

**First Unitarian Church of Des Moines  
Congregational Survey  
November 2008**

**We need to hear from you!**

The long-term vitality of this congregation depends upon members and friends. We've made tremendous strides in the past few years; adding on to our building, growing our membership and strengthening our staff. As we look toward the future, we need to understand what makes this congregation appealing to you, what's most important to you, and what we need to concentrate on as we deepen our relationship with current members while reaching out to new members and friends.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the attached survey. We do not want to know your name: the survey is completely anonymous. There will be no effort made to tie responses back to individuals. The basic demographic questions will help us understand who we are. The middle section gives you an opportunity to rate services, participation and other activities. The last section is the most important one: we want to hear from you in your own words.

Our goal is to gather input from as many members, friends and visitors as possible. The results will be tabulated and shared with the congregation sometime in late January or early February.

**Your responses are very important; thank you for participating.**

## Tell Us About Yourself

1. I have been a member of this church since \_\_\_\_\_ (approximate year of joining).

OR

I am not a member but have been attending since: \_\_\_\_\_ (approximate year of first attendance).

2. My family situation is most accurately described as (please check one):

Married or living with a partner

Single

Divorced

Widowed

3. Presence of children (check all that apply):

I have children under age 5

I have school-age children - living at home

I have school-age children - primary residence is not with me

I have adult children

I do not have children

4. I live \_\_\_\_\_ miles from the church (please indicate approximate miles).

5. My household income falls into the following category:

Up to \$30,000

\$91,000 to \$120,000

\$31,000 to \$60,000

\$121,000 and over

\$61,000 to \$90,000

6. My level of education is best described as:

- Up to HS graduate
- Some college
- College graduate
- Post-graduate work
- Post-graduate degree

7. My work status is best described as:

- Work full time
- Work part time
- Unemployed/looking for work
- Home Management
- Retired
- Student

8. My age falls in the following category:

- |                                   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 46 to 55     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 to 65     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26 to 35 | <input type="checkbox"/> 66 to 75     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 36 to 45 | <input type="checkbox"/> 76 and older |

9. I consider myself:

- |                                       |                                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Gay       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Sexual |

10. Prior to attending First Unitarian in Des Moines (please check all that apply):

I was a UU at another congregation.

I had not attended any church for some time.

I was a member or attended the following:

Buddhist

Jewish

Catholic

Lutheran

Church of Christ Scientist

Methodist

Church of Jesus Christ of

Presbyterian

Latter Day Saints

Quaker

Evangelical

Other (please specify)

Islam

\_\_\_\_\_

Jehovah's Witness

I would describe myself as:

Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
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11. Politically			
12. Lifestyle			
13. Religiously			

## Your Attendance and Involvement

### Services and Forums

14. The average number of services I attended per month from June 2008 was \_\_\_\_\_. September 2007 –
15. The average number of services I attended per month from August 2008 was \_\_\_\_\_. July 2008 –
16. I attended approximately \_\_\_\_\_ forums during the past year.

### Religious Education

If you have children attending religious education classes::

17. Please indicate the grade levels (check all that apply):
- \_\_\_\_\_ Infant, nursery, toddler      \_\_\_\_\_ 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- \_\_\_\_\_ K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade      \_\_\_\_\_ High school
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do not have children attending religious education classes.
18. My children attend RE approximately \_\_\_\_\_ times per month.

### Working Groups and Committees

19. This year I have been involved in \_\_\_\_\_ working groups or committees. (Working groups and committees include Board of Trustees, Religious Education, Hospitality, Building & Grounds, Caring Ministry, etc.).
20. Over the past 2 to 3 years, I have been involved in \_\_\_\_\_ working groups or committees.
21. When I have been involved in working groups or committees, I spent approximately \_\_\_\_\_ hours per month.
22. In addition to ongoing working groups or committees, I spend approximately \_\_\_\_\_ hours per month helping and volunteering for the church.

### Affinity and Social Groups

- 23. This year I have been involved in \_\_\_\_\_ affinity or social groups.
- 24. Over the past 2 to 3 years, I have been involved in \_\_\_\_\_ affinity or social groups.
- 25. When I have been involved in affinity or social groups, I spent approximately \_\_\_\_\_ hours per month with the group.

## Tell Us About Your Experiences At First Unitarian

If a statement doesn't apply to you, you need not reply.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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### Religious Services

26. The services I attend on Saturday evening or Sunday morning are satisfying to me.					
27. The Minister's sermons are appropriate and stimulating for me.					
28. The services not led by our minister (by a visiting minister or lay leader) are appropriate and stimulating for me.					
29. The musical offerings enhance the service and are enjoyable.					
30. The spirituality in the services meets my needs.					

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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### Religious Education

31. It is important to me that First Unitarian offers a robust children's RE program.					
32. It is important to me that First Unitarian offers a strong youth program.					
33. It is important to me that First Unitarian offers an adult RE program.					
34. The children and youth RE programs meet my family's needs.					
35. The adult RE program meets my needs.					

**Events and Groups**

36. I am satisfied with the social events and affinity groups offered.					
37. It's easy to find information about a group or activity that I would like to join.					
38. I feel welcome and comfortable attending an event or affinity group for the first time.					

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
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**Social Justice and Outreach**

39. Our church is well-represented in social justice activities within the community.					
40. It is easy to get involved in UU social justice activities that are meaningful to me.					
41. I believe that social justice activities are an important way to express my religious beliefs.					

**Service to the Congregation**

42. I believe service to the congregation is an important responsibility.					
43. I have been encouraged to volunteer.					
44. I know who to contact if I want to join a group or activity.					
45. I feel that my volunteer efforts are valued.					

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
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**Structure and governance**

46. I trust the staff leadership at First Unitarian.					
47. I trust the lay leadership at					

First Unitarian.					
48. I am confident that we are a fiscally responsible congregation.					

**Communication**

49. First Unitarian has adequate visibility in the community.					
50. I regularly read the Intercom.					
51. I regularly use the church website.					
52. The communications I receive from the church encourage me to participate in activities.					

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
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**Being a UU**

53. I feel welcome and comfortable in this church.					
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54. I have made friends in this church.					
55. I have recommended or invited friends and acquaintances to this church.					
56. I am comfortable explaining UU beliefs and principles to non-UU's.					

Clueless and that is ok	Clueless and want to learn more	Average	A "B" student and always striving	An "A" student and always learning
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**Religious Literacy**

57. My religious literacy would best be described as:					
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**Tell Us in Your Words**

Please share your thoughts on aspects of the church and congregational life that are important to you. Your responses to these questions will provide valuable insight.

**Being a UU**

58. I identify with being a UU because...

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59. I come back to church because...

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60. If First Unitarian Church didn't exist in Des Moines I would...

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**The Future of First Unitarian Church of Des Moines**

61. In the future I see the church...

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62. When I hear the word "growth" I think...

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63. In 3 to 5 years I hope that First Unitarian...

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**Religious Services**

64. The services that are most meaningful to me...

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65. I would like to see more...

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66. I would like to see less...

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**Religious Education**

67. What is most important to me about religious education is...

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68. I would like to see more...

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69. I would like to see less...

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**Participation in Church Events and Affinity Groups**

70. I participate in and enjoy church community events and affinity groups because...

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**Service to the Congregation**

71. The best experience I've had with a group or activity...

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73. When I hear the word "volunteering" I think...

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**Structure, Governance and Support**

74. My financial contribution to the church is based upon...

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75. The time and effort I contribute to the church is based upon...

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76. I would consider pursuing leadership opportunities if...

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***Thank you for your participation. Your input will be respected and valued.***

Please return your completed survey to the designated boxes in  
Channing Hall or Church Office.

For questions about the survey, please contact:

- Liz Bredeson
- Lori Emison Clair
- Nicky Keller
- Greg Nichols