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# ComUUnicator

*Bringing you the news of the United Unitarian Universalist Congregation*

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Summer Office hours  
Tuesday, by appointment  
Friday, 9-3 p.m.  
262-544-1050

July 2018



United UU Congregation  
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## **July 1 - "Sacred Complexity" - Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson**

We are woven together in ways seen and unseen. What does the Earth teach us about the connections that bind our fates intricately together? Let us discover how science, nature and our Unitarian Universalist faith can help tend to the sacred connections that hold us all together.

## **July 8- "Liar, Lunatic, Legend?" - Rev. Tony Larsen**

Tony's sermon will explore C. S. Lewis' comment about Jesus that "a man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic--on a level with a man who says He is a poached egg--or else He would be the Devil of Hell. ... (L)et us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher." Evangelical Christians are fond of quoting Lewis in their argument against the view that Jesus was "just" a moral exemplar. But must we be limited to just 2 or 3 alternatives?

## **July 15 - Mike Felske**

Please welcome former member, Mike Felske, to the pulpit Sunday, July 15,

## **July 22 - "Animals that enrich our lives" - David Stokes**

Using songs, sign-language, puppets, and a few live animals we will appreciate creatures that make our lives more enjoyable. What animals make your life more fun? What are your favorite animals? Nothing lives alone! We all need somebody to lean on!

## **July 29 - "Church is Where the Mystery is" - Mary Beth Danielson**

Why do we attend church anyway? This sermon will talk about mystery, openness to the numinous, and cracking open the world one Sunday at a time - all while in the company of others.

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## Minister's column

Rev. David Kraemer

We were founded in 1877 by people who believed themselves to be embarking on a new season. As we celebrated our 140th anniversary this year, we have told the story of our beginnings in Mukwonago by transplanted New Englanders, who built a church that became the hub of the town.

We told of strong forebears, many of them women, who established a community around them and built up the life of the church. We told of our ministers, back to Olympia Brown, and further, to the ancestors whose courage shaped our faith.

And still, as a congregation, we are very young. All this history, all these changes, the initial incubation of liberal religion in the Midwest is only moments behind us.

Rev. Galen Guengerich, speaking to the All Souls congregation in New York City in 2015, says, "If you visit a typical Unitarian Universalist congregation, you may walk away thinking we know more about what we don't believe than what we do. That's because we've only recently left home, theologically speaking. Both the Unitarians and the Universalists left the Christian fold (only) a century ago; the two denominations merged in 1961.

"Like teenagers who have just left home, we're relieved to not be under mom and dad's thumb, but we haven't fully decided on a home of our own — either where it stands or how it's furnished.

"No worries," Guengerich says "it took the Christian tradition several hundred years to cobble together its tradition from then-contemporary sources, so we have plenty of time."

As this church year came to a close, I did some polling of the Board of Directors and the Committee on Ministry on goals for this congregation in the coming year.

There were a lot of questions in this about who we are as a faith, questions of identity, about "who and what is a UU," and "am I one?" You might be feeling these questions, too.

We are not alone in this. There is a lot of conversation across our faith about this, even in large, historic congregations like Guengerich's. We fret about the center, about what holds us together. We grasp at a concept like non-creedalism. Or we try to hold out the Seven Principles as a kind of a non-creedal creed. At least they are there on paper, in the first few pages of the hymnal, which itself is a vague approximation of scripture, or as close as we get to it.

I think this conversation about identity can shape our worship and our small groups and everything that we do for a long time, maybe even the next 140 years.

These are good questions to ponder now that it is summer. ...a time of fullness, of culmination. The year is full and rich. Days bring limitless potential. There is nothing that is remote, nothing that says "it's too late." The world is full of possibilities. This congregation is full of possibilities. We are old, and we are young. And we have plenty of time.

(edited from a sermon delivered June 17, 2018)

# Announcements & Events

## Summer Religious Education programs

**July:** Cool Waters Water Park, West Allis - Get your splash on with other UU kids and families. We are tentatively planning for July 12, in the late afternoon or evening. Nominal entry fee; scholarships available.

**August:** UU youth bonfire night - Join us for s'mores, flames and fun as we celebrate the close to summer. No fee.

Exact dates and times are to be determined. Keep an eye on our announcements and newsletters for more information as is becomes available.



Katelyn Berken  
Director of Religious Education  
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## Treasurer's report

TREASURER'S REPORT for JULY, 2018			
Income		Amounts from 7/1/17 - 6/22/18	Amount Budgeted for the Year 7/1/17- 6/30/18
	Pledges	\$63,266	\$69,351
	Other Income	\$36,345	\$46,116
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$99,611</b>	<b>\$115,467</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>114,069</b>	<b>\$114,430</b>
<b>Income - Expenses</b>		<b>(\$14,458)</b>	<b>\$1,037</b>
Note: \$4,000 has been moved from Other Income into our Emergency Fund (savings) which now has \$16,021. Also, We will be receiving \$8,027 in rebates for the solar panels in October. The mortgage balance is \$125,807. We have a 5 year note at 4.75%. The endowment balance is \$221,364.			

## July Greeters and Coffee hosts

### Greeters

- 7/1 John and Kaye Wickenberg
- 7/8 Meg and Moni Whaley
- 7/15 Chet and Sally Celenza
- 7/22 Mike and Donna Dawicki
- 7/29 Alex and Marcia Romashko

### Coffee hosts

- 7/1 Patti Kies and Peggy Ann Harris
- 7/8 Jim Brownlow and Lisa Bieri
- 7/15 Erika Winkler
- 7/22 Tudy Bolling and Sara Toenes
- 7/29 Adele Revoy and Jenny McAllister

Please remember, you are responsible for finding your own replacements if you are unable to attend church on your scheduled day.



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## Milwaukee Pride Parade

Six hardy souls from United marched along with the Milwaukee Pride Parade on June 10. The weather was a dreary drizzle, but that did not stop the festivity. Thousands turned out once again for the greater Milwaukee area's show of support and celebration of the LGBTQ community. Those of us who marched can attest, it does a body good to receive so many cheers and smiles and welcoming acclamations. Pride makes us proud.



## Here comes the sun!

Just in time for the summer solstice, the green-minded people of United installed a solar panel array on our roof. Our contractor, Arch Electric, worked for about two weeks installing the panels, running conduit down to the inverters, and connecting everything to our power supply. An inspection was done on June 27 and we are now on-line, producing electricity.

We have a 10.1 kilowatt array, consisting of 28 panels that are expected to produce 13,500 kW a year, which is just shy of what we actually used last year.

Two grants will help pay for this project – approximately \$5,000 from RENEW Wisconsin's Solar for Good program, which funds solar projects for nonprofits like churches; and approximately \$3,000 from the state's Focus on Energy rebate program. The solar installation itself cost approximately \$26,000. Generous donations from the congregation specifically for this project, plus some church funds, paid for the remainder.

In the course of the decision-making for this project, the congregation also chose to replace the roof before the solar panels were installed.

The cost of the roof was covered by some expenditure of church funds, and an increase in the mortgage.

The equation is at this time only an estimate, but one way of looking at this is that, with refinancing, the increased cost of the mortgage is covered by savings on our electric bill. Our out-of-pocket is exactly the same. And we have a new roof, we're producing energy, and we're living in to our values. This project should serve us well for decades.



## Food pantry collection

In July, the focus for the food pantry will be boxed meals such as macaroni and cheese.

Donations of non-perishable, portable food items such as granola bars, fruits cups, small bags of nuts and beef jerky are an on-going need. These items are very much appreciated.

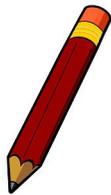
## BackPack Coalition

The BackPack Coalition for more than 20 years has helped students be prepared for the first day of school. It takes a village!

Last year the BackPack Coalition gave away 4,916 filled backpacks for students from nine different school districts including Menomonee Falls, Milwaukee, Muskego, Mukwonago, New Berlin, Oconomowoc, Pewaukee, Sussex, and Waukesha.

Please bring in any donations of new school supplies for our BackPack Coalition drive during the month of July. The deadline is July 29. The items most needed are:

- Backpacks
- Binders 1.5 Inch
- Colored Pencils
- Colored Markers
- Dry Erase Markers
- Folders – Plastic
- Glue Sticks
- Glue (bottle, liquid)
- Highlighters
- Pencils
- Pens (Red, Blue, Black)
- Pink Erasers



**Stay tuned for Fall activities after the next Social Action: Service committee meeting, September 16. We will plan a few meal preparations and deliveries for local homeless facilities or other local social service organizations.**

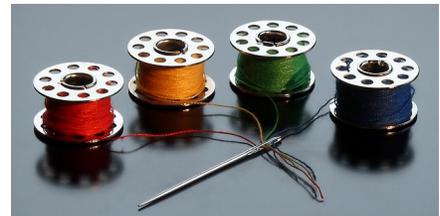
## Ongoing collections

The Social Action: Service committee collects certain items on an ongoing basis. Donation bins can be found in the front foyer for coats, shoes, purses and personal care items. To date, we've collected 51 purses and 255 pairs of shoes. Once collected, all donations are delivered to area organizations such as The Hope Center.

## Threads United, July 7 and 25, 9:30 a.m.

Threads United will meet July 7 and 25 at Marcia Romashko's house. The group is currently making quilts for Healing Hearts, a local non-profit agency that offers grief support.

Contact Marcia at [owasseh@yahoo.com](mailto:owasseh@yahoo.com) for information.



To learn more about the BackPack Coalition, please see their website: [www.unitedwaygmwc.org/Backpack-Coalition](http://www.unitedwaygmwc.org/Backpack-Coalition).

## Religious Education Coordinator position

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee is searching for a Religious Education Coordinator. This part-time one-year position is a wonderful opportunity for someone who is excited about working with children, youth, parents and volunteers, appreciates religious education and supports liberal religion. Do you know a teacher who wants a break from the school system, or someone with experience in religious education who would love part time work next year? Are you the right person? We are offering a salary range of \$25,000 to \$30,000, depending on experience. Additional compensation includes health benefits.

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee is a vital downtown urban congregation of about 750 adult members with a robust Religious Education program of about 150 registered children and youth. We have a friendly and connected staff team, including two ministers, a full administrative staff, facilities staff, and music staff, who are waiting to welcome an RE Coordinator. Our dynamic Religious Education Program is supported by four religious education staff members who will report to the RE Coordinator: the Youth Programs Coordinator (18 hours / week); the Religious Education Administrative Assistant (23 hours / week); the Early Childhood Coordinator (4 hours / week); and Nursery Coordinator (4 hours / week). About half of our RE volunteers for next year are already recruited, and there is a curriculum map and a handover packet with useful information for an entering RE Coordinator. Come join us!

You can find the full job description here: [https://uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/RE.Coordinator.FUSM\\_JobDescription.pdf](https://uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/RE.Coordinator.FUSM_JobDescription.pdf). Interested applicants can email questions and applications, including a

cover letter, resume, and three references, with the subject line “RE Coordinator” to: [Jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org](mailto:Jennifer.nordstrom@uumilwaukee.org). The last day to apply is July 6, 2018. This position is for August of 2018 – July of 2019 only, and the person will not be able to apply for the long-term Director of Religious Education.

## Mindful Meditation Group, Tuesdays

The Mindful Meditation Group meets every Tuesday from 7- 8:30 p.m., at United, in the sanctuary.

All are welcome. No meditation experience necessary. Learn or deepen a meditation practice with a friendly and welcoming group of people. Benefits include reduced stress and anxiety, and cultivating peace of mind, concentration, and happiness.

Please contact Larry Hopwood at [lehopwood@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lehopwood@sbcglobal.net) with questions.



## Buddhist study group in Mukwonago, July 18

The Buddhist study group will only meet once in July, on the 18th. Typically, the Buddhist study group meets the first and third Wednesday of the month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at The Linden Grove campus in Mukwonago, 837 Veterans Way.

Any interested members, friends, or anyone who wishes to bring greater peace to their own minds are encouraged to stop in and find out if this group might assist you, or someone you know.

Questions can be directed to Patti Kies at [buddha@uniteduuc.org](mailto:buddha@uniteduuc.org).



# Looking Back by Susan Bergmann

## HISTORY OF WASHINGTON AVENUE SITE

How many churches have there been at 506 N. Washington Ave? If you answered three you are correct. We all know about the River of Life Church that owned the building before us, but before that the Waukesha Civic Theatre purchased the building from an Assembly of God Church. I wanted to know a little bit more about the original church. My first call, was to Bridge Church at 1314 S Grand Ave. I was in luck. They were able to find a church history, and I found out that they purchased two lots in 1954 completing the flat roof building in 1955. It was the approximate size of the office entrance, sanctuary and storage area behind the sanctuary.

In 1964 the Civic Theatre had two properties under consideration for purchase. They chose Washington Avenue because it offered more parking than the other site. It was extremely fortunate that the Assembly of God Church cosigned their note when Waukesha State Bank refused to give them a mortgage. Before moving in they had to construct a parking lot, build a stage, install theatrical lighting and decorate the building in time for their opening of *The Mikado* in November 1964. Their first annual report after moving called for a ventilation system that would meet code, and elevated seating to provide better visibility. But they were to discover that the building needed more than that, and some of their stories are so amusing that their saga of woes would make a great comedy play.

The leaky roof was one of their most pressing problems, especially the dangerous leak running down the wall where the electric box was located. Other challenges were stifling summer temperatures, windows they could not open for ventilation because they would be invaded by bees, followed by temperatures that were so chilly that the actors were provided blankets to keep warm, no on site storage space, no real office space, a tiny changing room that offered no privacy, flushing from the men's urinals that disturbed performances if someone forgot to turn it off before the show, uncomfortable pew seating, and actors having to run around the building to make some of their entrances.

Those of us who sat in the pews at our former church can sympathize with how uncomfortable pews can be, which is why Charlotte Simpson started the "Soft Seat Society" to get cushions for our behinds. To top it all off, when it was cold a huge icicle hung from the roof over the backdoor freezing it shut. It reminds me of the trouble we had when our lock box froze shut.

The Civic Theater worked hard to improve the building. Flat roofs are notorious for leaks and this one was no exception. There are even stories about having to give their patrons umbrellas to keep dry. The pews were eventually replaced with second hand theater seating, but several seats situated under leaks had to be wrapped in plastic. There must have been quite a celebration when they received a grant to repair the roof!



Eventually installation of air conditioning helped with the summer heat, and in 1970 they built a 2-car garage behind the building to store scenery and furniture.

But these fixes challenged them with a new set of problems. The storage garage, full from the moment it was finished, provided a home for the mice and its location at the bottom of the hill ensured that it flooded every time it rained. The air-conditioning proved to be too cold if you were near a vent and too warm if you weren't close enough, and the water from the air-conditioning vents leaked into the theater. Buckets were suspended under the vents, and then ingeniously lined with paper to muffle the sound of dripping water. The "new" theater seats were in constant need of repair. One rather gracious patron refused to take money to replace the pants that he ripped getting out of his seat.

By 1998 the situation was so dire that the WCT group was worried that the building was going to fall down around them. There was much discussion about a major renovation versus moving to a new location. Fortunately for the WCT the old Pix theatre in downtown Waukesha was donated to the group. A successful fundraising campaign allowed them to remodel the building in time for the beginning of the 1999 - 2000 season.

The building was sold in 1999 to the River of Life Bible Church and it reverted to being a church again. Fortunately for us they decided to gut the old theater down to the sanctuary walls and the small furnace room in the basement. The hill at the rear of the building was excavated to make room for classrooms and meeting rooms, and the roof

was redesigned. Everything including the exterior walls, roof, windows, interior walls, woodwork, bathrooms and flooring were all new. The congregation put in a lot of sweat equity into remodeling the building, and with the skilled carpenters and drywallers in their congregation the finished church was a beautiful new building.

Church politics forced their congregation into bankruptcy in 2011. We purchased the building and moved in at the end of February 2012, making us the third church to occupy this site. Third time's the charm!

Susan Bergmann, historian, 2018

# July 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Mindful Meditation 7pm				Threads United 9:30am
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		Mindful Meditation 7pm				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		Mindful Meditation 7pm	Buddhist study group (Mukwonago) 6:30pm			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	August newsletter deadline	Mindful Meditation 7pm	Threads United 9:30am			
29	30	31				
Last day for Backpack Coalition donations		Mindful Meditation 7pm				