



UU Laramie News

April 2021

Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Laramie
1402 E. Gibbon Street
Laramie, WY 82072
(307) 745-8874

Services for April

Please see page 5 for important information regarding Zoom services, including login information.

April 4 (Casper Zoom Room)
Reverend Leslie Kee will introduce the April worship theme “Courage.”

April 11 (Casper Zoom Room)
Reverend Leslie Kee will continue with the April worship theme “Courage.”



April 18 (Laramie Zoom Room)
What gets in the way of accessing courage? Fear. One of the many wonderful emotions that can serve as well as cripple. So let's dive in. Catie Ballard will facilitate a journey into fear that includes how to make a friend of it, see it as integral to a larger understanding and simple ways to deal with unwanted overwhelming fear. Without fear there may be no courage.

April 25 (Laramie Zoom Room)
This morning's service is an exploration of the meaning and forms of courage. We will engage this spiritually rich topic through a panel discussion with a moderator from the UW Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies and two “practitioners” of courage. One of our guests has long experience in sociopolitical courage and the other in physical, bodily courage. The moderator and panelists will address questions such as: how is courage differentiated from cowardice or recklessness; how can courage be cultivated in a person; is courage on the rise or decline in our society; what are the obstacles to courage; does every role and every day provide an opportunity to be courageous?



Minister
Rev. Leslie Kee (lkee@wyoming.com)

UUFL Board
Co-chairs: Linda Meeker (ldangrous1@gmail.com)
David Perry (dperry@uwyo.edu)
Treasurer: Michael Wade (darooke22@gmail.com)
Secretary: Robin Chestek (rchestek@gmail.com)
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UU Laramie News Editor
Laura Miller (uularamienews@gmail.com)

Facebook: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Laramie (public)
Facebook: UUFL Community Group (private)

This is a private group for UUFL members and friends who want to discuss current issues and challenges.

Website: uularamie.org

For more news and events, and the latest updates!



Minister's Musings

The worship theme for April is 'Courage,' and from a theological and moral perspective, it's an idea with which one can engage in an endless wrestling match. As we read and hear about the deliberations and actions being taken at the Wyoming State Legislature this term, I find myself wondering if I have the courage to ramp up my public statements, pointing out the obvious: like the moral sovereignty a woman has over her own body does not belong to religious fanatics and political sycophants who claim their moral ground is superior to each woman's moral and legal sovereignty over her own body.



Or, the paternalistic hypocrisy of entitled white men (and the women who agree with them) who claim Medicare expansion will only encourage those in need to take advantage of 'free medical care,' instead of working hard and creating enough of their own wealth to cover their own health care costs. I call this the 'let them eat cake' mindset.

Or the sheer stupidity of thinking the billions of dollars in Wyoming's 'rainy day fund' are sacrosanct. And that by closing a handful of public rest stops and laying off the handful of state employees who keep them sanitized is going to even make a micro-blip on the economic radar, much less significantly contribute to balancing the state's budget.

Or the belief that diverting federal covid relief funds into the coal gasification boondoggle that is supposed to 'save Wyoming's fossil fuel industry' is ethical and somehow meets the needs of local businesses, schools, medical centers, and unemployment claims. While, at the same time, the state is turning over the academic freedom of the University of Wyoming to the fossil fuel boys whose underwriting is turning our university into their own private fossil fuel research center.

As I run the risk of becoming the person who is obsessed with a laundry list of complaints, I have come to the realization that I'm not the one lacking courage – it's the legislators who do not have the courage. It takes courage to stand up to the career-politicians who exercise way too much behind-the-scenes control in Cheyenne and the deep-pocketed self-severing party donors. I find it very hard to believe this unimaginative, closed-minded, stuck, white-privileged mindset actually represent the majority opinion of Wyoming's residents.

What I do believe is too many Wyoming citizens also lack the courage to say no and to demand an alternative vision for our state. I also believe I have the courage to continue speaking up because my UU values, as articulated in our principles, are visionary and courageous precisely because they invite each person to engage with them on their own terms and, individually or within community, put these values into action. I do have the courage of my convictions, and when it comes to valuing the democratic process, I am ready and willing to put my inclusive, freedom-based values up against the outdated and imprisoned values which underlie Wyoming's conservative mindset -- any day. See you in church!

Rev. Kee



Musing from the Co-Chair

It's April and most in the northern hemisphere turns to thoughts of Spring. My tulips are pushing up through the edges of last week's snowdrift and robins have reappeared in my yard. Unfortunately, we know that April is often the cruelest month in Wyoming with days of teasing warmth and sunshine punctuated by periods of heavy, wet snow.

April is also the month in our church year when we traditionally launch our annual pledge drive to support the work and expenses of the congregation. This past year has been exceptional in that we will probably come in under budget at the end of our fiscal year and have the resources to take on some building projects such as refurbishing the R.E. rooms that were disrupted by the foundation work. In this year of no in-person meetings, we have cut our heating expenses, we have suspended our snowplowing contract, we have cut back on our cleaning expenses and we have had no expenses for children's R.E. and Sunday childcare. We assume all of these will return this coming year as we resume more normal functioning and we will need the resources to take them on. We will also take on some additional expenses during the transition as we gear up for streaming our services even when we return to the building.

When you receive your pledge mailing in the coming weeks, please think about what our community means to you and give generously if you can. If you don't receive a pledge letter and would like one, please email me directly. We have tried to parse our mailing list to those who wish to receive our annual letter, but we are not all-knowing—that's a state of enlightenment I have no hope of achieving in this lifetime. As Spring signals a rebirth and rejuvenation of our earthly environment, let our pledge drive signal a rededication and rejuvenation of our spiritual purpose.

David



UUFL Calendar of Events

David Perry maintains a current event calendar on the UUFL website (uularامية.org). You can always check there to see what is happening. Remember, all scheduling for use of the building must be done through David (dperry@uwyo.edu).

Upcoming Services

As winter subsides and spring approaches, the Program Committee is hoping to begin scheduling Sunday services on the Fellowship lawn during the second half of May -- weather permitting, of course. Watch for details in the May newsletter and on uularامية.org.

New UUFL Website

Check out our new website on uularامية.org for more news and events, including latest updates.



Family Promise

UUFL is not scheduled to provide meals for Family Promise during April; however, they do need the following non-perishable items for their pantry: granola bars, pop-top cans of soup and fruit, nuts, peanut butter, jelly, snack foods, and microwavable pastas. Please take your donations of food to the United Presbyterian Church, 215 S. 11th Street between 9 am and 4 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Due to the pandemic, families have limited facilities to heat and cool foods within their hotel/motel rooms. For more information regarding families, types of food donations, contact Family Promise directly at 742-6480.



Thanks to Bren Lieske for volunteering to be our Family Promise Coordinator. Bren is currently working with Family Promise to determine UUFL's weeks to provide meals. Look for the new schedule in next month's newsletter.

Membership Committee

The UUFL Membership committee is Robin Chestek (Chair) and Andi Noakes. Please help keep the member / friend database up to date! If you have a change of address, phone number, or email address, please send your updated contact information to Robin at rchestek@gmail.com.

Building Use Policy *updated October 2020*

The UUFL board has drafted a policy governing the use of the Fellowship building by small groups during the COVID-19 crisis.

Requirements:

1. Users must wear masks or cloth facial coverings.
2. Users are responsible for cleaning tables, doorknobs, and bathroom surfaces with appropriate solvents.
3. There must be a gap of 24 hours between groups using the building.
4. A maximum of 20 people is allowed in the Sanctuary and no more than 12 people are allowed in the Social Hall. The two spaces may not be occupied simultaneously.
5. The kitchen remains closed.

Recommendations:

1. Please maintain a social distance of 6 feet or more.
2. The doors and windows may be open for ventilation, weather permitting.

The board will regularly review and revise these policies as conditions and state guidelines change.

NOTE: All scheduling for use of the building **MUST BE** done through David Perry (dperry@uwyo.edu).



Important Information Regarding Zoom Services

The Zoom information for every Sunday service in the UU Laramie zoom room is the same. The meeting id is 290 700 5294. The passcode is Board0805. This is all the information you need to access the Zoom room. You do not need to have a live link to click on.

Please keep this information handy. You could copy and paste the meeting id and passcode onto the desktop on your computer or to a piece of paper kept next to your keyboard. Another option is to print out this page and keep it by your computer. This will avoid the frustration of trying to find the link in the newsletter or on Facebook on Sunday morning.

To get to the service, open Zoom on your computer, click on "Join a meeting" and then enter the meeting id and passcode when prompted to do so. You can access the UU Casper Zoom room by using their room id (459 187 0381) and passcode (084964) in the same way. *Barbara Bogart, Program Committee Chair*

Zoom Room Information

UUFL has a Zoom Room members and friends may use to host UUFL related events. Contact Michael Wade (darooke22@gmail.com) for details on how to use the Laramie Zoom Room to host a meeting.

Below is the Zoom access information for both the Laramie and Casper Zoom Rooms. The location of each Sunday service is stated on page 1 in the service announcements.



Laramie Zoom Room
Meeting ID: 290 700 5294
Passcode: Board0805

Casper Zoom Room
Meeting ID: 459 187 0381
Passcode: 084964

Anyone who has a bulb has spring.
Bulbs don't need much light;
they don't need good soil;
and they don't need cossetting.
They are, in fact, the horticultural equivalent of cats;
self-contained, easy-care, and supremely suited to living in New York.
- Author Unknown

