

UNITY TEMPLE LGBTQ+ | GENDER | REPRODUCTION FAITH IN ACTION



This issue is bigger than the last issue, while we try to offer support and resources amidst the changing climate. Let us know if there is something you would like to see in the next issue.

LGBTQGenderReproductive@unitytemple.org

Remembering a Reproductive Advocate*

Cecile Richards 1957-2025

Cecile Richards passed away on January 20, 2025 at age 67. She was a monumental figure in women's and reproductive rights. She embodied the values of being a good troublemaker through her work as a feminist activist. Richards served as president of Planned Parenthood from 2006-2018. The women in Richards' family were no strangers to political power: Her mother was the outspoken late Gov. Ann Richards of Texas and her daughter, Lily Adams, served as a political appointee in President Joe Biden's administration. In one of his final presidential statements, Biden honored Cecile Richards, calling her a "leader of utmost character" and saying she "fought for the dignity of workers, defended and advanced women's reproductive rights and equality." Richards had been battling brain cancer. Cecile Richards passed away at home surrounded by family members including her beloved dog, Ollie.

*UU People From the Margins to Know will return next issue



Books In The Margins Book Club

On February 27, 7-8, the first meeting of Books in the Margins book group started. We started with the first half the UU Common Read Authentic Lives and will finish the rest of the book discussion on April 24. You do not have to have read the book to join the open hearted conversation. If you want to continue exoiling, here is the UU Common ReadResource Kit.

The 2025 other books will be:

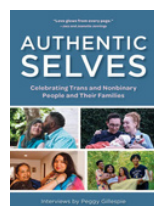
April 24 - Authentic Selves by Peggy Gilespe (2nd half)

June 26 - Mad Honey

August 28 - Shamless Nadia Nolz-Weber

October 23- LGBTQ+ Rom com

December Pizza party for all who participated in every book in 2025.



Who has been out there:

Jen Evans and Terry Kinsey, went to Downers Grove with UU Hinesdale January 9, to volunteer as escorts for women seeking abortions. If interested to be an escort and participate in escort training, contact Jen at

LGBTQGenderReproductive@unitytemple.org

We will soon be partnering with another escort organization which will create more opportunities for involvement from UTUUC congregants.

Terry Kinsey bagged 200 produce bags on January 15 with Task Force Prevention and Services. You can join 10-12ish on the third Wednesdays each month. If you want to join email Terry at LGBTQgenderReproduction@unitytemple.org

February 9

Terry Kinsey and Riley Chattin hosted Workshop for Black HIV Awareness with our partner organization, TaskForce and Prevention Services.

Katie Dozier, Jen Evans and Riley Chattin held the first Books In the Margins, for an open hearted discussion of the first half of Authentic Selves.

NEXT ZOOM COMMITTEE PLANNING MEETINGS ARE
MARCH 11 & APRIL 8 AT 4PM

MONTHLY ZOOM LINK: [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/81436939452?pwd=DHJVZXRSN1HLZKJUR2D1OFP1NZZPDZ09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81436939452?pwd=DHJVZXRSN1HLZKJUR2D1OFP1NZZPDZ09)
OR EMAIL LGBTQGENDERREPRODUCTIVE@UNITYTEMPLE.ORG



Dates of Awareness

LGBTQ, Gender and Reproductive Awareness Days March

Bisexual Health Awareness Month & Endometriosis Month
Week varies in March: National LGBT Health Awareness Week
March 8: International Women's Day
March 10: National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
March 20: National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility

April

STD Awareness month, Sexual Violence Awareness Month
Women's Eye and safety month

April 6: International Asexuality Day

April 10: National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

Third Friday of April: Day of Silence — April 11, 2025

April 11-17: Black Maternal Health Week

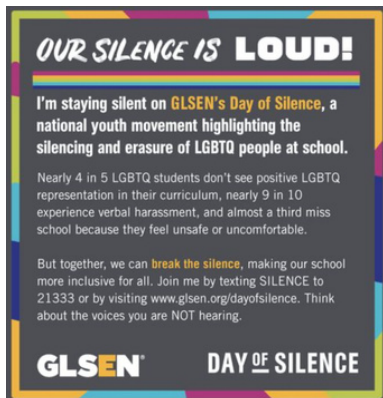
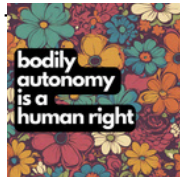
April 18: National Transgender HIV Testing Day

April 18: Nonbinary Parents Day

April 21-27: National Infertility Awareness Week

April 26: Lesbian Visibility Day

Credit, Champaign Urbana Repro Justice website



We Want to Hear You!!

We welcome submissions of poetry, art, or short essays with a point of view toward social justice issues. Uplifting and intersectional pieces are highly desirable. Those under 35 and/or from marginalized communities are especially encouraged to submit. Please send submissions to LGBTQGenderReproductive@unitytemple.org for consideration. Deadline for submissions for thru March/April newsletter is by February 12, 2025.

Third Bi-annual Blood Drive

Join our 3rd biannual Blood Drive, on **March 29th**, sponsored by the LGBTQ+Gender&Reproductive Justice Team along with Out With Purpose (formerly OPALGA+). This blood drive will be held at the Community Center of Unity Temple located at 1019 S. Blvd., Oak Park, IL 60301 from 9:00am until 3:30pm. We initiated having this blood drive to celebrate the guidelines for donating blood being modified so that gay men could donate. This was a right we fought for, for many years!. You will need to pre-register. Watch for additional information in the next News From the Margins, in Unity Temple's weekly newsletter the eBeacon, or contact LGBTQGenderReproductive@unitytemple.org.

Dates to Save!

Men's Retreat

(all who identify as male)

March 7-9

will include a workshop with Carolyn Wahlskog of Youth Outlook, talking about parenting gender expansive youth

mensretreat@unitytemple.org

International Women's Day

Cheesecake, Golden Girls and Conversations

March 7, 7-8 at 1019 South Blvd

LGBTQGenderReproductive@gmail.com

Brown Elephant HIV/STI Screening

5404 N Clark Street; Andersonville

Wednesdays 1-5pm

773-271-9382

Rainbow Connections

March 20, 7-8:30pm

for more information email:

rainbow@unitytemple.org

Unity Temple 3rd Biannual Blood Drive

March 22, 9-3:30pm; 1019 South Blvd

Email to pre-register or volunteer

LGBTQGenderReproductive@unitytemple.org

March 31, Transgender Day of Visibility

Explore Nail polish and gender after each service

Brown Elephant HIV/STI Screening

217 Harrison Street; Oak Park

4th Thursdays, 2-6pm

Brown Elephant HIV/STI Screening

5404 N Clark Street; Andersonville

Wednesdays 1-5pm

708-445-0612

Rainbow Connections

April 17, 7-8:30pm

for more information email:

rainbow@unitytemple.org

Books in the Margins

every other 4th Thursday

April 24

7-8pm

1019 South Blvd

Authentic Selves

Families with Gender Diverse Children

meets monthly, for more information, email

familysupport@unitytemple.org



Links and Resources

Mifepristone Pills by mail and they are good for four years.
<https://aidaccess.org/en/page/2880027/advance-provision>

Point of Pride, financial resources for transgender and gender expansive individuals.
<https://www.pointofpride.org>

Affordable Healthcare at Planned Parenthood
<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-illinois>

Governor Whitmore has made it easier to receive free contraceptives from pharmacists at 300 locations. [Click to learn more.](#)

Assistance to receive gender affirming care, including travel assistance.
<https://southernequality.org>

Equality Illinois If your doctor's appointments are canceled or altered, if your access to restrooms is restricted, if your curriculum is censored, or if you are being treated differently in the classroom since the new administration took office, file a claim immediately with the [Illinois Department of Human Rights](#).

Two resources and hotlines for LGBTQ Youth.
Trevor Project a hotline for LGBTQ youth. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/>
Rainbow Youth. <https://www.rainbowyouthproject.org/>

Trans Lifeline.
Hotline staffed by Trans, for Trans in crisis 877- 565-8860

Self-Care Corner on Mindfulness Amidst the Unknown

During times of uncertainty, meditation offers profound benefits for LGBTQ+ individuals, those with compromised immunity, and women by fostering resilience, reducing stress, and promoting emotional well-being. It helps manage anxiety, strengthens mental clarity, and supports overall health by lowering cortisol levels and boosting immune function. For marginalized communities facing unique challenges, meditation provides a space for self-acceptance, healing, and empowerment, creating inner peace amidst external turmoil. Unity Temple has a mindfulness group that meets daily on Zoom at 8:25 -9am, then in person on Tuesday evenings and on the first Saturday to learn more or to get connected email mindful@unitytemple.org.

National Day of Silence

The National Day of Silence is an annual observance that began in 1996, initiated by students at the University of Virginia and later adopted nationally by GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network). It is held the third Friday in April and serves as a powerful demonstration against the bullying, harassment, and erasure faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly in schools. On this day, participants take a vow of silence to symbolically represent the silencing effect of discrimination. The event raises awareness about the challenges LGBTQ+ students endure and calls for the creation of safer, more inclusive environments. The Day of Silence has grown into a significant movement, empowering students, allies, and educators to take a stand against homophobia and transphobia while promoting acceptance and equality. To learn more visit GLSEN at www.glsen.org

In the News

Admiral Linda Fagan's firing as the first woman to lead the U.S. Coast Guard highlights the persistent gender biases and challenges women face in breaking through institutional barriers. As a trailblazer in a historically male-dominated field, Fagan's leadership symbolized progress toward greater gender equity in the military. Her removal raises questions about the treatment of women in leadership roles and serves as a critical moment to reflect on how systemic inequities can undermine strides toward representation. This was the first broad strike in actions of dismantling DEI. This is impactful to the progress of women and all in the margins.

CNN reports, that January 2025 Thailand becomes the first Southeast Asian country to recognize marriage equality. This marks a momentous win for the LGBTQ+ community which has fought for more than a decade for same sex marriage rights as heterosexual couples.

Jessica Valenti reports in her Substack

A new law just went into effect in Illinois that prohibits discrimination based on reproductive healthcare decisions, including abortion. The law applies to discrimination around things like housing and employment, which pisses anti-abortion activists off to no end. Specifically, Illinois anti-abortion groups say that the law is discriminatory against them because it stops them from refusing to hire someone who has had an abortion.

March 3rd and 20th ACLU will be holding Know Your Rights

The ACLU is holding a series of workshops to help you know your rights. Sign up by following the link above.



University of Washington Medicine educates on transgender myths.

"Trans and nonbinary people are just people

- Anti-trans legislation is largely based on misinformation and myths.
- Kids know their gender identity as early as 3.
- Gender-affirming care does not typically involve surgery under age 18.
- Being trans or nonbinary is not "trendy," and most people who transition will not detransition.
- Anti-trans sports bans are not based on scientific research.
- Sex is not a binary and being trans is not a mental illness.
- Trans and nonbinary people have a right to live and access necessary gender-affirming medical care.

National HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

The LGBTQ+/Gender & Reproductive Justice team held an informational meeting on February 9, in recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day with TaskForce Prevention and Community Services' Executive Director, Christopher Balthazar. TaskForce was founded in 1990 and is located on the west side of Chicago, in the heart of the Austin community. It is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year!

TaskForce is a grassroots organization committed to improving the sexual health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth of color in Chicago by providing a safe space for fellowship, HIV/STI screening and education, and on-site referrals to medical, housing, and other social services. They are dedicated to making a difference by working towards solutions in partnership with their community in order to improve their overall quality of life. During this meeting various topics of possible collaboration were discussed including fresh produce monthly brown bag packing, involvement in clinic outreach programs for HIV testing, collaboration for National Day of Silence and other days of remembrance, etc. Keep an eye out for more.

Women's Retreat 2025

Single-gender retreats, especially for women, offering a unique space for deep connection, renewal, and empowerment. Free from social expectations and distractions, women can explore their spirituality in a supportive, understanding environment. These retreats foster sisterhood, allowing for honest conversations, shared wisdom, and mutual encouragement. They also create a safe space for healing, self-reflection, and personal growth, helping women reconnect with themselves and their spirituality in a meaningful way.