



**CEDAR VALLEY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

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***** 2026 *****

- FEBRUARY 1** 10:00 A.M. SPRING WILL COME: ROOTING IN HOPE WHILE WAITING FOR CHANGE
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Pastor Emma Peterson, Kathi Bower *
- FEBRUARY 8** 10:00 A.M. DIFFERENCE IS BEAUTIFUL: ENDING STIGMA ON “AUTISM SUNDAY”
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Pastor Emma Peterson, Callie Amiday *
- FEBRUARY 15** 10:00 A.M. WE ARE ALL MADE OF STARS: GLITTER BLESSING SUNDAY
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Pastor Emma Peterson, Al Hays *
- FEBRUARY 22** 10:00 A.M. OUR CVUU COVENANT: DIVINELY INSPIRED OR PAST ITS PRIME?
 11:30 A.M. Adult Forum – Dennis Harbaugh, Mandy Joy *

* ~ 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

At the time I'm writing this, it was seven days ago, on January 7th, an ICE agent stationed in Minneapolis by the Trump Administration to carry out kidnappings, detentions and deportations of residents of the city "suspected to be in the country illegally", *murdered *Renee Nicole Good*. I do not need to repeat the details of that unconscionable act. But I would like to lift Renee's memory and offer a prayer that her death bring about justice for all people being terrorized in Minneapolis and across this country by an evil, fascist regime. May Renee's death not be in vain and may all of us together become safe, sovereign, and free. (*ICE's targeting of people based on skin color and not suspected immigration violation is widely documented, as is their brutality and recklessness as they carry out their unconstitutional acts.)

As many of you know, the wife of Renee Nicole Good is *Becca Good*. Becca Good was once a member of the CVUU. She was also my friend. We knew each other before I became your minister. We spent many, many hours together weathering the first two years of the COVID-19 Pandemic within our "quarantine pod". Becca and I are no longer in contact, but I have sent her a letter, in care of the Reverend Ashley Horan. In it I acknowledge Becca's immeasurable grief, and send our abundant, unceasing love to her and her family. Becca will always have a place at the CVUU, should she ever return to the Cedar Valley.

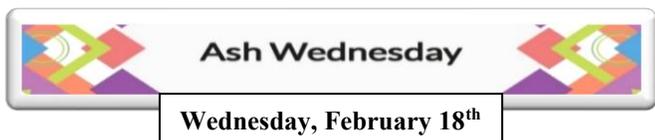
Beloveds, do not despair. Though the world seems to be in an inferno of chaos and violence, we must not lose hope. We must put our faith in each other. These times require *All of Us* to come together to defeat terror and make a better world. It is my personal belief that we are called to be God's hands and feet here on earth. Together we are God's body. Together we are more powerful than any other earthly force, as powerful as Love Incarnate. So, please, take care of yourselves and each other. Remember this is a marathon, not a sprint. Find one small way to make a difference each day. Be kind and generous with your neighbors. (We are all neighbors to each other.) We all have a role here and it is never too late to try to make a difference. Rest in Power, Renee Nicole Good, and May Your Memory be a Blessing.

Pastor Emma

[Editor's Note: The Rev. Ashley Horan serves as the UUA's Vice President for Programs and Ministries.]



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.



GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

February is traditionally the month of love. But as I reflect on all of the ways we can express love for ourselves, our family, our community, and the world, I am overwhelmed with images of hate, greed, violence, and repression.

I am still reeling from the news of Renee Good's murder and the images of her wife *Becca* grieving her loss. I've been trying to find a way to contact Becca, but all I have found are Facebook messages full of love and compassion, others full of lies and hate, and Becca's own brave words that are so quintessentially UU.

Many of us knew Becca when she lived in Waterloo-Cedar Falls before, during and after the pandemic. She did gardening and woodworking for me, including two raised wooden boxes where I can tend a kitchen garden consisting of cherry tomatoes, basil, parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme. When she needed a chair for her apartment, I gave her one. Remembering her cheery, make-do attitude and comparing it to her current anguish haunts me on a daily basis. If only the political powers that be would stop blaming her for what happened and start focusing on healing her wounds instead of making them worse.

I hope that we, as members of the CVUU, can stick together during these frightening times and take good care of ourselves and others. I love you all. Please stay safe.

Carolyn Hildebrandt
CVUU President



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, *Al Hays* at <vp@cedarvalleyuu.org>; and *Pastor Emma Peterson* at <pastor@cedarvalleyuu.org>.



"When our communities are at risk,
when democracy is at risk,
when the planet is at risk,
it is our moral duty to come together."

~~ UU Rev. Ashley Horan

The industrialist, inventor, and philanthropist *Peter Cooper* was born on February 12, 1791 in New York City. His ironworks in Baltimore, Maryland, produced “Tom Thumb”, the first steam locomotive built in the United States. He owned iron mines, blast furnaces, foundries, a rolling mill, and a wire factory, and was the first in America to use the Bessemer process to refine iron from ore. He often worked beside his employees. Cooper was also the president of two telegraph companies that together connected communication across the Atlantic Ocean and North America. In 1859, he founded the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Cooper was a leading member of the Unitarian Church of All Souls in New York City. He died on April 4, 1883.



FEBRUARY SERVICES

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

February 1st

Spring Will Come: Rooting in Hope While Waiting for Change

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Kathi Bower (WA)

February 8th

Difference is Beautiful: Ending Stigma on “Autism Sunday”

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Callie Amiday (WA)

February 15th

We Are All Made of Stars: Glitter Blessing Sunday

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Al Hays (WA)

February 22nd

Our CVUU Covenant: Divinely Inspired or Past Its Prime?

~~ Dennis Harbaugh, Mandy Joy (WA)

Together each Sunday we recite our CVUU Covenant, but have you ever wondered where it came from? Who created it? Is it divinely inspired, or past its prime? Join *Dennis* as we take a deep dive into our Covenant; you may never look at it the same way again!



Autism Sunday, also known as the International Day of Prayer for Autism and Asperger Syndrome, is an event observed annually on the second Sunday of February.



MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Sunday morning meditation will continue at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Find the *NEW* 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.

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 1st

Indivisible

Indivisible is a strong resistance group that has organized many of the actions against Trump policies. Carol Tjaden, one of their lead organizers, will discuss their plans for spring activities.

February 8th

Legislative Review

Sadly, many of us cringe when the Iowa Legislature is in session due to the negative policies they have created in the past. This session will review bills and proposals that might be of concern to UUs. Any member who has concerns with a particular piece of legislation is invited to participate. Materials on how to contact and communicate with legislators—as individuals, since the congregation can’t lobby collectively on specific proposals—will be provided.

February 15th

Soul Matters February Theme: *Embodying Resilience*

Kat Beane-Hanson will lead a discussion of this month’s theme.

February 22nd

Talk-Back on the Covenant

Al Hays will lead a talk-back session on *Dennis Harbaugh’s* service theme of reviewing the Covenant.

Al and Pam Hays for Adult RE



FY2027 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN BEGINS!

February marks the start of our CVUU Pledge Campaign to raise money for the next fiscal year, FY2027, which runs from July 2026 through June 2027. Our goal is to raise \$232,500, a 4.5% increase from last year.

This year’s pledge campaign will run concurrently with the one-time capital campaign, the *New Home Fund Drive*, to fund our move to the new building. The CVUU Finance Committee emphasizes that, of the two, the pledge campaign has priority. Although we may have the new building in sight, we still have our roots planted here; the needs of congregational life in this building—property and program expenses, staff salaries, and membership to the national UUA—all comprise our more immediate obligation.

As the pledge campaign unfolds, we’ll be asking members and friends to make a pledge, a commitment to the amount you plan to contribute between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. You do not need to have the money on hand right now; many people pay their pledges monthly over the course of the year. Every pledge, in any amount, is meaningful and appreciated.

Watch for details and highlights in upcoming Weekly Updates and newsletters! Dates to remember so far are Pledge Sunday on March 1, 2026, and the official pledge deadline on March 15, 2026. For more information, speak with one of our pledge team members: *Joanna Waggoner-Norquest*, *Jennifer Hopkins*, *Seth Chadwick*, and *Sally Browne*.

CHILDREN'S RE!!

Spring is near, but not quite here. Even as I write this, there is a fresh blanket of snow on the ground. Soon enough it will all melt away, but we'll have to endure the cold a while longer. The Noon Years Eve party was wonderful! We created beautiful memories of companionship and joy for us to remember when we open our time capsules. Thank you to everyone who made the party possible—from my REAP Council who helped create and put together the event, to *Mike Knapp* and *Gerry Chamberlin*, who generously provided pizza and sundaes (respectively) for everyone to enjoy!

The Soul Matters theme for February is *Embodying Resilience*. Life is known to throw challenges our way, ones that are often complicated and can feel overwhelming. February's theme will teach us where to find the strength to recover, as well as move forward with courage and joy. There is a lesson on finding resilience through community, which I value deeply and am excited to explore with the children through a "Helping Hands" community garland to demonstrate how we can hold each other up.

This month there are a couple of fun activities to look forward to, beginning with First Friday Fun Night on Friday, February 6th at 5:30 p.m. with pizza and activities upstairs for the kiddos! We would also love for you to join us on Saturday, February 14th from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for our Valentines party! There will be snacks, card decorating, and fun with friends! Anyone is welcome to attend, and we invite you to bring supplies for cards or snacks to share.

It feels as if so much has already happened despite being so early into a new year. That overwhelm is nothing to feel ashamed of, and neither is asking for support to find the courage needed to keep moving forward. There is so much of the year yet to come, and you never know what the future holds!

Ronan Parker
Coordinator of Children's Religious Education



SOUL MATTERS FOR FEBRUARY – EMBODYING RESILIENCE

This month's Soul Matters theme teaches us that, while resilience has a lot to do with what is inside us, it is even more dependent on what is between us. We survive our wounds and weaknesses by having the strength to tell others about it. We find the courage to make our way through the dark only when we sense we are not alone. Internal and individual grit only gets us so far; empathy, assurance and love from others gets us the rest of the way. Boil it all down and you get this: Resilience is as much a collective endeavor as an individual one.



Susan Brownell Anthony was born in Adams, Massachusetts on February 15, 1820. Her family was Quaker, but they were also active members of First Unitarian Church in Rochester, NY. Anthony spoke often of the guidance she received from the church's minister, William Henry Channing. She was active in the temperance and abolition movements as well as teachers' organization. She wanted to include women in the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave African-Americans the right to vote. Anthony published a women's rights periodical, *The Revolution*, and organized the National Woman Suffrage Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton in 1869. The two women spent the next thirty-five years traveling around the United States working to get the vote for women. In 1872, Anthony went to the polls in Rochester, claiming the right to vote as a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment. She was arrested and fined \$100, which she refused to pay. With other feminists, she compiled and edited "The History of Woman Suffrage". In February 1906, a month before her death, Anthony gave her final speech at the women's suffrage convention in Baltimore and stated, "Failure is impossible!" Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote, fourteen years after Susan B. Anthony's death. She died on March 13, 1906.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

CVUU has been busy ringing in the new year with a multitude of activities. From Buddhist Path to labyrinth walks, to pizza and movies, to building time capsules in RE, to choir practice, and a multitude of Small Groups, our building has been humming with activity.

Check out the calendar to see some incredible opportunities in February to spend time building and strengthening relationships with others. Another great way to make connections is to volunteer. There are many opportunities to get involved including RE, nursery, greeting, and hospitality. Come join in the fun. If you want to know about opportunities to get involved or more about Small Groups or events, feel free to reach out to *Juanita* or me. Make 2026 the best year yet.

Jill Miller
for the Congregational Life Council



CARING CONNECTIONS TEAM

The members of our Caring Connections Team are determined to serve this congregation month after month. Have you thought about joining them in their efforts to provide various means of assistance? As of January 1st, CVUU member *Stacey Bartz* is the new lead for the team. If you have questions about this committee—what they do, when they meet, or if you would like to join them—get in touch with Stacey.

The contact person for the month of *February* is *Carolynn Hartsfield*.

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.

The December collection on Christmas Eve was for the *Black Hawk-Grundy Mental Health Fund* and the total donated was \$235. The January collection was for our own UUA's *UUSC-Guest At Your Table* which advances human rights in the U.S. and internationally through grassroots collaborations; we'll have that amount for you next month. This month, as always, we pause our outreach collections as our focus turns inward to our own *Annual Pledge Campaign*. Be watching for this year's theme, more details, and how you can help to maintain a vibrant CVUU in the Cedar Valley!

You may donate early to the Social Action Collections if you wish, but be sure to note the *specific charity* for our Collector. Thank you to all who participate in supporting these worthwhile organizations each month in the name of the CVUU.

The Social Action Committee



FEBRUARY DEADLINES

FOR THE CALENDAR AND NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be the March issue! The calendar deadline for this issue will be **Wednesday, February 11th** (send info to the office); the newsletter deadline will be **Friday, February 13th** (send articles to me). This information can also be found in **bold type on the calendar page of this newsletter**. With February being such a short month, often the deadline dates are earlier than most other months; that's just how the calendar plays out!

Mark your calendars now for **February 11th and 13th**—the calendar and newsletter deadlines for the *March 2026 issue*. There are always 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.

Something to Consider

In an effort to streamline Leann's and my work with these monthly newsletters, we have been asking you to consider using her Wednesday Calendar Deadline to send the two of us your dates, events, articles, etc. It means you'd have one less deadline to contend with by using her calendar deadline. The Friday newsletter deadline will still be an option, but if you are looking to simplify your CVUU work, give the calendar deadline a try for sending your information to both of us.

Gerry Chamberlin, Editor
newsletter@cedarvalleyuu.org



GREEN LIVING CORNER

Plastics – Concerns, and Questions

In the December newsletter the focus for this column was on plastics—some history, concerns, and questions. The news coverage of how microplastics are invading our lives is disturbing. Some articles report how microscopic bits of plastic are sloughing off into food and beverages when consumers *unwrap* plastic packaging, and that heating plastic—as in take-out coffee cups—drastically increases the amount of microplastic shedding. These two just touch the iceberg of what plastics are doing to humans and the planet.

A few companies have been advertising glass storage containers as alternatives to plastic for prepping meals and storing leftover foods, but in looking more closely at the ads, some of them have plastic covers which seem to defeat the 'good intention'. Some product reviews state that the snap lock lids (which are plastic) are bulky, difficult to latch, and tend to crack or break. While being tempted to rid one's cupboard of plastic, the glass options are a bit pricey, so certainly not attractive if the life of the lids is questionable and they contain plastic. Until some better options come on the market, I'll use my few pieces of CorningWare with glass lids to store leftovers.

This means plastic take-out containers are in question as well. Picking up an order where piping hot food has been put into plastic has long since been unappetizing in my mind. At least the Wild Hare in Cedar Falls always lines their styrofoam containers with white waxed paper for take-out orders. It not only keeps the food out of direct contact with the foam container, but it makes the food easier to remove.

In the early 70s while living in southern Maryland, we bought a few Le Parfait glass canning jars for storing flour to keep bugs out. The jars have glass lids, galvanized wire closures, a rubber seal, and are aesthetically pleasing. Over the years I've added many more jars in various sizes from 8 ounces to 3 liters—for flour, different kinds of sugar, beans, coffee, popcorn, etc. and everything stays fresh.

Have you ever noticed how much plastic is in your life and how hard it is to get through a day without coming into contact with it? It's everywhere you turn. This month a few counties around Minneapolis are again offering folks the chance to join in the Plastic Free Challenge. I understand it is really eye opening! A friend there stated she always learns something from the experience and, as a result, has made changes in her own plastic consumption. For instance, last year she started making her own yogurt using milk that comes in returnable glass containers.

If you have ideas to share on this topic of so much plastic in our lives and/or how to reduce plastic consumption, let us hear from you.

Gerry Chamberlin



The English Unitarian and geologist *Sir Charles Lyell* died at age seventy-seven on February 22, 1875. He is buried in Westminster Abbey in London.



The suffragist and pacifist *Anna Carpenter Garlin Spencer* died in New York City at the age of seventy-nine on February 12, 1931. She was a Unitarian and the first woman ordained in Rhode Island.



CHRISTMAS POTLUCK ANOTHER SUCCESS

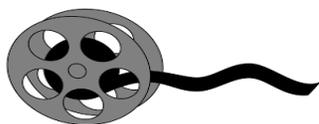
Twenty-five people were served at the Christmas Day potluck and two members dropped in a little later just to enjoy some socializing. (Anyone is welcome to join this annual gathering whether it's for the entire time, just dessert/coffee, or for conversation!)

Priscilla is the catalyst of course, and her Dream Team includes *Nita* and *Terry Stewart*, *Nate Callahan*, and *Russ Campbell*. While the Christmas potluck is smaller and more laid back than the Thanksgiving one, this team pitches in for both! The attendees bring one or more dishes to share, so there is always plenty of food and a variety of choices.

Priscilla and *Nate* discuss/prepare main dishes and are busy in the kitchen along with *Nita* and *Terry* who are essential in the kitchen as well. *Russ* manages the table organization and sees to the placement of dishes as they come in. *Priscilla* makes sure there are tasty gluten-free choices, keeps everyone happy and moving, all the while being attentive to acknowledging newcomers—this is why she's called Hostess-with-the-Mostess!



Between food prep and clean-up, *Nita* and *Terry* are a small army getting things done in the kitchen. We are so grateful for their talents and dedication to these holiday potlucks.



MOVIE DISCUSSION SMALL GROUP

The Movie Discussion Small Group will be meeting in the sanctuary on Monday, February 9th at 1:00 p.m.

The movie being discussed is *Nonnas*. Because it is a Netflix movie, it's only available on 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*. Come and enjoy the discussion together!!



Monday, February 2nd

SYRACUSE CULTURAL WORKERS

A few of you have heard me speak of Syracuse Cultural Workers, their mission, and their products. With the recent happenings in Minneapolis and elsewhere, I feel a need to share this resource more widely, as their mission aligns with UU Principles and Values.

SCW, founded in 1982, strives to nourish communities that honor diversity and creative expression, and inspire movements for justice, equity, and liberation while respecting our Earth and all its beings. They have an interesting variety of books for both children and adults on their website, and publish calendars, posters, T-shirts, greeting and holiday cards, buttons, stickers, and other merchandise to support those movements and the people who build them. They are committed to peace, sustainability, social justice, feminism, and multiculturalism.



Located in Syracuse, NY, the easy-to-use website is <syracuseculturalworkers.com>. Don't take my word for it, take a look for yourself.

Gerry Chamberlin



SOME OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY INCLUDE:

- National Women Inventors month
- National Parent Leadership month
- National Children's Dental Health month
- National Care About Your Indoor Air month
- National Cherry month
- National Haiku Writing month



WhaleCoast Alaska – Our 32nd Year!

Two unique, exciting fundraising tours organized by four Alaska UU congregations are being offered again this summer by WhaleCoast Alaska. The “All-Alaska Tour” has only eight spaces left! The “Alaska National Parks Tour” has now sold out! For over thirty years, WhaleCoast Alaska tours have been the *best* way to visit Alaska. A tour sells out once thirty guests are registered, so don't delay!



The All-Alaska Tour – 8 spaces left!

July 17 – July 29, 2026; 13 days/12 nights
Explore Fairbanks, Denali National Park, Anchorage, Juneau, Sitka

The Alaska National Parks Tour – sold out!

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

FEBRUARY DROP-IN SMALL GROUPS

No need to register or RSVP! These CVUU Small Groups are a drop-in opportunity to connect with the CVUU community. Come as you are, and enjoy some time being mentally present with other UU folks. This month's events, dates, and times are:

Silent Book Club

Wednesday, February 11th from 6-7:30 p.m.

Thirty minutes of casual conversation about books, sixty minutes of free reading as a group – bring a book!

Coffee Hour Small Group

Saturday, February 14th from 10-11:00 a.m.

Join us for coffee (or tea, if that's your thing!) and conversation. *Very* casual Saturday morning get-together.

Crafternoon

Sunday, February 15th from 1-3:00 p.m.

Bring your most portable current project to work on! We have had everything from crochet to needle felting to embroidery to video game programming. All creative endeavors welcome!

Game Night

Friday, February 27th from 6-8:00 p.m.

Options for games will include Bananagrams, Phase 10, Uno, and other quick-learn games.

Taste of Soul is taking a break for February because I can only do so much. Join us to discuss our February Soul Matters theme, *Embodying Resilience*, during the Second Hour on Sunday, February 15th.

Contact me with questions!

Kat Beane Hanson
Small Group Coordinator



As this newsletter is being prepared, the Cedar Valley has experienced high winds and very cold weather. It's a great time of year for making homemade soup which warms the soul and the kitchen!

Our deepest sympathy to the family of *Dr. John Johnson*, retired UNI history professor who died on Friday, January 2nd. The family—John, Debby, and their sons, Matt and Noah—moved to Cedar Falls around the mid-80s and became familiar faces at the then UUSBHC. (Debby's memorial service was held at the CVUU on June 3, 2023.) A visitation was held on Saturday, January 10th at Richardson's Funeral Home in Cedar Falls. The full obituary may be found at the funeral home's website, <<https://www.richardsonfuneralservice.com/>>.

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 sympathy.

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



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE

Annually, the *International Day of Women and Girls in Science* (IDWGS) is February 11th. This year is their thirty-first anniversary, a significant milestone in the global effort to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender equality in science is crucial for building a better future for all, yet women and girls continue to face systemic barriers and biases in pursuing scientific careers.



Closing the gender gap in science requires breaking stereotypes, promoting role models to inspire girls, supporting women's advancement through targeted programs, and fostering inclusive environments through policies and actions that promote inclusion, diversity and equity.

Did you know?

*A 2022 study found that one in two female scientists reported experiencing sexual harassment at work. A shift in the structure and culture of science workplaces is urgently needed.

*As women advance in their scientific careers, the gender gap continues to widen. In research management structures, the proportion of women in senior positions remains disproportionately low.

*In cutting-edge fields such as artificial intelligence, only one in five professionals (22%) is a woman.

*Despite a shortage of skills in most of the technological fields driving the Fourth Industrial Revolution, women still account for only 28% of engineering graduates and 40% of graduates in computer science and informatics.

To learn much more about the *International Day of Women and Girls in Science*, visit their official website: <<http://womeninscienceday.org/>>.



Jeremy Bentham was born on February 15, 1748 in London, England. A noted British philosopher and political economist, he published a work on Unitarianism under the name of Gamaliel Smith. Although he studied law, he never practiced it but wrote extensively on the theory of legal reform. Bentham's most important work was "Introduction to Principles of Morals and Legislation" (1789). He left a large bequest of money and books to University College. The college was one of the first to open its doors to anyone who could pass the entrance exams and pay the fee, regardless of race or class. It thus became an important center for Unitarians to study since Unitarians were denied access to Oxford or Cambridge University.



Florida Yates Ruffin Ridley, an African-American Unitarian and teacher, died at age eighty-two on February 25, 1943.



WEARING TWO HATS AT THE CVUU

FIRST FRIDAYS AND THE SHARED MINISTRY COUNCIL

You may have seen announcements in our newsletters and in the Weekly Updates about First Fridays. Here are details for this month, February:

Join us on February 6th for First Friday! There will be pizza. No need to bring anything but yourself—and a friend if you'd like!



If you're not in the mood for pizza, or if you have something you'd like to share, please add to our pizza buffet. The paper plates will be out to make clean-up easy. This is an event for all ages. Everyone is welcome!

We'll get started at 5:30 p.m., eat, and socialize. If you have a game you'd like to play, bring it along!

I've enjoyed being one of the hosts of First Fridays. My favorite part is the chance to slow down, sit down, talk, and spend time getting to know each other better. One of our goals has been to make it simpler and easier for you to attend—it's customizable.

- Food: have pizza, bring something potluck style or do both – you choose!
- Dishes: use paper plates, a plastic fork, or bring your own!
- Play a game after the meal, chat, or simply relax with a cup of tea!
- Attend each month or a time or two when you can—no pressure!

We're UUs—caring and committed, and we each live out our UU values in our own unique way. I hope you can make it to First Friday—or one of the many opportunities you'll see in the newsletter and calendar for us to gather. In these turbulent times, we have each other.

If you have ideas for First Friday activities, or would like to talk more, let me know.

Michaela Rich, First Friday Host and
Shared Ministry Council Member



The *Le Christopher's* meal in Waterloo at the Jubilee United Methodist Church will be returning next month after their winter break! It's a special offering of hospitality, friendship, and delicious southern food to the Cedar Valley community. Several UUs have delighted in the experience over the years. If you enjoy good food and plenty of conversation, plan ahead and mark your calendar for **Sunday, March 8th** when *Le Christopher's Southern Cuisine* will again be served at noon at their church!



Is there a dating app for seniors?
Yes—carbon dating.

UUSC - GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

Every year around the holidays and into January, the CVUU participates in an initiative to raise money for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, known to many as UUSC. This initiative is known as *Guest At Your Table*. The idea is to put a little extra money aside during meals to signify setting a plate at your table for someone in need.



Where does that money go, you may ask. The money raised by UUSC is used for humanitarian efforts and volunteerism through grassroots social justice initiatives all over the world. The UUSC has an excellent website with educational videos and brochures; visit <www.UUSC.org>.



As in years past, when you donate \$150 or more, your donation will be matched by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY.

If you are reading this newsletter in the final days of January, you still have an opportunity to get a donation to our CVUU collector—**preferably prior to January 31st** noting that it should be allocated to UUSC-Guest At Your Table (GAYT). Questions? Contact *Austin* or *Lizzy*.



CROSS-COUNCIL COALITION

If you are reading this newsletter before the end of January, please be aware that the CVUU Board is asking all Council Chairs to meet with the Board on **Saturday, January 31st at 10:00 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. Coffee, tea, and delicious treats will be provided.

This meeting is a time for the Board and councils to discuss what is working well with each of our councils and committees, share tips for ways to promote volunteering, and work together to develop our calendar for the remainder of our liturgical year. Committee leads and members of the congregation are welcome to attend and participate. Contact *Jill Miller* with any questions.



First Ladies with February birthdays include:

Louisa Adams (12th), *Sarah Van Buren* (13th), and
Bess Truman (13th).

Presidents with February birthdays include:

Abraham Lincoln (12th), *George Washington* (22nd),
William Henry Harrison (9th), and *Ronald Reagan* (6th).



Laura Matilda Towne, an American educator of freed slaves and a Unitarian, died at age seventy-five on February 22, 1901.



NORTHEAST IOWA FOOD BANK

We will be volunteering this month at the Food Bank. Our usual schedule for this monthly event is from Noon to 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Saturday which is February 28th.

Working together in community service and having *much* fun and socializing at the same time is uplifting. If this sounds like something you would enjoy, contact me (phone, text, email, or CVUU FB page). This has been a fun and productive event for us 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



IOWA CANTERBURY FORUM

The Canterbury Forum is back as of this month! On Sunday, February 22nd at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom the topic and speaker will be:

**Abraham, Moses, and Jesus:
The Heritage of the Bible in the *Qur'an***

**Dr. John Burnight,
Associate Professor of Religion, UNI**

Muslims hold Abraham, Moses, and Jesus in high esteem, viewing them all as messengers of God. This presentation will examine a number of the Qur'anic passages discussing these and several other biblical figures, highlighting the important role that each plays in Islam.

The Zoom link to this program will be sent to the Canterbury Forum email list later in February. If you are not already on the list and wish to hear this month's program, send a request to <canterburyforum@gmail.com> to receive the link.



Begin thinking about GA this year! General Assembly 2026, *Meet the Moment: Together Everywhere*, will unfold in two parts with a midweek pause. From Sunday, June 14th to Tuesday, June 16th delegates will engage in fully virtual General Sessions focused on the business of the Association. Programming resumes Friday, June 19th through Sunday, June 21st with worship, featured speakers, and *Meet the Moment* themed programs that can be experienced online, at the studio site in Louisville, or in participating local congregations. This flexible model makes GA more accessible, sustainable, and connected for UUs everywhere.

IUUWAN NEWS

Red Earth Nation - The History of the Meskwaki Settlement Community Book Read

In the spirit of truth and reconciliation, Decorah Unitarian Universalist is hosting community book discussions of *Red Earth Nation* by Eric Zimmer and Meskwaki Historians Johnathan L. Buffalo and Dawn Suzanne Wanatee Buffalo. These are free and open to the public.

Discussions of *Red Earth Nation* will be held on Tuesdays, February 10th, 17th, and 24th from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the Mott room*, Luther College Student Union, and on Zoom. (*Walk straight into the Student Union, go all the way to the back windows, take a right and go all the way to the Mott room.)

If you wish to receive email reminders or access the Zoom link for the discussions of *Red Earth Nation* reply to <decorahuu.contact@gmail.com>.

"In 1857, the Meskwaki Nation purchased an eighty-acre parcel of land along the Iowa River. With that modest plot secured as a place to rest and rebuild after centuries of devastation and dispossession, the Meskwaki, or "Red Earth People", began to reclaim their homeland—an effort that Native nations continue to this day in what has recently come to be called the #Landback movement. *Red Earth Nation* explores the long history of #Landback through the Meskwaki Nation's story, one of the oldest and clearest examples of direct-purchase Indigenous land reclamation in American history." – synopsis from the website of *Red Earth Nation*, University of Oklahoma Press.

- Free and open to the public,
- Need not have read the book to join the discussion,
- Okay to join one or all discussions,
- *Red Earth Nation* can be purchased at Dragonfly Books for a 10% discount.

This book was recommended by Shelley Buffalo from the Meskwaki Settlement. Copies can be found at the Cedar Falls Public Library.



Lombard College (Universalist) was chartered in Galesburg, Illinois on February 15, 1851. In 1857 it changed its name to Lombard University. It was the second college in the United States to award the B.A. degree to women through the regular curriculum. The class of 1930 was the last to graduate. Later the University merged with Meadville Theological School, which became Meadville Lombard Theological School.



Online shopping is easy at the UU Book and Gift Shop called *inSpirit*. Browse for items such as adult and children's books, ball caps, sweatshirts, mugs, decals, totes, rally signs, bumper stickers, jewelry, and so much more at: <<https://www.uuabookstore.org/>>.