

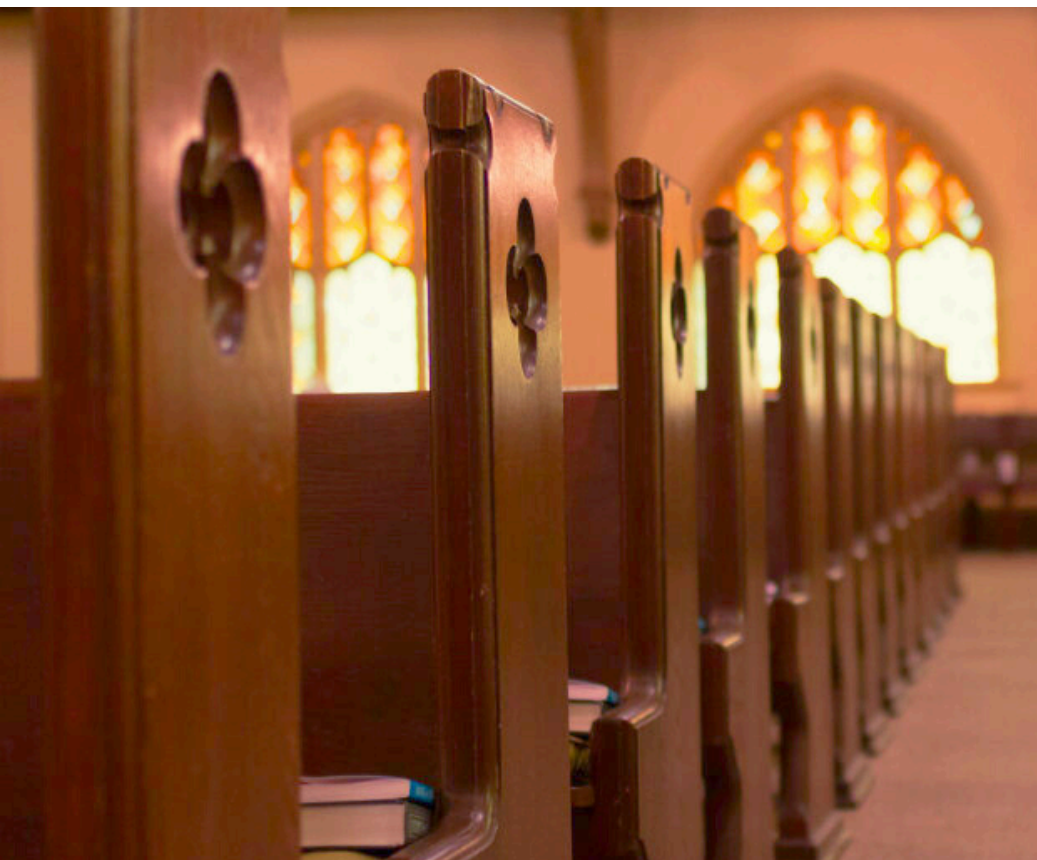
JULY 2024



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
Summer Services	6
Children & Families	7
Adult Spiritual Development	8
Our People, Our Community	9
Social Justice	10
Membership	13
Contact Us	14



Monthly Theme

*What does it mean
to be a people of*

Identity

Inside News

by *The Chanticleer* Editors

Welcome these Summer Pulpit Guests!

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.

August 4 - Andrew Agacki presenting “Resting at the Edge.”

First Church member Andy, took first Lay Precepts with the Kwan Um School of Zen in 1998 and reconfirmed them with Bright Dawn Institute. After training with the late Rev. Koyo Kubose, Andy was inducted as a Buddhist Minister in 2008. He served as president of international Bright Dawn Lay Minister's Association in 2011.

Andy has given Dharma Talks and sermons at First Church and other UU churches. He has served as Meditation Facilitator for First Church's annual Silent Retreat, where he has also conducted Evening Vespers.

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

Identity is complicated, powerful, and surprisingly fluid. Studies have shown that our identity shifts depending on context: we might feel more or less American on the fourth of July, for instance, or have a heightened sense of any identity that is the only one of its kind in a room.

This July, the Republican National Convention will be held in Milwaukee, and identity will be on full display. Some people will claim identity doesn't matter, while others will claim it is the only thing that matters. May you know that in Unitarian Universalism, and in your First Church community, you are beloved, beautiful, and sacred, both in your identity and beyond it. Your heart is held in sacred trust, and you are loved just as you are.

You are welcome to join our congregation and MICAH (Milwaukee Inner City Congregations Allied for Hope) on July 14 at the rally proclaiming We All Belong. Our faith calls us to proclaim this sacred home for all people. (see more here: [LINK TO WE ALL BELONG article](#))

Dear ones, in all the mess and chaos and judgement, may we be sacred space for one another. May we practice, again and again, returning to the home of our souls.

With love,

Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

Dena's Digressions

by Rev. Dena McPhetres



I walked into the interview for a full-ride scholarship at seminary, sat down, and the first question they asked me was: “Who are you?” I was floored! Didn’t they already know who I was from my application? Besides, they invited me to apply! What kind of question was this?

I slowly began to answer, naming various roles in my life that I play. “Who are you?” I named my identity markers such as ethnic, racial, gender, class, sexual orientation, religious affiliation. “Who are you?” I described my theological bents. “Who are you?” I listed my hobbies, passions, talents, and skills. “Who are you?” I described my family upbringing. “Who are you?”

Silence. I had had enough. I wanted to say, “When will you stop asking me this question?” I felt more and more discomfort as the layers of my identity peeled away. Finally, I said “I am human.” They took pity on me and moved onto other questions. When I left the room, I had no idea where I stood in their minds and whether I ‘passed the test.’ That was probably the point. To be nudged into ‘not knowing’ even about my most basic sense of self. Because, ultimately, do we really know who we are in all our aspects at all times?

Maybe you are familiar with the exercise that I underwent in that interview, maybe you’ve played it with someone. If not, I recommend it. Who are you, really?

It turned out that I was a student who was awarded a scholarship. For the rest of my years, especially at seminary, I knew I was a human being with humility and vulnerability at my core. So now, I ask you: “Who are you?”

Yours,

Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister



Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



This year we are engaging in a new way to help support the children in our community of Milwaukee and at First Church. Starting in July, we will be joining United Way's Backpack Coalition whose goal is to provide over 9,000 filled backpacks for the start of the 2024-25 school year. Backpack Coalition is committed to providing backpacks and school supplies to students with financial constraints, so they have the tools they need to succeed in school.

There are several reasons to support these efforts in Milwaukee. The average cost of school supplies hovers around \$75 and not every family can afford this cost. Supporting this effort will reduce the amount of money teachers spend from their own pockets to provide school supplies for their students, and help families redirect their limited budgets to other important needs: rent, food, bills, school clothes, and more.

There are three ways you can contribute to the Backpack Coalition.

Purchase supplies and drop them off in the bins in the hall and Leenhouts Common Room at church. High priority items include:

- Crayons, 24 count
- Folders, paper or plastic
- Markers, 10-12 count, thin or broad tip
- Composition notebooks, college or wide ruled
- Spiral notebooks, college or wide ruled

Visit the Amazon Wish List and purchase items to be shipped directly to United Way. Double Your Donation Promotion: For every backpack you donate, Fenrici Brands will ship an additional backpack on your behalf. United Way will also receive 5% back from your purchase. Click [HERE](#) for the link to the wish list.

Donate to the Backpack Coalition. \$30 provides one child with a backpack filled with grade-appropriate school supplies. Click [HERE](#).

On Sunday, August 11, we invite children to bring their backpacks to service for a blessing from the congregation. This blessing ritual will honor their return to learning at school and each child will receive a talisman for their backpacks. Backpack blessings are a way for our faith community to recognize the importance of children's lives and let them know that their faith community's love is with them at school and wherever they journey.

Help us prepare for our Backpack Blessing by letting us know your child/children will be attending. [RSVP here](#) for our Backpack Blessing on August 11:

I know together we can create backpack blessings for our community and our children.

In faith,
Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Minister of Religious Education

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

7

You Are Your Best!

Cheri Taylor, Pulpit Guest

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Nancy Spransy, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)



14

Identity is a Kaleidoscope

Rev. Dena McPhetres

Teresa Drews, Collaborative Pianist

Erik Alexander, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

21

We All Belong

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Don Weimer, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

28

I Guess I'm Not on the Cubs

Steve Sieck, Ministerial Intern

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Jeremy Koenen, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

SUMMER SERVICES AT 10:00 a.m. ONLY

First Church RE Family Playground Meet-Up!

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Minister of Religious Education

We are excited to announce that the Children Religious Education (CRE) Team leaders have organized a First Church family meet-up for Family Fun Days at the Northwestern Mutual Community Park, located inside Henry Maier Festival Park.

Join us after church service on Sundays July 7, August 4, and September 22 for a day filled with fun and festivities. The FREE Sunday Family Fun Days will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and offer a range of family-friendly programming, delicious food and drink options, and interactive activities for all ages. It's the perfect opportunity to connect with other families from our community and enjoy a day out together.

Mark your calendars and learn more about these exciting events [HERE](#). We can't wait to see you there!



All Are Welcome at the First Church Family Picnic

Join us for a First Church family outing that includes a picnic, hiking and marshmallows! Bring your own lunch to join us for a picnic hosted by the Hilgeman family, followed by a beautiful hike at Engel Conservation Area and then roast marshmallows by the fire back at the Hilgeman home.

Save the date of August 3. The picnic is at 12:30 p.m., hike at 1:00 p.m. and marshmallow roasting at 2:00 p.m. The address is S90W19168 Acorn Dr, Muskego, WI 53150. Click here for [Google map](#) directions and [RSVP here](#). Please bring a folding chair. A pack and play, quiet room, and several cots are available if a child needs to nap here. Get to know families from RE, hike and relax!



**Pridefest
June
2024**

First Church &
ZAO Members
walking in the
Pride Parade.



Theme Circle Facilitator

Application Deadline July 15!

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.

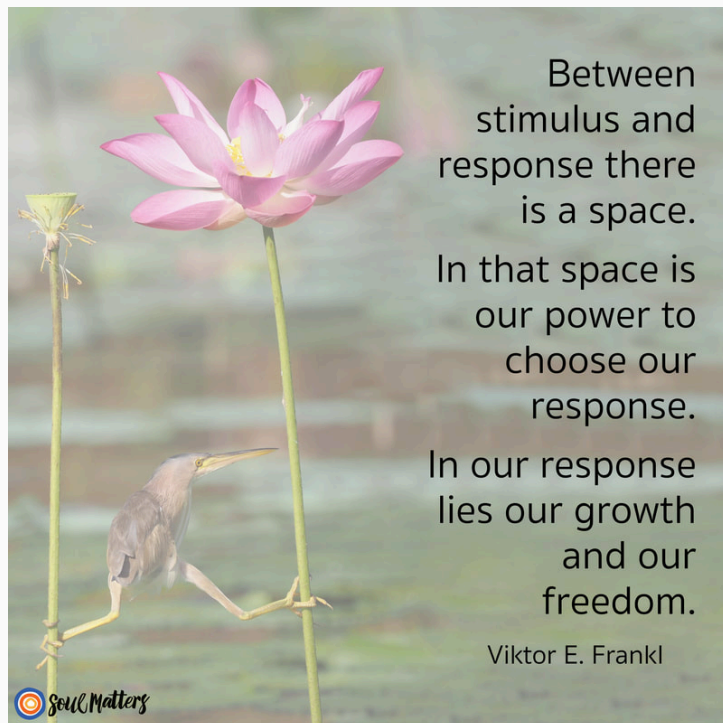
Application deadline is July 15. Selected applicants may be interviewed by Rev. Dena by mid-August. The required online Facilitator training with the Soul Matters team happens in August or September. Theme Circles begin meeting the third week of October.

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.





In Memoriam

Thallis Hoyt Drake

October 8, 1927 ~ May 27, 2024

Thallis Drake died at home on Monday morning, May 27, 2024, surrounded by her loving family. She fell at home a few days prior, resulting in a broken hip, and was under the care of home hospice. Although this news came as a surprise to many, her privacy and dignity were very important to her. Thallis was 96 years old and a member of First Church since 1964.

We lit the Candle of Life in memory of Thallis at both worship services on Sunday, June 2, 2024. A memorial service concert, which Thallis planned, will be held at First Church on Monday evening, September 30 at 7:00 p.m. with the Rev. Dena McPhetres officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to:

Early Music Now

<https://www.earlymusicnow.org/>

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

<https://bit.ly/Give2UU>



A Caring Community

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.

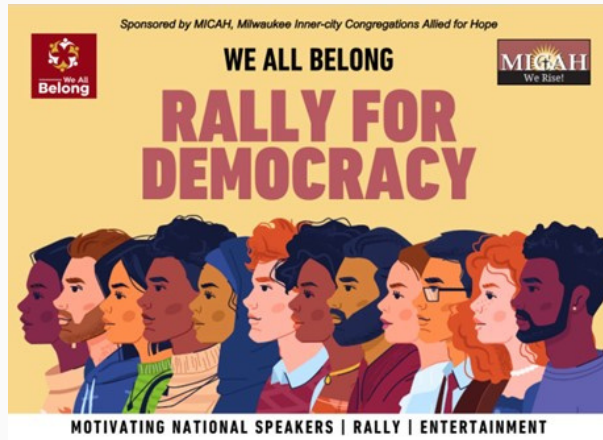
If you'd like to talk to the Ministers, please call our Pastoral Care Emergency line at 414-216-3113.

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.

Join the Rally for Democracy

by Bob Monahan
MICAHA Leadership Council &
First Church Defend Democracy Team



ATTENTION! Defenders of Democracy!

Show Up to Show Off
the Real Milwaukee
Sunday, July 14

This in-person event features a lineup of national speakers to draw national attention to the need to Reject White Christian Nationalism, Protect Democracy, and Build the Beloved Community envisioned by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These three pillars of MICAHA's We All Belong Campaign are the way forward for our country.

This message of equity and inclusion is likely very different from what will be offered by speakers at the Republican National Convention the following week. Show the nation what Milwaukee really looks like -- and what we really need from our elected officials!

Buy tickets at \$5 to ensure your general admission for first come, first served main seating. Securely order tickets [HERE](#). Or contact Sr. Barbara Pfarr at WeAllBelong@wisdomwisconsin.org to purchase with cash or check. Overflow seating with livestream will be available if main seating sells out.

Featured national speakers include Rev. Al Sharpton (National Action Network), Amanda Tyler (Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty), Rev. Bryan Massingale (Fordham University Center for Ethics Education), and Rev. Jim Wallis (Georgetown University Center on Faith and Justice).

Hear from local MICAHA leaders Rev. Dr. Richard Shaw, Rev. Marilyn Miller, Rev. Joseph Jackson, Janan Najeeb, Rev. Greg Lewis, Rev. Joe Ellwanger, and MICAHA Task Force Leaders.

You Can Help Stop Line 5

Submit Your Comments

by Jenny Abel

Earth Justice Ministry Member

All of us have an opportunity right now to help protect natural resources, defend the Tribal sovereignty of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and tackle climate change by submitting a comment calling on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reject the proposed reroute of the Line 5 pipeline.

Line 5 crosses northern Wisconsin and is decades past its lifespan of safe operation. Enbridge's attempt to continue operating the pipeline is in violation of the Bad River tribe's rights. In 2013, a federal judge ruled that Line 5 has been illegally trespassing on the Bad River reservation and ordered that it should be shut down by 2026. The pipeline also threatens the water, local communities, fish, and other wildlife with the threat of an oil spill.

You can submit a comment to the [Army Corps of Engineers](#) asking them to do a full Environmental Impact Statement of the project and to ultimately reject Line 5. Email your comment to CEMVP-WiL5R-CDD-Comments@usace.army.mil. Comments can be submitted through the new deadline of **August 4**.

Several Wisconsin organizations have compiled useful resources. The [Wisconsin Chapter of the Sierra Club](#) has links to submit your comments to the Army Corps of Engineers. The Sierra website

has more ways to share your point of view and detailed background information on Line 5. You can also learn more at the [Bad River Band Pipeline Page](#).

First Church is working on showing the film Bad River on October 13, so stay tuned for more details.

Walk and Roll

Hart Park/Tosa Farmers Market

by Jacki Zandi

Earth Justice Ministry Member

Join us on Saturday July 13th from 10:30 a.m.-noon for our Walk and Roll at Hart Park, located in Wauwatosa, 7300 Chestnut Street along the Little Menomonee River.

Let's meet and park in the lot along the river, accessed from 68th or 74th just south of West State Street. From there we will Walk and Roll along the paved path to the Farmers' Market. Invite friends and family. We always experience more together. Jacki Zandi is your leader and Paula Anderson is your host.



Reimagine Together
From An Extractive
Age To A New Era

Save the Date: Oct. 5-6

Lea Morris &

Climate Justice Revival

by Terry Wiggins

Co-Chair, Earth Justice Ministry

How can our climate work and all our social justice work be:

- Less isolated, more connected?
- Less anxious, more nourishing?
- Less limited; more visionary?

Join us for a national UU Climate Justice Revival weekend offering inspiring collective worship, creative learning, and new frameworks at the intersection of climate and justice. We'll have a chance to weave together the threads that always link our deepest commitments. The Revival will equip UU congregations to enter a new era of climate action—one that intentionally and faithfully breaks down silos and cultivates relationships leading to flourishing collaborations that transform our congregations.

First Church will hold our revival October 4-5 when we will have Lea Morris, beloved musician of pandemic-time services, here for the Morter Lecture. Many UU Congregations will do this UU program in late September.

Do you often find yourself ready to throw up your hands overwhelmed at what feels like immovable obstacles of government inaction, public apathy, and odds stacked against people?

“That’s why this Climate Revival is critical.... What bolsters me is our shared faith, which holds us in values of justice and equity. What gives me hope is the innovation, creativity, and ingenuity that is emerging all around us. What gives me strength is the power that we amass when we come together to build a new way.”

~Rev. Amanda Weatherspoon
 River Road UU Congregation

The Greeter Lectern is Calling You!

by Rev. Dena McPhetres
Associate Minister

Our beautiful Greeter Lectern, designed and built by member Pete Hill, is calling to you! Are you someone who enjoys smiling, saying “good morning,” and talking to guests at church? Perhaps you’d like to volunteer at our Greeter Lectern in the main hallway on Sunday mornings.

The role is fun and easy! Show up fifteen to twenty minutes before service begins on Sunday, pull the lectern into place, and get ready to offer a hearty hello, personal connection, nametags and basic information about our church (like how to find the nearest restroom, water fountain, door to the sanctuary, and where to connect with children’s religious education).

We are down a few staff people, so we need to open this lovely opportunity to our members. Please contact Steve Sieck, our Ministerial Intern, (steve.sieck@uumilwaukee.org) or Rev. Dena, (dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org), if you are interested and we will get you signed up with much gratitude and joy.

Journey to Membership

Saturday, Oct. 12, 10:00 am – 4:30 pm and
Tuesday, Oct. 15, 6:30 -8:30 pm
In-person, at First Church

People join churches for many reasons, including making a commitment to a personal practice, supporting their values in the world, and strengthening their connections to something larger than themselves, whether that is defined by community or purpose.

At First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee, we do not share a common creed, but we do share a commitment to practicing an intentional life towards justice, spiritual growth and love.

Helping our community nurture souls, engage minds, and inspire action can look like warmly welcoming a stranger on Sunday morning, providing pastoral care, organizing a social justice action, teaching children, singing in our choir, or the many additional ways members help to sustain and shape everything we do at First Church. Service to the community is also an important part of strengthening our connections and sense of belonging.

Learn more about membership or register at uumilwaukee.org/get-involved/become-a-member/. Email dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org for more information.

Staff Directory

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dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org, ext. 202

MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Rev. Kimberlee Carlson

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MINISTER EMERITUS

Rev. Andrew C. Kennedy, D.Min.

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Tristan Strelitzer

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COLLABORATIVE PIANIST

Teresa Drews

teresa.drews@uumilwaukee.org

Staff members have varying hours.

Please contact them directly to set up an appointment.

Board of Trustees Officers

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Vice President...Mark Chambers

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How to Reach Us

414.273.5257

first.church.office@uumilwaukee.org

1342 N. Astor St. Milwaukee, WI 53202



uumilwaukee.org

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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