



CommUUunity Matters

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

SEPTEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES

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

Sept 4: *Bad Theology Makes For Bad Ecology* with Rev. Gy

Our beliefs really matter. If our beliefs are rooted in traditions or texts that ignore or deny rational thought or scientific fact, they can lead us into making bad decisions that can affect everyone and everything.

Sept 11: *Water Communion* with Rev. Gy

At this multigenerational service, we will celebrate Water Communion and take time to reflect on the sacredness of life and how our Unitarian Universalist faith calls on us to be of service to it.

Sept 18: *Adaptive Ministry* with Cameron Young

When one strand of the web is broken, the entire web is prone to collapse. When we in UU spaces speak of our 7th principle, belief in the interdependent web of all existence, we are not merely speaking in metaphors. Our existences are intricately woven with all life. When violence, oppression, and marginalization occur elsewhere in the world we are consciously and unconsciously bound to it, and vice versa. Join UUA Congregational Life staff member, Cameron Young, as they make the case for embracing a more adaptive ministry.

Sept 25: *Reflections on Stoicism* with David Senecal

UUCC member David Senecal has been reading about Stoicism, a school of thought that flourished in ancient Greece and Rome, and has been struck by the similarities between its ethical framework and Unitarian Universalist theology.



Spiritual Theme for September: THEOLOGY

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 Theology.

Theology, according to the dictionary, is the systematic study of the nature of the divine and more broadly, of religious belief.

As Unitarian Universalists, we are each called to undertake a personal 'free and responsible' search to define the nature of the divine and our beliefs for ourselves. *But*, we also are called to covenant with each other to affirm and promote our shared values.

Holding these truths about Unitarian Universalism in balance can be challenging. It requires us to listen to and value our inner voice but also to cherish what others tell us about their experiences, even if we don't fully understand.

Questions to ponder this month:

How does UU theology require us to Widen the Circle of Our Concern?

What might change at UUCC if we had a deeper understanding of theology as a community?

GUESTS IN THE PULPIT

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

Unitarian Universalist Community Church member **David Senecal** is a native of Muskegon who has lived in the Kalamazoo area for over 50 years. He is a graduate of Western Michigan University and was a librarian for 35 years at the Kalamazoo Public Library until his retirement in 2005. He has enjoyed his post-working years engaging in his favorite pastimes and passions of music and theater performance and art classes at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. He also enjoys the companionship and love of his significant other, Lisa, and his cat, Felicity.



Cameron Young is a native Texan and lifelong Unitarian Universalist. Having grown up in those programs, they developed a particular affinity for youth and young adult ministry. Prior to joining the UUA, Cameron served as a lifespan religious educator in Fort Worth, Texas for five years, having helped to implement their congregation's first-ever Coming of Age, Spirit Play, and Young Adults programs. Cameron also served a two-year elected position as Young Adult Co-Facilitator at General Assembly. Cameron has a Bachelor of Music from Louisiana State University and is currently a seminarian at Fort Worth's Brite Divinity School. In their spare time, Cameron is an avid traveler, die-hard fan of Dallas sports teams, and a devoted coffee drinker.

Join us for a Conversation with Nomi Joyrich

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, September 15 at 7:00 PM** will be **Nomi Joyrich**. She will talk to us about relational organizing and the ballot proposals voters in Michigan will be deciding in November. Click [HERE](#) to join the meeting. ID: 476 401 695 Passcode: 449120



Nomi is an organizer for Jews For a Secular Democracy organizer for Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network. Nomi's work supporting interfaith concerns and social justice issues spans decades and includes political activism at all levels of government. Her current focus is on reproductive freedom, economic justice, and voting rights and protection.

Nomi received her B.A. in Minority-Majority Group Relations, Political Philosophy and Psychology from James Madison College, Michigan State University. She received her Masters of Social Work from the University of Washington. Prior to working full-time as a social justice organizer, Nomi was a social worker—first for the Seattle Indians Health Board and later for Seattle Public Schools. She is the child of Holocaust survivors and a member of Temple Kol Ami. She lives in Farmington Hills with her husband and two daughters.

FROM THE MINISTER



From the Minister

[Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney](#)

As you are sitting here reading this article, what is the most important thing about your life? Just take a moment to think about it... what is the most important thing in your life?

Is it not that you are alive?

This is the single most important thing. Because you are alive, you can think, you can care, and you can feel. This is the single most important thing: you are alive. Now things can become important to you, people can become important to you, and issues can become important to you. But, if this life leaves you, nothing is important anymore.

There was a guru once who had a great following. Thousands hung on his every word. One day our guru looked at the crowd and asked, "Do you want to know the secret to my happiness?"

"Yes", shouted the crowd. This is literally why they had been following him around, they wanted his happiness.

He said, "The secret to my happiness is that I don't care what happens to me."

The guru understood that in the world there are many things beyond his control, however, he got it that he was fully responsible for his own inner world, for his own life experience. His joyfulness depended on him and him alone.

I have noticed that joyful people can make more happen than depressed people. I noticed that when I am in a good state of mind, I am so much more productive and effective than when I am down and depressed.

One of our current-day famous gurus, James Taylor put it this way:

*The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time
Any fool can do it
There ain't nothing to it
Nobody knows how we got to the top of the hill
But since we're on our way down
We might as well enjoy the ride
The secret of love is in opening up your heart
It's okay to feel afraid
But don't let that stand in your way
'Cause anyone knows that love is the only road
And since we're only here for a while
We might as well show some style*

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHWHPPhAj8>)

(Continued on [page 4](#))



Singer/songwriter James Taylor

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Gratitude works. Many have said it before me, many will long after I'm gone. It changes one's state of mind. It realigns our focus, it helps us appreciate the single most important thing about us: that we are alive!

If you are exuberant, ride it, enjoy it! If you are down and depressed, perhaps introduce a practice of gratitude into your daily routine, and see if maybe it'll help you get out of your funk.

Bad things will always happen, there is so much out of our control in this world. One thing, however, is possible, that we can live here as joyful human beings. Our ability to fix the world around us depends on many realities, but if we are no longer afraid of suffering, we will be able to live a full life. Our fear of suffering holds us back from living life fully. Once we no longer care what happens to us, we can be free to do the next sensible thing.

Here's to freeing ourselves from the fear of what happens to us and to allowing this life to live through us fully, exuberantly, and joyfully! And so it is.

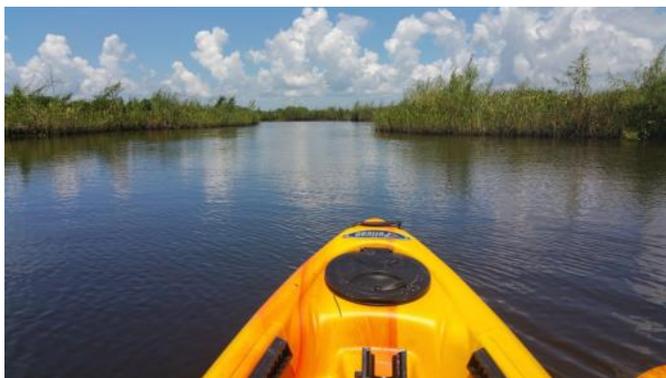
UUC Sugarloaf Kayaking Trip

Enjoy the beauty of nature with UUC friends on our Sugarloaf Kayaking Trip on **Saturday, September 10.**

We will plan to meet at the Sugarloaf Boat Ramp (off Shaver Road about 3/4 miles south of church) at **10:00 AM** and paddle around Sugarloaf Lake. If conditions allow, we will take the channel into Little Sugarloaf Lake as well. Following the trip, we will gather at UUC for lunch.

This is a BYOB (Bring Your Own Boat) trip but we may be able to borrow a kayak/canoe or two for those who need them.

If you are planning to come, please RSVP to Miriam (uucommunity@gmail.com) by Monday, September 5. Please be sure to let her know if you need a kayak or not.



Equinox Bonfire at Eagle Lake

Celebrate the Autumnal Equinox with a Friday night bonfire, on **September 23** at Kathy Hays' home, 536 Aquaview Dr., Kalamazoo.

Sunset will be at 7:40 PM, so we can gather any-time after **6:00 PM** (come early in case you want to be home before dark!)

Kathy will provide weenies and s'mores. You can bring your own preferred beverage.

This is a service auction event but ALL are welcome to join in! If you like, you can make a donation (\$10 or so) to UUC by sending us a check with 'Auction' in the memo line or by donating online or with the Vanco app.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Kathy at 269-598-6132. Please join us!

CARING COMMUNITY



SEPTEMBER CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall.
– F. Scott Fitzgerald

Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

In August, our new friend **Laurie Upjohn** and her partner **Bruce Wilke** were married by Rev. Gy in a beautiful ceremony in Alpena, Michigan. We look forward to hearing all about it when we see Laurie at church again soon.

Several of our members and friends have come down with Covid recently, (**Rev. Gy, Bruce Fetzer, Jeannine Willacker**, and others), but happily, all have recovered. We are so grateful for the vaccines that gave us lighter symptoms than threatened in the first pandemic year.

Larry Higgins was diagnosed with diverticulitis and had a portion of his colon removed. He is now on the mend. **Bob McWhorter** is still struggling with health issues because of the stroke he suffered. Cards and notes of support and healing wishes would be appreciated by both.

Cards would also be appreciated to wish a happy 97th birthday to **Herb Gross** on September 5. He has moved away and is happy when he hears from his old friends at UUC. Herb's address in Wisconsin can be found in the church directory. Our dear friend **John Folz** will also celebrate his 97th trip around the sun later in the month on September 29.

Most of us remember **Jacquie Robertson**, who served as our Director of Religious Education for several years. Jacquie has a new job! She has joined the UUA as a conflict resolution team co-leader.

Judy Oliver checked in from New Jersey to let us know that she has received a pacemaker and is feeling great! **Stace Danielson** was referred to a hematologist-oncologist at University of Michigan. Let's hope a new treatment will get her feeling better.

Our Religious Education graduates are doing exciting things. **Amanda Nelson** is starting her freshman year at WMU, **Matthew Nelson** is studying abroad in Costa Rica, and **David Brozovich** will be playing with the WMU marching band.

Joe and Nancy Calme had a hard month in which both their 12-year-old dogs passed away. The Calme spirits are being lifted by a young labradoodle, "Zoey", who they adopted into the family and are busily training how to live on the farm.

Birthdays:

In addition to Herb and John, let us wish a happy September birthday to **Julie Keleman!**

Remembering Friends who have passed on:

In September of 2012, we lost Alice Foote, a founding member of UUC. Alice was a bundle of energy and put her whole heart into making the church beautiful and welcoming. The small evergreen in the front corner of the church building is dedicated to Alice and her husband Lin for their service to UUC. Alice would have been 93 this year. (More on [page 6](#))

COMMUNITY

New visitors:

We were happy to welcome visitors to our Sunday services in August --

Naomi Elise Hall, Mikayla Kaufmann-Saurrault, and Chris and Kimberly Stathakis. We hope to see you again soon!

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 UCC office: 269-324-7262 or uucommunity@gmail.com.



Water Communion 2022

Water Communion is a unique Unitarian Universalist ritual traditionally held at the beginning of the church year that serves to remind us of our interconnectedness and celebrate our gathering together as a community.

To be a part of this year's communion be sure to collect a small sample of water from a place that brings you peace or provides sustenance for your soul. It can be from a far-off place you traveled to this summer or from as close as your backyard hose. All that matters is that it has significance for you. Plan to bring it to UCC on **September 11** to add to our communal bowl.

This will be our first in-person Water Communion since September 2019 and we hope YOU will be a part of it!

Big Changes for Our Congolese Friends!

Empowerment of a refugee family from the Congo is a primary means by which UU Community Church demonstrates our UU faith in action. Jean, Francoise, Kwizera, James, Teddy, and Amelia arrived in Kalamazoo from Rwanda in January of 2019. The team of UCC volunteers who offers support to the family is led by Denise Sonier.

In June, when we last checked in with our Congolese friends, they had just made an offer on a house and were waiting to see if the deal would go through. We are happy to report that they are now homeowners, living in Comstock, and facing exciting new challenges such as meeting their neighbors, starting new schools, and learning the basics of home maintenance. More details will come in a future newsletter.



LEADERSHIP



- On August 27, the board met for their annual retreat and brainstormed goals for the coming year.
- They discussed the upcoming Appreciative Inquiry/Strategic Planning gathering coming up on September 25 following the Sunday Service.
- They awarded a \$1000 grant from the Artistic Endeavor Fund to the Open House Theatre Company in support of their upcoming production. (The Fund was started in 2019 with a bequest from the estate of Jean Gal.)
- The next regular Board meeting will take place via Zoom **Tuesday, September 6** 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](#).



Your board members, Pat Timm, Andy Miller, Judy Pigg-Behrendt, Eric Nelson, and Marsha Laya, hard at work at the Board Retreat. Many thanks to Marsha Laya for hosting the meeting at her beautiful home on Lake Oliverda in Sherwood. Not pictured is Marsha's cat Katy Purry who listened carefully to the Board's discussions and the many hummingbirds who flitted by to check out what was going on.

ISAAC

SAVE THE DATE

**10
25
22**

**PUBLIC
MEETING**

Save the Date for the ISAAC Public Meeting

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, on Facebook Live and YouTube Live.

Everyone is invited—everyone from ISAAC's member congregations and organizations, all their partner organizations, and everyone else in Kalamazoo County who cares about Anti-Racism, Gun Violence Prevention, and Housing!

Our presence in large numbers gives candidates for election in November and other community leaders the support they need to take new steps to build the Beloved Community in Kalamazoo.

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 September 11. We will meet via following the service and you can participate either in person or via Zoom.



At our August meeting, we had tons to **CELEBRATE!** We took a Sunday Service Sabbatical to provide REST (our theme for July) for staff and volunteers. We held several in-person events to keep people connected including the Chat and Chill on Kathy Hays's Porch, the Backyard Broadway and BBQ FUNdraiser, the 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group, and a beautiful Lakeside Sunday Service and Brunch hosted by Kathryn Ragains. Our Youth Group went shopping to help a Kalamazoo Promise student get settled in their dorm. The virtual Qigong Group met regularly during July, the new Board of Trustees met and elected officers, and a big group of volunteers braved the July heat and humidity to work on the church grounds. Eric Nelson and Michael Graham also were able to install a new vanity in the upstairs women's bathroom.

We also took care of business by discussing ideas for Thoughtful Thursday programming and possible recipients for our Generosity Sunday collections.

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

Program Council Chair, Andy Miller reminded everyone to read their newsletter and the Friday emails to keep up to date on all the opportunities 'to seek, to sustain, and to share' offered at UUC and in the wider community. If you are not getting our electronic mailings, you can subscribe by visiting our website: <https://uucommunitychurch.org/calendar/newsletters-and-weekly-emails/>

If there is anything you want included in our newsletter, send your submissions to uuccnewsletter@gmail.com. The newsletter deadline can be found on the [UUC Calendar](#).

If you have something to be added to the Friday email or included in our video announcements during the Sunday service, please send it to the office, uucommunity@gmail.com by noon on Wednesday. Items for our Joys and Concerns columns can be sent to the office at any time.

ON the AGENDA for September's Program Meeting

- Choose Generosity Sunday Recipients for 2022/2023 (see [page 9](#) for more info).
- Update on our Appreciative Inquiry/Strategic Planning Workshop planned for September 25.
- Check in with our committees and teams and see where help is needed.

Please plan to join us at the next Program Council meeting on **Sunday, September 11** at around **11:00 AM**, in person or via Zoom, and help keep UUC'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).



GENEROSITY SUNDAYS



Four times a year, UU Community Church holds special collections for organizations in the community whose good work aligns with our mission of positively transforming the world. At the August Program Council meeting, several organizations were nominated as possible recipients of this year's collections. At our next Program Council meeting on September 11, we will narrow the list to four. Please take time to learn about each of these organizations before we take a vote.

The Ecumenical Senior Center, nominated by Nancy Crowell, is an activity center that provides a wide range of programs and services to individuals 60 and older living in the city of Kalamazoo and surrounding areas. Membership is free and everyone is welcome to join. Its mission is to offer a place where seniors can come and spend quality time with their peers and participate in a wide range of activities such as exercise, games, trips, and classes. The center provides guests breakfast and lunch and distributes donations of food, hygiene products, household items, equipment, books, and other items as they become available. <https://www.ecumenicalsc.com/>

Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Michigan, nominated by Judy Halseth, works to protect and enhance the ability of affiliates to deliver comprehensive reproductive health services by educating supporters and the public about the impact of public policy on the lives of Michiganders, especially as it relates to access to Reproductive Justice issues. <http://www.education.miplannedparenthood.org/programs/>

Kalamazoo Coalition for the Unhoused, nominated by Darby Fetzer, was established in December 2020 to bring individuals and organizations together to coordinate efforts, increase impact, and empower change among the unhoused population in the Kalamazoo area. <https://kzoocoalition.org/>

Aims Kidz, nominated by our justice partners at PLOV, provides programs and support to children and youth in the Interfaith Homes Community on Kalamazoo's Northside. <https://www.facebook.com/aims.kidz>

Boys and Girls Clubs of Kalamazoo, nominated by Kathy Hays, provide youth with life-enhancing, meaningful, and purposeful programming to aid in their professional, personal, and educational development. <https://bgckzoo.org/>

First Day Shoe Fund, nominated by Andy Miller, believes that every child should start school on equal footing, and distributes a new pair of properly fitting athletic shoes to those students in need in all Kalamazoo County public elementary schools. <https://firstdayshoefund.org/>

Kalamazoo Alliance to Prevent Gun Violence, nominated by Miriam, is one of the many programs administered by H.O.P.E. Thru Navigation and is aimed at empowering youth, women, and men directly impacted by gun violence to advocate for changes to policies and provide trauma-informed services and supports. <https://www.facebook.com/Kalamazoo-Alliance-to-Prevent-KAP-Gun-Violence-100944559312796/>

STEWARDSHIP

UCC Service AUCTION
Saturday, October 8

Please RSVP and send your auction items to the Stewardship Committee by September 30!

Since we are able to gather in person now, the UCC Service Auction will be a hybrid event this year! You can attend via Zoom or in person. However you choose to join us, we hope you will come on **Saturday, October 8** for what is sure to be a wonderful evening of fun and fellowship.

Do you like homemade pie, road trips, parties, special dinners, weekly fresh vegetable boxes, or movies? Or would you like someone to teach you a new hobby or help you with chores? These are just a few of the offerings from previous service auctions. And any of them (or similar) can be yours for the high bid at the Service Auction. **Your own offerings are needed, of course, to make this happen, so please sign up for what you will donate to the auction and RSVP at [THIS LINK](#).**

Those attending in person are invited to gather at UCC at **5:00 PM** to enjoy soup (a vegetarian option will be available), homemade bread, desserts, and beverages for a suggested donation of \$10 per adult. (Kids eat FREE!)

Between **5:00 PM and 6:00 PM**, you can also peruse the **Silent Auction** tables which will be laden with jewelry, books, decor items, and the like. Each item will have a suggested starting bid. You write your bids on the sheets for items you want and keep checking to see if someone has outbid you. At the end of the evening, the highest bidder takes each item home.

At **6:00 PM** comes the **Main Event**. Rev. Gy will begin auctioning the special events and services. Lucky buyers will go home with high expectations for the events and services they'll enjoy throughout the year.

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 UCC website or the Vanco app.

Questions? Talk to any member of the Stewardship Committee -- Joe Calme, Ron Crowell, Marsha Laya, or Chair Regena Nelson.

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

SEPTEMBER 8: UCC MOVIE DISCUSSION GROUP

This year we will use films to explore our over-arching spiritual theme—Widening the Circle—and provide opportunities to talk about the impact of racism and other harmful oppressions. On **September 8 at 7:00 PM** we will discuss *Crash*. Please take time to watch the film *before* our Thursday gathering. (There is more information about the film and where you can watch it below.) We may be able to set up a time to watch it together ahead of time either in person or virtually. Please contact Miriam at uucommunity@gmail.com if you are interested in attending a watch party before September 8.

SEPTEMBER 15: A CONVERSATION WITH NOMI JOYRICH

At our Thoughtful Thursday gathering on **September 15 at 7:00 PM**, we will be joined by [Michigan UU Social Justice Network](#) consultant, Nomi Joyrich, to learn more about Relational Organizing and the Ballot Proposals that will be on the November ballot. You can learn more about Nomi on [page 2](#).

SEPTEMBER 21: EXPLORING ANTI-RACISM

Rev. Gy and UCC Board President, Eric Nelson are planning to team up this year to lead a series of conversations about anti-racism, often centered on an article or short excerpt of a book you will be asked to read before attending. They hope these conversations will help us to begin to gain the shared knowledge and understanding necessary for having productive conversations about race and systemic racism as we work to put our 8th UU Principle into action. The first meeting of the Exploring Anti-Racism Group will be on Thursday, **September 22 at 7:00 PM**.

September Movie Discussion Group Selection:

Crash

(2004) Rated R for Sexual Content, Language, Some Violence

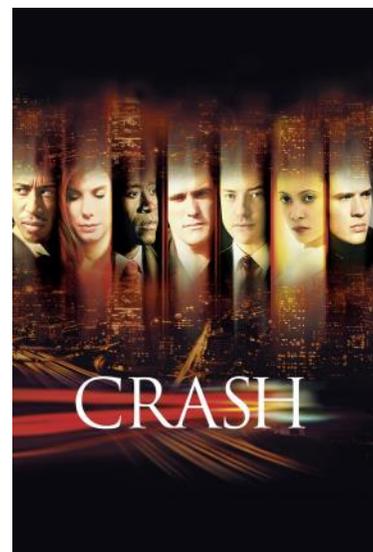
Los Angeles citizens find their attitudes about race challenged as their vastly separate lives collide in interweaving stories of loss and redemption in this Oscar-winning drama co-written and directed by Paul Haggis, Matt Dillon, Thandiwe Newton, Don Cheadle, Terrence Howard, Sandra Bullock, and Ludacris.

Where to watch:

DVDs available from Kalamazoo and Portage libraries

HBO Max

[Stream from Amazon Prime for \\$3.99](#)



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY



Civil Conversations Group

The UCC Civil Conversations Group will begin meeting again in September! 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 will meet 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 September meeting will be on **Tuesday, September 27 at 7:00 PM** via Zoom. Watch the Friday emails for more information about what we will discuss.

Newcomers are always welcome to join this gathering 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.

At their August meeting, the big news was the Rain Garden Project that they have been working on for many months. The native plants for the garden will be delivered by [Hidden Savannah](#) nursery in mid-September and they have planned a **PLANTING DAY** on Saturday, **September 17 from 10:00 AM until noon**. If you are willing and able, please plan to come and help plant a garden that will help sequester runoff from our parking lots, provide habitat for native insects, beautify our grounds and show the community UCC is committed to sustainability!



The group also talked about the City of Kalamazoo's pilot **Bike Lanes Project** that has added plastic barriers to protect the bike lanes on portions of Park St. and Westnedge Ave. and how this could make choosing carbon-neutral active transportation like biking and walking easier and safer for more people. The city is currently collecting feedback about the bike lanes from both cyclists and drivers. Click [HERE](#) to take the survey. You do not need to be a city resident to leave feedback.

In other news, the group has decided to explore the Unitarian Universalist Association's **Green Sanctuary 2030 Program** as a way to explore ideas for sustainability at UCC. Future group meetings will be dedicated to learning more about the program.

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](#) if you have questions or need more information.

CONNECTION

3rd Saturday Breakfast Group

Join your UUCG friends for breakfast on **Saturday, September 18 at 8:30 AM** at Garcia's Mexican Kitchen, on the corner of Osterhout and Shaver in Portage, right next to UUCG.

Don't miss this opportunity for good food, good company, and good conversation!

If you plan to come, please RSVP to breakfast coordinator, Ken VanEseltine, (269) 342-4793 or vaneseltinekl@sbcglobal.net, by Friday, September 17.

Women's Book Group

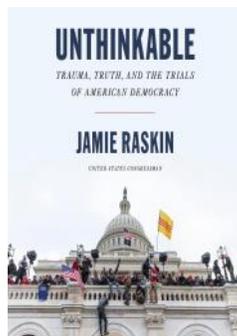
Friday, September 9
1:00 PM via Zoom

September

Selection:

Unthinkable

by Jamie Raskin



From Goodreads:

In this searing memoir, Congressman Jamie Raskin tells the story of the forty-five days at the start of 2021 that permanently changed his life--and his family's--as he confronted the painful loss of his son to suicide, lived through the violent insurrection in our nation's Capitol, and led the impeachment effort to hold President Trump accountable for inciting the political violence.

The Book Group will meet at 1:00 PM on September 9 via Zoom for a short business meeting followed by a discussion of the book led by Marsha Laya and Rita Stevens.

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](#).

Qigong at UUCG

You are invited to join our weekly Qigong sessions, every Tuesday and Saturday morning at 9:00 AM!



5 Reasons to try Qigong at UUCG

- Qigong is a low-impact exercise that doesn't require fancy equipment or special clothes.
- Qigong helps to loosen your muscles and relax your body.
- Qigong provides an opportunity for intentional deep breathing that clears your mind.
- Our sessions are on Zoom so you can try it in the privacy of your own home with your camera off.
- Our Qigong 'regulars' are a great bunch of people who will welcome YOU warmly.

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 UUCG member and lead facilitator at Stress Less Kalamazoo, Eric Nelson, for drop-in guided Mindfulness Practice. The next session will be on **Wednesday, September 28**.

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

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

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

Recently, I have heard people say, “we don’t have any kids at UUC.” This is not true! And when you say that, it makes the one kid we do have feel invisible. *We should celebrate our very small but mighty youth presence at UUC.* After all, one kid is better than none and it is certainly not his fault that there are not any others here. I think we should plan to give him 100% of our efforts and make sure he feels loved, accepted, and valued by this community.



For my part, I started the church year the same way I usually do, with a discussion about our expectations of each other and the program for the coming year. I promised to support our youth in whatever projects he wants to take on and he committed to coming to church in person so we could work together on things. In order for this plan to work, I will need an adult to volunteer to be downstairs with me EVERY Sunday. Please consider donating some of your time to RE this year. *Volunteering to hang out in the RE area on Sunday is one of the ways you can show our young person that he is important!*

Then, we started brainstorming. We decided to practice some of the organizing skills we learned last year by taking on a couple of social justice projects.

The first one will be similar to the **Postcard Party** we held last fall in support of reproductive justice and climate change. (Who knows? Maybe our cards to Governor Whitmer helped firm her resolve to fight to protect Roe vs Wade and our notes to President Biden helped inform his decision to include climate change mitigation measures in the Inflation Reduction Act! I am sure they didn’t hurt!) This time we will be reaching out to people in Michigan and encouraging them to vote. Our letter- writing party is tentatively schedule our **Sunday, October 2**. Make sure to get it on your calendar. *A big turnout will show our young person how much we appreciate his efforts!*

Our second social justice project will be a much bigger undertaking focused on **LGBTQ+ Visibility and Acceptance**. It will require a lot of planning and a team of people to pull it off so be ready to say ‘Yes!’ if our youth reaches out and asks you for help. *Accepting our young person’s leadership will let him know he is valued!*

We also decided to work on an all-congregation art project in celebration of our **8 UU Principles**. We reached out to our resident artist, Mary Roscoe to see if she would be willing to collaborate and she said, “Yes!” She will be meeting with our young person on Sunday, September 18 to get the ball rolling on this plan. There will be an opportunity for everyone in the congregation to add their imagination and artistic skills to this project. *Sharing your time and talents with our young person is a great way to show him that he is loved by this community!*

I am excited about the plans we have made. I think with your help, it will be another great year at UUC. May it be so!

DATE	SEPTEMBER UU EXPLORATION PLANS	LOCATION
September 4	Our Brainstorming Continues...	Downstairs UUC
September 11	Water Communion Multi-generational Sunday Service	Upstairs UUC
September 18	8th Principle Art Project	Downstairs UUC
September 25	Letter Writing Party Prep	Upstairs UUC

8TH PRINCIPLE

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.

Putting our 8th Principle into practice will require us to challenge and stretch ourselves to discover and adopt new and better ways of thinking and doing so that we may build a Beloved Community that benefits us all.

Luckily for us, we have an amazing resource at the Kalamazoo Public Library, ONEplace@kpl, that can help us with this work. ONEplace is a capacity building organization offering resources and services to nonprofit staff, board, and volunteers in Kalamazoo County. They have teamed up with organizations such as ERACCE (Eliminating Racism and Creating/Celebrating Equality), the YWCA, AORTA (Anti-Oppression Resource And Training Alliance), and others to provide no cost, virtual trainings that can help us learn the skills we need to challenge systemic racism in our daily lives and throughout our community.

There are lots of great trainings coming up in September. We have highlighted a few that might be beneficial to both individuals, depending on where they are on their anti-racist journey, and to our church community as we work to dismantle barriers to inclusion.

You can learn more and register for these events at the ONEplace event page on the Kalamazoo Public Library's website (see the link below).

Registration Required

Introduction to Systemic Racism

September 14 & 15, 2022
Please register: kpl.gov/oneplace/events

one
place @ kpl

Visit One Place at the Kalamazoo Public Library website:

www.kpl.gov/venue/oneplacekpl-webinar/

to learn more about these and other FREE virtual trainings and to register to attend.

Registration Required

Uprooting White Supremacy in Organizations

Tuesday, September 20, 2022
Please register: kpl.gov/oneplace/events

one
place @ kpl

Registration Required

Racial Equity Workshop

Wednesday/Thursday, September 21 & 22, 2022
Please register: kpl.gov/oneplace/events

one
place @ kpl

FAITH IN ACTION



PROTECTING DEMOCRACY

RALLY FOR FULL EQUALITY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST, NOON
STATE OF MICHIGAN CAPITOL STEPS

Inclusive Justice of Michigan invites all Michiganders who believe in defending democracy in our state and nation to join us in lifting our voices on the steps of the State Capitol. We gather in honor of one of our founders of Inclusive Justice, Jim Toy, who made his mission in life to advocate for equality. Now, more than ever, we need to come together and advocate for preserving democracy from those whose goal it is to turn back the clock and re-write history as a way of hiding truth.

We will advocate and educate on the importance of:

- racial justice
- women's reproductive rights
- LGBTQ+ equality
- voting rights
- preventing censorship of historical facts & literature in schools and public libraries
- and protecting transgender youth from those who would silence them or diminish their humanity



WILL YOU JOIN US?

Contact Inclusive Justice or rstringfellow@inclusivejustice.org to have your organization listed as a co-sponsor.



OPPORTUNITIES



The 9th annual **Gryphon Place Suicide Prevention Walk** takes place on **Saturday,**

September 24. The 5K walk will raise awareness about suicide prevention, allow people to connect with resources and each other, and provide critical funds for Gryphon Place.

The walk will kickoff at 9:00 AM at Bronson Park. After the kick-off, you will walk a 5k around Kalamazoo! The route is marked, and it will lead you back to Bronson Park.

Registration is \$25 and includes a t-shirt and wristband. Registration increases to \$30 after September 5 and your t-shirt size preference will no longer be guaranteed. To register: www.gryphon.org/spw



SUICIDE PREVENTION WALK
SAT. SEPTEMBER 24

Walk FOR WARMTH

COME JOIN US FOR A FAMILY AND PET FRIENDLY ONE MILE WALK!

SEPT. 15TH
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
REGISTRATION AT 11 AM

WALK BEGINS AT 11:30 AM
315 W. MICHIGAN AVE - KALAMAZOO - MI 49007
DONATIONS WELCOME!

DOGS ON LEASH WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE
ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE USED TO KEEP FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY WARM THIS WINTER

CommunityAction

Go to caascm.org/highlights for updates.



In 2019 UUCC entered into a partnership with some creative folks in our community and a new theatre company was born, **Open House Theatre Company!** Their vision was (and is today) to provide an accessible, educational, and inclusive theatrical experience regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, or economic status.

Open House Theatre Company's inaugural production of ***Our Town*** in November 2019 was a great success. Then, with only one play produced and some plans in the works for more projects, Covid-19 came crashing down on our world like a tsunami and all the company's dreams came to halt. Now that the effects of Covid are subsiding, Open House Theatre Company is emerging once more. This past spring they produced the reading of first-time playwright Daniel Smith's ***Slipping*** and now they are in the beginning stages of putting on the full play.

Please watch this space as they share more information regarding Daniel Smith, his play, and Open House Theatre Company's fully staged production. If you are a thespian and are looking for a project to participate in this fall, please email openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com.

The company is also looking for sponsors, supporters, and volunteers to help them succeed in producing an amazing production of ***Slipping*** by playwright Daniel Smith. Are you this willing to help? Contact openhousetheatrecompany@gmail.com to learn more.

OPPORTUNITIES

**BODIES.
TIME.
LABOR.
PRIVACY.
AUTONOMY.
POWER.
FUTURE.**

**FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 30TH**

**WE ARE CHOOSING
TO REMOVE OURSELVES.**

**#DAYWITHOUTUS
LET'S GO.**

- ACRE Campaigns
- Advancement Project
- Ben & Jerry's
- Black Feminist Future
- Black Feminist Project
- Black Men Build
- Black Queer & Intersectional Collective, BQIC
- Black Trans Fund
- Black Voters Matter
- BLD PWR
- BLUF Editorial
- Center for Popular Democracy Action
- Collective Impact
- Color of Change
- Ford Foundation
- Giving Gap
- Harness
- Harriets Wildest Dreams
- Highlander Center
- In Our Own Voice
- Mass Incarceration Committee
- MomsRising Together
- MoveOn
- National Lawyers Guild
- NDN Collective
- Ohio Voice
- One Billion Rising
- Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists
- SisterLove
- SisterReach
- Stardust Fund
- The Afiya Center
- The Frontline
- The Gaia Leadership Project
- The South
- Unitarian Universalist Association
- URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
- V-Day
- Voters of Tomorrow
- We Testify
- Women's March
- Working Families Party

www.DayWithoutUs.com

Paid for by Ben and Jerry's

[Day Without Us](#) is a national teach-in organized by a group of Black Women committed to the liberation of all people. We know the electorate. Providing care and relief is an important part of our individual and collective work. People should not have to decide between participating in democracy and feeding their families.

On September 30, we invite you to join your community to meet this moment collectively and exercise the power we have and the freedom that comes from flexing that power together.

#DayWithoutUS emphasizes the autonomy of participants above all. We will move participants from education to absorption to action around reproductive justice and democracy defense, realizing that work encompasses labor, climate, racial, disability, housing, and gender justice. By hosting in-person gatherings and virtual teach-ins in communities across the country, we'll share information and immediately connect people with local reproductive justice, democracy, and organizing work happening where they live.

Answer the urgent call to exercise our collective power in a #DayWithoutUs. The fight for our future is happening right now. In order to *let America be America again— The land that never has been yet—And yet must be—the land where every man is free*—our ask of you is simple : **STAY HOME ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30** to gather virtually or in person. We'll learn together, make connections, build community, and fortify ourselves for what comes next.

**DAY
WITHOUT
US**
NATIONAL TEACH-IN



CALENDAR



SEPTEMBER 2022

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Thursday	September 1	Stewardship Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Friday	September 2	Life Line Health Screenings	9 AM—5 PM
Saturday	September 3	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	September 4	Bad Theology Makes For Bad Ecology with Rev. Gy UU Exploration for Children and Youth After-Service Social Time	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 10:45 AM
Monday	September 5	LABOR DAY	All Day
Tuesday	September 6	Qigong Board of Trustees Meeting	9:00 AM 6:30 PM
Thursday	September 8	UUCC Movie Discussion Group: Crash	7:00 PM
Friday	September 9	Women's Book Group	1:00 PM
Saturday	September 10	Qigong UUCC Sugarloaf Kayaking Trip	9:00 AM 10:00 AM
Sunday	September 11	Water Communion with Rev. Gy After-Service Social Time Program Council Meeting	10:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:00 AM
Tuesday	September 13	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	September 14	Sunday Services Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
Thursday	September 15	A Conversation with Nomi Joyrich	7:00 PM
Saturday	September 17	Qigong 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group Rain Garden Planting Day	9:00 AM 9:00 AM 10:00 AM
Sunday	September 18	Adaptive Ministry with Cameron Young UU Exploration for Children and Youth After-Service Social Time	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 10:45 AM
Monday	September 19	Sustainability Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	September 20	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	September 21	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	12:00 PM
Thursday	September 22	Exploring Anti-Racism with Rev. Gy and Eric	7:00 PM
Friday	September 23	Equinox Bonfire	5:00 PM
Saturday	September 24	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	September 25	Reflections on Stoicism with David Senecal UU Exploration for Children and Youth After-Service Social Time Appreciative Inquiry/Strategic Planning Workshop	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 10:45 AM 11:00 AM
Tuesday	September 27	Qigong Civil Conversations Group	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Wednesday	September 28	Mindfulness Practice with Eric	7:00 PM

**UU Community Church
is served by:**

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

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

2022-2023 Board of Trustees

Eric Nelson

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Marsha Laya

Pat Timm

**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, September 21 at NOON**

Please send submissions to:

uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUUnity Matters

**Unitarian Universalist Community Church
of Southwest Michigan**

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



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

