

JUNE 2024



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*

Renewal

Inside News

by *The Chanticleer* Editors

WELCOME SUMMER!

June 2 Flower Ceremony Sunday

Celebrate summer's arrival with your church community. Bring a fresh flower to share from your yard or roadside. (p. 6)

June 9 Summer Sunday Schedule Begins

One Sunday service only at 10:00 am (in-person and online) followed by social hour.

Summer RE: Faith Formation Stations and special sessions by community members. Children start in the Worship Service. (p. 8)

Summer Pulpit Guests:

June 9 - Rev. Bowie Kling-Garcia presenting "The Joy of Gender" (p. 7)

July 7 - Cheri Taylor presenting "You Are Your Best! Discovering One's Value, Self-worth, and Identity."

First Church former Membership Development Coordinator Cheri serves as the Philanthropy Officer for Principal and Major Gifts at Planned Parenthood of Wis. A Milwaukee native, Cheri earned her undergraduate degree from Marquette University in Social Welfare and Justice and Women's Studies. Prior to joining PPWI's Development team, Cheri served as the Major Gift Officer for the UUA for five years.

Cheri lives in Wisconsin Dells with her husband Anthony, her three children, Mattie, Anthony III, James, and their mini poodle Teddy.

Share the Plate Summer 2024

by Lynde Uihlein
Share the Plate Team Member



Hanan Refugees Relief Group

The Hanan Refugees Relief Group is an international charitable organization with an active branch in Wisconsin. Dedicated to both short- and long-term solutions, the organization provides social services that include the problem of food insecurity as well as English as a Second Language programs for adults. Their goal is to transition refugees into contributing members of their host communities by providing long-term solutions, such as housing, labor opportunities, and medical relief.

The group consists of dedicated volunteers that join together for the sole purpose of aiding refugees and people in need. Staff and volunteers help with the mentoring, shopping, housing, employment, and health care. 100% of donations go directly towards charitable supplies. All overhead, including travel and administrative expenses, are paid for by the volunteers. Volunteers are welcome, including youth to babysit during the ESL classes.

Learn more at www.hananrrg.org

Donate to this STP Partner



Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

We made it to June in Wisconsin! The weather is warming, the sun is beginning to kiss skin, and the flowers are flowing over gardens and trees and tables. May beauty and connection renew your faith in this world and the power of love.

We can renew our spirits with celebration in each of our first three June Sunday services. We open our June worship month with our annual Flower Ceremony, celebrating the unique beauty each member of our community brings in, and the ways our community creates more beauty in the spirits we carry out again into the world. On the second Sunday of June, we move into our annual Pride celebration. Everyone is invited to celebrate Pride in Sunday worship, and then join First Church marching in the Milwaukee Pride Parade. On the third Sunday of June, we'll celebrate Father's Day and honor Juneteenth.

I hope the beauty and warmth of the flowering earth and this community of love and celebration is a balm to your spirit this season, helping you renew your faith in love and this world.

With love,
Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister



Join In The Parade

Come walk with First Church and ZAO MKE for the 2024 Pride Parade on Sunday, June 9. Line up at 1:00 p.m., step-off at 2:00 p.m. [Sign up here.](#)

The pre-parade staging area is on 2nd Street from Lapham north to the step-off point. ALL ARE WELCOME!

This year celebrates the 20th anniversary and to convey the theme, we ask you to dress-up as any one color from the Pride Flags, together we will be spectrum of joyful colors! Sign up to let us know you plan to attend and to receive updates as well as detailed directions.

Dena's Digressions

by Rev. Dena McPhetres



The year that I lived in Portland, Oregon, my favorite place to go for renewal was the Columbia River Gorge. Whenever the intensity of my ministerial internship became too much to bear, whenever my spirit was exhausted, I jumped in the car and drove thirty minutes to one of the most beautiful places on earth.

Waterfall after waterfall after waterfall. I'd park the car, hike a short distance, and sit on a rock watching the water cascade down from a high cliff, land in a pool, swirl into eddies, and flow down a stream. The gentle touch of the mist on my skin was refreshing. The feel of the solid rock below my body gave me stability. The sight of moving water reminded me that "this too shall pass." But it was the sound of the waterfall that renewed my soul. I could listen to that sound for hours, even though it usually only took one hour to get renewed.

I had not been a big fan of waterfalls before that year. Growing up in the Midwest, waterfalls were small. But everything in nature is big in the Pacific Northwest. The waterfalls are awesome, the trees are huge, and I connected to water in a way I never had before. You don't have much choice, with all that rain!

"Don't say, don't say there is no water to solace the dryness at our hearts. I have seen the

fountain springing out of the rock wall and you drinking there," wrote poet Denise Levertov, "And I too before your eyes found footholds and climbed to drink the cool water."

Wherever you go this summer to renew your body, mind and spirit, remember that First Church holds worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. to hold you in whatever intensity, exhaustion, sorrow or joy you may be experiencing. We will welcome member Rev. Bowie Kling-Garcia on June 9 and reunite with our former Assistant Sabbatical Minister Rev. Jim Foti on August 18. Far flung member and former staff Cheri Taylor will speak from our pulpit July 7. And three members whose proposals were accepted, Andy Agacki, Amy Wilbourne, and Barbra Lancelot will speak on a variety of topics August 4, August 25 and September 1.

"Don't say, don't say there is no water. That fountain is there among its scalloped green and gray stones, it is still there and always there with its quiet song and strange power to spring in us, up and out through the rock."

Be like the poet, go to the fountain for renewal, and have faith it is there in you, always.

Yours,
Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister



Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



Even as we worked our way across the flower garden, weeding fork in my hand, tossing dandelions onto the drive for collection I feel deep reverence for this beautiful weed. Dandelions are ubiquitous harbingers of summer, wildly nutritious, an early source of nectar for pollinators with sun-colored popping superpowers.

“Dandelion” means “lion’s tooth,” perhaps named for its jagged leaves or its deep taproot that can grow up to 3 feet long. Dandelions can regenerate from just a small root piece, one of its secrets to survival. My young companion picks up a billowy seeded tuft saying, “I wish there were not so many dandelions,” and then blows those feathery parachutes into the spring breeze. Smirking, I give him a look. “Oh, it tricked me!” he replies, “I could not resist.” Another secret of its survival is being irresistible to wish makers.

Every year I remind myself to admire the dandelion’s persistent crack-filling, blooming fierceness. Its tenacity for renewal should not be taken for granted. A dandelion does not know if it is a weed or a blessing, it just keeps renewing, cycling through its version of that old wisdom about what makes a good life.

Something to do, something to love, something to look forward to.

Dandelion embodies this by growing anywhere it can, loving its offspring’s wonderful beauty and looking forward to blooming again and again.

May each yellow burst remind us to invest and believe in new beginnings, no matter how unlikely or tenuous, for that is how our hopes and dreams are made real.

Let our wish-making be irresistible.

Blessings,
Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Minister of Religious Education

RE End of Year Survey 2024!

Religious Education has changed a lot this year! This makes our end of the year R.E. survey especially important, your answers to a dozen questions help RE leadership focus our time and resources. Our short religious education survey allows us to evaluate how we are doing and how we can improve our religious education program to meet the needs of our families and our congregation’s Ends. We value your input and ideas, and I hope you can take a few minutes to reflect on your experience with our faith formation opportunities for children, youth and families.

[Click Here](#) for the End of Year RE Survey!

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

2

The Power and Beauty of the Present

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

The Chancel Choir

Erik Alexander, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

SERVICE AT 9:00 AND 11:00 A.M.

9

The Joy of Gender

Rev. Bowie Kling-Garcia, Pulpit Guest

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Desiree Pointer Mace, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

SUMMER SERVICE ONLY AT 10:00 A.M.

16

I'm Just Dad

Steve Sieck, Ministerial Intern

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Jeremy Koenen, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

23

Why Renew?

Rev. Dena McPhetres

Karen Beaumont, Guest Organist

Don Weimer, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

23

You're Batting 1000% So Far

Steve Sieck, Ministerial Intern

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Liz Irwin Moore, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

SUMMER SERVICES BEGIN JUNE 9 at 10:00 a.m.



Flower Ceremony ♦ June 2 Sunday Services

The first Sunday in June includes the Unitarian Flower Ceremony, which began in the Unitarian congregation in Prague, Czechoslovakia in June 1923. Please bring a fresh flower from your yard, neighborhood or random roadside to contribute to our community bouquet. We will each receive a different flower to bring home! Our delight in the uniqueness of each flower and the beautiful bouquet of community is a special kind of happiness.



“The Joy of Gender” ♦ June 9 at 10:00 a.m.

Rev. Bowie Kling-Garcia (they/them)

Rev. Bowie Kling-Garcia (they/them) is the Spiritual Care Supervisor and Palliative Care Chaplain at UnityPoint Health–Meriter Hospital in Madison, WI. Their journey to ministry started here at First Church as a lay member in 2018, and now they are the Affiliated Community Minister at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Church. In their free time, they enjoy reading, playing board games with their husband Logan, and snuggling with their energetic cat Yen.



Can You Help This Summer on Sundays?

Do you like welcoming people and creating a safe and smooth church experience? You might be an usher! If you're interested in serving on our usher teams for summer 10:00 a.m. services or for the 9:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. services during the 2024-2025 church-year, please send our Ministerial Intern Steve Sieck, a note at steve.sieck@uumilwaukee.org.



Summer Plans in Religious Education

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Minister of Religious Education

Dive into a summer of inspiration and growth at our Religious Education program for children! Join us as we embark on a journey of learning and fun, with opportunities to share your hobbies, talents, crafts, or topics with our eager young learners. Our program, centered around the Faith Formation Station Room, will also offer special sessions by community members, making it a truly enriching experience. Let's come together as a congregation to nurture young minds and foster connections between adults and children. Reach out to Rev. Kimberlee at kimberlee.carlson@uumilwaukee.org to be a part of this exciting initiative. Let's make this summer a season of creativity, learning, and community building!

Summer Schedule is online here at https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050848A4A923AAFC1-48935370-religious_

These volunteer roles are needed each Sunday this summer:

RE Summer Volunteer: Supervise and play with children in the Faith Formation Room or help with special session.

RE Volunteer Leader: Propose an activity or workshop idea for our children, work with Rev. Kimberlee to shape a feature workshop. Write Rev. Kimberlee to propose your idea!

RE Volunteer Leader: Propose an activity or workshop idea for our children, work with Rev. Kimberlee to shape a feature workshop. Write Rev. Kimberlee to propose your idea!

Preschool-Early Childhood Helper: Assisting in the Preschool with Mariah Groshek volunteers for the 10 a.m. Sunday service.

Nursery-Early Childhood Helper: Assisting in the Nursery with Cecelia Groshek, volunteers for the 10 a.m. Sunday service.

In the summer, Religious Education programs for children over 5 years of age begin at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. During our offertory hymn the Children, Youth participants and RE Volunteers will depart for the RE program, beginning in the Leenhouts Common Room and then moving to the lower level. For children under five, the Nursery and Preschool will be open from 9:45 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Consider Becoming a Theme Circle Facilitator!

by Rev. Dena McPhetres
Associate Minister

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. They feel closer to each other and the congregation through exploring how a theme like Belonging, Attention, 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 help create deep connections among our church members and friends. You would also meet regularly for leadership support with Rev. Dena and the facilitator team.

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

More information and application form here:

<https://uumilwaukee.org/theme-circle-facilitator/>.

People with diverse identities are especially encouraged to apply!

Questions? Contact Rev. Dena at:

dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org.



Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

Viktor E. Frankl

 Soul Matters



In Memoriam

Lisa Marie Noble

December 8, 1960 ~ April 29, 2024

Lisa Noble died unexpectedly at home in the late afternoon on Monday, April 29, 2024, after a long struggle with depression. Lisa was 63 years old and had been a member of our congregation since 2003. Cards and emails to the family are welcome and can be sent to Lisa's husband Dave Macherey.

A memorial service will be held at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, June 8, 2024, with the Rev. Dena McPhetres, officiating. A reception with light refreshments will immediately follow the service in the Leenhouts Common Room. All are welcome.

The Candle of Life was lit in memory of Lisa at both worship services on Sunday, May 5, 2024.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be given to Environmental Defense Fund or Heifer International

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 heartfelt condolences are with the **Schultz** family. Bizzy's grandfather, Kathy's father, and Duane Schultz's father-in-law Roy died on May 6, 2024 at the age of 102.

Pastoral Care Resources

If you would like to talk to a Pastoral Care Associate for a listening presence, please contact PCA Coordinator Lynn Connolly at fuspastoralcare@gmail.com or 414-573-9823.

If you'd like to talk to the Ministers, please call our Pastoral Care Emergency line at 414-216-3113.

For practical help, grocery shopping and delivery, or contactless meal delivery, contact Liz Irwin Moore, Pastoral Care Provider Coordinator at: fuspcprovider@gmail.com.

For personal financial assistance, please contact Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom at jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org.

Holy Earth Month!

Wholly Earth Month!

by Terry Wiggins
Environmental Justice Ministry Co-Chair

Friends, our Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) team shepherded us through a great Earth Month, a.k.a. April.

- The congregation wrote postcards – Did we ever! About 1,000 – and we donated most of the cash for the stamps we applied. EJM added about \$65 to what we collected. The Environmental Voter Project allowed us, led by Citizens Climate Lobby, to apply their methods to Wisconsin.
- We watched excellent films from the one Earth Film Festival, a Chicago-based organization that made the two films “Patrol” and “Carbon: The Unauthorized Biography” available to us for modest fees (less than a movie ticket) for each of the 5 residential viewing sites. Excellent discussions followed at each location.
- We soaked up nature’s blessings as we moseyed and rolled through Estabrook Park. The chirping of the birds was absolutely delightful that beautiful day.

- Many of us gathered to join Milwaukee Riverkeeper’s annual river-clean-up. We were encouraged that our efforts would keep trash from ending up in the lake, our source of drinking water.

We celebrate all of you and the interdependent web of which we are all a part. Thank you to all who participated.

Walk and Roll

Roll Grant Park

by Jacki Zandi
Earth Justice Ministry Member

Join us Saturday June 15 from 10:30 a.m.-noon at Grant Park along the Lakefront in South Milwaukee, 100 East Hawthorne Avenue. While we are on a path, we stop and observe whatever catches our senses. We always see more together!

Let’s meet and park at Grant Park Golf Course. To reach the lot where South Lake Drive ends, turn left (towards the lake) onto Hawthorne Avenue till you get to the public parking lot on the left-hand side. Juliet Hills is the leader, and Paula Anderson and Jacki Zandi are your hosts. Please bring friends and family.

Membership News

Spirit of Life Sessions

by Steve Sieckn
Ministerial Intern

Are you interested in deepening your spiritual reflection and practice this summer? Join us for a Spirit of Life series to explore understanding of wonder, ritual, and practice. The sessions will include individual reflection time, intentional listening, and collaborative meaning-making.

"No experience necessary." These gatherings are perfect for beginners and new visitors and members. Spirit of Life is a great opportunity to connect with others on a deeper level and get to know new friends.

These sessions are drop-in, so you can come to as many as work for your schedule. You can sign up at the Membership Services table in the Common Room or email our ministerial intern Steve, if you want an email reminder shortly before each date.

Sundays, June 30, July 14, and July 28 - 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Young Room. Bring Your Own Lunch. Online registration [HERE](#).

Cathedral Center Meal

June 4

by Treenut Wilson
Volunteer Coordinator

There are two ways you can help with the June 4th meal at Cathedral Center!

Please prepare your dishes at home and make them hot (if served hot) as there is no kitchen available for us to use there.

Please drop off your dishes at the Cathedral Center, located at 845 N. Van Buren St. Milwaukee, at 6:30 p.m. the day of. If you need to coordinate an early drop off or pick up ahead of time, contact Treenut Wilson at scoobert92@gmail.com or 262-442-8721.

We also need help serving dinner from 6:30-8:00 p.m. "Serving" may also include cleanup and making sandwiches on site, they provide materials. Thank you all very, very much!

You can sign up at Coffee Hour if you would like to help. You'll need to fill out a quick volunteer application if you haven't volunteered with us previously; I'll email it to you.

Exciting New Initiative Trans & Queer for UU!

by Susie Siedelman
T&Q for UU

We are thrilled to announce the formation of a groundbreaking committee at our church: Trans & Queer for UU (T&Q for U&U). Our mission is clear and vital: to lead cultural and systemic change at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee, ensuring that our spiritual community is one where trans and queer individuals fully belong and thrive.

Our mission statement drives our passion: "We're shifting First Church culture so that people of all identities thrive when queer and trans people are at the center of our congregational life."

Why is this so important? Imagine a First Church where every member, regardless of identity, feels an unshakable sense of belonging. When we center the experiences and needs of trans and queer people, we create a ripple effect of inclusivity, compassion, and unity that benefits everyone. This is about supporting a marginalized group, and it's also about enriching our entire community, making our congregation stronger, vibrant, and full of love.

Our committee is committed to making this vision a reality, but we can't do it alone. We need your enthusiasm, your energy, and your commitment to justice and inclusivity. Whether it's through participating in our events, sharing your ideas, or simply spreading the word, your involvement is crucial.

Together, we can create a church where everyone feels at home, where every voice is heard, and where every person is valued. This is our moment to shine, to lead, and to make a lasting impact. Let's embrace this change with open hearts and minds and make our congregation a beacon of hope and love. Sign up at the RE Table in the Common Room or reach out to Susie Seidelman at susieseidelman@gmail.com.

Join us in this exciting journey. Together, we will make the irresistible momentum of queer and trans belonging a reality at First Church. With enthusiasm and gratitude,
The Trans & Queer for UU Committee

PrideFest MKE 2024

Summerfest Grounds

Thursday, June 6 - 4 pm-12 am

Friday, June 7 - 3 pm-12 am

Saturday June 8 - 12 pm-12 am

Get Blessed at Pridefest!

Friday, June 7, 3-9 pm

Saturday, June 8, 12-9 pm

MKE Pride Parade

Sunday, June 9 - 2 pm

Come walk with First Church and ZAO MKE for the 2024 Pride Parade. Sign up to let us know you plan to attend [HERE](#). The pre-parade staging area is on 2nd Street from Lapham north to the step-off point.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VIRTUAL GA • JUNE 20 - 23, 2024

Love Unites, Stories Ignite: UUA General Assembly

General Assembly (GA), June 20-23, is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. Participants worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through the democratic process.

In a world filled with division and challenges, the theme for this year's General Assembly is a powerful reminder of the core principles that unite us as Unitarian Universalists. "Love Unites, Stories Ignite" celebrates the profound impact of love as a binding force that transcends boundaries and fosters connections within our faith community and beyond.

Our faith has always been rooted in the power of storytelling, and this year we'll explore how our stories can ignite change, inspire compassion, and help us build a more just and equitable world. Through storytelling, we share our experiences, our dreams, our struggles, and our triumphs. It is through these stories that we can find common ground, deepening our understanding of one another and the world around us.

Learn more and register [HERE](#).

For more information about the proposed changes to our Principles and Purposes, go to the Article II Study Commission, click [HERE](#).

Justice:

We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive. We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions.

Equity:

We declare that every person has the right to flourish with inherent dignity and worthiness. We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities.

Transformation:

We adapt to the changing world. We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically. Openness to change is fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages, never complete and never perfect.

Pluralism:

We celebrate that we are all sacred beings diverse in culture, experience, and theology. We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.

Interdependence:

We honor the interdependent web of all existence. We covenant to cherish Earth and all beings by creating and nurturing relationships of care and respect. With humility and reverence, we acknowledge our place in the great web of life, and we work to repair harm and damaged relationships.

Generosity:

We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope. We covenant to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. Our generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality.

Splinters from the Board

by Dana Brooks
Board of Trustees

At the Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting on April 23, Reverend Jennifer reported that combined attendance in person and online is higher than pre-Covid attendance. Fifteen people completed the recent Journey to Membership classes and will officially join the congregation. She also reported that Fiona Higgins has been hired as the new Religious Education and Membership Assistant.

Jean Johnson, Director of Administration, and Finance Team Chair Noreen Gilbertsen presented extensive financial reports for the third quarter and answered the Board Members' many questions about the financial operations. The BOT is satisfied that First Church continues to be managed in accordance with established policies.

Jean also presented the proposed budget for the 2024-2025 church year. The Board will consider its approval at its May meeting.

Board President Pat Geenen reviewed the Board of Trustees' satisfactory performance in compliance with Church Policies. Dana Brooks shared that many fewer congregants completed the Annual Survey than in recent years.

George Bledsoe reported that at the Annual Meeting, Endowment Fund Trustee Dave Becker will explain the Endowment Trust provisions and l

answer questions. In addition, prior to the Annual Meeting, Dave Becker and the Trustees will conduct three information sessions to answer questions in person and online.

The Board approved members to serve as delegates to the General Assembly, and agreed that BOT members could attend if they are available.

OWL 7-9 class who graduated this spring.



Staff Directory

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Rev. Andrew C. Kennedy, D.Min.

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

Board of Trustees Officers

President.....Stacy Koenen
Vice President...Mark Chambers
SecretaryJoe Riepenhoff
TreasurerTom Briscoe

Members

Dana Brooks
Elizabeth Hayes
Ryan Pawlowski
Sarah Richards
Stacey Thieme
Amy Wilbourne

How to Reach Us

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1342 N. Astor St. Milwaukee, WI 53202



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Follow Us



Summer Church Building Hours

Sundays: 8:30 am - 1:30 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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