

FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF DETROIT NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION: LIBERATE TRUTH - RADIATE KINDNESS - LOVE COURAGEOUSLY

JANUARY EDITION

Upcoming Sermon Schedule

January 4:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

"A Resolution of Joy."

As we begin the New Year, it is a time for resolutions. As we make commitments to recreate our realities, let's make a resolution to live more joyfully this year.

January 11:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

"An Evolutionary Culture."

It seems that contemporary culture tends to be too much about defending our learned practices and preferences. But perhaps an evolutionary culture is about creating adaptive practices and preferences.

January 18:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

"Relational Ethics."

Ultimately, one might argue that ethics is about love. But it does require an understanding of power to love with awareness.

January 25:

Matt Friedrichs

"Anger."

Reflections on a night in Ferguson and St. Louis.

February 1:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

"Human Becoming."

It is always possible to become more fully human. Indeed, human being may well evolve beyond humanity – or at least, beyond human being as we now know it.

February 8:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

"Social Hedonism."

Hedonism is the idea that the purpose of life is to maximize our own pleasure. But human beings very often prefer shared pleasures, Ubuntu. What if we built a world in which joy was the goal?

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2014-2015

Officers

President

Marsha Bruhn

Vice President

Danny Rebb

Immediate

Past President

Sally Borden

Board Secretary

Kathe Stevens

Treasurer

Dan Wiest

Board Members At-Large

Matt Friedrichs

Joan Smykowski

Joel Batterman

Paul Chislett

Staff

Minister

Rev. Roger Mohr

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Office Admin

Alexis Mitchell

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



Letter from the President...

As we approach a new year, I decided to look back on my June letter to the congregation just prior to becoming president and review my “dreams” for the church for 2014-15. Here is what I said six months ago:

- Create a stable church home.
- Remove any uncertainty around remaining at our current location.
- Ensure that the original agreement with EMEAC is honored to its fullest extent.
- Find a solution to the Prentis lot that addresses upgrades, maintenance and revenue.
- Achieve continued growth and vitality to enable First UU to carry out its mission.
- Enable the church to fulfill its mission in a more widespread fashion.
- Identify the expectations of the membership and our capacity to meet them.

Some of these dreams have already been realized. Following productive meetings with John Linardos of Motor City Brewing Works, and with Chuck Roy of Cass Café, the Board approved a seven-year lease of a portion of the Prentis parking lot. In addition to upgrades to the lot, some of which are already visible, they will maintain the lot and continue to make it available to the congregation for our regular Sunday services. The partnership will benefit two local businesses and provide a consistent revenue stream for the church.

We have certainly achieved continued growth and vitality as the membership has risen to over 100 members, doubling the size of the congregation in just a few years. We can credit a lot of that growth to the positive response to our minister, to the work of the Membership Committee, to the many members who have welcomed us to church each Sunday, to opportunities to become involved in an increasing number of committees and activities, and to the revitalization that is occurring not only in Midtown but in the city of Detroit. The energy that is emanating from the congregation is enabling the church to fulfill its mission in a more widespread fashion.

Several initiatives have helped to identify the expectations of the congregation: the listening sessions with individual members, the mid-year informational congregational meeting, the strategic planning process, and the recent survey completed by many in the congregation. I hope people feel these are positive moves and that their comments are being heard and incorporated, where possible, into our congregational life.

My one disappointment is that we have been unable to achieve agreement with EMEAC on a new Memorandum of Understanding that would clarify our relationship with them and our use of the facilities. We have started the conversation, however, and I'm hopeful that it will continue after the first of the year. The agreement is part of ensuring a stable church home, just as the financial stability of both organizations is key to remaining at our current location. As long as financial challenges remain, so will some degree of uncertainty. I hope we will be seen as a willing partner.

Happy New Year!
Marsha Bruhn

The Rev's Room

Welcome to a brand new Michigan winter! I know, for many of us it doesn't feel that we have used up all of the last one yet, and perhaps that is horribly wasteful, taking the bounty of our winters for granted. Oh, this consumerist society in which we live!

I am pleased about where the church is at the moment. The Strategic Planning process is moving ahead strongly, with solid support from the board. We are also beginning to think of what it might mean for First Church to be a "mid-size" church (150 members) and how that will change who we are, how we do things, and what that might feel like. Our perspective and momentum is very much forward looking, anticipating challenges and opportunities for growth at a number of levels. That's excellent.

For me, that raises some questions. How are we doing in the present? Why are we growing? Why does that matter? What is our real message? How can we better express our message, both as individuals and as a church? I do not believe that simple success is an intrinsic good, just because it is success. I want to know why it works, and why we should help it to work.

With that in mind, I want to look at those questions this month. The messages this month are about setting out some ideas for my understanding of the meaning of Unitarian Universalism. I believe that we have a foundationally evolutionary tradition. We are called to support evolution, to the best of our respective understandings, at both the individual and multiple collective levels. It is not enough simply to be. The point is to be involved in a process of becoming.

Now what that looks like in any specific case may vary enormously. We are not all on the same path, or on the same place on our paths. But what excites me about our tradition is the call to become our best selves, our best society, even our best species. May we find the joy in that creation.

Namaste.
Rev. Mohr



Membership News

Becoming a Member is the Best Gift to Give Yourself

Newcomers are always welcomed at First Church. We are also reaching out to those friends of the Church, who have been coming for sometime, but have never made the commitment to join.

There is no formal conversion process, so becoming a member of our Church is simply a matter of self-identification. Membership is voluntary and does not require renouncing other religious affiliations or practices.

To learn more, please plan on attending one of the upcoming "Introduction to First Church" on January 4 or February 1, 2015 at 12:30 pm.

Getting Involved

All members and friends are encouraged to learn about the volunteer opportunities at First Church. The next Getting Involved Sessions will be held January 25 and March 22, 2015 at 12:30 pm.

2015 Interest Survey

Have you recently completed a Member Interest Survey? We'd like to know about your skills and talents to help our Church grow and improve. See Joan Smykowski for more details.

The Welcoming Congregation Program

The First Unitarian-Universalist Church has started the first steps to becoming a welcoming and inclusive church for people with marginalized sexual orientations and gender identities.

The program was first launched in 1990, by the U.S. Unitarian Universalist and Canadian UU. The First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit was one of the first UUA churches to participate. The program grew out of an understanding that widespread prejudices and ignorance about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people existed within Unitarian Universalism, which resulted in the exclusion of LGBTQ people from our congregations.

Today, 66% of U.S. Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations and 94% of Canadian UU congregations are recognized as Welcoming Congregations. The program is supported by LGBTQ Ministries.

Welcome to Our New Members

In December, two new members joined our Church.

Anita Jones
Regina Hollingshead

We welcome them to our Church family.

January Membership Anniversaries

1963-Faye Colling
1992-Bill McKnight
1979-Carole Ludwig
1993-Rhonda Rogers
2013-Matthew Friedrichs
2014-Alayna Oleneck



Membership News

Radical Hospitality Continues to be Practiced at First Church

Thank you to the best ushers and gushers of any and all UU churches in December 2014.

Al Acker

Lencha Acker

John Angry

Joel Batterman

Sally Borden

Paul Chislett

Dale Compton

Glenn Maxwell

Sharon Mills

Ruth Seifert

Kathe Stevens

Dave Vaillencourt

Katherine Vaillencourt

Dan Wiest

Jody Wise

Sherry A. Wells

Gushers and Ushers, if you're uncertain about your volunteering date or would like to volunteer, please visit <http://www.1stuu.org/Worship/worship.php>

Welcome to Our December 2014 Guests

S. Albachiarg

M. Alawieh

A. Asante

M. Csomor

L. Gardner

N. Strickland

A. Walbridge

Thank you, for visiting us! We hope to see you again soon.

Important Upcoming Membership Dates

To help newcomers discern whether or not the First Unitarian-Universalist Church is a good fit, we encourage you to attend a variety of services, join us for activities and attend an "Introduction to First Church" and "Getting Involved" session.

January 4, 2015, 12:30 pm, Intro to First Church

January 11, 2015-Membership Book Signing

January 25, 2015, 12:30 pm, Getting Involved Session

February 1, 2015, 12:30 pm, Intro to First Church

February 8, 2015, Membership Book Signing

The Membership Committee plans to begin recognizing the Good Eggs of our congregation. You know who they are (or maybe you don't). They're folks just like you who are busy behind the scenes, making sure things run smoothly. Watch for a shout-out to our Good Eggs, soon!

From the Welcoming Task Force...

A HUGE THANK YOU! We are so grateful to all of you. To everyone who brought food, helped set up and clean up, attended the December 14th service and made all our guests feel welcome and well fed, a big hug. Now the recertification process is starting. The first step, as we mentioned at the service, is everybody's opportunity to get involved.

CONGREGATION-WIDE BOOK READ We invite you to join us in reading excerpts from two very informative, interesting books::

Dangerous Liaisons: Blacks, Gays, and the Struggle for Equality, Author: Eric Brandt – 44 used from \$0.01, 15 new from \$7.35 on amazon.com (also available at the Detroit Public Library, Edison Branch, 18400 Joy Rd. just west of the Southfield Fwy).

Coming Out in Faith : Voices of LGBTQ Unitarian Universalists, Authors: Keith Kron, Susan Gore – price \$14 at uuabookstore.org.

We have a few copies to lend, as well. Let Kathe Stevens know if you would like to borrow a book or Kindle.

Please see Kathe Stevens or Irene Brisson during coffee hour to sign up to participate in the discussion by January 4th so we know how to plan the event. Watch the order of service or ask any Task Force member which excerpts we have chosen to read. We will begin discussing the book excerpts after church on January 25th.

Another opportunity to learn more: the January 14 Vespers service at 6 pm in the parlor will feature a wide variety of LGBTQ poetry from famous poets as well as contemporary authors including teens..

Task Force co-leaders Al Acker, Deanna McGraw and Kathe Stevens



Church Announcements and Events

1st UU Board Meetings

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

January 14	Whole Foods Community Room	7:00 - 9:00 pm
February 11	Whole Foods Community Room	7:00 - 9:00 pm
March 11	Whole Foods Community Room	7:00 - 9:00 pm

All are welcome at board meetings. Whole Foods is located at 115 Mack Ave at John R, Detroit. 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

Vespers Wednesday

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

FIRST Sundays: "Intro to First Church."

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: Welcoming New Members.

This is a normal service, but we also include a time to invite our new members to come forward, present themselves to the community, and sign the membership book. This is an important ceremony honoring those who have chosen to identify themselves with our values, our tradition, and our community. Make them feel welcome among 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.

Singing Circle

Wednesdays at **7:00 pm** - Singing Circle at the church. Open to all. Contact Gwen Foss bookdoc-torgwen@gmail.com for more details.



Church Announcements and Events

Acknowledgements

If you have a milestone (joy or sorrow) to share or a visitor to introduce during a worship service, please write the message on one of the index cards which can be found in the backs of the pews, and place the card in the offering basket during the collection. Milestones and visitor names will be passed to the minister for sharing with the congregation as part of our closing circle.

Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a global movement of people fighting injustice and promoting human rights. Amnesty International meets at 1st UU on the third Monday of every month at 7:30 pm in the Parlor. Contact Dan Wiest for more information.

Young Adults Activities

The first UU Young Adults group participates in two activities per month. To learn find out about upcoming Young Adults activities, visit us on Facebook at: [groups/young1stuu/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/young1stuu/) or contact Beth Bailey to be join our Google Group.

Music Program Meeting

On Sunday January 18, after the worship service, there will be a meeting with Music Director Todd Ballou, to discuss the music program. This will be an opportunity to discuss the program with Todd and to share any feedback or suggestions you may have. Please mark your calendars.

Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are needed to clean and update the Church Office. A date has not been set, however, the Building and Grounds Committee is looking for hard working individuals that would like to assist. You do not have to be a member of the Building and Grounds Committee to help. Please see or contact Tim Bailey at tbailey44444@yahoo.com.

Chancel Flower Donations

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 suggested donation of \$20 is negotiable if your situation requires. Lencha Acker purchases the flowers each Saturday at Eastern Market and brings them to church. The donor takes the flowers home to enjoy and returns the vase later. If you have any questions or would like to sign up, see Tamara after service or send her an email. Thank You!



Church Announcements and Events



Your Friendly Membership Committee plans to begin recognizing the Good Eggs in our congregation. You know who they are. Or maybe you don't. They're folks just like you who are busy behind the scenes, making sure things run smoothly. Or they show up on Sunday with whatever we need to worship together, or on Saturday for clean-up, or ... you get the idea. Watch for a shout-out to our Good Eggs, soon!

Child Care Coming--

We hope to begin providing child care during each church service starting in January. A great group of 1st UUer's have volunteered to help with the care and we will have a short training session before we begin providing the care. Alayana O. works with Head Start and is a great resource for this undertaking.

If you have any of the following items to donate to our newly decorated child care room, please let Richard Hillier, Alayna O. or Sally Borden know, but **DON'T BRING THEM TO CHURCH YET:**

- small kids size table and chairs
- a low shelf for toys that kids can reach on their own
- Boppy pillow and an activity gym for infants
- small play kitchen set (is usually a hit with kids)
- any toys appropriate for ages eight months to four years (larger Legos, puzzles with two to six pieces, toy cars, trains, Fisher price Little People, balls, stuffed toys and dolls)

We think we have a rocking chair and a changing table.

It will be great to see even more young children coming to church.

Joys / Concerns

Carolyn Ludwig joins other 1st UU members, Trey Greene and Linda Dargat, on the Board of Peace Action of Michigan.

Please pray for Mark Anderson who has been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer.

"I am so grateful to my U.U. friends-Joel Batterman, Danny Rebb, and Dan Secrest- for their attendance and support of my reading at the Hannan House last Wednesday night".

-Nancy Owen Nelson

The 42nd annual Noel Night was a successful evening of fundraising capped off by another spectacular performance by Thornetta Davis. Special thanks to Regina Hollingshead, Kathe Stevens, Aletha and Matt Oberdier, Corrine Streicher, Irvine Brisson, Carolyn Ludwig, Shawlene Gaye, Marilyn Mitchell, Joel Batterman, Jody Wise, The Christ the King Service Corps, Bill McKnight, Joan Smykowski and Beth Bailey for sharing their expertise from last year, and of course a special thanks to Dan Wiest and apologies to anyone I have forgotten to mention here. Oh! And special thanks to Bryce from EMEAC for coordinating the whole night.

-Matt

Please keep Roger Zeigler in your thoughts as he will undergo knee replacement surgery tomorrow, Monday, December 29, 2014.

-Nancy Owen Nelson

"My daughter discovered your "holiday" presentation information in 2013. Your Noel Night entertainment was wonderful and uplifting! It made my back ache and cold feet worth the discomfort! We plan on attending every year! Thank you, thank you!

(P.S I am not a church goer, but may reconsider)

-Shirley A. Lorie

JANUARY 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
4 11:00am - "A Resolution of Joy " Speaker - Rev. Mohr 12:30pm - Intro to First Church	5	6	7 7:00pm - Singing Circle	8	9	10
11 New Member Sunday 11:00am - "An Evolutionary Culture " Speaker - Rev. Mohr 12:30pm - Potluck	12	13	14 6:00pm - Vespers 7:00pm - Board Meeting 7:00pm - Singing Circle	15	16 Happy Birthday George Waterman!	17
18 11:00am - "Relational Ethics " Speaker- Rev. Mohr 12:30 pm- Music Program Meeting	19 7:30pm - Amnesty International Meeting	20 Happy Birthday Colleen Dolan- Greene!	21 7:00pm - Singing Circle	22	23	24 Happy Birthday Faye Colling!
25 11:00am - "Anger" Speaker - Paul Chislett 12:30pm- Getting Involved Session 12:30pm- Congregation Book Read Happy Birthday Elayne Sikelianos!	26	27	28 7:00pm - Singing Circle	29	30	31



**FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF DETROIT**

4605 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI
48201

Please visit us at www.1stuu.org,
email us at info@1stuu.org, or give
us a call at (313) 833-9107.

Church Announcements

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.

Weekly Order of Service Deadline

Have an item/event to be included in our weekly Order of Service? We'll do our best to include it, although printed materials have significant space limitations. Send your information to office@1stuu.org by **12:00 pm Thursday**.

February Newsletter Deadline

Tuesday, January 20th

Next issue covers February 1 - February 28, 2015

No submissions accepted after the deadline.

Send items to office@1stuu.org