



**CEDAR VALLEY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

3912 CEDAR HEIGHTS DR. CEDAR FALLS, IA 50613

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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www.cedarvalleyuu.org



***** 2026 *****

- APRIL 3 7:00 P.M. TRADITIONAL GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE VESPERS – Pastor Emma Peterson**
- APRIL 5 10:00 A.M. RISING FROM THE ASHES: WHY THE STORY OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS STILL RELEVANT – Pastor Emma Peterson, Mandy Joy ***
11:00 A.M. Easter Potluck Brunch (details inside)
- APRIL 12 10:00 A.M. PETE SEEGER: HIS LIFE AND SONGS – Karen Impola, Al Hays ***
11:30 A.M. Adult Forum / I Want to Be a Member session
- APRIL 19 10:00 A.M. EARTH DAY—RE SUNDAY – Callie Amiday, Kathi Bower ***
11:30 A.M. Earth Day Celebration with Drum Iowa
**4:00 P.M. HOMEGOING, HOMECOMING: A RITUAL OF TRANSITION (at the UCC)
– Pastor Emma Peterson, Pastor Sue Weier
****Potluck following the Service (see details in the Congregational Life article)****
- APRIL 24 5:30 P.M. PET BLESSING VESPERS – Pastor Emma Peterson**
- APRIL 26 10:00 A.M. WHAT IS A GREEN SANCTUARY? – Debbie Kyler, TBD ***
11:30 A.M. Adult Forum

* ~ 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

April is a busy month at the CVUU! There are **three** special services this month, in addition to our regular Sunday worship. On Friday April 3rd, after our First Friday Fun Night, join us for a traditional **Tenebrae Good Friday Service**. A Tenebrae service is a somber event recognizing the crucifixion of Jesus, featuring a ritual of readings and candle-extinguishing.

On April 19th at 4:00 p.m. we'll join the UCC in our soon-to-be new home for a **co-worship service** recognizing endings, new beginnings, and sacred transitions. Expect phenomenal organ music and an interesting blend of our traditions. We plan to party together after we worship together, so come ready to celebrate! (See the Congregational Life article for more details.)

Finally, Friday April 24th at 5:30 p.m. the CVUU will host its first-ever **Pet Blessing Service**. You and your well-behaved four-legged family members are welcome for a fun evening of blessings and play! We hope everyone will be on their best behavior that night. That said, please keep in mind that our animal companions can sometimes be unpredictable. Please exercise your best judgment when deciding to attend and who to bring! I'm excited to stretch our liturgical muscle with all this variety in April. I hope you'll join us for each special occasion this month!

Pastor Emma



Earth Day is April 22nd

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>.



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

Welcome Spring! Finally, the days are getting longer and the weather is getting warmer! The snowbells on the side of the church are blossoming and green tulip leaves are peeking through the warm, damp earth.

Persian New Year, or Nowruz, started March 20th, at the exact moment of the vernal equinox. Nowruz means “new day” and lasts for two weeks. It is celebrated in countries that were once part of Iranian empires, including Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and the Caucasus region, particularly Azerbaijan.

My Italian language group is very concerned about our fellow student who lives in Iran. She and her sister escaped from their apartment in Tehran just after the bombing started up again. They are now living with their mother on an island south of Iran. It's hard to celebrate with friends and family when travel and communication are restricted, supplies are limited, and a bomb could go off at any time. We've been exchanging photos and videos of our Nowruz celebration in Istanbul last year—her first trip out of the country! We hope for a speedy end to the war and the opportunity to get together again soon.

For Muslim people, the sacred holiday of Eid al-Fitr also fell on March 20th. I saw pictures of a huge crowd of worshipers kneeling on the ground as close to the main mosque in Jerusalem as possible. For security reasons, they were not allowed to go inside.

All around the world, Christians are looking forward to Easter and Jews are looking forward to Passover. Sadly, not everyone will be able to celebrate with their friends and family this year due to travel bans, war, incarceration, displacement, disease, injury or death.

Most of us at the CVUU are more fortunate. The sun is shining and the birds are singing as they gather materials to build their nests. We at the CVUU are nesting, too! The *New Home Fund* is brimming! Many thanks to everyone who donated!

Once we purchase the new building, our next job is to move. That means a lot of hard work and decision-making. There are a number of things that we will definitely want to bring with us—the piano, the hymnals, the art work, the RE books and supplies. However, there are some differences of opinion about seating in the new sanctuary. Should we rip out the wooden pews with their red cushions and set up our stacking purple chairs instead? I was talking to *Christine Carpenter* the other day. She said that when a UU congregation in Oregon moved to their new church, they took their pews with them. Their question was, “How can you have church without pews?” Our question is, “How can you have church without metal stackable chairs?” I guess it's all about what you are used to. What do you think?

Carolyn Hildebrandt
CVUU President



The pioneering Unitarian religious educator *Sophia Lyon Fahs*, who was ordained a minister when she was eighty-two, died at age one hundred-one in Hamilton, Ohio on April 17, 1978.



APRIL SERVICES

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

April 3rd (7:00 p.m.)

Traditional Good Friday Tenebrae Vespers

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson

Join us for the story of the crucifixion of Jesus, featuring special music from our Interim Music Director *Alan Beving*.

April 5th *Easter Sunday*

Rising from the Ashes: Why the Story of the Resurrection of Jesus is Still Relevant

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Mandy Joy (WA)

April 12th

Pete Seeger: His Life and Songs

~~ Karen Impola, Al Hays (WA)

April 19th

Earth Day–RE Sunday ~~ Callie Amiday, Kathi Bower (WA)

April 19th (4:00 p.m. at the UCC)

Homegoing, Homecoming: A Ritual of Transition

~~ Pastor Emma Peterson, Pastor Sue Weier

Join us at our soon-to-be new home at 9204 University Avenue for a co-service with the Cedar Falls United Church of Christ. This service will feature special music from both congregations and will be co-officiated by *Pastor Emma* and *Pastor Sue* of the UCC.

April 24th (Friday, 5:30 p.m.; CVUU parking lot)

Pet Blessing Vespers ~~ Pastor Emma Peterson

Bring your furry family members and join us in the CVUU parking lot for a pet blessing! Well-behaved four-leggeds and their human companions are invited to receive a blessing from *Pastor Emma*. Due to its location, this service will not be live-streamed and is “in-person” only.

April 26th

What is a Green Sanctuary? ~~ Debbie Kyler, TBD (WA)



“The best kind of friend is the kind you sit with, never say a word and walk away feeling like it was the best conversation you ever had.”

~Steven Wright



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.

April 5th

Annual Easter Brunch (immediately following the service)

In place of a Forum today, join us for our **Annual Easter Brunch** in the Fellowship Hall following the service. (See separate article in this newsletter for details!)

April 12th

Soul Matters April Theme: *Embracing Possibility*

Kat Beane-Hanson will lead a discussion based on this month’s theme – *Embracing Possibility*

April 19th

Spring and Earth Day Celebration

During the Second Hour please join us when we’ll be celebrating Earth Day. **Drum Iowa** will lead us in a drum circle to enrich our minds and spirits and connect us with our Earth.

April 26th

The Immigrant Next Door

Longtime Cedar Falls veterinarian now retired, and noted local author, *Jim Kenyon* will discuss his latest book, *The Immigrant Next Door* (2025). It features thirty-one stories/interviews with immigrants sharing their journeys and contributions to the American spirit.

Al and Pam Hays for Adult RE



PLEDGE CAMPAIGN:

OUR INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

The journey isn’t quite over, but the results we have at this time should be a source of pride for all CVUU members and friends. Even with a few pledges not yet in, the FY 2027 dual Pledge Campaign, combining the annual campaign with a capital campaign, has raised more than three times the amount this congregation has ever raised before. Congratulations!

The Pledge Committee is deeply grateful for the commitment to generously support the annual *Supporting Our Present* campaign. Our goal was \$232,500, and at this point pledges total \$219,781. We believe this commitment from CVUU members demonstrates a high level of confidence in our leadership and our ability to fund ourselves during the times ahead.

The *Creating Our Future* New Home capital campaign now stands at \$593,500! With this total we are able not only to take care of essential renovations, but also fund some discretionary changes that will make the building and grounds our own.

To all our members and friends: Thank you to everyone who contributes to the CVUU, not only through pledging but through many different acts of support throughout the year! Special thanks go out to several people whose assistance was invaluable: *Bill Brown*, *Pastor Emma Peterson*, *CVUU President Carolyn Hildebrandt*, and *Steve and Gerry Chamberlin*.

With gratitude, your Pledge Committee members: *Joanna Waggoner-Norquest*, *Jennifer Hopkins*, *Seth Chadwick*, and *Sally Browne*.

CHILDREN'S RE!!

Okay, okay, winter had some parting gifts to give but I think we're finally onto spring! The days are warmer, brighter, and full of life. With plenty of snow to have melted into the earth, the season is sure to be bright and beautiful!

The Soul Matters theme for April is *Embracing Possibility*. Throughout the month we will be exploring the vast possibilities around and within us, and how we can learn to embrace them as they are and can be. We will finish the month with my favorite lesson, where we focus on embracing the possibilities in each of us and create bracelets to represent UU Values that could guide our understanding of what we're capable of.

April is a busy month, with lots to do and plenty to celebrate! On Friday the 3rd at 5:30 p.m. we kick things off with **First Friday**, where we will eat pizza and fill eggs for our upcoming egg hunt. We have plenty of plastic eggs to fill, but if you have candy please bring it! That following Sunday, April 5th is our **CVUU Egg Hunt**. After the service the children will go downstairs to the Fellowship Hall for brunch, followed by our **Egg Hunt at 11:20 a.m.** Please bring your own baskets, but we will have a handful of extras for anyone who doesn't. Friends and family are welcome!



There will be no RE class on Sunday, April 19th as that is our **Earth Day RE** service! Please join us during the service to celebrate our Earth, and stick around for our Second Hour forum featuring a drum circle led by **Drum Iowa!**

I want to take a moment to give a shout out to the people who are currently preparing for training courses to become *Our Whole Lives* facilitators. OWL is a wonderful program, and I am so proud of everyone who has and will continue to work hard to return it to our congregation. The work that we put in ensures a brighter future for those who come after us, and those who need our guidance and support now.

I love what I do. If I hadn't embraced the possibility of something good, I may have never known how amazing things could get. No matter where you are in life, it's important to embrace what life offers and what you are capable of. You never know what you might find.

Ronan Parker

Coordinator of Children's Religious Education



CARING CONNECTIONS TEAM

The members of the Caring Connections team are committed to serve this congregation month after month. Have you thought about joining them in their efforts to provide various means of assistance?

They meet on the first Saturday of the month at 10:30 a.m. at the church. Anyone who is interested in joining the team or would like to know more about what they do to help members of the church, is welcome to attend.

The contact person for the month of **April** is **Stacey Bartz**.

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"Caring for others is the highest expression of humanity."  
~~~Harriet Beecher Stowe

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Spring into CVUU Community

April will be a busy month for our congregation! Lots of old favorite activities as well as new. Please welcome our visitors, new members, friends and family. Even better—invite them to attend a fun CVUU activity or event. Check out our calendar for dates and times.



A few highlights:

***Saturday, April 18th** Buddhist Path is sponsoring a Silent Retreat at the CVUU.

***Sunday, April 19th** there will be a joint potluck with the UCC members at our new home location following the 4:00 p.m. service led by *Pastor Emma* and *Pastor Sue*. Bring your appetite, and if you are able and willing, please bring your favorite CVUU dish to share—a main dish, salad, side dish, dessert, or beverage. If you are available to help with setup and/or cleanup, contact *Jill Miller*. Our 'New Home' address is 9204 University Ave., Cedar Falls.

***Friday, April 24th** at 5:30 p.m. *Pastor Emma* will be having a pet blessing in the CVUU parking lot.

Check out the calendar, and other newsletter articles for even more activities and events. In addition to our Sunday service and scheduled weekly events there are over twelve unique events, activities, and Small Groups happening in April. Invite a friend, new member, CVUU member you haven't seen in a while and join us! Spending time together builds our relationships and makes our community stronger.

Leann, our administrator, is working hard to keep us all connected and informed with the CVUU social media platforms, as well as the general public. Leann is the primary administrator for all social media related to CVUU. Did you know you can request, with advance notice, Leann's assistance with publicizing your event? She can create an event, post information and more on social media. She can also post photos after your event, as well as archive the photos for later use. Not sure what help you need or want? Reach out to me, or email Leann in advance and ask if she can assist you. Leann is a great support for getting the word out.

Not sure where to find CVUU groups in social media? Links to all of these social media sites can be found on our website: <<https://cedarvalleyuu.org/about-us/contact/>>. Which, if any, of these sites do you follow—CVUU Facebook page, CVUU Instagram page, CVUU Facebook Discussion Group, Progressive Parenting Facebook Group, Buddhist Path Facebook Group, CUUPs (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) Facebook Group?

Whether building in-person relationships at CVUU activities, Small Groups and events, or growing our online community—there are many opportunities to reach out and interact with one another. Let's make April 2026 CVUU's busiest month yet. Come join us. We see you, we support you, we like you, we love you.

Jill Miller

on behalf of the Congregational Life Council



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 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. Although it was reported last month that our members generously supported this effort with \$1,878, this month we have an updated figure of **\$2,903**. Way to go CVUU!



March's charity was for the *Iowa Abortion Access Fund* which has been among our annual charities for a number of years. We'll have that total for you in the next issue.

April's charity is for the *Northeast Iowa Food Bank*. The CVUU volunteers there for two hours one Saturday a month doing various jobs. It must be considered time well spent as many of those folks come back again and again, but the food bank can also use dollars to buy necessary items they don't get donated. Every bit helps this worthy, local organization!

Although the Social Action Collections are taken on the last Sunday of the month, you may donate early to them if you wish, just 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



FOR THE CALENDAR AND NUUSLETTER

The next newsletter will be the May issue! The calendar deadline for this issue will be **Wednesday, April 15th** (send info to the office); the newsletter deadline will be **Friday, April 17th** (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 **April 15th and 17th**—the calendar and newsletter deadlines *for the May 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.

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Would you like to have one less CVUU commitment on your calendar and at the same time, streamline Leann's and my work with these monthly newsletters? If so, do what some contributors are doing and use the Calendar deadline also as the Newsletter deadline. Articles are welcome any time for the next month's issue and 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. Thanks for your help.

*Gerry Chamberlin*, Editor  
newsletter@cedarvalleyuu.org

## GREEN LIVING CORNER

### *Green Sanctuary Revamps Its Process*

For thirty-five years, the Green Sanctuary program has supported congregations in their commitment to the environment. Now, a revitalized Green Sanctuary 2030 is offering a flexible, manageable, and impactful process to effectively support UUs in transforming their congregations through climate justice.

Green Sanctuary 2030 includes four essentials of climate action, five approaches to support your congregation, and just one requirement for yearly recognition: sharing your progress. The four essentials at the heart of the program—Congregational Transformation, Justice, Community Resilience, and Mitigation—help congregational teams take well-rounded climate actions. And the streamlined process makes renewing congregations' commitments to climate justice simpler so they can focus on action, not paperwork.



As congregational teams go through the Green Sanctuary 2030 process, they'll have access to resources and activities to help develop and nourish the team, ground their actions in the realities of oppression and harm in their community, create a shared reimagining of their community thriving, explore possible actions for each of the four essentials for climate action, and make plans for short-term actions and long-term goals.



You can watch the twenty-minute orientation video at: [sidewithlove.org/green-sanctuary-2030](https://sidewithlove.org/green-sanctuary-2030). [This article was taken from a *UU World* email sent March 2026.]



## NATIONAL TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY

*Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day* is an annual event held on the fourth Thursday of April. This year's event will be on April 23<sup>rd</sup> with the theme, "The Future is @ Work", empowering young people to take bold steps toward their dreams, fostering the confidence and resilience they need to succeed. Now expanded to include children of all genders, the day focuses on career exploration, mentorship, and showing children the value of education and workplace skills.



## EASTER BRUNCH

Happy spring, one and all...hopefully without snow! The Board cordially invites you to celebrate Easter with a brunch directly following the Easter Sunday Service at around 11:00 a.m. on April 5<sup>th</sup>. It's always fun to see what potluck items come our way, so please feel free to bring your favorite food or beverages (such as juices, an egg dish, a bakery product, fruit, or anything you would like). Coffee and tea will be provided.



The Easter Egg hunt for the RE children will be at 11:20 a.m. so the kids can have brunch before that.

If you would like to help set up or clean up on Sunday, please let *Carolyn Hildebrandt* know.

On April 12, 1919 the *Unitarian Laymen's League* was organized to provide fellowship for men and to help them support Unitarianism. Through the 1960s it spearheaded denominational outreach with print advertisements that asked, "Are you a Unitarian without knowing it?"



## MOVIE DISCUSSION SMALL GROUP

The Movie Discussion Small Group will be meeting in the sanctuary on Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

The movie being discussed is *Made in Dagenham*. Although not available at the library, it can be rented for \$3.99 on Amazon Prime, YouTube, Googleplay, Apple TV and Fandango.

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!!



*Embracing Possibility* has distinguished Unitarian Universalism from the beginning. Historically, when others saw depravity and sin at the core of human identity, we saw potential. UU Principles and Values have led us to be a people of "why not?". Join us in April to consider all the ways we can embrace possibility, as individuals and as a UU congregation.



*National Arbor Day* is always celebrated on the last Friday in April. For 2026, the primary national Arbor Day theme is focused on celebrating the nation's upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a theme of "Stars, Stripes and Saplings" focusing on the enduring role of trees in American history.



## APRIL 14<sup>th</sup> IN HISTORY

April 14<sup>th</sup> is historically significant for several major events—most notably the 1865 assassination of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, the 1912 sinking of the Titanic, and the 1935 "Black Sunday" Dust Bowl storm. Known at times as "Ruination Day" it also marks the 1939 publication of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

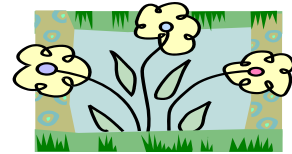


On April 11, 1865 *Mary White Ovington* was born in Brooklyn, New York. She was descended from New York Unitarian abolitionists and spent her life fighting for social justice. She was inspired by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois. A founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Ovington worked tirelessly for the organization for decades. She lived in the Tuskegee Apartments in Manhattan, where she was the only white resident, and sponsored racially mixed dinners in an era when that was dangerous. Ovington worked to bring black women into positions of authority in the NAACP and wrote a history of that movement, *The Walls Come Tumbling Down* (1947). Her ashes are interred at Community Church (Unitarian) in New York, where she was a member. Mary White Ovington died on July 15, 1951.



## SOME OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL INCLUDE:

- National **Donate Life** month
- National **Minority Health** month
- National **Knuckle Down** month
- National **Frog** month National **Pickleball** month
- National **Humor** month National **Poetry** month



## HYMNS FOR PROFESSIONS

- The Shopper's Hymn:.....*Sweet By and By*
- The Tailor's Hymn:.....*Holy, Holy, Holy*
- The Contractor's Hymn:.....*The Church's One Foundation*
- The Golfer's Hymn:.....*There's a Green Hill Far Away*
- The Dentist's Hymn:.....*Crown Him with Many Crowns*
- The Optometrist's Hymn:.....*Open My Eyes That I Might See*
- The Weatherman's Hymn:.....*There Shall Be Showers of Blessings*



We've been watching the east wall and the progress of the annual pledge campaign along with the awesome artwork created by your young people, *Harper* and *Bell* who had assistance from *Jennifer* and *Joanna* in making it all come to life. The little mice were so excited with what looked like the outdoors having been brought indoors, that they thought it would be possible to run through the trees and flowers and right over the bridge. Luckily we adults headed them off before there were any casualties. Thanks for the fun times!

*The Church Mouse*



## APRIL 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. When everything feels like too much, we offer a safe space to come as you are. This month's events, dates, and times are:

### *Coffee Hour Small Group*

Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

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

*Jill Miller* for hosting this Small Group this month.



Join us to discuss our April Soul Matters theme, *Embracing Possibility*, during the Second Hour on Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup>.

The *Silent Book Club* and *Crafternoon* groups are on hiatus for April because I'm in a play and don't have time! Look for these again in May.

Contact me with questions!

*Kat Beane Hanson*  
Small Group Coordinator



## JOYS and SORROWS

At the time of this writing in mid-March, the thermometers have hit 80°-plus. March is having a hard time deciding if the weather should be lion- or lamb-like as the saying goes. We'll find out soon enough how it will exit into April.

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.



We understand that an Easter Potluck Brunch sponsored by the Board is being planned—which, as you may have guessed, piqued our interest. Any time there will be a congregational gathering *with food* we can only hope that some crumbs will be missed during cleanup! There was a signup sheet being passed around at coffee time on a recent Sunday and some of the dishes folks are planning to bring sound yummy! Hope to see you there.



*The Church Mouse*



## CVUU CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PART 1

At the CVUU and at other UU congregations, we follow the Values of *justice, equity, transformation, pluralism, interdependence, and generosity*, all with love at the center. With love and our other shared UU values in our minds and hearts, one goal is to prevent conflict, with the understanding that we have different opinions and beliefs, and that's something to be celebrated rather than avoided.

We have several CVUU policies that are intended to set the stage for getting along, even (or especially) when we don't always agree with each other. Two of these policies are our Covenant of Right Relations and our Code of Conduct, which are both provided below. We hope that you'll become familiar with these policies and use them together with our UU Values to help guide your actions, so that you, too, can show your love for others within the CVUU and beyond, even when we disagree with each other.

Our CVUU policies are found in the *CVUU Congregational Handbook* along with procedures that provide basic information about the day-to-day operations of the CVUU. The handbook is posted on the CVUU website: ([www.cedarvalleyuu.org](http://www.cedarvalleyuu.org) > About > About Us > Leadership and Operations).

### **Covenant of Right Relations**

Our Covenant is a statement of promises for mutual support accepted by members of the Cedar Valley Unitarian Universalists. Membership in our church community carries with it benefits, expectations, and responsibilities. We build our church on a foundation that:

- Permits us individually and collectively to explore our values and to honor our diversity as a source of communal strength;
- Expects us to accept responsibility for our individual conduct;
- Encourages us to communicate with one another in the spirit of respect, kindness, and support, even during times of disagreement;
- Enables us to serve our personal needs with compassion and commitment.

### **Code of Conduct**

We, the members of the Board affirm:

1. To treat our staff, minister, members of the Congregation, and visitors with dignity and respect at all times;
2. To establish a cooperative and constructive relationship with our staff, minister, one another on the Board, members of the Congregation, and visitors;
3. To expect there will be disagreements within our congregation but will endeavor to resolve these disagreements in the best interests of the Congregation as a whole;
4. To encourage anyone who has a complaint to talk directly to the person with whom they have a concern, or to contact the Shared Ministry Council, to begin a process of facilitated open dialogue between the two parties. We will not respond to anonymous complaints.

*This article is brought to you by the Shared Ministry Council, whose role at the CVUU includes resolving conflicts for members who cannot do so on their own, facilitating opportunities for members to develop the necessary skills to participate in shared leadership, and more. The Shared Ministry Council consists of Heather Flory (co-chair), Nancie Groszkruger (co-chair and Board liaison), Floralyn Groff, Debra Kyler, Michaela Rich, David Nation, and Pastor Emma Peterson.*

## FIRST FRIDAY—PIZZA AND FUN!

Join us this month for pizza on **Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. There will be candy for dessert because after we eat, we will celebrate spring time and have some fun filling the children's Easter eggs for the Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to everyone who has attended a First Friday. We'll make sure there is plenty of pizza this month!



Michaela Rich



We snuck around in the sanctuary for the Forum on March 22<sup>nd</sup> when *Donna Davis* and *Sally Browne* presented information on the numerous advantages of planting native plants that support pollinators. They also mentioned neonicotinoids (ooh, that's such a big word!) and how they systemically kill insects by attacking their nervous systems, as well as pose severe threats to pollinators like bees and birds. The little mice had lots of questions for us and it made us wonder how safe we are in this world.



*The Church Mouse*



*Le Christopher's* meal in Waterloo at the Jubilee United Methodist Church returned in March following their winter break! Several UUs enjoy attending these special meals that boast hospitality, friendship, and delicious southern food—a sort of gift from the Jubilee members to the Cedar Valley community.

If you enjoy good food and plenty of conversation, plan ahead and mark your calendar for **Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup>** when *Le Christopher's Southern Cuisine* will again be served at noon at their church! The tables are set attractively and the meal is all-inclusive – entrée, sides, salad, dessert, beverage – for \$20 cash. Rev. Funchess greets everyone at the door with his warm and engaging smile!



**John Lothrop Motley** was born on April 15, 1814 in Dorchester, Massachusetts. A member of distinguished families on both sides, he socialized with the top literary figures of his day. He was a historian and novelist and wrote numerous articles for the *North American Review*. His books include two histories of the Netherlands, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* (1856) and *History of the United Netherlands* (1860-1867). He also wrote *The Life and Death of John Barneveld* (1874). Throughout his life, he traveled extensively in Europe. President Ulysses Grant appointed him minister to Great Britain in 1869, but he was forced to resign over disagreement with Grant's policies. Motley was an active Unitarian Layman.

## “THE YEAR TO SAVE THE EARTH”

If you are reading this newsletter in the latter part of March, this is a reminder of the **Jim Scott concert at the CVUU on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.** Mixing powerful songs and a video background of beautiful projected images, Jim Scott's lyrical melodies and outspoken poetry take his audience from grieving to celebration, and from protest to positive vision for the planet. As well as hard reality, the program's message is one of optimism with many invitations to join in the singing.



Prolific composer and guitarist, Jim has played at more than 700 UU churches over four decades of travels, and his songs are in the UU hymnbooks (“Gather the Spirit”). Formerly a member of the Paul Winter Consort, Jim was the composer of their celebrated “Missa Gaia/Earth Mass” and sang their anthem song “Common Ground.”

One of the originators of the UU Green Sanctuary program, Jim also compiled the “Earth and Spirit Songbook”, an anthology of 110 songs of Earth by many contemporary composers. He has toured the world, recorded nine CDs of original music and published a growing line of choral works. He was awarded an NEA grant to develop and present his multimedia concert “The Year to Save the Earth” in Worcester, MA with band and chorus. He's taking it on the road across the US.

Tickets at the door will be \$20. Additional donations may also be given for the CVUU New Home Fund. Check out Jim's music at his website: <<https://jimscottmusic.com/>> and plan to join us at the CVUU for this incredible experience.



## NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY

During April the Social Action Committee invites you to recommend organizations to receive one of our monthly special collections in 2026-2027. Charities should exemplify values consistent with those of the CVUU. All charities that qualify will be put on a ballot, and eight charities to receive a collection will be chosen in May. We rely on your input for a varied and relevant slate of organizations as we assemble a ballot to submit to the congregation.



If you would like to recommend a charity not already receiving a donation from the CVUU, email **Sally Browne** or **Carolyn Hartsfield** before **May 1<sup>st</sup>**. Or, put your recommendation on paper in the handy, clearly-labeled box in the Fellowship Hall. Tell us what organization you'd like to place on the ballot and why you think it merits a donation.



What size was the lumber  
that was used to build the ark?

2×2

**John Webberly** was imprisoned on April 17, 1648 in Oxford, England for translating and publishing Unitarian books. He remained in prison until his death.



## NORTHEAST IOWA FOOD BANK

We will be volunteering again this month at the Food Bank. Our usual schedule is from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Saturday, which is April 25<sup>th</sup>.

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). 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



## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Cedar Valley Unitarian Universalists is scheduled for Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:15 a.m. A regular Sunday service will precede this meeting. Watch this space for more information as it becomes available.



## PASSOVER— THE BELOVED FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM

Passover marks the beginning of the Jewish spring holiday season and commemorates one of the most defining moments in Jewish history. Passover 2026 begins at sundown on Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> and ends at nightfall on Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Seder is a ritual involving a retelling of the story of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt, taken from the Book of Exodus in the Torah.

The Seder plate, a special plate, holds symbolic foods including bitter herbs (representing the bitterness of slavery), a sweet mixture of fruit, nuts, and wine (representing the mortar used by enslaved Jews), a roasted shank bone, a roasted egg, a green vegetable, and more. The Seder is most often conducted in the family home where the family comes to the table dressed in their holiday clothes.



GA is just a matter of a few months away! General Assembly 2026, *Meet the Moment: Together Everywhere*, will unfold in two parts with a midweek pause. From Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> delegates will engage in fully virtual General Sessions focused on the business of the Association. Programming resumes Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup> 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.



**Thomas Jefferson** was born on April 13, 1743 in Shadwell, Virginia. He served in the Virginia House of Burgesses, where he established a reputation as a patriot. As delegate to the Continental Congress (1775-76), he drafted the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson also wrote the Statute for Religious Freedom of Virginia, and published his "Notes of State of Virginia" (1784). In 1785 he became the U.S. Minister to France. Upon his return to the United States in 1789, he was appointed Secretary of State under George Washington, became Vice President under John Adams, and served two terms as President of the United States. In retirement he founded the University of Virginia. Jefferson was a convinced Unitarian and wrote extensively in Unitarianism's defense. He also prepared a Socinian edition of the Bible, known as the Jefferson Bible, which is still in use.



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/>.



On a previous page in this newsletter I mentioned wishing for crumbs after the Easter Brunch. After reading *Jill's* article, I found out that April offers us another chance for crumbs—following the joint UCC/CVUU service at "the new home"! We must have cousins there, so we'll alert them of this potential. Since the UCC is just down the road, maybe we'll try to join them for the festivities that afternoon – and crumbs, of course! **The Church Mouse**

