

# Decorah ♦ Unitarian ♦ Universalist ♦ Fellowship

Sunday, August 30, 2020  
Otter Dreaming, Fellowship Coordinator

Gathering virtually since 2020!

[decorahuu.org](http://decorahuu.org)  
387-6050 or otterdreaming@gmail.com

## Welcome and Announcements

Today's service relates to our monthly theme: Wisdom

Chalice Lighting We gather this hour as people of faith, With joys and sorrows, gifts and needs. We light this beacon of hope, sign of our quest for truth and meaning, in celebration of the life we share together.

...Christine Robinson

Opening Song *We Shall Overcome*

...African American spiritual, performed by Pete Seeger

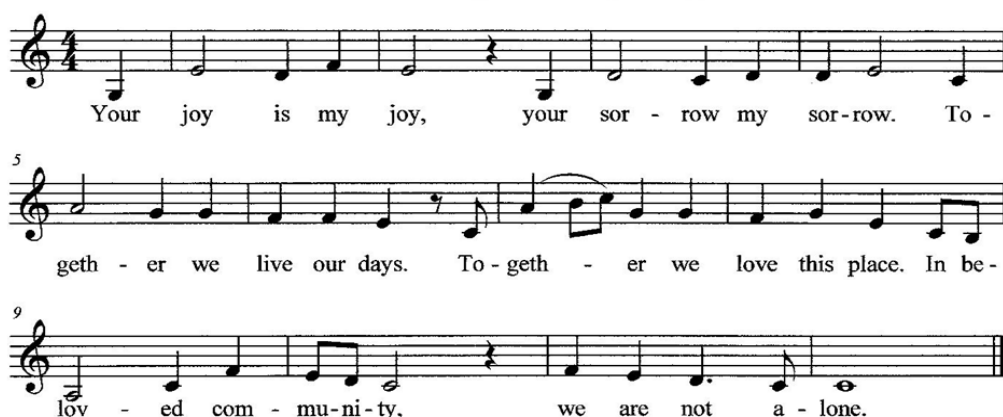
## Land Acknowledgement

Joys and Sorrows Please raise your Zoom hand to share any personal joy or concern with the Fellowship.

## Silence/Response

### Your Joy Is My Joy

Ellen Rockne



Offering/Offertory For all that is our life, we sing our thanks and praise; for all life is a gift that we are called to use to build the common good, and make our own days glad. ...Bruce Findlow/Patrick Rickey

Reading *In This Place (An American Lyric)*

...Amanda Gorman

An original poem written for the inaugural reading of Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith at the Library of Congress.

There's a poem in this place—  
in the footfalls in the halls  
in the quiet beat of the seats.  
It is here, at the curtain of day,  
where America writes a lyric  
you must whisper to say.

There's a poem in this place—  
in the heavy grace,  
the lined face of this noble building,  
collections burned and reborn twice.

There's a poem in Boston's Copley Square  
where protest chants  
tear through the air  
like sheets of rain,  
where love of the many  
swallows hatred of the few.

There's a poem in Charlottesville  
where tiki torches string a ring of flame  
tight round the wrist of night  
where men so white they gleam blue—  
seem like statues  
where men heap that long wax burning  
ever higher  
where Heather Heyer  
blooms forever in a meadow of resistance.

There's a poem in the great sleeping giant  
of Lake Michigan, defiantly raising  
its big blue head to Milwaukee and Chicago—  
a poem begun long ago, blazed into frozen soil,  
strutting upward and aglow.

There's a poem in Florida, in East Texas  
where streets swell into a nexus  
of rivers, cows afloat like mottled buoys in the brown,  
where courage is now so common  
that 23-year-old Jesus Contreras  
rescues people from floodwaters.

There's a poem in Los Angeles  
yawning wide as the Pacific tide  
where a single mother swelters  
in a windowless classroom, teaching  
black and brown students in Watts  
to spell out their thoughts  
so her daughter might write  
this poem for you.

There's a lyric in California  
where thousands of students march for blocks,  
undocumented and unafraid;  
where my friend Rosa finds the power to blossom  
in deadlock, her spirit the bedrock of her community.  
She knows hope is like a stubborn  
ship gripping a dock,  
a truth: that you can't stop a dreamer  
or knock down a dream.

How could this not be her city  
su nación  
our country  
our America,  
our American lyric to write —  
a poem by the people, the poor,  
the Protestant, the Muslim, the Jew,  
the native, the immigrant,  
the black, the brown, the blind, the brave,  
the undocumented and undeterred,  
the woman, the man, the nonbinary,  
the white, the trans,  
the ally to all of the above  
and more?

Tyrants fear the poet.  
Now that we know it  
we can't blow it.  
We owe it  
to show it  
not slow it  
although it  
hurts to sew it  
when the world  
skirts below it.

Hope —  
we must bestow it  
like a wick in the poet  
so it can grow, lit,  
bringing with it  
stories to rewrite —  
the story of a Texas city depleted but not defeated  
a history written that need not be repeated  
a nation composed but not yet completed.

There's a poem in this place —  
a poem in America  
a poet in every American  
who rewrites this nation, who tells  
a story worthy of being told  
on this minnow of an earth  
to breathe hope into a palimpsest of time —  
a poet in every American  
who sees that our poem penned  
doesn't mean our poem's end.

There's a place where this poem dwells —  
it is here, it is now, in the yellow song of dawn's bell  
where we write an American lyric  
we are just beginning to tell.

## The Role of Rural Media in Social Change and Democracy

Julie Berg-Raymond

Extinguishing the Chalice We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

...Elizabeth Selle Jones

Closing Song *Lift Every Voice and Sing*

...Rosamond Johnson / James Weldon Johnson  
performed by Stanford Talisman Alumni Virtual Choir



## Announcements

**Thank you** to our guest speaker this morning: **Julie Berg-Raymond** is arts and lifestyles editor at Decorah Newspapers. She lives in DeSoto, Wisconsin with her husband and their two cats. Thank you as well to today's service leader, **Nancy Barry**, and to Lalie Madriguera and Karen Esterl for service support. ❖ After our gathering, please treat yourself to a little something, and we'll be in touch again soon.

**Share-the-Plate** - Our plate recipient for July-August is *Collective Action for Racial Equity (CARE)*. To donate to the plate recipient, see Decorah UU Giving, below. Or if you prefer to mail a check, please note "Share the Plate" in the memo line, and mail to PO Box 382, Decorah, IA 52101.

### **Upcoming Sundays**

**September 6** - *No service* as Decorah UU continues its every-other-Sunday schedule.

**September 13** - *Ingathering at Twin Springs Park*. We will have an in-person outdoor physically distanced, masked, and very careful ingathering service, assembling for the first time in 25 weeks! (Please note we will otherwise continue to have virtual services in Zoom.) As ever, the ingathering service will include a water communion. Whether you travel this summer in spirit or in body, bring a sample of water from a place that is special to you: a beach, a spring, a kitchen sink. We'll combine our waters and tell our stories. Logistical details will be shared as we get closer to the date. Service leader to be determined.

**Save your treasures for the UU Auction** - If you're cleaning out your garage, set aside (and photograph) your special treasures for the UU Auction coming later this year. Each year we auction off our talents, services, homegrown vegetables, homemade goods, arts, crafts, and closet treasures to raise funds for our UU congregation and for our Low Income Heating Assistance Program. This year's auction will be online. For questions, contact carolyn@corbingroup.biz or littleredkayak@gmail.com.

**Decorah UU Board of Trustees** - The next meeting of the Board is Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Board members for 2020-2021 are Matthew Alexander (chair), Beth Wahlberg (treasurer), Maggie Hayden, Julie Ohde and Lynn Pleggenkuhle.

**IUUWAN Fall Conference** - The keynote speaker for the Iowa UU Witness and Advocacy Network's fall conference on Sunday, September 13, will be Damonte Stogner, ACLU Iowa's Community Relations Associate. All Iowa UUs are invited to the Zoom conference that starts at 1:30 pm and ends at 3 pm. The theme of the conference and the topic of Mr. Stogner's presentation is Getting out the Vote. In addition to the keynote, IUUWAN board members will introduce themselves, representatives from each congregation in Iowa will give a short update of their work in social justice, and breakout chat rooms will be available. A link to the conference will be sent out closer to the date.

**Decorah UU Support** - As we continue to find our way through this challenging time, please remember: **if you need help**, let Otter know via phone 563-387-6050 or email otterdreaming@gmail.com. We'll all need support of one kind or another during this time. Please don't hesitate to ask.

**Decorah UU Circles** - We are practicing physical distancing to stay safe in these times, but that doesn't mean we must be disconnected socially. Check in with folks in your Circle or others as well, and know that together we care for our UU family and friends. Contact Sue Otte if you have questions or comments: sueotte@gmail.com or 563-419-5396.

**Decorah UU Service Archive** - Did you miss a service we conducted by Zoom? Or did you attend but would like to watch it again? You can! Go to [Decorah UU](#). There are two links to our new YouTube channel: a small YouTube icon in the upper right and a button in the middle that says "Watch past services on YouTube." Once on the YouTube channel page, you can choose the service you want to watch. We will try to post the link within one week of each service. Tip: If you want to see the bulletin or other information about the service, you can click on the SERVICE ARCHIVE button on the homepage. From there you can click on a service and then the "read more" link.

**Decorah UU Giving** - Decorah UU has set up online payment primarily for donations you might otherwise make in person at fellowship. Go to our [Decorah UU](#) homepage and click on the "Give Online" button, which will take you to the Giving page. There, you'll find the "Donate" button which will send your payment through PayPal. You do NOT need a PayPal account. You'll be asked to choose whether your donation is for **Share-the-Plate** or for **Decorah UU**. You can only choose one, so if you want to donate to both, you will have to repeat the process. You can use a debit or credit card. Below the "Donate" button on the Giving page, you may also consider two options for recurring donations. **Please note:** We deeply appreciate the gracious gifts of our members and friends, whether given on a weekly, monthly, or annual basis. We understand that present circumstances and uncertainty may affect your ability to make a financial commitment to Decorah UU. Know that we value your "gracious gifts" to our fellowship, in whatever form they may be.

**Decorah UU online** - For more information, please visit our website [Decorah UU](#) or our [Facebook](#) page.

**Member Emergency Fund** - Unforeseen troubles come our way from time to time. If you or someone you know in the fellowship could use some help, please let Otter know. We may be able to provide support or short term monetary assistance. Confidentiality will be respected.

**Decorah Community Food Pantry** - With continuing unemployment and underemployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Food Pantry has seen a significant increase in usage. Volunteers and monetary donations are needed to help meet the need. The best way to give money is to write a check to "Decorah Community Food Pantry" and mail it to the Decorah Community Food Pantry, PO Box 26, Decorah, IA 52101 or visit [decorahpantry.org](http://decorahpantry.org). There is a need for diapers, menstrual hygiene products and toiletries. To volunteer, go to [volunteer](#).

**Mail Cheer** - Green Iowa Americorps has made a program for people who feel isolated during the pandemic. To give or receive these friendly letters, call *Green Iowa Americorps* at 563-293-5075, or visit the *Decorah & Winneshiek County Mutual Aid Network*.

