



THE CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.

August 2019

Dena's Digressions

by the Rev. Dena McPhetres

I believe that honesty is the first step toward living a life of integrity. To align one's actions with one's words is a common goal of those in liberal faith communities. We respect people who have integrity. It takes work to get there, however. It requires reflection, practice, and returning to self-examen again and again. Being honest with ourselves is the place to start.

The word "examen" may be familiar to those who are former Catholics. It means "formal examination of the soul or conscience, usually made daily by Jesuits and other Roman Catholics." The word comes from the Latin "exigere," to weigh accurately.

Reflective living involves asking ourselves how we are being and how we are doing—how close did we come today to being our best selves? How close did we come to aligning what we believe inside with how we act outside? True answers require being honest with ourselves. And trying again the next day.

Margaret Silf's book "Inner Compass: An Invitation to Ignatian Spirituality" orients the reader to a process of self-reflection, honesty, and integrity. She suggests we think of our life as three concentric circles. "The center of the circles asks, Who Am I? This is the center of my being where I am who I truly am. The next circle asks, How Am I? The areas of my life where I make personal choices and exercise some control. The outermost circle asks, Where Am I? The givenness of the facts and circumstances of my life, the things I cannot change."

("Dena's Digressions" continued on page 2)

SUMMER SERVICES & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 10:00 A.M.

AUGUST 4

"Many Kinds of Honesty"

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director
Natalie Quinton, Worship Associate

Honesty means telling the truth. Or does it? There are usually many sides to the same story, many truths to be considered. There are many kinds of honesty, too. Brutally honest, gently honest, and nuances in between. Honesty can be used to harm or to heal. Perhaps truth is not the only measure. In relationships and in community, fear of being held accountable can deter people from being honest. Before speaking our truth, we might ask with compassion for self and others: "is it true, is it kind, is it necessary?"

AUGUST 11

"Being Honest with Self and Others"

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Dan Dance, Guest Musician
Javier Dorantes, Worship Associate

Choreographer Martha Graham said, "the body never lies." I wonder, how is your body dealing with your lies—the ones you tell yourself and the ones you tell others? Honesty will always entail a risk, yet so does deception. Drawing from Harvard Negotiation Project authors Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen, and their books "Difficult Conversations" and "Thanks for the Feedback," we'll explore how honesty works in the community.

(Continued on page 7)

AUGUST THEME

What does it mean to be a people of

Honesty?

Her recommendation is to start with the outermost circle because it is the easiest to notice, then move inward finding our own honest answers to the questions. Practicing this over time can bring us into greater alignment with our beliefs and values, and make us into a person and a people of honest integrity. Silf claims that this process can help us "move from being a person to whom things happen, through the realization that we can influence what happens, to the acceptance of personal responsibility for being an event who happens to others."

We might think we already know this and do this, but I wonder if we do. If I'm being honest, I'm sure there is more I can learn through traveling through these concentric circles of reflection. Maybe you can, too?

Yours,
Dena

August's Theme: Honesty

by Mark Bishop
Congregation President 2019-20

This month's theme of Honesty caused me to reflect on two recent statements coming from seemingly disparate sources: Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray, UUA President, and Megan Rapinoe, Co-captain of the World Champion United States Women's National Soccer Team.

Statement #1 from Rev. Frederick-Gray at this year's General Assembly where the theme was "The Power of We":

"In these difficult and dangerous times, we see people doubling down on a deadly status quo rather than choosing to be bold, cooperative and innovative to meet the challenges before us. And this is heartbreaking—because it is exactly in times like these when we need audacious leaders and communities that are willing to take risks, to show a new way forward—one that is life-giving, life-affirming, and justice-centered.

"To do this, we need each other, and we need to invest more fully and generously in the power and impact of our congregations and our larger Association. A future of increasingly isolated congregations just will not cut it. We need one another to be the religion and the people we are called to be in this time—a multiracial, multicultural, multigender, multi-generational future of Unitarian Universalism. We can't turn back now.

"Our voice, our values, our ability to show up, these matter right now. And they are needed. There is more possibility

ahead for our world and our humanity, but we need activists for love and organizers for justice and democracy.

"We are just 16 months out from perhaps the most critical election in our lifetimes. One that will have real and immediate consequences for democracy, climate justice, for the lives of people of color and refugees, for women's autonomy and freedom.

"And so—I want to take these themes of action, risk, courage, and mission and propose to you that we UU the Vote!

"Let us make our congregations into voter protection, voter registration, civic engagement, and mobilization centers. Let us show the difference that the power of Unitarian Universalism can make. We already have a reputation as the people who show up—let's build the reputation that we are a people that show up AND get others to show up.

"We have a choice about who we will be. Will we choose doubt, fear, and moderation—or will we choose mission, courage, generosity, and boldness? I know what I will choose!"

Statement #2 from Rapinoe at a celebration of the Team's World Cup championship:

"This is my charge to everyone. We have to be better. We have to love more, hate less. We got to listen more and talk less. We got to know this is everybody's responsibility, every single person here. Every single person who is not here. Every single person who doesn't want to be here. Every single person who agrees and doesn't agree. It is our responsibility to make this world a better place."

("August's Theme: Honesty" continued on page 6)

In Memoriam

Russell Monroe Sherman

April 28, 1942 ~ July 10, 2019

Russ Sherman died peacefully on Wednesday, July 10, 2019, at 10:02 p.m. with his wife Dot at his side. Russ died from pneumonia after a long journey with Parkinson's. He was 77 years old and a member of First Church for 29 years. A Candle of Life was lit in Russ's honor at Sunday Service on July 14.

A Memorial Service and Celebration of Life will be held at the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee on Saturday, August 17, at 2:00 p.m., with a reception in the Leenhouts Common Room immediately following the service. The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom will be officiating.

Donations in memory of Russ may go to Common Ground or the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee.



2019/2020 Theme Circles - Registration Begins

by the Rev. Dena McPhetres

What is a Theme Circle? Theme circles are monthly small groups that deepen and support the spiritual journeys of participants in community with each other and in connection with the church's monthly worship themes.

Is this a sermon discussion group? No, the goal is not to explore the sermons in more depth, but to explore the monthly themes in more depth. Sunday services enrich the experience of the theme, but are not the focus of Theme Circles.

What is the focus of Theme Circles? Connection to self, others, and that which is larger than ourselves through engaging reflective questions, short readings, spiritual exercises and sharing our experience in a space of trust.

What do we mean by spiritual exercise? Spiritual exercise goes beyond the question "What do you think?" and invites us into the deeper question: "Where are you willing to let your faith take you?" The goal is to get us out of our heads and into our lives. This is not to say we leave thinking behind. Instead, the aim of the spiritual exercises is to challenge our tendency to use "objective analysis" as an escape. By pushing us to engage and talk about "what is really going on in our lives," we find ourselves challenged not just to think differently, but also to live differently.

Who can participate in a Theme Circle? Theme Circles are open to First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee members, pledging friends and regular guests who register during the annual fall registration period.

What is expected of Theme Circle members? Each month, members engage in pre-reading and contemplation exercises based on that month's worship theme. Materials are sent in advance for participants to delve into whatever level works for them.

Because Theme Circles only meet once a month and focus on spiritual exploration within community, we expect participants to make every effort to attend all meetings. If you already know you will miss more than two meetings, please wait to register until next year.

What do Theme Circle meetings look like? Here is a sample format:

- Centering (Opening words, chalice lighting, followed by a moment of silent reflection)
- Brief Check-In – around 15-20 minutes
- Spiritual Exercises – around 40 minutes (Members share which spiritual exercises they chose and how it went)
- Engaging the Questions – around 40 minutes (Members practice deep listening as they share their experience 'living the questions' related to the month's theme)
- Check-Out – around 10 minutes
- Closing Words

How often do Theme Circles meet? Theme Circles meet once a month for two hours during the third week of the month from October to June. Circles include up to eight participants guided by a trained facilitator.

When do Theme Circles meet? Registration begins August 23, and the registration deadline is September 29. You may select which meeting time works best for you.

Third Mondays, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Third Mondays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Third Tuesdays, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Third Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Third Wednesdays, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Third Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Third Thursdays, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Third Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Memorial Gifts Received

The Church has gratefully received memorial gifts from the following people in memory of **Carla Ernst**: Mark & Jo Ann Bishop, Kathy Collisson, David & Jane Erickson, Jerry Fredrickson & Jill Erickson, William Hammons, Anne Hefter & Denise Cawley, Beverly Katter, Colette Kocour, Tom LeBel & Michelle Naples, Janet & Marlowe Nortrom, Rosalee Patrick, Katy Phillips, Kathy Rivera & Sally Lewis, Deb & Ken Solis, Nancy & Dick Spransy, Susan Thaney, Lynn Tolcott, Melinda & Kit Vernon.

The Church has gratefully received memorial gifts from the following people in memory of **Jan Gottschalk**: Andy & Patty Agacki, Bill Frink, and Janet & Marlowe Nortrom.

How do I sign up? Sign up will begin on August 23. Visit the uumilwaukee.org website under "Get Involved" to find the Theme Circle registration form.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

“Early Bird” RE Registration Discount Available Now

by Cami Thomas
Religious Education Coordinator

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 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 in the Classrooms and Support the RE Program this Year

The RE program cannot function without your help. We encourage you to sign up as soon as possible as this helps us make our plans for the church year. We currently have the following openings:

9:00–10:15 a.m. Teaching positions available:		11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m. Teaching positions available:	
Class	No. teachers needed	Class	No. teachers needed
1-2 Grade	3	1-2 Grade	4
3-4 Grade	3	3-4 Grade	3
5-7 Grade	3	5-7 Grade	3
	No. assistants needed		No. assistants needed
Nursery	3	Nursery	2
K4-K5	3	K4-K5	3
1-2 Grade	2	1-2 Grade	3
Floater	3	Floater	2

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, 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! The RE Program could not happen without your help!

Come Welcome our new Director of Religious Education (DRE)!

by Kristine Hansen
DRE Search Team

After service on Sunday, August 4, join members of the DRE Search Team in the Leenhouts Commons Room to welcome our new Director of Religious Education, Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, with summer-appropriate, kid-friendly snacks. Kimberlee's enthusiasm for working with youth and young adults, plus her passion for educating congregations on anti-racism actions, is supported by 18 years of experience working in UU Religious Education. You may recognize her from the “Blessed at PrideFest” interfaith blessing booth, which Kimberlee set up in 2017.



A recent graduate of Meadville Lombard Theological School, Wisconsin native Tomczak Carlson most recently served as UU West's intern minister. Her deep UU background—as a program director working with families at Unitarian Universalist Church in Rockford, Illinois, as well as within YRUU—also extends to creativity as she's a former art teacher in Whitewater. We can't wait to see what projects, lessons, and activities she brings to our RE program!

Volunteer Orientation Sunday, August 18

by Lillian Schley
RE Administrative Assistant

Mark your calendar for the Religious Education Volunteer Orientation. This is a great opportunity for our RE family to meet our new DRE Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson! All RE volunteers must attend our volunteer orientation on August 18 from 12:00–3:00 p.m.

During this orientation we review all of our safety protocols, learn about classroom management, and prepare to have a purposeful and fun year in RE.

Please RSVP by emailing our REAA Lillian Schley at re.admin@uumilwaukee.org.



All About Youth

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

YRUU Youth Group Happenings in August

- The YRUU youth group will meet on Sunday, August 25, in the Reeb Room at 10:00 a.m. for a Ghost and the Spirit World discussion led by Gus Pointer-Mace.
- Adult Our Whole Lives (OWL), Eighth Grade OWL, and YRUU advisor team planning meetings shall all take place in August with Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator.

A Youth Group Mission Trip Advisor is Needed or The 2020 Trip May Be Cancelled!

The Youth Steering Committee (YSC) is seeking at least two additional volunteers to join our youth advisor team for the late July 2020 Habitat for Humanity trip to Battle Creek, Michigan. The ideal candidate will be well organized, outgoing, comfortable with both youth and adults, and able to commit to an annual trip through 2022. Experience in construction is not a requirement, but a willingness to learn and jump in is! Advisors are expected to participate in some activities prior to the trip in order to get to know the youth. If we do not receive two more advisors for 2020, we will have to cancel our trip for the first time in 15 years! For additional information and a volunteer application, contact Deb Solis at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org. The application deadline is September 30, 2019!

Eighth Grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) to be Offered Next Year!

Parents of eighth-graders who were unable to attend the parent orientation session in May 2019 MUST attend the Sunday, August 11, 2019 parent orientation from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. in the Young Room.

If you are a member of First Church, and the parent or guardian of a child in Eighth grade this Fall, please consider the 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, parents MUST attend this session—if not able to attend the session offered last spring. To RSVP, contact Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org or 273-5257 ext. 209. Eighth grade OWL classes will take place on Sunday mornings from 11:00 a.m. to 12:45 a.m. during September-May months.

A Youth Group Boston Heritage Trip Advisor is Needed

The Youth Steering Committee (YSC) is seeking at least one additional volunteer, over the age of 25, to join our advisor team for the June 8-13, 2020 scheduled Boston Heritage Trip to Boston, Massachusetts. This trip is made possible through the generous support of the Krug Bequest.

Our group will tour the UUA headquarters in Boston, experience a historic walking tour, which features famous sites of Unitarian Universalist history, and explore the city of Boston and the rich connection we have to our faith there. A trip to Boston can help make our liberal heritage a real part of the lives of our youth.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about this trip, please contact Youth Program Coordinator Deb Solis at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org or 273-5257 ext. 209.

Grade K-1 Our Whole Lives (OWL) Coming to First Church This Fall

We will be offering the K-1 Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum for grades K-1 this fall at First Church with facilitators Crysta Jarczynski, Bruce Wiggins, and Katie Maedke-Hall.

OWL is a positive, comprehensive, and age-appropriate educational program that promotes sexual health, and is informed by the guidelines of the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). This is an eight-session curriculum for 5-7 year old children and is based on the philosophy that parents and religious communities form a meaningful partnership for age-appropriate, positive, and responsible sexuality education. Sexuality is a lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes and values about identity and relationships, intimacy, and health.

Our parent informational meeting happens on Sunday, September 22, from 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Our MANDATORY parent/child orientation meeting happens on Sunday, October 6, from 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Our eight-week K-1 OWL class will meet on Sundays, October 13-December 8, from 9:00-10:00 a.m. in the Young Room. (There will be NO class on November 24.)

For more information, please contact Youth Program Coordinator Deb Solis at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org or 273-5257 ext. 209.



The Most Important Thing You Can Do as an Individual

by Bruce Wiggins and Tree Moore
Earth Justice Ministry Co-Chairs

What is the most important thing you can do as an individual to make a difference in the climate crisis? The one thing you can do is stop being an individual. You have to join and work with others.*

Our Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) helps you join and work with others to address climate change, environmental degradation and pollution, and to promote environmental justice.

Building on programs and activities of the past year, EJM will start our new church year in September with enthusiasm and commitment to address growing concerns about our planet and our way of life. We will undertake programs for which there are interest and energy in the congregation. As of now, we are thinking about the following activities:

September 20 Global Climate Strike

We will work with others to make this effort effective locally.

Sustainable Businesses

We'll expand and distribute widely the directory of sustainable businesses completed last year.

Go Plastic-free

Plastic is showing up in our blood and our oceans, killing birds and fish. With some research, we can reduce the plastic used in our church and our homes.

Lead Filters

With the Interfaith Earth Network, purchase and distribute filters (funded with Krug Bequest dollars) to needy families in Milwaukee.

Composting

Let's compost to improve soil and keep organics out of landfills.

Solar Panels

We want to investigate installing more panels on our church.

Bee in Community

Help bees and learn about these amazing threatened creatures that make life on our planet possible.

Will you join us? We welcome everyone's ideas, passions, and energy. Sign up for our Google group at the Social Justice Table on Sundays or talk with one of us or other EJM members.

* This was a message preached by Rev. Lindi Ramsden at General Assembly this year.

Learn about Unitarian Universalist History This Fall

by Nancy Pajewski
UU+ Study Group Chair

The UU+ Study Group will show the six-part video series "Long Strange Trip," which presents the fascinating history of our denomination. The series was produced by Ron Cordes, a UU since the late 1970s, who turned to history after a career in electrical engineering and software development. Cordes declared, "I want people in the pews to understand we have as broad and deep and interesting a history as any other religion." The videos were filmed at North American and European locations of historical significance to our faith. Each video is one hour long and will be followed by a half-hour discussion.

The series will be located at First Church on Tuesday evenings. The dates and topics are:

- September 24 — Roots of liberal religious thought before the Reformation
- October 8 — Spread of Unitarianism in Europe
- October 22 — Three strands of Unitarianism in the US
- November 5 — Development of Universalism
- November 19 — Evolution toward humanism and social justice
- December 10 — Why and how Unitarianism and Universalism merged

More information will be available in the September *Chanticleer*, on the website later this summer, or by contacting Nancy Pajewski. No registration is needed

(continued from page 2)

"August's Theme: Honesty"

Both statements are brutally honest and come with the conviction of speaking the truth. Only when we are honest with ourselves can we help affect the change that is so critically needed right now. We face a number of challenges and opportunities as a nation, as a city, and as a congregation. Let's be brutally honest with ourselves, recognize that status quo and complacency will not enable change, and challenge each other to work towards achieving our Ends and in making this world a better place. Let's leverage the Power of We.



AUGUST 18

"A God as Big as Lake Superior, Revisited"

The Rev. David Kraemer

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Bob Balderson, Worship Associate

Inspired by the Great Lakes, this service will outline the evolution of Rev. Kraemer's naturalistic, theological humanism.

The Rev. David Kraemer serves the United Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Waukesha. He previously served for two years as interim minister in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and as an intern in Rockford, Illinois. He is a graduate of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and was ordained in 2015 at his then-home church in Rochester, Minnesota. He is a former journalist, working as a reporter and editor at newspapers in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. He has been an avid canoeist and kayaker, but admits he doesn't find the time to paddle as much as he used to.

AUGUST 25

"How to Live: Aristotle and the Buddha in Agreement"

Robert Szymanski, Member

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Mark Richards, Worship Associate

Aristotelian and Buddhist ethics can enhance each other so that the outcome can be behaviors conducive of a more flourishing and more fulfilled life. Having a clearer sense of the philosophical underpinnings of one's moral/ethical system and how those underpinnings connect with the UU principles can strengthen and vivify our lives. Their systems, Aristotle's and the Buddha's, are in many ways complementary; but they also differ in some interesting and fundamental ways. These understandings can be both enlightening and practicable.

Robert Szymanski has been a member of First Church for 26 years and has served in numerous roles: the Board, Religious Education, Pastoral Care, Chalice Circles, Worship Associate, and previous Pulpit Guest. His other interests include running, gardening, reading, volunteering at Literacy Services of Wisconsin, cooking, working on his 110-year-old home in Riverwest, and humor; although the latter is too often not adequately appreciated by his men's group.

SEPTEMBER 1

"Rebellion: An Act of Spirituality and Love"

Ehlona Walker, Member

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Beth Monhollen, Worship Associate

The sacred idea of rebellion begins in our hearts, in the soles of our feet, and the centers of our palms. This work is hard, but it is necessary. In the space of beloved community, we will explore how we can best hold rebellion in our hearts and minds to combat today's modern society and the forces of hate.

Ehlona Walker is a senior at Brown Deer High and uses they/them pronouns. They enjoy being in musicals at school as well as slam poetry, German Honor Society, being the school's National Honor Society secretary, mentoring kids at the local elementary school, and traveling to be with other UU youth. After their senior year, they hope to double major in elementary education and American Sign Language Inter-

HOW TO REACH US

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Administrative offices are staffed this summer Monday through Thursday, 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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The Rev. Dena McPhetres

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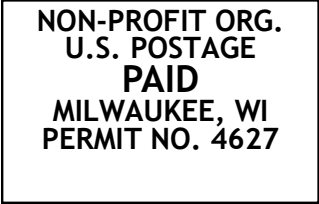
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Vice President:	Mark Bender
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Chris Aiken, Jane Cliff, Jeremy Koenen,
Mark Miller, Jane Peterson, Melinda Vernon





First Church Summer Building Hours (ends August 2, 2019)

by Director of Administration Jean Johnson

As activity at the church winds down in the summer, so does staffing! Some of the staff members work reduced hours and many take their vacations during these months. Please plan your evening and weekend meetings according to the following schedule.

Evening & Weekend Summer Schedule

Monday	4:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Tuesday	4:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Wednesday	4:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Thursday	closed
Friday	closed
Saturday	10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Daytime

Note that the office is closed on Fridays. Although the office is covered Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., staff is reduced and we could be away on an errand. Please call the office before stopping by to be certain someone will be in. Thanks!

