



Soundings



Newsletter of Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Church

From Our Minister



Dear Ones,

It is December, the season where we bring light into the darkness of our wet winter. The sun ducks below the horizon in the late afternoon but colorful strings of Christmas lights chase off the gloom. What is illuminating your life this month? Where are you finding hope?

We have a month of nurturing and joyful worship ahead. Don't forget that our Christmas Eve service will be at 7 PM- bring friends and family to hear fresh new holiday music as well as cherished carols. Our Christmas Eve service is always the highlight of my winter. I love singing with you in the candlelight, surrounded by Christmas finery and the warmth of community.

For many of us this autumn has been difficult. I want to apologize for my role in that stress. I made a major change to Joys and Sorrows, moving it to after the worship service, and then a few weeks later left town for three weeks for a continuing education class. The board president was also out of the country at the same time. It was a bad time to make a big adjustment- I wasn't here to receive feedback or answer questions. It was also during our stewardship drive, a busy season for our board and many volunteers. My poor timing lead to a lot of hurt feelings and distress, and I am sorry.

Moving forward the Board of Trustees will be making the decision of how and when we share the ritual of Joys and Sorrows. They feel that due to the controversy over the change, Joys and Sorrows falls under the Substantial Change policy of the congregation. The board will review the data from a survey distributed to all members, as well as information gathered from the worship committee regarding how other congregations handle the ritual, and vote on a way to move forward. I volunteered to recuse myself from this conversation. I hope that this recusing will lower tensions in the congregation and allow us to move forward together.

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Being a part of a spiritual community means enjoying a sense of belonging, of working together toward a greater purpose, and of learning and growing together. Community also means working through bumpy times, practicing patience, and asking for forgiveness. This has been a bumpy few months. I apologize for the hurt I caused. I hope we can all practice patience as the board determines how we will move forward with the Joys and Sorrows ritual. Thank you for the support and grace you continually share with me and with each other.



I wish you all a merry season of light and I hope to see you in worship on Sunday mornings and on Christmas Eve. Life is better, together. Let's share our light and our love.

Warmly,

Rev. Kate

President's Message

Dear Friends,

This has not been an easy few months at SUUC, ever since the decision to move Joys and Sorrows out of the worship service. The Board of Trustees wants to reassure you we have processes in place to deal with the various issues that have arisen. We need your help right now: not to spread rumors, not to speak badly of those you disagree with, but to work towards strengthening our beloved community. There is more that unites us than divides us!



As you all are probably aware, the decision to move Joys and Sorrows out of the service has created a great deal of distress for some members of our congregation. Some congregants felt really hurt by the decision itself, or by the process that was used to make the decision, or by the way the decision was communicated to the congregation, or by the timing of the change, or by all of the above. Let me assure you that the Board takes your concerns and your feelings very seriously. We passed a resolution asking Rev Kate and the Worship Planning Committee to reconsider the decision (and to follow the process for

substantial changes outlined in our policies). We convened a task force to collect data from the congregation. By now, you will have seen those survey results. I am really happy that we had an excellent response rate (over 75%). We are so grateful to the team that created, administered and reported the survey data (Stephanie Metting, Karen Thompson, Dianne Carreri, and Paul Borrman). There is also a working group collecting information from other congregations. This group is chaired by Carolyn Wallace, and includes Susan Storer Clark, Krista Tenney, and myself. We are grateful to these volunteers as well as to the Worship Planning Committee and especially Jerald Forster for leading Joys and Sorrows after the service during the last few months.

The Worship Planning Committee is tasked with examining all this information (survey of congregants and information from other congregations) and presenting a proposal to the Board concerning the form of our Joys and Sorrows ritual going forward. This proposal will then be voted on by the Board of Trustees, probably in January. The Worship Planning Committee has decided (based only on survey results) that for three Sundays during December (12/1, 12/8 and 12/15), we will temporarily go back to sharing Joys and Sorrows in the service as we used to do. Due to the strong reaction of some congregants, Rev Kate has recused herself from all Joys and Sorrows decision making. Let me add, that in our work calling other congregations of our size, we've been struck by the fact that many congregations and ministers have faced similar challenges and upheavals. As congregations get larger, the open mic sharing of Joys and Sorrows can become unwieldy and time-consuming. There are a multitude of interesting solutions that congregations have adopted and I am optimistic that we will have some ideas to share with you very soon. If we decide to experiment with other formats for sharing Joys and Sorrows in the service, congregational input will definitely be sought.

But, the distress that some people in the congregation are experiencing now goes beyond the ritual of Joys and Sorrows. During the difficult conversations around what to do about Joys and Sorrows, we uncovered some deeper issues regarding authority, responsibility and conflict resolution processes within our congregation. We have begun tackling these issues as well. The Committee on Ministry is working with Reverend Kate, as part of an assessment process. The Board, working with Reverend Kate, is considering additional steps to promote healing within the congregation.

Rifts within congregations happen sometimes as do conflicts with ministers. None of us is perfect. All of us are human. Sometimes we have an opportunity to make a mistake, and we take it. It is so crucially important to give one another the benefit of the doubt and to

speak and act from a place of compassion and care rather than from anger. Congregations usually get through these rough patches. During this time, which may be stressful for many reasons, including the holiday season itself, the Board of Trustees implores each of you to take good care of yourself, to be intentional in your words and actions, working to unite our community rather than divide it. Thank you to all who have worked to support members of our community and to promote healing during the last couple of months.

In other news, you may have noticed the roof is covered with plastic now. It may not be that attractive, but it's comforting to know that the rain is on the outside! Thanks to Ed Buzzell for working with the roofing contractor. We plan to replace the roof and do structural repairs during the spring/summer of 2020. We passed a draft budget at our November 19 Board meeting. Thank you to all who attended the informational meeting on Nov 17 and offered suggestions or raised your pledge! Thanks to your generosity, we were able to meet our most important goals. The draft 2020 budget will be emailed to members on Dec 4; we will have an additional information session on Dec 8; and a congregational meeting to approve the budget on Dec 15.

Whew, I know this is a lot to digest, especially if you haven't been tuned in to these controversies. We don't want to worry you, but we want to keep rumors at bay, and let you know what's going on to the best of our ability. Please stay in touch with us and let us know if you have *any* questions or concerns. You can email me (Catherine_crain@comcast.net) or any member of the board.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season,

Catherine Crain

President, SUUC Board of Trustees



Director Of Religious Exploration



Season's greetings to you all. Due to visiting my family on the east coast for a week in late November, I'm running rather late in getting my monthly soundings article turned in so I'll be keeping this article brief. I'm expecting many of you may be getting busier as the holiday season approaches so hopefully my brevity is welcome and appreciated! Three things I want to communicate with all of you:

First off all, looking back at November, the youth group had a great pie sale! 42 pies were put together, 33 of which were sold (thanks to all who bought a pie / multiple pies!), a few given away to the United We Stand tent city encampment, and a couple apple pies saved to be cooked at future dates! The youth group earned approximately **\$600**, half of which will be given away, and the other half put towards a group outing such as an escape room, a trip to the roller rink, or something else fun.

Second, a group of children and adults planted some of the trees which will make up the Climate Copse (pictures below). This project of the SUUC Climate Action Team will conclude in spring when the rest of the trees are planted, though there will be plenty of work to care for the new trees in the coming year – let me know if you are interested in helping out with this and I will put you in touch with people whose thumbs are greener than mine!

Finally, we'll be having an all-ages winter solstice service put on by myself and members of GreenSong CUUPS (Covenant of UU Pagans) on Sunday, December 22. There will also be an all-ages Christmas eve service on, you guessed it, Christmas eve, Tuesday, December 24. While there will be many well known Christmas songs sung, there's also going to be one you probably aren't familiar with based on a Liberian folk song which I'll be sending out to all of you via email in the next week. I encourage you to learn this song with your kids to help facilitate me, Kate, and Wil's idea of a one-song, pop-up all-ages choir!

I hope your holidays are restful and full of warmth, companionship, and love. Conveniently, one of the best places to come looking for all that stuff is here at SUUC – we've practically got warmth, companionship, and love on tap! See you on Sunday,

Chris Pollina

shorelinedre@gmail.com

Financial Report



This year's stewardship drive ended up being a nail-biter! Catherine did a great job summarizing the outcome in her column. I'm very pleased that we will be able to fund some of our top priorities. Thank you to everyone that showed up for the informational discussion on November 17th. Your feedback was useful and I really appreciate those of you that saw the need and raised your pledges to help even though we pushed a little further into the lunch hour than anticipated.

The 2020 proposed budget will be emailed out to the congregation on December 4th. Here are some of the highlights. The total 2020 budget is just under \$310,000. In addition to stewardship our income includes rentals, Sunday collections, and some other misc. income. Total stewardship pledges came to just under \$219,000, which is about \$5,000 short of 2019 stewardship. This is impressive when considering that we had a net loss of 8 pledges. I'm even more pleased with all that we are able to accomplish in the 2020 budget.

We were able to fully fund the proposed salary increases that SUUC has been working towards for more than 4 years. We were also able to give cost of living increases (assumed 2%) for staff that didn't have planned increases. Thank you again to everyone that dug deep this year and offered your pledge in good faith.

The budget also includes a contribution to the UUA. The amount set aside is half of what the UUA asks. That 'ask' is derived from a new formula that starts with operating expenditures, instead of membership like it was in the past. The total contribution would have been \$16,200 and we've reserved \$8,100. The board has talked with our district representative who was understanding and said that this isn't unusual and asked only that we consider giving extra in better times. Note that the new formula includes regional dues and our budget reports will be revised accordingly.

Committee budgets are generally maintained at 2019 levels. This may be a disappointment to some committees who were hoping to get additional funds this year and we are sorry we couldn't fit those increases in too. One of the tasks I need to complete before we email out the budget is to re-proportion some lines. So while there won't be any net

change in a committee's budget, the distribution of funds amongst the individual lines will reflect the priorities you expressed in your budget request. Contact me if you oversee a committee budget and have any questions.

In other finance news, more member loan offers have been coming in and we're now 75% of the way to our goal! There are a couple of people that have asked me to follow up with them early in 2020, which of course I'll do. I'm very happy with how this is coming together and I am continually impressed with the generosity of our congregation. Based on the average loan so far, we only have three more to go. Please contact me if you're interested.

Finally, there will be another finance informational session on December 8th and the CLC has offered to provide food for this meeting. I hope to see you there.

Kind regards and happy holidays,

Ryan Dunne

VP-Finance, SUUC Board of Trustees



Side by Side... a column from Mental Health & Recovery Ministries

Our theme this year is books that will enhance our recovery. This month the book, *Healing Through the Dark Emotions* by Miriam Greenspan is our focus. In this book, Ms. Greenspan invites the reader into a very counter-cultural idea: suffering is normal. It is something all humans experience. She invites us to face and feel those most difficult emotions: grief, fear and despair. If we can do this, we can experience a transformation of our grief to gratitude, our fear to joy and our despair to faith.



In our culture of numbing and denial this is a huge leap of an idea and she tells amazing stories to help us understand how she got there and how we can too. In her words: *I call this process the alchemy of the dark emotions: knowing how to stay connected to the energy of painful emotions, to attend to and befriend them, to surrender, mindfully, without being overwhelmed. This, is how we listen to the language of the heart.* She reminds us that pain-

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ful emotions have a purpose in life (they aren't there just to make us miserable or to shame or defeat us) but to teach us about ourselves, others and the world.

Ms. Greenspan is a therapist and the daughter of two Holocaust survivors. Her first born died in a neonatal intensive care unit. She knows her topic well. I most appreciated her amazing stories and her concrete suggestions. She offers actual help to the reader through many exercises, thoughtful journal questions and a wonderful bibliography so we can all learn more. We can face and listen to our painful emotions and learn what they are trying to teach us. There is a difference between emotions mindfully experienced and emotions that are stuck. We all need this education and transformation so that we can contribute to the healing of the world. Please read this amazing book!

If there is any way that we can be supportive of you and your family please reach out to us, the co-chairs of the Mental Health & Recovery Ministry team here at Shoreline UU, Chris Poole at 206-542-9271 or Rev. Barbara Cornell at uubcornell@gmail.com
The support group for Family and Friends of those with a lived experience of mental illness will next meet in December on the fourth Monday, December 23, 2019 in the conference room at church from 6:30 to 8 PM. There will always be a place for you to join us!

Rev. Barbara Cornell

Affiliated Community Minister



SUUC Board Meeting minutes for Nov 5, 2019

In attendance: Catherine Crain, Susan Storer Clark, Marley Banker, Ryan Dunne, Dana Doerksen, Earl Davis, Brandon Hunter, Rev Kate Landis, Rev. Amanda Aikman

Chalice lighting

Check-in

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the October board meeting were approved.

Action item: Policies document should be updated to reflect the requirement to have approved minutes signed by the secretary.

Signing of letters authorizing access to SUUC accounts

Letters were signed authorizing Catherine Crain, Susan Storer Clark, Ryan Dunne, and Brandon Hunter access to church bank checking and saving accounts and the endowment fund accounts. This is required by the institutions running these accounts.

Update on roof repair (Catherine)

There was a general discussion about the work of the task force on the roof replacement.

Catherine said we were still on track for replacement next year.

Motion to authorize Landmark (contractor) to install interim roof covering. Moved by Ryan. Seconded by Susan. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Update on pledge drive (Ryan)

The pledge drive has effectively ended.

There may be a significant shortfall between pledges for 2020 and the proposed draft 2020 budget.

Board members must come prepared to discuss how to address the shortfall at the November 19th budget meeting.

Plans for November 17 church budget meeting (Ryan)

There was a general discussion of how to communicate the results of the pledge drive and its impact on the 2020 budget.

A meeting will be held on the 17th to update the congregation on this topic.

Ryan will head the discussion with Catherine and Dana in support.

The subject of member loans came up and what was needed for the roof replacement.

Decision: Board members are able to make loans to the church for capital campaigns but must recuse themselves when the board makes decisions that could impact the status of such loans.

Board/ Minister relationship conversation

We had an executive session to discuss issues of authority, responsibility, and conflict resolution

We discussed the work of the Joys and Sorrows task force and how that would be communicated to the congregation.

Kate stated that she would take herself out of any decisions being made regarding the future implementation of Joy and Sorrows and would communicate this to the congregation. *<end of minutes>*

Social Justice Ministry Committee report

Our November 9th meeting was a busy and productive one! Topics discussed included the creation of a subcommittee to review sources for possible materials to use for the Duwamish land acknowledgement; Jo Moore and Marguerite Chin will work with Edie Loyer Nelson and report back to the larger SJ committee with their findings.

The City of Shoreline is looking for volunteers to assist with the overnight Winter Cold Weather Shelters that will be in place November 1 – March 30th when the temperatures drop to a certain low. These will operate at various locations in North King County in and near Shoreline. Men and women are welcome, and will open at 7:30 p.m. Please contact 425-677-9370 for more information about how to volunteer or contribute support. The Children’s RE CATS (Social Action Climate Team) has organized a tree planting activity and will be holding a fundraising activity at a later time. This group is organized and run by the younger members of SUUC and Chris Pollina will keep us updated on their efforts and activities. Sno-King Meaningful Movies will be showing “The Labor Wars of the Northwest “ this evening at Edmonds UUC and the Seattle Labor Chorus members will begin the evening with some Rousing Labor songs! Doors open at 6, movie begins at 6:30 p.m. On January 11, the movie will be “Paris to Pittsburgh”!

The Faith Action Network dinner will be on Sunday, November 10th and Bob Beekman will have details in a later article. The final plate of 2019 will be on Nov. 17, and will be for El Centro de la Raza. Update: Plate share total was \$653.76, and 75% (\$490.32) sent them. Selections for 2020 will begin soon; last year there were over 43 nominated!

The SUUC Holiday activities will have a different focus this year: food and unwrapped toys will be collected for the annual Shoreline Holiday Basket event, but we will also begin a bi-monthly item drive for those in need. For December and January, the items will be NEW SOCKS! These will be taken to Hopelink. Marley Banker will be a featured speaker at Edmonds UUC Advocates for Women event: Reproductive Justice: US Laws and UU Princi-

ples, December 8, 12:30 p.m. Chapman Hall and SUUC members are invited and encouraged to come!

If you would like to be added to the Social Justice email list, please send your information to: Krista Tenney tenney@earthlink.net home phone 206.367.8688 landline



Community Announcements



SUUC Women's group will meet on Saturday, December 7, 2019 from 10-12am in Threadgill Hall.

Please join us as we enjoy our traditional holiday brunch. Bring a favorite brunch dish to share.

Advocates for Women of Edmonds UUC invite Shoreline UUs to: Reproductive Justice: US Laws and UU Principles December 8, 12:30 pm, Chapman Hall, EUUC

Enjoy a light lunch and learn about legal strategies to defend reproductive rights for all women and how this fight intersects with UU principles. Speakers include Marley Banker, SUUC Board Member and NARAL activist, and Fajer Saeed Ebrahim, Counsel at Legal Voice. Legal Voice uses the power of the law to dismantle oppression of women in the Northwest.

Donations of \$10 gift cards to Fred Meyer, Target, or Orca will be collected, benefiting women escaping the sex trade at Peoria Home. Please RSVP A4W@euuc.org by Dec. 1st so that we have an accurate count for lunch. Childcare needed? Contact us by Dec. 1.

Shoreline UU Men's Group

The men's group will meet for breakfast at the Wedgwood Broiler, 8230 35th Ave NE, on Saturday, December 21, 9-11 a.m. The discussion topic for this meeting will be "an unpleasant experience in my life and what I learned from it". All SUUC men are welcome at our monthly breakfast meetings on the third Saturday of each month. For information contact Dick Volkman richard.volkman@att.net, 206 281 7944.

SUUC EVENING BOOK GROUP MEETING DECEMBER 4

"The owl of Minerva flies at dusk."

The Evening Book Group (aka "The Owls of Minerva") will discuss Proud: My Fight for an Unlikely American Dream by Ibtihaj Muhammad, the first female Muslim American Olympic medalist on Wednesday, December 4. Sarah Dilling will facilitate our discussion. The meeting is at the usual time -- from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Brown Room in the Davis Building.

Looking ahead a month, we will meet on January 8. This first meeting of the year is when we select the books for our following 11 meetings in 2020. Please be thinking about one or more books you've read -- recently or long ago -- that you would like to reread and to discuss with others -- and work on your sales pitch. We normally read non-fiction, but interesting fiction is OK, too. We prefer books that are -- or will be -- available in paperback and that are available within both the King County Library System and the Seattle Public Library.

Anyone is welcome to join our monthly book group discussions. You don't have to have finished reading the book to come to the discussion. Need more information? Contact Bob, [\(206\) 527-7340](tel:2065277340), rlbeekman@gmail.com.

December 15 Congregational Meeting

The Board of Trustees invites all members and friends to our congregational meeting at noon after our Sunday service on Dec. 15.

The major item of business will be a vote on our 2020 budget and a quorum is required.

Childcare and light snacks will be provided. Please plan to come!

Please be prepared on either of two successive Sundays (Jan. 5 or 12), to vote your preferences for Plate Share recognition in 2020.

Paper ballots will be displayed in the main lobby and Threadgill Hall those two mornings, listing a slate of nonprofits from which you may vote for a designated maximum number. Thank-you for supporting your favorite local causes!

"Celebrate Yule with GreenSong!"

As the days grow shorter and the nights longer, our thoughts, feelings, and even our Spirit turn inward. This dark time has allowed us to reflect and learn, as the fields lay fallow and the Earth below rests and regenerates. When we understand that the Sun will soon return in all her brilliance, we celebrate with joy. Our GreenSong ritual, on Sunday, Dec 15th, begins at 5:30 PM and is open to all, including children. We will celebrate in the Sanctuary. Feel free to bring an altar item to celebrate the Sun's return, and please bring light refreshments to share after the ritual.

Contact greensongcuups@gmail.com if you have any questions. Blessed Be!"

Save the Date for FAN's Interfaith Advocacy Day at the Washington State Capitol in Olympia **Thur., Feb. 6, 9 AM – 3 PM, at The United Churches of Olympia and the State Capitol Campus**



FAITH ACTION NETWORK's **Interfaith Advocacy Day** in Olympia brings to our elected leaders our voices for justice and compassion. We partner for the common good with people of all faiths who stand up boldly for our shared values. Meeting with legislators and/or their staffs on this day is one of our most effective actions of social and economic justice advocacy.

On Interfaith Advocacy Day, you will be able to:

Join workshops that will break down the issues on FAN's 2020 Legislative Agenda.

Learn current best practices on how to advocate in today's legislature.

Prepare for briefings and hearings with advocates from your legislative district.

Meet your legislator! Once you register, FAN will set up an appointment for you and others from your district.

On-line (fanwa.org) registration coming soon, but save the date now! For more info, contact Bob Beekman (206-527-7340, RLBEEK-MAN@GMAIL.COM).



Up In The Morning Early

by Robert Burns (1759-1796)

*Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,
The drift is driving sairly;
Sae loud and shrill's I hear the blast,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.*

*Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early;
When a' the hills are cover'd wi' snaw,
I'm sure its winter fairly.*

*The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
A' day they fare but sparely;
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.*

*Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early;
When a' the hills are cover'd wi' snaw,
I'm sure its winter fairly.*

December Worship Services

Sunday, December 1, 10:30 a.m.: “Now What?”
Susan Storer Clark

Sunday, December 8, 10:30 a.m.: “Thus We Covenant”
Rev. Kate Landis

Sunday, December 15, 10:30 a.m.: “Advent for Heretics”

Sunday, December 22, 10:30 a.m.: “Winter Solstice Celebration” (All Ages)
Chris Pollina + GreenSong CUUPS

Sunday, December 24: “Christmas Eve- A Light Pierced the Darkness”
Rev. Kate Landis

Sunday, December 29, 10:30 a.m.: “Out with the old, Bring in the new”
Jerald Forster, Catherine Crain, Kristina Selset



Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Church

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2019 Board of Trustees:

Catherine Crain, President; Ryan Dunne, VP-Finance; Susan Storer Clark, Vice President;
Earl Davis, Secretary; Dana Doerksen; Marley Banker; Jo Moore

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Brandon Hunter, Church Administrator	(W) 206-363-7994 office@shorelineuu.org

Calendar available online at <http://www.shorelineuu.org/calendar.html>