

# St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship

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## May 2021

All services are online at this time. Please visit [www.uufstcloud.org](http://www.uufstcloud.org) for the Zoom information to join

### **10:30 a.m. Sunday, May 2: "Letting Go of the Pain" – Rev Karen Hutt**

Why do we hold things in? Why do we resist grief and sadness? Many of us have learned about the stages of grief but have mixed experiences repurposing grief into our narrative. Come and explore what it means to dive into the pain to obtain new processes to process suffering and pain.

### **10:00 (10:15) a.m. Sunday, May 9: "Matriarchy, the Sacred Feminine, and a Re-balance from Exclusive Patriarchy" - Professor Mary Clifford**

UUC Willmar invites SCUUF to join them for this Mother's Day service. Joys & Concerns will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the formal meeting about 10:15.

### **10:30 a.m. Sunday, May 16: Flower Celebration - UUF Program Committee**

We will be celebrating how the diversity of flora inspires the diversity of our emotions, connectedness, and engagement with one another. We will also reflect on ways we have supported nurturing a diverse community, and the meaning our Fellowship provides to us. We encourage everyone to place their flower next to them, so it is visible to all during our zoom service.

### **9:00 a.m. Sunday, May 23: 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/summer, and the usual chit chat we would enjoy during coffee time after our service. *Provide your own coffee.*

### **10:00 (10:15) a.m. May 23: Presentation focused on books by Kurt Andersen**

UUC Willmar invites SCUUF to join their service. Joys & Concerns will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the formal meeting about 10:15. Kurt Andersen is an American writer and host of the Peabody-winning public radio program [Studio 360](#). In 2017, he published [Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire: A 500-Year history](#). In August 2020, he published [Evil Geniuses: The Unmaking of America](#), which examines the coordinated efforts to achieve conservative economical and political changes in the United States from the 1970s to 2020.

**Informal activities may take place during the summer. Weekly Sunday Services will resume on September 12.**

## May President's Corner

by Ozzie Mayers

*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."*

Charles Dickens from A Tale of Two Cities

I need not elaborate on Dickens' expressions of "the worst of time," since we have all lived through this past year. But, I do want to say that this Fellowship has shown the "best of times" as well. As President over the past two years, I have had the privilege of witnessing these "best of times." I have seen the resilience of the Board Members, Committee Chairs (including leaders of the Meditation, Book Discussion, and the Anniversary Planning Committee), and members of the Fellowship. Only through the efforts of all of us have we managed to maintain

connections to one another—be it remotely mostly; I also want to commend Jessica Beierman and Judy Foster for providing us with the Newsletter and weekly messages. And also I commend Tom Hergert, Jim Hixson, and Lisa Bershok for their technological expertise; having them as in-house Zoom teachers has been a gift, especially to someone like me who learns such matters very slowly. I appreciate their patience.

**As an appreciation for all of your efforts, I have planted a tree in the MN Reforestation Project; the tree will be planted in the Superior National Forest in the name of the St. Cloud UU Fellowship. I hope this gift is a living symbol of our joint efforts to keep our Mission and Vision alive.**

Now the latest updates from the Board:

- the Ad Hoc Anniversary Planning Committee is well on its way to completing the plans for our celebration in the Fall; the Committee will meet on September 19<sup>th</sup> for its final deliberations;
- an update on the Nominations for next year's leadership positions was provided by Lisa Bershok; all Board positions and Committee Chairs have been recruited with the exception of the President Elect; the Terms for all officers begin June 1<sup>st</sup>, following their election.
- Lisa Bershok also announced that this year's Leadership Retreat will be held via Zoom on June 5<sup>th</sup>; details will be provided closer to that date.
- the following motion was approved by the Board

*"After exploring possible options for SCUUF to purchase, repurpose, and occupy a building at 300 East St. Germain on St. Cloud's East Side, the Building Options Committee has agreed that this building is not a good option for the future of the Fellowship. Several factors affected this decision, not the least of which are elements connected to the COVID-19 pandemic. **We recommend that we suspend all activity toward pursuing building options, in our current building or at other locations, until we are meeting again in person and have re-acclimated to operating as a face-to-face community.**"*

The Board thanks the members of and consultants to the Ad Hoc Building Options Committee for their efforts on behalf of the Fellowship.

- in conjunction with this decision, the Board also approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Reopening Committee to help us prepare for the time when we can re-open. This Committee will be led by Linda Saupe and Lisa Bershok and will base its recommendations from MDH as well as scientific information. Fellowship members will have an opportunity to hear from this Committee and to voice concerns and questions at our Annual Meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

The Board also approved the Agenda proposal by me for the Annual Meeting; copies of the agenda will be sent to Board Members and Committee Chairs. Also, members who lack reliable access to technology may come to the Fellowship to participate with the assistance of Jim Hixson or Tom Hergert. Please let one of them know if you do intend to come to the

Fellowship. **Keep in mind that we are asking only those who cannot access the Annual Meeting via Zoom to come to the Fellowship for that meeting.** The Board also approved a motion to authorize Jim Hixson and Tom Hergert to acquire equipment up to \$500 to assure for the future likelihood that we might need to expand to the Fellowship Hall for Hybrid Services.

This is my final President's Corner. The Fellowship is very fortunate to have Lisa Bershok assuming the Presidency for next year; she will bring invaluable guidance and insight that I have appreciated as we have worked together these past two years.

### **Important Dates**

**May 7<sup>th</sup>: Annual Meeting via Zoom**

**May 16<sup>th</sup>: Last meeting of Current Board**

**June 5<sup>th</sup>: Leadership Retreat via Zoom**

### **Possible Summer Activities**

*by Pam Peterson, Program Committee Co-chair*

The Program Committee is not yet sure of the guidelines from our Board regarding summer activities. However, we are suggesting that we might consider possible activities such as the following with a contact person for each activity:

- Visit member gardens - Pam Peterson
- Picnic or hike in a park - Charlotte Stephens
- Activities for children and families - Jessica Beierman & Melissa Woods
- Talent Show (via Zoom)
- Canoe or kayak activity
- Bike trip
- Meditation

Please let me know what other activities you might recommend and activities for which you would be willing to serve as the contact person. Then we'll see what the Board recommends in May and go from there....You can contact me at 320-224-4448 or Home at 320-982-2360.

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

### **General Assembly**

*by Ozzie Mayers, President*

If you are interested in attending this year's Virtual General Assembly (June 23-27), you can find the link for registration at <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>. Keep in mind that you can request financial assistance for the registrations (\$200) by sending a request to the Board. Our policy is that if you do receive funding, you are expected to provide information to relevant Fellowship Committees or the Board that you feel is helpful to their work.

## **Re-Opening Committee**

*by Linda Saupe & Lisa Bershok*

The SCUUF Board has approved a temporary committee to provide recommendations that will provide guidance about our re-opening process. The committee will utilize UUA and MN Department of Health guidelines, as well as local data provided by the state on infection rates. The committee will examine recommendations for services (including in-person and hybrid), summer activities, technology, food/drink, meetings on-site, weddings & funerals and many other intricacies that come with hosting in-person events again. The goal will be to have recommendations to the Board over the next few months for approval. Recommendations will allow for the Board to take action as approved, and will include the ability to turn the dials up and down (to borrow from Governor Walz). We need to be prepared as a congregation that it may still take time to be able to host larger numbers in our fellowship building given the size and inability to have a number of people still socially distanced. We also need to take into account the efficacy of vaccine research and the fact breakthrough infections can occur even after vaccination. Our hope is that infection rates stabilize in the future so we can return to in-person even if it may be a hybrid model. But, we must also prepare that we could meet in person only to see infection rates change and a return to virtual services having to occur. Our guidance to the board will include plans to accommodate this. The committee will be co-chaired by Linda Saupe & Lisa Bershok. Additional members include: Angela Stevens, Jim Hixson, Tom Hergert, and Judith Siminoe. If you have questions you would like to pose to the committee, or information you would like us to take into account as we work on the recommendations, please contact Linda Saupe at [linda.saupe@gmail.com](mailto:linda.saupe@gmail.com).

## **Coming Your Way Soon! Celebrating 60 Years of the Existence of the SCUUF**

*by Lois Head, Chair of the Anniversary Planning Committee*

Save these dates! Whether we must Zoom or can meet Face to Face, we will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in three autumn Sunday mornings. On Sunday, October 10, our focus will be on Honoring Our Founders. On Sunday, November 7, we will focus on Celebrating Our Major Events: Fundraising for Buildings and Ministers. On Sunday, December 5, we will focus on Looking Forward to the Future: Teaching Our Children and Ongoing Development of Community.

On each of these Sundays, the 60th Anniversary Committee members will share with you historical information and photographs excavated from our Archives, stories of how we came to have and to be what and who we are, the impact that our liberal presence has had on our young people and our community, and our excitement about the growth we have experienced from our beginnings as a discussion group to our current recognition as an influence for Seeking Truth, Building Community, and Promoting Justice.

We on the Committee felt that we had so much to celebrate that we needed all three Sundays to strut our stuff! So, plan to participate in all three of these Sunday meetings to relive the stages of our growth and all the fun we've had maturing into the organization that we are today. We have surprises to share that will make you glad that you are a part of this group as we acknowledge our past and current leaders and honor their contributions.

All three Sunday meetings will be preceded and followed by Power Point presentations so plan to come early (starting at 10:00 a.m.) and stay late (for an additional one-half hour) to enjoy the slides and then, if the pandemic guidelines in place at that time will allow us, we will have old-fashioned meals and fellowship together following the presentations.

## Are We Ready for an 8<sup>th</sup> Principle?

by Judy Foster

I assume you are all familiar with the UUA 7 Principles (<https://www.uufstcloud.org/principles-and-sources-of-the-uua>). On Feb. 27, at the UUA New Day Rising Conference, I was introduced to a proposed 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, which has been under discussion for years, but somehow hadn't gotten on our SCUUF radar. The Black Lives UU group had proposed the following 8<sup>th</sup> UU Principle:

**“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 way this works in the UUA is that congregations consider and decide whether to adopt the principle in “principle” or in “spirit,” without endorsing the specific language. See this website <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>, and be sure to read the Background section. When enough congregations have adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> principle, it goes to the national General Assembly for consideration as an 8<sup>th</sup> UU Principle. It must be approved at two GAs before it becomes official, and the final language is determined there.

On April 15, the Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) became the second State Action Network (<https://cuusan.org/>) in the nation to affirm and promote the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. The MUUSJA Executive Board (on which I serve) felt strongly that, given how Minnesota has been in, not only the national, but the international spotlight, when it comes to racism in policing, we should be on the front line supporting this Principle.

When the SCUUF Anti-Racism Team met on April 9, we agreed with MUUSJA's decision for the same reason. We will be bringing the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle to the Annual Meeting on May 7 for your consideration. Please review the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle website and come to the Annual Meeting prepared to discuss this proposal

## Anti-Racism Work Group

by Hanni Epp

Thanks to Judy Foster for taking on our newsletter entry, in addition to the many other jobs she shoulders. Still working at peek and peck speed and style, but I'm glad to have that much to work with.

Our Group's involvement in Racial Justice Convenings, Beloved Conversations trainings, New Day Rising Conference, Anti-Semitism training and several other conferences and trainings has given us substantial information to move our work forward. We continue to be engaged with some of these groups and will provide feedback to you when it is available. We hope to focus on two models for organizational change, bringing this information for discussion to our leadership retreat in June. We think that adapting one of these models to our Fellowship's needs will guide us as we strive toward our goal of dismantling white supremacy and becoming truly anti-racist, individually and as a Fellowship. A number of people in our Fellowship are participating in community meetings and groups involved in racial justice. This is really great, and if you have been involved in these meetings, we would love to hear from you, so that we can all benefit and learn.

Contact any one of us, Hanni Epp, Judy Foster, Lisa Bershok or Jean Keller – we'd be happy to hear from you.

## SCUUF Book Club News

by Marcia Neely

Our book club will read Elizabeth Strout's Pulitzer prize winning novel *Olive Kitteridge* and discuss it on Saturday, May 22 at 10:00.

Thanks to Judith Siminoe who has volunteered to lead our book club following the May meeting.

## **CRE News**

*by Jessica Beierman*

We had planned another CRE gathering at Quarry Park to walk the rest of the paths on Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, but the weather made us postpone this.

We moved the hike to Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1 pm - All are welcome to join us!

If you'd like to be added to the email list to be reminded of CRE events, please email [woods.melissa11@gmail.com](mailto:woods.melissa11@gmail.com).

## **Walking Meditation in May**

*by Lucinda Hudson*

On May 15<sup>th</sup> (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 during the walking meditation time (about 20 minutes). Children and families are very welcome too. If you would like further information, please contact Lucinda at [lucindahudson9@gmail.com](mailto:lucindahudson9@gmail.com) or 320-224-5440. Please bring a mask, and we will be practicing social distancing for this gathering.

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 also 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.

## **Support your pledge-drive-free Fellowship in 2021**

*from Budget & Finance Committee*

In 2020 and 2021 we faced new challenges, unlike any in our Fellowship's 60-year history. A year ago, in the early months of the pandemic, with all the changes it required, we decided to forego a traditional themed Pledge Drive. The challenges continue, and we have decided not to hold a Pledge Drive this spring either.

We are pleased and relieved to note that many members and friends have continued to support the Fellowship through periodic donations. Now we are asking all members and friends to help sustain the Fellowship with your financial support by continuing previous pledge contributions or by making a new pledge or one-time donation. You can donate through our website, [uufstcloud.org](http://uufstcloud.org), or make your checks payable to SCUUF. Information on how to donate is posted during our online Zoom gatherings. To send your check, make a pledge for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, or get more information, please email or write to Treasurer Ralph Carr:

Email: [treasurer@uufstcloud.org](mailto:treasurer@uufstcloud.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.*