

Spring Jazz Band Concert

By John Jensen

On Saturday, May 10 at 7:30PM in the Sanctuary, Universal Jazz will offer its annual spring concert. The big band will play songs that we usually reserve for the Valentine's Dance; this is an opportunity to really hear what these tunes sound like. Rounding out the concert will be vocalists Caitlin Lennox and Annie Wineheimer from St. Olaf. Pianist Ethan Rasmussen, one of John Jensen's students at St. Thomas, will accompany his mom, Natalie, on the Bacharach standard, "Alfie." Please support the band! Admission is free. You can hear us again the following morning, when Universal Jazz will grace both church services with music.



Angela Henderson Collaborates with First Universalist Choir

By Randy Buikema

Angela Henderson, a 25 year member of the Minneapolis based Grammy Award winning gospel choir "Sounds of Blackness," is collaborating with Randy Buikema and the First Universalist Choir for a special musical presentation. On Sunday, May 18, "I've Got a Reason," and "For Every Mountain," two powerful works rooted in the gospel tradition, will be presented during worship. Ms. Henderson has performed nationally and internationally with Stevie Wonder, BeBe & CeCe Winans and Patti LaBelle. Many of you will remember Ms. Henderson from last Fall when she and the cast of Hairspray joined The First U Choir. We look forward to Ms. Henderson sharing her amazing gifts with us again.

THE liberal

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

In the universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive and grow.

Issue 5, Number 11

May 2014

House That Love Built Update

By Peg Meier

Construction of the House That Love Built begins the week of May 5. Volunteers are lined up, but more are necessary. Please check the church website if you want to learn more or sign up to help.

If that week doesn't work for you, more opportunities are coming up during the weeks of June 2 and July 8.

Is volunteering any fun? We asked Nathaniel Larson, who's 17 and worked on a Habitat for Humanity house last summer. He painted doors, caulked, put in trim, and did a little of everything for about 30 hours.

"I was the youngest person on the job, by at least a couple decades," Nathaniel said. "I learned a lot about building and met lots of interesting people. I'm still in contact with some of them. Some older people from church are really cool people."

So, if you're a cool person over age 16 and can help – anything from raising a roof to preparing lunches to picking up construction trash – we'll see you at 3026 Morgan Ave. N. in Minneapolis. Check the First Universalist website for details.

That's www.firstuniversalistchurch.org.



Bill McTeer, Phil Johnson, Bob Friedman, Bill Lewis, Karen Parson, Tom Saterstrom at the Habitat Panel Plant. Photo by Bob Friedman.

It's Survey Time Again, and We Need Your Help

by David Leppik, Governance Committee member

How do you measure love? Can giving, receiving, and growing be quantified? Can you put a number on spiritual growth? Perhaps not, but as people of faith we are sometimes called to reason about the unreasonable. In particular, the Board of Trustees must report on progress toward our Visionary Goals—and provide feedback for improvement. What's more, the Board must track progress over the course of years. The annual survey is a key tool for this task.

Although one person's spiritual growth is hard to quantify, by asking for a gut reaction from enough people, we at least get a stable measurement. By comparing answers to that question from one year to the next, we get a meaningful measurement. And by tracking the answers year after year, we can uncover trends that can teach us how to improve. That's why every year we need as many people as possible to fill out the survey. Our first survey, two years ago, was a baseline. Last year we got our first meaningful results. This year we may start to uncover trends.

The annual survey will run throughout May at www.firstuniversalistchurch.org/survey. It takes about 10 minutes to complete and every response is greatly appreciated.

Daytime Connections

Thursday, May 15

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Cummins Room

Come celebrate our last gathering of Daytime Connections for the 2013/14 church year. We will have a closing ritual, offer each other blessings, and share fellowship. In addition, Rev. Jen will join us to discuss ideas and options for future programming geared to those in the latter half of life. All are welcome, whether you've come before or not.

Instead of having a luncheon afterwards, we will have a pot-luck during the meeting starting around 11:30. Please bring a small dish, snack or dessert to share, if you are able.

This event also brings to a close my quarter-time internship. I would love to share personal good-byes with everyone and hope you can come.

If you have any questions or to RSVP, please contact me at terri@firstuniv.org or 612-825-1701.

— Terri Burnor

Are Your Church Library Books Overdue?

Over 100 of the Library's best books are long overdue. Please check your bookshelves and clear your conscience! The Library has no budget this year, so we can't buy replacements. If these books are returned by June 1, we won't have to send out bills.

Thank you from your Library Committee.



TRUST

By Marjie Smith

TRUST Meals On Wheels recipients would like to thank the following four people from our community for donating their precious time to deliver meals: Adrienne Alexander, Lily Franz, Ward Lyndall and Sandy Parnell. You are our heroes!



**Rev. Jen Crow,
Acting Senior Minister:**

First Universalist members and friends,

Over the past few weeks, I have been holding two truths. One is that as of this writing, we are facing a significant budget shortfall for the year ahead. Our income does not yet match our anticipated expenses, and this puts us in a difficult position. This is a truth that you may not have known until you attended the congregational budget preview meeting on April 27 or read this letter.

The second truth is one that I am sure you know. This church is thriving. Our worship associates inspire us with their honesty and courage. Our choir blows us away with their daring and their artistry. Our religious education program is among the largest and most innovative in the country. Our children and youth are looking forward to summer camps here that will make this church feel even more like home to them. Our Pastoral Care Team is reaching out and meeting with church members and friends who are facing significant losses and transitions. More than a third of you are participating in our Community Circles, Spiritual Deepening Circles, Racial Justice Circles, and Care Circles. We have six Wellspring groups running this year, and more will start in the year ahead. The foundation has been poured and the walls assembled for the House That Love Built, and together we will begin to make that empty lot a home for a single mother and her five children. Our partnership with the Augsburg Fairview Academy - a high school that serves youth in need of another chance - is deepening. So much is happening that I cannot possibly name it all. This church is offering powerful ministry to its members and to the world.

For me, holding these two truths - the truth of our budget shortfall for the year ahead and the truth about our astonishingly successful work in the world - can be a hard thing to do. It gives me pause - but it also gives me reason to hope. I hope that in the month ahead, we will close our budget gap with creativity and generosity. I hope that we will prove yet again that together we can build the world and the church of our dreams.

Yours in faith and love,
Rev. Jen Crow

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FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
In the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive and grow.

Ministers

- Senior Minister Rev. Justin Schroeder
- Program Life Rev. Jen Crow
- Membership & Rev. Elaine Aron
- Adult Ministries Tenbrink
- Worship Arts Rev. Ruth MacKenzie
- Emeriti Rev. John Cummins
- Rev. Kate Tucker

Worship Arts

- Director Rev. Ruth MacKenzie
- Music Director John Jensen
- Choral Director Dr. Randal Buikema

Operations

- Director Diane Gavere
- Assist. Finance Admin. Brad Schmidt
- Communications Manager Heidi Johnson
- Office & Events Manager Bree Mattson
- Administrative Assistant K.C. Bogdan
- Facility Manager Tracy Van Epps
- Sr. Cleaning Custodian Tim Ewing
- Sound System Operator David Kellermann

Faith in Action

- Interim Director Rev. Jen Crow

Membership & Adult Ministries

- Director Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink
- Membership Support Sandy DiNanni

Children, Youth & Families Ministries

- Director Lauren Wyeth
- Youth Coordinator Abe Levine
- Program Assistants Alice Fredrickson
- Emily Christie

If you want a print version of the Liberal, contact sandy@firstuniv.org, 612-825-1701, or pick up a print copy at the Information Center. The online color version can be found at www.firstuniversalist.org/communication. Our office hours are Mon-Thurs 8:30am-8pm; Fri and Sat we are closed; Sun 8:00am-1pm. Church Services are 9:30am and 11:15am during the year and only 10am during the summer.
3400 Dupont Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55408
Phone: 612-825-1701 Fax: 612-825-8879
www.firstuniversalistchurch.org

Visual Arts

By Bette DeMars

ART 4 U -- A great success!

When the Visual Arts Committee agreed to sponsor a fundraising event, we had no idea how many people would agree to participate or how much money we could raise. We far exceeded the Board of Trustees' expectations, raising \$5,447. Even more important was the opportunity we provided for the congregation to experience the talent of our artists, fiber artists, and authors. Thanks go to all who donated their work and all who purchased something from our ART 4 U sales.

Soul Journey

"Soul Journey," a photography exhibit by John McKinley is on display in the Social Hall through May 25. The exhibit features landscape photographs on canvas from

the canyon country in Utah. "I love the peace and beauty of canyon country. This is where I go to rejuvenate my spirit and attune with the earth's healing and loving energy without distraction. I seek to share the beauty, balance and being as a reminder of the light within. This is my spiritual practice." As well as sharing his beautiful work with us, John has generously offered to give %10 of all sales from his exhibit to the church.

Summer Art Exhibits

June 1 - July 6: Samantha Johnson (Carol and Warren Johnson's granddaughter) will be exhibiting her art work. She is graduating from the Perpich Center for the Arts this spring. The exhibit will also be featuring other students from the school.

July 13 - 31: Moira Lennox will show her fine art photography. Examples of her work are available at www.moiralennox.com.

Tilling the Soil for Racial Justice Work Discussing "Race: The Power of an Illusion"

Part Two: The Story We Tell

Sunday, May 18, 1:00-2:30 PM

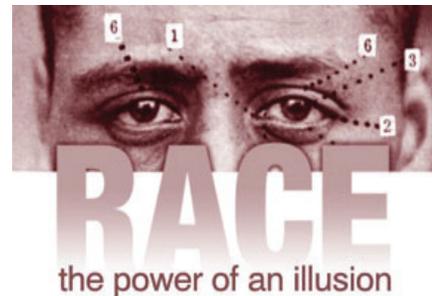
OR

Tuesday, May 20, 6:30-8:00 PM

Both showings will be in the Cummins Room

Join us as we watch part two of "Race: The Power of an Illusion". "The Story We Tell" traces the origins of race to the European conquest of the New World and to the American slave system - the first ever where all the slaves shared similar physical traits and a common ancestry.

For more information, contact Kayci Rush at kayci.rush@gmail.com or Clemma at clemmaj@gmail.com. Please RSVP to Elaine@firstuniv.org. Childcare is available free of charge by filling out this online form at least 7 days in advance. <http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/childcare/>



Interested in Learning More?

For more information on our racial justice work at First Universalist, visit our website at: www.firstuniversalistchurch.org, and click on the 'News' section for the latest updates.

Don't Forget: *'The Liberal'* is Taking a Summer Vacation

By Heidi Johnson

As of this printing, *The Liberal* will be taking a summer vacation. While *The Liberal* typically takes a hiatus over the summer, this year we will be corresponding the publication schedule of *The Liberal* with the church calendar year: this means that the May edition of *The Liberal* (the edition you are reading right now) will be the last edition before the summer. During this time, staff will be assessing the ways and means in which we communicate here at First Universalist, in hopes of gauging the effectiveness of our publications and communication methods. Please note that the website, Bulletin, social media accounts, and Weekly Church E-News will still be utilized to communicate news, events, and important information with the congregation.

If you have any questions about communications at First Universalist, please email Communications Manager Heidi Johnson at communications@firstuniv.org.

Clean Out Carbon in Your Life!

Sign up for a Home Energy Squad visit

By Carol Johnson

Join other UUs on Tuesday, May 20, 2014 at 6:30pm in the Chalice Room.

Attend the hour-long presentation by the Center for Energy and Environment and learn how CEE can assist you in reducing your home energy use, thereby cutting carbon dioxide emissions, and at the same time saving a bundle of money.

Many First U Members and Friends have already answered the call to become active in the "Energy Challenge" to consume less energy. Here is an opportunity for others of us to make those changes in our lives to meet the challenge of reducing carbon emissions that are contributing to our changing weather patterns.

The 350.org organization, Dr. James Hansen and meteorologist, Paul Douglas, are all in agreement. Our world's weather patterns are being impacted by the carbon we emit into the atmosphere. We CAN do something about it!

So keep doing what you are doing (energy conservation) or come learn what you can do for you part of the solution. The UU Seventh Principle: "Respecting the inherent worth of our interconnected web of life" calls us to this task. Mayflower Congregational Church has cut their carbon emissions by 60% over the past few years as a commitment to change.

Please pass the word along. Please join us for the Home Energy Squad information on May 20. Questions: Carol Johnson, 612-825-3322; Cecelia Newton <newton.cecelia@gmail.com> Bob Friedman <rmarcf@usfamily.net>.

Photos from our Easter Sunday Service:



Photos by Bob Friedman

Reflect and Connect in a Circle This Summer

Looking for spiritual nourishment this summer? Hoping to connect with some of the fascinating, thoughtful people of First Universalist? Joining a summer circle may be just the thing for you!

Our circles are groups of 8-10 committed participants who come together with a trained leader to nurture spiritual growth in community. These groups are grounded in the spiritual practices of deep listening and open-hearted reflection.

Which Circle is right for me?

Community Circles for the summer session will reflect on life's big questions.

Spiritual Practice Circles engage in a spiritual practice together, such as Chi-Gung.

Newcomers Circles offer an opportunity to learn more about our liberal faith tradition and connect with others who are getting to know First Universalist. This three-session circle is led by Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink, Minister of Membership and Adult Ministries.

When Do the Circles Take Place?

Each circle will have its own schedule, which can be found on the website: <http://firstucircles.weebly.com>. Our summer Community Circles will run for six sessions and the Newcomer Circle for three sessions. The schedules of our Spiritual Practice Circles will vary.

How Do I Get Involved?

Register online <http://firstucircles.weebly.com> from Sunday, May 4 through Monday, May 19. Group sizes are limited and registration is first-come, first-served. You may also register in the social hall on Sundays, May 4, May 11, and May 18.

For more information, please contact Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink at: elaine@firstuniv.org or 612-825-1701 x124.



**Annual Meeting
of Membership**

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

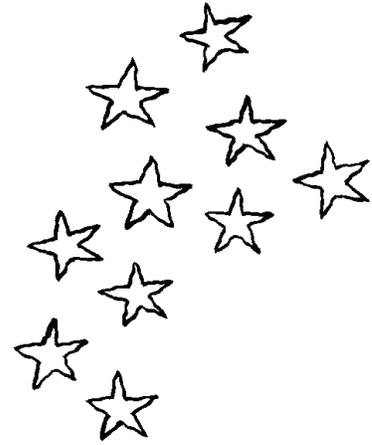
Sunday
June 1, 2014
11:30 AM

We will present the annual report, elect church leadership, and approve the budget for the 2014-15 church year.

Join us in the sanctuary for our annual meeting.

Sermon Theme: Season of Passage

Every May we celebrate and hold the different thresholds of spring. Some of our youth are leaving our community for work or college. Others are completing their work in the Coming of Age program and are living into the beliefs and values they have outlined. Some of us are watching new patterns of church emerge, as we live ever more fully into our mission of giving, receiving and growing. This time of year, we recognize the season of passage and transitions. We honor what has come before, know that we stand on the shoulders of those who have come before, and imagine our faith community into the future.



May Sunday Worship

May 3: Rev. Jen Crow

I Didn't See That Coming...

Life is change, pure and simple. Sometimes we see it coming, but most times we don't. How do we deal with unexpected change? How do we keep our balance? How do we see the whole of change, the negative and the positive?

Musical Offering: First Universalist Choir

May 11: Rev. Justin Schroeder

Season of the Church

As we move into spring and turn towards summer, we'll pause to reflect on the season we're in as church community. Four months ago, in the heart of winter, we reflected together on the "State of the Church." We'll return to this conversation to reflect on where we've been and where we're going, as together, in the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow.

Music Offering: The Jazz Band and the Usual Suspects

May 18: Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

Coming of Age: Season of the Imagination

The season of life we now call adolescence is a relatively new idea in our understanding of human development. What if we truly recognized this time of life as a time when imagination really takes root in a life and feeds the maturing soul? What if we honored adolescence as a time of blessing rather a period of life to endure? How do we reconnect with the spirit of adolescence, or trying things on? This morning we embrace our Coming of Age youth and imagination.

Music Offering: Gospel singer, Angela Henderson and First Universalist Choir

May 25: Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink

What Fills Your Life?

(please note our summer worship schedule begins May 25: one service at 10:00am)

In our culture that prizes busyness, we're encouraged to work hard, be productive, and fill up our calendars to overflowing. Sometimes, it feels like our worth gets defined by how busy we are. This morning, we will take a step back and consider what truly lends worth and meaning to our lives.

3400 Dupont Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408
Phone: 612.825.1701 Fax: 612.825.8879
Sunday Services 9:30am and 11:15am

Special Upcoming Sundays

May 11

* Universal Jazz Band plays at both services
Directed by John Jensen and joined by John's beloved trio, The Usual Suspects, with Jim Sutherland and Harry Pontiff.

May 18

* Gospel singer Angela Henderson with First Universalist Choir
* Special recognition of John Jensen w/coffee and cake after both services
* Last Day of RE classes

May 25, Memorial Day

* Childcare available for ages 6 mos. thru 5th gr.
* No RE classes
* Summer Worship schedule begins, one service at 10am

June 1

* Multigenerational Flower Communion, and Inter-generational Choir
* Summer Worship schedule, one service at 10am
* Annual Meeting, 11:30am in the Sanctuary, with special recognition of John Jensen's 22 years of service
* Childcare available for ages 6 mos. to 3 yrs.
* No RE classes
* RE Teacher Appreciation Brunch in the Chalice Room, 9-10:00am

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING SENIORS!

