

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit

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December 21, 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

Cantor

Gwen Foss

Office Admin

tbd

Building & Grounds

Joe Brimmer

Leonard Swint

(Sunday)

Trustees

Trey Greene

David Lingholm

Bill McKnight

Dessa Cosma

Newsletter Editor

Ryan King

DREW'S VIEWS

Before you undertake the task of creating New Year's Resolutions, consider starting with affirmations. It seems that resolutions often take the form of something completely different than what has come before – starting some entirely new behaviour or stopping some long-standing habit. And it seems that so many resolutions result in little change after all. So I've been thinking that it might be worth starting from a different place.

What have you done this year that can be affirmed as good? Were you generous in supporting causes you believe in? Were you generous in spirit? If you can begin with affirming that generosity is part of your life, maybe the resolution is to increase that generosity a little.

Has there been a time this year when you took good care of your own health? Maybe just a moment when you knew you were eating well, getting rest, and exercising all in good balance? Maybe a resolution would be to do that some more.

Often at the end of a year people reflect on those they no longer see, perhaps friends who have drifted away, family members who've been taken for granted, loved ones who have died. Was there a time when you initiated contact just for the sake of saying hello and checking in? Can you resolve to do more of that?

Maybe this year is the time to make small and reasonable resolutions based on all the things you have done well in the past. I notice that many people do a lot more good than they recognize, and I'd guess that might be true about you. So before attempting to resolve some major life change, consider starting with something you already do well, and do more of that.

I'm thinking of using the end of the calendar year to reflect on gratitude as well. Sometimes life moves at a pace that makes it hard to see the things that truly matter. Sometimes that is a slow pace when things don't seem to change and we are somewhat blinded by the routine. Sometimes change seems to spin rapidly and there isn't time to make note of what is around us. But now, as the year turns, I intend to make the time to name for myself the things that bring me gratitude. Even if I limit my list to things that happen at church, the list is long. Witnessing moments of kindness, hard work by many church members, generosity in many ways – these are sources of gratitude for me that are as near as church.

As we turn to a new year I remain in an attitude of anticipation and hope. I affirm that I have reason to expect this church to be a source of gratitude for an increasing number of people, and I resolve to do my part to make that happen.

Happy New Year – See you in church –
Reverend Drew

Lynda's Lyrics

Notice the new title of this column. It's so good to hear the congregation singing out on Sunday mornings. Singing is a communal event. One of the reasons I like being a UU is that the lyrics of hymns often have been revised to fit our liberal theology. We do sing traditional lyrics as well, because that was the composer's usual intent. On the other hand, revelation is not sealed in our tradition, that is, the meaning of what is truth, beauty, and love evolves just as does everything else.

The volunteers working to keep this congregation are evolving, as newer members make a commitment to take big and small responsibilities. Hopefully this frees up some of the longer-term members to take stock of why they volunteer and what would really be satisfying to take on. It's also encouraging when longer-term members, who've not been so active, contribute to the whole. Please don't hesitate to talk to me about finding your niche in this community.

Here's an excerpt from my current favorite poet, David Whyte. My gratitude to Drew for reminding me about Whyte's poetry.

*Millenium....the river of the soul flows on and the soul refuses safety until it finds the sea.
The ocean of longing, the sea of your deeper want,
the gravity well of your own desire,
the place you would fall becomes in falling,
the place you are held.
The great sea and the still ship of your own becoming.*

Wishing you the joys of friendship and faithfulness in 2009,

Rev. Lynda Smith, Assistant Minister

President's Ponderings

With this issue of the newsletter, I wanted to take a different approach and let you know specifically what the Board of Trustees is accomplishing regarding our Church's future.

As you know, your Board of Trustees has been meeting 2 to 3 Saturdays a month since September

to draft a plan for 1st UU Detroit's future. This action comes directly from your feedback from the appreciative inquiry and asset mapping where you stated 1st UU Detroit has value and matters to ourselves and the larger communities we are all a part of. Following your lead and our desire to be of use, we are close to a final draft which we will present to you in early April 2009.

The following is an outline or flow of how we are working together as Trustees to draft the plan. Our basic plan process includes the following elements:

1. Identify your purpose (mission statement)
2. Select current goals (from the Logic Model)
3. Identify specific approaches or strategies
4. Identify specific action plans to implement each strategy
5. Monitor and update the plan

Our inputs, data and voices include using:

- Logic Models
- Asset Mapping
- Valuations

The logic model helps us to identify inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes which lead to goals and evaluation of the plan.

Each has its own purpose as listed here including the questions we ask ourselves and the answers are what you will read in the final draft plan in April 2009:

Inputs

- What resources do you need for the program/initiative?
- Your Church
- Other organizations
- invisible resources, including in-kind

Activities

- What happens during your program/initiative?

Outputs

- What can you count? What is measurable to see success.
- What does your program/initiative produce?

Outcomes

- How will your clients or constituents be different as a result of your program/initiative?
- What will they know or be able to do?

Goals

- Outcomes are goals
- Missing inputs might be goals

Evaluation

- Statements that explain the problem, the need or the opportunity that the plan is addressing and outline the activity proposed.
- These are PREDICTED OUTCOMES
- Who and what will change as a result of this? How?

The final plan is a living document that will change over time and will be “reviewed” each year by the Trustees at the beginning of the Church year. This will also include input by you, our members, as together the plan works. Our future is ours to create and we are only limited by ourselves. I, along with your Board of Trustees, look forward to presenting this draft plan to you in April.

If you have any questions, please contact myself, any of our Ministers or any Trustee as well.

Alicia Biggers

Greetings from your 2009 Canvass Campaign Co-Chairs, Kathe Stevens and Glenn Maxwell:

With a charge from Rev. Drew to think of new ways to thrive and prosper at the corner of Cass and Forest, your governing board has asked us not only to chair the 2009 Canvass Campaign, but to help transform the process.

This January, we will begin a rolling pledge campaign. How will that work? We’re not yet sure. We do know a few people will be canvassed each month, so our pledge income is more evenly distributed throughout the year. Following that model, we’ll be recruiting canvassers to visit four or five pledging units each month during the calendar year.

We are inspired by the words of board president Alicia Biggers, from her November 16th newsletter column, “we are listening but really need to hear from you, continuously.” A pledge form will be developed to invite you to voice your thoughts on church life as you commit your money to its health. And those thoughts will not be lost in the midst of a massive annual campaign, but instead passed on in an orderly process, designed for acknowledgement and follow-up. Your thoughts, along with accounting figures, will be presented to the board via monthly canvassing reports, which we believe will be manageable, productive, and improve communication.

That’s as far as our brainstorming has taken us! Details will be announced in January. Again drawing inspiration from the last newsletter, we are reminded by Rev. Drew that “this is the season of anticipation and hope.” And so we anticipate and hope that the upcoming year will be challenging, exciting and transformative. We may get some things wrong and we will get some things right. Mostly, we’ll work together to thrive and prosper at the corner of Cass and Forest!

Glenn and Kathe

Glenn: 248-219-5873 glenn@mbwgroup.com

Kathe: 313-675-1553 kathe@mbwgroup.com

Faith Development

Miss Nora Holt and Sherry Wells have been teaching the basic rules and principles of various religions to our elementary school students. We have room for more students! And for one-time expertise from you (see below).

We began with the Golden Rule and the Silver Rule, then the 10 Commandments, a Sunday about Why We Go to Church was requested by the parents and we are here to augment and support their home teaching!

We will be doing the Kwaanza principles (I'm partial to them), Jainism, Buddhism, Taoism, Jesus (2 greatest commandments), Islam and, of course, the UU principles. We will finish by making our own Rules for Living.

HELP! If any of you have particular familiarity with any of these, please call me to offer it.

Each is doing a folder to contain all these but the units are individual enough that a new child won't feel "behind" and, on a Sunday when newer children are there and our sisters are not, we can catch them up.

Flexibility is vital to teaching on Sunday mornings these past decades.

Sherry A. Wells, (248) 543-5297 (day, eve, machine)

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.

Help UUSC Provide Humanitarian Aid

In the spirit of giving, we at First Church remember the Unitarian-Universalist Service Committee with its contributions to help improve the lives of many people around the world. We have begun the 'Guest At Your Table' campaign by distributing boxes in which you can drop money when thinking of the many who will benefit from your generous donations.

Please bring your checks (not cash) to church and ask Mary Neale to forward them to the UUSC, so that our church can receive credit for these contributions. Checks will be collected for the next few weeks, and we plan to end this Guest at Your Table by January 18, 2009.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for printed material is **Sunday, January 25, 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 the Church Office at office@1stuu.org.