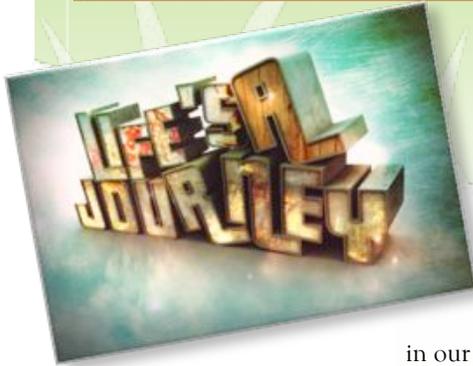


BUC

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

During the month when we transition from one season to another, from winter to spring, and also transition from standard to daylight savings time, our worship services take up the consideration of time, a subject all spiritual traditions have much to say about through stories and images that imagine time's beginnings and endings, through teachings that guide us on wise use of our time. And yet we still struggle, ever busier, mastering the skill of multitasking so as to be able to do multiple things at one time, fret about wasting time, long for free time. Trappist monk Thomas Merton believed that the most common prayer in our culture is a prayer for more time: "Lord, give me time." Ironic, that in an era when technology enables us to do more in less time, we still feel that whatever time we have is not quite enough.

Popcorn, Poetry & Prose, Monday March 31

Calling all BUC writers and appreciators of writing. Please join us for a laid-back evening of popcorn and listening to the words of our own in-house writers! We'll munch popcorn and give appreciative applause to all writers! ☺

Not a writer? Bring one poem or short piece of prose that speaks to your heart. Sign up to read during coffee hour - or, just arrive with words in hand (3 short poems or 2 pages of prose).

MARCH 2 - "Busy": Whereas we might once have responded to another's question, "How are you?" with a nondescript "fine" or some answer that reflected an inner sense or feeling, now we are more apt to respond with a statement about our activity level, "I'm so busy!" Why has being busy become the cultural standard for assessing the value of our lives, and what costs are exacted by our choices to do more, do it faster, do it without rest? Kathy and Worship Associate Peggy Woerhlen consider the meaning of being busy from a spiritual perspective, and whether there might be other ways to see ourselves as persons of value without being persons who are also busy. Music provided by BUC's Chalice Choir.

MARCH 9 - "Forever and a Day": All spiritual traditions include, as part of their teachings and wonderings about time, some distinctions between time as we usually experience it each day, and time that would be timeless, or eternity. Is eternity only a kind of time that comes after death? What would it mean to have my usual ways of marking time lifted, so that time stopped? Kathy and WA Grace Rising explore beyond the boundaries of time, the arena where we often locate experiences of spiritual awakening and lasting truth. Music provided by pianist Hwa Ling Russell.

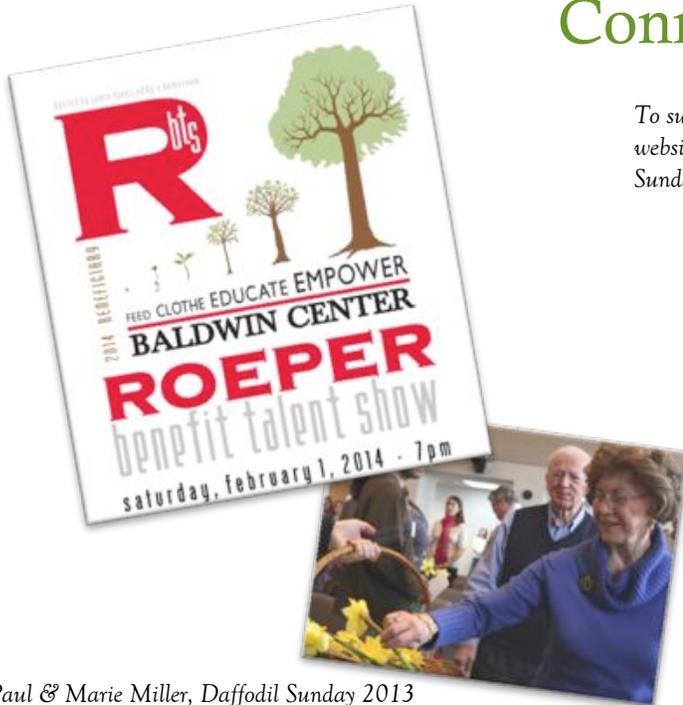
MARCH 16—Youth Sunday. "Life is Good: A Journey." In planning their annual Youth Sunday service, the 6th-12th graders of BUC agreed that often life is positive and wonderful—and we don't notice because we allow ourselves to be demoralized by others' actions or words. Planned and executed (mostly) by the youth, the leaders will explore our shared ability to deflect negative influences and make life—the ultimate unit of time—truly good. Music provided by youth instrumentalists and the Teen Choir under the direction of Abha Dearing.

MARCH 23—"The Sacred and the Profane": The sacred and profane are distinctions used in Religious Studies to analyze and understand human religious experience. They can also be used to describe certain ideas and practices in Unitarian Universalism, in order to give a focus and depth to spiritual identity. Our guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Brent A. Smith, Assistant Professor at Grand Valley State University who has served congregations in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Grand Rapids. WA Sara Constantakis will conduct the service. Music provided by the Chalice Choir.

MARCH 30 - Hymn sing service. Come ready to sing as Co Directors of Music Abha and Steven Dearing lead us through some of our favorite hymns and some that we wish we sang more often.

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.



Paul & Marie Miller, Daffodil Sunday 2013

Flowers, Flowers, Flowers... for Sunday Morning

Take a moment to recognize or honor someone dear or to commemorate a special occasion by providing fresh flowers for the sanctuary!

Flowers add significantly to the ambience on Sunday mornings.

You may go to our website, www.bucmi.org, to order the flowers through SignUpGenius or contact me directly: joanne.copeland@bucmi.org or 248.318.8698

When you sign up, please let me know if you are bringing your own arrangement or if you would like me to order one, and please note in the comment section the words you would like printed in the order of service. The cost for us to purchase flowers is \$50. and pay online by clicking on the "Donate" button and noting that it is for "Sanctuary Flowers on (date)" or you may send a check to BUC at 38651 Woodward Avenue, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304. Please note "Sunday Flowers" in the memo line.

Thank you for sharing your remembrances of special occasions and important people in your life and enhancing our communal worship experience.

Sincerely,

Joanne Copeland

On February 1, the Roper School held a Talent Show Benefit for the Baldwin Center, (BUC staff and volunteers provided a week long camp there last August). Because of our Roper connections (Lisa Baker and Abha Dearing), Roper choose the Baldwin Center as the recipient. The event raised over \$5,000 for the Baldwin Center! Celebrating being part of the interconnected web of existence. ☺

Former BUC member, Carol Ann Arvan's father "Kinney" Kinsaul passed away on January 30th. Carol Ann and her mother, Christie held a memorial service in Decatur, Georgia in February at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Carol Ann wishes to express her thanks for all the love and support. If you would like to contact Carol Ann, her address is: 32 Chelsea Court, Avondale Estates, GA 30002-1550.

Paul and Marie Miller celebrated their 62nd Wedding Anniversary in February - Congratulations!

Tony Hardesty was hospitalized in February with some cardiac issues. She is home now, and receiving treatment. We wished her a speedy recovery and she complied - making it out to the SoundBites concert on February 14!

Long time BUC member, Kate Mellet, died on February 5. Her memorial service was held at BUC on February 12. Thoughts and prayers most appreciated for Kate's husband Jim, and children Ed and Mandy, and her grandchildren, as they move through this time of loss.

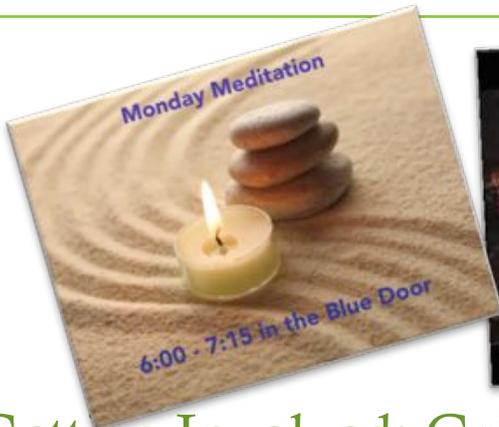
Larry Larson is healing at home, recovering from a fall that resulted in several broken ribs. Thoughts and well wishes most appreciated.

Former BUC member, Norb Keller, died the first week in February. His wife, Carole Keller, family and friends celebrated his life on February 8 at Thayer Rock Funeral Home.

Long time BUC member and mother of Dan Boyce, Alice Boyce, died after a brief illness on February 15. A memorial service will be held in May in Houghton, Michigan.

BUC member, Bill Rittinger celebrated his 82 birthday, on February 26. Happy Birthday, Bill!

Pat Kridler slipped while visiting family out of state, and broke her wrist. We wish her a speedy recovery!



New UUA Logo, spring 2014!

Getting Involved: Grief Support, Meditation, Opera Buffs

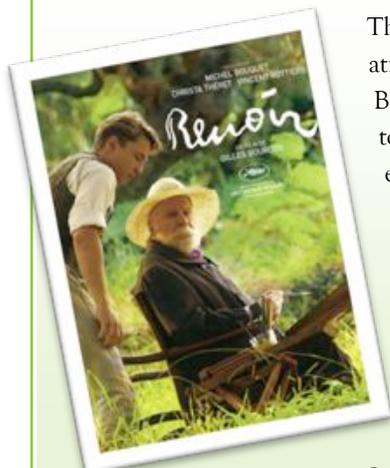
Grief Group – Tuesday, March 11th

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

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.

Friday, March 28, Film Buffs: *Renoir*



The Commons at 7:00 p.m. "Set on the French Riviera in the summer of 1915, Gilles Bourdos' lushly atmospheric new drama 'Renoir' tells the story of celebrated painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir (Michel Bouquet), in declining health at age 74, and his middle son Jean (Vincent Rottiers), who returns home to convalesce after being wounded in World War I. The elder Renoir is filled with a new, unexpected energy when a young girl miraculously enters his world. Radiantly beautiful, Andrée (the luminous Christa Thérét) will become his last model, and the wellspring of a remarkable rejuvenation. A sensory feast, 'Renoir' observes the moment when the light of genius passes from the painter to his brilliant filmmaker son. In French with English subtitles. -DFT Summer 2013 film Guide

"Lush and involving... Renoir is classic French moviemaking with some modern twists." –Kenneth Turan, Los Angeles Times

Renoir (France, 2012, 111 minutes) was rated R by the MPAA.

Snacks provided. For more information contact Larry at 248-569-0965 or LJWisniew@yahoo.com.

Getting to Know UU: IV "UU in the World Today" Tuesday, March 26th 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 – Save the Date April 5th

La Bohème BUC Opera Goers will attend Puccini's moving story of young love, 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.

Poetry, Art, Writing, & Discussion Groups @ BUC

Spiritual Conversations – Poetry and Reflection – March 3, 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. Bring a poem to share related to this month's theme of "time" or a poem that has personal meaning for you. Group is open and is facilitated by Penny Hackett-Evans, meeting in the Blue Door Room.

Art and Spirit – Monday, March 10, 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. Bring a blank journal and any art supplies you happen to have – along with an open and willing spirit. Group always open to new members.

Writing as a Spiritual Practice – Monday, March 17, 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. 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.

Sacred & Profane Discussion Group – Wednesday, March 19, 10:30

This group will meet on Wednesday March 19 at 10:30 AM to discuss the topic of "The Future" in the Large Conference Room. – Facilitated by Maurice Lefford.

Hospitality at BUC

Being greeted when I walk in the door on Sunday mornings warms my heart. As I walk into the service an usher hands me a bulletin and again welcomes me with a smile. After service I go into the social hall and coffee is hot and ready. Books are available to lend or purchase.

How does this happen? It happens when people like yourself sign up one or two times a year to return the hospitality you feel every Sunday morning. Sign-up sheets are in the social hall after services or it's easy to sign up on line through our website – go to www.bucmi.org and click on "Sign Up for Sunday Morning Hospitality" in the center column.

Save the date for Pam's POOL PARTY in June. I believe hospitality is important and should be rewarded. Everyone who has volunteered to serve coffee, usher, greet, or work the book cart in the last 365 days will be invited! Contact Pam McAlpin pam.mcalpin@bucmi.org



Don't miss out on the fun, sign up and volunteer!

Alliance – Save the Date: Wed. April 16

The Alliance will not meet in March, but will be meeting for a brown bag lunch at noon on April 16th and then carpooling to the Detroit Historical Museum for a tour. Hope to see you!

Reflections by the Rev. Dr. Kathy Hurt



Pete Seeger, the legendary folk singer and activist who died recently, observed that "it's a very important thing to learn to talk to people you disagree with." Through his music and his life, Seeger held to this value, repeatedly trying to draw into relationship ideas and persons who were at odds, finding points of connection that were not readily apparent,

figuring out how to keep the conversation going without having it degenerate into argument or mere teeth-gritting tolerance.

When was the last time you had a conversation with someone you disagreed with that was more than just two people hurling ideas past one another in another hopeless effort to change somebody's mind? Is changing the mind of the person you disagree with the only motivation you bring to such a conversation? We Unitarian Universalists seem to harbor an unusually large number among us who find themselves in situations where all sorts of conversational topics have to be avoided because of disagreement—yet why does the prospect of disagreement shut us down? Are we unable to envision any other result of disagreement besides a thoroughly unpleasant shouting match, in which case avoiding controversial topics becomes the wisest alternative?

During this challenging winter of upended schedules and difficult driving and seemingly endless snow and cold, we could all use a distraction. Consider trying your hand at Seeger's urging and test out a conversation with someone you already know you disagree with, seeing whether you can avoid the extremes of superficial polite tolerance and intense argument, whether there might be a third way of a kind of engagement that mysteriously deepens a relationship even when both parties are in disagreement. Think of it as a kind of spiritual practice, which has the potential, over time, to be one's own personal contribution to world peace—as well as something to do while the snow continues to fall.

Faithfully,

Kathy

Volunteer of the Month: Keith Brown



Why do I volunteer?

I care about our church, what it stands for and what it can accomplish. I feel I have skills, knowledge, and experience that are important that I can contribute to the growth and improvements of the church.

As an Architect, I feel I can contribute not only art and architecture but also a problem solving methodology of creating solutions to many issues. And when they are done they should be that best that they can be for the circumstances. I enjoy seeing the results of a job well done that will be an improvement for many years to come, and working with people who appreciate the improvements.

Keith Brown Volunteer Activities Current & Past:

- ⊕ Facilities Committee 1982 ~ 2012
- ⊕ Green Sanctuary 2006 ~ current
- ⊕ Art Committee 1980 ~ current
- ⊕ Memorial Glen Committee many years ~ current

Previous Volunteer Activities:

- ⊕ Long Range Planning Committee
- ⊕ Architect Selection Committee (sanctuary)
- ⊕ Building Committee (sanctuary, gallery, and lower classrooms)
- ⊕ Sanctuary Furniture Selections Committee (including layout and installation)
- ⊕ Congregational Development Committee
- ⊕ Landscape Architect Selection and Advisory Committee
- ⊕ Christmas Decorating Committee for many years
- ⊕ Building and Grounds special projects: Needs Assessment Analysis for Growth Report; gas leak repair coordination, pond reconstruction (partial); well reactivation and drainage for geo-thermal furnace installation; design and construction of Woodward and Lone Pine signs including city approval process; entry signs and interior signage; choir movable riser design and construction; designer of Memorial Glen; Capek Woods creation, advisory and maintenance;
- ⊕ Capek Woods earthen berm construction.
- ⊕ Saturday Work Days, inside and outside for many years.
- ⊕ Rummage "schlepping" and take down for many years.
- ⊕ Co-Coordinator of Sharing Dinner for three years
- ⊕ Celebrity Chef for annual Bake-Off for three years
- ⊕ Sunday Morning coffee service, ushering, and greeting over many years.
- ⊕ Trustee on the Board



Music

Chalice Choir

Musicians at BUC are as active as ever! Please mark your calendars for the next UU Choir Festival on March 9th, hosted by First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit on Cass Avenue on Wayne State's Campus. This is at least the 5th UU Choir Fest of its kind: our friends at 1st UU invited 11 of the UU choirs in southeast Michigan and southwest Ontario to participate in an afternoon of choral music. Please come support your BUC choir and almost 200 other singers at 3pm (parking nearby) for this awesome, inspiring concert.

Thanks so much to all of the folks who helped to make the February 14th SoundBites concert a huge success. There were almost 200 people who enjoyed the music of the Dearings and Rudolf, followed by truly delectable desserts and wine. There are so many volunteers who pitched in to make the event run smoothly so the music staff could concentrate on making music. It takes our BUC village for successes like that!



Sound Messengers

The Sound Messengers house band continues to enliven our Celebratory services while the Chalice Choir supports our congregational singing in between their powerful renditions of lots of new music. May 18th will be Choir Sunday. The next couple of weeks are ideal for joining choir. Rehearsals are Wednesdays 7:30-9pm.



"I would like to thank everyone who came out to the Big Band Benefit Concert on February 23rd. The band wanted to do a benefit for BUC in appreciation for the donated rehearsal space provided throughout the year. The band and the audience had a great time. Thank you!"
- John Hammer



Children's Religious Education

In March we continue the Seeking Peace rotation, which explores the tools that our faith offers us for creating peace.

Youth RE

This year's youth group activity continues to focus on living our Unitarian Universalist principles. The youth have continued on the course they set at the beginning of the year to increase their social action activities and connect more with adults in the congregation. The 6&7 Unitarian Friendship Organization has, so far, put together almost 70 blessing bags, containing hand warmers, emergency blankets, coffee shop gift cards, and more, for congregants to keep in their cars and distribute to needy folks in our area. Thank you to all the BUCers who have supported this project with donations of cash and toiletries. We will continue to take orders and create bags throughout the cold days of late winter and early spring.

After the middle school youth created over 30 tied-fleece blankets for cat and kitten crates (which were then donated to the Michigan Humane Society), the high school youth learned of a similar project to create larger blankets for abused children through an organization called Child Hope. On February 16, during a joint middle and high school craft afternoon, three large blankets were finished. In addition, eight knitters began work on scarves to donate to local warming centers. (We also created a few fleece scarves from the blanket leftovers.)

And please remember our ongoing food drive! We continue to collect non-perishable food and other items, such as shampoo and diapers, to donate to the Open Hands Pantry in Royal Oak. Just bring your donations into service on Sunday and the exiting children will collect them. Thank you!

Life is Good: A Journey: Youth Sunday 2014

As a further sample of the youth commitment to connection with the larger congregation, please expect this annual youth-



planned and youth-led event to be a real worship service. The 6-12th graders are working hard on music and written pieces that reflect the chosen theme. Look for instrumental and choral pieces, a fun children's message, a thought-provoking meditation and homily, and youthful greeters, ushers, and coffee servers. During the coffee hour, the ROPE parents will be offering special treats in exchange for a donation to the 2014 Boston trip! Life is good AND Youth Sunday is good, so please join us!

And youth, please remember that the rehearsal for Youth Sunday is Saturday, March 15, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Bagels and juice will be provided.

The 6 & 7 class will visit the Ann Arbor Zen Buddhist Temple on March 2 and wrap up Buddhism on March 9. On March 23, they will begin a new unit on Judaism.

The 8th grade Rite of Passage Experience (ROPE) class has been busy interviewing BUC congregants and discussing ideas about God. In March, they will enjoy playing Theological Jeopardy, work further on their credos, and welcome a panel of BUCers representing several areas of interest at our church. Thank you to all who supported the Boston Trip by joining in the pancake breakfast!

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.

GUUSH: In addition to Youth Sunday planning, BUC will host the district Social Justice Con March 7 to 9. Many volunteers are needed to make this event a success, so please contact Graham Ross or Kimery if you are willing to pitch in. We need cooks and angels (the term for overnight chaperones who keep at eye on things on Saturday night.) This con is carefully planned to deepen participants' understanding of social justice challenges in our culture and adults as well as youth find it to be a meaningful experience. Please consider joining our youth at this important event!

DRE Kimery Campbell at kimery.campbell@bucmi.org.

Service & Justice

WHRC Elementary School Update

WHRC Elementary School students and teachers have settled into a “new normal” at Pontiac High School and Middle School while significant water damage is being addressed at WHRC. Shortly after the news broke about the situation, donations of school supplies and library books started coming in from various sources. Teachers reported that they’ve gotten enough school supplies to last through the year. Thank you to all who have been so generous.

The next area of focus is replacement of teacher materials, bulletin board displays, etc. that were destroyed. Some of those materials were purchased by the teachers originally and it will be a “double whammy” if they have to spend their own money to replace them. We expect to receive a consolidated

list of needed items during the next few weeks and will make it available to our congregation.

We are also working to categorize and label library books that have been donated and distribute them to classrooms. We will contact people on our volunteer list to help with that. More books are welcome; Grades K-6.

For more information or to volunteer, contact George Lentz, Sharon Kirchner, or Mary Jo Ebert. Monetary donations can be sent to the BUC office. Please write checks to Communities United for Children. 100% of your donation will go to WHRC.

Food Drive Continues

On January 5, we launched our food collection program. Each Sunday, as the children leave the sanctuary, they collect food donations from the congregation which get transported to the Open Hands Pantry at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Royal Oak. Supplies at local food pantries are low due to the increased demand for food resulting, in part, from cuts in SNAP benefits. Please continue to bring donations to church. Good items to donate include peanut butter, canned tuna,

cereal, mac & cheese, soup, dried beans, peas, or lentils; toothpaste & toothbrushes, deodorant, and dish soap.

MUUSJN Spring Justice Party

The Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN) invites you to the Spring Justice Party on March 15, 5:00 p.m., UU Church of Greater Lansing. Program includes dinner, a concert, and speakers who will address gun law reform, immigration reform, and minimum wage increase. Visit the MUUSJN website or Facebook page for details.

Plate Collection

2013 Summary: In 2013, our congregation donated a total of \$20,608 to plate collection recipients, which was an increase over the \$17,320 donated in 2012. Well done everyone!

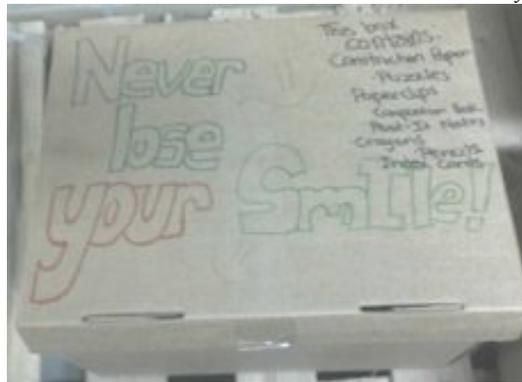
2014 Plate Collection: In a letter to the congregation last December, Rev Hurt and 2013 Board President Eric Sargent informed us that in order to stay within budget limits in 2014, the donated portion of the plate collection is reduced from 50% to 25% this year. Please reference these guidelines:

1. When submitting a pledge payment via the plate collection, write “pledge” on the memo line of your check.
2. Cash donations will be divided 75% to BUC and 25% to the plate recipient.
3. Checks written directly to the plate recipient will be sent to that organization.

March Recipient: Detroit Inner City Outings (ICO) program of the Sierra Club. Through the ICO program, disadvantaged urban youth and adults gain access to wilderness and enjoy outdoor experiences that they would not otherwise have. The program serves people of varied economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, hearing or visually impaired persons, and the physically disabled.

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

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



Troy Schools donated boxes of supplies to WHRC, many of which were decorated by Troy students



Saturday, March 15 Finvarra's Wren

For St. Patrick's Day weekend, MAMA's Coffeeshouse is proud to present Finvarra's Wren. One of North America's most exciting Irish quartets, this Detroit based band has an intense dedication to their instruments and to Irish music. Traditional and contemporary Irish, Scottish and Celtic-American folk songs are punctuated

with wonderfully inventive arrangements of jigs, reels and hornpipes. Doors open at 7:00 ~ Open Mic 7:30 ~ Show 8:00 p.m.

The band is led by Jim Perkins and Cheryl Burns, well known for their sensitive vocals and the inventive musical weaving of Jim's guitar and Cheryl's mountain dulcimer and bodhran. Their children, Asher Perkins (button accordion and concertina) and Alison Perkins (vocals, fiddle and tin whistle), are world renowned for their award winning playing. Admission \$15 (\$13 student/senior)

Are You Ready? We Are!

Perhaps you have been attending Sunday services and enjoyed some fellowship events or joined one of our many special activity groups. Perhaps you have served as a volunteer at Rummage, Sunday Hospitality, South Oakland Shelter week or one of several other ways to serve the church and the wider community. Maybe you have even made a financial pledge. Are you ready now to make a decision to join BUC as a member?

Membership is both simple and difficult. It is easy to sign the Membership Book. It is challenging because of what this simple act means: that you have made a commitment to join a faith community that is searching for truth, working for justice and whose members live in loving relationship with one another. Because this would be your church home, you would support BUC with your time, talents and financial resources, as generously as possible.

As a member you likely will find that your experience at BUC will become more spiritually, intellectually and emotionally rewarding. Members treat Sunday services as opportunities to learn, reflect, and enjoy acceptance and fellowship, rather than meet an obligation. Members can rely on each other during times of personal crisis, and feel how joy multiplies during times of celebration. Members find that family weddings, child dedication services, and memorial services deepen in meaning as their participation in life at BUC grows.

By becoming a member you can vote on decisions about leadership, budgets and other issues affecting the church. You will increase our power and strength as a community to impact positive change in the world and join thousands of others who stand for the principles of Unitarian Universalism. Please join US in building the future of this church!

We invite you to read the [Membership Path](#) booklet, which is also available in the church foyer and visitor's table in the Pavilion. If you are considering membership or have questions, contact our BUC Membership Coordinator, Pam McAlpin: Phone 248-647-2380 ext. 223 Email: pam.mcalpin@bucmi.org



UU Green Sanctuary Congregations Respond to Climate Change

Keith Brown forwarded this Feb 12, 2014 letter from Vincent Pawlowski (uuvince@ultrasw.com), a board member of the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for the Earth, to Green Sanctuary Committees in Unitarian Churches all over the country. I have excerpted it here for us to think about. ~ Annis Pratt

Dear Green Sanctuary friends:

In posts to each other, the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for the Earth (www.uuministryforearth.org) brought up the following topics:

- ⊕ First, we debated the effectiveness of individual and legislative actions, of divestment and other forms of economic pressure. (Church and Universities, among other groups, are refusing to invest in fossil fuel companies. (For the UU discussion, see www.uuministryforearth.org/fossil-fuel-divestment. ap)
- ⊕ Then, water, fracking, etc were discussed. My heart goes out the hundreds of thousands in West Virginia who are directly affected by toxic water, and to my friends all around West Virginia who are victims of a government/extraction industry cabal that is intent on treating our Appalachian region as a sacrifice zone.
- ⊕ I am deeply saddened by the recent coal ash dump spewed 82,000 tons of sludge into a North Carolina river, by those affected by fracking toxins in their water, by native peoples who have had their rivers poisoned by tar sands extraction, by those who've lost their homes and communities to drought and extreme weather, and by the many more around the world who have lost their right to clean water due to privatization, global warming, war, or for whatever reason.

It is time to connect the dots to solutions. We need bold, massive nation- and world-wide action to take back our planet! Within our denomination, we have statements, resolutions, and witnesses:

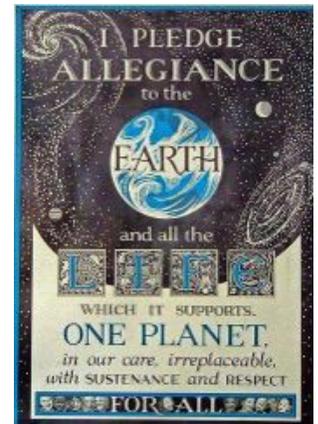
- ⊕ UU Ministry For the Earth has been working on climate justice since before the term became commonplace.
- ⊕ The 2006 Statement of Conscience on Global Warming/Climate Change (www.uua.org/statements/statements/8061.shtm)
- ⊕ The Resolution of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany to Oppose the Current Practice of Hydraulic Fracturing and Support the Widespread Adoption of Renewable Energy
- ⊕ The UUSC Human Right to Water campaign (<http://www.uusc.org/campaigns/the-human-right-to-water>)
- ⊕ The 2008 Action of Immediate Witness to Extend the Tax Credit for Wind and Solar Power
- ⊕ Local, district and national resolutions, leading up to the UU Divestment and Reinvestment group's upcoming Business Resolution on Divesting the UUA from Fossil Fuels.

These are all great and worthy efforts, but not are enough, alone. All lead me to believe it is time for us all to stand up and say, in the words of the fictional Howard Beale, "I'm as mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!" I don't know about you, but I am ready to really fight, in whatever way I can, for our human right to be free from ALL forms of the corruption and domination that are killing us and our planet Earth.

In almost every case, the greed of the powerful is becoming painfully obvious. It is time to unite the social, civil, human rights campaigns with the global, environmental and climate justice efforts growing world-wide into one giant "HEAVE HO!"

How do we get there? Simple, an "all hands on deck" movement. So, my friends at the Association for the Tree of Life have put together our solution, the Save Ourselves Now campaign: <http://www.saveourselvesnow.net/> Someday, I hope you'll join us.

In joy and resolve,
Vincent Pawlowski





Explorations

School for Young Learners

The spring session of Explorations is off to a great start. At the beginning of February we added two new students, and after a successful open house on February 6th, we added another new student to the current program starting on February 25th, and two new students for the fall. We are proud to announce that we have also passed our "unannounced" licensing inspection by the Department of Human Services with flying colors, which extends our provisional license to a standard two-year license. In



March the children will continue to create many fun and artistic projects related to our various areas of discovery as well learning new songs and games. It is wonderful watching them grow as they learn about themselves and the world around them.

We continue to receive registrations for our programs in the fall, and we look forward to growing even more. In preparation for the 2014 - 2015 school year Explorations will hold

OPEN HOUSES on MONDAY, MARCH 10th and 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 Young Explorers Toddler School for 18 month - 34 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.

Committee Update

One of the key BUC committees, which serve a crucial, though not always visible, role in ensuring effective church operations, is our Personnel Committee. Established in our governing documents as an advisory committee for the Minister in her Executive role and a check to ensure proper staff support, evaluation, and treatment, the Personnel Committee's responsibilities range from oversight of personnel policies to clarification and standardization of job descriptions to development of evaluation procedures to consultation and guidance during times of staffing transitions.

Drieka DeGraff, Jenn Karteczka, and Julia Gragg have recently completed more than three years of service on our Personnel Committee. Taking office during the time of ministerial transition, when church personnel matters had been set aside while the search for a new minister was in process, Drieka, Jenn, and Julia set about the herculean task of rewriting the personnel manual, standardizing policies (and filling gaps where policies were missing or outdated), reviewing job descriptions for all staff members, and organizing personnel files that had, over time, become scattered. They served a key advisory role for our Senior Minister during some challenging staff transitions, providing support and guidance to ensure the transitions occurred fairly, legally, and with minimal disruption of ongoing church life. Over time, they consulted with the Senior Minister to determine congregational staffing needs and how best to configure our staff so that needs were met appropriately. With a large church staff, issues inevitably arise, and the Personnel Committee members were available to assist in resolving those issues.

The incoming members of the committee - Judy Amir, Libby Harris, and Marilyn Mast as the Board representative - along with all of us are grateful for the many accomplishments of the outgoing committee.

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