



THE UUS NEWS

March 2021

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

Upcoming Sunday Services

Join the Virtual Service via Zoom each week at bit.ly/UUSVirtualService. Meeting ID: 422 482 660, Passcode: 006311
 Or join via phone: Find your local number: bit.ly/UUSServices [FindZoomNumber](#).

Each week the Zoom meeting will open at 9:50 am, with the service beginning at 10. A time for virtual fellowship will follow.

March 7th: "Expanding Our Spirits," Rev. Diana Smith

March 14th: "Holding Space: A Pandemic Anniversary Worship Service," Rev. Diana Smith

March 21st: "Bear Witness: Save Lives," CB Beal

In order to tell our stories, it is vital that we are able to trust that people will be still and bear witness to us, acknowledge and accept what we share. We must be present with one another with an empathy that honors our different life experiences. Guest worship leader CB Beal will share about the spiritual practice of bearing witness, and trusting others to bear witness to us, with a particular focus on gender.

CB Beal is a fat, white, queer, non-binary educator, writer, storyteller, and speaker. CB was the 2019 recipient of the Unitarian Universalist Association's [Angus H. MacLean Award](#) for Excellence in Religious Education. They make their home in a farmhouse library loft in western Massachusetts and consult with individuals and organizations to increase consent culture, equity, and justice in the world. You can find them online at [About CB – Justice and Peace Consulting](#).

March 28th: "Transgender Day of Visibility," Rev. Diana Smith

March's Social Justice Offerings Benefit The Center for Worker Justice (CWJ)

Workers at the heart of the CWJ network play an essential role in Eastern Iowa's economy. Their work powers local restaurants, hotels and construction. They care for children, seniors, and people with disabilities. They clean stores and offices throughout the night. And much more.

Working with interfaith and labor allies, CWJ has led efforts to raise the minimum wage for all workers, coordinated projects to address injustices in workplace conditions, unpaid wages, civil rights, access to education, and the need for affordable housing. All of these efforts continue during the pandemic, and our contributions will be helpful and appreciated. Learn more at cwjiowa.org.

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 CWJ on the memo line.)

March Birthdays

<i>Dick Anderson</i>	<i>Kathleen Kingman</i>	<i>Barbara Staib</i>
<i>Philip Beck</i>	<i>Jodi Linley</i>	<i>Maya Tallman</i>
<i>Aiden Bettine</i>	<i>Jan Locher</i>	<i>Sullivan Turner</i>
<i>Wendy Brown</i>	<i>Rory Marshall</i>	<i>Mary Vasey</i>
<i>Reed Cheyney</i>	<i>Diane Martin</i>	<i>Elaine Waples</i>
<i>Lois Cole</i>	<i>Kathy McDonald</i>	<i>Nickolas</i>
<i>Kay Eginton</i>	<i>Shelby Myers</i>	<i>Westergaard</i>
<i>Betsy Fischer</i>	<i>Laurie Neuerburg</i>	<i>Jerry Wetlaufer</i>
<i>Audrey Friestad</i>	<i>Alison Oliver</i>	If you would like
<i>Rochelle Honey-</i>	<i>Jenny Reynolds</i>	your birthday listed
<i>Arcement</i>	<i>Linda Rice</i>	in the newsletter (or
<i>Jean Hood</i>	<i>Susan Salterberg</i>	removed), contact
<i>Spencer Johnson</i>	<i>Jane Slaymaker</i>	dcl@uusic.org .

Past Sunday Service Attendance

- January 31st:** ~128 Participating Zoom Accounts
- February 7th:** ~136 Participating Zoom Accounts
- February 14th:** ~130 Participating Zoom Accounts
- February 21st:** ~134 Participating Zoom Accounts



From Your Minister

Dear Ones,

As the calendar turns to March, the days lengthen, and the world warms, we're moving into new phases of the pandemic that has changed our lives and is constantly challenging and changing us. This month we'll encounter the anniversary of when the pandemic hit Iowa and our beloved congregation and so many other parts of our lives closed in-person activities.

It's been a strange year, full of deep losses and amazing discoveries. Many of us have been changed in ways that we're only beginning to understand. And so, on March 14th, we'll be holding a special All Ages online worship service to help us reflect, together, on our resilience, our losses, and on how this year has changed us individually and as a congregation. I hope you'll join us.

Fittingly, this month our theme is *Commitment*. And so, we'll be taking time in worship services, covenant groups, and in other parts of our congregational life to reflect on to whom and to what we commit ourselves. At the beginning of the month, during a drive-through event on Saturday, March 6th, we'll be passing out seeds and materials to grow them—and then planting the seeds together during the All Ages online worship service on March 7th. (In May we'll invite people to

transplant them into veggie boxes at UUS or at home as part of our flower communion celebration.)

This month we'll also have the opportunity to begin working with CB Beal. CB Beal is an educator, writer, storyteller, and speaker. CB was the 2019 recipient of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Angus H. MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education. They consult with individuals and organizations to increase consent culture, equity, and justice in the world.

Due to the pandemic moving so much of our lives and this congregation's ministries online, CB will be able to join us for a series this spring. On March 21st, CB will lead our worship service, inviting us to reflect on the spiritual practice of bearing witness to each other's lives, experiences, and perspectives, particularly when they're different from our own. Then, on May 2nd, CB will join us again to lead a worship service on Preemptive Radical Inclusion During Covid-times. Preemptive Radical Inclusion is an entryway to increase justice and equity among ourselves and in the world, a way to embody beloved community in a time of physical isolation and social connection, and a perspective for justice and equity as we begin to carefully and inclusively regather. On Saturday, May 22nd, from 10 to 11:30 am, CB will lead an online workshop to help us deepen our skills for preemptive radical inclusion. I hope you'll mark your calendars and join us for these sessions as we reflect on our commitments to each other within this congregation and in the wider world.

Love and Blessings,
Rev. Diana

From Your Board President, Joe Rasmussen

Wintering the Pandemic

Our relationship to winter as Iowans is different than persons in some other states. The pace of life changes as snow covers the ground and temperatures confine our movements. This is a slower pace that gives time for reflection and study. There is a calming effect to our daily lives. I live in rural Johnson County and often go outside on a winter's night. There is a quiet that comes at no other time of the year. The snow provides an insulation sound barrier. There are no sounds of insects, birds, machinery, or neighbors. A clear night sky provides a magnifying glass to the stars and planets. Cold air has a taste and feel that is unique. While we all long for spring, take some time to enjoy our winter break.

The Board of Trustees has not taken a break. The Board's Finance Committee continues to monitor our fiscal health which right now is not looking bad. Our Governance Committee is bringing together past policies and procedures into one unified document. This has been a multi-year effort led by Amy Fretz, and we recognize her hard work. Our new policy governance structure places emphasis on the Board's role in planning for the future. Planning requires an annual process which the Board members have tentatively established. We and the UUS senior staff held a two-part meeting on January 30th. The model we are following requires a board and minister to produce two work products each year. One is an Annual Vision of Ministry that establishes goals for the next church year. The second is

to formulate up to three open questions (Questions) to engage the congregation in discussion of what we want to be and how we get there. The Questions do not have yes or no answers and do not establish goals. Our new annual planning process envisions the Board meeting in January or February to write the Questions. The Board's annual retreat is moving to June and will focus on the Vision of Ministry. We are discussing how we bring the congregation into engaging with us on the Questions.

Rather than call 2020-21 the winter of our discontent, I prefer to call it our winter of possibilities. The pandemic closure has shaken our usual comfortable routines. COVID vaccinations will change how we live. A new minister and the pending departure of our Director of Lifespan Religious Education are opportunities to examine who we are and what we want to be. Thank you, DLRE Jessica Zimmer, for your service to our community. We continue open discussion on how to reshape UUS religious education. The old Sunday school/youth group model many of us grew up with is no longer applicable in the 21st Century. A ministry COVID Team is working on re-opening procedures. The Board is engaged in a group read of a UUA report, *Widening the Circle of Concern*, that challenges us to be more than "a social club as haven for those disaffected by other religions" and engage with persons and cultures that are not white-dominated. You can find it on [the UUA's website](#). As UUs we have the freedom to design our own answers to these questions and how we can safely reconvene together. So stay engaged. Stay safe. More to come. PEACE.

March Drive-Through Event, March 6th: Planting Seeds of Commitment and Change

On Saturday, March 6th, from 1 to 2 pm at UUS, we'll be passing out seeds and materials to grow them. Then we'll plant the seeds together as part of a seed ritual during the All Ages online worship service on March 7th. In May we'll invite people to transplant them into veggie boxes at UUS or at home as part of our flower communion celebration.

COVID Task Force Update

Status of the Building: The COVID Task Force met on February 19th. In December we began looking at what we can do with our building to mitigate the risk of people contracting COVID. While increasing the MERV filter rating, changing ventilation, increasing fresh air, using UV lights, etc., will all help decrease the spread of COVID, none of these measures will eliminate risk to our members completely. The task force continues to watch for new data coming out and are compiling a list of questions we will give to Building & Grounds to ask our building management company.

Warm Weather Options: The summer worship series will all be online, as the worship team is hard at work planning those services now. Meanwhile, spring is on the way! Soon it will be time to look for wildflowers, pull garlic mustard, and walk along our beautiful trails. With COVID positivity rates decreasing, we believe we will be able to resume outdoor groups and some other outside activities once warm weather arrives.

Vaccinations: Many people have asked how the vaccinations will affect UUS reopening. It will be quite some time before many of our members, including children and families and even our staff, will be vaccinated. It is important to note that being vaccinated does not prevent you from spreading disease. Right now, our Phases for Reopening are based on the rate of infections. We are monitoring recommendations for gathering in person from a variety of sources and may adjust our Phases for Reopening based on changing information in the future.

UUA Guidance: On February 8th, the UUA issued an update on gathering in person. In it they offer concrete guidance on when to open and urge congregations to consider and reflect upon their values before deciding to open. Currently, they still recommend only virtual gatherings. Here are their reasons for having guidance that is more stringent than schools:

- As a community that values inclusion and collective care, we don't want to create in-person situations that inadvertently exclude those at higher risk or create situations that force those at higher risk to publicly identify themselves. Our decision-making must center the needs of the most vulnerable.
- The membership of most UU congregations is an older, more vulnerable population than the general public.
- We do not want congregational staff and ministers to be put at risk on the job.
- A normally-operating congregation presents too many opportunities to spread a highly contagious respiratory virus like COVID-19.

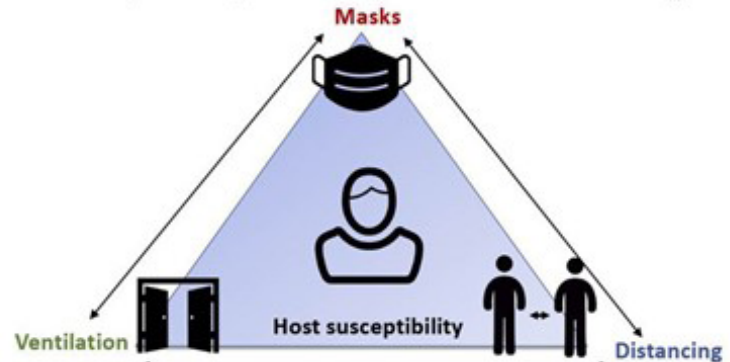
The COVID Task Force continues our commitment to keep each other safe while looking at ways we can be connected. This is an ongoing ever-changing situation, and we will keep you informed as we move along.

Be safe, everyone! Reach out to any of us if you have questions. The COVID Task Force Team: Rev. Diana Smith (chair), Marsha Cheyney, Dan Gall, Peggy Garrigues, Kim Palmer, Peg Voelker, Jessica Zimmer, Emma Barnum, Marta Little, Mary McMurray, and Amy Fretz.

References

- 2/12/21 Operational Strategies for K12 Schools through Phased Mitigation (<https://beta.documentcloud.org/documents/20478594-cdc-k-12-operational-strategy-2021-2-12>)
- 2/8/21 UUA Guidance on gathering in person once COVID subsides (www.uua.org/safe/pandemics/gathering-guidance)
- 2/9/21 Ventilation and COVID (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation)
- Myth and Facts about Vaccines (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts)
- Filters and COVID (www.lubbockchamber.com/blog/lubbock-business-network-blog-3508/post/can-merv-13-filters-stop-the-covid-19-virus-26475)
- 2/21/21 CDC Guidance for Faith Communities (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based)

The Complementary Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions Triangle



Legend: Three points of the non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI) to combat COVID-19 are complementary. As one decreases, the other can compensate. So, with less distancing, double masking (or higher fit/filtration masks) for adults keep them safe. With more ventilation (e.g. outdoors), the mask can be less fitted; host susceptibility plays roles in the strength of NPI required.

Night of 1000 Dinners, March 10th

Night of 1000 Dinners, a virtual celebration of International Women's Day, will take place on Wednesday, March 10th, at 6 pm. The event will honor local organizations founded by, led by, and/or serving women: DVIP, Houses into Homes, and Sankofa Outreach Connection. Each of these groups is advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals in our community. In addition to honoring these groups, the program will include performances or presentations by the Oakdale Community Choir, an Afghani novelist in the UI International Writing Program, the International Academy of Russian Music, Art, and Culture, and a dance performance by Iowa Andhi.

Tickets are \$25 per house (\$10 for students or those hard-hit by the pandemic) and may be purchased from Jim Olson (jimolson921@gmail.com) or at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) (enter "Night of 1000 Dinners" in search box). Proceeds will benefit the UN World Food Programme, and three local food banks.

Night of 1000 Dinners is hosted by the Johnson County United Nations Association and 21 community co-sponsors including UUS.

Iowa Criminal Justice Presentation, March 18th

The Prison Ministry Team and the UU Secular Humanists invite all to a presentation/discussion on Iowa Criminal Justice on Thursday, March 18th, at 7 pm.

Our guest speaker is Dr. Allen Hays, Professor Emeritus of University of Northern Iowa, who will be speaking about state-wide efforts by UUs and others to address mass incarceration, bail reform, and working with legislators on justice issues. He will describe the work of the Iowa Justice Action Network. There will be an opportunity for questions and discussion following the presentation.

[Link to join Zoom Meeting](#) (Meeting ID: 848 9406 6842, Passcode: 971292). If you have questions, please contact Mark Yuskis (resdoggie@aol.com) or Sally Hartman (sallyhartman@hotmail.com). All are welcome!

UUS Free Lunch Program Report

Friday, February 12th, brought frigid weather, but UUS Free Lunch volunteers Bonnie Penno, Daniel Christian, Gary Lawrenson, Robert Ferguson Littlehale, and Sherry Dolash persevered and served hot meals to 55 appreciative guests at the Free Lunch Program kitchen located at 1108 S. Gilbert. Another 35 box lunches were assembled and taken to the day shelter at the Robert A. Lee Center downtown.

In addition to chicken strips, baked beans, coleslaw, and bananas, the hearty meal included the special Valentine's Day treat of cookies and chocolates. This month's meal was paid for by contributions from our large and generous group of UUS Free Lunch volunteers. Thank you!

On this incredibly cold day, our dedicated volunteers were especially grateful for the wind-blocker that has been installed across the doorway where meals are served at 1108. Special thanks to Gary Lawrenson who placed protector tips on the screws of the wind-blocker so that no one has to worry about injuries.

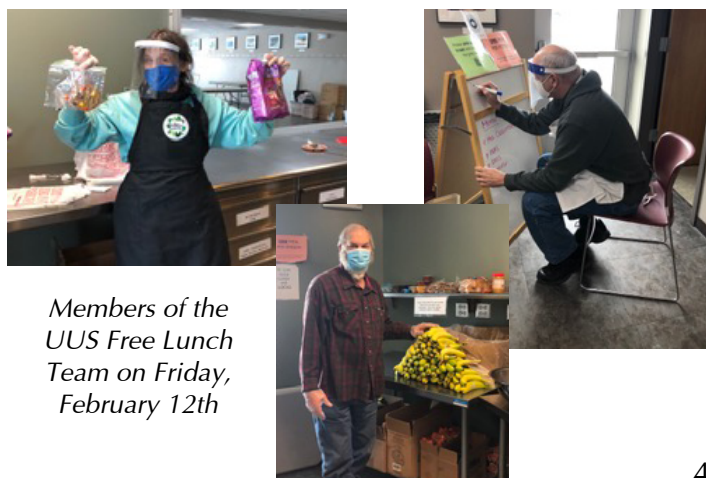
To learn more about the ways you can participate in the Free Lunch Program, please contact Carmen Griggs at cgriggsiowa@gmail.com.

Immigration Action Team and Circle of Friends

The UUS Immigration Action Team coordinates a program called Circle of Friends, which supports five needy immigrant families in our community. This support includes providing rides, teaching English, hiring for small jobs, locating community resources, donating games, books, clothing, other necessities, as well as monetary donations during a crisis. At Christmas, many members of the UUS purchase gifts or gift cards for each member of the families. Here are some brief snapshots of our five Circle of Friends families:

- Modesta, a Guatemalan asylum seeker, lives with her husband and three children. Her brother, Pablo, is also seeking asylum, with his wife and two children. School supplies and winter clothes are frequently needed for these families.
- Our newest member of Circle of Friends, Wendy, is from Honduras, and is also seeking asylum. She is here with her two young children. We have been helping her with food, clothing, and diapers in the past couple of months.
- Griselda, a Guatemalan weaver, has two sons, Rey and Jeffrey, who are in 4th and 7th grades. Griselda has been selling her work at the IC Farmer's market for several years (except for 2020, of course). Be sure to stop and visit with her at the Farmer's Market this summer.
- Vidal and Maria, also from Guatemala, are doing better since Maria has been hired at UIHC. Thank you to those who have hired Vidal in the past for yard work.
- Rabab and Montaser are raising three children, including a toddler with a disability. Originally from Egypt and the Sudan, they are learning English, thanks to three UUS volunteer tutors.

During this time of COVID, these families often struggle to pay utilities, medical bills, rent money, and necessities for their children. Because there is not a budget line for Circle of Friends, we rely on donations from members and friends, including funds from the 5th Sunday collection 2 years ago. Thank you to all who have supported Circle of Friends in the past! Your continued support has meant that their lives are a bit easier, but more importantly, they feel hope for the future because of our caring. Should you wish to support these families by donating, volunteering, or hiring, please contact Sally Hartman (sallyhartman@hotmail.com) or Deb Schoelerman (dschoelerman@gmail.com).



Members of the UUS Free Lunch Team on Friday, February 12th

Treasurer's January Financial Report Excerpt

Overall our bank accounts and Endowment stock accounts are down a bit for the month but well within the normal +/- fluctuations in each. It is too early to identify any trends in the former. Operating Bank Accounts end-of-month totals = \$419,500, Endowment Funds end-of-month totals = \$1,469,000.

Pledges Update

Pledges for 2020 were very well met by the members. \$397,000 was pledged with \$388,000 actually donated. That is a 98% return on promises. Kudos to you all. Pledges for 2021 have risen to about \$380,000. To date, \$73,000 has been donated.

Revisiting 2021 Deficit Spending

As I look at the numbers above, I am heartened that we are on a firm footing for the year. I anticipate that we will not need to ask for an extra Endowment funds transfer until our December meeting when the Board presents a 2022 budget. At our May Congregational meeting, we will most likely be only giving members a financial update.

Our 2021 Budget anticipates spending to exceed regular

Green Sanctuary Team

Green Sanctuary Beloved Community

The Green Sanctuary Team invites you to join the Beloved Community of UUs working on environmental issues. We have built one of the greenest church buildings in Iowa. What more can we do? As "Keepers of the Earth" we can endeavor to turn the tide of environmental decline and at the same time strengthen community and connections within our congregation. We can do more together! Below you will discover opportunities in March and April that promise connection to like-minded folks at UUS. Consider joining in the Beloved Community.

Green Sanctuary Team Meeting, March 8th

The Green Sanctuary Team meets Monday, March 8th, at noon. The focus this past year has been on presenting Drawdown events to Iowa UU congregations, developing our Earth Day worship service, and strengthening partnerships with other groups. For 2021 our focus is on how to bring us together as UUs working toward saving our home, the Earth.

Should you be able to make the Green Sanctuary Team meetings you would discover a small group of committed people, not to be underestimated! To touch base about this dynamic and thoughtful group, contact Deb Schoelerman (dschoelerman@gmail.com). All are welcome!

Introduction to Drawdown Workshop, March 13th

Join us on Saturday, March 13th, from 1 to 3:30 pm, for a Zoom workshop on solutions to global warming. A team from the Unitarian Universalist Society brings these solutions to life, using slides, video, and discussion. Our guests will be members of the Cedar Valley UUs. The workshop is based on a book edited by Paul Hawken called *Drawdown: The most comprehensive plan ever proposed to reverse global warming*. There is no cost to participating in the workshop. To register, click on the link that will be in the Wednesday Updates on March 10th, or contact Sally Hartman (sallyhartman@hotmail.com).

income by \$175,000. Month-to-month we will cover this with the reserve funds in the Operating Bank Accounts. The Finance Committee wants a \$200,000 base of reserve in the bank. Thus the current sum of over \$400,000 in the bank allows us to cover the 175k deficit while maintaining the 200k base. We should be able to wait until December to discuss and vote on any extra Endowment funds use.

The Finance Committee sees this as allowing us all to relax a bit about our budget shortfalls; until December anyway. Let us now focus on those exciting, fun things we do to keep our community connected and active as we slowly break out of the pandemic restrictions. Staff and Committee members, do stay within each program's budget and do spend wisely, but let's focus on our joyful work.

Updates from the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee explored several questions that lead to the "Deficit Spending" section above. In addition, the Stewardship Team is making plans for its 2022 Pledge Campaign in early Fall, and the Endowment Committee is looking into a Legacy function for later in the year. —Mike Pavelich

Congregational Climate Convergence, March 20th

The UU Ministry for Earth, our national eco-partner, has planned a "[Spring for Change](#)" season of events, starting on March 20th with a Congregational Climate Convergence. Congregational teams form and then attend with the idea of mobilizing to work for climate justice. For more information or to join a team, contact Sally Hartman (sallyhartman@hotmail.com).

Looking Ahead: Write for Climate Justice in April

The UU Ministry for the Earth is partnering with the UUs for Social Justice and their Write Here, Write Now program to write letters to our Congress members. Watch for further information in the UUS Wednesday updates for letter topics. The letter writing will culminate with Zoom meetings with US Congressional Staffers in April.

Looking Ahead: April Drawdown EcoChallenge

During the month of April, the Green Sanctuary Team requests your participation in the Drawdown EcoChallenge, an opportunity to report on-line your environmental actions to reduce global warming. This is an opportunity for everyone to be a part of something big, because many congregations across the country are joining the EcoChallenge. You will be able to sign up for this month-long event via the Wednesday updates in the last part of March. For more information, contact Sally Hartman (sallyhartman@hotmail.com).

Contributing to the Beloved Community

Recognizing that not everyone has time to jump into climate justice action, there are things you can do to be a part of the Beloved Community. Invite friends and neighbors to the Earth Day worship service on April 18th. Sign up for the April EcoChallenge and report the environmental actions you are already doing. Cut out the Environmental Checklist provided on the next page and choose one area at a time to work on. Talk about the UUS Beloved Community and Green efforts at UUS during break-out sessions after the service. Encourage, compliment, and inspire others to join in as "Keepers of the Earth."

**The Green Sanctuary Team invites you to pledge to be a Steward of the Earth
and to live the Seventh Principle.**

Never underestimate the collective impact of small changes. Changing habits can be challenging, but in small steps and with support, change will occur. Together at UUS we can make a difference!

The Green Sanctuary Team invites you to choose ten (or more) actions listed below.

Choose one from each group and commit to make some changes this year.

A. Goal: Reduce fuel consumption. <i>I will.....</i>	already do	I commit
1. Walk, bike, take the bus, or carpool instead of driving alone	_____	_____
2. Purchase a more efficient vehicle – a hybrid or electric	_____	_____
3. Keep car well maintained - check air filters and tire pressure often	_____	_____
4. Carpool and combine errands	_____	_____
5. Drive responsibly & efficiently (slower speeds and smooth starts and stops)	_____	_____
6. Avoid idling car for long periods of time	_____	_____
7. Fly on airplanes only when necessary.	_____	_____
B. Goal: Eat a Plant Based Diet and support local food production. <i>I will.....</i>		
1. Reduce consumption of beef, chicken, pork, and dairy	_____	_____
2. Become a vegetarian or vegan	_____	_____
3. Support locally owned grocery stores	_____	_____
4. Support CSAs and Farmers Markets	_____	_____
5. Limit buying foods that are not in season	_____	_____
6. Limit buying foods that have been shipped a long distance	_____	_____
C. Goal: Reduce household energy use. <i>I will.....</i>		
1. Obtain an energy audit for my house	_____	_____
2. Install a programmable thermostat	_____	_____
3. Set winter temp at 68 degrees or lower; summer at 78 or higher	_____	_____
4. Use ceiling and floor fans	_____	_____
5. Install LEDs in my home	_____	_____
6. Turn off lights when leaving the room	_____	_____
7. Wash only full loads of laundry & use cold water	_____	_____
8. Take shorter showers	_____	_____
9. Install low-flow toilets and shower heads.	_____	_____
D. Goal: Use fewer resources – reduce, reuse, recycle. <i>I will.....</i>		
1. Avoid disposable products - choose reusable products	_____	_____
2. Shop in 2 nd hand stores before buying new	_____	_____
3. Buy only what you need and are sure you will use	_____	_____
4. Buy in bulk and/or minimally packaged products	_____	_____
5. Always use cloth or reusable shopping bags	_____	_____
6. Recycle glass, plastic, aluminum containers	_____	_____
7. Recycle paper, magazines, and cardboard	_____	_____
8. Support the elimination of plastic bags and plastic water bottles	_____	_____
9. Compost organic (food, yard) waste	_____	_____
10. Opt-in for electronic billing statements	_____	_____
11. Donate useful clothes and appliances to charity	_____	_____
E. Goal: Other – something not listed.		
I will _____		
I will _____		
I will _____		
I will _____		

Unitarian Universalist Society Board of Trustees Meeting Highlights

February 17th, 2021 (virtual via Zoom)

Full Board meeting minutes are available on the website or can be requested from the UUS administrator.

PRESENT: Joe Rasmussen (President), Alan Swanson (Vice-President), Amy Fretz (Past-President), Mike Pavelich (Treasurer), Carol Adamson (Secretary), John Raley (Financial Trustee), Paul Pomrehn (Trustee), Julia Audlehelm (Trustee), and Rev. Diana Smith (Minister, Ex-Officio). **ABSENT:** Colleen Higgins (Trustee). **GUESTS:** Mary McMurray, Deb Schoelerman.

President Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

CONSENT AGENDA: *Consent agenda and other items are uploaded to Dropbox for Board review prior to the meeting. The Board voted and received the consent agenda and approved the January Board minutes, February Executive Committee minutes, Staff Report, Treasurer Report and Financial Summary.*

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- **Finance:** Pavelich reported that he anticipates that we will not need to ask for an extra Endowment funds transfer in May.
- **Mission & Vision Review:** Pomrehn asked the Board to consider using this committee to gather the information from the congregation for the “Three Open Questions” it is currently developing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Building Re-opening: Benchmarks and Phases:** Rev. Smith said UUS is still in Phase 1. This month the COVID Team is reviewing the metrics for phase 5 as they will likely be unattainable as currently stated. Rev. Smith reminded the Board that the COVID Team has determined to use number of cases and not vaccination percentages.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Land Ministry Proposals:** The Land Ministry Team has requested that the Board of Trustees consider funding the Playscape Development and creation of the Memorial Garden for 2021. The playscape proposal is to contract for

construction of a crushed limestone path from building level to below the boulder scramble with steps to a gathering spot created by volunteer labor. Estimated cost: \$7,542. There is a second part of the playscape proposal to install a previously purchased slide and improving access and increasing the boulder scramble. Estimated cost: \$4,944.22. The memorial garden proposal would create an area for cremains and contemplation east of building (near choir area in sanctuary). This includes limestone outcroppings, raised beds, and a path from the building path. Estimated cost: \$15,279.

Pavelich made a motion, seconded by Pomrehn, to thank the Land Ministry for their work and recognize its importance to furthering the Mission and Vision of UUS. However, funding is not available and should not be funded.

Discussion: There was lengthy discussion of the Land Ministry Proposals including: how the proposal should be considered by the Finance Committee and the Endowment Committee; and how fundraising might be used for proposals that cannot be funded through the Operating Budget or the Endowment.

Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Fretz, to table the discussion to give the Finance Committee time to review the Land Ministry proposals and bring its recommendation to the Board at its March meeting. The motion carried 6:1.

Three Open Questions: Due to time constraints, the Board will discuss the Three Open Questions at a special meeting on February 25th from 7 to 8 pm.

CLOSING

There were no process observer comments, Pavelich provided closing words, and the chalice was extinguished. *Raley moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Pomrehn. Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 9:48 pm.*

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, March 17th, at 7 pm. —Carol Adamson, Secretary

Congregational Administrator’s January Financial Report Excerpt

January’s pledge payments were up compared to budget by about \$4,660. This is typical for January as several people pay their full pledge in advance, although we received about \$13,000 less this year than we did last January. Our Endowment Accounts mostly fell by small amounts in January.

In January UUs raised \$3,545 for our various social justice agencies, including \$751 for January’s agency The Abbe Center, \$200 extra for December’s agency, the Free Dental Clinic, and a whopping \$2,594 for the January 5th Sunday offering for Clear Creek Amana’s Better Way Forward Library Diversity Fund.

Expenses were down across the board with a few exceptions. Most of the over-budget expenses can be attributed to 2020

costs not hitting the bank until January. This should even out in the long run (i.e., this December some expenses will carry to 2022) so these 2020 expenses shouldn’t throw us too over budget for the year.

We did have a few maintenance and grounds issues crop up that pushed us over our monthly budgets for those lines. We budget a lump sum for the year to cover these kinds of “unexpected” issues, and the Building/Grounds Teams and the Finance Committee will be monitoring these lines to make sure we are within target.

W2s, 1099s, and our 4th quarter state and federal payroll taxes were filed through QuickBooks and mailed to the appropriate personnel/vendors. In early January I sent out giving statements to everyone in Realm listed as having a tax-deductible gift.

—Emma Barnum

The UUS News

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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.

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.