



First Unitarian Church

*A Member Congregation of the
Unitarian Universalist Association*

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A Member Development Director Update

I realized a few weeks ago that some of you may not know what I've been up to as your Member Development Director. So, here is a brief update of things I have been doing in the last few months.

In September, a Young Adult group was formed in an attempt to bring together the 18-35ish folks of First. We committed to eating lunch together every 2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month. On Tuesday, Dec. 16th, a group from First went to Wayside Christian Mission to do a couple hours of volunteer work. This group of young adults is committed to doing more than just meeting together to eat. They really want to do something good for the community.

In November, after attending a Heartland District workshop about Shared Ministry, I decided that we needed to take better care of our visitors. A friend of mine has a card hanging on her refrigerator from her first visit to the church she has now been attending for almost 3 years. I took that to mean that that piece of mail was very important to her and her connection to her church. So, I started brainstorming a low cost way that we at First could potentially give a visitor that same feeling. The end result is a sharp looking postcard, signed by Alma, that gets out to our visitors a couple days after their visit.

Chalice Night continues. I am trying to give our members and friends a break from leading courses/classes as much as possible so that folks can participate rather than always worry about getting something together to lead. I have started showing a film or movie each week that has some thought-provoking element to it. There have been two classes being offered for members and friends – Bisexuality and Build Your Own Theology. CUUPs also has a Paganism 101 class that meets just about every other week.

I have recently changed my other part-time job's hours in order to have more consistency in my time at First. I plan to be in the office Monday-Friday from 1-5pm with some exceptions as my meeting and activity schedule is flexible.

Rebecca Dimon

Search Committee News -We continue weekly meetings to prepare for interviews, reference checks, and precandidating weekends. Ministerial candidates have been interested and impressed by our behavioral covenant and our ministry team structure. Both are seen as important steps.

We persevere to find the best minister for our church at this time. - *Doug Taylor*

Love is the spirit of this church...

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Loving Connections: A Message from Your Interim Minister

Being a parent means watching children's movies over and over, until they reveal (or we hallucinate) all kinds of wisdom and insights for our lives. I will never forget one week at home with my daughter's ear infection and a DVD of "Piglet's Big Movie," in which I began to discern themes of colonialism, anti-feminism along with a paradoxically radical vision of an inclusive family transcending species. I know it was time to get out of the house!

But it is not much of a stretch to compare being an interim minister to the title role of the film "Mary Poppins." With ritual, songs, a firm hand and a loving creative alliance with the members of a congregation, we try to prepare religious communities to move forward as a refreshed extended family, ready to welcome a new settled minister and prepared to move into the unknown future with hope and boldness.

It is tremendously intimate and loving

work. At Christmas Eve Vespers, I looked out at all of you and my heart was full. I have come to care so deeply for you and I felt melancholy at the parting to come, even as I rejoiced to see your faces, to hear your music, and felt honored to share your history.

Somewhere not far away, is a ministerial candidate who will love you even more than I, who will plant his/her family in your midst, and who will walk with you over many trials and celebrations. You will welcome her/his particular, special gifts, some of which will reveal themselves for the first time in the unique chemistry between that particular minister and you as a particular congregation.

I join you in praying for the success that will be yours when your minister joins you and with passion and patience, you begin the steady journey of partnership in service of our Unitarian Universalist values alive in the world.

With admiration and love—Alma

Board Biz—The Board of Trustees met on a cold evening in January, and were warmed by John Grossman's good (hot) homemade soup before settling down to business.

The highlights of our discussion included:

The church audit is done! The Board will meet on 2/3/09 to review the results.

- It was decided by consensus to engage an external consultant, Books in Order, from Indianapolis, to look at the books and do a training with personnel and church members.
- A report that Finance is putting together a new budget, and the Board should have a preliminary budget by the February meeting.
- The Personnel Committee has been working on staff job

descriptions and hopes to have a manual by March.

- Slight change of the Behavioral Covenant to include "the Covenant will be reviewed and updated every three years."
 - Letters will be sent out to members we have not seen in a long while concerning their membership status.
 - The Board voted to move forward with a proposal presented by Stewardship in conjunction with Mission and Outreach, to promote and sell raffle tickets for a Smart Car.
 - First U policies were reviewed, updated, and approved by consensus.
 - Discussion about a collective notebook section for events should be established in the volunteer area.
 - Interim Evaluation
- Kathy Drehmel, Board of Trustees

Wanted: A few good people to serve on our Director of Religious Education search team. If you are interested, please let the Board know. The term of service will be from April first to September first.

Contact us through our mailbox in the Volunteer area or by emailing Brian Daly at president@firsttulou.org.

Interweave—Interweave Continental is a membership organization actively working toward ending oppression based on sexual orientation and gender identity, recognizing that we will not be free until all oppression is a thing of the past.

* Potluck Dinner. **Tuesday, Feb 3, 6:30.** Potluck dinner and conversation for bisexual, gay, intersex, lesbian, questioning, and/or transgender persons, and heterosexual allies. All First Unitarian members, friends, and visitors are welcome.

* Polyamory Open Conversation. **Monday, Feb 9 6:30-8:30pm.** Share a polyamory story or ask a question. Diverse viewpoints are welcome; all First Unitarian members, friends, and visitors are welcome.. Attendees are welcome to bring your own dinner. Contact Jasmine Walston, jasminegld@aol.com or 944-7517, to request a topic. Co-sponsored meeting.

* For more information or questions about Interweave, please contact Michael Ben-Avraham at kailoa@insightbb.com or 587-1561.

STEEPLETALK

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Love is the spirit of this church...

Religious Education News

February is, for me, the month that requires all my faith to get through. It has been so dark for so long, and spring feels so far away. One of the things my family does is an Imbolc ritual in early February. As part of this, we light candles and place them in all the windows of the house, then walk outside in the dark. We look at the places where we know – intellectually – that there are bulbs waiting under the frozen ground. We go to the barn to look at the goat does, and we know – intellectually – that there are kids growing inside. Our knowing involves faith, because there is no outward evidence of what is to come. We just know it. After taking a long look at the winter sky that defends itself against the dark time with its brightest stars of the year, we turn back toward the brightly lit house that welcomes us in from the dark and cold to some warm tea or cider. It is a time of gratitude and faith, of waiting and of treasuring the candles we light.

My personal ritual is to think of the seeds that I have planted and am waiting to see sprout. You know what I mean: Those ideas we all have whose seeds we plant and then we wait to see the outcome. I can think of several seeds that the First Unitarian community has planted – the ministerial search, finding a new Director of Lifespan Religious Education, the movement toward greater

environmental awareness, exciting fundraising ideas, and, of course, a new semester of Lifespan Religious Education.

I continue to be amazed by the diverse talent and dedication that drives our religious education program. I will meet with the new teachers this weekend to share the new curriculum schedules. On February 1st, you will send your young people to the classes and then the seeds the RE Ministry has planted and nurtured will begin to sprout – children will attend their RE classes; the kindergarten and first graders will begin attending OWL (Our Whole Lives); the Youth groups will begin their social action projects and the Middle School Youth will plan their service. On the adult front, we eagerly anticipate another semester of SMART and Chalice Night as well as the possibility of some new young adult programming.

All of this requires faith in our history, in our potential, and in each other. I am truly grateful for the candles of faith and commitment we light as a community.

Carol Uebelhoer, Interim Director of Religious Education Contact me at **585-5110, press 2** and leave a message or e-mail me at **cuebel56@yahoo.com**.

Senior High Youth Service Trip

The Sr. High service trip this year will be to a part of Appalachia, like many others, heavily mined for coal. The degraded land and depleted natural resources are the legacy of that mining. The Clearfork Community Institute is a living/learning center, located on some of the Woodland Land Trust's 400 acres, that fosters community-building, explores sustainability issues, and promotes life-long learning.

Our Sr. High youth will be performing repair/construction work, while lodging at the Institute (only the finest sleeping bags will do!). Estimated cost is \$200/person. Adults interested in making this trip with our youth, **June 1-5**, are invited, especially those with some knowledge/skills in construction. Information on the land trust is available at <http://socialconcerns.nd.edu/students/Woodland/index.html>

Sunday Morning Adult Round Table– Please Join Us!

Church Library

Gather at 9:30am

Program until 10:45am

Please join the Sunday Morning Adult Round Table at 9:30am each Sunday for programs on a variety of topics. Youth are invited to participate.

For more information or to suggest a program, contact Carol Uebelhoer at 585-5110 or Jasmine Walston at jasminegld@aol.com. For information about child care, contact Rebecca Dimon at 585-5110.

- Feb 1 “Reason and reverence” “A new religious humanism is emerging that offers depth, meaning, and purpose without sacrificing intellectual honesty or the spiritual dimension.” UU World Article, Winter, 2006, www.uuworld.org
- Feb 8 “That elusive more.” “What do Unitarian Universalists need to go deeper?” UU World Article, January 12, 2009
- Feb 15 “Assembly of a lesser god.” “Belief and worship are powerful tools for organizing thought and behavior.” UU World Article, Winter 2008
- Feb 22 Celebrating the Creative Process. Bring a favorite poem, short reading, song, or piece of art on the theme of winter or darkness. Tell the class how it touches your spirit. Rodney Walston, facilitator.

Just Among Ourselves...

In Sympathy- We extend our sympathies and condolences to Phil Candee, Danielle, and their boys at the death of Phil's father.

Celebrate!! A church-wide celebration of the marriage of Carol Uebelhoer and Jo Ann Dale will be held on **Sunday, Feb. 15**, following the Celebration of Life. Jo Ann and Carol were married on Dec. 26, 2008, in Boston, Massachusetts, and we are all ready for a party! The reception is sponsored by several of the church programs and groups in which Carol and Jo Ann have been involved: Chalice Night, Interweave, Member Ministry, Mission and Outreach Ministry, Religious Education Ministry, and Women's Alliance.

In lieu of gifts, Carol and Jo Ann have requested that donations be made to supplement the ongoing social justice work of the church, as carried out by the Mission and Outreach Ministry. Jo Ann, Carol, and the celebration sponsors wish to thank everyone for their support of these social justice efforts and of the progressive values of First Unitarian and Unitarian Universalism, which have contributed to the progress toward Marriage Equality.

For further information about the reception, contact Kathy Kremer at 459-4109 or Suzanne Meeks at suz_meeks@bellsouth.net.

Women's Alliance

It was a joy to be one of thirty members and friends of First Unitarian in attendance at the Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice's Roe v. Wade Dinner when it was announced that Fran Ellers was the recipient of the Dr. David Gunn Award for her book, *Standing Up for Reproductive Rights, the Struggle for Legal Abortion in Kentucky*. Elio Isetti received the KRCRC Service Award. Drew Patterson presented the Award and Elio was very surprised? Congratulations to these committed people in our congregation.

We thank all the women and men who have planned, cooked, served, set up and cleaned up for the Spaghetti Luncheon which was a benefit for the Solar Array Project on Sunday, Jan. 25th, in the Social Hall after the Service.

If you are interested in becoming a member, or renewing membership in the Women's Alliance please contact Kathy Thackeray or Lois Allen. Our next General Membership Meeting will be on **Saturday, March 28, 2009** - an important meeting to elect members of the Steering Committee and decide where we want to give our support.

Money Talk\$ Just a few items to update you on in

February: The audit is done, and by the time you read this, the Board should have met to review the final report. But I have to write this well before you see it, so I won't be able to tell you more about it until the March issue. Until then, we will both have to be in suspense.

You should also have received your tax statements by now, documenting the amount that the church thinks you contributed in the 2008 calendar year. If you haven't reviewed this yet, please do so right away. If there are corrections to be made, I need to learn of them soon! (If you didn't get one for some reason, please let me know that, too.)

Calling all readers! Join fellow UU's in reading and discussing books. All meetings will be held in the parlor and begin at 6:00 pm. Following is a list of the meeting dates and books to be discussed through July 2009.

- Feb 9 Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe AND The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch
- Mar 9 Reading Lolita in Tehran by Azar Nafisi.
- April 13 Virgin suicides by Jeffrey Eugenides
- May 11 Wordy Shipmates by Sarah Vowell
- June 8 Middleman and Other Stories by Bharati Mukherjee
- July 13 Velvet Elvis by Rob Bell

The following are meeting dates for the rest of 2009...

Aug 10, Sep 14, Oct 12, Nov 9, Dec 14.

We would love for you to join us!

Finance Committee at Work

The Finance Committee is busily preparing the budget for the next Church year. This means that we will be scheduling budget sessions over the next two months to prepare a realistic and, preferably, balanced budget. The Budget Committee consists of Lois Allen, Mary Ballard, and Uwe Eickmann with Brian Daly and Maureen Taylor serving from the Board. All Ministries are reminded that the committee will be distributing Ministry Budget forms within the next several weeks so each ministry and committee will have input into allocations.

In case you heard rumblings about an overpayment of housing allowance to our previous interim minister, you should know that a check from her at the end of the year resolved that issue completely. The church has been repaid.

Finally, we are now having BB&T handle our payroll, as of January 1. We are looking forward to a smooth transition with NO headaches. All told, we have much to be thankful for in 2009, despite the economic problems that seem to be facing nearly everyone today. Thanks for doing your part to support First Unitarian!

Maureen Taylor, Treasurer

Calendar

Sunday, February 1
 9:30am SMART
 9:45am YAC
 10:55am Celebration of Life & Children's Religious Education
Monday, February 2
 7:15pm RE Committee
Tuesday, February 3
 6:00pm Owl Potluck
Wednesday, February 4
 5:00pm Chalice Night
Thursday, February 5
 5:30pm Stewardship
 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal
Friday, February 6
Saturday, February 7

Sunday, February 8
 9:30am SMART
 10:55am Celebration of Life & Children's Religious Education
 12:15pm Young Adult Group
Monday, February 9
 6:30pm Interweave
Tuesday, February 10
 6:00pm Board of Trustees
Wednesday, February 11
 5:00pm Chalice Night
Thursday, February 12
 5:30pm Personnel Committee
 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, February 14
 9:00am House & Grounds

Sunday, February 15
 9:30am SMART
 10:55am Celebration of Life & Children's Religious Education
 12:15pm Young Adult Group
Monday, February 16
 11:00am Brownbaggers
 6:00pm UU Christian Fellowship
Tuesday, February 17
 6:15pm Ministry Council
Wednesday, February 18
 5:00pm Chalice Night
Thursday, February 19
 6:00pm Member Ministry
 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal
Friday, February 20
 Steepletalk Deadline

Sunday, February 22
 9:30am SMART
 10:55am Celebration of Life & Children's Religious Education
Monday, February 23
 7:00pm Keith Cook Music
Tuesday, February 24
 7:00pm Finance
Wednesday, February 25
 5:00pm Chalice Night
Thursday, February 26
 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal
Friday, February 27
Saturday, February 28

An announcement for Young Adults

First Unitarian will be the site of a Young Adult Retreat in February. Beginning **Friday, Feb. 20**, Young Adults are invited to a chili dinner at Calvary Episcopal Church (a fund raiser for CHOICES) at 5:30. After eating and fellowship, we'll head back across the parking lot for an evening of fun watching movies, playing games and getting to know each other better. An optional "slumber party" follows the merriment.

Starting Saturday morning, the tentative plan is to have a professor of mine from the Presbyterian Seminary partner with Alma to lead a mini-workshop on rituals and worship. The rest of the day will be spent in activities related to the workshop.

If you plan to attend, please send me an email so I have an idea of who is coming – and so that I can send you more information as plans solidify.
memberdevdir@firstulou.org

Wanted: Are you searching for a way to use your talents to help people? We need volunteers with good office skills to help Betty with day-to-day activities. Please call (585-5110) or email (office@firstulou.org).

The Solar Array Project The scrap metal collection for the Solar Array Project was an undetermined success. Undetermined because a silver tea set that was donated has an unknown value. We will attempt to sell it Ebay. We caught the aluminum, brass and copper markets at their nadir and 165 pounds brought only \$37, but .05 pounds of gold brought \$146. Thanks -Joe Kremer, 445-3607

Heartland District News—The Heartland District regional meeting is scheduled for **April 3-5 in Muncie, Indiana**. We are allocated five delegate slots. This is a unique and meaningful gathering. If you are interested in attending, contact the Board through our mailbox in the Volunteer area or by emailing Brian Daly at president@firstulou.org.

FIRST U -KROGER BUCKS

Did You Know? Kroger Bucks can be used for.

- Groceries
- Gasoline
- Prescriptions

- Gifts
- Postage Stamps (buy Liberty Bell "Forever" stamps before the price goes up in April). See Gary Drehmel after church on Sunday, or call him at 499-2493.

UU Christian Fellowship

The First Unitarian Chapter of the UU Christian Fellowship will have its February meeting February 16th at 6pm at the church. The study of Luke will continue. Everyone is welcome. Questions? E-mail Geneva Fry at grfry@flash.net or call her at 812-948-1367.

Brownbaggers

We intend to meet at the church, eat our lunch, then carpool to the Kentucky Center to see the 1:00pm show.

When: Either February 17 to 18—Call Natalie or Jess at 968-5792 to see which date works for our group.

What: "The Kentucky Show" at Kentucky Center for the Arts.

Cost: Depending on the numbers attending, cost will be no more than 6 dollars each. Other information will be provided by our phone chain: 968-5792

Bring a brown bag and a smile.



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February Chalice Night Schedule

Yoga at 5pm, Dinner from
5:30-6:30, Centering Service
at 6:40, Programs at 7pm

February 4

- Liberal Sew and Sew's
- Class: Build Your Own
Theology (8th of 10 weeks)
- Film: Son of Rambow

February 11

- CUUPs: Paganism 101 –
The Elements
- Class: Build Your Own
Theology (9th of 10 weeks)
- Film: Simon Birch

February 18

- Class: Build Your Own
Theology (10th of 10
weeks)
- Film: Paper Clips

February 25

- CUUPs: Paganism 101-
The Goddess and The God
- Film: Smart People
- Liberal Sew and Sew's

Celebrations of Life

Sunday Services begin at 10:55 a.m.

- February 1 **Dr. Jeremiah Wright, Jr. and African American Prophetic Preaching** - Guest Minister, The Rev. Dr. Debra J. Mumford, Frank H. Caldwell Assistant Professor of Homiletics at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary will share her expert knowledge of African American religion, history and culture and ways they are (mis)understood by "mainstream" culture.
- February 8 **Leadership & Service Celebration**—Join us in celebrating the many ways in which our members lead and serve our congregation and community. Because each of us has different skills and gifts, we each contribute in different ways. This joyous service will explore talents and opportunities and help each of us find deeper connections. This service is coordinated by the Board of Trustees.
- February 15 **"I and Thou ... and We."** Martin Buber, religious philosopher and Hasidic scholar, believed that the essence of Judaism and of religion itself is in honoring the everyday connections in the human community. Through Hasidic stories and music, we will explore ideas for strengthening our awareness of our modern day unity of being.
- February 22 **Topic to be announced.**