# REACH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF NORTHFIELD

## November 2026

## This Month's Theme: Healing

**November 1st | Healing Broken Hearts and a Broken World**
***with Rev. Sara Smalley***

We'll gather to share grief and hope, and to lament all that has been lost even as we continue to love. This is our annual Remembrance Sunday. You are invited to bring a photo or other memento of a loss in your life – a person or pet who has died or any other loss you wish to honor – to place on our shared altar. This is also the Sunday before Election Day. We'll ground ourselves in community and connection through story, song, and the life- and world-changing act of showing up for each other.

After the service the Care Team will be hosting a conversation circle on grief for those who wish to continue to share stories and memories.

**November 8th | The Fruit of the Spirit:**
**The Spiritual Practice of Queer & Trans Solidarity**
***with Seth Anderson-Matz***

Through ritual, storytelling, and music, queer & trans community minister Seth Anderson-Matz will articulate how solidarity with and among queer & trans folks is a time-honored spiritual practice, inviting all of us—individually and collectively—to deepen our commitments to this practice and live all the more boldly into our faith in liberation.

**November 15th | The Question of Suffering**
***with Ry Klassen and Rev. Sara Smalley***

How do we make sense of suffering in the world? From the Book of Job through modern poetry, humans have struggled with how to make meaning in a world filled with so much suffering. Join congregant Ry Klassen and Rev. Sara Smalley as we explore this fundamental human question.

**November 22nd | Holy Hurt**
***Rev. Sara Smalley and Aaron Arnold***

It's a far-too-common story in Unitarian Universalist spaces: the religion of our childhood was painful and left us with lasting wounds. Many of us and many of those we love carry the residue of this religious trauma with us still. Adam Arnold, a therapist who specializes in spiritual and religious trauma, will join us to reflect on how messages of fear and control affect us all, and how healing and even thriving is possible.

Rev. Sara will be hosting a conversation circle after the service for those who want to continue to reflect together on healing from religious harm and trauma.

**November 29th | Earth, Heal Thyself?**
***Janet Scannell***

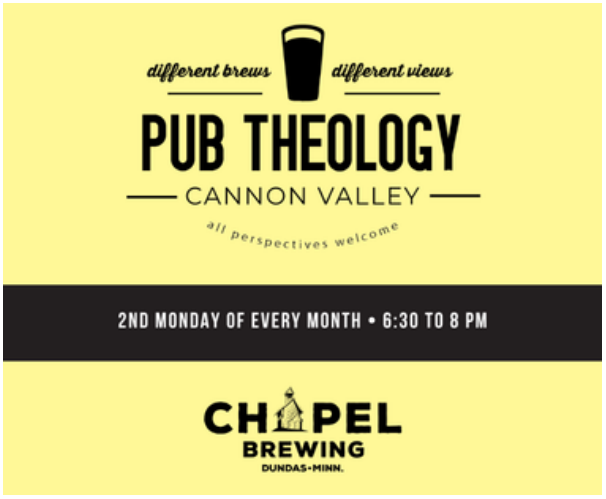
When we read about nature's resilience, it's easy to hope the planet will save itself without us. But what happens when our optimism gives way to the sobering reality of the climate crisis? This Sunday, we'll journey through both hope and anxiety and finally to a steadfast commitment to our living Earth. How are we called to move from passive hope to active stewardship?

## *A Reflection on Healing*

Jewish teaching includes frequent reminders of the importance of a broken-open heart, as in this Hasidic tale:

A disciple asks the rebbe: “Why does Torah tell us to ‘place its words upon your hearts’? Why does it not tell us to place these holy words in our hearts?” The rebbe answers: “It is because, as we are, our hearts are closed, and we cannot place the holy words in our hearts. So we place them on top of our hearts. And there they stay until, one day, the heart breaks and the words fall in.”
~ Parker J. Palmer

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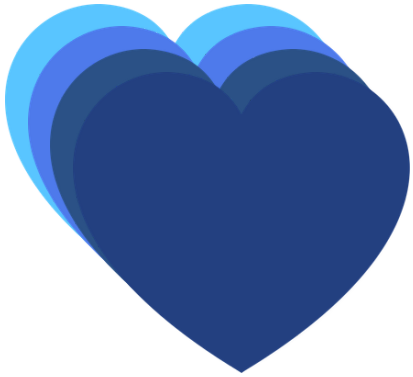

Join us for Pub Theology on **Monday, November 9th** and the second Monday of every month from **6:30 to 8 pm** on the deck at **Chapel Brewing** in Dundas.

These gatherings are open to everyone - theists, atheists, agnostics, and others, churched and unchurched - so come alone or bring a friend.

You’ll be able to share your own wrestlings and thoughts while learning something new along the way, and perhaps try a new craft beer or kombucha flavor you haven’t tried yet. Chapel also has some new hard-seltzer-based cocktail options, as well as a number of non-alcoholic options.

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November **Men's Group** will only meet once this month on **Thursday, November 12th**. All men are welcome. 6:30 to 7 is social time. 7 to 8:30 PM is for our meeting. We meet downstairs at UUFN.



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# November Share the Plate: Operation Joy




Wanted: JOY!

This year, UUFN is a sponsor of the Community Action Center's Operation Joy initiative. Last year, this initiative provided over 1,000 children in our community with a meaningful holiday experience. This year CAC expects the need to be even greater. With so much hardship and fear in the world, this is one way we offer children and families something that goes beyond everyday survival. It offers something every child should experience everyday: joy.

You can help in two ways: our November Share-the-Plate recipient is Operation Joy. With our generous donations, each child receives a Target gift card, which allows families to choose the just-right gift for their child; a new book, carefully selected and donated by Content Bookstore with financial support from their customers; and a family blanket, lovingly made by local volunteers.

CAC has also requested a whole lot of wrapping paper so every family can add some extra joy to their holiday season. The Community Action and Support Team (CAST) at UUFN is coordinating a wrapping paper drive to help fulfill this request.

You can bring your donations of wrapping paper rolls, gift bags, ribbons, bows, and/or tape to UUFN any Sunday in November. They need enough supplies for hundreds of families, so let's do our part!


WRAPPING PAPER DRIVE
SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY ACTION CENTER (CAC)
Please bring new holiday-themed wrapping paper, gift bags, bows and ribbons in support of Operation Joy to UUFN!
November 1-29




# Election Week Gatherings




**Election night, Tuesday, November 3rd**: Vigil in Bridge Square at 8pm. (Carleton Chapel as a backup/inclement weather location.) We'll gather for a candlelight vigil to sing, pray, and connect as a community. Co-sponsored by a number of Northfield area churches including UUFN.




**Wednesday, November 4th**: First United Church of Christ will be open starting at 4:00 p.m. for prayer and lighting of candles as we respond to whatever the election results may be at that time. At 6:30 we will gather for a time of prayer together.

MUUSJA
MINNESOTA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

**Thursday, November 5th, 7-8 pm online:** MN UU Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) Post-Election Gathering. This post-election gathering will provide a grounding space to be with others who believe in a strong democracy. All are welcome to join this virtual gathering of Unitarian Universalists across the state. Minnesota protects our neighbors, and we protect our votes. Together, we can face whatever happens.

**Register here** for the Zoom link.




Holly Kelchner, Mairi Doerr, and other Unitarian Universalists have been supporting our Muslim neighbors in the south metro during their Friday prayer time, encouraging them to get out to vote. It has been a wonderful time of connection for all!




People from UUFN have also been showing up on Thursdays in Northfield to join Shine the Light in proclaiming our values.



# Religious Exploration News



Are you curious about how Unitarian Universalists handle RE? Do you have a child that you think would benefit from being in RE? Are you interested in learning about what happens in the RE classroom and how you can help? Are you unsure of what "RE" even means and are too afraid to ask at this point?

If you said yes to any of these, **join us on Saturday, November 14th from 10-11:30am, for a Religious Exploration info session!** We will be discussing our goals and strategies for this year's RE classes and answering any questions that you may have. We'll also be sharing some ways for you to get involved both in and outside of the classroom.

If you have any questions or comments or suggestions for important topics to cover on the 14th, please reach out to Will at **uufnre@uunorthfield.org** or catch them on a Sunday after the service. We hope to see you there!

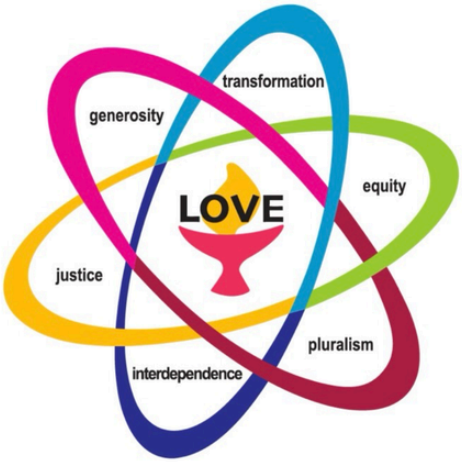
# Care Team Updates

Along with other UU congregations, the UUFN Care Team recently participated in a book study and follow-up webinar with Cody J. Sanders, the author of *Spiritual Care First Aid*. Among the many points he made, Sanders called attention to the epidemic of loneliness in our country, as noted in recent years by the U.S. Surgeon General. He encouraged us to pay attention to social connection in our congregations, noting that people don't want to admit being lonely. He mentioned that loneliness is subjective; isolation is objective; and solitude is a chosen experience to connect with self and our own power.

Please reach out to anyone on the Care Team if you would like to talk about your experience of loneliness, or anxiety as a byproduct of loneliness and isolation, or social connection in our community. For more information, contact: Mary Jane Lipinski 715-897-1019, Martha Easter-Wells 563-343-8578, or speak with any member of the Care Team.

# Journeying Together: UU and You

## Wednesdays 7-8:30 pm
## November 4, 11, 18




Join us for three more sessions of learning, reflection, and connection. This class is especially helpful for newcomers but is designed for everyone (including long term members!) who want to deepen their understanding of Unitarian Universalism as well as their own beliefs. The sessions are designed to build on one another, but attendance at all of them is not required, so come to as many as your schedule allows.

**November 4th: How We Travel Together**
We'll reflect on Unitarian Universalism's approach to religion and to life and ask the question, *What does it mean to be Unitarian Universalist anyway?*

**November 11th: Making Sense of the Path**
As we journey through life, we encounter pitfalls, landmarks, obstacles, and gifts along the way. How do we make sense of them? We'll consider different theological approaches as well as how UUs might approach religious concepts like god, prayer, worship, and faith.

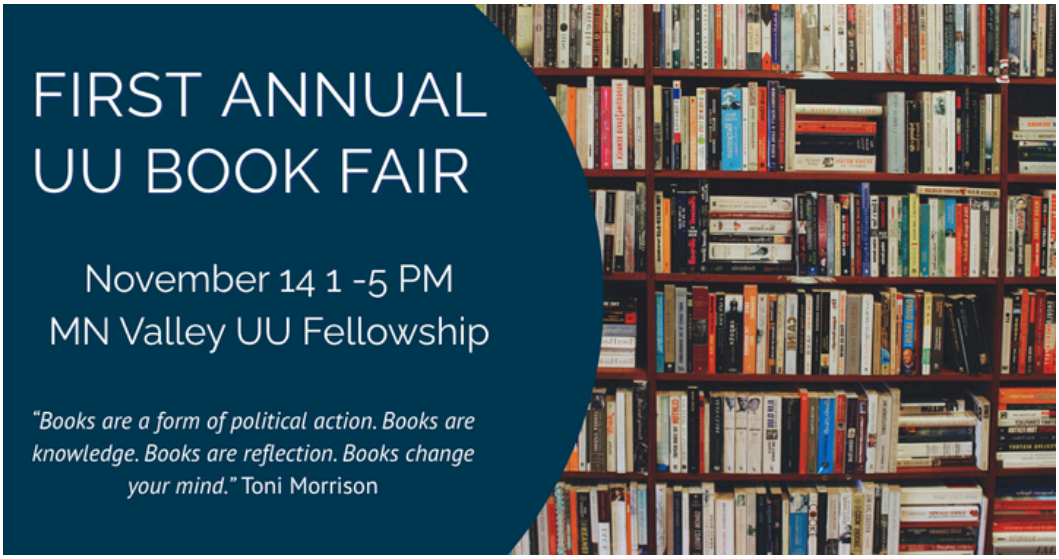
**November 18th: Journeying Outward and Onward**
Given all that we've learned about and thought about in the previous sessions, we'll consider the question, *how then shall we live?* Why does it matter that we're Unitarian Universalists in our everyday lives at this moment in history? And what does it mean to be doing this work as a part of the community of UUFN?



## Fireday Bonfire at UUFN!

Join us for a cozy evening around the fire circle on Fireday (Friday), November 6 at 6:00 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield.

We'll have hot cocoa, marshmallows, hot dogs, and s'mores — bring your family, friends, and a lawn chair if you'd like!
Where: UUFN fire circle, 5785 Lonsdale Blvd E, Northfield
When: Friday, Nov. 6, 6:00 PM
Hope to see you there and let us know if you have questions!
Don Stager (507 321 3789) and Larry Vorwerk




## UU Book Fair at Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship

When: Saturday, November 14 1-5 PM
Where: MVUUF Fellowship Hall
10715 Zenith Ave S., Bloomington 55431
Cost: Free – but bring cash and cards for book purchases.

Everyone is welcome—bring friends, family, and neighbors to this great public event! For more information including a schedule of author readings and workshops throughout the day, **click here.**




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

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**Music Director:**
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**Board Members:**
Nan Cedar (Secretary)
Mairi Doerr (Co-Chair)
Lisa Ebert
Beth Goodell (Treasurer)
Bob Spear
Don Stager
John Thwing (Co-Chair)
Kimesha Winn

**November Greeters:**
Nov 1:
Nov 8:
Nov 15:
Nov 22:
Nov 29:

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**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