

First Unitarian Church, South Bend  
**Annual Service Auction FAQs**

❖ **What is our Annual Service Auction?**

Most importantly, it's our largest fundraiser of the year, which supports the regular activities and programs of the church. It is also our major social event of the year. It's a party, complete with a theme (for which you can wear a costume, if the mood strikes you!), a delicious dinner, a running comedy show, great music, and lots of enthusiastic Unitarian Universalists. If you are new to First Unitarian, the Auction is a great way to get to know others and discover common interests, as well as purchase a place at a fun event, a service, or a tangible item.

❖ **How does our Service Auction Work?**

People in the congregation think of events (themed parties, nature experiences, special meals, family game nights, etc.), services (yard work, babysitting, etc.), or objects (handmade items, event tickets, etc.) they can donate, or ask local businesses they frequent to donate items (such as gift certificates, tickets, passes, gift baskets, etc.). All donations for both the *Live* and *Silent* Auctions are listed in a catalog which, so you can plan your bidding in advance, we make available in print and online the Sunday before the Auction.

❖ **I'm interested in donating something, how do I know what will sell?**

If you are not sure what to donate, look through recent Auction catalogs (available on Sundays) or ask our Auction Chair for ideas on how to transform your obsession (waffles, hula-hoop, fondue, haiku, campfires) into a donation. *Most often*, events are co-hosted. You can ask our Auction Chair for suggestions of co-hosts.

❖ **When I know what I want to donate, how and when do I submit it?**

Just complete an **Auction Donation Form** by our submission deadline. You will find a link to an electronic version of the form on the church's website (<http://firstunitarian.us/events/annual-service-auction/>); or fill out and turn in a paper version, available at church, or print it out from our website (in pdf format).

❖ **How can I contribute without donating an item?**

Just attend this fun event. And, if you are able, purchase something from the *Silent* or *Live* Auction. We strive to offer items and events for diverse income levels. Hopefully you will find something within your means.

❖ **What happens on the night of the Service Auction?**

The evening begins with appetizers, bid number paddle pickup and time to peruse the *Silent* Auction. Beer & wine, and usually a special drink are available at a cash bar. Dinner, prepared by volunteers (with gluten free, vegan/vegetarian options), follows. After dinner, the *Live* Auction begins and the *Silent* Auction continues.

❖ **Is childcare provided?** Yes, including a free child-friendly meal! But, you must RSVP.

❖ **How does the *Live* Auction work?**

Items are offered in catalog order. The auctioneer reads a description of each item, along with its opening price and how many of that item are being offered, like places at an event. Those interested in bidding on the item raise their paddles. The price increases until the number of bidders equals the number of items offered.

❖ **How does the *Silent* Auction work?**

You have approximately two hours to peruse the items in the conference room and bid on as many as you would like. You may return at any time to outbid someone with a higher bid. The top bidder wins that item!

❖ **How and when do I pay and get my purchases?**

Our accounting team keeps a tally sheet for each bidder. Payment by check or cash is due Auction night. Tangible items are sent home with you. Confirmation of events & services is sent within the next two weeks.

**If you have other questions, please contact:**  
Kathy Platt, Service Auction Chair ([pkplatt@comcast.net](mailto:pkplatt@comcast.net))  
Church Office ([office@firstunitarian.us](http://office@firstunitarian.us)) or 574-234-6588