



CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

March 2021

MARCH SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 AM via Zoom and [Facebook](#)

March 7: *Sexuality Through a UU Lens* with guest speaker Dr. Melanie Davis

Honoring more than 20 years of Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education in our denomination, this service explores the Unitarian Universalist perspectives on sexuality and our internationally acclaimed Our Whole Lives curriculum. OWL is co-published by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ.

March 14: *Liberatory Hubs of Cultural Empowerment* with guest speaker Dr. Michelle Johnson

Michelle S. Johnson will discuss the TRHT Historical and Cultural Landscape Project and highlight Kalamazoo County locations with significant layers of cultural empowerment. Black, Latinidad, and Indigenous spatial self-determination, she argues, rests at the core of liberation and shapes rich and instructive narratives of our Kalamazoo identities.

March 21: *Compassionate Connection* with Rev. Gy

Acts of love and generosity make us feel good whether we are on the giving or receiving end of the equation. They also live on much longer than we realize, changing us and altering the world in unexpected ways. On this Stewardship Sunday let us explore the ways that our 'compassionate connections' are helping to positively transform ourselves and the world.

March 28 *The Sweet Spot* with Rev. Gy

The pendulum seems always to be swinging, from left to right, from one extreme to another. Recent events seem to indicate we are moving in a new direction towards more justice and equity. In this time of great change, how can we find the pendulum's sweet spot that provides a balance between personal liberty and collective liberation?

LIBERATION



Our Spiritual Theme for March:

Elandria Williams, co-Moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association from 2017-2020, was a fierce and righteous organizer for justice and liberation who inspired many, both within and outside our faith. They spoke these words about Liberation at General Assembly in 2019:

When you hear the word liberation—liberatory spirit, liberatory life, liberatory possibilities—what does that conjure in your soul?

When you hear, "We are the liberating force, spirit, light, and love," what does that conjure in your spirit?

When you hear that we have the power to transform the world around us, what does that mean in your bones?

The end goal of the "Revolution" we have been thinking about and exploring this year is Liberation. Our Unitarian Universalist faith calls on us to be proactive agents of justice, helping to liberate hearts and minds so everyone has a chance to realize their full potential.

GUESTS IN OUR PULPIT

We are excited to welcome the following guests to our virtual pulpit in March:

Dr. Melanie Davis is a lifelong UU and a member of the UU Congregation of Somerset Hills in New Jersey. She is the Unitarian Universalist Association's Our Whole Lives (OWL) Program Manager and is an all-levels OWL trainer. She is the author of *Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Older Adults and Sexuality* and *Our Faith: Companion to Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Grades 7-9, 2nd ed.* She was the developmental editor for several other editions in the series.



Outside of the UUA, Melanie is an author, sexuality education consultant and counselor, adjunct professor, professional development provider, and lay worship service provider for UU congregations. She holds national certifications in sexuality counseling, sexuality education, and sexuality educator supervision from the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists. She is a founding member and co-president of the Sexuality and Aging Consortium at Widener University.

She has three adult daughters and a blue heeler mix named Bella, who accompanied Melanie on a 14-week sabbatical road trip around the US in the spring and summer of 2019. As a result of the trip, Melanie wrote a sermon titled "Driving Toward the Tornado" because they did that, and they survived to tell the tale.



Michelle S. Johnson, serves as a public scholar in the fields of Black history, literature and cultural production and applies her identity as a public scholar in cultural studies programs and classroom environments. Johnson's formal education includes a BA in Humanities from Michigan State University in English, Philosophy, Psychology and Women's Studies and a PhD in American Culture in African American Literature, 19th Century American Literature and Environmental History. Centering the power of telling story, Johnson consults on Black history projects that document the people, narratives and places of Black autonomy and researches,

writes, curates, develops exhibits, performs and lectures for academic and public settings. Johnson's creative collaborations with poets, musicians, playwrights and interview subjects include, *Community Spaces of the Industrious: The Oral Histories of African Americans and Latino/as in Saginaw*; *Collecting Ourselves: Three Movements of Blackness*; *Dreamin'*, her first in a comedy series produced by Face Off Theater; and *Creative Stands for Justice: Black Refractions in Southwest Michigan*. In addition to "Tell 'Em What We Did!": *Choosing and Building Black Space in the Midwest* in [Black in the Middle](#), and *Rooster*, a short story in [Midnight and Indigo](#), her forthcoming release includes *Black Shapings: Memory, Documentation and Tradition in Saginaw, Michigan African American Migration and Smaller Midwestern Cities* in [The Middle West Review](#). Co-founder of the Institute of Public Scholarship in the Arts, Sciences and Humanities, Johnson has been named a 2021 Rubinger Fellow to establish The Cultural Land Trust as part of LISC's support of innovative community development initiatives. You can read more about Michelle Johnson in the February 2021 issue of [Encore Magazine](#).

STEWARDSHIP

GENEROSITY CHANGES EVERYTHING

Pledge materials have arrived in your mailbox that explain how you can support UUCC's mission and activities for the next church year. We ask that you return your pledge cards by March 19 so we can finalize the budget for the next church year.

The theme for our Sunday Services this year is Revolution. Rev. Gy and our guest speakers encouraged us to do our part to create a more compassionate and connected society. Each week we have gathered on Zoom to live our values by learning how to support social justice work in our community and each other. We have created a safe space for us to cry and laugh together as we navigated this new normal.

We know that we need each other and this community more than ever. Supporting UUCC with your pledge is one of the ways you can show your gratitude for UUCC and ensure its future. On March 27, we will announce the pledge results and share our appreciation for all the ways you give to UUCC with your time, talents, and treasure. See details below.

Celebration of Generosity

Saturday, March 27, 2021

6:30 PM

- ◆ ***Welcome by Rev. Gy***
- ◆ ***Update from Nancy Calme, UUCC Board President***
- ◆ ***Pledge Results from Regena Nelson, UUCC Stewardship Committee***
- ◆ ***Concert by Seth Bernard followed by Q&A with Seth***



More about our guest artist Seth Bernard:

Seth describes himself as a music maker, cultural warrior, and water protector. Born and raised on Earthwork Farm in rural Northern Michigan, he was brought up in the folk and farmstead culture with an enriching integrative experience of the arts, agriculture, and community.

In 2001, Seth founded Earthwork Music, a renowned Michigan-based collective of successful independent musicians who focus their efforts on environmental advocacy, social justice, creative empowerment, and community building.

A longtime iconic leader and steward of Michigan's music community, Seth has 12 albums to his name and a dozen more collaborative projects in his catalog. He's won 8 Jammie awards as a recording artist and producer and has been featured on NPR and at SXSW.

Seth has traversed the many worlds of music collecting hints of jazz, blues, traditional folk, straight-up rock, and even old spirituals, carving a unique place for himself in the Americana music of today. His lyrics are compassionate, truthful, loving and hilarious, touching on everything from the beauty and irony of living on earth as humans, to the troubles of the world and the journeys we take through time and understanding. His sound is both rusty and refined, his playing thoughtful and powerful, sung with potent heartfelt honesty that leaves you with a feeling of hope. Seth's music and message will be the perfect way to wrap up our 2021/2022 Pledge Drive. Please join us for this Celebration of Generosity!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

R.E.flections From [Miriam Epskamp](#), Director of Religious Education

March 15, 2020. It was a Sunday. One year ago. This was the date we closed the doors of our building on Shaver Road and transitioned to a 100% online community. Looking back over the last 12 months, it is safe to say that none of us fully understood the changes the pandemic would bring to our lives. It has been quite the journey. As much as I would love to tell you that the journey is at an end, as much as I would like to assure you the upheaval is over, it is likely we will continue to feel the effects of the pandemic for some time to come.



But if the last 12 months have taught me anything, it is that this community, despite its shortcomings, is more than capable of withstanding a little adversity. When I think back to those first frantic days of lockdown when we scrambled to shut down the building, set up calling circles to make sure everyone was ok, and figure out the technology that would enable us to meet virtually, I never imagined that we would be so successful in building something new.

But we have! We figured out live-streaming and Zoom and we hit the ground running, establishing mid-week programming that included Coffee with Rev. Gy, Mindfulness Meditation with Eric Nelson, and a Thursday evening Happy Hour. We transitioned our Religious Education classes to Sunday afternoon Zoom meet-ups. We leveraged our weekly emails and monthly newsletters into important channels of communication, sharing information not only about Covid19 but also our joys and sorrows to help to keep us connected and in community.

As we became more comfortable and slightly more proficient with Zoom and began to understand the potential of the online platform, our programs began to bloom. Established groups like Men's Breakfast and Women's Book Group resumed their meetings and new groups – Sustainability, Civil Conversations, and Qigong - started to form. Our Thursday Happy Hours morphed into a rich and varied tapestry of opportunities for learning and growth including Moral Decision Making, Thematic Church Discussions, and conversations with a wide range of special guests.

We have continued to build community by having fun together. Who can forget the costumes at the Halloween Service Auction, the inspired performances at Open Mike Night, or the sight of a bunch of Unitarian Universalists playing Bingo?

We have used our financial resources to help support those in need. We reached out to musicians whose livelihoods have been devastated by the pandemic and were treated to memorable performances by Daniel Nahmod, Stowegood, and Tret Fure. We have continued to practice generosity by supporting organizations in our community engaged in justice work. As a group we have given money to ISAAC, Planned Parenthood, Face Off Theatre Company, and participated in the annual fundraiser for the UU Service Committee.

The murder of George Floyd reminded us of the need to be actively anti-racist and help to dismantle white supremacy. Many of us participated in anti-racist workshops and challenges and shared our experiences and resources. We opened our virtual spaces to speakers and guests who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We have listened to their stories, offered our support, and begun to build relationships. When the NAACP was looking for a partner for their Community Baby Shower Drive, they knew who to call. And we said, "YES!"

Despite the challenges of social distancing, a group of dedicated volunteers led by Denise Sonier have maintained our commitment to the Congolese refugee family by providing educational and transportation support, as well as assisting with occasional household emergencies and other needs. *(Continued on page 5)*

LEADERSHIP

The Congolese Family Support Team even purchased and delivered Christmas gifts and holiday cheer to the family in December.

This list of accomplishments would be impressive in a normal year. During a once-in-a-lifetime catastrophic event, it is amazing! We have shown ourselves to be loving and generous stewards of this community. We have stepped up to take care of one another, to support those in need in the wider community, to continue to our justice work, and to build Beloved Community.

As we enter our second year of 'Life During the Time of Covid19', I pray that this community will continue to meet the challenges that may arise and continue to thrive.

May it be so.

Board President's Corner From [Nancy Calme](#)

Brrrrr. I'm writing this in mid-February, with deep snow on the ground and temperatures below zero in the mornings. By the time the newsletter is published, this will just be a cold memory and we'll be easing into the 30's or even 40's. I believe it! Here on the farm, I worry about my animals and how they will keep themselves warm.



The cats don't show themselves often, but Joe has found them nesting atop a bale of hay that is close to the ceiling. I don't know if they snuggle together to share warmth, but they don't seem to resent each other as much as they do in the summer. They are both sporting thick coats and weigh a ton when I pick them up. Their bodies seem to adapt appropriately this time of the year.

The goat and the sheep, in their thick woolly coats, do not seem to mind the cold wind. I find them napping on the ground with snow crusting their backs. I add extra straw to their bedding and they greet me with straw clinging to their hair, so I assume they spend the long winter nights nestled together in their shed.

The chickens do not like the snow. They stay roosted in their coop unless they hear me coming to scatter corn or vegetable scraps in their run. Sometimes I shovel a path for them if I see them eyeing the snow drifts anxiously. This morning I felt especially motherly and took them a dish of hot oatmeal. I have had to send Joe to the store for eggs because they can't seem to bring themselves to produce this winter.

I feel thankful for a warm house, good company, and little need to travel. Zoom takes the place of many of the treacherous drives we used to have to risk for church gatherings. I have been around long enough to know that it all gets better from here on out.

- President Nancy Calme, Vice-President Erin Michael, Secretary Darby Fetzer, and Trustees Larry Higgins and Freya Lake serve on the UUCB Board of Trustees.
- The Board meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 PM via Zoom (login information is on the [UUCB Calendar](#))
- The minutes from their last meeting can be found [HERE](#).
- Any questions? Contact Nancy Calme (nancy.calme@gmail.com or 269-271-8851)



PROGRAM COUNCIL



Program Council—Where TOGETHER, and Apart- We Get Stuff Done!

From [Erin Michael](#), Program Council Chair

Program Council is YOU! Everyone is invited to create programming at UCC via Zoom, second Sundays around 11:00 AM.

Celebrations abound! Outstanding services by Rev. Gy and Kimberly Ridley! Civil Conversations, Moral Decision-Making, Sustainability, Bingo fellowship, education on racism and our Great Lakes, building improvements, and so much more!

Bring your voice to our next meeting on **Sunday, March 14.**

Opportunities Abound!

- **Budget time!** Deadline is 3/1 for 2021-22 budget needs to be submitted to the Board.
- **2020-21 Church Strategic Goal updates:**
 - #1 *Technology*: Steve, Eric, and Nancy will meet 2/17 to plan upgrades for future live-streaming. Send questions to Nancy Calme.
 - #2 *Landscape/Building*: Andy is planning the roadside landscaping, Eric and Kevin are gathering bids for air filtration, furnace, dehumidifying and beginning plans for bathroom upgrades. If you wish to help, contact Andy or Eric/Kevin.
 - #3 *Adult Enrichment*: Check the website, weekly emails, and newsletter for dates/times for events on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays!
- **Legal services:** From time to time UCC needs legal advice. If you know of anyone who would be willing to provide services, please contact Nancy Calme.
- **Birthdays added to Directory:** Discussion led to agreement to add birthdays (month/day only) to the Directory. This information is shared with active members and friends only.
- **Welcoming Congregation Renewal Pledge:** Thursday, March 25 at 7:00 PM. Join us for a discussion of the video *Pay It No Mind*; watch the video on your own time and print the discussion questions (links here). RSVP to Erin Michael as we need 10% of the congregation to attend. We plan to have two events per year moving forward to help us stay up to date on LBTGQ+ issues.
- **Covid-19 Guidelines:** The Board is monitoring and updating these guidelines weekly and posting the weekly email. No one is using the building currently.
- **We are engaging!** Rev. Gy attended a UUA Mid-America Region Minister's gathering of small congregations (< 100 members). Discovered UCC is doing it right! Other churches are not live-streaming, have services only twice a month, have no weekday events, and have not done coffee hours. We are looking at how we can share our offerings with these churches to connect and help them start their own events. Miriam will share our events with the UU Small & Mighty Congregations Facebook page found here <https://www.facebook.com/groups/176323625876713/>

See you on Sunday, March 14, 11:00 AM, on Zoom! Thank you for all you do! Stay well!

CARING COMMUNITY



MARCH CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

Kindness is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers.
~Kahlil Gibran.

Snow showed up around here during a stretch in February, two beautiful (although inconvenient) feet of it. It's already melting off the roofs and trickling down the storm drains. The kindness part of Kahlil Gibran's metaphor will stay with us, though, because that's a year-round feature of our UCC community.

Freya Lake elected winter for her hip replacement, which makes sense; she'll be ready for spring activities. She came through the procedure in early February with flying colors and her recovery is on schedule. People familiar with Freya's determination aren't too surprised that she already has resumed driving.

While wintering in Florida, Marsha Laya has also been involved in a hip replacement, but not her own. She is caring for her daughter Mia, who has been staying with her since December and is recuperating from the surgery. Marsha manages the required therapeutic ice machine and looks forward to Spring.

Bev Folz celebrated her February birthday with Chinese take-out with her entire family. It was a ZOOM event, and all of them — in Colorado, Boston, and Kalamazoo — enjoyed their own local Chinese takeout meals at Bev's VERY socially distanced birthday party.

That kind of creative celebration is a high bar for our five March birthday people: Erin Michael, Bruce Fetzer, our music director Nick Sienkiewicz, Marcia Adams, and Betty Lee Ongley's granddaughter, Olivia Russell. Warm and springy happy birthdays to all of them!

In the past month, more and more UCC people have received their first COVID-19 vaccine doses and some have had the second. Nancy Stob was one of the latter, and Beverly and John Folz and Marcia Adams were all able to complete both vaccinations right where they live, at The Fountains.

As of the beginning of March, Michigan guidelines have not yet allocated COVID-19 vaccines for the general population. This includes most healthy younger people whose jobs are not in specific targeted areas — such as members Kimberly Ridley and her son Hunter.

Kimberly's office job has allowed her to work at home part of the time. When at the office, she and her colleagues follow the safety protocols of masks and distancing.

Hunter, in manufacturing, has worked every day, all year, at his job site, with his employer requiring masks and safety practices. At one point, a potential exposure to COVID on the job required Hunter to remain at home for a few days (with pay) until his COVID test came back negative.

Kimberly and Hunter are among the unsung heroes of this strange interlude. When regular life resumes for all of us, we will probably see some changes. *(Continued on page 8)*

CARING COMMUNITY

But much of what was familiar before COVID will remain intact because of the people who waited patiently and worked through the pandemic. It is reassuring.

Jim Heveran and Ellie Barnette thought that permanently settling in Alabama was going to make their life easier but much misfortune has come their way in the few months. Their neighborhood was hit by Hurricane Maria in the fall. This winter, they both fell ill with Covid19. Ellie battled the virus at home, but Jim ended up in the hospital for weeks. They are both have recovered now and hope the tough times are behind them. If you would like to send them a note filled with love and encouragement, the address is: 204 Seminole Ave, Fairhope AL 36532.

Bob McWhorter's health is slowly improving after suffering a stroke in January. His wife Barb is tasked with keeping track of his daily physical therapy exercises, pill regimens, and doctor appointments. Bob is not sure what he would do without her keeping him on the straight and narrow!

Rev. Gy is also grateful for the love and support of their partner, Patti, during their latest health struggles. Patti has been a rock of support, accompanying them on a trip to Los Angeles at the end of February so that Rev. Gy could yet again undergo a procedure to patch a CSF leak. It will be mid-March before they know if the patch was successful and late April before they can return to normal activity.

We pause in sadness to remember two members who passed away in March: K. C. Kozminski, born July 8, 1957, died Mar. 9, 2006, and Dori Gerritson, born July 20, 1933, died Mar. 21, 1999.

Remember! Daylight Saving Time begins this year on Sunday, March 14, when clocks will "spring forward" one hour and we lose an hour of sleep overnight. That's okay, because less than one week later we enter SPRING. The equinox happens on Saturday, March 20, at 5:37 A.M. (That should help you forget that only a few weeks ago, on February 17, the temperature in Kalamazoo fell to ten degrees below zero.)

Whether it is winter or spring, summer or fall, always remember that this church community is here for YOU. If you or someone you know is in need support of any kind, you can contact one of our point persons: Nancy Crowell 599-1235, Rita Stevens 330-0376, or Judy Oliver 353-9397. Sharing is caring!



Despite Covid19, the **8th Annual Guy and Jean Johnson 'Memorial' Chili Supper** on February 20th was a great success! 37 suppers were delivered raising \$370 to support programs at UCC!

The Calmes were so busy filling orders at the 'drive-thru', they forgot to take pictures!

Many compliments for the delicious dinner were heard during coffee hour the next day. One satisfied customer ordered extra so they could enjoy the chili and all the fixings twice!

Thank you Chef Nancy, Car Hop Joe, and everyone who ordered a meal to go!

LEARNING AND GROWTH

Thoughtful Thursdays

Each Thursday evening there are opportunities to gather with UU Community Church members and friends for programs and discussions about some of the big questions in life. We hope you will take advantage of the opportunities for learning and growth these programs offer.



First Thursdays—THEMATIC EXPLORATION

The first Thursday of each month will be dedicated to an exploration of the current spiritual theme. On **March 4 at 7:00 PM** we consider questions about **LIBERATION, EQUITY, and STEWARDSHIP.**

Second Thursdays—MORAL DECISION MAKING

The second Thursday of the month will feature a short lecture and a group discussion of thorny ethical questions. The topic for exploration on **March 11 at 7:00 PM** is *Liberty*. Learn more about this Thoughtful Thursday at the bottom of this page.

Third Thursday —A CONVERSATION WITH....

Once a month we invite special guests to join us to engage in conversation and answer our questions on a variety of topics. On **March 18 at 7:00 PM**, we are excited to be joined by WMU Political Science professor **Paul Clements** to explore ways we can achieve equity and equality in the world. Read more about Paul on page 10.

Other Thursdays—ASSORTED PROGRAMMING

On the remaining Thursdays, we will present a variety of programming and activities. On **March 25 at 7:00 PM** we will have a film discussion that will help us to renew our **Welcoming Congregation** status. See page 10 for more details.



The Ethics of Liberty

At the next installment of our series on **Moral Decision Making** on **Thursday, March 11 at 7:00 PM**, we will shift our attention to the ethics of Liberty, one of the most important moral values in Western society and a key value in American culture, as we consider the question: 'Do we have a moral obligation to be healthy?'

Is it ethical to eat, drink, and smoke whatever we want, wherever we want, and as much as we want? The lecture by Clancy Martin will pit the views of Aristotle and John Rawls against those of Robert Nozick on individualism and self-determination.

All are welcome to attend this adult enrichment opportunity. There is no need to register. Each session is a stand-alone program. You can even bring a friend! Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom link.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

A Conversation with Paul Clements

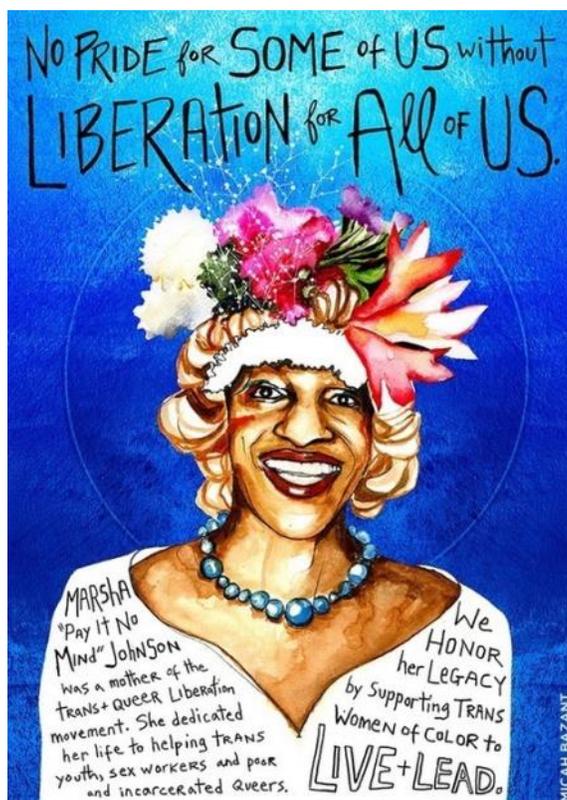
Once a month we invite special guests to join us at a Thoughtful Thursday gathering to tell us more about the work they are doing in our community and answer any questions we might have. On **Thursday, March 18 at 7:00 PM**, we are honored to be joined by Paul Clements.

Mr. Clements is a political science professor at Western Michigan University where he also directs the master's program in International Development Administration. He received a BA in Social Studies from Harvard and a Ph.D. in Public Affairs from Princeton. Most of his childhood was spent in Hong Kong and India, and he lived for five years in The Gambia, West Africa, where he originally served as a Peace Corps Volunteer. He is also a founding member of the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition and the Interfaith Coalition for Peace and Justice. His publications include *Rawlsian Political Analysis: Rethinking the Microfoundations of Social Science* in which he argues for a radical reorientation of social science from the idea of interests to the idea of social justice.

Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom login to join in the conversation with Paul Clements.



Qigong at UCC Our Qigong group meets each **Tuesday at 9:00 AM**. Anyone interested in learning this ancient Chinese mind-body-spirit practice is welcome to join! Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom link. If you have questions, contact [Freya Lake](#).



Welcoming Congregation Renewal

In 2021, UU Community Church hopes to renew our Welcoming Congregation Pledge and reaffirm our commitment to welcoming and supporting people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

The renewal process has several components including a religious education piece. To meet this requirement, we will be holding a film discussion group to help inform, educate, and to raise awareness.

To participate, please watch the documentary about Marsha P. Johnson, [Pay It No Mind](#), and review the following [Discussion Questions](#).

Then, on **Thursday, March 25 at 7:00 PM** plan to join us as we explore Johnson's legacy as one of the mothers of the trans and queer liberation movement and learn more about the current needs and concerns of LGBTQ+ people in our congregations and our community.

LEARNING AND GROWTH



Pay Your Respects to the Potawatomi Elders

Consider learning more about the people on whose land our building stands at an upcoming virtual program offered by the Portage District Library. ***Pokagon Potawatomi Culture through Storytelling*** on **Tuesday, March 9 at 7:00 PM** will explore the history, culture, and ways of the St Joseph River Valley Potawatomi and the Three Fires Confederacy of the Great Lakes Basin Ohio River Valley with Jefferson Ballew, Great Lakes Basin Indigenous Peoples' History and Life Ways Presenter. Mr. Ballew will share information on current tribal entities, misconceptions, related current events, and relevant stories. Through robust discussion, we will explore the enduring vibrancy of Michigan's native inhabitants. Click [HERE](#) to register for this free program

Fridays for the Future

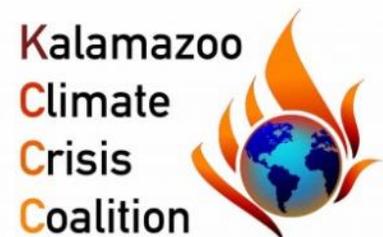
The [Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition](#) is hosting virtual Fridays for the Future on the second and fourth Fridays of each month from 12:00—1:00 PM.

Friday, March 12 - Guest Speakers, Dr. Steve Bertman and Dr. Paul Pancella will discuss why are electric vehicles the way of the future and what should you do about it.

Friday, March 26 - Guest Speaker, Jessica Simons, Vice President for Conservation Stewardship at Kalamazoo Nature Center (KNC). Jessica will share results of a Forest Carbon Inventory and how land management is a part of KNC Climate Action Planning. (description pending approval)

To join KCCC Friday for the Future Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88627591823?pwd=NG5PNUN5M1hqU1dUYkFtcDQzc2VjZz09>



Civil Conversations Small Group

The UUCC Civil Conversations Small Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is on **Tuesday, March 9 at 7:00 PM.**

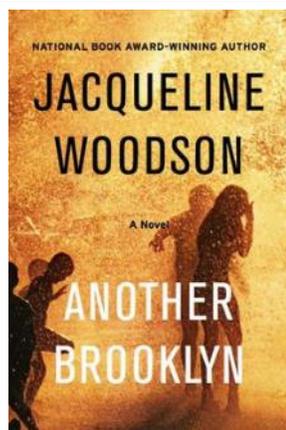
Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom login.

In the coming months, the Civil Conversations Small Group will be learning strategies and structure for Civil Conversations as well as brainstorming curious, open-ended questions that will be helpful when engaging with people who have different points of view. The group will also have practice civil conversations about potentially contentious topics such as abortion, drug use, and religious beliefs.

Anyone interested in practicing their emotional intelligence skills and learning how to engage in meaningful conversations that will help to build bridges towards greater understanding in the world is welcome to join this small group. It is not necessary for you to have attended the previous meetings

If you have any questions about this small group, contact [Darby Fetzer](#).

CONNECTION



Women's Book Group

[Stephanie Grathwol](#), Chair

The March Selections are from the Kalamazoo Public Library's Reading Together 2021 featured author, Jacqueline Woodson:

Red at the Bone* and/or *Another Brooklyn

Book discussion via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/99607835644?pwd=b2V0QkM4MC9lMDQwR0pldVFKdWlvUT09>

Friday, March 12 at 1:00 PM

The Women's Book Group starts with a short business meeting followed by the book discussion led, this month, by Betty Lee Ongley.

The Women's Book Group encourages everyone to participate in one of the Reading Together community events. See page 13 for more information.

Other opportunities of note:

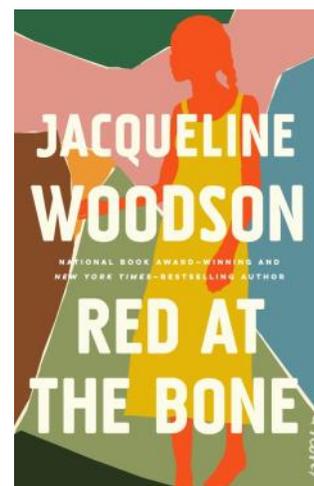
Book Discussion on Zoom hosted by Parchment Community Library
March 4, 7:00 PM.

Bookworms Book Discussion on Zoom – ***Harbor Me*** - hosted by KPL
for 3rd – 5th graders

Saturday, March 13, 3:00 PM

Teen Book Group – ***Miracle's Boys*** hosted by Richland Library
Friday, March 12, 3:00 PM

Click [HERE](#) for more information about these events.



Men's Group Virtual Breakfast

Saturday, March 20 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.

Dress is casual. In fact, sometimes people login while still in their pajamas.

The conversation is always interesting. Last month, topics ranged from bees to vaccines to politics with a few things in between. It seems like there is always an opportunity to learn something new.

Please contact [Ken VanEseltine](#) with your questions or to let him know you are coming.

Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom meeting login.

Full login info can be found on the [UUCG Calendar](#).



READING TOGETHER

From the Kalamazoo Public Library website:

Reading Together 2021 – Celebrating Story

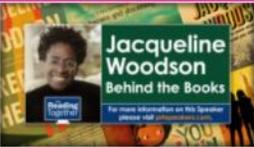
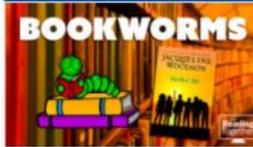
Featuring Author Jacqueline Woodson



Every year, Kalamazoo residents gather together to read and discuss the themes of one book. This year, however, instead of focusing on one book, KPL has selected an award-winning author, Jacqueline Woodson, who has written [dozens of books](#) for children, teens, and adults alike. This way, people of all ages can come together as a community and celebrate story.

Events

Join us for our first virtual Reading Together and mark your calendar for the following events. These events require registration to receive your Zoom link to attend.

All Ages	All Ages	Children
 <p>Jacqueline Woodson – Behind the Books</p>	 <p>Jacqueline Woodson – The Power of Story</p>	 <p>Bookworms</p>
<p>When: Wed, March 10 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm</p> <p>Where: KPL Online Events</p>	<p>When: Wed, March 10 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm</p> <p>Where: KPL Online Events</p>	<p>When: Sat, March 13 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm</p> <p>Where: KPL Online Events</p>

To learn more and to register for these events visit the Kalamazoo Public Library's website:

[https://
www.kpl.gov/
reading-together/](https://www.kpl.gov/reading-together/)

COMMUNITY

Bingo! Bingo!

Our Valentines Bingo Night was a rousing success! Dr. Fauci, looking at times strikingly like our own Kevin Brozovich, kept the crowd entertained with his number calling skills and pandemic jokes. Freya Lake, Pat Fuehr, Judy Oliver, Carol Higgins, and Denise Sonier won the fabulous prizes, but a great time was had by all.



Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

It is with a heart full of gratitude that we thank all of you for your support of our **1st Annual Black History Community Baby Shower Drive**. Your warm hearts and generous giving made standing out in the cold today quite bearable

A special THANK YOU to Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney (Unitarian Universalist Community Church), Pastor Paul Naumann (Michael Lutheran Church), and Sid Ellis (CEO of the Frederick Douglass Association) for allowing us the use of their property to host our event.

This event could not have come together without all of our wonderful volunteers, Black Student Union WMU, the NAACP Executive Committee members, and last but not least Pastor Millard Southern III! His energy was infectious!

We will continue our efforts to bring awareness to the Community to reduce the Black Infant Mortality rate in Kalamazoo. 100% of the proceeds collected will be donated to the YWCA of Kalamazoo.

**Wendy Fields, President
Metropolitan Kalamazoo
Branch NAACP**



SUSTAINABILITY



Finding More Joy Through a Smaller Environmental Footprint

In February, the UUCS Sustainability Small Group met to reflect on our sustainability journey, share our successes and failures, and explore ideas about 'mindful curation', sustainable fashion, and toxic marketing with a book discussion led by Erin Augustine. We look forward to continuing the conversation in March!

Some of the resources we shared include:

Sustainable Clothing:

[Ultra Fashion is Eating the World](#), an article in the Atlantic about fast fashion

[The True Cost](#), a documentary about clothing, the people who make them, and the impact the industry is having on our world.

Tips for greener living:

Going Zero Waste: <https://www.goingzerowaste.com/>

Sustainable Food/Farming:

[Kiss the Ground](#), a documentary on Netflix about regenerative farming

[The Biggest Little Farm](#), a documentary on Hulu about regenerative farming

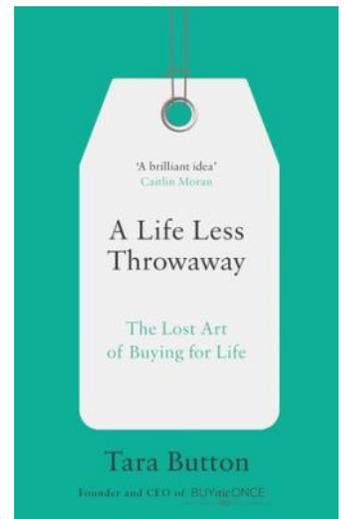
[Just Eat It: A Food Waste Story](#), a documentary on YouTube about food waste

[Misfits Market](#), is a multistate delivery system for organic foods that do not fit the acceptability standards for commercial stores (too big/small or discolored) and too big a crop for local distribution to food banks. Some of the proceeds from these sales go to food banks. Packaging is protective and mostly recyclable.

At our next meeting on **Monday, March 15 at 7:00 PM** we will be discussing the second half of ***A Life Less Throwaway: The Lost Art of Buying for Life*** by Tara Button.

Everyone is welcome to join in the discussion! Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom link.

For more information about the UUCS Sustainability Small Group, contact [Miriam](#).



Keep collecting caps!

Several pounds have accumulated again for Buddy benches. Any and all sizes of hard plastic Bottle caps are welcome. When the weather breaks we will figure out ways for Freya to get them from you. Be proud to be doing your little bit to save the planet.

ANNUAL PEACE SERVICE

19th Annual Peace Service

Kalamazoo Interfaith Coalition for Peace and Justice

"Raising HOPE Amidst a Pandemic"

Keynote Speaker: Gwendolyn Hooker, C.E.O. of H.O.P.E.
Helping Other People Exceed thru Navigation

**Kalamazoo Interfaith Coalition for
Peace and Justice Virtual Peace Service**

Sunday, 21 March at 5 p.m.

ZOOM Meeting ID: 989 6001 6687

Passcode: 495175

We of KICPJ are individuals from many faith communities working to bring peace and justice into the world. We are inspired by our faith in the value of each human being. We seek to promote justice and further the cause of peace only through nonviolent means. And we're committed to the protection of the environment, the divine creation entrusted to our care.



We thank Kalamazoo Nonviolent Opponents of War [KNOW] for their support.



At H.O.P.E., Gwendolyn helped to create a new project to support re-entry of the formerly incarcerated and the homeless by the building of tiny houses. She has worked with various Kalamazoo authorities to lessen gun violence attacking its root causes of racism, economic exploitation and despair. She was the former Volunteer Coordinator at Local Initiatives Support Corporation [LISC] AmeriCorps at Northside Association for Community Development [NACD]. Currently she serves on numerous community boards.

For information, call Rev. Harold W. Beu at 269-381-6439

Website for KICPJ is <https://interfaithkazoo.org>



CALENDAR



MARCH 2021

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Tuesday	March 2	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	March 3	Board of Trustees Meeting	5:30 PM
Thursday	March 4	Thoughtful Thursday—Thematic Exploration	7:00 PM
Friday	March 5	Stewardship Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Sunday	March 7	Sexuality Through a UU Lens with Dr. Melanie Davis After Service Coffee Hour Meet-Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM
Tuesday	March 9	Qigong Civil Conversations Small Group	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	March 10	Sunday Services Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
Thursday	March 11	Moral Decision Making	7:00 PM
Friday	March 12	Women's Book Group	1:00 PM
Sunday <i>Day Light Savings Begins</i>	March 14	Liberatory Hubs with Dr. Michele Johnson After Service Coffee Hour Program Council Meet-Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:00 AM 1:00 PM
Monday	March 15	Sustainability Small Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	March 16	Qigong	9:00 AM
Thursday	March 18	A Conversation with Paul Clements	7:00 PM
Saturday	March 20	Men's Group Virtual Breakfast	8:30 AM
Sunday	March 21	Compassionate Connection with Rev. Gy After Service Coffee Hour Meet-Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM
Tuesday	March 23	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	March 24	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	12:00 PM
Thursday	March 25	Welcoming Congregation Discussion—Pay It No Mind	7:00 PM
Saturday	March 27	Celebration of Generosity with Seth Bernard	6:30 PM
Sunday	March 28	The Sweet Spot with Rev. Gy After Service Coffee Hour Meet-Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM

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

**UU Community Church
is served by:**

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2020-2021 Board of Trustees

Nancy Calme

Erin Michael

Darby Fetzer

Larry Higgins

Freya Lake

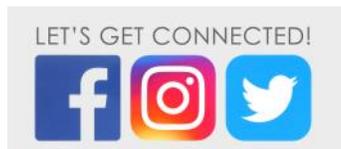
**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, March 24 at NOON**

Please send submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUUnity Matters

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**SPIRITUALITY FOR
DIVERSE PATHS**

BLACK LIVES MATTER