



REACH

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

5785 Lonsdale Blvd E
Mailing Address: PO Box 363
Northfield, MN 55057

September 2023

Theme: Welcome

Minister

Sara Smalley

Coordinator of Religious Education

Ashley Hawthorne

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

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 if you would like to begin receiving the weekly email.

Sunday, September 3rd • 10:30 am (Note time and location change)

“Gather at the Topp Farm” • Presented by Bev and Lee Topp

On this informal beginning of the church year, our UUFN service will be at the Topp farm, starting at 10:30 am. The theme for September is “Welcome” and we would like to hear from members and friends. Please bring your prose or poetry or any creation on this theme or another and what it means to you. Music will round out the service! We will gather outside, weather permitting, so please bring a chair and your own beverage. And, please feel free to bring a guest! *Please see your emails for directions.*

Sunday, September 10th • 10:00 am

“Water Ingathering: Holy Wells” • Rev. Sara Smalley

We welcome the start of the new church year with our annual Water Ingathering service. This ritual was started by leaders in the UU feminist movement decades ago and is shared by UUs across the continent. Bring a small amount of water with you, whether from a favorite lake or your kitchen tap or any source special to you. And if you forget, rest assured we’ll have a pitcher of water at UUFN for you to use. This is always a wonderful gathering, whether you’re a long time member or first time visitor!

Rev. Sara will lead this multigenerational service and reflect on a Holy Well she visited this summer – and the holy wells that sustain us everyday.

Sunday, September 17th • 10:00 am

“Jazz at UUFN” • Guest presenters: Richard Terrill and Larry McDonough

Join us for a special morning of music and meditations presented by professional jazz musicians Richard Terrill and Larry McDonough. During the first part of the service, Rev. Sara will share “A Time for All Ages.” Children are invited to remain in the sanctuary for this message before heading to their classrooms.

Sunday, September 24th • 10:00 am

“A Wider Welcome” • Rev. Sara Smalley

Join Rev. Sara and worship associate Brynda McCoy as we reflect on this month’s theme: *The Gift of Welcome*. What does it mean to consider welcoming as a spiritual practice – welcoming change, welcoming diversity, welcoming each other and our own truest selves?

New Religious Education Coordinator

We are thrilled to welcome Ashley Hawthorne as our new Religious Education Coordinator! Ashley is an early childhood educator and Unitarian Universalist. She will work approximately five hours per week, and will be at UUFN most Sunday mornings as the lead teacher in our religious education classroom. We'll officially welcome her during our Water Ingathering on September 10th!

Ms. Ashley

Meet the TEACHER

about me

Hello! My name is Ash/ Ashley.

My pronouns are she/her.

I have been a Unitarian Universalist since 2014.

The 1st UU Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person is my favorite! "We are building an action-oriented community, bridging races, religions, and creeds with a shared desire to make faith, religion, and spirituality verbs".

We Welcome People with Many Beliefs | UUA.org | In A.I. www.uua.org | <https://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/beliefs>

I love my career as an Early Childhood educator! I have an AAS degree in Photography, and Early Childhood Education Certificates. I am so excited to be working in a wonderful community and guide young humans on their path in life.

experience

Teaching Early Childhood Education
since 2017

CPR & First Aid AED

things i love

- Green bay Packers
- Minnesota Wild Hockey
- Favorite color, Purple and Teal
 - My daughter
- Being part of UU Community
- Holiday, 4th of July, Hanukkah, Yule/ Winter Solstice
 - Audiobooks/podcasts/books
 - Coloring, nature walks
- My Indigenous, Rican, Irish and Jewish Heritage
 - My favorite season[s] is Spring/Fall
 - My cat Smokey
 - Nature



From Rev. Sara

More Information about Religious Education

This year we will have “Sharing Sundays” once per month. On these Sundays (usually the third Sunday of each month), children will start in the sanctuary for the first part of the service. After the opening words, lighting the chalice, and story, they will be sung out of the sanctuary on their way downstairs to their classroom. This is an important way children learn what it means to worship and that the sanctuary is also their space. On the other Sundays of each month, children can go directly downstairs before the service starts (or whenever you get to church if you’re running late, which is entirely understandable!).

Families, you’re especially invited to put two dates on your calendars:

- First, **September 10th is our annual Water Ingathering service.** This is a fully multigenerational service, as it is a joyful and important way UU children develop connections to our faith tradition. Speaking as a UU mom not just UU minister, some of my kids’ most important UU memories are from gathering water each summer and bringing it to church each fall. We’ll also officially welcome our new Coordinator of Religious Education, Ashley Hawthorne, so your kids will get a chance to meet her before RE classes start.
- Second, **our religious education classes for elementary-aged children will start September 17th.** On the 17th we’ll all start in the sanctuary for the first ten or fifteen minutes or so, and then children will go downstairs to their classroom after the Time for All Ages story. Rev. Sara, Ashley Hawthorne, and Nita Wolf will join them downstairs so we all can get to know each other.

For families with children in 7th, 8th, 11th, and/or 12th grades, we’re partnering with First UCC to offer Our Whole Lives (OWL) this year. Our Whole Lives (OWL) is an expansive, inclusive, comprehensive, values-based sexual education program of the United Church of Christ and Unitarian Universalist Association. OWL will be led at First UCC by trained facilitators. For more information and to register, go [here](#). **Note that there are required parent/caregiver orientations.**

I also invite parents/caregivers to reach out to me directly if you have questions or plan on registering your child(ren) for OWL so I can support them during this experience. OWL was life-changing for my own children and for countless UU and UCC youth!

Religious Education Teacher Training

Saturday, September 23, 2023

1:00 pm

On Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/98334984021>

Come and get to know our new Religious Education Coordinator, Ashley! Anyone who is interested in learning more about the curriculum we’ll use in RE this year is warmly invited to attend this training. Rev. Sara and Ashley will co-facilitate.

This training will also equip volunteer teacher assistants with a basic understanding of what will happen in RE Sunday mornings. **If you don’t have children in our religious education program, you are especially encouraged to volunteer!** Ashley will be the lead teacher most Sundays, but we will always need at least one additional adult. On Sundays she has off, we will need two RE teachers. This is a wonderful way to build multigenerational relationships. If you’re interested in helping, please contact Ashley.

Welcome Team hosts picnic for newcomers and everyone else

We are having a picnic on September 16th at noon at Odd Fellows Park especially for newcomers to UUFN, but everyone is welcome. The kids will have equipment to play on and there is a pavilion in case of rain. We are going to be learning more about our Newcomers and enjoying each other’s company. So mark your calendars. Everyone should bring a picnic basket for your family. We will have a birthday cake and celebrate our fall birthdays.

Updates from Building Vision Team

What are we looking for in a building addition? The Building Vision Team has sent out a Request for Proposals seeking a firm that could work with us in designing and eventually building the addition. The extent of what we might build will depend on how much money we could raise. But before it is time to raise money we need to have congregational discussion of what it is we are hoping for. Our plan is to have a preliminary design prepared for discussion this fall. This design will change based on feedback and eventually based on a clear understanding of what money we have.

One of our needs is to have space that can be used for socializing – potlucks, receptions, coffee hour for example. We also want to have a real kitchen and have it close to the social space. We've talked about having an unfinished basement with electrical rough-in that the congregation could finish room by room as money, energy and need arises. This space could greatly expand religious education space as well as provide office space or small meeting rooms. From this contractor we'd need to have the roofs solar ready and there are various programs we can use to install solar panels. There are many other considerations, such as heating and cooling, acoustics, environmental efficiency, floor surfaces and storage space.

How is money for a building project raised? It would be absolutely lovely if we could just find someone to give us a huge grant! We may be able to get some very small grants such as for solar panels, or a Chalice Lighters grant from the UUA MidAmerica Region. We will certainly go for those. We could decide to take on a small mortgage to supplement what we can raise, but a mortgage too large is not a good idea as it impacts the money available for programming. The reality is that most of the money needs to come from congregants through pledges in a special capital campaign.

Our congregation's annual budget is mostly supported by the pledges we make each year. A capital campaign would ask for an additional pledge that could be paid over a period of three years. The amount of money that congregants can afford to pledge varies tremendously as our financial situations vary. There are some people who can reach into their "other pot of money" that they don't need for living expenses and they can make a gift from that. But many don't have another "pot of money". The money they have is the money that comes each month through working, retirement or Social Security. And so as people look at what they might be able to give, there will be tremendous variation. We would need gifts of all sizes.

First we will need to develop some plans as to what we might want to build. Then the congregation could decide to have a capital campaign. And based on that it could make a decision whether to build and how much.

What is a Financial Feasibility Study? UUFN had a Next Steps Weekend with consultant Rachel Maxwell in May. She gave us several recommendations to help us move forward towards a potential building project. One of them was to develop proposed building plans that could show what we could build if we could raise \$350,000 or \$550,000 or \$1,000,000. She felt certain that we could raise at least \$350,000 based on our annual giving amount and based on what she has seen in other Unitarian Universalist congregations. But she said that the amount we might raise could vary tremendously and encouraged us to think well beyond the minimum. A decision on whether to build and what we build won't be made until after we know what has actually been raised.

We have contracted with Rachel to conduct a Financial Feasibility Study in January, after the congregation has had a chance to see and react to various potential plans. She will come to UUFN and conduct 18 interviews with individuals and couples and then prepare a written report. The interviews will cover ideas and opinions of those interviewed as well as a question about a potential capital campaign gift. Each interview is confidential, but the trend of thinking of the interviews as a group will be shared. This report will give us good feedback as to whether we are ready to engage in a capital campaign. From those interviews, Rachel will be able to make a closer prediction as to what we would be able to raise, both from making projections based on information from the interviews and by having uncovered knowledge of specific major gifts. Any congregational decision as to whether to even have a capital campaign will come after that report.

September Share the Plate: Side With Love



SIDE WITH LOVE

Unitarian Universalists affirm unconditional, universal love as a foundation and grounding for our actions in the world. We strive to be of service to our communities and advocate for change on local, state, national, and international levels.

Through UUA's **Side With Love** campaign, we amplify the voices of the oppressed through online media; we show up in partnership at justice events across the country; we lobby national leaders on immigration reform, racial justice, equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, religious freedom, and more; and above all we work to make love real in the world.

Thank you for giving as you are willing and able.

July Share the Plate: Makoce Ikikcupi (Land Recovery)

UUFN members contributed \$574.00 for Makoce Ikikcupi.

Care Team Update and upcoming conversation on avoiding fraud

The Care Team is entrusted with providing care and support for people needing help and encouragement during a stress-filled life transition. Our hope is that no one in our beloved community travels life's difficult times alone. We have begun planning for the upcoming church year and are eager to offer a new set of monthly conversations. Please reach out to the Care Team co-facilitators, Martha Easter-Wells or Mary Jane Lipinski if you have a topic you would like to propose and/or if you are interested in being part of the food ministry initiative begun this past Spring or helping to provide rides for congregants in need.

Our September conversation will be led by Brynda McCoy. It will be held on Zoom on September 13th at 6:30 pm. This will allow those in the workforce to participate. This is a very important subject which is "How to Prevent Fraud." Scammers often target older folks, but no one is immune. Their tactics keep changing, but there are things we can learn from each other. Come join us, share your story if you have one and learn new techniques for avoiding this all too prevalent crime in America. If you would like to participate, contact Brynda by email or phone or text and she will send you the zoom link.

Tips from the Green Team on Saving Water



- Keep a bin to catch water when washing hands or running water to heat up. Use this greywater to water your garden
- Wear your clothes more than one time before washing (it makes your clothes last longer, too)
- Wash only full loads of clothes
- Turn water off when not needed while brushing your teeth or showering



Lifelong Learning and Engagement Committee

September Theme: Welcome

The theme for Soul Matters in September is the Gift of Welcome. I responded to the theme introduction on page one:

- the bigness that comes as we expand relationships in welcoming
- a way to get there: our willingness to *shrink* and de-center our voices allows us to welcome the gift of *more* into our relationships and lives.

As the author says, “think big! But also, stay small.” Check it out! Ellen Saul

Welcome to the Brink of Everything, Parker J. Palmer

Parker Palmer has done a number of insightful interviews and columns for On Being with Krista Tippett. This article, which is an introduction to his most recent book (his tenth), *Welcome to the Brink of Everything*, is particularly meaningful to me (Bill J). It presents a thoughtful perspective on welcoming the gifts of age.

Excerpt: “Age brings diminishment, but more than a few come with benefits. I’ve lost the capacity for multitasking, but I’ve rediscovered the joy of doing one thing at a time. My thinking has slowed a bit, but experience has made it deeper and richer. I’m done with big and complex projects, but more aware of the loveliness of simple things...”

<https://onbeing.org/blog/parker-palmer-welcome-to-the-brink-of-everything/>

Carleton College hosts weekly convocations with excellent speakers on a wide range of topics. They are open to the public.

The speaker for this year’s opening convocation is Dr. Kellie Carter Jackson

Monday, September 11, 2023 • 3:00pm - 4:00pm • Skinner Memorial Chapel.

Kellie Carter Jackson is Associate Professor in the Department of Africana Studies at Wellesley College. She studies the lived experiences of Black people with a focus on slavery, abolitionism, the Civil War, political violence, Black women’s history, and film. She is the author of the award-winning books, [*Force & Freedom: Black Abolitionists*](#) and the [*Politics of Violence*](#). Her essays have been featured in The New York Times, Washington Post, The Atlantic, The Guardian, The Los Angeles Times, NPR, and other outlets. Her next book, *The Remedy: A Forceful History of Black Resistance to White Supremacy* is in progress with Basic Books.

Except for the opening convocation, the weekly Convocations take place Fridays from 10:50 to 11:50 a.m. in [Skinner Memorial Chapel](#). You can find full details about upcoming Convocations on the [Convocations Calendar](#). You can also view [recordings of past Convocations](#).

Social Justice

2022-2023 Annual Report



Members: Rev. Sara Smalley, Janet Scannell, Bill Jokela, Augustus Lehn, Liz Brekke

Key contact: Liz Brekke

As Unitarian Universalists, living our values is essential to our religious life. We seek out concrete ways to act that will bring healing to our world and hope to our own hearts and spirits.

Areas of focus:

- Racial Justice
- Climate Justice
- Democracy

Accomplishments:

SHARE THE PLATE

- One of our main agenda items for the year is to nominate and select **Share the Plate** recipients (non-profits whose work coincides with UUFN values):
Dakota Woodlands Homeless Shelter, \$493.00; **Regenerative Agriculture Alliance**, \$331.00; **Native Ways Federation**, \$718.00; **Veterans for Peace**, \$441.00; **Community Action Committee – Mobile Home Assistance Fund**, \$517.00; **Alight**, \$497.00; **Black Lives UU**, \$491.00; **Community Action Committee**, \$577.00; **Citizen’s Climate Education Fund**, \$638.00; **Planned Parenthood – North Central States**, \$634.00; **Pride in the Park – Northfield**, \$424.00.

TOTAL July, 2022 – June, 2023: \$4,696.00

SOCIAL JUSTICE SURVEY

The Social Justice Committee created a survey of UUFN regarding social justice issues such as: racial justice, climate justice, land acknowledgement statement (education, activities, and speaker suggestions in these areas).

Climate Justice

- Created a new Green Team that is focusing on individual responsibility for climate change, considering whether UUFN becomes a Green Sanctuary and working with Interfaith Power and Light on legislative action
- Co-sponsored two speakers in August, 2022: **Ricky DeFoe** of the Minnesota Fond du Lac Native Tribe on the topic of stopping sulfide mining in MN and **Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin** on the topic of regenerative farming

Racial Justice:

- Invited **Sydney Beane** (Flandeau Santee Sioux) to speak
- Created a Land Acknowledgement and Beyond Team that is researching the history of the land on which UUFN resides and working on drafting a land acknowledgement statement for UUFN
- Sponsored the documentary: **Ways of Being Home** about two small towns - one in Mexico (Maltrata) and one in Minnesota (Northfield).- it describes the experience of Mexican immigrants moving to, living and working in rural America.

Democracy:

- Co-sponsored Rev. Kelli Clement who spoke on reproductive rights in May
- Organized participation in **Pride in the Park** on June 3. Many UUFN members helped out in our booth at the event.

We invite members to become involved with our UUFN Social Justice Committee and to bring your social justice concerns and energy to the committee.



Social Justice Committee



Our Land Acknowledgement and Beyond Committee has been studying, going on field trips, and discussing local Native American history and the history of the land on which UUFN resides for several months. We look forward to including our congregation during "Heritage Month" in October with a service dedicated to this topic. We are continuing to work on our own preliminary land acknowledgment statement to present to the board and the congregation.

International Day of Peace, September 21

September 21 is the International Day of Peace and our community is celebrating it in Central Park in Northfield. UUFN has agreed to help the Cannon Valley Friends Society with many activities and speakers planned for this special event.

We will have our own table emphasizing that UUFN have become a "Peace Site" through the World Citizen Organization and we will have our "Side With Love" banner there.

Liz Brekke and Nita Wolf will be organizing this for UUFN and need volunteers to be at our table for two-hour time slots throughout the day.

If you are interested in donating your time for this event, please contact Nita Wolf.

Upcoming events:

- **Sept. 15 – 17:** Mankato Wacipi (Pow Wow). <https://www.mahkatowacipi.org/>
- International Day of Peace, **September 21**

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)**



Update: Members of the Land Acknowledgement and Beyond Committee will be contacting city council members and leaders of the Bridge Square Redesign team to ask that this plaque and statue be moved to a more prominent place in Bridge Square.

Summertime Social at Mairi Doerr's

A fabulous time was had by all who attended Mairi Doerr's summertime social on August 12. Good food, good friends, and good fun! Thanks Mairi!

