



# In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA  
FOUNDED 1887

Thank You  
- Corey Swertfager

Soon, many in the United States will once again get together with family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving. It reminds me how thankful I am for our extended family here at First UU.

Thank you to all who gave their time and treasure to make EcoFest Wichita fun and successful! It was fabulous to see so many people joyfully pitching in.

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*Our new mural! in mid-paint. Painted during Eco-Fest October 8th, 2016. Photo by Rolando Gomez.*

# In Touch

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

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

Member  
Unitarian Universalist  
Association

Minister: Rev. David Carter

[minister@firstuu.net](mailto:minister@firstuu.net)

(316) 684-3481

Wed.: 3 PM – 6 PM

President: Corey Swertfager

Office Manger:

[office@firstuu.net](mailto:office@firstuu.net)

(316) 684-3481

Anita Culp

Mon., Tue., & Fri.: 9:30am – 2:00pm

Wed. & Thr.: 1:00 – 5:00pm

Director of Religious  
Exploration:

Denise Jackson-Simon

[simontrio@aol.com](mailto:simontrio@aol.com)

(316) 644-2022

Webmaster: Jack Regehr

[web@firstuu.net](mailto:web@firstuu.net)

Newsletter Staff

Copy Editor: Suzanne Miller

[millerbuchhorn@gmail.com](mailto:millerbuchhorn@gmail.com)

Layout Editor:

Rolando Gomez

[shadoe7@mac.com](mailto:shadoe7@mac.com)

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

## *Presidents Note, continued*

And thank you to all who organize and participate in our worship services, our concerts, our fundraisers, our classes, our discussion groups, our social activities, our committee meetings, our First Sunday Lunches, our dinners, our calls to action, our food drives,...

And thank you all for making First UU a safe haven and a place that challenges minds and rejuvenates hearts and souls. Thank you for helping us become the best we can be.

## Alternative Gift Market

*Give gifts of peace, justice, and sustainability*, says Julie Brin, Volunteer Steering Committee Member for the Wichita Alternative Gift Market, by joining hundreds of shoppers at the 22nd annual Wichita Alternative Gift Market on Saturday, November 12, 2016, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at East Heights United Methodist Church, 4407 E. Douglas. She notes that we may even recognize a few vendors and volunteers there from EcoFest Wichita 2016.

The market, co-hosted by dozens of local service groups and congregations, is an opportunity to learn about and contribute to projects that relieve poverty and suffering around the world. Alternative Gifts are humanitarian gifts given in honor of friends or loved ones. Like traditional gifts, they express love and celebration. Unlike traditional gifts, they do not contribute to the consumer stream and will not be re-gifted. These tax-deductible gifts come with either greeting cards or hand-made ornaments to represent your donations. Additionally, traditional, tangible gifts are available for purchase: global artisan crafts from Fair Trade Fans of Newton & Wichita (Ten Thousand Villages); 2017 wall calendars from Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Kansas; and fair-trade chocolate, coffee and tea from Equal Exchange. Light breakfast and lunch items are also available for purchase.

Of the \$30,360 raised in 2015, \$3,835 was disbursed to six local agencies, with the remainder disbursed to thirty national and international projects from the Alternative Gifts International catalog ([www.altgifts.org](http://www.altgifts.org)). This year's local projects are Circles Network, Dear Neighbor Ministries, Episcopal Migration Ministries, Roth Project (Alzheimer's Association), West High School OWLS, and YWCA Women's Crisis Center. For more information, see Wichita Alternative Gift Market on Facebook.

## Social Action Report

- Margi Ault-Duell

**Building the Beloved Community Event:** Save the date for our second annual Building the Beloved Community gathering on Saturday, February 4, hosted by the UU Congregation of Lawrence. This all-day event convenes UUs and other allies from around Kansas to discuss social justice issues and identify strategies for action. If you want to be involved in planning this event, please talk to our Social Action Coordinator Margi Ault-Duell.

**Our Place in the Web of Life:** Have you ever heard people debate which is more important: climate change or racism? Clean energy or economic justice? Environmental damage and human injustices are often seen as separate issues and even pitted against each other, when, in fact, they are deeply interrelated. How can we live in right relationship with other humans and other species? What can we do to restore the planet and create healthy living environments for all our communities? As part of our Green Sanctuary certification process, we will explore questions like these within a framework of EcoJustice. Join us for a two-session workshop series to dig into the details of how our lives in Wichita intersect with communities around the globe. The workshops will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at First UU on Saturday, December 3, and Saturday, December 10. Save the dates and spread the word! Sign up on our bulletin board or by talking to Margi.

**EcoFest Mural:** A giant THANK YOU to all who made our Seventh Principle mural possible! Through the generous contributions of time, energy, money, and supplies from the congregation, we were able to add some color to our building, express one of our deep values, and engage the community in a new way. This mural was painted by First UU congregants, members of the ICT Army of Artists, friends and family who volunteered, and lots of people who attended EcoFest. Public art is a powerful tool for social change. Our Seventh Principle, stated on the mural, encourages all of us to “respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part,” thereby calling us to awareness and compassionate action because ecological harm is a justice issue between human communities, between us and other species, and for the planet as a whole.

**First Sunday Food Bank Drive:** For our service on Sunday, November 6, we will dig into our stories and memories about food – foods we love to make, eat, and share with others, and foods that remind us of the people and places we love. We will also talk about food insecurity, which is an issue that impacts a lot of Wichitans. To honor our shared experiences of abundance and hunger, please bring donations for our Food Bank shelves. And don't forget to stay after the service for our First Sunday Lunch!

**Standing Rock Donations:** A monthly run of donated items will be going up from Wichita to support the Standing Rock water defenders for as long as necessary. In October, First UU collected and sent three winter coats, three bags of gloves and hats, three blankets, a sleeping bag, two camping mats, two pillows, several bandanas and batteries, and the nine cases of water left from EcoFest. The water defenders have been camping out since April 2016 near the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline through tribal lands in North Dakota. The pipeline construction has already destroyed sacred sites and will contaminate the tribe's key water source. The defenders have been met with violent repression and have been largely ignored by mainstream media. This is a human rights issue and a manifestation of the long

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Legacy of colonization and displacement. If you have items to donate, please leave them (with a note) on or near Margi's desk in the corner RE room. The defenders need items appropriate for winter camping—gloves, hats, scarves, coats, batteries, solar chargers, tents, camping pads, cookware, etc.

## And He Said

- Lila Arnold

When I die  
 let heaven be a library,  
 said an old man with a friendly wink  
 as we two looked at  
 books displayed  
 on tables in the torrid shade  
 of a big-box bookstore awning,  
 and he said, if heaven's not a place  
 with books my one-time wife  
 will have the last laugh;  
 she lives in Montrose now.  
 How she hated books,  
 my nose always in 'em.  
 He wiped his sweaty fingers  
 on his denims and when  
 his wrinkled hand caressed  
 the sun-warmed cover of a book,  
 I felt it on my face.

## Full Moon Celebration

Our November gathering will be on Monday, November 14, at 7 p.m. at the church. Please join us as we celebrate with drumming, chanting, singing and perhaps a bit of dancing. You are welcome to bring your own instruments or share ours.

Whether curious or dedicated, we invite you to join us. Contacts are Kathy Hull, 204-9956; Anne Bailey, 650-4905; or Linda Jordan, 512-6652.

## Beloved Community Thanksgiving

Everyone is welcome to join in the traditional potluck meal at our church on Thanksgiving Day, November 24! Watch First UU social media and emailed announcements for details. If you have questions or want to volunteer to help, let Jana Rambo know, 686-4215.

## The Flower Gardens

- Anita Culp

It's fall, and that means the purple asters are in full bloom next to the handicap parking. If the sun is shining, there are swarms of butterflies and small native bees busy at the flowers. Take a detour and check out these beauties.

# November 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6:30p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	2 7:00p Committee on Ministry	3	4	5
6 Daylight Savings Ends 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch 12:30p Financial Planning Seminar	7	8 6:30p Zen Friends	9 7:00p Worship Committee	10	11 2:00p Membership Committee	12 10:00a Caring Committee 1:00p Occasional Book Club
13 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:30p Leadership Council	14 7:00p Music Committee 7:00p Full Moon Celebration	15 6:30p Zen Friends	16 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	17 7:00p Green Sanctuary Committee	18 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	19 9:00a New Member Class 9:30a Private Event 3:00p Partner Church Tea
20 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	21	22 6:30p Zen Friends	23 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	24 Office Closed Thanksgiving Meal	25	26
27 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	28 2:00p Movie Group 6:30p Writers Group	29 6:30p Zen Friends	30			



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)

Who's Who @ First UU

FIRST UU OFFICERS & BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President – Corey Swertfager  
 President-Elect – Holly Terrill  
 Board of Trustees – Mike Diggs, Nancy Milner, Kathleen McGee, Bonnie Till, Anne Welsbacher, Jana Rambo, and Doug Wilson  
 Treasurer – Anne Bailey

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Adult RE – Frank Ruf  
 Aesthetics – TBD  
 Building & Grounds – TBD  
 Caring – LaRilla Combs and Jana Rambo  
 Chalice Lighters Ambassador – Bonnie Till  
 Children’s RE – Wendy Haynie-Coxby  
 Chalice Book Store – Nancy Milner  
 Communications – Corey Swertfager  
 Custodian – Durell Gilmore  
 EcoFest – Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford  
 Ethical Eating – TBD  
 Finance – Charles Merrifield  
   Financial Commitment – TBD  
   Fundraising – TBD  
 Green Sanctuary – Linda Jordan and Ned Lakin  
 Hospitality – TBD  
 Kitchen Mavens – TBD  
 Librarian – Nancy Milner  
 Membership – Bonnie Till  
 Music – Jana Rambo  
 Partner Church – Betty Hensley and Debbie Wadman  
 Personnel – TBD  
 Social Action – Margi Ault-Duell  
 UUA Denominational Liaison – Mike Diggs  
 Worship – Marcia Diggs

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Charles Merrifield, chair; LaRilla Combs, Linda Jordan, Sandy Roberts, Rachel Rutledge, Frank Ruf, and Rev. David Carter, ex officio

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Susan Hund-Milne, Linda Jordan, and Del Smith

GROUP CONTACTS

Craft Night – Anita Culp  
 Digerati Buchgemeinschaft – Rolando Gomez  
 Eclectic Readers – Del Smith  
 Fourth Monday Movie Group – TBA  
 Fourth Monday Writers Group – Amy Geyer  
 Garden Group – Anita Culp and Linda Jordon  
 Humanist Group – Charles Merrifield  
 Occasional Book Club – Amy Geyer  
 Pagan Group – Anne Bailey and Kathy Hull  
 Zen Friends of Wichita – Bob Feleppa and Vivien Minshull-Ford

## What Makes First UU First UU?

- Del Smith

The word “minister” comes from the Latin *ministrare*, which means “to serve.” Sometimes our ministry is simply being openhearted, paying attention when someone shares joy, pain, grief, or the everyday events of their life. Sometimes ministry is more obvious.

Shared ministry – serving one another – is fully evident on the first Sunday of every month. First Sunday Lunch is a long established opportunity for fellowship at First UU. Our custom is to invite first time visitors to be our guests at the meal, and many, if not most, congregants stay for lunch.

Let's meet a few of the folks who make it possible for the rest of us to partake of nourishment and fellowship.

Jim Buchhorn and Debbie Wadman are usually in the kitchen. Why do these busy professionals choose to cook for us?

Jim, a professor of English at Butler Community College, has never had formal culinary training, but he's done just about everything in the restaurant business from the time he was a 14-year-old washing dishes at a Taco Bell to the years he was working his way through school “shift managing fast-food joints.” He learned to make manicotti from Ukrainian cooks in a fancy Italian restaurant by the time he was 16. “I'm really busy now with my current work teaching people to read and think, but I still like to cook whenever I can, so I'm always happy to jump in and help out in the church kitchen, even if I can only do so in a limited way because of all my other responsibilities.” Jim, a vegetarian who cooks at home as a hobby, says “cooking is a hobby you can eat!”

Debbie, a professor of German at Wichita State University, likes to help at First Sunday Lunch, especially with the cooking. “When we have vegan UUs, I try to make something vegan for more food choices. I enjoy feeding people, but planning how much is needed is not my strong suit, nor is arriving early! This is a busy semester (teaching 18 credit hours). Sometimes I cannot stay for the clean-up. Other times I can be there until 2. But I am always good for bringing a dish, or 2 or 3 or 4!”

Jim and Debbie are regular contributors, but many in the congregation bring dishes to our monthly feasts, and others help prep the meal. The rest of us bring side dishes, desserts, and salads to make a full meal. What is needed is announced on social media and in the Weekly Update email. On November 6, we will have a potluck (see Bonnie Till's “Indian Summer Potluck” article in this issue).

Other less obvious ways of being of service are necessary for a successful First Sunday Lunch, especially set up and clean up.

Peter Ninemire is always among the first to bring tables from the storage area to set up in the gathering space. Peter is succinct: “It's no big deal.” He figures that it is one of the ways he can contribute to the church “in line with doing what I can when I can. I am very grateful for the cooks and everyone else who makes a contribution.”

Charlie King is a regular in cleaning up the kitchen. When he first began attending First UU, Kent Rowe told him about the First Sunday Lunch. “I was rarely busy afterwards and stayed to help. Having been a professional dishwasher more than a few times, I fell into the position. I also like to eat and am usually one of the last to finish. This is a way I can chip in and help out.”

These four are typical of the many who make people feel at home through the hospitality of food. Making people feel at home is one of the hallmarks of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita. And that characteristic is “what makes First UU First UU.”

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*What Makes First UU, First UU continued*

### FAQs about First Sunday Lunch:

**What's the cost?** Anne Bailey, who makes change as necessary, tells those who ask that \$6 is suggested, or whatever they can afford. Some pay nothing, some \$1, and some people put in \$20 or pay for others. Some people put in \$5 or so when they bring food to share.

**Who is in charge?** Good question. In the recent past, the person known as the "Kitchen Maven" has coordinated First Sunday Lunches. Magda Garrett stepped down after several years of service. Magda's predecessor was Judy Naillon. Corey Swertfager, president, is looking for a maven, not necessarily a gourmet or even talented amateur cook, but someone with organizational skills who can plan ahead and communicate needs for the next First Sunday Lunch! Could that be you?

**Is First Sunday Lunch a fundraiser or fellowship?** Both!

## Have an Affinity for Films?

First UU film buffs meet at 2 p.m. on the 4th Monday of every month. We are "leaderless." Each month, movies are suggested, and a choice is made. The person who suggests the movie is responsible for obtaining the film, introducing it, and facilitating the discussion. We've seen foreign movies, indie productions, classics, political statement movies, and just plain off-beat titles. All of these are critically acclaimed movies not seen recently in local theaters.

We meet too late in the month to announce our choices in this newsletter, but watch social media and the First UU Weekly Update email. If you would like to join the movie group email list, let Del Smith know ([wichitadel@aol.com](mailto:wichitadel@aol.com)).

## Caring Committee

- LaRilla Combs

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 are saddened to hear that Marsha Digg's mother passed away Saturday, October 8. We send our heartfelt condolences to Marsha, Mike, and Amanda.

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

## Indian Summer

### Potluck

- Bonnie Till

A new member of our congregation, Chris Land, is taking on First Sunday Lunch responsibilities for November, December, and January. Chris, Jennifer, and son Jack started attending First UU in 2016.

November's FSL is an Indian Summer Potluck because Chris is confident that November 6 will be a glorious fall day and that he will be able to grill hamburgers and hot dogs outside. Of course, there will be vegetarian and vegan options.

The next few Sundays, Chris will be signing up folks to help with the meal on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Please say yes to Chris and contribute by signing up to bring a potluck item or to help in the kitchen before, during, and/or after the meal.

## Meditation Class

Rev. Carter's meditation class will now start January 23rd. The class will continue to run for 10 weeks.

## Raising UUs

- Sheri Barnes

Growing up in the Catholic Church, I was discouraged from thinking critically and was frequently told, "We just believe without question." As a new vegetarian at age 12, I received from my parish priest a letter expressing that God intends for us to be omnivorous. After struggling for years with guilt and fear, I eventually pulled away from Catholicism.

When my son Logan was born 12 years ago, it was important to me to raise him in an atmosphere that not only allowed, but encouraged, critical thinking. I have tried to nurture in our lives the UU fourth principle, "A free and responsible search for truth and meaning."

I am grateful that I had the courage to remain true to my convictions, and I am proud of Logan, a lifelong vegetarian, for making the decision as a kindergartner to move from vegetarianism to veganism, as I had done a few years earlier. His grounding in the free and responsible search for truth and meaning facilitated his ability to step out of convention and live his ethics, which embrace the concept of social justice for all species, in contrast to the assumption of human superiority with which I was raised.

*(Editor's note: This is part of a series of short articles – 100 to 200 words – on raising children as Unitarian Universalists. **If you were raised UU or are raising UUs**, consider sending me short reflections, memories, questions, advice, resources, inspirations, confessions, or whatever you think on this inexhaustible topic. Thanks! Suzanne Miller, [millerbuchhorn@gmail.com](mailto:millerbuchhorn@gmail.com))*

## Second Annual International Tea

- Debbie Wadman

Our second annual International Tea/Coffee to benefit the Unitarian Church of our Partner Church in Homorod-Szentpal, Romania, is at 3:30 p.m., Saturday, November 19. Much like at an English Tea, you will be served delicious cakes and pastries at a floral-decorated table while you listen to music and converse with your friends and the guests you bring. Pinkies lifted, everyone! We promise you a wonderful time!

If you would like to help bake for this event, call Debbie Wadman at 681-3307 for ideas or to list your contribution. If you are not a great baker, that is fine as well. Nancy Milner is coordinating volunteers to decorate tables, set up, and clean up. Nancy's number is 685-7682. It takes a couple of dozen helpers to make this event a success. It sounds like a lot, but is really just one afternoon each fall. Thanks for your help!

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## FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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7202 E. 21<sup>st</sup> St. N.  
Wichita, KS 67206  
[www.firstuu.net](http://www.firstuu.net)



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### Eclectic Readers

11:30 am, Friday, November 18: Bring a brown bag lunch and discuss *Stones from the River* by Ursula Hegi. The first paragraph reveals Trudi Montag's praying to grow (she's a "Zwerg," a dwarf). Her story is the voice of anyone who has tried to fit in despite being different. Eventually, she learns that all humans share being different in some way. Critics hailed the novel as timeless and unforgettable, the story of ordinary people living in extraordinary times (1915-1952). It is set in Germany where Hegi lived until the age of 18. Del Smith, [316-612-0826](tel:316-612-0826).

### Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. For November we are choosing between Ursula K LeGuin, *Wizard of Earthsea* and Earnest Cline, *Armada*. Act, fast if you want to help us chose. Discussions will take place at Goodreads. You can join us at <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/177877-digerati-buchgemeinschaft>