

Birmingham Unitarian Church

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

December 2010

Sunday Worship Services

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.*

*Sunday, December 26 ONE SERVICE at 10:30

December 5: "The Faith of Cats"

UUs often refer to leading our congregations as an exercise in "herding cats." On the Sunday of the annual meeting of the congregation, when we recognize the service and commitment of our volunteer leaders, what does it mean to take on the challenge of church leadership? Kathy and Worship Associate Lisa Demian reflect on the pleasures and frustrations of herding cats, music by the "One Hour Choir."

December 12: "What are We Waiting For?"

The weeks leading up to Christmas are traditionally known as the season of Advent, associated with a time of waiting. Along with waiting for the gifts we hope to receive, what are we hoping to experience spiritually in this time? Kathy and Worship Associate Grace Rising explore the ways we wait, and what we hope to find at the end of our season of waiting. The children will be reveling in our annual "Candy Cane Sunday" activities.



December 19: Intergenerational Service

Please join us for a fun, holiday intergenerational service with special music courtesy of all our "No Fault Orchestra" volunteer musicians. There will be music, carol singing, and seasonal stories -- an opportunity to worship with the whole family.

December 24: Christmas Eve Services



5:30 ~ A younger family oriented service complete with pageant.

8:00 ~ A candlelight Christmas Eve service. Share a glow to last through the holidays.

December 26: SINGLE SERVICE at 10:30

Didn't get enough of singing carols before Christmas? Never got to sing your favorites? This service is for you, -- a time to gather around the piano and sing the songs of the season one more time.

A Significant Income Source for BUC

This year, the BUC Account with the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, will again generate a significant sum to BUC's income. The earnings from contributions over the last dozen years now provide well over \$12,000 per year to BUC's income stream. Your contributions can be at little cost to you, since they generate both a Michigan tax credit and a Federal Income Tax deduction.

To help you understand how contributions to the Foundation before the end of 2010 can benefit the community, BUC, and YOU, the Endowment Committee will be in the Social Hall (through December 19). Please stop by during the coffee-hour.

What Lies Beyond Religion?

This discussion group, which meets at 9:30 on Sunday mornings in the Large Conference room has finished John Shelby Spong's book and will resume meetings on January 9th. The group enjoyed Spong's book, reflecting: "We met for eight weeks to discuss *Eternal Life: A New Vision* affect on our spirituality. Spong said, 'We share in eternity by being in communion with the ever-expanding life force, which is the life-enhancing power of love.' He says we are part of God. God is part of us. We must do the work of God (be loving). Our lives are created by the love of others. We become part of their lives, and they become part of ours. Love is not defeated by death, as it continues on for generation after generation. Love is everlasting. We embrace eternal life through those we love. Knowing the human race and our planet will disappear eventually, means we need courage to live. However, we know that love and compassion help make our planet a more heavenly place, giving our life the meaning and purpose that replaces primitive, comforting, traditional religion."

For at least two weeks in January, they will explore the book, *My Stroke of Insight* by Jill B Taylor, brain scientist. Other subsequent books may include, *Why God Won't Go Away*, *How to be Good, Nothing to be Frightened Of*, and *The Science of Good and Evil*.

All are welcome to join the discussion or just observe the lively meetings. For further information please contact Diane Lake at diane.lake@comcast.net or 248-626-0222.

Adult Education "Is Money Moral?"

On four Saturday mornings in January from 9-11AM, with coffee and doughnuts to be had, Annis Pratt will lead a discussion on the origins of money, what values each of us attach to it, and how people arrive at different economic theories. If you are interested please contact her at avpratt@aol.com. the dates: Saturday Jan 8,15,22,and 29. Good background reading is, *Justice: What is the Right Thing to Do?* By author Michael J. Sandel.

The Sacred and Profane Discussions

There was a lively discussion of "Fun" at the meeting on 17 November, led by Marjorie Taylor. We considered various definitions of fun; kindly fun, nasty fun, fun in groups and crowds, and solitary fun

such as enjoyment of music and puzzles. Participants were invited to name their favorite fun and un-fun events. The former included soaping windows on Halloween; the latter were circus clowns. As to whether we suffered from a deficiency of fun at BUC, we learned that there had once been a "Merriment Committee" at BUC. Should it be revived?

The next meeting of the discussion group is scheduled for 10:30 AM on Wednesday 15 December, when we will discuss the topic of "Christmas" to be facilitated by Roger Marshall. I anticipate that both the sacred and profane features of this holiday will be discussed with brio.

Holiday Dinner for BUC Folks

Margaret Marsh will again be hosting the annual BUC Christmas dinner potluck at her home. Turkey, dressing and gravy will be served along with all the guest contributions. A number of folks brought wine last year and the impromptu wine tasting was said to be quite fun. Four o'clock Christmas day. Please respond to Carol Winslow if you are planning to attend at cwin@att.net or call at 248-398-1582.

In lieu of a white elephant gift exchange, this year's theme is gift food items. Gourmet coffee or tea, popcorn, cheese, nuts, wine, maple syrup, jam, homemade goodies. The address: 831 Mt. Vernon, Royal Oak, 48073

Needs Network:

The annual holiday gift collection for the Lighthouse in Pontiac will began on November 28 and continue through December 12. All gifts must be new, unused, and unwrapped. The following items are particularly needed: coats for children and adults, especially men's very large sizes; sweatshirts, sweatpants, and underwear, especially XXL sizes; large men's socks; pajamas for women and children; household items including cleaning supplies, toilet paper, facial tissue (Kleenex), bath towels, dishes, glasses, pots and pans, sheet sets in any size, comforters, and blankets.

The only toys that tend to be in short supply are board games and books for older children.



For additional information, please contact Margaret Marsh 248-288-3411 email: mmarsh96@yahoo.com

Connections - Joys & Sorrows

Jean Andrews, long time BUC member died October 8. Jean joined BUC in 1967. An avid reader and liberal thinker she found the atmosphere of the church stimulating. She made lifelong friendships in Evening Alliance. Jean was a librarian and worked at Pontiac Public Library managing the branch libraries until 1966. She then served 18 years as Director of Waterford Township Library, retiring in 1984. Jean leaves behind 7 nieces and nephews and 3 grand nephews and a niece. She was a devoted aunt to all and will be greatly missed. Rev. Hurt officiated at a Memorial Service for Jean on November 28th at the Henry Ford Village.



Jason and Jennifer MacDonald welcomed their daughter Autumn Grace to the world on Oct. 20th ~ Jason and Jennifer wish to express their extreme thankfulness for the generous Meijer gift cards given to them by the congregation. "In my twenty years working at BUC, I've never had something so wonderful happen. It blew me away. I can't even tell you

how much we appreciate it." ~ Jason MacDonald

Virginia Dickinson, a long time member of BUC, died Sunday, October 31. She joined BUC in 1958. She served as the Board Secretary, was active in Alliance, serving on its board. She worked the lay away desk at our rummage sales for many years. She was 89. A graduate of Highland Park Junior College, her career was with the Burroughs Corporation. After retirement she volunteered at the Detroit Institute of Arts for over 25 years. She was a member of the Audubon Society, and enjoyed walking, attending the Detroit Symphony and attending the theater - especially Stratford and Niagara on the Lake. Rev. Hurt officiated at a Memorial Service for her at BUC on November 5th.

BUC's pianist, Angelina Pashmakova is spending some time with her ailing mother in Bulgaria. Recent CT scans indicate a lung tumor, but she does not want treatment. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Angelina and her family as they navigate this time.

In October, Penny Hackett-Evans and Carol Lee visited our partner Unitarian Church in Prague, Czech Republic, with Petr Samojsky, minister.



Charles Wakefield Modrack, 88, died on November 14 surrounded by his children. Principled, curious and compassionate, he possessed a keen intellect and tenacity for independence through his last days. Chuck and Dorothy joined the Church in the early 1960's. The Modrack's helped foster the development of The Memorial Glen. Chuck sang in the BUC choir and relished the musical offerings of Sunday mornings at BUC. In January, a private memorial is planned for Chuck's family and friends, details to follow. The Modrack children, Charles Jr., Christine, Leslie and Matthew, wish to express deep gratitude to BUC for the rich intellectual and spiritual companionship their parents shared with so many in the church community. Memorials may be directed to The Nature Conservancy 101 East Grand River Lansing, MI 48906

SOS Hosting Success

We had just over 30 guests each night and all went smoothly. This is due to the wonderful volunteers here at BUC, as well as some from Paint Creek and Emerson. What a team we all make---driving, setting up, tearing down, doing laundry, shopping, cooking, serving and hosting.

Paul Plante and Grace Rising sincerely thank all of the team leaders and the people who worked with them. SOS is able to extend their services to many people, in part, because we are willing and able to help with housing one week each year.

Starry, Starry Night

*The 'alumnae' of Women and Religion (active 1980s-early 1990s)
invite Women of BUC to a
Starry, Starry Night on Sunday, January 30, 5 p.m.
a simple catered supper
a celebration of the wonder of time, the marvel of life.
Watch for details in next newsletter*

Reflections

Rev. Dr. Kathy Hurt



I carry many memories—and not particularly fond ones—of road trips with my family. Before we owned a station wagon (and before the invention of the minivan and the passage of seat belt laws), my parents would stuff five of us in the back seat of the family Buick, settle themselves into the front seat with the baby, and set out for Grandmother's house or a Texas state park. Though the drive was only three hours or so to either destination, it seemed interminable. I remember my primary concern being the preservation of my few inches of space, ideally next to a window, against the incursion of sibling arms, elbows, and feet. How my parents endured these trips with their sanity and our safety intact remains a mystery.

Life in a Unitarian Universalist congregation often resembles my family road trips. With our unambiguous commitment to individual autonomy above all else, members are encouraged to pour their energies into the preservation of their space—on a committee, in a social group, as part of a theological or political perspective—with minimal concern given to how keeping one's own space might affect the well-being of the whole group. I had no interest in whether my siblings experienced discomfort or unhappiness as a result of my ferocious defense of my seat by the car window; all that mattered was that my view be unobstructed and my place be comfortable.

What Unitarian Universalist congregations struggle to discover is how and when to encourage members to surrender some of that precious autonomy for the sake of the whole. We readily defer group interest, group goals, in order to honor individual needs; when do we sacrifice individual interests and goals for the sake of the entire community? Given that most folks these days identify community as a primary reason for joining a congregation, why is the next step—asking for commitment to advance the well-being of the community—so problematic? And what happens to that beloved sense of community when the needs of the community, its goals and aspirations, run counter to individual needs and preferences?

My family road trips might have seemed shorter, less of an ordeal, had I sometimes shifted my focus from self-preservation to some sort of helpful interaction, such as reading to my siblings instead of arguing with them. Had I applied my organizational skills to determining seat assignments, we all might have been more comfortable. And perhaps this spiritual road trip we have embarked upon, by coming together in a congregation, will grow easier in time as we stop insisting that we always have to sit by the window.

In faith, hope, and love,

Kathy

BUC Film Buffs ~Friday, December 10

Cold Comfort Farm (England, 1996, PG, 95 minutes)

7:00 p.m. in the Commons ~ snacks provided

"When Flora Poste (Kate Beckinsale), a young society woman in 1930s London, becomes suddenly orphaned, she's forced to take up residence with a group of her unsophisticated, oddball relatives at their farm. Despite protests from the bedridden, iron-willed matriarch of the farm, the aspiring lass tries to achieve some semblance of order and class in the house -- and in her own life. Cast also includes Eileen Atkins, Ian McKellen and Joanna Lumley." -

www.rottentomatoes.com



For more information contact Larry at 248-569-0965 or LarryWisniew@att.net

click on the poster

to view trailer..

Children's Religious Education

Eleanor McGuire, Director of Religious Education for Children



Here is a brief outline of the **Kindergarten-5th grade** schedule through the 2010 holiday season:

Dec. 5th: Creation Myths rotation & One Hour Choir/Youth Chorus

Dec. 12th: Candy Cane Sunday

Dec. 20th: Intergenerational Holiday Service & No-Fault Orchestra

Dec. 24th: Family Service at 5pm

Dec. 26th: Intergenerational Family Caroling Service

Jan. 2nd: Holiday Happenings for Preschool – 5th grade

Jan 9th: Children's Worship Service for Creation Myths

Children's Rotation Curriculum

January's *Coming to Agreement* rotation stems from a larger objective of teaching our children how to find a balance between diverse individual opinions and community needs. To address this conflict, our UU Fifth Principle encourages "the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large." In an effort to explore and reinforce the Fifth Principle, this rotation will address two main questions: "What are the skills and steps needed to carry out the democratic process?" and "What are some benefits of coming to agreement?" This rotation will allow the kids to practice, both within groups and as individuals, the skills necessary to move through conflict toward consensus and then action.

Each workshop within this rotation will focus on one of these four steps for resolving conflict within groups of any size: 1. Identify the problem (Listening) 2. Brainstorm options (Deliberation) 3. Choose a solution (Compromise) 4. Try it out! (Commitment).

The Games workshop calls for "good listening", which is a skill that requires practice. This class focuses on two fundamental parts of good listening: "replaying" what was said and making "I" statements in order to avoid accusations.

The Storytelling workshop illustrates that discussion of possible options is essential to the process of coming to agreement. The children will discuss the pros and cons of each different animal that they could donate through Heifer International, using the Children's Worship offertory.

The Video workshop demonstrates how compromise often requires the skills as well as the willingness to reach agreement. The children will learn some methods of how to, as well as the benefits of compromising.

The Cooking workshop: The final stage in coming to agreement within a group is the act of commitment. The children will learn that "commitment" is action taken to support your decision – it is not just an idea you think *might* be good to try.

Please contact Eleanor McGuire, Children's DRE, with any questions at: eleanor.mcguire@buemi.org

Guest At Your Table: a program of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee



Each year between Thanksgiving and New Year's, friends and families in our congregation participate in Guest at Your Table – a UU tradition. By bringing home a beautiful Guest at Your Table box, families and individuals learn about how the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee puts our shared principles into action in the United States and around the world. Through a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC promotes economic rights, advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties, and preserves the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis. If you would prefer not to bring home a box, you can take a donation envelope or support UUSC directly online at www.uusc.org.

Youth Religious Education

Laura Ross, Director of Religious Education for Youth,
laura.ross@bucmi.org



Youth Sunday Classes in December

6/7th grades: 11:15 a.m

- Dec 5 Class: Atheism.
- Dec 12 Help with Candy Cane Sunday.
- Dec 19 MultiGen Service: No Fault Orchestra

8th Grade: 9:30am Our Whole Lives

- Dec 5 Parent Forum 10:30a – 11:15a Blue Door, Small Room
- Dec 11, Saturday: Our Whole Lives Overnight/Late night 3pm – 9:30am.
- Dec 19 FINAL Celebration 9:30 – 11:15 Potluck breakfast.
- Jan 7 (NEW DATE!!!) ROPE Kickoff Late night 6:30 – 11:30pm

9th – 12th Grades: 11:15 a.m.

- Dec 5 No Class. One Hour Choir Service
- Dec 12 Lead Candy Cane Sunday
- Dec 19 MultiGen Service: No Fault Orchestra

Youth Groups:

Unitarian Friendship Organization: 6th & 7th Grades: Stay tuned to email for a fun Winter Vacation activity!

Rite of Passage Experience (ROPE): 8th grade:

- FUNDRAISING Dec 5 – 19 Poinsettias and Baked Goods for the Holidays –proceeds for the Boston Trip.
- ROPE KICKOFF Late night January 7 (NEW DATE!!): 6:30p-11:30p
- ROPE Boston Trip April 28 – May 1, 2011

Great Unitarian Universalist Senior High (GUUSH):

- GUUSH meeting: December 5th 6p – 8p, Red Door.
- GUUSH & GUUSH Alumni Dinner Dec 19, 6 – 8p, Commons
- GUUSH –HS Mystic Lake Retreat FIRM Jan 14-16, 2011

Heartland District Youth Conferences:

- Jr. High 1 Day (North)- Location: Lansing or Midland- Date: January 8-9
- Spirituality Development Con- Location: Gross Point UU- Date: February 11 – 13
- Social Justice Con- Location: First in KY or TJUC- Date: March 11-13
- Bridging- Location: Ann Arbor or UUI - Date: April 29 - June 1
- Jr. High Election - Location: St. Johns Cincinnati- Date: May 13-15

Candy Cane Sunday

Candy Cane Sunday is a holiday tradition dating back to the late 1970's at BUC. The children will spend class-time December 12th on three tasks. Kindergarten through 5th graders will create three gifts: a gift for Families (cookies made by BUC elves), a gift for BUC (an ornament for our BUC holiday tree), and a gift to the Community (collect socks and gloves for Communities United for Children in Pontiac). 6th & 7th graders & High Schoolers will assist with the projects. (Our 8th graders will receive cookies, but will not assist, as they will be engaged in their last class session before an OWL closing celebration Dec 19.) **This event is festive and messy. Children & Youth: DRESS FOR MESS!**

Please bring in new socks and mittens to fit Kindergarten – 6th grade children now through Dec 12th. These items can be deposited in the RE Office.



Multi Generational Services

Periodically at BUC we have Multi-Generational services. Instead of calling them Intergenerational, as some of you may be used to, Multi-generational is a more accurate term, since our services are not only designed to cross generational lines, but also to integrate them. In a multigenerational service, you may find a different framework to the order of service, perhaps more songs, more movement, more conversation than a typical adult-oriented service. We design services differently to maintain the attention of the younger set, but also to allow for a slightly different experience of worship – we all appreciate a change now and again, and a few changes can make for an enjoyable experience! We hope you liked the El Dios De Los Muertos service on Oct 31 and on November 28, the interactive *William Gordon MacDonald Partridge*, by Mem Fox. December 19th will be another multi-generational service with delightful music by the No-fault Orchestra. Our 5pm Family Service on December 24 offers a truly interactive telling of the Nativity story, with opportunity for many actors as sheep, mice, chickens... no rehearsal required! If you have further questions, comments or concerns about the development of Multigenerational Worship, please feel free to talk to Laura Ross, DRE for Youth, Eleanor McGuire, DRE for Children, or the Rev Dr Kathy Hurt. We welcome your input.



GET YOUR HOLIDAY CHEER HERE!

The time of year is here when the ROPE* class sponsors its fundraising: **Poinsettias** and **Fresh, Homemade Holiday Baked Goods** are on sale. **Fair-trade Coffee** (tea, cocoa & chocolate) will arrive for sale in December.

Look for tables in the Pavilion, Social Hall and Foyer. Stop by to purchase or order your items. **Pick up your poinsettias on December 5.**

*ROPE, which stands for Rite of Passage Experience, is the 8th grade religious education class and youth group. The proceeds from these sales help to fund ROPE's culminating UU Heritage trip to Boston. The youth need to raise \$11,000 this year to go to Boston.

Musical Notes



SOS Dinner Music

Stuart McAlpin, Louise Angermeier, Bill Russell and I alternated evenings playing dinner music for our SOS guests (and volunteers). Paul Plante says we're the only church of 52 who provides this added

ambience and the guests and volunteers really appreciate it. Thanks to those who for volunteered their time to "affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity" of our guests.

October Special Music: Chalice Choir, BLUUS Band, Reprise, Chalice Choir, Day of the Dead - Eric Sargent, classical guitar, Jennie Spenner, flute

November Music: Chalice Choir– Louise Angermeier, Bill Russell and Emmon Scott, Chalice Choir – Cyndi Peltonen, Thanksgiving Intergenerational Service - Youth Chorus, Pam McAlpin and Teen Choir, Cyndi Peltonen

December Music: December 6 - One Hour Choir – Pam McAlpin , Louise Angermeier, December 12 - Chalice Choir – Louise Angermeier, No Fault Orchestra - Pam McAlpin, Christmas Eve – Teen Choir, Cyndi Peltonen and Chalice Choir, Louise Angermeier

No Fault Orchestra

Music may be picked up Sunday, Dec.5 in the Social Hall. Performance December 19. Special request for Saxes, please.

Pamela McAlpin
Youth Music Director
pam.mcalpin@bucmi.org

Looking Forward

Carol Ann Arvan, Congregation and Board President



On Sunday, October 31st the board and Rev. Kathy Hurt met to begin thinking about congregational goals for 2011. Several key thoughts that came from that discussion struck me. One was Kathy's repeated query, "Towards what end?" when we would come up with a particularly practical and bottom line goal. Why do we want to have more members? Why do we want to have more money? What is it we're trying to accomplish here?

As a board, we have had to take a very operations-bottom line-deal with the practical issues approach to our job during these years of transition. We've had very little opportunity, or perhaps we've just not carved out time for the opportunity, to think very strategically. To dream first about what we want BUC to be. Then to think about the steps we need to get there.

This visioning should be manifest in many ways. One is our Mission Statement: "To grow in spirit and give to the world" (short version). Is this really why BUC exists? Is there something more? Something less? Something completely different? To help us engage in this visioning, please join your board members and Rev. Hurt on Sunday, November 14 after each service in the Pavilion for our monthly town hall meeting where we'll talk about our Mission Statement. We hope to see you there.

And we hope to see you at the December 5 annual meeting of the congregation where we'll share the board's goals with the congregation and elect our leaders for 2011. Voting is a right of all active members, and a responsibility is you care about BUC's future, and a privilege made possible by all those members who came before us. Please plan to join us for this important day in the life of BUC.

Together with you in service to BUC,

Carol Ann

Rummage Wrap-Up

Kimery Campbell, Rummage Coordinator

The Fall 2010 BUC Rummage Sale grossed \$15,090. Once expenses were deducted (including the cost for extra custodial help, supplies, advertising, security, truck rental, babysitting, extra dumpsters, paid coordinator), the net profit to BUC was about \$12,375. This means that Rummage's total profit for 2010 was a little under \$27,000, which was an improvement upon the previous two years.

But what does Rummage really mean to our church community? It is an opportunity for BUCers to work and take meals and coffee together. A nasty early fall virus curtailed our numbers, but members and friends still managed to put together a polished sale in a mere four and a half days and consolidate the leftovers in less than six hours. But I think Rummage's most important role and most in keeping with our principles is the service it provides to the greater community. As need increases, we have increased our rummage outreach and provided assistance to Afghan children, Most Holy Trinity's homeless outreach program, Whitmer Human Resource Center, the Oakland County Jail, Bloomfield Township Public Safety, Freedom House, the Furniture Bank, and the Salvation Army. We have expanded our campaign to keep recyclable materials out of the landfill. The success of Rummage is many faceted!

Although the rummage sales are organized by the Rummage Committee and the new paid coordinator, it could not happen without the many rummage donors, cooks, and hard-working volunteers. Thank you to all for your generous support. Mark your calendars now for May 1, 2011-- our next Rummage intake Sunday!

Annual Alliance Holiday Luncheon

Hurry, **last day for a reservation is Monday, December 6**, for the special annual holiday luncheon on Wednesday, December 8. Everyone is invited to come enjoy this festive gathering sponsored by the Alliance. It will be at noon at the Radisson Kinglsey. Reservation forms are on the counter in the BUC office; they list the menu selections for your choice. We have held the price to \$25 for a wonderful meal with all the trimmings; there will be a cash bar for wine and sodas. This is a delightful occasion with time to visit with other BUCers and their guests, so bring family and friends – but make the reservations immediately, please! If you have questions, please contact Diane Sasaki 248/258-6826.

Our January 19 Alliance program takes us on a journey with Gloria Boddy, photographer extraordinaire – “Capturing Iceland: Digital Photography under the Midsummer Sun.” Gloria writes: On June 30, 2009, with a local photographer as our guide, sixteen of us squeezed into a van and set out to photograph Iceland. What we found was a country forged by fire, honed by ice and shaped by an independent people--who manage to live intimately with these forces on a day to day basis. Join David and me for a photo essay describing our visit to this extraordinary island.

This will be a Brown Bag lunch at noon in the Pavilion; Alliance will provide beverages and there will be cookies courtesy of our thoughtful cookie-bakers! Come at noon with your brown bag; the program will begin at about 1:00 p.m. in the Commons. Look for the Alliance brochure in the pamphlet rack for the other 2011 monthly programs. Wishing everyone joyful festivities this holiday season! If you don't have reservations for December 8th – hurry! We look forward to seeing you there.

Plate Collection Update

Thank you, BUCers, for giving generously and from your hearts to the plate collection on Sunday mornings. We were able to donate \$863.96 to The Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network; \$1137.93 to the Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County, and \$808.84 to the Southern Poverty Law Center where it partnered with a matching grant to give them \$1,617.68. The way these sums are arrived at is that, first, 10% of the total Plate Collection intake goes to our Minister's discretionary fund, which allows her to give small amounts to people in crisis who appeal to the church for help. 35% of the remaining total goes to the charities we choose from Grant Applications (simple, one page items) filled out by a BUC member who wants to sponsor an organization. These are available at in the church office or at our website www.bucmi.org under the “Church Business” section.

The Plate Collection Committee has voted on two charities to receive our next donations. The first is The Welcome Inn, a daytime shelter for the homeless in Royal Oak that is run by the

South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless. BUC volunteers have been active at The Welcome Inn for years, whether talking to guests, purchasing needed clothing and office items, cooking casseroles, accompanying them in vans to their appointments, or serving their hot lunches. Watch for Annis Pratt's booth in the Social Hall in December or contact her at avpratt@aol.com.

At Christmas time, when our church is filled with music, we will donate funds to the Cass Tech Orchestra to repair several of its string bass instruments. At a time when our BUC musicians bring so much happiness to our hearts, it seems suitable that our plate donations will help High School students in Detroit also experience the joy of music.

Winter Sports Enthusiasts – Abe Amir is putting together the annual trip to Sault Ste Marie, Canada. The dates are January 21-23. Hotel rate is \$119 Canadian (plus tax) per night. More information to come. Email Abe at aamir@wowway.com to add your name to the list or for more details.

Saturday, December 18 MAMA's @ BUC

Michigan-raised singer/songwriter, Drew tells stories in songs about the people we know, people we wish we knew, and the people we are. He gives us the words we need to celebrate or let go. Songwriter John Gorka said, "Drew's songs sound like the rest of us feel. His characters are anything but defeated. They are dazed, angry, amazed and climbing." Drew joined the Navy and traveled the world. He was able to see first-hand what was really happening in the world, and came home with fresh eyes to appreciate the realities of life in America. These experiences provided insight and understanding that have found an outlet in songs filled with discovery, revelation, and hope.

Jen Cass will open. Check out upcoming MAMA's shows at mammascoffehouse.org. Shows begin at 8:00pm unless otherwise specified. Doors open at 7:00pm with open mic beginning 15 minutes later.



OUR BUC FACILITY: A Building Update

Inta Davis, Chair of Facilities

BUC celebrated its 61st birthday this year and our Bloomfield Hills location celebrated its 50th birthday. The landscaping, facility and expansion projects that include the sanctuary and social hall have reached the age where they need to be remodeled, updated or replaced. Due to the poor local economy and decrease in church membership and funding, updates to the facility and grounds have been deferred. The worn facility and surrounding landscape is showing its age; costly maintenance projects that have been deferred must be addressed soon. Some items such as the broken and unlevel concrete in the Marshall Court and torn carpet in the hallways are potential liabilities while other items such as the worn out and dying landscape are visual detriments. Regardless if they are visually unattractive or dangerous, there are many things that need attention.

It is the hope of the Facilities committee that a brief summary and update of the committee's activities and work each month through the BUC newsletter will provide church members and visitors with an understanding of the needs, the short term and long term goals, and the status of work by the Facilities committee at BUC. For the past several months, the Facilities committee has been working hard to develop a budget that addresses not only the financial needs of 2011 but our future needs as well. While in its infancy and still in need of refinement, we made our first attempt at developing a 5-year plan. We are trying to be proactive rather than reactive.

The following is our attempt to provide you with a summary of the projects we have been working on and their status. We will also share with you the challenges we are experiencing with funding and in trying to satisfy everyone.

2010 Projects:

1. In 2010, repairs to the roofs on all of the BUC buildings were made. No work to the roofs was deferred; however, included in the 5-year maintenance plan will be roof replacements. The cost of this year's roof repairs was \$13,500.
2. Thirteen large dead trees were removed by Paul's Tree Service. Two other trees were pruned and some small dead trees were removed by BUC volunteers. The cost of this work was \$2,800. The dead trees were cut into wood chips that will be used in the Capek Woods.
3. Bids were obtained to replace the concrete and railings in the Marshall Courtyard, but we discovered, we cannot afford to return / replace the concrete to its original design. Bids ranged from \$19,800 to

4. \$42,400. And that is just for the concrete! The plants and landscaping in the Marshall Courtyard also need to be replaced. We are reviewing the design and looking at ways to lower the cost. We plan to finalize a new plan so that the concrete and railings can be replaced as soon as weather permits in spring 2011.
5. A janitorial company was brought in to strip and clean the restroom ceramic tile floors. We plan to set up a program to maintain not only the restroom floors but also the Social Hall and vestibule area tile floors. Special equipment and cleaning products was required to properly clean the restroom floors.

2011 Projects:

1. Funds from the endowment loan of 2007 will be used to retrofit the interior church lighting with more energy efficient lights in an effort to make the church more green and to lower electric use. We are taking advantage of rebates offered through DTE Energy and have already been approved for a rebate of \$2,600. Total cost of the retrofit is \$11,800 less the rebate of \$2,600 for a net cost of \$9,200. The retrofit is expected to be completed by February 2011.
2. Automatic door openers will be installed on the entry doors next to the bridal room and into the sanctuary to assist handicap persons. Budgeted cost is \$5,000 for March 2011.
3. Funds have been allocated to replace the carpeting in the church entry foyer area, the blue door area, and portions of the sanctuary. The work is planned for spring (after the snow ends). \$14,000 has been budgeted for April 2011.
4. Also budgeted for 2011 is \$2,500 for painting of miscellaneous rooms (restrooms, meeting rooms, etc.) and \$1,500 to install a dumpster pad that will allow us to keep a recycling dumpster on site. To help keep the cost low, the dumpster pad will be installed next spring when the concrete work is performed in the Marshall Courtyard.

5-Year Plan includes the following large projects: (2012 through 2015):

1. Landscaping replacement and updates are planned for the areas along Woodward Ave, Lone Pine Road, at the church front entry, and in the Marshall Courtyard. Work should include dead tree removal; worn out tree and shrub replacement; installation of flower beds around the signs; add irrigation in Marshall Courtyard, on Woodward Ave, and Lone Pine Road; repair and/or replace brick walls, broken sidewalks and the lights for sign beds. Estimated cost \$54,500.
2. Parking lot and sidewalk repairs / replacement and connection to neighboring parking lot. Estimated cost \$75,000.
3. Roof replacements. Estimated cost \$100,000

As the Facilities budget projections demonstrate, the one topic Unitarian Universalists prefer not to discuss is a topic we must discuss – MONEY. Historically the Facilities budget for projects has been \$24,000 per year. This amount was not sufficient to cover the work that we needed to complete in 2010 nor will it be sufficient to cover the work that needs to be completed during the next 5 years. Plus at some point we need to pay back the endowment funds that were borrowed in 2007.

While the special projects that are near and dear to each of us are important, we hope this information will help you understand the need for us all to work together and focus on the basic need - to take care of the building and grounds. Certainly funds donated for a specific project can and should be used for the intended project, but we can no longer spend general repair and maintenance funds for special projects that do not benefit the church as a whole. Each month we plan to update you on projects in progress and that are planned. And we hope you will forgive us, but yes, we will also update you on the cost of these projects and ask for your support, ideas, and assistance in raising the funds needed to complete the projects.

Together with you in service for BUC.

BUC FACILITIES COMMITTEE

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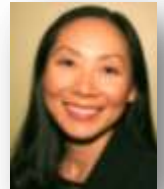
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I have recently become a member of BUC, a church I can finally call my spiritual home! I have been a chiropractor for over 15 years in Michigan, specializing in giving individualized, loving, specific, gentle care to all ages, pregnant moms to newborns, the elderly, and all levels of athletes. I work Tuesday & Thursday 9-1, 3-6:30 pm and Saturday 10-12 pm.

Monday/Wednesday/Friday by appointment only. If you have any questions about your particular case, please feel free to email me drejkim@gmail.com or leave your number at the office.

Thank you, Dr. Eun Joo Kim.



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