



# Coming Home

The Newsletter of the Cache Valley Unitarian Universalists

JULY 2021 | VOLUME 27 | ISSUE 7

## OUR MISSION

CVUU strives to be a caring religious community that encourages and supports the sharing of ideas and experiences of all who travel rich and varied spiritual paths.

## Sunday Online Services

Tune in through Zoom each Sunday at 10:00 AM: <https://zoom.us/j/94154808522>

July  
4

### ***Introduction to Grief***

presented by Sondra Scott

July  
11

### ***Group Discussion on Grief***

presenter TBA

July  
18

### ***Friendship***

presented by Lorien Belton

July  
25

### ***The Work that Reconnects***

presented by Emerson James

## Hospitality and Homecoming

*photo from Pexels*

I entered the Library for Religion and Science, a narrow room no more than eight feet wide, on the second floor of the Melhorn Science Building on McPherson College's campus. As I walk in I reach up to flip on the light switch and down to flip on the eclectic tea kettle. Although the space is already confined, I close the door so that I can access the cupboard behind it that contains Lipton black tea and mugs. I grab two, one for me and one for Jonathan, my advisor, who will be coming soon. After the tea kettle switch clicks up and turns blue, I pour the hot water into the mugs and sit down at the narrow lab table that occupies most of the room.



I am sitting across from the floor to ceiling bookshelves that occupy the rest of the space. I scan the titles of the collection that Jonathan has curated and note just how many of them I have read over the four years of a weekly seminar course I maintained with Jonathan. It seemed informal then, but now I'd say the reading and conversation that occurred from week-to-week was the backbone to my undergraduate study in Environmental Stewardship: the backbone to the life that I live now.

A central thread to what I read was the writing of Wendell Berry and Wes Jackson. In their decades long conversation with each other, they explore what it means to be a good steward to the land; the role of place-based and local economies in living sustainably; and the need to educate young people not just in home economics, but also in homecoming.

Because I had little desire to return to the place I was raised, I ended up spending the last decade of my life dedicated to homecoming's sister: homemaking. At first I thought that this homemaking applied strictly to the household I developed, but I've since realized the amount of homemaking I have engaged in has extended far beyond this.

I have come to feel that, if we are lucky, we have several types of homes: the home of our body; the home of the physical structure that shelters us; the home found in landscapes and places; and the home offered when seen and welcomed fully into the hearts of others. For me, I must tend and return to all of these homes to feel healthy and whole.

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As I write this, I am at home in Winona, Minnesota. Before a week ago, I'd never been to Winona, but it is home because one of my dear hearts, michelle, lives here. After the year plus spent sheltering in place--where I, like so many, was asked to settle into the home of my body, was asked to deepen my relationship with landscape--coming to visit michelle is just one stop on a larger pilgrimage I am on to return to several of my homes in people that have become geographically dispersed overtime.



*photo from Pexels*

When I first got to Winona, I felt such warmth, welcome, the goodness one expects to feel when returning home. I also felt michelle's tremendous hospitality. All of this was generous and giving so I couldn't figure out why I also felt sad. In coming back together with michelle, I felt a bit like I did the week before when I was back in Denver, the place I grew up.

When in Colorado, I recognize landmarks and street names, know the major roads even if I've lost some of the finer points of navigation, and have a lot of memories. It is familiar, but, because there are long periods of time when I am absent, the change of the place registers more clearly. It is in the past that Colorado and I are familiar. In the present there is the distance that comes when we do not witness the day-to-day. What I remember and expect about Colorado isn't exactly as it is now.

This is what I found when I first connected with michelle: much was recognizable in them and between us, but the change was clear. What I remember and expect about them and how we relate together isn't exactly as it is now. To receive hospitality made me realize I was in many ways a stranger. While the fact of this unknowing brought sadness, there has also been the gift of meeting michelle with a beginner's mind, showing up with a heightened attention to get to know them and their life anew. This experience feels like just one example of what many of us might be experiencing: after all this time we have each spent sheltered--inside ourselves, our houses, our places, our spirits--that in more ways than we probably realize, we have all become strangers to each other. We have the possibility to show up with curiosity and meet each other and our world with new eyes. For our health and wholeness, we must.

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When I think now about those weekly seminars with Jonathan, how the education I received in homemaking and homecoming has shaped my life, what I really learned about was what it means to make a commitment to a place, person or course of study. I learned the deepening of relationship that can occur--despite the inevitable leaving, distance and change that will happen--if we return again and again and attend over time.

In an interview between Wendell Berry and Wes Jackson, Wendell Berry said that it is, "once the commitment is made [that] you're eligible for certain rewards. I don't think that they'll be the ones you foresee, I don't think they'll come on a schedule prescribed by you, but I do think that there will be rewards." He recognized that, "Places have limits. Human relationships have limits. When you hit the limit, you think, 'This is it, I'll have to try for something else now.' But you keep on. And then, somehow, the situation opens up and you begin to see more than you saw before."

I think this is what our present moment is calling for; it is asking us to reconnect, return and prioritize our relationship with our homes of self, others, and earth even though in doing so, some sadness and discomfort might arise because these relations aren't exactly as we thought or remembered them to be. Only by keeping on, can we express our deepest care. The rewards will come.

–Emerson James

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## Barbara Ann Trojan

*photo from Facebook*

CVUU is sad to report that our friend Barbara (Bobbie) Trojan died in June, 2021 in Arizona. Bobbie Trojan was a friend of CVUU, a generous and kind person, and an avid gardener. She and her husband, Frank Wyse, were summer citizens and they enriched our church family during their many summers in our community. Bobbie and Frank also loved to garden and to beautify the world. They would often work in our CVUU garden, weeding, planting and caretaking, in order to keep our flower beds in great shape. Bobbie had so much energy one summer that she also transformed the large perennial beds in front of the USU credit union from an unruly scene into a well tended and colorful flower bed. We miss you already and appreciate all that you did for us.



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## A Memorial for Sandy

Helen Lant recently sent the following message to Leslie, and when asked, she said it would be wonderful to share with the congregation.



*photo by Susanne Janecke, December 2019*

In a few weeks we're traveling to our hometown in Illinois to have a memorial for Sandy with old friends, on her birthday, July 11th. I know Logan friends won't be there, but just wanted to pass along how grateful I am for all of the help and support given to us last year, from bringing food to singing to my mom. We didn't know how to hold ourselves up during those weeks, and couldn't have done it without your CVUU community.

Helen also said it would be sweet if anyone wanted to light a candle for Sandy and/or send prayers on that day, July 11th. Our hearts are with the Lant family. Our lives were changed by Sandy's inspirational life and we miss her so much.



## Events & News

July  
15

**CVUU Board Meeting:** All are welcome to attend and give input.

**Contact info:** Anne Hedrich at [president@cvuu.org](mailto:president@cvuu.org)

Thursday, July 15, 5:30–7:00pm online through Zoom

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## Highlights from the Last Board Meeting

- We discussed the budget and strategic plan to present at the upcoming annual congregational meeting.
- We wrote a survey to assess employees' and the congregation's comfort levels for reopening hybrid online/in-person services.
- We expressed condolences for our next door neighbor, Mr. Friedli, who passed away this past week.

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## Annual Meeting

Did you miss our annual congregation meeting on June 20? Never fear, you can still [view the recording here](#) to get an overview of all the wonderful things that CVUU has accomplished in the past year, as well as a review of our strategic plan and budget for the upcoming year. A huge thanks to Anne, Lorien, and Emerson for their work in preparing for the meeting!



*screenshot from the annual meeting*

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## Projects Completed!

Two major projects were accomplished over the winter: restraining the retaining wall between our yard and the house to the west, and some extensive tree trimming. The wall was threatening to collapse into Mr. Friedli's yard. A trench was dug to attach wires to the wall to bring it back into alignment and stabilize it. The tree trimming was conducted to prevent damage to our neighbor's house (on the west) and to open up the east driveway which was affected by many low hanging limbs that created a problem of leaves filling the stairwell.

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## Prolific Plants

CVUU newsletter (proposed submission) June 18, 2021

The CVUU spider plant in the book room has been prolific in producing offspring during the pandemic. Eleven offspring are potted and ready for adoption on the back porch. Help yourself! There are numerous plant pots (most plastic) just inside the east gate to the backyard. Please

help yourself to any pots you can use.

Also during the pandemic, the yucca located in the dining room next to the refrigerator grew so much it threatened to burst through the ceiling. Appropriate action was taken and the top half will be rooted and has found a new home.

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## Xeriscaping the Parking Strip



Due to the extreme drought that has no end in sight all Utahns are being encouraged to cut back on outdoor watering. According to USU Extension trees should be the highest priority for outdoor watering, followed by shrubs, perennials, annuals, and, last of all, grass. A recent USU Extension webinar made the point that grass and trees need dramatically different watering regimens. Trees need less frequent but deeper watering. Property owners are encouraged to eliminate grass in parking strips and replace them with drought-tolerant plants.

A proposal has been made to install drip irrigation around the 5 trees in our parking strips and to start eliminating the parking strip grass. Doing so would reduce our water bill, require less fossil fuels to mow this grass, and reduce the chemicals used to fight weeds (and reduce our yard care costs). We've had great success with eliminating grass adjacent to the east driveway and replacing with drought-tolerant plants. While the xeriscaping requires weeding in the early years, the proposal is to plant bushy shrubs like Russian Sage and Rabbitbrush in the park strip. These bushes will outcompete and cover up weeds. If the morning glory shows through... so be it. We can start the process of eliminating the grass in the park strip by not watering the park strips this summer once drips are installed around the trees. We can tackle this project one park strip at a time if the budget dictates.

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## Nathan Friedli

Our neighbor on the west, Nathan Friedli, died at the age of 91 in June. A sympathy card was sent from the congregation to Mr. Friedli's family.

## In Our Thoughts



- ◇ Frank Wyse, the Lant family, Nathan Friedli's family, and all those mourning the loss of loved ones
- ◇ Friends, members, and their families struggling with physical or mental illness and other life struggles

*"We light this chalice for the warmth of love, the light of wisdom, and the energy of action."*

## Info & Contacts

[Board of Trustees](#)  
[Staff](#)  
[Action Teams](#)

[CVUU Calendar](#)



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