



Welcoming Guide 2016/2017

1400 N Lafayette St.
Denver, CO 80218



Welcome Letter from Reverend Mike Morran

We Are So Glad You Are Here!

We are proud of our many activities at First Unitarian Society of Denver (FUSD) and the opportunities they provide for people to connect and grow in this ministry of love and service. Social activism, worship, Religious Exploration, governance, classes for spiritual growth, fund-raising, and much more, it takes hundreds of volunteers to make this amazing community happen.

First Unitarian is a Welcoming Congregation with a rich history in Central Denver. We see ourselves as “an urban sanctuary for growing souls in love and service”, and we take this vision very seriously. Whatever your available time or your thirst for connections and community, there is a place for you here. We are committed to growing together!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike S. Morran". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Mike Morran

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First Unitarian Information

First Unitarian Society of Denver (FUSD) has provided a liberal religious presence in the Mile High City since 1871 - five years before Colorado was granted statehood. FUSD today is a vibrant, inclusive, and inspired community committed to realizing justice, celebrating diversity, and growing souls in love and service.

From the Sunday after Labor Day to the end of May, there are two scheduled services: 9:15a and 11:00a. During the summer, there is only one service at 9:15a. A formal Children's Religious Exploration program is offered after the start of the first service with appropriate registration; the children initially gather with the congregation in the Sanctuary at 9:15a. Infants (6 weeks of age and older) and toddlers may be dropped off before any service at the nursery, which is staffed by trained childcare workers.

Congregants dress as they feel comfortable. Services generally include: gathering music; words of welcome, lighting a chalice (a symbol of our faith), singing of hymns, a story for all ages, meditations or prayers, an offertory, a sermon, reflection, or homily, musical interludes, singing of a closing affirmation, a benediction with extinguishing of the chalice, and postlude music. Following services, we invite you to join us as we gather for fellowship and refreshments in the Community Room. Ministers and members are available to welcome you and answer questions.

As FUSD is an urban church in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, parking can be a challenge. On Sunday mornings, there are spaces reserved in the Alta Court lot across from the church towards Colfax on Lafayette Street (you can park in the spots labeled "FUSD"). Parking is also available on the north (left) side of 14th Avenue until 1:00a. Metered spaces on Colfax Avenue are free on Sundays.

FUSD has a ramp at its west entrance on Lafayette Street which leads to our main floor. Our elevator is located on the east side of the building accessible from 14th Avenue. We also have braille hymnals and hearing devices available during the service. Feel free to contact the office in advance of visiting if you have any questions or concerns: office@fusden.org

2016/17 Board of Trustees, Staff

Board of Trustees:

Chris Hahn, President

Stuart Ferguson, Vice President

Peggy Streit, Board-appointed Treasurer

Peggy Ulrich-Nims, Board-appointed Secretary

Kelly Becker, Member at Large

Ellen Cahill, Member at Large

Douglas Fiero, Member at Large

Lars Parkin, Member at Large

Zach Robertson, Youth Member

Staff:

Minister, Reverend Mike Morran (full time)

Office Administrator, Glenn Barrows (full time)

Director of Religious Education, Erin Kenworthy (full time)

Music Director, Lia Davis (part time)

Choir Director, Brian Stone (part time)

Bookkeeper, Heather Doyle-Maier (part time)

Events Manager, John Vivian (part time)

Building Superintendent, Patrick Phillips (part time)

Nursery Caretakers (3-4)

Office Hours: Sunday-Thursday, 8:00a to 1:00p

Religious Exploration

Welcome to Religious Exploration at First Unitarian Society of Denver! Our mission is to provide our children with a safe, challenging environment in which to learn and grow, connect with other children, and explore their own developing spirituality. We believe this is best accomplished through participative learning, and an active exploration of age-appropriate materials. A central tenet of our program is that religious education is a community endeavor as much as an individual experience. As such, our classroom encounters are built around the ideals of tolerance, inclusion, and respect for others.

We strive to give our children knowledge of world religions in addition to Unitarian Universalism. We work to incorporate social justice into the curriculum for children and youth and to create more meaningful intergenerational opportunities for all.

This program runs on volunteer teachers, so please considering supporting RE. See the RE booklet for additional information, or reach out to Erin Kenworthy, Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) (erin@fusden.org) or co-chairs Cindy Boune (cboune@yahoo.com).



Dates of Key Events

InGathering Service – first Sunday after Labor Day. This is when Religious Exploration for children begins for the year and we go to two services.

Giving in Action – Twice a month, on the first and third Sundays of the month we hear from and give our entire collection to a nonprofit group in our community.



Family Promise Program – Three to four times a year we host a number of homeless families in our church. We provide a private room for each family, cots and meals (see sign-up board during coffee hours).

Vespers – The first Wednesday of the month there is a half hour service at 6:00 in the evening, followed by a potluck dinner at 6:30p; offered during the church year from September through May.

Last Wednesday Lunch Bunch – The last Wednesday of the month a group gathers at 11:30a in the community room to share a potluck lunch and conversation.

Drop-In Core Circle – ***New day and time*** On the fourth Sunday of the month immediately following the first service, a CORE Circle meeting is held at FUSD for anyone interested in exploring CORE Circles but who may not be able to commit for an entire year, or may be waiting for an opening. Here you can dive more deeply into the Whole SoUUI Living Theme for the month; childcare provided. Contacts: Stu Ferguson (sferguson2@msn.com) and Lisa Moore (lcm96@me.com)

Young Adult Group (20's/30's) – meets for brunch the second Sunday of the month after the second service at Hot Cakes; see below for more information.

Auction – Usually the first Saturday in May the church hosts its major fundraising event of the year. There is a silent auction, dinner, live auction and entertainment.

Summer Services – In the summer we have one service, at 9:15a. The children have a service together in the Chapel. This begins the last Sunday before Memorial Day and goes until the Sunday during Labor Day weekend.

Annual Congregational Meeting – In the spring, after we go to one service. Election of a new board and some committee heads occurs and we vote on the operating budget for the next fiscal year (July-June).

Young Adult Group

Young Adult Group is a group of folks in their 20s and 30s who gather each month to talk about spirituality, share potluck meals, hang out, and play an occasional board game. Monthly gatherings might include 2nd Sunday Brunch, Holy Happy Hour (4th Saturday beer, coffee, and spiritual conversations), or a Circle Worship and Potluck. Email Glenn Barrows to get on the email list.

Find out more about who we are and what we do on Facebook: FUSDEN2030s (First Unitarian Society of Denver 20s/30s Group).

Elected Committees

Board of Trustees – Nine members, elected by the congregation at the annual meeting in June, serve on the Board of Trustees on a rotating basis, each serving a three-year term. The board makes a considerable commitment of time and effort toward visioning congregational goals, establishing policies, fiduciary responsibilities, long-range planning and overseeing accomplishment of congregational goals.



Committee on Ministry (COM)

– The Committee on Ministry is committed to the Religious Mission and Covenant of FUSD, the Committee on Ministry encourages all aspects of congregational life to be coherent and aligned with that mission and covenant. The Committee on Ministry acts as a neutral advisory body to the minister.

Contacts: Jason Kenworthy (kenworthy316@yahoo.com)

or Ann Sabbah (ann@sabbah.net)

Faith in Action Council (FIAC) – The Faith in Action Council (FIAC) coordinates social action and justice work in the FUSD community. Currently, FIAC coordinates five congregational projects and one justice circle. FIAC maintains a liaison to each group, assists with project proposal development and approval and provides support for budget development, promotion and other needs as they arise. Contacts: Stephanie Walton (stephaniewalton717@gmail.com) or Brad Silsby (silsby1@msn.com)

Finance Council (FC) – The Finance Council is primarily responsible for managing and monitoring the financial resources and obligations of the church. The Finance Council organizes around a set of guiding values: vision and proactive investment in FUSD values, transparency and appropriate confidentiality, integrity and honesty, fiduciary stewardship, and adaptability to economic fluctuations. The Finance Council strives for frequent and effective communication with the Society around financial issues. Contact: Janet Kennedy (janetk200@gmail.com) or Andrea Mitchell (andrea.c.mitchell@gmail.com)

Leadership Development – The goal of the FUSD Leadership Development Committee is to identify and develop new and potential congregational leaders; to support and nurture ongoing leaders; to be a resource of best practices for group process and organizational structure. Contacts: Mary Sullivan (mmaarryy@comcast.net) or Tim Murphy (murphtp@comcast.net)

Personnel Committee (PC) – Provides oversight and review of the FUSD Personnel Manual, including review of compensation and benefits for employees. Members of the PC are elected, and new terms begin on July 1. Contacts: Laura Mueller (ljmobj@gmail.com) or Peggy Ulrich-Nims (ulrichnims@gmail.com)



Supporting Sunday Service

Greeters – The friendly face you see when you walk in the front doors at FUSD is the greeter. The greeter is there to welcome visitors and members to FUSD, answer questions, give new comers a sense of what they can expect during service as well as provide an overview of upcoming events and activities at FUSD. One greeter is needed for each service. A brief training is provided, as needed. Contact: Pat Johanson (p.johanson@gmail.com)

Sound Engineers – Responsible for running the sound board during Sunday services and select special events. We also create audio recordings of every service that are made available on the church website and as podcasts, allowing our services to be heard by members and friends unable to attend, by potential visitors, and by the wider community. We provide training to all volunteers who are interested in joining the sound crew. Contact: Greg Wimpey (gwimpey@pobox.com)

Ushers – FUSD uses three ushers at each of our services. Ushers generally oversee several aspects of Sunday Service. They ensure the sanctuary is set up properly; they hand out Orders of Service as congregants arrive; and when needed, they help people find seats. Three ushers collect the offering. At the end of the service, the ushers collect the Orders of Service and make sure the sanctuary is set up for the next service. Contacts: Eric Karnes (ektriangle@aol.com) or Don Ivins-McCleary (DMCClearyjr1966@gmail.com)

Worship – First Unitarian has a wonderful group of lay Worship Leaders to light the chalice on Sunday. No committee meetings are necessary to be part of this group – just a desire to contribute to high-quality worship services, an interest in poetry and readings, and a modest talent for public speaking. Training is provided and Worship Leaders sign up for a few services every few months through an easy on-line app. Contact: Helen Berkman (h.berkman@comcast.net)

Music

Music Committee – collaborates with the music staff to help shape the mission of the music program and support its activities. This includes creating and refining our vision of music in worship, developing community music events & concerts, managing the budget, hiring staff, and supporting the music staff. You do not need to be a musician to serve on the Music Committee! Anyone interested in the music program is welcome to join. Contact: Charlotte Braud-Kern (cskern@earthlink.net)

Chalice Singers – Our adult choir, the Chalice Singers, sings for both services twice a month, and for special services including Christmas Eve and Easter. The choir also collaborates periodically with other Front Range UU choirs to perform larger choral works. Membership in the choir is open to anyone who likes to sing – no audition is required. The Chalice Singers rehearse weekly from September through early June. Contact: Brian Stone, Choir Director (brian@fusden.org)

Children's Choir – Led by Charlotte Braud-Kern, is open to children ages 4-12. Children's Choir meets weekly in the multipurpose room between services from October to the end of December and then again from March to the end of May. The group will have the opportunity to sing several times a year during services, for special events and periodically with the adult choir. We are always looking for children who love to sing to join us at any time of the year. Contact: Charlotte Braud-Kern (cskern@earthlink.net)

Guest Musicians – We encourage members and visitors alike to share their musical talents with our community! Musicians of all ages and abilities are welcome. If you sing or play an instrument, and would like to contribute musically to an upcoming service (either solo or as part of a small ensemble), please contact Lia Davis, Music Director (ldavis@fusden.org)

Building Community

Abundance Committee – Implements and sustains an overall plan for year-round stewardship, provides education and communication through church-wide engagement around the importance of giving and creates a culture of generosity throughout the congregation. We are a subcommittee of the Finance Council, and are responsible for communicating and coordinating pledge activities for the congregation and predicting income to the finance council for budgeting. We work with pledgers to remind them of and thank them for their pledges throughout the year. The committee meets regularly (almost every month) to work on the tasks to which they are charged. To become an abundance ambassador or to join the committee, please email abundance@fusden.org

Spring Auction (Feb-May) – The annual auction presents an exciting blend of significant fundraising and happy community-building. There are many opportunities to be part of this important event, from short-term day-of commitments to longer lasting involvements, such as coordination of donations and working on the catalog. The evening offers many opportunities to meet new people and have fun, all of which are enhanced by careful planning—catering the food, arranging for entertainment, arranging for childcare, etc. The events and dinners that are auctioned are also good places to meet FUSD members. Contacts: Diane Hainsworth (DianCNS@aol.com) and Kathy Aguirre (kathyaguirre.denver@gmail.com)

Caring Committee – Facilitates connections between congregants who need help and those who wish to help. Our philosophy is that every member of FUSD is a member of the Caring Committee both in giving and receiving. We provide meals, rides to doctor appointments, childcare, as well as many other services. If need a little help, let us know. If you can lend a helping hand, put your name on the email list. We are always looking for people to help coordinate these efforts and be more involved in the committee. Contact: caring@fusden.org

Connections Ministry – Responsible for helping First Unitarian members, friends and visitors build and strengthen the connections that make our community a loving, supportive and spiritual place to belong. We strive to welcome people of all ages and classes, sexual orientations, gender identities/expressions, races/ethnicities, spiritual traditions, and abilities. We brainstorm ways to make breaking into this community easier for new comers and host a variety of events during the year to welcome new members into our community. Contacts: Mary Hilken (mary.hilken@gmail.com) or Noelle Botti (noellebotti@hotmail.com)

CORE Circles (Creative Open Religious Exploration) – Core Circles are groups of 8 to 10 people who commit for a year to meet together once a month. Per the Mission Statement of these circles, they "strengthen our congregation, create small, intimate communities for personal and spiritual growth, nurture leadership, and challenge us to action in the larger world". They are a great way to make the larger community a more personal and comfortable one and are more of a "filling up" opportunity when we have so many other life commitments. Come join us! Contact: Ange Barnes (angela_barnes48@yahoo.com)

Young Adult Group – Are you in your 20's or 30's? Sign up to be on the email list for the Young Adult Group to see what is going on with your FUSD peers. For more info see page 8.



Social Justice

Congregational Projects (voted on by entire FUSD membership)

Hunger and Homelessness, Family Promise – Working with the non-profit Family Promise Program and other area congregations, our FUSD community provides church-based shelter, food, transportation, and hospitality for families who are experiencing homelessness on their way to self-sufficiency. We host families for a one-week period three times each year. Volunteer opportunities include: Making a main dish, side dish, or dessert, then joining the families and other volunteers for an evening meal; driving families to or from the Family Promise day site in the morning or late afternoon; transforming RE classrooms into cozy bedrooms so each family has its own private space. We also need help in between our hosting weeks: wash blankets, sew a curtain, setup and maintain volunteer information, help plan and coordinate activities. Whatever you enjoy doing, however you shine, we have a place for you! Contact: Mardi Moore (mardimoore@forethought.net)

Hunger and Homelessness, Metro Caring – is a local nonprofit organization that provides services to low income and homeless individuals, including food, nutrition and healthy living education, utility and transportation assistance, employment readiness programs, and identification documents. FUSD contributes non-perishable food and toiletry items on a regular basis. The red wagon near the front door collects our donations. Contact: Peggy Ulrich-Nims (ulrichnims@gmail.com)

Hunger and Homelessness, Women’s Homeless Initiative – FUSD is part of a consortium of churches offering overnight sanctuary every night of the week for 20-25 women who are homeless. FUSD plays host every other Friday night. Volunteers are needed to assist with set up/clean up, dinner preparation and community building, and overnight hosting. Contacts: Matt LeMay (matt.c.lemay@gmail.com) or Jamie Schwartz (jschwarz@collegefund.org).

Immigration Justice – The Immigration Justice Project (IJP) is dedicated to creating meaningful immigration reform and support of immigrants who are a part of our community through a variety of initiatives (e.g., educational opportunities, partnerships with other faith based communities and other organizations that confront issues that affect immigrants, advocacy, direct support and assistance for immigrants who are facing difficulties related to our broken immigration system). Contacts: Kat Parker (skatherineparker@gmail.com) and Chris Wheeler (cwheeler@msu.edu)

Gun Violence Prevention – The Gun Violence Prevention Project at FUSD reviews research to support effective methods to reduce gun violence. We set up a table at our church's coffee hour periodically which generates interest within our church community. As a Congregational Project, we have built relationships with other faith communities and gun violence prevention organizations in Colorado. Our group provides volunteers to correspond with key legislators, advocate positions before members of the state legislature during public comment periods, and recruit others who are interested in fighting to reduce gun violence with us. Contact: Michael McGuire (deb.mike@comcast.net) to get on the email list.

Illuminating Invisible Injustice (“iCubed”): The Mental Well Being Initiative at FUSD – This group is founded on the understanding that it is common for people struggling with addictions, trauma, and mental health issues to feel disconnected from community and their spiritual paths, often at just the times when community and spiritual grounding could be essential to restoring balance to a chaotic life. This project strives to “illuminate the invisible injustices” of mental health, addiction and trauma, and promote compassion, dignity and interdependence. Our main programs include: iCubed Worship Services, workshops, classes, and an iCubed CORE Circle. Contact: mentalwellbeing@fusden.org

Racial Justice – As we witnessed the birth of the Black Lives Matter movement, FUSD felt called to take action. In February 2015, the congregation voted to put a Black Lives Matter banner on the side of our building to show our solidarity with the movement. We want to be effective allies but there is a steep learning curve on how best to do this. We have become involved with other churches by attending interfaith events; we have hosted Black Lives Matter meetings at our church; we have shown up as witnesses to violence in Denver. We continue to find our way on this issue. Contacts: Sherri Stover (sherrilearns@yahoo.com) and Amanda Trujillo (atrujillo12346@gmail.com)



Giving in Action –

Twice each month our Sunday offering is donated to causes outside our four walls. Groups are selected by the Giving in Action Committee to best represent First Unitarian's commitment to put our Faith into Action in our community. We attempt to balance groups over the course of the year which work to address root causes of injustice as well as meet the immediate needs of the community. Topics are drawn from an annual survey and in concert with congregational projects and Faith in Action justice initiatives. Contact: Kristen Smith (kristensmith@gmail.com)

Resources

Book Table (Miriam's Book Table) – The Book Table is set up each Sunday during first and second service coffee hour in the Community Room. It offers members and visitors the opportunity to find books of interest covering a wide variety of topics - from UU history and thinking, to current issues, e.g. immigration, climate change and social justice to meditation manuals to books for children. In addition to the books, the Book Table also offers bumper stickers and free brochures about UUism and other topics, especially for visitors and those not familiar with our Principles. Contact: Deborah Horner (Debner1@ecentral.com)

Library – The church has an awesome library currently located in the basement. Please stop by--we have great books for all ages and a generous checkout period. If you've said, "I would love to work in a library," please consider joining the library volunteers. There are several roles to suit a variety of time commitments. This is a nice way to meet people and surround yourself with good books. Contact: Nan Wigington (missprothero@gmail.com)

Media –

Website: www.fusden.org

Facebook page: FirstUnitarianSocietyofDenver

Twitter: @FUSDenver

Newsletters –

First Announce – our weekly eNewsletter is emailed out on Thursdays (and is also available on the website); email John Vivian (events@fusden.org) to get on the email distribution

Ploughshare – Our monthly newsletter is available in hardcopy and on our website and comes out the First Sunday of the month in the order of service, and contains articles by staff and committees

Property Management Committee

– This committee is charged with making sure that our building is still standing for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It is on hiatus during our Building Renovation Project and Capital Fund Drive which began in the fall of 2016. See the church website for more information.



UU Affairs Committee – This committee has been formed to explore ways FUSD can better connect with the wider Unitarian Universalist community (e.g., groups such as the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), UUA General Assembly, the UUA Pacific Western Region, the UUA Mountain Desert District, Together Colorado, Create Meaning, the Russell Lockwood Leadership School, and our Beloved Community Minister Program). It serves as a conduit for both receiving and distributing information between these outside groups and FUSD. Contact: UUAffairs@fusden.org

Useful Acronyms

ARE – Adult Religious Exploration

BOT – Board of Trustees

CM – Connections Ministry

COA – Coming of Age

COM – Committee on Ministry

CORE – Creative Open Religious Exploration

CRE – Children’s Religious Exploration

FC – Finance Council

FIAC – Faith in Action Council

FP – Family Promise

FUSD – First Unitarian Society of Denver

GIA – Giving in Action

I³ (I-cubed) – Illuminating Invisible Injustices (Mental Well-Being Initiative)

LRP – Long Range Planning

MDD – Mountain Desert District

OWL – Our Whole Lives

PC – Personnel Committee

RE – Religious Exploration

SAC – Social Action Committee

UU – Unitarian Universalist

UUA – Unitarian Universalist Association

UUSC – UU Service Committee

WHI – Women’s Homeless Initiative

YA – Young Adult

Becoming a Member

Joining a religious community involves making a profoundly important decision. Because we are a covenantal religion, membership is entered into freely without adherence to a creed.

While it's not mandatory, it is highly recommended at FUSD that anyone interested in becoming a member attend a "Finding Yourself" class. This is one four-hour session exploring our religious journeys: the origins, history and themes of liberal religion and Unitarian Universalism; FUSD history, vision and programs; and the meaning of membership. This class is offered Saturday morning approximately 5 times per year by Reverend Mike Morran.

Becoming a member involves signing the Membership Book, making an annual pledge of an identifiable financial contribution, and informing the congregation of one's interest and gifts regarding service to our community. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Glenn Barrows (office@fusden.org)

As a member, we ask you to uphold the four commitments of membership at FUSD:

- Commitment to community – Regular attendance at Sunday services keeps us in touch with one another and grounds our common religious identity.
- Commitment to your own spiritual growth – Spiritual practices and disciplines vary from person-to-person. To provide assistance, companionship and instruction on your journey, we offer religious education classes, CORE Circles as well as numerous volunteer opportunities.
- Commitment to serve – Virtually everything that happens at FUSD happens because of our members, friends and volunteers. We have a wide-range of short-term, long-term and ongoing opportunities to contribute to our ministry and the vitality of FUSD.
- Commitment to fair pledging – Members are asked to make an annual commitment to support the church's operating budget. We have a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and a wide range of economic ability.

Our 7 Guiding Principles

Unitarian Universalist congregations together affirm and promote seven Principles. We also share a “living tradition” of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from many sources. The seven Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association grew out of the grassroots of our communities, were affirmed democratically, and are part of who we are.

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person.

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

FUSD Covenant

As a faith community, we promise:

To engage with one another in a spirit of respect, compassion, love and trust

To nurture, deepen and expand our spiritual growth and sense of community by regularly attending Sunday services

To give generously of our volunteer time, energy, and our financial support to sustain our church home, our church community and our mission

To be present with each other through all of life's transitions

To engage with the larger world to promote justice and demonstrate our values in the public arena

To be gentle with others and ourselves when we fall short of expectations, showing good humor and calling ourselves back into covenant

We acknowledge and commit ourselves to the work of sustaining our beloved community, welcoming all in good faith and ministering to each other

Our Mission:

Joining hands and voices for justice and peace, we inspire lives of joy and spiritual integrity, growing an inclusive community of courage and caring.

Our Vision:

Community is inspired. Justice is realized. Diversity is celebrated. Souls are grown in love and service.

Our Values:

COMMUNITY of compassion, reverence, and respect

JUSTICE in our hearts and world

INCLUSION of diverse perspectives

OPEN and creative religious exploration

UNITY through love and acceptance