



# James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Weekly News for 6/10/2026-6/16/2026

**This Sunday, June 14, 2026, 10:00 a.m.**

**“We Belong To Each Other” with Rev. Karen Armina**

Mother Teresa said, “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” This morning, as we approach Juneteenth, we’ll explore what it might mean to consider all people as part of our community as we create the conditions for flourishing together. [Image from publicdomainpictures.net]



Worship Associate: Stephen Rich

Special Music: Rachel Avery

[Service Webpage](#)

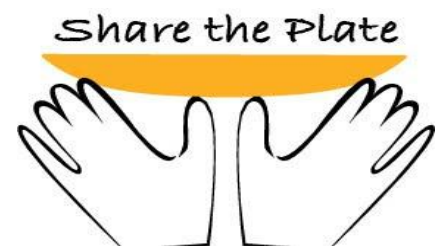
[Zoom Link for Service](#)

***After Service: Coffee & Conversation***

***Next Sunday Worship: “[General Assembly 2026](#)” with Rev. Jen Youngsun Ryu***

***Next Sunday after Service: Community Meal***

The Share the Plate recipient for Sunday June 7 and 14 is [Friends of the State Street Family](#). FSSF provides help, hope, and friendship to our neighbors struggling with the challenges of homelessness by giving them basic need services for survival. Their goal is to help our homeless neighbors on their journey to permanent, supportive housing, support for sobriety, trauma counseling, medical or mental health care. They were nominated by Liz Green.



## Our June Theme: Flourishing Together

Our June theme reminds us that our well-being is based on mutuality and relationship. In this space, you'll find a new invitation into reflection every week.

**Check in question: What do you need - or what do you need to do - to regain your faith in a future where we will all flourish together?**

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

-- [Mother Teresa](#)

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## Ministry Connections

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### Minister's Monthly Musings

From Rev. Karen Armina



Dear Ones,

First of all: Happy Pride!

I'm spending a lot of time reflecting on our shared ministry these days, as I get ready for its close. I'm honored and grateful for the time I've served this congregation - you all have been a huge part of making me the minister I am, and I'll carry your stories and all I've learned here with me.

It feels a little strange to be considering the theme of "flourishing together" during my last month as your minister. As I was filling in a form for my exit interview with the UUA, I remembered some of the things we've created during our 12 years of shared ministry, that feel fitting to share as part of this theme: [Click here to read more...](#)

### Minister's Availability

**Rev. Karen will be away on study leave on June 15-21 to attend General Assembly and Ministry Days. There will be no office hours during this time.**

She will hold her regular office hours this Friday 6/12:

- **In person Fridays** at Reeb 12:00-2:00 pm
- **Virtual Fridays** on Zoom 5:00-6:00 pm

Regular office hours will resume on Tuesday 6/23.

## Community Minister's Corner

From Rev. Bowie Kling-Garcia, Affiliated Community Minister



Friends,

I am excited to join in on the newsletter fun, now with my own columns every other month! As your Affiliated Community Minister, I have a special role with Reeb volunteering with the church while you all support my ministry in the community. In this column moving forward I would like to share with you all what I am observing in my work as a hospital chaplain, opportunities to get involved in the world, or how our faith guides us in current events.

In the month of June we are approaching my favorite time of year - Pride! Being a church who is welcoming and affirming of the LGBTQ+ community is such an important role that we play in our country. [Click here to read more...](#)

### Music Ministry

Good (but conditional) news from the hiring team - we have offered the Director of Music Ministry position to an outstanding candidate! We have a verbal yes, and we're working on some final negotiations, including a start date. We've closed the job announcement in the meantime. More to come soon!

Information about intermittent choir rehearsals and choir Sundays is currently being sent out via the choir google group email list. [Contact David Henry](#) if you would like to join the choir email list. See **Small Group Ministries** and the **Congregation and Community Calendar** below for updates.

Are you a musician looking for an opportunity to share your music? Maybe you played an instrument in a school band or orchestra and would love to be able to play again. Maybe you are a singer/songwriter who would like to introduce us to new songs. Maybe you would like to share your love of a non-traditional instrument from another part of the world. There are opportunities at Reeb to play and/or sing with others – or to play a solo. All are welcome. We would love to hear from you. Please [contact David Henry](#).

### Music Club - 6/13

Our JRUUC Music Club plans to catch some music at the Marquette Waterfront Festival. Join Us!

- When: **Saturday June 13 at 5 p.m.**
- Where: **Yahara Place Park**, meet near Cottonwood Stage, look for Tom Wernigg or Sandy Ligon.
- What: Lost Lakes on the Cottonwood Stage at 5:30, then Ratboys on the Main Stage at 6:30.
- What else? **Bring a chair!**

### Folk Group - 6/20 and 6/27 (not 6/13)

The folk group is meeting on **Saturdays, June 20 and 27 (no meeting on June 13) from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the multipurpose room**. We will practice the music for Karen's final service and Goodbye Ritual on June 28. Please join us in celebrating Karen's time with us at Reeb with music! We'll be performing Stephen Lee Rich's song "Goodbye, Dear Friend," which he wrote for this ceremony. We'll also be performing "Heart Wide Open" by Leah Morris and "Turn! Turn! Turn!," by Pete Seeger. And we'll lead the shared music "We'll Be Known For Our Love," "Love Will Guide Us," and "Now Let Us Sing." The sheet music for the June 28 service is at [this link](#). The audio files for practice are at [this link](#). If you'd like to be added to the folk group email list, please [contact Mike](#).

### Open Mic - 7/11

The July open mic will be on **Saturday, July 11** (note the new date - second Saturday instead of first) from **6 to 8 p.m.** Share your prose, poetry, songs, and jokes, and be entertained by the local talent! Hosted by Stephen Lee Rich.

### Religious Exploration and Family Ministry From Emily Smith, Director of Family Ministry

**This Week:** Our service on 6/14 will be multigenerational with everyone together in the sanctuary.

**Next Week:** Our service on 6/21 will be multigenerational with everyone together in the sanctuary. After service, we will have our **June community meal** - please bring a dish to share!

**June Community Meal:** Our next community meal will be on **Sunday June 21**. If you plan to attend and can bring a dish to share, please sign up to do so on the sheet posted by the kitchen window.



### Small Group Ministries

**Offering and Receiving Connection, Support, and Spiritual Practice**

[Read more here](#)

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

**Sacred Breath Choir** - Intermittent rehearsals, contact [David Henry](#) to join the choir mailing list

**Folk Music Gatherings** - Saturdays (no meeting on 6/13), 10:30 a.m. - noon, contact [Mike Stimson](#)

**Laughter Yoga** - Paused until September, contact [Virginia Harrison](#)

[Zoom Link for Meditation](#)

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## Our Congregation and Community Calendar

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### Potluck for People, Peace & Planet - 6/20

Building Unity will conclude their Juneteenth activities with the Potluck for People, Peace & Planet on **Saturday, June 20 at 6 p.m. at JRUUC**. This monthly gathering helps us to find each other, share vital information, and explore the possibilities of united action. See [our flyer](#) for more information.

### Sweet Justice at First Unitarian Society - 6/26

First Unitarian Society of Madison (FUS) announces “Sweet Justice,” a fundraiser to support immigrant communities and families in Wisconsin. The event takes place **Friday, June 26, from 6 to 8 p.m.** FUS is located at **900 University Bay Drive**. See [their flyer](#) for more information, and [click here to register](#).

### Rev. Karen’s Farewell-Thank You Reception - 6/28

Rev. Karen’s last worship service with JRUUC will be on **Sunday, June 28. After service** there will be a reception where members and friends can say final goodbyes and well wishes, and share gritudes and reflections on what Karen's ministry with us has meant to them. We will have paper hearts for people to write their messages for Karen to take with her. In preparation for the reception, we will need people to purchase and/or make things and volunteer to set up and clean up the event. [Sign up HERE to help out!](#) [Contact Virginia Harrison](#) with questions.

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## Congregation News, Invitations & Announcements

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### Welcome Rev. Denise Cawley!

The Interim Search Committee and Board of Trustees are absolutely thrilled to announce that [Rev. Denise Cawley](#) will be joining JRUUC as our interim minister on August 3, 2026. (The first Sunday service with Rev. Denise is to be determined. Meet and greet opportunities to come!)

The Interim Search Committee—Heike Saynisch, Charlie McNulty, and Virginia Harrison—resonated immediately with Rev. Denise for her strong [social justice](#) background, warmth, [creativity](#), and compassionate chaplaincy.



Rev. Denise says of her work with congregations, “I very much enjoy the brilliance I find in congregations. I love watching groups learn together, struggle, grow, love each other up, celebrate and create community together. I find the pace of that transformation might be slow for a year and suddenly the congregation might take a giant leap before my eyes. The work is magic. I am dedicated to bringing people into that magic.”

She created [this video of introduction](#) for our Flower Communion service (last Sunday, 6/7) as a way to help us start to get to know her.

Below is Rev. Denise’s letter to the JRUUC community:

*I am thrilled to be joining James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation as your Interim Minister! From the moment I learned of this community, I was moved—the name James Reeb carries such profound meaning in our tradition, and everything he stood for resonates deeply with my own calling. The leaders I have met have already impressed me with their passion and vision, and your reputation for justice work is inspiring. The congregation's proximity to the Wisconsin state capital and the University of Wisconsin only adds to my excitement about the collaborative possibilities that lie ahead for us together.*

*I bring visual arts, interactive rituals, and dramatic storytelling into my ministry. Artmaking is a vivid part of my own spiritual practice and of the healing journeys I am honored to offer others. Those who know me have called me Artist, Respectful Collaborator, Inclusionary Leader, and Magical Spirit—words I hold with deep gratitude.*

*My Master of Divinity is from Meadville Lombard Theological School, and I have had the privilege of pastoring congregations in Oregon, Illinois, and Wisconsin. I serve as a chaplain at Advocate Aurora Healthcare and have appreciated my time as an administrator at the UU Ministers' Association. Feel free to call me RevD or Rev. Denise! I hold four units of Clinical Pastoral Education certified by the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, with trauma expertise using Kintsugi Psychology tools, and am nearly finished with my Kintsugi Resilience Associate (KRA) Certification with Community Care Chaplains. For more than 25 years, justice work has been close to my heart and central to my calling.*

*I live in Milwaukee with my spouse, Rev. Matt Aspin who is minister at Hartland’s Lake Country Unitarian Universalist Church (you might know him from when he was minister at Prairie UU for two years in Madison). We live with our wonderfully fuzzy dogs and sometimes our busy teenage kids. My background in arts, fundraising, marketing, and communications was shaped by years of nonprofit work and educational foundations at Alverno College and Parsons School of Design.*

*I look forward to wonderful collaborations when we meet in August.*

## Work Day: Thank You!

A message from Renee: Thank you to everyone who helped over three days to paint over the graffiti, and for extra credit, cut back brush along the fence line! Shout outs go to Jean S, Mike C, Rand, Sophie, Heike, Peggy, and Jocie for their help scraping paint, washing the wall, priming, painting, cutting and moving brush.

## Share the Plate Donation Totals: April and May 2026

JRUUC is committed to serving our community, so we give half of all Sunday offerings to local organizations whose work furthers our mission. In the months of **April and May**, we raised:

- \$348.58 for [Voces de la Frontera](#)
- \$310.97 for [Kennedy Heights Community Center](#)
- \$312.05 for [Friends of Cafe CODA Cool School](#)
- \$300.38 for [Black Girl Magic Educational Services](#)
- \$263.00 for [GSAFE](#)

## Inclusion and Community Care: Thinking about All of Us

From Rev. Karen: We are a community that values welcome and inclusion, and we know that this means listening to each other and making change to widen that welcome. I've heard from some Reebbers about two tangible ways we might make some intentional change, and I'd like to invite us all to reflect on them and engage with them.

First, our mobility-challenged folx need easier access to our building on Sunday mornings, especially if they happen to arrive after 10:00. I ask those of you who are physically able-bodied, to please leave the parking spaces in the city lot on the side of our building open so everyone can get here easily.

Second, you might notice signs in our foyer, encouraging masking and consent stickers as a practice of community care. These are to remind us that we have immunocompromised and Covid-cautious people in our community, that we're still operating under a simple Covid policy, and that using masks and consent stickers protects us all from Covid and other respiratory illnesses. As vaccines and support for the sick are expected to become less available, and information on respiratory diseases is expected to become less reliable, it feels important to remember that the practices we began when Covid was a threat to more of us - multiplatform events, [covenantal consent](#) (stickers), and support for people who choose to mask - are still ways we can take care of each other, and good practices of welcome and inclusion.

Thank you for being part of this beloved community!

## Deadline for the Weekly Newsletter Submission

Please send your submissions to [news@jruuc.org](mailto:news@jruuc.org) by **10 a.m. 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.*

## JRUUC Online Giving and Directory

[Breeze](#) is JRUUC's website for online giving and the directory. If you would like to create an account, or if you need any help, email Bryan Rainey, our office administrator, at [office@jruuc.org](mailto:office@jruuc.org).

## Website Errors or Suggestions? Contact [web@jruuc.org](mailto: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](mailto: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!

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## Unitarian Universalist Association News & Connections

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### 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:



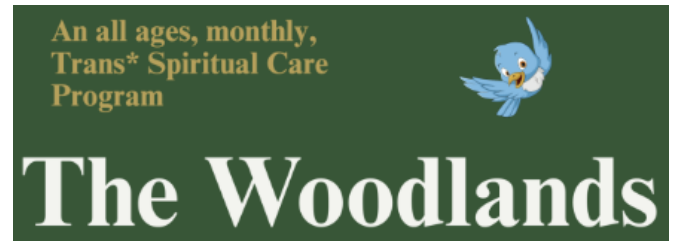
- Spiritual grounding - strengthen your heart and spirit for the work ahead
- Political analysis - understand the threats to democracy and justice
- Collective action - organize with others to block anti-democratic forces and build a just and loving world

[Click here](#) for more information, to register to receive the Zoom link, and to view previous recordings.

### **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](#)

[More UUA Updates](#)

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

Please submit articles for the newsletter to [news@jruuc.org](mailto:news@jruuc.org) by Tuesday at 10:00 am.