



# WomanSpirit 2018 - "I AM WILLING"

with Holly Near

Unitarian Church of Evanston

February 2-3, 2018

## Workshop Offerings

### MORNING

**Tai Chi with Reverend Denise Tracy:** By learning some movements and repeating them we will discover the ancient Taoist form of prayer called Tai Chi. In this workshop we will play with the very beginning meditation called the five elements Earth-Air-Fire-Water-Woodwind. We will laugh and enjoy each other's company as well.

*Rev Denise Tracy* has been learning and teaching Tai Chi for over 35 years. Tai Chi is the spiritual discipline that has sustained her Unitarian Universalist ministry. She is retired and is the Chair of the Women & Religion Committee.

**Indigo Shibori Sampler/Scarf with Johna Van Dyke:** We will explore the ancient art of Shibori dye techniques by immersing our scarves into an indigo dye vat for varied and often surprising results. We will explore 3 different techniques: 1) binding objects into the silk to create areas resistant to the dye; 2) Arachi Shibori, which consists of wrapping silk around cylinders and tightly tying string around it to create resist; and 3) clamping folded fabric to create the resist. Everyone will have a beautiful indigo scarf to take home.

*\*\*There is a \$5 material fee for the purchase of your silk scarf, payable to the presenter.\*\**

*Johna Van Dyke* is a retired Interior Designer who attended The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, The Art Institute of Chicago, and The Harrington Institute of Interior Design. In her former career, she studied and designed textiles. Johna studied Shibori textile art and the use of indigo dye in Japan.

### **Writing As Healing with Maureen Martin and Cindy Ulrich:**

While a writing practice, such as journaling, may bring insight and healing, writing in a group can allow us to feel heard and create a sense of community. This workshop will offer the experience of writing together and sharing our writing with others following the model of Mary Pierce Brosmer and Women Writing for (a) Change. Bring a pen, a willingness to write together and an openness to surprises.

*Maureen M. Martin, MDiv, LCPC* is a writer, spiritual director and a former hospice chaplain. She attended the Feminist Leadership Academy of Women Writing for (a) Change.

*Cindy Ulrich* is a spiritual director and musician. She attended the Spiritual Direction program at Siena Center in Racine, WI. They both live in Evanston.

### **Grief – Recovery and Growth with Betsy Eisenschiml and Michele O’Connell:**

An interactive discussion about the journey of grief.

*Betsy Eisenschiml* and *Michele O’Connell*, having experienced their own personal losses, met in a grief group 4 years ago. They feel that it is possible that the journey through grief is one that can result in personal growth.

### **The World is Your Oracle: Tapping Your Inner Wisdom with Nancy Vedder-**

**Schults**: In this interactive workshop, we will use several of the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic techniques that Nancy has gathered in her new book *The World Is Your Oracle* to explore the wisdom that resides within each of us. After eliciting questions that need answers, we will invite our inner knowing to respond. As opposed to the pre-programmed responses provided by Tarot, the *I Ching*, or runes, the embodied methods we will employ turn us inward to develop deep listening, deep vision, and deep sensing of our flashes of insight. Opening to our inner depths in this way empowers us on our spiritual paths as well as in our daily life.

*Nancy Vedder-Schults*, PhD was named one of the Wisdom Keepers of the Goddess Spirituality Movement in 2013. She is the author of *The World is Your Oracle: Divinatory Practices for Tapping Your Inner Wisdom*, a theological columnist for *SageWoman* magazine and blogger for *Tikkun Daily* and *Feminism and Religion*. She has offered spiritual growth keynotes, workshops and classes since 1987.

### **Using an Equity Lens: How To Do It and Why It Matters with Eileen Hogan**

**Heineman**: Many people feel there is little they can do to impact the inequity that exists in many of our society’s systems. Not true! No matter where we live, work, worship or play, applying an equity lens to how we live CAN be transformative. This workshop explores what “using an equity lens” looks like, and how making this change can change you, your congregation, and your larger community.

*Eileen Hogan Heineman*, Director of the Racial Justice Program at YWCA Evanston/ NorthShore, has been facilitating Racial Equity and Anti-Racism workshops for 15 years. At YWCA she has been responsible for developing and implementing racial justice programming which seeks to make racial equity a priority by affecting changes in knowledge, behavior and condition.

**Your Relationship with Food (and Your Body) with Tammy Besser:** In this workshop we will begin to explore and untangle the multi-layered and conflicting meanings and messages we embody about food. If your relationship with food tends to be complicated and you could use a bit of support on your journey to health and well-being, consider joining us. We discuss various readings and find ways to connect with one another and restore our health and our spirits.

*Tammy Besser* is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over thirty years of experience working with individuals with disabilities and their families. She fell in love with food at an early age and continues in this sometimes tumultuous and tricky, but usually nourishing and satisfying, relationship.

**Art and Healing: For a Better World with Reverend Lisa Siders Kenney:** When we heal our own heart we begin to heal the world. We will look at some of the ways art offers the opportunity for healing through ritual, symbolic imagery and transformation of poetic materials. In this workshop I will present the process of making art with the intentional process of healing through images and stories from my practice. We will speak to the power of repurposing meaningful materials and provide a hand-on opportunity for workshop members participation.

*Lisa Siders Kenney* is a multimedia artist working in fiber, video and sculpture. Since her daughter's sudden death in 2009, Lisa has been collecting artificial flowers that have blown off of graves. She has ritually sewn them together to create a new fabric resulting in an installation piece of shared loss. Lisa has an MFA in sculpture from the University of Cincinnati and makes and teaches art from her studio on Whidbey Island, WA where she seeks to craft meaning out of the inexplicable realities that make up life.

## **SPECIAL LUNCHTIME PROGRAMMING**

**Beyond the Binary: Gender and Spirit with Melinda McCormick and Rev Suzelle Lynch:** In a conscious space of respect and caring we explore how our expanding gender spectrum and consciousness make a difference to us all in body, mind and spirit.

*Dr. McCormick, MDiv., MSW, PhD*, has spent much of her career advocating for members of the LGBTQ community and has researched the impact of bullying on queer youth as well as their experiences with post-traumatic growth. She is currently on the

Social Work faculty at Marian University. *Rev Suzelle Lynch* is senior minister of UU Church West in Brookfield and has walked the path of caring, support and advocacy with LGBTQ people since 1980.

## **AFTERNOON**

**Ecstatic Dance with Cindy Lortie:** Movement, rhythm, and music have been used by cultures throughout the world for millennia to induce healing and ecstatic states of being. Gathering together in community on the dance floor in movement, music and breath activates potent life force energy for creation and transformation. An introduction that describes what Ecstatic Dance is all about will happen first, the basis being the 5 Rhythms by Gabrielle Roth, followed by an hour of music and movement. All bodies are welcome!

*Cindy Lortie* is currently a preschool teacher (14 years) after a previous career in social work. Her love for dancing started as a child and has evolved throughout the years into a spiritual practice of moving to music from the heart, spirit and body. This led to starting a spiritual dance community in 2015 at UCE.

**Willing to Sing for Strength and Harmony with Reverend Linda Slabon and Toni Tollerud:** This workshop invites participants to join voices to sing women's music about the earth, social justice, the goddess, and women's spirituality. Music is a force that engages us deeply; it offers the opportunity for reflection, risk taking, and empowerment. The women's chorus we form at this workshop will connect us deeply. Take home songs that strengthen you for each day.

*Linda Slabon* is the Minister Emerita at the DeKalb UU Fellowship, a UU community minister, and a clinical social worker. She sings with Cymbal, a UU women's sextet. Gardening and meditation renew her soul. When singing she fearlessly reaches for the upper registers, and she still enjoys wearing feather boas.

*Toni Tollerud* is a member of Cymbal and a retired Director of Music from the UU Fellowship of DeKalb. She serves on two local boards and is a Distinguished Teaching Professor Emerita at Northern Illinois University. She loves to drum, garden, sing low, and cheer for the Cubs...they made it, baby!

**The Goddess Unveiled: Discover your Divine Feminine Archetype with Amy Grabowski:** The Goddess is the soul of the world, the feminine power that is the sacred root of life, love, and wisdom. We will find which Goddess from many different cultures inspires us and then make Goddess collages to honor our personal Feminine Divine Within. By embracing our inner Goddess we have the power to not only transform ourselves but to enrich the lives of those around us.  
(No artistic ability needed.)

*Amy Grabowski, LCPC*, is the Founder of The Awakening Center, a counseling and nutrition practice in Chicago. She is a member of UCE, and has an interest in Feminist Spirituality and Goddesses.

**West African Dance with Alicia Hempfling and Jan Halman:** Participants will learn basic West African dance steps, which are traditional in ceremonies and in daily life activities.

*Alicia Hempfling* is involved in music and the arts, both as a performer and supporter. She founded a nonprofit music and arts organization dedicated to helping individuals to experience music and the arts through lessons, classes and performances. She is also the producer and host of a Saturday morning radio show about the arts.

*Jan Halman* is a teacher and performer of African drumming and dance. She performs regularly at Old Town School of Folk Music and teaches drumming and African dance at Creative Arts Factory of Evanston at Rogers Park. She has studied West African rhythms and dances in Africa and loves to share her skill and knowledge.

**From My Heart and My Life with Reverend Emmy Lou Belcher:**

Holly Near wrote, "*I do not separate my music from my heart nor do I separate my ideas from my daily life. ... It is from this personal place that I write my songs.*" In this workshop we will be creating a collage of cut and torn paper expressing what is in your heart and life. Is it a call to justice? Is it about loss and grief? Is it about a vision of a world of love and beauty? Is it about feeling empowered? There will be various papers and magazines from which to cull images to express your heart and life, and scissors and glue to put it all together using artists crayons, markers and pencils. **\*\*There is a \$2 materials fee payable to the presenter.\*\***

*Emmy Lou Belcher* is Minister Emerita of DuPage UU Church. She served thirty years in ministry after a career in art and teaching.

**EmBODYing the "I Am" with Jayne Ader and Rubi Ramos:** We will use Group Therapeutic Breathwork to touch in with our internal wisdom and discover what barriers might be blocking our aliveness. It is in our partnership with Spirit and our internal wisdom that we find a place of peace from which we can choose more centered action in our current world setting. This workshop will mostly be experiential and participants are lying in a circle on yoga mats; this process can be adapted for those who request a more physically supported experience. Loose, comfortable clothing is recommended; other materials provided. Feel free to bring your own blanket, mat, sacred object to support your process.

*Jayne Ader* is an LMT, MSP has over 25 years of experience in lovingly supporting

people in the process of tapping into their own innate wisdom. She utilizes the powerful tools of breath work, bodywork, energy work, yoga and integrative psychology to help clients move through their greatest barriers to living more fully.

*Rubi Ramos* enjoys connecting people to healing resources and communities. She does so with great joy, compassion and a philosophy of abundance. Rubi is a Reiki level II practitioner and level II Therapeutic Breathworker. As she launches more deeply into her path as a natural health provider, she dissipates barriers and inspires others along the way.

**Beauty in the Unexpected with Linda Higdon:** If you are a woman seeking new purpose and adventure, Linda Higdon invites you to join her workshop. She will show her short film, “Beauty in the Unexpected” which follows her 15-year personal quest working with the women of Kenya who mysteriously lead her into hidden worlds of beauty. Participants will explore “how at this time in life new meaning can be found by discovering the Global Heart.”

*Linda Higdon* is a champion for global women; she is a performing artist, philanthropic visionary, photographer and filmmaker. She has worked for over 15 years with women “on the ground” igniting change in Kenya and hosts a “Women’s Journey to Kenya” to introduce Western women to the same women who have transformed her life. Her short film, “Beauty in the Unexpected”, follows her personal quest doing this work and is showing in film festivals across the US.

**Spirituality and the Environment with Heather Brown:** Explore ways that spirituality and the environment are interconnected. Connect with others who also have an interest in the environment and brainstorm ways to inspire yourself and your congregation’s Green Team.

*Heather Brown* has been a member of UCE for 5 years and is chair of the Green Team. Her passions include the environment, volunteering for a local animal rescue and women’s issues.

**Herbal Wisdom the Wise Woman Way with Linda Conroy:** Everyday Herbs, Simple Rituals, Self Love and Compassion are all tenets of the Wise Woman Way. During this inspiring workshop we will sing with the plants, sip herbal infusions and learn to incorporate herbs into daily life for health and nourishment. Exploring the oldest approach to healthcare in the world, we will tap into our intuitive sensibilities and knowing about the green world.

*Linda Conroy* dedicates her life to connecting with the green world. She is a practicing herbalist providing education, workshops, apprenticeships as well as individual consultations and handmade herbal products. Linda holds two masters degrees: MSS (Master of Social Service) and MLSP (Master of Law and Social Policy). She is a

community organizer and the founder of Wild Eats as well as The Midwest Women's Herbal Conference.

**The Soul of Democracy with Sharon Welch**: We are in a struggle for the very soul of democracy and all that we hold dear — interdependence, reason, compassion, respect for all human beings and stewardship of the natural world that sustains us is under direct, unabashed assault. How do we, as Unitarian Universalists, confront, counter and understand this explosion of hatred?

*Sharon Welch* served for 10 years as Provost and Professor of Religion and Society at Meadville Lombard Theological School; before that she taught at the University of Missouri and Harvard Divinity School. In light of our current political challenges, Sharon has moved from administrative work to devoting half her time to activism, research and writing and half to teaching. She has completed a book for NYU Press on the rising threats of authoritarianism. Sharon is involved in research on implicit bias, white privilege/fragility and facing head on rising racism and explicit calls for white supremacy and nationalism.