



THE

CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.

August 2018

Words on the Wind

By The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Being in the Here and Now is one of meditation's techniques for calming the mind, centering it in the present moment and away from fears of the future or the past. Of course, when there is clear danger in the present the practice is less calming, though it can bring helpful focus for effective response. I find power in both the practice of centering on Here and Now, and in connecting with the past and the future.

At the Unitarian Universalist gathering of ministers this year, the minister who preached on behalf of those ministers who have served our religion for 50 years recalled what was happening in the world when he was ordained in 1968. The Rev. Olav Nieuwejaar's refrain from his sweeping moral call to liberal faith in action was "that was 50 years ago, and here we are, 50 years later...". As he compared our work in 1968 to what we are facing here and now, I felt a strange mix of hope and grief seeing the similarities in the kaleidoscope of time. Rev. Nieuwejaar reflected back to the calls of his first year of ministry: helping women find safe access to reproductive care; realizing the long and painful war of the time was based on a lie; responding to racism and public assassinations of black leaders; and living with a president who lied to the American public and had possibly committed treason. The sermon left me simultaneously stunned and hopeful. I remembered that history both repeats itself and is different with each turn of the wheel. I was left wondering: how will we respond in the here and now? What will this iteration of self, this community, this generation do?

Lessons from the past can give wisdom to the present, so we might act in ways that are the most beautiful human, and together shape a better future.

With love, *Jennifer*

Theme: What Does It Mean to Be A People of
Here and Now?

Coming on Sunday!

One service & religious education
10:00 a.m.

August 5

"Don't Borrow Trouble"

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Guest Organist Karen Beaumont

Worship Associate Lisa Gies

For those of us who worry, hearing the admonition "don't borrow trouble" can help sometimes. Practicing living in the here and now can also help calm anxieties, including the fear of missing out on the next awesome thing that is going to happen. Being present to what's in the moment (not the past and not the future) is one of the most accessible and least expensive spiritual practices. There is always a gift waiting for us in the present moment. What do we need to do to receive that gift? Because people usually have plenty of troubles, without borrowing more.

August 12

"In the Footsteps of Gandhi:

Achieving Nonviolence in a Violent World"

Monica Kling

Worship Associate Bob Balderson

In January of 2017, Monica Kling got on a plane to India to embark on what was called "A Pilgrimage of Peace," learning and experiencing Mahatma Gandhi's message in the places where he walked, talked, and lived. Now, over a year later, she explores how her own powerful experience and Gandhi's message of a truly non-violent existence can be applied to present-day Milwaukee. How do we as a congregation "be the change" we

(SUNDAYS, continued on page 7)

Dena's Digressions

Our theological theme for August is "Here and Now." As mindfulness teacher Jon Kabat-Zinn's book title aptly suggests, "Wherever You Go, There You Are." Yet many of us spend much of our time not paying attention to the present moment and where we are.

I'm excited to introduce the kind of reflection we'll engage in Theme Circles, coming this fall. Here is a sneak peek at how participants in Theme Circles can deepen their spiritual connections—with self, others and daily life. Each month, members of Theme Circles receive intriguing homework as a practice to live with for the month, to delve into at whatever level works for you. Here are some examples for August's theme.

A Week of Wake-Up Alarms

Set your watch or cell phone alarm for one to three times a day, each day of that week. Make it the same time or times each day, and when it goes off, find some way at that moment to be present. Stop and look out the window, stop and breathe deeply, stop and then go someplace to meditate or sing—whatever works for you.

Two Weeks of Discovering One Place

Pick a place and take a picture of it once a day for two weeks. The same view, perhaps at different times of day or night. At the end of two weeks, look at all the pictures together. Keep looking and see what happens. What do you notice?

Another way to engage the theme is to reflect on Questions to live with, such as:

1. What gift is the here and now trying to offer you? And what do you need to do to receive it?
2. What is keeping you from the here and now? What pulls you into the past or the future?

A spiritual exercise (like wake-up alarms or taking a photo of one place every day) and engaging the reflective questions offered above are examples of what we'll do in Theme Circles beginning this fall.

Theme Circles follow our monthly worship themes for the year, supporting a journey of deepening and mending our connections that get frayed and torn in daily life. To get a taste of this experience, you can try the exercises this month! Allow yourself to experiment with lots of ease, trying one or two of the suggestions above, perhaps journaling about the questions — whatever you're able to do.

And then notice. Notice how you feel and what you think about. Notice whether the practices change your day, your week, and your month. Do you experience being more aware of the present moment? What did you learn about being a person of the here and now?

Yours,
Dena

Here and Now

By Michelle Naples
Board President

I am a planner by nature and by profession. It is my idea of fun to think of what I want to happen in the future and then map out the steps to getting there. Planning by definition implies a focus on the future. Making the future as I envision it come to life is the work that needs to get done, starting in the here and now.

The Board of Trustees spent this past year focusing on the future as we worked with the congregation to develop our ends statements. That is an appropriate place for the Board to be spending its time. In fact, best practice in policy governance suggests that 85% of a board's time and energy should be on the future.

The here and now is the beautiful and important domain of ministry. This year Rev. Jennifer and team will be interpreting what the ends actually mean for us in a concrete way. The Board's role will be to monitor how well we are performing against the ends and whether we are making progress.

What are your ideas for bringing the ends to life in very specific ways? Now is a perfect time to be thinking about applying for funding for programmatic initiatives in service of the ends from the Lu Krug bequest. Details can be found with this link: <https://uumilwaukee.org/get-involved/lu-krug-bequest-funding-for-initiatives/>, or by visiting our First Church website uumilwaukee.org under the Get Involved tab.

Save the Date
INGATHERING SUNDAY
September 9
Two Services &
Religious Education Resume!
9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Come to rekindle friendships and reconnect in the community at this joyous service, celebrating the beginning of a new church year!



Denomination News

By Bruce Wiggins

Unitarian Universalists call for an abolition of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the end of family separation at the border.

Note: This is an edited version of an article in *UUWorld* with coverage of General Assembly 2018 in Kansas City, MO. If any of you at First Church are interested in pursuing any of these actions, let Dena or a member of the Social Justice Council know at the Social Justice Table during Coffee Hour. For the full article, see <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/ga-2018-news-report>.

The General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association voted to make dismantling white supremacy its priority for congregational study and action. Delegates picked “Undoing Intersectional White Supremacy” as a multiyear Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI).

Delegates endorsed three Actions of Immediate Witness, which all emphasize the urgency of supporting people of color and indigenous people.

1. The first calls for congregational action to draw attention to predatory medical fees charged to incarcerated people, who are disproportionately people of color; the UUA’s Church of the Larger Fellowship developed the resolution in partnership with its 870 incarcerated members.
2. The second resolution pledges solidarity with indigenous “water protectors,” who have been fighting the placement of liquid natural gas pipelines near Native American lands and who face federal charges for disrupting construction of the pipelines.
3. The third resolution demands immediate action to improve U.S. treatment of asylum seekers and migrant families to keep families together. Among other demands, the resolution advocates the abolition of Immigration Customs Enforcement “and the implementation of a system that understands the causes the migration provides a non-carceral solution while asylum seekers await a decision on their case, and has a fundamental commitment to keeping families together.”

All three were adopted speedily by overwhelming margins and without amendments.

My Notes from the General Assembly

By Lynne Jacoby

What I brought home from General Assembly (GA), with thoughts on how to do my job better, from Connie Goodbread (UUA, Southern Region):

- Faith Development is what we do (helping humans grow to the deepest we can be).
- The Faith we teach is Unitarian Universalism.
- The congregation is the curriculum.

I love this succinct explanation of what I believe we are all about. I also loved Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray’s insight (GA Sunday service, <https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2018/worship/sunday>), “...the circle never gets wider from the center, it grows from the margins”; which when I weave with ‘congregation as curriculum’ explains for me why we UUs keep trying to unlock our statistical homogeneity (despite how bad we’ve been at it). Our job is to grow deeper but our curriculum, in this respect, remains shallow.

Brittany Packnett’s observation (Ware Lecture, www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkV2fNuN1C4) regarding her Black mind gearing itself up to meet a white audience’s ‘expectations’ gave me a glimpse of at least one reef I’ve stood on unwittingly – having grown up in the dominant culture of this country.

But I also brought home the feeling of a couple thousand UUs singing and swaying and holding hands to close the Sunday Service. The hand I held on my left happened to be black. It also happened to belong to a longtime UU whose daughter is our newly elected UUA Co-Moderator. “Wow,” I responded in our post-service chit-chat, “You must be very proud!” He and his wife grinned back with a smile as wide as any proud parent I have known.

In that singing and holding hands — and even in the chit-chat after I was not busy learning, or thinking, or worrying, or feeling guilty, or confused, or self-conscious — I was definitely in that ‘here and now’ as they call it, and I feel lucky that worship can so often bring me there. Because in those moments — anything, everything, seems possible.



CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATES FOR 2018/2019

"Early Bird" RE Registration Discount Available for Limited Time

We appreciate you registering your children for RE ahead of time, as having an idea of class sizes helps us plan for church year programming! Complete RE Registration by August 1 to receive a discount of \$25 per child. You can visit www.uumilwaukee.org for class information and online registration, or register at the RE Table during Coffee Hour on Sundays (plan to pay with a check or cash if registering at the table).

We are committed to making RE accessible for all families. If the registration fee is any hardship for you, let the RE Staff know, and we will work out a full or partial scholarship or payment plan to fit your family's needs.

For questions, feel free to contact RE Administrative Assistant Lillian Schley at RE.admin@uumilwaukee.org.

Volunteer Opportunities in the Classrooms

The RE program is still looking to fill a large number of volunteer positions in the classrooms, especially RE teachers for the elementary and middle school. We currently have the following openings:

- 9:00-10:15 a.m. RE classes
- Teaching positions available: 1-2 grade, 3-5 grade, and 6-8 grade.
- Class Assistant positions available: K4-K5, 1-2 grade (one position left in each of these classrooms), 6-8 grade, and Floating Assistants to fill in wherever needed.
- 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m. RE Classes
- Teaching positions available: 1-2 grade, 3-4 grade, 5-7 grade.
- Class Assistant positions available: Nursery, K4-K5, 3-4 grade, 5-7 grade, and Floating Assistants.

We are happy to have both new and returning RE volunteers, as well as folks with or without children enrolled in RE. If you've been a class assistant in the past, please consider teaching this year! Visit the RE Table during Coffee Hour or contact Lillian Schley at RE.admin@uumilwaukee.org to sign up, and feel free to mention if you have any special interests or talents you'd like to share with the students.

A huge thank-you to everyone who has already made the commitment!

Eighth Grade "Owl" to be Offered Next Year!

Parents must attend an orientation in order for their child to participate. Orientation will be held on Sunday, August 12, from 11:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.



If you are a member of First Church, and the parent or guardian of a child in Eighth grade this Fall, please consider the "Our Whole Lives" (OWL) sexuality education class for your child's Religious Education experience in September.

OWL helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. For a child to participate, at least one parent must attend a mandatory Parent Orientation. (Some of you have already attended the orientation offered in May of 2018 so you do *not* need to attend this August session.) Contact Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator, by email or at 273-5257 ext. 209, to RSVP.

Eighth grade OWL classes will be held on Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. during September-May months.

RE Volunteer Orientation Nursery — 8th Grade Sunday, August 19, 5:00-8:30 P.M.

This mandatory session provides an opportunity for teams of volunteers to meet together for information, support, and schedule planning. You'll meet the new Interim RE Coordinator, hear from the Senior Minister, and get the "lay of the land" for the next church year. If you are volunteering in RE for the next church year, please plan to be there!



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

A Youth's Perspective By Ehlona Walker

For many, the General Assembly (GA) is a pilgrimage. Many hours or maybe a few minutes spent in a car, bus or plane to get to our sacred space; our home for maybe one day or several days. This pilgrimage marked my first General Assembly and my first time being on youth caucus staff for such a prestigious event.

This year, GA took place in Kansas City, MO (next year GA is in Spokane, WA). Kansas City is home to delicious barbeque and hot summer days. Throughout these hot summer days, I was the Thrive youth junior representative. This position is for a youth of color to help provide representation and connections to other youth of color. While representing staff, I met so many amazing and loving youth who bring so much life and joy in our faith. One of the many things I helped with was the youth of color lunch, where we invited Native American Elders from Standing Rock who were visiting our GA. For me, that was such a special opportunity because I am Native and learning from and spending time with them is not an opportunity everyone gets. Along with that, I was able to meet and spend time with the Ware Lecturer, Brittany Packnett.

If you have time, I highly encourage you to watch the Ware Lecture on the UUA's Youtube Channel. She brought up many valid and interesting points that I have brought home with me. Next year I will be taking over the senior position to continue to empower the youth of color and couldn't be more excited. Thank you First Church for your love and support on my journey into our faith as a youth leader.

All About Youth.... By Deb Solis Youth Program Coordinator

- The YRUU youth group will meet on Sunday, August 19 in the Reeb room at 10:00 a.m. for a Mindfulness Movement Meditation Session with Deb.
- Our Youth Steering Committee will be holding their annual retreat on Saturday, August 4 to plan youth events for the 2018-2019 church year. Perhaps there will be a return of our popular Harry Potter fundraiser from last year? Our leadership team includes the following adult and youth members: Matthew Finco and Celie Koneazny (co-chairs), Ehlona Walker (vice-chair), Jonah Roth, Clarity Saigh, Sam Mulvey, Simone Pointer-Mace, Henry Ratayczak, Zoe Gulbranson, Adena Saigh, Nick DaVia and Andrea Cornwall.
- Our YRUU Advisor Orientation takes place on Sunday, August 19 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This year our advisors will be Bizzy Schultz, Don Weimer, Nick DaVia and Jessie Moffat.
- NEW for RE next year: We have all of our facilitators trained for all levels of OWL and are looking into scheduling and offering these OWL classes in the 2018-2019 church year. This would include OWL for grades K-1, grades 4-6, High School, Young Adults, and Adults. Details to follow in the September *Chanticleer*.

DEB'S REFLECTION ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2018

This was my first year attending General Assembly as a staff member, and I must say that it was indeed overwhelming at times but so inspirational and encouraging to be able to network with so many UUs from across the country. I was particularly impressed with the 70-plus youth in attendance. Their youth-led morning service one day, "Frayed — Not!", more than ten youth sessions throughout the five days, and the Synergy Bridging Ceremony were quite memorable for me.

Also, attending the Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom's session "Called to the Intersections of Justice" and hearing first hand that her

book has been selected as the Common Read for next year's GA was a highlight.

Of special personal note is the fact that one of our youth, Ehlona Walker, spoke in front of the entire GA Assembly body, with the support of the entire youth caucus group, to present an "Action of Immediate Witness" in regards to calling for ongoing solidarity with Indigenous Water Protectors. I encourage you to look into attending a GA for a rich, enlightening and worthwhile faith development experience. And ... GA will be hosted in Milwaukee in 2020!!



Earth Justice

By Tree Moore and Bruce Wiggins

Our Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) is reinventing itself. Tree Moore and Bruce Wiggins are the new co-chairs. We thank Terry Wiggins for 5 years of leadership. EJM will become more project-based. So if you have an idea for a project — whether education or action on behalf of Earth, our communities or environmental justice, see Tree or Bruce.

Many of us are aware of what's called the butterfly effect: the flutter of butterfly wings in Okinawa can eventually cause a typhoon in the Indian Ocean. Our actions, whether they be small or large, can have significant consequences.

"Good news — bad news, who's to say?" is one of my favorite sayings, and it now has me thinking. Our attitude has a lot to do with what is considered "bad news." Rebecca Solnit in her book *Hope in the Dark* tells incredible stories of humans turning a crisis into a heart-warming ending. Can we do this with climate change?

As temperatures rise and weather becomes more extreme, the situation can feel like all "bad news." In response, we are considering our food system where, for example, broccoli from California is shipped to us. It could be grown in a hoop house in Wisconsin.

To counter the unnecessary use of fossil fuels for shipping food, we are proposing a campaign — "C'mon Home to Eat" — where we encourage folks to pledge to eat locally, within a 100-mile radius of Milwaukee, for the month of September. Sugar, salt, coffee, tea and rice would be exceptions. Sorry, no bananas. Good news for local farmers. So prepare your purse and palette for nourishing produce from Wisconsin's sacred earth. Let's C'mon Home to Eat this September. During August, we'll be asking people to sign pledges. Who knows the final result!!

Connecting with

Church Members in Facebook

We've recently created a new group on Facebook for First Church members and friends to share news directly with each other. It's a "Closed Group," which simply means that while anyone on Facebook can see the group exists, you have to join the group and be "approved" as a member to be able to see the content.

The purpose: to share information and experiences with each other more directly. Once you are a member, you can post directly without having to submit items to church staff to post for you. This is a place to exchange comments about church-related programs, to connect socially and spiritually, and to share items of social justice activities important to us in Milwaukee. We welcome your news, photos, and comments.

The official name is [First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee FB Group](#). To join, go to Facebook and search for that. Click "+ Join Group" below the cover photo. In a day, you'll get our approval and you're in! Once you're a FB Group member, you can post items of interest to the church community. This is a place to share news, to remind us of opportunities for things to do that you'd like to share with other members. (However, we will moderate and delete anything that violates the spirit and purpose of the group.)

So yes, we now have two Facebook presences. Check the regular First Church business page for "official" posts (as before, submit any requested posts to Jean Johnson). Or visit the new Group page for more varied info and more voices . . . if you join!



wish to see? In what ways are we unknowingly violent to ourselves, others, and the environment? How does this connect to our own UU principles?

Monica has her BA in Religious Studies from Cardinal Stritch University, and her MA in Religion from the University of Bristol in Bristol, England. She is beginning her studies this summer at Meadville Lombard Theological School to become a UU minister, but outside of the weddings she has officiated, this will be her first official sermon. Monica is passionate about many things, among them interfaith cooperation, travelling abroad, and Star Wars. She and her fiancé Logan live in Fox Point and will be married this October.



August 19

**"Don't Show Up Empty-Handed:
Unlearning Lessons From a Southern Childhood"**

**Beth Monhollen, Member
Worship Associate Jason Ludke**

We all learn many helpful lessons and guiding principles in our childhoods. But sometimes, those lessons have unintended harmful consequences. Through story-telling, this sermon will explore some common childhood lessons and the harm embedded in them, and then reflect on how UU principles can help us unlearn those lessons and embrace our inherent worth.

Beth is originally from Eastern Tennessee and Kentucky but has lived in Milwaukee since middle school. She lives on Milwaukee's Southside and works full-time at Alverno College. She has been attending First Church for five years.



August 26

"Between Here and Now and Forever"

**The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Resident Artist Jack Forbes Wilson
Worship Associate Diane Horne**

"Between here and now and forever is such precious little time" sings Carrie Newcomer, yet we find so many ways to escape the present moment, especially if it's painful. Today we'll explore paying attention to our mortality in the here and now and the lessons that come from being present with painful experiences. Buddhist teacher Pema Chodron says, "the most precious opportunity presents itself when we come to the place where we think we can't handle whatever is happening." Poet David Wagoner writes, "wherever you are is called here, and you must treat it as a powerful stranger, must ask permission to know it and be known." Making meaning out of our experiences in the here and now doesn't happen once and then we're done. It happens over and over again if we're paying attention to our precious little time on this earth.

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Administrative offices are staffed Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., but individual staff members have varying hours. Please contact them directly to set up an appointment, as staff members are rarely available for drop-in appointments.

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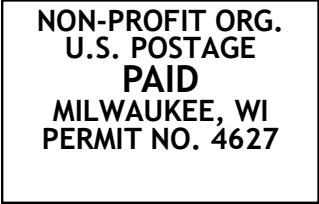
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Book Tower News

The Book Tower is stocked with several new books of interest, and it is self-service. Please pay with exact cash or check.

- *Justice on Earth* — essays on environmental justice edited by our own Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom and Manish Mishra-Marzetti. \$18
- *Life Without Pockets: My Long Journey Into Womanhood* — written by member Carla Anne Ernst. \$17
- *Felicity* — Mary Oliver's latest book of poetry. \$12
- *Justice for All: Selected Writings of Lloyd A. Barbee* — this book was edited by daughter Daphne Barbee who presented at our Forum on May 6. \$27

Book Discussion Group

Second Sunday of the month, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

We gather once a month to discuss a chosen book. We welcome all readers. On September 9 we will discuss David Rhodes's *Driftless*, a fictional story of a small Wisconsin town with hard-working, funny, wise, and generous residents.

Door's Open Tour at First Church

Doors Open Milwaukee is a two-day event on September 22 and 23 to see buildings in Milwaukee the public does not often have a chance to see, sponsored by Historic Milwaukee, Inc. First Church will be featured as a site for [Doors Open Milwaukee](#) Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. We need 20 people willing to be docents for a two-hour shift Saturday or one-hour shift on Sunday afternoon to tell people about our building. It is fun to share our church! We will provide scripts for those who volunteer. You can ask questions or sign up to volunteer by emailing Nancy Spransy.

