



Weekly News for 9/24/2025-9/30/2025

This Sunday, September 28, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

“Wider Circles” with Rev. Karen Armina

We’ve spent time this month exploring some of the tangible ways we build circles of belonging. This morning, inspired by Rising Appalachia singing “We are moving in wider circles / We are opening our circle” (listen to this wonderful song [here](#)), we’ll explore what it might look and feel like to build wider circles, using our collective imagination.

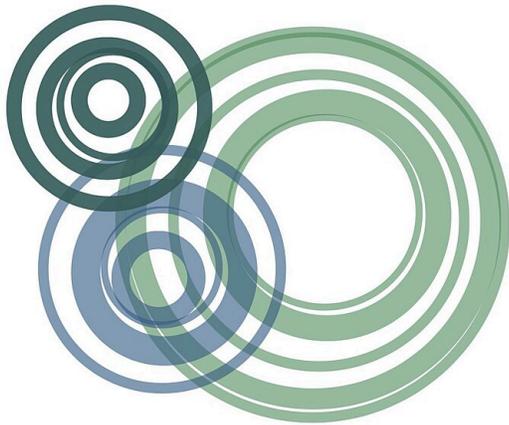


Image from [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Worship Associate: Michael Nunley
Special Music: Rachel Avery

[Service Webpage](#)

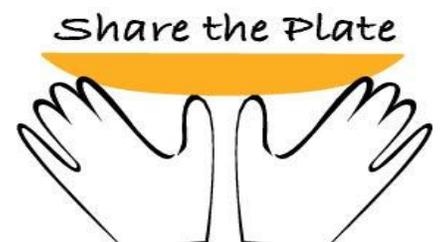
[Zoom Link for Service](#)

After Service: Coffee & Conversation, Board & Ministerial Listening Session (see below)

Next Sunday Worship: “Cultivating Compassion” with Rev. Karen Armina

Next Sunday after Service: Coffee & Conversation

The Share the Plate recipient for September 28 and October 5 is the [Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice](#). WNPJ is a coalition of activists throughout Wisconsin. They advance a sustainable world free from violence and injustice by connecting, engaging, and strengthening member groups and serving as a catalyst for community organizing and education. They were nominated by Jocie Luglio.



Our September Theme: Building Belonging

Our September theme reminds us that one of the practices of building community is that of creating and nurturing belonging. In this space, you'll find a new invitation into reflection every week.

Check in question: Of all the communities you have belonged to, think about your favorite - if you could say thank you to it, what would you say?

“Without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression.” -- [Audre Lorde](#)

Ministry Connections

Minister's Monthly Musings From Rev. Karen Armina



Dear Ones,

I've had a series of mini-vacations throughout August, and I'm planning one more in early September. It has been a lovely summer of going to places in which I can ground myself in nature, and spending time with my son and some of our chosen family and grounding myself in relationship. And now, as I re-enter congregational life and begin musing on this month's theme, Building Belonging, I find myself wanting to reiterate an invitation I periodically make: **come and talk with your minister!** I plan to create periodic listening circles after worship where small groups can meet with me and talk together about your hopes and dreams for our congregation, as well as any challenges and disappointments you're experiencing. You'll find announcements for these in the "Congregation and Community Calendar" section of the newsletter as I schedule them.

I also want to make sure you all know that I would love to talk with you one-to-one. There's a whole slew of reasons a person might want to do this - [Click here to read more...](#)

Minister's Availability

Rev. Karen's regular office hours are:

- **In person Tuesdays** at Java Cat Coffee House
- **In person Fridays** at Reeb 12:00-2:00 pm, **please call or text ahead** so Karen knows you're coming
- **Virtual Fridays** on Zoom 5:00-6:00 pm ([Zoom link](#))
- **Evenings and other times by appointment**- Karen would love to meet with you! Please [send her an email](#) to set up a time.

Music Ministry

From Jennifer Hedstrom, Director of Music Ministry

Hymn of the Month: “We Will Carry Each Other” from Sing Out Love

Have you heard?! After over 2 years of work, discussion, and trouble-shooting the UUA has launched our first ever virtual hymnal! The vision of “Sing Out Love” is, [according to the UUA website](#), “to build a living collection of song resources through an accessible, equitable, online platform grounded in UU values. This virtual hymnal will help Unitarian Universalism live into our prophetic calling as a joyful, liberatory, and anti-oppressive faith.” You may have a lot of questions! I don’t think I could possibly answer them all in one blurb and, to be honest, Rev. Karen and I are still learning a lot as we explore this new resource. What I *can* tell you is that a lot of great new UU hymns are coming your way and our Hymn of the Month series will be a great way to get to know many of them!



September’s hymn of the month is composed by Soren Austenfeld and was inspired by conversations with UU colleagues and friends. Austenfeld currently serves as the music director at First Parish in Malden, which is located in the greater Boston area. I’m certain you’re going to love his creation!

Accessing **Sing Out Love** and its many resources requires a login. If you are interested in accessing the entire hymnal, please contact revkaren@jruuc.org.

Sacred Breath Choir is gathering again! Sacred Breath Choir welcomes folks of all voice types and musical backgrounds. We meet weekly on Thursdays from 7-8:30pm and sing at 1-2 worship services per month. Singing is nourishment for the mind, body, and spirit. Nourish yourself and your community by joining Sacred Breath Choir! Email Jennifer at music@jruuc.org with questions.

Share Your Skills: Did you know that your Director of Music Ministry gets 1-2 Sundays off a month? On those Sundays, JRUUC volunteers or local professionals accompany Sunday worship in their place. Do you have significant piano or guitar skills and feel capable of leading our congregation in song? Please email Jennifer at music@jruuc.org to be added to a list of volunteers who could serve as the primary musician on Sunday mornings when Jennifer is not available.

Religious Exploration and Family Ministry

From Emily Smith, Director of Family Ministry

Update to October schedule: Next month we’ll have a one-time change to the family ministry calendar - instead of our usual 3rd Sunday, our **RE class and potluck community meal** will happen on the **2nd Sunday, October 12**.

This Week: Our service this Sunday will be multigenerational, with everyone together in the sanctuary. There are no religious exploration classes.

Next Week: Our service will be multigenerational, with everyone together in the sanctuary. Coming of Age will have their first class after service with Emily and Rev Karen.



Small Group Ministries

Offering and Receiving Connection, Support, and Spiritual Practice

[Read more here](#)

Laughter Yoga - Second Mondays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., contact [Virginia Harrison](#)

Meditation With Friends - Wednesdays, 6:30-7 p.m., newcomers welcome, [Zoom Link](#)

Sacred Breath Choir - Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m., contact Music Director [Jennifer Hedstrom](#)

Folk Music Gatherings - First & third Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. - noon, contact [Mike Stimson](#)

[Zoom Link for Meditation](#)

Our Congregation and Community Calendar

Celebration of Life for Tom Richards - 9/26

It is with deep sadness that we share that Tom Richards has passed away. All who considered Tom a friend are welcome to attend his Celebration of Life on **Friday September 26, from 1 to 4 p.m., with sharing starting at 2 p.m., at Gunderson Funeral Home at 5203 Monona Dr.**

Board and Minister Listening Session - 9/28

On **Sunday September 28 at 11:30 a.m.**, please grab a beverage and join members of your Board of Trustees and Rev. Karen for a listening session after service. We would like to hear from you, whether you have been attending for 5 months or more than 5 years! We will be exploring these questions together, centered on volunteering at Reeb:

- What information do you need to make decisions about serving in volunteer roles?
- Is there anything standing in the way of you getting involved with something you'd like to get involved in?
- To our volunteers past and present: Can you share a time you felt supported in a volunteer role at Reeb? And a time you didn't?

A Racial History of Unitarian Universalism - 9/30

Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson and the Racial Justice Ministry Team at the **First Unitarian Society of Madison** are offering four sessions on UU racial history at **7 p.m. on four Tuesday evenings this fall in the Gaebler Living Room at FUS**. Using new materials developed by the UUA (Mosaic Life-Span Anti-Racist Curricula), the sessions will dive deeply into our UU history to learn about our spiritual ancestors and how their decisions impact us today. We request that you click on the sessions below to register so materials can be prepared. All sessions are open to Reeb!

- [September 30 at 7 p.m.: A Racial History of Unitarian Universalism \(to 1969\)](#)
- [October 21 at 7 p.m.: A Racial History of Unitarian Universalism \(after the 60's\)](#)
- [November 11 at 7 p.m.: Unitarian Universalism and Colonialism](#)
- [December 9 at 7 p.m.: Creating an Anti-Racist Unitarian Universalism](#)

Immigrant and Refugee Rights JAM Meeting - 9/30

The Immigrant and Refugee Rights Justice Action Ministry team will meet on **Tuesday September 30 (new date) at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom**. An agenda will be forthcoming, and [here is the Zoom link](#). Please join us to learn what you can do to make a difference.

Folk Group (NEW TIME) and Open Mic - 10/4

The folk group is now meeting on the **first and third Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon**. The next meetings are **Saturdays October 4 and October 18**. Everyone is welcome to sing, play, or just hang out and talk about music with fellow enthusiasts! We've been asked to offer "[Get Together](#)" during the **revival service on October 26**, and we will offer "[I'll Fly Away](#)," with additional verses written by the folk group! Also, Mike is revising the songbook, please [contact him](#) with any songs you want to see in an upcoming edition.

Also, note the monthly open mic will be on **Saturday October 4 from 6 to 8 p.m.**

Save the Date

October 18 - Getting to Know JRUUC Class (open to all, [contact membership team](#))

November 15, 5:30-8:30 p.m. - Reeb Rave (see [flyer](#) for more information)

[See our Online Congregational Activities Calendar Here](#)

Congregation News, Invitations & Announcements

Early Sunday Socializing at 9:45 am

You're invited for tea and greetings before worship on Sunday mornings! As we receive more and more visitors, we're learning that they tend to arrive earlier than many of us. We'd love for them to have Reebers to talk with, so our greeters are now preparing hot water to be ready at 9:45, so people can enjoy some tea and greet each other in the foyer before the service. We hope you'll consider coming a little earlier and making this a lively new tradition!

Rent Reeb

Do you or someone you know want to rent a large space, centrally located in Madison? The JRUUC Board of Trustees would like to remind you that [our building is for rent](#), for very reasonable rates, and

that building rental is an important way for us to drive revenue for our currently tight budget. Can you please help us? Could YOU get just one person to call to schedule a visit for a tour and to discuss building rental? We would greatly appreciate your referral. Thank you!

Deadline for the Weekly Newsletter Submission

Please send your submissions to news@JRUUC.org by **10 am on Tuesdays**. *Remember to include relevant event and announcement information, such as date, time, location, links, contact information, and how long you would like the information included in the newsletter.*

Website Errors or Suggestions? Contact web@jruuc.org

If you notice an error or something important missing from our website, please let Susan Podebradsky know by sending an email to web@jruuc.org. It helps if you send a link to the specific page in question. You can also let us know if there is something you can't find, something new you would like to see, or something you really like to see. Thanks!

Unitarian Universalist Association News & Connections

Ingathering Message from UUA President and Leaders

UUA President the Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt and a gathering of leaders from across the faith offer a [message of welcome and courage](#) at the start of a new congregational year for UUs. Together, these leaders invite us to consider how we might place love at the center of our commitments rather than fear, even and especially in these challenging days.

Want to act but you're not sure how? Join forces with other UUs!

 A public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression, with four intersectional justice priorities: Climate Justice, Decriminalization, Democracy, and Reproductive Justice & Trans Rights. [Click here](#) to learn more. We build strong movements when we take action together. Organize teams and networks that can take these actions together, and get support on practical organizing skills and support at our [Organizing School](#) and [Skill Up](#) resources. **Side with Love offers two ways to take concrete action:**

Weekly Action Update features essential resources, upcoming events, and spiritual reflection to support work across our intersectional priority areas. [Click here to view this week's update!](#)

The Gathering:
Second Mondays at 7 pm



A monthly virtual event designed to offer:

- Spiritual grounding - strengthen your heart and spirit for the work ahead
- Political analysis - understand the threats to democracy and justice
- Collective action - organize with others to block anti-democratic forces and build a just and loving world

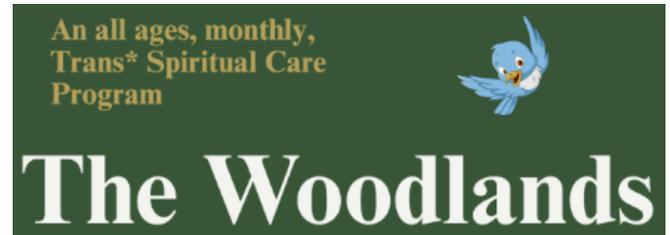
[Click here](#) for more information and to register to receive the Zoom link for The Gathering.

[Click here](#) to view the recording from the 8/11 Gathering.

The Woodlands:

First Sundays at 3 pm

A UUA monthly online gathering designed for trans children, youth, and adults – as well as the parents and caregivers of trans people. [Click here](#) to learn more about the sessions and to register online.



LOVE RESISTS Activates people of faith and conscience to resist the harm inflicted by criminalization, to create safer, more just, welcoming, and sustainable communities. [Click here](#) to learn about current actions, and to download resources and tools to bring the Love Resists campaign to your community by expanding sanctuary, growing solidarity, and raising your voice.



UUs support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregations, our Association, and society at large, and UU the Vote engages in year-round movement-building work toward building a truly inclusive democracy. Wisconsin is a key state for UU the Vote's action initiatives. [Click here](#) to learn how you can get involved in getting out the vote.

And here are some other UUA resources relevant to these times:

[Community Resilience Hub](#)

[ICE and Immigration Enforcement in Congregations](#)

[Expanding Sanctuary](#)

[Wisdom and inspiration from UUA President, the Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt](#)

The 2025 UUA General Assembly adopted a Congregational Study Action Item and Three Actions of Immediate Witness!

This year's adopted social witness statements:

Congregations are invited to engage with the study topics and possible actions listed in the CSAI over the next three years, and to use the AIWs for guidance on issues to take immediate action on.

Three proposed **CSAIs** were admitted for consideration by the UUA General Assembly 2025, and the delegates adopted [Abolition, Transformation, and Faith Formation](#).

Five **AIWs** were proposed for the delegates to consider, and three were adopted:

- [We Declare and Affirm: Immigrants Are People Who Have Inherent Worth and Inalienable Rights](#)
- [Faithful Defiance of Authoritarianism: Reaffirming Our Covenants for Democracy and Freedom](#)
- [Defending LGBTIQ Freedom Amid Funding Crisis: A Call for Global Solidarity](#)

The process:

The [UUA Commission on Social Witness](#) oversees the **collective social witness process** among Unitarian Universalist Association member congregations and groups. Their mission is to amplify emerging social action, promote connections, and nurture accountable social witness across the Association. They facilitate two different types of social witness statements: **Statements of Conscience (SOCs)**



which arise from Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAIs), and Actions of Immediate Witness (AIWs). **Congregational Study Action Issues** are issues selected by Unitarian Universalist member congregations for three years of study, reflection and action. The purpose is to provide member congregations of the Association with an opportunity to mobilize energy, ideas and resources around a common issue. The end result will be a deeper understanding of our religious position on the issue, a clear statement of Association policy as expressed in a Statement of Conscience, and a greater capacity for congregations to take effective action. **Actions of Immediate Witness** are used by congregations in local efforts and empower them to take action and recommend action through other departments of the UUA and other Unitarian Universalist groups.

[Learn about CSAIs and AIWs here](#) - and please **talk with Rev. Karen** if you'd like to hear more about how these are chosen, talk about what excites you about them, and share your ideas about how our congregation might work with them.

[More UUA Updates](#)

[See our website for more information - jruuc.org](#)

Please submit articles for the newsletter to news@jruuc.org by Tuesday at 10:00 am.