



UU Laramie News

May 2022

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

Services May

Services begins at 10 am. We continue to offer our Sunday services both in person and via Zoom. Masks are recommended for those attending services in the Fellowship building.



May 1 “Tool Time, Story Time: A Sharing Workshop” - Jeffrey Lockwood

Tools shape the world around us—and they shape us. Garden tools, yard tools, farm tools, artist tools, kitchen tools, sewing/knitting tools, writing tools, woodworking tools, plumbing tools, and the list goes on. Our ancestor, Homo habilis, was given the Latinized name for “handy man.” Tools are woven into the course of human evolution—and into our personal journeys. Bring to this service a tool and its story—your story. Is it connected to your father or mother, or perhaps a beloved place, or maybe a time in your life? Share with us how the tool changed wood into a cabin or wool into a sweater—and also how the tool changed you.

May 8 “Universalism: Past, Present and Powerful” - Visiting minister Kalen Fristad

Rev. Fristad, a member of the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship, will speak on the history, significance, and hopeful message of universalism.

May 15 “Spiritual Dimensions of Photography” - Ken Chestek

Visual arts have long been employed in the service of spirituality. Depictions of holy scenes are commonly found in places of worship the world over. Even scenes of nature can help bring a sense of spirituality to the worshipper in earth-based traditions.

But what of the artist—whether a painter, photographer, or in any other medium? Is the act of creating visual images a spiritual practice in and of itself? UUFL member Ken Chestek will discuss what photography means to him, while showing some of his works.

May 22 UUFL Annual Member Meeting

Rev. Kee will present a brief service, followed by a potluck before the congregational meeting. A quorum is necessary to conduct the business of the Fellowship, including elections. Please plan to attend, either in person or via Zoom.

May 29 Coffee & Conversation

We’ll gather informally to engage in conversation. Topic TBA.



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



As I've been revisiting our transcendentalist roots, it occurred to me those small groups of women and men living in the Boston/New England area in the years following the revolutionary war, were around the same age as my children are now – maybe even younger! I remember the decade of my twenties and the idealism and passion which carried me into my thirties. It was an exciting time when it felt like someone turned on all the light bulbs in my brain! When you look through history, even now at the faces and voices of the Black Lives Matter, Me Too, and Greta Thunberg's environmental movement, change is always fueled by young adults.

And so it is, those of us who are embracing the wisdom that accumulates while we travel through the later decades of our life, are compelled to remember how those heady decades of idealism, passion, and optimism felt because change is fickle. On one hand, it is a predictable as the rising and setting of the sun. On the other, it can be overwhelming and out of control. And yet, it can be welcomed and refreshing, like a summer rain shower.

It seems to me, the trick is how to interact with change in ways that are invigorating, yet assuring; that are intentional, yet flexible. I've always liked the image of a beaver and its dam. Somehow, the beaver just knows a good place to build its dam, what trees to chomp down, how to weave the structure so it's not too tight and not too loose. And when it's completed, there is a lovely dam with just the right amount of water flowing through the woven branches to keep the pond from stagnating and dying, while moderating the flowing current so it isn't too strong to overwhelm the new ecosystem where the beaver family will live and thrive.

Today, UUs around the country are finding themselves emerging from the past two years of 'covid-craziness' and taking stock. Perhaps we are like the beavers who are emerging from a long winter's hibernation and taking stock of their environment. What are physical and material conditions of their home? What is the state of their family relationships? What important questions need to be asked and addressed? Not that I'm saying we at UUFL are a bunch of beavers, but yet again, there are some amazing similarities between us and where we find ourselves today as a religious and spiritual community.

I have never purported to have all the answers to life's questions, but there is one thing I do know: change is a fact of life, and, like the beavers, we can accept it, figure out how to interact with it, and always remember: we are only stewards of those gifts we have been blessed with in this life, especially our church. For me, it is one of life's great pleasures to find ways to work together to create a safe, nurturing, beautiful (UU) environment for the purpose of ministering to and with each other. And, not only do we have beavers to inspire us, we have our transcendentalist ancestors who probably learned from the beavers too! See you in church!

Rev. Kee



Mini-Musing + a Cheeky Challenge from your Board Co-Chair

If you were able to attend the service in mid-April, you might agree that it felt really great to “enter, rejoice and come in” to the building. Wow, it was so nice to see each other and talk in person and use a hymnal. And if you’re like me, your singing voice may have weakened a bit with neglect, and your Sunday morning out-the-door-to-get-to-church-on-time-routine was all but forgotten. I’ve been an active member of our Fellowship for many years but was shocked to realize how much effort that it took to get myself to church two Sundays in a row this month. Was it just me?

Now that we’ve shaken off the dust of prolonged hibernation, let’s see if we can all get back into the pattern of going to church on Sundays. Psychologists say [so it must be true!] that it generally takes seven repetitions of a given behavior to form or change a habit. But seven might be too many to expect with the busyness of spring now upon us. So, here’s the challenge that I’m proposing: Let’s see how many of us can attend five Sundays in a row. Five to Thrive! We don’t want church to be merely a habit, but we do want to get back into the groove and reestablish those pathways to health, harmony, and happiness. Virtual attendance doesn’t count unless you’re unable to attend in person due to medical status or being out-of-town. In those situations, it counts for half. Five to Thrive! I think I can, I think I can... and if we all help each other, I think we can do this. Will you accept this challenge? Five to Thrive!



With thanks in knowing how well you abide my goofiness,

Linda

p.s. alternate title: Get out of the rut, Get into the groove!

Minister

Rev. Leslie Kee (lkee@wyoming.com)

UUFL Board

Board Co-Chairs: Linda Meeker (1dangrousl@gmail.com), David Perry (dperry@uwyo.edu)

Treasurer: Jennifer Wade (Jswade.wyo@gmail.com)

Secretary: Robin Chestek (rchestek@gmail.com)

Catie Ballard (cdonbdoc@bresnan.net)

UU Laramie News Editor

Laura Miller (uularamienews@gmail.com)



Reminders from the Board:

Annual Meeting: Our annual meeting of the congregation will be on Sunday, May 22nd. We will start with a short service led by Rev. Kee followed by a potluck lunch and then the business meeting. We will have short presentations from the co-chairs, the minister, the various committees, and votes on the business of the Fellowship. We need a quorum so please plan to attend in person or get in touch with Robin Chestek (rchestek@gmail.com) to obtain an absentee ballot. We look forward to seeing you there.

Annual Pledge Drive: It's time to come out of hibernation! If you haven't already made your pledge for next year, please do so soon. We need this information to finalize our budget before the Annual Meeting.

If you have already pledged to the Fellowship, we ask your forbearance. And at the risk of being overbearing, it is unbearable that nobody wants this year's fund drive to fall embarrassingly short, as that would put our religious community in an unbearable situation.

And so, we promise no more bearly tolerable puns, *if* you'll just send your pledge to Nancy Lockwood at nanlockw@gmail.com. If you have lost your pledge card, you can also contact Nancy. Thanks for bearing with us.



Membership Committee

The UUFL Membership committee is Robin Chestek (Chair) and Laura Miller (Database Administrator). 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.

Contemplative Yarns

We meet at the Fellowship at 12:30 pm on Saturdays. We welcome others to join us. If you are interested in participating, e-mail uularamienews@gmail.com or drop by on Saturday. When the weather improves, we will start meeting at the southeast corner of Harbon Park, which is across from the Fellowship.

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).



Family Promise

Sunday, May 1 – Sunday, May 8 is our week to host meals for Family Promise. Currently there is one family that consists of a mom and dad and 6 children ranging from the ages of 7-16. There are some food restrictions because of severe allergies to peanuts, bananas, and cucumbers.



Meals and shelf stable food items can be delivered to the Presbyterian Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you've any questions you can call Bren at 307.761.0887 or text her at bpatchranch@yahoo.com.

2022 UUFL / Family Promise Dates

May 1-8

July 31-August 7

September 11-18

October 16-23

Western Unitarian Universalist Life Festival (WUULF)

WUULF (Western Unitarian Universalist Life Festival) is a week-long camp for Unitarian-Universalists from June 20th - June 26th, 2022, in Ghost Ranch, New Mexico. We are a loving community from a diverse set of age groups, backgrounds, and cultures who gather in New Mexico each year to express our appreciation for each other and our world. Please feel free to visit the WUULF festival schedule site <https://wuulf-festival.org/> for more information.

New COVID Policy *updated March 25, 2022*

We strongly encourage all eligible members to be fully vaccinated and we continue to recommend indoor masking as ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect our community, but in the current phase of the pandemic, we no longer require masks inside the Fellowship. In addition, use of the kitchen and food service is permitted by groups that wish to do so. The Board will continue to monitor pandemic conditions and adjust our policies if we need to return to more restrictive measures.

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: no passcode needed

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

