



## Special Announcement

August 20

Unitarian Universalist Association

I am thinking of you and holding you in my heart. As we continue to learn more about what is happening in Kenosha, Wisconsin, it is all so infuriating, heartbreaking, and traumatizing. The violence inflicted on Black lives and Black communities needs our attention and response across this country.

I also want to make sure that each of us is doing what we need to do to take care of ourselves and respond to the needs of our hearts and souls. Please, today, tomorrow, and in the days ahead, take time for your well-being. Personally, I am trying to shift things on my schedule to put my attention where it is most needed, to make time to rest, and to show up where I feel called to be.

As religious leaders guiding congregations, I want you to know how much your work matters. There is so much collective grief that needs expression. There is so much organizing and resistance that needs support. There is so much compassion that needs to be nurtured.

Religious community is one of the containers to express our collective grief and to be strengthened by the knowledge that we are not alone. This experience of interdependence creates compassion and calls us to act from that place of love for the things we hold most deeply. It kindles in us the courage to confront systems of injustice and nurture new practices of justice and care.

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We hold in our prayers Jacob Blake, who is paralyzed after being shot in the back by Kenosha police. We pray for his family, especially his children who witnessed this violence. We pray for the loved ones of those killed and injured in Kenosha, after a white nationalist shot into a crowd of protestors. We pray for movement leaders and those witnessing for Black Lives Matter. We pray for people in California, Iowa, Louisiana, and Arkansas trying to survive in the midst of unprecedented fires and storms. We pray for our children and their parents, caregivers, and teachers who are navigating unbelievable challenges, while, at the same time, they are teaching little ones and youth how to love and thrive.

I also want to recognize those of you whose work is directly connected to supporting and responding to communities, leaders, and individuals that are in the midst of crisis situations. From organizing to communications, to pastoral care and disaster response—your work is deeply important. In this time, when nearly every day brings new trauma, you keep showing up. May you too take care of your spirit and know that is needed for the work as well.

And to everyone, I send my deep care to you and your loved ones and families. Thank you for the ways you bring so much care and commitment to your congregations, communities, and to this faith we share—Unitarian Universalism. I love you. I am with you. I am praying with and for you always.

Yours,

Susan

**P.S.** Recognizing that many congregations have ingathering services coming up, I offer this video message for your congregation. Visit our [ingathering web page](#) for additional resources for your service.