



Nirmala Rajasekar, world renowned Carnatic veena virtuoso, performed here at services on Sept 23.

THE liberal

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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

Issue 4, Number 2

October 2012

Listening Deeply to Where Love is Calling Me Next

In 2004 I was honored to be hired to the staff of First Universalist Church. I have delighted in my work here. It has been inspiring, challenging, and touching to be a part of this community and I am so proud of how First Universalist is growing, changing, and truly living into its mission.

It is with sadness and joy that I let you know that October 12 will be my last day on staff at First Universalist Church. Love is calling me to take a break from the frenzy of work, parenting, and study to discern how I want my gifts and energy to serve the world. I have decided to concentrate on completing my Master's program in Public Affairs at the Humphrey School at the University of Minnesota. I can't wait to see what else unfolds.

As when ministers depart, it is in the congregation's best interest to have staff leaders be away from the church for a time so that their successor can build relationships and find his/her own place. Accordingly, I will say goodbye to you before October 12, and afterwards will give you and your new staff person room to grow together.

I have loved this work and you all and I hope I have served you well. I will always be grateful for my time at First Universalist. Thank you for letting me be a part of this amazing community.

In faith,
Heidi Mastrud, Director of Membership & Adult Ministries



Celebrating and Saying Goodbye

by Revs Jen Crow and Justin Schroeder

What an incredible gift it has been to have Heidi with us these last eight years. In so many ways, Heidi has held steady with us during a time of many transitions, guiding us with her insight, her humor, her expertise, and her presence. She has taken up several critical roles during her time with us: shepherding our programming for children, youth and families, building a small group ministry program that brings many of us into leadership and asks us each to listen deeply to where Love might be calling us next, welcoming new members and creating opportunities for all of us to welcome, affirm, and protect the light of each human heart as newcomers cross our doors. Heidi has been at the heart of our staff for a long time now, and as she moves on to the next stage of her life - she goes with our best wishes, our gratitude, and our blessings.

(continued on page 2)

Church News

On the Side of Love

At least 75 people Danced on the Side of Love Saturday September 22, 2012 to the sound of the 14 piece Universal Jazz Band. The event was a FUNdraiser for marriage equality and a celebration of Suzann Willhite and Kristin Siegesmund's 10th Anniversary. Kristin and Suzann want to thank everyone, the singers, the musicians, the dancers, the well wishers, who made this night so memorable and who gave so generously to the cause. In this challenging time it is great to be part of an affirming congregation. They agree with Justin Schroeder who spoke at the event about the critical need for everyone to talk to at least 10 people before the election about the importance of marriage equality. If we all pull together, Minnesota can be the first state to stand on the side of love.

Rev. Tucker's sermons and Ann Reed



As many of you know, before Rev. Tucker retired we created a CD with six of the sermons she most wanted us to have. It closes with Ann Reed singing *We Will*, the song she wrote for us. We began giving them out in June. There are still some available in the church office and at The Hub in the Social Hall.

Saying Goodbye (continued from page 1)

Help us to say thank you - and add your voice to ours as we cheer Heidi on as she listens deeply to where Love might be calling her next. Over the next few weeks, send Heidi a note - a real, handwritten note if you can. Take her out to lunch. Find a way to say thank you for all that she has done for us, for the way that she has been with us. And join us on Sunday, October 7 after both services to say goodbye and celebrate her many gifts.

Some of you may be asking what will happen next with Heidi's many responsibilities. Rest assured that your staff and lay leaders are hard at work figuring out how we will continue to best serve the congregation, and we will keep you informed of each step along the way.

Celebrating Generosity

\$1,035.37 was donated to Simpson Housing Services to assist in bringing their kitchen up to code. Their good work helps to house, support and advocate for people experiencing homelessness. Simpson Housing Services believe that with close, individual advocacy and support, men, women and families experiencing homelessness can achieve housing stability.

Our congregants generously donated 214 lbs. of food to the Joyce Food Shelf. The Joyce Food Shelf distributes food to those in need with respect and dignity as an expression of the love of God.

Nov. 17: Save the Date

Save the date for the Annual Church Auction, Saturday Evening, November 17. Fun, Food, Fellowship, Fantastic Items

Saturday
17

Volunteer for the Church library committee

Love books? Our church library committee is seeking volunteers. Join our monthly meeting Tuesday, Oct. 16, in the library to learn what we do.

Something New on the Menu

As our website has grown to over a thousand pages we have found it increasingly difficult to find the information we want using the old menu system, and we have heard from a number of congregants that they, too, have been having problems. So we are upgrading our menu system. You will see the new menu if you visit our website.

Most of the pages you have been looking for are in different places on the menu, but we hope that you can find them more easily. If you are looking for some information on our website and are having trouble finding it, call and talk to our interim communications coordinator, Craig, who would love to help find the information you want. Or, you can email him at craig@firstuniv.org.

“Growing into Love’s People”

We believe we are all Love's people, held by a Love that will not let us go. As Love's people, we join together to do holy work:

We welcome, affirm, and protect the light in each human heart.

We act boldly beyond our walls.

We listen with our whole being to where Love is calling us next.

If you’ve been at church in the past two months, you’ve probably heard these words from the pulpit. This language – this Vision of who we are - emerges from our Mission Statement (*In the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow*) and First Universalist’s four Visionary Goals:

1. We, the people of First Universalist Church, grow in our Unitarian Universalist faith: we are equipped to live out our values and experience worship, spiritual practices, and rituals that challenge, comfort, celebrate, and heal.

2. First Universalist Church is a home for ageless wisdom. People of all ages find opportunities to engage in an intellectual and spiritual search for deeper meaning and understanding in the Unitarian Universalist tradition, both as individuals and in community. We know our roots, find our wings, and apply our knowledge and wisdom to all our endeavors.

3. First Universalist Church is an intergenerational community of mutual caring and support. We build this community by actively welcoming all and encouraging each to discover, develop and share their gifts.

4. The people of First Universalist Church work to build a just, loving and sustainable world. We are a visible, influential voice, and we act to shape the larger community into a more just and equitable society.

This language about being “Love’s people” crystallizes the essence of these Visionary Goals. *Listening with our whole being* - a spiritual practice - links with Visionary Goal 1. *We are all Love’s people, held by a Love that will not let us go* is a core tenant of Unitarian Universalist theology and links with Visionary Goals 1 and 2. *Welcoming, affirming and protecting* - offering care and support - links with Visionary Goal 3. *Acting outside our walls* links with Visionary Goal 4.

Together, in this faith community, we give, receive, and grow ever more deeply into Love’s people. This is the path we walk together. This is the language that helps us remember who we are called to be.

Final Miracle Sunday on October 7

by Rev. Justin Schroeder

Did you know that we have 464 children and youth registered in our Religious Education Program? That there are more than 250 people participating in Small Groups? That there are nearly 1,000 people in the building on Sundays, and we’re using every available inch of space and then some?

We took a leap of faith this year, not pursuing a major tenant and the rental income



they’d provide because the cost to our program **l i f e** would be too high.

This leap of faith left us with a \$75,000 hole in our budget. We took this leap because we trust the momentum we feel here; we took this leap because we believe we are *all* Love’s people, and this is a message the world needs to hear. We took this leap, trusting that you – that this congregation - will help put the ground under our feet, and help us fill this gap.

Many of you will remember that this past spring, we had two Miracle Sundays, raising over \$40,000. We’re almost there! And on Sunday, October 7, we will have our final Miracle Sunday. Will you be a part of it? If you haven’t made a financial pledge for 2012-2013, will you make one October 7? If you’ve already pledged, are you able to increase your pledge by \$10-\$20 a month? Would you consider a cash gift to help us close this gap? Each of our small gifts can add up, and we’re expecting a miracle on October 7. We hope you’ll be a part of it!

President's Report

The Board of Trustees sincerely appreciated the responses of 225 congregants who provided us with a pulse check on the church's hopes and dreams. This was the first year that we utilized our Mission Statement and [Visionary Goals](#) as the survey framework, which is appropriate given this is how the board measures overall progress.

Additionally, considerable effort was spent ensuring alignment between the survey results and the key items laid out in the church's [5 Year Strategic Plan](#). To that end, this 2012 survey will serve as a baseline from which subsequent surveys will measure and determine year-over-year progress towards realizing our Visionary Goals via the Strategic Plan.

The key themes of the survey were the following:

Joys – Most congregants feel our worship service celebrates, challenges, comforts, and heals. Most adults have a spiritual practice, and nearly all of us know what it means to be Unitarian Universalist. The board believes we are on a solid trajectory to continue positive trends in these areas.

Hopes and Dreams – There is a strong desire for more inter-generational engagement. Congregants (both new and existing) are still adjusting to change and require ongoing help accessing core church services. There is a yearning for more Faith Formation (a.k.a. Adult Education) and more effective integration of volunteers. Finally, congregants have expressed an explicit desire to increase our racial diversity.

Demographics – respondents ranged from 19-89 years old, with an average age of 54. We are predominantly white, well-educated, heterosexual, married, female, and with a fairly broad income range.

Each one of these joys, hopes, and dreams was identified as a priority in the Strategic Plan. I will share one example with you - a re-imagined Worship Associates Program will be re-launched this year. For the rest, feel free to see for yourself.

Also, we are providing you all with [full access to the survey in its entirety if you'd like more information](#).

Lastly, the Board will continue to develop sound governing practices this year which to me are the guard rails that ensure we have a healthy, resilient institution for the next 150 years.

In Faith,

Craig Bierbaum



THE liberal

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
Intern	Laura Smidzik
Emeriti	Rev. John Cummins Rev. Kate Tucker

Worship Arts

Director	Ruth MacKenzie
Music Director	John Jensen
Choral Director	Randal Buikema

Finance and Administration

Director	Susan Claeys
Assistant Finance Administrator	Brad Schmidt
Office Manager	Trish Greene
Facility Manager	Tracy Van Epps
Senior Cleaning Custodian	Tim Ewing
Evening Custodian	Albert "Reed"
Sound System Operator	David Kellermann

Faith in Action

Director	Debra Rodgers
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Membership and Adult Ministries

Director	Heidi Mastrud
Membership Support	Sandy DiNanni
Interim Communications Coordinator	Craig Lindahl-Urben

Children, Youth and Families

Director	Lauren Wyeth
Youth and Young Adult Ministries Coordinator	Katie Heaton
Program Assistant/Childcare Provider	Lily Franz
2 & 3 Year Old Teacher	Emily Christie
Children's Music Coordinator	Mary Bohman

If you want a print version of the *Liberal*, contact sandy@firstuniv.org, 612-825-1701 x125, or pick up a print copy at The Hub. The online color version at firstuniv.org/newsletter has live links. Our office hours are Mon-Thurs 8:30am-8pm; Fri 8:30am-4pm; Sat we are closed; Sun 9:00am-1pm. 3400 Dupont Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55408
Phone: 612-825-1701 Fax: 612-825-8879
www.firstuniv.org

Operation Keep 'em Warm

Each fall for 15 years, First Universalist has sponsored a new coat project, first through Warm Hands/Warm Hearts and now through Operation Keep 'em Warm. This program is aimed at keeping low-income children warm, with the purchase of a new winter coat, hat, and mittens/gloves. The collection and organization of coats for Operation Keep 'em Warm is a marvelous way to get involved in First UU's Social Justice program. It's straightforward, fun, and unbelievably rewarding. If you'd like to be more involved in Operation Keep 'em Warm, please call Sherrilee Carter (612-822-2996) to talk about the possibilities or sign up in the Social Hall. If you haven't already done so, stop by the Operation Keep 'em Warm table in the Social Hall to pick up a card for a child in need.

Seeking Gently Used Boots and Coats!



As you are sorting through your winter clothes, you may find boots or coats that need a new home. If so, consider donating them to Ascension Place, Inc. for the women and children in their programs in north Minneapolis. Please take them to the Social Hall anytime

through the end of October and look for the donation box. Questions? Email NancyMcCallmn@gmail.com Thank you!

Voting Amendment Forum



Join Minnesota Secretary of State and First Universalist member, Mark Ritchie, for a conversation with people of his faith. All metro UUs are encouraged to attend this 90-

minute educational forum and Q&A to learn how the proposed constitutional amendment on voting would change our elections in Minnesota. Introduction by Rev. Justin Schroeder. It will be immediately followed by a 30-minute action planning led by Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) with Faith-in-Action Director, Deb Rodgers. Learn the facts so you can better explain your position to other voters on this important issue. **Sunday, Oct. 14, 1:30-3:30pm First Universalist Church, Chalice Room.** A light lunch will be served starting at 1:15. RSVP appreciated at jjewell.thomas@gmail.com or 612-920-2653.

Auction 2012

Silent Auction

Live Auction

Great Gatherings

FABULOUS ITEMS, FELLOWSHIP,

FOOD, FUN

Childcare provided

FUN for kids too!

Come, Join the Party!

Saturday, November

17, 6:00-10:00pm



Tickets on sale at the Hub and in the Church Office in late October.

Adults: \$25 advance, \$30 at the door, Couples: \$50 advance, \$60 at the door

Price includes hors d'oeuvres, dinner, dessert, wine, beer, soda, and event participation

Creative, energetic people needed for planning, marketing, item procurement, logistics, ticket selling, and more!

To join the Auction Team contact Auction Team Chair, Paul Robinson paul.robinson@earthlink.net or 612-791-7080

Art in Worship

Stories We Choose

by Ruth MacKenzie

A nimbus—clouded voice directed me: “Live in the layers, not on the litter.”

The Layers by Stanley Kunitz

Human beings tell stories. Stories are the creative act of remembering ourselves, and weaving ourselves into our future. They are everywhere, and in everything, constantly changing shape, and shaping us. At one point, we may tell a story of a bold act we once undertook, and yet as time passes, we see the same event as a way we were deeply hurtful to someone. Stories of victimhood shape shift into stories of survival, and the rich sediment from which compassion grows in our lives. Stories help us make sense of our past. They can just as easily hold us back, as we continue to propagate a particular conception of ourselves, or our community that stifles transformation. The creative act of storytelling is something that deserves our attention. When we are conscious of the stories we tell, we find a rich layering of narratives to build on, rather than a pile of litter that continually trips us up.

What are the stories that need to fall away in your life? What stories have transformed you? Are there stories that need to be told more fully? What are the stories that we need to embrace as a community? How does our Judeo-Christian root system shape our Unitarian Universalist story today? What kind of stories do we need to tell our children? This month we examine the stories we tell. We will take the poet’s advice and live in the layers, not on the litter.

Abstracts and Illuminations

How can artwork in today’s world support the mind toward a more positive outlook and experience? That question is explored in the upcoming Unitarian Universalist art exhibit *Abstracts and Illuminations* by Jim Marion Foreman. The *Abstracts* are colors and shapes painted in a joyful way with bold design areas, colorful symbolic patterns, and/or impressionistic brushwork.

The *Illuminations* are prints and paintings that are related to the abstracts but that also include uplifting words, poems, or prayer words and/or symbols. Sometimes the Illumination is a *Prayer Portrait*, a line or expressive photo portrait with positive words and playful symbols representative of thoughts for the individual.

This exhibit begins Oct 21, and concludes November 25. The reception for the artist is on October 28. Ideas on how to incorporate artwork in moving toward a higher consciousness will also be discussed during the reception.



Awaken

by Randal Buikema

This December, First Universalist explores the call to “Awaken,” inspired by Bach’s Cantata #140 *Wachet auf*.

The First Universalist Choir will present *Wachet auf*, during worship on December 23. This call to “Awaken,” composed in 1731, will be woven into the service as the culmination of our four-week sermon series. Although J.S. Bach lived for 65 years and composed around 1200 works, *Wachet auf* has emerged as one of his most famous and well loved compositions. Accompanied by strings, oboes, English horn, French horn and continuo, the presentation of *Wachet auf* will cultivate introspection and joy as you prepare for the holidays.

This is a big work and our preparations begin now. The Choir is looking for extra singers from the congregation and larger community to participate in this exciting event. Rehearsals will be from 8:00-9:00 on Wednesday evenings beginning in October.





Play the Music

There are so many ways to join the music at First Universalist Church. Along with opportunities in Jazz Band and Folk Band, we are assembling a list of brass, woodwind and string players to accompany hymns, and provide solo and ensemble work to accompany the choir. Please contact John Jensen, pianojj@earthlink.net, or Randy Buikema, randy@firstuniv.org, to express your interest.



Our Water Communion on Sept. 9 celebrated the start of our church year and brought us all back together after the summer with a deep rejoining of the waters of life.

Calling All Folkies

John Jensen, Ruth MacKenzie, and key members from the Folk Band met Sept. 24, and teased out hopes and dreams for the future of this group. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 23 at 7pm in the Sanctuary. We are asking all fiddlers, flutists, mandos, singers, recorders, clarinetists, guitarists, or banjo pickers interested in making folk music, to bring recordings or sheet music that relate to the topic of “Calling,” to the upcoming meeting. We will share our music, decide on some pieces, and begin to craft arrangements for a worship service in March.

Calling comes from the latin root vocatio or vocation. It is that still small voice, that movement of the spirit that helps you find your groove or purpose in the great rhythm of this life. So see what music strikes you, instrumental or vocal, and bring it on Oct. 23.



Join The Song

Singers who would like to join the choir on a regular basis are always welcome. Rehearsals are from 7:00-9:00 on Wednesday evenings. Prior experience and the ability to read music are helpful, but not required. For more information, contact randy@firstuniv.org or visit the website at firstuniv.org/music/choir.

Extra singers are invited to join the First Universalist Choir for upcoming presentations of Bach’s beloved Cantata, “Wachet auf.” Rehearsals for this special project are Wednesday evenings from 8:00-9:00pm in the sanctuary. Presented during worship on December 23, this work will be the culmination of a four week sermon series entitled “Awaken!”

Children, Youth and Families



Parenting in Divisive Times

With the definition of marriage on the ballot in November, children of all ages are being exposed to television ads, seeing Vote No and Vote Yes lawn signs in people's yards, and hearing conversations about relationships, sexuality, and marriage. Join in a facilitated discussion about how to be in conversation with your children and to give them room to ask questions; be open with you about what they are hearing and thinking; and create their own moral compass.

For LGBT parents:

We'll take extra time to talk about how to help our kids find refuge during the storm and find comfort in the arms of their family and our open and affirming religious community. Facilitated by Lauren Wyeth, Director of Children, Family & Youth Ministries. Lauren is a lesbian mom and former resident of California who lived through the Prop 8 campaign. Sundays, Oct. 7 and Nov. 11, lunch at 12:45pm, program 1:15-2:30pm. Child care is available upon request with advance notice; please email lauren@firstuniv.org.



Facilitated by Laura Smidzik, Cummins Ministerial Intern and past Executive Director of Rainbow Families and Project 515. October 17, 6:30-8:00pm.

For Allies:

Facilitated by Laura Smidzik, Cummins Ministerial Intern and past Executive Director of Rainbow Families and Project 515. October 17, 6:30-8:00pm.

Children's Voices Everywhere

by Lauren Wyeth

The year is off to a roaring good start for our kids in Religious Education classes. Our halls and classrooms are filled with the energy of new beginnings and being together once again - or for the first time. The mood on the first day back to classes was a reflection of the efforts of many dedicated volunteers who gathered for a training retreat the previous Saturday and poured their time and attention into the work of creating a radically welcoming experience for every child at First Universalist. Together, we start the year focused on teaching our values by showing our children what is possible when we welcome, affirm and protect the flame in each human heart. As of press time, we have 448 registered children and youth and 184 volunteer teachers and advisors on board. The year ahead promises to be full of laughter, exploration and growth for us all.



It's Not Too Late

All children in grades 1-5 are welcome to join First Universalist's Children's Choir, directed by Mary Bohman. No experience necessary. We sing music that reflects our Unitarian Universalist values, build music skills, and have loads of fun! Rehearsals are Sundays from 10:35-11:10 in the Cummins Room. Come any Sunday to sign up, meet the director, and sing with the choir. For more information, contact Mary at mary@firstuniv.org.

Chalice Lighters

3rd through 6th grade children are invited to attend a special workshop where they will learn about the history, meaning and tradition of lighting a chalice as we gather for worship. Children who complete the workshop will be invested as Chalice Lighters, and may sign up to assist in worship during Children's Chapels and in the Sanctuary. The workshop will be held on Sunday, Oct. 14, 12:30-3pm. Lunch provided. To register your child, please email lauren@firstuniv.org.



Our Whole Lives

A small group especially for parents of 8th grade "Our Whole Lives" (OWL) students will be meeting in October on Thursday nights. We'll share experiences about parenting and human sexuality. The group will meet for 4 sessions (Oct. 4, 11, 18, and 25) from 6:30-8:30pm in Room 203. Attendance is expected at all sessions and registration is limited to 12 in order to preserve the small group experience. Please sign up as soon as possible. If the group is popular, another section will be offered in the spring. Contact Katie Heaton at katie@firstuniv.org

Religious Education Orientation

New family registration takes place during our monthly Religious Education Orientation, held on the second Sunday of the month, Oct. 14, between services, from 10:45-11:05 a.m. in room 102. Child care is provided. When you register your child at First Universalist, you join a supportive and affirming faith community. Together, we celebrate, grieve, grow and seek to build a peaceful and just world for ourselves and our children.

Multigenerational Potluck & Movie Night

Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax*, rated PG

People of all ages who care about environmental issues are invited to join us for this fun event. Bring a dish to share, beverages and dishes for your family members and be ready to take in a family-friendly movie! Saturday, October 27, 6-9pm, in the Social Hall. Coming to our potluck? All offerings are gratefully placed on our table. Please bring local, organic, and/or sustainably sourced foods if you can.

Religious Education Announcements

Congratulations to Lily Franz, former Religious Education Program Assistant who recently accepted the position of Front Office Assistant for First Universalist. We will miss Lily's support of Religious Education classes and tender care in the nursery on Sundays, but are thrilled she will continue to work and grow with us. Welcome to Kelly Timian, who grew up in this congregation and will care for our littlest ones on Sundays.

All our love to Religious Education preschool teacher Emily Christie as she takes a maternity leave to welcome and care for a new little one due Oct. 30, and a warm welcome to Bailey Halligan, who will take her place through mid-January. And welcome, Nicole Rath, our new care provider for 2 year olds. We're so glad you have joined us!

Thanks to Nora Page, who sewed beautiful rainbow window coverings to help transform the Chalice Room for our weekly Children's Chapel, and to Allison Wyeth, who brightened the first floor Religious Education hall with colorful display windows.

And finally, we are grateful for our many volunteer nursery care providers, Religious Education teachers and youth advisors. Thank you for walking with our children and honoring the light in each of their hearts.

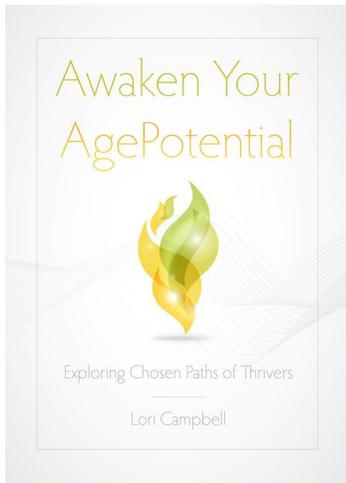


Get Involved

Chi-Gung

All are welcome to join Chi-Gung at First Universalist. Chi-Gung is a centuries-old form of meditative exercise that centers the mind, increases self-awareness, builds internal energy, and develops a healthy, flexible body physically and spiritually. Chi-gung practice can diminish physical pain, stress, depression and isolation, relieve the effects of stress and support resistance to illness. You may stand or sit as needed, so the class is suitable for people with physical limitations or illness. Instructor Pat Gottschalk is a member of First Universalist, and has an 18-year practice as a certified Shiatsu practitioner. Participants are encouraged to make a \$35 donation to First Universalist. All are welcome to attend, no matter your economic circumstances. Fridays, 10-11:30am, 9 sessions Sept. 21— Nov. 16, Cummins Room. Contact: pat-gottschalk@yahoo.com, 612-861-4087.

Thriving as you age



Join Lori Campbell, author of *Awaken Your Age Potential: Exploring Chosen Paths of Thrivers*, and Salvador Valdovinos, member of First Universalist, who is featured in the book as a "thrivers," for a special Sunday program. Lori will talk about being a "Visionary Gerontologist," and what she learned from the thrivers, all 50 years and older, featured in her book. Sal will talk about how he thrives well into his 80s. The talk is meant to inspire you to transform your perspective on growing older and the joyful possibilities that await. After the talk, there will be time for conversation and questions about thriving in aging. Sunday, October 21, 12:45-2:15pm Cummins Room.

Association of Universalist Women



AUW Friday Get Connected social event is held the first Friday of each month, 7-9pm, in the Library. Oct. 5 Topic: Social Networking. Jeanne and Rita will provide high-level overviews of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Bring a

laptop/ iPad if you can.

AUW Friendship Groups are starting up. For the past eight years, AUW has organized small groups of women who come together for friendship and deep conversation. Groups meet 5-7 times over four months. Registration forms are available at the Hub in the Social Hall. **Deadline for registration is Monday, Oct. 15.**

AUW Fall Mini-Retreat "Rhythms of the Heart" — 1-4:30pm, Sat., Oct. 27, in the Cummins Room. Come explore that "something" we all perceive when someone "puts their heart into it." Keynote speaker TBA. Two breakout sessions 1) Moving with Passion or 2) Self-portraiture (with photography) as a tool for Self-Knowledge and Self-Acceptance. Snacks are provided.

You do not need to be a member of AUW or First Universalist to attend. Suggested donation: \$15 AUW members; \$20 non-members; sliding scale for those on limited income. To register, sign up at the Hub or email auw.firstuniv@gmail.com. Walk-ins welcome, too. For free childcare, send request before Oct 19th to Lily at lily@firstuniv.org, 612-825-1701x107. To volunteer, contact Mary Sandbo & Marilyn Lamoreaux via Hub/office or auw.firstuniv@gmail.com. More info available at the Hub.



Hopes and Histories with Rev. Jen Crow

If you haven't joined me yet for a Hopes and Histories session, I hope you will soon. I've met with several of you already and it is a joy to get to know you and to hear your stories about our church and your vision for the future. In these 90 minute sessions, we sit together

in a small group, sharing and listening as we explore our church life - past, present, and future. Come tell me what state or season you think our church is in right now. Come tell me about a time when you felt most connected to our church. Come tell me what you'd like to see more or less of, what your wild dreams are for our next 5 or 10 or 20 years together. I can't wait to meet you - and to tell you what I'm hearing. Several openings are still available to join me. Childcare is available for evening and weekend sessions if you let us know at least a week in advance. Sign up online, at the Hub, or by calling the front desk or emailing Sandy DiNanni at sandy@firstuniv.org. If you aren't able to join me for one of the scheduled times, but would still like to be a part of the conversation - let us know. More sessions can be scheduled. The currently scheduled sessions are: Oct. 8, 7-8:30pm; Oct. 10, 10:30-noon; Oct. 16, 7-8:30pm; and, Nov. 14, 6-7:30pm (this session will be especially for parents with children in Religious Education).

Circle Suppers

Looking for a way to get better acquainted with people within the congregation and enjoy great food and conversation? You're invited to join Circle Suppers! Circle Suppers meet the first Saturday of every month from November through March. To sign up or for more information contact Marybeth Hoelzer 612-284-1221 or mhoelzer@mac.com by October 15.



Men's Support Group

Each man is capable of significant personal and spiritual growth. Each is whole. Each has his own timing. Each has his own answers. In the Men's Support Group we deal with the joys and sorrows of everyday life. We share with each other our lives as we experience them. We learn to better understand and cope with life's issues. We build on our strengths, get in touch with our power, explore alternatives and increase confidence.

Our expectations are regular, long term attendance, confidentiality, attentive listening and respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

We meet at the church every other Tuesday from 7-9pm. We are seeking men of all ages to join our group and we are still open for October. For more information and to arrange to attend, phone Tom Greenspon: 952-929-1499.

November Holiday Gift Exchange

In connection with National Recycle Day, First Universalist is holding the annual Holiday Gift Exchange on Sunday, November 11th. It is a fun way to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. So



start collecting your new or slight used gift-type items to exchange for something someone else has brought. *No clothes or damaged goods will be accepted.* Housewares, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, tools & jewelry are fine.

Get Involved and Stay Connected

Considering Membership at First Universalist?

Choosing membership at First Universalist is a public declaration and a spiritual commitment to support this congregation and allow the community to support you. Membership is available to all, ages 14 and up, who are aligned with the mission, vision, and values of this church. Although most programs at the church are accessible to non-members, becoming a member allows you to participate in the governance of the congregation and gain access to our strong network of congregational care.

Details: firstuniv.org/membership

How Can I Learn More?

First Step is a brief overview of what our community has to offer. This session is especially for visitors and newcomers. The next sessions will be **October 7 & 21** following each service. No sign up is necessary. Childcare is available in Room 100.

Pathways to Membership

This class is for those new to Unitarian Universalism and/or First Universalist Church, and is a requirement for those who wish to become members. Next class: **Saturday, Oct. 6**, 9:00am-1:00pm. Register by emailing Sandy@firstuniv.org. Free childcare available on request one week prior.



Opportunities for Spiritual Practice

The Buddhist Meditation & Study Group

We will be using the book *Nothing is Hidden, essays on Zen Master Dogen's Instructions for the Cook* edited by Jisho Warner. Meets Tuesdays, 7-8:45pm, North Arches, from Oct. 2-Nov. 27. Contact: Susan Hagler, 612-825-7780, Susanhagler13@gmail.com.

Tai Chi Beginning at First Universalist

Join member Michael Dotson and guest teachers from the Chinatown Tai Chi Center to learn the basics of this Chinese martial art that is practiced for health and self-defense. Open to people of all ages and abilities who hope to explore this spiritual practice. No fee. Thursdays, Sept. 27-Dec. 6, 6:30-7:45pm. Sign up by contacting Sandy@firstuniv.org, 612-825-1701 x125 or visit the Hub. For more information, contact: Michael Dotson at 612-419-4260 or mdotson904@att.net.

Mostly Silence Meditation Group

The Mostly Silence Meditation Group will meet the first Thursdays of the months Sept. 6 – Dec. 6, 5:00 – 6:15pm. Newcomers and drop-ins are welcome, even if you've never meditated before. Those who have experienced the group have appreciated meditating with other people in a group, and having it on one's calendar provides a specific opportunity to actually do it.

The group starts with a reading and check-in in the Chancel Room (left door behind the Sanctuary), then moves to a walking meditation in the Sanctuary, followed by a sitting meditation in the Meditation Room. We then return to the Chancel Room for reflection and closing words. Any questions, contact Michael Dotson at 612/ 419-4260 or mdotson904@att.net.



Congregational Care What is it?

by Jen Crow

It's something we all do informally every time we reach out to listen to and care for a fellow congregant. But more formally, it's a program of the church whereby we make sure that people experiencing a life event or going through transitions, are recognized and supported.

How can we support people? First of all, we need to know about individuals. You can call the church office and talk with the receptionist, 612-825-1701, talk with Jen Crow, our Minister of Program Life, Ext 103, or contact Margit Berg, margitkb@comcast.net or 612-377-4776. You may call about yourself or on behalf of someone else, and we will contact that person. If you want to be listed in the Cycle of Life, we will initiate that.

We have a large cadre of volunteers that can provide: 1) transportation for special appointments or rides to church, 2) meals in time of illness, 3) hospitality at memorial services, 4) visits to people and delivery of flowers from the Sunday service or a comfort shawl, and 5) other miscellaneous help. The Congregational Care team also sponsors an annual blood drive, support groups, and speakers on issues of health and end-of-life planning.

Our TRUST parish nurse, Pat McLaughlin, 612-822-2394, is a good resource when there is a need for a referral to a community service. TRUST also has an important service that those in South Minneapolis may want to know about and that is a chore program for those over 55 or disabled people for indoor or outdoor chores. They charge on a sliding fee scale. Call TRUST at 612-827-6159. See their web site for other programs, www.trustinc.org.

This shaking keeps me steady. I should know.

What falls away is always. And is near.

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

I learn by going where I have to go.

Theodore Roethke

Journeys

Jim Mickman, who suffered a small stroke in the region of his brain tumor

Diane Claeys, sister of church Administrator **Susan Claeys**, who had successful open heart surgery September 5.

Erin Lysne's husband, Kris, who broke both wrists in a biking accident.

Steven Lazarski and his family, as he navigates the challenges of Stage IV pancreatic cancer. To follow his progress, you're invited to check his Caring Bridge site,

<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/stevelazarski>

Kimon Swarts, who was diagnosed mid-September with Stage 4 prostate cancer. He began treatment immediately. Our love and support to Kimon and Gayle, as they work through this sudden impediment in their lives.

Barb Benner, who underwent serious knee surgery Sept. 12 at Fairview Riverside Hospital.

Passings

The family and friends of Rose Day. Rose died peacefully on September 21, a week after her 61st birthday, at the last light on the last day of summer. Rose's daughter Juliana and husband Michael were at her side. Per her wishes, she will be cremated with a memorial service to follow soon afterwards. Rose lived a full life, was greatly loved and will always be remembered for her intelligence, talent, wit and wisdom. **Michael Day, 2814 Huntington Ave S, St. Louis Park, MN 55416**

Gradyn Davies, father of Beth Davies, father in law of Mark Saarinen, Grandfather of Owen Saarinen, Henry Saarinen died peacefully in his family home in Green Bay, Wisconsin on September 16, 2012. Gradyn was 89 and lived a life rich in love and thankfulness. **Beth Davies, Mark, Owen, Henry Saarinen, 3838 Blaisdell Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55409**

October

Tuesday
2

1:30p Phone Banking
& Conversations

Saturday
6

9:00a Pathways
to Membership

Sunday
7

The Indispensable Church
Rev. Justin Schroeder

10:30 & 12:15 **First Step**

12:45p Parenting in Divisive
Times for LGBT
Parents

1:30p Conversations with
People You Know

Jubilant Song - music composed by
Norman Dello Joio Text by Walt Whit-
man

Hold on to your seats! This choral fan-
fare challenges the members of the choir
with driving rhythms and striking chordal
progressions while putting John Jensen's
virtuosic talents to the test! Whitman's
exuberant and joyful text is reflective of
the energy and enthusiasm at First Univer-
salist Church. This anthem is a true cele-
bration of our great community.

Monday
8

7:00p Hopes & Histories

Wednesday
10

10:30a Sage Conversations
10:30a Hopes & Histories
6:30p Nurturing Children's
Spirits

Thursday
11

1:30p Phone Banking
& Conversations

Sunday
14

Stories We Choose
Rev. Jen Crow

10:45a RE Orientation

12:30p Chalice Lighters
Workshop

1:30p Phone Banking
& Conversations

1:30p Voting Amendment

October

Tuesday
16

1:30p Phone Banking
& Conversations
7:00p Hopes & Histories

Wednesday
17

6:30p Parenting in Divisive
Times: A Conversa-
tion with Allies

Sunday
21

Stories We Choose
Rev. Justin Schroeder
10:30a & 12:15p **First Step**
1:30p Phone Banking
& Conversations
1:30p Voting Amendment
Forum

Wednesday
24

6:30p Nurturing Children's
Spirits

Thursday
25

6:30p Phone Banking

Saturday
27

6:00p Multigenerational
Potluck & Movie
The Lorax

Sunday
28

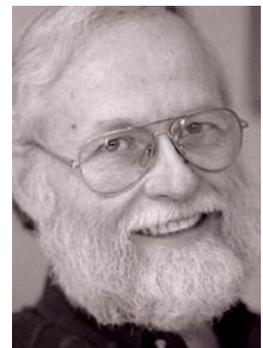
Stories We Choose—
Saving Paradise
Rev. Ruth MacKenzie
12:30a All Church Book Read
1:00p Hopes & Histories
1:30p Conversations With
People You Know
Training

Everywhere Will Be Called Eden with
music composed by Warren Park and text
by Judy Chicago.

First Universalist Church member, pi-
ano technician and philosopher, Warren
Park found inspiration in author, feminist
and educator, Judy Chicago's "Merger
Poem."

From Warren Park for the Liberal:

*My choral piece "Everywhere Will Be Called
Eden Once Again" was written in the late
1990's for the installation of our new minister
at the time, Rev. Frank Rivas, who chose the
text by nationally-known artist Judy Chicago.
Her poem can be found in the readings section
of our UU hymnal, #464. I found the noble
ideas expressed to be an inspiration for the mu-
sic, which I deliberately wrote with a variety of
rhythms, tempos and character. The ending is
serenely quiet compared to the more raucous
section leading up to it. It was my way of depict-
ing the transformation back to Eden that the
words long for.*





Join GLBTQ people and their allies who are reeling from the divisive MN marriage amendment ballot. Standing on the Side of Love MN offers a safe haven of spiritual support and love.

sideoflovemn.org - facebook.com/sideoflovemn - youtube.com/user/sideoflovemn - twitter.com/sideoflovemn

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
3400 Dupont Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408
Phone: 612-825-1701 Fax: 612-825-8879