Coming Into Full Bloom:
Flower Communion and the Courage to Grow

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Norwich - June 28, 2026

Rev. Dianne M. Daniels & Ms. Sarah St. George

Opening Words – Rev. Dianne

Good morning and welcome.

As we gather for Flower Communion, we gather not only to celebrate the beauty of flowers, but also the beauty of becoming.

Each flower arrives carrying its own shape, color, fragrance, and story.

No two are exactly alike.

And yet together they create something more beautiful than any single blossom could achieve alone.

As we close one church year and prepare to enter another season of life, may we reflect on the ways we have grown, the gifts we have received, and the possibilities still waiting to bloom within us.

May we enter this hour with open hearts and grateful spirits.

Chalice Lighting – Sarah & Congregation

As we light this chalice, we open our hearts to the color and fragrance of life.

May the flame ignite our inner light, transforming our thoughts and centering our minds.

In this shared space, we welcome the beauty of diversity and the sweetness of community.

Let this light guide us to grow, to love, and to shine together.

Meditation / Prayer – Rev. Dianne

Spirit of Life, we give thanks for seasons of growth.

For seeds planted long ago.

For lessons learned through joy and challenge.

For friendships that sustain us.

For communities that nurture us.

For possibilities that call us forward.

As we gather among these flowers, remind us that growth rarely happens all at once.

Teach us patience with ourselves.

Help us trust the unfolding process of becoming.

May we honor both what has already blossomed and what is still emerging.

And may we carry forward the courage to continue growing, learning, loving, and serving.

Amen.

Story of Flower Communion - Sarah

Before we celebrate Flower Communion together, it is worth remembering where this tradition began.

In 1923, Norbert Čapek (Cha-peck), founder of the Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia, created a new communion ritual that would unite people without relying on traditional Christian sacramental forms. Instead of bread and wine, he chose flowers—something accessible, beautiful, and meaningful to all.

Each person brought a flower.

Together, those flowers formed a single bouquet.

The symbolism remains powerful today.

No two flowers are alike.

Yet each contributes something unique.

The bouquet would not be the same without every flower.

And neither would our community.

Flower Communion reminds us that diversity is not a problem to solve.

It is a gift to celebrate.

Sermon – Rev. Dianne and Sarah

Rev. Dianne

At the beginning of this month, we asked a question: What is mine to do?

A few weeks later, we reflected on another question:

What am I carrying forward?

Today, as we close this church year, we arrive at a third question:

What is ready to bloom?

Because growth is never the end goal.

Blooming is.

Not blooming for applause.

Not blooming for perfection.

Blooming because growth naturally seeks expression.

Sarah

One of the reasons I love Flower Communion is that it reminds us that growth looks different for everyone.

Some flowers bloom early.

Some bloom late.

Some are bold and colorful.

Others are quiet and delicate.

Yet none of them are failing.

They are simply expressing their nature in their own way.

As I prepare to begin seminary this fall, that truth feels especially important.

I don't know exactly what kind of minister I will become.

But I do know that growth is part of the journey.

And growth requires trust.

Trust in the process.

Trust in the calling.

Trust in ourselves.

Rev. Dianne

That trust is something every one of us is asked to practice.

Whether we are beginning a new chapter or continuing a familiar one.

Whether we are students, parents, grandparents, caregivers, workers, retirees, seekers, or leaders.

Life continually asks us to grow.

The challenge is that growth often happens invisibly.

Before a flower blooms, a great deal of work takes place beneath the surface.

Roots spread. Nutrients are gathered. Strength develops.

None of it looks impressive.

Yet all of it matters.

The same is true spiritually.

Sarah

Sometimes we underestimate the importance of what happens beneath the surface.

The conversations.

The questions.

The moments of reflection.

The struggles that teach resilience.

The relationships that teach compassion.

The experiences that help us become more authentic.

None of those things may look dramatic.

Yet they are preparing us for whatever comes next.

Rev. Dianne

When we look back over this church year, we can see many seeds that have been planted.

Seeds of listening.

Seeds of presence.

Seeds of belonging.

Seeds of courage and authenticity, of spiritual responsibility.

And most importantly, seeds of love.

Some of those seeds have already blossomed.
Others are still growing. That is perfectly okay.

Not every flower blooms at the same moment.

Sarah

Flower Communion reminds us of something else.
We do not bloom alone.

The bouquet before us exists because many people contributed.
Every flower matters.
Every person matters.
Every story matters.

Our individual growth is strengthened by community.
By encouragement.
By friendship.
By shared wisdom.
By belonging.

Rev. Dianne

This is one of the great gifts of congregational life.

We help one another grow.

We remind one another of possibilities we cannot always see for ourselves.

We encourage one another through difficult seasons.

We celebrate one another's victories.

And sometimes, we simply stand beside one another until new growth becomes possible.

That is sacred work.

Sarah

As we move into summer, I hope we will remember that spiritual growth doesn't take a vacation.

The opportunities simply become less structured.

Growth happens in conversations.

On walks and during vacations.

At family gatherings.

Through books and quiet reflection.

Through curiosity and everyday acts of kindness.

Rev. Dianne

And so, as we prepare to exchange flowers today, I invite you to consider: What is ready to bloom in your life?

What gifts are waiting to be shared?

What possibilities are waiting to be explored?

What strengths are waiting to emerge?

The answer may not be obvious today.

But trust the process.

Trust the roots.

Trust the growth already underway.

Sharing Flowers – take one, leave one
Please come forward and choose a bloom to take home with you – there are plenty of flowers in our community vase, along with paper towels to catch drips.

Shared Closing - Sarah and Rev. Dianne together

May we honor the beauty of what has already bloomed.

May we nurture what is still growing.

May we celebrate the diversity that strengthens our community.

And may we continue becoming more fully ourselves.

For the world does not need copies.

The world needs each of us, bringing our unique gifts, colors, and beauty to the shared bouquet of life.

Closing Words - Sarah

Every flower in this room began as a possibility.

Every bloom is evidence of growth.

Every blossom is a reminder that becoming takes time.

May we leave today trusting that growth is still unfolding within us.

Chalice Extinguishing - Rev. Dianne

Though we extinguish this chalice, its light remains with us.

May we carry its warmth into the summer days ahead.

May we continue growing in wisdom, compassion, and courage.

May we honor the unique gifts we each bring to the world.

And may we remember that together, like the flowers we exchange today, we create a beauty far greater than any one of us could create alone.

Go in peace. Go in gratitude. Go in bloom.

Have a wonderful afternoon, and a beautiful week and summer ahead.