

## **Service Auction FAQs**

### **First Unitarian Church, South Bend**

If you've never attended one of the annual Service Auctions at First Unitarian Church, you may wonder what it's all about! Here are some answers to your questions.

#### **❖ What is a Service Auction?**

Most importantly, it's a social event. It's our biggest party of the year, 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 UUs. Secondly, it's also a fundraising event that helps support the activities and programs of the church. If you are new to First Unitarian Church, it's a great way to get to know people, discover common interests with others, and get some fun events on your calendar for the coming year.

#### **❖ How does a Service Auction Work?**

People in the congregation think up ideas for fun events (such as themed parties, nature experiences, guided bike rides, special meals, family game nights, etc.), services (such as yard work, babysitting, etc.), or objects (quilts, food items, tickets to sporting events, etc.) that they can offer to provide, OR they ask local business owners to donate (passes for golf, gift baskets from a store, etc.). Often, people team up with others to host an event. All of these Service Auction items are listed in a printed catalog that is available the Sunday before the Service Auction, so people can plan which items they want to bid on. All the proceeds from the sale of the items go to the church.

#### **❖ Do I have to offer a service item in order to participate?**

No! There are lots of people in the congregation who enjoy hosting Service Auction events, so don't feel you have to offer something yourself if you aren't so inclined.

#### **❖ I'm interested in offering an item, but I need help thinking of a good idea.**

Are you a waffle whiz? A martini maven? A hula-hoop habitué? A fondue fanatic? A haiku hound? A campfire connoisseur? Contact the Service Auction Committee Chair for some great ideas about how to transform your obsession into a service auction item. Once you know what you want to offer, just complete an **Auction Donation Form**. You will find a link to an electronic version of the form on the church website (click on the Auction link on the main page of our website [www.firstunitarian.us](http://www.firstunitarian.us)); or fill out a paper version by hand, which you can pick up at church, or print out from our website (pdf format). Please note: There is a separate form for Silent Auction donations.

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

The first part of the evening is about socializing. Dinner is provided (prepared by volunteers), for a suggested optional donation. Wine and beer are available at a cash bar. It's kind of like coffee hour, but with the extroverts among us wearing costumes, music playing, and the spirit of celebration cranked up a few notches. After dinner, the auction begins.

#### **❖ What is the Silent Auction?**

The silent auction works by having a starting price for each item. You will have approx. 2 hrs to go into the room with all of our silent auction items and place your name and bid amount on the paper under each item. At the end of the 2 hrs, the auction will close and the top bidder on each item will win! Many of our members and friends frequent certain stores and restaurants around town. Some of them have asked these establishments to offer gift cards or items for us to offer at our silent auction. Some members also make jams and jellies or weave fabric or have other nice items that they might be ready to part with. These are the items you will be bidding on.

## **Service Auction FAQs, continued**

### **❖ What's the "running comedy show?"**

During the auction, there's a joke teller. At random times throughout the evening, anyone can yell, "I want to buy a joke!" and the joke teller must comply. Jokes usually range from \$1 (groan-worthy or just plain silly) to \$5 (belly-laugh with a chance of baudiness).

### **❖ How does the "auction" work?**

When you arrive, everyone signs in and gets a bidding paddle. Then everyone chats and dinner is served. After dinner, there's an auctioneer who reads a description of each item, along with its opening price and how many of that item are being offered. For example, someone may offer a 1990s-themed dinner for 8 at an opening price of \$10 per person. Those who are interested in bidding on that item raise their paddles, indicating that they want to bid on one "seat" at the party (or, if they are wanting to buy one for themselves and one for a companion, they hold up two fingers). If there are more bidders than the number of seats available for that item, the price goes up. As the price goes up, bidders drop out until the number of remaining bidders equals the number of items available.

### **❖ Is childcare provided?**

Yes, we will have a childcare provider during the event, but only if you make a request in advance to the church office ([office@firstunitarian.us](mailto:office@firstunitarian.us) or 234-6588). All ages are welcome. We will provide pizza and a movie to enjoy in one of the classrooms.

### **❖ How much does it cost to attend the Service Auction?**

It doesn't have to cost anything—that's up to you. If you don't have extra money in your budget to spend at the Service Auction, please just come enjoy a meal and fellowship with a bunch of crazy UUs! If you have some discretionary income, this is a fun way to direct it toward a good cause. For just a dollar or two, you can buy a joke (see above) and crank up the silly. There are auction items offered in a range of prices, and it's often possible to get something for only five or ten dollars.

### **❖ Do I have to wear a costume?**

This is entirely up to you. If you aren't a costume person, fine! Your job will be to appreciate those who take the plunge.

### **❖ Is there anything I can do to help with the Service Auction?**

Well, funny you should ask! We can always use more hands on the day of the Service Auction setting up and decorating beforehand, and cleaning up afterward. This year, we're having a cake-baking contest, so if you love to bake, you can contribute a cake. If you're interested in any of these ways to pitch in, please contact the Service Auction committee [Ally Kricheff, Auction Chair at [ally.kricheff@gmail.com](mailto:ally.kricheff@gmail.com)].

### **❖ What if I don't have time to help?**

Come and enjoy yourself. No one is keeping score, and we'd love to hang out with you!

**If you have other questions, or need help with something, please contact:**

Ally Kricheff, Auction Chair ([ally.kricheff@gmail.com](mailto:ally.kricheff@gmail.com))  
Church Office ([office@firstunitarian.us](mailto:office@firstunitarian.us))

2016 Committee Members: Alice Bentley, Janet Bogar, Lois Holm, Florence Klecka, Kathy Platt