



**CEDAR VALLEY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

3912 CEDAR HEIGHTS DR. CEDAR FALLS, IA 50613

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

319-266-5640

www.cedarvalleyuuu.org



***** 2026 *****

SEPTEMBER 6 10:00 A.M. LABOR DAY SERVICE

KEEPERS OF THE FLAME: MY SIXTY YEARS IN A SKILLED CRAFT UNION

– Albert Browne, John Miller *

SEPTEMBER 13 8:30 A.M. PANCAKE BREAKFAST

10:00 A.M. KICK-OFF SUNDAY: BUILDING TOGETHER, GROWING TOGETHER

– Callie Amiday, Al Hays *

SEPTEMBER 20 10:00 A.M. WATER COMMUNION (CELEBRATION SUNDAY) – Karen Impola, Kathi Bower *

SEPTEMBER 27 10:00 A.M. WHAT IS GOD? – Lynn Brant, 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.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the new church year! This year's theme is "Building Together, Growing Together".

The Board, Councils/Committees, and other interested members met on August 15th to plan the first half of the program year. We started by adding Sunday Services and other church events to the calendar. We also talked about how we could improve communication and support of each other.

We have so much to look forward to! There's the Cedar Valley Pride Fest (if you're reading this in August), Kick-Off Sunday, Water Communion, the Treats and Talents Auction (with a *Bob the Builder* theme), Halloween, Thanksgiving, "Noon" Year's Eve, Buddhist Path, Community Outreach, Soul Matters Discussions, UUA Leadership Trainings, First Fridays, Nature Hikes, Movies, Puzzles, Crafting, and Games (including D&D).

Since we are between Ministers and Music Directors, we will need extra volunteers to help during Sunday Services, including people to give the message, and to provide chalice lightings, readings, children's stories, and music. We could also use more Worship Associates, Zoom Techs, and Sanctuary Techs.

Our New Church Home on University Avenue is undergoing important renovations (see the Weekly Updates, the articles in this newsletter, and pictures on our new bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall). Thanks to the hard-working members of the Finance, Building and Grounds, and Steering Committees, we hope to move in sometime in January.

I appreciate all of you who came to the Listening Sessions so the Board could share the events leading up to and following *Pastor Emma's* resignation. Understandably, it was a shock to many people when it happened and a disappointment to those who would have liked to be more directly involved in the decision making. For any other type of issue, it would have been preferable to engage in a democratic process with the entire congregation. But because the Board had been asked by key individuals to keep their testimonies confidential, we were bound by that promise until they were ready to speak out. By the time they were ready to speak, Pastor Emma had already requested a negotiated resignation, and we had accepted it.

We will be offering more listening sessions upon request; just talk to a Board member to schedule one. But for now, it is time to move on so that we can learn from this experience, form better systems of shared governance, and build stronger relationships with each other.

Thank you again for your kindness to our church leaders who have been through a very stressful three months. Thank you also for your active participation and your constructive suggestions for the coming church year.

With Love at the Center,
Carolyn Hildebrandt



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.

CHILDREN'S RE!!

What a summer it has been! I am grateful for the warmth and abundance that the season has given us, but I am also glad that it is almost over. Autumn marks the beginning of a great many things—from the kickoff of our new church year to the first day of school and beyond. It is when the Earth begins to prepare for her winter slumber, and when we can begin to heal.

Soul Matters makes its return! Religious Education classes begin anew on Sunday, September 6th with our first month's theme, "Beginnings". Please remember to register your children for the 2026-27 Religious Education school year. Registration forms can be found on our website under the "Children's Religious Education" section of "Children & Youth". There are also a number of blank registration forms that can be found in the Fellowship Hall. The deadline for registration forms is September 13th but registration will remain open throughout the school year. Please note that there will be no Religious Education class on Sunday, September 20th as children will be staying in the service to participate in our Water Communion.

We have some wonderful intergenerational activities going on throughout the month! First of its kind, we've combined *Movie Night* with *First Friday* to create a gathering for all ages! On Friday, September 4th at 5:30 p.m. please join us for pizza and company in the Fellowship Hall, or gravitate upstairs to the Sanctuary where the kiddos and I will be eating snacks and watching *The Wild Robot*! We will also be having a *Craft Night* in collaboration with Small Groups on Saturday, September 12th from 3:00–5:00 p.m. There will be a variety of craft activities available being led by members of the congregation—from seed balls to crochet to tie dye—with options for all ages to have fun and learn something new!

This year has been an incredibly difficult one for me to navigate, and I'm certain that there are others who feel the same. The world will always throw impossible situations at us, and there will be times that it feels as if we cannot pick up the pieces after they've been shattered. Consider them, as they are. The harm that caused them, and when you are ready, gather them together. Their jagged edges may hurt, but as you shape them into something new the wounds will heal, and so too will you. It may not be what it once was, and you may not know what manner you wish to yet arrange them, but it will be beautiful because you tried.

Ronan Parker
Coordinator of Children's Religious Education



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* and *Karen Impola*.

On September 3, 1654 the English Parliament charged **John Biddle** for writing the two-fold Catechism. Its Unitarian theology was seen as an affront to the Church of England.



SEPTEMBER SERVICES

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

September 6th Labor Day Service

Keepers of the Flame: My Sixty Years in a Skilled Craft Union

~~ Albert Browne, John Miller (WA)

Albert will speak about something that outsiders know the least: The skilled trades people who build America and the craft unions who represent them.

September 13th Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

Kick-Off Sunday: Building Together, Growing Together

~~ Callie Amiday, Al Hays (WA)

This is the Sunday our theme for the year will be introduced.

September 20th

Water Communion (Celebration Sunday)

~~ Karen Impola, Kathi Bower (WA)

Water Communion is a UU tradition of ingathering. We each bring a small amount of water gathered on our last year's journey, literal or metaphorical. Each person adds their water to the common bowl and shares a little about its source.

* Celebration Sunday means that children stay for the entire service. There is no RE class today.

September 27th

What is God? ~~ Lynn Brant, Karen Impola (WA)

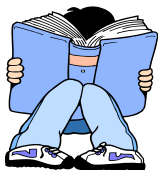
One UU's perspective: Ideas of what god is like are strongly affected by how humans take themselves too seriously and give themselves a higher cosmic value than they deserve.



SEPTEMBER FIRST FRIDAY

**Pizza and Fun! September 4th at 5:30 p.m.
in the Fellowship Hall**

Join us for pizza and fun in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, September 4th at 5:30 p.m. There will be plenty of pizza and breadsticks. If you'd like to bring something to share, please do. Stay in the Fellowship Hall to hang out, or head up to the sanctuary for movie night to see *Wild Robot*. Bring a friend! If you have any questions, contact *Michaela Rich*.



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.

September 6th
TBD

September 13th

Rain Gardens, Night Skys, Monarchs, Pollinators, Oh My!

It's all happening at the Cedar Valley Arboretum and Botanic Gardens. We're planning for a staff member to present a slide show. Learn about all the new things occurring at one of the best botanical gardens in the Midwest!

September 20th

Soul Matters September Theme

Kat Beane Hanson will lead a discussion on this month's Soul Matters theme, "Beginnings".

September 27th

***An Ordinary Insanity* (documentary)**

Join us to watch the recently released film *An Ordinary Insanity* directed by Oscar nominee Judith Ehrlich. This twenty-nine-minute documentary features renowned whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg and provides an updated wakeup call about the threat posed by nuclear weapons and how we can reduce the danger of nuclear annihilation. *Dennis Harbaugh* will introduce the film and at its conclusion will lead a brief discussion.

Al and Pam Hays
Forum Organizers



CEDAR VALLEY PRIDEFEST 2026

If you are reading this in the last week of August, this is a reminder that the Cedar Valley Pridefest will take place Friday and Saturday, August 28th and 29th in downtown Waterloo. The CVUU is again hosting a booth on Saturday, the 29th beginning at 12:00 p.m.!



Volunteering is how this event happens! If you want to sign up, here is the link to the sign-up sheet to help at the booth and/or to provide baked goods to be served: 2026 Cedar Valley PrideFest Sign Up - Google Docs.

Contact *Austin Evens* or *Lizzy O'Loughlin* with any questions.



This newsletter has **four pollinator garden photos** taken by CVUU member, *Elaine Hughes*, that are scattered throughout the pages. Each is labeled as Elaine's work, the plant that is being showcased, and where the photo was taken. The paper copies won't do justice to the lovely colors, so for those who depend on the black and white hard copies of the newsletter, go to the website to see her photography in color!



PANCAKE BREAKFAST KICK-OFF SUNDAY

Sunday, September 13th at 8:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall we will be having a pancake breakfast prior to the Kick-Off Sunday service. Additional volunteers will be needed to assist with set up, prepare sausage, fruit and coffee, bus tables, and help clean up.

For anyone with gluten or other food-related issues such as vegetable oil etc., who wants to bring in their own batter or oil, they will need to let *Mike Knapp* know in advance and have their supplies to the church by 7:30 a.m. that Sunday so Mike can make their pancakes first. Contact *Rosa Torres* or *Jill Miller* for more information or to help out.



IMPORTANT: CHILDREN'S RE
begins on September 6th!

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

New Member Spotlight

The Swanson Family ~ Ashley, Josh, Kylar and Sorin

Their family moved from Minnesota to Iowa about two years ago to be closer to extended family. Cedar Falls was *Ashley's* hometown and they decided to pack up and move because her "dream house" was going up for sale...so they bought it!



Since moving back, they have opened a mental health therapy private practice, made many home repairs, visited friends in Minnesota many times, found new friends, and tried to build up a sense of connectedness to this community.

Kylar (6) and *Sorin* (4) love to talk to anyone who will listen, love to draw, play "pet tigers", and play in any amount of water they can find.

Ashley loves to do crafting (and to buy more crafting stuff), engage in sustainability projects, play board games, and do almost anything outside. *Josh* loves airsofting, playing TTRPGs and board games, talking politics, and riding the golf cart with his kiddos.

Jill Miller
on behalf of the Congregational Life Council

Frederick May Eliot was born on September 15, 1889 in Dorchester, Massachusetts, the only son of Christopher Rhodes Eliot and descending from a long line of Unitarian ministers. He was educated at Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School and received several honorary degrees. An active parish minister, religious thinker, and denominational worker, Eliot headed the Commission on Appraisal of the American Unitarian Association when it issued its historic report "Unitarians Face a New Age" in 1936. As president of the American Unitarian Association, he helped to revive the denomination. Eliot worked toward the consolidation of the Unitarians and Universalists, which was accomplished after his death. He was also the author of several books, including *The Unwrought Iron*, *Fundamentals of Unitarian Faith*, *Toward a Belief in God*, and *Prayer Spoken in Unity Chapel*. From 1945 to 1948 and from 1951 to 1958, Eliot served as chaplain to the Massachusetts Senate. He died on February 17, 1958.

Nicholas Przbcovius, an elder in the Socinian church in Luclawice, Poland, died on September 1, 1612. He was a Polish knight who brought his family into Socinianism. Together with his son Samuel, Przbcovius was instrumental in strengthening the movement.



Soul Matters is back for the coming year (September through June). This month's theme is "Beginnings" so on Sunday the 20th during the Forum time join *Kat Beane Hanson* when she will explore this topic. If you have questions about the Soul Matters Small Group, direct them to *Kat* who is the Small Group Coordinator.



NEW HOME PATIO CONCERT

It is time to put a little of our "New Home" to use. Your CVUU musicians would like to thank you for all your hard work towards making our New Home dream come true. We will do so on September 19th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on our New Home patio, 9204 University Ave., Cedar Falls. All you have to do is bring a lawn chair, your favorite beverage, snack, and sit back to enjoy the music. No work on your part, just enjoy the show. Hope you can make it. Contact *Bill Brown* if you have any questions.



Le Christopher's meal in Waterloo at the Jubilee United Methodist Church is served on the second Sunday of most months and several UUs enjoy attending these special meals that boast hospitality, friendship, and delicious southern food. Carpooling could be an option; think about it!

If you enjoy good food and plenty of conversation, mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 13th** when ***Le Christopher's Southern Cuisine*** will again be serving at noon at their church! The tables are set attractively and the meal is all-inclusive – entrée, sides, salad, dessert, beverage – for \$20 cash. To top it off, Rev. Funchess greets everyone at the door with his warm and engaging smile!



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 June collection was for the **Cedar Valley Victim Resource Coalition** and although this total was reported in the August newsletter, we have an updated amount, \$450.

The July charity was for the **House of Hope** (the collection for which was taken on Sunday, August 2nd due to the Summer Break). The donations totaled \$460.

After review by the Social Action Committee, the August 30th collection for **Cedar Falls Community Meals** was cancelled as there is ample funding for that program. This was announced last month in the August newsletter.

The September charity is for **Iowa Safe Schools**, one that has made the list for a few years! See the complete 2026-27 Collection roster at the end of this newsletter.

Although the Social Action Collections are typically 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



SEPTEMBER DEADLINE FOR THE CALENDAR AND NUUSLETTER

The next newsletter will be the **October** issue! The calendar deadline for this issue will be **Wednesday, September 16th** (send info to the office); the newsletter deadline will be **Friday, September 18th** (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 **September 16th and 18th**—the calendar and newsletter deadlines for the *October 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.

If you'd like to send your items to Leann and me early, boy would that be terrific. It really helps avoid the congestion at deadline time...thanks!

Gerry Chamberlin, Editor
newsletter@cedarvalleyuu.org



GREEN LIVING CORNER

COMPOSTING 101, Part 3

In *Debbie Kyler's* introductions to composting in the previous two newsletters, she has covered all of the essential must-knows of composting. In this brief article, I will explain how simple it is to compost.

First of all, keep a closed pail next to your vegetable and fruit prep space, so all peels, cores, and over ripe items can go directly into it. When the pail is full take it to your composting area.

We have a two-part compost, made with 6"x6"x4' lumber (see photo). There is always an active side and a settling side. We build up the active side throughout the summer and then turn it over to stew throughout winter. By spring the beautiful compost is ready to use.



Critters are attracted to our compost. Besides the gorgeous earthworms doing their magic in the turned side, we have raiders like raccoons and squirrels, who rummage through the active pile, to see what looks good. Once, when turning the pile, I found an entire family of mice. There is a neighborhood possum who likes our compost, too, but is a good animal to have around. Because of this, I suggest you build your space a decent distance away from your back porch, if you have space to do that.

We keep our compost "clean" so have no odors coming from it. Never add protein or dairy items to your compost or it can get slimy and stinky. These are hard things to mitigate, so avoid that in the first place.

If you have questions, or want to see our compost area, please contact me for a tour.

Moria Brown



CEDAR FALLS WEEKLY COMMUNITY MEAL

Every Tuesday night at the First United Methodist Church (718 Clay Street) from 4:30-6:00 p.m., a free meal is served to anyone who shows up. CVUU is part of a team of churches serving on the *fifth* Tuesday (along with Community of Christ, Cedar Falls United Church of Christ, St. Luke's Episcopal, and First Christian Church).

Since this month has five Tuesdays, we are scheduled to help on September 29th. To assist on site or provide dessert, sign up in the Fellowship Hall or reach out to *Shirley Whiteside*.



*Autumn is a second spring when
every leaf is a flower.*

Born on September 4, 1824, **Phoebe Cary** was a Universalist poet and the sister of Alice Cary, who was more well known. Phoebe Cary died on July 31, 1871.



MOVIE DISCUSSION SMALL GROUP

The Movie Discussion Small Group will be meeting in the sanctuary on Monday, September 14th at 1:00 p.m. sharp!

The movie being discussed is *I Swear* (2025) that can be rented on Amazon, and was to be available on Netflix in the U.S. by August 22nd. Anyone who wishes to be added to the email list, or has questions about the group, contact *Nancie Groszkruger*. Come and enjoy the discussion together!



SOME OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER INCLUDE:

National **Be A Food Hero** month
National **Passport Awareness** month
National **Skin Care Awareness** month
National **Guide Dog** month National **Organic Harvest** month
National **DNA, Geonomics & Stem Cell Education** month



Bee on Anise Hyssop at 9204.
Photo by member *Elaine Hughes*.

2026-27 SOCIAL ACTION COLLECTION SCHEDULE

The Social Action Collection Schedule for 2026-2027 is here!! This schedule of monthly collections is the result of a process that began in April, when CVUU members submitted the names of charities they would like to see receive a donation sometime in the next fiscal year. In June, a list of all the charities submitted was presented to members in the form of a ballot. After the votes were counted, the top nine vote-getters were eligible for a donation. Then *Carolyn Hartsfield* and *Sally Browne* got to work on that list of nine and assigned each to a month of the year, skipping January, when we take up a collection for the UUSC; February, our congregational Stewardship Month; and August, when the CVUU participates in the Cedar Falls Community Meal program.

The Social Action Committee is deeply grateful for the high level of congregational support our monthly collection has enjoyed through the years. Next year, the collection will be coordinated by *Lizzy O'Loughlin*.

IMAGINE THIS:
IT'S AUGUST AND THE GRASS IS STILL GREEN
AND GROWING . . . (AND NEEDS MOWING)!!

Having had a considerable amount of rain this summer, our grounds continue to need mowing! The CVUU uses volunteers for this task. *Can you give a helping hand?* The season generally runs from the middle of April through the end of October. Some edging and trim work may also be needed.

We will provide training on our equipment if you have not operated it previously. Contact *Bill Brown* or *Roger Hahn* if you are willing to help. Note that this is for our grounds on Cedar Heights Drive.



CARING CONNECTIONS TEAM

The Caring Connections Team is dedicated to assisting members of the CVUU in times of illness, need of a ride, or just a little cheering up.

We would welcome new members to our team! We meet (at 3912) on the first Saturday of the month at 10:30 a.m. which this month is the 5th. If interested in joining us in serving our beloved community, please contact *Stacey Bartz*.

The contact person for September is *Nancie Groszkruger*.



IOWA CANTERBURY FORUM

If you are reading this newsletter the last week of August, here are details of the upcoming Canterbury Forum!

Challenging Extremism, Defending Democracy
Connie Ryan, Executive Director
Interfaith Alliance of Iowa
Sunday, August 30th, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Interfaith Alliance of Iowa has for the last thirty years carried out its mission for progressive people of all faiths: standing up and speaking out against religious and political extremism to defend democracy and protect the rights of Iowans. In these troubled times, the collective voice of the Alliance through Iowans in communities across the state has never been more important. *Connie Ryan*, Executive Director, will tell us about the mission and work of the Alliance, and how Iowans can be involved.

A Zoom link to this program will be emailed one week before the presentation. If you are not already on this mailing list, you can receive a link to the program by emailing <canterburyforum@gmail.com>.



Universalists met in Oxford, Massachusetts on September 14, 1785 to form the first *New England Convention of Universalists*.



At the time of this writing in the latter part of August, lawns are still quite green and in need of frequent mowing due to all the rain. Summer is still with us and tasty, locally grown sweetcorn has been available at various locations in the Cedar Valley. It's getting dark sooner—a sure sign that autumn will be here shortly!

Currently we 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.



This lovely photo of three monarchs on the Meadow Blazing Star was taken by member *Elaine Hughes* in her own home garden.

SHARED MINISTRY COUNCIL

The Shared Ministry Council (SMC) will meet on Tuesday, September 1st from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. at StoryPoint, 4715 Algonquin Drive, in Cedar Falls. The meeting is open to all CVUU members. Please let one of the SMC members know if you are planning to attend.

We'll be discussing opportunities for training and education for our congregation that were recommended by Matthew Johnson from the UUA. We will also review the SMC portion of the *CVUU Bylaws and Handbook* to prepare our comments for the board.



If you have a concern or question about our shared ministry, or would like to join the council, please let one of the SMC members know. We are looking for two people to join us. The current SMC members are *Nancie Groszkruger*, *Floralyn Groff*, *Heather Flory*, and *Michaela Rich*.



IUUWAN NEWS

Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness Advocacy Network

UU PRISON MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY

An intern pastor who is connected with Peoples UU (Cedar Rapids), UU Society (Coralville), and UU Congregation (Quad Cities), has been conducting a prison ministry at the Newton Correctional Institute. Bridget Laflin has been going the third Monday of the month and has one hour with the members of the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship there (a congregation of thirty inmates, give or take). Rev. Laflin has just accepted a church assignment in Cleveland but a member of the Coralville congregation is currently coordinating the effort. The DOC allows up to three volunteers at a time to go into the prison and assist with services, so it would be great to get several people to volunteer so that we can be sure to always get at least one person each month. The hour consists of twenty minutes of church and the remainder is conversation with inmates. Anyone interested or with questions contact *Shirley Whiteside*. Volunteering requires a preapproval process with the Department of Corrections.



2026 CVUU TREATS AND TALENTS AUCTION

This year's *Treats & Talents Auction* will be held on Saturday, October 24th.

In keeping with all the construction at the new-to-us building, our theme for this year will be *Bob the Builder*. So get out your hard hat and prepare to take this year's auction to a whole new plane. I don't want to hammer the need for your participation, but your support keeps us plumb in line to complete our mission as a liberal religious home in our community.



Participants will be encouraged to come dressed in construction themes that paint a picture of our progress at the new CVUU location. I'm on the level about the success of our annual fundraiser. If you were at last year's auction, you saw what can be achieved. So don't screw around. Pencil this date on your calendar and plan to attend.

Social hour and silent auction will begin at 6:00 p.m. with the live auction starting at 7:00 p.m. Refreshments and liquid libations will be provided. Childcare will also be available. Join my crew for this year's fun at our annual *Treats & Talents Auction*.



Guess I nailed it, though as a rule I don't usually work with a blueprint, so hope I didn't finish too quickly or peak too early on the layout of this project.

Mike Knapp, Auction Chair



Women's rights activist *Antionette Louisa Brown Blackwell* was ordained as a Congregationalist minister on September 15, 1853 by her church in South Butler, New York. She later became Unitarian.

Labor Day 2026 occurs on Monday, September 7th. The holiday pays tribute to the contributions and achievements of American workers and is observed annually on the first Monday of September. It was created by the labor movement in the late 19th century and became a federal holiday in 1894. Labor Day weekend also symbolizes the end of summer for many Americans and is celebrated with parties, cookouts, parades and athletic events. It originated during one of American labor history's most dismal chapters.



NORTHEAST IOWA FOOD BANK

We will be volunteering again in September at the Food Bank as long as there are enough volunteers who sign up. We like to have 8 to 15 people if possible—all ages. Our usual schedule is from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Saturday which will be September 26th.

On Saturday, August 22nd eight hardy CVUU volunteers cut and tied mesh bags, and broke down 1,600 pounds of potatoes into five-pound increments into the mesh bags that filled two huge boxes, each on a pallet. The remainder of the time was used to label roughly 200 cans of corn that were missing labels, make boxes for them, and fill the boxes with the cans. A good time—doing good work so those less fortunate have nutritious food—was had by those in attendance.

Working together in community service 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).

Margie Miller



Royal Catchfly at 9204.
Photo by member *Elaine Hughes*.

National Grandparent's Day is a secular holiday celebrated in the United States since 1978 and officially recognized in a number of countries. In the U.S., Grandparent's Day is the first Sunday after Labor Day and the official flower is the forget-me-not which blooms in the spring. As a result, seasonal flowers are given in appreciation to grandparents on this day. **In 2026, Grandparent's Day is Sunday, September 13th.**

NEW HOME UPDATE

Have you ever been involved in a remodeling project? If so, you know that things often take longer than you expected. The New Home Steering Committee's current "best guess" at this time is that moving into 9204 University Avenue may happen in early January.

As of the newsletter deadline, the bulk of the asbestos removal is done in the office/classroom wing of the building, and the floors are down to bare and surprisingly smooth concrete. The asbestos folks will have to come back briefly once the bathroom project gets underway. The architect's plans for the new bathrooms are being finalized, and by the time you read this, we hope to be taking bids. When it's done, instead of two two-stall, single-sex bathrooms which are not at all handicap accessible, we'll have three one-seat, gender-neutral, ADA-compliant bathrooms. Hooray for toilets that anyone can use! (Don't worry, there is an accessible bathroom off the hallway next to the kitchen that will remain in use; there will never be a time that we're totally toilet-less.)



The design team has been meeting with a consultant and getting ideas about the color palette for the walls and floors of the renovated wing. They're choosing colors that work with the existing brick, as there were strong objections to painting the brick. Thanks to *Moria* and team for their discerning eyes.

The seven plate glass windows that needed replacing are finished. The seventh one arrived with a small crack, so the contractor had to order a replacement and has now installed it, at no additional cost to us. Waiting for things on order is a recurring theme: the "rust" color of the fascia had been discontinued from the supplier first selected, so the contractor had to switch to a different supplier to get a good color match and they are waiting for that to arrive.

Landscaping work is underway, and the landscapers will be installing underground screening to keep groundhogs from digging around the foundation of the building. *Bill* and *Roger* have caught and relocated two groundhogs already.

The board has approved a contract for sidewalk replacement, and that will probably be started by the time you read this. We also have a contract for some repairs to the parking lot. That will start when the sidewalk and soffit/fascia work is done.

The Steering Committee has put up a bulletin board at the current building (3912), at the west end of the Fellowship Hall next to the kitchen, for pictures of the progress on our new home. *Ken Taylor* is also creating a video display for the Fellowship Hall. If you have pictures to share, please send them to Ken.

Stay tuned for more Building Together news!



John Ludwig Wolzongenius died at age sixty-two near Breslau, Silesia (now Poland) on September 16, 1661. He was a well-known scientist, mathematician and Unitarian who wrote a great deal about Christianity. When he knew he was dying, he sent for a Lutheran minister known for mathematical skill and discussed advanced mathematical problems with him. With his reasoning power thus established, Wolzongenius declared that he wished to reconfirm his Unitarian faith.



Online shopping is easy at the UU Book and Gift Shop called **inSpirit**. UUA summer hours are in effect through Labor Day. During this time (excluding holidays and other special closures) bookstore staff are on hand to assist you by email and phone Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The phone is: 800-215-9076. Browse for items such as ball caps, mugs, sweatshirts, decals, totes, rally signs, bumper stickers, jewelry, adult and children's books (*so numerous and tempting!*), and so much more at: <<https://www.uuabookstore.org/>>.

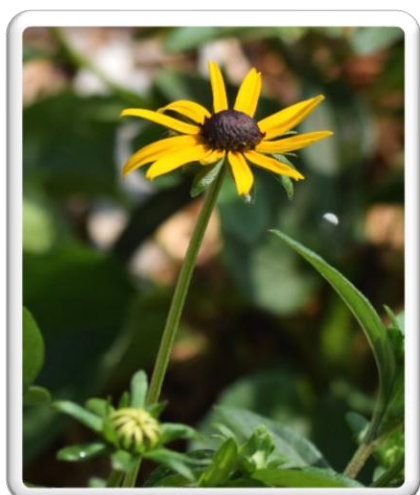


MINDFULNESS MEDITATION RETREAT

The CVUU Buddhist Path Mindfulness Meditation Retreat will be on October 9th -11th (Friday-Sunday). The retreat is again being held at the Creighton University Retreat Center outside of Griswold, Iowa.

An informational bulletin, along with registration forms, is posted in the Fellowship Hall. At the time of this writing, there are about ten spaces left. We hope you will consider attending this meaningful and relaxing retreat!

Feel free to contact either *Nate Callahan* or *Mary Kay Madsen* with any questions.



Showy Black-eyed Susan at 9204.
Photo by member *Elaine Hughes*.

SOCIAL ACTION COLLECTION CALENDAR FOR THE 2026-27 YEAR

2026

September 27th – Iowa Safe Schools. The largest group supporting LGBTQ and allied youth in the Midwest. Their best-known program, the Iowa GSA Network, assists student-run clubs in schools to support victims of harassment, build safe spaces, and create positive change. <www.iowasafeschools.org>

October 25th – Black Hawk Grundy Mental Health. Some clients need additional basic support—clothing, bus fare, food, or housing—not covered by Medicaid or private insurance. <www.unitypoint.org/waterloo/black-hawk-grundy-mental-health-center.aspx>

November 29th – House of Hope. Individualized support, including trauma-informed care, and transitional housing for single-mother families and women who age out of foster care. <<https://houseofhopeccd.org>>

December 24th – Americans for Independent Living. Helping veterans transition from homelessness, they provide temporary shelter and essential supplies, transform empty houses into homes for veterans, and teach skills for independent living. <<https://www.afil.org>>

2027

January 31th – Guest at Your Table. A collection for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, which advances human rights through grassroots collaborations in the U.S. and internationally. <www.uusc.org>

February – CVUU Annual Pledge Campaign month.

March 28th – 1619 Freedom School. A five-days-a-week, after-school program dedicated to delivering intensive literacy instruction and a culturally responsive curriculum to bridge the academic opportunity gap among low-income public-school students in Waterloo. <<https://www.1619freedomsschool.org>>

April 25th – Cedar Valley Global Pathways. A new local non-profit helping eligible immigrants understand the legal system toward citizenship and providing assistance with citizenship application. <rajane@cvpathways.org>

May 30th – Iowa Abortion Access Fund. Discreet and private financial assistance, in the form of interest-free loans, to Iowa residents needing abortions but unable to pay. <www.iaafund.org>

June 27th – Amani. They serve Black and Brown sexual assault and domestic abuse survivors with cultural sensitivity. <<https://www.amani-cs-org>>

July 11th – Planned Parenthood of the North Central States. Providing sexual and reproductive health care throughout the region, they are a visible advocate for policies that promote women's health and access to affordable contraception. <www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-north-central-states>

August 29th – Cedar Falls Community Meals. A program operated collaboratively with five other Cedar Falls churches to provide a free community meal each Tuesday. CVUU takes its turn each month with five Tuesdays.

[*Editor's Note:* you may want to keep a printed copy of the above roster handy for the coming year so you know which collections will take place when.]



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

WHAT IS THE CLC? WHY IS IT HERE? WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN US?

The mission of the Congregational Life Council (CLC) is to promote activities for members and visitors that provide opportunities to develop connections and spiritual growth through meaningful connections. Council meetings are held monthly to learn from past activities and events, plan new and meaningful activities for the coming year, welcome new members, care for members, build opportunities for involvement, all while we help our CVUU community to grow with love at the center. Meetings are held monthly on Zoom. Regular attendees are *Juanita Williams*, *Leigh Zeitz*, *Chelsea Toppin*, and CLC Chair, *Jill Miller*. Jill is also the CLC Trustee on the CVUU Board. Meetings are open to the congregation, and this small but mighty team is always looking for more members to help us brainstorm, plan, organize, and improve!



The CLC is here, in connection with REAP, to provide a wide variety of events and activities for growth, development, connection and building community. Check out the fall calendar for a *Pancake Breakfast* September 13th, *New to CVUU* and *I Want to Be a Member* sessions, an intergenerational craft night, *Trunk or Treat*, Small Groups (old and new), games, movie nights, coffee hours, book groups, holiday potlucks, and more.

The CLC is so much more than just the small group that meets monthly. You are likely a part of CLC without even realizing it! Everyone who leads a group or activity, everyone who brings food or washes dishes, everyone who participates to make activities successful, makes up the CLC. Thank you everyone who supports the council, and a huge shoutout to the folks who work behind the scenes keeping the CLC chugging along:

The **Caring Connections Team** is led by *Stacey Bartz*. The team connects members in need of caring support with those willing to help, sends cards, makes phone calls to check in with members, and supports our members in a variety of ways all year long.

The **Newsletter** is edited and organized by *Gerry Chamberlin* who keeps the CVUU connected and up to date with important articles and announcements.

The **Greeters** are led by *Joanna Waggoner-Norquest*. They greet and connect with visitors, returning friends and members of the congregation to help welcome everyone who passes through our doors each Sunday.

The **Hospitality Crew** is led by *Nick Reans*. They organize and provide delectable food, coffee, and beverages for Fellowship after the Sunday services.

Buddhist Path is facilitated by *Nate Callahan* and *Mary Kay Madsen*. This group provides opportunities for spiritual growth every Thursday evening with Buddhist Path, and each Sunday morning with Silent Meditation in a quiet room before the service.

The **Small Groups** are coordinated by *Kat Beane Hanson* and offer a wide multitude of opportunities ranging from the spiritual *Soul Matters* discussions led by Kat, the interconnected web through the *Nature Lover's Group* coordinated by *Sheri Huber-Otting*, heartfelt connection with the *Movie Group* coordinated by *Nancie Groszkruger*, and *First Friday Pizza and Fun*, coordinated by *Michaela Rich*. Reach out to Kat with ideas for a Small Group you would like to lead or see organized.

Marketing is facilitated by the CLC, with *Leigh Zeitz* generating ideas to promote the CVUU and *Chelsea Toppin* creating incredible designs, such as the beautiful sign at the new building.

New Members is facilitated by *Juanita Williams* to welcome visitors and friends, offer opportunities to learn more about the CVUU and Unitarian Universalism, and support them to become members of the congregation.

Membership is facilitated by *Jill Miller* to offer opportunities for all members to come together as a community, promoting and supporting activities and opportunities such as concerts, picnics, special events.

Come help the CLC create, promote, organize and hold even more events and activities. Join us at our next meeting; contact Jill Miller for more information.

**DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?**

We have future openings in the pulpit. Contact Religious Services Council co-chairs *Karen Impola* or *Kathi Bower* if you would like to give a sermon.

HOW DOES A SUNDAY SERVICE HAPPEN?

Short answer #1: It's a group effort!

Short answer #2: It begins with an idea. What's your idea for a service topic? If you have one, please contact *Kathi Bower* or me, co-chairs of the Religious Services Council.

I began attending services at what was then called UUSBHC (Unitarian Universalist Society of Black Hawk County—a truly very long name) in the spring of 2000. After one of my first services, I was approached by someone who knew that I worked in radio, and was therefore not afraid of public speaking. They asked if I would ever be interested in putting on a service. I remember thinking “But I just got here! I don't know how that works!”

This is my attempt to tell you how it works, and how you can help.

How Does a Sunday Service Happen? ... continued next page

How Does a Sunday Service Happen? ... continued

I came to several services that spring, then many of the “summer discussions” that we had in lieu of services in those days. The next fall, I joined what was then called the Sunday Services Committee. We’re now the Religious Services Council, because changing the names of things is a favorite UU pastime.

The RSC meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m., usually on Zoom. At each meeting, we look at our spreadsheet and make sure we have at least a topic, presenter, and Worship Associate for each Sunday in the upcoming month, and start working on the month after that as well. Our meetings usually fall the week before the calendar and newsletter deadlines, so if the next month isn’t filled in at meeting time, we have a short grace period to do some quick emailing and phone calling.

We live and die by our spreadsheet.

Besides the title of the service and the name of the preacher (or speaker, or presenter, if you prefer), what are we keeping track of on the spreadsheet? Too many things to mention, but I’ll outline the most important ones.

First of all, the spreadsheet lists who the **Worship Associate** is. Our currently active WAs are *Kathi Bower, Callie Amiday, Al Hays, John Miller*, and me. You see us in the pulpit reading announcements, leading Joys and Sorrows, and generally keeping things flowing. The Worship Associate is also responsible for the physical setup of the room: making sure the chairs are arranged right, the chalice is full of oil, the hymnals are passed out, the hymn numbers posted on the board, and so forth. If you arrive early on a Sunday, you can polish your karma by offering to help put the hymnals out, or ask the WA if there’s anything else that needs doing. Sometimes there’s something unexpected—like an icy sidewalk that needs salt or sand. The WA can’t always do everything, so you may find yourself recruited if you’re hanging around.

With five WAs, we each do the job about once a month. We’d be thrilled if one or two more joined us.

There’s also a box on the spreadsheet for the **Sanctuary Tech**. You see them at the back of the room. Current active Sanctuary Techs are *Ken Taylor* (also our general IT guru), *Bill Brown, Mandy Joy*, and *Sonya Smith*. Once upon a time, services ran without technology. Nowadays, we need someone to control both microphones and a camera, so that the folks on Zoom can see and hear what’s happening in the room. It’s easy not to notice the Sanctuary Tech’s work unless something goes wrong. A few weeks ago, something did go wrong right at the start of the service. Bill was the one signed up to work that Sunday, but Ken jumped in to help out also. If you noticed the wait, think about how many weeks everything goes smoothly.

Be sure to thank the Sanctuary Techs once in a while. Just don’t try to chat with them before or during the service; they’re busy. And if you like doing techie things in real time and are relatively computer-savvy, we could use your services as a Sanctuary Tech as well.

Then there are the **Zoom Hosts**. I’m one of those, along with *Steve Chamberlin, Dave Nation, Jena Talbert, Michaela Rich, Austin Evens*, and occasionally *Mike Knapp* and *Leigh Zeitz*. This is the most invisible job on a Sunday morning. Zoom hosts make the hymn lyrics show up on the screen. They also chat with Zoom attendees before and after the service, and make sure everybody stays muted when they should be. This is the one job that it seems like we have plenty of people to do, though occasionally there’s a Sunday when no one is available. If you’re comfortable hosting Zoom meetings, consider volunteering for this job. You can do it at home in your pajamas if you like. Some of us like to get dressed and do our Zoom hosting from church, so we can partake of coffee and treats.

It wouldn’t be a proper Sunday morning without music. As of this writing, we are without a regular **Music Director**, so people have been filling in as they can. Many thanks to *Carolyn Hildebrandt, Jess Lieb, Bill Brown, Nate Callahan, Maegan Blaylock, Mandy Joy*, and *Erik Norquest* (plus anyone I’ve inadvertently left out), who have accompanied and/or sung hymns for us over the past couple of years. Carolyn also deserves special mention for serving as our volunteer Music Director for many years in the 1990’s and early 2000’s, again in late 2024 and most of 2025, and also for booking special musical guests.

In case you’ve ever wondered who chooses the hymns, it varies. The Music Director has the final say, but the WA and the person giving the sermon are welcome to make suggestions. In fact, anybody is welcome to make suggestions, provided it’s at least two weeks before the service. The MD might veto a suggestion if they don’t have the time to prepare it, or if it doesn’t fit their skill set.

We use the “Sacred Spreadsheet” to keep track of what the hymns are, who is accompanying, and whether there are any special guests or special music. Speaking of special music: once we have a Music Director, feel free to contact them if you play an instrument and would like to provide music for meditation or some other kind of musical interlude during a service sometime. If you are a skilled pianist who can accompany hymns, please let Kathi or me know right now!

One more thing that you may not be aware of—most services have a technical run-through before Sunday. As of now, rehearsals are on Thursdays at 4:45 p.m. although the time may change in the future. Ideally, the Preacher/Speaker, Worship Associate, Sanctuary Tech, Zoom Host, and Music Director (or that week’s accompanist) attend the rehearsal. It usually takes about half an hour. We don’t perform the entire service, but we do talk through it and make sure all the pieces are in place. At least half the time, something comes up that had been forgotten or not thought through properly, and we say, “This is why we have rehearsals!”

TL/DR (which is internet-speak for “too long, didn’t read”): Here’s a list of ways you can assist the Religious Services Council with making Sunday services happen.

- * Become a Worship Associate (requires attending monthly RSC meetings).
- * Become a Sanctuary Tech or Zoom Host (doesn’t require attending RSC meetings).
- * Volunteer to give a sermon/message, light the chalice, or present the Story for All Ages.
- * Offer to play music during a service.
- * Come early and help put hymnals out, or anything else the WA needs.
- * Thank the people who do any of the above tasks!



Karen Impola, Religious Services Council co-chair