



Hi,

What crazy weather we are having. Warm and sunny one day and cold and rainy the next. Hope you are enjoying the sunny and warm weather.

The board has some dates of things scheduled that I wanted to share with you. The congregational meeting this year will be Sunday June 28 after the service.

Rock the Pride Beloit's Pride Feast is Saturday August 22. I will be in charge of Rock the Pride. Our booth at the Beloit Farmer's Market is Saturday October 3.

Barbra Fett Timmer will be in charge of the booth.

June 30 will be the end of my 2-year term as President of the UUCRV Board of Directors. Jerry Paulson and I are the nominating committee members for next year's board of directors. We are looking for a president, vice president, and a trustee. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone, please let Jerry or myself know.

Looking forward to seeing you at church or on Zoom, Cher

THE TOUCHSTONES SMALL GROUP will meet on May 20th at 10:30 at the church. The topic to be discussed is Peace. There will be a link to the Journal in the newsletter.

Please let Denny or me know if you are only able to attend on Zoom. Denny will send a link to the Touchstones Journal. (also as an attachment)

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=4062e8cd0a&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-a:r:2303901919165041722&view=att&disp=safe&realattid=f_mokfy0g20&zw

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Connie Matusiak - cminthegarden@gmail.com

STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON In May, we will have the Stewardship/Pledge Drive which will kick off in a service on May 17th, *In Support of our Church*. Committee chairs are currently being asked to submit anticipated expenses for the 2026-27 church year. Members will receive information including pledge cards after the 17th. We are asking that pledge cards be returned on May 31 or sooner. Finance Committee

"I have 3 unopened ink cartridges left from my former HP printer— 1 yellow and 2 blue — number 910. I'm looking for someone who can use them. I prefer not to toss them in the garbage. — Nina"

GREETINGS FROM THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT!

It's that time of year again. Time to think about making that yearly pledge to keep our wonderful congregation in good shape. We will be handing out pledge forms soon and our May 17th message will include information on this fiscal year's expenditures and what we hope to be able to do next year.

If you still owe a balance for this year's pledge, please see if you can find a way to submit it before June 30th. If you cannot, we understand that surprise expenses are difficult to plan for and hope that circumstances change for the better soon!

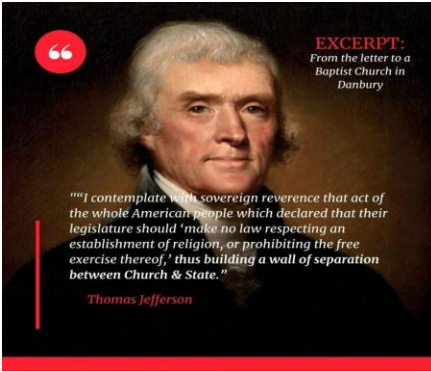
Sincerely, Carol Klager - UUCRV Treasurer

"If we had no winter the spring would not be so pleasant." Anne Bradstreet

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

May 3 – Separation of Church and State

Lay Leader: Jane Viemeister



May 10 – Welcoming & Belonging - UUA Sermon of the Month

Virtual Guest Speaker Lenore Bajare-Dukes Lay Leader: Wendy Edgington

How do we know what to do when the stories that showed us how to live no longer serve us? Or, what happens when a garden bucket breaks? Wander down a path of healing, imagination, and wild hope with Lenore Bajare-Dukes, Congregational Life Staff, Central East Region



May 17 – Stewardship

Lay Leader: Nina Herzer

May 24 - From Demon's to Diet

Guest Speaker Dr. Erin Fisher

Lay Leader: Nina Herzer

From Demons to Diet: A Historical Timeline of Mental Illness and its Treatment. This presentation traces the winding path of mental health through history. Dr. Fisher will examine how shifting scientific, cultural, and medical perspectives have shaped the way we view and treat mental illness as well as consider what the future may hold for more holistic, biology-informed approaches.



May 31 - Open Read - Memorial Day

Lay Leaders: Donna Beaumont & Nina Herzer

"...I hear the sounds of melting snow outside my window every night and with the first faint scent of spring, I remember life exists..."

John Geddes

UUCRV Activities in May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 <i>Charlotte Detert's birthday</i>
3 *** 10:30 am Worship: Separation of Church and State Lay Leader: Jane Viemeister	4	5 10:30 am – 12:30 pm Faith Formation Committee Meeting	6	7	8 1-3pm Board Meeting???	9 <i>Margaret Curtright's birthday</i>
10 *** 10:30 am Worship: Welcoming & Belonging Virtual Guest Speaker Lenore Bajare-Dukes Lay Leader: Wendy Edgington	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 *** 10:30 am Worship: Stewardship Lay Leader: Nina Herzer	18	19	20 10:30-12:00 Small Group Discussion	21 <i>Please send in dates and articles for the June Newsletter!</i>	22	23
24 <i>Jackie Shair's birthday</i> 10:30 am Worship: From Demons to Diet Guest Speaker: Dr. Erin Fisher Lay Leader: Nina Herzer	25	26	27 1:00-2:00 Membership Committee Meeting	28	29	30
31 10:30 am Worship: Memorial Day Open Read Lay Leaders: Donna Beaumont & Nina Herzer						

*** WORSHIP SERVICES ARE MULTIPLATFORM INCLUDING ON ZOOM

(The ZOOM link is in the "Service Information" email sent to members & friend prior to the service. Request service information by emailing uucrockvalley@gmail.com)

"The sun just touched the morning;
 The morning, happy thing,
 Supposed that he had come to dwell,
 And life would be all spring." - Emily Dickinson Quotes About Spring

"It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart."

Rainer Maria Rilke

HYMN OF THE MONTH

***In the Silence* by Rick Hermann**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mlzk2aOzt6E&t=5s>

COMPOSER BACKGROUND INFORMATION Rick Hermann (he/him) was an author, musician (primarily guitar) and poet as well as a chef, editor, and film and restaurant reviewer (and so much more!). He discovered southern hospitality and Unitarian Universalism at the First Existentialist Church of Atlanta, where he lived for two years. Back home on the West Coast he found his spiritual community at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship. He lived for 31 years with Young-Onset Parkinson's disease, which took away his ability to continue his professional life, but gave him more time and space to be in nature and to create short stories, poems, and songs. [Written by his widow Lee Willis. — Everett]

LYRICS

In the silence that has fallen,
Fellow travelers come to see
That our spirits are unbroken,
Sheltered in love's mystery.

(Chorus)

*Come what may in these dark days,
All our hearts are standing still.
Love will shine again upon us
And our dream of peace fulfilled.*

All the troubles that delude us,
Things that I can barely say.
Truth does not survive unspoken;
Without breath it fades away. (Chorus)

If our hearts could burn like fire,—
If our voices could be the wind,
We would give what all desire: —
Freedom, joy and peace within. (Chorus)

We won't fear the tyrant's anger;
Fear will never win our hearts.
We will not be silenced ever,
Ere the king his throne departs. (Chorus)

Share the Plate for April through June 2026:



Who We Are:

Rockford Urban Ministries (RUM) is Rockford's interfaith social justice advocacy nonprofit, made up of more than twenty congregations. We believe that together, people of faith have the power to reshape our community into one rooted in dignity, love, and justice.

What We Do

- We listen and respond to the needs of our neighbors.
- We advocate for meaningful change—even when it's unpopular.
- We bring people together for training, public witness, and dialogue.
- We partner with local groups to tackle everything from hunger to gun violence.

Our Story

Founded in 1962 to confront issues like housing discrimination and civil rights, RUM has never shied away from hard work. Over the decades, we've launched housing redevelopment programs, created jobs, fought addiction, and pushed for peace. From the Good Friday Walk for Justice to installing solar panels on local buildings, our projects reflect our values: community, equity, and hope.



Our Leadership

Rev. Violet Johnicker

Executive Director

Today, RUM is led by Rev. Violet Johnicker, a United Methodist elder with deep roots in Rockford and a passion for urban justice and interfaith partnership. Under her leadership, we carry forward a tradition of bold advocacy and creative problem-solving.

Why We Exist

Because justice doesn't just happen. It's made—by communities of faith and conscience standing shoulder to shoulder, refusing to give up on love.

"Now every field is clothed with grass, and every tree with leaves; now the woods put forth their blossoms, and the year assumes its gay attire." Virgil

From Decoration Day to Memorial Day - May 23, 2025

Posted by: Neely Tucker on the Library of Congress Website (see link below*)

It was Decoration Day at first.

This was in the mid-1860s in the aftermath of the Civil War, Lincoln's assassination and the contentious start of Reconstruction. The nation fairly reeked of death; the 1861-65 conflict killed at least 620,000 in a nation of roughly 35 million, or about 2 percent of the population.

Small organizations around the country on both sides of the conflict had begun to formally mourn the dead even before the war was over. John A. Logan, a member of Congress from southern Illinois before the war and a volunteer who rose to the rank of general during the conflict, wanted to energize his comrades.

On May 5, 1868, as the national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, the dominant organization of Union veterans, he issued General Orders No. 11, naming May 30 of each year to serve as a remembrance by its members "for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land."

Decoration Day, as it was dubbed, was observed at Arlington Cemetery 25 days later, with veterans, grieving families, politicians and volunteers placing thousands of flower arrangements on the slim white gravestones.

Given that few communities had escaped the war without a loss, the day quickly served as a national umbrella for the many preexisting local and regional memorial recognitions, in both the Union and the former Confederacy — though Logan clearly delineated the remembrance to honor only Union troops.

"Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains and their deaths the tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms," his order continued. "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance."

The Library preserves much of this history, including Logan's papers, research guides on the G.A.R. and early photographs of celebrations, and the Library's Congressional Research Service preserves the day's history and legislative documents.

In 1888, Congress made May 30 a holiday in the District of Columbia, and in 1950 the House and Senate passed a joint resolution calling on the president to "issue a proclamation designating May 30, Memorial Day, as a day for a Nation-wide prayer for peace."

President Lyndon B. Johnson finally did so in 1968, setting the recognition to begin in 1971 and adjusting the date to be the last Monday in May.

Logan, though not widely remembered today, was a prominent figure in the late 19th century.

He was a highly decorated officer and was wounded in the war. His Illinois constituency sent him to Washington as a member of the House of Representatives and elected him three times to the U.S. Senate. He narrowly missed being elected vice president on the Republican ticket in 1884, when he and presidential nominee James G. Blaine narrowly lost to the Democratic ticket of Grover Cleveland and Thomas A. Hendricks.

Logan died of an illness two years later, at 60, while planning a run for the presidency.

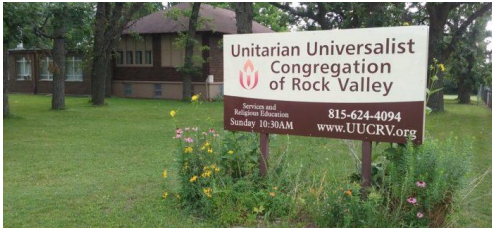
His birthplace in southern Illinois is [now a museum](#); he's memorialized in the nation's capital, with Logan Circle in downtown D.C., in the center of which is a [statue of Logan astride a horse](#); and he's buried across town in a prominent mausoleum in the [United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery](#).

* <https://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2025/05/from-decoration-day-to-memorial-day/>

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Our Vision: We envision Beloved Community where all are welcome.

Our Mission: The mission of this congregation is to create community, celebrate worship, seek justice and truth and live guided by love.

Our Unitarian Universalist Values



Graphic attributed to the artist Tanya Webster (chalicedays.org)

2025-2026 OFFICERS

President Cher Zimmerman

Vice-President Wendy Edgington

Secretary Barb Fett Timmer

Treasurer Carol Klager

Trustee Jane Viemeister

Members are welcome at all UUCRV Board and Committee meetings. Check the calendar in this newsletter for meeting times. If you have questions or comments to share, contact board members or the appropriate committee chair.

Pastoral Care Team

◆ Jerry Paulson

◆ Judy Pickle

SHARE THE PLATE THIS QUARTER



This April through June, we are sharing 50% of additional donations made in the plate or by mail (beyond your pledge) with Rockford Urban Ministries, Rockford's interfaith social justice advocacy nonprofit, made up of more than twenty congregations. We believe that together, people of faith have the power to reshape our community into one rooted in dignity, love, and justice

Final thoughts...by Rachel Carson

A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood. If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unflinching antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.