

EAST BREEZE



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

Volume 27, Number 11 — November 2018

November theme: What does it mean to be a people of Memory?

“To acknowledge our ancestors means we are aware that we did not make ourselves.” – Alice Walker

Connections

My Dad was an airline mechanic, so my family flew to Germany for free every summer to visit the people my parents had left behind when they moved to the US. Once there, we used public transportation to get around the city where our closest relatives lived. An association began for me there – the smell of the diesel fuel used in buses will forever happily remind me of my Omi, the Seven Spires of Lübeck, and the best Marzipan on earth. It also reminds me of unhappier things I held during our trips – the loneliness of missing my Dad (who usually stayed home) and my friends, the wistfulness of seeing my birthday gifts on the tea table every year (because my birthday fell during the best time to travel), the strangeness of not being allowed to speak English (because it was neither polite nor politically correct), the fear of getting the grammar wrong (because German is hard!).

As I reflect on what takes me back, and to where it takes me, it strikes me that memory is a thing with its own volition. My association between smell and memory is beyond my will – I get a whiff and I’m immediately transported back to those childhood emotions that I couldn’t name. I’m grateful that I understand them now, and that I’m able to weave them with the rest of the stories that have made me who I am.

Whatever takes you back, and wherever it takes you, may you find a way to weave your stories that allows you to move toward peace and wholeness. May you find comfort when the memories are hard or traumatic. This month, I offer a new opportunity to seek healing in community – a Healing Circle on the first Wednesday. And I’m always available to talk privately.

In faith and love,
Karen

10 AM Sunday Services

11/4 “Remembrance Day”

The Rev. Karen Armina

Inspired by Samhain, Day of the Dead, and All Souls Day, this morning we will explore the relationships between love and loss, joy and grief. This multigenerational service will include a ritual of remembrance of our ancestors.

11/11 “Re-membering”

The Rev. Karen Armina

Memory is not just about holding on to the past – it’s about holding on to our core values. This can help us put ourselves back together when we feel broken, and it offers us something to absorb when we are broken open. Today, we gather to remember who we are.

11/18 “Visibility”

The Rev. Karen Armina

As part of our administration’s work to define and narrow who belongs in our nation, an effort to erase the existence of transgender people has begun. This morning, we’ll remember the beauty and joy of seeing and embracing difference, and we’ll acknowledge the lives and deaths of our trans siblings by marking International Transgender Day of Remembrance.

11/25 “The Great Story”

James Phillips

The Great Story is a telling of our evolutionary history as an amazing journey through deep time. Rev. Karen wrote this sermon some years ago, about

Charles Darwin's struggle with, and eventual acceptance of, the idea that species arose from what has come before.

Check-in question: What does it mean to you to acknowledge your ancestors?



Minister's Office Hours in November

Rev. Karen is in the office Thursdays from 10:30 am until 2:30 pm. She can also be found at Café Brittolli (formerly Café Zoma) on Tuesdays between 1:30 and 3:30 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!

There will be no scheduled office hours November 13 and 15, as Rev. Karen will be out of town for a ministers' study group. Ask her about what she learned about the connection between faith and freedom of speech when she returns!



Wednesday Evening Vespers Service and Healing Circle

November 7 at 7 pm and 8 pm

Join Rev. Karen for a quiet service of reflection at 7:00. Stay after the service or come at 8:00 for a time dedicated to helping each other find healing amidst the onslaught of triggering events in our local and national news. All are welcome.



President's Column

What does the Board of Trustees do? Part 1

Our current shared leadership structure at JRUUC is based on the book *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership* by Dan Hotchkiss. Dan is a Unitarian Universalist Minister and consultant. Our congregation started to move into his model of Policy Governance about five years ago. The model is three-fold: Governance by Partnership, Governance by Conversation and Governance by Policy.

Governance by Partnership is about maintaining a positive and constructive relationship between the board and the minister. We are clear about our expectations and boundaries. We know what **are governance (board) committees** that report to the BOT, and what are **ministry teams** that report to the minister and the committee on shared ministry.

Governance by Conversation is about how the board does not work in isolation. We as a church community are usually working on one or two-yearlong congregational "big questions" like our role in the New Sanctuary movement and Dane Sanctuary Coalition or this year – revisiting our JRUUC mission statement. Other than these "big questions," teams and committees are delegated authority from the board to do specific work, given a budget and/or supported guidance, and held accountable to do the work set out for them in their written charge. The BOT is generally hands-off the details.

Governance by Policy is how the board and congregation controls decisions made over time. Anything that is not a one-time decision is explicitly written down and collected in a policy book. We have guidelines for how teams and committees

spend their budgets and submit an overspend request if necessary. We have charges for standing teams and committees, and written guidelines for temporary task forces. It might not all be organized all the time, but that's the goal.

Board meetings are always open if you would like to attend as a witness. We meet on the third Wednesday each month from 6 - 8 pm at JRUC. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Peace.
Jocie



Financial Update

	September 2018	Year to date
Income	\$12,281	\$42,509
Expenses	\$18,380	\$47,244

Our expenses for the first quarter of the 2018-19 fiscal year (July 1 to September 30) were \$4,663 more than our income of \$42,509, but that cannot be expected to continue throughout the year. Many expenses come in irregularly. However, we passed an annual budget in May with a deficit of \$5,571, so we must realize that we need to eventually improve our finances, very possibly through improving our rental income. We have enough cash to cover these deficits: \$39,109 on September 30, including our reserves for Emergency/Opportunities (\$3,844), Major Building Maintenance (\$3,142), and Sabbatical Expenses (\$750, to be increased to \$1,250 this year).

We can face the future with confidence while realizing that we have a fiscal challenge before us. I think that we would not be serving our obligations to each other and to our staff, building, and community if we were not courageous in funding operations that we feel are right.

With best wishes,
John Mathis, Treasurer



Amelia Soth and Ruth Flanagan sharing their story on Water Communion Sunday.

25 Years: the story continues...

Who are we ... *Builders of Community*

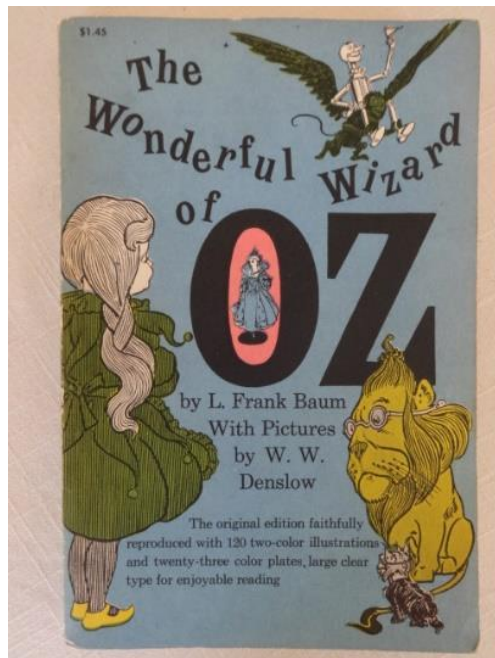
Rituals and traditions are one of the ways that we build beloved community.

At JRUC we have many traditions. As we celebrate our 25 years of community, let's remind ourselves of traditions and rituals that are special to us. Check out the photos in the glass case this month.

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.*





The Wizard of Oz Reeb Rave Saturday, November 17

Beginning at 5 pm with dinner

Our Annual Auction Dinner, Party,
& major fundraiser needs your donations
To get to the Emerald City and our goal
of raising \$8,000 in donation items!

<https://www.auctria.com/auction/TheWizardofOz>

Contact Tom McClintock,
tom.mcclintock@wisc.edu

Calling All Book Lovers

Our JRUUC library is in need of some organization and care. We have lots of resources on a wide range of topics: Unitarian Universalism and other world religions, theology and spiritual practice, race studies and queer studies and gender studies, societal issues, parenting, education, works for children -- and we'd like a couple of book-loving humans to take charge of sorting them and making them more visible and available to our congregation. Please contact Rev. Karen if you're interested in this.



Soul Matters Memory

We are well advised to keep on nodding terms with the people we used to be, whether we find them attractive company or not. Otherwise they turn up unannounced and surprise us, come hammering on the mind's door at 4 am of a bad night and demand to know who deserted them.

-- Joan Didion from "On Keeping a notebook" in
Slouching Towards Bethlehem

All that we have ever loved
And all that we have ever been
Stands with us on the edge
Of all that we aspire to create:
A deeper peace,
A larger love,
A more embracing hope,
A deeper joy in this life we share.
-- The Rev. Leslie Takahashi

Justice at JRUUC



**Courage for Racial Justice/ Courage for
Collective Liberation with Chris Crass**
Saturday, November 10 from 9 am to 2 pm
Come and be part of a transformative day of learning and dialogue, sponsored by Groundwork, JRUUC, and other area congregations! Chris Crass is a UU father, organizer, educator, and national speaker who has worked extensively with various faith

communities. His work is dedicated to bringing powerful working-class based feminist multi-racial movements for collective liberation. His talks and workshops focus on themes of anti-racism, social justice organizing, feminism for men, creating healthy activist culture, and spiritually grounded leadership for liberation. Doors open at 8:30 am at Fountain of Life Church on Badger Road 633 W Badger Rd, Madison, WI 53713. Please pay at the door -- costs are on sliding scale of \$20-30 for adults, \$15 for students (no one will be turned away for lack of funds), and include lunch.

The PJS meet Thursday, November 15

Join the Peace, Justice, and Sustainability group from 7 - 8:30 pm for our November meeting. Contact Beth Esser, 608-239-1353, beth_esser@hotmail.com with questions.

November Sustainable Saturday Night

We will gather November 24.

Potluck at 6 pm, Program at 7 pm.

SSN takes a break in December.

Adult Learning and Reflecting

Covenant Café – a less formal way to gather and talk through some of life's big questions – will happen at **Barriques Atwood Thursday, November 8 beginning at 7 pm**. Join Matt Finesilver for a lively discussion on this month's theme, memory.

Adult Religious Exploration

The discussion sessions on *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Environment*, edited by Manish Mishra-Marzetti and Jennifer Nordstrom, began October 30. The second session will be held Thursday, November 20 at 7 pm.



Music: All My Memories of Love

Get into formation for a tender November.

Something tells the wild geese. What speaks to you? The scent of wet leaves, the smell of smoke, the changes of earthly colors, and the effect of the changing light upon them? A whirling circle of leaves can transport me instantly to a fall moment when a true love said goodbye. We smiled and cried at the same time, suspending us in a protective circle for a moment. Stark black tree trunks in the changing light call the secret filmmaker in me and my eyes suddenly see sharper lines and so much beauty. More quality, less quantity, internally and externally!

Up and down the stairs we go now, with the changing of the guard for sweaters and boots and candles. Is it muscle memory, sensory memory, or instinct? **We begin again in love**, the rituals of the season, perhaps homage to a loved one, or someone you admire during El Dia de los Muertos or in preparing "All My Memories of Love," #336, our hymn of the month, set to a Solemnnes plainsong melody, similar to chant, possibly from St. Cecilia's Abby (Benedictine monastery in Solemnnes, France). The text is by Anna Akhmatova (born Anna Andreyevna Gorenko. 1888-1966).

All my memories of love hang upon high stars.
All the souls I've lost to tears now the autumn jars,
And the air around me here thickens with their
song,
Sing again, their nameless tunes, sing again, and
strong!

Russian poet, Akhmatova's writing, is brilliantly stark. Perhaps her noble lineage combined with living amidst Stalin's persecution contributed to her distinct efficiency of just the right words, with an insider's perspective on persecution and internal conflict.

Excerpt from “The Return” by Anna Akhmatova

The souls of all my dears have flown to the stars.
Thank God there’s no one left for me to lose—
so I am free to cry. This air is made
for the echoing of songs.

You can listen to more of Anna’s works recited
here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=267&v=vchOX6LGekI

Film: *Moine au Coeur de l’ Eglise*, 2009. A French
Documentary about the tradition of chant at St.
Cecilia’s Monastery.

Music Director’s Picks for Memory theme

The recent remake of *A Star Is Born* called up
Streisand’s “Memories,” and Barbra’s influence in
my own music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBPQT2Ia8fU>

Sweet Honey in the Rock “Wanting Memories”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vW2TpW4gCt8>

Elvis: “Memories”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfaWK291Fr0>

Carrie Underwood: “Whenever You Remember”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpvQU9-bkgI>

Alan Jackson: “www.Memory”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3WDU273Gzs>

Fall Out Boy: “Thanks for the Memories”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onzL0EM1pKY>



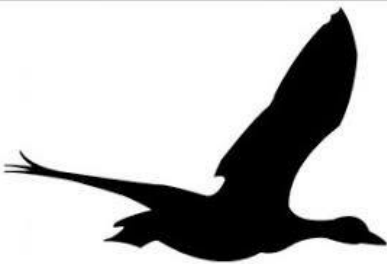
Administrator’s Thoughts

Memory! This month’s theme has me thinking
about my brother Joe, who is two years older than I.
Back in 2001, he fell off his bicycle, sustaining a
mild traumatic brain injury. Thank god he was
wearing a helmet! Joe was in a Massachusetts
hospital for a scary few days with amnesia. He
couldn’t remember which state he lived in (Rhode
Island? No -- New Hampshire) and every time he
saw his face in a mirror he wondered whether he
had been in an accident. I brought him back to
Madison for his recovery and had the same dinner
conversation every evening for a week at a time.

Joe slowly got better and his memory began to
return, but he was a slow thinker for a number of
years and couldn’t keep track of a conversation
involving more than two people. But this story has a
happy ending – my brother recently visited my
younger sister, my mother, and me and
demonstrated a complete recovery. My smart and
insightful brother is back, thanks to brain plasticity,
which means my memory of his injury is no longer
at all painful. Instead, it’s a joyful memory.

Yours in growing faith,

Elizabeth Barrett, Congregational Administrator



So fly bird, fly!

Heather Yonker, Music Director, JRUUC

SOMETIMES
memories
sneak out of my
& eyes
roll down
my cheeks



Love Does Not Disappear

By Elea Kemler October 31, 2018

"Mysterious Source of Love, moving within and between and among us; upholding and connecting all: the living, the dead, and the generations yet to come. We give thanks for the web of all creation, strands interwoven. And for the gifts of love, which can never be ungiven or unraveled."

—Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

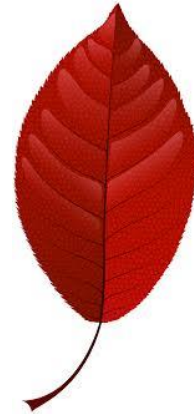
In the eighteen years I've served as minister of my small-town congregation, I have led 96 memorial services, most for people I have loved. I didn't realize how much the deaths would hurt. The longer I stay, the deeper I love and the more I grieve. This seems so obvious, but I was surprised by it. Another surprise has been how our beloved dead seem to make themselves known; how they seem to linger with us for a little while.

Once, after a memorial service, everyone left the church and gathered on the sidewalk in the sunlight of a still, summer afternoon. As we stood there, a huge gust of wind blew down the street. We could see it coming, almost like a tumbleweed. For maybe five seconds, the wind was all around us and over us. We turned and watched the gust blow down the street and then it was completely still again. "There she goes," someone said.

Another time, I was about to lead the memorial service for a man who shared a love of butterflies with his wife. Their home was filled with images of butterflies and we had put a photo of one on the program. As I stood at the church door, a huge orange and black butterfly flew near. It circled me three times, above my head, around my shoulders, at my knees and then flew away. When I told his wife about it, she nodded. "Butterflies have been all around me since he died," she said.

Last spring a beloved elder died who believed he would be reincarnated as a red-tailed hawk. I told the congregation about his death at Sunday morning services. I had taped a picture of a red-tailed hawk on the front pew where he always sat. Several people told me that as I was making the announcement, they were looking out the sanctuary windows and saw a large hawk soaring above the church.

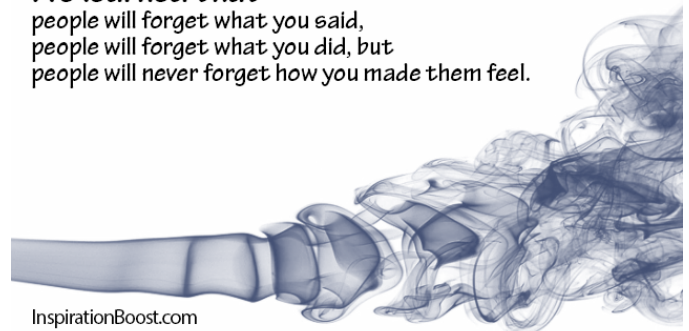
Over the years I've heard many stories – stories about dragonflies and rainbows and love songs coming on the radio at just the right moment. Maybe it is just coincidence. Maybe we're looking for signs so we find them. But maybe those we love are nearer to us than we realize. Maybe love is vaster than the limits of our understanding. I believe that it is.



MAYA ANGELOU

I've learned that

people will forget what you said,
people will forget what you did, but
people will never forget how you made them feel.



InspirationBoost.com

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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).
- ❖ Newsletter submissions may be emailed to office@jruuc.org. The **deadline for submissions** is the 20th of the month at 5 pm. Please limit articles to 200 words. Please be careful not to include sensitive information.
- ❖ Read *East Breeze* online at www.jruuc.org.

Religious Education (RE) & Childcare: Childcare & Children's RE are available most worship services.

*Karen Armina takes Mondays off and reserves Fridays for sermon-writing.