

Dated Tuesday, September 15, 2026



To the New York State Convention of Universalists

On behalf of the Central East Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association, thank you for your continued affirmation of our work in supporting the vibrancy of our faith in the state of New York. As your Regional Staff, we embody the Association's mission by equipping congregations for vitality, supporting leadership in their prophetic ministries, and advancing our tradition's values of holding Love at the center both locally and globally. While a hefty task, the grant you graciously provided makes it possible.

Throughout 2026, your Regional Staff have partnered with congregations across the state to directly coach, connect, challenge, and companion them in fulfilling their respective missions. Broadly speaking, this has included conversations and efforts to more boldly embody their ministries, engage in effective stewardship, welcome newcomers, offer guidance in times of planned and unforeseen transitions, (re)frame the assets of their legacy for today's needs, and bolster religious education across the generations. In particular, the Rev. Lyn Cox was joyfully welcomed to lead worship with several congregations within the first six months of joining staff. Cassandra Montenegro facilitated Start Up gatherings that aimed to clarify and align congregations and ordained ministers as they began their new chapters of shared ministry. And Lenore Bajare-Dukes assisted with the formation of a new lifespan curriculum called Woven Faith that numerous congregations have utilized to empower their work in expanding Unitarian Universalist identity, spiritual depth, and generosity.

Furthermore, NYSCU's grants, while primarily oriented to aid congregations across the State of New York, also support congregations across the Central East Region and the Association at large. Bold examples of this broader, interdependent ministry can be witnessed in the prophetic public ministry of the Building Beloved Community Beyond the Binary Conference hosted by the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse and congregations serving as regional and national hubs for General Assembly 2026. For truly, as Love is woven throughout all things, so too are the connections of our congregations.



Again, on behalf of the Central East Region, thank you for your ministry and the gracious grant provided. Your efforts are nothing short of miraculous, and we are deeply appreciative of the centuries-old legacy that you continue to uphold. This legacy embodies the great truth of Universalism: that which is an unwavering knowledge that Love holds all things.

With Care and In Faith,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Coles".

Rev. Byron Tyler Coles
Lead, Central East Region
Unitarian Universalist Association

Dated September 14, 2026