



THE

CHANTICLEER

First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.

January 2020

Words on the Wind

by The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Amazingly, we are beginning a new decade this month. According to movies from my childhood, this should be the decade of hoverboards, robocops, and dystopias. And while we struggle with our own dystopian realities in the actual 2020, the closest thing I see to a hoverboard is a dockless scooter. Alas. Maybe next decade.

What does it mean to be a people of Integrity this January of 2020? Integrity is about adhering to a moral (or artistic!) code. It is also about wholeness and alignment. Therefore we might say integrity is about adhering to a moral code, but we could also say it is about living a whole life and aligning your life with your truth. Are you living a whole, undivided life? Are your values and your behavior aligned? What about your mind, body, and spirit? Are your intentions in line with your effects?

I invite you to consider how you want to begin the next decade of your life. How can you more fully live your truth in the 2020s? How might you live a more whole life? How can you bring the various pieces of yourself and your life into alignment with your truth? How might we do these things as a religious community? How can we be more whole together? How can we live our congregational truth more fully? How can we bring our intentions in line with our effects? I look forward to exploring life, truth, and wholeness with you in 2020.

Love,
Jennifer

SUNDAY SERVICE & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

JANUARY 5

“You Don’t Have It Until You Live It”

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Jeff Percy, Worship Associate

There is a difference between saying you have integrity and living it. There is no pretending with integrity. We can’t have integrity unless we practice living it. What are your core values and how do you live them out in daily life? Do our self-proclaimed values match how others experience us? Integrity doesn’t happen just once. It takes practice, although there are usually some defining moments. Join us this Sunday while we explore living examples of integrity.

JANUARY 12

“When We Fail”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Julia Oswald, Worship Associate

What do we do when we fail to live in our integrity, as individuals or as a people? Unitarianism has its roots in Puritanism, baking a rigorous distinction between good and bad into our culture. On the other hand, Universalism has its roots in mercy and grace, honoring the inherent worth of all people beyond our worst mistakes. How do we return to integrity when we make mistakes, how do we return to covenant when we break it, and how do we learn to see ourselves whole through all of it? Join us for this Sunday service where we explore what to do when we fail to live into our integrity.

(Sunday Services continued on page 11)

MONTHLY THEME

What does it mean to be a people of

INTEGRITY?

Dena's Digressions

by The Rev. Dena McPhetres

Many of you are familiar with the practice of creating covenants for our work together at First Church. A covenant is a promise of how we intend to treat each other in this religious community filled with aspirations for just, peaceful and transformative relationships. Covenantal relationship is a foundation of our faith, cleverly expressed in the phrase that Unitarian Universalists are about “deeds, not creeds.”

At First Church, we have classroom covenants for all ages in Religious Education, Theme Circle covenants, Social Justice Council covenant, Board of Trustees covenant, and a staff covenant published next to our staff photos. Our ministers also work together steeped in a covenantal relationship. Our ministerial covenant is a promise that guides us into the practice of integrity—with each other, with you, and with the living tradition of our religion.

Since Kimberlee joined our staff as Director of Religious Education in August, Jennifer and I have intentionally begun building our relationship with Kimberlee as a ministry team. An essential part of that process was a conversation to create our covenant, learning about how we wish to be treated, and how we will come back into the right relationship when we inevitably make mistakes.

Large congregations often have multi-minister teams and we benefit from the work of others who crafted their promises into words. You can read the latest rendition of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee's Ministerial Covenant on our church website here: uumilwaukee.org/policies-and-procedures.

Calendar

In this edition of *Chanticleer*, featured classes and events can be found on the pages listed.

Events

Jan. 10 - New Friday Yoga Class, Page 5
Jan. 12 - UU the Vote, Page 10
Jan. 19 - 50th Forum Anniversary, Page 5
Jan. 20 - Feb. 20 - Ethics Class, Page 5
Feb. 4 - Winter Singing Circle, Page 10
Feb. 8 - Parents Night Out, Page 6

Weaving New Patterns of Peace and Justice

by Lynne Jacoby

Membership Development Coordinator

Likely I am not the only one thinking about integrity in regards to the political climate in the world today. Which is why this line in a reading Jacki Zandi of the Pledge Team found in our hymnal kept resonating with me.

“May we... be empowered by that love to weave new patterns of Truth and Justice” – Barbara Wells

Teaching the Journey to Membership classes about Unitarian Universalist (UU) history, I have been highlighting our past denominational conflicts. Partly because I think it is important for new members to understand our inclusivity of different beliefs didn't just pop-up from nowhere. It expanded in stages, and not without heartache and struggle. But partly because I like reminding myself that what we believe today to be true and right and just, our descendants may well see as pretty narrow. And our faith asks us to lean into that reality, uncomfortable as it may feel at times. We say revelation is continuous, that truth unfolds, unendingly.

I picture this tenet as a bit of a guard-rail against the moral cliff of “the ends justify the means” that people on both sides of the aisle seem to be falling off these days, and I too, can forget, in the heat of a moment, how I want to treat others. But in the long run I find it very difficult to justify actions unaligned with my values when one of the cores of my faith is I cannot know all the truth.

But mostly I like how much power “not knowing” gives to creativity. Throughout our history we Unitarian Universalists (UUs) have turned to bigger, broader more colorful and complex patterns. Certainly on the religious front we have woven new truth again and again because our ancestors decided revelation is continuous, because they did not hold their truth as an end.

We need this mindset in the world today, in politics, in social justice, for our earth, for communities. We need the integrity of knowing we cannot know.



Why Have a Minister of Religious Education at First Church?

by The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Last year, our Director of Religious Education Search Committee listened to our children, youth, and parents describe what they wanted for Religious Education (RE) at First Church. The Search Committee listened to RE teachers and members who participated in the RE Interim Process, through workshops and listening sessions. We also solicited input during Coffee Hours, via surveys, and through one-on-one conversations.

We heard a deep yearning for more family ministry – more support for parents trying to raise Unitarian Universalist children and youth in the 21st century. We heard a desire for more support navigating the big challenges of being a child or youth in today's world. We heard a need for resources to empower parents to take UUism home.

Then, we wrote a job description to meet those needs. After advertising nationwide, we heard from multiple ministers or ministers-in-training who asked, "Would you be willing to hire a minister for this position?" Much to our surprise, the job description we wrote described a Minister of Religious Education.

The Search Committee wrestled with that, confronting our preconceived notions and expectations. We returned to the truth that we wrote the job description of what our congregation wanted in this position, and we decided, with the Board's approval, to accept applications from ministers.

In the end, the best applicant for the position was Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, and we were overjoyed to offer her the position, and benefit from her wise, loving and creative leadership. Now that Kimberlee passed the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, it's time to begin the process of transitioning her job title from "Director of Religious Education" to "Minister of Religious Education," while keeping her job description and compensation the same. What's in a name? Turns out, a lot!

Minister of Religious Education

by Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Director of Religious Education

I felt such a joy of possibilities when I first read the job description for the Director of Religious Education here at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee last January. My ministerial call is centered around serving children and families. It is a blessing to have the opportunity to work in a congregation with strong religious education roots, ready to evolve how it serves families.

Religious education should be a lifelong process of discovering and creating a relationship with ourselves, the Universe and the mysteries it contains. Our purpose is to seek answers to questions about what gives meaning, sustenance, and embodiment to the common good within the values of our Unitarian Universalist (UU) tradition. The work of faith formation is to help humanity construct and actualize their potential to choose and then to serve that common good together.

This is an exciting time to be working as a minister in religious education. We are exploring how we can develop our religious education program from a curriculum-driven program to something new, something that is sustainable and meets the needs of families today. This ministry work co-creates resources and experiences with families, reshaping how we do the work together while offering pastoral care and spiritual guidance on the journey.

Our faith is grounded in relationships, nurturing connections and believing that together humanity has the capacity to work towards the greater good. UU family faith development is a journey of relationships as family members connect with one another, the faith community, and the universe to discover and rediscover our dynamic, sustaining faith. This is the ministry work I am called to do, to use my skills in pedagogy, methodology and our UU faith to facilitate relationships and help provide a nurturing environment where we can all thrive and grow.



January's Theme: Integrity

Mark Bishop

Congregation President 2019-2020

The theme of integrity seems fitting in January for so many reasons. January, the start of the new year, is typically the time that we reflect on the past year and make resolutions for the new one - perhaps to resolve to wake up to something, to have the courage to face the truth, or perhaps to speak up and take a stand. January is also when we celebrate the life and contributions of Martin Luther King, Jr. There are many quotes attributed to Dr. King, but one that particularly resonates with me is: "The time is always right to do what is right." That quote could be the tagline for so many of the ministries here at First Church.

I am proud to be part of a congregation that quietly does so much good. As the news is cluttered with stories of institutions or people with questionable integrity, it is reassuring to know that we, as a congregation, continue to strive to do what is right. Happy New Year.

Splinters from the Board

by Dianna Dentino

Board of Trustees

Our First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee Board of Trustees meeting on November 19 began with the discussion of the interpretation of Limitations 4.1, 4.4 & 4.5. Rev. Jennifer added some things related to security and accessibility and Mark Bender noted a few minor changes. Next, the Board discussed monitoring Ends Statement 5: Promote Unitarian Universalism and our shared values in the world and Ends Statement 8: Create accessible, courageous, and innovative welcome to people who might find a sense of belonging and a spiritual home with us. The Board explored context around the visitor information that has been gathered, and discussed the importance of each current member taking an active role in inviting guests since data indicates that this is the most impactful way to grow a community.

Next, the Board discussed our current monitoring governance process, which included the perpetual calendar and Board of Trustees self-assessment tools. Mark Bender shared that he has several templates for First Church to incorporate for tracking the governance process. More discernment and the sorting through of a variety of possible tools needs to be continued, with the current goal to set protocol and practices.

The Board next discussed formalizing the appropriate protocol process for First Church members with grievances. Mark Bender recommended developing a flow chart for clarity. Once this protocol is finalized, it will be accessible on the First Church website.

An ongoing discussion continues regarding the idea of inviting First Church youth members to participate on the Board. Many configurations are to be explored and then determined.

Rev. Jennifer shared with the Board that there are two staff updates. A facilities assistant has been hired. Please welcome Gary Rebholz. Also, Jack Forbes Wilson has given his official notice and will be leaving his position at First Church at the end of December 2019. A memory book is available at the Member Services Table in the Leenhouts Common Room following the services in December. All are invited to share your appreciation, acknowledgments, and gratitude with Jack.

The last item covered during the November Board meeting was related to the KGAT (Lu Krug Gift Acceptance Team). Elizabeth Lentini shared that the current team is working on making some structural changes to the team, the end goal being maximum efficacy and impact. Stay tuned for future updates.

Board meeting minutes are posted on the First Church bulletin board in the central corridor and on the church website. Members of the Board welcome your thoughts and concerns at any time. Our pictures are posted on the central corridor, and we wear yellow name tags. You can find our contact information in the front of the First Church directory.

Plan to Attend Regional Assembly (RA) or General Assembly (GA) in 2020

Bruce Wiggins

Denominational Affairs Coordinator

RA 2020: April 18, Rockford, IL

GA 2020: June 24-28, Providence, RI

GA 2021: June 23-27, Milwaukee, WI

We'd like to have a good contingent to help us prepare for GA here the following year. So far, I know of three of our members who are planning to go to Providence. First Church will be allowed 15 official delegates to conduct our Association's business. Some financial assistance will be available, to be announced in January.

A major focus of programming will be a partnership with Indigenous leaders in the Northeast to explore how to co-exist in the right relationship with one another and the land we occupy. We will deepen our understanding of Unitarian Universalism's role in European settlement, 400 years since our direct religious ancestors on the Mayflower landed in Plymouth and began the colonization of what is now New England. GA will delve into our theological and historical roots, bringing those threads into the present day and acting in solidarity with Indigenous communities. For information on this, along with other workshop and program information, visit www.uua.org/ga.



“Doing the ‘Most’ Right Thing: A Review of Ethics and Morality”

Ken Solis, class leader

Four sessions, January 30–February 20

Thursdays, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$20.00 members/\$35.00 non-members

Making decisions about the right thing to do can be complicated. Join us for this exploration of ethics and morality, which are concerned with determining what we ought to do in different situations, what is “the good” or “the bad,” and other value-oriented questions. Religions usually offer lessons if not outright prescriptions for morality, and some people believe that religion is the main, if not the sole source for morals. We will briefly examine this claim to determine if it might have limitations. We will also explore several secular ethical theories like utilitarianism, duty-based, principle-based, natural law, relational ethics, and others. These tools can be helpful for making decisions, but we will see how a mixture of them is usually needed when making value judgments in social justice, healthcare decisions, or even “living the good life!”



Ken Solis, M.D., M.A. received his medical degree from UW-Madison and his master's degree in bioethics from the Medical College of Wisconsin. He is currently working on a new ethical theory called “complex ethics” that attempts to provide another way of understanding

what we ought to do, and why.

If cost is a barrier, please contact Rev. Dena McPhetres at dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org to request a fee waiver. The registration deadline is Sunday, January 26. You can register at the Religious Education Table on Sundays or online at bit.ly/UUEthics. Childcare is available if requested by January 21.

New Friday Morning Yoga Class Beginning in January

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. To register for yoga classes, visit uumilwaukee.org/events.



50th Forum Anniversary Celebration on January 19, 2020

by Christian Becker

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee's Sunday morning Forum began on January 18, 1970, with a car dealer telling us about the need for a baseball franchise to replace the departed Milwaukee Braves. It's now 50 years later and Hall of Fame Commissioner Bud Selig is still with us, and so is the Sunday morning Forum!

Everyone is invited to join us on Sunday, January 19, 2020, for a celebration that will include a continental breakfast, a brief Forum history, selected CD Forum excerpts, and a banner made by our Youth Group displaying many notable speakers. During this 90-minute event, there will be time for audience members to share their favorite Forum memories. Don't miss it!



You are Going to Love Religious Education Volunteering!

by Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Director of Religious Education

This new year we are making some changes in Religious Education (RE) and we could use some extra hands. Currently, our elementary class has children from first through fourth grade. This large age range is not ideal for our children or teachers, and we need you to help change this to more appropriate age ranges.

Starting in January, class topics will be based on the church's monthly worship themes, including integrity, resilience, and wisdom. Each week that you teach or assist, you will be provided with an engaging lesson plan, laid out clearly and simply to make it very easy for you to use. On any given week, your class might tell stories, play games, engage in discussion, or do a science or craft project.

This new RE lesson format has been well received as it makes volunteering in RE simple and straight forward. Whether you are a brand new or returning volunteer, please consider signing up today!

Most of our volunteers are in the classroom about one Sunday a month. You are always welcomed to sign up for more days if you're interested, or fewer if that's what works for your schedule. We welcome your help in whatever time you have available!

To sign up, please contact RE Admin Lillian Schley at RE.Admin@uumilwaukee.org or at 414-273-5257 ext. 210.

Calling All Mystery Friends!

by Lillian Schley
RE Administrative Assistant

In Children's Religious Education (RE), we're getting ready for one of our favorite events of the year — Mystery Friends! Sundays, January 5-19, adults and children can sign up at the RE Table to be matched with a pen pal from a different generation in our church community. You'll receive your friend's contact information during the week of January 20, and then exchange notes until the Mystery Friends Meet-Up Party on February 29, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. What's the mystery? Children will not know the identity of their pen pal until the very end. Use hints (like "I have red hair," or "I play guitar") to help your friend guess!

Children age 5 and up can participate; parents/guardians are welcome to help children with reading and writing! Youth in grades 8-12 are invited to sign up as EITHER child or adult friends. Any adult members and friends of First Church may participate — you don't need to have a child in RE. Adult participants will go through a simple and secure background check, to ensure Mystery Friends is fun and safe for everyone!

Adult Mystery Friends commit to sending one note in the mail each week, and dropping off another at church each Sunday, January 26-February 23. Parents of Mystery Friends children should make sure their child writes and delivers a letter to church each Sunday, January 26-February 23. Adult and child friends along with a parent/guardian should all attend the Mystery Friends party. If you're not available, parents can make a plan with their child's friend to meet at a different time. (Adults and children shouldn't meet outside of the church without the child's parent/guardian present.)

We know that you will get so much joy out of being a Mystery Friend, no matter your age. If you're looking for something fun to do during this cold time of the year, don't miss signing up!

Parents Night Out

by Deb Solis
Youth Program Coordinator

Parents, do you need a break from your children? Children, do you need a break from your parents? The youth group is hosting an evening childcare fundraiser for their summer Habitat for Humanity service trip to Battle Creek, Michigan on Saturday, February 8 from 5:00-9:00 p.m. at church. Sign-ups begin at the Religious Education (RE) Table on Sunday, January 12. The cost is \$40 for one child and \$10.00 for each additional child. Children ages 4-12 are invited to this evening of food, games, and crafts with our youth. Any questions, contact Deb Solis at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org.

Campus Ministry at UW-Milwaukee!

by Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Director of Religious Education

We are excited to announce that a young adult who has been attending our church is starting a Unitarian Universalist (UU) Campus Ministry group at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee! Kimberlee has expertise in campus ministry and is helping them develop a format and get organized. Every campus ministry group needs faculty or staff to be their sponsor. If you know of someone who might be a good fit, we would love to hear from you. Additionally, if you know of any UU young adults attending the school, please contact Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson at kimberlee.carlson@uumilwaukee.org so we can be in touch about this emerging group.



Meet Dylan Duffy

by Beth Monhollen

Youth Steering Committee Adult-at-Large Member

Dylan Duffy has been attending First Church pretty much all of his life, with his parents and his older sister, Emma, who is a Religious Education (RE) graduate. Dylan's earliest memories of First Church are from RE classes when he was about 5 years old. His RE experience has been positive and included Our Whole Lives (OWL) classes when he was in eighth grade.

He is now a sophomore at Reagan High School in Milwaukee, where he participates in cross country, track & field, and musical theater. In addition to those activities, Dylan loves skateboarding and he plays bass guitar in a band!

He brings the creativity from these various activities and interests into his work with the youth group, which he says is his favorite thing about attending First Church. He likes how nice and accepting everybody is, and how the youth stay engaged with each other and are always focused on projects to help others. He says he enjoys "listening to and chiming in on topics" during the Sunday morning youth group sessions.

Interested in Membership at First Church?

Journey to Membership Winter 2020 Four-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)

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.

Our YouTube Channel

Now Has Over 100 Subscribers

by Shari Wright

Office Coordinator

Last year we created a YouTube channel to show our Sunday services live at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Our First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee YouTube non-profit channel is now named youtube.com/c/FirstUnitarianSocietyofMilwaukee. This URL link is our new customized easy-to-remember channel ID.

After the Sunday live-streamed service, the recording of the Worship Associate story and the sermon are saved in two small videos and shared on our Facebook page. These videos are very popular, shared with friends, and have had over 4,000 views since September 9, 2109. We have also received 554 views on our YouTube channel live and saved videos since September 8, 2019.

I would like to thank our First Church audio techs who monitor the live stream every Sunday service. If you are in the Sanctuary on Sunday, you will see the audio techs located back by the audio closet. They monitor the audio microphones, speakers, and the live stream and podcast equipment.

Next time you are not able to make it to Sunday service, you can grab your coffee, find a comfy couch, and go on our live stream YouTube channel. While you don't need to subscribe to our channel to watch the live stream, if you do subscribe, you can receive a reminder when we are "Live." If you wish to view past services, the live stream videos are saved on our channel too. In the future, we may expand with more videos, so *stay tuned*.

Get Ready for the Used Book Sale

by Nancy Pajewski

Book Tower Co-chair

The annual Used Book Sale will brighten the weekend of March 27-29. The sale is an opportunity to stock up on books you've always wanted to read, to discover new titles to delight you, to pass along volumes you have finished, and to raise money for our church.

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



I Was Arrested for Civil Disobedience

by Terry Wiggins
Earth Justice Ministry Co-chair

On Friday, December 6, the Milwaukee Climate Strike took place at Zeidler Park, and a sit-in took place at Wells Fargo Bank to demand that it stops lending to the fossil fuel industry to build infrastructure.

We were arrested that afternoon and released Friday evening. There were many inspirations for this action and here's why I participated and risked arrest.

First, are the facts of what we see around us and what might come. Fires, floods, droughts, hurricanes, heat waves, crop failures – all exacerbated by climate change. The level of CO2 in the atmosphere is now about 411 parts per million (ppm). When I was born it was about 311 ppm. Scientists consider 350 ppm the maximum safe level to support life on earth as we know it.

Another motivation is a local follow-up to my civil disobedience eight years ago when I sat in front of the White House, asking President Obama to veto the Keystone XL pipeline. I was inspired by the pleas of Bill McKibben and 350.org, and by the brave actions of Tim DeChristopher, who went to federal prison for two years for civil disobedience.

Another motivator was the Seventh Principle of Unitarian Universalism. This principle resonates with me and is what allows me to be a Unitarian Universalist (UU).

Another inspiration is Greta Thunberg who was *Time* magazine's person of the year. She declared that our house is on fire and we need to act like it. She motivated young people all over the world to become involved in climate action, including here in Milwaukee, and 350.org joined them to form the People's Climate Coalition.

Finally, seeing my granddaughter supporting me at the bank window helped me know I was doing the right thing.

I believe that climate chaos endangers me and all that I have ever loved, and you and all that you have ever loved.

2020 Vision

by Cesar Cornier
Social Justice Coordinator

As we welcome a new year and transition out of this decade, we are faced with the realization of change. Regardless of how ready we may think we are, time continues to lead us in the present with every second leading into the next. Time humbles us, reminding us not only of the past but the current pace of life. In embracing the New Year, many often look to the future and create goals to make positive changes for themselves and others around them. I'm sure we are all familiar with that campaign where we convince ourselves, this is the year! The year of growth, the year of unmatched success, the year we become the best version of ourselves.

Although our attempts to revitalize our lives come from good intentions, it is sometimes those exact intentions that may keep us held back. Having goals is great, but so is knowing that imperfection is a crucial part of life and development.

As we celebrate Martin Luther King Day later this month, I reflect on the work of the many advocates who came before me. I think not only of the successes of these great people, but also their obstacles. I think about the events that didn't go as planned, the times when hate tried to interrupt the process of peace. What made these people great was not the lack of adversaries or defeats they had, but how they gracefully stayed on the path of justice with resilience. Their hope overcame hate, their dreams defeated despair. In this present time, we are still seeing division and confusion amongst one another.

I ask that we take 20/20 vision into 2020, not only looking at the community but within ourselves for hope. Having a clear focus does not mean ignoring the obstacles, but rather making sure we are aware of all our surroundings. With energy and room to grow amongst ourselves we will be the best version for ourselves, and for our community that needs us.





Victory Garden Initiative is our January Share the Plate recipient. Founded in 2009, Victory Garden Initiative's slogan is "This is a grassroots movement. Move grass. Grow food." They work to ensure that communities throughout Milwaukee are taught how to grow and enjoy their own food. Their mission is to build "communities that grow their own food, to create a community-based, socially just, environmentally sustainable, nutritious food system for all."

Through its various programs, Victory Garden Initiative (VGI) aims to build a more socially just and sustainable food system. One of their biggest programs is the Great Milwaukee Victory Garden Blitz. It is the nation's largest garden building event. Volunteers at VGI help to deliver and install multiple raised garden beds in communities all around Milwaukee. To date, there have been over 4,500 raised beds installed since 2009. This year the Blitz will be from May 9-23. To learn more about this organization or how you can volunteer for the 2020 Blitz, please visit their website at victorygardeninitiative.org.

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

Beginning January 4 Large Sunday Parking Lot at Van Buren

by Jean Johnson
Director of Administration

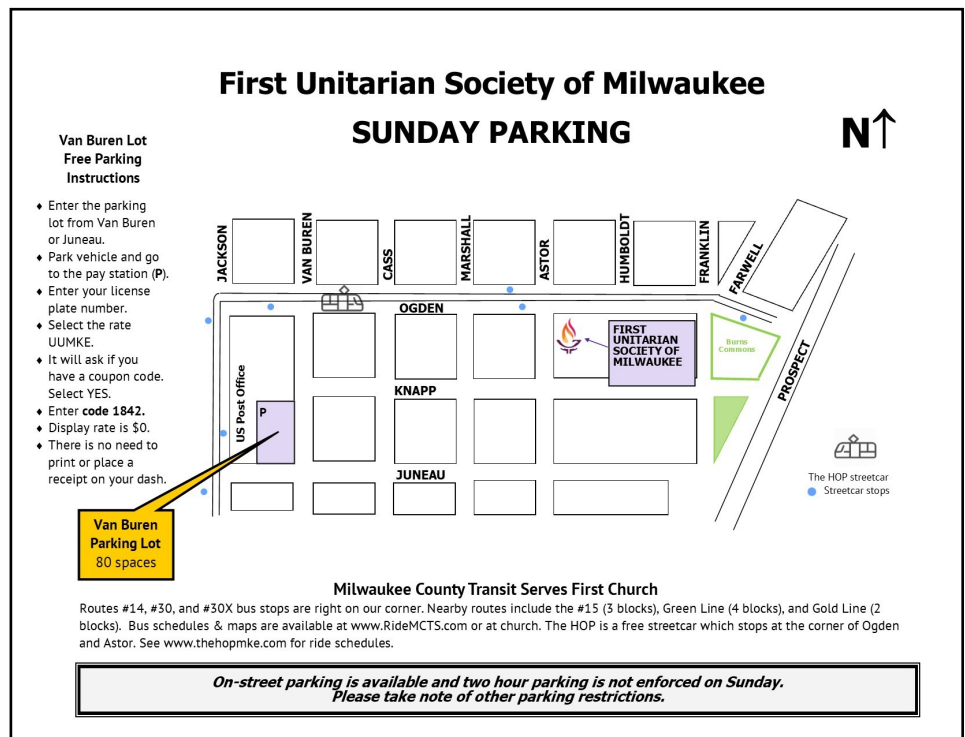
As of January 1, we can no longer use the Cass Park lot owned by MPS. But the Parking Solutions Task Force has found a great new lot with 80 spots for free parking on Sundays.

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 4 blocks from church. An added feature of this lot is that it is one-half block from the Hop streetcar stop on Jackson at Juneau. That's just two stops from the church. A map of the lot can be found on the uumilwaukee.org website or at church by the front entrance.

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 for Sundays only.

Here are the simple instructions:

- Enter the lot from Van Buren or Juneau.
- Park vehicle and go to the pay station.
- Enter your license plate number.
- Select the rate: UUMKE.
- It will ask if you have a coupon code. Select YES.
- Enter code: 1842 (the year our church was founded).
- Display rate is \$0.
- No need to print a receipt or place a receipt on your dash.



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.

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 hallway 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 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 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.

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

Winter Singing Circle

By Alissa Rhode
Lead Music Director

Our Tuesday evening Singing Circle returns for a five-week session on February 4 - March 3 from 6:45-8:00 p.m. in Max Otto Hall. Experience the joy and power of singing together in the oral tradition as vocalist Julie Thompson facilitates a circle of songs, rounds, and chants. Join in this sacred time to connect through the magic of sound. We'll explore the spiritual practice of communal singing and raise our spirits by raising our voices. No experience necessary!

Registration is now open at bit.ly/UUWinterSinging before January 15 for the Early Bird rate of \$50 for the five-week session. The fee will be \$60 after January 15. To learn more about Julie Thompson, visit: <https://julievoice.com/>.

"UU"-ING THE VOTE AT FIRST CHURCH

by Mary Devitt
Social Justice Council

First Church's Social Justice Council, made up of leaders of the various social justice teams/committees of our congregation, has agreed to participate in the denomination's effort to "UU the Vote" in the coming election year. The Council will be working together to make electoral engagement a strategic facet of the justice work we do, to #VoteLove and #DefeatHate.

We invite anyone who is interested in participating in "UU the Vote" to join other First Church members in participating in a national online training on January 12, at 3:00 p.m. at First Church. If you are interested in being part of this team, please contact Social Justice Intern Cesar Cornier, cesar.cornier@uumilwaukee.org. More information at www.uua.org/justice/vote2020.



JANUARY 19

“Morality vs. Ethics”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

George Bledsoe, Worship Associate

Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday

When discussing issues of right and wrong, people often use the terms “morality” and “ethics” interchangeably. However, morality refers to an individual’s internal sense of right and wrong, while ethics refers to a community’s shared understanding of right and wrong. If we are a people of integrity, then we also must define the terms of that integrity: are we in integrity with ourselves, our community, our society? What happens when individual morals conflict with communal ethics? What happens when a community’s ethics conflict with the larger society’s code of conduct? Join us for this Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday where we explore truth, risk, and the relationship between individual and communal integrity.

JANUARY 26

“Weaving Morals and Ethics Together”

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Director of Religious Education

Dale Skaggs, Worship Associate

Church is a place where we wrestle with moral and ethical dilemmas. Without a creed, how does Unitarian Universalism bring individual morals into a shared religious ethic? How do we teach integrity? How do we keep the integrity of our systems and institutions healthy? And most importantly, how do we bring shared values into practice? Join us for this final Sunday of the Integrity theme, where we examine how church weaves individual morality into shared ethics, and theoretical values into lived daily practice.

Office Closed January 20

Please note that the First Church office will be closed Monday, January 20, in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

HOW TO REACH US

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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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SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

JANUARY 5

"Unlearning Racism: Coded Language, Bias and Microaggressions"

Presenter: Dynasty Ceasar, Racial Justice Trainer,
YWCA Southeast Wisconsin

The YWCA Southeast Wisconsin's Racial Justice team has developed *The Unlearning Racism: Coded Language, Bias, and Microaggressions* presentation to help people identify the root of these claims and to develop more thoughtful responses. This session will provide definitions, engage participants in an activity to identify their own racial biases, and will introduce ways to support those who are interrupted when using microaggressions and coded language.

JANUARY 12

"Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers: Patient Centered & Family Based"

Presenter: Chris Mambu-Rasch, Director of
Government & Community Relations,
Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers

Since 1969, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers has provided high quality health care, health education, and social services for residents of the multi-cultural neighborhoods on Milwaukee's South Side. Learn about their innovative programming and dedication to the complete health of the individual as well as the overall health of the broader community.

JANUARY 19

"Sunday Forums: Join the 50th Anniversary Celebration"

Presenters: Members of the Sunday Forum Group, past and present
The Sunday Forum Program at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee will celebrate the 50th anniversary of consistent years of Sunday morning lectures. You can count on a lively review of past topics and speakers, and appreciation for the many congregation members who have worked together inviting and hosting presenters through the years. It's time for everyone to remember and share.

JANUARY 26

"Tricklebee Café: Cheerful Hearts, Continual Feast, Cozy Chapel"

Presenter: Rev. Christie Melby-Gibbons,
Executive Director, Tricklebee Café

Established in 2016, Tricklebee Café has been serving up delicious, nutritious, freshly made food in the Sherman Park neighborhood, regardless of customers' ability to pay. Come learn about "Tricklebee Economics" and hear real life stories from daily Tricklebee Café life.

