

St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship



July 2020

July President's Corner
by Ozzie Mayers

The Board met this month and spent most of our meeting time considering the options for Fellowship Outdoor Gatherings as well as Zoom Services. The Board agreed that an Ad Hoc group consider both options, keeping in mind the CDC, MHD, and the Stearns County Guidelines. To this end, the Program Committee Chairs will set up a Zoom meeting for members of the Program Committee as well as the Chairs of the Building and Grounds Committee, the Technologies Committee, and the Music Committee to explore how we might proceed. If we do organize an outdoors' gathering, we will have to insist on attendees' wearing masks, keeping 6ft apart from one another, as well as providing ways for attendees to access our bathrooms in the Fellowship building and to sanitize them after use. At this point, the Board is recommending that we begin at the simple level and gradually add on to our virtual services. You will be notified about this Working Group's suggestions in the near future.

While most of the leadership roles for the coming year have remained the same as this year, there are three changes: 1) Ralph Carr is now our Treasurer; 2) Doug Polley is now Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee; and 3) the Nominating Committee will also be seeking a replacement for Elaine Schrenk , who resigned as Board Member at Large because of health issues.

The Board approved the following Meeting Dates for 2020-21:

- a. First Sunday - Return to Services: Sunday, September 13, 2020 (subject to restriction conditions at that time) **Labor Day is late this year on Monday, September 7, 2020*
- b. Sunday Service Cancellation over Winter: Holidays: Sunday, December 27th, 2020
- c. Annual Meeting: Friday, May 7, 2021
- d. Leadership Retreat: Saturday, June 5, 2021

Finally, I have ordered a copy of the UUA report: Widening the Circle of Concern and will make it available to Committees. According to the UUA description: "After three years of research, story gathering, and analysis of structural and systemic racism and white supremacy culture within Unitarian Universalism, the report makes vital recommendations to advance long-term cultural and institutional change that redeems the essential promise and ideals of Unitarian Universalism."

Sign up to receive email or mobile alerts when data is updated, as well as other periodic COVID-19 updates for Minnesota at [Subscribe: COVID-19 updates](#) .

Program Committee News

by Pam Peterson

While our congregation is closed due to Coronavirus, we wanted to present opportunities to you for ongoing engagement in Unitarian Universalism. The following UU congregations in MN are streaming their Sunday services. Some of our members have attended these services virtually, and we encourage you to check them out yourselves.

SERVICES AVAILABLE ONLINE:

Michael Servetus Unitarian Society in Fridley...Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

<http://www.msuu.org/>

Skip and I have participated in these services over the last few months now and have found them very meaningful. The services include a Time for All Ages and music selections as well as reflections by their minister. There is often an opportunity for discussion in small groups (going to specific breakout rooms as a part of Zoom) following the service for those wanting to participate.

Other UU Fellowships having services online...

White Bear UU Church, 10 a.m. Sun. <http://www.wbuuc.org/>

First Universalist in Mpls., 10 a.m. Sun. <http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/>

First Unitarian Society, Mpls., 10:30 a.m. Sun. <http://firstunitarian.org/>

Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul, 10 a.m. Sun. <http://www.unityunitarian.org/>

We are planning to use ZOOM for many of our upcoming services...

So, we need to hear from you if you

1. Don't have access to a computer or smart tablet, such as an iPad
2. Haven't used Zoom

By hearing from you soon, we can problem solve for a way you can access the service.

Contact Pam Peterson at pamelda4@gmail.com

For individuals using Zoom, it would be great if you attended one of the services listed so you get an idea of how it works.

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

Social Justice News

by Judy Foster

St. Cloud Pride: St. Cloud Pride in the Park and the Pride and Peace Faith Walk will not be held this year because of COVID19. The Pride Board is working on possible alternative activities in which folks can safely participate. We will keep you informed of those activities when they are announced.

MUUSJA: The Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance continues to be active:

It participated in a clergy statement on the murder of George Floyd, as well as the protests in Minneapolis, and Juneteenth activities. The most recent Board Retreat included in-depth discussion of anti-racism and how we can sustain that work in our congregations.

Its network of UU volunteer liaisons is growing and linked via the phone and internet, in five main project teams:

- In the **Akhrinta-Reading Together** project, with Muslim partners, MUUSJA coordinates online English-language reading buddies for Somali-American children, in homes where English is a second language. MUUSJA responded to calls from Neighbors Together in Solidarity and Success Academy to address a need exposed by the COVID-19 school program closings, building upon existing partnerships among Unitarian Universalist and Muslim congregations.
- With national "**#UUtheVOTE**" and regional partners, MUUSJA is creating a movement towards UU values in the 2020 election -- focused now on saving the US Postal Service and activating voting-by-mail. We partner with WeVote/MNvoice and ISAIAH, among others, to mobilize voters in free and fair elections.
- The "**UU Climate Justice Circle**" focuses on environmental issues, partnering with Indigenous activists, the UU Service Committee, MN Interfaith Power and Light, and Sierra Club Northstar.
- A "**Sanctuary, Accompaniment and Resistance**" team resists discrimination and family separation, in solidarity with ICOM (Interfaith Coalition on Immigration), MIRAC (MN Immigration Rights), and other immigrant-led groups.
- The "**Rainbow Chalice**" coalition of LGBTQ+ UU's, family, and allies, is teaming with OutFrontMN, regrets the cancellation of this year's PRIDE fests but plans for an even more fabulous 2021, if we can #UUtheVOTE in 2020!

If you are interested in helping out with any of these projects, please let me know.

Here's how else you can help:

- **Become a Sustaining Donor.** Whether you can give \$10 a month or \$1000, becoming a Sustaining Donor is the *single most effective way you* can contribute to MUUSJA's financial stability, and guarantee that we have the financial resources we need to live into our bold vision. <http://www.muusja.org/donate> is the simplest link, with no fees ever.
- **Make a one-time contribution that reflects your aspirations for Unitarian Universalist justice work in the world.** Do you want to see stronger collaborations for justice among our congregations? Have more Unitarian Universalists trained in direct action and witnessing for justice in the public square? Increase our UU congregations' skills for effective, accountable partnerships beyond their walls? Deepen our theological grounding and amplify our public voice? Then **make a donation to our work that feels aspirational, bold, and generous.**
- Visit muusja.org/donate/ to create or increase your sustaining support. Paper checks may be sent to **MUUSJA at 900 Mount Curve Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403.**
- MUUSJA exists because we all need each other. It is clearer now than ever: We are the air and water, we are the earth and the fire, we are one. When we act with one heart and speak with one voice, we can change the world.

Dismantling White Supremacy Team

from Hanni Epp

Our group has met periodically since last fall, with our last meeting on 24th June. We have established goals and set some priorities for our process. There is much to learn and understand in how to move forward. We are currently collaborating with the Program Committee for planning purposes. We expect that over the coming months we will have numerous opportunities to participate, as individuals and in small groups, for learning and discussion.

Meditation Schedule for July and August

by Lucinda Hudson

There will be two meditations in July and two in August, and they will be offered online.

July 4, 2020

Earth Meditation

Readings from Native American sources

This meditation will focus on our connection with the land in which we live. Readings will draw from Native American sources of wisdom. Our UU hymnal reading #550 quotes Chief Noah Seattle (also known as Chief Sealth): “This we know. The earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family...”

July 18, 2020

Self-compassion Meditation

Readings offered by Hanni Epp

More than ever, we are being asked to think of others as we work toward getting through these tumultuous times. Physical distancing, wearing a mask, avoiding large groups. We are also questioning ourselves regarding our biases, and wondering what we can do in the work of dismantling white supremacy.

We may not even be aware of the toll this amount of turmoil can place on us. Let us spend a little time together, focusing on self-compassion, and how it can help us toward feelings of peace, freedom and even joy. Join us...

August 1, 2020

Meditation (topic yet to be determined)

August 15, 2020

Meditation (topic yet to be determined)

These meditations are offered with a low-tech approach that only involves e-mail. You can meditate for whatever amount of time you choose. Many members of the meditation group begin to meditate at 11 AM on Saturdays, but you can pick a different time if that time doesn't work well for you. The form is also flexible, and you can meditate while sitting or while walking--or while practicing any activity in a mindful way. After the meditation, anyone is welcome to share a comment or reflection. To receive meditation readings or if you would like further information, please contact Lucinda at lucindahudson9@gmail.com or 320-224-5440.

Meditation is the practice of focusing one's attention with intention and is used in many ways. For example, it can be used to be more aware in the present moment—more mindful of thoughts, words and actions. It can be used for growth and healing, as with loving kindness and self-compassion practices. Meditation can help build inner resources in a variety of ways.

SCUUF Book Club reminder

By Marcia Neely

Our next book club meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 8 at 10:00 and we will discuss *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver. This meeting will likely again be on-line, but we will wait until closer to that time to make a final decision.

If you are interested in being included in emails about the book club, (and don't currently get these emails), please inform Marcia Neely at marciakgarden@gmail.com.

Sharing for Our Future

from your Budget and Finance Committee

In the absence of our Sunday gatherings and our annual pledge drive we are especially grateful for those who continue to donate to our fellowship. We have received some new pledges for our upcoming year (2020-2021) in the amount of \$8700. We also continue to receive pledge payments for 2019-20. \$2,987 was received in April and May.

If you would like to make a pledge for our '20-'21 year, please let us know by sending an e-mail to our new Treasurer Ralph Carr (rw carr@stcloudstate.edu). You can also mail the treasurer at our Fellowship address below.

We recognize the uncertainty of these coronavirus times. For those who are unable to make a yearlong commitment, we hope you will continue to make pledge payments at the rate you chose for the last pledge year. Your donations to our fellowship can be made to

St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
P.O. Box 805
St. Cloud, MN 56302

We also now have a '[donate](#)' button on our web page where you can use PayPal or a credit card to make your donation.

We wish to give a special thanks to our outgoing Treasurer (Josh Meehl) and Committee Chair (Ralph Carr). Both of these individuals have been critical to our continued financial success.

Staying Connected through the Summer from the Caring Committee

In past summers, the Fellowship offered several in-person opportunities to be together in the months where we don't have weekly Sunday Services. This year while we're not together at our building due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the Caring Committee reminds us that it's still important to stay connected. At home you can reach out to another member by phone or email. Outdoors you can meet for a walk, a picnic, or sit together for conversation on a patio, deck, or in a park. Maintain a safe distance and wear a mask as needed.

This summer we're doing things differently and need to be mindful so we stay safe, but we can continue to be a caring congregation. To share your ideas of other ways to stay connected with SCUUF folks during the pandemic restrictions, contact Hanni Epp so we can include them in the August newsletter.

Contact one of us or another friend if you need a phone call or assistance during this time. 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. The following committee members can be reached using the contact information in the UUF Directory:

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).

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.