

Unitarian Universalist Society
2355 Oakdale Road
Coralville, IA 52241
www.uusic.org

8 Principles of Unitarian Universalism

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
8. Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions

The UUS News

July 2025 Newsletter

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From Your Minister

Rev. Diana Smith

Dear Ones,

I'm writing to you from Baltimore, MD, where the annual national gathering of Unitarian Universalist congregations, called General Assembly, is just wrapping up. It's been an inspiring week that began with our three-day convocation of Unitarian Universalist ministers and ended with the four-day General Assembly of congregations.

Our theme this year has been Meet the Moment. As part of different learning cohorts focused on various topics, we've explored these questions:

- What is the moment we are in?
- What are the most urgent and important needs and opportunities of this moment?
- What do our values call us to do in response to this moment?

You can learn more about the Meet the Moment theme and become part of an ongoing cohort exploring these questions for one of several topic areas on the [Meet the Moment website](#).

In addition, I've attended several very inspiring talks. One was by Deepa Iyer, who wrote the [2025-26 UUA common read, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection*](#). After attending the session, I'm even more excited about engaging with this book at UUS and the ways it can help us with our crucial justice work. Last night I also attended an extraordinary [lecture given by Imara Jones](#), who helped us understand more deeply how the anti-trans movement was carefully constructed to divide people and separate us from each other and our values. When the video is available, I look forward to sharing it with the congregation.

I'm looking forward to sharing more about all of this with you when I preach a two-part sermon series about Love in Action on July 6 and 13. I'm working with our GA delegates to identify when they'll be able to share their reflections with you, too, so look for an update about that in our weekly emails.

Finally, I'm pleased to share that in July we'll be part of the **JUULIowa UU Summer Sunday Co-op**. For the co-op, our Unitarian Universalist congregations here, in Ames, and in Dubuque are collaborating to present Sunday services in July. We will be welcoming each other into our virtual spaces to share worship, create connections, and inspire our fellow UUs across the state. So on July 6 and 13, UUs from Ames and Dubuque will be joining us online and on July 20 we'll be inviting people who are watching our worship service online to join Ames' worship service while Kara Beauchamp leads a highly interactive in-person worship service in UUS's sanctuary.

I hope that this summer brings all of you opportunities to rest, recharge, and get re-energized. Because to survive and thrive we need one another and we need our collective wisdom.

Love and Blessings,
Rev. Diana

Upcoming Services

July 2025 Sunday Services

July 6: Love in Action Part 1

The Dream of America - What is the moment we are in here in Iowa and as a country? How did we get here? Join us to reflect on our US story and work on discerning, together, where we are and the most urgent needs and important opportunities of this moment. Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

July 13: Love in Action Part 2

Meet the Moment - On July 6 we'll reflect on the moment we're in as a country. Join us on July 13 to engage the theme from this year's assembly of Unitarian Universalist congregations from across the country and world: Meet the Moment. We'll reflect on the most urgent needs and important opportunities of this moment, then discern and celebrate how our UU values call us to respond to this moment in ways both big and small. Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

July 20: Finding God in Deep Time OR Who Are We?

This Sunday has two options:

1. **Option One:** Viewing the online service from the Ames, IA church as part of our JUULIowa collaboration. Service title: Finding God in Deep Time: How did that trilobite fossil get up to the mountaintop? The rocks, soil, water, and living beings we encounter on our travels or close to home have stories that stretch far back into time and across the planet, showing how we are all interconnected. Rev. Kelli Clement preaching.
2. **Option Two:** An in-person, no-streaming, interactive service. Service title: Who Are We? - We will engage in a group process including large and small group sharing about a question which probes our beliefs about the world and our place in it, such as "why do things happen the way they do?" as a way to understand ourselves and each other in a deeper way. UUS member Kara Beauchamp leading.

July 27: Change for the Planet

This service explores our relationship to nature through the UU Value of Transformation. How are we changing as a congregation and as individuals for the good of the planet? How can we keep changing for good? UUS member Jan Weaver preaching.

Find more information on our Sunday Services on our website: www.uusic.org/services.

Join us on YouTube Livestream: www.youtube.com/@UUS_IC.

July Offerings

July offerings support [DVIP](#), an organization that provides “comprehensive support services to persons affected by domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence, stalking, and human trafficking, focusing on immediate and long-term safety, dignity, and hope.”

Cash and check donations are collected during the Sunday service offering. Checks should be made out to UUS and have “DVIP” on the memo line. You can also donate online at bit.ly/UUSPartner and select “Monthly Community Partner,” text “GivetoUUSIC Partner” to 73256, or mail a check to the UUS office.

From Your Membership Coordinator

Victoria Huitt

Starting Point Classes Update

We have just finished our 4 week Starting Point class in June and are looking forward to offering it again in the fall for those of you who missed this offering. It is open to all, members and visitors alike. Meetings were on Zoom for ease of access, and we will consider that or in-person in the future. It is fun to see the expansive offerings we have here in our congregation as well as the wealth of knowledge and experience, caring for each, the community and our planet.

Hospitality Coordinator Volunteer Needed

We are seeking a Hospitality Coordinator volunteer to oversee all hospitality including the Sunday Hospitality teams. The teams are formed but sometimes need some updates in members, weekly instructions and monitoring of general supplies. Estimated 2 hours per month for those duties. Please email Victoria Huitt with interest or questions: welcome@uusic.org.

Pathways to Membership

We continue to offer monthly Pathways to Membership orientations for anyone interested in finding out more about the benefits and process of becoming a member here at UUS. The Sunday after services dates vary, so keep an eye on the calendar or reach out to Victoria if you have an interest for other options.

The LDC Addresses Barriers to Volunteering for Leadership Positions within UUS

This year, one of the tasks the Leadership Development Committee focused on was the barriers to finding people to volunteer for certain leadership positions at UUS. Some steps have already been taken that have helped make leadership positions within UUS more accessible to more people, such as shortening the terms for Board Trustees.

The Barriers

Another factor we found to be a barrier for certain positions, such as Treasurer, is that many folks doubt that they have the skills for the position, or worry about stepping into the position with little preparation or transition. The last couple of years we had situations which allowed for incoming Trustees in two of those positions to shadow and assist the incumbent Trustees. These situations provided opportunities for learning and development of skills and confidence.

Those situations involved the Treasurer and Secretary positions on the board, two positions which have historically been difficult to fill. The President position is already afforded the opportunity to have a full year of learning, since the first year of their term is served as Vice President. The Treasurer and Secretary don't have that opportunity.

The Start of the Internship Process

The success of those two recent situations of shadowing and assisting led the Leadership Development Committee to suggest that we provide "Internship" like experiences for these positions, where prospective Treasurers or Secretaries can assist the incumbent in that position. The "intern" would not be a voting member of the Board, and the length of the experience can vary.

For the position of Treasurer, Kara Beauchamp has agreed to be a Treasurer Assistant for the next church year, assisting and learning from Michael Honey-Arcement, our current Treasurer. The hope and expectation is that she would then be prepared to be the candidate for Treasurer for the following term.

We believe this is one way we can develop leaders in our community and improve governance at the same time. The Leadership Development Committee is dedicated to finding additional ways to develop leaders and are looking at training through the UUA that will help in this task.

Kara's Bio



I found Unitarian Universalism after leaving the religion of my childhood (Christian Science) and exploring a variety of religious organizations in Minneapolis. When I visited the First Universalist Church in south Minneapolis, I knew I had found my religious home. Luckily, when I met the man who became my husband, Jeff Walberg, he wanted to become a UU too. Since that time, each time we moved, one of the first things we did was join a UU congregation - in Hyde Park (Chicago), Meriden, CT, and Iowa City, IA. Recently, at UUS, I have served as a worship associate.

I got a Ph.D. in experimental, low temperature, solid state physics at the University of Minnesota (in Minneapolis). A position teaching physics (and eventually engineering) at Cornell College, in Mount Vernon, IA, brought us to Iowa in 2001.

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In my work as a researcher and a teacher, I worked with numbers, spreadsheets, and equations related to the physical world. I like thinking about numbers. The thinking processes involved in the work that I've done in physics and engineering is directly transferable to the thinking processes needed for understanding the numbers involved in budgets. In my work as a faculty member at Cornell College, I served on a variety of committees, including ones that studied the college's budget. I enjoy working with others on committees to pursue the mission of the organization, and I am looking forward to understanding the budget and budget process at UUS.

Upcoming Events

Rev. Diana Community Office Hours, July 2

Rev. Diana will be at lower Iowa City park near picnic shelter 11 from 3:30 pm to 5 pm for members and friends to stop by and chat about whatever's on your heart or mind. You don't need to have an appointment. She hopes you'll stop by to say "Hi!"

Men's Sunday Social, July 6

UUS adult men are invited to gather together the first Sunday of most months from 6 to 8 pm to socialize in a casual setting. Members and Friends are welcome. Currently, our monthly gatherings take place at 2Dogs Pub (1705 First Avenue, Iowa City).

Send questions to Russ Lenth and Phil Beck at menssundaysocial@uusic.org.

Free Lunch Program, July 11

The UUS Free Lunch Team will be serving a meal on Friday, July 11. See the Free Lunch Program update in the UUS Committees and Teams Report below for all the details.

Social Justice Day of Service, July 12

On Sat., July 12, Houses into Homes needs help with delivery day. On delivery day, volunteers will assist with retrieving items from the warehouse and loading them onto the trucks. Once the trucks are loaded and ready, volunteers will be assigned to a set of deliveries. Drivers will receive the addresses for their deliveries. The number of deliveries per truck varies; some deliveries may include full furnishings, while others might involve smaller items like mattresses. At the delivery stops, volunteers serve as movers, bringing items into the homes and placing larger pieces in the appropriate rooms. While we typically do not assist with assembling furniture, such as bed frames or tables, there are occasional exceptions.

Contact Dave Martin, Sally Hartman, or Ian Cawley with questions.

Compassionate Connections, July 13

For those who would like to share their joys or sorrows in conversation in a smaller venue after worship services, the Pastoral Care Associates lead a Compassionate Connection Circle immediately after worship services on 2nd and 4th Sundays. These circles are opportunities to share with and support each other in our lives' journeys.

Banned Book Club, July 13

Join us for our monthly gathering of our Banned Book Club. This month we will continue discussing *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult.

Please reach out to Nic Kaplan if you need help obtaining the book: education@uusic.org.

Rev. Diana Community Office Hours, July 16

Rev. Diana will be at Press Coffee from 1:30 pm to 3 pm for members and friends to stop by and chat about whatever's on your heart or mind. You don't need to have an appointment. She hopes you'll stop by to say "Hi!"

UUS Board Meeting, July 16

The UUS Board of Trustees holds a monthly meeting at 6:30 pm on third Wednesdays, with the public portion typically beginning at about 6:50 after a chalice lighting and check-in.

UUS members and friends are welcome to attend. Meetings are held in the UUS Conference Room, unless otherwise specified, and can also be joined via the Zoom link. Advance notice of attendance is appreciated by contacting the Board president at president@uusic.org.

UUS Men's Sharing Circle, July 20

Men who are UUS members and friends 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 Ron Pile and Niklaus Jakob at menssharingcircle@uusic.org.

Sound Bath Meditation, July 23

Join Tina McCoy in the Fellowship Hall for a mini-retreat from the distractions and busyness of life in an immersive sound meditative bath. The unique sound experience offers a peaceful respite to enjoy feelings of relaxation and serenity. This is your time to reconnect with heart and spirit, all supported by soothing vibrations and sounds from singing bowls, gongs, chimes, and other instruments.

Lion King Kids! Performance, July 25

Celebrate our *Lion King Kids!* performers and their hard work on Friday, July 25 at 6:30 pm. Watch for more information from Nic Kaplan, Director of Lifespan Religious Education.

Compassionate Connections, July 27

For those who would like to share their joys or sorrows in conversation in a smaller venue after worship services, the Pastoral Care Associates lead a Compassionate Connection Circle immediately after worship services on 2nd and 4th Sundays. These circles are opportunities to share with and support each other in our lives' journeys.

Check out the UUS Committee and Team Reports for more events. Find our full list of July Events at uusic.org/upcoming-events.

UUS Committee and Team Reports

BUDDHIST SANGHA

New Members Join Buddhist Sangha

Our invitation for members resulted in new faces we welcomed to our Zoom gatherings on Monday evening. We are now in the middle of Part I of BUDDHISM, A Concise Introduction with religion scholars Huston Smith and Philip Novak. Our study of core Buddhist concepts continues with historical divisions into Theravada, Mahayana, Vipassana, Tibetan, and Zen schools. These all have found their way into the west, which is why we chose these authors to study.

KUNDUN in July

Sunday, July 6 is the 90th birthday of Tenzin Gyatso, HH Dalai Lama. We encourage all sangha members to stream the Martin Scorsese film KUNDUN (1997) for this occasion. It is the first feature film treatment (2 hrs 15 min) of the early life of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet. It was Oscar-nominated for Best Cinematography, Costume, Art, and Dramatic Score (by Philip Glass). Best enjoyed with yak butter tea and momos.

Explore Walking Meditation

We have been exploring walking meditation outside and individually, and sharing those experiences at meetings. Inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh from his Guide (1985), walking meditation can bring you joy and peace while you practice it. We recommend the labyrinth at UU as a perfect place to practice. You might find us there.

COVENANT GROUPS

The Thorny Question of Freedom

In June, groups addressed the thorny question of freedom. How do we define it, recognize it, live it? Americans hear the word a lot, but we experience it very differently. In this fraught time in our history, what does freedom mean to us as individuals, as UUs, as citizens?

Join a Covenant Group

If questions like these intrigue you, you might want to consider joining a Covenant Group. The Covenant Group Program offers its members the opportunity to share their views and deepen their understanding of a wide range of issues while creating closer ties with other UUs. If you're interested, please contact Nic Kaplan (education@uusic.org) for more information.

ELLI Microloan Program

The UUS/ELLI (Equitable Local Lending Initiative) microloan program is off to a flying start! The fund has proven to be a vital resource, supporting both urgent household needs and entrepreneurial ventures in various small businesses that were otherwise unable to secure funding from traditional lenders.

Why Microlending?

Microlending is a proven means of equitably growing participation in the local economy by underserved populations. UUS/ELLI is committed to pursuing this new avenue of economic justice work in our community and grounding it in our core values: Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Inclusion/Interdependence, and Generosity.

UUS is collaborating with the Multicultural Development Center of Iowa (MDCI), to create community synergy and amplify their ongoing efforts. With MDCI, we are supporting local business development, helping build financial literacy, fostering networking and

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collaboration, all of which empower women, youth, low-income, and underserved groups to achieve greater economic stability and impact in the community and region.

Funding Success

As of June 2025, the UUS ELLI monies have funded eight loans. These have assisted people like Maria, a food service entrepreneur. After losing her job during a restaurant closure, Maria applied for a microloan to help launch her own Mexican/Honduran food takeout service. The loan will help her secure a food license, purchase commercial equipment, and market the launch of her business. With this business, Maria hopes to provide for her family and bring part of her culture to Iowa City.

Watch this space for more inspiring stories about the impact of UUS' microloan program. You are invited to learn more about, support, and participate in the project, including at a Social Justice table in the Fellowship Hall on July 13, and a 'Big Event' a little later in the year.

FREE LUNCH

On Friday, June 13, the UUS team prepared Mexican Shepherd's pie for the meal along with fruit salad and homemade bars for dessert. Four roaster pans of the pie containing meat were prepared and a half roaster of a vegetarian version.

All of the shepherd's pie was gone after 113 diners filled up (some with seconds and thirds) and took the rest as carry out. Frank Wildensee came up with the recipe and the casseroles were assembled by Kezia Walker-Cecil, Theresa Ullerich, Star Wojciak, and Mimi Sherburne.

Bonnie and Mark Penno cut up all the fruit which was donated. Pete Brokaw made 2 kinds of bars for dessert. Gay Mikelson prepared the silverware and Joy Thompson served drinks. Terri O'Berry, Janet McKee,

Carolyn Johnson, and Carrie Norton served the meal and Caryl Lyons, Cynthia Crawford and Gary Lawrenson washed all the dishes.

Next month the team will serve lunch on **Friday July 11**. A chicken, rice, and broccoli casserole is tentatively planned.

Contact freelunch@uusic.org to get added to the email list and get the Sign Up Genius to volunteer or bring a fruit for the salad. The group always has a good time and leaves feeling satisfied that a valuable community service has been provided.

GREEN SANCTUARY

Social and Environmental Justice (SEJ)

Sunday, July 13

For the June 8 SEJ activity, 21 people wrote 39 postcards to our US Senators Grassley and Ernst to protect Medicaid and to Governor Reynolds to sign the bill preventing use of eminent domain for the carbon pipeline. Thanks for all your support! That said, our work is not done. Reynolds vetoed the eminent domain restrictions, and the Senate is still seriously considering \$800 billion in Medicaid cuts, which will endanger rural health care and the lives and well-being of uninsured Iowans.

Let's keep filling the cup of protest with our cards, calls, and letters. Even if we don't know which drop will cause it to overflow with justice, we do know that all our drops are needed for that last drop to make a difference.

Sustainability Bingo July 20

Hey, we're doing Sustainability Bingo again! We had a terrific response in April (47 people) and hope to repeat that success or do even better. Based on feedback, we'll just do one sheet for grownups, add some new actions, and mix up the squares. You can find a summary of results in the May newsletter but most of us were using LEDs, recycling, and shopping local; at least half were composting,

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exercising, and protesting; and at least a quarter were eating vegetarian, using public transit, and getting energy audits.

Green Sanctuary Service July 27: Change for the Planet

This service explores our relationship to nature through the UU Value of Transformation. How are we changing as a congregation and as individuals for the good of the planet? How can we keep changing for good?

July Better Together - Prepare for the Worst

Reduce vulnerability by being prepared to take care of yourself and others in natural, social, and economic disasters.

1. **Make plans.** Here are the tips from last July if you haven't had a chance in this past year to get ready ;-). For severe weather visit

www.weather.gov/ama/severesafetytips.

For a major disaster visit

www.ready.gov/plan.

For death - Fill out an Advanced Medical Directive (ADM) to guide end of life choices. If you have young kids, designate a legal guardian so the court doesn't choose one for you. Make a will so that what is left goes where you want it to go. Start by writing your wishes down and then use these resources to help formalize your plans.

- ADM: www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/by-state/iowa/
 - Guardianship: www.nytimes.com/article/legal-guardian.html#link-3f98cc12
 - Will: www.iowalegalaid.org/resource/wills-and-probate-questions-answers.
2. **Learn a new skill.** Plumbing, wiring, cooking, sewing, gardening, a new language, or first aid. There is no knowing what impact a disaster will have on our stuff, but our skills and

knowledge are portable and self-replenishing.

3. **Make new friends and deepen your relationship with old ones.** It's everything from smiling at the person helping you at the store to inviting a friend to coffee to just catch up. Helping each other in emergencies is so much easier when we have some shared history.

HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

At the June 21 Historical Records Team Meeting, members mounted a plaque with her favorite to thank Susan Eberly for her years of service on Historical Records. The plaque includes her favorite quote which reads: "Some believe only great power can hold evil in check, but . . . I have found it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay." -Gandalf (JRR Tolkien).

To see this plaque and more, swing by the shared office area at UUS. Interested in joining the Historical Records Team to ensure the UUS story continues to be told? Contact Team Lead Diana Miller at dkmilleriowa@gmail.com.

PRISON MINISTRY

Penpals for Inmates

In June, PMT continued to be active in its Pen Pal program. Members regularly correspond with incarcerated individuals either by "snail mail" or through the Iowa Department of Corrections' e-mail system, CorrLinks. We are always looking for volunteers to write to inmates. Incarcerated individuals tell us over and over how important it is for them to hear from those of us outside. Just knowing that there are caring people who haven't forgotten them and are willing to spend time writing to them is a deeply meaningful, positive experience for them. And it is very rewarding for volunteers, too. We can set you up with contacts, instructions for using CorrLinks and

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postal mail, and a sample introductory letter to use or modify as you see fit. If you think you might be interested, please email prisonministry@uusic.org and one of us will get back to you. You can also check out our page on this website at www.uusic.org/connect/#justice.

The UUA has a prison ministry through the Church of the Larger Fellowship, the Worthy Now Prison Ministry Network. They're also looking for people to become pen pals to incarcerated individuals nationwide. For more information, go to worthynow.org.

Next Meeting on July 1

The UUS Prison Ministry Team meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the UUS Conference Room. You are welcome to join us at our next meeting on July 1, 2025, at 7:00, either in person or via Zoom (Meeting ID: 848 0842 4430; Email Prison Ministry for passcode).

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social Justice in Our Community

When you put a dollar or more in the Sunday collection, our community partner agency benefits from this generous donation. The twelve agencies we support regularly write emails and notes, thanking us for our charity. Free Lunch, which happens when members gather to make a meal on the second Friday of each month, also is a needed charitable act.

Now is the time to expand our social justice horizons! For this reason, the Social and Environmental Justice Table on each second Sunday provides opportunities to reach beyond charity to make a difference. July's Social Justice Table will provide information, postcard writing materials and stamps, and postcard writers will give their legislators a piece of their minds! ELLI (Equitable Local Loan Initiative), an amazing UUS group that has bubbled up to address the need for low interest loans, will have a presence at the July

Social Justice Table. We welcome any social justice or environmental justice ideas or thoughts you may have!

Immigration Action Team

The UUS Circle of Friends families face challenges! What was sure is not sure, such as the employment authorization documents. Two Circle of Friends adults had this permit revoked, so now they are out of work.

Even when members of our Circle of Friends have jobs, they are treated poorly. They are hired to work full time, but then the company or daycare tells them they don't have to work that day. Sometimes they only work two of the five days! Some immigrants have told us they are afraid to be out and about, and others stay home from work when they hear there might be an ICE raid at work, even though they have the papers to prove they can be here legally.

In addition to keeping up with our Circle of Friends families, the Immigration Action Team promotes change in the community. The Center for Worker Justice and the Immigrant Welcome Network actively advocate for change in our community by protesting wage theft and other job support, exposing housing discrimination, connecting to community resources, and providing know your rights training. These agencies are a life-line to our Circle of Friends families.

Our work continues beyond our immediate community. Over the years, the Immigration Action Network champions the environmental work of the Chico Mendes Reforestation Project in Guatemala, which was featured in the New York Times last month. A service-learning trip to Pachaj, Guatemala for 2026 is in the initial stages of planning.

IUWAN

The Iowa UU Witness Advocacy Network reaches out to all the congregations in Iowa. This year they offer to pay expenses up to \$100 for any Iowa congregation promoting a Pride event.

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IUUWAN has two interest teams: Environment and Immigration. Both meet once a month to share resources, coordinate actions and offer

support. Smaller congregations are grateful for this kind of support, and all congregations involved learn from each other. Should you be interested in joining either group, contact Sally at sallyahartman@hotmail.com.

UUS Board Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2025, at 6:30 p.m

Present: Jeff Walberg (President), Sarah Ross (Vice-President), Lucy Gamon (Secretary), Michael Honey-Arcement (Treasurer), Ernie Cox (Trustee), Ian Cawley (Trustee), Monique DiCarlo (Trustee).
Quorum met.

Guests: Jan Weaver (incoming Vice-President), Erica Reschly (incoming Trustee), Andrew Bryant (Music Staff), Hsin-hui Liu (Music Staff), Deb Schoelerman (Buildings and Grounds), Chris Taylor (Ministerial Aspirant).

The meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. with check-in. Cawley provided Opening Words. Rev. Diana lit the chalice.

Hearing no objections, the following Consent Agenda was adopted:

Reports	Decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minister's Report - April• Financial Spreadsheet - April• Ministerial Intern Grant Application (in process)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve April Board Meeting Minutes• Approve Sick Leave Policy change• Approve new Background Check policy• Approve ministerial aspirant sponsorship for Chris Taylor

Music Staff Update: Andrew Bryant and Hsin-hui Liu provided the Board with an update on the music program at UUS over the past year, including both music at services and special events music programs. Both Bryant and Liu shared their joys and challenges with the music program. The Board complimented both Bryant and Liu on the jobs they are doing with the choir, the UUS Strings, the special event music, and the guest artists. All agreed that music is one of the highlights of being involved with this church.

Ministerial Aspirant: Chris Taylor presented to the Board regarding his aspirations to become a parish UUA minister. Taylor is a current UUA seminary student seeking aspirant status. To achieve this goal, he needs sponsorship status from a UUA congregation, but he is not seeking financial sponsorship. Chris has been a member of this church since 2009. He has been involved in multiple teams and committees. Rev. Diana described the Pathway to Parish ministry, and the ways in which we could provide support to Chris and he could provide support to the congregation. The Board agreed by consensus to approve ministerial aspirant sponsorship for Chris Taylor.

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Vote on property insurance policy—Honey-Arcement and Rev. Diana informed the Board that our current property insurance policy expires on May 27, 2025. The Finance Committee has identified a new insurance policy which meets all church needs, and which is the only realistic option for coverage.

Motion—Honey-Arcement moved to accept the property and liability insurance policy recommended by the Finance Committee; motion seconded by Ross. The Board voted unanimously to approve this motion.

“HOPE for Us” Update—Erica Reschly updated the Board on progress concerning our contract with “HOPE for Us.” The Right Relations Team will meet with “HOPE for Us” on June 2nd . A list of people currently experiencing some degree of conflict within the congregation will be identified and approached regarding possible participation. The Board wants to meet with “HOPE for Us” for a 90-minute session sometime before the Board retreat scheduled for July 12th. Identification of the date is pending.

Discussion of Glass Issues and Options—Deb Schoelerman of the Buildings and Grounds Team updated the Board on current issues regarding the breakage of interior glass in the church building. Protective film is scheduled to be placed on all lower interior glass in the building. With the placement of protective film, glass may still break, but it will not shatter. The Board remains concerned about whether the upper-level interior glass is at risk of breakage. The Board determined to seek an independent risk assessment to be conducted by a structural engineer. Cox volunteered to contact a structural engineer he knows to conduct this assessment.

Action Step: Cox will contact a structural engineer to work with the Congregational Administrator and the Building and Grounds Team. This structural engineer will provide the Board with a risk assessment regarding the upper-level interior glass in the church building.

Discuss Rental Program Assessment Committee Report—Cawley led the discussion of this report. There is currently great interest in renting our church building for various events. The Board strongly agrees that all rentals must be related to our church mission and goals. Church building rentals, particularly to non-profits, provide a service to the community and expose others to our values. Rentals are currently limited to two events per month to allow staff to keep up with the demand. The Board generally agrees that rentals should be kept at a “steady-state” level, with revenues covering expenses. The rentals program should not be expanded to include more than a few large weddings or events per year. Nor should rentals be viewed as a large revenue generator, as the church building must primarily serve our own members.

Discuss Financial Decision Timelines and Roles—Walberg led the discussion of the financial decisions which need to be made in the second half of our fiscal year. These decisions primarily relate to the pay-down of the church mortgage, which comes due on November 30th. We need to determine the amount of endowment funds which will be applied to the mortgage, as well as a future Annual Spending Allowance (“ASA”) strategy. Walberg views the August 20th Board Meeting as a critical point for making these decisions.

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Motions to go in and out of closed session—Cawley moved to go into closed session to discuss staff compensation matters; Honey-Arcement seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion. A closed session discussion thereafter ensued. Cox moved to go out of closed session; Ross seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Staff Compensation Matters—Rev. Diana apprised the Board regarding the recent professional certification of our Director of Religious Education, Nic Kaplan. Rev. Diana recommended a promotion and a salary increase for Kaplan in recognition of their achievement. The Board concurred.

Motion—Ross moved to approve Rev. Diana’s recommendation to move Kaplan to “director level,” and to increase their compensation level beginning in July of 2025; Cox seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved this motion.

Closing

Ross provided Process Observer comments. Rev. Diana provided Closing Words. With the Agenda completed and no new business from the floor, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Lucy Gamon, Board Secretary

Email the Secretary at secretary@uusic.org with requests for documents reviewed at the meeting.

The Board approved these Minutes at its regular meeting on June 18, 2025.