

# The Hoosier Humanist Herald

FreeThought Fort Wayne, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 6

## **Message from the President**

School is out and there are lots of new graduates going out to face the world with high hopes to make their dreams come true and among them is my first grandchild. Pondering the future of the 2018 graduates had me reflecting on our FTFW group and our future. In the span of four years, our group has risen from the ashes of the previous iteration of FTFW and continues to grow and reach new heights.

We now have a monthly newsletter, the “Hoosier Humanist Herald,” a radio show, the “Hoosier Humanist Hour,” and a TV show, “We Are Atheists” (which will air its first show very soon, thanks to Calyb T. and his group for both broadcast shows). We are also starting up a new discussion group, FTFW’s “Meeting of the Minds,” which will be launching on Wednesday, June 20, thanks to Bob Brandt.

Additionally, we have an expanding website with PayPal options for new/continuing members and we now have FTFW merchandise for sale on our website through [CafePress](#) and SquareSpace links in the “Store” tab along the

top of the webpage. CaféPress currently has FTFW shirts in lots of colors, styles and sizes. Keep your eyes on the selection of products on CaféPress, as we will be expanding the types of merchandise that are available for sale featuring our FTFW logo, thanks to Chris Rex.

We also have our very own celebrant in Victoria Gipson. All of these wonderful programs are the result of the hard work of our members who all volunteer their time to help make our group what it is today. We also had three of our members represent FTFW at the American Humanist Association (AHA) conference in Las Vegas May 17-20 (pic below). Let's celebrate FTFW as we continue to grow and actualize our vision!

Karen Mizner, President of FTFW



From left to right, FTFW Board Members Victoria Gipson (Director of Communication) and Chris Rex (VP), followed by Uriah Rex (member).

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## FTFW CafePress Shop

The [CafePress storefront](#) for getting your own piece of FTFW merchandise is now open! We have a number of shirts and hoodies currently available, with more products to come! FTFW gets a small commission from each purchase, so we greatly appreciate your contribution!

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## Karen's Corner



**All churches, whether Jewish, Christian  
or Muslim, are simply human inventions.  
They use fear to enslave us.  
They are a monopoly for power and profit.**

**~ Thomas Paine**

Karen Mizner, President of FTFW

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## The Rise of Unbelief in America

I do not believe in God, but I used to! For more than 20 years, I was what many of you would likely consider to be a fundamentalist Christian. But in reconsidering my faith, I am certainly not alone.

In a 2014 article by the Pew Research Center entitled, “America’s Changing Religious Landscape,” we read that the rise of America’s religiously unaffiliated rose from 16.1% in 2007 to 22.8% in 2014. But why is it that these religiously unaffiliated, referred to in the article as “Nones,” appear to be increasing in number?

In 2016, the Pew Research Center published another article entitled, “Why America’s ‘Nones’ Left Religion Behind.” This article provided some statistics explaining this change:

- About half claimed to be disenchanted with religion in general, felt they do not need religion, their views evolved, or they went through a crisis of faith.
- 20% claimed to be disenchanted with organized religion.
- Just under 20% self-identified as being undecided on issues of faith, or that they are spiritual but not religious.
- 10% said they do have some religious views, but that they are unable or unwilling to be more committed to them.

There are other attempts to explain why unbelief appears to be on the rise in America. The Templeton Foundation is an organization that seeks to unite science and religion. Their position regarding many of these apparent unbelievers, citing research from North Dakota State psychologist, Clay Routledge, is that many of them “...Secretly make room for the supernatural,” despite how they self-identify. I am less likely to agree with this explanation because it requires me to doubt the sincerity, self-knowledge, or intellectual capacities of millions of people I have not met and will likely never meet.

Why are the number of religiously unaffiliated on the rise in America? Is it

because of a general disenchantment with religion, or, as the Templeton Foundation claims, are these religiously unaffiliated holding secret beliefs in the supernatural, making this apparent rise without substance? Regardless of the underlying reason(s) for this growth, or of how skeptical we are concerning the self-awareness of others, unbelief is undoubtedly on the rise in America.

J. Steven, Member of FTFW

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## Letter to the Editor

Here's your chance! Have an idea for our group? Have a question for us?

Have you experienced frustrations as a non-believer? Do people question you about what Humanism means? Just want to vent a bit? Have a funny story to share? Have a question for our Celebrant, Victoria Gipson? The Hoosier Humanist Herald committee will do its best to respond to your concerns.

Submit your letter via e-mail to [fortwayneaha@gmail.com](mailto:fortwayneaha@gmail.com) with the subject line of "Letter to the Editor" or "Ask a Celebrant," then watch for a response in our next month's newsletter! Please note that letters may be edited for clarity and space.

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## Upcoming Events

### *LGBTQ Pride Month*

#### **All June**

June is the month to celebrate LGBTQ Pride, but with all the other festivals this month, Pride Fest takes place in July.

***Fort Wayne Movie Club - "In Between"*****June 17, 2018 (Sunday): Time TBD at the Cinema Center**

Join us for Movie Night in conjunction with Chris Woods' (FTFW Secretary) "Fort Wayne Movie Club." The movie will be "In Between," a film about three Palestinian women attempting to balance faith and tradition while living in Tel Aviv. Check for updates and details on Meetup.com and we may get a bite to eat after the film.

***FTFW Monthly Board Meeting*****June 18, 2018 (Monday): 6:30-8:30 pm at a place TBD**

Paid members are welcome to join the FTFW board of directors at their monthly meeting. Details will be revealed on Facebook and on the website calendar.

***Meeting of the Minds*****June 20, 2018 (Wednesday): 6:00-8:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Wayne**

This is a new recurring event for FTFW every month on the third Wednesday, whereby folks get together for an open discussion on a particular topic of interest. The theme for this first session is in honor of "National Humanist Day" (June 21), so bring your relevant discussion topic ideas pertaining to that theme and we will vote as a group on which one(s) to talk about.

***Star Gazing*****June 23, 2018 (Saturday): 9:30 pm at the StarQuest Observatory**

We will join the Fort Wayne Astronomical Society at their StarQuest Observatory at 1720 Webster Rd, New Haven, IN 46774 for a stargazing event. They will provide telescopes and information about the visible universe in our neck of the woods. Given inclement weather or cloudy skies, the

alternative date will be June 30. A little advice, don't wear white or fragrance as the mosquitoes are attracted to both which also means that mosquito repellent might be a good idea as well as a small flashlight!

### ***FTFW Annual Picnic***

**July 21, 2018 (Saturday): 11:00-3:00 pm at Foster Park**

Come one; come all to FTFW's Annual Picnic, which will be a family affair for all members and their families, as well as the general public.

### ***Pride Fest***

**July 27-28, 2018 (Friday & Saturday) at Headwaters Park**

Supporting the LGBTQ community, this two-day event features live entertainment, vendor market, a beer tent, food plaza, workshops, tournaments, KidSpace and fun with the Fort Wayne community. FTFW will have a table setup on Saturday, July 28, 12-7 pm.



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