

UCU Newsletter June 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.*

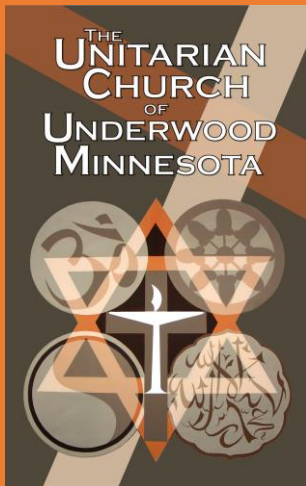
Unitarian Church of Underwood

PO Box 58, 206 North Main Street
Underwood, MN 56537

Phone: 218/826-6553

Website: www.ucofu.org

www.facebook.com/www.ucofu.org



"Lilly Pads"



Painting by Mickie Edmonds

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



Stay Informed & Connected

U Group Zoom Meetings 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 @

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.

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](#)

Need help with Zoom?

Email: techhelp@ucofu.org

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 June 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

June 6 - Dr. Donna Beegle, "Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty."

How many ways does poverty impact our communities? Dr. Beegle will give us an introduction to her June 24 Training message and will touch upon these Unitarian Universalist Principles:

[1st Principle](#): The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

[2nd Principle](#): Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

[7th Principle](#): Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



On June 24th, Dr. Beegle will offer a training for the surrounding community:

This training is designed to provide the foundation for improving outcomes for children and families living in the crisis of poverty. She will discuss the many different life experiences of poverty and how they impact communication, relationships, and outcomes.

[Click here](#) to register.

Dr. Donna Beegle is an authentic voice from poverty. Born into a migrant labor family and married at 15, Dr. Beegle is the only member of her family who has not been incarcerated. By age 25, she earned her GED and then, within 10 years, received her doctorate in Educational Leadership. State agencies, politicians, and other organizations have partnered with Dr. Beegle to implement community-wide approaches that improve outcomes for citizens living in poverty, while creating healthier communities for all.

June 13 - Nancy XiáoRong Valentine, "The Audacity to be Asian in Rural America: We Owe You No Apologies."

Valentine believes that artistry and arts advocacy work in tandem, and stays heavily involved in the Otter Tail County, MN creative community. Much of Valentine's artistry draws technical inspiration from her Chinese heritage and focuses on abstract themes of beauty, hope and resilience. She strives to reveal hidden connections to her audience through organic impressionistic design using mediums such as watercolor, gouache, Chinese and India inks on paper.



Nancy XiáoRong Valentine is a self-taught water-medium artist from Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Though often referred to as "the creative kid" throughout her lifetime, it wasn't until 2016 that she officially launched her creative career. In 2020, Valentine was named a Blandin Community

Commented [ma1]:

Leadership Institute Cohort Member, Lake Region Arts Council Cohort Artist, and currently serves as the Vice President of the Kaddatz Galleries Board of Directors.

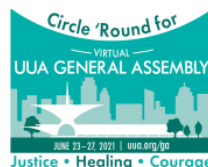


June 20 - A Tribute to Father's Day - by UCU Writers

Several members and friends of our congregation will reflect on fathers and fatherhood. Who were their fathers and what did they mean to them? What impact did they have? How are they remembered? Presenters will be Ozzie Tollefson, Sandra Barnhouse, Richard Kagan, and John Miersch.

June 27 – UU General Assembly Joint Worship Service hosted by the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis.

For a change, we will begin with Sunday coffee time/conversation at **10:30 am and then from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.** join the largest annual gathering of UUs together in worship. We will stream the Sunday worship service from the UUA General Assembly - this year the service will be hosted by First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. We encourage all congregations to gather as is possible and practical to participate in this wonderful, communal event.



First Universalist has been a model of shared ministry and what it means to put the work of dismantling white supremacy and building anti-racist, anti-oppressive practices at the center of their ministry. They have been on the front lines in support of the Movement for Black Lives in Minneapolis, bringing spiritual care and moral leadership in the wake of George Floyd's murder by police and the important uprisings for justice that followed. Children and families are a vital part of their ministry, and they have been using creative approaches to engage all ages in worship during the pandemic. Their leadership exemplifies some of the best practices for the creativity, spiritual depth, and moral leadership that is possible when we embrace the work of shared ministry rooted in love and justice.

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

See Katy Olson's presentation of May 23rd at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19h5WaldlzpX-98Y-s30OwGADUcGOQ8e?usp=sharing>

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

The Earth Needs Our Help.

In April, the National Park Service issued new guidance for park managers, including provisions that they must now actively choose what to save from the ravages of climate change. Although I was not surprised, it made me sad to read this reminder that such ecological triage was happening on my generation's watch.

Two centuries ago, the American bison was viewed as an inexhaustible resource and, without the benefit we have today of scientists who would warn us of impending danger, the bison were hunted to near extinction. So, what is our excuse for the slow reaction to the warnings that climate scientists have been giving us for decades?

No doubt most of you reading this are working to promote mitigation of your carbon footprint. In addition to the social and racial problems we are trying to address, it may seem like a battle to save the planet is an overwhelming, exhausting exercise beyond what any small group or person can achieve.

Yet it is our individual actions that may avert a climate catastrophe. If you want to do your part to limit the ecological damage, there are many paths to take to make a difference, including advocating for government policies, investing in "green" companies, convincing friends, and neighbors that climate change mitigation is in their best interest. You may want to start by becoming more aware of your own climate footprint and then doing one thing differently to make a difference, and then one thing more, and so on. Do not despair or complain, just do what you know is right.

To be a part of UCU folks working to make a difference, see the opportunities featured below.

Board Meeting Highlights

On May 12 prior to the Officer Team meeting, Norm Kolstad and Mary Anderson presented a power point presentation for new Board orientation to Board members.

At the Board meeting of May 19, Alison Francis and Melody Shores presented the Social Justice Interest Group proposed plan for "When Hate Comes to Town." Modifications will be considered prior to full Board approval. Alison also gave an update on the plans and work of the Social Justice Interest Group.

Mary Worner and Dawn Ellison Jordan presented a proposal for an Adult Religious Education fall class using UU Wellspring curriculum for which the Board approved funding.

The Board adopted the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan (see the Plan at the end of the newsletter).

Full May meeting minutes will be included in the July newsletter

Membership

Referencing the amended Bylaws and updating the membership lists, the Membership Committee is following up with all individuals who at one time signed the book to become members of the Unitarian Church of Underwood. Until or unless someone who once signed the book, requests to withdraw from membership, the individual remains a member of the Unitarian Church of Underwood. For questions on membership, contact Mary Anderson at 218/346-6638 or mary.anderson@ucofu.org.

Giving in Gratitude

Giving for the month of April fell below the projected budget needs. Your gifts support the operations and offerings of the Unitarian Church of Underwood. The Stewardship Committee will be sending letters to members and friends with a reminder how our gifts in gratitude may be given. You can give by:

- Mailing a check to: UCU, PO Box 58, Underwood, MN 56586.
- Or giving electronically using Givelify.com. Directions on in the Weekly.
- Or signing up for automatic transfer of funds. (the form is at the end of the newsletter)



Your generosity is appreciated!

Hybrid Worship



Plans have begun to address the challenges of returning to regular in-person worship. It appears UCU cannot be ready to offer a combined in-person worship service with virtual offering until the technical issues can be worked out. There may be some outside services scheduled for summer months. Otherwise, Sunday services will continue via Zoom. If you have ideas or wishes about your preferences for worship

services, please contact: Norm Kolstad, President and Chair of Hybrid Task Force at norm.kolstad@ucofu.org.

Adult Religious Education for Fall

For adult religious education, beginning in the fall, we are considering offering the curriculum from Wellspring. Wellspring provides an opportunity for Unitarian Universalists to come together to deepen their spiritual lives. They meet in groups of about ten people, twice a month for ten months. Led by facilitators from the congregation, everyone attends a retreat to learn how to listen deeply, explore spiritual practices, participate in covenant, and learn about spiritual companionship. There is reading and reflecting, journaling, fellowship, and support to

develop spiritual practice. Learn more on the Wellspring website at uuwellspring.org; go to Programs and then Congregations. Contact Mary Worner, Program Coordinator at maryworner@mail.com or 218-826-6998 if you are interested in joining us.



**To those who helped with roadside cleanup.
To John Salmen for hosting and for all those attending his
Permaculture Tree Planting Party.**

**To Steve Berg and Linda Quigstad-Berg for their lovely
pictorial video to accompany their singing of “It’s a
Wonderful World.”**

**To Melody Shores for her tutorial helps on word processing
and use of Google Shared Drive and for inviting her
daughter to share her music with us.**

**To Katy Olson for sharing her learnings from the UU Extended Leadership
Experience.**

And to all you unnamed others who do all the things that we appreciate.

Care & Concerns



Please hold in your thoughts and reach out to:

Budd and Marguerite Andrews (Photo courtesy of daughter, Kate as of May 8, 2021).

Bert Whitcombe and his wife, Tere Mann as Bert continues his recovery.

Susan Groff and family as they “party together” with Susan’s mom in preparation for her transition.

And to all your other known connections who are experiencing health or other life concerns.

Staying Connected

**Celebrate Together the Lives of
Donn & Marlys Siems**



June 26 from 9-11 a.m.

Unitarian Church of Underwood

The family of Donn & Marlys Siems invite you to a celebration at the Unitarian Church of Underwood so the Siems' many church friends and immediate family may honor the blessings of that special couple's lives among us. Celebrants, Ellen Eastby and Bob Worner will conduct the service. Coffee and rolls will be served after the service outside Sverdrup Suites #300. Masks will be required during the inside service.

The Seasons of Life

By [Mary Frances Comer](#)

We are grateful to mark time with seasons,
to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries,
or to gather as family to remember our loved ones.

In all these seasons, may we give thanks for the breath of life,
ever mindful of the fragile nature of existence.
May we live fully in each moment.

From summer to fall and winter to spring,
we gather in mystery and in the bonds of beloved community.

May we radiate love both within and beyond these walls,
this day and all the days to come,
caring for those we love and for those we have yet to meet.

Connections from Across the World



Schools for Shan Refugees



Dear friends of Shan Refugees:

Conditions in Burma are abysmal. The military is waging open warfare against people protesting the takeover of their country. It is not just the protesters who are in danger: Loi Kaw Wan, an encampment of Shan displaced persons, on the Urma/Thai border north of Chaing Mai, has been shelled and residents cannot farm their land for fear of attack. In the past, we supported six orphans at this site, and I am deeply saddened by the plight of their people. See: [https://myanmar-](https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/myanmar-military-artillery-shells-explode-near-shan-idp-camps)

[now.org/en/news/myanmar-military-artillery-shells-explode-near-shan-idp-camps](https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/myanmar-military-artillery-shells-explode-near-shan-idp-camps). You can read more about the military coup here: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/daw-aung-san-suu-kyi-to-go-on-trial-at-special-court-in-naypyitaw>.

The Burmese military blocked internet service for more than a month. When they still had it, a former student wrote simply, "Scared, Teacher."

In the meantime, we are hoping to keep the schools and scholarship programs afloat. We are ever so grateful to those of you who have donated. That money is in safekeeping until the education programs resume. If you have not donated this year and wish to do so, scholarships range from \$30.00 per year for elementary students to \$100, \$200, and \$300 per year for older students, attending vocational schools. Donations can be made through Pay Pal at our website: www.shanrefugeeschools.org OR you may write a check to Schools for Shan Refugees and send it to:

Mary Worner, Treasurer
28424 Water Street Road,
Underwood, MN 56586

Many thanks to the Unitarian Universalist Church in Underwood for their continued support in the form of an annual grant. We are grateful. The Shan youth are grateful. If we remain COVID free into fall, we plan to hold a 3-course Shan dinner fundraiser in Minneapolis. Hold the date: Saturday, October 9!

Sincerely,
Bernice Johnson,
Vice President Schools for Shan Refugees, Inc.
www.shanrefugeeschools.org

From Former Foreign Exchange Student
Fikri in Indonesia

Mary Anderson shares her latest correspondence from Fikri, who she hosted as one of two foreign exchange students. In 2012-13, Mary hosted two young men, both Muslims, Fikri and Elshan who loved to come to UCU for the socializing and treats. Fikri, having completed his college degree, is now training to be a diplomat for Indonesia. Elshan has completed his master's degree, is working toward a PHD while he continues to teach chemistry and English at a private school in Azerbaijan. Soon he must serve his one year of mandatory service in the Azerbaijan military. Mary shares Fikri's letter that tells us about current aspects of his life on the other side of the world.



From Fikri May 12, 2021:

"Dear Mom & Friends,

I was vaccinated last month. I had two doses of the Sinovac vaccine and luckily, I had no severe post vaccination problems such as fever etc. Yet I felt a bit sleepy and craving for sweet after the second dose. However, Citra (*his wife*) has not received any vaccine because the government for now only provides vaccines for public services such as civil servants, health workers, people working in markets, etc. Although the civil workers have vaccinated, some of my colleagues still got infected by COVID-19, yet this time the virus did not cause any severe symptoms. "It was like flu," one of my colleagues said.

Today is the celebration of the end of our holy month of Ramadhan, the month where Muslims are fasting during the day. It is my second year of Ramadhan which I do not spend the celebration with my family but only from zoom meeting. The government lately impose a travel ban across Indonesia. no flight, no train, no buses operating in two weeks. Checkpoints are also set up in provinces and city borders. For a civil servant like me, we are not allowed to travel and are obligated to report daily.

I am getting closer to the end of my first phase of training. it will end in the first week of June. Then the training will be continued with the basic training for diplomats. Now I am having the training for the newly recruited civil servants, habituation they say.

Our training is held online all the time. For me, online learning is good from the point of time management. I can work and study on my own time arrangement. Besides that, I don't have to deal with traffic and even to think of what to wear today if I go to the office. Yet online learning has impeded me to know more about my colleagues. I barely know them but their name and their department.

I am still working at the Southeast Asia Directorate. Myanmar really did take our attention. last time, the ASEAN held an emergency meeting and invited the coup leader to Jakarta to represent Myanmar. As you would have predicted, it sparked protests in our capital and of course the internet. But from what I understand, ASEAN believed that inviting the military junta to the meeting does not mean recognizing the junta government. Yet from what I observe, the military used that invitation to portray their government was recognized, at least by the ASEAN countries.

I am thinking of taking digital diplomacy, a topic which might be important for the next decade as the world is getting more and more relying on the internet. Even during the pandemic, the diplomatic work somehow must adjust to the new normal such as having negotiation through digital tools like zoom. But I am still unsure. The topic must be consulted with the human resource bureau as well to make sure it fits the need of the ministry.

Rumors say that civil servants are easier to receive scholarships from the government because after our study we will obviously return to Indonesia and work for the government. The challenge is to find the university and the country where to study. I will need a recommendation letter from the director where I am assigned. as well as a permission letter from our ministry's human resources bureau.

By the way, the people in the directorate general of Asia pacific and Africa's 2019 intake are quite diverse. We are a group of 13 people where 3 of them are Hindus and 2 Christian. I never had Hindu colleagues before, and I find it interesting. We were just amazed by their religious celebrations. I think they have more celebrations than we do.

In total, we have 62 diplomats where more than half of them speak more than one foreign language including me. I think English and French or English and German are quite familiar combinations in our intake. None but me speak Turkish and thus it becomes a minority language along with Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Russian. I am studying Korean now and I am progressing!



I attached my picture in front of the flag hall which is the entrance of my office and our group picture of the directorate general of Asia pacific friends. In my picture, I was wearing "Batik", our traditional clothing. People often wear it for a casual occasion.

That's my story. Miss you.
Fikri”

Living Out Our UU Principles

Join

UCU's Social Justice Interest Group

Thursdays, Bi-Weekly Meetings @ 6 p.m.

Time: This is a recurring meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92749849036?pwd=YnZ5MTljK2ZpYklyLOREK2VnS1ZSUT09>

Meeting ID: 927 4984 9036

Passcode: SJIG

Or
Dial by your location
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 927 4984 9036

Greetings from the Social Justice Interest Group

Between camping trips, family visits, river runs, garden weeding, mosquito slapping, and meadow meanders, we hope you will attend one, or a few of the events we are offering this summer. On June 10th, please join host, Amy Beckman for the final discussion of John Biewen's "Seeing White" podcast. No bother whether you have attended the previous discussions, simply listen to episodes 13: "White Affirmative Action," and 14: "Transformation." Weather permitting, we will be meeting at Amy's house for the discussion. For further details, please email amy.beckman@ucofu.org if you were not able to attend the previous session on May 27th. If weather prohibitive, we will meet on Zoom. That link is available on the UCU Calendar.

Just two weeks later, at 1:00 pm on June 24th, Dr. Donna Beegle will be presenting her training titled: "Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty." This Zoom event was made possible through the generosity of the Unitarian Church of Underwood, Sverdrup Lutheran Church in Underwood, MN, and through a scholarship provided by Dr. Beegle who will teach us about the many ways poverty impacts communities, the structural causes of poverty, and common myths, stereotypes, and judgements many of us carry around as truths. Attendees may register by clicking here:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=tph55x6ab&oeidk=a07ei0m84dr3e1d2595&fbclid=IwAR1jhIJHRxDGp2xEHg8XPffE0AtAmhN6WAhp9NqWOQoKWP8FblCignw7FGg>.

As we move into July and August, please stay tuned for more information around the upcoming book discussion of Cheyenne and Arapaho author Tommy Orange's 2018 novel: "There There," and an ongoing series exploring BIPOC poetry.

The Social Justice Interest Groups welcomes new members. Please send us an email if you would like more information: ucusjig@gmail.com. Amy Beckman & Alison Francis, Community Outreach Co-Coordinator.

"We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers" Bayard Rustin

Note: The Social Justice Interest Group is preparing for Board Approval a plan to address "when hate comes to town." The plan will "create a clear and comprehensive response to acts of hate in UCU communities that is in-line with UU principles."

Hate has Come to Town.

**"This place isn't perfect, although I sure once thought it was."
Contributed here by author, Sandy Barnhouse.**

(As published in the Fergus Falls Journal, June 2020)

I try to be careful not to do a double take when I see a dark-skinned person here in Otter Tail county. I could be wrong, but this seems to be the most vanilla part of Minnesota—blond hair, blue eyes, creamy skin, Norwegian pride.

When I first arrived here in 1999, a Celtic/Anglo-Saxon American from several cities and centuries (14 checkered generations), having usually lived amid all kinds of people, it was about location. For my whole adult lifetime, I had longed to live in the country, in a relatively unspoiled landscape, abundant here. I wasn't looking to get away from African Americans or other dark people; their presence was something I just took for granted. Because I was caught up in a building project—and was getting used to the lakes, the trees in all forms, the myriad birds—I didn't immediately notice that this must be the lightest-skinned county in Minnesota.

An early racist comment I recall was from a real estate agent (not the one who handled my property), that Otter Tail Lake was "entirely white," as though I should like that. My reaction was to fantasize inviting Dr. Mary T. Howard (B.A., Howard University, M.A., PhD., University of Minnesota), to invest there. Mary taught psychology classes at St. Cloud State and she also was a clinical psychologist at the VA hospital. She was on the St. Cloud school board. She had marched in Selma. One of her sidelines was property investment and she owned several St. Cloud rental properties. I daydreamed about her purchasing a vacation manse on Otter Tail Lake, but I never suggested it.

(Goggle: "Dr. Mary T. Howard, A catalyst for change")

Little more than a dozen years ago, I invited Mary to speak at the Unitarian Church of Underwood during Black History month. While living in St. Cloud, I had listened as she spoke to the Forum of Executive Women about how to handle large budgets. I'd heard her speak about her first-hand experience of marching with Rev. King. She could hold an audience enthralled. She'd spoken numerous times in many venues; she founded the first NAACP chapter in Stearns County. Mary was a giant, in my mind, without question. She would give us Underwood Unitarians a big-picture speech.

Instead, she spoke about how many times lately she'd been pulled over by the police and how this was becoming a problem again. Were the police unusually alert when they saw a middle-aged African American woman driving to work in a Jaguar? She told us about an incident when she was actually asked to get out of the car. Did they just want to look inside? She warned us, that Sunday, "It isn't over. There's more to come."

My orientation still existed in the 'sixties bliss of the civil rights legislation, which I mistakenly viewed as finally won, justice at last. I admit I was disappointed with her subject, since she could have told us personal history about racial politics; and now I realize, she was offering advance notice.

After the service, we went to lunch at the Farmhouse Café in downtown Underwood with about a dozen church members. I've buried details of that hour deeply in my psyche. I only recall that I

was shocked, witnessing the manipulation of the owner, who, with various mixed messages, “accidental” mishaps, forgetting, and just sheer delay, managed to deprive Mary of her lunch. I offered to share mine, but she said no, having witnessed the whole experience from a position of well-honed detachment. She drove away in her \$47,000 car, unfed. I was appalled.

Did I bother to stand up for her? Did I get up and shout that this was an abomination? Did I point my finger at the owner in front of everyone, and say, “This is racist bull s---. You’ve just insulted my friend by this ridiculous performance, giving all these reasons why you won’t serve her!”? Did I walk out in indignation?

I have my excuses: I was new in town, forming new relationships, and didn’t want to impose discomfort in this popular gathering place (now gone). I’ve lived a sheltered life and only seen this sort of thing on television news, so that day I was too shocked to act (or lacked the courage?). I was caught up in my pride in introducing Mary to this good fellowship of Unitarian friends and didn’t want to spoil it (already spoiled). How would I even be able to call out the owner, since it could be argued that I was imagining what I saw? The affront had been subtle and covert (clear as day).

I did try to do something; I offered Mary my lunch (“no thanks”).

Did I refuse to eat my lunch?

I even paid for that lunch.

‡ ‡ ‡

Just as I was writing this in 2020, a friend shared the on-line coverage of a local businessman’s racist postings in reaction to the Minneapolis protests over the death of George Floyd. I’m late to this local issue, but it fits right in with others worth mentioning.

There’s the African American mother who decided to live in a small town with no police station, because it felt safer; yet still, she was pulled over more than a dozen times in an eight-year period. I’ve read her daughter’s reaction to the sight of her mother pinned against the car, while she and her brother sat watching from the back seat. These kids were called “monkeys” by an adult neighbor, while walking to school.

A ‘tweener I first met as a four-year-old, open and innocent, now has attitude, having been taunted by “white” children in restaurants, by their parents, and by her rural classmates. Inside herself, she’s constructing powerful, invisible armor. I reach out—and fail—to keep her soft, keep her excited about, keep her, her.



Katy Olson, Tere Mann, and Bonnie Graham plan to join the multifaith delegation for [Treaty People Gathering](https://www.mnipl.org/).

We rise together for the treaties. We rise together for the climate. We rise together for our water. We rise together for one another.

On June 5-8, we will gather in northern Minnesota in massive numbers to propel this issue to the top of the nation's consciousness and force the Biden administration to act.

Already more than 100 people of faith and spiritual grounding have signed on to Plus, more than 600 people from all backgrounds have registered with the broader coalition.

More information at: <https://www.mnipl.org/>



Cultural Appropriation and Art Kandace Creel Falcon

June 16 @ 7 p.m.

Registration Info Below

Cultural Appropriation and Art




What is cultural appropriation in art? What controversies surround the subject? How do artists of all backgrounds engage with cultures that are different from their own in ways that honor diverse cultural perspectives? Join Kandace Creel Falcón (she/they) in a Zoom conversation on these topics on Wednesday, June 16 at 7:00 PM.

Kandace is a lifelong interdisciplinary scholar whose life's passion involves the power of narrative for social transformation. Kandace has two bachelor's degrees (in Women's Studies and Psychology) with a minor in Leadership Studies, a PhD from the University of Minnesota in Feminist Studies, and an Associate of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in visual arts.

For nearly a decade, Kandace taught and directed the Women's and Gender Studies Program at a regional university in NW Minnesota while publishing research on Chicana feminism, feminist pedagogy, equity efforts in higher education, and digital media storytelling practices. Now as an equity consultant and full-time artist and writer, Kandace lives and works in rural Erhard, Minnesota with their wife, and their ever-changing brood of chickens, cats, dogs, and goats. To learn more about Kandace, check their website at www.kjcfalcon.com. They give a view of both Kandace's art and writing, obviously a woman who takes their passion seriously.

Join Kandace on Thursday, June 16, at 7:00 on Zoom. Register for the event at: <http://bit.ly/SitOtterTail>.

This talk will be recorded, so if you can't be at the meeting, register anyway and you will receive a link to the recording of Kandace's talk after it is over. It is a part of the series "Sit With Me; Let's have a conversation" sponsored by Pelican Rapids Multicultural Committee, the Welcome Place, Unitarian Church of Underwood, Otter Tail County Historical Society, and West Central Initiative. *Joannie Ellison*



SAVE THE DATE
THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2021
1:00 PM VIA ZOOM

Donna Beegle

Portland, OR



Dr. Donna Beegle inspires and educates individuals, organizations, politicians, and entire communities with proven models to better outcomes for people in poverty. Born into a migrant labor family and married at 15, Dr. Beegle is the only member of her family who has not been incarcerated. By age 25, she earned her GED and then, within 10 years, received her doctorate in Educational Leadership. Dr. Beegle is dedicated to broadening and improving opportunities for all people who live in the war zone of poverty.

Please join us for an afternoon with Dr. Beegle.
For more information, please email ucusjig@gmail.com

Poverty Training Opportunity- Please join us!

The Social Justice Interest Group of the Unitarian Church of Underwood, and Sverdrup Lutheran Church of Underwood, MN have come together to bring Dr. Donna Beegle to present her training: Breaking the Iron Chains of Poverty.

This training is designed to provide the foundation for improving outcomes for children and families living in the crisis of poverty. Dr. Beegle will engage you—through her lived experiences and 30+ years of research—with practical knowledge allowing a deeper dive into understanding poverty. She will discuss the many different life experiences of poverty and how they impact communication, relationships, and outcomes. This training will also help you explore the structural causes of poverty, and allow you to be conscious of stereotypes, myths, and judgments that are often programmed into our subconscious minds. Through story and engaging activities, this training will help define poverty, examine its impacts, provide the foundational tools for meeting people where they are, and explore examples for creating responsive, inclusive environments.

Please join us, via Zoom on Thursday, June 24, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Through the generosity of the Unitarian Church of Underwood, Sverdrup Lutheran Church, and Dr. Donna Beegle we are happy to provide this training to you at no cost.

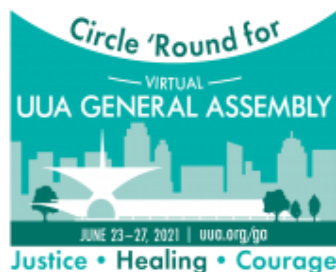
Click this link to register:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ei0m84dr3e1d2595&llr=tph55x6ab>

For more information please email: ucusjig@gmail.com

We Are Part of the Larger UU

Note: UUA and MidAmerica Region offer many resources, including virtual workshops. If interested, check out the uua.org website for sessions, dates, and times.



June 23-27, 2021 UUA Virtual General Assembly –

If you haven't registered for Virtual GA 2021 already, register now! Registered attendees are among the first to hear program announcements, such as the Ware Lecturer and featured speakers, and only registered attendees will have access to the NEW! GA app. So, register early to join online discussions, familiarize yourself with the GA schedule, and find your place in our community of communities. Register here: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>

[Register for General Assembly](#)

Note: You do need to be registered for the full conference to attend a workshop.

Board Minutes

Note: The Board Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2021 were approved at the Board meeting of May 19, 2021. They can be found at the end of the May Newsletter. Once approved, the Board Minutes of May 19, 2021 will be in the July Newsletter.

Unitarian Church of Underwood Approved Board Meeting Minutes April 18, 2021

Attendees: Mary Anderson, Amy Beckman, Marianne Byran, Molly Delarbre, Norm Kolstad, Ron Roller, John Salmen, Wally Warhol. Absent: Mary Worner. Also attending, Bonnie Graham, Congregational Administrator.

The Board meeting for FY 2021 reorganization was called to order by President, Norm Kolstad at 11:45 a.m.

The first item of business was to affirm votes taken by e-mail motion of 1) the Social Justice Interest Group for the Board to endorse UCU sponsorship with the Pelican Rapids Multicultural Committee and the Otter Tail County Historical Society, a presentation on Islamism, "Sit with me"; 2) motion of Norm Kolstad on behalf of Mary Anderson, Ellen Eastby, and Susan Groff to accept the proposed Covid Preparedness Plan to accommodate church in-person meetings, ie., Siems Celebration of Life service June 26.

Ron Roller raised the question on #2 for tenant contacts and considerations. Mary Anderson/Amy Beckman moved to amend the motion above to approve endorsement of the Islamic event and table #2 until the Sverdrup Suite tenants are visited. Molly informed us that the Islamic event had been postponed due to scheduled speaker activist involvement in the latest Minneapolis shooting.

Election of 2021-22 Officers:

President, Norm Kolstad (Mary Anderson/Ron Roller)
Vice President, John Salmen (Mary Anderson/Ron Roller)
Treasurer, Ron Roller (John Salmen/Marianne Bryan)
Secretary, Mary Anderson (Norm Kolstad/Amy Beckman)

It was decided to have the session on Board Orientation, May 12th @ 6 p.m. prior to the officer team meeting. Mary Worner will be asked to share information with new Board members June 9th prior to the Officer Team meeting and arrange for a phone conference on Board expectations following that date with Revs. David Pyle and Phil Lund.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05.

Next Meeting:

Board Orientation & Officer Team – May 12 @ 6 p.m. via Zoom.

Board meeting – May 19 @ 6 p.m. via Zoom.

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

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.

Note: The form to authorize Automatic Funds Transfer (AFT) is on the following page.

Authorization for Automatic Funds Transfer (AFT) To Unitarian Church of Underwood (UCU)

Return completed form in sealed envelope to collection plate: attention of Board Treasurer or mail to:

Unitarian Church of Underwood

P.O. Box 58

Underwood, MN 56586

I authorize Farmers State Bank of Underwood (bank of Unitarian Church of Underwood) to initiate entries to my checking account for recurring transfers of funds. This authority will remain in effect until I notify UCU in writing to cancel it. I can stop payment of any entry by notifying Farmers State Bank of Underwood three (3) days before my account is charged.

Funds Transfer from:

Name on account: _____

Bank Name _____

Account # _____ ☐ Checking ☐ Savings

Routing # _____

Recurring AMOUNT \$ _____ to be paid beginning (date): _____

☐ Weekly ☐ Every Other Week ☐ Monthly ☐ Other _____

Already using AFT & wish to change conditions:

Change Amount from: _____ / _____ to: _____ / _____ effective: _____
(old amount per xxx) (new amount per xxx) beginning date

Requestor SIGNATURE _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Email: _____

Submitted to Bank by: _____ Date: _____

(UCU Board Treasurer)

Funds Transfer to (Bank Use Only):

Reason: Donation pledge

Pay to: Unitarian Church of Underwood from Farmers State Bank of Underwood

(Bank Address: 110 Main St, Underwood, MN 56586; Telephone: 218/826-6112)

Account # to be credited: _____

Bank Routing # _____

