



In Touch

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF WICHITA

FOUNDED 1887

Eco-Activism at EcoFest May 5

- Bonnie Till

EcoFest is Sunday, May 5, noon to 5. Admission is \$3 (under 12 free).

This year's EcoFest emphasizes eco-activism. The many advocacy groups and vendors at EcoFest will show us that living green is not difficult and that with a few small changes in the way we do things, we can have a big impact on making the environment healthier and safer for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren. For example, the EcoFest lunch crew is committed to as little waste as possible. They will use only compostable or washable dinnerware, and all food remaining on plates will be composted.

I know most of you have signed up to help, but it is not too late to join the team. If you are available to help, please contact LaRilla Combs at 559-4478. LaRilla will find just the right spot to plug you in.

Special features this year there will include **passport prizes** – one \$50 Sprouts' gift certificate or one Olive Tree gift certificate (you just need to get your passport initialed by at least 20 of the advocacy groups/vendors to qualify for this drawing); **silent auction; music** – Carl Williams and John White Crow; and **hydration station** – *don't forget your refillable water bottle so you can use the station!*

And please think kindly of and support the following **sponsors** – KMUW, KHCC, and Natural Foods – and **donors** – Backyard Birds, Sprouts, Two Olives, and the great and wonderful Spice Merchant!

As of this date, there are **15 Advocacy Groups** (Wichita Renewable Energy, Southwind Sierra Club, Citizens Climate Lobby, Pro Kansas Recycling, WASI, Extension Service [composting], Zero Waste, SOAR, Bag Free Waste, Vegan Foodies, Kansas Native Plants, Wings of the Wind [kites], Ark River Coalition, Wichita Dog Action, Tony Jackson) and **16 Vendors** (Compost ICT, Puppy Smiles, Belle and Buddy's Kitchen, Urban Prairie, Strong Roots Farming, Inspirit Kombucha, The Atypical Company [shopping bags], Krazy Lady Designs, Fairmount Pottery, Synergy Arts [face painting & henna], Sweet Cheeks, Alternative Market, Refinement, Recycling Perks, Juniper Clay & Canning Company [honey], Ori's Farm) participating in EcoFest!

On May 5, plan to celebrate the environment and learn what you can do to make our community, state, country, and world a healthier place to live well.

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.

Leadership Council Minutes: 14 April 2019

- Andrew Davis

Members present: Anne Bailey, Lynn Kientz, Mitch Kientz, Sharon Kniss, Vivien Minshull-Ford, Jana Rambo, Rachel Rutledge, Celestra Snyder.

Finance: Charles Merrifield reminded members of the Leadership Council to get their pledges for the Stewardship Campaign in ASAP if they have not already.

Worship Committee: The Worship Committee is down to four members. We invite anyone interested to consider joining. You may contact Susan Hund-Milne, Anne Bailey, Lara Pollack, or Kay Davis for more information.

Aesthetics: The EcoFest art show will go up on or around **April 21**.

Committee on Ministry (CoM): We are continuing our efforts to increase our inclusivity of individuals who come from traditions that may not be as publicly visible as others. We want everyone to engage in the UU conversation.

Social Action: We are working with CoM on increasing inclusivity and part of our Welcoming Congregation efforts. We are also exploring ways to highlight our initiatives supporting education in Haiti so that we increase congregational involvement by offering a Haiti themed First Sunday Lunch in the Fall. To this end, we are looking for a point person to highlight these efforts.

Small Group Ministries: The bi-weekly Sunday Morning meetings are great for all participants, but we would like to extend an invitation for anyone interested to join us.

EcoFest: We are putting the finishing touches on EcoFest by filling in the gaps with vendors. This will be one of the strongest lineups of environmental advocates we have had.

Caring Committee: We are sending out Birthday and Thinking-of-You cards. We will be conducting a survey after EcoFest to assess needs and adjust our work as needed.

Music Committee: Don't forget the **Roy Zimmerman Concert at 7:00 PM on Monday, April 29**.

Membership Committee: We have two new members and two prospective members.

Traveling with Thea

- Thea Nietfeld

April 14: I'm just back from traveling in the South and want to make a recommendation for those planning trips: The **Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) Legacy Museum** and **National Memorial for Peace and Justice** sites in Montgomery, Alabama.

Bryan Stevenson, who wrote *Just Mercy*, is behind the EJI. Those working to defend people on death row came to see that slavery has not stopped, but rather has changed form. They decided to honor the 4000 identified lynching victims with a park and sculptures and by inviting communities to engage the project locally.

If you can get to Montgomery, I hope you are able to visit these inspiring sites.

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.

Our heartfelt **condolences** to Janelle and Ed McCormack as Janelle's mother passed on Saturday, April 13. Please keep Janelle and Ed in your thoughts and prayers.

Congratulations Graduates!

- **Olivia Burkhart** will graduate from East High School in May. Olivia is the daughter of Julie Burkhart and Keith Sellers, and she is the granddaughter of LaRilla Combs. Olivia has excelled playing flute in the East High band and ensembles.
- **Emma Schmidt**, a member of the National Honor Society, will graduate from Southeast High School in May. Emma is the daughter of Lynn and step-father Thong Dy Vouthilak. Emma and Lynn coordinate CornUUCopia (First UU's food bank donations).

Let us know of any other graduates who we can congratulate.

A warm welcome to Linda Jordan who joined the Caring committee this month.

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

Eclectic Readers Honor Mary Oliver

Even if poetry is not a favorite genre, probably every Unitarian Universalist knows Mary Oliver's work. Her books are frequently published by Beacon Press, the UU publishing arm, and her poems are read as part of our worship services. She was the Ware Lecturer at the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly at St. Louis in June 2006.

Oliver, who cited Walt Whitman as an influence, is best known for her awe-filled, often hopeful, reflections on and observations of nature. "Mary Oliver's poetry is an excellent antidote for the excesses of civilization," wrote one reviewer for the *Harvard Review*, "for too much flurry and inattention, and the baroque conventions of our social and professional lives. She is a poet of wisdom and generosity whose vision allows us to look intimately at a world not of our making."

Mary Oliver, a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award-winning poet, died at the age of 83 in January 2019. Her honors include an American Academy of Arts & Letters Award, a Lannan Literary Award, the Poetry Society of America's Shelley Memorial Prize and Alice Fay di Castagnola Award, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Oliver held the Catharine Osgood Foster Chair for Distinguished Teaching at Bennington College until 2001. She lived for over forty years in Provincetown, Massachusetts, with her partner Molly Malone Cook, a photographer and gallery owner. After Cook's death in 2005, Oliver later moved to the southeastern coast of Florida. Oliver died of cancer in Hobe Sound, Florida, on January 17.

Members of Eclectic Readers are invited to read a poem and tell why the work resonates – or doesn't – with them. They may also share something about Oliver's life and background.

11:30, **May 17**: brown bag lunch followed by group discussion. Del Smith, 316-612-0826.

April Freethinker Humanists Meeting

- Charles Merrifield

Dr. Greg Smith will be the speaker for the **Saturday, April 27**, meeting of the Freethinker Humanists. Greg is a practicing clinical psychologist as well as a member of the psychology faculty at Newman University. He will discuss "The Multiplicity of Mind." This should be a fascinating talk that, I think, will bring together neuroscience, psychology, and meditation with Dr. Smith's entertaining style.

The evening will begin at 6:30 with a social period with finger food and desserts at the First UU Church. Greg's talk will begin at 7:00.

Please let us know if you will need childcare so we can provide it. And let us know what you can bring to share so we can avoid a limited focus on dishes.

May 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 1:00p Private Event 7:00p Committee on Ministry 7:00p Pagan Circle	2 3:00-5:00p Ecofest Second-Hand Sale Drop-off	3 9:00a-5:00p Ecofest Second-Hand Sale Setup	4 10:00a until finished Ecofest Setup
5 12:00 - 5:00 p Ecofest	6 10:00a until finished Ecofest takedown	7 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Group	8 1:00p Private Event	9	10	11 10:00a Caring Committee
12 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Leadership Council	13	14 6:00p Zen Friends	15 1:00p Private Event 4:00p UU Craft Group 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	16	17 11:30a Eclectic Readers	18
19 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Seeking Circle 12:20p Social Action Group	20	21 6:00p Zen Friends	22 1:30p Newsletter Mailing	23	24	25 6:30p UU Humanist Group
26 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Music Committee	27 Office Closed 1:00p Movie Group 5:30p Memorial Day Potluck Party	28 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p Membership Committee	29	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 – TBD

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

Services in May

- Kay Davis

The Worship Committee has experienced some change recently, as Annie Welsbacher, our stalwart leader, has found it necessary to step down due to her expanded responsibilities at work. We truly value and appreciate the time, energy, and care Annie brought to the work we do, and she will be missed. Now, we need more members! Committee members take turns scheduling presenters and topics for our worship services, selecting readings and hymns for each service, and typing up the service leader scripts and orders of service. If you enjoy working with others to create diverse programs to meet the many spiritual paths of our congregation, please consider joining us.

May brings flowers and many opportunities for change and learning. **One of our most important UU rites now is a rite of spring--our annual EcoFest Wichita, an intergenerational service day on the first Sunday, May 5!** That means no traditional service will be held. Instead, we will all work and play together as we learn about caring for and living sustainably with our Mother Earth. This month also brings us Mother's Day. We will celebrate mothers and others who contribute to the care and nurturing of our children; we will also learn about the origins of the day and its connection to UUs. On the third Sunday of May, we will consider the Soto Zen path to spiritual growth in a participatory service, and we will end the month with lessons on spiritual healing as our own Billie Knighton shares her pilgrimage to Viet Nam.

Sunday, **May 5**, promises to be a very special day as we celebrate EcoFest Wichita! Together, we will celebrate the interconnected web of life as we educate ourselves and the public about environmentally friendly and sustainable ways to live. **In place of our traditional worship service, we will gather at the usual service time and work together as a congregation to advocate for environmental justice on this day. Come for an hour or two, or spend the whole day as we celebrate the earth and its many gifts – including ourselves!**

Inspired by Alice Walker, Andrew Davis's talk on **May 12**, "In Praise of Our Mother's Gardens," will reflect on the significance and beauty of Mother's Day. The service will also give special recognition to those who help to raise and nurture our UU children: Denise Jackson-Simon, Madeline Crawford, and Miranda Pollock.

On **May 19**, Taiun Michael Elliston, Soto Zen priest, abbot of the Atlanta Soto Zen Center, and guiding teacher of Wichita's Southwind Sangha, will speak about whatever you want him to! In the spirit of the Zen practice of "Mondo" – the spontaneous answers of a Zen teacher to questions posed by his students – Abbot Elliston has asked that we provide questions for him to answer in the moment. Here is your chance to find out whatever you want to about Soto Zen practice in general or Wichita's Southwind Sangha or the Atlanta Soto Zen Center in particular. **Please email or text First UU president Doug Wilson with your questions by Wednesday, May 15**, so he can gather and present as many questions as time allows.

Billie Knighton will bring us "My Pilgrimage to Viet Nam: A Journey to Healing" on **May 26**. She will share her insights about the possibilities for positive choices our culture could make in lieu of the demands of the dominant military-industrial interests we currently follow. While Billie's pilgrimage began as a commemoration the 50th anniversary of her husband's death in Viet Nam, she examines how it became a journey to healing and learning new ways to deal with loss, grief, and the trauma of violent conflict.

RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon

Hello all, and Happy May. The month starts off very exciting with our EcoFest on **May 5**. There will be no RE for children that day as we prepare for the festival. On **May 12**, we will begin in the service and return to the classroom to create a Mother's Day gift. On the **19th**, a review from the year of the seven principles with activities will take place in the classroom. And on the **26th**, we will take our annual end of the year walk with watermelon on the trails at Great Plains Nature Center.

This is the time of year **we ask congregation members to sign up for a summer Sunday lesson for children**. We have always had such a wonderful variety of activities led by amazing folks from our church. We will pass around a list after a service, and then it will be hanging on the office window so you can check your calendars and then sign up when you're available. **Please consider sharing a hobby or interest on a Sunday this summer**. It is a wonderful inter-generational experience for all involved.

I'd like to congratulate Emma Schmidt on her graduation from Southeast High this month. We are proud of you, Emma, and excited to see what lies ahead!

Come one, come all to the **EcoFest**. There will be **activities for kids**, so have them bring friends and plan on spending an afternoon of fun, learning, food, art, and more as we celebrate our seventh principle: **We care for life's Earthboat!**

Trust Women: Open Mic Event

- Bria Boykins

You are invited to join others to reflect on how, ten years after his passing, Dr. Tiller's hard work and legacy continues to pave the way for reproductive freedom. Share your heartwarming stories and/or listen to others share their memories of our beloved friend and mentor.

This will be a come and go event on **Friday, May 31**, from 6-9 p.m. at the Lyceum at Reverie, 2206 E Douglas, Wichita.

Memorial Day Party

You are cordially invited to kick off the summer with the UU Holiday Party Group on Memorial Day, **Monday, May 27**, at First UU Church. Gather at 5:30; dine at 6.

Come for the great company; stay for the Death by Chocolate Thundersnow Dessert. Please bring a covered dish for dinner. After dinner, we'll play lol games!

Board of Trustees April Meeting Agenda

Following is the First UU Board of Trustees April 17, 2019, 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.

"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."

Anne Bradstreet

Check in (Masud will be absent)

Let's talk about meeting minutes

Review agenda

Review and consent February minutes

Reports:

1. Treasurer's report
2. Charles Merrifield with stewardship matters
3. President Elect's report
4. President's report

Continuing business:

1. Discuss possible new policy for compensating non-ministers leading memorial services etc.
2. Nominating committee – How many do we need? Who is eligible?
3. Any new developments with pastoral care?
4. What have I forgotten?

Developing business:

1. G.A. delegate credentials
2. What have I overlooked?

AmazonSmiles

- Charles Merrifield

AmazonSmiles is a way to have Amazon give one-half of one percent of the money you spend with them to the First UU of Wichita. In order to take advantage of this benefit whenever you shop at Amazon, use the URL of [amazonsmiles.com](https://www.amazon.com/smiles) instead of [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). AmazonSmiles uses the same account email and password as Amazon. When you get to AmazonSmiles page, look under the order window for a wording that says "Supporting: a listed charity." Click on the listed charity, and an opportunity to change your charity will appear. Change your charity to First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita.

Pagan Circle at First UU

We will celebrate Beltane on May 1 this year. That is **Wednesday, May 1** (not our usual Saturday because of preparations for EcoFest). Please join us at 6:00 for a potluck feast followed by an informal ritual about 7:00. Please bring a generous dish to share. Coffee and tea will be available. You are encouraged to bring drums or other rhythm instruments. All are welcome.

For June, we return to our first Saturday meeting time – June 1, at 7:00. Questions? Feel free to call Anne Bailey (650-4905), Linda Jordan (512-6652) or Paula Peare (312-5235).

**FIRST UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH**

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Music Committee Notes

- Jana Rambo

The Music Committee continues to work to improve the music in our services as well as attract musicians who want to perform in a concert setting. Our current focus is on preparation for the **Roy Zimmerman concert on Monday, April 29**. We would have preferred a weekend date, but he was already booked in this area, and this was the best date we could get. We hope that in the future we can schedule his concerts on weekends. The charge is \$20, or pay what you can.

Thanks to John White Crow for playing in the service recently.

If you are a musician and would like to provide special music for a service, please let us know. Also, if you are acquainted with musicians who might want to play a concert, please give us those names.

We would also be happy to have a few more committee members. We meet the fourth Sunday after the church service.