

Website: [www.1stuu.org](http://www.1stuu.org)

Email: [office@1stuu.org](mailto:office@1stuu.org)

# First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit Newsletter

4605 Cass Avenue  
Detroit, MI 48201  
Office Phone: 313-833-9107

December Edition

## Upcoming Sermon Schedule

**December 2**

Rev. Roger Mohr

***“The Home of Progressive Thought.”***

First UU Church is the historical home of progressive thought in Detroit, and we are proud to claim that title today.

**December 9**

Rev. Roger Mohr

***“Our Cruelty to Strangers.”***

Our supposed ethical superiority depends on how we treat others, especially those who oppose us. We will observe Human Rights Day, December 10. The service will include a brief presentation from a representative from Amnesty International concerning American practice of torturing political prisoners.

**December 16**

Rev. Roger Mohr

***“Black, White, Brown, and Green.”***

As we near the Winter Solstice, we meditate on race, class, and privilege in a progressive and sustainable culture.

**December 23**

Rev. Roger Mohr

***“X-mas and the Politics of Resentment.”***

Christmas is a time when we are supposed to be positive. But sometimes we have trouble looking on the bright side.



**December 24**

**7:00pm**

Todd Ballou and Rev. Roger Mohr

***“Christmas Eve Service.”***

Todd will lead us in our annual Christmas Eve service of carols and hymns, with inspirational commentary from Rev. Mohr.

**January 6**

Rev. Roger Mohr

***“Success or Stagnation.”***

Change is not a choice, but a necessity and an opportunity.

**Message Topics:** Remember, Rev. Mohr is always open to new ideas for sermon topics, either in terms of texts and sources, or in terms of topics. If you have an idea for a sermon, please do feel free to share it.

## FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2012-2013

### Officers

**President**

*Sally Borden*

**Vice President**

*Cynthia Zurschmiede*

**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**

*Tamara Halliburton*

**Worship Services  
held every Sunday at  
11:00 a.m.**

The deadline for newsletter articles is the 20th of every month! Please send any articles to [office@1stuu.org](mailto:office@1stuu.org) or drop them off in the office.

*All those who are involved in the service on Sunday (Speakers, Worship Coordinator, Trustee of the Day, Cantor, and Music Director and/or Guest Musicians) will meet in the Sanctuary at 10:30am each Sunday to review the service.*

## **The President's Corner**

I'm writing this column right before the Thanksgiving holiday which naturally made me think about "giving thanks." I started thinking about all the things that I have to be thankful or grateful for and realized that in many ways I have been a very lucky person. First of all I was born and then lived to adulthood with the opportunity for an education. I had a parent who encouraged me to ask questions and think for myself. I was blessed with a brain that I was allowed to use and which gave me the opportunity to get a scholarship for college.

I managed to survive my early adult years, despite making some questionable choices, and was again allowed to obtain more education for a nominal fee.

I was working with mentally challenged teenagers when I became pregnant and realized that giving birth to a child was no guarantee that the child would be born "normal". I was thankful to my concept of God when my child was born "normal."

Again I was blessed with fairly good health and the opportunity to earn a living doing something which I enjoyed.

I also happened to give a talk at First UU in the late 1960s when I was working with those wishing to adopt "hard to place" children. This gave me the opportunity to find out that First UU existed.

A little later when I returned to Detroit and had found Unitarian Universalism in other cities, I again sought out First UU in 1973 and felt that I had returned "home."

First UU has allowed me to explore my interests and challenge my intellect while putting me in contact with others I liked and felt comfortable with. So life is not perfect and mine certainly wasn't, but as I look back, I have so much be thankful for, I can't even put it in words.

**The President's Corner** (continued)

So despite all the problems and challenges of life today, I'm sure you'll remember what things and people you have to be grateful for. Let's continue to remember our gratitude while we continue to wrestle with our personal and group challenges.

And another thing that this church can be grateful for is that Marsha Bruhn has agreed to fill the vacant slot on our Board of Trustees until the May congregational meeting. Marcia has a wealth of experience in work and community activities, so we welcome her to our Board to help us plan and make the best decisions for this church as we move forward into the future.

Despite whatever is happening in your life, let's remember that we have each other and that we do have some things to be thankful for.

Sally Borden

President

## The Rev's Room

In conversations with leaders in our congregation, and in my own work as a writer and community leader, my thoughts about what it means to be a church are changing. It is almost a cliché that a church is made up of its members, not its building. But First Church is very much associated with our historic, cathedral-like structure at the corner of Cass and Forest. Indeed, for much of our recent history, the primary energy of the church has been to manage to maintain the building and pay for our facilities. In several significant ways, the church was the building.

But that is no longer the case. Predictably, when we were able to solve the problem of the facilities, the question of who we really are and what we are really about came up. We love our sanctuary, and many people reference it as the reason they were first attracted to the church. But the building is *not* the church. And if not, then what is it? What is the purpose of the First Unitarian-Universalist Church in Detroit?

Answering that question is very much on the minds of our congregational leaders. I have recently agreed to publish an article in the Journal of Religious Humanism discussing my thinking on the subject, and a number of our church leaders have come to me to discuss their own ideas. To try to state all of these perspectives concisely, I think the consensus is that *First Church exists to provide a focal point for gathering and growing the progressive community of metropolitan Detroit.* Now, that word “progressive” could be problematic, but it is not meant so much in the political sense, but in the religious sense of “faith in a better future.” We are, “An urban center for spiritual renewal and social justice.” *The church exists to bring people together to help create a better future for themselves and for Detroit.*

## **The Rev's Room** (continued)

In one sense, that sense of being a focal “point” seems to imply “place.” But the community itself is what is really important. Our building could as easily house a fundamentalist Christian church. What makes our building important is that it provides us with a place to gather as a community. It also reflects our values and heritage of course, and that should not be under-rated. We need a space that can support our growth and reflects our history and inheritance. But what really matters is that we gather as a community of loving, rational people, interested in our individual and collective evolution as applied to the context of our lives and environment.

What that means is that we share a passion for progress, looking for opportunities to grow and improve our lives, as well as our community and culture. Thus, we gather to be challenged and inspired, looking for the services and programs of the church to help us to improve our lives and our world. But we also look to one another for opportunities to engage in beneficial and energizing work in the community. Church is a *networking* opportunity. We invite others who have ideas and resources to share in achieving the community's aspirations and ideals. Growth is a matter of achieving the goal of progress, of making better people in a better Detroit. *We grow to get better, not just bigger.* Thus, as we end this calendar year, we are on track to see significant growth in membership. But we remember that the goal of growth is community in pursuit of continuous improvement. The church is a community of progressive people, sharing their insights and opportunities for engagement in a project of holistic improvement. *The First UU Church in Detroit is a community that focuses on making it better, together!*

## **Membership Committee and Social Justice Team**

Rev. Mohr, Sally Borden and I conducted a UU Orientation session after church on November 4. Five prospective new members attended: Paul Chislett and Frank Butler from Windsor, Erich Cortright, Alicia Martinez and Matt Friedrichs. Dan Chicklas, who joined the Church on October 14<sup>th</sup> attended his second session. Dan has made a pledge covering the remainder of the fiscal year. On Sunday, November 11, we formally welcomed Nancy Owen-Nelson and Roger Zeigler to membership and Paul Chislett and Dawn Thomas signed the book. Accordingly, the Church has enrolled six (6) new members since Rev. Mohr arrived.

I am updating a list of active members as well as “friends of the church”, for a new church directory. If your address or telephone information has changed, please call or email me. I also intend to contact members we have not seen in church for some time, such as Janet Thompson, Carole Hosey and Jim Brown, to determine their intentions to continue their membership and invite them to return to church. Let me know if anyone has a special relationship with such persons so that a friendly phone call would be more appropriate. Under Article III, Section 3 of the By-Laws, a person who has not made a contribution of record during the present or prior fiscal year is to be sent an inquiry regarding desire to maintain membership and “will be removed from the membership list” unless an exemption is requested.

Finally, we heartily thank Joan Smykowski for making the new uniform nametags and we thank Tim Bailey for the numerous carpentry and other projects he undertakes to improve our building.

Marilyn Mitchell

## Spend Noel Night with 1st UU Church!



First UU will open its doors to the community for the annual Noel Nite celebration on Saturday, December 1. Plans include a holiday bazaar in the Social Hall, First UU choir, various local schools and other local talent performing in the Sanctuary and Memorial Hall.

This year there will be more integration with other members of the Cass Corridor Community Commons. Peoples Kitchen will be serving food; Fender Bender will have a bike display. Not only do we use this as an evening to open our facilities to the greater area, but also as a time to spend with ourselves.

### Partial Schedule of Events

The entertainment for the evening in the **sanctuary** is:

5:15 pm Earhart Chorale

5:40 pm Duke Ellington Academy

6:15 pm First Unitarian-Universalist Choir (with members from other UU churches)

7:45 pm Project: DayDream

Below McCollester Hall, in **The David Blair Theatre**, the East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC) will be conducting "A Green Christmas with the East Michigan Environmental Action Council." There will be fun, free family activities from 5-9 pm.

### 2012 Holiday Bazaar Vendors

Alfie (*photography*), Roz Carpenter (*hats, scarves, mittens, tote*), Dale Compton (*misc household items/clothes*), Colleen Dolan-Greene (*jewelry*), Gwen Foss (*books and misc*), Yvanne Ham (*jewelry*), Laura Jalynski (*Swarovski items*), Pewabic Pottery Educational Studio (*pottery*), Emirene Mendoza (*small items*), Amy Miller (*cabinet knobs and karma sticks*), Evonne Owens (*jewelry, scarves, purses and perfumes*), Monique Sasser (*ginger tea*), Elayne Sikelianos (*books, clothing, knick-knacks, CDs, and Christmas items*), Simone Smith (*greeting cards, holiday favors and gifts*), Jennifer Teed (*jewelry, aprons, vests, Christmas stockings, scarves, purses, etc.*) and Joy VanBael (*green tea, organic t-shirts, organic salves, organic massage oils and providing 5-10 minute chair massages*)

On Friday, November 30, join us at 6:30 for a simple dinner followed by decorating our building and grounds. Volunteers will be welcome for the day to help set up, give guided tours, serve as greeters, chaperone acts and help with clean up. Contact Dan Wiest and Joan Smykowski for more info.



## **From Your Activities Coordinator and Crew**

In addition to the Rev. Mohr's list of Events on Sundays and Christmas Eve, there are a few for December. Some of these are "church," some are Midtown area fun, some social justice, but all are designed to enable us to be together in various combinations, thereby building community.

### **Friday, November 30**

Light dinner and holiday decorating and set-up for Noel Nite. Come at 6:30 to get more acquainted with other "elves" while prettying up the place.

### **Saturday, December 1**

Noel Nite—A tradition at first church with seasonal performances, a craft show and light refreshments as are our contribution to the decades-old, event throughout the Cultural Center. (Elves needed tonight, too.)

### **Sunday, December 2**

5:00 p.m., Searching for Sugarman, Burton / Cass City Cinema, \$5.

7:30 p.m. WSU Opera Workshop at the auditorium in SW Old Main. Scenes from Marriage of Figaro, The Pearl Fishers and Candide make a sampler for new to opera (like me) and buffs. \$5 students and seniors, \$8 others.

### **Wednesdays, December 5 to 26**

7:00 p.m. Singing Circle open to all. Gwen Foss, [gwenfoss@netrek.net](mailto:gwenfoss@netrek.net)

### **Thursday, December 6**

8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., "Stuff A Cop Car with a Toy Event," in front of the Detroit Institute of Arts. Please donate new unwrapped toys for children 1-12 yrs. to be distributed by the Central District Adopt-A-Family Program Police Community Services. More Info.: Ofc. Dale Dorsey- (313) 587-4172

### **Sunday, December 9**

2:00p.m., Detroit Reparatory fun play, A Paradise of Fools. \$15 (\$5 goes to our church). Margaret Beck, 313 882 7775 or [margretbeck@comcast.net](mailto:margretbeck@comcast.net) We will go to dinner after.

### **Wednesday, December 12**

6:00 p.m. Our monthly Vespers. Al Acker will give us words and music to cherish, while we relax and take a deep breath to last until Sunday. Music circle

### **December 30**

Fifth Sunday Funday. We'll play some peaceful, cooperative games (in contrast to competitive ones). Jennifer Teed and I and anyone else who knows of one or more will explain and lead. You'll be surprised.

Sherry A Wells  
Activities Coordinator  
[esperantosherry@tm.net](mailto:esperantosherry@tm.net)  
(248) 543-5297



## Church Announcements and Events

### **Rev. Mohr teaches Sustainable Spiritual Growth**

(As appearing in *Natural Awakenings* magazine)

“Spiritual growth is not an unpleasant task to be suffered by strength of will,” say the Reverend Roger Mohr, a nationally recognized Humanist minister and pastor at First Unitarian Universalist Church, Detroit. “Spiritual growth is an exciting process of continuous improvement, one small insight and one small change at a time,” he adds. Rev. Mohr will lead a program about considering spiritual growth as an enjoyable daily process of transformation. The class is scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m., December 18, at the Detroit Athletic Club, in Detroit. Parking is available at the club for \$8; street parking may be available.

Rev. Mohr’s program is based on the principles of Reason and Compassion that are the foundation of the Humanist tradition. The basic principle is simple: Know Yourself. The goal is to get clarity about the real you, and what you need to do to care for that person. Rev. Mohr will discuss practices and ideas from world religions, along with scientific evidence and research, which is the core of Humanism. With more than a decade in ministry and advanced degrees in religion, psychology and business, Rev. Mohr has the experience and expertise to help people grow.

Cost: \$25 per person, but free to First UU members on a space available basis. Dress code at the DAC is business casual (blazers and slacks for men, no denim or t-shirts). For more information or to RSVP (required), call 313-262-6175, email [Roger@RogerMohr.com](mailto:Roger@RogerMohr.com) or visit [RogerMohr.com](http://RogerMohr.com).

## Church Announcements and Events

### **1st UU Board Meetings**

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

December 12	Memorial Hall	7:00 - 9:00 pm
January 9	Memorial Hall	7:00 - 9:00 pm
February 13	Memorial Hall	7:00 - 9:00 pm

All are welcome at board meetings. If you have an item you wish to have included on the agenda for discussion at the meeting, please contact Kathe Stevens, Board Secretary at [kathestevens@gmail.com](mailto:kathestevens@gmail.com)

### **Vespers Wednesday**

Wednesday evening Vespers runs from 6:00 - 7:00pm on the **2nd** Wednesday each month.

### **FIRST Sundays at 12:30. Intro to FUUD**

Are you new to the church, or just interested in learning more about our church and tradition? The New UU class is about offering introductory information about what the church is all about, and it is an important step toward becoming a member. There are two objectives: one is to share information on the UU tradition as a whole, and a second goal is to focus specifically on the history and traditions of the Detroit church. Please do attend: We are proud of who we are, and we want you to be proud to be with us!

### **SECOND Sunday Potluck**

Time to break out your best recipe and bring it to church – share your food with FUUD! As we begin to add new members, it is a good time to share fellowship and nourishment with the people who nourish us, in return. Remember that everything must come and go the day of the event – we have no refrigerator space to keep things beyond the immediate need. If you have dietary concerns (peanut allergies, and such), please do let us know, so that food can be labeled.

## Church Announcements and Events

### **Pop Songs for a FUUD hymnal!**

We have been using lots of “contemporary” songs in our services this year, and we want to start collecting them up so we can gather sheet music for our professional musicians, Todd and Gwenn, to use on Sundays. What songs do you love to sing that might be uplifting for our services? Pete Seeger, “Turn Turn Turn”? How about Desiree, “You Gotta Be”? Beatles, “All You Need Is Love”? Marvin Gaye, “What’s Going On”? Louis Armstrong, “What a Wonderful World”? If you think of something, Rev. Mohr is collecting them, just send your ideas with artist and title to [reverend-mohr@gmail.com](mailto:reverend-mohr@gmail.com) .

### **Chancel Flower Donations - 2013 Dates Available!**

Our custom for providing flowers for each Sunday service is to have members and friends donate them in honor or memory of a person or event. The **2013** signup sheet for donating flowers is now in the back of the church (some call it the narthex). Please take a moment to add your name and the person/event you wish to honor. Suggested donation is \$20 but is negotiable depending on your situation. Lencha Acker purchases the flowers each Saturday at the Eastern Market and delivers them to church on Sunday. The donor then takes the flowers home to enjoy and returns the vase later. If you have questions, see Lencha Acker after the service or call her at 313-393-8544. Thank You!

### **Entertainment Books for Sale!**

Margaret Beck is selling Entertainment Books for \$30 each with the church earning \$6 for each book sold. Entertainment books are filled with many coupons to save you money. We also get 2 free books worth \$60 after she sells 15 books. Please call Margaret Beck [313 882 7775](tel:3138827775) or email [margretbeck@comcast.net](mailto:margretbeck@comcast.net) if you are interested in purchasing one. They also make excellent gifts. Thank you for helping our church!

## Community Events

**The Community Chorus of Detroit (CCD)** presents three spectacular holiday concerts, conducted by Edward Maki-Schramm, DMA:

*Detroit's Community-Sing Messiah* on Sunday, December 9 at 4:00 pm, at Central United Methodist Church, 23 E. Adams St. on Grand Circus Park, Detroit 48226. Free admission; no tickets. The church has secure parking and it is handicapped accessible. The audience will join the CCD choristers to sing this great work. Bring a Messiah score or borrow one for a nominal fee. *Christmas Joy!* on Friday, December 14 at 7:30 pm and Saturday, December 15 at 4:00 pm, at Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, 8625 E. Jefferson Ave. at Burns in historic Indian Village, Detroit 48214. Secure parking. Featuring spectacular arrangements of beloved Christmas music, with the CCD and the CCD Orchestra, and with opening music by the renowned JAPC Chancel Choir. General admission tickets are \$16 in advance (\$14 in groups of 10 or more) and \$20 at the door. Tickets can be purchased on the chorus website (below), where further concert and chorus information is also available, including information about patron tickets and mail-in options.

All concert info and tickets for Christmas Joy!: [www.communitychorusofdetroit.com](http://www.communitychorusofdetroit.com)

### **Coats For Detroit's Children: Operation Warm**

Since coming to Detroit, I have been increasingly involved with the Detroit Rotary Club. Colleen and Trey asked me to join when I arrived, and I was honored to be asked to join. Since then, I have been very pleased to join other Rotarians in projects that range from the global efforts to end polio and to provide fresh drinking water around the world. More locally, Rotary is involved with efforts to increase Literacy, promote non-violent conflict resolution, identify and support young leaders in high schools and colleges, and more. I am privileged to be part of their good work.

Operation Warm is a Detroit Rotary project intended to help to provide disadvantaged children with new winter coats, and was featured in Rochelle Riley's column in the Free Press. The need is enormous. According to the agencies we have agreed to support, there is a need for at least 18,000 coats - 18,000 children will be without protection from the Michigan winter. In order to provide for our community's children we need your help. Twenty dollars will buy one coat. Will you help keep a child warm this winter? I am grateful for your compassion and generosity.

Thank you! Rev. Mohr

To Donate to Operation Warm:

<https://donate.operationwarm.org/page/contribute/snuggle-rotary-in-detroit>

Rochelle Riley's column:

<http://www.freep.com/article/20121007/COL10/310070252/Rochelle-Riley-Rotary-clubs-coat->

## Community Events

### **Detroit Urban Craft Fair**

Masonic Temple

The Detroit Urban Craft Fair (DUCF) is a two-day alternative craft fair held annually in the city of Detroit. Now in its seventh year, the 2012 fair features 100 handmade crafters and indie artists.

DUCF is a community market that encourages the interaction of maker and buyer. It is unique opportunity for shoppers to find one-of-a-kind items and meet the people who made them. Participating crafters have the chance to connect with a large, supportive audience.

#### *Event Dates and Times:*

10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, December 1, 2012

11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, December 2, 2012

### **MOSES Holiday Fellowship**

Mon, December 17, 6pm – 9pm

Location: TBD

For more details, go to:

<http://www.mosesmi.org/calendar.html>

### **Detroit Fire Department Collecting Christmas Toys for Children Through Toys for Tots Program**

There are few things sadder than a child without any toys for Christmas. The Detroit Fire Department and U.S. Marine Corps Reserve are doing what they can to ensure children have new toys at Christmas through the Toys for Tots program.

The Detroit Fire Department will have Toys for Tots gift receptacles at each Engine House through December for residents who would like to generously drop off a shiny new gift and share the joy of Christmas with children in need.

## **National Events**

### **2013 Heartland District Assembly**

April 12-13, 2013

Horizon Convention Center

Muncie, IN

*"Claiming the Future in Two Parts"*

This year's District Assembly will have two main components: conversations and decisions on the future of Heartland District, and conversations and reflection on the changing world of religion.

[http://www.heartlanduu.org/District\\_Assembly\\_Pages/assembly\\_home.html](http://www.heartlanduu.org/District_Assembly_Pages/assembly_home.html)

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### **Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations**

#### **General Assembly, A Meeting of Congregations**

June 19 - 23, 2012

Louisville, KY

[www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga)

**Mark your calendars now!**

# DECEMBER 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>**More details on ALL events can be found in the newsletter!</b>						
2 9:00am - Choir Practice 11:00am - "The Home of Progressive Thought." 12:30pm - Intro to FUJUD 5:00pm - Searching for Sugarman 7:00pm - WSU Opera Workshop	3	4	5 7:00pm - Singing Circle with Gwen Foss	6 8:00am - 3:00pm "Stuff a Cop Car with a Toy Event", DIA	7	8
9 <b>New Member Sunday</b> 9:00am - Choir Practice 11am - "Our Cruelty to Strangers." 12:30pm - Potluck 2:00pm - A Paradise of Fools 4:00pm - CCD Holiday Concert <b>Happy Birthday Robert Neale!</b>	10 <b>Happy Birthday Emirene Mendoza!</b>	11 <b>Happy Birthday Marilyn Mitchell!</b>	12 6:00pm - Vespers, Al Acker 7:00pm - Singing Circle with Gwen Foss 7:00pm - Board Meeting	13	14 7:30pm - CCD Holiday Concert	15 4:00pm - CCD Holiday Concert
1 6:11:00am - "Black, White, Brown, and Green."	17 6:00pm - MOSES Holiday Fellowship <b>Happy Birthday Kenneth Meyer!</b>	18 7:00pm - Rev. Mohr teaches Sustainable Spiritual Growth, DAC	19 7:00pm - Singing Circle with Gwen Foss	20	21 <b>Happy Birthday Lee Thume!</b>	22
2 3:11:00am - "X-mas and the Politics of Resentment."	24 7:00pm - "Christmas Eve Service." <b>Happy Birthday Emma Velasquez!</b>	25	26 7:00pm - Singing Circle with Gwen Foss	27	28	29
3 0:11:00am - Sermon 12:30pm - Fifth Sunday Funday	31					



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CHURCH OF DETROIT

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48201

Please visit us at [www.1stuu.org](http://www.1stuu.org),  
email us at [info@1stuu.org](mailto:info@1stuu.org), or give  
us a call at (313) 833-9107.

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## First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit Classified Ads

### Dear UU Friends,

Needing to raise income for my extravagant lifestyle; I turn to you for assistance. I offer two possible ways we may benefit each other. First, many know I make original hand beaded jewelry. I offer the chance to host a jewelry get together. I benefit from sales; you benefit from hostess gift. Jewelry repair is also available. Secondly, I have been a rep for a distinguished natural food supplement company for over 30 years. I know how such products are different from each other and I can help you understand this also. This company has a 50 year history of making environmentally friendly household products and naturally sourced food supplements.

I hope you will feel free to talk to me about any of this.

Sincerely and thankfully,  
Yvanne  
248-703-3971 or [yvanne1@comcast.net](mailto:yvanne1@comcast.net)

### Used books from honest book dealers.

TomFolio.com (Thanks from Gwen Foss!)

*There is no charge for members and donors and only \$5.00 for everyone else. To submit an ad, please see Tamara in the church office, leave a message on the church voice mail (313-833-9107) or send an email to [office@1stuu.org](mailto:office@1stuu.org).*