



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA
FOUNDED 1887

President's Letter

Doug Wilson

I have been so impressed with the board lately! Everyone is so helpful. They all contribute in their own way to the machinations of the board; they keep the wheels of the church spinning. If you didn't know, board meetings usually last 2 hours. Our September meeting was 2 1/4! We discussed a lot, made many decisions, stuff that keeps First UU humming. So this month's letter will be a compilation of announcements that came up in the September board meeting. Sorry if some occur elsewhere in the newsletter. Oh well, all deserving causes!

Del Smith has asked for an assistant, a partner, to help her post photos, etc, on Facebook and elsewhere on the web. She is transitioning into a new home and slowing down. So, hopefully, someone can help her with that.

We also heard the Kitchen Mavens are growing weary. Debbie Wadman, Magda Garrett, Frank Jandl, and several others routinely do all the heavy lifting (planning, cooking, and cleaning) in the kitchen and could use some new helpers for First Sunday lunches and more. Please, if you've ever considered it, now's the time to step up.

While we're talking about the kitchen, etc., a board member remembers when people hung out more, stayed longer after service for coffee and companionship. They lament the hurried exits of so many. We understand. Sunday noon, and half the day is over, and there are still things to accomplish, and some people go back to work Monday, but these people around you are a big part of the reason why we are here together. Please, if you are so inclined, if you can accommodate a little extra time after services for visiting, we will all be closer, stronger. I will try. We're often guilty of rushing out, on to the next thing, but that board member is right!

Finally, I have begun to look into renewing our status as a Welcoming Congregation. We first achieved designation as a "Welcoming Congregation," a congregation especially suited to meet the concerns and needs of LGBTQ+ people, in 1997. That was quite a while ago! Much has changed, and there are several criteria involved in renewing our designation. I would gladly welcome anyone who would like to help me with the process.

Ok, thanks.
See ya at church!
Doug

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.

A Thank You to the Summer Volunteers

Denise and the UU Kids (shared in the August 26 service)

We started the summer learning all about China;
Wonton soup with Lara and Bonnie--what could be finer?
Miniature gardens with Vivien and Millie:
The creativity of each one was amazing--really!
Liquid nitrogen ice cream, how exciting is that?
Holger taught us some physics and lots of fun facts.
Who knew playing with Legos could be so much fun?
If you need creative inspiration, Darien's the one.
And who knows more about trains than Frank Ruf?
To find one with more passion for railroads is tough.
Thanks to Anne and Linda, we made bracelets with beads;
Handmade jewelry is something everyone needs.
Learning to use binoculars was quite the test,
But watching for birds with Doug was the best.
Mitch got us all excited with latch hook;
A few tries for the kids, that's all it took.
We played matching games in Spanish with Joe,
And our *papel picado es muy bonito*.
Fun times were had playing with clay;
Rob taught us some new techniques that day.
Plastic flowers from bottles? Elaine showed us the way
To make colorful creations that we're proud to display.
Looking for bugs with Holly and Mae,
What better way to spend a rainy Sunday?
And today we're with Del, who will share stories of old;
Our time with her is as precious as gold.
Thank you one and all for your gifts and your time—
Being with you has been simply sublime.

Treasurer's Report: Keep Up the Good Work!

Anne Bailey

Financially we are in pretty good shape. We have money in the bank and some reserves for emergencies.

There are some maintenance issues which will have to be addressed in the immediate future, so don't forget to make your pledge payments. And if you have not made a formal pledge, please ask Charles Merrifield or me, and we will get you signed up.

Thank you for supporting First UU Church.

Music Committee Notes Jana Rambo

We have not had a lot of activity lately. We were contacted by a music group Jana learned about at UUA General Assembly called "Deeper than the Skin." After a long wait, we heard back from them and learned they charge a lot more than we feel able to pay, so at our August meeting, we made the decision not to invite them.

We continue to hope for more members. If you would like to join us, we meet after the service on the fourth Sunday of the month.

Pagan Circle Celebration

Join us on Saturday, October 6, as we gather to celebrate Mabon. Our monthly meeting falls some time after the usual observance of Mabon, but please join us beginning at 7:00 as we celebrate the Autumn Equinox.

Day and night are in perfect balance again all over the world. After all is gathered in and all the outside work is finished, this is the big festival of the Autumn's end. From now on the days will get shorter and the weather colder. Astrologers know that this is when the sun enters the sign of Libra, the Balance, which is a fitting symbol of balanced light and darkness.

You are invited to bring a drum or other rhythm instrument, snack foods to share, and whatever you wish to drink.

Our Samhain or Halloween celebration will be on Saturday, November 3. Save the date—details in the next newsletter.

Questions? Call Anne Bailey (650-4905), Linda Jordan (512-6652), or Paula Peare (312-5235).

Nonpartisan Candidate Forum

The ACLU has rented the church for a Candidate Forum on Monday, October 1, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

From the [ACLU website](#): "Civil liberties are major issues in this November's election. We know that voters want to hear about where candidates stand on everything from reducing mass incarceration to increasing citizen participation. That's why we're sponsoring Kansas State House Candidate Forums so that voters have the opportunity to hear directly from, and talk directly to, candidates about where they stand on criminal justice reform.

"Join us for a candidate forum on criminal justice and citizen participation in Sedgwick County. This forum is sponsored by Kansans for Smart Justice and the Kansas Coalition for Citizen Participation. All Sedgwick County candidates have been invited. These forums are nonpartisan, free, and open to the public."

News from the Garden
Anita Culp

Our flower garden is being visited by a number of skipper butterflies. These one-inch cuties usually sit with their wings folded and rapidly flit (skip) from flower to flower. When our purple asters bloom this month by the handicap parking, they should be filled with skippers, sulphur butterflies, and native bees. Only a few monarch butterflies were seen this summer in the garden, but several monarch caterpillars were spotted on our butterfly milkweed plants.

Speaking of the plants next to the handicap parking, the Gardening Group is losing the battle between the Bermuda grass and juniper bushes. If you have a good idea to control the Bermuda grass invasion into these bushes, please pass it along to Anita Culp or Linda Jordan.

On a fun note, our indoor dracaena potted plant next to the front door was graced with four toadstools during September. They popped up, one at a time, and “bloomed” for one day. A quick search on the internet revealed that toadstools in indoor pots are not unheard of and are thought to be a result of spores in the potting mix. Since this potted plant has been around for some time, it is more likely that the spores wafted in from the outside. Toadstools (also known as mushrooms if the plant is edible) are the fleshy, spore-bearing fruiting body of a fungus. They do not harm the potted plant, living instead on the organic matter or dead roots in the soil. Why did they show up this year and not before? It was really humid this summer and maybe that made conditions just right. Or maybe our plant wrangler, Linda Jordan, has developed a new gardening talent.



**Board of Trustees
September Meeting Agenda**

Following is the First UU Board of Trustees September 19, 2018, meeting agenda. If you would like more information about agenda items, you may refer to the minutes, which are usually kept on file in the church library.

Check in
Agenda review
Consent agenda and August minutes

Reports:

1. Treasurer report
2. President's Report
3. President Elect's report

Continuing business:

1. Andrew's vision work
2. Alternative gift market

New business:

1. Window repairs
2. Roof repairs
3. Web page redesign
4. Any new business?

Adjourn

Thanks, Anita

Thanks to Anita Culp, Office Manager, for stepping up to format *In Touch* this month. Rolando Gomez's work involves travel and long hours, and he was unable to do the formatting for this issue.

October 2018

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:00p Nonpartisan Candidate Forum	2 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	3 7:00p Committee on Ministry 7:00p Worship Committee	4	5	6 7:00p Pagan Circle
7 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Sunday Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:00p Fall Family Round- Up and First Sunday Lunch	8 6:00p Vegan Potluck	9 6:00p Zen Friends	10 9:00a - 5:00p Setup & Price Rummage Sale	11 8:00a - 5:00p Rummage Sale	12 9:00a - 5:00p Rummage Sale	13 9:00a - noon Rummage Sale
14 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Sunday Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:30p Leadership Council	15	16 6:00p Zen Friends	17 4:00p UU Craft Group 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	18	19 11:30a Eclectic Readers	20 10:00a Caring Committee 6:00p Church Potluck
21 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Sunday Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:20p Social Action Group	22 1:00p Movie Group	23 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p Membership Committee	24 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	25	26	27 6:30p UU Humanist Group
28 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Sunday Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Music Committee	29	30 6:00p Zen Friends	31			

Supper Club, Holiday Group, All-Church Potluck

The First UU Supper Club will join forces with the Holiday Group for an all-church covered-dish dinner at 6 p.m. on Saturday, October 20.

This family-friendly event is sure to be fun. Everyone is welcome. Let's mingle and catch up with old church members and get to know new friends.

Bring a covered dish and BYOB. Volunteers are needed to set up and take down tables for the dinner. Please contact Susan Hund-Milne (susanhundmilne@gmail.com) if you can help.

Bulletin from the UUA International Office: Act Globally!

Vivien Minshull-Ford

In 2014, I was staying in a hotel across from the United Nations Building and looking online for a nearby UU church to visit on Sunday. Instead, even closer, I found the United Nations UU offices, very cluttered and crowded, where the nicest bunch of young interns you could ever meet were hard at work, amongst coffee cups, pop bottles, half-eaten sandwiches, and lots of high-tech equipment. They were at the time skypping on a large multi-split screen with UN UU correspondents from churches all over the country. I was bombarded with questions about our church, the size and location, and would we be interested in having someone at the church be our UN UU Ambassador, and start a group to study UN activities?

I am still receiving regular updates and announcements, which I really want to share with an occasional bulletin in our newsletter, and contact information so you can pursue UN UU activities, get on their contact list, and learn all the wonderful things the UUA International Office does for migrant and refugee programs, for gender equality, against systemic racism, for religious freedoms, and for promoting UU solidarity and connectedness with Unitarians worldwide. It is a view of the world which we will never get from network news.

The events do not always take place in New York. In July, leaders from nearly every African Unitarian Universalist community met in Nairobi for a three-day retreat. This meeting was “the culmination of a year-long process to connect our UU communities across Africa to one another; to share best practices, difficulties, successes, the wisdom of experience, and fellowship.” And in November, the UU College of Social Justice will join an interfaith delegation to Honduras, Por La Vida, “which will focus on the struggles, strategies, and resilience of women in Honduras who are fighting for their own rights and to protect the Earth from the ravages of corporate mines and dams. This journey will strengthen solidarity with our Honduran partners, awaken participants to some of the root causes of migration, and prepare us for advocacy and accompaniment when we return.”

In Spring 2019 in New York City, the UU-UNO Intergenerational Spring Seminar is a big question: **What can people of faith do to make gender equity a reality in our communities and our world?**

Access to these events is available online in webinars and live feeds. You can subscribe to the newsletters via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and uua.org/un.

The address in New York is Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office, 777 UN Plaza, Suite 7G, New York, NY, 10017. It is a great experience to visit, and you can take in the UN at the same time!

Ripples
Jana Rambo

The Caring Committee is the arm of the church that responds to events in members' lives. We send birthday and other celebrative cards, sympathy cards, and sometimes help with needs like meals and hospital visits.

Our condolences to **Rob Williams** on the death of **his friend Desmond**, who visited the church several times with Rob.

Lila Arnold is continuing to recover at home. Please call first if you're considering a visit, to be sure it's a good time for you to come.

As most congregants know, **Del Smith** has been hospitalized with a twisted intestine. Fortunately, the problem resolved itself and surgery was not needed. Del was in the midst of preparations for a move to the home of Jenny and Jessi, and after being released from the hospital September 19, has moved to her new home.

Our **Emergency Fund** continues to be somewhat lower than we would like. Thanks to everyone who has donated. If you would like to donate, please contact Jana Rambo or LaRilla Combs.

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

Fall Rummage Sale Week: October 7-13

Marcia Ellsworth

Do you have things at your house that you don't need, love, or use? Would you like to find a new home for some of them? If so, now is the time to start sorting and setting aside your extra stuff to bring to the church on Sunday, October 7, or Wednesday, October 10. The Fall Rummage Sale will start Thursday, October 11, and go through Saturday, October 13.

Donations can be anything you think someone else can use, but here are some ideas:

- Clothing is always popular but must be in good condition. Fall and winter clothing is preferable. Also, clothing on hangers helps with display.
- Children's toys
- and good books are in big demand.
- Electronics must be in working condition.
- Kitchen items,
- jewelry,
- décor,
- garage items, garden equipment, and tools are always welcome.

Pricing your own items is greatly appreciated but not necessary. If you have questions or can volunteer to help price or sell, let Vivien (316-371-1949) or Marcia (316-208-3083) know.

First UU to Sponsor Goat Fund at Alternative Gift Market

Joe Lozano

The Social Action committee, on behalf of the First UU congregation, has signed up to sponsor a project at the AGI Fair on Saturday November 10, at University Congregational Church, 9209 E. 29th St. North. Our project is “Pay It Forward with a Goat,” which provides goats as renewable economic resources for families in the communities of Gros Morne, Haiti.

We are given a six-foot table to decorate as our “booth,” and we need to have on hand 150-200 keepsakes/ornaments for those who choose our project to support in their gift-giving—and there will be around 25 different projects to choose from. Ideas for the decoration of the table and the ornaments are in Marcia Ellsworth’s capable hands so far, so please reach out to her if you would like to help with that part of the project.

The fair runs from 10 to 4, so two shifts of 2-3 people should be enough (9-1 and 1-4:30). Those running the booth will need to become knowledgeable about the project. Holger has volunteered for the 1st shift, and Marcia, LaRilla, and I are also in the mix. Please let me know if interested in volunteering!

We are also encouraging you to plan to “shop” at the AGI Fair. Rather than buying a traditional gift for a loved one, shoppers at Alternative Gift Markets can honor their friends and family by donating to various national and international humanitarian projects. An alternative gift is a sustainable gift you give to others in honor of someone. It’s a nontraditional way of giving and a meaningful gift that will help someone in need.

Children’s Religious Exploration

Denise Jackson-Simon, DRE

We finished up our summer activities with a fun and informative lesson by Jennifer Connelly on the benefits of Recycle, Reuse, and Repurpose. Then, it was nice to have our children participate in the water ceremony by lighting the chalice and doing the reading, passing the plate for the offertory, and joining in with percussion on a song. The plan is to have children participate in two services per month.

Please mark your calendars and plan to be here for our annual Fall Family Round-up. “Family,” as in church family, so everyone is invited. It happens on **October 7**, which is also 1st Sunday, so I’m teaming with the kitchen folk to have our lunch as part of the round-up. We’ll hope for beautiful weather so we can enjoy games and gathering on the lawn.

Parents, please check your email for notes from simontrio3@aol.com. That’s me, and I send out a notice once a month with the activities and lessons planned for those Sundays.

I look forward to seeing you and your children at UU. It’s much more fun when U are there!

Services in October Annie Welsbacher

Fightin' words fly at First UU's pulpit through much of October, mellowed at month's end by an exploration of an ancient Celtic festival honoring the darker part of the year.

October 7, Andrew Davis will present his thoughts on "The New Privilege," exploring both how privilege has been used to create and maintain systemic inequity in our society and how we can redefine privilege to create solutions to this inequity. We'll also hear about our Annual Fall Family Roundup, which follows the service, in a special presentation from First UU's kids.

First UU Oklahoma City Minister Emeritus Mark Christian speaks on October 14. "This Machine Kills Fascists" honors the name of Woody Guthrie's guitar—and the message of much of his music, perhaps even more relevant today than when he sang it. Christian and musical partner Fenton Rude will inspire us with words and song.

The service for October 21 features "No Time for Casual Faith," a video of UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray's closing sermon at the 2018 General Assembly in June. At a time of extraordinary hatred and violence, the sermon calls on UUs "to build stronger relationships across our faith and deeper commitments with those most impacted on the frontlines of campaigns for liberation." Our kids join the service with, fittingly, a lesson on our faith's first principle.

On October 28, Linda Jordan will speak on Samhain, the Gaelic harvest festival observed on October 31 or November 1. Halfway between the autumn equinox and the winter solstice, Samhain marks the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter or the "darker half" of the year. It is still celebrated as a cultural festival by some (though it has mostly been replaced by Halloween) and, since the 20th century, has been celebrated as a religious festival by Celtic neopagans and Wiccans.

First UU Team to Attend Anti-Racism Workshop in Manhattan, KS, October 20

"Love Reaches Out," a day-long workshop led by Phil Lund, helps UU congregations examine how they can reach out in the changing American religious landscape while staying grounded in their core identity. Jonalu Johnstone writes, "Now more than ever, we need each and every congregation in the MidAmerica Region reaching out into their local communities to bring about more love, justice, and peace into the world."

Johnstone recommends that teams of at least four people from each congregation attend the workshop, as there will be opportunities to work together about specific congregational situations. **Please contact Doug Wilson, who plans to attend, if you can join the team from First UU.**

UU Fellowship of Manhattan, 481 Zeandale Road, Manhattan, Kansas, will host the "Love Reaches Out" workshop from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 20. The only cost is a small donation for lunch. See <https://www.facebook.com/events/1977134545680576/>.

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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Eclectic Readers

Emily St. John Mandel's *Station Eleven* is our selection for October and the selection for Big Read Wichita. Kirsten Raymonde will never forget the night Arthur Leander, the famous Hollywood actor, had a heart attack onstage during a production of *King Lear*. That was also the night when a devastating flu pandemic arrived in the city, and within weeks, civilization as we know it came to an end.

Twenty years later, Kirsten moves between the settlements of the altered world with a small troupe of actors and musicians. They call themselves the Travelling Symphony, and they have dedicated themselves to keeping the remnants of art and humanity alive. As the story takes off, moving back and forth in time and vividly depicting life before and after the pandemic, the strange twist of fate that connects them all will be revealed.

"Even if you think dystopian fiction is not your thing, I urge you to give this marvelous novel a try.... [An] emotional and thoughtful story," writes Deborah Harkness, author of *The Book of Life*.

The kick-off event for the Big Read is Saturday, September 29, at the new Advanced Learning Library, 711 West Second, 1-4 p.m., featuring chamber music, an art project, a Shakespeare preview, reader's theater and free copies of the book. There will be numerous other events around Wichita and surrounding towns during the next six weeks, culminating with an appearance by the author at Friends University on November 15.

Join us on Friday, October 19. Bring a brown bag lunch at 11:30 a.m. and join the discussion which begins around noon. Anne Bailey, 316-650-4905.