

St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship



February 2022

All services are online at this time. Please visit www.uufstcloud.org for the Zoom information to join

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

10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 6: Immigration System Injustice: Sanctuary, Resistance and Our UU Values – Heidi Romanish

Given the grave injustices in our immigration system, what does it mean to seek and provide sanctuary? How is resistance integral to our UU values? How can resistance against injustice lead to building our interconnectedness as one humanity across the borders which divide us? Heidi grew up in our Fellowship and now is an immigrant rights activist and advocate, working as a Legal Assistant with the Puerta Grande Law Firm in Minneapolis.

10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 13: Love Songs in the Time of Zoom – UUF Musicians and You

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 at whiteray@charter.net by Feb. 7, with your ideas or offers for participation. Plans include having current and former musicians from the Fellowship ‘joining in’. Everyone is invited to join us and enjoy a morning focused on love, in all its many forms.

10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 20: Mental Health and Suicide: The Search for Answers – Roddy Biggs, UU ministerial aspirant

As a liberal faith community, we are called to help change the damaging narrative of suicide created by society and religious communities for centuries. Together we can make a difference; we can change the story and empower others. Join us as we embark on searching for answers around such complex and important topics as Mental Health, Suicide and Self Care.

10:30 a.m. Sunday, February 27: Here’s To The Losers – Rev. Shelley Dugan

We live in a world of winners – people who make it to the top of the mountain, the top of their game, and the top of the best-seller list. People who demonstrate that if you just work hard enough, keep believing, and don’t give up, eventually, inevitably, you will win. This sermon is for the people who didn’t win. Their big dream did not come true.

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>

February President's Corner

by Lisa Bershok

We are now more than halfway through our 2021-2022 Fiscal/Program Year. I would like to make the congregation aware of another opportunity to participate at a UUA assembly. The MidAmerica UUA Regional Assembly will be held virtually on Saturday, April 30th, 2022, from 9a-1p. The keynote speaker will be UU educator CB Beal who will present on "The Glass is Refillable: Pandemic Exhaustion, Lifeline Faith Formation, and Preemptive Radical Inclusion". There will be scholarship funding opportunities for anyone interested in attending this or the General Assembly this summer. Please let me know if you are interested in either opportunity.

In Board news, we continue to examine possible shared leadership paradigms. This month we discussed the Fist to Five Consensus Decision Making process we learned from our Anti-Racism consultant. This process was developed by the Asian Minnesotan Alliance for Justice, part of the MN Coalition of Asian American Leaders. The Board voted to utilize this process over the next few months to get a sense of how workable it will be within our Fellowship for our decision-making process; a small test of change. See below for more information. The Board will also be meeting with the Anti-Racism workgroup for a listening session on February 1st to provide feedback on the work they have been doing with the consultant around possible language changes to our Constitution. The goal of the Anti-Racism workgroup is to continue to hold listening sessions this winter/spring within the congregation.

For those of you not able to make it to our current Sunday services, we do have a workgroup that is looking at how we can make recordings of some of our Sunday services available for viewing. A big thank you to the group that is looking into the details of how to make this possible.



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COVID UPDATE FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES

by Charlotte Stephens, on behalf of our ad hoc Reopening Committee

Recently the Minnesota Department of Health invited faith leaders to a webinar: “COVID-19 update and challenges” which I attended on behalf of our Fellowship. While the COVID infection rate is higher than ever, the presenters reminded us that each of us can take responsibility to limit our exposure and to stop the spread. Layered mitigation remains critical: vaccination, masking, social distancing, avoiding large crowds, hand washing. Besides giving an update, they provided tools which may help you in talking with people who are hesitant about the vaccines and also in addressing health misinformation. Use these links:

[What You Should Know About COVID-19 Vaccines \(state.mn.us\)](https://state.mn.us)

[Toolkit for Addressing Health Misinformation from the Office of U.S. Surgeon General - 2021 \(hhs.gov\)](https://hhs.gov)

After the webinar the Minnesota Department of Health sent a message which included the following:

Two years into this pandemic, it feels like there are a lot of things we still do not know about COVID-19. And this latest surge of the Omicron variant has made a lot of people throw their hands up. But that is the nature of science. As much as we might like it to be cut and dried, the virus keeps changing; that means we may have to adjust how we fight it. *One thing we know is that getting vaccinated and boosted will help prevent severe illness even if you do get sick.* There is other good news! We are not helpless in this fight; we can take action to help protect ourselves and our loved ones.

Tools in your toolbox:

Get Vaccinated. Every person over the age of 5 can get vaccinated. **Vaccines are the best way to keep you out of the hospital even if you do get sick.** They also help protect the people around you who cannot be vaccinated, like children under 5 years old. Find vaccines for the whole family at mn.gov/vaccine.

Get Boosted. All Minnesotans 12 and older should get a booster when they are due (five months after receiving Pfizer, five months after receiving Moderna, and two months after receiving Johnson & Johnson). Scientists believe the Omicron variant is more transmissible than previous variants but getting fully vaccinated and boosted significantly increases protection against severe illness or death from infection.

Get Tested. The state has many free testing options. [Make an appointment at a community testing site](#) or [order a test through the at-home testing program](#)--or use your at-home test if you already have one. You can also find other testing options here on the [state's Find My Test map](#).

Stay Home. If you feel sick, stay home. While staying home isn't an option for everyone, limiting contact with others if you feel sick—especially if you are waiting on a test result—is one of the ways we can stop the spread of the Omicron variant.

Wear a mask. Omicron is the most contagious COVID-19 variant we've seen. So, we need to up our mask game. The Minnesota Department of Health recommends that you wear a mask that completely covers your nose and mouth without large gaps or openings. Wear a mask especially in indoor public settings like a grocery store, a shopping mall, or a school, and crowded outdoor settings too. N95s or KN95s are the best option. Double masking works as well, preferably with two surgical masks or one cloth and one surgical mask.

Vaccine Incentive for Minnesota Families.

Governor Tim Walz launched the next phase of the '[Kids Deserve a Shot](#)' vaccine incentives program, to encourage families to get their children 5-11 years old fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

CRE News

by Jessica Beierman

The Children's Religious Education group had planned to get together for sledding and ice skating at Memorial Park in Saint Joseph this month, but we had to postpone the event. An email will be sent to the families when we determine a new date for this, hopefully during the month of February.

We will also plan additional outings this Spring, so keep your eyes open for more information in upcoming newsletters! 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.

Membership Committee

by Marge Bates

When the Board asked committees to study the possible eighth principle and think about what we might do, we volunteered to keep a library of books on racial and cultural differences. Since we cannot access the library, we are hoping to reference one book a month in this Newsletter.

The first book, suggested by Marge Bates is Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask, by Anton Treuer, a MN Ojibwe with a PhD from Princeton, who lives in MN. Anton Treuer offers a book of questions and answers for Native and non-Native young readers alike. This book does exactly what its title says, in a style consistently thoughtful, personal, and engaging. Updated and expanded to include: dozens of new questions and new sections, including a social activism section that explores the Dakota Access Pipeline, racism, identity, politics, and more; over 50 new photos; and adapted text for broad appeal. I found it very informative and quick reading. It is available from the GRRL or contact me and we can arrange a book exchange.

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).

Social Justice Committee

by Linda Peck

An organization worth supporting: ALIGHT

Alight (wearealight.org), formerly known as the American Refugee Committee, was founded to help Cambodians escaping from the Khmer Rouge, and for 40 years has worked with survivors of conflicts around the world, in refugee camps and in the United States. Each year, their services reach an estimated 3.5 million people in 17 countries, including Sudan, Somalia, Syria, and Uganda. Alight has worked with Afghan refugees for nearly two decades and has educated a million Afghan children in Pakistan. In the U.S., the organization is now working to resettle families who have escaped the Taliban takeover and are now housed on U.S. military bases. Alight also continues to operate in Southeast Asia, providing health care and education in an ambitious campaign to eradicate malaria. Several years ago the SJC supported Alight in two ways: a financial donation to their efforts; a service at the UUF by a speaker from Alight. Hopefully members of the UUF will consider helping them financially.

Anti-Racism Team Report

from Judy Foster

As reported in previous newsletters, the Anti-Racism team is focusing on internal implementation of the 8th Principle by examining our organizational documents, policies, and procedures for evidence of white supremacy culture.

We continue to work with Charlotte Stephens and Doug Polley on our SCUUF Constitution, and Hedy Tripp, a community member with a background in Unitarian Universalism and SCUUF, is helping us to review our work with a BIPOC perspective.

Having met with the Social Justice Committee for feedback on our work so far and suggestions for the future, we meet next with the Executive Board to review several suggestions Hedy has made for changing our constitution. We hope to meet with other committees and congregational groups in listening sessions for further feedback.

If you are interested in what we are doing and want to see our constitution, please contact me for a copy. We welcome your comments and feedback.

Lisa Bershok, Judy Foster, Mary Ness

February Meditation

by Lucinda Hudson

On Saturday, February 5, the Meditation Group will meet at the St. Cloud Public Library at 10:30 AM in the Array Meeting Room. This room is down the hall and to your right as you enter the lobby of the library. We will practice social distancing, and please wear a mask (but okay to pull your mask down if you are speaking). For February, the readings and meditation will have a loving kindness theme.

If you would like further information, please contact Helen at hmanion@yahoo.com or 928-499-4784.

MUUSJA/8th Principle Report

by Judy Foster, MUUSJA Board Co-chair

The MN UU Social Justice Alliance is addressing multiple issues of concern: racial and immigration justice, climate justice and support for indigenous people, voting rights and protection of democracy. If you are not receiving email updates from MUUSJA, you can sign up here: <https://www.muusja.org/events-calendar/>. Scroll down to the very bottom to sign up for updates.

Meanwhile the MUUSJA Board is working on board development and better outreach.

The 8th Principle Learning Community meets monthly. You can Like their Facebook Page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/8thprinciplelearningcommunity>.

At the last meeting we discussed our 8th Principle joys and concerns as we welcomed 2022. One thing I learned about is the Liberal Religious Educators Association <https://www.lreda.org/>.

There are now 147 adoptions nationally. See the new map here:

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

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. 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 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.