



CommUnity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

June 2020

June Services

All in-person Services have been CANCELED until further notice. Online Services will be live-streamed via [Facebook](#) on Sundays at 10:00 AM. Video recordings of services are on [YouTube](#).

June 7: *Flower Communion Sunday* with Rev. Gy

Each June we celebrate Flower Communion, the uniquely Unitarian Universalist celebration of beauty, human uniqueness, diversity, and community. The safety measures we are currently following in order to keep everyone healthy will prevent us from celebrating Flower Communion in the usual way this year. Join us virtually as create new rituals to celebrate our community and our interconnectedness, even while we are apart.

June 14: *Carry the Flame* with Miriam Epskamp and the UUCC Kids

As our church year comes to an end we take time to celebrate our young people and the volunteers who contribute their time and talents to our Religious Education program. We will also honor the Coming of Age transition of our graduating seniors, David Brozovich and Matthew Nelson, as they begin their journey as adults.

June 21: *New Member Sunday* with Rev. Gy

This morning we will officially welcome the newest members of our community and celebrate all who join us on this journey towards creating more peace, justice, and love in ourselves and the world.

June 28: *Sunday Morning at General Assembly* with Rev. Joan Havier and Rev. Mykal O'Neal Slack

One of the silver-linings of virtual church is that distance and expense are no longer impediments to participating in denominational events like General Assembly (GA). The Sunday Morning Worship at GA is certain to be the largest gathering of UUs joining together in virtual worship this year. We invite everyone to be part of the gathering by joining the live-stream on uua.org/ga.

From the Minister

[Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney](#)



I am distressed by the news. As if Covid-19 isn't somehow enough, another unarmed black man died at the hands of police. People are marching wanting justice, understandably so, and some are rioting.

I don't know anymore what to say when I watch another video clip with "I can't breathe" being ignored. I don't understand it at a very human level, and I am even more shocked to know that our police force, whom we should be able to call on and TRUST when distressed, vulnerable, and in need, is repeatedly capable of such brutality. To add insult to injury, they usually get away with just getting fired. Or not even that.

I have a suspicion that we will eventually change the culture of brutal policing. Enough unarmed black men will be sacrificed and enough of us will march, some will always riot, and eventually we will call forth the will the change this brutal culture. I don't know why it takes us so long to change something bad into something better.

This past week I had wonderful conversations with our two graduating youth, David and Matthew. We are planning their coming of age ceremony. It is a beautiful passage, I feel privileged to be part of it even in a small way.

They are the first two kids who have gone all [\(Continued on page 2\)](#)

FROM THE MINISTER

the way from pre-school to graduation in the RE program at our church. That is another milestone by itself.

As they say, it takes a village to raise a child and I know that it wasn't just our program that shaped these two young men, yet I like to believe that they did get some good values and principles from our RE and community. They both believe in inclusivity, kindness, compassion, fairness. Kindness is very important for both of them. They care deeply for the wellbeing of all and want to shape a gentle, compassionate world. They give me hope.

It is because of the two of them and many like them that I know and have hope that the culture of police brutality will give way to a fair one. Looking at our youth brings me back to balance and a sense that it is going to be alright. They may be shaped by our current culture, yet won't be defined or limited by it. It seems as though they know better. We have much work to do. Getting discouraged is not an option, although I often feel it creep up inside me. These times call for courage and a clear voice. NO MORE! We no longer want to be the country, the generation that is willing to tolerate the stain of senseless murder on our collective soul. NO MORE! This is not the legacy we want to pass on to the generations coming behind us. They deserve better and so do we.

Allow me to leave you with wisdom in the words of Maya Angelou:

You should be angry. You must not be bitter. Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host. It doesn't do anything to the object of its displeasure. So use that anger. You write it. You paint it. You dance it. You march it. You vote it. You do everything about it. You talk it. Never stop talking it.

*Justice will not be served until
those who are unaffected are as
outraged as those who are*



INSPIRED SPIRITUALITY

Guided Wellness Meditation Continues

Great news! Eric Nelson, UCC member and experienced meditation coach with Stress Less Kzoo, has agreed to continue his weekly Guided Wellness Meditation sessions via Zoom on **Wednesdays at 5:00 PM** throughout the summer. (Visit the [UCC Calendar](#) for login info.) Eric has over 30 years experience in training and research in contemplative and meditative science and served over 20 years as Program Developer for The Fetzer Institute of Kalamazoo. We are grateful for his willingness to share his time and expertise with us.

From the [Stress Less Kzoo](#) website:

Mindfulness and Compassion training have been tested in hundreds of research studies and found to be uniquely effective in improving overall health and well-being by reducing stress and anxiety and improving attention, emotional balance, resilience, self-compassion and relationship harmony. Just like physical exercise, which strengthens the body, mindfulness exercise strengthens mind, emotion and body balance.

Eric provides background information and answers questions at each meditation session making it a great experience for both beginners and veteran practitioners. You can drop in occasionally or choose to make mindfulness practice a regular part of your week. Either way, we hope you will take advantage of the wonderful gift Eric is offering to us.



Sunday Morning Worship at General Assembly Rooted, Inspired, and Ready

We will be trying something a bit different on **Sunday, June 28th**. Instead of live-streaming a service on Facebook like we usually do, we are inviting everyone to go to uua.org/ga to watch the service from General Assembly, the largest annual gathering of UUs in the world. This powerful, communal service will stream on at **10:00 AM** and requires no login. All are welcome.

Leading the service will be Rev. Joan Javier-Duval from the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, Vermont and Rev. Mykal O'Neal Slack, Community Minister for Worship and Spiritual Care for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism.

Benjie Messe, from the UU Congregation of Phoenix, will act as Music Director for the service. His goal is to share the beauty and joy being created by the wonderful musicians throughout our faith, including a virtual choir made up from singers from all over the country.

The worship service will also include a special collection for the [Tomaquag Museum](#), an indigenous museum featuring an extensive collection and archive of Southern New England tribal communities. You can visit the Unitarian Universalist Association for more information about [Sunday Morning Worship](#) on June 28th.



Rev. Joan Javier-Duval



Rev. Mykal O'Neal Slack

STEWARDSHIP



From the Stewardship Committee

In gratitude for our congregation's generous pledging of support for UUC, the Stewardship Committee is planning a virtual celebration. As you know, due to stay-home, stay-safe orders, our traditional dinner celebration didn't happen. Save the date on the evening of **Saturday, June 20** and watch for an announcement with details about what will occur instead.

It is also unlikely that we'll be able to hold the annual service auction in the fall. That is our major fundraiser. The proposed budget for 2020-2021 counts on income the auction generates. That means we need a substitute fundraiser or a different type of auction. Again the Stewardship Committee is brainstorming ideas, and your thoughts and suggestions are most welcome. Contact a member of the Committee to offer your ideas.

The UUC Stewardship Committee is: Chair [Regena Nelson](#), Joe Calme, Ron Crowell, Bev Folz.

Financial Giving to UUC

Many of us are missing out on a regular spiritual practice of financially supporting our church. If you are interested in how you can continue to financially give to the church before services resume, please consider the following options:

Mail checks to the church, 10441 Shaver Road, Portage, MI 49024.

Give to UUC from your smartphone! Download the free **GivePlus Mobile** app from Google Play or Apple's App Store. Find **Unitarian Universalist Community Church** and select the one in Portage, Michigan.

OR...Open a browser, type in the church website, www.uucommunitychurch.org, and click on the "donate" button in the middle of the page.

If you would like assistance, please give Kimberly a call at 269-569-3658 and she'll walk you through the steps.

**GIVE
PLUS⁺**

Apple Classes Return!



Great News! We will be offering our iPhone/iPad classes again this summer. In the interest of safety for everyone, all sessions will be held via Zoom. Since we are not bound by geography, please share this information with your friends and relatives who may be interested regardless of where they live!

The success of this Fund Raiser for our Church depends on participation. And participation depends on **YOU** helping to get out the word. Sessions will start on June 9th and 10th and will continue through the summer on Wednesdays until September 9th. Most sessions will start at 1:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) and run about an hour. Private tutoring sessions can also be scheduled for a donation of \$5 per 30 minutes. To register or schedule a tutoring session, email to 123easy.apple@gmail.com. If demand surpasses capacity, duplicate sessions will be added on Thursdays. For more details and a schedule click [HERE](#).

CARING COMMUNITY



JUNE CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

*The important thing is not that we can live on hope alone,
but that life is not worth living without it. ~ Harvey Milk*

*Hope is the feeling you have that the feeling
you have isn't permanent. ~Jean Kerr*

Even as we enter the spring/summer season with many of the special events being cancelled we have high hopes for our graduates –

David Brozovich and Matthew Nelson from Kalamazoo Loy Norrix High School.
Tyler Rigling (Stace Danielson's son) from Marshall High School.
Olivia Russell, (Betty Lee Ongley's granddaughter) from M.S.U.

Congratulations grads!! Be sure to come see us when we can be together again.

A shout out for high hopes goes to Justin Rigling, another son of Stace Danielson, who is a Marine preparing for deployment overseas.

Sending high hopes to Rev. Gy and Patti who are still working on a deal to close on buying their new house!

Our hopes are high for Judy Pigg-Behrendt, Rita Stevens, and Bob McWhorter all of whom are celebrating June birthdays. Wishing all three a healthy and happy year ahead!

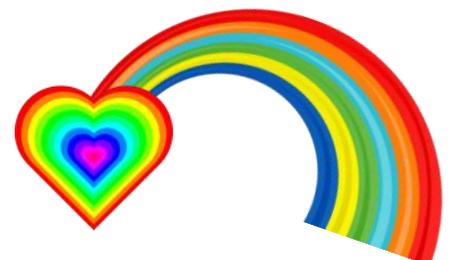
Our sympathy goes out to Miriam and her family with the loss of her sister-in-law, Beth Ann Epskamp. Beth Ann was a retired teacher from KPS and lived in a memory care residence where she contracted Covid-19. Please keep Miriam in your thoughts and prayers.

As a reminder to all – Please check the Friday weekly emails that Miriam sends out from UUCC. It is an important way to have information about UUCC and each other. If you have Joys or Concerns that you wish to share, the Friday email is the place to send them during our Quarantine.

We send Hope for those in the community who face uncertainty with employment and who wonder if their jobs are safe. Hope also for all in the larger community who will be affected by the deep budget cuts announced at Western Michigan University.

If you need help from the UUCC Caring Community Contact Persons, please call or email, [Nancy Crowell](#), [Judy Oliver](#), or [Judy Pigg-Behrendt](#).

Sharing is Caring!



LEADERSHIP

From the Board President

[Nancy Calme](#)

How are you doing? Are you staying connected to your church community? Are you finding nourishment from those connections or are you feeling isolated?

The Board of Trustees has met frequently since mid-March to assess how soon things might shift back to “normal.” No one really knows, but the scientific community predicts that we are going to have to continue living in this strange new world for many months. We might as well accept that and learn to feel comfortable in new garments.

So, think about it. If you were not able to gather with your friends from church for a year, what would you lose? What opportunities for helping the world would be lost? What relationships would wither from neglect? How would your spirit suffer?

We have control over our attitudes, and we have the power to forge new paths into community. It may mean learning technical skills that we had thought belonged only to the young. It may require us to rediscover some low-tech ways of keeping in touch, such as writing letters and making phone calls.

If ever American Ingenuity was called for, it is today. Let’s dig in, adapt, and find new, old, and better ways to take care of each other and hold our church community together.



Virtual Gatherings Help Us Connect!

Even though our doors are closed, there are many opportunities to meet each and to be together in community. Please consider joining one of the following virtual gatherings. Your presence may be a gift to someone feeling isolated and alone.

Tuesdays at 11:00 AM. Join Rev. Gy for coffee and conversation via ZOOM

Thursdays at 7:00 PM Mingle with friends at our weekly Happy Hour via ZOOM

Sundays at 10:00 AM Join Rev. Gy on Facebook for a live-streamed Sunday Message

Sundays at 10:45 AM Following Rev. Gy’s talk, we will gather for a virtual Coffee Hour via ZOOM

How to Connect: Login information for these gatherings can be found in the previous week’s Friday Weekly Email and on the [church calendar](#). If you need help connect to Zoom, contact the [office](#). We are always ready to brainstorm solutions and offer one-on-one assistance.

Service Recordings: Videos of Rev. Gy’s Sunday Message can be found on our [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#). You can find us on Facebook and YouTube by searching for UU Community Church of SW Michigan.

PROGRAM COUNCIL

Program Council—Where We Get Stuff Done— TOGETHER

by [Erin Michael](#), Board Vice-President

Thank you to the mighty group who joined our first ever virtual Program Council on May 17th. We celebrated NINETEEN successes from the quality online weekly offerings (five of them) to Chalice Circle groups, to a successful Canvass, to Joe, Tami and Kimberly's work to get us PPP funding, to providing a laptop and tutoring for our Congolese family, to our new "Sustainability" small group and much more! You can read the notes from our meeting [HERE](#). Our next meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, June 14th**. We will meet virtually using Zoom. Looking forward to being with you!

Connecting with each other: Not all our congregants have the technology to connect online. Please take a few minutes to reach out to people by calling and writing cards. If you want and need to connect online, let Miriam know and she can match you with someone who can help!

UU the Vote: Our Social Justice committee is hoping as a community and/or individually we can find ways to help with this UUA initiative. If you haven't already, review the list of [50+ Ways You Can UU the Vote](#). Together we will decide where to put our energy and resources. (More info on [page 12](#))

Generosity Sundays: We missed one to benefit Planned Parenthood of Michigan in April, but put in place plans to collect money for them in May. In June, we will collect for OutFront Kalamazoo and hopefully will be joined by their representative during the service on June 21st. You can donate at any time, by mailing a check made out to UUCC (memo line should indicate Generosity Sunday) or online at our [Donate](#) page by choosing "Generosity Sunday."

Virtual Fellowship Dinner Celebration: Stewardship is planning our Fellowship Dinner online! (see [page 4](#)) Save the date and we will gather to share dinner and celebrate! Watch for details!

iPhone/iPad Fundraiser: Marsha Laya is planning how to offer her famous classes online. She is asking for our help to spread the word. (See [page 4](#) for details.) One advantage is that anyone across the country can join in! Thanks, Marcia!

ISAAC's Run, Walk, Roll Event: This event is still on! ISAAC will provide multiple routes for you to choose from and complete between July 25 and August 25. They ask you to send photos of you and your family participating. There is also the opportunity for UUCC to place an ad supporting a local, small business. More details coming.

Fall 2020 Service Auction! Stewardship is starting to plan for a virtual Service Auction, and they need your help! Please send your ideas of how this event might take shape and ideas for virtual offerings on which we can bid. In addition, if you have an event you have yet to offer up from this year's auction, reach out to others for ideas. If not, do not fret. All is okay!

Thank you for all you do! Stay well!

THANK YOU!

COMING OF AGE



Matthew Nelson



David Brozovich

A Coming of Age Celebration

Unitarian Universalist Community Church is proud to announce that David, son of Tami and Kevin Brozovich, and Matthew, son of Regena and Eric Nelson, have completed our Coming of Age program for high school seniors.

Coming of Age program, a six month long program focused on religious exploration and self-reflection, is the way our church community marks the transition of our young people into adulthood.

David and Matthew have been meeting with mentors since January for a series of conversations about their values, beliefs, and personal spiritual journeys. They will share the insights they have garnered from these discussions with us during the service on **Sunday, June 14th** and, as a community, we will acknowledge the beginning of this new stage in their lives.

The ongoing health crisis has prevented the Class of 2020 from enjoying many of the usual rites of passage associated with a senior year of high school. Our virtual Coming of Age ceremony for David and Matthew will not quite be the same as it would have been if we could all be together. To make up for this in some small way, we are planning a Coming of Age Parade on June 14th to show our love and support to our graduates.

The plan is to gather in our cars at Winchell Elementary School at 2:00 PM to prepare for the parade. Car decorations are highly encouraged! At 2:30 PM will make our way first to Matthew's house in the Winchell neighborhood and then to David's on Westnedge Hill. We will wave and offer our congratulations from our cars.

We hope that many UUC people will be able to be part of this fun celebration for David and Matthew to honor their Coming of Age. Please contact [Miriam](#) to RSVP.

Congratulations!

LEARNING AND GROWTH

Anti-Racist Summer Reading

The Women's Book Group is on their usual summer hiatus. If you are looking for some interesting reading material in place of their usual excellent suggestions, consider some of the titles on this Anti-Racist Reading List by compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker and Alyssa Klein. Now would be a great time to read or re-read a few of these works.

Black Feminist Thought by Patricia Hill Collins

Eloquent Rage:

A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower

by Dr. Brittney Cooper

Heavy: An American Memoir by Kiese Laymon

How To Be An Antiracist by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson

Me and White Supremacy by Layla F. Saad

Redefining Realness by Janet Mock

Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde

So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin

The New Jim Crow:

Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

by Michelle Alexander

The Next American Revolution:

Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century

by Grace Lee Boggs

The Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

This Bridge Called My Back:

Writings by Radical Women of Color

by Cherríe Moraga

When Affirmative Action Was White:

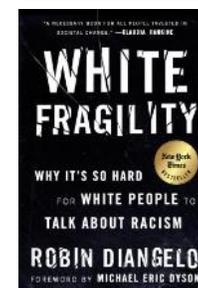
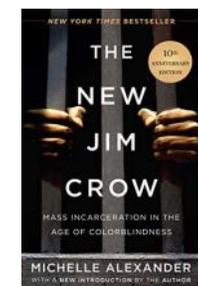
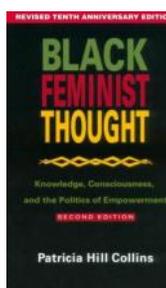
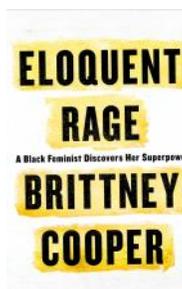
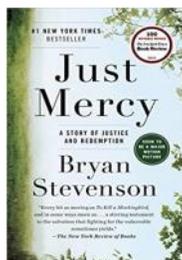
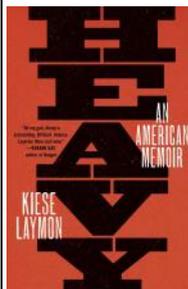
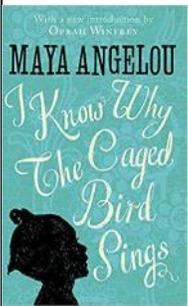
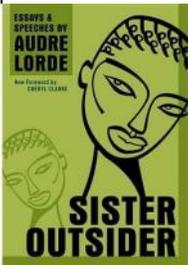
An Untold History of Racial Inequality in 20th Century America

by Ira Katznelson

White Fragility:

Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism

by Robin DiAngelo, PhD



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In a time of great challenge and heartbreak in our world, what does our faith ask of us?

At this year's fully virtual General Assembly (GA), June 24-28, people from all over the world will gather online to explore the power, possibility, purpose, struggle, and joy of finding the path forward together as Unitarian Universalists. You can part of the exploration!

[Registration for GA 2020 -Rooted, Inspired, & Ready](#), is open and there is still time to commit to take part in what is sure to be the largest online gathering of UUs ever and attend meetings, activities and workshops, many of which are dedicated to our ongoing struggle to dismantle white supremacy in Unitarian Universalism and in the world. A listing of available workshops can be found [HERE](#).



There are also opportunities for non-registrants to participate. Several GA worship services and all general sessions are open to the public and can be watched from the Unitarian Universalist Association website: uua.org/ga.

General Sessions (see [Schedule](#)) Watch as the business of the Association is conducted in real time.

Synergy Bridging Worship (June 25 at 5:00 PM) Come be inspired and illuminated at a multi-generational celebration and rite of passage for high school seniors that will include brilliant contemporary musical performances. The service includes a collection to benefit the Katie Tyson Fund for Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

Service of the Living Tradition (June 26 at 5:00 PM) Led by the Ministries and Faith Development Staff Group, this service honors fellowshipped and credentialed religious leaders; remembering those who have died, recognizing those who have completed active service, and welcoming those who have received fellowship or credentialed status in the past year. The service includes a collection to benefit the Living Tradition Fund.

Sunday Morning Worship (June 28 at 10:00 AM) See [page 3](#) for more details.

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Virtual Juneteenth Celebration

June 19, 2020 at 1:00 PM

Kalamazoo Valley Museum's is planning a Juneteenth Celebration that will bring the community together for a virtual experience!

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the

United States. To participate in the online event visit the [Kalamazoo Valley Museum](#) or [Soul Artistry LLC](#) Facebook pages from 1-5 PM on June 19th. The celebration will commemorate the history of Juneteenth and feature live music, poetry, dance, visual artists, and reflections from some of Kalamazoo's most prominent Black creative individuals. This Juneteenth celebration will amplify important contributions and accomplishments of the Black community at a time when we need it most. This event will also support Black artists in our community. Come and join the celebration!

anti-racism resources

Current events have once again reminded us that *Black Lives Matter* is not just a slogan, a chant, or something we can put up on a sign and forget about. *Black Lives Matter* is a call for justice. It is a call to action. It is a call to for white people to do the work of dismantling white supremacy.

If this work is yours to do, here are some resources that might be of help:

[Anti-racism Resources](#): A google doc with readings, podcast, and film suggestions as well as a list of organizations to follow and support.

[In the Name of Love - Deepening Anti-Racist Commitment and Values](#): A webinar recording from the Church of the Larger Fellowship for white people seeking to dismantle racism in themselves and in society.

[Take the Pledge](#): Pledge to [Stand with Love](#) and be a part of the growing multi-faith community in support of the Movement for Black Lives.

From the **Poor People's Campaign** website: The increasing urgency of a broad movement led by the poor and most impacted is more apparent every day. Now is the time to organize towards collective action to enact a moral agenda for the nation. As the ranks of the impoverished grows in the coming months due to COVID-19 and the ongoing crisis of poverty, building a platform for the plight, fight, and insight of the poor is even more urgent.

Join us as we marshal our collective voices to demonstrate the power of our communities. We demand that both major political parties address the interlocking injustices of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism by implementing our [Moral Agenda](#). Visit www.june2020.org to learn more.



FAITH IN ACTION



On May 30, a group met to discuss where we have energy to [UU the Vote!](#) Our plan is to:

1. Amplify the work already being done by local and national organizations regarding voting and issues
2. Promote news and information on voting and upcoming elections in our area. We will circulate this information through our weekly emails and social media avenues.

If you would like to get involved, please contact [Erin Michael](#) or the [Office Administrator!](#)

Men's Group Breakfast

Saturday, June 20th at 8:30 AM

All are welcome to join the Men's Group for their monthly gathering via ZOOM to enjoy virtual breakfast, companionship, and conversation. Please contact [Ken VanEseltine](#) to let him know you are coming.

[https://zoom.us/j/97856246726?](https://zoom.us/j/97856246726?pwd=WTlQaG1qZ3liZERFQmpkdXhqYVhoZz09)

[pwd=WTlQaG1qZ3liZERFQmpkdXhqYVhoZz09](https://zoom.us/j/97856246726?pwd=WTlQaG1qZ3liZERFQmpkdXhqYVhoZz09)

Meeting ID: 978 5624 6726 Password: 749176

Full log in info can be found on the [UUCC calendar](#).



#StillProud—Kalamazoo Pride 2020

The Covid-19 health crisis caused OutFront Kalamazoo to cancel the in-person Kalamazoo Pride celebrations planned for June 5 & 6. Recognizing how important this event is to the thousands of LGBTQ+ individuals and allies in Kalamazoo, OutFront quickly switched gears and began planning a month-long virtual Pride celebration. They have launched a new website, [StillProud.org](#), to highlight the virtual concerts, performances, book readings, games and more that will take place during the month of June, including their Friday Signature Events:

June 5: #StillProudStillPerforming, a Virtual Drag Show

June 12: Profiles in Pride, an interview series with OutFront Kalamazoo director, Amy Hunter

June 19: The Coming Out Monologues presented by the WMU Office of LGBT Student Services

June 27: Special Performance by musical group, HANNANIAH

To support OutFront Kalamazoo and their mission to create a just, inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions in Southwest Michigan, we will hold a Generosity Sunday collection on June 21st. You can donate to OutFront by mailing a check made out to UUCS (memo line should indicate Generosity Sunday) or online on the UUCS website by choosing "Generosity Sunday" on our [Donate](#) page.

Covid-19 has helped us to remember that a building does make a church; people make a church. In this time of social isolation the job of being a LGBTQ+ Welcoming Church falls to each of us individually. Supporting OutFront Kalamazoo financially and by attending their virtual events are ways you can show Kalamazoo that UU Community Church is #StillProud! Thank you for your support!

SUSTAINABILITY

Finding More Joy through a Smaller Environmental Footprint

On May 18th the UUCS Sustainability Small Group met to give participants an opportunity to share their guiding principles and personal sustainability goals. Everyone in the group agreed that sharing our sustainability thoughts and ideas with the congregation is an important part of our sustainability journey. Here is some of the highlights from our meeting:

We talked about what motivated us to join the group and to work to live more Earth-friendly lives. One guiding principle that many of us had in common was a desire to do everything we can to leave a healthy planet to our children, grandchildren and future generations. Our Unitarian Universalist principles played an important part in our thinking too. People mentioned the 2nd UU Principle of promoting equity and compassion in human relations, the 6th of building a fair and peaceful world, and the 7th principle which calls on us to respect the interconnected web of all existence. Ron Crowell was inspired to write an entire essay on his guiding principles!

Participants also each set goals in five different areas: Food, Housing, Transportation, Goods, and Services. Some of our goals around Food included:

- ◆ Eat less meat/less pork and beef
- ◆ Eat more vegetarian meals
- ◆ Buy produce seasonally/buy local
- ◆ Buy in bulk and preserve
- ◆ Buy fewer processed items/learn to make our own
- ◆ Buy more at the farmers market and food co-op
- ◆ Use reusable bags at the grocery store
- ◆ Plant a vegetable garden
- ◆ Eat out less frequently
- ◆ Find snack alternatives
- ◆ Research ways to buy things with less packaging



Are you motivated by a desire to leave a healthier planet to future generations? Can you find space in your life for any of these practices? Are you interested in setting your own sustainability goals? Consider exploring your Environmental Footprint with this [Calculator](#) and using this [Sustainability Goal Setting](#) worksheet to help you get started. You are also welcome to join us on our sustainability journey. Our next meeting is on **Monday, June 15th at 7:00 PM** via Zoom.



To join the Sustainability Small Group Meeting:

[https://zoom.us/j/94705183271?](https://zoom.us/j/94705183271?pwd= SXAwMGdSZjMzdWJ2SENScWlkSTlZdz09)

[pwd= SXAwMGdSZjMzdWJ2SENScWlkSTlZdz09](https://zoom.us/j/94705183271?pwd= SXAwMGdSZjMzdWJ2SENScWlkSTlZdz09)

Meeting ID: 947 0518 3271

Password: 394963

If you would like more information about the UUCS Sustainability Small Group, contact [Miriam](#).

LIVING SUSTAINABLY

Living Sustainably

By [Ron Crowell](#)

Our recent guest speaker, Erin Augustine, presented a creative and useful vision of her ideas for becoming a “Carbon Free Family”. She challenged us to begin to make some of the changes she suggested. Erin’s ideas for change toward the sustainability of our earth is an important start. In the process she presents, we do work on our own small but important steps.

I took the Carbon Footprint Calculator (CFC) and the results were discouraging. I think Nancy and I are doing quite well in moving toward a more sustainable lifestyle. Of course, it is partly because we are old and do not accumulate as much as we used to. However, my score indicated that if everyone lived like we do, it would take 2.2 earths to sustain us.

The very first page of the calculator asks how many animal products we consume? That, exactly, is the question Nancy and I have been discussing. So our beginning in this process of decreasing our carbon footprint is to eat less meat, especially red meat. But no matter how we begin and what we do, the question has to be asked – is it enough? It is a start. Can we do more? How can we go further or are we on an irreversible path?

Below are some of my thoughts in addressing these questions.:

The Pulitzer Prize-winning book *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert gave me my first real understanding of our future. The author makes a fact-based statement about the extinction of life on earth. All but one of the first five extinctions (the dinosaurs) was caused by climate change. The sixth will also be caused by climate change (unless we all work to reverse the direction of change now.)

As Jonathan Safran Foer says in his book *We Are The Weather* (the 2020 Reading Together title) we are heading toward extinction if we do not change and recognize what must be done. Among the problems causing climate change, and the most important problem is the production and consumption of meat. The author points out that conversations about meat, dairy, and eggs make people either defensive or annoyed. Personally, I know of no one who actually wants to be a vegetarian except vegetarians - such as Regena and Rev. Gy.

Safran Foer says we must act together to eat differently –to act collectively. Acting collectively is certainly supported in the UU faith. Although working collectively to obtain sustainability is certainly challenging, the pandemic that we are living through may be the right time and the right situation to begin addressing the more comprehensive questions of climate change.

Safran Foer says human activity is 100% responsible for global warming. Among other things we have to change what we eat. Even though it is a small action, it is one, among others, that many of us need to take.

Some facts:

- ◆ 59% of all land capable of growing crops is growing food for livestock
- ◆ 1/3 of all freshwater used is used in the production of livestock.
- ◆ We eat twice the recommended intake of protein that we need.
- ◆ The earth is warming when, in the history of the earth, it should be cooling based on the long term, natural changes in our climate

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SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES

What matters most, among many things, is meat and dairy production So our (Crowell's) start is very small but it is a start. – decrease our consumption of red meat.

It is pretty discouraging to think that one family eating less meat can help us move toward climate sustainability and away from extinction in our future. However, a book that Eric mentioned last week, *Active Hope* by Joanna Macy, is a more positive and certainly less discouraging way to begin. The book deals with what individuals can do in this world to address the “crisis of sustainability”. The author’s rationale is offered as a starting point for our understanding of what we need to consider.. And how focusing on active hope can help us move to a life-sustaining society. At least it is a way of thinking about our current crisis and the future.

Sustainability Resources

Here are some good ideas from the UUCC Sustainability Small Group to help you live a more earth-friendly life:

[TerraCycle](#) offers free recycling programs funded by brands, manufacturers, and retailers. The program is great for people without municipal recycling programs or with hard-to-recycle waste. Visit their website, choose the program, starting collecting, download free shipping labels, and send in your waste to be recycled.

Purchase Reusable/Washable Veggie bags to use on your next shopping trip instead of plastic ones:

[Ecoware Reusable Mesh Produce Bags](#)

[Atopsell Reusable Mesh Produce Bags](#)

The [Michigan Education Savings Program](#), the state-sponsored, tax-advantaged 529 college savings plan, is a great zero-garbage gift to give a grandchild!

Pack a **Mother Earth Bag** to grab when you walk out the door. Put in a refillable water bottle, a reusable insulated cup, a reusable shopping bag, silverware, a cloth napkin, a handkerchief, and some snacks. If you take time to pack these things, you can reduce your waste significantly as you are out and about running errands!

Erin Augustine’s [Carbon Free Family](#) has a new website with lots of tips and suggestions!

Keep Collecting Those Plastic Lids!

Although the pandemic has prevented our Collection ‘CAP’tain, Freya Lake, from relieving us of our piles of plastic caps and lids, she hopes we are still stockpiling as many as we can.

The lids we collect are destined to become a Buddy Bench at a local school. The Buddy Bench is a simple idea to eliminate loneliness on the playground. When a child is feeling lonely, they sit on the bench to signal their need for companionship to others. Kids can be taught to respond to the needs of their classmates and a culture of inclusion and friendship can bloom.

But it takes a lot of caps to make a Buddy Bench. About 400 pounds of caps and lids are needed to make one 6-foot bench, so keep on collecting!

If you have any questions about our cap collection, contact [Freya Lake](#).



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

R.E.flections

From [Miriam Epskamp](#), Director of Religious Education

I shed tears at the Zoom Meet-Up for kids on Mother's Day. I choked up saying their names. Trayvon Martin. Ahmaud Arbery. I don't think I have ever cried at church before.

Mother's Day was supposed to be about Unitarian Julia Ward Howe and her famous Proclamation, about our Unitarian Universalist legacy of working for peace.

But, then the horrific video of Ahmaud's murder emerged online and I could not ignore it. I needed to speak his name.

I spent all Saturday looking for the right lesson plan or activity or poem or reading that might sense of his death. But it makes no sense.

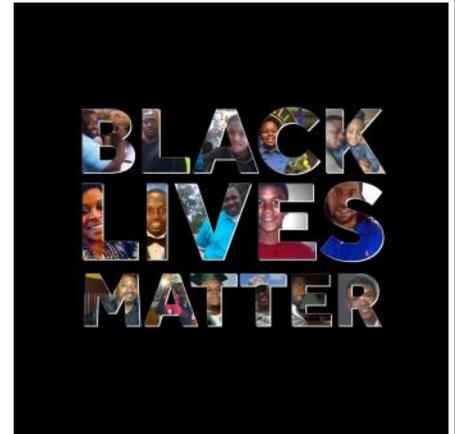
And here we are again, just three weeks later. There are lives cut short by police brutality and vigilantes standing their ground. There more names to be said aloud. Breonna Taylor. Cornelius Frederick. George Floyd. Tony McDade. I weep. I weep, but tears are not enough.

Representative Ilhan Omar said in a statement about George Floyd's murder, "Black Lives Matter is not just a chant, it's a call for justice." Are we answering that call?

I think this is one of those moments when each one of us, as people of faith, as Unitarian Universalists who preach the inherent worth and dignity of every person, must reach a little deeper to face hard truths, to do the difficult work, to have the uncomfortable conversations, and to do more to combat racial violence and oppression.

If you aren't sure where to start, flip through this newsletter again. Maybe there is a book you can read, or a webinar you can watch, or a virtual event you can attend. Or consider finding the time to attend General Assembly and take advantage of the many workshops and lectures devoted to helping UUs dismantle white supremacy in themselves and their congregations. General Assembly will also be a great opportunity to connect with other UUs so we may learn, reflect, and act together.

The Youth Group, for their part, have decided to devote some of their time to learning more. They have agreed to host a guest speaker at a future Zoom Meet-Up for Kids who can tell them more about the Black Lives Matter and what they can do to make a difference. I don't know about you but that certainly a source of inspiration for me. If our kids are willing to do their part, then we should be too. May it be so.



Online Religious Education

Until regular services resume, our Religious Education classes will meet on Sundays at 1:00 PM via ZOOM video-conferencing. Please contact Miriam for login information.



CALENDAR



JUNE 2020

<p>Sunday, June 7 10:00 am - Flower Communion on Facebook with Rev. Gy 11:00 am— Virtual Coffee Hour via ZOOM 1:00 pm—ZOOM Meet-Up for Kids</p>	<p>Monday, June 1 5:00 pm - Board of Trustees Meeting via ZOOM</p>
<p>Sunday, June 14 10:00 am - R.E Sunday with Miriam and the Kids 11:00 am—Virtual Coffee Hour/Program Council via ZOOM</p>	<p>Tuesday June 2, 9, 16, 22 11:00 am—Virtual Coffee with Rev.Gy via ZOOM</p>
<p>Sunday, June 21 <i>Father's Day</i> 10:00 am - New Member Sunday on Facebook with Rev. Gy 11:00 am— Virtual Coffee Hour via ZOOM 1:00 pm—ZOOM Meet-Up for Kids</p>	<p>Wednesday, June 3, 10, 11, 12 5:00 pm —Guided Wellness Meditation via ZOOM</p>
<p>Sunday, June 28 10:00 am - Sunday Service at GA 11:00 am—Virtual Coffee Hour via ZOOM 1:00 pm—ZOOM Meet-Up for Kids</p>	<p>Thursday, June 4,11, 18, 15 7:00 pm —Virtual Happy Hour via ZOOM</p>
<p>Monday, June 15 7:00 pm—Sustainability Small Group</p>	<p>Saturday, June 20 8:30 am—Virtual Men's Group Breakfast via ZOOM 6:00 pm—CELEBRATION OF GENEROSITY</p>

Do you read the Weekly Email?

The weekly email is full of information about UCC that you won't find anywhere else! If you are not getting the Weekly Mail, [visit our website](#) to subscribe.

For the latest, up-to-date information about our activities and events visit our [website](#) and our [online calendar](#).

Connect with us!
Sundays at 10:00 AM
Facebook Live

UU Community Church is served by:

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2019-2020 Board of Trustees

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**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, June 24th at NOON**

Please send submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUUnity Matters

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**SPIRITUALITY FOR
DIVERSE PATHS**

BLACK LIVES MATTER