

JULY 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*

BLESSINGS



Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Dear First Church,

In times of grief and crisis, counting our blessings can offer a balm for the pain of the moment. And we are blessed. The world is rife with abundance and beauty blooms in the cracks of every broken thing.

Counting these blessings does not diminish the truth of loss and grief, but it does encourage the heart to stay open and alive through it. Honest gratitude builds our resilience muscles.

This week, I invite you to observe your surroundings and notice what you can be grateful for. What is blessing your life with beauty? What is blessing your life with connection? What is blessing your life with laughter and delight?

May you celebrate these blessings and bask in the wash of gratitude.

Love,

Rev. Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister



SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

6

Life Believing In Itself

Rev. Mark Richards, Pulpit Guest

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Amanda Panciera, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

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A Battle of Imagination

Rev. Julica Hermann de la Fuente, Pulpit Guest

Teresa Drews, Collaborative Pianist

Debra Klepp, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

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What Our Tales Tell About Us

Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson, Pulpit Guest

Teresa Drews, Collaborative Pianist

Desiree Pointer Mace, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

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Blessing as Protection

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Teresa Drews, Collaborative Pianist

Liz Irwin Moore, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

Summer Services at 10:00 a.m. ONLY



“Life Believing In Itself” July 6

Rev. Mark Richards calls himself a wondering wanderer after seeing much of the world through a business lens. His wandering landed him in Door County providing chaplain services for a local hospice agency. After a few years settling in, Mark’s social justice senses were tickled by an offer to work with the Wisconsin UU State Action Network. Now serving as its President, Mark is promoting UU values throughout Wisconsin to bring about his aspiration of a community that allows all members to nourish the spirit with which they are born. Mark and Christina live in Egg Harbor and last month celebrated 50 years of marriage.



“A Battle of Imagination” July 13

Rev. Julica Hermann de la Fuente (she/ella) serves as the Lifelong Learning Manager at the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA). She is also a coach, trainer and facilitator for liberation, transformation and justice.

Born and raised in Mexico City, Julica first became committed to social justice when she came to the United States for college. Since then, Julica has been an anti-racism/anti-oppression educator and trainer in a variety of capacities over the past three decades. Julica stubbornly believes that liberation is found at the intersection of joy and justice.



“What Our Tales Tell About Us” July 20

Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson is the Co-Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Society of Madison, where he has served for 4 years. Prior to coming to Wisconsin, Kelly served the First Parish Church in Beverly, Massachusetts for 11 years. He is a father, a vegan, a science-fiction enthusiast, and a life-long Unitarian Universalist.

Bearing Witness and Standing Up for What is Right

by Michael Pointer Mace
Immigration Solidarity & Action

The call from Norma Duckworth, Interfaith Coordinator of Voces de la Frontera, came 12 hours beforehand. Yessenia Ruano, a mother of nine-year-old twins, educator and immigrant member of our community



for 14 years had been called into the ICE office. This mother had committed no crime. She had shown up to every ICE check-in. She had worn a wrist GPS monitor until the skin had grown raw. When she walked into that office, she might not ever return but her worries were not about herself. What about her children? What about her students? How could she explain this to them?

When Norma asked if FUSM would accompany her to the ICE office and to bear witness, I said “Yes.” UUs show up! Soon the press, the common council and Gwen Moore joined our call for decency, kindness and common sense. Ms. Ruano came back out from the ICE office. She attended her students’ graduation and her daughters finished their school year. Ms. Ruano and her daughters self-deported with some autonomy and dignity. Milwaukee’s loss highlights the current struggle. FUSM is proud to support, both logistically and financially, VDLF’s Interfaith Coordinator Norma Duckworth and the struggle to keep families together. To get involved with Voces de la Frontera’s work to defend immigrant families, visit vdlf.org or reach out to Norma Duckworth norma@vdlf.org.

EJM Walk & Roll-Oak Leaf Trail St. Francis

by Jackie Zandi
Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) Team Member

Please join us on Saturday July 12 from 10:30-noon for the EJM Walk and Roll on the Oak Leaf Trail along the cliff in St. Francis. Let’s meet at La Finca Coffee Shop located at 3558 E. Sivyver Ave. (north of Howard Ave and near the corner of Packard Ave.) You can park on Packard Ave. or S. Lake Drive. From there we will cross the northern-most condo building and Walk & Roll along the cliff to Sheridan Park pond and continue on the Oak Leaf Trail until it is time to return. Juliet Hills, who is a keen observer along this trail through the seasons, is our leader. We always experience more together! Invite friends and family. Paula Anderson and Jacki Zandi are your hosts.

Splinters from the Board of Trustees

by Stacey Koenen
Board of Trustees

In May, the Board met early to complete the preparations for the Annual Meeting. In addition to approving the Annual Meeting agenda we requested and received input on the Memorial Trust Fund from the EFTF Trustees. They agree that it would make sense to move the funds of the Memorial Trust Fund into the Endowment Fund. The Trustees will work with the Board next year to continue this process. Dave Becker also gave details on the process and recommendations at the Annual Meeting. The annual budget was presented to the Board in April and after taking time to review the information was approved at the May meeting.

It has been recognized that the church fire and alarm system need updating for the safety of the congregation. A team has reviewed the current system and is looking for a single way to notify the congregation in an emergency. They have determined that a professional assessment is needed. The Board approved funds to move forward on this work. The Anti-Racism team is recruiting new members. They are working on the Juneteenth service and preparing an exciting speaker for the event. They are also planning trainings for next year, in Spring they will focus on interrupting racism and training on cultural competency in expected in Fall.

One of the tasks for the board next year is a review of the church Ends. The Board approved hiring a consultant to assist with this task. The Ends give our congregation direction and intentionality in our actions. Please keep your eyes and ears open for exciting opportunities to participate and provide your voice in this process. Your input will help shape our future.

As I step down from the role of Board President I have much gratitude for the work of the past year. I am incredibly grateful for the wonderful Board and staff that I have been able to work with. And I am excited for what our future brings. While we are saddened with the departures of Rev. Dena and Steve, we are happy for the next steps in their journey. We are also looking forward to welcoming Rev. Long and his ministry.

Staff Directory

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Staff members have varying hours.

Please contact them directly to set up an appointment.

Board of Trustees Officers

President.....Mark Chambers

Vice President...Ryan Pawlowski

Secretary.....Dana Brooks

TreasurerMark Bishop

Members

Deborah Conta

Kathy Donius

Elizabeth Hayes

Stacy Koenen

Stacey Thieme

Andrew Whitver

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Follow Us



Summer Church Building Hours

Sundays: 9:00 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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