



**CEDAR VALLEY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

3912 CEDAR HEIGHTS DR. CEDAR FALLS, IA 50613

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

319-266-5640

www.cedarvalleyuu.org



***** 2024 *****

- JANUARY 7 10:00 A.M. LIBERATING LOVE: MEMBER PERSPECTIVES ON LOVING THE CVUU**
11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Heather Flory, Lynn Brant *
- JANUARY 14 10:00 A.M. MLK, JR. SUNDAY**
BENDING TOWARDS JUSTICE – Pastor Emma Peterson, Kathi Bower *
11:30 A.M. Adult Forum
- JANUARY 21 10:00 A.M. FESTIVAL SUNDAY**
GOOD VIBES SUNDAY – Jess Lieb and other Religious Services members, Karen Impola *
11:30 A.M. Adult Forum
- JANUARY 28 10:00 A.M. TRANSFORMATION: A UU VALUE AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**
11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Pastor Emma Peterson, Dick Warhol *

* ~ denotes *Worship Associate*



For complete CVUU COVID-19 information, go to Guidelines on the website at <<http://cedarvalleyuu.org/covid-19>>.

The *mission* of this organization is to be an accepting and supportive community that nurtures spiritual, emotional, and intellectual explorations, articulates ethical values, and encourages actions based on personal beliefs. This community is a voice for religious diversity, human tolerance, improvement of the human condition, and preservation of our environment.

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR

I've never liked New Year's resolutions. The last thing I want to do after surviving the winter holiday season, is hurl myself into some new project of self-improvement. During the long grey days of January, I'm still in hibernation mode! I find it amusing that immediately following a beautiful celebration of darkness and winter and the patient waiting for the sun's return, we're encouraged to set (unreasonable) goals and ramp up our activity. It goes against our very nature, but it is deeply American! The message goes, "Right after you break the bank buying everyone and their sister unnecessary material things, sign up for a gym membership or similar expensive investment for a commitment that will maybe last two weeks, if you're lucky."

I've resisted joining the New Year's resolution bandwagon for years now. Instead, I choose to focus January on... surviving January. It is a long, grey month. December goes by in a flash, but January often seems to last years. For me, surviving the long letdown after the bustle of Christmas departs means taking care of my home, keeping it clean and organized and turning the cozy factor up as high as possible (candles! fairy lights! snuggly blankets everywhere!). It means nourishing my body and my soul, eating hearty winter foods, moving gently and often, getting outside whenever I can, and stimulating my mind with new books and podcasts and movies. It means centering gratitude—with my partner and our critters, with dear friends near and far, with the basic amenities that make daily life comfortable (hot water! electricity! warm clothing!).

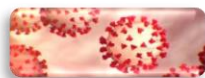
Whether you're setting big goals for yourself in 2024, or just doing what you can to get through until spring, I'd like to hear about it! Sharing our journeys and challenges helps all of us be the best version of ourselves. If a pastoral conversation might help to get you through the cold and dark season, let me know. My office is open on Wednesdays and Thursdays, some Tuesdays and Fridays by appointment. Let me know you're coming, and I'll put the kettle on. Nothing like a good cup of tea in the winter!

Pastor Emma



COVID-19 NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

If we learn that there has been a possible COVID exposure at a CVUU event, we will send out an all-church email. To ensure that you receive these emails, verify that you are signed up on our newsletter and Weekly Update email lists.



Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 in the days after attending an event at the CVUU should contact the CVUU office at <office@cedarvalleyuu.org>; the Vice President, *Karen Impola* at <vp@cedarvalleyuu.org>; and *Pastor Emma Peterson* at <pastor@cedarvalleyuu.org>.



UU-related historical facts in our newsletters are contributed by *Mica Lorenz* and taken from *This Day in Unitarian Universalist History* by Frank Schulman – Skinner House Books.

MEMO FROM THE PREZ

Let's talk lay ministry.

In some respects, we are all lay ministers. As UUs we believe in 'shared ministry'—that the well-being of the CVUU is a shared responsibility involving lay persons, the minister, and our professional staff. Each of us has a responsibility to help the CVUU thrive by putting our individual skills, experience, energy, and passion to good use.

However, once a congregation gets to be a certain size, it can be helpful to have one or more congregation members who take on a larger role than the average lay person. At the CVUU, this involves helping the minister care for the needs of our congregation. For example, this might include doing visitations or providing pastoral care, preaching, or officiating at weddings, funerals, or other occasions.

At the CVUU our experience with lay ministers is relatively recent. *Judy Harrington* recently reminded me that she served on the committee which came up with our previous lay minister policy, back in 2007. That committee did a good job, and the initial policy provided a job description and outlined qualifications and a Code of Ethics for wannabe lay ministers. It served an important purpose and provided guidance for several CVUU lay ministers over the years.

But times change. After years of service, some of our previous lay ministers have moved on, moved away, or 'aged out' of the role. After sixteen years, the Board agreed it was time to take a fresh look at our lay ministry policy and create a new path forward.

Rob Boody, *Mandy Boody*, and *Pastor Emma* initiated this effort and gathered research on the topic, looking to draw upon UU resources. Other than references to lay ministers serving as interim ministers, few UU resources address the topic.

This did not deter our small but determined crew, however! This fall they developed a draft for the Board to consider, and after incorporating Board suggestions, a new Lay Minister Policy for the CVUU was adopted at our December Board meeting.

The new policy outlines the process for a member to become a Lay Minister, and includes Performance Standards, an Assessment Team, and other specific guidance. The policy includes more training requirements than the previous policy, but the Board was aware to not create too many barriers for members interested in expanding their 'shared ministry' role. This new policy will be included in our updated Congregational Handbook, for all to see.

If you feel called to a deeper level of ministry, please take a look at our new policy. We love you and want to encourage you to live out the level of ministry to which you feel called!

Until next month...

Dennis Harbaugh



On January 21, 1525 *George Blaurock* received the first adult congregational baptism in Zurich, Switzerland, thus establishing congregational Anabaptism, which later merged with Socinianism to enlarge and strengthen the Unitarian movement.

“how do i make a future of justice an irresistible option?”
~~ adrienne marie brown



JANUARY SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. online and in person unless stated otherwise.

January 7th

Liberating Love: Member Perspectives on Loving the CVUU
~~ Heather Flory, Lynn Brant (WA)

January 14th MLK, Jr. Sunday

Bending Towards Justice
~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Kathi Bower (WA)

January 21st Festival Sunday

Good Vibes Sunday ~~ Jess Lieb and other members of the Religious Services committee, Karen Impola (WA)
There will be no Children's RE this day; children will enjoy the service. There will be nursery care.

January 28th

Transformation: a UU Value and Spiritual Practice
~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Dick Warhol (WA)



CHILDREN'S RE!!

On Sunday, December 10th we were absolutely delighted to have ten children in our RE class and all went incredibly well. My plan for that day was to create small props for the four elements that were going to be a part of our pageant, and everyone did a wonderful job of creating pinwheels, waves, leaves, and flames! The kids helped one another with drawing, cutting, and cleaning up afterwards.

December 17th we put on the Winter Solstice pageant! Four of our amazing CVUU children contributed their acting chops to help make the performance a wonderful success! Thank you to everyone, children, adults, *Jess Lieb* and *Pastor Emma*, for all the time, energy, and love you gave to this pageant (and to me).

If you are reading this prior to the end of December, there will be RE on Sunday, the 31st.

Some notes on Children's RE for January:

* Classes will resume on Sunday, January 7th!

* Our next *Festival Sunday* is January 21st! There will **not** be RE classes that day as children will be invited to attend the service. However, there will be nursery care available.

* The RE Soul Matters theme is *Liberating Love*. The lessons include “Love Pulls Us”, “Love Pulls Us Up Stream”, and “Love Pulls Us Toward Beauty”.

As I write this, we are coming to the end of 2023 so I want to thank all of our wonderful RE and nursery volunteers—we couldn't do what we do without each of you!

DCRE-ly yours, *Kate*

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Forums take place following the Sunday services at 11:30 a.m. unless publicized otherwise. Most, if not all, are available on Zoom and in person at the church.

January 7th

Strengthening and Supporting Kids and Youth in Foster Care

Two strong advocates for youth will discuss issues related to the foster care system and youth justice. Latitia Aossey is the State Coordinator for Achieving Maximum Potential, a statewide group that provides support and advocacy for youth who are in the system. The director of Cedar Valley Angels, Andrea Delitt, will also participate.

January 14th

MLK, Jr. and Nonviolent Opposition to War

CVUU members *Byron Plumley* and *Shirley Whiteside* will lead an Adult Forum on MLK's Vietnam speech and nonviolent call for opposition to that war. They were friends with Dr. Vincent Harding who wrote King's Vietnam speech.

January 21st

Loving the Walk

The Nature Group meets monthly to enjoy nature—usually with a walk outdoors. Members of the group will share why they choose this activity and what benefits they have gained from being part of the group. They have been known to venture out even on the coldest and hottest of days, enjoying the Interconnected Web. Anyone is welcome to join the group, and form friendships as well as learn together. You might even experience a session of Forest Bathing!

January 28th

Raising UU Children

A panel of parents and other interested people will discuss the challenges and rewards of raising children in our UU congregation.

Al and Pam Hays for Adult RE



MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Sunday morning meditation will continue at 9:00 a.m. Use this link to join us: <<https://meet.google.com/edc-tsvx-fbj>>. Look for group posts and updates on the Buddhist Path Facebook page.



Paul Best, described as a “troublesome Unitarian who denied the Trinity of the Godhead, and the Deity of Christ, and the Holy Ghost” during the reign of King Charles I of England, was accused of blasphemy by the Committee of Plundered Ministers on January 28, 1645. He was tried by Parliament, and an ordinance for his execution was introduced. However, the ordinance was never passed due to public outcry, and Best was allowed to return to Yorkshire, where he continued his studies and writings and died in 1647.

BOARD BRIEFS

On December 14, 2023 your CVUU Board held its regular monthly meeting. We again had excellent attendance.

The Board...

- Received reports from and discussed ongoing work of the various CVUU Councils.
- Finalized and adopted a new CVUU Lay Minister Policy.
- Scheduled the CVUU Annual Meeting for May 19, 2024.
- Discussed ideas and tentative plans for a Board fundraiser in April, 2024.

Dennis Harbaugh



Wow, another year is behind us! With renewed hope for world peace, may this year bring new happiness, new goals, new achievements, and a lot of new inspirations to each of us.

Congratulations to *Linnelle Roelofse* on her exceptional performance as Molly in the Cedar Falls Community Theatre production of *The Happy Elf* that took place in early December. Her parents, members *Lindi Roelofse* and *Rick Liguz*, have a budding star in their midst!

Also in the cast was a longtime Copyworks employee, *Kyle Weber*, who had the role of the head elf, Norbert. Copyworks does a lot of our printing, so Kyle is a familiar face to those of us who drop off/pick up printing orders. Congratulations to Kyle!

To those in our congregation who have been dealing with health issues or are recovering from illness or surgery, we wish you a very speedy recovery; to those who have experienced the loss of a relative or dear friend, we send our deepest sympathy.

Contact the *Caring Committee* with pastoral concerns, or if you are in need of assistance.



SOCIAL ACTION: BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Do you have a friend or family member who lives in Black Hawk County, is under the age of five, and would enjoy a free book a month? You can sign them up for *Dolly Parton's Imagination Library*!

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a program dedicated to giving books to children for free. This inspires a love of reading from a young age. Go to <https://imaginationlibrary.com/> and register the child(ren) or share this information with their parent(s).

As of mid-December, when this article was written, 224,249,899 books have been gifted to children around the world. Another idea—if you know someone who is the recipient of these books and they are overflowing in their household, keep our *Little Lending Library* in mind as a new home for the gently used books. *Happy Reading!*

SOCIAL ACTION COLLECTIONS

The Social Action Collections are an important activity for the CVUU, and we have continued to do well in supporting worthy charities.

The charity for November was the *Black Hawk Grundy Mental Health Fund* and \$440 was collected in donations. The *Cedar Valley Angels* was the designated December charity, and we'll have that total for you next time. (A collection was taken at both services on Sunday, December 24th, Christmas Eve.)



January's charity is for the UUSC's annual intergenerational program, *Guest at Your Table*, which raises support for and awareness of key human rights issues. *Kathi Bower*, on behalf of Social Action, has written about it in this issue. Be sure to read her article for details, especially if you are new to the CVUU.

Thank you to all who participate in supporting the charities each month in the name of the CVUU.

The Social Action Committee



JANUARY DEADLINES

FOR THE CALENDAR AND NUUSLETTER

The next newsletter will be the **February 2024** issue. The calendar deadline for this issue will be **Wednesday, January 17th** (send info to the office); the newsletter deadline will be **Friday, January 19th** (send articles to me). This information can also be found in **bold type on the calendar page of this newsletter**.

Mark your calendars now for **January 17th and 19th**—the calendar and newsletter deadlines for the *February* issue. There are paper copies left at the church each month—some in the acrylic wall holder in the front entry and some at the foot of the stairs in the Fellowship Hall.

Gerry Chamberlin, Editor
newsletter@cedarvalleyuu.org



CARING CONNECTIONS

The members of our Caring Connections Committee are devoted to serving this congregation month after month in various ways as the needs arise. Many thanks to each of them! The contact person for **January** is *Margie Miller*.



PAGAN PLANNING POTLUCK

Pagans and friends! It's time to revive CUUPS! Bring food and your calendars Saturday, January 20th at 12:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We'll discuss what we've done before and what we want to do in 2024.

James Freeman Clarke announced in *The Christian World* the opening of Meadville Theological School in Meadville, Pennsylvania on January 27, 1944. It opened “without endowments, buildings, library or apparatus of any sort, but nevertheless having the essential parts, teachers and pupils.”



CEDAR FALLS WEEKLY COMMUNITY MEAL

January has a fifth Tuesday, so on January 30th the CVUU will help serve a free community meal at First United Methodist Church in Cedar Falls (along with several other local small religious organizations). Thanks to all who have helped in the past, especially for setting up tables and chairs, as that task is solely a CVUU responsibility.

Volunteers are needed to set up tables and chairs that morning (usually starting about 8:30 a.m.), donate cupcakes, help prepare food from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., serve from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., and clean up from 5:45 until approximately 6:30 p.m.

Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact *Shirley Whiteside* if you are willing and able to help.



In all kinds of weather, your Building & Grounds folks take care of this spiritual home for the benefit of all. In December we noticed *Bill Brown* spending a morning changing the message on the sign by the road. Thanks, Bill! ***The Church Mouse***



Millard Fillmore was born on January 7, 1800 in Locke, New York. He was a lawyer who served in the New York State Assembly and the U.S. House of Representatives. Elected Vice President of the United States in 1848, Fillmore became President on July 9, 1850 when President Zachary Taylor died, and he held that office until 1853. Fillmore signed a series of bills known as the Compromise of 1850, which admitted California to the Union as a free state, restricted the slave trade in the District of Columbia, and provided for the return of fugitive slaves. He authorized the first American mission to establish trade relations with Japan. In 1856 he ran for President as the candidate of the Native American (“Know-Nothing”) Party but was defeated. Fillmore was a member of the Unitarian Church in Buffalo, New York.



Iowa UU Witness Advocacy Network

IUUWAN envisions uniting all UU congregations in Iowa to advocate for policies that promote social and environmental justice and end the oppression of marginalized groups of people in Iowa. *Shirley Whiteside* and *Byron Plumley* are representing CVUU on the Board. The *IUUWAN* website strives to list statewide events.

THANKSGIVING POTLUCK ANOTHER SUCCESS!!

Thanksgiving Day’s potluck dinner at the CVUU was attended by *thirty*, an increase from last year! Much conversation and eating took place as is expected at a UU event!

There are a few who were instrumental in seeing that the choreography for this occasion was planned in advance, with *Priscilla Nieman* as ‘head wrangler’ (along with her clipboards for sign-ups!). *Nate Callahan* and *Nita Stewart* collaborated on all things turkey and the trimmings with Nate arriving early to get the turkey in the oven. *Nita* and *Terry Stewart* also arrived early and spent hours in the kitchen taking on food responsibilities as well as being a part of all shifts, including clean-up. Not enough can be said about the dedication to the work, food prep, and food contributions by *Nita*, *Terry*, and *Nate* that day.



Russ Campbell arrived around noon to arrange the tables and organize the food dishes. *Sheri Huber-Otting*, *Arnie Strait*, and *Sheri’s* son, *Tom Otting*, put out the table center pieces to add a festive flair to the decor.

A wide variety of foods in every category was contributed by the attendees to satisfy everyone’s taste buds. Longtime members, new members, and guests of members came and feasted, often going back for seconds.

Byron Plumley gave a blessing. Some of those who pitched in with clean-up tasks were: *Steve Chamberlin*, *Shirley Whiteside*, *Nita*, *Terry*, *Priscilla*, and most likely, some others who are not mentioned here, but whose assistance was very much appreciated!

Everyone truly comes together as a community to make our annual Thanksgiving potluck memorable. Just as you might expect, *Nate* and *Priscilla* are already planning next year!!



OPEN OPPORTUNITIES: LEAD A SERMON

The *Religious Services Council* needs *YOU!* We are looking for a few brave souls who are interested in leading a sermon (or two) over the next few months (February through June 2024).

You can present something on your own or team up with a few friends to share something meaningful from the pulpit.

What’s in it for you? Fame! Fortune (the non-monetary kind however)! A chance to inspire and transform the minds and hearts of others! An opportunity to stretch yourself and grow as a person by trying something you have always wanted to do!

How do you sign up? We thought you would never ask!

You can email the RSC at the following email address: <CVUURSC@gmail.com> OR you can speak with any member of RSC (think Worship Associates).

We will then reach out to you to discuss topics, dates, music, etc., in order to assist you in making your experience at the pulpit something to remember!

Can’t wait to experience the magic you bring to the CVUU! Reach out today!

NEW YEAR'S DAY LABYRINTH WALK AND MINI-RETREAT

Welcome in the New Year at the CVUU on Monday, January 1st from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. by walking a canvas labyrinth in the Sanctuary and/or reading Tarot cards in the Fellowship Hall, while enjoying a hot cup of tea and discussing goals and plans for the new year with other UUs.



All are welcome to drop in for a few minutes or stay for the entire two-hour mini-retreat. Please contact *Floralyn Groff* if you'd like to help set up the labyrinth and/or move chairs before or after the event.



GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

Welcome *Guest At Your Table* season at the CVUU!!

We have reached the third and final month of fundraising for *Guest At Your Table* at the CVUU!! We only have until January 31st to get our donations in!! Act FAST!! Reminder: This year's theme is: Pursuing Liberation. To find out more, please visit the UUSC website at: <<https://www.uusc.org/resources/congregations/gayt/>>.

REMINDER: What is Guest at Your Table?

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness of key human rights issues. Since UUSC works in more than twenty countries, with over fifty grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. The program is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership and support human rights.



Making a Gift to Guest at Your Table

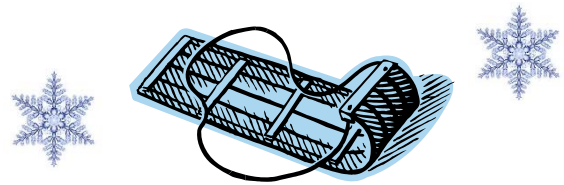
Donations to *Guest at Your Table* help advance community-led human rights initiatives around the world. Donations of \$150 or more are eligible to be matched by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY.

Ways to Give at the CVUU:

- Tithle.ly ~ Be sure to type "Guest at Your Table" in the notes/memo section;
- Send a check to the CVUU at 3912 Cedar Heights Drive, Cedar Falls, IA 50613 with *Guest at Your Table* in the memo line;
- Drop cash or check in the CVUU Collection box in the sanctuary with a note/memo signifying the donation as a *Guest at Your Table* gift.

One important final note—some members may be receiving USPS mailings from the UUSC directly for GAYT. If you wish your donation to be credited to the CVUU, then *do not* fill out and return the paper mailing to the UUSC but follow the instructions above. The CVUU does NOT get credit for the contributions otherwise.

With any questions or inquiries, please reach out to the Social Action Committee or *Kathi Bower*.



ROOTED IN VALUES AT THE CVUU

Our theme this year at the CVUU is "Growing in Purpose: Rooted in Values". Our UU values include love, interdependence, equity, transformation, pluralism, generosity, and justice. One way you can live these UU values, and find purpose, is to help out right here at the CVUU!

See the "Links and Forms" section towards the end of each Weekly Update for more information about how you can help, or contact the folks listed below for each of the areas mentioned.

- To help as a **greeter** on Sunday mornings, contact *Jill Miller*.
- To help provide treats and coffee as part of **hospitality** on Sunday mornings, contact *Linda Lechty*.
- To help with **building and grounds** tasks, contact *Roger Hahn* or *Rick Henry*.
- To help by **playing with the kids and youth** on Sunday mornings (aka help with the Religious Education program), contact *Kate Flynn*.
- To help with **Sunday services** by lighting the chalice, serving as a worship associate, or helping with Zoom or in-sanctuary technology, contact *Mandy Boody*.
- If you're interested in being a **future leader** at the CVUU, contact *Heather Flory*.

Whether you are new to the CVUU or have been around for a while, we encourage each of you to think about how you might live out the UU values and find purpose in your life by helping keep the CVUU running in any number of ways.

This article is brought to you by the Shared Ministry Council, whose role at the CVUU includes working together to support and promote the growth and well-being of the CVUU congregation in all aspects of its community life. The Shared Ministry Council consists of Heather Flory (chair), Floralyn Groff (Board liaison), Debra Kyler, Nancie Groszkruger, Steve Thom, and Pastor Emma Peterson.



SOME OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY INCLUDE:

- National **Clean Up Your Computer** month
- National **Conscience** month National **Hot Tea** month
- National **Radon Action** month National **Skating** month
- National **Mentoring** month National **Polka Music** month
- National **Poverty in America Awareness** month

On January 30, 1896 at age ninety-three, *William Henry Furness*, an influential Unitarian minister and abolitionist, died in Philadelphia.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Warmest of wishes to you for a good kick-off to your 2024! We are all entering into the new year with a clean slate, ready for a fresh start—embracing the adventure of the upcoming year together.

As we look back on 2023, we can celebrate our unprecedented growth at the CVUU. We welcomed *twenty-five* new members into our Beloved Community last year and had many visitors return to experience more of the good energy, inspiration, and warmth they found when they attended. It seems like we are living out our theme for this year's church year: "*Growing in Purpose, Rooted in Values*".

We hope you'll consider how *you* can help keep this momentum going. Participate as much as you can, share your gifts and skills with us, and invite friends to check us out. We currently need help providing snacks during coffee hour and help in the nursery. These are good ways to get to know each other as well as fill a need for our church community.

If you are a newer attendee, mark your calendar for our next *New to CVUU* session, **Sunday, January 28th**. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the CVUU and help us get to know **you** better so we can support you on your life journey. And, if you are considering deepening your commitment to the CVUU, make a plan to attend our *I Want to Be a Member* session on **Sunday, February 11th**. If you have any questions about either of these sessions or about how to get more involved, feel free to contact me, *Pastor Emma* or *Heather Flory*.

In the meantime, stay warm and cozy—but be sure to join us at church to let your *Beloved Community* help you survive and thrive this winter!

Warmly,

Juanita Williams
for the Congregational Life Team

Meet Our New Members~

*Curt and Chelsea Toppin and
Miles and Lena*

Curt and Chelsea Toppin have been living in Cedar Falls since 2014. They have two wonderful children, Miles, who is eight, and Lena who is three.

Curt, a native of Cedar Falls, is a software engineer. Chelsea works in communications; both are graduates of Central College in Pella. The pair work for the same company, Overland Conveyor Company in Denver, Colorado.

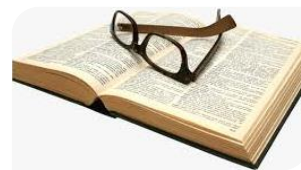


KNOTS OF LOVE

The Knots of Love group/yarn crafters group is looking for some new leadership! Up until now, our main focus has been in making hats to donate to the nonprofit group *Knots of Love*, but if a new leader wanted to take the group in a new direction, that change would also be welcome.



Some suggestions have included opening up the group to all crafters and having an open, bring-your-crafting social time. The leader's responsibilities are to coordinate with the Office Administrator to schedule a meeting time, unlock the building at that time if needed, maintain an email contact list for the group, and write announcements for the newsletter and Weekly Update. Co-leadership is an option! Contact the CVUU office if interested.



CVUU READER'S SMALL GROUP

The next meeting of the Reader's Small Group will be on Tuesday, January 23rd so mark your calendar(s). They meet in person at the CVUU in the balcony *every fourth Tuesday* at 6:30 p.m.

As in the past, there won't be an assigned book; instead, attendees will share with each other what they've been reading.

If you'd like to be on the email list for the Reader's Small Group notifications, contact *Mandy Boody*.



Support for our *Little Food Pantry* and *Little Lending Library* is ongoing through the upcoming winter months. Our neighbors, and the children getting off the bus coming home from school, can use nourishment for minds and bodies during this chilly time of year. Thanks for helping us to help others.



MOVIE DISCUSSION SMALL GROUP

The Movie Discussion Small Group will meet at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom on Monday, January 8th. The movie being discussed this month is *Wild Prairie Rose* which is available on Prime video—for free with a membership or for rent for \$2.99. You can also see it for free *with* ads on Freevee.

A reminder will be sent out the week prior and include the Zoom link. For questions, contact *Nancie Groszkruger*.





On January 20, 1817 Unitarian leader *Henry Ware Jr.* was ordained and installed as minister at Second Church in Boston, Massachusetts.



“Good Vibrations”

Our 2023 Treats and Talents Auction – A record-breaking success!

This year’s Treats and Talents Auction raised over \$12,702 for the CVUU. After expenses, we should clear a little over \$12,300—an all-time record for this annual fundraiser!!!

Our thanks go out to the following individuals who helped make this year’s Treats and Talents happen:

- * *Mary Kay Madsen, Bill Brown, Jeanette Talbert, Rob Boody, Dave Steege* (Finance, kitchen, set up/take down);
- * *Jessica Lieb* and the *Burning Heretics* for the great 60’s music;
- * *David Nation* and *Norm Kitchen* (our statisticians);
- * *Gerry Chamberlin, Mary Day, Pastor Emma, Jill Miller, Kathi Bower, Mary Kay Madsen, Jeanette Talbert, Shirley Whiteside, and Moria Brown*, who donated bake goods and other treats;
- * *Rob Boody, Mandy Boody, Virginia Boody, Shirley Whiteside, Jill Miller, and Mica Lorenz*, all of whom volunteered to provide childcare if needed;
- * *Moria* and *Bill Brown*, and *Roger* and *Cindy Hahn*, creators of our hippy bus prop and organizers of the “coffee house” in the Sanctuary for the Social Hour with the *Burning Heretics*; and of course,
- * *Frank Olson*, our long-time auctioneer. (Apologies if I have left anyone out of these thank yous.)



Last but not least, I would be remiss if I didn’t thank all of our members and friends who donated their services, items, and meal events for the auction, and of course all of you, who bought these auction donations enabling us to set a fundraising record!!!!

Mike Knapp



TRACING OUR CONGREGATION’S HISTORY

There has been a Universalist presence in our community since the late 19th century, and a Unitarian presence since the mid-20th century. Our various congregations and gatherings have a rich and varied history. In 1994, one of the founding members of our congregation, *Dorothy Grant*, decided to write down much of this history. She was a creative and fascinating woman, and the book she assembled reflects her intellect and insights. Her book is available for perusal at the church.

However, there have been nearly thirty years of history since this book was written, so I (a member for forty-four years), have decided to undertake the task of recounting the important events that have happened since her book was completed. I also hope to digitize her book and possibly update some elements of it.

In order to carry out this ambitious project, I will need the help of many members of the congregation which will include your memories of important events that have occurred since 1994. We have had three ministers in that time: *Rev. Rod Debs*, *Rev. Eva Cameron* and, of course, our beloved *Pastor Emma*. Many other important events have taken place, such as the renaming of our congregation. We have had our challenges during that time, but also some great successes. All of you who were here during any portion of that time have memories of key events which would be valuable for you to share.

If you wish to share a memory that is important to you, please write it down and send it to me at my email address or, if you are really old fashioned, you could snail mail it to me. You will find all of my contact information in our online directory. Also, if you have photographs of various events, they could be a helpful part of the history. Note that photos should have the 1) event, 2) date, and 3) people in the photo identified. Please contact me about any possible photos so we can determine the best format to use to get them to me. Thank you!

Al Hays



ADMIN UPDATE

Happy New Year, CVUU friends! I’m fighting the winter blues this year by participating in a play with the Waterloo Community Playhouse. In February, I’ll be playing real-life American astronomer, star classification pioneer, Suffragist, and astronomical glass-ceiling-shatterer *Annie Cannon*, in a play called *Silent Sky*. If you’d like to come see it, you can find more information on the Waterloo Community Playhouse website at: <<https://www.wcpbhct.org/>>.

Here at the CVUU, I always start the year working hand-in-hand with the Stewardship Campaign team; completing our Congregational Certification with the UUA; and a number of other behind-the-scenes tasks. I’ll be busy, but I can always make time for members and teams that need something—just do your best to give me some extra lead time when you need a special project from me.

Kat Beane Hanson
Office Administrator

GREEN LIVING CORNER

It Starts One Native Plant At A Time

How many flowers, plants, trees, and shrubs have you planted in the past five years? How many of them were native to Iowa? For years I have gardened by the seat of my pants, selecting flowers and plants based solely on their appeal from the dizzying array available at the local nursery. I always attempted to be chemical free, but beyond that I had never thought about the impact my choice of flowers, plants, trees, and shrubs had on my environment. I planted annuals that would bloom all summer and be resistant to bugs. I mowed my grass high and avoided chemicals on my lawn, but beyond that never truly thought about the impact MY gardening had on my environment. Then a few years ago, a random conversation with a complete stranger about my plan to plant an oak tree, led to a transformation in my view of gardening. She graciously lent me *Nature's Best Hope* and started the transformation of my yard to Iowa natives, one plant at a time.

A favorite website that has impacted my journey is: Homegrown National Park <<https://homegrownnationalpark.org/>> co-founded by Doug Tallamy. Their goal is to inspire us all to improve the world from the bottom up in our own backyards creating diverse, productive ecosystems filled with native plants. The idea is that if every one of us planted a section of natives in our yards, all of those little areas combined could have a great impact across the nation. It is an incredible site that educates, delights, and inspires me every time I log in. My inspiration in spring 2023 was planting keystone plants in containers. Keystone plants are native plants that support the most native species, including native insects. All of my life I was taught to eradicate insects, without ever understanding the implication that had on birds and wildlife with whom we share this environment. This site inspired me to analyze why do I plant what I plant? Why do I value the non-native annuals I purchase each spring? Why do I spend forty-five minutes every morning watering dozens of potted plants that do not support or attract the birds, bees, and butterflies? My goal next year is to purchase only native plants, and to continue to decrease my lawn while increasing my native grasses, sedges, flowers, trees, and shrubs.

In 2023 I planted native trees and shrubs from the DNR and grew plants from seeds harvested from my native plants or from native plant nurseries. The end result was a yard full of native bees and insects, including bumblebees, monarchs, butterflies, and moths. I have had to buy a bird book to identify birds I have never seen before in my yard. I had frogs and toads in the middle of a drought and my lawn is getting smaller. I have a very small area of natives in my yard, but enough to register my yard on the Monarch Watch and with Homegrown National Park. You too can make a difference. Bring your yard back to life, one native plant at a time. Go to *Homegrown National Park* to learn more about how you can make a difference.

Jill Miller for Green Living



Le Christopher's Southern Cuisine will be offered every second Sunday of the month at 12:00 p.m. This means the January meal will be Sunday, the 14th, weather permitting.

Prior to the pandemic, several of us enjoyed the socializing and hospitality over the noon meal served once a month at the Jubilee United Methodist Church, 1621 East 4th Street, Waterloo. Gather up your CVUU friends and let's plan to do it again!!

Adult plates are \$20 cash donation (\$15 cash donation for children twelve and under). Check out their website at: <<http://jubileeumc.com/>>.



CUUPS DRUM CIRCLE

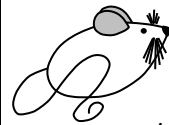
For those who like to plan ahead, there will be a Drum Circle at the CVUU on Friday, February 2nd at 6:30 p.m.!

Drum circles have been a part of the human experience in virtually all cultures since time immemorial. Drumming together provides participants with an opportunity to connect with the community in interesting ways and provides an opportunity for meditation and for spiritual growth. It can literally lower blood pressure and create a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere. No musical skills are required.



If you have questions, direct them to *Nate Callahan*.

We were watching throughout December as the bins filled up with socks, mittens, and gloves under the beautiful Christmas tree created by *Moria* that stood in the foyer. It was a real cozy sight just to look at, and sometimes we had to strongly discourage the little mice from diving in to enjoy the warmth! Your efforts help us to teach our little ones about helping others in need.



The Church Mouse



WhaleCoast Alaska - A More Authentic Travel Experience

Two unique, exciting fundraising tours organized by four Alaska UU congregations are being offered again next summer by WhaleCoast Alaska. Experience majestic scenery, wildlife, Denali National Park, Alaska Native culture, glaciers, and UU homestays. For thirty years, WhaleCoast Alaska tours have been the *best* way to visit Alaska.



The *Alaska National Parks Tour* is June 15-25th, and *The All-Alaska Tour* is July 19-31st. Spots fill fast so register now for this amazing experience! Check out the details including space availability at: <<https://whalecoastak.org/>>. For questions, email Maya at: <whalecoastak@gmail.com>.





Soul Matters for January—*Liberating Love*

We've all been saved, sustained, healed, and transformed by the love of close friends and family, as well as those who only briefly crossed our paths. In one way or another, we have all known love and have been the face of love for others. This month, join us to consider the powerful impact of love in our lives and to consider how we can be a force for love in the world.

Adapted from the Soul Matters curriculum.



CVUU BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY SOCIALS

Building Our Community is the theme for this year's stewardship campaign. In the spirit of community-building, the CVUU is holding a series of social events in late January/early February 2024. In-person events will take place at the CVUU, with additional meetings on Zoom. As of this writing, the dates are still being firmed up; watch the Weekly Update and the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for opportunities to sign up.

The focus of these events will be socializing, sharing a meal, and having meaningful discussions with other UUs. Space is limited to 8-10 people per event, and advance signup is required. We encourage every CVUU member to sign up for one (or two) of these important events.

At each event, we will give a brief preview of financial goals for the CVUU in 2024, and discuss questions like:

- What does "community" mean to you?
- What drew you to be a part of the CVUU community?
- What do you give to the CVUU community, and what do you receive from it?
- In which parts of the community are you involved? Where would you like to be more involved?
- How do we keep our community strong?

Stay tuned for more information. We look forward to *Building Our Community* together!

The 2024 Stewardship Team
Mandy Boody, Karen Impola
Michaela Rich, Nancie Groszkruger

TIME AT THE CVUU AND AWAY: PART OF THE UU MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT

It's common knowledge that ministers don't work a 9-to-5 job, but did you know that UU ministers typically work a 6-day work week and are responsible for monitoring their time to ensure an appropriate balance of work and time off? Ministry is understood as a calling, and the work of ministry is time-intensive and subject to unforeseen events. Sufficient down-time is essential to maintaining personal health and professional sustainability, and our CVUU ministerial agreement is designed to help our minister find that balance. This article provides a few highlights from *Pastor Emma's* ministerial agreement related to her time at the CVUU and away from us, as recommended by the national Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA): <www.UUA.org>.

Ministers are most known for the work they do on Sunday mornings. However, in addition to Sunday services, Pastor Emma provides many other types of ministry to the CVUU, including participation in almost all council, committee, and Board meetings; serving as the head of staff for our three paid staff; providing pastoral care for congregants as needed; helping re-develop our religious education program; and more. In these multi-faceted roles, priorities are constantly shifting. Pastor Emma often works evenings and spends time in ways less tangible such as addressing congregational problems. Pastoral and congregational crises can occur at any time including days off.

It is expected that UU ministers will have, at a minimum, one day per week free of all Congregational responsibilities and one additional day devoted to study and writing wherein they will be available only for emergencies. Therefore, Pastor Emma works a 6-day work week. Her day off is Monday; her study and writing day is typically Saturday.

To offset this full work schedule, each CVUU fiscal year, in keeping with UUA recommendations, Pastor Emma receives four weeks of vacation (24 days), four weeks of study leave (24 days), ten days of sick leave, paid holidays, and one month of accrued sabbatical leave. In addition to vacation and study leave, attendance at national UUA General Assembly, regional UUA gatherings, UUMA (Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association) Chapter Meetings, and Ministry Days are considered associational responsibilities for which our minister may be away from the CVUU. Because of these various reasons to be away from the congregation, UU ministers typically lead or co-lead worship services between 30 and 35 Sundays each year.

During this fiscal year (which began July 1, 2023), Pastor Emma has taken 6 days of vacation in July and 17 days of study leave in September and October. In January, Pastor Emma will take 6 days of vacation from January 17–23 and will return to CVUU work on January 24th.

Pastor Emma determines the schedule of her time away from the CVUU in consultation with the Religious Services Council, the Shared Ministry Council, and the Board President. If you have questions about Pastor Emma's time at or away from the CVUU, or other aspects of the ministerial agreement, please feel free to contact *Heather Flory*, Shared Ministry Council chair.

This article was written by Heather Flory on behalf of the Shared Ministry Council: Heather Flory (chair), Floralyn Groff (Board liaison), Debra Kyler, Nancie Groszkruger, Steve Thom, and Pastor Emma Peterson.

