REACH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTHFIELD

March 2026

Monthly Theme: Paying Attention

March 1st | "Paying Attention to Connection"
with Rev. Jim Foti, guest speaker

Minnesotans have been bearing witness to the worst and best of humanity. What myths have many of us been taught about human nature, and how might we move toward a fuller embrace of interdependence? Join us as we lift up the beauty of all kinds of communities.

March 8th | "Love Grows Here: 60 Years of UUFN"
with Rev. Sara Smalley

Join us as we celebrate UUFN's 60th anniversary and consider who we are called to be as we move into the next 60 years. What has remained constant at the heart of this community and what has evolved? Our new mission statement draft will make its debut and we'll have special music from UUFN members and the choir. All are welcome at this important service in the life of this congregation!

March 15th | "All the Rest is Water"
with Seth Anderson-Matz

During the liturgical season of Lent, Christians around the world practice fasting, almsgiving, and prayer to reflect on the body as a site of temptation. While this tradition has certainly contributed to body-denying theologies and religious harm, Lent can also offer an opportunity to quiet distraction and listen more closely to the sacred wisdom our bodies carry. Through music, poetry, prayer, and somatic practices, we will gently turn our attention to the holy waters from which our bodies are formed.

March 22nd | "UUFN Then and Now: Moving Forward Together"
with Sue Coleman and Janet McGrath

As we celebrate our 60th Anniversary as a congregation, how do we make sure we are changing with the needs of the times while maintaining our most basic values? Members of the UUFN will share their insights on the congregation at different times in its history. Are we on the right path? How do we make good decisions for the future?

March 29th | "More of This"
with Rev. Sara Smalley

In a world of distractions, how do we learn to pay close attention to what we most cherish? And how can paying attention help us come more alive? As Rev. Julián Jamaica Soto writes, "Shake the scales from your imagination. Reach. Stretch. Rise. There is no more time for pretending that everything can be all right without your care, without your attention." We'll also wish Rev. Sara well before she starts her sabbatical on March 30th, and will celebrate New Member Sunday as we welcome new members to UUFN!

Paying Attention

Each month participants in Sacred Circles small groups at UUFN receive a packet of inspiration for our month's theme. That packet includes a number of options for spiritual exercises related to the theme. After all, it's one thing to analyze a theme; it's quite another to experience it. By pulling us out of the space of thinking and into the space of doing, these spiritual exercises invite us to figure out not just what we have to say about life, but also what life has to say to us.

This is an example of one of those spiritual exercises. You're invited to try it and see what most calls your attention.

Spiritual Exercise Option: What Do You Want to Fall Back in Love With?

The Sanctuary Boston is a UU spiritual community that creates deeply moving contemporary worship music. One of their songs is called *More of This*. It's a song that invites you to not only pay deeper attention to life, but also fall back in love with life.

This exercise asks you to accept that invitation by listening to/watching the video of this song in a guided listening practice. Here's the instructions:

- Set aside 15-20 minutes and find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed.
- Gather up your computer or phone to play the video, as well as a pen and paper to write your thoughts on.
- On your first listen/watch, clear your mind and just let it wash over you.
- Then listen to/watch it again with this question in mind: "*What parts of my life do I want to fall back in love with?*" Along with keeping this question at the forefront of your mind, bring extra attention to the details of the video and lyrics, paying attention to what shimmers for you and letting those shimmerings lead you to and illuminate parts of your own life.
- If it helps, you might want to listen to/watch it one or two more times. You might also try just listening to the song rather than watching the video.
- Afterward, spend some time writing down the aspects of your life that the song led you to – aspects that are precious to you but that you've lost connection with. Reflect on what has caused them to grow dull and drift from the focus of your attention.
- And finally, identify one or two things to commit to in order to connect with them again and fall in love with them again.

Rev. Sara's Sabbatical
March 30 – June 1, 2026

As Rev. Sara is in her fifth year of ministry with us, she will be taking her first sabbatical beginning March 30th and ending June 1, 2026. UUFN will be well cared for during this time. Guest speakers and internal leaders are scheduled for Sunday services, support structures are in place for staff, and pastoral care protocols will be clarified.

We are especially glad and grateful that **Rev. Chad Snyder will be our Sabbatical Support Minister** during this time. He won't have a full ministerial job portfolio, but will be present for preaching, Board meetings and leadership support, and some small additional tasks.

To find out more about Rev. Sara's sabbatical, please see A Guide to Rev. Sara's Sabbatical.

The Meaning of Membership

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.

Participants will reflect on what membership means to them as we imagine where our journey together might take us. After the class is completed, participants will be invited to officially become members by signing the membership book during a Sunday service.

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.

Sunday, March 1st
After the service (approximately 11:15 to 12:15)
Childcare provided

If you are interested in becoming a member, please fill out **this online form**.

YOU'RE INVITED TO

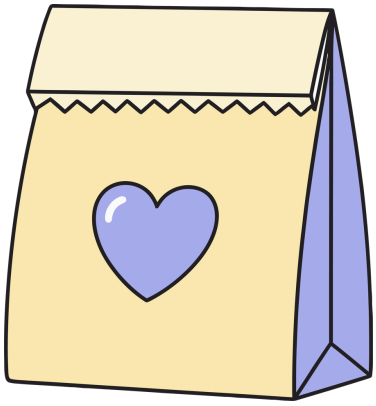
Party Through the Decades

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTHFIELD

FRIDAY, MARCH 6TH • 7:00-10:00PM
ARMORY SQUARE EVENT CENTER
519 DIVISION ST S.

LIGHT APPETIZERS SERVED | CASH BAR
BRING A DESSERT TO SHARE
DRESS IN THE ATTIRE OF YOUR FAVORITE DECADE, 1960S TO NOW

RSVP BY 3/1 AT
TINYURL.COM/UUFN60TH



The **UUFN Lunch Bunch** is a group of women who meet monthly to eat and enjoy each other's company. It is welcome to all. We alternate between eating at the UUFN with catered food and dining in local restaurants. In the summer we sometimes gather at a member's home who has the space. If you would like to be on the list to receive the invites contact Nan Cedar **nancedar31@gmail.com** or Sue Coleman **csuecoleman1973@gmail.com**.

For Men in our community

March 22, after the service there will be a meeting downstairs for all those who identify as men who are interested in forming a support group. The meeting will help decide when, how often, and the general contents and processes for the group. All interested should either plan to attend, or contact me with their responses to the above decision issues.

As men, we are conditioned to be self-reliant, tough things out in silence, and figure out life solo. We often develop unhealthy relationships to people, substances, our bodies and our health. We unconsciously take on and internalize oppressions that isolate us, force us to wear masks of inauthenticity, and to fear intimacy with both men and women. Yes, the Patriarchy comes down hard on our gender, too!

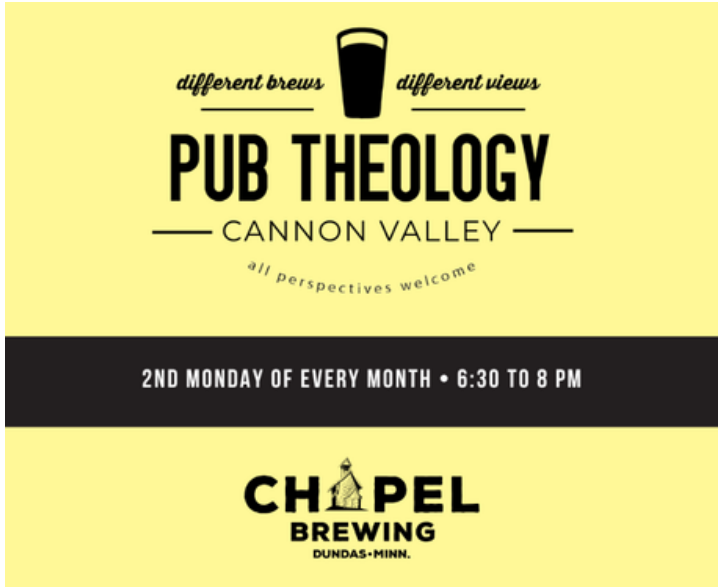
How can we break free of internalized oppression to reach our authentic selves, better support our loved ones, and listen more deeply to our bodies, our hearts, our spirit and to others? Doing this alone is not just difficult; it's impossible. We are busy with our lives, but is it worthwhile for men to gather in sincerity and in covenant to work through our issues together with loving support? If so, let us begin together to change ourselves and our worlds. Email John Owens at **john.owens552@gmail.com** with any questions.

March Share the Plate: Minister's Discretionary Fund

Rev. Sara maintains a Minister's Discretionary Fund to provide confidential, emergency financial aid (not ongoing assistance) for members and friends of UUFN and members of our wider community. It is used, as its name implies, at the discretion of the Minister, who is often made aware of situations where individuals, families, or a group need assistance.

Food insecurity, acute and chronic health issues with resulting medical care costs, the high cost of goods, services, and housing are all issues that have not been limited to the outside world. Members and friends of UUFN face these financial struggles as well. We have also seen an increase in requests for grocery and gas gift certificates for those in the wider community, especially when the Community Action Center is closed.

Your gift to the Minister's Discretionary Fund is a tangible expression of our shared covenant to care for one another and our neighbors.



If you've been meaning to join us for Pub Theology, March is your last chance before Rev. Sara's sabbatical! We'll meet **Monday, March 9th, from 6:30 to 8:00pm**.

Come bring your questions and your curiosity and pull up a chair. Chapel Brewery has both beer and nonalcoholic beverages including lemonade and root beer on tap. Come a little early to get a drink and a seat before we begin at 6:30.

These gatherings are open to the wider community, not just UUFN members and friends, so help **spread the word**!

The **Green Team** is exploring a new project to encourage eating locally.

What could be more local than your own yard, patio or balcony! If you have interest in:

- **Vegetable gardening in pots or planters** at your home or starting a garden in your yard, please email Mary Davidson mbd838688@gmail.com
- **Helping with a new raised vegetable garden** on the south side of the new addition, please email Mary Davidson mbd838688@gmail.com
- **Learning from and helping** Larry Vorwerk in his large garden in exchange for the freshest of produce, please email Larry ljvorwerk@yahoo.com

Playground Fellowship Continues!

Connect with other UUFN families with children at a casual drop-in play date on Saturday mornings. We'll generally meet on the third Saturday of the month from 10am to noon.

March 21 - location TBD
April 18 - location TBD

Please contact Laura Gerber if you're interested in hosting a play fellowship at your home during the winter months.

The UUFN Choir meets weekly on **Tuesday nights** from **6:00-7:30 PM** under the direction of Taylor Wesseln, UUFN Music Director. These rehearsals will include exploring your voice as an instrument, expanding your musical ear, singing a wide variety of genres, and making music with some stellar UUFN-ers.

The choir will sing a featured anthem on the third Sunday service of every month, while also leading hymns from within the fellowship. No audition is required to join! All voices are welcome!!

Please email Taylor Wesseln at music@uunorthfield.org for any additional information or general questions.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTHFIELD

Minister:
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Administrator:
Seth Anderson-Matz
info@uunorthfield.org

Director of Children and Family Ministries:
Audrey McCann
uufnre@uunorthfield.org

Music Director:
Taylor Wesseln
music@uunorthfield.org

Nursery Teacher:
Julie Bailey

Board Members:
Mairi Doerr (Co-Chair)
Lisa Ebert
Bob Spear
Don Stager (Treasurer)
John Thwing (Co-Chair)
Kimesha Winn

March Greeters:
3/1 Bev & Lee Topp
3/9 Steph McKenzie & Nan Cedar
3/15 Claire & Jim Rafferty
3/22 Mairi Doerr & Martha Easter-Wells
3/29 Sue Coleman & Steph McKenzie