

# GET CONNECTED

## HOLIDAY GIVING - GIVING OUR GIFTS TODAY

During each service this Sunday, individuals and families will be asked to bring forward their gift to Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, the recipient of our collective intent to re-imagine the holidays by reducing our consumption and redirecting those savings to provide alternative housing for homeless youth, formerly incarcerated men and families in a housing crisis. You can place your check or cash in the red envelope provided during services last week and available in the vestibule, or make an electronic contribution via Square Cash (To: \$firstuniv For: Beacon). If you donate electronically, just write the amount on the red envelope and bring it forward during the service.

*The 2015 Holiday Giving Team: Peg Mitchell, Sofi Ali and daughter Juliet Ali-Caccamo, David Potyondy and son Owen Kynch, Ann McCully and daughter Claudia Wahl, Lena Vdakes and son Skyler Vdakes, Diane Rose, Paula Gilbertson, Martha Moriarty, and Shannon Steven.*

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE: DEC. 24, 9:30 P.M.

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service is a time of mindfulness, meaning-making and music. This service is a weaving of scripture readings, poems, musical offerings, silence, and lighting our hearts and spirit with the candlelight and hope.

## ONE SERVICE ONLY NEXT SUNDAY, DEC. 27 10 A.M.

Next Sunday, Dec. 27, join us for a multi-generational Singing Sunday at 10 a.m.

## WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

For 35 years, First Universalist has honored the longest night of the year, and joyously celebrated the return of the Sun! Join us on Monday, Dec. 21, as we observe another turning of the year. Sanctuary doors open at 7 p.m., and the service begins at 7:30 p.m. We begin with music, chanting a story for all ages, leading us into darkness, then celebrating the return of the light. The service includes 12 minutes of complete darkness, accompanied by the drumbeat. Come celebrate the longest night and discover what gifts await you in the dark.

## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our annual Christmas Pageant is a beautiful telling of an ancient story. It is a tale of hope and hospitality, a reminder that every child is born a redeemer, a story that speaks to us all of what it means to be a seeker, a star, a wise one, a wanderer. Join us for the Pageant this afternoon at 4 p.m. or Thursday, Dec. 24 at 4 p.m.

## NEWCOMER CIRCLE BEGINS JANUARY 5

Are you new to First Universalist? Newcomer Circles are four-session gatherings of 6-10 people that offer a chance to explore core Unitarian Universalist values, reflect on our spiritual journeys, and connect with other folks who are new to church. The next Newcomer Circle meets Tuesdays, Jan. 5, 12, 19, and 26 from 7-8:30 p.m. Registration is required; sign up at the Information table in the social hall or by emailing [Sandy@firstuniv.org](mailto:Sandy@firstuniv.org).

# WELCOME

*We are so glad you are here.*

*At First Universalist Church, in the spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow.*

We welcome, affirm, and protect the light in each human heart; we act outside of our walls; we listen to where love is calling us next. We do all this as a faith community committed to racial justice. These spiritual practices and commitments are the ways we move in rhythm with the great love that is alive in the world.

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

**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**, stop by our Information Center in the Social Hall downstairs, call 612-825-1701, or visit our website: [firstuniversalistchurch.org](http://firstuniversalistchurch.org).

## Are You Visiting?

Come to a brief orientation to First Universalist and Unitarian Universalism, the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

## Our next orientation takes place: Today!

Meet us in the front of the Sanctuary immediately after the service. Find out more about our community in this 45-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 Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries Lauren Wyeth at: [lauren@firstuniv.org](mailto:lauren@firstuniv.org).

## CELEBRATING OUR GENEROSITY

*Offering plates from Sunday Service:*

**11/15** Senior Corps Programs \$590.64

**11/22** Beacon, Holiday Giving \$2,931.34\*

**11/29** Joyce Uptown Foodshelf \$1,070.50

*\*100% of the offering to Holiday Giving*

Know a charitable organization that shares our commitment to justice and equity? Nominate an offering recipient at: [firstuniversalistchurch.org/offering-plate](http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/offering-plate)

You can give online through the Square Cash App. Our cashtag is \$firstuniv. Thanks!

## LET US KEEP YOU IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

If you are experiencing a crisis or transition, or celebrating a joy—please let us know. To be included in our Cycle of Life each Sunday in worship, contact Sandy DiNanni at [sandy@firstuniv.org](mailto:sandy@firstuniv.org) or 612-825-1701.

If you would like support, contact Rev. Jen Crow ([jen@firstuniv.org](mailto:jen@firstuniv.org) or 612-825-1701) or any member of our Pastoral Care Team.

## NEED TRANSPORTATION TO CHURCH OR TO A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT?

We can help with at least two weeks' notice. Contact Anne McBean (952-938-2897, [mcbea001@yahoo.com](mailto:mcbea001@yahoo.com)) if you need help with a ride or would like to offer a ride to a congregant.

## THE WEEKLY LIBERAL

*The Weekly Liberal* (our email newsletter) is published on Thursdays. Subscribe at: [firstuniversalistchurch.org/the-weekly-liberal/](http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/the-weekly-liberal/)

Do you have news or information you'd like published? Fill out the submission form on our website!



WORSHIP THEME: MAKING ROOM

# GIFTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

REV. JUSTIN SCHROEDER

*DECEMBER 20, 2015*

Music for GatheringDr. Jerrod Wendland

Words of WelcomeRev. Ruth MacKenzie

Bellsound

PreludeFirst Universalist Folk Band  
Il Dulci Jubilo  
-Sussex CarolDick Hensold

Call to WorshipConrad Carlozzi

Opening Hymn #225 (Please stand in body or spirit)  
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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  
  
(reprinted with permission by the UUA)

Musical InterludeFirst Universalist Folk Band  
‘Tis a Gift to be Simple  
Dick Hensold  
-American Shaker tune, new lyrics by Ron Parker

Silence

Cycle of LifeRev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink

Hymn of Prayer #123 (please remain seated)

Spirit of Life  
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  
  
(reprinted with permission by the UUA)

Musical OfferingFirst Universalist Folk Band  
Stables  
Dick Hensold  
-Peter Mayer

SermonRev. Justin Schroeder  
Gifts That Make a DifferenceRev. Jen Crow

Celebration of GiftsFirst Universalist Folk Band  
Medley, Swimming to the Other Side & ‘Tis a Sign  
Dick Hensold  
-Pat Humphries (Swimming) Ron Parker (‘Tis a Sign)

Closing Hymn #231 (Please stand in body or spirit)  
Angels We Have Heard on High

Closing WordsRev. Justin Schroeder

Blessing in Song #413  
Go Now in Peace

Music for the JourneyFirst Universalist Folk Band  
Thanksgiving Eve  
Dick Hensold  
-Bob Franke

Worship Leaders

Rev. Justin Schroeder	Senior Minister
Rev. Jen Crow	Executive Minister
Rev. Ruth MacKenzie	Minister of Worship & Coming of Age
Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink	Minister of Membership & Adult Ministries
Dr. Jerrod Wendland	Pianist
Dick Hensold	Folk Band Conductor, Arranger, Northumbrian Smallpipes, String Bass

First Universalist Folk Band

Allan Steinhauer	Vocals
Eric Roberts	Banjo
Howard Hobbs	Guitar & Vocals
Jill Conrad	Violin & Vocals
Ron Parker	Guitar & Vocals
Sylvia Scoggin	Violin & Vocals
Mary Lee	Guitar & Vocals
Patrick Hertz	Guitar & Vocals

Elizabeth Haugen	9:30 Chalice Lighter
Ava Bleifuss	11:15 Chalice Lighter

Chancel Flowers

The holiday decorations, “An Explosion of Beauty and Joy,” were created by the Visual Arts Committee with warm wishes.

Offering: Beacon Housing Initiative

The Holiday Giving Team is charged with the bi-annual effort of leading our congregation to live out our principles by investigating opportunities to reduce our consumerism during the holidays and re-direct our financial and emotional energies to changing the imbalances in our culture. This year’s recipient is Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, an organization committed to ending homelessness through advocacy, alternative housing, and temporary shelter. Our goal is to raise \$70,000 this holiday season.

About Dick Hensold

Dick Hensold (B.M., Oberlin Conservatory) is the leading Northumbrian smallpiper in North America, and for the past 20 years has performed and taught in England, Scotland, Japan, Canada, and across the United States. His solo Northumbrian smallpipes CD *Big Music for Northumbrian Smallpipes* was released in 2007. He has been composer-in-residence at Pilgrim Lutheran Church in St Paul since 2002, providing music for a Celtic contemplative service. As a church musician, Dick uses his instruments to help create sacred space for worship, using his sounds and melodies to help the congregation interpret the service in an intuitive way.

December Worship Theme: Making Room

So much in our consumer culture screams hurry up, do more, make it work, squeeze it in. We are bombarded with how to do things smarter, faster, more efficiently, especially at this time of year. If the purpose of the religious life is to grow our souls and repair the world, as Unitarian Universalist minister Richard Gilbert once put it, if we are to move into a greater sense of wholeness inside and out, then making room is key. Making room is different than squeezing it in. Making room connotes a sense of slowing down, refocusing our attention and coming into spiritual alignment. It is developing practices and systems that help us calm our tricked out nervous systems, and finding grace and goodness on the other side, when we least expect it.