

March 2019

# *Grace Notes*

The Monthly Journal of First Unitarian Universalist Church



## **Journey**

What does it mean to be a  
people of journey?

## From the Minister

Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer



*"We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time."  
- T.S. Eliot*

Growing up, I never really travelled very far from southern Minnesota.

Our family trips were usually in the summertime to visit family "up north", as we say.

Every few years we would go on a long family road trip – packing up our van with my parents and older brothers, and set out onto the highway weaving through countryside, small towns, and across state lines.

I always loved going on a road trip any time of year – I still do. I love how much of the sky you can see from an open road, to be held by the arc of the horizon and what looks like the infinite unknown, even on roads I know well.

I also remember, though, the sense of comfort that came with coming home. It was partly in response to the exhaustion of long days of travel, and trying to sleep in a packed hotel room in an unfamiliar place – but also a love for a place to settle into and call home.

More and more I've come to understand journey as taking many forms: going on once-in-a-lifetime journeys that seem like a pilgrimage, and change you in some profound way – how you live, or think, or believe.

Other times, it is more simple – like the journey the heart can take from one moment to another, one day to the next, seeking and discovering new things about the world, or yourself, or people you love – sometimes never leaving home.

And Journey, in its oldest meaning, meant "a day's travel or work" or, earlier yet, "a day's portion."

Which makes me wonder – perhaps journey is not meant to be a constant state of being, as much as just a regular practice. It's good for you, like sleep or exercise, but none of those are good for you to be doing constantly.

Whether journeying spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, perhaps it is an invitation to take a daily portion at a time, to be changed or to grow in some way, small or large, and then, "arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time."

And then get ready to journey again.



## From the Board

Angie Gupta

*"Sometimes it's the journey that teaches you about the destination." - Drake, Canadian rapper*

Journeys are big and small. Some Sundays being able to get to church on time with kids, husband, coats, and shoes seems like an epic journey. Yet by most conventional norms, my three-month hitch-hiking trip through Sub-Saharan Africa was a real journey. The truth, I suspect, lies somewhere in-between.

As a church congregation, we are on a continuous journey to live our principles every day as individuals and as a community. My journey with this church started with a love for potlucks. During the intro to a UU gathering we attended, I was asked why I was interested in attending church. I said, "I missed potlucks." For me, the eureka moment came seconds later when it was clear that answer (which didn't include god, goodness, or spirituality, but did inherently include food and community) was acceptable! I knew this was where I wanted to continue my journey.



The Gupta family in the Smokey Mountains

Now, 14-years later, while reflecting on Drake's quote, "Sometimes it's the journey that teaches you about the destination," I realize my church journey has taught me a great deal about the destination. The first service Ash and I attended at this church was the day the beloved Rev. Dillman announced her retirement. For us, this place, that day, felt great, like we'd found a place that could accommodate Ash's brown Indianness and my white Midwesternness with no hiccups, yet for many I suspect that day was full of sorrow, fear, and trepidation for a future without their charismatic leader.

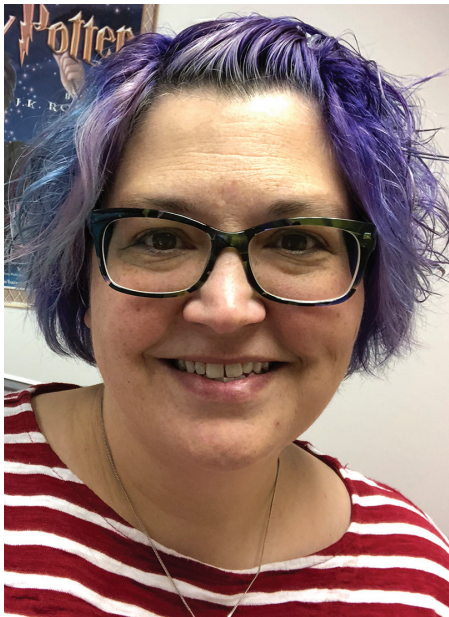
Since we started, there have been 5 church leaders here, several major medical issues have arisen, Chalice camp has moved from Edith Mayo Girl Scout camp to the church, RE directors have come and gone, and now we're looking at a major conversation about our physical church building. But if Drake is right, and the journey informs the destination, then we're bound for a wonderful journey through hard decisions, moments of joy, maybe a lost shoe or two, and many, many conversations both long and deep and short and sweet that will help to create the destination we want and can appreciate, love, tend, and cherish.

So, on we march, eat, chant, sing, pray, cry, and persist towards the UU goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all one day and one person at a time. Please join me, the board, and this community on our journey so we can all learn about the destination together.



# Stewardship

Amy Nelson



In this day and age of tweets, emojis, and slang that change on a daily basis, a word like “stewardship” can seem rather antiquated. Each year our church has a stewardship campaign that involves filling out a piece of paper and letting the church know how much money you plan to give. So I have always equated “stewardship” with money. Now that I am working with the Stewardship Team, I have learned...it is SO. MUCH. MORE. THAN. MONEY.

To be a “steward” of something means you take care of it. Often, that does involve money, but it also has to do with all of the different ways people give of themselves to take care of something they value - be it a gift of time, unique talents, or treasures like money or other donations. As a part of our stewardship campaign, we want to honor all of these amazing ways of caring for our church home with a celebration.

Starting at the beginning of March, there will be a space to share all of the reasons members and friends give to this church: time, talents, and treasures. We will have a “Why I

Give...” wall for everyone to display all of the reasons this church is so important to each of us and how it impacts our lives.

We are also going to recognize our shared efforts by spending time together. All members and friends of the congregation are invited to Move Forward Together - a celebration of our time, talents, and treasures, on Saturday, March 16. We will start in the commons with some hearty appetizers and interactive artwork. The evening will conclude in the sanctuary with a variety show and tasty desserts. Please see the end of the article for all the details about this fun evening!

Pledge forms will be available the first three Sundays in March. If you prefer your pledge form be mailed to you, please contact the office staff (507-282-5209 or [administration@uurochmn.org](mailto:administration@uurochmn.org)).

We are encouraging all members and friends of the congregation to turn in their completed pledge forms by Saturday, March 16, preferably at the party on the 16th. When you turn in your pledge form, you are showing your intent to care for this church using treasures - be those \$1 or \$100,000.

If you turn in your pledge card by Saturday, March 16, you will be entered in a drawing for your very own UU Cookbook or colorful UU socks! There will also be a grand prize drawing. The winning person/family will get to work with Reverend Luke Stevens-Royer to design a Sunday service.

Also, if you turn in your completed pledge form by Saturday, March 16, someone from the Stewardship Team won't need to call you to ask for it! Of course, if you would like a call or a visit, we are happy to connect with you personally to discuss stewardship.

All of this - the celebration, giving options, shorter length of the campaign - is part of our ever-changing journey as a congregation. So please join the Stewardship Team as we Move Forward Together!

## **Moving Forward Together - a celebration of our time, treasures, & talents.**

Saturday, March 16, from 5:30pm to 8:00pm

Last chance to turn in your pledge form to be entered in the drawings!

Heavy appetizers - 5:30-6:45pm in the Commons

Variety show & desserts - 7:00-8:00pm in the Sanctuary

RSVPs are encouraged to help us plan, but are not required (so plan to come even if you don't RSVP!) Sign up at church or email [office@uurochmn.org](mailto:office@uurochmn.org) with your RSVP or any questions.

Need childcare? Please contact Chantelle - [childcare@uurochmn.org](mailto:childcare@uurochmn.org).

Want to show off your talent for baking or picking up treats at the store? Please bring a dozen or more sweet treats to share during the variety show.



Another new option this spring is electronic giving. A webinar I participated in introduced an app to make pledges or weekly offerings. When presented with this idea, administration was all on board! Electronic giving is a bit different than an authorized auto-withdrawal from your bank account each month. Anyone who has the app can go in and manage their donations by setting up a schedule or making an unscheduled donation - for example on a shared plate Sunday. We will also have a card reader that can be used after the service or at Wednesday night meals.

All of this is turning out to be easier than we had expected, since we already have an account with Vanco, the company behind the GivePlus+ app. The app is free to download and free to use. There are fees on the church's end, comparable to any fee associated with using a credit card, but I can almost guarantee the church will not lose money on this! Watch for more details about electronic giving as the month unfolds.

Rest assured, we will continue to accept cash, checks, and automatic bank withdrawals! No need to switch your method of pledge payment if you don't want to. Electronic giving is just one more way for our members and friends to manage their donations.





# Chalice Circles

Lisa Talcott



Are you on a spiritual journey? That, of course, is a rhetorical question – everyone is on a spiritual journey. Perhaps the better question is: are you alone on your spiritual journey?

Our spiritual journey is as individual as we are. It is informed in part by our gender, sexuality, age, whether or not we perceive ourselves to be religious, and where we live. At times we are an active participant, taking time to read, meditate, journal, or do whatever informs our journey. At other times the busyness of our lives overtakes our best intentions and the journey recedes into the background.

Even as I acknowledge that my spiritual journey is mine, I am aware that it doesn't occur without influences from others. In fact, another person's journey can enrich my

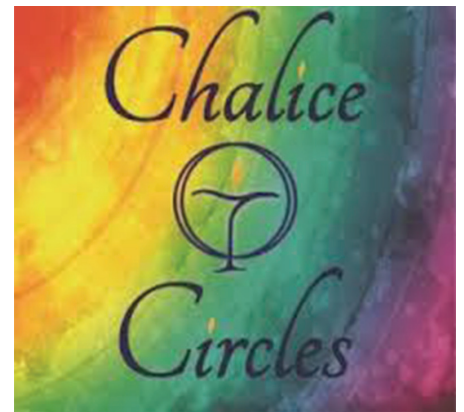
experience. Participating in a Chalice Circle is one of the opportunities to actively pursue my spiritual journey in the company of others.

In the Chalice Circle setting, individuals come together to speak their own truth and to listen to others'. Regardless of the question that is asked, it is our personal stories that touch those who take time to listen. The listener's role is deceptively complex: listen without judgment and listen to give the speaker the chance to speak into his or her truth. The listener is not asked to give advice, to fix anything, or to even give an opinion. 'Just' listen.

Then it is my turn to speak. I tell a story that comes from within and reflects where I am on my spiritual journey.

In the give and take of the Chalice Circle, I am privileged to glimpse the spiritual journey of the other members. It can be a light for the steps I am taking, it can assure me that I am not alone in my struggles, or it can simply be a great story to hear. On the flip side, I can be as open about my journey as I choose. When I give voice to my story, it becomes more real. Also, I may be gifting the listeners in ways that only they know.

The power of the stories we share in Chalice Circle can fuel both our own spiritual journey and those of the others in the group. The questions we reflect on give us a starting point, and then our stories take over. Our spiritual journey continues, as individual as we are and informed by others.



# Upcoming Events

Watch the Weekly eNews for a complete list of events



5:30-6:30 pm	Dinner in the Commons ( <i>free will donation</i> )
6:00-7:15 pm	Choir Rehearsal
6:15-7:15 pm	Children's Activities, Childcare in Nursery
6:15-7:15 pm	Walden Hill Youth Group
6:30-7:15 pm	Forum

## Walden Hill Wednesday Forums

- March 6 **By-Laws Presentation**  
Please join us for a forum about the church by-laws. In the months leading up to the June 3 annual meeting, the committee will offer you multiple opportunities to review our by-laws and provide feedback on our efforts to streamline language and provide greater flexibility to committees and staff.
- March 13 **Moving Forward Together (Stewardship)**  
Come for a conversation with lay leaders and staff about the hopes and dreams of this year's pledge campaign for next year's budget.
- March 20 **History Committee**  
Join us as the history committee presents artifacts they have found during their work over the last few years. They will show and discuss the 125th anniversary quilt, discuss the scrapbooks in the hearth room, talk about how we offered post war assistance to Germany after World War II, plus much more.
- March 27 **Climate Justice & Social Change - Rescheduled from a prior forum**  
Join us for a conversation, and TED Talk video, about climate justice and the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth. The theme for the discussion will be "Sacred Resistance and Regeneration." Led by Paulette DeMers.

## Special Events

- March 16 **Moving Forward Together: Destination Celebration**  
Join us for an all-ages party of music, skits, a communal art project, and refreshments, all in celebration and support of our church.
- April 18 **The Welcome Table**  
A service of poetry, music, silence, and breaking bread, echoing traditions of suffering and liberation from the Jewish Passover and Christian Maundy Thursday, ending with a traditional Universalist Communion ritual. All are welcome.
- April 27 **Clara Barton Rummage Sale- Save the Date!**

## Church Staff

Luke Stevens-Royer	Minister	revluke@uurochmn.org
Joyce Rood	Director of Religious Education	dre@uurochmn.org
Melissa Egglar	Coordinator of Congregational Life	congregationlife@uurochmn.org
Erika Fetterman	Office Administrator	office@uurochmn.org
Connie Schuelka	Congr. Administrator / Co-Dir. of Music	administration@uurochmn.org
Joe Mish	Co-Director of Music	music@uurochmn.org
Derik Robertson	Youth Program Coordinator	youthprogram@uurochmn.org
Chantelle Feddersen	Childcare Coordinator	childcare@uurochmn.org
Tom Rud	Custodian	custodian@uurochmn.org



# Throwback Page

## History Highlights of First UU



*1st Grade Religious Education Class from 1984.*

*Back row L to R: Sherry Petric, Adam Dunn, Colin Dunn, Julie Gilkinson  
Front Row L to R: Anna Petric, Andy Wheeler, Martha Gurtz, Andrea Gilkinson,  
Jeremy Kroenig, Sarah Pingatore, unknown, Allison Palmer*

*"We're gonna keep on moving forward, teach our children courage, never  
turning back." - Emma's Revolution*

## First Unitarian Universalist Church



1727 Walden Lane SW  
Rochester, Minnesota 55902  
507-282-5209 | [uurochmn.org](http://uurochmn.org)  
Sunday Services & Religious Education  
9 & 11 a.m.

Our publication title, **Grace Notes**, harkens back to the name of this congregation in the 1870s, Grace Church, and also refers to a grace note in music, which is an extra flourish to a main piece of music. Each month, we create some space to highlight just a flourish, some extra notes, within the larger life of our church.