



THE CHALICE NEWS

Unitarian Society of Menomonie

A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

September 2025 Newsletter

Seven Principles

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person
2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregations
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

CALENDAR

Programs are at 10 a.m. in our meeting room, unless otherwise noted.
(ZOOM CONNECTIONS WILL BE PROVIDED)

Sunday, Sept. 7 – Gathering of the Waters

This is the time when we recount our summer travels. Bring a container of water from a place you visited to add to the communal bowl. Or you can use the symbolic water we will provide.

We will also talk on Sept. 7 about how to spend the substantial gift USM has received. Bring your ideas to the discussion!

Sunday, Sept. 14 – Service w/Dennis Peters, “Relationships”

All of us have been in relationships of one kind or another. Have they been good? Bad? A little of both? Let's talk about it today.

Heaven knows I am no expert, unless you count how to do it wrong as worthwhile experience. But we should be able to think about how it works and see if we can laugh a little at our mistakes.

Board Meeting after the service.

Sunday, Sept. 21 – Presentation by Reda El-danbouki

El-danbouki is a native of Egypt, a lawyer and human rights defender, and will talk about global human rights.

Sunday, Sept. 28 – Service with Dennis Peters, “Norwegian Jews in World War II”

Many of us don't realize the important role that Norway played in slowing down the Nazi advance in World War II, especially the Lutheran church. Let's take a look and revisit that past. Let's see how much you know about it!

And we'll also look at a short video of “Garden of the Righteous: Stories of courageous people who risked their lives to save victims of the Holocaust.”

DAVID K. WILLIAMS: A Unitarian Bicentennial



The following essay is excerpted from the website of the Unitarian Universalist Association (uua.org). The origins of our concern about individual civil liberties and free exercise of religion stem from the leaders who inspired the founding of Unitarian thought in America.

May 25, 2025 was the 200th anniversary of the chartering of the American Unitarian Association (AUA), one of the founding organizations that makes up today's Unitarian Universalist Association.

In 1961, the Universalist Church of America, founded in 1793, and the American Unitarian Association, founded in 1825, consolidated their organizations to become the Unitarian Universalist Association. Our legacy reaches back centuries to liberal religious pioneers in England, Poland, and Transylvania.

Six years before the AUA was chartered, the Rev. William Ellery Channing turned the term "Unitarian" — until then used pejoratively by religious conservatives in New England — on its head. His sermon "Unitarian Christianity," given at First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, MD in May of 1819, used the word to name a liberal faith that rejected the commanding trinitarian God of Calvinism in favor of an understanding of Jesus as human, not God, among many other radical and deeply influential ideas.

Channing's foundational ideas strongly influenced early Unitarian practice and influential thinkers and writers in early American history, including author and women's rights advocate Margaret Fuller. Fuller's work in the Transcendentalist movement helped develop key concepts of individual rights and liberties which remain critically important to our understanding of civil liberties today.

On May 25, 1825, a group of Unitarian ministers in Boston met and voted to charter an association that would help to organize the growing Unitarian religious movement in the United States — and of course, in its own very Unitarian way, "evangelize" the newly-established liberal religious denomination. The American Unitarian Association (AUA), which was chartered the very next day, is one of the two precursor organizations to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

It's important to highlight that history because it was those early Unitarians whose beliefs, sermons, civic leadership, and writings formed the intellectual underpinnings for core American values that are now under threat. We can thank prominent American Unitarians like Rev. William Ellery Channing, the leading Unitarian preacher whose ideas influenced both transcendentalism and the formalization of Unitarianism as a religious practice, and writer Margaret Fuller, who was an advocate for women and editor of *The Dial*, for providing theological and ethical grounding for the concepts of individual rights and liberties, ideas that are so necessary for how we think about "civil liberties" today.

It was Channing who emphasized the idea of "self-culture" as a means of spiritual growth, making the individual believer's faith journey a matter of central importance in American religion. And it was Margaret Fuller who laid claim to the still-echoing truth that all persons, including women, should have the opportunity to fully realize their individual potential and exercise both intellectual and social independence.

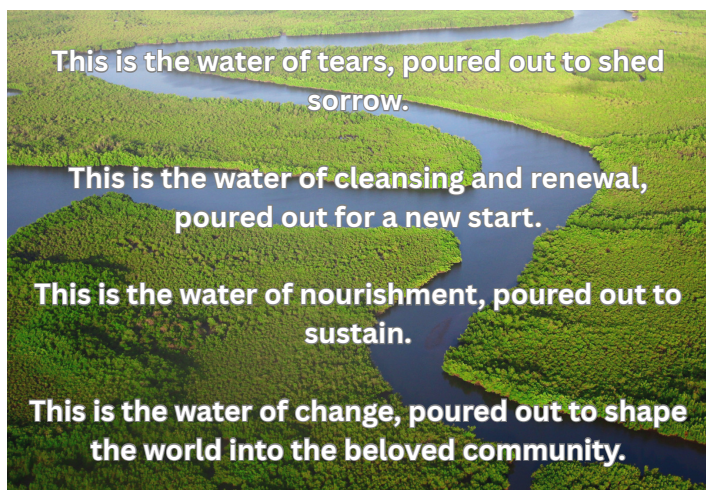
In 2025, we know that the idea of "civil liberties" is severely threatened. Recently, a federal official floated the idea of suspending the writ of habeas corpus, which would deny those arrested by the federal government the right to challenge their detention in court. Federal officials are infringing on Constitutional rights, including the First Amendment-protected freedom of speech and right to practice our faith freely, and due process. Unitarian Universalists in the United States want our civil rights — indeed the civil rights of all who live in this country — respected not only because we are Americans, but because they are integral to our religious beliefs, shared values, and traditions as UUs.

So Happy 200th Birthday — may we continue to be inspired by the ideals that put Love at the center, protect populations made vulnerable by oppressive policies, and provide liberation and communal care to all people of good will.

“The 200th anniversary of the American Unitarian Association offers Unitarian Universalists an opportunity to ground in our deep religious roots in America, explore some of the early and radical theological ideas at the core of our faith, and consider where we go from here.”

— From “Looking Back and Leaning Forward: 200 Years of American Unitarianism”

[Click here to watch the video.](#)



Board Members

Jill Smith, President
Paul Helgeson, Vice President and Alano Liaison
David Williams, Treasurer
Lynn Shaw, Secretary
Juliana Schmidt, Programming Chair
Mary Beth Lvoncek, Homeless Kids Project



Good Reads

“Holding Wonder”
by Zenna Henderson

“Zenna Henderson introduces us to a boy who ‘calls’ his mother, despite the fact that the nearest phone is miles away — and reads the distress call from an orbiting astronaut’s mind; to the amazing cures of Aunt Sophronia — pills for the living dead; and to Loo Ree, the imaginary friend of a first grader -- who turns out to be all too real.”

— [From Goodreads.com review](#)



Please email events, news, poems, photos, and stories by the 25th of the month to be included in the next newsletter to Kyser.Cassandra@gmail.com.