



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

Let's Get Together

- Corey Swertfager, President

There are many ways that some of the congregation gather to learn, grow, and celebrate. Then there are times that call upon all of the congregation to come together, such as the following, all occurring at First UU immediately after Sunday services:

April 30: Special Congregational Meeting. First UU has run out of cash reserves and is not currently receiving enough income to cover expenses. We are calling upon all First UU congregants to come together on April 30 to help overcome our financial shortfall and to grow our abundance. First UU has weathered similar situations in its 130-year existence. If we work together, we will find the solutions.

May 21: All Food on Deck! Time to celebrate the conclusion of our annual stewardship drive. It will be a potluck, with laughter and perhaps a surprise or two!

June 4: Annual Congregational Meeting. We'll approve the final budget and vote for our next set of board and nominating committee members. See the special Candidates' Bios section in this issue and the June issue of *In Touch*.

All Hands on Deck Party

On Sunday, May 21, following the church service, members and friends of First UU are invited to participate in a potluck cookout lunch to celebrate our successful 2017-18 Stewardship Campaign. Your Board of Trustees is planning a few surprises to insure this event is fun and festive. Of course, the most fun is when we all participate and build community.

A signup sheet for this event is on display in the gathering space (foyer). Please sign up and let us know:

- If you plan to attend,
- How many there will be in your party, and
- What you plan to provide from the menu categories listed on the signup sheet.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact Bonnie Till at 316-644-4043 or bect@cox.net.



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.

Seven Reasons Everyone in Church Ought to Wear a Nametag

- The Membership Committee

1. Few people know everybody in the church. Even in the smallest churches, it's sometimes difficult to remember everybody's name. If/as the church grows, that task becomes even more difficult. Nametags allow us to admit that struggle while providing a way to overcome it.
2. Nametags invite conversation. Knowing another person's name breaks down one barrier to conversations that church folks ought to feel comfortable having. It's simply easier to talk with others when you are on a first-name basis.
3. Knowing names makes fellowship more personal. While calling each other "Hey there" is doable, that nomenclature is often a cover up for "I'm sorry I don't know your name, and I'm embarrassed to ask." As long as conversations remain at the anonymous level, fellowship will remain surface level.
4. Nametags save embarrassment. We've probably all called someone by the wrong name, only to realize it later (or perhaps even within the same conversation). That's embarrassing for both parties.
5. Nametags are an inexpensive way to promote outward focus. The church that says, "We don't need nametags since we already know everyone anyway" is probably saying more than they care to admit: they see few guests at their church, and they probably aren't expecting any. On the other hand, using nametags is one way to say, "We expect guests, and we want to be ready for them."
6. Guests feel less conspicuous. I understand why we give guests a nametag, but doing so for them alone actually makes them even more noticeable – and puts them at a disadvantage in conversations. I know their name, but they don't know mine if I'm not also wearing a nametag. Guests should never be the ones who must do the asking.
7. Saying to someone, "Please let us know your name" also says, "We want to know you." People who come to a church are looking for something. They welcome care and concern.

Minister's Musings: Cast Your Bread On The Waters

- Rev. David Carter

As the Roman stoic philosopher Seneca wrote centuries ago, "It is not the man who has too little, but the man who craves more, that is poor." So, is Seneca's aphorism anachronistic, here and now in the 21st century? Sadly, no. Too often, now as in times past, those who are financially well-to-do but morally and ethically bankrupt egregiously abuse, afflict, and exploit the vulnerable.

This observation bears mulling over. And one can do worse than to reflect deeply on the stringent laws of nature which are revealed in the world's wisdom traditions. In every age and clime, the world's great teachers have taught that those who selfishly misuse wealth and power do great harm. But the greatest harm they do is to none other than themselves. Willing to stop at nothing in pursuit of their ambitions, with no regard for the well-being and happiness of others, and willfully ignorant of the laws of karma, such self-deluded "paupers of time," however financially well off they may be, are inevitably "hoist in their own petard." As Garma C. C. Chang, translator of the Tibetan spiritual classic "The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa," explains in a footnote:

"Ripened karma" may be translated as "fully ripened Karma" or "the Karmic force that ripens in different lives." The law of Karma says that usually a deed brings not merely one, but many, effects. For example, if a man commits murder, he will be punished by his conscience, by the law, by the ruin of his reputation in life, and so on. But this is not all. The force of Karma has not yet been exhausted. In a future incarnation, or incarnations, the murderer will be subjected by this mysterious Karmic force to shorter lives and much sickness; or he will be prone to rebirths in times and lands where there are frequent wars and perils. This force, the Karma that ripens in different lives, seems to be the most fundamental and mysterious aspect of the Buddhist doctrine.

My cups ran over, but I craved more.
Seeking wealth sideways,
Greed plucked the sun from the sky.
I looked, but in the dark, I couldn't see.

Matchless gifts that had graced my life
Slipped away, silently.
Misled by greed's masquerade, friends left,
Happiness stole away from me.

Nightly now, from deep in the heart's core,
Tears rain.
And because crying eyes forbid rest in sleep,
I rest in God.

Of course, we who wish to, can easily step into our intrinsic spiritual identity as "bliss billionaires." The secret is to learn and to enact the art of unselfish giving. It takes intelligence, courage, faith, and perseverance, but what else is new? How does the proverb go? Cast your bread on the waters, for after many days you will find it again...

Welcome, New Members!

Janelle Patterson: The most important thing for me to teach my kids is compassion. It wasn't until EcoFest a couple of years ago that I was exposed to UU's principles and really felt it possible that a church could help me with that. I have five boys, three by marriage and two by birth: 21, almost 18, 16, almost 7, and 3. I finally have a girl in my life, a beautiful 4-month-old granddaughter. I currently work in the financial department at the Sedgwick County Zoo. I have attended UU with my two youngest for over a year, and I am very excited to get more involved. I am passionate about eco-friendly living and social action.

Beltane Celebration

Beltane is the second principal Celtic festival which is celebrated approximately halfway between Spring Equinox and Summer Solstice. It marks the arrival of summer.

Join us on Saturday, May 6, for a potluck feast at 6 p.m., followed by an informal ritual about 7, at First UU Church. Please bring a generous dish to share. Coffee and tea will be available. You are encouraged to bring drums or other rhythm instruments. All are welcome.

Questions? Call Anne Bailey, 316-650-4905, or the church office, 316-684-3481, for further details.



Bonnie Till (behind podium) introduces new members Joe Lozano (left), April Bales (middle), and Bruce Roby (right)

May 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 2:00p Membership Committee 6:30p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	3 7:00p Committee on Ministry	4	5	6 6:00p Beltane Celebration
7 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	8	9 6:30p Zen Friends	10 1:30p Worship Committee	11	12	13 10:00a Caring Committee
14 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:30p Leadership Council	15 6:30p Writers Group	16 6:30p Zen Friends	17 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	18 7:00p Green Sanctuary Committee	19 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	20
21 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Pledge Celebration Potluck 12:20p Social Action Group	22 2:00p Movie Group	23 6:30p Zen Friends	24 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	25	26	27 6:30p UU Humanist Group
28 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	29 Office Closed 5:30p Memorial Day Potluck	30 6:30p Zen Friends	31			



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 – Charles Merrifield

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-Cosby

Chalice Book Store – Del Smith

Communications – Anne Welsbacher

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

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 – Anne Welsbacher

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

Garden Group – Anita Culp and Linda Jordan

Humanist Group – Charles Merrifield

Occasional Book Club – Amy Geyer

Pagan Group – Anne Bailey and Kathy Hull

Writers Group – Amy Geyer

Zen Friends of Wichita – Bob Feleppa and Vivien Minshull-Ford

Candidates' Bios

- Corey Swertfager

We have another great slate of candidates to choose from at our Annual Meeting (June 4, 12:30 p.m.), thanks to this year's thoughtful and expedient Nomination Committee: Del Smith, Susan Hund-Milne, and Linda Jordan!

President-Elect, to be empaneled by affirmation at annual meeting: Doug Wilson.

Board of Trustees, two to be elected for three years, one to be elected for two years: April Bales (running for three-year term); Dave Lombard (running for two-year term), Joe Lozano (running for three-year term), Holger Meyer (running for three-year term), Paula Peare (running for three-year term), Lori Young (running for two-year term).

Nominating Committee, three to be elected: Masud Chand, Rolando Gomez, Dee Dee Jordan, Vivien Minshull-Ford, Peter Ninemire.

Following are some candidates' short bios (others will run in the June issue of *In Touch*):

Rolando Gomez (Nominating Committee): I have been a member of the church for a few years now. Currently I get to be the layout editor for the *In Touch* newsletter and have lent a hand here and there at the church. My professional training is as an Engineer, and I work in the aerospace industry in testing and compliance. In my free time, I like spoiling my nephews, watching sci-fi (I grok Spock), and trying to read more. I even started a book club at the church. Recently, I have taken up jogging, completing a 5K this year, my first in 15 years.

DeeDee Jordan (Nominating Committee): My husband and I have been members of this church since 1970. Ancient, aren't we? I have served on the board several times. How glad I am to see a choir starting up, as choir was my first intro to the good people in this church. I know all the old (and not so old) members of the church and hope to know the young people soon as well. Thank you for the confidence you have placed in me. I plan to get some good people to serve you.

David Lombard (Board of Trustees): Origins: California born, Kansas bred. Education: Enterprise, Kansas, K through 12; Stanford University, BA; St. Mary's of California, MS; Wichita State University, Quality Management certificate. Family: Spouse (Caroni), one sibling, four grown children, eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren. Career: Industrial sales and management. Current Status: Retired; tutor mathematics, statistics, logic, probability theory. Interests: Quality of life issues, environmental concerns, promotion of gender-blind civil rights and opportunities for all, realpolitik (global outlook, effective political interventions). Outlook: Secular humanist, who regards the practices of the many theologies over the millenniums and throughout the world as impediments to progress and the well-being of human beings everywhere. At no time has an established religion accepted the findings of scientific inquiry without concerted, often draconian, efforts to force conformity with theological doctrines.

Joe Lozano (Board of Trustees): I still call myself a Californian, even though I was born on the other coast and now am right smack in the middle. My wife Irene – whom you have not met since she goes to Mass on Sundays – and I have been married for 45 years; we have one daughter and one son, plus the six grandkids. We moved here from Culver City about five years ago, for family reasons, and it has of late gradually dawned on me that yes, I do, really, live in Kansas.

Right around the turn of the millennium I got into interpreting, and I'm still at it here in Wichita. At one time in the past, I had delusions of owning a bookstore but luckily was unable to get that off the ground.

Continued on page 9

Caring for One Another

- 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 thought you'd like to know:

- We are wishing Lynn Way a speedy recovery. After successful knee surgery, Lynn is recovering at home.
- Our heartfelt condolences to the Kim and Eric Ford family as Kim's father passed away on March 31.

Here are two current ways we can care for one another at First UU:

- Provide transportation to church: we have a request for transportation from the Northeast Wichita area to the Sunday church service.
- Provide a meal: we also need help with meals in the next few weeks.

What touches one of us affects us all. In caring for one another we are cared for. *Please contact LaRilla Combs at 316-559-4478 or Jana Rambo at 316-686-4215 if you can help.*

RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon

It's hard to believe that we are getting close to the end of another school year, which means we're wrapping up our church curriculum for the "year" as well. This means it's time to be thinking about what you might like to teach this summer. There will be a sign-up list on the office window beginning in May. Congregation members are encouraged to pick a summer Sunday when they can share a hobby or interest with the children. It is a great opportunity to get to know the young people in our church and have a valuable intergenerational experience.

Families, please mark your calendar for May 21: we will be in the main church service to spend a few minutes recognizing our RE program, our children, and our high school graduates.

On May 28, we will take our annual trek to the Chisholm Trail park to explore and celebrate the beginning of summer.

It's been great to see so many new faces join us on Sundays. I hope to see you all in church. It is much more fun when you are there!

Memorial Day Potluck

The Holiday Party Group invites everyone to a Memorial Day Potluck dinner. Please join us for yummy food, great conversation, and laugh-out-loud games on Monday, May 29, at First UU Church. Gather at 5:30 p.m.; dine at 6:00.

*Candidates Bios, continued**(Joe Lozano bio continued)*

Being a new member here at First UU, I have really met only a few of you, but I am grateful for having found this oasis of humanism. I very much enjoy the diversity and the liberality in your little community – I guess I can say “our” now, so thanks to all of you.

Holger Meyer (Board of Trustees): A few years ago, Debbie Wadman introduced me to the idea of a social action church and to First UU. Last year I finally became an official member because First UU brought me together with a nice crowd of people fighting for social, environmental, racial, local and global justice who are aware that all these issues are connected.

The services have Rev. David Carter’s brilliant messages alternating with presentations from the community, opening our minds to issues and possibilities we might not have been aware of. For example, after Alison Celic’s presentation on the Circles network, I was one of three UUs who became Allies in the Circles program about two years ago. EcoFest and our efforts in the Green Sanctuary process meet my need for awareness of environmental issues and solutions.

Fortunately, we have a good set of candidates for the Board of Trustees. If I get elected, I will be able to dedicate the time necessary for the Board to support First UU’s mission.

Vivien Minshull-Ford (Nominating Committee): When Vivien joined First UU eleven years ago, she felt she had been a Unitarian Universalist all her life without knowing it. For her, First UU has been “a chance to grow, to find out what I’m good at, to make myself useful, and to set goals beyond my limits.” It was initially the Seven Principles which compelled her to sign up, in addition to the friendliness and inclusiveness of the congregation, as well as social justice activities. Vivien lives near WSU with her philosophy professor husband Bob Feleppa and two Australian Cattle Dogs, Bandit and Liberty Belle. She loves to travel, is interested in just about everything, goes to movies whenever she can, and makes miniature gardens.

Paula Peare (Board of Trustees): My first encounter with UU was in the mid to late 1990s. (At that time, I was under the impression that UU was a “Broadminded Christian Church,” with a capital “C.”) I thought that the “Broadminded” explained the acceptance of a pagan group. Some UU members accepted us, and some weren’t that friendly. My second encounter with UU was about 20 years later when I met Rev. Carter. I was immediately impressed by his accepting attitude. I’ve felt welcomed and accepted since that time.

Prior to my first encounter with UU, I was part of a pagan group who founded a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization titled “Wiccan Inspired Temple for Community Healing.” While that group was up and running, I served in several positions at different times, including, but not limited to, officer, founding member, trustee, and unpaid willing slave. I also taught classes in personal development, aura work, healing techniques, energy work, and crafts.

One of the many things that drew me back to First UU were some friends I met there before I left the first time. I appreciate that First UU is active in and supportive of human rights, women’s rights, and fighting against social injustice. I will do whatever I can to help support our UU church.

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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Eclectic Readers

11:30 a.m., Friday, May 19: *A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking is considered high on any list of best nonfiction books. [The Guardian's review](#) noted that the book "has sold 'about one copy for every 750 man, woman and child in the world'. Not bad for a book that, Hawking freely admits, he never expected to do anything like as well as it did.... From its opening page, in which he repeats the apocryphal tale of the little old lady who told Bertrand Russell that 'the world is really a flat place supported on the back of a giant tortoise', Hawking's intention is to instruct and entertain. He recounts, tongue in cheek, that when Russell is said to have replied, with a smirk, 'What is the tortoise standing on?', the old lady answered, 'You're very clever, young man, very clever. But it's turtles all the way down.' Plainly, Hawking can appreciate the ironies implicit in the speculative side of quantum physics."

Join us for a brown bag lunch. We will discuss the book and watch a documentary about it.

Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. We are deciding what to read next. Discussions will take place at Goodreads. You can join us at <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/177877-digerati-buchgemeinschaft>. Contact Rolando Gomez, shadoe7@mac.com, for questions on how to join.