



# THE UUS NEWS

June 2020

**WE ARE A WELCOMING, SPIRITUALLY DIVERSE HOME. WE ACT ON OUR VALUES:**

- \* HONOR THE EARTH      \* ADVOCATE FOR RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
- \* FOSTER DEEP CONNECTIONS      \* EMBRACE THE ONGOING QUEST FOR MEANING

## Sunday Services

Join the Virtual Service via Zoom each week at [bit.ly/UUSVirtualService](https://bit.ly/UUSVirtualService). Meeting ID: 422-482-660

Or join via phone: Find your local number: [bit.ly/UUSServices\\_FindZoomNumber](https://bit.ly/UUSServices_FindZoomNumber).

*The Zoom Meeting will open at 9:45 am, with the service beginning at 10. A time for virtual fellowship will follow.*

### June 7th: "Reflections on the Journey," Rev. Diane Dowgiert

Milestones are places to stop and reflect on where you've been and look ahead to where you are going. Today is a milestone event in the life of UUS—the conclusion of a successful time of interim ministry. To mark the occasion, Rev. Diane will share reflections on where we have been together as minister and congregation and where each of us is headed now.

### June 14th: "Co-creating a Culture of Belonging, Part 1," Kirk Witzberger

Belonging. This basic human need includes a powerful desire to feel at home, where we are not just tolerated, but appreciated for our whole and complete selves, just the way we are. In our spiritually-diverse home, how can theists, atheists, and everyone in between co-create a culture that appreciates our spiritual differences while celebrating our shared principles? Kirk has been a member of UUS since the late 1990s, has served on our board, Leadership Development Committee, and New Facilities Committee, and has professional expertise in leadership and organizational change.

### June 21st: "Trust, Hope, and Action: Doorway to a New Future," Miriam Kashia

How we think about "Trust and Hope" sets the stage for the possibility of acting on behalf of a livable future. In this time of uncertainty, that can hold us back or move us forward—together. Miriam Kashia, is a proud 50-year UU, a retired psychotherapist, a "Climate Action Warrior" who walked across the country with the Great March for Climate Action six years ago, and has been arrested four times for non-violent-direct-action on the front lines fighting for a livable future.

### June 28th: "From Trauma to Trust," Julia Audlehelm

Julia Lohrman Audlehelm has been a UU since 1977. She will share her journey of childhood trauma and attempt to describe how she has found self truth and peace with it. (Please be advised that the message this morning will discuss sexual assault.)

### June's Social Justice Offerings Benefit CommUnity

CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank is a volunteer-driven organization based in Iowa City. For 50 years it has provided immediate and non-judgmental support for individuals facing emotional, food, or financial crisis. Currently more than 250 volunteers assist a small paid staff. Services include a 24/7 crisis hotline, chat and text hotlines; support groups; in-house and mobile food banks; a basic needs program that includes utility and housing assistance, prescription and other health and work related assistance.

Cash or check donations can be given [online through Realm \(onrealm.org/uusic/-/give/SIOffering\)](https://onrealm.org/uusic/-/give/SIOffering), or mailed to the office. (Write checks to UUS, with CommUnity on the memo line.)

### June Birthdays

Dayna Ballantyne	Pat Larson	Shona Roeder
John Bowman	Marta Little	Ari Schmitz
Freddie Connelly	Kaylee Lopez	Vicki Siefers
David Curry	Nancy Lynch	Lydia Smith
Rob Dietrich	Caryl Lyons	Sharon Thomas
Jim Ephgrave	Ian Martin	Jim Trepka
Dan Gall	Tom McMurray	Kaye Winder
Peggy Garrigues	Virginia Melroy	Mabel Wittenkeller
Peggy Houston	Carol Nordquist	Lenda Zelinskas

If you would like your birthday listed in the newsletter (or removed), contact [dcl@uusic.org](mailto:dcl@uusic.org).

### Sunday Service Attendance (Zoom accounts participating)

May 3rd: ~140

May 10th: ~105

May 17th: Canceled Due to Zoom issues

May 24th: ~117

# Congregational News and Events



## From the Interim Minister's Study

Ours is a community of memory and hope. Good-bye exists between these two. Within every good-bye, there is an inherent hello. The memories we have created together over the past two years of interim ministry will live forever. Good-bye, then, doesn't make

much sense. You have made an indelible imprint on my soul. Nothing can change that. And, this leave-taking is hard. I feel it in my body, leaving people I have come to know and love. A good good-bye doesn't always feel good. Sadness is part of the deal.

This particular good-bye is made harder by the fact that we won't get to have the in-person party that usually marks the ending. Living in the age of COVID as we do, things are different. The Interim Transition Team is planning a "Drive-by Bye-bye" event for June 5th. You can read about it in the Wednesday email. I hope to see you there!

Was it Shakespeare who said, "parting is such sweet sorrow?" In the digital age in which we live, parting means changing my social media status with you for two years while you establish a relationship with Rev. Diana. I wish for a better word than "un-friending" on Facebook. I hope you know that I will always

consider you friends, in the Quaker kind of way, even if we are not friends on Facebook. Which leads me to the hope part of our community.

Hope is oriented toward the future. Saying good-bye to the past is necessary for the birthing of the future. A new day is dawning at UUS. You have done your work well. You know who you are as a people. You know what you have to offer to the world. You have called a strong and capable minister to join you in bringing a vital presence of Unitarian Universalist principles and values to your neighbors here in the Iowa City area.

Good-bye to the past, hello to the future—memory and hope woven fine into a tapestry of faith. The thread of my time here with you will always be a bright spot in the tapestry of my ministry.

My last Sunday in the pulpit is Sunday, June 7th. My contract with you ends on July 31st. During June and July, I will be using vacation time, attending General Assembly—virtually (the annual gathering of UUs from all around the country), and moving to my next transitional ministry assignment in Nashville, Tennessee. During June and July, I will be available for emergencies.

Thanks for the memories!

Yours in the interim, Rev. Diane

## UU Wellspring: Info Sessions for 2020-21 Group, June 1st and 14th

This coming year we will once again offer UU Wellspring, a program for those who want to deepen their spiritual practices and expand their understanding of UU values. UU Wellspring incorporates five elements designed to balance a knowledge of UU history/ theology with personal spiritual practice and engagement with the world:

- A commitment to daily spiritual practice
- Participation in a small-group community
- Individual work with a spiritual director
- Readings and resources for knowledge and reflection
- Reflection and commitment to live out our values in the world

The program will begin with a Saturday retreat or virtual retreat in September, then meet (either by Zoom or in person when safe) for two hours every two weeks, most likely on a Monday or Tuesday, from September through June. There will be articles to read and/or video clips to watch before each session.

We will offer information sessions in a breakout room after the Sunday services on Sunday, May 31st, and Sunday, June 14th, and also an evening Zoom session on Monday, June 1st, at 7 pm. Read more about Wellspring in the PDF flyer sent in recent weekly emails, or contact Peggy Garrigues ([dcl@uusic.org](mailto:dcl@uusic.org)) with questions.

## Remember to Pick Up Your UUS Picture Directory!

If your picture is in the new UUS Picture Directory, and you have not already picked up your copy, there should be a copy with your name on it in the UUS entryway, which is open 24 hours a day. If you have questions or would like to have a directory mailed to you, contact Peggy Garrigues at [dcl@uusic.org](mailto:dcl@uusic.org).

## Drive-By Bye-Bye for Rev. Diane, June 5th

Come one, come all on Friday, June 5th, at 7 pm for a Drive-By Bye-Bye for Rev. Diane. Her last service with us will be on Sunday, June 7th, so please come and say goodbye to Rev. Diane and wish her well as she prepares for her next adventure.

Please bring yourself and family to UUS via Oakdale Road from the south, gather in the Oakdale parking lot so we don't block the street for too long and can start in an orderly fashion, then leave after greeting Rev. Diane from your car, turn right out of the parking lot to head to Oakdale Blvd.

Signs or decorations for your car will add to the festivities! If you'd like, please write a note or card for Rev. Diane. We will bring baskets to your car window to collect them for her.

HONKS, NOT HUGS! You will not be allowed to leave your car and masks are suggested. The parade will proceed slowly past through the parking lot, but stops to greet Rev. Diane will be very brief.

The rain date for this event is Saturday, June 6th, at 7 pm.

## From Your Director of Lifespan Religious Education

With many states lifting or modifying their safer at home orders and many businesses reopening, congregations and Religious Education (RE) programs across all denominations have been talking about what it would take and what it might look like for us to reopen, and I wanted to share with you something I sent to RE families a few weeks ago.

The two most discussed options for reopening congregations are: 1) All programming remain virtual until it is safe for all people to meet (ie: a vaccine) or 2) hybrid return to services and programming with small groups meeting in person (with precautions like masks, increased sanitation, safe distances, etc.) with the option to participate virtually for high risk individuals. I trust that UUS leadership will make the call that is best for UUS, whether we go with one of these scenarios or another one altogether. However, I cannot think of any scenario where we will be able pick our RE program back up as if this pandemic never happened.

Reopening our RE program will have to be evaluated in terms of safety (can we meet in a way that is safe for leaders and participants?), staffing (can volunteers and paid staff implement the program at the level required by our Safety Policy?), and in terms of resources (do we have enough time and supplies to put together a quality program?) Even if we can check 'yes' to all those questions, I am not sure we would want to. For instance, an article titled "10 tips for Reopening Your Children's Ministry" from [theconfidentkidmin.com](http://theconfidentkidmin.com), which was shared in one of my RE Professionals groups, looks at how Children's Ministry (translate this to RE) programs could reopen and stipulates many safety requirements that would have to be followed, including:

- Students will need labeled cushions/mats six feet apart and they need to remain in their spots
- Toys and group supplies are off limits
- Individual supply bags
- The same kids and volunteers meeting each week
- Increase in sanitation and supervisory practices, including bathroom, classroom and hallway movement

As laughable as it is for anyone to think preschoolers will, "sit in their spots, six feet apart, and follow directions," for a full class or that the same volunteers will lead RE and the same families will attend every week, my bigger concern with this setup is the atmosphere it would create. When I picture how this might play out on a Sunday, I imagine how many reminders the RE volunteers would need to give for children to remain on their cushions; not to touch one another or their faces; and to sanitize their hands and supplies, and how even the gentlest of redirections when given constantly would make our children and volunteers feel harassed and harassing. Confined to their cushions, I also struggle to picture games and projects where we are exploring together. Rather, these restrictions would likely limit our classes to worksheets and top-down discussions, and while those things have their place, a program that is centered on them is something Unitarian Universalist Faith Formation gave up decades ago, as it does not meet or nurture the spiritual needs of children. Ultimately, this is not the type of program I would want to lead, volunteer in, or have my children attend.

So I have been pondering: what would it look like, if instead of trying to contort our RE program to work under the framework and precautions required by the pandemic, we crafted something that addressed the evolving needs of our children, youth, and families? And after not meeting for several months, what would a program whose main goals were to re-establish trust—trust that it is safe to be together and that UUS is a safe place to be—and to rebuild and strengthen the relationships of our RE participants and groups look like? How can we design a program that will meet people where they are when some of us are thriving in our slowed-down lives; some of us are just surviving with the increased pressures of work (or non-work), family, school, and home; and many of us are experiencing both?

I don't have the answers, but as we learn more about how our community will be together over the coming days, weeks, and months, I hope we can explore these questions together. In the meantime, know that I miss all of you and dreaming for the day when we can all be together again.

Jessica Zimmer

### Summer Religious Education



Over the summer months, we will be sending out monthly RE packets. They'll include activities to do together and ones kids can do on their own; suggestions for things to do, watch, and read together; family spiritual practices; and more to bring Faith Development home.

Keep an eye on your mailboxes for the June Packet!

### Virtual UU Grief Group, June 17th

Grief comes in many forms as we experience the loss of the things that we used to do before the pandemic. You may be mourning the loss of your freedom, events or connections that used to help you to feel more balanced and happy, or the roles you played that helped you to feel whole.

This month the UU Grief Group is opening their doors via Zoom to all in the congregation who are finding it difficult to deal with this loss. This group provides a safe and supportive environment where you can talk about your loss to other UUs who are also experiencing loss. After all, we're all in this together. You may come away from the group feeling more reconciled or with ideas about how others are handling their grief. Mark your calendars and come join us on Wednesday, June 17th, at 12:30 pm. Use this address to gain access: [zoom.us/j/97054631713](https://zoom.us/j/97054631713). Direct any questions to Gail Garwood at [griefgroup@uusic.org](mailto:griefgroup@uusic.org).

## Consider “Attending” National UU Virtual General Assembly, June 24th-28th

UU General Assembly can be a wonderful experience of gathering together with UUs from around the US, and around the world! Usually, several thousand UUs gather together at once for amazing music and worship, workshops of all kinds, meeting UUs from many places, and learning about the many programs and social justice projects of UUs around the country and the world.

This year, the General Assembly (GA) will be fully virtual, so no one will be gathering in person. There are virtual events planned to begin at 2 pm Central time on Wednesday, June 24th, through the Closing Celebration on Sunday, June 28th, which finishes at 6 pm. Worship celebrations and the Ware Lecture are always inspiring highlights. Naomi Klein, an award-

winning journalist, author, and climate activist will be the Ware Lecturer this year.

Virtual registration is \$150 per person and does not involve any transportation or lodging, so this is a wonderful opportunity to have a glimpse of what GA is like for a fraction of the usual cost. (If you have some tech skills, and are willing to volunteer to help, your registration would even be free!)

For General Assembly, UUS will get to have six official delegates. If you would like to consider attending virtually as an official delegate, let Peggy know ([dcl@uusic.org](mailto:dcl@uusic.org)), and she will pass your name along to the board.

Learn more about GA at [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga). If it sounds interesting, but not for this year, General Assembly next year will be held (hopefully in person!) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin!

## A Note From Your Board President

*(Content emailed to the congregation on May 24th, 2020)*

Thank you for all who attended the Congregational Meeting. It has been an honor to be your board president this past year. For those who are newer, the congregation votes on a new vice president each year. That person spends one year as vice president, one year as president, and one year as past president. This was my last meeting as president. I will become your past president in July and Joe Rassmussen will become your new president. I wanted to give you a summary from the meeting [held on May 24th].

I would like to thank all the outgoing leaders. From the board: Jane Dewitt, Chris Rode, and Michael Honey-Arcement. From the Endowment Committee: Pete Brokaw. From LDC: Jim Olson, and Maureen Patterson. We really have appreciated each one of your special talents and hard work.

For the Congregational Meeting we had a quorum of 63% of people who voted. The following motions were made and approved by the congregation by at least 98% or higher:

- Vote to approve the January 5th and May 3rd Congregational Meeting Minutes. Amendments from the January notes, as previously expressed, will be added for the record.
- Vote to approve the slate of new candidates as recommended by the Leadership Development Committee (LDC): Alan Swanson, vice president; Mike Pavelich, treasurer; Lucy Choisser, trustee; Liz Swanson, Endowment Committee; Susan Salterberg and Sue Otto, LDC.
- Vote to approve the Covenant of Right Relations as approved by the board in February 2020.

Sadly, Lucy Choisser had to withdraw her name after the ballots had been mailed. Our thoughts and love are with her, as well as her husband Sam and daughter Kate. The LDC found another candidate: Kim McWane Friese. Our bylaws state that when there is a vacancy on the board, the board will appoint the replacement and they will be voted on at the next Congregational Meeting. In this case, the board will vote for Kim Friese at the June meeting and, if the vote is affirmative, the congregation will vote for her at the December 2020 Congregational Meeting for the remainder of the term.

Jane DeWitt presented the Covenant of Right Relations that the board passed in February.

Treasurer Chris Rode provided an update on our current finances since the pandemic began. He noted that, while we have seen a dip in our revenues, it is too early to have a clear picture of how our finances will be affected.

Finally, we discussed the facility reopening. On May 14th, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) sent guidance on reopening. In that email, the UUA recommended congregations plan to offer virtual offerings through May 2021. You can read Susan Fredrick-Gray's email here: [www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/message-uua-president-updated-guidance-gathering](http://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/message-uua-president-updated-guidance-gathering). Each UU Congregation will have to decide how they are going to proceed.

The most important thing is that we stay safe and we do not do anything that will cause COVID to spread through our community and beyond. At the May board meeting, the board decided to appoint a task force to help us determine how and under what conditions we can safely open. There are many moving parts to opening our doors for a service or other opportunity. The task force will have representation from many different groups in our congregation. The important question we need to answer before we know “when” we can open is “how” we can safely open? If we can answer this question the “when” will take care of itself.

While it is still too early to consider opening, the health, well-being, and life of our members and staff is the most important consideration. I want to thank our amazing staff, including Emma, Peggy, Jessica, Gloria, and Rev. Diane, for figuring out how to do these services online and looking for ways to help us connect. I also want to thank the volunteers who have helped with the AV part of our services.

In these challenging times, please continue to reach out to each other and check-in by phone, text, or email. You might make another person's day with a simple message to let them know you are thinking of them.

Stay well everyone!

Amy Fretz

UUS Board President

## Unitarian Universalist Society Board of Trustees MEETING HIGHLIGHTS—May 13th, 2020

*Board meeting minutes are available on the website or can be requested from the UUS Administrator.*

**Present:** Amy Fretz (President), Joe Rasmussen (Vice-President), Jane DeWitt (Past-President), Chris Rode (Treasurer), Allison Bettine (Secretary), John Raley (Finance Trustee), Michael Honey-Arcement (Trustee), Colleen Higgins (Trustee), Paul Pomrehn (Trustee), and Rev. Diane Dowgiert (Ex-officio)

**Absent:** None

Board President Fretz called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Rev. Dowgiert provided opening words.

**Consent Agenda:** Consent agenda and other items are uploaded to Dropbox for Board review prior to the meeting.

Consent Agenda items: April Board Meeting Minutes, May Executive Meeting Minutes, Minister's Report, Treasurer's Report, and Financials

*The Board received the Consent Agenda and approved the April Board Meeting Minutes, May Executive Meeting Minutes, Minister's Report, Treasurer's Report, and Financials.*

**Jean Reese Fund:** The Jean Reese Fund proposal was sent out to the Board via email prior to the meeting. Fretz called for a motion to approve the Jean Reese Fund proposal. After a brief discussion regarding the difference between endowments and special gifts, a motion was made that the vote be tabled until after the Governance and Endowment Committees meet to revisit the Gifts Policy. *Motion carried.*

**Finance Committee Updates:** Raley reported on the status of upcoming rentals booked through November and communicated the Finance Committee's recommendations regarding the future of rental opportunities at the UUS building. Raley is set to meet with Emma in order to develop a plan to reach out to the remaining rentals to convey that the building has been closed to the public indefinitely.

**Governance Committee Update:** Fretz shared that the Committee is finalizing the order of the policies book and that the most updated policy is in Dropbox for Board review.

**Interim Ministry Appraisal:** The Interim Ministry Appraisals completed by Fretz and by Rev. Dowgiert were shared with the Board via Dropbox prior to the meeting. It was agreed by the group that the interim ministry was successful and that the congregation made significant achievements under Rev. Dowgiert's leadership.

**COVID-19 Planning:** Fretz asserted that planning must begin to prepare for the challenges facing the congregation, the ministerial team, and staff due to the pandemic. Certain issues including limited technology, the staff's evolving workload, and the accessibility of services were discussed. It was established that a crisis management taskforce must be formed and that this team be tasked with developing safety plans for the congregation so long as the virus presents a health threat to this community. It was moved that Fretz, Rasmussen, and Rev. Dowgiert appoint the members of this taskforce, drawing from the staff, the hospitality team, the worship associates, medical professionals, and those in the congregation with children. *Motion carried.*

**Closing:** DeWitt read the closing words, Honey-Arcement gave process observer comments, and Fretz adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm. The next Board Meeting is Wednesday, June 10th, 2020, at 6:30 pm on Zoom.

—Submitted by Allison Bettine, Secretary

### UU Free Lunch Report

On Friday, May 8th, UUS volunteers once again donned masks and rubber gloves to serve a hot meal to 95 appreciative Free Lunch guests. The 'Fabulous Five' volunteers included Linda Rice, Sherry Dolash, Russ Lenth, Vicki Siefers, and Bonnie Penno! Many thanks to Bonnie Penno, who generously purchased fried chicken, baked beans, and potato salad in memory of her mother and in honor of all mothers on Mother's Day. Diners also enjoyed juice and a cookie thanks to generous donations from many UUS Free Lunch volunteers. These donations also paid for clamshell containers, napkins, and eating utensils. Once again, this great meal was a team effort proving that UUs can be of service even in the most challenging times. If you would like more information about how you can help, please contact Carmen Griggs at [csgriggsiowa@gmail.com](mailto:csgriggsiowa@gmail.com).



# The UUS News

The Unitarian Universalist Society  
2355 Oakdale Road  
Coralville, IA 52241

**Website:** [www.uusic.org](http://www.uusic.org)

**Office Phone:** 319-337-3443

## Our Seven Principles

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

**Our Mission:** We are a welcoming, spiritually diverse home. We act on our values: Honor the Earth; Advocate for racial and social justice; Foster deep connections; Embrace the ongoing quest for meaning.

**Our Vision:** We aspire to be a more inclusive, loving, diverse congregation that welcomes all people. We will defend and celebrate the Earth, confront racial and social injustice, and nurture deep connections.

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## UUS Staff

**Interim Minister:** Rev. Diane Dowgiert (minister@uusic.org)

**Congregational Administrator:**  
Emma Barnum (admin@uusic.org)

**Director of Lifespan Religious Education:**  
Jessica Zimmer (education@uusic.org)

**Director of Congregational Life:**  
Peggy Garrigues (dcl@uusic.org)

**Music Director:** Gloria L. Corbin (music@uusic.org)

**Accompanist:** Aura Strohschein (accompanist@uusic.org)

**Publicity Coordinator:**  
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**Administrative Assistant:**  
Nik Jakob (admin.assistant@uusic.org)

**Religious Education Assistant:**  
Anna Rode (re.assistant@uusic.org)

**Community Minister:**  
Rev. Lois Cole (community.minister@uusic.org)

## UUS Board of Trustees, 2019-2020

**President:** Amy Fretz  
(720-207-4513, amymhere@gmail.com)

**Vice President:** Joe Rasmussen  
(721-7777, uusicc.joe@gmail.com)

**Past President:** Jane DeWitt  
(621-5033, jane.dewitt@drake.edu)

**Secretary:** Allison Bettine  
(630-272-6907, allison.bettine@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Chris Rode  
(520-241-1431, ccrode@gmail.com)

**Finance Trustee:** John Raley  
(321-5437, jraley@amfam.com)

**Trustee:** Michael Honey-Arcement  
(563-289-7153, mike@gwn-ws.com)

**Trustee:** Colleen Higgins  
(646-6564, colleen\_iris1950@yahoo.com)

**Trustee:** Paul Pomrehn  
(594-2371, paulpomrehn@gmail.com)