



CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

May 2023

MAY SUNDAY SERVICES

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

May 7: *Living in Right Relationship* with Rev. Gy

Join Rev. Gy as they help us explore what integrity, courage, and commitment to an honest and healthy relationship with others might look like in our lives.

May 14: *Hindsight 20/20?* with Rev. Gy

If we do not acknowledge the true legacy of those who came before us, we run the risk of romanticizing and glorifying times and systems that provided justice and freedom to a privileged few.

May 21: *Flower Communion* with Rev. Gy

The first Flower Communion, led by Unitarian minister Rev. Norbert Čapek, was held in Prague one hundred years ago this June. We will join UUs from all over the world in celebrating the centennial anniversary of this beloved tradition and [its powerful history](#). Be sure to bring a flower to add to our communal bowl if you plan to attend the service in person.

May 28: *Where Is the Line?* with Rev. Gy

Is “political correctness” simply being sensitive to another’s experiences and treating people with the dignity they deserve or is it a soul-crushing cultural force that inhibits free speech and polices free thought?



Spiritual Theme for May ACCOUNTABILITY

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 Accountability and Resources.

In *Accountability in a Time of Justice*, Vivette Jeffries-Logan, Michelle Johnson, and Tema Okun write, *Accountability in the context of racial equity and justice generally refers to the ways in which white people and communities need to be accountable to people and communities of color. This commitment attempts to redress the way in which racist oppression, all oppression, benefits those with social and institutional power at the expense of those with less. This is not to suggest that it is a one-way street, where dominant groups and people are always “wrong” while oppressed groups and people are always “right.” Accountability is in essence a form of solidarity, one that acknowledges the deep conditioning of all of us into a race construct that places white at the top while systematically devaluing people and communities of color.*

Question to ponder this month: How might we construct accountability in ways that help us live our vision of racial equity and justice?



FROM THE MINISTER



From the Minister

Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney

One of my professors once said that hope is the waiting we do. Once hope is gone, so is the waiting.

I find myself waiting, hoping

As you may know, I just returned from Los Angeles in search of a fix for this pesky CSF leak (cerebrospinal fluid) I have. It was a successful trip in the sense that they confirmed the leak beyond the shadow of a doubt, but unfortunately, they could not schedule me for surgery right away. Hence the wait.

I will return to Cedar Sinai (West Hollywood) within the next couple of months and they will look for the leak again. If they find it, they'll fix it. If they won't, they will shrink my dura (the pouch that holds the brain and the spinal cord). The idea is that if the dura is smaller even with less fluid in there the pressure will be bigger and that's what I need. So, here's hoping, here's waiting.

In the month of May we are focusing on Accountability which is why I decided to include my health update in the monthly newsletter. Transparency is an integral part of accountability.

We are also doing some really great work in our spiritual community to grow our in-person and online reach. It is clear to me that we can't keep doing church in the old, conventional ways for the world around us has changed. People engage in different ways, expect involvement in different ways. We are trying to catch up to the change.

We've engaged a very competent marketing consultant who is helping us to think in ways we've never thought before, trying to open our consciousness to possibilities we never considered before. I feel incredibly hopeful and excited about what's to come.

In the spirit of accountability and love, we will keep you posted on all new things we are going to implement. We are only at the very beginning of this journey and we're in good hands.

Here's to growing our reach and impact because our message is worth all of our efforts.

Celebration of Life for John Folz

A celebration of the life of long-term member and one of the founders of our church, [John Folz](#) (1925-2023), will be held at UUCU at **2:00 PM** on **Saturday, May 13**. Light refreshments will be served. Masks are welcome but not required.

A Zoom room will be set up for those who would like to attend remotely. Please contact the church office (uucommuntiy@gmail.com) for the link.



CARING COMMUNITY



MAY CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

When April steps aside for May, like diamonds all the rain-drops glisten; fresh violets open every day: to some new bird each hour we listen. — Lucy Larcom

Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

Rev. Gy and Patti had an eventful medical trip to Los Angeles. You can read about it in Rev. Gy's article in this month's newsletter.

Nancy and Joe Calme are excited to welcome a new puppy into their farm family. They will be hunkering down at home for the first few days to bond together.

Congratulations to UUCC friend **Denise Hartsough** for taking 2nd in their age group in the half-Marathon during the Kalamazoo Marathon on April 23.

Lots of UUCC folks enjoyed hearing **Freya Lake** sing with the Kalamazoo Community Chorale during their spring concert on April 23.

It was a joy to see founding members **Connie and Mike Leatherman** at our Easter service! They have moved closer to Portage and we hope they will visit again soon.

Congratulations to our UUCC college students **David Brozovich, Isaac Epskamp-Hunt, Amanda Nelson, Matthew Nelson, and Chris Petersmark** as they finish up the school year and take one step closer to their academic goals!

Birthdays:

The May babies among UUCC members, friends, and RE graduates include:

5- Nick Tasko, 13 – Kathy Hays, 17-Denise Sonier, 20-David Brozovich, 25-Larry Higgins

We wish you all a very happy birthday and many happy returns of the day!

Remembering Friends Who Have Passed On:

Three dear old friends/members of our congregation died in the month of May in past years.

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

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

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

Welcome New Visitors:

It was lovely to meet Chris Petersmark's wife **Adelaide** and her mother **Christy** at a Sunday service in April. We were also delighted to have our dear friends **Jacquis Robertson** and **Dr. Charlae Davis** drop in for a visit via Zoom. And, we welcomed **Emily** and **Adam Harmon** for a second visit in April and apologize for messing up their names so badly in last month's newsletter.

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.

LEADERSHIP



The Board of Trustees met on April 5. Here are a few of the things they accomplished:

- Reviewed the proposed budget, made a few small changes, and reviewed plans for the budget roundtable on April 30.
- Learned about the security plans for the Drag Show and authorized assistance from a team from OutFront Kalamazoo.
- Gave their okay to begin planning a joint potluck between UCC and Peoples church later this year.

Click [HERE](#) to read the minutes from their April meeting. The next regular Board meeting will take place via Zoom **Wednesday, May 3 at 6:30 PM**. Click [HERE](#) to see the agenda.

Board meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend. A link to the Zoom meeting can be found on the [UU Community Church online calendar](#).

Annual Meeting News

In accordance with the by-laws, UCC will hold an Annual Meeting of the Congregation on **Sunday, June 4 at 11:15 AM**.

The meeting agenda, the final proposed budget, the slate of candidates, and any other relevant documents to the meeting will be emailed to you on **Friday, May 19**. If you need paper copies of these, please contact the office and Miriam will mail them to you. There will also be a few paper copies available at the Welcome Desk on and after May 21.

The Annual Meeting will be a hybrid gathering with members in good standing who signed the membership book before May 4, 2023, able to vote in person or via Zoom for candidates for the board and nominating committee, to approve the budget, and on any other matters of business brought to the floor. There shall be no voting absentee by proxy, by email, by postal mail, or by facsimile.

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

The **2022-23 UCC Nominating Committee**, (Nancy Calme and Kimberly Ridley) have selected three members to be nominated for two-year terms on the Board of Trustees. These appointments are approved by member vote at the annual meeting. They will be replacing outgoing Trustees Judy Pigg-Behrendt, Eric Nelson, and Andy Miller.

The nominees for a 2-year term are:

Eric Nelson (renewing for another term)

Michael Graham

Stephen Tasko

The Committee is very grateful to these three members for agreeing to serve the congregation in leadership roles.

In accordance with the by-laws, additional nominations for the Board of Trustees may be submitted by any member or group of members, two weeks in advance of the annual meeting by furnishing the name of the proposed nominee or nominees, in writing, to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees. A member may also self-nominate. Nominations will close two (2) weeks prior to the annual meeting and there will be no nominations from the floor.

8TH PRINCIPLE

BUILD a
diverse
BELOVED
COMMUNITY

Putting Our 8th UU Principle into Action

Our newly adopted 8th UU Principle calls on us to engage in individual and communal action to accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in our congregation and in society at large.

A frequently asked question about the 8th Principle is: *How do we “accountably dismantle?”* To answer this question the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis (UUCA) created an **8th Principle Accountability Checklist** for its Board of Trustees. The checklist

explicitly states that the 8th Principle is at the *center* of all the Board’s work and lists items such as:

- The Board is committed to being bold in conversations about the 8th Principle and showing leadership in practicing the 8th Principle.
- The Board will publicize its commitment to the 8th Principle in the newsletter, other publications, on the UUCA website, and during public meetings.
- The Board will follow the SAE (Subtle Acts of Exclusion) Model and encourage its use throughout UUCA.
- Board members will demonstrate their awareness of and support for the 8th Principle during UUCA meetings and classes.
- Board Meetings will be conducted in an inclusive manner, ensuring that all participants have a chance to be heard.
- Decisions and Policy development will be made with an anti-racist and inclusive lens. An inclusive lens is sensitive to the concerns and experiences of people who are not part of the dominant identities.
- Communications with other Board members will be made directly, recognizing that this requires comfort with conflict and the acceptance of the different ways people handle conflict.
- New members of the Board will be paired with a buddy to make sure they are given the necessary support to clearly understand the Board vocabulary, procedures, and accountability measures.
- The Board will consciously support involvement and transactions with businesses, organizations, events etc. that are predominantly owned/operated by black, indigenous, or other people of color whenever possible.
- During every Board meeting time will be allotted for an Accountability Observer to report on our adherence to our 8th Principle Accountability Checklist. Board members will rotate the responsibility for being the Accountability Observer on a monthly basis.
- Board communications will be reviewed with an 8th Principle lens to ensure inclusive, bias-free language and images prior to sending them out.
- Board members are responsible for their own continued learning to establish a shared vocabulary and foundational understanding.

It is inspiring to see how other UU congregations are integrating the 8th Principle into their policies, procedures, and governance and imagining how UU Community Church could create similar systems of accountability that could help us live our vision of racial equity and justice.

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 11:20 AM. Bring your voice to our next meeting on **May 7**. We will meet following the service and you can participate either in person or on Zoom.

At our April meeting, we had much to **CELEBRATE!**

We looked back at all we accomplished in March including great Sunday Services from Rev. Gy and special guest Levi Rickert, a wonderful Thoughtful Thursday conversation with Rev. Barry Petrucci and members of his congregation, and meaningful discussions in our small groups. We collected \$347 for the Ecumenical Senior Center and wrapped a very successful Pledge Drive. We celebrated our generosity with a delicious dinner from our neighbors Garcia's Mexican Kitchen, margaritas, and entertainment from Bob Ricci. A new exhibit of paintings by our youth group member Nick Tasko went up on the Art Wall. We shared words of support and encouragement in a video on social media to celebrate Transgender Day of Visibility. And last, but not least, we moved into the Project Phase of the Appreciative Inquiry process and have eager volunteers ready to work on some new and exciting projects at UUCC. Together, we do amazing things!

During the meeting, we also learned about some **ISSUES** and **OPPORTUNITIES**:

- We got a report from **Mary Roscoe** about what is happening at **Open House Theatre**.
- We got an update from **Regena Nelson** about some requests from our justice partners at ISAAC (**Interfaith Strategies for Advocacy and Action in the Community**) and agreed to spend \$250 from the Program Council budget to pay our annual dues to ISAAC.
- **Miriam** filled us in on the **amendment process for the proposed Article II** language. (Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association By-Laws houses our principles and sources. A commission appointed by the UUA is proposing some significant changes to the way we articulate our values. You can learn more about the changes to Article II [HERE](#).)
- **Joe Calme** let us know that UUCC will be hosting a table at **Pride on Saturday**, June 3, and that volunteers will be needed to plan activities and staff the table.

On the **AGENDA** for May's Program Council Meeting:

- Plans for a **joint potluck** with UUCC and Peoples Church
- Check in from our Appreciative Inquiry **Project Teams**
- An update from the **Growth Team**
- News about the **Annual Meeting**

Please plan to join us at the next Program Council meeting on Sunday, May 7 at around 11:20 AM, in person or via Zoom, and help keep UUCC's programs going strong. If you have any questions, or items to add to the agenda, contact Pat Timm (ptimm336@gmail.com).



OPEN HOUSE THEATRE

Open House Theatre Company produces new play by Portage playwright Daniel Smith by David Senecal

PORTAGE, MI—The Open House Theatre Company, based at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan (UUCC), 10441 Shaver Road in Portage, MI will present its production of "Slipping" by playwright Daniel Smith on May 5, 6, and 7 at the UUCC. The play, directed by Mary Roscoe, tells "a timely and timeless story of struggle and friendship, as a group of young friends each confront their fears, hopes, and dreams. Living with the realities of student debt, unfair working conditions, and low wages, they find strength and support in each other and in the fight to form a union against all odds. The play does not pull any punches in an honest portrayal of heartbreak, despair, joy, and love, as their lives cross and they each must find the courage to confront what life has thrown at them."

Daniel Smith brings a broad range of life and work experience to his play. He worked in the industrial, corporate, and academic worlds until his retirement. He worked for National Steel in down-river Detroit, beginning at age 21, from 1974 to 1986. He says that workers were regularly killed or injured there and that finally stressful working conditions and concern for his health led him to seek employment elsewhere. "Slipping" is based on his experiences both as a worker and a union steward, the people he worked with and served, and the challenges they met in the workplace and in their private lives. He hopes that the play will contribute to "validating the lives of working women and men" no matter where they live and are employed. Indeed, "Slipping" is set in an unnamed city in Michigan, and we know his characters by their first names only. The company that most of them work for is identified by "Wolverine," a manufacturer of paper products.



Daniel Smith

While employed by National Steel, Daniel earned his bachelor's degree in computer science at Wayne State University. He then moved on to the Upjohn Company (now Pfizer) in Kalamazoo for 18 years and spent the rest of his career at Western Michigan University working in Information Technology. It was at WMU that Daniel submitted the original version of "Slipping" to a play-writing contest in which the winning submission would be performed by theater students. Although his play didn't win, he had the satisfaction of creating a full-length work since previously he had only written some poetry and a few one-act comedies not published or performed. Eventually, Daniel and Open House Theatre Company's Artistic Director, Mary Roscoe crossed paths, and Mary agreed to produce his play. It received a preview performance in a readers' theater format at UUCC last year, and Daniel and Mary were then confident that a fully-staged production could become a reality.

As well as working on a new play, Daniel teaches in an ESL program at a local church, is the co-chair of KNOW: Kalamazoo Nonviolent Opponents of War, and is a member of Portage LOV (Linking Our Voices) which addresses school and community equity issues. It's not all work for him: he also sings with the Kalamazoo Male Chorus and has performed at the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre.

"Slipping" performances are at 6 PM on Friday, May 5, and Saturday, May 6, and at 2 PM on Sunday, May 7 at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church building, 10441 Shaver Road in Portage. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the door, on the church website, or using the Vanco app on a smartphone or tablet.

OPEN HOUSE THEATRE

SLIPPING

BY DANIEL SMITH

DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY
MARY ROSCOE

TICKETS
\$15



10441
SHAVER RD
PORTAGE, MI



MAY 5 @ 6 PM
MAY 6 @ 6 PM
MAY 7 @ 2 PM

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

MAY 11: EXPLORING ANTI-RACISM

Our Exploring Anti-Racism Group will meet on **Thursday, May 11 at 7:00 PM**. Please join Rev. Gy and Board President Eric Nelson as they begin to guide the group through assessing governance practices to procedures to help us build an Anti-Racism congregation.

MAY 25: A CONVERSATION WITH ...

We are hoping to schedule a conversation about Accountability with a representative of an organization engaged in anti-racist transformation but were not able to finalize our plans before the newsletter deadline. Please save the date and watch the weekly email for more information.

Composting to Combat Climate Change!

One of the projects we identified through the Appreciate Inquiry process that had a lot of volunteer support was establishing a **Community Composting Bin**.

What is composting? It is the process of breaking down organic matter and recycling the nutrients back into the soil. It takes items out of the waste stream where they don't belong. In landfills, organic matter from things like fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells, lawn clippings, etc. emits methane as they break down. Methane is an extremely potent greenhouse gas that is 80 times more potent at warming the planet than carbon dioxide.

Composting can be challenging for many people, especially if they don't have the space or the physical capabilities to manage a compost bin of their own, not to mention the question of what to do with the composted soil once you create it. A Community Compost Bin at UCC would solve many of these problems.

Members of the Composting Team will be at the **May 7** Program Council meeting to talk more about how a community bin would work and answer any questions you might have.

Congregational Conversation: Article II

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Article II Study Commission has been charged with making **changes to how we articulate our Unitarian Universalist principles and purposes**. Since 2020, the members of the Commission have collected hundreds of survey responses from individual UUs and consulted with a wide range of UU groups to help them draft a new Article II that better reflects the core values of our faith. In January, Commission submitted proposed updated language for Article. In April, a process was set up to gather suggested amendments to the proposed language. In May the UUA will host Zoom workshops to discuss, hone, refine, and finalize the amendments in preparation for a vote at General Assembly in June.

Rev. Gy and Miriam will host a **Congregation Conversation about Article II** and the current proposed amendments on **Sunday, May 21** following the service. This will be an opportunity to hear the most current information about Article II and to provide guidance to our voting delegates to General Assembly about how they should vote on the article and its amendments. You can read more about the efforts to rewrite Article II on the [UUA Website](#).

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Yoga Nidra

In the month of May, our Daring to Rest™ facilitator, **Erica Guthaus**, will be with us to lead Yoga Nidra practice on the first and third Sunday of the month because of the holidays that fall on her usual Sundays. Please mark **May 7** and **May 21** on your calendar and plan to join Erica at **7:00 PM** via Zoom on those dates.

Newcomers are always welcome to our Yoga Nidra sessions. We practice with our cameras and mics off. Yoga Nidra is a sleep-based meditation practice. But don't let the word "yoga" confuse you. There are no downward-facing dogs, warrior poses, or other physical postures. During yoga nidra you are guided to the most supreme state of relaxation imaginable. You can lie down or sit. Yoga nidra is a state of consciousness that feels like the best of deep meditation and of deep sleep. It has been stated by some practitioners that 30 minutes of yoga nidra feels like 3 hours of sleep in the body.

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 UCC

Spring brings opportunities for new growth both in our gardens and in our souls!

If you have been curious about qigong at UCC, now is the time to give it a try! You can join us every **Tuesday** and **Saturday**.

Newcomers are always welcome!



Qigong, pronounced "chi gong," was developed in China thousands of years ago as part of traditional Chinese medicine. It involves using exercises to optimize energy within the body, mind, and spirit, with the goal of improving and maintaining health and well-being.

Our qigong sessions begin at **9:00 AM** with a brief check-in followed by 30 minutes of exercise (with our cameras and mics turned off). We are led, via video recording, by an experienced instructor.

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,



Mindfulness Practice with Eric

On the 4th Wednesday of each month at **7:00 PM** you can join UCC member and lead facilitator at [Stress Less Kalamazoo](#), Eric Nelson on Zoom for drop-in guided Mindfulness Practice. The next session will be on **Wednesday, May 24**.

The practice lasts about 45 minutes and includes readings at the beginning and end. Both newcomers and seasoned Mindfulness veterans will benefit from these practices. All are welcome!

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



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY



Building Beloved Community One Conversation at a Time

The UUCC Civil Conversations Group meets once a month to practice emotional intelligence skills and learn how to engage in meaningful conversations that will help to build bridges toward greater understanding in the world. The group's next meeting is on **Tuesday, May 16 at 7:00 PM** via Zoom.


At each meeting, the group reviews what it takes to have a Civil Conversation, recaps civil (and not-so-civil) conversations they have engaged in recently, and brainstorms strategies that could be helpful when engaging with people who have different points of view.

To hone their skills, the group also has a "practice" civil conversation about a potentially contentious topic. This month they will discuss being "Woke", an adjective originally derived from African-American Vernacular English meaning "alert to racial prejudice and discrimination" that has been co-opted by popular culture as a one word short summation of leftist political ideology, social justice politics, LGBTQ+ rights, and critical race theory. It should be an interesting conversation!

Anyone interested is welcome to join this small group. You don't need to have attended the previous meetings and you are always welcome to invite friends with varying perspectives to join the conversation. Click [HERE](#) to be part of the conversation. Meeting ID: 913 7914 4167 Passcode: 601656

Finding Joy Through a Smaller Environmental Foot Print

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 UUCC and in the wider community. Here are a few things they discussed at their last meeting:

- [Climate Reality Project](#) provides free online leadership trainings led by former Vice President Al Gore and featuring advocates and experts from a wide range of fields that provide attendees with a deeper understanding of how the climate crisis is transforming our world today and the solutions available to us know if we are willing to embrace them. **Carol Higgins** recently completed the training and hopes to share what she learned at an upcoming meeting.
- **Sisal Soap Bags** are a great way to get away from bodywash in plastic bottles and extend the life of a bar of soap. **Bev Folz** recommends purchasing one from [Free the Ocean](#), an online shop that offers a wide range of plastic-free products and donates to partner organizations working to clean up the ocean with every purchase. 
- **Eric Nelson** is reading [Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture](#) by Toby Hemenway and reimagining how the landscaping might look in his yard.
- **Transformation to Renewable Energy** in Michigan will require a better policy framework at the state level to support even further expansion. Nicky Leigh has put together some talking points to help people send postcards to their state representatives to urge reform. Nicky's info sheet and everything you need to send a postcard are on a table at the back of the sanctuary.
- The group also talked about needed improvements to the **Rain Garden**, resources from the UUA for **Solar Panels** church buildings, and our annual **Vegetarian Feast**. They also put together some plans for an **Outside Work Day** on May 6 and worked on our **Green Sanctuary Opportunity Assessment!**

The group's next meeting will be on **Monday, May at 7:00 PM** via Zoom. Newcomers, no matter what stage of the sustainability journey they are on, are always welcome to this group!

SUSTAINABILITY

Styrofoam Recycling

Ron and Nancy Crowell celebrated Earth Day this year by delivering a huge load of EPS Foam (aka Styrofoam) to the recycling station at Mayors Riverfront Park.

Thank you to all the folks who kept Styrofoam out of the trash by bringing it to UUCC and placing it in the collection box at the back of the sanctuary.

UUCC will continue to collect clean, dry Styrofoam marked with a number 6. Bring it to UUCC and our dedicated volunteers will make sure it gets recycled. The next EPS Foam collection day for the City of Kalamazoo will be on July 22.



Hope for Creation Strategy Saturday



Our climate justice partners at [Hope for Creation](https://www.hopeforcreation.org/) will hold a Strategy Saturday event on **May 13 at 10:00 AM** at Peoples Church on 10th Street.

UUCC folks are welcome to join people from faith groups all over Kalamazoo to map out the next steps for joint, local environmental sustainability and climate justice priorities as identified at the final session of their recent "Analysis to Action" series.

During the session, they learn about intersectionality, elements of effective congregational action, and Ann Arbor's advances toward carbon neutrality. They also brainstormed and ranked local priorities.

At this follow-up session, planning will begin on four priorities: advocacy in local municipalities, land use, resource sharing, and waste reduction.

All are welcome whether you attended earlier sessions or not and a free vegan lunch will be served during the meeting.

Kalamazoo
Climate
Crisis
Coalition



The Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition (KCCC) mobilizes collective action to achieve immediate and drastic reductions in green-

house gas emissions and rapid adoption of renewable energy through a transition grounded in social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. The coalition was formed in 2019 in response to the Global Climate Strike led by youth climate activist, Greta Thunberg.

UU Community Church has done many things to support the work of KCCC such as sharing and participating in their events, hosting their leaders as guest speakers, and contributing financially through a special collection, but we have never taken steps to become a KCCC affiliate.

During our Annual Meeting on June 4, there will be an opportunity for the congregation to vote on officially joining KCCC. To learn more about the organization and the work they are doing to combat climate change before you vote, visit their website at kalamazooocrisis.org

CONNECTION

Women's Book Group

Friday, May 12
1:00 PM via Zoom

May Selection:

Band of Sisters

by Lauren Willig

From Goodreads:

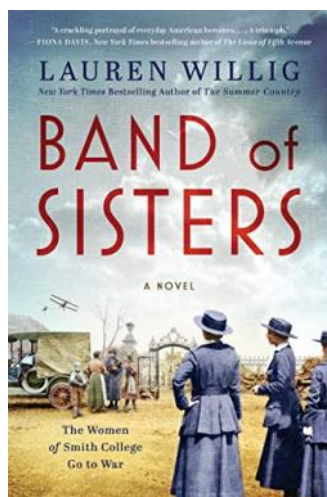
A group of young women from Smith College risk their lives in France at the height of World War I in this sweeping novel based on a true story.

A scholarship girl from Brooklyn, Kate Moran thought she found a place among Smith's Mayflower descendants, only to have her illusions dashed the summer after graduation. When charismatic alumna Betsy Rutherford delivers a rousing speech at the Smith College Club in April of 1917, looking for volunteers to help French civilians decimated by the German war machine, Kate is too busy earning her living to even think of taking up the call. But when her former best friend Emmeline Van Alden reaches out and begs her to take the place of a girl who had to drop out, Kate reluctantly agrees to join the new Smith College Relief Unit.

Four months later, Kate and seventeen other Smithies, including two trailblazing female doctors, set sail for France. The volunteers are armed with money, supplies, and good intentions—all of which immediately go astray. Despite constant shelling from the Germans, French bureaucracy, and the threat of being ousted by the British army, the Smith volunteers bring welcome aid—and hope—to the region. But can they survive their own differences?

The Book Group will meet at 1:00 PM on May 12 via Zoom for a short business meeting followed by a discussion of the book led by Denise Hartsough

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



3rd Saturday Breakfast Group

On Saturday, **May 20** our Breakfast Group will meet at Garcia's Mexican Kitchen (right next door to church) at **9:00 AM**.

Newcomers are always welcome to join the group for good food and conversation. Please RSVP to Breakfast coordinator, Ken Van Eseltine if you plan to attend, (269) 342-4793 or vaneseltinekl@sbcglobal.net



**People's Church of Kalamazoo
&
Unitarian Universalist Community Church of
SW Michigan (UUC)**

vegetarian pot luck

June 10

11:00 - 2:00

Save the Date!

Our **2023 Vegetarian Feast** is going to be better than ever! We have invited our fellow UUs from Peoples Church to join us. We will be sharing our favorite vegetarian creations to inspire everyone to live more gently on the Earth by incorporating more meatless meals into their diet AND strengthening the connections between our congregations so we can work together to spread the good news about Unitarian Universalism in the community!

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

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



It is almost time for Drag Me to Church! Nick and I are excited but nervous. We are trying to get the word out about the event the best we can but *what if no one comes!!* Our host Miss Moscato says that she is happy to perform whether there are ten people or a thousand but I know that she and her fellow queens have put in many hours and lots of hard-earned money into creating their look and rehearsing their performance. I hope that lots of community members and UUC folks and their friends come and show their support.

If you are like me, you may have never attended a drag show before and might feel a little uncertain about the whole thing. Drag Me to Church will be the perfect opportunity for drag show newbies. It is, of course, taking place in a comfortable setting for us, it will be a family-friendly show so with performances that are mostly wholesome, and there will be a whole lot of joy with music, glamour, laughter, and fun. What is not to love?

If you are not sure about the **PROPER ETIQUETTE FOR ATTENDING A DRAG SHOW**, the folks at dragpride.com have put together a helpful list:

STAY IN YOUR LANE. Don't walk where someone is performing. As with any theatrical event, the audience is there to watch the performers, not you (no matter how cute you are). Unless the performer comes up to you and invites you onstage to use in their act, do NOT go up on stage

CHEER, DANG IT! You're enjoying the show, so show it! Cheer, clap, stomp your feet. Be enthusiastic, and play along. If the emcee or a queen says jump, jump! And don't boo. Unless the person with the microphone tells you to.

TIP THEM!!! If you attend a drag show, you should be prepared to tip. The best policy is to just hand the performer the cash with your arm outstretched, or toss the money onstage if they're busy. Don't make them work for it. It may disrupt their routine. **SIDEBAR: WHY TIP?** No one can make you tip but it is an unspoken rule of drag shows. Drag performers work **HARD** and drag is **EXPENSIVE!** \$o \$how \$ome \$upport!

HANDS TO YOURSELF Do not initiate physical contact with a performer. (Don't initiate non-consensual physical contact with anyone, for that matter.) Drag performers put hours into their makeup, hair and outfits and will not appreciate you messing with their look.

LEAVE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS AT THE DOOR. Are many drag queens cis gay men? Yes. Are all drag performers cis gay men? Not by a long shot. Many drag entertainers are trans men and women, non-binary, genderqueer, and even cis women. Never assume and don't ask if a queen or king is "a real girl" or "a real dude". What all drag performers have in common is that they are people challenging, subverting and dismantling traditional ideas of gender by performing heightened versions of masculinity, femininity, and everything in between!

DATE	MAY UU EXPLORATION PLANS	VOLUNTEERS
May 7	UU Identity—The 6th Principle	Kimberly and Isaac
May 14	UU History—Mothers Day for Peace	Regena and Eric
May 21	Multigenerational Sunday Service	N/A
May	NO RE	N/A

Last, but not least, **HAVE FUN!!** There may seem like there are a lot of rules to keep in mind, but the most important thing of all to remember is to enjoy yourself! May it be so!

LGBTQ+ VISIBILITY

AN ALL AGES COMMUNITY EVENT

DRAG ME TO CHURCH



**A DRAG WORKSHOP AND SHOW AT
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH**



**UNLEASH YOUR INNER
DRAG QUEEN AT OUR
UPCOMING 101
WORKSHOP. LEARN
FROM THE PROS IN
MAKEUP, HAIR, AND
PERFORMANCE. ALL
SKILL LEVELS
WELCOME. JOIN US
FOR THE WORKSHOP
AND STAY FOR THE
SHOW! LEAVE FEELING
FABULOUS.**



HOSTED BY: MISS MOSCATO



MOANA LOTTE



PETTY DIVINE



SAVANNAH HAWTHORNE

MAY 20TH 2023

DRAG 101 WORKSHOP 4PM - 6PM

DRAG SHOW 6PM - 8PM

10441 SHAVER RD

PORTAGE, MI 49024



**Unitarian Universalist
Community Church
uucommunitychurch.org**

OPPORTUNITIES

Outside Work Day

The UUCC Sustainability Group is hosting an outdoor spring clean-up day on **Saturday, May 6 from 10:00 AM to noon**. Come when you can and stay as long as you want!

We will be mowing, trimming, weeding, raking, and doing anything else that needs to be done to get our grounds looking good.

If you plan to volunteer please bring gloves, garden tools, rakes and shovels, trimmers, or anything other tools that will come in handy.

Thank you in advance for your support in helping to keep our church a beautiful place for all to enjoy!



Construction on Shaver Road

One of the opportunities you might have in the coming weeks is finding an alternative route to church!



Construction on the Shaver Road Reconstruction Project will begin on Monday, May 1. According to the City of Portage's website, this project will be constructed over the next two years.

Year one of the project affects Shaver Road from the south city limits to Oakland Drive and includes the installation of barrier-free access at all sidewalk crossings including tactile warning surfaces, pavement milling, and resurfacing. The first phase of the project is expected to be completed by mid-June 2023.

The City of Portage is committed to keeping the traffic flowing during the construction process as well as maintaining access to driveways except for brief periods during the milling and paving operations. However, there will be times when lanes are restricted and traffic delays can be expected. Motorists are urged to seek alternate routes and use caution while driving in the construction zones.

UUCC at Pride



Each year, Kalamazoo Pride brings together thousands of people of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, and racial identities from South-west Michigan and beyond to celebrate LGBTQ+ Pride. The festival at Kalamazoo's Arcadia Creek Festival Place features drag performances, music, exhibitors, food, dancing, and more. This year's Pride will take place on **Saturday, June 3**.

UUCC will be sharing a booth with People's Church again this year and we are working together to plan some kid-friendly activities. Volunteers will be needed for this event! Please save the date and watch your weekly email for information on volunteer sign-up closer to the date.



MAY 2023



DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Tuesday	May 2	ELECTION DAY Qigong	7 AM-8 PM 9:00 AM
Wednesday	May 3	Board of Trustees Meeting	6:30 P:M
Thursday	May 4	Stewardship Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Friday	May 5	OHTC presents Slipping	6:00 PM
Saturday	May 6	Qigong Outside Clean-Up Day OHTC presents Slipping	9:00 AM 10:00 AM 6:00 PM
Sunday	May 7	No Choir Practice Living in Right Relationship with Rev Gy and UU Exploration for Kids Program Council OHTC presents Slipping Yoga Nidra	10:00 AM 11:20 AM 2:00 PM 7:00 PM
Tuesday	May 9	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	May 10	Sunday Services Committee Meeting	7:00 PM
Thursday	May 11	Exploring Anti-Racism	7:00 PM
Friday	May 12	Women's Book Group	9:00 AM
Saturday	May 13	Qigong Celebration of Life: John Folz	9:00 AM 2:00 PM
Sunday	May 14	MOTHERS DAY Choir Practice Hindsight 20/20? with Rev. Gy and UU Exploration for Kids	9:00 AM 10:00 AM
Monday	May 15	Sustainability Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	May 16	Qigong Civil Conversations Group	9:00 AM 7:00 PM
Saturday	May 20	Qigong 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group Drag Me to Church Workshop and Drag Show	9:00 AM 9:00 AM 3-8 PM
Sunday	May 21	Choir Practice Multigenerational Flower Communion with Rev. Gy Article II Feedback Session Yoga Nidra with Erica	9:00 AM 10:00 AM 11:20 AM 7:00 PM
Tuesday	May 23	Qigong	10:00 AM
Wednesday	May 24	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Mindfulness Practice with Eric	12:00 PM 7:00 PM
Thursday	May 25	A Conversation with	7:00 PM
Saturday	May 27	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	May 28	Choir Practice Where is the Line? With Rev. Gy No UU Exploration for Kids	9:00 AM 10:00 AM
Monday	May 29	MEMORIAL DAY	
Tuesday	May 30	Qigong Committee on Ministry	9:00 AM 1:30 PM

UU Community Church is served by:

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2022-2023 Board of Trustees

Eric Nelson

Judy Pigg-Behrendt

Marsha Laya

Pat Timm

**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, May 24 at NOON**

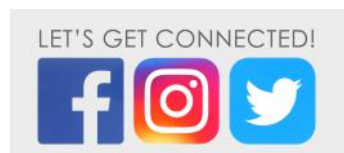
Please send submissions to:

uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUUnity Matters

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ON

