



THE

CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.

April 2019

Words on the Wind

by The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

What does it mean to be a people of wholeness in the midst of all this grief, and spring also rising? How is it possible to praise the mutilated earth when the melting snow exposes raw, muddy loss?

We Unitarian Universalists sometimes try to do Good Friday and Easter Sunday in 60 minutes or skip the story all together. But our Christian siblings have learned that transformation is a long process, and give an entire week for the people to move from jubilation, to service, to betrayal, to awful loss and death, and then to resurrection again.

We have had a great deal of loss in our congregation this winter, as well as new life and connections growing. As the earth slowly warms, resurrecting spirits, may we know that to be a people of wholeness includes all the emotions, stories, and symbols of love, loss, and rising to live again.

Love,
Jennifer

SUNDAY SERVICES & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

APRIL 7

"A Path to Wholeness"

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Javier Dorantes, Worship Associate

Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator

Someone once said that being a minister is like being a dog at a whistlers' convention. I think life is like that for many of us. How do we find a path to wholeness, when so many different demands are calling for attention? We live in a fragmented, distracted and broken world, yet we yearn for wholeness. Paradoxically, acceptance of not being whole can be a path to wholeness.

APRIL 14

"The Difference Between Whole and Not Whole Is Love"

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Tristan Strelitzer, Choir Director

Beth Monhollen, Worship Associate

Each of us has broken pieces—places in our life where hurt or loss has made a knot in our wood. Sometimes the bark has grown back around these knots, and sometimes they are still tender where the branch has been lost, and we are exposed. Knowing that life will create these broken places, how do we learn to feel whole again? What is the difference between whole and not whole in lives that include suffering?

MONTHLY THEME

What does it mean to be a people of

Wholeness?

(SUNDAYS, continued on page 11)

April's Theme: Wholeness

by Michelle Naples,
Congregation President, 2018-19

The concept of wholeness to me means knowing, accepting, and integrating all parts or aspects of oneself or something. First Church is a place where I am challenged to make sense of how the various parts of myself and my life work together and form who I am - including the parts that are easy to accept and those that are not.

The pledge drive this year highlights how we need one another to make First Church's operating budget pledge-sustained. We each are part of the whole, and it will take all of us to give as generously as we can to support the mission and vision of First Church as defined by our Ends. Have you gotten your pledge in yet? Now would be an excellent time if you haven't done so already!

Be part of the larger whole of our Unitarian Universalist faith by attending MidAmerica Regional Assembly in St. Louis (April 5-7) or General Assembly in Spokane, WA (June 19-23). There are also ways to participate from afar in General Assembly (see page 5 for more information).

Finally, mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting on May 19. It has been a full year so far and there is much to share.

Cheers to Spring!

April Event Listing

Event articles In this edition of *Chanticleer* can be found on the page listed below. Please see the article for more information.

- April 7 SWANS Lunch - Page 10
- April 7 UUUFDA Lunch - Page 10
- April 14 Bards Poetry Reading - Page 8
- April 20 Guest House Meal - Page 6
- May 12 Youth Dessert Auction - Page 8

Splinters from the Board

by Maria Dorsey
Board of Trustees

Happy Spring Everyone! When the Board of Trustees (BOT) met in February it felt like winter would never end, but there is light at the end of the tunnel! The Board of Trustees continues to discuss the governance policies we have been drafting and we see a light at the end tunnel with this important process as well. We don't have a finalized draft just yet, but we will keep you posted.

Member Elizabeth Lentini reported to the BOT the Krug Gift Acceptance Team (KGAT) recommendations and led a thorough discussion with the BOT regarding questions the BOT had in regards to the recommendations.

Rev. Jennifer presented some of her metrics plan for measuring our Ends and reported that new systems will be implemented in order to effectively track the data captured needed to measure the Ends.

Rev. Jennifer presented her Senior Minister's report and highlighted her attendance at a program led by Author Resmaa Menakem on racism, trauma, and white supremacy that took place in Los Angeles. Rev. Jennifer also reported that the Stewardship team is excited about the rollout of the pledge campaign with the goal of closing the \$107,000 gap between our operating expenses and operating income.

Minutes of the February meeting are posted on the First Church bulletin board in the central corridor and on the church website. Members of the BOT welcome your thoughts and concerns at any time. Our pictures are posted in the central corridor and we wear yellow name tags. Our contact information is listed in the front of the member directory.

Proposals Approved for Use of Lu Krug Bequest Dollars

by Melinda Vernon
Board of Trustees

After a significant review of 19 applications, the Krug Gift Acceptance Team (KGAT) recommendations for funding were approved at the February 26, 2019 Board meeting. The KGAT received applications that totaled over \$700,000 in funding. KGAT members are in the process of communicating with applicants about the status of their applications.

Decisions were challenging on what projects would be funded and at what level due to the overall high quality of the proposals submitted. The Board chose not to allocate all of the available dollars at this time, anticipating another round of funding after some experience has been gained. A number of factors were used in decision-making. Priority was given to projects that were highly aligned with the Ends chosen by the congregation last year.

KGAT members are confident the congregation will be excited by the projects. Watch for more information in the May *Chanticleer*, and mark your calendars to attend the Annual Meeting to be held on May 19, 2019. A portion of this meeting will involve a presentation of the funded projects.



Wholeness

by Lynne Jacoby
Membership Development Coordinator

Once, a fellow member at my previous church (long before I imagined working in one), who I quite liked, was bemoaning something about our congregation and saying “I wish they would...,” when I rudely interrupted him.

“They?” I pounced before even thinking. “We are they, Peter! If we need something different, the members here are responsible for trying to figure out a way to make it happen!”

I did, and still do, know it isn’t as simple as that. Like any institution, we have bureaucracies and red tape, and just to get a proposal on the agenda of the right team or committee takes legwork and patience. And then the right advocate for the idea might be at home sick that meeting. Or, if the committee does get on board, depending on the impact of the change, that could be only the beginning of the consensus-building needed.

This all assumes a member has the time from other life responsibilities and an awareness of how to advocate successfully. Or, that our white, upper-middle-class cultural perspective, which naturally remains our community’s first reaction to what is a good idea, doesn’t overwhelm all effort. Although we are working hard as a community to become more aware of this bias.

Still, it is possible. In fact, what we rely on in this community - from welcoming one’s neighbor in the pew on Sunday, to initiating a social justice group, or participating last year in the ENDS process - is that each individual among us has opportunities to change us for the better, and each member has the responsibility to try. And this is what’s beautiful about us, and also what creates openings for wholeness.

Shortly after my outburst, I did apologize to Peter, as I am familiar with the frustration of those who can’t see my “obvious” as the next person, and have plenty of my own “they” references populating both internal and external dialogues.

I also believe that wholeness within a community and within individuals comes in those tiny moments when we stop saying “I wish they.” It is the moments when we are feeling “we” and “they” as the same interconnected web of which we are a part, and when we are focused solely on how we might live into our own part well—whether or not the changes our lives create ever become what we begin—by imagining.

Dena’s Digressions

by The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Grieving sucks. I’m just sayin’. It’s hard. We don’t get over a deep loss. We go through it, each in our own unique way and in our own time. Yet we share some commonalities with all human beings who suffer loss.

Our First Church community is grieving. Several deaths of dear members happened over the last two months. And several serious diagnoses occurred, sending many circles of an individual’s community into worry, and perhaps, anticipatory grief.

How do we grieve as a people? How do we hold the circle of community in wholeness, when so many hearts are breaking?

There is no one answer. There is no perfect prescription. Contrary to previous grief theory, people do not move through clearly defined stages of grief in a predictable manner. Current grief specialists say that the stages of grief theory is not accurate, and if we expect ourselves to follow it, we may feel even worse.

Dr. Alan Wolfelt, Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado suggests that mourners have six needs, which may or may not arise in numerical order.

- Need 1. Acknowledge the reality of the death.
- Need 2. Move toward the pain of the loss.
- Need 3. Convert the relationship with the person who died from one of presence to one of memory.
- Need 4. Develop a new self-identity.
- Need 5. Search for meaning.
- Need 6. Continue to receive support from others.

How are we a people of wholeness? When we are broken open by loss, we hold space for one another to grieve. We do not hurry each other into healing. We do not tell someone else what their loss means, we listen to the meaning they are making. And we trust the wholeness of life when someone who is grieving cannot. I am grateful for the ways in which you have done this for me, and am continually moved by how our community does this for each other.

Yours,
Dena



BOARD AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE CANDIDATES

The candidates below will stand for election at the Annual Meeting on May 19.

Board of Trustees Candidates

Dianna Dentino

In 1997, Dianna Dentino, her husband John Gielow, and their children, D'Laney (age 7) and Tieg (age 4), found FUSM and made it their spiritual home. She has participated in a variety of committees and FUSM events over the years. Highlights include working with Lisa Larson, Jeff Harsh, Elizabeth Lentini, and Kevin Gibson to create the Family Committee; co-leading a coupleship series with John; volunteering on the Membership Committee; contributing as a volunteer for pastoral care needs of members; teaching in RE; serving as FUSM's liaison with Interfaith of Greater Milwaukee; volunteering on the annual FUSM Pledge Team; and participating on both sides of the Feast for Funds. Her life has been enriched by the Sunday Forums, Circle Suppers, Build your Own Theology, Chalice Circles, and Geography of Grace. Outside the FUSM community, Dianna has spent the past 34 years working as a teacher and interpreter for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She enjoys hanging out with family and friends, the great outdoors, supporting the arts, and reading good books.

Jane Cliff

Since she was not raised in any faith community, Jane was pleasantly surprised to discover a liberal and tolerant church—First Church—through her partner Julie Hamrick. Jane turned the tables on Julie by joining first in 1994, and Julie followed in 2002. They raised their daughter in First Church (as long as she would tolerate into her high school years). Early on, Jane had fun being a “secret friend” with congregational youth. She has served on the Library Cart, Personnel, and Pulpit Guest Committees. She is currently on the Membership and Irma Morter Lecture Committees, and finds committee work to be informative and meaningful. She also sings in the Chancel Choir and enjoys Circle Suppers. Jane retired three years ago from the U.S. Forest Service where she was a forestry technician, wildlife biologist, public affairs specialist, and media spokesperson for agency leaders. Jane is grateful to be part of a spiritual community that helps in her quest for living a life of integrity and learning, and making a difference in the world.

Mark Miller

Mark has been attending First Church since 1999, and he has two sons who experienced the breadth of our RE and OWL programs. Mark has served as a pastoral care associate, served a term on the RE Committee, and taught or assisted in RE for many years. Currently, he has been serving for at least six years on the IT Committee. He has been part of the Buddhist Study Group for over ten years and plays bass guitar for the church band. Mark is a cyber-security professional currently working for a financial services company, ensuring customer data is protected by designing secure systems to minimize risk. Mark enjoys so many aspects of our church community, not the least of which is the influence we have on each other and our children in terms of social and racial justice.

Nominating Committee Candidates

Heather Hansen

Heather Hansen is a life-long UU whose family were members until she was five years old. She found her way back to First Church about nine years ago, after returning to Milwaukee following college and grad school. The community she found in the congregation was welcoming and the Sunday services engaging, so she kept coming back and ultimately became a member. Heather has served in a variety of roles in the congregation over the years, serving on the initial Feast for Funds Committee, YANKS co-chair, volunteering in RE as a teacher and an assistant, and three years as a pastoral care provider coordinator. She's looking forward to getting to know more members and friends of the congregation while serving on the Nominating Committee. When not at church or working as a client success manager, Heather can often be found somewhere in the great outdoors with a pack on her back and a camera in hand.

Vashti Lozier

Vashti Lozier is a life-long Unitarian Universalist and a member of First Church since 2011. She has been a member of a number of UU congregations, including the Unitarian Universalists in Europe and The Church of the Larger Fellowship, as well as congregations in Upstate New York, Long Island, and the Twin Cities. At First Church, she has served on the Children's Religious Education Committee as both a member and as the chair. She looks forward to continuing her involvement at First Church as a member of the Nominating Committee to ensure that the church grows and retains its strong lay leadership in the years to come.

Members will be voting on May 19 for positions vacated by the following individuals listed below.



The Board Members vacating their position:

Michelle Naples
Maria Dorsey
Omega Burkhart

The Nominating Committee Members vacating their position:

Patricia Witt
Joe Schuller



The Anti-Racism Team

by Ron Oshima

Forming an Anti-Racism Team was an integral part of The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom's ministry when she started in August 2016. The team was reconstituted in January of 2018 to reflect a wider diversity of perspectives.

The team's purpose is to move forward anti-racism work in the congregation as a whole. The principles developed in anti-racist work can easily be applied to other areas of oppression like gender, sexuality, and age.

What's the difference between the Anti-Racism Team and the Black Lives Matter Team? The latter is focused on reaching out to the community and working with partners like Mothers for Justice United, or marshalling feet on the streets at events like Dentre Day. The former is focused on anti-racism within the congregation, looking at our practices and systems, and supporting our members in their journey of developing anti-racist understanding and practice.

What's next? The team plans to hold a Beloved Conversations series on anti-racism in the 2019–2020 church year. Beloved Conversations is a program for having deep conversations about race and faith in a way that engenders deeper understanding and real connection. Through telling personal stories, we will learn how individuals became who they are. It invites us into deep soul work in a dance between introspection and relationship.

Stay tuned for coming news about the Beloved Conversations program. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Jennifer.

First Church Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the Annual Meeting of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee on Sunday, May 19, at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Members are eligible to vote if they signed the Membership Book 60 days prior to the meeting date and have made a financial pledge or contribution of record in the past year. A list of voting members is posted on the bulletin board in the walkway 15 days prior to the meeting.

In addition to the election of members to the Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee, we will hear about the financial condition of First Church and other important matters. Please show your support of the church and its work by attending this once-a-year event! Child care is available, and you can sign up at the Member Services Table. A reception will follow.

General Assembly Viewing Parties and Off-Site Delegate

by Bruce Wiggins, Denominational Affairs

I ask you to consider three ways you can enjoy the "Joys of GA" from the comfort of Milwaukee. General Assembly (GA) is Wednesday, June 19, through the Sunday morning worship on June 23. It's in Spokane, WA this year, and a few First Church members are going. You can choose to participate from a distance and get a lot out of our UUA annual national conference.

Live-streamed Events

There are many events viewable by all as they are being live-streamed. You can view many things such as worship services, the opening and closing ceremonies, Service of the Living Tradition, Bridging Ceremony, WARE lecture, and the General Sessions. I encourage you to get together with others at First Church and watch together—have a Watch GA Party!

Off-Site Registrant

Off-site registrants can watch and ask questions in live sessions including workshops and business sessions (mini-assemblies, hearings, etc.) Registration is much cheaper than attending in person. For more details, go to www.uua.org/ga/off-site.

Off-Site Delegate

Delegates get more of GA, including everything live-streamed plus workshops. They can participate in the association's business (ask a question, present arguments, and vote) during General Sessions. A limited amount of church funds is available on a first-come, first-served basis to pay for registration of delegates. For more details, go to www.uua.org/ga/off-site/registrants/delegates. Our Board of Trustees names our First Church delegates ahead of time, so let me know by May 15 if you are interested.

Have you handed in a pledge card yet?

by Lynne Jacoby, Membership Development Coordinator



April marks pledge clean-up and your Pledge Team would love a record low of follow-up calls to make. Your Finance Committee would love final numbers to plug into next year's budget before the Annual Meeting, and your Membership

Development Coordinator would love to focus on the Spring Journey to Membership class!

Please help out by submitting a pledge, or a request of a waiver at uumilwaukee.org/ways-to-give/annual-pledge-drive. Or, contact Lynne at lynne.jacoby@uumilwaukee.org or 414-273-5257 x205.





Guest House Meal on April 20

Please mark your calendar to prepare or serve meals at the Guest House Shelter for Men on Saturday, April 20. To sign up, stop by at the Social Justice Table in the Common Room after services.

Think Globally, Buy Locally!

by Amy Monahan

When the fate of our beloved planet Earth hangs in the balance, it is important to support organizations who intentionally reduce their negative impact on the environment. Many businesses and organizations in the Milwaukee area conscientiously work at minimizing the consequences their practices have on our planet. Supporting them is another way that each of us can reduce our own footprint. Please consider voting with your purchasing dollars! The multiple and varied “sustainability practices” of these businesses/organizations are lessons in how we all can make changes in our own spending habits in order to live more gently on the Earth.

To help you find some of these sustainable businesses/organizations, Earth Justice Ministry member Amy Monahan compiled a directory of some of the local and regional consumer businesses with “green” practices. The directory includes many types of businesses from governmental agencies to restaurants. Amy will have sample copies of the directory in the Common Room during Coffee Hours on Sunday, April 7 and 21. Please stop by to view a copy and, if you wish, comment. The directory will also be posted on the church website. Watch the announcements to find out when it goes online.

Remember, Think Globally, Buy Locally.

If you're interested in the subject of making a change in society with your dollars, you might be interested in the April 14 Forum, “Frustrated with the Political Process? Try Socially Responsible Investing with Shareholder Activism.”

What's Happening in Common Ground, You Ask?

by Jerry Fredrickson

Last April was the ten year anniversary celebration of Common Ground (CG). Coincidentally, Common Ground is currently working on ten issue campaigns: Washington High School (outdoor athletic space improvements), Do Not Stand Idly By, United Parents, Workforce Development, Watershed, Mental Health & Ascension, St. Joseph, Milwaukee Rising LLC, Heroin and Opioid Abuse, Common Ground Healthcare Coop., and Racial Justice.

Some of these campaigns have been ongoing and some are newer. There isn't space here to provide the details about all of the campaigns, so please stop by the Social Justice Table to pick up a CG TENacity flier. Common Ground chooses its campaigns by listening to people in the member organizations and in the participating neighborhoods.

Common Ground is now operating with one lead organizer and a part-time organizer. In addition, we will be losing our outstanding lead organizer, Keisha Krumm, in the spring as she transfers to Cleveland to continue her organizing work. In the interim, Common Ground members have stepped up to help with some of the administrative work. The plan is to hire three full-time organizers to continue the work on the existing campaigns and to gear up for future campaigns.

Should you have questions about the campaigns or wish to become involved, please talk to any of our First Church Core Team members: George Bledsoe, Lynn Connolly, Rod De Pue, Mary Ann Fisher, Jerry Fredrickson, Larry Krolkowski, Russ Langford, Cathy Startt, and Mary Ann Steger.

We wish to extend a big thank you to all of our First Church friends who have supported Common Ground throughout the years. We hope for your continued support as we enter our second decade of social justice work in Metro Milwaukee.



Dontre Day 2019

by Kenyatta Yamel
Black Lives Matter Team

The Black Lives Matter First Unitarian Society Team invites the community to participate in Dontre Day, which will have its fifth anniversary this month. Dontre Day is a series of activities and celebrations organized by the family of Dontre Hamilton, who was killed by Police Officer Christopher Manney on the night of April 30, 2014. We follow the lead of his family regarding roles they would feel comfortable in having us perform. His murder and the movement that erupted in the Black community in response were featured in an explosive documentary, *The Blood is At the Doorstep*.

The Black Lives Matter First Unitarian Society Team sponsored a showing of *The Blood is at the Doorstep* at First Church on November 18, 2018. The event was co-sponsored by Mothers Against Gun Violence, Moms Demand Action on Gun Violence, and Progressive Moms of Wisconsin. Maria Hamilton, Dontre's mother was the featured speaker. Mary Devitt of Black Lives Matter and Khary Pennebaker of Moms Demand Action also spoke.

A lot of activity has been underway in the past five months. Maria recently returned from touring with the movie. The organization she founded, Mothers For Justice United, has achieved recognition as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization by the IRS. And the Black Lives Matter Team has been working with Maria to create a sustainable peer support model, which can be used to assist parents whose children were killed by the police and demand greater accountability from the justice system. Our desire is to learn from the past and support the Hamiltons and others in their grieving and struggle.

News from Your SJ Intern

by Claire Keyes
Social Justice Intern

Throughout my internship, I have faced a lot of questions. People often ask me what my plans are for the rest of my life, which is a question I personally dread answering. Two other questions have flowed throughout the entirety of my internship and consistently leave me lost in my mind. These questions are:

- “How do you pick which issue to dedicate your time to?”
- “How do you sustain yourself in this work, especially when you do not get results right away?”

When I hear these questions my initial response is, “Ugh, what a great question,” and then I will give a more in-depth response,

based on the person I am talking to. For the first question, I usually point out the irony of the situation. Even though social justice work is by nature outwardly focused, and usually a process in which you give up some part of yourself to support others in your community, justice work is a deeply personal journey. In order to be truly effective in social justice work, you have to know yourself. You have to know what issues tug at your heart and your mind so that you can dedicate your time there. You also need to know your own identity. Specifically, it's components of power, privilege, and oppression. Once you have this understanding of yourself, it is pretty easy to pick out the issue you should dedicate your time to.

The second question, which is related to sustaining oneself in this work, is more challenging. I often lie awake at night asking myself “Is it worth it?” or “Will the world ever change?” With the effects of injustice constantly showing up on social media and the news, it's easy to want to give up. What keeps me going in the sea of social issues that surrounds us is coming back to the “why.” When I am feeling discouraged, I usually take time with a pen and paper to write about why I showed up here and why I have chosen to work against injustice. I have found that my dedication to social justice stems from a myriad of experiences. Some of my dedication comes from my childhood and some from the eye-opening experiences I've had in college.

I encourage you to try this reflection sometime. It can be an emotional and deeply reflective experience, but it always reignites the passion for change within me. This work was never meant to be easy—but trust me, it is so worth it.

In Solidarity,
Claire

Reflections on the Revolution of Love

by Tree Moore
Earth Justice Committee

Life on earth is a gift. We humans did not ask for it – or do anything to deserve it.

We are surrounded by abundance, beauty, and miracles – none of which we have earned. Out of the earth's generosity naturally comes gratitude, an awareness of having been blessed. From gratitude comes respect, a desire to love and care for the Generous One – the earth. A natural cycle of reciprocity develops.

If we lived on a giant dead rock, then we could make full use of all the “resources” (nonliving “commodities”) with impunity.

(Continued on page 8)



However, we are part of a complex, interdependent web of existence. We all breathe the same air, need similar nutrients to stay alive, and are subject to the same physical laws. Tragically (for many reasons) we have all treated our planet as dead – disrupting life processes and doing serious damage to our intricate web of all existence. We have failed to respond to our planetary home with gratitude and love.

As Charles Eisenstein says, “Love is an expansion of self to include another, whose well-being becomes part of one’s own.”

Although I am impressed with the many potential ways that might reverse climate change listed in Paul Hawken’s *Drawdown*, the element missing from the list – wind turbines, educating girls, solar farms, etc. – is the power of love, of spirit. We need to regard this web, to which we belong, as sacred – all of it, including the worms and the skunk cabbage. It will require the power of many committed, courageous, loving hearts to heal our planet, including the air, the soils, the forests, and all the creatures. Nothing else can do it!

**In Memoriam
Philip Nevin Martin**

November 22, 1953, ~ March 3, 2019

Phil Martin died peacefully on Sunday morning, March 3, 2019, with his wife Jean holding his hand. Phil traveled his cancer journey for almost two years and died after a very brief stay in hospice. He was 65 years old and a member of our congregation for six years.

A memorial service celebrating Phil’s life was held Saturday, March 23. A Candle of Life was lit in Phil’s honor at worship services on Sunday, March 10. Memorial donations may be made to First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee or Voces de la Frontera.

**In Memoriam
Bettie Zillman**

February 9, 1925 ~ March 8, 2019

Bettie Zillman died peacefully on Friday morning, March 8, 2019, at her home. She died following a February 24, 2019 fall at home that led to a brief hospital stay followed by a week in hospice care. She was 94 years old, and had been a member of First Church for 40 years.

Bettie did not wish to have a formal memorial service, but she welcomed memorial gifts in her memory to Goodwill Industries or First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. We lit the Candle of Life for Bettie in worship on Sunday, March 10, after which people gathered in the parlor to share stories and memories of Bettie.

Youth Group Advisors Needed

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

Are you passionate about our youth at First Church? Did our Youth Service inspire you in some way to get more connected to our youth? If so, consider volunteering to be a YRUU youth group advisor. We are seeking at least two more people to add to our advisor team for the 2019-2020 church year. For more details, please contact Youth Program Coordinator Deb Solis at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org. This volunteer position requires you to be at least 25 years of age and willing to serve at least three years as a youth group advisor.

Do You Do Delicious?

by Deb Solis

Sign up begins mid-April for Gourmet Dessert Auction donations! Mark your calendar for the annual Youth Group Dessert Auction on Mother’s Day, May 12. Cakes and pies and truffles..... Oh my! It’s not too early to begin thinking about what you will contribute this year. Sign up at the RE Table from April 21-May 5 to donate a baked good for this fun Habitat for Humanity Mission trip fundraising tradition. You may also email Youth Program Coordinator Deb Solis with your intention to donate or to ask questions at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org.

Poetry Reading & Open Mic-Against Hunger

by Katy Phillips

April is National Poetry Month! First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee will celebrate with a poetry reading on Sunday, April 14, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. in Max Otto Hall. Featured poets will be those whose work is published in the Wisconsin edition of the book *Bards against Hunger*. In addition, there will be an open mic focusing on issues of social justice.

The book *Bards against Hunger* will be available for purchase, with half the purchase price being donated to the Interchange Food Pantry in Milwaukee. Other suggested donations are fresh fruit (apples, oranges, and pears) or cash to be used to purchase items for the pantry.

Registration for this event is not required. If you have any questions, please contact Katy Phillips.



All About Youth

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

K-1 Our Whole Lives (OWL) Class News

Due to our trained facilitators' schedules, we will be offering the K-1 Our Whole Lives (OWL) class in the Fall of 2019 at First Church. More details will arrive in future months. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator.

Upcoming Youth Events

- April 5 Eighth Grade OWL Lock-in from 6:00-10:00 p.m.
- April 6 Feast for Funds Game Night with the youth from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Those of you who signed up to attend will be playing board games, card games, and active games with our youth, and delicious themed snacks will be provided.
- April 7 Monthly Youth Steering Committee meeting at 10:40 a.m. in the Murray Room.
- April 24 Hearts on Fire series for our graduating high school seniors with Rev. Jennifer.
- April 29 Youth Steering Committee (YSC) elections and annual picnic.

A Youth's Perspective

by Celie Koneazny

The youth group at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee would like to thank everyone who attended, supported, supervised, and enjoyed this year's Youth Service on March 3. As always, this service was a labor of love to create and implement and brought the youth group closer together. This year's youth service was entitled, "Why Are You You? Where did we come from...where are we going?" and the goal was to give the congregation a look into our own personal identities as well as the reasoning for those identities.

We put together a service with a variety of music that introduced and displayed our talents to both the congregation and the youth group. There were pieces about how group identities came to be so prevalent in our lives, what it means to be a woman, how First Church has shaped our identity and who we are as individuals and as a youth group. This youth service gave us a chance to embrace our identities, imperfections, and ideologies, and share them all with the congregation in an artistic and powerful way. Many thanks again to everyone who supported and contributed to the 2019 Youth Service.

Meet Sam Mulvey!

by Andrea Cornwall
Youth Steering Committee Member

Introducing this month's Youth Steering Committee member, Sam Mulvey! Sam is a sophomore at Rufus King High School in Milwaukee. He has been attending Religious Education (RE) at First Church since he was four years old, and he feels that UU values and principles have taught him to be more open to new concepts. He has several memorable RE stories, including pulling a condom over his entire leg in OWL (Our Whole Lives) class - try that one! Sam greatly enjoyed OWL class, which he feels covered important subjects in all areas of life relevant to everyone. He also appreciates working with the Youth Group in which he's currently involved, which encourages participants to learn valuable life skills such as leadership and teamwork, and also provides a safe community where ideas and thoughts can be expressed. He also values the opportunity to become involved in movements that young people care about.

Sam has been involved in First Stage Children's Theatre Group for many years, and is currently acting in its production of Shakespeare's "As You Like It." Sam loves entertaining, and comedy in particular, which he finds is an incredible gift in its ability to spread joy simply from a silly face, a play on words, or an amusing story.

After high school, Sam would really like to work in the entertainment field, either in voice acting, acting, movies, or stand-up comedy, though he worries that it's too risky. Sam shares his Dad's advice, "As long as I'm happy, I'm healthy, and I'm making the world a better place, I'm on the right path."

Sam's take on First Church: "It's an amazing place that has a place for everyone, and I think that everyone should at least explore it. If you love to worship in any way, song or prayer, you can go to our service. If you want to explore your religious identity, other religions and discover your faith, you can get to RE. If you want to learn about sexuality, identity, and other lifelong knowledge you need to survive and thrive, you can go to OWL class. If you want to join liberal movements, there's youth group for the youth or other liberal groups for adults. There is so much opportunity at First Church and it's really a beautiful place."



GETTING TOGETHER

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 and third Wednesdays
of the month
6:30-8:00 p.m.

No matter what your level of interest or practice in Buddhism, you are invited to check out our Gathering Waters Sangha. After a brief check-in, we discuss a book related to Buddhism for an hour, then do a 15-minute group meditation, and finally, socialize for a bit. The book we just started at our last meeting is Norman Fischer's *Training in Compassion*. 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,

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.

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.

SWANS next lunch is April 7 at Taylor's Restaurant at St. John's on the Lake (1800 N Prospect Ave.) You're invited if you believe Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social and want to join us. We'd love to have you, especially if you've never come before. Meet at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday in the hallway after church to carpool. Reservations are required. Call Barbara Kloman.

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 Tuesday 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. For more information, contact Nancy Pajewski.

On Tuesday, April 9, we will talk about *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* by Biblical Scholar Bart Ehrman.

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. For more information, contact Erik Islo or Angi Krueger at uuufda@gmail.com.

Join UUUFDA at the Sherman Phoenix at 12:30 p.m. on April 7. Sherman Phoenix is a community space in the Sherman Park Neighborhood that is seeking to be a model for healing in Milwaukee by generating positive economic and social returns in communities of color. Check it out here: www.shermanphoenix.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.



APRIL 21

"Wholeness is Not Binary"

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kari Gunderson, Worship Associate

Sometimes our brains work in zeros and ones: I am whole, or I am not whole; this experience is good, or this experience is bad; I am male or I am female. But the truth is sometimes more complicated than that and involves a journey through unknown territory. Join us on this Easter Sunday where we complicate binaries along with the most complicated binary story in our culture: I was dead, and now I am risen.

APRIL 28

"Finding Wholeness in Nature"

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Jack Forbes Wilson, Music Director

Natalie Quinton, Worship Associate

Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator

Earth Day Sunday

We are interconnected to all beings through air and sun, water and earth. We have known this for most of the generations of human experience. Urban life and its typical disconnection from nature is comparatively recent. This Earth Day Sunday, we will explore the benefits of finding wholeness in nature and our responsibility to preserve and maintain access to green spaces, both for our health and the wholeness of all beings.

Share the Plate

by Dawn Blackmore

The River Revitalization Foundation (RRF) is our April Share the Plate recipient. Serving Southeastern Wisconsin since 1994, RRF's mission is to establish an urban parkway for public access, walkways, recreation and education along the borders of the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic Rivers, to use the rivers to revitalize surrounding neighborhoods and to improve water quality.

RRF is very unique as Wisconsin's only urban rivers land trust. A land trust protects land and water resources for public benefit. RRF works to purchase land, acquire easements, seek land donations and manages public lands. Staff and volunteers work to improve Milwaukee's urban rivers through removal of invasive species, building trails, protecting plants, trees, and wildlife and improving water quality. RRF partners with the groups: Fostering Our Riparian Biodiversity, UWM's Center for Volunteerism and Student Leadership, Cream City Conservation and Consulting, AmeriCorps and Earn and Learn. For more information about the River Revitalization Foundation and to learn more about how you can volunteer, please visit their website at www.wisconsinrivers.org/watersheds/river-revitalization-foundation.

Cash collected in the plate will be shared 50/50 between the River Revitalization Foundation and First Church. To donate only to RRF, please write a check directly to "River Revitalization Foundation" and we will mail it for you. Parents and guardians, please talk with your children how even small donations help.

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SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

April 7

"Hunger Task Force: Free & Local"

Presenter: Maureen Fitzgerald, Director of Advocacy

Hunger Task Force is a private, nonprofit organization that works to end hunger today and prevent hunger tomorrow. Food provided is free of charge, through a network of local meal programs, food pantries, and homeless shelters. Currently 43% of Milwaukee's children and 29% of all Milwaukee residents live in poverty. Every month, partner food pantries serve 36,000 people, and partner soup kitchens/homeless shelters dish up more than 55,000 hot meals. Hunger Task Force believes that every person has the right to adequate food obtained with dignity. Maureen Fitzgerald's work focuses on access, participation, and program quality of the federal nutrition programs. Host: Ann Batiza.

April 14

"Frustrated with the Political Process? Try Socially Responsible Investing with Shareholder Activism"

Presenter: Christopher Cox, Assoc. Director,
Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition
for Responsible Investment

Democratic engagement is more important than ever, but what can we do in this era of political division, Congressional gridlock, and ever-changing regulations from one administration to the next? Have you considered socially responsible investing? For five decades, groups of socially

conscious investors have worked for and won corporate-level change. At the corporate level, decisions are made every day that affect climate change, sustainability, economic justice, worker/consumer safety, and public health. Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investment is a coalition of faith and values-driven institutional investors who view the management of their investments as a powerful catalyst for social change. Host: Terry Wiggins.

April 21

Easter Sunday. No Forum.

April 28

"Milwaukee Farmers Union: New Approach To Eating Local"

Presenter: Janice Christensen, Lifelong Farmer,
Member of Milwaukee Farmers Union

Local? Organic? Sustainable? Today, there are new opportunities for you to get food grown right here in the city by urban farmers. Learn about the Milwaukee Farmers Union and its revolutionary approach to delivering food on a "hyper-local" level! During the 2018 season, the Milwaukee Farmers Union delivered more than 5,000 pounds of food grown in Milwaukee to groups and individuals. Raised on a potato farm in central Wisconsin, presenter Janice Christensen is currently farming a city lot in the Riverwest neighborhood of Milwaukee. Host: Jo Ann Bachar.

