

# FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF DETROIT NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION: LIBERATE TRUTH - RADIATE KINDNESS - LOVE COURAGEOUSLY

MAY EDITION

## *Upcoming Sermon Schedule*

May 3:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

**"The Meaning of Work."**

May 1 is International Labor Day, a time for celebrating the importance of work, and working people, in our lives, and in our culture.

May 10:

5 Voices,

Join us on this Mother's Day with 5 voices from the community:  
Kim Redigan - Teacher and Non-Violence Trainer with the Michigan Peace Team  
Susan Sunshine - Earth Poet - Occupy Detroit and Environmental Activist

Jahra Michelle McKinney - Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller & founding member of Hakamma

Carolyn Doherty - Raging Grannies and Peace Activist  
Sylvia Banks - Chapter Leader, Metro Detroit Parents of Murdered Children, Inc.

May 17:

Rev. Roger Mohr,

**"Diving Into the Future."**

This is Rev. Mohr's last Sunday in the pulpit with First Church. Let's take a moment to celebrate the possibilities of new beginning, new cultivations, and new possibilities.

May 24:

Joel Batterman,

**"Techno Religion."**

As devotees of electronic music converge on Detroit, what can we learn from this phenomenon? What are the parallels between techno music and Unitarian-Universalist faith, and how can we transcend the contradictions between individual and collective action in a technocratic age?

May 31:

Julie Brock,

**"What it means to be from here?"**

People from Detroit love their city. Our pride is well earned, as our folks haven't had it easy. But what does it mean to practice a religion that is culturally white and upper class, in a city that isn't? Join a home grown Detroit girl as she reflects on lessons she could have learned only in the pews of 4605 Cass, how they translate to wider UU culture, and how wider UU culture affects our congregation. (Part One of a Two Part Series.)

## FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2014-2015

### Officers

#### President

*Marsha Bruhn*

#### Vice President

*Danny Rebb*

#### Immediate

#### Past President

*Sally Borden*

#### Board Secretary

*Katbe Stevens*

#### Treasurer

*Dan Wiest*

#### Board Members At-Large

*Matt Friedrichs*

*Joan Smykowski*

*Joel Batterman*

*Paul Chislett*

### Staff

#### Minister

*Rev. Roger Mohr*

#### Music Director

*Todd Ballou*

#### Office Administrator

*Alexis Mitchell*

**Worship Services held  
every Sunday  
at 11:00 a.m.**



## *Letter from the President...*

### President's Letter...

We recently completed the last of four home canvass meetings, and, as always, I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know more of you on a more personal basis and receive your comments from the short survey on what you feel are the church's greatest strengths and the challenges facing us in the next five years. While members mentioned our history, diversity, music and principles as strengths, the overwhelming number of comments centered on the qualities of our congregation (lay leadership, dedicated and resourceful members, problem solvers); spiritual renewal and community (interconnectedness, open mindedness, justice for all); and location (part of a growing and "happening" community).

It's probably no surprise to you that achieving a stable ministry, financial stability and membership growth were mentioned as the top challenges in the next five years. Members hope for a settled minister who recognizes the value of our membership and appreciates the opportunity to work in the city of Detroit. They see the importance of maintaining the growth that we've experienced in the last several years and attracting young families with children. Important, too, is living the mission, welcoming visitors, and increasing our interconnectedness through more programming and a nurturing environment.

This is important information as we enter a period of transition with, hopefully, an interim minister, and, by January of next year, the search for a settled minister. Pledges have been good so far, but we're counting on about 30 of you who have yet to pledge for the 2015-16 budget year. Many members have increased their pledges, which bodes well for our church. If you haven't yet pledged, please do so! Pledges are the major source of operating income for First Church.

The proposed budget that will be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting on May 17 supports the committees and activities that have grown in the past several years, not only through their budget allocations but through plans for expanded leadership development and training. This will help us all do a more effective job.

Marsha Bruhn

## *From the Welcoming Task Force...*

### **Updates from the Welcoming Task Force:**

The special collection at the March 29 marriage equality service netted about \$1000 for First UU and \$400 for the [National Marriage Challenge](#), the 501(c)(3) for the *DeBoer* marriage equality lawsuit. About 70 people attended the March 29 worship service and 30 attended the panel afterwards. Many thanks to our panelists for sharing their stories!

First UU joined over [200 congregations and faith communities](#) participating in [Freedom to Marry's](#) National Weekend of Prayer. The Welcoming Task Force thanks Nancy Owen Nelson for graciously incorporating a [responsive reading and a prayer](#) into the April 26 worship service to support the legal teams, the plaintiffs and all American families anxiously watching the Supreme Court's deliberations on April 28.

Please join us for the third of our informing and connecting book discussions. On Sunday, May 31, at 12:30 pm, the Welcoming Task Force will present a continuation of our discussion of essays from [Dangerous Liaisons: Blacks, Gays, and the Struggle for Equality](#). On May 31 we'll discuss: *Some Queer Notions about Race* by Samuel R. Delaney (pages 259-289) and Cornel West on *Heterosexism and Transformation: An Interview* (pages 290-305). The discussion will be at the church; room TBD. Please advise if you need a copy of the essays. For more information contact Kathe Stevens at [kathestevens@gmail.com](mailto:kathestevens@gmail.com). It will be great to continue our dialogue and deepen our search!

The Task Force has discussed continuing its activities, or morphing into a committee on outreach, or blending with another committee to work on outreach. Discussions will continue as we count down the days to the expected renewal of our Welcoming Congregation status, which is the end goal of the Task Force as it exists now. Our request for your approval to renew First UU's Welcoming Congregation status will be on the ballot for the May 17 annual congregational meeting!

## *From the Canvass Committee...*

### **Update from the Canvass Committee**

2015-2016 Canvass Campaign, "Give with a Loving Heart, Love with a Giving Hand"

We've completed our four House Canvass Meetings and send a huge thank you to our hosts, Ken Meyer, Dave and Katherine Vaillencourt, Aletha and Matt Oberdier, and Al and Lencha Acker. Your hospitality was awesome. Another big thank you goes to Edie McKnight who helped make phone calls. Dan Wiest and Bob Lauer are appreciated for presenting our financial position with clarity. Joan Smykowski has been amazing with her help despite her time constraints. Marsha Bruhn has been a driving force in pushing the campaign forward – thank you, Marsha.

Thank you so much to all of you who have pledged to support the mission of First UU. If you haven't had a chance to pledge, don't worry. We'll have pledge forms and brochures in social hour and we'll be reaching out to those who don't have a chance to get to church before the annual meeting (May 17).

The Canvass Committee is a well-oiled operation. Would you like to help plan parties, get previews on the budget, and meet and get to know your fellow congregants? Why don't you think about participating on the committee for the 2016-17 campaign?

– Kathe Stevens, Canvass Committee Chair



## *Church Announcements and Events*

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

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

May 13	Whole Foods Community Room	7:00 - 9:00 pm
June 10	Parlor, First UU	7:00 - 9:00 pm

All are welcome at board meetings. Whole Foods is located at 115 Mack Ave at John R, Detroit. 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)

### **Vespers Wednesday**

Vespers runs from 6:00 - 7:00pm on the 4th Wednesday of each month.

### **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 [bookdoctorgwen@gmail.com](mailto:bookdoctorgwen@gmail.com) for more details.

## *Church Announcements and Events*

### **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.

### **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.

### **Young Adults Activities**

The first UU Young Adults group participates in two activities per month. To learn find out about upcoming Young Adults activities, visit us on Facebook at: [groups/young1stuu/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/young1stuu/) or contact Beth Bailey to be join our Google Group.

### **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 would like to signup, please visit the signup sheet on our website at [1stuu.org/Worship/worship.php](http://1stuu.org/Worship/worship.php), see Alexis after the service, or send an email to [webmaster@1stuu.org](mailto:webmaster@1stuu.org)!

### **New Care Committee**

The Care Committee will address pastoral cares of our church community. It is chaired by Nancy Owen Nelson. Other members are Sally Borden, Edie McKnight, and Nathan Strickland. Please contact Nancy Owen Nelson, [nelnan@aol.com](mailto:nelnan@aol.com) or call her at 313-914-3475, if you would like a member of our Care Committee to reach out to you in a time of need.

### **Movie fUUndraiser Night**

Friday May 9th UU Fundraiser Movie Night at 7:30pm at Kathleen and Robert Johnson's home. In conjunction with the upcoming Women Walking Woodward for Peace, our movie will be Persepolis (2007), a poignant coming-of-age story of a precocious and outspoken young Iranian girl that begins during the Islamic Revolution. (Animated) Donations go towards 1st UU church. Yummy popcorn provided!

## *Church Announcements and Events*

### **Women Walking Woodward for Peace**

New member, Anita Jones, is one of the organizers of the annual Mother's Day Peace Walk, Women Walking Woodward for Peace. This year, the route has been changed to start at First UU Church of Detroit at 8:30am. Upon returning back at the sanctuary at 11am, 5 speakers will share their reflections and takes on mothering:

**Kim Redigan** - Teacher and Non-Violence Trainer with the Michigan Peace Team

**Susan Sunshine** - Earth Poet MiCats (Michigan Coalition Against Tar Sands)

**Jahra Michelle McKinney** - Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller & founding member of Hakamma

**Carolyn Doherty** - Raging Grannies and Peace Activist

**Sylvia Banks** - Chapter Leader Metro Detroit Parents of Murdered Children, Inc.

UUs are invited to join the walk - more information can be found on Facebook for Women Walking Woodward for Peace.

### **Meet your 2015 Interim Minister Search Committee:**

Matt Friedrichs, Robert Johnson, Aletha Oberdier, Danny Rebb, Kathe Stevens, and Nathan Strickland. The Committee reviewed the interim minister application, completed congregational, historical, financial and demographic information, and listed the strengths of the congregation, areas of focus for the interim ministry, desired strengths of an interim minister, current areas of momentum, and what current traditions we wish to maintain. The Governing Board approved our draft and the committee submitted an online application for a half-time minister on the UUA's website. Names of potential candidates should start arriving soon. We're excited about our prospects and the future of First UU's ministry. If you have any questions about the process, please ask any one of us.

### **DATE CHANGE: UU Regional Picnic & Spring Gathering!**

Our second annual Regional Picnic gathering will take place on Saturday, June 6th, 2015 from 10am - 3pm at Shelter 9 on Belle Isle. Volunteer activity in the morning, and a potluck & BBQ picnic and games to follow. UU Congregations from throughout Southeast Michigan are welcome to attend! The planning committee is seeking volunteers to assist with setup/break-down, cooking, and activities (contact Aletha Oberdier, 248-872-3837 or alethafaye@gmail.com) and donations of food & condiments (contact Beth Bailey, 313-244- 4796 elizabethbailey88@gmail.com)





## *Church Announcements and Events*

### **NOTICE OF ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

First UU Detroit's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 17, at 12:30 P.M. in the Sanctuary. The order of business shall include:

1. Approval of the Minutes of June 15, 2014 Reconvened Annual Congregational Meeting
2. Amendments to the By-Laws
3. Election of Board President, Board Vice-President, two (2) Trustees-at-Large, 2015 Nominating Committee, two (2) delegates for the UUA General Assembly, and two (2) delegates for the UUA MidAmerica Regional Assembly
4. Approval to renew our Welcoming Congregation status with the UUA
5. Approval of the 2015-16 Budget

### **General Assembly 2015:**

Do you want to participate in the UUA's General Assembly June 24–28, 2015, but you're unable to travel to Portland, OR? Good news: this year, anyone can join in a Virtual GA and watch major parts of the meeting from their homes or wherever they have Internet access. Off-site registrants will be able to view live-streaming video of plenary sessions as well as nine workshops. Everyone wishing to participate in Virtual GA must register. Early registration, through April 30, costs \$135. Late registration (May 1-June 19) is \$160. I plan to be there; check out the programs and workshops, join me virtually and we can compare notes afterwards! – Kathe Stevens

## *Joys / Concerns*

Darlene Harris moved to Detroit in the middle 1960s. She has attended the UU Church in Kalamazoo as well as Northwest and our Detroit church. Both daughters were married at First UU. She says it is lovely to visit this church again. She is a long-time friend of Lee Thume. Phone: 313-982-9188.

Lencha and Al Acker ask for your kind thoughts and prayers for her brother, Hymee Camacho, who has been diagnosed with cancer.

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Dear Members of my Beloved Community,

Count me among the toxicity inflicted. My doctor says it will probably be a month or two before I will be well enough to enter a moldy building without getting symptoms. I look forward to the time I will again be singing with the choir and singing circle. Meantime, I will be thinking of you all.

See you in June. Love,  
Margaret Wilkie



## *Church Announcements and Events*

### **UU CLASS CONVERSATIONS**

Saturday, May 30

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Birmingham Unitarian Church

Child care available; lunch will be served

**Registration fee \$20 (more if you can; less if you can't)**

Registration Deadline May 23

This interactive, full-day workshop will strengthen our UU congregations as we explore the implications of class and classism, begin the process of becoming less classist and more class inclusive, and organize more effectively across class lines.

- Better understand the strengths and challenges of class differences and of each class background.
- Relate our UU principles to the development of language, concepts, and strategies to understand class differences and issues.
- Consider the intersection between class and race and other issues of oppression, and the relationship between class stereotypes and escalating inequality.
- Increase our effectiveness in building strong class inclusive institutions and learn to avoid the miscommunication and distrust that can weaken our efforts to advance social justice.

Registration forms are available during Coffee Hour on Sundays.  
See Mary Lou Malone and Sharon Mills to arrange car pools.

Sponsored by Birmingham Unitarian Church, First UU Church of Detroit, Northwest UU Church, UU Church of Farmington, Beacon UU Congregation



**FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH OF DETROIT**

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

## *Church Announcements*

### **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**.

### **June Newsletter Deadline**

Saturday, June 20th

Next issue covers June 1 - June 30, 2015

No submissions accepted after the deadline.

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