



THE liberal

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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

Issue 5, Number 9

May 2013

Love the Conversations

by Laura Smidzik
Cummins Ministerial Intern

What a joy and honor it has been to serve as your Cummins Ministerial Intern this year! You are a wonderful teaching congregation—open to newly budding ministers through your warm, loving and honest presence. Looking back on the year, I am so grateful for the opportunity to do such valuable work such as: organize the Standing on the Side of Love MN, a social media pastoral care project and statewide worship to defeat the constitutional amendment restricting marriage rights to exclude same-sex couples; participate in small group ministry both as a member and as a leader of a group for people experiencing grief; revitalizing the elders

Conversations (continued on page 7)

The Annual Survey

by David Leppik, Trustee

At First Universalist Church, we give, receive, and grow.....or do we?

One of the Board of Trustees' most important tasks is to monitor how well we as a church community live up to our ambitions—and where we need to do better. The Board has articulated our ambitions in four Visionary Goals, which were developed in conjunction with the Mission Statement.

The annual survey is one of our most important tools for measuring year-over-year progress in living up to the Visionary Goals. By conducting the survey every year we can tell what has changed in the last year, as well

Annual Survey (continued on page 5)

First Universalist Reaches 1000 Members

by Sara Smalley
Interim Director of Membership and Adult Ministries

First Universalist is growing! We currently have 993 members, and during worship service on Sunday, June 2, we will welcome over thirty more. Be sure to be there for the celebration when we officially go over the 1,000 member mark.

Minister of Worship Arts

Ruth MacKenzie Passes the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and Will Be Staying at First Universalist

by Rev. Justin Schroeder
Senior Minister

At the beginning of April, Ruth MacKenzie, our Director of Worship Arts, crossed the final threshold of ministry when she appeared before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee in Boston, and passed this final interview with flying colors. Ruth is now cleared to be ordained by a congregation!



In addition to passing the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee also approved a waiver request that Ruth submitted. Ruth requested that she be able to stay on at First Universalist and continue her ministry with us. Many of you will remember that Ruth served as our intern in 2010-2011. In most circumstances, ministers who have done their internship with a congregation are not allowed to stay on to serve the church in a ministerial role.

Minister of Worship Arts (continued on page 3)



Once again the high school seniors who will graduate from Religious Education this year received Chalice Pillows to take with them on their next adventures as reminders of our love. Presentation was on Youth Sunday, April 28. The pillows were made possible by the following: **Sue Schiess, Judith Grittner, Nora Page, Margit Berg, Mary DeBruin, Judy Broad, Judith Carlson, Marlene Walth, Mary Djerf, Janet Chandler, Cathy Apostle.** This is the work of our church.

Timeless

Photographs of Hawaii by Marilyn Lamoreux

by Bette DeMars

First Universalist will be exhibiting the work of member **Marilyn Lamoreux** in our social hall over the next month. In Marilyn's own words:

"For nearly three months last winter I was in a small community of artists, dreamers, idealists, and misfits in a small plantation village on the Big Island of Hawaii. The rusted roofs and weathered boards of the aging homes in the small village where I stayed and the ageless beauty of people and places that I visited gave a sensation of being suspended somewhere outside of time. I sensed echoes of ancestors who had been of the land, their spiritual practices and languages and the rhythms of life lived in close harmony with the land. I came home with over 15,000 photographs of people, places, natural scenes, and events.

I chose these photos to represent my timeless experiences on the Big Island of Hawaii. I hope you will take a moment to breathe deeply, shed the burdens of everyday life, and share the timeless with me for a little while."

Exhibition runs from May 12 - June 23 and the artist's Opening Reception is May 19, after both services.

Religious Education Registration

Open, live and online NOW!

by Lauren Wyeth, Director of Children, Youth & Families Ministries

We are pleased to announce our pilot year of online Religious Education registration. We hope you will experience this as a simpler, more streamlined process than in previous years. No more paper forms and standing in line to turn them in! No more struggling to remember cash or checks to pay your fees! We're joining the digital age!

When you register your child at First Universalist, your whole family engages in 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. In this spirit, each family is asked to take an active role in the work of our Children, Youth & Family Ministries; consider the volunteer options and select your top choices on the RE registration form.

Go to our website to learn more and to access the link to the online registration form. You can register your children for the 2013-2014 church year, and for summer 2013 RE at the same time.

Susan Claeys Leaving

by Rev. Justin Schroeder
Senior Minister

I am grateful for all the gifts that Susan has shared with First Universalist and I know you join me in wishing her well in her next journey! Susan Claeys' last day was Friday, May 3rd.



Susan has been incredibly gracious, staying on much longer than her 2 weeks notice. She has helped finalize the budget, finished setting up Quickbooks, and has gotten her files in order, so that our new Director of Operations can easily get caught up to speed. We are grateful for the gifts she shared with us.

Hope is Our Speaker

by Laura Smidzik
Cummins Ministerial Intern

A larger circle of over twenty elders gathered to watch a short Ted Talk Krista Tippett: Reconnecting with compassion. Lively small group discussions followed, spurred on by the main points of Krista's talk. The room was overflowing with the energy of people speaking about how compassion informs this church and their lives. The spirit continued into lunch conversations in the social hall.

Our last gathering of this year is scheduled for May 9 from 10:30 to noon with a lunch following. Our guest speaker is Julie Neraas, the author of *Apprenticed to Hope: A Sourcebook for Difficult Times*. Her book of essays includes the story of her chronic illness and what she learned in that difficult apprenticeship. Julie is an Associate Professor at Hamline University, an ordained Presbyterian minister, spiritual director, and frequent speaker and retreat leader. The topic is Hope—a subject that crosses time and culture and it is absolutely essential, like bedrock beneath us. While many people live without (specifically religious) faith, and others keep going without much love, you do not do very well for long without hope. In fact, to live without it is to barely live at all. With hope so much is possible; without it, little is. The capacity to hope is an indispensable human quality. We will reflect on the ways in which hope is different from optimism, trust and faith, and tap our collective wisdom about what it's like to lose hope and find it again.

No RSVP is necessary unless you plan to join us for lunch (suggested \$5 donation). RSVPs help us get a count for food preparation. The elders group will start up again in the fall.

Hope is our speaker.

Minister of Worship Arts (continued from page 1)

However, because the ministers and the Board of First Universalist felt strongly that Ruth's gifts were so well suited to the needs of First Universalist, Ruth submitted a request to waive this rule, with letters of support from Craig Bierbaum, Chair of the Board, and myself.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee approved this request, and the Board and I are happy to announce that Ruth will continue to serve First Universalist Church as Minister of Worship Arts, and will be ordained September 15, 2013 in our sanctuary. We are overjoyed with this news.

Join our
Office Volunteer Team!

Contact Lily at 612-825-1701 x123
or lily@firstuniv.org

The Work Chorale

How we prepared for *A Place of Hope*

by Randy Buikema
Director of Choral Arts

Stephen Paulus' *A PLACE OF HOPE* captures my initial impression of First Universalist Church on my first visit during summer 2011. The words of the patients at the Mayo Clinic seemed to fit in perfectly with my First U. impression. "Because I know that life is a journey to be treasured, I can find hope."

As a conductor, this was a very complex work for me to prepare to lead. First, while most choral music has 4 vocal parts, this Paulus piece has 8 vocal parts. Second, the harmonic language is quite dissonant and even though our ears are accustomed to dissonances in instrumental music, this dissonant vocal harmony is especially difficult for singers.

The third challenge was the constantly changing time signatures. Many pieces have the same beat pattern throughout; however, *A PLACE OF HOPE* changed frequently, and sometimes even in every measure for several measures in a row. As I pondered these rapid meter changes, I realized that Paulus was manipulating the time element to emphasize the text and to make more easily understood. The changing meter had the effect of approximating the natural accents of speech.

A fourth task was the orchestration. It has been my goal to incorporate more church members into the orchestra for these major musical events. Instead of the paid professionals who have played with us previously, 11 of the 16 instrumentalists were members of First Universalist Church.

I love introducing people to new music. Our choir found this music difficult and

The Work Chorale (continued on page 13)

Annual Meeting
Sunday, June 2, 2013
service starts at 10am
and the meeting follows



“Love is the Spirit of this Church...”

by Rev. Justin Schroeder
Senior Minister

These aren't just empty words we say each Sunday. They are words with a deep history that point to the heart of our liberal religious faith. These words connect us through the centuries to our religious ancestors who believed that love – how we are with one another, how we listen, speak, and act in love – is more important than what we believe. (If you're curious to know more about the origins of “Love is the Spirit of this Church,” please listen to the podcast of the sermon: <http://tinyurl.com/avs9gtk>.)

As I near the end of my fourth year of serving as your Senior Minister, I can testify that love is indeed the spirit of this church. I see this love alive in our Small Groups, where participants create sacred spaces for deep listening and spiritual growth. I see this love alive in the classrooms on Sunday morning as nearly two hundred adults serve our children and youth, creating safe spaces, as they welcome, affirm, and protect the light in each of our children's hearts. I see this love alive in the hundreds of you who work in our housing ministry teams, partnering with Habitat for Humanity, Augsburg Fairview Academy, and Simpson Shelter. I see and hear this love in the voices of our choir members, and with our instrumentalists, as they create music that holds, embraces, and carries us to healing spaces. I see this love alive in the warmth and smiles every Sunday as we turn and greet one another.

I see this love alive in the ways that this congregation helps us all give, receive, and grow into full human beings.

In a world that is so often full of bad news and despair, First Universalist continues to offer a grounded message of love and hope. And that message touches and transforms lives – yours, mine, and so many others.

As we move into the rhythms of summer, may we continue to live with love at the center of our lives.

I'll see you in church.

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

Worship Arts

Director Ruth MacKenzie
Music Director John Jensen
Choral Director Randal Buikema

Operations

Director
Assist. Finance Admin. Brad Schmidt
Interim Office Manager Julie Fredrickson
Office Assistant Lily Franz
Facility Manager Tracy Van Epps
Sr. Cleaning Custodian Tim Ewing
Evening Custodian Albert “Reed”
Sound System Operator David Kellermann

Faith in Action

Director Debra Rodgers

Membership & Adult Ministries

Interim Director Sara Smalley
Membership Support Sandy DiNanni

Children, Youth & Families Ministries

Director Lauren Wyeth
Program Assistants Emma Schlatter
Emily Christie
Children's Music
Coordinator Rev. Mary Bohman

Communications &
Information Systems Mgr. Craig Lindahl-Urben

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 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 8:00am-1pm. Church Services are 9:30am and 11:15am during the year and only 10am during the summer.

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www.firstuniv.org

Race and Our Faith

by Rev. Justin Schroeder, Senior Minister

We have begun our racial justice journey as a church. This is deeply spiritual work, central to our faith. It is a reclamation project of sorts, a way to reclaim our full humanity, and the humanity of others, and a way to commit to be partners in dismantling the devastating impact of racism.

In many ways, this journey has begun with learning, listening, and engaging with one another. We've watched and discussed, "Race the Power of an Illusion," "Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible," and "Cracking the Code: Making Whiteness Visible." We've held a number of small group listening sessions that over 50 people attended, and we've preached on the spiritual imperative of racial justice work, as well.

I'm in this journey with you, learning too. I've just finished reading Isabel Wilkerson's book, *The Warmth of Other Sons*, which is about the "Great Migration," the story of the millions of African Americans who left the Jim Crow South for opportunities and better lives in the North and West. The Jim Crow South between reconstruction and WWII is a part of America's history that we are largely silent about: the lynchings, the beatings, the abuse of African American citizens of this country - whose rights and human dignity were utterly denied.

As human rights lawyer Bryan Stevenson says in a TED Talk: "I tell my students about slavery. I tell them about terrorism, that era that began at the end of reconstruction that went on to World War II. For African Americans in this country, that was an era defined by terror. In many communities, people had to worry about being lynched, about being bombed. It was the threat of terror that shaped their lives. And these older people come up to me now and say, 'Mr. Stevenson, you give talks, you make speeches, you tell people to stop saying we're dealing with terrorism for the first time in our nation's history after 9/11.' They tell me to say, 'No, tell them we grew up with that.' And that era of terrorism, of course, was followed by segregation and decades of racial subordination and apartheid."

Stevenson goes on, "And yet, we have in this country a dynamic where we really don't like to talk about our problems. We don't like to talk about our history." (From: http://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice.html.)

As William Faulkner has said, "The past is never dead. It's not even past." And so part of our racial justice journey as a faith community is to understand the past, and how it impacts and is alive in the present, in different ways and forms.

Beginning this fall, we move into this spiritual work in earnest, working closely with Dr. Heather Hackman, a local educator and racial justice trainer, who will help us develop the internal capacity to train and educate ourselves as racial justice allies.

It is good to be doing this work - and this learning - with all of you.

Pledge Drive Update

by Dan Moriarty
Chair of the Pledge Team

Thanks to everyone who renewed their pledge for the 2013-2014 church year, especially those who stretched in their giving. With your contributions, our work as a church can continue to grow.

A few facts regarding our pledge drive:

1. Every pledge counts! Your pledge is welcome, no matter the amount. The important thing is that you participate. We want everyone to be a part of supporting the ministry of this church.

2. Every year you need to renew your pledge; it does not happen automatically. So even if you pledged last year, please fill out another pledge card this year.

3. The pledge you make for 2013-2014 won't take effect until July of 2013.

4. You can renew your pledge online at <http://firstuniv.org/pledge>, or pick up a pledge card from the church office. You may also call Brad at the church office with your questions, 612.825.1701.

Thanks to the hundreds and hundreds of households that help support and sustain our church!

Annual Survey (continued from page 1)

as spot long-term trends over the course of many surveys.

Last year was our first year, and it served as a baseline. Without other survey data for comparison, it's hard to interpret the results. This year we'll be able to start measuring progress—and see if we really are growing into Love's People.

I invite you to participate in this year's survey, which we will be conducting in May. Visit us in the social hall or online at www.firstuniv.org.

First Universalist Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 2, 2013

Service starts at 10am
and the meeting follows

The Promise of Flowers

by Ruth MacKenzie,
Minister of Worship Arts

Four years ago, my father in law lay in a hospital bed in his living room. No one wanted to admit it, but that bed would be the place he would live out the rest of his days. It was May. The dahlia bulbs he had carefully awoken in aluminum turkey pans and some potting soil in the basement were not going to make it into the ground. Ralph could barely lift himself to a seated position in the bed, let alone, dig holes, plant bulbs, and pound stakes. Still he talked about getting those dahlias in the ground, and watching the dinner plates of color come alive, row after row in his tiny backyard in Chicago.



One of Ralph's dahlias in bloom last year.

We agonized over how to talk to Ralph about the dahlias: Should we talk about letting the dahlias go this year and throw the bulbs out? Should we plant them in his backyard knowing they would wither from lack of care? Should we just state the obvious? “Ralph, you’re not up to this anymore, and probably never will be.” Every option felt too cruel. Slowly, a solution arose among all the talks about beauty, and the promise of flowers. My partner and I told Ralph that we would bring all his 20 to 30 sprouting dahlia bulbs back to Minnesota and plant them in our yard. We would care for them as tenderly as he had, and then bring them back to Chicago in the fall, ready for next spring. We would live into the promise of dahlias, and the covenant of life even in the midst of dying. Ralph was happy.

We tore up our front yard. We dug holes, planted and staked every last one of those beauties. We loved those plants like they were our own. We watered them with our tears, and rejoiced when buds appeared. We traveled to Chicago nearly every weekend and told Ralph about his dahlias, asking questions about how to pinch off the extra growth to get the biggest flowers, or the best kind of fertilizer. For Ralph’s final birthday on this earth, we brought him a huge bouquet of his dinner plate dahlias. He laughed until he cried as he took in the wonder of life, love and beauty, all held in the reality of dahlias.

It’s spring again, and Ralph’s bulbs are sprouting in our basement. We are still living into our promise, even though Ralph passed years ago. We live in the mundane of dirt, and bulbs, and fertilizer, and grace. Ralph lives in the transcendent of memory, and stories, and love. Still the mundane, and the transcendent meet in a covenant, a promise of dahlias. Blessed be.



A Day of Joy and Hope

by Kay Johnson, Congregant and Front Desk Volunteer

On Sunday, April 28, I had an incredibly moving experience, one that made me laugh, cry and feel great hope. The young people of the church did the entire service: music, poetry, homily, and personal thoughts. They were amazing! The music was mesmerizing and lovely (sometimes funny), the poetry was touching and beautiful, the homilies were thought provoking, and the personal stories from these young people were truly amazing. What struck me the most was the maturity, thoughtfulness and wisdom they expressed. These qualities illustrated how much they have learned from their UU experience.



Given the horrendous events of the past few months, I’ve found myself worrying about the future of our country. After the service I felt renewed hope. The country will be in wonderful hands with people like these kids at the helm. I say “thanks so much” to them and their wonderful advisors.

Conversations (continued from page 1)



group; working with congregational care and visiting congregants in the hospital; offering anti-racism and racial justice programs; preaching and assisting with

worship; leading children's chapels and attending youth overnights; gathering with the women of the AUW; and reaching out to neighbors on the Day of Service. More than any one area of focus, I've loved the conversations with you in the social hall and parking lot where I have witnessed how you bring your own faith, passion and shared ministry into the life of this church.

My final sermon and goodbye party will be on May 26. I will be on staff until June 2 and then return on June 9 with the Well-spring group (a pilot faith development program that started this year). You have such a gifted and mission-driven staff to carry you forward, but of equal importance, you have the love and gifts of each other which has sustained and grown this vital faith community through the years.

I want to call out a special thank you to those who served on my internship committee this year: Laura Cooper, Eric Cooperstein, Chuck Coskran, Michael Dotson and Jayne Miller. They met with me monthly and proudly assumed the responsibility of being "my peeps."

I am heading off to take a summer course, "Race, Sexuality & Gender: Analyze! Preach!" Later in the summer my family will join others from Unity Church-Unitarian on a pilgrimage to Transylvania. Next fall I am scheduled to be a student chaplain at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. I graduate from United Theological Seminary next spring (the same time as my oldest son graduates from high school). Then I will see where love is calling me next. I will carry you in my heart and am eternally thankful for this part of my journey toward ministry. I've grown in so many ways this year and owe that to all of you and the incredible mentorship of the First Universalist staff. Thank you for such a blessing!

Worship Associates Applications

Deadline for submission is May 17

Over the course of this year, we have been blessed with the stories and thoughts of our Worship Associates. They've made us laugh, made us cry, and cracked open the sermon theme in surprising and heartfelt ways. What you see on the chancel is the result of hours of creativity, preparation, and practice. Here is a description of what the Worship Associates do on the chancel and in preparation.

- Appear on the chancel three or four times during the year
- Meet one on one with Ruth MacKenzie two weeks before you appear on the chancel to discuss the sermon theme and the particular slant of that Sunday's sermon
- Write and edit your Call to Worship
- Practice reading from the pulpit
- Participate in three half-day retreats where associates and the worship team discuss the state of the church, upcoming sermon themes, and experiment with writing for oration

Worship Associates will serve from September 2013 – August 2014. You will need to attend all three half-day retreats. The first retreat is scheduled for August 18, 2013.

If you are interested in submitting your name for next year, please review the following application form, and submit your name and essay by May 17, to Ruth MacKenzie, ruth@firstuniv.org. The Worship Team (Rev. Schroeder, Rev. Crow, Ruth MacKenzie, Minister of Worship Arts) will review applications and notify applicants at the beginning of June 2013. Associates will be chosen on the basis of writing submission, comfort with public speaking and creating a team that represents the multi-generational, multi-cultural congregation we are becoming.

Email your submission to ruth@firstuniv.org or mail to:

First Universalist Church
Att: Ruth MacKenzie
3400 Dupont Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55408

What to include in your Application:

- Your Name
- Email Address
- Phone Number
- Write a 500 word narrative about forgiveness. You can tell a story, cite a piece of poetry, or write a piece of fiction.
- Please write a sentence or two about your comfort level with public speaking and experiences.

Earth Day Cleanup Rescheduled



Come out to help CARAG neighbors keep our community tidy at the re-scheduled Earth Day Clean Up Saturday, May 11, 9:30am-Noon. Meet at Bryant Square Park (3101 Bryant Ave S.) We will pick up

trash throughout the neighborhood and the Midtown Greenway. We will also stencil storm drains informing neighbors that they drain directly to our lakes and river.

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) is providing trash bags and gloves. Common Roots and Dunn Bros. are providing pastries and coffee for the event. Please join us!



The work crew on April 27 at the distribution plant assembling wall frames: **Mary Sandbo, Bill Lewis, Lynda Borjesson, Hannah Mitchell, Kelsey Wolf, Charlie Turner, Joe Cassell, Peggy Leppik, Stan Sattinger, Peter Crane.**



Mary Sandbo, Hannah Mitchell, and Charlie Turner assembling a frame.

Project Homeless Connect

Project Homeless Connect is just four weeks away and an initial training is required if this is your first time volunteering. Project Homeless Connect is a one-stop shop for delivering services to people experiencing homelessness. Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis are partnering with service providers, businesses, citizens, and faith communities to bring multiple resources to one location where people can come to find the services they need. These services include: housing providers, employment specialists, medical care, mental health care, benefits specialists, eye care, haircuts, transportation assistance, food and clothing.



A 90 minute training for Project Homeless Connect is required for everyone except those who trained and volunteered for a previous event. At this training, Project Homeless Connect staff will orient the volunteers and answer questions about the event. While volunteers at previous Homeless Connects do not need to attend training each time, we strongly recommend attendance at the training sessions. Much has changed in this event over the years, and we want to make sure that the guests and volunteers have as meaningful and productive a day as possible. Training at First Universalist Church will be held Tuesday, May 7, 7:00-8:30pm.

The May 20 event will start at 10:30 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m. with two shifts for volunteers: (1) 9:00am to 2:00pm and (2) 9:00am to 4:00pm. All volunteers are asked to arrive by 9:00am. The Convention Center space will be set up with many tables, rooms, and areas for the various services available and volunteers will assist the guests in connecting with the services they need or request. With about 2000 participants expected for this event, at least 1000 volunteers are needed to make the day successful. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Help us to reach our goal of 1000 volunteers by signing up today.

To volunteer for May 20, please go the web site www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org. Click on the bar in the heading that says, "Please join us as a volunteer." That will take you directly to the volunteer registration page. All volunteers must register on-line and volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

Join our
Office Volunteer Team!

Contact Lily at 612-825-1701 x123
or lily@firstuniv.org

Earth Day Waste Disposal at Church

by Julie Gottesleben, Congregant



Thank you, thank you, thank you, to everyone who has sorted their trash and recycling at the church at various events. We are all doing a great job! There is a new sign posted just inside the kitchen with a clear chart of where to toss which items. If it is still unclear, just ask someone for some help. A couple new changes are coming our way with our vendor, Randy's Sanitation. We can now recycle clean plastic con-



Our new recycling station (there are two of them) and now we can all learn what goes where.

tainers other than just bottles, with our metal and glass containers. These might include plastic items like deli & bakery boxes and trays, cups, yogurt, cottage cheese, margarine tubs, jar lids etc. Just make sure to look for one of the recycling numbers (#1-7) and rinse well before recycling. Another change that has come in 2013 is single sort for all recycling (paper, cardboard, glass, metal & plastics). Organics and trash will remain separate. Some people have expressed interest in seeing how the recycling is sorted at the other end when it leaves us. We are trying to set up a little tour at the plant in Delano for those who might want to see how this process works. It will be during a typical work day and we will give some advance notice so you can sign up if you are interested.

**First Universalist
Annual Meeting**
Sunday, June 2, 2013

Service starts at 10am
and the meeting follows

Becoming A Member

by Sara Smalley, Interim Dir. of Membership & Adult Ministries

First Step

If you are a visitor to First Universalist, you are invited to join us for a First Step session. First Step is a short overview of Unitarian Universalism and First Universalist Church. Sessions run about half an hour and no sign up is necessary – just show up and learn more about our church community! Upcoming Classes: Offered the first and third Sunday of every month after each service. Meet in the front of the Sanctuary.

Pathway to Membership

The LAST new member class of the church year is coming up this month! If you're ready to deepen your exploration of Unitarian Universalism and First Universalist Church, join us for The Path to Membership: Sharing our Journeys. This class includes meaningful reflection, lively conversation, and a more in depth exploration of the history of Unitarian Universalism and the community of First Universalist Church. After sharing our personal religious journeys and learning about the journeys of Unitarian Universalism and First Universalist, participants will be invited to imagine where our journey together might take us. This class is offered as a three weeknight series or one Saturday, and is a requirement for membership.

Upcoming Classes: Saturday, May 18; 9:00am - 3:00pm.

New Member Brunch

After taking the Path to Membership class, you are invited to celebrate your commitment to First Universalist. Join Rev. Justin Schroeder for brunch and explore the deeper meanings and expectations of membership. Participants have bagels and coffee, and then reflect on how they will give, receive, and grow as they make a financial and personal commitment to the life of the congregation. The brunch will conclude with a celebration ceremony as participants sign the membership book and officially join the church!

Upcoming date: Saturday, June 1; 10:00-11:30am

New Member Recognition Sunday

New members will be welcomed and recognized by the congregation during worship Sunday, June 2. Note there is only one service at 10:00am (summer schedule).

First Universalist Annual Meeting

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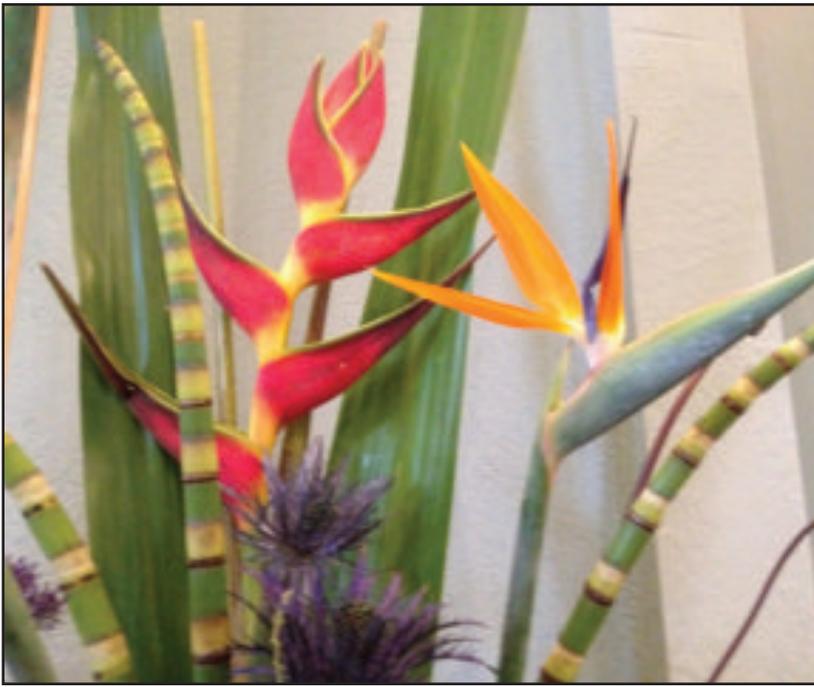
Class Sign Up and Childcare

To sign up for a class, please contact Sandy DiNanni at 612.825.1701 or sandy@firstuniv.org. If you have questions about classes or about how to get connected at First Universalist, please contact **Sara Smalley**, Interim Director of Membership and Small Groups, at 612.825.1701x124 or sara@firstuniv.org.

Childcare is provided free of charge with at least one week advance notice. Contact Emma Schlatter at 612.825.1701x107 or emma@firstuniv.org.

Join Our Office Volunteer Team!

Contact Lily at 612-825-1701 x123
or lily@firstuniv.org



Photograph by Janet Mills

*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

We hold in our hearts and prayers: Journeys

- Gabriel Haage, son of **Tasha Rose** and **Travis Haage** and baby brother of Grace and Degory. Gabriel was at children's hospital with viral pneumonia, and is now recovering at home.
- **Nancy Jones**, who underwent hip replacement surgery on May 8, followed by a week of rehab before she returns home.
- **Lyle Johnson**, who had a stroke and possibly a severe seizure on May 1. Corky is asking for our thoughts and prayers.
- **Christine Bailey**, who is home recovering from gallbladder surgery.
- **Dave Juncker**, who is recovering from triple bypass surgery.

Passings

- **Joe Gabrielsen's** father, Dr. Stephen "Gabe" Gabrielsen, who died at home on April 8 after a long journey with Parkinson's disease. Please hold **Joe, wife Heidi, Micah and Ada** in your thoughts and prayers.
- The **Saterstrom family**, who celebrated the life of Tom's father, Stan Saterstrom, who passed away on April 22, at the age of 92.

Blessings

- Welcome to Owen Michael Colliton, son of **Ann Terlizzi** and **Russ Colliton**, and brother to Devon, who was born April 6.
- We celebrate with **Donna Kurimay** and **Julie Gottesleben** their 25-year vow renewal the third week of April.
- Our love to **Mary Bohman**, who was ordained by this congregation on May 4, in a glorious celebration.
- Congratulations to Minnesota's 2013 Teacher of the year, our own **Megan Hall!** Megan grew up in this church, and is now a member.

Congregational Care: What is it?

by Margit Berg, Congregant & Cochair of Congregational Care

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 individual needs. 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**, margit.berg7@gmail.com 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.

The Choir



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. Contact randy@firstuniv.org or visit the website at firstuniv.org/music/choir.

Children's Choir

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 10:35-11:10am 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.

Universal Folk Orchestra

Emphasizing folk songs and instrumental chamber music we use words and sounds to more fully express our spiritual values, and we have a lot of fun doing it. Our main purpose will be to make music together. We meet every Sunday 6-7:30pm in the Sanctuary. Bring instruments, musical scores, recordings. Contact Ruth MacKenzie (ruth@firstuniv.org) or John Jensen (pianojj@earthlink.net).

Rise Up Singing

Rise Up Singing: Community Song Circle at First Universalist Church is an informal group of musicians and singers who gather to sing for fun on the first Thursday of each month. They sing from the Rise Up Singing songbook.

And you only have to love to sing to join 'em...you don't even have to be very good!

Come and lift your voice in communal singing on the first Thursday of each month from 7-9pm in the Chalice Room. Contact the group leader, Allan Steinhauer, 612.309.5632 or arstein01@hotmail.com for more information.

We are open to all that want to have a good time, including children. We go around in a circle picking songs and singing them together. The Rise Up Singing songbook which has 1,200 songs to choose from is our primary songbook, and you are also welcome to bring your own song handouts. We have a piano and welcome all instruments, especially a guitar player to help lead us in song. We don't repeat a song in the same evening, and we always have fun. Come for just one song or a whole evening of singing. We hope to hear you there.

Remember to embrace your voice and lift it in joyous song!



Universal Jazz Band

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.

Buddhist Meditation

The Buddhist meditation and study group will meet weekly this Spring on

Tuesdays, April 9- May 21, from 7:00-8:45pm in the North Arches room. At each session we will read a selection from: "You Have to Say Something" by Dainin Katagiri- Roshi, founder of the MN Zen Meditation Center. This book is a compilation of some of the talks he gave over a number of years. Roshi was the first Buddhist teacher to come to MN in 1972 to work with Westerners. In addition to a discussion, we will begin each session with 20 minutes of silent meditation followed by 10 minutes of walking meditation, discussion and ending with 20 more minutes of meditation. The suggested donation is \$35 for the 7 week session. You can buy the book online or at local bookstores.

Please contact Susan Hagler at: susan-hagler13@gmail.com to register or if you have any questions. Everyone welcome!



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. You may sit or stand as needed, so the class is suitable for people with physical limitation or illness. Instructor Pat Gottschalk is a member of First U and has an 18-year practice as a certified Shiatsu practitioner. Participants are encouraged to make a \$35 donation to First Universalist, but all are welcome to attend no matter your economic circumstance. Fridays, 10-11:30am, ten sessions Mar. 22—May 24, Chalice Room.



Bob Friedman took this photo of the service on Youth Sunday, April 28.

The Work Chorale (continued from page 3)

hard to approach at first. However, with appropriate support, the choir did an amazing job.

The nuts and bolts of the support are this: one of our basses, **Charlie Betz**, took on the challenge when he bought a special computer program that could scan the printed music and then make it into a recording. From there he separated out the vocal and orchestral parts. Next, Charlie made a composite recording of all the vocal parts together. The final step was making separate recordings of each of the 8 vocal parts so that choir members could hear their individual parts for practice at home. In total, Charlie had to make 40 separate recordings.

Our stalwart choir members embraced their task and learned this challenging music with these special recordings. I am indeed grateful to Charlie for creating this support.

It was fun at choir last night, after our performance on April 21, to hear singers saying that they couldn't get the music out of their heads. That's quite an achievement for a piece of 21st century music!!!

I invite all additional singers to join us on four summer Sunday mornings to rehearse at 9am and then perform in the 10am service. Watch for announcements of the specific Sundays.

Happy spring to you all,

Calendar

1 Wednesday

6:30pm - 7:45pm Open Labyrinth Walk
7:00pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal

2 Thursday

7:00pm - 9:00pm Rise Up Singing Folk Group

3 Friday

10:00am - 11:30am Chi-gung

5 Sunday

Sunday Services (9:30am & 11:15am)
First Step Class
5:15pm - 7:30pm Universal Folk Orchestra Rehearsal

6 Monday

6:30pm Skeletons in oUUr closets
7:30pm - 9:00pm Jazz Band Rehearsal

7 Tuesday

10:30am - 12:00pm Elder Gatherings
6:30pm - 8:30pm Project Homeless Connect Training
7:00pm - 8:45pm Spring Buddhist Meditation and Study Group

9 Thursday

10:30 - Noon Eldter Gatherings
6:30pm - 8:30pm Search for Home training

10 Friday

10:00am - 11:30am Chi-gung
5:30pm - 8:30pm AUW's Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



11 Saturday

7:30pm - 9:30pm Spring Raz-Matazz Jazz Band Concert

12 Sunday

Sharing Sunday Services (9:30am & 11:15am)
12:45 OWL Graduation Potluck

13 Monday

7:00pm Visual Arts Committee

14 Tuesday

7:00pm - 8:45pm Spring Buddhist Meditation and Study Group

May



Photography by Marjie O'Loughlin



16 Thursday

6:30pm - 8:30pm Path to Membership Class
6:30pm - 8:30pm Board of Trustees Meeting

17 Friday

10:00am - 11:30am Chi-gung

18 Saturday

9:00am - 3:00pm Path to Membership Class
3:00pm - 6:00pm Coming of Age Ceremony



19 Sunday

Last Day of Religious Education Term
Sunday Services (9:30am & 11:15am)
First Step Class
Artist Reception for Marilyn Lamoreux

20 Monday

10:00am - 4:00pm Project Homeless Connect



21 Tuesday

6:30pm - 9:00pm Library Committee
7:00pm - 8:45pm Spring Buddhist Meditation and Study Group

24 Friday

10:00am - 11:30am Chi-gung

26 Sunday

Sunday Service (10:00am)

27 Monday

Church Closed for Memorial Day



1 Saturday

9:30am - 11:30am Committing to First Universalit Class
12:00 - 1:30pm Heritage Circle Luncheon

2 Sunday

Flower Communion & Annual Meeting
New Member Welcome
Sunday Services (10:00am)
First Step Class



MAY/JUNE



First Universalist Church has its annual Coming Of Age ceremony on Saturday, May 18.

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

Return
Service
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