

St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship



June 2021

Plans for Re-Opening the Fellowship

by Lisa Bershok & Linda Saupe Co-Chairs

After 14 months of dealing with the COVID pandemic, many of us are beyond ready to see our friends and family in person, and have hopes of reconnecting as a Fellowship. The SCUUF Board created the Re-Opening Committee to research recommendations from the UUA, State of MN, and CDC to best determine plans to guide how we manage services, meetings, and other Fellowship activities.

It is the position of the UUA, SCUUF Board, and the Re-Opening Committee that we need to live our Unitarian Universalist values in regards to decisions about re-opening. As the UUA has stated to leaders, “What is the right thing to do, for the largest number of people, while prioritizing those with the greatest risk?”. Our Fellowship is committed to full inclusion, leaving no one behind, especially those at the most risk. While the vaccine is rolling out, the virus is still spreading, and still causing illness and death. Things like singing, preaching, and eating are still considered higher risk spreading activities. It is important to ensure we acknowledge the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the interconnected web of all existence of which we are a part. Re-opening will require all of us to be adaptable and flexible. Even since we have presented our plan to the board, we have seen national and local changes to recommendations and changes to state governance.

Our committee will continue to meet throughout the summer and work with the Program Committee to plan for fall services. While changes have been made to mask mandates and re-opening across our state, SCUUF will continue to follow the science and it is important to recognize that at times state and national guidance is politically motivated. Here are the current recommendations approved by the SCUUF Board at our May meeting that will guide our summer activities and allow for fall planning. Infection rates will guide our final plans for Fall services and activities, so therefore we can plan, but cannot confirm what reopening will look like at this time.

- Decisions to hold in-person, hybrid, or virtual services, meetings, and events will be made by the Board in consultation with committee chairs utilizing the State of MN’s Guidance for School Opening. We will utilize Stearns County data and the high school guidance as high school students’ reactivity to COVID is the same as in the adult population. We encourage you to look at this website as you will be able to see the infection rate guidance as well as rolling infection rates for Stearns County over the last few months. [Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 Case Rate by County \(state.mn.us\)](https://data.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/wschooldata)
www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/wschooldata.pdf

- As you can see, while the current infection rate in Stearns County has been dropping, recommendations would be for distance, but getting closer to hybrid options.
- A hybrid option would be to open the Fellowship sanctuary and fellowship hall to in-person congregants who want to attend services in-person while still hosting services virtually. The presenter/minister may or may not be in person or virtual based on their needs. Capacity with 6' distance between households is currently being determined for both the sanctuary and fellowship hall.
- Services, meetings or events inside require that individuals be masked, with 6' distance between households.
- Programs, meetings, or events that are held outside can allow for either 6' distance between households or masking if 6' distance cannot be achieved.
- No eating or drinking (unless needed for medical circumstances) inside the Fellowship building. Eating and drinking can occur outside for functions as long as food and drink are not shared, and everyone brings their own and eating and drinking occurs with 6' distance.
- This will allow for some meetings and summer programming to resume in-person. Please see the newsletter for more information about summer activities.
- A log of attendance is required for services, meetings, and events. This is required for contact tracing if someone were to be diagnosed with COVID-19. Meeting leaders and event organizers should maintain a copy of the list and either place a paper copy in the President's mailbox at SCUUF or email to lpbershok@gmail.com.
- Unless meetings are 2 people only, all meetings should be held in the Fellowship Hall or Sanctuary to accommodate 6' distance. Please do not use the small meeting room for meetings larger than 2 people.
- When services resume in-person, singing can occur as long as individuals remain masked, no woodwind instruments can be used currently, and no sharing of hymnals can occur. Words for songs will be displayed on our TVs.
- Vaccine status does not change these requirements. SCUUF will not ask anyone their vaccination status, nor allow for changes in these requirements based on vaccine status. We will abide by science-based recommendations to limit exposure as there have been documented break through COVID-19 infections and new variants continue to develop.

We will continue to notify the congregation of changing recommendations and board approvals as they occur. We are preparing technology and planning for hybrid services so we can effectively launch this as an option when community infection rates decrease to the point they can be offered. We hope individuals are able to participate in summer activities, as they feel comfortable. We will discuss these recommendations more fully with new Board members and Committee Chairs at our leadership retreat in June. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Linda Saupe or Lisa Bershok.

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 July and August events will be provided in upcoming newsletters. **Weekly Sunday Services will resume on September 12.**

10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 12th: Walking Meditation (Munsinger Garden)

On June 12th (a Saturday) at 10:30 a.m., there will be an in-person 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. Please bring a mask, and we will be practicing social distancing for this activity. If you would like further information, please contact Lucinda at lucindahudson9@gmail.com or 320-224-5440.

1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, June 12th: Juneteenth Celebration (Lake George)

On June 12th from 2-7 p.m., the African American Male Forum is hosting a celebration of Juneteenth in Lake George Park. As many of you already know, Juneteenth is an annual celebration and commemoration of the official and final emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. Juneteenth was first celebrated in Texas on June 19, 1865. If you would like further information about this year's Juneteenth celebration, you can contact the Higher Works Collaborative at 320-774-1588. (Although the walking meditation and the Juneteenth celebration are both happening on June 12th, the walking meditation is in the morning and the Juneteenth celebration is in the afternoon. So anyone who would like to attend both events would be able to do that.)

9:00 a.m. Sunday, June 13: Coffee Talk (via Zoom)

As COVID continues to keep us apart, please join our informal conversation on Zoom. 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.*

5:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 16: CRE Splash Pad Picnic get-together (Waite Park splash pad)

The annual splash pad event has become a tradition for SCUUF's CRE & friends group. This summer we are planning TWO events. The second get-together is tentatively planned for Saturday, July 17th at the new Sauk Rapids splash pad. More details will be included in the July newsletter.

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.

11 a.m. Saturday, June 26th: Memorial Service for SCUUF member Elaine Schrenk (UU Fellowship Garden Area)

This memorial service will be held in honor of SCUUF member Elaine Schrenk who died in August 2020. This will be an opportunity for friends and family to share memories of Elaine. Bring a lawn chair and your mask. In case of inclement weather, the gathering will be indoors following current COVID and SCUUF guidelines.

11 a.m. Sunday, June 27th: Sunday Morning Worship at UUA General Assembly (Streaming Online)

The Sunday Morning Worship at UUA General Assembly will be streamed on uuu.org and on the UUA's [YouTube channel](#). This is the largest annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists in worship. Speakers include Rev. Arif Mamdani and Rev. Karen Hutt who have been guest ministers at SCUUF. Recognizing the importance of shared ministry and the many innovative approaches to worship created by congregations during the pandemic, UUA President, Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick Gray, selected the [First Universalist Church of Minneapolis](#) to serve as worship leaders for this year's GA Sunday Morning Service. Music will be offered through collaboration with 2021 GA Choir Director Susan Mashiyama, the GA virtual choir, and musicians from First Universalist. First Universalist has been a model of shared ministry and what it means to put the work of dismantling white supremacy and building anti-racist, anti-oppressive practices at the center of their ministry. They have been on the front lines in support of the Movement for Black Lives in Minneapolis, bringing spiritual care and moral leadership in the wake of George Floyd's murder by police and the important uprisings for justice that followed. Children and families are a vital part of their ministry, and they have been using creative approaches to engage all ages in worship during the pandemic. Their leadership exemplifies some of the best practices for the creativity, spiritual depth, and moral leadership that is possible when we embrace the work of shared ministry rooted in love and justice.

10:30 a.m. Sunday, July 18th: 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.

Sunday, August 8th at 12 pm (noon) – 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.

Saturday, August 28th in the morning – UUF Building and Grounds clean up

Look for details in August.

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#

Possible additional summer activities

- Let Pam know if you are interested in any of the following possible summer activities or would like to organize them. E-mail at pamelda4@gmail.com or call 320-224-4448 (cell) or 320-982-2360 (home).
 - Would you like members to visit YOUR garden or would you like to visit member gardens? This would likely be later July or August
 - Talent Show (via Zoom)
 - Bike trip
- Picnic or hike in a park – contact Charlotte Stephens by e-mail at charlow@cloudnet.com
- Social Justice discussion – contact Angie Stevens by e-mail tstevenstcloud@gmail.com

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

June President's Corner

by Lisa Bershok

After maintaining leadership for a second year during the pandemic, we will see our normal change of leadership occur on June 1st. I want to express a huge thank you to all the current SCUUF Board Members and Committee Chairs for serving a 2-year term. My tremendous and heartfelt gratitude goes out to Ozzie Mayers for taking on a second term as President. He has helped us as a congregation weather the COVID storm with strong leadership. Thank you Ozzie!

At our virtual Annual Meeting we voted and approved a new slate of leadership for our 2021-2022 year. A copy of the approved leadership positions is below. I look forward to working with our leadership group on coming back together in the next year. As you saw in the Re-Opening newsletter article, we have guidelines now established for in-person programming, events, and meetings. We will be working to offer hybrid services at some point in the fall. Our community spread and infection rates will determine our ability to do so. While our vaccination choices are personal, I want to make sure everyone in our congregation knows where and how to schedule a free vaccination. Information below will provide easy access to determining where you can schedule an appointment or attend a walk-in clinic.

At our Annual Meeting a great conversation was held around the 8th Principle that is being promoted by Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU). Judy Foster provided a description of the process for considering a new UU Principle. Individual congregations of the UUA adopt new principle concepts from a grassroots perspective, with the ultimate language needing to be adopted by two consecutive General Assembly meetings to become officially adopted by the UUA. A motion was made from the floor to affirm and promote the proposed 8th principle in spirit with the understanding the specific language could change in the approval process. The congregation voted to affirm and promote the 8th Principle within SCUUF. See this newsletter for more information about the 8th Principle from our Anti-Racism group. Anti-Racism work is a part of our 5-year goal plan.

2021-2022 SCUUF Leadership Board

President – Lisa Bershok

President Elect – Pam Peterson

Treasurer – Ralph Carr

Secretary – Louise Goetz

Members at Large – Ozzie Mayers, Jim

Hixson, Susan Dunbar

Committee Chairs

Adult RE – Ozzie Mayers

Program – Pam Peterson & Wendy Schoen

Budget & Finance – Doug Polley

CRE – Melissa Woods & Jessica Beierman

Buildings & Ground – Tom Hergert

Membership – Marge Bates

Social Justice – Angela Stevens

Communications – Judy Foster

SCUUF leadership looks forward to resuming work on our 5-year goal plans, as well as continuing to move forward as an organization through the pandemic. I plan to use the President's Corner to keep you all updated on our work. The Leadership Retreat will be held the first weekend in June, and this should provide us an opportunity to set leadership goals for the next year. I hope you all have a wonderful summer and can take advantage of our increasing beautiful weather to spend time outside and connect with friends and loved ones as you are able.

How Minnesotans Can Get Their COVID-19 Shot at No Cost:

- **Vaccine Connector:** You can directly sign up for an appointment at one of the state Community Vaccination Program locations at [VaccineConnector.mn.gov](https://vaccineconnector.mn.gov).
 - Walk-ins for Minnesotans 12+ will be accepted at state community vaccination sites administering Pfizer vaccines in Bloomington (Mall of America), Saint Paul (Roy Wilkins Auditorium), Lino Lakes and Oakdale.
 - Walk-ins and appointments for Minnesotans 18+ are accepted at all sites.
- **Vaccine Locator Map:** You can use the Vaccine Locator Map to search for providers who are offering COVID-19 vaccine to Minnesotans ages 12 and older at <https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/find-vaccine/locations/index.jsp>.
- **Vaccine Finder:** You can also find COVID-19 vaccine appointments at [Vaccines.gov](https://vaccines.gov), which allows you to filter by vaccine manufacturer and search for only Pfizer vaccine appointments.
- **CentraCare: Online vaccination scheduling is available** for Minnesotans ages 12+. People under 18 can only receive the Pfizer vaccine and must call CentraCare Connect at 320-200-3200 to schedule an appointment.
 - Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccination: <https://covid19.centracare.com/covid-19-vaccine-information/>

Anti-Racism Work Group

by Hanni Epp

8th Principle. Sincere thanks to those at the Annual Meeting who voted to affirm and promote the 8th Principle. We are following up on next steps through the UUA, clarifying the process for national consideration. We will report back to the congregation, and will provide more opportunities for discussion on this important topic as we move forward. Here is the link to the 8th principle: <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>

My Grandmother's Hands. Our reading group of about 10 people will be coming to a close as you read these pages. We have been meeting every two weeks or so since February, and one more meeting will finish the book.

The reading combined with the exercises, followed by our group discussions, have given us opportunities to look at ourselves, our beliefs and behaviors. We shared backgrounds and experiences and looked at all of it through an anti-racist lens, noticing where we had failed, and how we could do things differently, going forward.

I, for one, will be sorry to see an end to our group, as I feel we have become very close. It has been an intense involvement, a deeply experiential and transformative practice. Many thanks and a big bouquet of appreciation to our facilitators, Dr. Jean Keller, and Dani Jakubowski.

From MUUSJA

Treaty People Gathering June 5-8

from Judy Foster (MUUSJA Board Member)

The Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) is co-sponsoring (with MN Power and Light and others) the Multifaith Delegation to the "Treaty People Gathering" to stop Line 3, on June 5-8, and we're inviting you to come share this experience, including cabin-camping or tent-camping with us if you wish.

Please see <https://treatypeoplegathering.com/> for complete information. If you cannot attend, you can still support the effort to stop Line 3:

- You can tell Joe Biden to stop Line 3 <https://www.stopline3.org/biden>
- You can support the water protectors with a donation https://www.honorearth.org/welcome_water_protectors
- You can support MUUSA's social justice work by donating on its website. <https://www.muusja.org/>

If, at a later date, you would be interested in joining a UUF delegation on a trip north to support the water protectors, contact Mary Ness at maryjerry6@sol.com.

Just for fun, enjoy this rendition of "No More Pipeline Blues"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjoRB7ETaGk>

Speaking of MUUSJA...

Please see this message from MUUSJA Executive Director, Karen Wills, sent on May 16, 2021:

Dear ones at SCUUF,

Just a note to say how much I enjoy reading about everything you're doing, and how incredibly pleased and proud I hope you all are for being among the first in Minnesota to affirm the 8th principle. I'm very happy to share that my hometown congregation, where I am a member, Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship in Bloomington, followed in your footsteps at our annual meeting this morning!

Of course, as Judy mentioned, in April, the MUUSJA Board became the second UU State Action Network to affirm the 8th principle. (Maryland was first.) Next month, after all of the congregations have held annual meetings, I will be posting a special celebration on the MUUSJA website about this. Congratulations and thank you! For being such amazing social justice leaders.

Karen

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. 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.