

**St. Cloud  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
Fellowship**

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## July 2021

### Summer Programming

During the summer it is our tradition to offer informal opportunities for learning and growing together. The Program Committee thanks those who are hosting and organizing these events. Note varying times and locations in the programming section. More details regarding August events will be provided in upcoming newsletters. **Weekly Sunday Services will resume on September 12.**

#### **10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 10<sup>th</sup>: Walking Meditation (Munsinger Garden)**

On July 10th (a Saturday) at 10:30 a.m., there will be a gathering at Munsinger Garden to practice walking meditation. Anyone who would like to come is welcome to join. We will be meeting at the gazebo that is close to the Mississippi River. If there happens to be another group in the gazebo at that time, then we will meet close to the gazebo. Walking meditation is about being fully present with the experience of walking. We will be practicing in a relaxed and light-hearted way. This will also be an opportunity to chat and catch up with each other and enjoy the gardens. We'll have a brief reading at the beginning and a modified version of Joys and Concerns. For the walking meditation part of the gathering, we'll each be walking at our own pace, in whatever way is most comfortable for each of us. If walking is difficult for you, it is totally fine to come and simply sit and rest for part or all of the walking meditation time (about 20 minutes). Children and families are welcome too. Feel free to bring a mask if you'd like (optional), and we will be practicing social distancing for this activity. If you would like further information, please contact Lucinda at [lucindahudson9@gmail.com](mailto:lucindahudson9@gmail.com) or 320-224-5440.

#### **9:00 a.m. Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>: Coffee Talk (via Zoom)**

Please join us to have a chance to talk to some of your Fellowship friends. We can share joys and concerns, upcoming plans for spring/summer, and the usual chit chat we would enjoy during coffee time after our service.

*Provide your own coffee.*

#### **11:00 a.m. Saturday, July 17<sup>th</sup>: CRE Splash Pad Picnic get-together (Sauk Rapids Lions Park)**

It was nice seeing some of you and having the chance to catch up at the splash pad in June!

Our second CRE splash pad get-together this summer is planned for Saturday, July 17th at the new Sauk Rapids splash pad, which is across the railroad tracks by Burger King.

These events are usually potluck style, but this year we ask that everyone bring their own meal/snack and drink.

All are welcome! Contact Jessica Beierman (jbeierman78@gmail.com) or Melissa Woods (woods.melissa11@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>: Kayaking (Bass Lake in Wright County)**

Come with your kayak or canoe to Wendy's place on Bass Lake. Bring a picnic lunch for afterwards. Email Wendy for directions at wenschoen@gmail.com.

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup>: SCUUF Sing-a-Long (outside the SCUUF building)**

Come join your Fellowship music group for an outside sing-a-long! For COVID caution we will ask that household groups sit 6' apart from each other, however masks will not be required outside. Masks would be required for anyone who enters the building to use the bathrooms. If possible, bring your own camp chairs, but if you don't have a camp chair we will provide chairs as needed. Our sing-a-long will be held in front of the building to keep away from bugs and be accessible to as many people as possible. Please come sing with us and revel in being together and making a joyful noise!!

**12 p.m. (noon) Sunday, August 8<sup>th</sup>: PB&J Picnic (Bend in the River Regional Park)**

The PB&J event hosted by Julie Peters will be held at Bend in the River Regional Park. Look for more details in August.

**Morning of Saturday, August 28<sup>th</sup>: UUF Building and Grounds clean up (Fellowship building)**

Look for details in August.

**10:30 a.m. Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup>: Bagels and Ethics Panel Presentation (Fellowship Hall/SCUUF building)**

Join the Social Justice Committee for this summer's Bagels and Ethics informative panel presentation on the 8<sup>th</sup> principle and how it relates to anti-racism and other oppressions in our community.

**UU Church of Willmar Summer Zoom Services**

SCUUF members may want to join UU Church of Willmar via Zoom for informal discussion which will be available most Sundays at 10:00AM. Shortly before each Sunday there may be more specific information on their Facebook page which can be accessed using this link: [our Facebook events page](#).

Use the following link to Join Willmar's Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/91647871084?pwd=eVBGaENsRIRZT2VUL2J4N0JCVTNRQT09>

If you join by dialing your phone: Dial 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 916 4787 1084# Passcode: 920017#

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

## **July President's Corner**

*by Lisa Bershok*

I hope everyone is having an enjoyable summer and getting some time outside. There continue to be new activities created for our summer calendar, so I encourage you to take a look at the summer program activities in the newsletter for updated events. We are following guidelines to host outside with six feet of distance between households, or if held inside the Fellowship building masking and six feet distance between households. We hope this allows for more people to connect over the summer.

The Board, the Budget and Finance Committee, and I would like to sincerely thank our members for your support over the last year. COVID-19 has changed how we gather, communicate, and engage. Throughout the pandemic our members have continued to host and attend online services, engage in committee work, and support our Fellowship with both your financial and in-kind donations. Thank you. Our Fellowship could not function without the work, engagement, and support of all kinds that you have provided over the last year. We sincerely hope we will be able to return to a hybrid model this coming program year that will allow for those that choose to attend in person, and that has options for those who need to remain at home to attend virtually. We will continue work on those plans over the summer and will keep you updated.

Our board wants to continue to promote transparency in the business of our Fellowship. I want to remind all our members that anyone can choose to attend a Board meeting as an observer or request our meeting minutes for review. The Board meets the third Sunday of the month from 9am-10am. Currently we meet virtually, so you would need to contact me for the Zoom link.

It is in the spirit of transparency that I would like to update our members on a possible long term rental opportunity that has presented itself. There is a local group of individuals that are in the process of starting an Adult Daycare business that will support the Somali Community. The organization, The Place of Nur, has identified that the refugee and immigrant community has unmet needs related to adult daycare. This opportunity would be a long-term rental contract that would have our Fellowship building utilized from 8am-6pm Monday through Thursday. For those of you who have been long term members, I have been told it would be similar to when we rented our space during the day to the Montessori pre-school. Our rental liaison, the Building and Grounds Committee, and the Board have been identifying additional information we will need to consider the rental request from the organization, as well as what the additional costs may be for our Fellowship and needs we may have when we look to resume in-person services. At our June meeting, the Board did vote unanimously to authorize our rental liaison to pursue additional negotiation to find answers to these questions and determine if a rental contract is feasible. A rental contract of this nature would require an additional Board vote to approve. At this time, we are in an information gathering period. This includes hearing from members.

Contact Charlotte Stephens if you have comments or concerns about this potential use of our building. Thank you for your continued support of our Fellowship. Have a wonderful summer!

## Ready to Act on the 8th Principle?

by Mary Ness

Please mark August 29<sup>th</sup> 10:30a.m. -12:00p.m (noon) on your calendar for a lively, informative panel presentation on the 8<sup>th</sup> principle and how it relates to anti-racism and other oppressions in our community. This “Bagels and Ethics” event will be presented by members of the Social Justice Committee and the Anti-racism Work Group. As a reminder, the 8<sup>th</sup> principle is “We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 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.” The 8<sup>th</sup> principle is unique in that it includes action words as opposed to the first 7 principles. It calls us as Unitarian Universalists, to take actions as individuals and a congregation to dismantle racism and other oppressions in our community and beyond. The panel will be both informative and interactive so please come with your ideas, thoughts and questions.

At this point in time, the event will be held in the Fellowship hall and will also be zoomed. Masks are required indoors. Eating is not allowed in the building, so this will be a bagels and ethics ---sans bagels. You may bring your own drink. Should recommendations for use of the building change before August 29<sup>th</sup>, you will be notified in the August newsletter. We look forward to seeing many of you on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Anti-Racism Work Group

by Hanni Epp

*“We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 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.”*

At our May 2021 annual meeting, our Fellowship voted to adopt the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. This principle is based on the melding of the 7 UU Principles and Beloved Community (which expresses deep multiculturalism). We will continue to provide background information and opportunities for discussion in the months ahead.

Good work was done on these issues in the past, such as during the civil rights movement, and in the 1990s with the passage in 1997 of a resolution to become an Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppression Multi-Cultural Organization.

Sadly, the funding and support waned in the 2000s, and our accountability mechanism failed us. The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle came from a feeling that we need something to renew our commitment to this work, to hold ourselves accountable, and to fulfill the potential of our existing principles.

Our Fellowship is integrating this work as much as possible, both individually and as an organization, in all that we do. Let us take up this work with purpose and with joy.

## Fall Hybrid Services

by Tom Hergert

Our Fellowship has had a complex and interesting adventure this last year in continuing our community at a distance using Zoom and other tools. We appreciate everyone's patience and participation. Because of the successes of our Zoom activities, especially in including members of our community who are not local to St. Cloud, we plan probably to continue using technology for outreach. In that vein, we're asking for Fellowship members and friends to step up to be part of the hybrid service production group. There is no experience necessary and no technical expertise is required. The exact system and schedule aren't set yet, but we do expect to need a crew of 3 or 4 for every service. Please contact me at [tom.hergert@gmail.com](mailto:tom.hergert@gmail.com) or 320-493-2515 (text okay) to volunteer or for more information.

# Beloved Conversations Report

by Judy Foster

Beloved Conversations is a UUA course on Anti-Racism and Dismantling White Supremacy provided through Meadville-Lombard Theological School. Our UUF Board covered the cost of my registration so that I could take it and report back to the congregation with recommendations. It was a six-week course (with one more half-lesson to go in the summer.) There were multiple dimensions and volumes of resources, of which I could barely scratch the surface, but I have saved them all for future reflection. There was a Critical Friend who helped me reflect on the lessons (Ozzie Mayers); there was a Learning Pod, in which I met fellow UUs in Nevada and Texas; there were Meaning Making Sessions, which provided inspiration, knowledge, and challenges. I welcome your comments and suggestions.

Here were the main themes:

1. **Ancestors.** It is so important that we understand our own personal history related to white supremacy, as well as the land we occupy as UUs. I recommend that we go beyond our Land Acknowledgement Statement and dig more deeply into the history of our indigenous past, as individuals and as a congregation. Nearby is a street with an indigenous name: Mni Sota Makoce <https://www.sctimes.com/story/news/local/2019/02/19/st-cloud-street-native-american-history-costco-heritage-park-stearns-history-museum/2909632002/> **I recommend we learn about its history and how it might be related to our property.**
2. **Cultivating a Culture of Appreciation.** One of the characteristics of White Supremacy Culture is Perfectionism. Accepting imperfection does not mean lowering our standards of excellence, but it does acknowledge that we will make mistakes and sometimes fall short. As an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff, I recommend we redouble our efforts to express gratitude for all the service that our volunteers provide to keep SCUUF alive and thriving—our Board and committee leaders, our committee members, individuals who step up and pick up the slack when we need them. Those who go beyond the call of duty! **How can we make this culture of appreciation a lived reality in SCUUF?**
3. **Both/And.** Another characteristic of White Supremacy Culture is Either/Or Thinking. How can we be more inclusive and open to hearing all points of view? This does not mean we do not have our limits. Our 7 UU Principles and the newly affirmed 8<sup>th</sup> Principle define those limits. But, within those limits, there may be multiple ways to achieve our goals and make our decisions. Instead of “either objective truth or subjective truth,” can we value both? **Can we temper objectivity with personal experience, feelings, and values? Can we temper subjectivity with attention to facts, reason, and shared values?**
4. **Collectivity/Collaboration.** A third characteristic of White Supremacy Culture is individualism, a UU value that dates back in our history to Emerson and Transcendentalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Yet the Transcendentalists also valued community and social well-being. Collectivity involves trusting the group process, trusting our agreed-upon decisions and values. **Instead of thinking in terms of what we can get from our fellowship together, what can we contribute, whether it be time, talent, or treasure? How can we as individuals serve our common purpose? How can we move from “I” to “We”?**
5. **Emergent Faith.** This theme overlaps with 3 and 4. It involves accepting multiplicity and complexity, moving and working organically as opposed to in a narrowly linear fashion. Instead of a line, think of a circle or a spiral. As we move forward to achieve our goals, including our anti-oppression work and dismantling white supremacy, instead of thinking from A to B, **how can we merge with others both internally and externally in this work? What can we contribute? How can we emerge as a more vibrant faith group in a world of diversity, equity, and inclusion?**
6. **Imagination, Joy, and Celebration.** Use our imagination to envision such a world, experience joy as we participate in creating such a world, celebrate our progress and achievements. **Can such a celebration be incorporated into our Annual Meetings?**

If you are interested in the Fall course of Beloved Conversations, talk to our Board about financial support and see this website: <https://www.meadville.edu/fahs-collaborative/beloved-conversations/> (or you can contact me for information on how to register).

## **MUUSJA Update**

*from Judy Foster*

The Executive Board Chair of the Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance has found it necessary to resign from the Board because of other obligations. As a member of the Board, I can report that we held a retreat in June in which we discussed the 8th Principle and how we restructure our leadership model and move forward, referencing a book called *Emergent Strategies* by adrienne maree brown.

Unlike any of the current 7 UUA Principles, the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle calls for action:

*“We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 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.”*

MUUSJA is an action-oriented organization and is currently supporting the Water Protectors at Line 3 (which overlaps with indigenous rights and environmental justice). We partner with Jewish Community Action, Pride, MARCH (Multifaith, Anti-Racism, Change & Healing), to name a few, and serve as a social justice resource for UU congregations in MN, Wisconsin, and the Dakotas on issues such as elder justice, immigration, and defending Democracy, as well as the above. See: <https://www.muusja.org/>

*Emergent Strategies* challenges our white supremacist hierarchical leadership and organizing structures, offering instead models of collaborative leadership and organic relationships both within and among community action groups. In light of this book, MUUSJA is reviewing its leadership model, mission, and vision to grow in closer alignment with the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. Stay tuned!

I also attended an online meeting of the Coalition of UU State Action Networks (CUUSAN), of which MUUSJA is a member. I can tell you that SANs across the nation are working on issues like those being addressed by both MUUSJA and SCUUF. As UUs we have a vibrant and ever-growing, ever-evolving social justice profile nationwide. See <https://cuusan.org/>.

### **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).

## 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.*