SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE: See Sunday Service schedule, themes and leaders on pages 2

Are you interested Adult OWL programming? Please see pages 10-11

September 2023 Volume 59 Number 1

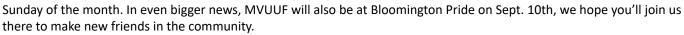
September 2023: Welcome

We often think of September as "back-to-school" time. But, it is also "back-to-church" time. Vacations and time at the cabin give way to more settled weekly routines. Often, we think of this time of year as a chance to reorganize and reorder our lives. There is also a sense of newness that comes with joy and excitement; what will I learn...what new friends will I make... what should I wear?! All good questions.

There is so much for us to learn and explore together this year! We've got new adult programs starting this fall with Adult OWL (Our Whole Lives Sexuality) and a chapter of the UU Christian Fellowship, as more Christian leaning folks have recently joined the congregation. This is the first time we've had either of those programs here. We've also got excellent guest speakers and great Sunday services planned, too!

Looking for friends and deeper connections? Soul Matters small groups continue to meet to explore our monthly themes. We've also added Coffee & Conversations gatherings twice a month and a Grief Support Circle. Fran's yoga group is starting back up. And Men's Group, Women's Group, and Book Club are all in swing.

Looking for a bigger gathering? September 9th we'll be hosting Kids Night (aka Parent's Night Out); this is a variation on our usual monthly Community Night. We've got Potluck Sunday starting up again on the 4th



All of these great new things are happening and favorite activities are returning. The only thing left to decide is what to wear! I'll be wearing my clergy collar and rainbow shawl to pride. As for the other events and Sundays; I have to admit, I do

What about you? Why not celebrate the new school/church year by wearing your favorite outfit to our Annual Water Gathering service on Sept. 17th. Throw on some bangles and shine up those shoes! Let's look good and feel good as we celebrate the beginning of another church year together.

find myself wanting to buy a smart new outfit to show off at the Fellowship...and I've got a sassy new haircut.

See you Sunday,

Rev. Laura



MVUUF is a liberal religious congregation guided by democratic principles whose mission is to engage members in a shared quest for spiritual and intellectual growth leading to lives of service, compassion, and justice.



Uni-Sun September 2023

Sunday Services

Sept. 3rd: The Healing Power of Movement:



Candace Mahowald will be talking about the mind/body connection and the healing power of movement. Speaking as a yoga teacher, she will talk about how moving the physical body can strengthen and bring peace to our minds and souls. There will be a guided meditation and a short, seated movement practice as a part of service. Candace is a 200hr RYT certified yoga instructor with the Yoga Alliance. Fran Bohlke is assisting with the service.



Sept. 10th: What Does It Mean to be a 'Welcoming Congregation?

Within Unitarian Universalism the term 'Welcoming Congregation', indicates a congregation that is welcoming and supportive of the LGBTQ community. Beyond being friendly and accepting, what are we called to do as a community to live out our declaration of being a 'Welcoming Congregation'? Rev. Laura Thompson and Kaizen Hummer



Sept. 17th: Water Gathering; All Rivers Start Small

Join us for our Annual Fall Ingathering Service, which is always marked by a water gathering ritual. Bring a small amount of water from your home or a favorite place as we rejoin together to celebrate our community and mission. With Rev. Laura Thompson, Maria Bavier and the MVUUF Choir



Sept. 24th: Welcoming Change

In June, UUs from all over the country gathered online and in-person to worship, learn and conduct denominational business together. Delegates at the UUA General Assembly voted to move toward changing our principles into a framework of values that all stem outward from LOVE, which is our centering value. Join Rev. Laura and Carla V. Ries as we look at these big changes and what they mean to us. In honor of 'Welcoming Change', we invite you to bring all of your collected spare change to MVUUF as part of our new fundraising campaign, Change for Good..

Letter from the Board Chair

It's back to school time. For each of us, this means something different. Maybe you are sending your little ones to preschool or daycare, or enjoying more daytime adventures outside in the waning summer heat. Maybe you're negotiating the spot in your home for the after-school dump of backpacks and Chromebooks. Or maybe you're sending a young adult to college. Maybe you're just observing the new hustle of early-morning activity in your neighborhood - bus traffic, crossing guards, and kids on bikes. Whatever your vantage point, we are reminded that "summer's lease hath all too short a date." Even so, it's a fresh start.

This month is a theme of welcome. Welcome **back** to our long-timers, welcome **in** to our first-timers. Welcome even if we only see you once in awhile. This year we hope to build up our roster of members even more, so bring your friends! We are planning some fun community events, a couple of "kids' nights" (aka - "parents' night out"), along with our usual Sunday potlucks. We also welcome new ideas, new perspectives, and most importantly of all, new friendships.

So as you are negotiating the new traffic flows in your household, or in your neighborhood, never forget the wise advice from the Burma Shave signs along the road (if you don't know this reference, it's a fun Google journey):

At school crossings

Heed instructions!

Protect our little

tax deductions.

Burma Shave

Have a great September!

-Kathleen Coate



Sunday Sharing Partner

Outfront Minnesota



Leading Minnesota to LGBTQ+ Equality

GRIEF

/grēf/ noun

a strong, sometimes overwhelming emotion for people, regardless of whether their sadness stems from the loss of a loved one or from another form of loss.

Grief Support Circle 1st Wednesdays at 10:30am Fireside Room



Please place clean, dry and "stretchable" plastic here.

Also accepted: bubble wrap and bubble wrap envelopes with labels cut off

No food tainted plastic bags

No plastic wrap



Communications & Administration

Hello friends,

Welcome back. Welcome home. I hope your summer brought you much joy.

For those interested in *Writing as Spirtual Exploration*, please stay tuned. I am planning to launch a new exploration that alternates monthly between the Soul Matters prose writing and my curriculum in poetry. It will begin in October. I will tell you all about it in the Friday emails and October's Uni-Sun.

Warmly, Jeannie jeannie@mnvalleyuu.org

SOUL MATTERS MONTHLY THEME: Welcome

This month we explore the theme of creativity. To delve into this theme, check out the plethora of resources from this month's <u>Soul Matters Small Group Packet</u>, which includes guided questions and activities, recommended readings, films, music playlists and more. **Tom Ehlinger will host a Soul Matters Group beginning on Monday, September 18th at 10:30**. He will also host an information session on 8/31 and 9/3 for people curious about Soul Matters. Please find more details below.

The Soul Matters packet asks some good questions about welcome. How would you answer?

- Has welcoming change gotten easier or harder as you've grown older?
- What would you tell someone younger than yourself about welcoming in grief?
- Have you ever welcomed in a moment so fully that you suddenly felt one with it?



Are you curious about the Soul Matters
Sharing Circle? Join Tom for an info
session to learn about Soul Matters.

On Zoom: 8/31 at 7pm Link. In person: Sunday 9/3 at 11:30am in the MVUUF lobby

Children, Youth & Family Ministry



This year's overarching frame is *The Gifts of Our Faith*. We'll focus on ten beloved UU values and explore their potential to shape us and, in turn, shape the world.

It's exciting to know that our wider faith community also will be exploring these themes. As part of our UUA's <u>Article II Commission</u> work, a <u>proposed new statement of UUA purposes and values</u> has been developed. Our 2023-24 Soul Matters themes were created with that proposal in mind as we do the sacred work of discerning which of our beloved UU values will best guide our faith as we engage today's world.

I hope you have had a fabulous summer! In August, CYF had a Summer Sunday Outside ~ We had tons of fun with a bubble machine, a picnic, a famous Unitarian Universalist scavenger hunt.

Some of the youth even made Welcome Rocks to place outside the front door. Do you notice their art?

For the 2023-2024 year our Middle and High School Youth Group will be exploring their own UU Faith while learning about other faiths through the Crossing Paths curriculum. I am thrilled that some of you have volunteered to help! In addition to Crossing Paths, MVUUF youth will participate in a Social Action project (like helping the Animal Humane Society) and Field Trips (like meeting at an Escape Room).

Our elementary children will explore social action through a Harry Potter themed curriculum. We will mix in some Soul Matters Activities and a year-long social action project of their choosing. Our 4th and 5th graders may also become chalice lighters as part of their CYF year.

Our Nursery through Preschool aged children will be using our Soul Matter's Curriculum and play-based learning.

All programming will take place on Sundays from 10:30-11:45 a.m. unless it is a field trip or Community Night (<u>CYF Calendar Link</u>).

Note that this 2023-2024 Children, Youth and Family Ministry programming encompasses Religious Education, Junior Youth Group and Youth Group.

Registration is Open!
Volunteer Sign-Up

Maria Bavier
Family Ministry Director, Credentialed Religious Educator
maria@mnvalleyuu.org
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers



MUSIC AT MVUUF!





Uni-Sun

Stewardship 2023-24

Stewardship, like many things post-pandemic, has undergone a sea change into something new. To say the very least, we now exist in a hybrid world of technological and in-person meetings. We use technology more than ever as a resource for our growth and for connecting with our wider communities.

I am delighted to report that three new members of the Stewardship Team have joined the current team of Glenn Corliss, Steve Danko, Jeanne Simpson, and Rev. Laura Thompson:

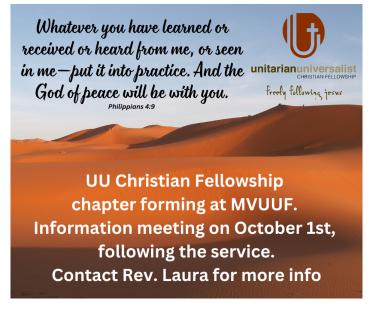
- Candace Mahowald
- Emily Kampa
- Suzanne Scribner

They bring a wealth of knowledge, energy and creativity. Thank you for joining!

One way Stewardship has not changed: All of us MVUUF community members are stewards. We do not "own" MVUUF per se, but we are charged to keep MVUUF safe and strong for future generations in need of a safe place to exist, to ask questions, and to explore possibilities.

Questions? Want to learn more? Contact any of us!

Kelley Hughes, Stewardship Chair





Social Action Racial Justice

We would like to invite all to come to the **Bloomington Pride Festival on Sunday, Sept 10**th from 12 to 5 pm at Civic Plaza **1800 W Old Shakopee Rd, in Bloomington.** Members of the Social Action and Racial Justice Committee will be staffing a booth. There will be food vendors and entertainment. We look forward to seeing you there as we celebrate our Pride and show our support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Updates on the Ukrainian family: Polina is registered and will start school on Sept 5th at Howe

elementary. A special "thank you" to Fran for organizing her English tutoring and for all the volunteers who have tutored her over the past several weeks. We all see noticeable difference in her English skills and this is sure to benefit her when she starts school. Both Sasha and Svitlana have passed their written driver's license test and have started to practice behind the wheel. Thank you for those who have donated their car and time for behind the wheel practice. Sasha and Svitlana are taking English classes Mon-Thursday mornings in Minneapolis but their current teacher is leaving Sept 14th. They are on the waiting list for another class but may need extra tutoring as well as volunteers to take them to job interviews in Sept-Oct. Please reach out to Nan or Heather if interested in helping with this family.



We have had a few new members join the SARJ committee. It has been fun to have new energy and new ideas. If you are interested in coming to a meeting or joining our committee, reach out to John Chlebeck at Johnchlebeck@gmail.com. Our next meeting is Sunday, Sept 24th after the service.



Adult OWL

Have you ever wondered what an Adult OWL activity might look like? If so, read on. Here is an example.

Context: This activity is part of a 2-hour lesson titled Sexual Consent and Boundaries (SCB). This SCB lesson is from the Older Adult Our Whole Lives Manual and is number 7 out of 14 total possible lessons. It comes after the group of participants have already established comfort with and around each other. The group has agreed to a group Covenant of respecting each other, holding the details expressed in the group private, understanding how to listen and participate, and a shared responsibility for making the program work for everyone, among other agreements.

The Activity: 25 minutes.

Goal: Assessing one's own sexual values and respecting other's values.

Participants receive a handout with questions on it. They are instructed to answer the questions honestly, but anonymously. They answer by checking a box for "AGREE" or "DISAGREE".

Some questions in the handout are as follows:		AGREE	DISAGREE
1.	A partnered relationship is not necessary for my happiness.	[]	[]
2.	I approve of consensual non-monogamy, with partners openly having relationships with more than one person at a time	[]	[]
3.	I think it is okay to talk someone into sex.	[]	[]
4.	If young adult grandchildren visit my home (or if they were to visit), they can share a bed with a romantic partner.	[]	[]

The handouts are collected discretely and then mixed up and handout out randomly to the participants again, face down.

Participants read the new sheets with someone else's responses and follow the direction below.

One of the facilitators will read the statement out loud. If the sheet of paper in your hand for this item is marked AGREE, go stand by the sign posted in the room marked AGREE (one side of the room) and if it is marked DISAGREE, go stand by that sign (other side of the room). REMEMBER you are representing someone else's answers, not your own. This act of moving will be done in complete silence to avoid making any comments that might hurt someone.

After all the statements have been read, everyone is invited to return to their original chairs.

Then the group is asked to share their thoughts about the following questions.

- 1. What were your thoughts as you completed your own survey?
- 2. Which, if any, of the statements were the most thought provoking?
- 3. What surprised you?

After this activity, the group is given a 10 minute break before the next activity begins. That is it!

Interested in Adult OWL? Please read more on the next page about what we are offering and how to register.

Adult OWL

Adult OWL registration is OPEN! Please fill out the <u>REGISTRATION FORM</u>. Registration ends on OCT 7th or once we reach our maximum number of participants (15).

of Sessions planned: 8 sessions, Oct 2023-May 2024

Dates & times of Sessions: 2nd Sunday of Month, noon -2pm (based on survey responses)

of Participants: Maximum=15, minimum=6

Location: MVUUF Conference Room

Topics we will cover: To be solidified in our 1st session. Currently

based on survey responses

1) Orientation/kickoff

- 2) Sexuality and Aging
- Review of newer discoveries around sexual response cycle, sexual anatomy, sexual life cycles, developmental stages, and orgasms.
- 4) Sexuality and spirituality
- 5) Sexuality and relationships
- 6) Triangle of love theory examines relationship of intimacy, passion, and decision/commitment.
- 7) Sexuality and family
- 8) Body Image/ Sex Beyond the Basics

Adult OWL 2023-24

Out Anole Lives: holistic sexuality and ...

Consent

Intimacy Register Here

Spirituality

Spirituality

Dates: Oct 8th: Nov 12th, Dec 10th, Jan 14th, Feb 11th, Mar 10th, Apr 14th May 12th

I was beginning to learn that home is the space within us and between us where we feel safe—and brave. It is not a physical space as much as it is a field of being.

Valarie Kaur

Groups and Committees

Coming soon

MVUUF groups that will start back up in October include:

- Evening Book Group
- Men's Group
- REI
- Women's Group
- Writing as Spiritual Exploration

YOGA

Yoga classes return again this church year!

Classes begin on Monday, September 11th at 4:15. There are 6 yoga classes offered in September. Those dates are 11,13,18, 20, 25, and 27. We meet from Mondays and Wednesday from 4:15-5:15 downstairs

at the fellowship. There is no fee, but you are asked to make a donation to MVUUF.

NOTICE: This is a very active, moving and stretching class, with lots of up and down—on the mat, standing and back onto the mat. Though chairs are used, this is NOT a chair yoga class.

The classes consist of stretching, strength-building, flexibility, right/left brain work and balance practice for all. You are encouraged to go at your own pace and to do only the poses/movements that suit

you and your needs. Bring a yoga mat and strap, wear loose, comfortable clothing, and come prepared to move and have some fun. Fran Bohlke is your instructor.





Guys Lunch

For some time now, a group of mostly retired MVUUF guys have been meeting informally for lunch on the 4th Thursday of the month. Lately this has been at Zeke's in Bloomington at noon. It's very informal. Just show up if you would like (although it does help Zeke's if they have an approximate count).

If you think you would like to be added to a list of guys that get monthly reminders, let Don Park know (donfpark@comcast.net). He can easily add you to the list.

Groups and Committees

Evening Book Club

The Evening Book Group is taking the month off in September but would love to have you join us in the following months for lively conversation. Alternating nonfiction with fiction as is our tradition, our upcoming choices for discussion are:

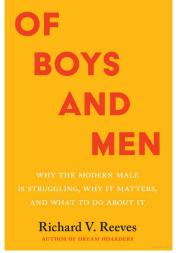
NO MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

On October 19, 2023, Of Boys and Men: Why the Modern Male is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do About It by Richard V. Reeves

On November 16, 2023, Trust by Hernan Diaz

The Evening Book Group usually meets on the third Thursday of the month throughout the year at 7 PM.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. The only requirement to attend is that you read, or attempt to read, the monthly selection. Feel free to come to any or all of the meetings. Let us know a little ahead of time so we can send you a Zoom invitation. We welcome newcomers!



Questions? Email Joyce McMartin at <u>joyceamcmartin@gmail.com</u> or text at 952-210-1372 or leave a message at 952-942-7143.





Art in the House

Have you seen the art up at MVUUF? Fran and Karen recently hung the beautiful landscapes of Sybil Swanson. The show will be up into November. All pieces are available for sale. Please contact Fran if you are interested in purchasing.

Sybil Swanson

Sybil Swanson is a contemporary artist focusing on landscapes, seascapes, and has the most fun painting intuitive abstracts. She has no formal art instruction and is solely self-taught. Her artwork has been exhibited in numerous juried exhibitions, most frequently at the Maple Grove Arts Center in Minnesota, USA.

After retirement, Sybil started painting, creating art utilizing the various techniques of acrylic fluid art. She quickly became addicted, thoroughly enjoying the process. After a brief period painting this brushless technique, she started selling her paintings and began holding classes to teach others. She has since gone into business, giving classes so others can enjoy having fun playing in the paint as well.



Sybil finally bought some brushes and started painting landscapes, seascapes, and abstracts in acrylics. Not getting quite the results she wanted, she tried the water mixable oils. Yes! Just what she was looking for. Oil painting has become her passion. Sybil believes she's been given a gift, this gift to be forwarded on to others to enjoy, and is so delighted when one of her paintings finds a new "forever home".



Uni-Sun

Endowment at MVUUF!

Thoughts from the Endowment Committee

Do you believe in the mission and vision of our Fellowship? Would you like to help our Fellowship ensure that it can serve people for years to come? If you answered yes, then you believe in the benefits of an endowment. For the next few months, your Endowment Committee will provide some insights into the financial workings of and the role of the endowment at MVUUF.

To sustain and steward the Fellowship into the future, it must be a financially responsible system that generates revenue to support its operation. So where does money come from?

- 1. **Pledges and Offerings** from members and friends are the primary sources of income for the Fellowship, and primary source for the annual operating budget.
- 2. **Donations Online** have become popular nowadays because of technology advances.
- Property Rental for events, businesses, groups, classes, and co-working space purposes.
- 4. **Fundraising Events** auctions, rummage sales, garage/parking lot sales, bake sales, car washes, musical performances, t-shirt sales, adult dance party, and movie night.
- Crowdfunding the practice of funding a project or venture by raising money from a large number of people, typically via the internet to support travel, education or community aid.



6. **Endowment** - provides additional support for Fellowship's ministries beyond what is possible in the annual operating budget.

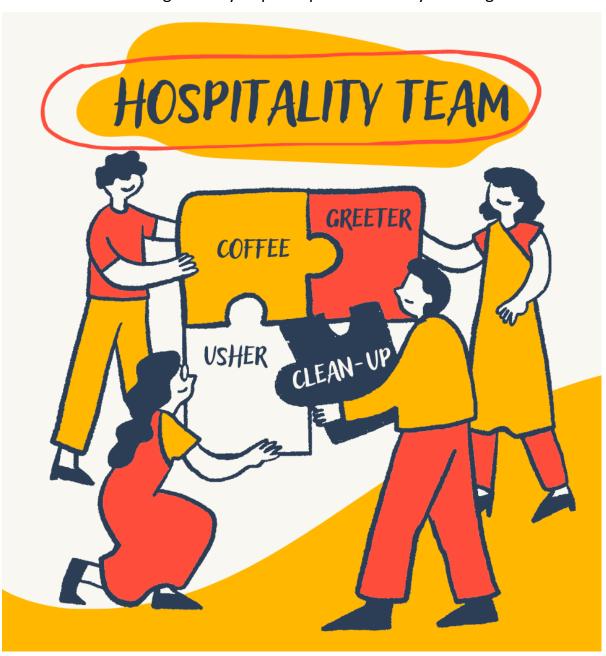
To keep the Fellowship going, we must find different ways to raise money. Relying solely on philanthropic gifts that are not a totally-guaranteed income is not advised. An endowment fund can provide some financial stability. More about this next month...

Your Endowment Committee - Holly Bruce, chair; Glenn Corliss; Tom Bergmann

Uni-Sun

Hospitality at MVUUF!

Hospitality Teams will begin in the Fall ~ They are being hosted by the Membership Committee. No experience needed to sign-up because we will offer brief training sessions. This is a great way to participate on Sunday mornings!



MVUUF Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
10:30am - Sunday	2:45pm - Nicole	3:15pm - Nicole	3:30pm - Nicole		11am - Uke Jam -	
			6pm - MA -			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10:30am - Sunday	2:45pm - Nicole	11am - Nicole Voice	10am - Grief Support	6pm - Teacher	10am - Needlework	4:30pm - Kid's Night
Service		3:15pm - Nicole	3:30pm - Nicole	Orientation		
10:30am - CYF		o. ropin - reicole				
			6pm - MA -			
12pm - Soul Matters						
Info session						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:30am - Sunday Service	2:45pm - Nicole	10am - Needlework	10:30am - Coffee &		11am - Uke Jam -	
	4:15pm - Yoga	3:15pm - Nicole	Conversation			
12pm - Bloomington Pride		7pm - Needlework	3:30pm - Nicole			
Filde			4:15pm - Yoga			
			6pm - MA -			
			7pm - BoT Meeting			
17	18		20	21	22	23
10:30am - Sunday	10:30am - Soul Matters	10am - Needlework	3:30pm - Nicole	5:30pm - Congreg Care Comm		
11:45am - CYF	2:45pm - Nicole	11am - Nicole Voice	4:15pm - Yoga	Jare Collilli		
11:45am - Teacher	4:15pm - Yoga	3:15pm - Nicole	6pm - MA -	7pm - Membership		
orientation				7pm - Needlework		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:30am - Sunday	2:45pm - Nicole	10am - Needlework	10:30am - Coffee &	12pm - Guys Lunch	11am - Uke Jam	
10:30am - CYF	4:15pm - Yoga	3:15pm - Nicole	3:30pm - Nicole			
11:30am - Potluck		7pm - NWG evening	4:15pm - Yoga			
11:45am - SARJ Mtg			6pm - MA -			
12pm - A Very UU			•			
info meeting/casting						
and meeting/casting						

MVUUF Service Schedule

SUNDAY Service is at 10:30am. Services are multi-platform. You may join us in person, on Zoom or you can livestream on YouTube.

https://zoom.us/j/3953901346 or call 312-626-6799; Meeting ID: 395 390 1346

Please check the website, Friday emails and the above content of the Uni-Sun for all the MVUUF events

If you would like to volunteer to help as a Greeter, Usher or treat-bringer, here is a link to sign up.

Church Directory



Are you a member of MVVUF?

Would you like a directory of Fellowship members? Directories contain mailing address, phone and email information.

Email Jeannie at <u>office@mnvalleyuu.org</u> for an electronic copy to be emailed to you. You may also request a hard copy directory.

WEARE: ALL CONNECTED STRONGER TOGETHER LOVE'S HANDS IN THE WORLD CALLED TO CREATE JUSTICE RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE ANOTHER AND THE EARTH

Board, Committees and Staff

BOARD OFFICERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP AS OF 7/1/2023		
Chair & Board Member	Kathleen Coate	
Chair-elect & Board Member	Linda Hayen	
Secretary & Board Member	Carla V. Ries	
Treasurer	Richard Duffin	

BOARD WORKGROUPS				
Covid-19	Rev Laura Thompson, Myra Basar, Jeanne Simpson, Richard Duffin, Kelley Hughes			

MVUUF STANDING COMMITTEES AS OF 7/1/2023				
Committee	Chair/Contacts			
Adult Education and Enrichment	Rev. Laura Thompson			
Aesthetics	Karen Olson			
Archives	Kathy Eager			
Congregational Care	Andrea Anderson			
Committee on Shared Ministry	Barb Gilliand			
Endowment	Holly Bruce			
Finance	Steve Danko			
Membership	Eric Grady			
Music	Barb Becker			
Nominating	Barb Gilliand			
Operations	Mark Clary			
Social Action Racial Justice	John Chlebeck			
Religious Education	Maria Bavier			
Stewardship	Kelley Hughes			
Technology	Richard Duffin			

BOARD TRUSTEES AS OF 7/1/2023			
Trustee & Board Member	Myra Basar		
Trustee & Board Member	Holly Bruce		
Trustee & Board Member	Jody Gray		
Trustee & Board Member	Becky McPeek		
Trustee & Board Member			

MVUUF

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Music Director

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Treasurer

Richard Duffin, treasurer@mnvalleyuu.org

Accompanist

Lark Lewis, piano@mnvalleyuu.org

Custodian & Operations

Mark Clary, cust@mnvalleyuu.org

Uni-Sun Item Submission Information

The deadline for UNI-SUN is the 20th of each month. Submit articles to office@mnvalleyuu.org