

Welcome

First Unitarian Church of Wilmington is a beloved community that nourishes minds and spirits, fights injustice, and transforms the world through loving action.

We would love for you to join us for:

- Worship Sunday mornings 10:30 a.m. live stream worship or in our building
 - Religious exploration programs for children and youth
 - Small groups and Soul Matters Groups that meeting monthly
 - First Unitarian Concert Series
- *LifeStream* Program for Personal & Spiritual Growth and Social Transformation
 - Social Justice and Service Projects
 - Much more

For more information or to receive our weekly e-news, go to: <https://firstuuwilm.org/>



First Unitarian Church of Wilmington

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<https://firstuuwilm.org/>

<https://firstuuwilm.org/connect/lifestream-at-first-unitarian-church/>

LIFESTREAM @ FIRST UNITARIAN OF WILMINGTON – WINTER 2024

WELCOME: OPEN TO ALL

We welcome you to join us for any of these opportunities for learning and connection in community. We value conversations that matter and learning from our experiences and the experiences of others. Several of these opportunities are also offered online.

Plan to join us and bring a friend!

-Rev. Larry Peers

Opportunities for Personal and Spiritual Growth & Social Transformation

PROGRAMS STARTING IN JANUARY

Health Coaching in January for Veganuary

Sundays in January (1/7, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28) from 12:00-1:30 p.m. - Room 25

Kat Samworth, Certified Health Coach & Stephen Sheehy, Licensed Leadership Coach

Registration Required

Have you been thinking about moving towards a plant-based diet? Be it for your health, for the planet, for animal welfare or for all three? Then consider trying Veganuary this January. Veganuary is a movement that began in 2014 inspiring people to try vegan for January. Check out <https://veganuary.com/en-us/>.



To support you, Kat Samworth & Stephen Sheehy, from the Environmental Justice Task Force are offering 4 group health coaching sessions for creating goals for Veganuary. **BONUS!** Steve Marek, also from the Environmental Justice Task Force, is offering a **vegan cooking demonstration** following the first coaching session on January 7th at 1:15 p.m. This will include a light lunch so please expect to stay until around 3:00 p.m. A light vegan snack will be provided for the three additional sessions. Email questions to Kat at ktsamworth@gmail.com.

Vegan Chili Cookoff - Youth Fundraiser Saturday, January 13, 5:30 p.m. – Parish Hall

Registration Required – Child friendly

Come warm up on a cold winter night with a bowl of chili! Please join us in Parish Hall for a Vegan Chili Cookoff! \$5 entry fee goes to the Youth Group and a future service trip. Come and enjoy trying different vegan chili, or bring a bowl of chili to join in the competition. Prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Register at the church website or bring \$ the night of the event. Cups will be provided for the tasting. Drinks and cornbread provided as well. Bring some cash for the 50/50 raffle. Come out and support our youth while having a healthy plant based meal!



For registration information for all Lifestream Programs, go to <https://firstu.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/category/60819> or use your smart phone to access our website using this QR code:



Understanding and Responding to Antisemitism

Sunday, January 21 Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Meri Weiss – Parish Hall

Registration Required – Childcare available – Zoom option available

Here is probably no timelier topic than the current state of antisemitism in our country. As we try to navigate through the world of misinformation and polarization, we will explore what it's like for Jewish children and adults to go about their daily lives debunking myths and often concealing their religious identity from their peers. As an educator of Jewish children, Meri Weiss has tales to tell. And through frank discussions with her, we can learn what role non-Jews can play in changing this rising tide.

Meri Weiss is an academic who has spent two decades teaching Jewish culture and traditions to people of all ages in the Jewish and the wider community. Alongside teaching in area Hebrew Schools, she is a cantorial soloist, Holocaust educator, and directs Jewish community programming. Meri is also a Girl Scout Leader, an environmental activist, and a board member of The Brandywiners Ltd. She is passionate about seeking and sharing knowledge.



Book Discussion: “The Best We Could Do”

Wednesday, January 24, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

The Friends, Books & Fun!

Gerry Konzelmann - Parish Hall

Registration Required – Zoom option available

This is an extra meeting of the Friends, Books, Fun! group held at First U! We have (15) of these graphic memoirs to share at no charge. The books are available as part of the New Castle County Libraries National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read Program Events. For more information please refer to the February 14 meeting of Friends, Books, Fun! (Ongoing Programs section of this brochure) Or contact Gerry Konzelmann at FriendsBooksFun@gmail.com.

Ikigai: Living a Life with Purpose

Sunday, January 28, 2024 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Rev. Dr. Larry Peers and Karin Thomas – Sanctuary

Registration Required – Childcare available

According to the Japanese, everyone has an ikigai—a reason for living. And according to the residents of the Japanese village with the world’s longest-living people, finding it is the key to a happier and longer life. Join us for this workshop in which we lead you through a process using some practical tools for clarifying or refining your "ikigai" no matter what age or stage of life you are in. Following the workshop, there will be an opportunity for those who wish to check-in with each other on how you have utilized these insights during the first three months of this new year.

Creating Your Estate Plan

Sunday, January 28, 2024, dinner 5:00 p.m., program 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Liz Darling – Parish Hall

Registration Required

It's a topic people tend to put off or ignore, but one of the most important things you can do is develop a sound plan for your estate. Doing so lets you take a giant step toward a more secure future for yourself and generations to come. Attend our “Creating Your Estate Plan” presentation and you’ll learn more about: What to consider when creating your will, the benefits of trusts in estate planning, how to help reduce taxes on your estate, how insurance can help protect your family. When you register, please indicate if you wish to attend the dinner. There is a suggested \$10 fee for dinner.

About Liz Darling: Prior to partnering with Edward Jones as a financial advisor, Liz toured the United States as a professional orchestral flutist and music educator. After years of working from coast to coast and being on the road, I was ready for a career change that would allow me the opportunity to plant roots in my local Wilmington community. I was drawn to Edward Jones because of their long-term quality investment philosophy, emphasis on putting client's needs ahead of their own, and a 100-plus year long history of impactful change and volunteerism within their communities.

PROGRAMS STARTING IN FEBRUARY

Let ‘em Cook Clean Comedy

Friday, February 2 – Pre- Show Party 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. followed by show 8:00 p.m.

Dan Cicala – Theater N and DE.CO in Wilmington

Registration Required

Join us at Theatre N for a night of laughs hosted by First Unitarian’s own Dan Cicala. All attendees are welcome to the pre-show party just across the street at DE.CO, which is located in The Hotel DuPont, with an extended happy hour and Dan ChickHolla behind the bar. We’ll be there from 5:30 p.m. right up until doors open for the show at 7:30 p.m. Additional information is available at

<https://firstuuwilm.org/connect/lifestream-at-first-unitarian-church/>



Rhythm Revelations Weekend, with UU Musician Matt Meyer

Saturday and/or Sunday, February 3-4

A Joint presentation: Counterpoint Fund and Lifestream - Parish Hall

Registration Required for each event

Join us for a weekend of rhythm and song with a focus on social justice, led by Matt Meyer, UU musician, community organizer and educator

On **Saturday, February 3, 2024**, from **3:00-4:30 p.m.**, Matt will lead a workshop – “Rhythm and World Music Workshop” – which will explore the theories and practices of West African, South Indian and European perspectives on rhythm. Using song, body percussion, and a few instruments, we’ll look at odd time signatures, syncopation, and polyrhythms through the lens of what different world traditions have to teach us about the role of rhythm. *Child Friendly*.

On **Sunday, February 4th**, Matt will help to lead music in our 10:30 a.m. Worship Service. After the service, from 1:00-2:30p.m., he will lead a workshop entitled “Songleading for Justice,” a fully participatory workshop designed to build skills and confidence for leading music in worship or in the streets. He’ll share best practices for invitational leadership and gentle encouragement to singing. Join us for an experience of leading and following, rhythm and words, and the sound of a community in harmony together. Both Workshops are open to the congregation and the general public. Learn more about Matt Meyer and register for one or both workshops on our website. *Child Friendly*.



Delaware's Indigenous Tribe

Sunday, February 11– 12:00 -1:00 p.m.

Ruth Ann Purchase – Co-founder, Greenbridge Sanctuary

Registration Required – Childcare Available – Zoom option available

The Lenapes are an Indigenous Native American tribe who live in a community in central Kent County Delaware. Come to celebrate the culture and contributions of the Lenape tribe as related by community activist, Ruth Ann Purchase. We will hear stories of past and present. We will look beyond the generalizations and reflect specifically about how we perceive our Indigenous communities and their relationship to the natural environment. By dismantling stereotypes you may not know you carry—or you may not recognize as harmful—you can make your initial steps towards repairing the damages done by colonization and begin uplifting Indigenous voices. You can expect a free-flowing exchange of knowledge and learning at this event.

Ruth Ann is the co-founder of Greenbridge, an organization dedicated to improving the lives and prospects of the Lenape people. Visit their website at <https://greenbridgecdc.org/> to learn more.



Poetry as a Tool for Wellness

Wednesdays, February 14, 21 and 28, 1-2:30 p.m.

Rev. Larry Peers in Brunner Chapel

Registration Required – Zoom option available

This new series uses poetry to find meaning in our lives. Rather than trying to understand precisely what the author may have intended, we will provide generous support to one another as we focus on how poems and words can offer healing and understanding. Based on the work of the Institute of Poetic Medicine, this is not about writing the perfect poem

but about finding ways to express your thoughts and experiences creatively and learn from one another.

Restorative Writing

Sunday, February 18, 2024 - 12:00-1:30 p.m.

Cassandra Lewis - Room 25

Registration required – Childcare available

The Restorative Writing Workshop, led by Cass Lewis, is an opportunity for writers of all levels to experiment with creative writing by responding to a series of prompts, inspiring passages, and a discussion about how creative writing can transform chaos into something organized and meaningful. Writing can help make sense of things that are difficult to process and can be a way of taking control of our stories in a time when everything feels out of control. Writing is a wonderful tool for self-care, understanding, engagement, and even social change. More information about the instructor can be found at www.CassLewis.com.

An Evening with Author and Illustrator Thi Bui

Thursday, February 22, 2024 - 7 to 9:30 p.m.

Registration Required

New Castle County Libraries National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read Program is sponsoring an evening with Thi Bui where she will discuss her work and host a book signing following the presentation. Location to be determined.

Thi Bui was born in Vietnam and came to the United States in 1978 as part of the “boat people” wave of refugees fleeing Southeast Asia at the end of the Vietnam War. Thi Bui’s debut graphic memoir, *The Best We Could Do*, is the story of her family in the years before, during and after the Vietnam War. It has been selected for an American Book Award, a National Book Critics Circle finalist in autobiography, and an Eisner Award finalist in reality-based comics. It made over thirty best of 2017 book lists, including Bill Gates’ top five picks. She illustrated the picture book, *A Different Pond*, written by the poet Bao Phi, for which she won a Caldecott Honor.

Gerry Konzelmann is coordinating carpooling. Please indicate your interest in ridesharing and feel free to direct questions to Gerry at FriendsBooksFun@gmail.com. The times for leaving the event may be earlier based on interest.

PROGRAMS STARTING IN MARCH

Mondays in the Park

9:00 a.m. starting March 4

Helena Miller - Locations vary

Registration Required

Get your week off to a good start with a walk in one of our state, county or city parks. Each week we will explore a different park (or a different trail within the larger parks.) Walks will last approximately 60 - 90 minutes. When you register you will receive notices about the locations.

Game Night and Spaghetti Dinner - Youth Group Fundraiser

Saturday, March 2, 2024 – 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Parish Hall

Register online or pay at the door - Child Friendly

Come out for an evening of games followed by a spaghetti dinner!

Bring your favorite board game or use games provided by the church.

Newborns - 99 year olds (and beyond) are encouraged to take part in the fun and food! Suggested donation, \$10 for adults, \$5 for children.

Retreat - What Do I Really want to be When I Grow Up?

Saturday, March 9, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. coffee gathering, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. retreat

Rev. Dr. Larry Peers – Parish Hall

Registration Required

Many of the myths that we grew up with are suspect. Our world has changed. We have longer lifespans and it is time to change our scripts about our life. We will draw upon some of the insights and practices from Bruch Feiler's book *The Search* (2023) in which he provides a roadmap to finding meaningful work and/or a meaningful life. How might we write new stories for the rest of our life whether we are young adults, mid-life, approaching or in retirement? \$10 suggested donation for food.

A Liberal Religious Path: Sermon & Discussion

Sunday, March 17, 2024

Worship at 10:30 a.m. - Discussion from Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Sanctuary

Registration required - Childcare available – Zoom option available

Rev. Kubl-Komoto, lead minister at the UU Fellowship of Raleigh, NC will preach. Following the service he will also talk about his book, *The Liberal Religious Path*.

MONTHLY GATHERINGS



Vespers

2nd Wednesday evening* of the month, from 6:30-7:00 pm.

Cindy Cohen and Kathy Harris

January 10, February 14, March 13

Sanctuary

Drop In No Registration Required

The services will continue to be based on the Taizé style of worship, featuring candlelight, inspirational music, readings and meditation. We will join together in silent meditation, a candle-lighting ritual, and the singing of short chants and rounds. This unique respite from the hectic pace of everyday life offers restoration, and an opportunity to calm our minds and hearts and nourish our spirits.

Come to find peace, silence and fellowship.

Celebration of the FULL MOON with Circle of the Ash Tree Moon

January 24, February 23, March 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Faith Whittington and Linda Sanders – First Unitarian Church (various rooms)

Join our earth-centered spiritual group named "Circle of the Ash Tree Moon" and celebrate the full moon with an earth-centered ritual designed each month to celebrate the special meaning of that month's moon theme. (For more information about moon themes, see Christopher Penczak's book, "The Path of the Moon"). We usually meet the night before the full moon so our meeting date varies each month.

Here are the dates and locations:

Brunner Chapel on January 24, Parish Hall on February 23, Brunner Chapel March 24



Country Line Dancing with Ilana
Saturdays, February 17, March 16 - 6:30 p.m. social time
7:00- 8:30 p.m. dance
Instructor: Lorraine Cohn
Parish Hall

Registration required

Are you looking for some fun exercise? If so, Country Line Dancing is for you! All are welcome - singles, couples, and families. No experience is needed. Come learn and enjoy Country Line Dancing with Ilana.

Cost: \$5/person Registration required for each date. If we have good response to these events, we will offer Country Line Dancing every month in the spring brochure!

Lorraine Cohn (aka Ilana) has been teaching recreational international folk dancing and line dancing in communities and summer camps for adults and children since 1975. She learned most of the dances directly from the choreographers at workshops for dance teachers on the East Coast. For the past two years, she has been teaching dance to retirees for the University of Delaware's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). Ilana has also learned dances from the "Line Dance King", Ira Weisburd, as well as from local Country Line dance teachers in Wilmington, DE and Maryland.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

Sunday Forum

Sundays, 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Jim Davis - Room 25

Drop In No Registration Required

Adult Forum is an informal get-together to learn and discuss people and events that formed our society. A 30-minute video sets the stage for 15 minutes of general discussion, topic vary weekly.

Monday Night Yoga

Mondays 7-8:00 p.m.

Rich Collins - Brunner Chapel

Drop In No Registration Required

Monday Night Yoga focuses on restorative stretching with a concentration on loosening major muscle groups. Participants hold positions and move through gentle, complete cycles. Open to all regardless of ability. Please contact any of the people listed if you have questions: Rich Collins, 302-379-3888, rich.collins@comcast.net, Helena Miller, 302-478-8921, hb.miller@verizon.net, Michelle Frey, 302-478-4175

Meditation Class

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Michael Wiedner – Brunner Chapel (on January 24 you will be in Room 30)

Registration Required

Meditation is a powerful tool that is available to everyone. It is a practice that helps improve our wellbeing, our outlook on life, and our contentment with our daily living. There are many types of meditation practices. At their core are the themes of concentration and mindfulness.

In time, these practices naturally help one become aware of ways we create our dissatisfaction and make it easier to let go of the habitual thoughts that pull us away from a natural state of contentment.

Please join us in our new meditation series. All are welcome, experienced meditator and beginner alike. The sessions will include two twenty-five-minute meditation sessions with a five-minute walking meditation in between. There will be how-to instruction ten minutes before our sessions.

Soul Matters, Creativity Matters and Connection Circles

Nancy Pinson - Location available upon registration

Soul Matters & Small Group Ministry

We have three kinds of Small Group Ministry: Soul Matters, Creativity Matters, and Connection Circles. You can participate in any or all of these forms of small groups. Small Group Ministry is a form of shared ministry that encourages spiritual growth and the development of deep and substantive relationships.

We have a new group that is open for new members in January 2024. To register or to learn more please go to this link <https://firstuuwilm.org/connect/soul-matters/>

Friends, Books & Fun!

Monthly, Second Wednesday 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Gerry Konzelmann - Meets at the Brandywine Hundred Library

Drop In No Registration Required

The Friends, Books & Fun! Group is a drop-in group that meets monthly the Brandywine Hundred Library. We are a group of friends open to more friends joining us for book discussions. We take book suggestions from all attendees and hold periodic surveys to add to our schedule. Join us when a book meets your interests, our meetings are informal. Upcoming book titles include:

January 10: "Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widows" by Balli Kaur Jaswal.

A lively, sexy, and thought-provoking East-meets-West story about community, friendship, and women's lives at all ages.

February 14: "The Best We Could Do" by Thi Bui.

New Castle County Libraries he National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read Program. The graphic memoir is an American Book Award winner, a National Book Critics Circle finalist in autobiography, and an Eisner Award finalist in reality-based comics. Bui documents her family's daring escape after the fall of South Việt Nam in the 1970s and the difficulties they faced building new lives for themselves in America. Additional opportunities to discuss this book on January 24 and February 22.

March 13: "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt.

A luminous novel about a widow's unlikely friendship with a giant Pacific octopus reluctantly residing at the local aquarium—and the truths she finally uncovers about her son's disappearance 30 years ago. A gentle reminder that sometimes taking a hard look at the past can help uncover a future that once felt impossible.

Visit <https://firstuuwilm.org/2023/12/08/friends-books-fun-winter-2023/> to learn more about the group.

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