



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

Minister's Musings: Wish Me Well!

- Rev. David Carter

Retirement is really just a job change, isn't it? I mean, we never really ever cease chasing after our dreams, do we? Of course, what awaits beyond death's door is a point of much debate. But from here where I live and breathe, I am certain that the adventure of pursuing our dreams never ends.

And now I find my body to be just one decade and one year younger than the proverbial four score years that herald imminent departure. And now, having engaged for eight times twelve months, give or take, in heart transforming, divine service at First UU of Wichita, I am called away. I am called away to New York City to spend my days and nights in a town that some say never sleeps, a storied megalopolis that hosts, hides, or harbors upwards of 23 million humans*, each, in his or her own unique way, striving to achieve dreams and goals known only by God. New York City, the town where, in this life, I first drew breath...

There I will be known to the IRS as an Unpaid Religious Worker (an official term for clergy who renounce income to pursue the joys of unmotivated, uninterrupted spiritual service). My fellow "inmates" (the other prisoners of Love at the bhakti center that'll be my home) will know me as a *vanaprastha* (literally "a forest dweller;" figuratively an elder who parts from the world of buying and selling, and the passionate pursuits of youth, to seek the joys of unmotivated, uninterrupted spiritual service). To friends, family, teachers, students, seekers, and strangers, I will be known by various names, viewed through countless lenses, esteemed (or disesteemed) in myriad novel ways. It will be... an adventure.

I liken it to skydiving. Heeding the "call" to "free fall" requires action. Sufficient study under qualified instructors, numerous practice sessions, the acquisition of technical knowledge, the swapping of anecdotes about the perils and ecstasies of "free falling." Different daydreams about "the moment" abound, and then... the moment!

You leap. Into thin air... 39,000 feet above the fathomless jewel we call Mother Earth, ripcord in hand, beads of sweat breaking out... Then everything gets real. Then, it's a wing and a prayer. And that prayer has a special urgency, an unsurpassed honesty, a singular fervor forever unknown to the armchair aficionado who sits at home vicariously savoring the imagined thrills of free fall acrobatics in upper space, taking in the view from on high, breathing the rarified air of heaven... Then, because real life requires it, there must be the fateful yanking of the cord that separates life... from death.

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In Touch

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Ministers Musings continued

I hope to catch my dream and become a transparent via medium through which anyone and everyone can see, as in a mirror... himself or herself... beautiful beyond their dreams. And behold, in that selfsame mirror, the infinite Beloved! Wish me well!

*NYC's "urban area" has a population of 23,723,696.

Singing Meditation - Carol Denning

It has been a joy for me to have been able to start the small, fledgling UU choir. I have either been accompanying for, arranging music for, or singing in a choir since middle school. My high-school director was Edla Hilts, a young WSU graduate. She became like a mentor to me as she had noticed my ability to write arrangements, which she then used in her groups.

Participating in a choir is more than providing entertainment for others. In an article sent by Vivien Minshull Ford, it was said that a test given to choir members revealed an observable upswing in the quality of mindfulness after they had sung with the choir. While listening to music attentively can also bring one to a heightened state of mindfulness, the actual participation with the use of one's own voice in concert with others has an even greater effect, bringing the singer into a constant experience of the Now, the present moment. Almost like meditation.

We will soon be discussing the UU choir schedule for 2018. Maybe you've never sung in a choir. Maybe you're shy about singing. But our choir is kind of like yoga – no competition, just participation. Consider joining us next year. We rehearse, basically, every other month at 10 on Sunday mornings. The payoff is a great feeling of satisfaction and connection!

George Clooney Is My Spirit Animal

- Holly Terrill, President

In this, my favorite month of the year, I searched for something to write about that might be fun and relevant to our community. Focusing on the negative isn't really my style; there is a time and place for that, and I'm onboard when the occasion arises, but this is not that day. It seemed a little egocentric to write about my birthday; although, I'm still unsure why it hasn't become a federal holiday. #ImpendingFame. My other favorite holiday in October is Halloween, but not everyone celebrates it...which totally confuses me because a). candy, and b). costumes. I decided to move on to something a little more spiritual, and while Google searching all sorts of topics, I came across the following quote by George Clooney: "I don't believe in heaven and hell. I don't know if I believe in God. All I know is that as an individual, I won't allow this life—the only thing I know to exist—to be wasted."

I consider myself to be a spiritual humanist. In my experience, humanists believe in religion based on reason or science over spirituality; we are typically accepting of people from all religious backgrounds and traditions. This is why I've been able to flourish as a Unitarian Universalist; the philosophies in our communities are similar.

But let's get back to the little bit I know about George. George Clooney is an American actor, director, producer, screenwriter, activist, business man, and philanthropist. I was surprised when researching him that we have quite a few things in common: I am an American actor—in a few plays, a television commercial and a couple of small films; a writer, an activist, a small-business woman, an activist, and a philanthropist.

I was raised in a house devoid of religion, while George was raised in a Catholic home. Through the years, I've sought to learn about different religions and religious practices; I've craved learning about what it is that makes people spiritually tick. George moved the other direction and concluded that organized religion wasn't his thing.

Although our life experiences have been very different, we both appear to have come to similar conclusions where religion is concerned—neither of us really knows what's going on. This uncertainty, while maddening, doesn't make us immoral; it only proves that we're human.

Caring Committee

- LaRilla Combs

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

Our healing thoughts are with Kathleen McGee who is recovering at home after her surgery on October 10. She requests no calls or visits at this time but would welcome cards.

We are grateful that a young man, who has a serious illness, was able to purchase gas and food thanks to our members and friends who have contributed to the Caring Committee emergency fund.

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

Walk, Bike, and Learn History

Recommending three new Wichita History Walks developed by Bike Walk Wichita and the Wichita Public Library, Vivien Minshull-Ford says, "We have quite a few bikers in the congregation – and it's such a green activity!" Funded by a grant from the AARP, these new walks recently debuted at Open Streets ICT. Each walk relates to a different section of Douglas Street: the Delano District, the downtown/Oldtown area, and East Douglas. Download a free tour guide app on Pocket Sights (see <http://wichitalibrary.org/historywalk> for details).

Bring a Photo - November 5

Photographer Jim Hammer and Thea Nietfeld discuss inspiration and the art of photography. Congregation members are encouraged to bring a photo in whatever medium it exists. We'll share how the activity of photographing and photos as art can enhance human meaning and connections. Meditate on Jim's Burning Man slide show.

November 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:00p Committee on Ministry	2	3	4 6:30p UU Humanist Dinner and Meeting
5 Daylight Savings Ends 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Choir Practice 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch 4:00p Private Event	6	7 3:00p Membership Committee 6:30p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	8 7:00p Worship Committee	9 7:00p Green Sanctuary Committee	10 10:00a Caring Committee 5:30p Veterans Day Potluck	11
12 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Choir Practice 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:30p Leadership Council	13 6:00p Vegan Potluck	14 6:30p Zen Friends	15 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	16	17 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	18 6:00p Grotts Telebration
19 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Choir Practice 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:20p Social Action Group	20 6:30p Writers Group	21 6:30p Zen Friends	22 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	23 	24	25 6:30p UU Humanist Dinner and Meeting
26 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	27 2:00p Movie Group	28 6:30p Zen Friends	29	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 – Holly Terrill

President-Elect – Doug Wilson

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Aesthetics – TBD

Building & Grounds – TBD

Caring – LaRilla Combs and Jana Rambo

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Children's RE – TBD

Chalice Book Store – Joe Lozano

Communications – Anne Welsbacher

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Finance – Corey Swertfager

Financial Commitment – TBD

Fundraising – Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford

Green Sanctuary – Linda Jordan

Hospitality – TBD

Kitchen Mavens – TBD

Librarian – Nancy Milner

Marketing – Debra Clements

Membership – Bonnie Till

Music – Jana Rambo

Partner Church – Betty Hensley and Debbie Wadman

Personnel – TBD

Program Development – Amy Geyer

Social Action – Sharon Kniss

UUA Denominational Liaison – Mike Diggs

Worship – Anne Welsbacher

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

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

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Peter Ninemire, Vivien Minshull-Ford, and Rolando Gomez

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 Jordon

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

Wichita Freethinker Humanists
- Charles Merrifield

The October meeting for the Wichita Freethinker Humanists will be held on November 4 at the Unitarian Universalist Church, [7202 E. 21st](#), with a potluck dinner-social hour beginning at 6:30 p.m. and a discussion at 7:30. If you cannot bring a potluck dish to share, there will be other ways to support the dinner, so don't let that deter you. (Yes, the October meeting is being held the first Saturday of November because of scheduling problems with October.)

Since the open-discussion format was such a success at our September meeting, we decided to use the same format for this November 4 meeting. Our topic of discussion will be "The Experience of Being a Humanist in Wichita." What has been your experience? Have you any concerns about your experiences as a humanist? Is the situation for humanists in Wichita improving or deteriorating? How are things different elsewhere in Kansas, or anywhere else? If you have any topics you want to include in our discussion, you could send me (cmerrifield@cox.net) the topic headers that I could include in an outline of concerns that we could use to organize our discussion somewhat.

Also, there will be a Freethinker meeting on November 25, the last Saturday of November, as usual. One of our members, Dr. Masud Chand, has agreed to discuss implications of the aging population worldwide. We will plan on having pizza so people don't have to do additional cooking after Thanksgiving. An RSVP (cmerrifield@cox.net) would be appreciated.

Religious Exploration Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon, DRE

Happy Fall everyone. I hope you are getting a chance to enjoy this beautiful weather!

In October in RE, we have been learning fables with morals that fit with our UU principles: each person is important, and be kind in all you do. Six children presented *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* along with a short song during storytime in the October 15 service. They did a great job. We will finish out the month with a few more fable skits and a Halloween/Day of the Dead celebration on October 29.

In November, our focus will be on Manners and Gratitude. Again, we will use stories, songs and skits to explore these topics, and the children will do a short presentation in the main service on the third Sunday, November 19.

It has been exciting to have some new kids join us on Sundays. They bring fresh energy and enthusiasm to our program. So, please, keep coming. It is much more fun

What Do You Want to Create?

- Anne Welsbacher

First UU Members and Friends: Watch for upcoming services as speaker Andrew Davis encourages us all to begin a conversation about our vision as a church.

The series launches November 19, when Andrew will speak about family, gratitude, and Thanksgiving. He'll prompt thought-provoking questions on how we, with our myriad traditions, can come together to create a vision for what we have—and what we want.

Honor Veterans: Bring Bold Food

November is packed full of days to celebrate with Cook Something Bold Day on the 8th and Chicken Soup for the Soul Day on the 12th, so we've decided to honor our Veterans on Saturday, November 11, by sharing our favorite bold dishes (whatever that means to you) and maybe even a pot of chicken soup. We hope you'll join us, the Holiday Party Group, on the 11th. Bring a dish to share; gather at 5:30; we'll eat at 6:00, followed by fellowship and games.

Music Committee Notes

- Jana Rambo

The Music Committee continues to work to bring more music to our services, both from within our congregation and from outside. We also continue conversations with two singer-songwriters who want to hold concerts at the church when in the area next year.

The choir will resume our practices on October 29. We continue to need more singers, especially male voices. Join us!

Between every two
pine trees there is
a door leading to a
new way of life.

*- William Muir, written in the margins of a copy of
volume I "Prose Works By Waldo Emerson"*

UU's Seven Principles, Children's Version

We believe each and every person is important.

We believe all people should be treated fairly.

In our congregations, all people are accepted and we learn together.

We believe each person is free to search for what is true and right in life.

Everyone deserves a vote about the things that concern them.

We believe in working for a peaceful, fair, and free world.

We believe in caring for our planet Earth and every living thing that shares it with us.

These can be found in the [Unitarian Universalist Association Tapestry of Faith Curricula](#).

FIRST UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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Eclectic Readers

11:30 a.m., Friday, November 17: *My Name is Lucy Barton* is a 2016 *New York Times* bestselling novel and the fifth novel by the American writer Elizabeth Strout. It was first published in the United States on January 12, 2016, through Random House. The book details the complicated relationship between the titular Lucy Barton and her mother. In July 2016, it was longlisted for the 2016 Man Booker Prize. Strout's *Olive Kitteridge* won the Pulitzer Prize in 2009.

Bring your sack lunch at 11:30, and discussion, led by Jane Ray, will begin at approximately 12 noon. All are welcome!

Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. Join us in plotting, or planning our next literary conquest! 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.