



THE

CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.

Words on the Wind

by The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Fractals are self-similar patterns repeating at different scales. They pattern our lungs, tree branches and leaves, snowflakes and river routes. Sometimes I think possibilities are like that: random but repeating patterns that flow out of the past moving into a new, but familiar, future.

Other times, I think it is only my mind that binds me to those old patterns, and that possibility is as wide as the horizon over the lake at sunrise, and only unchaining my imagination will give me access to possibility's wild side.

Other times, I think fractals marry wildness and grow forth in the unfurling beauty of patterned imagination as possibility becoming.

What do you think is possible this year? To what wild-dreamings might you open yourself? What fractals patterned imaginings might we build as a community?

This year at First Church, I see possibilities to:

- Keep growing our multigenerational community, hiring a new Director of Religious Education who will dream with our children, youth, and adults in learning community;
- Deepen our long congregational commitment to social justice by learning together with our Social Justice Intern how to use the new 10 hours a week of dedicated staff time to social justice;
- Live into our Ends, learning how to make them real together, including through new projects funded by the Krug bequest;

("Words on the Wind" continues on page 2)

January 2019

SUNDAY SERVICES & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

JANUARY 6

"You Can't See Meteor Showers If You Don't Go Star-Gazing"

The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Beth Monhollen, Worship Associate
Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator
Jack Forbes Wilson, Resident Artist

They say that opportunity only dances with those who are on the dance floor. Last summer I happened to be camping up north during the Perseid meteor showers, so I chose to stay up late and lie on the dock star-gazing. Getting out on the dance floor with the meteor showers was worth the lost sleep. Being a person of possibility means that I try to approach life like a "choose your own adventure" book. Being a people of possibility means approaching life in community as planned happenstance.

JANUARY 13

"Possibility's Paradox: Letting Go to Hold On"

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom
Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director
Kari Gunderson, Worship Associate
Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator

Studies have shown that more choices make people less happy, and yet, as a people of possibility, we cherish freedom. The relationship between freedom and boundaries can be a paradox, seemingly contradictory and yet potentially mutually reinforcing. Join us for this worship where we will explore the paradox of choice and how to swim in the sea of possibility.

(SUNDAYS, continued on page 11)

MONTHLY THEME:

What does it mean to be a people of

Possibility?

- Keep holding all our people as they move through transitions and losses in life, with our new team of Pastoral Care Associates;
- Connect in our learning and growing community;
- Welcome you into First Church as a new member;
- Help you (re)find your place here, connecting in ways that make your heart sing; or
- Celebrate all the ways you have co-created this community over the all the years of your involvement.

We live in a world of possibilities, wild imaginings, and fractals growing from the past into the future. I look forward to another year in loving community with you.

Love,
Jennifer

Dena's Digressions

by The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Simply by calling something new, we invite possibilities. The New Year, whenever we observe it, marks a beginning, a fresh start, and often the resolve to improve ourselves and our community. The Soul Matters materials this month encourage us to relate to the new year as an unfolding, not a time in which we must fix and improve ourselves or others. This suggestion feels qualitatively different: gentle and expansive, awakening curiosity and awareness rather than discipline and willpower.

Relating to the New Year as a process of unfolding instead of an improvement project is a radical reorientation. Every day is a new day with possibilities stretching before us beyond the horizon. Yet we don't often greet the day with this positive frame for the day's expected outcome. We human beings with our flawed and limited awareness honestly can't tell exactly how the day will unfold. What might help keep us open to possibilities?

In Theme Circles this month, our spiritual exercise is to find one word that will help keep us open to new possibilities. When we discover the word, we commit to find a way to keep the word in our awareness. My word is grateful. When I focus on what I'm grateful for, I feel my mind calming, my heart filling and my spirit opening. It helps me on my grief journey, tempering the sorrow of my loss. It also centers me so that I can greet the day from a place of balance. Because who knows what possibilities might flow into this moment?

Yours,
Dena

January's Theme: Possibility

by Michelle Naples
Congregation President 2018-19

Possibility abounds! This notion is constantly reinforced for me through First Church and fills me with hope. We spend a lot of time at First Church imagining the possibilities for the future that we want to see. That was at the heart of the visioning process that resulted in our eight Ends Statements. Possibility related to the Ends also inspired the development of nineteen visionary project proposals for funding from the Lu Krug bequest. In addition, during our interim process for Religious Education, we are currently exploring how we might move forward into the future with possible new strategies and ideas for Religious Education at First Church.

The Board of Trustees is now focusing on developing a framework for an effective system of governance that will support meaningful progress towards our vision for the future. In January we are hunkering down in a day retreat to develop policies in three areas: Board Governance Process, Board Executive (Senior Minister) Relationship, and Executive Limitations. We are being guided in these efforts by a consultant we have worked with from Unity Consulting who has extensive expertise in policy governance.

Be sure to check back here in February for the results of the Congregational Survey.

Cheers to a 2019 full of possibility and its realization!

Domination Affairs

by Bruce Wiggins

Plan Now for Regional and General Assembly

It's time to start planning for our Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA) Regional Assembly (RA) and General Assembly (GA). The Regional Assembly is in St. Louis, April 5-7, with a theme of "Intersectionalities" and our UUA President, Susan Frederick-Gray, is the keynote presenter. This is a special opportunity to interact with the Rev. Frederick-Gray, the national head of our association of Unitarian Universalists congregations. See <https://www.uua.org/midamerica/ra>.

General Assembly (GA) is in Spokane, WA, June 19-23, with a theme of "The Power of WE." See <https://www.uua.org/ga> for more information.

Scholarship applications will be available in mid-January with a mid-February deadline so you can take advantage of the RA early bird registration before February 28. Contact Bruce Wiggins if you have questions.



Possibilities of Support and Connection

by Lynne Jacoby
Membership Development Coordinator

Fred Gutierrez, a three-year member of First Church, who is our 2019 Pledge Team Chair, has spent the last month talking to people he knows, and people he doesn't, around supporting different small elements of the work. He keeps getting positive responses.

Just when our Office Coordinator, Shari Wright, and I were wondering how we were going to keep inspiring members to register on the new Member Portal, the Membership Team presents a plan to have Rikki Thompson take member photos for the Portal, four Sundays in January.

A couple of Sundays ago, I was standing with my clipboard in hand, surveying the Coffee Hour crowd for someone who might make sure our 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service reception was going smoothly. Sally Heuer and Steve Culver walked up and offered to do that.

Of course, it goes further than taking ownership of helping us do what we do here at First Church. I like member Dale Skaggs remarks, "Show-up because you never know who is going to give you exactly what you need on a given day, and show-up because you never know who will need exactly what you have to give."

From a simple welcome to listening, to on and on and on. It reminds me of one day in particular last year. On a Saturday, I went to work feeling very sorry for myself. I'd been sick, needed to catch up on my day off, feeling miserable in a new city, and overwhelmed with my new job. But instead of the empty building I'd expected, noisy smiling members and children were spilling out of the Common Room and into the hall. As the Religious Education's Secret Friend party was just wrapping up, Beth Bruch cheerfully pulled me over to a youth who needed more adults in his chocolate preference study. Suddenly I was supporting a teenager I had never met with test tasting chocolate!

The whole scene felt like a miracle to me that day. It shifted my immediate perspective on my life completely around. And it may be what I love most about intentional covenantal community. The many possibilities of support and connection that arise out of this joint endeavor of ours. The ones we seek out, and the ones we can't even imagine the need for until suddenly we have just experienced them.

Become a Member of First Church

by Lynne Jacoby
Membership Development Coordinator

January's Journey to Membership Class will consist of four consecutive Thursday evenings starting January 10 through January 31, from 6:00–8:30 p.m.

Led by our ministers, staff, and lay leaders, this series explores Unitarian Universalist theology, history, principles, and our social justice framework, as well as the meaning of membership and ways to connect here at First Church.

Offered again in April, Journey to Membership is a prerequisite to become a member at First Church, but you are welcome to join the class whether or not you intend to join the church. Sign up if you are interested in membership, are curious to learn more about Unitarian Universalism, or just want to explore with others a deeper understanding of covenantal community as we strive to practice it here at First Church.

To register, email lynne.jacoby@uumilwaukee or sign up at the Membership Table during Coffee Hour.

IN MEMORIAM

Gloria Rodriguez Kappel

February 6, 1915 – December 3, 2018

Gloria Kappel died peacefully of natural causes on the morning of Monday, December 3, in her room at Newcastle Place in Mequon, at the age of 103. Gloria joined our congregation in the 1940s, left for a number of years, and most recently rejoined in 1999. A Candle of Life was lit in Gloria's honor on Sunday, December 9.

A Memorial Service and Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, January 26, at 2:00 p.m. at Newcastle Place, with The Rev. Dena McPhetres officiating. Gloria had a long career in music as a singer, voice teacher, and choral director. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to a music organization of your choice.



Taking Time to Walk the Walk

by Claire Keyes
Social Justice Intern

Within social justice circles, the dilemma of “talking the talk” versus “walking the walk” is often brought up. I often find myself hosting this internal battle. I question if I am doing enough to be an ally and stand in solidarity with those most affected by the issues I am passionate about.

With this dilemma in the back of my mind, when legislation that would persecute transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals was proposed by President Trump, I jumped at the opportunity to join Rev. Jennifer at a Trans Liberation Rally at the end of October.

I was nervous prior to the rally because I had never attended a protest and was unsure what to expect. While my fear made me uneasy as the action began, I discovered an intense feeling of community and purpose while standing by the Art Museum with members from my Unitarian Universalist church and the Milwaukee community.

As I stood in front of honking cars, holding a sign reading “RESIST GENDER NORMS,” I felt my heart rate increase and my hands begin to shake. Then I turned to my right and saw Rev. Jennifer standing next to me and a line of protesters walking up the street. I suddenly realized I was not alone. I was surrounded by a diverse community of individuals all fighting for the same goal. This feeling was unlike anything I had ever experienced. This intense feeling of community that comes with participating in direct action and “walking the walk” is something I encourage you to seek out—it can be transformational and revitalizing in the sea of social issues that surrounds us.

Earth Justice

Full of Hope for the New Year

by Terry Wiggins

Did you think the latest climate reports were bad news, full of doom and gloom? I write today to offer alternative thinking for the new year.

Let's prioritize justice and ecology. Let's fall in love with the future. Let's fight for something rather than against something. In fact, let's not fight at all, let's inspire action (our mission, remember!) in peaceful terms. How about the Green New Deal? How about the Sustainable Development Goals? How about Drawdown?

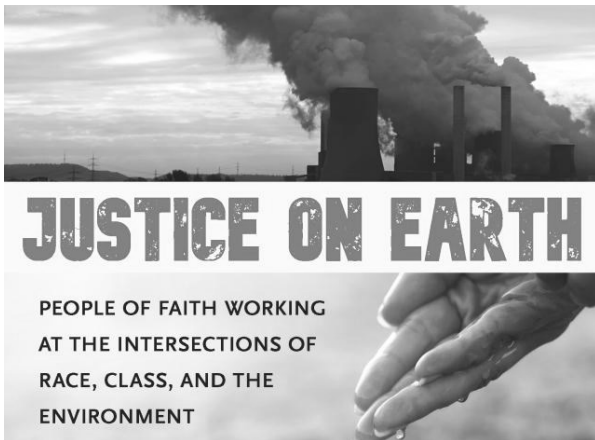
For good reading, for a daily dose of good news, read *Grist*. Their mission is “make the story of a better world so irresistible, you want it right now.” For a weekly dose, I find the Rev. Peter Sawtell's *Eco-Justice Notes* is often a Friday afternoon pick-me-up.

For a one-time dose, on a Sunday morning, try the Forum on January 13. Bruce Wiggins will tell us about the Drawdown Project to reverse global warming.

Whatever you choose, I'm putting down my metaphorical weapons and fighting for—no, adopting—more peaceful metaphors. We can look at it, not as a war, but that the earth is running a fever, and we need some wind turbine ibuprofen to bring down the heat. Let's not stoke the partisanship, as looking at climate change partisanship does.

Maybe these ideas are for those of us stuck inside, in the city, in winter. If you can get outside, Earth has a lot to offer. And then there's always the attitude of acting as if there's hope. Active Hope is what Joanna Macy recommends.





February Book Discussion Read Jennifer's Book

by Bruce Wiggins

Read the Rev. Jennifer's book this month in preparation for a book discussion group in February. Save the dates, Monday evenings, February 18 and 25, for the book discussion event. Rev. Jennifer will attend to help us with the discussion. Details of the book discussion group will be forthcoming in February.

Many of us bought and had Rev. Jennifer autograph her book, *Justice on Earth, People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and the Environment*. If you have not read it (or if you read it a while back), we suggest you read it (or read it again) in preparation for the group. The discussion group will be sponsored and lead by our Earth Justice Ministry and the UU+ Groups.

This book has the distinct honor of being named by our Unitarian Universalist Association as the Common Read for Unitarian Universalists across the country. Congregations across the United States are encouraged to read it, contemplate it, and discuss it. See <https://www.uua.org/books/read>. Read it and attend the discussion to see why it was chosen as an inspiring book that speaks to our current circumstances.

If you have not bought it yet, four books are available at our Book Tower on Sunday mornings. Get them while they last! After those are sold out, the book is available at Inspirit, as well as the UU bookstore and gift shop. Visit <https://www.uuabookstore.org/Justice-on-Earth-P18357.aspx> or ask around and see if you can borrow a copy from any of the numerous members who've bought the book.

Share The Buzz: Bee In Community Project

by Bruce Wiggins, Barbara Leigh, Charlie Koenen

Our Earth Justice Committee is initiating a collaboration with BeeVangelists to raise awareness about what's happening to our pollinators. BeeVangelists is a group dedicated to spreading the buzz about the plight of insect pollinators and doing something about it. One of the initiatives is the Bee in Community Project. We are gearing up for programming – having fun, learning, and making a difference.

Help us build a colony of interest and opportunity. You can host bee-teaching events, movie screenings, hands-on activities, and crafting. You will become better informed and connected to nature and its principal pollinators. We seek people and places to cross-pollinate:

- People to help volunteer at events, learn the trade, or become advocates.
- Places where ideas could bloom abundant.

Can you join us? Do you have a group, club, organization, school or business that could benefit from learning about pollinators? Please let us know.

If you are interested, please contact us or get information at the Social Justice Table during Coffee Hour. Contact First Church member Barbara Leigh or Charlie Koenen.

As opportunities blossom, we will contact you with specific dates and times, and you can let us know if you can join our swarm.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

by Cami Thomas
Interim Religious Education Coordinator

Religious Education News

Possibility invokes excitement as well as anxiety, a sense of gratefulness, and a sense of being overwhelmed. Possibility calls for hope and wonder while also calling for work and perseverance. It's an exciting time to be involved in Religious Education (RE) at First Church.

RE-vitalize! Workshop

During our RE-vitalize! workshop on Saturday, December 8, The Rev. Christina Leone-Tracy opened our eyes to possibility by sharing three different models for religious education. As an example, one of the models she shared with us is called "middle hour." With this model, everyone would attend service and the opportunity for religious education and lifespan education for all ages would take place during the middle hour (the hour between the first and second services). The different models shared by Rev. Christina sparked people's imaginations. Now is the time to dream and wonder about what religious education can look like for this community.

We hope to inspire your imagination with our second semester programming. The curriculum has been opened up to make space for topics and lessons from our volunteers, parents, and social justice committees.

Calling for More Religious Education Volunteers

We invite you to volunteer as teachers and assistants in grades 1 through 8, the nursery, and early childhood. You don't need to have a child enrolled in RE to join us! Everyone is welcome to share our world in the lower level, including: young adults, college students, senior citizens, people of color, queer and LGBT folks, singles, empty nesters, etc. Please contact RE Administrative Assistant Lillian Schley at RE.Admin@uumilwaukee.org.

Important Dates

- January 6: Black People Matter training after the 11:00 a.m. service.
- January 13: The last Sunday of the first semester, and the last date that is currently scheduled.
- January 20: Final date to sign-up for second semester teaching/assisting dates.
- January 20-February 3: Black People Matter program.
- February 3: Teacher Chat, 12:15-2:00 p.m. All teachers and assistants are asked to attend.

Changes for the Second Semester

- One of our big goals for 2019 is to split grades 1 through 4 into two classrooms. One classroom will be for grades 1 and 2, and one classroom will be for grades 3 and 4.
- RE teachers will have the choice to use a suggested lesson plan or choose their own topic for the day. We'd love to have you share an interest or talent of your own with the class, so please get creative!
- We will continue to hold our multi-age First Sunday programs for grades 1 through 7. However, Cami will no longer be leading the programs. You are invited to sign-up to teach the first Sunday. First Sundays are based around the church's monthly worship themes (for instance, "Mystery" in December), which are taken from a Unitarian Universalist resource called Soul Matters. Each monthly unit has a section with suggestions for using the theme in RE. You can choose to use activities from that resource or create something completely different yourself!

Black People Matter January 20-February 3

The racial justice program, Black People Matter (BPM), is returning to grades 1 through 7 and high school classrooms. This program is designed at age-appropriate levels to help children and youth recognize, discuss, and combat systemic racism against African Americans. For Black People Matter, each classroom has two co-leaders (rather than a teacher and assistant) who go through special training to prepare for the program. This year, BPM is expanding to three weeks, with special guests coming in to lead on February 3.

Training for BPM leaders will be held on January 6 at 12:15 p.m. (The exact start and end times are TBD, and the snow day is January 13.) Whether or not you have taught in the program before, all Black People Matter leaders are asked to attend this valuable training.

If you are interested in co-leading one of the classrooms during the first two weeks (January 20 and 27) or learning more about this opportunity, contact Cami Thomas, Interim Religious Education Coordinator, at camithomas@uumilwaukee.org.





A Youth's Perspective

by Celie Koneazny

Many of you may have been aware and actually helped paint alongside with the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) youth group, a wall mural for permanent display here at First Church. The youth group thanks you for your contribution.

Through the creative process, this mural gave YRUU youth the chance to be heard by our congregation in a beautiful way as well as to learn and show our artistic skills. We brought in 2018 Milwaukee Artist of the Year, Tia Richardson, who aided us in talking through the problems we were seeing in our church and the ways we could solve some of these issues. We started our process by naming the problems we saw, identifying the ideal future we were striving for, and brainstorming the different ways we could reach this future. We then split into smaller groups and drew out the different parts of our discussion that we felt should be included in the finished mural and how we should be represented. The drawings were hung up in the Reeb Room and youth voted on the parts that accurately fit into what the collective vision was, and a small group of artistically inclined youth sketched the idea together. Tia then met with a group of adults to help fill in the gaps with the ideas and came back with a beautiful watercolor that captured everything youth wanted to see. The image was sketched onto a large four foot by eight foot aluminum mural board, and Tia gave instruction on techniques for painting the mural.

Since October, both youth and adults came into the Murray Room on Sunday mornings to make our mural come to life. It is filled with spiky trees, camaraderie, blossoming flowers, candles lighting the way, and bridges being built towards a brighter, more diverse, inclusive, self-aware, and supportive future. The entire project was made possible through the generous support from the Tom Thaney Fund for the Arts and the finished mural can be found displayed in our lower level at First Church near the elevator.

All About Youth: January YRUU Happenings

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

We have thirteen youth accepted for our 2019 Summer Habitat for Humanity Mission Trip to Battle Creek, Michigan from July 29-August 3, 2019. Those youth are Celie Koneazny, Ehlona Walker, Jonah Roth, Clarity Saigh, Ian Fitak, Adena Saigh, Sam Mulvey, Austin Straub, Nyanna Krajewski, Leah Nyholm, Lucy Pyne, Paul Lindroth, and Zoe Gulbranson.

Upcoming Events

- The Youth Steering Committee will meet on Sunday, January 6, starting at 10:40 a.m. in the Murray Room.
- On Saturday, January 19, our rescheduled mission trip fundraiser, YUULE Ball, takes place here at First Church (see details on page 8 in this *Chanticleer*.)
- On Sunday, January 20, at 10:30 a.m. in the Anthony Room, is a 2019 informational mission trip meeting for all youth and their parents. Trip questions will be addressed, trip packing lists will be reviewed, and the trip planning calendar will be presented.
- Friday, January 25, at 7:00 p.m. through Saturday, January 26, at 9:00 a.m., the youth have a lock-in with the theme to be determined at the January 6 Youth Steering Committee meeting.
- Sunday, January 27, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. is the first of our four-part Hearts on Fire series for our graduating high school seniors with the Reverend Dena McPhetres leading our discussion.



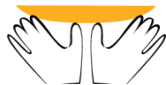
YUULE Ball Arrives

Get ready to join our Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) youth group and immerse yourself in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at our YUULE Ball on Saturday, January 19, from 5:00-9:00 p.m. at First Church. The youth will host a dance in Max Otto Hall and invite you to come in costume representing your favorite Hogwarts House to dance the night away with fellow Unitarian Universalists, and even learn how to waltz and gavotte. A raffle, Harry Potter themed appetizers prepared by the youth, music, and other assorted magical entertainment including our very own master storyteller Paul Akert, as Professor Dumbledore, will be provided.

The cost is \$20 per adult and \$10 per child ages 10 and up. Every purchased ticket comes with two raffle tickets to choose between three baskets. Sign-up for this event at the Religious Education Table during Coffee Hour on Sunday, January 6, and Sunday, January 13. Child care will be provided. If you have any questions, contact Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org.

Share the Plate

by Dawn Blackmore



Express Yourself Milwaukee (EYM) is our January Share the Plate recipient. Through music, dance, theater, and visual arts EYM brings much-needed joy to at-risk youth throughout Milwaukee and teaches valuable long-term skills that can change their lives.

Starting as a pilot program in 2001 using art as therapy, Express Yourself Milwaukee later became an affiliate chapter of the Express Yourself program in 2003. Since then, it has worked with over 1,100 youth in Milwaukee, establishing a positive, consistent presence in their lives. Express Yourself Milwaukee introduces youth to the world of music, dance, theater, and visual art. Through these experiences of creation and performance, the youth develop a sense of belonging, discover inner strength, and connect with others. For more information on the programs offered or how you can volunteer, please visit www.exyomke.org.

Cash collected in the plate will be shared 50/50 between Express Yourself Milwaukee and First Church. To donate only to EYM, please write a check directly to the organization, and we will mail it for you. Parents and guardians, please talk with your children about how even small donations help.

Meet Adena Saigh!

by Adena Saigh

Adena is a sophomore at Shorewood High School, where she enjoys both chemistry and African studies. Adena is an avid reader and enjoys a wide variety of books including fiction and non-fiction. She initially attended First Church as a child, but has become a more regular attendee in the past several years since her older sister attended the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program. This past summer, Adena attended the Midwest Leadership School in Decorah, Iowa, and she is sharing leadership skills from that experience as a youth representative on our Youth Steering Committee this year.

Adena's memorable moment from her time in religious education programming at First Church is when the Grade 4-6 class used stuffed animals to reenact traditional weddings from different religions and belief systems.

For Adena, participation in religious education at First Church has meant having a community and support system of her peers and youth mentors whom she can form a meaningful relationship. She feels that being part of the Unitarian Universalist First Church community has helped her establish her own set of values and beliefs.

While Adena is currently unsure what her future after high school will involve, she thinks that going to college is probably a good option.

Connecting through our MyFirstChurch Member Portal

by Shari Wright
Office Coordinator

Members and friends of First Church have been signing up for our new Member Portal to view their private giving records and contact information for other members, and start to connect with activities and groups at church. Leaders are beginning to populate their groups and use the portal tools to communicate with their participants. Our congregation will soon have a better understanding of who, and how, members are engaging within our community.

On December 16, Rikki Thompson attended Coffee Hour to photograph members. The photo shoot was very successful, and over 70 member photos are being uploaded to their profile pages – making it easier for all of us to put names to faces.

Many thanks to all of you who are making the effort to get the most from this new asset.

To access your own Member Portal account, visit our website at uumilwaukee.org under the Members tab, MyFirstChurch Member Portal.



ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Winter Yoga Class

Yoga class with instructor Morgan Engels starts back up in early January.

- Monday evenings, January 7 through March, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. (no class on January 21 for Martin Luther King Day).
- Wednesday mornings, January 9 to March 6, from 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Cost is \$99 for First Church members and \$117 for non-members. These classes are suitable for all levels and can be modified to suit the participant's individual needs. The poses and stretches are designed to nourish the joints, ligaments, tendons, and fascia to help open and release areas in need of stretching. Register at the RE Table on Sundays (pay with cash or check) or on our website, uumilwaukee.org.

Owning Your Religious Past

Facilitators: Jeanne Lowry and Gordie Mueller

Are you wondering what to do with past religious beliefs and experiences now that you're a UU? This class can help you reflect on your religious past, sorting out what to leave, what to bring into the present, and what to redefine. We'll give you simple tools through which you may re-examine and retrieve positive aspects of past religious experiences, including group sharing and private exploration using journal exercises. Join us for a meaningful reflection on our lifelong spiritual journeys.

Five Tuesday evenings,
March 5-April 2, 2019, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$25 members; \$35 non-members.
Scholarships available.

Class Size: Minimum 5 and Maximum 15

Jeanne Lowry has been a member of First Church since 1995 and has co-taught this course with the Rev. Dena McPhetres in the past. She has served in our Pastoral Care program for many years. She was raised Catholic and is a psychiatric nurse by profession. She currently co-facilitates our Buddhist Study Group.

Gordie Mueller has been a member of First Church since 1996 and has taken this course. Gordie was raised as an Evangelical United Brethren, which later merged with the Methodist church to form the United Methodist church. He is a retired CPA by profession and still performs some tax preparation work. He currently is a member of the Finance Committee and the Krug Gift Acceptance Team at First Church.

Please bring a journal or notebook and pen. Registration will be available at the Religious Education Table in the Common Room during Coffee Hours after Sunday services. More information and online registration will be coming in February.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) for Adults Comes to First Church

Do you want to understand your needs for sexuality and intimacy with a partner and be able to communicate with them?

Do you want to understand more about sexual orientation and gender identity?

Do you want to learn how to have a safe and mutually pleasurable relationship?

Stop by our Adult OWL table in the Common Room on Sunday, January 13, 20, and 27 during Coffee Hour and speak with one of two Adult OWL facilitators, Liz Hopkins and Shannon Widlansky, to learn more about this new program for First Church. We would like to begin this program in March, 2019. Sexuality education is not just for our children and youth anymore!

Get Ready for the Used Book Sale

by Nancy Pajewski

The annual Used Book Sale is scheduled for the weekend of March 29-31. The sale is an opportunity to stock up on books you've always wanted to read, to pass along volumes you have finished, and to raise money for our church.

Donations will be accepted beginning in March, and not before, due to storage space limitations. We accept books, CDs, and DVDs. We do NOT accept magazines and textbooks.



GETTING TOGETHER

Stop in, meet new people, and make new friends!

Visitors are especially welcome.

If you have an idea for starting a new group, contact The Rev. Dena McPhetres at 414-273-5257, ext. 202, or dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org.

Book Discussion Group

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

We gather once a month to discuss a chosen book. You can find our book list on the church bulletin board and website. We welcome all readers. For more information, contact Chris Linder.

Buddhist Study Group: Gathering Waters Sangha

First & Third Wednesdays
of the month
6:30-8:00 p.m.

We explore Buddhist teachings and ideas and practice meditation, followed by tea, cookies, and fellowship. All are welcome! For more information, please contact Jeanne Lowry or Steve Lowry.

Chancel Choir

Every Thursday
7:15-9:00 p.m.

All singers who are high school age and up are invited to join our weekly choir rehearsals. Contact our Choral Director Tristan Strelitzer at tstrelitzer@gmail.com with your name and voice type.

The Chronologically Gifted

Last Sunday of the month
12:30 p.m. Potluck Lunch

We foster activities that allow members who are age 60 and older to live well, offering meaningful, creative, healthy engagement through the arts, education, relationship building, and fun! For more information, contact Sharon DePue.

Pagan Celebrations Group

Pagan rituals honor the natural cycle of the earth and celebrate the seasons. For more information, please contact Kathleen Miezio or Nick DaVia.

SWANS Group (Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social)

First Sunday of the month

Join us once a month as we go out for lunch and other social events after the second service. Newcomers are welcome. For more information, contact Barbara Kloman or Camille Johnson.

UU Parenting Group

Second Sunday of the month
12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

We share helpful parenting resources, do fun family activities together, and discuss topics like positive discipline, creating healthy habits, and the unique challenges of raising UU children. For more information, contact Stacey Thieme or Brook Worzella.

UU+ Study Group

Second Tuesdays of the month
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

We gather to deepen our knowledge of Unitarian Universalism and to continue our spiritual journeys through reading and discussion. Contact Nancy Pajewski for more information.

Unitarian Universalists Under Forty Doing Activities (UUUFDA)

UUUFDA encourages social camaraderie among the under-forty crowd at First Church, contributing to a strong, joyful, and fun church community. Join us for our monthly brunch and other activities. For more information, contact Erik Islo or Angi Krueger at uuufda@gmail.com.

WomanSpirit

We meet to empower women and join in spiritual quest through social justice, music, ritual, and friendships. For more information, contact Janet Nortrom.



SUNDAY SERVICES & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

JANUARY 20

“What’s the Best That Could Happen?”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom
Tristan Strelitzer, Choir Director
George Bledsoe, Worship Associate

Possibility shows up when we open ourselves to new ideas, relationships, and experiences. Instead of framing new possibility in terms of fear, we can ask ourselves: what is the best that could happen by trying this? Join us for this Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday where we explore how trying new things could open us up to the best possibilities of connecting across difference.

JANUARY 27

“Hell in the Hallways”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom
Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director
Julia Oswald, Worship Associate
Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator

Even if that old cliché is true, and “when one door closes another one opens,” it can be hell in the hallways. Leaving an old way behind when the new way has not yet arrived can be painful, lonely, and anxiety-inducing. Join us for this worship service where we explore spiritual practices for surviving hell in the hallways when one possibility is closed down and there is no new one on the horizon.

HOW TO REACH US

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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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SUNDAY MORNING FORUM

January 6

“Cultivating Non-Polarizing Conversations Regarding Gun Violence”

Presenter: Marlene Melzer-Lange, MD, Prof. of Pediatrics,
Medical College of Wisconsin

Violence in Milwaukee, especially gun violence, is a significant public health and social concern. Marlene will present information about the scale of the problem and discuss the Guns, Grief, and Grace Toolkit. This toolkit is being developed to open non-polarizing conversations around firearms and firearm injury prevention for our communities. She will describe the coalition leading this initiative and opportunities for collaboration.

January 13

“Indian Summer: Teachings from the Turtle’s Back”

Presenter: Judy Dordel, Executive Director, Indian Summer Inc.

Celebrating 31 years on Milwaukee’s lakefront, Indian Summer entertains, educates, and promotes Native American culture. Relaxing and family-friendly, the event is the only festival that prohibits alcohol consumption on half of the festival grounds. Events include the competition Pow-Wow, with a colorful grand-entry ceremony of performers in traditional regalia. There is a genealogy tent and an Education Day when schools are invited to participate. Indian Summer explores issues around local native groups their goals, lifestyles, and challenges in Milwaukee and the diasporas.

January 20

“Our Trans Family”

Presenters: Jeff Percy and Meredith Watts,
with Lorlee Cook-Daniels and Michael Munson, Executives of FORGE

Jeff Percy and Meredith Watts will present a selection of their work and speak about their understanding of transgender people who have been marginalized by society. All these families have navigated a complicated personal and social path to express the gender identity that is within them. The world around them, and sometimes people close to them, often attempt to impose an external definition based on preconceptions and stereotypes. Some may even seek to deny trans persons the rights and protections available to other American citizens.

January 27

“Life Without Pockets”

Presenter: Carla Ernst, Author, Musician, Trans Advocate

Life Without Pockets: My Long Journey into Womanhood is a powerful story chronicling Unitarian Universalist author Carla Ernst’s journey from male to female. It is a compelling, modern-day adventure story of the human spirit as well as an entertaining and practical guide to living a life based not on marginalization by others, but on the continuing revelation and brave embrace of who we indeed are. Whether readers are on that journey themselves or are a loved one of a transgender person, “Life Without Pockets” is a compelling narrative that will transform the way readers think about and understand transgender.

