



Weekly News for 4/29/2026-5/5/2026

This Sunday, May 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
“Turning to Wonder” with Rev. Karen Armina

This month’s theme invites us to awaken our curiosity. This morning, we’ll explore how cultivating a practice of curiosity might bring a sense of awe, a feeling of compassion, and a foundation for relationship. [Image from Soul Matters]



Worship Associate: Vera Leone
Special Music: JRUUC Sacred Breath Choir

[Service Webpage](#)

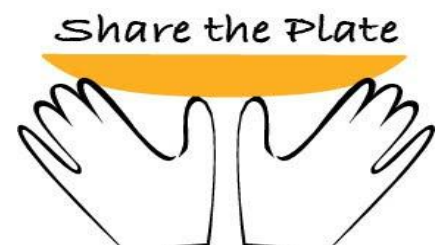
[Zoom Link for Service](#)

After Service: Coffee & Conversation, Coming of Age Class

Next Sunday Worship: “[Coming of Age](#)” with Benny Luglio and Lottie McNulty

Next Sunday after Service: Coffee & Conversation, Cheers and Fears

The Share the Plate recipient for Sunday April 26 and May 3 is [Friends of Cafe CODA Cool School](#). Cafe CODA is Madison’s premiere jazz space located on Willy Street, which offers Cool School, a Saturday morning session for young musicians interested in learning the basics of improvisation in music and the language that occurs when making music together. They were nominated by Ed Kuharski.



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?

The best spiritual instruction is to wake up in the morning and say, “I wonder what's going to happen today.”

-- [Pema Chodron](#)

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. You all will get to do this too - to get curious about who you are as a congregation and what kind of minister might be a good match for you.

I'm also thinking about the role of curiosity in our living tradition. I'm reminded of this short history of our faith by the Rev. Adam Robersmith: So, how did Unitarian Universalists come to be? I could tell the story about histories of heresy or the mechanics of the merger in 1961. Those are stories well worth telling. But for now, I'll tell it like this: once there were people who kept asking why? and how? and Is that really true? Some people asked them to be quiet, to stop asking so many questions. But they couldn't stop! They didn't know how! Finally, everyone else around them said, "You all should have your own churches, where you can ask questions that we don't want to ask and you can find answers that don't make sense to us." Many of them did just that and, even though it wasn't easy, in time they decided to transform themselves into something new by making promises to one another about how they would be with one another and in the world. And that's how Unitarian Universalism was born, but to this very day we still ask why? and how? and Is that really true?

And because UUs still ask those questions, our faith tradition will continue to grow and change as it always has. And that is true of Reeb tool - I often say that we change with every new person who comes through our doors, when we can be curious about what they bring to our congregation. So I hope you'll keep asking why? and how? and is that really true? about yourselves, your congregation,

your mission, and the possibilities for your next minister. I'm excited for you to embark on this journey!

In faith and love, Karen

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 would love to meet with you! 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 folks had a great time performing and singing with the congregation on Sunday. The next service the folk group will play at will be on May 17, where we will perform "For What It's Worth," and "Blowin' in the Wind." [Here is a link to the lead sheets](#). We will also lead 3 pieces of shared music, to be announced.

Open Mic - 5/2

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 May 2 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Reeb**. Note that the July Open Mic will be on **July 11**.

New Music Club

If you enjoy live music, join other Reebers to catch local live shows around town in an informal music club to enjoy music from our local talent and wandering minstrels. Upcoming shows we'll attend:

- Carsie Blanton will be playing at the High Noon Saloon (701 E. Washington) on **Thursday May 14 at 8 p.m.**

If you know of any upcoming events for the music club, please [email Mike](#).

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

This Week: Our service on 5/3 will be multigenerational with everyone together in the sanctuary. After service, Coming of Age youth will meet with Emily and Rev Karen in the youth room.

Next Week: Our service on 5/10 will be the Coming of Age service. Please join us as we celebrate our Coming of Age youth and listen to their reflections on a year of exploring their personal beliefs. The service will be multigenerational with everyone together in the sanctuary.



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](#)

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

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

Cheers and Fears - Sunday, May 10, after worship, contact [Rev. Karen](#)

[Zoom Link for Meditation](#)

Our Congregation and Community Calendar

Join Us This May Day - 5/1

From the JRUUC Justice Leadership Team: May Day is coming up on **Friday May 1**, and it's a big opportunity to show that we are willing and able to impose economic consequences in response to the current threats to our country. Here in Madison, it's also called "Dia sin Inmigrantes," or Day Without Immigrants, to honor the contributions of immigrant workers to Wisconsin's economy. Madison is one of a handful of cities who have successfully organized to shut down an entire sector this year, in our case the public schools. We feel that May Day is very aligned with the justice interests of our congregation, so we wanted to let you know how you can participate.

Historically, May Day, in addition to being a pagan Spring festival, asks us to remember the union organizers who were fighting for an 8 hour work day. They faced many of the same tactics of government repression that we see today, such as violence, warrantless searches and seizures, suppression of journalism, and being targeted by police in retaliation for their activism. And, their willingness to get uncomfortable has led to material improvement in millions of people's lives. When we celebrate May Day, we join that legacy and practice the skills of non-compliance that we will need to face the threats of today.

Organizers are asking for you to make these commitments: No shopping. No school. No work.

Get in the streets if you can. **The main event is starting on Library Mall at 12, marching up State St. at 1, and rallying at the Capitol at 2.** If you would like to connect with other Reebers, our goal is to hook up with FUS and the yellow Side With Love banner.

Reeb Book Lovers - 5/4

Our next meeting will be **Monday May 4**. We will meet at Reeb from **6:30 to 7 p.m.** to chat and snack, and then from **7 to 8 p.m.** we will talk about books. For May, you are as always welcome to talk about whatever book you would like. But for a suggestion, may I suggest the theme below:

Curiosity & Learning Something New: Choose a book that teaches you something you didn't know before – about the world, people, history, science, or faith.

"Time Pieces" by the Wisconsin Chamber Choir - 5/9

Reeber Sarah Hallas is in the Wisconsin Chamber Choir and would love to see folks at their next concert on **Saturday May 9 at 7:30 p.m.** It's a powerful program that addresses injustice, among other topics. [Click here](#) for more information about the program and tickets.

Cheers and Fears - 5/10

This is a space in which we'll offer each other support in navigating today's times. We'll cheer each other on, and we'll share our fears and hold them together. The next one-hour session will meet on **Sunday May 10 after worship in the Reeb library**. All are in person, drop-in opportunities – come once, or as often as you like.

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](#).

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!

Congregation News, Invitations & Announcements

Pledge Drive and Budget Update

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 now 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 yesterday, our pledge income is \$194,451. 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 \$5,549 to achieve this
- A balanced budget (no surplus) would require a pledge income of \$196,055 - we would need an additional \$1,604 to achieve this

Interim Ministry Search Committee Prepping for Interviews

The Interim Ministry Search Committee (Heike Saynisch, Charlie McNulty, and Virginia Harrison) is preparing interview questions in advance of next week's release of candidate information. On Wednesday, May 6, the committee will be notified of interested interim ministerial candidates. The committee will then review the candidate profiles, watch recorded services, and conduct Zoom interviews. The committee has until May 17 to do this. On Monday, May 18, the committee must submit an online form ranking the candidates by "Yes" (1st, 2nd, 3rd choice, etc.), "Maybe" (1st, 2nd, 3rd choice, etc.), and "No." Our rankings will be lined up with the ministerial candidates' rankings of us, and we will hopefully have a match! Note: Last Sunday, the UUA's Rev. Matthew Johnson reminded the congregation that there is a small pool of ministers to choose from, so we are prepared to only have a couple of candidates to interview.

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

Love at the Center Book Group Cancelled

Because of low and inconsistent attendance, we're ending this opportunity. Thanks to those who made it to the first two sessions!

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 Reebers 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 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.