



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

Mid-Year Meeting
State of the Congregation – President’s Report
Sunday, January 21, 2018
-Holly Terrill

Thank you all for joining us today. These meetings give you an opportunity to hear from church representatives regarding important details of First UU’s finances and upcoming events as well as helping us to make our organization a better place. We are here to build relationships. Relationships are built upon many layers: trust, mindfulness, open communication, mutual respect, and welcoming diversity. I believe it was Rumi who said “Yesterday I was clever so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise so I am changing myself.”

My name is Holly Terrill, I am the current president of this congregation and I stand here today as a work in progress: professionally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. By trusting others, we can be open and honest in our thoughts and actions. When we are mindful, we can take responsibility for our words and actions. Mindfulness can be equated to emotional intelligence, or knowing that your emotions can impact those around you – both the positive and the negative emotions; and the great thing about emotional intelligence is that it can be developed.

We communicate all day, every day by email, text message, phone calls and face to face. In person, our facial expressions tell a story; our tone and word choices can draw someone in or they can push them away. By respecting the people in your life and asking for their respect in turn you can work together, creatively and collectively. We are a welcoming congregation; however, that phrase has different meanings for different people. Accepting people for their differences means you can appreciate both their opinions and beliefs, and allow those opinions to influence yours.

It’s an impossible task to make everyone happy all the time; trying to do so is exhausting and challenging. I can, however, be genuine and positive – two traits I possess that are among my strongest. I appreciate everyone in this room; you’ve taken time out of your day to look out for the best interest in your church, our church, and you are valued.

First UU of Wichita is an amazing place. We offer so much to so many – we have weekly services, Adult RE, children’s RE, social activism, reading groups, wiccan groups, fellowship, food and so much more. There is something for everyone if they only look for it and if they are patient.

Speaking of patience, as many of you are aware, our minister retired a few weeks ago. What this means for the congregation is that myself and your representatives on the board are beginning the

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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.

President's Report continued

process of researching the best next steps for future pastoral care and Sunday service needs. This process may take us several months; we will keep the congregation informed as we move forward in the process and we will welcome questions as well as suggestions. Please remember what I previously said about not being able to please everyone - our goal is to make the best decision to support the needs of this congregation.

Today we will hear from Charles Merrifield on the budget, as well as Bonnie Till on the upcoming General Assembly in Kansas City. There may be additional speakers today, please welcome them all as they share their thoughts, feelings, and wisdom with us.

I love First UU and I'm passionate about its success. We are all passionate about something or someone; we are all loved and we all love. William Parish said "Love is passion, obsession, someone you can't live without. I say, fall head over heels. Find someone you can love like crazy and who will love you the same way back. How do you find him? Well, you forget your head, and you listen to your heart. Cause the truth is, there's no sense living your life without this. To make the journey and not fall deeply in love, well, you haven't lived a life at all. But you have to try, cause if you haven't tried, you haven't lived." Let's show our love for First UU of Wichita.

Thank you.

Welcome, New Member!

Thea Nietfeld: As a new member, I've been welcomed graciously and given the opportunity to introduce myself here. I live alone in Newton, where I have worked part time as a restorative justice practitioner since summer 2016. My son and his family live in the Los Angeles area. A few months ago, my mom had to move into a memory unit at Presbyterian Manor in Newton. Two of my three brothers live in Wichita.

We grew up in Wichita, and I graduated from South High in 1969. After college and graduate school, I worked for labor organizations, government, and non-profit groups. I went to seminary in the Washington DC area and became a UU minister in 1994. I've served congregations in Maryland, Iowa, Oklahoma, and, most recently, Salina and Hutchinson. I facilitated some focused workshops on communication and covenant-making for First UU of Wichita in 2013 and 14, so I got to know the congregation and its determination to be democratic and inclusive. I'm so glad to be part of this religious community.

Our Shared Ministry: Updates from the Worship Committee

- Annie Welsbacher

With David Carter's retirement, First UU enters a new era. Until we as a congregation determine the best path forward in our search for ministerial leadership, we will be a lay-led church. And that means opportunities to hear from *you*.

Yes – you! Worship committee member Thea Nietfeld states that “services lurk among us” and we have already seen the truth in her claim. Our recent service featuring poetry written and read by our own congregation members gave us opportunities not only to connect with our spirituality through art, but also to get to know one other better. Recent services with presenters Carol Denning, Anne Bailey, Linda Jordan, Sarah Yost, Andrew Davis, and Thomas Vitkus also highlighted the individual wisdom of our fellow friends and members at First UU.

We are asking committee chairs to present services that reflect the vision and work of their committees and look forward to services about environmental works, humanism, pagan rituals, international connections, and much more. But you don't have to be a committee member to present. What lessons or life experiences have you had that might enrich us all in a service? How does your personal spirituality manifest? What do the UU principles mean to you, and how do you see them in today's world? How has the congregation helped you flourish?

Thea Nietfeld invites members and friends into small group conversation, based on the UUA guide, “A Call to Faith in Turbulent Times” (<https://www.uua.org/small-group/call-faith-turbulent-times>). Four sessions will be scheduled about once a month, with dates set by those interested. Contact Thea with questions and come to a logistics meeting after church on February 4. Participants will be invited to share in the May 13 service.

Please consider joining our church's ministry. You can contact any of the worship committee members to discuss your ideas. We will post a calendar of services, to be updated weekly, so you can see available dates. (The calendar will be for information only; contact me directly to arrange dates.)

Worship Committee members are Annie Welsbacher, chair, awelsbacher@gmail.com; Anne Bailey, annebailey@earthlink.net; Kay Davis, kmdavis9909@att.net; Susan Hund-Milne, susanhundmilne@gmail.com; Thea Nietfeld, nietfeldthea@gmail.com; Jana Rambo, jrambo76@gmail.com.

Eclectic Readers

11:30 a.m., Friday, February 16: Dava Sobel, former science reporter for *The New York Times*, wrote an international best seller published in 23 languages when she wrote *Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time*. "In the eighteenth century 'the longitude problem' was the thorniest scientific dilemma of the day – and had been for centuries. John Harrison, in complete opposition to the scientific community, dared to imagine a mechanical solution – a clock that would keep precise time at sea, something no clock had ever been able to do on land. *Longitude* is the dramatic human story of an epic scientific quest and of Harrison's forty-year obsession with building his perfect timekeeper, known today as the chronometer. Full of heroism and chicanery, it is also a fascinating brief history of astronomy, navigation, and clockmaking, and opens a new window on our world" ([Amazon](#)).

Brown bag lunch at 11:30, then discussion of the book, led by Anita Culp, begins around 12 noon. Call Anita, 316-684-3481, to get your copy of the book.

Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. We are finishing up *Future Home of a Living God* by Louise Erdrich. Join us in plotting, er planning our February book. 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.

The Occasional Book Group

Please join the Occasional Book Group on Saturday, February 24, 2-4 p.m. at First UU, when we meet to discuss *The Murder Room* by Michael Capuzzo, a non-fiction book about the best forensic scientists from around the world working to solve the toughest of cold cases.

"Three of the greatest detectives in the world were heartsick over the growing tide of unsolved murders." ([Amazon](#)). They decided one day over lunch to invite the greatest collection of forensic investigators ever assembled, drawn from five continents, to eat a gourmet lunch at The Union League of Philadelphia once a month and to solve the hardest-to-solve cases. They named themselves The Vidocq Society, after the first CSI in Western Europe.

Fundraising Committee Notes

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

Our next venture is an April garage and book sale.

If you have any other ideas for fundraising (Bingo has been mentioned as an exciting possibility!), please let us know: Marcia Ellsworth, 316-208-3083, Vivien Minshull-Ford, 316-683-9295, or Corey Swertfager, 316-209-5177.

We would love to hear from you: many heads mean more ideas!

February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 12:00p Carol Denning Memorial Service at Botanica 6:00p Pagan Circle, Imbolic Dinner and Ritual
4 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	5	6 3:30p Membership Committee 6:30p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	7 7:00p Committee on Ministry	8	9	10 10:00a Caring Committee 3:00p Valentine Tea
11 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:30p Leadership Council	12 6:30p Vegan Potluck	13 6:30p Zen Friends	14 7:00p Worship Committee	15	16 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	17 9:30a Inquiries Class 6:00p Holiday Party Group
18 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:20p Social Action Group 3:00p Jenny Bowen & Seth Gifton Concert	19 Office Closed for President's Day	20 6:30p Zen Friends	21 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	22	23	24 12:00p Private Event 2:00p Occasional Book Group 6:30p UU Humanist Dinner and Meeting
25 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	26 2:00p Movie Group	27 6:30p Zen Friends	28 1:30p Newsletter Mailing			

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

Board of Trustees – Kathleen McGee, Bonnie Till, Anne Welsbacher, Jana Rambo, Holger Meyer, Joe Lozano, and Lori Young

Treasurer(interim) – 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 – TBD

Chalice Book Store – Joe Lozano

Communications – Anne Welsbacher

Custodian – Durell Gilmore

EcoFest – Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford

Finance – Charles Merrifield

Financial Commitment – TBD

Fundraising – Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford

Green Sanctuary – Linda Jordan

Hospitality – TBD

Kitchen Mavens – TBD

Librarian – Nancy Milner

Marketing – TBD

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, and Frank Ruf

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 Jordan

Humanist Group – Charles Merrifield

Occasional Book Club – Amy Geyer

Pagan Group – Anne Bailey, Linda Jordan, and Paula Peare

Writers Group – Amy Geyer

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

Music Committee Notes

- Jana Rambo

The Music Committee is delighted to announce the hiring of our new pianist, Eric Whetmore. Eric Whetmore and Jenny Bowen have been covering the position since November, so he is not new to the congregation. He will play for us on three Sundays per month, and Jenny will continue to serve as substitute pianist.

Eric is a private piano instructor here in Wichita. He also accompanies choirs at the Northfield School of the Liberal Arts. He has served as pianist for UU congregations in Wisconsin and Texas.

Anne Bailey and I met with the Publicity Team about publicizing our concerts, with a special focus on the concert by Tom Neilson on March 17. It's our plan to publicize the concerts more widely, in hopes of having a larger attendance.

Tom Neilson will also be doing the church service on March 18. He has asked if someone in the congregation could provide a place for him to stay. He doesn't need a lot of special consideration, just a place to recharge his batteries. Please contact the Music Committee if you can help.

The Committee continues to have only three members – myself, Anne, and Corey. We'd really like more people to join us. Please contact one of us if you'd like to help bring good music to First UU.

RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon DRE

Happy Wintertime! Brrrrrr!!! I trust you all are staying safe and warm through these bitterly cold days.

The children have been exploring the teachings of MLK Jr. this month as we focus on Peace and Tolerance. We will continue our focus on Peace and stir in a bit of Love as we enter the month of February.

The third Sunday of each month, there is a time slot reserved for the children to present something they've been learning and/or preparing in Religious Exploration classes. They enjoy doing this, and the congregation seems to love to see the children involved in the service.

A couple of adults have expressed interest in knowing more about how they might help with the RE program. This is great. Now, we just need the children to attend more regularly. Not only does this help with planning and facilitating lessons and activities, it is also much more meaningful and fun for all when they are there!

Let the Sunshine In

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

Members of First UU have stepped up nobly to pledge or donate almost enough money to purchase the panels, mounts, and inverter for Phase 1 of our bid to make our church carbon-neutral. Kent Rowe is waiting for better weather to get up on the roof with his team to install the panels. We hope to complete Phase 2 by January 2019.

Currently we are just \$800 short of our goal. If you are planning to make a donation or a pledge for this project, please contact Vivien Minshull-Ford, 316-683-9295, or Charles Merrifield, 316-371-3960. We will have pledge forms available.

Cherry Party

The Holiday Party Group invites you to help us celebrate National Cherry Month on Saturday, February 17, at First UU Church. Gather at 5:30, and dine at 6. Please bring a dish to share (with or without cherries). We will enjoy the potluck dinner and then play games.

Dessert recipes with cherries abound. To find a non-dessert cherry dish, try online. You can find recipes for [spicy cherry glazed chicken](#), [apple cherry pork chops](#) (30 minutes), [slow-cooker cherry pork chops](#), [dried cherry couscous salad](#), [seared pork with figs and quinoa-dried cherry salad](#), and [shrimp salad with dried cherries](#).

According to sources, February is National Cherry Month because George Washington was born in February, and he famously chopped (or didn't chop) down that cherry tree.

Imbolc Celebration

- Anne Bailey

The First UU Pagan Circle will meet on Saturday, February 3, to celebrate Imbolc (or Candlemas). We will gather for a potluck feast beginning at 6:00 followed by ritual at 7:00. Please bring a generous dish to share. Coffee and tea will be available.

All are welcome. Please feel free to call Anne Bailey (316-650-4905), Paula Peare (316-312-5235), or Linda Jordan (316-512-6652) for answers to all your questions – at least questions about our gatherings!

Inquirer's Class

People interested in learning more about First UU or about becoming members are invited to attend an Inquirer's Class on Saturday, February 17, from 9:30 to 2:00. Lunch provided. To register, contact the church office at 316-684-3481 or office@firstuu.net. Advance notice is required if child care is needed.

Thanks from UUA President Rev. Gray

Following are excerpts from a letter received recently from the Unitarian Universalist Association:

Every year, each congregation in the Unitarian Universalist Association is asked to give a financial contribution to support the larger faith movement. Your congregation gave the full amount requested to the Annual Program Fund during this past fiscal year, allowing our faith to be strengthened all across our Unitarian Universalist Association. **This means you are an Honor Congregation, honoring the covenant among and between our congregations.** THANK YOU!

As you know, the times in which we live are giving us no shortage of opportunities to show up on the side of love. Your support provides trainings and gatherings of all sorts in your cluster, district, and region. Your support allows us to do both internal and external work on systems of oppression as an Association. **Your support strengthens Unitarian Universalism.** No individual congregation can possibly tackle the challenges of our society alone; we need one another, and we are stronger together.

Your fulfillment of the Annual Program Fund request is a promise that has already been made. **Thank you for keeping your promise!**

With deep gratitude,
Rev. Susan Frederick Gray,
President

Ripple Effect - 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 beloved long-time church member Betty Hensley is in Larksfield Place Health Care, Room 414. Betty is hoping to regain strength and return home soon. Visitors are welcome, especially long-time members. The address is 2828 N. Gouverneur. Cards can be mailed to her home address.

Our heartfelt condolences to Doug Wilson, whose grandmother passed away recently.

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

FIRST UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

7202 E. 21st St. N.
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A Sweet Idea for Your Valentine!

- Debbie Wadman

We will hold a lovely Valentine Tea for members and their guests on Saturday, February 10, from 3-5 p.m. at the church. Admission is only \$8, and you will get to try many delicious desserts and pastries, while being entertained by live music.

This fundraiser requires the help of many volunteers, and we are happy to take your contribution of baked items, other sweets, or tea sandwiches. If you aren't much of a baker, but want to help, please see Debbie Wadman, Vivien Minshull-Ford, or Marcia Ellsworth, and we will sign you up to help set up tables, serve libations, or clean up. It is a fun event and much easier with eight helpers, rather than just two or three.