



FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO December 2018 Newsletter

First Unitarian Society of Chicago 5650 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago IL 60637 (773) 324-4100

Go Slow Rev. Teri Schwartz

Go slow
if you can.
Slower.
More slowly still.
Friendly dark
or fearsome,
this is no place
to break your neck
by rushing,
by running,
by crashing into
what you cannot see.

Then again,
it is true:
different darks
have different tasks,
and if you
have arrived here
unawares,
if you have come
in peril
or in pain,
this might be no place
you should dawdle.



I do not know
what these shadows
ask of you,
what they might hold
that means you good
or ill.
It is not for me
to reckon
whether you should linger
or you should leave.

But this is what
I can ask for you:

That in the darkness
there be a blessing.
That in the shadows
there be a welcome.
That in the night
you be encompassed
by the Love that knows
your name.

from Jan Richardson's blog,
The Advent Door

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The holiday season is upon us. In our culture, this month between Thanksgiving and Christmas can feel even fuller than our ordinary lives, which often feel stretched to the max. This month is a time of special celebrations—yet often, extra exhaustion. It can be a time of joy with loved ones—yet, it can also be a time of deep loneliness and despair for many people.

In contrast, during this period of midwinter, many religious traditions from around the world invite us to do the opposite. To slow down. To pause. To reflect on both the changing seasons outside our windows and the changing seasons in our own hearts and lives. Whatever these next several weeks may hold for you, I invite you to:

Go slow
if you can.
Slower.
More slowly still.

And whatever joys or sorrows you find upon your heart this season, know that the church is at your side. While “...I do not know what these shadows ask of you...”, I do know that this church community is a sanctuary for many in times of both difficulty and ease. Know that Rev. David and I are available for pastoral support, as is our newly-trained pastoral care team. Please reach out to us at teri.schwartz@firstuchicago.org or david.schwartz@firstuchicago.org.

Blessings,
Rev. Teri

A Holiday Update

Betty Holcomb, President of First U

The months of November and December invite memories, new experiences and plans for the New Year.

The first paragraph in the winter issue of UU World inspires me: “What is your congregation doing that makes you proud and makes you want to invite other to get involved?”

Here at First Unitarian, we celebrate ourselves with the annual Thanksgiving Family Dinner. Held in the Sanctuary, we share a traditional dinner, family-style, at round tables, hosted by our own members and friends. We reflect on what “family” means, both personally and socially, while reinforcing what it means to live by our shared Principles and Purposes. The Christmas Eve Service, with music provided by the Chicago Children’s Choir and our own

Jeffrey Hamrick, the performance of the Nutcracker by our long-time tenant, the Hyde Park School of Dance, the lighting of menorah candles, and our celebration of Kwanzaa, round out the busy end of 2018.

As we look forward to 2019, our financial support toward programming, capital improvements and membership growth continue to inspire me. I am especially thankful to the dedication of our Capital Campaign committee members and co-chairs, Jim Proctor and Lisa Christiansen-Gee. Seven new members increase our strength in living up to our Seven Principles and Purposes. May we finish this year in joy and hope.

In faith and in service,
Betty

Hello from the DRE

Beth Moss, Director of Religious Education

As a teacher, one of the hardest and most important things I ever had to say to a student was, "I don't know." So often we are tempted to explain away our lack of understanding, to defend the gaps in our knowledge. Saying, "I don't know," leaves a space not for imperfection, but rather for the ever ceasing curiosity of life to have room to grow. So, let us learn and discover together in this season of wonder and mystery.

December RE Charity Events

Cradles to Crayons Donation Drive

First Unitarian is partnering with Cradles to Crayons to collect new and like new children's essential items. Please bring all donations to the DRE's office by Dec 16. Cradles to Crayons is a nonprofit that provides children living in low-income and homeless situations with the essential items they need to thrive—at home, at school, and at play. They provide these items free of charge by connecting and engaging with the Chicago community. To learn more about Cradles to Crayons, visit www.cradlestocrayons.org/chicago

Kid Packs made of donated materials are hand-selected with great care to meet a boy or girl's specific wants and needs. A wide range of new and like-new items for children age 12 and under will be accepted. Please note they aim for a standard of quality that ensures each child feels valued and dignified. Please follow the guidelines below to make sure your donations go to good use.

- Clothing
 - Bottoms, tops, outerwear, pajamas, accessories for ages 0-12
 - Children's sizes 0-20 and child-appropriate adult clothing sizes S-M
 - New socks, underwear and pajamas
- Shoes
 - Sneakers, sandals, and boots (Please attach pairs with rubber bands)
 - Books
 - Boardbooks, picture books, easy readers, early chapter books, young adult books, foreign language books
 - Most needed: baby books ages 0-2
 - PLEASE NO family, religious, or holiday books
- Toys, Arts & Crafts, and School Supplies
 - New markers, crayons, school supplies, stamps, craft kits, clay and dough, paper crafts, painting supplies, activity and coloring books
 - Items should be cleaned.
 - Games and kits should contain all pieces, instructions and batteries (if required)
 - Most needed: infant and toddler toys
 - PLEASE NO stuffed animals, videos, computer games, violent toys, big plastic toys, riding toys, playhouse kitchens, and table and chair sets
- Baby Gear
 - Like-new strollers, car seats, swings, and pack'n'plays
 - NOTE All equipment must be less than 5 years old, in perfect working order, with manufacturer's instructions and have all hardware and attachments.
 - Please place hardware and attachments in a ziplock bag and attach equipment
 - If batteries are required, discard old batteries and include new ones
 - PLEASE NO cribs or furniture.
- New Baby Supplies
 - New safety, feeding, bedding, diapering and health supplies
- New Hygiene
 - New soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes

If you have questions, email their team at communitychicago@cradlestocrayons.org

Ujima Village Donation Drive

First Unitarian is also partnering with Ujima Village Youth Shelter this winter. Ujima Village Youth Shelter offers up to 24 beds, dinner, breakfast, showers, and laundry for single youth, all genders, ages 18-24. Located in Greater Englewood (7320 S. Yale-South Wing, Chicago, IL 60621), it is the only shelter for young people on Chicago's Southside. Ujima belongs to a network of other youth shelters covering all three sides of the City, through The Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth, and utilizes a low-demand/low-threshold model of service including harm reduction, trauma informed care, and positive youth development. Ujima fully reopened in March after a substantial fire had forced it to be closed for a year (though they were able to operate in a temporary space for 6 months of that year).

Ujima Village Youth Shelter is seeking donors who could provide up to 15 gift bags with the following items (all genders will generally wear androgynous "mens" attire):

- Knit skull cap in non-gang colors (black, gray, brown, dark green)
- White ankle high athletic socks
- Men's water-proof gloves
- Ear-bud headphones
- Pack of playing cards
- Ax deodorant solid
- Ax body wash
- Hand and body lotion
- Chapstick
- Magnum brand condoms (no Lifestyles brand please!)
- Candy: Snickers, M & M's, Resses
- 1 Day, 3-Day, or 7-Day Ventra/CTA bus pass
- Gift cards to Family Dollar or Walgreens

If any congregants would want to come on Christmas Eve to hand out the gifts, they would be most welcome as well, though this is not required for participation. If anyone is interested in going down Christmas Eve, please contact Anne Holcomb the Ujima Supportive Services Supervisor directly at aholcomb@unityparenting.org.

December RE Calendar

Dec 2: Timuel Black's 100th birthday

This special service will honor Tim Black's years of service to our community and over 60 years of membership here at First Unitarian. Tim Black is known for his role in the civil rights movement as well as many other social and humanitarian struggles. As a historian and teacher, he has captured the stories and experiences of hundreds of residents of the city's South Side in his books. His long career has included decades of teaching, organizing, and building organizations such as the Jazz Institute of Chicago, the DuSable Alumni Coalition for Action, the Vivian Harsh Society, and many more. First Unitarian, where his children grew up, has been his church home since 1956. Our worship will feature African drumming and guest vocalist Meagan McNeal (<http://meaganmcnealonline.com>) and the First Unitarian Choir.

Children are welcome to attend this landmark service with families. We know not all pre-K to 6th grade students are developmentally able to attend to content for the duration of services, even for a service as cool as this. For any students wishing to leave the big church after the time for all ages, holiday activities will be available in lieu of formal classes to allow for flexibility.

Any time before Nov 30, students may share questions from kids to ask Timuel Black during the time for all ages. Questions may pertain to his longevity or unique life experiences. Email your children's questions to Mrs. Moss at dre.firstu@gmail.com.

Dec 9: After time for all ages, students will head out to do pageant rehearsal. All students are welcome to participate in pageant rehearsal. No lines need to be memorized. First Unitarian has a two year secular/religious pageant rotation. This year's secular story is, "The Mitten Tree," by Candace Christiansen and Elaine Greenstein. This heartwarming story is about the joy of sharing without the expectation of reward. All students wishing to be part of the pageant should try and attend both Dec 9 for practice during class and Dec 16 for the performance. Grade 7-12 students who wish to help narrate are strongly encouraged to reach out to Beth Moss any time before Dec. 6.

Dec 16: The RE program proudly presents the pageant in this annual time for all ages service.

During coffee hour, we will have the first fundraiser for the Boston trip—bring cash for donuts!

Also, RE families are invited to bring a dish to share with the congregation for coffee hour this date. Sweets are covered, but we will need one veggie, one fruit, one cheese, one cracker, one chip, one dip. Please email dre.firstu@gmail.com by Dec. 9 to let the DRE know what you would like to bring OR go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D4EABAA22A4FC1-recoffee> to just sign up and see what is still needed.

This will also be the last day for item collection for either of our December donation drives.

Dec 23 and Dec 30: There will be no RE on these dates. Please enjoy the time with your families. See you in January.

First U and the Mayoral Race

Rev. David Schwartz

The IRS has certain requirements for how we, as a church, engage with candidates for office. As the mayoral race heats up—and with church member Toni Preckwinkle in the running—we could all use a refresher on what to do and what not to do for campaigns and the congregation.

We don't endorse or campaign for candidates as the church, or as any committee or group of the church. We don't host campaign events or speeches, we don't make space available to campaigns, we don't accept any political advertising. Members and friends don't campaign for or distribute literature for any candidates at any church events, on-site or off-site. Ministers and staff who support candidates must clarify they speak for themselves, not the congregation, and don't use church time or resources to do so. We don't display campaign signs for any election on church property.

We do urge everyone to vote and to vote their values! We do enthusiastically encourage voting, work to get people to the polls, and help get people registered. We do make space available for all-candidate forums not sponsored by any campaign. We do, from time to time, consistent with IRS guidelines, invite politicians to speak in a non-candidate capacity. For example, Toni Preckwinkle will speak at Timuel Black's 100th birthday service on December 2nd. In these situations, campaign activity doesn't happen in connection with the speaker, and the invitation is extended for reasons other than candidacy for office.

If you have any question or concern, it's better to talk sooner rather than later! Reach out to congregational president Betty Holcomb, or to Rev. David.

Sing Noel!

Jeff Hamrick, Music Director

Members and friends who are not already part of the Choir of First Unitarian Church are warmly invited to join with choir members in singing for the annual Christmas Eve vespers, December 24, 2018, 7:00 p.m. The choir will learn a few anthems and will lead the gathered assembly in hymn and carol singing.

Rehearsals for the Christmas eve choir will take place on Thursdays, December 6, 13, and 20, 7:00–9:00 p.m. in the choir room and sanctuary. All are invited (the ability to read music and match pitch is assumed). Please contact Jeff Hamrick (music@firstuchicago.org) for more information or to express your interest!

Our choir music for this year's vespers features several songs from the African American tradition, including a contemporary setting of "Mary Had a Baby," as well as a choral setting of a Christmas song from Malawi, "Poor Folk Hear Him Gladly" (TAMKWIMBA KWA JESU).

It has been the tradition in our vespers service to always sing two much revered songs: one of these, "Silent Night" (Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht), has been sung for exactly 200 years! It was composed in December 1818 by Franz Gruber as a setting of a poem previously penned by his friend, a young priest named Josef Mohr, in Oberndorf, Austria, near Salzburg. There are many legends surrounding the song's origin; more or less incontrovertible is the following: "On December 24, 1818 ... Mohr journeyed to

the home of musician-schoolteacher Franz Gruber who lived in an apartment over the schoolhouse in nearby Arnsdorf. He showed his friend the poem [that he had written around two years earlier] and asked him to add a melody and guitar accompaniment so that it could be sung at Midnight Mass. His reason for wanting the new carol is unknown. Some speculate that the organ would not work; others feel that the assistant pastor, who dearly loved guitar music, merely wanted a new carol for Christmas" (soundscapes.info).

The second song that is traditionally sung in our vespers service is "Go Tell It on the Mountain," which dates back to around the middle of the nineteenth century. According to *The Presbyterian Hymnal Companion*, the song's compiler "John Wesley Work II ... was born, educated, worked, and died in Nashville. He majored in history and Latin at Fisk University (B.A. 1895, M.S. 1898), after which he was instructor of Greek and Latin until 1906 when he was appointed chair of the department. Work and his brother, Frederick Jerome (1879–1942), were leading figures in the preservation, performance and study of African-American spirituals. They published several collections of slave songs and spirituals, including *New Jubilee Songs as Sung* by Fisk Jubilee Singers (1901) and *Folk Songs of the American Negro* (1907). John Work II's treatise *The Folk Song of the American Negro* (1915) was one of the earliest studies of African-American music undertaken by a descendant of an ex-slave."

December Worship Services

December 2nd, 10 AM
*On Sacred Ground: the 100th Birthday
 of Timuel Black*
 Rev. Teri Schwartz

Come join in worship as First Unitarian celebrates the 100th birthday of our member, Timuel Black. Tim is known as a soldier, beloved teacher, civil rights leader, and political activist; he has received local and international awards and recognition over the years for his important work. First U is proud to welcome guest speakers Fr. Michael Pfeger and Mayoral Candidate and Cook County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle. Our worship will feature African drumming, guest vocalist Meagan McNeal (<http://meaganmcnealonline.com>), and the First Unitarian Choir

December 9th, 10 AM
Kindling Light in the Darkness
 Rev. Teri Schwartz

December 9 is the sixth day of Hanukkah; we'll celebrate six uplifting stories to brighten our hearts amidst our present difficulties.

December 16th, 10 AM
Holiday Pageant
 Rev. David Schwartz

This year, First U's children will present a new holiday pageant, *The Mitten Tree*.; Our Director of Religious Education, Beth Moss, has adapted this beloved holiday story (originally written by Candace Christiansen) into a special pageant.

We are pairing the pageant with a kids' mitten and winter clothing drive for Cradles to Crayons. (<https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/chicago>). One in three children in Chicagoland live in poverty; you can help. Please bring new or clean, gently used children's winter clothing to the DRE's office starting December 1st. Final donations will be

collected during on Pageant Sunday. If you wish to knit your own mittens, start now!

December 23rd, 10 AM
*The Longest Night:
 A Winter Solstice Worship*
 Rev. Teri Schwartz

Cultures around the world mark the winter solstice as a turning point from the longest night into days of increasing light, both in the outside world, and in our inner selves. Come mark this annual moment in this contemplative, wintry worship.

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December 24th, 7 PM
Christmas Eve Vespers
 Rev. Teri Schwartz

Come join us for the cherished tradition of Vespers on Christmas Eve: A contemplative, yet joyful worship service of readings, music, carols, and candles, and a time to gather with our extended church family, the neighborhood, and to many people returning to the city for the holiday. Child care is available.

December 24th, 9 PM
Communion in Hull Chapel
 Rev. Teri Schwartz

In the late hours of Christmas Eve, break bread together in memory of Jesus of Nazareth. In today's climate of fear and hate,

his message of revolutionary love and peace in the face of empire speaks to us today. We will use the church's 19th century silver communion set. This table is open to people of all beliefs; whether it is your first communion service or a cherished tradition, you are warmly welcomed to this contemplative and intimate communion service.

December 30th, 10 AM
Kwanzaa
 Joseph Harrington

We will light the Kinara and lift up the seven principles of Kwanzaa with words and music. Whether Kwanzaa is a long family tradition, or you've never celebrated before, you are warmly welcome for this intergenerational service.

Sabbatical

Revs. Teri and David Schwartz

A sabbatical is an ancient concept that relates to the period of rest or change, typically after six years. The root is from the biblical term, sabbath, which is the day of rest after six days of labor. Traditionally, a sabbatical leave is a time to rest and reflect so one may return to work refreshed and renewed in body, mind, and spirit.

Unitarian Universalist congregations recognize the importance of ministerial sabbaticals. By offering periods of rest, these congregations enjoy longer ministerial tenures and more vibrant leadership and church life over time. The result is a renewal of the ministers' outlook, new directions of thought and expanded vision. This period is also an opportunity for the congregation to strengthen itself. After a sabbatical, there can be fresh enthusiasm, new ideas, and a clearer focus for the church as a whole.

The Board of Trustees approved Revs. Teri and David to take their contracted sabbatical

leave time from March through August of 2019. First U has prepared for the sabbatical by setting aside funds in advance, annually. There will be a contracted Sabbatical Minister during this time to serve our church community; further information is forthcoming in the very near future.

The Sabbatical Committee will serve as a resource to the congregation, the Board, the Sabbatical Minister, and as well to Revs. Teri and David upon their return. They will meet on a regular basis to plan and communicate information about the sabbatical, to support a smooth sabbatical period, and to assist in the ministers' re-entry next fall. The committee is comprised of Board Member Kristin Faust, chair, and members Kristina DeGuzman, Liz Harris, Jean Hester, and Jim Proctor. More information about the sabbatical is forthcoming through all church communication channels; you may also reach out to the sabbatical committee or the ministers with any questions.



“The Shared Pulpit” Preaching Class

Rev. David Schwartz

“The Shared Pulpit” is an 8-session workshop to help lay people gain experience writing and preaching a full-length sermon for their congregation. Participants learn about theory and theology of preaching, practice writing and speaking with authenticity, and gradually build toward composing quality 20-minute sermons.

Last year I led the class for circle of members at Beverly Unitarian, this year I’m inviting participants from both churches.

The workshop is for all experience levels: whether you’ve never led worship or have preached before; whether you are at home in front of a room, or anxious to stand up and

deliver; whether you journal every day or haven’t ever written–this is for you!

The class will meet in seven sessions, each from 6:00–9:00 pm: January 23rd and 30th; February 6th, 13th, and 27th; March 6th and 13th. Some class sessions will be at First Unitarian, some at Beverly Unitarian (at 103rd and Longwood). Because the class builds from one session to the next, I’m requesting you not enroll if you know you’ll miss more than one meeting.

Sound like a workshop you’d be interested in? Let me know! Send me a note at david.schwartz@firsttuchicago.org.

December Meetings and Events

First Forum: Honoring Timuel Black

12/2/2018 Sunday 11:30 AM–1:00 PM

VOV Library

Timuel D. Black, Jr. has been a member of First Unitarian Church for more than 60 years and on December 7th will celebrate his 100th birthday. We invite you to join us for a very special First Forum as Tim and Susan Klonsky, educator, writer, and community activist who with her husband, Mike Klonsky, are the authors of *Small Schools: Public School Reform Meets the Ownership Society*, discuss Tim’s life, social activism, and latest book, *Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets* of Timuel Black.”

This special event is facilitated by Joseph Harrington. For more information, please contact Richard Pardo at pardo.richard@comcast.net.

Concert at First U: Lux Cantorum Chicago

12/7/2018 Friday 7:00 PM

VOV Library

Lux Cantorum, Chicago’s premier sacred choral music ensemble, will present a seasonal choral concert titled *Light of the World* at First Unitarian. “Lux Cantorum” roughly translates to “Light Singers,” and they herald the season with songs of light from across the globe. The program will feature both holiday favorites and works less familiar, including selections from Bach, Forrest, Nordquist, Peevla, and Rutter.

Tickets are \$15.75. [More information and tickets are available online.](#)

Small Group Meeting: Cronos

12/9/2018 Sunday 11:30 AM–1:00 PM

The Cronos are a small group of older women who meet monthly (most months) to explore personal issues in an atmosphere of support and confidentiality.

From time to time—including now—the Cronos open to new members. They are looking for older women who can commit to a regular monthly meeting.

Interested potential members should contact Margaret Huyck, at margarethuyck@gmail.com, or 312-833-0415.

Long Strange Trip: A Series on UU History

12/9/2018 Sunday 1:00 PM–2:30 PM

Chris Moore Parlor

Join Allan Lindrup for this Unitarian Universalist history series. *Long Strange Trip* is a six-part video series by Ron Cordes that explores the history of Unitarian and Universalist thought and practice from the

early, liberal strands in faith at the beginning of the Christian era to what we know today as Unitarian Universalism. Each session of this series includes the showing of a one-hour video followed by discussion. The sessions will take place every second Sunday from September through February of 2019.

For more information, please contact Allan Lindrup at uusj@sbcglobal.net.

Denominational Affairs Committee

12/11/2018 Tuesday 4:00 PM

The Denominational Affairs Committee meets regularly at 4 pm on second Tuesdays. For more information, please contact Marie Cobbs at marie.cobbs@att.net.

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Saturday 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Co-Ministers' Office Hours

Rev. David Schwartz, by appointment on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday

Rev. Teri Schwartz, by appointment on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday

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