



In Touch

First Unitarian Church of Wichita
Founded 1887

July 2019

Letter from the President of the Congregation

More

-Andrew Davis

Through 2nd grade, I grew up Oxford, Kansas, and my best friends were two boys named Tony and Marty. During the summer between my first and second grade years, these two friends were an important part of an unusual week for me. For some reason I don't now remember, my parents had to be out of town on two different nights that week, and for the first time in my life I spent the night away from home – twice.

The first night at Tony's house, when it came time for dinner, I walked over to the table and asked his mom where I should sit. I was told, "Not yet." We had to wait for Tony's dad to get home from work even though the food was ready. Then we had to wait for him to sit down before we could. Then we had to wait for him to say a prayer that seemed to last at least an hour. Then he served himself. Finally, the rest of us could serve ourselves, too. I was confused.

Three days later at Marty's house, the two of us were out by the creek that ran behind the barn, searching for lizards and gold and diamonds and such, when the clang of a bell rang through the air. Before I could ask what it meant, Marty jumped up and told me to hurry if I wanted to eat. We reached the kitchen just as Marty's sister was drying her hands at the sink, so we washed up and rushed to the table where everyone else had already served themselves, and Marty's brother was working on seconds. Once again, I was confused.

The next day when I got home I asked my mom and dad why other people ate dinner wrong, and then it was their turn to be confused. Of course, my parents never answered me, which is probably one of the smartest things they never did, and I'm proud to say that I've never eaten dinner right since. Instead, over and over again, I've learned how little our small, first and second grade thinking can help us understand anything that matters. And while aesthetically speaking less can be more. when it comes to understanding others and being understood by

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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.

Note from the Editor

- Rolando Gomez, Layout Editor

As you have noticed, this InTouch has a new format. The old one served us well (I hope). However, that template was from an earlier software version and became buggy to the point that we had issues printing. As in all things, change must happen. This month newsletter will no doubt not meet people's expectations. I know this, as it does not meet mine. Please bear with me as I knock this template into shape. Change happens one step at a time.

I write this a few hours after the remembrance celebration for Del Smith. Del became the Communications Chair in a period of "turbulence" in our church. I had just agreed to start doing the newsletter and was rather stunned by the wake this turbulence caused. Del stepped in and put a hand on the yoke and flew us, and me, into clean air.

As my college philosophy professor said, please contact me with any questions, comments, concerns or criticism, at shadoe7@mac.com.

TOO GOOD TO WASTE A Green Proposal for 1st UU

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

Compost ICT took care of all the waste and trash at Ecofest: plates, paper napkins, and leftover food and took it all away to make into compost. It's what they do for restaurants, businesses, and homes-- and they can do it for us.

How it works: on a set date Compost ICT would drop off an air-tight 5 gallon bucket with a set of start-up instructions. We fill the bucket during the week until a pre-designated date when we take it out to the curb by midnight, and C-ICT picks it up, leaving us a new clean bucket. With 1st Sunday Lunch, the vegan dinner, and other food events, we think one bucket a week taken away for composting and reuse to be just right for 1st UU. C-ICT takes fruits, veggies, coffee grounds, eggshells paper, dairy, meat (including bones), grass clippings, hair, fur, and feathers. No plastics or the dreaded Styrofoam are allowed.

The cost for one bucket a week for three months is \$55; for a year it's \$220, which works out to be about \$4.30 weekly. Marcia Ellsworth and I would pay for a quarter each, but we are hoping that two other people would take care of the rest. You can add your payment to your pledge or pay one time.

If you would like to help with this zero-waste project, please call Marcia Ellsworth at 208-3083 or Vivien Minshull-Ford at 683-9295.

July Caring Committee

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 sympathy to Rachel Rutledge whose step-father passed away recently.

We are so happy to report that Jean Vaughn has returned home where she is gaining her strength. Jean welcomes visits, although, please call first.

Three Cheers! As we welcome Linda Jordan and Sharon Kniss as new members of our Caring Committee.



Del Smith, 2014 Water Ceremony

We are heavy hearted as our beloved long-time Church member, Del Smith died Thursday, June 20. Our deepest sympathy goes to Del's family: son, Scott and wife Becky; and to Jenny Findling, sons Charley and Emerson, and Jessi Raburn. The Caring Committee wants to thank all the wonderful members and friends who spent time with Del during the last few weeks. Del greatly enjoyed those visits.

Thanks to everyone who completed our recent caring committee survey. We appreciate knowing of your availability and willingness to help with the committee meeting the needs of our members and friends.

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

Pagan Circle

- Anne Bailey

Please join us on Saturday, July 6, at 7:00 p.m. We will have a guest speaker tell us about the Egyptian Gods and Goddesses. All are welcome. Feel free to bring snack foods and instruments to join us in chanting and drumming. If you have questions, please call Anne Bailey (316-650-4905).

Letter from the President of the Congregation, Continued

... anything that matters. And while aesthetically speaking less can be more, when it comes to understanding others and being understood by them, I've come to believe that more is more.

We have to pay attention to everything happening around us without trying to judge it if we're ever going to understand it. We have to listen to one another, which means everyone gets a turn to talk. We have to question what we don't understand – after, of course, we've done our best to try to understand it – and we have to invite questions from others if we ever want to be understood. Regardless of how we say it, if we want to grow and thrive we have to be open to more, which means, of course, that we also can't be tricked by those who say more, but mean less.

In every issue of *In Touch* this year, I'll be using the "President's Letter" to discuss what more can mean for us. Sometimes it will be more about something small, like dinner with friends. Sometimes it will be more about something large, like how we can better care for one another as a lay-led congregation. In all cases, however, I'll be exploring how more can make us more.

I'm not sure where these explorations will take us, but I'm certain that without you they won't matter. If you have ideas or questions about the "more" you care about, not only do I want to hear what you have to say, I *need* to hear what you have to say.

Working with Doug and the Board this year has taught me enough so that I think I'm ready at last to start learning what matters – if you're willing to teach me – so here's to the more that will come from a year of learning and growing together.

RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon

Happy Summertime. I hope you've been able to enjoy some of this cool, albeit wet weather. Everything is beautifully green and colorful. A walk in nature can do the soul good.

We started our summer program with a walk on the trails of the Great Plains Nature Center. We saw numerous turtles, birds, butterflies, and a deer. Our other lessons this month have included a study of rocks, making paper flowers, and origami. We will continue the next few weeks with vermicomposting, crafts, and culinary arts.

We're having a good time with congregation members who have agreed to lead a lesson about one of their hobbies or interests. We enjoy the visitors who come and as always, it much more fun when our UU kids show up. So come one, come all to our summer fUUndays. You'll be glad you did!

July 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 6:00p Zen Friends 7:00p UU Craft Group	3 7:00p Committee on Ministry	4 Office Closed 5:30p 4th of July Potluck	5	6 7:00p Pagan Circle
7 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	8 4:00p Worship Committee 6:00p Vegan Potluck	9 6:00p Zen Friends	10	11	12	13 10:00a Caring Committee
14 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Leadership Council	15	16 6:00p Zen Friends	17 7:00p Board of Trustees 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	18	19 11:30a Eclectic Readers	20 6:30p Game Night
21 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Seeking Circle 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
28 9:45a Adult Relig Explor 10:00a Small Group 11:00a Worship Service 11:00a Children's RE	29	30 6:00p Zen Friends	31			

Mama

- Lila Arnold

White as calla lilies
is her still face
casketed now
quite beyond rain
far beyond wind.

Gone as a wisp goes,
astral toes bouncing
through tiers of spirit
to spheres beyond telling,

leaving me with
rags and tags of memory
tickets of hope to
be with her again
beyond wind and rain.

Editor's note: This poem is published in Poetry by Lila Arnold, Volume One, 2015.

UUA Alert – Scammers Posing as Congregation Leaders

- Email Received from the UUA

Several congregations have reported that their members are receiving scam emails that are requesting gift card donations for a charitable cause. Religious groups and congregations are becoming easy targets for these types of scams.

The UUA has seen an increase in “phishing” attempts of all kinds. Phishing is a form of “social engineering,” whereby a hacker with bad intentions sends an email (or text or phone call) pretending to be someone the recipient trusts and asks the recipient to take an action which can have adverse effects. Sometimes, they request money. Other times, they invite the recipient to click a link or open an attachment that can trigger malicious code.

A good rule of thumb with emails you’re not expecting is to: (1) reach out to the sender through another channel (call, text, visit website) and (2) not click on a link (or send money, gift cards, etc.) without clarifying from the trusted source. First UU Church does not use emails requesting donations. Donation requests are announced in a church service or announced in the Order of Service or rarely in the Weekly Update. You can always contact the Office Manager at 684-3481 or office@firstuu.net to verify a request.

Services in July

- Kay Davis for the Worship Committee

We have traveled together quite far down the road to becoming a lay-led congregation and have finally arrived at the place where we begin in earnest our thematic SoulMatters explorations. Our theme for July is "Vision," and our presenters this month will lead us in an exploration of the benefits and the dangers of holding fast to a clear vision as we seek answers to the question, "What does it mean to be a people of vision?"

July 7: Joe Lozano brings us "Want What You Have," a sermon by the Rev. Peter Friedrichs, minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County. Drawing from the life and published works of the late Rev. Forrest Church, spiritual leader of All Souls UU Church in New York City, Rev. Friedrichs encourages us to choose acceptance and appreciation for all of the aspects of our lives as they are, and to use our energy for actions that improve upon what is rather than engaging in wishful thinking.

July 14: Debbie Wadman explores the dichotomy between our UU faith's emphasis on individualism and our need for community as we put our faith into action in her presentation of "Vision of the Voyage: How to be a Unitarian Universalist," a sermon by the Rev. Tim Kutzmark, Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno.

July 21: Andrew Davis will deliver an original presentation titled "Seven Faces of Spirituality," in which he explores his vision of spirituality and argues that spirituality can only meaningfully exist in a multi-faith community if each individual is allowed to define it for themselves.

July 28: In our final service of the month Linda Jordan and Anne Bailey guide us in a celebration of Lammas, known in Ireland as Lughnasadh, a celebration of the first wheat harvest of the year, the bounty of the growing season, and the cross-quarter day signaling the end of summer in the Northern Hemisphere.

Justice on Earth

- Linda Jordan for the Social Action Committee

Looking for a great summer read? First UU is participating in this year's UU denomination-wide common read: "Justice on Earth." It only takes a few hours to read about 150 pages, consisting of 14 essays, written by UU ministers and lay leaders. And, reading "Justice on Earth" now will put you "in the know" for the September Sunday service we will have on the book.

"Justice on Earth" is a powerful study of important aspects of environmental justice, which is the intersection of social justice and ecology. It explores the ways the two topics are deeply entwined and must be worked on and solved together. The essays clearly define problems and offer workable solutions to empower us to do something positive toward solving the major problems of our times.

Copies of "Justice on Earth" are currently available for \$14, at First UU, (Fair Trade table) or on Kindle for \$9.99.

FridaysForFuture Wichita

- Holger Meyer for the Social Action Committee

The release of carbon dioxide from fossil fuel and other human activities are causing climate change that is accelerating at an alarming rate. Greta Thunberg started a global movement to demand an immediate strong response to this climate crisis that threatens the future of all young people on Earth and of human civilization. She started raising awareness simply by sitting outside the Swedish parliament building in Stockholm with a sign 'skolstrejk för klimatet' ('school strike for climate'). After several weeks of missing school she compromised with her parents and teachers to attend school Monday through Thursday and strike for the climate every Friday. Thus FridaysForFuture (FFF) started. As media covered Greta's story pupils and students in many countries joined her initiative by starting climate strikes in their home towns every Friday. As the movement grew, older people joined in as well. Here in Wichita we first participated on a particularly large Friday for the future, the Global Strike for Climate on March 15. This was followed by the Global Strike for Climate 2 on May 24. At that strike we decided to participate in the global strikes at least on the second Friday of each month. FridaysForFuture-Wichita strikes noon to 1 p.m. at the intersection of Douglas Avenue and Market Street downtown. We chose that intersection for the high traffic of cars and pedestrians during the lunch break for many who work in that area.

FFF-Wichita will strike next on July 12 and August 9. Bring just yourself (maybe with sunscreen, a reusable water bottle, a hat, or anything else you might need to stay comfortable) or come with a sign, a costume, or anything else that may help raise awareness for better climate legislation. In the past we had 13 to 25 participants. I hope that number will increase as FFF-Wichita becomes better known.

An alliance of many environmental organizations is planning general strikes and other actions in September during the United Nations climate summit in New York City. FFF-Wichita will join in those actions in September. So how will you find out about what is going on? I plan to submit updates through the newsletter periodically, but I also highly recommend the Peace and Social Justice Center's email newsletter for updates on any social and environmental actions in Wichita. You can subscribe to it at www.wichitapeace.org. And of course you can ask me or my daughter!

Leadership Council

First Unitarian Universalist Church Annual Report for 2018-2019

- Andrew Davis, President Elect

We did not have a Leadership Council meeting in June because of our Congregational Meeting. In case you missed it, here is our Annual Report. – Andrew Davis

As a relatively new member of our church (June 2017), I am honored that you trusted me to step into a church leadership position so quickly. I also learned that President Elects don't so much lead as get out of the way of smart people doing good work, while hopefully keeping track of all that good work being done around me.

Since our committee chairs will have the opportunity to give their own reports, I don't want to focus on the details of their work so much as so much as point out the significance of their work to our church's ability to thrive—especially as we transition into life as a lay-led congregation.

- Regular worship services matter, both in terms of the messages offered and the opportunities for shared time together. Our worship committee has done an outstanding job of bringing consistently high-quality sermons/presentations/discussions to our Sunday morning services that generate thoughtful conversations among our congregants and visitors.
- The social action committee has continued its long-standing tradition of giving focus and structure to our commitment to justice of all kinds for all people. This allows individuals to plug into social action work to whatever extent they feel able.
- Ecofest was a success because of our church's commitment to our seventh principle and the extraordinary work of the volunteers who turned a powerful vision to care for the world around us into meaningful reality.
- Maintaining the infrastructure and beauty of our facilities requires ongoing care in a way that reflects our values is hard, but satisfying work. Many if not all of these activities are coordinated by our Office Manager, Anita Culp, and without her we could not be half as successful as we have been.
- Being a Welcoming Congregation in both name and action is critical to our success, and we are exploring ways to strengthen this part of our mission and vision.
- The Caring Committee has taken on a huge burden in providing care to our members and friends without a minister as the point person. The recent survey they have asked you to complete will help them fulfill their mission, and any support you can lend to their work will be appreciated.
- The better job we do of communicating the work of our committees to the entire congregation, the better we become as a church. To this end, In Touch is a vital communication piece that helps hold us together as a vibrant community.

These are just the highlights from my point of view. Thanks for the opportunity to serve as your President Elect.

Eclectic Readers

Eclectic Readers is taking the month of July off. Look for our August selection in the next In Touch Newsletter.

Game Night!

Games and Snacks at the Church! Bring your favorite game, or play one of ours. Please bring a snack to share. Saturday, July 20, 6:30 p.m., at First UU Church.

Fourth of July Party

You are cordially invited to the UU Holiday Party Group *Fourth of July Party*. Come help us celebrate the 243th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. We'll enjoy a potluck dinner, and then play games. Thursday, July 4. Gather at 5:30, dine at 6:00; at First UU Church.

First Unitarian Universalist Church

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