



White
Bear
Unitarian
Universalist
Church

The MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

328 Maple Street | Mahtomedi, MN 55115 | Phone: 651.426.2369 | wbuuc.org

Summer 2017

SPiRiT: the practice of inhaling and exhaling

Find resources for spiritual practice at wbuuc.org/themes.



artwork by RE students and Homework/Soulwork attendees

To see the current issue of *Show Your Soul*, visit wbuuc.org/show-your-soul.

It is important to note that in spite of how it feels when you inhale, you do not actually pull air into your body. On the contrary, air is pushed into the body by the atmospheric pressure that always surrounds you. In other words, you create the space, and the universe fills it.

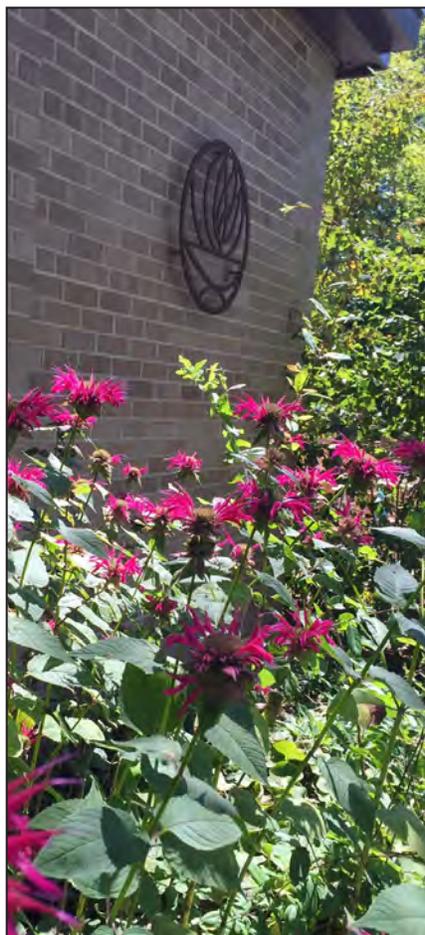
– Leslie Kaminoff and Amy Matthews, “The Universe Breathes Us”

How do you tell your story, the history of yourself, and your people, your family and country, your sense of place and your own dirt—your land, your home, this common ground—and how do you tell it in relation to all the other stories, the story of the person next to you right here, and the story of the stars, invisible, right above your head (and also below you and around you, infinite in all directions), and the story of the soil beneath the concrete floor that holds the bones and dreams of ancestors whom we choose to call family, or not.

The way you enter your story, locate your plot, the way that you write history, is the way you do religion. What matters here? What's true? Where's the thread of meaning? How do the threads connect? **Religion is the practice of doing this together**, mingling the small streams of our little private stories in a greater, flowing confluence —finding our place in the family of things.

These words come from the first sermon of this past church year, way back in September, but I think of these things in the spring as well, when at the Annual Meeting we close the chapter of one year together, and open the chapter of the next. And I am filled with gratitude, for the lives of beloved members who have died this year, who made this house holy by their presence:

Randy Castle, John Weaver, Dean Honetschlager, Ann Berry, Lowell Hanson, Channing Donahower, Marlys Oliver, Charles Grady, Donna Jorgensen.



“The church is ever more a beacon of light and love and truth and hope. Our lives are anchored here.”

And I have gratitude as well, beyond measure, for all of you remaining, children and adults, who grace this house with

laughter and hard work; with music, art, and wisdom; preparing budgets, coffee, classes, as if our lives depended on these things—because they do. In this hard year especially, with our country shaken to its core, the church is ever more a beacon of light and love and truth and hope. Our lives are anchored here.

With sadness now, and pride, we say farewell to Luke and Jenna Stevens-Royer, as Luke answers the call to our Rochester congregation—and again, I'm filled with gratitude for his ministry and friendship. Looking forward, our hope is to hire an interim Assistant Minister to be here for one year as we gather a Search Committee and clarify our intention for a permanent position.

And in the meantime, thanks to your incredible and practical generosity, our building is in a state of cheerful, crazy chaos, as ceilings, floors and offices are ripped apart to make way for the new HVAC system, which will warm us and cool us more reliably and efficiently for years to come. Watch your step this summer—and be proud of this accomplishment! If you're in the building on a weekday, speak a word of thanks to Anna Gehres, Steve Bolton, and John Macke, who are managing the project.

Breathe in. Breathe out. Repeat. And give thanks.



Laurie Kigner
2016-2017 President
president@wbuuc.org

Last month we were asked, in Rev. Victoria's sermon "Powerless and Powerful,"

What if this is a moment now, in our country and our lives, not for resignation and regression, but for rebooting, recalculating our own capacity, as a people, for courage, commitment, collaboration?

Then, a prophet's observation,

Oh, I see the world as it is, but I also see *that*, the world as it could be, the world as it should be, as it will be, if you will only desire it and commit to it, if you will only submit to your own spoken desire for justice, freedom, equity, compassion.

And "choose to dwell in possibility" and "in love... nevertheless."

This is a difficult charge. One reaction: go out of focus, let my eyes glaze over, turtle my head into my shoulders, avert my gaze, and hope that others, who are clearly stronger and more capable

than I, will get this done...will fix this broken and hurting world.

The summer theme is Spirit, the practice of inhaling and exhaling. To inhale and exhale is so fundamental that it is typically far from my mind. And while the words seem somewhat ubiquitous these days, I am finding that bringing them to my mind, or my mind to them, is pretty much guaranteed to quiet turmoil within, if only for one

"What if the practice of inhaling and exhaling is not quite so passive?"

breath and maybe the next. Thich Nhat Hanh teaches, "Breath is the bridge which connects life to consciousness, which unites your body to your thoughts."

Was Anne Frank consciously aware of this practice when she wrote,

It's difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hope rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart.

I can but think that Anne Frank was all too often aware of each

and every quiet inhale and quieter exhale, and through that awareness found the peace and wisdom that she shares in *The Diary of a Young Girl*.

Recently my breath practice has been illuminated with another thought, shared by Rev. Victoria on May 7 in the poem by Valerie Kuar:

What if this darkness is not the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb? . . . Now it is time to breathe. But soon it will be time to push. . . We must fight and live and love with revolutionary love.

What if the practice of inhaling and exhaling is not quite so passive, is not just quietly listening within, but requires that deep, courageous, beyond imagining energy that brings new life? So, as I pause and breathe and discern, I will also try to remember to ask, to sense, looking deeply, "Is it, now in this moment, time to push, beyond fear, beyond oppression, into what is right and just?" And then I will try to courageously do so.



Grow Your Soul | SUMMER Classes, Groups, and Forums

Summer Series for Adults

A Call to Faith in Turbulent Times

Join Victoria Safford for a 4-part conversation this summer: *A Call to Faith in Turbulent Times*. Our point of departure will be a new series published by the Unitarian Universalist Association, offering readings, video clips, music and ample space for the sharing of our own stories.



What steadies you, and what anchors you, in these turbulent times?

What does this moment require of us, one by one and as members of a vibrant Unitarian Universalist community?

We'll gather in the Sanctuary on four **Wednesday evenings: July 19 and July 26, August 2 and 9, from 6:30–8:00pm.** All welcome!

If you'd like to help facilitate, contact Victoria: vsafford@wbuuc.org.

Save the Date

Flower Communion & Annual Meeting June 4
Rev. Luke's Going Away Gathering..... June 11
Pride Parade June 25
General Assembly..... June 21-25

Year-Round Groups for Adults

Men's Group | 1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 12:30pm
2nd & 4th Tuesdays at 7pm

Make connections and build community through sharing and support. Open to all WBUUC men.

Contact: Steve Kahn, stevekahn@comcast.net

Shamanic Drumming | 3rd Tuesdays, 7pm

Participate in the ancient practice of shamanic drumming for meditation and spiritual exploration.

Contact: Nancy Hauer, nancy@rookhouse.org

Women's Book Group | 2nd Mondays, 7-9pm

Read and discuss books written by women.

Contact: Dana Jackson, danaleep@q.com

For Kids and Families

WBUUC Park Days are an open invitation to families of all ages to connect—an opportunity for children to play together and for caretakers to connect and share resources. No need to register in advance. Beginning the week of June 11, 2017

Woodbridge Park

Cottage Grove
Mondays, 10-12

Rutherford Elementary

Stillwater
Wednesdays, 10-12

Podvin Park

White Bear Lake
Mondays, 12-2

Tony Schmidt Regional Park

Arden Hills
Wednesdays, 10-12

Summer Sundays

Spirit Play

Children entering Pre-K-1st

Our UU Principles and Sources explored through stories from all over the world in this Montessori-inspired curriculum. Each session features interactive storytelling and a special craft.

Soulwork Sundays

Children entering grades 1-7

Join us each Sunday to explore spiritual practices including crafting, yoga, meditation, storytelling, games and more.

Magic of Hogwarts

I: Children entering grades 2-4

II: Children entering grades 5-7

We are bringing the Magic of Hogwarts right to the halls of WBUUC! We'll challenge young witches and wizards to find the magic within.

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text

Youth entering grades 8-12

The "Harry Potter and the Sacred Text" podcast is a fun, weekly podcast that invites listeners to examine themes in Harry Potter and how these themes are present in our own lives.

Nursery Care available for children 6 months to 3 years.

Register for Sunday morning and see the complete Park Day schedule at www.wbuuc.org/re-registration.

Grow Your Soul | FALL Classes, Groups, and Forums

For Adults This Fall

Living the Questions: Theme Circles – Fall 2017

I beg you, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language... And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer. . . go into yourself and see how deep the place is from which your life flows.

–Rainer Maria Rilke

As Unitarian Universalists, we have chosen a free faith that calls us to grow our souls and serve the world, and to do this in community: adults, youth and children all together. Over the course of the year, in the words and music of Sunday services, in small groups and discussion circles, and in personal reflection and practice, our practice is to engage together a series of spiritual themes and theological concepts—one each month through the cycle of the year.



Theme Circles are groups of 8-10 adults, gathered once a month from October to June to reflect through conversation and deep listening on how the month's theme touches their own lives. Shared readings ground the conversation in a simple format led by a facilitator. Groups are scheduled weekdays during the day and in the evening, and on Sunday afternoons. To register for the series beginning in September 2017, sign up in the Atrium or on the church website at www.wbuuc.org/classes. To learn more about facilitating a Theme Circle, contact Victoria Safford, vsafford@wbuuc.org. Facilitators take part in a one-time training in the fall, and meet monthly with the minister to reflect more deeply on the themes.

For Children and Youth This Fall

Religious Education Classes

From mid September through early June we offer RE classes for children Preschool through 12th grade. We encourage children age three through 6th grade to join the congregation for the start of the service. After our opening words, a song, and the chalice lighting, the children are invited to attend class. Youth in grades 7 through 12 start classes on the hour.

9am: Prek-9th grade (spring 9th grade Coming of Age)

11am: Prek-12th (Youth group for 9th-12th)

Register online at wbuuc.org/re-registration.

Small Groups That Return in the Fall

See also “Year-Round Groups” listed on p. 4

Parents of Young Children/Youth

2nd Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30pm

Explore spirituality and parenting.

Contact: Amy Peterson Derrick, dre@wbuuc.org

Third Thursdays for 60+ | 3rd Thursdays, 11am-1pm

For those 60+, including lunch, discussion and speakers.

Contact: Rev. Victoria Safford, vsafford@wbuuc.org

Unitarian Universalist Voices

4th Wednesdays, 7:30-9:00pm

Discuss texts from our UU heritage. Readings provided.

Contact: Victor Urbanowicz, vurbanowicz@yahoo.com

WomenSpirit Circle | 2nd Tuesdays, 7-9pm

Exploring personal spiritual origins and experiences. Open to all WBUUC women.

Contact: Carol Marsyla, carol.marsyla@gmail.com

Young Adult “After Hours”

4th Wednesdays – 8:00-9:30pm

Young adults meet for conversation around the monthly theme at a local pub.

Contact: Amy Peterson Derrick, dre@wbuuc.org



Welcome Table Wednesdays Will Return in the Fall

Every Week | 5:30pm Dinner | 6:30pm Forum



Jill Schwendeman
Director of Youth Programs
youth@wbuuc.org

Sit very still and the motion that is you continues. Your heart pumps, lungs breathe, and each organ does its work. Even in deep meditation, your humming mind rolls and feels, knowing beyond words, like the hands of a resting baby.

Trillions of synapses spark constantly in our brains, like a galaxy of stars. Every cell in us came from the stars. Unique as we are, each of us will return there. We are not cloddish statues, but dancing atoms. What does it mean, this relationship to motion?

In what sense is the self you claim the same as when you were a toddler? Our beginnings set us in motion, but it's the story we live—the people around us and our experiences and thoughts—that create who we are. We exist in relationship to one another. Memoirist Meghan O'Rourke wrote of grief, "The people we most love . . . become a physical part of us, ingrained in our synapses, in the pathways where memories are created."

WBUUC's Coming of Age youth make life masks to capture a glimpse of this moment in what we hope will be their long lives. An important task for adolescents is to try on "masks" of who they are or can be. Teens experiment with many facets: actor, rebel, joker, jock, worrier, follower, thinker, protestor. They feel what each is like—sorting, rejecting, selecting, prioritizing—as they shape who they are.

The work of a lifetime, though, lies not only in outward presentation, but also in what or whom we receive. Each of us has a limited but powerful tool, which is our power of choice. As we ask the teens: "Who or what is in your life? What do you want to become part of yourself? What would you push further out, to be replaced with other influences of your choosing?" Where hard things cannot be changed, even then, each of us has power to choose whether/how we will change our ways of responding.

In an ancient Hebrew prayer of repentance, King David pleads: "Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit (*ruach*—breath, wind, spirit) within me. Turn not your face from me, and take not your holy spirit (also *ruach*) from me." He asks for divine help and presence as he seeks to reestablish a right (*nachon*) spirit and be in right relationship.



From the May 21st Coming of Age ceremony.

UUs sing, "When I breathe in, I breathe in peace. When I breathe out, I breathe out love." In doing so, we invite a right spirit to move through us. We call our hearts and minds and bodies into motion. "Be my *in-spiration*"—literally, my breathing-in.

What is it you choose to breathe in? What do you invite into your heart, mind, and body? Who are you? Who are you becoming? You are, every day, something new. We are all here with you.

Save the Dates | 2017-2018

Opening Sunday and Water Communion	9/10/2017
Annie Humphrey Concert.....	10/7/2017
Auction Party.....	10/14/2017
Joyful Noise: Halloween Costume Ball/The Bazillions	10/28/2017
Winter Solstice.....	12/21/2017
Martin Luther King Breakfast.....	1/15/2018
Joyful Noise: Ann Reed.....	1/20/2018
Joyful Noise: The OK Factor	3/3/2018
Circle of Laments.....	3/29/2018
Passover Seder.....	3/30/2018
Joyful Noise: Patty Peterson/Jazz Women All-Stars.....	4/14/2018
Annual Meeting.....	6/3/2018
Closing Sunday and Flower Communion.....	6/3/2018

WBUUC's 2017 Oktoberfest Auction Saturday, October 14

Please mark the date on your calendars. We will have some new games and activities, a new auctioneer, and new donation categories. Please start imagining your contributions now.

Can you do a basket of mending? baby-sit? offer a young family a meal a month for 3 months or more? lead a birding breakfast? pet-sit? give rides to and from the airport? offer a half day of gardening? plant window-boxes? offer home handy-person services?

Can you teach someone to kayak or canoe? knit or crochet? make a baby quilt? snow-shoe? make a chalice out of clay? build a bird-house? mushroom hunt? fish (fly, ice, or otherwise)? better use their computer? get started on social media? take better photos? paddle-board? decorate cakes and cookies? **or..?**

Do you have a cabin to lend? a sailboat big enough for a guest or two? bees and honey to harvest? a plot of land for gardening? an adventure to share? concert, play, opera or sports tickets? a club membership for a round of golf? gift cards for restaurants, massage, wine, consultations...?

Volunteers are needed before, during, and immediately after the auction. Please call Jody McCormick 651.238.7157 or Gloria Ferguson 651.295.5073 if you'd like to join our fun crew.

Donations will be accepted at church **Sept. 20-Oct. 4** only, so plan ahead for the **BEST AUCTION EVER!**

Estate Planning 101

Sunday, November 5, 12:45 pm

What do Jimi Hendrix, Pablo Picasso, Bob Marley, Abraham Lincoln, Howard Hughes, Sonny Bono and Prince have in common? All died without a will! In fact 55% of all adult Americans do not have a will or estate plan.

Have you been thinking about creating a will or estate plan, and don't know where to begin? The Endowment Committee of the White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church is sponsoring an educational seminar to assist you in your planning process. The date is November 5, 2017.

Presenters Julie A. Westbrook, JD and Brenda Stuhr, CPA, CTFA from Trust Point, will share their expertise in a free 90 minute informational session and be available to answer questions.

Light refreshments will be provided by the Endowment Committee. More details will be highlighted in the September and October newsletters. Save the date today, and RSVP to Jack Ver Steegh at runjvs@gmail.com.

Celebration Sunday & Annual Meeting

JUNE 4 **9am: Flower Communion Service** | Presentation of the 9-11 Memorial Scholarship, Religious Education Celebrations, with music from the Adult Choir and Youth Choir. *We close the regular church year with this Unitarian Universalist tradition by bringing flowers to share in our common bouquet—a stem from your garden or from the store, showy weeds from the roadside, anything in bloom!*

10:15am: Annual Meeting | Honor new members; listen to President Laurie Kigner's report on 2016-17; recognize the work of this year's lay leaders and vote for next year's nominees; affirm the 2017-18 budget and the program it empowers. *All are welcome! WBUUC members strongly encouraged to attend.*

Summer Sundays: One Service Only at 10am

From June 11 through September 3, we revert to a more summery pace, with a single service and concurrent Religious Education every week at 10:00am. Hosted by our minister, our summer services will feature mostly guest preachers, with music from Carol Caouette, Mary Duncan, and a variety of special guests.

JUNE 11 **Thank you Everybody. Thank you Everything.** | Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer with music from Carol Caouette
Farewell Party for Rev. Luke! Join us for cake and lemonade following the service, as we bid farewell to Luke and Jenna, Louisa and Clara Stevens-Royer.

JUNE 18 **Discovering and Remembering Your Wisdom** | Guest preacher Ken Stewart with guest musician Dean Magraw

JUNE 25 **Waiting for Benedict: A New Monasticism and the Path of Radical Compassion** | Guest Preacher Rev. David Hottinger with music from Mary Duncan | David Hottinger serves as the Manager of the Spiritual Care Department at Hennepin County Medical Center. Ordained in the United Church of Christ, he holds degrees from Harvard Divinity School and Oberlin College and lives with his wife, Joanna, and their blended family of six children in White Bear Lake.



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