

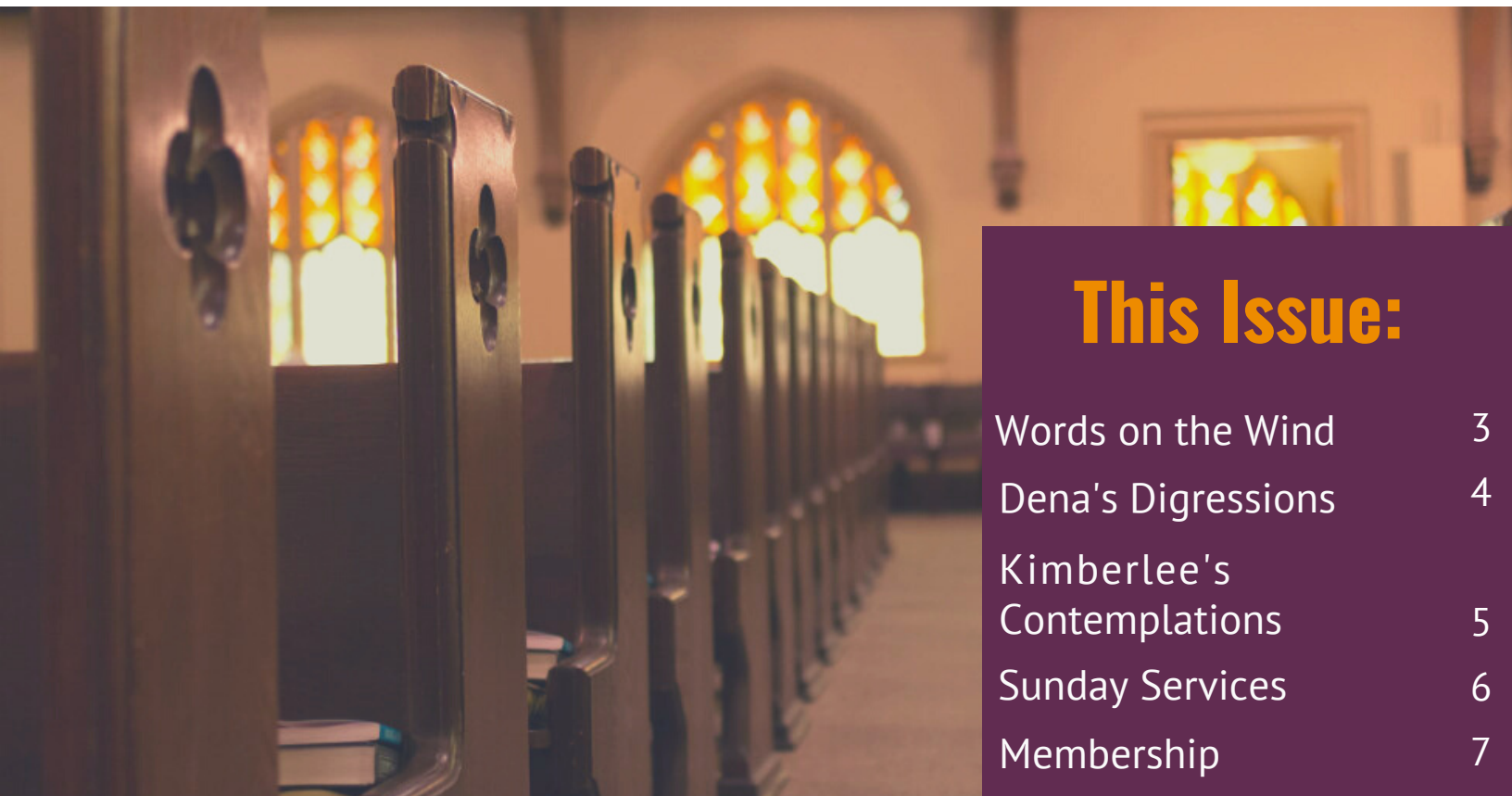
JUNE 2022



THE CHANTICLEER

The First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.



This Issue:

Words on the Wind	3
Dena's Digressions	4
Kimberlee's Contemplations	5
Sunday Services	6
Membership	7
Religious Education	8
Get Involved	9
Adult Spiritual Dev.	10
Social Justice	11
Monthly Events	12
Board of Trustees	13
Contact Us	14

Monthly Theme



*What does it mean to
be a people*

Celebrating Blessings

Inside News

by the *Chanticleer* Editors

Happy Summer!

June 5 we hold our Flower Communion ceremony during worship to mark the end of the “church year.” Bring a single flower to participate in this lovely tradition.

One in-person Sunday Service in Summer:

June 12 begins our summer season when there is one in-person Sunday Service at 10:00 a.m. followed by social hour. Online Sunday Service at 10:00 a.m. continues.

With COVID cases rising, we are disappointed that we needed to step back from allowing beverages and food, as well as the congregation singing while indoors. However, food and beverages outdoors for church activities is welcome at all COVID case rates. We’ll bring back coffee at Sunday social hours and hymns as soon as the cases subside below 175.

COVID Safety: Proof of vaccination required at the door. Everyone 5 years and older must mask with KN95 masks. Please see all details on our website.

Please see weekly Friday e-announcements, our Facebook page, and our website for current news.

[Click to receive weekly eNews](#)

[Subscribe to Facebook Group](#)

June Share the Plate

by BJ Ermenc



HEAR Wisconsin is our summer Share the Plate partner. HEAR Wisconsin is a local nonprofit that helps people of all ages with hearing loss by eliminating communication and language barriers through personalized services, technology, and education.

For 95 years, HEAR Wisconsin has provided comprehensive services for people of all ages, with all degrees of hearing loss. They serve approximately 6,000 people each year. Their programs respect diversity and communication choice, foster independence, and transform lives. HEAR Wisconsin does not turn anyone away who needs hearing healthcare, evaluations, hearing aid fittings/repairs, assistive technology, therapy, sign language interpreting, and more. They know that good hearing and communication are essential at all stages of life and that hearing loss can be avoided or slowed down through preventive actions taken as soon as possible. Untreated hearing loss can lead to poor academic performance, loss of jobs, increased incidence of dementia, cognitive decline, and other negative physical/mental health effects.

HEAR Wisconsin is hitting the road. They now bring services directly to local community members and businesses with Wisconsin’s first-ever nonprofit Mobile Audiology Clinic (MAC). First Church will be scheduling a MAC visit sometime this summer. Watch for details!

[Donate to this STP Partner](#)



Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Summer Solstice lands on June 21 this year, marking the longest day of the year and the beginning of summer. In Celtic Pagan society, the solstice was traditionally celebrated with a giant bonfire, honey mead, music, and dancing. Like we do, Ireland had long, cold winters, and summer was a time to celebrate and embrace life again.

As humans, we need joy and celebration in our lives. We also often need rituals to return us to a practice of celebration and gratitude.

What is worthy of a big bonfire celebration in your life? What rituals could return you to the ground of gratitude for your life's blessings? How will you mark the turning of time from Spring to Summer?

At church, we will celebrate our community's blessings with our annual Flower Ceremony on June 5. Remember to bring a flower with you to church that morning to share with the community in our ritual of celebration.

See you at church,
Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

Assemblies and Presidencies and Faith, Oh My!

Tis the season to connect with our national Unitarian Universalist faith. Our annual national gathering, where we make decisions about Unitarian Universalism, how we want to be together now and who we want to become, is called General Assembly.

This year it will be held in Portland June 22-26, and available online. Our UU representatives will be making a big decision about our national bylaws this year, determining how we can stay theologically grounded, and mission focused in our governance. Read more here: https://www.uua.org/files/2022-03/ga2022_bylaw_bus_res_032022.pdf, and see Bruce Wiggins or Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom if you are interested in attending.

Rev. Jennifer has been elected as the President of the Senior Ministers of Large UU Congregations, a group for the Senior Ministers of our 34 largest congregations in Unitarian Universalism. Rev. Jennifer assumed this role in March of 2022 and is facilitating a conversation among our large church colleagues about purpose, identity, and faith.

Dena's Digressions

by Rev. Dena McPhetres



My mission as a minister is to be a blessing. To be a blessing, I need to receive and celebrate blessings. Every year at the UU Ministers' conference right before General Assembly in June, the 25th and 50th anniversaries of ordination for living ministers are celebrated. I am fortunate to be among the 25-year cohort this year. Everyone in my cohort was invited to make a brief video reflecting on a sacred object that informs their ministry.

I talked about my final fellowship stole. A colleague and friend who creates stoles met with me to discuss the design. I brought pieces of fabric from my women ancestors, and she worked them into the stole, combining old with new.

You've probably seen me wear it. I wear the gold side for ordinations, installations, and memorial services. I wear the white side for weddings and child dedications. There is gold filigree in the trim which was once used to make religious garb for priests. I gain strange satisfaction as a female minister knowing that fact.

The fringes at the bottom came from a dresser scarf of my grandmother's. The new fabric with mountains evokes Mount Hood from my

internship congregation in Portland, Oregon and the White Mountains of New Hampshire where I served my first settlement. The fabric with an image of pillars evokes cherished lay leaders of all the congregations I've served, including you-- the "pillars" of First Church.

The generations of my family are symbolized by the buttons from the button box I played with as a child, the embroidered hankies from my great-aunts, the thistle from my Scottish heritage, and the letter H for my mother Harriet, who did not live long enough to see me be ordained.

This stole reminds me that to do ministry well, I must remember that I am not self-made. The hand-crafted lace, the hand-stitched art embroidering my soul, reminds me that I am delivered from my ancestors' hands into others' hands -- as are we all.

What object do you treasure that reminds you to celebrate blessings?

Yours,

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister



Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



I want to share a glimpse of what “Blessed at Pridefest” is, an event I help co-create and host. “Get your blessing here! Personal Blessing given to you right now by our Blessing Booth Clergy!” Krystal called out to the passersby at PrideFest in Milwaukee. Quizzically, they would look over and be offered a Blessing Menu. “To help the clergy customize your blessing,” she explained.

Most folks look pleasantly astonished as they realize that this was a real offer.

The Blessing Menu invites you to share what you call the Divine or Sacred. Is it God, Goddess, Allah, Jesus, Love, Father, Mom, Sun, Moon, Earth, Science, Spirit of Life, or Quantum Physics? There is no limit to how many sources of divinity you choose, and a blank space is provided to write in your own unique name for the sacred.

The Blessing Menu has many choices and, though it is a playful catalyst for connection, its aspiration and purpose are quite real. It creates a path to being vulnerable, to being seen, and to being blessed by one another. By offering a blessing, we hope to take a small step toward helping heal people, especially people who identify as LGBTQ; so many of whom are religiously wounded from churches, family, and friends that have told them they were “less than.” The blessing booth gives us a moment to connect and share in the joy and sorrow that it is to be human.

Do you need a Healing Blessings for Emotional Pain or Rejection?

How about a Forgiveness Blessing for harming yourself or others?

What blessings do you long to experience: Abundance, Love, Grace, Justice?

So many people—too many people—requested healing from abandonment, rejection, abuse, and self-harm.

“I am already blessed!” someone shouts out. I answer, “Yes, you are, we just want to articulate it!”

On that June weekend, over five hundred people were blessed: young and old, straight and gay, parents and children, drag queens, police officers and senators—everyone! Jewish, Lutheran, United Church of Christ, and Unitarian Universalist clergy blessed everyone earnestly and eagerly. It was a remarkable interfaith coalition of ministry and love. Most blessings ended with smiles, some tears, hugs, and a sweet surprise—surprise at the simplicity, the tenderness, and the magic we make when we remember that we belong to one another.

It is so easy to feel powerless today in a world where human rights and dignity are all too often ignored and violated. Our little Blessing Booth was a visceral reminder of the power of human connection, to heal one another through relationship and love.

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

5

Centering Joy!

9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Minister of RE

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Marisa Riepenhoff, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

12

The Blessing of Pride

10:00 a.m.

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Jobey Clarke, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

19

Sources of Our Wellspring

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Miles Schuller, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

26

Make the Time & Mark the Time

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Kevin Gibson, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

Summer Sunday Service

Begins June 12 at 10:00 a.m. In person

10:00 a.m. Online



Mark Your Calendars Summer Connections

by Lynne Jacoby

Just in time for Summer, our June theme is delight – and heaven knows we need it. The word even sits in the mouth lightly and as our communities heal from isolation while skimming heartbreaking headlines striving for anything more substantial, “joy” for example feels like too much of an ask. But delight? My dog, with one acrobatic frisbee catch, elicits a moment, a smile, of delight!

And, for me, watching as this congregation arrives back each Sunday morning since COVID, yes. Still delighted to be back.

Inspired by the Earth Justice Ministry’s offering of Rock and Roll Walks (link to Bruce’s article?) on the second Saturday of each month, and the delight of seeing each other again, the Membership Team is sponsoring Beer Garden Sundays on the fourth weekend of June, July, and August.

Stop by and enjoy each other’s delighted, unmasked, grins of welcome. Hang around for a cool drink (beer optional), a brat, or your own picnic. Bring your family, friends, dog. Bring a frisbee on June 26 Estabrook Park (more details tbd).

Save the Date for the Church Picnic

June 5, 1:00-4:00 pm!

Kern Park, Picnic Area 3

Save the date for a First Church picnic after church on Sunday, June 5! Everyone bring their own lunch and drinks. We’ll supply the fun!

See the map for more information on the location and parking. There will be picnic tables, bathrooms, and a little shelter in case it rains.

The park is located at 3614 N Humboldt Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53212. Here is a link to the [Kern Park Map](#).



Consider Becoming an OWL Teacher

By Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator

First Church is hosting an intensive Our Whole Lives (OWL) teacher training the weekend of August 19-21 for Elementary (Grade K-6) and Secondary (Grade 7-12) levels.

The success of our OWL program depends on the qualified and caring persons who are selected and trained to be OWL teachers. If you are a person who has a commitment to value-based, comprehensive sexuality education; is experienced, skilled, and comfortable with elementary and/or secondary children & youth developmental needs; and is able to build respectful relationships and good rapport with participants, we invite you to apply to join our First Church OWL team.

We are seeking people at least 25 years old who are willing to make a three-year commitment to this life changing program we offer at First Church.

Application forms are available at the RE Table on Sundays, through the RE Weekly Update newsletter, and may be requested to be mailed to you. All application must be received by June 30, 2022.

Please direct any questions to Deb Solis, Youth and OWL Program Coordinator at deb.solis@uumilwaukee.org

RE Summer Volunteers: Let's keep our children coming back to church!

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

We need you to help make RE happen this summer. Religious Education happens when our members volunteer and it has never been easier to volunteer in RE. No preparation is needed, and the gift of your time and energy makes it possible for our children, families and youth to be welcomed and engaged at our church.

This summer Mariah Groshek and Rev. Kimberlee will be leading an all-ages group for ages 5-12 and need 2-3 responsible adults to help care for our children each Sunday.

Ready to become an RE Volunteer. Click Here: [RE Volunteer form](#).



Hospitality Supports Sexuality Education at First Church

By Deb Solis, Youth Program Coordinator

Can you pitch in to support sexuality education with food or hospitality this summer?

Sexuality is an integral part of being human. Honest, accurate sexual education saves lives. Within our Unitarian Universalist faith tradition, sexuality is understood as both natural and positive and as encompassing ethical, spiritual, emotional, social, political, and interpersonal issues as well as physical ones. Our Whole Lives (OWL) is our comprehensive sexuality education curriculum that helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior.

For these reasons and more, we are proud to host two levels of Our Whole Lives (OWL) training Friday, August 19 through Sunday, August 21.

Participants from around the country, who are sponsored by their congregations, will attend an intense weekend of training to become OWL facilitators here at First Church.

Hosting an OWL teacher training allows us to affordably train new OWL teachers for our congregation while sponsoring the training needed for other congregations.

You can support sexuality education by providing food, snacks and beverages, for our Friday Welcome Dinner on August 19, and/or home hospitality for a participant on Friday and Saturday nights in your guest room.

Ready to help? Sign Up here and thank you!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050848a4a923aafc1-first>



Our local congregations are returning to spread love, joy and affirmation at the Blessed at Pridefest booth, June 3-4 in the Health and Wellness Common area. This year the Blessed at Pridefest booth we will have a fun photo station, stickers, and a blessing gate! The Blessing Gate is a collaborative artwork, everyone is invited to share blessings on ribbons that will adorn the gate.

Clergy and lay volunteers are needed to make our Interfaith blessing event happen. Blessed at Pridefest clergy will be offering personal blessings using our blessing menu. Lay volunteers will invite people to be blessed, offer a blessing menu, and direct them to clergy volunteers.

If you want to help us generate some love and divine affirmation in Milwaukee on June 3 & 4 sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050e4aafad2ba7f49-blessed>

Questions or concerns? Contact us at blessedatpridefest@gmail.com

Consider Becoming a Theme Circle Facilitator

by Rev. Dena McPhetres

Do you enjoy our monthly worship themes? Are you called to the ministry of creating a trusting space for reflection and exploration in a small group of adults? Consider applying to become a Theme Circle Facilitator!

Theme Circle participants say that the spiritual exercises, readings, reflection and sharing have significantly affected their personal lives and experience of Sunday services. They feel closer to each other and the congregation through exploring how a theme like Belonging, Attention, Awe, Integrity or Resilience resonates and brings meaning to their life.

Serving as a Facilitator for a monthly Theme Circle allows you to nurture the spiritual journey of your peers and helps create deep connections among our church members and friends. You would also meet regularly for leadership support with Rev. Dena and the facilitator team.

More information and application form here:
<https://uumilwaukee.org/theme-circle-facilitator/>

Application deadline is July 15. Selected applicants may be interviewed by Rev. Dena by mid-August. The required online Facilitator training happens in August or September. Theme Circles begin meeting the third week of October.

Questions? Contact Rev. Dena at:
dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org.

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.

Much joy and congratulations to Amanda and Tony Panciera who welcomed the birth of their new baby on Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 3:58 p.m. Their daughter **Vivian Elizabeth Panciera** was 8 pounds, 8 oz. and 21 inches. Parents, baby, and big sister Zoe are all doing well. We lit the Candle of Life in honor of Vivian on Sunday, May 8, 2022 at both in-person worship services.

Due to family needs, the memorial service for **Katy Phillips** will be held at Feerick Funeral Home (2025 East Capitol Drive, Shorewood WI 53211). This is a vaccination and mask optional environment with livestream available for off-site attendees. Same date and time: Saturday, June 18, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. with Rev. Dena McPhetres officiating. People are welcome to greet the family at Feerick during visitation hours before the service at 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Those who knew and loved Katy are welcome to send brief tributes, anecdotes, or favorite memories to Rev. Dena at dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org by Wednesday, June 15 at 5:00 p.m. for possible inclusion in a Collage of Voices to be read during the service.

EJM is Member of Plastic-Free MKE Coalition

Encourages You to Collaborate

by Bruce Wiggins, EJM Co-Chair

EJM has joined the Plastic-Free Coalition, aiming to reduce single-use plastic in our city. The Plastic-Free MKE mission is to reduce the harms that unnecessary plastics have on our environmental health, public health, and social justice. Keeping plastic from polluting our lakes and rivers is a major goal. There are a variety of ways you can get involved, including volunteer, educational, and advocacy roles. See the website <https://www.plasticfreemke.org/> and Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/plasticfreemke/> Contact First Church member Pete Hill for more information: email petehill414@gmail.com

Pledge to reduce your use of single-use plastic. Take the pledge on the website.

See their website to sign up for their newsletter and learn about events, monthly meetings, and more. The monthly newsletter has information on the plastics industry, local events, and volunteer opportunities. The website is now enlisting people to table and hand out literature at summer events.

Lake Friendly Business. One of the interesting initiatives is to recruit businesses, e.g., restaurants, to use less plastic. You can visit restaurants and stores on behalf of Plastic-Free MKE to sign them up, and learn about the Lake Friendly Business program.

Monthly Walk and Roll June 11 at Pulaski Park

by Bruce Wiggins

Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) is sponsoring monthly park walks – a chance to get out in nature, visit one of our outstanding parks, and socialize. They will be the second Saturday in June, July, and August at 10:00 a.m. for about an hour. Organizer Cheri Briscoe says: “June 11, we’ll go to Pulaski Park, 2677 S. 16th St. in Milwaukee. We’ll meet at the Pulaski Pavilion. Parking is in a lot near the pavilion or along the streets around the park. We’ll walk on a trail on a restored section of the Kinnickinnic River.

It’s an excellent example of our MMSD strategy to re-naturalize the flow of our urban rivers along with cooperating with Milwaukee County’s goal of keeping our parks family friendly.”

Stay tuned for details of the July and August walks.



Buddhist Study Group

Wednesday, June 1 & 15, 6:30 pm

[Join Us Here](#) Online or In-person

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.

For more information, contact Mark Miller at gatheringwaterssangha@gmail.com.

Poetry Contemplation

Every Wednesday, 9:00 am

[Join Us Online 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, June 12, 12:45 pm

Join us as we discuss May's read *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman. Contact Barbra Lancelot for the meeting location at uubarbra@gmail.com.

Connect & Reflect

Every Thursday, 5:45 pm

[Join Us Here](#) Online or In-person

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. All are welcome.

Grief Support Group

Wednesday, June 1 at 6:30 pm

[Join Us Online Here](#)

If you are experiencing loss, broadly defined, and would like the support of a small group of fellow travelers, please join us. We'll connect, share, learn about grief, and support each other. All are welcome.

Splinters from the Board

by George Bledsoe, Board Member

The Board of Trustees (BOT) held its monthly meeting on April 26, 2022. The BOT discussed Monitoring Policy 4.3: Staff Compensation & Benefits for the 2022-23 church year. Rev. Jennifer presented various recommendations for the BOT to consider. Option 1 which allows for a minor increase to the budget was voted on and passed unanimously.

Jean Johnson and Noreen Gilbertsen presented Monitoring Policies 4.4: Financial Planning & Budget and 4.5: Financial Condition for the third quarter of the church year. We had a projected budget income decrease of \$10k (due to pledges coming in lower than expected) and there was an increase of \$40k in expenses (due to increased health care costs and some increases in operating expenses). During the current pledge campaign, pledges are coming in ahead of schedule and were flat; we have fared better than other congregations through the pandemic. Overall, we have had a good year financially. We are compliant with Policy 4.4 and Policy 4.5.

Six First Church delegates were approved to attend General Assembly (GA) for this year. A Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Bylaw like Article II, which pertains to Committees, Teams and Groups will be voted on at GA this year. Possible instructions to First Church delegates on how to represent the congregation on the Bylaw changes will be voted on at the next board meeting. Article II will be voted on again at GA next year.

The Board prepared for the upcoming First Church Annual Meeting. The candidates for BOT and the Nominating Committee were presented. A new nominee for the Nominating Committee was voted on and accepted unanimously.

The Senior Minister's (SM) Performance Evaluation and Compensation review was conducted in a closed session. After some discussion, the board unanimously approved the same salary increase for the Senior Minister as for First Church staff members, which moves us closer to UUA salary guidelines and helps address inflation concerns.

Staff Directory

SENIOR MINISTER

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom
jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org, ext. 201

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The Rev. Dena McPhetres
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MINISTER EMERITUS

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

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MAINTENANCE WORKER

Art Sims

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Tristan Strelitzer
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COLLABORATIVE PIANIST

Teresa Drews
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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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Vice PresidentPat Geenen

SecretaryGeorge Bledsoe

TreasurerTom Briscoe

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George Bledsoe

Patricia Geenen

Rollie Hanson

Mike Hogan

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Joe Riepenhoff

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Follow Us



Church Building Hours-Summer

Mon., Tues. & Wed.	9:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday	9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday	Closed
Saturday	10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Sunday	9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

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