



**CEDAR VALLEY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

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***** 2025 *****

- FEBRUARY 2** 10:00 A.M. RITUAL SUNDAY: WALKING THE LABYRINTH FOR IMBOLC
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Pastor Emma Peterson, Mollie Wallsteadt*
- FEBRUARY 9** 10:00 A.M. SAINT VALENTINE: LOVE BEYOND ROMANCE
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Pastor Emma Peterson, Mandy Boody *
- FEBRUARY 16** 10:00 A.M. CAN WE THE PEOPLE PRESERVE DEMOCRACY?
A PRESIDENT’S DAY MESSAGE – Pastor Emma Peterson, Kathi Bower *
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum
- FEBRUARY 23** 10:00 A.M. “WHY BE MORAL?” A QUESTION WITH MANY GOOD ANSWERS
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Robert Earle, Karen Impola *

* ~ 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

On the outside of Dysart, Iowa, heading straight west down Sherman for one mile with the sun in your eyes, then a sharp right onto Highway X, up a gradual incline with a farm on your left (two horses, chickens, many barn cats, the farm dog that barks and barks and then follows you for a while) corn forever on your right, directly across from the town's gargantuan sky blue and white water tower, is a cemetery. It's roughly the size of two and a half football fields, side by side by side, I'd guess. Dysart's town founders, the Dysarts, are buried there—as are many of the town's earliest residents, dating back one and a half centuries. Many of the folks who live in Dysart have lived in Dysart their whole life. Many of those Dysart folks are buried out in the western Protestant cemetery, straight down Sherman, left on highway X, cresting on the only perceptible rise of flat land around, the sun setting at its back, across Iowa's giant sky, eternally. (A much smaller Catholic cemetery sits adjacent to the Casey's on Dysart road, on the east side of town. I don't see many sunrises myself, but I imagine they're lovely from that spot.)

Living in Dysart, I walked to the cemetery regularly for years. I like cemeteries. I find them peaceful, and I like reading the headstones. When I adopted *Roberta*, my seven-year-old Bracco Italiano dog and soulmate, I'd walk her out to the cemetery so she could run and run. I'd unhook the leash from the harness around her snout, and she would take off running laps. Straight down the paved drive bordering the headstones, curving a wide left to fly down the wide-open strip of yet unplotted grass, then around, returning lap after lap to bark her joy at me, taking off to run it again. I'd never seen a creature experience such ecstasy as Roberta did when she was running free. But she was terrible on a leash. She'd lived the first seven years of her life on a chain in a backyard somewhere. A failed hunting dog, she ran away a lot. The third time she showed up at the shelter, her family declined to retrieve her. Then she was mine, and she'd never walked on a leash in her life. She was a mess every time, yelping and barking and jumping and trying desperately to catapult herself magically to the place where we were going so she could run. She was so dramatic—whining, yelping, and barking as we walked—that I often worried my neighbors would hear her vocalizing her distress and call the ASPCA. Yet the moment we crossed the threshold of the cemetery, and Roberta was released from her tether, she transformed. Every unbearable moment of the walk on the leash we took to arrive at the place where she found her joy, was worth it the moment we arrived. Every. Time.

I haven't walked to the cemetery since Roberta died in January of 2021. It's been too painful. My heart aches just typing it. But as I wrap up my season as a Dysart resident, I am planning one last walk out to the cemetery. I'll bring a small amount of Roberta's ashes to scatter there. I might talk to her awhile, tell her that even though this was the place we lived together, she is with me wherever I go. I'll watch the sun set across Iowa's endless sky. And then I'll walk back to town. I'll walk into whatever the new season I'll be walking in brings.

On the first Sunday of February, the CVUU will celebrate Imbolc with a labyrinth walk. The spring equinox walks us out of one season of darkness and rest, into a new season of increasing light and new growth. Walking is a traditional ritual of the holiday. A way to reflect on the passing season while entering the next. I hope you'll join us as we walk into a new season together.

In Faithful Community,

Pastor Emma



GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

February is the month of love—romantic love, love of family, love of friends, love of our non-human companions, love of nature, and love of the ideas and institutions that we cherish. The CVUU theme for this year is *Love at the Center*. Not only does this reflect the values recently endorsed by the UUA, but decades of scientific research on how we can promote individual and collective health and wellbeing.

While preparing to leave office this January, Dr. Vivek Murthy reflected on his tenure as the 19th and 21st U.S. Surgeon General. In an interview with *Time Magazine* he said, “I realized over two terms that there were critical questions I have been grappling with. The main one is: “What was driving the deeper pain, the unhappiness I was seeing for years across the country?” A major cause of this unhappiness and pain is an epidemic of loneliness and lack of community. Hence, Dr. Murthy's parting prescription for our nation—build community!

According to Dr. Murthy, “Community is a place where we have relationships, help each other, and where we find purpose in each other. Those three elements are the core pillars of community. Community is also a place fueled by a core virtue: that's love, which manifests in generosity, kindnesses, and courage. When you put these together, then you have a place where people find a sense of belonging and meaning.”

Dr. Murthy, who is Hindu, has touched upon many of the key values that we share as UUs.

He notes, “What I have found over my two terms is that for many people, that sense of community has eroded. We have millions of Americans struggling with loneliness: a third of adults and half of young people. People's participation in both formal and informal service remains low. And more than half of young adults in a recent survey said they felt either low or no sense of meaning and purpose in their lives.”

One reason for this decline in community is the COVID pandemic, where many of us worked hard to limit our face-to-face interactions to help keep ourselves and others safe. Another reason is the proliferation of personal entertainment and communication devices. Years ago, families used to share a daily newspaper, weekly magazines, a radio, a telephone, and a TV. If you wanted to see a new movie, you could go to a public theater. If you wanted a new book, you could go to a public library. Now, all of this information can be easily accessed on our personal devices—cellphones, iPads, laptops, watches, and desktop computers. Although online communities can meet some important needs, they are no substitute for healthy, contemporaneous human interactions.

This lack of community has been observed both in the US and abroad. In fact, it has even led the UK and Japan to appoint Ministers of Loneliness to help get people together in meaningful ways.

What does the CVUU have? We have a Minister! But we also have a whole group of like-minded people who are working together to build community with love at the center. In doing so we are guided by our Covenant, our Seven Principles (yes, they are still alive) and the Six Values recently endorsed by the UUA.

February community-building opportunities at the CVUU include Mindfulness Meditations, Sunday Services, Adult Forums, Small Group Ministries, Community Service Groups, and Social Activities such as the First Friday Dinner. If you haven't been to church lately, please join us! You can attend in person or via ZOOM!

Carolyn Hildebrandt
CVUU President

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.



FEBRUARY SERVICES

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

February 2nd

Ritual Sunday: Walking the Labyrinth for Imbolc

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Mollie Wallsteadt (WA)

Walking is a common ritual celebrated on the spring equinox. We welcome you to walk the CVUU labyrinth, as we reflect on a season of rest and preparation, into a season of fresh growth and new life.

February 9th

Saint Valentine: Love Beyond Romance

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Mandy Boody (WA)

February 16th

Can We the People Preserve Democracy? A President's Day Message ~~ Pastor Emma Peterson; Kathi Bower (WA)

February 23rd

"Why be Moral?" A Question with Many Good Answers

~~ Robert Earle, Karen Impola (WA)

Robert shares, "Some people think that a robust faith tradition is needed to motivate ethical behavior. Lacking involvement with any such tradition myself, I've found moral guidance through the study of several interlocking intellectual frameworks."



MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Sunday morning meditation will continue at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Find the link in the Weekly Update to join in with this group on Sunday mornings and look for group posts and updates on the Buddhist Path Facebook page.



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>.

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.

February 2nd

House of Hope

Dusky Steele, Development Director of the House of Hope, will share its mission and programs. She writes, "Breaking the cycle of poverty and homelessness at HOH gives me a front row seat to watch women transform their lives and go on to thrive in our community."

February 9th

Celebrating UU Heroes Who You Probably Don't Know

Pam Hays will present stories of a few UU heroes. We have all probably looked at the big poster in the Fellowship Hall of famous (more or less) UUs, but there are ones who have given their lives and/or accomplished important work of which most of us are unaware. Let's take a few minutes to celebrate these people together. We will light a candle for each one and think of them with gratitude and humility.

February 16th

Haitian Art in Waterloo

A staff member from the Waterloo Center for the Arts will speak about the Center's collection of Haitian Art founded in 1977. They have the largest public collection in the world which includes art from deceased artists as well as contemporary ones; many of the older pieces feature religious motifs.

February 23rd

Talkback from today's sermon

Robert Earle will lead a discussion following his message on "Why Be Moral?" This is our members' chance to weigh in on a very weighty topic.

Al and Pam Hays for Adult RE



FY26 ALL-MEMBER PLEDGE DRIVE

Greetings CVUU Friends,

February is when we begin our pledge campaign for funding FY26 (which covers July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026). In the coming weeks there will be opportunities for us to share the ways that we live our UU Values as we care for one another and our community. Your pledge commitment is critical to help keep our doors open and our Minister and staff in place.

Pledge Sunday will be March 2nd, so be watching for more information coming in the March newsletter, Weekly Updates, and the Sunday announcements!

Michaela Rich
Pledge Team Chairperson



BOARD BRIEFS

On January 9th your CVUU Board held its regular monthly meeting; here are a few highlights:

- * **Category B Congregation:** Our proposed budget for the new fiscal year will reflect our church's growth into a Category B size congregation. Therefore, ministerial and staff compensation will increase according to the recommended UUA guidelines.
- * **Guest Musician Program:** We now have funding to invite guest musicians to perform at the CVUU during Sunday Services. *Carolyn Hildebrandt* will recruit musicians from UNI, UNI Suzuki, and Wartburg College to perform special music/music for meditation, prelude, and postlude music, and to participate in leading congregational hymns.
- * **Two Open Positions:** We are still searching for a Music Director and second Coordinator of Children's Religious Education (CCRE). If you are aware of any good candidates, please let us know.
- * **Continued Conversations with the UCC:** Members of the CVUU have been meeting with members of the United Church of Christ to explore possible purchase of their building. As of now, the UCC congregation would like to continue using the building for their own functions. We are at the stage of getting to know each other better and deciding how that arrangement might look.



The month of February brings to mind *Ground Hog Day*, *Presidents' Day*, and of course, *Valentine's Day*. Did you know we've had four presidents with February birthdays? We're all familiar with Washington (the 22nd) and Lincoln (the 12th) but there was also William Henry Harrison (the 9th) and Ronald Reagan (the 6th). If you are reading this and have a birthday this month, we wish you a very happy day!

We currently have members who are dealing with health issues including surgery; some are in various stages of the healing process. We wish each of them a speedy recovery to good health. To those who have experienced the loss of a relative or dear friend, we send our deepest sympathy.

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



The Soul Matters theme for February this year is *Inclusion*. Our children will also be using this theme in the RE classes. What does this theme mean to you in your daily life and in the lives of those around you? What thoughts come to mind?



CHILDREN'S RE!!

The Winter Pageant was adorable! Though it had to be rescheduled due to the weather, everyone who participated and volunteered their time came together in a big way and made it into a wonderful experience shared with the congregation.

The theme for February is *Inclusion*. As Unitarian Universalists, the inclusion of all people is a cornerstone of who we are, and an important concept to teach our children. Throughout the month we will learn about not only the inclusion of people, but their stories as well. There are wonderful activities that touch upon not only what we do to practice the inclusion of others in the environment around us, but the importance of the love we feel inside for what makes us special.

We will continue to have Children's RE each week, as well as Second Hour childcare. On *Saturday, February 1st at 3:00 p.m.* I will be hosting a *Valentine Party* for the children of our congregation. I hope that parents and children will join me in the Fellowship Hall to make Valentine cards for friends and family. If you have card-making supplies to bring along, please do so!

January was a time for new beginnings. Determining what the year might look like moving forward, and the goals we have to continue the Children's RE program and see it thrive. February will be dedicated to transition, where some of these goals and ideas will start to be put into action. It is as always, an absolute joy to be the Coordinator of such an important piece of the CVUU whole.

Sincerely Yours,
Ronan Parker

Coordinator of Children's Religious Education



CHANGING YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IN THE CHURCH DIRECTORY?

Have you had to change your email address in the on-line "Instant Church Directory"? After doing that, have you had a problem logging back in using your new email address? We've discovered a quirk in this program. The first time after changing your email, you must create a new login to connect to your existing information.

To do this from the web, on the Instant Church Directory Sign In page, click on the button at the bottom titled "First time signing in? Create Login". Then fill in the information requested. You will have to respond to an email to confirm the new address. In the password field, you can use the password you had before or create a new one. When you get in, you'll be connected to your existing entry, nothing will be lost or have to be re-entered. There is help available also at the following link: [Logging into the App - Instant Church Directory](#). If you need help, feel free to contact me or *Leann*.

Steve Chamberlin



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

We are midway through winter and hopefully this finds you savoring some quiet, rejuvenating times and also appreciating that you have a CVUU community to warm your heart and provide connection.

We've had some fun times already this winter and there's more to come. Thanks to *Michaela* taking the lead on our First Friday potluck last month, about thirty of us gathered to enjoy good food and conversation. Getting to know each other better with some game-playing was a highlight for me. I hope you'll find time to bring your family and/or friends to our next First Friday event. It's a great opportunity to feel more connected to your CVUU community. And, if you're willing, offer to help set up or clean up. It's a simple job and it's a huge help! Let *Michaela* or me know if you're available.



So, if you've been coming to church and finding it meaningful to participate in the CVUU community but haven't become a member, your chance to do that is just around the corner! In February, we will hold a couple of membership events. The first one will be the *New to CVUU* session on Sunday, February 9th. This is an opportunity to learn a little more about the CVUU and also share what you're looking for in a spiritual community. Then on February 16th, there will be an *I Want to be a Member* session. This is when you take the next step of joining the CVUU and discovering the benefits and opportunities of membership. Let me know if you plan to attend either of these sessions, so we can have enough materials for everyone.

No matter if you are a member, visitor, or friend, we welcome you to be a full part of the CVUU.

If you have any questions about getting more involved, let me or *Pastor Emma* know.

Warmly, *Juanita Williams*
on behalf of the Congregational Life Council



NORTHEAST IOWA FOOD BANK

We are planning to volunteer again this month at the Food Bank—on Saturday, February 22nd from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Please sign up by contacting me (phone, text, email, or CVUU FB page). This has been a fun event for us in the past and we hope to keep it going. We'd like to have 8 to 15 people if possible, all ages, and there are some tasks that can be done sitting down.

Margie Miller



NATIVE SEEDBALL MAKE-AND-TAKE

On Saturday, February 1st from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, come learn to make seedballs filled with native seeds. Native plants support native insects, pollinators, and wildlife. Take home your seedballs and distribute them in your garden or flowerpots and let nature take its course. Children are welcome with an adult companion. Contact *Jill Miller* for more details.



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 that are chosen annually by this congregation.

December's charity was for *Iowa Safe Schools* and \$502.00 was collected that month.

January's charity was for the UUSC's *Guest at Your Table* program; we will report on that donation total next month. [Note: if you are reading this prior to the end of January, you still have time to contact our Collector with a contribution for this worthwhile cause. Remember that donations of \$150.00 or more are matched!]



Annually in February, we keep our focus of support on the CVUU with our *Pledge Campaign*. Join us in this effort!

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

The Social Action Committee



MOVIE DISCUSSION SMALL GROUP

The Movie Discussion Small Group will be meeting this month in the sanctuary on Monday, February 10th at 1:00 p.m.

The movie being discussed will be *Wit* (2001) which can be seen on MAX with a subscription or viewed on YouTube at this link: <https://youtu.be/uOPPvYIGqL8?si=TdYKK1WJHigqWKHz>. If these options don't work, contact *Jane Allen*. It is not available at the libraries or on Prime or Netflix.

This is an open group and all are welcome, so if this Small Group sounds interesting to you and you'd like to be added to the email list, or you have questions, contact *Nancie Groszkruger*.



MINISTERIAL MOVING FUND

The Board and the Shared Ministry Council have set up a Ministerial Moving Fund to help *Pastor Emma* and her partner *Skylar* move to the Cedar Valley. Any donations would be very welcome. You can donate through *Tithe.ly* or by writing a check to the CVUU—be sure that your donation is labeled for the "Ministerial Moving Fund".



On February 10, 1945 the *North Shore Unitarian Church* was founded in Long Island, New York. It is now the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, New York. As part of its founding outreach, the congregation contacted an Episcopalian named *Caroline Veatch*, who provided for the church to receive income from her oil fields in Germany after her death. The church has since turned this income into the largest single source of funding for the Unitarian Universalist Association and its work.

IUUWAN NEWS

IUUWAN's purpose is to form connections and collaboration among Iowa's fourteen UU fellowships to amplify social justice work, because together we'll have a bigger impact.

Presently two 'action teams' are working with representatives of Iowa UU congregations. The action teams collaborate on ideas to inspire action from UUs in the state. The UU Immigration action team has just started meeting monthly on the second Monday at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom, to collaborate about different communities' action for justice in immigration issues.



The Environmental Justice action team meets monthly on the first Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Recently they have discussed actions for April 'earth month', support for churches that haven't yet held a climate justice revival, and they've talked about bird walks to collaborate with homeless people, and establishing street theater actions.

The LGBTQ+ Equality Action Team is not presently meeting but offered small grants in 2024 to help with Pridefest activities. See the IUUWAN website at: <<https://iuuwan.com/>> or contact *Byron Plumley* or me if you are interested in being involved in these statewide teams.

You can find IUUWAN's presence on Facebook at: <<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61561649006548>>.

Shirley Whiteside



IOWA CANTERBURY FORUM PROGRAMS

Canterbury Forums are beginning again this month. They are held once a month via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. on Sundays.

This month's date, speaker, topic, and description is:

Sunday, February 23rd

What Does it Mean to be Lutheran?

Rev. Dan Mixdorf, retired ELCA pastor

Description: Lutheranism is based on the Biblical notion of "saved by grace through faith". Coming from a background of Northern European and Catholic history, Lutheranism is known for its use of liturgy in worship and the sacraments as means of this grace. However, in today's world such things don't resonate with most Americans. As a Lutheran all his life and as a pastor for almost fifty years, Rev. Mixdorf will share Lutheranism's history, its unique message and its challenges. In addition, he will share his experience and perspective on the ELCA's view regarding various social issues the Church is dealing with today and how that view differs from those of other Lutheran bodies.

If you would like to be added to the list for these free programs that are open to the public, contact the Forum Coordinators at: <canterburyforum@gmail.com>. Login information for the Forum's Zoom programs will be sent out via email during the week immediately preceding each program.

FIRST FRIDAY POTLUCKS

Our First Friday potluck this month is Friday, February 7th at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us and bring a friend for good food and conversation.



Please bring something to share for the potluck if you can. There will be plenty of food, so no pressure! The paper plates will be out, but if you prefer your "regular" plates and silverware, bring them along. The hot water will be on for tea or bring your own beverage. Everyone is welcome!

Thank you to everyone who attended in January! If you have questions about First Fridays, would like more information, or would like to help out, please contact me. Our next First Friday is March 7th.

Michaela Rich



CRITICAL BIRD HABITAT IS UNDER THREAT

For the first time ever, land designated as wilderness is at risk of being declassified. Reach out and share your comments with the Fish and Wildlife Service today.

Alaska's Izembek National Wildlife Refuge—one of the world's most important migratory bird staging and wintering habitats—is under attack. For many years, a way to connect the remote community of King Cove to Cold Bay, a larger town with an all-weather airport and better medical care, has been sought. A nineteen-mile road through the heart of the refuge's wilderness area has consistently been rejected in favor of other alternatives. Now, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has come up with a new plan of swapping some of the refuge's wilderness land for other lands that could be turned into a new wildlife refuge.

If you care about wilderness and waterfowl, you can provide comments to the Fish and Wildlife Service's draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement *before the February 13, 2025*, deadline. The website is: <<https://ak.audubon.org/news/izembek-at-risk>> where additional information is available.

The Pollinator Group



Phebe Ann Coffin Hanaford was ordained at Hingham, Massachusetts on February 19, 1868, becoming the first woman Universalist minister in New England.

THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS POTLUCKS ANOTHER SUCCESS!

There were forty-three members and friends who attended on Thanksgiving day and twenty-eight who gathered on Christmas day for these two potlucks where there was, in typical UU style, so much good food!

While those attending bring the food and help with aspects of clean-up, there is a small core of folks who are essential to these two gatherings. *Priscilla Nieman, Nate Callahan, Terry and Nita Stewart, and Russ Campbell* are the choreographers who see that the basics are covered and with expertise! Priscilla refers to Nate, Terry, Nita, and Russ, as her “dream team”, and rightfully so.



The success of the potlucks is because everyone who attends really wants to be there and is willing to pitch in to the hilt. A group consensus was that the holiday potlucks should continue as a tradition. Think about joining one or both of these festivities this year!

[Editor's Note: although not a potluck, to welcome in the new year and help our Cedar Valley homeless, a hearty UU group led by *Kathi Bower* gathered Wednesday, January 1st in the Fellowship Hall. They brought supplies and busily made seventeen tie fleece blankets in a couple of hours. Many brought brunch food to share; it was a lovely and meaningful way to begin the new year!]



If you are one who likes to plan ahead, mark your calendars for Sunday, March 9th when the Jubilee United Methodist Church in Waterloo will again serve the delicious *Le Christopher's* Southern Cuisine meal at their church. Think about gathering some friends and carpooling.



Lydia Estes Pinkham was born on February 9, 1819 in Lynn, Massachusetts. Her family was Quaker but abandoned that religion because they felt it was unwelcoming to the African Americans who came to their meetings. Eventually the family joined the Universalist Church. They also joined the Female Anti-Slavery Society, and Pinkham organized the Freeman's Institute, a debating society that welcomed everyone, regardless of religion, race, or politics. She worked as an unpaid visiting nurse and developed a compound to treat every female ailment. Her sons persuaded her to market the compound, which was eighteen percent alcohol, and she developed a successful business. Pinkham wrote a book on the “facts of life” and another on the female reproductive system through all its stages. After her death, her publisher continued to print “her answers” to personal letters, and that practice, along with information about the alcohol content of her elixir, led to the formation of the Federal Food and Drug Administration. Lydia Estes Pinkham died on May 17, 1883.

Sent by the American Unitarian Association, *Martha* and *Waitstill Sharp* left on February 4, 1939 for Czechoslovakia to work with refugees from the Nazis. This marked the beginning of the Unitarian Service Committee, which was organized in May 1940 as a standing committee of the association “to investigate opportunities for humanitarian service both in America and abroad.” The USC became independent of the AUA in 1948. In 1963 it merged with the Universalist Service Committee, which was first organized in 1945, also as a response to the war in Europe. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee focuses on humanitarian aid, development, and human rights in America and throughout the world.



WhaleCoast Alaska - A More Authentic Travel Experience

Don't procrastinate! Spots still remain for these two unique, exciting fundraising tours organized by four Alaska UU congregations that 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-one years, WhaleCoast Alaska tours have been the BEST way to visit Alaska. Register now for this amazing experience!



Details at <www.WhaleCoastAK.org>. For questions their email is <info@whalecoastak.org>.



FEBRUARY DEADLINES FOR THE CALENDAR AND NUUSLETTER

The next newsletter will be the March issue. The calendar deadline for this issue will be **Wednesday, February 12th** (send info to the office); the newsletter deadline will be **Friday, February 14th** (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 **February 12th and 14th**—the calendar and newsletter deadlines *for the March issue*. There are paper copies left at the church each month—some in the acrylic wall holder on the north wall in the front entry, and some at the foot of the stairs in the Fellowship Hall.

Gerry Chamberlin, Editor
newsletter@cedarvalleyuu.org



A Sunday school teacher asked, “Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?”
“No,” replied Johnny. “How could he, with just two worms.”

**“To love and be loved is to feel
the sun from both sides.” ~David Viscott**



SHOW YOUR LOVE FOR THE CVUU!

Love is our core value as Unitarian Universalists, and February is an excellent month to reflect on love.

Do you love the CVUU and our beloved community? If so, how do you show it?

Would you love to see us continue to thrive? If so, what are you already doing, or what could you be doing, to help?

The Shared Ministry Council encourages everyone who is part of our beloved CVUU community to show your love by helping our CVUU community in February and/or throughout the year.

- If you'd like to show love by providing treats and coffee as part of hospitality on Sunday mornings, contact *Nick Reans*.
- If you'd like to show love by helping as a greeter on Sunday mornings, contact *Joanna Waggoner-Norquest*.
- If you'd like to show love by playing with the kids and youth on Sunday mornings (aka help with the Religious Education program), contact *Ronan Parker*.
- If you'd like to show love by helping with Sunday services, contact *Karen Impola* or *Kathi Bower*.
- If you'd like to show love by helping with shoveling snow or other building and grounds tasks, contact *Roger Hahn* or *Bill Brown*.

For more information about how you can help, see the “Links and Forms” section towards the end of each Weekly Update! Those of you reading this newsletter electronically can [click here](#).

Throughout February and beyond, if you'd love to connect with other CVUUs in our beloved community, see the CVUU Directory (online at our website: www.cedarvalleyuu.org), in the upper right corner by clicking on “Member Directory”) and reach out to those who you'd love to get to know better.

With deep love and appreciation,
The Shared Ministry Council

The Shared Ministry Council's 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), Nancie Groszkruger, (Board liaison), Floralyn Groff, Debra Kyler, Byron Plumley, and Pastor Emma Peterson.



CARING CONNECTIONS TEAM

The members of our Caring Connections Team 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 assistance in **February** is **Margie Miller**.

The celebrated Unitarian poet, *Sylvia Plath* committed suicide at the age of thirty on February 11, 1963.



2024 TREATS & TALENTS AUCTION REPORT

Saturday, November 23rd was a ghoulish night of fun as we gathered at the CVUU for our annual Treats & Talents Auction. The night's *Zombie ApocUUlypse* walking dead and Apocalypse survivors brought in \$9,126 in sales, and the total keeps rising with post event sales on remaining items.

The night wouldn't have been so successful without all of you who offered up so many great items for the auction, and of course, all of you who bought them! Special thanks go to *Mary Kay Madsen, Jeanette Talbert, Bill and Moria Brown, Leigh Zeitz, the Burning Heretics, Rosa Torres, Mollie Wallsteadt, Steve and Gerry Chamberlin, Juanita Williams, Kathi and Gigi Bower, Ronan Parker, Karen Impola, and Mica Lorenz* who helped make things happen that night with their performances, food, bean counting, logistical support, and clean up. **AND** of course, our very own **Zombie Auctioneer, Frank Olson!**



Now to begin next year's planning. Hm-m-m, anyone have a good idea for next year's theme?

Mike Knapp, Finance Council



SOME OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY INCLUDE:

- National **Women Inventors** month
- National **Haiku Writing** month
- National **Cherry** month National **Embroidery** month
- National **African American History** month
- National **Children's Dental Health** month



Support for the CVUU's *Little Food Pantry* and *Little Lending Library* is ongoing throughout the year. Our neighbors, and the children who are coming home from school, can use nourishment for minds and bodies especially as the weather turns **very cold!** The CVUU LFP is one of the Social Action charities we support once a year, but it's always the season for sharing.

