

THE Voice

May 2023



*Flower Ceremony & Annual Meeting –
May 21st*

Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist
4980 Gordon Avenue NW. Cedar Rapids IA 52405
www.peoplesuu.or



Worship

Sunday, May 7, 2023 11 am

9:45 FORUM: *Discussion of Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, by Thomas Abt; Ely Room

11 am WORSHIP: *Creating Lives with Sacred Yeses* – Reverend Carin Bringelson

Worship Associate: Emily Hoselton

Story for All Ages: Ryan Roth-Klinck

Music by Castle Ridge

Join us for a Reception for Rev. Carin in the Andre Room after worship.

Sunday, May 7, 2023 11 am

Mother's Day

11 am WORSHIP

Congregational Vote on Ministerial Candidate after worship!

OUR STAFF

David Wise

Interim Pastor

(319) 362-9827

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday usually
10 am - 3 pm or by appt

Ryan Roth-Klinck

Faith Formation Interim Director

(319) 362-9827

Christine Kullander

Congregational Administrator

office@Peoplesuu.org

(319) 362-9827

Office Hours will vary as volunteers provide assistance

Jackie Wedeking

Digital Media Specialist

Judy Mitschelen

Pianist

Walter Robidoux

Custodian



A WELCOMING
CONGREGATION



Pastor's Page — Pastor David Wise

yearly just before the summer recess of the church.

CREATIVITY is the theme for May.

We are holding the Flower Ceremony on May 21st.

I think the two go hand-in-hand in many ways. It took outside-the-box thinking to originate the idea of using flowers in a ritual. It took creativity to create the method in which they would be used, and to develop the significance of the ceremony.

Reginald Zottoli describes that first service this way:

The Flower communion service was created by Norbert Capek (1870-1942), who founded the Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia. He introduced this special service to that church on June 4, 1923. For some time he had felt the need for some symbolic ritual that would bind people more closely together.

The format had to be one that would not alienate any who had forsaken other religious traditions. The traditional Christian communion service with bread and wine was unacceptable to the members of his congregation because of their strong reaction against the Catholic faith. So he turned to the native beauty of their countryside for elements of a ceremony which would be genuine to them. This simple service was the result. It was such a success that it was held

The flower ceremony was brought to the United States in 1940 and introduced to the members of our Cambridge, Massachusetts, church by Dr. Capek's wife, Maja V. Capek. The Czech-born Maja had met Norbert Capek in New York City while he was studying for his Ph.D., and it was at her urging that Norbert left the Baptist ministry and turned to Unitarianism.

The Capeks returned to Czechoslovakia in 1921 and established the dynamic liberal church in Prague; Maja Capek was ordained in 1926. It was during her tour of the United States that Maja introduced the flower ceremony, which had been developed in the Prague church, at the Unitarian church in Cambridge. Unfortunately, Maja was unable to return to Prague due to the outbreak of World War II, and it was not until the war was over that Norbert Capek's death in a Nazi concentration camp was revealed. From this beginning the service has spread to many of our Unitarian Universalist congregations and has been adapted along the way.

People were asked to bring a flower of their choice, either from their own gardens. or from the

Continued on page 3.

Get Well Soon!

Christine Kullander, Office Administrator, had surgery on Tuesday due to a fall at her home over the weekend. The surgery was successful. She will be out of the office for an unknown amount of time in order to heal and recover. If you would like to send her a card, please send it to the church and we will make sure she receives it at home.

**With A Little Help
from Our
Friends!**



VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED in the office. There is a sign-up sheet on the office door or you may email David at minister@peoplesuu.org

Tasks include answering the phone, preparing the Order of Service, working on the E-Weekly, and a variety of other projects that may emerge. Experience is not needed – just a willingness to be present and to help even if it is simply answering the phone.



Folk Choir

FOLK CHOIR PRACTICES are on different dates than normal this month, due to Ryan traveling.

In May the Folk Choir will practice on the following dates and times:

May 11 - 5:30 to 6:30pm

May 23rd - 5:30 to 6:30pm

May 28th - 10am

Pastor's Page, continued from page 2

field or roadside. When they arrived at church a large vase stood waiting in the vestibule, attended by two young members of the Church School. Each person was asked to place their own flower in the vase. This signified that it was by their own free will they joined with the others. The vase that contained all the flowers was a symbol of the united church fellowship.

The young attendants helped with the arrangement of the bouquet. Later they carried the vase up to the front of the auditorium and placed it on a table there. Dr. Capek then said a prayer, after which he walked over and consecrated the flowers while the congregation stood. The two attendants then took the vase back out into the vestibule.

After the service, as people left the church, they went to the vase and each took a flower from the vase other than the one that they had brought. The significance of the flower ceremony is that as no two flowers are alike, so no two people are alike, yet each has a contribution to make. Together the different flowers form a beautiful bouquet. Our common bouquet would not be the same without the unique addition of each individual flower, and thus it is with our church community, it would not be the same without each and every one of us. Thus this service is a statement of our community.


By exchanging flowers, we show our willingness to walk together in our Search for truth, disregarding all that might divide us. Each person takes home a flower brought by someone else - thus symbolizing our shared celebration in community. This ceremony of sharing is essential to a free people of a free religion.

As we celebrate 100 years of this ceremony what new ways can we be creative and focused on new ideas that perhaps will last another 100 or more years?

Faith Formation

Ryan Roth-Klinck, Interim

May Faith Formation Calendar



MAY 7
FAITH FORMATION
HONORING OUR CREATIVITY
9:45 – 10:45AM

MAY 14
FAITH FORMATION
MEET PASTOR CARIN

MAY 21
FAITH FORMATION
END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR PARTY



MAY CO-OP SCHEDULE

5/7 - Murdock-Linwood Funeral Home
Visit- 4:30 to 6pm

5/14 - No Co-op

5/21 - Coming of Age Meeting During
Faith Formation Hour 9:45 to 10:45am

5/21 - Indian Creek Service Project - 2 to
4pm

5/28 - End of the School Year Party at
Quarter Barrel Arcade - 5 to 6:30pm



OUR FAITH FORMATION SEMESTER is almost at a close, but we have some great things lined up to help us end the semester well. On **May 14th** be sure to come to meet with our pastoral candidate, Carin! We will have some activities to help you get to know each other during the Faith Formation hour, so please be sure to come by to introduce yourself to Carin! Then our LAST Faith Formation of the semester will be **May 21st**. There will be a little end of the school year party to help us transition into summer mode.

YOUTH CO-OP is also on the tail end of its events for the semester. Be sure you come to the last faith formation meeting on **May 21st**, where youth parents will work on planning the Coming of Age trip. Our last co-op event for the semester will be on **May 28th** at the Quarter Barrel Arcade and then we will switch into our summer youth co-op schedule, which will be three times a month on Wednesdays. Please check the summer calendar and register your student on the Google form.

Board Appreciation

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

This is an amazing time at PCUU! We are on the threshold of meeting our ministerial candidate in May!

We need to thank our Search Committee members - Robyn Messler-Kubinak, Kathleen Mavity, Laura McGraw, Susan Petersmith, and Charles Cizio for what turned out to be a two-year search effort for most of the group.

During this time of transition, we also need to acknowledge Interim Minister David Wise for being the daily glue that has held us together by making sure our building, programs, and services have been well maintained and grown during these past two years, even during a period of personally challenging health circumstances. David has provided an extraordinary level of interim service and for this Peoples Church and our congregation have been blessed and are deeply indebted to him.

During David's transition to interim ministerial service, we were fortunate to have Ryan Roth-Klinck step in as our Interim Faith Formation Director. Ryan leads our children and youth in a variety of exciting and enriching activities every week, plus providing several sermons and great music along the way.

Christine Kullander continues to provide helpful and thoughtful resource assistance to our members and friends. She has also effectively dealt with a variety of building service needs over the past several years. Peoples Church is fortunate to be the beneficiary of her talents.

Words alone do not do justice to the amount of gratitude we collectively owe David, Ryan, and Christine for their efforts over the past year+ to keep the doors of Peoples Church open and welcoming to our members, friends, and visitors.

I also want to recognize and thank the many members and friends that have kept the flame of Peoples Church burning brightly during this time of transition.

Please plan to attend activities during our Candidating Week of May 7 - 14, and vote on May 14!

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 21, so this month will be full of activities and excitement about our future. Thank you for your generosity and support!!

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President: Steve Hershner

Treasurer: Gary McGraw

Members:

Kris Davis

Sue Davis

Marcy Mattison

Cate Sheller

Lu Wilcox



Meet the Minister Candidate:

Rev. Carin Bringelson

Welcome Reception with Q&A
Sunday, May 7 after the service
in the Andre Room, downstairs in the church

Open Office hours
Monday, May 8 @ 3:- 5 PM in the Ely Room, upstairs in
the church

Open Coffee hours
Tues., May 9 @ Noon - 3 PM
at the Downtown Library Unconference Room

Zoom Open Office hours
Thursday, May 11 @ 6 - 8 PM on Zoom

Congregational Meeting with VOTE
Sunday, May 14 after the service or ~12:15 PM in the
Sanctuary & on Zoom

Ministerial Candidate Vote

CALLING A NEW MINISTER: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

From the Bylaws of PCUU:

IX. The Minister

2. Approval of Candidate

*For the purpose of approving a candidate for minister,
a quorum of 40% of the membership
must be present in person, by proxy (or Zoom) at a meeting
held for the purpose of calling a minister.
The recommended candidate for minister must be approved
by a minimum of 95% of those present.*

WE KNOW that Peoples Church members are excited to meet and hear from Rev. Carin! We'll be asking all Peoples members to vote in the decision to call Rev. Carin as the next minister on May 14th following worship - in person, by proxy, or on Zoom.

As a reminder and according to our bylaws, a special meeting held for the purpose of calling a minister means the **meeting quorum requirement is doubled to 40% of the membership** that must be present (in-person or by proxy). **Based on current membership levels, this means that no less than 47 members must be present in person or by proxy.**

The recommended candidate **must be approved by a minimum of 95% of those present (45 yes votes, if 47 members are in attendance)**. We hope that many more than 47 members are able to attend, but wanted to share how meeting requirements will be handled.

The Board wanted to share this information pro-actively on quorum and approval bylaw language for this special meeting, so members can make proxy arrangements if they not available in person on Sunday, May 14.

Calling a minister is a special event for a congregation and we look forward to hearing from and talking with Rev. Carin during her week with us leading up to this vote. Sharing information on how our bylaws handle this unique meeting in advance is meant to help our members make plans for their participation in this momentous activity.

Thank you!

Your PCUU Board

Steve Hershner
Kris Davis
Susan Davis
Marcy Mattison
Cate Sheller
Lu Wilcox

Annual Meeting information

Click for [Agenda link](#)

Click for [Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID #_253 166 571

Password 253 166 571

Click for [Proxy link](#)

Social Justice News

First Sunday Plate Collection:

The Cedar Rapids Gun Violence Intervention Program

Gun homicides are on the rise in the U.S., with Black and brown people experiencing the highest rates. Young Black citizens (ages 15 to 34) are experiencing the highest rates of gun homicides across all demographics. Black Americans are 10 times more likely than white Americans to die by gun violence. *Cedar Rapids is no exception to rising rates of gun violence.*

We have a unique program to address gun violence in our community. Retiring Chief of Police Wayne Jerman has said of the Group Violence Intervention program, "I appreciate the work and efforts of the GVI Program. Their relationship-building, involvement and custom notifications move us in the right direction."

THANK YOU, Peoples people for supporting an organization that directly advocates for the civil rights of of our most vulnerable populations.

A Forum on this program was held March 26, and. Can be viewed on YouTube. In conjunction with this program, we will be reading the book, *Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, by Thomas Abt. High rates of violence in poor communities of color come not from culture or values, but from long legacies of racial persecution that have resulted in concentrated poverty and disadvantage.

The next Social Justice meeting is at 1 p,m, May 1.

Our 4th Quarter 2022 First Sunday Plate Collection recipient was the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa. Their thank you letter said:

"Dear Marcia, Thank you for your generous gift of \$644 to the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa. Your financial support enables us to do work to protect religious freedom and our democracy, as well as creating welcoming communities for all."

Good Neighbors
for May:
Contact Kathy
Juba (319)
378-3116

Sign up here to be
a GREETER
before Sunday
worship!

Joyce Nielsen Obituary

We are sorry to share that long-time Peoples member Joyce Nielsen died at the end of April. Here is her obituary from The Gazette:

JOYCE NIELSEN, Cedar Rapids

Joyce Nielsen, 89, of Cedar Rapids, IA, passed away on April 27, 2023 in her home after many years of battling Alzheimer's.

Joyce was born to Dorothy and Clarey Jensen in Askov, MN. She grew up with her aunt, Gloria Schmidt (Saastad) and her brother, Gerald in a very closeknit family and community. Joyce graduated from high school in Cloquet, MN after only living there a year and considered herself an Askov graduate, participating in reunions until she was unable to. On June 11, 1955, she married the love of her life, Eric Nielsen. They enjoyed 67 years of life together.

Joyce lived life as a part of an in service to her community. She was a long-time active member of the Unitarian Church. She learned about politics with the League of Women Voters and had a lifetime commitment to the organization. She was a part of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty and worked with Head Start as it began its program. From there, she developed a career at HACAP. She worked up managing a center in Toddville, and then a local Cedar Rapids center. She was most proud of setting up a three-country tutoring program that was subsequently adopted by the schools themselves.

In her 50's, she decided to try all the ideas she had thought were interesting. She began a licensed detective, set up a babysitting exchange, took tap dancing classes and taught private driving classes to the elderly and disabled. After giving all these things a trial, she decided to serve others by selling cars. This got her more interested in finances. She was a particular advocate for women and children throughout her life and decided she could be of more service helping women figure out how to secure their financial life. She began by selling annuities, but soon teamed up with other women with other financial strengths to put together Nielsen Financial Advisors.

Joyce had a lifelong belief in the capacity of people to improve themselves and their world. She believed that our democratic process allows people to have a voice and to change the world. Her values and philosophy best fit with the Democratic Party and she was an advocate for the Democratic Party through her life, while also respecting the opinions of the Republican Party. She believed in caring for and supporting all of those around you, even those who you disagreed with or were unlikeable. She felt honored to serve two terms in the Iowa House of Representatives.

Joyce was preceded in death by her brother, Gerald and her parents. Surviving Joyce are her husband, Eric Nielsen, her daughter Dr. Cindy Nielsen, her granddaughter, Stephanie Nielsen, her niece, Andrea Jensen and her nephew Jared Jensen.

Joyce willed her body to the University of Iowa. Memorials to her will be considered at a later date. Gifts may be given in memory of Joyce to the charity of your choice.

JOYCE NIELSEN Obituary

https://cedarrapidsgazette-ia.newsmemory.com/?publink=73f890da9_134ab8b

Peoples Church Mission Statement:

Leading compassionate lives through spiritual growth and just action.

2023 UUA PRESIDENTIAL FORUMS

There will be a series of four presidential candidate forums, starting in March, to allow delegates and members to learn more about Rev. Dr. Betancourt. Planned in concert with the Election Campaign Practices Committee with support from UUA staff, each forum will offer both on-site and virtual participation. There will also be an additional forum during General Assembly in June.

All Unitarian Universalists are welcomed and encouraged to engage with the presidential candidate forums and the process as a whole, to ensure our next UUA President may establish the foundation for their leadership with broad participation.

Learn more on the pages listed below:

May 20, 2023 1p PT Santa Barbara, CA

BE ALERT FOR FRAUD

Peoples Church Minister, Board members, and staff will:

NEVER text or email you to ask for money or gift cards.

NEVER text or email you to ask for your social security number and/or birthdate.

Do not respond to these communications!
If you receive either request, please let the office know.

It is increasingly common for people to be impersonated on social platforms. Please be aware of the possibility that you could be seeing or following a fake account on any social media platform.

If you are in doubt that an account belongs to Peoples Church, please check with us.

[Sign up here to
bring SNACKS for
Coffee Hour after](#)

[Sign up here to
help set up Coffee
House before
Sunday worship](#)