

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit

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November 16, 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 Hutchinson

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

Trey Greene

David Lingholm

Bill McKnight

Newsletter Editor

Volunteer Needed

DREW'S VIEWS

This is a time of anticipation and hope. It's not just the long-awaited national election, although that has been the focus for many people. There is seasonal change in the air and much more. The important thing is that this time the promise of change brings hope more than fear.

You have heard me speak often about change, and here I am again, extolling the virtues of transformation and moving into the uncertain. There is, perhaps, an interesting parallel between the state of the nation and the state of our church. Both places have been known to get into routines of doing things that don't work. As normal humans we all get in routines and sometimes are so engrossed that we don't notice how ineffective our habits are. But now we anticipate changes, and we seem to believe that change will bring a new outcome. Simply put, as we stop doing things that are proven to fail we make space for something that might, possibly, work better.

This is such a seasonal event, with the coming of Advent, which promises a new routine, or at least space for a new thing to happen. Without even delving far into the Christian stories of the season – Advent and Christmas – we notice that something new is coming. If not the Christ, then at the very least a new calendar year. This coming year, a change in the United States government, and changes in our own church, too. What if we believe that all of these changes make room for new things that might work better? What if we look with the faith of those who believe that people are capable of doing what they agreed to do? What if we quit telling ourselves stories of how easy it is to fail? What if we, instead, use our knowledge of the past and our knowledge of the present to recognize that what has happened before is not destined to be repeated just because of a vague similarity?

The world has never been as connected as it is now. Information has never moved as quickly as it does now, and wealth has never been distributed the way it is now. Although doomsayers like to watch the news and predict that we are always in dire straits, in reality those doomsayers always fail to consider new information, new circumstances, and new strengths. What if we remember always that “this time” is not the same as “that time,” or simply repeat to ourselves, every time we feel afraid of the state of the world or the city or the church that, “This is not that?” Indeed, new things are happening all the time and the current state of things is not the same as the past. We change and the world changes, too. This is not that.

When we expect things to go poorly and are surprised at good outcomes, it may be easy to see that, “This is not that.” It may be worth remembering too, that when we compare this moment to something from the past we do a great disservice to this moment. Let's take this moment in time as it is, on its own merits, and notice the gratitude that is possible when we appreciate what is happening now, rather than

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smothering the present with some imagined history.

Relatively small changes can make big differences. At church we have a new office assistant who is already helping to bring some new order and efficiency to our church. Please welcome Huey Gray III if you call or drop by the office. The new office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

See you in church –
Reverend Drew

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

Your Board of Trustees continues their efforts in the areas of policy, portfolio and planning. The work is starting to take shape now in the form of a policy manual with our goal of accepting, reviewing then adopting at least two policies per Board meeting. Then portfolio work continues as Trustees link into the areas of Church life we have accepted accountability and this linkage also supports our policy and planning efforts.

Policies adapted to date include:

1. Disruptive Behavior
2. Newsletter
3. Calendar
4. Canvass
5. Phone Tree
6. Building Key Access

I expect to have the policies adapted to date posted on our governance board, available in the Church Office then eventually posted securely to our web site. If you have specific questions regarding policies, please contact any of the Trustees for answers.

We continue to dedicate select Saturday afternoons to work on the Church's comprehensive plan; you will also see your Trustees update the membership using Order of Service inserts as well as announcements on Sunday morning. We have assigned ourselves with a deadline of March 2009 to present a draft to the Congregation, however, before that time; you will be informed of the plan as you will have helped craft the plan.

You may be aware that Wendi Winston's time with us has come to a close. We wish Wendi all the best in her future endeavors and career! The Board of Trustees and Rev Drew Johnson are working together to ensure office support continues. As with life, there may be a few lumps and bumps along the way.

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) 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 6 pm with food and drink available! Come get in the season!!

2) 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 is as follows:

President – Alicia Biggers
Vice President - Dan Wiest
Treasurer – Sharlene Gage
Secretary – Alma King
Trustee – Dave Lingholm
Trustee – Trey Greene
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, December 7, 2008** no later than NOON or the following Monday, no later than 9:00 a.m. for electronically submitted material. Please send your material to Huey Gray at info@1stuu.org.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2. Caroline Taylor, Mary Lee Ventzke
9. Rev. Drew Johnston
15. Jim Harvey
19. Pearl Samples
23. Jerry Williams
24. Margaret Wilkie

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

A sincere apology to Carole Hosey, who was spotlighted in the last ABOUT Us column as Carole Harvey.

At the church Chili Supper on October 18, Ian McGill and his wife Susanne were stellar examples in the line dancing, and clearly were having fun.

Ian is from metropolitan Detroit, and his parents live here. As a youngster, he attended a boarding school, and then lived in Europe. When he studied at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI, he concentrated on Political Economics and English. He is a professional actor and toured in college drama groups and is a member of the Actors' Studio, which has offices in Ann Arbor and Royal Oak. Ian is presently enrolled at Wayne State University. "I am primarily working in hopes of expanding my mind and horizons."

Ian's consulting company works with doctors' offices and government agencies in technological health care. He provides software for medical dictation and transcription.

After visiting another UU Church, Ian and Susanne chose First UU Church because of our "sense of social community and social justice with like-minded people. People who are on a similar journey, even though our destinations are not the same."

We are pleased to welcome Ian and Susanne, and congratulate them on their November 9 wedding anniversary.

If you have suggestions about this column, please contact Mary Neale at 313-562-0776 or helenmary3@gmail.com

NOEL NITE

On the first Saturday in December First UU will again be a part of Noel Nite. It is one of our best opportunities to open our doors to the community at large. Volunteers are requested to perform the following duties: chaperoning performers, stage setup, greeters, tour guides, and luminary candle maintenance. We will have cider and cookies during the evening for people as they pass through the church. We need lots and lots of cookies. Maysel Brooks will see that the cider jugs and cookie plates are kept full, but she needs volunteers to help. We will be gathering on Friday, Dec 5 for a pizza dinner at 6:00 followed by a decorating/preparation party. Donations of decorations and funds are most welcome.

THEOLOGY ROUNDTABLE - EVERY 3RD**WEDNESDAY AT 7PM**

Topical discussions about spiritual issues...

Spend an evening discussing topical theological issues. Explore and clarify your own beliefs. This is a drop in group and is open to everyone who wants to take a deeper look at their own faith in an open and accepting atmosphere.

UU'S AROUND THE WORLD - EVERY 2ND**WEDNESDAY AT 7PM**

It's a big world out there, with lots of UU's...

We'll be learning about a different Unitarian Universalist community each month. This interactive class focuses on the history, traditions and religious development of UUism in countries around the world. It's a drop in class, so there is no need to R.S.V.P. and you can show up for one class, or every month if you like!

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS

Thanks to all who bought **Entertainment books**. The sale has raised \$200 for the church. \$92 from our members and \$108 from my friends, relatives, and neighbors. I have 5 books left if you would like to purchase one, it will be \$4 more in the church treasury. Please call 313 882 7775 or email margretbeck@comcast.net if you would like a book they are wonderful savings.

Last weekend 11 people bought tickets to the play *Defiance* at the Detroit Rep. \$55 was turned into the treasury. It was an excellent play.

Thanks for all your support these years for fundraising it was fun and raised thousands of dollars for the church for many years. *Margaret Beck*

Upcoming

Detroit's local Amnesty International group is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Wednesday, December 10. Some of you may be aware that this group got its start thanks to legendary First UU'er Vic Schumacher. The event starts at 7:00 in Memorial Hall and features speakers from local human rights groups, videos and music by Julie Buetel (okay and carrot cake, too). Come to Vespers; celebrate human rights.