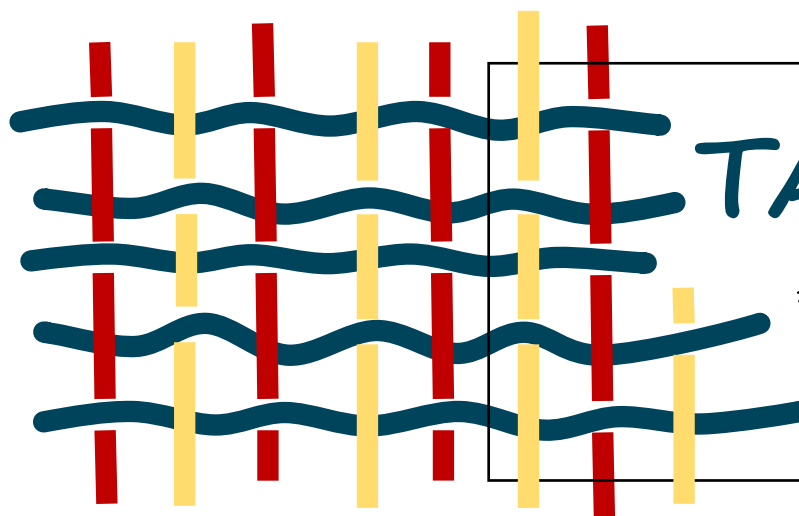




TAPESTRY

A Magazine for All Peoples UU

September 2026



"Ohio River from Rose Island" photo by Rob Kingsolver

Editor's Note

This issue of the Tapestry is devoted to peacemaking--fostering peace in the world, in our communities, and within ourselves. One of the hardest things we have struggled to come to terms with this summer was the loss of our dear friend and Tapestry teammate, Lori Sargent. Lori contributed to our congregation in so many ways, one of which was four years of service on the Tapestry's Editorial Board. You have probably noticed her artworks featured in these pages, but she also was a very perceptive copy editor. Her aesthetic sense was quite valuable in designing the overall look of the magazine as well.

When we say "rest in peace" after the loss of a dear friend, we are of course wishing them well at the end of life's journey, but that same wish seeks rest and peace in our own hearts. We never really get over that kind of loss, but we hope to find a place where grief dissolves into gratitude; where we can reflect on all the wonderful memories our loved ones have left with us, and to allow our ongoing lives to be enriched by the time we had together.

As you look over the work of writers, poets, photographers, chroniclers and essayists who shared the creative side of themselves in this issue, we hope your spirit can come to rest in a good place.

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TOGETHER ON THE JOURNEY

by Rev. Bruce Beisner

Minister, All Peoples UU

P“Peace” is a really big word. We say it and hear it all the time. “Peace be with you.” “Give peace a chance.” “Let there be peace on earth.” “Go now in peace.”

Like so many vital terms in our vocabulary, we conceptually understand what “peace” means. We might even have words to describe it. But when it comes to knowing it and really experiencing it, we find that “peace” can mean different things to different people in different situations.

When we read the news and see armies marching across borders or another mass shooting here at home, we know that is not “peace.” When we live in fear that someone we love might be picked up by federal agents and held without due process, we do not feel at peace.

The violence, aggression, and loss of life that takes place in places here in Kentucky and across our globe every day can leave us shaking our heads and wondering: “Why can’t our fellow human beings seem to find better ways to resolve their conflicts with one another?” We can end up grasping for that little word “peace” and pondering why it is so elusive and questioning if such a thing is even possible.



I think that is because I have been taught to imagine “peace” as a thing, as a noun. Peace as a world of serenity and compassion where there is an absence of conflict. If I know anything about humanity, after my own short time here of being alive myself, or after studying the long march of our shared history, it is that people cannot and do not live without conflict.

To me, it is more helpful to think of “peace” as an action, as an adjective or adverb. Instead of working for peace as a goal or outcome, I think our energy is best spent considering cultivating ways to becoming more “peaceful,” “peace-making” and “non-violent.”

We live in a society that teaches us every day, in small and subtle ways, that violence can be an answer to our problems. We are told that aggression and domination are the only ways to resolve our conflicts. Most popular entertainment relies on this narrative, from James Bond to Wonder Woman. The war on terror, the war on drugs and our criminal justice system itself are all expressions of this deeply held belief. Of course, this never works out and only leads to tragedy and suffering. I think that something deep inside our human hearts knows that there must be a better way.

I believe that Unitarian Universalism calls us to embrace a different narrative for working through our conflicts. And that begins with teaching one another how to be more “peaceful” and “peace-making.” The practices of non-violent communication and non-violent resistance espoused by Ghandi and Dr. King can offer us direction. The process of honest and accountable reconciliation championed by Nelson Mandela and Gerry Adams can be a model. The attitude of reverence for life and gentle curiosity taught by the Dalai Lama and others might offer us inspiration.

Time and time again, history has proven that violence only begets more violence. When we reach out in peaceful ways, the result can be a break in the cycles of conflict. Taking such an attitude involves risk, but it is a risk worth taking. And the first step must be truly believing that peace is always possible.

Peace be with you,

Bruce



NEW MEMBER FOCUS

From Janet Taylor,

Congregational Life Coordinator

Cathy Spiegel and Bob Weber

Cathy's story:

I started out on my life's journey in the early 50's in Pittsburgh, PA. My family moved to Rochester, NY when I was in high school. After college I started my career as a legal assistant/paralegal. After 25 years in Rochester, battling long winters and Lake Ontario-effect gray skies, I moved to Atlanta, GA. It was in Atlanta that I became interested in a personal spiritual journey and started attending a Unity Church there. Unity opened up a whole new world for me as I was raised with Presbyterian theology which really did not resonate with me.

Circumstances evolved which caused a move to Ft. Myers, FL in 2016. It was there on Christmas Eve 2023 that I met Bob Weber. It was pretty much an unexpected instant electric connection! Having navigated our way through hurricanes Irma, Ian, Milton and Helene, we decided we had enough of Florida! Bob, was raised in Louisville, so we thought it was a "no-brainer" to return to his hometown. I thought it was a perfect fit to live in another city on the Ohio River! We purchased a townhouse in Middletown and moved there in April, 2025. We absolutely love the convenience and friendly people that we have met in and around Middletown. Activities we enjoy are hanging out at our community pool, hikes, and bike riding at The Parklands, which is nearby. What a FANTASTIC place that park is! We are members at Woodhaven Golf Club and try to get there and play as much as we are able to handle our terrible golf game! Additionally, my interests are watercolor painting and gardening/landscaping. I would like to find a mahjong group too, maybe start a group at All Peoples, if there is an interest.

Bob's story:

I was adopted and raised an only child. About 20 years ago, I obtained my birth certificate and found cousins in Greenville, S.C. and a sister living in Atlanta. And learned that I'm half Irish! I was raised in the Catholic tradition. (St. Albert's grade school and then St X.) Around my junior year in high school I decided I was agnostic. I struggled with the Catholic dogma. Over the following 60 plus years my spiritual views have drawn me to the conclusion that it is a huge universe and that there is a power at work that my human self cannot grasp. It is certainly not an old guy with a white beard sitting on a throne! I think it is more an energy of consciousness, and science tells us that energy cannot be destroyed.

After high school, I went to college in Springfield, Ohio (where they eat cats and dogs per JD Vance) and then followed a girlfriend to Ann Arbor. Not thrilled with the winters, we went to Southern California, where I got into carpentry. That situation ended and in 1980 I drove across the country to the South to take up residence in Ft. Myers, FL. In 1986 I got my Florida state general contractors license and focused mostly on remodeling for the next 40 years or so. After Hurricane Ian I experienced both gratitude and survivor's guilt. As a GC I saw destruction that is difficult to put into words.

As Cathy mentions, she and I met on Christmas Eve 2023 and the rest is history. (see her story). Her experience in Atlanta with the Unity Church led us to a Unity church in Middletown, but the vibe wasn't quite right. After our first visit here last January we knew we had found our people. Leaning left and living in SW Florida can be stressful, in that you never know when to keep your mouth shut. (most of the time). Here, I feel I can express whatever is on my mind and will be heard and accepted. As new members, we are looking forward to finding our niche where we can participate, learn, and help nurture All Peoples' place in this wonderful community that we call home.



*This series of poems by Jill Baker was
inspired by the seven UU principles.*

POET'S CORNER

GENEROSITY: We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.

We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope,
hands open, giving like morning sun, hearts steady as bread.
In giving, we do not have less, but more.
Abundance begins in the soul.
Kindness offered becomes a flame,
passing light from one to another.
A stranger who pays for another's meal, then walks on,
Leaving behind a table set with the wonder of generosity,
and a desire to do the next good deed.
So may we give with humble joy,
trusting that even the smallest mercy can bloom—
Where love is shared.

~Jill Withrow Baker

INTERDEPENDENCE: *We honor the interdependent web
of all existence.*

We honor the hidden threads—
root speaking to root beneath the frost,
river giving itself to stone,
breath borrowed from cedar and cloud.
Nothing stands alone for long.
The sparrow leans on wind,
the shoreline on the moon's patient tug,
and I, too, am held—
by names, by seasons, by the hands I do not see.
So let me walk more gently here,
aware that every step is answered:
leaf into loam, grief into grace,
my small life woven with all life—
not separate, but belonging.

~Jill Withrow Baker



JUSTICE: *We strive to become a diverse multicultural Beloved Community where all feel welcome and can thrive.*

Justice is the home opening every door to welcome the stranger,
building a beloved family wide enough for every story,
rich with many cultures, many tongues, many songs,
Justice is a land where each person is welcomed not as guest, but as kin.
Justice stands in the courtroom too, in the hush before the verdict,
when Truth is asked to speak aloud and every voice is heard clearly,
when the law must remember the human face behind each name.
Justice is the table with room still being made for one more mouth,
Justice is a gathering with courage to listen to every story,
grace to share power with the weak,
so all can thrive and share a common hope.

~Jill Withrow Baker

EQUITY: *We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion*

Equity is the vow we make at dawn—
that no soul enters this world less sacred,
no newborn breath and cry less blessed,
no life meant for shadows.
The truth that each heart is fashioned for sunlight,
for room to rise and thrive,
Hands unbound by hunger, fear, or silence.
We choose a wider table,
a language gentled by mercy,
a world remade in compassion's steady light.
Belief that every person is inherently worthy—
not by earning it, not by proving it,
but by the simple miracle that they are here.
May equity be more than an ideal —
may it be the daily bread justice hands out,
An open door, an uplifted face,
The right of all to flourish.



~Jill Withrow Baker

PLURALISM: *We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.*

We came together on an ordinary street, the kind the city forgets
until footsteps gather.

Cardboard signs lifted like small altars, hand-painted with hope,
names, and promises.

There was no thunder in us,
only the steady rhythm of walking, the hush before a chant,
the chant itself, rising not to wound, but to remind the world
that every life is more than a headline, more than a number, more than a fear.
Beside me, another elder held the edge of our banner,
while a child on the other end gripped it with both hands, serious as prayer.

A woman in a headscarf passed out water bottles.
Someone began to sing, softly at first, and the song moved through us
like a light being lit from lamp to lamp.
Different languages brushed the air.
Different theologies walked shoulder to shoulder.
Some carried scriptures. Some carried silence.
All of us carried the stubborn belief that dignity is not granted by power
but recognized in one another.
And while the police stood watching, we answered with our unbroken hands,
our open voices, our refusal to hate.
It was not weakness, that gentleness.
It was discipline. It was love refusing to become the image of its enemy.
We reached the square, evening was near and windows around us
caught the last light.
For one brief moment, every face was gold.

I remember:
this is what pluralism looks like when it breathes—
not an idea in a book, but strangers watching out for each other,
making one wide shelter.
From many convictions, many histories, many names,
Sharing our mutual sacredness.

~Jill Withrow Baker



Love: *the thread between us*

Love is the hearth where all hearts gather near,
 Its flame made bright by laughter, warmed by tears;
 It lifts our joys like songs into the air,
 And bends to hold the weight of hidden cares.
 When one voice trembles, many voices rise,
 When one face shines, we all are crowned with light;
 For family is not merely blood or name,
 But every soul we shelter in love's sight.
 It reaches past the threshold and the door,
 Past fields and seas, past borders drawn by men;
 It names the stranger sister, brother, friend,
 And gathers all the world as kin again.
 We share the bread of gladness, crumb by crumb,
 And pass the cup of sorrow, sip by sip;
 No burden stays too heavy when it rests
 Upon the strength of more than one firm grip.
 So let love bind us gently, soul to soul,
 A woven cord no storm can tear apart;
 For every joy grows fuller when it's shared,
 And every woe grows lighter, heart by heart.

~Jill Withrow Baker

TRANSFORMATION: *We adapt to the changing world.*

We learn the shape of shifting light,
 and bend without breaking.
 A world remaking itself each morning—
 new edges, new winds, new names.
 Still, we answer:
 not with fear,
 but with quiet courage
 of becoming.
 We adapt,
 and in adapting,
 we are transformed.
 A flower rising from a hard and buried seed,
 We reach for warmth, open to the day,
 Softening, petal by petal, we absorb the sun,
 then fall back to earth—
 We are boldly changing.

~Jill Withrow Baker



Evening to Night

by Joan Miller

It seems almost fake
The sky is mostly orange
The trees are all black

Now pink and purple
And the dark trees are darker
And lost in the evening

There are no clouds now
And the sky has turned to gray
It's almost nightfall

I still see some light
But the silhouettes of trees
Offer sharp contrasts

We drop into dark
And wait for the stars to come
To sparkle tonight



*I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things*

--Wendell Berry

from "The Peace of Wild Things"

In the Hollows

by Rob Kingsolver

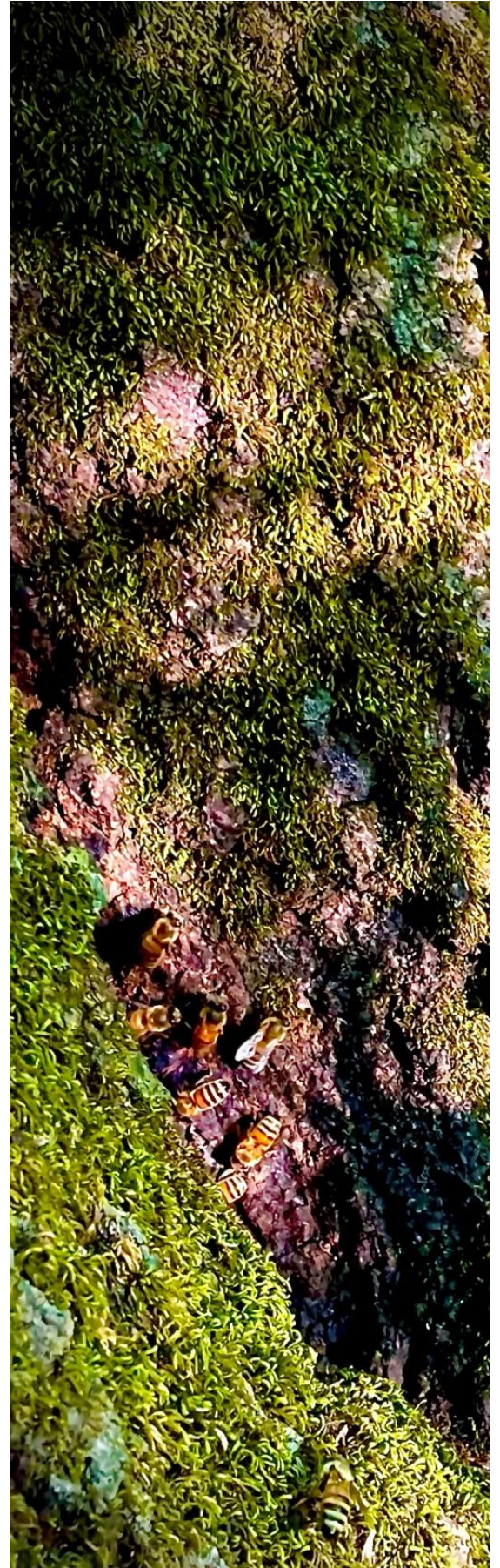
Every year, it has become harder for her to climb the path
Up this knob to keep company with the mossy oak on top.
Halfway there, she pauses to take a breath.

A few years ago, she would not have stopped to notice
An eruption of wildflowers: anemone, trillium, bluebells,
Or chickadees at play above the trail.

From here she can just make out the old giant
In its entirety. Its silhouette is twisted and broken--
Transfigured by fires, by windstorms, by lightning,
Each element carving its own name into the bark.
Like her body, the oak's constant striving to recover
Can't quite keep up with the pell-mell rush of time.

She recalls that trees like this are built of carbon
Atoms snatched by fluttering leaves out of thin air,
And linked in chains to form the stuff of wood.
Now, the tree is hollow. Fungi digest its softening core,
Releasing all that carbon back into the sky.
"From air were ye made, and to air ye shall return."

Drawing close, she hears a droning sound
Before aging eyes can find the hovering bees.
Waiting each in turn to fly through an open cleft
Into their hive inside the empty trunk.
She wonders, does this tree mourn, or celebrate
New life abuzz in the hollows of its heart?



Observations on a Sunday

by Wallace McMullen

I woke up to a story on NPR telling us that the devastation caused by forest fires in the USA is much greater than has been generally reported. I find it pretty concerning. Some of the forests are predicted to never come back.

That was followed by a news story that opposition to hyperload data centers has become vigorous and quite widespread across the nation. (The effort to control data centers with adequate and appropriate regulations is in the heat of battle in Louisville, with new developments every day, and the news media are barely keeping up).

On to opinions I find in the Sunday morning paper:

Professor Ricky Jones writes: “THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE DOES NOT APPROVE OF ANY OF MY MESSAGES. And I do not approve of theirs.” He’s been feuding with the University since President Trump attacked DEI initiatives 18 months ago. (As you might guess, Dr. Jones believes the University has not defended DEI programs as it should).

Beside that item on the page is an op-ed by Rabbi Ari Berman, President of Yeshiva University. He challenges universities to “insist on academic rigor, pursue research that expands knowledge and serves humanity, addresses affordability as part of their public responsibility, and approaches artificial intelligence by asking what kind of human beings education is meant to form.” He continues: “At its best, a university is of one of civilization’s great achievements: ... devoted to the shared pursuit of truth [where] students learn to examine arguments carefully, listen seriously to those with whom they disagree and follow evidence wherever it leads.” I like Rabbi Berman’s essay.

During the day, I encountered multiple articles memorializing Wendell Berry. Although they each reported on his visionary intellect in various ways, they all characterized him as being consistently hopeful. That alone makes him something of a generational visionary.

And then I come to church, where we happily mixed the streams of our lives with enthusiasm, sharing water and joy in an uplifting service full of love.

Thus, my day was full of impactful and rather unrelated ideas. But the battles over large ideas are what ultimately shape our society. What would life in the United States be, and indeed, what would American civilization be like, without the proclamation: “... all men [and women] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” ?

So I hope as I lead my unremarkable life in a bungalow in Louisville, the enduring Spirit of Life allows me to continue seeking Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness as I try to modestly contribute to improving the quality of life for all those dwelling here. And I hope we all are able to mix the streams of our lives, sharing water and joy in a daily lived experience full of love.



Blood Over Bright Haven by M. L. Wang and *Monk and Robot* by Becky Chambers

Book reviews by Ryan Vaughn

Fantasy and science fiction offer a fantastic lens through which to explore the world in ways that standard genres simply cannot—specifically when those stories include social commentary. These books provide a fresh angle to examine our own world's social issues in a setting that feels less threatening, yet deeply exciting. Today, there is a massive selection from a new generation of diverse authors across all genders, races, cultures, and sexualities. Below are two contrasting favorites of mine, paired with quotes that reflect the core value of each book.

Octavia E. Butler (on why she fell in love with reading and writing sci-fi):

"I was attracted to science fiction because it was so wide open. I was able to do anything and there were no walls to hem you in and there was no human condition that you were stopped from examining."

Blood Over Bright Haven by M. L. Wang (Del Rey, 2023)

This book centers on the first woman to ever achieve the rank of Highmage at a university in a world that mirrors our own Industrial Age, but powered by magic. When the protagonist, Sciona, finally passes her qualifying exams, she finds her challenges have only just begun. Her new colleagues are determined to make her feel unwelcome—and instead of a qualified lab assistant, they assign her a janitor.

That janitor, Thomil, belongs to an oppressed race, while Sciona has been completely sheltered from the harsh realities of his world. Together, this unlikely pair unravels an ancient secret that could shatter their entire civilization.

So **bear with** the beginning: *Blood Over Bright Haven* starts out slowly, spending about twenty percent of the book explaining an intricate magic system as Sciona completes her exams. This section heavily explores misogyny and inequality within academia. Keep in mind that there is a reason for everything in this narrative. After this setup, the story picks up speed and becomes a complete blur as we follow the central mystery.

In addition to academic inequality, the book dives into industrialization, intentions versus outcomes, morality, cultural theft, historical revisionism, utilitarian atrocities ("NIMBY" ethics), dehumanization, racism, the "girlboss" trap, and complicity in privilege. I would advise against looking up any of these concepts beforehand if you are unfamiliar with them—just let the story reveal them to you.

Once past the setup, the book is a fast-paced read with accessible prose. So much is packed into the narrative that I felt the author could have easily added another 100 to 200 pages to flesh things out even further. I also felt the romantic connection between the two

leads was slightly underdeveloped, given how much they ought to have been at odds initially. (Be warned: this book contains one scene with sexual assault and attempted rape in addition to a few short gory scenes.)

I am still thinking about this book months later; it is one I will never forget. The ending left me feeling melancholic about our own world, but it also inspired me to want to do better within the society we live in.

“The question isn’t: How do I stop feeling this way? That’s stupid. I can’t. The question is: What can I do with this feeling?”

— M.L. Wang, [Blood Over Bright Haven](#)

Walidah Imarisha (on sci-fi as a space for social change):

"Science fiction is a perfect testing ground... because the vast majority of people can't imagine a world without [our current systems]. Science fiction frees you to go anywhere and examine anything."

Monk and Robot by Becky Chambers (Tordotcom, 2025)

This series serves as a wonderful palate cleanser after the heavy themes of *Brighthaven*. *Monk and Robot* is a short two-part duology totaling around 300 pages. It has been centuries since the robots of Panga gained self-awareness and laid down their tools—centuries since they wandered, *en masse*, into the wilderness, never to be seen again. One day, the peaceful life of a tea monk is upended by the arrival of a robot who has returned to honor an old promise: to check in on humanity. The robot cannot return to the wilds until it answers a single question: *"What do people need?"*

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this on vacation this year. It is a gentle exploration of what it means to be human, following a nonbinary monk who serves tea and listens to people's problems in a post-capitalist, ecologically sustainable society. When the monk grows restless and ventures into the wild, they meet the robot. Together, they explore the wilderness, and in the second novella, travel back to human civilization.

I absolutely loved experiencing a society so radically and fantastically different from ours. In Panga, people aren't concerned with judging others' gender or sexuality; instead, they focus on everyday living and environmental stewardship. It is about as utopian as a society could get. If you need a comforting book to help you through a rough time, this is it.

Other Recommendations from Ryan:

- **Ursula K. Le Guin** – *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *The Dispossessed*
- **R. F. Kuang** – *The Poppy War* and *Babel* (Note: Kuang wrote *Babel*; *Katabasis* is an upcoming work)
- **Margaret Atwood** – *MaddAddam* Trilogy



NATURE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

by Rob Kingsolver

In the dry heat of early September, our flower gardens look as if they have performed their last show and taken their last bow. Exhausted, bedraggled, heat stressed, and ready for a long winter's nap. (The gardeners may be forgiven for feeling the same way.) Just when the rest of our natural world seems to be packing it in for the year, here come the hummingbirds, gracing our September days with exuberant energy and color.

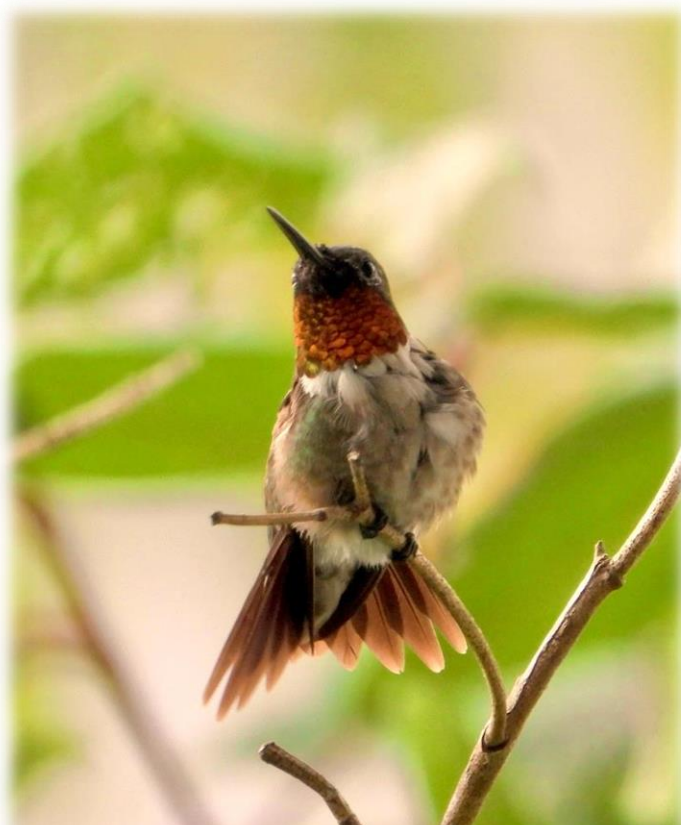


photo of male Ruby-throat by Monica Hoel

Ruby-throated hummingbirds have been living and nesting here in Kentucky all summer, of course, but when there are lots of summer wildflowers in bloom, we don't see them near the house as often. The ecological relationship between hummingbirds and native red or orange tubular flowers works to the advantage of both. Insects cannot see in the red range of the color spectrum, so any red flower you see is hard for bees or butterflies to find. Instead, the red color of trumpet vine, cardinal flower, or native red honeysuckle has evolved to attract the plant's preferred pollinators, which are birds, who see red quite well. It's no accident that native red flowers tend to be trumpet-shaped, with a deep throat enclosing their nectar. This is just the vessel to accommodate the hummingbird's long beak. By shunning insects, the plant reserves its nectar reward for the birds, who will return the favor by transferring pollen more reliably to another red, tubular flower.

As soon as the August landscape begins to dry out, the local floral buffet offers fewer options, so our hummingbird feeders become a desirable alternative. Since the birds are loading on calories and storing fat to power their long upcoming migratory flight, ruby-throats need to eat 3x their body weight every day at this time of year. It's no wonder they come to take full advantage of artificial nectar at this critical season.

To keep their wings beating 60-80 times per second, hummingbirds have the highest metabolic rate of any vertebrate, according to Paige Bartlett's 2018 reporting on hummingbird research at John's Hopkins School of Medicine. Their heart rate averages 1,200 beats per minute and their body temperature runs hot--about 105 degrees Fahrenheit. Since sugars in nectar are their primary food, a hummingbird's blood sugar shoots up high enough to kill you or me, but they never contract diabetes. (Hence Johns Hopkins' research interest; how do they manage that?) With such a high energy requirement and their flying restricted to daylight hours, have you ever wondered how hummingbirds make it through the night with no midnight snacks? Their remarkable solution is a kind of mini-hibernation. At nighttime, hummingbirds enter a state of torpor, their metabolism slowing and body temperature dropping by as much as 50 degrees to save energy.

A hummingbird feeder does not have to be very fancy. We've had the best luck with the ones that look like a covered plate with holes in the top for the birds' long beaks to poke through. An ant guard, which puts a water barrier above the feeder's point of attachment, is a worthwhile purchase if your feeder doesn't already have one built in. Hang the feeder higher than five feet, to prevent animals from pulling it down, but low enough for you to reach and refill it easily. Avoid placing your feeder in dense vegetation, but positioning it near a tree or shrub can provide roosting spots. I like hanging feeders within 20 feet or so of the house so we can easily see our hummingbird visitors. They do not seem very shy about coming up close, and I've never seen one accidentally fly into a window.

Commercially prepared hummingbird food is not needed: just dissolve one part granulated sugar in four parts water, and you are in business. Red dye is also totally unnecessary, since hummingbirds just have to waste metabolic energy to excrete the artificial coloring. If any part of your feeder is colored red, the hummers will find it. One note of caution: If you are going to put out a hummingbird feeder, commit to rinsing and refilling it twice a week, or three times in very hot weather. Sugar water can grow fungi and bacteria quickly, especially when it's warm out, and the birds can't handle funky nectar any better than you or I could. Since it requires frequent maintenance, the simpler your feeder is to clean out and refill, the better.

It's pretty amazing that the same evolutionary lineage that produced ostriches and the California condor went to the opposite end of the size chart with this little bird. An adult male ruby-throat weighs 3 grams, about the same as a 1980s era copper penny. Females are a bit larger, averaging 3.5 grams. If I got on a teeter-totter with hummingbirds, it would take over 30,000 of my feathered friends to balance me on the other end!



female--photo by Monica Hoel

In spite of their diminutive size, these birds are incredibly feisty. Males, especially, will stake their claim on a feeder and chase off any hummingbird that tries to share it. Their aerial maneuvers exceed anything a "top gun" fighter pilot could imagine. To minimize avian conflict at home, my wife Paula put up a second feeder around the corner of the house, out of view of the first one, so that more than one hummer can be fed at the same time.

As the days grow shorter in October, our hummingbirds will leave us, flying all the way across the Gulf to Central America for the winter season. We usually notice the first returning hummers



photo by Monica Hoel

shortly after Derby here in Louisville. Audubon Magazine reports 24 species of hummingbirds native to the United States, but the Ruby-throated is the only one that nests on this side of the Mississippi River. In the spring mating season, male hummingbird species do an aerial "dance" to attract females, and each species adheres to its own routine. In Ruby-throats, the flight pattern follows a U shape, with the little male swooping down, then up, then back down and up the other way, like a pendulum. I once witnessed a male performing his mating display right in front of a female sitting on a twig nearby. Her long-beaked face shifted back and forth, back and forth, following his movements like a tennis fan watching a match from center court. I believe she must have been favorably impressed, because we saw her gathering bits of lichen and strands of spider web for her nest soon afterward.

Our hummingbirds have gotten used to our presence in the garden, and zip all around us when we are outside. As they swoop over my head, I often hear a high-pitched chittering sound, nearly beyond the range my aging ears can detect. Although not the virtuoso singers among hummingbird species, ruby-throats do twitter on the wing, especially when they are chasing after each other. Their acrobatic flight, flashes of emerald and ruby color, and their pleasing chatter never fails to make me smile during the hot, dry end of our Kentucky summer.



"Above all birds, the hummingbird gives me that feeling of the mystery and the wonder of life. Such a vibrant little body, such color, and wings that beat faster than thought. I felt as if I could watch the whole of life if I could hold a hummingbird in my hand once."

— Gladys Taber, The Book of Stillmeadow

Heard from the Pulpit

On the nature of truth: June 28, 2026

"I was raised in a world very far from here. I was raised in a binary world, a world where there was a yes and a no. No truth was ambiguous. There was right and there was wrong. Jesus is the way and there's no other way. My country, right or wrong-- love it or leave it. Either you are for me or you are against me. It has been a long and difficult journey from the binary world to a world where God and life are so much bigger and more beautiful than I could've ever imagined. . . There's a saying I've learned in the last few years, and it's a mind-bender for those of us who came from a binary world: two things can be true at the same time."

--Rev. Joe Phelps, "To Tell the Truth,"

On the wisdom of children: July 5, 2026

"As adults, we often imagine ourselves as the teachers, the wisdom-keepers, the guides, the ones invested with shaping the next generation. We hope to pass on what matters to our children, or students, or grandchildren. But wisdom does not travel in one direction. When we slow down enough to truly pay attention, children become our teachers. In their honesty, their capacity for wonder, their fearless curiosity, their willingness to love without calculation, and their remarkable ability to simply be, they remind us of truth that we have not lost so much as forgotten."

--Abbie Hames, "The Truths Children Carry,"

On justice: July 19, 2026

"If you label people as animals or as 'the worst of the worst,' as burdens on taxpayers or as carriers of genes that 'poison our blood,' don't you tend to treat them differently than if you see them as members of families, or at least as human beings who have been affected by the circumstances in which they were raised? Might not justice look different, depending on how much concern, how much love you think people deserve?"

--Rev. Elwood Sturtevant, "What do we Mean by Justice?"

On the limitations of technology: August 2, 2026

"People are not like the Facebook algorithm. They are not programmed to show me what I already want to see, nor to confirm my preconceived notions about the world. Instead, they often challenge me. They challenge me to think and to learn to change a little sometimes. The water and the wind of our amazing planet don't care if I hit "like" or "share." They keep rippling and blowing, bringing with them some destruction, but also a lot of restoration, humbling my need to control--reminding me of what is truly holy and life-giving."

--Rev. Bruce Beisner, *The Worldwide Web of Life*

On Becoming: August 9, 2026

"I believe that like everybody else, through science and mystery, I am the miracle. I don't need another miracle, so that's my journey of becoming. I think I will never arrive. I think I'm always going to be on that perpetual journey, but I think that's what life is about for all of us, really."

--Melanie Pescoe

"I especially enjoy serving as an occasional Sunday morning discussion group leader. Our morning sessions offer a wide range of thought-provoking topics from the participants. The discussion group represents a microcosm of Unitarian Universalism as spirituality, intellectual stimulation, compassion, and fellowship are woven together."

--Harvey Edmunds

"Being a nurse, I realized my strength--that part of me that was the foundation of who I became-- was that I could care for and love even those hardest to love. My mother would say those that are hardest to love are the ones who need it the most."

--Lisa Benner

"I am currently a support specialist. Now I can give back and I can help, and that is what is keeping me growing and becoming. I can empower others now in this work, and it's giving me back more than I could ever imagine. This church too--every single one of you -- has made me feel right at home, so thank you and bless you!"

--Brice Williams

On welcoming new Americans: August 18, 2026

"If you look back through human history, every thriving society, every flourishing city, and every transformative movement has faced one fundamental question: What do we do with the stranger? How we answer the question defines not just our culture, but our future. When we talk about building places where people want to live, stay, and contribute, we often hear the word 'welcoming.' It sounds soft. It sounds like a warm smile at a front desk, a colorful banner hung across a main street."

Welcoming, when done with true purpose, is anything but simple. It's actually very complicated. It is a discipline. In fact, it is both an art and a science. . . The art of welcoming is creating belonging, visibility, and emotional safety. It's creating space for our parades or festivals or public arts or heritage. It is answering the human longing to be seen and honoring who you are without demanding that you erase where you came from.

The science of welcoming is building the infrastructure of opportunity. It is crafting policies, pathways and strategies that allow newcomers to thrive economically. It's recognizing foreign credentials, streamlining relicensing, matching comparable job skills, and opening doors to capital and political representation."

--Ricky Santiago, "The Art and Science of Welcoming"



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS FOR JUNE 2024

CROSSWORD

T	W	O	S	T	E	P		A	B	U		R	S	P
W	I	N	M	O	R	E		C	A	N	T	A	T	A
I	N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E	D	A	Y
L	E	V	E	L		A	I	D		O	N	C	L	E
I	S	D		A	W	W		H	A	R	D	L	I	E
G	H		N	O	M	A	D		S	K	E	I	N	S
H	O	J	O	S		R	A	J	A		R	F		
T	W	O	H	U	N	D	R	E	D	F	I	F	T	Y
		H	I		A	S	I	F		A	Z	E	R	O
M	A	N	T	L	E		A	F	I	R	E		I	U
I	S	A	T	E	S	T		E	L	M		E	P	R
S	I	D	E	S		O	E	R		A	T	A	L	E
S	T	A	R	S	A	N	D	S	T	R	I	P	E	S
R	I	M	S	O	U	T		O	N	E	N	O	T	E
I	S	S		N	G	O		N	E	A	T	E	S	T

ACROSTIC

The accumulation of all powers
legislative, executive and
judiciary in the same hands
whether hereditary, self-
appointed, or elective may
justly be pronounced the very
definition of tyranny.

--James Madison

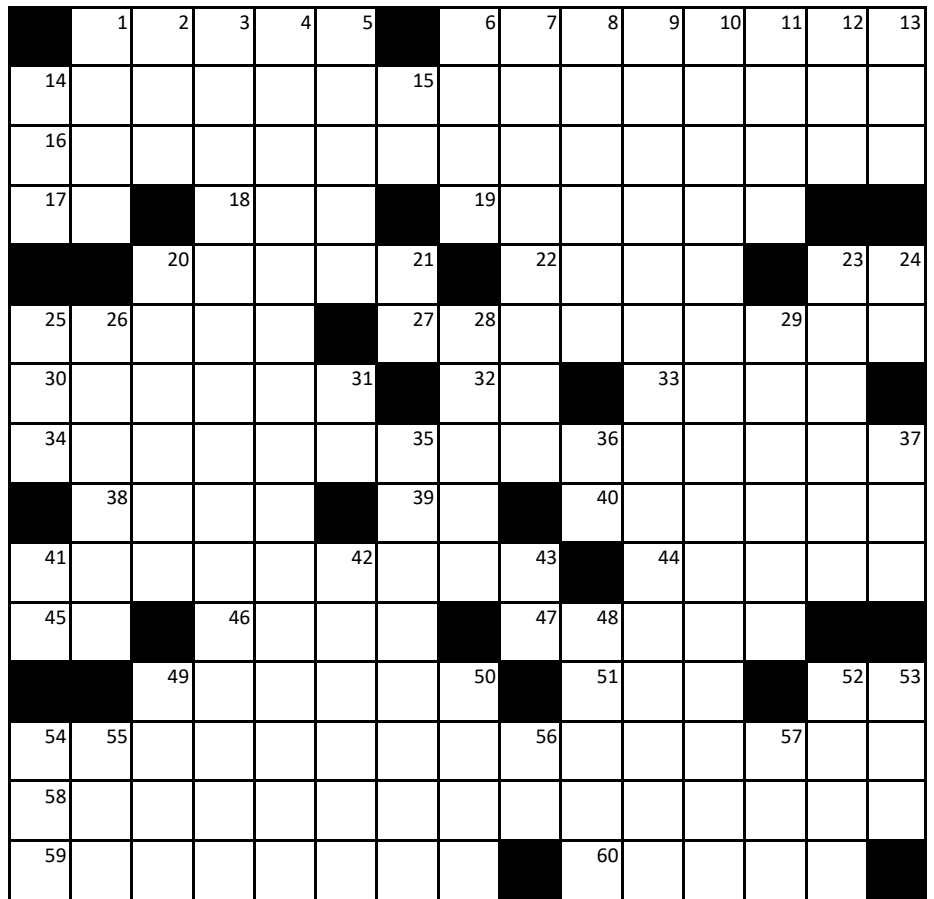
PEOPLES PUZZLE

"On the wings of
a dove"

by Rob Kingsolver

ACROSS

1. When late sleepers might rise
6. Stereotypically dead thing
14. What she might do at the kennel
(3 wds)
16. **Site of first moon landing (2 wds)**
17. East Market district: Nu ____
18. Urogenital ailment (abbr)
19. "Don't forget ____ the soup."
20. Italian autos
22. World's longest river
23. Skin test for nurses (abbr)
25. Abbot's second in command
27. Instructions for dreidels? (2 wds)
30. Usher's domain
32. Word before *garde* or *masse*
33. Acronym meaning "carpe diem"
34. **Awarded to Obama and Machado**
38. Author Morrison
39. Increases summer electric bills
40. The fables with a moral
41. Superior routes (2 wds)
44. A brief skirmish (2 wds)
45. 12 mo.
46. 4-day schedule, with Tuesdays off
47. A cat's are retractable
49. Spilled the beans (2 wds)
51. Sense of self
52. Has a 12-step program (abbr)
54. **Heard from our choir (3 wds)**
58. Before the ballet, ____
59. Two Charlie Brown expletives
60. What logic makes



DOWN

1. Shortened preposition
2. Law preventing hiring bias (abbr)
3. **Civil protest tactic (3 wds)**
4. Napkin description (4 wds)
5. Died, in France
6. Shoulder muscle, briefly
7. N.J. company named for a constellation
8. Chooses to join (2 wds)
9. When kings, queens, princes and princesses are in accord? (3 wds)
10. Lady Godiva description (2 wds)
11. Jumbled info
12. Those French guys
13. Director Spike
14. Computer key (abbr)
15. Aloha, meaning or location
20. DIY house sellers, informally
21. Merchant ship name prefix
23. Three kitchen measures (abbrs)
24. Hamlet might or might not ____
25. Kitchen vessel
26. Violator of 3-Down
28. Georgia fruit
29. Ness and Spitzer
31. Editor's mark that sends you to the dictionary (abbr)
35. What we should do before every congregational meeting (2 wds)
36. Synonym to "per person" (abbr)
37. 1964 hit song "____ Beso"
41. Word before author's name
42. Where Belisarius won in 530 AD
43. Gamecock's state (abbr)
48. Namesakes of biblical Rachel's sister
49. Performed musically
50. Audi sports car
52. Addie's husband in As I Lay Dying
53. Affirmative vote
54. US agency for food safety (abbr)
55. Required, even on motorboats
56. Symbol for a lightweight gas
57. Boolean logic words

ACROSTIC PUZZLE

by Rob Kingsolver

Follow the clues and fill in the blanks to complete each word. Then copy letters into the matching numbered squares to complete a quotation. The first letters of each of the words, read from top to bottom, spell out the author's name and topic.

1 I	2 J		3 Q	4 S	5 C		6 G	7 T		8 T	9 F	10 D	11 U		12 B	13 K	14 O	15 N	16 Y	17 O		18 K
19 R	20 I	21 V	22 O	23 D	24 T		25 Q	26 J	27 H	28 U	29 X	30 G		31 N	32 W	33 L	34 E	35 W	36 U	37 N		38 U
39 P		40 N	41 L	42 Z		43 H	44 U	45 B	46 T	47 A		48 J	49 P		50 H	51 E	52 Z		53 Q	54 J	55 T	56 U
	57 H	58 T		59 E	60 U	61 A		62 W	63 H	64 R	65 J	66 W	67 G	68 U	69 C	70 I	71 J		72 Q	73 M		74 Z
75 X	76 F		77 O	78 S	79 D	80 V	81 F	82 L	83 G	84 E		85 O	86 H	87 O	88 U	89 W	90 S		91 Y	92 A	93 X	94 K
	95 C	96 P	97 M	98 J	99 C		100 N	101 E		102 W	103 O	104 M	105 B		106 Q	107 J	108 V		109 F	110 M		111 M
112 O	113 X	114 S		115 J	116 B	117 H		118 F	119 K	120 Z	121 C	122 L		123 G	124 O		125 A	126 W	127 Q	128 V		129 P
130 M	131 Z	132 O		133 F	134 R	135 A		136 E	137 N		138 D	139 F	140 Q	141 H	142 Q	143 B		144 K	145 P		146 W	147 X
148 Y	149 M		150 K	151 G	152 V		153 N	154 J	155 S	156 L		157 C	158 S	159 G	160 X	161 E		162 M	163 U	164 J	165 S	
166 F	167 H	168 E	169 L	170 P	171 M	172 Z	173 L	174 Z		175 D	176 A		177 E	178 V	179 Y		180 X	181 U	182 L	183 C	184 U	
185 R	186 B	187 W	188 S	189 F		190 L	191 C	192 T	193 B		194 A	195 T	196 K		197 I	198 B	199 O	200 Y	201 D	202 E	203 R	204 D

(The first letter of each answer in this column spells the author's name.)

A. Feed

135 176 92 47 194 61 125

B. It packs a trunk

186 45 105 198 12 116 193 143

C. Word after rocket

95 183 69 99 157 191 5 121

D. Pioneer

201 23 138 175 79 204 10

E. Get something

101 136 177 34 202 84 168 59 51 161

F. Looking back

166 9 76 189 139 118 81 109 133

G. Lizard or screen

159 83 30 6 123 151 67

H. Jeff. Co. suburb

63 117 43 50 57 27 167 141 86

I. "High _____"

1 20 197 70

J. It predated bells

71 154 2 164 65 107 48 115 54 26 98

K. Gulp down

119 18 144 150 13 196 94

L. Around 12:00

173 169 122 33 41 190 82 182 156

M. Ill effects

171 110 104 149 73 162 97 111 130

N. Beatles anthem

153 37 100 15 40 31 137

(The topic is this entire phrase, along with first letter in each answer below.)

O. A visual art

199 22 87 14 124 17 77 103 85 112 132

P. "E for _____"

96 49 39 145 170 129

Q. Car hospital

106 140 127 3 53 142 72 25

R. Intone

64 185 134 19 203

S. Who UUs welcome

78 155 165 188 114 158 4 90

T. Tree pro

192 24 8 46 58 55 7 195

U. OK to eat

56 68 11 88 163 60 36 38 184 44 181 28

V. Act indecisively

108 80 21 178 128 152

W. Unserious

89 126 35 66 102 187 62 146 32

X. Spoken in Cincy?

29 180 75 147 113 93 160

Y. Ill will

148 179 16 200 91

Z. Cilium

131 174 42 172 120 52 74

Fellowship and Stewardship

We don't think of finance as a spiritual aspect of church life, but it can be. In fact, you could say that the All Peoples' budget is where our religious values are manifest in the real world through our collective generosity and spending decisions. Fundraisers like the Service Auction and Winterfair are more than a way to finance our church operations; they are an essential part of our community life as well. In the next Tapestry we will look at financial topics such as environmentally and socially responsible investing, guidelines for budgeting in UU churches, and some ways that public tax policy and budgeting affect the structure of society.



In the biblical parable of the loaves and fishes, the disciples take a modest basket of bread and fish and use it to feed the assembled multitude. Some scholars consider this one of the miracles chronicled in the New Testament, while others see the story as an allegory nudging us out of a paradigm of scarcity and into an attitude of abundance. (Here in Kentucky, home-grown tomatoes and zucchini squash might do the trick!) If you have thoughts on these or other topics, please let us know.



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Tapestry's mission is to celebrate All Peoples congregational life through personal reflections, stories, poetry, music, visual arts, and a healthy measure of fun. Because *Tapestry* celebrates the human spirit, we ask our contributors not to use artificial intelligence tools to produce art or text. We want to know about you--not about your algorithm.

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