



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

News from your Board of Trustees

- Bonnie Till

Church Computers

"Houston, we've got a problem." These are not the words one wants to hear first thing in a First UU Board meeting report. However, compared to the perilous journey of Apollo 13, the difficulties associated with the church computers are minor. The problems: 1) In April 2014, Microsoft will no longer support its Windows XP operating system, and 2) The cost involved in upgrading three (3) church computers. (The fourth computer located in the library will be updated as soon as finances permit. The library computer will no longer be available starting April 2014.)

The computers at First UU use Windows XP. This means starting in April 2014 our computers will be vulnerable to viruses and hackers. What's being done? To address the problem, Jack Regehr, our First UU computer guru, submitted three options for review by the Board. The options and other suggestions were discussed at the Board meeting. The final decision will be made at the December Board meeting. How much will it cost? The three options presented to the Board range from \$950 to \$1,775. These numbers are not set in cement because Jack and the Board are continuing to gather information.

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Obvious Enthusiasm For Revitalization

-Marcia Ellsworth

A group of about thirty enthusiastic Wichita UU members met at the church on November 5th to discuss the Michael Durall workshop held on October 19th. It was obvious from the comments shared about the workshop that Michael Durall, author of *The Almost Church Revitalized*, gave us some very powerful and innovative ideas to help revitalize our congregation. Those in attendance agreed that we should focus our energy on three of his suggestions for now. First, we need to form a membership committee that will develop higher expectations and guidelines for church membership. Anne Bailey, Millie Cherryholmes, Judy Wherritt, Susan Hund-Milne, David Carter, Marguerite Regan, and Mike Diggs would like to be involved in this committee. Second, we need to become a more public church by developing outreach programs that will serve our community and enrich our church spirit. There were many ideas for community involvement shared including, but not limited to, donating to the Food Bank, supporting the LGBT Youth Summer Camp, involving our church in environmental projects and participating in the overflow shelter program that

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Treasurer's Report

-Kim Talbot

For the Month of October 2013

	Budgeted	Actual	Net
Cash In	\$12,600	\$11,280	-\$1320
Cash Out	\$12,600	\$14,346	\$1,746

Interpretation: This month the church saw a negative cash flow of \$3,066. This was in part due to back pay that was paid to the minister for time owed in August during contract negotiations. The loss was compounded by the fact that we received \$1637 less in pledges

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In Touch

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

www.firstuu.net

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

ALERT!

We need to upgrade our church computers before April 2014. How can you help? If you have a Windows 7 computer and/or Microsoft Office software you could donate to the church, please contact Jack Regehr. If you prefer to donate money toward this upgrade of the church computers, contact Treasurer Kim Talbot. Also, the PC in the library won't be supported after April (unless a different computer is available). Thank you for your generosity.

- Jack Regehr, Webmaster and our IT guy!

Thinking Of (And Giving To) Others: Current Social Action Projects At First UU

CornUUCopia. Have you seen the fabulous poster the children made to promote CornUUCopia (AKA Food Bank Donations)? Take a look next Sunday when you bring your two food items to place on the giving tree.

Annual Hat and Mitten Tree. Our Hat and Mitten Christmas Tree will be adorned by hats, scarves and mittens (adults and children) to be donated to Operation Holiday - by Judy Naillon

Carpenter Place Service Project. Help fulfill wants, wishes and needs of 20 young women living at Carpenter Place (carpenterplace.org) by filling a Christmas stocking with items from each girl's "wish list. If you can't commit to a stocking, place items in a box in the library to be distributed among all stockings, such as a bag of nice Christmas candy! - by Judy Naillon, violinjudy@gmail.com.

Homeless Children, Students who live in shelters or "sofa surf" due to homelessness are "at-risk." Reach out to assist by providing food for the winter overflow shelter during December & January. The Diggs family has volunteered to provide breakfast one day as part of our Yule celebration. Please let me know how you can help or if you have questions. - Marsha Diggs, 687-6424

Q: Why can't UUs sing very well in choirs?

A: Because they're always reading ahead to see if they agree with the next verse.

News from your Board of Trustees

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How can you help? This necessity to upgrade the church computers is an opportunity for generosity either by donation of a computer you may be replacing or by a donation of money.

By-laws Review Task Force

Jamey Findling has agreed to chair the By-laws Review Task Force. The goal of the Task Force is 1) Updating language such as changing Prairies Star District to MidAmerica Region, and 2) Revising the Membership section. The Task Force wants to complete its business in time to present recommendations at the Mid-year Meeting January 26, 2014.

Treasurer's Report

In Mid-December, our Treasurer, Kim Talbot, is "retiring". Kim feels the demands of her two young children and her business should take priority at this time in her life. To insure a smooth transition, Kim and Charles Merrifield formed a Finance Committee Task Force. This Task Force will morph into the Finance Committee with Charles as chair.

Board Action

-The Board acted on the recommendation of the Committee on Ministry not to continue its its association with the current CUUPs (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) group, since officers of the group are no longer affiliated with our church and have encouraged others in the group to end affiliation with First UU. *Motion: After December 20, 2013, CUUPs is welcome to use First UU for meetings, but will do so on the same basis as any outside group by signing a contract and paying the standard fee. Motion passed.*

-The policy of hiring only non-church members as Office Manager was reviewed. Motion: The policy of hiring only non-church members as Office Manager was rescinded. Motion passed.

- Bonnie Till, President

Forgiveness

"Forgiveness" is one word but not one act alone. Forgiveness is the process we live through in order to restore a relationship. Forgiveness is the process of coming back together again with another or with oneself after a separation based on wrongdoing or grievous shortcoming. Sometimes the wrongdoing *is* the separation. Forgiveness involves the acknowledgment and, where possible, the mutual recognition of what went wrong, of what we are doing to right the balance, and especially of the meaning and importance of the relationship. Forgiving is not forgetting. Forgiving is anchoring a wrong in its own time, letting it recede into the past as we live and move toward the future.

- Greta W. Crosby, from "Tree and Jubilee," a book of meditations composed and compiled by Rev. Crosby, minister emerita of First UU. Published 1982, UUA Department of Public Relations.

At Your Service:

Rev. Carter's office hours: Wednesday 11 am to 2 pm and by appointment.

The office is staffed by volunteers. We suggest you CALL FIRST (684-3481) to be sure your trip isn't in vain! Monday, 3:30-4:30 pm; Tuesday, 2:45-4 pm; Wednesday, hours vary ; Thursday, 2:45-4 pm; Friday, 9:30 to 11:15 am. Anita Culp, Marsha Diggs, Jana Rambo and Bonnie Till are the regulars, with Marcia Ellsworth "on call."

Treasurer's Report

(continued)

than projected.

Treasurer's concerns: 1) No significant fundraisers have been planned. 2) No new pledges received. This is a large part of our growth plan for our budget.

While I have found great satisfaction in being the church treasurer over the past 16 months, my personal situation has changed and I will be stepping out of this role as of mid-December. I have begun the task of resurrecting the Financial Committee through a Financial Committee Task Force. Here are the goals of the Task Force:

1. To meet monthly to provide oversight of the finances until the more permanent Committee can be established. We hope this is completed in the next 3 months.
2. Seek new talent to provide to the church a bigger vision for the financial health of 1st UU.

Redefine the job of the Treasurer and parcel the tasks. By doing this we will have a job that is not so overwhelming for one person and there is a better system of checks and balances. I strongly feel that these jobs can be shared by 2-3 people with the right skill sets. These jobs will loosely be:

- a. Accounts receivable: Tracking revenues received; work with FCC in tracking pledges; managing all revenue capturing accounts (Vanco, PayPal, etc.)
- b. Accounts payable: posting and paying bills
- c. Payroll: paychecks and payroll liabilities
- d. Treasurer: overseeing the payment of bills and sources of revenues, run reports, reports to Board

Please consider serving on the Financial Committee. You will be surrounded by strong leaders in this area. Many of the tasks that need to be done can be taught to someone who is willing to learn. If you have had business or bookkeeping experience, please consider sharing these talents. These are skill sets that are very important to the church. Please see me or Charles Merrifield, President Elect, if you are interested. Thank you for all the support and gratitude as I took this role on; it is a labor of love and because of you, it was not a thankless one!



*We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association,
covenant to affirm and promote: Justice, equity, and compassion in human
relations*

5th Annual Vegan Holiday Potluck

Everyone is invited to join us for our 5th Annual vegan holiday potluck on Saturday, December 14th. These are very informal and always lots of fun! It doesn't matter what your regular dietary preferences are, this is open to all. The only stipulation, of course, is that any dish brought be vegan (no meat or meat broth, eggs, dairy, or honey). Because this is our 5th holiday meal, we're making it a little extra special this year. Doors will open at 4pm to allow time to browse an extensive display of vegan cookbooks and other books which would make great gifts. In addition, there will be a vegan products display and lots of free literature and info available. From 4:30-5:30, there will be a cooking demo, and we plan to eat at 6pm. Following the meal, around 7:15, we will give out door prizes and will end the evening with a variety of games. Or just hang out and visit with a great group of people :) Hope to see you there!

Please contact me if you have any questions - Dianne Waltner
946-1115; dwaltner@mac.com

Obvious Enthusiasm For Revitalization (continued)

Interfaith Ministries sponsors. It was agreed that we need to keep our outreach simple to begin with, do it well, and carefully consider what we should commit to as a congregation for the future. Third, we need to consider implementing the suggestion of Mr. Durall to develop programs that focus on meeting the needs of a few specific groups. Already, David Carter is planning to start a UU Club at WSU in January and we have made three deliveries to the Food Bank.

These were just a few highlights of this meeting. It was obvious from the comments made that our church has a bounty of potential to grow into a more meaningful community of members who are invested in enriching their own lives as well as the lives of others. If you weren't at this meeting, we hope to hear from you about what you envision for the future of our church. If you have thoughts and ideas you would like to share, please contact a board member or comment through our on-line list serves.

Email List

WichitaExclusive listserv is open to members of the congregation. Just let Charles Merrifield know you'd like to join. cmerrifield@cox.net. Charles' pulpit presentation Sunday, Nov. 17th featured Michael Durall's follow-up report to the meeting reported here.



Meet Molly Sanford

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

After moving to Wichita in 2012 with her sons, 8-year old Noah, and Corbin, aged 6, Molly Sanford set about finding First UU Church online. Apart from her own need for a church which was free from dogma, she wanted to facilitate her sons' spiritual journeys "more than my parents did for me." The boys had, to Molly's surprise, declared themselves Buddhist and Christian respectively as soon as they could talk. The first time the family attended a service at First UU, Molly felt excited "to have found a place where my sons and I could grow spiritually and explore humanist causes, all without feeling any sense of judgment or guilt whatsoever." She says that she leaved church every Sunday "feeling enriched in some way."

Molly was raised an atheist: "Of course, you always want to rebel, so I would go to church with my friends whenever I could. I always liked the idea of church, except for that whole, pesky requirement of belief in Christ." As an adult, she explored religion intellectually, reading everything she could, speaking to people of different faiths, and attending churches, Buddhist temples, Wiccan gatherings: "Now, I consider myself mostly agnostic and existentialist."

Molly is currently attending Wichita State University full-time and hopes to earn a degree in forensic science within a few semesters. In addition to the unusual scope and focus of her degree, she's been an editor, belly dance instructor, pharmacy technician, and bartender, so she is not sure how her diverse areas of knowledge can be applied: "I would like to join some committees and become active in various charitable causes connected with the church." She would also like to see opportunities for the children to help, too, "even if it's just cleaning or something simple."

December Worship Services

12/1/13 *Advent Conspiracy* - Marsha Diggs: As we approach December, turn away from commercialism and toward spirituality.

12/8/13 *Enlightenments of Buddha* - Rev. David Carter: In Japan, December 8 is the annual observance of the enlightenment of the Buddha, or "Bodhi Day."

12/15/13 *Coping with Holiday Sadness* - Nadine Reimer-Penner: Everyone else seems so happy, but if December is a time of sadness for you, you aren't alone.

12/22/13 *A Christmas Story* - Rev. David Carter: Why the story of a baby is as important today as it was over 2000 years ago.

12/24/13 *Christmas Eve* - Rev. David Carter: A traditional candle-light service.

12/29/13 *Jim Crow Laws, revisited* - Michael Diggs: Our Unitarian Universalist common-read was *The New Jim Crow*. What did we learn?

We're Invited to Hutchinson's UU's Blessing Service

On behalf of the emerging congregation, Prairie Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (PUUF), Unitarian Universalists from central Kansas are invited to the Prairie Blessing Service, upon the occasion of the Fellowship entering new space.

The service will be Sunday, December 8, from 11 am to noon at the Healing Artz Center, 9 W. Avenue B in Hutchinson.

Please bring a token from the prairie to share as part of the blessing ritual. This new and welcoming space is a joy for PUUF members and we would value your participation in our celebration. PUUF will provide at least pizza following the service.

It will be great to have you join us. - Thea Nietfeld

Every Week at First UU

Adult RE, Sunday, 9:30 am - Corey Swertsfager, 201-6921

Zen Friends of Wichita, Wednesday, 6:00 pm - Bob Feleppa, 683-9295

Every Month at First UU

Board Meeting - third Wednesday, 7 pm

Book Discussion - second Wednesday, 7 pm - Anne Bailey, 943-3861

CUUPS - third Fridays

Craft Night - first Tuesday, 7 pm - 440-3097, Amy Geyer

Dinners for Eight - dates vary, Marcia Ellsworth, 688-5352, Sigrid Trombley, 683-7075

Eclectic Readers - third Friday, 11:30 AM, Del Smith, 612-0826

Game Night - second Thursday, 6:30 PM, Joie Vitkus, 613-2527

Meatless Monday (Ethical Eating) - second Monday, 6:30 PM, Dianne Waltner, 946-1115

Music Committee, fourth Sunday after church

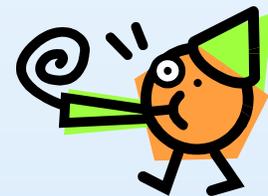
Newsletter Deadline - third Wednesday, evening - Del Smith, 612-0826

Newsletter Folding - fourth Wednesday, 9:30 AM - Del Smith, 612-0826

As announced

Garden Group - Anita Culp, 744-2840

HIP, HIP, UURAH!



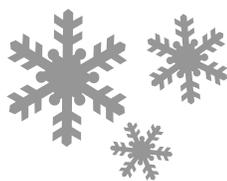
Unitarian Universalists reflect our faith tradition and principles in service to the wider community.

To mention just a few:

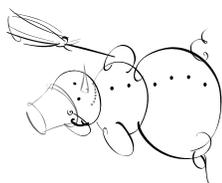
Kim Talbot serves on the YWCA Board. The YWCA Women's Crisis Center provides shelter, advocacy and supportive services for women and children fleeing violent homes.

"After Tiller" was shown by Tallgrass Film Festival on November 20th. A dinner and reception with the directors benefitted Trust Women Foundation, which opened South Wind Women's Center in Dr. Tiller's former medical facility. *LaRilla Combs* and *Diane Wahto* were among the sponsors of the event. "Reproductive Justice" is a current UUA Study/Action issue.

Rev. David Carter was a presenter at The Kansas African American Museum's "Tribute to Trailblazers." He accepted the posthumous honoree award recognizing the Rev. James Reeb, Unitarian minister who was murdered on "Bloody Sunday" before Dr. Martin Luther King's march to Selma. Also attending from First UU were *Charles Merrifield*, *Fern Van Gieson*, *Marguerite Regan*, *Matt Mastroly* and *Nancy Milner*.



December 2013



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 NO Adult RE 11:00 Sunday Service 12:00 1st Sun Lunch	2	3 7:00 UU Craft Night	4 6:00 Zen Friends of Wichita	5	6	7 6:30 Dinners for Eight Party (off site)
8 9:30 Adult RE 11:00 Sunday Service 12:15 Leadership Council	9 6:30 Ethical Eating Group	10	11 6:00 Zen Friends of Wichita 7:00 Book Discussion 7:00 Worship Committee	12 6:30 Game Night	13	14 6:30 Vegan Holiday Pot Luck
15 9:30 Adult RE 9:30 Seeking Circle 11:00 Sunday Service	16	17	18 6:00 Zen Friends of Wichita 7:00 UU Board Meeting (Newsletter Deadline)	19	20 11:30 Eclectic Readers Group 7:00 CUUPs Gathering	21 2:00 Private Event
22 9:30 Adult RE 11:00 Sunday Service 12:00 Annual Holiday Potluck Dinner	23	24 7:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 No Zen Friends	26	27 9:30 a Newsletter Mailing	28 10:00 Caring Committee
29 9:30 Adult RE 11:00 Sunday Service 5:30 CUUPs Meeting	30	31				

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

7202 E. 21st St. N.

Wichita, KS 67206

www.firstuu.net



We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: The inherent worth and dignity of every person

Yes, Virginia, There Is A Holiday Dinner At First UU

David Brewer has been coming to the annual Potluck Holiday Dinner on the Sunday before December 25th since he was a wee lad. He's stepped up to lead the parade to the tables for this year's Holiday Dinner after church on December 22nd. He'll see that the turkeys are cooked and make sure a good variety of food is available, including vegetarian and vegan. And he knows that there are people who will help him. He just doesn't know their names yet! So let David know (dbrewer@kpts.org, bozonose@gmail.com, cell 841-4151) that you will be among the folks who will help put on the event. We need turkeys to be cooked. If you just want to donate the turkeys, David will find someone to cook it for you. Besides food to share, David will be asking for help in setting up, serving and clean-up. PS for "Virginia": This would be a great day to invite friends and family to come to church with you and meet the rest of your UU family.



Evening Book Discussion: We have not selected a specific book yet but will be considering suggestions from Michael Durall's book "The Almost Church Revitalized." Anyone interested in exploring ways to transform First UU Church or to deepen your own spiritual journey, is urged to join us. December 11, 7pm, Anne Bailey, 650-4905.

Eclectic Readers Group: is going with the classic and seasonal in December, Charles Dickens', "A Christmas Carol." December 20, 11:30am, brownbag lunch, Del Smith, 612-0826.