



In Touch

First Unitarian Universalist Church of
Wichita
Founded 1887

April 2023

President's Message

- Rachel Rutledge

Once again, the month has turned. Last weekend we finally had our first Sunday potluck in many months, the Welcome Back Lunch, and it did not disappoint. The soups and other dishes were great, and there certainly was an array of desserts! Most importantly, we were together. It felt like "us" again, and that was a very special feeling. Hopefully everything will hold together, and we can have a proper First Sunday Lunch on April 2. It's so good to be back to these!

Spring holds a lot of activity for us. The Fundraising Committee will hold a churchwide huge Garage Sale May 4-6, so it is time for you to look through your clutter and excess and see if there is anything you can donate that might be of interest to a garage sale customer. Our garage sales are epic, and they raise striking amounts of funds for the church. The annual project is a huge undertaking and will require a lot of help from everyone. I really look forward to this event and can't wait to see how big it gets this year.

The annual UUA General Assembly is in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, this year on June 21-25, with an online capability available. Activities involving Betty's Place will be planned as the weather gets nicer, and the Building and Grounds Committee and the Gardening Group will be active, making our church appear nicer and more seasonable through their efforts.

We've had a lot of new visitors lately, and this is very encouraging. Some of these visitors have driven relatively long distances to be with us, and that is quite remarkable. As always, we are always welcoming and encouraging to anyone who seeks us out for worship and community in a liberal religious home. I thank each and every one of you who makes an effort to reach out to our visitors, and the effort you make to have them feel at home with us. Thank you.

In Touch

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

www.firstuu.net

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Unitarian Universalist Association

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(316) 684-3481

Anita Culp

M, Tu, & Th: 9:30am – 2:00pm

W & F: 1:00 – 5:00pm

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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

jfindlin@ius.edu

April Anniversaries

- Anita Culp, Membership Committee

These members joined First UU Church during the month of April (with years of membership given). We celebrate your membership and look forward to your continuing participation in our church life: Rick Welsbacher (15), Janet Roberts (15), Suzanna Mathews (13), Jim Buchhorn (8), Suzanne Miller (8), April Bales (6), Bruce Roby (6), Eric Whetmore (4), Carol Findling (4), and John Findling (4).

Growing Season and Stewardship

The Stewardship committee

- Ned Lakin, Anne Bailey, Charles Merrifield, Bruce Roby and Annie Welsbacher

Ah, springtime and its harbingers. They're all here: birdsong, green shoots popping up in First UU's beautiful gardens... and Stewardship Season.

Yes, folks, it's that time of year again when we'll all be asked to pledge our annual investments into the church we love. The Stewardship Committee has begun meeting and will be updating friends and members throughout the spring with plans, activities, and requests for your involvement.

Watch your mailbox for pledge packets coming in April. These will include information on how you can pledge and forms for doing so. We'll also inspire you with personal testimonies about what our church means for our members in brief Stewardship Moments on Sunday mornings. We'll wrap up in May, just in time for our finance committee to prepare our 2023-24 budget for the summer Annual Meeting.

Remember, this church belongs to all of us, which means that we get to decide what we do with it to keep it healthy and growing. What you pledge now will directly affect what we can do in the year ahead. Please start thinking about how you would like to support our 2023-24 campaign.

Happy Spring!

Membership Committee

- Anne Bailey

The Membership Committee is an important part of the First UU's ministry. The purpose of this committee is to promote and develop the growth of church membership and to strengthen and sustain current membership.

This committee prepares permanent name tags for new members and regular attendees who request them and has temporary name tags available for new people and visitors. This is the committee that presents the Inquirer's Class for prospective members; this year we are holding our classes on Zoom. We hope to be able to present it again in April. If you are interested in joining our congregation to sign up for the class, please call the office at the number provided below.

The Membership Committee is responsible for seeing that there are people to greet visitors each Sunday morning. We are always looking for new people to perform this vital function. Please talk to Anne Bailey or LaRilla Combs about getting on the schedule to be a greeter or to join this committee. We plan to meet again on Zoom on the second Wednesday, April 12. Please call the church office, (316) 685-3481, and ask for the time of the meeting and the Zoom information.

Heads Up! Our Spring Whopper Indoor Garage Sale Approaches

- Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford

The recent warm weather might bring on thoughts of spring cleaning – and, we hope, putting aside things to donate. Thursday–Saturday, May 4–6 are set for the First UU 2023 Garage Sale.

We're hoping for donations of household goods, clothing, furniture, toys, electronics, art – in short, any items in good condition that you want to get rid of. Along with your donations, the sale will also include books, baked goods, and plants.

Direct questions to Marcia Ellsworth, (316) 208-3083, or Vivien Minshull-Ford, (316) 683-9295.

First UU Pagan Circle

- Anne Bailey

The Pagan Circle will meet on Wednesday, April 26, beginning at 2:00 pm. to continue our celebration of the return of Spring with a drum circle. Bring your drums or other rhythm instruments and plan to join us in singing and chanting. If you have questions, please call Anne Bailey (316) 650-4905 or Linda Jordan (316) 512-6652.

UUA General Assembly for 2023 is in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 21-25, 2023

- Charles Merrifield

Each June, the Unitarian Universalist Association holds a General Assembly (GA) at which delegates from each member church gather to discuss the future of the organization. The delegates vote on the leadership, the by-laws, the social justice priorities, and other UUA goals and policies. Sometimes it is smooth as silk, sometimes it is loud and contentious, but almost always, it is fascinating.

In addition to the business meetings, there are workshops and seminars on matters that are useful to active church members. Workshop topics include fundraising, children's RE, adult RE, social justice issues, leadership issues, and much more. Many people who attend GA purposely avoid being a delegate. One can attend without being a delegate and enjoy the interesting workshops without the burden of spending time in the business meetings. (I have always been a delegate when I attended.) Other experiences of GA are lectures from noteworthy speakers, as well as great examples of UU worship services.

The in-person registration fee for an adult over 35 is \$500 until May 15, and \$600 after that date. However, you do not need to go to Pittsburgh to attend, and you can even be a voting delegate virtually. Virtual attendance is also less expensive: You can attend virtually for a fee of \$300.

In previous years, our Board of Trustees has authorized virtual registration stipends. Contact President Rachel Rutledge (316) 755-5828 if you would like to be a delegate from our congregation. Go to uua.org/ga for more details on registration.

April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		(Z) - Meeting via Zoom (+Z) - Meeting In-Person and via Zoom Call church office at 316-684-4581 for Zoom information.				1
2 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	3 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	4 4:00p Worship Committee (Z) 7:00p UU Craft Night (Z)	5	6	7	8 10:00a Caring Committee (+Z) 7:00p Holiday Party (Z)
9 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 11:00a Worship Service (+Z)	10 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	11 10:30a Renaissance Food Pantry	12	13 7:00p Leadership Council (Z)	14 12:00p Fridays for the Future 6:00p Sierra Club (+Z)	15 9:30a Gardening Group
16 9:45a Adult RE (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 12:15p Social Action Comm 6:00p Global Learning Center	17 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	18 11:30a UU Friends Lunch	19 6:00p Board of Trustees (Z) 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	20	21 11:30a Eclectic Readers	22
23 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 12:15p Music Committee	24 1:00p Movie Group 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	25 10:30a Renaissance Food Pantry	26 1:00p Newsletter Mailing 2:00p Pagan Circle	27	28	29 6:30p UU Humanists Group (+Z)
30 11:00a Children's RE 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 12:30p Garage Sale Setup						



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— Rachel Rutledge

President-Elect— Ned Lakin

Board of Trustees—Jerette Preisser, Ellie Shore, Jim Bucchorn, Andrew Davis,
Celestra Snyder, Magda Garrett, and Charles Merrifield

Treasurer—Anne Bailey

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Adult Religious Exploration—Frank Ruf

Aesthetics—TBD

Building & Grounds—Bruce Roby (Building) and
Anita Culp (Grounds)

Caring—Jayne Henry and Magda Garrett

Children's Religious Exploration—Kerry Dobbins

Chalice Book Store—Joe Lozano

Communications—TBD

EcoFest—Holger Meyer and

Lucy Kirkham-Cochener

Finance—Charles Merrifield

Fundraising—Marcia Ellsworth and

Vivien Minshull-Ford

Green Sanctuary—Linda Jordan

Kitchen Mavens—TBD

Leadership Council—Ned Lakin

Librarian—Nancy Milner

Membership—Anne Bailey

Music—Jana Rambo

Nominating—Dan DeMott, Corey Swertfager,
and Melanie Jenney

Partner Church—Debbie Wadman

Personnel—TBD

Social Action—Ellie Shore

Stewardship—Ned Lakin

Worship—Anne Bailey

Committee on Ministry—Peter Ninemire, Chair;
Sigrid Trombley, Will Jordan, Jennifer Hess, and
Caroni Lombard

GROUP CONTACTS

UU Craft Group—Anita Culp

Eclectic Readers—Anne Bailey

4th Monday Movie Group—Vivien Minshull-Ford

Gardening Group—Anita Culp and Linda Jordan

Holiday Party Group—Anita Culp

UU Humanist Group—Charles Merrifield

Pagan Group—Anne Bailey and Linda Jordan

Zen Friends of Wichita—Bob Feleppa and

Vivien Minshull-Ford

STAFF

Custodian—Laurel Keating

Office Manager—Anita Culp

Pastoral Care—Joe Mohr

Director of Children's Religious Exploration—Anna Jenney

Nursery—Stephanie Davidson

Bullet Points from the Board

March 15, 2023

- Andrew Davis

- GREAT NEWS! We will have a special Welcome Back Lunch on Sunday, March 12. We are welcoming Sunday Lunches back into our lives for anyone who would like to sit, eat, talk, and enjoy time with other like-minded folk.
- MORE GREAT NEWS! First Sunday Lunches as a regular part of our community fellowship will begin Sunday, April 2.
- We can still pay our bills.
- We have done a wonderful job of stepping up both to meet both emergencies (i.e., fixing the air conditioning) and to fill in the gap created by the untimely deaths of a few long-term members. Please keep up with your pledges so we can keep our community strong.

Music Committee

- Jana Rambo

The Music Committee continues its work to enhance the music in our ser are looking for people to provide special music, as well as songs that are upbeat and expressive of UU values.

If you would like to help with music or join the committee, please contact me at (316) 686-4215

Holiday Party Group

- Anita Culp

The Holiday Party Group will meet via Zoom on Saturday, April 8, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. We will celebrate Rubber Eraser Day.

Rubber erasers: What would we do without them? We'll start a conversation about these indispensable tools: what are your favorite erasers, which ones do you hate, did you ever collect shaped erasers?

We'll then play a fun virtual game. Please contact the church office at (316) 684-3481 for Zoom information.

From the Worship Committee

- Anne Bailey, Kay Davis, Marcia Ellsworth, Melanie Jenney, Linda Jordan, Charles Merrifield, Vivien Minshull-Ford, Debbie Wadman, and Annie Welsbacher

“Resistance”: a word that might bring up images of raised fists and chanted slogans. But resistance is deeply spiritual, too. As one UU minister noted in a sermon on this topic, “Social change is a transformative act that begins with reflection about who we are as individuals.” In this five-Sunday month, we also observe Earth Day, Easter, and Beltane.

April 2: The first of the month’s presentations is “*Resistance is (not) Futile*” by Rev. Andrew L. Weber, minister at the Thomas Paine UU Fellowship in Collegeville, Pennsylvania. Beckoning us into his sermon with recollections of the terrifying Borg from the Star Trek franchise, Rev. Weber tells us that “we can live and act from a place of deep faith; faith that our actions, whether large or small, matter deeply.” He exhorts us all to take up those actions, no matter how seemingly trivial: “At any moment when you think, someone should – you be that person! Someone should really speak up for the oppressed. Someone should really pick up that piece of trash. Someone should help that person with their groceries. Let us be that person!”

We look forward to seeing you after this service for our First Sunday Lunch. For those who participated in March’s Welcome Back Lunch, thank you! The event featured delicious fare and raised more than \$300 for the church.

April 9: In this reflection on Easter, Corey Swertfager will present a sermon about perhaps the most famous of history’s practitioners of resistance. “Subway Jesus,” by Rev. Kaaren Anderson, Interim Minister at the UU Fellowship of Vero Beach, Florida, is the title of a poem that the minister wrote while in seminary. The poem – and this sermon – challenge the traditional teachings about Jesus’ mission in this world. Anderson offers instead an alternate understanding of Jesus, the person who taught steadfast working for justice and radical resistance to the status quo.

April 16: Rev. Joe Mohr, who speaks monthly at First UU and also serves our church through counseling First UU individuals on request, continues with April’s theme in his sermon, “*Love is Our Resistance: Sharing the Gospel from a Unitarian Universalist Perspective.*”

April 23 (Earth Day): First UU member and Eco Warrior Holger Meyer offers up a special presentation around the annual observation of Earth Day.

April 30 (Beltane): Linda Jordan, member of First UU and the First UU Pagan Group, will present “*Vibrant, Juicy, Contemporary, or Why I’m a UU Pagan.*” This essay, by Margot Adler, is a tribute to the pagan holiday of Beltane and an insightful exploration of that faith tradition’s path within the UU context. As a young girl, Adler began exploring her religious beliefs and discovered that she was drawn to many Earth-centered traditions. Although her family had a culturally non-practicing Jewish background, Adler found that all of her religiously diverse beliefs fit best with the principles of Unitarian Universalism. So she became a UU Pagan. Join Linda in a celebration of Beltane and explore the ways Earth-centered spirituality connects with Unitarian Universalism.

Ripples from the Caring Committee

- Magda Garrett

The Caring Committee is the arm of the church that responds to events in the lives of the congregants.

We acknowledge birthdays and other special celebrations with cards and kudos. In times of sorrow, we acknowledge and seek to bear witness to the pain. Volunteers associated with Caring Committee can, at times, provide transportation to medical appointments, church services, and other church-associated events. Light meals and light housekeeping can be provided as needed due to illness, bereavement, or other. Reasonable requests for assistance will be accepted and support provided, always, contingent on available manpower.

The colors and season will change in this next month. Remember to enjoy the outdoors as you are able for fresh air and sunshine. Let the beauty bring you peace and calm for improved energy of spirit.

The Caring Committee continues to need additional volunteers to assist in transporting church members to and from medical appointments. Contact Jana Rambo at (316) 686-4215 if you can lend a hand.

The Caring Committee maintains a small emergency fund used to provide cash assistance to church members in need. In addition, a person in need may occasionally show up at our front door. For them we usually provide a Dillons gift card. If you are able to donate cash or a card, it will be distributed as needed. The Caring Committee is a good steward of your donation. You may donate through the church office, and the committee thanks you in advance.

Watch for monthly reminders of UU Friends lunch bunch. Turnouts have been great and the food and fellowship most enjoyable. We meet the third Tuesday of the month. Given that some eateries are closed on Tuesday, we will likely offer occasional Wednesday lunch dates.

The church is fortunate to have in our service Rev. Joe Mohr. Rev Mohr is available to church members for confidential counseling at no cost. Contact Joe directly to schedule (580) 729-0781.

We as the Caring Committee are interested in the joys and sorrows members wish to include in this newsletter. Please contact Magda Garrett (316) 765-3352 to share for April.

What touches one of us touches us all.

First Unitarian Universalist Church

7202 E. 21st
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Eclectic Readers

- Anne Bailey

The book discussion group will meet at our regular time and date, 11:30 am on the third Friday of the month, on Friday, April 21, beginning at 11:30 am for lunch with discussion to follow at 12:00 pm.

The book chosen for April is *The Joy Luck Club*, a 1989 novel written by Amy Tan. It focuses on four Chinese mothers in San Francisco who start a club known as *The Joy Luck Club*, playing the Chinese game of mahjong for money while feasting on a variety of foods. The book is structured like to a mahjong game, with four parts divided into four sections to create sixteen chapters. The three mothers and four daughters (one mother, Suyuan Woo, has died before the novel opens) share stories about their lives in the form of short vignettes. Each part is preceded by a parable relating to the themes within that section.

Two copies of the book, borrowed from the Wichita Public Library, will be available at the Church. Please speak to Anita Culp or Anne Bailey if you would like to borrow a copy. Additional copies are available at local used bookstores or online either new or used.