

St. Cloud UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Fellowship



January 2023

10:30 a.m. Sunday, January 1: Letting Go and Looking Ahead with Intention

As the new year begins, this participatory program invites you to look back and look ahead. What do you want to let go of? What are your hopes for the new year? The Program Committee will present some reflections and historical context. There will be something for all ages. Join us to begin the new year together.

10:30 a.m. Sunday, January 8: "Loving Our Neighbors Experiencing Homelessness and Poverty" – Nancy Dyson

What are the struggles of people experiencing homelessness and poverty in the St. Cloud area? As people of faith, how can we make a difference in the lives of our neighbors? Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the need in our community? Let's talk about where we can start and the first steps we can take to transform lives! (And the lives we change may be our own!)

To help, bring quarters and/or meal items for Laundry Love! (Coffee, paper plates, paper bowl, plastic forks and spoons, paper towels, napkins, hot and cold cups)

10:30 a.m. Sunday, January 15: Principles or Values? Where is Unitarian Universalism Headed? – Kay Slama

UUC Willmar is hosting this program. Joys & Concerns will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the formal service at 10:30. Learn about the UUA's multi-year process to review and update Article II, which includes our guiding Principles, Sources, and Purposes. What's new? How is this related to the 8th Principle initiative? How will UU congregations be affected by the proposed changes? What do you think about the changes? Breakout discussion will take place at the SCUUF building and on Zoom.

Sunday services are presented in the Fellowship building and on Zoom.

See article on the next page regarding whether presenters will be in person or on ZOOM.

Visit www.uufstcloud.org for information to join on Zoom.

Masks are recommended in the building. Coffee/tea will be served following the services.

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>

10:30 a.m. Sunday, January 22: “Prayers for a Feverish Planet” – Ann DuHamel, piano

This program by pianist Ann DuHamel will include works selected from her latest project “Prayers for a Feverish Planet” that features 60 new works for piano and piano/electronics about climate change. Some pieces quote from older hymns and have the theme of meditation. She will be with us on the morning after her Chamber Music Society of St. Cloud concert.

10:30 a.m. Sunday, January 29: “The Art of Suffering” – Rev. Shelley Dugan

“Life is suffering” according to the Buddha. Pain is everywhere. It impacts every aspect of our human lives – physical, spiritual, emotional, financial, relational. It can even change our personality and identity. Unbelievable amounts of money, time, and energy are spent every year in an effort to escape pain, with varying degrees of success. Our culture, especially marketing, suggests that people are wrong to experience suffering, and they just happen to have the thing that will make that pain go away! Yet the truth is, we are all hurting. Join us as we examine pain and how it affects each of us. It should be a relatively pain-free service!

Program Presenters: In Person or on Zoom?

From the Program Committee

As we continue to offer hybrid programs, some members have requested to know whether the Sunday Service presenters will be at the Fellowship building or participating on Zoom. While that seems like a simple request, responding to it is not so easy. The Program Committee gives presenters both options. At the time when the monthly newsletter is prepared we don’t always know which they will choose. And their plans sometimes change. For example, during November one presenter who had planned to be in person decided to present on Zoom, and another presenter who had planned to be on Zoom decided to come in person.

The Program Committee appreciates the additional opportunities Zoom provides for us to have a greater variety of presenters, and we hope you do too. We also like the flexibility for presenters to be with us even when the weather or other circumstances interfere with them coming to our building on Sunday morning. Even when the presenter is not in the Fellowship building, some elements of the Sunday Service take place at the building. We hope all of you find the experience meaningful whether you choose to come to the building or attend on Zoom, and whether the presenter is in person or on Zoom. We thank the Tech Team for making this multiplatform opportunity possible.

Going forward, the program committee will do our best to include information in the newsletter about what we know of each presenter’s intention. If there is a change in plans, we will attempt to have that included in the weekend announcement that Judy sends by email. Even then, plans can change at the last minute, and you may find that the program is different than your expectation.

For January, we expect presenters will be at the building, except for January 15. Even then there will be an opportunity for in-person interaction as part of the program Willmar is presenting.

President's Corner

By Pam Peterson

Greetings to you, Beloveds. As we conclude this season of holidays and celebration, I hope you encountered joy in your time together with family and friends. I look forward to our programs and activities resuming. It's exciting to have larger groups and visitors at the Fellowship as we continue to have stable numbers on Zoom.

I want to thank Julie Peters for attending the Kwanza celebration as our representative. She read a blessing and observed a crowd of a couple hundred people. Both dancing and drumming were a part of the event. World Religions Day will be observed on the afternoon of Saturday, January 21 at St. Cloud Library's Mississippi Room. At this point, we are co-sponsors with members of the Baha'i Faith. We hope other faith groups will participate. I attended the planning meeting and will continue working on the event and will announce updates during January.

On January 15th, we will have a presentation by Kay Slama from Willmar. She will present the UUA's process of reviewing and updating Article II, which includes our guiding Principles, Sources and Purposes. She'll explain about how this fits with the 8th Principle Initiative. There will be an opportunity to discuss this in breakout groups. I highly encourage you to attend.

I continue to share information from the book *GROWING A BELOVED COMMUNITY* by Tom Owen-Towle. The 6th hallmark of a healthy congregation is "Balance Justice and Joy." E.B. White capitalizes the balancing act like this: "I arise in the morning, torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world, and a desire to enjoy (or savor) the world. This makes it hard to plan the day. A healthy congregation is asked to save and savor its world in harmony with each other. We need to 'juggle' moments of both duty and delight. Sometimes they turn out to be one and the same—as when we celebrate justly and do justice work joyfully. Or as the Zuni people phrase it, 'We dance for pleasure and the good of the city'". (p. 43)

We can consider whether we are "a saving force or a serving faith. Or some of both?" (p.43) I really connect with what Rev. Scott Alexander has said as he "exhorts our congregations to 'help save the human enterprise at every level: myself, others, our culture, and the planet.'" (p. 43) Love is an activity, a feeling contained in our actions. We need to strive to serve our world using our abilities and our enthusiasm that enables us to experience big or small victories.

The image of a puzzle brings the balance of justice and joy into focus. "We all have a pocketful of puzzle pieces, representing the skills and experiences we contribute to the common good. I can pocket my pieces, hoarding them, or I can play them. If I do a cost-benefit analysis of working for social justice, I might never play these pieces, because it takes a leap of faith to step up to the table of history and say 'I'm willing to commit myself to making changes.' There are no guarantees, and we can't see the cover of the box to know where to place the pieces or how the pattern will come out, To play these pieces means to play with faith, knowing we may never see the frame constructed in our lifetime. Perhaps some of the puzzle I work on will never be completed. But I need to play my pieces anyway." (p. 45) Confidently, play the pieces you were given. Consider what speaks to you and do that. When we're excited about our compassionate work, great things can happen. "Indeed, serving and savoring are often wed." (p. 46) At the same time, we need to be flexible so we can change as needs or priorities change. "In recent times, . . . we've been melding spirituality with activism (what the Buddhists call 'engage spirituality') and our servanthood has grown more holistic and realistic." (p. 46)

We need to give our service with joy—this means practicing such habits as parties at the Fellowship, meditation or yoga or other endeavors to refill our bucket as we dole it out to others. We stay more flexible when we are joyful. Being positive and upbeat gives us resilience and perspective when we're doing important Fellowship work. As UU's, we need to do more than Duty! Duty! Work! Work! We need to balance it with Joy! Joy! Delight! Delight! And hope we strive as UU's "To be hopeful, lifelong carriers of JUSTICE and JOY." (p. 50)

Let's have fun with something new!

By Brenda Graves on behalf of the Caring Committee

Do you miss the SCUUF friends you aren't seeing? Join us for "Cheerful Conversations" centered around pleasant topics. Starting in January, every third Tuesday of the month, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., we will meet on Zoom. The January 17th topic will be, "If you had a round trip ticket to anywhere, where would you go and why?" If you would like to attend, e-mail Brenda Graves for the Zoom link. Her email address can be found in the SCUUF Fall Directory.

Book club news

By Judith Siminoe

Our next meeting will be **Saturday, January 28 at 10:00** at the Fellowship and on Zoom. If you wish to participate, send me a poem you would like to share with the group by email, text, or U.S. Postal Service to arrive by **January 13**. I will make copies and distribute them to members who have expressed interest in the book discussions so everyone will have several days to read through them and formulate questions, comments, and observations. Let me know of any book selections you would like us to consider for future meetings.

January meditation

By Helen Manion

Meditation will be held at the Fellowship at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, **January 7**. Masks are recommended in the building. Meditation will include Joys and Concerns, some reflections on compassion and forgiveness, and 20 minutes of silent meditation. There will be time at the end for sharing our thoughts. For those who would like to stay a bit longer, there will be tea and coffee available and an opportunity to visit.

Do you love to sing?

By Jane Ellison

We are looking for SCUUF members who would be interested in forming a very small UU choir with Alan Phillips as our choir director. No tryouts required. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. If we get enough people to create a small choir, we will determine how often and when we will practice. Let me know (at jrellison53@gmail.com) if you might be interested!

Good wishes and thanks

By Marge Bates on behalf of the Membership Committee

The Membership Committee hopes you and yours have had a great winter break. As our weekly Sunday services resume, we wish to thank those who attend in person and stay for coffee/tea for returning your cups to the dishwasher. Thanks also to the Program Committee for the great programs and to the Technology Committee who make this all happen.

Communications report

By Judy Foster

We have been making updates to our website: <https://www.uufstcloud.org/>. We need to hear from committee chairs for any updates to their sections and for anyone in the congregation for suggestions.

In addition, we want to remind folks to send any oral announcements for a Sunday service in advance to President Pam Peterson at pamelda@gmail.com. Announcements should be UU related and no more than a couple of sentences.

Thank you to Marcia Neely for her work on the newsletter, our primary mode of internal communication, and Shari Gieseke for her work on the website, our primary mode of public information. Contacts are: newsletter@uufstcloud.org and webmaster@uufstcloud.org.

8th Principle and Article II

By Judy Foster

My understanding from the MUUSJA (MN UU Social Justice Alliance) annual meeting presentation by Paula Cole Jones on Dec. 6 is that: (1) the 8th Principle is more of a grassroots (bottom up) process and the Article II process is more of a top-down proposal from an appointed commission; (2) the Article II proposal, which eliminates Principles, incorporates the 8th Principle in spirit and content, if not in specific wording. Cole Jones recommends that the 8th Principle approval process move forward in parallel to the Article II process.

Since SCUUF has approved the 8th Principle, we should turn our attention to the Article II proposal, which was included in full in the December Newsletter. See <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/blog/8thprinciple>.

Sad News from the Caring Committee

We just learned that **Chuck Head** died December 17 in Auckland, New Zealand, at the age of 82. Chuck and Lois had decided not to cancel their trip to New Zealand and Australia even though Chuck had fallen and broken his neck on October 20, and then had a pacemaker implanted and the neck mended. After a couple of days of sightseeing, Chuck fell ill and died in his sleep. He was a 40-year member of the Fellowship and served as our Buildings and Grounds Chairperson years ago. Plans will be announced at a later date for a Service of Commitment for the interment of Chuck's ashes at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Little Falls and a Memorial Service in St. Cloud in the spring. An obituary, which Chuck had mostly prepared years ago, is available on the St. Cloud Times website: <https://www.sctimes.com/obituaries/sct072704>. Lois requests that people not call her, but you can reach her by email or postal mail.

Eileen Larsen's son, Darren, notified Doug Polley that she died on October 27. She had moved from St. Cloud to live with Darren near Little Falls after being diagnosed with lung cancer. Eileen began attending the Fellowship about 10 years ago and she started our first Covenant Group. She also served as Program Chair for one year and attended Sunday Services regularly until the pandemic. Darren said "The nurses did an absolutely amazing job helping me keep her comfortable ... As you know traditional church wasn't her 'thing' so there will be no wake or funeral. No announcement in the paper. We will have a private, family celebration of her life at some point in the future. I will also place a head stone next to my Dad up at St Thomas of the Pines by Maddens resort ... As for a memorial, please do what you think she would have liked."

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 in-person and 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 in-person and Zoom meetings. Please send an e-mail to calendar@uufstcloud.org if you have any questions.

Tom Hergert has agreed to be the contact for the Zoom license and will provide a tutorial for anyone needing to learn how to host a Zoom meeting. His contact information can be found in the UUF Directory.

WELCOMING CONGREGATION: We are a welcoming congregation that seeks to be a spiritual home for people of free faith. We value the full range of human diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, affectional/sexual orientation, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, and ability.

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3226 Maine Prairie Rd.
P.O. Box 805, St. Cloud, MN 56302
320-252-0020
www.uufstcloud.org