



CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

January 2022

JANUARY SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 AM

[On Facebook](#) and [Zoom](#) ONLY

In-person services are suspended due to Covid-19

Zoom Meeting ID: 926 5154 8494 Passcode: 286763

January 2: *Letter to Self* with Rev. Gy

On this first Sunday of the New Year, Rev. Gy will guide us through the spiritual practice of writing a letter to our future selves.

January 9: *Us vs. Them* with Rev. Gy

There are different ways of trying to make sense of the world but too often we slip into the us-versus-them mentality that oversimplifies problems, vilifies people, and makes it harder for us to solve complex problems and work towards the common good.

January 16: *Together* with Rev. Gy

We know that can do more together than we can do alone. Today we will explore the ways we might create a healthy, constructive, fulfilling life together.

January 23: *The Human in You* with Jacquis Robertson

To build a real authentic community, we first must engage with our shared humanity. In today's talk, Jacquis will engage us to channel our shared humanity in ways that it hasn't been channeled before.

January 30: *Building the Beloved Community* with Dr. Charlae Davis

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of The Beloved Community. He believed that the Beloved Community, while not devoid of conflict, is free of violence. It is a place in which our deepest values of abundance, equity, community, hope, and most of all love are infused into our policies and practices, so that every individual is held as beloved. What does this truly mean and how do we intentionally build this Beloved Community in Kalamazoo County?



Spiritual Theme for January: BELOVED COMMUNITY

Martin Luther King, Jr. popularized the idea of the Beloved Community. The King Center, the institution founded by Coretta Scott King to further King's goals describes it this way:

Dr. King's Beloved Community is a global vision in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood.

Beloved Community happens when people of diverse racial, ethnic, educational, class, gender, abilities, sexual orientation, backgrounds, identities come together in an interdependent relationship of love, mutual respect, and care that seeks to realize peace and justice within the community and in the broader world.

How will you weave the BELOVED COMMUNITY into your Tapestry of Life?

GUESTS IN OUR PULPIT

We are excited to welcome these special guests to our virtual pulpit in January:

Jacquis Robertson currently serves as the Vice President of Strategy and Engagement at Gryphon Place, the leading agency for suicide prevention in the greater Kalamazoo area.

Before joining Gryphon Place, Jacquis held various roles focused on working with youth including serving as the Director of Religious Education at UU Community Church from 2015-2019.

Jacquis has an educational background in Sociology, with a bachelor's degree in Comparative Religion from Western Michigan University. She is currently working towards a master's in Organizational Leadership at Bethel University.



Dr. Charlae Davis was born and raised in Kalamazoo, the youngest child of Kalamazoo Public Schools educators Vern and Auga Davis. She grew up in Tabernacle Church of God in Christ where her family is still actively involved.

After graduating from Kalamazoo Central High School, Charlae attended the University of Michigan and earned her B.A. with concentrations on Race, Class and Gender Inequalities and Social Welfare. She continued at the U of M to earn her Master of Social Work with a focus on Children, Youth & Families, Interpersonal Counseling, and Community Organizing.

She received her Ph.D. in Educational Policy from Michigan State University, where her dissertation was a Phenomenological Study that investigated diminishing the Racial Academic Achievement Gap. She has received an impressive list of awards for her work including effective community organizing on issues of inequity.

Dr. Davis is a member of the Metropolitan Kalamazoo Branch NAACP and Northside Ministerial Alliance. She is a Board Member and Community Working Team Member for the Group Violence Intervention Strategy and Board Member for Counting to One Ministries, Inc. She currently works as the Executive Director of Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy & Action in the Community (ISAAC), a faith-based non-profit community organizing network of which UU Community Church is a proud member. She is also a Healing and Transformation Racial Healing Practitioner.

Show Your Support for ISAAC with Hoodies, Shirts, and Caps!

Check out the awesome new ISAAC Apparel--hoodies, long-sleeve & short-sleeve Ts, and caps! They come in beautiful colors, lots of sizes, and with a message that lasts all year round: ***Grasping Change at the Root; Growing the Beloved Community!***

Items are custom-made by Artwear Apparel Graphics, Inc. At the end of each month, they collect all orders placed for ISAAC, print the items, and ship them out.

Visit the [ISAAC website](#) to place your order!



FROM THE MINISTER

From the Minister

[Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney](#)

A rattlesnake that doesn't bite teaches you nothing.—Jessamyn West

There is a special feel to the end of the year. One tends to look back for lessons learned and peers into the new year with hopes of applying those lessons learned.

Didn't exercise enough, will exercise more, better yet, regularly. Gained weight, will lose weight. Didn't read enough, will read more, every day some. Didn't rest enough, will definitely rest more, go on that vacation, see that site, try that dish...

Then the New Year comes, turns into the old one and our lives look much the same. Maybe a little change, but really, much the same. Why is that?

You'd think there is something fundamentally broken about us because this is a universal experience. We wish to change, learn a lesson well, be done with it, and start anew, and yet we keep going back for more of the same. It's not just you. It's most everyone.

In *A Course In Miracles*, the author Helen Schucman claims that humans either learn through love or through pain. I have found this to be true. I also found –if I am to be honest, and if you know me at all, you know that I am honest—I learn most often through pain. I seem to need that rattlesnake to bite me before I am willing to learn. Even then I am slow sometimes. Every so often I learn through love. Glorious! No pains, still gain. It's when I recognize a rattlesnake for what it is and avoid it! It's when I learn from another's mistakes. It's when I present to my own life and no longer let the autopilot make all the decisions. It's grace. It's rare.

That's what I want more of. Grace. Ease of being. If it's paired with weight loss, hey, I'll take it! It is things of the mind that trip us. The stories we tell. The stories we foretell. The mind will suffer anything. Too much money, trouble! Too little money, oh, big trouble! No job, tragedy! Job, insufferable! Single, Poor me! Married, Oh, boy!

So, it is all in the mind, isn't it? Keeping the thoughts checked is where it's at. Easier said than done. Still, it must be done.

I wish us grace in the New Year. Ease of being. Investigated thoughts. Peace of mind. All of it wrapped in soft, comfortable, safe Love.

And, we begin again.



CARING COMMUNITY



JANUARY CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

*December is letting go of all the past year's fails,
And starting anew in January as time again chases its tail.*

-Stewart Stafford

Judy Oliver recently found this quote from Rachel Dansby Freeman that serves as a nice reminder of what our UCC Caring Community is all about:

When a flashlight grows dim or quits working, do you just throw it away? Of course not. You change the batteries. When a person messes up or finds themselves in a dark place, do you cast them aside? Of course not! You help them change their batteries.

Some need AA...attention and affection; some need AAA...attention, affection, and acceptance; some need C....compassion; some need D...direction.

And if they still don't seem to shine...simply sit with them quietly and share your light."

If your batteries could use some recharging or if you have some extra attention, affection, or compassion to share with others, contact us! YOU are the UCC Caring Community and the UCC Caring Community is here for YOU!

Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

Freya Lake, Stephanie Grathwol, and the **Nelson family** all enjoyed trips to different locations out West in December.

Lee Smittendorf finally joined **Marsha Laya** at their winter home in Florida. Marsha missed him a little bit during the weeks they were living in different states.

Marcia Adams will be spending the winter in Florida with her daughter Sally and son-in-law Paul. They will all be glad to escape the frigid winter weather in Massachusetts.

Judy Oliver plans to move out of state in 2022 but is grateful that she will still be able to connect with her church community and attend events thanks to Zoom.

Peggy Clausing recently fell and broke her knee. She will need surgery to repair the damage and is struggling with a lot of pain. Cards and letters of support and encouragement would be appreciated. Please send them to 1610 Gateway Blvd, Apt 1, Beloit WI 53511.

UCC has a new cleaning person to help keep our building spic and span! **Amber** will usually be in the building on Thursdays. If you happen to cross paths with her, make sure to give her a hearty UCC welcome!

In December, **Mary Roscoe** attended her first in-person service since the pandemic began. She enjoyed the warm welcome she received and the strong feelings of connection after so many months of watching services by herself on Facebook.

Terry Tessari sends his regards to everyone. Family and personal issues have been keeping him busy for the last few months but he misses us and hopes to re-connect with UCC in the New Year.

January Birthdays

So many "Happy Birthday!" greetings among us in January! Here are all of our babies born in January over the last 90 decades: **Dick Bott, Nancy Stob, Pat Fuehr, Ron Crowell...** (Continued on Page 5)

LEADERSHIP

Mary King, Amanda Nelson, Hailey Poulson, Judy Oliver, Betty Lee Ongley, and Kevin Brozovich. If your birthday was not on the list, pass it on to the church office so you get included next year.

Remembering Friends Who Have Passed On

Take a moment to remember those who left us in January's past:

Susie Johnson in 2006, **Otto Byers** in 2015, and most recently, **Elizabeth Fernandez** in 2021.

Welcome Visitors

Several new visitors dropped by to check us out in December. Please look for continued attendance from **Mikayla and Nathan Kauffman-Sarrault, Jaime Jones, Don Schneider, and Wyatt Densmore.** We are so happy to share our community with new people who can add ideas, interests, and inspiration.

Everyone in the church is part of our Caring Community, and caring for one another is a key feature of this congregation. If you have a need that we can help with or some news that you would like to share with us all, please pass it on to the coordinators through the UUC office: 269-324-7262 or uucommunity@gmail.com



Here are a few things our Board of Trustees accomplished at their December meeting:

- Discussed Covid-19 protocols updates to help insure the safety and well-being of those choosing to attend services in the building.
- Developed an engagement/discussion process to identify what we do best and build upon those strengths to build an updated 3-5 years vision/action plan to meet the needs of our congregants. The first of these several Appreciative Inquiry Sessions will take place following the service on Sunday, January 16.

The minutes of the December meeting can be found [HERE](#).

The next regular Board meeting will take place via Zoom on Wednesday, **January 5 at 6:30 PM.** Board meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend. A link to the Zoom meeting can be found on the UU Community Church [online calendar](#).

2021 Contribution Statements

Contributions statements will be emailed to you in January. If you gave traceable payments on a pledge or other contributions to UU Community Church of Southwest Michigan, you will receive an emailed Contribution Statement in January 2022. The Contribution Statement will show all your giving activity recorded in church records for the calendar year ended 12/31/21.

This statement is intended to support your tax records and claims of deductions for charitable giving to UUC. All receipts made via check, Give Plus, Vanco, or other recorded means for which you received no goods or services are listed. As always, please review your records and let me know if you find any discrepancies which require correction (or if you do not receive the emailed statement by January 31).

Your contributions and donations are sincerely appreciated. Thank you!

Kimberly Ridley, Assistant Treasurer
ridleyk@hotmail.com or (269) 569-3658

STEWARDSHIP



Generosity Sunday Collection

The recipient of our January Generosity Sunday Collection will be the [Kalamazoo Literacy Council](#) (KLC). KLC's mission is to enhance the lives of adults by improving their reading, writing, spelling, and comprehension skills and to empower them to reach their full potential.

In Kalamazoo County, 25,000 people –1 in 8 adults — struggle to read, which means they are not able to apply for jobs, manage their health, or help their children learn. In fact, research shows that children of parents with low literacy levels have a 72% chance of being at the lowest reading levels themselves. All KLC literacy services are FREE and through an ever-expanding array of programs, volunteers are currently serving hundreds of learners across the region through a Virtual Learning Center and in-person classes.

This dynamic organization will benefit your donations but also seeks volunteers to assist in a variety of programming needs. Over the years several UUCC members and friends have experienced the joy of making a difference by being involved with the KLC.

During the Sunday service on January 9, we will be joined by Kalamazoo Literacy Council Executive Director, Michael D. Evans, and Adult Learning Services Navigator, Rose Fetzer, who will tell us more about how this local nonprofit organization impacts learners in our community.

If you would like to make a donation to our collection for KLC you may mail a check to our building, you may give electronically through our church website, or you can give using the Vanco Mobile app on a smartphone or tablet. Please be sure to put 'Generosity Sunday' in the memo line of your check or choose 'Generosity Sunday' in the menu when giving electronically. Thank you for your support!



Michael D. Evans



Rose Fetzer

valentines
BINGO

17	18	23	21
8	7	22	
12	19	5	24
	2	16	6

Save the date for
UUCC Virtual Valentine's Bingo
Saturday, February 12
6:30 PM on Zoom

Please join us for a fun and free event.
Bingo cards will be mailed out in February.
Stay tuned for more details!

PROGRAM COUNCIL

Program Council—Where TOGETHER—We Get Stuff Done!

Program Council is the place where YOU can be a part of planning programming for the church community. EVERYONE at UUCC - members, friends, and visitors - is welcome to take part!



Our December meeting was plagued by technical difficulties. We started out with 22 people in attendance but that dwindled to 11 when we lost sound in our Zoom room. If you were unable to attend for any reason you can read the full notes from the meeting [HERE](#).

We **CELEBRATED** small group ministry at UUCC by hearing from leaders of our different adult enrichment groups including Men's Group Breakfast, Women's Book Group, Qigong Group, Moral Decision Making Lecture and Discussion Group, Thoughtful Thursday Gatherings, Civil Conversation Group, and the Sustainability Group. We learned that these small group gatherings are an important way for us to lean into our values and foster connection with each other. Maybe YOU should join one of our small groups in 2022!

Check out these **OPPORTUNITIES!**

- *Meet-up for Youth* - Select Sundays at 1:00 PM (via Zoom) Details on [page 12](#).
- *Qigong* - Tuesdays at 9:00 AM (via Zoom) Details on [page 11](#).
- *January Thoughtful Thursdays* (via Zoom) at 7:00 PM—Details on [page 8](#)
 - 1st Thursday— *Thematic Thoughtful Thursday*—Explore this month's spiritual theme with Rev Gy
 - 2nd Thursday— *Moral Decision Making Lecture and Discussion Series*
 - 3rd Thursday – *An Introduction to Yoga Nidra* with Erica Guthaus—Details [on page 9](#)
 - 4th Thursday— *An 8th Principle Conversation* with Rev. Gy
- *Civil Conversation Group* - Tuesday, January 11 at 7:00 PM—Details on [page 10](#).
- *An Introduction to Non-Violent Communication*— 6-week class lead by Rev Gy. Tuesdays at 7 PM via Zoom, starting January 18—Details on [page 9](#).
- *Sustainability Group*—Monday, January 24 at 7:00 PM—Details on [page 9](#)
- *Volunteer!*

GREETER TEAM: A few more people are needed for in-person, Sunday morning, greeting teams. Can you help one Sunday a month (once we are back in the building)? Contact Greeter Coordinator Ken VanEseltine (vaneseltinekl@sbcglobal.net) for more info.

IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

- *MLK Day of Service* - The City of Kalamazoo sponsors a community-wide day of service in January each year in honor of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Participants join thousands of volunteers across the county to celebrate the life and work of MLK by participating in various outreach activities throughout the county. Volunteer registration is coordinated through Gryphon Place. Details on [page 13](#).

There will be no Program Council Meeting in January. We hope to see you at the next Program Council Meeting on **Sunday, February 11** at around 11:00 AM. We will meet in-person and via Zoom following a brief social hour. Send your agenda items and celebrations to Program Council chair, [Darby Fetzer](#). And as always Thank YOU for all you do! Stay well!

LEARNING AND GROWTH



Thoughtful Thursdays

Each Thursday evening we offer 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.

Click [HERE](#) for the Thoughtful Thursday Zoom link. Meeting ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120

First Thursday— THEMATIC THOUGHTFUL THURSDAY

Join Rev. Gy on **January 6 at 7:00 PM** for a discussion about this month's spiritual theme: Beloved Community.

Second Thursday—MORAL DECISION MAKING

Our gathering on January 6 at 7:00 PM will feature a short lecture and a group discussion of the thorny ethical question: Should I help a suffering loved one die? (See below for more info.)

Third Thursday— AN INTRODUCTION TO YOGA NIDRA

Doula and Health Educator Erica Guthaus returns to UCC to lead a workshop on Yoga Nidra on **January 20 at 7:00 PM**. More information about this wonderful opportunity is on [page 9](#).

Fourth Thursday— 8TH PRINCIPLE CONVERSATION

Join Rev. Gy on Thursday, **January 27 at 7:00 PM** for an exploration of the proposed Unitarian Universalist **8th Principle**. By adopting the 8th Principle, UCC has the opportunity to take a leadership role in our UU faith and deepen our commitment to building an authentic Beloved Community. This 8th Principle Conversation is a first step in the adoption process. Please plan to attend this event!

The Ethics of Euthanasia

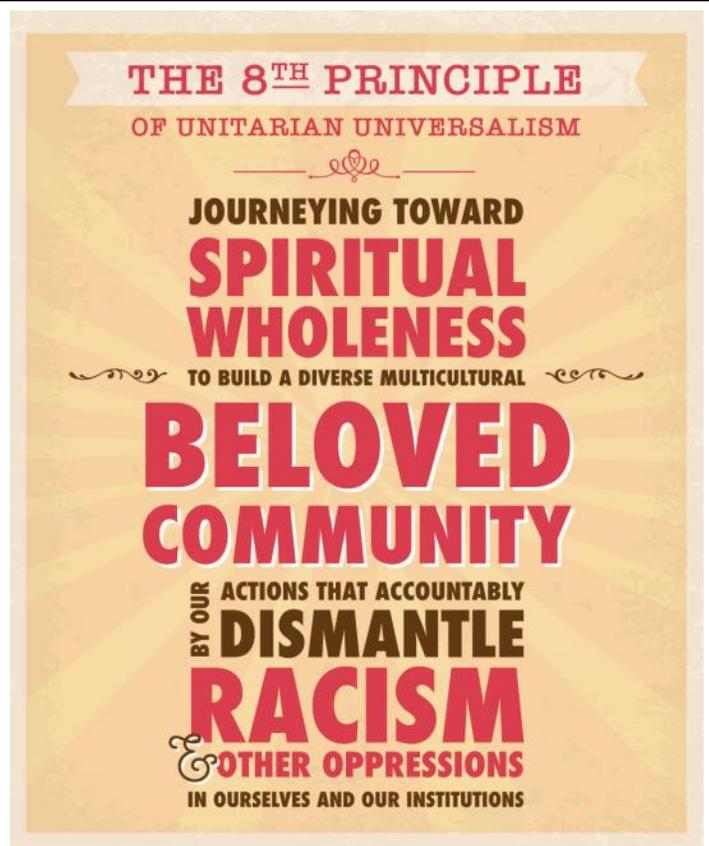
At the next meeting of our **Moral Decision Making Lecture and Discussion Group** on **Thursday, January 13 at 7:00 PM**, we will consider the ethical pros and cons of assisted suicide.

Medical technology is prolonging our lives, for better and for worse. In this lecture, you'll explore the myriad complexities around euthanasia. Is there such a thing as a "good death"? What counts as "natural causes"? Is there a moral distinction between "pulling the plug" and assisted suicide?

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.

Meeting ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120



LEARNING AND GROWTH

Nonviolent
COMMUNICATION



A Course in Non-Violent Communication

Join Rev. Gy for a six-week-long class based on the book *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* by Marshall Rosenberg.

Non-Violent Communication can help you create your life, your relationships, and your world in harmony with your values. If you're in hurry for peace, this course is for you!

In this course you will have an opportunity to learn how to:

- Listen to hear the message in the words
- Speak in a way that you are heard
- Create win/win outcomes from conflict
- Effectively deal with emotions
- Deepen your relationships

Non-Violent Communication offers a new model of relating that will transform your way of using words, leading to open, honest and effective communication from the heart.

The class will meet via Zoom on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM from January 18 until February 22.

Click [HERE](#) to register for the class.

A \$30 'love offering' is suggested for this class. If it is yours to do, you can mail us a check made out to UUCC with Non-Violent in the memo line or you can make a donation from our website or use the Vanco app on a smartphone or a tablet. A donation is not required to participate.

If you have any questions about this adult enrichment opportunity, please contact Rev. Gy gyludvig@gmail.com or (269)352-2412

What is Yoga Nidra and Why Should You Dare to Rest™?

Rest is an imperative part of our natural cycle as it leads to regulation of our nervous systems and balanced hormones! It is also the thing that we sacrifice most often when the busyness and demands of life start to take over.

Join Daring to Rest™ facilitator, Erica Guthaus, via Zoom on



Thursday, **January 20** at **7:00 PM** as she helps us explore Nidra napping, cooling breaths, and re-connecting with our deepest sense of knowing in this FREE, 90-minute introduc-

tion to Yoga Nidra.

No equipment or downward dogs required! All you need is a place where you can stretch out and be comfortable. You can lay on the floor, put up your feet in a recliner or on the couch, or join the Zoom from your bed. Don't let the word "yoga" confuse you. Yoga Nidra is more like meditation than an exercise routine.

If you're ready for an easy, pose-free way to slow down and recover from the stressors in your life, Yoga Nidra could be the answer you are looking for.

This would be a great class to invite a friend to join. All are welcome!

Click [HERE](#) for the Yoga Nidra Zoom link.

Meeting ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

Finding Joy Through a Smaller Environmental Foot Print

Each month the **Sustainability Group** meets to reflect on their personal sustainability journeys, to share their successes and failures, and to explore ideas for promoting sustainable living at UUCC and in the wider community.



At their last meeting they shared the following resources:

Sustainable Gifts: [Heifer International](#) is a great way to give meaningful, waste-free gifts to friends and family and make a difference in the world.

Climate Change Action: Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition has a [new website!](#) They are also building their contact database so they can mobilize the thousands of people in their network to take action by contacting elected officials about climate change issues. Click [HERE](#) to add your name to their contact list and become part of the movement for a greener, more sustainable future in Kalamazoo County.

Resources for Rain Gardens: [Kalamazoo County Drain Commission](#), [Rain Garden Manual](#)

Optimism: [climateoptimist.org](#) is a great source for optimism about climate change including this quote: *We must. We can. And we will solve climate change. It is that simple and that difficult. And because the climate change challenge is so great and its consequences are so serious, optimism is essential. Hope beats fear. It is the attitude that inspires progress. We behave, we buy, vote, and work for change because we are optimists. Our vocal actions will take our actions even further. It will make others bold. Optimism has always had this power. Humanity has eradicated diseases, overcome great injustices, and even reach the stars because enough of us believed we could.*

At their next meeting on **Monday, January 24 at 7:00 PM**, the group will continue to make plans for Greening the UUCC Grounds and an all-church Sustainability Challenge in 2022. Newcomers are always welcome to join this small group. Contact Miriam (uucommunity@gmail.com) if you have any questions. Click [HERE](#) for the link for the Sustainability Group Zoom Meeting.

Meeting ID: 960 9812 1445 Passcode: 990641

Building the Beloved Community One Conversation at a Time

The UUCC **Civil Conversations Group** will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, **January 11 at 7:00 PM** to help participants learn the skills that will help them engage in more meaningful conversations with family, friends, and others to authentically build a more Beloved Community.

On the agenda this month:



- Sharing Civil Conversations we had over the Holiday
- Sharing thoughts about "How to keep the CC space safe"
- A discussion about Gender-Neutral Pronoun Usage (i.e. They/Them/Their)

Please feel free to invite friends with varying perspectives to this gathering. We work to intentionally create a safe space by following our Civil Conversation's guidelines and intervening if necessary.

Click [HERE](#) to be part of the conversation. Meeting ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120.

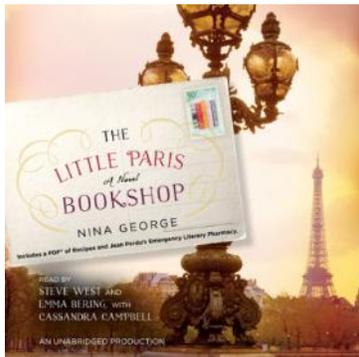
If you have any questions about this group please contact Darby Fetzer at 269-569-5557 or darbylynnfetzer@gmail.com.

CONNECTION

Women's Book Group

Friday, January 14
1:00 PM via Zoom

January Selection:
**The Little Paris
Bookshop**
by Nina George



From Goodreads:

Monsieur Perdu calls himself a literary apothecary. From his floating bookstore in a barge on the Seine, he prescribes novels for the hardships of life. Using his intuitive feel for the exact book a reader needs, Perdu mends broken hearts and souls. The only person he can't seem to heal through literature is himself; he's still haunted by heartbreak after his great love disappeared. She left him with only a letter, which he has never opened.

After Perdu is finally tempted to read the letter, he hauls anchor and departs on a mission to the south of France, hoping to make peace with his loss and discover the end of the story. Joined by a best-selling but blocked author and a lovelorn Italian chef, Perdu travels along the country's rivers, dispensing his wisdom and his books, showing that the literary world can take the human soul on a journey to heal itself.

*Internationally bestselling and filled with warmth and adventure, **The Little Paris Bookshop** is a love letter to books, meant for anyone who believes in the power of stories to shape people's lives.*

The Book Group will meet at 1:00 PM on January 14 via Zoom for a short business meeting followed by a discussion led by Sally Cowles.

Click [HERE](#) to join the Book Group Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 996 0783 5644 Passcode: 360981

If you are interested in joining Book Group, please contact chairperson, [Stephanie Grathwol](#).

Qigong at UCC

Building the Beloved Community is hard work! In order to be able to continually show up with the compassion and kindness needed and do the work of justice, we have to take care of ourselves.



Qigong, a series of mindful movements that can help center the mind and relax the body, is a great way to practice self-care.

All are welcome to start the New Year off right by joining our **Tuesday** morning Qigong sessions. They begin at **9:00 AM** with a brief check-in followed by 30 minutes of exercise (with our cameras and mics turned off) led by an experienced instructor.

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

Meeting ID: 697 338 090 Passcode: 138550.

Any questions? Contact [Freya Lake](#).



Men's Group Breakfast

Due to the rise in Covid cases in our area, the Men's Group has decided that they will meet via Zoom on **Saturday, January 15 at 8:30 AM** for this month's gathering. In-person breakfast will resume when case numbers come down.

As always EVERYONE (regardless of gender identity or expression) is welcome to join the Men's Group for good company and good conversation! If you want coffee and eggs this month, you will have to bring your own!

Click [HERE](#) for the Zoom Link for Men's Breakfast Meeting ID 979 3910 2898 Passcode: 287317

If you have any questions, please contact breakfast coordinator, Ken VanEseltine, at (269) 342-4793 or vaneseltinekl@sbcglobal.net



RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

R.E.flections

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

Ministry with Community is an organization in Kalamazoo that provides services to people in our community facing great challenges including homelessness, poverty, substance use disorder, and other crises. They recently shared this post on their Facebook page:



We often overhear our members asking each other how they're doing. Many times, their response is, "I'm blessed." It's humbling to be in the presence of such gratitude and graciousness. And it's a powerful reminder, especially after another year filled with challenges, to count each blessing in each moment.

This was something I really needed to hear. In the waning days of 2021, as Covid-19 yet again wreaks havoc on all my plans, it is easy to feel frustrated and sorry for myself. The truth is that I am blessed. I am warm and safe, relatively healthy, have plenty to eat, and am surrounded by loving friends and family. There is more good in my world than challenges.

We sometimes moan and groan about everything wrong with this church community, but the truth is that it too is blessed. There is much to be grateful about here.

- * Our children's program may be small, but the young people who participate in it are a joy! They are full of unique insights and have a willingness to stay involved.
- * Our volunteers are amazing! They share their valuable time with us often working quietly behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly.
- * Our members and friends generously provide us with the financial resources needed to offer unique programs and try new things!

This list goes on and on and just making it has raised my spirits quite a bit!

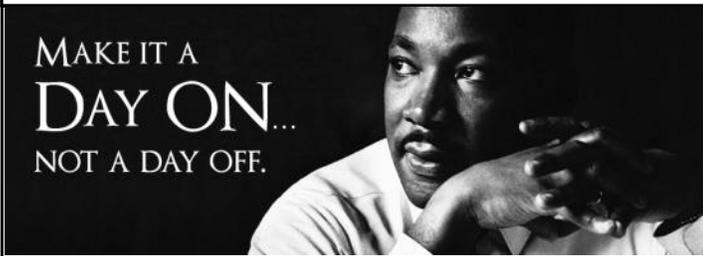
Soon you too will have an opportunity to share the parts of UU Community Church that you consider a blessing as we engage in Appreciative Inquiry, a process that will use positive questions and discussion to focus on how UU Community Church functions at its best. The Board of Trustees and the Strategic Planning Team have been working hard over the past few months to come up with a plan for our first session on Sunday, January 16 following the worship service. Keep an eye on the Weekly Email that comes out each Friday for more information. You can also reach out to Rev. Gy or one of our Board members if email isn't convenient for you.

Whatever lies in store for us in 2022, may we remember to practice graciousness and gratitude and "count each blessing in each moment". May it be so.

JANUARY R.E. SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
January 2	Day off	N/A
January 9	Mind Maps	Zoom
January 16	Power Maps	Zoom
January 23	New Year Bonfire	Outdoors at UUCC
January 30	Social Justice Sunday	TBD

OPPORTUNITIES



MLK Day of Service

The City of Kalamazoo sponsors a community-wide day of service in January each year in honor of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year's Day of Service will take place on **Monday, January 17.**

Social service organizations around Kalamazoo County provide opportunities for community volunteers to take a day-on rather than a day-off. Participants join thousands of volunteers

across the county to celebrate the life and work of the slain leader by participating in various outreach activities throughout the county.

Community members are encouraged to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King by finding ways to serve our community.

Volunteer registration is coordinated through Gryphon Place. You can visit [their website](#) to browse volunteer opportunities and sign up to help. They can also be contacted at (269) 381-1510 ext. 242.

Styrofoam Recycling Day

Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) foam recycling will be available to Kalamazoo residents on Saturday, **January 29** from **10:00 AM to 1:00 PM** in the parking lot of Mayors' Riverfront Park.

ACCEPTED:

- + Foam labeled with a 6 symbol only
- + Foam must be in clear or translucent bags
- + Food containers must be rinsed, wiped, or cleaned

NOT ACCEPTED:

- Styrofoam or sheeted insulation
- Packing peanuts



FRIDAYS for the FUTURE

Join the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month at noon for an informative session focused on combatting Climate Change!

On the agenda in January:

January 14:

Kirsten Clemente, Kalamazoo Nature Center

January 28:

Chris Dilley, PFC Grocery

Click [HERE](#) to join the Fridays for the Future Zoom Meeting. All are welcome!

Keep Those Caps Coming in 2022!

Our Collection 'Cap'tain, Freya Lake, reports that since we started in April 2020, we have collected an accumulative 147 pounds of hard plastic bottle and jar caps to help make Buddy Benches for school playgrounds! Great work, everyone!

Let's keep them coming! You'll feel better about doing your little part for the environment and helping school kids process their emotions in a positive way.

Now that we aren't meeting in person and you cannot bring them to the building, please save your caps until we open up again, or you can contact [Freya](#) and make arrangements to get them to her. Thank you for your support!



DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

MidAmerica UUA 

**Regional '22
Assembly**

Online April 30 10AM-2PM ET
9AM-1PM CT
Registration opens January 21

Keynote: CB Beal UUA.org/midamerica/ra

 PRINT, CUT OUT, AND STICK TO YOUR FRIDGE!

Save the date for our virtual MidAmerica Regional Assembly set for Saturday, April 30th, 2022 10 AM - 2PM

CB Beal will speak, the Annual Business Meeting will take place, and there will be time for break-out rooms for connection and conversation.

Mark your calendars! Registration opens January 21.



Registration is Open for General Assembly 2022

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Participants worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend.

General Assembly 2022 will take place between June 22 and 26. It will be a multiplatform event, with registration options for in-person and/or virtual participation. In-person registration for GA 2022 in Portland, Oregon is open NOW. Registration for virtual participants will open March 1. You can visit the

[UUA website](#) for more information.

Financial support for registration as well as a payment plan are available from the UUA. UU Community Church may also have funds available to help members to attend. Contact a board member for more information.

All GA attendees and exhibitors are required to provide proof of Covid-19 Vaccination for in-person attendance at General Assembly. In addition, masking is required, and physically distanced seating options will be reserved in our meeting spaces.

General Assembly can be an uplifting and inspirational experience that benefits not only the individual but our church community and larger faith movement. Several UUCA people including Rev. Gy, Miriam, Judy Halseth, Kimberly Ridley, and Marsa Laya have attended GA in the past. Reach out and ask them about it. Maybe this will be the year that YOU get more deeply involved in our faith by attending GA.

MULTIPLATFORM / PORTLAND • 2022



CALENDAR



JANUARY 2022

DAY	DATE		TIME
Sunday	January 2	Letter to Self with Rev. Gy After-Service Social Hour	10:00 AM 10:45 AM
Tuesday	January 4	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	January 5	Board of Trustees Meeting	6:30 PM
Thursday	January 6	Stewardship Committee Meeting Thematic Thoughtful Thursday	1:00 PM 7:00 PM
Sunday	January 9	Us vs. Them with Rev. Gy After-Service Coffee Hour Meet-Up for Youth	9:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM
Tuesday	January 11	Qigong Civil Conversations Group	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	January 12	Sunday Services Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
Thursday	January 13	Moral Decision Making	7:00 PM
Friday	January 14	Women's Book Group	1:00 PM
Saturday	January 15	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
Sunday	January 16	Together with Rev. Gy After Service Social Hour Strategic Planning—Appreciative Inquiry Session Meet Up for Youth Strategic Planning—Appreciative Inquiry Session	9:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:00 AM 1:00 PM 3:00 PM
Monday	January 17	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY	All Day
Tuesday	January 18	Qigong A Course in Non-Violent Communication	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Thursday	January 20	An Introduction to Yoga Nidra	7:00 PM
Sunday	January 23	The Human in You with Jacquis Robertson After-Service Social Hour Youth Group New Year Bonfire	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM
Monday	January 24	Sustainability Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	January 25	Qigong A Course in Non-Violent Communication	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	January 26	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	12:00 PM
Thursday	January 28	An 8th Principle Conversation	7:00 PM
Saturday	January 29	Styrofoam Recycling Day	10 AM—1 PM
Sunday	January 30	Building the Beloved Community with Dr. Charlae Davis After-Service Social Hour Youth-Led Social Justice Sunday	10:00 AM 10:45 AM TBD

**UU Community Church
is served by:**

Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney M.Div., M.A.
Consulting Minister
By Appointment Only
gyludvig@gmail.com
Cell: 269-352-2412

Miriam Epskamp
Office Administrator and
Director of Religious Education
uucommunity@gmail.com
Church office: 269-324-7262
Cell phone: 269-993-8758

Nick Sienkiewicz
Music Director
nsienki@iu.edu

2021-2022 Board of Trustees

Eric Nelson

Darby Fetzer

Judy Pigg-Behrendt

Freya Lake

Andy Miller

**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, January 26 at NOON**

Please send submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUUnity Matters

**Unitarian Universalist Community Church
of Southwest Michigan**

10441 Shaver Rd.
Portage, MI 49024
269-324-7262



uucommunity@gmail.com
www.uucommunitychurch.org
www.facebook.com/uuccswmi
twitter.com/uuccswmi
www.instagram.com/uuccswmi/



**SPIRITUALITY FOR
DIVERSE PATHS**

BLACK LIVES MATTER