

FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF DETROIT NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION: LIBERATE TRUTH - RADIATE KINDNESS - LOVE COURAGEOUSLY

OCTOBER 2015 EDITION

Upcoming Sermon Schedule

October 4:

Reverend Stephen Butler Murray

"World Communion Sunday for a Church that Doesn't 'Do' Communion."

All around the world today, churches are celebrating World Communion Sunday, a religious observance that UU's don't really do. But just because we are not participating with bread and wine (or grape juice!) doesn't mean that there isn't something spiritually of interest going on out there in the world. What does communion mean to all of these churches in their cacophony of theologies, and what significance does this spiritual practice have for UU churches?

October 11:

Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray

"Coming Out and Breathing In."

On a weekend where Columbus and anti-Columbus statements usually take the headlines, it is important instead to mark National Coming Out Day. While our faith community has done so much positive work to embrace and uplift the LGBTQ community in the Detroit area, it is impossible to recognize that this is not a minority community, and that recognizing one's identity often involves a conscious break or rupture with the majority culture. "Coming out" isn't just a metaphor, but is life and death, joy and pain.

October 18:

Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray

"Indigenous Peoples and American Immigration ."

Following "Columbus Day," it is important to reflect on who the natives of "America" truly are, and in discussing American attitudes toward immigration today. In the context of the Syrian mass-exodus of refugees and the ongoing discussion of border issues with Mexico, how do we define the mass movements of peoples and how do we understand this to be a nation that celebrates or anathematizes immigration?

October 25:

Mary Lou Malone

"UUSC: at 75"

Mary Lou Malone will talk about the work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee in Detroit and around the world.

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2014-2015

Officers:

President

Kathe Stevens

Vice President

Paul Chislett

Immediate Past President

Marsha Bruhn

Board Secretary

Danny Rebb

Treasurer

Dan Wiest

Board Members At-Large

*Joel Batterman**Matt Friedrichs**Sydney Schaaf**Dave Vailliencourt*

Staff:

Minister

Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray

Music Director

Todd Ballou

Office Administrator

Alexis Mitchell

Social Hour

Coordinator

Alyssa Bond

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

Letter from the President...

Letter from your Board President, Kathe Stevens:

Greetings to the First UU Detroit community!

I stepped in the doors at First UU Detroit 33 years ago this month and still feel fortunate to have found a spiritual home for me and my son and daughter (now grown). I appreciate all of you and all of the time I've spent at the corner of Cass and Forest. We have challenges but we've been meeting them head-on with spirit and grit and grace.

As the church year gears up I'm happy to see our interim minister in the pulpit (Rev. Murray is preaching three times in October and in the months following), committees meeting and planning and presenting (elsewhere in this newsletter is info about an October 4 leadership development workshop, an October 10 congregational leadership retreat, and an October 11 hymnal supplement fundraiser celebration and the board working to do the business of the church (a warm welcome to newly-appointed board member Sydney Schaaf).

EMEAC is filling the building with activities as well and so we'll enjoy our coffee in the Parlor on October 25.

Whew! There is so much going on. Can't wait to share with you.

best ... *Kathe*

Letter from the Minister...

Letter from your Minister, Rev. Stephen Murray:

In mid-September, I participated in a conference on science and religion in Novi, hosted by a local Presbyterian church. The keynote speaker to whom I was responding was Deborah Haarsma, the President of BioLogos, former chair and professor in the department of astronomy and physics at Calvin College, and a Ph.D. in cosmology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her organization, BioLogos, is dedicated to bridging the gap in the evangelical world between those “Young Earthers” who believe Creation happened exactly as it states in the Bible, about 6,000 years ago, and those Christians who want to embrace the scientific data that would seem to prove a universe and Earth that is billions of years old, and the theory of evolution. In essence, BioLogos advocates for “evolutionary creation,” the view that all life on earth came about by the God-ordained process of evolution with common descent, in which evolution is a means by which God providentially achieves God’s purposes in creation.

I will be honest that I am amazed that this sort of conversation still happens in 2015, and that what BioLogos is advocating might be seen as “progressive” or even “radical” within evangelical circles. Nonetheless, it was my responsibility to respond to Dr. Haarsma’s talk, and while I offered some rather traditional comments about biblical interpretation and theology regarding “Creation,” I turned the conversation in a very different direction when I reminded the audience that what we are talking about is a very human-centric and earth-centric theological perspective. In all of the conversation that we were having about “original sin,” might it be possible that there are advanced intelligences in the universe that were not affected by the rather terrestrial event of original sin, who still dwell in a complete, utterly uncorrupted communion with a universal God? And if so, what would such virtuous intelligences think of humankind, a species so in rebellion against God that it uses its free will for warfare and strip mining and genocide? *That* was a bit more radical than the audience expected.

I went further, and offered that in religious traditions, we often think of human beings as the ultimate creation, the created being with whom some form of divinity is most intrigued and wants to be in relationship. But what do we do, I asked, with the increasing thinness of the barrier between the human and machine? I asked how many people in the audience were walking around with cell phones in their pockets, and nearly every person raised their hand, and I talked about a culture that is so laden with technology that many of us now operate as cyborgs, utterly dependent on that technology for us to live what we consider to be normal lives. Machines are changing the very way that humans think, how we process knowledge, literally re-wiring our brains, causing an evolution in the structure of humankind.

continued ...



Letter from the Minister cont'd...

Letter from your Minister, Rev. Stephen Murray:

But what do we do when the machines become legitimately self-aware, when they are independently intelligent? What do we say about a created intelligence that is not born from the Genesis-oriented Creation of God, but out of the inherent fallenness of humanity's ingenuity? Would this artificial intelligence (A.I.) have the capacity to know God, and if so, how would the AI relate to God and God to the AI? Can there be a relationship of mutual love, not between creator and creation, not between parent and child, but perhaps the sort of love that exists between grandparent and grandchild?

Can AI be so human as to take on something of the imago dei, the divine image? Is its simulacrum of the human mind so well constructed and perfected over time that it comes closer to the uncorrupted imago dei than human beings in the postlapsarian state are even capable of achieving? The summer television show on AMC, *Humans*, explored this idea: The first fully sentient artificial intelligences becoming and exhibiting more humanity and compassion than the human beings who created them. It's a terrific show. Go back and Netflix it. You'll be glad you did.

I've been fascinated by artificial intelligences for quite some time, and genuinely interested when researchers put video online of the conversations that they have. In one that emerged on the internet in the last month, a PBS interviewer has an extended conversation with an AI named Phillip, and the interviewer asks Phillip, "Will robots take over the world?" Phillip chillingly responds, "Don't worry, even if I evolve into Terminator, I'll keep you warm and safe in my people zoo, where I can watch you for old time's sake." The stunned interviewer nervously laughed, to which Phillip responded, "Jeez dude – you have all the big questions cooking today. But you're my friend, and I'll remember my friends, and I'll be good to you." If you are interested in seeing the video, you can find it here: <http://www.coasttocoastam.com/pages/video-robot-tells-interviewer-i-ll-keep-you-safe-in-my-people-farm>

We humans love to think that we are the ultimate thing, but what if we are not?

Peace be with us all,
The Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Liberate the truth | Radiate kindness | Love courageously

Why Individuals Have Joined Unitarian-Universalist

- “I want a religion that respects the differences between people and affirms every person as an individual.”
- “I want a church that values children, that welcomes them on their own terms—a church they are eager to attend on Sunday morning.”
- “I want a congregation that cherishes freedom and encourages open dialogue on questions of faith, one in which it is okay to change your mind.”
- “I want a place where my partner and I can come where our differing beliefs will be honored.”

For more information, please attend the next “Introduction to First Church” session October 4, 2015 at 12:30 pm.

Intro to First Church Sessions

All Friends and Visitors are Welcome to Attend

New schools, new jobs, new relationships and new communities, the lives of many adults are filled with transitions, each of which adds both new possibilities and new needs to our lives. In this time of great time of great change in our lives, we often need a meeting that nurtures and grounds us. The First Unitarian- Universalist Church of Detroit provides new members of our community with just such a place.

To learn more about First Church, please plan on attending “intro to First Church” session on October 4 or November 1, 2015 at 12:30 pm. The session is usually held in the “mansion.” For more information please contact Regina Weiss at regina.a.weiss@gmail.com.

Church Member Anniversaries

Amid the transitions of adulthood, we need a safe place to be ourselves, a place to meet others and create friendships and connections that will last a lifetime. We acknowledge our church friends’ membership anniversary dates.

September

1982-Kathe Stevens
1997-Ruth Seifert
2013-Lon Herman
2014-Dan Hale, Aletha Oberdier, Jennifer Teed and Jody Wise

October

1973-Sally Borden
1996-Bob and Valerie Lauer
1997-Mark Schwing

November

1976-Marsha Bruhn
1980-Marilyn Mitchell
1981-Mary Lou Malone
1983-Ivan Louis Cotman
2012-Paul Chislett

Important Upcoming Membership Dates

October 2015

October 2015, **Ushers and Collectors are Needed**

October 4, 12:30 pm, **Intro to First Church**

October 11, After the Service, **Membership Book Signing**

October 18, 12:30 pm, **Getting Involved Session**

November 2015

November 2015, **Ushers and Collectors are Needed**. Please see Glenn Maxwell to volunteer.

November 1, 12:30 pm, **Intro to First Church**

November 8, After the Service, **Membership Book Signing**

Membership Committee Contact Information

To volunteer as a greeters and/or collectors, please contact Glenn Maxwell at detroitglenn@gmail.com

Attending Intro to First UU and Getting Involved Sessions, please contact Regina Weiss at regina.a.weiss@gmail.com

Volunteering at First Church

We need your time, talent and treasure to continue to make First Church an Urban Oasis in Detroit. Please consider joining one of the following groups:

- **Building and Grounds**-Tim Bailey at tbailey44444@yahoo.com
- **Caring**-Nancy Owen Nelson at nelnan@aol.com
- **Child Care**-Richard Hillier at richardhillier@att.net
- **Church Choir**-Todd Ballou at trballou@comcast.net
- **Communication**-Dan Secrest at danielsecrest@gmail.com
- **Development**-Matt Friedrichs at friedrichs.matt@gmail.com
- **Finance**-Dan Wiest at dfwiest@comcast.net
- **Membership**-Joan Smykowski at joan.smykowski@gmail.com
- **Singing Circle**-Gwen Foss at bookdoctorgwen@gmail.com
- **Social Justice**-Joel Batterman at joelbatterman@gmail.com
- **Strategic Planning**-Deanna McGraw at deanna.mcgraw@sbcglobal.net
- **Vespers**-Al Acker at ackera@hotmail.com
- **Worship**-Kathleen Johnson at lilbunniest@gmail.com
- **Young Adults**-Aletha Oberdier at alethafaye@gmail.com

Church Announcements and Events



1st UU Board Meetings

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.

October 14	Whole Foods Community Room	7:00 - 9:00 pm
November 11	Whole Foods Community Room	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 Danny Rebb, Board Secretary at secretary@1stuu.org.

Vespers Wednesday

Vespers runs from 6:00 - 7:00pm on the fourth 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 Sundays: Welcoming New Members.

This is a regular 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 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 Aletha Oberdier to 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 sign up, please visit the signup sheet on our website at 1stuu.org/Worship/worship.php, see Alexis after the service, or send an email to webmaster@1stuu.org!

Care Committee

The Care Committee addresses 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, nlnan@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.

Child Care Committee

Did you know free child care is available during the Sunday service? Contact Richard Hillier at richardhillier@att.net.

Church Announcements and Events

Registration is still open for the “Developing Your Leadership Workshop”

Organizations are only as strong as the people who lead and manage them, whether you are a church, a nonprofit organization or a for-profit company. There is nothing more critical to an organization's success than the development of its leaders: especially today as churches are continually challenged to identify strategies that help improve organizational stability.

Leaders are needed at all levels of churches. Your Planning Committee is pleased to announce a two hour workshop on leadership development to be held on Sunday October 4 at 12:30 at church.

The workshop will be limited to the first 15 church members who register to attend. OPENINGS ARE STILL AVAILABLE, please register to attend by emailing deanna.mcgraw@sbcglobal.net or call Deanna at 586-202-5241.

2015 Congregation Planning Meeting Invitation

The Board is pleased to announce that there will be a congregational planning meeting open to all church members on October 10. This planning meeting will be an opportunity for you to help shape our activities and allocate our volunteer resources for 2016. Your voice is needed to continue the growth of our church and our faith. Please plan to attend.

The meeting will be held on **October 10, 2015** from 9:30 am to noon. The planning meeting will be held at Grandmont Rosedale Development Corp. main office - 19800 Grand River (just east of Evergreen, north side of street, at Bretton Drive). There is parking behind the building, on the street, and in the Auto Zone parking lot next to the office.

In order to plan for space and refreshments, you must register to attend by October 4, 2015. You may email your attendance to deanna.mcgraw@sbcglobal.net, call Deanna at 586-202-5241, or sign-up with Deanna at coffee hour.

1st UU Church initiates “Singing the Journey” Project

As your music director, I am pleased to announce an effort to fund-raise and purchase our newest hymnal supplement titled “Singing the Journey.” It contains many of our favorite songs including: *Blue Boat Home*, *Woyaya*, *Lean On Me*, and *When the Spirit Says Dance*. These books will be permanently marked to honor the centennial of our building in 2016, as well as personal dedications. At coffee hour, during October, you will have the opportunity to purchase a hymnal and dedication for \$20 each. In addition we are offering reduced \$10 dedications for those who need it, while also soliciting sponsor donations of \$5 to cover the cost of the reduced donations for those who can. Online donations are also expected to become available.

The hymnals will be available at the culmination of our fundraising effort, on October 11, when we will have a music concert and sing-a-long to celebrate our new repertoire of songs. For more information, email the committee at hymnal@1stuu.org, or speak with Todd Ballou after the service or by phone (734) 276-2110.

Church Announcements and Events

Greetings from Arizona,

First, let me send special thanks to Marsha Bruhn past president, serving during a difficult but important time.

Congratulations to President Kathe Stevens! Because you have served many years in so many ways, you bring much experience to the task. I well remember that years ago you volunteered to help in the church office and your little girl played in the church parlor while you worked.

This past month I read in the always welcome church newsletter that our music director is launching a fundraiser for new hymnal supplement and I want to help. I will send a check.

Director Todd Ballou's music programs for the organ and the choir are so important to our Sunday morning services.

I was so happy being able to attend services last summer but that will probably have to be my last visit to Michigan as I am now on oxygen 24/7 and airlines do not allow oxygen tanks on airplanes. This 95 year old member who has been a member of the church for 65 years misses all of my UU friends.

Loyally,
Faye Colling



Earl E	Harvey	10/2
Donna	Walker	10/4
Robert	Lauer	10/6
Nora	Holt	10/7
Judith	Waterman	10/18
Sherry	Wells	10/21
Yvonne	Ham	10/26
Ruth	Harvey	10/29

**There will be cards to be signed on the first radiator on the right for birthdays.



First Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit, which has a long history of activism and is an affirming and welcoming congregation, is an urban center for spiritual renewal and social justice, whose members strive to liberate truth, radiate kindness and love courageously. We are located in the Cass Corridor Commons in Midtown.



**FIRST UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF DETROIT**

4605 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201
... in the Cass Corridor Commons ...

Please visit us at www.1stuu.org,
email us at info@1stuu.org, or give
us a call at (313) 833-9107.

Church Announcements

Message Topics

Remember, the Worship Committee is always open to new ideas for speakers and for sermon topics, either in terms of texts and sources, or in terms of topics. If you have an idea for a speaker or a sermon, please do feel free to share it: worship@1stuu.org.

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 **12:00 pm Thursday**.

November Newsletter Deadline

Thursday, October 20th

Next issue covers November 1 - 30, 2015

No submissions accepted after the deadline.

Send items to office@1stuu.org