



# CommUUunity Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

October 2023

## OCTOBER SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 AM. Onsite, [Facebook](#), or Zoom.

### October 1: *On Living and Dying:*

#### *The Hidden Wisdom of the Aramaic Jesus*

with Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz

Renowned religious scholar, Neil Douglas Klotz, will Zoom in from his home in Edinburgh to about will talk about his new book, *Revelations of the Aramaic Jesus*, which collects his 40 years of work on the radically inclusive and holistic vision offered by the words and example of Jesus as seen through his native Aramaic language.

Zoom Meeting ID: 910 6299 3883 Click [HERE](#) to register.

### October 8: *Stories of Becoming*

with Rev. Gy

We will celebrate Coming Out Day by listening to the voices of LGBTQIA+ folks speaking about becoming their true selves.

Zoom Meeting ID: 939 2370 0966 Click [HERE](#) to register.

### October 15: *On Senescence*

with J. Barrett Lee

J. Barrett Lee will reflect on our monthly theme based on his experience serving (at different times in his life) as a hospice chaplain, a pastor, a philosophy professor, and a substance abuse counselor.

Zoom Meeting ID: 992 6415 3162 Click [HERE](#) to register.

### October 22: *Letting Go is Hard to Do*

with Rev. Gy

Some things, both physical and spiritual, just have to go, and it is our job to prune them out of our lives even when it is hard to do.

Zoom Meeting ID: 944 3097 8163 Click [HERE](#) to register.

### October 29: *How to Befriend Death*

with Brent Harris

As much as we try to resist, endings happen in every moment. The end of a breath. The end of a day. The end of a relationship and ultimately the end of life. In each of these endings, there is a beginning, but we do not know what that will be. When we learn how to befriend death we develop resiliency and find new ways to navigate our next steps, our next breath, our next relationship, and our world.

Zoom Meeting ID: 999 5416 5103 Click [HERE](#) to register



## Spiritual Theme for October CONTEMPLATING SENESCENCE

Our next stop on our exploration of the Tree of Life is senescence, the cycle of life and death.

Trees, especially deciduous ones, are often associated with the cycle of death and miraculous rebirth because of their annual habit of dropping their leaves in the fall then and re-growing them in the spring. There could be no stronger symbol in the natural world of life, death, and life again.

Unitarian Universalist views about life after death are informed by both science and spiritual traditions. Some of us live with the assumption that life does not continue after death, and others hold it as an open question, wondering if our minds will have any awareness when our bodies are no longer living.

The one thing we know for sure is that we cannot escape the cycle of senescence. We are becoming, changing, aging, and eventually, we will die.

This month we invite you to reflect, to learn, and to explore senescence with us.

# GUESTS IN OUR PULPIT

## ***We are excited to welcome these guests to our pulpit in October:***

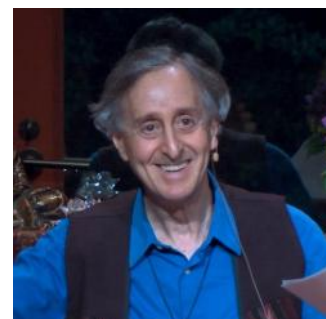
**J. Barrett Lee** lives in western Michigan with his spouse and children. He currently works as a chaplain and has previously served as a pastor, a philosophy professor, and a substance abuse counselor. Barrett is a Benedictine oblate of St. Gregory's Abbey, Three Rivers, and postulant for the priesthood in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan.



**Brent Harris** is a talented Kalamazoo-based sculptor, art educator, and owner of the Alchemist Sculpture Foundry. He came to Kalamazoo to attend Western Michigan University and study psychology before moving into sculpture. After graduation, he became a paramedic to serve the community. His work as an EMT allowed him to continue to consider the human form in all of its stages and states. Now a full-time artist, Mr. Harris's pieces help to tell stories and clarify the world around him. These stories range from gestural vignettes, to personal and spiritual examinations, and socio-political study. His sculpture is influenced by rhythms of nature. He notes. *"Nature provides the shapes and patterns that repeat in our body and in our subconscious. They exist in us in a*

*nautical spiral in the curve of an ear, the rolling hills of our spine, or in the root-like structure of our nerves and vasculature."*

Our special guest for the next **Thoughtful Thursday** on **October 19** at 7:00 PM will be **Dr. Donald Rothberg**, one of the nation's foremost leaders in socially engaged spirituality. His experience uniquely combines a long record of activism and organizing, extensive teaching, and leadership roles in pioneering programs that weave together social action with spirituality. He has practiced Buddhist meditation for over 25 years and has been significantly influenced by other spiritual traditions, particularly Jewish, Christian, and indigenous.



Dr. Rothberg teaches retreats and groups on Buddhist insight meditation practice, lovingkindness, and other heart practices, transforming the judgmental mind, mindful communication, working skillfully with differences and conflicts, and socially engaged Buddhism. He is a member of the Teachers Council at Spirit Rock Center, a guiding teacher for the Marin Sangha in San Rafael, California, and a regular teacher at the East Bay Meditation Center in Oakland, California, Southern Dharma Retreat Center in North Carolina, InsightLA, and New York Insight. He has practiced insight meditation since 1976, and has also received training in Tibetan Dzogchen practice, body-based psychotherapy, and trauma work. He has helped guide many six-month to two-year training programs in socially engaged spirituality, both Buddhist-based and interfaith, and is the author of *The Engaged Spiritual Life: A Buddhist Approach to Transforming Ourselves and the World*, and the co-editor of *Ken Wilber in Dialogue*.

On October 19, Dr. Rothberg will speak with us about the connection between opening to change, loss, and what is painful, and opening to wisdom, compassion, and skillful responses to our lives and the world.

Come and be part of the conversation! To Register: <https://tinyurl.com/uuccTT10>

# FROM THE MINISTER



As Rev. Gy continues to recover from surgery they will take a break from their monthly column and give us an opportunity to hear perspectives from other ministers. This month's reflection is from a May 2023 [Braver/Wiser](#) blog post from **the Rev. Tania Yadira Márquez** (she/ella), an ordained UU minister, Spiritual Director, and Hospital Chaplain

*Is it that we come in vain to live, to sprout over the earth?  
Let us leave at least flowers, let us leave at least songs.*

—Nezahualcóyotl

I have been working as a hospital chaplain for almost two years now. During this time, I've had the honor to accompany people as they say goodbye to their loved ones, and have prayed numerous times by the deathbed of a person. At their deathbed, patients are often wondering if their life was worth living, if their lives had meaning.

This work has made me more aware of our mortality and of the ways in which humans connect and care for one another. One of the things I have noticed is that many of the encounters I have with patients turn into poems, the most available means of expression for the emotions I felt.

My Nahua ancestors thought about death a lot. The little literature that survived the conquest tells us about how they wondered about what life was, what it meant to be alive, and how they often concluded that life on earth was but a dream. They also thought that the greatest mystery of life could only be captured in song and poetry—*flor y canto*, as they called it.

This capacity to bear witness to the world, to life and death, and turn those experiences into flower and song is an ability we all possess. It is about letting the voice within speak in its own language; to not be limited by the structures we perceive but to attempt to reach beyond. To be open to another way of perceiving the world and, perhaps, to be open to new ways of understanding death, too.

To create beauty amidst the suffering and chaos of our world is what Nezahualcóyotl is exhorting us to do: that when we become fully aware of our limited time on earth we can still, at least, leave behind flowers and songs.

Our hearts and spirits already know how to express themselves; we just have to open up our hearts and let both *flor y canto* spring forth in song, in poetry, in actions that help make the world more beautiful; that help reveal deeper truths; that help us connect to the source of life.





# CARING COMMUNITY



## OCTOBER CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

*October is the month of painted leaves.  
Their rich glow now flashes round the world.*

— Henry David Thoreau

### **Joys, Concerns, and Member News:**

Our thoughts are with those struggling with serious health issues including **Jeff Mais, Larry Higgins, Bob McWhorter, Nancy Stob, and Stace Danielson.**

Congratulations go out to **Betty Lee Ongley** who was recently honored with a 2023 Women of Courage and Achievement Award at the “Woman Up and Celebrate Kalamazoo” event, and to **Grace Fetzer** who displayed an [amazing piece](#) at Art Prize this year. The sculpture, created from ammunition casings strung together to form a conical spiral, is a statement about gun violence.

**Kelin Michael** is ‘Open for Business’ on LinkedIn! She is available to do research, translation (German, French, Latin), writing, and more. Connect with her through the link below! <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kelin-michael-phd-80714183/>

It isn’t Thanksgiving quite yet but lots of UUCC folks have been sharing gratitude lately. **Joe and Nancy Calme** are grateful for a wonderful grape harvest and all the wonderful wine it will bring. **Bev Folz** is grateful for all the love and support she received from this community following the death of her husband John. She especially loves the flowers planted in his honor at the front of the church. **Ken VanEseltine** is grateful to be back on his feet again after a bad fall and surgery on his leg earlier this year. What a blessing it is to have things to be grateful for!

### **Birthdays:**

October was a month pregnant with possibilities! Look at all the UUCC members and friends who were born in that month: 3 – **Ellie Epskamp**, 5 – **Joan Young**, 7 – **Kathryn Ragains**, 8 – **Judy Halseth**, 9 – **Grayson Tasko**, 11 – **Ellie Barnette**, 24 – **Terry Tessari**, 30 – **Carol Higgins**, 31 – **Barb McWhorter**

### **Remembering Friends Who Have Passed On:**

We lost three of our founding members in the month of October. If they were all still living, **Dorothea Tompkins** would be 108, **Jean Houston** would be 111, and **Don Mollhagen** would have been 104. We remember them fondly and owe them gratitude for the foresight of helping to launch UU Community Church. Our friend Jim Heveran also passed away in October 2021. The dogwood tree on the north side of the building came from his property in Constantine and has been a lasting gift to UUCC.

### **Welcome Visitors:**

We have enjoyed visits from **Mary King’s son Dan, Cody Francis, Joel Kemisty, Christy Lowe, Mac Armstrong, and Perla Medina** recently. We are so glad you joined us! Please stop by and see us 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 UUCC office: 269-324-7262 or [uucommunity@gmail.com](mailto:uucommunity@gmail.com).*

# LEADERSHIP



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

- Finalized plans for a Board Retreat on September 30 at Pat Timm's house.
- Approved expenditures for parking lot and building repairs.
- Discussed building safety and steps that could be taken to deal with disruptive visitors.

Click [HERE](#) to access the minutes from the meeting. The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **October 4** at **6:00 PM** via Zoom. 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](#).

We are grateful for UUCC volunteers **Kathy Hays, Ron Crowell, Nancy Crowell, Mike Graham, and Deborah Warner** who participated in the 10th Annual Suicide Prevention Walk Celebration at Bronson Park on September 23. Showing up for those whose lives have been impacted by suicide helps to end stigma and build Beloved Community that benefits us all.



At the 2022 ISAAC ([Interfaith Strategies for Advocacy and Action in the Community](#)) Public Meeting, UU Community Church pledged to advance racial equity and to help dismantle systemic racism by committing to send representatives to ERACCE's two-and-a-half day **Understanding & Analyzing Systemic Racism** workshop. Thanks to generous financial support from ISAAC, UUCC was able to fulfill the pledge this fall by sending Board Trustee **Michael Graham** and our Director of Religious Education, **Miriam**, to this training. Mike and Miriam look forward to sharing what they learned with the UUCC community as we work to dismantle racism and other oppressions in the world.





# SERVICE AUCTION



## It's Time for the UCC Service Auction!

All are welcome to come to the fabulous **UCC Service Auction** on **Saturday, October 21**. Bring your friends! Bring your family! Childcare will be provided. Click [HERE](#) to RSVP.

### ***Soup Supper***

We'll start this fun event with a Soup Supper at **5:00 PM**. For a suggested donation of \$10, you can serve yourself some delicious homemade soup (vegetarian and vegan options available), some of Rev. Gy's wonderful homemade bread, and dessert. Beer and wine are included.

### ***Silent Auction***

Bidding on our Silent Auction items will also begin at **5:00 PM**. You can place your bid for an interesting assortment of items that may include jewelry, books, home decor items, and more.

### ***Live Auction***

The main event, a live auction with Rev. Gy as auctioneer will start at **6:00 PM**. This will be a **hybrid event**. You can attend in person or via Zoom. We will have lots of unique and creative items for you to bid on to raise funds for UCC and connect with each other. There is still time for YOU to donate an item to the auction. Use this link to submit your donations before October 10: <https://forms.gle/v47aCJP1dotAco4z5>

### ***Proxy Bidding***

The auction item list will be sent to you before the auction. If you are not able to join us, please ask someone to serve as your proxy and bid for your items for you. (Hint: Miriam would be happy to help!)

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

We look forward to seeing YOU at the auction on October 21. Thank you for your support!

# RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



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

For the last year or two, the Unitarian Universalists world has been engaged in revising Article II of the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Article II is where our core UU values are articulated. It is the covenant to which all of our congregations pledge themselves when they become members of the UUA. The seven principles spelled out in Article II are central to our understanding of what it means to Unitarian Universalists.

As you can imagine, the process to revise Article II has been long, cumbersome, frustrating, and not without conflict. We have debated, argued, and disagreed. But, it has also been a gift for Unitarian Universalists of all ages, from all over the world, and all walks of life to engage in deep theological discernment together. If not for the revision process, that probably would not have taken place. The invitation to think deeply about what is important and true to us is so valuable. Whatever the outcome, the process of taking time to review, rethink, and re-see our principles and purposes has made Unitarian Universalism stronger.

I think our recent discussions about re-naming our congregation have created similar opportunities for UUCC. Our meetings about name change have allowed us to talk with each other about what we value about UUCC, about our core identity as a spiritual community, and how we want others in the world to see us. We have been given the opportunity to learn from each other and to cherish diverse perspectives. Even if we decide in the end to stick with our current name or something very similar, the process of thinking about it and talking about it has been time well spent.

Sometimes we get so caught up in the destination that we forget the journey is just as important. There is another unexpected gift that has come out of the Article II revisions that I want to share with you. If you have been following along with developments you might remember that the new Article II proposal included a diagram with love in the center surrounded by six core UU values—justice, equity, pluralism, interdependence, generosity, and transformation. It did not take very long for people who work with children in our congregations to start brainstorming how they would teach these new Article II values to young folks. And it wasn't too long after that that someone noticed you can come up with some memorable anagrams using the first letter of each of those words.

I know you are dying to hear more. It is my pleasure to introduce a new UU mascot to you, J. PIGLET. (I am told that JET PIG also works but it is missing "L for Love" and to my mind, Love is the most important part).

Part of me hopes that the discussions and debates about Article II that will take place before we take a final vote next June won't upset this wonderful anagram. (Ideas for pig-themed activities are already filling my head!) But I trust that however things turnout, there will be new things to learn along the way. And that is a gift. May it be so.





# LEARNING AND GROWTH



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. Please know if you cannot attend any of these Thoughtful Thursdays in real time, you can **sign up to receive a recording** of the event by dfilling out the Zoom registration form.



## **October 19: Facing Challenge and Loss 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 the connection between opening to change, loss, and what is Painful, and opening to wisdom, compassion, and skillful responses to our lives and the world. Click [HERE](#) to register for this Zoom 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 this Zoom Meeting ID 996 7998 5253



## **Coming in December: A Conversation with Ben Brown**

Ben Brown is a true renaissance man who feels blessed to be able to pursue many interests including permaculture, sustainability, energy conservation, tiny homes, machine knitting, beekeeping, and music. He is looking forward to joining us in December to talk about his life's journey and his many passions. Click [HERE](#) to read more about Ben.

**Open House Theatre Company (OHTC)**, an organization that believes that the arts are for everyone, makes its home at UU Community Church. Open House Theatre strives to provide an accessible, educational, and inclusive theatrical experience for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, or economic status. The theatre company is currently planning its upcoming year and has a question or two for UUCF folks:

***Are you a writer? Have you written a one-act play?***

***Would you let Open House Theatre Company read your and possibly produce it?***



If yes, OHTC Executive Director Mary Roscoe would like to talk to you—[lizoflynn@gmail.com](mailto:lizoflynn@gmail.com)!

# WELCOMING CONGREGATION



United Way of  
South Central Michigan

Calhoun | Clinton | Eaton | Ingham | Jackson | Kalamazoo



## LGBTQIA+ CHALLENGE

Each year UU Community Church engages in “Practices of Welcome” in order to ensure that LGBTQ+ folks feel fully welcomed, centered, and embraced by our congregation and to renew our “Welcoming” certification through the Unitarian Universalist Association.

These practices include exploring issues of importance to the LGBTQ+ community during a Sunday service, honoring days of remembrance and visibility, financially supporting an event or organization, and offering an annual opportunity for the congregation to participate in one or more Welcoming Congregation continuing education programs.

One of the educational opportunities we have chosen for this year’s **21-Day LGBTQIA+ Equity Challenge**. United Way of South Central Michigan is partnering with OutFront Kalamazoo to offer this challenge as an opportunity for people in our communities to learn, come together, and break down the systems and biases that keep many people from living a flourishing, equitable life.

During the Challenge, participants will receive one email each weekday throughout the month of October with links to videos, articles, podcasts, and more. The Challenge is self-guided and self-paced. Participants can explore as few or as many of the links in each email as they like.

The Challenge kicks off on **Monday, October 2**. You can sign up quickly by clicking [HERE](#). Registration will stay open after the challenge begins so if you are reading this after October 2 you can still sign up.

To help us process what we learned from the Challenge and to explore together how it might impact our UU Community Church, we will hold a **UCC LGBTQIA+ Challenge Debrief Session** on Thursday, **November 2** at **7 PM** via Zoom.

We hope that a significant number of UCC members and friends will take the challenge, join the congregational debrief session on November 2, and help us reaffirm our commitment to being a truly “Welcoming Congregation.” Thank you!

# SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

## Building Beloved Community One Conversation at a Time

The UUCC Civil Conversations Group meets once a month via Zoom to help participants learn the skills that will help them engage in more meaningful conversations with family, friends, and others to authentically build a more Beloved Community.

The group's next meeting will be on **Thursday, October 26** at 7 PM. At this gathering we will:



- Review what it takes to have a Civil Conversation
- Share Civil Conversations we had over the Summer
- Watch a 15 Minute Ted X video and,
- As a group, discuss "The Intersection of Conspiracy Theorists and our UU Values"

We are looking forward to exploring this dynamic topic and lively discussion! Please feel free to invite friends to this gathering. We work to intentionally create a safe space by following our Civil Conversation's guidelines and intervening if necessary.

Click [HERE](#) to be part of the conversation. Meeting ID: 913 7914 4167 Passcode: 601656

If you have any questions contact Civil Conversations Facilitators Darby Fetzer and Miriam Epskamp.

## Finding Joy Through a Smaller Environmental Foot Print



On the third Monday of the most months, 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 UUCC and in the wider community.

Group members recently shared inspirations, opportunities, and resources to help each other live more gently on the earth:

- **Darby** shared a reflection about her recent trip to Scandinavia and the many **examples of sustainable living** she saw there including robust renewable energy capacity, scores of people using active transportation such as walking and biking, and a culture that seemed to reject excessive consumerism.
- **Regena and Eric** are exploring replacing the grass in their backyard with help from their neighborhood **Native Garden Group**: <https://encorekalamazoo.com/growing-native/>
- **Kathryn** has adopted a **plant-based diet** with help from the book ***How Not to Die: Discover the Foods Scientifically Proven to Prevent and Reverse Disease*** by Michael Gregor, M.D.

The group also discussed possible programs they could sponsor this year to help the congregation and the wider community learn more about sustainable living. Ideas included an Electric Car Show, a Green Appliance Fair, and a solar panel demonstration. They also plan to continue working on the Green Sanctuary Congregational Assessment to gain accreditation from the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Sustainability Group's next meeting is on Monday, **October 16** at **7:00 PM** via Zoom. Newcomers are always welcome! Click [HERE](#) to join the Zoom Meeting ID: 960 9812 1445 Passcode: 990641



# GREEN OPPORTUNITIES

## Climate Change Letter Writing Party

UUC Youth program will be hosting a nonpartisan Climate Change/Get Out the Vote letter-writing party on Sunday, October 15 following the service.



Writing letters to voters is one of the most effective ways to help increase election turnout and our GOTV partners at Vote Forward believe that the way to

meaningful government action on climate change is through the ballot box.

Everything you need to write a few letters to young voters in Virginia with messages focused on climate change will be provided for you at our Letter Writing Party. (It would be helpful if you could bring your own BLUE pen.)

Writing these letters is easy and will only take you a few minutes. You only need to write a sentence or two advocating for climate action.

If you can't stay after church, we can even give you some letters to take home and return to church later in the month.

Please come to the letter-writing party. There is a kid in RE counting on YOU to help Get Out the Vote to fight climate change this fall.

## Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition

UUC is a proud affiliate of the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition whose mission is to mobilize collective action to achieve immediate and drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through a just transition.

Click [HERE](#) to sign up to receive their newsletter to keep up-to-date on climate action in our community.



## Styrofoam Recycling

The City of Kalamazoo's next **EPS Foam (aka Styrofoam) Recycling Day** is on Saturday, **October 28** from **10 AM to 1 PM** at Mayor's

Riverfront Park. Schupan will also be collecting used electronics at the same location and you can also bring documents for shredding.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College will also have a collection site for Styrofoam only on October 28 if that is more convenient.

If you cannot make it to either collection site you can always bring your clean, dry items to UUC and place them in the collection bin by the Welcome table. Our great volunteers Ron and Nancy Crowell and Stephanie Grathwol will make sure your items get delivered to the collection site!



## Composting at UUC

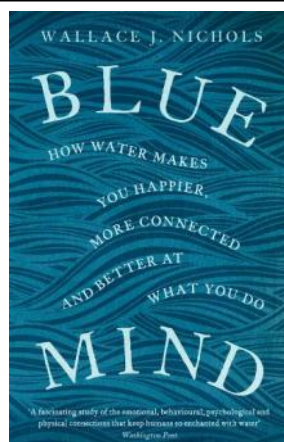
The UUC compost bin is open for business! The bin is located on the east side of the building, next to the stairs. You can drop off compost at any time using these simple instructions.:

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 slide the door back.
3. The UUC 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, and tea bags. Do not compost meat, fish, poultry, rice, or dairy products.

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

# CONNECTION



## Women's Book Group

**October 13**

**1:00 PM**

**Blue Mind:**

by Wallace J. Nichols

Discussion Leader:

Judy Ha/seth

From Goodreads:

*There's something about water that attracts and fascinates us. No wonder: it's the most omnipresent substance on Earth and, along with air, the primary ingredient for supporting life as we know it. From far, far outside, our planet looks like a blue marble; from deep inside, we ourselves are three-quarters H<sub>2</sub>O. We know instinctively that being near water makes us healthier and happier, reduces stress, and brings us peace. But why? And what might the answer tell us about how we should be living our lives? After centuries of asking these questions, we can finally answer them - and those answers are life changing. As Wallace J. Nichols reveals in Blue Mind, we are now at the forefront of a wave of neuroscience, evolutionary biology, and medical research that illuminates the physiological and brain processes that underlie our transformative connection to water. That research, involving tools like EEGs, MRIs, and fMRIs, is uncovering remarkable truths about water's incredibly powerful, and startlingly profound, effects on our bodies and souls. Blue Mind isn't just about oceans, lakes, and rivers. Water's tremendous benefits stretch from the sea to the swimming pool, from a barrier reef to a glass of water - even a fishbowl, photograph, or painting. So no matter where you live on this big blue marble, it's time to get your brain on water.*

If you have any questions about Women's Book Group, please contact Stephanie Grathwol.

Click [HERE](#) to join the Zoom Meeting.

Meeting ID: 996 0783 5644 Passcode: 360981

## Qigong Group

You are invited to join our weekly Qigong sessions, every Tuesday and Saturday morning at 9:00 AM, for some embodied spiritual practice. Newcomers are always welcome!

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

Meeting ID: 697 338 090

Pass-

code: 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 ([freyalake@sbcglobal.net](mailto:freyalake@sbcglobal.net))



## 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group

The UCC Breakfast Group will meet for breakfast on **Saturday, October 21 at 9:00 AM** at Garcia's Mexican Kitchen conveniently located on Shaver Road, right next door to UCC.

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

Our long-time Breakfast Group coordinator, **Ken VanEseltine**, announced his retirement last month. We are grateful to Ken for keeping the group going for so long.

We are also grateful to **Ron Crowell** for stepping up as our "new" Breakfast Group coordinator.



Please RSVP to Ron if you plan to attend the 3rd Saturday Breakfast Group. An RSVP is not required but sometimes plans

change at the last minute and checking in with Ron will ensure you are having breakfast alone.

Ron's contact info is [ronald.crowell@wmich.edu](mailto:ronald.crowell@wmich.edu) or (269)599-1242.



# CONNECTION



## New Opportunity: 1st Saturday Game Gathering!

UUCC held a "Game Night" in late July and a dozen people came to play board games together with snacks and activities for the children. The Connections Team organized this event and they considered it a success and an indicator that we should continue. Our "Game Night" was technically held on Saturday afternoon, but that seems to be the best time for most people.

This year, we will be holding a Game Gathering on the first Saturday of every month! Mark your calendars for 1:00-4:00 PM for some fun and fellowship. We will gather on **October 7** this month.

You may learn an intriguing new simulation board game and pit your strategy against veteran and novice opponents. You might prefer a simple card game, an old favorite like Backgammon or Scrabble, or an opportunity to learn something new like Quirkle or Crokinole.

Feel free to bring your beverage of choice and snacks to share. If you are bringing children, let the office ([uucommunity@gmail.com](mailto:uucommunity@gmail.com)) know so childcare can be provided, if you like, to allow you to engage with adults for the afternoon. Bring your favorite game if you would like to share it as well. Bring friends and family too!

If you have any questions about our 1st Saturday Game Gatherings, contact Nancy Calme or Stephanie Grathwol. See you there!





# 8TH PRINCIPLE



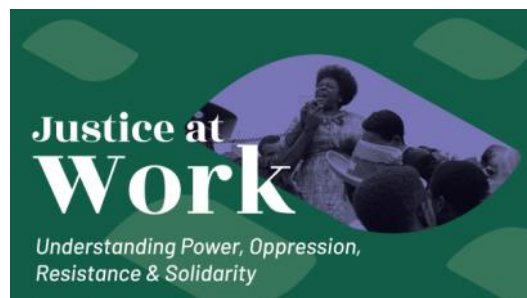
## Putting Our 8th UU Principle into Action

*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. We regularly share insights and resources in the space to help us do this work.*

There are many opportunities for individuals to explore anti-racism/anti-oppression and gain cultural competency at their own pace. OnePlace@KPL is a program at the Kalamazoo Public Library that offers free workshops and trainings to help strengthen non-profits in our community.

One of their programs, **Justice at Work by Freedom Lifted**, is a self-paced online training for individuals and groups that goes beyond most of those that focus solely on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and invite participants to:

- Explore the relationship between identity and power
- Take a deep look at the history and legacy of oppression in the U.S.
- Learn what resistance and solidarity look like in practice.
- Adopt a shared language when addressing social justice
- Begin or continue creating plans of action that shift culture and develop practices that advance justice in their organization and community.



The time commitment for the online training is 3-4 hours. Click [HERE](#) to learn more and to sign up to get access to the Justice at Work online course. Instructions to access the online course will be emailed to you within a week of sign-up



The **UU Institute**, an online learning community organized by the Unitarian Universalist Association offers trainings and other learning experiences that can support members, leaders, and professionals in Unitarian Universalist communities in their anti-racist and anti-oppression work. These include:

- [Knotty Conversations for Dismantling White Supremacy](#)
- [Unitarian / Universalist Colonial Legacy: Are We an Imperial Faith?](#)
- [The Journey to Jubilee: Stories of Anti-Racism Efforts at the UUA](#)

The UU Institute's trainings and other learning experiences include readings and video presentations that you can access online at your own pace, paired with discussion questions and activities you can share with others in "real-time". There is a nominal fee for most of their programs.

Visit the UU Institute website [uuinstitute.org](http://uuinstitute.org) to get started.

# OPPORTUNITIES



**Pursuing Inclusive Justice**  
Crisis Moments | Responsive Movements  
Faith Summit: Inclusive Dialogue for Clergy, LGBTQ+, & Justice Leaders

**October 20th, 2023**  
9:00 AM to 3:30 PM

**Keynote Speaker**  
Rabbi Alana Chaya Alpert  
Congregation T'chayah

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
143 Albany St, Ferndale, MI 48220

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
[bit.ly/44ReiaP](http://bit.ly/44ReiaP)

Sponsored by: Inclusive Justice Michigan

## **Pursuing Inclusive Justice: Crisis Moments / Responsive Movements** Friday, October 20 from 9 AM - 3:30 PM Zion Lutheran Church 143 Albany St, Ferndale, MI 48220.

This conference sponsored by Inclusive Justice and the Michigan UU Social Justice Network is an opportunity to connect with other progressive people of faith throughout the state to build strategy and network on issues that threaten to divide congregations and strip fundamental rights from targeted communities.

This will be a hybrid conference – both in person and online. The Keynote Presenter will be **Rabbi Alana Chaya Alpert** (she/her) of Congregation T'chayah and the Founding Director of Detroit Jews for Justice. There will be workshops on the “Best Practices of LGBTQ+ Inclusion” and “Pursuing Sacred Activism.” Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Registration is free for those attending online and \$10 per person for in-person guests. Learn more and register here: [inclusivejustice.org](http://inclusivejustice.org)

On Monday, **October 23**, Vicksburg will welcome **Angeline Boulley**, author of *Firekeeper's Daughter* and *Warrior Girl Unearthed* to speak live at the Vicksburg Performing Arts Center located at 501 East Hwy, beginning at **6:00 PM**. This is a no cost event, but pre-registration is required.

“Firekeeper’s Daughter” is Boulley’s debut novel and was a #1 New York Times Bestseller. Additionally, it has been selected as the Great Michigan Read for 2023 and the book has been given the Walter Dean Myers Award for Outstanding Children’s Literature, the William C. Morris Award for YA debut literature, and the Printz Award for Excellence in YA Literature. It was also an American Indian Youth Literature Award Honor Book.



Angeline Boulley, an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, is a storyteller who writes about her Ojibwe community in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. She is a former Director of the Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Angeline lives in southwest Michigan, but her home will always be on Sugar Island.

Reserve your seat by registering at the Vicksburg District Library, 215 S. Michigan St. or online at <https://tinyurl.com/ABauthorvisit>.



Check out the **Peoples Plant-Based Party**, an All-Vegan Market Sunday, **October 8** From **12 – 4 PM** Kalamazoo Farmers Market Live more sustainably!

## **2023 KALAMAZOO COUNTY SENIOR EXPO**

**Kalamazoo County Senior Expo is back!**  
Kalamazoo Expo Center, 3900 Lake St.,  
**October 3** from **9AM-3PM**.



# OCTOBER



DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Sunday	October 1	On Living and Dying with Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 11:00 AM
Tuesday	October 3	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	October 4	Board of Trustees Meeting 1st Dallas—UU Elevator Speech Workshop	6:30 PM 8:00 PM
Thursday	October 5	Stewardship Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Saturday	October 7	Qigong Game Gathering	9:00 AM 1:00 PM
Sunday	October 8	Stories of Becoming with Rev. Gy UU Exploration for Kids After Service Social Time/Souper Sunday Program Council Meeting	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 11:00 AM 11:20 AM
Monday	October 9	Mindfulness Self-Compassion Course with Eric Nelson	7:00 PM
Tuesday	October 10	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	October 11	Growth Team Meeting Sunday Services Committee Meeting 1st—Dallas UU Elevator Speech Workshop	10:00 AM 5:30 PM 8:00 PM
Friday	October 13	Women's Book Group	1:00 PM
Saturday	October 14	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	October 15	On Senescence with J. Barrett Lee UU Exploration for Kids After Service Social Time GOTV Letter Writing Party	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 11:00 AM 11:00 AM
Monday	October 16	Sustainability Group	7:00 PM
Tuesday	October 17	Qigong	9:00 AM
Thursday	October 19	A Conversation with Dr. Donald Rothberg	7:00 PM
Saturday	October 21	Qigong 3rd Saturday Breakfast UUCS Service Auction	9:00 AM 9:00 AM 5:00 PM
Sunday	October 22	Letting Go Is Hard To Do with Rev. Gy; UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time	10:00 AM 11:00 AM
Monday	October 23	Mindful Self Compassion Course with Eric Nelson	7:00 PM
Tuesday	October 24	Qigong	9:00 AM
Wednesday	October 25	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE`	12:00 PM
Thursday	October 26	Civil Conversations Group	7:00 PM
Saturday	October 28	Qigong	9:00 AM
Sunday	October 29	How to Befriend Death with Brent Harris UU Exploration for Kids After-Service Social Time	10:00 AM 10:00 AM 11:00 AM
Tuesday	October 31	HALLOWEEN Qigong	9:00 AM



## UU Community Church is served by:

Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney M.Div., M.A.  
Consulting Minister  
By Appointment Only  
[gyludvig@gmail.com](mailto:gyludvig@gmail.com)  
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## 2023-2024 Board of Trustees

Steve Tasko

Eric Nelson

Pat Timm

Michael Graham

Marsha Laya

**The next Newsletter Deadline is  
Wednesday, October 25 at NOON**

Please send submissions to:

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

## *CommUUnity Matters*

### Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan

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



[uucommunity@gmail.com](mailto:uucommunity@gmail.com)  
[uucommunitychurch.org](http://uucommunitychurch.org)  
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NOW ON

