



# REACH

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

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## Minister

Sara Smalley

## Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Whitson

## Nursery Teacher

Julie Bailey

## President

Paul Krause

## Treasurer

Katy Gillispie

## Secretary

Wyman Weinbeck

## Board Members-At-Large

Sue Coleman

Bill Jokela

Sabina Peters-Daywater

Don Stager

## Sunday Services Coordinator

Susie Weinbeck

## Choir Director

Taylor Wesseln

## Music Director

Bev Topp

## Indoor Facilities Committee

Wyman Weinbeck

## Outdoor Facilities Committee

Matt Thieding  
Larry Vorwerk

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## August 2023

*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, August 6th • 10:00 am

#### “The Transient and Permanent in Unitarian Universalism”

#### Guest speaker: Meleah Houseknecht

Over the course of our 200-or-so-year history as a denomination, what it means to be a Unitarian (or) Universalist has undergone considerable change. That doesn't mean that transformation has always – or ever – been easy. What can the transcendentalist revolutionaries of early American Unitarianism teach us about what it means to be a living faith tradition today? What is it that truly holds us together in sacred covenant now and into the future, and what are the outward manifestations of our shared faith that are ready to be transformed for a new age? Join UU leader and seminarian Meleah Houseknecht and worship associate Sue Coleman as we explore who we have always been and who we are becoming.

### Sunday, August 13th • 10:00 am

#### “Opening our Minds to Learn What is True” • Presented by Paul Krause

This presentation is the third and final service in Krause's "Chalice Lighting" series. This service is a natural extension of his earlier services which focused on Openings of the Eyes and the Heart. The service will include music, song, poetry and possibly dance - all contributed by our talented members.

### Sunday, August 20th • 10:00 am

#### Topic TBD • Rev. Sara Smalley

### Sunday, August 27th • 10:00 am

#### “The Audacity to Imagine Sisyphus Happy”

#### Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Andrea Johnson

With the recent 3rd anniversary of the murder of George Floyd how can we both declare that black lives are sacred while locating our commitment to racial justice in the struggle itself? As we continue to push "the rock" of injustice up the hill, we can find hope in the sheer strength of human will and in solidarity with our neighbors. Join Rev. Dr. Andrea Johnson, our guest preacher who just completed her doctoral thesis on a distinctly Unitarian Universalist theology of liberation, as we reflect on hope when hope is hard to find.

*From Rev. Sara*

### **Coffee with the Minister**

**Thursdays, August 17th and 24th, 12:30 to 2 pm**

The HideAway Coffeehouse (outside weather and space permitting)

Stop by HideAway Coffeehouse in Northfield to chat about UUFN, life, or whatever is on your heart or mind. Stay for as short or as long as you're able!

### **Welcoming Congregation Conversation**

**Sunday, August 13th after the service at UUFN**

In response to an online conversation about LGBTQ+ identities, terminology, and welcoming, let's gather in person to talk about these concepts. (Note: I had originally planned for this to be on Zoom, but I think it's worth gathering in person so there is a chance for greater understanding and connection as we talk through these complicated topics.) I'll do an overview of terminology and concepts, and we'll have plenty of time for questions and reflection. Together, let's deepen our conversation about how we can be more welcoming to people in the LGBTQ+ community who are already members of UUFN and those who have yet to come through our doors, and share our questions, struggles, and insights.

## **Sunday Services Planning Retreat**

**Saturday, August 19th**

**9:00 am to Noon**

**At UUFN**

Join Rev. Sara, our incoming choir director Taylor Wesseln, and congregational leaders Bev Topp (Music Director), Susie Weinbeck (Sunday Services Coordinator), and Paul Krause (Board Chair) for our annual Sunday services planning meeting. As with previous years, we'll fill in our Sunday services calendar for the fall. This year we'll also add more conversation about worship and our worship themes for the next few months. Those who want to be worship associates this year are especially encouraged to attend, but **all are welcome**. Come and be a part of the conversation about Sunday services at UUFN!

## **Job Opening at UUFN!**

Please share [this job opening](#) for a Religious Education Coordinator / Lead Teacher with your network of family, friends, and neighbors.



## **Creating Community Together: New Ways to Get Involved**

Our volunteer sign up form for the 2023-24 church year is now live! You'll recognize many of the committees, but there's a number of new ways to get involved as well. [Click here](#) to see how we're building a welcoming, multigenerational, vibrant community at UUFN and to get involved!

## Board Bits

*This column is an ongoing feature regarding general business and actions taken by the UUFN Policy Board. Official minutes are filed by the secretary and are available upon inquiry.*

The July 23, 2023 meeting of the UUFN Board was convened at 11:38 am in the basement meeting room at UUFN. Chalice lighting, followed by an inspirational reading was provided by Rev. Sara.

The board team was asked to individually check in with their hopes and dreams for this coming fiscal year. The dominant theme throughout the check-in was clarity... clarity of purpose, clarity of communication, clarity of duties and responsibilities, etc.

Board Team present: *In-person* - Pres. Paul Krause, Katy Gillispie, Wyman Weinbeck, Bill Jokela, Sue Coleman.

*Via ZOOM* – Rev. Sara Smalley, Sabina Peters-Daywater. Board Team absent: Don Stager. *Guests present:* Janet Scannell, Martha Easter-Wells, Bev Topp

Election of Officers for the next fiscal year was the first order of business. Paul K. will continue to preside over the board for this new fiscal year. There is currently no nominee for the president-elect position. Action on the president-elect position was tabled for later consideration. Current officers Katy G. (treasurer) and Wyman W. (secretary) have both agreed to serve in their current positions thru this new fiscal year. The remainder of the board team shall serve as at-large members of the board. Bill Jokela made a motion that Katy and Wyman be approved to serve an additional year in their positions. Motion carried.

Treasurer Katy G. reported on our final financial report for fiscal year 2022/2023. Following final figures for expenses vs. income, we ended the year with a positive operating surplus of \$3277.

Next on the agenda was consideration of Rachel Maxwell's five recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** *Make realistic doable building plans within price ranges you may be able to raise, including a stretch goal plan.* Janet Scannell presented the plan created by the Building Visions Team for potential future building plans. This plan involves hiring a contractor on a design/build basis to present plans and pricing for an addition to our building. RFP's (Request for Proposal) would be presented to each of three contractors asking for their design and projected costs for a future building project. The RFP would request pricing and designs for a 48' x 48' addition and a kitchen size to be determined. We are requesting they bring us plans with a low, medium and high-cost options. These prices and designs will then be presented to the board/general congregation for determination of doing a feasibility study and to gauge the congregation's interest in the project.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** *Create a Generosity Team to work on your annual pledging campaign and overall generosity.* A Generosity Team is being created currently. 3 members have expressed interest in being involved with this team.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** *Create a more inclusive budgeting process and build financial processes that better reflect who you are now.* This is a process that will be the responsibility of the board and will be addressed in the future.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** *Develop a new mission.* No action taken, tabled to a future meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION #5:** *Work on you member engagement strategy.* There is a need to clarify membership team roles and goals. Engagement and communication with membership will improve when full functionality to our *Tithely* software is activated.

A discussion was held concerning our DRE position and RE programming. There is a strong emphasis on the need for this position and the role/responsibilities of the same. Plans and suggestions were discussed.

Wyman, for the Interior Facilities committee, informed the Board that volunteers will be constructing a new partition wall in the basement. This new wall will effectively create a new meeting space/R.E. area. Work is scheduled to be completed prior to resumption of fall programming (Sept. 1).

President Paul stated the next Board Meeting will be held August 27th. The meeting adjourned at 1:08 pm.

*Respectfully submitted—*

*Wyman Weinbeck*

*UUFN Secretary*

## August Calendar of Upcoming Events

You are invited to join us for these two social events this month.

Enjoy a lovely day on Lake Byllesby. **Saturday, August 12th. at noon, Mairi Doer invited us to her house near Cannon Falls.** Please bring food to share for a potluck. Mairi will provide beverages and watermelon. There will also be a pontoon cruise on the lake. If you want to swim, bring a swimming suit, towel, and a lawn chair if you want to sit outside. All ages are welcome.

**Saturday, August 26th. at noon is scheduled to be the next monthly "Story Circle" with Paul Krause inside at UUFN.** This will include a time for a sing-a-long, your own bag lunch, and social time. There will be a specific theme for sharing personal stories and an opportunity to enjoy each other's company. Ages 10 and up are welcome. If you just want to be there for storytelling, this is estimated to start around 12:45 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Krause.

### Update on Steps toward a Building Addition from the Building Vision Team

The Building Vision Team has been working behind the scenes to determine the best way forward towards a potential capital campaign for a major building project. The Building Vision Team is headed by Janet Scannell and includes Bev Topp, Wyman Weinbeck and Martha Easter-Wells. This team, in consultation with the board is leading the process of producing a proposed project for congregational consideration.

We've determined that it makes sense for our congregation to engage with a contractor for a design-build project rather than have an architect first design a project and then hire a contracting firm. This will be appropriate for the size project we would have. Because we won't know what size project we could afford, we are looking for a basic proposal that could meet our needs, with some potential subtractions or additions depending on what money we are able to raise. No decision on what would be built can be made until we are sure that we would have the money for it.

We are going to check in with three local firms that do design-build to see if they might be interested in responding to a request for proposal. Our hope is that we could select a firm by the end of August. The first thing we would want to have from the firm would be some concepts or skeletal drawings to give the congregation a chance to react and make suggestions. We then would have them develop a more complete proposal for consideration which could serve as a basis for fundraising.

After we have a solid proposal, the next step would be a financial feasibility study to get a clearer sense of what we might be able to raise. Based on that result, the congregation could vote to have the campaign. After the campaign and a much clearer sense of the costs and our financial ability, the congregational could decide whether or not to build and how much to build.

## August Share the Plate: Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light



Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light works in partnership with multi-faith communities to co-create a just and sustainable world by addressing the climate crisis.

Since its founding in 2004, Interfaith Power & Light has grown the multi-faith climate movement in Minnesota and across the United States by empowering communities to take action that is authentic, effective, and energizing in their context.

This is done in two ways:

- **Leadership development programs** for communities, adults, and youth; and
- **Action opportunities** that provide tangible ways to make an impact.

UUFN is using the MN Interfaith Power & Light to provide local legislative action opportunities to supplement the UUA Green Sanctuary program, moving UUFN forward to live our faith and values through effective and sustained action on climate justice.

Thank you for giving as you are willing and able.

## June Share the Plate: Pride in the Park

UUFN members contributed \$424.50 to Pride in the Park—Northfield.

## SATURDAY AUGUST 12: BLESSING CEREMONY WITH SUN, SKY, LAND, AND METEOR SHOWER

At Shodo's farm, beginning mid-afternoon, concluding overnight with meteor shower watching and perhaps the moonrise. Details please click [here](#):



## GARDEN TEAM UPDATE

Greetings everyone! In case you have not been to our building recently, here is a photo of the front of our building and the sign garden. It looks so vibrant and alive! Up close as well as bees, butterflies and a hummer stopped by to buzz me while watering. The second photo is of our prairie which is doing pretty good considering this is the third year of drought for our area. The prairie is doing what she is meant to do, bloom in spite of the dry weather. The photos don't do the garden and prairie justice.

It feels important to call out the members of our team who take turns coming every day, yes, every day to make sure the sign garden is watered if needed. They also take turns weekly to come to weed and deadhead. The TLC shown in these photos are the commitment of time and talent by Carol Spear, Wyman Weinbeck, Larry Vorwerk, Peter Allen, Maria Musachio, Shirley Rawling, Mary Jane Lipinski, and Bill Jokela. We all thank you for dedication to our gardens here at UUFN. New Volunteers always welcome!



Mairi and Connie





## Social Justice Committee



Some members of the **Land Acknowledgement and Beyond Committee** (Janet McGrath, Nita Wolf, Liz Brekke) recently attended a joint meeting of Northfield organizations working on creating land acknowledgement statements and outlining possible future connections with Indigenous peoples. The meeting included representatives from **UCC, UUFN, St. John's Lutheran, Friends Meeting, Just Food Coop, Carleton College, and the Northfield Arts Guild.**

Most of the organizations are roughly at the same level as we are: have a committee, are educating themselves, have planned/taken learning excursions, are considering what to do next and universally realize the need/benefit of collaboration and sharing resources.

The only organization in Northfield that has so far developed an ongoing relationship with Indigenous peoples is Carleton College which recently created a new position: **Indigenous Communities Liaison. Marcy Averill, the Liaison,** was hired specifically to advance Carleton's relationship with the Prairie Island Indian Community (PIIC) near Red Wing. The PIIC Dakota partners are working with Carleton and the City of Red Wing to be "good relatives," walking forward in a good way. Marcy is interested in creating a public website, a clearinghouse for Indigenous Peoples educational resources, events, and opportunities.

The group agreed to meet in six months. In the interim, the group will keep in touch, offer information and suggestions for speakers, etc., attend Indigenous-related events and continue self-education.

### Upcoming events:

- **August 18 – 20:** Shakopee Mdewakanton Wacipi (Pow Wow).  
<https://www.smscwacipi.org/experience/2023-wacipi/>
- **August 22: Waterford's Indigenous river crossing, a hike in the Carleton Lower Arb with Matt Rohn of UCC – bring water shoes to wade across the ford – carpool from UCC parking lot at 9:30am**
- **Sept. 15 – 17:** Mankato Wacipi (Pow Wow).  
<https://www.mahkatowacipi.org/>

### Northfield's Land Acknowledgement Statement Display

Northfield's Land Acknowledgement Statement is displayed on a plaque next to the statue below located near Highway 3 across from Basil's Pizza and Froggy Bottoms River Pub. **(Photo courtesy of Janet McGrath)**

