



REACH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTHFIELD



May 2026



Monthly Theme: Awakening Curiosity

**May 3rd | “Be Curious”
with Rev. Chad Snyder**

We humans can be so different. And sometimes so certain. Maybe many of those differences will never go away. Maybe many of them shouldn't. But how might we change the way we see those differences if we changed our frame of mind from "I know" or "I think" to "I wonder?"

**May 10th | “The Divine in the Human”
with Rev. Chad Snyder**

An exploration of one minister's journey toward an understanding of what it means to be humanist and religious and Unitarian Universalist.

**May 17th | “Embracing Restoration: Viewed Through a Scientific
& Spiritual Lens”
with Rev. Chad Snyder**

Right in the Belly: There's a lot to be angry about these days. Lots of people we can be angry at. How does that anger -- righteous as it often is -- restrict our curiosity, and what might we lose as a result?

**May 24th | “Title TBD”
with Rev. David Pyle**

The Rev. David Pyle is the Regional Lead and a Congregational Life Consultant with the MidAmerica Regional Staff. He also serves in the US Army Reserve as a Brigade Chaplain. He lives in Kentucky.

**May 31st | “It’s All Fragile and Fleeting, and that’s Good News”
with Lisa Ebert**

Often in life we get stuck in a sense that things are heavy, solid, and immovable. Instead, we'll explore the possibility that the world and our lives are actually fleeting and ephemeral, and do so simply because that's just the way things are.

We'll look at modern physics, the Diamond Sutra from Buddhism, and other teachings for support in embracing this fragile and porous view of things. We'll also envision how we understand things as less fixed and solid, it expands the potential for change, ease, and even joy.



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 is 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.](#)



A Message from the Care Team



The Care Team provides support so that people in our community don't have to travel life's difficult times alone.

Please contact us if you could use a little help in getting through a tough spot. We are always glad to talk and find ways the team can lighten the load for you.

One of the ways we provide support is by offering opportunities for conversations with others on topics of general interest. The next conversation will be about relationships with adult children and will be held at UUFN on May 30 from 9:30-11:30 am.

In the coming months, we will also offer conversations for people in our fellowship who are interested in talking about their own spiritual journey and another on recovery from addiction.

Mary Jane Lipinski 715-897-338
Martha Easter-Wells 563-343-8578



Scan to register or visit mmusja.org/calendar

ADULT OWL SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Thursdays, May 14 through July 2
from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

MUUSJA

Orientation Dates (choose one):
Thursday, April 30th, from 7 pm to 8 pm
Thursday, May 7, from 7 pm to 8 pm

Have you ever wondered what UU youth do in the **OWL (Our Whole Lives)** sexuality education program? Have you ever wished there was a program like that for adults?

Good news: OWL really is for our **WHOLE** lives, and **there are OWL curricula designed for adults** in addition to those for youth and children!

More good news: **MUUSJA is offering an online version of this program** especially for UU congregations in our network* that do not have their own trained adult OWL facilitators.

OWL uses interactive workshops and lively discussions to explore a variety of sexuality-related topics. The range of topics to be covered may include sexual values, communication, relationships, boundaries, fantasy, diversity, identity, aging, body image, and pleasure. Sexuality education is a form of social justice! Join us as we explore together what it means to be a spiritual and sexual being.

*Registration is open to members or friends of UU congregations in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Western Wisconsin

When: Thursdays, May 14 through July 2, from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Orientation session: May 7 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. * Attending an orientation session is a **requirement** for registration. If the orientation dates do not work for you, please let us know, and we'll do our best to accommodate you.

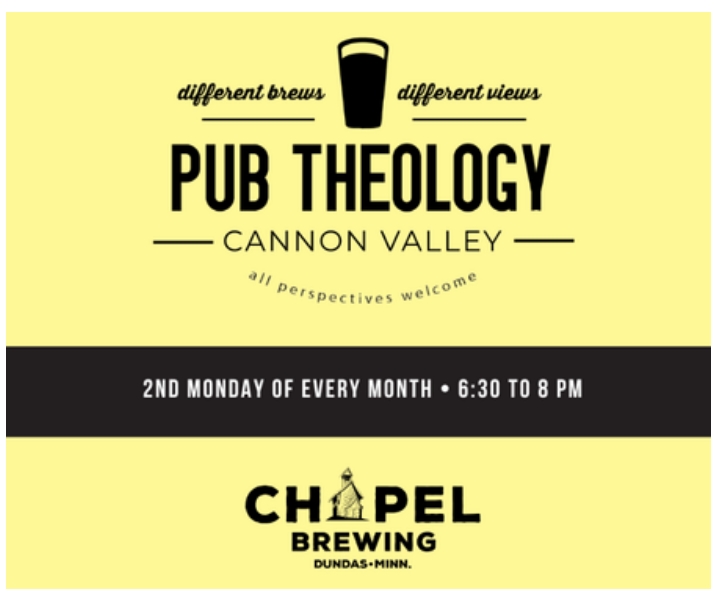
May Share the Plate

SHARING OUR ROOTS

Immigrant, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and emerging farmers and community gardeners work together to produce nourishing food and restore ecosystem health.

This month we continue our support of [Sharing Our Roots](#), which manages seven community gardens and 163 acres of farm and natural lands in Northfield and Faribault. It works with largely immigrant and refugee farmers and gardeners to advance a resilient agriculture system that demonstrates the power to heal our lands, nourish our communities, and prepare emerging farmers for success.

Over the last several months, Sharing Our Roots has supported over 100 families affected by the ICE surge with more than \$72,000 in mutual aid for rent, utilities and food costs. That work is ongoing as we help our friends and neighbors recover and as they plant their fields and gardens in the hope of a more just, equitable and compassionate future.



Pub Theology is paused in April and May during Rev. Sara's sabbatical. We'll resume on Monday, June 8th with a new co-host. We'll meet the second Monday of every month throughout the summer on the deck (weather permitting) at Chapel Brewing starting at 6:30pm.



Families Potluck: Saturday, June 13 at 4:30pm

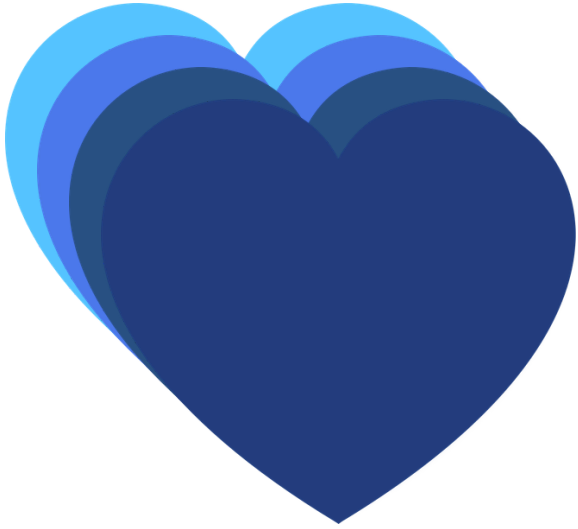
All are welcome regardless of age or parental status! Aaron and Laura Gerber will host a potluck centered around kids and families to mark the end of the school year and welcome summer together. [Please RSVP here.](#)

Playground Fellowship Continues!

The next **Play Fellowship** is **Saturday, May 16 from 10am to noon at Way Park** in Northfield. [Please RSVP here.](#)

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. No need to bring anything, and no need to be put-together or on time! We're keeping it loose.



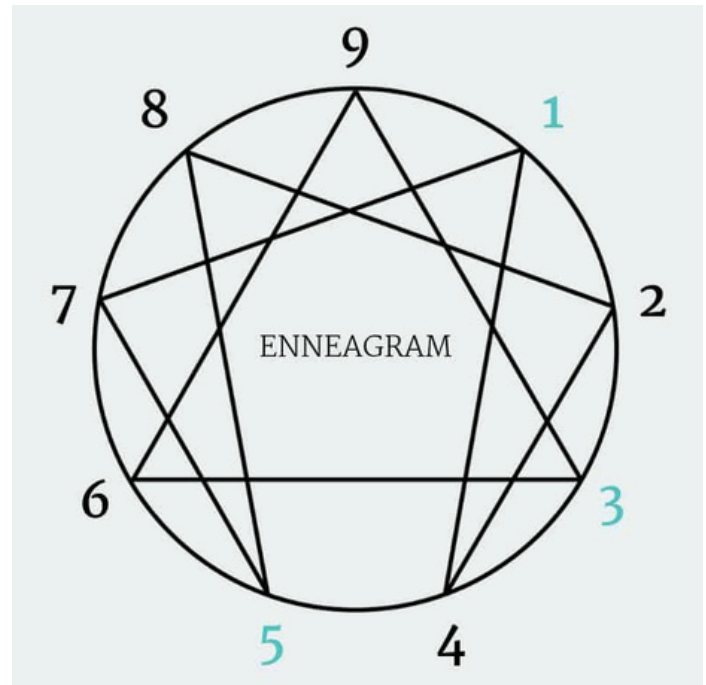


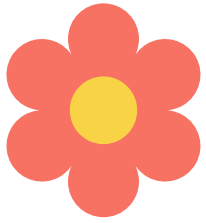
UUFN Men's Group will meet twice in May at UUFN downstairs, on **Thursday, May 14** and **Wednesday, May 27**.

All male-gendered are welcome to attend. Come between 6:30 and 7 PM for social time. Chalice lighting is at 7 until 8:30. Curious? Come and check it out! Questions? Call John Owens at 507.581.1118.

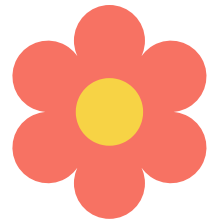
Enneagram Study Group (ESG) will hold its last meeting until September 2026 on **May 19 from 4 to 5:30 PM**. We meet at the **Fireside Room in St. John's Lutheran Church / Northfield** (due to a new carpet sensitivity).

This month we will share about our Social Instinct and what that is like when it is our dominant instinct, as well as when it is our blind spot.

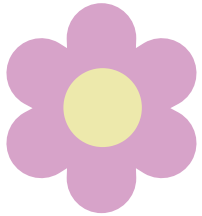




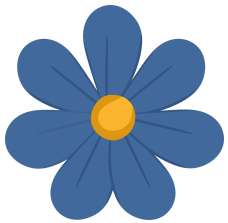
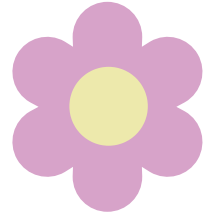
What does it mean to find beauty in the midst of struggle?



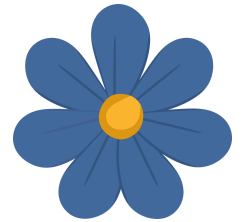
This May, UUFN is invited to a special service at Carleton's Skinner Chapel: **"Beauty in Community: a Unitarian Universalist-inspired flower communion tradition."**



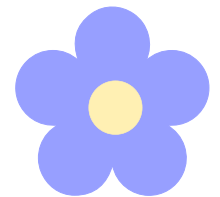
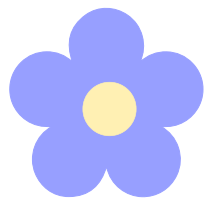
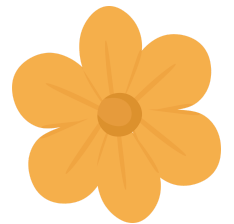
On **May 3rd at 5:00pm**, UUFN member Holly Kelchner and two of her Meadville Lombard colleagues will host a service that expands on the beloved tradition practiced here at our fellowship. This is a wonderful opportunity to share this ritual with the wider community through special music and powerful stories of resistance and hope.



Holly is especially excited to share personal insights and melodies she gathered during her visit to the Unitarian Church of Prague last fall. These international threads of our faith offer a beautiful perspective on our shared history and values, and Holly looks forward to sharing these stories with her home congregation.



Please mark your calendars now, bring a flower, and join Holly and her colleagues for this evening's celebration of beauty in Community.





Thank you for a wonderful CELEBRATION SUNDAY!

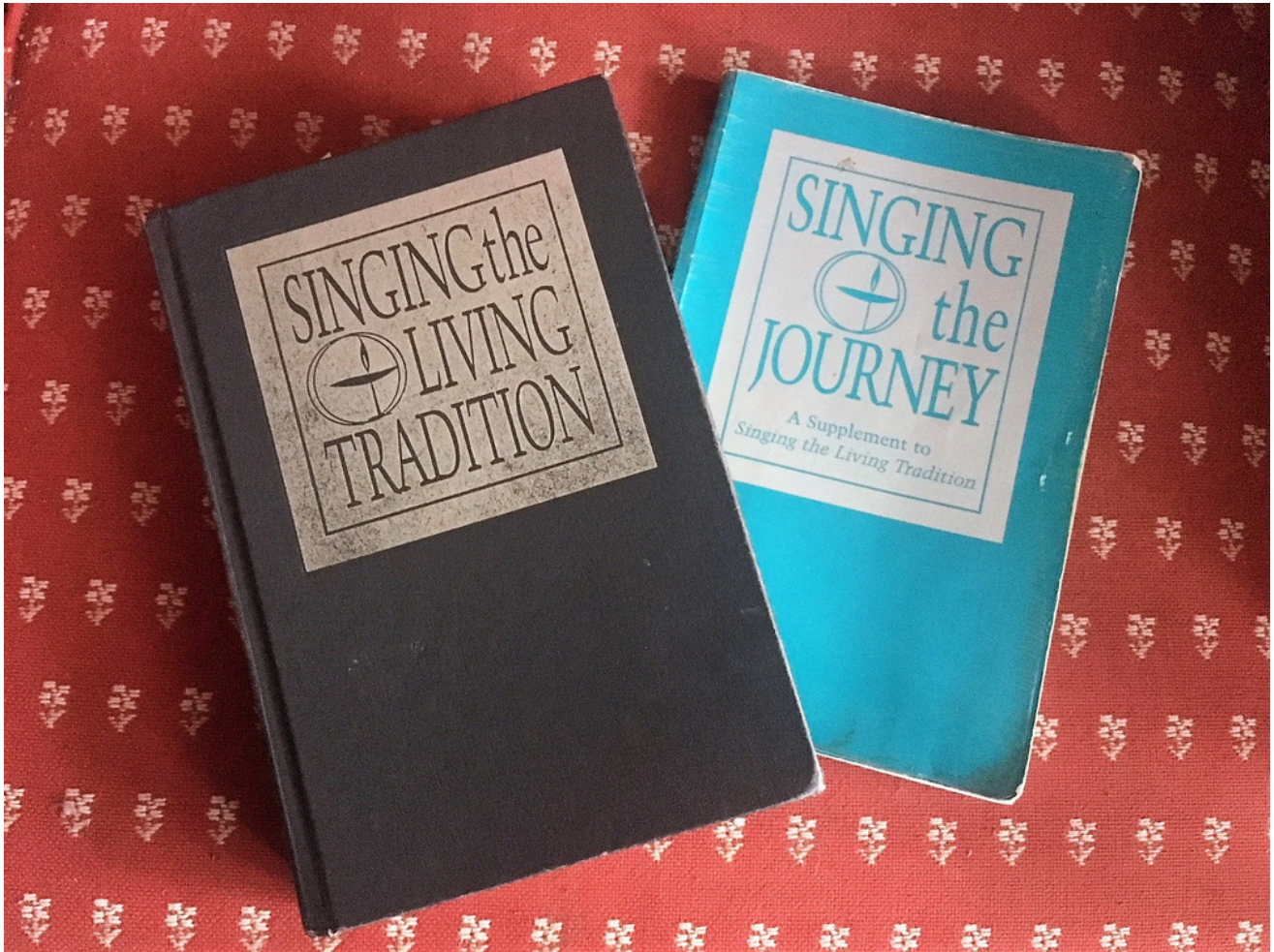


We have so much to be grateful for at UUFN and our people are at the center of it all. And what better way to highlight our community than to acknowledge how we all contribute to its continuing legacy. And on April 26 we dedicated the church service to celebrating the time, talent and treasure we share with one another. **Martha Easter Wells** coordinated the mailing communication pieces that reached our members and **Bev Topp** planned the luncheon and coordinated the many folks who facilitated it.

The sanctuary was transformed into a dining room thanks to a team and their willingness to wrestle with about 90 chairs, some twice. Tables were “finished” with colorful placemats and centerpieces. And the whole room was festively adorned by our resident artist **Steph McKenzie** and helpers. Lunch efforts flowed smoothly with volunteers led by **Barb Krause** and **Kim Reis** in the kitchen.

Audrey McCann gave a delightful message with Celebration Sunday’s theme as a guide and **the choir** anthem reflected the day by sharing “Let the Praise Go Round.”

The 65+ folks who attended this special day reflected the joy that seemed to emanate all around, making for pleasant memories of yet another successful Stewardship effort by UUFN.



If you have borrowed one of **UUFN's hymnals**, please return it in the next few weeks. If you want to keep a hymnal at home, they are available for sale on the UUA.org website bookstore.

The gray hymnal is about \$34 + shipping. The teal "Singing the Journey" hymnal is \$18. Both are available in large print editions for slightly more.



The UUFN Choir meets weekly on **Tuesday nights** from **6:00-7:30 PM** under the direction of Taylor Wessel, 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 Wessel at music@uunorthfield.org for any additional information or general questions.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
OF NORTHFIELD

Minister:

Rev. Sara Smalley
(507) 200-8394
revsara@uunorthfield.org

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

May Greeters:

May 3: Cot and Shawntel
May 10: Matt and Katy
May 17: Bill & Janet
May 24: Tim and Martha
May 31: Jen and Kim

Your life is sacred and important.

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call or text 988

Sexual Assault Support: Call 800.656.HOPE or text
"HOPE" to 64673

Domestic Violence Hotline: Call 1.800.799.SAFE or text
"START" to 88788

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Helpline: call 1-
800-662-HELP (4357)

LGBTQ Youth and Young Adult Crisis Line: Call 1-866-
488-7386 or text "START" to 678-678