



JANUARY 2013

In Touch



First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Wichita

Founded 1887



AS WE BEGIN 2013... From Carol Clark and Mike Felton, Co-Presidents

This was the year that was my friends, this was the year that was (sounds like there should be a song somewhere in there). YES, in the year 2012 we celebrated the 125th anniversary of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita. We are so fortunate to have a sustaining congregation that has been able to provide Wichita and the surrounding area with 125 years of liberal philosophy and religion.

During this past year we participated in a wonderful 125th anniversary program that started with an “over-the-top” Wine-Cheese-Chocolate Art Auction in September planned and coordinated by Pat Felton and Vivien Minshull-Ford. The event was a great success that not only funded our October 125th events but added \$2,500+ to our reserve fund. Marsha Diggs planned and coordinated our wonderful October 125th Celebration schedule that highlighted bringing the musical group Emma’s Revolution to our church along with Dr. Paul Rasor. Dr. Rasor conducted a workshop on Saturday, October 27 entitled “Reclaiming Prophetic Witness” (being a witness for liberal religion) and presented the following Sunday service on the topic “Faith without Certainty.” What an event-filled celebration we had thanks to you, the members of our congregation!

We state as our mission: consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles,[our mission]is to provide a joyful, safe, healing environment where diversity is embraced. We will inspire and uplift the whole person through enriching programs and services for all ages, and serve the larger community through social action... To this end, we have seen our philosophy of being a welcoming congregation continue to grow and we have become the embracing, welcoming church of our mission.

We have seen the resurrection and reactivation of our social justice program through the leadership of Billie Knighton and Peter Ninemire, an expanded and growing affiliation with the Sunflower Action Network, a greater involvement with the needs of our congregants and the maintenance of our vital RE programs for children and adults as well as other ongoing groups and programs.

During 2012, First UU was delighted to welcome 12 new members:

Jamie and Charles Somervill (1/8/12), Leslie Jacobson (1/29/12), Dixie Moreau (3/16/12), Rachel Vroman (3/25/12), Luke Watkins (6/3/12), David Jewell (6/10/12), Louis Goseland (6/10/12), Joie and Cristan Vitkus (8/26/12), Cyril Marque Payne (11/11/12), Shanna Kating (11/11/12), and Jennifer Hess (11/25/12).

We saw the changing of the guard of the treasurer from 10 years of ever-faithful service by Anne Bailey to Kim Talbot. Coming soon after the first of the year will be our Stewardship Campaign in preparation for our new fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013. As in most churches, the Stewardship Campaign is fundamental to our financial well being as your pledges provide most of the funds to keep First UU alive and well. When Staci Steddum and Jeanne De Grasse and their team contact you regarding your financial support of our church, please look at how we are manifesting our mission and how we depend upon your generous support to continue that work in Wichita and beyond as part of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Our president-elect Helen Barnes will take over the leadership of First UU on July 1, 2013. We both have the greatest confidence that Helen will continue to provide the kind of leadership that will carry First UU into our NEXT 125 YEARS!





In Touch

The newsletter of
The First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Wichita
is published monthly.

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The deadline for In Touch and for
the monthly calendar is the
third Wednesday of each month.

Please submit items to
Newsletter@FirstUU.net
or bring to church office.

LATE SUBMISSIONS MAY BE OMITTED.

A tribute and a call to action...

The House I Live In

Join us Saturday, January 12, 2013, 2 p.m., at the Murdock Theatre,
536 N. Broadway, to commemorate Dr. King's life and legacy.

We will begin to work together against the injustices of the drug war and mass incarceration through the National Faith Community Education Event.

We affirm Dr. King's message that "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." What is happening to America, especially for communities of color, matters to all of America.

The First Unitarian Universalist Church is a sponsor of this event.

The House I Live In — Grand Jury Prize Documentary 2012 Sundance Film Festival

“ Over the past 40 years, the War on Drugs has cost more than \$1 trillion and accounted for over 45 million arrests.

Today, there are more people behind bars for nonviolent drug offenses than were incarcerated for all crimes, violent or otherwise, in 1970.

The U.S. accounts for 5% of the world's population and 25% of its prison population.

African-Americans comprise 13% of the U.S. population and 14% of drug users, yet they are 37% of the people arrested for drug offenses and 56% of those incarcerated for drug crimes.

Since 1970, the War on Drugs has made America the world's largest jailer, and damaged poor communities at home and abroad. The House I Live In captures heart-wrenching stories from individuals at all levels of America's longest war. The film examines how political and economic corruption have fueled the war, creating a vast machine that feeds largely on America's poor, and especially on minority communities.

The film is available to any faith community for no charge, who will commit to gathering in a screening group of 50 or more people, followed by a facilitated discussion. ”

Make Camp UniStar Part of Your Summer

50+ years of Unitarian tradition located on Star Island in Cass Lake, MN

Imagine ... An inter-generational camp with activities for all.

Imagine ... Never needing your credit card, no cars to contend with, no stores wanting your business, no TV.

Imagine ... Freshly prepared food three times a day, miles of trails to hike alone or with others, sailboats, kayaks, canoes and windsurfers to use as you like, a sandy beach and swim area, participation in a hands-on daily workshop or a thought provoking talk.

That is Camp UniStar.

For further information: www.CampUniStar.org or
Management Committee member Pam Johnson, 651-430-1738 or pam_doug.johnson@comcast.net.



The UUA Common Read: **The New Jim Crow**

By Mike Diggs

Are U.S. laws and enforcement designed to target people of color, imprisoning them at higher rates and relegating them to second-class status?

This is the premise of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. The UUA has chosen this book as a Common Read, encouraging all congregations to read and discuss the book. Reverend Carter has also suggested that we all read and act upon this book.

We have scheduled three meetings to discuss the book. We will meet on the fourth Monday at 7 p.m., January 28, February 25, and March 25, 2013. I will facilitate, and each meeting will last about ninety minutes.

Copies of the book are available at Watermark Books and Barnes and Noble. Copies can be ordered from Amazon, and if you order through the churches' website First UU will get part of the purchase price. Billie Knighton has ordered copies for several people, and you can contact her if you desire.

A Facebook page has been set for the discussion group: First-UU-Reads-The-New-Jim-Crow.

I hope to see you at the first meeting, January 28, 2013. Please encourage interested friends outside the church to participate.

Unitarian Universalist "Common Read"

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander (The New Press) has been selected as the 2012-13 Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Common Read. Alexander, an attorney who is a civil rights advocate and litigator, asserts that crime-fighting policies and systems in the U.S., such as the "war on drugs" and the incarceration system, disproportionately and intentionally affect Americans of color. She describes multifaceted, lifelong discrimination and disenfranchisement that affect people who are branded "felon."

A Common Read invites participants to read and discuss the same book in a given period of time. A Common Read can build community in our congregations and our movement by giving diverse people a shared experience, shared language, and a basis for deep, meaningful conversations.

The New Jim Crow

The Unitarian Universalist discussion guide to The New Jim Crow helps groups reflect on the book and consider together what steps they are called to take, as people of faith, in response to Alexander's call for awareness and action.

A committee of UUA staff selected The New Jim Crow after reading and considering several potential Common Read books. Alexander's compelling work has already attracted many UUs and congregations. At General Assembly 2012, her presentation drew a large crowd, and can be viewed online (58:15). The Common Read selection committee noted the book's appeal to a variety of civic groups and non-UU faith groups, and anticipate it can ground and inspire community and interfaith dialogue as well as partnerships on the issues Alexander raises. Read the criteria for Common Read selection. Nominate a book 2013-2014 using our online form.

The UUA Bookstore is supporting this Common Read with a 10% discount on orders of 5-9 books and 20% off orders of 10 or more books. Your purchase of The New Jim Crow from the UUA Bookstore supports the work of our Association. The New Jim Crow is also available online where e-books are sold, and in public libraries.

If you are on Facebook, consider taking part in the open Facebook group called UUA Common Read Lab. Post information about a discussion group being held in your congregation or community, extend in-person conversations beyond your group, and connect with others taking part in the Common Read. Please note that you need to have a Facebook account to join this group.

Past Common Reads

2011-12: Acts of Faith

2010-11: The Death of Josseline

For more information contact religiouseducation@uua.org.

This work is made possible by the generosity of individual donors. Please consider making a donation today.



The Medical Loan Closet of Wichita needs our help! Request for Durable Medical Equipment

The Medical Loan Closet of Wichita is a 501c3 and loans medical equipment to the medically underserved, individuals with no insurance and those who have slipped through the cracks of Medicaid and Medicare.

In the first week of December we delivered; 1- hospital bed, 1- walker, 2-tub transfer benches, 1- blood pressure cuff, 1-bedside commode, 3-wheelchairs, 1-walker with wheels, 1-porch wheelchair ramp and 1-toilet seat riser.

This follows the 230+ items the Medical Loan Closet of Wichita has loaned since starting in May 2012. Our inventory is being depleted faster than anticipated and we would like to request your help.

If you have any serviceable durable medical equipment that you are no longer in need of and you would like for it to have a new worthwhile home, please contact us.

References; The Medical Loan Closet of Wichita serves individuals directly and referrals from Independent Living Resource - Via Christi Rehab - Center for Helath and Wellness - Guadalupe Clinic - United Way - Central Plains Area Agency on Aging - St. Teresa Hospital - MERN - Kansas Equipment Exchange - Dept of Aging - Wesley Home Care - Union Rescue Mission - YMCA - USD 259 and Hunter Clinic. How you can help! Our website www.mlcwichita.org list the DME we have and what we need. Or you can call Lloyd Hanna, 316-516-2199, or Mike Felton, 316-258-8004, for further information or to arrange to have the equipment picked-up. (Lloyd is a member of the First UU Dinners for Eight). All donations are tax deductible.

Dear All, May the joys of this season lift you!

In January, per the message below, we will be hosting some very gifted and wonderful members of Tulsa's UU church, All Souls. For expediency sake, I highlighted the info I thought you would most want to focus on.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have,
Yours in service,
Rev. Carter

All Souls Youth Choir Coming to First UU of Wichita in January

Hello Rev. Carter!

It's my hope that your Holiday Season is going well and that your connection with family and friends is being renewed! My name is David Smith and I am the Director of the Children's Music Program here at All Souls in Tulsa. Every year near the end of January our Youth Choir visits a city and a sister church that's not too far away for the weekend. This communication is a follow-up to a message and or conversation between First UU and our Sr. Minister, Rev. Marlin Lavanhar. We also received a message from Denise Jackson-Simon and there was an openness to having the Youth Choir of All Souls to visit with the wonderful people at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita Jan. 26-27, 2013. Thank you for considering us.

It would be our honor and pleasure to share some of our music with you during your Sunday morning service. I welcome an opportunity to talk with you or the appropriate person about some of the details of our Youth Choir's potential visit. In addition, there would be only three other elements that we would appreciate from the Church to make our visit with you successful: 1) Rehearsal in your service space on Saturday, 2) A possible group activity with your youth on Saturday evening, and 3) Lunch after service on Sunday.

Here's our planned schedule so far:

We plan to arrive in Wichita between 1:30 and 2:30 on Saturday, Jan. 26, 2013. Rehearse in the church's service space for about 1.5 hours after we arrive. After rehearsal we would get settled into our accommodations and have dinner. We absolutely welcome an activity in the evening with the church's youth.

On Sunday morning January 27, we would be honored to share some music with you in your 11 a.m. service.

It would be much appreciated if the church could provide us with lunch after service. We would get on the road back to Tulsa about 1 p.m. or so.

I am also copying this message to Anita Randza from our choir board. She will be in discussion with the appropriate persons you designate about the possible Saturday group activity and Sunday's lunch.

Rev. Carter, our thanks to you and the entire church leadership for allowing us to come and be with you. We look forward to a great time.

The Best to You,
David B. Smith, Associate Director of Music
All Souls Church
Tulsa, OK 74114



Festival of Lights Service



Shown here are some of the many members of The First UU Religious Exploration Program as they present The Festival of Lights on Dec. 15. The program, led by Denise Jackson-Simon, was joyfully received by a meeting room full of members and many guests.

Social Action Team Report

By Billie Knighton, 12/14/12

Given that dedication to action and service in the interest of social justice is central to the principles and history of Unitarianism, and given that the areas of concern and need are so diverse, it is all too easy to feel lost as to where to begin.

Although we are blessed with a membership comprised of individuals deeply dedicated to social justice and passionately involved in many important causes throughout the broader community, this very blessing also creates a challenge to the congregation as to how we might go about recognizing and focusing on some common concerns and actions within our own church community. Of course, some areas of common concern are well recognized and integrated in ongoing congregational functions. Among these are our Partner Church, Ethical Eating, and Welcoming Congregation groups that contribute to our identity as a spiritual community.

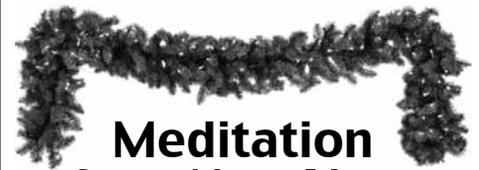
In the area of service under the heading of Social Justice we have seen wonderful responses to opportunities for action when concerns have been raised. One that got a wonderfully spontaneous response was the appeal to support "Filling the Gap," a program sponsored by Partners for Wichita to provide food for school children when schools are not in session. This wholehearted response indicates a potential for a broader and more sustained program within our congregation whereby we might focus our actions on local hunger issues. Certainly, the fact that of one-fourth of our children are going hungry or are in danger of going hungry is a great and heartbreaking concern.

Similarly, response to a program to combat child abuse was heartfelt when the opportunity to support local program of one of our members arose. Similarly, when some awareness of economic abuse in the form of wage theft was raised, congregants wanted to do what they could to help.

Now, thanks to the suggestion of UUA, we are launching into what could become a significant area of action. Beginning on January 28, we will have the first of three discussions of a book that has gained wide national attention. [The New Jim Crow](#) by Michelle Alexander addresses multiple systemic injustices that devastate lives in a huge proportion of the nation's population and undermine, indeed, make a mockery of our democratic ideals and aspirations.

Beyond that, as Chair of the Social Action Team, I want to request suggestions for specific areas of concern and action. From these, then, we can develop a survey to help identify particular areas of special interest to our congregation.

I am grateful for this opportunity to serve and proud to be a member of this wonderful community. Thank you.



Meditation for a New Year

Amanda Poppei

My friends, we have arrived.
We are here, in this new year.

We have crossed the boundary of time, into the next year, with all its resolutions and plans and schedules ahead of us.

Let us pause, for just this moment, before we move boldly onward.

Let us pause to hear the breathing of those around us, to feel their presence in this room.

To know their presence in our lives.

Let us pause to consider the trees, their branches stripped bare, their elegant architecture on display.

Let us pause to feel the spirit of life and love that ties us to each other, that winds its way through our very bones and settles in our hearts.

Before we march forward, armed with resolutions that will shortly be forgotten in the day-to-day of living, let us notice what it is that remains every year, every day.

What exists beyond schedules and months, beyond time. It welcomes us to life, not just at the start of the year, but every day.

And let us answer . . . Amen.

Repeating Schedule of Regular Activities Every Month at First UU

C.U.U.P.S. of Wichita, has New Moon Circle and Full Moon Dances, where the New Moon Circle is a time to gather, for study, meditation and ritual exploration of earth-centered spiritual growth and Full Moon. We meet on the third Friday of every month, combining the Full Moon and New Moon activities into these once-a-month meetings, which we call "CUUPS Gatherings."

For more information: C.U.U.P.s of Wichita, phone (708) GO-CUUPS or (708) 402-8877, cuupsk@gmail.com, or on Facebook.

Craft Night is the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m.

Eclectic Readers group meet the third Friday of the month at 11:30 a.m. at the church. Contact: Del Smith, 612-0826

Book Discussion Group meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the church. You are welcome to attend whether or not you have read the book. Information: 943-3861

Ethical Eating group meets the second Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Meal followed/accompanied by round table discussion. Bring a vegan dish to share! Contact Dianne Waltner, 946-1115, or dwaltner@sbcglobal.net, for additional information.

Dinners for Eight. Date varies. Contact Maxine Wells, 681-0442, or Marcia Ellsworth, 688-5352.

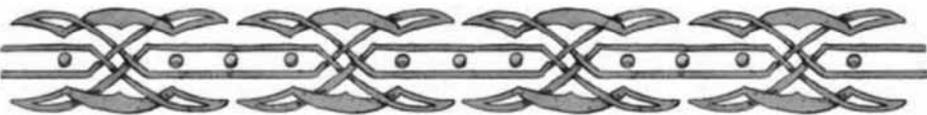
Music Committee meets the fourth Sunday following service.

Every Week at First UU

Adult RE meets Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the southeast corner R.E. room. Current topic: Joseph Campbell lecture series. Contact: Corey Swertfager, 201-6921

Meditation: Establishing a Practice taught by Rev. Carter. This class is an introduction to Sitting Meditation, helping students learn to bring about a state of inner peacefulness and happiness, learn to reduce stress and to integrate the personality. The class also discusses the philosophy, goals, and techniques of the Science of Yoga. For further information, feel free to contact Rev. Carter by email at Minister@FirstUU.net.

Wichita Buddhist Meditation and Reading Group meets on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. Contact: Bob Feleppa, 304-9170



Please contribute items of interest to
your newsletter, First UU's In Touch!

Eclectic Readers: ATTENTION, ATTENTION, ATTENTION!

Eclectic Readers Group has an empty place (or two) at the table for people who love to read and discuss what they've read.

As our name suggests, our choices are all over the place when it comes to genre. Some of the best discussions we've had start out with comments ranging from "I didn't get this book" to "I really didn't like this book, but I'm glad I read it" and beyond.

We rotate leadership, with the person who suggested the book facilitating the discussion, which includes providing background on the author and other ancillary material to lend depth to our viewpoints.

By the time you read this we will have hashed and rehashed Forrest Church's "The Cathedral of the World." Our January selection will be announced in future weekly Updates and Orders of Service.

If you're curious about the group, which meets on the third Friday at 11:30 for a brown bag lunch, talk to any one of us: Jean Vaughn, Anita Culp, Anne Bailey, and Del Smith.

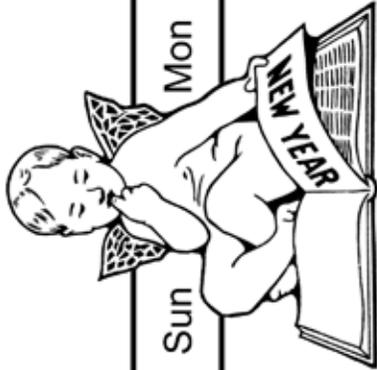


Book Discussion Group: A Hiatus

The Book Discussion Group is taking a break for the months of January and February, due to the fact that Anne Bailey will not be able to participate, the weather is generally lousy, and general lack of attendance.

Please plan to participate in the Third Friday Eclectic Book Group and watch this space for further developments. Please call Anne Bailey 650-4905 if you have questions.

January 2013

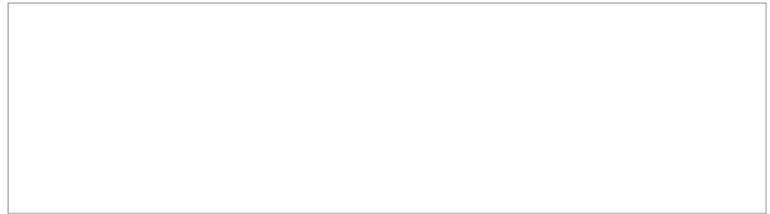


| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 6 9:30 Adult RE 11a Sunday Service 12p 1st Sunday Lunch | 7 | 8 6p Meditation and Book Discussion 7p UU Craft Night | 9 6:40p Meditation Class 7p Book Discussion @ Church 7p Worship Committee | 10 6:30 Game Night | 11 | 12 |
| 13 9:30 Adult RE 11a Sunday Service 12:15 Leadership Council | 14 6:30p Meatless Monday | 15 6p Meditation and Book Discussion | 16 6:40p Meditation Class 7p Board Meeting Newsletter & Calendar Deadline | 17 | 18 11:30 Eclectic Readers Group 7p CUUPS Gathering | 19 |
| 20 9:30 Adult RE 9:30 Seeking Circle 11a Sunday Service | 21 | 22 6p Meditation and Book Discussion | 23 9:30a Newsletter Mailing 6:40p Meditation Class | 24 | 25 | 26 10a Caring Committee |
| 27 9:30 Adult RE 11a Sunday Service 12:15p Music Comm 5:30 CUUPS Meeting | 28 7p Jim Crow Discussion | 29 6p Meditation and Book Discussion | 30 6:40p Meditation Class | 31 | | |

Return Service Requested

First Unitarian Universalist Church
7202 E 21st St N
Wichita, KS 67206

www.FirstUU.net



HAPPY HOLY DAYS!

Sunday Programs

9:30 a.m. Adult Religious Exploration

11:00 a.m. Children's RE and Nursery

11:00 a.m. Worship Service

From the Worship Committee

Looking for a group to join in the New Year?

How about the Worship Committee?

We really do have fun and there are so many areas to explore!

Join us at the church on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.. We'd love to have you join us!

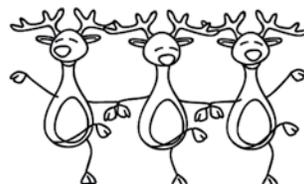
UPCOMING SERVICES January

6 — Marguerite Regan & Mike Duxler
present: The Season for Non-Violence

13 — Rev. David Carter:
Can We Do Better?

20 — TBD

27 — Rev. David Carter



VISION STATEMENT

IT IS OUR VISION:

To be a growing, inclusive, vital congregation that encourages shared values amidst differing beliefs and nurtures

creative exploration of intellectual and spiritual paths.

To be a visible community leader that promotes human equity and compassion, and celebrates life through the arts.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission, consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles, is to provide a joyful, safe, healing environment where diversity is embraced. We will inspire and uplift the whole person through enriching programs and services for all ages, and serve the larger community through social action and active promotion of the arts.