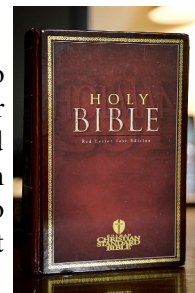


**Upcoming Sunday Programs**  
**(10:15 to 11:30 am)**

**February 2 – Why an Agnostic Should Read the Bible – R. Lee Stagg**

Why should an agnostic, atheist, or any non-believer read the Bible? The Bible contributes so much to our understandings of not only the Judeo-Christian traditions of faith, but to a broader understanding of the cultures, political tensions, wars, literature, and myriad relevant topics and challenges for the past two thousand years. It has informed how we define ourselves, for both good and ill, as individuals, communities, and nations. This brief introduction will begin to explore some interesting motivations and ways we can view this text and will ask questions about its relevance for us today.

Lee Stagg has been an English and Theory of Knowledge teacher and program coordinator in the St. Paul Schools for over 25 years. He holds two master's degrees in teaching English and Systematic Theology. Having moved from evangelical roots in the American south, through a more progressive Christianity, he is now a firm agnostic, yet retains a deep interest in studying philosophy, theology, the bible, and related topics.



**February 9 – On Being Human Part 3 – Rev Leslie Mills**

Rev Leslie Mills continues her series from last November.

**February 16 – Pop Wagner and The Hampden Rounders**

The Hampden Rounders are Pop Wagner, Adam Granger and Annie Spring. Pop and Adam are mainstays of the Minnesota Folk music scene and part of the original Prairie Home Companion cast.



**February 23 – TCAAP/Rice Creek Commons**

Tena Monson from the Arden Hills City Council will provide an update on the Rice Creek Commons development and the ways Pilgrim House might influence this project.

**March 2 – On Being Human Part 4 – Rev Leslie Mills**

Rev Leslie Mills presents the final program in her series.

**March 9 – Unhealthy Foods that Cause Sugar Addiction, Prediabetes, Insulin Resistance Troubles**

Wayne LeBlanc presents this program. See article below.

## PILGRIM HOUSE UU FELLOWSHIP

We seek to carry out the principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association of churches and fellowships, with which we are affiliated. These principles affirm the worth of everyone, freedom and the right of conscience in search of truth, encouragement of one another's spiritual growth, and the wonder and mystery of the web of all life. Membership in Pilgrim House is open to everyone who is in sympathy with our purposes and principles and wants to join.

**Phone:** 651-631-2582 (leave a message)

**Email:** [pilgrimhouse@pilgrimhouseuua.org](mailto:pilgrimhouse@pilgrimhouseuua.org)

**Internet:** <http://www.pilgrimhouseuua.org>

**Board Chair:** Marcie Jefferys

### The Land Acknowledgment

*Pilgrim House acknowledges that we gather on the ancestral land(s) of the Dakota People. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have been stewards throughout the generations, including the Ojibwe.*

### Pilgrim's Progress (Pilgrim House Newsletter)

If you have any items for the newsletter, please contact Fred Green

[newslettereditor@pilgrimhouseuua.org](mailto:newslettereditor@pilgrimhouseuua.org)

## CALENDAR

**Saturday, February 1, 5:30pm – MWUUC Coffee House, 5:30 potluck, 6:30 hybrid Coffee House at Pilgrim House.** All are welcome. To be on the list for Coffee House, contact Chad Synder.

**Thursday, February 6, 7pm – Great Decisions via Zoom – India: Between China, the West, and the Global South.** All are welcome. Contact Al Potter. See article below.

**Sunday, February 9, 12:00pm – Sunday Stories at Pilgrim House with presenter Gary Averbeck.** All are welcome. Contact Mary Eskelson.

**Monday, February 10, 7:00pm – Pilgrim House board meeting via Zoom.** Everyone is welcome. Contact Marcie Jefferys.

**Saturday, February 15, 10:00am – Soul Matters meets at Pilgrim House.** Contact Cynthia LeBlanc.

**Wednesday, February 26, 12:30pm – Novel exchange book club meets at a local library.** Contact Mary Carlson.

**Thursday, February 27, 1:30pm – Book Club meets at Pilgrim House.** The book is *Power and Light* by Will Weaver (MN author). Contact Cynthia LeBlanc.

## RALPH REEDER FOOD SHELF

Help Us Help Others!  
We need BROWN GROCERY BAGS WITH HANDLES to continue serving our community efficiently. These bags are crucial for packing and distributing food to those in need. If you have any clean and sturdy brown grocery bags lying around, please consider donating them! Drop them off at Pilgrim House or at the back entrance of the food shelf anytime and place in the donation bin on the backside of building Monday thru Friday. Spread the word. 2544 Mounds View Blvd, Mounds View.



Thank you for your support!



## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7 IS NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY (NBHAAD)

**Why is there a need for such a day?** Because, while the disparity is ever so gradually narrowing, Black Americans are far more likely to be diagnosed with HIV/AIDS than any other group, to be living with it, and to die of it. The purpose of the awareness day is to educate members of the community about the risks, to encourage testing for the condition, increase the number of people in the community who are involved in improvement efforts, and to get newly-diagnosed people access to needed information and treatment.

**Background:** Black communities have made great progress in reducing HIV. Yet racism, discrimination, and mistrust in the healthcare system may affect whether Black people seek or receive HIV prevention services. These issues may also reduce the likelihood of engaging in HIV treatment and care. NBHAAD is an opportunity to increase HIV education, testing, community involvement, and treatment among Black communities.

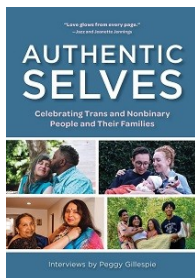
**Action:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has put in place a number of measures to reduce the incidence of new cases and improve care for people with existing cases. Current political trends are operating against these measures, including efforts to combat the underlying causes of the disparities such as racism and lower access to health care in general. For

information about actions to improve health outcomes for Black Americans with HIV/AIDS, see <https://oar.nih.gov/about/directors-corner/national-black-hiv-aids-awareness-day-taking-action-improve-health-outcomes>.

**PLAN TO JOIN US AT 3:00 PM ON MARCH 9 FOR THE COMMON READ FROM UUA**

[updated article]

***Authentic Selves: Celebrating the Lives of Transgender and Nonbinary People and Their Families***



The Pilgrim House Connections Committee and Welcoming Congregations program will be co-hosting a facilitated discussion session of this UUA Common Read book. Engaging stories, easy to read, and so useful for building understanding. We have copies of the book at Pilgrim House for you to check out. **The discussion will be at 3:00 pm on Sunday, March 9, with beverages provided, and a chili and cornbread supper afterwards.**

The book is an engaging compilation of life stories and portraits of trans and nonbinary people, as well as their partners, parents, children, siblings, and chosen family members. It was developed in collaboration with PFLAG National and Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund, and tells each person's story in their own voice based on in-depth interviews.

You do not need to read the entire book to contribute to the conversation, but it is likely once you start you will want to continue reading more of the fascinating and varied stories in it. You will likely also have questions to bring that will also help spur a great conversation. The facilitator will be Rev. Laura Thompson of Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship, an experienced facilitator and herself a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

We are looking forward to seeing and discussing with you on the afternoon of March 9 – we hope you can make it!

**GREAT DECISIONS VIA ZOOM**

**February 6, 7:00pm – India: Between China, the West, and the Global South**

India today is an emerging power occupying a pivotal position in the world. As it marks its 75th anniversary in January 2025, the world's most populous nation and largest democracy continues to defy simple categorization.

Our speaker is Kannan Solayappan, who grew up in Chennai in Southern India and earned his

undergraduate degree in chemical engineering at a university in Bangalore. In the late 1980s, he saw the promise of computers and went to Australia to study computer science, graduating with a master's in 1992. He moved to Minnesota in 1998 and has been a software consultant here for over 20 years now. In these years he has worked in most of the major companies in Minnesota, including IBM, Mayo Clinic, American Express, Cargill, 3M, United Health Care, Medtronic, U.S. Bank and now Wells Fargo. He lives in Eagan with his wife, Vallikannu, who works as a banker in Wells Fargo.

**WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBER!**

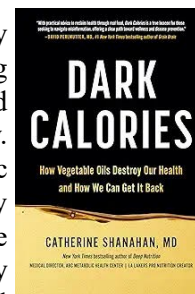
We're pleased to welcome Lisa Ueki of Lino Lakes to Pilgrim House membership. Lisa began visiting Pilgrim House this past fall and has enjoyed the Sunday programs, the people, and our community projects. Our thanks to Marilyn Jones and Carol Gross for introducing us to Lisa.



We look forward to getting to know Lisa better through our gatherings. Be sure to introduce yourself!

**UNHEALTHY FOODS THAT CAUSE SUGAR ADDICTION, PREDIABETES, INSULIN RESISTANCE, TROUBLES**

Nearly everyone in the US is currently prediabetic or insulin resistant causing a vicious downward spiral on the need to consume sugary foods for energy. On Mar 9, 2025, Wayne LeBlanc plans to present a program on healthy and unhealthy foods that explains the current problem with currently suggested diets and nearly universal sugary food addiction due to current fallacious diet recommendations. Two books (and others) have convinced me that current American Heart Association (AHA) and Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommendations are off tract and causing Americans horrible problems. These books explain why there is so much conflicting information about diets: Keto, Paleo, Vegetarian, Fat free, Carbohydrate free, and so on. I believe that Dr Catherine Shanahan has made a real breakthrough but it has not been well received for many reasons. Wayne hopes to shed some light on these important to everyone, healthy and unhealthy food topics. Highly recommended are 2 books, Dark Calories, and, The Fat Burn Fix by Dr Catherine Shanahan. Also see her website, [drcate.com](http://drcate.com), for information if desired.



## HOLIDAY SHOP 2024: A SEASON OF GRATITUDE AND GROWTH

*From the Alexandra House Newsletter (Pilgrim House members contributed generously to the Holiday Shop):*

Alexandra House's 2024 Holiday Shop was a resounding success, made possible by the generosity of our community, dedicated partners like Target, Spring Lake Park Lions Club, many individual donors, and the unwavering support of our advocates and volunteers.

Over the course of two days, we had the honor of serving:

106 families (18 more than last year)

246 children (45 more than last year)

95 Youth Services Participants (65 more than last year)

In total, 128 more individuals were impacted by Holiday Shop this year—a significant milestone that reflects the collective power of the community. Click to read our full Impact Report!

Participants received bags brimming with holiday gifts, wrapping supplies, warm winter gear, family games, stocking stuffers, holiday meal food boxes, and gift cards. These thoughtful provisions do more than brighten the season; they bring hope to families navigating the immense challenges of rebuilding safe and healthy lives after experiencing domestic or sexual violence.

The journey toward safety and stability can feel like a daunting mountain of responsibilities and obstacles. Holiday Shop serves as a reminder that survivors do not climb that mountain alone. By alleviating the financial burden of the holiday season, this program replaces hardship with joy and uncertainty with encouragement.

Thank you for being part of this incredible effort. Whether you donated, volunteered, or advocated for the families we serve, your support made it possible to bring smiles everyone we served!

## DELPHI QUINTET AND FRIENDS

Saturday, February 8, 7:00 – 9:00pm

United Church of Christ in New Brighton, 1000 Long Lake Rd, New Brighton, MN 55112, USA

An evening of wonderful music including: Jazz Standards, Show Tunes, Latin/Brazilian, Popular, Movie Hits, and More!

Hosted by Merging Waters UUC

This is a free concert, but donations are welcome. This is a special fundraiser for SACA (Southern Anoka Community Assistance) Food Shelf. This is a family friendly venue -- please no alcohol on premises.

*From the First Unitarian Society of Madison, WI (available via Zoom):*



*the spiritual work of trans justice & safety*

**Saturday, February 22**  
**10am - 3:30pm**  
worship to follow at 4:30pm

*register at [tinyurl.com/wartmann25](https://tinyurl.com/wartmann25)*



## UPDATED COVID-SAFETY CRITERIA WE FOLLOW AS OF 9/11/2023:

- Masks are optional – Masks and hand sanitizer are available.
- Attendees are vaccinated, with exception for children too young to be vaccinated.
- Air purifiers will continue to be run in Program and Fellowship Rooms.
- Food and beverages are provided by our Hospitality Committee.

## NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME HERE!

We enjoy the visitors and friends who join us for Sunday programs. If you're interested in taking the next step of becoming a member of Pilgrim House, we'd would enjoy talking with you and sharing a short, live Power Point introduction – in person or via Zoom.

*Kathy & Mel Aanerud, Membership Committee*

[membership@pilgrimhouseuua.org](mailto:membership@pilgrimhouseuua.org)



*"If you think you are too small to make an impact, you have never spent a night with a mosquito." Fransiska Kangombe, University of Namibia (via the Back Yard Biology blog)*