



MINISTER'S COLUMN

JANUARY 2025

The Practice of Story

Dear CUF folks,

The New Year brings with it reflections on the past year and dreams for the future. It follows that January is a good time to think about the stories we are told and the stories we tell about our past and about future possibilities. We might begin by examining the stories we tell ourselves and others about who we are and how we became who we are. We can go deeper to look at how those stories we tell have helped and/or harmed us. Our stories guide how we perceive and act in the world – we are the protagonists, are we warriors constantly battling a hostile world full of enemies, are we peacemakers seeing that resolution is always possible, or both? As we begin the New Year, are there some changes we'd like to make to our stories of our lives and of our world?

While we're thinking about our personal stories, it makes sense to think about the stories we tell each other about ourselves in community, as a Unitarian Universalist congregation. If we tell the story of putting love at the center of who we are and what we do, we're more likely to stay open to listening for similar stories from people and groups around us.

Remember, you don't fear people whose stories you know.

~Margaret Wheatley

This month, many of us are bracing for the government transition, and fearing the worst, we are in the "protagonists battling a hostile world/evil enemy" storyline. If we can hear alternative stories from potential partners who share some of our values, we can work together from a place of love, respect, reason, and justice. As Margaret Wheatley advises, "Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible...Know that creative solutions come from new connections...Rely on human goodness. Stay together." Let's begin 2025 by sharing the stories of who we are and what we dream of, and to listening for others' stories that can help us live into those dreams.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Sarah". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.