

# St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship

---



## December 2021

All services are online at this time. Please visit [www.uufstcloud.org](http://www.uufstcloud.org) for the Zoom information to join

**ALL SUNDAY SERVICES WILL TAKE PLACE  
ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

### **10:00 a.m. Sunday, December 5: Enlarging Our Community: The Third of Three Sundays of Celebration for our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

We will emphasize our impact upon our children and take a broad look at our wider influence in our UUA community as well as in our local secular community about issues that reflect our values.

### **10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 12: The Price of Being Free – How much is it worth to you? – Ellen Eastby**

We so often associate Unitarian Universalism with being free. And there is a lot of freedom in being a Unitarian Universalist. But is being free actually free? Ellen believes that being free in Unitarian Universalism does come with a price. The question is: How much is it worth to you?

### **10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 19: "Long-Distance Wisdom: Solstice Reflections" – Dr. Karen Erickson**

At this time of the winter solstice, we'll explore themes of balance, stability, challenge and the pace of change in nature, in our lives, and in the world today. We'll consider the sometimes unexpected gifts of these long nights and share stories of endurance, courage, and insight.

**NO SERVICE on Sunday, December 26. SERVICES RESUME on January 2.**

#### **To contribute to SCUUF:**

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

*Your December TOUCHSTONES Journal was sent as an attachment with this newsletter distribution*

## December President's Corner

*by Lisa Bershok*

The holiday season is upon us. From Bodhi Day to Hannukah to Solstice to Christmas, there are many celebrations and holidays that are celebrated in the month of December. I hope whichever holidays you celebrate are full of joy, connection, and peace.

I have several updates from the Board this month. The first is that the UUA General Assembly will be in Portland this summer and will be held from June 22-26, 2022. Individuals can attend in-person or online. If you are interested in attending the General Assembly, in either manner, please let me know of your interest. We have scholarship funds available and the total amount we could provide to interested individuals will depend on how many people are interested. For more information about the schedule and registration costs, please visit [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga).

Our Fellowship received a request to join Sanctuary and Resistance to Injustice (SARI) in calling for an immediate end to immigrant detention in Sherburne County. The Sherburne County Jail contracts with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and SARI believes this is inhumane and unjustly targets immigrant communities in Minnesota. They feel the contract implies that Sherburne County residents support the unjust detention and deportation of those detained in Sherburne County in exchange for the financial gain the ICE contract provides Sherburne County. SARI requested that our Fellowship sign our name to the letter being sent to Sherburne County that supports the termination of ICE detentions:

- 1) abandoning all plans to expand or renew the current contract with ICE
- 2) phase out existing contracts and release, not transfer, all currently detained immigrants;
- 3) resolve that Sherburne County will be a Sanctuary County requiring law enforcement to pledge they will no longer collaborate with, or detain individuals on behalf of ICE.

At least twenty-three other organizations have signed on, including Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA). The Board voted unanimously to support this and lend our congregation's support and name to this letter.

The Anti-Racism Workgroup requested support from the Board to pursue a consultant who can assist our congregation with internal review of our documents and governance processes. The Board approved the Anti-Racism workgroup to pursue getting proposals and estimates from consultants on the time and cost this type of project may take. The Board would still be required to vote on the hiring of the consultant and approving the projected use of funds to cover the consultant expenses.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! My sincerest hope is that we will be able to gather together again in-person in 2022. I hope you will continue to participate in virtual options to stay connected to each other in our congregation until that time.

## **SCUUF's Anniversary Celebration Sundays Continue!**

*by Lois Head*

The third of our three Sundays of Celebration for our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary will occur on December 5, 2021. Don't miss this last opportunity to celebrate! The ZOOM connections will be available starting at 10:00 a.m. (instead of the usual starting time of 10:30 a.m.).

We on the Committee felt that we had so much to celebrate that we needed all three Sundays to strut our stuff with extended programs! So, if you participated in the first and/or second program, we know that you will want to plan to participate in the third one on December 5 to celebrate our continued growth, recognize those who grew up in our Fellowship, revisit our recent history, and to appreciate the expansion of our social justice outreach in the community, including the many local groups that we have become affiliated with.

Power Point presentations will again open and close our second Sunday of Celebration so plan to come early (starting at 10:00 a.m.) and stay late (for an additional one-half hour) to enjoy the photo slideshows. In other words, plan for another big morning, longer than usual, if you opt to "arrive" on ZOOM at 10:00 a.m. and to stay for the closing sequence.

So, gather with your family to participate in the December 5 celebration of our continued growth.

### **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 member of the committee:

Linda Saupe (Chairperson), Marge Bates, Hanni Epp, Doug Polley, 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).

## **Opportunity to Support Homeless Helping Homeless**

*by Lucinda Hudson*

Homeless Helping Homeless is one of the organizations that SCUUF supports, and probably many of you remember when Harry Fleegel gave a talk (via Zoom) in March for our Fellowship. During the month of December, The Good Earth Food Co-op is choosing Homeless Helping Homeless for its monthly rounding up opportunity. What this means is that customers shopping in The Good Earth can choose to round up their total to the next dollar amount. The amount that has been rounded up will go to Homeless Helping Homeless. (The Good Earth does this on a monthly basis, selecting a different local nonprofit each month.) Although the amount rounded up for each purchase may be small, it grows through the month and can become a significant donation. Especially as we begin the winter months, any donations for Homeless Helping Homeless give much-needed support for people in our community who are experiencing homelessness.

## **Winter Holiday Traditions – Consider Chalica**

*by Wendy Schoen, on behalf of the Program Committee*

The Holiday season is upon us and, while some may relish in carrying out a plan for a festive time with family and friends, there are many who struggle at this time of the year. Celebrations and the keeping of traditions, no matter what they may be, take planning and energy. There are times when even the best laid plans can result in disappointment or unhealthy exhaustion. Do you faithfully sustain old and cherished traditions, or have you brought new traditions to your winter celebrations that better align with your values and beliefs?

In 2005, out of a wish to have a holiday organized around our Unitarian Universalist Principles, a new Holiday emerged. Chalica is a week-long celebration of our Principles that begins on the first Monday in December. This year that is Monday December 6<sup>th</sup> and it will end 7 days later on Sunday December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Each day represents a different Principle and each day's celebration begins by lighting a chalice or candle. Gifts that reflect our 7 principles can be made, bought, verbal, written, acts of care and kindness or perhaps the sharing of a memory with a loved one.

Here are a few examples:

A gift of a peace offering such as inviting someone to dinner, a letter of forgiveness or an apology brings action to our UU principle of “The inherent worth and dignity of every person.”

The perfect gift for a “free and responsible search for truth and meaning” could be to teach someone something you know and love, or make arrangements to learn something new from a person you admire.

Serving a meal to community members is an excellent way to express “justice, equity, and compassion” while making time for human connection.

You could host a dinner party to celebrate democracy to highlight our 5<sup>th</sup> principle “the right of conscious and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

There are endless ways each individual may choose to live out their values celebrating Chalica. If you would like to make Chalica a Holiday tradition in your home we encourage you to explore ideas available through the UUA website surrounding this recently developed UU Holiday celebration.

Check this link: <https://web.archive.org/web/20050405190549/http://worship.uuyan.org/program.php?id=37> or contact Wendy at [wenschoen@gmail.com](mailto:wenschoen@gmail.com) to receive an email with more details.

## **CRE News**

*by Jessica Beierman*

Happy December everyone!

The CRE group enjoyed getting together for outdoor activities on multiple occasions this past year. We went hiking at Quarry Park and St. John's Arboretum, we met at the splash pad, and we had a great turnout for an afternoon of sledding in January. We plan to meet for another sledding adventure this upcoming January – tentatively on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. More information will be shared in the January newsletter.

If you are not on the CRE e-mail list yet and would like to be included on future CRE related e-mail notifications, please let Melissa know via e-mail at [woods.melissa11@gmail.com](mailto:woods.melissa11@gmail.com).

## **Share the Spirit**

*by Angela Stevens - Social Justice Chair*

Happy Holidays to you all. Once again the Social Justice committee is working with Catholic Charities Share the Spirit program. Due to Covid precaution we are collecting money to donate to Catholic Charities, who will then purchase gifts for the people requesting help.

If you wish to participate in this year's Share the Spirit program, I need your donation by December 10<sup>th</sup>. You can send donations to me at:

Angela Stevens  
19465 County Rd 7  
South Haven, MN, 55382

Please make your check out to Catholic Charities and write *Share the Spirit* in the memo section. Thank you for your kindness and consideration.

## **Social Justice Committee**

*by Linda Peck*

Please join the Action Alert Group. In the last two years, the Social Justice Committee has initiated directly contacting our elected officials at the local, state and federal levels of government. Our contacts are done by emails, phone calls, and letter/postcard writing - whatever method works for the sender. We are taking action and implementing the 8th Principle which our UUF recently adopted.

The following issues have been addressed:

1. stopping line 3 and other aspects of climate change
2. support of LGBTQ rights
3. care for the homeless (housing, food, shelter)
4. support of small/medium sized farm operations
5. racial justice/environmental justice
6. support of markets for locally grown food

A network of UUF members is involved. If interested in joining this action group please contact Linda Peck or Angie Stevens. Members so far include Mary Ness, Helen Manion, Linda Peck, Angie Stevens, Lucinda Hudson, Judy Foster and Louise Goetz.

## **Anti-Racism Team Report**

*from Judy Foster*

We are sorry to report that Jean Keller has resigned from this group, at least temporarily. If anyone is interested in joining us, please let me know ([jfoster58@charter.net](mailto:jfoster58@charter.net)). As previously reported, we are working with Doug Polley and Charlotte Stephens to review and revise our Constitution to address issues of outdated language, white supremacy culture, and our leadership structure. Mary Ness will join us for our next meeting.

At our last meeting we agreed to recommend revising Articles I and II as follows.

## ARTICLE I. Name and Affiliation

The name of this religious society shall be “The St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.” This Fellowship shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and of the Prairie Star District.

## ARTICLE II. Purpose

The purpose of this Fellowship is to further the causes of individual freedom of belief; advancing truth; the democratic process in human relations; brotherhood and sisterhood; and a united world fellowship. We support the Unitarian Universalist Association Statement of Principles. We are a welcoming congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith regardless of race, color, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability.

### **Proposed Revision**

#### Article I:

The name of this religious society shall be “The St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.” This Fellowship shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and of the **MidAmerica Region**.

#### Article II.

The purpose of this Fellowship is to further the causes of individual freedom of belief; **seeking truth; building a beloved community; promoting social and climate justice; supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion in human relations.** We support the Unitarian Universalist Association Statement of Principles. 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, affectional/sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, physical/mental ability.**

Please note: This revision will entail changing our Welcoming Congregation statement as follows:

#### **(Current) Welcoming Congregation**

We are a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith regardless of race, color, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability.

#### **(Proposed) 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, affectional/sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, physical/mental ability.**

We welcome your comments and feedback.

Lisa Bershok, Judy Foster

## Adult Religious Education Conversations

by Ozzie Mayers, Chair

Would you like to continue the conversation about our UU Principles that began with the Sunday Service presented by Ellen Eastby on October 24<sup>th</sup>? Then join a discussion that includes our individual understanding of the Principles and to what extent we as a Fellowship are manifesting them.

The next Adult Religious Education will be held on Zoom on Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. **Please send me a reply with your e-mail address so I can include you in the Zoom invitation.** I will send you a copy of Ellen's presentation once I hear back from you. You are welcome to participate in the discussion even if you did not hear the presentation on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

For easy reference, here is a site for the list of Principles: <https://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/principles>

You might also want to obtain a copy of the book upon which Ellen based her presentation, though this is not a requirement for our conversation: The Seven Principles in Word and Worship by Ellen Brandenburg; you can purchase it through the In Spirit Book Store (<https://www.uuabookstore.org/Basket.aspx>).

## MUUSJA/8<sup>th</sup> Principle Report

by Judy Foster

Many thanks to those of you who have donated to the MN UU Social Justice Alliance in the past or as a sustainer. Your financial support makes it possible for us to work on social justice issues statewide.

The final total for Give to the Max donations to MUUSJA was \$6,105.74. Thank you to all who donated.

If you missed the Give to the Max opportunity to support MUUSJA, here is another opportunity:

<https://faithify.org/projects/MUUSJA-wider-circles/>

Meanwhile, we devoted our November Board meeting to a report from Laura Parks on the results of our Intercultural Diversity Inventory (IDI). As is usually the case we did not score as well as we thought we would. We will now meet with Laura separately to discuss our individual results, and, as a Board, we will be discussing next steps for improving our organization and increasing our diversity.

Please note that the date of the MUUSJA annual meeting has been changed to December 8. Watch for more information. **SAVE THE DATE!**

Meanwhile, there are now 130 adoptions of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle nationally. See a map of locations here:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1wy8PXall5SYDcxtXPm3BUJLEAhTDv1G7&ll=38.84798088639156%2C-91.427383940625&z=5>

## December Meditation

by Helen Manion

On Saturday, December 11, the meditation group will meet at the St. Cloud Public Library at 10:30 in the Array Meeting Room. This room is on the main floor and down the hall to your right, as you enter the lobby of the library. The room is large enough for our group to practice social distancing. Please wear a mask (but okay to pull your mask down if you are speaking). Our readings and meditation this month will be about the approaching season of winter, slowing down, and generosity.

If you would like further information, please contact Helen at [hmanion@yahoo.com](mailto:hmanion@yahoo.com) or 928-499-4784.

## Calendar Reminders

**AVOID ZOOM CONFLICTS:** We encourage you to use the Zoom licenses 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 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 any Zoom meetings. Please reach out to Jessica Beierman at [calendar@uufstcloud.org](mailto:calendar@uufstcloud.org) if you have any questions.

*Tom Hergert and Jim Hixson have agreed to be the contacts for the Zoom License and will provide a tutorial for anyone needing to learn how to host a Zoom Meeting. Their contact information can be found in the new UUF Directory.*