

Everyone Has a Story, Share Yours

As the current and unofficial chief UUCSC Story Gatherer (an awkward title to be sure) I have recently been delighted to realize I have an enthusiastic and amazing partner in Lee Cowan. And I am following in the footsteps of Helene Gersuny and others who have worked to capture our history. But I have also felt a special purpose during the pandemic. I felt as if I was making a personal plea to us all to stay connected. I know it was serving that need for me. As we emerge from Covid life yet are still unable to gather at our sanctuary we need to find some new ways to connect with our UUCSC community.

In that spirit I'd like to make this suggestion. I'd like everybody to think of five people they have seen on a Sunday morning (or at a committee meeting or virtual gathering) and thought were interesting. Perhaps you have heard them speak in Joys and Concerns and you were touched by what they said. Perhaps they spoke of their spiritual journey and you could connect with it and thought, "I'd like to talk to that person, I'd like to learn more about them." It is so easy on a Sunday morning to have that thought, that desire to connect more. But it is not so easy to follow through—it can be awkward to approach someone you don't really know. Coffee hour can be daunting to the shy or introverted amongst us (and that includes me). But I am going to ask everybody to be brave and call your five people (or one, or two) and share a story. Talk about what might have piqued your interest in that person, talk about how you survived the isolation of the pandemic, talk about your favorite thing to do in May. Just talk.

This is exactly how I started the "Our Stories" project. I looked at the online directory and I started with people I was sort of comfortable with approaching but as the project progressed, I actually was able to be brave enough to call people that I thought could probably tell their stories better than I could—could write better, turn a phrase better, might think I was even doing a terrible job LOL. But I decided I didn't have to be perfect. My purpose was to be the facilitator of the story gathering. Many people that I approached decided for one reason or another to not have a story about themselves published but I never once felt that anyone was sorry that I had called.

So, I ask you all to share a joy, a story, ask how another is faring, talk about what our community means to you, what you are looking forward to, anything—the important thing is to talk and connect. No writing assignment is attached to my request. Just have fun and be there for each other.

Elizabeth Donovan
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