

First Unitarian
Universalist
Church of
Wichita

Founded 1887

In Touch is the
newsletter of the First
Unitarian Universalist
Church of Wichita and
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Member of Unitarian
Universalist Association

**First UU Mission
Statement: We are
“A welcoming
community with
diverse beliefs
united for positive
change.”**

In Touch

April 2024

President's Letter

- Ned Lakin

What If?

Do you ever wonder “What if...” about our Church? I do!

For example, “what if” we would bring more people into our community as our older members and friends pass away?

“What if” we would identify and set our priorities in such a way that we can afford to hire at least a part-time minister, or increase our outreach into the community, or continue to support those members of the community who need extra help, or expand and improve our religious exploration programs?

“What if” we want to become even more environmentally friendly, increase our energy efficiency, make other improvements in our facilities, or keep up with technological advances – and have the resources to do those things?

We are now in the early stages of our annual Stewardship Campaign, so we encourage members and friends to make generous pledges to that effort.

Do you have “What ifs” of your own? Think about the future of our church and how you can contribute your own unique talents and gifts in helping to create a more inclusive, loving, and vibrant community.

Together, we can change “What if” to “When”!

From the Worship Committee

- Annie Welsbacher

The theme for April is The Gift of Interdependence.

On April 7, Ned Lakin will present “*iChurch*” by Rev. Anne Mason, who asks, “What is our pathway to find interconnection, as a faith tradition?” and posits that the answer is “to listen to the teachings of our younger leaders who ask us to engage in emergent strategies of collective work. We need to discover that our humanity is bound up in each other.” Special guest musician Phil Black performs on the tuba.

On April 14, Donna Morris presents “*We Are One*” by Rev. Kaaren Anderson, who writes about the current critical threat to our biological web, noting that the massive reduction in pollinators (including more than 90 percent of bumblebees) is happening in a world where “one out of every three bites that every American eats depends on these pollinators.” We also share a story for all ages with Anna Jenney, director of Children’s RE, and the kids.

On April 22, Rev. Joe Mohr is back in the pulpit. And our pianist, Ish Farid, will also sing for us as this week’s special music guest.

On April 28, Peter Ninemire presents “*Against Greedy Globalism*” by Rev Tess Baumberger, who states that “We, as a nation, can combat the gospel of greed by making policy decisions that consider the impact on our planet and on the whole of humanity, who all share our blue boat home.” ... Pianist Joe Giat performs special music.

From the Children’s RE Director

-Anna Jenney

April in Children’s Religious Exploration centers around the gift of interdependence. We will talk about this core principle of Unitarian Universalism and learn about how we belong to an interconnected web, how that web cares for us, and how we can care for it.

Want to get involved? We are looking for volunteers to help in our classroom and would love to have you join us – no experience necessary!

Please scan this QR code to sign up or find Anna Jenney after church services on Sunday.

<https://forms.gle/MNiQFFHKzbkZTUhJA>



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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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First UU Film Club: Looking Back and Ahead

-Vivien Minshull-Ford

Our February showing of Denis Villeneuve's *Dune*, also was our first viewing at the new day and time, brought together aficionados who also remembered the David Lynch's amazing production, knew the books, and looked forward to seeing *Dune 2*. The names Sting and Lady Jessica were evoked, and cherished terms like "ornithopters" and the "Butlerian Jihad" were tossed about. There was a great deal of discussion and popcorn. We hope you'll drop in for our next two films on the fourth Friday at 6:30 pm.

Diner (1982) is the April 26 choice. Baltimore reviewer Kyndall Cunningham cited *Diner* as one of her favorite films taking place during the holidays. Made by Baltimore filmmaker Barry Levinson, "the little movie that paved the way for 'Seinfeld' is a hilarious, sharply written romp about a bunch of male friends approaching different crossroads in their adulthoods. It features a hot Mickey Rourke, Paul Reiser, Ellen Barkin, and a spiraling Kevin Bacon, who destroys a neighbor's Nativity scene. It's classic dude cinema." *Diner* raises questions about just how attached one dude can be to his record collection or whether another dude should coach his significant other in everything he expects her to know about football. Set in the '50s, *Diner* shows Ellen Barkin in her best and most moving role.

Ex Machina (2015) will run May 26. Caleb Smith (Domhnall Gleeson), a programmer at a huge Internet company, wins a contest that enables him to spend a week at the private estate of CEO Nathan Bateman (Oscar Isaac). Caleb learns that he has been chosen to be the human component in a Turing test to determine the capabilities and consciousness of Ava (Alicia Vikander), a beautiful robot. However, it soon becomes evident that Ava is far more self-aware and deceptive than either Caleb or Nathan imagined. *Ex Machina* won the Oscar for best visual effects, and first time director/writer Alex Garland was nominated for Best Original Screenplay. The extraordinary Alice Vikander as the AI subject was nominated for Best Supporting Actress for both BAFTA and Golden Globes.

Eclectic Readers

- Anne Bailey

On April 19, the Eclectic Readers will gather to discuss the 2024 Big Read book *There There* by Tommy Orange. Please note that there is a new meeting time for the group.

First UU Pagan Circle

The Pagan Circle will not meet in April. The next meeting will be Saturday, May 4, from 6 to 9 pm, for a belated celebration of Beltane, the Gaelic May Day Festival marking summer's beginning. Beltaine is traditionally held on May 1, or about midway between the spring equinox and summer solstice.

We will enjoy a pot luck meal at 6 before the ritual, which will begin at 7. Please bring a dish to share. We will use paper plates to cut down on the cleanup chores. Or if you prefer, just come at 7 for the ritual.

Call Anne Bailey (316-650-4905), Linda Jordan (316-512-6652), or Donna Morris (316-573-9101) if you have questions about this gathering.

There There is a New York Times bestseller and was selected as one of its Best Books of 2018. This novel – which grapples with the complex history of Native Americans; with an inheritance of profound spirituality; and with a plague of addiction, abuse and suicide – follows 12 characters, each of whom has private reasons for traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow.

Free copies of the book are available at any Wichita Public Library. There will be many events at various places in Wichita to celebrate the Big Read. Please go to the Wichita Public Library website for a full list.

We will gather on April 19, beginning at 12 noon with a brown-bag lunch followed at 12:30 pm by discussion. Please note this new time.

From the Music Committee

- Jana Rambo, Chair

We meet monthly to coordinate the musical life of the church. We recruit musicians, from inside and outside the church, for special music; make sure we have a pianist on Sundays; and occasionally sponsor a concert. Our last concert was in February, when Tom Neilson returned to perform for us and conduct the service the next day. We'd like to have a drumming circle in the church. If interested, please get in touch with me.

We meet the fourth Sunday of each month after the church service. New members are always welcome. Also, if you or anyone you know would like to provide special music, or if you know of musicians who might play for a service, please let us know. Contact me at (316) 992-5528 or jayrobo@aol.com.

New Gathering Space Gallery Exhibit and Reception: Doug Tripp

- Vivien Minshull-Ford

There will be a reception for our featured artist Doug Tripp on Sunday, April 14, at 12:30 pm. The show was curated by Ernst Kind.

Doug was born in Newfoundland and loves boats and coastal scenes. He lived in New Mexico for his junior and senior high school years, inspired by the art and artists around him. He is an astonishing artist with draughtsman-like skills and a Renaissance intensity in the palette of his oil paintings. His art is full of architectural details and symbolic imagery: "I try to use my art to combine realism and abstract, using symbolism to draw on deep personal spiritual concepts. Some of my work I refer to as "self-portraits," as they have a connection to events and milestones on my path."

Doug always appreciates getting feedback on the impact those pieces have on others. Curator Ernst Kind invites you to come and meet the artist at the reception.



April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	2 4p Worship Committee (Z) 7p UU Craft Group (Z)	3	4	5	6
7 9:45a Adult Rel Ed (+Z) 11aa Children's Rel Ed 11a Worship Service (+Z) 12:15p First Sunday Lunch	8 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z) 6p Vegan Potluck	9 10:30a Renaissance Food Pantry	10 7p Leadership Council (Z)	11	12 12p Fridays for the Future 6:30p Sierra Club	13 10a Caring Committee
14 9:45a Adult Rel Ed (+Z) 11aa Children's Rel Ed 11a Worship Service (+Z) 12:30pm Artist Reception	15 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	16	17 6p Board of Trustees (+Z) 7p Newsletter deadline	18 11:30a UU Friends Lunch	19 12p Eclectic Readers	20 9:30a Gardening Group
21 9:45a Adult Rel Ed (+Z) 11aa Children's Rel Ed 11a Worship Service (+Z) 12:15p Social Action Group	22 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	23 10:30a Renaissance Food Pantry	24 7p Tech Committee	25	26 6:30p First UU Film Group	27 6:30p UU Humanist Group
28 9:45a Adult Rel Ed (+Z) 11aa Children's Rel Ed 11a Worship Service (+Z) 12:15p Music Committee	29 6:30p Zen Friends (+Z)	30				

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 people power.

Spring has sprung, and we are excited to have it back. Looking for a therapeutic activity that will benefit you, the planet, and the church? Keep unwanted items that are still in decent shape out of the landfill: reduce, reuse, recycle. Gather and donate your items to the up-and-coming "Huge Garage Sale," as it is currently being called. The ever-popular annual UU fundraiser takes place May 7-9, with donations accepted May 5-8. See Vivien Minshull-Ford's article elsewhere in this issue, and keep your eye out for further details and instructions.

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 card, it will be distributed as needed. The Caring Committee is a good steward of your donation. Thank you in advance.

Please note that the monthly UU Friends lunch bunch day has changed to the third Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. Plan to join when you can. Lunch turnouts have been great and the food and fellowship most enjoyable. Watch for updates about this and other events in the weekly e-newsletter Update, the UU email listserve, and Sunday service bulletins.

The church is fortunate to have in our service Rev. Joe Mohr, who is available to church members for confidential counseling at no cost. With recent losses, illnesses, and everyday stressors, you may find that you need Rev. Mohr's services more than ever. Please reach out. We care about you. Contact Joe directly to schedule at (580) 729-0781.

If you can help with occasional transportation to medical appointments for congregants, or if you need medical transportation yourself, contact Jana Rambo at (316) 686-4215.

Donate to the committee's emergency fund through the church office at (316) 684-3481.

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

Tidbits From the Board of Trustees
March 20, 2024
- Ned Lakin

From the UU
Principles:

3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

1. We continued discussion on church budgets for the future and the anticipated impacts on them of demographic trends and membership growth.
2. We had a brief discussion on ideas for paying down or paying off our mortgage faster.
3. We began reviewing our Policies and Procedures Manual and talked about possible changes needed for several existing policies.
4. Charles volunteered to put together a committee to plan a memorial event for Rev. James Reeb, marking the upcoming 60th anniversary of his murder in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965.
5. We approved additional funds for the Children's RE program, to be taken from our reserve funds.
6. Ned mentioned the successful dinner held at the church, which was planned by Debbie Wadman and raised more than \$1,000 for a local refugee family.
7. Mention was also made about two national conversations to be held on Zoom for those concerned about the proposed changes to Article II of the UUA Bylaws. The events will be held on March 27 and April 24.

Membership Committee

- Anne Bailey

The purpose of the Membership Committee is to promote and develop the growth of church membership and to strengthen and sustain our current members.

If you are interested in joining our congregation or learning more about Unitarian Universalism, we would like to offer an Inquirer's Class in the near future, probably on a Saturday at the church. You may sign up for the class by calling the church office and we will let you know the specific time and date. The plan is to meet at 10 am to learn about the history of the Wichita Church and UU history, take a break for lunch and then watch a video, learn what it means to be a member, and take a tour of the building in the afternoon. Please call the Church office at (316) 685-3481 to let us know you are interested in joining the class. Or call Anne Bailey at (316) 650-4905 if you have questions.

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 and be a part of our committee. Please talk to Anne Bailey or LaRilla Combs about getting on the schedule to be a greeter.

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 (16), Janet Roberts (16), Suzanna Mathews (14), Jim Buchhorn (9), Suzanne Miller (9), April Bales (7), Bruce Roby (7), Eric Whetmore (5), and John Findling (5).

First Unitarian
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Huge Garage Sale

-Vivien Minshull-Ford

“Huge Garage Sale” is the working title for our annual event, this year slated for May 16-18. It will open at 9 am daily and close at 5 pm on Thursday-Friday and 1 pm on Saturday. We will accept donations May 12-15. Hours are 12: 30-3pm on Sunday; office hours or by appointment on Monday and Tuesday; and 9 am-5 pm on Wednesday.

Lots of volunteers will be needed all week, so please let us know if you can work. Join in the fun! Volunteering has its advantages when it comes to spying that item you just can't do without!

More information will be forthcoming. If you have any questions, or if you have a bright catchy title for our event, please call Marcia Ellsworth, (316) 208-3083, or Vivien Minshull-Ford, (316) 371-1949.

Meanwhile, start collecting your unwanted but sellable stuff.