



REACH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTHFIELD

March 2025

Monthly Theme: The Practice of Trust

We gather both in-person at UUFN and online for Sunday services. Links for the Sunday Zoom meeting will be sent each week through the UUFN-Announce email group.

March 2nd - 10am | Lisa Ebert
Falling and Learning to Trust and Do

Where do we put our trust? What happens when our trust is broken and we fall? Join Lisa as she explores these questions, and considers what happens when we start to trust in what might be possible, rather than what seems solid.

March 9th - 10am | Brandon Daywater
Al and Amen

Brandon will share his thoughts on the relationships between trust, Al, inclusivity and, of course, amen! All are invited to stay after the service for our Social Justice Team meeting.

March 16th - 10am | Rev. Sara Smalley
Feeling Conflicted: On Anger

Poet Jan Richardson writes, "When anger walks into my life and sits down at my table, I try to remember (eventually) to ask, 'What is anger trying to tell me?'" Anger can be scary because it is so often used to harm; how might we, as a "gentle, angry people," use it to heal? Join Rev. Sara for a reflection on anger, because, after all, even Jesus knew sometimes you need to flip some tables.

March 23rd - 10am | Barbara Krause and Ellen Saul
Spring Equinox: A Time for Opening, Deepening, and Trusting the Mystery of Growth and Rebirth

Barbara and Ellen invite you to celebrate the arrival of Spring, leaps of personal growth, and the gifts of interconnection. Experience revelation, release and flow through ritual.

March 30th - 10am | Rev. Sara Smalley
Becoming Trustworthy

What happens when the trust that knits together our relationships and our society becomes frayed? What is our work to do to repair it? We'll consider what our monthly theme, The Practice of Trust, means for us both as individuals and as a community.

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Nursery Teacher:
Julie Bailey

Board Members:
Sue Coleman (Secretary)

Rollie Davidson

Mairi Doerr

Katy Gillispie (Treasurer)

Sabina Peters-Daywater

Don Stager

John Thwing

Sunday Service
Coordinators:
Sue Coleman
Susie Weinbeck

Indoor Facilities Committee:
Wyman Weinbeck

Outdoor Facilities
Committee:
Matt Thieding
Larry Vorwerk

A reflection on the kind of trust that is needed given the state of the world

By Akaya Windwood, co-author of *Leading with Joy: Practices for Uncertain Times*

Some of us are hospice workers and will help the dying systems go. Some of us are here to tend to those who are grieving or afraid. Some of us are here to assist in our current situations and help them move along. Some of us are the architects who will dream what's coming next. Some of us are the builders of what is on the horizon. Trust this.

The only way through these coming times is together. No one of us can or will do it alone. Find your folks, love deeply, and laugh and play when you can. Never forget that our ancestors survived so that we could meet this moment, and those who will come after us are depending on us. Trust.

Each of us has an essential part to play in the coming years, and it's crucial that we discern what that is and commit to it. The hardest part may very well be to have faith that others are doing what they are here to do, and not try and micromanage or supervise them. Let's trust ourselves. Let's trust each other.



Let us simply trust.

We will get there, I know we will.

My heart to yours.



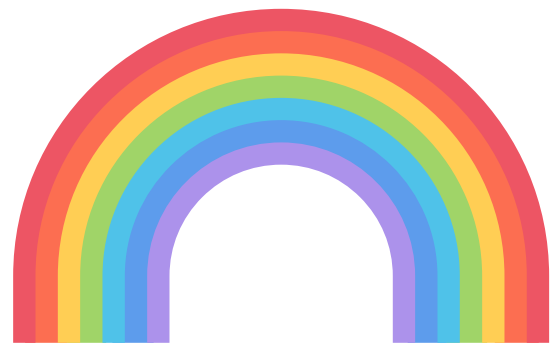
The Meaning of Membership Class

Sunday, March 16th
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

If you are ready to deepen your connection to UUFN, join us for The Meaning of Membership. This class includes information about UUFN and explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership. After the class is completed, participants will be invited to officially become members by signing the membership book during a future Sunday service if they decide to become members.

This class is a requirement for membership, and is also a great way to connect with other new members. If you are unable to attend this class but would like to become a member, contact Rev. Sara.

Religious Education Update from Audrey



February's religious education classes were a blast as we focused on the theme of inclusion! We learned about the importance of making sure different people, stories, and religions aren't left out—including ourselves. March will focus on the theme of trust, and we will be diving into things like covenant, forgiveness, and self-confidence. Parents, if you have a spare two minutes, it would be very helpful to get your input on [this short poll](#)! It will help us plan ahead for children's religious education at UUFN.

Social Justice Team Update

from Rev. Sara

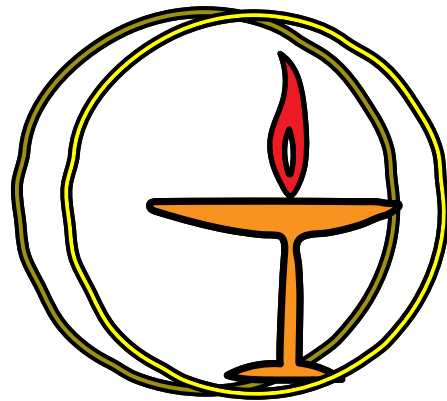
On February 2nd, over 30 people stayed after the service to begin visioning about how we might more effectively engage in social justice work. On February 22nd, 13 people gathered to form a new Social Justice Team, with four more who wanted to be there but weren't able to attend that day.

In other words: there is a lot of energy at UUFN to increase our impact in the world as we work to amplify love and justice!

At the new Social Justice Team gathering on February 22nd, we started with spiritual grounding and reflection instead of jumping in right away to frantically plan. Our goal is to create justice work at UUFN that is effective, sustainable, and relational. After all, as Akaya Windwood wrote in the opening reflection:

The only way through these coming times is together. No one of us can or will do it alone. Find your folks, love deeply, and laugh and play when you can.

After our time of spiritual grounding and reflecting on what justice issues are closest to our hearts, we moved into two smaller working groups – one focusing on sanctuary, the other resistance. (Those two focus areas come from Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance, though they might change as things evolve.)



The **sanctuary group** discussed ways of directly helping those who most need it. For example, we might be called upon to provide literal sanctuary at UUFN for people seeking gender affirming or reproductive health care, but this group was thinking about a wider definition of sanctuary: things like supporting recent immigrants and those who work directly with them; building relationships at places such as The Key and Community Action Center; offering music events for the wider community as a way to create joy and connection when so many people are hurting and isolated; and offering a climate grief support group. In other words, how we might provide sanctuary for both bodies and spirits.

The **resistance group** was focused on what we can do to help save democracy and change systems of oppression. They talked about economic justice, rising fascism, voter suppression, and the increasing threats to our constitution. This group will develop ways to communicate to the congregation actions we can all be taking to become more involved in the work of resistance.

Again the words of Akaya Windwood: *Each of us has an essential part to play in the coming years, and it's crucial that we discern what that is and commit to it. The hardest part may very well be to have faith that others are doing what they are here to do. ... Let's trust ourselves. Let's trust each other.*

We don't have to do everything, we just have to each do our part. **The next meeting of the Social Justice Team is Sunday, March 9th after the service. ALL ARE WELCOME!**

March Share the Plate Recipient: ACLU Foundation

Unitarian Universalism is deeply rooted in principles of justice, equity, and the democratic process. These values align seamlessly with the mission of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The ACLU tirelessly defends the civil liberties guaranteed by the US Constitution, ensuring that marginalized and oppressed individuals have a voice and legal support in the face of systemic injustice.



By supporting the ACLU Foundation, we directly contribute to their crucial work in areas like voting rights, criminal justice reform, and reproductive freedom—issues that are at the heart of our UU commitment to social justice. The ACLU’s advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights, racial equity, and freedom of speech embodies the UU principles of justice, compassion, and upholding human rights for all.

Our share the plate offering represents more than financial support—it is a moral statement. It signifies our solidarity with those who are most vulnerable to discrimination and oppression. It affirms our belief that no one should be denied their rights based on race, religion, gender, or socioeconomic status.

Giving to the ACLU enables UUFN to extend our impact beyond the walls of our fellowship, joining a national effort to uphold the democratic process and safeguard freedoms that are under increasing threat. Please give generously as you are able.

Summary based on text written by UU Björn Nilson.

March Greeters

March 2nd:
Cot and Katy

March 9th
Shantel and Rion

March 16th:
Barbara and Paul

March 23rd:
Gail and Reid

March 30th:
Don and Larry



A Note From the Care Team

The Care Team warmly thanks the many people in our UUFN community who stepped up to help Brynda McCoy make the move to her new home, amid the challenges of a stuck elevator that complicated the heavy lifting, packing, and carrying.

We are grateful to all for your care and acts of kindness during this very stressful life transition for our beloved Brynda. In the midst of everything, on February 22, Brynda hosted a “Healthy Aging” Care Team Conversation. She is truly a model of resilience for all of us! Stay tuned for the next Care Team Conversation on finding balance in the unbalanced times we are living through, to be offered in Spring.



Tip From the Green Team

In a recent CNN article by [Sandee LaMotte](#), she reviews research on plastics and the brain. She notes the cadaver brain research in 2024 showed a 50% increase in the amount of plastics in normal brains over a similar study in 2016. Twelve people diagnosed with dementia before their deaths had three to five times the amounts of shard-like plastic pieces in their brains. While LaMotte agrees this type of research is still in early stages and measurement may not be totally accurate, we still need to take any precautions we can. These can include:



- Don't use single use plastic water bottles.
- Drink out of a metal or glass cup.
- Work to ban plastic shopping bags in your community.
- Do not microwave food items covered in plastic.
- Promote fewer items made with plastic and the use of safer chemicals in plastics.



Soup Supper

Building community one bowl at a time!

You are all cordially invited to our March UUFN dinner. We gather at **6:00 pm Friday, March 7th** for another lively and entertaining evening. We will be sharing soup, bread and desserts and then have a game and door prizes (of course).

We are looking for a few volunteers as well. On Thursday, March 6th, 10:00 am we set up the tables, move chairs, and bring up the dishes so we are ready for Friday night. Another volunteer opportunity involves coming in Saturday morning to unload the dishwasher and load in the rest of the used dishes. If these activities sound good to you please let me know.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend and also what you will bring. Everyone doesn't need to bring food to every dinner but we all appreciate your creativity in the kitchen! Questions? RSVP to hendershotgail15@gmail.com.

Welcome to Our New UUFN Staff Members!



Audrey McCann

(she/they)



Seth Anderson-Matz

(he/him)

It is a true joy to welcome Audrey McCann (uufnre@uunorthfield.org) as our new **Religious Education Coordinator** and Seth Anderson-Matz (info@uunorthfield.org) as our new **Administrator**. Audrey works approximately 5-8 hours per week including most Sunday mornings at UUFN.

Seth works approximately 10-15 hours per week and will work primarily on Wednesday mornings, Friday afternoons, and Sunday mornings. Seth will be onsite one day per week, either Fridays or Sundays.

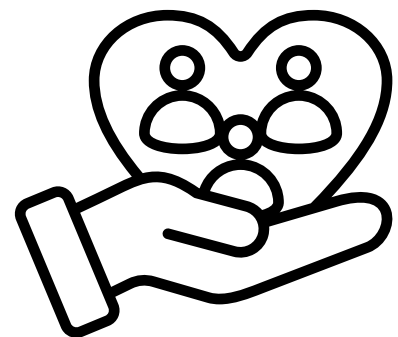
We are so glad you're both here, Audrey and Seth. As the world seems to get worse and worse, it is no small thing that our community is getting better and better!

Join a small group to help propose edits to bylaws

The UUFN Board has not followed all of our bylaws and we want to close that gap, if you want to be a part of a small group to review the bylaws and propose changes to the congregation contact Don Stager at 507 321 3789 or DWStager@yahoo.com

We are expecting 2 to 3 meetings about an hour each. The meeting will be fun and include refreshments.

Don Stager, UUFN President





Summary of February Board Meeting

John Twing prepared the agenda and led this meeting of the UUFN board. Holly Kelchner and Audrey McCann were guest speakers at the beginning of the board meeting. Holly explained her progress updating the UUFN Web site. She needs assistance with a final task - adding the information about our different committees and working groups. The board will assist with getting the information to the correct groups. Audrey McCann, our new RE Coordinator, told of her plans for the RE program which include: setting up an activity binder for volunteers in case she is not available, starting an informal training program for new volunteers, planning a game night for young adults, planning for a Parents Night Out where kids do supervised activities at church while parents have a free evening, and coordination with other UU groups in the area.

The Social Justice Leadership team of eleven will meet for the first time Saturday, February 22. Don Stager will create a committee to negotiate Rev. Sara's new contract. We will be looking for at least two new board members starting in July. Katy Gillispie, our treasurer, and Sue Coleman, our secretary, will end their terms at the end of June.

This is the time of year to begin budgeting. After our budget brainstorming session with the entire congregation on 2/16/25, RE and music seem areas of congregational priority. Sara suggested making Taylor a music director with a salaried position rather than by the hour. She suggested changing Audrey's position to RE Director rather than RE Coordinator. This would give Audrey broader focus with her job role and a slightly higher payment rate. We are also at a time to begin considering increasing the minister's position to full time.

Upcoming Events with MN UU Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA)



Reproductive Freedom Lobby Day

Monday, Mar. 10 · 10 am-4 pm (rally at 1:30) · MN State Capitol

Learn from leaders in Minnesota's reproductive freedom movement about the progress we've made and the work ahead, receive training and resources to prepare for meeting with your state legislators, and network with fellow community members and other UUs.

Register [here!](#)



Rise & Repair Rally Day

Wednesday, Mar. 12 · 10 am-2:15 pm (rally at 1:15) · MN State Capitol

MUUSJA is part of the Rise & Repair Alliance. Join UUs and other people of faith and conscience as we rally and have meetings with our state legislators about protecting wild rice and clean water, opposing false climate solutions, and respecting Indigenous and tribal sovereignty.

Register [here!](#)
