

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit

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October 5, 2008

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First Unitarian
Universalist Church
Organizational Chart
2008 – 2009

Officers

President

Alicia Biggers

Vice President

Dan Wiest

Immediate Past

President

Linda Darga

Board Secretary

Alma King

Treasurer

Sharlene Gage

Staff

Minister

Rev. Drew Johnston

Minister Emeritus

Rev. Larry Hutchison

**Minister of Faith and
Development**

Rev. Athena Kolbe

Assistant Minister

Rev. Lynda Smith

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Choir Director

Gwen Foss

Church Secretary

Wendi Winston

Building & Grounds

Joe Brimmer

Leonard Swint

(Sunday)

Trustees

Ivan Cotman

Trey Greene

David Lingholm

Bill McKnight

Newsletter Editor

Volunteer Needed

DREW'S VIEWS

I have some trouble understanding “the undecided.” This came to mind when I learned that the second presidential debate was going to be held in the presence of undecided voters. Where do they find that many people who have not made a decision?

Of course, I thought of this at the grocery store where I couldn't make up my mind about what brand of toothpaste to buy.

There is one critical difference between presidential candidates and toothpaste (there may be more than one, but let's try this . . .) The wall of toothpaste is dozens of minor variations on a theme, whereas there are only two serious candidates for the president, and the differences are obvious. So I can understand, and experience, indecision when faced with a vast array of subtle differences. When the choice is limited to one or the other of two extreme differences, it seems simple enough though. In politics, particularly this year, it is either more of the same or something different.

It is a crucial time in our history and I trust that you have made a decision and will take voting seriously this year, even nudging your family, friends, and neighbors to vote.

Of course I am thinking about more than this election; as always, I am thinking about our church, too.

Our church, our religious movement, our denomination, offers a clear alternative to everything else. It is hard for me to imagine being indecisive when offered such clear options – religion as a set of beliefs to which you must adhere; or religion as a process and relationship with others who seek truth in diverse ways. I am a strong supporter of open mindedness, and will always do some research before choosing something important: like a president, a religion, or toothpaste. Once I do choose, though, I'm happy to explain my thought process. In fact, talking about my reasons for making a choice is one way I can keep an open mind – by listening to my own reasons I sometimes realize that I am ready to do more research, and sometimes make a new choice.

So, if anyone asks why I voted a certain way, I will probably be able to answer. If someone asks why I chose Unitarian Universalism, I can probably answer that question, too, and in many different ways. Can you? Or are you still in a research phase, gathering more information about this church? What would you like to know?

There are several good ways to learn about Unitarian Universalism, and this particular congregation. Participating in activities is one of the best! Showing up on Sundays and Wednesdays, talking to folks who

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DREW'S VIEWS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have been here for a while, finding little ways to help out, taking a class – these are all good ways to learn about this place! There will be a newcomer orientation near the end of October and I strongly recommend that as a key piece of learning – especially if you have been thinking about officially joining this congregation. Joining is, technically, easy. You sign a book and make a pledge of support. It deepens the relationship. The most useful part of joining is learning more about each other and finding ways to fit in to the life of the church that are both good for you and good for the church. If you are at that point in decision making, feel free to talk to me. OR find Reverend Lynda Smith and talk to her about the opportunities to help out around church. Or talk to Membership Committee people. As for toothpaste, I remain open on the question of fluoride and sodium laurel sulfate. No doubt some of you have strong opinions – I'm still researching.

See you in church!

Reverend Drew

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

What a Sunday! This past Sunday afternoon, October 5, 2008, numerous members and guests joined your Board of Trustees and our Minister in an exercise to discover our assets and how our assets can turn quickly into actions, activities or programs. Our collective first step to telling our story for our future success!

The Board will now use the information collected to continue our Saturday sessions for planning or telling our story so we can prepare for the future, our future here at this corner! How inspiring!!

You will continue to see your Board work through the easy and not so easy aspects of governance to ensure your voice and your future are planned for which means we may not be “nice” but we will be “kind” in every decision made or policy created.

On another note, you can see the fall season has begun which means the holiday season will be shortly upon us. Make sure you mark your calendar for the following events:

- 1) **Women's Alliance can / dry food drive for Gleaners**
I would like to challenge each member and each committee/group to see who can bring in the most cans/dry goods! I'll be watching to see who contributes the most - -- there will be a reward.
- 2) **Jim Scott Concert (Fundraiser for the Church) – October 11th**
Invite your friends and neighbors to join us in this concert which benefits the Church. It starts at 7:30pm for \$12 advance or \$15 @ door.
- 3) **Chili Dinner (Fun and Fundraise for the Church) – October 18th**
Join us for some great food, line dancing and cash bar.....6:30pm the hot sauce begins!
- 4) **Election Day – Tuesday, November 4th – Make it count! Bring a neighbor or a friend to the polls**
- 5) **Holiday Decorating Day – Friday, December 5th**
Join us for an evening of fun decorating all our buildings from the sanctuary, McColleston Hall, Memorial Hall (Church House) to the outside. We'll begin decorating in earnest at 5pm with food and drink available! Come get in the season!!
- 6) **Noel Night – Saturday, December 6th (4pm -9pm)**
Our annual “Open House” to the community where we offer music (via the Cultural Center Association) in the sanctuary, shopping and kids activities in McColleston Hall and of course cider and cookies for all. We WELCOME volunteers from helping with the kids crafts to stage hands for the music to docents for tours.....interested, great just let us know which hour you can donate your time!!

As you see, there is much to do and as your Board steps up to do its role, I hope as a pledged member, you step up for your role too! Unsure where or how to step up? Just ask any of us.....

Your Board of Trustees for 2008-2009 are as follows:

President – Alicia Biggers
Vice President - Dan Wiest

Treasurer – Sharlene Gage
 Secretary – Alma King
 Trustee – Dave Lingholm
 Trustee – Trey Greene
 Trustee – Ivan Cotman
 Trustee – Bill McKnight

Please feel free to contact any Board member or any of our three ministers: Rev. Drew Johnston, Rev. Lynda Smith or Rev. Athena Kolbe and let us know what you feel about the Church, the ongoing changes, how you want to be of use or service, as we are listening but really need to hear from you, continuously! Looking to hear from you soon! *Alicia Biggers*

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for printed material is **Sunday, October 19, 2008** no later than NOON or the following Monday, no later than 9:00 a.m. for electronically submitted material. Contact Wendi Winston (info@1stuu.org) for information.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2. Earl Harvey
 4. Donna Walker
 6. Robert Lauer
 7. Nora Holt
 26. Yvanne Ham

CD RECORDINGS OF THE SUNDAY

SERVICE Every Sunday Service is recorded on CD by the sound crew. Copies are made after service in coffee hour at the sound table. Please fill out the order request form as soon as possible so we can graciously make your copy for only \$5. Copies of past sermons are also available.

The sound crew schedule is as follows:

First Sunday: Linda Darga
 Second Sunday: Len Zettel
 Third Sunday: Glenn Maxwell
 Fourth Sunday: Dan Secrest
 Fifth Sunday: Dave Lingholm

Contact them on their respective Sunday for questions. If you are interested in being on the sound crew, contact Glenn Maxwell or Dan Secrest.

ABOUT Us

Our church has many special people, and Dan Wiest is one of those who makes extraordinary

commitments. He knows the church facilities intimately, and is usually seen assisting in the kitchen early Sunday mornings. Dan is Vice-President of our church Board. He oversees the Building and Grounds portfolio, and also serves on the Minister's Council. He headed the Membership Committee for many years, and spearheads Noel Night.

Dan was born in Wisconsin; his father worked at General Motors, and after they moved to Michigan, he graduated from Rochester Adams High School in 1974. An accounting major, he graduated from Eastern Michigan University, and works as a contract programmer at Ford Credit. Dan's parents are now living in Iowa, their native state.

“As a recovering Catholic, I had been looking for a spiritual home for a long time, and attended Farmington UU Church with a friend. Since I live in Lafayette Park, I then began coming to First U.U. and realized that I had found my religious haven. This church means so much to me, more than I can describe.”

Members like Dan are a great inspiration, and we are grateful to him, and to all those who contribute to our church community. Sally Borden and Nora Holt, Membership Committee Co-chairs, ask that you please contact me if you would like to suggest someone who might be written about in this newsletter column. Mary Neale – 313-562-0776 or helenmary3@gmail.com

CHILI SUPPER

**CHILLY IN MICHIGAN? IN OCTOBER?
 NOT ON SATURDAY, THE 18TH AT 6:00
 P.M. THAT'S CHILI SUPPER DANCE TIME**

It will be warm and convivial at First Church's cordial corner. Wear your western (or Spanish) garb and attend the first social event of the year, our 6:00 p.m. **CHILI SUPPER DANCE.**

Over 40 U.U.'s are helping to make this a special evening. There's the Kitchen Crew led by Colleen Dolan-Greene, with cooks Maysel Brooks, Faye Colling, Ed Collins, Nora Holt, Pearl Samples and Elayne Sikelianos. They will be serving 4 kinds of chili, recipes from Joe Samples, spicy or mild,

vegetarian recipes from Dessa Cosma and Linda Kernohan.

There will be a Cash Bar – beer, wine and soft drinks - the bartenders are Lynda and Stuart Smith, Dan Secrest, Bob Neale and Suzanne McGill.

Tickets were designed by Glenn Maxwell.

Ticket Sales during coffeeshour are handled by Sally Borden assisted by the membership committee wearing cowboy hats.

Ticket takers - Mary Lou Malone and Walter Greene III.

Room arrangers - Felice Rizzo, Joe Brimmer, Yvonne and Ross Fowler

Entertainment - David Robinson and his guitar. Ken Hermanat, Choir Director from N.W. Church, a line-dance caller and teacher, will lead us in our dancing for all ages.

Publicity - Sally Borden, fliers – Alicia Biggers, Dan Wiest, and Tracy Martin

Party Clean-up – Alma King, Donna Walker, Alex Maxwell, and other volunteers

Last of all, 20 of our church's newest members agreed to be table hosts/hostess

NOW, HOW CAN ALL OF YOU HELP?

Buy tickets during coffeeshour and bring friends with you to eat, drink and dance up a storm!!

This will be a special evening, you will keep in your memory box!

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

Everyone is invited to join the Women's Alliance!

We have weathered many changes and seem to be an inherent part of the landscape here at 1st UU.

Even so, we need your support. How can you do this? (1) Attend our monthly luncheons and programs. We work hard to plan programs on topics that we think will be of interest. There is no charge for attending the program portion, but lunch will cost \$8. (2) Join the Unitarian-Universalist Women's Federation (UUWF).

Membership is open to all. Dues are \$25 a year that are sent to the UUWF to support their projects. UUWF is an organization that supports projects through grants that benefit women.

Funded projects around the world advance equity

and justice for women through education and advocacy. Other grants are available to support UU women in scholarly, prophetic and innovative explorations of religious feminisms. Descriptions of the projects supported are available on the UUWF web site, UUWF.org. You do not need to join UUWF to be part of our monthly group, although it is strongly encouraged. Those who pay dues have voting rights with regard to Women's Alliance business. UUWF is an independent non-profit and one of three associate member organizations of the Unitarian-Universalist Association. (The other two are the UU Service Committee and the UU United Nations Office.)

The Women's Alliance will be collecting non-perishable food for Gleaners – a non profit agency that distributes food to those in need. The collection will continue until October 15th (monthly luncheon) at which time the group will entertain a speaker from Gleaners Community. The collected food will be turned over to the representative at that time.

Our next luncheon/meeting will be Wednesday October 15. Our speaker will be, Bill Winkler, from Gleaners Community Food Bank. He will share information about what Gleaners does to collect and distribute food. Lunch is at Noon and the program begins at 1 PM. Please bring a non-perishable food item to donate. Reservations for the luncheon need to be made by Noon of the previous Monday by contacting Eiko Takemoto or the Church Office. Please consider joining us!! Remember that membership is open to everyone! Other questions? Contact Alma King.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS

Entertainment books have raised \$160 this fall. I have a few more to sell for \$20 each and can order more. Thanks to all who bought books. A few buyers also purchased them for gifts. Every year I give some as presents. My beautician used her so much and really appreciated the savings. I used to take my mother out to dinner using the coupon and she enjoyed it better than going out without one. Single women, fellows will appreciate you bringing a coupon on a date. The books make great Christmas presents. I will have them for sale at coffee hour. Margaret Beck

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

(the committee that makes good memories)

Come join us for the first Hang Out night to be held the 4th Wed. of the month--this month it will be Wed. 10/22/08 at 7 pm. This is meant to be a relaxing and fun night with no pressure. There will be games and cards to play and we'll have a session with some of our church historians to learn more about the history of 1st UU. No test afterward.

Come for dinner and vespers before the get together.

If you have questions, contact Sally Borden or Nora Holt, co-chairs of the Membership Committee.

SOCIAL JUSTICE @ 1ST UU DETROIT

Did you see the 4,000 people who turned out to hold their elected and public officials accountable on key issues of social justice? Sunday, September 28, 2008, MOSES (Metropolitan Organizing Strategy Enabling Strength) along with numerous member Churches (including 1st UU Detroit) held a public rally to address key issues such as health care, mass transit down to quality grocery stores in the city. It was exciting yet we must ensure those commitments made by our public or elected officials are tracked to hold them accountable. With elections just around the corner, we must continue to place our "faith in democracy."

The social justice team will be meeting soon to decide the one or two actions it will complete this year in the name of 1st UU Detroit. If you are interested in social justice or action, join us!

Meanwhile, the Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN) is hosting its annual conference on Saturday October 11, 2008 from 8am to 4pm in Ann Arbor. More information can be found at www.uujustice.org. 1st UU Detroit is a member so you are welcome to attend any and all of MUUSJN's activities.

More to come.... Peace – Lee Gaddies