



In Touch

First Unitarian Universalist Church of
Wichita

Founded 1887

Co-President's Message

- Kirk Mitchell

February 2022

It was nice to survive the holidays unscathed. The road trip to Colorado for Thanksgiving with my aunt and uncle did demonstrate to me that I'm growing old enough that eight-hour drives are no longer quite as easy as I remember. I'll have to remember that more frequent stops will probably ease the danger of joints locking up.

While my immediate family in Wichita doesn't celebrate the usual holidays, my younger daughter did celebrate her wedding anniversary, and we were able to get family and freshly vaccinated grandchildren together celebrate that accomplishment. Of course, with all our precautions, we were reminded that other viruses exist when sniffles and coughs spread from this family gathering, even though all our COVID tests were negative.

It's so easy to become complacent after a few years of caution and making sure that at least my family has had their vaccinations and boosters, but we still wear masks in public and shrug our shoulders at those less vigilant. The newest variant, omicron, was late at getting here, but January has shown that it's explosive. Just from late December to now, the number of new cases here has grown by a factor of ten. More personally, it's hit my family. Both my daughters, the older in Germany, and the younger here, have tested positive for it, even after vaccinations and booster shots. While they both appear to be handling it well, at most a really nasty cold, it does leave me feeling a bit like Sisyphus. While we may not have cheated death twice, we've certainly tried to avoid it, and it feels like we're collectively watching that boulder roll back down the mountain again.

I know I'm not alone in this feeling, but we're not ready to throw in the towel just yet. At the January board meeting, members reflected on their concern for the rising number of COVID cases in Sedgwick County over the last few weeks. While we love being able to join together in live services and meetings, we've noticed a dip in in-person attendance and an increase in Zoom attendance.

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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. Please send submissions to

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Ripples from the Caring Committee

- Linda Jordan

The Caring Committee is the arm of the church that responds to events in the lives of the congregants. We send birthday and congratulations cards in joyful times and sympathy and get well cards when appropriate. We offer support by providing transportation to church, medical appointments, and errands. During bereavements and illness, we sometimes provide light housekeeping and a few meals, and we help with receptions after memorial services.

We extend our deepest sympathy and supportive thoughts to Will Jordan and his family with the recent passing of our long-time member, Dee Dee. A tribute to Dee Dee will be forthcoming in a future newsletter, but for those who may have missed it, here is the Wichita Eagle's obituary, published on January 9.

"Deloris 'Dee Dee' Jordan

June 22, 1937

January 4, 2022

Wichita, Kansas - Deloris 'Dee Dee' Jordan passed away on January 4, 2022. She was a graduate of Grinnell High School, Grinnell, Iowa, and Wichita State University, where she received a Bachelor of Music Education degree. She taught music in public schools in Waverly and DeSoto, Kansas, and in later years served as an activity director in several nursing homes in the Wichita area. She is survived by her husband of 62 years, John, and sons, Mark (Kelly), Steve (Phyllis), and Robert; grandchildren, Hannah, Eric, and Madison Jordan; step-grandchildren, Michelle Simmons and Nicole Staggs; step-great-grand-children, Gwyneth and Abbigale Simmons. A Memorial Service honoring Dee Dee's life will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society or the St. Jude Children's Hospital. Services in care of Downing & Lahey East Mortuary. Share tributes online at www.dl-wichita.com."

Reach out to someone who makes you smile when you think of them, just to say hello and maybe get together for coffee or a walk. And, if help would help, remember that Joe Mohr is available to church members for counseling free of charge. Call him directly at (580) 729-0781 to schedule an appointment.

May you have a great month, and if you have anything for the Caring Committee, let us know.

What touches one of us touches us all.

Holiday Party Group on Zoom

- Judy Wherritt

The UU Holiday Party Group invites you to celebrate Library Lover's Day on Xoom.

The Holiday Party Group has gone virtual. We'll meet via Zoom on Saturday, February 12, from 7:00-8:30 pm. Come and go as you please. Conversation will deal with the theme of Library Lover's Day: What do you love most about libraries?

Before COVID, our group had a tradition of playing a game after dinner. We have revived this tradition with a fun Virtual Game. All are invited!!

In Search Of Music

The Worship and Music Committees would like to diversify the music content of our services. We have a splendid accompanist in Laura Black, but additional music contributions would enhance our services greatly. Let's face it, there are some limitations to singing in a mask, hard on the singer and hard on the listener, like singing all alone in a padded room or into a pitcher?

We are looking for people in the congregation who can sing or play a musical instrument. Singing can be solo, duet, or group. Any genre of music – jazz, folk, blue grass, blues, classical – will work. Words or music do not have to fit the service theme. Any type of instrument will do, even drums. We already have on tap Laura, who occasionally treats us to a violin solo, a tuba player, musicians who play Indian flute music, and people who can sing in spite of their masks, but it's untapped talent we're hoping for. If you have any ideas about musical additions to our services or would like to take part yourself, please contact Jana Rambo, chair of the music committee, jayrobo@aol.com, 316 992-5528 or Ned Lakin, nedlak@msn.com, 316 214-0968. If the church has to shut down for a while because of Covid precautions, which may have already happened by the time you read this request, we can still be thinking and planning for more, better music in our near future.

Bullet Points from the Board

January 19, 2022

- We have \$16,000.00 in the bank.
 - Members have met 98% of their pledges, so we are doing amazingly well financially.
- We will fix the basketball goal as soon as the weather permits.
- The wind blew away our compost bucket.
- The Board passed the following motion regarding in-person meetings and services during the current COVID surge: “Due to the current surge in COVID-19 Cases in Sedgwick Co., we will close the church for all in-person meetings and will offer Worship Services on Zoom. When the positive percentage rate of cases in Sedgwick Co. drops below 10% for three consecutive weeks, the Board will consider re-opening the church for in-person meetings and services.”
- We will be organizing the upcoming stewardship campaign in the next month. Volunteers will be greatly appreciated.

‘Co-Presidents Message’ continued

We came to the decision that we needed to return to the policy that served us so well when the pandemic first arrived and to cancel in-person services and meetings and rely on Zoom. We will return to live services and meetings when the Sedgwick County COVID Dashboard reports that the rolling 14-day percentage of positive tests to negative is less than 10 percent for three consecutive weeks. As of January 20, it was 22 percent. It’s discouraging to have to put our backs to the boulder again and push it back up the mountain, but unlike a certain political party, the Board does not regard certain members of our congregation as disposable. We certainly ask for everyone’s understanding and hope for the best!

February Anniversaries

- Anita Culp, Membership Committee

These members joined First UU Church during the month of February (with years of membership given). We celebrate your membership and look forward to your continuing participation in our church life: Marsha Diggs (25), Mike Diggs (24), Millie Cherryholmes (21), Carna Yipe (14), Caroni Lombard (13), Jean Vaughn (13), Clyde Rob Williams (12), Rolando Gomez (8), Holly Terrill (6), Ned Lakin (6), Joe Lozano (6), Teresa Conduff (4), Lynne Kientz (4), and Mitch Kientz (4).

February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 4:00p Worship Committee (Z) 7:00p UU Craft Group (Z)	2 4:00p Committee on Ministry (Z)	3	4	5
6 9:45a Adult Relig Expl (Z) 11:00a Sunday Service (Z) at home Children's RE	7 6:30p Zen Friends (Z)	8	9 7:00p Membership Committee (Z)	10	11 10:00a Small Group Ministry (Z) 12:00p Fridays for the Future	12 10:00a Caring Committee (Z) 7:00p Holiday Party Group (Z)
13 9:45a Adult Relig Expl (Z) 11:00a Sunday Service (Z) at home Children's RE 12:15p Leadership Council (Z)	14 6:30p Zen Friends (Z)	15	16 6:00p Board of Trustees (Z) 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	17	18 11:30a Eclectic Readers (Z)	19
20 9:45a Adult Relig Expl (Z) 11:00a Sunday Service (Z) at home Children's RE 12:14p Social Action Committee (Z)	21 6:30p Zen Friends (Z)	22	23	24	25 10:00a Small Group Ministry (Z)	26 7:00p UU Humanist Group (Z)
27 9:45a Adult Relig Expl (Z) 11:00a Sunday Service (Z) at home Children's RE	28 6:30p Zen Friends (Z)			(Z) - Meeting via Zoom Call church office at 316-684-4581 for Zoom information.		

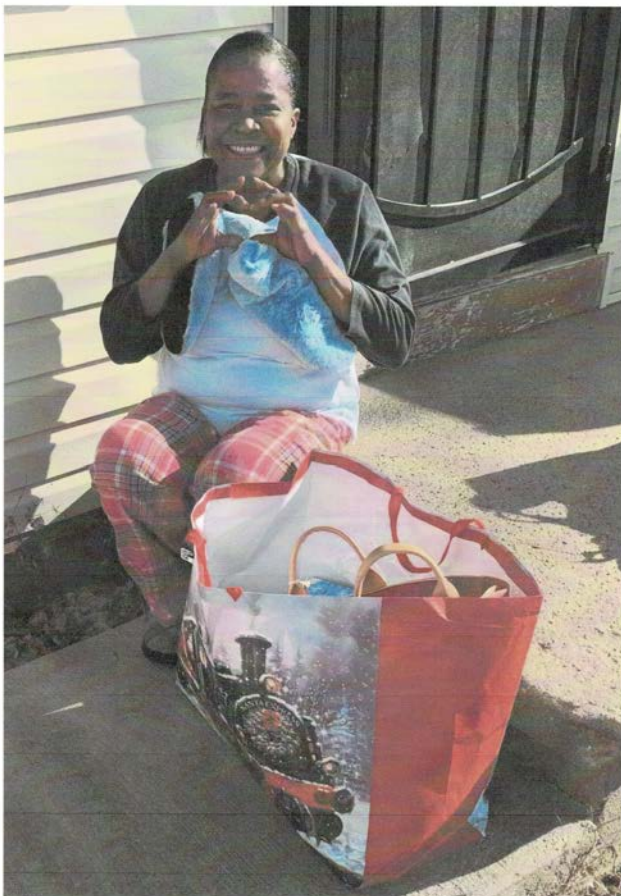
Renaissance Food Pantry

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

Jennifer Connelly would like to thank everyone who made food or cash donations to the Food Pantry. Jennifer, Carla Patton-Jackson, and Kent Rowe provided Christmas meals for families in Northeast Wichita, including 20 children and seven seniors. There were also gifts for the children. Jennifer and Carla do the preparation and cooking (ham was the main dish), while Kent packs, loads, and delivers. At Thanksgiving, Carla and Kent smoked turkeys in his garage! Jennifer also wants to express special thanks to essential volunteers, particularly LaRilla Combs, and to Debbie Wadman, who makes casseroles and bakes.

The RFP is still serving the same communities, which have been provided meals and prepared food every two weeks for the past two or more years, throughout the early months of quarantine “lockdown” when jobs and income were lost. The community has fluctuated over the time since the RFP began, depending on jobs, health, and other factors. The formula has always been the same: those who can cook receive raw ingredients, while seniors or those who can’t cook or don’t have cooking facilities receive prepared meals. Fresh meat and vegetables are always part of the program.

Jennifer reports that the program has expanded to include some members of our church and a community served by church member Rob Williams. In addition, on Sunday, January 16, hats, scarves, and gloves from the 1st UU mitten tree were also distributed.



From the Worship Committee

Members: Anne Bailey, Sara Jane Crespo, Kay Davis, Linda Jordan and Rebecca Veron Lewis

February is a perfect month for us to consider the theme of “Love.” Many sources reflecting on love refer to it as “our highest purpose,” or “our guide,” and often we are encouraged to “radiate love” or “go forth in love,” but we rarely take the time to consider exactly what we mean by those phrases.

Each of us is fairly sure we know what we mean, but do we all mean the same thing? This month we will look at love from a variety of perspectives. We hope you will join us on Zoom as we explore.

February 6: Andrew Davis shares his monthly presentation, “Sometimes the Center Does Hold.” Whether it’s looking at the diversity of our congregations, the range of our principles, or the objectives of our social action, there seems to be an invisible center around which everything we are and do orbits. In this presentation, Andrew suggests that this center is “mindful” love. He will explore its significance to Unitarian Universalism by focusing on what mindful love allows us to see and therefore to be.

***February 13:** Linda Jordan explores many of the different meanings of “love” and leads us in a “Chocolate Communion” in “Love is Like a Box of Chocolates,” a sermon by Sarah Movius Schurr.

***February 20:** Reverend Joe Mohr returns to the pulpit to bring us his thoughts on the theme of Love and its significance for our personal and spiritual growth and for living healthy, fulfilled lives.

February 27: Sara Jane Crespo presents “Love the Hell Out of the World” by Rev. Dawn Cooley, supplemented with some of her own thoughts on the subject.

*Substitutions and additional information will be provided in the Friday Update emails as needed.

RE Corner

- Denise Jackson-Simon

I was hoping to share exciting news of us meeting in-person for RE at the end of the month. However, the Board decided last evening to suspend live services until the current surge in Covid cases subsides. Therefore, I will continue to send out weekly lessons via e-mail until we are able to be together at the church. Also, I am updating my e-mail list. That is how I communicate most often with families. If you haven't already, please let me know if you would like to continue to be on that list. Otherwise, I will be removing your address in the next couple of months.

This month we explore the ways in which our times call us to "Widen the Circle." There are four ways we will explore the ways we can do this. They are: Widening the Way We Accept Ourselves - Understanding our Outsides and Insides; Widening the Love We Share- Celebrating all kinds of love; Widening the History We Tell - Black History Month; and Widening the Principles We Live By - The 8th Principle proposal.

While it is difficult to share the love in person right now, I hope you find our lessons this month helpful in the ways to widen the circle and feel the love.

First UU Pagan Circle

- Anne Bailey

Due to the fact that the Church is again closed for in person services, the Pagan Circle will not meet on February 5 as scheduled. It is possible for us to meet on Zoom if enough people are interested. Please feel free to call me at 316-650-4905 if you have questions or comments.

Membership Committee

- Anne Bailey

The Membership Committee will meet on Zoom on Wednesday, February 2 at 7:00 PM. There is always room on this committee for anyone interested in getting involved. We will be talking about the latest presentation of our "Inquirer's Class" on Zoom and plans for future classes. Please let me know if you would like to attend this meeting - annebailey@earthlink.net or 650-4905. We are always looking for additional members to help with this important committee.

All For Love

- Lord Byron

O talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is
wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled:
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary –
What care I for the wreaths that can only give glory?

O Fame! if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, there only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

First Unitarian Universalist Church

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Eclectic Readers

- Anne Bailey

We will be meeting at our regular time on Friday, February 18, on Zoom only, beginning at 11:30 for lunch, with discussion beginning at 12:00. Please let Anita know if you would like to attend this session. Our selection for February is any book by Virginia Woolf. Ms. Woolf was an English writer, considered one of the most important modernist 20th-century authors and a pioneer in the use of stream of consciousness as a narrative device. Copies of her books may be borrowed from the Wichita Public Library or purchased at any of the used bookstores. Please call Anita at the Church for further information. That number is (316) 684-3481.