



From Your Minister

Rev. Diana Smith

Dear Ones,

As we move into August, many of us are continuing and wrapping up summer adventures, whether far away or right here at home. And many of us are looking towards the coming of a new school year and congregational year. This year at UUS we'll be continuing to nurture our connections with ourselves, each other, and the wider community. You can read about many of the programs, relationships, and activities that staff and members are developing throughout this newsletter.

This month we'll be continuing to explore our summer theme of Delight as we experience the end of the summer and the beginning of the regular congregational year. We'll be having Ingathering events from August 20 – 27, beginning with our water communion and backpack blessing during the worship service on Sunday, August 20, and then an ice cream social after the service. Then, on Saturday, August 26, Emma's Revolution will be giving a concert at UUS. Chances are, you're familiar with their music even if you don't know them by name, so check out their music here <https://emmasrevolution.com/music> and stay tuned for ticket purchases. And then, on Sunday, August 27, after

the worship service we'll have our annual opportunities fair so you can find out about ways to get more involved at UUS. While we're actively working on plans for the congregational year, you can find early information about offerings throughout this newsletter, and then stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

Finally, I'll be on study leave from July 25 – August 7. Study leave is a very important part of my year. It's when I have the chance to do some of the planning and reading that I don't get to do during the regular course of ministry. It helps me plan our programming for the fall and early winter. When I'm on study leave, staff and the Pastoral Care Team are responding to most urgent needs. I'm reachable if there is an emergency.

As we move into the last part of summer, may you continue to create spaces to nurture your mind, heart, spirit, and body so that you may enter the new year rejuvenated.

Love and Blessings,
Rev. Diana

Upcoming Services

Join us at 10 am on Sundays,
in-person or virtually

August 6th: Hope, One Mile

A road sign on I-35 about 30 miles into Minnesota reads “Hope, 1 Mile.” Each time we pass, I wonder where hope resides in everyday life and what it means to us. We will explore possible meanings of the concept of Hope. I select this idea because of its common use in the UUS community: in worship services, in covenant groups and in greetings, e.g., “I hope you have a good day.” No single meaning is proposed. Rather, several meanings are offered for worshippers to consider. UUS member David Jepsen preaching.

August 13th: The Delight of Experilearning

How do we create communities that celebrate learning and growing? That try things out, letting go of the things that aren't working and trying something new? What helps us with delighting in unknowing and cultivating creativity? Join us for a special reverse religious education worship service. About halfway through the service instead of singing kids out to special classes, we'll be singing adults out to try some special workshops on different ways of experilearning. Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

August 20th: Ingathering

Join us for our Ingathering service on August 20! We'll celebrate our traditional Water Communion service, so please bring a small container of water that is meaningful to you. We'll also be blessing backpacks, courier bags, briefcases, and more for people of all ages who are about to start the school year or simply want to mark this transition point in the midst of our work year, so please bring your backpack or a similar item. If you're participating from home, please bring a glass of water, an empty bowl, and your backpack or other bag to the online service. During the worship service we'll also commission our Board of Trustees. Rev. Diana Smith preaching. Following the service at 11 am we'll have an ice cream social and games outside and inside!

August 27th: The Joy of the Journey

“Work” shows up in a lot of what we do, from the employment we engage in, to doing school stuff, to caring for the people in our lives, to the ways we engage with justice. (Whew, it was hard avoiding the “w” word in that sentence!) So what are some things we can do to cultivate joy and delight to sustain us in the many types of work that we do? Rev. Diana Smith preaching. Following the service at 11 am we'll have our activities fair.

*Find more information on our Sunday Services
[on our website.](#)*

August Offerings Benefit the Center for Worker Justice (CWJ)

The Center for Worker Justice's priority issues include defending workers' rights to proper payment and safe work, improving housing options for low-income residents, confronting discrimination and ensuring equal access to community services, and providing assistance to those affected by immigration policies. Find out more about CWJ at <https://cwjiowa.org>.

All cash donations collected during or for the Sunday Services offerings benefit our monthly community partner, unless otherwise earmarked on a donation envelope. Checks for the offering baskets should be made out to UUS and have “CWJ” or on the memo line. You can also donate online at <http://bit.ly/UUS-Partner>, text “GivetoUUSIC Partner” to 73256, or mail a check to the UUS office.

Farewell to Alex!

Please join us August 6th for Alex Heetland's goodbye celebration after the Sunday Service. We are so grateful for the time we had with Alex and wish them the best as they take on a new adventure as the Artistic Director for the Sacramento Gay Mens' Chorus in California!

Let's Celebrate Our August Birthdays

Allison Bettine
Beverly Bullard
Meghann Foster
Ron Pile

Beah Rode
Heidi Sinderman
Star Wojciak



From Your Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Nic Kaplan

For August 6th and 13th, RE continues to be “one room schoolhouse” style for ages 3 and up. We will spend Sundays outside learning more about the UUS Mission Statement while we explore, discover, and play outside. Because we’ll primarily be outside, play clothes and shoes are strongly recommended.

Interested in helping guide Religious Education at UUS?

This past year, the members of the RE Team have been instrumental in making sure that I have felt welcomed and have been supported. They’ve met about once a month on Zoom to discuss our mission, values, and how those are playing out in our spaces. They gathered together to make the beautiful chalices for our Bridgers and teachers. They have helped connect me with the congregation. And so much more.

If you would be interested in joining the RE Team or as a facilitator this coming year, please fill out this form. Whether you’re interested in guiding programming for 3, 13, or 30+ year olds, there’s something for everyone and you don’t have to be a practiced teacher to be right for the job.

Youth Group

Youth Group is not meeting regularly over the summer. Youth and their families should keep an eye out for messages about a couple of pop up events over the summer. We’ll resume our regular meetings on August 20th.

Summer Camp Successes!

Our first year of summer camp was a success! Families were thrilled with both Nature Camps and Theater Camp and we heard from several parents and caregivers that UUS camps were “the best camp” they had ever participated in.

Thank you to everyone who helped make camp a success and for everyone’s patience while so much of my time and attention was devoted to camp.





Learning Spaces Opens on August 23rd!

The Learning Space for trans, queer, and other marginalized youth will be opening August 23 at UUS! The Learning Space is a place where children and youth in grades 1 – 12 who are enrolled in online school or homeschool can come to take their classes together. UUS will be providing trained adult supervisors.

Come to our first-ever Learning Spaces open house on August 9th for a building tour and Q&A session with UUS leadership. You can participate in-person or virtually! You can email education@uusic.org to submit your questions in advance!

What is the LEARNING SPACE?

- ♦ A safe learning space for trans, queer, and other marginalized students in our community for the 2023/2024 school year
- ♦ Students in 1st through 12th grade enrolled in online school are welcome to UUS for a safe, supervised environment to complete their classes and socialize with other students.
- ♦ The Learning Space will be open to anyone in our community—it is not a Unitarian Universalist-only program—as an alternative to virtual learning from home.

OPEN HOUSE EVENT

UUS is opening our building as a safe learning space for trans, queer, and marginalized students in response to extreme anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-trans legislation.

Join us **August 9th** for the Learning Space Open House! Take a tour of the Unitarian Universalist building at 6:30 PM, followed by a Q&A with UUS leadership at 7:00 PM. **Participate in the Q&A in person or virtually**, all your questions are welcome! You can email education@uusic.org to submit your questions in advance.

Volunteer Opportunities

We need adult volunteers who can help support trans, queer, and marginalized students who need a safe, supportive community in which to learn.

Learn more [HERE!](#)

Learn More!

Want more information about the Learning Space? Use this QR code to bring you to our webpage OR use the link below!



Learn More:

- Find out more here: <https://www.uusic.org/uus-learning-space/>
- Sign up a student to attend here: <https://forms.gle/hqQFGpS9jwftbzgg8>
- Sign up an adult to volunteer here: <https://forms.gle/d6VqRFAoByLrImoH7>
- Signed up or potential students, their families, and volunteers are invited to attend our Learning Space open house on Wednesday, August 9. At 6:30 pm we will be having a tour of our facility and at 7 pm we will have a Q&A.

ONLINE REGISTRATION:

Register your student(s) for the Learning Space for '23/'24 school year by using the QR code or the link!



**UUS
LEARNING SPACE
REGISTRATION FORM**

SAVE THE DATE!

EMMA'S REVOLUTION

INGATHERING SPECIAL EVENT

August 26th at Unitarian Universalist Society

Ingathering Announcements

Join us **August 20th** for our Ingathering Service! We will celebrate our Water Communion service, bless backpacks, an enjoy and ice cream social after the service!

August 26th is our Ingathering Concert featuring Emma's Revolution! Save the date and watch for more details! After service on **August 27th**, we will have our activities fair featuring all of our teams, groups, and opportunities at UUS.

Newsletter changes coming soon!

We are in the process of reviewing how we handle our monthly newsletter. With the majority of our readers viewing the newsletter online, we'd like to shift to a more dynamic process of sharing news and events. Also, the staff restructuring this summer has shifted workloads for the admin staff, making it harder to handle a formatted monthly publication. Luckily, the unveiling of our new website has opened up some exciting possibilities. Next month Communications and Outreach Coordinator Kaytee Rairdin and Congregational Administrator Emma Barnum will be working on a blog for our website, organized by categories and tags for easy navigation. As articles, reports, and events are submitted for the weekly emails and newsletter, they will be posted directly on the blog. The September newsletter will be created and published as usual, but will likely be less polished as we focus on getting the blog up and running. Then in October we will experiment with a monthly emailed newsletter made up of excerpts and links to the blog posts, rather than a formatted PDF. We will continue to provide printed versions of the newsletter for those on our mailing list, but they will look different.

This change will allow leaders and groups to submit news and announcements on their own schedules, without worrying about content lengths or deadlines, and will allow us to share more information in new ways. It will also hopefully help the admin staff streamline the newsletter process to better fit our workload requirements. This is an experiment and we'll be tweaking things as we learn what works. We appreciate your patience and support as we try something new! Look in the weekly emails in August and September for updates on the blog and instructions on how to submit items for publishing.

Leadership Development Committee

Building Our Leadership Muscles

Today's featured leadership practice: Model the Way



Carol Throckmorton can often be found in the kitchen at UUS. She has two passions: food and human connection. Some might consider those two things unrelated, but Carol sees them as intricately intertwined. "Food facilitates connection. It brings people together," she says.

After three decades as a clinical dietitian and nutrition educator, many of the roles Carol takes on at UUS revolve around food and nutrition. She was involved in the kitchen layout when the new building was being designed, and continues to serve on the kitchen committee, the Free Lunch program, and the Little Free Food Pantry Team, as well as many others. She also started, and continues to lead, the Veg CommUUnity, where she organizes informal gatherings with delicious plant-based food.

For 6 ½ years at 10 South Gilbert, she was Congregational Life Coordinator. In that position, she was instrumental in creating the Hospitality Teams concept and adding food to the social hours, both of which continue to this day. She has served as a Hospitality Team leader since 2017. She also organized the Girls' Night Out! group which—you guessed it—combines food and connection.

When asked if she has a favorite quote that embodies her leadership style, she quotes Maya Angelou, "I have learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Carol has facilitated many connections through food and continues that tradition. By aligning her actions with her shared values, she is truly "Modeling the Way".

The Leadership Development Committee initiated this column to highlight leadership practices and routes to leadership. We also want to re-connect you to some of UUS's leaders.

Congregational Preparedness

This spring, a team of board members (Jeff Walberg and Rochelle Honey-Arcement), staff (Rev. Diana Smith, Emma Barnum, and Nic Kaplan), and other volunteers (Dave Gallaher and Anne Schons) began meeting to work on our planning for congregational preparedness. Our work, which is building on previous work that UUS has done around safety and preparedness, was sparked by trends we're seeing around the country amidst growing division and extremism.

The team shared lessons about preparedness that we've gleaned from previous work in congregations, government, nonprofits, mental health, disaster preparedness, and military service. We also were able to share information from recent UUA trainings about congregational preparedness. Some of the key principles we're using to guide our continuing work are:

- Greeting and welcoming people well, including having greeters in the atrium throughout worship services or anytime the building is open, is one of the most important things we can do to increase security and minimize disruptive behaviors. And it also helps us be a more welcoming congregation!
- De-escalation training is important. The biggest thing congregations in places of growing extremism are experiencing are things like people showing up to yell or distribute flyers and such to try to disrupt programming. Sometimes this can be forestalled by identifying people before programming begins because of good greeting practices. Other times, having folks near the entrance who are prepared to de-escalate someone is important.
- Preparing ourselves for disaster response – things like fire drills, first aid training, tornado prep – is very important. It equips us during this time of growing climate chaos, and also helps us be ready if something happens like a fire, a burst pipe, or an injury.

Based on what we've learned, we've been working on three main things:

- Enhancing our disaster preparedness through things like the first drill we had in July and posting clearer information about responses. We will be including basic first aid training/reminders in our various volunteer trainings as we begin the congregational year.
- Putting together a training for ushers, greeters, and similar folks for August or early September. Dave Gallaher is organizing this. We hope many people will be able to attend.
- Doing specific preparation for the Learning Space opening, including consulting with UUA Safer Congregations staff and local safety professionals. We are looking into upgrading our camera system, enhancing IT security, and partnerships.

If you'd like to learn more or join our team to help us with this work, please contact any team member.



August Food Drive

With rising food prices, many folks are having trouble feeding themselves and/or families. Let's do a food drive in August for CommUnity (formerly the Crisis Center). It's the food bank that serves the entire county. Please bring non-perishable foods to UUS on Sundays and put them in the bin in the foyer.

Save the Date(s) to Support UUS!

UUS Treats and Talents Auction, September 16th

This year the annual Treats and Talents Auction is trying something new! On Saturday, September 16th, join us for a free, open-to-the public afternoon of entertainment, games and activities for all ages, food, and a variety of fun ways to support our operating budget, including our annual silent auction (which will begin earlier in the month online as normal). Following the family-friendly afternoon festivities, an elegant evening program with music, desserts, and wine (as well as delicious nonalcoholic drinks) will be held in the Fellowship Hall accompanied by our popular Live Auction event.

Details on the Auction programming are still coming together, but please start thinking if you have a unique or valuable item, event, or service to donate for the silent or live auction. (This year we are asking for people to donate household items to the Rummage Sale instead of the Auction.)

We will also need members and friends of all ages to share their treats and talents during our afternoon program (can you juggle, do magic, play a fun instrument, or have another fun talent to showcase? Can you donate gently used toys or a dessert for game prizes? Can you volunteer to run a game or table?). We'll have more details and signup information in the coming weeks and months- keep an eye on the weekly emails and newsletters! Contact Judy Tokuhisa (judy.tokuhisa@gmail.com) with questions or if you'd like to join the Auction planning team!

UUS Craft Fair, December 2nd

This winter (date TBA) we are planning our first annual Holiday Craft Fair. This event is still in the initial planning phase, but will provide an opportunity for the artists, bakers, crafters, and creatives in our congregation and community to showcase our collective talents and spread some holiday cheer. Artisans will be able to rent booth space to sell items for themselves, or they can donate items to be sold to benefit our operating budget. Many more details are yet to be determined, stay tuned! If you'd like to be involved in planning this event, contact Emma Barnum (admin@uusic.org).

Highlighted Upcoming Events

Prision Ministry Team, August 1st

The UUS Prison Ministry Team would like to invite you to our monthly meeting at 7 pm on the first Tuesday of each month, in the UUS Conference Room. The Prison Ministry Team endeavors to become informed advocates for justice and build relationships to decrease isolation of those confined in the Iowa justice system. This will be a Hybrid Meeting, both in-person and by Zoom ([Link to join](#), Meeting ID: 848 0842 4430, Passcode: 193553).

Racial Justice Team, August 3rd

The Racial Justice Team strives to educate ourselves through various venues (reading, discussion, media, programs). We meet at 7 pm on the 1st Thursday of each month. With goals to further anti-racism, we hope to equip ourselves to be allies standing in solidarity with communities of color. Join us on our journey! Watch for updates in the Wednesday emails. For more information contact Peg Bouska and Dave Martin at racialjusticechair@uusic.org. ([Link to Join](#), Meeting ID: 880 6065 0709, Passcode: 501124).

UU Mystics, August 6th

Join the UU Mystics on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month in the Conference Room after services (11:30 am to 1 pm). The UUS Mystics is a group for anyone who has an interest or personal experience with what is commonly referred to as "mystical experiences." We will share our stories, and explore the impact, meaning, and implications that these experiences may have in our lives and beyond. As with most groups who enjoy personal sharing, we will practice confidentiality and respect with sharing of time.

If you wish to participate and cannot be present, please use join us over Zoom ([Link to Join](#), Meeting ID: 826 8770 0792, Passcode: 218927).

Men's Sunday Social, August 6th

UUS adult men are invited to gather together on the first Sunday of most months from 6 to 8 pm to socialize in a casual setting. We will be meeting at 2dogs pub in Iowa City (1705 S 1st Ave). Send questions to Nik Jakob at menssundaysocial@uusic.org. or 319-631-8126.

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Social Justice Team, August 8th

The UUS Social Justice Team coordinates our congregation's community service, monthly community partners, and a variety of social action activities in our area. Our meetings are informal and fun, and we welcome new faces and ideas. Join us! All are welcome! Contact socialjustice@uusic.org to get more information about the team. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. ([Link to Join](#), Meeting ID: 906 916 603 Password: 036010).

Green Sanctuary Team, August 10th

The Green Sanctuary Team invites you to join us from 11 am to 12:30 pm via Zoom. Together we'll collaborate on ways to live our 7th Principle (respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part) in the life of our church community, in our personal lives, and in our world. ([Join Zoom Meeting](#), Meeting ID: 881 3226 4216, passcode: 533092)

Free Lunch Program, August 11th

The cornerstone of the Free Lunch Program is, "an open door, a full plate and no questions asked." A hot meal is served six days a week at 1105 S. Gilbert Court, Iowa City. Since 1986, UUS has provided the Free Lunch meal on the second Friday of every month to about 110 guests. This year we have returned from the pandemic limitations by creating the main meal using the UUS kitchen by our volunteer chefs under the guidance of Vicki Siefers. This change has reduced the costs of our offerings in the face of higher costs.

If you would like more information about how you can contribute to Free Lunch, please contact Bob Littlehale (freelunch@uusic.org or 419-297-7812)

Rummage Sale, August 12th

The UUS Rummage Sale will be Saturday, August 12th! Bring your items to the service on August 6th and we will help you unload them after the service. August 7th-11th, you can place your items in the foyer at UUS on the right (south) side. We need help unloading cars on Sunday, August 6th, after the service, advertising, making signs, putting up signs, and removing items that don't sell. If you are able to help or want more information about the Rummage Sale, please email Sue at kann.sue@gmail.com.

Land Ministry Team, August 18th

The Land Ministry Team plans for uses of the outdoor areas and leads in the implementation of those plans, including

the community garden, labyrinth, children's playscape, the woodlands and trails, and the memorial garden. Land Ministry also coordinates volunteers and contractors to care for our trees and grasses, bio-retention cells, and special projects. The Land Ministry Team meets every third Friday of the month from 10 am to noon. Contact Deb Schoelerman at landministry@uusic.org with questions.

We meet in the conference room. Join Zoom Meeting ([Link to Join](#), Meeting ID: 847 0553 5290, Passcode: 297927)

UUS Men's Sharing Circle, August 20th

All adult UUS members and friends who identify as men are invited to join us at our monthly sharing circle. You are invited to share your joys and sorrows, practice deep listening, and offer support when asked for, all in a confidential environment. We will meet in the Hickory & Oak Rooms at UUS on the third Sunday of each month from 6-8 pm. For questions, contact menssharingcircle@uusic.org.

UUS Team and Committee Reports

Free Lunch Program

It was a lovely day. We served at least two families with children. There were seven children served and it was joyous to watch their respective faces beam! Donna Simonton provided us with music and a decorative touch to our serving line. Furthermore, we also had Reed Cheyney of our youth group and his mother Marsha helping Donna at the beverage table. He vows to do this again in August! He is learning knife skills without losing a finger.

The usual veggie and fruit salads prepared on premises of 1105 were served with an array of cookies for deserts. Caryl Lyons provided her veggie lasagna and our chef team (Frank Wildensee, Barb Stannard, Linda Rice, Russ Lenth, Gary Lawrensen, Donna Simonton) made a mac with beef and tomato main dish, both of which ran out! People were hungry! We served 108 folks.

Among the volunteers that provide food were: Russ Lenth, Nancy Lynch, Carol Throckmorton, Pete Brokaw, Ron Crawford, Judy Quinn, and Carrie Norton.

Those who also helped serve were: Bob Littlehale, Carolyn Johnson, Bonnie Penno, Joe Rasmussen, Barb Stannard, Theresa Ullerich and John Elson.

A special thank you to Donna Simonton who has the unenviable task of rounding up our volunteers each month. Sometimes it may seem unsurmountable but she always comes through. Yeah, Donna!

Green Sanctuary

When smoke got in our eyes recently, we experienced the Canadian Boreal Forest destruction up close. The Green Sanctuary Team points out that additional destruction of the Boreal Forest happens when we consume name brand paper products. Companies such as Proctor and Gamble (Charmin), and Koch Industries (Quilted Northern) cut hundreds of acres of virgin forest for toilet paper!

Alternatives include installing a bidet or buying post-consumer recycled fiber toilet paper rated by the Natural Resources Defense Council or Forest Stewardship Council. You can purchase them at specialty grocery stores, Target (Ever Spring brand) or on-line (Who Gives a Crap). On another paper product issue, be gentle on your nose by purchasing cloth handkerchiefs or 100% recycled tissues.

Watch for new programming from Green Sanctuary this fall. We are not going to keep talking about toilet paper, but how we can minister to the earth.

Racial Justice Team

The Racial Justice Team has been active since 2017 in leading the congregation toward an anti-racist agenda. We've worked at challenging our members and friends to expose themselves in various ways, including:

- worship services that centered the struggles of the BI-POC community and our responsibility to look at our role
- holding discussions and study groups surrounding books/movies/speakers that spurred us to think beyond our old ways
- organized tours to museums or gatherings that exposed us to information we were unaware of
- joined in solidarity with folks of color in protests/advocacy opportunities/policy change venues.

A goal of ours has been to infuse an anti-racism stance into all of our activities, be it Board decisions, RE classes, committee work, etc. This is an ongoing pursuit, but hopefully has been instilled in the congregation at a deep level to the point where we can move forward in a meaningful way.

Dave Martin and Peg Bouska have been co-chairing the team for the last several years, after its initiation in 2017 with Alison Oliver as our leader. We are forever grateful to Alison for starting us on this journey. There are several folks who have been steady participants since the beginning, evolving together with support and effectively working toward change in the community.

Dave and Peg are stepping down as co-chairs and we have decided to merge with the Social Justice Team. Our committees have several members who have regularly attended both meetings.

We are hopeful that the congregation will carry on this momentum in every way possible.

Our last meeting of the Racial Justice Team will be on Zoom, Thurs 7pm Aug 3. Please join us if you have been a participant at any point in the last few years and would like to share your experience, how you have grown, ways you see yourself as a change agent, etc.

If you'd like to share through email, please send toracial-justicechair@uusic.org. We hope to celebrate the work we've done.

Secular Humanists

The Secular Humanists are planning a reprise of last fall's ingathering picnic. **This year's potluck/picnic will be held on Tuesday, August 29**, again at Caryl Lyons's home in North Liberty. The time will be approximately from 6 to 8:30 pm. and Mark Yuskis has agreed once again to provide his delicious pulled pork. Let Caryl or Daniel Valentin know if you need a ride and we will do our best to accommodate that need. Watch for more details in the Wednesday emails.

We will plan to meet in the yard by the fire pit and the outdoor swings, but should the weather be less than ideal, there is room inside the house to continue as planned. Hope to see current secular humanists and anyone else who is interested. You are welcome either to let us know that you will be coming or just to show up at the last minute if that is more convenient. We'll be happy to see you either way. Contact secularhumanists@uusic.org for more information.



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The UUS News

August 2023