

EAST BREEZE



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

Volume 28, Number 5 — May 2019

May theme: What does it mean to be a people of curiosity?

“In the mind of the beginner there are many possibilities, in the mind of the expert there are few.” -- Shunryu Suzuki

Check-in question: As you get older, are you more curious, or less?

Connections

Curiosity has been like the tap root of my personal “tree of knowledge.” It has been the basis for my ecological research, as the practice of noticing something and then wondering about it is the starting point for all science. This is curiosity about how the world works. Curiosity about others has been a starting point for many of my relationships; wondering how someone else thinks or feels about something draws me toward them. And then there’s curiosity about meaning, which has been the basis for my spiritual journey; my wondering about what I call God and my connection to it serves to widen my theological resources. As a tap root, I envision my curiosity as constantly digging deeper into its surroundings, seeking new sources of nourishment while serving to stabilize my ever-growing trunk and canopy – the parts of me that I get to let those around me see and interact with.

This may not feel, at first, like a theme to explore in a religious setting. But when we widen the lens of our question in reflection on what it means to be a people of curiosity, we can start to feel how our community embodies these ideas. When we’re curious about the world around us, we can find that we’re also seeking to understand our place in it. When we’re curious about each other, we can open up to possibilities that might be inaccessible if we’re sure we know who they are. The wisdom we find together builds as we grow relationships in the medium of wondering. And when, as a faith community, we ground in an attitude of curiosity, we develop tools like compassion and empathy, which help us build community that is more inviting, more inclusive, and more relational. This is holy work.

What are you curious about? And how has that curiosity served you?

In faith and love, Karen

10 AM Sunday Services

5/5 “May the Fourth Be With You”

The Rev. Karen Armina

Many elements of popular Sci Fi works have theological or spiritual undertones. This morning, in a multigenerational service, we’ll be curious together about science fiction as a source of wisdom.

5/12 “How’s That Cat Doing?”

The Rev. Karen Armina

The adage says that curiosity killed the cat. Katie Berardo writes that “what really got him in trouble was his inability to deal with the new situation he was in.” This morning, we’ll explore the role of curiosity in adaptability.

5/19 “Never Too Late”

The Rev. Karen Armina

Sometimes we find ourselves in a state of disconnection. This morning, we’ll explore the role of curiosity in finding our way back.

5/26 “Question Box”

The Rev. Karen Armina

What are you curious about? What questions do you have for Rev. Karen – theological, spiritual, personal, ethical, philosophical, or religious? Rev. Karen will collect written questions and offer her responses during the service.

Memorial Service for Ann Maffet

Saturday, May 4 at 2 pm

All are invited to attend this special service to honor Annie's life and her time with us. Rev. Karen will officiate, and there will be time for us to share our memories.

Celebration of the Life of James Phillips

Wednesday, May 29 at 6:30 pm

All are invited to attend this special service to remember James with love and care. There will be time for us to share our memories, but if you'd like to offer something beyond that (a particular reading or piece of music, for example), please let Rev. Karen know ahead of time.

James' wife, Mary, has created an online obituary here (<https://www.tributes.com/4aFvREryD>). Please visit and offer a condolence or memory in the guestbook. Mary would love to hear from us.

Minister's Availability in May

Tuesdays: Rev. Karen can be found at Café Brittolli (formerly Café Zoma) between 1:30 and 3:30 pm.

Thursdays: Rev. Karen is in the office at JRUUC from 11:30 am until 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!

Roy Zimmerman Concert

RiZe Up Sunday, May 5 at 7:30 pm

Roy Zimmerman's signature blend of heart and hilarity has never been more necessary. His concerts are funny and forceful expression of resistance.

"Satire empowers people," says Roy. "To laugh is to fight back. To hope is to fight back."

J.R. Java, Jive & Jam Coffeehouse & Open Mic Friday, May 10 at 7 pm

In celebration of our generosity in the most recent Annual budget drive, and our spirit of abundance and generosity, the Stewardship Team invites you to a coffee-house, open-mid and talent-show! Bring your musical instruments and most of all your precious selves to JRUUC May 10! Coffee and homemade desserts will be provided.



President's Column

The annual JRUUC congregational meeting is "the main event" for governance, setting our congregation up for a healthy fiscal church year and a full Board of Trustees. It is also the best time for voting on bylaw changes, congregational resolutions, calling a minister, or anything else requiring a congregational vote.

Here are some relevant sections of our bylaws:

V. Meetings. The congregation shall have an annual meeting for elections and approval of the annual budget the third weekend of May. Special congregational meetings may be called upon petition of one-tenth of the current members, and when the Board determines. Ten days' written notice of all meetings shall be given. A quorum is one-quarter of the current members, but not more than fifty. Proxies are not permitted. The purchase and sale of real estate and any change in the congregation's principal worship site requires congregational approval.

And-

6.3 Each year the congregation shall choose a President-elect who serves in that position for one year and succeeds to President for the following year.

6.4 The congregation shall elect the Secretary, Treasurer, and at-large Board members to 2-year terms on the following schedule:

- (a) In even-numbered years, the Secretary and 1 at-large member.
- (b) In odd-numbered years, the Treasurer and 2 at-large members.

This year at our congregational meeting Sunday, May 19, we will vote on a proposed 2019-2020 budget, a new congregational Mission Statement, a slate of candidates for the board (President-elect, Treasurer, and two at-large board members) and three members of the Nominating Committee. Our continuing board members will be President Bev Buhr, Secretary Thomas Lund, and at-large member Jean Skinner.

We have also incorporated a volunteer recognition practice and the Art Hackett “Above and Beyond” award presentation. After the official meeting is adjourned, there is a 50/50 raffle drawing from the Fundraising Team and as an added incentive to come to the congregational meeting. I hope to see you all Sunday, May 19!

Peace
-Jocie

Membership News



Jaqueline, Danielle, Eddie, Marie, Stacey, Matt, & Elaine

Congratulations to our new members – Jacqueline Goldstein, Danielle Ellen (with son Eddie), Marie VandeBerg & Stacey Miller, and Matt & Elaine Morrison.



Annual Raffle Tickets

The Fun(d) Raising Committee is selling raffle tickets before and after service every Sunday through May 19, \$3 each or 4 for \$10.

The raffle grand prize winner will get 50% of the proceeds. In addition to the grand prize, gift certificates to local restaurants will also be raffled.

What a fun way to support Reeb!

Financial Update

March 2019 Year to date

Income	\$14,841	\$150,816
Expenses	\$16,900	\$133,695

The important fact is that our income is well ahead of our expenses. I expect us to finish the fiscal year with a small *surplus*, in contrast to our budgeted *deficit* of \$5571. How can this nice situation come about? Because of the hard work of Rev. Karen Armina and several devoted congregants, who are managing the Religious Education program without help from its budgeted director. I sincerely thank them and hope that we can find a way to fully fund that important position.

Another factor contributing to our good financial position is our committees underspending their monthly budgets. Please don't feel compelled to use your own funds for Reeb programs unless you truly want to do so. If that's the way you feel, many thanks!

With best wishes,
John Mathis

Mission Statement Musings

Without further ado, we present the proposed new JRUUC mission statement:

We are a faith community rooted in Unitarian Universalist principles, called by love to welcome the seeker, cultivate relationship, nurture spiritual wholeness, and grow justice in the world.

We thank our Refinement Team, Sarah Cook and Colleen O'Hara, for listening attentively to the congregation and for the time and care they have approached this work with.

The process to revise our mission statement, which serves to both inwardly guide our ministry work and outwardly to briefly tell people about JRUUC, began last May. Here is a quick recap of the "Mission 25.1" timeline:

- May 2018 annual congregational meeting – BOT announces mission statement will be revisited
- September 23 – Worship kickoff
- October 20 – Congregational workshop & Refinement Team creation (open to all, thanks to Sarah Cook and Colleen O'Hara who volunteered)
- November 4 – Second "mini" congregational workshop & Google form for written input offered
- December newsletter – First draft released
- Throughout January – Four cottage feedback meetings held
- March newsletter – Second draft released

- March 10 & 13 – Congregational feedback meetings held

We're excited that we're now in our final steps of reviewing the above mission statement and voting at our May 19 annual congregational meeting for possible adoption! As we have done throughout the process, we will respect the Refinement Team's role of having listened to what the congregation has said since October. Although all individual perspectives may not be fully reflected in the language, the Refinement Team has heard all participants' perspectives and incorporated them to create a statement that reflects who we are and what we are here for, as a whole.

When the mission statement is brought up for a vote on May 19, we will invite conversation on whether we will adopt the above statement as written (please note we will not offer any more revisions). Because this statement is to be reflective of our congregation as a whole, the Board of Trustees has decided that a **supermajority vote of three-quarters of the voting members present at the meeting will be required to adopt it. If the statement does not pass, the Process Team and the Board will consult on possible next steps.**

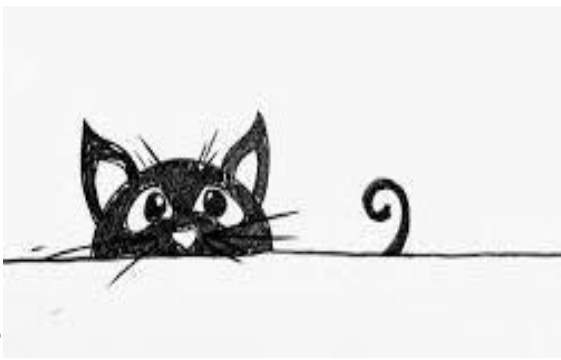
Finally, we thank all of you for participating in the process.

We look forward to May 19 – please join us!

Article submitted by Mission Statement Process Team (Rev. Karen, Beth Esser, Sarah Hallas, and Jean Skinner)



Curious?



May Music

“Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?”

I am a wonderer. Frequently. One of my extra moms was known to say, “Heather is very curious.” I assume this was in response to something I can’t remember, like someone thought I had too many irons in the fire, or perhaps thought I was wandering around too much, chasing impossible dreams, that weren’t always impossible. Or maybe it was in fact, a big compliment! It hasn’t killed me. Yet. I haven’t grown out of it. Have you?

“The Case for Curiosity” (TED talk) by Mario Livio (reserve 20 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1102&v=Z_ojyXVVFKA

A celebration of curiosity as the most human and maybe most precious “hunger” that exists. *“Curiosity is the best remedy for fear.”*

Thank you JRUUC choir, Reverend Karen, and Stephani Pescitelli for being curious and open to the possibilities surrounding our presentation of “Returning to the Root” last month. It was a milestone achievement, and very well received. I hope that the practice will stay with you in some way, and contribute to your sense of grounding and self, even if it is just a reminder to seek out that place. You know the one.

“Being a Person of Curiosity” by Rev. Ellen Quaadgras

<https://www.westminsteruu.org/services/being-a-person-of-curiosity/>

If you’re curious about joining the choir, please contact me: music@jruuc.org

“How can I both attend to the things that can be done “perfectly”, that can be “solved” – things that, when doing them, feel like standing on safe and solid ground.... how do I balance that with simply being willing to witness, allow things to unfold, to not know, and be curious? Maybe what my friend was saying was simply:

I wish you could tell that there is room for you – maybe there’s more safety and more room for you, than you can tell. Or maybe that’s my wish for you – for all of us. Life is challenging. Things get hard. We get anxious, we get frustrated, we get tense. How can I, how can we, find that childlike place – where we know we’re going to stumble while we learn, but **trust** in an unfolding future?”

#297 “The Star of Truth,” **Hymn of the month** by Dede Duson and John Andrew Storey

The star of truth but dimly shines behind the veiling clouds of night,
but ev’ry searching eye divines some partial glimmer of its light.

The certainty for which we crave no mortal ones can ever know;
uncharted waters we must brave, and face whatever winds may blow.

Though for safe harbor we may long, we must not let our courage fail,
and, though the winds of doubt blow strong, upon the trackless ocean sail.

From honest doubt we shall not flee, nor fetter the inquiring mind,
for where the hearts of all are free, a truer faith we there shall find.

Check out this fun trip with Mr. Rogers!

“Garden of Your Mind,” A visual or audio meditation. Mister Rogers Remixed! (3:13)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFzXaFbxDcM&fbclid=IwAR0uoa4AupE_8LNCVW5XbjJ8yvKaAkepRbFWK10-0kMP3KeZOuIuo2vsWE0

“Starry Starry Night” by Don McLean

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

- Heather Yonker, Music Director

Justice at JRUUC

Thanks to Reeb members and friends, our **2018-2019 Share the Plate** initiative has done very well! Kelly Kearns, Joan Kemble, and the rest of the PJS work to choose recipients. Here are the bi-weekly totals from July 8, 2018 through April 21, 2019:

Building Unity	\$240.00
Healing House, MUM	\$136.40
Social Justice Center	\$184.00
Freedom, Inc.	\$207.50
Wisconsin Worker Justice	\$228.10
OutReach	\$192.00
Dane Co. Immigrants Assistance Fund	\$160.75
MOSES Yearbook	\$237.80
Goodman Center Thanksgiving Baskets	\$230.84
Freedom, Inc. Holiday Project	\$272.00
Community Immigration Law Center	\$336.35
Healthy Food for All	\$159.70
Sacred Fire UU	\$185.28
WI Network for Peace, Justice & Sustainability	\$192.00
Social Justice Center	\$206.91
Options in Community Living	\$198.00
Latinx Student Union of East High School	\$214.00
Operation Fresh Start	\$223.88
Catfish River 4-H Club	\$209.00
Zao MKE Church	\$199.84

Share the Plate Total so far is: \$4,214.35

Sustainable Saturday Night, May 25 Truax Air National Guard Base and the Poisoning of Our Drinking Water

6 pm – Community Meal

7 pm – Program and Community Discussion

For more information, contact Tom Boswell at tomboswell2002@yahoo.com.

The Peace, Justice and Sustainability group will meet Tuesday, May 28 at 7 pm in the youth room. Anyone interested in working on such issues is encouraged to attend. Contact Beth Esser at beth_esser@hotmail.com.

Religious Education for Children and Youth

Our listening sessions have ended – many thanks to everyone who offered their time and energy to attend a session or provide their input online! Tracy Beck, our RE consultant, will provide us a report around mid-May, that contains her observations and some recommendations for our program. The transition team will make that report available to all once we’ve received it, and begin creating a program that reflects our desires for our young people, our values, and our mission, including creating a job description for a professional religious educator. **In the meantime, please contact Rev. Karen if you’re interested in teaching a class or providing nursery care.**

Adult Learning and Reflecting

Covenant Café – a less formal way to gather and talk through some of life's big questions – will be held **Thursday, May 9 beginning at 7 pm**. Join Matt Finesilver at Barriques on Atwood for a lively discussion on this month's theme, curiosity.

Administrator's Thoughts

As some of you know, I plan to resign as your Congregational Administrator at the end of this month – Friday, May 31. I've been experiencing health problems and decided (in conjunction with my primary care doctor) that I need to stop working for an extended period in order to get well. I also have an aging mother who needs more care now.

JRUUC is a great place to work because of the kindness, compassion, and strength of its members, friends, and staff. Thanks for being such creative and resourceful people! You inspire me!

I wish you all the best in the future.

Yours in growing faith,
Elizabeth Barrett, Congregational Administrator

Save the date



JRUUC Campout at Lake Farm Park!

**Saturday afternoon, September 14
through Sunday morning, September 15**
Join Reeb members and friends at the group campground at Lake Farm Park. Stay the whole time or just come for dinner Saturday.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Our Wider UU World

General Assembly of Congregations, June 2019
Wednesday evening, June 19 through
Sunday morning, June 23

What do we want Unitarian Universalism to be? It is a time when we are asking big questions in our faith, and GA 2019 will be focused on digging into those questions together. It is a critical chance for congregational leaders and passionate UUs to set new goals and aspirations for our religious community. Help begin to reshape our Association and our congregations in new and powerful ways. This year's theme is about collective power, "The Power of We," as well as the possibility, the purpose, the struggle and the joy of what it means to be together in faithful community. In the past two years, Unitarian Universalism has recommitted to the work of liberation inside and outside our faith community. The antidote to a time of dangerous dehumanization is a love that connects us to our deeper humanity.

Come to Spokane to experience what our shared faith can become when we embrace the Power of We. Or sign up as an online delegate, as Rev. Karen is doing this year, and attend meetings and workshops from wherever you are.

See here:

(<https://www.uua.org/ga/program/highlights>) for program highlights, and here (<https://www.uua.org/ga/program/business-agenda>) for information on the GA agenda, including a proposed statement of conscience on "Our Democracy Uncorrupted."

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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.