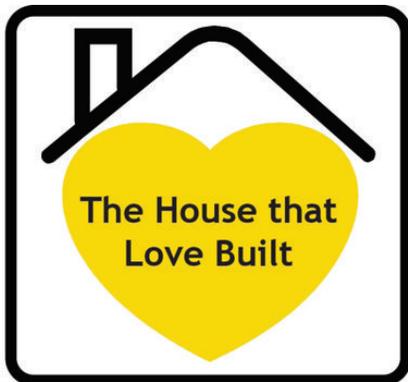


In This Issue...

- The Faces of Love's People . . . 2
- Worship Theme . . . 3
- Minister's Column . . . 4
- Board Column . . . 5
- Pledge Team . . . 6
- Daytime Connections . . . 8

The House That Love Built



A Project of First Universalist Church

Imagine a safe place to live - room for your family, a neighborhood where you can put down roots, a monthly investment made as you pay your mortgage. Imagine a house built of love - a vision shared between strangers and friends becoming real as the rafters rise. Imagine a family that used to struggle alone, knowing the gift of community. Imagine the love we talk about each week in church - the love that will not let us go - becoming real and expanding beyond our walls.

This winter and fall, you and your family and friends can make this vision real as we become the primary sponsors for The House That Love Built - a home built with Habitat for Humanity. Over the past four years, our relationship with Habitat for Humanity has grown. What began as a single one day project with a \$500 donation to Habitat, has grown into work weeks and days, increased

House That Love Built (continued on page 2)

THE liberal

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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

Issue 5, Number 4

October 2013

We Ordain You, Rev. Ruth MacKenzie



*May this charge inform
all the days of my life.*

by Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

Sometimes you don't know that you are making a decision from which there is no turning back. Sometimes you're just having lunch with a friend, and your whole life changes.

I was brown bagging it with an old theater buddy in his office. Jaime Meyer had just started working at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. I had come for a little moral support. See, I had been toying with the idea of going back to college to finish up my bachelor degree, and things weren't going as planned. As a young buck, I had quit college, jumped into a car in Denver, Co., and headed for Minneapolis to make my fortune as a singer. I told myself I was taking a break, and would complete my degree later. My young adventurous heart thought nothing of what that choice would mean. Now I was a 40-some old singer with plenty of accolades, and a few stinging failures, talking with different music pro-

Days of My Life (continued on page 3)

First Universalist Church Choir

“Everyone brings something special” are the words of choir director, Randy Buikema. New singers bring openness and light up the energy.

We have no auditions, but we do have lots of friendly support for people who want to experience the joy of making music and being part of the worship service. The experience of choir singing is a deep one, of the whole being greater than its parts -- for example, the rich full harmony on “MLK” at Ruth’s ordination service.

Come join us for fun and making music as a spiritual practice. Rehearsals every Wednesday at 7pm.

House That Love Built (continued from page 1)

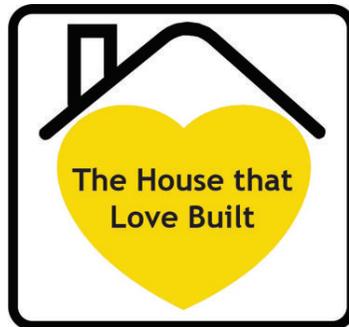
contributions, legislative advocacy, and mentorship relationships with new Habitat home owners. This year we are deepening our commitment. With Habitat for Humanity, we will become the primary sponsor for The House That Love Built - building a home, stabilizing a family, and strengthening our community. Together we will raise \$60,000. These funds will be raised outside of the church budget. We will also provide two full work weeks and monthly work days for First Universalist volunteer building crews.

You might be wondering how we will do this.

We’ll do it together. We’ll do it by re-claiming the true meaning of the winter holidays, as we focus on love and hope and how to make it real in the world, instead of stuff. We’ll do it by pushing back against a culture that says more things are more valuable than everyone having what they need. Together, we’ll do what none of us can do alone. We’ll remember who we are and who we long to be, and our holidays will have a deeper meaning. We’ll listen deeply to where love is calling us next, we’ll affirm and protect the light in each human heart, and we will act boldly beyond our walls.

Join us by:

- learning more by attending church on Sunday, October 13 and coming to our information session with Habitat for Humanity at 12:30pm. Or visiting our website – www.firstuniv.org/habitat
- joining a Community Circle to explore Taming the Holiday Machine
- talking with your family and friends about how you will put your faith into action
- challenging yourself to change your holiday spending this year by giving half of what you would normally spend to The House That Love Built
- volunteering to be a part of our Stonecutters work crew
- making lunch for our work crew volunteers
- donating to The House That Love Built



Welcome Teams

The Face of Love’s People

By Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink and Sandy DiNanni

How would you like to be called “the loving face of First Universalist?” Our Welcome Teams embody the spirit of love that animates our lives and calls us to care for one another. From greeting at our front doors to chatting with newcomers over coffee, Welcome Team members practice a ministry of radical hospitality through honoring and welcoming the light in each human heart.

Church Trustee and Welcome Team member Jill Braithwaite finds that “being part of a Welcome Team is definitely one of my favorite ways to volunteer at church. It’s super simple to do – you just show up 45 minutes before the service, check in with your team and choose your post, and then you get to be the warm, friendly face of First Universalist. It takes courage to visit a church for the first time, and we all know how bad it feels to be in a new place that is not friendly.”

Welcome Teams are one of the hidden gems of volunteering at First Universalist. The only requirements are a modest time commitment of one Sunday a month and an open heart. In return, you get to meet and help people you might not otherwise encounter and develop a special friendship with your Welcome Team colleagues. If you’re ready to embody the loving spirit of First Universalist Church through service on a Welcome Team, please email Sandy@firstuniv.org. We would be delighted to delve into this essential ministry together with you!



Worship Theme

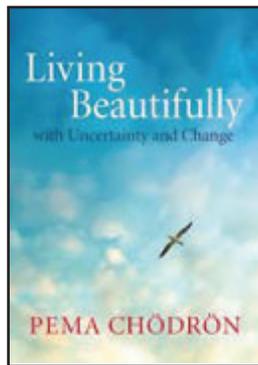
No Going Back

October 20 – November 3

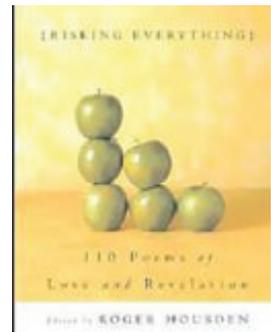
Once we know something, we can't unknow it. We may try to ignore the truth awakened within, or talk ourselves out of it, but the work of the spirit is living into a conscious life. Truth may be hard. Truth may set us free, but ultimately, there is no going back. Archbishop Rowan Williams is right: "Truth makes love possible and love makes truth bearable." In this sermon series we explore those critical moments in our lives when there's a before and an after.

Theme Resources

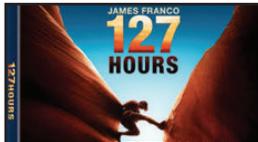
Sometimes it helps to read or watch a movie to deepen or expand our experience of the worship theme. Here are a few that illustrate events and moments in life from which there is no going back.



Living Beautifully: with Uncertainty and Change
by Pema Chodron



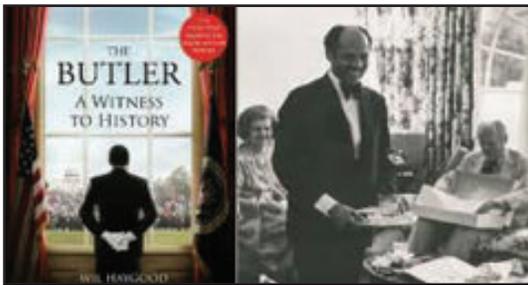
Risking Everything: 110 Poems of Love and Revelation
by Roger Housden



127 Hours
Stars: James Franco



Sweet Land
Stars: Elizabeth Reaser, Lois Smith



The Butler
Stars: Forrest Whitaker, Oprah Winfrey, John Cusack

Days of My Life (continued from page 1)

fessors at various colleges, trying to fold myself back into a 19 year old framework in order to get a degree. It wasn't feeling so great.

I said something like: "You know Jaime, sometimes I fancize about going to seminary. I'm not sure why, but it is intriguing to me. I know it's impossible, because I don't have a bachelor degree, but it doesn't hurt to dream." Within a nanosecond, I was talking to the admissions counselor, and the professor for Ordained Ministry programs. I was told in no uncertain terms that I didn't need to have a bachelor degree; I just needed two years of undergraduate work, good grades, and the ability and passion to do the work of theological study.

Sunday, September 22, 2013, the long journey of theological study, and following that still small voice, came into its flowering. I stood in front of you and pledged myself to bear witness to the spiritual dimen-

sion of our lives, and that of all life. I promised to serve this ministry with dedication, generosity, and humility. And as I let the tears stream down my face, I said: "*May this charge inform all the days of my life.*" Those in attendance looked back at me with love and recognition that there was no turning back, There are moments in a life when there is a before and an after. My ordination Sunday was one of those days. So was that day I threw my duffle into the back of a station wagon and headed for Minnesota, and the day I had lunch with a friend. Sometimes we don't know that we are making a decision that will change everything; sometimes we don't understand the call or what we should or shouldn't do; sometimes we just slip and fall into the sky.

I love you all so dearly. I'm so grateful to have been ordained by you, to have the privilege of serving you, to bear witness to the holy & serve this congregation.



Rev. John Cummins and Rev. Ruth MacKenzie at her ordination September 22, 2013.

Falling into the Sky

by David Breiden

(Based on a poem by Zen Monk Muso Soseki)

Years end ways
I dug and dug
Deeper into the earth
Looking for blue heaven
Choking always
On piles of dust rising
Then once
At midnight
I slipped
And fell into the sky

We Are Called

by Rev. Justin Schroeder

In the meditation manual, *Voices from the Margins*, Unitarian Universalist minister Rev. Natalie Fenimore writes:

We are all called.

Called by the wind, the rushing water, the fireflies, the summer sun.

Called by the sidewalk, the playground, the laughing children, the streetlights. Called by our appetites and gifts – our needs and challenges.

Called by the bottle, the needle, the powder, the pill, the game, the bet, the need, the want, the pain, the cure, the love, the hope, the dream.

Called by the Spirit of Love and Hope, and visions of God’s purpose for our lives. We are all called.

What do we choose? How do we answer?



At First Universalist, we believe that we are called by the “Universalist Spirit of Love and Hope, to give, receive, and grow ever more fully into Love’s people.”

We believe that we are called to walk with one another as spiritual companions. And hundreds of you are just beginning this journey in one of our many Community Circles, groups of 8-10 people that meet every other week to welcome, affirm, and protect the light in one another, and to listen deeply to where Love is calling us next in our lives. I know that sometimes it feels safer to sit in a row than a Circle. I know that being in a Circle can be soul stretching, heart opening, and even challenging, as Circle members share the “really real” of what’s going on in their lives with others.

As you heard during worship on September 29, we are called into our Racial Justice work; it’s a spiritual imperative and practice for us. By the end of this year, one hundred people will have gone through the racial justice trainings, and twenty people will be equipped to lead ongoing trainings. We are answering “yes” to this soul work, because as the Rev. Rebecca Parker has said, “Racial injustice is not only a tragedy that happened yesterday...racial injustice is currently mutating and re-creating itself. Its dehumanizing effects are harming...lives.”

Finally, I am grateful that the Board of Trustees has approved my request for a two month sabbatical for March and April, 2014, because I am feeling called to deepen my understanding of large church ministry. I wish that everyone could have regular sabbatical time for spiritual, personal, and professional growth. During the sabbatical, I intend to grow as your Senior Minister, to visit other large Unitarian Universalist churches and learn best practices around management, growth, and staffing, to work with a large-church ministry coach, and to deepen my own spiritual life. Ultimately, I want to help this congregation thrive in our shared ministry. Whether we’re 1,000 or 2,000 members, I want First Universalist to offer an experience of warmth, welcome, and transformation, that helps all of us move toward more fully becoming Love’s people in the world.

How are you responding to the call from the Spirit of Love and Hope? How are you answering “yes?” Drop me a line or catch me after the service on Sunday – I’d love to know.

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
- Membership & Adult Ministries Rev. Elaine Aron 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 Randal Buikema

Operations

- Director Diane Gavere
- Assist. Finance Admin. Brad Schmidt
- Office Manager Heidi Johnson
- Interim Office Assistant Julie Fredrickson
- 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

- 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
- 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.

3400 Dupont Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55408
Phone: 612-825-1701 Fax: 612-825-8879

www.firstuniv.org

From Our Board of Trustees

by David Bach,
President of the Congregation
and of the Board of Trustees

On September 7 the Board of Trustees, along with Justin, held a Board Retreat to get to know each other better, look carefully at our role as Trustees of this precious congregation, project 15 years out to anticipate some of the challenges and opportunities ahead, and to set goals for this year. With that ambitious agenda, we came out of the retreat without all our work done. We have decided to build in four Working Sessions, similar to our retreat, on November 9, January 11, March 22, and May 10, to provide time for thorough discussion of important issues that affect the current and future direction of First Universalist Church. These sessions are in addition to our meetings the third Thursday of each month. Our meetings are open meetings and agendas and materials are posted a week before on our church website. Below are the Board Goals for this year:

- Begin an initiative to define, understand and live into excellence in leadership as a policy governance board.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan.
- Develop and implement a strong Communication Plan with the Congregation and other major stakeholders.
- Develop and implement a strong Linkage Program with the Congregation (opportunities to listen closely to your hopes and aspirations).
- Determine the appropriate linkage and contribution level to the UUA and the Mid-America Region (formerly Prairie Star District).
- Become an intentional Community Circle as a Board, including developing and engaging in a regular spiritual practice.

As we begin our work this year, I am pleased to report that First Universalist Church ended fiscal year 2013 on June 30 with a balanced budget. In addition, we have the right staff and volunteers in place to move confidently into fiscal year 2014, to achieve our Visionary Goals, and to meet the needs of this growing and loving congregation, with support for our spiritual development through Community Circles, our community outreach through “The House that Love Built,” our commitment to Racial Justice training, and for our growing children, youth and adult education programs. What an exciting year ahead! How are you involved?

We want to hear from you. Please feel free to catch one of us on Sunday mornings. We will be wearing our gold name badges. Or drop me an email at boardchair@firstuniv.org. We thank you for your confidence in our leadership and we take this responsibility very seriously. Let us know how we are doing as we grow together into Love’s people.



A New Season

Embracing Change and Rethinking the Annual Auction

by Diane Gavere, Director of Operations

As the old Byrds song says, there is a time to every purpose. Seasons come and go, but the one constant in our lives is change. Sometimes we resist change. Other times we embrace it. But change is the one thing we can count on. It is the one thing we can expect with certainty.

A time to laugh, a time to weep. What does change mean? What season is it? Our leadership says it is time to be purposeful in what we do. To focus on those things we do well. To be good stewards in the work that we do and how we use our resources.

A time to build up, a time to breakdown. Through that lens everything we do at First Universalist is being examined. A new plan is in place to reach more people, and transform more lives through the introduction of Community Circles, Practice Circles, and Care Circles. So too, other areas of First Universalist are being reshaped.

A time to gain, a time to lose. Our Auction Chair, Jane Beaudelaire, recognized change was in the air. She found it challenging to put together an auction team for this year. Although the auction has been successful in the past, she recognized the ends may no longer justify the means.

A time to end, a time to start. So how do we embrace change? We gather together our imaginations, our passions, our desires and find a new way to use the resources we have to best serve our mission of giving, receiving, and growing more fully into Love’s people. We are just beginning this process of discernment and ask those who are interested to gather with us in finding the new path this change is leading us to. Specifically, if you have ideas about new kinds of fundraisers the church might engage in, please contact Diane Gavere at diane@firstuniv.org or 612-825-1701 x104.



This year's pledge team (from left): David Potyondy, Rich Jaeger and Marcia Wattson.

From the Pledge Team: Why Do I Give?

by David Potyondy (Pledge Team Chair)

Why do I give 5% of my family's income to First Universalist? Because I was asked. Let me explain. Two years ago, I was asked to join the Pledge Team. What is this Pledge Team? It is a 3-member committee that runs the Pledge Drive. What is this Pledge Drive? It is the time when all members of the Church are asked to make a year-long financial pledge to the Church. The pledge monies provide more than 80% of the Church's operating revenue.

When asked to join the Pledge Team, I had been a member of the Church, along with my wife, Lianne Knych, since 2001. We had two young children, Owen and Luca, who participated in religious education. I had been an RE teacher for the past five years, and in the process, had connected with many of our younger children. Through participation in Circle Suppers and Family Circle Suppers, I had become well connected with many families with young children. I was also keenly supportive of the small group concept. I participated in an early form of these groups in 2001 to 2003, and I had been a participant or facilitator in three of these groups since Justin had arrived. I felt that I was a part of the First Universalist community. When I was asked to join the Pledge Team, I decided that this was a

good way for me to help maintain and grow our community.

My pledge-team work has kindled within me a growing awareness of generosity, and how by cultivating generosity one can grow in spiritual maturity. I believe that the purpose of the Church is to develop spiritually mature members: people who challenge themselves to create better lives for themselves, their families and their fellow citizens. The Pledge Team is committed to fostering stewardship within our Church community. To us, "stewardship" means acknowledging that we have a shared responsibility toward the Earth — including our lives, our possessions and the communities of which we are a part — and that we are called to express our gratitude by being generous with these blessings. Marilyn Robinson touches on this idea in her 2004 book, *Gilead*, by describing a certain type of "courage that allows us to be brave — that is, to acknowledge that there is more beauty than our eyes can bear, that precious things have been put into our hands and to do nothing to honor them is to do great harm. And therefore, this courage allows us, as the old men said, to make ourselves useful. It allows us to be generous, which is another way of saying exactly the

same thing.”

Indeed, the Pledge Team hopes to transform our Church into a congregation of generous people. Our mission is expressed well by Michael Durall in his 1999 book *Creating Congregations of Generous People*:

“Secular organizations solicit financial support from members and friends. . . . But I believe that religious organizations have a stronger authority—indeed, a moral authority—to challenge people to lead generous lives.”

Now that all of these grand ideas have been stated, I am still left with answering the core question:

Why do I give 5% of my family’s income to First Universalist Church?

Part of the answer lies in being a part of something larger than myself. There is a good energy in the Church, and we are moving forward. I want to help keep us moving forward. There are far too many things going on at the Church for me to participate in, but I can help to move them all forward by my pledge. The beauty of our Church community is that we are all invited to help shape our shared vision, and we are all in this together — by working together we can achieve more, both personally and globally, than by working alone. We are a community working together to grow: both inwardly, by becoming more spiritually mature, and outwardly, by becoming powerful creators of a bold, progressive future in which all can experience the Universalist message of love and hope. I envision First Universalist as a large ship that is moving forward through the sea, and I want to grab hold of an oar to keep that ship moving forward. This is how I can make a difference in the world.

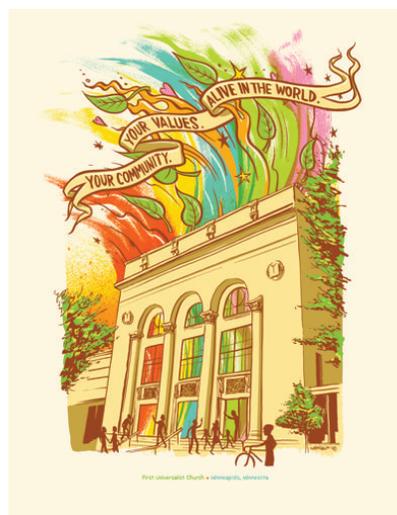
This year’s Pledge Team is shown at the beginning of this piece. We will be asking all of you to pledge 5% of your household income to First Universalist. We realize that this is a big stretch for most of us. It certainly has been for me (and Rich and Marcia will share their stories in the November and January Liberals). In my case, Lianne and I have increased our pledge each year during the past three years to arrive at our present level of 5% of our income. The biggest increase occurred after I had joined the pledge team and begun thinking deeply about generosity. Justin met with Lianne and me for coffee and **DIRECTLY ASKED US TO INCREASE OUR PLEDGE BY \$3000**. That was a really hard conversation for me. Talking about giving is a difficult thing, perhaps because of the explicit nature

of money—it is black and white, it is quantifiable, and it forces us to confront big questions like the following blunt statement by Michael Durall:

“An important question about stewardship is: Should generosity be one of the core values of religious people? Phrased less delicately: Is it possible to lead miserly lives (or conversely, lives of great indulgence) while giving little to the church or to any other charitable organization — yet attending worship services and considering oneself to be a person of faith?”

As I sat there talking with Justin and Lianne over coffee, this question was resonating in my mind, having recently completed reading the Durall text as part of our Pledge Team work. Upon further reflection and conversation with Lianne, I realized that we both believed strongly in the work of the Church, wished to increase our charitable giving and were happy to give most of those monies to First Universalist. Those difficult conversations helped us to arrive at a good place, a place where we feel that our charitable giving, our money and our life energy are aligned with our values.

The pledge team is organizing a Canvass to take place before the Pledge Drive launches on February 23. We hope to find 30 canvassers and have each canvasser meet with three members of the Church. In this way, we hope to engage 120 people in dialogue over this difficult topic with the hope that they will join us and agree to give—or move significantly toward giving—5% of their income to First Universalist. If you are asked to be a canvasser, or are canvassed, please consider taking part in this work of our Church. After all, we are the Church, and it is up to us to step up, grab hold of an oar, and help keep that ship moving forward.



Welcoming the Light in Each Human Heart

Child Dedication Ceremony & Practice Circle

Have you recently welcomed a child into your family? Are you a family with children that recently joined our congregation? If so, we invite you to participate in our next Child Dedication Ceremony, which will take place during the November 17 Sunday service. During this ritual, our congregation pledges itself to partner with and support parents and family in the religious upbringing of their child. This tradition reflects our Unitarian Universalist belief that every child brings new life and hope into the world.



What's Good Food?

A conversation about your values, food and sustainability on Sunday, Nov. 10 at 1pm

Do you consider what you are eating and whether its origins are compatible with your values? Do you recognize that the true cost of food is greater than what you pay at check out?

Do you long for guidance and community in making these difficult choices?

For many of us, what and how we eat is a part of our spiritual practice, a moral or religious act. For others, the reality of industrial food production, the changing climate and the paradox of widespread hunger and obesity call for radically different approaches to food and agriculture. The reality is eating justly is difficult.

In collaboration with neighboring congregations, on Sunday, November 10 at 1pm First Universalist is hosting a conversation that will explore eating justly from a variety of perspectives. Joining us are guests from small and family farms, workers rights organizations, sustainable agriculture, and local food justice efforts.

A light lunch will be served. RSVP's required by contacting environmentaljustice@firstuniv.org. Childcare will be available upon request with 7 days advance notice.

For more information contact Judy Broad, jab679@gmail.com

Daytime Connections

If you are in the second half of life and would welcome a chance to connect with others outside of Sunday services, please join us for these monthly gatherings. Our October session -Thursday, Oct. 17, 10:30-noon, Cummins Rm., lunch to follow - will feature guest presenter, Lucy Rose Fischer, author/illustrator of *I'm New at Being Old*. Our post-retirement years can be a major part of our lives. If we retire at age 65 or so—then what? How could we manage this gift of time? This presentation will offer insights on the so-called “Third Age” and will include stories about vital and inspiring older people and colorful art.

If you will be staying for lunch or have any questions, please contact Terri Burnor, Cummins Ministerial Intern, at terri@firstuniv.org or 651-324-2343. Daytime Connections meets monthly on the third Thursday.

Integrating Your Catholic Heritage

by Jim Foti

On my journey toward becoming a Unitarian Universalist minister, one of the most interesting questions has been, “What from my Catholic upbringing am I taking with me, and what am I leaving behind?” Leaving one religious tradition and joining another can be complicated—theologically, culturally, and emotionally. Sometimes the breaking away is so painful that we want to reject everything from the past; sometimes our newfound religion feels so different that we wonder how we got here. Everyone who has made the transition from Catholicism to Unitarian Universalism has a story, a story set against the ever-shifting landscapes of the two traditions. Please join me for an exploration of the gifts and challenges that former Catholics bring to Unitarian Universalism. Saturday, November 2, 9am-noon, Cummins Room.

Make a Difference

Part of the Series: Living Beautifully with Uncertainty & Change

by Hal Schroer

A recent conversation with long time member Larry Gottschalk revealed how he has channeled his desire to “Make a Difference” into mentoring college students towards computer related careers. After working for 30 years in computer technology at Control Data, Larry created an encore career as a Professor of IT at Metro State. A satisfying part of this position has been the opportunity to improve graduation rates by guiding students on class selection and successful course completion. Importantly, Larry has learned that if mentoring and advising aren’t provided at the right time, students struggle and often drop out. To help students be more competitive in finding good paying jobs, Larry and a team of colleagues are now developing a special program that helps two year graduates go on to earn a four year degree.

Larry was already working at making the switch from industry to education when he suffered heart problems in 2000 that required surgery. After the surgery, he still experienced stress-induced Atrial Fibrillation. So in order to continue working without further surgery, he conquered this disorder by learning to control stress. The book *Time Management from the Inside Out* by Julie Morgenstern helped him learn to Delegate, Diminish, Drop, or Delay tasks whenever his day feels out of control. With successful stress management, Larry continues to create personal meaning in his life, while at the same time managing around his daily living constraints.

The Making a Difference workshop series will help us be intentional about how we allocate our time to paid/unpaid work, daily living and leisure time. Furthermore, it will help us align our work activities with our values, and it will help us maximize our impact from the time we have available.

This workshop will provide a supportive, interactive opportunity for participants to:

- Learn about an eight-step calling discovery process
- Apply this knowledge to our own life situation
- Identify personal, professional, and community calling possibilities
- Develop initial strategies for moving forward

These two workshop sessions will be led by fellow church member and Career Consultant George Dow, and they will be held at 7pm on Thursday evenings, Oct. 3 and Oct. 17. To learn more or to sign-up, please contact Elaine at 612-825-1701 x124 or elaine@firstuniv.org.

Living Beautifully with Uncertainty & Change

A Year-Long Series to Prepare for the Road Ahead

by Hal Schroer

My wife Theresa died two years ago after a five year battle with cancer. My daughter Emma just left for college, and I am transitioning into retirement.

During the last several years, I have been uncertain about many things: how long Theresa would live, how to be present to her as she grieved her many small losses, what Emma’s and my grieving process would be like after she died, and what the next chapter of my life would look like.

The most powerful elements of this journey have been the experiences and courageous conversations that Theresa and I had in community. This church community has been a tremendous help through its support groups, the knowledge gained from its workshops, and its ministerial support of our spiritual journey. It allowed us to accomplish goals that are difficult to achieve individually, and to be connected as we navigate uncertain times.

So many of us are striving to live fully amid uncertainty and change. We wonder:

- How does my living have a positive impact in the world?
- How do I prepare well for the later chapters in my life?
- How do I cultivate hopefulness in the face of the unknown?
- What kind of legacy will I leave?

Living Beautifully with Uncertainty & Change is a year-long series of workshops that offer a supportive community and practical expertise in navigating the spiritual and practical realities of life’s uncertainties.

To learn more or to sign up, please call Elaine at 612- 825-1701 x124 or email her at elaine@firstuniv.org.

Project Homeless Connect December Event Cancelled

by Debra Rodgers, Director of Faith in Action

As many of you know, the first Project Homeless Connect was held in December 2005 and First Universalist has been an active supporter and participant in their events since the beginning. This year, their planning team has agreed to cancel the traditional December Project Homeless Connect event, and to instead work to create and pilot some smaller, more frequent events targeted towards those who are least likely to access services or are having the hardest time accessing services.

While the opportunity to volunteer at the event will not be available, there will continue to be volunteer opportunities connected to homelessness available, likely more often, and with varying hours and locations. If you would like to get regular updates about the work going on in the community, and how you can get involved on a volunteer, advocacy, or leadership basis, please click the link below and simply enter your address and someone from either the City of Minneapolis or Hennepin County will keep you up to date. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2QBMBLG>

No Coat Drive This Year

For a number of years, First Universalist members have been extremely generous contributors to different coat drives for youth in the winter months. We are so grateful for this support, and as our previous coat drive partners have closed their doors, we are eager to turn our attention to supporting two new partnerships. This fall we will not be conducting the coat drives we have in the past, but we will be focusing our attention on building our relationships with Habitat for Humanity, Augsburg Fairview Academy, and Avenues for Homeless Youth. All of these organizations need our donations of time, clothes, food, and funds.

You can learn more about both of these organizations by stopping by the Information Center on Sunday or by contacting Pat Gottschalk (pat.gottschalk@yahoo.com) about Augsburg Fairview or Shelley des Islets (shelleydes@gmail.com) about Avenues.

Of course, warm coats are still very much in demand as are sweaters, chinos, gloves, sweats, jeans, socks and underwear. You can be sure your donations will be put to good use! If you prefer to donate a gift of money, please make the check out to First Universalist Church (note Youth Homelessness in the memo line) and we will use the funds to purchase specific items the youth might need.

We are excited to be building these new relationships with these outstanding organizations as they present a unique opportunity for us to learn about and impact youth homelessness in a way we have not done before. Stay tuned in January for news on an event that ties together youth homelessness, racial justice and our new partners. If you are looking for ways to get involved with either organization or have general questions, please contact Debra Rodgers, Director of Faith in Action at debra@firstuniv.org

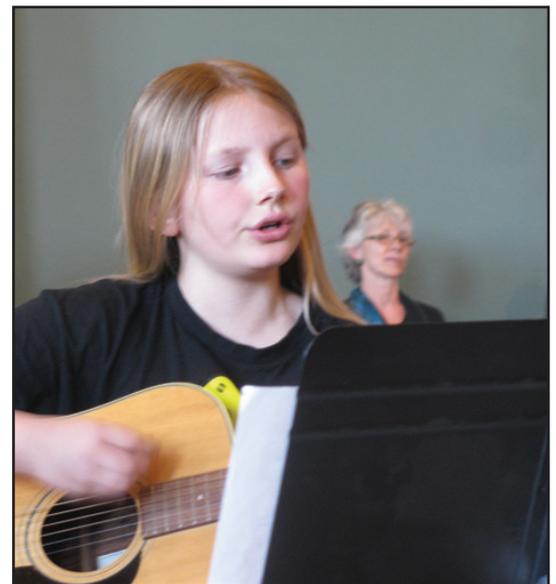
Children's Music Coordinator News

by Rev. Ruth MacKenzie,
Minister of Worship Arts

The team assembled for hiring the Children's Music Coordinator has been hard at work these past few months. We are: Ann Kay, Sharon Mandel, Jill Ambrus, Lauren Wyeth and Rev. Ruth MacKenzie.

We interviewed several people and auditioned three candidates for the position, but we still have not found the right fit for our congregation. We are looking for an excellent musician/music educator and a kid magnet. We were blessed with the work of Rev. Mary Bohman for many years and, let's face it, she is a hard act to follow.

The team will be continuing our search by reposting the position, and beginning again in love and hope. We will be meeting about contingency plans for the Children's Choir for the fall, until we find a new coordinator. Please watch for information about the Children's Choir and our progress through the Religious Education weekly email, the LiberaI, and First Universalist Eblasts. If you have questions, or a musician we should know about, please contact Ruth MacKenzie (ruth@firstuniv.org) or talk with any member of the team with your questions, concerns, or ideas. We are very hopeful about our new clarity and direction for our next Children's Music Coordinator.



Art Exhibit

Lucy Rose Fischer

Lucy Rose Fischer's art exhibit will be on display October 13 - November 17. This exhibit features original illustrations from her colorful, fanciful book, *I'm New at Being Old*, along with examples of her whimsical glass art on the theme of aging. Before launching her art career, Lucy Rose had a distinguished 25 year career as a researcher specializing in the study of aging. *I'm New at Being Old* received a Midwest Book Award and an Independent Publishers Gold Award. Fischer is featured on the Twin Cities Public Television program, *Life Changing Art*, which received a regional Emmy.

Lucy Rose will be present for an artist reception in the Social Hall after both services on Sunday, October 27. She also will be participating in the AUW retreat and at Daytime Connections on October 17.



Men's Conversation Group

In the Men's Conversation group we believe each man is capable of significant personal and spiritual growth. Each has his own answers. In the Men's group we deal with the joys and sorrows of everyday life. We share with each other our lives as we experience them. We build on our strengths, get in touch with our power, and explore alternatives.

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 to 9pm. We are presently men of retirement age but we are seeking men of all ages to join our group. We are still open for October. For more information and to arrange to attend, phone Tom Greenspon: 952-929-1499.

Calling All Young Adults (18-35ish)

We have several events coming up this fall just for you! We will have two Community Circles:

- Young Adults Circle on Wednesdays led by Jessy
- Queer Young Adults Circle on Thursdays led by Caitlyn

Also look for these monthly events:

- **October 6 Sunday Brunch at Brie's house.** Meet Jessy by the piano after the second service to walk over. Or just meet at Brie's apartment 3432 Emerson Ave S at 12:15. Please bring something to pass and RSVP to brianna.jonna@gmail.com if you can so we can get the right amount of chairs and food.
- **November 7 Thursday Happy Hour at Pancho Villa's** 5:30-7:30pm on 2539 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis. Look for Liz and the First U table sign.
- **December 6, 7pm Friday Game Night** at Jessy's apartment in Uptown, 2601 Garfield St., Minneapolis.

Want to get connected to the young adult emails so you don't miss out? Sign up at the Welcome Desk in the social hall after the service. You can expect emails once or twice a month with reminders and updates from the google group: firstunivYA@googlegroups.com

Also check out our Facebook page: First U Young Adults <https://www.facebook.com/groups/259445814167719/>



Alright, so they might not show up for our happy hour, but we'll have just as much fun.



During the ordination of Rev. Ruth MacKenzie, (from left to right): Rev. Karen Hering, Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs, Rev. Justin Schroeder, Rev. John Cummins, Rev. Ruth MacKenzie.

**Non-Profit Org
US Postage Paid
Twin Cities, MN
Permit No. 875**

Return
Service
Requested

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