

Birmingham Unitarian Church

"The Mission of the Birmingham Unitarian Church is to create a free and welcoming religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service, learning and joy."

April 2012

Worship Services @ BUC

9:30 and 11:15

With Childcare & Children's Ed~ something for all ages

All Church Work Day - April 21

This is a great way to get to know your fellow BUC'ers. We will be doing the usual gardening; weed and invasive plant removal, spreading mulch and clean up. We will also be trimming the yews along Lone Pine, cutting back the burning bushes on the south side of the Commons, trimming ivy and transplanting shrubs. We're starting around 8:30-9:00 and working through the morning. Even if it is just for an hour, we could use your help. Bring gloves, hand trowels and pruning shears to cut back ivy and trim hedges. We could also use a chain saw to cut down a few small trees. Call Fred Straky [\(248\) 373-4942](tel:2483734942) or Nancy Duffy [\(248\) 647-3108](tel:2486473108) if you have questions.



April 1: "Where Angels Fear to Tread"

In this season of renewal and rebirth, our April worship services consider different understandings of renewal, how it happens, and how often the results surprise us. This first service, led by Kathy and Worship Associate Grace Rising, looks at BUC's traditional Daffodil Sunday through the lens of Palm Sunday and Passover observances being marked this week for ways stories and symbols gain a renewed power to move us, and how renewal can be dangerous. The service will include a special daffodil processional.

April 8: "Passions"

Our culture encourages an attitude of jadedness and indifference, captured in the dismissive expression,

"whatever." Churches and prophets strive to move us in the other direction, towards an increased intensity of experience, caring more, desiring more. Kathy and Worship Associate Gregg Bloomfield reflect on Easter and Passover images that connect intense experiences, suffering, and transformation to explore what it means to come alive in a culture of "whatever."

April 15: "God Sorting"

How much can a traditional religious image be changed before it makes more sense to simply discard it? Many UUs struggle with what to make of the God image and whether it can hold any meaning for them. Join Kathy and Worship Associate Diane Lake in wondering whether God Him/Her/Itself can be renewed.

April 22: Earth Day Celebration

We celebrate Earth Day as we recognize our accomplishments and look to the future as leaders and laborers in service to our Seventh

Principle, "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." Our guest speaker will be Rebecca Salminen Witt, President of Greening of Detroit, an organization that BUC has supported for many years. Dan Kosuth will be the worship associate.

April 29: "Singing For Our Lives"

Co-directors of Music Steven and Abha Dearing, joined by Kathy, lead a hymn-focused service of singing, readings, and reflection about the key role of music in our spiritual journeys. We often turn to music during times of sadness and celebration, for comfort and for inspiration: how does music do its work on us and in us? You are invited to come prepared to select a favorite hymn and share why that hymn is important to you.

Connections - Joys & Sorrows

Bob Sherry died on February 8, 2012. Bob, his wife Marilyn, and their daughter Mimsy were members of BUC from 1984 until they retired and moved to Cupertino, California in 2008. Bob died peacefully at home, in hospice care for a rapidly growing cancer that took his life less than a month after diagnosis. Following cremation a small memorial with friends was held in California. A larger memorial is being planned in Lansing Michigan in late May. No further details at this time. Regards to all, Marilyn Sherry, 10213 Miller Ave., Cupertino, CA 95014 (marilyn.sherry@comcast.net)

Craig and Debbie Stroup ran a marathon in New Orleans the first week in March. Way to go guys!

Diane Licholat-Skurati's 77 year-old dad, Carmen had a minor heart attack while playing hockey the first week in March. He had triple by-pass surgery the following week and hopes to be back on the ice in the fall. Your thoughts and prayers for a complete recovery are most welcome.

Abha and Steven Dearing both received the Detroit Classical Music Award. Congratulations!

Ann Duncan's father, George Duncan, was in a car accident the second week in March and is recovering in the hospital.

Karen Stankye's father was hospitalized in mid-March and is now in a Rehab facility. This next phase will most likely be difficult as he and his wife adjust to needing home care assistance. Please keep the Stankye family in your thoughts.

We share Tom Cranston's joy in being seizure free for one year and driving for six months. Whew! Jean Cranston had a knee replacement surgery on March 20. She went home on the 23 and is well on the way to a full recovery.

John Odneal a long-time attendee at BUC, died the third week in March. He asked that there be no Memorial Service. In memory of John, there was a memorial "coffee" at Panera Bread in downtown Birmingham on March 24, where John was a "regular." John loved Rummage and gave of his time and talents at the Silent Auction.

Max Kort's uncle, Arthur Kort, died the third week in March at his home in Tampa, Florida. He was 92 years old.

Sherry Mullins shares a concern for Dave Mikol, who attended BUC with Sherry for many years. Dave is going through a bone marrow transplant. Your thoughts and prayers would be most welcome.

Dorothy Prier's grandnephew and his wife are rejoicing with their family over the birth of their twin boys. Congratulations all around!

Tipping Towards the Light

On March 25th this event saw over 80 women enjoying community, dinner, dancing, poetry, dialog, movement and spirituality for a great evening. There was a modest financial overage after costs of the evening were met. In the spirit of continuing to nurture individual seeds in



ourselves and in the larger community, it will be donated to Seedlings Braille Books for Children, which increases opportunity for literacy by providing high quality, low cost Braille books for visually impaired children.

Rummage @ BUC a Pocket Guide ~ Dates & Times

Sunday, April 29: Intake Begins

Monday, April 30: Family Night – Lasagna Dinner for workers

Thursday, May 3: 6:30-9:00 Opening Night!

Friday, May 4: 10:00-2:00 Half-Price Day, Consolidation/GUUSH Sleepover 5:00-Sat. a.m.

Saturday, May 5: 9:00-Noon -- BAG DAY

Sunday Morning Discussions

All of April, and through May 6th, we will discuss the book, "Living Buddha, Living Christ" by Thich Nhat Hanh; Please note that we will not meet on April 8th or 29th. Our group meets in the Large Conference Room from 9:30 to 11:00 - everyone is welcome.!

Sacred & Profane Discussions

The Sacred and Profane Discussion group will discuss "Intimacy in Human Relationships" on April 18, at 10:30 in the Large Conference room. All are welcome!

Film Buffs, Friday April 20 *Trouble in Paradise*

Join us in the Commons at 7:00, when thief Gaston Monescu (Herbert Marshall) meets his true love in pickpocket Lily (Miriam Hopkins), they embark on a scam to rob lovely perfume company executive Mariette Colet (Kay Francis). But when Gaston becomes romantically entangled with Mme. Colet, their larcenous ruse is jeopardized and Gaston is forced to choose between two beautiful women. Legendary director Ernst Lubitsch's masterful touch is in full flower in *Trouble in Paradise*, a pinnacle of the sophisticated romantic comedy, loaded with sparkling dialogue, witty innuendo, and elegant comic invention – a much-needed balm to the soul of audiences who were enduring the depression era. - *Detroit Film Theatre Winter 2012 Film Guide*



"A working definition of the term 'sophisticated comedy.'" –Leonard Maltin

Trouble in paradise (USA, 1932, 82 minutes) was not rated by the MPAA.

Snacks provided by Margot Leroy. For more information contact Larry at [248-569-0965](tel:248-569-0965) or LarryWisniew@att.net.

MOSES Report

On Thursday, March 15, six persons representing BUC boarded a van and were carried to the huge new Fellowship Chapel to attend the 15th Annual MOSES banquet in Detroit. Besides having a delicious, generous dinner we were privileged to meet the many MOSES personnel serving the Detroit area. The main speaker was Dr. Gail Christopher, a VP at the Kellogg Foundation. She inspired us by speaking of her reminiscences of the horrible scenes of people being stuck in the floods of New Orleans several years ago, her recognition of the still prevalent existent "racial hierarchy" around us that divides our community including the redlining of insurance which amounts to an apartheid for such persons. With the 90,000 foreclosures in Detroit last year, she challenged us to "fight for investments" in Detroit to improve the situation. It was an awe-inspiring occasion. ~Lucille McNaughton

Good Grieving: Not Good Grief

Over the years, various members and friends have asked that there be an open, on-going group at Birmingham Unitarian Church for people grieving – sometimes grief is new, sometimes, old, sometimes "in your face," sometimes distant. No matter what it is or how it got there, grief hurts and is often modulated when shared in a safe place.

A safe place is what most people experience here at BUC, but this group will be a safe place to share feelings at a different level. With an initial meeting April 10, from 6:30-7:30 in the Small Conference Room, join us if you are interested in being a part of this group, whether on a regular basis or as needed. If you have questions, please contact Grace Rising at 248-545-2178 or gbrising@comcast.net

Friday Food, Faith and Fun

April 13.

Potluck at 6:45

Vespers 7:30

Variety Show 8:00-9:00pm

Reflections

Rev. Dr. Kathy Hurt

While I usually find mnemonic devices helpful, one I struggle to keep straight is associated with the change between daylight savings time and standard time: “Spring forward, fall back.” Every few months, when the designated date for switching from one time to the next arrives, I mix them up, unsure whether I should advance my clocks or set them back.



Perhaps the source of my confusion can be found in my basic temperament. As a cautious type, hesitant to move into unknown experiences, it comes naturally to me to “spring back,” to withdraw from unfamiliar territory until I have a chance to study it, map a course, learn the rules. Even then, I am more likely to “fall forward,” to advance because circumstances or people force me to, rather than advancing through my own efforts.

“Spring back, fall forward”: my confused mnemonic device may also reflect the dynamics of congregations I serve. A Unitarian Universalist mentor of mine once observed that while churches of all kinds tend to be conservative institutions, “liberal churches are the most conservative of all.” Whether this is the result of our congregations attracting folks who are more liberal in their personal lifestyles and thus count on churches to be comfortable and familiar landing points for them in an otherwise ever-changing environment, or whether this is the result of our having no articulated creed but instead latching onto certain practices and perspectives as a kind of tacit creed that we defend against change, the fact is that our otherwise open and experimental approach to life can fly out the window when we walk in the church door, so that we find ourselves springing back from all sorts of proposed changes in the church. New worship styles, new methods of governance, new organizational structures, new office procedures, new building appearances, new volunteer faces, are regularly met with consternation, complaints about not being informed a change was coming, discomfort, resistance, a wish for “the way we’ve always done things around here.”

BUC is approaching a critical juncture in April, when the Board of Trustees must make decisions about how best to address the remaining budget deficit for the year. April also brings decisions about implementing technology upgrades, to be described in a special mailing that will change our worship and communication practices. I am fascinated by the irony that the possibilities we are considering have already been explored and implemented by congregations on the conservative end of the spectrum, while we liberal congregations are only now moving into this arena.

Time changes require us to “spring forward, fall back.” As we wrestle with changes to our church, will we follow that mnemonic advice or will we confuse it, springing back from change and falling forward only when external circumstances may force us to do so? What would it mean for BUC to be a church that broke away from the customary institutional mode of springing back and instead took a deep breath and sprang ahead, taking risks, willing to experiment and fail and learn and try again?

Faithfully, Kathy

Facebook Tutorial - the Commons, Sunday April 22 at 12:30

Folks keep asking, so we’ll keep meeting. If you have a particular question, email lisa.crawford@bucmi.org and she’ll create a mini-tutorial answering your question. Here are a few minute long videos to get you started.

- 1) [How to Delete a Comment Posted in a Thread](#)
- 2) [How to Change Your Profile Picture](#)
- 3) [How to Change Your Status to “Offline” in Chat](#)

Lifespan Religious Education

Pam McAlpin, Director of Performing Arts & Adult Education pam.mcalpin@bucmi.org

Kimery Campbell, DRE for Youth kimery.campbell@bucmi.org

Eleanor McGuire, DRE for Children eleanor.mcguire@bucmi.org

Adult Religious Education

The next Friday Food, faith and fun will be on April 13 with a potluck at 6:45, Vespers at 7:30, and a Variety Show 8:00-9:00. Sign up for the VARIETY SHOW in the social hall after Sunday services. Music, poetry, jokes, juggling, skits, etc. Come one, come all! Sign up in the Social Hall following services or you may email me at pam.mcalpin@bucmi.org if you plan to join us for this lively potluck event.

Children's Rotation Curriculum

April's *Creating Equity* rotation highlights some of the ways that our church teaches us to *practice* our faith. It explores BUC's work to promote equity in both our community and our world. This rotation asks: "Why does our church work to help other people succeed?", "How do you recognize what the need is?" "How do you decide *how* to help...what path to take?" and what does it mean, "Teach a man to fish and he'll be fed for the rest of his life?"

This rotation asks the children to contemplate for themselves four different aspects of equity:

- 1) **Recognizing differences and needs:** What are the differences in peoples' material experiences? Could there be greater equity? What things do we really need and what makes us truly happy in life?
- 2) **Patterns of consumption:** What habits lead to the preservation or depletion of the earth's limited resources? What could be done to save precious natural resources for future generations?
- 3) **Local distribution of opportunities/resources:** What does BUC do locally to create equity by supporting organizations in neighboring communities?
- 4) **Global distribution of opportunities /resources:** What does BUC do in the larger world to create equity

Finally, this rotation reinforces the Unitarian Universalist Sixth Principle, which can be summarized as "promoting the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all."

Youth Religious Education

As DRE, I have heard many positive comments about the March 18 Youth Sunday service, but I must stress that the theme and the development of the content all came from the youth. It was their originality and creative spirit that led the process and they deserve praise for their vision and hard work. The youth were supported by a cast of dozens: Lifespan Team members Pam McAlpin and Eleanor McGuire, for help with vision, format, production, direction, and technical advice; Music Directors Abha and Steve Dearing for screening, rehearsing, directing, and supporting the musicians and Teen Choir; Barbara Woolf for providing piano accompaniment; Lisa Crawford for publicity and administrative support; Jim Shettel and office volunteers for scheduling assistance and putting together the Order of Service; Jason McDonald for help with the myriad of conflicting setup and teardown demands of the day; Matthew McNitt and the Art Committee, especially Joe Sim, for their help with the art exhibit and sale; Doug and Carey Wendell and the ROPE parents for spearheading the pancake breakfast; and the GUUSH advisors and many parents who were there to plan and process. Thank you, one and all. We could not have done it without you. The **6th and 7th graders**, under teachers Debbie Fordree, Stuart McAlpin, and Eric Sargent, will spend two weeks looking at Orthodox Christianity. On April 2nd, **UFO** (Unitarian Friendship Organization) will participate in a Spring Break service project at Gleaners.

ROPE (Rite of Passage Experience): The ROPE youth will continue to discuss ideas about God in April and begin sketching out credo ideas. On April 14, a ROPE sleepover will help prep everyone for the Boston trip April 19-22! Watch for new ideas about how BUCers can support our youth with Scrip!

April's Sunday morning High School class will explore some of the underpinnings of *Leadership*. Rather than focusing on "How to effectively organize and motive groups of people", these workshops will instead explore forces that are quietly guiding our lives. Where are we personally finding inspiration & direction? What are our sources of leadership? BUC's youth are invited to examine and share the important music, film, literature and biographies that are impacting their lives. Here is a brief overview of the workshops and ideas comprising this *Leadership* unit:

- How can **ancient teachings** offer roadmaps for today? Aiming/In an effort to explore a set of widely known teachings, this class will therefore focus on common Bible stories that raise questions still relevant to this generation's challenges.
- Who are our **heroes** & why? For example, Bob Dylan penned lyrics that still resonate for many people, one example being the song *With God on Our Side*. All youth are invited to share personal sources of inspiration (send anything that you wish to share anonymously with your classmates to leanor.mcguire@bucmi.org)
- What is the value of **self-awareness**? Fearless yet balanced self-inventories allow an individual to better adapt him/herself to move through the world based on choices rather than inadvertent actions.
- How do we acknowledge **forces larger than ourselves** that may or may not propel our world forward? Among the many forces shaping our modern world, the impact of technology draws the most praise and criticism. All youth are invited to share their favorite aspect or example of communication through technology.

With Youth Sunday behind us, **GUUSH** (Great Unitarian Universalist Senior High) will begin to focus on end-of-year events: the Rummage sleepover and Election meeting on May 4; the May car wash; high school bridging and the GUUSH-ROPE picnic in June; and the annual Cedar Point trip. Plus, we hope to use the plans for the January cluster event as a template for a summertime fun con! All high school youth are welcome to join us for the GUUSH meetings on April 15 and 29th, 6 to 8 p.m.

Questions about Youth RE can be addressed to Kimery Campbell at kimery.campbell@bucmi.org

Alliance April 18 "Trees for Tomorrow"

"Trees for Tomorrow – Caring for Our Community Roots" is a very special program featuring BUCer, Lillian Dean. She is Coordinator of Healthy Lawns and Gardens Program of the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority (SOCWA). Her PowerPoint presentation is a comprehensive look at – "Environmental benefits of trees – how trees thrive and grow – basics of maintenance – types of trees, and the connections with Rouge River water quality."

This is a Brown Bag lunch at noon in the Pavilion. Beverages and homemade cookies will be supplied by Alliance and ALL are welcome to come. If you wish to come for the program only, it will begin at 1:00 in the Commons.

Mark your calendar for our traditional Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 6. This will be a catered luncheon in the Social Hall, with reservations taken in advance. Note that we do not have a program meeting in May, because our Spring Rummage Sale is April 29 to May 5, and most of us will be busy there – as we hope YOU will!

Words & Spirit April

Living by Heart - - a group dedicated to reflecting on the written word as a means for deepening our own lives. Bring a poem or piece of short prose to share. We meet the first Monday evening of the month, this month on April 2, from 7:00-8:30 in the Large Conference Room.

Writing as Spiritual Practice -- a group focused on using our own writing to deepen our living. Bring paper and pen. We meet every third Monday of the month, April 16 this month, from 7:00-8:30 – this session we will meet in the Blue Door Room. Drop ins welcome to both groups!

BUC Volunteer of the Month: Pat Hammer

I have been at BUC for many years. When I was very new here, Chris Baker suggested to the Alliance (Women's Alliance in those days!) that I might fill a vacancy on the board, and I was on my way. I served as Alliance treasurer, and then co-managed the BUC Bookstore ... it was a long time ago.

But when the Needs Network Committee organized more than twenty years ago I found the volunteer outlet that has most occupied my time. As worker bee, project leader, and then chair, I have benefited from the opportunities afforded me in taking part in the many projects and workdays that fall under the umbrella of Needs Network: service to the larger community, teamwork, the challenge of organizing, and, not least, the camaraderie and sense of accomplishment that comes from working with other volunteers to see the project through to successful completion. Fun might sum it up better.



The Needs Network projects that we know today - - SOS, Greening of Detroit, Habitat for Humanity, Welcome Inn, South Oakland Community Lunch, Royal Oak Warming Centers laundry, Lighthouse donations - - have functioned smoothly for many years through the efforts of all the project leaders, who do the work of organizing, recruiting, and publicizing their projects, and, equally important, through the generous participation in time and spirit of the BUC volunteers, who make the workday happen.

The other side of the social justice coin is advocacy. MOSES and MUUSJN offer opportunities to address the social and economic inequities that underlie the outreach projects to which BUC has devoted so many volunteer hours for so many years. The diversity of these groups, working with other UU's and advocates from other faith groups, planning forums and public meetings, responding to legislative alerts has enriched my life and broadened my horizons.

Sometimes outreach and advocacy come together at unexpected moments. Taking part in a MOSES action to publicize an upcoming SMART millage vote a year ago, a group of BUC advocates rode the Woodward Avenue line, "talking transit" with the passengers. As the bus sped through Bloomfield Hills, one man pointed out BUC, and said he had spent a happy week there several years before, when he was homeless. Of course, we were proud and delighted to say that BUC was our church. Employed and on his own now, he was an SOS success story, and BUC played some part in that success.

There is a richness of opportunity here at BUC. One project leads to another ... a contact made, a conversation, an interest sparked. Through all these years, I've learned this: all you have to do is say, Yes!

Music @ BUC



This was a month of preparation and presentation for the choirs at BUC. It was a joy to welcome new singers and welcome back some singers who haven't been with us for a while. Our choir loft is always open to new-comers :)

The Kids Choir sang a reflective song and then were joined by the Adult Choir on March 4th. Our kids are learning about good breathing, singing out, staying poised as they sing for the congregation and about teamwork in rehearsals. We have been having fun with rhythm and sound games downstairs between services. The Kids Choir is open to any child who reads under age 12. Come check us out on Sundays from 10:35-11:10am.

The Teen Choir did a NICE job on "Galileo" for Youth Sunday services. It was great to see and hear so many strong teen voices singing together on this powerful, fun song. With three rehearsals and some attention to detail, they sang with one voice (and some harmony as well!). Thanks to Nathan Farrar on djembe. The African drum really added to the feel of the song. The Teen Choir will sing again for ROPE Sunday in June.

The Adult Choir will be more active in April, singing a nice variety of songs from John Lennon with a Latin twist to Brahms for Easter with an instrumental ensemble. They are also preparing numerous songs for their Choir Sunday services "What Would UU Do?" on May 20th and the UU Choral Festival on June 4th, hosted by the UU Church of Ann Arbor. The music folders are full, snacks are enjoyed after rehearsals and choral music abounds at BUC.

Special thanks to Mike McGillivray for playing 3/25, and for arranging the Brahms instrumental score for our Easter service. I hope all BUCers are getting excited for April 29th Hymn-Sing service. Your voices will help us lift the roof in spirit. Co-Directors of Music Steven and Abha Dearing. You may email us at: abha.dearing@bucmi.org or steven.dearing@bucmi.org

MAMA's Coffeehouse Saturday April 21 - Dick Siegel & the Brandos

The recent collaboration of Dick Siegel, Brian Delaney and Dave Roof as [Dick Siegel & the Brandos](#) is bringing a new musical chemistry and excitement to listeners. The trio's sound, like Siegel's songs themselves, is extraordinary. It's full of American Roots influence - blues, folk, pop, rock and jazz - and it's strikingly modern. Siegel, Roof and Delaney are committed to pushing the limits of a string trio, squeezing every bit of music they can out of Siegel's songs and their instruments.

Fred Ball will open the show. General admission is \$12 unless otherwise indicated. Seniors (62 and over), and those under 18, are \$10. Children 12 and under are free.

Open mic starts at 7:30pm with 2 reserved spots available. Please e-mail Jim Bizer at jb@jimbizer.com if you wish to reserve a spot. Walk-ins can sometimes be accommodated.



Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

Each December, we as members, come together to elect our lay leaders (all volunteers!), and discuss the financial goals and values of our church community at our annual meeting. The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) invites you to identify areas where you might personally give of your time in our commitment to living out our values. We also invite you to identify others in our community that you see as leaders or potential leaders among us.

Would you or someone you know, be willing to be considered for service in one of these capacities in 2013 at BUC? We are in the process of gathering names to discuss with the Program Council and the appropriate committees.

Board of Trustees

- President (Position open for 2013)
- Vice President (Position open for 2013)
- Secretary (Position open for 2013)
- Treasurer (Position open for 2013)
- Five Trustees (One position open for 2013)

Program Council Positions:

- Membership (Position open for 2013)
- Fellowship (Position open for 2013)
- Worship
- Religious Education Council
- Service & Social Justice

Leadership Development Committee

- Nine nominated – five elected each year for two-year term.

Spring Rummage April 29-May 5, 2011

Like the first trip to the beach, Rummage is right around the corner! What is Rummage, you ask? For one week each spring and fall, we turn the church into a giant resale shop. It's a great opportunity to volunteer and get to know fellow BUCers better, share wonderful meals, shop for treasures, as well as donating gently used household discards.

Sign up for volunteer shifts and food donations beginning on Sunday, April 1 and every Sunday after that. Please join us! For four hours of service or two food donations, volunteers earn early shopping privileges. We need sorters, cooks, salespeople, folks to set up and tear down, and more. Intake begins as soon as the building is set up on Sunday, April 29; it continues through noon on Tuesday May 1. The sale begins at 6:30 on Thursday, half-price sales on Friday, Consolidation Friday night, and bag day Saturday from 9 to 12:00.

There are fewer than 12 hours of actual rummage sale time. The best donations are things that are likely to sell in that time: clothing in good condition, working appliances, toys with all their parts, etc. Donors can jumpstart the sorting process at home by putting clothing on hangers, sorted by age and gender; labeling all boxes with the appropriate department; and including instructions whenever possible.

The ban on shabby goods does NOT apply to newspapers, magazines, and books. Just label paper discards "recycle" and leave them with your rummage donations. Debbie Stroup, our Rummage Recycling Queen, will wave her magic green wand and turn them into dollars for BUC!

Memo From the BUC Board of Trustees

Our March meeting, as always after the routine initial agenda items, included a review of our finances. We are getting by, with the deficit showing up in the difference between income and expenses as averaged over the 12 months. Through January and February, we've been about \$5,000 per month behind where we would like to be. This lag is reasonably in line with the deficit projected at the Annual Meeting in December.

Our subsequent campaign for additional/increased pledges and gifts has thus far resulted in \$20,000 additional income in gifts and pledges from about 22 percent of all those who pledged earlier. A very welcome and heartening outcome, we are very appreciative of the caring and generosity reflected by the donors. Because of it, the expected deficit, as well as any reductions for the program planned and now underway for the year, will be smaller.

At our April 16th meeting, the Board will settle on a final 2012 budget that will reflect our financial outlook then, including any reductions that may be made. Thus the next few weeks are an ideal time for members of the congregation who have been considering making a new or additional contribution toward funding BUC's program to take that step.

Rentals – this summer, indicating that we are looking at other ways to increase income, staff will conduct a review of rental contracts with an eye to whether our rates are in line with the market. Requests to rent BUC facilities have been increasing, making it advisable for members who wish to reserve space for church activities to do so as early as possible.

Rummage – another major fundraiser, its success depends very much on what is contributed for sale, so selecting items to donate with an eye to their appeal – are they clean and whole, for starters – would be helpful. Also, any nice furnishings or other items that we all are ready to part with would be very welcome donations.

Cell phone use – rather than making a policy, the Board stated its intent that the church leader of any group or of a particular function may state their policy on cell phone use for that group or occasion. We continue to expect, of course, that cell phones will not be heard during Sunday services and other formal gatherings.

Endowment loan interest – at the recommendation of the BUC Endowment Committee, the Board acted to drop the interest rate from 5% to zero, effective this year. This will permit a lower balance remaining in 2017, when we are committed to paying off the loan.

Members of the Board are always open to hearing from you with suggestions for improvement or concerns about any BUC activity. We welcome your attention.

Priscilla Hildum, Treasurer pahildum@sbcglobal.net

Visiting RAVENDALE, Sunday April 29, 12:30-4:30

Make the connection Carpool to Ravendale for a driving tour of the neighborhood • Small group box lunch in a Ravendale home • Dessert and debriefing at the Ravendale Community Center • Cost: \$15.00

Questions? Call, or stop by our table in the Social Hall after services **Lillian Dean** LFDean@aol.com
248.546.5818 / Pat Hammer
patriciajhammer@gmail.com **248.644.6568**



Special Thanks from the Welcome Inn Guests

Members of the Birmingham Unitarian Church were especially generous this year with purchases of tickets for the Welcome Inn's Fundraiser, general donations, taking shifts with our guests, preparing casseroles, and running errands to buy and deliver necessary supplies using funds provided by the Needs Network. Thanks go to Janette Andrews for not one but two long winter underwear runs; Mary Gawel-Ensroth for ink cartridges; Drieka Degraff for medicine; Larry Freeman for his time with the guests and his donation of a vacuum cleaner with extra bags; and Grace Brockett for her donation of boots. Casseroles and salads were prepared by Gail Rouse, Barbara Schandavel, Margot Leroy, Drieka Degraff, Lynn Bell and her neighborhood group, Joy Powell and her small group, and Penny Evans. Last but not least, kudos go to Rolland Vriesenga for not only volunteering for a weekly shift but selling an incredible number of Fund Raising tickets!

Coming May 12 & 19 Greening of Detroit

Save the date Saturday May 12 and May 19, 2012, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM! BUC joins other volunteers again this year to plant trees in Detroit. In 2011, 70 BUC volunteers of all ages joined in. There are two new sites this year, one on the East Side of Detroit, and one on the West Side. New trees have an amazing affect on the landscape, and people around them. They bring hope and beauty to recovering neighborhoods. This is a wonderful opportunity for long time BUC members, and new ones. Families are welcome. Show your kids a way to give to others, while enjoying a family outing. No experience required. This knowledge may come in handy in your own yard some day! This is physical work, but we plant in teams, so all are welcome, and can contribute. Tools are provided. This is a donation of your time, no money is solicited. If your short on cash this year, this is a great way to contribute. Mother's Day is May 13. Plant a tree for her, plant a tree for yourself, plant a tree for the Earth. Go Green.

Please contact coordinator Paul Plante (pplante@twmi.rr.com), phone: [734-464-1577](tel:734-464-1577) and commit to one of these dates so we can coordinate volunteers for the trees available. Social Hall sign up after Service is available in April & May. Volunteers will be given a site location and map. I will coordinate your efforts, and tie us together as a group. BUC youth groups, Small Group Fellowship Groups, and new BUC members have a wonderful opportunity to contribute here.

April's Artist: Sharon Will, March 30-April 25

Michigan artist Sharon Will, got her start in the arts through training and working in the commercial art field. Several years were spent in illustration and graphics before breaking from advertising, all the while studying painting. After decades of working exclusively in pastel, she now paints in both pastel and oil, with an emphasis on plein air painting. This exhibit at the BUC features over 40 paintings, both plein air and studio work depicting a variety of eclectic scenes throughout Michigan and beyond. Favorite local painting sites represented are Cranbrook Gardens, and the VanHoosen Historical Farm.

Thirty years of painting have won Sharon numerous National and International Awards including, *Paint the Parks –Top 100*, *The Butler Midyear*, *The Pastel Journal Competition*. In 2011, she was inducted into the *Master's Circle of the International Association of Pastel Societies*. In addition to painting, Sharon teaches Workshops in oil and pastel and runs a Custom Framing business from her studio. Currently Sharon's paintings are available through Michigan galleries: Tvedten Fine Art in Harbor Springs, Mullaly's 128 in Elk Rapids, as well as her home/studio by appointment at 586-336-9693. Visit Sharon's website: www.sharonwill.com



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Birmingham Unitarian Church

HOST: Mothers Networking Center
WHEN: April 19, 2012
WHERE: Birmingham Unitarian Church
TIME BEGINS: 6:45pm;
film begins promptly at 7:00 pm
Discussion following film at 8:45-9:30
RSVP: 248-622-3366 or
Email: mothersnetworking@gmail.com



Atomic Mom is a feature length documentary about two women, both mothers, who have very different experiences of the atom bomb. One is the filmmakers' mother, Pauline Silvia, who was a Navy biologist in the early 1950's and was sent to the Nevada Test Site where she witnessed five detonations. The other woman is Emiko Okada, a Hiroshima survivor who was eight years old when the bomb was dropped. Knowing the work that Pauline did, Emiko offers her an olive branch with a beautifully potent message of peace.

MEMBERS of the Mother's Networking Center:\$12.00; NON-MEMBERS:\$15:00

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All Submissions for the Newsletter must be received by midnight on the 20th of each month for the following months newsletter to the editor lisa.crawford@bucmi.org