



***Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation***

**News  
May 2022**



Claire Sexton (she/her)  
UUWF President

Spring is my absolute favorite season. I get excited at the Winter Solstice, knowing that there will be more light in each day. I started gardening at the beginning of the pandemic; my family was in a new house and the additional time at home opened up the possibility for us to pursue it. When we realized how quickly the supply chain can be disrupted, we got down to business tilling and prepping and planting. Being outdoors watching things seek the sunlight helped me tremendously in that early, strange pandemic time.

My work with the UUWF did, too. In a way, the work was the same: planting, prepping, tilling, seeking the light. Especially, because I was recently unemployed, virtual board meetings were the only scheduled thing I had to anchor me to what day it was. With board members and staff scattered all over the country, we were ahead of the game, because we'd been meeting on Zoom for years!

I'll be wrapping up my time on the board in June, and the

ending is bittersweet. As I reflect on my time as a board member and board president, I'm struck by how the people I have worked with have affected me in so many important ways. I'm taking all that personal growth with me, and cheering on the UUWF as their growth continues to bloom, as we all work toward collective liberation.

## Some Thoughts on Spring

*By Ann Wiesner  
UUWF Director*

Two weeks ago, when we started working on this newsletter, it was still cold and grey outside and people all around me were grumbling that spring would never come. But I knew we'd get there and by now we have! Here are a few links to help you welcome the spring sunshine into your worlds—to nourish resilience and feed mind, spirit, and body...

- Read and reflect on "[Despair is Not a Strategy](#)" by Abby Brockman
- Listen to Noma Dumezweni read "[I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud](#)"
- Help [feed refugees](#) fleeing war in Ukraine

---

## No Longer Interim!

Some of you may have noticed that our Interim Director, Ann Wiesner, has recently dropped the "Interim" from her signature line.

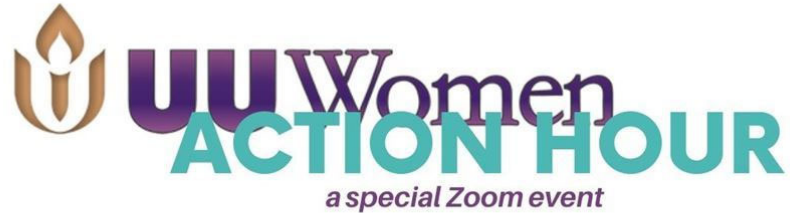
We're delighted to announce that the board of directors asked Ann to stay on as the permanent UUWF Director, after working with her over the past 18 months. We felt that Ann's leadership is the right fit for the next iteration of UUWF, and we're excited to have her on board for the long haul.



Look for Ann at GA in our booth (#237) or our Saturday evening reception (details below) and help welcome her to our family!

---

The Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation is pleased to present



**LEAVING TEXAS TO HAVE AN ABORTION: A CONVERSATION WITH  
REV. ERIN WALTER, TEXAS UU JUSTICE MINISTRY**

**SUNDAY, MAY 22, 6:30-8PM CT**



Join us as we hear from **Rev. Erin Walter**, Executive Director of the Texas UU Justice Ministry -- and hear what's happening on the ground in the fight for reproductive justice, with reflections and actions that will be relevant to living your UU values, wherever you live.

Rev. Erin will share reflections from her work in the fight for abortion rights, reproductive justice, LGBTQIA+ rights, and more, including her recent flight from Texas to New Mexico to accompany 20 people seeking safe and legal abortions.



You'll also hear from UUWF Director **Ann Wiesner** about UUWF's new vision, and how we can fight for gender, racial, and economic justice together.

**Please join the conversation! You don't want to miss  
this time to connect and get inspired to act!**

[Register Now](#)

---

## Instructions on Not Giving Up

by *Ada Limón*

More than the fuchsia funnels breaking out of the crabapple tree, more than the neighbor's almost obscene display of cherry limbs shoving their cotton candy-colored blossoms to the slate sky of Spring rains, it's the greening of the trees that really gets to me. When all the shock of white and taffy, the world's baubles and trinkets, leave the pavement strewn with the confetti of aftermath, the leaves come. Patient, plodding, a green skin growing over whatever winter did to us, a return to the strange idea of continuous living despite the mess of us, the hurt, the empty. Fine then, I'll take it, the tree seems to say, a new slick leaf unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all.



## Resilience

By Rev. Isabel Call (she/her)  
Unitarian Universalist Minister, MDiv  
UUWF Board Member

I can feel the resilience in my achy temples, staying up late to finish a project I'm passionate about for people I love because life intervened earlier in the day. I promise to rest tomorrow.

I can see the resilience in the inch-by-inch progress of unpacking and moving into my new office at my new church. We *will* be spending more time together in this building someday soon.

I can smell the resilience in the homemade stew made by a congregant and offered to me at the end of a really busy week. I thanked his wife only to be set straight about who is the real cook of the household.

As a new minister during the pandemic, I'm learning how to do a job nobody could have trained for. And I'm grateful every day that this is what I get to do. I get to bear witness to the unceasing creativity and generosity of people in community. And then I get to write about it, and speak about it, to them. Together, we reflect and our commitment to our shared future deepens.

I'm developing routines. I'm learning that, in order to listen and write, I have to sleep and eat properly, on a schedule, and I have to meditate and stretch daily. If I'm going to be on a Zoom meeting tonight, I need to take the morning off. I'm learning to follow these guidelines, with wiggle room, because when I push them away too long, my faith falters. If I let my busyness eat up my self care for too long, I end up spinning my wheels and getting nothing done anyway.

Throughout my life, I've identified as a woman and a feminist, but these days, new in ministry, recently transplanted to a new city, and emerging into middle age, are the most authentic expression of that identity I've found. So few of my women ancestors—perhaps none of them—had this kind of opportunity to build a life completely around our chosen values. I'm grateful for the ways they grew towards this possibility and pushed me towards it. And I'm grateful for the circles of support—spread all over the country—that keep me nourished, accountable, and informed. My support network is not all women, but it's fundamentally feminist, thanks in part to women being in the majority in UU ministry since the 90s. And that is thanks, in part, to the powerful organization of Unitarian, Universalist, and UU women for over a century.

I'm filled with hope that more and more of our communities can practice deep listening, consent, collaboration, disruption of harm, direct address, and covenanting. Working with the UUWF board while emerging into ministry is a big part of why I stay hopeful. We are embodying the creativity and resilience of our ancestors in contexts they couldn't have imagined. To their gifts we add our own humor, grace, and persistence.



# UU Women

we're  
open  
at GA

Open Eyes: Live Webinar

## Uncovering and Understanding Patriarchal Power in Your Congregation

Saturday, June 25th  
1:45 to 3:15 p.m. PDT

with Rev. Kimberly Quinn Johnson  
and Rev. Terry Cummings



To reimagine a radical faith community, we have to understand how systems of oppression and power-based behavior show up in our current faith community. And we have to be intentional and explicit about identifying and disrupting them.

We'll provide a framework for understanding patriarchal power and equip participants with a gender & power inquiry tool that helps identify and disrupt patriarchal power in their congregation, group, or other institution. With a goal towards relationship-building, we'll practice using the tool and discuss our findings in ways that enable us all to imagine how it could be different.

We're working to

**BUILD**  
covenantal  
relationships  
-AMONG-  
Unitarian Universalist Women  
THAT **EQUIP** US ALL  
TO BE  
**BETTER**  
co-conspirators  
and allies  
*in the movement for*  
**COLLECTIVE  
LIBERATION**

Visit us in the exhibit hall!

Open House Reception

## UUWF Co-Conspirators and Allies Reception

Saturday, June 25th  
6:15 to 7:15 p.m. PDT

Hyatt Hotel • Deschutes A

Stop in and gather with other UU women, femme-identifying, and gender expansive people and their allies who care about gender justice. (Re)acquaint yourself with the UUWF as we open the doors for your input, feedback, participation, and connection. No registration necessary.

Watch Kimberly & Terry's Welcome Video

## Clara Barton Sisterhood Welcomes New Members



The Clara Barton Sisterhood welcomes our newest inductees (pictured from left): **Lori Rittle** (First UU Nashville, TN); **Joan O'Hara** (Women for All Seasons, First Parish UU Church of Kennebunk, ME); and **Kathleen Dillon** (UU Church in Eugene, OR).

The Clara Barton Sisterhood was created in 1979 as a way for local women's groups, congregations, and individuals to honor women aged 80 and over for their contributions to their congregations and communities. [Learn more here.](#)

Donate to UUWF

Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation

*advancing justice for women and girls and promoting their spiritual growth*

[www.uuwf.org](http://www.uuwf.org)

Contact us: [uuwf@uuwf.org](mailto:uuwf@uuwf.org)