

# Decorah ❖ Unitarian ❖ Universalist ❖ Fellowship

Sunday, January 31, 2021  
Otter Dreaming, Fellowship Coordinator

Gathering virtually since 2020!

[decorahuu.org](http://decorahuu.org)  
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## Welcome and Announcements

Today's service brings meaning to our UU Principle #7 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

### Chalice Lighting We light this chalice:

"...to abet creation and to witness to it,  
to notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature  
so that creation need not play to an empty house."

...Annie Dillard, adapted

### Opening Words

...Karen Esterl

### Opening Song *Get Out and Plant a Tree*

...Shir Soul

based on *Black Horse and the Cherry Tree* by KT Tunstall

Land Acknowledgement As has been our practice, we acknowledge the traditional indigenous inhabitants of the land. In northeast Iowa, we acknowledge this area was home to

- the Ioway (whose traditional name is Baxoje)
- the Sac and Fox (the Fox's traditional name is Meskwaki)
- the Dakota
- and the Ho-Chunk

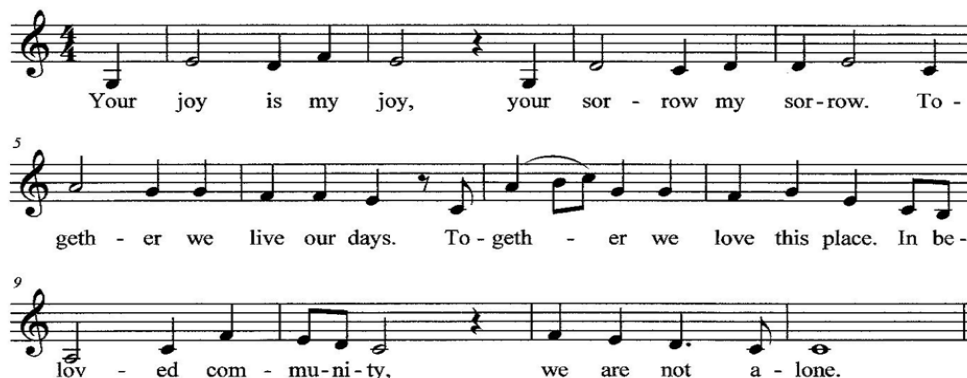
peoples whose relationship to this land continues today. Acknowledgment is a critical public intervention, a necessary step toward honoring Native communities and enacting the much larger project of decolonization and reconciliation. I invite you to take a moment for reflection upon the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that have shaped our presence here today and to adopt an attitude of reverence and gratitude for the ongoing resilience of this place and the people who have called it home.

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



Your joy is my joy, your sor-row my sor-row. To -  
geth - er we live our days. To - geth - er we love this place. In be -  
lov - ed com - mu - ni - ty, we are not a - lone.

Reading Fantasy is a natural human activity. It certainly does not destroy or even insult Reason; and it does not either blunt the appetite for, or obscure the perception of, scientific verity. On the contrary. The keener and the clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make. If humans were ever in a state in which they did not want to know or could not perceive truth (facts or evidence), then Fantasy would languish until they were cured. If they ever get into that state (it would not seem at all impossible), Fantasy will perish, and become Morbid Delusion. For creative Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a

slavery to it. So upon logic was founded the nonsense that displays itself in the tales and rhymes of Lewis Carroll. If humans really could not distinguish between frogs and kings, fairy-stories about frog-kings would not have arisen.

Fantasy can, of course, be carried to excess. It can be ill done. It can be put to evil uses. It may even delude the minds out of which it came. But of what human thing in this fallen world is that not true? We have conceived not only of elves, but we have...made false gods out of other materials: our notions, our banners, our monies; even our sciences and our social and economic theories have demanded human sacrifice. *Abusus non tollit usum.*

Fantasy remains a human right: we make in our measure and in our derivative mode, because we are made: and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker. ...J. R. R. Tolkien  
adapted from *On Fairy-Stories*

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

## Imagining the Tree of Life

Madison McClendon

Closing Song *Canticle of the Turning* ...trad. English, arr. Cooney; performed by Cathryn Archer  
My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,  
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn.  
So from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

CHORUS: My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,  
And your mercy shall last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn.  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. CHORUS

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn.  
There are tables spread, every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. CHORUS

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound  
'Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. CHORUS

### Extinguishing the Chalice

Blessed is the dark, in which our dreams stir and are revealed.  
Blessed is the dark of earth, where seeds come to life.  
Blessed are the depths of the ocean where no light shimmers: the womb of all earthly life.

Blessed is the light into which we awake,  
the light that sparkles on the waters:  
that calls the forth from the seed,  
and calls the shadow forth from the tree.

Blessed are we as we move through darkness and through light. ...The Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern



## Announcements

**Thank you** to our presenter today: **Madison McClendon** is a candidate for ordination in the American Baptist Churches, USA, and did his MDiv alongside secular humanist, Jewish, and Muslim friends at the University of Chicago. He brings to our table a keen interest in how imagination and fantasy and "creative visions" can promote sense of purpose and direction and action in a world badly in need of goodwill and positive change. ❖ Thank you also to **Karen Esterl**, service leader, and **Carolyn Corbin**, service support. ❖ After our gathering, please treat yourself to a little something and we'll be in touch soon.

**Share-the-Plate** – Our plate recipient for January-February is *Thunder Rode*, therapeutic riding. 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**

**February 7** - *No service.*

**February 14** - *Rules, Rituals, and Restoration: the Story of Sunday*, with Sue Otte. With roots in the Judaeo/Christian tradition, UUs observe Sundays as a day of gathering, along with many other faith traditions. What does Sunday mean to us today, and how has it changed over the years? As Sue shares some history and personal reflections, she invites your perspectives as well. Karen Esterl, service support.

**February 21** - *No service.*

**Invite a friend to UU Services** - It's easier now than ever to attend a Decorah UU service because we are on Zoom! Friends and family can join you on zoom with their video off and watch the services like television. Guests can also join services through chat and video if they wish! We meet every other Sunday. To receive our weekly electronic newsletter as well as invitations to services, sign up via our website, [decorahuu.org](http://decorahuu.org), clicking on the **Contact Us** link. If someone does not want to sign up for email but does want to attend a live service, they can do so directly from our website, [decorahuu.org](http://decorahuu.org), clicking on **Zoom Details for Sunday Services** under **Recent News**.

**Send us your photos!** - Would you please send us a photo of yourself and/or your clan? You can take a selfie, or have a friend in your bubble photograph you doing something interesting, or send an older photo. We want to share your photos in upcoming services. You can send photos directly to [carolyn@corbingroup.biz](mailto:carolyn@corbingroup.biz).

**Decorah UU Board of Trustees** – The next meeting of the Board is Tuesday, February 2, 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.

**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](mailto:otterdreaming@gmail.com). We'll all need support of one kind or another during this time. Please don't hesitate to ask.

**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](http://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** - 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 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. Donations can also be mailed to PO Box 382, Decorah, IA 52101.

**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](mailto:sueotte@gmail.com), or 563-419-5396.

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

**Decorah Community Food Pantry** - In 2020, the Decorah Community Food Pantry hosted 4,964 client visits, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. These visits allowed the pantry to provide food for 14,062 children and adults. This accomplishment was made possible through the dedication of many people and organizations including local congregations and their members. At this time donations of paper towels would be welcome. For further information or to donate, see the website [decorahpantry.org](http://decorahpantry.org).

**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*.

