

# FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF DETROIT NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION: LIBERATE TRUTH - RADIATE KINDNESS - LOVE COURAGEOUSLY

APRIL EDITION

## *Upcoming Sermon Schedule*

April 6

Rev. Roger Mohr

### **"The Center of the Universe."**

A common challenge in social justice efforts are our experiences of burnout, alienation and despair. How do we connect spiritual renewal and social justice?

April 13

Rev. Roger Mohr

### **"Progressive Regional Leadership."**

First Church has begun to build its outreach efforts with a strategic vision to reach beyond Detroit's city limits. How can we, as Unitarian Universalists, be more effective in shaping our region, as well as our neighborhood?

April 20

Rev. Roger Mohr

### **"Here Comes the Sun."**

With Easter, we embrace the arrival of Spring. Let's also give thanks for the revitalization of our church, even as we look forward to future challenges and opportunities.

April 27

Dan Secrest

### **"Another Great Awakening? "**

In his March 2 sermon, Reverend Roger Mohr mentioned previous "Great Awakenings" in U.S. religious history. I'll discuss these in greater detail and consider the prospects for another great awakening.

May 4

Rev. Roger Mohr

### **"Calm Down. Aim. Hit the Ball."**

In general, progress in any endeavor is more a matter of conscious discipline and consistent practice than of sudden inspiration or instinctive reactions.

## **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*

*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.**



## *President's Letter*

What makes people feel good about our church? I've been asking that question of the membership and am overwhelmed with the depth and variety of the responses:

- Its music
- The warmth of fellowship
- A place for freedom of ideas
- A sanctuary, a place for re-creation
- Where we connect to the broader Detroit community
- Our history of social justice
- Its traditional structure
- The interesting and intellectual sermons
- Its creativity
- The open-minded, accepting, active, friendly people
- Messages that combine lay life and spirituality
- An opportunity to learn about self and how to grow
- A focus on service for individuals and the group
- A place where many paths are offered and respected
- And even...a better alternative to staying home in your pajamas!

This is just some of what I've heard from you. These are the reasons you join, stay and support our church, not only financially but in many other ways—by participating on committees, being a brother/sister to your fellow members, singing in the choir, organizing theatre parties, raising funds, greeting visitors, shoveling snow, fixing electrical problems, building relationships, attending services, providing leadership.

I was struck by the buzz of activity in McCollister Hall following a recent service. In one corner, people clustered around a table planning for Nain Rouge; fingers were flying at the next table as a group of young adults built activity kits for blind children; a third table hosted the Nominating Committee; and in another corner a small group debated the question of whether it was time to end Black History Month. I felt the warmth of fellowship throughout the room and was grateful to be a part of it. We have grown so much in the past year...together.

Marsha Bruhn

## *The Rev's Room*

It seems we have made it through another winter, and it was a pretty serious one. It has been a long time since I experienced anything like it, and it has been over a century since there has been a harsher winter. I crawled out of the cold, gray, dirty ice and snow on my hands and knees, but I am standing tall, ready for the new year. We have survived. Congratulations!

As soon as I returned from my doctoral intensives, I started taking meetings to think about the priorities and vision for our church and its ministries for the coming year. As I mentioned last month, I am cognizant of a need to elucidate a way of doing our faith that involves a coherent connection between our personal spiritual lives and our public social justice concerns and interests. Toward that end, I have been focusing on Interdependence as a foundational premise in the practice of our tradition. It is the Unity of our Cosmos, our biosphere, and our selves that seems to me to provide the best opportunities to make our private and public efforts inform and empower one another.

However, as part of the conversations about what will be the best approach to building our church and our social justice practice, the opportunities for us seemed to include issues beyond simply the city of Detroit, reaching into issues of regional influence and leadership. In meetings with friends, ministerial colleagues here in Detroit, and First Church leaders, the challenge is to begin to think of our ministry as community organizing at a regional as well as local level.

After all, the issues which vex Detroit are not local, but regional, in terms of economics, politics, and vision. We are blessed at First Church with an increasingly capable and functional church organization. We are doing remarkably well, and our ability to address and overcome our internal challenges is growing rapidly. The next step is to begin to develop a vision for outreach and ministry as a church. Our vision(s) must recognize the fact of our interdependence at every systemic level. As we become stronger, healthier, and more capable, we have the responsibility to strengthen our neighbors, as well, in ever wider circles. Let us prepare to lead!

Namaste.

Rev. Mohr



## *Membership Committee News*

### Investing in the Future at First UU

#### **Canvass Meetings Continue Be Part of the Future of Our Congregation**

If You Missed the March Meetings, There's One More Canvass Meeting to Attend

The Board of Trustees invites all members and friends of the First UU to attend the final house canvass meeting. The canvass meeting is the opportunity to learn about the present and future plans for First UU and to answer any questions that you may have. We encourage you to attend, participate and decide your most comfortable level of giving for the next year.

As with the City of Detroit, our Church is experiencing growth and new energy. We are proud of the progress and stability our Church has obtained. We want to continue to grow and be a religious option for individuals in our community. Yet, it will take the generous donations of our members and friends to ensure our financial stability.

The final canvass meeting will be held, April 8, 2014, 6-8 pm at Sharlene Gage's home. Please RSVP to Sharlene at 313-393-8502 or at [shargage@gmail.com](mailto:shargage@gmail.com), to find out the location and directions for parking. There is a limit of 15 guests. Light refreshments will be served, so it's important to RSVP to Sharlene.



#### **March Canvass Meetings a Success**

Thank You to Hosts and Hostess

Attendance at the 3 March canvass meetings for the 2014-2015 Investing in the Future at First UU, has been a positive experience for the hosts and hostess, presenters and guests.

A special thanks to Nancy Owen Nelson, Roger Zeigler, Kathe Stevens and Glenn Maxwell and Marilyn and Jerry Mitchell for hosting the events in their homes.

Finally, the Canvass Committee did an outstanding job of sharing information about the future challenges of our Church. Thank you, to Marsha Bruhn, Dan Wiest and Rev. Mohr for leading, sharing and moving our congregation forward. We recognize that talking about money is not easy, but we must deal with financial realities.

## *Membership Committee News (continued)*



### **Why Invest in the Future at First UU?**

“There is only one reason for joining a UU Church! That is to support it. You want to support it because it stands against superstition and fear. Because it points to what’s noblest and best in human life. Because it is open to men and women of whatever race, creed, color, or national origin.

You want to support a UU Church because it has a free pulpit. Because you can hear ideas expressed there which would cost any other minister his or her job. You want to support it because it is a place where children can come without being saddled with guilt or terrified of a some ‘celestial peeping Tom,’ where they can learn that religion is for joy, comfort, for gratitude and love.”

Reverend John Wolf, retired Senior Minister at All Souls in Tulsa



### **Becoming a Member of First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit**

#### **The Membership Journey Begins a Deeper Commitment**

Newcomers are always welcome in Unitarian-Universalist congregations. There is no formal conversion process, so becoming a Unitarian-Universalist is simply a matter of self-identification. Membership is voluntary and does not require renouncing other religious affiliations or practices.

To help you discern whether or not the First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit is your church home, please join us for an Introduction to Unitarian-Universalism at First Church of Detroit. The sessions are held, in Memorial Hall on the following dates:

Sunday, April 6, 2014-12:30 pm

Sunday, May 4, 2014-12:30 pm

Sunday, June 8, 2014-12:30 pm

If you would like to know about activities, programs and committees, please join us for a “Getting Involved” session in Memorial Hall, on one of the following dates:

Sunday, May 27, 2014-12:30 pm

Sunday, June 22, 2014-12:30 pm



## *Membership Committee News (continued)*

### **Welcome to Our Newest Member**

*March 2014*

Eric Rattan of Detroit

Welcome Back to An Old Friend

David Vaillencourt of Ferndale

### **April Membership Anniversaries**

I never see what has been done; I only see what remains to be done.

Buddha

April 1961 - 53 Years

Robert "Bob" Neale

April 1971 - 43 Years

Patricia Pilafian

April 1991 - 23 Years

Margaret Wilkie

April 2002 - 12 Years

Emma Velasquez

April 2007 - 7 Years

Yvonne Ham

Toni Marie Tront

April 2009 - 5 Years

Carole Hosey

Sharon Mills

April 2010 - 4 Years

Stephanie Chang

Sean Gray

April 2012 - 2 Years

Dale Compton

Nancy Owen Nelson

Roger Ziegler

April 2013 - 1 Year

Tommy Wyatt

## *2014 April News*

Sunday, March 16 was amazing and wonderful. We had 6 activities going on: some announced weeks ahead; some more last-minute; some folks simply continued enjoying coffee with others. Everyone looked quite happy.

When too many things happen on the same day while on other days there is nothing happening, then one wishes for a coordinator.

However, when there is something for everyone, as simply a calendar girl, she's not so needed. (Still check with our church calendar and then Tamara if you definitely need a specific space for an activity.)

So my role now is more to continue seeking, or even helping create, activities we can enjoy together. Continue to tell me when you see something or want to do so something that would be good to announce in the Order of Service insert. Often, I put them on our mass listserv, too.

So what do you think about a Getting Acquainted series of Sunday after-church events in which interested persons can:

- 1) display information about their vocations
- 2) display information about their avocations/hobbies
- 3) display information of the causes they are passionate about.

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## *By-Laws Revision*

Pursuant to Article X of the By-Laws, the Governing Board intends to place a revision to the By-Laws of First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit on the agenda for a vote of the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting to be held in May 2014. The change is to Article III, Section 1, membership requirements, as follows:

“Section 1. Membership is open to all interested persons who: are at least sixteen (16) years old; sign the membership book; make a monetary pledge of support; and/or make a financial contribution of record. We welcome all who are in general agreement with Unitarian Universalist principles and purposes without regard to considerations based on sex, sexual identity or orientation, race, ethnic identity or national origin, economic status or level of ability. No test of belief shall be imposed as a condition of membership.”

Only the first sentence is changed, the second and third sentences are unchanged. There are no other changes to the By-Laws.

The change is intended to remove the requirement that (in addition to signing the membership book) to be a member one must sign a pledge form **AND** make a monetary contribution of record. In the revision, in order to be considered a member, a person who has signed the membership book then needs to make a contribution of record **OR** sign a pledge form.

Members are strongly encouraged to make a written monetary pledge of support to help the Governing Board determine its budget for the next fiscal year. The intent of the revision is to offer membership to those who are, for whatever reason, unwilling to sign a pledge form but who make regular monetary contributions to the church. With this change, we are able to recognize as members those who support our Church budget in whatever way is comfortable for them.

Article X—Amendments – states that the Church By-Laws “may be amended at an Annual Congregational Meeting or any Congregational meeting of the Church called for that purpose, provided that notice of the proposed amendments has been given in the call of the meeting, and that the quorum and voting requirements are met.”

The Governing Board honors and appreciates our members and their support.



## *Church Announcements and Events*

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

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

April 9	Memorial Hall	7:00 - 9:00 pm
May 14	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)

### **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](mailto:bookdoc-torgwen@gmail.com) for more details.

### **UUMFE Eco-Justice Collaboratory**

The UU Ministry for Earth Eco-Justice Collaboratory was held in Detroit on March 10-13. Detroit was chosen as the best place to see eco-justice challenges and solutions.

### **Development Committee Fundraiser**

*August: Osage County* will be playing at the Hilberry Theater from April 18-May 10, 2014. Your Development Committee is planning an exciting fundraiser for our church - we'll be offering tickets to a performance combined with a pre-performance reception at the home of Kathe Stevens and Glenn Maxwell (located next door to the Hilberry). Watch for details in future Orders of Service."



## *Church Announcements and Events*

### **Food Drive**

The Outreach Committee is excited to announce the beginning of an ongoing food drive (should we call it a FUUD Drive?). We will be collecting nonperishable food items to support the Cass Community United Methodist food program. Collection will take place every Sunday during coffee hour, and the food will be delivered to Cass Community on a weekly basis. Our goal is to collect 455 items before the end of 2014. That may seem like a lot, but it's only 5 items per congregation member!

The program we will be supporting prepares over 20,000 hot meals each week for families and individuals who need them most. Please read the following guidelines to ensure that your donations are best aligned the program's needs: Nonperishable items only. Please avoid soups. (Canned soups are great for pantries that provide take-home boxes to families; but are not appropriate for preparing large meals with.) Staples are most needed (rice, flour, sugar, etc.). Canned veggies and meats are needed. Peanut butter and jelly are needed.

### **Vespers Wednesday**

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

### **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.

### **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.

### **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!

### **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.

# APRIL 2014

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 7:00pm - Singing Circle	3	4 <b>Happy Birthday Ivan Cotman and Elianna Martinez!</b>	5
6 11:00am - "The Center of the Universe." 12:30pm - Intro to First Church	7	8 6:00pm - Investing in the Future at First UU <b>Happy Birthday George Thotakath!</b>	9 6:00pm - Vespers 7:00pm - Board Meeting 7:00pm - Singing Circle	10	11	12
13 <b>Welcoming New Members</b> 11:00am - "Progressive Regional Leadership, 12:30pm - Potluck	14	15	16 7:00pm - Singing Circle <b>Happy Birthday Sally Borden!</b>	17	18	19
20 11:00am - "Here Comes the Sun." 12:30pm - Young Adults Meeting <b>Happy Birthday Lily Secret!</b>	21 7:30pm - Amnesty International Meeting	22	23 7:00pm - Singing Circle	24 <b>Happy Birthday Bill McKnight!</b>	25	26
27 11:00am - "Another Great Awakening?" 12:30pm - Getting Involved at First UU	28	29	30 7:00pm - Singing Circle			



**FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH OF DETROIT**

4605 Cass Avenue  
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48201

Please visit us at [www.1stuu.org](http://www.1stuu.org),  
email us at [info@1stuu.org](mailto:info@1stuu.org), or give  
us a call at (313) 833-9107.

## *Church Announcements*

### **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.

### **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](mailto:office@1stuu.org) by **12:00 pm Thursday**.

### **May Newsletter Deadline**

Sunday, April 20th at 8:00am

Next issue covers May 1 - May 31, 2014

No submissions accepted after the deadline.

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