



Let us know if there is something you would like to see in the next issue. LGBTQGenderReproductive@unitytemple.org

News from the Men's Retreat

Ken Conrad (he/him) shares his experience with the program, Supporting Trans and Non-Binary Voices and Understanding Our Own Gender", presented at the Unity Temple Men's Retreat by Carolyn Wahlskog, LCSW (she/they) Director of Operations and Programming Youth Outlook Co-Coordinator, Name Change Mobilization Transformative Justice Law Project of IL. This was not something I expected going in to the men's retreat, but it was definitely informative and useful.

In the 1950's, 60's, and 70's, it was pretty strictly binary which was limiting and painful for many. As perception changed, so did vocabulary with terms like cisgender, transgender, non-binary and intersex emerging. These are not so simple as male/female were, but do describe people's experiences and how they are being recognized more and more.

These experiences result in positive and negative reactions that require taking stands and thoughtfulness that is challenging for many of us. For example the state of Iowa is the first state to outlaw transgender. How would you regard that if your child were transgender living in Iowa? How can we use our voices for advocacy to implement appropriate, fair and kind policies regarding gender?

The presentation helped me to distinguish among gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, physical attraction and emotional attraction. For example someone can be a male at birth but identify as a female, still express themselves as a male, be physically attracted to women and therefore be a lesbian, while being emotionally attracted to men and women. Obviously, this is the gender spectrum that today's children are experiencing and not the binary option I was presented as a child in the fifties. For many of us cisgender males, it is a new world that we are facing with our children and grandchildren.

It has broadened my perspectives on sexuality and clarified concepts that will enable me to make better decisions not just politically but also regarding everyday behaviors and language so as to be more sensitive in my relationships going forward. I also took from it that this is a bottomless discussion that could feature future presenters and/or panels discussing other interesting aspects of the topic.

Why Pronouns

Using correct gender pronouns when speaking with people is a fundamental way to show respect and acknowledge their identity. It fosters an inclusive environment where individuals feel seen, valued, and accepted for who they are. When people use the right pronouns, it demonstrates a willingness to listen and affirm others' experiences, helping to build trust and mutual understanding. Misusing or disregarding someone's pronouns, whether intentionally or not, can create discomfort, alienation, or even harm. By making an effort to use gender pronouns correctly, we contribute to a culture of respect, dignity, and belonging for all.

NEXT ZOOM COMMITTEE PLANNING MEETINGS ARE
MAY 6 & JUNE 10 AT 4PM

The 2025 Books In The Margins Books Club

June 26 - Mad Honey

August 28 - Shameless
Nadia Nolz-Weber

October 23-
Detransition Baby by
Torrey Peters

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





Dates of Awareness

LGBTQ, Gender and Reproductive Awareness Days

May

Lupus Awareness Month
National Osteoporosis Awareness and Ovention Month
National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month
National Women's Health Week (5/12-5/15)
International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.
5/17
Harvey Milk Day May 22
Pansexual and Panromantic Awareness and Visibility Day May 24
Menstrual Hygiene Day 5/28

June

LGBTQ Pride Month
Scleroderma Awareness Month
LGBTQ Families Day
June 12 Pulse Remembrance Day
June 15 Anniversary of U.S. Supreme Court Bostock decision
expanding protections to LGBTQ employees
June 26 Anniversary of Supreme Court Legalizing marriage Equality
June 28 Stonewall Day
June 30 Queer Youth of Faith Day

UU and Mother's Day

Celebrations of maternal figures can be traced back to ancient Greece and Roman festivals honoring goddesses like Cybele and Rhea. "Mothering Sunday" is a day for working people to visit their mothers in the United Kingdom. In the United States, Julia Ward Howe, a Unitarian Universalist, suffragist, abolitionist and author of The Battle Hymn of The Republic, wrote the "Mother's Day Proclamation" in 1870, calling on mothers to unite for peace. Ann Reeves Jarvis organized "Mothers' Day Work Clubs" to improve sanitation and promote health and "Mothers' Friendship Day" to promote reconciliation after the Civil War. After her mother's death in 1905, Jarvis dedicated herself to establishing a national holiday honoring the important role of mothers. Mother's Day became a national holiday in 1917.

"The history of Mother's Day reminds us that it is more than a day for flowers and pancakes. It's a time to highlight the aspects of motherhood that are not usually visible in the greeting card aisles. It's a call to honor the resiliency of all those who mother, especially those who bear the brunt of hurtful policies or who are weighed down by stigma in our culture" (Rev. Stefan Jonassen, [Mother's Day](#)).

There are mothers, birth mothers, adoptive mothers, foster mothers, grandmothers, stepmothers, surrogate mothers, trans mothers, den mothers and many others to celebrate. Perhaps more importantly is celebrating the act of mothering. Mothering knows no gender and is an action when viewed through a positive lens of nurturing and unconditional love that makes our society a better, stronger place.

Be a Marshall for Protests

Indivisible is looking for people who want to [be a marshall](#) for protest events, Use passcode, W3K33pU5S@f3 to enter the form,

Dates to Save!

Newsletter and Book Club Planning

May 1, 10:30-11:30am

1019 South Blvd, email for a Virtual option

lgbtqgenderreproductive@unitytemple.org

Women's Connection Potluck

May 2,

Brown Elephant HIV/STI Screening

5404 N Clark Street; Andersonville

Wednesdays 1-5pm

773-271-9382

Rainbow Connections

May 15, 7-8:30pm

for more information email:

rainbow@unitytemple.org

Oak Park Pflag

May 25, 3-5, no June meeting

848 Lake Street

pflagoakpark@pflagillinois.org

Brown Elephant HIV/STI Screening

217 Harrison Street; Oak Park

4th Thursdays, 2-6pm

Newsletter and Book Club Planning

May 1, 10:30-11:30am

1019 South Blvd, email for a Virtual option

lgbtqgenderreproductive@unitytemple.org

Brown Elephant HIV/STI Screening

5404 N Clark Street; Andersonville

Wednesdays 1-5pm

708-445-0612

Rainbow Connections

June 19, 7-8:30pm

for more information email:

rainbow@unitytemple.org

Books in the Margins

[every other 4th Thursday](#)

June 24

7-8pm

1019 South Blvd

Mad Honey by Jodi Picoult & Jennifer Finney

Boylan

Families with Gender Diverse Children

meets monthly, for more information, email

familysupport@unitytemple.org



For All the Mothers ~by Lindasusan Ulrich

For All the Mothers
 For all the mothers and mother figures
 The grandmothers, aunts, and extended family members who mother
 The soon-to-be mothers, the wish-they-were mothers, the never-wanted-to-be mothers, the "it's complicated" mothers
 The birth mothers, foster mothers, adoptive mothers, stepmothers
 The "used to be Dad" mothers and "more than one Mom" mothers
 The single mothers, separated mothers, stay-at-home mothers, unhoused mothers
 The grieving mothers, those who grieve their mothers, and those whose grief is complex
 For all the communities that mother
 And for all who depend on the Great Mother
 You are held — and beloved.

Self-Care Corner

Jan Johnston shares her favorite type of self-care. Sometimes referred to as "Vitamin N," gardening alongside Mother Nature is not only good for what ails one but also can be a spiritual practice. When I am planting, weeding, or picking the red raspberries in my backyard, I often experience a meditative state. A garden aesthetically captivates one's attention along with providing the self-care sustenance one needs. Bird symphonies and bee pollen distributors are awesome reminders of the interconnected care of all existence.



The Unity Temple prison pen pal program, is where members correspond with an incarcerated person. There is a trans person currently incarcerated (but being released in July) who is hoping to have a trans pen pal. It's an older person with children and grandchildren. If you are interested, or have further questions, or know someone who might be interested, please connect with Barbara Moline at prisonpenpals@unitytemple.org.

PRIDE Month events>

June LGBTQ Pride Month Events

5th 5-9pm
 Downtown Oak Park
 Thursday Night "Out in the Burbs"

7th, time TBA
 Out in The Burns Chamber of
 Commerce

21st, 10-2pm
 Forest Park Preserves Pride
 8030 Chicago Ave, Maywood, IL

29th at 11 am
 Chicago Pride Parade
PrideChicago.org

Looking for LGBTQ friendly services?
[Oak Park LGBTQ Resources](#)

Meg Herman reflects about her time as a clinic escort, "It became so clear to me the importance of being a safe presence at the Washington blvd presence. The protesters were behind us with their murder poster and readiness to swarm the clients. We provided a barrier."



The Third and Second Annual Spring Blood Drive

Terry Kinsey started and coordinates the blood drive that started in order to celebrate the change in the discriminatory guidelines which did not allow gay men to donate blood. These guidelines were changed by the FDA in August of 2023. We had our first blood drive celebration in the spring of 2024 and again in the fall of 2024. This is our 3rd blood drive. Many gay men still do not realize they can donate blood unless they are on Prep and other unknown limiting for some other criteria to donate.

The LGBTQ+/Gender & Reproductive Justice Team and OPALGA+ (our partner) thank all 44 people who attended last Saturday's blood drive and made it such a success. 34 units of blood were collected. Watch for the next blood drive which will occur in about 6 months!



Rainbow Connections

Margaret Klemundt shares that, Rainbow Connections was formed in 2019 when several members of the Unity Temple Unitarian Universalist congregation saw the need for those who identify as LGBTQ to come together regularly and build connections. Since its inception, the group meets on a monthly basis, and the gathering is almost always centered on a topic or theme which someone volunteers to facilitate. While allies are invited occasionally, most meetings include only those of us who identify as LGBTQ.

One of the foundational pillars of the UTUUC congregation is "Wherever you are on your life's journey, you are welcome here." This deep sense of hospitality is present in every gathering of the Rainbow Connections group. Whether you are a newcomer or old timer, the sense of welcoming is felt as soon as you walk in the door. And when you walk out the door, I guarantee you will be changed in some emotional or spiritual way.

Back in 2019 some may have questioned the need for "yet another LGBTQ group" but the reality is there can never ever be enough opportunities for us to find safe space and connect with others in our community. Do we in the LGBTQ community need yet another group? You bet we do!

Transgender Day Of Visibility Protests

On March 30th, Mark Maynard along with several members of UTUUC joined the Trans Up Front/Indivisible Chicago rally and march through downtown Chicago.

This event was held one day prior to Trans Day of Visibility (TDOV), drawing roughly 5,000 attendees and a coalition of over 50 organizations. There were around a dozen members of our congregation gathered for the event. It was a great event full of joy. As Trans Up Front is a Trans and Deaf lead organization they had an area up front for those needing visibility to the ASL translators and other accommodations. The energy was palpable and there were many cool organizations present with buttons and pamphlets for other rallies and causes our community should be aware of. We encourage everyone to follow [Trans Up Front](#) on substack and [Indivisible Chicago](#) and please join us next time! Remember: "No pride for some of us without liberation for all of us." - Marsha P. Johnson

