



Sunday services and all in person activities are suspended beginning March 15.

[A Video Message From Rev Luke](#)

Dear friends,

Church leaders of First Unitarian Universalist Church met and have decided to close our building to all in-person gatherings until further notice. This includes all programming - for children, youth, and adults - such as Walden Hill Wednesday, Sunday worship, and all classes, committees, groups, & events held in the church building.

This has been a difficult decision, but we are taking guidance and recommendations from our national UU Association and other faith communities in the area.

Knowing this community is a central part of so many people's lives, we are working hard to plan for what this means in our church. We are considering many options to encourage and equip groups to meet online and to find ways to broadcast our services. We invite everyone to join us in a practice of ***social distancing and soulful connection*** - finding ways to stay connected to each other in new and different ways.

At the same time, we also think this is a time that calls us to breathe, taking care and intention without rushing forward. Here are ways we invite you to stay connected in the coming days:

- **Sunday, March 15th: Sabbath Sunday** - we'll send out and post a video inviting you to practice sabbath this Sunday morning, when you may have been at church, and post pictures on Facebook of how you are spending your sabbath time. *See the poem below for inspiration*, and consider doing things that nourish your spirit - reading, cooking, games, taking a break from news and instead taking time with family or friends, time outside in nature - anything that feeds your soul.
- **Future Sundays** - we are working to livestream future services starting Sunday, March 22nd, with one service each week at 10:00 am. We will only have staff and worship participants present, but you can still hear readings, a meditation, music, a story, and an invitation to breathe and light your own chalice at home. Watch for more to come.
- **Wednesday Soul Matters online** - we are working to set up a Wednesday chalice circle style online gathering each week.

- **Online Meditations** - we'll post videos, poems, and other ways to encourage personal emotional and spiritual care.
- **One-on-one spiritual support** - if you are in need of spiritual care, call the church to set up a time to speak by phone or meet in person with Rev. Luke or Melissa Egger - we are here to support you.
- **Join other Unitarian Universalists** - through the "Church of the Larger Fellowship", our online national Unitarian Universalist congregation: <https://www.questformeaning.org/worship/>

This is a rapidly changing and impactful time. We encourage you each to find ways to care for yourself, and for others. Part of our mission is to create a compassionate community - suspending in-person gatherings is a way to care for each other and to imagine how we can stay connected with each other.

Please be in touch with the church office if we can be of assistance or support. Know that your staff and leaders are working hard to continue to live our mission during this time - that while our building is closed, our mission and vision is alive and well, in this time when we need each other's care as much as ever. So, spend time with those you love, find ways to nurture your spirit, take a break from the news, and remember this church is still your spiritual home.

More updates will be forthcoming, but for now:

Breathe deep the breath of life.

Breathe deeply among this community of love and justice, hope and grace.

Know that here, in person or in spirit,

you are named and you are known as beloved.

Here are words from Rev. Lynn Ungar to guide these coming days

"Pandemic"

by Lynn Ungar, March, 2020

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath-
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.

Center down.

And when your body has become still,

reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)
Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.
Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love--
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

In faith,
Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer
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