



CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

February 2022

FEBRUARY 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

February 6: *Are We There Yet?*

with **Tristan Henry**

Without a map, how does one know when they have left China and entered Mongolia? How do we even know when we've gone from Michigan to Indiana? Humans have been migrating across the Earth for thousands of years. With this in mind, join me as we explore one migrant's journey through this vast country we call "home".

February 13: *Through the Eye of a Needle*

with **Rev. Gy**

Jesus preached that wealth was a spiritual stumbling block. But what does that mean exactly? Is wealth always immoral and corrupting? Is poverty a virtue? What does all this mean for us?

February 20: *A Sojourner in a Foreign Land*

with **Rev. Gy**

In the United States, immigration can be a heated and divisive topic of debate often focused on the narrow lens of its effect on us, our jobs, our economy, and our security ignoring the other side of the equation. Immigration can also be looked at as a moral issue that is directly connected to the lack of justice, equity, and peace in other parts of the world.

February 27: *An Ultramarathon of Racial Justice* with **Chris Crowell**

In October 2020, Chris co-founded the Running Industry Diversity Coalition (RIDC) to address systemic racism in the running industry and found himself entering an Ultramarathon of Racial Justice as RIDC began centering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the industry and dismantling systemic racism in our communities and working to improve visibility, and access for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.



Spiritual Theme for February: A MORAL ECONOMY

When she spoke to us last month, Dr. Charlae Davis asked us to pledge to understand that *"if my neighbor is not okay, then I am not okay."*

This idea of wanting for our neighbor what we want for ourselves is at the core of our spiritual theme for February: A MORAL ECONOMY. As we weave our Tapestry of Life we must remember we are interconnected with everyone in our community, our nation, and our world. We must remember our Unitarian Universalist principles call on us to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to build a world of justice, equity, and compassion.

That world we seek to build must include a just and equitable economic system that values people and a healthy planet just as much as it does profit and growth. The system we have now does not. It has created an enormous gulf between the haves and the have-nots and too many of us are struggling to survive. This is not just an economic issue but a moral and religious one. *"If my neighbor is not okay, then I am not okay."*

What will you do to weave A MORAL ECONOMY into your Tapestry of Life?

GUESTS IN OUR PULPIT

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



Sunday Services Committee member Kimberly Ridley met **Tristan Henry** on the corner of Centre and Westnedge Ave on Sunday afternoon when they both showed up to join the Portage Kids Peaceful Protests in support of Black Lives Matter in the summer of 2020.

Born in Ontario, Canada, the son of two proud Jamaican parents, Tristan migrated to Michigan in 2002 for school. He will offer us his unique perspective of living in the United States as a migrant for 20 years and in Portage for eleven of them.

He is a graduate of Andrews University in the field of Medical Laboratory Science. He lives not too far from UUCC with his awesome partner and three young sons. He shares that “building genuine, long-lasting relationships is my life mission.”

Chris Lampen-Crowell is no stranger to UU Community Church as he is the son of long-time members Ron and Nancy Crowell. He is married to Mary Lampen-Crowell. They have three children and three grandchildren.

In 1985 Chris and his original partner, Bruce Johnson, opened Gazelle Sports with the help of family and friends. Gazelle Sports has grown to 6 locations plus an online business, with a new location in downtown Grand Rapids opening this spring. Gazelle employs over 200 people.

Chris is proud to have created, organized, and led hundreds of healthy fun events and programs such as the John Daley Memorial One/One Run, the Greater Kalamazoo Girls on the Run, and the Kalamazoo Marathon. In 2020, he co-founded the Running Industry Diversity Coalition.

An avid runner during his years at Loy Norrix Highschool and Western Michigan University, Chris continues to run, as well as walk, bike, kayak and workout for physical, mental, and spiritual health.



Joining us for Thoughtful Thursday on February 24 at 7:00 PM is **Tim Bartik**, senior economist at the Upjohn Institute for Employment. Tim received both his Ph.D. and his MS in economics from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He earned a BA from Yale University in Political Philosophy. His areas of expertise include Early Childhood Education, K-12 Education, Promise Programs, Job Security & Unemployment Dynamics, Local Labor Markets, Regional Policy & Planning, and Economic Development. His 1992 book, *Who Benefits from State and Local Economic Development Policies?*, is widely cited as an important and influential review of the evidence on how local policies affect economic development. He is co-editor of *Economic Development Quarterly*, the only journal focused on local economic development in the United States.

Tim is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist who has been a member of People’s Church since the early 1990s. He lives in Kalamazoo with his wife Deb. They have two adult sons.

FROM THE MINISTER

From the Minister

[Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney](#)

*Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting
—over and over announcing your place in the family of things.*

— Mary Oliver



There was a time, not so long ago, when humans were so much more in tune and in sync with Mother Nature than we are today.

But then we invented electricity. And the third shift. And that changed everything. Back in the day when winter days were short and darkness long, we still understood that it is good to allow our bodies and minds some rest while darkness ruled. As the days got longer, we too, worked longer hours, adjusted our rest to the rhythm of nature. Humans honored and observed this cycle for thousands and thousands of years until it all changed with the dawn of the industrial age about two-hundred or so years ago.

Life changed in an instant. The meaning of productivity took on a whole new definition that was no longer tied to the change of seasons or even the rise and setting of the Sun. Humans' lifestyles changed in a blink of an eye from travel, to food, to work, to communication, vacation, you name it. Every single aspect of life was affected without allowing for much time to adapt.

Throughout evolution, change happened relatively slowly. Slowness allowed for all life forms, humans included, to catch up to the evolution of things.

Not so much today. So much so, that for the first time ever in history a parent can literally have no idea how to advise their child in choosing a career path. Who would have thought even a few years ago that "youtubing" would provide a lucrative income? Life is changing so rapidly that we can no longer imagine what the future of our children is going to look like. They may have robot butlers. Or if all goes wrong, they shall be butlers to robots...

But, I digress. My point is that although life has improved for almost every single person on this planet over the past hundred and fifty years, in reality, we have not been able to adapt to all this change. While our physical environment improved, our mental one suffers. One in ten Americans are on anti-depressants. Many more are suffering from anxiety, eating disorders, ADHD, and the list goes on.

I wonder if all this is connected to our falling out of rhythm with Mother Nature? There's no more time to recharge, time to adapt, time to process, contemplate. We created a go-go-go world with only emergency breaks available.

There is still a bit of winter left. Some may argue, that too much here in Michigan. In any case, what if we carved out some time to get back in sync with the seasons? What if we allowed ourselves some rest, some sincere slowing down, finding our place in the family of things?

Slow down. Rest. Be kind to yourself. You've been through a lot. I mean, A LOT! Be gentle to yourself —as love would have it. So you can begin again. And again...

And so it is.

CARING COMMUNITY



FEBRUARY CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.—Albert Schweitzer

Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

January was a gloomy month for many of us. Rising rates of Covid-19 forced us to suspend in-person activities again and the doors closed at UCC for a second time. More and more family members and friends have been diagnosed with the virus. Some of us have been in and out of quarantine. The global pandemic continues to test and challenge us in ways we never imagined.

Several UCC friends had to deal with non-Covid health issues. **Stace Danielson** was hospitalized for dehydration and exhaustion. **Peggy Clausing** had surgery on her knee. **Miriam** fell and broke her arm. **Herb Gross** was moved into a memory care unit. Many others struggle with issues they do not choose to share.

Bright spots in January included the news that **Kimberly Ridley** received a big promotion at work and **Matthew Nelson** was hired as a Teaching Assistant. And babies are bringing us joy as well! **Darby and Bruce Fetzer** welcomed Eli, a new grand-nephew, **Marsha Laya** is looking forward to meeting her newest great-grandchild, and **Pat Timm** is enjoying cuddling her first grandbaby, Henry!

Birthdays

Let's wish a "Happy Birthday!" to our members and friends born in February:

Hunter Ridley, Marsha Laya, Beverly Folz, Regena Nelson, Kathi Moore, and Joe Calme

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

In February of 2009, we lost **Barbara Cousins**. Together with Judy Halseth, Barbara led the Genealogy Covenant Group and helped people learn how to dig into their ancestry. What else do you remember about her? Perhaps it was her attention to our church library, her artistic skills, and her friendship in the Women's Book Group?

In 2017, we were saddened by the untimely death of our past minister, **Rev. Greg Martin**, at age 59. Greg was a vibrant speaker and past Methodist minister who went on to a settled UU ministry after we launched him from our little church.

New visitors

Our special programs in January enticed many new people to visit us virtually including **17 visitors** to our Yoga Nidra workshop whose names we don't have room to list. We also welcomed **Gina Thomas** and **Karen Tinklenberg** to our Non-Violent Communication Class. We hope we have opportunities to get to know more about our new friends in the coming months.

Everyone in the church is part of our Caring Community, and caring for one another is a key feature of the 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 UCC office: 269-324-7262 or

uucommunity@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP



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

- Set up a procedure for re-opening the building when the Covid-19 risk level and positivity rates fall to more acceptable levels.
- Set a schedule for the Future Change process to gather congregational input on strategic planning. The next meeting, **Discover Process 2**, will be on **February 20 at 11:15 AM**. This session will

feature new questions to consider and everyone should plan to participate, whether or not they attended the first session in January.

- Approved the suspension of cleaning services while the building is closed.
- Made plans to complete the annual UUA/Mid-America Region congregational certification.

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

The next regular Board meeting will take place via Zoom on Wednesday, February 2 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](#).

Program Council—Where TOGETHER—We Get Stuff Done!

Our Program Council did not meet in January. We will gather again on **February 13** following the Sunday Service to celebrate our successes and make plans for future activities and programs. Your thoughts, ideas, and input is needed!

If you have any celebrations or agenda items for the next Program Council meeting, please send them to [Darby Fetzer](#) by Friday, February 11.



2021 Contribution Statements

Contribution statements from Kimberly Ridley were emailed on January 16, 2022.

If you gave traceable payments on a pledge or other contributions to UUCC, I emailed you a Contribution Statement on January 16, 2022. The Contribution Statement shows 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 UUCC. All receipts made via check, Give Plus, Vanco, Paypal, or other recorded means for which you received no goods or services are listed.

As always, please review your record and let me know if you find any discrepancies which require correction (or if you did not receive the emailed statement). Your contributions and donations are sincerely appreciated.

Thank you,
Kimberly Ridley, Assistant Treasurer
Email ridleyk@hotmail.com

STEWARDSHIP

UUCC Valentine's Bingo Night

Saturday, February 12, 2022, at 6:30 PM

Everyone is invited to this event!



We have the following Valentine's Day prizes for the bingo winners to be delivered on February 13.

- ♥ *Ron Crowell's wine and chocolates from Confections with Convictions*
- ♥ *Joe Calme's cherry liqueur and a Victorian Bakery treat*
- ♥ *Kalamazoo Company candle-making class gift card*
- ♥ *Marsha's handmade dish towels and dish soap from Bee Joyful*
- ♥ *\$50 cash prize*

You will receive your bingo cards in the mail. (If you don't get yours by Friday, February 11 please contact the office and we will send you cards electronically.) The Zoom link will be emailed to you. Wear red and come ready to have a fun night with **UUCC Bingo Caller Kevin Brozovich!**



9th Annual UUCC Chili Dinner

February 19, 5:00 – 8:00 PM

\$10/person—Kids eat FREE!

Again, this year the Chili Supper will be a take-out event. You have a choice of Joe and Nancy Calme's fantastic meat or vegetarian chili served with a hunk of homemade cornbread.

Drive up to the church door and we'll take your order and deliver it to your car.

If you signed up at the Service Auction, you're all set. If not, there is still plenty of time to get in on this delicious annual event.

Send an email or call Joe Calme (joe.calme@gmail.com) or 269-271-8852) to reserve your spot.

Mail a check made out to UUCC with 'Chili Dinner' in the memo or pay at pick up.

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— AN 8TH PRINCIPLE CONVERSATION (RESCHEDULED)

Join Rev. Gy on **February 3 at 7:00 PM** for a discussion about the proposed 8th UU principle (see wording below) that would add explicit anti-racist and anti-oppressive wording to our foundational principles.

Second Thursday—MORAL DECISION MAKING

Our gathering on **February 10 at 7:00 PM** will feature a short lecture and a group discussion of the thorny ethical question: *Is genetic enhancement playing God?* (See below for more info.)

Third Thursday— CIVIL CONVERSATION GROUP

On **February 17 at 7:00 PM** our Civil Conversation Group will meet with curious minds and loving hearts to learn how to engage in Civil Conversations with those who might have different viewpoints than our own. You can learn more about this group on page 9.

Fourth Thursday— A CONVERSATION WITH AN ECONOMIST

Once a month we invite a special guest to join our Thoughtful Thursday gathering. We are honored to have economist Tim Bartik with us on Thursday, **February 24 at 7:00 PM** to talk about our spiritual theme for the month: A MORAL ECONOMY. You can learn more about Tim on page 3.

The Ethics of Genetic Engineering

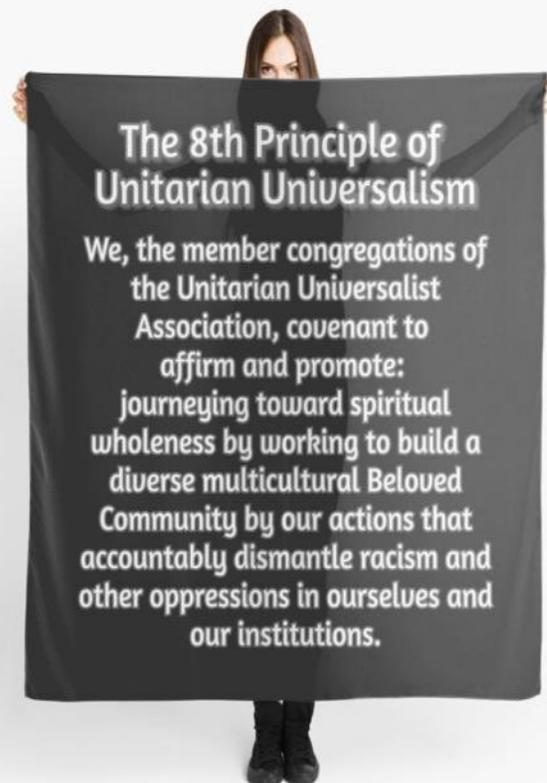
At the next meeting of our **Moral Decision-Making Lecture and Discussion Group** on **Thursday, February 10 at 7:00 PM**, we will consider the challenging ethical questions around technologies that allow us to alter the genetic codes of future generations.

What if you had the opportunity to choose your child's hair color? Or edit their DNA to protect against disease? Or determine your child's intelligence and athletic ability? This kind of genetic programming is not as far-fetched as it sounds—and it raises a host of questions about human agency and social fairness.

All are welcome to attend this adult enrichment opportunity. 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



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Mindfulness Practice with Eric

February 23

7:00 PM via Zoom

If you have been enjoying Eric Nelson's practices during our Sunday services lately you will definitely want to take this opportunity to explore Mindfulness a little more.

Join Eric on Wednesday, February 23 at 7:00 PM to learn basic stress management skills through Mindfulness.

During this Zoom gathering, you will learn practices that support present moment attention, which is characterized as non-judgmental, non-reactive, and kind. Instead of unconsciously **reacting** to life, based on past habits and conditioning, mindfulness gives you the freedom to consciously **respond** to life from a fresh and creative perspective.

Eric received his BA and MA in Social Psychology and Organizational Communication from Western Michigan University and worked as a Program Officer at the Fetzer Institute for 22 years in mind-body health and contemplative science. He founded Stress Less Kzoo in 2012, which provides stress management training.

If you have any questions about this class, contact Eric (ericnelson1@gmail.com).

Click [HERE](#) to join the Zoom Meeting
Meeting ID: 976 5549 1883 Passcode: 617949

Visitors, beginners, experienced practitioners, newcomers, and longtime members and friends are all welcome to join this gathering! Feel free to widely share this information and zoom link.



Yoga Nidra with Erica Guthaus

February 27

7:00 PM via Zoom

We are excited to announce that Daring to Rest™ facilitator, Erica Guthaus, has agreed to offer a monthly Yoga Nidra workshop via Zoom for those interested in learning more about this relaxation practice that allows you to slow down and recover from the stressors in your life.

As we have shared before, despite having yoga in its name, Yoga Nidra does not involve any poses or require any equipment. 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.

We may try out different days and times as the months go by to find the best place on our schedule for Yoga Nidra. In February, Erica will join us on **Sunday, February 27 at 7:00 PM**. She plans to offer a unique practice each time so each session will offer something a little different than the last.

A love offering will be accepted for this class to make sure that Erica is fairly compensated for her work. The suggested donation is \$10 and information about how you can send that to her will be shared closer to the date.

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: 922 4471 7815 Passcode: 457428



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.



These are some of the resources that were shared at their last meeting:

Dryer Balls: [Bee Joyful Shop](#) in Kalamazoo has wool dryer balls that can be an earth-friendly alternative to dryer sheets to help keep clothes soft and static-free. Most dryer sheets are made from non-compostable polyester fibers and soaked with chemical fragrances and softeners.

DIY Cleaning Solutions: Vinegar and baking soda can be used to make cleaning solutions for most household chores. Visit [Better Homes and Garden's website](#) for more info.

Mode Shift: www.wearemodeshift.org is a website that shares stories and resources about Michigan communities shifting focus from cars as the only way of getting around to people-powered options like walking, riding a bike, or taking a bus. You can follow [Mode Shift Kalamazoo](#) on Facebook for local information.

Natures Best Hope: The Winchell neighborhood *Natures Best Hope* by Douglas Tallamy helps homeowners everywhere turn their yards into conservation corridors that provide wildlife habitats.

Sustainable Gardening Practices: The Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition presented a program on sustainable gardening practices that might be of interest to backyard cultivators. The presentation by Kirsten Clemente, Director of the DeLano Farm at the Kalamazoo Nature Center, starts at the 15-minute mark. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10Q87UXu-CQ>

The next meeting of the Sustainability Group is on **Monday, February 21** at **7:00 PM**. Newcomers are always welcome to join this small group. Questions? Contact Miriam (uucommunity@gmail.com)

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 Thursday, **February 17** 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:



- Review what it takes to have a Civil Conversations
- Review the strategies we came up with last month to keep our group a safe space to share differing points of view
- A discussion with special guests from Canada about Universal Healthcare

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

CONNECTION

Women's Book Group

Friday, February 11

1:00 PM via Zoom

February Selection:

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent

by Isabel Wilkerson

From Goodreads:

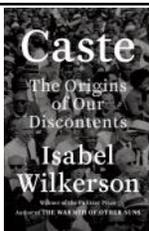
In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings.

Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people, she shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. She documents how the Nazis studied the racial systems in America to plan their out-cast of the Jews; she discusses why the cruel logic of caste requires that there be a bottom rung for those in the middle to measure themselves against; she writes about the surprising health costs of caste, in depression and life expectancy, and the effects of this hierarchy on our culture and politics. Finally, she points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.

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 Freya Lake, Judy Oliver, and Marsha Laya.

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

Any questions? Contact chairperson, [Stephanie Grathwol](#).



Qigong at UCC

What is it? A distant cousin to Tai Chi, Qigong is made up of simple, repetitive motions, regulated breathing, focused meditation, and self-massage.

Who can join? People of all ages and conditions can benefit from Qigong. (As with all exercise, if you have a chronic illness or injury, it's best to speak with your healthcare provider before you start.) Prior knowledge of Qigong is not required.



When is it? Every Tuesday morning at 9:00 AM via Zoom. We begin with a brief check-in followed by 30 minutes of exercise (with our cameras and mics turned off). We often chat afterward as well.

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

Meeting ID: 697 338 090 Passcode: 138550.

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

Men's Group Breakfast

The Men's Group will meet via Zoom again this month. 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, you will have to bring your own!

Please join Breakfast Coordinator, Ken VanEsltime on Saturday, February 19 at 8:30 AM.

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

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



Good Morning

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



R.E.flections

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

One of the things I LOVE about February is the opportunity for do-it-yourself religious exploration provided to us by Side with Love.

Side with Love's 30 Days of Love Calendar provides you with a different 'playlist' or 'menu' of activities suitable for a multigenerational audience for each week. (The calendar actually starts in mid-January but this is DIY so it doesn't really matter if you are on the right dates or not. All that matters is that you take the opportunity to learn and grow!) You can find things to Watch, Act, Listen, and/or Worship with for each of the four intersectional justice priorities that Side with Love is focused on in 2022. Again, this is self-directed so you can do as little or as much of each playlist as you would like. Click on the links below to check them out:

[Week One: Reproductive, Gender, & LGBTQIA+ Justice](#)

[Week Two: Democracy & Voting Rights](#)

[Week Three: Decriminalization & Racial Justice](#)

[Week Four: Climate Justice](#)

Sprinkled among the do-it-yourself links are a few live events you have to pre-register for. All of them are free except for the fundraiser for UU Ministry for Earth.

February 3 at 8:00 PM

- **Safety Beyond Policing: Organizing Lessons from Minneapolis.** A webinar with Sheila Nezhad and Jonathan Stegall of Reclaim the Block and Yes4Minneapolis as they reflect on long-term cultural organizing, building strategic values-based campaigns, abolitionist dreams of a world without police, and the possibilities that lie ahead. [Registration required.](#)

February 4 at 8:00 PM ET

- **Friday Songs of Joy.** This is a live, 30-minute time of connection, music, and joyful embodiment open to all! Hosted by Rev. Ali KC Bell and Rev. E.N. Hill. [Registration required.](#)

February 11 at 8:00 PM ET

- **Emma's Revolution.** A winter concert fundraiser for Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth featuring the dynamic musical duo, Emma's Revolution! [Registration required.](#)
- **Friday Songs of Joy.** This is a live, 30-minute time of connection, music, and joyful embodiment open to all! Hosted by Rev. Ali KC Bell and Rev. E.N. Hill. [Registration required.](#)

Please consider taking advantage of this opportunity to explore your Unitarian Universalist values, nurture your spirit, deepen your understanding, and Side with Love in February and beyond!

May it be so.

FEBRUARY R.E. SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
February 6	Make a Campaign Plan!	Zoom
February 13	Valentines Zoom	Zoom
February 20	Day Off	N/A
February 27	Taking Action: Protests, Petitions, and More	Zoom

OPPORTUNITIES



Open House is OPEN!

Did you know that UU Community Church serves as a home to the Open House Theatre Company, an organization that believes that the arts are for everyone? Open House Theatre strives to provide an accessible, educational, and inclusive theatrical experience for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, or economic status.

The pandemic put a stop to their activities back in March of 2020 but now Open House Theatre is excited to announce they are coming out of hibernation to collaborate with local playwright, Daniel Smith, to produce his new play *Slipping*.

The play is about working-class people responding to the challenges of life as they get caught up in a battle for a union at a local factory and how their lives take unexpected turns. Open House Theatre believes the message of unity and solidarity is more important now than ever and the message in *Slipping* will resonate with audiences.

Open House Theatre hopes that you can help with this project. They are looking for readers to audition for a role in the play. Experience is not necessary, just a commitment to the project. They will be scheduling times for tryout readings as they receive word from those who are interested.

If you are interested in participating, please send your name, email, and phone number to openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com. Please put *Slipping* Reader in the subject line.

Feel free to forward this information to others who may be interested in trying out or helping with the project. More details of the dates and production will be coming soon!

Kalamazoo
Climate
Crisis
Coalition



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 February:

February 11:

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum

February 25

TBD

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

Got Caps?

Keep CAPS 🧢 on your head for winter warmth ...
and 🧢 CAPS out the environment to warm your
conscience!

Please keep collecting all sorts of hard plastic caps to pass on to Freya Lake, the driving force behind UUCC's "CAP"ital Project. Freya sends the caps on to others so our collection can be part of the Buddy Bench project which provides durable benches to area schools.

Caps may be dropped off at Freya's home anytime you are out and about running errands OR call her for pick up of a bag full—269-324-3503.

Thank you for your continuing support!



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with your God—Micah 6:8



Our interfaith partners at ISAAC (Interfaith Strategies for Advocacy and Action in the Community) are persistently working on the issues chosen by the whole ISAAC family at the Issues Convention in late 2019: **Anti-Racism, Gun Violence Prevention, and Housing** (Task Forces that ALL are invited to join), and **Group Violence Intervention** (a holistic approach introduced to the Kalamazoo Dept. of Public

Safety by ISAAC in 2012, in which ISAAC continues to have representation on the GVI Governance Board and is instrumental in building the GVI Community Working Team). Thanks to all those who support the transformational work that we do together, ISAAC recent work includes:

- The **ISAAC & TRHT Housing Task Force** (a joint effort with Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation) is building on its 2020 success at getting the Housing Equity Ordinance unanimously adopted by the Kalamazoo City Commission--by helping surrounding municipalities adopt Housing Equity Ordinances as well. Stephanie Hoffman has stepped down as co-chair since she was elected in November to the Kalamazoo City Commission, where her housing leadership at Open Doors Kalamazoo will be invaluable, but former Vice Mayor Patrese Griffin has stepped in as the new co-chair! It was her vision and determination that made the Housing Equity Ordinance happen, with the help of many of you in ISAAC and TRHT plus some wonderful City Staff and City Commissioners. *If you live in Kalamazoo Township, Comstock, Oshtemo, Texas, or Portage, please let your Trustees or Council Members know that you would welcome a Housing Equity Ordinance in your community.* The Housing Task Force meets on the 1st Monday of each month from 6:00–7:30 PM. Contact Tobi Hanna– Davies, thd Davies@umich.edu, for more information.
- **Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF)** is focused externally on local criminal justice systems, and internally on increasing Task Force members' understanding of anti-racism while deepening anti-racism practices in our work. Internally, members participate in reflective one-on-ones at meetings, have a book discussion group focused on examining and dismantling white supremacy, and are engaged in ERACCE workshops focused on Internalized Racist Oppression and Internalized Racist Superiority. Additionally, when Kalamazoo County reapportionment headed toward a reduction in the number of County Commission districts, the Task Force, with numerous community partners, advocated for having enough "majority-minority" districts for strong representation of Black and Brown residents on the County Commission. We held a Community Forum, where Apportionment Commission (AC) Members were invited, to lift community concerns and to examine maps submitted that were not racially equitable. The Anti-Racism Task Force meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 PM. Contact Ashante Collins, acoll030@fiu.edu, for more information.
- **Gun Violence Prevention Task Force (GVPTF)** continues to strive to humanize gun violence. Numbers and statistics do not tell the whole story of what continual gun violence does to families and the community as a whole. Too many dreams have been permanently deferred due to gun violence. Hopes are being crushed by gun violence. Living with persistent gun violence is the equivalent of living in a war zone. (More on page 14)

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Gun violence causes trauma to our bodies and minds. Those we lose to gun violence are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, daughters, sons, loved ones...This is why the task force has co-sponsored conversations about Trauma as it relates to community violence. Also, as part of the ISAAC Public Meeting "asks", the GVPTF has continued to meet with Law Enforcement, Officials and the Prosecutor to support strengthening mutual trust, building our capacity to communicate openly and effectively, and allowing the community to work more collaboratively with law enforcement and others for the safety, health and welfare of everyone. We are grateful to the KDPS reps who join meetings as we discuss reducing violence together. The GVPTF also advocated for using American Rescue Plan Funds toward Community Violence Reduction, as well as advocating for no reductions to our County Commission Election Officials. GVPTF meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 6:30 -8:00 PM. Contact: Rick Omilian, romilian@chartermi.net, for more information.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. —Matthew 6:21

ISAAC counts on YOU to continue to be able to do the work they do in our community. You can volunteer your time and talents, you can make a financial donation to ISAAC on their website <https://isaackalamazoo.org/donate/>, and now there is a new way you can support the work--awesome new ISAAC Apparel! Click [HERE](#) to purchase Beloved Community hoodies, long-sleeve & short-sleeve Ts, and caps! (You may have to put ISAAC in the search box.)

MKB-NAACP Baby Shower Drive

UU Community Church is excited to be will be a collection site for the 2nd annual Metropolitan Kalamazoo Branch of the NAACP's Black History Month Community Baby Shower Drive.

It is easy to support this event. Watch your weekly email for a list of requested donations, go shopping, and bring your new items to church on Saturday, **February 26 from 9-11 AM.**

If you'd like to drop off your donations before February 26, you can them to the Douglass Community Association at 1000 W. Paterson St. in Kalamazoo during regular business hours (M-F, 9-5) or contact the UUC office for assistance.

All items collected will be donated to the YWCA of Kalamazoo in support of the Cradle Kalamazoo Community Baby Showers. These Baby Showers are held quarterly and are open to all new and expecting parents in the greater Kalamazoo area. They are one of the ways Cradle Kalamazoo is working to reduce infant mortality in our community.





CALENDAR



FEBRUARY 2022

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Tuesday	February 1	Qigong Non-Violent Communication Class	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	February 2	Board of Trustees Meeting	6:30 PM
Thursday	February 3	Stewardship Committee Meeting An 8th Principle Conversation	11:30 AM 7:00 PM
Sunday	February 6	Are We There Yet? with Tristan Henry After-Service Social Hour Meet-Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM
Tuesday	February 8	Qigong Non-Violent Communication Class	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	February 9	Sunday Services Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
Thursday	February 10	Moral Decision Making	7:00 PM
Friday	February 11	Women's Book Group	1:00 PM
Saturday	February 12	Valentines Bingo Night	6:30 PM
Sunday	February 13	Through the Eye of a Needle with Rev. Gy After Service Social Hour Program Council Meet Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:15 AM 1:00 PM
Tuesday	February 15	Qigong A Course in Non-Violent Communication	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Thursday	February 17	Civil Conversations Group	7:00 PM
Saturday	February 19	Men's Group Breakfast 9th Annual Chili Supper	8:30 AM 5-8 PM
Sunday	February 20	Sojourner in a Foreign Land with Rev. Gy After Service Social Hour Strategic Planning Workshop II Meet Up for Youth	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:15 AM 1:00 PM
Monday	February 21	Sustainability Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	February 22	Qigong A Course in Non-Violent Communication	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	February 23	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Mindfulness Practice with Eric	12:00 PM 7:00 PM
Thursday	February 24	A Conversation with an Economist	7:00 PM
Saturday	February 26	NAACP Community Baby Shower	9-11 AM
Sunday	February 27	An Ultramarathon of Racial Justice with Chris Crowell After-Service Social Hour Meet-Up for Youth Yoga Nidra with Eric Guthaus	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 1:00 PM 7:00 PM

**UU Community Church
is served by:**

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2021-2022 Board of Trustees

Eric Nelson

Darby Fetzer

Judy Pigg-Behrendt

Freya Lake

Andy Miller

**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, February 23 at NOON**

Please send submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUnity Matters

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**SPIRITUALITY FOR
DIVERSE PATHS**

BLACK LIVES MATTER