Sundays in February

The theme for February is Widening the Circle

“It is no longer appropriate to think only in terms of even my nation or my country, let alone my village. If we are to overcome the problems we face, we need what I have called a sense of universal responsibility rooted in love and kindness for our human brothers and sisters. In our present state of affairs, the very survival of humankind depends on people developing concern for the whole of humanity, not just their own community or nation. . .”

—Joanna Macy

Sunday, February 6
Kir Zecher, Worship Associate
“Side With Love Sunday”

A virtual service hosted by the Side with Love, a national UU justice campaign. Join us for stirring music, deep-hearted reflection, and moving testimonies from Unitarian Universalist leaders around the nation (including a Time for All Ages led by Lauren Wyeth, who has roots here at USSB and now serves as Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis).

Sunday, February 13
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“All Kinds of Love Sunday”

A Valentine’s Day service where we recognize that love comes into our lives from many places: The love of friends and family and romantic partners, love of lofty ideals and love of the earth and all living things, the love of life itself. In poetry and music, we will explore how love sustains us in all its myriad forms. May the light of Love shine upon us!

Sunday, February 20
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“The Martineau Window & Radical Dissent”

Continuing our conversation about the names on the windows in our physical Sanctuary, we turn toward Harriet and James Martineau, siblings from England and leaders in the British Unitarian movement of the mid-1800s. Harriet was a social theorist and author who defied the expectations of her gender, and James was a Unitarian minister and theologian who pushed the boundaries of liberal religious thought. What does it mean to live up to their legacy of dissent?

Sunday, February 27
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“Mardi Gras for All Y’all”

Mardi Gras (Tuesday, March 1) marks the end of Carnival season and the beginning of Lent. It’s a party with a place for everyone. How do joy, celebration, and the spirit of carnival help us “widen the circle” of community?
**Board Corner**

Will You Be Our Valentine?

Roses are red,  
violets are blue,  
the annual survey is coming  
and we’re counting on you!

Why are we counting on you? For yet another year, we have had little opportunity to be together in person. But the mission of our congregation has continued virtually unabated. Perhaps more than ever, we need to learn your thoughts and feelings about USSB the past 12 months (anonymously, if you like). When we present the compiled and charted results at the Annual Meeting, you will have a chance to see and hear how the community as a whole is experiencing our six Ends:

**LIVING WITH INTEGRITY, WE:**
- 1. Support each other in life and life’s transitions with loving care, joy, celebration and gratitude.
- 2. Care for the earth and its rich web of life for current and future generations.

**NURTURING WONDER, WE:**
- 3. Experience the transcendent that opens us to deep connection and life’s mystery.
- 4. Cultivate spiritual practices and engage in lifelong learning, utilizing our hearts and minds.

**INSPIRING ACTION, WE:**
- 5. Shift the larger culture toward justice and compassion through bold individual and congregational endeavors.
- 6. Welcome and connect with people across differences of ethnicity, class, sexual identity, religion, politics and education

And if you like to make New Year’s resolutions, please consider adding this one: “In 2022, I resolve to participate in the USSB annual survey!”

— Judy Farris and your USSB board of trustees

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**DRE Office Hours**

**Wednesdays 5:00 to 7:00 PM**  
**Thursdays 9:00 to 11:00 AM**

Do you have questions about Religious Education programming for children, youth, or adults? Do you need help enrolling in a class or finding a good fit for an adult affinity group? Do you have an idea for an Adult RE class or group? With virtual worship services and programs, it can feel harder to get connected. Our Director of Religious Education, Charla Bregante, is here to help. Go here to schedule a phone, Zoom, or — when safe — an in-person appointment:

https://calendly.com/charla-ussb/dre-office-hours
"What is ultimately compelling for our children in helping them conjure images of a future for themselves is our willingness to walk with them as they do it."

—Father Greg Boyle

We have a couple of very young children in our congregation who were born during the Covid-19 pandemic. Their young lives have been defined, in part, by the shifting ground we have all been standing on for almost two years. Think of it: Though we hold these children in our hearts, they have not had the experience of – literally – being held by this congregation at coffee hour or potlucks. Masked adults and older children are perfectly normal to them. They have missed out on so many smiles and hugs.

Here at USSB we began inviting children back for in-person religious education over the summer. We were outside and masked, but we were together and it was good. Beginning in March — Omicron willing — we will invite children to begin Sunday services in the sanctuary again to enjoy a story and music in the company of the adults in our congregation in a time for ALL ages.

As you begin to see the children more regularly on Sundays, take note of how much they have grown in the past two years! Who are the familiar faces? Who might be new? And ask yourself if you have something to share with them. It could be as simple as a warm greeting or putting a new children’s book in our Little Free Library. But it could also be more. Our children need adults to walk with them as we all stumble out of this pandemic. There are many ways to take that first step. Contact me and we’ll find the right way for you. The time for all ages is now.

Engaging With This Loving Community of Seekers

Has the USSB community felt a bit, well, remote this past month? Do you miss coffee hour conversations? Consider joining a small group. Although many are still virtual, these groups provide an opportunity for deeper connections and conversations.

• **Connection Circles:** These small groups meet twice a month to reflect on a particular theme, using a practice of deep, respectful sharing and listening.
• **Journaling Hour:** Explore journaling as a spiritual practice in the comfort of your own home, and in the company of other writers. Meets Tuesday evenings 7:00 to 8:00 pm on Zoom.
• **Midweek Meditation:** Join a guided midweek meditation to help get you through the week. Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:15 pm. Beginners welcome.
• **Justice & Equity Team:** Every Friday morning from 10:00 to 11:00 am this group comes together online to share resource and organize for action on a variety of social justice issues.
• **Why Were We (U)Us?:** This monthly Zoom group for young adults explores issues and themes common to folks in the early years of their adult lives. Meets the second Sunday of each month at 7:00 pm.
• **Parent Circle:** An online opportunity for RE parents can get to know each other, support each other, and share ideas about what it means to raise children in a Unitarian Universalist framework in an ever changing and complicated world. Meets the first Wednesday of the month from 7:00 to 8:00 pm.

For information about joining any of these groups, visit the USSB website or contact DRE Charla Bregante at charla@ussb.org.

In Faith,
Charla Bregante
Director of Religious Education
charla@ussb.org

Join USSB at the Starting Point
Tuesdays, March 1 & March 8 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Are you new to the Unitarian Society? Or perhaps you’ve been here for a little while, but want to explore membership and meet some new people? This two-session class is for you! Join Rev. Julia and DRE Charla Bregante to dive into a little UU theology, learn a little UU history, share some of your own journey, and connect with others as we explore what it means to be a part of this congregation. This class will take place both in-person and online, whichever works best for you!

Register online: https://tinyurl.com/USSBSpringClass

We Are a Caring Congregation

The Care Team is in the process of updating its list of members who have in the past volunteered to give rides, provide meals, grocery shop, or act as a handy helper. If anyone in the congregation would like to volunteer for any of these opportunities to help, or if you’re on the list and can no longer provide these services, please contact Judy Fontana at judithannfontana@yahoo.com. If you have any questions or concerns, please just let me know.

Judy Fontana
Care Team Member

Volunteers Needed On Zoom
One Sunday a Month

We are looking for five volunteers to assist us with Zoom on Sunday mornings. You will chat with members and visitors, learn the basics of Zoom, and receive support from our staff team. Gain new Zoom skills with a warm and friendly group. You only need to commit to one Sunday per month. (But you can do more if you find you like it!) Email Erin Wilson if you’d like to learn more: erin@ussb.org
February Outreach Offering
Beloved Conversations

This month’s Outreach Offering will support Beloved Conversations, a program for Unitarian Universalists seeking to embody racial justice as a spiritual practice. Originally commissioned by a congregation in need of resources to hold its members in covenant as they learned how race and ethnicity shape their spiritual and social lives, Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity is now the signature offering of the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School, and has served more than 250 congregations across the continent.

In 2019, the board of trustees, staff, and lay leaders of the Unitarian Society participated in Beloved Conversations, which used a small group ministry format. In January of 2020, two more cohorts of USSB participants began the program, only to be sidelined by the pandemic.

In September of 2020, the Fahs Collaborative introduced Beloved Conversations Virtual — a four part, fully on-line program offering opportunities for individual, self-paced learning; relationship building in small groups; and large group worship and fellowship. USSB will continue toward the goal of having all board members, staff, and lay leaders complete the curriculum, which is available to anyone who is interested.

Please contact Rev. Julia at julia@ussb.org with any questions about participating in Beloved Conversations.

Learn more below, or visit the Meadville Lombard website: http://meadville.edu/beloved.

Beloved Conversations Virtual
Early Registration: January 1 to February 14
Regular Registration: February 15 to February 22

Beloved Conversations — the signature offering of The Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School — is a program for Unitarian Universalists seeking to embody racial justice as a spiritual practice. In Beloved Conversations, we are here to heal the impact of racism on our lives, in order to get free together.

Registration opened January 1 and closes on February 22. The Spring Term begins March 22, with lessons published every two weeks, as well as biweekly small group check-ins and monthly large group worship and discussion. In the program's first phase, entitled "Within," we engage with a personal exploration of race and our work for racial justice. With two caucuses, our white participants are invited into the Un/learning for Liberation course, and our BIPOC+ participants are invited into the Gathering Our Selves courses. In Beloved Conversations, we are here to heal the impact of racism on our lives. Let’s get free together.

Learn more and register at http://meadville.edu/beloved.

USSB Beloved Conversations participants, let us know you’ve registered so we can connect you with other folks in the congregation participating in the spring term. Contact Charla at charla@ussb.org

REGULAR REGISTRATION
February 15-February 22
meadville.edu/beloved
Sunday services online at 10:00 AM

We livestream on Zoom and Facebook!

Watch online or use your phone to dial in and hear the service live.

To listen to the service on your phone, call 1-669-900-6833 and then enter the Sunday services meeting ID: 960 0363 8223#

You may call in starting five minutes before the service begins.

Zoom and Facebook links are sent out in the Friday email, in a special Sunday morning email, and are always available on our website, at www.ussb.org/worship/zoom.

Contact our office at ussb@ussb.org if you’d like to be added to our email list.

Can’t be with us when we’re live Sunday morning? We archive every service video on our YouTube channel and on our website at www.ussb.org/worship/archive.