



# In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

## President's Promos

- Corey Swertfager

September is a month when many of us walk and stump for our favorite political candidates and causes. In addition to such activities are some upcoming opportunities in and out of First UU:

- The First UU Humanist group is in the process of getting First UU officially designated as Freethinker Friendly! Contact Charles Merrifield for more info.
- In the spirit of EcoFest and our Seventh UU Principle, an ecology-themed mural will be painted on parts of First UU's outer walls! Stayed tuned for details on how to help and to donate supplies/money.
- First UU will once again proudly march in the Wichita PrideFest parade on Sunday, September 25. We'll head there immediately after service. Ride or walk as you are able. Please let me know if you can join us.
- There are several open shifts to cover at the pro-choice booth at the Kansas State Fair, September 9 and 12-17. Each shift is four hours (9 a.m.-1 p.m., 1-5 p.m., 5-9 p.m.) and requires at least two volunteers. All volunteers get free tickets to the fair! Please contact me to sign up.
- International Rescue Committee is hosting their second Faith Based Leaders Conference on Friday, September 16th, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Wichita Public Library, main branch downtown. Contact Loren Belew, IRC Volunteer and External Relations Coordinator, 316-361-2795.

## Final Friday at First UU

First UU is hosting a Final Friday event Friday, September 30. Plan to attend and bring family, friends, and neighbors to share in the fun, food, and art. Contact Marcia Ellsworth for details.

## Countdown to Success

- Bonnie Till



Our third annual family-friendly EcoFest Wichita celebration Saturday, October 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., is coming together in grand fashion, and everyone who is working on it is bursting with excitement. Why? Too many reasons to enumerate in just one article, but we'll give a sampling.

*First*, our stellar sponsors: KPTS and Bicycle X-Change.

*Second*, an amazing variety of exhibitors, educators, and vendors: The popular Great Plains Nature Center will be featuring live animals – snakes and lizards. The many exhibitors will prove that crafts, decorative items, useful items, clothing, jewelry, and up-cycled and recycled items have charm, as well as support the idea of environmental sustainability. Beautiful and intriguing art work inspired by repurposed and recycled materials will be featured.

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# **In Touch**

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[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.

## Thank You for Being a Friend

- Holly Terrill

Some people believe they are successful if they have lots of friends, and some think it's better to have few. I fall somewhere in the middle. I love to make new friends, to meet often with current friends, to reconnect with past friends, and to stay connected to many friends through social media.

Growing up moving around a lot meant making lots of new friends, and I adored all them all. The problem for me has always been keeping friends. "Out of sight and out of mind" is a troubling statement that is, sadly, a very accurate explanation for what I often allowed to happen.

Something I've come to understand as I've grown older is that, as cliché as it might be, true friends are always around when you need them, and occasionally you'll find out that someone you might have at one time categorized as a co-worker or acquaintance shows up at the right moment and saves you from yourself.

I haven't told my friends enough how much they mean to me, how important they've been in the evolution of who I've become. To friends I let slip away, I apologize; it pains me every day. To friends I seldom see or speak with, you are in my heart; I miss you. To friends I am fortunate enough to see or speak with regularly, I appreciate you. Every friend helps shape me; I love each of them for their unique part in my life.

Don't let your friends slip away. Don't let the responsibilities of adulthood keep you from the people who are special to you. Tell them you love them, and thank them for being your friend.

## Financial Planning

- Rev. David Carter

At our October 2nd first Sunday lunch, financial advisor Tim Rogers will speak with interested members of the congregation, asking and answering questions, and offering his years of experience as a resource for financial planning for individuals, for families, and for the church

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## Social Action Report

- Margi Ault-Duell

**Pride Weekend:** Don't miss out on Wichita Pride events happening all weekend on September 24-25. Pride is an annual celebration of LGBTQIA rights, communities and people. The first Pride events took place in 1970 to commemorate the Stonewall Riots, which ignited more widespread organizing for gay rights in the U.S. Here's a breakdown of the events in Wichita:

**Family Picnic:** Sat. (9/24), 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at O.J. Watson Park, 3022 S. McLean Blvd.;

**Block Party:** Sat. (9/24), 5:30-9:30 p.m., Mid-America All Indian Center, 650 N. Seneca St.;

**Drag Show:** Sat. (9/24), 10:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m., Club Boomerang, 1400 E. 1st St. N.; and

**Pridefest:** Sun. (9/25), 12-6 p.m., Mid-America All Indian Center.

For more information about the events, visit the website [www.wichitapride.org](http://www.wichitapride.org). You can also contact me to help you track down info! My number is 520-396-0633, and my email is [socialaction@firstuu.net](mailto:socialaction@firstuu.net).

**Interfaith Sunday:** Reb. Moti Rieber, Executive Director of Kansas InterFaith Action, will be in Wichita this September for a series of events. You can catch him in the pulpit at First UU on Sunday, September 18!

**Campus Carry Meeting:** Join other Kansans in organizing to repeal the law allowing concealed carry of firearms on college and university campuses on July 1, 2017. The meeting is at 4 p.m. on Monday, September 19, at University United Methodist Church, 2220 N. Yale Ave.

**Faith and Public Policy Forum:** Join the discussion. Experts in the issues of taxation and budget, assistance to the poor, healing the sick, and the safety of our university environments will make presentations. The forum is a non-partisan, facts-only event, helping voters to get the information to make educated, values-based decisions in the voting booth. This event is at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 20, at College Hill United Methodist Church, 2930 E. 1st St.

**EcoFest Wichita 2016:** EcoFest is right around the corner, and so is our interactive EcoFest Mural! We're seeking donations to support the creation of a mural on our building, expressing our Seventh Principle: Respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. The mural painting process will be interactive, meaning that anyone can help with the painting (facilitated by experienced artists). If you'd like to contribute to the making of the mural, we need:

**Supplies:** brushes, paint trays, buckets/containers, rags, drop-cloths;

**Donations** for the cost of the paint;

**Experienced artists** to help with outlining before EcoFest; and

**Helpers** at EcoFest to co-facilitate the painting process.

If you'd like to help, contact Margi Ault-Duell, Social Action Coordinator, at 520-396-0633 or [socialaction@firstuu.net](mailto:socialaction@firstuu.net).

**Visitation Program:** We are seeking volunteers to help initiate a visitation program with Immigrant Detainees in Kansas. We're in an exploratory phase of this process, and need a small team of folks to do an initial visit to the facility in El Dorado. Beyond that first visit, we'll decide if and how to proceed. Please contact Margi if you like to participate—520-396-0633 or [socialaction@firstuu.net](mailto:socialaction@firstuu.net).

*Countdown to Success - Continued*

*Third,* everyone who attends EcoFest Wichita will have the opportunity to participate in the creation of a mural which will wrap around the southeast corner of our building. The mural will depict the UU principle to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person. It will be sketched on the building by artists, and the rest of us will fill in the color. It will be beautiful, and it will draw attention to our church.

*Fourth,* every festival features food. Ours will too. In addition to an amazing bake sale, we will sell lunch, featuring carnivore, vegetarian, and vegan soups served with gorgeous multigrain bread.

But wait, there's more! Wonderful Antiques and Collectables! A raffle! Children's activities ala Denise Jackson Simon! Rickshaw rides! Books galore! And the list goes on...!

**HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

**Volunteer:** Success does not come by magic. Here's what LaRilla Combs wants you to know: You've heard the saying, "It takes a village...." Well, it takes the First UU "Village of Volunteers" to have a successful EcoFest Wichita 2016! You're invited to join our "village" of volunteers by signing the volunteer sheet at the EcoFest Wichita table located in the gathering space before and after church, or contact LaRilla at 316-559-4478 or [LaRillaCombs@aol.com](mailto:LaRillaCombs@aol.com).

**Tell Everyone You Know and Those You Don't Know:** Last year we estimated 500 attended. This year YOU can help increase this number by continuing to spread the word among your neighbors, friends, and even strangers about First UU's amazing EcoFest Wichita.

Yes, we're counting down the days to another successful celebration of living green and spreading the word in the Wichita community about First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita and our values and principles. Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford are co-chairs of the event. Admission is only \$2, and kids 12 and under are admitted free.

**Save the Date: "Pete, Woody and Me"**

- Anne Bailey

The Music Committee has tentatively scheduled a concert for Saturday, October 22, with Spook Handy, who is promoting his new recording entitled "Pete, Woody and Me." Save the date, and check the October newsletter for details.

**Autumn Leaf**

- Lila Arnold

Its certain silver  
will not come again  
but has its eternity  
in memory.

**Full Moon Celebration**

Our celebration will begin at 7:00 p.m. at First UU Wichita on Friday, September 16. Join us for an informal get together to talk, sing, drum and maybe even dance. Please call Linda Jordan, 512-6652; or Kathy Hull, 204-9956, for further details.

**Labor Day Party**

You are cordially invited to wrap up the summer with the UU Holiday Party Group. We will celebrate Labor Day, the day when hardly anyone works, 'cause we're celebrating work and workers. Join us for scintillating conversation, irresistible edibles, and a laugh-out-loud game of Apples to Apples. Please bring a covered dish for dinner on Labor Day, Monday, September 5, at First UU Church. We gather at 5:30 and dine at 6.

# September 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	
<b>4</b> 9:45a Adult RE 11:00a Worship Service NO Childrens RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	<b>5</b> Office Closed - Labor Day 5:30p Holiday Potluck	<b>6</b> 6:30p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	<b>7</b> 7:00p Committee on Ministry	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 2:00p Membership Committee	<b>10</b> 9:30a Private Event 10:00 a Caring Committee
<b>11</b> 9:45a Adult RE 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Childrens RE 12:15p Leadership Council	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 6:30p Zen Friends	<b>14</b> 7:00p Worship Committee	<b>15</b> 7:00p Green Sanctuary Committee	<b>16</b> 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group 7:00p Full Moon Celebration	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult RE 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Childrens RE	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 6:30p Zen Friends	<b>21</b> 7:00p Board of Trustees Ministry 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	<b>22</b> 4:00p Final Friday Art Setup	<b>23</b> 5:00p Final Friday Art Crawl	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:45a Adult RE 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Childrens RE	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 6:30p Zen Friends	<b>28</b> 1:30p Newsletter Mailing 7:00p Social Action Group	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	

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## France under Siege

- Masud Chand

“Every man has two countries – his own and France” – a saying often attributed to Thomas Jefferson, rings as true today as it did during the revolutionary era. When it comes to facing terror directed against civilians in the recent past, France stands in a league of its own. In the last year alone, it has faced attacks against the offices of Charlie Hebdo that killed 11 people, November’s IS-organized strike against a concert hall and a football stadium that killed 130, Bastille Day’s attack against families celebrating France’s hard won freedoms during the French revolution that killed 84, and the slitting of the throat of Father Jacques Hamel while praying in church. For me this begs the question: Why France? What is so revolting about France that it has moved to the top of the terrorists’ hit list?

While these answers are rarely simple, I see some common threads that help me understand some of their motivations. France has historically assumed the role as standard bearer of Western secular liberalism. This has seen France robustly defending free speech, even when it is seen as blasphemy by some; unapologetically standing up for the equal treatment of women, even when it is unpopular in various cultures; and being in the vanguard of speaking for enlightenment ideals, even though it is often seen as promoting the wrong “values” by some. In short, France is often seen by terrorists, rightly or wrongly, as an atheist power which is both defending ideals such as human rights, free speech, and democracy, and trying to impose them on their world.

The struggle that France is engaged in today will be long and hard, with no easy victory, but as President Françoise Hollande said, one where we need to get used to a new normal. This could be one of the defining struggles of the coming years. It is not a clash of civilizations (with due deference to Professor Huntington); it is a clash for civilization.

## Creative Cooking with Bonnie Till

When we cook for others, we show love, and when we cook together, it is a relationship enhancing experience. A group came together in the UU kitchen on Creativity Sunday (August 14) and shared in making Beef Stroganoff. I chose this recipe for the following reasons: 1. There is much love in my years of preparing this recipe for my family, and 2. The recipe is listed in the First UU cookbook, *Season to Taste*.<sup>\*</sup> *Season to Taste* was created by members and friends of First UU in 2002. The book was lovingly edited by Lara Pollock. There are many fond memories of beloved members and friends contained in this recipe book.

Dana Hensley and Del Smith assisted with the chopping of many onions and mushrooms. Elizabeth Crawford and son Miles oversaw the sautéing of the vegetables. Holger Meyer learned how to make a roux without lumps. John Jordan made sure we measured out the correct amounts of each ingredient. And I disclosed the secret of adding sour cream to a hot sauce without curdling the cream. In the end we created a delicious dish served over egg noodles which we shared with the congregation.

\*Want a copy of *Season to Taste*? Contact Bonnie Till at 722-8208 or [bect@cox.net](mailto:bect@cox.net)

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## Minister's Musings

- Rev. David Carter

Teach Me 9/2011

Once, a small-time mystic came seeking Srila Sanatan Goswami. He came because he heard that Sanatan owned a touchstone, that whatever it touched turned to gold. Lust for gold brought him to Sanatan's hut, where he found the mystic master seated, eyes closed, absorbed in meditation. Mr. small-time sat at the master's feet and waited. When Sanatan finally opened his eyes, the seeker seized the propitious moment: I have come to beg from you the touchstone that turns ordinary things into gold. I want that. It is why I have come here to meet your holiness. Sanatan smiled. There is no need to beg. Follow the path outside this hut, he said pointing, and at its end there is a garbage heap – buried beneath the refuse at the bottom of that pile you will find the thing you seek. Take it, along with my blessings. With that Sanatan closed his eyes anew, and returned to his meditation. Without delay, the seeker took off down the path straight to the garbage heap. And sure enough, there beneath the trash lay the fabled touchstone. He held it, he smelled it, he hefted it in his hand. And then he tested it. The little gray stone instantly transformed whatever it touched into gold. Unbelieving, astounded, and mad with visions of wealth, he carefully placed the little gray treasure in his bag and set out, a happy man.

But soon he was back. O great one, why have you cheated me? Surely, you have cheated me. I came seeking the greatest treasure, but this touchstone lay buried in garbage. I am no fool. You possess a greater treasure. That is what I have come back here for. That is what I want. Pray, give me that.

Sanatan smiled. Ah, so, you have found me out. Yes, I possess the greatest of all treasures. But if that is what you want, then you must do as I did. You must throw the touchstone away. Sanatan bade him cast the touchstone into the depths of nearby Radha Kund, and return to him. Trembling, Sanatan's visitor rushed away, did as he'd been instructed, and hurried back. Sanatan then initiated him into the chanting of the Holy Name.

Akbar the Great heard tell of this great wonder, and coveting the stone for himself, had the length and breadth of Radha Kund dredged. Strong nets fashioned from finely linked iron chain were dragged through the dark waters of the deep kund by the emperor's servants. Light turned to dark, dark turned to light. Hoary time patiently told the pious rosary of days. The endless snake swallowed its tail. Sanatan's fame turned to gold. Akbar's iron nets turned to gold, and Akbar's faith also. But the touchstone was never found.

## Music Committee Notes

- Jana Rambo

The Music Committee is continuing to work on improving the music in our services. A happy side effect of our recent Creativity Services has been identifying people who may be interested in singing in a choir. We will be contacting them in the next week or so; practices will begin in October, with our first performance for a service in November. If you didn't attend the Music break-out session, can carry a tune, and would like to be in the choir, please let us know.

Our pianist, Carol Denning, has a multitude of contacts in the music community, and has been getting in touch with them about playing for our services. Carol did a wonderful job of organizing the music group during the Creativity Services, and has lots of ideas for the choir.

We continue to need more people on the Music Committee. Please let me know if you can serve the church in this capacity.

## Recoveries

- LaRilla Combs, Caring Committee

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. We thought you'd like to know:

**Fern Van Geison**, a long time church member, fell several weeks ago and is making a good recovery in the Prairie Homestead Health Care skilled nursing section. Let's shower Fern with get well wishes.

We are delighted that **Del Smith** has successfully recovered from surgery and is able to once again join in our First UU Church activities.

What touches one of us affects us all. In caring for one another, we are cared for.

## Goldfinches in the Garden

- Anita Culp

The flower garden went like gangbusters this summer from all of the rain. The purple coneflowers especially grew in profusion. During August some congregants witnessed American goldfinches sitting on the coneflowers and eating the seeds. What a treat to see these bright yellow, white, and black birds in our garden.

## We Need You!!!

- Denise Jackson-Simon, DRE

The children and youth Religious Exploration (RE) program is in need of volunteers to join our team. It would involve one, sometimes two, Sundays per month. The more teachers we have, the less time it would require from anyone. The RE program is a very important component of our church. It can be very satisfying to spend time with our young ones. It's a win/win opportunity. Please consider joining our wonderful team of dedicated teachers. Catch me at church or feel free to call me at 945-7622.

## September Sundays

- September 4: Benjamin Chips, Lakota Spirituality; First Sunday Lunch  
September 11: Rev. Carter, Homecoming Sunday, Water Communion  
September 18: Rabbi Moti Rieber, Kansas Interfaith Action; Fall Equinox  
September 25: Rev. Carter, Spiritual Practices; PRIDE Festival

## Antiques and Collectables

- Nancy Milner

Most of us have a lovely antique or collectable given to us by a favorite family member. We have an attachment to the item, but want to pass it on to the next generation. Then, we discover the younger generation has no interest in polishing silver or caring for great grandma's Hummel collection. What to do?! I suggest you donate to First UU's Antique and Collectable booth at EcoFest Wichita. By doing this, you can help First UU financially, you can deduct the value of the item from your taxes if it sells, and the item will go to someone who will value and care for it.

**Interested? Bring your item(s) to the church by September 25.** Please bring it in a box or bag and include your name, address, and phone number. Leave the item on the white shelves in the adult RE classroom located in the southeast corner of the church. If you have any questions, contact Nancy Milner at 316-685-7682.

## RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon, DRE

Well, another summer in RE is quickly coming to a close. We've had a great variety of activities led by our wonderful congregation members. A big shout out of thanks to the following volunteers: Landon Schmidt; Whitney Leonard and friend, Faith; Anne Bailey and Linda Jordan; Charles Merrifield; Vivien Minshull-Ford and Millie Wherritt; Maddy and Holly Terrill; Bonnie Till; Elaine Edens; Christina Grande; and Durell Gilmore. We appreciate each of you, and we couldn't have done it without you!

It's on to planning the fall church year. We are still in need of more RE team members. Please consider joining us. It's a great opportunity to get to know our young people. We have lots to learn from one another!

Sunday, September 4, Labor Day weekend, there will be NO children's RE. The following Sunday will be our intergenerational Water Communion Service. We will kick off our new curriculums and lessons with a fun-filled "Back to Church Special" celebration on September 18. More details will be forthcoming, but mark your calendars now.

We look forward to seeing you all in the fall which promises to be filled with fun, adventure, learning, service, and lots of opportunities for celebration. Remember, it's much more fun when you are there!

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## FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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### Eclectic Readers

11:30 a.m., Friday, September 16: Will Alexis de Tocqueville's classic be relevant in today's social/political/economic climate? Read the book, and come discuss it with us! "French sociologist and political theorist Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) traveled to the United States in 1831 to study its prisons and returned with a wealth of broader observations that he codified in 'Democracy in America' (1835), one of the most influential books of the 19th century. With its trenchant observations on equality and individualism, Tocqueville's work remains a valuable explanation of America to Europeans and of Americans to themselves" ([www.history.com/topics/alexis-de-tocqueville](http://www.history.com/topics/alexis-de-tocqueville)). Del Smith, 612-0826.

### Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. The coordinator been distracted by travel, butterfly and wrakspurts, but we will get a book for September. Join us and help us find one. We are also going to participate in the Wichita wide Big Read in October. Discussions will take place at Goodreads. You can join us at <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/177877-digerati-buchgemeinschaft>