

AUGUST 2025



THE CHANTICLEER

The First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.



This Issue:

Words on the Wind	2
Sunday Services	3
Social Justice	5
Pastoral Care	6
Adult Spiritual Development	7
Get Involved	8
Contact Us	9



Monthly Theme

*What does it mean
to be a people of*

BECOMING



Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Dear First Church,

We are so excited to welcome Rev. Chris to First Church this month! While Rev. Chris will not be preaching until September, he will be with us on Sundays beginning in August. We hope you'll take the chance to say hello and welcome him to the First Church community.

Our theme for August is "Becoming," fitting as we explore who we are becoming as a community with the new ministry team. Who are you becoming in these late days of summer? What dreams have you realized, and what dreams are just taking shape? How has loss changed you? Where do you see your next cycle of learning and growth taking you, your family, and your community?

Every day as we interact with other people, as we grow and age, as we learn and lose, we become. As Octavia Butler wrote, "Everything you touch, you change. Everything you change, changes you. The only lasting truth is change. Shape change." We are becoming, First Church, individually, as a community, and as a society. With every move we

make we, shape change and become. Let us choose to shape change with love.

Love,

Rev. Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

3

Small Is All

Rev. Hannah Roberts Villnave

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Trudy Watt, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

3

The Road Ahead

Dale Skaggs

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Tom Hester, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

17

Pointless Piety or Purposeful Practices?

Rev. Jim Foti

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Nancy Spransy, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

24

Beyond Positivity and Kindness

Pardeep Singh Kaleka

Alissa Rhode, Lead Music Director

Jeremy Koenen, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

31

TBD

Rev. Beth Monhollen

Teresa Drews, Collaborative Pianist

Don Weimer, Worship Associate

Summer Services at 10:00 a.m. ONLY



“The Road Ahead” August 10

Dale Skaggs has been a member of First Church since 2007 and has served as Worship Associate, a Trustee, a Pastoral Care Associate, and has served on a number of committees and task forces. His career(s) included management roles in technology companies, university art gallery management, and management of visual effects studio operations. Recent years have seen him working to bring an old farm back to life using organic practices. He lives with his wife Lynda Lambert in the 1889 row house next door to First Church.



“Pointless Piety or Purposeful Practices?” August 17

Rev. Jim Foti is a freelance UU minister based in Minnesota. From 2014 to 2022, he was an assistant minister at the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis, and in 2023 he served as assistant sabbatical minister here at First Church. A Milwaukee native, Jim is a UW-Madison grad, and he’s currently a doctoral student in creative writing and public theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Before ministry, Jim had a 20-year career as a newspaper journalist.



“What Our Tales Tell About Us” August 24

Pardeep Singh Kaleka is a senior anti-hate advocate and the co-author of *The Gift of Our Wounds*. In 2012, following the death of his father in the hate killings at the Oak Creek Sikh Temple, he helped inspire community resilience and healing. He is specializing in addressing the impact of communal trauma, he has helped to develop cross-sector policies and practices for public health professionals, law enforcement, and educators develop community orientated strategies to address conflict, hate, and the rise of targeted violence.

Inspiring Action

by Michael Pointer Mace
Immigrant Solidarity & Action

When does a movement start? How does an idea grow until it becomes a truth that is self-evident? John Lewis sat down at a lunch counter. Rosa Parks didn't give up her seat. Septima Clark demonstrated how to hold a pencil.

On July 9th, Unitarian Universalists joined Souls to the Polls, Voces de la Frontera, SEIU and faith leaders from across Milwaukee at the Federal Court House proposing the idea that, without due process and the rule of law, there is no justice.

A particularly strong and vocal presence was heard from members of FUSM starting with Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom who offered the rally's invocation. At present, Judge Hannah Dugan's court date remains on hold but First Church's commitment to justice and our constitution remains loud and clear. Inspired to action? Consider joining FUSM Immigrant Solidarity & Action's first fall meeting on Sept. 10 at 6:00-7:30 pm at FUSM's Common Room. Voces de la Frontera's Director of the New American Program Rosy Navarro and Interfaith Coordinator Norma Duckworth will be in attendance.



EJM Walk & Roll-Forest Sheridan Park Cliff Walk

by Jackie Zandi
Earth Justice Team Member

Join us on Saturday August 9th from 10:30-noon for our Walk and Roll at Sheridan Park at 4800 S. Layton Avenue. We will Walk and Roll on the Oak Leaf Trail from where we left off last month. Sheridan Park stands atop towering cliffs along Lake Michigan and has a pond. Let's meet at the Patrick Cudahy Statue located at the east end of Layton Ave. Nearby there is a small lot and parking along S. Sheridan Drive (one way going north). We "trail" at our own pace and take care of each other along the way. We engage with nature and each other. Please invite friends and family. Juliet Hills is our leader and Paula Anderson and Jacki Zandi are your hosts.

Welcome our New Pastoral Care Provider

by Rev. Dena McPhetres
Minister Emerita

We are delighted to welcome church member Laura White into the role of Pastoral Care Provider (PCP) Coordinator!

Laura is a senior frontend software developer and currently works for a Toronto-based startup. She joined First Church as a member in 2016—the same year she moved to Milwaukee. With her husband Scot Henry, Laura has helped with our Feast for Funds annual fundraiser, primarily serving as technical support during the bidding process. She has also served as a pastoral care provider, and she currently serves as co-chair of the Nominating Committee. She continues to appreciate the sense of community and support First Church provides.

We give our hearty thanks to Liz Irwin Moore who served as our PCP Coordinator for the last three years. Liz, we appreciate your care, organizational abilities, and positive morale during these challenging times. Thank you!

Pastoral Care Providers are church volunteers who provide a practical service like a meal or a ride to other members and active friends with short-term needs. If you need this kind of assistance, please contact Laura at: fuspcprovider@gmail.com or 847-721-7473.

PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

Pastoral Care Associates (PCA)

Phone: 414-273-5259 Option 5

Email: fusmpastoralcare@uumilwaukee.org

The purpose of our Associates is to foster and extend our culture of caring to all members, particularly at times of important life events or transitions. Examples may include surgery, chronic illness, job loss, moving, divorce, terminal illness, death, difficult decisions or problems at work or home, arrival of a new family member, graduation, promotion, new career, etc.

Pastoral Care Providers (PCP)

Phone: 414-273-5259 Option 5

Email: fusmpcproviders@uumilwaukee.org

These volunteers may be called upon to provide care to First Church members in times of need through a ministry of “doing.” Pastoral Care Providers give concrete services such as providing rides or meals on a short-term basis.

Christianity for UUs

by David Hoover
Chair

We are all UUs but we are rooted in many beliefs and faith traditions including Christianity. We are curiosity seekers, students and/or followers of Jesus of Nazareth, and we gather to learn, share, challenge and celebrate our common faith heritage and interest.

Currently, we are gathering monthly for two hours in the home of one of our members. We are discussing the book, *Christ for Unitarian Universalists, A New Dialogue with Traditional Christianity*, by Scotty McLennan (Skinner House Books 2016).

Interested? Please join us! For more information, contact David Hoover at 414-530-4107 or david.k.hoover@gmail.com.

UU Wellspring at First Church

by Rollie Hanson and Diane Horne
Co-Team Members

What do you believe as an UU? Do you know? Principals, values and sources, oh my! Wellspring is a spiritual journey to explore, verify, clarify, illuminate, elucidate and perhaps even purify your path. And you get to do it with other UUs! Agnostics, Theists, Atheists, Pagans, Buddhists, Transcendentalists, any and all religious histories – come as you are and experience the wonderful joy of discovery.

This upcoming church year, we will offer UU Wellspring: Sources, focused on the six sources of the UU religion. This is our fifth year of offering Sources; previous participants have found it a deeply enriching and enlivening experience. The program meets twice a month for the church year, a significant commitment that rewards significantly. UU Wellspring provides an opportunity for developing “a sense of purpose and meaning, arising from UU Wellspring’s unique combination of spiritual practices, spiritual companionship, readings, and heart-opening sessions. A sustaining joy emerges while deepening commitment to creating change in ourselves and the world.”

Opportunities to meet with the recruitment team will be available in August. Look for announcements and postings on our Facebook group page for more information. Contact Diane Horne with questions and interest.

Unlocking the Heart, with Poet James Crews

by Lila Daut
Morter Lecture Team

James Crews, in his poem “Soft Courage,” speaks of a hummingbird “making at least one soft place to land and rest in this harsh world.” Come join us, alongside James, as we find a resting place at this year’s Morter Lecture.

This year’s Morter Lecture theme is: Unlocking the Heart: Words for Presence, Connection & Compassion in a Grieving World. Whether you have never read poetry or are a long-time writer, please join us as James helps us discover connection across differences, and opens our hearts to wonder and transformation.

On Saturday, September 27, 2:00-3:30 p.m. James will share his journey with poetry, writing and spiritual practice, including thoughts from his most recent books: *Unlocking the Heart*, *Love is for All of Us* (poems from the LGBTQ community) and *Turning Toward Grief*.

On Sunday, September 28 James will read poems during each service and from 1:00-2:30 p.m. will lead a contemplative writing workshop for non-writers and writers alike. James Crews is the editor of several bestselling and prize-winning books including *Kindness Will Save the World*. He has been featured on NPR’s Morning Edition and in The Washington Post, The New York Times Magazine, and The New Republic, among other publications. James speaks and leads workshops on kindness, mindfulness, and writing for self-compassion. For more visit: jamescrews.net.

Chancel Choir starting up for 2025-2026 Church Year

by Tristan Strelitzer
Choral Director

The Chancel Choir will be starting up again for the 2025-2026 Church year with our first rehearsal on Thursday, August 28. New and returning choir members are invited to join us for rehearsals on most Thursdays during our NEW time, 7:00 - 8:30 PM.

Choir membership is open to all members and friends of the church, high school age and up. The choir sings about once a month for services from September to June and for one Christmas Eve service. Previous knowledge/experience with music is helpful, but not necessary.

If you are interested in joining or have questions, please contact Choral Director Tristan Strelitzer at tristan.strelitzer@uumilwaukee.org

Staff Directory

SENIOR MINISTER

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jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org, ext. 201

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MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Rev. Kimberlee Carlson
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MINISTER EMERITA

Rev. Dena McPhetres

MINISTER EMERITUS

Rev. Andrew C. Kennedy, D.Min.

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

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TBD

FACILITIES ASSISTANT

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Vinnie Hack

LEAD MUSIC DIRECTOR

Alissa Rhode
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CHORAL DIRECTOR

Tristan Strelitzer
tristan.strelitzer@uumilwaukee.org

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

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

How to Reach Us

414.273.5257

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uumilwaukee.org

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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