



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

President's Report

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

This month has been remarkable for community action, congregation participation – and exceptional sermons. Church members joined in the Gay Pride Parade, rallied downtown in support of Planned Parenthood, and marched with the Stop Violence against Women group, an event which had been in the planning for several months. The Reverend David Carter spoke on why Black Lives Matter, Julie Burkhart of Trust Women addressed the struggle for reproductive freedom, and Carolyn West of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) stressed the importance of this service for children at risk. On 25 October in a pulpit exchange, the Reverend Jonalu Johnstone of Manhattan UU addressed our congregation on “The Tenses and Tensions of Covenant.”

By the end of September, all church activity was focused on EcoFest. In preparation, new tables were purchased, flyers were distributed, and street signs planted. On Saturday, the church was transformed: the sanctuary and fellowship hall looked beautiful, and vendors' and advocates' booths prepared for opening time. Outside booths took up spaces on the south side of the building, offering honey, organic soap, electric cars, or radical ideas on green living and

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International Tea and Dessert Event

- Debbie Wadman

We hope everyone will come to tea (or coffee!) on Saturday, November 7, 3:30 to 5:30, to join us for an elegant afternoon. White gloves not necessary! The event, an International Tea and Dessert, is a fundraiser for our partner church in Homorod Szentpál, Transylvania. We will offer delicious international cakes, cookies and pastries, tea and coffee. Later, other snacks and libations will be offered. For an admission ticket of \$7, you will be given your choice of hot beverages, and several sampler size cakes and sweets to try. Live musical entertainment will be provided from Wichita's own Trevor Stewart, who plays the Chapman Stick, as well as other instruments.

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita has had an ongoing partnership with this Unitarian Church in Homorod Szentpál, Transylvania, a village in central Romania, for the last 25 or 30 years. This area of Romania is populated largely by ethnic Hungarian Unitarians, which are about seven percent of the Romanian population. They have their own Unitarian high school in central Transylvania, a Unitarian camp and park area for church events and retreats, and many Hungarian

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Calling In Pledges! Fall Means Shortfall

While the church is financially secure, the treasurers report that there is a temporary cash flow problem caused by increased utilities costs, more frequent mowing charges due to rain, and a shift in valued donor commitments. This comes at a time when we have just hired a social justice director, Margi Ault-Duell, to take over from Louis Goseland on 1 November. Margi will carry on and develop the community outreach programs which are a vital part of the church's mission.

At this time, we are asking all members of the congregation who have not yet paid pledges to do so as soon as they can. And if anyone feels that he or she would like to give more, these donations will be put to excellent use. If you have any questions, please contact Vivien Minshull-Ford, 683-9295 or Charles Merrifield at 371-3960.

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.

International Tea And Dessert Event - Continued

owned restaurants and stores. The Partner

Church village, however, is quite small, and while located in a lovely rural area of rolling hills and farmlands, it is 3 1/2 hours from Bucharest, the capital city, and about 45 minutes to the next decent sized city, if one needs to go to the bank or the theater, or do major shopping. Our partners in the Homorod Valley live on very small salaries (\$100-\$200 per month, for example) and rely heavily on their own resources for their subsistence. They garden, plant their own crops and raise animals, and repair their own tractors and use them for decades, and thus, repairs to the centuries-old church building come slowly. Their next big project is to obtain repairs for the church organ. While we send them funds every spring after our Partner Church dinner, the committee would like to send them more.

You can reserve your tickets with a phone call to Vivien Minshull-Ford at 316-683-9295.

If you are interested in helping bake, serve, or help with cleaning at this event, contact Debbie at 316-681-3307. Assistance would be most appreciated.

Our Culture, Our Food

Dr. Will Tuttle, author of *The World Peace Diet*, will be speaking in our congregation on Friday, November 27, at 7 p.m. He has spoken here twice in the past and has given wonderful talks. Since then, he has been traveling the country and the world giving his inspirational talks. His book “has been called one of the most important books of the 21st century: the foundation of a new society based on the truth of the interconnectedness of all life. It is the first book to make explicit the invisible connections between our culture, our food, and the source of our broad range of problems – and the way to a positive transformation in our individual and collective lives” (<http://www.worldpeacediet.com>).

Doors will open at 6 to give people a chance to come early, meet Will, and enjoy refreshments. There will also be time for visitation and refreshments following the talk. For more information, contact Dianne Waltner at 946-1115 or dwaltner@mac.com.

In Memoriam: Jo Gardenhire, A Community Treasure

- Del Smith

Jo Gardenhire, longtime member of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita, died peacefully in Wesley Medical Center Hospice Wednesday morning, October 14. She never regained consciousness after suffering a stroke the prior week. She is survived by three sons, Keith, Gary, and Chris, and innumerable friends. Gary, who lives in Italy, followed his mother to our church in the early 1960s. In 2010, Gary wrote for a church pledge drive, "Even though living far from America now, the church is still with me in the ways which I participate responsibly, socially and politically, in my adopted community." Jo took great pleasure in her son's statement.

If Jo has her say, and likely she will, there will be no memorial or funeral service, nor an obituary in the local paper. This church newsletter tribute shall do, but it cannot do justice to her countless contributions to the quality of the lives of all who knew her, whether personally or by her reputation as a civil rights activist.*

Some First UU members know Jo through her work for social justice as an NAACP organizer or when she was president of the congregation in the early 1980s. Others, newer to our church community, admire and appreciate her love of life, her kindness and generosity, and her "Amens" and enthusiasm for concerts and Rev. David Carter's sermons.

Fern Van Gieson recalls Jo telling her in the 50s that, due to the nature of her work with NAACP, she would have to be a quiet supporter of the work Fern and another Unitarian, the late Joe Brewer, were doing to establish the Urban League. Jo worked closely with Chester Lewis, another Unitarian, who had a more flamboyant leadership style, while Jo's "steely, detailed-minded strength and skill at working behind the scenes kept the [NAACP] movement going."*

Jo's work as director of the WSU Office for Students with Disabilities directly affected at least one of our current members. She helped 18-year-old Mary Moore get a job and tuition assistance. "Jo was all about creating opportunities for others, especially those with disadvantaged circumstances," Mary wrote on Facebook.

Jo was thoughtful of all, friends and friends of friends. The friendship of the Gardenhire and Welsbacher families existed for decades and included a summer when Rick Welsbacher lived with the Gardenhires. Dick Welsbacher's close friend and colleague Joyce Cavarozzi was pleased that Jo sent her a card upon his death.

I experienced this thoughtfulness often, but one occasion is especially joyful to remember. About 10 years ago, Jo returned from a London trip with a poster from the Royal Opera House where Scott, my son, had appeared in a dance performance. She missed the performance but made sure she brought a poster home for me and gleefully announced the gift during Joys and Sorrows.

Jo's impact lives on. A blog writer, Sherrie Cronin, discovered in her mother's house an August 1986 newspaper article about race relations in Wichita. It quoted the former secretary of the Wichita NAACP: "I want to know when we are going to stop kidding around and get to the root problem of what is causing this trouble." Ms. Cronin writes on August 1, 2015: "My 13-year-old self never crossed paths with Jo Gardenhire. Today, I'd like to shake her hand, and to echo her question. When are we going to stop kidding around? And isn't five decades far too long a time to be asking this same question?"

Indeed, Jo never stopped asking the important questions.

*Note: Space allows only a glimpse of Jo's significance to the civil rights movement. For that, you are referred to Gretchen Cassel Eick's *Dissent in Wichita: The Civil Rights Movement in the Midwest, 1954-72*, published 2001.

President's Report, continued

climate change. The Bug Lady introduced her collection of live creatures, and visitors learned about composting with worms, conserving water, and fermenting vegetables. There were raffle prizes, and plant and bake sales. Lunches of chili-topped baked potatoes were served; diners also had the option of visiting the award-winning Kind Kravings food truck parked outside. EcoFest netted almost \$4,000 for the church and was deemed a success, mostly due to the wonderful teams of UU volunteers who worked singly and in teams to bring it about.

Following EcoFest, all attention turned to Social Justice: Louis Goseland had already been advertising for a Social Justice Director to replace him when his UU appointment would end. From ten applicants, four excellent finalists were chosen for interview. Margi Ault-Duell was offered the position, has accepted, and will begin work on 1 November.

On Sunday, 11 October, the chamber music concert featured Jenny Bowen and the IC Trio, tuba solos by Philip Black, and Carol Neighbor and Greg Golding playing Telemann duets for recorder and guitar. Later the same day, much loved UU member David Brewer married long-time partner T. J. Edmonds in a private ceremony; the wedding was followed by a party with champagne punch attended by friends and church members. The parking lot was full to overflowing.

The Partner Church committee met on Thursday, 15 October, to plan the fundraiser tea at which European pastries and wine will be served at the church on Saturday, 7 November. Money raised will be sent to the Unitarian church at Homorod Szentpál in Transylvania for church repairs.

Many attended Southern Cluster, 16-18 October at White Memorial Camp on Council Grove Lake in the Flint Hills, an event organized by Charles Merrifield, Louis Goseland, Barb Gutsch, Nyla Romeiser, and Bonnie Maize. While some UUs stayed the full three days, a group drove up to the camp on Saturday for a rewarding social justice workshop, during which an alliance was initiated by the Reverend Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan of the UU Fellowship of Topeka, and a plan set in motion for UU members to visit Topeka on 6 February 2016. Reverend Carter led the Sunday morning service. According to Charles Merrifield, the statewide UU turnout was a record, and a deposit has already been made for 14-16 October next year.

Erickson Art Exhibit


Mary Erickson will be holding an art exhibit and sale at the Beautiful Day Cafe, 2516 E. Central, during the month of November. The exhibit opening will be November 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with live music from 12 to 2. Thirty percent of exhibit sales will be donated to First UU.

Erickson is a juried member of the Pastel Society of America and a charter member of the Pastel Society of Colorado. Her work has been juried into the last three Pastel National Exhibitions at the Wichita Center for the Arts and into other national exhibits.

Full Moon Celebration

The next full moon is on Wednesday, November 25 – the day before Thanksgiving. Join us at 7 p.m. as we give thanks for all the blessings we have received this year. You are encouraged to bring drums or other rhythm instruments to join in our celebration. Call Anne Bailey (650-4905), Kathy Hull (204-9956), or Linda Jordan (512-6652) for further information.

November 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 DS Time ends 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	2 6:30p Meditation Class	3 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	4 7:00p Committee on Ministry	5 6:00p First UUs for Vedic Awareness	6	7 3:30p Partner Church International Tea
8 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Leadership Council	9 6:30p Meditation Class	10 6:00p Zen Friends	11 7:00p Worship Committee	12 6:00p First UUs for Vedic Awareness	13	14
15 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	16 6:30p Meditation Class	17 6:00p Zen Friends	18 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	19 6:00p First UUs for Vedic Awareness	20 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	21 9:00a Board of Trustees Retreat
22 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Music Committee	23 6:30p Meditation Class	24 6:00p Zen Friends	25 12:00p Membership Comm. 3:00p Newsletter Mailing 7:00p Full Moon Celebration	26 Office Closed 2:00p Thanksgiving Meal	27 7:00p Dr. Will Tuttle Presentation	28 10:00a Caring Committee
29 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	30 6:30p Meditation Class					

What Do U Know about UU?
Sherry L. Buettgenbach

We're not just Unitarians; we're Universalists, too! The Universalist Church was formed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe and America by people who believed in an unconditionally loving God and salvation for all: thus, "universal" salvation. The Universalist Church formed by John Murray, an English preacher who immigrated to America in 1770, helped lead the battle to separate church and state. His home in Gloucester, Massachusetts, is open to the public if you are ever there and wish to tour it. The Gloucester Church included a freed slave.

Officially organizing in 1793, Universalists believed in a God who embraced everyone, and this eventually became central to their belief that lasting truth is found in all religions and that dignity and worth is innate to all people regardless of sex, color, race or class. The Universalists became the first denomination to ordain women in the ministry, beginning in 1863 with Olympia Brown.

In the 1830s, both Unitarians and Universalists were studying and promoting texts from world religions. By the beginning of the twentieth century, humanists within both traditions advocated that people could be religious without believing in God. No one person, no one religion, can embrace all religious truths.

Both Unitarians and Universalists were active participants in many social justice movements. Their efforts included abolition of slavery, reform of prisons and mental hospitals, founding of the American Red Cross by Unitarian Clara Barton, civil rights, women's rights, and the rights of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons.

By the middle of the twentieth century, it became clear that Unitarians and Universalists could have a stronger liberal religious voice if they merged, and they did so in 1961, forming the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Primary source: Unitarian Universalist Association



2015 Wichita Gay Pride Parade, photo by Jack Regher

Our Covenant: A Living Document

- Del Smith

Rev. Tom Owen-Towle notes that “The core of a lasting covenantal promise is generosity: being liberal of time and resources, talents and respectfulness. Partnerships and congregations cannot endure, let alone thrive, without mutual magnanimity” (*Blazing Theology*, Flaming Chalice Press, 2011).

Our liberal diverse community comes together as a group most often on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m. EcoFest 2015 involved just as many members of the congregation over the months of planning for the successful October 3 event. We laughed and sighed together. We worked together for the good of the whole. Indeed, as Owen-Towle suggests, we were—and are—generous with our time and resources, talents and respectfulness.

The previous two columns in this series touched on the Respect Covenant (showing regard and appreciation for others). This time the spotlight is on the Safety Covenant (courteous, sincere, and thoughtful consideration for others). Reflect privately on these ways to apply the Safety Covenant in our interactions as individuals and as a congregation:

- Request and give confidentiality.
- Share diverse ideas in a physically and emotionally safe manner.
- Help provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for myself and others.
- Take time to process information before responding.

Which are easy to apply? Do any require extra effort?

Owen-Towle adds that “One of the central religious notions in our progressive movement is the recognition that we are responsive and responsible beings. Both words arrive from the Latin word *spondere*, which means ‘to promise.’ Therefore, as re-*sponding* (*sic*) persons, we are committed to continually renewing our promises.” Taking time to “Stop, Look, Read” the Covenant of Healthy relations is one way we can renew our promises, our covenant.

Minister's Musings

- Rev. David Carter

Under Cover of Night

under cover of night
those two greatly charitable
and influential ambassadors of love
your eyes

slip down into my heart
through the portal of dreams
and there
disrupt by their mystic dance
and the lyric of their ecstasy
the tyranny of inability
that separates me from who I am.

rising from my bed
still buried alive by the deeper sleep
of days and nights, your eyes

from beyond time's cacophony
ransom me from the world of names
and show me:

the palace of illusion in flames
empty of prisoners;
time's shipwrecked sailors pulling for the shore;
fear's cruel sovereignty subverted;
and happy in love at the heart of light
ecstatic dancers making love dance.

Beloved
because they ceaselessly steal away the figures of delight

please, unbind me from these two worse than useless thieves

my vagabond eyes

and give me sight.

Thanksgiving Meal

- Judy Naillon

Thanksgiving meal at church is Thanksgiving Day at 2 p.m. Folks can come at 1 p.m. to bring their dish and socialize. Turkey and stuffing will be provided.

UU/UN Envoy Program

The recent newsletter from Brian Knotts, director of UU at the UN, lists the following UN issues: Perspective and Dialogue on Structural Racism against People of African Descent, Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights, Climate Justice, and LGBTQ/Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity. Are these First UU concerns too? If you think so, call Vivien Minshull-Ford at 683-9295 for an update on the UU/UN Envoy Program.

November Worship Schedule

11/1 Rev. David Carter – Famous UUs: Forrest Church

11/8 Rev. Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan – minister of UU Fellowship of Topeka

11/15 Charlie King – Conscientious Objection

11/22 Rev. David Carter – Giving Thanks for Giving Souls

11/29 Project Touchstone – Kids COPE

For further details, check social media, Weekly Update, and orders of service.

New Church Policies in Effect August 19, 2015

- Anita Culp

Following are new church policies as written by the Board:

“When a church member or church member group plans an event which produces income for that member or group, the event must be approved by the Board of Trustees at the regular Board meeting at least one month prior to the event or by a Board designated committee.

“It is policy that the church member or group will split the profit (amount of money over and above the cost of the product or service) by a percentage or dollar amount agreed upon by the member or group and the Board or designated committee.

“For use of the kitchen for church related activities by members, no fee is charged; however a donation of \$1 per adult is requested.”

RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon

Help put the YOU in UU by joining us on Sundays at 11:00 for Children's Religious Exploration.

Coming up this month, our Kindergarten-2nd Graders will be exploring Forgiveness and Acceptance in our Tapestry of Faith curriculum, *Love Surrounds Us*.

Our intermediate group fought the Illiteracy Horcrux with a children's book drive. The books will be donated to an organization that assists needy children and families. We are on to fighting the Hunger Horcrux this month and will be organizing a food drive with the donations going to Interfaith Ministries. We will also fight the Poverty Horcrux by collecting warm hats, gloves and scarves for those in need.

Our teens will view *The Twilight Zone* episodes, "A Most Unusual Camera" and "The Obsolete Man." Their discussions will center on the dangers of greed and totalitarianism, and on the innate worth of all humans.

We hope to see you. Remember, it's much more fun when U are there!

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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From Eclectic Readers Group.

November 20, 11:30 a.m.: David McCullough's *The Wright Brothers* tells the surprising, uniquely American story of Wilbur and Orville Wright, courageous Dayton bicycle mechanics with only high school educations. Wilbur was considered a genius, and Orville was gifted with mechanical ingenuity. Their preacher father supplied them with books which whetted their intellectual interests and curiosity. Despite their lack of "higher" education, little money, and no influential contacts, they never stopped in their determination to take to the air. Historian David McCullough, winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, had wide access to the Wright Papers to tell the human side of their story. Their sister, Katherine, made contributions little known prior to McCullough's book.

December 18, 11:30 a.m.: We'll change the pace with a book that is the equivalent of a well-crafted romantic comedy. Graeme Simsion's debut novel, *The Rosie Project*, is about "a fussy, socially-challenged man's search for the perfect wife... smart, breezy, quirky, and fun." Some reviewers think the book was clearly written with the big-screen in mind. (Film rights have already been sold.)

Eclectic Readers meet on the third Friday of the month for a brown bag lunch and a lively discussion. All are welcome! Questions? Call Del Smith, 316-612-0826.