

St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship



December 2023 **PRESENTERS PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN PERSON.**

10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 3: What does Earth-based Spirituality mean to us? – Jane Barth and Erin Hughes

Earth based Spirituality recognizes the Sacred in the Natural world. It is individual, self-directed, and without hierarchy. The Medicine Wheel, Circles, Animal and Plant teachings, and Seasonal observances help us to connect to the Interdependent Web. Fellowship members Jane and Erin have been living and sharing this Spirituality for over 30 years.

**SUNDAY SERVICES
WILL BE
MULTIPLATFORM.**

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

Visit www.uufstcloud.org for
information to join on Zoom.

***Children's Program (CRE): What I Love About Islam.**
Neighbor, Friend, and Muslim Community Leader, Hassan Yussuf,
leads this exploration.*

10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 10: Celebrating the Season Together

Using music, poetry, and reflections, we will sample some of the ways that religions and cultures celebrate this season of darkness and hope. Our Musicians and Program Committee offer this multigenerational program of celebration. Call Charlotte to offer a song or reading.

***Children's Activity (CRE):**
The newly established "CRE Corner" in the Sanctuary is stocked with quiet games, puzzles,
word searches, and activities for the youngsters to enjoy during the service.
You're all invited to check it out and make suggestions for what else belongs there.*

10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 17: Celebrating our Fellowship Community

This Sunday we celebrate our Fellowship Community by welcoming new members and honoring all members past and present. Our Membership and Program Committees offer this program before our holiday break.

***Children's Program (CRE): Bullying**
What forms does it take? Ever happened to you?
What are some ways to respond to it?*

Dec 24: No service

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](https://tinyurl.com/Donate-SCUUF)

10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 31: Auld Lang Syne: The Song That Nobody Knows – Bill Vossler

On December 31 people gather to celebrate the end of the year and at midnight voices sing "Should old acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind ..." Poet Robert Burns' 18th-century words, set to an older tune, are recognized the world over. Additional verses may be a mystery to most people, but the greater mystery is how did this Scottish folk song become associated with New Year's celebrations worldwide? At the end Bill will lead the group in singing a verse of this plaintive and beautiful song.

Children's Activity (CRE): The "CRE Corner" in the Sanctuary is stocked with quiet games, puzzles, word searches, and activities for the youngsters to enjoy during the service. You're all invited to check it out and make suggestions for what else belongs there.

President's Corner

Beloveds

December has come so quickly my head is spinning. Skip was in the hospital for over 2 weeks, so our sense of time has become confused. He is now at home and getting very much on the right track. I think I'm just going to celebrate a low key Christmas.

Instead, I plan to put more focus on Winter Solstice, a time for slowing down, reflecting, and looking inward. This year Winter Solstice, the longest night and the shortest day in the northern hemisphere, is Thursday, December 21, at 9:27 p.m. The longest night leads to the return of the sun. In Latin, Solstice means "the sun standing still."

Themes for Winter Solstice can include light amid darkness and the cycle of life. I see this as a time of hope and new beginnings. This is the wish I send to each of you during the holiday season.

As we celebrate the winter holidays, it is a wonderful opportunity for Unitarian Universalists to express their commitment to our Sixth Principle: We covenant to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Winter Solstice holds the promise that winter will come to an end. It is at this time that we can begin to plan ahead for the upcoming year as we contemplate the past year and choose to plant new seeds for our future. This is where we focus our attention and energy. This is the hope and dream of the Yule, to begin again in joy and peace. May it be so. Pam

In closing, I would like to share this poem by David Breeden titled THE SOLSTICE TEACHES US:

The Solstices teach us that darkness comes, that darkness goes.

The Solstices teach us that light comes, that light goes.

The Solstices teach us calmly, silently, to be calm, silent. Learning.

The Solstices teach us as we circle the sun that everything flies.

The Solstices teach us to remember the dark, to remember the light,

To remember time. The seasons. And love as we circle the sun.

Children's Religious Education adjustments

By Louise Goetz

We're making some adjustments to our Children's Religious Education program based on parent feedback. On the first and third Sundays of each month from December to May, a Children's Religious Education (CRE) experience, based on UU Principles, will be offered for children and youth ages 5 – 16. Topics for the year will include: Democracy for Dinosaurs, Insects, A Creative Expression of Thankfulness, Bullying, Beekeeping, Meditation, Islam, and Racism.

A "CRE Corner" in the Sanctuary will have quiet games and activities for children to enjoy during the other Sundays of the month. A "Time for Children" story time is offered early in the service, and a nursery is available for infants and toddlers.

I'd love to include you and your talents in our CRE program. Please let me know of your interest. Thank you.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday Service January 14: Provide your input to enhance the conversation.

By Louise Goetz

Preparations are underway for the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. service to be held on January 14. To keep the conversation and action of racial justice and unity ongoing, relevant, and enduring, we are reaching out to the Fellowship for your input. Where and when in your life experiences have you personally experienced and/or witnessed, participated in, or maybe shied away from engaging with others in the work that Dr. King and those before, with, and after him have set forth? Perhaps you have a story, anecdote, or experience you'd be willing to share with us all during the service.

Let a Board member know of your interest and be ready and willing to briefly share with us all on January 14. Thank you.

Doug Polley 1945 – 2023

From the Caring Committee

Long time SCUUF member Doug Polley was admitted to St. Cloud Hospital on November 8 and died there on November 17 from complications of Covid. His daughter Meegan Ward and her husband were with him. Doug was an active member of the Fellowship for many years, serving multiple years as Treasurer and as chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. He was also a member of the Caring Committee in recent years. For several years Doug organized and facilitated the popular UU Covenant Groups within our Fellowship. Because of his leadership, these groups flourished and developed deeper connections between our members.

At our Sunday Service on November 19, Doug was described as "kind, gentle, and deeply insightful" and also as "honest and open." He will be missed.

Meegan posted his obituary on the Williams Dingman Funeral Home website <https://www.williamsdingmann.com/obituaries/Douglas-E-Polley?obId=29945265#/>. She is not planning a local memorial service. Contact Linda Saupe by December 10 if you want to be involved in considering how the Fellowship might memorialize him. Also, contact Linda if you want Meegan's address.

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).

Meditation at the Fellowship on December 9

Our Meditation group will meet on Saturday, December 9 at 10:30 am at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. All are welcome to come and to stay for tea and visiting afterwards.

Contact Helen Manion if you have any questions.

SCUUF book club to meet December 16

Please join the SCUUF book discussion group on Saturday December 16, 10 am, in the Fellowship sanctuary to talk about *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick.

Individuals in the book are presented with a box containing a string and if they look they will know the length of their life. Would you look? We learn how this knowledge affects eight individuals. The book has been described as life-affirming and uplifting.

Gather to honor the winter Solstice on December 21 at 7:00 pm

We will gather this night of the Winter Solstice to honor our Guardians, especially those of the Natural world, in teaching, story, and ritual.

We will join in darkness together to welcome back the light.

We'll sit in the North of the Medicine Wheel with its gifts of Wisdom and Discernment.

Please join us for a gentle time together at the Fellowship on this very special night.

Facilitated by Erin Hughes and Jane Barth. A love offering is appreciated

Full Moon Drumming

Please join us at the Fellowship building on **Tuesday, December 26 at 6:30 pm** on this Full Moon night as we drum in community with others throughout the world. Bring a drum if you have one. There will be some drums and rattles to share. A love offering is appreciated. Facilitated by Erin Hughes and Jane Barth.

Thanks for your MUUSJA support

By Judy Foster

Thanks to those who signed up as MUUSJA sustainers and/or contributed via Give to the Max. Please add to your calendar the MUUSJA Annual Meeting at 6:30 pm, Thursday, Dec. 7, via Zoom. Let Judy Foster know if you need the registration link.

8th Principle/Article II update

As of the Nov. 8 meeting of the 8th Principle Learning Community, there were 279 adoptions of the 8th Principle, including SCUUF.

8th Principle:

We covenant to affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

In addition, we were updated on the final proposal for Article II.

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/final-proposed-revision-article-ii?fbclid=IwAR0BTOMbfgwTb3tWn-pG4UOq7d0O1pypNhs4YU8hLaGx6J9Hoduq7IRMFXE>

We should begin our approval process for this proposal and recruit delegates for the UUA General Assembly to be held in June when the final vote will be taken.

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 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 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.

To respond to an article in this newsletter and/or get further information, here are some ways to connect with the person who submitted an article:

- Find contact information on the Leadership page of the emailed newsletter.
- Talk to the article-submitter in person before or after a Sunday Service.
- Use the SCUUF Directory to find the person's contact information.
- If you don't have an emailed Newsletter or Directory, call SCUUF at 320-252-0020 and leave a message that includes your name, phone number, and the name of the individual you want to reach. We will arrange for that person to contact you.

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. 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.

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.

St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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