



# FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO

## June 2018 Newsletter

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

### Ramping Up! Rev. Teri Schwartz

The church has many entry points. Some of them are physical.

This month, we are proud to offer a new accessible entry in the back of Pennington Center. First U is pleased to share our space with the Little People Learning Center, the preschool that operates on the second floor of Pennington. They are expanding their services to provide infant and toddler care on the first floor of Pennington. For fire safety, we need two accessible exits with ramps for evacuation cribs in the event of an emergency. This is a win-win; we now have an accessible entry and exit at our parking area to better serve our congregants, our guests, and to ensure safety for the littlest ones that make our church their home every weekday.

Deep thanks to our Director of Operations, Michael Knowles, who coordinated the project with all parties; Richard Pardo, our

volunteer Building Engineer, who designed the ramp in compliance with ADA requirements; and Ivan Lappin and his company who were contracted for construction services.

Changing our physical space changes how we move in the building—and in our minds and spirits. That can change who we are and who we are becoming. This month, we are ramping up to kick off our capital campaign on June 10th. We will raise over \$1 million for the restoration and repair of our building and facilities. Key building improvement priorities include ensuring the structural integrity and restoring the aesthetics of the sanctuary; increasing building accessibility; renovating the Parish House to create more functional event preparation and comfortable meeting spaces; and reducing our carbon footprint through proper climate controls and other energy efficiency measures.

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Yet, the capital campaign is about more than the physical building: It's about building a new way for our future.

Our physical space is what makes the work of the church possible. The church can provide different entry points and on-ramps into our community, into the world, and into our deepest selves. We have different needs for entry and passage in the world—and the terrain of our interior landscapes.

This community can help us navigate our lives, provide shelter



from the storm, and the strength to go forth yet again.

There are times in church and in life, when we need a new way in, a new point of access, a door to open—be that a door to the world, a door to what is most sacred, or the door to our hearts. And when that time comes, we can build a new door, a new ramp, and we can build a new way...together.

May it be so,  
Rev. Teri

## Greetings from the DRE

Beth Moss, Director of Religious Education (RE)

When we talk about blessings, sometimes Unitarians get a little squeamish—this word and what it typically represents doesn't always fit neatly into the belief system of UU's who are atheist, agnostic, or alienated from communities that spoke often of blessings. That said, blessings don't necessarily have to relate to a deity or a specific religious identity. A blessing can be a wish from the heart, a whisper of gratitude, or gift graciously given of the spirit. With that in mind, there is value in recognizing the blessings that we have and offering our blessings to others. This past month, the youth participated in a service all about animals and the blessings they bring us, and that we wish upon them. They read this adapted passage written originally by Christine C. Robinson, which I wish to share with you.

### **Blessing of the Animals**

adapted from Rev. Christine C. Robinson's

Surrounded by the animals we love, we remember with gratitude the pets, protectors, and animal companions who have blessed our lives.

We give thanks for our childhood pets, who taught us to love and to cry. May you take the risk of discovering the divine within you and around you.

We give thanks for our children's pets, who help us to teach them responsibility and relationship.

We give thanks for the pets who brighten our days and comfort our nights.

We give thanks for all those animals who help us and for animals who give their lives to help us learn.

Spirit of life, help us to remember that we live and work and love among the animals.

Help us to be their friends, to love them and care for them and protect them from harm, to thank them when we use their lives in ours.

Bless those animals who are and have been companions in our lives.

Hear our outpouring of love and gratitude for our animals.

Help us care for them tenderly and faithfully, and may we remember that we are not alone on the earth.

Thanks to Cameron White-Davis, Andy Guelcher, Lulu and Cole Verdun, Keiran Martin-Eatinger, Josie Schwartz and all others who participated in this service. Also, thanks to everyone who sent in their pet photos and brought stuffed animals to the service. It was a blessing to be a part of this service with you all.

### June RE Schedule

**June 3:** Last day of this year's regular RE. Kids will celebrate with fun activities, some of which will be outdoor if weather permits. If it is chilly, please send a coat. Also, please send your child in clothes you don't mind them getting messy in!

In worship, those that have volunteered this year will be honored for everything they have done. The RE program could NOT exist without the incredible contributions of all the people listed below. A big thank you goes out to all of them.

RE Council: Alina, Ezrina, Kathryn, Katie, Kathy.

RE Teachers & Volunteers: For the Chalice Children, Ava, Kathy, Sky, and Tim. For the Seekers: Virginia, Alina, Ane, and Lorraine Richardson. For the Junior Youth, Paloma, Allan, and Kathryn. For OWL, Sabrina Holmquist and Jim Procter.

Summer Teachers: Marjorie, Ezrina, Kathryn, Allan, Ane, Joan, and Kathy

Organizing OXFAM and the Halloween Party: Cheryl, Cindy, Joan, the whole RE council and many youth who did an amazing job.

Mystery Friends: Mary Lee, Rosemary, Ivan, Barbara, Bette, Allen, Betty, Vivian, Linn and some wonderful youth.

Subs, Volunteers, Program Spokespeople, Pageant help, and others not yet mentioned: Lorraine, Jon, Allen, Lisa, David, Teri, Lynn, Chris, Leslie, Laura, Sara, Jon, Joan, Bill, Eileen, Jacob, Marjorie, Jennifer, Nan, other Lisa, people I missed, and all the other parents and families present each Sunday. Thanks everyone!

**June 10:** Flower Communion multigenerational service. No RE. Church picnic with campaign kickoff after services

If you were debating coming to church and the *Building a New Way* capital campaign kickoff party, debate no more...you will not want to miss this!

Not only will there be kid-friendly food in a family-friendly environment right after services, but starting at noon, *Mad Science* will be joining us at first U and hosting fun STEM activities for our youth!

*Mad Science* delivers unique, hands-on science experiences for children that are as entertaining as they are educational. *Mad Science Chicago* has been bringing science enrichment to children since 2005. *Mad Science* encourages scientific literacy in children in an age when science is as vital as reading, writing, and arithmetic. They believe in the importance of being at the forefront of the industry and continue to create hands-on science programming for kids. Email the DRE for more information.

**June 17:** Father's Day. No RE. Summer hours begin in the nursery (9:30-11:30).

**June 24:** Summer RE begins.

## June Worship Services

Unitarian Universalist minister, the Rev. Elea Kemler writes,

So what, then, does it mean to offer a blessing, to be a blessing? To bless something or someone is to invoke its wholeness, to help remind the person or thing you are blessing of its essence, its sacredness, its beauty, and to help remind yourself of that, too. Blessing does not fix anything. It is not a cure...it does not instill health or well-being or strength. Instead, it reminds us those things are already there, within us.

In the month of June, we will be exploring *Blessing* in worship—from the blessings that come from our imperfect and sometimes broken bodies, to the blessings from our beloved annual Flower Communion, the blessings of the tiniest and most absurd of little victories in life, and culminating with blessings through music. Come join us!

June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10 AM  
*You Are Beautiful*  
Rev. Teri Schwartz

We have complex relationships with our bodies. Society exerts strong influences that are often toxic, and our bodies at some point or another become ill or broken in some way. Yet, the human experience at its heart is an embodied one; physical pleasure and the beauty of our senses are some of the best and brightest blessings in life.

We are excited to welcome mezzo-soprano Beena David as guest musician this June 3<sup>rd</sup>, worship service. Ms. David has been involved in many of Chicago's finest professional choirs, including the Grant Park Chorus and the Chicago Symphony Chorus and enjoys a busy solo career as well. [You can learn more about Beena online.](#) Music selections for the service will be from the

song cycle *A Love Like That: Songs of Unconditional Love* by UU composer Elizabeth Alexander.

June 10<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
*Flower Communion*  
Rev. Teri Schwartz and Rev. David Schwartz

Come celebrate the beginning of summer in this annual beloved Unitarian service, featuring dancers from the Hyde Park School of Dance and special musical guests. In 1936, Norbert Čapek, founder of the Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia, united his diverse congregants from varying Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths by honoring the beauty of nature with a festival of flowers instead of the Eucharist. Please bring a flower to share during the service.

Following the service, we will celebrate our *Building a New Way* kick-off party for the whole congregation. Come to learn about planned building improvements, see architectural renderings, go on a building tour, enjoy a catered lunch, and have a good time! *Mad Science Chicago* will come to First U to host a special science party for our children and youth (parents, please RSVP to our DRE Beth Moss at [dre@firsttuchicago.org](mailto:dre@firsttuchicago.org)). This is a special event that is not to be missed; we can't wait to see you there. All are welcome.

June 17<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
*Life's Little Victories*  
Rev. Teri Schwartz

#Blessed has become a social media phenomenon that is more about boasting and less about gratitude. Yet, what can happen when we take the time to notice the blessings and little victories in life—no matter how small or absurd? Small victories, moments of gratitude, and expressions of

thanks can make not only our days sweeter, but can truly bless our lives.

June 24<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
*Blessings of Music*  
 Rev. Jason Shelton

First U is thrilled to welcome the Rev. Jason Shelton as our worship leader to bless us with music! Rev. Shelton is a composer, arranger, conductor, singer, multi-

instrumentalist, and a workshop and retreat leader. His compositions have been performed in churches and concert halls throughout North America, and his workshops for choirs, musicians and ministers are helping to redefine music ministry in the liberal religious tradition for the 21st century. This will be a unique service with one of our national UU worship leaders; it's not to be missed!

## June Meetings and Events

### Lux Cantorum: Spring Concert

6/2/2018 Saturday 7:00 PM-8:30 PM

Sanctuary

Lux Cantorum, formerly the Lutheran Choir of Chicago, will be presenting their spring concert at First Unitarian to celebrate their 70th anniversary.

The concert will feature favorites from the group's last decade, including compositions by Barber, Brahms, Gjeilo, Hogan, Lauridsen, Ticheli, Vaughan Williams, and Whitacre. Tickets are \$20 at the door or just \$15 purchased online in advance.

To learn more about Lux Cantorum, and to hear excerpts from past performances, [please visit their website](#).

### Forum on Recent Church Policies

6/3/2018 Sunday 11:30 AM

Chris Moore Parlor

Learn more about and discuss policies added or revised by the Board of Trustees in 2017-2018, particularly:

- Misrepresentation (new)
- Disruptive Persons (revised)
- Gift Acceptance (substantial revision in light of the capital campaign)
- Councils (transfer from the Bylaws).

The current version of the Policy Manual, including revisions approved by the Board of

Directors at their meeting on May 17, 2018, will soon be posted on the Governance page. For more information, please contact Joan Pederson at [president@firstuchicago.org](mailto:president@firstuchicago.org).

### Global Studies Group

6/3/2018 Sunday 1:00 PM

VOV Library

The Global Studies Group will continue the discussion of *Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives: From Stalinism to the New Cold War* by Stephen F. Cohen. We will be discussing the second chapter. All are welcome. For more information, please contact Bobbi Campbell at [rlammer@luc.edu](mailto:rlammer@luc.edu).

### Criminal Justice Task Force Meeting

6/7/2018 Thursday 6:45 PM

Chris Moore Parlor

The agenda of this meeting of First U's Criminal Justice Task Force will include:

- a status report on legislation in process in Springfield,
- a presentation by Community Renewal Society of the Civilian Police Oversight Ordinance now the subject of Chicago City Council community hearings, and
- a proposal from Housing Action Illinois; see the [flier with sponsors](#) and [download the endorsement form](#).

Patricia Fron and Gianna Baker of Housing Action Illinois are working on an initiative that seeks to add criminal records as a protected class under the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance—making it illegal for housing providers to impose blanket criminal record bans. Perhaps this is a cause that First Unitarian CJTF could support.

For more information, please contact Evan at [evanfreund@gmail.com](mailto:evanfreund@gmail.com).

### Building a New Way

6/10/2018 Sunday 11:30 AM –1:00 PM

It's the Capital Fund kickoff! Expect good food, great presentations, and fun activities for kids. Not to be missed!

### First U Christian Group

6/12/2018 Tuesday 7:00 PM–9:00 PM

Chris Moore Parlor

Welcome. Our meetings are open to all church members and friends—of any religious beliefs—with an interest in learning more about the Christian faith.

For the remainder of 2018, the group will continue its study of world Christianity. First we will view the opening lectures of a Teaching Company course, *The History of Christianity in the Reformation Era*, taught by Professor Brad Gregory, Assistant Professor of History at Stanford University. We will also begin a Bible study, focusing on the *Gospel of Matthew* and the *Gospel of Luke*. For more information, please contact Phiefer Brown at [PhieferBrowne@comcast.net](mailto:PhieferBrowne@comcast.net) or Finley Campbell at [FinleyCampbell5222@comcast.net](mailto:FinleyCampbell5222@comcast.net).

### Soup Lunch

6/17/2018 Sunday 11:15 AM

Hull Chapel

Soup Lunch happens every third Sunday of the month. Everyone is invited!

This is a wonderful time for all members and friends to gather and learn a little more about each other. Please bring a pot of your

favorite soup. You can bring it at room temperature and we can reheat it in crockpots in Hull Chapel.

Not bringing soup? Please consider contributing bread, salad, bread, drinks, or sweets, if convenient, or offer to help with the coordination. For more information, please contact Lisa Martin-Eatinger, [lisaeatinger228@gmail.com](mailto:lisaeatinger228@gmail.com).

### First U Men's Group

6/18/2018 Monday 7:00 PM–9:00 PM

RE Resource Room

This group is open to men at least 18 years old. Men in the group come together to share their experiences, help each other work through problems, and identify opportunities to support the church and its individual members. Some discussion topics for meetings have been "Politics in Chicago and Illinois," "God Is a Question, Not an Answer," and "The Beloved Community." For more information, please contact Joseph Harrington at [joseph\\_harrington@att.net](mailto:joseph_harrington@att.net)

### UUA General Assembly

6/20/2018 Wednesday to 6/24/2018 Sunday  
Kansas City, MO

Consider taking advantage of this exciting opportunity to meet and work in common cause with other UUs.

### Annual Business Meeting:

MidAmerica Region Unitarian  
Universalist Association

6/20/2018 Wednesday 4:30 PM

Kansas City, MO

The MidAmerica Region's Annual Business Meeting is one of the key events at this year's General Assembly.

## 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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