

JUNE 2026



THE

CHANTICLEER

The First Unitarian Society
of Milwaukee

nurture. engage. inspire.



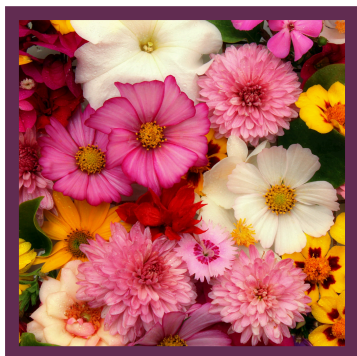
This Issue:

Words on the Wind	3
Sunday Services	4
Church News	5
PrideFest	6
Social Justice	7
Our People, Our Community	9
Church News	10
Calendar of Events	12
Contact Us	15

Monthly Theme

*What does it mean
to be a people of*

Flourishing Together



Inside News

by *The Chanticleer* Editors

Summer Services Begin June 14

After the June 7 Flower Celebration at 9 & 11, we will begin our summer schedule. On June 14, the Sunday service will be held at 10:00 a.m. only.

Note these Great Pupilit Guests coming this Summer:

- 6/14 Rev. Jim Foti
- 6/28 Dr. Monique Liston
- 7/05 Rev. Jim Foti
- 7/26 Rev. Allison Farnum
- 8/09 Rev. Mark Richards
- 8/23 Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson
- 8/30 Dale Skaggs

Latest Choir News

The Chancel Choir bids farewell to Jena Bliss, our Soprano Choral Scholar at the end of the 2025-2026 Church year. Jena has been in the Soprano Choral Scholar position since February of 2023. She will be pursuing a Master's Degree in Human Resources at UW-Madison in the Fall of 2026. The Chancel Choir and First Church staff thank Jena for all her contributions to our music ministry and wish her the best of luck in her future career!

preserve OUR parks

Share the Plate Summer 2026

by Lynde Uihlein
Share the Plate Team

Preserve Our Parks, Inc. is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of parks and green spaces. Their mission: To advocate for and promote Milwaukee area parks and open spaces and to strive to protect the tenets of Wisconsin's Public Trust Doctrine. For more than 25 years, they have been a leader in advocating for the protection of Milwaukee County parklands, halting many proposals to develop, privatize, or sell local parkland and lakefront spaces.

Preserve Our Parks works to ensure every park remains public, welcoming, and sustainable. They advocate for fairness in access, champion the health and environmental benefits parks provide, and stand up for the principle that our parks belong to all of us. To learn more about the issues facing Milwaukee's parks, add your voice to protect them, and help ensure these community treasures remain safe, green, and open for everyone, access the website at

www.preserveourparks.org

Donate to this STP Partner



Words on the Wind

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Dear First Church,

June in Wisconsin brings the promise of beauty with the warmth of early summer. You can feel the energy of the sun warming our creaky bodies and hopefully coaxing open our hearts like the budding flowers.

This June, we explore the theme of Flourishing Together through our ritual Flower Ceremony on June 7 at church, our Pride Service on June 14, and our Juneteenth celebration on June 21. All the differences in our community make us stronger and more beautiful, like a bouquet of flowers.

We will celebrate our LGBTQ siblings' flourishing after service on June 7th, when we march together in the Pride Parade ([LINK](#))!

We are more resilient together. We take shifts of giving and receiving in community. At some moments, you move into the labor of support, and at others you move into the circle of care. The mutual aid and support of our community allows us all to be human in the ebb and flow of life. Together, we can flourish.

Love,

Rev. Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

7

Flourishing Together

Flower Celebration at 9 & 11 a.m.

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director, and the Chancel Choir

Hannah Fox, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

14

Pride, Purpose, and Power

Rev. Jim Foti

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Tom Hester, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

21

Sankofa: A Juneteenth Celebration

Rev. Chris Long

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Debra Klepp, Worship Associate

[Click for info about this service](#)

28

TBD

Monique Liston

Tristan Strelitzer, Choral Director

Tom Hester, Worship Associate

Summer Services at 10:00 a.m. ONLY

The New Ends Statements

by Stacy Keonen
Ends Subcommittee

The Board of Trustees approved the creation of a new set of Ends Statements at its April 28, 2026, meeting. This action came after many planning sessions and two months of small group discussion meetings in early 2026 with members of the First Church congregation under the direction of the Board Ends Subcommittee. The process was guided by consultant, Rev. Roger Bertschausen, of Unity Temple, Oak Park, Illinois.

Many members of First Church participated as Ends Revision discussion leaders and many members of the congregation attended a two-hour session, all with the goal of revising the Ends Statements that guide the work of our church. We thank all who led or participated in these discussion groups.

The new Ends Statements were shared with the First Church community at its annual meeting on May 17, 2026. At the annual meeting, it was announced that the congregation would be invited to share feedback on the new Ends during the summer, with final adoption of the Ends Statements in the Fall of 2026.

The following is the Ends approved by the Board of Trustees:

To meet the moment, we will grow Unitarian Universalism in ourselves and the world by:

1. Deepening lifelong spirituality and faith formation within our First Church community.
2. Cultivation a multi-generational community of belong, joy, and care, including by leaning into anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multicultural work.
3. Building capacity in our congregation for love-centered action through practicing moral leadership and followership, guided by those most impacted by inequality and injustice.

We invite you to share your thoughts with the Board in the following ways: By attending a feedback session at the church on June 7 or June 28 or by emailing comments to:

<https://form.jotform.com/261476933911059>

Join Us for the MKE Pride Parade

by Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom
Senior Minister

Come walk with First Church and ZAO MKE for the 2026 Pride Parade on Sunday, June 7—line up at 1:00 p.m., step off at 2:00 p.m. The pre-parade staging area is on 2nd Street between Lapham and Greenfield. We are number 21 in the parade order, so once you enter the staging area on 2nd street, walk until you see us, or find number 21 (you can ask people what their staging number is). You can find a detailed map online here:

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

We invite you to dress-up as a color of the rainbow, or in a full rainbow so that together we will be spectrum of joyful colors! If you would like to join us, plan to meet us at 1:00pm on June 7 on Second Street, number 21 in the lineup. On the day of, you can also text Amy Horst for our exact location: (414) 241-6136



Get Blessed at PrideFest

by Rev. Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson
Minister of Religious Education

Blessed at Pridefest is a powerful street ministry that First Church leads each year here in Milwaukee. Our local clergy & congregations are returning to spread love, joy, and affirmation at the Blessed at Pridefest booth, June 5-6, 2026 in the Health and Wellness Common area. The Blessing Booth hours are Friday, June 5, 3-9 p.m. and Saturday, June 6, 12-9 p.m.

This year's booth will include a photo station, stickers, and a Blessing Gate—a collaborative art piece where everyone is invited to write blessings on ribbons that will adorn a rainbow archway.

We are seeking both clergy and lay volunteers to help make this ministry possible. Clergy volunteers will offer personal blessings using our blessing menu. Lay volunteers will welcome visitors, share the blessing menu, and guide people to art build & clergy.

Please click the link [HERE](#) for more information and to sign up on the volunteer schedule:

FUSM Members Taking Action on Data Centers

by Jenny Abel

Earth Justice Ministry Co-chair

If you have glanced at a local paper lately you have likely seen headlines about the influx of hyperscale AI data centers to our region. Designed to power things like artificial intelligence chatbots, these centers demand enormous amounts of energy and have negative impacts on human health. FUSM's Earth Justice Ministry (EJM) is starting a campaign this summer to share our concerns with our state elected officials and outline the steps we'd like them to take to regulate the unfettered growth of these centers. We would love to have you join us.

EJM will coordinate teams of FUSM members to visit with State Assembly members this summer. Each team will consist of 6-10 FUSM members who all live in the same assembly district. At the meeting the team will 1) share our concerns about the dangers that data centers pose to the environment and to human health, 2) provide a list of guardrails that we would like to see placed on the data centers, and 3) get a commitment from the state representative on the next steps they will take.

We have written talking points for these meetings and are just asking other First Church members to join us so that we can demonstrate a critical mass of concern. When an EJM member invites you to meet with your state assembly person, please consider accepting.

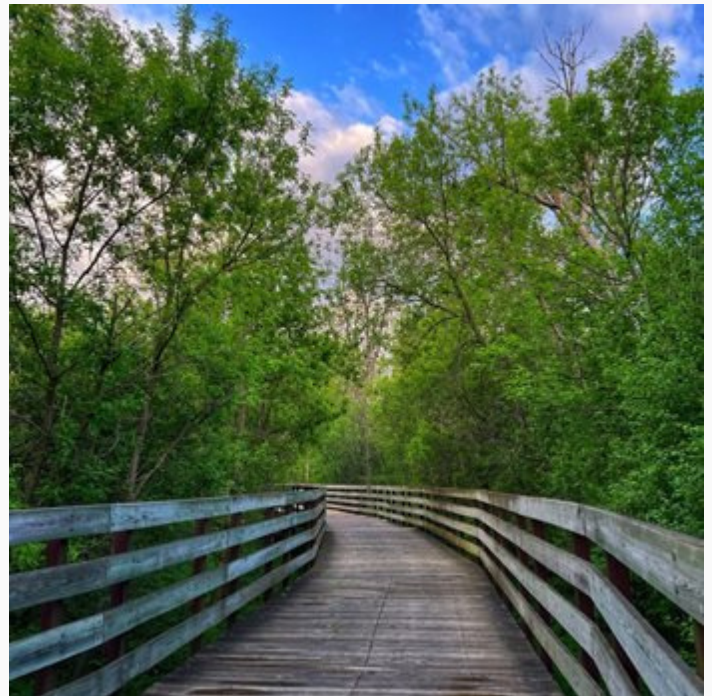
EJM Walk and Roll Gordon Park Oak Leaf Trail

by Jacki Zandi

EMJ Member

Join us on Saturday June 27 from 10:30-noon for our monthly Walk and Roll beginning at Gordon Park 2828 N. Humboldt Boulevard. You can access the parking lot from Humboldt Boulevard about a block south of Locust St. From there we will Walk and Roll south on the Oak Leaf Trail.

On the trail we often stop to engage with nature. We always see and experience more together! Invite friends and family. Paula Anderson and Jacki Zandi are your hosts.



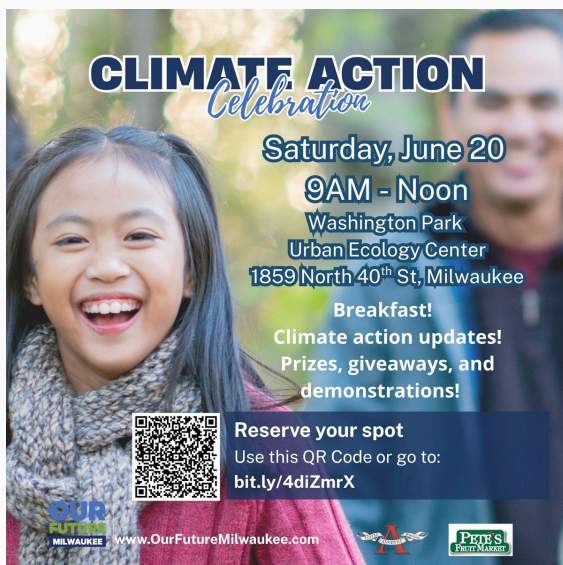
First Church New Partner Future Milwaukee Coalition

by Bruce Wiggins

Earth Justice Ministry (EMJ) Chair

Our Future Milwaukee is one of our Earth Justice Ministry's partner organizations. It was formed to involve Milwaukeeans in implementation of the City's Climate and Equity Plan (CEP.)

Several EJMers have been involved in the planning. The plan's implementation furthers UU values and FUSM Ends by addressing climate change and simultaneously promoting equity in our city. EJM encourages FUSM members and friends to attend the June 20 event which will encourage elected officials to ramp up CEP implementation.



Celebrate Climate Action!

by Jennifer Evans

President Our Future Milwaukee Coalition

FUSM Partner with Earth Justice Ministry

Join us on Saturday, June 20: 9AM to noon at Washington Park Urban Ecology Center, 1859 N 40th Street. Bring your friends and family to this event hosted by our partners at Our Future Milwaukee Coalition.

The morning will begin with breakfast and a brief progress report on Milwaukee's Climate and Equity Plan. The program will be followed by fun interactive displays and demonstrations - all of which will show young and old alike how they can support climate action in Milwaukee!

Some of our participating organizations include the following:

- Bubblr Bike
- Kompost Kids
- Teens Grow Greens
- Green Homeowners United
- Plastic Free Milwaukee
- Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy

There is no cost to attend, but reservations are appreciated to help us plan for food and seating. This is a rain or shine event - in the case of inclement weather we will move indoors.

To save your spot, use this QR Code, or go to this webpage: bit.ly/4diZmrX



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.

We send our comfort and love **Altha and Tom Arden** on the devastating loss of Altha's daughter and Tom's step-daughter, Kacy Green, died suddenly on Monday morning, May 18. Cards for Altha and Tom can be sent to their address in our Member Portal, Realm.

We send our care and comfort to **Sue Murphy Yerkes**, who is grieving the death of her husband Chuck Yerkes. Chuck died on May 12, 2026, after a multi-year journey with cancer. Cards for Sue can be sent to her address in our Member Portal, Realm.

We send our care and fortitude to **Ron Treptow**, whose doctors found cancer in his esophagus. Ron was hospitalized for treatment near the end of May, and hopes to be home soon. He is exploring radiation as a treatment. Cards for Ron can be sent to his address in our Member Portal, Realm.

We send our care and loving support to **Jim Spice** and his wife Linda, daughters Callie and Claudie, as his medical team supports him in intensive care. Cards for Jim and his family can be sent to church.

We send our healing thoughts to **Geoff Watters**, who had a mild stroke in early May, and our care and support to Thea and Nolan as their family navigates this reality. You can contact Laura White, our Pastoral Care Provider Coordinator, to sign up for the meal train for the Watters family.

We send out healing hopes to **Connie Georgenson**, who is recovering from a hip fracture at East Castle after a short stay in the Grafton hospital. Connie appreciates your caring thoughts, but no calls or emails at this time, please.

We send our healing hopes to **Mary Ann Fisher**, who had foot surgery at the end of April.

March

Splinters from the Board

by Stacey Theime
Board of Trustees

At the March 24 meeting, The Board officially approved the appointment of Sarah Fowles and welcomed her to the Board. After approving the minutes, the Board reviewed Policy 4.3 and determined we are making sufficient progress towards compliance. The Board reviewed the new Data Management Policy draft and decided it needs more refinement and additional definitions. Shari and the IT team will use The Board's feedback when revising a new draft policy that will be shared with the Board at a future meeting.

The Board chose to move forward with the flashing project and reviewed the Air Conditioning, Fire Safety, and Solar Panel bid proposals. Many factors need to be considered for AC; including the cost, effectiveness, and style of implementation-with special consideration to maintaining the historic features of our church. The Board chose to further discuss these options at a future meeting.

In May, church members will vote on the proposal to terminate the Memorial Trust Fund and transfer the money to the Endowment Trust by the end of this church year.

The Board is looking forward to meeting on April 17 and 18 to discuss the results of the Ends Revision Workshops and to discern the proposed new Ends.

April

Splinters from the Board

by Stacy Koenen
Board of Trustees

April was an exciting month for the Board with much work done toward the development of our new congregational Ends. Built off the congregational voices, mission and values, these are the vision that will direct out work for the next several years. The Board is deeply appreciative of the participation and input that was received through the listening sessions over the last couple months. We met in April for a retreat with the ministers to review all the data and input, so that the result could be presented at the Annual Meeting.

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Over the summer the Board will continue to take input. There will be a feedback session on 6/7. Please

April Splinters from the Board continued

watch your announcements for additional details. In the fall there will be an official rollout of the Ends. Then the work begins to interpret the Ends and create ways to monitor our progress.

Additionally, the budget for next year has been reviewed and the Annual meeting agenda and nominations were approved. The Board is reviewing a couple of capital projects, including a new fire safety system, roofing projects, and solar panels. Each of these are being weighed for importance and cost. Additional information is being gathered.

May Splinters from the Board

by Mark Chambers
Board of Trustees

The last full board meeting of the church year took place on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 and the Annual Meeting on the following Sunday, May 17, 2026.

Items of interest discussed or acted upon included

- Approval of a 2026-2027 church budget with operating expenses of \$1.145M, a 7% increase over the previous church year.
- Dissolution of the Memorial Trust Fund and transfer of its principal to the Forge Our Future Endowment.
- Approval of the Fire Safety Alarm and Communications project

- Approval of revised Ends Statements: To meet the moment, we will grow Unitarian Universalism in ourselves and the world by:

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Over the course of the Summer, the board invites comment on these statements with an expected final product in September.

- Congregational election of Amanda Panciera, Trudy Watt, and Adam Zaiger to the Board of Trustees and Erk Alexander and Laurie Peterson to the Nominating Committee.
- Election of Board of Trustee officers; Ryan Pawlowski, President; Kathy Donius, Vice President; and Amanda Panciera, Secretary
- Thanks to retiring board members Stacy Koenen, Stacey Thieme and Dana Brooks

And finally, a heartfelt expression of gratitude from Mark Chambers, immediate past president.



Buddhist Study Group

Wednesday, June 3 & 17, 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.

Book Discussion Group

Sunday, June 14

Join Us Online Here

Join us as we discuss June's read, *When It All Burns* by Jordan Thomas. Contact Eileen Teska at eileenteska@gmail.com.

Chancel Choir

NO Choir this Summer

After Flower Communion Sunday, the Chancel Choir will be on hiatus for our Summer Break. Stay tuned for the August Chanticleer for information about starting up rehearsals!

Poetry Contemplation

Every Wednesday, 9:00 am

Join Us Online Here

Contact Diane Horne for more information at diane_horne@hotmail.com.

The Chronologically Gifted Potluck

NO Potluck this Summer

Contact Barbara Collignon for more information or see the church website group information [HERE](#)

The Practice of Presence

This will not meet this Summer.

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.

Being UU, Being Male

June 7 , 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Meet us this month at church on May 7 in the Young Room. This is a group that is open space for dialogue, connection, reflection, and community on the first Sunday of each month. Contact Andrew BoddySpargo for more information.

Staff Directory

SSENIOR MINISTER

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jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org, ext. 201

MINISTER OF FAITH FORMATION

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MINISTER EMERITA

Rev. Dena McPhetres

MINISTER EMERITUS

Rev. Andrew C. Kennedy, D.Min.

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VACANT

FACILITIES ASSISTANT

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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

President.....Ryan Pawlowski
Vice President.....Kathy Donius
Secretary.....Amanda Panciera
TreasurerMark Bishop

Members

Mark Chambers
Deborah Conta
Sarah Fowles
Elizabeth Hayes
Adam Zaiger
Trudy Watt

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: 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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