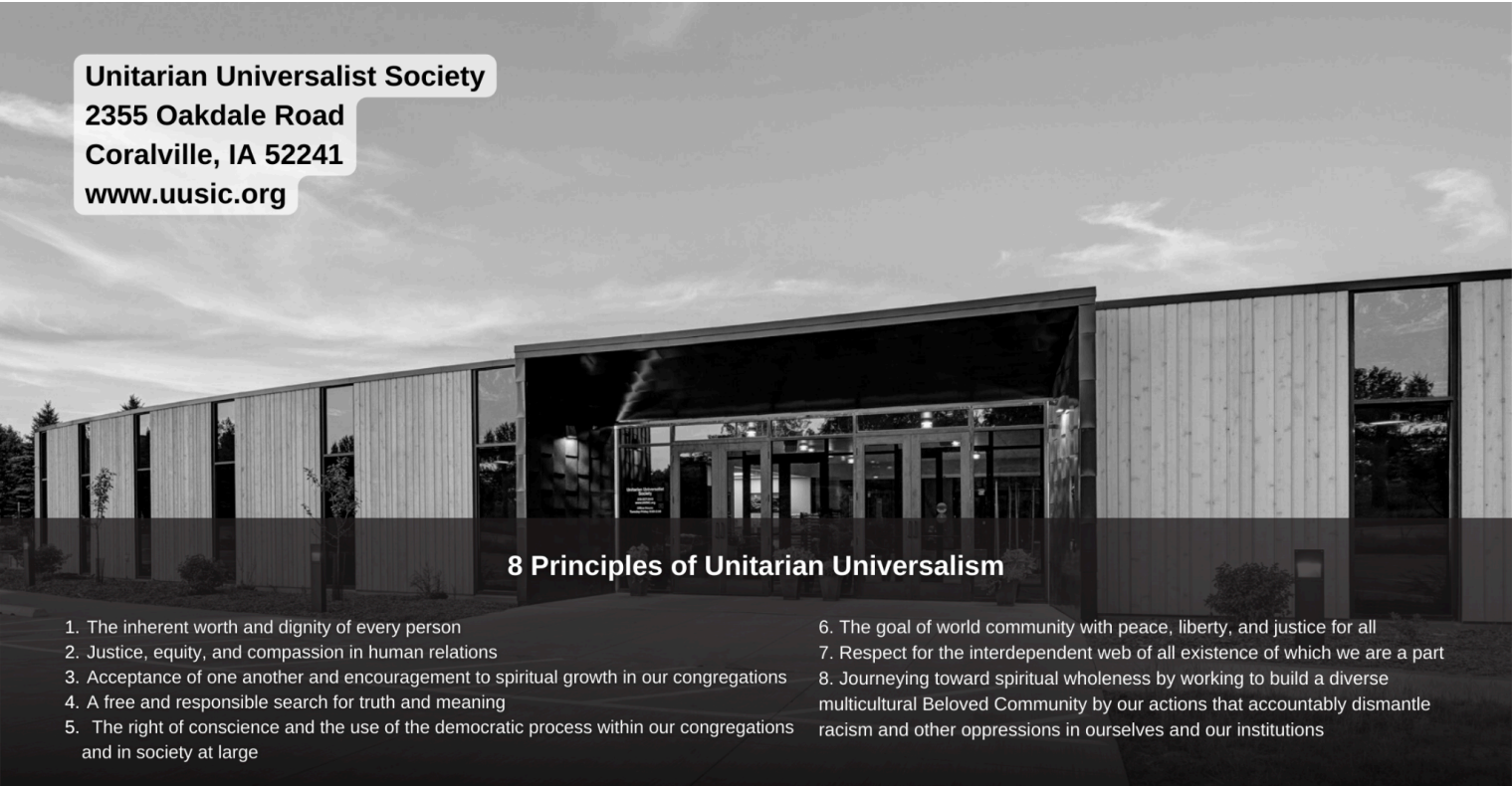


Unitarian Universalist Society
2355 Oakdale Road
Coralville, IA 52241
www.uusic.org



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 2024 Newsletter

TABLE OF CONTENTS

From Your Minister.....	2
Upcoming Services.....	3
July Offerings.....	4
From Your Congregational Administrator.....	4
Announcements.....	4
Upcoming Events.....	4
UUS Committee and Team Reports.....	6

From Your Minister

Rev. Diana

Dear Ones,

I'm writing this as I've just finished attending our annual UU ministers' professional gathering of Ministry Days and as our national General Assembly of congregations is just beginning. Last night our congregation's Board of Trustees invited staff to join the board meeting to work on developing our 2024-25 vision of ministry. And so, I'm writing this to you from a place of wondering, from a place of liminality, from a place of creative emergence where we – we who lead this congregation, we who are ministers in Iowa and Nebraska, we who are professional and lay leaders from around and beyond this country – are working to find the meaning, the shape, the story of this past year and are working to discern what our congregations and wider communities will need in the coming year.

I find sitting with questions particularly powerful in moments like this. Questions that are bubbling up for me right now include:

- How can we create conditions that help our congregations and communities remember the hope?
- What is our key work this coming year for nourishing resilience in the face of what is happening in our state and nationally, in response to what is happening in individual lives, and mindful of where our community is?
- How is our past and how we have coped with the past affecting our responses today?
- In what ways will we work to create stronger networks of solidarity and dismantle silos?
- How are we calling ourselves and each other ever more into the work of Love, through how we support each other and how we deepen our anti-racism/anti-oppression work?
- How can our congregations be some of the hope we need?
- What work do we need to do in our congregation to help it be a beacon of Love and justice even more?

These are big questions, but I love sitting with them – particularly when I get to work with other folks like our Board of Trustees, staff, and other lay leaders on discerning what they mean to us and how we'll respond. This is part of the joy of ministry. And it's part of the joy of summer. Due to the patterns of congregational life, this is one of the big times I get to help us sit with questions like these and work with leaders to turn our responses into a vision of ministry and program planning.

I'm excited for the coming weeks when this visioning and planning work will take clearer shape, we will have a vision of ministry to share with the wider congregation, and more team and committee leads will join in program planning and calendaring. This is such a generative moment!

To help with that, my schedule will be a bit different for the next two months. I will be away from UUS for several weeks this summer. Following General Assembly, I'm taking some study leave from **June 24 – July 7**. I will also be taking a week of study leave from **July 16 – 23**. During study leave I get to study, reflect, plan, and prepare for the coming year. To support that, I do not read or respond to email while I'm on study leave. I will be reachable on my cell phone for pastoral emergencies. You can also reach out to the Pastoral Care Associates by calling Virginia Melroy or emailing pastoralcare@uusic.org. Please reach out to the appropriate staff person for other needs.

(From Your Minister continued on page 3)

(From Your Minister continued from page 2)

Then I'll be on vacation from **July 29 – August 11** for a long-anticipated camping trip in Yellowstone National Park. While I'm on vacation, staff and the Pastoral Care Team will be responding to urgent needs. The Board of Trustees and staff will be able to reach me if there is an emergency that requires my attention (with some limitations due to being in the wilderness).

This summer, as we engage with big questions, whether they're similar to the ones I posed above or ones generated from each of our lives, may each of us find and create some space to rest, to sit in stillness, to talk with those we trust, or to engage with whatever other practice helps us find some of our answers, some of our clarity. Because to survive and thrive we need one another and we need our collective wisdom.

Love and Blessings,
Rev. Diana

Upcoming Services

July 2024 Sunday Services

July 7th: Being Enough Together

Marsha Cheyney will lead us as we reflect on the messages our world gives us about perfectionism, what it means to be successful or to be enough, and to celebrate how we can resist that, find our center, and learn how we want to be enough.

July 14th: Love Unites, Stories Ignite

Join us to hear about and reflect on learnings from General Assembly, the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists from around the country and world. Rev. Diana Smith preaching.

July 21st: Fighting for Freedom

Are you feeling anxious about the coming elections? Discouraged? Wondering what you can do? In this service, several UUS members and friends will describe what's at stake for the future of democracy, climate and the environment, immigration, body autonomy, income inequality and LGBTQIA+ rights. Voting, getting others to vote, and working with others in our community and beyond have never been more important. We will offer a variety of opportunities to take action to keep hope alive. This non-partisan service is part of our UUS participation in UU the Vote, a nation-wide UU initiative.

July 28th: Searching, Stretching, and Learning to Rest

How do we recover from injuries and what can that tell us about what helps us grow, as well as what helps us live and thrive in community? Rev. Diana Smith 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

Inside Out Reentry Community

July Sunday Offerings benefit Inside Out Reentry Community, a nonprofit organization based in Iowa City serving people returning to Johnson County after incarceration. They support people involved in the criminal legal system in changing from the inside out, and to educate the public, in order to promote healing, restore relationships and achieve success in the community.

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

From Your Congregational Administrator

Maya Kehr Yoder

June has brought a bustling office of volunteers. We had a great group of folks come help place stickers on bubble wands to prepare for the Pride Parade. Sue Otto, Mary Dix, Dave Martin, and Pete Brokaw successfully prepared 415 bubble wands despite uncooperative adhesives. Pete also spent an afternoon getting our office and conference cupboards into shape and miraculously created more coveted storage space. Bonnie Penno, helped shred old paperwork and improved our shredding system by adding compostable bags to catch the paper. Diana Miller spent some time organizing historical records.

Deb Schoelerman and Gary Lawrenson of the Land Ministry Team helped train our Facilities Coordinator, Patrick Satter in his new, seasonal role of Grounds Caretaker. For the growing season, Patrick will work an additional 5 hours per week to help the Land Ministry Team with watering, weed whacking, weeding, and more. Thanks to Patrick for being willing to add this to his load!

Check out photos of our volunteers on our social media! www.facebook.com/uusic

Announcements

- **Community Events at Draco Hill Nature Farm at 8:00 PM on July 12th**

Bug Night at Draco Hill: Join citizen scientist Jim Durbin from Marion for Friday night of insects! Jim will set up his bright lights at a perfect spot to draw as many bugs as possible. Bring a folding chair and well, probably some bug repellent for yourself! Supervised children welcome. This event is accessible to all.

Learn more here: dracohill.org/events/

Upcoming Events

Men's Sunday Social, July 7th

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. We define "man" as any adult who identifies as a man. 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.

(Upcoming Events continued on page 5)

(Upcoming Events continued from page 4)

Musical Theater Camp Week 1, July 8th

JUNGLE BOOK: JULY 8TH THROUGH 19TH

Musical Theatre Camp will give children entering kindergarten through 12th grade a chance to work together to create a show. All camp participants will have a role in the play if they want, or on the tech crew if they would prefer. Each camp will have a performance on the second Friday of their camp at 6:30 pm. There is a role for everyone in this show.

Rev. Diana Community Office Hours, July 10th

Rev. Diana will be in the community (time and location to be announced) 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!"

Free Lunch Program, July 12th

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)

Kommuna Lux: Ukrainian Band Concert, July 15th

Kommuna Lux brings you the heritage music of their beloved hometown. Klezmer, Balkan, and Urban Chanson, with a dash of Ukrainian Folk and powered by rocket fuel, Kommuna Lux impacts the crowd with a nostalgic, high-energy Big Band sound from the bygone days of speakeasies and rum runners.

Event begins at 7:00 PM. Purchase your tickets at the door!

\$15 for adult and age 12+

\$12 for UUS members

Free for age 11 and under

Check out their recordings at www.kommunalux.com

UUS Board Meeting, July 17th

The UUS Board of Trustees holds a meeting, open to all members, each month at 7 pm on the third Wednesday. Look for an agenda in the weekly email or [on the website](#) before the meeting. ([Link to Join](#), Meeting ID 891 3256 0297, password 228948, or join by phone).

Musical Theater Camp Performance Night: Jungle Book, July 19th

Join us for "Jungle Book" at 6:30 PM at UUS. More details to follow!

UUS Men's Sharing Circle, July 21st

All adult UUS members and friends who identify as male 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.

(Upcoming Events continued on page 6)

(Upcoming Events continued from page 5)

Musical Theater Camp Week 2, July 22nd

THE MUSIC MAN: JULY 22ND THROUGH
AUGUST 2ND

Musical Theatre Camp will give children entering kindergarten through 12th grade a chance to work together to create a show. All camp participants will have a role in the play if they want, or on the tech crew if they would prefer. Each camp will have a performance on the second Friday of their camp at 6:30 pm. There is a role for everyone in this show.

Rev. Diana Community Office Hours, July 24th

Rev. Diana will be in the community (time and location to be announced) 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, July 24th

Join Tina McCoy in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM for a mini-retreat from the distractions and busy-ness 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.

We will begin promptly at 6:30, please plan to arrive 15 minutes early to create your comfort space for the session. Bring props (e.g., yoga mat, blanket, etc.) to support and deepen your comfort. This is a free-will offering event.

***Find our full list of July Events at
www.uusic.org/upcoming-events.***

UUS Committee and Team Reports

COVENANT GROUPS

In June, covenant group members talked about some of the ways we renew ourselves. The Soul Matters packet puts it extremely well: "At one time or another, we've all asked, "How do I keep going?" It's a question that comes up not only when life is especially challenging, scary or disorienting, but also when it is especially routine and repetitive. In those moments, we hunger for renewal and new energy. Some strategy that will center us or at least help us put one foot in front of the other." What do you do to renew yourself—recharge your energy, reframe your perspective, restore your sense of purpose or feelings of joy and love?

If questions like these intrigue you, you might 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.

FREE LUNCH PROGRAM

On June 14th, a gorgeous day, we achieved a RECORD. Our incredible group served 152 guests!

That's correct. 152 meals were served!

The meal of cheesy ham and hash brown potato casserole was donated by David Jepsen in memory of Mary Jepsen. Volunteers Frank Wildensee and Vicki Siefers developed the recipe.

Frank and Vicki were helped with preparing and delivering this record meal by: Bob Littlehale, Bonnie Penno, Paul Gilbert,

*(UUS Committee and Team Reports continued
on page 7)*

(UUS Committee and Team Reports continued on page 6)

Barb Haring, Dan Gall, Joy Thompson, Kezia Walker-Cecil, Carolyn Johnson, Theresa Ullerich, John Elson, Gare Calhoun, Gary Lawrenson, Joe Rasmussen, Janet McKee and Terri O'Berry.

Many of the aforementioned volunteers also helped by providing ingredients. Other volunteers who contributed to the meal were Pete Brokaw, Laurie Cubit, Gay Mikelson, Sharon Booker, Star Wojciak, Judy Quinn and Ron Crawford.

GREEN SANCTUARY

Juneteenth Green Sanctuary Potluck and Program!

Over 25 folks showed up to share salads, bean dishes (traditional for Juneteenth), casseroles, cookies, brownies, and fruit at our first potluck. Because it was Juneteenth, we did a deep read of General Order No. 3, the notice informing enslaved people in Texas that they were free. Discussion focused on the inconsistency of telling Freedmen they had equal rights with their former enslavers, but advising them to stay and work for those same people. Our Juneteenth observation was linked to Green Sanctuary through Dr. Martin Luther King's writings on the connection of race and environment, a connection later documented in a report by the United Church of Christ that showed race was the number one factor in deciding where toxic waste facilities were located. The program wrapped up by sharing some of Green Sanctuary's work. On another note, everyone remembered to bring their own table service so we kept use of compostable plates down, and made clean-up a breeze.

UUA Climate Revival Event! Save the Date – September 28-29

Join us September 28 and 29 to explore how to bring our UUS climate and justice goals together! Details to follow.

Composting

Composting has increased and contamination has gone down. Everything is going in the right direction! Be sure and try out composting (if you haven't already) the next time you are enjoying refreshments in the fellowship hall.

July Better Together Challenge – Prepare for the Worst

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 prepare for the worst.

1. For Severe Weather – Make a Safety Plan. You can find everything here: [weather.gov/ama/severesafetytips](https://www.weather.gov/ama/severesafetytips)
2. For a major Disaster – After you make a plan for severe weather, you need to plan for the aftermath. You can find everything here: [ready.gov/plan](https://www.ready.gov/plan)
3. For Death – Thinking about death never killed anyone, but avoiding thinking about it can make it challenging for your family. Fill out an Advanced Medical Directive (ADM) to guide end-of-life choices. Designate a legal guardian for young kids 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:[caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/by-state/iowa/](https://www.caringinfo.org/planning/advance-directives/by-state/iowa/);

Guardianship:[nytimes.com/article/legal-guardian.html#link-3f98cc12](https://www.nytimes.com/article/legal-guardian.html#link-3f98cc12);

Will:[iowalegalaid.org/resource/wills-and-probate-questions-answers](https://www.iowalegalaid.org/resource/wills-and-probate-questions-answers)

(UUS Committee and Team Reports continued on page 8)

(UUS Committee and Team Reports continued on page 7)

Our Next Meeting Will be Hybrid!

Green Sanctuary is planning an in-person meeting at church **Wednesday July 24, 7 pm** but we will have a Zoom option for folks who can't attend. Contact Jan Weaver at jan.weaver57@gmail.com for more information or to get on our email list.

PRISON MINISTRY

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.” Here are some of our latest efforts:

- The Board meeting on June 4 included two guests. Zaria Rochester of the Inside Out Reentry Community in Iowa City explained the work she does to support formerly incarcerated individuals through that organization. Dr. Mary Cohen of the University of Iowa discussed some of her recent projects advocating for more just and humane treatment of the incarcerated, including an attempt to build a worldwide network of contacts and resources called IMAJIN (International Music and Justice Inquiry Network).
- The Prison Ministry Team sponsored a well-attended screening at FilmScene of Beyond Walls, a program of five short documentaries about prison life, its effects on families of the incarcerated, and life after incarceration. The films argue the need to find alternatives to the U.S. prison-industrial complex. After the screening, there was a panel discussion with incarcerated-rights advocate Sue Hutchins; Michelle Heinz, executive director of the Inside Out Reentry Community; and Ken Greene, a formerly incarcerated individual now part of the Inside Out community; after which the audience asked questions. The film and discussion were both well received and PMT successfully raised money through donations that will be used to support incarcerated individuals in Iowa.
- The Prison Ministry Team continues to be active through the 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 persons 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 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 offers the Worthy Now Prison Ministry Network, a prison ministry through the Church of the Larger Fellowship. They’re also looking for people to become pen pals to incarcerated individuals nationwide. For more information, go to worthynow.org.
- The UUS Prison Ministry Team meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the UUS Conference Room. You are welcome to join us at our next meeting on July 2, 2024, either in person or via Zoom (Meeting ID: 848 0842 4430; Passcode: 193553).