



# The Flame

SHARING THE LIGHT THAT CONNECTS US...

THE SEDONA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December, 2024

## Upcoming Sunday Services

We meet in the sanctuary of the synagogue, 100 Meadowlark Drive, in Sedona, Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

### 12/1/24 – *So Sorry Ms. Rosa*

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin

Join us for a service of reflection, gratitude, and apology as we explore the courageous spirit of Rosa Parks, who catalyzed a transformative movement for civil rights by simply, but powerfully, refusing to give up her seat. UUs affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person, as well as justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. We'll remember Rosa and seek a more just and compassionate world.

### 12/8/24 – *Forgiveness Reflections*

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin

Forgiveness is one of humanity's most profound and challenging practices. It is an act that calls us to confront hurt, extend grace, and embrace healing for ourselves and others. In this service, we will explore the transformative power of forgiveness from a Unitarian Universalist perspective, reflecting on the spiritual, emotional, and communal dimensions of letting go and moving forward. This service will also provide reflections upon our SUUF Saturday, December 7th "Forgiveness" interactive workshop.

### 12/15/24 - *Presence: Living in the Moment*

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin

Come explore the profound, yet simple, practice of presence—the art of fully living in the moment. In our world, it's easy to lose sight of the here and now. We'll reflect on what it means to truly be present, to engage with each moment as a gift and an opportunity for connection, insight, and peace. The practice of presence can transform our relationships, enrich our lives, and anchor us in what truly matters. In community, we'll practice the sacred act of showing up for ourselves and each other, moment by moment.

### 12/22/24 – *Winter Holidays*

Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson with Musician, Susannah Martin and friends

Let's gather in warmth and light to honor the rich tapestry of traditions that fill this season with meaning. We'll embrace the joy, wisdom, and beauty of Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and other seasonal observances. In each of these celebrations, we find symbols of hope, resilience, and the enduring human spirit. From the miracle of light in Hanukkah to the principles of unity and self-determination in Kwanzaa, and the spirit of giving and love in Christmas, traditions speak to truths that resonate across all faiths.

### 12/29/24 – *Reflections on Indigenous Religious Traditions from Vine Deloria Jr. to Zitkála-Šá (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) to the Verde Valley*

Guest Speaker, Dr. Maurice Crandall with Musicians, Four Shillings Short

In this area, where Indigenous religious practices are frequently stolen, coopted, or imitated—often for monetary gain—it can be difficult to find meaningful engagement with the voices and perspectives of Indigenous peoples. This talk will present examples of Indigenous approaches to religion and philosophy from the words and texts of Indigenous peoples themselves, some prominent and some less so.



# Minister's Message

**A Sinner in Winter**  
By Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson



I am a sinner in winter  
A 'wanna be angel in fall,  
Falling free form  
Shaped like a snow-flake,  
Floating like a dream.  
Dreaming of a place with no race  
Heart open, eyes with no face.  
Facing a wall of red stone,  
Climbing on top of Ancestor Bone.  
Boning up on babble,  
Masquerading as Truth,  
Full of Contempt.  
I am a sinner in winter,  
you too,  
Nobody's exempt!  
Falling free form,  
Shaped like a snow-flake,  
Floating like a dream.  
Dreaming of a place with no race  
Heart open, eyes with no face.

Facing a wall of red stone,  
Climbing on top of Ancestor bone.  
Boning up on babble,  
Masquerading as truth,  
Full of Contempt.  
I am a sinner in winter,  
you too,  
Nobody's exempt!  
Ahh', but spring will arrive  
When winter crumbles.  
Leaving traces of what will come,  
Beliefs we thought were so real  
Turn out to be bubble gum!  
In a wrapper,  
Dressed oh so dapper,  
Mimicking the original call.  
Me, I'm just a sinner in Winter,  
A 'wanna be angel in Fall.



# President's Message

***Community is built one invitation at a time.***

*Have you shared with friends what excites you about SUUF?*

*Might you invite them to our Holiday Party?*



My message this month is about updating or recreating SUUF's Covenant. Yes, we do have one! You may wonder: What is a Congregational Covenant? Why should we have one? How would we use it? What is SUUF's covenant now (from over 10 years ago)? We UUs are a living, not a static, tradition. It's time to revisit our SUUF covenant.

UU's don't have common religious dogma or creed. Instead, we agree to walk together in a relationship that fulfills our vision of the Beloved Community. This doesn't imply that "anything goes!" A Covenant reminds us that we want our interactions to be guided by principles based on love, that model UU values, and contribute to creating a Beloved Community. *A covenant is what we agree to do.* A SUUF covenant can ground us in maintaining and growing the welcoming, respectful, safe, vibrant spiritual community that SUUF is, and will continue to be.

Congregations find a covenant especially useful when differences of opinion put a strain on relationships. Most covenants urge congregants to: listen attentively, express gratitude, value confidentiality, ask for help, respect different opinions, and acknowledge that everyone makes mistakes. They put in place mutual understandings and intentions around handling the differences that inevitably exist among a group of people.

How will we make a Covenant become a *living* tool? We can post it in our lobby, include it in our informational material, discuss it with new members, invoke it at congregational meetings, post it on our website, refer to it in newsletter articles, and bring it up in sermons periodically. It cannot be buried!

"We've used our Covenant when there was tension, but not yet conflict," reports one UU minister. Another said, "A crisis is not the best time to develop a covenant. It's best done from a place of relative health." SUUF is in that place of health.

Creating a covenant together is a conscious intention to deepen relationships in our community for today and for tomorrow, to live our values "out loud and on purpose" as our minister would say! Let's work to ensure the congregational harmony and health we experience here. Who we are, and the way we are in community at Sedona Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is a beautiful thing.

Most congregations take a few months to develop or revise a covenant. We will too.

- The first step in our process starts now. Thanks for taking a look at our Covenant and a few others *which are included at the very end of this newsletter (pp. 12-13)*. What do you think about them, what parts do you like, and what would you like to see in SUUF's Covenant?
- Step 2) On January 5<sup>th</sup> after SUUF, in Social Hall, let's discuss what the Beloved Community feels like in practice; how we want members, friends, and visitors to feel when they encounter our congregation; how we live our UU values, starting with one another; and what we need to promise one another in order to create and maintain that kind of community.
- Step 3) Create a covenant draft and solicit input.
- Step 4) Vote on the proposed SUUF Covenant at the Annual Meeting in May.

Thanks for participating in another aspect of the "living tradition" in our SUUF community.

Tanya Mayer



SEDONA UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN  
FELLOWSHIP PRESENTS:

# FORGIVENESS

*A Spiritual Commitment for Our Time*

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DECEMBER 7, 2024

9 AM - 3:30 PM

SEDONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
110 INDIAN CLIFFS ROAD

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An interactive workshop exploring forgiveness as a healing response to hurt and wrongdoing, especially in divisive times.

Facilitators:

- Dr. Vince Waldron, Professor at ASU, author of "Communicating Forgiveness"
  - Sam Kirkland, Motivational Speaker and Life Coach
- "Forgiveness is not a passive act, it is a spiritual commitment to growth and healing."

- Rev. Anthony

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Limited Seating: Register Early

COST: FREE  
(DONATIONS WELCOME)

REGISTER WITH PRIYANKA  
PRIYANKADSUUF@GMAIL.COM

SUUF Presents

# Rockin' Holiday Party!

Wed. December 18th at the HUB



**LIVE SHOW WITH SMKI**

At THE HUB - 525 posse grounds rd., sedona  
**TIX: \$45Adv./ \$50 Door**  
**Dinner & Dessert Buffet Included**

**ROCK \* BLUES \* LATIN \* CLASSICAL**

*Groovy Classic Rock & Holiday Hits by  
 One of Sedona's Favorite Bands!!*

BUY Adv. Tix ONLINE at  
 SusannahMartinMusic.com

**5:30PM: DOORS Open/Buffer**  
**7:00-8:30PM: CONCERT**  
**\$7 Wine/Beer (or 4/\$25)**

***Calling ALL Happy Holiday Volunteers!***

**Sign up at SUUF on Sundays to enlist for Holiday Party helping (cooking, decorating, baking, setup and takedown, ticket sales, kitchen help, etc.) or contact Mary McCaffrey by text at 408 209 3958 or Piya Jacob at [piyajacob@gmail.com](mailto:piyajacob@gmail.com).**

**Mary and Piya welcome you to help make this year's party another fun-filled community celebration. If you'd like to donate a ticket for someone who can't afford the expense at this time, that's surely welcome. Don't forget to invite your friends to this FUNdraiser and party!**

***Tickets are available at SUUF, online with Susannah, or scroll to "Give to Holiday Party" after clicking here: [Holiday Ticket](#) (It takes you to SUUF's website).***



# SUUF Recycles 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.



Barely used Abdo twister - comes with video instructions. Was \$238, now \$75. It's fun to use! Parts are adjustable to fit you! It must be picked up. Call Carol Hazelett 928-301-4180 or email [carolsell@q.com](mailto:carolsell@q.com).

Very pretty room divider with wrought iron frame. It's adjustable with a pretty leaf design, and washable, white cotton "curtains". \$100. Must be picked up. Call Carol Hazelett 928-301-4180 or email [carolsell@q.com](mailto:carolsell@q.com).



**Do you have something to SELL FOR SUUF? Take a picture and email it with a description and price to our editor at [CherylSUUF@gmail.com](mailto:CherylSUUF@gmail.com).**



## SUUF Connections

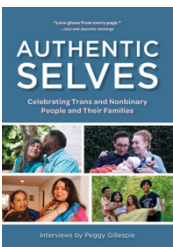


### Book Group

The November/December book group selection is *The Power of Us: Harnessing Our Shared Identities to Improve Performance, Increase Cooperation, and Promote Social Harmony* by Bavel and Packer. Meetings are at 10:30 on 2nd and 4th Mondays. Piya Jacob and Mary McCaffrey are the hosts at Mary's home – 2345 Corral Rd in West Sedona. **December 9th focus is Chapters 7- 10.**

*Bring ideas for a stimulating read for March and April.*

### January/February



The book selection is **Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families**. Several SUUFers enjoyed an interesting presentation at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in which one of the authors spoke about the book and their experience. The Social Justice Team LGBTQ+ focus group will host book discussions on Jan. 13 and 27, and Feb. 10 and 24<sup>th</sup> from 10:30-12:00. Meeting will be at 30 Bronco Drive in West Sedona. Carolyn Kavanagh will lead January discussions and Patty Delp will lead in February. It's expected that guest participants will join the discussions as well.

Chris Seeholzer has a few books to lend, and they're available to buy at UUA and on Amazon. Get your book now and enjoy a head start! You can sign up on a sheet in the foyer.

## Social Justice Interfaith Film

The SJ Team movie pick for Wednesday, December 11, at 10:30, is "Jim Crow of the North." Watch this PBS documentary on YouTube at [Jim Crow of the North](#) at home and come discuss it with us at Church of the Red Rocks, 54 Bowstring Drive. Tom Helgeson will be the facilitator. The film examines how restrictive racial covenants and redlining (in Minneapolis, MN) combined with other discriminatory practices to keep Blacks out of the housing market and force them into slums.



*“Roots of racial disparities are seen through a new lens in this film that explores the origins of housing segregation in the Minneapolis area. But the story also illustrates how African-American families and leaders resisted this insidious practice, and how Black people built community — within and despite — the red lines that these restrictive covenants created.”* PBS

**Evolving Elders** is a discussion group where friends share feelings and ideas, laugh and cry 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>.



**December 13 Topic:** *“Your Stories of Quirky, Unexplainable Synchronicities”*

**December 27 Topic:** *“Body, Mind, and Spirit”* What is one thing you are doing in each?

How do you feel about the balance of the three in your life?

## Rise and Shine Conversation



This lively, thoughtful SUUF pre-service discussion **meets from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.** in the Social Hall. Conversations are based on the UUA program: *What We Choose: Ethics for Unitarian Universalists* and are facilitated by Paul Friedman.

We are regularly faced with moral choices, big and small. How should we respond to a tricky family, work, or relationship situation? What is the most ethical course for a community, state, or nation to follow? We focus attention on the moral questions that arise in our lives, and explore the ethical frameworks that can help in sorting through them. Our discussions are based on real ethical dilemmas from our own personal lives and stories of people, congregations, and organizations at moments of decision. Join us as often as you wish, and everyone is welcome!

## How Can I Help? **New column!**

Here are a few opportunities to care and share in ways that bring joy to you and others!

- **Gary and/or Nate would like a volunteer to help work with sound equipment on Sunday mornings.** If you have skills and/or interest in this area, Gary and Nate welcome you! Talk to Gary or Rev. Anthony to join the team and serve your community in this way.
- **Thanks, Marj Haas,** for volunteering to manage our **Facebook** account. Instagram is another possible avenue we have yet to tap...to say nothing of Twitter (x) or TicToc! Talk to Tanya or Paul to use your skills to help spread the word of our congregation.
- **Volunteers, come help decorate the Hub (at Sedona Posse Grounds) for Breakfast with Santa.** These dates and times are open: Thursday and Friday, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, from 1-3 pm to help set up and decorate the Hub for the event, and Saturday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 am to clean up after the event. This time is their biggest need. Email Jason Vargo (Sedona Parks and Rec) to let him know when you are available to assist. He will contact you with instructions. His email is [jvargo@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:jvargo@sedonaaz.gov), and please put “Volunteer at Breakfast with Santa” on the subject line.



## SUUF and Me - An Interview with Steve Opitz

My Dad was a Methodist minister in Arizona and Southern California. So I grew up here in the Southwest. We moved around a lot from Chandler to Phoenix and then to Norwalk, California to Blythe, on Arizona's border with California. That is where I spent eight years through high school.

I graduated college at Cal State University Fullerton with a BA in Theatre. After a six-year stint in the entertainment field, my wife put her foot down and so I had to get a real job. I became a plumber and over the course of twenty-five years I became a foreman, building supervisor and plumbing inspector.

I came to the Verde Valley first in 1952, as my dad started the Methodist Church Camp on Mingus Mountain, and we were here most summers. My mother and Joe Wine, my stepdad, and I came back here in 2010 because we knew the area.

My mother, Wilma, found the phone number for SUUF and we attended the Breakfast at Golden Goose in February 2011. We joined SUUF shortly and I was on the board of trustees twice and was, along with Scott Robinson and Liz Danbury, responsible for selecting Rev. Glen.

I am involved with the Sedona International Film festival and I lead hikes on Monday morning at Red Rock State Park.



## December Birthdays

Dawn Griffin – December 1

Pat Langan – December 1

Dieter Knecht – December 2

Carolyn Kavanagh – December 10

Carol Bell – December 23

Diane Nadeau – December 29

*If you have a December birthday and it isn't listed, please email the date to [CherylSinn@gmail.com](mailto:CherylSinn@gmail.com).*

## SUUF Connections plus Food

**Friendly Feasts** returns January 18th!

*Is it time for you to host SUUF friends? About four homes hosting each month accommodate the folks who love to attend.*

*It's an easy and fun role as your guests bring the basics--good food and fellowship!*

Contact Suzanne Burkey [Sfburkey47@gmail.com](mailto:Sfburkey47@gmail.com) to let her know you'll host and/or to ask questions as a prospective host. This gathering is a favorite SUUF way of a fun meeting and greeting of old and new friends. Everyone is welcome to sign up for Friendly Feasts. Signup sheets will be on the table in January.

**Men's Breakfasts** are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays of the month at 8:30 at the Sedona Golf Resort in the VOC, this month on December 11. Please RSVP to Ben at [benshor7@gmail.com](mailto:benshor7@gmail.com) or 928-451-4370.



**Women's Lunch** will be Wednesday, December 18 at 11:30



at the

**Sedona Golf Resort in VOC.** You'll receive an email invitation to which you can RSVP. In case you don't get that email, know that whether or not you've made a reservation, you're always welcome

to join us! It's fun to see friends and enjoy good conversation over lunch. Please reach out to Barb to sign up at [bbmalat@gmail.com](mailto:bbmalat@gmail.com). Do let her know if you didn't get an invitation and she'll take care of you. We

don't want to leave anyone out!





# Board, Team, and Committee Reports

## Board Meeting Recap

The monthly meeting of the Board was called to order Nov. 15 by President Tanya Mayer at 2:25 PM. Those present included Gary Stewart, Piya Jacob, Ben Shor, Donna Fox, Patty Delp, Mary McCaffrey, and Reverend Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson.

Written monthly reports had been submitted for review by the minister, president, treasurer, and the secretary. Highlights of discussions are as follows:

Gary reviewed the financial statements for the board. The Bylaws state that these statements be regularly reviewed. Along with the board, our financial statements are reviewed by the Finance Committee, and Ben Shor did a complete review of the fiscal year July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024. All conclusions were that the financials are clear and in good order. The board also discussed bequests and how they are handled.

Gary moved to approve all reports including the minutes from the October board meeting. Tanya seconded the motion and all reports were approved unanimously.

### Unfinished Business

Mary and Piya updated the board on plans for the Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> Holiday Party/Fundraiser at the Hub. The liquor license and event insurance have been secured. A committee will be formed to set up and tear down.

Donna has reached out to our members who have recently moved to confirm preferred status as either “members” or “friends” of SUUF. Nancy Martin, Dieter and Peggy Knecht, Chuck Spence, and Mark and Carol Watson have all requested to be listed as “friends.” Donna will now contact Rose and Rick Gnerich, and Bill Horn.

Discussion followed on potential musical guests to perform when Susanna is on time off. All suggestions go through Susanna and Anthony.

### New Business

Tanya and Anthony purchased the graphics and email platform of Constant Contact for SUUF use \$357. It will be extremely helpful in sending out our weekly announcements and other emails.

Anthony shared that the Sedona Interfaith Thanksgiving Service is Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, 7 PM at the Church of the Red Rocks. Tanya and Patty volunteered to help with various duties during this important collaborative service. The Forgiveness Workshop will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup> at the Sedona United Methodist Church. There will be a sign-up sheet on Sunday at our service.

Gary suggested adding community resources to our website. Patty will research helpful sites.

After lengthy discussion the board decided to make the following recommendations to the Bylaw Committee regarding our succession plan:

- Add a Vice President position
- Staggered two-year terms to eliminate complete board turnover at any time
- Eliminate term limits

Anthony suggested contacting UUA for additional guidance.

Gary moved to adjourn. Piya seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fox

Board Secretary

## Social Justice Team

### **DORR Presents Robert Hubbell on Thursday, December 12, 6pm MST**

The Board of Directors of Democrats of the Red Rocks is thrilled to present a conversation with Robert Hubbell, one of the most esteemed voices in the progressive world. His *Today's Edition Newsletter* on Substack has been a consistent voice of sanity and encouragement in a world full of chaos and noise. He calls it, "A reflection on today's news through the lens of hope." The Zoom link is available on the DORR website: [democratsoftheredrocks.org](http://democratsoftheredrocks.org).

**Political** - To keep abreast of efforts to restrict illegal moves of the coming administration, visit the [ACLU.org](http://ACLU.org), or check out the Brennan Center for Justice of the NYU School of Law at [brennancenter.org](http://brennancenter.org).

**Climate** - Join Hazel Chandler of Mom's Clean Air Force and the AZ Climate Action Coalition. To receive her Weekly Agenda and keep abreast of what she's doing as a climate Warrior to protect the clean air, water and land gains that have been made by the Biden Administration, go to [chandler@momcleanairforce.org](mailto:chandler@momcleanairforce.org) or see [moms-clean-air-force.org](http://moms-clean-air-force.org) or [actonclimate.com](http://actonclimate.com).

Watch on youtube.com: Al Gore and climate TRACE Unveil groundbreaking data to target high-impact emissions reductions (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0WBeg1NJ7A>)

**General** - To keep in touch with UUs when unable to attend SUUF in person, visit the online UU Church of the Larger Fellowship at [questformeaning.org](http://questformeaning.org), click on the Worship icon to register and receive the Zoom link. They meet by Zoom Sundays at 8 pm Eastern Time or Mondays at 1 pm ET.

## Outreach Committee

Thank you to those who donated to the Sedona Food Bank After School Program collection of snacks and drinks. This is now completed, and Cora has delivered 70 lbs. of snacks and drinks and \$190 cash/check donations to the Sedona Food Bank.

### **December's Share the Plate Recipient: Yavapai Humane Trappers Animal Search & Rescue**

Yavapai Humane Trappers Animal Search and Rescue (YHT) was founded by Katrina Karr who has dedicated the last six years of her life to saving animals that need help. They have more than 30 years of experience in finding rescue animals their forever homes.

"It takes a village" is the philosophy behind this incredible all-volunteer Arizona organization. They became an official 501(c)(3) in November of 2019, although their work began long before that. With only a moment's notice, day or night, this group travels to help animals. Yavapai Humane Trappers has taken animals that other rescues are unable to help. They serve all of Yavapai County in Arizona, and frequently travel to the Navajo, Hopi, and Apache reservations and any place else there is an animal in need and no other resources are available.

They have been voted the Best Animal Rescue Group for 2022 and 2023 and the Best Animal Rescue/Shelter in Yavapai County 2024. – presented by Cora Shor



# Focus on Marginalized Communities

## Sedona Area Homeless Alliance



### Did you know?

that the Sedona area averages about 45 nights during each winter season between November through March that nighttime temperatures fall to freezing and below?

Our local homeless sleep in inconspicuous places in sleeping bags or tents, or for a small percentage, in cars. **Being homeless is hard and made harder during extreme weather. Winter becomes dangerous and life threatening** when temperatures drop especially when mixed with precipitation.

Project **CODE BLUE emergency cold night shelter** provides warm rooms for our *most vulnerable* men, women & children (and pets) on the street. **There are approximately 200 homeless in Sedona so we cannot provide rooms for all of our clients. Because of the cost, we're unable to offer single rooms but successfully group like clients together. Participants sign an agreement that includes rules/guidelines and rules and a SAHA staff member or volunteer remains on property.**

**CODE BLUE is completely funded by private donations and we are actively fundraising now. Might you consider contributing monthly during these cold months?**

***On a different note...SAHA has launched a Board of Directors recruitment!***

Are you looking for a unique leadership opportunity? Have you been yearning to put your talent in strategic thinking, financial management, project management, fundraising, public policy advocacy in the service of a great cause? Well, look no further, we are looking for you!

For 8 years, our volunteer board has been the strategic heart of our organization, ensuring our work for the homeless. Sedona Area Homeless Alliance is recruiting new/additional board members and officers to ensure that we honor our ongoing commitment to be led by a board as diverse as our SAHA program and the community we serve.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month and committee meetings are held quarterly in coordination with full board meetings.

We are offering an opportunity to learn more about Sedona Area Homeless Alliance at an operational level and to answer any questions you might have about our history, services, mission etc. on Monday December 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Sedona Public Library. 4:00- 6:00 pm

Please let us know if you plan to attend and if you are unable to attend and would like to arrange another option.

SAHA clients generally text (928) 978-9387 to request services

*Serving the Local Homeless Community since 2015*

*Sedona Area Homeless Alliance • text/call 928 978 9387 • email [sedonahomeless@gmail.com](mailto:sedonahomeless@gmail.com)*

*PO Box 1411 Sedona AZ 86339 • [www.SedonaHomeless.org](http://www.SedonaHomeless.org)*

*501(c)3 Nonprofit 82-0607491 • AZ tax credit Qualified Organization QCOcode 22418*



## PFLAG

Please join us for our monthly PFLAG Sedona/Verde Valley Support Meeting on **Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.** live at the Sedona Public Library (3250 White Bear Road, Sedona) in the Quiet Study Room, and on Zoom.

Our speaker will be Jen Emmerich. Jen is a Board member of PFLAG, a long-time ally in the LGBTQ community, and a psychotherapist in private practice in Sedona

since 2016. She will be sharing her father's story: "Accidental Soldier: Notes on Tyranny." Her father grew up in Germany during the rise of the Nazi Party. He endured a two-year inclusion as an unwilling soldier in WW II followed by 2 more years as a prisoner of war. Both the presentation at 6:30 and the support meeting at 7:30 will use the following zoom links:

<https://zoom.us/j/92237972093?pwd=TzJuVzFscck1xQk5vcjcyWDYzMWRzZz09>

Meeting ID: 922 3797 2093

Passcode: AZPFLAG



## **Three Covenants: from SUUF, Phoenix UU and a Denver UU:**

### **1) "Sedona Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Covenant" (from about 2013)**

This covenant binds us together as members of this congregation.

As members and friends of the SUUF congregation we agree to:

- Attend and participate in SUUF Sunday services and other activities with a sense of community and open spirit.
- Volunteer to assist in SUUF operations and activities whenever possible.
- Donate financially to support SUUF services and activities as able.
- Engage in relationships with acceptance, consideration, love and compassion as our guide, assuming the best of one another.
- Be of service to one another and the greater community as we are able.
- Engage in dialogue with curiosity and respect.
- Address differences of opinion and conflict with openness, honesty, respect and direct communication.

### **2) Phoenix UU "Covenant of Commitment to Our Congregation"**

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal religion; we don't have a creed or dogma that we need to follow. Instead, we mutually commit to shared values, trust, and concern for the welfare of each other. The following covenant of commitment was specifically developed for and by our UUCP congregation:

I am committed to the role our congregation plays in my religious exploration, and respect the shared ministry of each congregant, staff member, and minister, therefore:

- I acknowledge and accept my role as a community member, approaching each encounter with curiosity, generosity, and patience with the process
- I honor differences as opportunities to learn
- I listen to what others say
- I do my best to communicate directly and with humility

I understand disagreement and conflict as an opportunity for growth, therefore:

- I state my views with kindness directly to those involved
- I say of another only what I would say to them
- I am open to be changed by others
- I practice both patience and fortitude
- I remember to show gratitude to others for their contributions.

I affirm our flourishing religious community, therefore:

- I am generous with my talents, efforts, and gifts
- I support those who take leader positions
- I accept leadership when called and guide with love, warmth, and humor
- I encourage positive development within our congregation, individually and collectively

Thus do I covenant.

## 2) First Universalist Church of Denver “Covenant of Respectful Relations”

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal religion. This means that each of us covenants with each other that we will strive to be our better selves and that we will treat others within our congregation with respect, kindness, and consideration. How we treat each other expresses who and what we are as a congregation.

To help our congregation and its members and friends draw support and affirmation from each other we, the members and friends of First Universalist Church of Denver enter into this Covenant of Respectful Relations. May it guide us in the relationships we have with each other.

### **The Promise I Make to Myself:**

- Be loving and generous in spirit.
- Cultivate, warmth and joy
- Follow through on my commitments
- Take ownership and responsibility for my actions and their consequences
- Express gratitude to those who are working to help our congregation fulfill its mission
- Be willing to forgive and to seek forgiveness
- Not be judgmental of the actions of others or their motives
- Respect mine and others' boundaries of mind, body and spirit
- Be respectful when expressing disagreement with the opinions of others and church decisions.
- Contribute to our congregation in ways that enliven me and enrich my life.

### **The Promise I Make to My Congregation:**

- Treat others with respect, understanding, kindness and compassion
- Give generously of my time, talents, and resources
- Listen to understand rather than to judge or prove a point
- Support and nurture others
- Be mindful and considerate in my communications and interactions
- Forgive myself and others when we fail to keep our promises and begin anew in love and faith
- Assume good intentions of others and respectfully articulate the impact of behaviors and attitudes on me
- Speak with respect, kindness and understanding, whether in harmony or in conflict.

As a congregation, we affirm our calling to be a Beloved Community. We embrace this Covenant of Respectful Relations which will enrich our relationships with each other and strengthen our congregation as it reaches out to our community and to the wider world.

Approved by Congregation at Spring Congregational Meeting on March 19, 2019