



CEDAR VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

3912 CEDAR HEIGHTS DR. CEDAR FALLS, IA 50613

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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WWW.CEDARVALLEYUU.ORG



***** 2024 *****

- MARCH 3 10:00 A.M. STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY!**
IT TAKES A VILLAGE: A STEWARDSHIP SERMON
 11:15 A.M. **Luncheon and Show & Tell** (details inside) – Pastor Emma Peterson, Mandy Boody *
- MARCH 10 10:00 A.M. RACISM AND ITS ORIGINS** – Bill Chene, Kathi Bower *
 11:30 A.M. **Adult Forum**
- MARCH 17 10:00 A.M. MOVE OVER, PATRICK: IT'S ST. BRIGID'S DAY**
 11:30 A.M. **Adult Forum** – Pastor Emma Peterson, Callie Amiday *
- MARCH 24 10:00 A.M. FESTIVAL SUNDAY: CELEBRATING THE SPRING EQUINOX**
 11:30 A.M. **Adult Forum** – Karen Impola, Lynn Brant *
- MARCH 29 5:30 P.M. GOOD FRIDAY VESPERS** – Pastor Emma Peterson (in-person/online)
- MARCH 31 10:00 A.M. RESURRECTION FOR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS: BEYOND TULIPS**
 11:15 A.M. **Hospitality, Egg Hunt** (no Forum) – Pastor Emma Peterson, Dick Warhol *

* ~ denotes *Worship Associate*



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

Spring is upon us! At the CVUU, spring means many things! We eagerly celebrate the greening of the world, all while enduring fickle weather and muddy roads. We are also celebrating the finale of our Stewardship campaign! March 17th is the deadline to get your pledges in for the coming church year. The care and management of the CVUU is a *shared responsibility*. In the same way we consider the *ministry* of the congregation to be *shared*, we share responsibility for funding our congregation's expenses. We work together to ensure we raise the funds to keep our community not only functioning but thriving!

Last year, our Stewardship campaign made history. When the UUA released new metrics for equitable pay, CVUU leadership decided to take on a big challenge and meet those metrics in one Stewardship season. We gave our CVUU Staff and Minister sizeable pay increases, an essential undertaking in this time of rapidly increasing costs of living. Equity is a UU Value. Our Stewardship efforts help us *live* our values as UUs. We need to continue to live our values by rising to the challenge again this year!

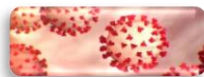
Chair of Shared Ministry *Heather Flory* said something during last year's Stewardship campaign that's always stuck with me. "Don't give until it hurts, give until it feels good." Generosity can feel marvelous. But spreading yourself too thin is stressful! We ask that you give what you can, as long as it feels good. Our membership continues to grow, which means we can share the load. If you haven't already, please get your pledges in. Thank you for your generosity. I look forward to witnessing and accompanying the CVUU as we continue to grow and thrive!

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

Greetings to all!

Building a community doesn't just magically happen. It takes conscious effort to bring people together and build relationships and friendships. That's why it's so exciting to see our initial 'First Friday' social event on the schedule March 1st! Make plans now to attend this intergenerational, family-friendly, fun potluck!

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Also, a quick reminder that all are invited to our Second Hour Adult Forum on March 10th. Join us for an open discussion as we dive into the question "What is our purpose at the CVUU?" We want to hear from our elders, middle-aged, and younger members: what was our purpose decades ago, what purpose are we serving now, and in the future how can we best serve our members and community?

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One of the benefits of serving on the CVUU Board is learning about all the things going on behind the scenes. In addition to our seven Councils which meet monthly to keep the CVUU humming along, we currently have several task forces and committees addressing immediate challenges and preparing for the future:

- A new *Engagement Committee* is planning intergenerational social events to help us build new friendships, and also help us to discover how our passions can positively impact the CVUU.
- Since we are welcoming increasing numbers of children into our building, the *Ad Hoc Committee on Children & Youth Supervision* is creating a policy to provide guidance for parents and staff.
- An *Assessment Team* is working with a member who is starting on the path to become a CVUU Lay Minister!
- The *Building Security Task Force* is putting final touches on a proposal to help keep our staff safe and the building more secure.
- A *Sabbatical Team* is making plans to ensure things run smoothly during *Pastor Emma's* sabbatical.
- The *Accessibility Task Force* continues to meet with our architect and refine plans to make our building physically accessible to all.

Whew! What an active, forward-thinking crew you are! Thanks to everyone for your service on behalf of the CVUU!

Dennis Harbaugh



Thomas Paine published *The Rights of Man* on March 13, 1791. Paine was not a member of a Unitarian or Universalist church, but his plea for human rights and his subsequent book, *The Age of Reason*, had a strong influence on the movement.



There are many reasons to oppose the wall along the southern border—including the loss of habitat for some of our smallest and most important animals. *Scott Hoffman Black,*
Xerces Society Executive Director



MARCH SERVICES

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

March 3rd *Stewardship Sunday*

It Takes a Village: A Stewardship Sermon

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Mandy Boody (WA)

This service will be followed by an All-Church Luncheon after which there will be a “Show & Tell”. Families are welcome. More details in the Stewardship article in this newsletter.

March 10th

Racism and Its Origins ~~ Bill Chene, Kathi Bower (WA)

March 17th

Move Over, Patrick: It's St. Brigid's Day

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Callie Amiday (WA)

March 24th *Festival Sunday*

Celebrating the Spring Equinox

~~ Karen Impola, Lynn Brant (WA)

March 29th 5:30 p.m. (in person/online)

Good Friday Vespers ~~ Pastor Emma Peterson

March 31st

Resurrection for Unitarian Universalists: Beyond Tulips

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Dick Warhol (WA)



CHILDREN'S RE!!

Classes will be held for four Sundays in March. You may want to make a note that Sunday the 24th is a *Festival Sunday*, so children are encouraged to stay in the service with their parents. The service that day is *Celebrating the Spring Equinox*.

We have been enjoying your children as we learn and focus on building relationships among us. March's *Soul Matters* theme is *Transformation*. A reminder that Daylight Saving Time begins on March 10th so set those clocks on Saturday night!

Easter is Sunday, March 31st and we look forward to the Annual Egg Hunt immediately after classes that day—to be held inside or out, the weather will dictate. If anyone is interested in donating candy, let me know! I can tell you where to leave it for us.

Some tidbits from the ‘bigger’ picture—currently I'm leading the ad hoc committee to create a child supervision policy for the CVUU and working on rebuilding REAP to assure the future of our RE program.

As always, we want RE at the CVUU to be a warm, friendly, safe place for your children.

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.

March 3rd (shortly after the service, about 11:15 a.m.)

All-Church Luncheon and Show & Tell

In lieu of a Forum today, please join us for an All-Church Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall shortly after the service which will be followed by Show & Tell. See the Stewardship article for more details.

March 10th

What is the CVUU's Purpose?

Building on this year's theme “Growing in Purpose, Rooted in Values”, *Dennis Harbaugh* will moderate an open discussion around the question “What is our purpose as a congregation?” We look forward to hearing from our elders as well as newcomers—and everyone in between! What purpose are we serving today? Has our purpose changed over the decades? Who do we see ourselves being in the future? Come listen, learn, and share your perspective, hopes and dreams.

March 17th

Getting UU Tech Savvy

Despite this being St. Patrick's Day, you will find that UU technology was not designed by leprechauns but by other humans who want to help us communicate with each other. *Mandy Boody* will lead us in a workshop on how to easily access online resources such as the congregational directory. Please bring your laptops and/or phones to this helpful session.

March 24th

Pollinators

As spring rolls around again, it is time to get ready for our wonderful Pollinator Garden to come alive. *Sally Browne* and *Donna Davis* will lead us in a discussion of the needs of that garden, including volunteers, and will also provide useful general information about pollinators and the plants that attract them.

March 31st

No Forum, but what “National Day” is today?

Calendars list March 31st as many different ‘national’ days: Tater Day, Crayon Day, Cream Cheese Frosting Day, Neighbor Day, and more; but this year, it's best known as Easter! Being Easter, there is no scheduled Forum today so that everyone can, at a leisurely pace, enjoy coffee and treats at our social time in the Fellowship Hall with their CVUU friends!

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.



Cataracts are the third leading cause of blindness.
Religion and Politics remain the first two.

BOARD BRIEFS

On February 8th your CVUU Board held its regular monthly meeting. We had a full agenda and a couple congregation members showed up just to observe, which was great! All our Board meetings are open to members and friends. Highlights:

- ✦ Approved a three-month sabbatical for *Pastor Emma* beginning May 1st and ending July 31st.
- ✦ Discussed membership of the Sabbatical Team, which will prepare plans for Pastor Emma's absence.
- ✦ Heard about the Nominating Committee's progress in identifying a slate of new leaders and Board members for the next fiscal year beginning July 1st.
- ✦ Decided the CVUU will become a formal sponsor of Cedar Valley Legislative Forums.
- ✦ Learned about the new *Engagement Committee*—a joint project of Shared Ministry & Congregational Life Councils—which will organize social events for members and help members identify how their passions might connect with the CVUU.
- ✦ Continued updating the 33-page CVUU Congregational Handbook.

Dennis Harbaugh



March is particularly busy this year with community offerings of plays and events, along with Easter being early! The CVUU is also buzzing with so many new members, lots of activities and committee meetings, and the final weeks of the Stewardship Campaign in the first half of the month. Along with all that, we hope the leprechauns don't get into too much mischief this month!

We have a few members looking at surgery this month and other members recovering from surgery/health issues. Good vibes and our best wishes to each of them. 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.



Soul Matters for March—Transformation

Make a bit of room. Leave a little space. That may not sound like anything radical or revolutionary, but it turns out that it is one of Life's favorite ways to make us into something new. Be cautious with those cultural messages about aggressively tilling and turning up your whole soil. Watch out for all the heroic talk about striving and perfecting, struggle, and control. Much of the time, transformation is a much subtler art. It's about stillness, listening and waiting to be led, not fighting with yourself and others to make sure you are in the lead. It's about breathing rather than becoming better. It's about patience not perfection. It's about depth not dominance. This month, we invite you to a time of Transformation.

Adapted from the Soul Matters curriculum.

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 designated charity for January was for the UUSC's annual intergenerational program, *Guest at Your Table*, which raises support for and awareness of key human rights issues. This year's total collected was a whopping \$3,025!



February's charity was for us, the CVUU! Every year we take a month to support the work of this congregation through our Stewardship Campaign which, at the time of this writing, is currently in progress. Hopefully by now you've read your Stewardship Campaign materials and have turned in your pledge for FY25. Be a part of the success and the goal set by this year's devoted Stewardship Committee!

In March our Social Action charity is the **1619 Freedom School** here in Waterloo. The 1619 Freedom School is a free community-based, after-school literacy program where students improve literacy skills and develop a love for reading through liberating instruction centered on Black American history. Here is a quote from the school's founder *Nikole Hannah-Jones*, a Waterloo native and Waterloo West High School graduate. "*The 1619 Freedom School is built on the understanding that for a people for whom it was once illegal to learn to read and write, education is a revolutionary act.*"

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

The Social Action Committee

Newsletter

MARCH DEADLINES

FOR THE CALENDAR AND NUUSLETTER

The next newsletter will be the April issue. The calendar deadline for this issue will be **Wednesday, March 20th** (send info to the office); the newsletter deadline will be **Friday, March 22nd** (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 **March 20th and 22nd**—the calendar and newsletter deadlines *for the April 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



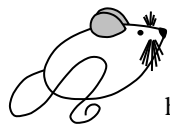
CARING CONNECTIONS

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 **March** is **Nancie Groszkruger**.

A leprechaun, a mythical creature, is a diminutive supernatural being in Irish folklore, classed by some as a type of solitary fairy. They are usually depicted as little bearded men, wearing a coat and hat, who partake in mischief and can be found in gardens, caves, forests, and moors.



While we were busy scurrying around the building one day in mid-February, we noticed *Roger and Cindy Hahn* who were doing a deep clean of the Fellowship Hall and kitchen. What a great group of members you have to take the cleanliness of your (our) building so seriously. Many thanks to Roger and Cindy!



The Church Mouse



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Cedar Valley Unitarian Universalists is scheduled for Sunday, May 19th. A regular Sunday service will precede this meeting. Watch this space for more information as it becomes available.



ADMIN UPDATE

Friends, I have been keeping very busy since the holidays. Between my regular weekly responsibilities, I've completed our congregation's annual certification with the UUA, helped the CVUU Board with preparations for their review of the CVUU Handbook, worked with the Membership folks to create information packets for our newest members, coordinated the distribution of this year's stewardship packets, rescued our website after a big ol' technical glitch, and more! Phew!

The one thing I really haven't had time to do is clean my office. Since the doors are locked for security, the cleaning company that we hire doesn't clean my office, and it could really use a once-over. If you'd like to come into the office and organize some stuff, get rid of some other stuff, sweep out the cobwebs, dust, and vacuum, please let me know!

Kat Beane Hanson,
Office Administrator



WOMEN OF FAITH

The next *Women of Faith* (an interfaith group for support and education) will be gathering March 19th at 6:30 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Cedar Falls.

Rose Quirk from the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Worker House in Waterloo will be the presenter. The St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Worker House provides food, shelter, and hospitality to those in need.

[Editor's Note: Women of Faith of the Cedar Valley is an interfaith group that meets monthly in person or by Zoom. Their goals are to encourage conversation, understanding, friendship, and the promotion of peace, justice, and prosperity, especially for women and girls.]

MAKING CHILDREN HUNGRY

Republican governors in fifteen states are rejecting a new federally funded program to give summer food assistance to children already on free or reduced-priced lunch programs, citing various concerns. Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds said she saw no need for an additional program to address youth food insecurity "when childhood obesity has become an epidemic," while Nebraska governor Jim Pillen said, "I don't believe in welfare," and that "handing out money" isn't enough to meet children's needs. Yet studies have shown that summer grocery assistance can decrease the percentage of children suffering from the most extreme hunger by one-third and also expand their access to healthier options. (Washington Post, January 10)

Quoted in *Christian Century*, March 2024, p. 10.

[Editor's Note: thanks to *Rita Waggoner* for sharing this.]



MARCH PAGAN CALENDAR

Friday, the 1st

Matronalia – The ancient festival of Juno, the birth goddess. Men are supposed to give presents to their wives on that day. Women are supposed to wear their hair and skirts loose to represent open wombs. Hmm. Rainbow blessings to all expressions of sexuality, by the way.

Monday, the 18th

Celtic tree of Alder Month begins – This month (Celtic months begin and end mid-month) signifies both increased energy and finding balance. Alder is valuable to the environment—its roots are excellent for reclaiming degraded soil and industrial wastelands, such as slag heaps.

Tuesday the 19th through Thursday the 21st

Ostara (Spring Equinox) – The celebration of Festival of the coming of spring. (As does Beltane, held later in the year, and at a little more appropriate time for Iowa.) The number of hours in the day and night are equal at this time. There are lots of versions of the story of hares and eggs—you can choose your own, but they likely go back to Ostara and her magic.

Monday, the 25th

Full Worm Moon in Libre – The Worm Moon is a time for grounding, for mending relationships, and for transformations. Worms are vital in breaking down detritus, putting nutrients into the soil, helping with drainage and soil aeration, and providing habitats for other soil-dwelling organisms. Thank a worm this month.

Monday, the 25th

Lady Day – A day honoring the Crone and the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (when Gabriel brought the news). Lady Day was also the nickname of Billie Holiday, an African American blues singer known for her haunting rendition of the "lynching song," *Strange Fruit*. Persecuted by J. Edgar Hoover, she never lived long enough to be a crone.

There will be a **Spring Equinox ritual** at the CVUU on Tuesday, March 19th at 6:30 p.m. Anyone who is interested in learning more about pagan/earth-based spirituality is welcome to attend.

Pam Hays
(a proud crone and working on becoming a sage as well)

OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR AUTHOR ROBIN WALL KIMMERER!!

Join Wild Ones and the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Sustainability Institute for Regional Transformations and the Inter-Tribal Student Council on **Tuesday, March 19th at 5:00 p.m.** as they present: "Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants" with celebrated scientist, decorated professor, author, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, **Robin Wall Kimmerer**.



This talk explores the stories and experiences that shaped the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Imagine what we might learn if we understood plants as our teachers, from both a scientific and an indigenous perspective.

Her first book, *Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses*, was awarded the John Burroughs Medal for outstanding nature writing, and her other work has appeared in *Orion*, *Whole Terrain*, and numerous scientific journals. In 2022 she was named a MacArthur Fellow.

Location: Remote or in-person at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Reeve Memorial Union, 748 Algoma Blvd, Oshkosh, WI, 54901. More general and registration information can be found at: <https://wildones.org/rwk-event/>.

[Editor's Note: for anyone who has read her books, this is an awesome opportunity to hear her!]



MIDAMERICA REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

The MidAmerica Region is coming together both online and at the First Unitarian Society of Madison, WI on Friday, April 19th and Saturday, April 20th for a multi-platform Regional Assembly!

This year's theme is **Threads That Connect: Stories That Inspire**. The Keynote address will be given by the Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, and Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

There will be workshops, the Annual Business Meeting of the MidAmerica Region, and opportunities to meet many UU leaders from across our faith tradition.

For those who are in-person, there will even be opportunities to tour this historic UU church designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Most importantly, it is a time to come together as Unitarian Universalists from across the MidAmerica Region. Please join us online or in-person for our first-ever multi-platform MidAmerica Regional Assembly!

Registration for in-person attendance closes on Friday, April 12th. Check out the website for more information at: <https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/events/threads-connect-stories-inspire/>.



William Channing Gannett was born on March 13, 1840 in Boston, Massachusetts. The son of Ezra Stiles Gannett, William taught school in Newport, Rhode Island after graduation from Harvard College. He then entered Harvard Divinity School but left after a year to work with the New England Freedman's Society, helping to educate several thousand freed slaves of the islands of South Carolina. After traveling in Europe and reporting on serfdom in Russia, Gannett returned to divinity school and then took churches in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; East Lexington, Massachusetts; and St. Paul, Minnesota, before becoming minister-at-large for the Western Unitarian Conference. The Western Unitarian Conference represented religion as an ethical system and withdrew from much of Unitarianism with its attachment to Christianity. The Western Conference formed in 1852 and became increasingly radical under the influence of Gannett and Jenkin Lloyd Jones. Gannett was a staunch defender of individual religious conscience and a leader in the so-called Western Controversy of the 1880s, which pitted traditionalists against radicals who wanted more freedom from doctrinal definitions. He also served churches in Hinsdale, Illinois and Rochester, New York where Susan B. Anthony was a member. Gannett also published a series of poems and edited *Unity Hymns and Chorals* with Frederick Lucian Hosmer. He wrote a number of hymns, and biographies of his father and Frances David.



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH BRINGS A PARADE OF HEROINES TO MIND.



A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, and Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother, seeing the opportunity for a moral lesson said, "If Jesus was sitting here, he would say, let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait." Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"



Henry Wheaton, an American lawyer, diplomat, and author, died in Dorchester, Massachusetts, at age sixty-two on March 11, 1848. Wheaton was a founder and member of First Unitarian Church of New York City.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

We love singer/songwriter Peter Mayer's music at the CVUU! (If you're newer to the UU world and you haven't discovered him yet, search his music on YouTube or Spotify and take a listen. His *Holy Now* song is iconic for us!) One of his more recent songs is *Everybody In*. His lyrics "everybody into the circle..." give us inspiration to make sure nobody feels on the outside of OUR circle—that all are welcomed and feel radically included. Inclusiveness is an important value for us! In fact, one of our 7 Principles celebrates the importance of all voices and perspectives being listened to and heard.

How do we live that out at CVUU? Are we making sure that visitors and newer attendees are not JUST welcomed but are pampered a bit... never standing alone at Coffee Hour, shown 'the ropes', taught the nuances of the CVUU inner workings, etc.? Are we watching for new faces and reaching out to get to know the person behind that new face, learning what's important to them and what they're looking for in a spiritual community?

This is EVERYBODY'S opportunity! Anyone who is part of the CVUU Beloved Community shares responsibility for helping bring people "into the circle". It isn't enough to let this be the job of the greeters, leaders, and extroverts! We need to ALL put ourselves in the shoes of newer people and raise our collective awareness of the bravery and courage it takes to visit and try to enter into a new group.

Let's all challenge ourselves each Sunday to look for two people who are wearing an 'I'm new here' look (either identified by their temporary name tag or because they appear to be somebody you don't know yet). On Sunday mornings let's try to minimize our CVUU 'business conversations' and prioritize more 'welcoming conversations'. It will help us all grow and thrive for the sake of the whole!

Juanita Williams
for the Congregational Life Council Team



Meet Our New Member~

Sue Johnson

Sue is new to the area. She grew up on a farm near Spencer, Iowa but has lived in Omaha and Kerrville, Texas. She worked in the financial sector and the Salvation Army. Her late husband who she met in 2018, George Johnson, a longtime Cedar Falls resident, was active with the UNI Men's Varsity Glee Club and before his illness, he sang and toured with them as an alumnus.

Her interests are gardening, watercolor painting, practicing yoga, and entertaining her Maine Coon cat.

She looks forward to getting to know everyone and hopes to be active with social justice issues and lend a helping hand where needed.

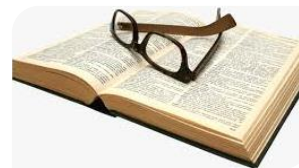


WORLD'S GREATEST SPRING BREAK FOR KIDS

Are you searching for activities to entertain your children or visiting grandchildren during spring break week? Again this year the Grout is participating with other area organizations in the "World's Greatest Spring Break For Kids". Note: the dates are March 11th -15th; times are 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Bring your family to downtown Waterloo to discover, explore, and play! Admission is just \$1 per child per site, and \$1 per accompanying adult.

For more details call the Grout or, better yet, check out the wonderful website: <www.worldsgreatestspringbreak.com>.



CVUU READER'S SMALL GROUP


The next meeting of the Reader's Small Group will be on Tuesday, March 26th, so mark your calendar(s). They meet in the CVUU 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 snowy, sometimes frigid, 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.



Charles Edwards Park was born on March 14, 1873 in Mahabaleshwar, India. He attended Yale University, the University of Chicago Divinity School, and was minister in Hingham, Massachusetts from 1900 to 1906. He then had a long and prominent career in Boston, with forty years as minister of First Church (Unitarian). *TIME* magazine called him "the Grand Old Man of U.S. Liberal Pulpits". He exerted a strong influence through his sermons. His books include *Christianity: How It Came to Us; What It Is; What It Might Be* (1948); *Creative Faith* (1951); and *The Way of Jesus* (1956). Charles Edwards Parks died on September 23, 1962.



“BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY” STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Sunday, March 3rd is *Stewardship Sunday*! Join us for the regular service at 10:00 a.m. when *Pastor Emma*’s topic will be “It Takes A Village”.

Immediately following the service, we’ll adjourn downstairs for an all-church luncheon in lieu of the regular hospitality treats and Second Hour Forum. We’ll build sandwiches and build community at the same time!



Once everyone has gone through the food line and settled down, we’ll invite people to come one-by-one to the Fellowship Hall microphone for a Show & Tell session. Part of community-building is learning about one another, so we urge you to take a few minutes to tell us about something you do that brings you joy. You can sing a song, play a tune, tell a joke or a story, share examples of your collection or hobby, tell a (brief) story about an important event in your life. . .whatever you think will help the congregation know a little bit more about you. If you have children, please encourage them to plan something for Show & Tell as well!

We’ll also have door prizes and other surprises, so we hope you can join us on this very special day.

Thanks to all who have sent in your pledges! Go to: <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iS4OKnRNnZFaSh2qQqgbmtoZDeyaCZZ2/view>> to view the stewardship packet for more information. There are paper copies and extra pledge forms in the Fellowship Hall. **Pledges are due by March 17th at the latest**, and we’d love to have them sooner. At the time of this writing, we have raised \$105,789 in pledges. We need **everyone’s** pledge to meet this year’s goal of \$208,353, which is about 3% more than we raised last year. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, March 3rd!



Happy Spring Break

Have you heard? Our relatives who live near downtown Cedar Falls shared with us that the upcoming production at the Cedar Falls Community Theatre from March 15th through 24th (six shows, two weekends) is *The Rat Pack Lounge* (yikes, rats?!). They’ve seen your *Gary Kroeger* show up for rehearsals and found out he’s playing the role of Dean Martin, so it should be fun! It’s a known fact that mice and rats don’t get along, so we may have to rely on hearing how the show turns out.



The Church Mouse



MOVIE DISCUSSION SMALL GROUP

The Movie Discussion Small Group will meet at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom on Monday, March 11th. This month we’ll discuss an old 1944 Alfred Hitchcock movie, *Lifeboat* (2005) which is available from the Waterloo Public Library or for rent on Amazon for \$3.79.

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

GREEN LIVING CORNER Iowa’s Water Quality -- Ways to Help

In March and April, when most of the excess water-polluting fertilizers and manures are applied to Iowa’s farmland, you can volunteer as a Water Quality Monitor. The Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) provides the training for nitrate detection and has an online data site, their Clean Water Hub, to provide the most current information.

A person considering relocating to Iowa wrote to a local newspaper, “I am troubled by how many lakes, rivers, and streams across the state—over 750—are polluted by nitrates and other pollutants from industrial livestock operations and commercial fertilizer applied in excess to cropland.” (J. Crabtree, Letters to the Editor, *Oelwein Daily Register*)

Since the Iowa Department of Natural Resources stopped its own volunteer water quality monitoring program in 2017, the ongoing one through the Izaak Walton League’s Save Our Streams (SOS) program has provided Iowa’s statewide volunteer water quality detecting service. And **they need more volunteers**, in order to better cover all needed sites.

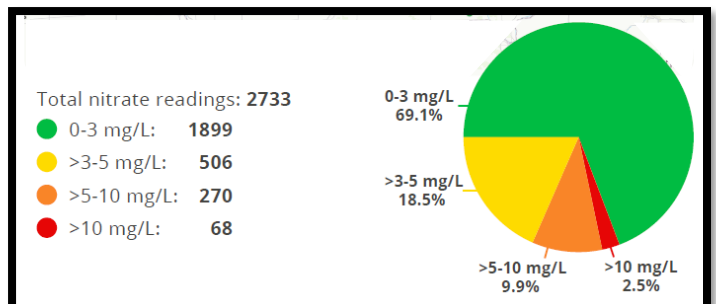
What damage does excess nitrate do? According to the Izaak Walton League’s website, “Excess nitrate in surface water yields: algae blooms, fish kills, dead zones from hypoxia (too little oxygen), and contaminated drinking water sources.” [Nitrate Watch from Izaak Walton League’s 2003 Annual Report, Surface Water. <<https://www.iwla.org/>>]

How much nitrate in our surface water is too much? “Prolonged exposures to more than 5 milligrams per liter (5mg/L) of nitrate concentration have produced adverse side effects.” It should be noted that these included cancer among the adverse results, from regulated drinking water sources, in a joint University of Minnesota and University of Iowa study. But the EPA only mandates that the maximum concentration for drinking water is 10 mg/L. Furthermore, private well water is not subject to regulatory standards, so may be more vulnerable to excess levels. [Quotes in this paragraph are from the IWLA website.]

So, let’s help identify the excess levels of surface water! Contact an Izaak Walton League chapter near you or, go online to <<https://www.iwla.org/>> and look for their link for volunteering. And as *Elaine H.* and *Shirley W.* from our congregation have done, get your training, assignments, and free testing materials as soon as you can! We will all benefit. Thank you.

Donna Davis for Green Living

Results for Iowa 2023 Nitrate Watch Annual Report



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, an American poet and Unitarian, died at age seventy-five on March 24, 1882 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

PASTOR EMMA'S SABBATICAL

(Below is an edited version of a letter emailed to all CVUU members on February 9th.)

Dear CVUU members:

It's common practice among Unitarian Universalist congregations to encourage their minister to take a sabbatical leave after a certain number of years of service. Sabbaticals are designed to offset the unpredictable and demanding nature of ministry work with a time of refreshment, rejuvenation, and personal growth.

Here at the CVUU we encourage our minister to take a sabbatical, and the process is clearly articulated in the Ministerial Agreement which our minister and congregation sign together. **At our February 8th Board meeting, the CVUU Board approved Pastor Emma's request to utilize three months of her earned sabbatical time, beginning May 1, 2024 and ending July 31, 2024.** Ministers typically return from their sabbatical with fresh energy, ideas, hopes and plans—and we look forward to experiencing this process with *Pastor Emma!*

The three months during Pastor Emma's absence will be different for us—we're used to having her around to help handle whatever emerges in the life of the CVUU. However, **the CVUU Board and I want to assure you that a Sabbatical Team of CVUU leaders and members will soon be formed to develop plans to cover all CVUU ministerial needs during Pastor Emma's absence.**

I'm confident that Pastor Emma's sabbatical will be a time of growth for her, and potentially for our congregation as well. The CVUU has a history of strong lay leadership, and our ongoing commitment to 'shared ministry' has prepared us to handle all aspects of ministry for a relatively short period of time. It takes a village, so don't be bashful about stepping up and volunteering during Pastor Emma's sabbatical!

Attached to this email is a document which includes some Questions & Answers about Pastor Emma's sabbatical, to help everyone gain a fuller understanding of this somewhat unique process. I encourage you to look it over, and if you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Wishing peace for you and our world,
Dennis Harbaugh
CVUU President

(See the Question & Answer page referenced in the above letter at the end of this newsletter.)



Le Christopher's Southern Cuisine will be offered *every second Sunday of the month* at 12:00 p.m. at the Jubilee United Methodist Church, 1621 East 4th Street, Waterloo. This means the March meal will be Sunday, the 10th (weather permitting). This is also the beginning of Daylight Saving Time, so set your clocks accordingly on Saturday night! Rev. Abraham Funchess has graciously and personally welcomed us to join them.

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



GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024: LOVE UNITES, STORIES IGNITE

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where attendees conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. The 63rd General Assembly will take place virtually Thursday, June 20th through Sunday, June 23rd.

Registration is available now (cost goes up on March 16th). For more information, visit the UUA's General Assembly webpage at: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>.

[Editor's Note: I couldn't help but notice that this year's GA logo has outlines of people. Ironic that our CVUU Stewardship logo for this year's campaign also has outlines of people.]



LESSONS FROM TREES



It's important to have roots.

In today's complex world, it pays to branch out.

If you really believe in something, don't be afraid to go out on a limb.

Be flexible so you don't break when a harsh wind blows. Sometimes you have to shed your old bark in order to grow.

If you want to maintain accurate records, keep a log.

It's okay to be a late bloomer.

Avoid people who would like to cut you down.

As you approach the autumn of your life, you will show your true colors.

In other words, "bloom where you are planted and make the best of what you've got."

~Author Unknown



SOME OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH INCLUDE:

- National **Caffeine Awareness** month
- National **Athletic Training** month National **Craft** month
- National **Eye Donor** month National **Hockey** month
- National **Kite** month National **Social Work** month
- National **Ladder Safety** month
- National **Women's History** month

NEW CVUU ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

In January, a new committee formed at the CVUU called the “Engagement Committee”. This committee was developed in collaboration between the Congregational Life Council (led by *Juanita Williams*) and the Shared Ministry Council (led by *Heather Flory*) to address areas where there is overlap between these two councils.

The initial vision for the Engagement Committee is to:

- Plan social events/parties at the CVUU.
- Help figure out how to get members (especially newer members) more involved in connecting with others and helping out at the CVUU, ideally by helping members find their passions and seeing if there is a way that CVUU can participate in helping them express their passions and become their best selves.
- Help figure out what kind of training would be helpful to transition members (especially newer members) into leadership roles.
- Ultimately, we would like to build a culture of community at the CVUU where everyone serves and helps out. Many hands make light work!

So far, the Engagement Committee has discussed previous CVUU social activities and shared some new ideas. We have scheduled our first social event: a family-friendly “First Friday” beloved community potluck dinner on Friday, March 1st, starting at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. See the First Friday Dinner article on this page for details.

Current members of the Engagement Committee are *Heather Flory, Juanita Williams, Jill Miller, Pam Hays, Rita Waggoner, Mollie Wallsteadt, and Rosa Torres*. If you’d like to join the committee to help plan for future events and involvement opportunities, please let one of us know!



CEDAR VALLEY INTERFAITH COUNCIL

Cedar Valley Interfaith Council will meet Thursday, March 7th at 9:00 a.m. at the First Congregational Church in Waterloo.

Along with regular business, CVUU member, *Dr. Mike Waggoner*, will present a brief overview of his longer presentation on White Christian Nationalism. He is willing to make a fuller presentation and to lead a discussion for congregations if they are interested.



CULTIVATING YOUR INNER POWER: A WOMEN’S SPIRITUAL RETREAT

Join *Pastor Emma* for a day of learning how to cultivate your inner power, through deep conversations with other CVUU members and friends, meditation, yoga, and more!

Mark your calendars now for Saturday, April 27th. More information, including how to register for this event, will be available in the April newsletter and upcoming Weekly Updates.

Brilliant Bits: Article II Update

Article II proposed by-law changes have been updated! At our 2023 General Assembly, amendments to the language for Article II proposed change were voted on and accepted. Based on these amendments, the “final” proposed revisions to Article II were published in October 2023. The following link includes the “final” proposal, a Letter from the UUA Board of Trustees, and another from the Article II Study Commission: <<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/final-proposed-revision-article-ii>>.

Final (truly final) amendments and a final vote on proposed Article II changes will take place at the General Assembly 2024.

MidAmerica Messenger, February 2024 issue
(the online newsletter for our MidAmerica Region, UUA)



FIRST FRIDAY DINNER: MARCH 1st

The new CVUU Engagement Committee (described in the previous column) would like to invite all CVUUs to join us in the Fellowship Hall from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. on March 1st (the first Friday in March) for a family-friendly beloved community potluck dinner. We are bringing back the beloved “First Friday” tradition at the CVUU! Years ago, First Friday dinners were held once a month, on the first Friday of each month. Now, First Fridays are back! We hope everyone will join us and bring their family and friends. Everyone is welcome!

What is “First Friday”? Here’s how this will work in March—and if it goes well, we’ll continue to have these family-friendly beloved community potluck dinners on the first Friday of each month (e.g., April 5th, May 3rd, etc.).

- **The meal:** Since this is a potluck dinner, we ask everyone to bring some food to share if you can, even if it’s just a loaf of bread, a bag of chips, or something else that’s quick and easy. Since this is a **beloved community** dinner, we hope you’ll come even if you can’t bring anything to share.
- **The drink:** Water and tea will be available. Please bring your own preferred beverage.
- **The fun & games:** After eating, you are invited to play games or socialize, hopefully with someone you haven’t yet met. If you want to play games, please bring your favorite game (for children and/or adults).

We look forward to seeing everyone at the CVUU for this fun-filled social opportunity!



“Women’s rights are an essential part of the overall human rights agenda, trained on the equal dignity and ability to live in freedom all people should enjoy.”

~Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

INFORMATION ABOUT PASTOR EMMA'S SABBATICAL

NINE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why do minister sabbaticals exist?

Minister sabbaticals exist due to the nature of a minister's work. UU ministers typically work a six-day work week. Ministry is understood as a calling, and the work of ministry is time-intensive and subject to unforeseen events. Sufficient time away is essential to maintaining personal health and professional sustainability.

2. Do ministers get paid their full salary while on sabbatical?

Yes.

3. What do ministers do during their sabbatical?

There is no such thing as a 'typical' minister sabbatical, other than a focus on rejuvenation and personal growth. Some may travel, attend a spiritual or meditative retreat, or visit other UU churches to get ideas. Others may take time to conduct deep research on a topic of interest. Each sabbatical is unique and is limited only by the creativity (and finances) of the minister. Specific language in our Ministerial Agreement with Pastor Emma states "*The Minister may use sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional, religious, spiritual, or personal growth.*"

4. Will we know in advance what Pastor Emma plans to do during her sabbatical?

Pastor Emma is planning to attend retreats, explore future educational possibilities, participate in the UU General Assembly on-line, travel, and rejuvenate.

5. How do religious sabbaticals differ from higher education sabbaticals?

Higher education is a profession which also offers sabbaticals, usually for tenured professors. During their sabbatical, faculty members are encouraged to engage in scholarly research or other activities which increase their capacity for service to the institution. Religious sabbaticals typically do not require a specific work product. While professors work long hours, they typically are not 'on call' 24/7 as are ministers. Our Ministerial Agreement states "*Upon return from sabbatical leave, the Minister will submit a Board report that provides information about how they spent their time on sabbatical.*"

6. Who will handle all of Pastor Emma's responsibilities while she's gone?

A Sabbatical Team consisting of the current CVUU president, the incoming CVUU president (nominated), and other selected CVUU members will develop plans to cover all CVUU ministerial services during Pastor Emma's absence. These plans will be well publicized to the congregation in advance of the sabbatical.

Our congregation's practice of 'shared ministry'—where responsibility for the well-being of the congregation is shared among members, staff, and the minister—has positioned us well to handle a sabbatical, since so many of our members are already involved in different aspects of CVUU work. We are experienced, and we are capable!

7. Can a minister take a sabbatical and then leave our congregation soon after they return?

Pastor Emma assures us that she has no plans to immediately leave our congregation, and she is absolutely committed to serving as our minister through at least June 30, 2025.

8. I've worked for decades and never gotten a sabbatical; why should I pay for my minister to have one?

It's true, sabbaticals are rare in the U.S. workplace. But a minister's work is unique, in both hours, number of hours on-call, training, and expectations. The constant challenges which ministers must deal with are reflected in the current shortage of ministers across all denominations. Nationally, UUs are currently facing the highest ratio of 'church openings' to 'ministers looking to be hired' ratio in recent history.

9. Does offering a sabbatical guarantee that our minister will stay with us long-term?

No, but it doesn't hurt—and might help—those chances. Ministers look forward to sabbaticals, and if they move to a new congregation, their time earned for sabbaticals has to 'start over'.



Sabbatical Team Update

A Sabbatical Team has been formed and has met to begin planning for Pastor Emma's absence during May, June and July. This Team will continue to meet regularly prior to Pastor Emma's sabbatical and, will continue to monitor and identify any special ministerial needs which may arise during the sabbatical as well.

Team members include:

- Dennis Harbaugh (President)
- Carolyn Hildebrandt
- Mandy Boody (Religious Services Council)
- Heather Flory (Shared Ministry Council)
- Mike Knapp (Personnel Committee)
- Betsy Brant (Caring Committee)

A detailed contact list and information about who to contact for pastoral care and other ministerial needs during the sabbatical will be included in the April newsletter.

We've been watching all the activity in the last few weeks in the Fellowship Hall with the many Stewardship social meals. From what we observed, everyone had a lot of fun, and the discussions were productive, educational (and often loud with much laughter!). It looked like the various offerings of food were pretty tasty too, but all of the "clean freaks" putting the kitchen back in order didn't leave even a morsel for us!

The Church Mouse

