

FEBRUARY 2025



# 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*

**Inclusion**

# Inside News

by the *Chanticleer* Editors

We are looking forward to more fun activities at church in February.

On January 19, 2025 we celebrated MLK Sunday Services with our ministers and Dasha Kelly Hamilton's powerful presentation "Makin' Cake." Many members and visitors attended and over 50 people joined the livestream to watch the service.

In January, The Social Justice Council along with the Anti-Racism Team and the TQ4UU had a energetic discussion on "Sanctuary & Accompaniment." Look forward to more news from these teams.

Our annual pledge drive will begin on Sunday February 2, including a testimonial from Ann Hefter and Alexis Felix. The congregation will be invited to participate a ritual to share your ideas from this question: "How does First Unitarian Society ignite your flame?" The other Sunday testimonials will feature members:

Feb 9: Katie and Noel Kegel

Feb 16: Fred Gutierrez and Kristi Davis-Gutierrez

Feb 23: Myles Pointer Mace

March 2: Cheri and Tom Briscoe

The all-ages Magic & Mystery Party is February 6. Learn more on page 8.

Plan to come Sunday, February 23 for our annual Youth Service. This year the Youth chose the topic "Tales of Inclusion."

## Environmental Youth Collaborative

### Share the Plate February 2025

by Lynde Uihlein,  
Share the Plate Team Member

The Environmental Youth Collaborative is composed of thirteen environmental youth-serving organizations that collectively employ over 125 youth each summer at an estimated total of 20,000 hours of youth employment. The programs offered combine racial justice and environmental justice throughout the thirteen organizations. Their programming spans Southeastern Wisconsin including the City of Milwaukee. Each organization's mission is unique and, when brought together, represents a strong diversity of programming in arts, engineering, stewardship, community development, education, social equity, and more.

Green careers are historically white-centered and white-filled. The Environmental Youth Collaborative employs young people from undervalued communities in order to provide experiences in environmentally centered organizations, leading to improved access to fulfilling careers in the field. Learn more at <https://www.eycmke.org>

Donate to this STP Partner



# Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Dear Ones,

Our February theme is inclusion, and we mean it. Universalism was born in the United States in the late 1700s because our ancestors knew the love of the holy is infinite and all-inclusive. No one is ever separated from love, the holy, or the whole. All separation is the product of human error, a figment of our sometimes-terrible imaginations.

Unfortunately, human beings have made such terrible imaginings real in the world through domination, exclusion, and hurtful hierarchies. The tenets of our faith call us to tear down all those human-made barriers, and to keep loving and dreaming across all imaginary lines of exclusion, be they race or age or gender or citizenship status or ability.

This call is getting real this month, and we will practice inclusion in our congregation and in our work in the world. If you are feeling frustrated, angry, or scared, empower yourself by taking action to get connected. You can get connected with one of our social justice teams working on trans inclusion, immigrant safety, and anti-racism. You can give generously to our church during the Pledge Drive, which launches on February 2,

protecting this institution and our beacon of Unitarian Universalist values in the world. You can show up for our youth and learn from their wisdom on Youth Sunday, February 23.

The seeds of change are alive deep within the earth. It is time now, and in this great turning we shall learn to lead in love.

With love,  
Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister



# Kimberlee's Contemplations

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson



It has been five years since I began my ministry at First Church to the children, youth and families of First Church in 2019. When I arrived at the religious education program at First Church, you were discerning how to reshape RE to meet the evolving needs of our families. Eight months later, all of us were learning how to navigate life and church in a pandemic. We have come so far together since then, reinventing and restructuring our religious education program multiple times since that first year. Together over the last five years we have hosted multiple regional OWL training weekends and Youth events, and witnessed our OWL program and Youth group return and grow. Beloved traditions such as Mystery Friends, Holiday Giving Tree, and Valentine Making have returned and new traditions have been born such as Sandwich Making Day have emerged. I am enormously grateful and proud of the progress we have made together in creating a joyful, welcoming and inspiring environment where children, youth and families can thrive and grow. It has been exciting, fulfilling and exhausting work. I find myself both filled with ideas on how we can continue and short on the time, energy and resources needed to make that reality happen. I am fortunate that my upcoming sabbatical will offer a time to recharge and refocus.

A minister takes a sabbatical to fill up their spiritual, educational and personal well and a congregation provides this gift of time to ensure that the health of the minister and work of the church can continue to thrive. A sabbatical offers a time away from the day-to-day life of a congregation, to provide a time of rest and rejuvenation for the body, mind, and spirit.

I have requested that my five-month sabbatical time be divided across two years in the summer months to ensure the continuity and progress we have made in religious education can sustainably continue in my absence. Our religious education program is scaled back in the summer due to lower attendance.

Over the next few months, the CRE team, RE volunteers and church staff planning will be engaged in preparing for my time away, which will begin on May 20 through to July 31, 2025. I will continue to communicate our progress and the nature of our plans over the next few months. Our faith is needed now more than ever, and I promise to continue to dedicate myself to serving this congregation, even in my absence, thankful for the gift of service and sabbatical.

Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson  
Minister of Religious Education

# SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

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## Inclusion for Liberation

**Rev. Jennifer Norstrom, Senior Minister**

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director, and the House Band  
Debra Klepp, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

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## How Do I Know I Belong?

**Rev. Dena McPhetres, Associate Minister**

Nancy Spransy, Worship Associate  
Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director with the Chancel Choir

[Click for info about this service](#)

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## Stop Signs, Cows, and Covenants

**Steve Sieck, Ministerial Intern**

Don Weimer, Worship Associate  
Alissa Rhodes and the House band

[Click for info about this service](#)

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## Tales of Inclusion

### Annual Youth Service

**Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson**

**Minister of Religious Education**

The First Church Youth Group  
Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

[Click for info about this service](#)

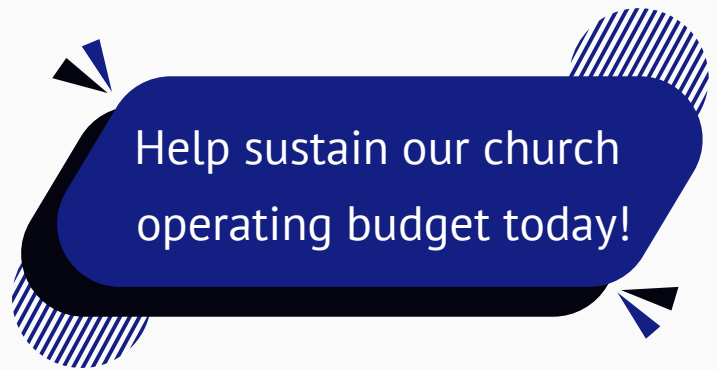
Sunday Services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

## Pledge Drive 2025-26 Together We Fan the Flame

by Kathy Donius  
Pledge Team Member

On February 2, we will kick off our annual pledge drive for the church year that begins on July 1, 2025 and ends on June 30, 2026. As you consider what you will pledge, our 2025 Pledge Team invites you to reflect on how First Church fans the flame of hope, peace, love and justice in your heart, our community and the broader world. Perhaps, like me, you find authentic connection, inspiration and support by being a part of this beloved community. Whatever it is that you love and value about our First Church community, your annual pledge is what helps to sustain it.

This year, our pledge goal is to keep up with inflation, so we don't fall behind in closing the gap between our annual operating income and annual expenses. An average First Church household pledge is \$1900 per year, and we are asking all members to consider an increase to their annual pledge. We recognize that some members pledge more, and some pledge less than our average household pledge; some members are still fulfilling a Forge our Future Pledge, and many other members may not have increased their annual pledge amount in many years. Our pledge form allows you to calculate the percentage increase that makes sense for your situation. Can you increase your annual pledge by 2, 4, 6 or 8 percent? We know not



everyone can manage an increase at the highest level, but please know that whatever you can pledge is deeply appreciated.

Our budget planning process this spring will rely on the results of the pledge commitments that we secure in the next five weeks so please submit your pledge before our pledge drive ends on March 2. We are so grateful for everyone's support of First Church. Together, we really do fan the flame.

Testimonial by Jack & Debra Klepp

*First Church has a presence in our community that helps to gather and inspire a community with shared values to be active, in a spiritual way, to be better human beings, and to be more present and participatory in what happens next in our world.*

Pledge here for the  
2025-26 Operating Fund.

[Online Pledge Form](#)



## Investing in Justice

by Holly Patzer  
Finance Team

As you consider your pledge for 2025-26, we would like to share with you that as part of First Church's investment strategy we are committed to investing with entities that work in our local community to provide economic opportunity for people of color and economically disadvantaged persons.

We currently have over \$21,000 invested with the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation, known as WWBIC, leveraging our initial investment with a match from the UAA. WWBIC has been "Putting Dreams to Work" in Wisconsin since 1987, providing support to underserved individuals who are interested in starting, strengthening or expanding businesses. It focuses on individuals who face barriers in accessing resources and traditional financing, particularly women, people of color, veterans, rural and lower wealth individuals. Since 1987, WWBIC has served 75,000 individuals in Wisconsin, with 92% of its Milwaukee clients being people of color.

We also currently hold a CD of over \$56,000 at the Self-Help Federal Credit Union. Its mission is to create and protect economic opportunity for all, especially people of color, women and low-wealth families and communities, by

providing financial services, lending to small businesses and nonprofits, developing real estate and promoting fair financial practices. Milwaukee branch collaborations include Sherman Phoenix and Milwaukee Build Operate Scale Sustain (BOSS), which will provide financial coaching and access to capital to certified minority-owned businesses in Milwaukee.

## Community Valentine Making



by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson  
Minister of Religious Education

Each year, children and adults are invited to create over 100 valentines for members of our community who have experienced a challenging year and might be in need of some extra love! Every card we make is sent out by the church staff to help someone remember and know that we love them, care for them and we're thinking of them this winter.

Our Valentine Making will take place on February 9th during coffee hours in the Leenhouts Common Room and in our Religious Education program for children. Come share your crafty creativity and help us meet our Valentine Making goal! Thank you for taking part in this meaningful tradition!

## RE Survey

At First Church, we believe in the importance of providing a robust and enriching faith formation experience for our community. That's why we have our mid-year Religious Education survey, designed to gather feedback from our members and focus our resources where they're most needed. Your input is essential to help us improve our program and meet the needs of our congregation's Ends.

Our short survey consists of ten questions and takes only a few minutes to complete. By participating, you'll have a direct impact on shaping our faith formation program and ensuring that it meets the needs of our community. Your feedback is invaluable to us, and we appreciate your time and effort in sharing your thoughts. Take the survey [HERE](#).

Don't miss this opportunity to help shape the future of our faith formation program. Take our mid-year survey now and let your voice be heard!

# YOU ARE INVITED TO A MAGIC & MYSTERY PARTY

MAX OTTO HALL FEB. 7, 6-8PM

Come one, come all for a magical, All-Ages night of fun and sorcery!  
A time for witches, wizards, and all manner of magical creatures to wear costumes, delight in magic, play games & enjoy each other's company!

Volunteer to help with decorations, food, games, and more. Sign up online, QR code below or at the RE Table to make this a magical event!





## Welcome our New Members!

by Rev. Dena McPhetres  
Associate Minister

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 9, 2025, when we will celebrate our newest new members at both worship services during our New Member Ceremony. We have over 30 people registered for the Winter Journey to Membership class and look forward to officially welcoming many of them into membership. Look for the folks wearing flower boutonnieres and please give them a hearty warm handshake at Coffee Hours on February 9. Big thanks to the Welcome & Belonging Team (Dave Hoover, Mariah Kauder, Jeanne Kowalski, Jessie Moffat, Laurie Petersen, Ben Trubach, Fiona Higgins, and Steve Sieck) who make our Journey classes and New Member Sundays such friendly events.

## Journey to Membership

**Spring 2025, 4 Wednesdays, April 9 – 30  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m., in-person**

Join us either for our Journey to Membership class. Led by our ministers and staff, this series explores Unitarian Universalist beliefs, history, values, and social justice framework, as well as the meaning of membership and how to make connections at First Church.

The class is a prerequisite to membership, but joining is not a requirement. Register if you are interested in UUism, want to meet others, or just want a deeper understanding of intentional community as we strive to practice it here at First Church. Learn more about membership and register at [uumilwaukee.org/get-involved/become-a-member/](https://uumilwaukee.org/get-involved/become-a-member/) or stop by the Connections Table on Sundays to sign-up.

### In Memoriam

Donna M. Jacobson  
March 22, 1935 ~ December 30, 2024

Donna Jacobson died peacefully in her sleep on Monday morning, December 30, 2024, after a long journey with Alzheimer's. She was in hospice care at the Lutheran home in Wauwatosa, surrounded by care, and died with her daughter Lisa holding her hand. Donna was 89 years old and was a member of First Church since 2004, although she was associated with us much longer having been married here in the 1950s and first visiting here when she was 18 years old. A memorial service will be held at First Church on Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. with Rev. Dena McPhetres officiating. There will be a reception in the Leenhouts Common Room immediately following the service. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Donna can be given to the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee.

## The Spiritual Work of Trans Justice and Safety

Saturday, February 22, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Worship service to follow at 4:30 pm

Lunch provided by the congregation

Participants can attend in person or virtually on Zoom

**First Unitarian Society, Madison WI**

As people of faith, we are called to be a prophetic and active force for justice in our world, both inside and outside our congregational walls. In our faith communities, being a place of welcome and belonging is about more than being friendly. It means actively working to dismantle the forces in our world that teach us that some people are better, normal, more valuable and other people are lesser than, other, outsiders. In our world today, we know that Trans and Non-binary lives are under threat. The current political moment is a dangerous and terrifying one for trans people and their loved ones, as harmful anti-trans rhetoric and legislation escalates across the country.

Come expand your understanding of what it means to be trans and nonbinary, learn how to tell fact from fiction, and find out how to help create safety for trans people and their families in this moment. No matter who you are or how much or how little you know about gender diversity, this interactive and informative workshop will expand your mind,

open your heart, and give all of us the tools we need to deepen our welcome and care for people of all genders in our community.

Zr. Alex Kapitan (ze/per) is a lay community minister, educator, editor, consultant, and activist. A trans and queer lifelong Unitarian Universalist, Alex does interfaith LGBTQ work and supports congregations in becoming places of radical welcome for all. Ze is the co-founder of the Transforming Hearts Collective, the co-leader of the program Trans Inclusion in Congregations, and the founder of Radical Copyeditor, an anti-oppressive language project. To register, please fill out the registration form.

[Click to register here](#)



## Getting Your Ducks in a Row

### Save the Dates!

by Rev. Dena McPhetres  
Associate Minister

Many of us think that end-of-life planning is only a concern for the elderly. It is, but anyone who has dependents, especially minor children, must also be prepared, just in case. Whether you have children or not, getting your end-of-life plans in place will give you peace of mind.

If your ducks aren't lined up, if you aren't even sure which ducks you need, join the Heritage Society in March 2025 for a three-part program that will give you this important information.

Wednesday, March 12, church member Dr. Brett Twente will discuss the medical issues related to end-of-life planning and how to prepare a medical power of attorney.

Wednesday, March 19, attorney and church member Rollie Hansen will discuss wills and probate, financial power of attorney, trusts (including special needs trusts), and Title 19/Medicaid planning.

Wednesday, March 26, Rev. Dena McPhetres will discuss spiritual aspects, such as how to talk with your loved ones about your final wishes, your beliefs about death and afterlife, your choices for disposition of your body after death, memorial service or funeral plans, and why we procrastinate these conversations.

Put these dates on your calendar now and look for the registration link to come!

Each program runs 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in Max Otto Hall upstairs which has hearing assist devices. The programs will NOT be livestreamed or recorded. The cost for the three-part series is \$30.00. To request a fee waiver, contact Rev. Dena at [dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:dena.mcphetres@uumilwaukee.org). Unfortunately, we are not able to provide childcare.

Reminder: Be sure that one of your ducks is leaving a bequest to First Church. Contact Shari Wright at [shari.wright@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:shari.wright@uumilwaukee.org) for information on how to do that.



## Update on the Acting Assistant Minister Search Process

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom  
Senior Minister

As a reminder, “Acting” means we will hire an assistant minister for 3 years. We have the flexibility to hire the person at the end of the period if the relationship is working. “Assistant” means this role will be hired, not called, and the congregation will not vote on this hire. An Assistant Minister has less responsibility for vision and direction-setting than an Associate Minister. The Acting Assistant Minister will have a ‘Congregational Life’ portfolio of Membership and Pastoral Care, including small group ministry like Theme Circles, and Affinity Groups like The Chronologically Gifted.

Our Board-approved Acting Assistant Minister Search Team of lay leaders with expertise in the Acting Assistant Minister’s portfolio areas has been hard at work with Rev. Jennifer since October. We have prepared and shared our congregation’s record, reviewed and interviewed a batch of UU ministers interested in the position. Unfortunately, we can’t hire Ministerial Intern Steve Sieck. While he is wonderful, the UUA has a rule against internship congregations hiring their ministerial intern.

This month, we will do more in-depth interviews with our top candidates. We hope to make an offer in March. Once our offer is accepted, we will announce the new minister to the congregation. The new Acting Assistant Minister will begin serving in August of 2025.

Rev. Kimberlee and I are both happily rooted here at First Church and will continue to ground us in stability through this process. Rev. Kimberlee will be moving up in the hierarchy of Ministers at First Church in August, collaborating with me on vision and direction-setting for the congregation, much like Rev. Dena did.

# Save THE Date

## Ministry Transitions Update

by Rev. Dena McPhetres  
Associate Minister

Music, Mingle, Munchies, and Memories – come celebrate Rev. Dena’s Retirement at an Open House on Friday, May 30, 2025, from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. at an off-site location, TBD. Come and go as you please, mingle with friends, eat some hearty snacks, share memories of Dena’s ministry, and give your blessings to her as she enters her last month at First Church. On Sunday, June 1, 2025, we’ll celebrate our annual Flower Ceremony during both Sunday worship services, as well as a Retirement ritual for Dena and the congregation to help us say good-bye.



## Update on Adult Spiritual Development Transitions

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson  
Minister of Religious Education

Beginning the next church year, August 1, 2025, my church responsibilities will expand to include Adult Spiritual Development and next year will be called Adult Faith Formation. My title will also shift to Minister of Faith Formation to reflect this shift in my portfolio at First Church.

Rev. Dena and I are utilizing the next few months to review the history of the Adult Spiritual Development program and ensure that I can continue to support the current Adult Spiritual Development program and leaders, that includes Wellspring and other offerings. I am grateful and fortunate to have this time with Rev. Dena and with Adult Spiritual Development First Church leaders prior to her retirement transition.

As a former public-school teacher, my heart is that of an educator; I am excited and honored to work with the congregation leaders to find ways we can continue and center the spiritual growth and educational needs of our faith community as we work together to develop the Adult Faith Formation program at First Church.

## Apply to Become a Worship Associate

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom  
Senior Minister

Do you love the Sunday morning stories our First Church Worship Associates tell? Do you love story-telling and meaning-making? Consider applying to be a Worship Associate!

Worship Associates help lead our Sunday worship services, collaborating with the ministers to reflect on meaning, purpose, and the life of the congregation. Worship Associates help develop Sunday themes for worship in monthly meetings with the ministers and then work 1-1 with the ministers to create a compelling story on the Sunday morning they serve.

Worship Associates help lead the Sunday service at both the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services and greet members and visitors during coffee hour after service. Worship Associates serve for 2 years, including during the summer, beginning with worship planning in May of the year they begin service and ending with summer services two years later. Learn more on our website and apply online by March 31 to serve in the 2025 – 2027 cohort: <http://uumilwaukee.org/ministers-and-leaders/worship-associates/>

Watch a  
Worship Associate

Liz Irwin Moore Story on Dec 1, 2024



Tom Hester Story on January 26, 2025



## Inspiration at General Assembly 2025

by Bruce Wiggins

Denominational Affairs Coordinator

General Assembly (GA) is the annual national 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. Please join us Wednesday, June 18 through Sunday, June 22, 2025 in Baltimore, Maryland (and/or online) for this 5-day immersive experience where we participate in inspirational worship services and informative workshops, reconvene with friends and colleagues, and explore our bustling exhibit hall. GA is an unforgettable experience for the thousands of UUs who attend. Meet us online or in Baltimore and you'll leave with renewed energy and innovative ideas to share with your congregation and community-at-large!

- Some inspiring speakers have been announced. See <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/GA-2025-Featured-Speakers-and-Other-News.html?soid=1102579699450&aid=-qNVgWTvcU>
- Funds available to help defray costs – both from FUSM and the UUA. Volunteer and scholarship opportunities are available. See <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration/financialaid/scholarships>
- Registration is now open; costs increase April 1. See <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>

For information, see Denominational Affairs Coordinator Bruce Wiggins.



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
BALTIMORE • JUNE 18 - 22, 2025

## Splinters from the Board

by Elizabeth Hayes

Member of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees met for our final meeting of 2024 on December 17. The Board unanimously determined compliance with Policy 2, which describes the Board's governance process.

The Board had a constructive conversation about allocating a portion of the generous and unexpected Kading Bequest and Weiss Gift to social justice causes. At the September meeting, the Board had passed motions to direct gifted funds toward short-term financial needs, a medium-term capital project, and long-term investment through the Endowment Fund. Following discussion at the December meeting, the Board unanimously approved allocating, after short- and medium-term projects are funded, a percentage of the remaining funds to one or two social justice projects (in consultation with the Social Justice Council), and the majority of the remaining funds to the Endowment Fund.

Following a report from Rev. Jennifer, the Board unanimously determined compliance with Policy 4.8 regarding Senior Minister Well-Being. Highlights from the Senior Minister Report include: Endowment pledge payments total to \$1,947,617 as of December 11; 18 registered for Journey to Membership; Anti-Racism Team, Social Justice Council and Trans Inclusion Teams plan to collaborate to protect the trans and immigrant communities receiving the most vitriol; the revamped Immigration Action Team is seeking support and interest.

## 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.*

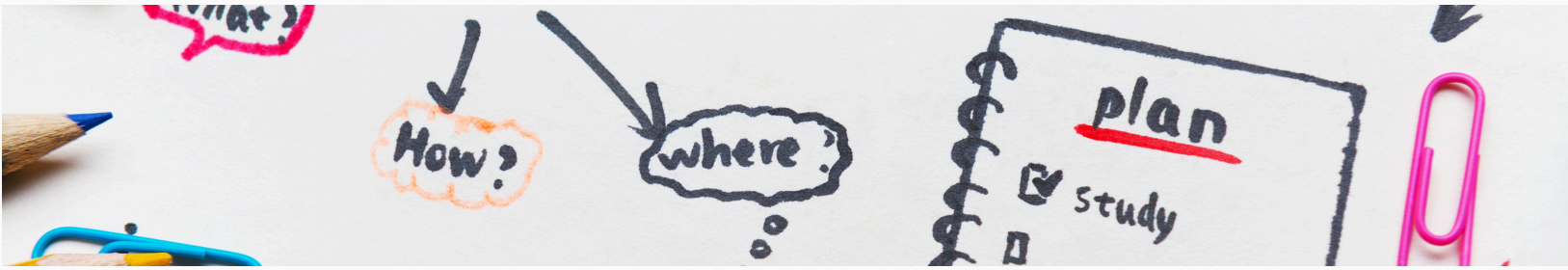
Our heartfelt condolences are with **David Tripp**, whose mother died on Christmas Eve in Virginia. May you be surrounded by care and filled with good memories.

Our love and care are with **Lisa Jacobson** and her family on the death of their matriarch Donna. May love and memories hold and heal your grief.

Our thoughts are with **Leon Todd** while he recovers from heart surgery in December. May you heal well and feel better soon!

Our thoughts are with **Chris Faulhaber** who is recovering from a broken hip and femur. Chris would welcome receiving cards. May you heal well and be back with us soon!





## Buddhist Study Group

Wednesday, Feb 5 & 19, 6:30 pm  
At Church

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](mailto:gatheringwaterssangha@gmail.com).

## Book Discussion Group

Sunday, February 9  
[Join Us Online Here](#)

Join us as we discuss February's read, *An Unfinished Love Story* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. Contact Barbra Lancelot [uubarbra@gmail.com](mailto:uubarbra@gmail.com).

## Chancel Choir

Feb. 6, 20, 27 at 7:15-9:00 p.m.  
At Church

Sing with us on Thursdays as we prepare to perform for Sunday services. Open to all singers high school age and up (no previous experience or audition required). Contact Tristan Strelitzer: to join at [tristan.strelitzer@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:tristan.strelitzer@uumilwaukee.org).

## Poetry Contemplation

Every Wednesday, 9:00 am  
[Join Us Online Here](#)

Contact Diane Horne for more information at [diane\\_horne@hotmail.com](mailto:diane_horne@hotmail.com).

## The Chronologically Gifted Potluck

Sunday, February 23 at 12:30 pm  
At Church

Reconnect with old friends and make some new ones. Bring a dish and join your contemporaries for a potluck after the Sunday service in Otto Hall. We may even have some entertainment! Plan ahead! Show up! Enjoy! Contact Barbara Collignon at [bjcollig@gmail.com](mailto:bjcollig@gmail.com).

## The Practice of Presence

Every Monday, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.  
At Church in the Sanctuary

Practicing presence allows us to be fully aware of the present moment, leading to reduced stress, enhanced self-awareness, improved relationships, better decision-making, and a deeper connection with yourself and the world around you. Come and go as you need; the singing bowl will ring every 20 minutes. No meditation experience required, but if you want brief instructions, please arrive at 5:15 p.m.

## SWANS (Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social)

Saturday, February 1, 10:30 a.m.

If you'd like to join us in Feb. at the Black Holocaust Museum, please contact Barbara Collignon at 414-614-8141 or by email [bjcollig@gmail.com](mailto:bjcollig@gmail.com). We generally meet on the first Saturday or Sunday of the month to socialize.



# Sunday Morning Forum

10:00 AM IN-PERSON & ON YOUTUBE



**FEBRUARY 2**

## Intersectionalities in the Deaf Community

**Katy Hagmeyer, MSW, LCSW.**

Katy will cover several topics that create a Deaf experience, including cultural identity, cultural norms & values, intersectionalities, and community connections. The goal of this presentation is to increase, and recognize the importance of, inclusivity and cultural awareness.

**FEBRUARY 9**

## Milwaukee's Community Gardens

**Arijit Sen, Associate Professor of History and Urban Studies.**

This conversation will focus on the practices of repair, carefully carried out by generations of Black women tending to three community gardens in Midtown, Sherman Park, and Walnut Hill. Since 2017, the Buildings-Landscapes-Cultures team has had the privilege of learning from the lives of these incredible guardians of our land. Our discussion will include stories and biographies of the gardeners, as well as lessons learned from this collaborative engagement.



**FEBRUARY 16**

## Kinship Community Food Center: Face of Hunger

**Travis Sternhagen, Volunteer and Training Associate.**

Discover how a Community of Generosity—where everyone gives and everyone receives—transforms individuals and communities alike, empowering solutions to food insecurity. Attendees will learn about Kinship's innovative programs and the organization's mission to cultivate community through food. Updates on recent initiatives will highlight how Kinship addresses hunger holistically. Join us to reflect, learn, and become a part of changing the way hunger is addressed in our city.

**FEBRUARY 23**

## Working Wonders

**Mike McCabe, former executive director of Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.**

Mike McCabe, the author of his recently released book *Miracles Along County Q* discusses how problems like poverty, bigotry and abuse are no match for faculties of the human spirit that often are overlooked or discounted, and only in the rarest instances get put to use. McCabe has been a popular speaker, presenting several Sunday Forums over the years at First Church. He is a past candidate for governor of Wisconsin.



# Staff Directory

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Vinnie Hack

## LEAD MUSIC DIRECTOR

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## CHORAL DIRECTOR

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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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## How to Reach Us

**414.273.5257**

first.church.office@uumilwaukee.org  
1342 N. Astor St. Milwaukee, WI 53202



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### Follow Us



## Church Building Hours

Sundays: 8:00 am - 2:30 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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