The human soul is hungry for beauty... When we experience the Beautiful, there is a sense of homecoming... In the experience of beauty, we awaken and surrender in the same act. Beauty brings a sense of completion and sureness. Without any of the usual calculation, we can slip into the Beautiful with the same ease as we slip into the seamless embrace of water; something ancient within us already trusts that this embrace will hold us.
from John O'Donohue.

The Madison Unitarian volunteer editorial team: Lari Fanlund and Hannah Lee
Starting a goodbye column is always a difficult task. I often find words elusive at such times when gratitude overwhelms me. I will be leaving FUS as your Communications Director later this month after nearly 4 1/2 years. I will be moving back to my home state of North Carolina, where my family still lives, and will begin work with another Unitarian Universalist congregation.

For me, FUS has been a place of growth and challenge but also an unexpected refuge—a chance to remember the call of faith communities in our lives. I marvel at what we've faced as a community during my time with you. We've had more than our fair share of challenges, but somehow we've managed to live into Francis David's call that "we need not think alike to love alike."

As you continue to move into your future together, my last project with you can be found in the Commons near the Atrium Kitchen. In collaboration with Cheryll Mellenthin and Janet Swanson, we've created a "Wall of Wonder," and we hope you'll contribute what inspires you, what you hope for, and what you love about FUS. We also hope you'll take time to read through what your fellow members share as well.

I look forward to seeing what you build from these challenges and how you embrace your future. Our tradition is watching to see how co-ministry at FUS might create new ways of living into our Unitarian Universalist values, and I know you will continue to build on your legacy within our movement. It has been an unexpected blessing to spend these years learning with and from you. As I recently said to a friend, "these have been trying years, and yet I've never felt more gratitude for it all."

My thanks to each of you and best wishes for your future.
Early on weekday mornings, you will find me on an elementary school playground trying to convince a certain fourth grader that it will not indeed be “the worst day ever known to humankind.” It’s a regular routine we have, and this far into the year, to be honest, it’s getting quite old. On a recent Monday morning, that of course, needed to be especially cold and unbearably gray, that fourth grader was in quite the mood. As he huffed off to line up, my yells of “Have a great day anyway!” were not met with a response.

As I stood there wondering what else I could try, I felt a poke on my back. Turning around, I saw the kindergartner of a friend who was absolutely tickled that she startled me. We spent a few minutes discussing the genius of her sneaky walk, how quiet she was even in rainboots, and laughed over how surprised I was to find her behind me. We may have had to hold a few reenactments of the scene. Soon, the bell rang, and she ran over to line up. As I passed by the group of kindergartners, I caught her eye and told her I would see her after school. She flung her arms wide, yelling, “I love you!” and blowing kisses. Without hesitation, I blew those kisses back and walked off that playground with a very good laugh and a much lighter heart.

That kindergartner was a force of the universe that morning, reminding me that beauty surrounds us even on the grayest of days. The poet and priest John O’Donohue wrote, “The human soul is hungry for beauty. When we experience the Beautiful, there is a sense of homecoming... In the experience of beauty, we awaken and surrender in the same act. Beauty brings a sense of completion and sureness. Without any of the usual calculation, we can slip into the Beautiful with the same ease as we slip into the seamless embrace of water; something ancient within us already trusts that this embrace will hold us.”

It is one of the great gifts of young children. They are simply themselves. Perhaps they embrace the words of Macrina Wiederkehr, who said, “I will believe the truth about myself no matter how beautiful it is.” Can you imagine slipping into that truth about yourself, that you are beautiful exactly as you are today, as easily as you slip into the embrace of water?

This month we turn our attention to nurturing beauty, and I wonder if we can begin by embracing the beauty that lives within each of us. Many of us learn early in life that we are either too much or not enough. We are told that parts of us are unacceptable—how we live or learn or feel or talk or love or look—and many of us carry those words and the accompanying shame with us as we grow. It is profound and tender work to set down our self-doubt, our recriminations of ourselves, to learn to hold ourselves with deep compassion, to learn to see ourselves as human, yes, and also as holy. To see ourselves with that same gaze filled with wonder and amazement that we would have with a sunset, the ocean, a newborn baby, or a tiny lamb.

In the days ahead, may you stop and notice the beauty around you, may you nurture the beauty already within you, and may you always blow kisses with abandon.
For the Board of Trustees, one of the most exciting events coming up at FUS is the installation of our Co-Senior Ministers, the Rev. Kelly Weisman Asprooth-Jackson and the Rev. Kelly Crocker, on Sunday, May 15. The board has enjoyed the opportunity to work with Kelly and Kelly in their first few months as Co-Senior Ministers, and we are thrilled to have this ministry team guiding us into the future. For the board and many others throughout the congregation, this is also a celebration of a new model of ministry for FUS.

I remember the first parish meetings where I heard the concept of co-ministry mentioned and listened in with intrigue. Is this something that would actually work for FUS? Upon joining the board in 2020, the ministerial model was one of the first big issues we tackled. Before our wonderful search team could proceed with searching for a new minister, they needed to know what role that minister would be filling. We absorbed the informative details the Ministerial Research Task Force had provided on various models of ministry throughout our denomination. We knew it was a perfect time to move toward more collaboration and less hierarchy, but what did that mean for how the position would be structured?

As we formed our description, it was so conceptual, and while we discussed at length how this would work logistically and feel to our congregation, it is still hard to visualize such a thing until you see it in action. We’ve now seen its early success and could not be more delighted with our co-senior ministry team.

The installation service is our chance to celebrate many blessings—a bold move to a new ministry model, our successful ministerial search that brought us Kelly AJ, the joy and stability of Kelly C’s continued ministry, and our congregation’s shared ministry with each other. We hope you will join us for this momentous occasion!

You’ll find more information about this celebration on page 11, or at www.fusmadison.org/installation.
I need you to know that there is nothing wrong with you, if you find the world congealed and unwieldy. You were never meant to serve money, to give loyalty to unprincipled power, to spend your joy frantically soothing yourself in order to tend wounds of being constantly dehumanized. I need you to know that your sense of injury and anger is not overdeveloped. You are meant for love and beauty. You belong where you are known and where your future is not just a resource, but a promise, which you begin to fulfill by being unmistakably, irrevocably yourself.

—you are not wrong.

by Rev. Theresa Soto
It has been so wonderful to fill our halls with the sounds of classroom activities again this year, and we look forward to being even more fully in-person next fall. I know (and can fully appreciate!) that many families were not quite ready to return in September. We hope that this fall is a different story and that we’ll welcome back many familiar faces, as well as new ones. We will continue to hold classes on Saturdays during our 4:30 pm worship service time and Sundays at 9 am. We will not have CRE classes during the 11 am Sunday services. Click here to register.

As always, our classes are dependent on the willingness of our adult community to share their time and talents with our kids. We hope that parents of CRE enrollees AND other adults will step into this need. Sharing time with our FUS kids is gratifying on so many levels. They make us laugh, inspire us to work toward a greater future, and help us to think outside of our usual boxes. We have teaching spots available for pre-K through 9th-grade classes (anyone interested in teaching our 8th or 9th-grade classes should contact me to explore compatibility). You can read about these classes in the brochure posted on our webpage fusmadison.org/cre/classes. If you’re registering children for CRE, you can indicate teaching as your volunteer choice. If you’re not registering children but would like to volunteer, please send me an email at leslier@fusmadison.org.

Wondering what our kids are up to over the summer? This summer, we are trying something new. We will have multi-generational worship services each Sunday at 10 am starting May 29. We’ll have special activities for all children and adults following each service. Be sure to join us for this great new opportunity for families to enjoy worship together!

Many people help keep the wheels of CRE turning. Thank you to all for creating a wonderful year of exploration!
Many thanks to this year’s Children’s Religious Exploration teachers who, seemingly magically, take our curriculum and bring it to life with laughter, purpose, compassion, and curiosity. We are so very grateful for your commitment to our FUS children and our UU values!

**Celebrating Me & My World**
- Nancy Kosseff
- Karen Weatherwax
- Ayanna Vandewalle
- Courtney Emerick
- Kelly Smithback
- Mary Rendall
- Caleb Janus
- Kristina Trybeck

**Experiences with the Web of Life**
- Dory Lightfoot
- Vicky Jones
- Mark DuRussel
- Kristen Isaac
- Becky Hustad
- Kurt Stege
- Morgan Neumann
- Eleni Mussared Varga
- Luke Eberhardy
- Edward Zapala
- Anya Lienau
- Lori Wendlandt

**Holidays & Holy Days/Moral Tales**
- Jen Conti
- Alexis Gill
- Sylvia Ramirez
- Brian Chanas
- Seth Johnson
- Tamara Brognano
- Vickie Eiden
- Farah Kaiksow
- Tara Potter
- Abigail Musselman
- Oriana Eversole

**Bibleodeon**
- Vance Miller
- H. R. Britton
- Kelly Hauser
- Jamie Annear-Feyrer

**Building Bridges**
- Liz Preston
- Susen Schroeder
- Krista Leale
- Rachel Howard
- Terri Felton
- Mike Ring
- Kerry Burke

**Compass Points**
- Reenie Euhardy
- Jane Worel
- Mary Wyman
- Jennifer Wickman

**Mind, Body & Soul**
- Becky Burns
- Ann Vetter
- JJ Streicher-Bremer
- Laura O’Flanagan
- Amy Bradshaw
- Rachel Bennett
- John Rider
- Blaise Thompson

**Coming of Age**
- Scott Mason
- Bryan Rainey
- Emily Smith
- Sandy Eskrich
- Jay Ranney
- Olivia Mote
- Rudy Moore
BECAUSE OF YOU!

Janet Swanson, Director of Membership and Adult Programs
& Cheryll Mellenthin, Project Coordinator

Because of You is here! It’s time to celebrate and show our appreciation for all the wonderful ways you bring life and love to our beloved faith community. Through your gifts of volunteer time, amazing talents, and ongoing financial generosity, we sustain a community built on the power of us and what we can accomplish together.

Plan to join us on Friday, May 6, 5 pm—6:30 pm for this staff and FUS Board-led evening. Our Because of You is a family event with dinner and dessert, recognition of your involvement, and words of gratitude for making the work we do possible. Please RSVP by Wednesday, May 4, here: Because of You Celebration. We’ll decorate Peace Poles, getting a head start on the annual Mother’s Day project, chalk the walk, and enjoy Spring! If you would like a Peace Pole for you/your family/your small group, please email Roz at woodwardrosalind@gmail.com by Thursday, May 5.

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a robust religious education program
a meaningful worship experience
a commitment to living our unitarian universalist values
a call to serving our community
a thriving intergenerational spiritual home
is all possible...

because of you

Join us for First Unitarian Society of Madison’s Annual Volunteer & Donor Recognition Celebration
Friday, May 6, 2022 @ 5 pm - 6:30 pm
Please register at www.fusmadison.org or use the code here:
This month marks a significant milestone in the life of our congregation. Nearly a year after calling the Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson to serve as Co-Senior Minister with the Rev. Kelly Crocker, we will formally acknowledge the covenant between our co-senior ministers and you, the members and affiliates of the First Unitarian Society of Madison. As the Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson wrote last month, this Service of Installation is one of the few Unitarian Universalist rituals marked with robes and stoles. It is also an occasion where other clergy join in the ceremony.

The Unitarian Universalist Association has provided a handbook for the Service of Installation and Ordinations, and explains beautifully its meaning and purpose: "[Installation] is a celebration of the joy both parties feel for having found one another, and their agreement to enter into a covenant of shared ministry. The Installation isn’t something the congregation does for the minister; rather, it honors and celebrates the promises you are making to one another as you knit yourselves into shared ministry. As a result, the Service of Installation is centered around a spoken ritual that lifts up your covenant of shared ministry. As with the Service of Ordination, it’s a worship service that offers an invitation to individual and communal transformation as well as an opportunity to live our faith in the world."

Please join us for this celebration on Sunday, May 15, at 3 pm in the Atrium Auditorium and for a reception following the service. Thanks to the volunteer installation team: Dorit Bergen, Emily Cusic Putnam, and Jeanne Sears for helping coordinate and plan. Volunteers are needed to help with set up, clean up, and prepare food and flowers. If you aren’t able to help, but would like to contribute to purchasing food, we have a special fund set up. All this information, including the RSVP link, is available at www.fusmadison.org/installation.

First Unitarian Society of Madison invites you to

a Service of Installation
WHEEL OF LIFE

With heavy hearts, we share news of the passing of Pat Bober. A longtime member of our Society Choir, Pat died on April 8 from leiomyosarcoma. We send our love to her husband, Neary Oostdik, and her children, Michelle and Fred. A memorial service for Pat was held in Sauk City on April 30.

A memorial service for Ben Webster will be held on Saturday, May 7, at 2 pm at Grace Episcopal Church. You can attend in person or online at https://youtu.be/4tNp7JwwMH4.

EASTER SNAPSHOTS

On Easter Sunday, we received the following message and photo from our partner church minister in Nagyajta, Levente Fekete, and his wife, Jutka. Our 30-year partnership with the Transylvanian village of Nagyajta and the many wonderful people who live there is indeed a great blessing for us all.

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Dear friends,
We wish you from all our hearts blessed and happy Easter!
Much love,
Jutka and Levente

Our thanks to all who participated in our Easter Egg Hunt last month! After a two-year hiatus, we finally welcomed our kids back to the playground for this favorite tradition. Pictured are two of our many volunteer helpers, Kathleen and Scott Ernst.
Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association’s WATER Team invites you to a family-friendly event at Vilas Park on Saturday, May 21, 1 pm–4 pm. Join neighbors from throughout the Lake Wingra Watershed. Special activities for children. Interact with people from 30 organizations committed to clean water needed by all life forms. Learn more about water stewardship and practices. Leave with new ideas to collectively ensure healthy lakes, streams, and the lands in between.

Itinerary at [https://fb.me/e/2fBr0YwrY](https://fb.me/e/2fBr0YwrY). Feel free to contact Taylor at water.wingragathering@gmail.com. Supported by UW-Madison Arboretum’s agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency. Logo courtesy of Colleen Manner, Madison Enterprise Center.
A MONTH OF SERVICES

In-person worship services: Saturdays @ 4:30 pm & Sundays @ 9 & 11 am
Online worship service: Sundays @ 11 am

MAY 7 & 8
A LIE THAT ALWAYS TELLS THE TRUTH
with Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson, Co-Senior Minister

The old saying goes that even if we may not know art, we know what we like. But is that the same as knowing what we need? Join us for a service devoted to exploring how art stirs and expresses our deepest truths.
The combined adult choirs sing anthems by William Mathias, Jean Berger, and Jerome Williams.

MAY 14 @ 4:30 PM & MAY 15 @ 9 AM
COMING OF AGE
with the Coming of Age Youth

This annual rite of passage celebrates the accomplishments and learnings of our Coming of Age youth who spend the year learning about Unitarian Universalism, their own beliefs about faith, and its place in their lives. This service is their own beautiful creation, representing the journey they have been on together. We hope you will join us in this recognition and celebration of our Coming of Age youth.

MAY 15 @ 11 AM
STATEMENTS OF FAITH
with Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson, Co-Senior Minister

On the weekend when our Coming of Age youth share their personal belief statements at the Saturday 4:30 pm and 9 am Sunday services, this service will echo that model as we read and reflect on faith statements from a variety of historical and contemporary figures.
MAY 21 & 22
THE BEAUTY OF PARTNERSHIP: OUR ANNUAL FLOWER COMMUNION
with Rev. Kelly Crocker & Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson

Flower Communion is the most important, specifically Unitarian/Universalist ritual across the U/U world. This ritual which celebrates beauty, human uniqueness, diversity, and community, will also mark the 30th anniversary of our partnership with the Transylvanian Unitarian parish of Nagyajta. Through story and song and the exchanging of flowers, we will honor the radical act of getting to know one another and recognizing the beauty to be found in relationship. Please bring a flower or two to share with another.

Music provided by FUS Children’s and Youth choirs, and special vocal ensembles.

SUNDAY, MAY 29 @ 10 AM*
THE BEAUTY OF OUR IMAGINATIONS
with Rev. Kelly Crocker & Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson

With this service, we begin our summer schedule of one service on Sunday at 10 am and the beginning of our all-ages services. We invite everyone, young and young at heart, to join us for worship together and special activities for all ages each week during coffee hour. In this service, we will let our imaginations run wild as we find and create beauty within and among us.

Special musical guests: singer-songwriter duo Helen Avakian & Dave Irwin.

*Our summer service schedule begins May 29 with one service on Sundays at 10 am.
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LAY MINISTERS
Our lay ministers provide a confidential, caring presence to congregants undergoing stressful life challenges or joyous occasions. Under the guidance of our called ministers, they promote the spirit of community through direct service in visiting the ill and healing, facilitating support groups, and more.
Contact a lay minister at 608.233.9774 x. 126