

April 2025

THE VOICE

Joy



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

Minister Musings

My mind feels *blown* by the invitation to practice joy – this month's theme – in the midst of the despair and outrage I feel given recent events. The constitutional crisis and disregard for the rule of law. The existential threats on trans lives. The lack of due process for immigrants and refugees. The environmental degradation that continues unchecked.

How is one supposed to practice JOY in the midst of all that is wrong with this world?! Our spiritual forebears might reply, "How can you not practice joy, given the gravity of the situation in which you find yourselves? You need more joy at these times – not less."

Indeed, many philosophers and theologians have paused to note how the Joy and Sorrow of our lives is woven fine. We cannot have joy without sorrow, for they interplay with and depend upon one another. As 19th century Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran put it, "The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain. Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?"



One of the ways I practice joy is by singing and dancing. I'm particularly buoyed by the song "[This Joy](#)" performed by the Resistance Revival Chorus. Especially for people who are the most systematically marginalized – the BIPOC, the disabled, the queer, the poor, the femmes, the fat, etc. – the song serves as a reminder that our joy need not be taken from us. Regardless of our identities, all of us can resist the temptation to slink back into our corners. Instead, we can make connections with each other and all we name as sacred – practicing joy within, between, and beyond us.

As you ponder and embody our theme of the month, [Living Love through the Practice of Joy](#), I invite you to make a list of all the ways YOU practice joy. The world needs our joy more than ever. Let's practice joy together.

Growing in Faith,

Rev. Cairn



PS: What do you think: which of our [Shared UU Values](#) are calling us most insistently to practice joy?



Sunday Worship

Sunday, April 6, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.

“Put Down the Water Buckets,” led by Rev. Rosie Rimrodt, PCUU member

In this time of too much to do, we are putting out fires (figuratively and literally), right and left, taking up all our time. But the time has come to put down the water buckets and seek some rest and peace and joy to get us through until we fill up our water buckets again.

Sunday, April 13, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.

“Good Eggs and Collective Liberation” led by Rev. Carin Bringelson

The annual celebration of Passover is a time for Jewish people to remember the Hebrew story about escaping slavery in Egypt. Today we'll explore how contemporary Unitarian Universalists might joyously engage in the project of collective liberation.

Sunday, April 20, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.

“The Rebirth of Joy” led by Rev. Carin Bringelson

This time of year, the plants that appeared dead over the winter months seemingly come back to life. Today we'll explore the joy that Earth Day and the Christian holiday of Easter hold in common. Though there are no Faith Formation classes before worship today, people of all ages are invited to participate in an Easter Egg Hunt following service.

Sunday, April 27, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.

“Joys of Shared Ministry” led by Rev. Carin Bringelson

Last year on this day, members of Peoples Church installed Rev. Carin as their called minister. While much has been spoken about “shared ministry,” what does this concept actually mean? And how is it being embodied in the congregation these days?

Board President

Happy April to all you beautiful Peoples people!

The church year is winding down and the board has begun planning our Annual Congregational Meeting, which is scheduled for May 18 in the sanctuary immediately after the service.

One thing that came up in our March board meeting is the need to clarify policy details around facility expenditures. We want to make sure expectations for how we fund improvements to our building and grounds (B&G) make sense to everyone, especially our new B&G team.

These sorts of questions may not seem all that engaging at first glance, yet clarifying our policies is a crucial part of tailoring our governance system to our specific needs. This, in turn, keeps our church organization running smoothly.

In addition to policy details, we talked through next steps for our Ministries' priorities and look forward to sharing more details at our upcoming Annual Congregational Meeting.

Make sure to mark your calendar with the Annual Congregation Meeting details and plan to attend: May 18 in the Sanctuary immediately after the service.

See you then, Robyn



Faith Formation

This Sunday:

Our PreK-5th graders will talk about trusting our community. They will explore creating covenant, play games that require trusting each other, and reflect upon trusting our church community to support our needs by introducing them to the new play space!

Middle and High Schoolers will be doing good in the community by volunteering at the Indian Creek Nature Center's Maple Syrup Festival from 7:30am-10:30am. Please contact Megan Jones for volunteer duties and transportation details at megan.teamjones@gmail.com.

Requests:

Easter Egg Filling Donations needed! Faith Formation will gladly and gratefully receive donations to fill our Easter Eggs: candy, pocket change, small toys/treasures: if it fits into an egg, we'll take it! Look for a donation bin outside the Sanctuary on March 30th and April 6th.

Events:

Easter Egg Filling Party! PCUU Youth are hosting an Easter Egg Filling Party on Sunday April 13th at 9:45am in the Ely Room and everyone is invited! Help us fill the Easter Eggs for the hunt the following Sunday and stay for food, community and fun!

Easter Egg Hunt! The Annual People's Church Easter Egg Hunt will be held Easter Sunday, April 20th after service. Middle and high schoolers are welcome to help hide eggs at 10:45am and can participate in a scavenger hunt after helping the younger kids find their eggs. We look forward to seeing you at this family fun event!



4/13: Service Project, Location TBD, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

4/26: Camping Day, Location TBD, all day Saturday

PCUUU YOUTH APRIL

**APR
06**

CREATE: WATERCOLORING
WATERCOLOR CHALICES,
END OF YEAR REVIEW

**APR
13**

SERVICE: EGG FILLING
HOST EASTER EGG FILLING
PARTY FOR CONGREGATION

**APR
20**

HAPPY EASTER!
NO CLASS, HIDE EGGS AT 10:40AM,
SCAVENGER HUNT AFTER SERVICE

**APR
27**

MULTIGEN: YARDWORK
SPRING CLEANUP ON PCUU GROUNDS

PCUU KIDS APRIL

**APR
06**

JOY IN ART
LEARNING ABOUT THE CHALICE THROUGH ART

**APR
13**

JOY IN PLAY
RECESS AT JACOLYN PARK!

**APR
20**

EASTER EGG HUNT
NO CLASSES, EGG HUNT AFTER SERVICE

**APR
27**

JOY IN HELPING
YARDWORK ON PCUU GROUNDS



Peoples Church UU
Care Team

Serve as Part of the Umbrella in a Storm

So far, 30 people at Peoples Church have signed up to work together to offer a metaphorical umbrella when the storms of life leave fellow congregants feeling drenched.

The PCUU Care Team serves as this “umbrella.” This newly designed group is open to anyone at Peoples Church who would like to offer support and assistance as needed (and when volunteers are able) in the following areas:

Card Writing

Visiting

Phone Calling

Providing Meals

Providing Rides

Helping with Household Tasks

Heavy Lifting

Sign up to serve with the [Care Team](#) by simply [filling out this short form](#).

Questions? Email the Care Team Coordinators at: pcuucareteam@gmail.com



Social Justice

- This month for our 2nd Sunday offering, funds will benefit Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice which is a statewide membership-based advocacy and immigration legal service organization driven and led by immigrant and refugee voices and united with allies.
- A Note From Cedar Rapids Pride



CR Pride invites you to an engaging Transgender Panel Discussion on Saturday, March 29, at 1:00 PM at Whipple Auditorium in the Downtown Cedar Rapids Public Library.

This panel will feature transgender individuals sharing their lived experiences, as well as professionals who provide essential services to the trans community. We'll discuss challenges related to healthcare, legal rights, workplace inclusion, and community support. A Q&A session will follow, offering attendees a chance to engage in meaningful dialogue.



Event Details: Date: Saturday, March 29 at 1:00 p.m. | Location: Whipple Auditorium, Downtown Cedar Rapids Public Library. This event is open to everyone—community members, allies, and advocates—who want to learn more and support transgender rights and inclusion. For more information about this event and other CR Pride events, visit crprideia.com.

Best, CR Pride Board of Directors

Social Justice (Con't)

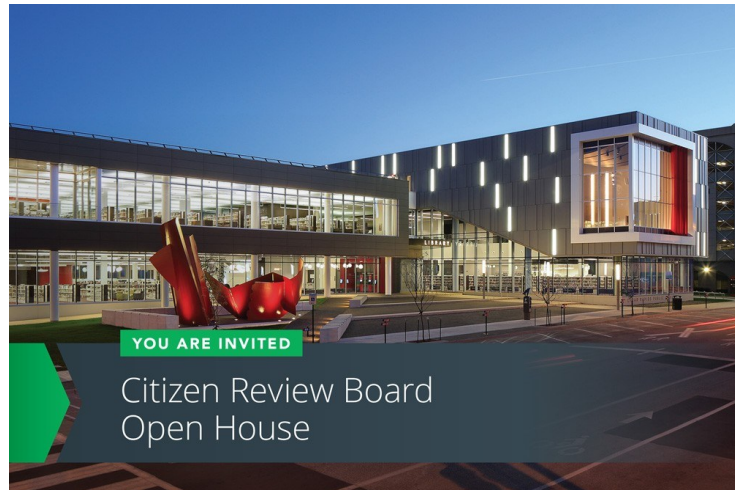
Who: You?

What: The Citizen Review Board is an independent body created to ensure community law enforcement is effective and responsive to the standards, values, and needs of those to be served. This event serves to bring awareness to the accomplishments and efforts of the Board and gather community input on their work.

When: Saturday, March 29 from 1:00—3:00 p.m.

Where: Cedar Rapids Downtown Public Library — Beems Auditorium (2nd Floor)

Why: Peoples Church was an active and vocal supporter of the Citizen Review Board and our continued involvement signals our commitment to this social justice issue.



Who: You?

What: The IAAF is bringing our spring fundraiser back to Cedar Rapids! The fund was founded in 1969 in Cedar Rapids by a group of clergy dedicated to ensuring abortion access for their community. [Join](#) for a silent auction, cocktails, appetizers, and remarks from executive director, Francine Thomson.

When: Saturday, April 24 from 5:30—7:30 p.m.

Where: [Venue revealed with ticket purchase.](#)



Why: Peoples Church identified women's reproductive rights as a central priority in 2024. Your participation in this event further strengthens our connection to this crucial issue.

A More Beautiful Question

To get you thinking—and talking about—each month's theme, Marcy Mattison and David Kind have teamed up to create an engagement space directly outside the sanctuary. Inspired by the e.e. cummings quote, "Ever the beautiful answer that asks an even more beautiful question," you'll find resources and prompts from the UU Soul Matters curriculum.

Divided into four categories— Ask, Listen, Share, and Reflect — make sure to check out the many small and easy ways to add spiritual practices into your everyday life.



Finance Update

The **Finance Team** met on 3/18/25 to review financial reports and continue financial planning.

- Income is very strong: \$24,013 — This represents 31.5% of pledges YTD.
- Expenses: \$16,812.
- Staff expenses have been running behind due to open Director of Faith Formation position.
- We have secured new insurance contracts for workers comp and property/casualty.



Cares of the Congregation

- Sheryl Ochs would appreciate your calls and cards as she recovers from a broken kneecap.

Sheryl Ochs

155 17th St SW

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404-174

- Susan Elliot-Bryan will gladly receive any notes of encouragement as she undergoes cancer treatment.

Susan Elliot-Bryan

1801 Blake Blvd. SE

Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-2229

- Marion Patterson writes that they are doing well. If you'd like to write her a note of encouragement as she continues to recover from her back surgery, send it to:

Marion "Manny" Patterson

1080 30th Street Dr. SE

Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-1506

Circle of Life

We are sad to share that a friend of Peoples Church UU passed away recently.

Eric Nielsen died on March 6, 2025. Read his obituary at:

<https://www.stewartbaxter.com/obituaries/Eric-Nielsen?obld=38462538>

Please keep his family members and friends in your hearts and minds.

Congregational Study/Action Issue Feedback Sessions

Join the UUA's Commission on Social Witness to
learn more about each CSAI, offer feedback,
& connect with others interested in the issue!

April 10

Housing: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

April 17

Fat Liberation: Building Justice &
Inclusion for Larger Bodies

April 22

Abolition Is Faith Formation



All Sessions at 5pm PT/8pm ET on Zoom
Learn more & register at
uua.org/socialwitness

Join our upcoming feedback sessions to learn more about each CSAI, offer comments and feedback, and connect with others working on the same issue!

April 10 at 5pm PT / 8pm ET : Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Feedback Session. [Register](#).

April 17 at 5pm PT / 8pm ET: Fat Liberation: Building Justice and Inclusion for Larger Bodies Feedback Session. [Register](#).

April 22 at 5pm PT / 8pm ET : Abolition is Faith Formation Feedback Session. [Register](#).

Learn more about CSAIs, the social witness process, and the Commission on Social Witness at uua.org/socialwitness.



Reimagine Together "Listen" by Courtney Fishback



SAVE THE DATE

April 22, 2025

8:00 pm ET • 7:00 pm CT • 6:00 MT • 5:00 pm PT

Earth Day Worship

Earth Day Worship Celebration

April 22, 2025

8:00pm ET • 7:00pm CT • 6:00pm MT • 5:00pm PT

As Unitarian Universalists, we are positioned to be faith leaders at this critical time in our country's history. And it can feel overwhelming. Where do we start? We run the risk of becoming quick to act without listening to each other and the communities most impacted by climate disruption.

This Earth Day, UU Ministry for Earth will help us deepen practices that put Love at the center of our climate justice work. Not to avoid acting, but to prepare us for action.

We will hold the service online, and we can also provide written worship materials for your congregation's or group's use. We ask for a donation for those materials. [Register for the online service and/or the written materials here.](#)



Explore PCUU Membership



Membership into, and within, Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist is a journey! Join us for these dates to learn about each other, our UU faith movement, and our congregation.

- **Sunday, April 27, 2025 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

Build community during lunch.

On your own schedule, review videos and resources

→ www.peoplesuu.org/Exploring-Membership

- **Thursday, May 8, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

Gather via Zoom to explore your questions.

- **Sunday, May 18, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.**

Share how you envision yourself engaging with Peoples Church and get ready for the New Member Ceremony happening during worship.

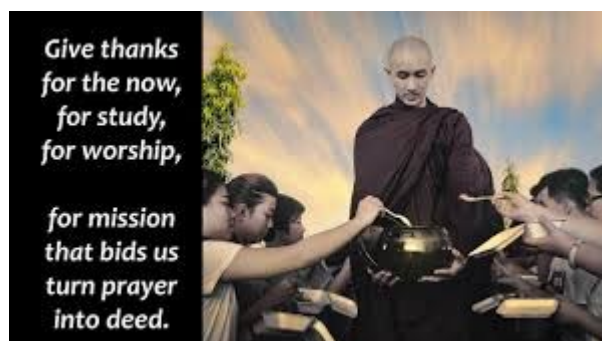
Attending? Email Membership Team contact, Megan Murphy Salyer, at lilmurph@gmail.com by April 5, 2025.

Peoples Choir

Peoples Choir invites you to join our Wednesday night rehearsals at 6:00 p.m. on April 9th, April 16th, April 23rd, and April 30th. We will also rehearse before service on April 27th at 9:45 a.m.

Music of the Month

April's Hymn of the Month is #404, "[What Gift Can We Bring?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzyBLO6nbpQ)" Listen to and watch at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzyBLO6nbpQ>



Our exclusively curated song from Lea Morris for April's theme is a song called "Joy is Free." Listen to and watch "Joy is Free" at: <https://youtu.be/-YGv4qe5ZU8>



- 3 Stewardship Team at 3:00 p.m.
- 6 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
- 8 Archives Committee at 10:00 a.m.
- 9 Shared Ministry Team at 12:30 p.m.
- Choir Practice at 6:00 p.m.
- 13 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
- Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- CUUPS at 12:20 p.m.
- 14 Van Vechten Guild at 12:00 p.m.
- 16 Social Justice Team Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
- PCUU Monthly Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
- Choir Practice at 6:00 p.m.
- 17 Worship Arts Team at 5:30 p.m.
- 19 Journey Circle at 11:00 a.m.
- 20 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
- Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- Voice Content Due at 12:00 p.m.**
- 23 Choir Practice at 6:00 p.m.
- 27 Faith Formation at 9:45 a.m.
- Choir Practice at 9:45 a.m.
- Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- Exploring Membership Kickoff at 12:30 p.m.
- 30 Choir Practice at 6:00 p.m.

April

JOY



PEOPLES CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

“Leading compassionate lives through spiritual growth and just action.”

Our Staff

Minister

Rev. Carin Bringelson
minister@peoplesuu.org

Congregational Administrator

David Kind
office@peoplesuu.org

Office Hours

Tuesday—Thursday
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Social Media / IT Outreach Technician

Matthew Wilde
pcuutech@peoplesuu.org

Worship Accompanist

Judy Mitschelen

Choir Accompanist

Andrew Stoneking



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS:

office@peoplesuu.org or
(319) 362-9827

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