

APRIL 2023



THE CHANTICLEER

The First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

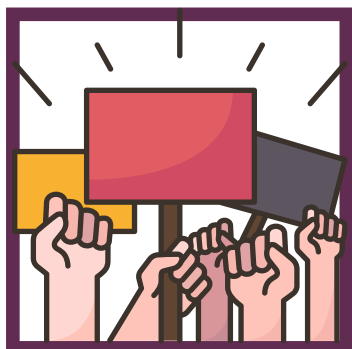
nurture. engage. inspire.



This Issue:

Dena's Digressions	3
Kimberlee's Contemplations	4
Sunday Services	5
Children & Youth	7
Forge our Future	9
Social Justice	10
Get Involved	11
Church News	12
Calendar of Events	13
Sunday Forum	14
Contact Us	15

Monthly Theme



*What does it mean
to be a people of*

Resistance

Inside News

Annual Meeting Set for May 21

Ben LeFort, Board President

Notice is hereby given of the Annual Meeting of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee to be held Sunday, May 21 at 12:45 pm. This year's meeting will occur in person in our Sanctuary and will also be available simultaneously via Zoom.

Learn about significant First Church accomplishments over the 2022-23 church year and hear about our financial condition. Vote on new Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee members for next church year and get the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions. Members are eligible to vote if they became Members of the congregation 60 days prior to the meeting date and have made a financial pledge or contribution of record in the past year. A list of voting members will be posted on the website and the church bulletin board 15 days prior to the meeting.

Stay tuned for information on Zoom registration and mark your calendars in the meantime!

Share the Plate

by Dan O'Keefe

The April Share the Plate recipient is the Electa Quinney Institute for American Indian Education (EQI) located on the UWM campus. EQI was founded to strengthen and celebrate American Indian education at the local, regional and national level and to share Indigenous teaching practices from around the world.

Since its 2010 inception, it has supported development of education programs at UWM that connect Milwaukee and Wisconsin. Faculty endowments by EQI have contributed to robust research activity and local partnerships with Urban Ecology Center and the First Nations Studies at Milwaukee Public Schools, to name a few. Several Indigenous student organizations and an outdoor Fire Circle encourage interaction of all UWM students and involve the surrounding community. Outside speakers, powwows, and the opportunity to audit Indigenous courses need support in order to continue to be available to the wider community.

The Institute is named after Wisconsin's first public school teacher, Electa Quinney. In 1828, she established a no-fee one-room school for Indigenous and white children in Kaukauna. To learn more about Electa Quinney and the Institute, visit the website <https://uwm.edu/eqi>. Dan O'Keefe can also be contacted at danok@att.net.

Donate to this STP Partner

Dena's Digressions

by Rev. Dena McPhetres



In the Soul Matters packet for this month's theme of Resistance, Rev. Scott Tayler wrote, "None of us resist alone. Or maybe what really needs to be said this month is that none of us have to resist alone. Each and every path of resistance is daunting. But they are made even more daunting when we tell ourselves that we must travel those paths by ourselves."

For me, resistance begins as a small "no" inside that grows as my understanding of a situation increases and my courage gathers. This applies to both personal and societal conditions that are just plain wrong. The small "no" that grows in conviction until it is spoken, sometimes at great risk and in a loud roar. Have you felt it in yourself? Have you heard yourself say it out loud? I'm thinking of women suffering sexual harassment at their job, individuals suffering abuse in their families, boys required to learn the way of violence to fit in as men, transgender people having their rights legally removed, Black Indigenous People of Color navigating a thicket of microaggressions daily. At some point, we feel our "no" rise.

If you are feeling a small "no" rise in yourself, try saying it to someone you trust to gain support. We don't have to resist alone.

Practicing resistance with people we trust clarifies and emboldens us. For when we heed the call of the "no" inside, we are simultaneously saying "yes" to our sacred worth and dignity.

Yours,

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

All in the Family

Congratulations to **Gina and Jessie Diliberti** who welcomed their second child into the world on Wednesday, March 1, 2023. Finn Reese was 7 pounds, 4 ounces. Finn and his moms and big brother are all doing well.

In Memoriam

Robert Petrie, Jr.

January 23, 1940 ~ February 26, 2023

Robert Petrie, Jr., always known as Pete, died peacefully on Sunday, February 26, 2023. He was 83 years old. Pete was a member of First Church for 53 years and he was a board member here many years ago.

Our heartfelt condolences are with his wife Lucia and their family and friends. A private memorial service will be held in May.



Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



It is the nature of children to push boundaries every day, and all the time. Growing humans learn by testing the rules and challenging the boundaries in a search to discover what and where the real limitations are. This drive, composed of curiosity, creativity and energy is how humanity thrives, grows, and stretches its capacity to do and be more. It is a good thing.

As a parent and teacher, reminding myself of this innate drive helps when the boundary testing is especially repetitive and exhausting. I do this by imagining children's boundary pushing nature to be like electrons. Electrons are essential components of atoms that are constantly in motion; it is just what they do, their movement is chaotic by nature. When electrons are in your family circuit, there is little use in getting tired, mad, or frustrated with them.

Electrons need resistors in a circuit to be effective. Resistors come in many varieties, their purpose is to protect the circuit and slow down the flow of electrons so the circuit does not break. Resistors keep the flow of electrons in balance. When the voltage is too high, (too many electrons) the resistor draws more power and current than it can handle, gets hot and may go up in flames with a cloud of smoke.

Dear parents and caregivers, you are the resistors in a family circuit and managing electrons is nonstop. The boundaries you are teaching and keeping are essential for children to thrive. Boundaries are fundamentally about being respectful and understanding of the needs of others, while being understanding and respecting our own needs. This is sacred, rigorous, foundational work.

Unlike electrons, our human nature's do mature, and your child's awareness and empathy will develop over time. Meanwhile, may you remember that your needs are important boundaries too, and remember you are not alone. Fellow resistors come in many shapes, sizes and diverse temperaments and many of them can be found at church.

Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Minister of Religious Education



SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

2

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Ryan Pawlowski, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

9

Jesus Resists!

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director, with the

Erik Alexander, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

16

Resisting Tyranny

Rev. Jim Foti, Assistant Sabbatical Minister

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Erik Alexander, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

23

Finding Hope in a Climate Crisis

Marisa Riepenhoff, Member

Matt Meyer, Sabbatical Guest Musician

Leah Twente, Youth

[Click for info about this service](#)

30

Every Body Is Sacred

Rev. Ashley Horan, Pulpit Guest

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director and the Choir

Laurel Brooks, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

In-person Sunday services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

SABBATICAL GUESTS



Pulpit Guest Rev. Dr. Betancourt Rescheduled

Unfortunately, due to a recent COVID exposure, Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt will not be able to visit us in Milwaukee April 2. Sofia sends her regrets – she was so looking forward to being with us this weekend! Rev. Dena will be preaching Sunday, April 2. We hope to reschedule Rev. Betancourt's visit to First Church and will let everyone know as soon as we do!



Pulpit Guests Matt Meyer & Marisa Riepenhoff

Matt Meyer is musician, worship leader, and community songleader, as well as a lifelong Unitarian Universalist. He graduated from Berklee College of Music in 2004, where he studied hand drumming and world music. Matt is honored to have performed with Ysaye Barnwell (of Sweet Honey in the Rock), Pete Seeger, Emma's Revolution, Peter Mayer, Jim Scott, Nick Page, The Halalisa Singers, Samba Tremeterra, and Bloco de Afrobrasil. He serves as the Director of Operations and Community Life for Sanctuary Boston, a contemporary worship community that meets on Wednesday evenings.



Pulpit Guest ♦ Rev. Ashley Horan

The Rev. Ashley Horan (she/her) serves as the Organizing Strategy Director at the UUA, where she leads the team that holds all the outward facing justice work of the Association under the banner of Side With Love and its related campaigns: UU the Vote, Create Climate Justice, Love Resists, and UPLIFT Action for LGBTQ, Gender & Reproductive Justice. Prior to her work at the UUA, Ashley was the Executive Director of the MN UU Social Justice Alliance, and the Curriculum Developer for Beloved Conversations. She also served congregations in Joliet, IL and Fond du Lac, WI. She lives in Minneapolis with her partner, the Rev. Karen Hutt, and their two youngest children—Aspen, 8, and Eden, 3.

Renewing Religious Education: Parent and Caregiver Meeting

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

Our Religious Education (RE) program structure is changing this fall. This RE shift will be from an age segregated, teacher-led, lesson-based format to a more intentional child-friendly time in the sanctuary, followed by an open space choice program with adult facilitation during worship services. Additional faith formation programs, such as OWL will be scheduled separately, sometimes on Sunday mornings.

It is our hope that the structural changes in Religious Education will make church a more accessible and child-friendly space that centers spiritual practice, social justice, and relationship building. The shape of this new model of faith formation for our children, youth, and families is still being formed by Rev. Kimberlee, in collaboration with our staff and Children's Religious Education Team.

We invite our families, parents, and caregivers to a meeting about the future of Religious Education for children, youth and families with Rev. Kimberlee on **April 30 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Young Room. If you have questions, or would like to discuss RE, please reach out to Rev. Kimberlee by email or phone.

Together, we can reimagine what our faith can offer future generations!

Magic & Mystery Night

Max Otto Hall

April 21

6:00-9:00 pm



Come one, come all for a magical, all-ages night of fun and sorcery! We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted to a special session of Magic & Mystery. This will be a chance for wizards, witches and magical creatures of all ages, to wear costumes, play wizard games and enjoy each other's company.

If you accept the invitation, you are to report to platform 9¾ (Max Otto Hall) on April 21, from 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Our All ages party needs party people power for decorations, food, games/activities, set up and tear down. Please sign up online or at the RE Table to be a part of making this a magical event for all!

Bring your ideas and enthusiasm to our party planning meeting April 16 at 10:30 a.m. in the Young Room. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050848A4A923AAFC1-hogwarts>.

(Note: We have changed the name and theme of our event due to J.K. Rowling's transphobia and hate speech.)



Grateful to our Youth and their families for all their efforts in creating our **Youth Service** on March 5. Pictured: Kailey Thieme, Ryan Bruch, Max Larson, Deb Solis, Thomas Pahl, Rev. Kimberlee, Claramae Hill, Vera LeFort. Not Pictured: Jasper Murray-Bentz, Liam Bruch and Myles Pointer-Mace.

Our Whole Lives

(OWL), our comprehensive and inclusive sexual education program for 4-6th graders has returned to first church.



Mystery Friends Party! After a month of letter writing, our paired Mystery Friends met for games, snacks and fun last month.

First Church Families Helping Out at Guest House

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, Milwaukee has the second-highest poverty rate among the top 50 most populated cities in the United States, with 24.6% of the city living in poverty. At First Church, we believe in service and inspired action.

For that reason, each month First Church hosts a meal at Guest House of Milwaukee. Guest House of Milwaukee provides shelter, housing, education, and services to Milwaukee's homeless who seek to transform their lives with dignity and purpose.

Children learn how to take action against poverty and injustice, through participation and direct service. This month they can experience by helping out at the Guest House. Families are invited to participate by preparing food for Guest House, and/or helping serve food on April 15 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Servers can be age 10 years and above with adult caregivers.

Join First Church Families in feeding our neighbors experiencing food insecurity & click this [link](#).

Update from the Endowment Fund Task Force

by Elizabeth Lentini
Co-chair of the EFTF

The Forge Our Future Endowment Fund Policy Task Force (EFTF) is hard at work on the task of recommending the structure and documentation for an Endowment Fund to hold the monies raised by the Forge Our Future campaign. We are continuing to research structural and management options for the fund and have recently met with a local attorney experienced in the creation of endowment funds and representatives of institutions responsible for management of such funds.

We plan to give a detailed update on our activities to the congregation at the Annual Meeting in May.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out to members of the task force with any questions. We are: Dave Becker & Elizabeth Lentini (co-chairs), George Bledsoe, Tom Briscoe, Ron Oshima, and Kathy Rivera.



It's Never Too Late to Support the Endowment Fund!

Goal: \$3,000,000
Dollars pledged as of
March 24: \$2,764,094



Pledge to this principal-protected endowment fund with the online pledge form.

[Endowment Pledge Form](#)

To learn more or schedule a visit, contact the team.

[Contact Us](#)

Clean Up Trash along our Milwaukee Rivers!

by Bruce Wiggins

Earth Justice Ministry Co-chair

Are you aware of areas near rivers that need clean-up? Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) suggests you spend two hours of your Earth Day – Saturday, April 22, 10:00 – noon working with us. We'll be part of Milwaukee Riverkeeper's army of volunteers working to pick up trash along our rivers.

Register for this family-friendly group activity at <https://milwaukeeiverkeeper.org/spring-cleanup-registration/>. Some of us are going to the Lincoln Creek Congress & Hopkins site. We welcome you to join us.

You'll be given a T-shirt and all you need to clean up the trash. Afterwards, you may enjoy a celebration at the Harley Davidson Museum from noon to 3:00 p.m. featuring music and local, sustainable, and tasty food.



Urgent Reminder to Vote in the April 4 Court Election!

by Dave Umhoefer

Defend Democracy Co-leader

The ideological balance of the Wisconsin Supreme Court will be decided in this election. This means the fate of issues such as reproductive rights, voting rights, fair elections, gay rights, gun safety, and health care are all on the ballot. Make your voice heard! The website myvote.wi.gov is the official source for voting assistance. Contact me at dave.umhoefer@gmail.com for more information.

Send Down Roots!

by Bruce Wiggins

Earth Justice Ministry Co-chair

In concert with the theme of the Earth Day service, Earth Justice Ministry will be sponsoring planting native flowering plants and trees. By planting trees, we do our part for the “Nature in the City” goal of the City’s Climate and Equity Plan, helping to beautify the city while absorbing greenhouse gases. The flowering plants will provide pollinators nectar while they pollinate our plants, serving as a crucial element of humans’ food supply.

Stay tuned for specifics nearer to Earth Day.

Summer Service Proposals Wanted

by Rev. Dena McPhetres
Associate Minister

Do you have a compelling message for our First Church community that would nourish, engage, and inspire? During the summer, church members may submit a proposal to create a worship service and deliver your own sermon. Worship helps us reflect on the meaning of our lives and how to align our actions with our core values. Rev. Dena McPhetres works one-on-one with you to develop your sermon. Submit your summer service proposal by April 15:

<https://uumilwaukee.org/committees/pulpit-guest-committee/>

You are welcome to contact Pulpit Guest Team members Maria Dorsey, Anne Alexander, Michelle Naples, and Rev. Dena with questions.

Watch church member, Annie Wegner LeFort sermon on July 3, 2022 as our pulpit guest.



Click on this picture to view the sermon..

Free Workshop with UU Music Leader Matt Meyer

RHYTHM FOR SINGERS

Sunday, April 23

12:30–2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Make a joyful noise and join us for this energetic, fully participatory workshop designed to help singers better understand rhythm in the mind, body, and spirit. With Matt's guidance, we will explore the theories and practices of West African, South Indian and European perspectives on rhythm. This is as much rhythm training as you can possibly fit into a 90-minute master class!

Suitable for adults and youth participants age 12 and up, and/or slightly younger music students with at least one year of directed lesson experience.

Matt Meyer is a musician, worship leader, and community songleader, as well as a lifelong Unitarian Universalist. He graduated from Berklee College of Music in 2004, where he studied hand drumming and world music. Matt is honored to have performed with Ysaye Barnwell (of Sweet Honey in the Rock), Pete Seeger, Emma's Revolution, Peter Mayer, Jim Scott, Nick Page, The Halalisa Singers, Samba Tremeterra, and Bloco de Afrobrazil. He serves as the Director of Operations and Community Life for Sanctuary Boston, a contemporary worship community that meets on Wednesday evenings.

While there is no cost to participate, a free will offering will be gratefully received.

Splinters from the Board

by Mike Hogan

Board of Trustees Member

The Board of Trustees (BOT) held its monthly meeting on February 28, 2023. The minutes from the January meeting were approved unanimously.

This is our first Board meeting with Reverend Jennifer on sabbatical. We had a productive meeting with Jean Johnson, Director of Administration as our staff representative. Jean presented a staff report of activities from each department head. All departments are running smoothly and attendance at Sunday services is steady.

Following our Forge Our Future endowment fund campaign, an Endowment Fund Task Force has been created. The task force is investigating questions such as: What does an endowment fund look like? And do we need professional guidance to establish one? The task force will develop an update to be shared with the congregation.

At the next General Assembly in June 2023, a vote will be taken regarding changing or updating the UU Principles. Rather than a complete rewriting, incremental steps towards more inclusive and Anti-Racist language are anticipated. If you are interested in learning more about the UUA General Assembly, here is an article from last month's Chanticleer. <https://uumilwaukee.org/important-business-at-general-assembly/>

We monitored two policies. The Board found, after reviewing information from the annual congregational survey and other information, that we are in compliance with the policies reviewed.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PITTSBURGH • JUNE 21 - 25, 2023

Financial Assistance to GA Deadline extended to April 15

by Bruce Wiggins

Denominational Affairs Coordinator

The deadline has been extended to April 15 for you to file an application for financial assistance from the church to help you attend General Assembly (GA) this year. GA will be multi-platform from June 21-25 -- live in Pittsburgh, PA and also virtual. The UUA has learned a great deal over the past two years about running a good conference virtually, so this is now a viable option! This year, two extremely important matters will be decided by GA delegates: election of our UUA President and debate plus a vote on the principles and purposes of our Association. Jennifer, before she left on sabbatical, preached on the revised principles and purposes, and our youth explored the proposed revised values at the terrific youth service.

Applications are simple and short. Forms are available on the Member Services Table during coffee hour and also on the church website at <https://uumilwaukee.org/committees/denominational-affairs/>. Registration information is on the UUA website at <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>. Financial assistance is also available through the UUA at <https://vimeo.com/790907595>



Buddhist Study Group

Wednesday, April 5 & 19, 6:30 pm
At Church or [Join Us Online Here](#)

Join us as we meet to share our thoughts and interpretations of Buddhist teachings and ideas. Then we meditate as a group for a short while and have fellowship. Contact is Mark Miller at gatheringwaterssangha@gmail.com.

Book Discussion Group

Sunday, April 9, 1:30 pm
At Church or [Join Us Online Here](#)

Join us as we discuss March's read, *Why Fish Don't Exist* by Lulu Miller. Contact Barbra Lancelot for more information at uubarbra@gmail.com.

Connect & Reflect

Every Thursday, 5:45 pm
[Join Us Online 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. All are welcome.

Chronologically Gift Potluck

Sunday, April 23 at 12:30 pm at church.

Contact Pat McFarland or Barbara Collignon for more information.

Chancel Choir

Every Thursday in April, 7:15 -9:00 pm
At Church

Join us on Thursdays in singing as we prepare to perform at Sunday services. Open to all singers high school age and up (no previous experience or audition required). Contact Tristan Strelitzer for more information or to join at tristan.strelitzer@uumilwaukee.org.

Grief Support Group

Wednesday, April 5 at 6:30 pm
[Join Us Online Here](#)

If you are experiencing loss, broadly defined, and would like the support of a small group, please join us. Open, drop-in, monthly group co-facilitated by Rev. Dena McPhetres and Pastoral Care Associate Deborah Conta.

Poetry Contemplation

Every Wednesday, 9:00 am
or 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 6:30 pm
[Join Us Online Here](#)

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



Sunday Morning Forum

10:00 AM IN-PERSON & ON YOUTUBE



APRIL 2

ARTS for ALL: Changing Lives through the Arts

Christina Martin-Wright, Executive Director.

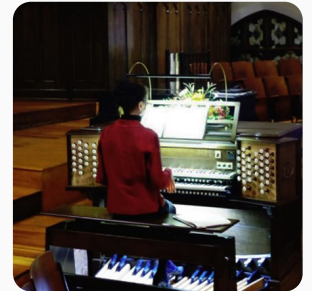
ARTS for ALL Wisconsin Executive Director Christina Martin-Wright will explore the transformative power of the arts and their positive influence on personal challenges, confidence building, and social connections, especially for people with disabilities. She will highlight the importance of creating inclusive arts opportunities that cater to the diverse needs of people with disabilities and the crucial role the arts play in enhancing well-being and creating positive change in our communities.

APRIL 9

Gratitude & Desire: the Alchemy of the Heart

Karen Beaumont, Musician.

A contemplation of gratitude and true desire. Their relationship and ability help us achieve greater wholeness and authenticity via poetry, writing and music. Karen will include her shared written reflections deepened by musical interludes.



APRIL 16

Protecting Public Access: Waterways & Waterfronts

Virginia Small, Journalist and Environmental Researcher.

We will discuss Wisconsin's "Public Trust Doctrine," which is fundamental to our water commons. Enshrined in the state's constitution, it legally protects public access to all "navigable" waterways, as well as all land that was formerly submerged. It has been crucial to the development of Milwaukee's extraordinary miles-long public lakefront and to the creation of Milwaukee's Riverwalk. Learn more about the role of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources and citizen advocacy in upholding this doctrine.

APRIL 23 & 30 TBD

Staff Directory

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

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Church Building Hours

Sundays: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Saturdays: 10:00 am - 2:30 pm

Monday - Wednesdays: 5:00 - 8:30 pm

If you are attending a scheduled group, ring the bell. If you need access to the building at other times, please make an appointment at first.church.office@uumilwaukee.org.

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