



# In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA  
FOUNDED 1887

## Social Action Committee Update

Sharon Kniss and Holger Meyer

*Following are excerpts from the minutes of the Social Action Committee meeting at First UU on November 18, 2018, attended by Wendy Aylworth, LaRilla Combs, Marcia Ellsworth, Sharon Kniss, Charles Merrifield, Holger Meyer, Peter Ninemire, and Janelle Patterson.*

- Peter talked about the desire to get involved in the legislative initiatives. The expungement efforts are trying to remedy the outcome of a broken system. It is far too easy in Kansas to have a driver's license revoked or suspended. Then it is a vicious cycle into poverty from there. There may be momentum to change some of the laws that create the most hardship for many people.
- LaRilla reported on the sale of goats at the alternative gift market. That was a fun and successful event, and we will likely do it again. Thomas Lozano was the leading force to make this happen, and of course, lots of others helped before and during the event.
- Then Wendy talked about the apparently common practice by the MABCD (Metropolitan Area Building and Construction Department) to systematically sign all roof inspection reports automatically without actually doing any inspections, leading to situations where roofers are not liable for inferior work because the inspection relieves them of liability. This has been going on for years and local news stations have been reporting on similar stories, but nothing has been changing. The City County Joint Inspection Department apparently claims that they can't really do inspections because they don't own ladders. This leads to real hardship for homeowners who are stuck with leaking roofs and bills by roofers who threaten to take the house if bills don't get paid, with courts siding with the roofers based on the falsified inspection reports.
- Next, LaRilla reported that the expungement drive resulted in 218 county and 79 city expungement applications being prepared that will be filed in the coming weeks.
- Sharon reported on the meeting with Sam Muyskens on the Haiti project in Lambert, Haiti. Overall, the impression was positive. There was some discussion on the fund resulting from sales of artwork from Mary Erickson. That should be in addition, not instead of the funding for two students First UU has been providing. Charles will check on the funding.
- The UU common read is *Justice on Earth*.
- Other issues were tabled for lack of time. Green Sanctuary and Welcoming Congregation recertification need separate meetings.

# In Touch

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

[www.firstuu.net](http://www.firstuu.net)

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

## Art and Culture at First UU

John Brammer



*John Brammer's photography exhibit in our gathering space will be up until the middle of February. Following is the artist's statement:*

I am a retired oral and maxillofacial surgeon who has had a latent interest in taking and processing pictures since my college days. At that time, I had a rangefinder type 35mm Yashica camera. I shot primarily in black and white and developed my own work in my parent's laundry room. During my residency, I used a 35mm Canon to extensively document my surgical cases.

Retirement, enjoyment of travel, and compulsion to understand the most basic capabilities of Photoshop helps me resurrect my earlier hobby. All my trips include taking photographs—in part to preserve memories, in part to create art.

My favorite subjects are people; some ordinary, some not so much. The hobbyists call it "street photography." I enjoy trying to convey some hint of what the person's soul might say if asked to speak. Some subjects are unaware of being photographed; others are flattered by my interest. Additionally, I enjoy the challenges of photographing landscapes and architecture. Images in this exhibit were taken in a variety of locations: Italy, Hawaii, Australia, Cuba, Chile, and the continental United States.

Most of the photographs in this exhibit were taken with a Nikon D810 using a 28mm-300mm walk-around lens. Some were obtained with a Nikon D90 with a Nikon 18mm-105mm utility lens. For a few, I used a Sony G pocket camera with a 2X optical zoom or my iPhone.

I'm flattered to have been asked to display these photographs at your church and have tried to develop an exhibit that will appeal to both the casual observer as well as to the more critical. I hope that you can enjoy them as much as I have enjoyed making them available. Thanks for looking!

## **RE Corner**

Denise Jackson-Simon, DRE

2019: that just sounds so strange to me. There was a time when it seemed so futuristic. But here we are, and I'm happy to be here!

January brings our exploration of the fourth principle, which focuses on our search for truth and meaning. On January 6th and 20th, the children will begin by participating in the main service and then have a follow-up lesson in the classroom. On January 13th and 27th, we will have lessons in the classroom, and possibly a community service project. We will take a close look at the teachings of MLK Jr. this month, as well, and discover how they tie in with our search for what is true and right in life.

We've had some Sundays with good numbers in attendance. Please try to make UU Sundays part of your children's new year. It is much more fun when U are there. And... Happy New Year!

## **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.

**Congratulations** to Eric and Jamie Whetmore, and son Desi, on the birth of daughter Evie Luna on December 8, 2018.

We extend **our deepest sympathy** to Janelle and Ed McCormack on the passing of their daughter, Alicia Christine McCormack on December 8, 2018.

**Thank you** to everyone who contributed to the Emergency Fund. Those contributions were truly GIFTS OF CARING for our members and friends.

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

## **Website Suggestions or Postings Procedure**

Andrew Davis

If you have suggestions or postings for the church's website, please contact one of the following four people: Doug Wilson (President), Andrew Davis (President Elect), Anita Culp (Office Manager), or Marcia Ellsworth (EcoFest/Fundraising). Doug, Andrew, and Anita will take any kind of information. Marcia is focusing on EcoFest and Fundraising projects. We hope this will streamline our processes and save time for Don Crawford, who does the heavy lifting of making our website go.

## Billie Knighton: Pilgrimage to Viet Nam

Billie Knighton will speak at the Global Learning Center Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 20, 2019, 7 p.m., at the Olive Tree Banquet Hall on the topic “Pilgrimage to Viet Nam: On Managing and Healing the Wounds of War.” Her lecture is free and open to the public.

Last November, during the fiftieth anniversary of the death of her husband, Maj. Yale R. Davis, in Viet Nam, Billie Knighton journeyed, under the auspices of Soldier’s Heart, with nine others on a Healing and Reconciliation pilgrimage to Viet Nam. Each participant wished to experience what the American war in Viet Nam has come to signify for both U.S. and Vietnamese people. Each also wished to gain a contemporary view of the Vietnamese people and the country’s remarkable path of recovery from war’s devastation. Knighton will tell the story of her journey from 1968 to 2018.

For more information, and to make dinner reservations, contact Jim Phillips at 316-684-1469 or [jamesphillips21346@gmail.com](mailto:jamesphillips21346@gmail.com), or visit the [Global Learning Center website](#).

## Invitation to TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly)

Vivien Minshull-Ford

This is the time of the year to eat, drink, and be merry—but it’s a time when some of us might put on a pound or two. If you are interested in keeping off the pounds, there’s TOPS, an international weight loss organization with branches in several areas in Wichita and Bel-Air. Three UU members belong to the branch in Grace Presbyterian Church, at 5002 E. Douglas Avenue, a fun group which meets from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

For information, call Vivien Minshull-Ford at 683-9295, or find me at church on Sundays!

## Christmas

*Lila Arnold*

\*  
is  
for the living  
giving  
in the dying year  
forgiving  
for giving again  
The New Year  
is for getting new  
beginnings  
forgetting old enmities  
for  
giving  
forgiving again.

# January 2019

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Church Office Closed  6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Night	2  7:00p Committee on Ministry 7:00p Worship Committee	3	4	5  7:00p Pagan Circle
6 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service <b>11:00a Children's RE</b> 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	7	8  6:00p Zen Friends	9	10	11	12  10:00a Caring Committee
13 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Worship Service <b>11:00a Children's RE</b> 12:15p MidYear Meeting	14  6:00p Vegan Potluck	15  6:00p Zen Friends	16 4:00p UU Craft Group 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	17	18 11:30a Eclectic Readers	19  <b>9:30a Inquirer's Class</b>
20 9:30a Seeking Circle 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 11:00a Worship Service <b>11:00a Children's RE</b> 12:20p Social Action Group	21  Church Office Closed	22  6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p Membership Committee	23 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	24	25	26  6:30p UU Humanist Group
27 9:45a Adult Relig. Explor. 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Worship Service <b>11:00a Children's RE</b> 12:15p Music Committee	28  1:00p Movie Group	29  6:00p Zen Friends	30	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—Doug Wilson  
 President-Elect—Andrew Davis  
 Board of Trustees—Jana Rambo, Holger Meyer, Joe Lozano, Charlie King, Masud Chand, Jayne Henry, and Linda Jordan  
 Treasurer—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—TBD  
 Custodian—Linda Jordan  
 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—TBA  
 Membership—Anne Bailey  
 Music—Jana Rambo  
 Partner Church—Debbie Wadman  
 Personnel—TBD  
 Program Development—TBD  
 Social Action—Sharon Kniss  
 UUA Denominational Liaison—Mike Diggs  
 Worship—Anne Welsbacher

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

Rachel Rutledge, chair; LaRilla Combs, Charles Merrifield, Paula Peare, and Frank Ruf

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Jennifer Connelly, Charles Merrifield, and Nancy Milner

**GROUP CONTACTS**

Craft Group—Anita Culp  
 Digerati Buchgemeinschaft—Rolando Gomez  
 Eclectic Readers—Del Smith  
 Fourth Monday Movie Group—Del Smith  
 Garden Group—Anita Culp and Linda Jordan  
 Humanist Group—Charles Merrifield  
 Occasional Book Club—TBA  
 Pagan Group—Anne Bailey, Linda Jordan, and Paula Peare  
 Zen Friends of Wichita—Bob Feleppa and Vivien Minshull-Ford

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## Services in January

Annie Welsbacher

January brings a rich stew of chewy topics, from end-of-life decision-making to the plight of children caught in the court system, to the “life blood” of our country that Martin Luther King espoused—and that UUs play a part in. We close the month with a pulpit exchange featuring Rev. Janalu Johnstone of the Manhattan, Kansas, UU church.

UUA Final Exit Network representative Dr. Charles Gessert will speak January 6 on “The Difference between Suicide and Rational Self Delivery. Gessert, a retired pediatrician, teaches a course in Minnesota on the best way to approach death. He uses PowerPoint and encourages congregational interaction.

“We All Need to Help These Children” is the message Judge Kevin Smith from the 18th Judicial District (Juvenile Court) brings when he joins us in the pulpit January 13. Smith will share the plight of too many children in our area who find themselves caught up in the Juvenile Court System with no way to represent themselves and no adult advocate to help speak for them. Smith will show us how we can be of service to these children to ensure that their worth and dignity is honored and that their needs and best interests are met when deciding their fates. The judge also will describe the Court Appointed Special Advocate program, and representatives from CASA and other agencies will be available to provide additional information before and after the service.

On January 20, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s. birthday, Andrew Davis will present “The Moral Arc of the Universe” in which he will explore the long tradition of social justice that has been the life blood of our country, with a special emphasis on how Unitarian Universalists have been an integral part of these efforts and how we as members of the First Unitarian Universalist Church can reinvigorate this tradition in our own community with the moral choices we make today.

On January 27, Rev. Jonalu Johnstone, Developmental Minister of UU Fellowship of Manhattan, considers “Could It Be? Yes, it Could!” to understand how possibilities—and the extent to which we acknowledge them—shapes our lives. Possibilities encourage optimism and keep us in touch with hope. Rev. Johnstone has served UU congregations from Oklahoma to Wisconsin. (To the northeast a few miles, our own Lara Pollack will stand in for Johnstone at the Manhattan church for this pulpit exchange.)

### Welcome New Member: Dania Laubach

Dania is a fresh transplant to the Kansas area and to the Unitarian Church. She works for the Girl Scouts in Volunteer Support. Her hobbies include writing letters, reading, drinking too much coffee, gardening, and tending to her five cats...yes, five. Her husband and she have fun geocaching, playing Pokemon Go, and going on adventures near and far.

She is tremendously excited to be a member of the First UU family and enjoys updating the Church’s public and private-group pages on Facebook.

Welcome, Dania!

## **New Small Group Beginning in January**

Lynn Kientz

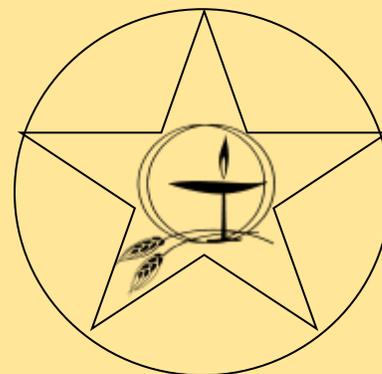
Hello everyone! My name is Lynn Kientz, and I am taking over the Small Group Ministry in January for Thea Neitfeld, as she is taking on new endeavors.

The Small Group Ministry is an adult group that meets the second and fourth Sunday of the month and talks about various topics. The group should consist of no more than eight to twelve people, and right now there are only three of us in the group. There is plenty of room for growth! The next meeting will be January 13, 2019. The way to join is to just show up.

A little background on myself: I have been a member of First UU for about six months now, I think. I have been active in the Pagan Circle for a number of years even before becoming a member of the Church. I feel that I am very openminded to most spiritual beliefs, and I enjoy learning about others' beliefs.

I am a Licensed Addictions Counselor and have been working in the field of addictions for about eight years. I am currently a part-time student at Wichita State University studying Social Work with an emphasis in addictions. At this time, my plan is to get my Bachelor's. I have experience in leading small groups and have a passion for helping others. I am hoping that by leading this Small Group Ministry, it will enrich me both professionally and spiritually.

If you feel that the Small Group Ministry is something that you would like to try, please join us on the second or fourth Sunday in the Meditation Room. We would enjoy having you!



### **First UU Pagan Circle**

We start the new year on January 5 with a story about Befana. In Italian folklore, Befana is an old woman who delivers gifts to children throughout Italy on Epiphany Eve (January 5) in a similar way to St. Nicholas or Santa Claus. Join us at 7:00 to celebrate the turning of the wheel and to share traditional lore from a different culture.

All are welcome, and snack foods are always welcome. Feel free to call Anne Bailey (316-650-4905) if you have questions.

## Music Committee Notes

Jana Rambo, MC chair

The Music Committee continues to work toward having more special music in our services. We were especially happy to hear the Native American music December 16. Thanks to John White Crow for his musical gift to us.

We are still hoping to set up some concerts. We have been in contact with Carol Neighbor, who intends to have a concert in the next few months. If you have contacts in the music community who might want to play at First UU, please let us know.

## UU at the UN Bulletin: Winter Update

Vivien Minshull-Ford

On World Aids Day, December 1, Bruce Knotts, Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office Director, sent in a report from Ghana where he had been visiting the UU-UNO's Every Child Is Our Child (ECOC): "Today On World AIDS Day, we reflect again on the impact that this disease continues to have on communities around the globe—where people infected with HIV and AIDS are forced to live in the shadows and often go untreated." ECOC provides access to health care for children in Ghana made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and for their care-giving family members. Unitarian Universalist contributions provide funding for ECOC to empower children orphaned or endangered by HIV/AIDS through education and to lower rates of AIDS related deaths through health care access.

International Engagement Associate Allison Hess reported on the 10th December celebration of Human Rights Day 2018, the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in her article "Creating and Working Towards Justice on Human Rights Day." The previous week, Bruce Knotts had spoken at a conference in Taiwan of threats to human rights. In his address at the International Forum for Freedom and Democracy in Taipei, he affirmed that human rights must never be put to a vote as had happened in Taiwan earlier that week. That country had just passed three referenda that would limit the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and couples. It has been shown throughout history that when the rights of a minority are put to a vote, the majority will strike those rights down.

It was significant also that on Human Rights Day there were two simultaneous UN conferences underway: the Katowice, Poland, conference on Climate Control, and the Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakech, Morocco, to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. As Bruce Knotts stated, "It is impossible to talk about human rights in 2018 without talking about both climate change and migration." For *In Touch* readers, it is possible to follow the rest of the Knotts address on the UU-UNO blog ([unitednations@uua.org](mailto:unitednations@uua.org)).

The UU-UNO also announced that registration is now open for **Equity in Action—Gender in an Intersecting World**, the 2019 Intergenerational Spring Seminar in New York City, April 11-13. Check the above website for further details—and at [uua.org/un](http://uua.org/un) if you would like to subscribe to the UU-UNO newsletters.

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**Eclectic Readers**

Pulitzer Prize winner and American master Anne Tyler brings us *Vinegar Girl*, a witty contemporary take on one of Shakespeare's most beloved comedies, *The Taming of the Shrew*.

NPR's Review: "Despite its ever-controversial sexism, *The Taming of the Shrew* remains one of Shakespeare's most popular comedies—in both the original and its many modern adaptations, including Cole Porter's *Kiss Me Kate*. And now Anne Tyler, as part of the Hogarth Shakespeare series of novels based on the major plays, has tamed the Bard's shrewish battle of the sexes into a far more politically correct screwball comedy of manners that actually channels Jane Austen more than Shakespeare. It's clear that she had fun with *Vinegar Girl*, and readers will too."

Copies may be available to check out from the office. Arrangements were not completed at deadline.

11:30, Friday, January 18. Brownbag lunch followed by a lively discussion. Del Smith, 612-0826.