

EAST BREEZE



Newsletter of the James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Madison, Wisconsin

Volume 27, Number 5 — May 2018

May Theme: What does it mean to be a people of creativity?

“Inside you there’s an artist you don’t know about... Say yes quickly, if you know, if you’ve known it from before the beginning of the universe.”

-- Rumi

Connections

I think spring might finally, actually, have arrived. I’ve emerged from a hibernation that I hadn’t fully realized I’ve been in. The sunlight and warmth are doing wonders for my spirit. And one of the things I appreciate most about this season is how we all start to come outside, stretch our bodies, smile at each other, put our hands in the dirt - so many ways to reconnect!

What a great frame in which to consider what it means to be a people of creativity. It took a long time for me to learn to think of myself as creative, because I had a very concrete idea of what creativity was. This idea was limited, because I thought of creativity as just the ability to make art, and I thought of that as a solo venture. And here’s what I’m currently learning: it takes all of the same things to nurture our creativity as it does to nurture our relationships. Because creativity is both our (individual and collective) ability to think of new things, and our ability to make them happen. We need each other’s encouragement to nurture us into believing in our individual creativeness, and we need the energy and resources provided by our co-creators to turn our ideas into reality. And so creativity is yet another amazing by-product of the welcoming community we build, because it creates among us the brave space in which we can take the risk of making something new, expressing ourselves, and gathering momentum, and it offers us co-creators ways to make things we couldn’t possibly think up alone. This month’s worship services were all created collaboratively, in that spirit, with an eye toward opening space for our individual growth, celebrating of our shared humanity, and making room for all people to be part of that celebration. I’m looking forward to sharing them with you!

In faith and love, Karen

10 AM Sunday Services

- 5/6 “Burn It Down!”**
The Rev. Karen Armina and Cea Stapleton Cordasco
Sometimes destruction of the old is necessary to make room for the new. This morning, we’ll explore how both individuals and movements might discern when “burning it down” can move us toward renewal, and we’ll wrestle with the mixed feelings it can bring to be agents of creative destruction.
- 5/13 “Families, Founders, and Fairness”**
Carin Bringelson
What do families – be they families of origin or families of choice – have in common with congregations? They can all be places in which we explore issues of justice and equity. This morning we’ll be looking specifically at the history of race relations within the James Reeb UU Congregation, and we’ll be asking ourselves if there are additional stories that need to be told and heard.
- 5/20 “The Beat of a Different Drummer”**
The Rev. Karen Armina and Stephani Pescitelli
How do we make connections across the many kinds of “otherness” that are present in our multicultural society? Today we’ll explore the creative process as a mechanism of relationship-building and social change. Our service will feature Persian music with a special guest, Adel Ardelan. Our annual congregational meeting will follow the service.

5/27 “Yes...And...”

**The Rev. Karen Armina and
Cea Stapleton Cordasco**

Sometimes, when we give ourselves permission to let go of expectations of how we’re perceived, we can surprise ourselves by doing or saying amazing things. Today we’ll explore the freedom of improvisational creativity.

Check-in question: In what ways are you creative?



**Wednesday Evening Vespers
May 16 at 6 pm**

Join Rev. Karen in the Sanctuary for a time of stillness, song, and reflection.



**Minister’s Availability and
Office Hours in May**

Rev. Karen is in the office on Wednesdays between noon and 2 pm. She can also be found at Café Zoma on Thursdays between 1 and 3 pm. And she’s more than happy to meet with you for a cup of coffee/tea or a walk at any other mutually agreed-upon time – just call to set it up!



The Promise and Practice of Our Faith Campaign

Imagine what our faith would look like if we *upheld* and *centered* the **history**, the **perspectives**, the **voices**, and the **leadership** of Black UUs...

The UUA launched **The Promise and the Practice of our Faith** following our June 2017 General Assembly. It is a historic commitment to address our denomination’s history of upholding white supremacy, and all Unitarian Universalists are invited to be part of it through:

- 1) Holding at least one worship service around the campaign’s themes,
- 2) Financial support,
- 3) Making a long-term commitment to dismantling white supremacy, racism, and oppression within our congregations, our Association, and beyond.

In the late 1960s, Unitarian Universalism was asked to take steps to address the silencing and marginalization of Black Unitarian Universalists. Though there was an initial affirmation of this commitment at the time, the commitment went unfulfilled and the promise was broken. Many Black UUs left our faith, and the loss of their voices was a huge impact. In October 2016, the UUA Board of Trustees made a bold \$5.3 million commitment to support ministry to Black-identified Unitarian Universalists. The Board’s decision reflects an understanding that Unitarian Universalism has benefitted from the system of white supremacy that advantages white people and white institutions. See here

(<https://www.uua.org/giving/areas-support/funds/promise-and-practice/frequently-asked-questions>) for more information.

Our JRUUC Board of Trustees has voted to pledge to this campaign as a congregation, and our contributions will be matched if we pledge the equivalent of \$10 per member. **More information may also be found in the foyer, along with pledge forms, on the table under James Reeb’s picture.**

2018-19 Annual Budget Drive ABD Where are we going?

**We are thoughtful compassionate stewards
who commit our money toward building
community, working for justice, and
nurturing spirit.**

As of May 1st, we have 81 Financial Commitment Forms and about \$154K in pledges, which will make it difficult to draw up a budget. We would love for the last 12 or so households to return their completed FCFs.

If you need ABD information, please access the three parts of the mailing by going here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ci275j0WFvj153EqGjAr7LF3kbpJyBrX6eJVm3gaLV4/edit>



50/50 Raffle

It's that time of year again! Our annual 50/50 raffle is after the Congregational Meeting on May 20th. Ticket sales are on-going on Sundays before and after service up to and including the Congregational Meeting. The money raised from ticket sales (\$3 per ticket or 4 tickets for \$10) is split 50/50 between the winning ticket holder and JRUUC. In addition to the cash drawing, there will also be drawings for gift certificates to local restaurants. You do not need to be present to win.

Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday, May 20

Please join us following service May 20 for our annual congregational meeting. We will vote to approve our budget, elect officers and leadership, appreciate our volunteers, and most importantly, determine the winner of our annual 50/50 raffle! All are welcome to join, but only members may vote. Light snacks will be provided.



Briana Buhr leads the parade from Tenney Nursery to our new JRUUC home on Johnson Street.

25 Years: the story continues...

**In August 1994, it was time to move in at
our new address — 2146 E Johnson St.**

We hope the east side is ready for us, because *here we come!*

In 1994 the parade from Tenney Nursery and Parent Center to Fourth St was a chance to have fun and celebrate an exciting milestone.

In 1996, we listened to each other with patience and love and agreed to change our name to be more inclusive by changing it from “church” to “congregation.” A beautiful new sign, made by Earl Ferguson, truly made it home.

The glass case in the foyer features photos of the first service at “2146”. It wasn’t *quite* ready for occupancy. Check out how we made it work! And see the hanging of the new sign.

If you have photos of our community to share please contact Colleen O’Hara: ohara1945@gmail.com. To read more of our history or view the timeline visit jruuc.org/history.

*Celebrating 25 years of nurturing spirit,
working for justice, and building community.*

Collective Memory Project JRUUC Stories

This congregation began 25 years ago to serve Madison's east side and beyond. Lots to celebrate; lots to remember. We're hoping to share one minute (100 words) of JRUUC history each Sunday during the worship service. We envision mostly personal reminiscences of memorable moments along the way: nuggets or anecdotes that amuse, inform, or inspire. We can help edit for length if that's an issue, or provide a reader if you prefer not to read it yourself. We'll keep a copy for the archives. Do you have a JRUUC story you'd like to share? Contact Sarah Cook at sarah_cook@tds.net.

Financial Update

March 2018	Fiscal Year to Date
Income \$13,022	\$147,849
Expenses \$19,456	\$145,345

We see that our total income for the year so far was close to the expenses, but that there was a shortfall for the most recent month. This trend will surely continue for the remaining three months, resulting in a deficit for the year. We should not be surprised; our budgeted deficit was \$5,427. It is still too early to make a good prediction for our actual deficit, but I would guess that it would be somewhat larger than the budgeted amount because of a few one-time unexpected expenses (for example, a needed repair for our fire alarm system.) Budgeting accurately for unexpected items is simply impossible.

Do not panic! An annual deficit reduces the amount of our available cash, but on March 31 we had an impressive \$53,464 total cash, vastly more than any conceivable deficit. Rest assured that our Board of Trustees knows that in the long run we must maintain our average income above expenses. We have not done so for the past two years because we decided to fairly compensate our staff, contribute our fair share to the Unitarian Universalist Association and to our MidAmerica region, and support other worthy social causes in these trying times. We would be failing our moral duties if we let dollars prevent us from doing the right things when we actually have such abundance.

-- John Mathis, Treasurer



Soul Matters

Creativity

The Seven Traits of Creative People

By Deepak Chopra

Full reflection here:

<http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=426>

Excerpt:

As long as creation dominates your existence, you will keep growing and evolving. Evolution thwarts entropy, decay, and aging. The most creative people in any field intuitively draw on this understanding. They grow with the full consciousness that they are the source of their own power, and whatever their field, certain traits are generally shared by them.

1. They are able to contact and enjoy silence.
2. They connect with and enjoy Nature.
3. They trust their feelings.
4. They can remain centered and function amid confusion and chaos.
5. They are childlike – they enjoy fantasy and play.
6. They self-refer: They place the highest trust in their own consciousness
7. They are not rigidly attached to any point of view: Although passionately committed to their creativity, they remain open to new possibilities.

I have no name
Until you name me.
I have no form
Until you shape me.
I don't exist
Until you make me,
I am creativity.
I am waiting deep inside you
Touch my spark
And let me light you,
Give me life
And I'll revive you
I am creativity.

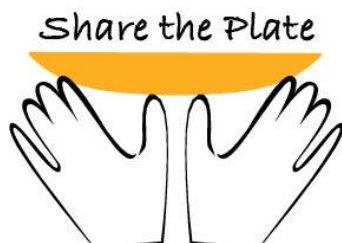
- Source:

<http://www.adaliaconfidenceandsuccessblog.com/2013/01/24/a-collection-of-creativity-poems/>

Justice at JRUUC

The Peace, Justice, & Sustainability Group (PJS)

This month, our meeting will be Monday, May 14. All are welcome to participate the second Monday of each month at 7 pm. Questions? Email Barbara Whitney at salbwhitney@gmail.com.



Recent Share the Plate Totals

Veterans for Peace	\$191.85
Dane Sanctuary Coalition	\$164.50
Free the 350 Bail Fund	\$385.00
The River Food Pantry	\$237.50

Wisconsin UU State Action Network (WUUSAN)

What is it, and should JRUUC join?

Over the last year, representatives from most of the UU congregations in WI have been meeting to form the Wisconsin UU State Action Network, or WUUSAN. Many other states have such networks, allowing the UU congregations to take collective action on issues of concern. For more info, see the website for MUUSJA, the very effective Minnesota Network: <http://www.muusja.org/>.

The Wisconsin group has recently developed a mission and vision statement (below) and by-laws and is now prepared for individual congregations to join. At this time we hope to have congregational dues relative to the number of members. These funds would help to hire a half-time coordinator. If JRUUC joins, we could initially cover dues through a Share-the-plate donation. If the Board of Trustees chooses to have a vote on JRUUC's membership in WUUSAN at our May congregational meeting, we will have several opportunities to learn more about it. In the meantime, if you have questions, see Kelly Kearns, Tim Cordon or Rev. Karen for more details.

Mission Statement: The Wisconsin Unitarian Universalist State Action Network aims to build a

statewide advocacy network employing the power of the collective voices of Unitarian Universalists in Wisconsin. We uphold the worth and dignity of every person while acting to further justice, equity, and compassion.

VISION STATEMENT

By 2022, the WI UU State Action Network will be a strong network of UUs and allies with a track record of:

- A. discussing social justice issues;
- B. collaborating on influencing public policy; and
- C. bringing about systemic change for those within our reach needing social justice in any form.

Adult Religious Exploration

Courageous Conversations on Culture

"White Supremacy Culture" has been in the news lately, both nationally and within the denomination. What does it even mean and reference? What choices do we have to better understand it – and ultimately create something more just?

Join Rev. Karen and members of our congregation and First Unitarian Society to reflect on and discuss the characteristics of White Supremacy Culture

Last class May 21, 7 - 8:30 pm will be preceded by a potluck.

Join the Wisconsin Poor People's Campaign Nonviolent Moral Fusion Direct Action Monday, May 14, 2 – 5 pm

WI State Capitol

Somebody's Hurting Our People: Child Poverty, Women, and People with Disabilities
March to demand a serious national examination of the enmeshed evils of systemic racism, systemic poverty, ecological devastation, and the war economy.

www.facebook.com/events/363351570833331/



Make it Happen! May Music at JRUC

We have exceptional creative diversity going on this month in music. According to Longfellow, and the rest of us fellows, it is “the universal language’ after all. Every culture has spawned creative output over new love, lost love, hushing the baby, remembering the dead, songs of joy and gratitude for the earth. Let music continue to bring us together toward deeper understanding and empathy.

Choir will kick off the first Sunday of the month themed Creativity with “Become the Sky,” a spacious, a paella piece by Alan Stringer. They will also present the hymn of the month, “The Oneness of Everything.” This is a long hymn that once you learn, may join the ranks of “Blue Boat,” and “Fire of Commitment”!

Coming Mother’s Day, you will hear Bobby McFerrin’s version of the 23rd Psalm, with a terrific vocal quartet and an offering of dance from local artist Kathleen Conklin.

May 20, don’t miss Iranian guest Adel Ardalan on **daf** and friend Kayvan on **kamānche**, along with local cellist Adam Scott presenting Persian music with the choir.

“Creativity is a wild mind, and a disciplined eye.”
—Dorothy Parker

Most people are creative! Many ideas spring up all the time, it’s the follow-through that is the hard part! Go out and make something different happen this month and have a great time while you’re doing it! Give change a chance to open your eyes and ears and mind, to some new thought, feeling or idea. You are going to love it.

-- Heather Yonker, Music Director



Administrator Thoughts

To be Creative

is to unleash the fire within
that at first simmers slowly
biding its time
until it can contain itself no more
To be Creative
is to watch the fire carefully
guarding its flame
until the day
when the roar needs to be heard
To be Creative
is to listen to the call of the fire
and release the fear
that it is strangled by
and surrender to joyfully watch it dance
- Source:

<http://www.adaliaconfidenceandsuccessblog.com/2013/01/24/a-collection-of-creativity-poems/>

Creativity! I have many creative ideas that are sparks of flame held back by fear. As in the above poem, I want to begin to “release the fear,” to ignore the gap between my vision and my hands can produce, and begin the work of creating the tangible part of the creative process.

Despite being drawn to the bright clarity of acrylic paints, I’ve been afraid to dip in a brush. But I’m putting that behind me and plan to sign up for a class through Wheelhouse Studios. How about you?

Yours in growing faith,
Elizabeth J. Barrett, Congregational Administrator





Save the Date:

Sunday, June 3

Special 25th Anniversary Service & Potluck Picnic

JRUUC held its first worship service as a congregation June 6, 1993. We didn't have a building to call our home at that point, so folks gathered each Sunday that summer at Lake Edge Park in Madison to worship.

To celebrate our 25th Anniversary this year, we will gather Sunday, June 3 in our Sanctuary for a special service, then head to Lake Edge Park (511 Park Ct, Madison, WI 53716) for a potluck picnic. Mark your calendars, and stay tuned for more details!

All are welcome, and we encourage everyone to invite family and friends, especially those with any connection to JRUUC in the past or present.

To learn more about JRUUC History, check out the rotating display in the foyer and listen for stories from the Collective Memory Project featured in each Sunday service this year. Please contact Stephani Pescitelli at stephanipescitelli51@gmail.com with any questions or suggestions.



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
June 20-24**

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, celebrate, sing, and make policy through democratic process.

This year's theme is **All Are Called**.

Go to: <https://www.uua.org/ga>



Brittany Packnett will deliver the Ware Lecture!

<https://www.uua.org/ga/program/highlights/ware-lecture>

And, as an added bonus, you can be there when our own Rev. Karen Armina is publicly acknowledged for having achieved Final Fellowship with the UUA, at the annual Service of the Living Tradition!

Go here to prepare for GA:

<https://www.uua.org/ga/prep>

General Assembly Orientation Webinar

Wednesday, June 13, 7 to 8:30 pm Madison time

<https://www.uua.org/central-east/events/webinars/webinar-general-assembly-orientation>



MidWest Leadership School July 15-21

MidWest Leadership School (MWLS) will be held from July 15 - 21 on the campus of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Please mark your calendars and spread the word!

There is an Adult School and a Youth School, and we are unique among UU leadership schools in that the schools are designed to do several activities together and safely interact.

MWLS creates opportunities to learn about the history of Unitarian Universalism, about yourself as an individual, and your role as a member of a congregation in a larger movement grounded in liberal theology. MWLS attendees come away from the experience with a better understanding of healthy organizational practices.

Is MWLS for you or someone you know? Anyone wishing to increase their leadership skills in a church context are encouraged to talk to us. Many incoming board members and presidents find this to be an excellent preparation for their service. Many youth enjoy being with like-minded peers, and the supportive environment enables them to help discern and activate their leadership passions.

Read more about MidWest Leadership School at www.mwls.org and follow us on Facebook for updates at <https://www.facebook.com/mwls.org>



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East Breeze is published monthly by James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation. To subscribe, unsubscribe, or change your mailing address, contact the newsletter editor (Elizabeth Barrett).

Newsletter submissions may be emailed to office@jruuc.org. The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month at 5 pm. Please put the word "newsletter" into the subject line of your message and limit articles to 200 words. Please be careful not to include sensitive information.

