



# THE UUS NEWS

December 2021

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

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



## From Your Minister, Rev. Diana Smith

Dear Ones,

During all the wonders and challenges of December, our Soul Matters theme will be *Opening to Joy*. As we (staff and teams) have begun planning activities for this month, many of us have been sitting with the reality of the gift of opening to joy combined with some of the challenges to doing so during this busy season.

Opening more fully and more deeply to joy is an ongoing process, an ongoing journey, particularly in a culture that often keeps us striving for the next thing, noticing what was lacking, working for perfection.

Joy comes in many shapes, but at its heart it's often made possible by a quality of heart or spirit that comes from being in relationship with the present moment. When we bring our awareness to the here and now, we are more likely to encounter and fully experience joy.

In this season of darkness, and as we feel the changing tides of the pandemic, as well as so much else that is happening in the world, it's natural to wonder about joy. I often come back to the ideas that joy is not the same as happiness, just as hope is not the same as optimism.

I am also returning to these words by Robin Wall Kimmerer in *Braiding Sweetgrass*: "Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift."

This month we'll be connecting with ourselves, each other, and the wider community online and in person in many ways. We'll be engaging with fun and mystery at our auction, creating spaces for those who are having a hard time with the holidays, celebrating winter Solstice in the stillness of a candlelit walk, and joining together in two Christmas Eve services, in addition to our regular Sunday worship services. We'll also be engaging in discernment about the future path of our congregation as we engage with the work of the Balance and Growth Initiative in preparation for the congregational meeting.

As we do so, may we all cultivate our openness to joy, and to tune our minds and hearts to our awareness of joy when it arrives, that we may let it flower and nourish our hearts, minds, and bodies.

Love and Blessings, Rev. Diana

## Congregational Meeting, December 19th

We will hold our semi-annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 19th, at 11:15 am following the service. The meeting will be multi-platform, with in person participants in the UUS Sanctuary and virtual participants in the same Zoom meeting as the normal Sunday services (Find the Zoom information on page 2).

The purpose of this meeting will be to vote:

- to formally elect one appointment to the Board of Trustees to complete the remainder of a term vacated early,
- to approve a small amendment to the Bylaws,
- to approve a maximum expenditure of \$125,000 from General Endowment earnings over a two-year period as part of funding for the operation budgets of 2022 and 2023 in the Balance and Growth Initiative (BGI) group's two-year plan to balance the UUS budget while enhancing our mission and vision for the long term,
- to approve the operating budget for 2022, and
- to approve the BGI plan itself.

The meeting agenda, the bio for the board official up for election, and the list of current voting members can be found in this newsletter.

Voting members will receive a congregational meeting packet with these and other meeting materials, as well as voting instructions ahead of the meeting. These will be sent via email or snail mail (if requested) the week of December 5th. If you believe you should be able to vote but do not appear on the list in the newsletter, or if you do not receive a packet, please contact Peggy Garrigues at [dcce@uusic.org](mailto:dcce@uusic.org). UUS members will be able to vote online or by mailing in a paper absentee ballot, and voting will close at 4 pm on December 19th.

**There will be two informational sessions** for anyone who has questions or wish to know more about the various items on the agenda:

- Sunday, December 12th, following the service. Those in person can meet in the UUS Sanctuary, and those attending virtually can join a special breakout room after the service (same Zoom info as the service, see page 2 for Meeting ID and passcode).
- Thursday, December 16th, at 7 pm by Zoom ([Link to Join](#), Meeting ID: 899 1900 0625, Passcode: 251022).

Contact the office ([admin@uusic.org](mailto:admin@uusic.org)) or Board President Alan Swanson ([alan-swanson@mchsi.com](mailto:alan-swanson@mchsi.com)) if you have questions.

# Join Us for Sunday Services

Our services are designed to be multi-platform, with congregants and visitors welcome to join in person or virtually (special services, such as Spirited Sundays and holiday events, may only be in person or only online; check the descriptions carefully).

Join via Zoom (**PLEASE NOTE NEW ZOOM LINK:** [bit.ly/UUS\\_Virtual\\_Sunday\\_Service](https://bit.ly/UUS_Virtual_Sunday_Service) (Meeting ID: 945 6258 4740, Passcode: 927789).

Join in Person: The building will be open at 9:40; plan to arrive early so you can be seated by 10 am. Please stay home and care for yourself if you're not feeling well or have been exposed to someone with COVID. Everyone over the age of 2 must wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth.

Find more details on attending services during the pandemic on our website: [www.uusic.org/about-us/covid-19-info-updates/](http://www.uusic.org/about-us/covid-19-info-updates/)

## Upcoming Services

### December 5th: "All in for Climate Justice, Food Equity, and Sustainability"

We invite you to join us online or in person for a UN Sunday Service, where Rev. Diana Smith, Ko Ko Lwin, Sally Hartman, and Jim Olson will focus on how working for equitable and sustainable food systems can bring us closer to climate justice.

In celebration of UN Day, the Unitarian Universalist Office at the UN invites congregations and individual UUs to engage with the story of our global Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist faith and reaffirming the connections between our UU principles and the vital issues dealt with at the UN. The theme, "All In for Climate Justice: Food Equity and Sustainability," follows the theme for UU@UN Intergenerational Spring Seminar.

### December 12th: "Opening to Joy"

"Joy is hard," writes one of the authors we'll hear from today. Join Rev. Diana Smith and Dan Gall online or in-person at UUS as together we celebrate opening to joy.

### December 19th: "A Season of Dark & Light"

Join us online or in person as we celebrate winter Solstice, the wonder and mystery of this season of dark and light, and the shifting of the world. The Congregational Meeting will follow this service at 11:15 am. See page 1 for details.

### December 26th: "Spirited Sunday"

Valerie and John Bowman will host a storytelling circle at 10 am (online only). Spirited Sundays are all-ages alternative services that allow us to engage with spiritual practices and meaningful play.

For those who are interested in a more traditional Sunday service experience, this month we'll join the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines online at 9:30 am for a hymn sing: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81946708767?pwd=NXhCRG0yc0tEM3VITURTTlhrN1hydz09>

## Christmas & Solstice Services

### December 7th: "Hold a Stillness," Evening Vespers

For many of us, the holiday season and ending of a year can be challenging. Join us at UUS on Tuesday, December 7th, at 7 pm for vespers as we hold space for ourselves and each other during this hard time of the year. There will be no online option for this service.

### December 18th: Solstice Celebration

Join the Owl Moon Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPS), Rev. Diana Smith, and DLRE Marsha Thrall for a special candlelit solstice walk with activity stations on Saturday, December 19th, from 4 to 7 pm. There will be an option to walk through the woods and a more accessible option around the UUS building. There will be no online option for this celebration. All participants over the age of 2 must wear masks when close to others outside of their pod and follow all COVID safety precautions.

### December 24th: Family Service

Join us at UUS or online at 5 pm on Christmas Eve for our special Christmas Eve family service with lessons, special music, and carols! The offering will benefit the Minister's Discretionary Fund.

### December 24th: Candlelight Service

Join us outdoors at UUS for a candlelight service of carols and readings. We'll be outdoors for this half hour service so dress warmly, wear a face mask, and be prepared to sing as loudly as you like as we make Christmas music together! There will be no online option for this service.

## Sunday Offerings

A freewill offering is a standard part of our services. Each month, we designate a partner organization in the community to receive our support.

### December's Social Justice Offerings Benefit the Free Dental Clinic

Our generosity helps community members who are without dental insurance. Volunteer dentists, dental students, dental hygienists, and dental hygiene students provided services to hundreds of patients each year, many of whom are children. Provided care includes cleanings, cavity fillings, tooth extractions, x-rays, and cleaning. Offering donations can be given online (<http://bit.ly/UUSPartner>) or mailed to the office. (Write checks to UUS, with *FDC* on the memo line.)

### The Christmas Services Offerings Benefit the Minister's Discretionary Fund

This fund provides financial help for members and friends of the congregation and people in the community when a need or emergency arises. Offering donations can be given online (<https://onrealm.org/uusic/give/MDF>) or mailed to the office. (Write checks to UUS, with *MDF* on the memo line.)

You can also designate an offering donation to our Operating Budget (<http://bit.ly/UUSOperating>), as a general donation or towards the fulfillment of your annual pledge.

## From Your Board President, Alan Swanson

I believe our UUS community is a sanctuary of reinvigoration and a catalyst for learning and action, unified as we embrace the diversity of individuals and thoughts. Our members volunteer extraordinary hours to strengthen our own connections and address others' challenges. We're stronger than the sum of our parts, and we gather to act together on vital social issues of our time.

Our aspirations require resources, and securing them is elemental. We anticipate very good results (pledges continue to come in) for the 2022 Stewardship Campaign, and special gratitude is due to all who are enhancing our mission and vision programming by your support of the UUS operating budget. We also extend thanks to the many among you who are increasing your pledges over last year's, or making your first pledges.

As part of expanded UUS efforts to connect with the wider community, recent events have brought additional people and excitement through our doors: a Women's Music Collective Concert organized by Staff Pianist and Music Outreach Coordinator Hsin-Hui Liu and a Diwali Festival, both with oversight from Peggy Garrigues, whose title has been changed to Director of Congregational and Community Engagement with a role expanded to cover community rental and outreach opportunities. Exposing others to our values and facilities will help with our budget and may help find new members as well.

On Sunday, December 19th, at 11:15 following the UUS service, we'll have our semiannual Congregational meeting that will include an election to vote on the 2022 budget as well as a highly anticipated two-year plan that results from the extensive work of the Board-established Balance and Growth Initiative (BGI) group. Informational materials in preparation for the meeting and election will be sent to the congregation in advance. In addition, two advance information Zoom meetings about the BGI plan are being scheduled and will be announced.

The COVID phases of UUS reopening protocols put in place by our original COVID Team continue to serve our safety well. Our multiplatform reopening stages are a discussion item at each board meeting. In follow-up to our September meeting, when we tweaked Phase 3 to cautiously allow slightly greater access to the sanctuary for services, last month we decided to continue as we are for now. At the January board retreat we'll revisit the phases to evaluate the possible need for further reopening changes and the possible reconstitution of a smaller COVID task force that can be called upon as the pandemic evolves or devolves.

Amazingly, a good thing COVID has given us (beyond proving the UUS congregation's resilience) is a new way to attend services and meetings. We and other congregations won't be going back to the "old way" because our new "multiplatform way" offers accessibility to the UUS unimagined before.

Caring and acting together,  
Alan Swanson, President

## From Your Leadership Development Committee

### Election of Replacement UUS Board Secretary

Whenever there is a vacancy on a UUS elected body, the Board appoints a successor to fill the vacant position. Appointees serve until the next congregational meeting, when they are formally elected to complete the remainder of the term. Last June Carol Adamson stepped down as Secretary of the UUS Board and Paula Miller has been appointed to replace her. The next congregational meeting is set for December 19th, at which time Paula will be presented for formal election as Board Secretary to serve through June 2022. We are deeply grateful for her willingness to serve.

**Paula Miller** grew up in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and was actively involved in the Lutheran church during her formative years. After high school she spent a year at Grinnell College and 3 years at the University of Iowa where she was introduced to the UUS through the all-ages punk rock shows hosted in Channing Hall. She left Iowa in 1990 and lived in Seattle, Oregon, and rural Arizona where her continuing education focused on how ecological processes sustain and create diverse natural communities over long time scales. She moved back to Iowa City in 2004 with her two elementary school-aged children to attend graduate school at the UI Geoscience Department. She started attending UUSIC in the summer of 2012 and joined the following February, which allowed her to engage in the decisions to move to a new facility and select a new settled minister. Previous volunteer efforts at UUS include leading a hospitality team for several years, actively engaging in the Membership Associate and Social Justice Teams, and participating in the Owl Moon CUUPS ceremonies and workshops. She has agreed to finish the previous secretary's term until a new secretary can be selected next spring.

Your Leadership Development Committee: Susan Salterberg (Chair), Ron Pile, Sue Otto, Dave Gallaher, and Marsha Cheyney

### December Birthdays

Margaret Burchianti	Donna Johnson	Sherry Mangold	Michael Pavelich
Pat Ephgrave	Leah Kaminsky	David Martin	Julie Reynolds
Carmen Griggs	Paul Kohnhorst	Diana Miller	Peter Thorne
David Jepsen	Kasia Laskowska	Mary Oba	Susan Wells
		Kelly O'Berry	

### Past Sunday Service Attendance

#### October 31st: "Holding Our Beloveds," Rev. Diana Smith

59 Participating Zoom Accounts, 38 in person

#### November 7th: "Worthy Now"

72 Participating Zoom Accounts, 23 in person

#### November 14th: "Loving All of Us," Rev. Diana Smith

93 Participating Zoom Accounts, 34 in person

#### November 21st: "Practicing Gratitude,"

Rev. Diana Smith

64 Participating Zoom Accounts, 48 in person

#### November 28th: "Spirited Sunday"

46 Participating Zoom Accounts



## From Your Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Marsha Thrall

Dear Friends,

December is here! The year's darkest month is also the month with the most calendared holidays. Hanukkah, Solstice, and Advent are just a few celebrations taking place that help to illuminate the darkness and bring some warmth to our hibernating earth.

While the earth hibernates, RE is beginning to wake up! Our youth group is already active, engaged, and spending time together. POP! (Parents of Preschoolers) programming for our preschool families is engaging, and parents are meeting regularly to provide support to one another. And in October, we launched an All Ages Activity space in the Fellowship Hall so that families can gather together in our beautiful space, participate in worship and community life while being assured that extra measures have been taken to keep them safe and healthy.

After much anticipation, OWL for 7th-9th grade youth will begin on December 5, 2021 with a family orientation event. At this event, families will receive information about the OWL schedule for the remainder of the 2021-22 church year and will also have the opportunity to meet OWL facilitators and

classroom managers. Attendance at this orientation event is strongly suggested for families who would like to participate in OWL programming this year. Please sign up at <https://bit.ly/21OWLOrientation> to reserve your space at the December 5, 2021 OWL orientation event.

Other December Religious Education friendly events being planned at UUS include a Solstice Celebration on the trails of UUS, and also an in-person family Christmas Eve service with a "pop-up" pageant element. Stay tuned and watch the weekly all church emails for more information regarding both of these events.

Finally—families, I'm so excited, and so relieved that so many of our children will be able to be fully vaccinated in time to celebrate all of the beauty, light, and joy that December brings. And as we emerge from this hibernation that the COVID crisis has forced so many of us into, please know that the community at UUS is working hard to provide a welcoming and safe physical space for you to be a part of. If you have any questions about Religious Education please contact me at [dlreuusic@gmail.com](mailto:dlreuusic@gmail.com).

Peace. Marsha

## 2021 Treats & Talents Auction Ends December 3rd

### Mystery, Magic and Fun-raising!

Once again (with a sigh for some of us) this year's annual Treats & Talents Auction is fully online and via Zoom, but this one you will not mind joining with all the fun we have planned!

In the midst of a pandemic we can still have some fun, make connections, and support our UU Society!

### Online Silent Auction

See the online silent auction at [www.auctria.events/UUS2021](http://www.auctria.events/UUS2021). Contact Judy Tokuhisa ([judy.tokuhisa@gmail.com](mailto:judy.tokuhisa@gmail.com)) if you need help accessing or bidding on items. Thank you to the many donors! The online auction will run through 9 pm on Friday, December 3rd.

### Virtual Auction Event, December 3rd

Most bidding for auction items happens online, but about half a dozen live auction items are only available if you attend the festive virtual auction event!

Grab your favorite beverage and snack and join in at 7 pm on Friday, December 3rd, for some uproarious fun. UUS member Al Thomas will roust a good cheer with a story and member Dan Gall is going to try to ease as much of your pocket money out of you as possible for live auction items on this evening of Fun-raising and fundraising.

Join Zoom Meeting: [bit.ly/2021\\_UUS\\_Auction\\_Zoom](https://bit.ly/2021_UUS_Auction_Zoom)  
(Meeting ID: 942 1484 7438, Passcode: 542864).

### White Elephant

Plan to attend the auction event or you may find that you have a new object you may or may not want. Several fun and silly "white elephant" gifts will be available for people to buy to give to someone else. We hear someone is going to get a very happy sun face wall hanging that sings at inappropriate times and then does not shut up. Come and help pin this jewel and others on someone else and see some magic in our playful connections, and for good measure consider buying some White Elephant Insurance through the online auction; it is only \$10!

### UU Whodunnit

The Mystery is afoot ... Mr. Boddy came to UUS to host an Advancing Racial Equity and Justice Conference. But now he's missing! We need to find out what happened to him. Find clues in the online auction catalog and at the virtual Auction event and figure out who, what, and where the dastardly deed was done.

Your first clue is here: "Fortunately, a group from the Social Justice Team found the revolver and decided to take it apart and make it a part of a large hanging drape for the coming worship service "Being Non-Violent." (In this case you can cross out the revolver as the weapon.)

You can find your scorecard to keep track of rooms, people, and weapons to eliminate in the online auction catalog, Item #1 (second item in the catalog). Print it and keep watch for more clues in the auction catalog and at the virtual auction event to solve this murderous mystery!

## Upcoming Events & Group Reports

### Guatemalan Weavings For Sale, December 5th & 12th

Griselda, part of our Circle of Friends families, will be selling her weavings and other items she has made in the Fellowship Hall after the service on December 5th and 12th. She will have purses, table runners, table cloths, coin purses, scarves, wall hangings, Christmas decorations, potholders and more. Custom orders available.

### Informal Social Zoom Conversations, December 9th & 23rd

Would you enjoy 'seeing' your UUS friends more often? Let's get together informally—via Zoom, of course! Join us for a mid-week conversation on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month from 1 to 2 pm (Join via Zoom, Meeting ID: 828 8681 5989, Passcode: 433198). All are invited. These conversations are arranged by the UUS Pastoral Care Team. Questions? Contact: Val Bowman ([valeriebowman2@gmail.com](mailto:valeriebowman2@gmail.com)).

### Healing for Myanmar, December 11th

The UU Immigration Action Team invites you to an evening of poetry, storytelling, and music to acknowledge the need for healing in Myanmar at 4 pm on Saturday, December 11th in the UUS Sanctuary. Ko Ko Lwin, whom the UU Society is sponsoring, will be our host and will share his experiences of leaving his family, friends, and employment as an environmental scientist to come here. We will light candles for those poets, artists, environmentalists and other activists persecuted by the military regime. All are welcome.

### Secular Humanists, December 21st

As we continue to work on our transition to a revised Secular Humanist group, on December 21st we will again join with the American Ethical Union to celebrate the solstice and learn more about the AEU. This will be at 7 pm on Tuesday, December 21st, via Zoom. A link will be sent out closer to that date. It was good to see a number of you at the previous meeting with AEU.

### Calling All Knitters & Stitchers!

The UUS Knitters and Stitchers would like to start meeting again to make items to donate. Our first gathering will be a Saturday in January and we will start with just meeting for a knitting or crocheting session together on any project you happen to be working on. In the past we have made prayer shawls but for now we will concentrate on reuniting and working on our skills. What better way to spend a cold January day than knitting with friends? Please contact Vicki Siefers at [vicki.siefers@gmail.com](mailto:vicki.siefers@gmail.com) if you are interested in getting more information.

### Social Justice Team

The Iowa UU Witness and Advocacy Network (IUUWAN) invites all Iowa UUs, including us, to network on social justice issues on a state level. Three interest groups are forming now in the areas of racial, climate and electoral justice. If you are interested in being a part of this new movement to address these urgent issues, please contact Kirk Witzberger ([kirkwitz@gmail.com](mailto:kirkwitz@gmail.com)).

### Green Sanctuary Team

#### Sustainable gift ideas for the Holidays

Are you looking for ideas of what to give this holiday season that are more sustainable, practical, and locally sourced? Below are some ideas from the Green Sanctuary Team:

#### • **Social/Environmental Justice:**

- Kiva: loans for small businesses ([www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org)), support artisans (<https://store.kiva.org>), gift card: ([www.kiva.org/gifts/kiva-cards?handle=d64editor](http://www.kiva.org/gifts/kiva-cards?handle=d64editor))
- Heifer Project - animal or stove: <https://www.heifer.org> ,
- Equal Justice Initiative Calendar: <https://shop.eji.org>
- Donations to local organizations: Free Medical/Dental clinic, DVIP, Community, Center for Worker Justice, etc
- Chico Mendes Reforestation Project: <https://www.chicomendesguatemala.org/>

- **Local/international Artisans:** Visit 10,000 Villages, Crowded Closet, and the Iowa City Holiday Market on December 18th at the Robert A. Lee Rec Center

- **Events:** Movie passes, theatre and concert tickets, bowling passes, restaurant gift cards, swim passes

- **Consumables:** Bar shampoo, soap bars, fruit basket, fair trade chocolate, coffee, local wines, face masks, home made soup mix or cookie mix.

- **Gift of Time:** childcare, shoveling snow, errands, cleaning, help with "downsizing"

- **Membership** in a museum an environmental group

- **Kids:** Classes, magazines, homemade play dough, origami paper, beeswax crayons and recycled paper

- **Nature:** Field guide for birds, wildflowers, butterflies, trees, etc.

- **Home and kitchen:** recycled paper towels, cleaning cloths, cloth napkins, beeswax wrap, hand soap in a glass bottle, biodegradable bags.

### UU Free Lunch Program Report

It was a windy, cold, wintry mix on Friday, November 12th, but our intrepid UUS Free Lunch volunteers showed up as they have in all kinds of weather for 38+ years! Still dressed in COVID gear since April, 2020, Bob Littlehale (UUS Free Lunch Coordinator) coordinated a crew that included Bonnie Penno, Russ Lenth, Linda Rice, Teresa Ullerich, and our newest Free Lunch volunteer, Donna Simonton. Welcome, Donna! Bob reports that our volunteers enjoyed camaraderie and good conversation as they assembled and then served 89 meals (out a side door window at 1105 S. Gilbert Ct.) to hungry guests who braved the bad weather to enjoy a good meal. Afterward, left-overs were carted across the street to the Salvation Army so nothing went uneaten.

Grateful thanks to the Roots and Wings Covenant Group for purchasing the main dish of chicken strips and to our many Free Lunch volunteers and other UUS members and friends whose donations purchased all the side dishes.

If you would like more information on how you can support the Free Lunch Program, please contact Carmen Griggs at [cgriggsiowa@gmail.com](mailto:cgriggsiowa@gmail.com).

# Unitarian Universalist Society Board of Trustees Meeting Highlights

November 17th, 2021 (virtual via Zoom)

Full Board meeting minutes are available [on the website](#) or can be requested from the UUS administrator.

**PRESENT:** Alan Swanson (President), Joe Rasmussen (Past-President), Rochelle Honey-Arcement (Vice-President), Mike Pavelich (Treasurer), Paula Miller (Interim Secretary), Diana Henry (Trustee), Julia Audlehelm (Trustee), Hazel Seaba (Trustee), Rev. Diana Smith (Minister, Ex Officio). **ABSENT:** John Raley (Financial Trustee).

*President Swanson called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and Seaba provided opening words.*

**BOARD READ:** Members discussed chapters 4-6 from *Trauma Stewardship* by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** *The Board received the consent agenda and voted to approve October 20th Board minutes, Nov 3rd Interim Email Board Minutes, November 10 Exec Committee minutes, Treasurer/Finance reports, and Minister/staff reports. The Board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda with one change to the October 20th Board meeting minutes (mention of \$20,000 floor of cash reserves changed to \$200,000).*

## BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Governance:** Four motions were considered for approval.

1. Amendments to the Personnel Manual only require Governance oversight if they impact the budget, and Governance should review all new policies and the entire Policies and Procedures manual to avoid conflicting provisions and remove outdated policies: *Rasmussen moved to approve, second by Henry, motion passed unanimously.*
2. Bylaw amendment on the Dec Congregational meeting agenda to add "or team" to clarify who may qualify to serve on the Board, LDC, or Endowment: *Rasmussen moved to approve, second by Swanson, motion passed unanimously.*
3. Changes to the sabbatical policy recommended by Personnel: *Rasmussen moved to approve, second by Swanson. Pavelich asked if sabbatical time would also accrue during the 7th year when the employee is eligible to take sabbatical for the first time; Rasmussen confirmed that it would.*
4. Endowment will provide a quarterly report to the Board and congregation that identifies amounts in the General Fund and Restricted Donor Named and Special-Purpose Funds. *Rasmussen advised that the Endowment chair requested that "all" be inserted prior to "Restricted...". Rasmussen moved to approve with the amendment, second by Pavelich, motion passed unanimously.*

**Personnel:** Rev Diana will review a draft of the job description for an AV Coordinator to replace Publicity & AV Coordinator Jeff Walberg with Emma and it will be posted asap. She advised that once a new Coordinator is hired we can hopefully also draw on volunteers for additional help, which may include Senior High School students.

**Finance:** Pavelich advised that Stewardship reported on pledges, and that Endowment approves the new changes to Policies & Procedures.

**Right Relations:** Per Audlehelm there is no news to report as their focus has been on planning the minister's installation ceremony. Swanson acknowledged that the installation was very successful.

**Mission & Vision Review:** Seaba reported that at the November 15th meeting they reviewed a draft addressing the triennial evaluation of the minister in the wider pastoral role. The group has gone through 4 out of 5 tasks, and in December they hope to finish the 5th. Seaba expected to have strong drafts completed by early Spring.

## OTHER BUSINESS:

**COVID and UUS Reopening Progress:** Johnson County is currently at 39.3 cases/100,000 which is an increase from last month but not to Phase 2 yet. Rev Diana advised that she is looking several months into the future and considering what kind of changes will need to be made as COVID infections become endemic rather than pandemic. Also, now that children as young as 5 can be vaccinated our previous phases may not be as appropriate. Swanson suggested organizing a small group with medically qualified people to review our COVID phases and policies. Pavelich confirmed that the CDC will also be offering updated guidelines for indoor gatherings. Rasmussen asked if this should be included in the Board's January planning session.

**December Congregational Meeting:** Will be held in person and on Zoom at 11:15 am on Sunday, December 19th Swanson reviewed the meeting agenda and confirmed that a 3rd budget motion has been added to approve the BGI 2-year budget plan after the 2 votes to approve the expenditure from Endowment earnings and to approve the 2022 budget. Pavelich confirmed that the final tally of all votes won't be ready until 4 pm, but we should have a general idea of how the votes are going from those present in the sanctuary as well as the online and mail-in votes already received. *Swanson requested a motion to approve the agenda; Rasmussen moved to approve the agenda, second by Pavelich, the motion passed*

**2022 Budget:** *Pavelich discussed the proposed 2022 budget of \$593,300 and moved to approve it, seconded by Henry. The vote was unanimous.*

**Balance and Growth Initiative (BGI):** Honey-Arcement reported that BGI is preparing a PowerPoint presentation as part of their communication plan, and she requested feedback on how to discuss the historical details of the current financial situation. Swanson stressed that we don't want to put any blame on previous decisions, but we want to look to the future and the exciting new programs which will benefit the overall health and growth of the congregation if we can implement the BGI recommendations.

Pavelich noted that if we don't need to use the entire amount asked from Endowment that we can always refund some funds. Honey-Arcement added that one piece of BGI is to start a capital campaign to get the mortgage paid off without taking anything away from Stewardship. Pavelich added that the \$125,000 two-year ask from Endowment is less than the stock earnings this year. Seaba asked about the opportunity cost for the withdrawal: Pavelich reported that it is approximately 15% of our request or \$20,000.



**Balance and Growth Initiative (BGI), continued:** Pavelich confirmed that the congregation will be voting on the line item budget at the Dec meeting. Rasmussen confirmed that the line item budget shows expense areas which all show decreases except for facilities and staff benefits due to the increase in health insurance. Honey-Arcement added that the presentation will show how much staff time goes to the programmatic budget, and if we lose a staff person then it is clearer how much we lose from the overall income as well as implementing the UUS mission and vision. Rev Diana advised that Stewardship has asked her to make a final appeal for pledges to be returned by December 1st so the Board can finalize the budget.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Leadership Development:** Rasmussen reported that per Sue Otto another finance trustee is needed after John Raley's term ends.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Fundraisers:** Music Outreach Coordinator Hsin-Hui Liu requested that a freewill offering be allowed for the Iowa Women's Music Collective Concert held on 11/14. Miller reported that the concert was excellent and well-attended. The Immigrant Action Team requested that a member of the UUS Circle of Friends be allowed to sell her weavings and jewelry after services on 12/05 and 12/12. The UUS Senior High Group requested that they be able to use the UUS kitchen for a fundraiser commencing ASAP and culminating on 11/24. There was unanimous email approval from Board members for the three fundraisers.

**Board Planning Meeting:** Is currently set for 01/08/2022 which will focus on brainstorming 2022's three open questions relating to UUS's mission and vision.

**Rev Diana's Fellowship Status:** This was due on 11/01 and was completed on time. The process went well, and thanks are due to Seaba and Henry for assisting.

**Treats and Talents Auction:** This annual fundraiser for the operating budget will be held virtually via Zoom on Friday evening 12/03. Audlehelm reported that planning is in

progress: they are paring down the entertainment portion compared to last year's event, but they will have some "white elephant" items which will be amusing.

**New Members:** 4 new members will join the UUS on 11/21/21. This is 28 days before the Dec Congregational meeting, and therefore 2 days short of the bylaws' requirement that voting members join at least 30 days before the meeting. It was agreed that they be allowed to participate as voting members in the Dec meeting if they meet other requirements.

**Holiday Staffing:** Swanson requested allowing all UUS staff have time-off between Christmas and New Year's Day to show appreciation for all the hard work they have dedicated to the UUS this year. Rev Diana advised that they have discussed physically closing the church and holding the 12/26 and 01/02/21 services online only. This would help the AV team and is also a good time for a vacation since there aren't many meetings. Emma will need to do some end-of-the-year duties that week, but she, Peggy Garrigues, and Rev Diana will try to take a vacation that week, and Marsha Thrall can work at home for a few days. Rev Diana added that 3 days would be counted as a vacation or holiday, and it would be great to also extend this courtesy to part-time staff since they don't get vacation time. Henry generously offered to make a gift for each staff member.

**DLRE Covenant:** Rev Diana shared a draft of the RE Transition Team's covenant with new DLRE Marsha Thrall which will be shared during a future ceremony to be held during a Sunday service. The Board provided some suggestions on wording since the covenant should be between the DLRE and the congregation, not the RE Transition Team.

#### **CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION**

#### **CLOSING**

Process observer comments provided by Miller. Swanson provided closing words and extinguished the chalice. *Swanson adjourned the meeting at 9:26 pm.* The next full Board meeting is Wednesday, December 15th, 2021, at 7 pm.

—Submitted by Paula Miller, Interim Secretary

## **October Financial Report Excerpts**

**Operating Bank Accounts** end-of-month totals = \$301,000.

**Income:** Monthly pledge income exceeded our budgeted expectation by over \$4,000. This overage is in part due to people paying their 2022 pledges early, which is an annual trend. Congregants raised \$50 in offering donations for Inside Out (our July partner agency), \$150 for the Free Medical Clinic (August), \$175 for Shelter House (September), \$1,205.99 for the Emma Goldman Clinic (October), and \$477 for the October 5th Sunday agency, the Catholic Worker House. There was a donation to the Memorial Fund in memory of John Jennewein, and \$1,079.69 was donated for the offering taken at Rev. Diana Smith's Installation service, which be divided evenly between the UUA Living Tradition Fund, Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), and the UU Ministry for Earth.

**Expenses:** The bank accounts are down noticeably again. This is primarily due to running a full staff and programming resuming for many groups. There were some bigger bills; our

six month payment to the UU Solar LLC, our quarterly HVAC maintenance payment, and several payouts to our monthly agencies for the social justice offering donations. Stewardship follow up, the Installation service, and the Haunted Trails event were all special activities that had spending this month.

**Status of our 2021 Deficit Spending:** Our deficit spending now totals \$117,000 for these first 10 months. Recall that we had anticipated it to be \$175,000 for the full year. We have enough extra funds in the bank accounts to cover our total 2021 deficit and to contribute a bit to the anticipated 2022 deficit. Final figures will be reported at the December Congregational Meeting.

**Finance Committee:** The BGI group will be submitting a final 2022 budget proposal and detailed Two-Year Plan to the Board this month. Again, the Congregation will vote on these in December. The Stewardship Team continues to monitor and follow-up on 2022 Pledge commitments. There is a good chance we will meet their goals for the drive.

—Mike Pavelich (Treasurer) and Emma Barnum (Congregational Administrator)

**UUS Congregational Meeting (In Person and via Zoom)  
December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 11:15 am  
Agenda**

**OPENING**

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting Rev. Diana Smith  
Call to Order Alan Swanson, President  
Validation of a quorum Amy Fretz

**ACTION/DISCUSSION/UPDATE ITEMS**

**Approval of May 23, 2021, Meeting Minutes**

*Motion and second, each by a member present, corrections/discussion, vote*

**Recognition of Outgoing Committee Members**.....Alan Swanson  
Carol Adamson--Board of Trustees Secretary

**Election of Officers**

*Motion to approve*.....Sue Otto, Nominations Lead, Leadership Development Committee  
Paula Miller--Board of Trustees Secretary  
*Second by a member present, discussion, vote*

**Amendment to the Bylaws** (addition of “**or team**” to the following (see bold type):

**UUS BYLAWS ARTICLE V – QUALIFICATIONS FOR NOMINEES; PROCEDURES FOR NOMINATIONS**

B. Only a qualified voting member (who has been a member for at least one year and has served on at least one committee **or team**) may serve on the Board of Trustees, Leadership Development Committee, or the Endowment Committee. Any qualified voting member may run for any open position.

*Motion and second, each by a member present, discussion, vote*

**Report from the President**.....Alan Swanson

**Balance and Growth Initiative (BGI): Two-Year Budget Plan Presentation**

Introduction of the Balance and Growth Initiative; recognition of its members by Alan Swanson  
**The Plan: Rochelle Honey-Arcement, BGI Chair, and Mike Pavelich, Treasurer**

**Approval of the expenditure from General Endowment *earnings* a maximum of \$45,000 beyond the annual spending allowance (ASA) for the 2022 UUS Operating Budget and a maximum of \$80,000 beyond ASA for the 2023 UUS Operating Budget (total maximum of \$125,000 for the two-year Balance and Growth Initiative plan).**..Mike Pavelich, Treasurer

*Motion to approve*.....Mike Pavelich  
*Second by a member present, discussion, vote*

**Approval of 2022 UUS Budget**.....Mike Pavelich, Treasurer

(The 2022 Budget is part of the two-year BGI budget plan but needs its own motion/second)  
*Motion to approve*.....Mike Pavelich  
*Second by a member present, discussion, vote*

**Approval of the Balance and Growth Initiative Two-Year UUS Budget Plan for 2022-2023**

*Motion to approve*.....Rochelle Honey-Arcement, BGI Chair  
*Second by a member present, discussion, vote*

**Announcements**.....Alan Swanson

**CLOSING**

Extinguishing of the Chalice and Closing Words.....Rev. Diana Smith  
Request for Unanimous consent to Adjourn.....Alan Swanson



# *Voting List for May Congregational Meeting*

According to UUS's bylaws, members are eligible to vote at the Congregational Meeting on December 19th 2021 if they: 1) have signed the membership book, 2) are over 14 years of age, 3) have made an annual financial contribution of record to the annual operating budget (or either have a financial waiver or are Life Members of the Society), and 4) have been members at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

If you think your name has been omitted from this list in error, please contact Peggy Garrigues ([dcce@uusic.org](mailto:dcce@uusic.org)).

Dean Abel	Jane DeWitt	Kathy Hotsenpiller	Lynette Marshall	Bonnie Penno	Sharon Thomas
Carol Adamson	Monique DiCarlo	Peggy Houston	David Martin	Mark Penno	Joy Thompson
Tim Adamson	Mary Dix	Carolyn Howe	Diane Martin	Ron Pile	Peter Thorne
Bruce Alexander	Sherry Dolash	Jan Hubel	Karen Mason	Paul Pomrehn	Carol Throckmorton
Dick Anderson	Andy Douglas	Kenn Hubel	Marianne Mason	Judy Quinn	Dave Tokuhisa
Alice Atkinson	Kay Eginton	Kathy Huedepohl	Katherine Mathews	Edward Raley	Judy Tokuhisa
Ken Atkinson	Meg Eginton	Lois Hughes	Beej Matson	Joan Raley	Jim Trepka
Julia Audlehelm	John Elson	Merle Ihne	Mary McCann	John Raley	Cheryl Tugwell
Larry Audlehelm	Irvin Emig	Lynne Ikach	Jason McGinnis	Bruce Randall	Ali Tunnicliff-Scott
Jeanne Bancroft	Lori Enloe	Adam Ingersoll	Janet McKee	Christina Randall	Simon Tunstall
Joe Barrash	Jim Ephgrave	Brigitte Ingersoll	Gail McLure	Joe Rasmussen	Theresa Ullerich
Kris Barrash	Pat Ephgrave	Jan Jacobson	Mary McMurray	Mardi Rasmussen	Dana Van Abbema
Kara Beauchamp	Christine Etler	Nik Jakob	Tom McMurray	Tabitha Rasmussen	Steve Van Abbema
Barbara Beaumont	Sara Feldmann	David Jepsen	Kim McWane Friese	Jacqueline Reger	Carly van der Heide
Philip Beck	Betsy Fischer	Carolyn Johnson	Virginia Melroy	Erica Reschly	Dana van der Heide
Daniel Benton	Linda Fisher	Donna Johnson	Gay Mikelson	Jenny Reynolds	Stephanie Van Housen
Joyce Bernardy	Jeffery Ford	Emily Johnson	Diana Miller	Julie Reynolds	
Allison Bettine	Meghann Foster	Nicholas Johnson	Paula Miller	Linda Rice	Mary Vasey
Sharon Booker	Amy Fretz	Nicole Johnson	Tony Miller	Tom Rocklin	Tova Vitiello
Peg Bouska	Donna Friedman	Susan Kaliszewski	Carol Moreno	Anna Rode	Peg Voelker
John Bowman	Dan Gall	Miriam Kashia	Ed Moreno	Chris Rode	Terry Lynn Wahls
Valerie Bowman	Meredith Gall	Sandy Keller	Craig Mosher	Shona Roeder	Zach Wahls
Susan Boyd	Dave Gallaher	Bailey Kelley	Ruth Muir	Sarah Ross	Jeff Walberg
Alan Brink	Winnie Ganshaw	Larry Kent	Shelby Myers	Rhonda Rowden	Kesia Walker
Pete Brokaw	Gail Garwood	Kathleen Kingman	Marcy Neumann	Charity Rowley	Doug Wallace
Wendy Brown	Joel Gilbertson-White	Margaret Kinsman	Carol Nordquist	Susan Salterberg	Mary Kathryn Wallace
Beverly Bullard		John Lanaghan	Gerald Nordquist	Ricardo Sauro	
Margaret Burchianti	Brian Glidewell	Tom Larkin	Jim Norris	Mike Schmitz	Daniel Walls
Kris Canfield	Carmen Griggs	Barbara Laughlin	Nancy Noyer	Kay Schneider	Julia Wasson
Lynne Cannon	Peggy Grimmer	Jim Laughlin	Liz Noyes	Deb Schoelerman	Connie Webb
Jeanette Carter	Prahlad Gupta	Gary Lawrenson	Mary Oba	Anne Schons	Mary Lou Welter
Fanny Carver	Beverly Haas	Dave Leavitt	Kelly O'Berry	Hazel Seaba	Nickolas Westergaard
Ian Cawley	Kurt Hamann	Judy Leavitt	Terri O'Berry	Alyssa Selmer	Jerry Wetlaufer
Kirk Cheyney	Barbara Haring	Russ Lenth	Alison Oliver	Jamie Sharp	Kristin Wildensee
Marsha Cheyney	Claudine Harris	Lisa Lepic	Jim Olson	Dick Siefers	Faith Wilmot
Rachel Clark	Robert Harris	Brenda Linley	Sue Otto	Vicki Siefers	Kaye Winder
Judi Clinton	Linda Hartford	Jodi Linley	Katherine Otto	Donna Simonton	Scott Wittenkeller
Sam Cochran	Sally Hartman	Marta Little	Simmering	Jane Slaymaker	Kirk Witzberger
Lois Cole	Santhi Hejeebu	Jan Locher	Cecile Owings	Cindy Spading	Star Wojciak
Cole Cecil	Diana Henry	Stephen Locher	Ron Owings	Renee Speh	Edward Wolfe
Chris Coretsopoulos	Hilary Higgs	Halie Lopez	Kim Palmer	Barbara Staib	Ron Wright
Jeanette Corley	Colleen Higgins	Mary Losch	Lula Palmer	Virginia Stamler	Rich Young
Ernie Cox	Sarah Holmes	Kristin Lucas	Maureen Patterson	Jill Stephenson	Susan Kasal Young
Ron Crawford	Michael Honey-Arcement	Nancy Lynch	Dorothy Paul	Hilary Strayer	Lenda Zelinskas
Dan Cummins		Nichole Lynn	Michael Pavelich	Alan Swanson	
Laurie Cummins	Rochelle Honey-Arcement	Caryl Lyons	Pat Pavelich	Liz Swanson	
Jo Cunningham		Cari Malone	Gerry Pearson	Christopher Taylor	
David Curry	Al Hood	Sherry Mangold	Emily Peck	Vanessa Taylor	
Jennifer Day	Jean Hood	Lori Marshall	Sriram Pemmaraju	Al Thomas	

**283 Members**

## Welcome to Our New UUS Members! UUS Membership Ceremony, November 21, 2021



### **Cole Cecil and Kezia Walker-Cecil**

Cole was born and raised in Keokuk, Iowa. When he transferred to the University of Iowa from Southeastern Community College's Keokuk campus, he moved to Iowa City, and has lived here ever since. Cole grew up in a conservative evangelical Christian environment, but now considers himself to be atheist/humanist. He works at Pearson as a senior software developer, and he organizes both the Iowa City Game Development Meetup, and a Discord community for neurodivergent adults. Cole recently found out about being neurodivergent (autistic, ADHD, and OCD) over the past few years, but he now sees it as an important and positive part of his identity. His hobbies include playing and making video games, spending time with his family and friends and cats, learning, creating things, reading, yoga, and mindfulness meditation.

Kezia is currently working on her Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Iowa. For about a decade, she has been either a lecturer or a teaching assistant in the ESL department and the Linguistics department. She has been actively involved in COGS (Campaign to Organize Graduate Students—UE Local 896) during her time as a graduate student. Kezia's grad school procrastination go-to is cooking and baking, since she says that unfortunately, grad school has pretty much taken over her life for the last five years.

Cole and Kezia both started attending services at UUS when they were looking for a church that cares deeply about social justice and helping people find ways to be better humans in the world. Cole appreciates the diversity of beliefs at UUS, that we work to help make everyone feel welcome and safe, and the weekly time of spiritual refreshment. Kezia values the openness to have conversations about difficult and important things, and that we are seeking for truth, wherever it may be found. She is looking for a place to learn and a place to rest.

### **Jennifer L. Day**

Jenn is originally from Cedar Rapids and has volunteered and worked in Iowa City for some years now. She works in Human Services, focusing on mental health and professional training. Jenn has been attending our UU Buddhist Sangha since last year, and has found a sense of community there that she would like to make official. She appreciates that UU's often have depth to their spiritual journeys, even while they simultaneously respect those with different beliefs. Jenn is hoping to find a supportive and engaged community, to continue her participation in the Buddhist Sangha, and to perhaps sing in the choir. She loves to laugh, loves animals, loves cookies, and loves learning how to live a good life.



### **Donna Kaye Simonton**

Donna's family moved around a lot while she was growing up, so she has lived in Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, and in the Chicago area, as well as Indiana, Maryland, and Washington DC. She came to Iowa just recently to enjoy family, to get away from expressways, and to enjoy the Midwest lifestyle and cost of living. She has been a UU for over forty years, so she's been part of UU congregations in many communities.

Donna's career as an operating room nurse and health professions educator led her to start clinical education/simulation centers at University of Illinois, Johns Hopkins, and George Washington University. Alongside that career, she has also enjoyed a musical career as a singer of sacred and choral music, and a UU choir director.

Donna has a strong commitment to Unitarian Universalism, and has taken on leadership in previous congregations, as well as serving on district and regional committees. She also started the Universalist Heritage network. Donna was very happy to find UUS. She hopes to participate here through music, education, denominational affairs, and event planning and support. In her free time she enjoys UU history, fused glass projects, and rescuing dogs

# The UUS News

The Unitarian Universalist Society

2355 Oakdale Road

Coralville, IA 52241

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

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## UUS Staff

**Minister:** Rev. Diana Smith (minister@uusic.org)

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

**Director of Lifespan Religious Education:** Marsha Thrall  
(education@uusic.org)

**Director of Congregational and Community Engagement:**  
Peggy Garrigues (dcce@uusic.org)

**Director of Congregational Music:** Alex Heetland (music@uusic.org)

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

**Staff Pianist & Music Outreach Coordinator:** Hsin-Hui Liu  
(pianist@uusic.org)

**Building Steward:** Ron Wright (contact the office)

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

## UUS Board of Trustees, 2021-2021

**President:** Alan Swanson (president@uusic.org)

**Vice President:** Rochelle Honey-Arcement, rochelle.r.honey@gmail.com)

**Past President:** Joe Rasmussen (uusicc.joe@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Paula Miller (kosmikkua@yahoo.com)

**Treasurer:** Mike Pavelich (treasurer@uusic.org)

**Finance Trustee:** John Raley (jraley@amfam.com)

**Trustee:** Julia Audlehelm (juliasdrawings11@gmail.com)

**Trustee:** Diana Henry (savekemet@gmail.com)

**Trustee:** Hazel Seaba (hazel-seaba@uiowa.edu)

**Our Mission:** We are a welcoming, spiritually diverse home. We act on our values: Honor the Earth; Advocate for racial and social justice; Nurture 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.