



# In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA  
FOUNDED 1887

## President's Report

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

The First UU website, Green Sanctuary, and Share the Plate are the main focus of this December-January period. We also set up a sub-committee to activate the December retreat Mission and Vision exploration.

Jack Regehr is making headway in the design and scope of the website, which will feature profiles of church leadership with photographs, an EcoFest site with logos of sponsors, and a social action page. We are also hoping for a regular site for church activities and achievements.

Marcia Ellsworth set up the first Green Sanctuary meeting on Wednesday, January 27. Many GS building features, activities, and environmental habits are already in place at First UU, but working towards Green Sanctuary certification is an exciting prospect. Andrew Beers is chairing the committee. Certification requirements include solar power and assistance to a needy community; anyone interested in joining this committee should contact Andrew or Marcia.

Margi Ault-Duell, our social action director, has been managing the Share the Plate applications: we now have six worthy candidates. One plate a month will be donated from July 2016. In addition to fielding Share the Plate applications, Margi Ault-Duell has been getting her bearings at First UU, visiting committees and services, and dealing with issues both expected and unexpected. Her first monthly social action meeting

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## A Culture of Respect

- Masud Chand

In our culture, almost every single day, we hear calls about the importance of respect. How as a society, we are becoming less respectful – people do not respect religious leaders any more, children do not respect their parents, students do not respect their teachers, citizens do not respect the police...the list goes on and on. Yet here is what strikes me the most – in almost all these conversations/exhortations, the direction is always one way – the people who are in subordinate positions must give respect, those in positions of power must get it. Rarely if ever do we have a conversation that talks about the importance of respecting people that you have a position of authority over. This makes me wonder...am I the only one who thinks about this?

As an educator and researcher, I know firsthand that respect is earned, not an entitlement. It is our actions everyday that make us worthy of respect – not the fact that we have letters after our name, not the fact that we wear a certain type of uniform, not the fact that we have more brute physical strength, not the fact that we worship the right deity. If respect is indeed important in society, which I fervently believe it is, it needs to be fostered through example. If you want to be respected, show respect. A position of authority needs to be seen as a blessing to serve, not as the power to lord over. That to me, is the biggest problem that we have with the conversation on respect today – we demand it, and rarely if ever display it when in positions of authority. Far too often,

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# In Touch

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

[www.firstuu.net](http://www.firstuu.net)

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

## *A Culture of Respect - continued*

we confuse respect with obedience, and a position of authority with overlordship.

I cannot think of too many examples of how supposed lack of respect by people not in positions of power hurts me personally, or society in general. Yet the largest problems and abuses in human history have been caused by the precise opposite – a lack of respect by people in positions of authority over those that they have authority over. Yes, we definitely need to have more respect in society, but I think we have the present ongoing conversation completely backward! What we need is more respect in society to be shown by people in positions of authority. The inherent worth and dignity of every human being is in far greater danger when respect is denied by people in positions of power, rather than when a persecuted individual “shows disrespect,” “gives lip,” or “acts uppity.” And then I wonder again...am I the only person thinking this?!

## The Dancers Are Back

The Grapevine International Folk Dancers are returning to First Unitarian Universalist Church from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sundays, beginning in February. The group began in 1975, and First UU was their home base for many years. They enjoy dances from around the world – Israel, Greece, Bolivia, Mexico, and many other countries. All are welcome to dance with the group. There is no need to bring a partner, but the more the merrier. This is a family event, so children are also welcome with parents. For more information, call Joyce Gedraitis, 683-1122.

*How many UUs does it take to change a light bulb?*

*An undetermined number. We choose not to make a statement either in favor of, or against, the need for a light bulb.*

*However, if on your own journey you have found that light bulbs work for you, that's fine.*

*You are invited to form a committee, write a poem or compose a modern dance about your bulb for next Sunday's service, during which we will explore a number of light bulb traditions, including incandescent, fluorescent, three-way, long-life, and tinted, all of which are equally valid paths to luminescence.*

## February Worship Schedule

- 2/7 Sam Myskens Global Faith in Action  
2/14 Rev. Carter Stewards as Visionaries, Part 2  
2/21 Women's Crisis Center  
2/28 Pulpit Exchange

For details and updates, see print Orders of Service, emailed Weekly Updates, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita on Facebook, or @uuict on Twitter.



*Rev. Jill Jarvis after giving the sermon in January of this year here at 1st UU. Rev. Jarvis is the Minister at Unitarian Fellowship of Lawrence.*

## Bags of Blessings

- Marcia Ellsworth

This will be our third year to join with Partners for Wichita and other community members to collect and distribute personal items for people in need. Last year 2,000 bags were given out to shelters and assistance centers in the greater Wichita area. Our youth assembled about 60 bags filled with personal care items. Let's do at least that well again!

Please bring one or more completed gallon size bags, or, if you aren't able to complete a bag, just bring individual items with you on Sundays through February 21<sup>st</sup>. Our youth will collect individual items and place in bags for you. There will be a container in the gathering space for your donations.

Each bag that is donated should have the following non-fragrant items included: soap, lotion, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, comb, ChapStick or lip balm, toothbrush, toothpaste, razor, shaving cream, emery board or clippers, Kleenex pack, 3 Band-Aids, washcloth, and white socks. Travel sized personal items are preferred but not required. Extras and other items are welcome (knit caps, gloves, etc.).

Together we make a difference!

*President's Report, continued*



*Vivian Minshull-Ford,  
President, at Ecofest 2014.*

took place at 8:00 on Wednesday, January 27, following Green Sanctuary; thereafter, the social action meetings will be at 7:00 on the fourth Thursday of each month. Carpooling and sign up plans have been set for the Topeka *Beloved Community* Social Action meeting on February 6 with ministers and congregants from other Kansas Unitarian Universalist communities.

More than sixty people enjoyed turkey and a mass of side dishes and desserts at the holiday dinner on Sunday, December 21. We almost ran

out of tables and turkey! At the Christmas Eve candlelit carol service, Jamie and Jennie Findling and visiting family sang a Hanukkah carol. The holiday season ended with a concert by Arri Simon, Rob and Denise Jackson-Simon's talented son, who gave the packed audience a thoroughly entertaining sampling of the musical he is working on in New York. Seldom has our piano been put to such good use.

At the January board meeting, the proposed budget was accepted in preparation for the midyear meeting, and we worked out the logistics for the congregational votes on the budget, Share the Plate, and the Congregational Study/Action Issues.

## New Member Events

People interested in becoming members of First UU may attend an Inquirer's Class on Saturday, February 27 from 9 to 2. Lunch will be provided.

To register, contact Bonnie Till at 722-8208 or [bect@cox.net](mailto:bect@cox.net). If you require child care, let Bonnie know at least 72 hours prior to class.

A New Member Recognition ceremony will be held during the service on Sunday, February 28.

## Community Bulletin Board

One way First UU expands our connection with the wider community is making space available on the Community Bulletin Board in the Gathering Space to organizations which reflect the interests of our community. You will find announcements of events, seminars, and even employment opportunities on the Community Bulletin Board. If you have an organization's activities you wish to promote, talk to Anita Culp, Office Manager, who oversees the board.

## Full Moon Celebration

We will gather at 7 p.m. on Monday, February 22. There may be signs of spring by then, so bring any seeds you have to bless for the coming growing season or to exchange or trade. All are welcome. Call Anne Bailey for further details, 650-4905.

# February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	<b>3</b> 7:00p Committee on Ministry	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 6:30p Music Meeting	<b>6</b> 3:00p Bhakti Society 5:30p Holiday Party
<b>7</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch 5:00p Grapevine Dancers	<b>8</b> 6:30p Ethical Eating Vegan Potluck	<b>9</b> 6:00p Zen Friends	<b>10</b> 7:00p Worship Committee	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 2:00p Membership Committee	<b>13</b> 3:00p Bhakti Society
<b>14</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Leadership Council 5:00p Grapevine Dancers	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 6:00p Zen Friends	<b>17</b> 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	<b>18</b> 7:00p Planned Giving Seminar	<b>19</b> 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	<b>20</b> 2:00p David Brewer Memorial 3:00p Bhakti Society
<b>21</b> 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 5:00p Grapevine Dancers	<b>22</b> 7:00p Full Moon Celebration	<b>23</b> 6:00p Zen Friends	<b>24</b> 3:00p Newsletter Mailing 7:00p Social Action Meeting	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 9:00a New Member Class 10:00a Caring Committee 3:00p Bhakti Society
<b>28</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 5:00p Grapevine Dancers	<b>29</b>					



**Unitarian Universalist Association Principles**

*We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:*

- \* The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
  - \* Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
  - \* Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
  - \* A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
  - \* The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
  - \* The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
  - \* Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.
- (Adopted by the 1984 and 1985 General Assemblies)

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**Who's Who @ First UU**

**FIRST UU OFFICERS & BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

President – Vivien Minshull-Ford  
President-Elect – Corey Swertfager  
Board of Trustees – Mike Diggs, Elaine Edens, Magda Garrett, Kathleen McGee, Nancy Milner, George Rivera, and Bonnie Till  
Treasurer – Anne Bailey

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

Adult RE – Frank Ruf  
Buildings/Grounds – Tom Moore  
Caring – Jana Rambo and LaRilla Combs  
Chalice Lighters Ambassador – Bonnie Till  
Children's RE – Wendy Haynie-Coxby  
Communications – Del Smith  
Denominational Affairs – Mike Diggs  
EcoFest 2015 – Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford  
Finance:  
    Financial Commitment – Charles Merrifield  
    Stewardship – Elaine Edens  
Kitchen Mavens – Magda Garrett  
Membership – Anne Bailey and Bonnie Till  
Music – To Be Named  
Partner Church – Betty Hensley and Debbie Wadman  
Personnel – Janet Roberts and Magda Garrett  
Social Action – Margi Ault-Duell  
Worship – Marcia Diggs

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

Charles Merrifield, chair; LaRilla Combs, Marcia Ellsworth, Linda Jordan, Lara Pollack, and Doug Wilson

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Millie Cherryholmes, Doug Clayton, and Jennifer Hess

**GROUP CONTACTS**

Chalice Bookstore – Del Smith  
Craft Night – Anita Culp  
Eclectic Readers – Del Smith  
First UUs for Vedic Awareness – Andrew Beers  
Garden Group – Anita Culp  
Meatless Monday – Dianne Waltner  
Pagan Group – Anne Bailey and Kathy Hull  
Zen Friends of Wichita – Bob Feleppa and Vivien Minshull-Ford

## Opportunities to Work for Social Justice

- Margi Ault-Duell



*Margi Ault-Duell, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita Social Justice Coordinator*

The First UU Social Justice Team will resume monthly meetings in February, but we're moving to a new time. Join us from **7-8:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month**. This meeting is open to any and all. I hope to see you there to reflect together and shape our congregation's social justice efforts. If you've never been involved in social justice work before, never fear: this gathering is for you too! We all have something to teach and something to learn from each other.

Join us on **Saturday, February 6, at the Beloved Community gathering** of the Southern Cluster UU congregations. We'll be dreaming and strategizing together about how to collaboratively address social justice issues in the state of Kansas. We want to strongly represent First UU Wichita, so we want you at the table with UUs and partner organizations from across the state. The event is

from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the UU Fellowship of Topeka, and lunch is provided. We will discuss issues that affect our communities, including

environmental justice, racial justice, health care access, education, economic justice, reproductive justice, voting rights/access, and LGBTQ justice. Your participation is free, although donations will be accepted at the event to help cover the costs. If you plan to attend, you can pre-register through the Facebook link. You can also register in person at the event (if you have special dietary needs, we recommend pre-registration). Carpooling is available from Wichita to Topeka, so if you'd like to offer or get a ride to the event, or if you have any questions about participating, contact Margi at [socialaction@firstuu.net](mailto:socialaction@firstuu.net) or 520-396-0633.

## Lend Us Your Voices!

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

We're looking for members of the congregation who have some singing experience: choir, chorus, school, group, or solo singing of any kind. We'd like to start a choir, large or small, of singers ready to take on part or round singing, call and response spirituals, which will add variety and impact to our music. If you are more than just a singer in the shower, we need you.

Carol Denning, our pianist, and Lynn Way are ready to get to work, and the organizational meeting will be at 6:30 on Friday, February 5, at First UU. Please call me at 683-9295 or email at [vminshull@yahoo.com](mailto:vminshull@yahoo.com) if you would like to participate.

## Join the Green Sanctuary Certification Team

- Andrew Beers

Would you like to be a part of our new Green Sanctuary certification team? This is a project that will eventually involve our entire church congregation but needs team members to make the goal of certification a reality. If you are interested in promoting environmentally related issues and bringing our congregation into greater alignment with sustainable living practices, this may be the project for you. The first meeting will be held at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, January 27.

Green Sanctuary certification is a program sponsored by our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), located in Boston, to help congregations become more environmentally aware and active. The certification is prestigious and held by only a few churches. As far as I am aware, there are none in Kansas at this time. The UUA provides support and guidance throughout the process which includes opportunity for study, reflection, and action.

Our team will build on our current environmental focus within our congregation and community. We will be required to plan about 11 projects in four areas to address specific issues. These focus areas include: 1)



*Andrew Beers, at Wichita 2015  
Gay Pride Parade*



*UUA Green Sanctuary  
Program logo*

## Earn Money for First UU at Dillions

Every time you use your existing Dillions Plus Shopper's Card, you can earn money for First UU Church. Last quarter (Oct.-Dec. 2015) we had 65 households who shopped at Dillions, resulting in a church reward of \$607. Let's try to meet or beat those numbers this year.

If your card was registered in 2015, you will need to re-register it for the new year. Go to [www.dillions.com/communityrewards](http://www.dillions.com/communityrewards) and fill in your information. Under Community Rewards select "First Unitarian Universalist Church" (no. 10162). If you forgot your password, Dillions has a super easy fix. Call Anita Culp, office manager, 684-3481, if you have questions or need help.

## Holiday Party

The Holiday Party Group will hold a Groundhog Day potluck dinner at First UU Church on Saturday, February 6. We will gather at 5:30 and dine at 6. Join us for the potluck dinner and games. If we like, we can consider such imponderables as "How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?" Or not.

## Brewer and Crosby Memorial Services

The Caring Committee is the arm of the church that acknowledges events in our members' and friends' lives such as illness, surgeries, and bereavements. We also acknowledge celebratory events such as birthdays, weddings, births and graduations.

Our long time member David Brewer's memorial service will be held 2-4 p.m., Saturday, February 20, 2016. If you can help with the reception, please contact LaRilla Combs at [LaRillaCombs@aol.com](mailto:LaRillaCombs@aol.com) or call 316-559-4478.

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped with the reception for Bob Crosby's memorial service. What touches one of us affects us all. In caring for one another we are cared for.

## Book Review: *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

- Suzanne Miller

Part of Beacon Press's ReVisioning American History Series (along with *A Queer History of the United States* by Michael Bronski and *A Disability History of the United States* by Kim E. Neilsen), *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, the award-winning book by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, gives voice to the silences in stories we know about the "discovery," "founding," "settling," "expansion," and "destiny" of this nation.

How Indigenous peoples have been treated by the US government and military, as well as by settler militias (see her blog on the recent occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge:

<http://www.beaconbroadside.com/broadside/2016/01/a-skirmish-between-colonizers.html>), is

documented and analyzed from outside "the national consensual narrative" and outside the "embrace of settler colonialism and genocide" in order to "transform society" (2). Dunbar-Ortiz writes that in a settler society that has not come to terms with its past, whatever historical trauma was entailed in settling the land affects the assumptions and behavior of living generations at any given time, including immigrants and the children of recent immigrants.

In the United States the legacy of settler colonialism can be seen in the endless wars of aggression and occupations; the trillions spent on war machinery, military bases, and personnel instead of social services and quality public education; the gross profits of corporations, each of which has greater resources and funds than more than half of the countries in the world yet pay minimal taxes and provide few jobs for US citizens; the repression of generation after generation of activists who seek to change the system; the incarceration of the poor, particularly descendants of enslaved Africans; the individualism, carefully inculcated, that on the one hand produces self-blame for personal failure and on the other exalts ruthless dog-eat-dog competition for possible success, even though it rarely results; and high rates of suicide, drug abuse, alcoholism, sexual violence against women and children, homelessness, dropping out of school, and gun violence.

These are symptoms, and there are many more, of a deeply troubled society, and they are not new. (229-30)

Dunbar-Ortiz notes that the Unitarian Universalist Association's resolution regarding the Doctrine of Discovery, the 1455 papal bull that legalized European nations planting flags and claiming non-European people's lands, is "particularly powerful and an excellent model" (200). It invites us and our government "to a process of Honor and Healing (often called Truth and Reconciliation)" (201). This book is surely part of that process.

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FIRST UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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### Eclectic Readers

Read anything by Agatha Christie and come prepared to give a mini-review at the February 19<sup>th</sup> Eclectic Readers Group meeting. You have plenty of titles from which to choose. This prolific writer wrote 66 detective stories, 14 short story collections and even, writing as Mary Westmarcott, six romance novels! Many of her works were produced as plays, the most famous likely being *The Mousetrap*. Bring a brown bag lunch and join us at 11:30. All are welcome!

### Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

For February we are getting all religious and reading *Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ Childhood Pal.* by Christopher Moore.

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. Discussions will take place at Goodreads. You can join us at <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/177877-digerati-buchgemeinschaft>

What is the definition of "Unitarian diversity"?  
Three colors of Subarus in the church parking lot