



By Bette DeMars,  
The Great Gathering Publicity Chair

Something must have happened at First Universalist Church during our November focus on prayer. Many of you had been disappointed that the auction and Valentine's Dance were both cancelled. You had enjoyed having entertaining evenings with many in our community together. Your prayers have been answered! On Saturday evening, February 22nd, The Great Gathering will happen. The evening will include a chance to sign up for a variety of Mini Gatherings (fun activities with others from Church), nibble on appetizers and desserts, listen to music, dance, and much more!

At one of Rev. Justin's sermons he presented "Thanks, Help, Wow, and Oops" as aspects of many people's prayers. These same terms are appropriate as we think about how we are going to provide The Great Gathering event, but in a different order. We are hoping that this will be an all community event, so that means we're hoping (maybe even praying) for YOU to be there.

**HELP...** is what is needed for our Great Gathering evening to be a success. There are MANY volunteer opportunities so everyone needs to step up and be involved either ahead of time, that evening, or both. Contact Diane Gavere, Director of Operations, at [diane@firstuniv.org](mailto:diane@firstuniv.org) if you are interested!

**Be a Part of "The Great Gathering!"**  
(continued on page 15)

# THE liberal

## FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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

Issue 5, Number 7

January 2014

## We Did It!

### The House That Love Built Update

By Rev. Jen Crow

This fall and winter we asked each other to take a look at our spending and reclaim the true meaning of the holidays by offering our gifts to The House That Love Built.

We hoped to raise \$60,000 to become a primary financial sponsor of a home with Habitat for Humanity and we did it! Thanks to your creativity and generosity we raised over \$90,000 and we brought light and hope to this darkest time of the year. What an amazing gift. The cost of each Habitat home varies, ranging from \$120,000-180,000, so every cent of our donation is needed and will be used for The House That Love Built.

**With awe, amazement, and gratitude,**

*Your House That Love Built Team*

(Martha Moriarty, Chuck Coskran, Tom Saterstrom, Peggy Leppik, Geoff Lennox, Lauren Wyeth, Debra Rodgers, and Rev. Jen Crow)

### SAVE THE DATE!

Here's a date worth putting on your new 2014 calendar  
or your phone:

## THE GREAT GATHERING

Saturday, February 22nd  
6:00 – 10:00 PM  
At First Universalist Church

## Interested in hosting a Mini Gathering?

### *A Very Fun Way to Support Our Church!*

**WHAT?** “Mini Gatherings” (previously referred to as “Great Gatherings”) are parties or other events that are hosted by someone like you. You, of course, choose what kind of party it will be – from a formal dinner to a romp in the woods – more examples to follow. (please note that this is different from ‘The Great Gathering’, which is our annual fundraiser this year, and will be taking place February 22nd, 2014).

**WHO?** The host (you!) will choose how many people may attend, and we will sell spots on the night of the Great Gathering. If the event doesn’t sell out we will continue to sell open spots up to the day of the event. The host also can choose if the event is adults only, women only, kid friendly, etc.

**WHERE?** Most commonly, Mini Gatherings take

place in the host’s home, but they can be anywhere. (At church, at a museum, at a friend’s house, in a park, on a lake, at a cabin, in a boat, etc.)

**WHEN?** Whenever you choose – as long as it doesn’t conflict with a major church event or with another mini gathering. (The first Saturday night of the month isn’t a great time, either, because many congregants will be attending circle suppers.)

**WHY?** For the fun of it. And for the love of our church. Mini Gatherings raise money for our church, and they help us get to know each other in new, fun ways!

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS:** February 9th, 2014.

Fax (612-825-8879) or submit the following info to Diane Gavere at [diane@firstuniv.org](mailto:diane@firstuniv.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

or leave form at the Hub or the Church office.

Your name and email (or phone, if you prefer): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

(often we list exact address, but we can also say something like “the Olson home in South Minneapolis”)

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

(First come, first served. You may be asked to change the date if it conflicts with another event.)

Name of Host(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Brief, enticing description of the event: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Maximum number of people who can attend (not including hosts or other non-paying guests): \_\_\_\_\_

Price per person: \_\_\_\_\_ OR Price per family: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Price will be negotiated between host and Mini Gatherings team.  
We like to have a variety of prices, and have similar things priced similarly.)*

## First Universalist Foundation News

At their fall meetings, the First Universalist Foundation Board voted to give \$5000 each to seven organizations in our community. Each of these met the Foundation's current giving priorities, which are focused on addressing root causes of injustice and developing the leadership capacity of youth, young adults, and disenfranchised communities in the Twin Cities area. The Foundation Board selected projects for which our modest funding levels would represent a significant portion of total costs. The grantees are:

### **MIGIZI Communications**

The American Indian Youth Leadership Project is an expansion of an existing leadership development program for young women. The project will now serve young men as well.

### **Minnesota African Women's Association (MAWA)**

The African Girls Leadership Empowerment (AGILE) School-to-College Success Program provides college tours and related programming to Pan-African young women across the Twin Cities.

### **NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Foundation**

Trust Project: Our Stories will highlight the reproductive health and rights experiences and priorities of women of color, with the goal of addressing historic and systemic exclusion.

### **Organizing Apprenticeship Program**

The Education Equity Organizing Collaborative is a partnership of community of color organizations working to engage parents and youth in addressing equity gaps in schools.

### **Southeast Asian Refugee Community Home**

Employment Services – Childcare Provider Training will promote childcare as a viable employment option among immigrant refugee women, enhance understanding of developing a home-based business and providing developmentally appropriate activities for children, and help families and children with healthcare navigation and kindergarten readiness.

### **World Without Genocide**

Twenty Years after the Rwandan Genocide: Preventing Hate Locally and Globally will expand the involvement of refugee and immigrant students in an annual summer institute engaging Minnesota high school stu-

dents in the work of human rights. The work of World Without Genocide is focused on developing advocacy, civic engagement, and leadership skills among high school and college students.

### **YouthLink**

YouthLink operates Minneapolis' only full-service drop in center, and very often young people state that YouthLink is the only safe place they know they can come during the day, when shelters are closed. The Youth Leadership Program will provide opportunities for Twin Cities homeless young people to advocate on their own behalf by raising awareness in the community of the youth homelessness issue, gain valuable skills that will help them become employed and contributing members of our community.

## New Reservations and Building Use Policy at First Universalist

By Bree Mattson, Office and Events Manager

Over the last four years, First Universalist Church has been growing and our church community has become larger and more active. With all of this wonderful growth and activity comes an increase in demand for building use at the church, which has put a strain on church resources. The Board of Trustees has directed the Senior Minister (and staff) to allocate our resources effectively as we strive to achieve our Visionary Goals. Thus, we are doing a comprehensive assessment of our building usage, policies and practices. From this assessment, we are creating a building usage plan that will be effective April 1st, 2014. It is our hope that this new plan will lead to an even stronger church community. There will be ongoing communication with all groups between now and April 1st to let them know where they stand in relation to their status and reservations.

Groups who are not staff-sponsored or directly associated with First Universalist who meet here can expect to see some changes in their groups' status. This may result in changes in the availability of space, childcare and support for your group, and may include rental fees going forward. All groups and committees can expect a letter with further information and a copy of the new building use policy by February 2014.

We are grateful for your understanding and patience as we move forward with this process.



## “It’s No Secret...”

Rev. Justin Schroeder

It’s no secret that a creative spirit moved among us last month, as we exceeded our fundraising goal of \$60,000 for the “House that Love Built.” We raised money from selling home-made mango chutney, from bringing in loose change from homes, from raffling off a quilt, from selling yarn and knitting material, and from many other creative ideas. And then, on December 22nd, during the services, so many of you made additional gifts to the “House that Love Built.” Many of you cut back your Christmas and holiday spending to support this project, and to begin to create a new relationship with the holidays, in order to return to the heart of these holidays/holy days. Truly, we are a faith community committed to the idea of giving, receiving, and growing more fully into Love’s people! We’ll begin work on this Habitat House in the spring.

It’s no secret that there is energy and momentum behind our racial justice work and our exploration of race, racism, and whiteness. Nearly three hundred of you showed up for the 90 minute racial justice workshops we’ve been offering after Sunday services! We’ll be offering these workshops again on January 26, at 1pm, and on February, 23, at 1pm. These lively, dynamic workshops lay out the essential framework that is guiding our racial justice journey; these workshops make it clear that the violence of racism and our Universalist faith are fundamentally incompatible. If you haven’t attended a workshop yet, or want to come again, I’ll see you there!

It’s no secret that we’re a growing congregation; what might be a secret is what it actually costs to run the church. This year, as we move toward our annual financial pledge drive at the end of February, we’re hoping to do more than just pay the bills. We’re hoping to raise about \$200,000 more in pledges than the \$1.2 million we budgeted in pledges last year. If we do this, we will be able to fully fund benefits for staff, to compensate our staff fairly (they have not received cost of living raises in the past three years), to fund our racial justice work in 2014-2015, to pay our “fair share” dues to the Unitarian Universalist Association, to look at adding a third worship service in 2015, and to handle possible increased mortgage payments (the balloon payment for the mortgage is due in January and the refinance will include a line of credit feature which will allow us to fund immediate capital improvement needs). Currently, the average church pledge is about \$1700. I hope you will begin to think about what kind of financial contribution you are able to make for the 2014-15 church year (July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015).

(continued on page 5)

# 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 Emeriti	Rev. Ruth MacKenzie Rev. John Cummins Rev. Kate Tucker

### Worship Arts

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

### Operations

Director	Diane Gavere
Assist. Finance Admin.	Brad Schmidt
Communications Manager	Heidi Johnson
Office Manager	Bree Mattson
Administrative Assistant	KC Bogdan
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

If you want a print version of the Liberal, contact [sandy@firstuniv.org](mailto:sandy@firstuniv.org), 612-825-1701, or pick up a print copy at the Information Center. The online color version at [firstuniv.org/newsletter](http://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](http://www.firstuniv.org)

I hope you will take a step towards giving 5% of your household income. Together, just like we did with the “House that Love Built,” we can do great things!

Happy 2014!

I’ll see you in church,



*P.S. I hope you’ll join a Circle this January. There are a variety of options. Signups begin on January 19th. Learn more on page 13.*

## Opportunities for you to make The GREAT GATHERING great!

Please consider how you can help before or during the event on February 22nd. Contact Diane Gavere with what you would like to do or sign up at The Great Gathering table.

**Planning Committee Team:** Work with others in planning the event and coordinating other volunteers

**Sunday Morning Promotional Team:** Provide sign ups for Great Gatherings, Tickets sales and Volunteer opportunities

**Great Gatherings Team:** Ask previous donors and recruit new donors

**Graphics Team:** Create Invitation. Ticket and Poster

**Publicity Team:** Use various way to publicize the event including the Liberal, Cyber Coffee Hour, the Pulpit

**Volunteer Recruitment:** Recruit and follow up with volunteers

**Food and Beverages Team:** Hire and keep in contact with caterer contact and bartender, supply drink needs

**Tables set up and display Team:** Reserve tables and set up tables and displays

**Decorations Team:** Plan decorations for all spaces and tables and arrange for table cloths

**Entertainment Team:** Plan evening program and dancing.

**Great Gathering Booklet Team:** Put together booklet and have it printed and on line

**Event Night Team:** Plan and execute Great Gathering sign ups and other activities

**Green Team:** Create opportunities to keep the event Green

**Close Out and Check out:** Assist with closing out and finalizing expenses for all purchases

**Child Care:** Work with staff for reservations, activities, and food

## “Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere”

By Kayci Rush & Richard Spratt

As Dr. Heather Hackman led her workshop on Racial Justice on Sunday, December 15, we found ourselves reflecting upon Rev. Justin’s homily.

Rev. Justin remarked upon the recent Star Tribune article which exposed the horrific failure of our public schools to educate the children of color in our communities. And worse, the warehousing of African American boys in schools that feed the school to prison pipeline. Together, Rev. Justin and Heather provided the moral imperative as to why this Racial Justice work at First Universalist must be our work. As we look to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we remember the letter he wrote while imprisoned in the Birmingham jail:

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

Racial injustice affects each and every one of us. We all have a role to play in the dismantling of the structural racism, the racial narratives, and the oppression of people of color as this is what Love calls us to do. Heather’s Sunday workshops are the first step. We invite you to join us at the next workshop.

*Kayci Rush and Richard Spratt recently joined the church. Richard is on the Racial Justice Leadership Team and both he and Kayci went through the first 24 hour training that Dr. Hackman led.*

# Board of Trustees Update: The Spiritual Nature of our Work

By Lark Weller

*“May this flame that burns before us light our way, informed by the wisdom of leaders gone before, and inspired by the trust that we have been given as stewards of this Church. May we have vision, compassion, and courage as we serve this congregation, now and for the generations to come.”*

These are the words that the Board of Trustees recites as we light the chalice to begin our meetings. They were written by Trustee Dan Berg. At the beginning of this church year, the Board reflected on our goals for the year. In order to fulfill our duties to this congregation as stewards of its resources, we agreed that one of our goals was to develop spiritual practices as a board that would help us engage more fully in the spiritual nature of our work.

We held a Saturday morning working session in November in order to explore and better define this goal. (Dan’s opening words were one of the outcomes of that session.) Together, we grappled with questions like, “What would it take to make it feel to you that the work we’re engaged in together as a board is a sacred, holy practice? What are the elements of this work that are spiritual to you? What specific practices can we incorporate to keep our work grounded in its holy nature? What guiding questions can we ask of ourselves during meetings, deliberations, and difficult moments to ground us and bring us back to the spiritual purpose of our work together? How do you want to be present during our time together? What is important to you in terms of how you behave and what you bring to our meetings, to this space, and to this work?”

As a result of this contemplation and discussion, we agreed that there are several elements of our board work

that can incorporate spiritual components: pre-meeting work (creation and review of meeting materials), our relationships (as individual members, as a board, with the Senior Minister and other staff, and with congregants), and elements within meetings themselves. In addition to writing and reciting our own opening words, we agreed to provide our own chalice (has anyone else found chalices—and matches—to be impressively elusive at church?!), use a singing bowl to create reflective space between meeting topics, demonstrate our gratitude by sending thank you cards each month, and encourage moments of silence and re-centering during meetings. As importantly, the conversation we had as a group helped to deepen our bonds with each other and helped us understand our values and how we wish to approach our work as a board.

This is a relatively new conversation for this board. We anticipate that we will continue to explore how we can best honor the spiritual nature of our work as Trustees of First Universalist. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to engage with each of you on this and other issues. You are always welcome to look for us on Sunday mornings, or call or email any of us. Happy New Year—may we realize our wonderful potential as a spiritual community in 2014!

---

## Sunday Flower Arrangements

Visual Arts flower chair Marjie Smith is now taking reservations for 2014 Sunday flower arrangements. This opportunity is a wonderful way to honor and celebrate people or events. A donation is made toward purchasing the flowers. The individual arranging them discusses what types of flowers you prefer and creates a unique arrangement for you and others in the congregation to enjoy. Once second service is completed, the flowers are yours to take home or to share with others from the congregation who are unable to attend the service. To reserve your date and for more information contact Marjie at [marjiesmith1@aol.com](mailto:marjiesmith1@aol.com).

---

## First Universalist Choir

Have you thought about singing in the choir? YOU are welcome to join us! Ability to read music and previous experience is helpful but not necessary. An open heart, eagerness to learn and the desire to be part of a large and dynamic choral ensemble are qualities we look for in new members. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9:00 starting on January 15. Potential choir members are invited to our “Post Holiday Potluck and White Elephant Gift Exchange” on Saturday, January 11. Contact [randy@firstuniv.org](mailto:randy@firstuniv.org) for details.

# Legacy Legends

## Planned Giving at First Universalist

### A Conversation with Rev Harlan Limpert

by Tom Saterstrom

I had the good fortune to have an insightful conversation, and brunch with friend, fellow First Universalist congregant, and Heritage Circle member Harlan Limpert. He had just arrived back in Minneapolis on the homeward leg of one of his many commutes to and from UUA Headquarters in Boston. Yes, we are proud to have one of our own serving in a leadership role as Chief Operating Officer for our national Unitarian Universalist Association!

There were several experiences in Harlan's life that he shared with me that were pivotal to setting him on a journey along the "Unitarian Universalist road of discovery". These experiences contributed to First Universalist Church becoming Harlan's spiritual home, and to a commitment to make its mission continue into times he would never see by including the church in his estate plan.

**Pivot #1:** Harlan was brought up in the Lutheran tradition in Richfield, Minnesota, but found it very painful to endure the obligatory 3 years of confirmation classes. He concluded that the "Lutheran road of discovery" would not get him where he wanted to go spiritually. He needed to find a good detour! He reached a deal with his parents that if he completed confirmation – "no more church for the rest of his life!"

**Pivot #2:** During college, Harlan found the study of world religions to be fascinating and impactful. He was formulating his own spiritual compass at the time, and found the diversity and common threads between the various world religions to be enlightening. The insights gleaned through this study brought him to the conclusion that he was a spiritual person who needed a church community of like-minded people in order to go deeper in his own religious path.

**Pivot #3:** Post-college life in the early 70s found Harlan in Long Beach, California visiting a Unitarian church for the first time. He sensed something different about the church experience there. Openness? Acceptance? Dogma-less? Observing a woman unashamedly breastfeeding her infant during the service made it clear – this was not the Lutheran church of his childhood!

**Pivot #4:** In the mid-70s Harlan joined First Universalist. Rev. John Cummins, then senior minister of First Universalist, saw something special in Harlan, and noted, "Harlan has a very curious mind and listens intently." Harlan began pursuing a graduate degree in Berkeley, California at one of the two Unitarian Universalist schools in the country. The Carl & Mildred Olson Fund at First Universalist helped offset the high cost of seminary, and getting experience preaching at First Universalist was important to his professional growth. Harlan was ordained at First Universalist in 1978. He speaks appreciatively of the mentorship provided him by John Cummins in the development of his individual spiritual and social justice compass.

Harlan expressed a strong belief in institutions and their power to make change for the good. This interviewer was awed at how he has lived into his values in tangible ways at First Universalist. Harlan has served: 2 terms as President of the congregation; 2 terms as Vice President/Moderator; 2 three year terms on the Board; and Co-Chaired a Capital Campaign. Paraphrased from Harlan's words,

"Serving this congregation as a volunteer, and the 1,048 congregations that make up the Unitarian Universalist Association as its Chief Operating Officer, is a great privilege to me. It's my way of thanking those who served in the past and serving those who yearn for liberal religion now and in the future."

Harlan's vision and dream for First Universalist church in a culture that is increasingly secular, consumer-oriented, and self-absorbed is that it remain a physical and spiritual gathering space where people can freely discover what it means to be human, and to continually ask what our responsibilities are to one another and the larger community.

For information regarding First Universalist's Planned Giving Program,

visit [www.firstuniv.org/plannedgiving](http://www.firstuniv.org/plannedgiving) or contact Planned Giving Committee Co-Chairs Marjie Smith [Marjiesmith1@aol.com](mailto:Marjiesmith1@aol.com), or Tom Saterstrom [saterstromtom@yahoo.com](mailto:saterstromtom@yahoo.com)

## From the Pledge Team: Why Do I Give?

by Marcia Wattson (Pledge Team Member)

I have been a Unitarian since I was in nursery school, and I'm now a retired senior. When I became a member in my 30's, I had no idea what the church budget was or how my contributions related to it. I had learned the importance of generosity and aligning my spending with my values. I just hadn't connected that with the needs of the church. Back then, in the 1980's, I thought \$5 a week seemed about right. As I said, I didn't really have a clue about what it cost to keep the church operating.

After a few years, a canvasser from the church visited me in my home to ask for my pledge. It was the first time I had had a conversation with anyone about how much to give to the church. At the time, I was between jobs, working as a consultant, and contemplating divorce. The woman was very understanding and assured me that whatever I could afford would be appreciated. If my situation changed and I needed to adjust my pledge, that was understandable too. It was important to the church to have some idea of what to plan for in the budget, and my pledge would help them do that.

Over the years, as the church grew and we bought the building on Dupont and committed to investing in the city's future, I became more deeply involved in the life of the church, first through the Unity Summer program and later on the Board of Trustees. It was a revelation to me how much time and talent the Unity Summer committee and the trustees were willing and able to devote to the work at hand. It was even more of a surprise to learn how rewarding it was to give more than I thought I could to something I believe in.

When I ask myself, as I often do, "Why Church?" the answer is usually something on the order of, "because I love this community and what it stands for." This religion encourages me to experience my deepest truth with honesty and to live with compassion and generosity. I am grateful for the values and lessons I learned growing up as a Unitarian and especially grateful for the kindred spirits I have met here at First Universalist. To see and hear the youth of our church express their ideas and feelings with their openness and dedication to UU values, I know that I want this church to be here for many generations. When I get to know the members of this church who came here and found a home, an inspiration and comfort in difficult times, I want this support to be here for those who need it. When we stand together for marriage equality, racial justice, human rights, peace and environmental sustainability, facing our imperfections and



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

vulnerabilities through this work, I find it very easy to justify pledging more than 5% of my income to sustain this legacy, and it feels good.

There are many other organizations doing important, valuable work in the world, and I want to support them as well. My goal is to give another 5% to groups outside the church, which is partly accomplished through our offerings every Sunday that give away 70% of the collection. I feel so lucky and grateful for what I have been given and so moved by the needs waiting to be addressed, that sharing feels natural and right.

As I write this, a song from the children's choir is running through my mind. "Each of us is a flower growing in life's garden. Each of us is a flower; we need the sun and rain." Our contributions to the church are like the sun and rain that sustain our growth and keep us healthy. May we give generously to maintain and grow our selves and this church community in its efforts to create a healthier world.



Consider joining 50 other members of our Church and commit to Meatless Mondays. Studies conducted by John Hopkins and Harvard University have found that going meatless one day a week may reduce your risk of chronic preventable diseases. This includes intestinal and colon cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity. In other words: eating less red and processed meats and more vegetables and fruits give you a better chance of living longer and healthier. Look for more information and pledge cards in the Social Hall after both services.

# Secrets

In Psalm 139, the writer takes comfort in being known. “My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.” Our beginning is a mystery. Our lives are a continuation of secret weavings. We are woven from events, characteristics, loves, and wounds. Some secrets feed us; others plague our every effort toward wholeness. In this sermon series we recognize and explore the power of secrets.

## Sundays in January

**January 5:** The Real of Reality  
*Rev. Ruth MacKenzie*

**January 12:** Beneath the Surface  
*Rev. Jen Crow. Sharing Sunday.*  
Musical Offering: The Universal Rock Band

**January 19:** Tell the Story to Hear the Story  
*The Racial Justice Team*

Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday  
Musical Guests: Heartland Youth Choir of St. Clive, Iowa

**January 26:** No Holds Barred: The State of the Church  
*Rev. Justin Schroeder*

## Resources:

### The Joy Luck Club

Based on the novel by Amy Tan, four older women, all Chinese immigrants living in San Francisco, meet regularly to play mahjong, eat, and tell stories. Each of these women has an adult Chinese-American daughter. The film reveals the hidden pasts of the older women and their daughters and how their lives are shaped by the clash of Chinese and American cultures as they strive to understand their family bonds and one another.

### The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

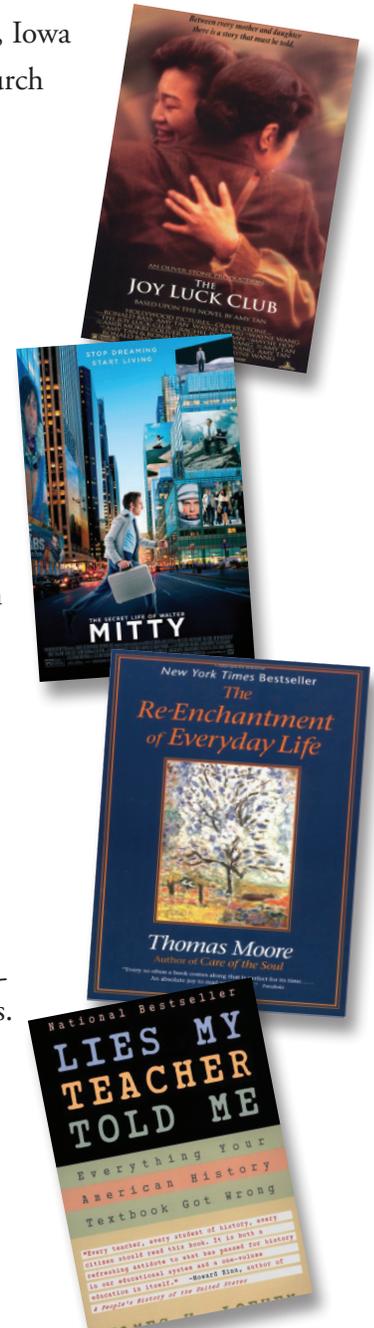
Based on a novel by James Thurber, a day-dreamer escapes his anonymous life by disappearing into a world of fantasies filled with heroism, romance and action. When his job--along with that of his co-worker--is threatened, he takes action in the real world embarking on a global journey that turns into an adventure more extraordinary than anything he could have ever imagined.

### The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life by Thomas Moore

### Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong

*by James W. Loewen*

This book is a wonderful retelling of American history as it should - and could - be taught to American students. Beginning with pre-Columbian American history and ranging over characters and events as diverse as Reconstruction, Helen Keller, the first Thanksgiving, and the My Lai massacre, Loewen supplies the conflict, suspense, unresolved drama, and connection with current-day issues so appallingly missing from textbook accounts.




---

## Children’s Music – Listening Sessions

As many of you know we postponed our search for a Children’s Music Director in order to reassess needs and wants. In that vein, Rev. Ruth MacKenzie will be conducting listening sessions with parents and children interested in music making, and choir. The next session will be held on Tuesday, January 14 @ 6:00PM in the Cummins Room. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to email Ruth with suggestions, concerns, and dreams at [ruth@firstuniv.org](mailto:ruth@firstuniv.org).

### 4th Annual 'Day of Service' Saturday, March 15th, 2014

*Every Sunday, we affirm this to each other,  
through the following words:*

*Love is the spirit of this church and service is its law.*

*This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace*

*To seek the truth in love and to help one another.*

For three years our community has come together on a specific day to turn these words into 'action'. We have contributed 4500 hours of service to others. Let's do it again! There will be opportunities to create, lead or participate.

*Do you work with or know of an organization that could really use some short-term help?*

*Are you a parent or could you help our youth feel the value in helping others?*

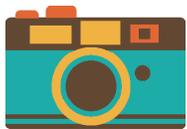
*Could you coordinate a service project?*

If you have a project idea, please stop by the Hub on Sunday, January 12th or 19th, or contact Judy Broad at **612-724-4565** or, email **jab679@gmail.com**

Thanks for considering this opportunity! Judy Broad  
- Faith in Action Steering Committee

*"We make a living by what we get, but we make a  
life by what we give."*

- Winston Churchill -



### Visual Arts Exhibit

Terry McDaniel's fine art photography will be on display in the Social Hall from Jan 5th through Feb. 2nd.

Her photographs have been said to be captivating, inspirational, exquisite and magical. Terry composes flora from her summer gardens in her hand made ice luminaries. She captures the essence of each luminary, in what is reminiscent of a miniature painting. The candlelight reflects through the textures of frozen bubbles and fractures in the ice against the contrast of the delicate preservation of summer. Thus, her garden gems are honored and their beauty extended before they return to the earth to begin again in the spring. To see samples of her work, go to **terrymcdanielphotography.com**

Terry will be available to talk about her artwork after most of the services. A special reception is scheduled for Sunday, January 19th, after both services and from 1:00 until 2:30.

### Need for tutors at Augsburg Fairview Academy

*Have you been thinking about volunteering at  
AFA as a tutor?*

We just learned that they need us badly right now – since 25 new students enrolled in just the last 10 days. Because they have completely open enrollment, the numbers can jump like this. Obviously, it creates challenges for faculty and staff to bring these new students into the school system, get them tested and set up with individual learning programs and get them focused on a routine and their school life.

The Self-Directed Learning Lab is hopping. (This computer lab allows students to work at their own skill level and speed to learn the material that they lack.)

They need volunteers who can give back up to students who are working on the individual learning programs – helping them to get through a confusing part, reassuring them about how they can approach their work, helping them to keep going, befriending them as an interested, supportive adult.

This is not higher math or creative writing. This is credit recovery that will allow these youth to reach grade level and be able to complete their coursework to graduate from high school.

First Universalist volunteers are going to AFA and getting involved.

Mike Day started tutoring math in November and wrote: "The first time was mostly standing around, however, the 2nd and 3rd time I spent 80% of the time with one or two students. I feel like I have a good relationship with 3 or 4 students in the 7th hour Tuesday class."

Joanne Engelking went in last Wednesday and met with Jenny, Heidi and 2 English teachers. She will work with Clayton (one of the teachers) in two of his Wednesday afternoon classes. More tutors from First UC are joining our team. You are welcome, also.

This is a tough season for youth without stable housing and supportive family ties. Having an adult to talk with them and encourage them can make a big difference.

We're looking for compassionate adults – not great academic achievers.

Want to know more? Please contact me at **pat.gottschalk@yahoo.com** phone or text **612 770-7738**.

It's happening for homeless teens. Come tutor and relate!

## From the Racial Justice Leadership Team

by Jayne Miller

Member of the Racial Justice Leadership Team

As a youth I grew up in a most beautiful part of the country. I was exposed to a wonderful outdoor environment to explore mountains, lakes, and oceans. My upbringing was in a white world. I was only aware of one non-white student in my entire K-12 education.

While I was always interested in equity and equality, I never understood the benefits of being white; the opportunities that I was given simply by being white. Love and justice are important to me as an individual and as a UU. Through the Racial Justice work we are embracing, I am more acutely aware of whiteness and how whiteness impacts my life and the lives of those who are not white.

I have had a number of challenges throughout my life. While I have worked hard to overcome the challenges in my life, I know that my whiteness and the privileges I am afforded because of my whiteness have given me significant advantages to overcome my

challenges. I am confident that doors were opened for me because I am white, that if I wasn't white the doors would have been harder to open or they may never have been opened for me.

I think about the times when I was really down and wondered how I would overcome my challenges. I remember how overwhelmed I felt during those times. Now I think about those times and wonder how I would have felt if I was not white; I believe my world would have been much bleaker. I learned to reach out to others for help – to use my connections to help me. If I was not white, would I have had access to those same connections? If I was not white, would those connections be willing to help me out? I am sure others “bent the rules” to help me. If I was not white, would the rules have been bent for me?

As Unitarian Universalists, we commit ourselves to love and justice. I believe that through our faith and through our humanity, we are obligated to look at the world around us and challenge the whiteness in our world. Racial justice is not a choice, but a responsibility. And a big part of that responsibility is to look at the whiteness which impacts our lives. Join me in exploring racial justice and whiteness in your day to day life.



### Daytime Connections

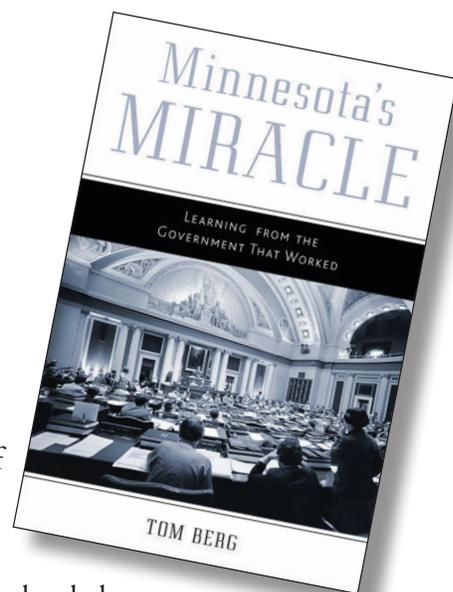
Thursday, January 16

10:30–noon, Cummins Room

Lunch to follow (\$5 suggested donation)

Our January gathering will feature guest speaker, Tom Berg, author of of *Minnesota's Miracle: Learning from the Government that Worked*. Tom's book is a civics lesson and legislative primer that is both rollicking and relevant. As a lawmaker during the 1970s, Tom was a witness to—and a participant in—the deal-cutting, arm-twisting, and just plain hard work that led to historic political shifts. Come hear him share stories that offer suggestions and hope as well as hard truths and cold facts.

If you will be staying for lunch or have any questions, please contact Terri Burnor, ministerial intern, at [terri@firstuniv.org](mailto:terri@firstuniv.org) or 612-825-1701 ext. 135. Daytime Connections meets monthly on the third Thursday and is for folks in the second half of life.





## Voices From The Circle

Each month, a Community Circle member reflects on the question, “How does your Community Circle feed you?”

### Removing the Brave Mask

by Jack Gaede

I am still in my first year as a “frequent visitor” at First Universalist. When I first started attending, I wanted to keep my fellow pew-mates at arms’ length. I didn’t want to start liking people here too much, just in case I didn’t like other things about the church and needed to make a clean break. Instead, I started settling in: enjoying the music, sinking into the moment of silence during the service, and being moved or challenged by most week’s messages. I decided that I was curious about these people who accompany me on this weekly ride. I wanted to get to know those who might be valuing this church that was beginning to feel like a place I could call “home.”

I did the next logical thing that anyone would do when they are scared to get involved, scared that they will find out something bad that will push them away from a life-giving joy in their life: I joined a community circle. This circle was filled with people coming from a rich diversity of backgrounds, spanning a 40-year age spread. Most of us were new to the church and curious to meet other like-minded individuals, and the fact that we were all at different stages of life added to the richness of our experience. We learned the practice of deep listening, which created a safe space for us to be able to share some deep concerns and some profound hopes, especially considering that we had all been strangers four weeks earlier. My second community circle is ending this week, and it is a circle that is more specific to my identity as a queer young adult. Much like the term “queer” itself, our group had a broad diversity of personalities while being linked together by a common thread: the thread of experiencing at some point the

feeling of being “queer” or “other.” While I can’t speak for other people’s experiences, I can share my own: My parents raised me in a conservative Lutheran church, so when I was figuring out my sexuality as a gay man, I struggled with figuring out how the different pieces of myself could co-exist. I fought against my own sexuality with five years of prayer, counseling, and anti-gay therapy. But then, I finally just gave up. I didn’t want to believe in a God that would make me this way and then punish me, so my other two options were to believe that either a) God didn’t mind that I was gay or b) there is no God. I gave up on the church, and I gave up on my spirituality. In my mind, there was no possible way to exist as a gay man and as a spiritual being on a spiritual path simultaneously. I had to choose one or the other, and I chose the one that felt most authentic, the thing I couldn’t deny no matter how hard I tried—my identity as a gay man.

As an alternating Buddhist -then -agnostic and a gay man, I had a hard time finding a church that embraced both my sexuality and my doubt. My first time visiting First Universalist was the last day of the sermon series about sex. I was sitting in a pew, hearing a sermon about sex and erotic love and the validity and beauty of all expressions of sexuality. This was not my parents’ Lutheran church. Throughout the course of the year, I saw the ministers, lay leaders, and congregants all gather around the issue of same-sex marriage passionately in a way that fully embraced me as a gay man, and this embrace shook me to my core. In the queer young adult community circle, we share some of our struggles: self-acceptance, rejection by family, rejection by other churches, or even just struggling to find our own spiritual path.

The safe space that was created by forming a community circle around the identity of “queer young adult” enabled me to process some thoughts and experiences around my identity as a gay man in a profound way. My parents are only 60% along on their way toward full acceptance of me and my partner Tristan. In most circles of my life, I choose to put on my brave face when discussing this hard reality. I talk about the support that I get from other people in my life. I try to remain hopeful since they’ve made progress from where they began (0%). However, sometimes I want to be able to remove that brave mask for a minute to explain that it really sucks that deep down I think that my parents want something “better” for me. I think they’re holding up hope that I will pick a different partner that matches their criteria, and this truth hurts me to my core. In our circle, I was able to share this pain. I knew that my pain was possibly shared by others in the group and would be deeply heard and cared for by everyone in the group. I knew I was safe to share, to make connections.

## Connect and Reflect in a Circle This Winter!

### *What are Circles at First Universalist?*

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

### *Which Circle is right for me?*

**Community Circles** offer an opportunity to reflect more deeply on our Sunday services and monthly worship themes. We have many circles that are open to everyone, as well as circles that gather around a shared identity or season of life, such as:

*Queer young adults*

*People living with or affected by mental illness.*

*Parents of elementary-schoolers*

**Learning Circles** are groups of 8-10 committed participants who gather for in-depth study of a particular topic or spiritual practice. This winter’s Learning Circles will include:

*Writing Your Life Story with Kathy Coskran*

*Racial Justice Learning Circles*

*Spirituality in the Second Half of Life with Karen West*

**Spiritual Practice Circles** engage in spiritual practice together. We will be offering:

*Songwriting as Spiritual Practice with Ellis and Terri Delaney*

*Chi-gung with Pat Gottschalk*

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

**Care Circles** offer participants support and encouragement during a particularly intense period of their lives. Our current Care Circles include a Grief Circle and a Caregivers Circle.

### *How Do I Get Involved?*

Online registration will occur between Sunday, January 19 and Monday, February 3. Group sizes are limited and registration is first-come, first-served. You may also register in the social hall on Sundays, January 19, January 26, and February 3.

For more information, please contact Rev. Elaine Tenbrink at [elaine@firstuniv.org](mailto:elaine@firstuniv.org) or 612-825-1701 x124. Also check out our website at [www.firstuniv.org](http://www.firstuniv.org)!

## Telling our Legacy Stories

**January 9th & 23rd at 7 PM in the Chalice Room**  
The next chapter in the Living Beautifully In the Midst of Uncertainty and Change series, this workshop will help you begin creating your own Legacy Story - a unique, heartfelt letter that expresses and shares your values, beliefs, future hopes, blessings and wisdom.

**Session 1:** will provide examples of completed legacy stories, an overview of the process involved, and the tools used for developing one’s legacy story. A writing exercise will be assigned as homework to begin framing your life story.

**Session 2:** will utilize additional writing exercises to help you complete the first draft of your story.

**The Presenter:** Cathy Manning is a church member and Ethical Will Facilitator who received her training from Barry Baines, MD, founder of the Ethical Wills movement. She is also a licensed insurance agent who is certified in Long Term Care, as well as a Certified Senior Advisor. Learn more about Cathy at [www.LegacyOnWords.com](http://www.LegacyOnWords.com).

To learn more or to sign up, please call Elaine @ 612-825-1701 x124 or email her @ [Elaine@firstuniv.org](mailto:Elaine@firstuniv.org).

## Could First Universalist Be Your Spiritual Home?

Check out these great ways to learn more about this faith community and meet fellow journeyers.

1.

### For Visitors: First Step

1st and 3rd Sunday of every month after each service. The next classes are January 5 and 19.

2.

### Newcomers Circle

These gatherings are an opportunity to learn more about Unitarian Universalist history, theology, and connect with others who are getting to know First Universalist. Through deep listening and open-hearted reflection, these circles offer an opportunity to get to know ourselves, each other, and this liberal faith tradition more deeply.

#### Upcoming Circles:

Tuesdays, February 11, 18, 25  
Tuesdays, April 8, 15, 22

3.

### The Path to Membership

Could First Universalist be the home for your spiritual journey? The Path to Membership invites participants into a more in-depth exploration of Unitarian Universalism, the history of this congregation, and experience of membership. The Path to Membership is a requirement for membership.

#### Upcoming Classes:

Saturday, January 11, 9am-3pm  
Tuesdays, March 11, 18, 25;  
6:30-8:30pm

To register, please contact the Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink at [elaine@firstuniv.org](mailto:elaine@firstuniv.org) or call at 612-825-1701 ext. 124.

Childcare is available free of charge by contacting [childcare@firstuniv.org](mailto:childcare@firstuniv.org) at least seven days in advance.

4.

### Racial Justice Learning Circles

Looking for a opportunity to become personally engaged in First Universalist's racial justice work? Join a Racial Justice Learning Circle. In circles of 8-10 individuals, we will consider where we are personally and institutionally on our journey toward racial equity and a deeper understanding of race, racism, and whiteness.

Participants are asked to have attended Dr. Heather Hackman's 90-minute workshop. (Don't worry, there's another one on January 26). Register online during our Circle registration, which begins on Sunday, January 19.



Heart to Heart is a retreat for couples sponsored by Unity Unitarian Church but open to all couples. The weekend is designed to enrich intimacy in your relationship by emphasizing personal reflection and couple dialogue

A team of three experienced Heart to Heart volunteer couples lead the retreat. The lead couples give a series of presentations describing their own journeys and offering insights into what they have learned about their relationships and each other. Each participant couple, then, goes to a private place to write personal reflections and talk with each other about the topic presented. Participants are not asked to do any sharing with the group.

Past Heart to Heart participants have praised the weekend for affirming the importance of their love for each other, and instilling a deeper understanding between them. All couples committed to their partner and their relationship are welcome—same and opposite sex partners, married and unmarried. All persons, regardless of faith or church preference are welcome.

Cost for the Spring weekend, including housing and all meals, is \$385. Thanks to the generosity of previous participants, partial scholarships are available. To register, or for further information, please visit our website <http://www.hearttoheartmn.org>, or contact Brian Nofzinger by email [brian.nofzinger@pearson.com](mailto:brian.nofzinger@pearson.com) or

telephone **612-308-2008**. Space is limited to the first 15 couples who send in completed registration forms and payments. The weekend regularly fills, but we do maintain a waiting list for cancellations.

April 2014 Heart to Heart leaders are Allen Desmond and Cheri Desmond May, Jane Rauenhurst and Brian Nofzinger, and Nancy Gossard and Susan Hoffman. It is held at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Janesville, MN.

*Love is the Water of Life. Drink it down with heart and soul! Rumi*

**Be a Part of “The Great Gathering!”**

(continued from cover)

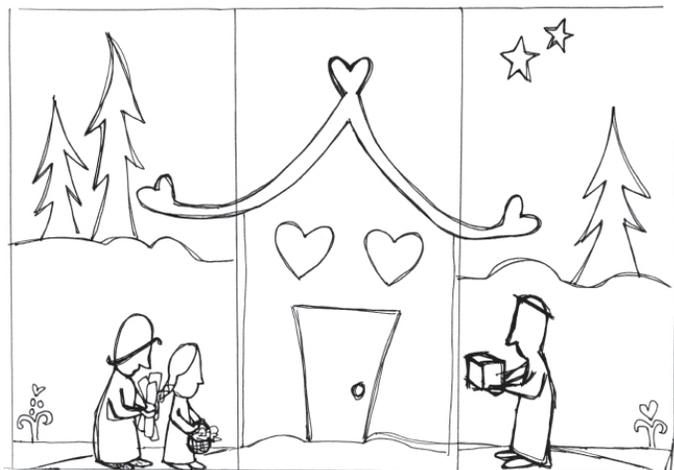
We also will need MANY more Great Gathering Experiences so we meet our goal of raising \$50,000 for our church budget. Be creative and think what event you could offer. We want activities for everyone to enjoy at a variety of price levels. Fill out the form provided in this Liberal on page 2 and return it to the Church office or the Hub or fax it to the church office (612-825-8879)

**WOW...** is what we hope everyone will feel at The Great Gathering evening. We hope you will be excited by the Great Gathering opportunities, but it might also be the food, the music, or just the chance to connect with others in the congregation during a fun night that gives you that WOW feeling.

**OOPS ...** We assume there might be some of these moments along the way, but with your help we will have fewer of those occasions.

**THANKS...** go to all who have made a financial commitment so the event is affordable for all.

- ...To all of you who purchase tickets!
- ...To all who offered one or more Great Gathering events
- ...To all of you who are volunteering to help. We hope that includes YOU!



This original drawing is by a Visual Arts Committee member.

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

Return Service Requested

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

## Why I give 5% to First Universalist

I am proud and grateful to call First Universalist my spiritual home. In fact, I am increasingly proud and grateful to be a part of this faith community. My relationship with and commitment to our church and Unitarian Universalist denomination is as a life-long UU, as a current member of First Universalist's Board of Trustees, as a former Coming of Age mentor to several youth, and as a former member and chair of our Pledge Team. I have long understood the obligatory part of my role at church: to give to the church financially, to receive spiritual guidance and growth here, and to grow into a more complete version of my best self in order to best serve the world around me. Because I take those responsibilities seriously, I give 5% of my income to First Universalist (pre-tax, gross income—but in a way, those details seem like unimportant semantics). I wonder if I will someday be so bold and so overflowing with generosity that I will give 10% of my income to this beloved place.

I have recently experienced a series of difficulties in my personal and family life. These have challenged me financially, in addition to emotionally and spiritually. Through the support and growth I received at First

Universalist in these times, I understand my role here even more completely now. My activities at First Universalist remind me of how perfectly imperfect my human life is, they connect me with other powerfully precious people, and they help me form deep relationships that link me to others with love. As the church becomes more strategic and powerfully visionary in its engagement with the community outside its own walls—as we understand our responsibility to both share our gifts abundantly and receive others' gifts graciously—I see that this place reflects my values more than any other place in my life. It is important to my spiritual health for my spending to reflect my values.

I give 5% to First Universalist because—when I understand its role in my life, in our lives, in this way—I can't afford not to. I humbly invite you to consider joining me in giving 5%. What kind of discovery and transformation might this kind of stretch bring to you?

*With gratitude,*  
Lark Weller

---