



# REACH

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

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Rev. Sara Smalley

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Ashley Hawthorne

**Administrative Assistant**

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Julie Bailey

**President**

Paul Krause

**Treasurer**

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**Sunday Services Coordinators**

Sue Coleman

Susie Weinbeck

**Choir Director**

Taylor Wesseln

**Music Director**

Bev Topp

**Indoor Facilities Committee**

Wyman Weinbeck

**Outdoor Facilities Committee**

Matt Thieding

Larry Vorwerk

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## May 2024

### Theme: The Gift of Pluralism

*Pluralism. We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology. We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.*

*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. Contact [jwhitson@uunorthfield.org](mailto:jwhitson@uunorthfield.org) if you would like to begin receiving the weekly email.*

**Sunday, May 5th • 10:00 am**

**“Pluralism: Obstacles and Possibilities” • Rev. Meg Riley**

Pluralism is one of those things that just seems like a good idea. We say we are a pluralistic religion because we draw from many theological sources and people are on many paths. But it's not all fun and easy. What does pluralism offer to us and what must we offer to the community to support pluralism? Meg is co-moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and is a not-to-be-missed preacher!

**Sunday, May 12th • 10:00 am**

**“Practicing Pluralism” • Rev. Sara Smalley**

“There are many ways to kneel and kiss the ground,” says the Sufi poet Rumi. Join Rev. Sara as we consider the role of spiritual practices in our lives – not just common ones like meditation and prayer, but the many ways we can more closely pay attention to our lives – and how they can be used to break patterns of oppression.

**Sunday, May 19th • 10:00 am**

**“The Gifts and Challenges of Pluralism” • Rev. Sara Smalley**

Pluralism is more than diversity. While diversity is good, it does not say anything about how diverse people interact. Pluralism calls us to not only tolerate differences, but celebrate them – and more, to be transformed by them. In addition to reflecting on what it means to be a pluralistic faith, we'll also have our Child Dedication ritual during the service. *Parents, please sign up by May 12th.*

**Sunday, May 26th • 10:00 am**

**“Kinship of Being Human: Notes on Jewish—Christian Relations”**

**Jerri Hurlbutt**

Jerri Hurlbutt is a scholar, writer, and editor who recently completed a semester-long seminar on Jewish - Christian relations at Union Theological Seminary in New York. She grew up on a farm south of Northfield, and has an Master of Divinity degree from Union. She currently divides her time between Minnesota and New York City.

**Spring Appetizer and Salad Supper!**  
***Remember to RSVP by May 10th***  
**(Soup will return in the fall.)**

Please join hosts, Nita and Larry, Friday, May 10th at 6:00 pm at UUFN for our May gathering. We promise casual conversation, lots of laughter and fabulous food. All are welcome. While everyone does not have to bring food, if you would like to share a dish it is always appreciated. An RSVP with what you will bring and how many will be attending is appreciated. Choices are: appetizers, salads or desserts. Please email Nita.

If you would like to help set up tables and chairs Friday morning, May 10th, please email Gail.

**Feedback for Sara's UUA "full fellowship" process**

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) provides various support and feedback opportunities for Sara during her first three years as a congregational minister. One of those elements is a Committee on Ministry (COM), which meets with Sara monthly and is responsible for providing feedback to her and the UUA at the end of each year. As we did last year, the COM would like to hear from the congregation (in this [survey](#)) about the 7 aspects of ministry identified by the UUA. You are welcome to select "not observed" if you don't have enough information to choose a different response.

You will notice that your name is being requested. This is being done in the spirit of openness and in case the COM members have follow-up questions, but the feedback will be summarized (without names) when it is shared with Sara. If you have any questions, you can contact any of the members of COM: Reid Hendershot, Janet Scannell or Nita Wolf.

We appreciate your support this year, which is Sara's final year in her "path to full fellowship". We look forward to hearing from you by 5pm on Monday, May 13th.

Thank you!

**Calling all parents!**  
**Child Dedications May 19th, 2024**

During a Child Dedication, members and friends of the congregation celebrate each child and honor each family by welcoming them into the gathered community of faith and hope. It marks a moment of great joy but is also a serious affirmation of life and love. Infants as well as older children are dedicated in our services.

Learn more about the meaning of child dedications in Unitarian Universalism [here](#).

If you are interested in having your family participate, please fill out [this form](#) by May 12th.

## UUFN Get-Acquainted Event—Sunday, May 19

Immediately after the church service on Sunday, May 19, there will be a get-acquainted session for newcomers as well as old-timers. This will be in Odd Fellow Park, 1011 Forest Avenue. A great location for children. Cake will be provided in honor of spring birthdays. Feel free to bring food for yourself, such as a sack lunch. If you bring additional food to share with others, it would be appreciated. Brynda is principle mastermind, with help from Bill McGrath.

### Mental Health Care Team Circle

This month is mental health awareness month, a month dedicated to decreasing the stigma of mental illnesses. One in five adults in the United States lives with mental illness – your minister included! I’ve had depression and anxiety throughout my life, and am open about talking about it.

Join Lyn Thwing and me (Rev. Sara) for a Care Team conversation about mental health. Those with mental health struggles and those who love someone with mental illness are especially invited to attend. We’ll gather:

**Thursday, May 30th**  
**4:30 to 6:00 pm**  
at UUFN

If you or someone you know has a mental illness, is struggling emotionally, or has concerns about their mental health, use these resources to find help for yourself, a friend, or a family member:  
<https://go.nih.gov/yztm1y9>.

### From the Care Team

Spring invites us to open our eyes and ears and note the transformation and renewal taking place in our community: longer days, greener vistas, tulips and daffodils springing up in our neighborhood, blossom-filled shrubs and trees, water gurgling in creeks, birds greeting the day with song. Mindful presence to the wonder of this season is an important step in caring for ourselves and the wider community. Being present to the unfolding changes in the landscape of one's heart is important, too. The Care Team is here to support your journey to greater presence to “what is” in whatever form that takes.

### Tip from the Green Team for May

Earth Day is behind us, but every day is earth day, a day to be aware of the impact human activity has on the planet. A startling quote in a April 21, 2024, piece in the Star Tribune: "By some measures, the apparel industry is responsible for more greenhouse gases than aviation and shipping combined." **Reduce, reuse and recycle clothes:** buy less, recycle what you aren't using, reuse by shopping in and donating to second-hand and thrift stores. Twin Cities-based leaders of Goodwill and Salvation Army say they “put less than 1% of donated clothing in the landfill.” Also in this article: email storage takes energy that produces one pound of emissions for every 1500 unread e-mails. Delete spam and unread and unwanted e-mails

# May Flowers Mean It's Gardening Time!

Did you know that there is an awesome, dedicated team at UUFN that plants, waters, and tends our lovely gardens? In addition to the flowers surrounding our sign, perennials grow in front of the building, also on the east side, in the peace garden in the back, around the peace pole to the west, and native plants thrive in the prairie to the south. These were all planted since purchasing our building! Whether you are experienced or would like to learn a little about gardening you are invited for these outdoor events:

## **Garden Preparation**

Tuesday May 7th 9:30AM

Rake mulch, amend soil, clear dead foliage, weed whack the prairie

## **Plant Annuals**

Tuesday May 21 9:30AM

Plant the sign garden

## **Summer Maintenance**

Watering approximately once per week

Weeding and deadheading, once per month

For more information contact: Mairi Doerr or Carol Spear

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**May 5:** Cinco De Mayo- We need each other to perceive The Whole

**May 12:** Mothers Day - We are Made of Many Roots

**May 19:** *Children Dedications. Children will go downstairs after dedications.  
"Many Things to Celebrate"- Theme (Last RE Sunday for the Summer)*

**May 26—27:** Memorial Weekend

**June 2:** Flower Communion Multigenerational Service

**It was so wonderful to be your Re Teacher this season!**

**See you all back in the Fall! Have a great Summer!**

## May Share the Plate: Interfaith America



For this month when we celebrate the value of pluralism, our share the plate recipient is Interfaith America. Interfaith America exists to realize the positive potential of our religiously diverse democracy. They recognize the religious diversity in our nation can descend into dangerous conflict, or can be engaged in a spirit of respect, relationship, and cooperation. Find out more about their inspiring work here: <https://www.interfaithamerica.org/>

Thank you for giving as you are willing and able.

## March Share the Plate: Minnesota Honor Tax

UUFN members contributed \$700.03 to Minnesota Honor Tax.

## UUFN Choir Members Performing: “Wider Circles” by Rising Appalachia

