



UU Laramie News

January 2022

Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Laramie
1402 E. Gibbon Street
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Happy New Year!



Services for January

January 2: Bring in the New Year with this hybrid service by Catie Ballard and Barbara Bogart offering a nontraditional Burning Bowl adventure! Barbara plans on having the building open and Catie will be on zoom to guide a "mindfulness" writing experience.

January 9: "Dimensions of Being"
How do we recognize and honor the spiritual in our personal identities and social roles?

January 16: "The Path to Now"
Each of us has a story about the spiritual journey that brought us to our current spiritual home.

January 23: "Bringing Our Whole Selves to Church" - Rev Leslie Kee

January 30: "I am from . . ."
What early religious experiences shaped our sense of how we are and how we should act in the world?



Minister

Rev. Leslie Kee (lkee@wyoming.com)

UUFL Board

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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 other day someone shared with me they thought a church should be an efficient organization and that a high degree of efficiency would help keep everyone physically and emotionally safe, tensions and anxiety to a minimum, and folks would just feel much happier if everything ran like clock-work. Even though I like efficiency, I had to disagree. Our UU church community, and in fact most all UU church communities, do need an efficient governance process and effective leadership team, but at the core of our religious community is our striving for right relationship.

Because we work so hard to be inclusive, welcoming, enlightened, and safe, right relationship in and of itself, isn't necessarily a defining feature of our community. Instead, it's the *striving for* which better describes the UU experience.

As we embark upon a new year, it seems like *striving for* is more important than ever. Relationships don't exist in a vacuum and efficiency isn't something that comes pre-packaged in the mail. In fact, when you stop and think about it, finding and maintaining a 'right' relationship is pretty hard work. For me, just when I think I've got all the dimensions, nuances, and sub-texts figured out, something happens and everything changes.

Business and some organizations run efficiently with the help of flow charts and spread sheets. But we are a voluntary association of believers and so UUs believe in the power of covenant: our *promise to each other* to strive for right relationship. For example, I feel more confident when I start from assuming good faith; and then sharing honestly and openly is a healthy and important next step. To ask for and offer forgiveness – if needed; and to support decisions in a shared voice all help the fluid dynamics of relationship stay within the context of covenant.

Over the upcoming weeks, our Program Committee is exploring the dimensions of relationship, which I believe are foundational to the fabric of our religious/spiritual community. We are the stewards of UUFL and as such, we must do the hard work of looking at all our relationships – interpersonally and organizationally, so we can figure out how our message of radical welcome, inclusiveness, valuing diversity, and witness to spiritual journeys can be made available and accessible to every person who chooses to come to a service.

I also believe all the change this pandemic has brought into our lives is now the new normal, and so we must start from here. The future is ours if we truly want to do the hard work that being in a covenanted relationship – our commitment to *striving for* – demands of us. I am looking forward to the new year and all that is in store from the amazing journey we are traveling together. Our UU values, history, and the light of the future have, and will continue, to guide us where we need to go! See you in church!

Rev. Kee



Social Action

For the month of January, Social Action is collecting both money and items for the Laramie Soup Kitchen. The Change-For-Change Sunday will be January 16th. There is also a box in the sanctuary available in case you want to drop off any spare change during the month. If you would like to donate needed items, please take them directly to the Soup Kitchen on Third Street between the hours of 9 am and 11:30 am daily. Items that they can always use are:

- Canned Food: veggies, beans, tomatoes, fruit, chicken, yams
- Spices: salt/pepper, chili powder, cumin, tarragon, chicken bouillon, onion soup mix, honey, Italian seasoning
- Salad Bar items: Olives, Fresh Fruit, Tortilla chips, mayo, mustard
- Other items: Olive oil, Canola oil, gravy mixes, spaghetti, pasta, rices, cake mixes, brownie mixes, bottled water, Gatorade, zip-lock baggies, pine-sol, baking soda
- Frozen/Fresh: ground beef, pork, chicken

The Laramie Animal Shelter is in need of some things not paid for with their city funding, especially canned dog and cat food. Older animals find this easier to eat and the others appreciate the variety it brings to their diet. Preferred brands are Pedigree dog food and Friskies pate for the cats. Treats and chews would also be appreciated as well. Donations can be brought to 1064 N 5th.

Wishing everyone a very happy and brighter 2022.
Steven, Ralph, Madeline & Marian

Photo: food donated to the local animal shelter by Steven Lieske as part of social action with the UUFL.



Contemplative Yarns

Contemplative Yarns has several activities going on this winter. On Saturday mornings, there is a book study on *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Paganism* by Carl McColman. We meet in the Laramie zoom room from 10 – 11 am. We also host an informal get-together on Saturdays at 12:30 pm at the Fellowship. We are hoping to start hiking again on Saturday mornings, weather permitting. If you are interested in participating in any of these activities, e-mail uularamienews@gmail.com.

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.

UUFL Calendar of Events

David Perry maintains a current event calendar on the UUFL website (uularamie.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).

Building Use Policy *updated December 1, 2021*

As we face the new Omicron variant of the coronavirus, the Board will be constantly monitoring the transmission metrics in Albany County on the Wyoming Department of Health, the CDC, and the COVIDActNow websites. The UUFL COVID policy will be updated as necessary. Please keep tabs on our Facebook page and Website for any potential changes in our Sunday services and other activities.

Requirements:

1. **Users must wear masks or cloth facial coverings inside** the building.
2. Users are responsible for cleaning tables, doorknobs, and bathroom surfaces with appropriate solvents.
3. There must be a gap of one hour between groups using the building.
4. A maximum of 20 household groups is allowed in the Sanctuary and no more than 12 people are allowed in the Social Hall.
5. While individuals may bring their own food or drink, food may not be prepared or served to groups without advance agreement by the Board.

Exceptions:

Speakers who are fully vaccinated and boosted and are actively engaged in leading religious services may remove their face covering so long as they maintain at least **twelve (12) feet distance** from non-household members indoors. Currently the only place in our sanctuary that is 12 feet or more from the nearest row of chairs is the pulpit.

Recommendations:

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

Indoor Church Services and Meetings:

We are allowing in-person services inside, but to protect those among us who might be vulnerable to infection, **we continue to require masks or facial coverings inside** the building. The Board will continue to monitor the advisability of indoor services and meetings as circumstances evolve.

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.

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

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



December 12 Service

“Making Christmas Memories”

Several gathered in the sanctuary, both in person and via zoom, to decorate the tree, sing carols, and share stories of family Christmases gone wrong.

