

# NUUs Letter

Volume 23, No. 5 - December 2020

Northwoods Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship

8625 Peggy's Lane, P.O. Box 1881,  
Woodruff, WI 54568



[www.nuuf.com](http://www.nuuf.com)

## A virtual chalice lighting: *The Persistent Flame*

By Amy Brooks

Even as the days grow shorter,  
and our homes shrink smaller,  
and our wicks burn lower,  
and our will to endure flickers,

we light this chalice  
to kindle a flame of warmth  
as a reminder  
of the connection that draws us in  
to a community that opens us up

in gratitude  
for the breath in our lungs  
and the love in our hearts,  
for the gift of this day,  
alive.

For more information contact  
[worshipweb@uua.org](mailto:worshipweb@uua.org).

## Upcoming Services

Dec. 6, Kate Rahimzadeh, "There's  
Something About the Dark"

"Darkness deserves gratitude. It is the  
alleluia point at which we learn to  
understand that all growth does not take  
place in the sunlight."

From the book *Uncommon Gratitude* by  
Sister Joan Chittister and the Archbishop  
of Canterbury Rowan William.

Dec. 20, the Rev. Denise Tracy

Jan. 3, the Rev. Mary Beth O'Halloran

Jan. 17, Ted Rulseh

[www.nuuf.com/services](http://www.nuuf.com/services).



## Sunday Discussions for December

All at 11 a.m. via Zoom — watch for invitations in emails

Dec. 13 and Dec. 20 – Campanile Concert or discussion of “holiday memories.” Schedule depends upon release date (TBD) of the Campanile Concert

## Announcements

For distribution of announcements between newsletters or email/address corrections, contact Candy Sorensen at [sorencan@yahoo.com](mailto:sorencan@yahoo.com)

## Milestones

Natalia Graf	12-08
Cathy Peterson	12-14
Guthrie Linder	12-15
Laurie Figueroa	12-20
Suzy Foster	12-27
Marilyn Hendry	12-27
Dana Collins	12-30
Peter Frost	12-31

Do you see a mistake that can be corrected? If so, please contact Candy Sorensen at (715) 892-2997 or [sorencan@yahoo.com](mailto:sorencan@yahoo.com) Thanks!

## Highlights

This new initiative will highlight two NUUF members a month. Hopefully we can all learn a bit about one another and stay connected during the pandemic. Members will be contacted and asked to write a brief autobiography. Highlights will resume in January.

## Upcoming Events

- The **Sunday Morning Discussion Group**, co-chaired by Mary Beth O'Halloran and Mary Ann Fields, meets every Sunday morning, by Zoom, at 11:00 A.M. The Sunday we have a virtual service, the topic will be a discussion on the sermon and the alternate Sunday will be a topic to be determined. All are welcome to attend the Zoom meeting.  
Candy will send an invitation to the Fellowship to attend the Zoom meeting.

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- Frederick Place in Rhinelander has a sizeable number of dates open for meals. If you can help out with one of these dates you can either call Frederick Place at 715-369-9777 or email Tammy Modic at [tammymodic.frederickplace@gmail.com](mailto:tammymodic.frederickplace@gmail.com)
  - Hello all UUs in the North,  
Hope you are all faring well during this difficult period of staying at home for everyone's safety. Some of the Care Committee and Board would like to continue our calling, emailing, and writing cards to all NUUF members to keep in touch with each other and offer friendship and support.  
However, we need some new "blood" or volunteers to pitch in for this effort. So, if you like chatting on the phone, or getting to know other members better, and would be willing to take a list of half a dozen people to contact weekly, please email either Toni Polus or Pam Thul-Immler.  
Thank you so much!  
Toni is at: [skipols@newnorth.net](mailto:skipols@newnorth.net)  
Pam is at: [ptimmler@gmail.com](mailto:ptimmler@gmail.com)
  - **The Spirituality Committee** — Spirituality Committee meeting for Jan. 11th at 10 a.m. by Zoom. If interested in attending please contact Nancy Johnson
  - **Social Justice Committee** meeting for Jan. 13, at 10 a.m. by Zoom. If interested in attending, please contact Nancy Johnson or Cheryl Hanson.
  - The **Northwoods Community Garden** in Rhinelander has broken ground! We have dug the beds and are trying to get as much done before winter as possible so we can be ready for gardeners in the spring. We've had several volunteer work parties and about half of the 48 plots have been spoken for already. Ann Sorensen and the fundraising team has initiated a one-month fundraising effort with a national grant program that may match a portion of the donations. It ends in mid December. We need about \$8,000 to hit our initial goals for fencing, raised beds, a shed and other infrastructure. If you'd like to contribute (no pressure), here's a link:  
<https://donate.seedmoney.org/4792/northwoods-community-garden-and-permaculture-training-center>  
Thanks! Mike Haasl  
To see the garden and learn more, please watch our fundraising video:  
<https://fb.watch/23kzMbAuE9/>
  - **Friends of Fair Trade,**  
In need of some more energy? Looking for some sweetness? Of course you are! And you can help small farmers in the process. Order some Fair Trade coffee, chocolate, or tea. We need to get enough special orders to receive free shipping.

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Attached is the list of items. In ordering coffee,  
 >> Be sure to specify ground/drip or whole bean.  
 >> Note the difference between a BOX of six 10-12 oz. bags, and a CASE of five 2-pound bags (or it may be two 5-pound bags)  
 Let me know what you'd like. When I get enough orders, I'll let you know that I will be submitting it. When the order arrives, we can arrange for safe pick up and payment.  
 Thanks for supporting Fair Trade for small farmers.  
 David and Phyllis  
 david.barnhill.925@gmail.com>uu m

- **Women's Group** meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 10:00am by zoom. December's topic is holiday traditions. All women of the Fellowship are invited. Bring your cup of Christmas tea.
- **Caritas-Minocqua** is a charitable organization established by local churches and civic groups in the Lakeland area. We assist people with paying small bills in emergency situations. We are closed for all face-to-face sessions with clients; however, we are now conducting interviews by telephone on Thursday mornings from 9-noon.  
 You must first leave a message on our voicemail at 715-356-9989. Your message should contain the following information. Please speak clearly and slowly. We need  
 your first and last name, your phone number, whether you are a new client or a returning client, and a very brief statement of your urgent need or how we can help you. Please be patient and we will call you to arrange an interview. Stay safe.

If you can be an empathic listener and want to make a difference in our community and the lives of our residents, this may be the volunteer opportunity for you! If interested, please contact our director, Beth Jacobson at [bjgraphic2@gmail.com](mailto:bjgraphic2@gmail.com).

- Jennifer LaPorte, St. Kate Hospice Chaplain, has presented services at our Fellowship in the past. She informed us that she is "available for pastoral care/meeting with any folks who may be in need of a chaplain during this time." To set up a meeting with her call 715-240-0120.
- **The Membership Committee** that oversees communications is making the following request of committee chairs. We would ask that you be responsible for sending communications directly to your committee members rather than sending them through Candy. We would also like to ask you to submit any committee news to our NUUsLetter editor, Carly Ratliff [carly.j.ratliff@gmail.com](mailto:carly.j.ratliff@gmail.com). When submitting

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things to the NUUSLetter please use a font that is easier to read. And we would also like you to send notice of your meetings so they can be placed on the NUUF.COM calendar. These should go to Jason Hoff [ic\\_boy@yahoo.com](mailto:ic_boy@yahoo.com). If you have any questions, please call me at 715-614-0088. Thanks for your help in improving communication.

## **Book Review** written by Ed Stoever

THIS IS A CALL TO ACTION! “WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY, AND HE IS US!” Those are the words of the immortal comic strip character Pogo, appearing in newspapers from 1948 to 1975. They are also the words that came to my mind as I read this book that I am recommending strongly that you read. We have met the enemy, and he is us, but I have also come to recognize that the enemy is “I,” and so will you. The inspiring and hopeful message is that “I,” and all of “We,” working together can address and conquer this enemy.

### ***THE UPSWING: How America Came Together A Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again***

By Robert D. Putnam and Shaylyn Romney Garrett, October 13, 2020.

No one will dispute the fact that at the present time our nation is severely divided, and in danger of dissolution. The authors of this book present, “. . . a sweeping overview of the last 125 years of American history. Drawing on a combination of statistical analysis and story-telling, Robert Putnam analyzes a remarkable confluence of trends that brought us from an “I” society to a “We” society and then back again to where we are today. Drawing on inspiring lessons from an earlier era when a dedicated group of reformers righted the ship, putting us on a path to becoming a society once again based on community, the authors offer strong suggestions on how we can do this again. (Material in quotes is from a description in Amazon.)

Robert the Putnam is the Malkin Research Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University and a former Dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government. Nationally honored as a leading humanist and a renowned scientist, in 2012 Pres. Obama awarded him the National Humanities Medal, the nation’s highest honor for contributions to the humanities. Sherilyn Romney Garrett is a writer and award-winning social entrepreneur. She holds a degree in government from Harvard University and is a returned Peace Corps volunteer.

The authors present a readable historical perspective of the changing trends in economics, politics, society, culture, race, and gender which follow remarkably similar

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patterns during these 125 years. We were on an upward swing from approximately 1920 to 1960, despite enduring major events like two world wars and the Great Depression during this time span. But beginning in approximately 1960, we have been experiencing a downswing to the low point where we are today. This book drastically changed my perception of, “social justice,” and it will change yours as well. I strongly encourage you to obtain and read this book.

## **Social Justice Committee Corner**

The Social Justice Committee of NUUF fosters justice in the community through activities for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and other events our members participate in throughout the year.

This year planning was more difficult, calling for a different kind of thinking. Uppermost in our thoughts for MLK, Jr. Day was keeping safe. Events we’ve been able to do in the past proved unworkable.

We will still do a candlelight vigil in January, the details of which will be provided closer to the event. Due to social-distancing requirements, we won't be huddling to keep warm or hugging, but we will still bring the spirit of Dr. King to the community. We hope that you join us.

Despite the circumstances, the committee’s ideas are still flowing. We have proposed to the Board the creation of an award, in the name of Martin Luther King, to honor a community member who gives time and energy to actively supporting social justice causes. The details are currently being worked on in committee.

Many of the racial justice issues Dr. King fought so hard to change in his time are still with us. It’s true that there has been progress. Blacks today can eat wherever they choose or shop in any store they fancy, yet doing so is not without problems. Living in the Northwoods, we are sheltered from most of what people of color, be it red or black, have to endure.

Martin Luther King Jr. was willing to sacrifice his life for a better world. We may not rise to his level, however, we can all go the extra mile. The Social Justice Committee will spend the coming year developing a path to honor one of these extra-milers. We invite our fellow members to join us in making this award happen for a deserving member of our community in 2022.

Dr. King’s final fight was The Poor People’s Campaign. Poverty may even be more prevalent in our area now with Covid 19 playing havoc. Being poor doesn't always mean dressing poor or living in a shack. It does mean not having the advantage of buying

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needed food or having money for car maintenance. Our Fellowship is involved in helping the needy by giving to and volunteering with Caritas.

All of us belonging to NUUF want to help solve the injustices of our nation and our community.

We can all follow Martin Luther King, Jr.'s lead and make the world a better place.

Thank you,

Nancy Johnson

## **NUUF President's Corner**

We made it through Thanksgiving with the help of Family Zoom meetings and telephone calls from friends. Hopefully all of you had contact with your family and special friends. Now we have the holiday season ahead and I hope this will bring a downward curve of Covid-19 new cases.

We welcome Nancy Johnson and Barb Beutler as co-chair for the Spirituality committee. Both Mary Beth O'Halloran and Dick Fields have access to our Zoom accounts. If you have a need for a committee meeting or other Fellowship business please contact either of them to set up a meeting.

Enjoy the Festivities, Music and Lights of the season!

Mary Ann

## **Our NUUF Community**

If you know someone who is interested in joining the *Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Fellowship*, Terry Hoyt at [thoyt@newnorth.net](mailto:thoyt@newnorth.net) or call 715-3563908,

Check out our website <http://nuuf.com>. Also take time to "LIKE" us on Facebook. Click here on [Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Fellowship](#) for direct access if you already have a Facebook account. We're posting pics, reminders about events and more.

## **Editor's Note**

Hello everyone, I will be compiling the newsletter for the foreseeable future! Please send announcements and updates to me, Carly Ratliff, at [carly.j.ratliff@gmail.com](mailto:carly.j.ratliff@gmail.com) or to Candy Sorensen at [sorencan@yahoo.com](mailto:sorencan@yahoo.com) by Dec. 28 for the January newsletter. It is very helpful if your copy is written exactly the way you want it to read so that it can be copied and pasted. Thank you!

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## UUA Affirmations

### *You Are the Holiday Miracle*

By [Gwen Matthews](#)

As December opens up before us, we welcome in the gift of reflection. We turn toward our holiday celebrations and search for common threads of meaning.

We begin with Yule, the winter solstice, and we are invited to explore duality, cycles, and seasons, and to witness the Holly King being overcome by the Oak King. Yule reminds us that we all partake in the miracle of renewal.



Hanukkah, the festival of lights, commemorates a time of miracles when the faith of the Jewish people sustained them to reclaim their holy temple and keep the light of the menorah burning for eight days.

Christmas, the celebration of Jesus' humble birth in a manger, offers us to revisit the miracle of birth and the desire to find saviors to heal the scars of humanity.

Here, in our church, you are just as much a holiday miracle as the turning of the earth, as persistence and dedication to a faith, as the creation of each new life. We see the love you give to others, the space you create to hold one another's joys and sorrows, and the generosity and spirit you entrust to this community.

You are the holiday miracle. This community is one of miracle-makers.

About the Author

[Gwen Matthews](#)

For more information contact [worshipweb@uua.org](mailto:worshipweb@uua.org).

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## *Winter Solstice Reflection*

By Gregory Jones

On this, the longest night of the year, we are warmed by the certain knowledge that tomorrow will welcome more light than today.

As it has for eons — for billions of years — the coming of light brings life. May we be awed by the great miracles of light and life, and faithfully nurture the mystery and magic of wonder.

About the Author

Gregory Jones

For more information contact [worshipweb@uua.org](mailto:worshipweb@uua.org).



## *Guided Meditation on Darkness*

By Shari Woodbury

I invite you to enter a period of quiet for a guided meditation. You may wish to adjust your position so that your spine is straight, your body relaxed, your hands resting gently in your lap. You will probably want to close your eyes and shut out all the distractions of the light. Let us take a few deep, slow breaths and begin...

With vision muted, notice what your other senses are telling you... you may feel a sense of pressure in your back or your sitting bones, where your body comes in contact with your chair... you may have feelings of tightness in your shoulders... along the jawline...



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Release any areas of tension that you notice... soften the neck and the swallowing muscles... release any tension you feel in your abdomen, imagining the inner organs in your belly letting go of tension... soften your eyes, let them feel warm and relaxed, as if floating in a pool of water... inhale, exhale... you may notice strange sensations such as tingling in a muscle, or a ticklish feeling on the skin... whatever comes to your awareness is okay, just acknowledge it in the silence...

Let us turn our attention to the sounds around us... What do you notice in the sanctuary? You may hear your own breathing, or growling stomach... you may hear a neighbor shifting position... perhaps cars passing on the street, and wind blowing by the outer walls of the building...

Having acknowledged these outward sounds, let us turn our focus inward now... thoughts may float through your consciousness, you can just let them float on by... feelings may bubble up from some deeper place with you – you don't have to name the feeling or put any words to it, just notice if there is anything there for you, with gentle acceptance...

Now imagine your body and mind are filled with darkness and silence, like the deep, dark night in a wilderness... Take comfort in the stillness, the restfulness of this space within you... Don't try to make anything happen, just rest into this inner darkness, knowing that you are safe in this moment... you can simply Be... breathe in and out...

In the quiet corners within, let us sense the healing powers of the body... the amazing ability of our soft animal body to restore damaged cells, to create new healthy cells, to bring balance to systems that have gotten out of whack... let us acknowledge, too, the creative powers of our minds and hearts... from the mysterious inner regions comes all poetry, all music... from the inner dark emerges all sculpture, and dance... all the art and cultures that are the heritages of humanity... even consciousness itself, the great unsolved mystery of science, resides in the deep unknown of ourselves...

Continue to be with your breath and a still, quiet mood as you rest a while longer in the darkness, with humility and awe and gratitude for all the powers of the darkness within yourself...

For more information contact [worshipweb@uua.org](mailto:worshipweb@uua.org).

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## Poetry Corner

### *Desert Places* By Robert Frost

Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast  
 In a field I looked into going past,  
 And the ground almost covered smooth in snow,  
 But a few weeds and stubble showing last.  
 The woods around it have it - it is theirs.  
 All animals are smothered in their lairs.

I am too absent-spirited to count;  
 The loneliness includes me unawares.  
 And lonely as it is, that loneliness  
 Will be more lonely ere it will be less -  
 A blanker whiteness of benighted snow  
 With no expression, nothing to express.

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces  
 Between stars - on stars where no human race is.  
 I have it in me so much nearer home  
 To scare myself with my own desert places.

### A virtual chalice extinguishing: *It Becomes More*

By [Amy Zucker Morgenstern](#)

When we take fire from our chalice, it does not  
 become less.

It becomes more.

And so we extinguish our chalice, but we take its  
 light and warmth with us,

multiplying their power by all of our lives, and  
 sharing it with the world.

