



CommUUUnity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan October 2022

OCTOBER SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 AM [on Facebook](#) and [Zoom](#)
Meeting ID: 926 5154 8494 Passcode: 286763

October 2: *White Fragility* with Rev. Gy

When we talk about governance, what we are really talking about is power. People who are accustomed to having power, who are used to having their ways of doing and being always front and center, will naturally resist relinquishing power to others. What does this mean for us as we begin to widen the circle of our concern?

October 9: *Altar Egos* with Rev. Gy

What would our lives look like if change came easily? What could we accomplish? Is it possible to train ourselves to embrace change even when it is hard and uncomfortable?

October 16: *The Truth Will Set You Free* with Rev. Harold Beu

In our nation today, and indeed, in the world, there seems to be a movement away from people seeking the truth. Instead too many have become captivated by harmful illusions. We must find a way to reverse this trend for the good of all humanity.

October 23: *Growing the Garden* with Chris Dilley

Peoples Food Coop (PFC) is on a journey of learning, growing, falling down and getting back up, with the intention of a deeper understanding of inequity, stronger collective will to change, and transformation into an organization that is better set up to be part of a thriving future for all. This talk will be an exploration and reflection on that journey so far at PFC as they endeavor to build and nourish an equitable, resilient community.

October 30 *The Oneness of Everything* with Jim Scott

We will celebrate the earth with singer/songwriter Jim Scott's original songs and readings along with his personal reflections on Mother Earth or "Gaia" being one living organism. Our "spiritual response" in word and action is so timely now, as "the spirit of life on earth is in crisis." Jim's uplifting songs provide the balance to the wake-up call, leaving us a vision and inspiration to take the healing into our own hands.



Spiritual Theme for October: GOVERNANCE

Our monthly spiritual themes in this year of [Widening the Circle](#) have been taken from a report by the Unitarian Universalist Association Commission for Institutional Change which was tasked with addressing the perennial problem of racism within Unitarian Universalism. Click [HERE](#) to read or listen to the chapter on Governance.

According to the dictionary, governance is "the action, manner, or power of governing." It is how decisions get made and by whom.

The end goal of church governance should have a clear focus on mission. In UUC's case that would be to "positively transform ourselves and the world for the benefit of all beings."

In order to fulfill this mission, we need to welcome the questions, gifts, and talents of *all* who are attracted to this faith even if they don't perfectly align with our questions, gifts, and talents.

This sort of radical welcome may require us to push beyond our comfort zone and explore new ways of doing and being.

It will require leaders who possess passion and vision, but also the ability to manage discomfort and conflict in a healthy way.

Questions to ponder this month:

How do "the ways we have always done things" create barriers against our goal of a more diverse and inclusive community? What is needed to help us deal with disagreement and conflict?

GUESTS IN THE PULPIT

We are excited to welcome members and guests to our virtual pulpit:

Chris Dilley has served People's Food Co-op since 1998, first as a board member, and as general manager for the past nineteen years. He has helped bring the community together to create a new store, to recreate the Kalamazoo Farmers Market, and to implement antiracism transformation efforts. He also serves on the board of directors of ERACCE. Chris is married to the visionary leader behind Can Do Kalamazoo, Lucy Dilley, and together they have a kind, creative, super smart kid named Elliott.



UU Community Church member and retired Unitarian Universalist minister **Rev. Harold Beu** was a senior in high school when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. He participated in anti-war protests, including the March on Washington against the Vietnam War. He worked in a poverty-stricken neighborhood in Pittsburgh as part of ViSTA, the domestic version of the Peace Corps. He worked for a time as a high school teacher of history, civics, math, and psychology before going to graduate school in Berkeley and receiving his MDiv from Starr King School for the Ministry in Oakland. Ordained in 1982, he served Unitarian Universalist churches in California, Michigan, and Indiana before retiring a few years ago.

From his work with the Paul Winter Consort, where he was co-composer of their celebrated "Missa Gaia/Earth Mass" **Jim Scott** has long been an activist for peace and the earth with his music. Former Co-Chair of the UU Ministry for the Earth, Jim helped create the "Green Sanctuary" program. His songs of earth have educated and inspired audiences across the US and the world and his "Earth and Spirit Songbook," supported by a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, has been widely acclaimed by UU congregations.



Once a month we invite a special guest to join us at one of our virtual Thoughtful Thursday gatherings to tell us more about the work they are doing and answer any questions we might have. Our guest on **Thursday, October 20 at 7:00 PM** will be Josh Hilgart. Josh founded the non-profit Kalamazoo Defender. It provides legal services for those accused of a crime who cannot afford counsel. What sets Kalamazoo Defender apart from Public Defenders across the state is its relationship with local service providers to provide clients wraparound support to deal with mental health problems, housing insecurity, addiction, and other issues and help them get out of the criminal justice cycle and become contributing members of

our community. This holistic approach requires Kalamazoo Defender to address systemic barriers to success including racism and other oppressions. Click [HERE](#) to join what is sure to be an interesting conversation. Meeting ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120

FROM THE MINISTER



From the Minister

[Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney](#)

She kicked the door open so wide that, within her life, people young and old didn't quite remember there was a door at all ~Tayari Jones

This quote was inspired by Maya Angelou, the great and wonderful Maya Angelou. The one who started out with a broken family and early on was traumatized so intensely that she didn't say another word till age 13. But when she reclaimed her voice, she used it well with power and finesse. She left the world just a bit better than she found it.

Ideally, we'd all want to follow in her footsteps—to figure out ways to improve aspects of life we come in touch with and to solve problems we become conscious of. Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't.

Why not, though? A few obstacles come to mind, and one of them is religion. In the words of Blaise Pascal, *"men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction."*

Misused and misinterpreted religion will have us strip women of their rights, create minorities, demonize the "other", and the list goes on. Religion so often denies humans their inherent worth and dignity. Once we put the "God-stamp" on a belief, any belief, we no longer have to think or invoke conscience.

Another obstacle is white supremacy, well, supremacy of any sort really. When one is used to having all the power and suddenly someone else gets some too, it feels like they are being stolen from. No wonder they want to hold on to all the power! When the powerful resist, the world trembles. When the powerless rise, oppressed people everywhere cheer them on.

No doubt that much progress has been made worldwide as far as human rights are concerned even as women and men in Iran flood the streets to protest the infamous and inhumane morality police.

In our country much progress has been made. People of color are elected to prominent leadership positions, voted in by many, many white constituents. People of color head fortune 500 companies and famous universities. Gays can legally marry. Yes, there's definitely been progress. And, there's still more work to be done.

Systemic racism, homophobia, and transphobia are alive and well. The war on women is a huge problem. Unfortunately, the list goes on.

It is our turn to find our voice and use it with power and finesse. It is our turn to claim power and use it to lift up and empower the historically disenfranchised and oppressed. If we don't, who will?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we, too, would kick the door open so wide that generations who come after us won't even remember that once there was a door?

WELCOMING CONGREGATION



UU Community Church is excited to announce that we successfully renewed our Welcoming Congregation status by completing Five Practices of Welcome during the 2021-2022 Church year.

The Five Practices of Welcome are benchmarks that every congregation should integrate into congregational life in order to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, asexual, two-spirit, genderqueer, non-binary, and others feel fully welcomed, centered, and embraced in our Unitarian Universalist congregation.

To complete the certification we held Sunday services that lifted up LGBTQ+ justice issues, honored days of visibility and remembrance, learned more about the issues facing the transgender community through a discussion of the film *Disclosure*, and supported Kalamazoo Pride by renting a table and enthusiastically participating in the festivities!

Going forward, the renewal process will occur annually, so we will continue to integrate programs and actions within our church year to make sure our commitment to LGBTQ+ equity and inclusion remains visible and that we are fully living the “Welcome” we proclaim.

Many thanks go out to everyone who worked on the renewal process: **Rev. Gy, Joe Calme, Erin Michael, the Sunday Services Committee, and Miriam.**

CARING COMMUNITY



OCTOBER CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers. It would be terrible if we just skipped from September to November, wouldn't it?

— L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables

Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

We have two working sinks in the women's bathroom thanks to **Rev. Gy** and their assistant, **Dylan**, who came in last week to finish up the plumbing. We are grateful to them and to Buildings and Grounds chair, **Eric Nelson** and helpers **Michael Graham** and **Kevin Brozovich** for all the hard work they put in to improve our upstairs bathrooms.

We are delighted that our very own **Regena Nelson** is now co-hosting the monthly news program, *Critical Issues; Alternative Views*, on the Public Media Network. She is carrying on a tradition started by a UUCC founder, **Linwood Bartley**.

We are grateful to **Joan Young** and **Freya Lake** for the time and care they have put into maintaining our *Remembering Book*. When fond memories of deceased members pop up in your head, think about writing them out and adding them to this book to honor our past.

Covid viruses are still plaguing our friends and neighbors. **Tim Michael**, **David Brozovich**, and two of **Miriam's** housemates tested positive recently. Stay vigilant and careful, and keep those vaccines up to date!

Erin Michael was pleased to report that her daughter, **Kelin Michael**, got a wonderful paid internship.

Julie Kelemen got a new dog and is happy for the companionship.

In less happy news, we heard this month that **Marsha Laya's** sister has cancer, that our new friend **Laura Wilkie's** mother was in a car accident out in California, and that **Tami Brozovich's** mother was hospitalized with heart problems. Please hold them in your healing thoughts or prayers.

Some wonderful gatherings took place in September. The Connections group of newcomers met out at **Joe and Nancy Calme's** farm for a picnic and a tour. Nancy was wishing she'd met our newest UUCC friend, **Dorothy Brooks** in time to include her. We are gaining new friends fast and furiously! In addition, **Kathy Hays** hosted a very enjoyable Fall Equinox bonfire at her place on the lake and about a dozen people enjoyed toasting marshmallows, hot dogs, and reciting poetry and stories around the fire till after dark. Soon, we will be enjoying the annual service auction as well. UUCC is one fun place to be!

Birthdays:

It seems like everyone who is anyone has a birthday in October! Wish a happy birthday to these people when you see them this month: **3 – Ellie Epskamp**, **5 – Joan Young**, **7 – Kathryn Ragains**, **8 – Judy Halseth**, **9 – Grayson Tasko**, **11-Ellie Barnett**, **21 – Diana Poulson**, **24 – Terry Tessari**, **30 – Carol Higgins**, **31 – Barb McWhorter** (*More Caring News on [Page 6](#)*)

CARING COMMUNITY

Remembering Friends Who Have Passed On:

Dorothea Tompkins Oct. 13, 1996, Jean Houston Oct. 27, 1999, Donald Mollhagen Oct. 20, 2011, and Barbara Maddox Oct. 13, 2014

New Visitors

We were happy to welcome **Justin, Bailey, and Hazel Latulippe, Susan Daniels, and Dorothy Brooks** to services in September.

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.



Connections Team

After a long Covid-hiatus in which Rev. Gy and Miriam kept a watch over the functions of the Connections Team, it is back in business with a slightly different mission. Nancy Calme has agreed to take the reins and plans to have the team focus primarily on welcoming and integrating visitors and new members.

Initially, the team will be loosely comprised of those new people and will build the relationships of this cohort of UUC friends and new members while gradually introducing them to activities and long-time members. Who knows better than a newcomer what would feel the most welcoming?

The Connections Team has had two meetings so far. One was held out at Kathy Hays's lake home and a second one at the Calme farm. As we draw in more visitors and prospective members, the group may get big and unruly but we'll deal with that happy situation as it presents itself!

At the first meetings, the group discussed what would make it easier for newcomers to ease into the congregation. A few great suggestions surfaced, and new member Jeannine Willacker stepped up to get monthly lunch and dinner gatherings started, open to everyone. Be sure to thank Jeannine for taking the initiative and take advantage of the opportunity for community-building over food. If there is enough interest, over time this program may split into smaller, more intimate groups in people's homes. Let's allow it to develop "organically."

As chair of the Connections Team, Nancy Calme will be calling on individual long-time members to join the gatherings to get to know the newbies better. If you would like to be included in that list, please contact Nancy (nancy.calme@gmail.com). It is exciting to see our numbers swell!

LEADERSHIP



The Board of Trustees met on September 6. Here are a few of the things they accomplished:

- They finalized plans for the final Appreciative Inquiry Workshop
- They identified three goals they would like to work on for the next few months. They are 1) helping to increase public awareness of UCCs activities and programs 2) engaging with the 8th UU Principle and 3) exploring renaming the church.
- Click [HERE](#) to read the minutes from their meeting
- The next regular Board meeting will take place via Zoom **Tuesday, October 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](#).



ISAAC 2022 Public Meeting

Come Build the Beloved Community



Public officials, candidates and community leaders will stand virtually before the community and commit to working with us for changes of policy and practice infused with love, hope, equity and abundance:

**Anti-Racism Housing
Gun Violence Prevention**

ISAAC Public Meeting Watch Party!

Our justice partners [Interfaith Strategies for Advocacy and Action in the Community](#) (ISAAC) will hold their bi-annual Public Meeting on the evening of **October 25, at 6:30 PM** on [Facebook Live](#) and [YouTube Live](#).

Come and watch the Public Meeting with your UCC friends! A free light supper will be served at 6:00 PM and we will livestream the meeting on the big screen in the sanctuary.

Whether it is from home or at UCC, please plan to attend this meeting. Our presence in large numbers gives candidates for election and other community leaders the support they need to take new steps to build the Beloved Community in Kalamazoo County!

PROGRAM COUNCIL

Program Council—Where TOGETHER—We Get Stuff Done!

Everyone - members, friends, visitors—is invited to help create programming at UU Community Church on second Sundays at around 11:00 AM. Bring your voice to our next meeting on October 9. We will meet via following the service and you can participate either in person or via Zoom.



At our September meeting, we had much to **CELEBRATE!** We re-started Sunday Services following the July sabbatical. Thank you to Sunday Services Committee, our Greeters, our Tech Team, and Facebook and RE volunteers for all they do to make our services possible each week. We hosted engaging guest speakers, Larry Farris and Sheriff Rick Fuller. Thank you to Sunday Services Committee and to **Mary Roscoe** for organizing these visits. We hired **Nick Tasko** to mow the lawn! Thank you **Eric Nelson** for helping to make this happen. We rented the building for Life Line Health Screening and a memorial service. Thank you to our Rental Coordinator, **Ron Crowell**, and to **Miriam** for the work they do behind the scenes to rent our building. We hired a new Music Director, **Chris Petersmark**. Thanks to **Kevin Brozovich, Kimberly Ridley, and Judy Halseth** for serving on the hiring committee. And we held a wonderful kayaking trip on Sugar Loaf Lake attended by twelve UUCM members and friends ranging in age from 25 to 86. Thank you to **Andy Miller** and **Miriam** for organizing the trip and to **Rev. Gy** for the use of their kayaks.

Looking to get more involved at UU Community Church? **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND!**

- Sound/Zoom Tech (Contact [Miriam](#))
- Facebook Host (Contact [Miriam](#))
- Sunday Greeting Team (Contact [Ken VanEseltine](#))
- Building and Grounds Work (Contact [Eric Nelson](#))
- Marketing Team (Contact [Darby Fetzer](#))
- Religious Exploration Volunteers (Contact [Miriam](#))

VOLUNTEER



During the meeting, we also voted for our Generosity Sunday Recipients. Thank you to everyone who voted (26 UUCM members and friends!) And the winners are:



- October: **Planned Parenthood**
- January: **The Ecumenical Center**
- March: **Kalamazoo Coalition for the Unhoused**
- June: **Kalamazoo Alliance to Prevent Gun Violence**

ON the AGENDA for October's Program Council Meeting:

- A donation request from Aims Kidz
- An update from MUUSJN about UU the Vote
- Planning for Christmas Eve

Please plan to join us at the next Program Council meeting on **Sunday, October 9** at around **11:00 AM**, in person or via Zoom, and help keep UUCM's programs going strong. If you have any questions, or items to add to the agenda, contact Andy (andy.kzo@att.net or 269-267-8483).

LEARNING AND GROWTH



Thoughtful Thursdays

On select Thursday evenings this year, 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 virtual programs offer.

Click [HERE](#) to join any of our Thoughtful Thursday programs. Meeting ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120

OCTOBER 13: CIVIL CONVERSATIONS GROUP

Our Civil Conversation Group will meet on the second Thursday of the month, October 13 at 7:00 PM to help participants learn the skills needed to have respectful and mutually beneficial discussions about the issues that divide us and our society. See [page 12](#) for more info.

OCTOBER 20: A CONVERSATION WITH JOSH HILGART

At our Thoughtful Thursday gathering on **October 20 at 7:00 PM**, we will be joined by Josh Hilgart, founder of Kalamazoo Defender, to talk about a holistic approach to public defense. You can learn more about Josh on [page 2](#).

OCTOBER 27: EXPLORING ANTI-RACISM

Rev. Gy and UUCC Board President, Eric Nelson will lead another conversation about anti-racism on **October 27 at 7:00 PM**. The topic of discussion will be understanding and confronting antisemitism. Before the Zoom meeting, participants are encouraged to read a short article (about a 20-minute read) [Understanding and Confronting Antisemitism in the Current Political Moment](#). A few printed copies of the article will be available at the Welcome Desk at church for those who find reading online difficult.



Article II Study Commission

In August, Miriam shared information with the congregation about the Unitarian Universalist Association's Article II Study Commission which has been working to reimagine how we articulate our core UU values (aka the seven principles) to the world. The Commission gathered feedback about their work from surveys and discussion groups this summer and is now engaging in their next round of drafting. In September, they held 10 Zoom sessions to gather feedback about some of the language they are considering. Unfortunately, we did not receive notice of these sessions in a timely fashion and were not able to share the links widely.

At the feedback sessions, core values were shared as a diagram rather than a list. The diagram consisted of an oval with the word Love in the center surrounded by a circle of six ovals with the words **Pluralism/Diversity, Interdependence, Equity, Generosity, Justice, and Evolution/Growth** on each one. Participants were asked to share their thoughts about how these values would ground UUs in covenant and what they would require of UUs in terms of action. They were also asked to share their thoughts about what words were missing from the diagram.

The Commission is planning more feedback sessions in late October and early November and we will do our best to share this information in the Weekly Email. To learn more about the work of the Article II Study Commission visit their website: www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission

CONNECTION

Women's Book Group

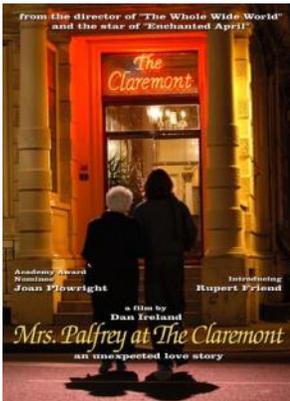
Friday, October 14
1:00 PM via Zoom

October Selection:

Mrs. Palfrey at the Claremont

By Elizabeth Taylor

From Goodreads:



Mrs. Laura Palfrey, a once dignified and sensible diplomat's wife, finds herself in the Claremont Hotel in London, a modest residence for elderly, forgotten people. Think "Fawlty Towers", but with a whole lot less amusing shenanigans. Mrs. Palfrey's only daughter is remarkably uncaring,

and her friends are vaguely indifferent. Never one to impose herself on others, she stays at the Claremont, which becomes an exercise in whiling away hours and days and seasons. Living through loneliness and emptiness.

One day, Mrs. Palfrey falls - and a young man comes to her aid. Thus begins a remarkable friendship. But never fear! This isn't a sweet, sentimental tale of a chivalrous boy who makes life worth living for a lonely widow. Taylor's lens is never syrupy. She sees the world quite as it is, which means sometimes it's sweet, and other times it's cruel, and when you're lucky, it makes you laugh.

The Book Group will meet at 1:00 PM on October 14 via Zoom for a short business meeting followed by a discussion of the book led by Beverly Folz.

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

If you have any questions about Book Group, please contact Stephanie Grathwol (sargg.64@gmail.com).



There are lots of opportunities to meet up with UUC friends to enjoy a wonderful meal and good conversation and get to know each other better.

2nd Wednesday Dinner Date

Our dinner group meets at area restaurants at **6:00 PM** on the second Wednesday of the month. This month they will gather on **October 12** at a yet-to-be-determined location. Please RSVP to Jeannine Willacker (269-303-6600 or jeannine.shafer@yahoo.com) if you plan to attend, and watch your weekly email for more information.

3rd Saturday Breakfast Group

On Saturday, **October 15**, our Breakfast Group will meet at Garcia's Mexican Kitchen (right next door to church) at **9:00 AM**. Please RSVP to Ken VanEseltine (269) 342-4793 or vaneseltinekl@sbcglobal.net if you plan to attend.

4th Friday Lunch Bunch

Our lunch group plans to meet on the fourth Friday of each month at an area restaurant. This month they will meet on **October 28** at **1:00 PM**. RSVP to Jeannine Willacker if you plan to attend (269- 303-6600 or jeannine.shafer@yahoo.com).



SPIRITUAL GROWTH



Yoga Nidra Returns

Daring to Rest™ facilitator, Erica Guthaus, was practicing what she preaches this summer by taking a long rest from leading Zoom Yoga Nidra sessions for us.

She had a renewing and relaxing summer (except for the part when her entire household came down with Covid!) and now she is ready to restart Yoga Nidra at UUCC.

She will be offering 45-minute Yoga Nidra sessions via Zoom twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 7:00 PM. This month the sessions will be on **October 9** and **October 23**.

For those of you new to Yoga Nidra, don't let the word "yoga" confuse you. Yoga Nidra is more like guided meditation than an exercise routine. No equipment or downward dogs are 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.

As the weather turns cold and we head into the busy holiday season, taking time to slow down, relax, and recover from the stressors in our lives is more important than ever. Consider taking time to "dare to rest" with Erica and Yoga Nidra.

As was our practice last year, we encourage participants to make a donation to Erica so she is fairly compensated for her time. A donation is not required to attend the sessions but greatly appreciated.

Click [HERE](#) to join the Yoga Nidra sessions with Erica. The link will work for either session.

Meeting ID: 918 3683 5566
Passcode: 917230



Qigong at UUCC

The Qigong group at UUCC is going strong! We gather twice a week for a 30-minute session of low-impact, mind-body exercise. Qigong, originally developed in ancient China and Tibet, uses stretches, self-massage, and deep breathing.

The exercises have helped participants increase flexibility, maintain balance, and center their hearts and minds. Everyone agrees they are a great way to start your day!

Newcomers are welcome to join our Qigong group. You can even invite a friend.

Click [HERE](#) for the TUESDAY Zoom link. Meeting ID: 697 338 090 Passcode: 138550

Click [HERE](#) for the SATURDAY Zoom link. Meeting ID: 977 5286 6838

Passcode: 383810

If you have any questions about the group, contact [Freya Lake](#).



Mindfulness Practice with Eric

On the 4th Wednesday of each month at **7:00 PM** you can join UUCC member and lead facilitator at Stress Less Kalamazoo, Eric Nelson, for drop-in guided Mindfulness Practice. The next session will be on **Wednesday, October**

The practice lasts about 45 minutes and includes readings that will inspire.

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

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



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY



Civil Conversations Group

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 as we strive to build the Beloved Community, one conversation at a time.

The group meets over Zoom once a month, alternating on a Tuesday or a Thursday in order to give as many people an opportunity to participate as possible. Their next meeting will be on **Thursday, October 13** at **7:00 PM** via Zoom. The group is collecting ideas for topics they will discuss in the coming months. If you have any ideas, please share them.

Newcomers are always welcome to join this 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 contact Darby (269-569-5557 or darbylynnfetzer@gmail.com).

Sustainability Group

Our Sustainability Group meets on the third Monday of each month 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. Here is a recap of their last meeting:

- The big news was the UCC Rain Garden has been planted! There are still a lot of rocks to move to finish things up and we will have to wait a couple of years before it is fully established but the group has decided to declare victory on this project!
- The group was thrilled to hear about **Bev Folz's** success in establishing a Styrofoam recycling program at the Fountains and perhaps the beginning of a composting program too! Keep up the good work, Bev!
- Thanks to **Pat Fuehr**, the group learned that some toothpaste tubes are recyclable. <https://www.colgate.com/en-us/oral-health/brushing-and-flossing/how-is-a-toothpaste-tube-recycled>
- Information was shared about the *Move Portage* program that seeks to make Portage more bike-friendly. The group talked about the possibility of installing a bike rack at UCC that, given our proximity to bike trails, could help people safely bike to church. <https://www.portagemi.gov/793/MovePortage>
- Information was shared about a new recycling education program the city of Kalamazoo is starting that will involve getting feedback about what is in our recycle bins. <https://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/2022/09/partnership-aims-to-increase-recycling-in-kalamazoo.html>
- The group talked about the intersection of sustainability and racial justice and touched on a lot of topics from black farmers to systemic racism to flooding to the *Inflation Reduction Act (I.R.A.)*
- **Joe Calme** announced that Chaz Rawls, a black farmer from Comstock, will be a guest in our pulpit on November 20. <https://encorekalamazoo.com/chaz-rawls/>
- The group is looking forward to a future Sustainability meeting when **Regena Nelson** will share what she found out about the *Inflation Reduction Act* while she was researching to prepare for the latest episode of *Critical Issues; Alternative Views* with special guest Denise Keele. (More on [page 13](#))



SUSTAINABILITY

(Sustainability Group News continued from [page 12](#))

- If you haven't seen the episode of *Critical Issues; Alternative Views* dedicated to the I.R.A., you can watch the show here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j8GikO1SG8>
- The group learned about *UUs for Social Justice*, a Washington D.C.-based group that lobbies Congress on justice issues including Climate Change. If you want to encourage some environmental justice legislation in the US House and Senate, you can take action through the UU's for Social Justice website. It only takes a minute of your time: <https://uusj.salsalabs.org/EnvironmentalJusticeforAllAct/index.html>
- There were also side conversations about hamburgers, bees, grape jelly, deer, pesto, and planting augers from this lively and engaging group.

Newcomers, no matter what stage of the sustainability journey they are on, are always welcome to join this small group.

Click [HERE](#) for the link for the Zoom Meeting. Meeting ID: 960 9812 1445 Passcode: 990641

Contact Miriam (uucommunity@gmail.com) if you have questions or need more information.

Fridays for the Future

In collaboration with the international movement inspired by teen-aged climate activist, Greta Thunberg, the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition (KCCC) has been organizing meetings to inform and network with the local community for action on the climate crisis since 2019.

After a summer hiatus, their ***Fridays for the Future*** meetings have resumed. They will meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month at noon via Zoom. The meeting will feature a wide range of experts and advocacy groups for delivering engaging and informative sessions focused on the causes, consequences, and actions for a carbon-neutral future.

These meetings are free and open to the public. Click [HERE](#) to join the meeting.

**Kalamazoo
Climate
Crisis
Coalition**



For more information about the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition and Fridays for the Future, visit the KCCC website:

<https://www.kalamazooecrisis.org/>

UUCC Recycling News



First the bad news from **Freya Lake**: *SORRY folks, but the CAPS project has been terminated. The owners of the company producing the Buddy Benches are retiring and closing down their business as of November 1. Until then they are completing their backlog of orders for benches but they are no longer accepting donations of plastic caps. This has been a worthwhile endeavor to help the environment in a small way and we as a church have done our best to contribute in a positive way. THANK YOU for your participation and be proud of the 300-some pounds that we rescued!*

And THANK YOU to Freya for introducing this program to UUCC and coordinating it for us over the years. We will never look at a plastic cap the same way again.

Now for the good news:

We will be continuing to collect EPS foam (aka Styrofoam) labeled with a "6". **Ron and Nancy Crowell** will make sure our collection gets to the City of Kalamazoo's next recycling day on Saturday, **October 22** from **10 AM to 1 PM** at Mayor's Riverfront Park. Schupan will also be collecting used electronics at the same location.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

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

There is so much going on in Religious Exploration for Kids right now, even I am having a hard time keeping up.



First up, on **Sunday, October 2** we will be hosting a **Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Letter Writing Party** after church. There will be a brief PowerPoint presentation following the service to go over the guidelines and then people will be invited to write a few lines on a letter template, sign their first name, and address an envelope to the Michigan voter whose address appears at the bottom of the letter. It should only take 15-20 minutes of your time to complete 5 letters. Easy peasy! Click [HERE](#) for the full instructions. The voter information was provided to us by Vote Forward, a non-partisan organization dedicated to encouraging people in underserved, low-turnout areas to vote.

Last year when the youth group was learning how to organize campaigns for change, they learned that personal contact like a handwritten letter is one of the most effective (and cost-effective) organization tools for voter turnout. They also learned how important is to get involved in voting efforts because big decisions about their three key areas of concern—LGBTQ+ Rights, Climate Change, and Racial Justice—are made by elected leaders at all levels of government.

Next, our **8 Principle Art Project** is well underway. We will be painting our first canvases on Sunday, October 2 during R.E. time. The theme of the canvases will be our 8th UU Principle—*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*. The first canvas will depict what the world looks like without this principle and the second will show the Beloved Community we are working to create. Once the kids have painted the background of these canvases, we will bring them upstairs for YOU to work on. We invite you to collect collage materials—newspaper and magazine clippings, photos, and three-dimensional items too like badges, buttons, beads, ribbons, etc.—and bring them to church on **Collage Making Day**. Led by the talented Mary Roscoe, we will add things to the canvases to create a striking and meaningful depiction of what the 8th UU principle means to our lives and our world.

During the month we will also complete a visibility project to honor **LGBTQ+ National Coming Out Day on October 11**, carve chalice pumpkins and learn about some heretics and martyrs who gave their lives for their UU beliefs, and attend the multigenerational service with singer/songwriter Jim Scott! Woo hoo!

A big shout out to all the wonderful volunteers helping to make our R.E. dreams a reality: **Mary Roscoe, Eric and Regena Nelson, Pat Timm, and Kimberly Ridley**. You rock!

DATE	OCTOBER UU EXPLORATION PLANS	LOCATION	VOLUNTEER
October 2	8th Principle Art Project—Painting Day	UUC	Mary Roscoe
October 9	Coming Out Day—LGBTQ+ Visibility Project	UUC	Eric and Regena Nelson
October 16	8th Principle Art Project—Collage Prep Day	UUC	Mary Roscoe
October 23	UU History—Heretics and Martyrs	UUC	Pat Timm
October 30	Multi-generational Sunday Service	UUC	N/A

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE



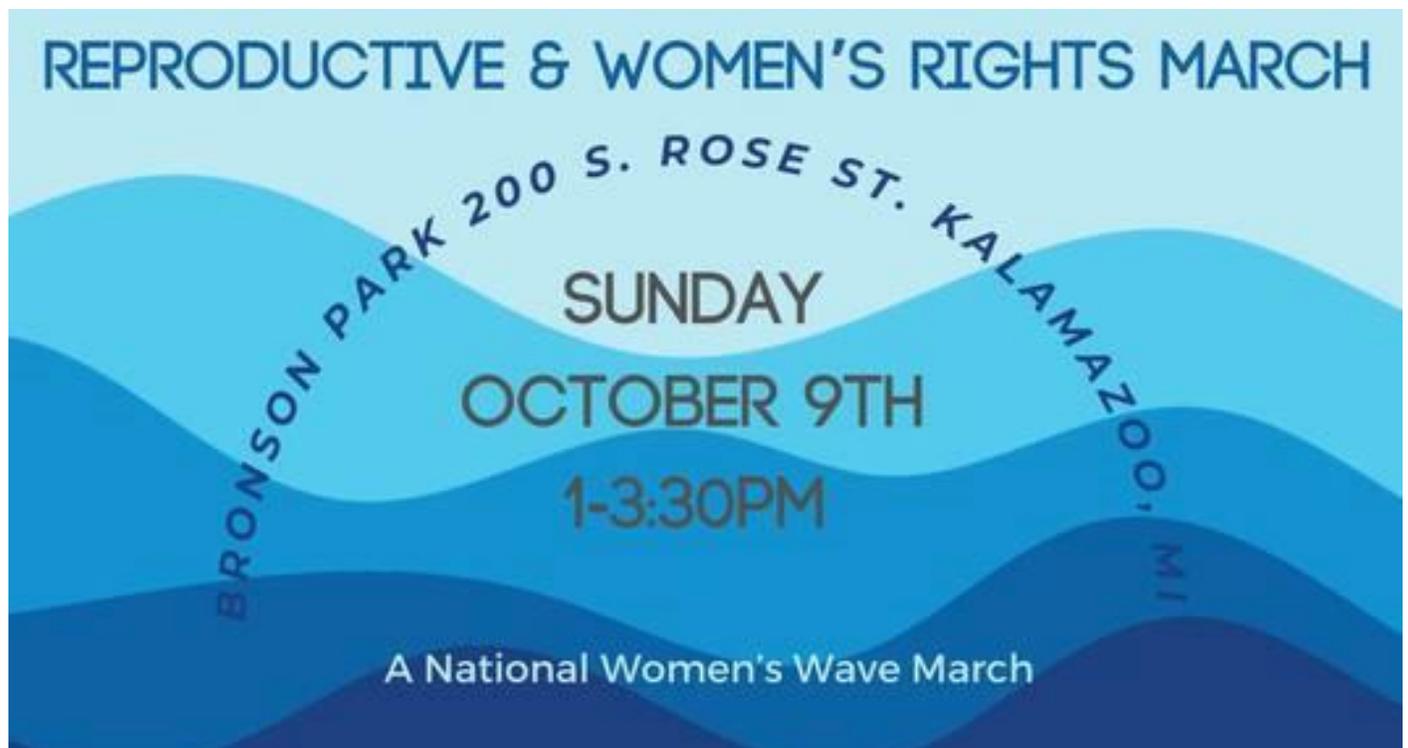
October Generosity Sunday— Planned Parenthood of Michigan

During the month of October, we will hold a Generosity Sunday collection in support of **Planned Parenthood**

Affiliates of Michigan and their mission to help people live full, healthy lives — no matter their income, insurance, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, or immigration status; and to provide, with respect and compassion, the high-quality inclusive and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care services all people need and deserve.

Planned Parenthood is also at the forefront of the fight for reproductive rights. Our financial donations are important to them as they prepare to engage the challenges ahead. They also ask that we move forward with them and stand up and speak out for choice by supporting access to comprehensive sexuality education, family planning services, and safe and legal abortion services. Please be generous with your time in October too and attend a rally, engage in voter outreach, or talk to your friends and neighbors about the importance of comprehensive reproductive rights.

If you would like to make a donation to Planned Parenthood in support of the important work they do, 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. In addition, all cash and loose change in the collection basket on Sunday, **October 9** will be donated to Planned Parenthood. There will also be a special message for UCC from Planned Parenthood during the service on October 9.



8TH PRINCIPLE

BUILD a
diverse
BELOVED
COMMUNITY



Putting our 8th UU Principle into Action

At our Annual Meeting this past June, we voted to adopt the 8th UU Principle. This principle calls on us to engage in individual and communal action to accountably dismantle racism and other systemic barriers to full inclusion in both our congregation and in society at large.

In September the Sunday Services Committee spent some time brainstorming what implementing the 8th Principle might look like in its area of concern with help of the article *Dismantling White Supremacy Culture in Worship* by

Erika Hewitt and Julica Hermann de la Fuente.

Hewitt and Hermann de la Fuente write... *“rituals are important: routine offers comfort...but when we inherit routines that were established unconsciously through a white lens, or by white culture—routines that haven’t been challenged—then our comfort is rooted in the status quo.”*

“The status quo is not radically inclusive.

The status quo is not Beloved Community.

The status quo is never going to get us free.”

“Decentering the status quo is important both as a goal and as a process. If we’re unable to change our liturgy, our expectations of worship, and how the container of worship is structured, how can we build our tolerance for decentering the status quo outside of worship?”

They suggest that our Sunday services should be an opportunity for us *“to explore discomfort in a familiar place”* and that taking risks, changing the familiar, and being open and flexible are ways that we put our Unitarian Universalist values into practice.

The article included several questions for the congregation to ponder as we try new things and work together to dismantle white supremacy culture on Sunday mornings.

If you are feeling critical (“I don’t like this” or “I’m unhappy”):

- *Which of my needs aren’t getting met?*
- *Why do I feel like disconnecting?*

If you are in a place of assessment (“Is this worth my participation?” or “Does this satisfy my tastes?”):

- *Can I find an opening for curiosity?*
- *How is this helping shift the status quo?*

If you are feeling curious (“If this doesn’t serve me, personally, who might it serve?” or “What love/energy/time/vision went into this?”):

- *How can I keep moving toward appreciation?*
- *How can I keep supporting intentional inclusiveness?*

If you are in a place of appreciation (“How does this invite me to grow and learn?” or “How does this serve our larger values?”):

- *How can I keep moving toward trust?*
- *Have I shared my appreciation with those who labored to provide this Sunday service for me?*

Your Sunday Services Committee, **Joe Calme**, **Regena Nelson**, **Kimberly Ridley**, and **David Senecal**, looks forward to hearing your thoughts about how to make our services more welcoming and accessible to everyone who seeks to join us.

UU THE VOTE

UU the Vote, the UUA's voter engagement campaign believes that progressive people of faith can be powerful and prophetic without being partisan. We can engage our neighbors, educate our communities, mobilize voters, and rally around ballot initiatives, with values based on our theology and principles. This election season, with so many issues important to UUs from combatting climate change to reproductive justice to our very right to vote on the ballot, it is important for each of us to find a way to encourage people in the community to engage with the issues and go out and vote.

The good news is we do not have to do this work alone! UU the Vote has chosen Michigan as one of the targets of its national campaign. UUs from all over the country will be joining us to phone-bank, write postcards and letters, and do other forms of voter engagement. Now is the time for Michigan UUs to step up and get involved!



Phone and Text Banking

The Michigan UU Social Justice Network, UU the Vote, and their partner organizations offer phone (and soon text) banking training and opportunities almost every day of the week between now and November 8. Phone and text banking allows you to engage directly with potential voters in Michigan. Scripts are provided to make the contact easy.

Mondays: 6-8 PM <https://bit.ly/PhbankMon>

Wednesdays: 6:30-8:30 PM <https://bit.ly/phMUUSJN>

Thursdays: 6:30-8:30 PM <https://secure.everyaction.com/xfjWDPfxwEuZNgY7P0fVOw2>

Fridays: 6-8pm: <https://bit.ly/PhbankFriday>

Saturdays: 5-7pm: <https://bit.ly/PhBankSats>

Once you are trained and comfortable, you can make calls on your own time any day of the week between 9 AM—8 PM.

Please feel free to invite friends and family to these sessions. The more people engaging with voters the better!



GOTV Letter Writing Day

UUCC Youth will be hosting a non-partisan Get Out the Vote letter-writing party on Sunday, **October 2**

following the service.

Writing letters to voters is one of the most effective ways to help increase election turnout and everything you need to write a few letters to your fellow Michigan voters asking them to vote on November 8. (It would be helpful if you could bring your own BLUE pen.)

Writing these letters is easy and will only take you a few minutes. You only need to write a sentence or two explaining why you vote. If you can't stay after church, we can even give you some letters to take home and return to church later in the month. If you are not sure what to write you can find some help [HERE](#).

Please come to the letter-writing party. The kid in RE is counting on YOU to help him **Get Out the Vote** this November!

COME MEET YOUR CANDIDATES!

PORTAGE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS FORUM

OCTOBER 11, 7 PM
UU Community Church
10441 Shaver Road

questions for candidates will be submitted via notecard during the forum - if you would like to submit a question beforehand please email portagelinkingvoices@gmail.com

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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

OPPORTUNITIES

UCC Service AUCTION

It is time for the Service Auction!

All are welcome to come to the UCC Service Auction on **Saturday, October 8**. Rev. Gy is this year's auctioneer.

We'll start with a **Soup Supper** at **5:00 PM** for a suggested donation of \$10 and start the **Auction** at **6:00 PM**. It is a hybrid event. You can attend in person or via Zoom.

We will have lots of unique and creative items for you to bid on to raise funds for UCC and connect with each other. The auction item list will be sent to you before the auction.

If you are not able to join us, please ask someone to serve as your proxy and bid for your items for you.

After the auction, you will be emailed the total amount for the items you purchased. You can pay by mailing a check to the church or using a credit card through the donate button on the UCC website or the Vanco app.

We look forward to seeing YOU at the auction. Thank you for your support!

A UCC Trip to the Theatre

UCC member **David Senecal** is looking forward to his return to the stage in the Civic Theatre's Senior Readers Theatre Musical production of ***Side by Side by Sondheim***. Featuring music from *Company*, *Follies*, *A Little Night Music*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Anyone Can Whistle*, and *Pacific Overtures*, not to mention the classics written with musical theatre giants, Leonard Bernstein, Jule Styne, and Richard Rodgers, this dazzling array of some of Sondheim's best-known songs is a lasting tribute to his masterful craft.

If you would like to go see David in this production with UCC friends, consider getting your tickets for Sunday, **October 16** at **2:00 PM** when several people from UCC plan to attend. Tickets can be purchased [online](#) or at the Civic box office. Adults -\$28, Seniors and Students -\$22, and Children (12 and under) -\$17.



Open House Theatre Company, an organization that believes that the arts are for everyone, makes its home at UU Community Church. They are currently working on a fully staged production of local playwright Daniel Smith's new play ***Slipping***. If you are a thespian and are looking for a project to participate in or you know someone who is, please email openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com for audition information.

The company is also looking for sponsors, supporters, and volunteers to help them succeed. Are you this willing to help?

Contact openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com to learn more.



CALENDAR



OCTOBER 2022

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Saturday	October 1	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	October 2	White Fragility with Rev Gy and UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time GOTV Letter Writing Party Open House Theatre Company Auditions	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 10:45 AM 12:45 PM
Tuesday	October 4	Qigong Board of Trustees Meeting	9:00 AM 6:30 PM
Thursday	October 6	Stewardship Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Saturday	October 8	Qigong UUCC Service Auction	9:00 AM 5:00 PM
Sunday	October 9	Altar Egos with Rev. Gy and UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time Program Council Meeting Yoga Nidra with Erica	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:00 AM 7:00 PM
Tuesday	October 11	Qigong Candidate Forum—Portage School Board	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	October 12	Sunday Services Committee Meeting 2nd Wednesday Dinner Date	5:30 PM 6:00 PM
Thursday	October 13	Civil Conversations Group	7:00 PM
Friday	October 14	Women's Book Group	1:00 PM
Saturday	October 15	Qigong 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group	9:00 AM 9:00 AM
Sunday	October 16	The Truth Will Set You Free with Rev. Harold Beu and UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time UUCC Trip to the Theatre	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 2:00 PM
Monday	October 17	Sustainability Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	October 18	Qigong	9:00 AM
Thursday	October 20	A Conversation with Josh Hilgart	7:00 PM
Saturday	October 22	Qigong Styrofoam Recycling at Mayors Riverfront Park 4th Saturday Lunch Bunch	9:00 AM 10 AM—1 PM 1:00 PM
Sunday	October 23	Growing the Garden with Chris Dilley and UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time Yoga Nidra with Erica	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 7:00 PM
Tuesday	October 25	Qigong ISAAC Public Meeting Watch Party	9:00 AM 6:00 PM
Wednesday	October 26	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Mindfulness Practice with Eric	12:00 PM 7:00 PM
Thursday	October 27	Exploring Anti-Racism with Rev. Gy and Eric	7:00 PM
Saturday	October 29	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	October 30	The Oneness of Everything with Jim Scott and UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time	10:00 AM 10:45 AM

**UU Community Church
is served by:**

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2022-2023 Board of Trustees

Eric Nelson

Andy Miller

Judy Pigg-Behrendt

Marsha Laya

Pat Timm

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

Please send submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUnity Matters

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