

Standing  
on the  
side of LOVE  
— and reason.

# THE FIRST Unitarian

VOL. 92, AUGUST 2010 • THE FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF MINNEAPOLIS

## From the Administrator

In May of 2009 the Board of Trustees endorsed a communications policy affirming that “good communications are essential in an organization as large and complex as First Unitarian Society (FUS). Members need to understand where to find information, and leaders and staff need to know how best to communicate with members.” As part of an ongoing process to improve communication, staff and program committees regularly evaluate our various communication tools to ensure that information is timely and reaches all members in an appropriate manner. At present, our most powerful mechanism for providing information is the FUS website. Complementing the website are two other electronic tools: *The Unitarian FLASH*, a twice-monthly electronic newsletter, and the FUS page on **Facebook**, the popular social media site.

These electronic channels are rapid and cost-effective. At the same time, the labor and expense of creating a print version of the FUS newsletter continues to increase. As a result, like many UU churches nationally, FUS is revising the creation and distribution of its printed materials starting in September.

Beginning next month, the Society will distribute a highly condensed summary of FUS news, produced as a large-print document and sent only to folks identified by the Caring Circles team as needing such assistance. This printed document will continue to link FUS activities with our members who may lack access to electronic systems, or who choose not to use them.

At the same time, we will distribute a new series of informational postcards to targeted mailing lists that will highlight upcoming FUS programs.

The First Unitarian newsletter will become a quarterly publication focusing on such topical questions as spiritual maturity, the education of children within the humanist tradition, music in the humanist experience, and critical social justice challenges. It will still contain useful FUS information but also will expand to be an exciting forum for exchanging ideas.

There are three goals for these changes. One is to more fully incorporate the new electronic communication tools to ensure rapid and timely sharing of information. A second goal is to reach out to those members who may not be comfortable with electronic communications by offering a special print link to their Society. A third goal is to introduce the programs and vision of FUS to a wider audience.

We welcome your feedback as these new communication vehicles are introduced over the coming year.

— Will Hegeman, Congregational Administrator

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## Trustee Tidbit

The Board of Trustees wants to thank all the volunteers that helped with the Humanist homecoming event. And a big round of thanks to all the volunteers at GA, particularly James Sweet and Mark Gibbons who spent 24/7 doing technical work, and others who greeted at the airport, and all who went to GA and represented FUS.

Order of Service  
announcements are  
due by noon on  
Wed. of each week. Please  
email your submission(s) to:  
[info@firstunitariansociety.org](mailto:info@firstunitariansociety.org)

Newsletter submissions are  
due by the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month  
and should be sent to:  
[newsletter@  
firstunitariansociety.org](mailto:newsletter@firstunitariansociety.org)

# Summer Assembly Previews

Your Summer Assemblies Committee is proud to bring you a full summer's worth of thought-provoking and enjoyable lay-led programming. Thanks so much to all of those who stepped forward to volunteer their time and talents to make this summer's assemblies an enriching part of FUS's full year of spiritual programming! Please join us for the following programs, each beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Lower Assembly Hall.



## **August 1: A Celebration of Lammass**

Speaker: Phil Duran (Seasonal Celebrations Team)

In ancient times, spiritual practice involved connecting not only to events like solstices and equinoxes, but also to other points during the cycle of the seasons. One such event is the celebration of Lammass, which, while largely forgotten outside of pagan circles, may nonetheless contain provocative possibilities for our congregation. Curious? This service will give you food for thought.

## **August 8: Lest We Forget**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons

Fifty-five years ago, on August 6 and 9, 1945, American forces effectively ended the Second World War by dropping atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, making the United States so far the only nation to have used nuclear weapons. As we struggle, more than half a century later, to make the world's arsenals smaller, it is worth recalling the circumstances, and the results, of that decision. This morning will offer an opportunity to renew our connections with some of the images, values, and hopes around the creation of war and peace. What, if anything, have we learned? What is it that we are called not to forget?

## **August 15: It's All up to What You Value**

Speakers: Lisa and George Greene

When we think of Gandhi, we think of someone who lived his values. But we don't have to look beyond FUS to find people who have integrated their values into their daily lives. Getting in touch with your values can be a catalyst for change not only in your community but in your own life. We will explore how acting on your values can be a transformative experience.



## **August 22: Toward Equality**

Speakers: Adele Hansen, Mibs Pearson (Women's Awareness Group)

Over the years, as we have grown in awareness of ourselves as women in a complex and ever-changing world, we have explored the past, acknowledge the present, and look forward to the future. Join us as we "celebrate the words and deeds of those who challenged us to change the structure of inequality in our world."

## **August 29: Service Travel**

Speakers: Madalyn Cioci, Joe Lazur and family, Peter D'Ascoli and Barbara Weatherhead, George and Jenna Hutchinson

Combining social justice and service to humankind with world travel is a win-win opportunity. Many FUS members have satisfied the itch to help others by offering service in interesting world cultures. Service travel does not necessarily require specialized talents or skills other than a willingness to work with local populations by cleaning, fixing or building necessary infrastructures or providing basic learning or English language tutoring. Find out how you, too, could participate in an upcoming FUS service trip.

## **September 5: Swimming to the Other Side**

Speaker: Steven Protzman, Summer Minister

Unitarian Universalism reminds us that none of us is in the water of life alone, and that together we teach and learn how to embrace this mysterious journey in all its wonder and terror and discovery. In this final summer assembly, we'll reflect on our journey together, some of the places we've been and the things we've learned, and the work we are called to do as we swim together towards the world our faith calls us to create.

# Social Action

Update from the DCEH Congregational Organizer  
Heidi Johnson McAllister



## Downtown Congregations To End Homelessness

The Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH) mission is to work together as people of faith to end homelessness. By working together on our shared values we increase our power to end homelessness, not just manage it!

So, how have we worked toward those goals lately?

- ✓ The Salvation Army Harbor Lights Shelter on Currie Avenue has been consistently overcrowded. It took some creative thinking and understanding of the dynamics of chronic homelessness to find a solution. That community-wide solution is the Currie Avenue Partnership. *FUS's contribution to this collaborative has helped to move 40 people into permanent housing in the past five months.* Of these 40 people, the average length of their homelessness was eight years, with the longest being 17 years staying in a shelter every night! In total, 150 people will move out of temporary housing in 2010. This work is important, but we are not yet finished!
- ✓ Support folks who are moving into permanent housing through Currie Ave Partnership! The DCEH is collecting Welcome Baskets to give to the Currie Avenue Partnership for folks moving out of shelter and into permanent housing. They need cleaning supplies! *Go to [www.dceh.org](http://www.dceh.org) or the Social Action table to find the list of items to donate and where to bring them.*
- ✓ This year over 700 people from the DCEH have engaged in advocacy by receiving action alerts on a regular basis from January through May of 2010. We were asked to *write letters, call or visit our legislators or send letters to the editor.* With the state budget deficit, most safety net programs were slated to be cut, such as General Assistance Medical Care and Minnesota Family Investment Program, which supports people who have no income, who cannot receive unemployment, and may be disabled.
- ✓ DCEH has a bike ministry and it has given away ten reconditioned bikes. Fifty more are waiting for reconditioning. *We need your help. If you enjoy fixing up bikes* contact [Annie@dceh.org](mailto:Annie@dceh.org).
- ✓ On August 23, 6:00–8:00 p.m. at the Basilica, **Responding to Pan-Handling**, featuring the zAmya Theatre Group (homeless or formerly homeless) and Monica Nilsson, Dir., St. Stephen's Street Outreach.
- ✓ September 25, 9:00 a.m.–Noon, **Sofas & Spokes Collection** of used furniture and bikes. More later.
- ✓ *Speak up!* Go to [www.dceh.org](http://www.dceh.org) to find a list of questions on ending homelessness to ask candidates this summer and fall at community forums.

**The First Unitarian** is published once a month. The deadline for submission of items is the 7<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. Items submitted may be edited for style, content, and to fit the space available. Submissions may be left in Morgan's mailbox in the FUS office, or made by mail, fax (612-377-2151) or email (preferred) to [newsletter@firstunitariansociety.org](mailto:newsletter@firstunitariansociety.org).



*This newsletter is printed on post-consumer recycled paper with soy-based inks.*

# Membership

FUS has gone viral! We have about 250 Facebook friends. We look forward to your active presence online. Feel free to post related topics or start a discussion.



Befriend FUS on Facebook!



## Happy August Birthdays!

Jon Boese	Margaret McCoy
Terry Burke	Kyle Redelsheimer
Sheila Callander	Viv Rengstorff
Gretchen Clemence	Jan Robin
Ray Deveaux	Lyle Rossman
Christie Eller	Karen Rowehl
Mark Gibbons	Richard Seurer
Harper Habig	Dan Tix
Arthur Higinbotham	Nicki Victora
Becca Justiniano	Maria Vincze
Ilo Leppik	
Andy Lyman-Buttler	
Wanda McCaa	

Teresa West, Membership Coordinator

# Stewardship

These words are being penned on “fireworks night,” the final festive sector of Independence Day. The date of course marks the anniversary of the remarkable message prepared by T. Jefferson and friends for Britain and the rest of the world. So it can suggest to this writer that he too should be offering another significant message for FUS’s late July consumption. And a significant message it will be (though somewhat more modest in tone than *The Declaration of Independence!*)



We too seem to have done it! My guess is that you’ll be pleased to read that the FUS PLEDGE TARGET OF \$392,000 FOR 2009-2010 SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN REACHED!

We have been told by the FUS Office money watchers that there are still a few loose ends to tie up; but when the stock transfers are recorded and all the end-of-June checks deposited, we should all be able to celebrate our success in this important area of commitment!

There’s also other news to share and it merits a positive mark in the promise of FUS as a Green Sanctuary. Thanks to funds set aside in 2008-2009 and this year supplemented by a very generous gift from the FUS Alliance, OUR STORM WATER SEPARATION PROJECT HAS BEEN COMPLETED, and our penalty payments to Minneapolis have ended.

So we have two positives to report to you. We also (being prudent monitors of your fiscal commitments to the Society) need to mention the annual concern about pledges in July and August. We know that many of you will find yourselves less involved in FUS activities during the summer: but we must remind you that pledge payments need to be kept current to cover summer expenses at the Society. And of course we need to wish all (active and less active-FUSers) a wonderful season and say thanks for your ongoing support!

Your Stewardship Committee

# Announcements



## Save the Date!

Save the weekend of October 8–10 for the annual FUS Retreat to the Woods at beautiful Baker Near-Wilderness Settlement in Long Lake, Minnesota, less than an hour's drive from FUS. Join your First Unitarian friends for a weekend of fellowship, relaxation, and renewal. You'll enjoy great food, hiking and biking trails, canoeing, and much more. You can tent or stay in rustic cabins. More details and registration will follow in *The Unitarian Flash*. Make plans now to join us for this relaxing weekend of fun!

## FUS Staff

Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, ext. 116  
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Music Director: Barbara Brooks, ext. 106  
Chorus@firstunitariansociety.org

Orchestra Conductor 2009–2010: Dr. Jeffrey Stirling  
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Building Steward: Cirilo Vail Hernandez

Office Hours: Mon.–Fri., 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.;  
Sunday, 9:00 a.m.–Noon

Main phone number: 612-377-6608

## Women's Awareness Group

The August meeting of the Women's Awareness Group will be held on Monday, August 9, at the home of Barb Lutz. Mibs Pearson is cohost. FUS women are invited to join us at 6:30 p.m. for a potluck dinner followed by an open forum. Please call Barb or Mibs to RSVP and for directions.

## The Alliance

Current members of the Alliance have received next year's program and requests for dues and updating information for the new 2010-2011 membership booklet. New members are welcome. If you are interested in becoming a member, please call Membership Chairperson Clara Asp for more information. The first program and membership meeting is Wednesday, October 6 at the Society. Dues remain \$25 per household for the year.

The Alliance is a dynamic group of dedicated members and friends of FUS. Members form friendships, exchange ideas, give service and support to the Society, promote liberal religion, and encourage and inspire personal growth.

## Reminder

Remember to collect some water during your summer activities to share during the September 12 ingathering service's Water Celebration.

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## The First Unitarian Society

OF MINNEAPOLIS

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# Enjoy Summer Assemblies!

10:30 a.m.  
every  
Sunday  
through  
September 5



### *Board of Trustees*

Beth Gohdes (Chair)  
Adele Hansen (Vice Chair)  
Bruce Nelson (Secretary)

Jon Boese  
Scott Eller  
Martha Hardesty  
James Leighton  
Polly Peterson  
JD Rickard  
Mary Ann Lundquist (Treasurer)

For an up-to-date listing of events at FUS, check the calendar online at the FUS website.

1. Go to [www.firstunitariansociety.org](http://www.firstunitariansociety.org)
2. Click on “Calendar” on the left menu bar.

If you do not have access to the web, contact the FUS Office at 612-377-6608 for event information.