



CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

August 2023

GROWING THE TREE OF LIFE



*The Sunday Services Team (Joe Calme, Pat Fuehr, Nicky Leigh, and David Senecal, assisted by Miriam and Rev. Gy) have put together a **Thematic Calendar for 2023-2024** that will tap into the wisdom of trees to help prepare us to grow mentally, spiritually, and physically in the coming year.*

Over the last few years, first through an Appreciative Inquiry/Strategic Planning process and later with the formation of a Growth Team, we have been spending a lot of time discussing our hopes and dreams for this little community.

At the heart of these conversations is the conviction that our Unitarian Universalist message of strength in diversity, love, justice, and peace is sorely needed in this hurting world and, what we do here matters.

Time and time again in these conversations people have expressed a desire to grow this community, to reach out beyond our walls and spread our life-giving message, and to partner with others to make a positive difference in our community and the world. These are noble goals but getting there won't necessarily be easy.

Promoting growth in a small religious community can be difficult. It will require us to cultivate a greater openness to innovation and change, both on a personal level and as a community.

To help us embark on this journey, we have chosen **GROWTH** as the focus of our spiritual explorations this year. (More on page 2)

A CHOSEN FAITH

To guide our journey we will look to **TREES** for inspiration. Trees are masters of growth and adaptation. Starting from a tiny seed, they use resources close at hand to grow to towering heights. In some cases, they can live for centuries, providing shelter and sustenance for thousands of other creatures. In forests, they cooperate with each other, sharing nutrients at critical times to keep each other healthy. They even have ways of communicating with each other. And in death and decomposition, they continue to provide protection and nutrients for the young trees that will replace them.

Trees, both metaphorically and literally, are sure to provide us with a year full of spiritual themes to explore as we seek to learn more about navigating change and growth. We hope you will join us as we embark on a new church year ***Growing the Tree of Life***.

- With love from Rev. Gy, Miriam, and the UUCC Sunday Services Committee



Book Discussion Group

Once a year, Rev. Gy invites both long-time members and newcomers to this Unitarian Universalist community to join them in a discussion of ***A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism***.

In the book, two long-time ministers and denominational leaders, Rev. John A. Buehrens and Rev. Forrest Church, describe the sources and history of Unitarian Universalism, how those traditions are adapted in congregations today, and how they each came to choose Unitarian Universalism as a career and a way of life. It provides a nice framework for participants to talk about their own spiritual journeys and to get to know each other better. We also ask that people who are considering formal membership at UUCC take part in this book discussion group before signing the membership book.

Rev. Gy likes to split the discussion into six, 90-minute sessions. The discussion group will meet once a week, most likely on Tuesday evenings starting in late August or early September.

The class will be hybrid both meeting in person at UUCC and on Zoom for those who prefer. Child-care will be provided for anyone who requests it.

If you would be interested in participating in this year's discussion of ***A Chosen Faith***, please contact Miriam (uucommunity@gmail.com) by Monday, August 14 so she can purchase you a copy of the book and set the class schedule.

INSPIRED SPIRITUALITY

AUGUST SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 AM. Childcare will be provided.

You can also join us on [Facebook](#) and Zoom*.

Spiritual Theme of the Month: PREPARING THE SOIL

Our services in August will focus on the skills, discernment, and practices we need to lean into growth and change.



August 6: *Growth and Change* with Miriam Epskamp

Our Director of Religious Education, Miriam Epskamp will help us kick off a new year and a new spiritual theme - Growing the Tree of Life - with an exploration of the challenges and benefits of growth and change.

Zoom Meeting ID: 962 5020 8659. Click [HERE](#) to register.

August 13: *Preparing the Soil* with Rev. Gy

Just as an acorn needs rich soil if it is to grow into a mighty oak, people need a supportive community if they are to realize their full potential. Rev. Gy will help us consider what ingredients are needed in a community to help people weather change and grow.

Zoom Meeting ID: 955 2218 1364. Click [HERE](#) to register.

August 20: *Trees of Life*

What better way to start our year of taking inspiration from trees than hearing from someone who has spent a lifetime in love with them? Our guest speaker, Mike Connor, a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture, will share his awe-inspiring wonder of trees and help us learn more about their vital role in our environment, ecosystems, and overall well-being.

Zoom Meeting ID: 976 8361 5341. Click [HERE](#) to register.

August 27: *Honesty in Diversity* with Rev. Gy

Humanity presents itself in so many diverse ways. It is easy to judge and exclude. But this is not the way to a healed and whole community and planet. In this talk, Rev. Gy will help us to exercise not only our acceptance but our supportive muscles.

Zoom Meeting ID: 994 9717 2124. Click [HERE](#) to register.

**Starting on August 6 we will be asking folks to register if they plan to watch the Sunday service by Zoom. You will still receive a Saturday email with a Zoom link for each Sunday service. When you click on the link, it will ask you to register by filling in your name and email address before letting you enter the meeting. It should only take a minute or less of your time.*

GUESTS IN THE PULPIT

We are excited to welcome these guests to our pulpit in August:



Mike Connor is a Certified Arborist, Nursery Grower, and an experienced Bee-keeper. He grew up on an orchard and Christmas tree farm in Southwest Michigan, and purchased his first hive of bees when he was 12 years old. He is in a unique position to understand the relationships between plants, trees, and bees.

Mike's education is from Cornerstone University and MSU, as well as from working with some of the best Beekeepers in the world!

Including a 7-year commitment as a Municipal Arborist and Park Superintendent, Mike has spent his entire career growing and caring for plants, trees, and bees. He is a co-founder of the Grand Rapids Area Bee Club.

Once a month we invite a special guest to join us for a virtual **Thoughtful Thursday** to tell us more about the work they are doing and answer any questions we might have. Our guest on **Thursday, August 17 at 7:00 PM** will be **Don Cooney**.

Get ready to be inspired by an activist who has dedicated his life to social justice. Don will share remarkable turning points in his decades-long fight for justice and talk about what has helped him adapt to change.

As a six-term elected Kalamazoo City Commissioner, Cooney has been instrumental in shaping the city's policies and initiatives. In addition, he is an esteemed professor at Western Michigan University's School of Social Work.



Cooney's activism dates back to his time as an ordained priest and community organizer in Philadelphia, where he worked with Cesar Chavez's National Farm Workers Association. He has also served at a parish in Brooklyn and helped disadvantaged young people win scholarships as the director of A Better Chance House in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

At WMU, Cooney led the South African Anti-Apartheid Movement, which successfully convinced the university to divest from South Africa, playing a vital role in ending apartheid.

As a tireless advocate for social justice, Don helped develop a program to house young people who were coming out of detention centers and did not have a place to live. He volunteered for Operation Breadbasket—an organization started by Martin Luther King Jr. to create economic opportunities in black communities. He also spent time working in opposition to the Vietnam War.

Join us for an insightful and thought-provoking conversation and to learn more about Don Cooney's incredible journey as a witness to revolution and the lessons he has learned along the way.

Please register for this event even if you don't think you can make it. We will send you a recording of our conversation with Don. You can visit our website or click [HERE](#) to access the Zoom registration form.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

R.E.flections From [Miriam Epskamp](#), Director of Religious Education
 UU Growth Consultant Peter Bowden shared the following in an article entitled The UU Tipping Point on the UU Planet website: *In his book, [The Tipping Point](#), author Malcolm Gladwell suggests three things that need to be present in order for something to grow to a point where it “tips” and spreads through a population. 1) The context or circumstances need to be right, 2) there must be a passionate core group advocating for the idea or product, and 3) whatever it is must be what Gladwell calls ‘sticky’.*



Bowden (and many people in our UU community) believe that Unitarian Universalism is only hitting on two out of three of the items on Gladwell’s list.

- 1) **The right context**—The world is ready for our Unitarian Universalist message! The upheavals of the pandemic years, the isolation and loneliness of modern society, and the uncertainty about the future have left many people searching for an inclusive and supportive spiritual community like UUC.
- 2) **Enthusiastic supporters**— No one can deny that the folks at UUC are passionate and committed to their spiritual community!

But number three—stickiness—is a bit of a problem. Here is more from Peter Bowden...*What does stickiness mean? Simple. For an idea to spread you have to be able to remember it long enough to accurately share it with someone else. Sticky ideas are easy to remember and share person after person after person. According to Gladwell, if you can’t remember what someone tells you, you will never change your behavior or buy their product or go to see the movie they recommended.*

At one point or another, I think of us have experienced the struggle to explain clearly and memorably what exactly Unitarian Universalism is and what it is that we believe. Not being able to get our central message to ‘stick’ with people is a bit of a stumbling block if we want to achieve our vision of growth and transformation for this spiritual community.

So what can we do? We learn to do better!



To facilitate that learning, Rev. Gy and I will be hosting an **ARTICULATING YOUR FAITH WORKSHOP** following the service (around 11:20 AM) on **August 27** to help us each find easy, memorable words to explain and share Unitarian Universalism with others.

This will be a hybrid workshop. You can join us in person or over Zoom. For those joining us at UUC, childcare will be provided. Plan to join us to get ‘sticky’ in the way you talk about UUC to others!

In other news, our Religious Exploration for Kids and Teens is on hiatus for the summer. We will kick off our 2023-2024 Religious Exploration year on Sunday, September 17. Childcare will be provided downstairs in the RE area starting at 10:00 AM every Sunday in August. And always if you have any questions about Religious Exploration at UUC, feel free to contact me by phone, text, or email.

CARING COMMUNITY



AUGUST CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

*Someone is sitting in the shade today because
someone planted a tree a long time ago.*

— Warren Buffet



Chatting and chilling by Eagle Lake.

It was also great to see so many UCC folks come out to help clean and organize the kitchen, the office, and the RE area. The crew included Miriam and her niece Fiona, Eric and Regena Nelson, Mary Roscoe, Ron and Nancy Crowell, Stephanie Grathwol, and Joel Folkert. Our volunteers are the best!

We took a break from Sunday services and other programs in July but were treated to many opportunities to gather for fun, fellowship, and learning including Summer Sunday Forums, a Game Night, and the Eagle Lake Chat and Chill. We are grateful to **Rev. Harold Beu**, the Connections Team (**Nancy Calme** and **Stephanie Grathwol**), **Kathy Hays**, and for making these gatherings possible. Many service auction gatherings took place in July as well. Those who gathered for "Lunch + Ice Cream Floats" on Stephanie Grathwol's Parchment patio had a wonderful time.



Enjoying root beer floats on Stephanie's patio.

Joys, Concerns, and Member News:

We hold **Mary Roscoe** and **Miriam** in our hearts this month. They both lost dear family members in July. We keep also keep all who are struggling with health issues in our thoughts and prayers including **Lee Smittendorf**, **Nancy Stob**, **Ken VanEseltine**, **Sherrie Vandeputte**, **Bob McWhorter**, **Rev. Gy**, and others.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Celebrating their birthdays in August are **Lauren Ritter**, **Kimberly Ridley**, **Miriam Epskamp**, and **Peggy Clausing**! We hope your special day is wonderful!

Celebrating their wedding anniversaries are **Kevin and Tami Brozovich**, **Eric and Regena Nelson**, and **Tim and Erin Michael**. May you be blessed with many more years together!

Remembering Friends

We pause to remember dear friends who are no longer with us. Our dear friend **Brian Leekley** passed away in June of 2022. We remember his careful devotion to the church library, our children's programs, and our social justice work. *(More on page 7)*

SUSTAINABILITY

We remember **Faye Clifton**, who died in July 2019. Faye was an ardent champion of recycling and an avid reader. We lost **Jean Batts** in August 2000. The beautiful piano in the sanctuary was her lasting gift to us. We remember **Lin Foote**, who passed away in August 2019. He played an important role in starting this Unitarian Universalist congregation

Welcome New Visitors:

We enjoyed meeting **Pat and Steve Ostradick, Colton McKinley, Ted and Martha Hammer, John and Emily Dykehouse, Patrick Sheehan, Sassafras and Joshua Nolte** at our services in June. We were also delighted to see **Joe and Nancy Calme's Colorado family Ryan, Eleanor, and Gordon, Mary King's granddaughter Hailie**, and our friend **Tina Minor**. We hope you all will come back and visit 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 UUC office: 269-324-7262 or uucommunity@gmail.com.

Finding Joy Through a Smaller Environmental Foot Print



Each month the Sustainability Group meets to reflect on their personal sustainability journeys, to share their successes and failures, and to explore ideas for promoting sustainable living at UUC and in the wider community.

Like many of the small groups at UUC, the Sustainability Group has been on summer break but its members continue to endeavor to live more sustainably in five key areas—Food, Transportation, Home Energy Use, Goods, and Services.

When the group's regular meetings start up again in the fall, they will calculate their environmental footprint using this [Footprint Calculator](#) and make goals for the new year. If you have been thinking about joining the Sustainability Group, now is a good time!



The group also encourages EVERYONE to attend a special Zoom **Climate Reality Project Presentation** with Carol Higgins on Monday, **August 21 at 7:00 PM**.

Carol recently participated in a Leadership Corps training through the Climate Reality Project. Founded by former US Vice President, Al Gore, the Climate Reality Project has a mission to catalyze a global solution to the climate crisis by recruiting, training, and mobilizing people from all walks of life to speed up energy transition worldwide and open the door for a better tomorrow for us all. She will speak to us about the ways the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) can help fight climate change, electrify homes and workplaces, and build a better future, powered by clean energy.

Click [HERE](#) to register for the Climate Reality Project Presentation. Zoom Meeting ID: 934 0830 8472 Please remember that if you cannot the event in real time, you can always sign up to receive a recording by filling out the Zoom registration form.

COMPOSTING PROJECT

UUCC Community Composting Project

The Composting Team at UUCC (Regena Nelson, Pat Fuehr, Freya Lake, and Miriam) are excited to announce that we are ready to begin composting at church! This project came about as part of the Appreciative Inquiry process the congregation took part in last year but it may not be clear to everyone why we are putting our time and resources into this project.

Unitarian Universalists have long viewed reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth as central to our spiritual lives. Believe it or not, composting is a very important part of caring for the planet!

[Project Drawdown](#), a great resource for learning about ways to help our planet by drawing carbon out of our atmosphere, lists composting at #60 on their list of the top 100 things we can do to impact climate change. Whether it is a backyard bin or an industrial-scale operation, composting converts organic waste into sequestered soil carbon and averts methane emissions (a much more potent greenhouse gas than CO₂) from landfills in the process.

If your municipality doesn't have a curbside composting program, if you are not an avid gardener, or if you live in a condo or an apartment, composting can be very difficult. This is where the UUCC Composting project comes in! UUCC members and friends can collect their compostables and drop them off at church.

The composting bin is located on the east side of the building, next to the stairs. You can drop off compost at any time using these simple instructions.:



1. There are two compartments in the bin. Slide the door with the plus symbol (+) away from the compost tumbler to open the bin.
2. Empty your kitchen scraps (green material) into the bin and slid the door back.
3. The UUCC Compost team will turn the tumbler and add brown materials (leaves, twigs, and unbleached paper) each week to the bin to create a 50/50 balance of green and brown materials to produce compost soil in about 8-24 weeks.

What you can Compost

Fruit and vegetable peels and scraps
Eggshells
Coffee grounds
Tea bags

Do not Compost

Meat, fish, or poultry
Rice
Dairy products



Starting in March 2024, composted soil should be available in a bin marked Compost Soil to share. The Composting Team hopes that everyone will take advantage of the bin to help keep food waste out of landfill and to protect planet Earth.

Contact Pat Fuehr (269-370-2838) if you have questions or need assistance with composting.

STEWARDSHIP



It's time for a UUCC Summer FUNdraiser!!

You are invited to a **Backyard Barbecue** at Rev. Gy and Patti's home,
5126 Meadowlark Lane, Portage, MI 49024 on Sunday, August 20.

Join us at 5 PM for dinner! We will be serving up grilled burgers and hotdogs (vegetarian options available) with delicious side dishes, and dessert.

At **6:00 PM** get ready to enjoy a **musical performance** by [Ellis & M.E.](#), a Kalamazoo-based eclectic folk group with a social conscience, featuring Catherine Ellis on vocals and guitar and Alma Muxlow on mandolin. Their repertoire features a mix of folk, swing, and bluegrass and has been described as "a balm for the soul." They have performed in a wide range of venues from music festivals to house concerts.

Suggested fundraiser donation at the door is \$20 per person or love offering of whatever works for your budget. (Kids and newcomers are free!) We always pass the hat for the performers so please bring a little extra cash if you can.

Please RSVP to Regena Nelson at nelsonR@wmich.edu by **Sunday, August 13** so we know how much food to make.

Guests are welcome! The backyard is shaded. We'll have tables set up for eating. Please bring your favorite beverage and a chair.



LEADERSHIP



The Board of Trustees for the 2023/2024 church year will meet for the first time on **August 2 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.**

On the agenda for the meeting will be:

- Nominating and Electing Board officers
- Making plans for the Board Retreat on September 23
- Discussing possible repairs to the roof and south wall
- Discussing a proposal for a Theatre Camp for Kids at UCC from Open House Theatre Company
- Deciding the next steps for a possible name change for UCC

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](#).

End-of-Year Finance Team Report

The Unitarian Universalist Community Church of SW Michigan ended the 2022/2023 fiscal year (July – June) with a (\$4,360) deficit in the General Fund; which brings our General Fund Balance to \$39,083 (this total is the culmination of all surpluses and deficits since our church began).

While we don't like to see a deficit, this outcome is about a quarter of the deficit that we had budgeted for (see the chart below). As you can see in the chart, we brought in more money and spent less money than expected.



Summary for the fiscal year 2022/2023 General Fund

	Income	Expenses	Surplus/(Deficit)
Actual	\$118,439	\$122,799	(\$4,360)
Budget	\$107,690	\$124,945	(\$17,255)

Thanks to the Board and our committee members for working hard to keep our church as financially healthy as possible. A special thanks to Kimberly Ridley and Joe Calme (my fellow Finance Team members) for all their hard work and expertise.

Respectfully submitted by
Tami Brozovich, Finance Chair

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 the **second Sunday of each month** at around **11:20 AM**. Our first Program Council meeting of the new church year will be on Sunday, **August 13**. You can participate in Program Council in person or via Zoom.

On the **AGENDA** for August Program Council Meeting:

1) Choosing our Generosity Sunday Recipients. Several times a year UUCC holds a special collection to support non-profit organizations whose work aligns with our values. Below are the nominations we have received so far.

[Community Homeworks](#)—Nominated by Ron Crowell, Community Homeworks works with our low-income neighbors to help them maintain safe, sustainable, and dignified homes.

[Ministry with Community](#)—Nominated by Nancy Crowell, MWC is a daytime shelter and resource center in Kalamazoo helping those homelessness, poverty, substance use disorder, and other crises.

[AACORN Farms](#)—Nominated by Michael Graham, AACORN's mission is to provide life enrichment opportunities and residential options for adults with developmental differences in a supportive inclusive community

[Chuck and Ellen Howard Fund](#)—Nominated by the Board of Trustees, this fund was established by voluntary donations to help members and friends who are in financial crisis.

[American Indian College Fund](#)—Nominated by guest speaker Levi Rickert, this fund is a non-profit organization that helps Native American students, providing them with support through scholarships and funding toward higher education. this fund provides scholarships

If you have an organization you would like to nominate for Generosity Sunday, please send your suggestion to the office by August 7.

2) Local Marketing Plan Update. Growth Team member, Eric Nelson, will give an update about our local marketing plans.

3) Potluck Plans. We will have a conversation about re-starting monthly, after-service potlucks.

4) Suicide Prevention Walk. We will consider tabling at this annual event organized by Gryphon Place.

5) MKB –NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet. We will consider a request to sponsor a table or place an ad in the souvenir booklet for this annual fundraising event for the local NAACP.

Please plan to join us at the next Program Council meeting on Sunday, August 13 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, please send them to Miriam (uucommunity@gmail.com).

 **Thank you for all you do!** 

LEARNING AND GROWTH



Thoughtful Thursdays

We have an exciting lineup of guests for our once-a-month **Thoughtful Thursday Speakers Series**. Each of these events will give you an opportunity to listen to and dialog with people navigating spiritual, mental, or physical growth and change in their work and their lives. Please plan to join us on Zoom at 7 PM for these unique opportunities to learn and grow.



August 17: Witness to the Revolution with Don Cooney

Kalamazoo City Commissioner and social justice advocate Don Cooney will join us to talk about some of the turning points in his decades-long fight for justice and what has helped him adapt to change. Click [HERE](#) to register for the conversation with Don. Meeting ID 983 0084 3391



September 7: Internal Family Systems with Mary Beth Thomas

Mary Beth, a certified facilitator of the Trauma Informed Mind Body Program, Level 1 trained Internal Family Systems (IFS) Facilitator, and Yoga instructor will talk about the transformative power of IFS especially as it relates to personal relationships. Click [HERE](#) to register for the conversation with Mary Beth. Meeting ID 973 5065 1017



October 19: Engaged Spirituality with Dr. Donald Rothberg

A Buddhist practitioner for over 25 years, Dr. Rothberg is one of the nation's foremost leaders in socially engaged spirituality. He will help us explore engaged spirituality through a Buddhist lens. Click [HERE](#) to register for the conversation with Dr. Rothberg. Meeting ID 951 4375 5249



November 9: A Conversation with Tam Morgan

The President of the [Foundation for Inner Peace](#) (the publisher for the Course in Miracles), **Tam Morgan**, is confirmed for our November Thoughtful Thursday. More information about this conversation will be coming soon! Click [HERE](#) to register for the conversation with Tam. Meeting ID 996 7998 5253

If you cannot attend any of these Thoughtful Thursdays in real time, you can sign up to receive a recording of the event by filling out the Zoom registration form.

INSPIRED SPIRITUALITY



Qigong at UCC

Our twice-weekly Qigong sessions are still going strong! Often described as a mind-body-spirit practice, Qigong can help improve your mental and physical health by integrating posture, stretching, movement, breathing, self-massage, and focused intent.

YOU are Invited to "Zoom in" for this set of stretching & breathing in the privacy of your home, with the video off and sound muted. The exercises only last for about 25 minutes and it is the same DVD each time, so the routine becomes familiar. And...a BONUS is the opportunity to visit with each other for a bit before we start the DVD.

Because it is the same series of light exercises each time, NEWCOMERS are especially welcome!

What people are saying about Qigong at UCC....

"Qigong at 9 AM on Tuesday and Saturday mornings has become part of my weekly routine, an easy way to get the day off to a good start, Come join us!" - Stephanie Grathwol

TUESDAY QIGONG

Click [HERE](#) to register
Meeting ID: 697 338 090
Passcode: 138550

SATURDAY QIGONG

Click [HERE](#) to register
Meeting ID: 977 5286 6838
Passcode: 383810

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

Water Communion 2023

[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 on September 10, be sure to collect a small sample of water from a place that brings you peace or provides sustenance for your soul to add to our communal bowl. If you have questions about Water Communion, please contact Rev. Gy: gyludvig@gmail.com



CONNECTION

Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group met in July to choose a chairperson and pick their selections for the coming year. Stephanie Grathwol will lead the group again this year. If you ever have any questions about Book Group, please contact her at sargg.64@gmail.com. Below is the book group schedule for September 2022 – May 2023:



Sep 8, 2023: (non fiction) *Daughters of the Flower Fragrant Garden* by Zhuqing Li (2022)

Discussion Leader: Beverly Folz

Oct 13, 2023: (non fiction) *Blue Mind: The Surprising Science That Shows How Being Near, In, On, or Under Water Can Make You Happier, Healthier, More Connected, and Better at What You Do* by Wallace J. Nichols (2014) Discussion Leader: Judy Halseth

Nov 10, 2023: (fiction) *The Mountains Sing* by Nguyen Phan Que Mai (2020)

Discussion Leader: Sally Cowles

Dec 8, 2023: (fiction) *The Woman In the Photo by Mary Hogan* (2016)

Discussion Leader: Nancy Calme

Jan 12, 2024: (fiction) *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate (2017)

Discussion Leader: Denise Hartsough

Feb 9, 2024: (non fiction) *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* by Ed Yong (2022) Discussion Leader: Sally Cowles

Mar 9, 2024: The *Kalamazoo Public Library Community Read*

Discussion Leader: Betty Lee Ongley

Apr 12, 2024: (non fiction) *Women In White Coats: How the First Women Doctors Changed the World of Medicine* by Olivia Campbell (2021) Discussion Leader: Stephanie Grathwol

May 10, 2024: (fiction) *Melissa* (previously published as George in 2015) by Alex Gino (2022)

Discussion Leader: Stephanie Grathwol

All Book Group meetings take place via Zoom to make it possible for members all over the country to participate. Click [HERE](#) for the link. Meeting ID: 996 0783 5644 Passcode: 360981



3rd Saturday Breakfast Group

The UUCC Breakfast Group will meet for breakfast on **Saturday, August 19 at 9:00 AM** at Garcia's Mexican Kitchen conveniently located on Shaver Road, right next door to UUCC.

The 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group is a wonderful opportunity for conversation and connection and is open to all UUCC members and friends.

Our Breakfast Coordinator, Ken VanEseltine, is still recovering from surgery and will be unable to attend this month. Watch the weekly email for information for RSVP info closer to the date!

8TH PRINCIPLE

BUILD a
diverse
BELOVED
COMMUNITY

Putting Our 8th UU Principle into Action

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

Inherent in the 8th Principle is the understanding that we each have a personal responsibility to keep learning and growing as we work to dismantle unjust systems of oppression. To quote an unknown internet philosopher, no matter how open-minded, socially conscious, and anti-racist we think we are, we still have old, learned hidden biases that we need to examine. We each have a responsibility to check ourselves daily for our stereotypes, prejudice, and ultimately, discrimination. We can believe we are good people, but we must also believe that we can be better people.

Fortunately, we have many resources for education and study at our disposal that can help us to stay engaged and up-to-date in our anti-racism/anti-oppression work.

- ⇒ [Oneplace@KPL](#) regularly offers excellent, free, online anti-racism programs as well as on-demand video trainings.
- ⇒ [ERACCE](#) | Eliminating Racism & Claiming/Celebrating Equality conducts intensive, multi-day workshops to help participants understand systemic racism. These are offered on a sliding scale.
- ⇒ [Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Kalamazoo](#) provides opportunities for racial healing through truth-telling and relationship building.
- ⇒ [ISAAC](#) (Interfaith Strategies for Advocacy and Action in the Community) has an Anti-Racism Taskforce that meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, from 7:00-8:30 PM at St. Luke's Episcopal Church (Library or Guild Room), 247 W. Lovell St. in Kalamazoo.

- ⇒ The [UUC Exploring Anti-Racism Group](#) meets once a month via Zoom beginning in September. Newcomers are always welcome to join this group. Contact Eric Nelson for more information.
- ⇒ Following the murder of George Floyd in 2020, many UUC folks shared online anti-racist resources for use in self-study. Click [HERE](#) to access the list. Another excellent list of resources was compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker and Alyssa Klein. Click [HERE](#) to access that list.



UPCOMING Workshops

ONLINE INTRO TO SYSTEMIC RACISM Hosted: On Zoom Schedule: Weds & Thurs 1pm - 4pm	AUG 2-3 2023
IN-PERSON OUTDOOR UNDERSTANDING & ANALYZING SYSTEMIC RACISM Hosted at: Markin Glen Park in Kalamazoo, MI Schedule: Weds 1 - 5pm Thurs & Fri 9am - 5pm	AUG 16-18 2023


KALAMAZOO

OPPORTUNITIES

FAITH IN ACTION:
COMBINING LGBTQ+ SPIRITUALITY WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY

REV. JM RICHARDSON
Host,
Inclusive Justice-MI

REV. DR. ROLAND STRINGFELLOW
Lead Pastor,
MCC-Detroit

SHARON PEDERSEN
Executive Director,
Jackson Pride Center

THURSDAY
AUGUST
3, 2023 3:00PM-4:00PM

REGISTER NOW

ONLINE WEBINAR www.ncljustice.org

LGBTQ+ Faith in Action

Join our justice partners at Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN) for **FAITH IN ACTION: Combining LGBTQ+ Spirituality with Social Justice Advocacy** on Thursday, August 3 at 3 PM.

This online event will feature a panel discussion with Rev. JM Richardson, an organizer for MUUSJN and Inclusive Justice, Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow, Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit and President of Inclusive Justice - Michigan, and Sharon Pedersen, Executive Director, Jackson Pride Center and MUUSJN LGBTQ+ Justice Organizer. Click [HERE](#) to register for this special forum.

Native Justice Coalition

The Native Justice Coalition will partner with groups across several states to present the 4th annual **Anishinaabe Racial Justice Conference**. The conference offers workshops, presentations, and opportunities for coalition building on racial justice. Open to both native and non-natives, this free conference will be held from **September 29—October 1** in Baraga, Michigan. Registration will be open soon. Visit nativejustice.org/conference/ to learn more.

4TH ANNUAL
ANISHINAABE RACIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE

Friday, September 29 - Sunday, October 1, 2023

Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
Niiwin Akeaa Community Center
111 Beartown Road Baraga, MI 49908

100 review views

Unitarian Universa... 5/21/23

★★★★★

As a long time (27 years) member, UUCD is and remains my spiritual community. Among other things, we are Positive, Progressive, Welcoming, Caring People.

[See your reviews >](#)

Your review is helping in a big way

Congrats! Your post just reached a new milestone. It's now been viewed over 100 times, helping lots of people get the information they need.

Did you know you can help spread the good news about UUCD by leaving a review on Google and social media sites like Facebook?

ISAAC BELOVED COMMUNITY WALK/RUN/ROLL

Moving Towards Wellness, Unity and Equity

September 9, 2023
1:30pm
Spring Valley Park

There is still time to join **TEAM UUCD** at **ISAAC Walk/Run/Roll**. \$35/person (childcare included). Contact Ron Crowell—ronald.crowell@wmich.edu
Come and help us build the Beloved Community!

K.N.O.W

HIROSHIMA, A DAY TO REMEMBER

**What is the Truth about Hiroshima and Nuclear Weapons?**

Two Presentations will be presented on the history of the dropping the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and the crimes of the Military Industrial Complex in the creation and deployment of nuclear weapons.

On Sunday, August 6th at 4 p.m., retired Unitarian Universalist minister and social studies teacher Harold W. Beu will speak on the many aspects of all that went into the decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima. Clearly, there was much more to that decision than to end World War II quickly, and it is important for us to understand the kind of thinking that went into making that decision that is still with us today.

On Wednesday, August 16th at 7 p.m., Ron Kramer, Professor of Sociology at Western Michigan will speak on his book *Crimes of the American Nuclear State: At Home and Abroad* that he wrote with David Kauzlarich. That book is a penetrating analysis of our government's policies related to the manufacture, deployment, and testing of nuclear weapons that violate both international and federal regulatory law.

Events Site: **Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan**
10441 Shaver Rd, Portage, MI 49024



Kalamazoo Nonviolent Opponents of War [KNOW] is an all volunteer group of ordinary folk from all walks of life, who believe that our country can do better than expend our precious resources of life and treasure for seemingly endless wars.

For further information, call Harold W. Beu at 269-381-6439

LIFE LINE SCREENINGS



Life Line Screening goes beyond regular checkups to look inside your arteries for signs of plaque build-up



All 4 Screenings for \$149

Carotid Artery Disease:

An ultrasound is performed to screen the carotid arteries (a pair of blood vessels in the neck that deliver blood to your brain) for buildup of fatty plaque. This buildup, called atherosclerosis, is one of the leading causes of stroke.

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD):

An Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI) test is performed using blood pressure cuffs on the arms and legs. It is important to screen for PAD because it increases the risk of coronary artery disease, heart attack, or stroke.¹

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA):

An ultrasound is performed to screen the abdominal aorta for the presence of an enlargement or aneurysm. AAA can lead to a ruptured aortic artery, which is a life-threatening medical emergency.

Atrial Fibrillation :

A 6-lead electrocardiogram (EKG) is performed by placing sensors on the arms and legs to screen for Atrial Fibrillation. AFib can lead to blood clots, stroke, and heart failure, and other heart-related complications.²

We will be in your neighborhood soon **Thursday, January 19th**

Unitarian Universalist Community Church

10441 Shaver Road, Portage

Get your special Community Circle pricing!

Three ways to register and receive the special discount:

Call toll-free: 1-800-679-5191

Online: [LLSA.SOCIAL/HC](https://llsa.social/hc)

Text: the word **circle to 216-279-1607**



Getting Screened is Simple!

Painless, non-invasive, keep your clothes on.



¹ <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/peripheral-artery-disease/about-peripheral-artery-disease-pad>

No single screening can detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease.

² <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/atrial-fibrillation>

Screening results are provided to you in about 14 days. We direct all participants with abnormal results to take the report to their physician. Appropriate modification of risk factors (including high blood pressure, smoking, heart disease, diabetes and poor diet) is also necessary for cardiovascular disease prevention. Our screenings cannot detect all forms of stroke risk or cardiovascular disease. All tests are for screening purposes only. You should consult with your personal physician regarding your screening results. Price does not include any applicable review fees. Insurance Note: Life Line Screening does not participate in the Medicare program and the cost of our screening services is not covered or reimbursable by Medicare. Life Line Screening does not file insurance claims nor provide referrals to any physician's group or hospital. If you are unable to attend the screening for any reason whatsoever, we will issue a gift card for the full amount to be used by you, or anyone you choose, for future screening services.



CALENDAR



AUGUST 2023

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Tuesday	August 1	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	August 2	Board of Trustees Meeting	6:30 PM
Thursday	August 3	Stewardship Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Saturday	August 5	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	August 6	Change and Growth with Miriam After-Service Social Time Hiroshima: A Day to Remember with K.N.O.W.	10:00 AM 11:00 AM 4:00 PM
Tuesday	August 8	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	August 9	Growth Team Meeting Stewardship Committee Meeting	10:00 AM 5:30 PM
Saturday	August 12	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	August 13	Preparing the Soil with Rev. Gy After-Service Social Time Program Council Meeting	10:00 AM 11:00 AM 11:20 AM
Tuesday	August 15	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	August 16	Ron Cramer and the Crimes of the American State with K.N.O.W	7:00 PM
Thursday	August 17	Thoughtful Thursday with Don Cooney	6:00 PM
Saturday	August 19	Qigong 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group	9:00 AM 10:00 AM
Sunday	August 20	Trees of Life with Mike Connor After-Service Social Time Backyard BBQ FUNdraiser	10:00 AM 11:00 AM 5:00 PM
Monday	August 21	Climate Reality Project Presentation with Carol Higgins	7:00 PM
Tuesday	August 22	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	August 23	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	12:00 PM
Saturday	August 26	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	August 27	Honesty in Diversity with Rev. Gy After-Service Social Hour Articulating Your Faith Workshop	10:00 AM 11:00 AM 11:20 AM
Tuesday	August 29	Qigong	9:00 AM



a tree has roots in the soil yet reaches to the sky.
it tells us that in order to aspire we need to be grounded
and that no matter how high we go
it is from our roots that we draw sustenance.

wangari maathai

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

Chris Petersmark
Music Director
christopherpetersmark@gmail.com
Cell phone: 248-535-4197

2022-2023 Board of Trustees

Eric Nelson

Marsha Laya

Pat Timm

Michael Graham

Steve Tasko

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

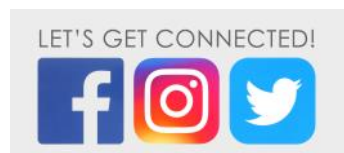
Please send submissions to:

uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

CommUUnity Matters

Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

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



uucommunity@gmail.com
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NOW
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