



# REACH

The Newsletter of the  
**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield**  
A Welcoming Congregation

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## Minister

**Director of Family Ministries**  
Diana McLean

**Administrative Assistant**  
Jennifer Whitson

**Nursery Teacher**  
Julie Bailey

**President**  
Paul Krause

**Past President**  
John Owens

**Treasurer**  
Katy Gillispie

**Secretary**  
Wyman Weinbeck

**Board Members-At-Large**  
Sue Coleman

Bill Jokela

Susan Sinning

Don Stager

**Sunday Services**  
Naomi Estes-Tullo

**Music**  
Bev Topp

**Membership**  
Don Stager

**Indoor Facilities Committee**  
Wyman Weinbeck

**Outdoor Facilities Committee**  
Matt Thieding  
Larry Vorwerk

## April 2023

### Theme: The Path of Resistance

*We gather both in-person at UUFN and online for Sunday services. Please choose the one that works best for you. For those in the sanctuary, vaccinations are expected for all who are eligible. When Rice County is in the green level according to CovidActNow, masks are optional but welcomed. When Rice County is in level yellow, masks are required during the service. Links for the Sunday Zoom meeting will be sent each week through the UUFN-Announce email group. Contact [jwhitson@uunorthfield.org](mailto:jwhitson@uunorthfield.org) if you would like to begin receiving the weekly email.*

**Sunday, April 2nd • 10:00 am**

**“Finding a Reason to Sing” • Presented by Nick Love**

We look forward to a special service from Nick Love, our well loved former pianist and singer who will share in music and words, some of his experiences since college that inform his personal growth and spirituality.

**Thursday, April 6th • 7:00 pm (In person only)**

**“Gathering at the Table: Holy Thursday Communion Service”**

**Rev. Sara Smalley**

In the Christian tradition, Holy Thursday is the day set aside each year to commemorate Jesus's Last Supper with his beloved friends. We gather to share this ancient ritual of breaking bread together in new ways. Our communion table is radically welcoming: all of who you are is welcome as we honor the life and teachings of Jesus, nourish our bodies and spirits, and experience the power of breaking bread together. Gluten free option available and only non-alcoholic wine will be served.

**Sunday, April 9th • 10:00 am**

**“Practicing Resurrection” • Rev. Sara Smalley**

“Today I get to be a participant in resurrection,” says Brother Thomas, SSF. “And if I am participating, then that means that a piece of humanity is participating. And if through me humanity is participating, then that means that a little piece of the world is being made whole.” For this Easter Sunday service, join Rev. Sara and worship associate Martha Easter-Wells as we consider the idea that we make the world whole by our rising, over and over again.

**Sunday, April 16th • 10:00 am**

**“Earth Day Celebration” • Rev. Diana McLean**

Please join us for a multigenerational, participatory worship service celebrating the Earth, led by Rev. Diana McLean, our UUFN Director of Family Ministries, and Worship Associate Janet Scannell.

**Sunday, April 23rd • 10:00 am**

**“Reverence as Resistance” • Rev. Sara Smalley**

Join Rev. Sara and worship associate Sharon Snyder for a reflection on a deeply counter-cultural way to move through the world: with reverence. Fear and shame shut us down; wonder and awe open us to new possibilities. This spiritual stance of reverence can inspire and transform our lives, our relationships, our justice work, and our community.

**Sunday, April 30th • 10:00 am**

**“Turning Points, Resistance, and Boundaries” • Presented by Ellen Saul**

Have you ever hit a turning point in your life? What did you do and how did it work out for you? Join Ellen Saul as she talks about her turning point experience and how it led to her writing a book, *Seven Steps to Boundaries: From Pain to Power*, to offer support to others.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*by Rev. Diana McLean*

## Family Ministry Musings

March was a busy month! There were three important meetings related to family ministry at UUFN that I want to tell you about.

On March 2nd, Rev. Sara and I co-facilitated the final session of the Beyond Welcome book discussion series. That session was focused on Family Ministry at UUFN—how to welcome families more fully, not only during the hour of worship and religious education class on Sunday mornings, but throughout the week and the year. Several congregants offered lots of exciting ideas, including having those of you who have an area of expertise you might want to share with our children and youth be a guest in RE (with a regular RE teacher there to support you), or offer a field trip or other outing for families (and others) to enjoy, perhaps during the summer. If either of these ideas sound like something you might want to do, please contact me!

On March 8th, I held a Zoom meeting for current RE volunteer teachers and anyone who might be interested in teaching. We went through a sample Soul Matters lesson plan together, talked about scheduling and other logistics, and discussed why we are committed to offering Soul Matters lessons in RE. The short version is that by using lessons that match up with the monthly worship themes, families can continue to explore the same topics together outside of church.

On March 19, after leading our multigenerational, participatory Spring Equinox worship with Worship Associate Janet Scannell, I attended the first part of the Board meeting, at which I got to hear some of what the Board is currently working on, share a few ideas about how any renovation or addition to the building might benefit Family Ministries, and give the Board a brief overview of what has been happening with religious education and other ideas for our families.

I continue to be impressed with the dedication and creativity of UUFN members—I see and appreciate your commitment to welcoming families with children and youth, and I look forward to continuing to share that ministry with you.

As always, if you have questions for me, please reach out!

In gratitude,  
Rev. Diana



## April Share the Plate: Citizens' Climate Lobby

Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots advocacy climate change organization focused on national policies to address climate change.

CCL's consistently respectful, nonpartisan approach to climate education is designed to create a broad, sustainable foundation for climate action across all geographic regions and political inclinations. By building upon shared values rather than partisan divides, and empowering supporters to work in keeping with the concerns of their local communities, CCL works toward the adoption of fair, effective, and sustainable climate change solutions.

Thank you for giving as you are willing and able.

## February Share the Plate: BLUU—Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism

UUFN contributed \$441.00 to Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU).

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

*Please see descriptions of each event elsewhere in this newsletter.*

### **Sunday, April 2nd after the service**

Congregational meeting about a proposed process for potential building expansion

### **Thursday, April 6th, 7:00 pm at UUFN**

Holy Thursday communion service

### **Saturday, April 8th, 1:00-2:30 pm at UUFN**

Conversations on Aging

### **Monday, April 10th, 10:30 am on Zoom**

Solo Souls Matter Conversation Circle

### **Sunday, April 16th after the service**

Congregational meeting to review preliminary budget for the 2023-2024 church year

### **Sunday, April 23rd after the service**

Practicing Resistance: Jiu-Jitsu for Every Body mini-workshop (15 minutes)

### **Tuesday, May 2nd, 11:00 am**

Memorial service for Mark Needham

### **Sunday, May 7th**

"Joy Jam" Sunday, including new member book signing, lots of music, and a celebration of the community of UUFN

### **May 19th to 21st**

Next Steps visioning weekend led by Rachel Maxwell of Stewardship for Us. Rachel will meet with the Board Friday and a number of small groups Saturday. On Sunday after the service Rachel will present her initial recommendations, followed by a more extensive written report.

### **May 22nd, 1-2:30 pm at UUFN**

Remembering Mother: Gifts and Challenges Conversation Circle

## Practice Resistance! Jiu-Jitsu for Every Body April 23rd after the Sunday service

Join Will Wiedenhoeft for a short (15 minute) jiu-jitsu mini-workshop designed for *every body*. You are not too short, too fat, too small, too tall, too inflexible, or too old. Really! Come and experience a low-stress, highly-joyful way to experiment with resistance.

Will is the founder of [Misfit BJJ](#), a trans-owned Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu gym in downtown Northfield. Misfit BJJ centers trans and queer bodies to help counteract the systems that make those communities feel like they are not powerful. However, all are welcome; Misfit BJJ is the perfect fit for everyone who wants to build confidence and feel more powerful in their body. Meet Will downstairs at UUFN after the service on the 23rd.

## Birthday Party Invitation

**YOU ARE INVITED!** Friday April 21 at 1:00 there will be a birthday party at UUFN for Brynda McCoy and Terry Stead. All are welcome. They request no gifts. Please RSVP to Sue Coleman so we can plan appropriately for refreshments.

## Choir Announcement

After long and careful consideration, I have decided to resign effective June 1, as Choir Director for UUFN.

I have served in this capacity for almost 20 years and it has brought me great joy and a sense of building community. I have certainly learned much in the effort to do a job I was not trained for, but the call to create a choir for our beloved UUFN and a whole lot of talented, dedicated and hard-working choir members confirmed my belief it could be done. And, the fun we had coming together each week!

Music has always been an important part of our UUFN community and I am pleased to have contributed, along with many other talented musicians, to an enhanced worship experience.

Our choir will go on! I'm excited that our pianist Taylor Wesseln has accepted the job of Choir Director for next year and brings the piano skills and experience as section lead for a large choir that will inform her work. Taylor is also a lead for music at the Northfield Arts Guild. She will draw from the music library I have built over the last 20 years as well as her own choices and is excited to bring new energy and ideas to our choir contributions.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as choir director for these many years. I have received far more than I have given to a community I hold dear to my heart.

Bev Topp

## Solo Souls Matter

Solo Souls Matter will meet again this month on Monday, April 10 at 10:30 am on Zoom. If you attended last month or indicated to Brynda that you couldn't make that one, but would like to attend next time, you will get a reminder ahead of time. If you would like to attend and don't fit into either of the above categories, please let Mairi know. It is best to call or text her. She isn't big on email. She will be sending out the link for our meeting

One of our "solo souls" who didn't attend our first session worried that this was some sort of online dating service. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are simply discussing the various aspects of living alone. We share ideas on how to overcome some of the problems that arise with single living. We may or may not have future meetings. That will also be discussed and decided by the group.

## Congregational Stewardship Visit May 19 - 21, 2023

Stewardship Consultant, Rachel Maxwell, will be with us the weekend of May 19th. She will meet with our board and staff on Friday, and our members and friends on Saturday to hear about our culture, concerns, and our hopes and priorities for moving forward. A core focus of the visit will be on identifying recommended next steps and practical information about our options. This will help us determine if we are ready to take further steps towards having a capital campaign for a building addition in the near future.

There will be various meetings on Saturday to include as many people as possible. More information will follow.

On Sunday after the service Rachel will present her observations and recommendations to our entire congregation. A written report will be delivered within two weeks of the visit. Snacks and childcare will be provided during Rachel's presentation after the Sunday service.

Please hold these dates so that we can get the most out of this visit. Thank you!

## Welcome Team

- The Welcome Team would welcome new members. What does membership on our team mean? It means that once in a while you would serve as greeter. When it's your turn, you would arrive fifteen minutes early and greet those coming to our service and hand out the order of service. You would make sure that
- Newcomers (i.e. first time visitors) are offered a visitor card and a stick on name tag. You would pass the offering basket and count the offering after the service. You would get a reminder before your Sunday along with an attachment with a list of duties. That's it. There are no meetings to attend—Zoom or otherwise. If you are not already one of the friendly people who greets people who attend our services—especially

## Care Team Volunteer Opportunity

The mission of the Care Team is to provide care and support for people in need of help and encouragement during a stress-filled time. We plan to initiate a food ministry component for those times when food support would be helpful, such as after a surgery, accident, or other unforeseen circumstance which limits mobility and/or capacity to manage meals. We are looking for congregants who would be interested in joining with other volunteers in a communal effort to provide an occasional meal should such a need arise. There are no meetings to attend. If interested in helping with food ministry at the UUFN, contact Martha Easter-Wells.

## May 7th New Member Ceremony

Interested in becoming a member of UUFN? Join us for our new member Sunday on May 7th! During the service that day new members will be invited to sign the membership book in a celebration of community. Please let Rev. Sara know if you plan on becoming a member.

## Dance for Body and Spirit

This dance class, akin to Zumba but infused with UU-values, is intended for all ages (adults and kids), genders, and abilities. Join us and set an intention for joy, energy, movement, and community. Hosted by Rev. Erin Walter in Texas with UUs Zooming from all over. Questions or song requests? Contact Rev. Erin at [erin.walter@austinuu.org](mailto:erin.walter@austinuu.org).

Read more about Erin's approach [here](#).

9:30 a.m. every Friday  
Zoom ID: 333 042 6480

## UU Summer Camp!

**For Singles, Families, Couples, and Groups of Friends**

Registration for Camp UniStar in northern Minnesota is now open. UniStar runs weekly programs with themes like singing, photography, yoga, climate justice, friendship, and humor. You can find out more and register [here](#).

## From the Care Team—Two Conversations

### *Conversation on Aging—Saturday, April 8*

The Care Team invites you to join Larry Vorwerk for a **"Conversation on Aging" on Saturday, April 8th. at UUFN (in person) from 1:00—2:30pm** for our ongoing conversations and topics of interest gatherings. This will be our second meeting on this topic but new questions with discussion will be offered. A short overview of last meeting in November will be reviewed also. You don't have to be of senior status to join us. All are welcome as we continue to age and grow together. It would be helpful if you let me know if you are attending but that is not mandatory.

### *Remembering Mother: Gifts and Challenges—Monday, May 22*

You are invited to a conversation, **Remembering Mother: Gifts and Challenges**, to be held on **Monday, May 22**, in person at the UUFN, from 1:00—2:30 pm. How does Mother continue to live on in your life? What's been hard? What are you grateful for? Come prepared to share a Mother story or two that reveal and celebrate the gifts and challenges woven into this important relationship. Please contact Mary Jane Lipinski if you are interested in joining this conversation.

## **AN INVITATION FROM YOUR UUFN GARDEN TEAM:**

*If you are new to our beloved UUFN community or have been a part of this community for some time and just want to give of your time +/or talents in a **new** way with other kindred spirits ..... **AND** you enjoy the outdoors, are not adverse to getting your hands dirty digging in the dirt, love planting annuals, perennials or shrubs, would enjoy learning more about caring for our native prairie, plus watering and weeding our newer plantings as needed, and generally enjoy the idea of keeping our UUFN grounds looking beautiful for everyone, then....*

*WE WANT YOU!*



*The UUFN Garden Team is already made up of a bunch of great UU folks that love this kind of activity as a way of giving back to our community.*

*Would you enjoy this too?*

*We'd love to hear from you!*

*Please touch base with either:*

*Mairi Doerr or Connie Wersal-Lavelle in-person, by phone or text, or email. Connie and I co-lead the UUFN Garden Team. We would value your help and be respectful of your time as we continue to create beautiful, healing, calming, meditative, and welcoming spaces surrounding the outside of our UUFN Home.*



*Remember: "many hands make light work!"*

*We would welcome having you join our UUFN Garden Team in 2023!*

*Sincerely,  
Mairi Doerr*

*And  
Connie Wersal-Lavelle*



# Lifelong Learning and Engagement Committee

## April Theme: The Path of Resistance



### One Person's Experience with the Soul Matters Packets

Thinking about my experience with the SOUL Matters packets over the last few months, I am very appreciative of Option F which offers the opportunity to get together with someone close to you and discuss posed questions related to the monthly theme. I've been meeting regularly with my friend who I have known for many, many years to discuss our responses. I can't tell you how many times we've said to each other, "I never knew that about you." We have both agreed this monthly exercise has deepened our connection and friendship. My friend has been meeting with a women's group for at least 15 years and started bringing these questions to that group. Again, those women are having this same experience of honoring each other's lives in a new way, considering questions that get below the surface. *Liz Brekke*



"Welcome to the Path of Resistance...both the long haul and our first courageous step are made possible by reaching out to receive a helping hand."

**Spiritual Exercises – Option A** invited me to identify a person who made resistance possible for me and thank them.

My friend Nancy Hawkins, a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibway, has taught me resistance to my cultural norms of hurrying, interrupting, and speaking over others. I

have only to think of Nancy and I feel myself slowing down, asking another question, inviting deeper sharing. I had a chance to thank her yesterday, connecting us even closer.

When I was recovering from a divorce and struggling to find a new form for myself and my life, I spent an hour with Dr. Chuck Lofy. My question to him was, how do I do what you do? He was a mental health therapist who had started an integrative office with many options for healing. Without hesitation, he laid out several paths to my goal of being a counselor. I left his office, drove across town to Mankato State University, signed up for a class, and went to the first class, all that same afternoon. He supported me with information and confidence. I was able to resist my doubts and pulverized self-esteem. It was just what I needed on that day. I'm still working on finding him so I can thank him. *Ellen Saul*

### Option B – Rethink Resistance

I listened to Sonya Renee Taylor perform her poem, *Your Body is Not an Apology*. Her energy and passion for acceptance of each person, exactly as we are, is inspiring. Her work with folks with disabilities connected for me with one of the movies listed for April, *Crip Camp*. Here's a summary of *Crip Camp*: "A groundbreaking summer camp for teens with disabilities proves so inspiring that **a group of its alumni join the radical disability rights movement to advocate for historic legislation changes.**"

[Crip Camp - Movie synopsis](#) *Ellen Saul*

# Lifelong Learning and Engagement Committee, continued



Convocation: April 14, 10:50 am  
Skinner Chapel

Bill Jokela sent around a piece which also connected for me with this focus on resistance. On **Friday, April 14, 2023** the Carleton Convocation presents **Gaelynn Lea: Violinist, Songwriter, and Disability Rights Advocate**. Gaelynn has captivated audiences around the world with her haunting original songs and traditional fiddle tunes. She is a sought-after public speaker about disability rights and accessibility in the arts. I'm going to this. See you there? *Ellen Saul*

## Invitation

**The Lifelong Learning and Engagement Committee** invites others from UUFN to join our team in our mission to offer enrichment opportunities for adults. We review and select resources from the Soul Matters packet, explore various local activities, and draw upon our own ideas and experiences, all with goal of providing opportunities for learning and engagement for the UUFN community. So, please consider joining us. Please contact Bill Jokela if interested in joining.





## Social Justice



## Social Justice Committee



The newly formed Land Acknowledgement Statement and Beyond Committee is meeting monthly. Committee participants are Lois Burnes, Janet McGrath, Nita Wolf, Mairi Doerr, Sabina Dayweather and Liz Brekke.

The Committee has been reviewing purchase records regarding our UUFN building and the history of the Wahpekute tribe that existed on this land before its seizure by the US government.

We are also exploring what the City of Red Wing and the local Prairie Island Indigenous Community have created through the joint Honoring Dakota Project and recent efforts by the City of Northfield to establish a long-term collaborative relationship with the Tribal Communities closest to our area including the Prairie Island Indian Community, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, and the Lower Sioux Indian Community.

According to a letter drafted by the City of Northfield to be sent to these communities, the purpose is to acknowledge the forced removal of the local Indigenous peoples and assure these communities that Northfield is committed to healing and is reaching out to collaborate to better understand the next meaningful steps Northfield should take.

The Committee's future plans include connecting with other churches, considering contributing to a land recovery project to help Indigenous peoples buy back land that

was once their homeland, setting up guided tours of local museums dedicated to Indigenous history, and creating a calendar of events for the rest of the year that focuses on Indigenous history and recognition events.

**You are invited to join this group. Please let Liz Brekke know if you are interested. Our next meeting via zoom is planned for Monday, April 24, 9:30 – 10:30am**



## Green Sanctuary for UUFN

**The Green Team** (previously known as the Climate Justice Team) has been meeting to explore how UUFN can best do our part to help with the climate crisis. We decided that the UUA's Green Sanctuary process is the best way to get started.

An important focus of the Green Sanctuary program is to explore and encourage making good environmental choices for the UUFN sanctuary and property and also helping members of our fellowship understand ways to lower their own personal carbon footprint.



As we approach Earth Day in the month of April, look for more information and opportunities to be involved. **Contact Janet Scannell or Bill Jokela if you want to join our Team.**