

JULY 2021



THE

# CHANTICLEER

The First Unitarian Society  
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.



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## Monthly Theme



*What does it mean to  
be a people of*

# Purpose

# Inside News

by the *Chanticleer* Editors

We're excited to present the *Chanticleer* newsletter with a new updated look.

The *Chanticleer* has evolved over time. For decades, First Church printed and mailed our church newsletter to members and friends. For several years, we have also offered the same layout and format online. Since April 2020, only the online version has been emailed to our church friends, members, and many visitors to connect them with our church during the pandemic. Many new visitors are viewing our monthly newsletter online.

We are excited to show you a new colorful online format of our newsletter with larger type, more pictures, and links to additional information. On the front page, "This Issue" lists the topics you love reading with each page number linking directly to the relevant page.

We appreciate you subscribing to our monthly newsletter. Please share it with a friend! If you have feedback, feel free to contact Office Manager Shari Wright.

## Summer Share the Plate



**NEHEMIAH  
PROJECT**  
Home, Help and Hope for Teens

The Nehemiah Project is our summer Share the Plate recipient. With two facilities in Milwaukee, the Nehemiah Project works with teens and young men, 13-20 years-old, who have served their sentences and are preparing to return to their families. In operation since the early 1970s, its mission is to "promote the physical and emotional well-being of youth through psychological, educational, leadership, and transitional living services in a residential community."

The Nehemiah Project provides residential, 24 hour care in their halfway houses and offers a wide variety of programs for its residents to "move them in positive ways toward adulthood without further contact with the criminal justice system."

For more information about the Nehemiah Project and how to become more involved, please visit their website at [www.nehemiahprojectinc.org](http://www.nehemiahprojectinc.org). This non-profit organization accepts clothing items, furniture, financial donations and offers volunteer opportunities.

Donate to this charity



# Words on the Wind

## by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

What does it mean to be a people of Purpose?

Theologian Frederick Buechner famously said that vocation is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.

Buechner was talking about a person's calling in life, but the same principle can apply to smaller pieces of purpose. In an individual day, what would bring you joy that also needs to be done? There is purpose in the small intersection as well as the large.

Of course, purpose can also be considered in the expansive sense. Perhaps you are wrestling with a weighty choice in your life. What would touch your deep gladness and also meet a deep need in the world?

This July, as you are handed long hot days and To Do lists and expectations, may you find moments where what brings you joy is also something that meets need in the world. May you experience purpose, both small and large.

With love,  
Jennifer

### Our Ministers' Summer Schedule

**Rev. Jennifer** is on vacation June 28 – July 18 and on study leave July 19 – August 1. She will return to work and email on August 2.

**Rev. Dena** is on vacation June 30 – July 5 and August 19 – 29. She is on study leave August 30 – September 6.

**Rev. Kimberlee** is on vacation July 5–9 and July 19-22. She is on study leave June 28–July 2 and July 26-30. She will return to work on August 2.

Please contact Shari Wright, Office Manager, regarding church business at:  
[shari.wright@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:shari.wright@uumilwaukee.org)  
or 414-273-5257.

# Dena's Digressions

by Rev. Dena McPhetres



Rev. Scott Taylor wrote in the Soul Matters theme packet on the theme of Purpose,

*“Wiccan and Witchcraft traditions see purpose and intention as the real magical power in any of their spells. Hindus don’t call it magic, but they treat purpose just as centrally. Purpose—or “rajas” as they call it—is the force that saves human beings from life’s primary negative force: “tamas”—their word for worldly depression. This tension between purpose and depression is seen as life’s primary battle and determines whether one is born higher or lower on the life scale when one is reincarnated.”*

During the pandemic, your First Church ministers and staff prioritized helping our members find purpose and meaning. Finding purpose and meaning helps us through difficult times, including how trauma affects each of us in our particularity and all of us as community.

While we move carefully toward reopening in-person church, we might feel like turning a corner, leaving the past behind and with it our hard-won intentions. During times of major transition (like COVID reopening), we need to fine-tune our sense of purpose and live with even more intention.

People are joyful these days, yet vulnerable. We’d like to rush from the past to the future, but what about the present? What can we notice about who we are now and how we have changed? “We are still living in liminal times,” Rev. Jennifer said at our staff retreat. “The Before is behind us, the Not Yet is not here. We long for a return to normal, but we are different now.”

Friends, may we use the slower pace of summer to explore our particular individual purpose in life—life as it is now. May we set our intentions for our life as community—community as it will be. May we hold each other’s hopes and vulnerabilities gently.

Yours,  
Dena





# Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



## **What is the Purpose of Religious Education?**

## **What gives life meaning and value?**

## **How am I connected to this world?**

## **Do I believe in good? What is evil?**

These questions focus on what we believe, what we put our faith in. Exploring the answers together gives us hope, purpose, brings joy and builds resilience.

How do we teach our children to be self-aware, to find solace and meaning inside themselves in a world where they are inundated with a plethora of confusing messages about what has value? We offer them a unique kind of education, a distinct religious education. Unitarian Universalist religious education encourages people to not only ask but experience and reflect on life's big questions.

"The function of the church for both young and old is not to give us on Sundays certain kinds of experiences different from experiences of the every day. The function of the church is rather to teach us how to put religious and ethical

qualities into all kinds of experiences." These are the words of Rev. Sophia Lyon Fahs, a Unitarian religious educator activist whose work shaped Unitarian Universalism pedagogy.

Religion education gives parents, teachers, and faith leaders a way to lift our children up, to empower and enable them to make connections between lived experience and religious concepts. We do more than educate the mind, we help them tend to their souls. Religious education gives our young people a time to raise their voice in song, light a candle while participating in ritual, express themselves and explore mystery in beloved community. It is an opportunity for children to develop their own innate spiritual awareness.

Religious education gives us all a chance, to explore and make meaning in our world. It attempts to do no less than help us discover meaning and illuminate our journeys together as worthwhile and meaningful.

May it be so,  
Rev. Kimberlee





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## What Kind of God Do You Want?

**Kevin Gibson, First Church Member**

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Dale Skaggs, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube link](#)

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## Finding Your Purpose

**Rev. Dena McPhetres**

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Jobey Clarke, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube link](#)

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## Free Life Began

**Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan**

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube Link](#)

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## The Purpose of Relationships

**Annie Wegner LeFort, First Church Member**

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Nick Hayes, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube Link](#)



### **Pulpit Guest July 4 ♦ Kevin Gibson**

Kevin Gibson and his family have been members of First Church for over 20 years. Kevin grew up in England where he served in the British Army before doing his undergraduate degree. He spent a year in the USA as an exchange student where he met his sweetheart, now his wife, Elizabeth. He subsequently worked in a variety of fields, including driving a double decker bus and operating the spotlight at an ice show before writing his PhD thesis on the jurisprudence of alternative dispute resolution. He recently retired as Professor Emeritus after teaching philosophy at Marquette University for 25 years.

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### **Pulpit Guest July 18 ♦ Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan**

Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan (she/they) serves as Lead Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY. With a background in economic development and recruitment, Shari hopes that what you're buying with your time and heart is your own best life. Shari and their wife Elisabeth live with their cat Hildegard and too many houseplants.

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### **Pulpit Guest July 25 ♦ Annie Wegner LeFort**

Annie Wegner LeFort has been a First Church member since 2006. She teaches yoga and cooking classes in the metro-Milwaukee area. She identifies as a movement practitioner (dancer, capoeirista, distance runner, acroyogini, hiker, drummer) artist, and mother to Vera, age 12. Annie works with adults and young people to help them become more comfortable in their bodies, celebrate their uniqueness, learn practical relaxation techniques, gain focus and stability, and heal through gentle stretching and meditation.

## Spiced Up Fun at First Church "Chopped!"

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Last month, many of our families joined us for a cooking adventure in religious education. Each family received a special delivery from Deb Solis and Rev. Kimberlee filled with secret ingredients, aprons, and chef's hats for the children. Promptly at four o'clock everyone joined us on Zoom for an hour of cooking, fun, and food themed music.



The first round was appetizers, each family had twenty minutes to create something with eggs, Japanese curry powder, miniature cucumbers and anything in their pantry. Our judges (Shari Wright, Deb Solis and Rev. Kimberlee) based their decision on presentation, use of secret ingredients, and the look on the families face when they tasted it. The appetizer round was won by the Richards family with their cumin curry egg salad crackers! The second round was the sweetest, the dessert round featured cream cheese, lychees, and caramel/cheese popcorn. This was a tough decision but ultimately the Robbin family won with their lychee sorbet crumble!

We are so grateful for the families who joined us for this unique and joyous event!



## Family Game Nights

This summer, join us for monthly, virtual game nights for all ages! Get to know the First Church Religious Education (RE) community while you team up with your family for some wholesome fun!

Register online for the July event. All ages are welcome to participate! Register here at <https://bit.ly/UUREgames>.

### July 18: Family Feud

Team up with your family to guess the most popular answers to hilarious questions.

### August 15: Minute to Win It

Relays, balance challenges, and more!

**Sign up for RE Weekly News!**



## New Pastoral Care Team Named

by Rev. Dena McPhetres

Thank you to everyone who applied to become a Pastoral Care Associate (PCA). We received more applications than positions available for this important ministry. I'm delighted to announce the names of our new PCA team who will be trained this fall and begin serving in late October. Until then, please continue to contact Jeri Percy, PCA Coordinator for a quiet compassionate listener from our current team ([fuspastoralcare@gmail.com](mailto:fuspastoralcare@gmail.com)).

Welcome and thank you to our trainees: Bob and Sue Austin, Lynn Connolly, Deborah Conta, Jean Groshek, Jeff and Joan Hansen, Melinda Vernon, and Kitty Willkomm!

*Are you looking for a deeply engaging, heart-opening experience to build your Unitarian Universalist identity and develop your personal theology and spiritual practice?*

## Become a Theme Circle Facilitator

by Rev. Dena McPhetres

Theme Circles support and deepen the spiritual journey of participants in community with each other and in connection with our church's monthly worship themes. This fall will be our fourth year of Theme Circles. We are looking for new facilitators.

Theme Circle participants and facilitators say the spiritual exercises, readings, reflections, and sharing have significantly affected their personal lives and their experience of Sunday services. They feel closer to each other and the congregation through sharing how a theme brings meaning to their lives.

Do you feel called to this ministry of creating a trusting space for reflection and exploration in a small group of your peers? Theme Circles are effective online, in person, or a combination as we move into multi-platform church. We can help you learn how to use Zoom.

Find more details and an application form to apply by July 15 at the link. Facilitator training is required online in August or September with the leader of Soul Matters themes, Rev. Scott Tayler. First Church Theme Circles begin mid-October.



**More Information  
& Application  
Click Here**

# Walk and Roll Outside... Together!

by Bruce Wiggins

Co-Chair Earth Justice Ministry

We invite you to our monthly Walk and Roll (wheelchair friendly) in McGovern Park, Saturday, July 10 at 10:00 a.m. Meet at the parking lot on North 51st Boulevard, just south of Silver Spring Drive. Bring your family and friends for an easy one-mile hike. For a park map, see <https://county.milwaukee.gov/files/county/parks-department/Park-Maps/McGovern1.pdf>

Walk leader Cheri Briscoe is a First Church and Park People member. Cheri says:

It is a lovely well-kept park, with on-site parking. We will hike over to the Senior Center which in a normal year has lots of neat senior activities. There is a lovely forest along the way, a big lagoon, and a kids' playground. Numerous trails are available for people who do not use wheelchairs. On Monday and Wednesday mornings there is senior line dancing at the Senior Center parking lot. The music has a delightful African American influence, the approximately 30 participants are welcoming and happy to help newcomers learn the steps. Several are friends of mine.

The beautiful landscape at McGovern Park





# Engaging with Earth Justice Ministry

by Terry Wiggins, Earth Justice Ministry

Please contact me ([terry.wiggins50@gmail.com](mailto:terry.wiggins50@gmail.com)) if you are interested in either of these:

- Learning about EJM activities, events, and concerns. You can be added to the First Church Earth Justice Google Group. You don't have to wait until we're back to in-person programs to sign up. Don't worry, there is not a lot of emailing – just pertinent info. We have some interesting, fun, and engaging activities planned for the Fall.
- Receive a free copy of YES! magazine. The “Solving Plastic” Issue. Articles include:
  1. How to Get Rid of Throwaway Culture.
  2. What Comes After this Plastic-Filled Pandemic?
  3. What to Do with Piles of Plastic Waste?
  4. Should I Wear Plants or Plastic?

YES! magazine brings good news to which people can say, “Yes”! With inspirational and encouraging stories/articles, its tagline is “Journalism for People Building a Better World.”



YES! Magazine is currently free for online viewing and gives you access to digital, interactive editions including lots of photos and videos.

To see past issues and subscribe to the magazine go to the YES! website or [click here for more information](#).



## JULY EVENTS



### Buddhist Study Group

Wednesdays, July 7 & 21, 6:30 pm

[Join Us Here](#)

Join us as we meet to share our thoughts and interpretations of Buddhist teachings and ideas from the current book. Then we meditate as a group for a short while and have fellowship. On Zoom. For more information, contact Mark Miller at [gatheringwaterssangha@gmail.com](mailto:gatheringwaterssangha@gmail.com).

### Poetry Contemplation

Every Wednesday, 9:00 am

[Join Us Here](#)



Join us online as we listen, respond, and rest with the words of selected poets and in the company of others in our community. Come listen for what resonates and illuminates. Members, guests, and visitors are welcome to join this open, weekly, drop-in practice.

### Book Discussion Group

Sunday, July 11, 12:45 pm

Join us as we discuss July's read: *The Woman of Troublesome Creek: A Novel*. The book follows the life of a travelling librarian in Kentucky in the 1930's. It is a view into the bigotry and ignorance in the depression era. Just drop in! Contact Chris Linder for the meeting location at [celinder@att.net](mailto:celinder@att.net).



### Connect & Reflect

Every Thursday, 6:00 pm

[Join Us Here](#)

Connect with a small group as we share a short reading and check in with how your spirit is doing. Reflect together on a few questions prompted from the reading. Sharing is always optional. Bring yourself, your dinner, your joys, your concerns. All are welcome.



# Pastoral Care Support Reminders

First Church continues to support our members with pastoral care through the summer.

- **Home Grief Kits:** a simple bag of supplies and instructions to create sacred space at home to remember your loved one. Contact Rev. Dena at: [dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org).
- **Shawls,** lap robes and baby blankets are available again, handmade by members of our shawl ministry. Contact Rev. Dena.
- **COVID Candle** during Sunday worship to honor the death of a loved one of any of our members who died from COVID-19 or any other cause. Contact one of the ministers.
- **Pastoral Care Providers (PCP)** resumed meal delivery to church members due to illness, return home from surgery, etc. PCPs provide masked contactless delivery. Contact PCP Coordinator Jane Dorweiler at [fuspcprovider@gmail.com](mailto:fuspcprovider@gmail.com) or 414-839-3053.
- **Pastoral Care Associates (PCA)** are available. When you need a quiet, compassionate listener. Contact PCA Coordinator Jeri Pearcy at [fuspastoralcare@gmail.com](mailto:fuspastoralcare@gmail.com) or 414-416-6036.
- **Pastoral Care Emergency.** To speak with a minister in case of emergency, call our Pastoral Care Emergency line at 414-216-3113.
- **For personal financial assistance,** please contact Rev. Dena in July for the Ministers' Discretionary Fund.

## All in the Family

*Life is hard sometimes. We experience sickness, job loss, broken hearts, and broken bodies. We want to support you through those difficult times.*



More Information...

Crysta and Teddy Jarczynski welcomed their daughter Caroline "Lulu" Rose Jarczynski Monacelli, born on March 20 at 10:06 p.m. Lulu weighed 9 lb 4oz. Parents and baby are all doing well. Congratulations!

Amanda DeBoer and Andrew Boddyspargo welcomed their daughter Josephine Charlie DeBoer into the world on June 6 at 5:37 a.m. Josephine weighed 7 lb 6 oz. Mom and baby, Dad and big sister Evelyn are all doing well. Congratulations!

We send our condolences to Eileen and Courtenay Teska, whose mother and grandmother, Virginia Harnett, died peacefully from natural causes on May 19 in Elmhurst Illinois where she was in assisted living. She was 102 years old.

# COVID Re-Opening Team

## Policy & Precautions

### by the COVID Re-Opening Team

At the annual meeting, we were pleased to present the policy and precautions procedure for our return to in-person church activities.

With love and justice as two of our core values, our focus is ensuring safety for all, including vulnerable populations in the church and the public at-large. By using strict scientific criteria and appropriate precautions, First Church will be able to re-open safely.

The Team balanced different needs including families, elders, people with health concerns, folks who are longing to reconnect, marginalized communities, and public health. The resulting policy is more cautious and slow-moving than some other institutions for several reasons. [Learn More Here.](#)

[This overview](#) of the policy and precautions is a helpful introduction. For all the details, see the complete [policy](#) and [precautions procedure](#).

How will you know the open status? First Church actively communicates the current re-opening status on a weekly basis on our website, Facebook page, Instagram, Friday announcements, and the church voicemail message. Questions? Write the COVID Team at [covidteam@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:covidteam@uumilwaukee.org).

We are very grateful for your patience and compassion as we prepare to re-open safely, inclusively, and with care, love, and justice at the center of what we do.

Incidence per 100,000 over 7 days	INDOORS Allowed in-person indoor gatherings	OUTDOORS Additional allowed in-person outdoor gatherings
Any	Clergy pastoral care (vaccinated clergy)	N/A
<100	Memorial services (25 person attendance limit)	25 person attendance limit
<50	Small groups (20 person attendance limit)	50 person attendance limit
<10	Sunday worship and other large groups	N/A

### COVID Team

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom,  
Senior Minister  
Erik Alexander (Chair)  
Lisa Koneazny  
Stacy Koenen  
Trudy Watt  
Jean Johnson,  
Dir. of Administration

# Staff Directory

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Staff members have varying hours.  
Please contact them directly to set up an appointment.

## Board of Trustees Officers

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Dianna Dentino  
Patricia Geenen  
Rollie Hanson  
Mark Miller

## How to Reach Us

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1342 N. Astor St. Milwaukee, WI 53202

PLEASE NOTE: Due to COVID-19, our building is closed until further notice. Emailing our staff is the best way to reach us.

Visit us at



uumilwaukee.org



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