

St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship



March 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**

10:30a.m. Sunday, March 6: Coffee Talk

As COVID continues to keep us apart, please join our informal conversation on Zoom. We can share joys and concerns, upcoming plans for spring, and the usual chit chat we would enjoy during coffee time after our service. During the hour, there will be time to converse with 2 or 3 small groups of people. *Provide your own coffee.*

10:30a.m. Sunday, March 13: What If I Only Had 30 Days to Love? (Daylight Savings Time Begins Today: Spring Forward!)

The UUA provided this complete program featuring “stirring music, deep-hearted reflection, and moving testimonies from a variety of UU leaders.” All Unitarian Universalist congregations were invited to participate in this annual “Side With Love” tradition!

11:45a.m. Sunday, March 13: Listening Session

The Fellowship’s Anti-Racism Team invites you to provide feedback on changes we are considering to our SCUUF Constitution. Stay after the service or join the Zoom link at 11:45 a.m.

10:30a.m. Sunday, March 20: "Why what has been wrong with Christianity is now what's wrong with America." – Jan Linn

The presenter will use his recent book [Unbinding Christianity: Choosing the Values of Jesus over the Beliefs of the Church](#) as the basis for his presentation. Jan Linn and UUF member Judy Foster were high school classmates and she worked with him on early drafts of his book.

10:30a.m. Sunday, March 27: Generosity: The Richness of Giving – Darla Hamann, Ph.D.

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>

Generosity is an honored tradition across many cultures and eras. Generosity and its cousin, philanthropy, play a large part in the fabric of our modern cultural life. On the macro and micro levels, generosity has benefits for givers, receivers, and the society as a whole. Darla, who teaches a graduate course at SCSU on philanthropy and fundraising in nonprofit organizations, makes connections among the many strands of generosity and how it affects us all.

March President's Corner

by Lisa Bershok

While it still feels like we are in the deep freeze, hopefully as March progresses we will start to warm up so we can all come out of hibernation! COVID infection rates are dropping quickly. We need to be at a case count of 30 cases per 10,000 people to resume in-person services. As of this last Friday we were at a case count of 99 in Stearns County. While still high, this is the lowest the case count has been since the end of October. My hope is if this trend continues, we might be able to resume some services in-person before the end of our program year. For March, we will continue to meet via Zoom.

The Anti-Racism workgroup continues to meet to work on proposed language changes to our constitution. We have held listening sessions with the Board and the Social Justice Committee. We would like to now hold a listening session with the whole congregation to discuss the possible language changes. We will be holding a listening session after our Sunday service on March 13th at 11:45am. This will be held in lieu of our connection rooms. If you are joining us that Sunday for services, you will be welcome to stay tuned in to our Zoom meeting for the session. If you are not able to attend Sunday services on the 13th, but would like to attend the listening session, you can utilize the same zoom link we are using for the service. This zoom link can be found both on our SCUUF webpage and is emailed out each week to members by Judy Foster. We will present our potential language changes and have break out time in small groups to hear your thoughts and get feedback to inform our work. Our goal would be to present possible language changes for membership vote at the Annual Meeting in May. We appreciate your participation with this process!

Lastly, I would like to make you aware of an interfaith vigil that is being held on March 8th at the Sherburne County Government Center in support of the Sherburne County sheriff ending its contract with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The vigil is being planned locally by Sanctuary & Resistance to Injustice and the Interfaith Coalition on Immigration. We were prior asked by these organizations to sign on to a letter being sent to Sherburne County in support of ending the ICE contract. The SCUUF Board has prior voted to approve adding St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship to the list of organizations and businesses who support terminating the contract. We hope that those from our Fellowship who are interested in lending your voice to this cause will support attending the vigil. More information can be found to the right. An interfaith delegation will present the letter we signed to the Board of Commissioners and Sheriff Brott. The vigil will be held outdoors and will include speakers, some of whom are former detainees. Then the group will walk to the gate closest to the detainees and sing. They will finish the vigil by walking along Business Center Drive by Hwy 10.

**Please join your friends in faith
for this interfaith vigil.
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2022, 8:45am
Sherburne County Government Center
13380 Business Ctr Dr NW, Elk River, MN 55330**

ICE OUT OF SHERBURNE COUNTY
Vigil Hosted by
Sanctuary and Resistance to Injustice and the
Interfaith Coalition on Immigration



Speakers will include:
•Reverend Shari Prestemon, United Church of Christ •Greg King, Interfaith Coalition of Immigration •Bishop Craig Loya, Episcopal Church of MN •Rabbi Jill Krimmings, Bet Shalom •Kateri Mancini, Catholic Charities for the Diocese of St. Cloud •Father Tony, Catholic priest, retired •Detainees released from ICE detention

**Please bring five friends, banners with the name of
your faith community and signs demanding
ICE OUT OF SHERBURNE COUNTY.**

We hope to see you there!

Spring Directory Coming Soon - Are You In?

The Communications Committee is preparing to provide an updated Fellowship Directory to be used by members and friends wanting to contact others within the Fellowship. We need your help for the directory to be as accurate and complete as possible. We hope to include all who have been involved in recent months and/or made a pledge of financial support for the current year. We will use information from previous versions plus additions and changes that we are aware of. The directory listing for each household includes NAME of adults, ADDRESS, PHONE (Home and Cell), EMAIL ADDRESS, and FIRST NAMES of children in high school or younger who attend Fellowship programs or activities. If you have new information or if you want to opt out, contact Joel Bershok by Monday April 4th at 303-503-8964 or jebershok@gmail.com. In the middle of April the directory will be sent by email to those who are listed in it, and it will serve as the calling list in the event that we need to call everyone regarding a cancelled Sunday service or other change in schedule.

SCUUF Book Group

by Judith Siminoe

The Book Group has been able to turn a good solitary activity, reading, into a social shared discussion group meeting in different ways. We met near the Garden on a windy Saturday morning in September to discuss, *The Soul of America: The Battle for our Better Angels* by Jon Meacham. Historian, Meacham, was prompted to write by then President Trump's response to the "Unite the Right," rally in Charlottesville. He is optimistic about our ability as a nation to weather deep divisions based on his analysis of our history. Our conclusion was a little more tentative.

In November and January, we greatly appreciated Tom Hergert who was willing to support a hybrid discussion with a few of us in the Sanctuary and a few joining via zoom. First, we tackled *Why Fish Don't Exist* by Lulu Miller. This was a fable like tale of the main character's attempt to learn how a scientist was able to keep returning to his work when his research was destroyed more than once. This was an unexpected treasure of a thought-provoking book, something few of us would have read but we all enjoyed. In January we talked about *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak. The book provides us the opportunity to get more acquainted with Death, who serves as narrator. A unique perspective of life in a German town during WW II with a child heroine who is resilient and endearing.

We next meet at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday March 26 to discuss *This is how it always is* by Laurie Frankel. The book is about a family including five brothers, and how they protect the youngest of them, who wants to be a girl. *This Is How It Always Is*, a novel about revelations, transformations, fairy tales, and family. And it's about the ways this is how it always is: Change is always hard and miraculous and hard again, parenting is always a leap into the unknown with crossed fingers and full hearts, children grow but not always according to plan. And families with secrets don't get to keep them forever.

Our final selection this spring at a date in May or June, will be to talk about Richard Powers' most recent book, *Bewilderment*. If you have not been receiving the email messages from Judith Siminoe about the book group, please send her a message so you can be added at dot_parker@yahoo.com.

The SCUUF Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, May 20th, 2022, from 6-8pm. Location to be determined based on COVID case rates. Our hope is to hold it in-person if the case rate is low enough to do so. If not, like last year we will hold it virtually. If held in person, a final decision on whether we will hold dinner at 5pm will need to also be made. Currently our re-opening guidelines do not allow for the serving of food. Mark the date on your calendars and look to the April newsletter for more information.

The SCUUF April Board meeting is being moved to Sunday, April 10th at 9am due to our regularly scheduled meeting occurring on Easter. We continue to meet virtually. If you are interested in attending, please contact Lisa Bershok for the meeting invite. If you have any Board agenda items, please forward to Lisa Bershok by April 6th.

Call for Volunteers!

The Communications Committee is seeking volunteers to help with recording our Sunday Services to your own computer and possibly editing and prepping the recordings for publishing on our website. Training will be available. Contact Tom Hergert at tom.hergert@gmail.com.

March Meditation

by Helen Manion

On Saturday, March 5, 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. This room is large enough for our group to practice social distancing. Please wear a mask (but okay to pull your mask down when you are speaking). Our readings and reflections will be about moderation and the middle way.

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

UU Common Read

by Judith Siminoe

Each year the UUA chooses a book and develops resources around it. This year the common read is *Defund Fear: Safety without Policing, Prisons, and Punishment* by Zach Norris. Resources were released in January including a one-hour discussion you can find on the [UUA Common Read](#) website. The author shifts the conversation about public safety away from fear and punishment and toward growth and support systems for our families and communities. In *Defund Fear*, Norris explores what has gone wrong, and why, and who has been most impacted by repressive and racist policing systems. He offers a new blueprint for public safety that holds people accountable while still holding them in community. Norris is a lawyer, a community organizer, and Executive Director of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights in Oakland, CA. [Learn about the Center's work](#) and [read his bio](#). I plan to read the book and will be willing to schedule a discussion about it in the summer or fall if anyone is interested in participating. If you are, please send me a message or give me a call.

Membership Committee

by Marge Bates

I have been requested to set up Circle Dinners again for those who may be interested. The same formula will be followed. Each group is responsible for their own dates, etc. The only request I have is that there are no requests. If you would like to have dinner with someone, invite them, but this is not what Circle Dinners are designed to do. If you are interested, please contact Marge Bates by March 15 (yes, the Ides) and include whether children would be included. I will not put more than 6 people in a group. My email is Margbates@gmail.com or you can call me at 320-267-3590. You can determine if masks will be required.

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).

MUUSJA/8th Principle Report

by Judy Foster, MUUSJA Board Co-chair

How would you like to attend a Board Meeting of the MN UU Social Justice Alliance? Connect with Board members, ask your questions, share your thoughts? Meetings are usually on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Contact me if you would like to attend.

A Date with Possibility:

We can look at the 8th Principle as a call to spiritual and cultural transformation.

We can look at the 8th Principle as an invitation from Unitarian Universalists to people who are seeking or interested in a progressive spiritual community.

What is possible? Where does the 8th Principle potentially take us in the future?

“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.”

There are now 155 adoptions of the 8th Principle 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.