

# BUC

BIRMINGHAM UNITARIAN CHURCH

*Our mission is to create a free and welcoming religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service, learning and joy.*

## Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:15



In April our worship services take up the twin themes of certainty and doubt, constant challenges, abiding promises, in all spiritual traditions. Many persons first begin to undertake a spiritual journey in earnest because doubts of what had seemed trustworthy and sure become too troubling to ignore, and a search ensues to recover a lost certainty. Is certainty – of salvation, of everlasting life, of security and unconditional love – a goal that can ever be realized? Can doubts ever be finally put to rest? Can certainty be problematic, and doubts useful? These are some of the questions that will accompany our worship journey in April.

### Friday, April 18 Taizé Service 7:30 p.m.

Taizé Worship Service - Please join Kathy and the BUC Worship Team for a Taizé Worship service.

Taizé is a prayer service designed to achieve a contemplative state through music, song and silence. There will be times of instrumental music, times of chanting, a minimum of spoken words to reflect on, and a long period of silence.

The service will provide a place for people to find the stillness within and to listen to it.

This worship form comes from the Christian monastic tradition, adapted for use in our UU congregation.

April 6 - "Being Wrong": Our culture has little regard for anyone who admits to uncertainty, and even less regard for anyone who actually acknowledges being wrong about something. From a spiritual perspective, however, the willingness to be wrong, and to acknowledge being wrong, can become an important strategy for growth. Kathy and Worship Associate Peggy Woehrlen consider the value of that dreaded experience of discovering that one has been wrong. This service includes our annual celebration of a beloved BUC tradition, Daffodil Sunday. Music provided by Sound Messengers and BUC's Chalice Choir.

April 13 - "Certain Doubt": Spiritual traditions often promise their faithful followers the relief of uncertainty about how to live, about such major questions as how one knows God and whether life comes after death. Our Unitarian Universalist tradition has long proclaimed itself different in offering more questions and doubts than any sort of certainty. Is there some way to have both? Or are certainty and doubt, answers and questions, mutually exclusive in spiritual experience? Kathy and Worship Associate Judy Amir try to find a way through these spiritual polarities. Music provided by Christine Dragone.



April 20, Easter Sunday - "Looking for Life in All the Wrong Places": The traditional stories of Easter miracles of resurrection and life triumphant over death are accompanied with stories of doubt. Who could not doubt such incredible claims? Kathy and Worship Associate Lisa Demian wonder whether doubt may be a necessary element in the experience of renewed life. Music provided by BUC Chalice Choir and Rudolfs Ozolins.

April 27 - "What Does Earth Day Mean to You?" Worship Associate Paul Vachon and the Green Sanctuary Committee have created this service to celebrate Earth Day commonly acknowledged on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. People are motivated to take action to protect the environment by an assortment of reasons. A few congregants will share what inspires them and how they actively live the UU seventh principle - Respect for the interdependent web of all Existence of which we are a part. We will borrow from other traditions to pay homage to the four directions/elements that make up all existence using a variety of our senses. In closing, we will ask for your commitment to the seventh principle by pledging what you plan to do over the next year. Music provided by Frank Arvan.



*It's official! After 18 years, Cindy MacLeod & BUC's Choir Librarian, Amy Smalley became legally married on March 22, 2014. BUC Stands with both of you... on the Side of LOVE in Michigan. ♥*



## Caution: Coffee Hour. Can We Talk?

A hot cup of coffee or tea after Sunday morning service is a great way to set the mood for engaging in pleasant conversation with fellow BUCers and potential BUCers. Sometimes it can be tricky. Tricky to walk in the door to a roomful of talking strangers. Tricky after coming to BUC for years to see new faces and think of something to say, instead of just happily visiting with familiar friends you haven't seen for a week. Tricky knowing just what to say when you want to be welcoming and inviting, but lack the right words. The UUA has put together a "Coffee Hour Caution!" poster with some common things one should avoid saying, with suggestions of what would be welcoming words to say (and hear!). It's worth a read if you're interested in helping make others comfortable and welcome at our church. You can read it online:

[http://www.uua.org/documents/yaya/ya\\_coffeehourcaution.pdf](http://www.uua.org/documents/yaya/ya_coffeehourcaution.pdf) or pop into the social hall kitchen to read a print out of it posted on the cupboard door.

## Connections: Joys & Sorrows

*To submit Joys and Sorrows for upcoming newsletters, please submit on our website newsletter submission form or write in the Joys and Sorrows book on Sunday morning.*

Former member, Ken Kauffman, took a fall on February 21st. He had extensive back surgery and suffered a spinal cord injury. He is recovering at a hospital in Grand Rapids it is expected to take anywhere from two months to two years. He is partially paralyzed in both arms and legs. Ken's daughter Dana would love to have us send cards and well wishes to keep his spirits up. Ken Kauffman, 3300 20 Mile Rd., Cedar Springs, Mi 49319

Jane McFarlane fell and broke her right arm. She has had surgery to stabilize it, and is recovering at home.

Kelly Taylor shares her joy: "A couple of weeks ago I passed by Boards and am now a Mammography Technician!"

Debbie Igleheart is recuperating from oral cancer surgery and is doing well at University of Michigan Hospital.

The Cavanagh/Kosuth family has three joys: "Charlie is in Guatemala leading a crop of U of M engineering students on a "woven wind" project, Michael received his acceptance to MSU, and Dan successfully presented a paper at the Annual Michigan Academy of Science, Arts & Literature Conference.

Joy from Ben Pulver: "I am proud to have passed my certified personal trainer exam, which will help me expand my personal chef business."

Joy! Aash and Monika Mangrulkar, along with brothers Victor, Dominik and sister Ariana, welcomed new baby Karina into the world on Saturday, March 8. Everyone is healthy and happy ☺

Walter Dean shares his joy in being able to be back at church after a short hospital stay.

Margaret Marsh recently survived a bout of life-threatening septicemia because of her daughter, her husband, the great folks at Providence Hospital, and good antibiotics. No long term affects.

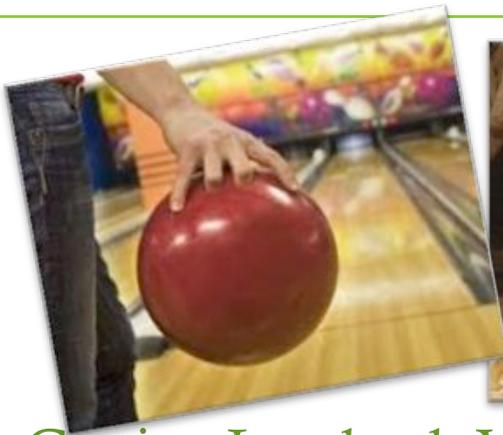
Randy and Nanette Magner celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on March 21

Jessa Webber, daughter of Kathy DuHame and Bruce Webber, was accepted to the College of Engineering at the University of Michigan - congratulations!

David White shares his sorrow at the passing of his father on March 20 to Leukemia.

Dick Wiseman shares his joy at coming back in one piece after skiing in California at 10,000 feet! (That's him behind the mask ☺)





## Getting Involved: Young Adults, Film & Opera Buffs

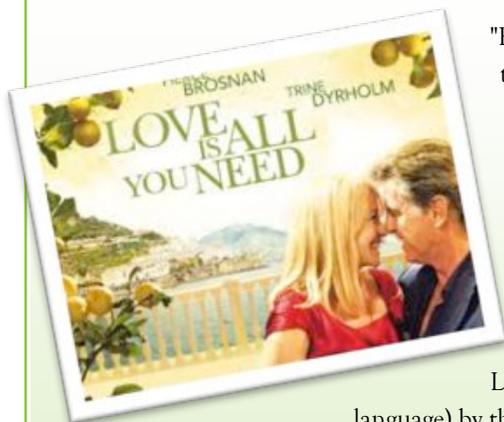
### Monday Meditation Group 6:00-7:15 in the Blue Door Every Monday Evening

Join us for a time of shared silence every Monday evening in the Blue Door. We begin with 30 minutes of silent meditation, then 30 minutes of reflection on a reading, followed by another 10 minutes of silence. This leaderless group is open for regular or drop in attendance.

### BUC Young Adults, Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> Dinner & Bowling!

Dinner at Big Beaver Tavern (645 E. Big Beaver, Troy) at 8:30. Friday Strikes and Slices (Troy Lanes, 1950 E. Square Lake Rd) from 11 p.m.-1 a.m. Unlimited bowling and pizza for \$10 (shoe rental not included). Please RSVP to Stefanie [stefmbair@gmail.com](mailto:stefmbair@gmail.com) for reservation purposes. Rides can be arranged if needed.

## Friday, April 25, Film Buffs: *Love is All You Need*



The Commons at 7:00 p.m.

"Hairdresser Ida, who has recently ended a successful breast cancer treatment, returns home to find her husband Leif cheating on her. At the same time, her daughter is getting married in an Italian villa in a few days, and on the way there she runs into Philip, the groom's father. At the wedding, which is eventually called off when the putative bride and groom find that they are not, after all, into each other, Ida and Philip develop an attraction. On their return to Denmark, Philip decides to reduce his workload and move permanently to Italy. He finds Ida at the hairdresser where she works, only to be rebuffed as she has returned to Leif. But Ida has second thoughts and goes out to Italy, with her hair growing back." -Wikipedia

Love Is All You Need (Denmark, 2012, 115 minutes) was rated R (sexuality, nudity, language) by the MPAA. In English and Danish with English subtitles.

Snacks provided. For more information contact Larry at 248-569-0965 or [LJWisniew@yahoo.com](mailto:LJWisniew@yahoo.com).

### Getting to Know UU: IV "UU in the World Today" Tuesday, ~~March 25<sup>th</sup>~~ April 1<sup>st</sup> 7-8:30 in the Commons

Come and learn about Unitarian Universalism in the world today. The UUA is currently making changes—changes to where we do our work, how we do our work, and how we tell the story of our Unitarian Universalist movement to the wider world.

Join us in examining our core values, our unique personality as a faith/church, and the impact UU's hope to make in the world. Ask yourself three questions: Who are we? What do we do? And why it matters? From these conversations, and more, we began to form our identity for the future of our religious movement.

### Opera Goers – April 5<sup>th</sup> AND April 26<sup>th</sup>!

April 5<sup>th</sup> *La Boheme*, Puccini's moving story of young love, and on April 26<sup>th</sup> *Così fan tutte* Metropolitan Opera Music Director James Levine conducts Mozart's beloved masterpiece about testing the ties of love. BUC Opera Goers will attend these operas transmitted live in HD from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera . AMC Forum Theatre – Mound Road and M-59 12:55 PM (\$22. \$20. Seniors) Sign up at the opera table after services or contact Larry Freedman [248-370-8227](tel:248-370-8227) [lawrenceman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lawrenceman@sbcglobal.net).

## Poetry, Art, Writing, & Discussion Groups @ BUC

### Spiritual Conversations – Poetry and Reflection – April 7, 7:30-9

Whether you are new to poetry, a lifetime lover of poetry or a poet yourself, in this group you will share and be exposed to poetry with others who search the world of words for meaning, comfort, challenge, and reflection. We will meet to discuss and look at poems related to Certainty and Doubt. Bring a poem to share about this topic or any poem that moves you. 7:30 in the Blue door. This group is open and is facilitated by Penny Hackett-Evans, meeting in the Blue Door Room.

### Art and Spirit – Monday, April 14, 7:30-9 – Blue Door Room

This group meets monthly to work together in a visual journal (much like a written journal, but using mainly images instead of words). No art experience is needed. The members in it jointly facilitate this group. We meet to create visual journal pages about opening up/blossoming/ certainty/doubt. Bring a journal and a willing spirit. 7:30 in the Blue door.

### Writing as a Spiritual Practice – Monday, April 21, 7:30-9

This group focuses on writing as a means for spiritual reflection. Through guided writing exercises, members of the group write about their own lives and thoughts. Writers may choose to share their words or to keep them private. We will consider the topics of certainty and doubt. Bring a journal and a pen and your willingness to explore. Group is open to new and continuing members. Facilitated by Penny Hackett-Evans, meeting in the Blue Door Room.

## Alliance, April 16

Alliance has scheduled a guided tour at the Detroit Historical Museum on Wednesday, April 16. We will see “old favorites” and some new exhibits, which were installed while the Museum was closed for half a year.

Please note the arrangements. We will NOT have our usual brown bag lunch, but will meet at BUC on April 16 to only to organize carpools. If you have made a reservation (see below) be in the BUC foyer promptly at 11:30 a.m. so we will get there to begin our tour at 12:30. The tour will last about an hour and a half.

To make a reservation you may phone Priscilla Hildum at 248-475-0729. If leaving a message, please state your name and telephone number. We hope you can come!

Alliance does not meet in May, but many of us work at RUMMAGE - (April 27-May3). Our last event of the program year will be our Annual Meeting Luncheon on Wednesday, June 4. Be sure to mark your calendar!

## Loss of Dreams Workshop Part II: Re-writing Your Story, Sunday, April 6

The loss of a dream can bring long-term effects, even devastation. While life cannot be undone perhaps it can be re-visioned. This workshop will explore the possibility. This workshop will be facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Celia Thurston, Minister Emerita at BUC. Meeting in the large conference room, 12:30 p.m. following the second service.

### Grief Group – Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>

An open grief group meets the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30-7:30 in the Small Conference Room (left of the main entrance in the RE hallway). Whether you have had a recent loss or one from a while ago – you are welcome in this group. Dropping in for one meeting or coming every month is fine. If you have questions, please contact Grace Rising at 248-219-9654 or [gbrising@wowway.com](mailto:gbrising@wowway.com)



## Reflections by the Rev. Dr. Kathy Hurt



Spiritual traditions of all times and places have expended considerable thought and energy to discussions of the soul. Words have mostly not been helpful, starting with the reference to “the soul,” encouraging us to envision soul as a kind of exotic object that resides somewhere inside our pouch of skin. Souls inhabit bodies, we are sometimes told, and exit bodies at the point of death. Souls may have a

special dwelling place outside space and time, in which case we want to take special care of a soul while it is with us to ensure it makes the transition to that special dwelling place in good shape.

Less well known but perhaps more useful are those alternative notions of soul that manage to stretch past the usual object-style language and images for something more provocative. One such alternative notion that I encountered recently comes from author Jacob Needleman, who proposed that “[the soul] is a movement that begins whenever one experiences the psychological pain of contradiction” (Needleman, *Lost Christianity*, p. 170). Soul as a “movement” rather than an entity: Needleman’s word choice opens up ways of understanding why we sometimes feel more present and grounded than others, why some persons we describe as “soulful” and others “soulless,” since a moving soul might come and go, manifest itself in us in different ways at different times.

Even more startling is Needleman’s suggestion that we might be particularly aware of our souls at times of internal distress, when “the psychological pain of contradiction” is upon us. When I feel conflicted about a choice, or uneasy in a relationship, or frustrated at my inability to move forward, or disconnected from an experience: rather than trying to avoid such times because of the discomfort they bring, what might happen if I instead embraced them, even sought them out, as opportunities to sense my soul coming alive within me? And is it possible, in these times of cultural and political conflict when it can seem we are in danger of losing hope, that we are instead poised on the threshold of an expansion of soul?

Faithfully,

Kathy

## Volunteer of the Month: George Lentz

"After first attending Birmingham Unitarian Church almost 25 years ago, I was attracted by the plethora of volunteer activities that were available, both to support the operation of the church and to initiate and maintain outreach and social justice programs. Over the years I continue to be impressed by level and depth of the support of our volunteers, both in time and donations in these activities.



In many ways, our involvement for well over a decade with a Pontiac elementary school, the Whitmer Human Resource Center (WHRC), captures that spirit and dedication of our congregation. What started as the WHRC/Partnership now continues with our 501(c)(3) Communities United For Children (CUFC) organization.

The needs and challenges faced by WHRC have been and continue to be many. Our efforts over the years include supporting various literacy and tutoring programs, providing school supplies for teachers and students, maintaining a lending library program (Book Trolley Program) and providing emergency clothing for the students. We continue An Adopt-A-Family program, food for Holiday meals, emergency food supplies, and support for Family nights. I have indeed been fortunate to be involved with many of you in these efforts.

As you may know the challenges being faced this year by WHRC are even more daunting. Frozen pipes over the Christmas break caused flooding and extensive damage to the school. Because of possible contamination from asbestos and the need for repairs, the school has been closed and contents have been quarantined. Vacant classrooms are being used in two other schools. The your support and donations of have been critical during this period.

Why do I volunteer at WHRC? The needs are evident and great. Through your donations and your support, we are able to address some of these needs quickly and effectively. That is satisfying. The reward is experiencing the gratefulness of the students, teachers and parents. It is in the smile of a child who selects a book to take home. It is in the appreciation of a teacher for our help of getting much needed supplies. It is in thanks of a parent for emergency food. It is in being part of making a real difference. Thanks for that experience."



# Music & Art

## BUC Gallery Presents: Alice V. Schneider March 28<sup>th</sup> – April 25<sup>th</sup>

### SoundBites – Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>



We welcome Kathy's son Adam Hurt on banjo and his duo partner Beth Williams Hartness on finger style guitar for our last SoundBites concert of the season. Plan on coming to hear true American folk music at its

finest, and bring a friend. Tickets can be reserved by calling the church, and will be available beginning Sunday, March 23 in the social hall.

## SoundBites

Concert, Afterglow & You.

The end of winter has been musically eventful at BUC. The BUC choir was a significant part of the UU Choral Festival at First Unitarian on WSU campus, and sang gloriously. The BUC choir showed up in great force, and were leaders amongst about 130 singers. It was great fun meeting others and building stronger relationships within our local denomination.

The Teen Choir sang with spirit and feisty energy for Youth Sunday. It was great to hear this group of over 20 singers perform "Unwritten", a song of hope and promise for the future. The service was meaningful and uplifting. A trio made up of Graham, Ian and Jaden closed with a soulful rendition of "Helpless".

### Choir Sunday – May 18<sup>th</sup>

Moving into the spring, Choir Sunday is one service 10:30am on May 18th. To prepare, the Choir will host Dr. Gabriela Hristova on April 5th. She is Director of Choirs at the University of Michigan -Flint and will lead our group in a choral clinic. Choir Sunday's theme is "Homeward Bound" ~ the ways in which we are bound to our home and for home, for good and sometimes with reluctance.

Alice Victoria Schneider is a Detroit-based visual artist currently enrolled at the College for Creative Studies. Her work is a combination of sculpture, painting, printmaking and filmmaking. She focuses on movement as a theme, highlighting motion, form, and speed with effects of still-life painting in mind. Schneider is intrigued by the concept of "film as painting". When making her filmed paintings, she set the stage with artworks that she has created, allowing the more traditional art seeker to have something tangible.

For her show at the BUC Gallery, Alice is including all new works of floral still-lives.

Links for more on Alice's work:

Tumblr

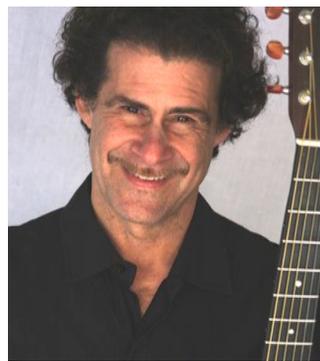
<http://alicevictoriaschneider.tumblr.com/>

Vimeo

<http://vimeo.com/aliceschneider>



## Saturday, April 19 Dick Siegel



A legendary Michigan-based singer/songwriter known for his engagingly unconventional lyrics and a dynamic songwriting style that incorporates modern folk, roots and jazz.

NEPTUNE'S CAR (the folk duo of Holly Hanson & Steve Hayes) will open the show. Admission \$15 (\$13 student/senior)





## *Children's Religious Education*

April's Environmental Awareness rotation explores how our religion helps us live according to our ecological values. It asks: What are some possible solutions to the problem of limited resources? Whose responsibility is it to care for the Earth and her creatures? What might be the best way to share and conserve the Earth's limited resources? This rotation aims to stay away from more recent, controversial issues and instead focuses on well documented environmental situations. Great effort has been made to stick to "Just the facts, Ma'am" during the presentation of all issues. It explores four areas of environmental awareness:

- ⊕ Scarcity & the fight for land – How has human consumption lead to the loss of animal habitats? What happens to an animal if it loses its habitat?
- ⊕ Equity & compromise – How does the world work together to share the oceans and protect the creatures that live in the seas?
- ⊕ Implementing best practices – Where does the energy that warms our church & homes come from? How can we use that energy most efficiently?
- ⊕ Planning for the future – What has happened to BUC's Capek Woods? How is our church working to restore the woods and plan for the future?

Please contact Eleanor McGuire, Children's DRE, with any questions at [eleanor.mcguire@bucmi.org](mailto:eleanor.mcguire@bucmi.org).

## *Youth RE*

Thank you to the many BUC staff members and congregants who pitched in to help with our annual Youth Sunday service on March 16th. Kathy Hurt began the process in November by talking to the assembled youth about worship. Abha Dearing directed our Teen Choir in the anthem and Steve Dearing worked with the instrumentalists. Rudolfs Ozolins provided piano accompaniment to the hymns and Joanne Copeland put together the order of service. Beth Lorey did all those extra tasks, everything from ordering cakes to bringing snacks to rehearsal. Mae Rooney prepared the hymn slides and did the PowerPoint for Piggy Bunny. Anne Calomeni helped direct the coffee hour activities (a new feature of Youth Sunday responsibilities) and Larry Freedman provided information for the young ushers. Above all, I would like to recognize the adults who

## *Religious Education*

regularly give of their time and talents to teach, advise, and mentor our youth: 6&7 teachers Steve Lorey, Bruce Webber, and Laura Kubit; OWL teachers Dave Graham and Max Kort; ROPE advisors Bill Fox, Glenn Hoffrichter, and Ruth Lyons; and GUUSH advisors Tom Cranston, Walter Dean, Bill Fox, Claudia Kocher, Kateri McMullen, and Paul Plante, plus retiring advisors Ilene Beninson and Lisa Crawford. A special thank you to my wonderful co-worker Eleanor McGuire who helped with tech planning and the ROPE buffet (another new feature) and has provided support for every youth undertaking of the year (and to me at all times!)

The 6 & 7 class will visit Temple Israel on Friday, April 4 at 6:45 p.m. and will wrap up their Judaism unit with a Passover Seder on April 6. We will then do two short units on ancient religions.

The 8th grade Rite of Passage Experience (ROPE) class has just a few more weeks to go before our Boston trip May 1-4. We will discuss spirituality and worship and have a pre-Boston sleepover on April 26!

High school class: On Sunday mornings from now through June, BUC's youth will explore aspects of current popular culture through the lens of their UU values.

If you are not receiving regular email updates about youth events, please send your contact information to Youth DRE Kimery Campbell at [kimery.campbell@bucmi.org](mailto:kimery.campbell@bucmi.org).

## *General Assembly of the UUA 2014: June 25-29*

If you have been thinking about attending GA, this could be the year for you. Join our BUC delegation in Providence this year and experience the workshops, worship and fellowship with UU's from around the country.

Registration is now open - go to [UUA.org](http://UUA.org) and put GA in the search bar for general information and registration. If you plan to attend, please let Lisa Demian ([ldemian@me.com](mailto:ldemian@me.com)) know so that our delegation can gather together in Providence.



## Explorations School for Young Learners

March was a busy month at Explorations School for Young Learners. We celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday and we read many of the wonderful books that he wrote. As part of the celebration the children created fun projects with each story, including "Cat in the Hat" hats that they made themselves! The week before St. Patrick's Day, just as we were reading stories about Ireland, shamrocks and leprechauns, a sneaky leprechaun came into our room to hide his treasure. It was very exciting to find his gold coins! In April, we are looking forward to many fun and exciting discoveries related to spring! It has been a very long winter and we are all ready to be able to go outside and explore



a new (hopefully much warmer) season! We are grateful for all the registrations that we have received for our fall programs and hope to have many more families join us for fall. Our last Open House in preparation for the 2014 - 2015 school year at Explorations will be held on WEDNESDAY, MAY 7th, from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. Tours are also available by appointment.

Our fall Programs include: Preschool for 3s, 4s and Young 5s and our Young Explorers Toddler Program for 18 month - 33 month olds. The lower level classrooms allow us to serve up to 34 children per half-day session, or 68 children per day, and we are eager to serve more families. Please help us increase enrollment by recommending our preschool to neighbors, friends and family. Thank you for your continued support as we grow our preschool program.

## Rummage Begins April 27<sup>th</sup>

The snow has disappeared from the BUC patio and that can only mean that Spring Rummage is getting closer! If you are new to BUC, you need to know that for one week each spring and fall, we turn the church into a giant resale shop. This provides an important source of both funds and community building to our church. You can make your household spending budget go farther by shopping for clothing, furniture, and other goods. And it is the BEST place to bring your own gently-used discards\*! (\*We do not accept sofa beds, stained or damaged furniture, analog TV or computer monitors, bike helmets, or children's car seats.) Please sign up during on any Sunday in April in the Social Hall or electronically at the link on our website [www.bucmi.org](http://www.bucmi.org) (live by mid-April).

If you have large furniture items to donate, plan ahead. The bulk pickup crews will collect furniture and other large items on **Saturday April 26 and Sunday, April 27 but you must reserve a spot on the truck in advance.** Please contact truck coordinator Soren Andersen now ([buc.rummage.pickup@gmail.com](mailto:buc.rummage.pickup@gmail.com))! For more information on bulk pickup, please email Kimery Campbell at [kimery.campbell@bucmi.org](mailto:kimery.campbell@bucmi.org) or stop by the Rummage signup table in the Social Hall any time in April.

## Thank You Welcome Inn Volunteers

Thank you, thank you, thank you, intrepid BUCers who helped at The Welcome Inn all through this brutal winter. At the opening Volunteer Orientation, there were so many of us that the minister exclaimed, "Those are all Unitarians!"

Thanks for those who gave up hours every week on regular "stints": Larry Friedman, Rolland Vriesenga, Lillian Dean, Sharon Kirchner, Bonnie Dunn and Karen Brown; and to our intrepid purchasers who bought much-needed supplies: Barbara Robinson, Laura McCulloch, Ed Sharples, Sharon Kirchner, and Mary Gawel Ensroth. When backpacks were needed, anonymous donors dropped them off at the office, and Lynn Bell found two almost new ones to give us.

BUC cooks this year were Camille Harris, Lillian Dean, Steve Schneider, Paul and Mary Jo Plante, Lynn Bell and friends, Carol Pastrick, Laura McCullough, Joy Powell, Marilyn Webster, James Lewis, Greg Bloomfield, J.B. Bernard, Barb Schandavel, Drieka DeGraff, Max and Lisa Kort, and Colleen Ezzeddine (for Explorations).

Finally, when money was needed money came in. Thanks to Eric and Annette Sargent and Carol Pastrick for timely donations, to Juanita Cervanak for passing the hat for breakfast money, and to everyone who contributed to our Plate Collection and purchased Blessing Bags for our guests. See you next year! ~ Annis Pratt

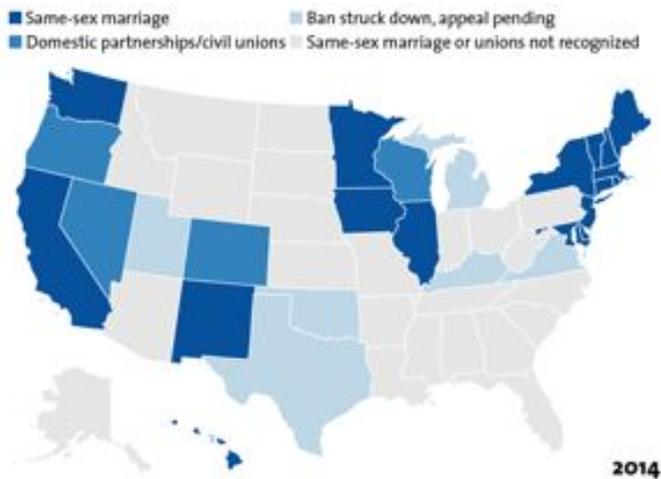


## Service & Justice



### A Giant Step for Marriage Equality in Michigan

On March 21, Federal District Judge Bernard Friedman ruled that Michigan's ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional, making MI the 18<sup>th</sup> state to recognize marriage rights for all couples regardless of sexual orientation. The state submitted a request for a stay to be imposed while it appeals the decision and on March 25, that request was granted for the duration of the appeal process. The U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, which serves MI, OH, KY, and TN, will review the case and rule on whether to uphold Judge Friedman's decision that the marriage ban is unconstitutional.



Momentum for marriage equality is building across the country. Seventeen states and DC have legalized same-sex marriage. In February, a federal judge ruled that KY must recognize same-sex marriages from out of state. In 5 other states, including MI, state constitutional bans have been ruled unconstitutional by federal judges and are pending appeal. Two others states have had activity challenging marriage bans this year and more are expected.

According to [freedomtomarry.org](http://freedomtomarry.org), over 38% of the U.S. population lives in a state that either has freedom to marry or honors out-of-state marriages. 41% live in a state that allows either marriage or a broad legal status such as civil union or domestic partnership.

Human Rights Campaign ([hrc.org](http://hrc.org)) reports that 58% of Americans support marriage equality, according to a number of nonpartisan polls including Gallup, CNN, and Washington Post/ABC News. An estimated 3.1 million people in America live together in same-sex relationships. LGBT couples and individuals are adoptive parents to more than 1 million children.

MUUSJN is targeting to collect 4,000 signatures to initiate legislation via ballot approval this Fall to raise Michigan's minimum wage. In Jan 2015, the wage would increase from \$7.40 to \$8.10, then to \$9.10 in 2016 and \$10.10 in 2017. Thereafter, it would be adjusted annually based on cost of living. If you agree with this position, you may sign a petition in the social hall on Sunday or volunteer to help collect signatures in your community. To learn more about the arguments for and against this change or to volunteer, Contact Pat Hammer, Mary Jo Ebert, or Sharon Kirchner.

#### March for Justice - April 5 - Shain Park

Join members of other area churches at a rally at Shain Park in Birmingham, Saturday April 5, 2:15-4:00. Speakers will discuss justice for Detroit pensioners, voter disempowerment, and regional transit. Free parking at the Chester Street Garage.

#### Detroit Bankruptcy & Beyond - Bldg Community - April 7-8

MOSES, Wayne State University, and other sponsors invite you to a conference that will bring together organizers, policy makers, community members, and researchers from cities facing similar situations. Topics include: How did Detroit and other cities get here? Effects of bankruptcy on racial justice? How to build community amidst crisis? Participants may attend Monday evening, Tuesday all day, or both. Register at [www.beyondbankruptcy.info](http://www.beyondbankruptcy.info). There is no charge.

#### April Plate Collection Recipient

The April recipient of our plate collection is the Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN), a coalition of 27 Michigan UU churches, including BUC, working together to promote social justice and community service. Recent work has included advocacy for immigration reform, LGBTQ rights, Medicaid expansion, raising the minimum wage, and retention of Michigan's ban on concealed weapons in places of worship and schools. Become a member and/or join MUUSJN's email list at [www.uujustice.org](http://www.uujustice.org).



#### Service & Justice Contacts

Service & Justice Co-Chairs: Mary Jo Ebert and Sharon Kirchner

Service & Justice Resources: MUUSJN (Michigan UU Social Justice Network): [www.uujustice.org](http://www.uujustice.org)  
 UU Service Committee (UUSC): [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org)

## BUC's Green Sanctuary Committee

The Green Sanctuary has been hard at work on numerous projects. Foremost of these is planning the worship service to celebrate Earth Day on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. Yes, that's Rummage Intake Day but what better way to celebrate than to have a church wide effort at reusing items and passing them on to people that have a need? We hope you take the time to attend the service! Here's how the Green Sanctuary has responded to your wishes from last Earth Day:

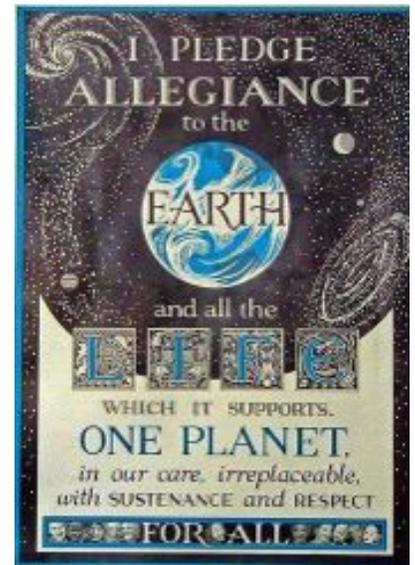
- ⊕ We have gotten renewable energy projects considered in the proposed Capital Campaign Project, which we will vote on at the May annual meeting.
- ⊕ We have developed policies for the Board's approval to reinforce BUC's commitment to the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle.
- ⊕ We have kept the congregation informed via our own Green Sanctuary Facebook. The Facebook page has numerous references for environmental happenings in our community and opportunities to make a difference, as well as informational articles. On Facebook, search for "BUC Green Sanctuary" click the button to "like" our page, and you will be notified of postings and updates.
- ⊕ We have developed an email list targeted to those individuals who have indicated they wanted to be kept abreast of environmental issues. If you wanted to be added to this list, please contact Annis Pratt ([avpratt@aol.com](mailto:avpratt@aol.com))

BUC's Green Sanctuary Committee participated in many environmental projects in the larger community. These include assisting the Sierra Club with their Beyond Coal Campaign to decrease DTE's excessive reliance on coal and attending the Green Screen documentary films shown by our neighbor, The Birmingham Congregational Church (Mary Dunn led the discussion session post a viewing of "Chasing Ice").

We increased our committee membership in 2014 BUT we still need assistance in achieving the best possible Earth Ministry. There are still more projects with which the Green Sanctuary would like help. Can you make a commitment to volunteer a limited amount of time to complete these projects?

1. Coordinate car pooling to BUC for Sunday Services
2. Develop & implement a composting plan for the church's waste products
3. Plan site visits to see facilities using renewable energy:
  - a. IHM Motherhouse in Monroe, MI
  - b. Ann Arbor Unitarian Church
  - c. Farmington Township Facilities
4. Research hybrid/ energy efficient vehicles & share data with other congregants
5. Coordinate a politically active campaign for one of the following issues:
  - a. Fracking
  - b. Beyond Coal Liaison with the Sierra Club
  - c. Continuing or increasing the minimum requirement of 10% renewable energy by energy providers in the state as designated in the state regulations due to expire in 2015.
  - d. Clean water

Won't you help us "walk the walk and talk the talk" of our 7<sup>th</sup> Principle, to carry out our pledge to Respect the Interdependent Web of All Existence of Which We Are a Part?



### New Member Potluck

On March 1st, we celebrated our new 2013-14 church members. New members shared a wonderful potluck dinner with members of the Board of Trustees, committee heads, membership committee, and their partners. Board members presented chalice pins to mark this special occasion. New members who were unable to attend should see Pam McAlpin, membership facilitator, to receive their pins.

Our new membership wall is in the works. Look for it to be displayed in the social hall. Special thanks go to Mary Ensroth, Marsha Mahood, and Teresa Honnold for their wonderful skills in setting up a beautiful spring look for the event. Also, thanks to all membership committee members who jumped in to help clean up. Kudos to Alvin Harris and Reed McAlpin for jumping right in and washing all the dishes. It was a wonderful celebratory evening. Congratulations to all our new members.

Pam McAlpin, Membership Facilitator

## Leadership Development Committee

At our Annual Meeting on December 8th, 2013, the members of BUC approved shifting the church fiscal year from a calendar year to a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. As part of this fiscal year transition process, the Board of Trustees created an 18 month fiscal year, January 1, 2014- June 30, 2015. As well, the Stewardship Committee asked members and friends to make an 18 month pledge commitment. The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) has followed the congregation's lead in this transition process and has asked current church leaders elected to the Board of Trustees, Program Council, and the Leadership Development Committee who have terms expiring on December 31, 2014 to extend their leadership commitment to June 30, 2015, when the current 18 month fiscal year ends.

Currently, BUC's Constitution & Bylaws state that elected terms begin on January 1. However, congregational authorization to extend the current terms six months would allow the current leadership to focus its energy on an upcoming capital campaign and leadership development training instead of preparing for an additional election cycle as they would normally do in the fall. A vote to approve extending these elected terms will be held during our next Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 18th, 2014 at Noon. The LDC proposes that amendments to the BUC Constitution regarding dates of office should be conducted at the Annual Meeting in May of 2015 when it presents a new slate to the congregation.

The members of the LDC recommend to approve a motion to extend terms on the Board of Trustees, Program Council, and the Leadership Development Committee that expire on December 31, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

### Board of Trustees

President: Lisa Demian  
 Vice President: Barbara Woolf  
 Secretary: Marilyn Mast  
 Treasurer: Dick Cantley  
 Trustee: David Graham  
 Trustee: John Hammer

### Program Council

Fellowship: Carol Lee  
 Green Sanctuary: Karen Stankye  
 Membership: Bret Bergeron  
 Music: Ed Sharples  
 Service/Justice: Mary Jo Ebert &  
 Sharon Kirchner  
 Worship: Penny Hackett-Evans

### Leadership Development Comm.

Kathy Arnold  
 Ben Gabel  
 Craig Stroup  
 Annette Sargent  
 Sheila Seaver

## *April Board of Trustees Update*

At the meeting of the BUC Board of Trustees, we reviewed different aspects of Church business and life, including:

- The projected budget deficit for FY 2013 had earlier been estimated to be as high as \$110,000. Through cuts made by staff through the year and some income areas producing more than expected, the actual deficit was officially \$39,000. Our endowments grew by \$122,000 and pledges for 2014 ended up just shy of the "maintain" goal for the pledge drive. The budget for 2014 is balanced at \$803,000.
- The Board discussed questions of who is in charge of the appearance of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, concluding that the Worship team and the minister have that responsibility.
- Although the Program Council had asked for input from the Board about Adult Religious Education, discussion resulted in noting that we do not currently have resources to develop that program area beyond the current offerings.
- Look for the Board table in the Social Hall after services in April and May for questions and comments.
- A subcommittee is reviewing committee charters to be certain that they are consistent with policy governance. Any questions about this? Come to the Board table in the Social Hall and ask a Board member to clarify.
- The Campus Development and Prioritization Committee anticipates rolling out the results of their year-long effort to discern our needs for the coming decade soon after the April 21 Board meeting.
- Reserve May 18 at 11:45 a.m. on your calendar. Board members will be calling in early May to invite and encourage you to attend the Annual Meeting on that date.
- BUC will continue to make pension contributions for staff to the UUA plan.

Fordree Law Firm, P.C.  
Deborah E. Fordree



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Telephone 248.652.1222  
Fax 800.672.6260  
[fordreelaw@yahoo.com](mailto:fordreelaw@yahoo.com)

Estate Planning – Wills, Trusts, Health Care Directives, Powers of Attorney, & General Practice

If you chose to make Birmingham Unitarian Church or UU organization a recipient of your estate, I will donate up to 20% of the fee to the Church or that UU organization.

**Personal Assistant \* Compassionate Care**  
**\* Non-Medical Homecare**  
**Excellent BUC References**



**Personal Assistant - Compassionate Care**  
**Susan Marie**  
**[suesearch9@aol.com](mailto:suesearch9@aol.com)**  
**(248) 247-5893**

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**Lower than agency rates.**

## Birmingham Unitarian Church

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