



James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Weekly News for 5/13/2026-5/19/2026

This Sunday, May 17, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

“Are You Sure?” with Rev. Karen Armina

We humans really like to be right! This morning, we’ll explore the possibilities that can arise when we can let go of the need to know, and the role of curiosity in easing the anxiety uncertainty can bring. We’ll also have a decommissioning ceremony for our visiting stewards.

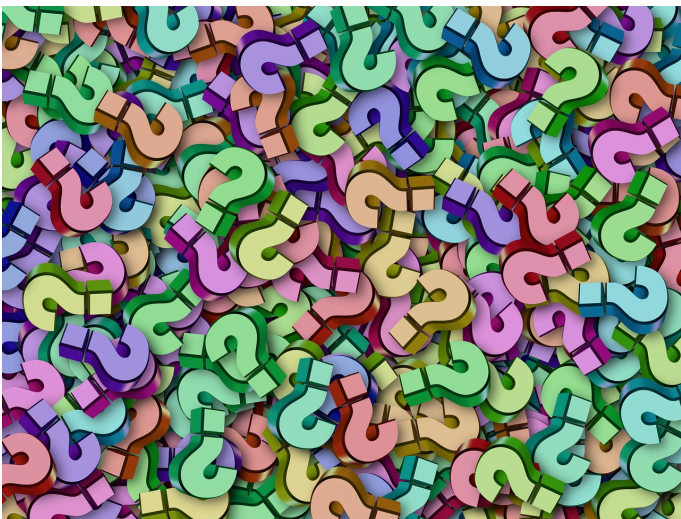


Image from needpix.com

Worship Associate: Stephen Rich
Special Music: JRUUC Folk Group

[Service Webpage](#)

[Zoom Link for Service](#)

***After Service: Potluck Community Meal,
Annual Congregational Meeting***

Next Sunday Worship: “[Awakening Curiosity with Activity](#)” with Emily Smith & Rev. Karen Armina

Next Sunday after Service: Coffee & Conversation

The Share the Plate recipient for Sunday May 10 and 17 is [Black Girl Magic Educational Services](#), a Black women-led non-profit organization that provides opportunities for Black girls by empowering them to let their natural gifts shine, cultivating leadership skills while centering youth voice in decision making, and forming a safe and affirming community where girls can authentically and unapologetically be themselves. Black Girl Magic cultivates safe, affirming, and liberating programming for Black girls in 4th to 10th grade. They were nominated by Heike Saynisch.



Our May Theme: Awakening Curiosity

Our May theme reminds us of the many opportunities we have to learn and grow, when we practice becoming curious. In this space, you'll find a new invitation into reflection every week.

Check in question: What is the greatest adventure that your curiosity took you on? What did that adventure teach you about yourself?

If you want to know why you do something, stop doing it and see what happens.

-- [Michael A. Singer](#)

Ministry Connections

Minister's Monthly Musings

From Rev. Karen Armina



Dear Ones,

Because this month's theme is awakening curiosity, I'm thinking about the role of curiosity in ministry. One of the things that led me to enter the search process was wondering about how other congregations do things. I started looking at the search packets congregations had put together, and got even more curious because each description was so unique. I delved deeper and eventually found a few that resonated so much with my understanding of ministry, that I started applying to some. It's understood by congregations in search that what they're looking for is a good match - a minister with whom they resonate, whose ministry complements theirs, who shares their vision and priorities - and I found myself excited about the possibilities of matching with a new congregation. [Click here to read more...](#)

Minister's Availability

Rev. Karen wants to meet with as many of you as would like to before the end of her time here!

Her regular office hours are:

- **In person Tuesdays** at Java Cat Coffee House (4221 Lien Road) 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
- **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's availability isn't limited to office hours! Please [send her an email](#) to set up a time.

Music Ministry

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](#).

Folk Group - Saturdays

Join the folk group on **Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the multipurpose room** (the front door will be locked at 10:45 – call Mike if you arrive after then). The folk group will play at the May 17 service, where we will perform “[For What It’s Worth](#),” and Tom W.’s “[I Like to Plant Seeds](#).” We will also lead 3 pieces of shared music: [Gathered Here #389](#), [With Joy We Claim the Growing Light #345](#), and [Touch the Earth Reach the Sky #301](#). [Here is a link to the lead sheets](#).

Join us for a springtime hootenanny at Doug W.’s place on May 30 or May 31! Please take this [SURVEY \(LINK\)](#) to let us know when you can make it.

Open Mic - 6/6

Everyone is invited to come share their talent for poetry, prose, comedy, music, or any other entertaining talent you have on the first Saturday every month from 6 to 8 p.m. Or come and be entertained by the talents of your fellow Reebers and the larger Madison community! The next open mic is on **Saturday June 6 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Reeb**. Note that the July Open Mic will be on **July 11**.

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

This Week: Religious exploration classes will be offered during our service on 5/17. After the Time for All Ages, school aged children will be invited to join a volunteer in the front classroom. After class and worship, the congregation will reconvene in the sanctuary for our monthly **community meal** and the annual **congregational meeting**.

Next Week: On 5/24, our service will be in the style of a multigenerational fair. During the reflection portion of the service, you’ll be invited to move around the church to participate in activities that engage your curiosity



across body, mind, and spirit. People of all ages will be welcomed and supported through this experience.

May Community Meal: Our next community meal will be on **Sunday May 17**, just before the annual congregational meeting. 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, 10:30 a.m. - noon, contact [Mike Stimson](#)

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

[Zoom Link for Meditation](#)

Our Congregation and Community Calendar

Catfish River 4-H Club Plant Sale - 5/15 and 5/16

Hello, gardeners! Come find great plants to start your garden! The Catfish River 4-H Club, which Benny Luglio is a member of, is having a plant sale. The sale will be held at **Emerson East Madison, 406 North Street, on Friday May 15 from 4 to 7 p.m. and Saturday May 16 from 10 a.m. to noon.**

The sale is a fundraiser for club activities, field trips, and service projects. The plants that the club will be selling include tomatoes, peppers, herbs, and flowers. Bake and Art sale too! Can't wait to see you there, the plants are growing well.

Prairie UU Society Solar Panel Celebration - 5/16

You are invited to celebrate Prairie UU's new solar panels on **Saturday May 16 from 12 to 1:30 p.m. at 2010 Whenona Drive, Madison, WI.** We will have free pizza, cake, music and kids activities. [See our flyer](#) for more information. Hope to see you there! – Prairie UU Society

Potluck for People, Peace, & Planet - 5/16

Saturday May 16 is the date for our next Potluck for People, Peace, & Planet. As it falls on Nakba weekend, we will partner with Jewish Voice for Peace and other pro-Palstinian justice groups to offer an after-dinner program to commemorate "The Nakba." Nakba is Arabic for "catastrophe" and refers

to the 1948 forced displacement of roughly 750,000 Palestinians. **Potluck starts at 6 p.m.** The program will begin by 7 p.m. For more information, [see our flyer](#) or [contact Tim Cordon](#).

Perfect Harmony Chorus Concert - 5/16 and 5/17

Perfect Harmony Chorus is grateful for JRUUC and invites our congregation to come to one of their next concerts on **May 16 and 17**. This chorus joyously serves the LGBTQ+ community in Dane County, providing an active welcoming community that makes beautiful music. Note the sliding scale ticket pricing – you choose from 3 different ticket prices to reduce the barriers to attendance. For more information, [see their flyer here](#).

Annual Congregational Meeting - 5/17

Our annual congregational meeting will be held **Sunday, May 17 at 11:45 a.m.**, after the Sunday service and our monthly community meal. The meal will be a potluck. If you are able, please bring food to share. Donations for the meal instead of food are also welcome but not required. All are welcome to the meal and meeting, but only members may vote.

At the meeting we will hear reports of the activities of your Board of Trustees and our ministry teams, vote to elect new Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee members, and review and vote on the proposed 2026-2027 fiscal year budget (the budget year starts July 1, 2026). Zoom participation will be available by staying on the Sunday service link. This is a chance to not only vote on important matters but also hear some highlights from this past year.

The agenda, proposed budget, and any other key documents will be posted here before the meeting. A reminder that you must be an official book-signed member of the congregation for at least 30 days in order to vote at the meeting. We hope to see you all here (in-person or on Zoom) on May 17th!

Pledge Drive and Budget Update - Match Ends 5/17

Thank you to everyone who filled out a new Financial Commitment Form to support the FY 2026-2027 operating budget! If you haven't gotten around to doing this but have meant to, there is still time! **Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, who has offered to match up to \$2,600 for any new or increased pledges April 29 through May 17 (the date of our congregational meeting), your pledge dollars could be doubled!**

It would also be helpful for us to receive a form from you, even if you give every month through automatic ongoing payments, so we have documentation of their intent to continue. You can [fill it out here](#). We will be using the pledge income total received by then to create a final budget to propose to the congregation at our May 17 annual meeting.

As of today, our pledge income is \$194,615. You may recall that we created two scenarios for this budget - here's a breakdown of what we need to achieve each one, which has some updates included

that occurred after our congregational budget forum (in part because of some of the great questions you all asked!):

- Our stretch goal was a pledge income of \$200,000 (which would give us a surplus of \$3,945) - we would need an additional \$5,385 to achieve this
- A balanced budget (no surplus) would require a pledge income of \$196,055 - we would need an additional \$1,440 to achieve this

Reeb's Annual Rummage Sale - 5/22 and 5/23

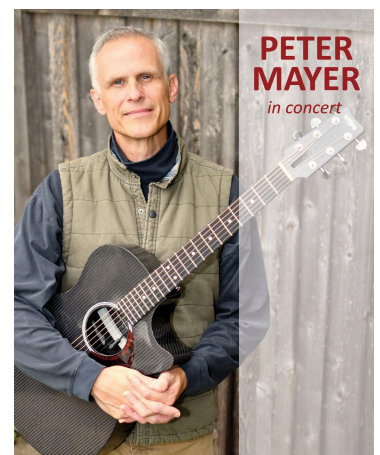
The sale is **Friday May 22 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday May 23 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Donation Drop-Offs: Starting **Sunday May 17** after services. Please place items in the multipurpose room (use the door at the end of the hallway). You can drop off any time you are in the building that week. On **Thursday May 21 from 4 to 8 p.m.**, the building will be open while volunteers are setting up the sale, and you can drop off donations then too. We'll take almost anything in good or usable condition, except clothing. As per last year, this year we won't be pricing each item individually, but will be asking buyers to pay what they think an item is worth. This approach to pricing doubled our return last year! If you are donating something of substantial value, please [contact Ingrid Stark or Jane Aldrich](#) to let us know what you think it is worth so we can deal with those items in a special way.

Volunteers Needed! We will be setting tables along the west wall of the sanctuary after service on **Sunday May 17**. We will need help moving them. We also need volunteers on **Thursday May 21 from 4 to 8 p.m.** to help with setup. And we need volunteers during the sale itself, to keep things orderly and to take cash at the table at the door. Please talk to or [contact Ingrid Stark or Jane Aldrich](#) if you are able to volunteer. Thanks, everybody!

Peter Mayer Concert and Service - 5/30 and 5/31

Minnesota's Peter Mayer has been singing and songwriting full-time for 30 years, performing in venues across the United States and beyond. He writes songs for a small planet--songs about interconnectedness and the human journey--songs about life on earth and the mysterious and wondrous fact of our existence. He also writes about dress hats, pumpkins and pajamas, and other important stuff. His work has been included in song books, church hymnals, and folk radio playlists across the country. He is the recipient of fellowships from both the McKnight and the Bush foundations. Peter has eleven albums to his credit, and has sold over 100,000 of them. He lives in Stillwater, Minnesota with his wife and two daughters. In UU circles, Peter is perhaps most famous for writing "Blue Boat Home." You can read more about him [here](#). **Peter will be at JRUC the weekend of May 30, to perform a concert on**



Saturday May 30 at 7:00 pm and lead worship on Sunday May 31. Concert tickets will be \$25, and will be available on Eventbrite soon - please check next week's enews for the link.

Congregation News, Invitations & Announcements

Lawn and Grounds Care

Warmer temps mean it's time for lawn and grounds care! [Please see the sign-up sheet](#) and sign up for a week (or two) that you can mow the lawn and pick up trash around the building. Instructions for how to access the mower are on the sign-up sheet. If you have any questions, please [contact Renee Buchanan](#).

JRUUC Members Invited to Serve as Delegates at General Assembly

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), where participants gather to worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy decisions for the Association through a democratic process. The General Assembly 2026 is **June 14-21**, and the format is virtual with both online and distributed in-person options.

JRUUC is able to send three (3) delegates to GA this year. If you are a voting member of the congregation and are interested in serving as a delegate, please read on for information about this year's format and ways to participate, then [contact Rachel Avery](#) to express your interest in serving as one of our delegates.

Delegates at General Assembly can discuss and vote on business items and motions during General Sessions. The registration process is the same for both delegates and non-delegates, and delegates can register before or after confirming their delegate status. Note: JRUUC does not reimburse for registration fees. See below for options for registration, from full participation to voting-only. We have listed the ways to participate:

- **In-Person:** Multiplatform in-person registration is required to attend in-person General Sessions and other in-person GA programming. It also includes access to GA 2026 virtual programming and networking on the Whova event app. (Single-day registrations do not include online programming.) Delegates will use the GA Delegate Platform for resources, discussion, and voting.
- **Online:** Online registration includes access to GA 2026 on the Whova event app. Delegates will use Whova for online programming and the GA Delegate Platform for resources, discussion, and voting. (The fee is \$450.)
- **Business-Only Online:** This option provides access to the GA Delegate Platform for discussion and voting but does not include GA programming, the Whova app, networking opportunities,

or the exhibit hall. (Note—The fee is \$175, with option to opt out of the fee with promo code OPTOUT2026.)

- **Election Only:** Delegates do not need to register for General Assembly to vote in UUA elections. Election ballots will be sent via email. (Note—No registration/fee required.)

For more information, [visit the UUA website](#).

Interim Ministry Search Committee Interviewing Two Candidates

The Interim Ministry Search Committee (Heike Saynisch, Charlie McNulty, and Virginia Harrison) is conducting interviews with and calling references for two very promising ministerial candidates this week. On Monday, May 18, the committee must submit an online form ranking the candidates by “Yes,” “Maybe,” and “No.” Our rankings will be lined up with the ministerial candidates’ rankings of us, and we will hopefully have a match!

If you have any questions, please feel free to [contact Virginia Harrison](#), and keep watching this space for further updates.

Sign Up to Contribute to Rev. Karen’s Farewell-Thank You Reception on June 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 gratitudes 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.

Invitation from Your Worship Team: Centering in Beauty

If you’ve been attending Sunday services recently, you’ve likely noticed a new element near the beginning. We believe that offering a brief time of centering can help us arrive more fully into the space we make sacred together, and that beauty can be a great way to do that. Who can’t use a little more beauty in their lives these days, right? The images we’ve shared up to now have been offered by Rev. Karen or members of the Worship Team. We’d love to widen our sources and include your images of beauty! **If you have an image you’d like us to show on a Sunday morning, please [email it to Rev. Karen](#)** (with a title if you have one).

Deadline for the Weekly Newsletter Submission

Please send your submissions to 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.

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

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

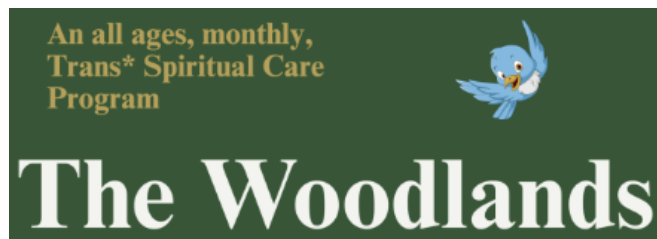
[Click here](#) for more information and to register to receive the Zoom link for The Gathering.

[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](#)

[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.