



# In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

## Let's Talk about It! Social Action, Generation to Generation

- Del Smith

After Dr. Jay Price's service related to generational differences in approaches to social justice work, Carol Reinert told Suzanne Miller how much his insights resonated with her, given her experiences in the early 60s with the Civil Rights movement. Suzanne, a "Boomer," wanted to hear more about the experiences of the "Silents," those who came of age in the late 1940s through mid-1960s.

She invited Carol, Millie Cherryholmes, and Del Smith to talk about their personal experiences, based on Dr. Price's general categories (adapted from "Contemporary Generations" handout):

- Silents trust ideals and those who embody them.
- Silents are the first generation of social activists.
- Silents sought to reform society, via Civil Rights, Historic Preservation, etc.
- Silents are interested in causes, and institutions are tools to promote causes.
- Concerning religion, Silents play by the rules, but seek to "broaden the rules."

*Suzanne asked Del to synthesize their responses into an article which may, hopefully, spark further cross-generational conversation. Different perspectives on matters may occur within the same generation but can be quite magnified when there are generation gaps. (See invitation below!)*

Carol said that her civil service job meant that she had to live a "secret life as an activist" and could not talk with co-workers about the trip she and friends took to Washington, DC, during the time the Voting Rights Act was being debated. Demonstrations around the assassination of Medgar Evers created chaotic situations, and Carol found it to be a "dangerous time." She also came to understand that the Civil Rights movement in the early '60s was not just a Black movement.

Millie was known at her workplace as a "women's libber," a proud title which she earned as an employee in human resources. Millie made it possible for women to receive legitimate insurance benefits for six weeks of maternity leave. "Management conveniently did not mention this benefit," she explained, "although it was spelled out in the insurance contract."

Del dreamed of being a Brenda Starr (comic strip newswoman), majored in journalism and took a job with the *Wichita Eagle*. Nepotism cut that career short when she married an editor. Classroom teaching had its downside, too: in 1962, single men

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# In Touch

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

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

## Quite the Weekend!

- Corey Swertfager

On Saturday afternoon, February 10, the Partner Church Valentine Tea fundraiser brought in \$496 (\$473 at event + \$13 leftovers sold after Sunday service + \$10 admission paid later).

On Sunday evening, February 11, the Bowen/Girton concert netted First UU \$289 (\$182 for our half of the door + \$75 concessions + \$30 admission paid later).

Plus, we had three people sign up to receive info about upcoming events at First UU!

## Ripples

- 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 of Woody Erickson's passing on January 20, 2018. Our long-time members may remember Woody's gentle and warm nature.

We extend our most heartfelt condolences to Anita Culp whose father passed away January 26, 2018.

Our long-time member Betty Hensley remains at Larksfeld place. It might be good to check before visiting, as there may be restrictions because of the flu.

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

## March Sunday Services

- Annie Welsbacher and Thea Nietfeld

Sunday services in March cover a wide spectrum of topics. Join us for thought-provoking discussions on war, environmental realities, social justice, and river water.

On March 4, guest speaker Robert F. Sommer, Ph.D., discusses “War as the Default Setting: Apathy, Activism, and the Personal Cost of America’s Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.” Sommer is the author of *Losing Francis: Essays on the Wars at Home*. Through his own tragic experience with the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, he discusses the disconnect between the world of war and the universe of no-war in a nation that often seems preoccupied only with amusing itself.

On March 11, Rev. Paul Hull speaks on “A Mutually Enhancing Human-Earth Relationship.” Hull’s career included environmental engineering for 25 years and then UU ministry for 19 years. He currently lives on the family farm near El Dorado.

Hull references the Rev. Dr. Thomas Berry, a leading environmental spirituality scholar, who says that the distinction between political liberals and conservatives will disappear and be replaced by distinctions between those who exploit the environment for profit and political advantage, and those who enhance environmental health and sustainability.

In response, Hull promotes the action-reflection process, which has been used in liberation theology to empower the Earth’s poor, as it applies to environmental spirituality and action.

The weekend of March 17–18, UU singer-songwriter Tom Neilson will be in town to entertain us with music *and* words. Join us Saturday, March 17, in a special concert by this seasoned artist, whose style echoes those of the iconic satiric folk singers Phil Ochs and Tom Lehrer. Then, join us Sunday to hear Neilson in the pulpit. The service topic of this widely traveled social and political activist will be “Stories Behind the Songs,” an autobiographical sketch around circumstances and choices in the musician’s life.

March 25, Kay Drennen returns to the pulpit to speak on “The Arkansas River: Past, Present, and Future.” Drennen is a board member of the Arkansas River Coalition. She grew up on the banks of, and spent a great deal of time on, the Arkansas River, and subsequently developed a love of this regionally defining, geographical resource. Her presentation will provide an overview of the Arkansas River history, problems this resource is facing, and ways these issues are being addressed.

## Climate Change and Winter Sports Green Sanctuary Committee

Join us at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 2, for an exclusive showing of the documentary, *Saving Snow*. First UU will be hosting Citizens' Climate Lobby, who has exclusive rights to show this documentary about climate change and the winter sports industry, skiing, and related sports. You can view a trailer at <https://vimeo.com/250159272>. The movie is 53 minutes long. There will be popcorn and a few minutes of discussion following the film.

If you would like to attend but need child care, please let Marcia Ellsworth (316-688-5352) know at least a few days ahead so it can be arranged.

## Chamber Music Concert

- Carol Neighbor

On Sunday, March 25 at 3 p.m., First UU will host the violin duo Nova Deco, consisting of Nancy Johnson and Dominique Corbeil, which will perform two pieces from their vast repertoire. Both are Wichita Symphony violinists playing widely in the Wichita area and maintaining their own teaching studios.

Also, the principal harpist with the Wichita Symphony, Jane Hyde, will regale us with her enchanted playing of selections from her new program "Chestnuts Great and Small." Jane has a special love of Celtic music, and since this is close to St. Patrick's Day, Greg Golding and Carol Neighbor will join our featured performers in an Irish finale. The jigs will jump, and the reels will run, and the ballads will pull at your heartstrings!

Refreshments will be provided. An offering of \$10 is encouraged.

## Humanists Meet

- Charles Merrifield

For our March 31 meeting at First UU, Holger Meyer and Dolan Bales will lead a discussion on the topic of promoting peace. If you look at the web page for the American Humanist Association, you will find that [one of their key issues is promoting peace](#). How can we as Wichita Humanists participate in efforts to promote peace?

## Pagan Circle at First UU

You are invited to a Full Moon Celebration on Saturday, March 3, 7 p.m., at First UU Church Wichita. Join us for chanting, drumming, singing, and honoring the beautiful full moon. All are welcome.

Bring your drums or other instruments. Snack foods would be appreciated. Call Anne Bailey (316-650-4905), Linda Jordan (316-512-6652) or Paula Peare (316-312-5235) if you have questions.

# March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
<b>4</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 3:00p Membership Committee 6:30p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	<b>7</b> 7:00p Committee on Ministry	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 10:00a Caring Committee 10:00a Call to Faith Group 5:30p Waffle Holiday Potluck
<b>11</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:30p Leadership Council	<b>12</b> 6:30p Vegan Potluck	<b>13</b> 6:30p Zen Friends	<b>14</b> 7:00p Worship Committee	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 11:30a Eclectic Readers Group	<b>17</b> 7:00p Tom Nelson Concert
<b>18</b> 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:20p Social Action Group	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 6:30p Zen Friends	<b>21</b> 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 6:00p Partner Church Dinner
<b>25</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Music Committee 3:00p Chamber Music Concert	<b>26</b> 2:00p Movie Group	<b>27</b> 6:30p Zen Friends	<b>28</b> 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 6:30p UU Humanist Dinner and Meeting

## Tom Neilson in Concert and in the Pulpit March 17-18

- Annie Welsbacher

Get a double-dip serving of award-winning folk musician Tom Neilson March 17-18 when he joins us for a Saturday night concert followed by a Sunday service presentation.

Dubbed “the coming together of Phil Ochs and Tom Lehrer” and the “Bard Insurgent” for his sophisticated, astute musical and political wit, Neilson presents a family-friendly concert at First UU on Saturday, March 17, at 7 p.m. Light snack items and beverages – beer and nonalcoholic options – will be available for purchase. (Popcorn is free.) Suggested ticket price is \$10-20 and may be purchased in advance in person or by phone; tickets will also be sold at the door, but early reservations are encouraged.

This special concert is a major undertaking for our church, and we encourage you to help spread the word among your friends and social media. We’re also asking for help distributing posters. Posters and a signup sheet will be available at the church.

In addition, the communications team has started a guessing game – join us! Throw in a dollar and guess the number of attendees the concert will draw. Whoever guesses closest to the actual figure wins half the hat, with the other half going to First UU. Ties will be decided with a coin toss; all decisions will be made by the communications team and are final.

Activist, historian, and educator Tom Neilson has performed songs of humor, compassion, and political affairs in 21 countries on five continents. He has appeared with Cynthia McKinney, Amy Goodman, Cesar Chavez, and others and played at the MLK Center in Havana, Cuba. A classical vocalist, he has also performed at New York City’s Town Hall, Boston’s Symphony Hall, and the New England Conservatory of Music.

After moving to South America in 1970, Neilson spent a dozen years in countries outside the U.S., primarily Africa and South America. His doctoral dissertation, rooted in his work with the United Nations in Somalia, is on U.S. political/economic hegemony. He teaches college-level courses “Music as Social History” and “Voices in Labor History” and offers Music in the Classroom courses for all ages.

Praised by Tom Paxton for producing “very good music – and very good politics,” Neilson also organizes community activism against water privatization, mountain-top removal, nuclear energy, incinerators, fracking, and toxic waste. He plays at festivals, universities, conferences, cafes, and political and social gatherings. He has performed for countless benefits and causes, and his music has been used in documentaries.

For more information about the guessing game or distributing posters, contact Annie Welsbacher at [awelsbacher@gmail.com](mailto:awelsbacher@gmail.com). For information about Neilson, visit [tomneilsonmusic.com](http://tomneilsonmusic.com).

Regarding the Wichita concert, visit the church Facebook page, call 316-684-3481, send an email to [office@firstuu.net](mailto:office@firstuu.net), or visit [firstuu.net](http://firstuu.net).

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## A Spring Revival–And New Allies for EcoFest Wichita

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

There will be no EcoFest Wichita *this* year. Instead, our green celebration will be on Saturday, *April 20, 2019*, two days before Earth Day, a week before Arbor Day. Work on the event will begin in the summer of this year, although co-chairs Marcia Ellsworth and I are continually on the lookout for new vendors, advocates, and ideas.

There are two compelling reasons for the change. First, since 2014 EcoFest has been all about the harvest season and has taken place in late September or early October. However, quite spontaneously and coincidentally, Bartlett Arboretum began staging a similar fall event in 2014–also called EcoFest, also with vendors and food, but focusing more on music, zero waste, and recycling. This has caused some confusion among visitors and vendors, who thought that the two EcoFests were one and the same thing. Recently, Marcia and I met Robin Macy, the owner of Bartlett Arboretum, and Catherine Johnson of SoCe Life and the Farm Shop, who facilitates EcoFest in the Arb, to discuss how to set up a useful liaison so that we could help each other to promote and enhance both events, which have similar and valuable goals. In a note to Marcia following both EcoFests last fall, Robin Macy wrote: “There are never enough Environmental Festivals to suit me; the planet needs to be bombarded and then reinforced with initiatives–especially in the heartland where we struggle.” Marcia and I couldn’t agree more: both EcoFests have much more in common than we had thought. Robin suggested that we take part “in a discussion that unites our mighty efforts.”

The second reason for moving our event is that spring, the time of renewal, planting, and farmers’ markets lends itself to selling plants and enthusiasm for gardening techniques like composting and water conservation. It is also a time when there are fewer competing fairs, festivals, and craft sales; the weather will be milder; the blossom will be out, and the church garden will be full of spring flowers.

A week ago, Marcia and Charles Merrifield hosted a celebration and debriefing evening, attended by many UU volunteers who contributed so much to the success of EcoFest Wichita 2017. We collected wonderful feedback on many areas of our event: what to eliminate, what worked, what to do differently next year. To those volunteers and others who could not make it to the meeting, thank you for your team work, energy, and creative thinking. Meanwhile, have a well-earned respite and time for rethinking, planning, and more creating. If you have any questions or suggestions, please send them to Marcia at 316-208-3083, [mjelsworth@aol.com](mailto:mjelsworth@aol.com), or to me at 316-683-9295, [vminshull@yahoo.com](mailto:vminshull@yahoo.com).

## Save Your Stuff!

- Marcia Ellsworth

Our garage/rummage/book sale is on the calendar for April 12, 13, and 14. We're hoping for enough of your salable collectibles, tools, kitchenware, toys, homeware, etc. to call it a Mega Sale. In the past, we have received many items from friends and family. Be sure to let them know to start putting items aside for our sale.

Bring your small items to the church starting the 1st of April. Save larger items for the week prior. If you can't store these items at home, contact Vivien ([316-683-9295](tel:316-683-9295)) or Marcia ([316-688-5352](tel:316-688-5352)) to make other arrangements for storage.

Volunteers will be needed Wednesday to price, and Thursday through Saturday to staff the sale. Clean-up will be immediately after closing at 1p.m. Saturday.

## Children's Religious Exploration

- Denise Jackson-Simon

The past two months, our RE program has focused on Peace and Love. We will carry those themes on throughout the spring, and we will explore the UU principles more closely in March. We will use stories, songs, art, games and other activities to discover how the principles fit into our daily lives.

Children's RE meets at 11:00 on Sunday mornings at First UU. We hope to see your children at church. It is much more fun when they are there!

## Adults' Religious Exploration

- Corey Swertfager

Adults' RE meets at 9:45 on Sunday mornings at First UU. The class is currently studying Classical Mythology, an introduction to the primary characters and most important stories of classical Greek and Roman mythology.

## Green Sanctuary Report: Air Quality Project

- Charles Merrifield

Our church's application for Green Sanctuary Candidacy Status was approved in January by the UUA Green Sanctuary Review Team. That means we have one to three years to put our action plan in place and to apply for Green Sanctuary Designation.

Our local Green Sanctuary Committee met on February 8 to begin preparing for putting our eleven action plans into place. Some are in progress, others are in development, and a few are near completion or completed: 1. Air Quality in Industrial Core of Wichita, 2. Labyrinth, 3. Environment-focused Sunday morning services, 4. Mural, 5. Adults' RE series: The Origin and Evolution of Earth: Big Bang to the Future of Human Existence, 6. Water in Wichita, 7. Children's RE: The Green Spring, 8. EcoFest, 9. Solar panels, 10. Vegan Potluck, and 11. LED lights. Each month we will describe one of our action plans or news related to the action plans.

This month we will begin with Air Quality in Industrial Core of Wichita. This project is led by Kent Rowe with Durell Gilmore of Sunflower Community Action. Volunteers will gather and analyze air and soil samples in different parts of Wichita. Areas to be sampled will be areas within the industrial core and areas near affluent periphery regions of the city.

Experience within Wichita schools has revealed that there are stark differences in asthma and other illnesses between students in the industrial core area and more affluent areas. We expect to demonstrate noteworthy differences in pollutants between the areas. We plan to present our data to city and county boards, as well as other political and health organizations to work to improve the situation.

## Waffle Bar and Potluck Dinner

Celebrate the wonderful March holiday Waffle Day with the UU Holiday Party Group on Saturday, March 10, at First UU Church. Gather at 5:30 p.m.; dine at 6.

A Belgian waffle maker will be provided. Please bring your favorite waffle topping and a side dish to share. Let the office manager ([316-684-3481](tel:316-684-3481)) know which topping you are bringing, so we don't wind up with six cans of whipped cream. Toppings could include fruit (berries, bananas, baked apples), whipped cream, sausage, almond butter, or chocolate spread. Let your imagination run wild. Got real maple syrup?

*Lets Talks About it, continued*

and married men with or without children were paid more because, as “heads of households they needed more income.” She has had years of working on reproductive justice as a main concern. Lately, that work has led her to acknowledge being benefited by her white privilege.

Carol was well ahead of the curve in one aspect. From 1965 to approximately 1967, she sheltered, in her apartment, friends who were escaping unhealthy and dangerous situations. She did this as an individual because there were no community resources to keep the women safe. She said that she is grateful this has changed for domestic violence victims.

Millie withdrew her membership in the Presbyterian Church because women were not allowed to become ministers. She later discovered the Unitarian Universalist Church. Del joined this church in 1962, attracted to it for many reasons, including its social activism. Carol reflected upon the Silents “broadening the rules” when it came to religion, noting that the uptight attitudes in the 50s were becoming more liberal in the 60s.

## Music Committee Notes

- Jana Rambo

Around thirty people attended the Celtic strings concert by Jenny Bowen and Seth Girton on February 11. The music was wonderful; I was in awe of their ability to play so well. According to Corey Swertfager, the concert netted First UU \$289 (our half of the door, plus concessions).

**Save the date: Tom Neilson will be in concert at First UU on March 17!** Refreshments will be available. He will also be doing our Sunday morning service the next day. Check out his website to hear his music: [tomneilsonmusic.com](http://tomneilsonmusic.com).

Thanks to Annie Welsbacher and the publicity team, we are going to be advertising for this concert much more heavily than we have in the past. If you listen to KMUW, you will start to hear ads there. We are hoping for an especially good attendance.

The Music Committee continues to have only three members: myself, Anne Bailey, and Corey Swertfager. It would really be nice to have more people. Please contact one of us if you'd like to join. Meetings are held the fourth Sunday after church.

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## FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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### Eclectic Readers

11:30 a.m., Friday, March 16: *This I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women*. This collection of credos was published in 2006, in association with NPR. Eighty men and women, famous and unknown, accepted NPR's invitation to write a personal credo expressing the core principles that guide their lives. They run the gamut from "Be Cool to the Pizza Dude" by Sarah Adams, "Unleashing the Power of Creativity" by Bill Gates, and "The Elusive Yet Holy Core" by Kathy Dahlen, to "When Ordinary People Achieve Extraordinary Things" by Jody Williams.

We are invited to write our own personal credos (optional). Anne Bailey distributed fifteen Unitarian Universalist Elevator Speeches which might jump start that process.

Copies of the book were distributed at the February meeting. If you missed that meeting, you can pick up a copy of *This I Believe* in the church office.

Brownbag lunch at 11:30. Discussion starts at approximately 12 noon.

### Digerati Buchgemeinschaft

Come join the Digerati! We are an online book club. We have just started reading Ursula K. LeGuin's *Lavinia*. Join us in plotting, or planning our April 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](mailto:shadoe7@mac.com), for questions on how to join.