

# St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship

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**February 2024**      **PRESENTERS PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN PERSON.**

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 4: Cessation from Suffering. What is that? – Myo-O Habermas Scher**

The Buddha's project was to both understand suffering **and** to understand and embody surcease from suffering. Isn't that what we all want, that we could be free from suffering, that our loved ones could be free from suffering, and that everyone, everywhere could be free in that way? So what is it to be free from suffering? How do we partake of that; how do we know it? And what does it look like when we live it?

**SUNDAY SERVICES  
WILL BE  
MULTIPLATFORM.**

**YOU MAY USE ZOOM  
OR ATTEND IN  
PERSON.**

Visit [www.uufstcloud.org](http://www.uufstcloud.org) for  
information to join on Zoom.

*Children's Activity: Bright Bulb Kidz Korner.*

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 11: "Love is the power that holds us together"** (title taken from proposed UU Values)

Our musicians host this Valentine program of songs and stories. You are invited to contribute by sharing poems, songs, readings – or anything else that might fit – for Valentine's Day. Contact Greg Erickson by February 4, with your ideas or offers for participation. If you have a song to sing but need (simple) backing, the UUF musicians might be able to help, so don't be bashful! Everyone is invited to join us and enjoy a morning focused on love, in all its many forms.

*Children's Program (CRE): This Is What Democracy Looks Like, Part 1  
with leaders Lisa Bershok and Judith Siminoe.*

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 18: Douglas Wood's Wild Path**

Douglas Wood, award-winning local author, artist, musician, naturalist and wilderness guide, will share thoughts and readings from his recently published book, *A Wild Path*, on the subjects of wilderness therapy, the meaning of beauty, and expeditions through 'the Lonely Land.' He will also sing for us accompanied on his guitar and mandolin.

*This program is for all ages.*

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 25: The Road Not Taken: Abraham Lincoln and the Peaceful Extinction of Slavery – James Read**

Abraham Lincoln is known to history as the president who abolished slavery in a deadly Civil War. But Lincoln never wanted such a war. James Read, drawing from his 2023 book *Sovereign of a Free People: Abraham Lincoln, Majority Rule, and Slavery*, will describe Lincoln's original hope that slavery could be abolished

peacefully and democratically. Going beyond the book, Read will also discuss Lincoln's religious interpretation of the Civil War and its outcome.

*Children's Program (CRE): This Is What Democracy Looks Like, Part 2*  
with leader Mary Ness.

**To contribute to SCUUF:**  
Send a check to SCUUF  
PO Box 805,  
St. Cloud, MN 56302, or  
Make a contribution by debit/credit  
card or PayPal by clicking on this link:  
<https://tinyurl.com/Donate-SCUUF>

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## President's Corner

Beloveds,

I look forward to the Valentine's Day Program on our "Waffle Sunday." This is just an example of one of the activities which is a part of becoming a Beloved Community. The total Fellowship's life is the sum of everything it says, everything it does, and everything it doesn't do. Together, these events and activities and services and friendships show us what this religious community is all about. With a diversity of choices, we are more likely to be a vital community.

Every person and activity in the Fellowship congregation has the potential to contribute to individual faith development and congregational growth.

There are celebratory events that are also very important to the development of our congregation. These include a variety of rituals marking life-transitions and journeys, such as weddings, child dedications, welcoming new members, and memorials.

To encourage growth, it is essential to have young families join our religious community. Then having classes, activities, and participation in our services encourage engagement by the children. Examples in the service would include lighting the chalice and having Time for Children/All Ages.

I know I enjoyed and learned from the book *My Daddy* about Martin Luther King, Jr, by his son Martin Luther King III written from a 10-year-olds point of view. Experiences in religious education often lead to opportunities for rich rewards and a lifelong commitment in Unitarian Universalism.

I really appreciate everything that each of you do!

Together we get so much more done and build connections in the process.

It's a win-win for all of us on the SCUUF Team!

With Valentine's Day around the corner, I found this piece by Maureen Killoran on the UU Worship Web that I would like to share with you:

“Love is the aspiration, the spirit that moves and inspires this faith we share. Rightly understood, love can nurture our spirits and transform the world. May you honor and embody the power and the blessing of the love we need, the love we give, the love we are challenged always to remember and share.”

Thanks!

Pam

### **Meditation at the Fellowship on February 3rd**

Meditation Group—The meditation group will meet on Saturday, February 3rd, at 10:30 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Our theme will be uncertainty, fear, and equanimity. The group will be led by Helen Manion.

### **SCUUF Book Discussion Group on February 10th:**

Do you know the difference between a National Monument and a National Park? This is one fact learned by reading *This Contested Land: The Storied Past and Uncertain Future of America's National Monuments* by McKensie Long. We will compare notes on this book at 10 a.m. on Saturday February 10 in the sanctuary of the UU Fellowship. We haven't set a date yet for our discussion of the Heaven and Earth Grocery Store by James McBride, though it will probably be about the second week of April. The next selection will be *A Future We Can Love: How We Can Reverse the Climate Crisis with the Power of Our Hearts and Minds* book written by Stephanie Higgs and Susan Bauer Wu. You can always send nominations to me.

Please let me know if you would like to be added or removed from the list to whom I send messages about the book discussions.

### **Waffle Sunday on February 11th**

On Feb. 11 we will have our 2nd annual waffle breakfast after the service. If you would like to volunteer to make waffles or donate a waffle iron for someone else to use, let Susan Dunbar know. We will also have strawberries, cream, and syrup. All comments or questions should go to Susan. Please contact Susan ASAP. The usual coffee and tea will also make an appearance.

### **In the Spirit of Animal Medicine workshop on February 17th**

Animals help awaken our souls to full expression, they teach us about relationships, they reveal our inmost wild selves and connect us with the Earth.

Do you want to discover the healing personal empowerment and absolute joy of partnering with these magnificent aspects of source?

Join us as we learn how to discover and connect with animal archetypes, birth totems, power animals, allies and more. Bring the Child in you who Remembers.

Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, from 2:00 to about 3:30 P.M. at the Fellowship building. Facilitated by Erin H. and Jane B. Love Gift appreciated.

### **Full Moon Drumming on February 24th**

Please join us at the Fellowship building on **Saturday, February 24th at 6:30 P.M.** on this Full Moon night as we drum in community with others throughout the world. Bring a drum or rattle if you have one. There will be some drums and rattles to share. A love gift is appreciated. Facilitated by Erin Hughes and Jane Barth.

## **Treasurer's Notes**

By Ralph Carr

We thank all of you who are making periodic donations or pledge payments for this fiscal year which ends June 30, 2024. In January I provided letters, via email, to those who made financial contributions to the Fellowship during 2023 since you may need that documentation for your 2023 tax return. Please contact me if you did not receive a letter and think that you should have.

Your Budget and Finance Committee has scheduled our first pledge drive in five years to take place from March 17 through April 7. This will be a time for you to say how you plan to support the Fellowship with your financial gifts during the next fiscal year. This year's theme is "Supporting Our Values". Look for details in future newsletters.

## **Communications Report**

by Judy Foster

We continue to work on keeping our website up to date and finding a way to make service recordings available. Fortunately, Jane Ellison has agreed to update our Directory in the summer when she has more time. Depending on how it goes, she may be willing to continue in that role. We continue to send out press releases on services that the Program Committee recommends. We also post on Facebook three times a week. In addition, we need to set up an Instagram account. From new people, it would help us to know how you found out about us: friend or acquaintance who attends, news story, Facebook, other? Please let me know.

## **MUUSJA Report**

by Judy Foster

The MN UU Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) is a member of the Coalition of UU State Action Networks (<https://cuusan.org/>) that seek to organize for justice. This is my last year on the MUUSJA Board, and it would be great if someone else would volunteer to represent us in that role. Meanwhile, we are currently struggling with a budget deficit and the need to fill vacancies on the Board. Thus, our main focus is fundraising and recruiting more Board members. If you can help with a donation, please see <https://www.muusja.org/>. If you are willing to serve on the Board or can recommend someone, please let me know.

## **Article II and General Assembly**

by Judy Foster

If you missed the program on Article II please see <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/final-proposed-revision-article-ii>. The Article II Revision will be up for a final vote at the national all virtual UUA General Assembly June 20 -23. We need two delegates to represent us and vote for us on this important issue. Please let the Board know if you can serve.

## **Please note: Emergency Notification Plan**

When it is necessary to cancel a Sunday Service due to inclement weather or other unsafe conditions, we will switch to a Zoom meeting for all and notify members as follows:

1. Send a message to everyone on the email distribution list, and when possible, post on the Fellowship website [www.uufstcloud.org](http://www.uufstcloud.org) and Facebook page.

2. Call individual members who have requested to be contacted by phone. This option is for members who don't have ready access to email or the internet. (Let Judy Foster know if you need a phone call.) When in doubt about the weather or the event, members should check for an email and/or check the website where the Zoom link can be found.

## **Building Bridges**

By Charlotte Stephens

The Greater St Cloud Faith Leaders group, where I represent our Fellowship, continues to meet monthly to work together to tear down walls and build communities of acceptance and peace. Recent activities include:

- Sponsoring the World Religion Day celebration that took place Saturday, January 20, at the St Cloud library. The group planned this event along with individuals representing various faith traditions. Pam Peterson represented our Fellowship on the planning team. Seven members of the Fellowship attended the event whose theme was "Share the Joy," with a focus on the Golden Rule.
- Issuing a statement speaking out against antisemitism and Islamophobia and calling for solidarity and peace in our community. The statement is posted on the Faith Leaders' website: <https://faithleaders.us/> or can be seen directly at this link: <https://faithleaders.us/page9.html> It ends with these words: We choose compassion over division, understanding over fear, and love over hate. Only by standing together, united in our common humanity, can we uphold a community and build a world where all people can live in peace and security, free from prejudice and violence.

## **The Program Committee: Inspiration for Challenging Times**

On February 18 and February 25, the program presenters will bring copies of their recently published books so that you can purchase one if you wish.

More than halfway through our program year, the Program Committee thanks members who help present our Sunday Services. That includes those who take care of technology and music every week as well as committees, the board, and individuals who offer ideas or help to present a particular program. We appreciate all of you, and we welcome others to become involved in future programs by contacting Wendy Schoen.

When planning Sunday Services, the Program Committee arranges for guest ministers, community presenters, and SCUUF members to provide interesting and inspiring Sunday Services that involve one or more of the following broad topics and recurring themes:

- Personal growth, spiritual growth, spiritual journeys of members
- Topics related to the UU Principles and our vision, mission, and covenant
- Topics related to the seasons or holidays such as Thanksgiving, Winter Solstice, Martin Luther King, Earth Day
- Interactive discussion on specific topics
- Music and other creative expression including poetry
- Social justice and environmental concerns

- Multigenerational programs
- Other religions and cultures

## **Nominating Committee:**

Please let Nominating Committee members know about the interest you may have to support the work our Fellowship. Current openings include: Membership Committee, Buildings & Grounds, Social Justice Committee, Budget & Finance, Tech Team, Program Committee, Choir and our Fellowship Board (beginning July 2024). Thanks for considering! We are united in greatness.

Committee Members: Hanni Epp, Louise Goetz, Carol Hamilton, John Peck and Linda Peck

## **Children’s Religions Education (CRE) Update:**

We’re moving our CRE programs for February and March to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month to accommodate the scheduling needs of one of our families. We’ll return to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month for April and May. So, we’ll be meeting FEB 11 & 25, and MAR 10 & 24, and then back to APR 7 & 21 and MAY 5 & 19. We’ll end our ‘Fellowship Year’ with a Memorial Weekend Sunday picnic at the Peck’s Farm, a total delight.

February’s offerings of “THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE”, PARTS 1 and 2, will be dynamic discussions led by Fellowship friends with social work, law and teaching expertise.

The Bright Bulb Kidz Korner has been initiated and is open for quiet activities during non-CRE program Sundays, Feb 4 & 18. Wordsearches, Etch-a-sketches, books, tic-tac-toe, coloring supplies and Uno await.

## **Calendar Reminders**

**AVOID ZOOM CONFLICTS:** We encourage you to use the Zoom license for video conferencing, but please follow the standard reservation process to ensure the Zoom “meeting room” (license) is available at the time you would like to make use of it and to allow others to see planned meetings on the calendar. Please check the online calendar on our website for scheduled in-person and Zoom meetings at [www.uufstcloud.org/calendar](http://www.uufstcloud.org/calendar). A meeting event/room reservation button to submit a form for reservation requests can be found below the calendar on the website. This same button can be used to schedule in-person and Zoom meetings.

*Tom Hergert has agreed to be the contact for the Zoom license and will provide a tutorial for anyone needing to learn how to host a Zoom meeting.*

## **End of Life Options**

From the Caring Committee

As a follow-up to the October Sunday Service where Rev. Harlan Limpert’s talk was titled “Taking Control of End-of-Life Decisions,” our Caring Committee is considering offering an opportunity for interested people to have further discussion about this topic. That could include how it relates to you personally and/or how we can support legislation for Minnesota to offer options similar to other states. A discussion time will be scheduled if

there's interest. Contact Charlotte Stephens if you might want to participate. Recently Unity Church Unitarian in St Paul offered training for UUs throughout Minnesota to join in the 2024 effort to pass legislation that gives Minnesotans a choice about death with dignity. Contact Charlotte if you want to be involved in efforts to advance the legislation.

### **The Caring Committee**

The Caring Committee has been formed for the times in each of our lives when we need help from another person. The members of the Caring Committee are available to help members and friends of the St. Cloud UU Fellowship in a variety of ways.

Feel free to contact any committee member:

Linda Saupe (chairperson), Marge Bates, Hanni Epp, Chris Smith,  
Charlotte Stephens, and Ron Syme.

For anyone with emergency needs, a wide range of services is available from agencies and organizations in the community. These can be accessed by calling 211 (or 800-543-7709).

**WELCOMING CONGREGATION:** We are a welcoming congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith. We value the full range of human diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, affectional/sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, and ability.