

UCU Newsletter July 2021

*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

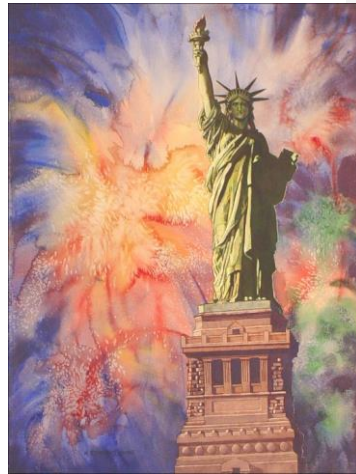
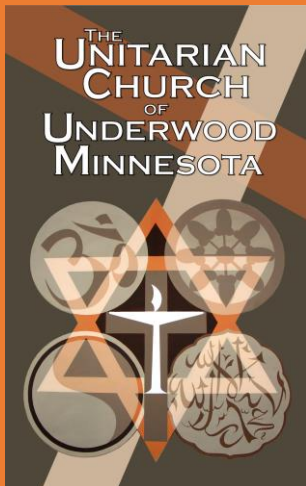
PO Box 58, 206 North Main Street

Underwood, MN 56537

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: www.ucofu.org

www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org



Painting by Mickey Edmonds
"Sweet Liberty"

Due to continued precautions
against the spreading of
COVID-19

In-person church services,
meetings & activities are
conducted via Zoom.

Watch for ucofu@ucofu.org
messages, the Sunday "UCU
Weekly" and check:

www.ucofu.org or
www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org

*OUTDOOR Gathering
In the works for an
August Sunday
Watch for details.*

Stay Informed & Connected

Schedule **Continue through Summer Months**

- Alexandria U Group: 4th Sunday each month @ 7 p.m. Facilitators: Lee Becker/Susan Sanford
- Battle Lake U Group: 2nd Tuesday each month @ 3 p.m. Facilitators: Bob Worner.
- Perham U-Group: **Last Wednesday @ 6:30 p.m.** Facilitator: Mary Worner

You are welcome to join a U Group – watch for the Zoom links.

For details or questions, Contact U Group Coordinator, Luce Reese @

lucereese@gmail.com or 218/495-2449

Newsletter Submissions due prior to Issuance the 1st of each month

Please submit your ideas, articles, and photos to:

Writer/Editor: Mary Anderson @

newseditor@ucofu.org

Editing: [Stephanie Sanderson](#)

Emailing: [Ellen Eastby](#)

Photos courtesy of Norm Kolstad & credited others.

[Credited Articles](#)

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

Need help with Zoom?

Email: techhelp@ucofu.org

UCU Weekly

(Designed and written by Ellen Eastby)

If there is something you would like to appear in The UCU Weekly, please send an email to the attention of Ellen at newseditor@ucofu.org by the Friday before the publication comes out. Please have the article written in its entirety using no more than 175 words.

As appropriate, some will be forwarded for inclusion @ www.ucofu.org and Facebook

[Page](#).

Watch for these and other

ucofu@ucofu.org email messages.

Participate in the **Zoom invitations for Sunday service, social hour & other meetings or see:**

[UCU Members and Friends calendar](#)

[Website Administrator: Bonnie Graham](#)

[Facebook Administrator: Melody Shores](#)

Gifts in Gratitude

To Contribute to UCU:

Use Givelify

(New Electronic Application)

@ucofu.org

or

Sign up for automatic funds transfer*

or

Mail your check to:

Unitarian Church of Underwood

PO Box 58

Underwood, MN 56586

***(For AFT form, contact**

newseditor@ucofu.org)

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.

Speakers for July Sunday Services

10:00 a.m.

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

Join UCU's Service at:

bit.ly/UCUSunday

Meeting ID: 970 8841 4602

Passcode: 424091

Call this number to hear the service on your phone: +1 312 626 6799.

July 4 - Bob Worner will share once again a message of his choosing. Bob is a long term member and always inspirational speaker of the Unitarian Church of Underwood.

July 11 - Roger Parks, "Making All Things New." In these times we all called to make all things new. This is not about going back to a former reality but building a new common life of Love for one another.

Roger tells us that, "As an Ordained United Methodist Clergy, I have a passion for seeking justice in all our life experiences. My work on Liberation Theology for a Doctor of Ministry degree taught me that justice seeking is a systemic issue, not just a personal transformation. In these times it is critical to seek the new ways that we must seek justice in our times."

July 18 - Kim Embretson, "Learning to See: A Journey into Art." Aldo Leopold developed the idea of a land ethic, "When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

One of Kim's goals in retirement is creating art to see more clearly. The process of "connecting my eye to my hand has helped me to slow down and more thoughtfully observe the natural world around me. Color, line, value, and shape have become artist tools that have helped me understand the natural and human made realities."

In his talk, Kim, will explore how his paintings and have deepened his connection to people and nature. He will be emphasizing UU principle 7 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. His understandings are sourced from Jewish and Christian teachings that call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Kim tells us this about himself: "Moving water has always attracted me. I was raised in Hastings Minnesota a town founded because of the confluence of the Mississippi and St Croix Rivers. Fergus Falls has been my hometown since 2002. Though I came here for work my retirement in 2016 has refired me to follow my creative passions. I have studied art with John Charles Cox at M State Fergus Falls campus and benefited from many students and local artist suggestions. I feel blessed to be living in such a beautiful part of the country and to be engaged with so many people that cherish our mutual hometown."

Commented [ma1]:

July 25 - Chris Stedman, "Faitheist: Building Bridges Between Believers, Nonbelievers, and Everyone In Between." In a world where religious conflict is front page news and the number of people who identify as religious is declining, is the chasm of understanding between people of different faiths and atheists and agnostics growing wider? Can people of diverse religious affiliations identify shared values and build partnerships for the common good, or are our disagreements too vast?

In this talk, professor, author, and activist Chris Stedman will share his story—including how studying religion at a Lutheran college helped him understand his identity as an atheist—and help attendees explore what theists and nontheists can gain from being in dialogue, how we can come to better understand one another, and how we can work together to improve the world we all share.

Chris Stedman is a Minneapolis-based writer, speaker, and professor who currently teaches in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Augsburg University. He is the author of [IRL](#) and [Faitheist](#), and his new podcast with iHeartRadio, [Unread](#), was released in June 2021. Chris has written for publications including *The Guardian*, *The Atlantic*, *BuzzFeed*, *Pitchfork*, *VICE*, *CNN*, *MSNBC*, *USA Today*, *The LA Review of Books*, and *The Washington Post*. He was previously the founding director of the Yale Humanist Community and a fellow at Yale University, a humanist chaplain at Harvard University, and a content developer and trainer for Interfaith Youth Core. In 2018, Augsburg selected Chris for their annual First Decade Award, which recognizes alumni "who have made significant progress in their professional achievements and contributions to the community" ten years after graduating.

Podcasts of previous programs at: <https://soundcloud.com/user-927528278> or [click link in Sunday church reports](#).

The Unitarian Church of Underwood now has a Public Calendar. It is available on our website at www.ucofu.org or [click here](#).



Use this link to the [UCU Members and Friends calendar](#) (open with your ucofu email address to find meetings and events with the Zoom links)

Church Happenings

Message from Board President, Norm Kolstad

Seek the Truth, Speak the Truth



"The election was stolen"; "...merely 'tourists' at the Capitol January 6th"; "Corona 19 virus is a hoax." It would be easy to say, "thank goodness we no longer have a president who says such things." But there are too many who continue to believe such things and they vote accordingly.

We have, in this country, a situation where the truth is not recognized by a substantial portion of the populace. My fear is that, without a common, agreed upon view of reality, our country faces a dark future, and the many voter suppression bills that have passed, or are under consideration, could be merely the beginning of that future.

Our 4th Unitarian principle of "A free and responsible search for truth and meaning" is our pledge to uphold the basic tenets of a democracy. I am proud that the members of Unitarian Church of Underwood are doing their part to speak the truth and promote the search for meaning. Your involvement will surely make a difference. Thank you.

Hybrid Worship Planning

The Hybrid Task Force met and will be recommending to the Board of Directors that beginning August 1, in-person services resume the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays of each month with Zoom services offered the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. The speaker portion of the in-person service may be made available via live feed (Zoom). The Task Force, Board, Speakers Committee and Technical Support team will proceed to work out the details, including guidelines relative to COVID precautions. Plans are also proceeding for an outdoor gathering for August. Watch for further announcements.

For Adult Religious Education in September **Spiritual Deeping for the UU Soul**

"Sources"



For adult religious education, beginning in September, we will be offering the course, "Sources" (from the Wellspring organization), with the main topics Unitarian Universalist Theology and Prophetic Voices, Jewish and Christian Teachings, World Religions, Earth-Centered Religions, Earth-Centered Spirituality, and Humanist teachings. A lot of time for sharing and discussion is built into the sessions. Personal spiritual growth is a main goal.

In addition to the twice-a month-gatherings, each two hours in length, there will be some outside reading, reflecting, and journaling, as well as support to develop a personal spiritual practice. We will form as many groups as needed to accommodate all the participants with from eight to twelve people in each group. At least one of the groups will be held exclusively on Zoom so that those living at a distance from Underwood can fully participate. The participants will set their meeting dates and times.

Contact Mary Worner, Program Coordinator, at maryworner@mail.com or 218-826-6998 for more information or to indicate your interest in participating.

Staying Connected

Celebrations of Life were held the end of June for the beloved Kathy Thompson and Donn & Marlys Siems. Each is remembered with love, joy, and gratefulness for their time among us. Below are the readings that Celebrant Ellen Eastby shared in honor of the Siems.

I asked the leaf whether it was frightened because it was autumn, and the other leaves were falling. The leaf told me, "No. During the whole spring and summer I was completely alive. I worked hard to help nourish the tree, and now much of me is in the tree. I am not limited by this form. I am also the whole tree and when I go back to the soil, I will continue to nourish the tree. So, I don't worry at all. As I leave this branch and float to the ground, I will wave to the tree and tell her, 'I will see you again very soon.'"

*That day there was a wind blowing and, after a while, I saw the leaf leave the branch and float down to the soil, dancing joyfully, because as it floated it saw itself already there in the tree. It was so happy. I bowed my head, knowing that I have a lot to learn from the leaf because it is not afraid - it knew nothing can be born and nothing can die. *Thich Nhat Hanh**

"I am always saddened by the death of a good person. It is from this sadness that a feeling of gratitude emerges. I feel honored to have known them and blessed that their passing serves as a reminder to me that my time on this beautiful earth is limited and

that I should seize the opportunity I have to forgive, share, explore, and love. I can think of no greater way to honor the deceased than to live this way." *Steve Maraboli*

Living Out Our UU Principles

**"If you are judging, you can not connect.
If you can not connect, you can not
communicate. If you can not communicate,
you can not break poverty barriers."**

-Dr. Donna Beegle

Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty

On Thursday, June 24th over 120 community members; organizers, teachers, healers, church members, local government employees, care givers, advocates, and stakeholders came together for Dr. Donna Beegle's training, "Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty." Dr. Beegle shared how poverty steals potential, limits positive exposure, and excludes admittance to many things people outside the crisis of poverty take for granted. We were reminded that people living in the crisis of poverty are not, in greater numbers, lacking intelligence, a work ethic, humor, and love, but resources and opportunity. Dr Beegle shared that we cannot accurately grasp poverty while looking at it through the lens of the middle class. She encouraged us to ask ourselves, what am I not seeing in this picture? We were shown we each have a role in fighting poverty, not fighting the people living in it.



The Social Justice Interest Group is encouraged by the turnout of their first event of this kind and looks forward to planning the next event!

Sincere thanks to Sverdrup Lutheran Church for co-sponsoring this event. *Alison Francis, Social Justice Interest Group Member*

Treaty People Gathering



More than two thousand people joined in the [Treaty People Gathering](#) to #StopLine3, the disastrous Enbridge oil pipeline that is being built through Anishinaabe treaty lands. The gathering was powerful, creative, and joyful—honoring the voices and leadership of Anishinaabe Water Protectors and bringing together a wildly diverse crew of supporters in solidarity from around the globe.

Sharing on the Interfaith Power and Light Call To Support the Line 3 Protest and Water Protectors

June 6 and 7

by Katy Olson



On June 6th after the fabulous service by Dr Donna Beegle on poverty in the US, I traveled to Detroit Lakes to pick up Bonnie Guyer Graham. We were traveling together to join with several hundred other people of faith to protest Line 3 in northern MN on and around the White Earth Reservation.

We arrived at Bliss Ranch for training early the afternoon where we learned how to protest and what our level of risk for arrest was. Red: you want to be arrested, Yellow: the buffer between red and green, you may get arrested, and Green: you do not want to risk arrest. Both Bonnie and I were solidly in the green camp. So, after several rounds of call and response: “I will not talk to the police, I will not talk to the press,” and how to identify the yellow arm band of those charged with that responsibility of controlling the message and to refer all queries to them.

Bonnie and I went off to learn about Deconstructing White Supremacy Culture and Settler Colonial Culture. The reds went to learn about their role in the protest and the yellows went to learn about how to hold the space between. We knew that our action was to occupy and hold a bridge crossing the Mississippi River near the La Salle recreation area. We also were told that there was to be a second action but nothing more.

Monday morning, we attended a powerful multi-faith service above the La Salle Lake, the deepest lake in MN. Every major faith was represented. The service started with the Indigenous Elder Women who are central to the work of protecting the water. The message of radical

hospitality, inclusion and forgiveness and inclusion brought me to tears. After all that has been done to erase them, they still love and invite in all beings, even and especially in that context, us ancestors of the colonial powers. We, the ancestors of the colonizers who signed these treaties, and the settlers who benefited from the theft of land have the added responsibility to help uphold their treaty rights to protect the water and to stand with them as they do this important work. One faith leader after another spoke to the central tenants of their faith that uphold the value of every person, the natural world of which we are a part and the shared humanity of all peoples. It was a powerful start to the day.

We then made our way to the protest and walked 2 1/2 miles towards the bridge. It was HOT, and we marched at the pace of the slowest among us, singing, praying, and chanting. We came to the end of the walk, and I wondered, where were the police? What happened to all the reds? There were only about 60 reds occupying the bridge and that was a fraction of the number we had stood and cheered for at the training the day before. and not so many yellows holding space either. It was then that I realized we were the foil protest. The elder indigenous women made their way into the river and prayed while walking downstream to where they were setting up camp on an Enbridge right of way, an important but peaceful statement of protest but not what we were expecting.

We listened to Winona LaDuke, Jane Fonda and others speak and sing and then we were released to go our ways. We made our way back to La Salle for a swim in the deepest lake and then started the hour long drive back to the Methodist camp where we had spent the night. Two thirds of the way back we came upon the 'real' action.

There we found the reds and yellows busy blockading the access road, chaining themselves to equipment, and preparing for the long struggle ahead. As we were getting the scoop from some field organizers, the police came in through a back road. Bull horns! Drones in the sky for identification of protestors! Helicopters spewing dirt! School buses for transporting arrested protestors! SUV's full of police in riot gear, and patty wagons all coming in fast. The pace quickened, the call went out for all reds to go to their assigned posts, with folks running and excitement in the air as the action was about to go down.

As we observed from the top of the hill overlooking the site, a big SUV charged up the hill and the owner of the land angrily confronted us and asked us to leave. As we were greens and had no interest in confrontation, Bonnie and I left the hill. We watched two indigenous protestors engage the man about treaty rights and the nature of the confrontation went to one of respectful dialog instead of a shouting match. The commitment and bravery of the organizers, protectors, and supporters was a powerful thing to witness!

Bonnie and I had provided transportation to the protest and buddied up with two fellows from MNPLS for the day and we went to Park Rapids for dinner and solidarity and then made our way home.

I felt honored, uplifted, and energized by participating in this action. It is our time to step into the fray. We who are the beneficiaries of all the theft, repression, and murder must step up to say "not in our name." No longer will we be accomplices in this system that holds us all in bondage. As Casey Camp-Horinek said, "We are not protecting nature, we are nature protecting herself."

I have included a link from media coverage from that day:

https://www.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2021/06/court-appeals-upholds-puc-s-illegal-permits-for-enbridge-s-line-3-pipeline?_ga=2.114667399.1488198069.1623766923-625013617.1603808678&_gac=1.81309797.1621957625.Cj0KCQjwwLKFBhDPARIsAPzPi-JRs717GMLVy-bJ9MZwJswB



Dear ones, I am so grateful for all of you. Thank you for showing up so beautifully and faithfully for this, and for embodying the best of what our faith can do and be in the world. I am so deeply thankful.

In faith and solidarity,
Rev. Ashley Horan
UUA Organizing Strategy Director
Side With Love's Organizing Strategy Team



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
MINISTRY FOR EARTH

Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.

The river of liberation is long, and our UU faith remains a well of strength and clarity -- we know another world is not only possible, but on its way. Actions continue on the frontlines in northern Minnesota, and your ongoing witness and solidarity is needed. Whether you can act from near or far, there is a role for you in the fight to honor treaties and ensure Indigenous communities thrive.

You can read the complete reflection from the weekend of action [HERE.](#)

In faith and solidarity,

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth

Mighty Nurturer

Source of life and food, continually giving forth

However can I show my appreciation?

How may I celebrate you, acknowledge you, thank you?

I long for a spiritual connection to you,

*one possible only through reciprocity
Through a dance of co-creation
of power sharing
of responsiveness
I seek to learn the steps
To know them in my body
That each day I feel connection
To you, to myself, to the past and the future,
To the collective human murmuration
Let us heal together
Let us know, and affirm, and honor each other's worth
May this labor of love bring forth connection, beauty, and harmony*

Celebrating the 1st Fergus Falls Pride Festival.

Amy Beckman describes for us the First Fergus Falls Pride Festival: "Most of the events of the Pride Festival served as a fundraiser for SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance) Youth. They were recently organized by a group of local parents and community members to create an inclusive space to provide support and affirmation for LGBTQ+ youth. They are currently raising money for bi-weekly outings, LGBT books and movies, and eventually, a small rec center. The link to donate is <https://www.gofundme.com/f/saga-youth-kickstart> and there are links for further information if you're interested in supporting this venture!"



Molly Delarbre says: "I absolutely loved volunteering at the Pride Picnic. My twelve-year-old daughter, Sophie and I had fun and I really wanted to show up to support a kid from Ashby school who participates in all the events. We wanted to show support for him especially but of course for everyone else there too."

Ellen Eastby also supported the Pride activities. She was unable to attend the drag show because it was sold out almost immediately, including standing room. She did buy cupcakes at the dance fund raiser, and she went to the picnic on Sunday and bought a pride bow for her dog Mocha. Ellen was most excited because there was a Fergus Falls Pride Festival.

Save the Date!
Water Matters

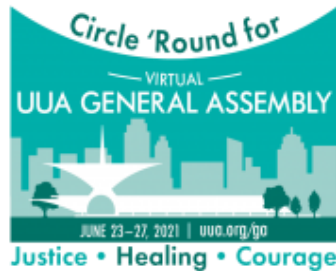
The UCU sponsored Nibi Walk will be held Sunday-Wednesday, September 18th - 22nd. Nibi is the Ojibwe word for water. The Nibi Walks are Indigenous-led, extended ceremonies to pray for the water. Every step is taken in prayer and gratitude for water, our life-giving force. It's a powerful spiritual experience coordinated by Sharon Day, an Ojibwe elder from Bois Forte. We are fortunate to have her come and help us bless and care for our river.



All are invited. The Facebook group, Honor the Otter Tail, is a great way to keep up to date with, and see the approximate route. Water is life. Water from the source is carried by women designated at the beginning of the day. One only need walk part of the route, one mile or more, depending on your physical stamina and commitment.

Each morning of the four-day walk Sharon will hold a ceremony and orientation so one can coordinate with the walkers that way or, though the water walkers do not stop, participants can track the route and position themselves to join the walk in progress. To learn more about it, visit the website www.nibiwalks.org.

We Are Part of the Larger UU



On behalf of the Unitarian Church of Underwood, Bonnie Graham, Congregational Administrator, Mary Worner, Katy Olson, and Molly Delarbre attended the UU General Assembly (GA) June 23-27, 2021. They share with us the following:

The Business of the Unitarian Universalist Association

“As one of your delegates to the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly (held on Zoom) held last week, I attended as many of the business meetings of the UUA as possible. There were five sessions, each two to three hours long. As in most business meetings, there were many hours of reports, discussion, and voting on many issues and elections. Voting was done electronically.

Regarding elections, it was unusual that there were two candidates for one of the UUA board member positions. One candidate had been selected by the nominating committee and the other became a candidate through another independent process. The candidate presented by the nominating committee was elected with about 80% of the votes.

I didn't realize candidates for president and moderator actually campaign. One of the votes taken was to shorten the length of time allowed for campaigning from one and a half years to seven months which passed.

Another action will affect our congregation directly. A motion passed that would not require delegates to register (which this year cost us \$200 per delegate) to vote. It passed by about 94%.

There was much, much more. Attending these meetings helped me realize and appreciate the huge scope of the work in many areas of concern undertaken by the UUA. Thank you to the UCU for supporting my attendance." *Mary Lynne Worner*

Bonnie Graham shares that the UU Principles and Sources we are familiar with may be changing soon. The Article II Commission is studying the part of UUA Bylaws that contain the UU Principles and Sources. They are taking a complete look at whether these Principles as written still serve Unitarian Universalism. Our current Principles were last looked at and edited in 1987. Over the next two years the Commission will be seeking input from congregations and individuals alike. In 2023, there is to be a vote on the proposal the Commission creates.

Want to learn more? [Watch this video](#) for a quick summary. Will we want to hold a discussion at UCU? [There are resources to help guide these discussions.](#) Take some time to explore these resources. Take some time to think about how you would write new Principles for the UUA and for our own congregation. We can have input into the process, if we make the effort to have our voices heard.

From **Molly Delarbre**: "I'm still working on a few that are yet available on YouTube. I really liked the application they had. It was a great substitute although I would love to go in person next time! They had several chat groups so you could have connections and camaraderie and "chatting in the (virtual) hallways."

Unitarian Church of Underwood
Board Minutes
May 19, 2021

Attendees: Mary Anderson, Amy Beckman, Marianne Bryan, Norm Kolstad, Ron Roller, John Salmen, Wally Warhol, Mary Worner. Absent: Molly Delarbre. Guests: Alison Francis, Melody Shores, Dawn Ellison Jordan.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Board President, Norm Kolstad who brought to attention the Covenant of Guiding Values.

The Board agenda was approved (John Salmen/Ron Roller).

The Board minutes of 3/17/2021 and 4/18/2021 Reorganization Meeting were approved (John Salmen/Marianne Bryan).

Alison Francis and Melody Shores from the Social Justice Interest Group presented a proposed plan to “create a clear and comprehensive response to acts of hate in UCU communities that is in-line with UU principles.” Motion to accept proposal as written (Marianne Bryan/Mary Anderson). After extensive discussion, the motion was made to table the motion (Mary Worner/John Salmen). The presenters will take the concerns into consideration and return to the Board with modifications addressing these concerns.

Mary Worner with Dawn Ellison Jorgenson presented a proposal for Adult Religious Education using the UU Wellspring Curriculum that Dawn has previously participated in. The curriculum cost is \$300 plus an annual membership fee of \$1/member. Motion made and carried to fund costs of program (Mary Anderson/John Salmen).

Alison Francis went on to report what the Social Justice Interest Group has done and what they are planning. After an active season, the Group is now working on procedures and protocols. They have several offerings in the planning stages. Motion made and carried to endorse plans for budgeted items of:

- 1) Poverty Institute.
- 2) Moorhead Mosque donation.
- 3) “Sit with Me” conversation with Pelican Rapids Multi-cultural center.

Annual Meeting Feedback – went smoothly, well-orchestrated. Will consider making documents available online prior to meeting in future years.

Reappointment of Coordinators: Motion made and carried (Mary Anderson/John Salmen) that the current Coordinators continue: Program – Mary Worner, Community Outreach – Amy Beckman and Alison Francis, Facility – Norm Kolstad and Susan Groff.

Reports:

Treasurer’s Report: Ron Roller did a presentation on how to read the financial reports. He then presented the financial reports. Ron stated that the church is in “excellent” financial shape. See May Financial Reports at Google Suites Shared Drive.

Congregational Administrator’s Report: Bonnie Graham reported that she continues work with the Speakers Committee, shares other churches’ information with the Hybrid Task Force, will soon be able to print a real membership “directory, and continues work training individuals for use of Google Docs.

Hybrid Worship Task Force: Norm reported that it will likely be fall before a combined in-person/virtual worship service is offered. Some suggestions were offered that can be considered further by the Task Force. This opened the discussion of the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan that Mary Anderson walked through. Motion was made and carried to adopt the COVID Protocols (Mary Anderson/John Salmen). Discussion followed on what should be the requirements for the Siems Celebration June 26. It was determined that a sign will be posted “masks required” and that this requirement should be stated accordingly in announcements and invitations.

Records Committee: Norm reported that the Google Suites work is ongoing. Mary Anderson has drafted manual revisions that are now out with others for review and completion.

Membership Committee: Mary Anderson reported that the Committee has reviewed the membership lists and sent out letters requesting written response from the member if they wish to withdraw their membership. The Membership Committee is working with John Salmen to sponsor a “UU’s Helping UU’s” project that should be ready to present to the Board for approval in July.

Stewardship Committee: Mary Anderson asked for feedback on sending out a letter to members and friends on how to give. The consensus was a letter would be good.

Program: Mary Worner reported that she is in progress of gathering information the Children’s Religious Education. She is talking with parents, leads, and other churches on curriculum and experiences. She noted that there is a MidAmerica Region offering Saturday for Small Churches. Norm will forward the information to Board members.

Community Outreach: In addition to what Alison Francis presented, Amy reported that “Sit with Me” is scheduled for June 16. Consensus was given that the “Seeing White” group meeting June 10 can be held outside. Questions then ensued on whether U Groups can meet at home or outside – COVID guidelines now say that fully vaccinated people may meet in home with masks or outside with no masks.

Unfinished Business:

June 9 presentation with Phil Lund teaching us the Circle Process and Powerful Questions with David Pyle how to use powerful questions in congregational assessments.

GA Attendance: Motion made and carried to fund two delegates to General Assembly, Katy Olson and Molly Delarbre with Mary Worner as alternate (John Salmen/Marianne Bryan). Bonnie Graham will also be attending. The cost for the virtual assembly is \$200/person.

There was no new business.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anderson
Board Secretary

Addendum Items:

- 1: Plan & Protocols for “When Hate Comes to Town”
2. COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

Plan & Protocols for “When Hate Comes to Town”

1. Objective
 - o The objective of this plan is to create a clear and comprehensive response to acts of hate in UCU communities that is in-line with UU principles.
2. What this plan responds to
 - o Hate speech in a public forum, disseminating misinformation and inciting acts of hate.
 - o Actual acts of hate, discrimination, vandalism, intimidation, abuse (including but not limited to verbal and physical), and other acts as recognized and approved by UCU board of directors on a case-by-case basis.
3. Suggested steps
 - o A simple statement to UCU members and friends through newsletters, Sunday announcements, and word of mouth requesting they assist this effort by sharing their knowledge when such acts occur.
 - o Clear instructions on how to communicate such acts to the board.
 - o Establishment of a network of UCU members and friends who will support inward and outward facing action when called upon.
 - o Create a general statement pertaining to Principals 1,2 and 6
 1. Board provides input to and approves statement.

Proposed statement attached.

Upon the report of a hate forum or aggression:

- i. Identify organizations and/or individuals who can confirm activities of offenders: *local government, members and friends, law enforcement, victim’s agencies, etc.*
- ii. Board determines whether the hate forum or aggression falls within the parameters of this plan.
- iii. Board determines key board member as “go to” person for this act.
- iv. Board requests UCU administrator posts approved statement on front page of website and social media outlets.

Reaching out with care to both victims and offenders.

Proposed statement:

The Unitarian Church of Underwood (UCU) joins (local organizations and churches, if any) in condemning (recent specific hate speech or crime). (Further description of hate speech or crime, and/or organization for public educational purposes)

We offer support and solidarity to victims, and to local communities of faith standing against xenophobic and racist remarks that motivate hate speech and actions.

Recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and our own call for justice, equity and compassion in human relations, we speak and act to support our [those who have recently been targeted] neighbors. We are disturbed and concerned to witness [the divisive discourse] [acts of hate] in our community directed at our [targeted victims] neighbors.

We call on (whichever are appropriate: local government, police, religious leaders, local churches and news media) to send the clear message that such actions will not be tolerated. We are in solidarity with victims, survivors, and families who have suffered loss and pain due to this (action).

As reference for internal understanding:

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all

**Unitarian Church of Underwood
COVID-19 Preparedness Plan
Policies and Procedures
Board Adopted May 19, 2021**

Under Gov. Tim Walz's Executive Orders, businesses that are in operation during the peacetime emergency are required to establish a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. This includes both critical and non-critical businesses, including faith-based organizations.

UCU's Prepared Plan is in keeping with our UU Values of being:

- A welcoming community accessible to many,
- Respectful of the inherent worth and dignity of each person
- Considerate of others
- Personally responsible and accountable.

Once restrictions on social gathering are further eased, the Unitarian Church of Underwood will provide worship services with combined in-person gathering and virtual opportunities. Each person needs to decide and choose what is best for them and what they need to maintain and grow: spiritually, physically, and mentally. This combo of offering allows individuals to choose for themselves their method of attendance for worship, meetings, and socializing with which they are most comfortable.

Depending on the latest CDC recommendations for restrictions, there will be flexibility on requirements. If, fully vaccinated, persons are not required to wear masks. Persons who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear masks and maintain social distancing.

To accommodate safety for in-person worshippers and church attendees, the following policies and procedures have been adopted by the Board of Directors on date xxx.

I. Identifying and maintaining healthy body attendance.

Sunday Worship

Attendees are encouraged to:

- Wear masks
- Continue hand sanitizing/washing.
- Continue social distancing outside family unit whenever possible.
- Stay at home if sick.
- Get tested.
- Follow other CDC recommendations for vaccinated/non-vaccinated individuals.

Volunteers

All volunteers are required to wear face masks (except for eating/drinking), absent selves if any symptoms of COVID or other spreadable disease, maintain social distancing when performing duties or assisting others, use hand sanitizer and sanitize any surfaces or items used.

Greeter Responsibilities

- Two (2) greeters at lower-level front door to welcome, greet, instruct lift use and sanitization, maintain sign-in book with contact information, provide directions to seating in the lower level.
- Two (2) greeters in upstairs Ellison room to welcome, greet, distribute programs, escort individual or family unit to seating within sanctuary maintaining 6' of social distance seating (prompts provided). Following service, to maintain spacing, escort attendees out starting with back to front rows.

Service Leader/Leader Responsibilities

In addition to other Service Leader responsibilities, the Leader will before and after each use, wipe the podium, light, and microphone surfaces. The leader will also announce the safety protocols at each Sunday Service, meeting, or special event.

Pianist

In addition to other pianist responsibilities, the pianist will before and after use wipe the surface of the piano, light, and microphone.

Music and Musicians

The musicians will attend to the cleanliness and handling of their own instruments and before and after use, wipe the surface of the microphones or any other equipment.

Hymn words will be projected or printed to limit access to common use of hymnals.

In-person Speaker/Presenters

Except during their presentation, the speaker/presenters will wear masks and self-remove any documents or written materials.

Technical Support Staff

In addition to other technical support responsibilities, the Tech person will wipe the surfaces of the sound board and other technical equipment to prepare for next use or storage.

Janitor

In addition to other cleaning responsibilities, the janitor will adhere to COVID cleaning protocols.

Coffee and Social Hour

Coffee and handheld treats will be served from Sverdrup Suites #300 garage entry with picnic table and folding chairs available for outside seating maintaining social distancing requirements. Napkins, wipes and trash containers will be provided. The garbage will be disposed of by the janitor/custodians.

Setup/servers will maintain food and health safety standards for preparation and serving of coffee, lemon ice water, and handheld napkin or paper plate for treats.

Other Meetings

Due to COVID precautions, distances traveled and sound environmental practices, most meetings will be conducted via Zoom. Should in-person attendance be preferred for church sanctioned events, attendees are to follow the same protocols as Sunday Service in-person attendees as listed above. In addition, meeting attendees using the church buildings are expected to clean up after themselves using COVID cleaning standards.

Special Events

Pending the lifting of COVID restrictions, the Unitarian Church of Underwood will hold most special events outside, limiting capacity to the CDC recommended numbers and recommending to attendees, their adherence to CDC guidelines. Events in the church will follow the procedures outlined in this plan for church use. Persons or organizations using the church shall be given a written copy of this Plan.

II. Workplace building and ventilation protocols.

Full capacity of 72 persons in the upstairs sanctuary will be limited to 36. Overflow of no more than 12 individuals will be seated in the Ellison room and in the lower level where table capacity is reduced and limited at each table for TV monitor viewing.

The Unitarian Church of Underwood recently installed all new windows in the upper level that open and close, allowing for better ventilation. Overhead fans are normally run during service for air flow. Windows can be opened also in the upstairs Ellison Room and the downstairs lower level.

III. Workplace cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

In addition to normal janitorial duties, the janitor shall adhere to other CDC cleaning standard protocols.

IV. Communications and training practices and protocols.

These written protocols shall be shared with volunteers prior to their time of serving.

These protocols will be posted on the church bulletin board, published in the church announcements, and reminders given by the Service Leader during Sunday services and/or other leaders for meetings and special events.

Questions may be directed to the Congregational Administrator at administrator@ucofu.org or Board Secretary at secretary@ucofu.org.

Note: UCU COVID Preparation Protocols are subject to changes of CDC guidelines.