

Standing
on the
side of LOVE
— and reason.

THE FIRST Unitarian

VOL. 91, OCTOBER 2009 • THE FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF MINNEAPOLIS

From the Minister

With the new FUS program season up to full speed, several of the goals outlined by our Strategic Planning Committee are starting to take on visible form. Following recommendations derived from the Strategic Plan, the Board of Trustees has appointed two task forces, and has approved a consultant visit for later this spring.

One task force will explore the desirability and feasibility of adding a second minister to our professional staff. This will include how we will make such a decision, the potential timing if we decide to proceed, how a position might be structured and funded, and the type of candidates we would wish to consider if we move forward. Clearly, a long discussion lies ahead for all of us, and we are preparing a process for having that conversation together.

The second task force will focus on the ways in which we cultivate and recruit leaders, especially volunteers and lay leadership, within the FUS community. We deeply want the experience of being a leader here to enrich the lives of our members, rather than being a chore that we reluctantly undertake just because it's my turn, or no one else will do it, and that leaves people with a bad feeling. Learning to lead, and practicing those skills in a supportive community, should be part of our growth as mature, responsible humanists. This congregation needs to be intentional about inviting our members to become leaders, and helping to equip, support, and reward them as they give this important gift to our community. This task force will help us to be reflective and pro-active as we encourage one another in leadership roles.

Another goal for the Strategic Planning Committee has been to review and clarify the governance structures by which our Society operates. For the most part, our board, by-laws, and meeting structures seem to be a good fit for us, and to work smoothly. At the same time, there is much literature available about how to make boards and committees more effective. It is possible that we could benefit from an outside perspective to help us see areas in which we might be able to improve, and at the same time identify the ways in which our process serves us well. We are in negotiation with a consultant from the UUA, formerly of the Alban Institute, to make a visit to us in the spring, and do an evaluation.

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

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

Forum and Assembly Previews

Forums are at 9:30 a.m. in the Lower Assembly Hall.

■10/4/09 FORUM: “GA 2010”

Join us for a discussion about the Unitarian Universalist Association’s General Assembly being held here in Minneapolis in 2010.



■10/11/09 FORUM: “Mining the Hymnal’s Hidden Gems, Revisited”

Presenter: Barb Brooks

Last year, we explored *Singing the Living Tradition* and discovered some wonderful songs in our hymnal. Let us continue that voyage of discovery, in which we will find and sing some beautiful melodies. Bring your voice.



Assemblies are at 10:30 a.m. in the Upper Assembly Hall.

◆10/4/09 ASSEMBLY: “Standing On the Side of Love: UUA Association Sunday”

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons

Unitarian Universalism has a long history of advocating on behalf of people who are subjected to exclusion, oppression, or violence because of their identities. We have not yet found the magic key to resolve the problem of institutional racism in our society, but we do have clarity that new forms of oppression can only make things worse for everyone. As we approach National Coming out Day next Sunday, how can we strengthen our commitment as a faith community to see to it that every person is treated with respect and integrity, and all genuine relationships of love are honored?

A special collection in support of the UUA will be received at this Assembly, and a Conversation with the Trustees will follow.

◆10/11/09 ASSEMBLY: “Music Making: Beyond the Self”

Speaker: Mary Bohman, Ministerial Intern

Since ancient times music and song have been an integral part of human communities. Music functioned to establish connections between people by teaching cultural identity and functioning as a medium for healing, ritual, meaning making, and beauty. It still can today. How can Unitarian Universalist communities actively cultivate these deeper layers of meaning in our own music making? Today’s cultural emphasis on specialization and individualization has led many of us to abandon music making because “we’re not good enough.” A focus on digital recordings has made us an iPod nation tuning out the world as we ride the bus to work. How can we go beyond music and the self and fully embrace the community building aspects of music making? Sunday morning is one of the few opportunities to sing in a group and transcend differences through music. Is music making an authentic Unitarian Universalist spiritual practice?

A soup lunch will follow this assembly.

Forum and Assembly Previews

Forums are at 9:30 a.m. in the Lower Assembly Hall.

Assemblies are at 10:30 a.m. in the Upper Assembly Hall.

■10/18/09 FORUM: “Minnesota Law Center for Immigrants”

Presenter: John Keller. Minnesota Law Center for Immigrants

John Keller has been on the staff of the Minnesota Law Center for Immigrants since 1998. He was named the Executive Director and Supervising Attorney in 2005. The Center’s goals are to: remedy legal problems with immigration legal services, prevent legal problems with law-related education to immigrants and refugees and to encourage immigration policies that are practical and compassionate.

A social justice offering will be taken for the Law Center during the Assembly this morning.

■10/25/09 FORUM: Book Chat: *They Take Our Jobs and 20 Other Myths About Immigration* by Aviva Chomsky



Dietrich Room

Discussion Leader: Aviva Chomsky
Aviva will be with us to help discuss her book and the issues surrounding immigration reform, in general.

She is currently a

professor and the coordinator of Latin American studies at Salem State College, Massachusetts. You can look for her book in the FUS bookstore. Ms. Chomsky will also be able to sign your book whether purchased that morning or earlier.

◆10/18/09 ASSEMBLY: “Dreaming Big”

Speaker: Rev. Roger Bertchausen

During the past twenty years, the Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Appleton, WI, has grown from 100 to over 600 members. Appleton and the surrounding cities comprise a small, conservative metropolitan area. So how has this happened in ground that is not supposed to be fertile for Unitarian Universalism? The Rev. Bertchausen, the Senior Minister of the Fox Valley UU Fellowship since 1990, will share his congregation’s story and its possible lessons for the wider UU movement.

A Ceremony of Grieving and Healing will follow this Assembly.

◆10/25/09 ASSEMBLY: “Standing On the Side of Love: Immigration Today”

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons

Diversity is often named as a core value both of liberals in general and religious liberals in particular, as well of the wider Enlightenment-based culture. Yet living

with and in support of diversity does not come naturally, and is not easy. Human consciousness appears to be genetically programmed for something like tribalism; a preference for the familiar and the similar, a comfort zone of likeness. What do we gain by resisting this instinctive suspicion of difference, and how do we create a society that is consistently welcoming and affirming to people “not like us”?

A Sermon Discussion will follow this Assembly.



From the Minister

continued from page 1



This month, on the weekend of October 18th, we will have a special pulpit guest, and an opportunity to think about questions of membership growth. The Rev. Roger Bertchausen is the minister of the Fox Valley UU Fellowship in Appleton, Wisconsin, which has grown from 104 members in 1990 to over 600 today, and has been named a “break away” growth congregation by the UUA. Roger and I have been friends for many years, and last spring I had the opportunity to preach in Appleton—at all FOUR of the weekend services there! I look forward to welcoming Roger to our pulpit, and to the opportunity to share lunch and a workshop/conversation about the ways in which that remarkable congregation initiated and responded to their rapid growth. Our Membership Committee will be sponsoring this gathering, following the Assembly on the 18th, and anyone who is interested is invited to join us. I hope many of you will take this opportunity to meet one of my most engaging colleagues, and join me in picking his brain for all the wisdom he can share.

One final request—We are in the process of laying out the cover art for the Orders of Service this year, and I am looking for additional submissions. If you have created something graphically interesting that could work for our covers, please get a copy to me—it can be digital or hard copy, but please let me be able to hang on to it, since we may not use it until later in the year. Any media is welcome; color is important. I would be happy to explore further if anyone has questions.

Kendyl Gibbons, Senior Minister

From the Intern

It is with great anticipation and gladness that I come to First Unitarian Society to be your ministerial intern. As I write this article the year is turning towards fall, a time of transition for many. Students young and old are settling into school, the beauty of autumn is upon us, and a new year at the society is underway. I am excited to share my gifts with you and gain hands-on experience in the life of the church and the many responsibilities of a UU minister. I am currently a student at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton where I am working on my Masters of Divinity. It is an honor to have the opportunity to intern at the society and to have such an esteemed mentor as the Reverend Doctor Kendyl Gibbons. I look forward to learning from all of you and welcome your feedback, critique, and encouragement.

Ministry is a second career for me. I worked for more than 20 years as a voice teacher, choir director, music therapist, and performer. I currently perform with an *a cappella* trio, Oasis, singing for patients in hospital and hospice settings around the region. I spent the last six years working just down the road, at First Universalist Church, where I am also a member. There I helped coordinate the Children’s Religious Education Program and also coordinated Children’s Music, including directing the Children’s Choir.

I am blessed to share my life with my partner, Jeff Sylvestre, and our two beautiful daughters, Emily, age 15, and Nora, age 11. We live in small bungalow in south Minneapolis with our cat Sasha. While my family is entrenched in congregational life at First Universalist, I hope they will join us from time to time to worship, learn, and play.

It is with a deep feeling of gratitude that I begin my internship. My hopes and dreams and hard work have brought me to this moment. I plan to immerse myself in the administrative, educational, and worship life of the church. I am excited to get involved with social justice. I hope to learn more about pastoral care and practice finding balance in my own life between work, family, and fun. Most of all, I look forward to getting to know each of you and growing together in heart, mind, and spirit.

Mary Bohman, Ministerial Intern

Alliance News

The Alliance board, meeting September 2, approved the entire payment of the \$2400 for an ice maker for the FUS kitchen. The Alliance will be catering several upcoming memorials and helping with the Harvest Dance Saturday, September 26. Earlier payment of Alliance dues is allowing for the production of an up-to-date Alliance Membership Directory, including address, phone, and email information.

Gretchen Clemence, who heads up the Holiday Gifts Sale, is interested in hearing from anyone in FUS, not necessarily in the Alliance, to help with the Holiday Temptations (food) portion of that December sale at FUS.

The Alliance reconvenes its regular program year



October 7 with FUS Director of Religious Education Jan Devor on the topic, "Let's Talk About Religious Education at FUS and in the UUA." The talk begins at 11:00 a.m. with opportunity for questions and then lunch from the Wedge at noon, followed by a short business meeting. Luncheon tickets for \$8 go on sale at 10:45 a.m.

The Alliance is a dynamic group of dedicated members and friends of FUS. New members are welcomed. If you are interested in becoming a member, please call Membership Chairperson Clara Asp for more information.



Art in the Gallery

The art committee is pleased to announce the 2009-2010 Art in the Gallery schedule:

September 13–October 11
Ted Salzman
Photography

October 18–November 15
Marilyn Allysum
Chinese brush paintings

November 22–December 28
Robert Roscoe, Photography
Herbie Sewell, Oil paintings

January 3–February 27
Jane Giligun
Photography

February 14–March 14
Mary Guzowski
Paintings

March 21–April 18
Jim Robin
Watercolors

April 25–June 6
Clara Ueland
Prints

June 13–August
All FUS Art Exhibit



Religious Education

I am trying to be more gray. Gone are the days of the adolescent black and white thinking . . . well, I said I am trying. And that thinking, gray that is, is how I am looking at our religious education budget for this year. The children's program has gone from \$5000 for the year to \$3000, and the youth program has gone from \$4000 to \$1000. And those "highs" are reduced from the days in 2001 when the RE budget for children alone was \$10,122. So, this could be all bad news, but RE has been building a reserve account from the Hopp-Hendrickson budget and we have that to draw from for enrichment projects. Belts are tightening all over, and RE is no exception. The RE Committee will be doing its darnedest to offer our current level of programming and extras like the Secret Friends, Harvest Moon Dance, and Lasagna Bingo night. But we might be asking for more help than usual. Perhaps you could fund the Secret Friend party for us? Or, maybe, bring in Lasagna for the Bingo Dinner. There are a number of ways that the RE Committee has thought of to have people help out and you will find them on the bulletin board on the second floor where the teacher appreciation pictures usually are. This year there will be a bulletin board of contribution ideas. Perhaps you could buy some treats or play dough for the preschool room, or sign up to bring in a bunch of Bingo prizes. Please go by the bulletin board every so often and see what is needed. Perhaps you are in a position to help out!



on December 12. Look for the notices all year long and if you would be as generous as you usually are to our youth fundraising projects we would be eternally grateful.

I have two small posters in my office featuring art by Mary Englebright. One is of a girl screaming, "OH, NO!" and another picture is of the same girl saying, "SNAP OUT OF IT". So, that is what I am trying to do with the RE budget this year! Go from the panic to the reality, from the black and white to the gray, and proceed from there. And with your help and those wonderful men of old, Mr. Hopp and Mr. Hendrickson, we will get through the year.



Jan Devor, Director of Religious Education



CARVED PUMPKIN SALE

AFTER SERVICE OCTOBER 25

SO THE FRONT OF YOUR RESIDENCE CAN LOOK FESTIVE IN TIME FOR HALLOWEEN.

THERE WILL BE PUMPKINS OF ALL SIZES AND ALL PRICE POINTS.

PROCEEDS WILL SUPPORT THE YOUTH GROUP'S EFFORT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR TRIPS THIS YEAR TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND BOSTON.

And speaking of money, one of the big projects on the docket this year is to send the senior high youth group on TWO trips. One big, the other local!! This is the year for the youth to go to Boston to explore our UU roots and then, since the UUA General Assembly is in Minneapolis this year, we want our youth to partake in that four-day programming. That means the youth will need to register for GA and to stay in a hotel in downtown Minneapolis. We will be fundraising like crazy for these two trips so that the cost per family will not be astronomical. Look for the senior high to be selling treats in social hour on a monthly basis. They will have carved pumpkins for sale the Sunday before Halloween. There will be a fancy cake auction on Sunday, February 14. (Could you bake a cake?) There will be a parent's night out for baby sitting here at the church

Membership

Joining FUS

You can become a member anytime you wish, simply contact Teresa West, membership director. We recommend attending the orientations and then joining us for the New Member discovery group which is held once a month after service. These groups are a great way to meet others and to learn from Kendyl, our minister.

We will be holding four orientation sessions this year. Please RSVP if possible, as we will provide a light lunch. They will be held after service at noon on the following days: November 1, January 17, March 21 and May 23. We will have three new member Sundays where part of the service is celebrating our newest members. A brunch is held prior to the service. These days are: November 22, February 7 and June 6.

In between the orientations, we would love to meet you at the Minister's Tea in the Upper Assembly Hall after service on Sundays. Look for us by the wall opposite the window wall. The minister, a board member and the membership director are available to meet you and answer any questions, regardless if this is your first visit or your 20th.

Fall Calling Campaign

The membership committee will be calling all the member of the society in October to ask how your relationship with FUS is going. We want to hear about what FUS is doing that you appreciate and how we could serve you better. We look forward to talking with you.

Happy Birthday to the following people!

We missed Dick Saunders birthday on September 27. Hope it was great! If I miss posting your birthday here, please let me know and I can add it to our database and you'll be included next year.

Leif Carlson	John Jacobsen	Claire Olson
Marcia Carlson	Henry Jerome	Julian Palmquist
Kathleen Cooper	Helen Kuehn	Brie Pileggi
Chris Darnell	Joe Lazur	Michael Pileggi
Audrey	Ryan Mork	Steve Pratt
DiGirolamo	JoAnn Nelson	Dana Reynolds
Angelique	Andres	Suzu Sewell
Frederiksen	Nordquist	Craig Smith
Lisa Greene	Nichole	Rebecca Trevino
Heidi Iwanski	Nordquist	

Teresa West, Membership Coordinator

Music Notes

I am thrilled to announce and introduce our new FUS Orchestra Conductor. As most of you know, Gabriela Diaz-Alatraste left our society last season as she was offered her own symphony orchestra in Mexico City! Although we will certainly miss her greatly, I believe our search committee has found a fabulous new person to conduct the orchestra. Dr. Jeffrey Stirling is a well-known Twin Cities conductor



and music educator. Currently Jeff directs the St. Paul Civic Symphony and the Northeast Orchestra in Fridley. He also conducts the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies Philharmonic. He holds degrees from Yale and Northwestern Universities and has pursued advance

studies at the Tanglewood and Salzburg music festivals and at the Paris conservatory. As you can see Jeff has a stunning background in conducting as well as being a wonderful violist!

But do you know what? All this is great, and we at FUS have come to expect and love excellence in our music, but Jeff is also a very lovely, kind man. I believe his winning personality and talent will enrich all of our musical lives here at the society. We look forward to welcoming Jeff to our society and we in the music program are thrilled that we have the opportunity to work with such a wonderful man and musician!

See you on Sundays!

Barbara Brooks, Music Director

Social Action

The issue of immigration reform is the main social justice topic for FUS in October. We are hosting a national speaker, Aviva Chomsky, author of *They Take Our Jobs and 20 Other Myths About Immigration*, on Saturday, October 24. The program begins at 6:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public. Ms. Chomsky will also be at FUS for the Book Chat at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning. Look in the FUS bookstore for her book and check out the SAC table, the Order of Service and bulletin boards for information about local speakers we have invited for other dates in an attempt to understand the complexity of this issue.



Tutors Needed



Volunteers of America of Minnesota's Experience Corp program is looking for adults 50+ to be tutors in partner schools in Minneapolis. For more information contact Maria Ricke at 612-708-5651; mricke@voamn.org.

Did You Know. . .

1 in 10 students in the Minneapolis Public Schools is homeless. Homelessness as a child often leads to homelessness as an adult. (Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, Heading Home Hennepin, 2006)

New Wilder Research Homelessness Study

Since 1991 Wilder has conducted a statewide



homelessness survey every three years to better understand the causes, circumstances and effects of homelessness. The 2009 survey will take place on October 22. More than 800 volunteer interviewers will survey people staying at more than 300 shelter locations

across Minnesota. If you are interested in serving as a volunteer interviewer, and would like to learn more, please contact Karen Ulstad at karen@wilder.org.

Fall Housing Seminar Series

From September-October, free community seminars are being offered. These educational opportunities provide insight into the many aspects of barriers people without housing experience. If you would like to understand the issue of homelessness, these seminars will provide a wide view of the reasons it occurs and solutions to ending it. The topics include: legal issues and unlawful detainers, foreclosures, job seeking, domestic abuse and more. To register, please contact Jessica Little at 612-543-0598 or jessica.m.little@co.hennepin.mn.us from the Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness.



For more timely information about social justice activities at FUS, subscribe to the *SAC Flash* by emailing sac@firstunitariansociety.org. The *SAC Flash* is published on the first and third Fridays of every month.

Carol Koepp, Social Justice Coordinator

Announcements

Submit Service Auction Proposals

The FUS Service Auction is scheduled for Saturday, March 13, 2010. The FUS Board of Trustees invites committees and groups at FUS to submit proposals for participation in Service Auction planning and subsequent sharing of the proceeds. The purpose of the FUS Service Auction is to promote a sense of community as well as raise funds for worthwhile causes both inside and outside our congregation.

Proposals should include:

1. The specific purpose for which funds would be used
2. The amount of money you are hoping to raise
3. A percentage of the net profit for which you are willing to work
4. The number of volunteers your group can realistically commit to the Service Auction—both planning and event volunteers

Please submit your proposals to the FUS office by December 7, 2009.

Discovery Group: Spring Forest Qigong

Qigong is an ancient Chinese discipline that combines mental concentration, breathing techniques, and simple body movements to activate Qi (energy) and cultivate health. This group is structured to include practice and reflection. It meets 7:00 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month and will be led by ministerial intern Mary Bohman. Location is still to be determined.

Women's Awareness Group

The October meeting of the Women's Awareness Group will be held on Monday, October 12 at the home of Kirsten Langsetmo. Barbara McKernan is the Cohost. FUS women are invited to join us at 6:30 p.m. for a potluck supper followed by a discussion of the book, *They Take Our Jobs - and Twenty Other Myths About Immigration*, by Aviva Chomsky. Please call Kirsten or Barbara to RSVP and for directions.

Trustee Tidbit

Energy bills have been on Board members' minds. At the August 26 meeting the Board passed a resolution to track FUS energy use and encourage conservation. Key to saving energy will be efforts by our custodial staff. The Board resolution aims to reward these efforts by carefully tracking our energy use and allocating savings gains back to the custodial staff in the form of indirect benefits such as training, equipment, or capitol budget items. Through these efforts, which will include more attention by FUS members, we hope to rein in our energy expenses.



FUS Staff

Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, ext. 116
Minister@firstunitariansociety.org
Minister Emeritus: Khoren Arisian
Ministerial Intern: Mary Bohman, ext. 107
Intern@firstunitariansociety.org
Director of Religious Education: Jan Devor, ext. 108
DRE@firstunitariansociety.org
Music Director: Barbara Brooks, ext. 106
Chorus@firstunitariansociety.org
Membership Coordinator: Teresa West, ext. 104
Membership@firstunitariansociety.org
Social Justice Coordinator: Carol Koepf, ext. 103
SAC@firstunitariansociety.org
Congregational Administrator: Will Hegeman, ext. 101
Office@firstunitariansociety.org
Publications Coordinator: Morgan Rock, ext. 111
Newsletter@firstunitariansociety.org
Finance Director: Bob Calgren, ext. 112
Fin-adm@firstunitariansociety.org
Building Manager: Caidin Riley, ext. 105
Rooms@firstunitariansociety.org
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

The First Unitarian is published once a month. The deadline for submission of items is the 7th 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.



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

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The First Unitarian Society

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900 Mount Curve Avenue • Minneapolis, MN 55403-1124

612-377-6608 • Fax: 612-377-2151

www.firstunitariansociety.org • office@firstunitariansociety.org

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October 2009



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October 7:

The Alliance reconvenes

October 12:

Women's Awareness Group meets

October 18:

New Exhibit in Foyer Gallery

October 24:

National Speaker Aviva Chomsky

October 25:

Book Chat with author Aviva Chomsky
Carved Pumpkin Sale

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

1. Go to 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.