

# Newsletter July 2020

*The Unitarian Church of Underwood is a welcoming community of diverse people where our celebration of life and common search for meaning bind us together.*

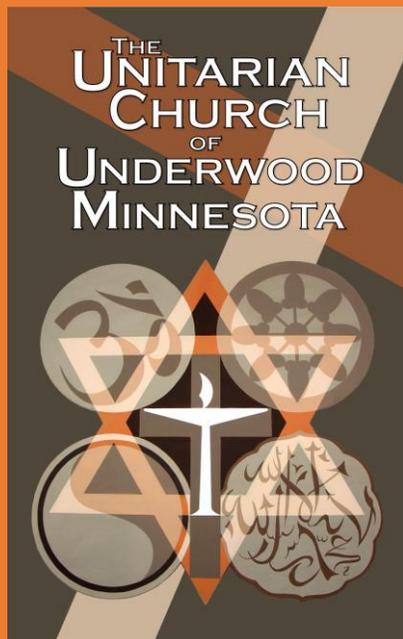
## Unitarian Church of Underwood

PO Box 58, 206 North Main Street  
Underwood

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org)

[www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org](https://www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org)



In Honor of George Floyd killed by Minneapolis police officers May 25, 2020  
And the millions of protesters out on the streets seeking racial justice. So too, may our voices be heard.

**Due to continued precautions against the spreading of the COVID-19 church services, meetings & activities are suspended until further notice.**

Watch for [ucofu@ucofu.org](mailto:ucofu@ucofu.org) messages, the Sunday “UCU Weekly” and check: [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org) or [www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org](https://www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org) [u.org](http://u.org)

["Like" UCU on Facebook: see www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org](#)

## U Group Schedule Watch [ucofu@ucofu.org](mailto:ucofu@ucofu.org) for announcements of "Zooming" U Group Meetings

- Alexandria U-Group: Zoom meeting June 28 @ 7:00 pm. Facilitators: Lee Becker/Susan Sanford
- Battle Lake U Group will continue the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each month @ 3 p.m. Facilitators: Bob Worner/Kris Warhol.
- Fergus Falls U-Group: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday @ 6:30 pm. Facilitator: Melody Shores.
- Perham U-Group: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday @ 6:30. Facilitator: Mary Worner

*Each group holds an empty chair for anyone who wants to come and join the group.*

**Adult and Children's Religious Education Classes and Mindfulness Sitting on Sundays are Temporarily Suspended until further notice**



### To Contribute to UCU:

Sign up for automatic funds transfer or  
Mail your check to: UCU  
Attn. Treasurer  
PO Box 58  
Underwood, MN 56586  
(Automatic collection payments will soon be available)

## UCU Weekly

Watch for these and other [ucofu@ucofu.org](mailto:ucofu@ucofu.org) email messages.  
Participate in the **ZOOM** invitations for Sunday service, social hour & other meetings

Note: Send Announcements for UCU Weekly and monthly newsletter to [newseditor@ucofu.org](mailto:newseditor@ucofu.org). As appropriate, some will be forwarded for inclusion @ [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org) and Facebook Page.

### Need help with Zoom?

Email: [techhelp@ucofu.org](mailto:techhelp@ucofu.org)

### Want to volunteer to be part of the Tech Help Team?

Also email: [techhelp@ucofu.org](mailto:techhelp@ucofu.org)

## Newsletter Submissions due prior to Issuance the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month

Please submit your ideas, articles and photos to:

Writer/Editor: Mary Anderson @

[newseditor@ucofu.org](mailto:newseditor@ucofu.org)

Editing: [Stephanie Sanderson](#)

Emailing/ mailing: [Ellen Eastby and Mary Anderson](#)

Website: [Ellen Eastby](#)

Facebook: [Melody Shores](#)

[Photos courtesy of Norm Kolstad & credited others.](#)

[Credited Articles](#)

**Note:** For security, personal telephone numbers and/or email addresses will not be used within the newsletters except with the express permission of the individual.

### UCU Weekly:

Designed and written by Ellen Eastby

Editing by Mary Anderson

**Church Services and meetings**  
**Continue Suspended due to COVID-19 Precautions**

Even though we are not having services in our church buildings, we have close to the same expenses. The Stewardship Committee encourages everyone to continue giving. Those of you who have not set up automatic withdrawals may send checks to our treasurer, Ron, at: UCU, PO Box 58, Underwood, MN 56586. The process for automated collection payments is being explored and will soon be available. Thank you for your continued financial support.

**Sunday Services**  
**New Start Time of 10:00 a.m. beginning July 5**  
**(Check in 9:45-10:00 a.m.)**

Beginning this coming Sunday, July 5, our UCU service will begin at 10 a.m. with check-in from 9:45 to 10:00 with virtual coffee time immediately following. A link will be provided for a 9 a.m. service at another Unitarian Universalist church. The Connections Task Force changed the time, so we finish earlier in the day.

**Message from Board President, Norm Kolstad**  
**Light on the Prairie**



*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.  
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." ...Martin  
Luther King*

Dr. King often invoked metaphors involving light and darkness: *"Only in the darkness can you see the stars."* or referenced *"... the starless midnight of racism..."*

Our community has recently witnessed the darkness of racism. The comments at our Church annual meeting reminded me of a term that was often used by Dr. King and others in the 1960's to describe the path to justice, and that is "righteousness."

We have an opportunity to walk in the righteous light of our Unitarian Principles and to reject the darkness of oppression. We must lead by example, challenge hate, call out hypocrisy, vote to end structural bias, and invite others to learn that love liberates both the giver and the receiver.

As you may know, our Unitarian Church of Underwood was my childhood church and I remember it often referred to as the "Beacon on the Prairie" as if it were a

lighthouse that would guide one through the shadows. Our chalice also is a light representing the "...light of life and love that lives in every human heart."

We will be strengthened by the diverse voices in our community to spread the light of - the beacon of - hope, and the path to righteousness. *Norman Kolstad*

### **June 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Highlights**

Orientation on Board roles & responsibilities reviewed individually by Board members  
Coordinators appointed: Program – Mary Worner; Community Outreach – Amy Beckman/Alison Francis; Facilities – Norm Kolstad/Susan Groff  
In person services yet suspended, continue virtually  
Racial Justice Task Force appointed  
Empowerment Grant Funds re-allocated  
GA attendees designated  
Church Chats with Board members will resume July 5.

Board minutes to be approved at the July 15 Board meeting will be in the August newsletter.

### **Speakers for July via Zoom**

**Note: New Start Time July 5 of 10:00 a.m.**

**(Check in 9:45-10:00 a.m.)**

Sunday services continue to be offered via Zoom video conferencing. The link is included in the [ucofu@ucofu.org](mailto:ucofu@ucofu.org) mailings each week. Click on the link to learn about Zoom. <http://www.ucofu.org/Zoom/Zoom.pdf>. If still confused, we have wonderful technical support people ready to help you via email or telephone: Tere Mann, Bonnie Showers, Melody Shores, Amy Beckman and Jim Francis. You can reach them at [techhelp@ucofu.org](mailto:techhelp@ucofu.org).

**July 5 – Edie Barrett, Part 1\* and**

**July 12 – Edie Barret, Part 2\*\* , “Creativity, Personal Reflection and Social Change.”** A year ago, Edie Barrett spoke to us on her reflections of white privilege. This month, as a candidate for a Masters’ of Public Affairs from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, she will share her thoughts on “Creativity, Personal Reflection & Social Change.”

From Edie: “I believe there is within each one of us -- perhaps in our DNA -- the ability to make the world a better place. We have that opportunity in small ways on a daily basis. Other times, perhaps our ideas are larger, grander, and a bit more challenging. If instead of actualizing our potential, we succumb to complacency, isn't that -- in its own way -- a crime against humanity?” from E.B.

Synopsis: Between Covid-19, the death of George Floyd and the subsequent global uprising, we are in unprecedented times. I would like to share with you what I’m learning and how that affects my understanding of engagement and social change. It is my hope this presentation will

invite you into your own self-reflection of what it means to participate, advance, and amplify our shared humanity.

For my presentations, I would like to do a sweep over the last two years of my graduate work, pinpointing highlights that support my presentation focus. I have been exploring Jungian psychology for almost 25 years. Throughout my coursework I have strived to integrate Jungian perspective with contemporary research on leadership. I believe the more we understand ourselves, the more authentically and consciously we engage with others.

Please consider reading this article prior to my presentation. Here is the link:

<https://onbeing.org/blog/william-deresiewicz-solitude-and-leadership/>

It has been a guiding light for me through my graduate work. It's titled, "Solitude and Leadership" by William Deresiewicz. This is a very famous lecture that was delivered to the United States Military Academy at West Point. "

Edie Barrett is a published author, published poet, and solo exhibiting fine artist. She has also written and performed her work on stage. Her Santa Barbara stage performance was titled: *The Bus Ride to Transformation: Poverty, Racism and My Black Muse*. In her first career she worked with criminally challenged youth and sex offenders. Then, for over 13 years, she worked in academic administration at Pacifica Graduate Institute in the Department of Mythological Studies. Pacifica is a world-renowned graduate school of Jungian and Depth Psychology.

For over 25 years she has been studying and exploring Jungian psychology. This perspective has had a profound impact in both her life and creative expression. She is a fifth-generation Minnesota Norwegian and returned to Minnesota in 2010, after living in Santa Barbara, California, for 26 years. In 2018 she began graduate work at The Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. She hopes to use art as a vehicle for social change and engagement. She has a tremendous love of the prairie and contemplates the intersection of landscape and leadership. Her home is in Ortonville, Minnesota.

**July 19 – Rev. Patricia Guthmann Haresch\*\*** - A friend of Alison Francis for many years, Pat is a UU minister who has lived all over the world. She currently lives in Ottawa, Canada, and visits Otter Tail County almost every summer.

Drawing from her experience, she will address some of the issues of racism (and the Black Lives Matter movement) that have been part of recent conversations. She will support our quest for understanding and action to help further our thinking and work of anti-racism.

**\*Following the July 5 service, join Board members, John Minge and Shannon Smith for "Church Chats" for an exchange of ideas and/or concerns.**

**\*\*During the social hour following Edi's Part 2 talk on July 12 and Pat's 20-minute message on July 19, we will break into groups and share a guided discussion. These discussions will give**

us the opportunity for follow-up to the annual meeting dialogue and further reflect upon white privilege and racial inequities. It is hoped that this input from members and friends will help guide the direction and planning of the newly Board appointed Racial Justice and Equality Task Force.

**July 26 (and August 23) – Rev. Roger Parks:** Roger will reflect on two books he is reading:  
First: SAPIENS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF HUMANKIND by Yuval Noah Harari.  
Second: THE WISDOM: ORDER, CHAOS, REORDER by Fr. Richard Rohr.

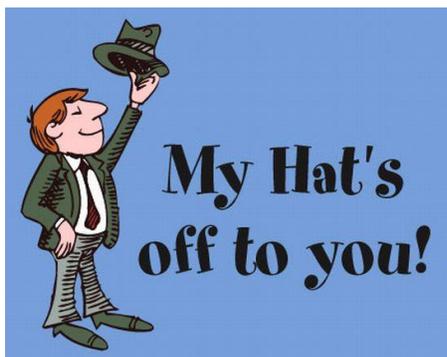
While approaching the human experience from different points of view these two books do complement each other. They give us some history of human development over millions of years and what we now can and must do to reclaim an authentic self.

*Note: The Speakers Committee is working on developing at least four Sunday services over the next year on issues of racism with potential follow-up discussions.*



### **Annual Meeting Helps**

Taking the normal planning for the annual meeting and adjusting it to a Zoom meeting involved many hours of thought and work on the part of the Annual Meeting Election Planning Team. Goals were to keep the meeting short, simple, give voting members information needed, and yet, have the attendees unaware of the work that went into it. Mary Anderson prepared most of the documentation that was artfully and efficiently incorporated into the mailings, and presentations by the Technical Support Team. Small changes in the voting process had to be implemented. All in all, the Planning Team felt good about the participation of the voting members and the flow of the meeting that resulted in the needed decision making. Thank you to all members who participated and thanks to the *Annual Meeting Election Planning Team:*



*Mary Anderson, Chair; Norm Kolstad, Ron Roller, Tere Mann, and Bonnie Graham, Church Administrator; and to the Technical Support team: again, Bonnie Graham and Tere Mann assisted by Melody Shores.*

**Special Thanks to Melody Shores** who spent hours with Sandy to get her on Zoom and with Mary A. to get her using Google Suites, plus all the others she has assisted. Melody has also spent hours on getting UCU switched to Google Suites: building the technical aspects for connection and institutional memory; figuring out how to map the relationships &

roles within the church for use in communication and record maintenance; developing instructions for others to use; and so much more that we don't even know. Hats off to Melody and her Google Suite teammates: Bonnie Graham, Tere Mann and Bonnie Showers!!

### Building Access

For safety and sanitation purposes, if you access or need to access the church building, please call or text Susan Groff (Janitor) @ 218/205-0439.



### Volunteer for Helps with Zoom Sunday Services

Slots are available

Contact [administrator@ucofu.org](mailto:administrator@ucofu.org) to sign up.

Thank you!

CANDLE LIGHTERS can be anyone. You light the candles as each person speaks a Joy or Concern. Betsy Wells can help answer any questions you might have.

If you want to help host Sunday Services or any church meeting on Zoom, the TECH TEAM would greet you with welcome arms. And they would give you some training so you would feel confident. Want to join the Tech Team? Write to [techhelp@ucofu.org](mailto:techhelp@ucofu.org) and tell them you are interested. Current Zoom Tech Team: Tere Mann, Melody Shores, Amy Beckman, Jim Francis.

### Friends Helping Friends

If any one of our members or friends needs support for anything from having groceries delivered to someone to visit with, you may contact one of the following individuals: Mary Anderson – [mary.anderson@ucofu.org](mailto:mary.anderson@ucofu.org) or 218-346-6638 Janell Miersch @ [Janell.miersch@ucofu.org](mailto:Janell.miersch@ucofu.org) or 218-531-1445 or Mary Worner @ [mary.worner@ucofu.org](mailto:mary.worner@ucofu.org) or 218-826-6998.

### Volunteer for the Community

#### Fergus Falls Food Shelf needs volunteers:

The Fergus Falls Food shelf feeds an average of 30 families each day it is open. We need your help to keep it open. More volunteer helpers are needed now. Each team of 4-5 volunteer workers pack up boxes of food inside and direct



traffic outside where families come to pick up their box of food. Recently the danger of Covid-19 threatened to stop this essential service to local families. Two months ago the food shelf made several changes to insure the safety of the volunteers and the clients: only four volunteers are allowed inside the building, cloth masks are provided and social distancing is observed; clients now drive up in cars and pick a box of food with no need to go inside.

**Deb Ferguson** has volunteered to coordinate efforts to form a team of 4-5 people from UCU to provide good nutrition and a sense of hope for our neighbors. Call or text Deb at 218/731-6786 or email her at [deb.ferguson@ucofu.org](mailto:deb.ferguson@ucofu.org), or contact **Kim Embretson** at the Food Shelf @ 218-770-4885 to receive more details and sign up for a volunteer time slot.

## Donation Opportunity for Minneapolis Neighborhood Needs

UCU is collecting supplies to be taken to the Twin Cities to help those left without access to them. Andrew Maxwell-Parish, Peggy Maxwell's son, will be taking them to a place of distribution weekly. Watch for current needs via the ucofu.org announcements and Weekly. You can leave your donations in the front porch of UCU Suite #300 by noon of each Sunday. If you would rather drop off money, Kris Warhol has volunteered to do the shopping for you. It is anticipated that supplies will be needed yet for an undetermined time. For more information contact coordinators: Kris Warhol @ [kris.warhol@ucofu.org](mailto:kris.warhol@ucofu.org) and John Salmen @ [john.salmen@ucofu.org](mailto:john.salmen@ucofu.org). Thank you all for donating!! For more information on where goods and helps are needed, see: <https://twin-cities-mutual-aid.org/>.

## Notes from June Virtual Sunday Services

**June 7** – Abbreviated service with **Kris Warhol** sharing her thoughts in a brief message titled “**A Message of Hope.**” She also led the reading of the Covenant of Right Relationships. The Chalice was lit in honor of all unspoken Joys and Concerns. This was followed by the Annual Meeting of the Membership led by Interim President **Norm Kolstad**. The meeting minutes to be approved at the 2021 annual meeting are below.

Attendance: 27 voting members + 5 others.

**June 14** – **Celebrant, Shannon Smith** spoke on “**Telling Our Stories on Race.**” All of us have a story to tell about our history, culture, and family. Why do whites feel that their story is the American story; the right story?

Shannon discussed thoughts written by four authors: Ibram X. Kendi in *How to Be Antiracist*, says that whites often feel there are two solutions to problems caused by different cultures and races – segregation or assimilation. However, we need to start by looking inward and realize that we are both racist and anti-racist.

Next she discussed Resmaa Menakem, author of *My Grandmother's Hands*. Therapist and trauma specialist Resmaa Menakem is working with old wisdom and very new science about our bodies and nervous systems, and all we condense into the word “race.” All of us carry

trauma in our bodies and need to understand that before we can move on. This trauma we carry, according to epigenetics, includes that of many previous generations. We also have inherited resilience from those generations. One way to understand those of other races and cultures is by entering a space where others have gathered and be open to what is around us.

A third writer is poet Ocean Vaughn who wrote *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*. As he grew up, Vietnamese and gay, Ocean was surrounded by story tellers. From them he learned and carries with him his history and culture.

Eula Biss, interviewed by Krista Tippett, says, "You can't think about something if you can't talk about it. She helpfully opens up lived words and ideas like *complacency*, *guilt*, and *opportunity hoarding* for an urgent reckoning with whiteness." This conversation was inspired by her 2015 essay in the *New York Times*, "*White Debt*."

Attendance via Zoom: 26

**June 21 –Bob Worner** entitled his talk, "**Chaos**." Bob referenced the writing of Canadian crime writer, Louise Penny who wrote more about life than death. In her latest book, *Bury Your Dead*, she tells the story of a hermit and collector of antiques who traded his antiques for groceries and companionship of the grocery store owner. To keep the arrangements to himself, the store owner kept telling the hermit stories of impending disaster, "chaos is coming."

We are in the throes of chaos: the pandemic, the death of George Floyd, and right here – the ugly racist remarks. Chaos means without form or order. The purpose of the church is not to make eternal promises but to keep chaos at bay; to hold one another, to provide form and order of civilized living - meaning peace and justice.

So even though we are apart, we remain a community of caring and support for each other working together in harmony.

Attendance via Zoom: 30

### **June 28 –UUA General Assembly Sunday Service live**

This morning we joined the Sunday Worship Service held at the UUA's Annual General Assembly. The service was led by Rev. Mykal O-Neal Slack. Mykal in his meditation, led with thoughts that as UUs, we are part of the unfolding human communal story. We find our place of identity and purpose in the richness and constraints of our lives. We are not all in the same place. We as UUs do not look, act, sound the same as all of us all the time. We don't have to be in the same place to move with clarity. We just have to 1) know where we are; 2) treat that other people know what they want. We come with our varied hopes and dreams. We can't wait with or wait for each other. Our journey remains wherever we are on it path.

Mykal is currently the Community Minister for Worship and Spiritual Care for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism, an organization and growing spiritual community committed to

supporting Black folx in our faith, and a co-founder of the Transforming Hearts Collective, a ministry that both supports spaces for LGBTQ people to access resilience, healing, and spirituality and resources faith communities and other groups for the work of radical inclusion and culture shift. He is a husband and father from the South, committed to healing and truth-telling, as well as community accountability and care.

Three people relayed the story from “Three Dreams in the Desert” by Olive Schreiner, a South African author. Reason says to the woman who has come out of the desert in search of the Land of Freedom but finds her progress obstructed by a dark, deep river with banks steep and high: "There is one way, and one only, to the Land of Freedom; down the banks of Labor; through the waters of Suffering." Some have made the track only to the water's edge, some have entered and washed away, some built the bridge upon which many more will cross in the future.

The message was given by Rev. Joan Javier-Duval who serves as Minister of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, VT. She is the daughter of immigrants from the Philippines. Her message also referenced bridges and roads – to know where we are on our journey and know where we come from, rooting ourselves to our ancestors and our history. We grapple to freedom and liberation. Liberation is costly. We make a track to the water's edge – who will pass – all of humanity so rather than our individual liberation, it becomes collective liberation – we are dependent upon one another and upon the earth.

The future does not have predictable outcomes. But we can cultivate “readiness.” She relayed her story of going with an international religious delegation in support of solidarity with Honduras people. Entering a protest area, she felt shaky, fearful but determined. She had donned her clergy collar to ready herself and give her courage.

Not being able to predict outcomes and results may cause us fear and reduce risk taking. We do not need to seek perfection. We enter open-hearted, risk willing, ready to make sacrifices. If we make mistakes, we ask forgiveness. We can learn from what has already been done. We are humbled, trusting selves to make the voices louder, acting toward the collective good with clarity and conviction to take up shared liberation. All of us need all of us to make it. Always love.

There were musical interludes along with the messages.

**Special candle of concern:** John & Janell Miersch's daughter, Jill living in New York has been hospitalized. She is allowed one visitor, so Janell can be with her. Please keep them in your thoughts.

The combined church chat reflected upon the messages and the call of opportunities to build collective and anti-racist awareness. We can start with the suggestion below provided by Bonnie Graham, Church Administrator:

An event to watch on Facebook or YouTube:

There is no need to register to watch the event on YouTube and Facebook and Twitter. Ibram X. Kendi on "How to Be an Antiracist" Tickets, Mon, Jul 20, 2020 at 7:00 PM | Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ibram-x-kendi-on-how-to-be-an-antiracist-tickets-110866502694>

## Relax and Enjoy! (From Steve Berg)

"Hi Everybody,  
Some of you came to my place last summer when Linda and I had John Smith ([johnsmithmusic.com](http://johnsmithmusic.com)) at our house for an evening of music. Well, COVID-19 has put an end to singer-songwriter gigs everywhere, but many musicians are live streaming to fill the gap. Anyway, John Smith and his buddy, Dan Sobanik did a live streaming concert on Father's Day from John's backyard in Trempealeau, W. John's backyard overlooks the Mississippi River right by a lock and dam. So, the background is the Mississippi and bluffs of Minnesota just a bit south of Winona, MN where I used to live and where I first heard John sing his songs in Galesville, WI. During the concert, a barge can be seen heading downriver and a couple trains go by too. You can hear lots of orioles singing in the trees. The concert was recorded and can be watched by clicking this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/johnsmithmusic/videos/10220715004798892/>

If you watch, you'll hear some of John's original songs and some covers. You'll hear a couple new songs referencing George Floyd. You'll hear some singer-songwriter stuff, some country, some bluegrass, some great harmony and some great guitar work by Dan. So, if you have a couple hours for a free concert at your convenience online watch John Smith's Father's Day concert. Enjoy!" *Steve Berg*

## *Stewardship* Giving in Gratitude

**UCU's Yearly Budgeted Income for 2020-2021 is \$40,831 or \$3402/month**

Collections for 2 months (April-May) of 2020-2021:

- \$3153 monthly Automatic Funds Transfer (18 households)
- \$2075 other collections (which includes one large donation)

For a total of \$5228 which is \$1576 short of our budgeted income for the 2 months.

We encourage people to continue to make regular donations. An Authorization for Automatic Funds Transfer form was included with the notice for Annual Meeting. The completed form and/or checks should be made out to UCU and mailed to: Ron Roller, Treasurer, UCU, PO Box 58 Underwood, MN 56586 The Board is also exploring a means for making online donations. We will let you know how you can do that when we have the process worked out.

The Unitarian Church of Underwood is considered an “honor congregation” by the Unitarian Universalist Association. We have consistently made contributions to the Association. Of our 2020-21 approved budget of \$40,831, we budgeted \$4300 (approximately 10.5%) to the Association’s Annual Program Fund. See below for the benefits of UUA’s Annual Program Fund.



APF

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AMPLIFYING  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALISM

### **Congregational Giving and Covenant**

*By Vail Weller, Congregational Giving Director*

Nearly two-thirds of the UUA’s philanthropic revenue comes from our congregations through their support of the **Annual Program Fund** (APF). Numerous congregations have worked hard to maintain **Honor Congregation** status by contributing the full APF ask every year—many have sustained this level of support for 10+, even 25+ years.

In this time of pandemic many UU congregations are naturally concerned about their financial health, given the remarkable stressors on our communities. At the same time, demand for the UUA’s services and support has never been greater. UUA staff has offered **guidance, resources and tools** regarding virtual worship, staffing, finance, ministry to children and youth, and so much more.

**As a faith, we are all doing things we never thought possible.** The Annual Program Fund is, and always has been, an honor system rooted in a **covenant of trust and mutual support** congregations make with one another. We trust that congregations will contribute their fair share, as they are able.

Whatever a congregation’s giving capacity during this crisis, the UUA remains a partner in ministry. This, too, is an expression of **the covenant that binds us** together and will be necessary if we are to make it through this together.

## In Memory and Celebration of the Life of Marlys Siems

"You may have sent a card, given a hug, expressed kind words, a phone call, a visit, brought us delicious food, given a memorial, kept us in your thoughts, whatever you have done. We are deeply grateful for your kindness and compassion you extended to our family during this difficult time. You have touched our hearts.

Due to COVID-19, we have decided to postpone the Celebration of Life for Marlys until June 20, 2021. A time and place will be announced as we approach the date." *The family of Marlys Siems*



## Welcome New Member

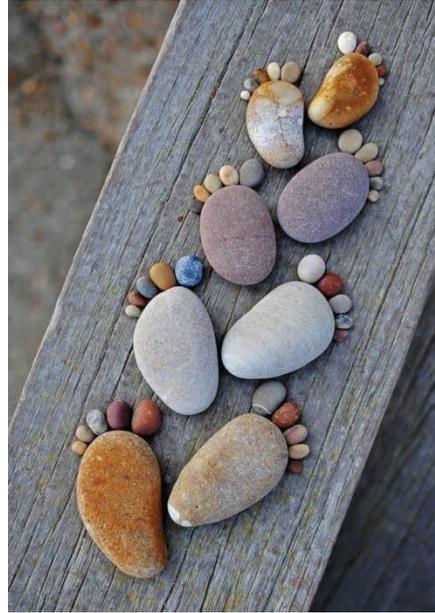
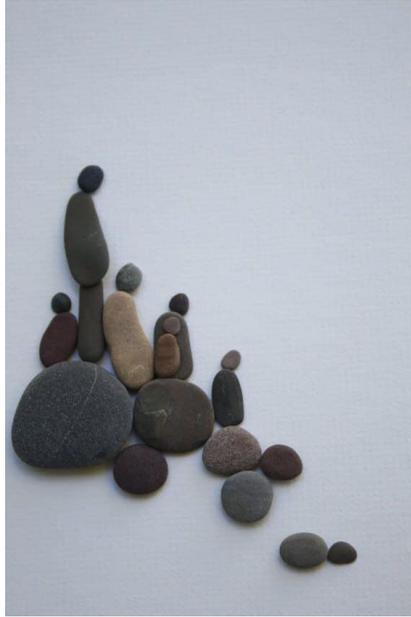


Gayle Nelson indicated in writing that she wanted to become a voting member of the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Gayle says: "I am inspired each time I meet with the UUs, and always feel uplifted hearing their voices ~ voices of open minded, empathetic, and deeply caring people. Reading through the reports that were sent regarding the Annual Meeting I realize there is good work being sponsored behind the scenes, as well as the work I hear cited at gatherings. So yes, I would be honored to be a member of the UCU. Count me in! I am happy to contribute to the UCU and have mailed a donation.

Gayle's background is that she "taught young children, also college classes and parenting classes related to young children. I cook, bake, tend shade gardens, enjoy interior painting, and belong to groups that read, golf, and line dance. So, if there is a way I can help or join in, I'd be happy to do so.

I am happy to have found the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Thank you, all Unitarians at Underwood, for this opportunity. *Gayle Nelson*

*Note: In lieu of new members signing the "silver book" to become members, please indicate in writing your desire to become a voting member and send to: [mary.anderson@ucofu.org](mailto:mary.anderson@ucofu.org) (Membership Committee Chair). The next New Member Welcoming Ceremony will occur October 4. Watch for announcements.*



“Stone Beauty” (photos contributed by Glenn Fritsche, Willmar UU)

### **We Need One Another**

“We need one another when we mourn and would be comforted.

We need one another when we are in trouble and afraid

We need one another when we are in despair, in temptation,

And need to be recalled to our best selves again.

We need one another when we would accomplish some great purpose,

And cannot do it alone.

We need one another in the hour of success,

When we look for someone to share our triumphs.

We need one another in the hour of defeat, when with encouragement we might endure,

And stand again.

We need one another when we come to die, and would have gentle hands

Prepare us for the journey.

All our lives we are in need, and others are in need of us.”

*George Odell*

## *Living our UU Principles*

The recent Facebook posting by an Underwood businessman not only exposed the issue of racism in our rural setting but also revealed a transitioning culture within the Unitarian Church of Underwood. We profess the 1<sup>st</sup> UU Principle of justice, equity and compassion with member viewpoints ranging from cautiousness in acting lest we call attention to ourselves to righteous indignation of the need to act now. After a spirited exchange and discussion at the 2020 annual membership meeting, the UCU membership adopted a Resolution for Race Equities and Justice (see full text of resolution below).

The Board of Directors approved the formation of a Racial Equality and Justice Task Force to explore and recommend ways in which the Unitarian Church of Underwood can build anti-racist thinking and action into the ministries. Your ideas are welcome. Please share at: [newseditor@ucofu.org](mailto:newseditor@ucofu.org),

## *From the Heart of Alison Francis*

“My Uncle Michael was a biker. He was not a bucket list biker, having ridden since single digits he was a biker in his bones, in his blood. As a kid, I remember visiting Uncle Mike's and Aunt Mo's home in Massachusetts. Theirs was a revolving door of old friends who came through it to see us, ‘the girls.’ These were kids Uncle Mike and my Mom had grown up with. They came on their bikes. They came and talked tough, looked formidable, and cracked wise. They were the coolest, quickest, funniest guys, and they'd come to see us! Together they were a family, and by coming to see us they were telling us we were family too.

Then Uncle Mike died. It was a summer evening and following a family tragedy he was doing the only thing that brought him peace, riding. We know he'd seen it coming. We know he took the hit, so another rider didn't. We know she was drunk.

At Uncle Mike's funeral I remember Auntie Nina and Uncle Fausto, I remember Cousin Duke, I remember friends of Aunt Mo's and Cousin Kelly's, but I don't remember Uncle Mike's friends because they did not come to the funeral. That evening, and the days to follow they came to the house and over and over I heard, ‘It was too hard.’ ‘I didn't know what to say.’ ‘I just couldn't do it.’ I remember thinking: Aunt Mo, Cousin Kelly, they don't get that choice! They don't get to say it's too hard! They don't get to show up tomorrow when they feel better. This is their life now, every moment of it, and you in all your tough, wise cracking ways didn't show up when they were hurting. That's not family. You told me we were family and I believed you.

This experience changed me. It steeled me. It was the beginning of committing myself to finding the courage I need to be a person with whose actions I could be proud. Through time my anger and disappointment in Uncle Mike's friends softened. I think my anger was hurt. Emotions have a strange way of masking themselves. Hurt as anger. Sadness as rage. These are my vulnerable masks. I don't know why Uncle Mike's friends couldn't make it to his funeral, but today I believe they did the best they could. I'd like to believe they found a way to go to the next funeral. I won't attempt to speak for Aunt Mo or Cousin Kelly, but that day I needed them there. That day I needed all my family there.

Today we mourn another tragedy. On May 25, 2020 George Perry Floyd, Jr. was killed at the hands of four Minneapolis Police Officers. As directly as we must attribute Uncle Mike's death to drunk driving, we must attribute George Floyd's death to institutional racism. Today I must dig deep. Today I must look critically at my actions and ask: Do my actions match my words and beliefs? As a Unitarian Universalist, am I living my principles? Are my actions that of which I can be proud? Today I must resist reaching for my masks. The masks that disguise my true feelings

of fear, ambivalence, sadness, and anger. Today I must also acknowledge that I am not as far along on the spectrum: Non-Racist to Anti-Racist Advocate as I thought I was but that I will use this knowledge to educate myself and fill my toolbox. Today this is how I will begin my day. Today and every day until there is no more work to be done. Today I share this with you because you too are part of my family. Together, let us show up for our greater family because today we are all hurting. *Alison Francis*

## *Amy Beckman Coordinating Underwood Community Dialogues for Restorative Justice*

"The death of George Floyd was a shock to the system. For me, it hit closer to home than any other case of police brutality. I used to ride my bike on Chicago Avenue to and from work when I lived in Minneapolis so I was familiar with the intersection where a police officer forced a knee into Mr. Floyd's neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. After years of reading and listening to black voices tell of their experiences, struggles, and hope for change, this was the moment where my passive learning changed to action. I made a pact that I would no longer **hide behind my white privilege and** simply shake my head, shrug my shoulders, or scroll past when racism presented itself. So, when it was revealed that a local businessman had posted racist remarks on his Facebook page, I was already angry, and that became the catalyst to find a way to make change.

As some of you may remember, my sister, Kara, spoke at UCU in March of 2018 about her work as a researcher into restorative justice practices in the St. Paul Public Schools. Her knowledge in this area and connections with other professionals seemed like a logical path worth pursuing. After countless conversations and hours organizing, a group of concerned citizens have been convening with Restorative Justice Practitioners for the last couple weeks to figure out how to address the harm that was inflicted and how best to repair broken relationships. We are still in the planning stages but are figuring out how to approach difficult conversations, provide support for healing, and establish deeper connections to all those we encounter.

The broad vision is to bring in the wider community discussions around what we value as a community and how we can address the culture of silence around racism and other difficult subjects. Once established, the tools will be in place for the long term to address any future incidents of harm.

Underwood is the place that helped shape me as I grew up and allowed me the opportunities to learn, make mistakes, and emerge stronger. I didn't see myself ever returning permanently after graduating high school, but life can take unexpected turns and here I am. It was the (stolen) land of my ancestors that called me back and the chance to continue the legacy as a steward of the land. It has been this affirming community at UCU that continually challenges, supports, and sustains me through difficult and joyful times. Though it will not be an easy path, I look forward to the journey that is ahead." *Amy Beckman*

**Note: Amy Beckman and Alison Francis are the newly appointed UCU Community Outreach Co-Coordiators.**

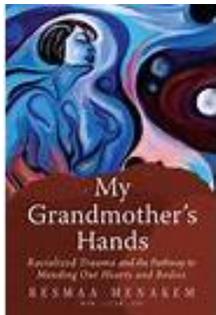
*“In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.”* ANGELA Y. DAVIS

*When you can't be there, start here!* Mary Anderson

## *Educating Ourselves on Our White Privilege and Anti-Racism*

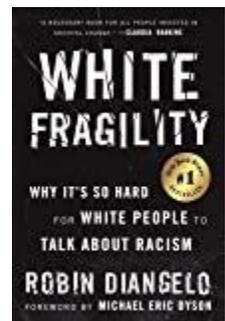
### **Recommended Books to Read for Building Self Awareness**

In ***How to Be an Antiracist***, Ibram X. Kendi takes readers through a widening circle of antiracist ideas—from the most basic concepts to visionary possibilities—that will help readers see all forms of racism clearly, understand their poisonous consequences, and work to oppose them in our systems and in ourselves.

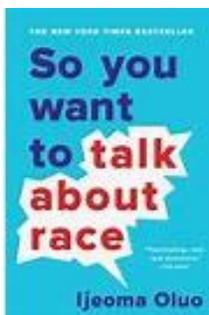


**My Grandmother's Hands** by Resmaa Menakam is a gripping journey through the labyrinths of trauma and its effects on modern life, especially for African Americans. In this important book, Resmaa's penetrating insight into trauma is profoundly impactful, but even more powerful and useful are his strategies for addressing it—for healing.

**Robin Diangelo**, author of ***White Fragility*** explores the counterproductive reactions white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and how these reactions maintain racial inequality.



In ***So You Want to Talk About Race***, Ijeoma Oluo guides readers of all races through subjects ranging from intersectionality and affirmative action to "model minorities" in an attempt to make the seemingly impossible possible: honest



conversations about race and racism, and how they infect almost every aspect of American life. "Oluo gives us--both white people and people of color--that language to engage in clear, constructive, and confident dialogue with each other about how to deal with racial prejudices and biases." -- National Book Review "Generous and empathetic, yet usefully blunt . . . it's for anyone who wants to be smarter and more empathetic about matters of race and engage in more productive anti-racist action."-- Salon

Depending on interest, book discussions via zoom on the above or other books may be scheduled. If you are willing to facilitate the discussion on the book of your choice, please contact Mary Anderson: [newseditor@ucofu.org](mailto:newseditor@ucofu.org).

## **“Can we stop harmful stereotyping? It just ain’t fair!”**

Words from Ozzie Tollefson: “We hear a kind of talk all the time—folks making snap judgements about people based on how they dress, their religious or political beliefs, and most harmfully, their skin color. Those negative, stereotypical judgements ignore the very soul of our fellow human beings. And it gets worse. People generalize about whole groups of people, without considering the diverse values and talents of each person within that group.” Ozzie goes on to tell a bit of the story of Mary Therese Alberts whose appearance may not fit a stereo-type. Her approach to life is a message to all.



*“I believe that down deep, all people of our world are more alike than different, and I try my best to see others as brothers and sisters. I try to live with kindness and compassion.” Mary Therese Alberts*

**Bikers: Mary Therese Alberts & Lee Hamness (photo courtesy of Lee)**

See the full content of Ozzie Tollefson’s message in his column of June 15, 2020 in the Fergus Falls Daily

Journal at; [https://www.fergusfallsjournal.com/opinion/can-we-stop-harmful-stereotyping-it-just-ain-t-fair/article\\_4a82a5dc-af38-11ea-89f1-1f89264c1aae.html?fbclid=IwAR2HZCbLrboS\\_mf1eZ\\_Frs1ZqjBkqdXChj-9fHIHXeZayB0Byiay7nqprHQ](https://www.fergusfallsjournal.com/opinion/can-we-stop-harmful-stereotyping-it-just-ain-t-fair/article_4a82a5dc-af38-11ea-89f1-1f89264c1aae.html?fbclid=IwAR2HZCbLrboS_mf1eZ_Frs1ZqjBkqdXChj-9fHIHXeZayB0Byiay7nqprHQ)

## **Don’t be silent about that racist joke. Silence is support.**

“The question isn’t: Was the act racist or not? The question is: How much racism was in play?” So maybe racism was 3% of the motivation or 30% or 95%. Interrogate the question “How much racism was in play?” as you think about an incident. Share this idea with the people in your life when they ask, “Was that racist?”

## *Black Lives Matter June 18<sup>th</sup> walk in Pelican Rapids*



Photo courtesy of Jon Solinger

Between 25-30 people wearing their masks participated in the peaceful march for Black and Brown Lives Matter in Pelican Rapids. Many of the marchers were from the Unitarian Church of Underwood and were joined by younger and older locals. UCU Barb Honer led the marchers using chants and stopping for readings to reflect upon the examples of racial injustice. “We don’t always understand, but we stand!” Thank you, Barb for organizing this march and thank you to those walking in this stand for justice.

### **Pelican Rapids Multi-Cultural Projects** **From Joannie Ellison**

Hi friends,

June 20<sup>th</sup> would have been our 17<sup>th</sup> International Friendship Festival, canceled due to COVID-19. We are still working on diversity projects in Pelican Rapids, it is an exciting time.

Instead of the Friendship Festival this year we are creating a website that celebrates past Festivals, looks forward to next year’s Festival and celebrates the diversity of our community through cooking, crafts, music, and stories. An award from West Central Turkeys will help finance this site. We will let you know when the site is up and running.

With a grant from Lake Region Arts Council and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans we have created craft kits for the kids – a weaving project, rubbings, and Mexican tissue paper flowers. The kits will be available for pick up by anyone at the parking lot next to the Mercantile on Main at 10 am until noon on Saturday, June 27.

With the help of artist Wesley Creigh, we are also working on an International Friendship Festival coloring book that will be available in July.

The Multicultural Committee, with the help of a grant from West Central Initiative through the Food Shelf from whom the Resource Center office at 30 West Mill St rents its office, is reinventing the Multicultural Resource Center. It will reopen soon with a new air purification system, hand sanitizer and

masks for everyone who comes there for help. Cynthia Zavala speaking Spanish and English, Abdulahi Hashi speaking Somali and English and Barbara Honer speaking English and Spanish will be available to help people with translations, medical, legal and immigration paperwork, job or school applications and conversations in English. We will let you know when the schedule is solidified.

Through a West Central Initiative grant and help from the Welcome Place, we are also creating a multilingual video kiosk with a touch screen computer to offer spoken language community information on COVID-19, medical issues, job opportunities and local events, in English, Spanish, and Somali. This kiosk will be available later in the summer on the outside door of the Multicultural Resource Center.

We hope that Diversity Dinners will resume soon, but we are waiting for the number of new local COVID-19 cases to begin decreasing before we take that step. We all miss seeing each other and it will be great to get back together again.

On a final note, Thursday and Friday of last week (June 18 and 19), two Black Lives Matter protests took place in Pelican Rapids – both with enthusiastic volunteers and both without violence. We are fortunate to live in a community that welcomes the stranger and values its diversity.

Thank you.

Joanie Ellison

[www.sheepnotes.blogspot.com](http://www.sheepnotes.blogspot.com)

## A Questioning Frame of Mind

Asking questions is a powerful tool to seek clarity or offer a new perspective. Below are some suggestions to use in conversations when racist behavior occurs:

- Seek clarity: “Tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Offer an alternative perspective: “Have you ever considered \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Speak your truth: “I don’t see it the way you do. I see it as \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Find common ground: “We don’t agree on \_\_\_\_\_ but we can agree on \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Give yourself the time and space you need: “Could we revisit the conversation about \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow.”
- Set boundaries. “Please do not say \_\_\_\_\_ again to me or around me.

•

# ANTI-RACISM: FIXED TO GROWTH MINDSET

@HOLISTICALLYGRACE

## FIXED - COMFORT

"I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START OR WHAT TO SAY"

"I DON'T WANT TO GET IT WRONG OR GET CALLED OUT"

"IT WON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHAT I DO, NOTHING IS GOING TO CHANGE"

"I DON'T GET INVOLVED IN POLITICS. I DON'T HAVE TIME"

## GROWTH - COURAGE

"FIRST I WILL LISTEN/READ/WATCH. I WILL SPEAK AGAINST INJUSTICE"

"I WILL MAKE MISTAKES, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. I WILL BE GRATEFUL FOR THE LESSON"

"THINGS HAPPEN WHEN I TAKE RISKS AND BECOME PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER"

"THIS IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. THIS MATTERS, I WILL MAKE TIME"

Here's an example of how white privilege sounds

You keep saying "It's horrible that an innocent black man was killed, but destroying property has to stop"

Try saying "It's horrible that property is being destroyed, but killing innocent black men has to stop"

You're prioritizing the wrong part.

# *We Are Part of the Larger UU*



## **Minnesota: Circles of Care**

June 11, 2020

*It has been a painful month here in Minneapolis. As forewarning, especially if you are deeper into the center of the Circles of Care than I am, you might not need or want to read this... And please know I am here to hear and see and do my best to support you. And I will take my own needs, my pain, anger, grief and confusion, to someone in a circle of care that's even farther out than the circle I'm in....*

In case this isn't a familiar concept, Circles of Care work like this: Look at the trauma and harm and adversity that occurs. Do not look away until you must for your own self-preservation. Focus your love and support towards the center. Prayers, donations, respectful responses to what is being asked or invited. Full stop.

And do not erase yourself because we need all of us. In the circles of care, you are included. Do not deny your own anguish. Just turn it away from those at the center of adversity. Vent your own discomfort, pain, grief, anxiety, rage, energetic striving for solutions, doubts and questions, fears and concerns, to loved ones and friends who this time are in the outer rings, who have capacity to listen and care for you. You are permitted the release and privilege of expressing grief to those who will not be further hurt by hearing it. Indeed, find those people and talk to them because you need to be unburdened to be able to pick up whatever burdens you can from those at the center.

Hold the center sacred for the people most affected – just now, George Floyd's immediate relatives and friends. The next circle is sacred to people closely related to those affected – such as the girl who filmed almost 9 minutes of pure horror. And the women who relive their own nightmares every time another woman's husband is murdered by police. Next, perhaps, is everyone else who has been pulled over, looked over, passed over, talked over, had their health, education, freedom of movement, freedom of speech, and economic livelihood constantly questioned or threatened, merely for Breathing While Black. Some of them also are local owners of small salons, bookstores, clinics, and cafes, destroyed in the maelstrom. Some are Breathing While Muslim. Some are Breathing While Transgender. These are intersections, not equations. We have not forgotten Cold Spring, Melrose, Worthington, Sioux Falls, where workers are returning to the COVID factories.



Then there are those of us outside the circles targeted by racism, whose work, play, living and sleeping have centered upon the blocks in north and south Minneapolis, and central Saint Paul, where beloved landmarks and thriving small businesses burned. We grieve our city blocks and the reasons for their burning.

And then there are people everywhere, of all hues and backgrounds and geographies, hurting because it hurts to live in a world where anyone ignores or relishes a cry that "I can't breathe." Every mother summoned by a dying man's cry for his mother.

There are onlookers simply fascinated or discomfited by the spectacle of so much pain. And there are those who simply cannot bring themselves to look, who use their privilege to look away...

We are called by our faith not to look away. We are called to support with action, donation, prayer, those at the center. To see and acknowledge the long history of trauma, resistance, and "involuntary resilience" as Karen Hutt put it.

To acknowledge the many, many steps before this tipping point. Five years ago last week, after police killed Jamar Clark, organizers pressured the Minneapolis City Council to end "lurking" and "spitting" as offenses arbitrarily used to harass people of color. Two days ago, the Council pledged to dismantle systems of policing that are more harmful than helpful to anyone. Another way is possible. Camden, New Jersey, did it and cut their crime rate, too. I am beginning to learn about defunding (so clear when applied to schools and Planned Parenthood; why so muddy when applied to police?) and about alternatives to police as we know them.

A key question, I think, even while crying, is not why some business blocks in Minneapolis were burned — but rather, why, given the history and circumstances, more of Minneapolis *wasn't* burned.

To my knowledge, no more lives were lost — almost no occupied apartments or homes were harmed — despite what might have looked in a newsreel like total chaos. The most serious additional injury, after the death of Mr. Floyd, was the police blinding a journalist with a rubber bullet. It most certainly was not police who kept those houses and their inhabitants safe.

The stories of all the neighborhood people who guarded the houses, shops, and blocks, have yet to be told. The story of the Minneapolis Sanctuary Hotel is a parable yet to be fully understood. Keep listening, not just to what is in the mainstream press.

Mother Jones is said to have said, "Pray for the dead. And fight like hell for the living." Step One: Stop killing people. Step Two: Challenge "LESS THAN" talk and action, every time it happens, whether it's Amy or Karen or any random police officer. No one is Less Than. No one's pain doesn't hurt. We don't get to say, "I wish it would stop so we can go back to normal." Normal hurts.

Farewell, Uncle Hugo's... Thank you for selling me Octavia Butler's books. I will cry every time I see your burnt shell. You burned for change, you burned so that people's houses would not burn, your memory is worth preserving in its own way. You were beloved as a refuge, but not a human life. You were an innocent bystander, collateral damage, hurt like the girl who filmed a murder (may she find healing). I will fight like hell for Change "which is the only lasting truth." Amen.

In faith and solidarity,



Karen Wills  
MUUSJA Executive Director  
612-927-2072, director@muusja.org



Statement: CCL supports racial justice and those who fight for it. By Mark Reynolds

**Citizens' Climate Lobby supports racial justice and those who fight for it.**

Our staff, volunteers and supporters are deeply saddened and angered by the most recent incidents of racist violence in America: Ahmaud Arbery's murder while out for a jog in his Georgia neighborhood, the fatal shooting of Breonna Taylor in her Kentucky home, the threat of police violence against Christian Cooper in Central Park, and George Floyd's murder in Minnesota. We denounce these incidents themselves, as well as the chronic injustice that plagues America and harms communities of color every single day. CCL's mission is to build the political will for a livable world, but it's clear that for so many people of color, America is a far cry from livable.

To our CCL volunteers who are Black and people of color: I know climate change is probably the furthest thing from your mind right now. That's completely understandable, and it's completely okay. I want you to know that you—your whole self—are welcome in CCL. That means we know and respect that you're dealing with a lot right now, including structural barriers to your safety and well-being. Things shouldn't be this way, and I'm so sorry that they are.

I also know that sorry isn't enough. It's not enough simply to list diversity as one of our values. The best way we can proclaim that Black lives matter to CCL, and that we care deeply about your well-being and your safety and your happiness, is for us to take concrete action. So, we're taking this moment to educate the predominantly white members of our organization about recent events and what they can do to help. We are making plans to offer additional training to our volunteers on racism, privilege, bias, diversity in the environmental movement, and more, including in a special seminar at our 2020 virtual conference.

We will continue to look for ways to do more, and to do better. Like climate change, there is no simple fix for racism—but we will not shy away from doing our part in this vital work.

## **2020 Unitarian Church of Underwood Membership Resolution for Race Equities and Justice**

**(Adopted by annual meeting membership vote June 7, 2020)**

WHEREAS our Unitarian Universalist principles call us to affirm and promote "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations" and "the goal of world community"; and instead we find injustice, inequity and non-compassion in human relations, often because of racism; and

WHEREAS racism and its effects, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves, and will not be eradicated without deliberate analysis and engagement; and

WHEREAS because of the impact of racism on all people, and the interconnection among oppressors, we must make an institutional commitment to end racism; and

WHEREAS the social, economic, and ecological health of our planet is imperiled by the deepening divisions in our world caused by inequitable and unjust distribution of power and resources; and

WHEREAS we are called yet again by our commitment to faith in action to pursue this anti-racist, multi-cultural initiative in the spirit of justice, compassion, and community; and

WHEREAS, the United States finds itself experiencing increased racial unrest following the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 at the hands of Minneapolis policemen; and

WHEREAS, there are growing movements of peaceful demonstrations by people of all races, backgrounds, and ages, urging us to expand our awareness of racial injustice-and its ramifications on all people; and

WHEREAS, there were social media posts by a local businessman using racist comments that resulted in community responses causing further dissention; and

WHEREAS, these acts combined with continued institutional racism, emphasize the need for antiracism mobilization within our church and our community as we seek to do justice; and honor the worth and dignity of every being; and

WHEREAS, we are called to exemplify our mission and values and stand for our UU Principles;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** at this Unitarian Church of Underwood's Annual Meeting of June 7, 2020, the members urge the Board of Directors to counter racism by developing a comprehensive plan of action which would involve community alliances, partnerships, or consultants to assist us in addressing racial injustice; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that members and friends of the church are urged to examine carefully their own conscious and unconscious racism and privilege as participants in a racist society, and the effect that racism has on all our lives, regardless of color; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that membership of the Unitarian Church of Underwood will engage in ongoing anti-racism training, to examine basic assumptions, structures, and functions, and, in response to what is learned, further expand the church's vision and mission to include anti-racism language and action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Unitarian Universalists are encouraged to enter into relationships of sustained engagement with all people of community and color with a goal of opening up authentic dialogue that may include, but is not limited to, race and racism. Such dialogue should also include how to appropriately honor and affirm the cultural traditions of all people of color; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to transform the racist institutions of our world, the voting membership urges the Unitarian Church of Underwood and all its parts to establish

relationships with other international and interfaith organizations that are working to dismantle racism; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the Board of Directors report the progress of these efforts at the 2021 Annual Meeting of the membership.

Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

*Submitted by Mary Anderson, Board Secretary*

## **Unitarian Church of Underwood**

### **Board of Directors**

### **Approved Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday May 6, 2020**

(Via Zoom Teleconferencing)

Board members in attendance: Mary Anderson, Amy Beckman, Alison Francis, Norm Kolstad, Tim Lanz, John Minge, Ron Roller, Shannon Smith, Wally Warhol, Mary Worner; Ex-officio, Kris Warhol; Church Administrator: Bonnie Graham

Note: Kris exited camera following election of Interim President. Betsy Wells signed in briefly.

Call to Order – Outgoing President, Kris Warhol called the meeting to order at 5:39 pm. with Mary Anderson reading the “Covenant of Right Relationships.”

Meeting Agenda was approved (Ron Roller/Shannon Smith).

The Meeting Minutes were approved of February 19, 2020 (Mary Anderson/Shannon) and April 15, 2020 (Ron Roller/Shannon Smith).

Unfinished Business:

#### Election of Interim Officers:

Kris Warhol led the election of Interim President Norm Kolstad (Mary Anderson/Ron Roller)

Interim President, Norm Kolstad led the further election of interim officers: Shannon Smith, Vice President (Mary Worner/Mary Anderson); Mary Anderson, Secretary (John Minge/Alison Francis); Ron Roller, Treasurer (Mary Anderson/Tim Lanz).

Annual Meeting Election Process: Mary Anderson did a walk-through of the materials distributed of the Annual Meeting Election Team's recommendation for conducting the annual meeting using Zoom. It included:

10-day notification of meeting

Annual meeting agenda

Voter information materials

Voting process (Team: Mary Anderson, Ron Roller, Norm Kolstad, Tere Mann, Bonnie Graham)

Annual meeting presiding officer & annual reports: Past President, Kris Warhol will conduct the abbreviated service (Reading and Candle Lighting). Interim President, Norm Kolstad will call the meeting to order and preside. Oral annual report presentations by: Kris Warhol, President's report; Ron Roller, Treasurer, Financial report and Budget 2020-21; Dave Sanderson, Stewardship Appeal; Susan Groff, Nominating Committee Chair – Slate of Board Nominees. Motion approved to hold the virtual annual meeting, Sunday, June 7 from 11 a.m. – noon with the Election Team finalizing the details per the plan presented (Mary Worner/John Minge).

Church Services - suspended services continue indefinitely subject to regular Board review of further health directives of COVID-19 and its ramifications.

Presentation: Practice of Board Leadership

Mary Worner led a summary of a UU MidAmerica Region Assembly Workshop by Rev. David Pyle on Practices of Board Leadership that "discerns, learns, connects, and transforms both our congregations and communities and world that we share." Round robin for board reactions to the information. Action: Mary Worner will present further information at upcoming board meetings on the Seven Practices of Board Leadership:

Discerning the congregation's mission and vision

Holding the fiduciary responsibility

Capturing institutional wisdom by generating policy

Assessing the health of the congregation

Planning for the Congregation's future

Building and maintaining relationships

Transforming the congregational culture.

New Business

Church chats will resume via Zoom once/month beginning in July with details to be worked out.

Follow-up presentations of annual reports during upcoming Sunday services thought to be good idea with the assignment made to the Annual Meeting Election Team to work out the details.

Board member contacts to members thought to be a good idea with assignment made to Mary Anderson/Mary Worner to work out the details to:

Divide up the membership list between Board members

Suggest an outline of questions/areas to discuss

Provide an early email to members for preparation purposes.

Financial Report – Treasurer Ron Roller

Exploring online links for contributing. Collections are down 40% due to lack of Sunday service collections.  
Empowerment Grants: 2-3 grant awardees have declined the grants because with the COVID-19 situation, they'll be unable to do their projects. Those funds will stay in the UCU bank account until future Board discussion and decisions.  
Windows Installation: John Shaw and Ron will conduct an inspection prior to payment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final installment to the window company.  
Balance: expenses lower but collections are also lower.  
Investment balance reporting lag time so current balance of 3/31 showed low but expect to better.  
Profit/Loss: \$1120 contributed against the \$3400 budgeted.  
Sverdrup Suite rental income continues as \$400/month profit.  
Church Debit Card – Ron obtained and used to purchase Zoom account using UUA discount.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, June 17 @ 6:30 p.m. The Board will continue to meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month. The Executive Team will meet one week prior to each Board meeting to prepare the agenda and the materials needed for the upcoming Board meeting using Google Suites for notifications.

Potential agenda items:

Board Orientation

Annual meeting evaluation/feedback

Discussion of business/mission priority setting

Meeting Adjourned 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Anderson, Interim Secretary

**Unitarian Church of Underwood**  
**Approved Board Minutes of Reorganization Meeting**  
**June 7, 2020**

Past President, Kris Warhol called the meeting to order at 12:55 p.m. Kris presided for the election of President: Norm Kolstad (Mary Anderson/Amy Beckman). Kris then excused herself and newly elected President Norm Kolstad presided for the election of the remaining officers with no additional candidates nominated and unanimous vote cast for:

Vice President – Shannon Smith

Secretary – Mary Anderson

Treasurer – Ron Roller

The Executive Team will meet one week prior to Board meetings (above plus past President, Kris Warhol). Norm will contact Bonnie Graham to set up the first meeting for Wed., June 10.

Reminder was given of the Board's phone calls to members between this date and June 17 Board meeting.

Suggestions and the membership list were sent to Board members via email.

The meeting continued on an informal basis as a chat room discussing the annual meeting reactions to recent racist awakenings in the community. Amy Beckman shared her plans for organizing efforts in the Underwood community to begin to address shared values.

Meeting adjourned 2:10 p.m.

**Unitarian Church of Underwood  
Annual Meeting of the Membership Minutes  
June 7, 2020  
via Zoom Teleconference  
(To be approved at 2021 Annual Meeting)**

Following an abbreviated Sunday service, Interim President Norm Kolstad called to order the annual meeting of the membership at 11:20 a.m. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and Minnesota Governor's orders for social distancing, this meeting originally scheduled for April 15, 2020 was delayed and was held via Zoom teleconferencing on this date.

Attendees: Bonnie Albers, Mary Anderson, Amy Beckman, Ellen Eastby, Alison Francis, Susan Groff, Barbara Honer, Kathy Kensinger, Norman Kolstad, Diane Johnson, Tere Mann, Janell Miersch, John Miersch, Katy Olson, Luce Reece, Ron Roller, John Salmen, Dave Sanderson, Donn Siems, Shannon Smith, Jon Solinger, Kris Warhol, Wally Warhol, David Wass, Betsy Wells, Bob Worner, Mary Worner.

Voting Members Attendance: 27

Also, attending: Bonnie Graham, Church Administrator, Steve Berg, Linda Quigstad-Berg, Melody Shores, Ozzie Tollafson. Total attendance: 31

Introductory comments:

The number of voting member attendees met the quorum. Brief introductory remarks and voting procedures were given by Norman Kolstad. Because of the technology limitations, the voting process agreed was to vote by exception, meaning that the call would be for votes "no" by show of hands or "nay" voice votes. If more than a few objections to passage of the motion, a roll-call vote would be done.

Approval/additions to the Agenda:

Added to the agenda: Resolution for Race Equities and Justice – Mary Anderson

Donation opportunities – John Salmen

The amended agenda was approved (Bonnie Albers/John Salmen)

Annual Meeting Minutes of April 14, 2019 were approved as written (John Miersch/John Salmen)

Reports:

Past President Kris Warhol presented her report.

Treasurer Ron Roller presented the financial reports that included the balance sheet and the profit/loss statement. (See attached or link.)

Ron continued with a presentation of the 2020-21 proposed budget. The budget of \$40,831 Board approved on April 13, 2020 was approved by the membership (John Salmen/Kris Warhol). (See attached or link.)

Stewardship – Dave Sanderson provided information that of the \$40,831 annual budget, \$3402 is needed each month. Sunday collections are down due to no Sunday services. Dave encouraged people to contribute via automatic funds transfer (form in informational materials mailed); or mail-in checks to Treasurer, UCU, PO Box 58, Underwood, MN 56586. On-line payment process is under consideration.

Other annual reports will be presented June-August at the Zoom video conferencing Sunday services. The full written reports were included in the annual meeting informational materials mailings and are also available at [www.ucofu.org](http://www.ucofu.org).

Nominating Committee Chair Susan Groff thanked out-going Board members: Darryl Booker, Bonnie Showers, Connie Stigen, Kris Warhol, Bob Worner, and Alison Francis. She then presented the slate of nominees:

Mary Worner – 2-year term

Wally Warhol – 2-year term

Mary Anderson – 3-year term

Amy Beckman – 3-year term

Norm Kolstad – 3-year term

No nominee – 2-year term\*

Note: Alison Francis resigned from the Board effective June 6<sup>th</sup>. Consideration to appoint a fill for that vacancy will be left to the Board of Directors assisted by the Nominating Committee.

There were no further nominations from the floor. The above slate of nominees was elected (Susan Groff/John Salmen). \*Filling the remaining 2-year vacancy was left to the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee.

Unfinished Business – none noted.

New Business –

Presentation of Membership Resolution for Race Equities and Justice (see attached) was introduced to assist in gauging the resolve of the membership on this issue. Because of a recent incident that involved an Underwood businessman posting racial slurs on Facebook, community responses, and UCU membership concerns regarding the issues, a draft resolution was read for adoption (Mary Anderson/Amy Beckman). The written resolution was presented to reflect membership support for race equities and justice and help guide the decisions of the Board of Directors based on that will of the membership.

Discussion ensued ranging from: too timid; too wordy; need action, not just words; don't start by talking about race or other side shuts down – start with shared values; church action and/or community action; UCU late in making statement.

Motion to table resolution discussion and view draft Facebook post (Amy Beckman/John Salmen).

Ellen Eastby presented and moved for adoption a posting for ucuofu.org Facebook Page (Ellen Eastby/Amy Beckman). Discussion ensued ranging from: could have/should have acted more quickly - we failed, we all failed; having resolution sets us up with commitment for action; church needs to stand up and call out, not be complicit; start where you are; know your audience with an effective, positive message; support the efforts of Amy Beckman to organize community response; should be church effort; as Universalists we positively stand behind a change; good to take the time to talk and thanks to those who stepped up to bring this together.

Motion passed endorsing Facebook page post (4 objections with post vote comments: be more specific, statement not strong enough).

Returned to Resolution for Race Equities and Justice with vote to endorse passing by majority vote (7 objections). Donation Opportunity: John Salmen presented a request for items for friends of Andrew Maxwell Parish (Peggy Maxwell's son) in the Minnehaha-Lake Street area affected by the protest demonstrations. Kris Warhol volunteered to help John coordinate. Announcements will be made via the church newsletter and other publications.

Announcements:

Board members will be making calls to members to discern support needs, identify other issues and concerns. Bonnie Graham, Church Administrator gave a reminder that the church paid-for Zoom platform is available for anyone in the congregation to use. Just call Bonnie to schedule the meeting.

Motion for adjournment passed (Kris Warhol/John Salmen).

Meeting ended at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Mary Anderson, Secretary

### **Unitarian Church of Underwood**

Financial Reports for Fiscal Year April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 Prepared by Ron Roller, Treasurer; Tere Mann, Book-keeper with assistance from Wally Warhol will be at the ucofu.org website.

