

January 2025

THE VOICE

Story



Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist
4980 Gordon Ave. NW Cedar Rapids, IA 52405



Minister Musings

Here we are in 2025 — wow! A quarter of the way through this century.

I remember turning 25 and thinking I was sooooo old.

When our kid turned 25, I gave Bri 25 quarters. Twenty-five is a big deal.

These recollections that echo across the decades are part of my personal story, which is related to the theme for this month of January: **“The Practice of Story.”**

Together we will explore the story of our UU faith movement including:

- What is the story of your personal journey into (or returning to) Unitarian Universalism?
- What’s the story of Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist?
- What’s the story of our larger Unitarian Universalist movement which recently approved the new articulation of our [Shared UU Values](#)?

I look forward to exploring our stories together.

Growing in Faith,

Rev. Carin

Rev. Carin Bringelson



Sunday Worship

Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

“Stories and Rituals of Release and Renewal” led by Rev. Carin Bringelson

As we enter a new calendar year, we’ll engage with rituals of release and renewal. During this hands-on worship service, we’ll explore our 2024 stories and consider what we might envision our stories to be in 2025. We will also acknowledge the 4th anniversary of the attack on the U.S. Capitol — and how stories might inspire us.

Sunday, January 12, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

“The Story of Stories” led by Rev. Rosie Rimrodt, PCUU Member

We will hear the story of how stories are a part of the human experience since man has walked on this earth. From before there was language there were stories. You will also hear some of Rev. Rosie’s favorite stories.

Sunday, January 19, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

“MLK and PCUU: Stories for Our Times” led by Rev. Carin Bringelson

Sixty years ago, Rev. Walter Kellison — the minister of Peoples Church back in 1965 — traveled to Selma, Alabama to march alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the struggle for voting rights for African Americans. Today we’ll tell a piece of this story and consider how this might relate to our contemporary lives.

Sunday, January 26, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

“Bringing Hope, Love, and Beauty” led by Rev. Carin Bringelson

Beloved Community is a vision to which we aspire as a Unitarian Universalist congregation. But what does it actually mean? And what does it ask of us? What stories might we need to retell in order to build the world we dream about? PCUU Care Team will be on hand to answer questions.



Peoples Church UU

Care Team

Are You Ready to Be Transformed by Caring?

By participating in the newly-designed [Care Team](#), we *give* and *receive* as part of creating a Beloved Community together.

- When we think we're giving support, we're actually *growing new friendships*
- When we think we're receiving assistance, we're actually helping others *connect with us*.

As the hymn goes, "*From you I receive. To you I give. Together we share, and from this we live.*" Participating in the Care Team is a way to be alive — and a way to be transformed.

Sign up to be part of the [Care Team](#) by simply [filling out this short form](#).

From writing a card to offering a ride, you can make a difference in the life of a fellow congregant.

*The new [Care Team](#) provides support that was previously offered by the Paraministers and Good Neighbors. We thank all of those who have served in these roles over the years.

Questions? Email pcuucareteam@gmail.com

Board President

As morning breaks on the New Year, I'm thinking about our theme of the month: **Practices of Story**.

The truth is, story is what makes us human. Before Netflix, and the Gutenberg Press, humans relied on story to teach, learn, celebrate, and mourn. Narrative holds the power to unite us—and divide us—and bring meaning to our everyday lives.

But not all stories begin with "Once Upon a Time." In fact, it's the stories we *tell ourselves* that matter most. For example, growing our congregation is crucial to the health of Peoples Church, yet when it comes to talking about my faith outside of our community, *the story I tell myself* is that it's a waste of time—I don't want to alienate my progressive friends who view religion as culturally harmful and when I talk to people from other churches, our values are often out of sync. Until now, the discomfort and uncertainty have been enough to keep me quiet. But in the new year, I'm going to do better. Here's how:

- Starting a conversation about faith is hard, especially if you don't have something specific to start with. That's why I recently pulled out a clean sheet of paper and listed our UU values: Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Generosity, Justice, and Love.
- Next, I wrote down 2-3 specific memories of how each value has shown up in the world outside of our community. Under generosity, for example, I described how a tough conversation with a colleague was transformed when I shifted my attitude to emotional generosity.

So I invite you to do the same. [Click here to submit a short story online about a time our UU Values showed up in your life beyond the church.](#) We'll be creating a visual representation of your responses outside of the sanctuary to inspire one another to bring light and faith into every encounter.

Together, Robyn



Faith Formation

Happy New Year!!

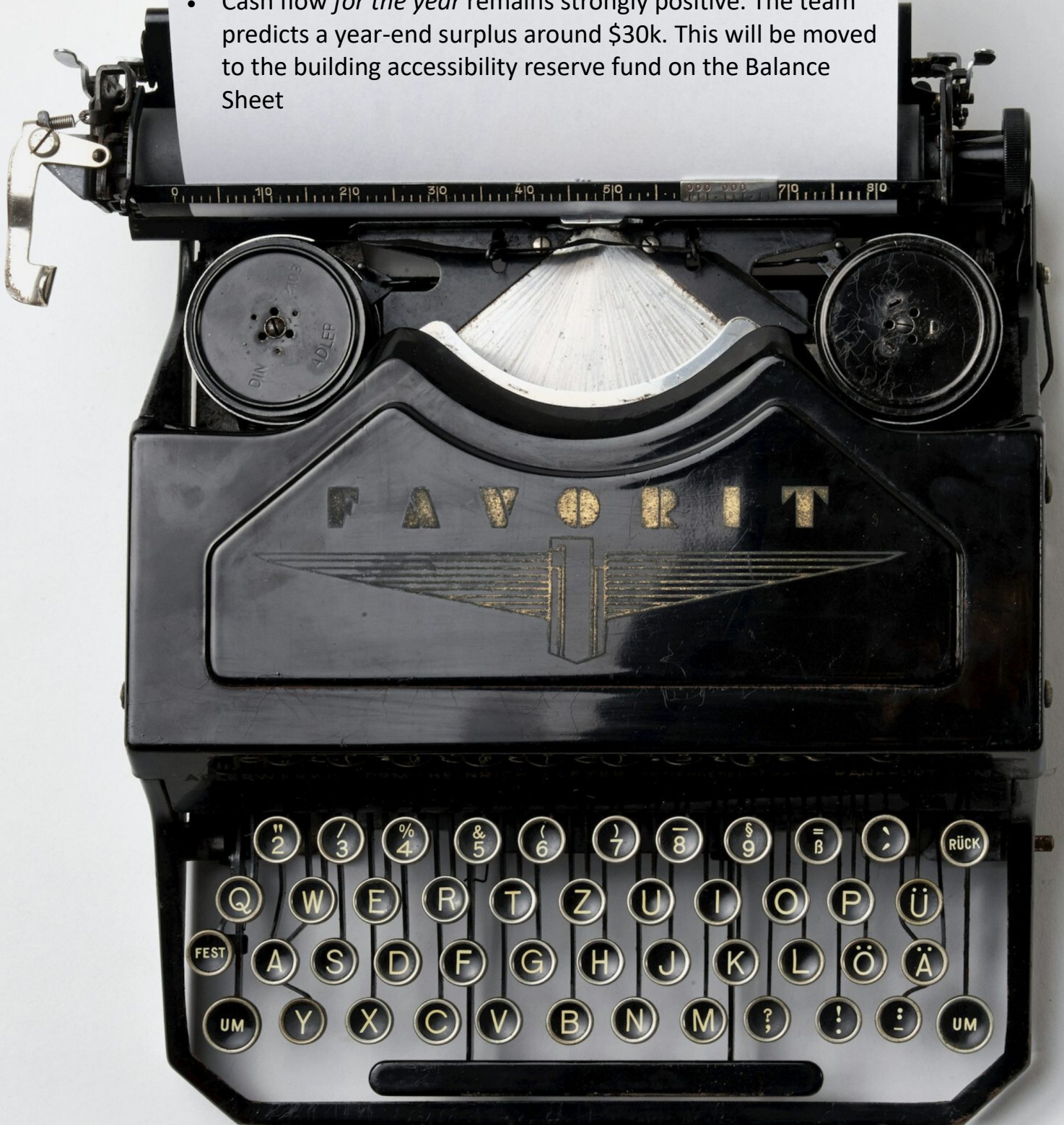
- We have a lot of exciting things in store for this month. With our monthly theme of “Story” we will be learning about the life stories from members of our congregation and sharing our won. Our kids and youth will have a chance to make movie posters about their lives and hang them up around the church.
- If you have not yet completed our [Volunteer Survey](#), we are still hoping to hear from you.
- On January 12th to celebrate the success of our December Mitten Tree, Faith Formation will have a bowling party at Pickle Palace from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.



Finance Update

The finance team met on 12/12/24 to review financial reports and continue strategic planning.

- In December, the Congregation approved the [2025 Budget](#)
- Cash flow *for the year* remains strongly positive. The team predicts a year-end surplus around \$30k. This will be moved to the building accessibility reserve fund on the Balance Sheet



Social Justice

At our December meeting, the congregation voted to send our quarterly donations to the four exceptional organizations described below. Also, for 2025, we are shifting *when* we collect donations to the *Second Sunday* of each month. We thank you in advance for your generosity!

- **Iowa Safe Schools**: Provides support, victim services, resources and events for LGBTQ+ and allied youth in Iowa schools. Provides education and support to school personnel. Programs include the GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) Network which empowers students to create safe spaces in their school and community.
- **Iowa Environmental Council**: The largest environmental coalition in Iowa. Advocates for policies that reduce water pollution and are science based, sustainable and effective. Advocates for funding for watershed planning and monitoring.
- **Iowa Migrant Movement For Justice**: Provides advocacy and legal representation for immigrants & refugees in Iowa with a Cedar Rapids office. Client cases include Family-Based Immigration; DACA; Green card Applications; Special Visa's for Afghans; Asylum; TPS; and VAWA Benefits.
- **Iowa Refugee & Immigrant Voices**: Founded in 2012 by and for refugees and governed by refugees. Provides cultural and linguistical support and assistance for job readiness and navigating health care system. Website provides information in 35 languages.



Bethel Ame Church presents the **Allen Lincoln Douglass Banquet 2025** on February 15, 2025 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. which will be held at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1285 3rd Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403.

[Buy Tickets Here](#)



Music of the Month

January's Hymn of the Month is #346, "Come, Sing a Song with Me." This song invites us to ponder hope during this winter month. What story comes to YOUR mind and heart when you hear or sing this hymn?

[Come, Sing a Song with Me](#)



Our exclusively curated song from Lea Morris for January's theme is: "Ex-Patriot's Song" (aka "A Love Song for America")

[Ex-Patriot's Song / A Love Song for America](#)



Lea is an ex-patriate now but wasn't when she wrote this song. [Click here to learn her story behind the song.](#)

Updates & Reminders

Van Vechten Guild

The Pecan Fundraiser was a terrific success. Raising over \$700. On behalf of all its members, thank you for your support!

Inclement Weather Reminder

If the weather is too dangerous for traveling, please stay safe. The worship team will decide whether or not to move to “Zoom Only Sunday” and update the **church’s website by 7:30 a.m. on Sundays**. Learn more by reading the details of the Inclement Weather Policy and Procedures on our website.

Prairiewoods: End of Life Planning Retreat

Prairiewoods invites you to a weekend of honest, open-hearted conversation on preparing for the end of life. Gerontologist and end-of-life guide Mary McCall, PhD, and death doula Annie Brownsberger and Sara Van Cleve will lead this weekend retreat focused on multiple facets of the death and dying process. Friday, January 17, 6:30 p.m. through Saturday, January 18, 3:00 p.m.

[Learn More and Sign Up Here](#)

Circle of Life

Please join in sending deep condolences to the family of **Bev Philpott**. An active member of Peoples Church for over 40 years, Bev and her husband Ian moved to the Twin Cities in 2022 to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Bev died on December 1, 2024 after a sudden pulmonary embolism. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

A full obituary is available at:

<https://www.thegazette.com/obituaries/beverley-philpott/>

Condolences can be sent to:

Ian Philpott and family

14937 Valley View Rd

Eden Prairie, MN 55344-1816



Please join in sending condolences to the family and friends of **Frieda Schmitz** – a member of Peoples Church since 2019 – who died on December 24, 2024. A memorial service followed by a luncheon was held on Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. in Manchester, Iowa with the burial occurring in Strawberry Point, Iowa.

A full obituary is available at:

<https://www.leonard-mullerfh.com/obituary/Frieda-Schmitz>

Condolences can be sent to Frieda's sister at:

Mary Lee Tripi

38889 Altura St.

Fremont, CA 94536



Cares of the Congregation

Jim Wasta is recovering from a November fall with the help of some rehabilitation at Meth-Wick.

If you'd like to mail him a get-well card, please use the Wasta's mailing address:

Jim Wasta

1300 13th St NW Apt A201

Cedar Rapids, IA 52405-2447



January

- 1 Office Open 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- 2 Office Open 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- 3 Office Open 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- 4 Journey Circle at 10:30 a.m.
- 5 Forum: Authentic Selves at 9:45 a.m.
Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- 8 Shared Ministry Team at 10:00 a.m.
- 9 Faith Formation Council at 6:30 p.m.
- 12 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
Faith Formation Bowling Party 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
(At Pickle Palace)
- 13 Finance Team at 7:00 p.m.
- 14 Archives Committee at 10:00 a.m.
Membership Team at 6:30 p.m.
- 15 Social Justice Team Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
PCUU Monthly Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
- 16 Worship Arts Team at 5:30 p.m.
- 19 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- 20 Content due for The Voice
- 26 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- 30 Care Team at 2:00 p.m.



CARING COMMUNITY

PEOPLES CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

LEADING COMPASSIONATE LIVES
THROUGH SPIRITUAL GROWTH



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS:

office@peoplesuu.org or

(319) 362-9827



Our Staff

Rev. Carin Bringelson Minister

(319) 362-9827

Please email Rev. Carin to
schedule an appointment

Celeste Downs

Director of Faith Formation

David Kind

Congregational
Administrator

(319) 362-9827

Office Hours

Tuesday 9:00am—3:00pm
Wednesday 9:00am—3:00pm
Thursday 10:00am—6:00pm

Matthew Wilde

Social Media and Internet
Outreach Technician

Judy Mitschelen

Pianist

Walter Robidoux

Custodian

Emilee Miller

Nursery Worker

Our Board of Trustees

President

Robyn Miessler-Kubaneck

Bob Butikofer

Sue Davis

Steve Hershner

Marcy Mattison

Lu Wilcox

Ex Officio

Rev. Carin Bringelson

Gary McGraw, Treasurer