First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit

4605 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201
August 21, 2011

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First Unitarian
Universalist Church
Organizational Chart
2010 – 2011

Officers

President

Sally Borden

Vice President

Robert Johnson

Immediate Past

President

Marilyn Mitchell

Board Secretary

Kathe Stevens

Treasurer

Dan Wiest

Staff

Minister

Rev. Roger Mohr

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Cantor

Gwen Foss

Office Admin

Jenn Hurtt

Building & Grounds

Joe Brimmer

Leonard Swint

(Sunday)

Newsletter Editor

Robert Johnson

Worship Services

held every Sunday at
11:00am.

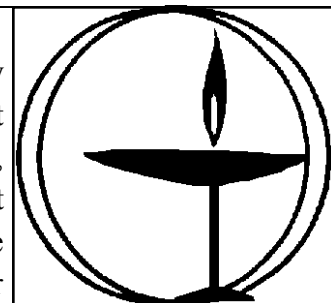
The Rev's Room

Well, hello! My name is Reverend Roger Mohr. I have only been here for two weeks, so I may not have met you yet. Let me begin by telling you how pleased I am to be here with you, at Detroit's First UU. Detroit is a great city, and the stress it has suffered does not decrease the glory of its past, nor occlude the brightness of its future. I love Detroit. And your congregation has a long and impressive history, including extensive work in civil rights and social justice. That is very important to me. A UU congregation should stand for something, mean something, and do something for the community in which we are placed. And that is something you have done very well. You are a center for love and reason in Detroit.

I am your interim minister, so I am here for one year to help you prepare to receive a settled minister. As I perceive my task at present, we have two goals for the year: First, I am here to facilitate the resolution of the facilities problem that has been burdening your finances. That is the most pressing concern at present. But I hope the trustees and the organization that plans to take over that task will soon finalize their agreement and bring that piece to a close.

But more importantly, I am here to help you to envision your future as a congregation. Why does First UU exist, who are you, and where are you going? What is the meaning and purpose of your congregation? What are you offering to this community? I have been a parish minister for nearly a decade, and I know well that this is a problem with which many of our congregations are struggling. But I am also an MBA, with expertise in leadership and organizational development. I am here, not just to help you survive, but to help you thrive.

To that end, I am meeting with as many of your congregational leaders as possible, as soon as possible, in preparation for visioning work we will do together later this year. I am focusing on meeting with the trustees, of course, but I am also trying to meet with those who lead in other capacities. If you are a leader, and I have not scheduled a meeting with you yet, you should approach me to schedule a meeting. In general, I will be in my office on Mondays and Tuesdays during business hours and Wednesday afternoons and evenings. But I am available by appointment later in the week, as well. And, in fact, it is wise to call for an appointment rather than just to drop in and hope to catch me, if at all possible. I may have another meeting scheduled – I consider talking with leaders in the congregation and in the community to be a major part of my work for you. And I am restless by nature, so I will not sit still for long if nothing is going on. I want to hear as many opinions and perspectives as possible, in order to help you build the best possible vision of your future. So, please, disturb me.



One caveat is in order. As part of coping with the financial burden of supporting professional ministry, it is important for you to remember that you have called me only $\frac{3}{4}$ time in Detroit. I also have to serve my other congregation on a quarter time basis. I have a commitment to them on the second Sunday of each month, and will be gone for a few days around that Sunday each month to minister to them. This month is an exception, and I will be gone for that purpose, and to take training as an interim minister, for most of the next week, from August 18-26th. In general, you can look for me to be in the pulpit the first, third, and fifth Sundays of every month. However, I will be present for the winter holiday services.

So here is the plan for the next month or so. I will be in the pulpit on a Sunday for the first time on August 28th, preaching a message titled, "Cassandra's Gambit," about the challenge of embracing the future. September 4th I plan to speak about the current state of UU theology and organization, and the way that the past brings us to the present, in a message titled, "Whose Idea Was This?" Then, on September 18, I will speak on the topic of spiritual disciplines, in a message called, "Mountain High, Valley Low." And we will hold the leadership retreat focused on vision and mission on October 1st.

I am looking forward to meeting you all. It is a pleasure to be here.

Reverend Mohr

Presidents corner

Thank you for electing me your President. I will work hard to do the best job that I can, but I also ask that each of you think of what you can do well or want to learn to do well, and work hard too to make this church be the best church we can be. We are all in this together and it will take all of us working and learning together to make a successful transition to a new kind of church that is not based on owning large buildings.

I had never wanted to lead this congregation in the past because I did not have a vision of how our church could be a successful urban congregation. Since 1973 when I first began attending this church, I have mostly experienced our church in a downward spiral, gradually losing members and financial backing. There are not many successful urban UU congregations, but I think we have a chance now to become one of those.

Through the hard work of our recent board, we were finally able to develop and implement a plan that would allow us to remain in our sanctuary, but not have the financial responsibilities for about 46,000 square feet of three aging buildings. We have a fantastic opportunity to reinvent our congregation, learn to get to know each other better, to share learning and social justice opportunities and to reach out and welcome new visitors and members.

I will soon be asking each of you to select two or three goals that you would like to see accomplished in the next church year, July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. As a congregation we will vote to select several goals that we can all work toward in the coming year in whatever capacities each have.

In addition, I want to officially welcome the Reverend Roger B. Mohr, who will become our interim minister this year starting 8/1/11. He has many skills and interests which can help us further develop our goals, along with specific plans on how to accomplish these goals.

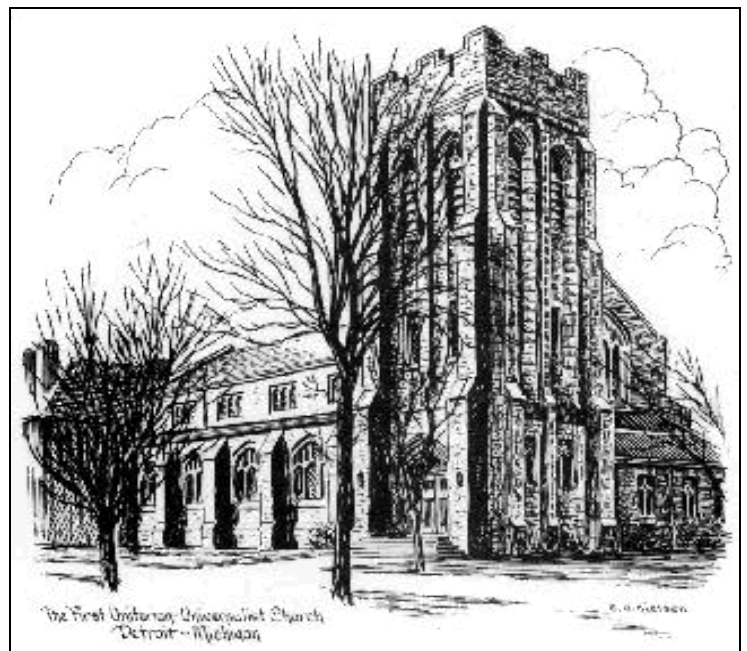
The first UU Church of Detroit has gone through several tumultuous years, but we have come out stronger and more focused than we have been in a long time. It is an exciting and challenging time to be a member of the First Unitarian-Universalist Church.

Membership Committee and Activities --- Marilyn Mitchell, chair

Hello First Churchers, Friends and Visitors! I have volunteered to chair the Membership Committee and Ruth Seifert has volunteered to help me.

We want to have some fun this year, so I am soliciting your ideas on what you would like to do. For example, are we all too elderly and child-free to return to Waterloo? Do you think a spaghetti supper (for example) and dance would be nice? How about movies and popcorn? Is there any interest in reviving a book club?

Please email me at mitchell140@comcast.net with your ideas.



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