



# In Touch

First Unitarian Universalist Church of  
Wichita  
Founded 1887

## President's Message

- Rachel Rutledge

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June 2023

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There is a lot going on in our congregation this spring, and we have all had many things with which to enjoy ourselves. The Jumbo Garage Sale was a huge success, bringing in about \$5,000 for the church. Thanks so much to Marcia Ellsworth and Vivien Minshull-Ford for spearheading the effort and for the many, many people who participated and helped with the huge effort. We earned a lot of money for our coffers, a lot of people came in and saw us, and a great time was had by all.

General Assembly (GA) comes up next month in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and we have delegates attending online. Corey Swertfager and Kathryn Vernon will participate in a variety of online workshops and seminars during the week of June 21- 25. At our Annual Meeting, to be held June 11 following Sunday services, they will discuss key issues to be voted on at GA. They will be looking for input from the congregation and will reach out to any interested parties to discuss the particulars.

Covid seems to be winding down, incredibly. The weekly positivity rates are well below 10 percent and have stayed there for eight weeks in a row, which allows us to have coffee and snacks available before and after services. Our First Sunday Lunches continue to be safe, and we can relax and enjoy our food and fellowship. We all enjoy our treats and meals so much, especially considering how long we had to live without them. We are thankful and grateful that normality with the Kitchen Chefs leading the charge is back on the Unitarian Universalist menu. We're all lucky indeed!

# 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.

Please send submissions to

[jfindlin@ius.edu](mailto:jfindlin@ius.edu)

## May Anniversaries

- Anita Culp, Membership Committee

These members joined First UU Church during the month of May (with years of membership given). We celebrate your membership and look forward to your continuing participation in our church life: Jim Hammer (28), Amanda Diggs (17), Wendy Haynie-Cosby (14), Sandy Roberts (10), Stuart Boehmer (7), Andrew Davis (6), Kay Davis (6), Jayne Henry (6), Jerette Preisser (4), Ann Barclay (4), and Scot Barclay (4).

## First UU Pagan Circle

- Anne Bailey

Our June meeting will be after the newsletter deadline, so we will have to get the word out by other means. Please check the weekly updates sent by the church for a possible date in June. Or call Anne Bailey (316) 650-4905 or Linda Jordan (316) 512-6652 to ask what our plans are.

## 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.

We presented an Inquirer's Class on Zoom for prospective members in late May. The date for the next class has not been set but will probably be in July. Please call the church office at (316) 685-3481 if you are interested in signing up for the class.

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 at (316) 650-4905 or LaRilla Combs at (316) 559-4478 about getting on the schedule to be a greeter.

## Board Candidate Statements

The First UU Annual Meeting is June 11 following Sunday services. Among other business, we will vote for two candidates for the Board of Trustees. The May issue of In Touch featured bio statements from LaRilla Combs and Charlie King as well as Ned Lakin and Corey Swertfager, who will be affirmed for the positions of President and President-Elect, respectively. In this issue are board candidate statements from Louis Goseland, Linda Jordan, and Vivien Minshull-Ford.

Louis Goseland

I first attended services and subsequently joined First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita nearly 10 years ago. A lifetime community organizer with 17 years' experience, I became aware of our congregation after the organization I was helping to build was awarded the James Reeb award. Our minister at the time, Rev. David Carter, traveled with me and others to a national mobilization in Washington, DC, and it was during our travels that he introduced me to the Unitarian Universalist seven principles. Intrigued and with a sense of resonance, I attended a Sunday service and found that so many of the people I considered to be pillars in our local justice community were part of this congregation!

In 2015 I moved to Illinois, and this past August I returned to Wichita to help build a permanent, multifaith justice organization through the DART network. Since being back, I've attended services and have reconnected with our members, and I'm proud to say I've signed the book (again)! I am proud of the historic significance this congregation has for the work of justice in our community, and it is my hope to help build on this legacy today.

Linda Jordan

I have been a member of First UU since the 1980s. I was drawn to join First UU by the intelligent and effective activism of Rev. Greta Crosby, the diversity of the church members' religions views and positive support for me, as well as the vision and power of the seven principles. These principles summarize my beliefs and I strive to enact them in my life.

I am currently active on the Worship Committee, the Caring Committee, the Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPS) and the Building and Grounds Committee as well as Betty's Place. I have previously been on the Board for one term and the Committee on the Ministry twice.

I want to serve on the Board again to contribute what I can to make First UU be a vital functioning Church that meets the needs and promotes the growth of its members. I also believe First UU has a great deal to offer the Wichita community. I want to assist First UU in being a powerful advocate for religious freedom, equality of opportunity, social justice, and earth-friendly ecological practices in the Wichita community.

Vivien Minshull-Ford

I have been a member of First Unitarian Universalist church for 14 years. I am a past President of the congregation and have served on the Board of Trustees twice. I was co-coordinator of Ecofest, First UU's environmental festival, for five years. Currently I am on the fundraising and music committees and assist with the Caring Committee needs and church art exhibits. My husband Bob Feleppa and I are convenors of Zen Friends of Wichita, the Buddhist group that meets once a week at First UU for meditation and book discussion. In addition to the diversity, enrichment, and innovation I have found at First UU, I enjoy travelling, painting, movies, gardening, and dogs.

## Bullet Points from the Board

April 19, 2023

- Andrew Davis

- We have completed the formal part of our Stewardship Campaign. You will receive a proposed budget with your information about the annual meeting, to be held June 11 following Sunday services. If you have yet to make a pledge, please contact Ned Lakin.
- We currently have enough money to pay our bills.
- The UUA will vote on proposed Bylaws changes at the General Assembly in June. Our delegates to the national convention will set up a time to share this information with you and get your input before they vote. Please be on the lookout for information about this meeting and join us if you can.
- Corey Swertfager soon will take over as Treasurer to allow Anne Bailey to step down. Thank you, Corey, for stepping up to take on this job, and thank you, Anne, for your long service.
- We are still looking for a replacement for Anita as Office Manager. This is a part-time position. Please contact the church office if you are interested or know of other potential candidates.

# June 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.			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	<b>5</b> 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	<b>6</b> 4:00p Worship Committee (Z) 7:00p UU Craft Night (Z)	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 12:00p Fridays for the Future	<b>10</b> 10:30a Caring Committee 7:00p Holiday Party Group
<b>11</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Annual Meeting (+Z)	<b>12</b> 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	<b>13</b> 10:30a Renaissance Food Pantry	<b>14</b> 7:00p Membership Committee (Z)	<b>15</b> 7:00p Leadership Council (Z)	<b>16</b> 11:30a Eclectic Readers	<b>17</b> 9:30a Gardening Group
<b>18</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Social Action Comm	<b>19</b> 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	<b>20</b> 11:30a UU Friends Lunch	<b>21</b> 6:00p Board of Trustees (Z) 11:00p Newsletter and Calendar Deadline	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:45a Adult Relig Explor (+Z) 11:00a Worship Service (+Z) 11:00a Children's RE 12:15p Music Committee	<b>26</b> 1:00p Movie Group 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	<b>27</b> 10:30a Renaissance Food Pantry	<b>28</b> 1:00p Newsletter Mailing	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	



### 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—TBD

*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

*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 Jordon

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

## First UU Annual Meeting and Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly

- Kathryn Vernon

First UU will hold our Annual Meeting on June 11 following Sunday service, when we will vote on next year's budget and for our Board of Trustees candidates. We also will vote on two crucial topics to be addressed at this year's UUA General Assembly, which will be held June 21-25 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, live and over Zoom. First UU will have delegates at the assembly.

A couple of issues at this year's GA will be foremost in our minds – both having to do with the Fifth Principle upon which Unitarian Universalism was founded – that of “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

For several years, the makeup of UUA has undergone a transformation, brought about by the leadership, which threatens to change the church completely.

There will be votes during UUA's General Assembly for various officers, including President. There is only one candidate for that position – which is in violation of the Bylaws and the Fifth Principle. Three “anonymous” candidates “withdrew” their candidacy; no reason was given.

An even more controversial issue is that since last year there has been a vigorous movement to rewrite Article II of the Bylaws that would effectively remove the Seven Principles and replace them with a more complicated doctrine.

We will have discussions and votes on these two issues at First UU's June 11 Annual Meeting. Please come and make your wishes known. In the General Assembly our delegates will vote, as much as possible, accordingly.

## From the Worship Committee

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

We thank Kay Davis for her service with the Worship Committee. Kay handled a large share of the administrative, technical, and physical work that goes into the weekly services we attend or view on Sundays. She joined the committee before Covid hit and was an invaluable member during that time when the committee had to quickly develop new processes and systems, including evolving technology. Thank you, Kay, and we look forward to continued consultations with you as we try to take over your many duties.

Delight is the June theme for Sunday worship services and Children's RE. We will explore a sweet and savory menu of life's delightful offerings, from alluring spells to flowers to the power of gratitude to ice cream – metaphorical and physical!

On June 4, Annie Welsbacher will present "*Nurturing Creativity*" by Rev. Jonalu Johnstone, Co-Lead Interim Minister of Reflection & Discovery at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin, Texas, and formerly with the UU Fellowship of Manhattan, Kansas. In this flower communion sermon celebrating several historic UU heroes – including Norbert Capek, the creator of the flower ceremony that many of our congregations celebrate in the spring – Johnstone examines innovation and creativity. She reminds us that to pursue new ideas and inventions, we must first get rid of the critics (ourselves and others).

June 4 is also First Sunday Lunch; please join us.

On June 11, UU member Lynn Way will present "*Sundae Sunday*" by Rev. Dr. James Kubal-Komoto reflecting on the theme of delight in change. There will be surprises in the service including revelation of the origin of the ice cream sundae, connected to a UU church in Ithaca, New York. In celebration of this momentous event, our after-service coffee hour will center around that tasty confection, delicious proof of the delight to be found in change.

On June 18, Rev. Joe Mohr will present "*I'll Put a Spell on You.*" Despite its sunny connotation, the origin of the word "delight" has a sultrier nature. It first appeared in Latin as *delicere*, to entice, and grew to mean to charm, allure, or please. To delight someone was to cast a spell on or entrance them. Much later, the prudens of the 16th century added the "gh" to the French word *delit*, to associate it with light. Join me on a trip of whimsy as we explore what it means to give oneself over to awe and take delight in our world and others.

On June 25, Shaun-Michael Morse will present "*Give and Take.*" Louis Armstrong reminded us of the beauty found in trees of green, blue skies, and red roses. Few of us would deny that we are surrounded by things we take delight in, but have you ever considered how our world might be different if we took the gratitude we feel and used that to create moments of joy for others?

Shaun-Michael is active in the local theatre scene as a director, actor, and producer and is completing his certification requirements in the ministry. We look forward to welcoming him to our pulpit.

June 25 is also the date when Olympia Brown, a Universalist minister, was ordained. On this date in 1853, she became the first woman to be ordained as clergy with the consent of her denomination. Brown was one of the few first-generation suffragists who were able to vote with the passage of the 19th Amendment.



## 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 the 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 events. Reasonable requests for assistance will be accepted and support provided, always, contingent on available manpower.

This past month saw the passing of church member Lucy Kirkham-Cochener. Her sudden death has left the congregation in shock and grieving. Please reach out as needed for emotional support. We have the availability of Rev. Joe Mohr, who can be reached at (580) 729-0781.

Now more than ever, self-care will be essential in the coming months.

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 can donate cash or gift card, it will be distributed as needed. The Caring Committee is a good steward of your donation. You may donate through the church office. Thank you in advance.

Watch for monthly reminders of the 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, who is available to church members for confidential counseling at no cost. Contact Joe directly to schedule at (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 at (316) 765-3352 to share for June.

What touches one of us touches us all.

# First Unitarian Universalist Church

7202 E. 21st  
Wichita, KS 67206

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*www.firstuu.net*

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## Eclectic Readers

- Anne Bailey

The book discussion group will meet at our regular date, the third Friday of the month, on Friday, June 16, beginning at 11:30 a.m. for lunch with discussion to follow at 12:00 p.m.

For June, read any book by P. D. James. The title choice is up to you. Phyllis Dorothy James was a British writer of at least 19 novels, numerous short stories, and three non-fiction books. Carol Neighbor has offered to loan books from her collection, and the Wichita Public Library has many of her books to borrow. Books are also probably available at local used book stores. Please ask Anne Bailey, phone (316) 650-4905, or Anita Culp, office phone (316) 685-3481, if you would like to borrow one of Carol's books.

Plan to join us for lively discussion on June 16.