

BULLETIN

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you are here. Please join us regularly for Sunday morning worship services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM. From May 25 - August 31, we offer one service at 10:00 AM.

Come to a brief orientation to First Universalist and Unitarian Universalism, the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. Our next orientation takes place May 18; meet us in the front of the Sanctuary immediately after the service. Find out more about our community in this 30-minute overview. No sign up needed and coffee & childcare are provided.

The Visiting Families Welcome Station at the north end of the Religious Education wing has information about our Children, Youth & Family Ministries. Stop by if you are interested in learning more, or email our Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries, Lauren Wyeth, at lauren@firstuniv.org.

Hearing Devices are available - please ask an usher. **Cushions are available for the pews** and are located next to the sound booth and at the entrance to the Sanctuary. Please return them to their home after the service.

We also have **Fragrance-Free rows marked in the balcony.**

For more information about First Universalist, go to our website: www.firstuniversalistchurch.org stop by our Information Center in the Social Hall downstairs after services, or call our church office, **612-825-1701**.



Dear Church,

We are on the edge of making significant cuts in our proposed church budget for the 2014-2015 church year, including eliminating free childcare for non-Sunday church events, reducing the hours of our Minister of Worship Arts, restructuring and cutting staff hours in our Religious Education Program, and more.

This note is to inform you about the potential changes, to update you on how we arrived here, and to let you know that collectively, we can decide how this particular story unfolds.

Almost exactly five years, on May 3, 2009, I was called by First Universalist Church, by a congregational vote, to serve as your Senior Minister. In that ceremony, we promised to walk together in the Universalist Spirit of love and hope. I was deeply drawn to this congregation because of its Universalist heritage, its bold vision and its desire to grow and change.

The first five years of my ministry have been a time of growth and rapid change. Four years ago, the Emily Grey Charter School bought out of their lease, meaning even though the church lost \$185,000 in annual revenue, we gained precious class room space to grow our Religious Education Program. The Board and Congregation took this risk because we were growing, financial giving was increasing, and we believed that owning our own space was a critical step in having our children and youth ministry program flourish.

At the same time, we added facilities staff to care for our building, administrative staff to meet the increased administrative demands, and program staff to help serve a growing congregation. During this time, some programs ended, such as Unity Center for Youth Leadership, and new initiatives and programs, such as the Day of Service, our Racial Justice Journey, and the Wellspring Program began. During this time, we began to focus on offering a deep, wide, variety of Circle experiences.

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We restructured our Program Team, bringing on a Minister of Program Life, and we created a Worship Arts staff position that ensures, through Worship Associates, intergenerational services, and youth focused worship, that Sunday morning sings. With additional fundraising efforts such as Miracle Sundays, matching pledge gifts, and more, we managed to balance the budget almost every year. (During this time, the Board and Congregation approved deficit spending of over \$100,000 and we've been significantly under that.)

In the 2013-2014 budget, we anticipated \$1,147,503 in pledges, with a Board approved \$18,000 deficit, but as we near the end of the current fiscal year, it's clear we were overly optimistic, as only \$1,087,529 has been received in pledges. The bottom line is that revenue has not increased to match the size of the dreams we aspire to fulfill. In 2014-15, we are committed to a realistic pledge estimate and a balanced budget. These facts, in addition to a few other adjustments, have resulted in us needing to close a large gap between our expected income and our expenses for the 2014-2015 budget. If we are unable to grow our giving to match our dreams, we will need to explore bringing a tenant back into our space.

At this point in time, in order to create a balanced budget, we need to make some significant changes. These proposed changes are difficult to consider, especially given the momentum and vibrancy of First Universalist, but we believe that they allow us to continue to protect the priorities and fulfill the mission of the church. Some of these changes may offer opportunities - opportunities like increased ministerial leadership of our Faith in Action efforts, and deeper partnership between staff and the congregation, to name a few. Some of these changes would be disappointing and difficult.

And that's where you, the congregants of First Universalist, come into this story. We are sharing this information with you so that we all know where we stand and what is at stake. We're not at the end of the story yet. Our budget for the 2014-15 church year is not yet set. We hope that over the next few weeks, we can increase our projected income for 2014-15, and as our projected income increases, we can restore some of the items we're proposing to cut.

If you have already made your pledge for the 2014-15 church year, thank you! And whether you have pledged already or are still thinking about your pledge, I invite you to reconsider the amount you planned on giving, and consider giving 10% more. If even half the congregation did this, we'd be able to take huge steps toward being the church we want to be in the world. To pledge, learn more or increase your pledge, visit www.firstupledge.weebly.com. You can also increase your pledge by filling out the orange card in the pew holder.

If you have questions or concerns about the budget, the church, or your pledge -- we want to talk with you. A more detailed version of the proposed budget will be available as part of the May Board Packet, and the proposed Program Budget is available online. Please join us for an open conversation with Rev. Justin Schroeder and Board members on Sunday, May 18 following the second service. Or, reach out anytime to Rev. Justin (justin@firstuniv.org) or Board President David Bach (boardchair@firstuniv.org).

In Faith,
Rev. Justin Schroeder

P.S. Go to www.firstuniversalist.org to see the full email that I shared with the congregation.



Seasons of the Church

Rev. Justin Schroeder

May 11, 2014

Worship Theme: Season of Passage

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

Music for Gathering

Words of Welcome

Rev. Justin Schroeder

Bell Sound

Prelude

Slowly and Quietly, Please
-Don Sebesky

Universal Jazz Band
Conducted by John Jensen

Opening Hymn 1018

Come and Go With Me (Teal Hymnal)

Lighting the Chalice

*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.*
-James V. Blake

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Wisdom Story

Rev. Jen Crow

Musical Interlude

Child Dedication

Rev. Justin Schroeder and Rev. Jen Crow

Blessing in Song

Three Flowers
-McCoy Tyner

The Usual Suspects

Silence

Cycle of Life

Rev. Jen Crow

Hymn of Prayer 123

Spirit of Life (seated)

*Spirit of life, come unto me,
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea:
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close. Wings set me free.
Spirit of Life, come to me. Come to me.*

-Carolyn McDade
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Reading

Rev. Justin Schroeder

For Joel at 94
-Mark Nepo

Musical Offering

Eleanor Rigby
-Paul McCartney, arr. by Eric Richards

Universal Jazz Band
Conducted by John Jensen

Sermon

Seasons of The Church

Rev. Justin Schroeder

Offeratory

Naima
-John Coltraine

Universal Jazz Band
Conducted by John Jensen

Closing Hymn 1007

There's a River Flowin' in My Soul (Teal Hymnal)

Closing Words

Rev. Justin Schroeder

Blessing in Song 413

Go Now in Peace

Music for the Journey

Ceora
-Lee Morgan

The Usual Suspects

Worship Leaders

Rev. Justin Schroeder Senior Minister
Rev. Jen Crow Minister of Program Life
John Jensen Director of Music/Pianist
Universal Jazz Band
The Usual Suspects John Jensen
Jim Sutherland
Harry Pontiff

Chalice Lighters

Katelyn Berry 9:30
Sophia Kimball 11:15

Worship Design and Coordination

Rev. Ruth MacKenzie Minister of Worship Arts

Offering

Youth Sunday

Chancel Flowers

The flowers today were arranged by Marjie Smith of the Visual Arts Committee.

Universal Jazz Band

Directed by John Jensen

Trumpets

David Bach, Steve Hillson, Anda Tanaka

Trombones

Jim Tenbensen, Brian McCullough, Kim Stelson, Michael Okwabi

Saxophones

Dylan Polivany, Scott Sponheim, Derek Smith, Annliv Bacon, Wes Huisenga

Rythm Section

Brian Zais, Dan McLaughlin, Paul Hjelmstad