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# First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit Newsletter

4605 Cass Avenue  
Detroit, MI 48201  
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August Edition

## Upcoming Sermon Schedule

August 18

Rev. Roger Mohr

**“Still I Rise.”**

Maya Angelou’s poem is an emphatic declaration of her transcendence. What can we learn from her?

August 25

Rev. Roger Mohr

**“The Wisdom of Detroit.”**

Detroit has among the deepest and richest histories of any US city. What have we learned?



September 1

Rev. Roger Mohr

**“Maggie’s Farm.”**

The Bob Dylan song (and excellent *Rage Against the Machine* cover) offers some useful insight into systems of exploitation and how to liberate ourselves.

## FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2013-2014

### 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*

*Cynthia ZurSchmiede*

*Sean McAde*

### 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.**

*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

July begins the church's new fiscal year, and it is already full of good news. The first concerns the sale of the property on Cedarhurst which was recently donated to the church. This long-time home of church member Eiko Takemoto was generously donated to First UU as part of the decision-making for Eiko's move to an assisted living facility in Kalamazoo to be near her family. We've been receiving good reports of Eiko's adjustment to her new home. Our good news is that the fully-furnished home has been sold to a young couple with four children—three daughters and a son all under the age of 11. We're happy to be able to report to Eiko and her family that this well-loved and cared-for home is meeting the needs of a new young family. They are delighted to be able to move into a four-bedroom fully-furnished home at an affordable price.

Much appreciation goes to Marilyn Mitchell who did all the legal work and acted as the property manager over the past month the house was on the market. We are grateful to Sean McAde who agreed to stay in the house each night in order to send a strong message that the house was occupied. His presence—sitting on the porch, conversing with the neighbors, cutting the grass—was crucial in helping to protect our asset.

The other good news was holding a leadership retreat early in the new fiscal year to evaluate our progress on the goals agreed upon a year ago and to set our goals for 2013-14. For each of the major goals of membership development, financial stability, and outreach/relationship-building, we need to continue to ask ourselves why each of these is important. What do we hope to accomplish, for example, by reaching 100 members? What do we gain by increasing our public presence? Equally important are the action steps to be taken to accomplish the goals. We agreed at the retreat to identify the necessary action steps, timeline them, and periodically evaluate our progress. We invite everyone to join in this dialogue.

It's amazing to me how much activity goes on quietly behind an increasingly complex organizational structure to bring life and meaning to the congregation. The 19 people who attended the retreat on July 13 represented most facets of the church—board, minister, worship, communications, hospitality, ushers, publicity, development, social justice, membership, nominations, GLBT, building and grounds, finance, young adults, and EMEAC relations. I look forward to their continued wisdom and input—and yours!—as we move forward this year.

Marsha Bruhn

## The Rev's Room

As part of my wellness program, I try to walk or run four or five miles every morning. Now in reality, that means I get it done three or four days a week. But I do so often enough to feel like I stay connected with the city of Detroit, with my own inner world, and with my body. Fortunately, all three seem to be in a pretty good place right now, despite some wobbles here and there (As I write this, Detroit has just entered bankruptcy, which was as expected). Things are going better. Part of that sense of optimism is the positive change we are seeing in the city. The streets are cleaner, shops are open, shoppers and spectators are out and about, and most people seem to really be enjoying the changes. Sure there are the resentful ones (not altogether unjustified, there are relevant complaints, but resentment we have with us always, the more so as things improve for those who can adapt), but it seems clear to most people that Detroit is better now than it was even a year ago. For that, I give thanks.

One of the signs of improvement is that some old, rotted buildings are coming down. At the south end of the Dequindre Cut walkway, where it meets Milliken Park and the Riverwalk, there is an old factory, an abandoned, burnt out shell, the Globe building (thanks to Dan Weist for the background info). It was just a huge chunk of decay, sitting there looking like a catastrophe in one of the most attractive spots in the city. And it was falling in, having long ago lost its structural integrity. Indeed, that is the major problem in restoring it for future use. Old buildings are dangerously unstable. But this summer they have finally begun to rehabilitate it, and I have watched the process. The major struggle is to take part of the building down efficiently, but while also retaining enough structural integrity to do so safely and to rebuild. The same is true when we put a new building up. We don't start at the top of the building and work downward. We build from the bottom, establishing the integrity of the building as we go, with site preparation, utilities, and of course, foundations.

At the First Church leadership retreat we hold each summer, the board and committees met to discuss the goals and agenda for next year. According to First Church's leadership, the major congregational goals are to create a system of membership development, to improve our relationships with the wider community, and to affirm and stabilize our finances. We need to make sure we have nourishing things to offer to each other, that we are a good partner and contributor for other organizations, and that we have enough money to be secure in our relationships and aspirations. These seem to be very basic things, the site preparation, utilities, and foundation. We have begun to build, but there are things we need to do first. We need to establish, maintain, and develop our structural integrity.

Thus, in my opinion, INTEGRITY is the major theme for this year. First Church began its period of decline along with the rest of the city, in the 1960's. That is a lot of time for things to fall into disuse, disrepair, despair. The structural integrity of the church is a bit shaky, at present. But like the city of Detroit as a whole, the commitment and legacy of our history gives us the wisdom and resources to rebuild. The project for the church, and the city, is to restore our integrity so that we can take our place as fully functional adults in our roles and relationships. This year, we begin to truly rebuild!

Namaste! Rev. Mohr

## Activities Coordinator

One of our most active members this summer has been Mary Lou Malone.

She represented our congregation at the UUA General Assembly, which was in Louisville KY. She has attended several of these and always appreciated the music in the openings and closings. In fact, she asked me to bring back a CD of the music a time she couldn't attend.

The theme this year was Covenanting: promising positive behaviors and committing to follow through.

One workshop she attended was given by Julie Brock, a member who is in seminary to become a UU minister, giving tips about covenanting with young adults. (Kathe Stevens daughter.)

In another, Sarah Dan Jones, whom Mary Lou recognized from prior involvement in the music programs at previous GAs, led an examination of the Order of Service. The result was a realization that inadvertently it was less inclusive and welcoming than we'd like. Mary Lou will be presenting, at the Worship Retreat on July 27, the ideas to remove insider content and jargon, improve introductions, and make services easier to hear and to understand.

As our representative, she was obligated to attend the plenaries—the business meetings of the UUA. She says they have improved much over the years, due to the outgoing (in more ways than one) moderator, Gini Courter, from Michigan, and her predecessor, both presiding with a sense of humor and inclusiveness. New is the option for delegates to attend a GA online, including being able to speak and to vote.

Usually the last day of the GA is open to the public and those of us who attend invite anyone we know in the area to attend.

Mary Lou will bring her UUA GA program book with her for the next few Sundays to show and tell about other workshop and activities in which she participated.

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On Saturday, July 13, while many of us participated in a Church Leadership Retreat off-site, Mary Lou was on-site at the Reproductive Rights workshop, sponsored by the

## **Activities Coordinator** (continued)

Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN), UU Funding Program and the Grosse Pte. UU Church among others.

Women's rights included not only choice about carrying a pregnancy to term but, as presented by Mothering Justice, to have support for breastfeeding, child care leave, on-site child care, living wage to support a family, sick leave, the expansion of Medicaid.

Many of these were also applied to gay parenting and to single fathers. Adoption by gay and single parents was included.

Mary Lou reported that the National Organization of Men Against Sexism has been concerned with Violence Against Women are now promoting profeminist attitudes.

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Also in July, I attended the Esperanto-USA annual conference. Over one-quarter of those participating were identified as UUs ! At least 9 of us attended the local UU congregation—it was quite impressive when they asked visitors to stand to be welcomed. I'm currently the moderator of the UU Esperanto Network Yahoo Group.

## **Church Announcements and Events**

### **Vespers Wednesday**

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

### **Singing Circle**

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

### **Sunday Worship Service**

The Worship Committee generally plans for Sunday worship service to run for about 1 hour. However, the Worship Committee does allow our speakers to take a few more minutes if needed to finish their point. So as a general guideline, please plan for Sunday worship services to end between 12:00 and 12:15pm.

## **Church Announcements and Events**

### **T.C. Latham Memorial Service**

A memorial service for Tulloss Clayton "T.C." Latham will be held on Sunday, August 18, 2013, at 1:00 P.M., in the sanctuary of the First Unitarian-Universalist Church, 4605 Cass at the corner of Forest, Detroit, Michigan 48201. There are two entrances to the sanctuary, a door on Cass Avenue near Forest and one off our small parking lot on Forest. Information about church parking may be found at <http://1stuu.org/parking.php>. Additionally, for a cost of \$4-6, there are parking lots at 4730 Cass (just north of Shangri-La Restaurant) and 4820 Cass (at Hancock) , as well as WSU Lot 60."

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

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

August 14	Memorial Hall	7:00 - 9:00 pm
September 11	Memorial Hall	7:00 - 9:00 pm
October 9	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)

### **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 signup sheet for donating flowers is 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!

### **Acknowledgements**

If you have a milestone or visitor to introduce, please write the message and put it in the \*visitor-milestone box \*in the narthex (foyer at back of church) or give it to any usher to deliver for you.

### **Monthly Young Adults Meeting**

Join young adults from the congregation and beyond to discuss the development of this new social and community group within First UU. They meet on the third Sunday of the month at 12:30 in Memorial Hall.

## Church Announcements and Events

**Reverend Mohr will be in New York taking courses for his doctorate the first two Sundays in August, so we will return to the new member orientation sessions in September.**

### **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. Please label your contribution and its ingredients.

### **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.

### **1st UU Walking/Running Team**

Rev. Mohr is interested in starting a team of walkers and runners to participate in local races. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rev. Mohr.

### **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.

### **Donation Letters**

It is not unusual for members to generously donate food, appliances, services or other items to First UU and then not ask for reimbursement. Letters may be provided upon request itemizing donations so that they may be taken advantage of for tax purposes. Please provide receipts to the office admin to receive the proper documentation.

### **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 **4:00 pm Thursday**.

## Church Announcements and Events

### **Bicyclists of the world...**

Hats off to the increasing number of bicyclists attending functions at First UU. Please don't spoil our ability to condescendingly look down upon our auto-addicted brethren with less than careful choices in where we park and lock our bikes. Please do not bring bikes inside the buildings where it may block access or cause egress problems (especially for the disabled). When parking outside, please do not place the bike on the inside of the ramp. The outside of the ramp is fine as long as it does not block through-ways. Until more permanent facilities are provided, it is suggested that we use the playground for our parking space. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Plea for Pledge Contributions**

As was projected at the Annual Congregational Meeting, First UU is experiencing a cash shortage as our fiscal year winds down. A possible bridge to close out the year and help us make it through summer (which is traditionally a slow period for contributions), the Board of Trustees suggests that those who are able please pay "ahead" on your pledges. Instead of paying an even amount over the next 12 months, you can pay a large amount (or the entire amount) early. It is hoped that future fund raising plans will overcome any shortages that this plan might entail for later months. Contact Dan Wiest with any questions.

### **September Newsletter Deadline**

Tuesday, August 20th

Next issue covers September 1 - September 30, 2013

No submissions accepted after the deadline.

Send items to [office@1stuu.org](mailto:office@1stuu.org)

# AUGUST 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Happy Birthday Mark Schwing and Rev. Lynda Smith!	3
4:11:00am - Sermon Information TBA	5	6	7:00pm - Singing Circle	8	9	10
11:00am - Sermon Information TBA 12:30pm - Potluck	12	13	14:00pm - Vespers 7:00pm - Board Meeting 7:00pm - Singing Circle	15	16	17
18:11:00am - "Still / Rise." 12:30pm - Young Adults Meeting 1:00pm - T.C. Latham Memorial Service	19	20	21:00pm - Singing Circle	22	23	24
25:11:00am - "The Wisdom of Detroit."	26	27	28:00pm - Singing Circle	29	30	31
	Happy Birthday Patricia Piliafian!					Happy Birthday Annie Byrne! Happy Birthday Sharlene Gage!



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CHURCH OF DETROIT

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us a call at (313) 833-9107.

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## Community Announcements and Events

### **Detroit Farm and Garden Free Classes**

Detroit Farm and Garden hosts a number of free classes each season; classes run from 1-3 p.m. Contact them at 313-655-2344 for more information or email [detroit-farmandgarden@gmail.com](mailto:detroit-farmandgarden@gmail.com) to be added to their monthly events and classes listserve.

### **Upcoming Classes**

Hard-Scaping, Patios and Walkways - August 18th

Composting - September 15th

Fermentation - October 20th