



# CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

May 2022

## MAY SUNDAY SERVICES

**Sundays at 10:00 AM**

Also on [Facebook](#) and [Zoom](#)

Zoom Meeting ID: 926 5154 8494 Passcode: 286763

**May 1: *Belonging*  
with Rev. Gy**

One of the most powerful drivers of human behavior is the need to belong. People will go to great lengths and sacrifice much to remain in social groups. How important is it to you to belong?

**May 8: *Warm Hearted Relationships*  
with Rev. Gy**

Healthy relationships are an important part of any life-affirming home. This Mother's Day we will consider the tools we need for creating warm-hearted, loving relationships that bring us greater happiness and deeper fulfillment.

**May 15: *Disrupt the Illusion*  
with Jami Lula**

Singer-songwriter Jami Lula will use story and song to help us look beyond the myths created around prophets and avatars to discover the truth of our own highest selves.

**May 22: *Multiracial Tapestry of Accountability*  
with Roddy Biggs**

As Unitarian Universalists, we are called to be the weavers of a Multiracial Tapestry of Accountability, but what does that mean? Join us as we explore our promise of being the weavers of such a tapestry as we ask ourselves where we might still need some work as a liberal faith community.

**May 29: *Abundance*  
with Rev. Gy**

Jesus said in Mark 13:12, *For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.* We will consider what wisdom these words have for us as we explore the role of an abundance mindset in creating a life-affirming home.



## Spiritual Theme for May A LIFE-AFFIRMING HOME

Over the past year, we have explored many threads that we felt were needed to weave a beautiful and sturdy Tapestry of Life. As the year winds down we come to one of the most important strands of all. Everyone needs a safe and supportive place to call home.

The yarn that is a life-affirming home is made of many different fibers. It must include:

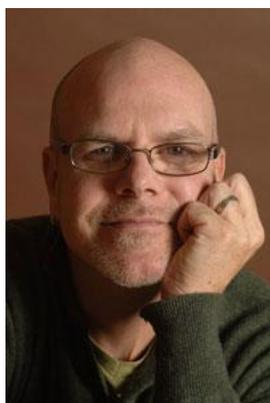
- A strong strand of communication
- A big bunch of unconditional love
- A healthy swath of honesty
- An abundance of trust
- A handful of equality
- A thread of calm
- A filament or two of acceptance

Twisted tight together, these things help create a sanctuary, a place we can rest, relax, learn, grow ... and just be.

What areas do you need to work on as you weave A LIFE-AFFIRMING HOME into your Tapestry of Life?

# GUESTS IN OUR PULPIT

***We are excited to welcome these special guests to our pulpit in May:***



**Jami Lula** has been described as “a singer with a gift and a blessing.” Born in Detroit, Jami moved to Los Angeles in 1987 to perfect his musical craft by attending the Musicians Institute (MI) in Southern California. His intense studies lead to his receiving the school's outstanding vocalist award in 1988. Six months after graduation, Jami joined the staff of MI where he still continues teaching voice, songwriting, stage movement, creativity workshops, and performance.

As a soloist or with his band, Jami has been musically supporting a number of charitable organizations including the Special Olympics, AA, Project Angel Food, and Hope for Abused Women Foundation. His contribution as a featured soloist with the choir group TAG through the Agape International Center of Truth serves as an extension of Jami's commitment to inspire through music.

He was the leader of the band ‘Lula’ for 10 years, releasing 2 records, *Waiting* and *Live Groove* on Circle Up Records. Praise for the band’s success was highlighted by Jami being nominated as Best Vocalist of the Year in 1996 by the LA Music Awards. He went on to win the award in 1997.

Rave reviews around Lula's live performances have come from the *LA Times*, *The Album Network*, and *Whole Life Times*. Jami's vocal performances have received praise such as, “gospel-like vocals and Southern evangelist-styled mannerism that makes him a compelling and powerful presence on stage” and “his lyrics truly contain a grain of optimism and inner-strength that can help people through the hardest of times.”

**roddy bell-shelton biggs** uses they/them pronouns and is a Queer, BIPOC, UU Young Adult. They claim a progressive anti-oppressive Christian faith grounded in the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

roddy holds a Bachelor’s degree in Religious Studies from Middle Tennessee State University and is a first-year seminary student at Meadville Lombard Theological School as they pursue the call to Unitarian Universalist ministry.

They have served as Mental Health and My Faith Conversation Coordinator for the UUA, Worship Lead for the UU Young Adult Revival Network, and on the Board of Directors for the UU Mental Health Network.

roddy joined us for a Thoughtful Thursday in October and we were so impressed we asked them to return. roddy shares “Beloveds, I do not have answers. I'm healing, I'm growing; I'm learning to love myself, trying to find my place on this topsy-turvy journey that we call life.”



# FROM THE MINISTER



## From the Minister

[Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney](#)

As former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, “It takes a village...” She was referring to raising a child. I am extending the metaphor to our church life. It takes a village and then some.

This time of the year your Board is busy working on next year’s budget. It is a time of excitement and anxiety. On the one hand, we are planning for an exciting church year, dream big, on the other hand, we have to balance it with reality which spells m-o-n-e-y. Dreaming is followed up by c-u-t-t-i-n-g and difficult decisions need to be made.

Once upon a time, a spiritual leader made a huge impact on me when she said, and I am paraphrasing, there are two ways to live life. One way is to assess circumstances/reality and let them shape our dreams. The other way is to assess our dreams and let our dreams shape reality.

I know which version of life inspires me. I’m sure you know for yourself, too. Still, it seems like such a tight rope to walk, doesn’t it? On the one hand, we dream of great things, on the other hand, there’s only so much money in our coffers.

What to do?

Life is a strange place. In fact, tension is baked into life. On the one hand we are born, life is so fresh and strong in our veins, dreams are many and big, and then there looms the undeniable, unavoidable end. Somehow we are still able to live, love, create, plan, hope, look forward to, get excited, dream! We are wired for resilience and overcoming. Most remarkable!

History is full of examples of people who refused to be limited by circumstances and instead found a way to shape circumstances with their dreams. If it has been done before, it can be done again. And again.

In our case, it takes a village. A village of resilient, committed, inspired dreamers, just like us. May we keep on dreaming. The world never changed by staying the same. It takes courage, commitment, vision, and a strong, loving community which we have in spades.

Here’s to us! A phoenix rising!



# CARING COMMUNITY



## MAY CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

*Do your little bit of good where you are;  
it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.*

— Desmond Tutu

### Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

Several members and friends headed out of town last month searching for warmer weather including **Miriam** who headed west to visit her daughter Ellie in California; **Stephanie Grathwol** who visited family in Orlando, Florida, and **Rev. Gy and Patti** who spent a week in Siesta Key.

**Judy Oliver** closed on her house at the end of April and is working hard to prepare for the movers who will come in May. She has promised to make an in-person appearance at UCC before she heads off to new adventures in New Jersey.

Congratulations to **Regena Nelson** for receiving Western Michigan University's Strengthening Community Connections Award! This award recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions to establishing or strengthening meaningful ties between Western Michigan University and community partners. Regena was acknowledged at a ceremony at WMU.

Congratulations of another kind go out to **Nancy Crowell** who celebrated her 87th birthday in April. Nancy was grateful for ALL the loving and kind wishes she received on her birthday.

**Freya Lake's** family pulled off a huge surprise for her birthday this year. She knew that her cousin Jorgen had plans to come from Germany to celebrate with her but was amazed when four of his sisters joined him as well as her daughter, Roberta, from California. Highlights of the visit included a trip to Shishewana, an impromptu acapella concert at the dinner table, and everyone joining Freya's bell choir practice at the Senior Center.

**Nancy and Joe Calme's** menagerie at Bluestem Pond Farm has grown a little. In April they were excited to bring home an adorable Pygora goat name Noah. In May, they will add two sweet Shetland Lambs.

Our hearts are with **Barbara Bott** who lost her brother in April following a long illness and with Judy Pigg-Behrendt who fell and broke her finger.

Nancy and Joe Calme were saddened to hear of the passing of their friend **Rev. William Spaid** after a battle with cancer.

In brighter news, **Denise Sonier** and **Steve Tasko** will be celebrating their wedding anniversary in May. Happy Anniversary to you both!

### Birthdays

Let's wish a "Happy Birthday!" to our members and friends born in May: **Zoe Granberg, Nick Tasko, Andy Miller, Kathy Hayes, Denise Sonier, David Brozovich, and Larry Higgins.**

If your birthday was not on the list, pass it on to the church office so you get included next year.

(More Caring News on [page 5](#))

# CARING COMMUNITY

## Remembering Friends

We pause to remember these dear UUCC members and friends who have passed on:

**Harold Oliver** - Dec. 25, 1924 - May 24, 2012

**Joan Wallace**—Feb. 25, 1925 - May 15, 2015

**Marjorie Snow** -Aug. 19, 1921 - May 4, 2016

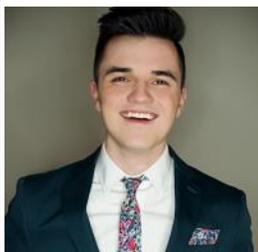
We keep a *Remembering* scrapbook at the back of the sanctuary with a section dedicated to each of our departed friends. You are welcome to take a look at it.

## New visitors

We were gratified to welcome many new visitors to our services and activities in April. Please extend a warm UUCC welcome to **Eric Sweet, Mike Nangle, Enfry's ap'Morrygan, Johnna Sturgeon, Abbie Johnson, Alex Bilicke, Francisco Garcia, and Lisa Wagner.**

*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, pass it on to the coordinators through the UUCC office: 269-324-7262 or [uucommunity@gmail.com](mailto:uucommunity@gmail.com)*

## Goodbye, Nick!



Nick Sienkiewicz's last day as our Music Director will be on Sunday, May 1. Some of you may remember that we had an official send-off for him back in 2020 when he let us know he was leaving Kalama-

zoo to go to grad school in Indiana. But then, there was a pandemic. Nick stepped up beyond the call of duty to help us transition to online services and stayed to provide us with great music for *two more years*.

Now, Nick is winding up his Master's program at IU, applying for positions, and thinking about moving to New York City to pursue his dreams. It is time for us to let him go and let him know how very grateful we are for the time he spent with us.

Please take a moment to write a note to Nick and bring it (or mail it to UUCC). There will also be a group card you can sign on Sunday mornings.

We will present the cards and notes to him during the Sunday service on May 15. He is planning to join us in person one last time to say goodbye.

## Hello, Anth!



We are delighted to announce that **Anth Ryan Swiatnicki** will be joining us as Music Director beginning on Sunday, May 8.

Anth is a nonbinary individual who uses the pronouns they/them. They live in Kalamazoo and are currently completing a social science degree at Western Michigan University.

They have been a musician for 15 years, playing a variety of instruments including piano, guitar, bass, and drums. Many of their early years were spent learning music in the church. They had the privilege of playing in some wonderful contemporary Christian bands, gospel bands, and classical sacred groups. Through that experience, they learned a variety of ways that music can accompany the sacred space to create an environment of contemplation and transformation and are looking forward to bringing that sensibility to UUCC.

Anth's personal experiences over the past few years have made finding ways to combine their music work with their social justice work a life imperative. They believe that serving as UUCC's music director uniquely suits their experience, skillset, and passion and they hope to bring these all together to facilitate an open and accepting community through music.

# LEADERSHIP



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

- *Provided approval and funding for the Sustainability Group to install a rain garden along the Shaver Road frontage*
- *Heard an update about the Strategic Planning process and made plans to consult a marketing professional as soon as the plan is completed*
- *Explored the proposed 2022-2023 budget to look for possible savings*

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

The Board met two additional times in April to update our Covid-19 policy and to discuss the proposed budget for the 2022-23 church year. You can find minutes for those meetings [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

The next regular Board meeting will take place via Zoom on Wednesday, **May 4** 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](#).

## Annual Meeting News

In accordance with the by-laws, UUCC will hold an **Annual Meeting of the Congregation** on Sunday, **June 5** at **11:15 AM**.

A draft proposed budget will be sent to you via email on Friday, May 13. If you need a paper copy, please contact the office and Miriam will mail it to you.

A **Budget Roundtable** will take place on Sunday, **May 15** following the service. This will be a hybrid gathering so you can participate via Zoom or in person. Members of the Board and the Finance Team will be on hand to explain the budget and answer your questions.

An agenda, the final proposed budget, the slate of candidates, and any other relevant documents to the meeting will be emailed to you on Friday, May 20. If you need paper copies of these, please contact the office and Miriam will mail them to you. There will also be a few paper copies available at the Welcome Desk on and after May 22.

The Annual Meeting will be a hybrid gathering with people able to vote in person or via Zoom for candidates for the board and nominating committee, to approve the budget, and on any other matters of business brought to the floor.

If you have any questions about the Annual Meeting please contact Board President Eric Nelson ([ericvnelson1@gmail.com](mailto:ericvnelson1@gmail.com) or 269-254-0771)

## From the Nominating Committee

The 2022 UUCC Nominating Committee, (Nancy Calme and Marsha Laya) have selected two members to be nominated for two-year terms on the Board of Trustees.

These appointments are approved by member vote at the annual meeting. They will be replacing outgoing Trustees Freya Lake and Darby Fetzer.

The nominees are:



**Marsha Laya**



**Pat Timm**

In addition, **Eric Nelson** has agreed to represent UUCC as a Delegate to the UUA General Assembly. Eric will attend virtually, and the Nominating Committee will seek out others who are willing to attend some of the conference to ease some of the load of virtual viewing and report back to the congregation. General sessions are available to be viewed by non-delegates, and if there are enough people interested, we may set up a viewing party at the church.

# 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

Join Rev. Gy on **May 5 at 7:00 PM** for one last opportunity to discuss the proposed **8th UU Principle** before adopting it comes to a vote at the Annual Meeting. The proposed principle reads:

*We covenant to affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.*

If you have not yet attended an 8th Principle discussion, please plan to attend. Your input is important to us. At this gathering, we will also talk about what changes might occur at UUCC if we this new guiding principle.

### Second Thursday—MORAL DECISION MAKING

Our gathering on **May 12 at 7:00 PM** will feature a short lecture and a group discussion of the question: ***Should the Death Penalty be abolished?*** (See below for more info.)

### Third Thursday— A CONVERSATION WITH....

Once a month we invite a special guest from the wider community to join us at Thoughtful Thursday to talk about the work they are doing, especially as it relates to our spiritual theme of the month. We hope to be joined by a speaker on Thursday, May 19 at 7:00 PM but were unable to get final confirmation before the newsletter deadline. Please watch the Weekly Email and Announcements in the coming weeks for details about this Thursday gathering.

### Fourth Thursday— MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND BREAK

There will be no gathering on Thursday, May 26 ahead of the Memorial Day Weekend.

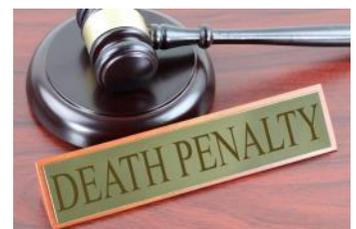
## The Ethics of Punishment

At the next meeting of our **Moral Decision-Making Lecture and Discussion Group** on **May 12 at 7:00 PM** via Zoom, we will consider ethical issues surrounding the death penalty.

The United States is one of the few Western nations that still has the death penalty. In this lecture, we will examine several arguments for and against the death penalty—and consider the larger system of punishment and justice in terms of vengeance, retribution, rehabilitation, and deterrence.

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

Each month UU Community Church provides members, friends, and visitors many opportunities to grow spiritually not only through our thought-provoking Sunday services but also with guided spiritual practices designed to help center our hearts, minds, and bodies. All are welcome to join these virtual events from the comfort of your home.



Every **Tuesday** and **Saturday** at **9:00 AM** via Zoom you can enjoy a **Qigong** session with supportive UUC members and friends. Qigong is an ancient Chinese practice that combines gentle stretching, self-massage, and deep breathing. The sessions are led by the way of a video recording by Kalamazoo-based **Ed Kehoe** of Kehoe Martial Arts. His calm demeanor and concise words make following along easy. We engage in the practice with our mics and cameras off so you do not need to feel self-consciousness at all.

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

Meeting ID: 697 338 090 Passcode: 138550.

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

Meeting ID: 977 5286 6838 Passcode: 383810

If you have any questions about our Qigong sessions, please contact [Freya Lake](#).



You can join **Eric Nelson**, UUC member and lead facilitator at [Stress Less Kalamazoo](#), for drop-in **Mindfulness Practice** at **7:00 PM** on the **4th Wednesday** of each month. The sessions begin and end with a reading for reflection and include practices that reduce stress and anxiety and improve emotional balance and overall sense of well-being.

All are welcome to join. Both newcomers and seasoned Mindfulness veterans will benefit from these practices.

Click [HERE](#) to join the Zoom Meeting. ID: 833 5090 0441



Daring to Rest™ facilitator, **Erica Guthaus**, will be with us on the **4th Sunday** of most months at **7:00 PM** on Zoom to guide us through a **Yoga Nidra** practice designed to help us to slow down, relax, and recover from the stressors in life.

Yoga Nidra is a wonderful deep relaxation technique and a form of guided meditation that anyone can do. It requires no special equipment or difficult poses, just a comfortable, quiet place to sit or lay down. Click [HERE](#) to join the zoom Meeting.

To help make sure Erica receives fair compensation for her work, donations will be accepted for this class. You can give to Erica directly using Venmo: @erica-guthaus, CashApp: \$EricaGuthaus, or PayPal @Guthaus. You can also send a check directly to Erica at 3115 Ellen Ave. Lansing, MI 48910.

Donations are NOT required to attend Yoga Nidra, but as a special **BONUS**, Erica provides everyone who makes a donation the link to a recording of the session so they can continue their practice until the next time Erica joins us.

# 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 UCC and in the wider community. They are currently working on working on three exciting projects:



**UCC 30-Day Sustainability Challenge:** The challenge started on April 22 and will run through May 20. Those who sign up will receive an email on Friday evening with things to watch, listen to, read, and do that will help them live more gently on the Earth. The group is very excited that people in the wider community have signed up for these emails and are learning about UCC and Sustainability at the same time. There is still time for YOU to sign up.

**Rain Garden Project:** The Sustainability Group is interested in 'greening the grounds' at UCC and was inspired by some of the gardens that other churches in our community are planting. This spring and summer, the group plans to install a Rain Garden on church property along Shaver Road. Rain gardens are plantings designed to reabsorb rain runoff into the soil. The Board of Trustees has signed off on the project and, with a little luck, a contractor will prepare the bed for planting by the beginning of June. The Sustainability Group is working with a Master Gardener to design a bed that will absorb run-off from our parking lot, be easy to maintain, and pretty to look at but lots of volunteer help will be needed to finish this project.

**Vegetarian Feast:** According to many environmental scientists, eating less meat can significantly reduce your carbon footprint. With this in mind, the Sustainability Group decided to host a Vegetarian Feast to inspire our UCC family to incorporate a few more meatless meals into their diets. The Feast will take place on the shore of Gourneck Lake on Saturday, May 21 at 6 PM. If you bought tickets to the feast at the Service Auction last fall you will receive an email invitation with all the details. If you did not and you would like to attend, tickets are \$10/person and you can purchase those through the office.

The next meeting of the Sustainability Group is on **Monday, May 16 at 7:00 PM**. Newcomers are always welcome to join this small group. Questions? Contact Miriam ([uucommunity@gmail.com](mailto:uucommunity@gmail.com))



## Building the Beloved Community One Conversation at a Time

Civil Conversations is a dynamic gathering where we glean a deeper understanding of today's hotly contested topics and engage our individual perspectives in discussion. Every month we intentionally set the stage for informed and safe engagement.

This month we will meet on **Tuesday, May 17 at 7:00 PM** via Zoom for a conversation about **Critical Race Theory**. Is Critical Race Theory a useful way of understanding how racism in America has shaped public policy and affects our daily life or is it a dangerous, divisive, discourse that pits people of color against white people? Bring your questions and opinions. If you want to learn more about Critical Race Theory before the meeting, check out this [New York Times article](#).

Newcomers are always welcome to join this small group and please feel free to invite friends with varying perspectives to this gathering.

Click [HERE](#) to be part of the conversation. Meeting ID: 935 5055 7249 Passcode: 653697

If you have any questions about this group please contact Darby Fetzer at 269-569-5557.



# RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



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

Tim Kuniskis, CEO of Dodge Division, recently was quoted saying. *“Every single thing we’re doing is like in Jell-O right now because it is so hard to plan anything.”* He was talking about supply chain issues in the auto industry but I totally know how he feels. Life seems to be serving up more and more uncertainty even as things are reportedly getting better and better. We are all swimming in Jell-O. Here at UUC, we decided to loosen our Covid-19 vaccination policy a little to allow unvaccinated children in the building as infection rates and hospitalizations

are plummeting in the region. On one hand, this is great! It means that we will be able to hold in-person Religious Exploration for kids on Sunday mornings again. I am so excited about the possibility of growing our programs for children and families.

But, on the other hand, switching my time and energy to growing the program means that I am going to need to stop doing some of the things the church has come to depend on me doing over the last few years. Knowing what to cut has been difficult. Should I stop facilitating adult enrichment classes and small group ministry groups? Should I drop my marketing efforts on social media? Should I pull back my administrative support of the Board and committees?

And then, wouldn't you know it, the very next Sunday after the Board made the decision to adjust our Covid policy, we had our first exposure incident. It had nothing to do with the relaxed rules, of course, but it did make me pause a bit as I fielded a flurry of emails and phone calls and struggled to compose a letter letting everyone in attendance know what happened. Is now really the right time to drop some of our protections? What if someone gets seriously ill from this?

But perhaps the biggest questions I have been grappling with have to do with what people with kids want from a church community following a pandemic that upended their lives and upset their mental well-being. What do the children who come through our doors need from us? What do they need from Unitarian Universalism? To tell you the truth, I am not really sure.

Making plans right now is hard. I definitely feel like I am in Jell-O, but what to do except keep on keeping on and hope for the best?

So, starting May 1 the lower level will be open for business for whoever shows up. Families and kids can enter through the doors that go directly downstairs and we will begin our Religious Exploration at 10:00 AM. We will light a chalice, share our Joys and Concerns, play games, and do crafts and activities while exploring the idea of Creating Home.

The Youth Group will continue on as they have been with a mix of social justice activities, learning about the Women’s Movement, and having fun. Sometimes they will meet in person, sometimes on Zoom.

And if you see me looking wild-eyed and harried on Sundays, know its because I have no idea what I am doing and I am up to my neck in Jell-O.

| MAY R.E SCHEDULE |                    |          | MAY YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE |                      |                   |
|------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| DATE             | ACTIVITY           | LOCATION | DATE                     | ACTIVITY             | LOCATION          |
| May 1            | On the Threshold   | UUC      | May 1                    | Portage Green-a-Thon | UUC and City Hall |
| May 8            | Creating Home      | UUC      | May 8                    | Action Strategies    | Zoom              |
| May 15           | Symbols of Faith   | UUC      | May 15                   | Service Prep         | TBD               |
| May 22           | Our Ancestral Home | UUC      | May 22                   | Service Prep         | TBD               |
| May 29           | Memories of Home   | UUC      | May 29                   | No Meet-Up           | N/A               |

# OPPORTUNITIES

Dear Friends,

As I sit on my porch on this beautiful Michigan day, beyond the chirping birds, I hear voices of father's cheering on their children in the sports fields behind my home. I can't help but to think of how Patrick Lyoya may have been spending this day outside with his daughters, if he hadn't been murdered by a Grand Rapids police officer a few weeks ago.



At Patrick's memorial service, attendees wore black shirts that read "We have the Right to Live". All people have the right to live. And certainly, no one's life should be at jeopardy over a traffic violation. The Lyoya family's attorney, Benjamin Crump said at the memorial service, *"It's not just an issue that affects Grand Rapids. This is an issue that affects all humanity because Patrick was a human being."*

Randy Block, Director of the Michigan UU Social Justice Network, recently received a letter written by Grand Rapids UU Minister, Rev Colleen Squires in response to the murder. She ended her letter with these words: *"May Patrick's life continue to matter to all of us. May true and needed change occur. May justice and accountability be swift. May we own the white supremacy culture that exists in our city and may we work to eradicate it from our world."*

I want to thank Rev. Squires for her call to action. I encourage each of you to not only decide how you will take action, but engage in dialogue with others in your family and congregation about what action you may participate in together. I'd love to hear your commitments!

In Solidarity for Justice,

Jenny Teed

MUUSJN Special Projects Coordinator

[jennifer.a.teed@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.a.teed@gmail.com)



## Styrofoam, Plastic Caps, and Pop Cans

Thank you to everyone who brought in pop cans to benefit the Youth Fund, plastic caps to build Buddy Benches, and Styrofoam to help save the Earth! We will continue to collect these items during the month of May. Place clean, dry, #6 Styrofoam (no packing peanuts please) and clean, dry, hard plastic caps from food or health and beauty containers into the marked boxes at the back of the sanctuary. There is a collection box for returnable bottles and cans in the Community Room.

Thank you again for your ongoing support of our recycling efforts.

Our friends at [Michigan UU Social Justice Network](#) recommend supporting the following ballot initiatives that align with our UU Values:



- Promote the Vote 2022** Adds additional voting protections to the Michigan constitution.
- Reproductive Freedom** Will prevent abortion from becoming illegal in Michigan if Roe v Wade is overturned by the Supreme Court.
- \$15 Minimum Wage** Would increase the minimum wage in Michigan from the current \$9.87/hr. (\$3.75 for restaurant workers).
- Good Time** Would align Michigan with almost every other state by offering a reduction in prison sentences for those with good behavior.

If you are a registered Michigan voter and interested in lending support to any of these efforts, Ken VanEseltine has petitions and will gladly meet you at the back of the sanctuary at UUCC on Sunday after church so you can sign. Contact Ken with your questions: (269) 342-4793

# OPEN HOUSE THEATRE



Presents a FREE  
readers' theater  
production  
of the NEW PLAY

# *Slipping*

by Dan Smith

**SUNDAY, MAY 15**

**1:00 PM**

*Masks required.*



UU Community Church  
10441 Shaver Road  
Portage, Michigan  
[www.uucommunitychurch.org](http://www.uucommunitychurch.org)

Contact [openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com](mailto:openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com) for more information.

# FAITH IN ACTION

## GET ON A BUS TO WASHINGTON!

### MASS POOR PEOPLE'S & LOW-WAGE WORKERS' ASSEMBLY

# JUNE 18, 2022

REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH | Poor People's Campaign | KAIROS CENTER  
A NATIONAL COLLEGE MODEL NETWORK | FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, JUSTICE & SOCIAL JUSTICE

## MORAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON

#JUNE18TH #MORALMARCHONWASHINGTON WWW.POORPEOPLES CAMPAIGN.ORG #POORPEOPLES CAMPAIGN

Michigan UUs! Make your voices heard.

March with thousands of people to protest the growing income disparity in America.

**It's Easy:**

- Go to: <https://rally.co/ppc>
- Choose the city in Michigan nearest to you and schedule a bus ride to Washington. Approx. round-trip cost: \$110.00
- This fee is no-risk, and 100% refundable up to 14 days before the trip.
- Schedule now! It takes 35 to 40 riders for a bus to be provided.
- Email [revjerry@uuflint.org](mailto:revjerry@uuflint.org) with any questions.

**"Make the world...better" – Lucy Stone**

|  |        |   |   |
|--|--------|---|---|
| DAY  | DATE   | EVENT   | TIME  |
| Sunday   | May 1  | Belonging with Rev. Gy<br>Religious Exploration for Children and Youth<br>After Service Social Hour<br>Program Council  | 10:00 AM<br>10:00 AM<br>10:45 AM<br>11:00 AM            |
| Tuesday  | May 3  | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |
| Wednesday  | May 4  | Board of Trustees Meeting   | 6:30 PM   |
| Thursday   | May 5  | Thoughtful Thursday—8th Principle Discussion  | 7:00 PM   |
| Saturday   | May 7  | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |
| Sunday   | May 8  | Warm Hearted Relationships with Rev. Gy<br>Religious Exploration for Children and Youth<br>After Service Social Hour  | 10:00 AM<br>10:00 AM<br>10:45 AM                        |
| Tuesday  | May 10 | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |
| Wednesday  | May 11 | Sunday Services Committee Meeting   | 5:30 PM   |
| Thursday   | May 12 | Moral Decision Making   | 7:00 PM   |
| Friday   | May 13 | Women's Book Group  | 1:00 PM   |
| Saturday   | May 14 | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |
| Sunday   | May 15 | Disrupt the Illusion with Jami Lula<br>Religious Exploration for Children and Youth<br>After Service Social Hour<br>Budget Round Table<br>Open House Theatre presents Slipping by Dan Smith | 10:00 AM<br>10:00 AM<br>10:45 AM<br>11:15 AM<br>1:00 PM |
| Monday   | May 16 | Sustainability Group  | 7:00 PM   |
| Tuesday  | May 17 | Qigong<br>Caring Community Team Meeting<br>Civil Conversations Group  | 9:00 AM<br>1:00 PM<br>7:00 PM                           |
| Thursday   | May 19 | A Conversation with ...   | 7:00 PM   |
| Saturday   | May 21 | Men's Group Breakfast<br>Qigong<br>UUC Vegetarian Feast   | 9:00 AM<br>9:00 AM<br>6:00 PM                           |
| Sunday   | May 22 | Multiracial Tapestry of Accountability with roddy biggs<br>Religious Exploration for Children and Youth<br>After Service Social Hour  | 10:00 AM<br>10:00 AM<br>10:45 AM                        |
| Tuesday  | May 24 | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |
| Wednesday  | May 25 | NEWSLETTER DEADLINE<br>Mindfulness Practice with Eric   | 12:00 PM<br>7:00 PM                                     |
| Saturday   | May 28 | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |
| Sunday   | May 29 | Abundance with Rev. Gy<br>Religious Exploration for Children and Youth<br>After Service Social Hour<br>Yoga Nidra with Erica  | 10:00 AM<br>10:00 AM<br>10:45 AM<br>7:00 PM             |
| Tuesday  | May 31 | Qigong  | 9:00 AM   |

**UU Community Church  
is served by:**

Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney M.Div., M.A.  
Consulting Minister  
By Appointment Only  
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Anth Ryan  
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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, May 25 at NOON**

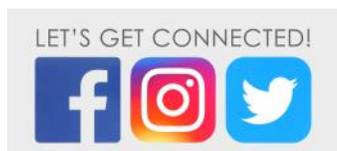
Please send submissions to:

**[uuccnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:uuccnewsletter@gmail.com)**

*CommUUnity Matters*

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