

The Torch

VOLUME 57, ISSUE 6

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SALT LAKE CITY

OCTOBER 13, 2014

UU Orientation October 14th

Welcome newcomers and not-so-new-comers who are ready to find out more about our church and its programs! Our Minister Tom Goldsmith, our Director of Religious Education Mary Kroener-Ekstrand, and members of our Welcoming Committee are presenting an orientation program to help you learn more about our congregation and our larger Unitarian Universalist faith community. This session will be held on Tuesday, October 14th from 7-9pm. Please register for this event at www.slccu.org. Childcare will be provided – please indicate your need when you sign up so that we know how many kids to expect.



*Rev. Russ Menk (a former congregant and Board President of First Unitarian Church) gave the sermon on September 28, 2014: "Necessities"
Photo by Steve Horton*

Endowment Fund News

-submitted by Hugo Rossi

A dinner was held on Friday, Sep 19th to thank members and seek potential new members to the Emerson Society. The Emerson Society, established by the Endowment Committee, comprises those members and friends who have made arrangements to include First Unitarian Church in their estate planning.

The dinner proved a joyous occasion. Tom Goldsmith, Henry Whiteside, Sue Geary and Carol Blackwell spoke about the importance of being members of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society. On Sunday, Sep 21st the Endowment Committee had a table at the Activities Fair to further acquaint the congregation with the purposes of the Endowment.

Members of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society make a commitment to ensure that the First Unitarian Church will be available for countless years to come in promoting its ideals to the citizenry of Salt Lake City and the State of Utah, and in leading action based on those ideals.

Have you thought about adding your name to the Emerson Society? The Endowment Committee would be pleased to offer a list of attorneys who could help in your commitment to the future of our church.

Please contact any Endowment Fund Committee member for more information: Hugo Rossi, Cathy Chambless, Cosette Joesten, or Bill Ohlsen. Thank you for your consideration.

The Torch

First Unitarian Church of Salt Lake City

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The Torch is published approximately 23 times per year, every other week during the regular church year & once per month during the summer.

Next Publication Date

October 27, 2014

Submission Deadline

October 20, 2014 (Mon.)
by 10:00 a.m.

Events to be listed should occur after October 28th to ensure timeliness.

Editor

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Congregational Briefs

Open Minds Book Group

The next meeting of the Open Minds Book Group will be at 7:00 on October 21 in the Haven room at the church. The book is Orange Is The New Black by Piper Kerman. The book for November will be Under the Wide and Starry Sky by Nancy Horan. All are welcome.

Refugee Resettlement Committee

Paul McCartney wrote a song about us in 1968. "Junk" is the title. Here is the chorus: "Buy! Buy! Says the sign in the shop window. Why? Why? Says the junk in the yard." As you yield to the buy impulse, the Refugee Resettlement Committee will turn your discards into treasure. Call either Joe DuBray (801) 930-9640 or Ron Anderson (801) 671-8968 to arrange to have your junk removed from the yard.

UU Jam

Unitarian sing-a-long and acoustic music jam will be Monday October 13 from 7pm to 9pm in The Sanctuary. Everyone is invited and all levels and abilities are welcomed. Bring 6 copies of songs with chords in large print to share or just show up and sing/play what others have brought. If you have any questions please contact Bill Stay at 801 360-5891 or Lori Shields at 801 440-6157.

Singing Circle: International Folksongs

All voices welcome - from shy shower singers to confident vocalists! Come learn wonderful songs, interesting harmonies and have fun! Adults and young people 15 years and up. Individuals under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a participating adult. When: Each month on the fourth Thursday, from 7:00-8:30 PM. Contact: Stacey at voicecoachSLC@gmail.com.

Dinner and Dialogue

Make new UU friends while enjoying good food and stimulating conversation. Sign up at the Welcome Table to HOST a dinner in your home. You set the date and the menu, and decide how many guests you can accommodate. Guests sign up to ATTEND and contribute by bringing a dish to share. What could be simpler? Questions, please get in touch with Jan Crane, 801 870-1222 or suppers@slcuu.org.

Reverently Yours

Rev. Tom Goldsmith



The first same-sex couple married in Utah during that "Christmas Rush" last year when celebration and liberation and dignity reverberated in county clerk offices in a fevered pitch was served a cease and desist order by LDS

Church attorneys for attempting to educate attendees at this last General Conference. Michael Ferguson and his husband Seth Anderson, reduced now to "partners" until the U.S. Supreme Court finally weighs in on the unconstitutionality of Utah law, aimed to distribute information outside the Temple Grounds explaining a key principle in same-sex relationships. Contrary to Mormon opinion, they insist that same-sex attraction is neither a choice nor changeable through therapy.

I remembered my own education process the first year I began my ministry. A phrase that UU ministers freely used back in the 70's that we felt underscored our progressive ideology was "sexual preference." We spoke about the inclusivity of Unitarian Universalism whereby we warmly welcome everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, and *sexual preference*. With some embarrassment I look back to those times where we were essentially saying that we're so liberal it's ok if you *choose* a same-sex partner. Everyone is welcome.

A man in my congregation read me the riot act one afternoon in the parsonage. He came out to me privately. He was married with a couple of kids, as straight as anyone would suspect. But unable to lead his life truthfully and honestly, he was filled with rage, despair, and anguish so palpable I worried for his own life. Through tears of torment he asked me if I really thought he *preferred* being gay. Did I honestly think that

he chose a lifestyle that filled him with such pain?

The thought of any phrasing that implied *choice* in same-sex attraction evaporated from my lexicon forever. I believe that all religious institutions that insist on homosexuality as an immoral behavior that can be changed at will, need to re-examine their thesis. Such religious institutions treat their gay and lesbian members as though they were unruly customers deliberately acting in defiance of old social mores. But in truth, if we have learned anything sociologically speaking these past few decades, it's that the forces of love and attraction act independently of archaic stereotypes insisting that love exists exclusively between a man and woman. And such religious institutions need to acknowledge (indeed embrace) the reality that love flows where it wills regardless of homophobic wishes to the contrary.

Ferguson and Anderson were right in assuming the fundamental stumbling block for authoritarian religions in accepting same-sex attraction lies in the word "choice." The religious and cultural bias against marriage equality can only begin to lessen once it becomes understood that love is so powerful it overwhelms conscious choice. Although many religious conservatives refuse to accept that premise, it remains a necessary condition to knocking down barriers of overt discrimination.

I hope that Ferguson and Anderson do not forego their efforts to educate the public because of a cease and desist notice. We need a widespread campaign organized by LGBTQ community and allies to underscore the random nature of love. TRG

Religious Education

Mary Kroener-Ekstrand



Dear All,

Perhaps you have noticed in our hymnal, on the UUA website, or in some other brochure or publication an explanation of the seven principles and six sources of our

Unitarian Universalist faith tradition. This year in Religious Education, we have been focusing on this one:

“Wisdom from the world's religions, which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.”

In Sunday School each week, our children and youth are learning about stories and traditions from a variety of faith traditions. They are building an understanding of the diversity of religious practice and belief. And they are thinking about where they fit in.

I will be offering an Adult Religious Education program exploring world religions beginning Monday, October 20th. In the fall, we will focus on the Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In the spring, we will turn to Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

Sign ups for this and other Adult Religious Education Programs will be available at church by the time you read this newsletter. Stop by the Welcome Table in Eliot Hall

during coffee hour or check the church website at www.slccuu.org for details and registration information.

Our timing in focusing on world religions as a theme couldn't be better. Not only is there an increasing trend of interfaith work here in Salt Lake City in which our church is actively participating, but also, The Parliament of World Religions is scheduled to have their annual meeting here in Salt Lake City one year from now, October 15th-19th, 2015. If we register together, we can qualify for a discounted group rate. We will discuss details in the World Religions Adult Ed program. Feel free to contact me if you are interested in joining the group for the conference but will not be taking the class.

Unitarians have been involved with the Parliament of World Religions since it's founding at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. In fact, the first called minister of our church Rev. David Utter was involved in the early planning of the Parliament of World Religions with Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones in Chicago before moving west to Salt Lake City in 1891. He went on to host Ecumenical Roundtable in Salt Lake City in May of 1892.

I look forward to working with congregants in building on our historic commitment to interfaith work

In Service,
Mary

High School/YRUU Update

We have so many exciting things coming up in October for YRUU and Highschool RE! Two of our teens and Helen, our volunteer, went down to Jemez Springs, New Mexico to our annual Mountain Desert District Fall Con. I cannot wait to hear all of the amazing stories that I am sure they will come back with.

Cons Give our youth an opportunity to see other Unitarian teens in a more relaxed

setting as well as being able to participate in workshops that help the discover what a being a UU means to them. There will be more chances to attend these Cons for your teens later in the year so please keep on eye out for calendar in Eliot Hall that will give you more dates and details!

Religious Education continued on next page

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Our annual Halloween Carnival will be happening this year on Tuesday, October 28th at 6:00 until 8:00 pm. We will have fun games, crafts and treats for the whole family! We are still looking for adult volunteers, so please contact me if you are interested!

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to get involved in YRUU or Highschool RE please contact me at yruu@gmail.com. Thank you and I hope you have a great couple of weeks!

-Jillian O'Karma, Youth Advisor

RE Newsbits



Annual Halloween Carnival, Tuesday October 28th

Mark your calendar and please plan to join us for the annual YRUU Halloween Festival on Tuesday, Oct 28th from 6:00 - 8:00pm here at First Church. Our high school youth group has planned a variety of activities for kids including a "Haunted Hallway", costume contest, carnival games, music, candy, prizes, and more. All ages are invited to attend and share in seasonal fun and games. Friends are very welcome, so please feel free to invite others who might enjoy a family-friendly social occasion. Eat dinner before you arrive – we will serve treats but not a meal!

All proceeds from this event go towards the YRUU Mission Trip fund. The suggested donation amount is \$5 per person payable either on Sunday during the coffee hour or at the door. Thanks for your support!

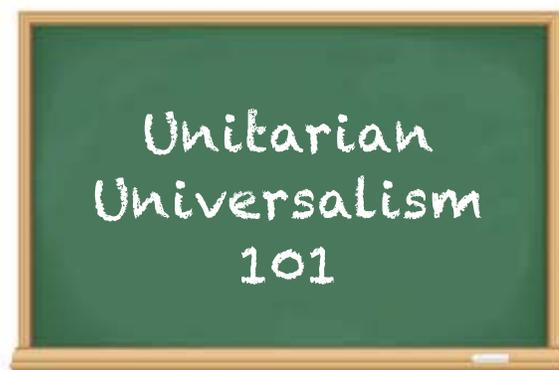
UU Orientation Program, Tuesday, Oct 14th, 7-9pm in Eliot Hall

Are you interested in finding out more about First Unitarian Church? Please join us for our upcoming UU Orientation Program. This session will provide newcomers to our church an opportunity to meet one another, get to know the Minister and Director of Religious Education, learn about Unitarian Universalism, and get involved with the many activities and programs of our congregation. Sign up at the Welcome Table during coffee hour after any Sunday service or on the church website anytime. Childcare will be provided – please indicate your need when you sign up so that we know how many kids to expect.

Religious Education Contact Information

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Environmental Ministry News

Green Sanctuary

*Submitted by Joan M. Gregory, Coordinator,
Environmental Ministry*

Walking our talk is what Green Sanctuary is all about. According to the UUA website: "The Green Sanctuary program provides a path for congregational study, reflection, and action in response to environmentally related issues." Green Sanctuary is based on a framework of four focus areas: Environmental Justice, Worship and Celebration, Religious Education, and Sustainable Living. These are the building blocks of the Green Sanctuary program. Back in 2006, our congregation voted to seek UUA accreditation as a Green Sanctuary and in many ways this is work that we are already doing. But, in other ways, there is much more work for us to do. Over the course of this church year, Environmental Ministry will be delving back into the Green Sanctuary Program, assessing where we are and what we still need to do to complete our Green Sanctuary application. Would you like to help? Read more about the Green Sanctuary program here: <http://www.uua.org/environment/sanctuary/index.shtml> and then contact Joan Gregory, at green@slcuu.org to find out how you can get involved.



It's Beginning to Look, Sound, and Feel Like a Movement

*Submitted by Joan M. Gregory, Coordinator,
Environmental Ministry*

400,000 people marched in the streets of New York City on Sunday, September 21, 2014. 50,000 students from 400 campuses were among those who marched, many of them working on divestment of their college/university endowments from the fossil fuel industry. 3,000 flooded Wall Street the next day demanding not just words but action from our leaders at the UN Climate Summit. Divestment of \$50 Billion in endowment funds from the fossil fuel industry has now been

pledged by over 180 foundations, universities, faith-based communities (including the Unitarian Universalist Association) and by over 655 wealthy individuals. Even the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, built from wealth generated in the Standard Oil Company, has pledged "to divest first from coal and tar sands by the end of this year, with more to come thereafter." Days before the UN Climate Summit, "more than 340 global institutional investors representing over \$24 trillion in assets called on government leaders to provide stable, reliable and economically meaningful carbon pricing that helps redirect investment commensurate with the scale of the climate change challenge, as well as develop plans to phase out subsidies for fossil fuels." And Archbishop Desmond Tutu called on institutions and people of conscience to divest. He said: "Climate change is the human rights challenge of our time. We can no longer continue feeding our addiction to fossil fuels as if there is no tomorrow, for there will be no tomorrow."

The message is getting clearer every day. We are at the decision point ... the decisions we make now will have vast implications for us and for generations to come. From the California Climate Breakthrough Initiative (CCBI) [<http://www.ccbi.works/>] to #FloodWallStreet, here is what we are hearing people and organizations in the movement saying:

- Put a price on carbon.
- Reduce emissions significantly every year.
- Invest in converting to a clean, efficient, resilient, renewable energy infrastructure.
- Reduce consumption, reduce the demand for fossil fuels.
- The United States must lead.
- Climate justice is the end we seek.

It certainly looks, sounds and feels like a movement! Read more: 350.org [<http://www.350.org>], CCBI [<http://www.ccbi.works/>], GoFossilFree [<http://www.gofossilfree.org>], Rainforest Action Network [<http://www.ran.org>].

2014 Ends Survey Results

-submitted by Erin Johnson, Board of Trustees President

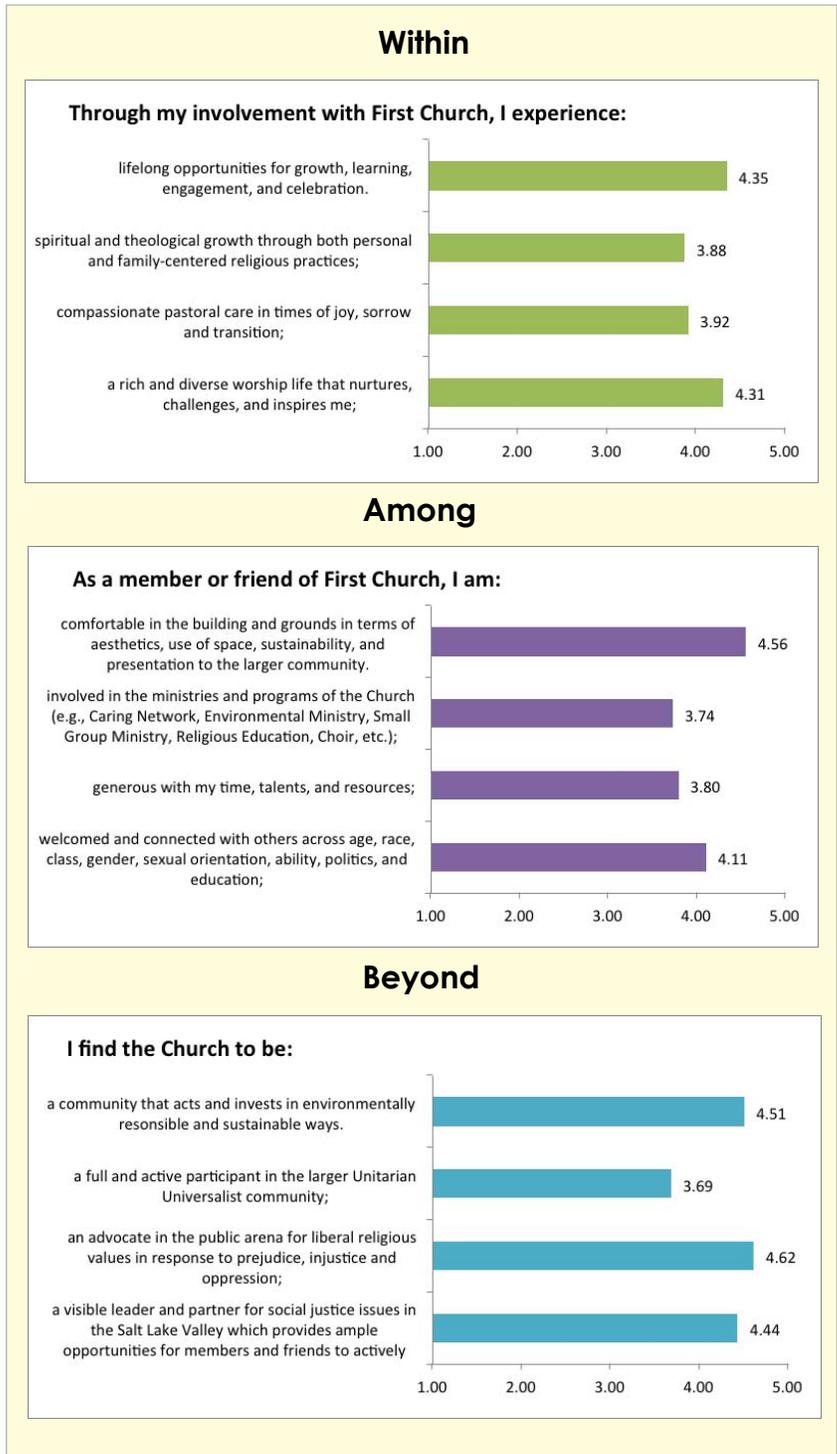
An essential part of the Board's job is to monitor the policies that govern our church, including the church's Ends, our overarching goals. While much of our monitoring requires only interaction with the Minister and Staff, the Board is effective at monitoring Ends only when we listen actively to the congregation. This monitoring process must occur every year because the environment changes, new opportunities arise, congregational composition and mentality shift. Only through continuous monitoring are we reminded of our most important values and therefore able to re-answer the question, "Why does this congregation exist?"

At the end of August we conducted a member and friend survey that will be used as a tool to evaluate how we, as a congregation, are progressing on a year-to-year basis. This year's data will function as our baseline and the same questions will be asked for the next several years (in May from here on out). Each year will also include a few additional questions posed by Tom to evaluate specific attempts at addressing congregational concerns.

The survey asked you to rate your personal experience on 12 statements relating to our three End statements. We had a total of 121 respondents (78.9% Members), with the greatest percentage of responses coming from respondents in the 65 and above age category (48.7%). Results are included to the right. All graphs represent the average score for each question on a 1 to 5 scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

Looking at the 3 Ends statements and results from this survey we have overall positive results. We have no averages falling in the Disagree(2) or Strongly Disagree (1) categories and seven of the twelve score above agree (4). Two of the three lowest average scores related specifically to individual involvement in church activities. These results may change with greater attempts to increase

Ends Survey continued on page 8



Fall Highway Cleanup

-submitted by Frank Steffey

Many thanks to the following 14 volunteers who cleared litter from SR-65 on a beautiful October 4th: Carolyn Erickson, Joe DuBray, Jim Coffey, Bob Weirick, Sue Slade, Carol Blackwell, Peter Poulsen, Tom Price, Ann & Ron Mildenhall, Ruth & Bill Ohlsen, and Vickie & Frank Steffey.

The hard-core award is shared by Carolyn Erickson and Peter Poulsen for tackling the toughest section at the overpass. Carol Blackwell walks away with the rookie award, while Joe DuBray and Jim Coffey share the extra mile award for going beyond the call of SR-65.

This could be YOU finding surprising treasures when we do our next cleanup in early May.



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survey responses from younger members of the church community, or they may be an indication that the wording of our Among End (*The congregants of First Unitarian Church create a supportive, caring, accepting, celebratory community where everyone feels valued*) may need to be re-evaluated. Only after several years of the survey and extended conversations with the congregation would any changes to the Ends take place.

Scores are particularly strong for the questions about being comfortable in the building and grounds (a result that Hal was especially pleased to see) and about the church being involved in the community and an advocate for liberal religious values.

To see tables with actual response numbers to each question please visit the extended version of this report on our website at http://www.slcuu.org/files/Fall%202014%20Torch%20article%20Ends%20Survey%20results_extended%20version.pdf

Comments associated with the questions were extremely variable and numerous, and they will be taken into account in our interpretation and use of this survey.

Thank you for taking the time to complete our 2014 Ends survey. We look forward to measuring our progress in years to come.



October/November 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12 Sunday Services 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.	13 UU Jam 7 pm (pg. 2)	14 UU Orientation 7 pm (pg.1)	15 Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	16	17	18
19 Sunday Services 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.	20 Torch Submissions Due 10 am	21 Open Minds Book Group 7 pm (pg. 2)	22 Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	23 Singing Circle 7 pm (pg. 2)	24	25
26 Sunday Services 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.	27	28 Halloween Carnival 6 pm (pg. 5)	29 Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	30	31	November 1
5 Sunday Services 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.	6 Torch Submissions Due 10 am	7	8 Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	9	10	11

Sunday Services

Sunday, October 12th
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
"The River of Life"
-Rev. Tom Goldsmith

Sunday, October 19th
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
**"Decline: An Honest
Appraisal of Long Life"**
-Rev. Tom Goldsmith

Sunday, October 26th
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
"Domination"
-Rev. Tom Goldsmith

First Unitarian Church
569 South 1300 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84102

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Return Service
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First Unitarian Church nurtures and challenges the spiritual and intellectual journey for all generations and actively engages in building a progressive and just world.