



THE

# CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society  
of Milwaukee

*nurture. engage. inspire.*

December 2019



## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

3:30, 5:00, & 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

**The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom**

**The Rev. Dena McPhetres**

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson,  
Director of Religious Education

3:30 & 5:00 p.m.

Jack Forbes Wilson, Associate Musician

6:30 p.m.

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director  
Teresa Drews, Collaborative Pianist  
The Chancel Choir

Join us for a simple, traditional multigenerational Christmas Eve service of carols, candlelight, and stories.

The whole family is welcome in all services. Childcare will also be available during the first two services.

A holiday reception will follow each service.

### MONTHLY THEME

What does it mean to be a people of

## AWE?

## SUNDAY SERVICE & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TWO SERVICES AT 9:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 1

**"The NEW New Covenant:**

**Redefining UU Polity for the 21st Century"**

**The Rev. Marcus Fogliano, Pulpit Guest**

Karen Beaumont, Organist

Natalie Quinton, Worship Associate

As Unitarian Universalists around the country grapple with what, if anything, connects us, questions of power and authority create narratives about how we are and aren't in a relationship. Rev. Marcus Fogliano will speak on the subject of Congregational Polity, the 1600's document that defines how our faith is organized, and how our faith and language has changed over the centuries.

Rev. Marcus Fogliano (They/Them/Theirs), is the Project Manager for the Commission on Institutional Change at the Unitarian Universalist Association, and seminarian at Meadville Lombard Theological School. Marcus is an intersectional advocate in Illinois and finds their calling in Unitarian Universalism as an Institutional Minister. As an ordained former Jehovah's Witness, they spend a lot of time thinking about faith organizational and institutional systems, and what wisdoms for world's religions around systems are useful to UUism as a faith movement.



DECEMBER 8

**"The Awesome Power of Human Connection"**

**The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom**

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Jeff Percy, Worship Associate

New Member Ceremony

Humans are some of the most powerful, resilient, destructive, and connected creatures on the planet. We have an incredible capacity for love and beauty, as well as a shocking capacity for destruction. How can we nurture the better aspects of human nature? Join us for this service that explores the power of human connection and resilience in the face of suffering.

*(Sunday Services continued on page 11)*

## Dena's Digressions

by The Rev. Dena McPhetres  
Associate Minister

I resisted traveling to the Grand Canyon for many years – too predictable and touristy. Then I went and discovered an awe I'd never experienced before. The journey was difficult and distracting. The normal roads were closed. It was unseasonably cold, so I had to wear every layer of clothing from my suitcase and warming packets in my mittens. And yes, there were touristy elements—crowded parking lot, kitschy gift shop, etc.

But when I walked up to the south rim and looked over the edge, my chest expanded and I began to weep. The scale of geologic time was mind-bending. The beauty unpredictable. The colors were astounding. The space went on forever. The ravens danced in the air defying gravity. I thought everyone should be weeping!

Going to the Grand Canyon was more than worth it, as experiences of awe always are. It makes me wonder what other experiences of awe I dismiss, avoid approaching, and why I make those judgments.

The winter holidays are a time when experiences of awe come in much smaller spaces than the Grand Canyon. Spaces like witnessing a grieving church member face their first Christmas without their spouse. Spaces like the offering plates overflowing on Christmas Eve. Spaces like my neighborhood, where I pause from shoveling snow and view the night sky full of stars that don't care what or how we celebrate, only that we are inspired.

May awe come to you this season in unexpected and predictable places and faces of those you love or want to love. And if you're tired of it all, please join us for Blue Christmas Vespers at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 11, in our beautiful sanctuary.

Yours,  
Dena

## Words on the Wind

by The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom  
Senior Minister

What does it mean to be a people of awe? As we enter the winter holiday season, heading towards the longest night of the year, we are invited into reflection as a religious community. There is an instinct to slow down now, keep warm, and huddle around a light, a fire, a flame. Lights begin twinkling in windows, snowflakes fall on eyelashes, and in the deep night, one might feel the whisper of awe.

Awe invites us into mystery, into a profound connection with something larger than ourselves. In a starlit night, the deep invites us to quiet, and listen to the cosmos. If you slow your breathing, what beckons you? If you stare into the flame, what do you see? What brings you to awe, and what meets you there?

Even as this holiday season might bustle with busyness, I hope your heart finds time for stillness and mystery. The call of the dark and deep brings its own gifts, more powerful than any wrapped package. May you find the time and space to receive the connection of awe this month.

Love,  
Jennifer

## December's Theme: Awe

by Mark Bishop,  
Congregation President

When I sat down to reflect on this month's theme, "Awe," I realized that it is one of our Congregational Ends—number 6 to be exact. "We, the people of First Church, build community, where we open ourselves to wonder, making ourselves vulnerable and available to find meaning, inspiration, and transformation." If you're like me, I am frequently awestruck at any number of things at First Church—whether it's the beauty of our Sanctuary, the eloquent messaging from the pulpit, the compassion and good works of our members, or the music. We are fortunate to have an environment that allows those moments of wonder to occur, and it's something we should not take for granted.

The Board of Trustees continues to explore how best to enable linkage with our members so that all voices are heard, and all members have the opportunity to experience wonder and awe here at First Church. As an example, the Board is currently discerning having youth observers attend Board meetings. Stay tuned...more to come on this.

Happy Holidays, and may you experience wonder and awe in the weeks to come.



## Don't Know About Awe But Certainly Gratitude

by Lynne Jacoby  
Membership Development Coordinator

If you've been experiencing this fall as I have, a sense of awe has been hard to find. I feel like for the first time in my life I can relate to people who "rubber-neck" past accidents, as my attention keeps getting drawn into, what feels like to me, the train wreck of our current national politics. Even though it makes my stomach hurt and I know it is neither helpful nor healthy for me to keep staring.

They say one of the best ways to recapture one's sense of well-being, perhaps even awe, is to practice gratitude. Shift our attention towards that which we are thankful, and so I think about this fall at First Church in that context, and suddenly it is very easy for me to access appreciation, delight, and even a little wonder at the generosity of this community.

Our Feast for Funds Auction raised \$22,000, thanks to generous (and creative!) donors, bidders, and winners! But especially thanks to the team who pulls the auction together and the chair who marches us forward and ties up all the loose ends.

I am also grateful to the 74 members of our community who have remembered First Church in their wills and contribute to this community's resources into the future, but particularly to the team members who worked towards a wonderful Heritage Society Appreciation Event this past month.

I'm reminded of the advice of Mr. Rogers when faced with disheartening or overwhelming events—look for the people who are helping. For me, this fall those people include the First Church Stewardship Teams:

**Feast for Funds:** Chair Susan Thaney, Roger Blau, Stacy Koenen, Ellen Krueger, Cecile Langford, Amanda Panciera, Laurie Petersen, Jane Peterson, Linda Presto, and Tom Radoszewski with the additional support of Claire Blau and Sally Heuer.

**Heritage:** Chair Lisa Koneazny, Jill Erickson, Chris Linder, Linda Presto, and Melinda Vernon.



Pictures from First Unitarian Society Heritage Society Harvest Luncheon

## Faith in the Streets Kick-Off Event

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Join us on Sunday, December 8, from 1:00–3:00 p.m. at Zao House for our first gathering of Faith in the Streets—a new group of First Church members and members of Zao-MKE church who will bring our faith into the streets in protest, art, song, and action. We are building a group of people in deep, trusting relationships who will build one another's confidence to bring our commitment to justice out of the church and into the streets.

Our first gathering will focus on food, fellowship, and getting to know one another. If you want to make a justice commitment with other First Church and Zao-MKE members, come learn more about this new effort to build a group of people who protest together. This is also an opportunity to build relationships across difference, as Zao-MKE serves primarily unchurched millennials, the majority of whom are LGBTQ+.

Please contact Cesar Cornier, Social Justice Coordinator, at [cesar.cornier@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:cesar.cornier@uumilwaukee.org) for more details or to coordinate rides from First Church to Zao House, which is located at 2319 Kenwood Blvd., across from UWM.



## Holiday Elves Needed

by Roger Blau  
Christmas Eve Reception Coordinator

The Christmas Eve Reception Team is forming. Volunteers are needed to assist in setting up the sweet and savory treats for the three Christmas Eve services and a crew to tidy up at the end. There will be a sign-up sheet for elves at the Member Services Table after Sunday services. There will also be a sign-up sheet for those who want to bring sweets. For more information, contact Roger Blau.



## The Gift of Being Present

by Cesar Cornier  
Social Justice Coordinator

Tis the season of love and gratitude...and Starbucks, credit cards, discounts, half-off, retail, advertising, bargains, marketing, merchandise, brands, debt, credit, endorsements, and so forth! It is so easy for us to get engulfed in the culture that is consumerism, and why not? It feels good to open that gift that you've been eagerly hoping for, and how nostalgic it is to see colorfully wrapped gifts under a tree of warmth and childhood bliss. However, we know that our festive traditions often come with sacrifices. According to the National Retail Federation, expected holiday retail sales during November and December are to increase between 3.8 and 4.2 percent, for a total amount between \$727.9 billion and \$730.7 billion.

Growing up we were not rich, but my parents always did their best to make me have a holiday season worth remembering. The extra shifts at work and the part-time jobs only validated this more. Though I am so grateful and blessed for them putting in that extra effort to purchase the things I so dearly wanted from "Santa," that is not what I value the most. What brings me true joy was the atmosphere, the feeling of belonging at my grandmother's house where all of my relatives would gather. Yes, the gifts were thoughtful and well appreciated, but what I wish I could wrap up in a present and open every day is the sound of my relatives laughing, and seeing the smiling faces of those who are not with us anymore. Time is the important gift we have, and to live it in the present moment is truly fulfilling. During this holiday season, I ask that we spend time and love on those we care about, within our family and community.

For the Christmas Eve offering, The Social Justice Council has chosen the recipients to be Interchange Food Pantry, Repairers of the Breach, and Guest House. These three organizations have been actively engaged in helping those less fortunate through shelter and nutrition.

## "Get In Where You Fit In" The Earth Justice Ministry Theme for the Year

by Terry Wiggins  
Earth Justice Ministry Chair

Rev. Jennifer reminded us in her September 29 sermon that climate change is about everything on this planet, including economics, race, gender, waste, water, food, the processes of life and death—so of course people feel overwhelmed. But you can also think about it being about everything as an opportunity—good thing, because YOU can get in where you fit in. There is so much to do in moving from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy that EVERYONE fits in somewhere. That's the approach our Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) is taking, encouraging people to do what they have the passion to do, and forming teams with others of like mind.

So far, projects EJM folks are working on include:

- Transportation alternatives to motor vehicles (Tree Moore is leading this group)
- Showing films and videos (Pat Parcell, Bruce and Terry Wiggins, Tom Scannell)
- Worms, bees, and gardens (Erica Gottschalk, Barbara Leigh, Tom Scannell)
- Go Plastic-Free (Pat Parcell, Tree Moore, others)
- Sustainable Business Directory (Amy Monahan)
- Interfaith Earth Network (Terry Wiggins is the UU representative)
- Natural burial
- Lead in water Issues (Krug money has been granted)
- Installing new solar panels (Mark Mueller, Bruce Wiggins)

Do any of these areas interest you? Do you have other ideas? If so, please call the person listed for the project to find out about it, and discern where you fit in. Or if you're not sure what fits, talk to one of our co-chairs, Tree Moore or Bruce Wiggins.

We are aware of other church members' activities related to climate change, such as participation in Citizen's Climate Lobby, [350.org](http://350.org), volunteering at the Urban Ecology Center, protecting our County Parks, working for earth-related nonprofits, and we applaud those activities. So many opportunities!



## Think Reparations is Just About Check-Writing? Think Again!

by Mary Devitt  
Black Lives Matter to Wisconsin  
Unitarian Universalist (BLM2WUU) Coordinator

Why are so many people, including so many presidential candidates and Ben and Jerry of ice cream, fame talking about reparations in this historical moment? What is HR 40? How does this subject relate to our Unitarian Universalist faith and principles? How can we act?

Our five-congregation collaborative, Black Lives Matter to Wisconsin UUs, invites interested UUs to take part in a conversation/learning session about reparations on Saturday, December 14, 1:00-4:00 p.m. at Unitarian Church North, 13800 N. Port Washington Rd., Mequon.

Pastor Marilyn Miller, MICAH President, former director of the Lutheran Human Relations Association, and an inspiring anti-racism trainer and organizer, will lead the workshop. A panel of our Milwaukee community partners will provide some provocative history and recommendations for reparations. A strong element of the workshop will be interactive, with small group discussions, Q&A, and a focus on actions we can take.

This gathering is intended for Unitarian Universalists and will explore the particular reparations work that is ours as a denomination.

We need all of us to be engaged in this important work. Our black faith siblings need to see our commitment. Please plan to join us.

Register at [www.eventbrite.com/e/its-time-for-uus-to-talk-about-reparations-tickets-79240750217](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/its-time-for-uus-to-talk-about-reparations-tickets-79240750217), and please indicate if you need free onsite childcare. If you have questions, contact Mary Devitt.

## Donate Food and Socks for the Guest House

by Nancy Pajewski

First Church will provide supper and good cheer for the 86 men of the Guest House shelter on Saturday, December 21 at 6:00 p.m. We are also collecting new and gently used socks (both dark dress socks and white athletic socks), lip balm, and cough drops, which are appreciated during the winter months.

Sign up sheets for the meal will be at the Social Justice Table after Sunday Services or contact Nancy Pajewski. You can drop off socks and other donations at the Social Justice Table throughout December.

## Give the Gift of Warmth and Holiday Cheer

by Lillian Schley  
Religious Education Administrative Assistant

Spread joy this holiday season by participating in the Giving Tree program! This year, we are thrilled to be paired with Friedens Community Ministries, the largest network of food pantries in Milwaukee. They have provided us with 80 tags, with \$20-\$25 gift suggestions for children and adults in their community. Starting November 24, stop by the Religious Education (RE) Table after Sunday services to choose a gift tag, then purchase the gift and drop it back at the RE Table by Sunday, December 15. All gifts should be unwrapped with the tag securely attached.



Winter is here, and the RE program is collecting new and gently used winter wear (such as mittens, hats, scarves, and coats) to be donated to organizations serving the Milwaukee community. We gratefully accept items for children or adults. Starting November 24, drop your donations in the mitten box next to the tree in the Leenhouts Common Room, or hang smaller items on the tree as decorations! Winter wear donations will be accepted until December 29.

Thank you for your generosity!

## In Memoriam Joseph Stephen Lowry

November 3, 1939 ~ October 26, 2019

Steve Lowry died peacefully at 1:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 26, with his family gathered around. Steve's family and friends, and members of several Buddhist sanghas surrounded him with love on his journey with pulmonary fibrosis over the last few years. Steve was 79 years old and a member of this congregation for 24 years. A Candle of Life was lit in Steve's honor during both worship services on Sunday, October 27.

A Memorial Service was held at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee on Friday, November 1, with the Rev. Dena McPhetres, Paul Norton from the Mindfulness Community, and Reirin Gumbel from Milwaukee Zen Center co-officiating. Memorial gifts may be donated to:

The Guest House  
Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee (MCM)  
First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee





### New Friday Morning Yoga Class Beginning in January

Join us for a mini pre-holidays yoga class with Morgan Engels. The class session will run for three weeks on Monday evenings (5:30-7:00 p.m.), December 2 to 16, and Wednesday mornings (9:00-10:30 a.m.), December 4-18. The cost for either session is \$33 for First Church members or \$39 for non-members. Please pre-register online or at the Religious Education (RE) Table after Sunday services to ensure there is space for you.

Due to popular demand, beginning in January, First Church will offer a third weekly yoga class, to run for nine Friday mornings (9:00-10:30 a.m.) from January 10 to March 6. This is a class for deep relief of tension and stress. Postures are practiced with the support of props such as bolsters, blankets, and chairs. This class is traditionally slow, allowing time for rest. This greatly soothes the nervous system and increases the capacity for deep breathing. Because of the individualized attention provided in this class, the maximum enrollment will be ten students.

In addition, we will offer yoga on Monday evenings (5:30-7:00 p.m.) from January 6 to March 2, and Wednesday mornings (9:00-10:30 a.m.) from January 8 to March 4. The cost for any of these January classes is \$99 for First Church members and \$117 for non-members. Register online at [uumilwaukee.org/events/category/adult-spiritual-development](http://uumilwaukee.org/events/category/adult-spiritual-development) or at the RE Table on Sunday's Coffee Hours.



### Shawl Ministry Welcomes New Members!

by Connie Georgenson  
Co-leader of the Shawl Ministry

The Shawl Ministry group members create shawls, lap robes, and baby blankets for church members who have had a death in the family, have a serious illness or family crisis or have had a baby or adopted a baby. These are given by one of the ministers or Pastoral Care Associates. We are always looking for new members. If you knit or crochet, think about joining us. We meet the second Sunday of the month after the second service. This important ministry provides a personal touch from one church member to another.

For information, contact Connie Georgenson or Patty Agacki.

### Getting Together Groups Welcome, Young Adults!

by Lillian Schley  
Religious Education Administrative Assistant

Young Adults between the ages of 18 and 25 are invited to connect with one another at First Church on Sunday, December 8, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Come participate in a conversation about transition and transformation, learn more about our faith community, and brainstorm ideas for future gatherings. Lunch will be provided.

From first time visitors to lifelong UUs, all young adults are welcome at this event, so feel free to pass the invitation on to anyone 18-25 years old who may be interested in connecting to the First Church community. Contact Youth Program Coordinator Deb Solis at [deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org) with any questions, or to RSVP.

### UU History Video Series Wraps Up

by Nancy Pajewski  
UU+ Study Group Chair

Tuesday, December 10, is the conclusion of the UU+ Study Group's presentation of the video series *Long Strange Trip: A Journey Through Two Thousand Years of Unitarian Universalist History*. The final video explains why and how the Unitarian and Universalist denominations merged, development of liberal religious education, our evolution toward humanism and the theology of social justice, and international UUism.

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, even if you have not seen the earlier videos. No registration is required.



## Formation Finish Line

by Kimberlee Carlson  
Director of Religious Education

On November 17, in religious education, we made 400 sandwiches for Guest House of Milwaukee, while we learned about how to help our neighbors in need. We are deeply grateful for all the people who donated bread, meat, cheese, and their precious time to help this happen in our congregation! We also were able to give non-perishable food items and so many socks for Guest House to distribute.

I am Boston bound early this December as I journey to see the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC), one of the last steps on my journey to becoming a Unitarian Universalist minister. The MFC reads over the hundred and some pages of essays, reflections, evaluations, and letters about my journey; then during my appointment listens to my sermon and asks me anything they want to. Afterward, the MFC deliberates whether they deem me to be qualified to become a fellowshipped Unitarian Universalist minister. It is rather astounding to arrive here, years after falling in love with Unitarian Universalism and the people of our faith community.

My call to do ministry began over 15 years ago, but I heeded that call by engaging in lay ministry with youth, young adults, and then as the program director at a congregation. Four years ago, with the full support of my partner Erik, I made the decision to pursue ministerial education, truly a leap of faith for us. As a partner of a minister, I had few illusions about the learning process; we knew it would be a strain on our family. I started seminary when my child was just two years old, knowing I would need to leave a fine job to complete my ministerial formation and that it would require me to do difficult things. Yet, I knew we needed to take that risk if I wanted to serve our families and children to the best of my abilities, the way I felt they deserved. I want to do my part in making Unitarian Universalism faith formation reflect the powerful, life-affirming theology it contains.

My experience as a director of religious education (DRE) made me deeply aware of the pastoral needs of families and children, my limitations to serve them in this capacity, and are at the core of my call to ministry. I am an educator and I recognized that I needed a ministerial education that would give me the skills and confidence in pastoral care, theological reflection, worship, social justice, spiritual development, and administration. I am awed to finally be nearing the end of this formal ministerial process and happily employed at a vibrant congregation doing the work I love. I am deeply grateful for all the wisdom, companionship, support, and love I have received on my journey. So, on December 8 light a chalice, whisper an affirmation, or say a prayer for me if you feel so moved. I am Boston bound and will hopefully return with good news!

Blessings,  
Kimberlee



## Deck the Hall!

by Tom Schroeder  
Facilities Manager



The time is approaching to decorate our Sanctuary for the holiday season. To help you get in the holiday spirit, please join us on Tuesday, December 3, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. for some great fun working together as well as sharing in a little holiday cheer. We'll be hanging green garlands, red bows, and white lights.

Please note: we need some folks who can climb ladders. We also need some folks with strong backs to lift parts of the tree over the pulpit rail and onto its stand behind the pulpit rail.

Please contact me at  
tom.schroeder@uumilwaukee.org or 414-273-5257, ext. 206, to let me know if you'd like to help out. It's going to be great fun!

## Book Tower Stocks New Holiday Merchandise

by Nancy Pajewski  
Book Tower Co-chair

Stop by the Book Tower in the Leenhouts Common Room as you plan your holiday gift giving. We have several designs of greeting cards, jewelry, mugs, tote bags, journals, and, of course, plenty of books focusing on New Year opportunities and Unitarian Universalist history.

The Book Tower operates in self-service mode. Payment must be made by check or exact cash amount. Instructions are posted at the Tower.

As you make room for new books, remember that the annual Used Book Sale will be held March 27-29, 2020 (the last weekend in March). More information will be coming in January. Due to space constraints, we cannot accept donated books before March.



## General Assembly in Providence, RI

**June 24-28, 2020**

by Bruce Wiggins  
Denominational Affairs

Do you want to meet, hear, and talk with inspirational thought leaders in our movement? Attend the General Assembly (GA), our Unitarian Universalist Association's annual national conference at the end of June. At GA, attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend.

In 2020, GA will be held in Providence, RI, June 24 -28. The theme is Rooted, Inspired, & Ready! "We are in touch with our theological roots, we are engaged in transforming our faith, and we are fired up to take action in the wider world." Read more about the GA theme here: [uua.org/ga/program/contribute/proposing/general-assembly-theme-rooted-inspired-ready](http://uua.org/ga/program/contribute/proposing/general-assembly-theme-rooted-inspired-ready).

### Early Registration Open

Adult full-time registration is \$400 through March 15. NEW! Registration Payment Plan: With a \$50 down-payment, the cost of registration can be paid over several months. Final payment must be received by February 29, 2020. When the final registration is complete, special consideration for dormitory lodging, financial aid, and volunteer opportunities to reduce costs will become available. Register now! Information on how to obtain financial help for First Church members to attend GA 2020 will be forthcoming.

For details or more information, contact Denominational Affairs Coordinator Bruce Wiggins.

## Not So Young... But Young at Heart & Mind

by Cecile Langford  
The Chronologically Gifted Member

Another year is coming to an end with a lot of good memories. Many of you over the last few years have heard and read announcements about The Chronologically Gifted (TCG) group. Meeting the last Sunday of each month, September-April, the idea was spearheaded by Sharon DePue with the thought that seniors of First Church (let's say 60-95 years old) have a lot to offer each other! So, "voila," the group was established.

Our get-together is a potluck, followed by a short program on a variety of topical issues. We meet in Max Otto Hall at 12:30 p.m. and we wrap it up around 2:00 pm. The good news is there are no dues, the food is good, we're enlightened, entertained, and simply have a good time! The bad news is that there are a lot of our seniors who are missing out! Why not make a New Year's resolution to join us? The search for program ideas is ongoing and we're always open to suggestions.

## Splinters from the Board

by Jane Peterson  
Board of Trustees

Our meeting on October 22 began with the first quarter financial report, presented by Noreen Gilbertsen and Jean Johnson. To summarize, the total income for the quarter was at 25% of the annual budget, while total expenses were at 23%.

Noreen and Jean went on to lead the discussion of Interpretation of Board Policies 4.4 and 4.5, relating to financial planning, conditions, activities, and budgeting. This is part of our Policy Governance framework. Some changes were drafted by the Finance Team at their meeting on October 21. There was a discussion about Policy Governance and how the financial-related limitations fit into the overall structure. The Board provided feedback on the Policies, and Jean and Noreen will take the suggestions back to the Finance Team for revision.

Rev. Jennifer opened a discussion on Limitation 4.1, Relationship to Congregants, and 4.1.1, centering on safety, was the principal topic. We discussed improved alarms for fire and lockdown. Rev. Jennifer will add information on accessibility and more complete data/ information policy. Jean Johnson and Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education, will prepare a comprehensive plan for safe congregations.

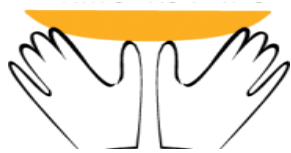
Rev. Jennifer led us in a training session related to End 2, Recognizing Power Differences. Content included the nature of power and the goals of having marginalized groups "move up" and dominant groups "move back." Members completed a questionnaire about Board functioning and power as part of the evidence and metrics for this End.

The next Board meeting is at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 26. Board meeting minutes are posted on the First Church bulletin board in the central corridor and on 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. Our contact information is in front of the member directory.







## Share the Plate

by Dawn Blackmore


We Got This Milwaukee is our December Share the Plate recipient. We Got This is a grassroots community garden initiative that empowers and employs young black males to become active in the beautification and cleanup of their community. It was founded in 2014 by Andre Lee Ellis, a community activist who had the idea of providing jobs for young men and boys in the community gardens at 9th and Ring Streets, in the 53206 zip code area of Milwaukee. What started as one invitation to one young man soon turned into over 100 youth working in the garden every Saturday by the end of that first summer.

Now in its sixth year, the young men and boys who participate in the program each summer learn about gardening, take part in neighborhood cleanups, and are matched with a mentor who provides support and encouragement to set high and realistic goals for themselves. Violence in the neighborhood has decreased since the program began, along with an increase in community pride and connection. For an excellent and in-depth look at We Got This, complete with photos and video, please see the Journal Sentinel article: <https://projects.jsonline.com/news/2018/12/7/milwaukee-community-garden-produces-free-vegetables-safe-place-for-boys.html>. You can also visit their website at [wegotthismke.com](http://wegotthismke.com) to find out how you can volunteer.

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

## Holiday Office Hours

by Shari Wright  
Office Coordinator

The First Church office will be closed December 25 through January 1. While some staff may be in the office during this time, please call 414-273-5257 before stopping by. Have a happy holiday. 

## Severe Weather Closing Policy for Sundays

We will be open and hold services whenever possible; however, church services may be cancelled during weather emergencies. In the event of such an emergency, if the Senior Minister (or the Associate Minister in his/her absence) and the President or other officer (Vice President or Secretary) deem it appropriate to cancel church services, the church will list its cancellation on the church phone answering system, the church website, and Facebook page. We will also send an email to our e-announcements list.

In some instances, even if we do hold services, Religious Education (RE) classes may be cancelled. If RE classes are cancelled, we will endeavor to have a group activity for K-seventh grade.

## Large Van Buren Sunday Parking Lot Beginning January 1

by Jean Johnson  
Director of Administration

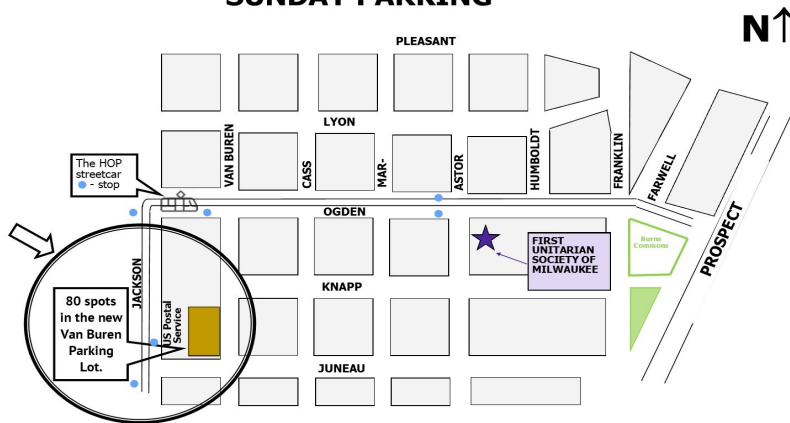
Sorry to say that as of January 1, we can no longer use the Cass Park lot owned by MPS. But the Parking Solutions Task Force has found a new lot with 80 spots for Sunday parking.

The Van Buren Parking Lot is located next to the post office, on Van Buren north of Juneau. This is about the same distance as the current Cass Park lot, about four blocks from church. And it's one-half block from the Hop streetcar stop on Jackson at Juneau.

All you need to do is put the special First Church code in the parking entrance machine, and parking is free to you. First Church pays an inexpensive discounted rate that we've negotiated.

Watch announcements for the code for free parking on Sundays only, beginning January 1.

### FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE - SUNDAY PARKING



# 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, or [dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org](mailto: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.

### Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social Group (SWANS)

First Sunday of the month

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

### 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 or Mark Miller.

### 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. Contact Nancy Pajewski.

### 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](mailto:tstrelitzer@gmail.com) with your name and voice type.

### Unitarian Universalists Under Forty Doing Activities (UUUFDA)

UUUFDA encourages social camaraderie among the under 40 crowd at First Church, contributing to a strong, joyful, and fun church community. Contact: Erik Islo or Angi Krueger at [uuufda@gmail.com](mailto:uuufda@gmail.com).

### The Chronologically Gifted (TCG)

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.

### WomanSpirit

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



## MUSIC AT FIRST CHURCH

### Singing Circle with Julie Thompson

Tuesday, December 3, 6:45-8:00 p.m.

\$15 in advance/\$20 at the door

Register at [bit.ly/UUSongCircle](http://bit.ly/UUSongCircle)

Experience the joy and power of singing together in the oral tradition as vocalist Julie Thompson facilitates a circle of songs, rounds, and chants. We'll explore the spiritual practice of communal singing as we raise our spirits by raising our voices. Join in this sacred time to connect through the magic of sound. No experience necessary!

### Recital for River Revitalization

Saturday, December 7, 2:00 p.m.

Organist Karen Beaumont and Cellist Viktor Brusubardis will perform Folias from Italy, Spain, and France. Timothy Kloss will read poetry about rivers, and a representative from the River Revitalization Foundation will briefly discuss their mission. There is no cost to attend, though a free-will offering will be collected to benefit the River Revitalization Foundation.

### Holiday Choir Forming

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

The holiday season is approaching and the First Unitarian Society Chancel Choir will continue the practice of opening our ranks to First Church members and friends (high school age and up) who wish to sing with us for the Winter Holiday Services on December 22 (9:00 and 11:00 a.m.) and Christmas Eve at the 6:30 p.m. service.

This is a great opportunity for those who enjoy singing choral music but can't make a full year schedule of choir or if you are a new member. No previous singing experience is required, but you must be able to commit to three Thursday rehearsals, December 5, 12, & 19, from 7:15-9:00 p.m. If you are interested in singing with us, please contact Tristan Strelitzer at [tstrelitzer@gmail.com](mailto:tstrelitzer@gmail.com) so we can have a folder and music ready for you. We'd love to have you join us!



**DECEMBER 11 (WEDNESDAY)**

ONE SERVICE – 7:00 P.M.

**Blue Christmas Vespers**

**The Rev. Dena McPhetres**

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Christmas is not always merry, but it can always be holy. Come in out of the cold and dark to the gentle presence of music and candlelight, readings and silence. We offer solace tonight for anyone who is feeling blue—those who are sick or tired or discouraged; those who are caring for ailing loved ones, have lost someone dear, and anyone who is feeling out of synch with the forced happiness of the holidays.

DECEMBER 15

**“Awesome Fear of the Holy”**

**The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom**

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Nick Hayes, Worship Associate

The magnitude of our universe—time and space, black holes and galaxies, quantum physics and the theory of relativity—can be fearsome. How do we mere humans gain perspective in a world that has evolved in geologic time? What is our small contribution to the cosmos, and how might knowing the scale of the cosmos contribute to our small lives? Join us for this service that explores the awesome fear of the holy whole of time and space.

DECEMBER 22

**Multigenerational Holiday Pageant**

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

**The Rev. Dena McPhetres**

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Jack Forbes Wilson, Resident Artist

The December holiday season is filled with celebrations from many different faith traditions. This Sunday, we honor the beginning of Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, and Christmas. Our children have spent the month exploring these holidays and are eager to share in this festive celebration. Let us delight in joy and learning together as an intergenerational congregation.

DECEMBER 29

**ONE SERVICE & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – 10:00 A.M.**

**“Going Fast or Going Far: The Power of Community”**

Pulpit Guest: Beth Monhollen, Member

Jack Forbes Wilson, Music Director

Amy Wilbourne, Worship Associate

Helen Keller once said, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” As we move into a new year, faced with urgent demands for equity and justice, let’s reflect on the power and necessity of community. Beth Monhollen, a member of First Church since 2013, has served on a variety of committees, is an OWL Facilitator and Worship Associate. In her day job, she is an advisor for undergraduate students at Alverno College.



## HOW TO REACH US

414.273.5257

office@uumilwaukee.org

www.uumilwaukee.org

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.*

### SENIOR MINISTER

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jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org, ext. 201

### ASSOCIATE MINISTER

**The Rev. Dena McPhetres**

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### MINISTER EMERITUS

**The Rev. Andrew C. Kennedy, D.Min.**

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### Board of Trustees

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FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY  
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## SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

December 1

**“Humor, Hope and Healing:  
from a Patient’s Point of View”**

Presenter: Barbara Leigh,  
Artist, Administrator & Guide for the Arts in Milwaukee

In December 1987, Barbara Leigh was partially paralyzed in a van accident. This talk incorporates music, puppetry, mime, and storytelling—inviting participation and appreciation in the role of the arts and a sense of humor in the healing process. Host: Christian Becker.

December 8

**”A Glimpse of Current Wisconsin Politics”**

Presenter: Chris Larson, State Senator

In 2008, Chris Larson successfully ran for Milwaukee County Supervisor on a platform of fully funding our parks and transit system. In Fall 2010, he was elected to the Wisconsin State Senate. He will provide a glimpse of current Wisconsin politics. Host: Mark Mueller.

December 15

**“Living Well with Vision Loss”**

Presenter: Rose Visser, Occupational Therapist,  
Vision Forward

Rose Visser will provide an overview of the normal changes that happen to vision as we age, such as decreases in visual acuity and contrast sensitivity. Common age-related eye diseases such as cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy will be highlighted. Host: Christian Becker.

December 22

**“Children’s Literature and Milwaukee  
Connections”**

Presenter: Juliet Hills, Children’s Librarian

Join us as we handle books created by some local named artists and authors, as well as wonderful works of art by noted children’s book artists from the last 80 years of English language books. Learn about working artists in our community and enviable collections owned by local universities. Host: Lorraine Jacobs.

December 29: No Forum

