

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

## *August 2025 Newsletter*

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# 2025 - 2026 Vision of Ministry

*Rev. Diana Smith and Sarah Ross, Board of Trustees President*

Each summer the Board of Trustees, with input from staff and teams, develops a Vision of Shared Ministry for the coming congregational year. The annual Vision of Shared Ministry provides direction and high-level goals to the minister, staff, and lay leaders as they develop programs and initiatives that are in line with the overall UUS mission and vision. It builds on conversations from many areas of the congregation about emerging trends and needs that we're recognizing in the congregation and wider community. It is intended to serve as a framework to guide and inspire the congregation rather than being a checklist of to-do items.

We're excited to share with you our Vision of Shared Ministry for August 2025 - July 2026.

This year's Vision of Shared Ministry continues building on many of the themes from the last few years but also reflects how we've been growing as a congregation and the challenging times we find ourselves in. We hope that you'll join us in engaging with this vision over the coming congregational year in a variety of ways.

In Community,  
Rev. Diana Smith, Minister  
Sarah Ross, Board of Trustees President

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## **We will nurture our capacity to live out our mission and values.**

We will focus our efforts, develop clear priorities, and respect limits to staff and volunteer time and energy. We will cultivate leaders and encourage cycles of rest and renewal. We will reduce barriers to participation, helping new and existing members and friends engage more easily with the shared life, work, and spiritual development of the congregation. We will creatively and compassionately engage in difficult conversations and conflict as we lean into our covenantal tradition. We will continue our anti-oppression work by practicing patience, resisting perfectionism, and cultivating open-mindedness together.

## **We will help meet critical needs of our neighbors.**

We will provide a beacon and a sanctuary for those seeking meaningful connections or a refuge from social or political oppression. We will build bonds with allied groups in our surrounding community, helping develop coalitions of faith communities and other allied organizations. We will be visible in the public sphere. We will use our building to enhance our mission and partnerships. Given needs we are aware of, and capacities we already have in place, we will support families with children, finding out about and attending to gaps in the state and our local community (e.g., child care, limits on topics for education).

## **We will continue to build our financial sustainability.**

We will continue to work to balance our budget. We will refine and develop our annual stewardship and fundraising. We will grow our long-term stewardship through the endowment, planned giving, and other strategies. We will be good ancestors.

# Upcoming Services

*August 2025 Sunday Services*

## **August 3: Woke is not a Pejorative Term**

"Woke" was originally coined by progressive Black Americans and used in racial justice movements in the early to mid-1900s. Recently, it has been used by some groups to criticize anything they don't like – as in, "Our state is where woke goes to die." Some folks have said we are "too woke." Dave Martin will offer his opinion on what woke means to him and discuss his continuing journey to become more anti-racist.

## **August 10: Being Interdependent**

Our interdependence shows up in many ways, from how the Earth supports us and everyone we love, to how we do our justice work, to how we create our congregations. Join us as we explore this and learn about exciting developments with the UUS Endowment that will help our congregation live more fully into this core value. Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

## **August 17: Caring for Ourselves and Each Other**

What are some of the ways we care for ourselves and each other in these challenging times? Join us as we learn lessons about community care from gardening, playing games, and exploring national parks. We'll also explore the ways we can help keep each other safe. Towards the end of our worship service, we'll practice a fire drill, which will be followed by popsicles and (hopefully!) a visit from a fire truck! Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

## **August 24: Love Gathers**

Join us for our Ingathering service on August 25! 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. 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 and welcome our new Ministerial Intern, Madison Colquette. Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

## **August 31: Finding Free Therapy in Nature**

As Unitarian Universalists we seek to better understand what is truth and to live a life of meaning. We strive to grow spiritually and to treat others with compassion. The hope of this reflection is to deepen our understanding of ourselves and how we can show up in the world more compassionately. UUS member Gail Garwood will reflect on her spiritual journey, from questioning God in high school to finding solace in meditation and later deepening her connection with the Universe through her experience using Internal Family Systems (IFS) therapy. IFS, which helps individuals access their "Self" – a state of calm, compassion, and clarity – as a way of accessing a higher power or Nature.

Find more information on our Sunday Services on our website: [www.uusic.org/services](http://www.uusic.org/services).  
Join us on YouTube Livestream: [www.youtube.com/@UUS\\_IC](https://www.youtube.com/@UUS_IC).

## August Offerings

August offerings will support three organizations: Immigrant Welcome Network, ELLI (Equitable Local Lending Initiative) and [Escucha Mi Voz](#). All three organizations serve our community and align with our Shared Values. Learn more about these organizations on Sundays during service.

Cash and check donations are collected during the Sunday service offering. Checks should be made out to UUS and have “Immigrant Welcome Network,” “ELLI,” or “Esucha Mi Voz” on the memo line. You can also donate online at [bit.ly/UUSPartner](https://bit.ly/UUSPartner) and select “Monthly Community Partner,” text “GivetoUUSIC Partner” to 73256, or mail a check to the UUS office.

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## Letter from Your Board President

*Sarah Ross, Board of Trustees President*



Hello,

I am honored to be serving as the next President of the UUS Board of Trustees! I began my service as President in July by leading the Board’s annual July Retreat and facilitating the July 16 Board of Trustees meeting.

I am relatively new to UUS, having become a member in 2018, a couple of years after moving to Coralville with my spouse, Peggy Garrigues, who worked on staff at UUS for 7 years. In the time I’ve been a part of this congregation I have come to respect and appreciate the commitment this community has to supporting and engaging in its many ministries.

When I joined I was amazed to know I was becoming a part of a congregation that has roots in the Iowa City area that go all the way back to 1838, before Iowa was even a state! As President of the Board I am pleased to play a role in the continuation of this long-rooted tradition of liberal religious ministry in the heart of the midwest.

During my term of service my intention is to support the Board of Trustees and UUS as a Congregation to:

- Continue building on and strengthening the policy governance model the congregation has been exploring and refining since 2017 by being mindful of established policies, respecting the Minister’s role as Head of Staff, and supporting thoughtful policy revisions when it makes sense to do so.
- Continue our efforts to effectively leverage and manage UUS’s assets to meet our current and future financial needs by better integrating the work of the minister, Board, various finance-related committees and ministry teams.
- Support UUS’s continuing engagement with the Hope 4 Us Team as we build our congregational capacity for living with conflict in ways that build trust and challenge us to learn and grow together.

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- Undertake a ministerial assessment process that supports the minister, the Board, and the congregation in appreciating the challenges and strengths we all bring to our life, and work together while creating opportunities to offer, and consider, constructive feedback.
- Engage with and learn from the congregation through an exploration of “Open Questions” that explore the challenges and opportunities we face in the near term.

I know many of you in the congregation have been in my “presidential shoes,” and that gives me courage! I am always open to supportive suggestions, encouragement and feedback.

Sarah Ross

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## From Your Membership Coordinator

*Victoria Huitt*

After a busy end of our church year, we are planning for the start of the upcoming year. In June we offered 4 weeks of Starting Point classes on Zoom, and I was so pleased with our attendance. We were able to share our histories, UU values, principles, and history, and learn about many of the ways to engage here at UUS.

### Coming Up for the 2025-2026 Congregational Year:

- **Starting Point Classes in September**  
Starting September 10, we will offer the four weeks of Starting Point Classes on Wednesdays via Zoom. This class is open to newcomers and members who have an interest.
- **Deep Dive with the Minister**  
Deep Dive with the Minister is being offered on August 17 after the service for newcomers and members who wish to learn more and discuss Unitarian Universalism with Rev. Diana.
- **September Opportunities Fair**  
Our annual Opportunities Fair is coming up on the first Sunday on Sept. 7. After the service, all will be able to explore many of the groups and activities offered at UUS, including updating your personal information and photos for our Directory update!

Come and find out what calls you to be more involved here at UUS. Social justice and action, volunteering, spiritual growth and education will all be represented. For now, enjoy the rest of summer!

# Peace Camp 2025 Recap

*Nic Kaplan, Director of Lifespan Religious Education*

One week. Five days really. That's not a lot of time to teach the concept of how to bring more peace into our world — to learn how to: recognize all the emotions we can experience, meet the needs of people in our communities, find common ground with people from all over the world, and do our part to take better care of our planet. Nevertheless, that is how 21 campers and 9 camp counselors spent the first full week of July at UUS.

Over the course of Peace Camp, children in 1st through 5th grade had the opportunity to meet and learn from people all over the world. We had visitors from Palestine, Guatemala, India, Sudan, and Romania. We got to hear about similarities and differences that helped us connect to our visitors and, hopefully, to better understand customs and traditions from a variety of the cultures that come together to create our beautiful world. Our visitors let us try on traditional clothing and ask questions about their weaving, invited us to dance with them, and talked with us about their experiences and what peace means to them.

In addition to spending time with our guests and learning to name our emotions and finding ways to create peace within ourselves, we were privileged to spend time throughout the week working on projects that supported [Houses into Homes](#). We bundled up books and stuffies, checked that donated puzzles had all their pieces, and our 4th and 5th graders built **two** night stands over the course of the week. We also made treat bags and baked brownies for the [Iowa City Free Lunch](#) Program and made no-sew blankets for families who need the warmth and comfort. While we did all these projects, we repeatedly talked about how, when each individual's needs are met, it is easier to have a community at peace. The campers were very quick to understand that more than just a person's physiological needs are important - **everyone deserves and needs to feel safety, security, love, and belonging.**

There may have only been 30 campers and counselors present for the incredible week we got to experience, but positive change can't necessarily occur for a whole city or state or country in one moment of time. It takes lots of moments and lots of work and lots of time. Mister Rogers told us how his mother would tell him to **look for the helpers** when sad and scary things were happening. I'm confident that the 30 children, youth, and young adults who participated in Peace Camp at UUS are better prepared to be helpers; they're ready to do the work to create moments of peace, connection, and community that will help carry our world forward into a more peaceful and beautiful time.



# Introducing Madison Colquette, Ministerial Intern, and Chris Taylor, Aspirant for Ministry

*Rev. Diana Smith, Minister, Madison Colquette, Ministerial Intern, Chris Taylor, Aspirant for Ministry*

This year, UUS will be working with two folks who are in the ministerial formation process: **Madison Colquette**, who will be our Ministerial Intern for 2025 – 2026, and **Chris Taylor**, an Aspirant for Ministry who UUS's Board of Trustees recently voted to sponsor. You can read more about Chris and Madison below.

But first, I wanted to share a bit more information about how people become Unitarian Universalist ministers. To become a [fellowshipped and ordained UU minister](#), folks are required to:

- Receive a Masters of Divinity degree
- Pass a career/psychological assessment
- Complete a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (a chaplaincy internship)
- Complete a ministerial internship
- Complete a UU-specific reading list and competencies, and
- Pass an interview with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee to ascertain that they meet requirements for fellowship.

After a minister is granted Preliminary Fellowship, which usually takes 3 - 10 years, the minister has 3 – 7 more years to complete requirements for Full Fellowship.

Along the way, folks apply for various statuses: applicant, aspirant, candidate, preliminary, and full. As an Aspirant for Ministry, Chris is currently working on his Master of Divinity degree and is active as a member of a UUS. UUS sponsoring him means that he remains a member (not staff and not an intern) of UUS. Sponsorship is a way of saying that he is a member of our congregation and we want to support him in his discernment of and work toward the path to ministry.

As a candidate for ministry doing her ministerial internship, Madison has completed more of her ministerial formation process. As a Ministerial Intern, she is a staff member in the process of developing the skills and attributes of ministry. UUS is supporting her learning and growing journey.

I hope you'll enjoy reading more about Madison and Chris, as well as supporting them in their ministerial formation process!

Rev. Diana Smith

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## Madison Colquette, Ministerial Intern



Greetings to you, UUS!

I am enthusiastic to join you as your Ministerial Intern in August. I am back in Iowa after serving as the Ministerial Intern with the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock on New York's Long Island. Before my first internship, I worked at University of Iowa Health Care as an interfaith chaplain and as part of the COPE team, an interdisciplinary group providing emotional and spiritual support to staff following challenging events.

I am a seminarian at Meadville Lombard Theological School pursuing fellowship as a Unitarian Universalist minister and chaplain. Prior to seminary, I worked as a dramaturg at Indiana University's Department of Theatre and Dance. I worked with playwrights developing new work and taught dramaturgy and the role of theatre and performance in communities. I received my MFA in Dramaturgy from the University of Iowa where I studied with the marvelous Art Borreca.

At UUS, I hope to minister and learn in ways that reflect compassion, mutual care, curiosity, and creativity. I am very happy to be back in Iowa and to work and learn alongside Rev Diana Smith and all of you. And I will try to catch every Iowa Women's Basketball game I can!

In Faith and Service,  
Madison Colquette

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## Chris Taylor, Aspirant for Ministry



I have been a member of UUS for almost twenty years. In that time, I've done everything from webmaster to Board member, but I've never been a Ministerial Aspirant. Until now! Questions of faith, meaning, and purpose have long informed not only my intellectual pursuits but also my engagement with our world. I've tried to dedicate my life to service in the name of community, including a decade in local government, and I'm thrilled to take this next step with you all on my journey toward parish ministry.

Receiving this endorsement from UUS is an important requirement for aspirant status with the UUA and a reassuring vote of confidence from this congregation that I love. I have two years left in the MDiv program at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, and I'll begin exploring options for clinical pastoral education soon. That will be followed by an internship with another congregation, as Bridget just completed with us. I'm grateful to the Board, to Reverend Diana and the UUS staff, and to all of you for your continuing support, guidance, and faith.

## Upcoming Events

### Men's Sunday Social, Aug. 3

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](mailto:menssundaysocial@uusic.org).

### Free Lunch Program, Aug. 8

The UUS Free Lunch Team will be serving a meal on Friday, August 8. See the Free Lunch Program update in the UUS Committees and Teams Report below for all the details.

### Willy Wonka Kids! Performance, Aug. 8

Come celebrate the hard work of our Theater Campers performing Willy Wonka Kids! on Friday, August 8 at 6:30 pm.

### Veg CommUnity Plantluck, Aug. 9

Join us for the Veg CommUnity Plantluck on August 9 at UUS. More details to come!

### Endowment Committee Celebration, Aug. 10

Come Join Us August 10 For A Celebration of UUS Endowment: The UUS Endowment is 40 Years Old! Come help us celebrate and learn about the launch of two new dedicated funds. Cake will be served during social hour.

### Compassionate Connections, Aug. 10

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, Aug. 10

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](mailto:education@uusic.org).

### Rev. Diana Community Office Hours, Aug. 13

Rev. Diana will be at Sidekick Coffee & Books from 1:30 pm to 2:30 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!"

### Deep Dive with the Minister, Aug. 17

Join Rev. Diana Smith to learn about covenant and congregational polity, and to ask your questions. This session is a part of our Pathways to Membership series. Please contact Membership Coordinator Victoria Huitt if you have questions about Pathways to Membership at [welcome@uusic.org](mailto:welcome@uusic.org). RSVPs are appreciated but not necessary.

## **UUS Men's Sharing Circle, Aug. 17**

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](mailto:menssharingcircle@uusic.org).

## **UUS Board Meeting, Aug. 20**

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](mailto:president@uusic.org).

## **101 Dalmations Kids! Performance, Aug. 22**

Come celebrate the hard work of our Theater Campers performing 101 Dalmations Kids! on Friday, August 22 at 6:30 pm.

## **Compassionate Connections, Aug. 24**

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.

## **Secular Humanist Potluck, Aug. 26**

Secular Humanists will have their annual potluck on August 26. See Teams and Committees updates for more information.

## **Rev. Diana Community Office Hours, Aug. 27**

Rev. Diana will be at Press Coffee from 4 pm to 5:30 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!"

## **Sound Bath Meditation, Aug. 27**

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.

***Check out the UUS Committee and Team Reports for more events. Find our full list of August Events at [uusic.org/upcoming-events](https://uusic.org/upcoming-events).***



# Happy Birthday, Gay! Free Lunch Program Receives Generous Donation in Honor of Gay Mikelson

*Vicki Siefers, Free Lunch Team Lead*



The UUS Free Lunch Program (FLP) Team received a **generous \$1,000.00 donation in July from Dana Mikelson**, Gay Mikelson's eldest, in honor of Gay for her birthday.

This donation to the FLP account will provide meals for several months. Thank you, Dana, for your generous donation!

Gay Mikelson is the original UUS member who heard about the plan to create a free lunch program in Iowa City in the 1980's. She knew that UUS needed to be a part of the program, and with her leadership UUS started providing lunches on the second Friday of the month. For over 30 years, UUS has provided lunch to an average of 100 diners every month.

On a typical Free Lunch Friday, you'll find Gay wrapping silverware and chatting with diners – some of whom she's known for many years!

The Free Lunch Program isn't the only organization Gay has played a major role. Gay served on the Shelter House board for ten years, including when Shelter House was planning their new facility. She has helped with Backpacks for Kids every fall – sewing backpacks and filling them with school supplies for local students who may not have been able to afford new school supplies. While Gay was raising her family, she would organize play groups for other young parents and their children so that they could connect and have a place to meet up and let their children play with each other.

Gay Mikelson has been an advocate for social justice in Iowa for her entire life. Thank you, Gay, for your steadfast work. We are proud to receive Dana's generous gift to the Free Lunch Program.

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## Land Ministry Report Highlight: Goats in Our Woods!

*Tom McMurray, Land Ministry*



Land Ministry is fighting invasive plant species with hungry goats. Unwanted shrubs and vines such as Non-native (Oriental) Bittersweet, Bush Honeysuckle, Japanese Barberry and Autumn Olive are threatening UUS woodlands, but we're fighting back with Goats on the Go.

On July 8, upon our application, the Coralville City Council passed a resolution authorizing UUS to use "targeted goat grazing" to reduce invasive plant species in our woods and trails to the east and south of our building.

On Monday, July 21, a trailer load of about 70 goats arrived from our contractor Falcon Farm, an affiliate of Goats on the Go. The goats are fenced in by a mobile, solar powered, electric pulse type fence and will graze for approximately two weeks through the end of July. The project is supported by the UUS Endowment and by a 50% cost-share from the City of Coralville.

# UUS Committee and Team Reports

## BUDDHIST SANGHA

The UU Buddhist sangha continues meeting via Zoom with the intent to periodically gather together in person. The showing of the Scorsese film **KUNDUN** at UUS on the occasion of HH Dalai Lama's 90th birthday, welcomed 25 UU members, including guests from UU Cedar Rapids and the Garchen Mila Buddhist Center in Iowa City. We had tea and treats together and many took home a *Lung-ta* Wind Horse Tibetan prayer flag. Charity Rowley, a founding member of our sangha, also joined us.

We are well into our study of **BUDDHISM, A Concise Introduction** with religion scholars Huston Smith and Philip Novak. The traditions of Theravada, Mahayana, Zen, and Tibetan Buddhism and its confluence with Hinduism will lead us to *Part II: The Wheel Rolls West*, Buddhism's migration into the western world, particularly America.

We meditate together at each gathering. With the introduction of Walking Meditation and the central tenets of this powerful meditative art from Thich Nhat Hanh, some members sit in zazen, and other practitioners stroll. Either spiritual practice helps you with presence and peace of mind.

## COVENANT GROUPS

In July, groups gathered to discuss the idea that is central to Unitarian Universalism – **Covenant**. We are a covenantal religion rather than a creedal religion. In other words, we are bound by the way we promise to treat each other, rather than by common beliefs and creeds. Covenant is the means by which we're held together in "beloved community."

How does this covenantal relationship work in the congregation? In what practices do you see it most? What do others do to create

"beloved community" for you, and what do you do to create it for others?

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](mailto:education@uusic.org)) for more information.

Groups will not meet in August, but may gather informally for a picnic or other social event.

## ELLI MICROLOAN PROGRAM

Come support the UUS' new microlending project, ELLI (Equitable Local Lending Initiative), which helps under-resourced people in the community start their own businesses, and provides emergency loans for those facing unexpected financial hardships.

**An Evening with Dave Moore: 7pm to 9 p.m on Friday, Sept. 12**, at the Unitarian Universalist Society, 2355 Oakdale Rd.

Enjoy desserts, drinks and music by Iowa music legend Dave Moore. Doors open at 7. Remarks at 7:30. Music starts at 8.

Come learn more about microlending, and how it can help create economic democracy and support equity and fairness in our community. Tracy Jon Sergeant of the Iowa Multicultural Development Center will speak about the impact of this microloan program. It is intimately related to many of our UU Principles.

This is ELLI's 2025 fundraiser. Donations accepted at the door (there will also be information available about how to donate electronically).

## FREE LUNCH

In July, the UUS Free Lunch Team prepared casseroles of chicken, broccoli, and rice to serve along with fruit salad, and dessert. 101 diners attended the lunch.

Bonnie and Mark Penno, John and Virginia Stamler, and Angie Burr assembled the casseroles. Angie, Juli Statton, and Tina McCoy cut up the fruit for the salad using fruit donated by the Pennos, David Quegg, Pete Brokaw, and Barb Haring. Gay Mikelson wrapped all the silverware. Terri O'Berry, Janet McKee, Sharon Beckman, and Mimi Sherburne served and Tina McCoy poured drinks. The clean up crew was Caryl Lyons, Emmaline Light, Cynthia Crawford, and Frank Wildensee.

The UUS Peace Campers, led by Nic Kaplan, prepared snack bags and baked pans of bars to serve for dessert.

On Friday, August 8, the UUS team will be serving free lunch again with a menu TBA but sure to include a fruit salad and dessert along with a hot main dish.

## GREEN SANCTUARY

### Sustainability Bingo

This past Sunday, July 20 we did our second round of Sustainability Bingo. Sustainability Bingo is not intended to be a scientific survey, just a fun way to get a feel for our sustainability actions. For this round, we only had one sheet of 48 possible actions. We had 29 adults and 6 kids fill out sheets.

This report focuses on the actions everyone could potentially take—they weren't dependent on having a home, a yard, or community services like transit and composting.

Here are the results for all the things that most people should be able to do:

- 100 to 75% of people stayed hydrated, knew the causes of climate change, and liked learning new stuff
- 75 to 50% of people also knew their neighbors, contacted their representatives and lobbied them, knew at least 5 native species, got out in nature weekly, and had healthy lifestyles.
- 50 to 25% of people also weatherized their homes, used low flow shower heads, replaced paper napkins and towels with cloth options, mended clothes, and had a mostly vegetarian diet.
- Less than 25% of people also adjusted their thermostats and bought low impact toilet paper.

Again, we included social behaviors, healthy habits, and civic engagement because those are important components of taking care of the planet.

If you took the bingo challenge in April and again in July, you may have noticed that using LED bulbs, meeting with friends, shopping local, donating to a thrift shop, or recycling were not included because everyone is already doing a great job with those. When the challenge is repeated in October, the things everyone checked off, like staying hydrated, learning new stuff, and knowing the causes of climate change will be replaced with other actions.

Set yourself a goal for October. If you don't already, get to know your neighbors, learn about some local species, get out in nature at least once a week, get some cloth napkins, and/or add more vegetarian meals to the menu.

If you have ideas for more things to include, or wonder why certain things were included at all, email Jan at [jan.weaver57@gmail.com](mailto:jan.weaver57@gmail.com).

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### **August Better Together – VOLUNTEER**

Each month of Better Together we have actions that members of the congregation can take to address climate Mitigation, Adaptation, Resilience, and Justice. Our focus for the summer is Adaptation to the new circumstances created by climate change. One way to adapt is to connect with others by volunteering.

- **What Are You Looking For?** Start by figuring out what you want to give your time and talents to. You can ask: what change you want to see in the world; what is the most urgent problem to address; what issues do you pay attention to?
- **What Can You Offer?** Then figure out what you have to offer. Can you translate? Are you good with numbers? Do you like to work outside with plants and animals? Do you have teaching skills? Are you good at carpentry, plumbing, or wiring? Can you write or edit? Can you keep track of details and carry out plans? Are you good with people? All these are examples of skills that organizations can use. When you know what you can offer, figure when and how often you can volunteer. For example, do you like working on projects that are over and done, or staying with things that require regular effort over the long haul?
- **Who Can Connect You?** If you would like to volunteer in the community, check out the opportunities here: [www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/service-directory/other-services/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/service-directory/other-services/volunteer-opportunities)

### **Social and Environmental Justice (SEJ) Sunday August 10**

Look for our table in the Fellowship Hall to write a postcard, letter, or to sign a petition to promote Social and Environmental Justice.

### **Our August Meeting Will be on Zoom!**

Green Sanctuary Meeting is Wednesday August 13 at 7 pm. Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88132264216?pwd=R2hyclJWOWxJYVFUd2J0amRhZHlYrQT09#success>

Meeting ID: 881 3226 4216, contact team for passcode. Contact Jan Weaver – [jan.weaver57@gmail.com](mailto:jan.weaver57@gmail.com) for more information, or to get on our email list.

### **HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE**

The Historical Records Committee has been sorting old pictures and we have some to give away. After the service on August 24 and September 7, stop by our table in the Fellowship Hall.

### **IMMIGRANT ACTION TEAM**

#### **August Offering Change**

The August Sunday Service Community Partner recipient for the offering has changed due to the closing of the Center for Worker Justice. Three agencies will be taking on much of the work supporting workers and immigrants and include the Immigrant Welcome Network, ELLI (Equitable Local Lending Initiative) and Escucha Mi Voz. These nonprofits, who will be the beneficiaries of the August offering, engage in advocacy, education, support, and organizing. Please consider the hardships immigrants are experiencing and give generously on Sunday mornings or through Realm.

#### **Back to School Opportunity**

Back to school shopping is coming up quickly. Should you want to help ensure the children from our Circle of Friends families are ready for school with new shoes, an outfit and backpack, please consider writing a check with Circle of Friends in the memo line, or donate through Realm. Maria, Saydi, Pablo, Viktoria, Bohdan, and Katya will be grateful!

## PRISON MINISTRY TEAM

### Ministry at Newton Correctional Facility

In July, PMT made progress on starting a prison ministry at Newton Correctional Facility. A group of 30 or more incarcerated individuals have been meeting on their own for a few months to discuss UU principles and ideas. We've provided them with a few printed materials, but we want to send a representative from our congregation inside to talk to the men in person. We've received permission to do that and believe it will happen soon.

### Pen Pal Program

PMT also continues 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. In a few cases, we've given donations from our fund to pen pals in financial need.

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 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://worthynow.org).

### August Meeting

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 August 5, 2025, at 7:00, either in person or via Zoom (Meeting ID: 848 0842 4430; Passcode: Email for code).

## SECULAR HUMANISTS

**SAVE THE DATE:** We will have our annual fall picnic potluck for our first meeting of the new season on Tuesday, August 26, 2025. This is the 4th Tuesday. After this meeting, we will return to our usual third Tuesday meeting day. The picnic will once again be held in the backyard of Caryl Lyons' s house in North Liberty from 5:30 to 7:30. In case of rain, we can move indoors. Mark Yuskis has offered to again bring his pulled pork. The rest of us will bring everything else. More details will follow in future emails.

If you have ideas for programs for the upcoming year or topics you think we should discuss, bring your ideas to the picnic. But mostly just come to relax and ease into the new year. Or just come to interact with the humanists if you're interested.



# UUS Board Meeting Minutes

June 18, 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), Rev. Diana Smith (Ex-officio). Quorum met.

Guests: Jan Weaver (incoming Vice-President), Erica Reschly (incoming Trustee).

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

Hearing no objections, the following Consent Agenda was adopted:

Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minister's Report - May</li><li>Treasurer's Report - May</li><li>Endowment Committee Minutes - May 19</li><li>Mortgage Reduction Campaign Results</li></ul>	Decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Approve May Board Meeting Minutes</li><li>For Glass Safety Task Force</li><li>Appoint Kara Beauchamp as Asst. Treasurer</li></ul>
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**Endorse endowment policy framework for restricted funds**—The Board reviewed and discussed a document the Endowment Committee has prepared entitled: “New Restricted Fund Rollout.” The Board generally approved this document, but also discussed various “wordsmithing” suggestions for the document. This feedback will be provided to the Endowment Committee. Rev. Diana agreed that she and staff would develop an application process for the restricted funds so that the Endowment Committee can receive “filtered” spending proposals which have already received initial approval.

**Action Step:** Rev. Diana and staff will work with staff on procedures and an application process so that entities can apply for restricted endowment funds.

**Discuss budget prep efforts and next steps**—Walberg led the Board in discussing our annual budget preparation efforts. He gave a summary of the recent successful mortgage campaign results, with pledges and contributions exceeding \$407,000. The August Board meeting will be a critical time to finalize a decision about 1) how much we will request from the General Fund as a contribution to the mortgage campaign, 2) how much we will contribute from cash reserves, 3) how much can be contributed from other revenue sources, such as bequests. The amount of the remaining mortgage, if any, will inform our Annual Spending Allowance (“ASA”) strategy.

**Action Step:** There will be a joint meeting with the Board and the Finance Committee before the August meeting.

**Action Step:** Rev. Diana will give the Board clear information about revenue sources and non-discretionary spending. She will prepare drafts of possible budgets at multiple spending levels.

**Discuss Upcoming Meetings Logistics**—Reschly and Ross updated the Board on progress with HOPE For Us. We will have a Zoom Meeting on July 2nd starting at 6:00 p.m. Members of the Right Relations Team will be invited to this meeting.

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Reschly will coordinate a congregational email and a service announcement to inform members that “HOPE for Us” is available as a resource for those experiencing conflict within the church. Ross reminded the Board regarding logistics for the upcoming Board retreat on July 12 beginning at 9:00 a.m.

**Board Transition Ritual**—Board members individually said their good-byes and expressed gratitude to outgoing trustees Cawley and DiCarlo for their service and contributions to the Board.

**Motion to go in and out of closed session to discuss management issue**—Ross moved to go into closed session to have a management consultation with Rev. Diana. DiCarlo seconded. The Board passed the motion unanimously. Board discussion regarding the management issue thereafter ensued. Cawley moved to go out of closed session. Honey-Arcement seconded. The Board passed the motion unanimously.

### **Closing**

There were no 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 9:40 p.m.

*Lucy Gamon, Board Secretary*

*Email the Secretary at [secretary@uusic.org](mailto:secretary@uusic.org) with requests for documents reviewed at the meeting.*

The Board approved these Minutes at its regular meeting on July 16, 2025.