

SEPTEMBER 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*

Embracing Possibility

Inside News

by the *Chanticleer* Editors

Welcome to the new “church year”!

September is always a season of excitement and re-connecting to church. In this uncertain time of the COVID Delta surge, we’ll need to be flexible and patient as we plan, build, and change how we’ll be “doing church” while the complex realities unfold.

In this issue, you can read about how Rev. Jennifer and the Worship Team have shaped an additional, online Sunday service in the afternoon. Also, learn about when we’ll meet in-person, and when our policy indicates we can meet online only. We’re excited about some new outdoor worship and ritual opportunities coming soon!

Rev. Kimberlee provides an update about this year’s high-quality Children’s Religious Education (CRE) programs as they flex and respond to changing COVID restrictions.

And a new group of Theme Circles is forming in September for the new church year. Don’t miss this once-a-year opportunity!

What will this church year hold? What shape will it take? As Rev. Dena says, with all this change, let’s stretch toward possibility!

September Share the Plate

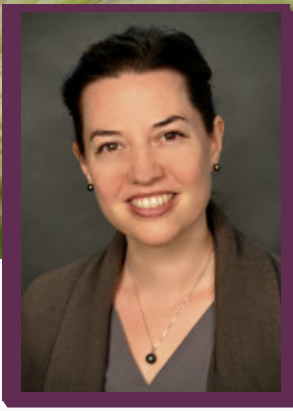


**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Wisconsin is our September Share the Plate recipient beginning Sunday, September 12th. As stated on their website: The grassroots work we do focuses on eliminating the loss of life from suicide by: delivering innovative prevention programs, educating the public about risk factors and warning signs, raising funds for suicide research and programs, and reaching out to those individuals who have lost someone to suicide.

Since its founding in 1987, AFSP established chapters in fifty states. The Wisconsin chapter participates in featured national programs such as: “More Than Sad: Teen Depression,” “It’s Real,” and “Talk Saves Lives.” There are also continuing local events to offer support, educate, and raise money. The upcoming fundraiser, “Out of the Darkness-Community Walks,” is an annual walk that will be held this year on September 18 at the Riverbend Trail in Merrill, WI. Click [here](#) to learn more about this event, how to register for the walk, and donate directly to the fundraiser.

Donate to this charity



Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Dear Ones,

I write to you in the midst of the Delta surge of the COVID-19 pandemic here in Wisconsin and around the world.

Vaccination is our best tool to prevent severe illness and death from COVID-19. It is also a key tool to prevent the spread of the virus that has killed over 600,000 people in the United States, and more than 2 million people globally. We must use every tool at our disposal to reduce the devastation.

COVID-19 has harmed marginalized communities, particularly communities of color, more than it has harmed more privileged communities. Communities of color also have lower vaccination rates than white communities, for a variety of reasons, including the history of white supremacy and current experiences of oppression. Communities with low rates of vaccination are being harder hit by the new Delta variant, and unvaccinated people are more likely to become seriously ill and die from COVID-19.

Living Our Values

This means it is vitally important and in line with our Unitarian Universalist values to do everything we can to slow transmission of this virus, including getting vaccinated, wearing masks indoors, and staying home and/or getting tested when we are feeling sick. We live our UU values by doing these things.

*"COVID-19 has harmed
marginalized
communities, particularly
communities of color,
more than it has harmed
more privileged
communities."*

*We commit to:
Living our values &
Recognizing difference*

*Grace when living our
values is difficult.*

Word on the Wind continued on page 4

Word on the Wind Continued

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Living Our Values continued

We also live our UU values by understanding that difference makes a difference when people make choices about getting vaccinated. We all operate in larger systems that affect our choices and their consequences.

Although the news often portrays unvaccinated folks as people refusing vaccination because they reject the science behind it, studies have shown that a significant portion of people who haven't been vaccinated yet are afraid of taking time off work to get the vaccine, or of losing work if they get sick from its effects. There is also a difference between white folks who believe they don't need the vaccine because God will protect them from the virus, for instance, and Black folks who have been systematically abused by the healthcare industry for centuries and are therefore suspicious of it based on repeated experiences of abuse.

Our Faith Calls Us to Recognize Difference

Unitarian Universalism believes humanity keeps learning and growing, and with it, so does our knowledge of the world. Our faith calls us to listen to evidence and the best knowledge of our time, which is today's science. Our faith values and science are aligned in calling us to get vaccinated, wear masks indoors, and stay home if we are sick.

Our faith values also call us to recognize that histories of privilege and oppression affect individual and community interpretations of data and perceptions of the credibility of various messengers. It also calls us to recognize the difference between a decision made based on entitlement, and one made based on oppression.

We can know the science is true and the vaccine is safe and simultaneously approach our neighbors with compassion and humility when we have conversations with them about why they may believe differently. Having those conversations in love, listening deeply to another person, and then sharing facts about the vaccine and virus, is not only living our UU value of right relationship, it is also the best way to invite people to consider new information—something that happens most often in relationships of trust and mutual respect.

Word on the Wind continued on page 5

Word on the Wind Continued

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Grace When Living Our Values is Difficult

This moment in history is calling us to be our best selves while simultaneously putting unprecedented amounts of pressure on us. Living our values is incredibly difficult when we are tired, scared, traumatized, and grief-ridden. Anger and exhaustion are embedded in grief, and all of us, and all our neighbors, are going through grief and collective trauma. Our context makes deep, honest, respectful conversations across differences of race and class hard.

We are called by our faith, and by love, to do the best we can each day. If the grief or anger is too much today, then spend some time tending to it and to your dear, beautiful, beloved heart. If you feel grounded today, then pull some love up through the roots of the earth and send it out to your neighbors, whether that be through a deep and hard conversation, through getting a vaccine, or through wearing a mask. Yes, the science is right. Yes, our faith calls us to espouse that. But our faith also calls us away from arrogance and towards understanding what differences led us to be able to believe the science in the first place. There, we might find the ground of humility that will enable transformation.

With so much love for you in all this world's complexity, beauty, and difficulty,

Jennifer

Plans for Sunday Services this Fall

See these pages to learn about Sunday Services and new programs this fall.

Multi-platform Church

Page 10

Fall Sunday Services Online & In-Person

Page 11

New! 4:00 p.m. Sunday Services Zoom Watch Parties

Page 12

Introducing Sunday Services House Watch Parties

Page 12

Dena's Digressions

by Rev. Dena McPhetres



Ok, I'll admit it: I'm tired of change. Anyone else? I recently became aware that pandemic fatigue includes change fatigue. Can't something just stay the same for a while? For example: the way we do church? School? Work? Public events?

Nope, not in the cards. Change is constant. Change is hard. Change is unpredictable. Change involves loss and sometimes fear. And when we are tired, our capacity to be flexible is limited. Instead of thinking about how we can be more open to change, I wonder if it would be interesting to think about when and how and where we experience being flexible? Then we might play with applying our joy in flexibility to our attitude toward change.

I love stretching my body. If I go for a day without stretching, I don't feel well. As I age, I lose flexibility in my body, but when I stretch, I gain some of it back. It feels good and I can literally change my movements and my direction with more ease and grace.

How can I apply the joy of that bodily experience of stretching when new ideas and possibilities are presented to me? I can practice stretching my mind toward the edge of discomfort and discover spaciousness and possibilities that I never considered before.

Honestly, I'm not ready yet to embrace possibility, as our September theme invites. (You know I'm not much of a hugger!) But stretching toward possibility? Yes, I'm there. Moaning and groaning a bit, but I'm there. Anyone else?

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.

Our healing thoughts are with **Elaine Murray** who is recovering from surgery on a broken ankle.

Our heartfelt condolences are with **Jill Erickson** whose father died on July 29, 2021

We send our condolences to **Jeanne and Chloe Lewis** as they grieve the June 14 death of Michael Lewis, Jeanne's ex-husband and Chloe's father. The Lewis family were members of First Church in the 1990s through 2010s, and Michael Lewis's Memorial Service will be held at UU Church West on Saturday, September 11, at 10:00 a.m.



Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



Our faith community is both a source and a place of possibility, so despite the constantly rotating restrictions this pandemic brings, we will continue to find a way forward and offer quality religious education for our families, children, and youth.

This fall, our Religious Education program will build on the wisdom gained from the past year and a half. We all have learned so much about creatively embracing the technology that allows us to actively connect at a safe distance. I am so grateful and proud of the way we have shared stories, song, wisdom, struggles, cooking, dancing, justice making, anti-racism education, and creating worship together. I continue to be delighted and relieved that there is learning and fun to be had in a Zoom Room. Our most successful programs will return, they include:

- **Early childhood classes** for pre-kindergarten through second grade with Mariah Groshek and Lindsay Porter at 9:15 a.m. on Sundays.
- **Families Together** is an intentional time of ministry to and with our families. We explore our faith monthly themes as we share and connect with one another, at 11:15-45 a.m. on Sundays led by Rev. Kimberlee.
- **Crossing Paths**: Exploring religion and theology for 5th through 9th grade led by Rev. Kimberlee & Deb Solis.

In addition, I have sought out the knowledge and experience of our larger faith community, communicating with religious educators across the country to find the best resources available. This search has yielded some new opportunities that we will offer this fall, they include:

- **UU Wellspring** for Youth (ages 14-19)
- **OWL**: Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators
- **UU Minecraft** for upper elementary and middle school children

Also, we are working on creating in-person outside opportunities for families to gather together as our COVID Safety policy allows, such as the All-Ages Water Ritual on September 12. The RE Weekly Update will provide comprehensive information on content, registration, and all emerging pivoting possibilities.

Finally, I am so grateful to our First Church Staff who are also preparing and improving our religious education space at church. We are embracing the possibility of our real yet eventual return! Until then I look forward to seeing you online and at our water ritual September 12 at 1:00 p.m.!





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Growing Ourselves from Seed

Rev. Sofia Betancourt, pulpit guest

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Jeff Percy, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube link](#)

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You Can't Imagine the Good that Will Come

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Miles Schuller, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube link](#)

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Ambiguity? Over. It.

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Paul Kosidowski, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube link](#)

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"Surrender, Dorothy!"

Rev. Dena McPhetres

Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Anne Hefter, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

[Sunday Service YouTube link](#)



Pulpit Guest September 5 ♦ Rev. Sofia Betancourt

The Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt serves as Interim Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Drew University Theological School. She holds a PhD in religious ethics and African American Studies from Yale University. Her academic work focuses on environmental ethics of liberation in a womanist and Latina feminist frame. She served for four years as the Director of Racial and Ethnic Concerns of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and briefly as its Interim Co-President. Betancourt's ministry centers on work that is empowering and counter-oppressive.



Water Ritual, September 12, 1:00 p.m.

Join us for an in-person Water Ritual on Ingathering Sunday, September 12. We will gather at South Shore Park, just north of South Shore Terrace on the grassy area next to the beach sidewalk for an all-ages Water Ritual.

Led by Reverends Jennifer, Dena, and Kimberlee, this 30-minute ritual will bless and merge water from all our participants, honoring our connections to each other, to water, and to this world. We ask participants to bring water from home in a container that makes pouring it easy. We will have some water available as well.

Please RSVP
for this event

Please remember to wear your masks and keep 6 feet of distance between households. There will not be any seating available at this brief event, so be prepared to stand or bring your own seating.

The Youth Group will gather for frisbee fun directly after the water ritual, see Religious Education Update for details.

Please RSVP for this event at <https://bit.ly/UUWaterRitual>.
[Click here](#) for the South Shore Park Map.

COVID Policy Revisions

by COVID Team

The First Church COVID Team of healthcare and building experts continues to monitor pandemic-related developments. With increased knowledge about viral transmission, however, we are pleased to announce our revised policy that allows safe gathering for in-person outdoor activities including outdoor worship.

The science tells us that outdoor gatherings are very safe, especially with masking and distancing. As long as masking is maintained and people from different households maintain six feet of distance, our revised policy only limits outdoor gatherings by venue capacity (30 square feet per person to maintain necessary distancing).

Leaders: As your First Church team or group plans, we invite you to be in conversation with all the members of your group about their needs for safety and accessibility. Try to find a solution that will meet all your members' needs, be they related to mobility, hearing, social interaction, or COVID safety. If you have questions about the new policy, or how to meet the needs of your team, contact the staff member assigned to your group.

Given the recent spike in viral incidence in the past few weeks, we are leaving all indoor limitations in place at this time. As transmission hopefully falls in the coming weeks and months, we will continuously evaluate our criteria and adjust as needed based upon our constantly evolving understanding of the virus. The COVID Team will keep the congregation updated as we work to find creative solutions to facilitate safe gatherings.

Multi-platform Church

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Yes! We will have online and in-person church simultaneously this year.

We are calling this mix of online and in-person opportunities “multi-platform church,” because church will happen in various modes: online through Zoom, YouTube, Facebook, and more; and in-person—outside, in members’ homes, and in the church building.

When and how we will gather in-person will depend on our Milwaukee County COVID incidence numbers (the number of new cases per 100,000 people in a given week). You can see our First Church chart of what is allowed at various levels on the [church website here](#), or you can just check our website’s front page for the current open / close status of any given week.

Online offerings will continue all year, regardless of local COVID numbers. This means:

- When we can worship in-person, online worship will also be available on the same Sunday.
- When small groups can gather in-person, opportunities to participate in small groups will also be available online.

A detailed explanation of fall church Sunday services opportunities is found on page 11.

Fall Sunday Services

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

This September, **when the local COVID incidence is above 10 new cases per 100,000 people**, we will gather for Sunday Services online at 10:00 a.m. on our First Church YouTube Channel, with the same 60-minute liturgy and Worship Associate chat hosts as you experienced last church year.

Afternoon Watch Parties: We're excited to offer beginning September 12, a shorter online worship services with a Zoom Watch Party, 4:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoons. It can also be viewed later on our YouTube channel. To learn how to attend a Zoom Watch Party, see the article on page 11.

Outdoors: We're also happy to announce we will gather for additional outdoor worship service or ritual opportunities once per month, weather permitting. Watch your email for more information and a registration link for each of the following:

- In September, join us outdoors for a 30-minute Water Ritual on Ingathering Sunday, September 12 at 1:00 p.m. (See page 9 for details.)
- In October and November, we will gather outdoors for a full Sunday worship service, time, date, and venue TBD. Online worship will occur as usual at 10:00 a.m., as well as the shorter 4:00 p.m. Zoom Watch Party.

When the local COVID incidence is **below 10 new cases per 100,000 people**, we will gather for Sunday Services in-person in the First Church sanctuary, at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., wearing masks. Online Sunday Services will continue at the 4:00 p.m. Zoom Watch Party Sunday afternoons.

COVID above 10/100,000

Sundays 10:00 a.m.

60-minute online Sunday Service on YouTube

Sundays 4:00 p.m.

30-minute online Sunday Service on Zoom

Sunday, Sept. 12 1:00 p.m.

Water Ritual outdoors at South Shore Park

COVID below 10/100,000

Sundays 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

60-minute in-person Sunday Service in the First Church Sanctuary

Sundays 4:00 p.m.

30-minute online Sunday Service on Zoom

Zoom Watch Party

Sunday 4:00 p.m. 30-minute service shared through Zoom with other participants.

Connect and reflect after the service with other Zoom participants.

For the Zoom link, enter your name and email in this form.

Seeking House Church Watch Party Hosts

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom



When the local Milwaukee COVID incidence is between 10 and 50 cases per 100,000 people, we are planning small House Church Watch Parties to gather in homes to watch 10:00 a.m. online worship service. Are you a First Church member who would like to host a Watch Party in your home? Learn more below and register!

- Our online Sunday Service is from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Hosts will greet First Church members and friends arriving at your home at 9:45 a.m.
- You will host at least once a month. You can host more often if you so choose.
- A House Watch Party group is between 4 and 12 people, depending on the size of the room in which you will screen the service. There needs to be 30 square feet of space per person for distancing.
- We will assign folks to your House Church Watch Party and connect you with them via email. You will give them your contact info and directions to your home.
- You can request a “Hospitality Host” to join you to help welcome people and keep the conversation going if that would be helpful.
- You can choose to host a Watch Party that is adults-only, or to include children. We are also organizing a Watch Party specifically for families, which our Minister of Religious Education will announce soon.
- Everyone will need to wear masks and maintain 6 feet of distance between households.

Would you like to be a House Church Watch Party Host?

Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/212357750328052>

What is a Virtual Zoom Watch Party?

A new Sunday Service option starting September 12, is a shorter worship service online with a virtual Zoom Watch Party at 4:00 p.m. every Sunday.

This new online “watch party” will allow you to have an interactive experience with other church participants as you watch the service together.

When you connect by computer or tablet, a Zoom Watch Party Host will greet you and explain how to participate online. You will be able to see and chat with fellow First Church participants in the Zoom Room.

The 30-minute service will feature the Worship Associate story and the sermon from the morning service, along with music curated by our Music Directors.

After the service, you can stay in the Zoom Room and meet with other participants. The host will offer ways to connect and reflect on the service.

For the Zoom link, enter your name and email in this form.



We welcome people of all genders, sexualities, ages, races, ethnicities, histories, and bodies here. We welcome your mind, your heart, and your spirit here. We welcome all you are bringing with you today, and all your heart longs to set down. We welcome all of you.

Preparing to Welcome, Join Us

by Lynne Jacoby

The Membership Team, like most of us, cannot wait to return to in-person church. And we are also aware that when we do, we are likely to have a unique opportunity to introduce First Church to more people than ever. People looking for community in a different way. People coming out of the pandemic seeking connection and meaning.

Many of us can relate. Maybe we walked into First Church for the first time seeking the same. Perhaps nervous, or excited, or just curious “could this community really be for me?” and willing to embrace the possibility of “yes!”

We know we have a lot to offer these people. We want to welcome them generously.

If you can remember the first person who spoke to you as an individual at First Church, or helped you feel seen, we need you on the front lines of our Welcome Team! Because you know what it feels like to be welcomed.

Ushers, Greeters, Membership Desk Coverage, Visitor Coffee Hosts –we are recruiting all of these for just one service a month and the only prerequisite is knowing what it feels like to be welcomed, and the generosity to want to pay it forward.

Please email Lynne Jacoby if you would like to join us in preparing Welcome! We will find a place for you.
lynne.jacoby@uumilwaukee.org

Fall Membership Class

Led by our ministers, staff and lay-leaders, this series explores Unitarian Universalist theology, history, principals, our social justice framework as well as the meaning of membership and ways to connect here at First Church.

The Journey to Membership class is a prerequisite to joining, but a commitment to joining is not necessary to participate.

Wednesdays, October 13, 20, 27
& November 3 from 6:30 – 8:30
p.m. online with Zoom.

[Click Here for
Class Registration](#)

UU MineCraft

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

We have an exciting opportunity to offer UU Minecraft exploration of our principles for our upper elementary aged students this fall! To make this dream a reality we need to recruit some special adult and middle-schooler facilitators with some technical skills.

We are seeking adult facilitators who are:

- comfortable enough with MineCraft that they can navigate the game almost exclusively on their own,
- confident enough in their own ability that they can ask for help from the youth for insight, assistance, or advanced skills without feeling self-conscious, and
- are sufficiently entrenched in gaming culture that they can get the deference owed to an experienced gamer, which papers over all manner of foibles and temporary shortcomings.

The technical skills are important, it is critical to have /op privileges (operator status), and very worthwhile to develop facility with /tp (teleport), /gamemode (setting game mode), /clear, and /give. The most critical, maybe, is /tell. The main role of the adult co-facilitator is to mentor the youth leader, whose primary job is to see and hear and love and care for all the participants. The secondary role is to ensure that the youth leader and all the participants are seen, and heard, and loved.

Does your middle schooler love MineCraft and like to work with younger children? We also need a youth leader to work with the adults for these sessions. Please contact Rev. Kimberlee (Kimberlee.carlson@uumilwaukee.org) if you can help us make UU Minecraft happen!



2021-22 Religious Education at First Church is Open

Join us for virtual and in-person RE events this fall. This fall we will be offering PreK-2nd grade Sunday School, UU Minecraft, Interfaith Education/Crossing Paths, Families Together, UU Wellspring for Youth and more.

Get the Early Bird discount when you register before Ingathering Sunday, September 12. Register by that date to receive an Early Bird Discount of \$50/child. Regular annual fee is \$75 per child after 9/12/21 (with lower family maximums). If your family could use a full or partial fee-waiver, feel free to contact Rev. Kimberlee. We never turn a family away!

**Member Religious Education
Registration Form**

**Non- Member Religious
Education
Registration Form**

**Sign up for RE Weekly News
for complete information!**

UU Wellspring for Youth

by Deb Solis & Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Youth yearn to explore what is important in life. UU Wellspring for Youth offers a time to connect with their peers, explore what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist and how their faith can sustain them.

UU Wellspring for Youth is a chance for youth to ask and reflect on the big questions in life and reflect on what is deeply important to them while learning about the six sources of Unitarian Universalism. Wellspring Youth will participate in a variety of spiritual practices each session, exploring spiritual resources that can sustain them for the rest of their lives.

UU Wellspring Youth will meet eight times online: on the first Thursday of every month beginning Thursday, October 7 from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. We ask the Youth to commit to participating the entire eight sessions, as this program builds on each session and the connections made within the group.

This program will be facilitated by Deb Solis and our youth advisors. Our eight, once-a-month sessions topics include:

- Introduction Session
- Direct Experience
- Prophetic People
- Jewish and Christian Teachings
- World Religions
- Humanist Teachings
- Earth-Centered Spirituality
- Closing Session

We are so pleased to be offering this new opportunity, If you have any questions, please contact Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org.



Soulful Home: A Resource for Families from Soul Matters

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Each month we offer a home-based, family faith development resource that helps our families weave our church's monthly themes into their daily life and regular routines.

It's hard to carve out time for faith-full family experiences, so many of us try to weave spiritual exploration into the routine spaces of family life. Helping parents create this sacred space in their daily lives is what Soulful Home is about.

I hope you take the time to explore September's Soulful Home on how to be a family that embraces possibility.

Check out the full [Soulful Home resource here](#).

Connect & Reflect Thursdays

by Diane Horne

In March of 2020, our world changed dramatically. Fortunately, the ministers began the Connect & Reflect program. It was a safe haven to be present to myself and others during these unprecedented times. We expressed what was in our hearts and minds related to COVID, George Floyd's murder, feeling isolated, and more. That fall, the ministers turned this group over to the Adult Spiritual Development team. It has been gathering ever since.

At Connect & Reflect, we share a check-in, a short reading, and respond to reflection questions. We share what is in our hearts and minds. We laugh, we pause for silence, we hold each other as we continue to navigate this pandemic, as we struggle with online-only gatherings still after 18 months, as we yearn for connection and community.

Everyone is welcome any Thursday at 6:00 p.m. The group is lively, the readings meaningful and uplifting. Laughter is welcome, as are tears, as is silence. Sharing is always by invitation. "Come, come, whoever you are, wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving. Ours is no caravan of despair. Come, yet again come."



[Click here to receive the Zoom link. Each week Zoom link is the same.](#)

Register Now For Fall Yoga

Instructor Morgan Engels will offer a Monday evening and Wednesday morning 9-week yoga class through Zoom, allowing students to participate from the safety of their homes. If COVID re-opening status allows for in-person yoga, class may be held in the church this fall.

The class begins with some gentle Qi Gong movements to open up, warm up, and connect to our breath. This part of the class can be practiced, standing or seated in a chair. We'll then move to practice Yin Yoga. Yin Yoga is practiced entirely on the ground.

Monday Yoga 5:45 p.m.
Sept 13 – Nov. 8

[Online Registration](#)

Wednesday Yoga 9:00 a.m.
Sept 15 – Nov. 10

[Online Registration](#)

What Are Theme Circles

by Rev. Dena McPhetres

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

Getting to connect consistently with a group of other people and hearing their reflections each month was very energizing, especially because of COVID and social distancing, and I looked forward to our meetings each month.
~ Theme Circle Participant 2020 - 2021

Prior to each meeting, participants engage in pre-reading and contemplation exercises based on that month's theme. Theme packets are sent to participants in advance which include Questions to Live With, Spiritual Exercises, readings, quotes, and links to music, articles, podcasts and more.

Are you longing for meaning and connection? Explore the Theme Circle schedule, FAQ and registration form here:

<https://uumilwaukee.org/get-involved/theme-circles/>.

Registration opens September 1 and the deadline to register is September 26. Theme Circles begin meeting in October.

Sample a Theme Circle

by Diane Horne & Nancy Spansy

Want to sample a Theme Circle? They provide a way to further explore the monthly themes of the church year, and to connect with other church members. In August and September, we are offering an opportunity to sample one. We will have two hour-long Zoom sessions available, either Sunday August 29 or Sunday September 19 at 11:00 a.m. Each session is limited to 6 participants.

Once you register, you will receive an email with a Soul Matters Sharing Circle small group packet for a theme explored in the 2020–2021 church year along with a link to the church website containing more information about Theme Circles. You are encouraged to spend time with either a spiritual exercise or a question from the packet prior to the session. In the Sample a Theme Circle session, we will start by going over a few agreements to better support a safe and meaningful experience, then we will share around the theme. This will be facilitated by Nancy Spansy and Diane Horne, trained facilitators.

Please register and sample a Theme Circle! With the nature of the current world, connecting with other church members provides community, and exploring the themes facilitates a deeper connection with ourselves and the wide web of life in which we are vitally alive and growing.

**Register here for a
Sample Theme Circle**



Sunday Morning Forum

11:00 AM ON ZOOM & YOUTUBE



SEPTEMBER 12

Environmental Sustainability in Milwaukee: Addressing Climate Change & Equity

Erick Shambarger, Environmental Sustainability Director, City of Milwaukee, leads Milwaukee's Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO), which has a vision of making Milwaukee a world class eco-city on America's Fresh Coast. He oversees implementation of the City's Refresh Milwaukee sustainability plan and oversees all of ECO's programs in energy efficiency, renewable energy, water policy, urban agriculture, and green infrastructure. He is also Project Manager of the City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity. He will discuss the ten big ideas of the City-County Task Force and discuss the role of local governments in addressing climate change

[Join the Forum on Zoom](#) or watch this presentation on [YouTube](#)

SEPTEMBER 19

How to Build a Future-Proof Economy in the Midwest

Kathleen Gallagher, 5 Lakes Institute Executive Director, and Jim Nelson, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Business Editor, presenters. The 5 Lakes Institute is a nonprofit organization working to grow the Great Lakes region's high technology economy. Kathleen will discuss what the future of the Foxconn site should be and what Wisconsin should do to attract high tech to the state. Kathleen was a business reporter at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel for 23 years and is currently a columnist with the paper. Jim Nelson, the Journal Sentinel business editor, will join in the discussion.



[Join the Forum on Zoom](#) or watch this presentation on [YouTube](#)



SEPTEMBER 26

PBS Milwaukee & the Milwaukee Symphony

Jonathan Lord, Chief Development Officer, Milwaukee PBS, will talk about the Milwaukee PBS/ Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (MSO) Broadcast Partnership. Milwaukee PBS will broadcast live the MSO's first subscription concert in the MSO's new performance space, the Bradley Symphony Center. Milwaukee PBS will also produce a 30-minute live pre-concert broadcast that will cover the MSO's history and the renovation of the Warner Theater into the Bradley Symphony Center. Jonathan will also cover Milwaukee PBS' connections to the Milwaukee community, particularly our local productions: Black Nouveau, Adelante!, and our news/feature magazine show, 10thirtysix.

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OCTOBER 3

An Address by the County Executive

David Crowley, Milwaukee County Executive, will talk about issues of current interest to the residents of Milwaukee County. This is another in the series of Forums by the new generation of young, Black political leaders in Milwaukee and Wisconsin. Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes was the first.



[Join the Forum on Zoom](#) or watch this presentation on [YouTube](#)





Buddhist Study Group

Wednesday, Sept. 8 & 22 6:30 p.m.

[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.

Book Discussion Group

Sunday, September 12, 12:45 pm

Join us as we discuss September's read: *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared Diamond This book argues for a more accurate and truthful way to describe the history of race in the United states. Just drop in! Contact Chris Linder for the meeting location at celinder@att.net.

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.



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.

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Please contact them directly to set up an appointment.

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

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