

# *THIS WEEK AT EMERSON – JULY 10, 2014*

Emerson UU Chapel    A welcoming congregation of the UUA

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**Sunday – July 13, 2014**

**10:00 AM – Worship Service**

**17815 Wild Horse Creek Road  
Chesterfield (Barat Academy)**

**Our First Service in our new worshipping space!**

**Join us!**



## [From Our Minister](#)

### A New Beginning

This Sunday, Emerson Unitarian Universalist Chapel will worship in our new sanctuary for the first time. It may not feel like it now, but we've been preparing for this day, or for a day like it, for quite some time. Seven years ago the leaders of this congregation realized that our building facilities were not serving us well. We either had to engage in some major new construction endeavor or move. No one knew which it would be, but we knew we needed a roadmap. We developed a Mission and Vision statement to clarify who we were and what our purpose was. That was followed by a Strategic Plan, and then a visit from Stewardship Consultants from the Unitarian Universalist Association. We put our property on the market and put in place a property search team while simultaneously hiring an architect to determine the cost and scope of new construction on our property.

By last Christmas, we'd had no offers on our property and the architects estimated a million dollar price tag on new construction. And, we didn't see any viable properties on the market. It seemed like we were staying and preparing for a major capital campaign and some major financial commitments to needed repairs. But then, this winter, an offer was made on our property. The board, after considerable deliberations, which included an assessment of our financial position, saw the offer as a golden opportunity and recommended to the congregation that the offer be accepted.

Simultaneously, the property search team began to develop a new possibility for us – renting instead of buying. Initially, not many of us looked too favorably on that option, me included. But the property search team didn't give up. Instead, they showed us a vision.

How many of you work for businesses that are divesting from bricks and mortar? How many companies are relying on telecommuting as a way to manage operating costs? I bet that a greater percentage of you are working from home or in non-traditional work environments than ever before. Churches are learning from this and making it work for them as well, and growing. We are in a highly competitive religious market and in an economy that is slowly recovering from the recession. Many churches are choosing not to invest in large construction projects anymore. Instead, they are renting as an intentional way to live their mission and vision.

I know that for many in our church, making the decision to sell the property was a very painful one. We had to deal with many obstacles, especially the obstacles in our own hearts. Many of us absolutely loved the sanctuary that was built in 2002. Many of you poured your sweat and blood into the older structures that needed constant TLC and creative approaches to make them work. The grounds themselves were a labor of love. Furthermore, we live in a society that places tremendous status on property ownership. Owning your home is a sign that you've made it. For many of us, especially long-term members, owning a church was a sign that we were a real church. Making the choice to not own our own building is challenging what many of us define as stability and self-sufficiency and realness.

And yet, in our society, home ownership is changing too. Since the Great Recession, home ownership in the United States isn't what it used to be. Many families are choosing not to own as a way to minimize risk and maximize flexibility.

The property search team and the Board asked us to look with new eyes on what it means to be a "real" church. We are being asked to be flexible and open-minded and to embrace a new path.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, 90% of those voting members present either in person or by proxy voted to sell the property. Some voted to move because they felt pushed out of property ownership by the financial demands of our property, and others voted to move because they felt pulled into a new vision.

Now that we have actually moved, and now that we are looking forward to our first worship service at Barat Academy, I'm going to encourage all of us to experiment with the latter approach. We moved because we were pulled to a new vision, a vision that asks us to live more faithfully into a faith tradition that epitomizes open mindedness and flexibility, a faith that asks that we remain relevant to the realities of our society and the challenges that ordinary people face every day. I know that it will take a while to become at home with our new circumstances, but let's be patient and kind with each other and ourselves as we continue to move through this transition. Let us embody a deep love, compassion and understanding of each other as we embody this change.

See you in church.

Yours in faith, Rev. Krista.

Rev. Krista Taves is available for regular pastoral care on Wednesdays, Thursday, and Sunday afternoon. She is available for emergency pastoral care 24/7.

If you have a pastoral care emergency, please leave a voice mail at 417-343-8657, 636-256-7393 and [pastoralcare@emersonuuchapel.org](mailto:pastoralcare@emersonuuchapel.org). Someone should be in touch with you shortly. A pastoral care emergency includes death, the proximity of death, or a life-threatening emergency. If Rev. Krista Taves is on her weekend, vacation or study leave, please contact either the Office Administrator ([office@emersonuuchapel.org](mailto:office@emersonuuchapel.org)), Pastoral Care Team Leader Karyl Howard ([pastoralcare@emersonuuchapel.org](mailto:pastoralcare@emersonuuchapel.org)) or President of the Board Nancy Belt ([president@emersonuuchapel.org](mailto:president@emersonuuchapel.org)).

## How to find us:

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## News from the Board

Items of interest from the first meeting of the 2014-15 board, held July 9, are, as follows:

- It elected Mary Murphy as president-elect, Jake Lyonfields as vice president of programming, and Mark Fish as secretary and vice president-elect. Other voting board members are Debbie Baumel, member-at-large; Nancy Belt, president; Jeff Gidday, member-at-large, and Charles Landauer, member-at-large. As minister, Rev. Krista Taves serves as an *ex-officio* (non-voting) member.
- It reviewed the finance team's proposed policy for the operating budget, suggested a few modifications, and is expected to vote on it electronically within the next few days. The policy covers many ways in which financial news will be shared with the congregation, and the board is considering ways to encourage small-group dialogues about Emerson's finances. (The board will cover the other two sections of the finance policy—one pertaining to a reserve fund and the other to an endowment fund—at its August meeting.)
- It noted that Interim Treasurer Melissa Grizzle projected, based on May's financials, that the closing of the books for FY14 will be right on target with the 2013-14 budget. (She expects to complete the closing of the books by August 1.)
- It confirmed the responsibilities of the two board members on duty each Sunday morning. Included are the handling of cash receipts from the offering and from sales of grocery certificates and scrip cards.
- It accepted the resignation of Caroline Korb and of Nancy Russell.
- It approved Nancy Belt, Randy Whitman, Melissa Grizzle, and Rev. Krista Taves as current signatories on applicable Emerson accounts at Commerce Bank.
- It received an update from Rev. Taves on progress being made on hiring a staff person who will focus strongly on religious education for children and youth.

If you have suggestions, questions, kudos, or concerns regarding the board's functioning, please feel free to contact any board member.

In faith,

Nancy Belt, president



Metro UU's are holding another workday in the Kensington neighborhood. It will be a 4 hour session beginning at 7:00 a.m. and ending promptly at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 2. We will be trying to continue the cleanup efforts in Zone 1, but need people willing to use their own chainsaws to cut the heavier foliage that we were unable to cut the last time. We also need volunteers to bundle the branches. If we have enough participants, we will do some more work on the other Zones as well. This will be a more informal work session with everyone bringing their own lunch and work stoppage at 11:00 due to the heat. Please contact Jan Seyer, if you are planning to attend and if you have a chainsaw you are willing to bring and use.

### [Easiest Fund raising ever!! Grocery gift cards and GL Scrip are on sale Every Sunday](#)

Stop by the table in the Hearth Room and see how ALL your shopping can benefit Emerson. See how **ALL** your shopping can benefit Emerson. Gift cards are available from Dierberg's and Shop & Save.

Spend what you normally spend each month and give 5% to Emerson.



**Scrip Bonuses!!**

**From July 19 through August 1<sup>st</sup> – Applebee's is offering a 3% bonus; Kohl's a 1% bonus; and Batha & Body Works is offering a 5% bonus on gift cards purchased during that time.**

### [This Week's Calendar of Events](#)

SAT, July 12                    9:00 AM Program Council

SUN, July 13                    10:00 AM Worship Service