



The Flame

SHARING THE LIGHT THAT CONNECTS US . . .

THE SEDONA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May, 2024

Upcoming Sunday Services

We meet in the sanctuary of the synagogue, 100 Meadowlark Drive, in Sedona on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. On 5/19/24, we'll meet at the Methodist Church 110 Indian Cliffs Rd, off 179. Synagogue is not available.

5/5/24 - "The Gift of Pluralism"

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin

We celebrate the rich tapestry of beliefs, cultures, and identities that make up our world, honoring pluralism as a spiritual gift that enriches our communities and enhances our understanding of the divine. Pluralism underscores the importance of embracing diversity, fostering inclusivity, and promoting a deep respect for the myriad paths that lead to truth and meaning.

5/12/24 – "Every Day is Mother's Day"

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin

We will recognize and honor those mothers who have taught us how to be human. Those mothers who grew a human in their body. Those mothers who have been, and are presently, a mother to any sentient being. Motherliness is much more than the romantic image portrayed in patriarchy. Motherhood is the most important function in any society because it insures its future. We will honor our mothers who have cared for and continue to care for us and for our world. Come Join us.

5/19/24 - "The 8th Principle" (service at Methodist Church, 110 Indian Cliffs RD followed by Annual Mtg.)

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin

The 8th Principle Project is a grassroots movement started in 2013, aimed at articulating a commitment to *dismantle racism and other forms of oppression* within Unitarian Universalist congregations. This Sunday we will speak to the 8th Principle which states: "We the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

5/26/24 - "SUUF and Me" with Peggy and Dieter Kneckt and Debby Losse

Musician, Susannah Martin

"SUUF and Me," affords us the opportunity to hear real-life stories of the personal and spiritual journeys of our members and why they have chosen Sedona Unitarian Universalist Fellowship as their spiritual home.



Minister's Message



WHEN WILL “THE WHO” REPLACE “THE WHAT”?

Now is The Time to replace: “What law?” was broken.
Now is Time to make “Who was Harmed?”
More than words Spoken.
Time to Realign
The laws of the state.
Time to make human healing
The center of the debate.
Restorative Justice, some may call it;
Justice with eyes open, I call it.
Eyes that see crime as broken lives
Regardless of the cause.
Eye Open Justice makes human healing
As important as man-made laws.
“We are a nation of laws,”
I hear the familiar chant.
No, we are a nation of people,
‘lest our constitution we shall recant.
You ever heard of a planet called Crime?
A place in space where criminals come from?
Me neither, these are our sisters and brothers
and then some.
I’ve been in the circles
and witnessed the healing,
Stark reminders of the power of human feeling.
The “Perp” and the “Vic”
Face to face in a circle of truth.

Led by loving folks who simply believe in love.
Sometimes face water flows in and out
Like the ocean tide,
Tears, which allow Ancestors to cross
To the Other Side.
Rev. Chris knows,
Makes you feel all warm inside.
So, how long do we keep harming people,
who harm people,
to show that harm is no good?
How’s it working so far?
Somebody better knock on wood.
Wood knocking too superstitious?
Is neuroscience good?
Brain studies show true caring is measurable
and never misunderstood.
Let us melt that frozen sea within,
In..., In..., Inmate to Classmate,
Felon to Fellow.
Let us listen to the sweet strings
Of our Spirit cello.
Listening to our inner gut.
Today let us allow,
“The Who?”
To Replace “The What?”

By Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson



sometimes i need only stand wherever i am
to be blessed
mary oliver

the sort of silence
that is a place
of refuge
of rest
of acceptance
of someone as they are

we are all hungry
for this
other silence
rachel naomi remen

attention is
the rarest
and purest
form of generosity
simone weil

SUUF Connections



Soul Matters



Soul Matters Sharing Circles are off to a beautiful start! We have formed 3 Sharing Circle Groups, one in the Village, one in West Sedona and one in Cornville. We are all practicing a new way of being together... intentional, uninterrupted sharing and conscious listening, as we engage in thoughtful and heart-provoking monthly themes.

Suzanne Burkey stated, "I am learning to listen to myself as I hear other group members describe their experiences, thoughts and feelings. As a result, I am finding I am listening to others outside of the sharing circles in a way that feels more connected. Soul Matters Sharing Circles has provided me with a unique way to experience self in community".

We hope to have more opportunities to join a Soul Matters Sharing Circle in the fall.

Evolving Elders is a discussion group where friends share feelings and ideas, laugh together, and grow closer. Join us! Meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month at 10:30, at 30 Bronco Drive. Or join on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4526141760>.



May 10: Topic: "If you were to die tonight, what would you regret not doing?"

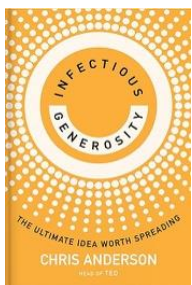
May 24: Topic: Ron Krumm and Barbara Warren will be in Sedona for a visit and will join us talking about "Aging and Illness." Ron and Barbara moved to MN to be nearer family last year. Ron is now in palliative care. We're excited to welcome old friends and visit openly about end of life issues.



Social Justice 3rd Friday Film features the **Netflix** documentary "Stamped from the Beginning" which explores the history of racist ideas in America.

Watch at home, then join us Friday, May 17, at 10:30, at 30 Bronco Dr., or email president@sedonauu.org to have Zoom set up - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4526141760>.

Book Group



Infectious Generosity by Chris Anderson is the May-June selection. The bestselling author, media pioneer, and curator of TED explores one of humankind's defining but overlooked impulses, and how we can super-charge its potential to build a hopeful future..."

Book Group meets at 10:30 on 2nd and 4th Mondays, 30 Bronco Dr, *except on May 27, the group will meet at 20 Sandstone Dr.*

May 13 pp 1-64

June 10 pp 111-164.

May 27 pp 65-110 (at 20 Sandstone Dr.)

June 24 pp 165-221.

Sign up at SUUF or email president@sedonauu.org.

Rise and Shine Discussion Group meets at **9:00 Sundays in the Conference Room of the lower level of JCSVV**. This month, we'll play with sharing endings for some sentence stems recommended by psychologist Esther Perel. Everyone is welcome. It's a great way to get acquainted, then to know others more deeply.

May 5 – "An experience that shaped who I am that few people know about ..."

May 12 – "It's hard for me to say yes to ..." "It's hard for me to say no to..."

May 19 – "I spend too much time worrying about..."

May 28 – "A question I've always wanted to ask my parents is...."

SUUF Connections plus *Food*

Men's Breakfast SUUF men's breakfast is held each month on the second Wednesday (May 8), at 8:30 AM, at the Sedona Golf Resort in the VOC. Please RSVP to Ben at benshor7@gmail.com or 928-451-4370.

Women's Lunch On Wednesday, May 15th, the Women's Luncheon is headed west - West Sedona that is- to locally owned/operated Cafe Jose'. Lunch will be at noon...respond to your email and we hope to see you there!



Sundays in June, Rev. Anthony will be in the pulpit.

****June 23** - SUUF Service will be at the **Methodist Church**, 110 Indian Cliffs Rd.



Sundays in July and August-

Sunday Services will be held at the synagogue. A talented team of your friends is planning creative and interesting services with the theme of "Building Community."

** JCSVV isn't available so we're renting the Methodist Church sanctuary.



May Birthdays

Brad Kincaid - May 2 Tom Roen - May 3 Glenn Farley - May 5 Debby Losse & Lin Ennis - May 6
Carol Rada - May 7 Michael Steele - May 16 Marj Hass - May 26 Ben Shor - May 29



SUUF Recycling to create a more sustainable world...

In this column you can

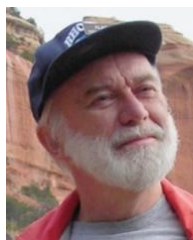
- 1) **Trade** items, like jigsaw puzzles, books, tools...
- 2) **Sell** items *with all money going to SUUF*. You name the price.
- 3) **Give Away** items in really good condition.

Be sure to provide a good description of each item and how to contact you.

Is it time to pare down? Send item descriptions (and pictures, if you wish) to president@sedonauu.org



SUUF and Me *interview of Alan Gore*



Where did you grow up? I was born in Manchester, UK. The family moved around a lot when I was young, living for a time in London, Toronto, and Montreal. By the time I was 13 we had arrived in Orange County, California. This is where I principally grew up.

What was your career? I was a software developer for fifty years. I still do residential IT.

When did you come to the Verde Valley and why? My wife and I started coming up to Sedona for romantic weekends in the 80s, and by 2001 decided to get a place of our own. We retired here in 2007.

Are you involved with any volunteer activities you'd like to share? I help with some charities my girlfriend has been involved in, in the Phoenix/Sun City area.

What is your religious background? I was not raised in any religious tradition, though my mother sent us to Sunday school as children.

What brought you to SUUF?

I was introduced to UU in Costa Mesa, California, in the Seventies by a co-worker, but had not gone for several years when we retired to Sedona. Friends here called us to it once again.



EVENTS

New Member Orientation and Brunch

From the Greeters/Membership Team: Have you been enjoying SUUF and wondering about becoming a member? Yes?

Terrific! You are invited to a **New Members' Orientation and Brunch May 4 from 9-12**, at Paul and Tanya's home at 30 Bronco Drive. We'll get acquainted with one another, Rev. Anthony and Tanya will orient you to Unitarian Universalism and to SUUF in particular, then we'll enjoy brunch. This is always a casual and fun community morning. Please RSVP to Rev. Anthony or Tanya (president@sedonauu.org) by **Thursday, May 2** if you'd like to join us for brunch.

After orientation, if you decide that you'd like to become a SUUF member, you're invited to be a part of a **membership ceremony** during the service on **Sunday, May 12**, and to sign the membership book. If you decide to remain a SUUF friend rather than a member, we honor and appreciate that choice as well.

Invitation to All Movie Fans!

A SUUF movie event will be held **Sunday, May 5, at 12:30, at Mary Fischer Theater shortly after Fellowship. Those who bought tickets voted and chose the film, "Oppenheimer," which won four academy awards: best picture, director, actor and supporting actor.**



During World War II, Lt. Gen. Leslie Groves Jr. appointed physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer to work on the top-secret Manhattan Project. He and a team of scientists spent years developing and designing the atomic bomb. Their work came to fruition on July 16, 1945, as they witnessed the world's first nuclear explosion, forever changing the course of history.

Mary Fischer Theater was rented as a part of February's Mardi Gras fundraiser—thank you, Michelle and Gerry Snyder. Included in the ticket price, thanks to Penny and Eddie De Jarnette, is a free drink (including wine) OR a snack. Admission for this entertaining afternoon with SUUF friends is \$25 a ticket at Mary Fischer Theater. You needn't have signed and paid ahead of time to attend. You can just pay at the door.

There's plenty of room for all! Bring a friend!

SUUF Annual Meeting

On May 19, after our 10:00 Sunday Service **to be held at the Methodist Church, 110 Indian Cliffs Road**, we will hold our Annual Meeting. Join us to hear reports of team and committee activities this year, to vote on candidates for the Board of Trustees and for Committees, to approve our annual budget, and to vote on the adoption of the proposed mission and vision statements and the 8th principle.

If you are a member and unable to attend, you may vote by proxy (an attachment in this email). Either email it to president@sedonauu.org or give it to Tanya by Friday May 17, and it will be counted.

Also, thanks for returning your pledge form to our treasurer, Gary Stewart, to support our Fellowship for the year ahead. You'll find a form attached to this email. You can also easily submit your pledge on our website (sedonauu.org). Automatic payments can be set up online as well. Be sure to click on "Give to Pledge 2024-2025" for this year's donations.



Board, Team, and Committee Reports

Board Meeting Recap

The SUUF Board of Trustees Meeting met on April 19, 2024, and began at 1:00 PM with Tanya Mayer, Gary Stewart, Rev. Anthony Johnson, Elizabeth Herrell, Helen Knoll, and Barb Malat present.

Minutes of the March SUUF Board Meeting approved without additions or corrections.

Treasurer's Report. Gary's reported the pledge goal of \$129,000 for the upcoming fiscal year.

Additions to the budget were discussed: Curriculum of \$700 including Soul Matters materials at \$390 for needs during the year and online subscriptions needed by Nate Smith for audio transmission of services to YouTube which will soon be available.

Minister's Report: A couple of highlights: Rev. Anthony is part of a Juneteenth planning group. Women of Courage program will return to Sedona in March.

President's Report: Summer plans are progressing. Plans are being made for the Annual Meeting. Proxy votes are being turned in. Chris and George Bien held a meeting in their home with some SUUF members to talk about SUUF and pledge drive. Tanya reported on their discussion. Book discussions, Evolving Elders, Friendly Feast, Counsel of Chairs are all going well. Community Outreach Committee will implement the new policy on the monthly "Sharing the Plate."

Unfinished Business: Services will be at Methodist Church, 110 Indian Cliffs Rd on May 19 for the annual meeting and on June 23, as JCSVV is not available.

New Business: Report on Board and Committee nominations for upcoming year.

Establishing and continuance of the SUUF Ministry teams and their missions was approved as follows:

- **Council of Chairs** Mission is to provide regular opportunities for collaboration and information and even sharing among our Team and Committee Leaders so that the SUUF's mission and vision can more effectively be met.
- **Care Team** Mission is to support fellow congregants through the acknowledgement of life's milestones and challenges, active listening, and the sharing of helpful community resources to encourage and sustain healthy lives. Confidentiality is honored and maintained.
- **Finance Team** Mission is to have the funds to meet budgeted expenditures to achieve the goals set by the congregation.
- **Worship Associate Team** Mission is to ensure that quality worship services are offered on the Sundays that the minister is not in the pulpit.
- **Marketing Team** Mission is to encourage like-minded Verde Valley residents to understand what SUUF is, what it offers, and to participate in its services and activities.
- **Greeting & Membership Team** Mission is to provide a path from SUUF entry to SUUF ownership. We warmly welcome all who enter and help visitors find ease and inclusion in our community.
- **Social Justice Team** Mission is to seek justice, equity, and compassion through dialogue, practice, and action.
- **Covid Team** Mission is to research the prevalence of Covid in our area and to assess and inform congregants of the implications.
- **Hospitality Team** Mission is to facilitate fellowship within the SUUF congregation by providing refreshments after Sunday services.
- **Security Team** Mission is to educate and involve the SUUF congregation in implementing safety procedures that cover various possible safety issues.
- **Soul Matters Team** Mission is to foster circles of trust and deep listening in our community.
- **Audio Visual Team** Mission is to provide quality sound and visuals to enhance Sunday Services.

Teams as well as committees will report briefly at the annual meeting May 19, 2024.

Meeting ended at 2:16 PM. Next Board Meeting: Friday, May 17, at 1:00.

Marketing Team

Have you checked out SUUF's website (sedonauu.org) lately? You will find...

- an article about Rev. Anthony, sharing a bit you don't know about him in "About Us"
- more about our Music Director, Susannah, in "About Us"
- Paul Friedman's weekly articles from the Red Rock News in "Blog"
- new and updated SUUF policies adopted by the Board of Trustees this year in "About Us"
- upcoming events on the SUUF calendar in the "Calendar" section.
- current as well as past issues of The Flame (in case your newsletters get lost in your emails).

Environmental Justice (part of the Social Justice Team) embraces UU's 7th Principle: "*Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*"

Good News! On Earth Day 2024, Experts Spread Optimism! From USA Today.
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2024/04/22/earth-day-2024-celebrate-climate-change-optimism/72863462007/#>



This month we highlight organizations in Sedona & the VV focused on Sustainability

- Gardens for Humanity - <https://gardensforhumanity.org/>
- Healthy World Sedona - <https://healthyworldsedona.com/about/>
& Healthy World Vitality Plan - <https://hwvitality.com/>
- Keep Sedona Beautiful - <https://www.keepsedonabeautiful.org/>
- Northern Arizona Climate Change Alliance - <https://www.nazcca.org/>
and <https://www.nazcca.org/speaker-series-climate-talks-for-everyone>
- Sustainability Dept of the City of Sedona - Waste Water concerns, regular Recycling + Electronics, Celebration of Spring event, Sustainability Neighbors, Food Scrap Composting, Home Energy Retrofits - <https://www.sedonaaz.gov/your-government/departments-and-programs/city-manager/sustainability>
- Hazel Chandler's AZ Climate Action Coalition Zoom every Friday at 3 PM, <https://bit.ly/3xDQs5n>

Interesting videos on how to address climate change

- STEP (Sedona Tools Empowering People) Tool Lending Library <https://step.myturn.com/library/>
- Jeff Bridges documentary - Living in the Future's Past
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJV0Kx7oGxU>

Organizations working on the intersection of Ecology and Faith... & Hope

- Arizona Interfaith Power and Light - <https://www.aziapl.org/>
- Active Hope Movement - <https://www.activehope.info/>

Plus - the Environmental Voter Project - <https://www.environmentalvoter.org>

For the UU Ministry for Earth, go to: <https://uumfe.org>

We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.

Community Outreach Committee

We successfully covered all the open Thursdays in May at which we needed 2 volunteers to participate in the Backpack Program at the Sedona Food Bank. The last day we will participate is May 23, 2024.

We are eager to welcome a new member to our committee as we explore new areas of growth.

---**The Outreach Committee: Cora Shor and Penny De Jarnette**



Welcoming Congregation News



Please join us for our monthly PFLAG Sedona/Verde Valley Support Meeting on **Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.** live at the Sedona Public Library (3250 White Bear Road, Sedona) and on Zoom. Please email pflagsedona@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

We will be presenting education scholarship checks to four wonderful applicants. Please join us in celebrating them! Afterwards, we will have our usual support group starting at 7:30 p.m.

May 17- International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

“Human rights are inherent to all human beings, and these rights are guaranteed for every person, regardless of gender or sexual orientation,” [UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem has said](#). “The persecution of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex people is a breach of their right to freedom of expression, to liberty, privacy, and equality, to freedom from violence, discrimination, and inhuman and degrading treatment, and to a fair trial. By protecting, promoting, and fulfilling the human rights of LGBTQI people worldwide, we can secure rights and choices for all.”