

Unity Church-Unitarian Spiritual Practice Packet


Abiding Hunger

March 2026



break open
evangelize love
abiding hunger
joyful visions
transformation

CHALICE
CIRCLES



cultivating faith
dangerous words
belonging
interconnected roots
to yoke ourselves

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About the Cover

Why do so many people walk the hundreds of kilometers of the [Camino](#) de Santiago? By many accounts, it is physically and mentally challenging, arduous, and even painful, at times. Yet, many, if not most, have said it’s a journey of the soul, a life-changing pilgrimage of great beauty, a tradition over 1,000 years old that feeds the spirit. Some talk about a call or inner longing to walk the Camino; does this come from abiding hunger for meaning, connection, spirituality? Explore this packet for greater understanding of and meeting your abiding hunger.



Abiding Hunger

You can't be stuck if you're not trying to get anywhere. Which, to me, means that when you stop fighting with the way things are, magic happens. You relax, open, and any action you take comes from alignment with what's true.

— Geneen Roth

I was hungry for 40 years. I started dieting at 13 years old and for most of my life, I have been told that my hunger was my fault; something I did or didn't do that caused my body to feel a sense of hunger throughout the day. I have never experienced true food scarcity. I also do not have a diagnosable eating disorder and for my UU siblings who have experienced this, please know that I am aware of the deep and "abiding" pain that comes from discussions around hunger.

We know scientifically that there are identifiable hormones that cause a body to feel hunger when it cannot actually be hungry. This is a portion of what the new weight medications are attempting to address. We also know that trauma can play a role in how we feel or don't feel hunger and of course our genetics, family systems, culture and availability add to this complexity.

When this theme of Abiding Hunger was offered, I went to the dictionary to look up what "abiding" means in relation to hunger. Because of my background and my own vulnerability around the topic of physical hunger, I found the results to "abiding," words like, "enduring" and "long lasting" concerning. What was Abiding Hunger? Unity Ends states, "evangelize love to meet the deep and abiding hunger in all of us." Let us recognize that there are many forms of hunger: physical, psychological and spiritual. Is it simply a part of our human experience that we suffer with an abiding hunger?

The story of my life is wanting, hungering, for what I cannot have or, perhaps, wanting what I dare not allow myself to have.

— Roxane Gay, [Hunger: A Memoir of \(My\) Body](#)

Historically, capitalism has provided all sorts of answers to our hunger problem. In the diet industry, we were often told that if we just ate, drank, moved, did or thought whatever the magic bullet was, our hunger, our need for a cure, our need to be whole, our need to end suffering would be provided through this amazing new discovery. Perhaps most of us have a hunger that is simply a result of living in capitalism? We are constantly told that by clever and researched marketing that purchasing this thing, or watching this show, or engaging in this activity will evoke some miraculous result that will make us happy, when in fact it just causes us to hunger more. Like many people, we continue some practice of consumption to satisfy our hunger. Dopamine is an excellent drug.

Many options to satisfy one's hunger are marketed as the more respectable or even admirable choices to supply us with Dopamine, Serotonin or Adrenaline. Often the way a society supports dealing with one's hunger can be obsessive behaviors and we might call it discipline. In my professional experience, deprivation or rigid discipline provided a sense of deep satisfaction of some people's abiding hunger which seems like a paradox and is the challenge of this topic.

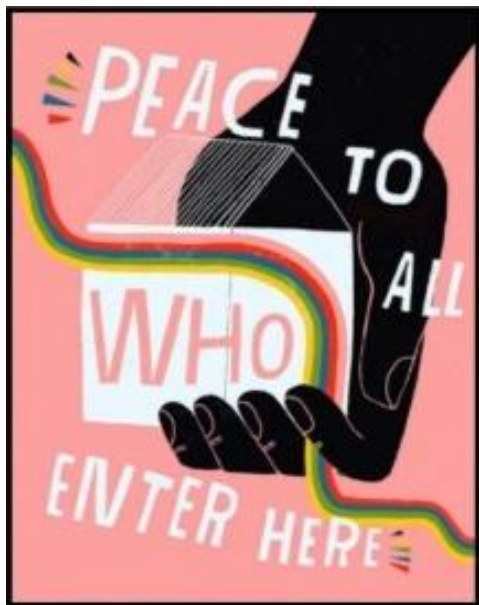
For spiritual practice, I would encourage all of us to tolerate one moment of our hunger, (in whatever form) not to satisfy it, but just to notice the hunger. Be curious about your hunger whether it is for

connection, to satisfy boredom, to feel victorious, to assuage some discomfort and see if for one more minute, sitting in hunger, can allow your intuition, higher power or synchronicity to provide some answers to the hunger.

Take time for deep practice to actually make friends with a small amount of your hunger to deepen your compassion. When we accept our own hunger, we can love the empty space within. Can we love another's hunger as well? When I am not satisfying my hunger, but remain open to it, even for just a bit, can I also notice my siblings' hunger, not to fix or change, but to simply accompany them?

This is the path of the open heart. We abide in our hunger to humble ourselves into a vulnerable state which makes us aware of others. Truly it is from this humbled state that we can walk together with more clarity. We can listen more deeply, attuning to our mutuality of needs. Feeling hungry for something is so human. Can we meet at the crossroads and walk a path together, both hungry, both curious and just be there for a moment? I can think of few better ways to evangelize love than to accompany one another in our hunger for compassion, understanding, care and of course love.

Rev. Amy Brunell and this month's Theme Team.



Peace To All...

Lisa Congdon

Spiritual Practices

Spiritual practices are the habits in our lives that center us, open our attention more fully, and nurture our connections to something larger than ourselves. A practice becomes spiritual when done with attention, intention, and repetition. At Unity, members are asked to develop a spiritual practice to help us find and keep our balance. Spiritual practices can be simple, like a walk in the woods, or structured, like tai chi. Here are theme-related practices that may hold possibilities for you.

Option A Fasting

If you are facing food insecurity on a daily or weekly basis, please speak to one of our staff with whom you feel comfortable.

Fasting is a practice of almost all spiritual traditions. Our Muslim siblings fast from sunrise to sunset for the month of Ramadan. Many religious orders fast one day a week. Buddha fasted, as did Jesus in the wilderness. During times of fasting, a person often experiences spiritual deepening – an awareness that hunger is not only for food, but for equally profound soul-needs.

Check with your doctor to be sure you don't have a medical condition that precludes fasting.

If you have never fasted before, you may want to follow the rules of Ramadan.

Awaken enough before dawn to be able to eat a light meal.

Then refrain from all food until after sunset. Be sure to stay hydrated with water.

Observe your body without judgment. Most of us are not used to real hunger pains and our first instinct is to eat something. Notice that the physical feeling of hunger ebbs and flows. Sit quietly with the feeling and notice your emotional response (anxiety, curiosity, fear, discomfort).

If you are trying this form of fasting, extend the practice for a week, eating nothing between sunrise and sunset each day.

If you have experienced fasting, you may use your own method or simply fast one day each week from sunset to sunset. This requires going without food for longer than the Ramadan fast and might open you to different experiences.

Consider what hunger represents to you (poverty, want, abandonment, loss) and allow yourself to be quietly aware of those feelings. Notice whether your hunger is only for food, or if there is some other emptiness that yearns to be sated. Where does that hunger reside in your body? Touch that part of your body tenderly and pour love into it.

Consider writing or journaling and/or discussing your experience with someone you trust and your chalice circle.

Option B

Feeding Our True Hungers

In *A Different Kind of Fast: Feeding Our True Hungers in Lent* (Broadleaf Books, 2024), Christine Valters Paintner invites us to fast from patterns and ways of being that distract and numb us in order to open up space to nourish our true hunger. She discusses several types of hunger and the life-denying habits or thoughts that keep us from being filled:

- We nourish our hunger for simplicity when we fast from consuming.
- We nourish our hunger for presence when we fast from inattention and multitasking.
- We nourish our hunger for abundance and contentment when we fast from anxiety and distracting thoughts.
- We nourish our hunger for slowness when we fast from rushing and productivity.
- We nourish our hunger for tenderness and vulnerability when we fast from always being strong and holding it all together.
- We nourish our hunger for calm unfolding when we fast from planning and overwhelm.
- We nourish our hunger for trust, openness, and mystery when we fast from trying to find certainty and control outcomes.

Paintner suggests contemplative practices—lectio divina, breath prayer, visio divina, walking, meditation on wisdom stories, imaginative prayer, creative ritual—that help us identify these life-denying patterns and open up space for the feast.

What hunger or hungers are you conscious of? And what stories, beliefs, or habits weigh you down or keep you hungry? What are you holding on to that you need to release? This month, reflect on the true hunger you would like to nourish. It may be the hunger for love, belonging, justice, God, meaning, one of the hungers Paintner names, or another. What can you do to nourish this abiding hunger? What can you let go of in order to make room for it?

You may want to approach this exercise with both general and specific ways you would like to “fast.” Reflecting on how your spiritual practice(s) serves your intention, and perhaps trying a new practice, may be part of your fast. You may want to track your progress through the month by journaling, talking with a soul friend, or using another marker. At the end of the month, share your journey with your Chalice Circle.



[Mandalas](#)

Viscous-Speed

Questions to Ponder

Unitarian Universalism doesn't have all the answers, but considering questions is one way for you to think about our faith and develop your own understanding of it. Read through the questions and mark which ones resonate with you or stir resistance in you; either reaction may lead to fruitful consideration. Choose one and take time to reflect on it over several days, perhaps writing it down and carrying it with you. How did you respond to the question? What did you learn? Where did it lead you?

Questions

1. What does “abiding hunger” mean to you? Does it bring up positive or negative connotations?
2. What do you think the difference is between a hunger that can be satisfied and one that abides?
3. For you, how is hunger different from longing or yearning?
4. “Abiding” hunger suggests one that will not be completely satisfied, yet it doesn't mean it is insatiable. In what ways do you experience abiding hunger for something other than food?
5. What do you yearn for most? How can or do you meet these hungers?
6. We live in a culture that depends on distancing ourselves from our true hungers, because when we identify with our surface hungers, we will consume more. How is this true in your life?
7. Does an “abiding hunger” guide your life choices? If so, how would you articulate what you are yearning for – meaning, purpose, social justice, connection, the sacred, something else?
8. How does Unitarian Universalism help us understand and keep abiding our hunger even when things seem wrong?
9. Do you find opportunities at Unity Church through which to respond to your soul-level longing? If so, do you experience these opportunities as challenging, rewarding, confounding, fulfilling, animating, or something else?
10. How do you respond when your abiding hunger collides with the abiding hunger of others? What are some examples of this that you have encountered?
11. March is Women's History Month, and we remember our women forebearers' abiding hunger for women's rights, having a voice in government, having agency over one's own body, being allowed education and employment, etc. How has this example given rise to your own sense of agency for your life's direction? Explain.
12. What are the internal movements of your heart and mind that point you to the goodness of the world and a sense of yearning for (hunger for) the thriving of that goodness, however you would describe that (compassion, justice, hope, equity)?

What is your question? Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't name what life is asking of you now, spend the month listening to your heart to hear what your question is.

Inspiration

Recommended Resources

For Personal Exploration & Reflection

Here you will find a variety of optional resources to help you take a deeper dive into and engage with the worship theme, in order to inspire thinking and open you to new insights. As you browse the packet, engage with those that hold meaning for you and one or two that may feel challenging.

Theme Definition

*We the people of Unity Church-Unitarian, grounded in a vision of beloved community, within, among, and beyond ourselves...**evangelize love to meet the deep and abiding hunger in all of us.***

“Abiding” is an adjective from an Old English word “abidan” —meaning “wait.” The dictionary defines “abiding” to mean “lasting a long time” (such as a feeling or memory) or “enduring.” Synonyms include lasting, persisting, lifelong, continuing, surviving, eternal, permanent, constant.

In the dictionary, hunger, as a noun, describes the feeling of discomfort or weakness resulting from the lack of food combined with the desire to eat. Synonyms include emptiness, starvation, famine, malnutrition. As a verb, however, “hunger” describes a desire or craving for something. Synonyms for “to hunger” include yearning, longing, desiring intensely. We use hunger as a verb to describe feelings and desires for things that include the physical need for food but can extend to less tangible emotional, spiritual or intellectual needs.

Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs” starts with the very basic physiological needs for biological survival—food, air, sleep. In Maslow’s view, without satisfying these basic needs it is not possible for an individual to move toward higher levels of need, which include safety, love, belonging, esteem and self-actualization.

The Bible considers both physical hunger, calling on us to feed the hungry and care for the needy, and spiritual hunger, seeking a deeper meaning and purpose. The Quran describes abiding hunger as a spiritual test that can lead to feelings of gratitude and empathy.

Last month’s theme “evangelize love” is connected by the word “meet” to this month’s theme of “abiding hunger.” Note that we are not being asked to satisfy or fulfill but rather to “meet” our and everyone’s deep and abiding hunger. What do we mean by the word “meet”?

Overeating or eating non-nutritious food can be a response to emotional and spiritual needs. Our economic structure – capitalism – is built on the premise of scarcity and exploits our physical, emotional and intellectual needs through acquisition of possessions and experiences. As a beloved community, we hunger for many things – connectedness, justice, compassion, to make a difference. Our End asks us to consider how we can **meet** all of these (and many other) deep and abiding hungers with a love that is healthy and fulfilling. How do we meet the world with integrity, service and joy?

Wise Words

“These trees were a few hundred feet from Lake Michigan. They had a magical energy that made me stop my car and walk around them. Full of admiration for one another, they respected the space they each occupied and yet were reaching out to each other. Each time I look at these trees I am reminded how we all need community. We are all reaching out for love. We also need space to grow.”
—Denise M Cawley, “Magnificent Trees Reaching”

“Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart.”
—Rainier Maria Rilke

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice: they shall have their fill.”
— Matthew 5:6

“You are safer here than anywhere else in the world because the arms that love you the most are holding you tight.

I write the words I believe to be true even as I know how terribly strong the arms pulling us apart are, and how love, even the most powerful kind, cannot protect, how it bears witness only, how it remembers and carries the words on, until our breaths are no more, until the homes that we’ve been looking for our whole lives open their doors and invite us in.”

—Kao Kalia Yang, “What I told my children to do if I’m taken by ICE,” *StarTribune*, January 31, 2026.

“To all the girls who have faced injustice and been silenced. Together we will be heard.”
—Malala Yousafzai, *I AM Malala*

“Truth isn’t always beauty, but the hunger for it is.”
—Nadine Gordimer

“We have a hunger of the mind which asks for knowledge of all around us, and the more we gain, the more is our desire; the more we see, the more we are capable of seeing.”
—Maria Mitchell, scientist, 1818-1889

“We long to belong to a circle of generosity, to live in a community where our gifts can be given and received.”
—Parker J. Palmer

“Justice is what love looks like in public.”
—Cornel West

“Liberation is a communal process; it is something we do together.”
—Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha / In the Struggle: A Hispanic Women's Liberation Theology*

“There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.”
—Mahatma Gandhi

“It seems to me we can never give up longing and wishing while we are still alive. There are certain things we feel to be beautiful and good, and we must hunger for them.”
—George Eliot

“So I think what’s happening in the modern age is people are realizing we’ve built this extraordinary gleaming modern world and yet we’re more hungry and thirsty for meaning than ever.

So I think that’s what’s happening is we have more than any human beings ever had in the history of the world and yet the same questions are still gnawing at the soul. What’s it mean? What are we doing here? Where is joy found?

Everything is driven by the desire to know the truth. There’s an exploration. There’s a wide eyed sense of wonder. If you talk to the best scientists they have this sort of gleam in their eye like, ‘this is what we’re learning and we don’t know what’s actually around the corner.’ And if you talk to the best theologians and poets and scholars they ideally have the same gleam in their eye, which is, ‘Look what we’re learning, look what we’re exploring.’ And so to me they’re not enemies. They’re long lost dance partners.”

—Rob Bell, “Hungry for Meaning: Is There a Conflict Between Science and Spirituality?”

“In the long run there is no more liberating, no more exhilarating experience than to determine one’s position, state it bravely, and then act boldly. Action brings with it its own courage, its own energy, a growth of self-confidence that can be acquired in no other way.”—Eleanor Roosevelt, *Tomorrow Is Now*

“I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi... will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have a Dream”

“The Hungry Ghosts are probably the most vividly drawn metaphors in the [Buddhist] Wheel of Life. Phantom-like creatures with withered limbs, grossly bloated bellies, and long, thin necks, the Hungry Ghosts in many ways represent a fusion of rage and desire. Tormented by unfulfilled cravings and insatiably demanding of impossible satisfactions, the Hungry Ghosts are searching for gratification for old unfulfilled needs whose time has passed. They are beings who have uncovered a terrible emptiness within themselves....In addition, these beings, while impossibly hungry and thirsty, cannot drink or eat without causing themselves terrible pain or indigestion. Their very attempts to satisfy themselves cause more pain. Their long, thin throats are so narrow and raw that swallowing produces unbearable burning and irritation. Their bloated bellies are in turn unable to digest nourishment; attempts at gratification only yield a more intense hunger and craving. These are beings who cannot take in a present-day, albeit transitory, satisfaction. They remain obsessed with the fantasy of achieving complete release from the pain of their past and are stubbornly unaware that their desire is fantasy. It is this knowledge that such people are estranged from, for their fantasy must be owned as fantasy. The Hungry Ghosts must come in contact with the ghostlike nature of their own longings.”

—Mark Epstein, *Thoughts Without a Thinker: Psychotherapy from a Buddhist Perspective*

“Women turn to food when they are not hungry because they are hungry for something they can’t name: a connection to what is beyond the concerns of daily life. Something deathless, something sacred.”—Geneen Roth, *Women, Food and God*

“Whether you long for the partner who broke up with you, or the one you dream of meeting; whether you hunger for the happy childhood you’ll never have, or for the divine; whether you yearn for a creative life, or the country of your birth, or a more perfect union (personally or politically); whether you dream of scaling the world’s highest peaks, or merging with the beauty you saw on your last beach vacation; whether you long to ease the pain of your ancestors, or for a world in which life could survive without consuming other life; whether you yearn for a lost person, an unborn child, the fountain of youth, or unconditional love: These are all manifestations of the same great ache....It doesn’t matter whether we consider ourselves ‘secular’ or ‘religious’: in some fundamental way, we’re all reaching for the heavens.”

—Susan Cain, *Bittersweet: How Sorrow and Longing Make Us Whole*

Poetry

Poems are often excerpted and, if so, a link to the entire poem is embedded in the title. Click on the poem title (link) to read the whole poem.

[Darkest Before Dawn](#)

James Crews

These blooms

stir something too long asleep in me...

—that hope

and grace still reign in certain sectors
of the living world, that there are laws
which can never be overturned
by hateful words or the wishes
of power-hungry men.

Widening Circles

by Rainer Maria Rilke

I live my life in widening circles
that reach out across the world.
I may not complete this last one
but I give myself to it.

I circle around God, around the primordial tower.
I've been circling for thousands of years
and I still don't know: am I a falcon,
a storm, or a great song?

The Bright Field

by R.S. Thomas

...Life is not hurrying
on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

Grace

Rafael Jesus Gonzalez

...thanks & blessing to them who work
& blessing to them who cannot;
may they not want – for their hunger
sours the wine
& robs the salt of its taste.
Thanks be for the sustenance & strength
for our dance & the work of justice, of peace.



Apple in Hand

Conger Design, Pixabay

The Bare Arms of Trees

John Tagliabue

I think of the vastness and courage between this step
and that step
Of the yearning and the fear of the meeting, of the
terrible desire
held apart.
I think of the ocean of longing that moves between
land and land
And between people...

I think of the unseen love and the unknown
thoughts that exist

Fasting

Rumi

What hidden sweetness there is
in this emptiness of the belly!
We are surely like a lute, no more and no less;
For if, for instance, the belly of the lute becomes full,
no lament high or low will arise from that full lute.

Go to the Limits of Your Longing

Rainer Maria Rilke

Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.

Just keep going. No feeling is final.

Don't let yourself lose me.

Nearby is the country they call life.

You will know it by its seriousness.

Give me your hand.

The Necessity

Alice Fogel

It isn't true about the lambs.
They are not meek...
and they are not silent when hungry....
I am to cry out loud
like a hungry lamb, cry loud
enough to waken wolves in the night.

No one can be allowed to sleep.

Love Dogs

Rumi

The grief you cry out from
draws you toward union.

Your pure sadness
that wants help
is the secret cup.

Listen to the moan of a dog for its master.
That whining is the connection.

There are love dogs
no one knows the names of.

Give your life
to be one of them.

I had been hungry, all the Years

Emily Dickinson

I had been hungry, all the Years—
My Noon had Come—to dine—
I trembling drew the Table near—
And touched the Curious Wine—

‘Twas this on Tables I had seen—
When turning, hungry, Home
I looked in Windows, for the Wealth
I could not hope—for Mine—

I did not know the ample Bread—
‘Twas so unlike the Crumb
The Birds and I, had often shared
In Nature’s—Dining Room—

The Plenty hurt me—’twas so new—
Myself felt ill—and odd—
As Berry—of a Mountain Bush—
Transplanted—to a Road—

Nor was I hungry—so I found
That Hunger—was a way
Of Persons outside Windows—
The Entering—takes away—



Kingfisher

Robert Balog, Pixabay

Articles

“Carolyn McDade’s Spirit of Life”

Kimberly French, UU World, 10/1/2007

In six short lines “Spirit of Life” touches so much that is central to our faith—compassion, justice, community, freedom, reverence for nature, and the mystery of life. It finds the common ground held by humanists and theists, pagans and Christians, Buddhists and Jews, gay and straight among us.

Spirit of Life, come unto me.

Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.

Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;

Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.

Roots hold me close; wings set me free;

Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

As close as this piece of music is to the hearts of so many UUs, its songwriter is something of an enigma. Little has been written about Carolyn McDade. We think of her as ours and often identify her as a UU songwriter, but for the past two decades she has had little formal contact with the denomination. And the tellings of the story behind “Spirit of Life” have not always agreed on the facts. Here is her story.

“Spiritual Longing”

McGill University Office of Spiritual and Religious Life, November 21, 2023

Whatever our beliefs, getting in touch with our own deep senses of longing, including compassionate feelings or desires for a better world or transcendent experiences, can be an expansive and healing experience.

Soul Hunger: What Is This Silent Epidemic Of The 21st Century?

Bev Janisch, n.d.

Soul hunger is an inner depletion that arises when the deeper part of you is asking for meaning, connection, or alignment. Soul hunger is not a flaw or a failure. It’s a sacred signal, it’s an invitation from within. With the right tools and practices, it is possible to reclaim your sense of inner peace and purpose.

To Seek Out Belonging

Rev. Janet Parsons, Gloucester UU Church, May 1, 2022

We humans yearn for relationships. We seek connection, for the opportunity to belong to something outside of ourselves, larger than ourselves. In ordinary times we can bring all of our separate yearnings to a place such as this church. And even something that we normally take for granted such as Sunday mornings here in church was taken from us for too long.... I wonder about this yearning for connection, for relationship, and from where it comes. My best answer is that it comes from Love.

“Mother’s Day Proclamation”

Julia Ward Howe

excerpt from Proclamation for “Mother’s Peace Day,” May 12, 1870, delivered at a peace rally in Boston.

Arise then... Women of this day!

Arise, all women who have hearts,

whether your baptism be of water or of tears! ...

In the name of womanhood and humanity, I

earnestly ask that a general congress of women,

without limit of nationality, may be appointed and held at someplace deemed most convenient and at the earliest period consistent with its objectives, to promote the alliance of the different nationalities, the amicable settlement of international questions, and the great and general interests of peace.

“The Longing to Matter Is No Laughing Matter”

Jennifer Szalai, New York Times, January 28, 2026.

Two new books delve into our hunger to feel valued and worthy of attention.

“Five Ways to Feel More Loved”

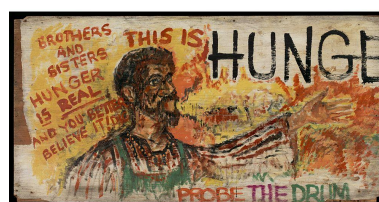
Harry T. Reis, et al, *Greater Good Magazine*, February 10, 2026.

Two-thirds of American adults yearn to feel more loved or loved more often by the people in their lives. The authors combine happiness research and relationship science to identify specific strategies for shifting our mindsets and interpersonal interactions for experiencing more love.

Resurrection City, Washington, D.C., 1968.

Brendan Tensley, *Smithsonian Magazine*, 2020

That past winter, Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) had revealed plans to erect a mini-metropolis on the National Mall as part of King’s Poor People’s Campaign. The encampment would send a message that the War on Poverty was far from over. Even after King was assassinated that April, his supporters forged ahead. The abiding hunger for justice goes on.



Mural (above) and Detail (left) from Resurrection City.

Prayers

Draw Near to Me

Source of Sources, Spirit of Life, that which loves us
without need of name.

Draw near to me...

Come, I humbly call you.

Wash me with the tears of the world,
so that I know I do not cry in solitude.

Oh, Great Mother, Blessed Father, lift my chin and
gently kiss
my cheeks

so that I may be renewed, restored, and begin to
trust myself

and others with my heart again.

Come, so that I may feel alive and loved again.

May those who hunger and thirst be fed.

And may those who are fed, hunger and thirst for
justice and righteousness.

—An excerpt, by Carol Thomas Cissel

Holy Hunger

Holy Hunger, abide in me.

Hunger for justice, abide in me.

Hunger for peace, abide in me.

Hunger for compassion, abide in me.

Let my yearning be for the thriving of all.

Let my yearning be for beloved community.

Let my yearning be for enlightenment.

Be persistence meeting glorious difference.

Be persistence welcoming the stranger.

Be persistence loving the enemy.

Let me be steadfast in abiding through trial,
through temptation, through distraction, through
despair.

Let me be steadfast in abiding until righteousness
becomes.

Let me be steadfast in abiding until all become one.
In the end as in the beginning, let kin-dom
fulfillment abide.

May it be so.

—Andrea La Sonde Anastos

[The Longing for Something More](#)

Every little thing that

breaks your heart

Is welcome here

We'll make a space for it

Give it its due time

and praise

for the wanting it represents

the longing for something more,

some healing hope that remains

—Gretchen Haley, UUA Worship Web, 2018

Books

[I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban](#)

by Malala Yousafzai. Little, Brown and CO., 2013.

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

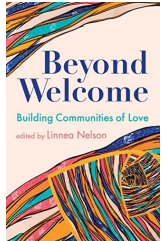
Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

I Am Malala is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

I Am Malala will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.
In the Anderson Library, 370.8 M.

[Beyond Welcome: Building Communities of Love](#)

by Linnea Nelson. Skinner House, 2021.

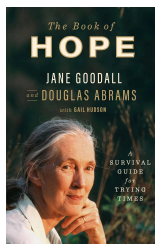


Editor Linnea Nelson and contributors dream of a future Unitarian Universalism that upholds abundant love and universal justice within every community. In the Unity Bookstall and Anderson Library: 230.07 N.

[The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times, Celadon Books](#)

by Jane Goodall, et al. Celadon, 2021.

Drawing on decades of work that has helped expand our understanding of what it means to be human and what we all need to do to help build a better world, *The Book of Hope* touches on vital questions, including: How do we stay hopeful when everything seems hopeless? How do we cultivate hope in our children? What is the relationship between hope and action? Filled with moving and inspirational stories and photographs from Jane's remarkable career, *The Book of Hope* is a deeply personal conversation with one of the most beloved figures in the world today. In the Anderson Library, 158 G.



[The Serviceberry](#)

by Robin Wall Kimmerer, Simon & Schuster, 2024
“...Abundant empirical evidence attests to the fact that we humans lean as much toward cooperation and generosity as we do toward self-interest under circumstances when we are not coerced by outside forces.” (p 45). In the Unity Bookstall and the Anderson Library, 581.63 K.

[Awakening Together: The Spiritual Practice of Inclusivity and Community](#)

by Larry Yang. Wisdom Publications, 2017.
“We are all seekers. We are seekers regardless of what spiritual tradition we affiliate with. We are

seekers even if we do not espouse any religious faith at all. We search for meaningful experiences, satisfying objects, compatible people, useful knowledge, fulfilling activities, well-being, and more. Seeking is part of our humanity. When we seek, inquire, and explore, we open up to our own life and to the world. This openness is a tender place for both our minds and hearts. From this tender place, we look for things that we hope will create more happiness and contentment for ourselves.”

[Famished](#)

by Anna Rollins, Eerdmans, 2025.

Rollins draws connections between the obsession with women's weight, sexual purity, and anti-black racism. This is a memoir of her own unhealthy eating as she grew up in fundamentalist Christian churches where the story of Adam and Eve was expanded and 'explained' as a 'necessary' reason for women's pain and chastity.

Children's Books

[We Are Water Protectors](#)

by Carole Lindstrom (illustrated by Michaela Goade). Roaring Brook Press, 2020.

This beautifully illustrated book, winner of the Caldecott Medal, tells the story of an Ojibwe girl who rallies her people to fight the Dakota Pipeline. Her hunger for the land and water to be safe and clean is a lovely way to introduce environmental justice to children. It is simple without being simplistic.

[The Incredible Book Eating Boy](#)

by Oliver Jeffers. Philomel Books, 2007.

A boy discovers he can eat books to gain knowledge, leading to an insatiable appetite and hilarious consequences.

Movies

[Hidden Figures](#)

Directed by Theodore Melfi, who co-wrote the screenplay with Allison Schroeder.

In the 1950s and 60s, as the United States raced against Russia to put a man in space, NASA found untapped talent in a group of Black female mathematicians that served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in U.S. history. Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, and Katherine Johnson overcame discrimination and crossed all gender, race, and professional lines while their brilliance and desire to dream big, beyond anything ever accomplished before by the human race, firmly cemented them in U.S. history as true American heroes.

[The Long Walk Home](#)

Directed by Richard Pearce, 1990

Set in Montgomery, Alabama during the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, the film follows Odessa Cotter (Whoopi Goldberg), an African-American woman who works as a maid/nanny for Miriam Thompson (Sissy Spacek). Odessa and her family confront issues faced by African Americans in the South at the time: poverty, racism, segregation, and violence. The black community has begun a widespread boycott of the city-owned buses to end segregation; Odessa is forced to take long walks both ways to work.

Miriam Thompson offers to give Odessa a ride two days a week to ensure she gets to work on time and to lessen the fatigue her “long walk home” is causing. Around the city, some informal carpools and other systems are starting, but most of the black residents are forced to walk to work.

As the boycott continues, tensions rise in the city. Miriam has to choose between what she believes is right – joining with other protesters standing against oppression or succumb to pressure from her husband and their friends.

Videos

[“The Danger of a Single Story”](#)

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. TED Talk, 2009.

“...When I left Nigeria to go to university in the United States. I was 19. My American roommate was shocked by me. She asked where I had learned to speak English so well, and was confused when I said that Nigeria happened to have English as its official language. She asked if she could listen to what she called my “tribal music,” and was consequently very disappointed when I produced my tape of Mariah Carey. She assumed that I did not know how to use a stove.

What struck me was this: She had felt sorry for me even before she saw me. Her default position toward me, as an African, was a kind of patronizing, well—meaning pity. My roommate had a single story of Africa: a single story of catastrophe. In this single story, there was no possibility of Africans being similar to her in any way, no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals.

Podcasts

[“Expect Delays,” a sermon by Dane Smith, delivered at Unity Church-Unitarian on September 3, 2017–Labor Day weekend.](#)

Start sermon at 26:45, appr. 21 min.

Activist and journalist Dane Smith outlines the way to keep on going, even when the going seems fruitless or like it is taking too long. He reminds us that the law of inertia tells us that things in motion, stay in motion, and so should we in the work towards justice; that the pursuit of justice is who we UU's are. But the arc of the universe is long, meaning also slow, and we need to expect delays and not give up because of them. With wit and humor, Dane offers up a way to stay in and endure an abiding hunger for justice.

Music

Playlists on Spotify are free to access though sign in to Spotify via a Google, Apple or Spotify account is required. YouTube Music is free to access without a Google account, though more features are available with an account.

Abiding Hunger, YouTube Music

Lisa Brosseau and Ariane Giles

Stay With Me by Sam Smith, *In the Lonely Hour*

Empire by Dean Lewis, *The Epilogue*

Runaway by Aurora, *Running with the Wolves*

I'm Yours by Jason Mraz, *We Sing. We Dance. We Steal Things.*

See You Again (feat. Charlie Puth) by Wiz Khalifa, *Nine Track Mind*

Streets of Minneapolis by Bruce Springsteen

Two Birds by Regina Spektor, *Far*

How Can I Keep From Singing by Judy Collins, *Portrait of an American Girl*

Go to the Limits of Your Longing by Donna McKevitt, *Go to the Limits of Your Longing*

Imagine by John Lennon, *Imagine*

One Voice by the Wailin' Jennys, *40 Days*

We Would be One by the Chancel Choir of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, *Music in the Air: Hymns from Our Liberal Religious Tradition, Vol. 2*

Spirit by The Waterboys, *This is the Sea*

Human by Rag'nBone Man, *Human*



Abiding Hunger (Take1), Spotify

Kevin Ward

Hunger by Florence + The Machine

You Can't Hurry Love by The Supremes

Wait by The Beatles

I Can't Be Satisfied by Muddy Waters

Hungry Like The Wolf by Duran Duran

Them Belly Full (But We Hungry) by Bob Marley & The Wailers

Hold On, I'm Comin' by Sam & Dave

Hold On by Wilson Phillips

Waiting For My Real Life To Begin by Colin Hay

The Waiting Song by Ani DiFranco

"Hallelujah"

Violamarie, a very young Italian singer, sings "Hallelujah."

For more information:

- Visit the [Spiritual Practice page on the Unity Church website.](#)
- Learn more about the [Double Helix Model of Faith Formation.](#)
- Please contact [Phillipa Anastos](#), Membership Coordinator and Program Assistant

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