



Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

The Log

October 2020

Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
2824 E. 18th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska
www.anchorageuuf.org

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From the Minister Rev. Lise Adams Sherry



Greetings my wonderful AUUFers!

As I write this, we've nearly completed two months together and I'm thoroughly enjoying myself. I hope you are too, at least in the sense that it feels like we're continuing to build good and joyful community together.

AUUF already has a strong foundation of caring for its members, friends, and the wider community, so it has been a delight to step into your midst and learn about how this congregation does things. But even strong foundations require maintenance. When I was hired by the Board to come do ministry with you all, they told me they wanted someone with a good pastoral presence that could help provide stability while AUUF continues its ministerial search. I've noted that there also seems to be a lot of grief in this system—I've heard a lot about Wendy and Shirley and I know there are some other beloveds who have died or left as well. The Board also said there were a few items under the heading of "Right Relations" that needed some attention.

Hmmm . . . Conflict avoidance, being less than transparent about one's feelings, letting things fester until there's an explosion, quietly, or not so quietly, stepping away from something rather than engaging, being so sad about something that you can't face anything else right now. If you're wondering, I'm not describing any particular event at AUUF, simply characteristics that all people and ALL congregations express when there are differing opinions around. Did you hear me? ALL congregations exhibit these traits in some form or another.

So, how can we change the culture to make it healthier, more robust, and resilient? First of all take a deep breath and be kind to yourself. Let's keep caring for one another. Last month I wrote about how the Super-Connectors were disbanding and we were re-establishing a more traditional Pastoral Care Team that will work with Share the Care. Stephanie Koonz is chairing that group and has written an article about this Team you can find elsewhere in this Log. The Board has also agreed to the establishment of a Healthy Congregations Team (HCT)—it will have many characteristics in common with what AUUF used to call its Committee on Shared Ministry. One of the initial goals of this new Team will be to work with the Fellowship to establish a Right Relations Covenant—one that more clearly spells out how we want to behave with one another, especially during our more difficult moments. Hopefully, this will help us all be more courageous and kind in the face of conflict. The HCT will also recognize and train leaders in our community who can help with conflict mediation. Yes, both of these Teams are similar to those AUUF had before its interim period, and each time we rebuild something, with any luck, we learn from past mistakes and create something stronger than existed before.

I want to end by acknowledging that our world is still in tumult and This. Is. Hard. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg did her best to hang in for those of us with a progressive bent, but even she had to finally rest. -Blessings, Rev. Lise

From the Minister continued

So please, grieve, go for walks, watch or read funny and/or irreverent things. Rest. Do things you enjoy. Love the people and creatures that are near and far away. Keep the faith and vote! To help, here are a few of my favorite quotes:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has. -- Margaret Mead

People say, what is the sense of our small effort. They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time. A pebble cast into the pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that. No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless [for long]. There's too much work to do. - Dorothy Day, adapted

Determine to live life with flair and laughter. – Maya Angelou

*Have enough courage to trust love one more time and always one more time.
– Maya Angelou*

New Congregational Administrator

Dear AUUF Folks,

I'm happy to announce that we have hired a new Congregational Administrator. She started working with us last week and is a pleasure to have in the office. She had a trip planned for the first week in October before we hired her, so she'll be gone for a few days at the beginning of the month. When she's back, I hope, if you're able and comfortable (healthwise), you'll stop by and say hello. Below is Irene's introduction to you all. -Blessings, Rev. Lise

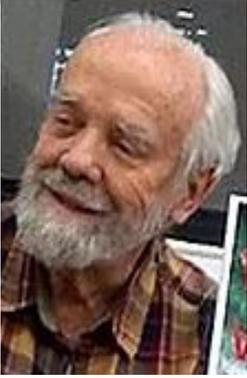
Hello, My name is Irene Kerita. I am originally from Torrance, California, but spent the majority of my life in Honolulu, Hawaii, before moving to Anchorage, Alaska 5-1/2 years ago. I have 3 boys ages 13, 11 and 9. If they are not keeping me busy with their extra curriculum activities, I love to hike and adventure into the outdoors. With the stress of raising 3 boys, I love to read and meditate when I have time. Professionally I have worked over 10 years in a hospital in Hawaii as and Executive Assistant before moving here and working the last 5 years in Office Management for a small local company. I look forward to working with you all and getting to know you on a professional basis.

Irene Kerita, Congregational Administrator

Office: 907-248-3737 X 1

admin@anchorageuuf.org

From Sid, Your Board President



Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!

UU General Assembly 2020

I learned so much during this year's General Assembly that I am thrilled that you can now be there too -- virtually. As the Sun slips lower on the horizon and the temperature drops, you're invited to catch all the incredible vision-expanding sessions now available for free on Vimeo. The array of offerings is daunting, but you can use the [GA2020 Program Guide](#) to find the sessions that interest you beginning on page 12 of the Guide. Then simply enter the session number into the little white Vimeo search box on the GA home page for easy access. UUA's 2020 [Virtual General Assembly](#) is ready and waiting for you to start your journey today.

-Sid McCausland, AUUF Board President

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7462757>

AUUF's Committees Need More Members

Here at AUUF Committees responsible for all-things-operational report to our Board. Our Committees provide the "down-in-the-details" analyzing, brainstorming, problem solving, recommending, monitoring, and reporting essential to AUUF's day-to-day and long-term operations.

- Our Stewardship Committee members imagine, create, and carry out our annual pledge drive along with other fundraising activities critical to our long-term health since AUUF is 100% reliant on your generosity.
- Our Finance Committee members are the stewards of our financial resources, drafting and presenting our annual budget, monitoring revenue and expenditures, and monthly reporting.
- Our Human Resources Committee members create, review, and revise our job descriptions, employment agreements, total compensation packages, employee evaluation procedures, working conditions, et al to assure that AUUF employees are treated fairly and equitably.

As a self-reliant, self-supporting congregation, AUUF is a reflection of your commitment to carrying our work forward. Our work begins here as we aspire to contribute to positive changes in the World. We always need new volunteers willing to contribute their time and talents. We need you now. Please contact our Nominating Committee today: Kalen Saxton saxtonkalen@gmail.com

October Board of Directors Update

Your AUUF Board Has Been Busy September Board Meeting Highlights Your Board

- Limited the use of AUUF's Building through December per AUUF's COVID-19 guidelines.*
- Disbanded the Ministerial Search Team.
- Authorized Kalen Saxton & Cathy Steen to plan AUUF's first Virtual Annual Gala & Auction!
- Embraced the re-creation of AUUF's Healthy Congregation Team and expressed gratitude for Amanda Mack's, Kelly Hartlieb's, and Rev. Lise's efforts to formulate a plan for moving forward.
- Approved the solicitation of Nominations for AUUF's 2020 Volunteer Awards
- Continued reviewing Capital and Maintenance Project Priorities
- Received reports from several other AUUF Teams and Committees

*In order to help groups plan ahead the Board sets 3-month COVID-19 Building Use Restrictions at each monthly meeting. Building use is currently limited to groups of less than 15 who have used the building pre-COVID-19 and agree to adhere to AUUF/MOA COVID-19 protocols.

Your Board also held a round of Zoom meetings as we prepare a Report to the Fellowship on our ministerial search that should be in your mailbox by the time the October Log is published.

Planning Retreat Highlights Your Board

- Reflected on the collegiality and upbeat energy of the 2019 Annual Meeting during which members eagerly chipped in and successfully balanced AUUF's FY20 Budget in a friendly bidding battle worthy of Hogwarts.
- Reviewed the endless string of unforeseen events that tested the Board's resilience time and time again over the course of FY20, beginning before the tragic death of our President Wendy Romberg and concluding with AUUF's first virtual Annual Membership Meeting.
- Engaged in heartfelt conversation regarding personal hurts that were passed over at the time, but which needed to be aired and reconciled in order for us to move forward together as a team.
- Reviewed and Revised our Board Covenant, which will likely be approved by the Board on October 14th.
- Generated a first draft of AUUF Goals for FY21, which will be shared with the Fellowship for feedback in the near future.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Sid McCausland, Board President

president@anchorageuuf.org

Virtual Forum



The Forum Committee has come up with an array of wonderful programs for October.

9am October 4, 2020

Cheryl Frasca, co-chair of Commonwealth North's Fiscal Policy Committee, will guide us through a new tool they have developed to help Alaskans make the tough budget choice we will be facing this coming year.

9am October 11, 2020

Rev. Lise Adams Sherry will "debut" at the Forum, telling us about traveling the Portuguese Camino. It will be a great opportunity to become better acquainted with AUUF's wonderful new contract minister.

9am October 18, 2020

We will hear from Alaska's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Anne Zink. She has been a rock throughout the pandemic, and it seems likely that we will still have some questions about it by mid-October.

9am October 25, 2020

We will hear from AUUF members Ed and Georgia Bennett, longtime Alaskan photographers and explorers (and much more) talking about several river trips they have taken in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

On the Sunday after the election in November, we will be joined by author Heather Lende from Haines. I'm giving a heads up now, so those who wish will have a chance to read her new book, *Of Bears and Ballots, An Alaskan Adventure in Small-Town Politics* (or her others, like *New York Times's* best-selling *If You Lived Here, I'd Know Your Name* or the 2020 Alaska Reads selection, *Find the Good*) between now and then.

Finally, we'd like to give a big Thank You to AUUF stalwart Marie Lundstrom, who undertook a major project of helping create a database of past Forum programs. It's a work-in-progress, but Marie has completed a very substantial and important part of it.

Virtual Worship October



October Worship Service. We look forward to seeing lots of you at the 11:00 Sunday services in October. Here's the line-up for the coming month. As always, we love hearing ideas you may have for services topics, music, and readings, and we welcome feedback on our services. You can contact me at any time –Marty Freeman Worship Associate Team chair martyw@ak.net

11am October 4, 2020

Animal Blessing Service

With Rev. Lise Adams Sherry

Join us for songs, poems and photos that celebrate our beloved furry friends. How do our choices affect their lives? Please send your photos of your beloved pets for our virtual blessing to Rev. Lise revlise@anchorageuuf.org by Saturday, Oct. 3 at noon.

11am October 11, 2020

The Doctrine of Discovery

With Rev. Lise Adams Sherry

How do philosophies and policies from before Plymouth Rock (400 years ago!) continue to affect how we treat others and organize our world? How can we listen more deeply to those who have been so adversely affected by these policies?

11am October 18, 2020

UU the Vote!

With Marty Freeman, Worship Leader

Faith. Love. Action. Together. Join us for this UUA-sponsored service as we consider our values and how we'll put them into action for our upcoming election. We offer this service in support of our own AUUF UU the Vote effort and efforts at congregations around the country.

11am October 25, 2020

Celtic Spirituality

With Rev. Lise Adams Sherry

The Celts were viewed as Pagans who needed to be civilized into the Christian world. How did Christianity merge with those earth-inspired traditions? How has Celtic spirituality remained incarnational, even in its current Christian setting, and what can we UUs learn from it?

Notes from Religious Exploration October By Rosene Beachy, DLRE



This was the weekend! But it didn't happen! Are you missing Fall Frolic?

The CYRE team is bringing Fall Frolic to everyone like never before! Join us for a series of Fall Frolic favorites, Saturday nights in October. Each week will be a different opportunity to join together in celebration, some live, some Zoomed. Maybe you have never been out at King's Lake Camp to participate in Fall Frolic. Now is your opportunity to share the spirit and the joy of this annual camp experience from the comfort of your living room!

THIS WEEKEND!

October 3, 12 -5pm Top of the list of favorite activities is Moon Lantern creation! LIVE! RE October kits will have a few supplies included, or you can use your own, or come to work on your lantern at one of the tables spaced out on the AUUF BB court and playground. Fun for any age! We will try to spread out attendees, so let Rosene know what time you will be there. We could use more corks – if anyone has accumulated ‘a few’ during the last year, you can drop them off at the church this week. The lantern launch will be LIVE at Goose Lake at 8pm, Oct. 3.

October 10, 7pm Civil Rights Sing Along <https://zoom.us/j/99482495305>

Be inspired by an evening of singing and listening to Civil Rights songs that we all know, led by musicians in the Fellowship. Please sign up to share or lead a song with Elayne Hunter, ech2123@gmail.com

October 17, 7pm Talent Show <https://zoom.us/j/95197222740>

Calling all kids, youth and adults who were waiting all year for the next opportunity to perform in our annual talent show! You know you want to! Share your unique and wonderful song, talent, family skit, whatever you can think of! Individual and group participation of all ages welcome. To be added to the lineup - Text your name, and what you will be doing to Rosene at 907-441-6815. Audience members also encouraged to attend!

October 24, 6pm Halloween all ages Costume Parade- LIVE - around the church!

You have time to figure out your theme and costumes. We will parade in the alley around the church and pose for treats and photos!! More details to come. It will be a Spooktacular night! We are still here! But participating virtually or Covid-distanced in each other's lives. Let's frolic!

OUR Programs 11am Service

Has your family always wished to light the chalice at the beginning of the service? We would love to have some family participants in the 11am service light our chalice from the comfort of your home each week! Let Lise or Rosene know and we can make it happen. We are also looking for children's artwork to showcase in online announcements, etc. Email or text to Rosene or Rev. Lise.

Notes from Religious Exploration continued

RE registration update links have been sent to everyone registered last year. Please update any info or just click "OK" if you want to stay on our current list and keep getting RE news through this year (even if you are not participating much with Zoom). We want to keep you in the loop, if that's where you want to be!

OUR SUNDAY ZOOM Groups

- RE Groups meet weekly via Zoom. The links will be emailed to the group, or will be on the Remind app or RE Facebook group. To keep up to date on what's happening, if you are a registered family, make sure you are added to these lists. Request to Rosene.
- RE Chalice Circle on Sunday mornings from 10:15 – 10:45am. Join Rosene and Bev to sing songs, hear a story on our monthly theme and participate in other interesting activities.
- Coming of Age Mentor/Mentee circles – 1:00 -2:30pm twice a month on Zoom or the AUUF Firepit.
- Jr Youth Meet-Up – 6:30 – 7:30pm Check in with your RE friends, Play games, participate in a discussion or other activities.
- Sr Youth Hangout - 8-9 pm Check In, Plan, play, participate in YRUU.

October Soul Matters Theme is Deep Listening

Check out the AUUF or RE Group Facebook page for thoughts and ideas, music and stories that will be posted during the month. We will be posting "Soulful Home" links for each month on the RE page as well as the live Chalice Circles.

RE Activity kits are available at the fellowship. Pick up the last week of each month for the next month when picking up your library book bag. Or contact Rosene for other pickup or delivery options.

ADULT PROGRAMS Beginning this month

Small groups are being formed. Please fill out the intent to participate form available in TAYF. Email to Rosene or Rev. Lise so we know how many groups to organize.

The Common Read for November will be "*An Indigenous People's History of the US*". There will be a ZOOM discussion group meeting on Tuesday, November 10. You have a few weeks to read it. Copies can be purchased online.

Common Read for December will be "*The New Jim Crow*". Discussion will be Tuesday, December 8th. Copies available at the Fellowship for \$15. Call the office to reserve yours.

"*Widening the Circle of Concern*" to come in the new year. Obtain your copy and read ahead!

Also coming in January - "*What Moves Us*" - discussions in UU philosophy and history led by Rev. Lise.

Social Action-The Broad Brush of Color By Dennis Arashiro

“Here’s the truth: White privilege is real. It provides white people with tangible benefits that for the most part they take for granted. I know, because I used to have white privilege. But being of Arab heritage and Muslim, my white privilege was revoked in the years that followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks.”

-- Dean Obeidallah

What Dean Obeidallah experienced shows how fluid and capricious the color line is, how we choose to “other” certain people and deny them privilege. And the reasons for doing so? Not anything to do with who they are as individuals but what ties them to an identified group. Obeidallah did not have anything to do with any terrorist act but is viewed as a threat anyway. He is required to condemn terrorism on a regular basis to allay fears his very presence generates. He has plenty of company. The African-American man who wears a university sweatshirt in order to jog safely in his own neighborhood. The Latina who has to regularly declare her citizenship or legal immigration status. All to escape the tarnish of the broad brush of color.

In 1995 when the perpetrators of the Oklahoma City bombing were still unknown, the greatest fear among Arab and Muslim Americans was a Middle East connection to that act of terror. They knew how badly they would be impacted by that. Their relief when it was revealed that those responsible were White was understandable. At the same time how great was the fear among Whites that the terrorists were among their number? How worried were Whites about being racially profiled by the actions of Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols? They most likely weren’t because Whites have the privilege of being seen more as individuals than as a suspect group. White privilege IS real.

Finding Your Way into Fellowship Oct 13th, 20 & 27th via Zoom!

Have you been attending AUUF for years or are you brand new? Would you like to know a lot more about UU and/or AUUF? Would you like to find out how your own faith journey intersects with AUUF? Are you thinking about becoming a member in the next few months? If so this class is just for you!

Three sessions from 6-8pm - We share our journeys and learn more about UU and AUUF. We have really enjoyed getting to know new& familiar folks. Rev. Lise will be leading one of the sessions and plans to participate in all of them.

We will meet on Zoom. If you are not comfortable using Zoom, please let us know and we’ll get something set up at AUUF for a link in with proper social distancing. For questions or to sign up, email Judy Engh at judyrae427@yahoo.com. We look forward to seeing you there!

October's Half Portion receipt is Alaska Innocence Project

By Kalen Saxton



The Alaska Innocence Project (AKIP) is an Alaska-based non-profit corporation that provides legal, educational, and charitable services to identify and exonerate individuals who have been wrongly convicted in the state of Alaska, and to provide educational opportunities that foster a culture that champions the defense of the innocent.

Prior to its formation, individuals wrongly convicted in Alaska could turn to the dedicated staff of the Innocence Project Northwest Clinic at the University of Washington school of Law for assistance. Their workload forced that project to turn down requests from inmates in Alaska. To meet the need of Alaskan inmates, a dedicated group of criminal attorneys, investigators, and concerned individuals banded together to form the Alaska Innocence Project. The AKIP is currently staffed by an Executive Director and overseen by a volunteer board of directors.

The Innocence Project is ramping up for an intense, demanding legal hearing, this time working to exonerate a man unfairly blamed and jailed for the death of his godson. TJ, the person involved, is now out on parole after spending 14 years behind bars, but still carries his 2nd-degree murder conviction. The project does not take on cases without great confidence in the innocence of the person involved.

The basis for the accusation is a set of criteria since deemed unreliable. But under the guidelines for getting wrongly accused people out of jail, the normal "innocent until proven guilty" rules are reversed, and Bill Oberly and team have to demonstrate clear and convincing evidence of innocence. Meanwhile the Innocence Project is struggling with the funding needed to do its work. Unlike when the Innocence Project successfully exonerated the Fairbanks Four, in this situation the work is happening without the support of big funders. Your support is one way to do some tangible good in a difficult time at a place where it is really needed.

Various Team Updates

Zoom Ushers

Connecting through AUUF

Zoom services have provided an important way for AUUF to stay connected, and in community, during this time when we are out of the building. We have been fortunate to have volunteers helping to welcome people into those meetings and keep everything flowing smoothly. Similar to ushers and greeters in our fellowship building, Zoom Ushers invite folks in, encourage people to put on their name tags, and keep an eye on assisting anyone who might be having difficulty. We would love to increase our pool of Zoom Usher volunteers, so that we can continue to offer welcoming and safe gatherings in our online space. If you have got the hang of attending Zoom meetings, you might be ready to learn how to help with ushering! Zoom Ushers receive an hour of training and practice, before they are invited to use SignUp Genius to volunteer their time. Ushers “arrive” at the services 15 minutes early and stay through the service to help out. Zoom Ushering works best on a desktop or laptop computer, but can be managed on a tablet as well. Please reach out to the Connections Team to volunteer!

connections@anchorageuuf.org

Special thanks to Di Smith, Leslie Adams, Judy Engh, Andrea Van Ravenswaay, James Dryden, and others who have helped serve as Zoom Ushers over the past few months! Your work has been greatly appreciated!

Alix McKee

Nominate an Outstanding UU!

Do you know an outstanding UU in our congregation? Here is your chance to recognize them for all the work they have done on behalf of AUUF! The Board presents two awards during the annual dinner to AUUF members who have contributed substantially to our congregation. The awards are:
Volunteer of the Year: This award is meant to honor a person who has contributed a significant amount of volunteer time to the Fellowship during the last year. Previous awardees are Bruce Roberts (2015), Denise Martin (2016), Kalen Saxton (2017), the Project Oversight Team that managed our building renovation (2018), and Carma Reed (2019).
Fred Hillman Distinguished Service Award: This award is named after long-time AUUF member and former Board president Dr. Fred Hillman, who passed away in 2014. Like its namesake, this award is meant to honor a person who lives the Seven Principles as part of their everyday life. Previous awardees are Shirley Dickens (2015), Sylvia Short (2016), Rod McCoy (2017), Helen Nienhueser (2018), and Wendy Romberg (2019).

To submit a nomination for an award, send a brief statement (no more than one paragraph) on why you feel this person should be recognized to past Board president David O'Brien at akdrdata@gmail.com. The deadline for nominations is October 15.

Various Team Updates continued

Save the Date - Saturday November 21, 2020

Virtual Annual Dinner

We plan to partner with an upscale restaurant. Pre-ordered dinners will be delivered to your home. We will ZOOM together. We propose a Live Auction with in-person Auctioneer. There will be a limited number of major auction items. Past live auction items were a condo in Mexico for a week, a cabin in Alaska for a weekend, trips on the ARR, and many other donations.

General Auction Items – At this time, we propose bidding on-line for six days . Sun-Fri, 11/15-11/20/20
You will view photos and descriptions online to offer bids. Some bids close out each day.

To donate items or services, fill out this form online. Email to Cathy Steen or Kalen Saxton saxtonkalen@gmail.com

Pastoral Care

One way a congregation can support its members is by forming a PASTORAL CARE TEAM which works with the religious professionals (DRE Director and Minister) to connect members of the congregation to each other and to provide support during times of joy and sorrow.

At present, Rev Lise Adams Sherry, Yolanda Meza, Carol Harris, Amanda Cash, Wray Kinard and I are working on forming this team. We are hopeful of

finding five or six fellowship members who are willing to comfort and aid other members and friends experiencing extraordinarily stressful and worrisome circumstances. The team will train lay listeners to offer support and compassion. Pastoral Care is a person-to-person expression of love at a time when it is most needed.

During this pandemic we need to contact people through phone, texts and emails or zoom. Our hope is to meet person to person as soon as possible. The team had its' initial meeting in September. We are working on our charter and defining our covenant. If you are interested in joining this group, please call or email me:
Stephanie Koonz 907-744-2428
stephaniekoonz@icloud.com

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

Everyone in our congregation and community deserves respect, safety & dignity. Learn how to recognize and prevent sexual harassment. Bystander intervention training will also be provided to sharpen your allyship skills. Sierra Gregg is an experienced workshop facilitator from STAR who will lead this 1.5 hour workshop via Zoom. Join us on Sunday October 18th at 1 PM. Please send an RSVP email to Sara Hannon at sara.hannon@gmail.com so we can get a headcount. Look for a Zoom link in TAYF during the week of October 12.
In Fellowship,
Your AUUF Safer Congregation Team

UU the VOTE



Our voices may never be as important as in this November's election. Your UU the Vote Team is working to be sure you know how to cast your ballot, when various deadlines are and how to reach out for help as needed. We're also contacting other faith-based groups who share our values to see how we can support each other in getting out the vote. Members of our team will call you soon to be sure you're on track for November and to offer needed assistance. We'd love to have you join our efforts!

UU the Vote on ZOOM Links also available on the calendar at www.anchorageuuf.org

Oct 6, 2020 7 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94681379153?pwd=LzVjUGhmZmNJMEkxYVdwU20za0V2Zz09>

[GhmZmNJMEkxYVdwU20za0V2Zz09](https://zoom.us/j/94681379153?pwd=LzVjUGhmZmNJMEkxYVdwU20za0V2Zz09)

Meeting ID: 946 8137 9153

Passcode: 108302

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,94681379153#,,,,,0#,,108302#

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799

Following are key dates to remember as you look toward the November election:

Last day to register or update your voter information	Oct. 4
Absentee ballots start to be mailed out in Alaska	Oct. 9
Early voting starts (in person sites/ballot drop off)	Oct. 19
Last day to apply for "by mail" absentee ballot	Oct. 24
Last day to register to vote for President only	Oct. 24
Last day to apply for "by electronic" absentee ballot	Nov. 2
Election Day: Alaska polls open 7 am to 8 pm	Nov. 3

Prop 2, Ranked choice voting & other changes to election laws

By Marty Freeman

I consulted with John McKay, who chaired the Forum on Prop. 2 at the AUUF a few weeks ago. We both settled on the same reference, a link to Ballotpedia that includes a summary, a link to the full text, key supporters and opponents and arguments from both sides. [https://ballotpedia.org/Alaska_Ballot_Measure_2,_Top-Four_Ranked-Choice_Voting_and_Campaign_Finance_Laws_Initiative_\(2020\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Alaska_Ballot_Measure_2,_Top-Four_Ranked-Choice_Voting_and_Campaign_Finance_Laws_Initiative_(2020))

John also noted that the podcast from the AUUF Forum is available on our website at: https://auuf-podcasts.org/AUUF_Podcasts/podcastgen/?name=2020-08-30_20200830_0900.mp3

The speakers at the Forum both invited folks to get in touch with them and could provide more information on their perspectives. Here are their contacts:

Shea Siegert : info@alaskansforbetterelections.com

Leighan Gonzales : leighanrgonzales@gmail.com

Alaska Common Ground will be hosting another forum on this issue October 14, 7-9 p.m. Check out their website for details at <https://akcommonground.org/events/>

The Faith Outreach Manager of Brave New Films contacted AUUF about the release of Suppressed 2020, The Fight to Vote. This film documents voter suppression that led to Stacey Abrams' defeat in Georgia in 2018 and the strategies to disenfranchise people of color that continue to be employed today.

Though we can't have a AUUF screening at this time, anyone can watch the movie directly from the Brave New Films website. To watch the documentary, scroll down past the subscription form and click on the video. It is 40 minutes long.

<https://www.bravenewfilms.org/suppressed>

The image contains two promotional banners. The left banner is dark blue with a white fist icon on the left. It features the text "Voting is an act of faith" in a cursive font at the top, "Harvest the Power" in large white and yellow letters in the center, and "Week of Action October 21-27" in a yellow brushstroke at the bottom. A small "UU-VOTE" logo is in the top right corner. The right banner is white with a light blue border. It features the website "www.uuthevote.org" at the top, a red box with "National Days of Action!" below it, and "#VOTELOVE Phonebanks" in large blue letters. Below that, it says "Join the push to reach 2,000,000 voters before Nov. 3rd." and includes an illustration of a smartphone with a speech bubble coming from it. A "UU-VOTE" logo is in the bottom right corner.

Progress toward AIM Certification By Kalen Saxton

The committee to assess the significant progress our Fellowship has made to better welcome, embrace, integrate and support people with disabilities and their families, and to look at inclusion for everyone, has met several times. Each of us is working on tasks. Bob Pelz has provided multiple sources of information on Chemical Sensitivity to inform the committee and to be used as resources for Board, Staff and Member decision-making. He plans to do more, but here is part of Bob's reporting so far. Written by Kalen.

Chemical Sensitivity

There are a huge range of reactions from life-threatening to not feeling well. Reactions vary from person to person both in intensity and to particular substances or odors. Food allergies are certainly a concern and need to be addressed in any communal eating settings. Fragrances in household cleaning products, hygiene products, and perfumes are common. Even products without fragrance may have ingredients that cause problems.

On a personal level, a lot of reading and attention to how you feel is needed. On a group level, it is much more complicated and worthwhile as we care for people and our planet. What doesn't kill you may still have a long-term health effect on you and others. Written by Bob. Accessibility Information for Unitarian Universalist Churches

Multiple Chemical and Electrical Sensitivities

Over time, living organisms can adjust to gradual changes in their environment. But in recent years changes to habitat have been so rapid that the human organisms, among others, can only strain to keep up. For certain vulnerable people, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), Electrical Sensitivity (ES), and other Environmental Illnesses (EI) can be disabling medical conditions initiated by acute or ongoing exposure to one or more chemicals, molds, electrical fields, or medications.

Following sensitization, subsequent exposures at even very low doses can exacerbate the person's sensitivity. Eventually, symptoms are provoked even by unrelated substances, foods, and electrical fields. Symptoms can be debilitating, sometimes life-threatening, and commonly include severe dizziness, headaches, fainting, tiredness, burning or itching of skin and eyes, flu-like symptoms, emotional disturbances, and seizure disorders. In addition, any chronic neurological disorders, asthma, and autoimmune disorders (such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis) can be aggravated by exposures.

Commonplace exposures that trigger symptoms for a sensitized individual include chemical emissions from new carpets, building materials, and furnishings; scented personal care products; maintenance, cleaning, disinfection and pest control chemicals; solvents; dyes; soft plastics; molds and mildew; animal dander; scented or petroleum candles; soaps, shampoos; detergents; wood and tobacco smoke; gas stove and furnace fuel and emissions; vehicle exhaust.

Progress toward AIM Certification continued

Eventually reactions can be triggered by noise, temperature, the sun, fluorescents, flashing lights, and any electrical equipment including transformers, cell phones, or overhead power lines.

Remember, each person is unique, whether they live with a disability or chronic health condition, or not. Therefore, it is impossible to make universal statements about what will enable us all, in our diversity, to be welcomed through accommodation. As with all reciprocal relationships, it is always important and appropriate to ask the people that are being welcomed, what will work for them.

<https://www.uua.org/files/documents/idbm/accessibility/manual.pdf>

Gentle Beginner Yoga makes a great fall companion

By Amanda Mack

What started as a stop-gap measure to offer some peace to our AUUF community during last spring's lockdown is now an ongoing weekly gentle beginner yoga class with steady attendance. I love greeting and teaching whoever shows up each week and am committed to continuing the class through the pandemic. As we watch the days get longer and the election get nearer, I invite you to join us. Like a new puppy, yoga makes an uplifting fall companion during these strangest of times.

Over these six months, we have established a rhythm in class where we start by discussing elements of yoga philosophy followed by mindful breathwork. We then launch into a gentle, meditative warmup that awakens the joints. Next are standing and balance poses. Classes include strength work, twists and side bends as well. We close with a seated or reclined resting pose called savasana to round out the class.

I feel deep gratitude for all who keep showing up. I love that my 80-year-old mother in Bismarck, N.D., attends most weeks and finds it accessible. I also love that Cindy Kinard now calls her Mom too. I love that for more able-bodied students, I can offer more active alternatives to the mostly seated postures I gear toward my mom. I love that students invite their siblings and friends from places near and far. I love that friendships have been formed and important sharing happens. I love that we all feel better after an hour together.

If you haven't tried yoga before or it's been a long time, this class is a safe place to begin. If you were a regular last fall and want to join us again, I invite you to put it back on your schedule. Classes are Tuesdays at 10 a.m. via Zoom. Visit www.yogacollectiveak.com for a direct zoom link to class. Classes are either \$10 per class or free.

Amanda Mack attended her first yoga class in a church basement in Minot, N.D., circa 1979, taught by her beloved Tante Foli, her nonconformist hippy aunt who attended the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Blacksburg, Va., until her death in 2019.



Artwork by Denise Martin

Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship | (907) 248-3737

www.anchorageuuf.org

Minister, Rev. Lise Adams Sherry, 907-248-3737 x2, revlise@anchorageuuf.org

Irene Kerita, Congregational Administrator, admin@anchorageuuf.org

Kelly Spring, Communications Specialist, communications@anchorageuuf.org

Rosene Beachy, Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration, rbeachy@alaskalife.net

Megan Webb, Music Director, auufmusic@gmail.com

Office Hours – By Appointment Only