



In Touch

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita
founded in 1887

June 2010



Acoustic Scratch to play at First UU

Save the date—**Friday, June 4, 7– 9pm.**

We will be having an exciting and fun evening brought to us by Acoustic Scratch. This is a smaller version of Made from Scratch, the award winning band that has been playing in and around Wichita for over 20 years. The group consists of Steve Jordan (Will and Dee Dee's son) on harmonica and lead vocals, Ken Kretschmar on guitar and vocals, and Willy Sebastian on upright bass. You won't want to miss this mix of blues, rock, swing, jazz, and just pure fun.

We are asking for a \$5.00 donation to help defray costs.

From the President

We face a challenging month as we attempt to pull in our final pledges and figure out, together, how to reconcile the budget we dreamed and the budget we must forge based on our pledges. (And if you have been “meaning to” get in your commitment forms, please do so now, before the end of May—our campaign has ended and we need your input to set a realistic budget.)

Given our economy, I am encouraged that our members have matched (approximately) last year's pledges—ensuring, as our treasurer likes to say in her monthly reports, that “the bills are paid and the lights are on”—but if we are to survive and thrive, we'll need more support than the current figures promise. Landscaping, building maintenance, a larger parking lot, and fulltime pay for a minister who already gives us—literally—more than the half time for which he is paid all loom large. At our annual congregational meeting June 6, I ask that you all come willing to engage in a conversation about how we can build a robust and long-lived future.

Our annual meeting also will include the debut of our



**YOU
ARE INVITED
to a Baby Shower
for
Judy Naillon
And Jack Regehr**

(This invitation is extended to men. Children are welcome. Childcare provided with advance notice.)

WHEN AND WHERE: 4 - 6 pm, Saturday, June 12, in the Gathering Space at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 7202 East 21st Street, Wichita.

WHY: To prepare to welcome the Baby Girl who will arrive at the Naillon-Regehr home in August. Gift registries are at Target Store and Babies 'R Us.

RSVP TO: Anne Bailey, 943-3861, Jenny Findling, 264-4481, or Del Smith, 612-0826.

UU Singles Memorial Day Potluck Picnic



May 31, 5:00pm at the church

Everyone is welcome!

No RSVP needed

You do not need to be single to attend!

“Volunteer of the Year” event, honoring volunteerism at First UU by recognizing six volunteers and two “quiet giants” who have given their time and energy to our church. We'll also reveal the names we've been able to parse from the “Let's Keep Making History” brochure

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In Touch

with The First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Wichita

is published monthly
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*The deadlines for In Touch and for the
monthly Calendar are the third
Wednesday of each month. The next dead-
line is June 16 to be mailed June 23. Please
submit items for this issue to:*

newsletter@firstuu.net

*or bring items to the church office.
Late submissions may be omitted.*

Chalice Bookstore Summer Sale

We've been holding back some special donations for our Summer Sale, which we're calling "For Armchair Travelers and Beach Reading." Additional donations of travel books, "coffee table" book and "like new" novels and mysteries will be welcome. We'll probably have some surprises, as well. **Dates of the sale in the Gathering Space: June 6-20.**

Del Smith and LaRilla Combs

From the President *(Continued from page 1)*

picture—thanks to all who sent in their contributions. Please mark your calendars for the event, June 6, during and after our First Sunday lunch.

Other news: Joe Niblett, our new landscaping chair, is hard at work assessing our grounds. His first addition: a basketball hoop, which he finagled at no cost to us. Our kids' health—and our adults' viewing pleasure—are in good hands! He plans more of the growing variety, of course, but I love how quickly he's dribbled into action. What pleases me the very most about Joe's offer to take on the big job of groundskeeping is the fact that he plans for it to be a "family affair" involving his wife, Brandy, and children. What pleases me next most—a close second—is the fact that the Nibletts are new members of our church, and that, according to Joe, First UU is deeply important to him and his family. What promise this holds for our future!

On a less happy note, Joe also reports that the Partner Church tree (which is between 21st Street and the church building) is ailing. He will trim the approximately 40 percent of it that he believes is dead so that the remainder stands a better chance of survival, but the odds are not in its favor. My hope is that, should we need to remove the tree, a donor willing to replace the tree might step forward.

We spent a majority of our May board meeting going over the annual budget for next year with treasurer Anne Bailey and finance committee chair Marsha Diggs; thanks to both of you, plus Trina Wheeler, president-elect, for your hard work on crafting this budget.

We also heard a report from the personnel committee on its work updating church job descriptions—a project the committee is approaching from an organic, macro view. In past leadership council meetings (consisting of committee chairs and the president-elect), we have broached the idea of collapsing many of our committees into a handful of umbrella groups that will direct matters of our church's "head, heart, and hands." The idea would mean a radical reduction of committee meetings (hooray!) and more interaction among groups whose concerns interconnect—music, for example, would work directly with worship to craft our Sunday services, rather than functioning in segregated committees. Much of the current job-description work by the personnel committee supports this approach, and will also take into account recommendations for new activities not currently covered by committees, such as social action.

I am grateful to our president-elect, who in addition to running our leadership committee has stepped up and taken on additional presidential tasks, more than a month before her coronation. And, as always, I am grateful to our board members, who contribute in ways that go far beyond our monthly meetings—pragmatic matters such as removing graffiti or looking into new carpet cleaners, and less tangible ones, too, attending extra meetings from across town "with bells on" and laughing through them month after month.

Shine on!

Annie Welsbacher

C.O.M. is Now Active

The Committee On Ministry (C.O.M.) has a new chair and is now meeting regularly. Members are David Brewer, Jana Rambo, Dee Dee Jordan, Susan Hund-Milne and Carol Clark, Chair.

C.O.M. members focus, in part, on supporting the minister by providing feedback from themselves and congregants, acting as sounding boards, and helping to address and resolve issues.

Part of C.O.M.'s function is to be the eyes and ears of the minister. Anyone with praise, suggestions or concerns pertaining to ministry should feel free to contact the minister or any member of the committee.

Rev. David Carter says he is excited and pleased to have an active committee. He seeks and welcomes feedback as necessary to grow a vibrant, relevant ministry that meets the needs of the congregation.

C.O.M. is still working to clarify the scope of its purpose — not an easy task, according to Karen Eng, former chair of the Committee on Ministry at the First Unitarian Church in Oakland, CA. From the Unitarian Universalist Association website (uua.org): “The most difficult part of a Committee on Ministry is getting people to understand what it is and how powerful it can be,” Eng says. “Even Committee on Ministry members don’t always have a clear idea of what it is.”

In her book *Churchworks: A Well-Body Book for Congregations* ([Skinner House](#), 1999), Rev. Anne Heller, district executive of the Pacific Northwest District writes: “Committees on Ministry are designed to track the heartbeat of ministry within a congregation; how the members... take care of themselves and each other, how the lay ministerial leadership serves a congregation; and how the called minister serves the congregation. It seeks to understand, assess, support, and advocate for robust ministry throughout the context of congregational life.”

C.O.M. meets with Rev. Carter on the first Wed. of each month, 7:45 p.m. Meetings are ‘members only’ since all information is kept strictly confidential.



Hymnals: We can never have too many. Thank you to the people who have donated \$28 for each of our new hymnals. We could always use a few more. Please make your check out to First UU Church of Wichita and put "Hymnal" on the memo line. I can't wait to thank you for your generosity!

Anne Bailey

Candidates for Elections at Annual Meeting on June 6

At our Annual Congregational meeting on June 6, we will be electing a new Nominating Committee and two new Board trustees. Here are short biographies of the candidates.

2011-12 Nominating Committee Candidates

LaRilla Combs

My brother, Porter Marshall, introduced me to Unitarian-Universalism. Then in 1978 or '79 I visited First UU and heard Greta Crosby's presentation, and felt I had come home, that is, to my religious home. As a member of First UU, my life has been enriched. I've felt that it's important to actively contribute to the life of the church. These are some of the committees and/or activities in which I've been involved over the years: a term on the Board of Trustees; Religious Education Director; Chair of the Caring Committee for several years. Currently, I'm a member of the Caring Committee and helping out with the Used Book Store. If elected, I will work hard as a member of the nominating committee.

Charlie King

I graduated from WSU in 1996 with a theatre major and American studies minor. I play various musical instruments, am a baseball fan, and read a lot of books. I love music, camping, and two-wheeled modes of transportation, and have studied various Eastern practices including tae kwan do, yoga, tai chi 'chuan, and qi gung. I have known about First UU since the early 1970s, but did not attend a Sunday service until September 2008. I signed the member book a month later. I have served as landscaping chair and helped out in other informal capacities.

(Continued on page 4)

Candidates *(Continued from page 3)*

Brandy Niblett

I have been married to my husband Joe for two years, together for seven. We have four children and enjoy spending time with them and watching them grow, educationally and spiritually. I graduated from WSU last year with my Bachelors Degree in Social Work and currently work for COMCARE Children's. I enjoy helping others and assisting with needs in the community. My husband and I recently joined Sunflower Community Action in order to help more people in the community. I am honored to be considered for the Nominating Committee and would love the opportunity to become more involved with the church.

Jana Rambo

I started attending First UU in 1999. It took me a full 10 years to recover from my experiences with conservative Christianity and get in touch with my inner UU; I signed the membership book in 2009. I have been co-chair of the Caring Committee for the past several years and serve on the COM. I am also a member of the Seeking Circle.

Courtney Ruthven

I was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, married Les Ruthven in 1955, have three children—two daughters in Wichita and a son in Houston—and six grandchildren. Les and I have lived in Wichita since 1965. I have an MS and PhD in psychology, and I have taught psychology at WSU and Newman University. Les and I practiced clinical psychology for years in Wichita, and retired in 1997. We love and collect art, and own Mid-America Fine Arts in downtown Wichita. We have owned several properties and businesses together, and I have been on several boards of non-profit organizations. I became a pilot three years ago. We joined the Unitarian Church in 1966, then fell away—can you believe that anyone could fall away from being a Unitarian?—to return last year. I like to garden, collect and view art, go to the theater, fly, travel, read history, and see the grandchildren and their parents. Sometimes I try to write. I used to sew clothing; I often think of starting again, but I don't need any clothes. Actually, I find most things (and people) interesting.

2010-11 Board candidates

Mike Felton

I joined First UU in March 2009 along with my wife, Pat. Previously, was a member of Monte Vista UU in Clairemont, California, for 10 years. Pat and I are very happy with the spiritual home we have found at First UU and have enjoyed our participation in weekly church services and many other church events. I am retired from a 27-year career with the Veterans Administration during which time I directed media/marketing efforts and was part of many special task forces and projects. I most particularly found staging the Golden Age Games and handicapped ski clinics to be rewarding and fun. I am an assistant funeral director at Lakeview Funeral Home and Cemetery, volunteer for Trees for Life International, and am secretary for Retired Professional and Business Men's Club. Pat and I love to travel in the U.S. and internationally, plus in our newly acquired travel trailer. We have three children and six grandchildren.

Ashley (Ash) Roberts

I am 17 years old, just graduated from high school, and will be attending WSU next semester. I have been involved in the church since I was very young and have worked with the RE group for the past few years. I am a member of the Communications team, and I also help out with other various things when I can.

Kim Talbot

I have a master 's degree in nursing and for the past 10 years have owned Professional Research Network of Kansas, a clinic with seven employees that manages pharmaceutical studies for area physicians. Recently I bought out my business partner of 10 years, so am now the sole owner. With this has come new experiences and responsibilities. I have two children, Myles, 4, and Kiera, almost 2, and a wonderful husband, Jason Loewen, who has been very supportive in all my crazy endeavors. With my children a bit older and the business issues somewhat under control, I feel like finally have a few minutes to start doing more for our church, something that has been on my radar to do for some time now. I am probably the most liberal conservative you will meet. I also feel very strongly that our church (and most organizations) benefit the most with a strong, inspirational leader and a strong, inspirational team to back up that leader. I would be honored and privileged to serve on the board.

Debbie Wadman

I serve on the partner church committee and the green sanctuary committee. I have been attending First UU since fall 2003, after 30 years of not attending any church. I came to First UU after Melanie and Charlie Jenney suggested I try it—the idea that you could show up with your same-sex partner was very freeing to me.

Getting to know our church members

Periodically in our newsletter, we feature short biographies about our new members, currently being written by Vivien Minshull-Ford. However, this time we are taking the opportunity to learn more about one of our longer-time members. If there is someone you would like to know more about, contact Vivien and ask her if she would do an interview.

Dianne Waltner—Champion for Environmental and Animal Abuse issues

On February 10, in Lindsborg, Bethany Lutheran Church displayed its recently installed geo-thermal heating system which is now saving the church \$1,000 each month. Dianne Waltner, along with a group of religious leaders and environmental activists on hand for the event, were interviewed by Leslie Kaufman of the New York Times to find what is being done by faith-based communities to combat the lack of leadership and the “nay-sayers” on the vital environmental issues.

In fact, Dianne is involved with two organizations devoted to promoting good stewardship of the environment. She is currently on the steering committee of Kansas Interfaith Power and Light, Emporia. The national organization Interfaith Power and Light, described as “the religious response to global warming,” addresses climate change and the steps that state legislators are taking to address the issues of renewable energy sources and energy conservation. IPL’s message is spread through church events, sermons, personal meetings, and internet communications.

IPL works with congregations and faith-based communities, which include Buddhists and Moslems nation-

ally, while in Kansas, membership comprises mostly Christian churches, the Mid Kansas Jewish Federation, and one other UU church besides First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita. The IPL website encourages use of its “Cool Congregations Calculator” to estimate the carbon footprint of a congregation and ways to reduce it. As a step towards First UU’s bid for Green Sanctuary Certification, Dianne is seen on the website showing off UU’s new energy-saving dishwasher.

In addition to her KIPL activities, Dianne works with Earth Spirit Kansas, a coalition of citizens from a variety of backgrounds committed to bringing about sustainability in our natural environment: for example, lack of options for renewable energy, lack of recycling opportunities, green products, pure water, as well as healthful local foods. On Saturday, April 17, ESK members organized a well-attended Earth Day event—*Earthfest 2010—Just Food*—at the Water Center in Herman Hill Park.

Equally important to Dianne is her work for the Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministry, a national organization committed to the promotion of Unitarian ideals with regard to the humane treatment of animals, in particular, factory farming, animals in laboratories, sports, and entertainment. Currently she is one of a task force of five members across the country (plus one member from Canada) working on several assignments. Dianne is working with another UUAM task force member on guidelines for a certification or accreditation program similar to Welcoming Congregation or Green Sanctuary programs, in particular the certification description and process, program requirements, and the certification manual.

In this same spirit, Dianne also heads the Meatless Monday vegan potluck dinners at First UU, encouraging living values of non-violence against animals and better nutrition for humans in conjunction with the UUA Congregational Study-Action Issue—CSAI—Ethical Eating. The meetings focus on documentary films, alternatives to the eating of animal products.

If you would like further information on these organizations, you can reach Dianne Waltner at 946-1115 or dwaltner@sbcglobal.net

Every Month at First UU:

Full Moon Dances are open to both women and men. Join in the dance to connect with the earth's power, celebrate the elements, and discover your personal power. Fri, 6/25, 7:00 pm
Information: Kathy Hull 267-3860.

New Moon Circle meets at the church. Intended to complement the Full Moon Dances, we offer this time to gather on the New Moon for study, meditation, and ritual exploration of earth-centered spiritual growth. Fri, 6/11, **Litha**, 6:30 pm potluck. Information: Kathy Hull, 267-3860.

Eclectic Readers group meet the 3rd Friday of the month at 11:30 a.m. at the church. Contact: Marsha Ebaugh, 683-4782

Book Discussion Group meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Joe Brewer, 2531 N Roosevelt. You are welcome to attend whether or not you have read the book. Information: 686-8575

Ethical Eating group meets the 2nd Monday of every month at 6:30 pm. Meal followed/accompanied by round table discussion. Bring a vegan dish to share! Contact Dianne Waltner, dwaltner@sbcglobal.net, for additional information.

Family Choir meets at 10 a.m. the 2nd Sunday to practice the song for that service. All ages welcome. Information: Denise Jackson-Simon, 644-2022

Monday Movie Night meets the Third Monday at 7 p.m. Critically acclaimed movies followed by discussion. Series coordinator, Kathryn Vernon, 210-2731.

Membership Committee meets the 4th Sunday at 10:00 am.

Personnel Committee meets the 4th Sunday at 10:15 am in the library.

Dinners for Eight. Date varies. Contact Nancy Milner, 685-7682.

Music Committee meets the 1st Sunday during 1st Sunday Lunch.

Every Week at First UU:

Southwind Sangha Zen Buddhist Meditation meets at the church. Introductory session, 7 pm, first Wednesday. Also meets 8-9 am on Sundays, 7-8 pm on Wednesdays and 6-6:45 pm on Thursdays. Half day retreat on third Saturdays, 8 am to 12 noon. Information: <http://www.southwindsangha.org/>, or Kathryn Riley, 84-8819 or Del Smith 612-0826.

Tai Chi classes. Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Cost: \$5.00 per class. Dress comfortably. Information: David Larsen, 612-4726 or davidlarsen@sbcglobal.net

Adult RE meets Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the southwest corner R.E. room. Current topic: Questions of Value. Corey Swertfager, 201-6921

Meditation and Book Discussion Tuesday, 6 p.m., Bob Feleppa, 304-9170

The **Book Discussion Group** has selected *Ines of My Soul* by Isabel Allende for our meeting on Wednesday, June 9, 2010. This book is a work of breathtaking scope: meticulously researched, it engagingly dramatizes the known events of Ines Suarez's life, crafting them into a novel full of narrative brilliance and passion. You are welcome to join us at 7:30 at the home of Joe Brewer on June 9.

Eclectic Readers will meet on Friday, June 18 at 11:30 for spirited discussion and lunch. The book for this month is *The God of Small Things* by Indian author Arundhati Roy. It is a story about the childhood experiences of a pair of fraternal twins who become victims of circumstance. The book is a description of how the small things in life build up, translate into people's behavior and affect their lives. Bring your lunch and join us if you are available over the lunch hour. You need not have read the book if you'd just like to enjoy the fellowship.

June's Movie Night— On Monday, June 21, we will show *The Stranger*, a 1967 version of Albert Camus' novel of the same name, starring Marcello Mastroianni and Anna Karina and directed by Luchino Visconti. It was nominated for the Golden Globe Award (France) in 1968 and for the Golden Lion Award (Venice) in 1967. This movie is in keeping with the theme of existentialism set by *The Passenger*, shown in May. If you have questions, please call Kathryn at 210-2731.

Is there an activity you would like to see taking place at First UU? Are you willing to help facilitate it? Contact Trina Wheeler to find out how to get it started.

Green Tip:

Protect the environment and create jobs for people with disabilities by taking computers, keyboards, monitors, hard drives, printers, fax machines, VCRs, and DVD players to Starkey, Inc. at 4500 W. Maple, Wichita, Monday thru Friday, 9 am to 3 pm. 316-512-4243.

June 2010

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <i>Throughout June, the Chalice Bookstore will be having the <u>Armchair Traveler</u> and <u>Beach Reader</u> Booksale!</i> | | 1 6pm Meditation and Book Discussion 7pm Tai Chi | 2 7pm Buddhist Meditation 7:45pm Committee on Ministry | 3 6pm Buddhist Meditation | 4 | 5 12:30pm-3pm Yoga Workshop with Sarah Yost |
| 6 8am Buddhist Med 9:30am Adult RE 12pm 1st Sun Lunch 12:30pm Annual Congregational Meeting | 7 6pm Buddhist Discussion | 8 6pm Meditation and Book Discussion 7pm Tai Chi | 9 7pm Buddhist Meditation 7:30pm Book Discussion at Brewer's | 10 6pm Buddhist Meditation 7pm Aesthetics Committee | 11 7pm New Moon Circle and Litha Potluck | 12 4pm-6pm Baby Shower for Judy Nailon and Jack Regehr |
| 13 8am Buddhist Med 9:30am Adult RE 12:15pm Leadership Council | 14 6pm Buddhist Discussion 6:30pm Meatless Monday | 15 6pm Meditation and Book Discussion 7pm Tai Chi | 16 7pm Buddhist Med 7pm Board Meeting NEWSLETTER CALENDAR DEADLINE | 17 6pm Buddhist Meditation 6pm Private Event-Democratic Soc. Mtg 7pm Worship Comm | 18 11:30am Eclectic Readers Group | 19 8am-12pm Buddhist Silent Retreat |
| 20 8am Buddhist Med 9:30am Adult RE 9:30am RE Comm 9:30am Seeking Circle (off-site) | 21 6pm Buddhist Discussion 7pm Movie Night | 22 6pm Meditation and Book Discussion 7pm Tai Chi | 23 9:30am Newsletter Mailing 7pm Buddhist Meditation | 24 6pm Buddhist Meditation | 25 7pm Full Moon Dance | 26 10am Caring Committee |
| 27 8am Buddhist Med 9:30am Adult RE 10am Member Comm 10:15am Personnel Committee | 28 6pm Buddhist Discussion | 29 6pm Meditation and Book Discussion 7pm Tai Chi | 30 7pm Buddhist Meditation | | | |

First Unitarian Universalist Church
7202 E 21st St N
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See our website
at
Firstuu.net

Sunday Programs at First UU

Every Sunday: 9:30a Adult Religious Exploration
11:00a Children's Religious Exploration
11:00a Worship Service

June 6 More from *Conversations with God*
Dick Welsbacher and Suzanna Matthews

June 13 *The Summer My Father Was Ten*—Klaus Obermeit

Other June services to be announced

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Vision Statement

It is our vision:

To be a growing, inclusive, vital congregation that encourages shared values amidst differing beliefs and nurtures creative exploration of intellectual and spiritual paths.

To be a visible community leader that promotes human equity and compassion, and celebrates life through the arts.

Mission Statement

Our mission, consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles, is to provide a joyful, safe, healing environment where diversity is embraced. We will inspire and uplift the whole person through enriching programs and services for all ages, and serve the larger community through social action and active promotion of the arts.