



THE

CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.

November 2019

Words on the Wind

by The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Permaculture techniques include moving through the world with wide, loose attention to be aware of as much as possible. The method opens the mind to a wider experience of the senses: hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and feeling more. When I broadened my attention this way, I heard birds cry, and the sound of my own footfalls. I smelled earth, pine needles, and sweetgrass. I saw the ridge of the trees and movement at the edge of my vision. I tasted water in the air and felt the movement of the wind against my skin.

This contrasts with a state of deep attention, zeroing in on a particular piece of the world. When I narrowed my attention, I noticed individual things with more depth: a clover, a dew-drop, a spider web.

How do you balance wide attention with deep attention in your own life? How do you manage the precious resource of your attention? In our congregation, we are learning to widen our attention to include more people, as well as deepen our attention to our values. It is a challenging balance in an individual life, let alone in a large community. I hope we can see this work as practice, rather than perfection, learning rather than mastery, and engage in it with humility and compassion.

With love,
Jennifer

SUNDAY SERVICE & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TWO SERVICES at 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

NOVEMBER 3

“Attention Is Our Most Valuable Currency”

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Amy Wilbourne, Worship Associate

Pastoral Care Recognition Sunday

Paying attention implies a transaction, a currency. When we pay attention, there is a current of energy moving between us. Paying attention is a way of investing in what we value. We pay attention to what we need or who needs us. Some would say that what we pay attention to is who we are. Join us as we honor and recognize those members involved in our pastoral care ministry this Sunday, a priceless way of paying attention that helps to heal lives.

NOVEMBER 10

“The Tension in Attention”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Mark Richards, Worship Associate

When we pay attention to one thing, we necessarily ignore a lot of others. How do we balance a wider, more panoramic view with zeroing in on something important? The Latin root of attention literally means “to stretch towards.” Come join us for this service that explores making space for the new information that comes as a result of a widening perspective, and how to balance the panorama with stretching towards new things.

(Sunday Services continued on page 15)

MONTHLY THEME

What does it mean to be a people of

ATTENTION?

Dena's Digressions

by The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Associate Minister

Barbara Brown Taylor wrote in her book, *An Altar in the World*, "Paying attention requires no equipment, no special clothes, no greens fees or personal trainers. You do not even have to be in particularly good shape. All you need is a body on this earth, willing to notice where it is."

Where is your body today and what do you notice? I notice the golden October sun streaming through my window and a cat cleaning her satiny fur in the sunshine. The neighbors' trees are dropping their leaves for me to rake onto my flower beds. The smell of decomposing leaves rises while I'm raking and I fall in love with the world again. I notice the purple aster, the red-orange nasturtiums, the maroon chrysanthemum. I see a female goldfinch pecking on the last of the chard in my garden. I know the earthworms move in the moist soil. And the slugs vow to fight me for my vegetables again next year—I can hear them plotting their strategy!

It comforts me to recall that I don't have to be in good shape or even feel cheerful to pay attention to where I am and behold what surrounds me. All I need is to come back into my body on this earth, open my senses. Hearing bird-song and traffic. Seeing beautiful blue sky out the window and the dirty dishes in the sink. Touching the warm hand of a loved one or the frost on a pumpkin. Smelling the rosemary and sage as I toss it into the soup. Tasting tart cranberry or a bitter cup of green tea. Paying attention brings me into the present moment, connecting me to what is real, ever-changing and everlasting. Because we can always bring our attention back, however far it may wander.

When the spare brown November trees dominate our view in the coming weeks, may we remember that we paid attention to the glorious colors as they fell. We rejoiced. We were grateful. And we know that they will come again.

Yours,
Dena

Calendar of Events

Event listing In this edition of the *Chanticleer*.

Events

Nov. 6 - *The Trans List*, Page 7
Nov. 5, 19 - UU History Video Series, Page 7
Nov. 7-Dec. 12 - Miss. Julie's Music Fun, Page 12
Nov. 8 - Ocean of Devotion Gong Meditation, Page 12
Nov. 11 & 17 - UU Elevator Speech, Page 6
Nov. 17 - Queer & Trans Inclusion Workshop, Page 6
Nov. 12- Song Circle with Julie Thompson, Page 12

November 2019

Thank You

For the Anniversary Celebration!

by The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Associate Minister

A minister is only as good as the people they serve and the strength of the love in their relationship. I am grateful for both the strength and the love in our relationship.

We have gone through a lot together over the last ten years. We have worked and played together; laughed and cried together; we struggled and celebrated together. We have faced an uncertain future and we have been changed. And we will continue to be changed through our love and commitment to this beloved congregation.

I still remember the moment when I knew I had found my people, after preaching here the first Sunday of Candidate Week in late April 2009. I am still in awe at how the Spirit of Life and Love works its mysterious ways with us, bringing us to where we need to be, where we can become our true selves, and make a bit of a difference for good in the world.

The last ten years have gone by more swiftly than any other decade in my life. I look forward to the next leg of the journey with you. I feel deeply grateful and thoroughly blessed. Thank you for the lovely, poignant and fun celebration on Sunday, October 20. Thank you for the privilege of ministry here, for the honor of being yours.

Theme: Attention

by Mark Bishop,
Congregation President

With this month's theme, I thought it helpful to update everyone on First Church's Policy Governance journey and the Board's current focus. The attention of the Board continues to be on building out the metrics and monitoring process needed to continuously assess the church's progress towards our Ends as well as compliance with our recently adopted Board Policies.

As with anything new, there is a learning curve that the Board is adapting to. We have worked through our first few months of monitoring activities and continue to engage with Rev. Jennifer and staff on their interpretation of the policies and how to effectively measure progress. This requires open dialogue, collaboration, and most importantly, full attention to our values, mission, and desired ends. I am happy to report that the Board's work is progressing nicely thanks to the strong leadership of Rev. Jennifer, and the engagement of the staff and the various staff-led teams.

There still is a great deal of work in front of us, and I feel fortunate that we have a talented group of individuals on the Board and as staff members giving the needed attention to these efforts. Please join me in thanking them for all that they do.



Attentiveness to Other's Stories and Our Own

by Lynne Jacoby
Membership Development Coordinator

Eight years ago my niece was trying to wrap her head around a transgendered classmate's issues with her liberal D.C. area high school. This niece had practically been born understanding that her lesbian aunts should have the same right as anyone to marry, but I could tell some of her classmates demands felt "over the top" to her and I had to tell her that I did not "get it" either, completely.

But maybe I could relate some, remembering when my parents gave me a beautiful, expensive, delicate, and very feminine watch in high school. I did not intellectually understand my sexual identity yet, nor, I guess, my gender identity (that I would never be that femme), but I sure knew I'd never wear that watch in a million years. I felt guilty and very lonely. Guilty about my lack of appreciation, lonely that two of the people who cared about me most, did not see who I was, at all. Sometimes, I told my niece, I try to imagine what it would feel like to live in a world where no one saw who I was.

It's a small story, and only in retrospect did I realize how perfect it was (of course my niece, at 15, absolutely related to parents not seeing her reality), but it is also the memory I go to still when I notice myself resisting other's realities because "I don't get it."

In small groups at First Church the kind of listening we try and practice is about holding space for other's realities. Shutting down our cultural need to fix or debate, and open space in our minds and hearts for simple acceptance of each other's truth, the best we can. The Anti-Racism Team has also taken this tack in approaching our mission. One of the first questions we were asked to reflect on and share, was why it was important to us to do this work.

I told how my mom, in hospice care and squarely facing her own mortality, apologized to me for not being aware of my sexuality sooner, for not being able to support me in that struggle. I did not listen attentively to my mom's truth though, and jumped immediately to protect her. I waved away all her culpability dismissively and blamed society of the eighties. "How could you have known!" I protested.

The story, originally about wanting to avoid my mom's regret of unintentional harm, has expanded for me. Now it is also about how my reflexive dismissal denied her truth, and maybe also of the loss of recognition and forgiveness I could have offered, if my attention had been better.

I will be joining First Church's Beloved Conversation this coming January to reflect and hold space for other's stories and my own. How some of my cultural reflexes and perceptions may be harming others, including those whom I would want to protect most.

Participate in Beloved Conversations

by the Anti-Racism Team

The Beloved Conversations curriculum is a carefully planned process that comes out of the expertise from decades of experience of the best practices and lessons learned in this work. First Church's Anti-Racism Team has chosen Beloved Conversations as the framework for our congregation to have reasonable conversations about race while grounded in love. Having honest conversations about race is difficult, so the Anti-Racism Team has worked hard to choose to use a well-tested framework carefully designed to help us do it well.

Beloved Conversations is designed to meet our people where they are: beginning from our members' experiences and stories. It will help members listen to and learn from one another, rather than beginning from conflict, division, or polarization. Beloved Conversations invites rich and deep conversation, and a whole range of perspectives, while staying grounded in genuine respect for one another. In anti-racism work, we choose to begin in love, journey in relationship, and end in again love..

The Beloved Conversations begins with the January 16-17 opening retreat. Afterwards, participants will continue to meet in small groups for eight more sessions held between February and May. Space in the program is limited, so we invite you to apply early at: bit.ly/UUBelovedConversations. The last day you can apply to participate in Beloved Conversations is December 1, 2019.



Is a QCD For Me?

by Mark Bishop,
Congregation President

As we look to the end of 2019, many of us start thinking about holidays, family gatherings, and year-end tax planning. I thought that I would share an idea that may be useful to many of our members, especially those approaching or over the age of 70½.

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a tax-efficient way to make charitable donations. It's a direct transfer from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a charity, such as First Church, and it's available only to IRA owners (and IRA beneficiaries) who are age 70½ or older. QCDs can be taken out of your traditional IRAs free of any federal income tax.

With the 2017 tax law changes, many of you who previously itemized deductions now find it advantageous to take the standard deduction instead. As a result, you no longer deduct your charitable contributions, but via a QCD, some can still make those contributions with pretax dollars, resulting in significant tax savings. Unlike typical charitable donations, you can't claim itemized deductions for QCDs. That's OK because the tax-free treatment of QCDs equates to a 100% deduction as you'll never be taxed on those amounts. And you don't have to worry about tax law restrictions that apply to itemized charitable write-offs. QCDs can effectively add to the standard deduction (or existing charitable deduction, if you are still itemizing) by allowing direct donations made from IRAs to be excluded from income, thus lowering adjusted gross income — and the tax bill.

A QCD is different from a required minimum distribution (RMD), which individuals must begin to take no later than the year they reach 70½. One could take their first RMD before reaching age 70½, but they would not be eligible to do a QCD until they attain this age.

The QCD limit is large, and QCDs can be done in excess of the RMD amount. Each IRA owner is permitted up to \$100,000 in QCDs annually.

As with all tax or financial planning issues, it is advisable to consult with your personal tax or accounting advisor as to how this may impact or benefit you. Happy planning!

Splinters from the Board

by Chris Aiken
Secretary, Board of Trustees

The Board met on September 24. This was the first Board meeting of the new church year so there was a full agenda. The first agenda item was our first monitoring review of Ends 4, 6, and 7.

If you need a refresher on the Ends, they are on the church website at www.uumilwaukee.org/ends-interpretations.

The first discussion was regarding End 4 (Generously give and receive support, connection, and care in times of joy and challenge). Progress on this End was demonstrated through written narratives from the staff, statistics on pastoral care and data regarding pledge income. The goal for the pledging is to increase the pledge base by 5% each year until operating income is above operating expenses.

End 6 (Open ourselves to wonder, making ourselves vulnerable and available to find meaning, inspiration, and transformation) is being monitored with the Congregational Survey and worship service attendance. End 6 will be in compliance when worship attendance increases and attendance is more consistent.

End 7 (Create communal experiences celebrating our interconnectedness) is being monitored with the Congregational Survey results and attendance data on church events. During the 2018 to 2019 church year, 745 events included 7,566 attendees.

As this was the first discussion around monitoring these Ends, some time was spent reviewing and agreeing on baselines for the measures going forward. At the end of the discussion, the Board accepted that the Senior Minister's report demonstrated progress on the Ends. The Board agreed that the Ends were being monitored well and were being given the correct degree of attention.

Rev. Jennifer provided a detailed interpretation of Board Policy 4.6.12. This policy states that "the Senior Minister shall not: Endanger the congregation's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder its accomplishment of the mission or its ability to accomplish its Ends." The interpretation included criteria that will be used by Rev. Jennifer to determine when taking a public position on behalf of the congregation. The key criteria for supporting an issue or coalition include broad congregational support anchored with alignment to our Ends, Mission, and Values. The Board supported Rev. Jennifer's interpretation of Board Policy 4.6.12.

The Board continued its discussion regarding a youth representative on the Board. Rev. Jennifer provided feedback from three congregations that have youth Board representation. In two out of the three congregations, the youth is a full voting member of

(Continued on page 5)



the Board rather than just an observer. This feedback will be used as the Board continues to evaluate adding a youth representative.

The Board will be hosting a Feast for Funds event on March 27. Please consider joining the Board of Trustees and fellow UUs for an evening of food, wine, and community.

Minutes of recent Board meetings are posted on the First Church bulletin board and the church website. Members of the Board of Trustees welcome your thoughts and concerns at any time. Our pictures are posted in the central corridor, and we wear yellow name tags. Contact information is also listed in the front of the Directory of Groups and on the last page of this *Chanticleer*.

The November Child Dedication Service

On November 24, a Dedication of Parents and Children will take place during both services. This simple ceremony is the Unitarian Universalism (UU) version of the traditional Christian “baptism” or “christening,” though the meanings we attach to it are significantly different.

The ceremony is a public declaration by the parents to dedicate themselves to faithfully nurture and support their children. The congregation recognizes your child’s original blessing, and we dedicate ourselves to nurturing your child and you. Because of the promises our congregation makes to the family during the ceremony, child dedications are available only to members of the church.

If you are interested in having your child dedicated on November 24, please pick up a dedication brochure from the pamphlet rack, call Shari Wright at 414 273-5257, or fill out the online form by Sunday, November 17, at uumilwaukee.org/child-dedication-form.

Interested in Membership at First Church?

Led by our ministers, staff, and lay leaders, the Journey to Membership 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.

The classes are a prerequisite to becoming 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, curious to learn more about us, or just want to explore with others a deeper understanding of covenantal community as we strive to practice it here at First Church.

Childcare is available for evening classes only. Cost for the series: \$15 (to cover meals). Register online at www.uumilwaukee.org/get-involved/become-a-member, sign up at the Member Services Table on any Sunday at church or contact Lynne Jacoby at 414.273.5257 or lynne.jacoby@uumilwaukee.org.

Sign up For One of These Series

Fall 2019 2-Part Series

Saturday Full Day

November 16, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. (lunch included)

Thursday Evening

November 21, 6:00-8:30 p.m. (dinner included)

Winter 2020 4-Part Series

Wednesday Evenings

January 15, 6:00-8:30 p.m. (dinner included)

January 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

January 29, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

February 5, 6:00-8:30 p.m. (dinner included)

Spring 2020 4-Part Series

Wednesday Evenings

April 8, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. (dinner included)

April 15, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

April 22, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

April 29, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. (dinner included)



UU Elevator Speech Class

Sundays, November 10 & 17
12:15-1:15 p.m.

Anticipate gathering with your extended family over Thanksgiving?

Wonder how to explain your religion?

Join us for UU Elevator Speech and be prepared!

This class guides participants to develop a short speech about Unitarian Universalism (UU). It is called an “elevator speech” because on an elevator ride when someone asks you “what is Unitarian Universalism?” you only have a short time to make a meaningful statement.

UU Elevator Speech helps us understand the commonalities we share as Unitarian Universalists, and how to better and more succinctly explain our faith.

The two-session class will meet Sundays, November 10 & 17 from 12:15-1:15 p.m. The session will be facilitated by Erik Islo and John Gielow. Childcare is available if requested by October 30.

Erik Islo joined First Church two years ago. He and his wife Angi coordinate the events for Unitarian Universalists Under Forty Doing Activities (UUUFDA) Group, where they sometimes wonder how to describe UUism.

John Gielow began attending First Church with his family in 1997. No one could concisely explain the UU faith, but he joined anyway since no one told him what to think and the community felt like home.

John and Erik are excited to work with you to create your own 2-3 minute UU elevator speech, just in time for the holidays!

Fee: \$10 Members/Pledging Friends; \$15 Non-members. If the fee is a barrier, please contact Rev. Dena McPhetres at dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org for a waiver.

Register by November 6 at the Religious Education (RE) Table during Coffee Hour on Sundays or online at www.bit.ly/UUElevatorSpeech.

Queer & Trans Inclusion and Culture Shift Workshop

Guest Speaker Alex Kapitan
Sunday, November 17
1:00-3:00 p.m.

First Church is proud to be a Welcoming Congregation and a haven for LGBTQ people. But as visibility for trans people and awareness of non-binary identities, in particular, has accelerated, the backlash has as well, and faith communities need additional support and training to keep pace with the times.

In this interactive and informative workshop, we'll expand our understanding of gender and sexuality, explore concrete ways to increase inclusion for queer and trans people, and talk about the radical culture shift that's required to live out our commitment as a Welcoming Congregation today.

There is no fee to attend, a light lunch will be served, and child-care is available if requested by November 10. Register by November 14 at www.bit.ly/UUInclusionWorkshop.

“Ze Is a Pronoun”?

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

“People whose gender is non-binary, whose sense of self is not exclusively female or male, use a variety of pronouns. Many non-binary folks use “they / them,” but others use a variety of other pronouns, such as “ze,” “xe,” “zir,” and “hir.” Our speaker on November 17, Zr. Alex Kapitan, uses “ze” and “per,” as in: “ze is a powerful speaker and you won’t want to miss per workshop, either.” “Ze” is pronounced with a long “ee” sound, so it rhymes with “we,” and “per” is short for “person.”

Many non-binary people also use prefixes such as Mx. (pronounced “mix”) and Zr. (pronounced “zee-ster”) instead of Ms. or Mr. Using a person’s correct pronouns is a vital way to honor and respect their inherent worth and dignity.

If you have questions about what a person’s pronouns mean, it is usually better to do your own research, rather than asking very personal questions of someone. You can find a glossary of terms at <http://www.juliaserano.com/terminology.html>.





The Trans List Moving Toward Gender Inclusion

by Shannon Widlansky

As a physician, I had learned about biodiversity in anatomy, genetics, and physiology, but I never learned about it in gender. That changed when we had a loved one who had the courage to tell us that they do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. We watched our loved one go from an uncertain, quiet, shy person, into a person who shined with happiness and confidence. Watching this transition has been one of the most beautiful things I have had the opportunity to observe.

My husband and I, as the physicians in the family, got to work at educating ourselves to help navigate the medical world. We got involved with the transgender community to learn more about advocacy and to become better allies. We realized that not only had we missed out on this education, but so many of our colleagues had too. We realized the power in this education was that it allowed people to begin to see the beauty of gender diversity in others and themselves. For many people, facts and education are not always enough to challenge their opinions. Sometimes it takes putting a human face on a concept to open minds.

I hope that you will join me on November 6 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at First Church to watch the one-hour documentary, *The Trans List*, and begin to put faces to the concept of gender diversity. The second hour will be a discussion in a safe environment to ask questions and explore your thoughts and feelings.

UU History Video Series Continues

by Nancy Pajewski
UU+ Study Group Co-chair

The UU+ Study Group's presentation of the six-part video series, *Long Strange Trip: A Journey Through Two Thousand Years of Unitarian Universalist History*, concludes with two dates in November and one in December.

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| November 5 | Development of Universalism |
| November 19 | Evolution toward humanism and social justice |
| December 10 | Why and how Unitarianism and Universalism merged |

The videos provide insights into our complicated denominational history and the inspiring figures who have led it.

We meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for an hour-long video followed by a half-hour discussion. All are welcome to attend one or more sessions. The videos will make sense even if you have not seen the earlier ones. No registration is required.

Memorial Gifts Received

The Church has gratefully received memorial gifts from the following people in memory of **Bob Teska**: Mark & Jo Ann Bishop, Kim & Louis Gloede, Annie Wegner Lefort & Ben Lefort, Dave & Judy Lehman, Marlowe & Janet Nortrom, Philip & Mary Reykdal.

Memorial gifts made to the church are usually in lieu of flowers being sent to a bereaved family or to a funeral home. It is a meaningful and tasteful way of acknowledging someone's death. The names of all contributors (withholding the amounts), along with the memorialized person's name, are recorded in our permanent Church Record Book.



Being an Agent of Change During the Season of Change

by Cesar Cornier
Social Justice Coordinator

As we approach this transition into fall, I always look forward to seeing the leaves turn bright crimson and orange before they shed off the trees. I am reminded of change all around me, and with this new opportunity here at First Church I am in a season of change. Autumn is a time where we see nature break down before us with shorter days and colder nights, yet we welcome it. We embrace fall for its unique transition and acknowledge the sacred pattern of growth, which often begins from starting over. I look forward to growing more internally, as well as with you all, in this community.

This past month I have been meeting with members of the Social Justice Council in learning more about what First Church has done to fight against injustices, and I am eager to work with such a dedicated team. I look forward to building with the congregation, and I am ready to serve the community by standing in solidarity against oppression. If you are interested in learning more about how First Church is involved with Social Justice, every Sunday after both services someone will be at the Social Justice Table with information on the current events and groups. We have DVDs available for people to rent as well as various sign up sheets for the social justice groups if you are interested in volunteering.

Autumn reminds us of how beautiful and vital change is, and I look forward to creating change with you all.



Circles of Support Training

by Paul Geenen

Circles of Support training for volunteers will be Saturday, November 9, from 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at Project Return's offices, 2821 N. Vel Phillips Avenue, Suite 202, Milwaukee, WI. Wendell Hruska, Executive Director of Project Return, Connor Williams, Economic Policy Analyst from Community Advocates, Calib Munb ÉL, Circle Keeper, and a representative from the Wisconsin Department of Corrections will be the presenters. There will be three break-out sessions to explore how we can help those who are in recovery from their incarceration experiences.

Circles of Support sessions are led by a peer support specialist and consist of six ex-offenders and six volunteers who have not experienced incarceration. The evening begins with a meal, followed by check-in and an open-ended question. Listening by the "outside" volunteers is a big part of their contributions. I learned at an abbreviated Circles of Support session that language skills of those who have been in prison are often deficient, and it is helpful for ex-offenders to speak with people in the general community to enhance their ability to interact with people in the workplace. Circles of Support is an initiative of First Church's Black Lives Matter ministry.

We hope to have eight First Church members attend this training. Attending the training does not mean that you are required to participate in a Circle of Support session. That decision can be made later, but you must attend the training to participate in future Circles of Support sessions.

We will be driving to Project Return's offices together as a way to express our solidarity. Please contact Paul Geenen about your interest in attending so we can make arrangements.



Planning our Caring Habits

by Juliet Hills
Earth Justice Ministry

Do you remember the people who helped you out when you were young, at school, in your first job, your first home? We frequently do things for each other, and it sometimes means we must change our plans or habits, especially in an emergency.

Earth is now in emergency need. Our contribution to the rescue effort might be quite doable if we plan our strategy.

Here are some ideas for your holiday gift to earth and all of us this year. Now is a good time to sit down and pick your gift. You might leave the house early to take the bus to church, or keep a fabric bag in your car (so you never need to use plastic bags), or make a major decision like changing to a smaller vehicle to get better gas mileage, or keep a cup in your car to refill at a bubbler or coffee shop.

Some additional gift ideas:

- Call your senator to act on climate change.
- Hang your laundry to dry, indoors or outdoors.
- Reduce your beef consumption (methane from cow burps is more destructive than CO2).
- Drive under 65 mph, and slow down instead of last-minute braking.
- Use a hot water bottle or cloth bag filled with rice (heated in the microwave) instead of an electric blanket.

We only give gifts to those who matter to us. You know how much this vulnerable planet means to you, your children, and your grandchildren. Earth needs us to pay attention, discard our "business as usual agenda," and wake up to our heroism, responsibilities, and the pleasure of knowing we make a difference because we make an effort.

Other ideas help. Please let Earth Justice Ministry folks know, so we can share them.

Thank you from The Guest House

by Betty Schroeder

First Church hosted dinner for the gentlemen of The Guest House on Saturday, October 19. Thank you to all the wonderful folks who donated food and/or time to make this meal a success. Volunteers included: Beth Monhollen, Jeri Pearcy, Becky Hollman, Phil Reykdal, Katy Phillips, Jeanne Kollmeyer, Jeanne Likes, Cheryl Maranto, Kim Hurtlehaus, JoAnn Bachar, Lisa Koneazny, Shannon & Indy Widlansky, Andrea Cornwall, Carol Ogorchock, Amy Wilbourne, Nancy Pajewski, Kitty Willkomm, Janice Orcutt, Paul Anderson, Mike Newman, Joan Hansen, Thea Watters, Laure & John Herzog, Nancy Spransy, Jean Schroeder, Juanita Mast, Jeanne Durnford, Amy Sandberg. Your generosity of time and talent was greatly appreciated by all the Guest House residents. Thank you.



Last Few Days to Buy your Fruits and Nuts

Order by November 3

Promote Unitarian Universalism in Southeast Wisconsin

by Bruce Wiggins,
Denominational Affairs Coordinator

Order your delicious treats by Sunday, November 3, for pick up starting Sunday, December 8. The prices on some items are lower this year and are often lower than you can get elsewhere. The Equal Exchange Fair Trade chocolate bars in various flavors are outstanding! And there are other chocolate favorites such as chocolate-covered fruit (milk or dark chocolate). Many people love the salty nuts, yogurt-covered pretzels, or party mix. And there is dried fruit. Truly, there is something for everybody!

Think about giving a bag or two as a special gift at the holidays; a gift for your employees; a thank you to new clients throughout the year. Of course, order for yourself, too! Find the order form on the church website: uumilwaukee.org/fruits-and-nuts.



Intentional Attention

by Kimberlee Carlson
Director of Religious Education

When I broke my leg in June, it fractured more than my bones; it broke apart my family's expectations for the summer. We had dreamed about this summer for years. I would finally be done with seminary. We would have the time and space to give one another the attention we craved and just enjoy the simple pleasures of the season. And then crack, one poorly placed foot in some slippery Kentucky mud and it all fell away. Instead the canceling began. Canceling plane rides, swimming, picnics, bike riding lesson—the list seemed endless.

With my independence curtailed, even going outside became challenging. As the weeks wore on, we began to call it the lost summer of 2019. All our attention was directed on problem-solving day-to-day dilemmas, and it seemed like all we could do was count our losses and wait for healing to mend our lives.

I mourned the small delights of daily life, gardening, grilling, and time outside with my child. I bemoaned to a dear friend, who had come to help care for me, that we were not even able to teach our child how to ride his bike. My friend listened to my grief compassionately and then gently told me I was paying attention to the wrong things. Your child is learning so much more than how to ride his bike this summer. He is learning that a family can stretch itself beyond what they think is possible to care for those they love. He is learning that he shares his mother, that she belongs to many beloved friends who bring food for body and soul. He is watching the community care for itself and finding out how he can be a part of that caring. He can learn how to ride a bike anytime. What he is learning this summer is priceless.

Her words lifted the stuck-ness from me, and it enabled me to shift my focus away from our deficits. There was no immediate fix to the situation, and it was all right to be sad, but I could pay attention to more than loss. I could still give my child my undivided attention, the core ingredient in any loving relationship.

"What we give attention to grows," Adrienne Maree Brown writes in her book *Emergent Strategies*.

What we pay attention to in children grows.
What do I want to nurture in my child with my attention?
What do I want to model how to endure difficulty in life?

Our love and attention is a human superpower that ultimately shapes our relationships and lives. What we give attention to those relationships will grow. Each day we get to choose and model for our children what we love in them, and the world by what we give attention to.

May it be with intention that we do so.

Good Neighbor Bag Donations!

by Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Director of Religious Education

We will once again be working to help our community members by learning about homelessness in Religious Education on Sunday, November 17, by building Good Neighbor bags to be distributed to those in need. We are collecting socks and non-perishable food items exclusively this year to ensure that we match our donations to the needs of those directly affected by homelessness.

We need your help to make this possible! Bring your non-perishable food items to church and look for the Good Neighbor donation barrel in the Leenhouts Common Room.

Some Wish List Suggestions

- Canned Corned Beef
- Chewy Granola Bars
- Cheese Crackers
- Fruit Snacks
- Vienna Sausage
- Spam
- Smoked Meat Stick
- Peanuts
- Energy Bars
- Canned Tuna in Water
- To Go Creamy Peanut Butter
- Crackers with Peanut Butter



November Youth Happenings

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

- Friday, November 1, through Sunday, November 3 - Youth CON in Evanston, Illinois at the Unitarian Church of Evanston
- Sunday, November 3 - The 2020 Boston Heritage trip. Youth applications and letters of interest are due by 12:30 p.m.
- Friday, November 8 - Game Night with Grade 5-7 youth from 6:00-9:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 10 - Youth Steering Committee (YSC) meeting at 10:40 a.m.
- Sunday, November 10 - Youth Habitat for Humanity trip youth interviews, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Sunday, November 17 - The 2020 Boston Heritage trip youth applicant interviews, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Learn More About Gender and Sexual Orientation

by Shannon Widlansky

Come view *The Trans List*, a documentary on the experiences of 11 people who identify as a gender different than the sex they were assigned at birth. Hear 11 different experiences of various identities and backgrounds.

As Unitarian Universalists, we strive to welcome all into our congregation and grow from our diverse experiences. Let's start our journey to a better understanding of gender by watching this film.

A facilitated discussion follows the film. This will be a safe space for questions and discussions to begin our journey to better understanding gender identity. Be there on Wednesday, November 6, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Facilitators for this event will be Shannon Widlansky and Liz Hopkins. See page 7 in this *Chanticleer* for information on Shannon Widlansky's biography.

New to First Church?

Young Adult Meet & Greet

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

Are you between the ages of 18 and 25 and looking for authentic connection with other young adults in our congregation? You are invited to attend a meet and greet with a light lunch on Sunday, December 8, in the Young Room (lower level at church). Bring your ideas for future meet and greets and worship. If you have any questions, contact Youth Program Coordinator Deb Solis at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org.

Lucy Pyne

Youth Steering Committee Profile

by Beth Monhollen

Lucy Pyne didn't start out thinking she would be a leader in the youth group. She and her family started attending First Church when she was in the sixth grade, and she admits that she was shy and soft-spoken, if she spoke up at all.

She attended church regularly for about three years, including her eighth grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) experience, which she remembers as being very positive. But even then, she says, she was quiet and mostly kept her thoughts to herself. When she started high school at Rufus King, she found herself alone having to forge a way in a new environment and trying to make new friends (none of her friends from middle school went to King). The uncertainty of that experience was mirrored when she came to the youth group at church in ninth grade, and she was still shy and felt out of place at both school and church.

Fortunately, she began to make friends in high school and to come out of her shell through various school clubs: Latin, National Honor Society, Chemistry Olympiad, Model UN, to name a few. She is an avid theater lover and while she doesn't want to be on stage, she loves helping behind the scenes and being an audience member. Now in her senior year, she is currently the captain of her swim team and hopes to attend UW-Madison to major in environmental studies.

The blossoming in school translated to more confidence, which led to her re-joining youth group at the beginning of her junior year. And now she is a positive leader in YRUU and an active member of the Youth Steering Committee. What she loves most about attending First Church is the accepting and supportive community we are creating. As a member of the Youth Steering Committee, Lucy is now a youth leader in creating that community.



Irma Morter Annual Lecture Sara Thomsen—Weaver of Community Song

By Lorraine Jacobs
Morter Lecture Team Chair

Through the Morter Lecture weekend of October 3–6, Sara Thomsen built a circle of song, closing with a crescendo experience titled *Join in Singing*. Our joy and energy during this workshop exemplified Sara's belief in the power of song.

The Morter Lecture embedded in the weekend was held on Saturday, October 5, *Planting Hope Note by Note*. Combining lecture and song, Sara described the origination of her non-profit, formed to inspire awareness and action. A part of this endeavor, "Echos of Peace" is a community choir. Without auditions or prior training, choir members built a repertoire and soon were invited to local gatherings, meetings, and social justice actions. A staunch supporter of struggles for human dignity and ecological sustainability, Sara finds that music and the arts build and bridge engaged communities. We fulfilled Irma Morter's wish to offer choices for finding our path toward making social change.

Other weekend programming included a solo concert on Friday evening, Sunday Services led by the Chancel Choir, and Sara Thomsen joined the congregation in singing *Mizmor Shir Leyom*, *haShabbat* and *By Breath*. Every audience member throughout the weekend left humming and thoughtfully enlightened.

Without the partnership of music ministry, Alissa Rhode and Tristan Strelitzer, we could not have managed the coordination of events. Nick Hayes, recruited by Alissa, handled the mystery of concert audio cords and equipment. Morter Lecture Group members Nick DaVia, Cheryl Maranto, and Jane Cliff, worked hard together, reviewing candidates, making plans and decisions, then participating and hosting during the weekend events. We'd have been "nowhere" without church staff Cindy Lorentzen, Shari Wright, Jean Johnson, and Jim Spice. Many others just stepped up as needed. Thank you all for a wonderful weekend.

The next annual Morter Lecture is October 2-3, 2020. It's not too soon to schedule a lecturer and start making "to do" lists. Some ideas already circulate. A broad range of skills and dedication will be needed to make it happen once again. Contact Lorraine Jacobs. Find your role in our 2020 Annual Morter Lecture.

Have You Heard? Our Music Ministry is Expanding!

by Alissa Rhode
Lead Music Director

SONG CIRCLE WITH JULIE THOMPSON

Three Tuesdays: October 29, November 12, and December 3
6:45-8:00 p.m.

Advance Registration: \$30 for all three dates
\$15/single class; walk-ins: \$20/class

Experience the joy and power of singing together in the oral tradition as vocalist Julie Thompson facilitates a circle of songs, rounds, and chants. No experience necessary! Register for as many dates as you wish to attend at: www.bit.ly/UUSongCircle.

MISS JULIE'S MUSIC FUN WITH JULIE THOMPSON

For Children Ages 1-5 with their Parents/Caregivers
Five Thursdays: November 7, 14, 21; December 5 and 12
10:00-10:45 a.m.

Five-week session: \$60/child of church member;
\$75/child of non-members

(Walk-ins will pay the non-member rate)

Explore music, rhythm, movement, finger plays, songs familiar and new. Parents, grandparents, nannies, aunts, uncles—bring your wee ones and we will have a blast! To register online, visit: www.bit.ly/CREMusicFun.

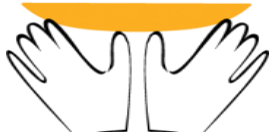
OCEAN OF DEVOTION GONG MEDITATION WITH PRESTON KLIK

Friday, November 8
7:00-8:30 p.m.

\$25 in advance/ \$30 at the door

Back by popular demand, this 90-minute acoustic journey ranges from quiet to powerfully intense. Attendees are bathed in multiple octaves of sonic vibrations in a sensory experience for the body, mind, and spirit. Register at www.gongmeditation.bpt.me or call 1-800-838-3006.





Share the Plate

by Dawn Blackmore

"Believe in Students FAST Fund" is our November Share the Plate recipient. This is a fund to provide rapid support to Milwaukee Area Technical College students experiencing economic emergencies so they can overcome financial challenges, remain enrolled, and achieve academic success.

100% of the funds collected are spent on direct services. Local 212, the MATC faculty union, provides office space, equipment, and administrative support. The staff of the FAST Fund is composed of retired MATC faculty volunteers.

Cash collected in the plate will be shared 50/50 between the FAST Fund and First Church. To donate only to FAST Fund, please write a check to: Believe in Students Inc., and we will mail it for you. Parents and guardians, please talk with your children about how even small donations help. More information can be found at www.local212.org/believe-in-students-fast-fund.

New Unitarian Universalist (UU) Merchandise at Book Tower

by Nancy Pajewski
Book Tower Co-chair

As the holidays approach, stop by the Book Tower to check out the greeting cards, jewelry, reusable tote bags, mugs, and journals, as well as a variety of UU books. InSpirit, the UUA bookstore, provides fashionable, reasonably-priced items that showcase the UU logo and principles. Remember that Book Tower purchases must be paid by cash or check.

We are pleased to announce that the 2020 Used Book Sale will be March 27-29, the last weekend in March. It's not too early to start setting aside books and DVDs to donate to next year's sale.

HELP WANTED: Facilities Assistant

Please help us find a reliable, congenial person with good customer service skills to assist users of the church facilities.

DUTIES: This person will be responsible for:

- providing set-up for meetings and events, including AV
- providing assistance to facilities users
- attending the front door as groups arrive
- closing and securing the facilities
- managing facilities on Sunday mornings
- miscellaneous tasks e.g., straightening facilities, stuffing envelopes, running a vacuum cleaner, running the dishwasher

SCHEDULE: Average 17 hours per week with two weekday evenings and alternating weekend daytime hours.

PAY: \$12.50/hour; \$13.00/hour after a satisfactory probationary period. May not be a member of First Unitarian Church. Great job for a mature student or a robust senior.

For more information, visit the website: uumilwaukee.org/careers-first-church or contact Facilities Manager Tom Schroeder at tom.schroeder@uumilwaukee.org.

Please email a letter of interest and resume as soon as possible. We will take applications until the right candidate is found.

In Memoriam Edwin (Ted) Wiley

December 10, 1929 ~ October 4, 2019

Ted Wiley died peacefully after a long period of poor health on Friday, October 4, 2019, at the age of 89, after several months in hospice care at East Castle. Ted joined our congregation in 1953 and was very active during the years of the Rev. John Cyrus's ministry.

The family prefers no memorial service but will plan a Celebration of Life in the Milwaukee community at a later date. We lit the Candle of Life in honor of Ted at both services Sunday, October 13, 2019.



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 each month
1:00 p.m.

We gather to discuss a chosen book. You can find our book list on the church bulletin board and website. We welcome all readers. Contact: Chris Linder at celinder@att.net.

Buddhist Study Group: Gathering Waters Sangha

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

The Buddhist Study Group meets to discuss a portion of the current book. We end the meeting with 15 minutes of group meditation. Contact: Jeanne Lowry at Jeanne.m.lowry@gmail.com or Mark Miller at bikeover@gmail.com.

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: 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! Contact: Sharon DePue at SLDePue@aol.com.

SWANS Group (Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social)

First Sunday of the month

Meet after second service in the hallway to arrange car pools/rideshare to lunch (12:30-2:30 p.m.) and talk and share. Contact: Camille Johnson at 414-522-0150 or Barbara Collignon at 414 964-8141 to get on the email list.

UU+ Study Group

Every other 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. Contact: Nancy Pajewski at npajewski@wi.rr.com.

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. Contact: Erik Islo or Angi Krueger at uufda@gmail.com.

WomanSpirit

We meet to empower women and join in spiritual quest through social justice, music, ritual, and friendships. Contact: Janet Nortrom at jnortrom@att.net.



NOVEMBER 17

“Radical Welcome”

Alex Kapitan, Pulpit Guest

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Dale Skaggs, Worship Associate

In today's political climate, being a Welcoming Congregation requires more of us than simply opening our doors to LGBTQ people. We are called to the work of transformation of our selves and our awareness, transformation of our congregation and its culture, and transformation of our wider community and world. In this service, guest speaker Zr. Alex Kapitan, a queer and transgender UU leader, will preach on what it will take to embody this sort of radical welcome—the kind of welcome that can ultimately transform us all.



Zr. Alex Kapitan is a lay community minister, educator, editor, consultant, activist, and trans and queer lifelong Unitarian Universalist from Milwaukee. Ze is the co-founder of the Transforming Hearts Collective, which does workshops, trainings, and consultancies with faith communities on radical welcome and other topics, and also the founder of Radical Copyeditor, a project that helps people use language in anti-oppressive ways. Alex worked for many years at the national office of the Unitarian Universalist Association and is a past steering committee of TRUUsT, an organization of trans-UU religious professionals. Ze now lives in western MA with partner Teddy and a menagerie of furry and feathered friends.

For more information about the pronoun “Ze,” see Rev. Jennifer’s article on page 6.

NOVEMBER 24

“What We Give Attention to Grows”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Jack Forbes Wilson, Associate Musician

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Mark Richards, Worship Associate

Child Dedication Multigenerational Service

When people give their attention to the pieces of their lives for which they are grateful, they are more likely to feel happy and at peace. However, in a bustling world full of sorrow as well as joy, it takes deliberate practice to return the mind to those elements of gratitude. Join us for this multigenerational and child dedication service, in which we practice gratitude for all that is our life!

HOW TO REACH US

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1342 N. Astor St., Milwaukee, WI 53202

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

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The Rev. Dena McPhetres

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SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

November 3

“National Democratic Convention”

Jason Rae, Secretary of the National Democratic Committee and
Martha Love, Democratic National Committee Wisconsin Delegate

How will our city, state, and you, welcome 50,000 visitors gathering at Fiserv Forum, July 13-16, 2020? Delegates, political candidates and other officials, security, media, and more, possibly generating over \$200 million to the Milwaukee area. Learn how we will be affected, how we can work or volunteer, and help host this big historical event that can help decide who our next president will be.

November 10

**“The Polarization of American Politics
and Impact on the 2020 Election”**

Dennis Conta, Wisconsin State Senator, Conta & Associates,
Public Policy Consulting Firm

With the 2020 presidential election as context, Dennis Conta will engage in a non-partisan exploration of the demographics, causes, and severity of our political polarization, and possible mitigation strategies. As an American politician and consultant, he will help sort the current messages, which can overwhelm and confuse.

November 17

“Why African Spirituality Makes Sense”

Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, Professor Emeritus, African & African
Diaspora Studies, UW-Milwaukee

Professor Bellebarde-Smith will share his travels and life within the Caribbean and African Diaspora. He will talk about his proudest achievement of becoming an *oungan asogwe*, a priest in Haitian Vodou.

November 24

**“Dispatch From the Front Lines of Climate Change:
How the Arctic is Changing and Why it Matters”**

Kate Hayes, Doctoral Candidate—Integrative and Systems Biology,
University of Colorado

Arctic environments are warming twice as fast as the rest of the world. Kate Hayes will discuss her work tracking climate change in Alaska, why it matters, and what we can do next.

