



Community Matters

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan February 2018

February Services

*Services and Children's Religious
Education Classes begin at 10:00am.
Nursery Care is available.*

Sunday, February 4 - Rev. Gy will be speaking on **"When will you Give me a Grandbaby?"** Rev. Gy will take a look at how the Bible has impacted population/overpopulation on our planet.

Sunday, February 11 - Rev. Gy will be speaking on **"How Our UU Principles Guide Us"**. In today's toxic political climate, we'll take a look at how the Seven UUA Principles can ground us and give us direction.

Sunday, February 18 - "Sounds". Joyce Van Baak and UUCC youngsters will explore the impact of sound in our faith, including her "singing bowls". This will be an intergenerational service.

Sunday, February 25 - Rev. Gy will be speaking on **"May Our Light Shine!"** Rev. Gy will expand on our Principles and how worthy they are to be shared with the larger community.

From the Minister



This year your Board has decided to address the issue of abundance within our community, or lack thereof.

Fact is that while our community may have been small in numbers through the years, we still created a beautiful life that is expressed in caring for one another, caring for our larger community, caring to put into practice our UU principles and values always in all ways.

We purchased a beautiful home for our community and we even paid it off a year ago. Perhaps it speaks to our sense of lack of abundance that to this day we failed to celebrate this major accomplishment. We may be small in numbers, but our love and commitment are powerful and we did that together!!! We paid off a sizeable mortgage loan! We can truly take a moment or two to pat ourselves on the shoulder. Kudos to us!

The Board has also decided to focus on getting our message outside the walls of our church.

Fact is that the reason we keep returning to our spiritual community is not only because we like each other, but because we love the principles and values espoused in there. These principles are worth sharing. We are willing to give them a voice within our larger community. It has long been said that Unitarian

(Continued on page 2)

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Universalism is the best kept secret in the world. There is only one reason it is so: we keep it that way. No more! To that end we formed a new and enthusiastic Marketing Team whose focus is to make us visible in the community.

The Board has also decided that 2017 was the last year we were willing to live with a parking lot in shambles. In 2018 we are fixing the parking lot. Our principles and values are attractive, so shall be our environment.

This year we are prepared to live into every aspect of our abundance: time, talent, and tithes. Fact is that to get the word out about us, to live into our newly developed Vision and Mission, to fix up the physical appearance of our building and its surroundings, will require of us a willingness to show up and practice abundance. We invite you to participate in every way that it is yours to do so. We are grateful for your generous support throughout the years and give thanks for your renewed commitment. Our best days are still ahead of us! Here's to us!

We invite you join us Saturday, March 24th for our annual canvas dinner. Social hour begins at 5pm. Dinner served at 5:45pm.

We will make our pledges after dinner and celebrate our abundance with dessert and entertainment while the pledges are tallied.

UCC Super Server for January, 2018 **Kimberly Ridley**

Kimberly has been a member of UCC since 2004. In the last 14 years, she has stepped into many roles to serve the church, including committee work (RE, Sunday Services, Finance), guiding the youth in activities (teaching RE, chaperoning, fundraising, Loaves & Fishes, PRIDE), and has participated in skits and musical numbers for special events.



She has found friendship and enrichment by working and playing with others in small groups over the years such as the Chalice Circles, play reading gatherings, planning and leading lay services, and cheering UCC friends with cards and presence during difficult times. She had a wonderful uplifting experience attending a recent UU General Assembly with Lauren Ritter.

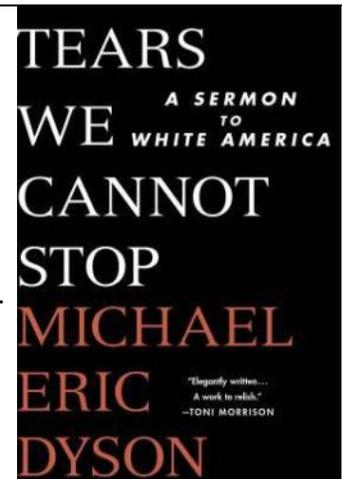
Outside of church, Kimberly is on the board of the USA Dance club, for which she is also the Treasurer, and is bravely beginning to get involved with the Kalamazoo Civic Theater. She has enjoyed attending sports, dance, and musical events that involve UCC children. She loves seeing what lights fires in our kids, even though her own two boys are grown.

Why does she do it all? She says that it is because church is where her friends and many interesting and caring people are. This is "her group of people!"

UCC Women's Book Group: Friday, February 9

The UCC Women's Book Group will meet Friday, February 9, to discuss "Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America," non-fiction by Michael Eric Dyson. Discussion leader: Rita Stevens; hostess: Nancy Stob.

Lunch will be held at 11:30 a.m. at the Cove Lakeside Bistro, 9110 Portage Road, on West Lake, a Millennium restaurant. The business meeting and discussion will begin at 1 p.m. in the UCC Community Room. Questions and lunch reservations with Judy Halseth, judith.halseth@wmich.edu. Eight women have already indicated they plan to gather for lunch. All UCC women are invited to participate.



On Wednesday, March 9, the Women's Book Group will discuss the Kalamazoo Public Library Community Read, "Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City," non-fiction by Dr. Matthew Desmond. On Friday, March 16, 7-9 p.m. Dr. Desmond will speak at Chenery Auditorium. Free event; open to the public. No ticket required. Copies of the book are for sale at Michigan News Agency. <http://kpl.gov/reading-together/2018/meet-the-author.aspx>.



February Calendar

Thursday, February 1 6 p.m. - Board of Trustees Meeting	Saturday, February 3 11:00 a.m. - Connections Team Mini Retreat
Sunday, February 4 9:15 a.m. - R.E. Committee Meeting 11:30 a.m. - Potluck hosted by the Board of Trustees	Friday, February 9 11:30 a.m. - Women's Book Group Lunch @Cove 1 p.m. - Women's Book Group Meeting
Saturday, February 10 1 p.m. - Meet the Newcomers @ Martell's	Sunday, February 11 11:30 a.m. - Faith in Action Committee Meeting 11:30 a.m. - Connections Team Meeting
Wednesday, February 14 Valentine's Day 5:30 p.m. - Sunday Services Committee Meeting	Saturday, February 17 8:30 a.m. - Men's Breakfast Group @ Burgertown
Sunday, February 18 11:30 a.m. - Program Council	Monday, February 19 President's Day
Wednesday, February 21 6:30 p.m. - UCC Film Forum	Thursday, February 22 6:00 p.m. Strategic Plan Task Force Virtual Meeting with Martha Creek

R. E. flections

Jacquis Robertson
Director of Religious Education



Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. - Harriet Tubman

I am utterly amazed at how quickly time flies when you're having fun. Here we are in February with spring and all that comes with it merely around the bend.

January was an inspiring time for me personally and for the Religious Education program. On the weekend of January 12 to 14, I was a facilitator/worship leader for the Young Adult Con that took place at People's Church. That was a beautiful and inspiring experience. For Friday night worship, I talked about hearing the Rev. Samuel "Billy" Kyles speak when I was 12 years old. Rev. Kyles was a very close friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, and was there when he died. I spoke about how that sermon is one I will never forget, if for no other reason than it humanized a person who has been canonized by the world.

It's through Rev. Billy Kyles that I remembered that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was human. Rev. Kyles talked about the laughter and conversation that ensued before Dr. King stepped out onto that balcony, how he and others planned to have dinner at Rev. Kyles' house that evening, and how-after Dr. King had been shot-the woman working the switchboard room ran out to see what happened and, from sheer shock, had a heart attack. It was these moments that no one would notice or hear about and it was these moments that humanized this horrific event. It wasn't just a civil rights leader that we lost on April 4, 1968, but a friend, a father, a husband, a brother, a son and more.

The focus of my talk tied into the weekend's common theme: That we see not only our humanity, but also see our power. This was something that I was excited to bring back to our youth and, as you will see, we have a lot of activities coming up that will allow them to step into their power in a way that they may not have before.

R.E. News



R.E. Committee Meeting: The R.E. committee will be meeting Sunday, February 4 at 9:15 a.m.

Thank You!: To Jeremy Blair for talking to our children about the importance of Yoga (pictured above and below).

Peace and Pizzazz: We will be participating in the Peace and Pizzazz program this year. If you would like to learn more, please see Jacquis.

UU Figures in History:



This Month we are highlighting Viola Fauver Greegg Liuzzo. Viola was a Unitarian Universalist civil rights activist from right here in Michigan. Born on April 1, 1925 Viola participated in the Selma to Montgomery marches and also worked on students rights here in Michigan. She sadly passed away in 1965, due to her involvement in the Selma to Montgomery marches.

December R.E. Schedule

Nursery Volunteer

2/4 Brian Leekley
2/11 Help Wanted
2/18 Help Wanted
2/25 Help Wanted

Dates	Lesson	Teacher
2/4	Call for Awareness	Regena Nelson
2/11	The Call for Our Unitarian Universalist Heritage	Stephanie Grathwol
2/18	“Sounds” Intergenerational Service	N/A
2/25	Buddhist Monk	Help Wanted

UUCC's **Religious Education Curriculum** is available in digital format. If you would like to have a digital copy of the lessons, please e-mail me at jacquis.o.robertson@gmail.com. Your participation, your questions and your suggestions are most welcome.

For those in our congregation who are new to volunteering as a Religious Education teacher, a **R.E. Teacher Check List** is available; this provides the appropriate details, and will give you an understanding of the routine.

For our best communication, please talk with me on Sunday and also send an e-mail to me at jacquis.o.robertson@gmail.com.

Our children need the participation of our adults, so thank you for considering this vital role.



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Hello, how are you, Members and Friends? Here we are in the calendar year's second month already, and in the eighth month of UUCC's fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). Goodness, how quickly time goes, as we engage in this life!

Before we know it, we'll be participating in our Fellowship Pledge Dinner, the Annual Meeting, and UUA's General Assembly, to name just a few of the upcoming annual events. I'm excited about these events, our new Vision and Mission, and the formation of our Strategic Plan Task Force that will take us into our three to five year future.

On a personal note, besides UUCC Board matters, I've been busier than I care to be in my "retired" life with the Osher Life Long Learning Institute (OLLI), scheduling dates for my Service Auction items, training our newer Coffee Hour Crews, and spending time with our deeply committed part-time staff.

Our staff: I've been meaning to share for some time now that I have a whole new appreciation for Jacquie and for Rev. Gy, and their respective service for us. As we get to know each other, and work together on any number of things for UUCC, I've witnessed their dedication, strength of character, abundant positive energies, creativity, and forward thinking. I think that it's especially nice that both women have strong roots and connections in southwest Michigan.

Some of you can appreciate that it's a big job, running a church. More and more, I appreciate the staunch commitment of UUCC's people--staff, including Nick, our innovative Music Director--and those many individuals who serve on our Committees/Teams/Social Groups. It's you who re-energize me. Thank you for your support.

Yours,
Stephanie Groshko Grathwol

Christmas Eve Service Offering

At the joint Christmas Eve Service held at People's Church, a cash offering was taken for the Minister's Discretionary funds and split between the two churches. Our share was \$497.69. These funds were put into the "Howard Fund" which is specified for members with financial need.

Kimberly Ridley, Asst. Treasurer



Check out our Online Presence

Find us online for up to date information on church happenings, sermons and more! Our website is uucommunitychurch.org! Like us on Facebook at [UUCCSWMI](https://www.facebook.com/UUCCSWMI)!





February Caring Community News

"Happy to share,
happy to bear one another's burdens,
that's why we are here." - Unknown

Congratulations to our birthday celebrants, 2/4 Nancy K., two who share February 10 – Hunter R. and Marsha L. There are also two “almost Valentine babies” – Beverly Folz 2/13 and Regena N. 2/15. Joe C. will be blowing out the candles on 2/26. Congratulations all! AND apologies to Nancy S.; her January 11 birthday was not noted in the January newsletter. Happy belated birthday, Nancy!

This month we remember Barbara Cousins, who established our church library. Barb left us in 2009.

There are some lovebirds celebrating February anniversaries. Molly and Tony Ettwein married 2/02/88. Kayle Rice and Brian Leekley were wed 2/26/95. Many more years together to you all.

Your ongoing good energies and encouragement are needed by Robyn Hoing and partner, Susan Beechler. Recovery from concussion can be slow. Robyn continues to limit activities that are stimulating and do not allow the brain to rest, including bright lights, loud sounds, and concentration. She avoids these no-nos by sleeping. We look forward to Robyn being okayed to return to UUCC.

Erin Michael has returned to UUCC services with her usual good humor and high energy, but still has episodes of vertigo.

We'll be missing more of our folks in the coming weeks, as they spend time in warmer, sunnier climes: Freya Lake will be with her California daughter Roberta; Pat Fuehr and husband Bob are returning to the southwest; John and Beverly Folz will be at a familiar place in Mexico, and Marsha Laya and Lee Smitendorf are off on another adventure, to Vietnam! And, of course, we miss the company of snowbirds Bill & Lucille Boyer along with Jim Heveran & Ellouise Barnette.

JOY: please notice the glorious Christmas cactus, a gift from Faye Clifton, in full bloom in the sanctuary.

It is important that we hear each other in community, so that we can share in joy and in times of concern. We are not alone. If you have, or are aware of someone else with difficult circumstances, please contact: Nancy Crowell, Judy Pigg-Behrendt, and/or Judy Oliver.

UUCC's LIBRARY HAS MOVED

Our library has been relocated from the Community Room to the front entrance/foyer area. Please check it out! We're working to make this space as inviting and comfortable as possible for our use, so please see UUCC Librarian Brian Leekley with your ideas.

Many thanks to Eric Nelson for moving the shelves, hanging the picture and quilt, and removing extra items to the lower level. Thanks to Brian Leekley for moving the books and other materials.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES - BUILDING and GROUNDS

We are in the process of refreshing and expanding our Building & Grounds Team, to more evenly distribute the tasks that keep our church home safe and sound. Many thanks and much appreciation to Eric Nelson who has been our primary one man team for a number of years .

Some of the items currently on B&G's Tickler File are:

ONGOING

..Sunday/Monday: Update information on the outside sign.

..Gather information from congregants on "trouble spots" in the building, such as burned out bulbs, water leaks, damaged areas, non-functioning toilets, etc.

..List accomplished tasks on the Completed Maintenance List. Note the date on which the task was done and the name of the volunteer or contractor.

..B&G Budget: Keep track of money spent by volunteers and/or professional contractors for supplies, maintenance, repairs, replacements.

..Communicate with the cleaning crew about trouble areas, special requests for supplies, changes to the regular cleaning schedule due to the building's rental.

..Attend Program Council meetings; report accomplishments, progress, concerns.

JULY/AUGUST

..Meet with both retiring and new committee members to review B&G's tasks with them

..Prepare for inspections by the Fire Marshall and/or Insurance Reps: Inspect the function of smoke detectors, replace batteries as needed; check the EXIT signs, replace bulbs as needed.

..Inspect the building for accumulation of things/junk or hazardous materials in storage areas, prior to fire and/or insurance inspections.

..Organize an All Church Work Day for general cleaning and simple repairs/replacements inside and outside (windows, light fixtures, painting etc.). Check the church calendar with the Office Administrator (and Sunday Services if the work day will be on a Sunday).

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

..Review Snow Removal contract and renew or research with a different company.

..Replace furnace filters as needed to prepare for winter.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

..Prioritize list(s) of old, new and incomplete projects.

..Discuss goals for the next fiscal church year (July 1 - June 30).

DECEMBER

..Turn in B&G's Budget Request Form to the Finance Team.

FEBRUARY

..Inspect the function of smoke detectors, replace batteries as needed; check the EXIT signs, replace bulbs as needed.

..Organize an All Church Work Day for general cleaning and simple repairs/replacements inside and outside (windows, light fixtures, painting etc.). Check the church calendar with the Office Administrator (and Sunday Services if the work day will be on a Sunday).

MARCH

..Review money spent on projects. Continue work to estimate next year's budget requirements.

APRIL/MAY

..Revisit the Oct/Nov Priority List of old, new and incomplete projects.

..Annual inspection of Fire Extinguishers; have professionals "rework" each as needed.

JUNE

..Annual review of property insurance with the Finance Chair, to ensure best coverage and competitive pricing.

..Check furnace filters; replace as needed for air conditioning.

OTHER

..Keep materials neat and up to date on the sanctuary's information table and its bulletin board.

..Keep information materials neat and up to date in the Community Room's display holders.

..Keep our inside plants healthy for the enjoyment of all.

..Periodically inspect the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

..Form a Safety and Security Team.

..Annual review/revise relevant policies/procedures.

Board Briefs



Regular Meeting: Thursday, January 5, 2018

Received report from Director of Religious Education (DRE) and Office Administrator (OA) Jacquis Robertson.

- DRE: Board supports trying out a space on the main floor for young children during one or more future intergenerational services. Goal: retain youth after their Coming of Age ceremony.
- DRE: Seven meetings/events in January (RE, UU History, UUS Covenant Webinar)
- OA: Reminder-Submittal Deadlines are Wednesday 10 a.m. for Announcements in Friday's Weekly Email, Wednesday 12 Noon for announcements in the Sunday Order of Service and Third Tuesday 12 Noon for the monthly Newsletter.

Received report from Consulting Minister Reverend Gy Ludvig-McCartney

- Being present with Children & Youth RE: Gy to volunteer on the 3rd Sunday, with the long term goal of helping to ease their transition from "downstairs" to "upstairs".
- Outreach - looking into doing Meetups around town.
- Our drummer Alex Valkema is moving to Florida; his last day with us is January 7th.

Board Discussions:

- Board Liaisons gave updates on the committees that they support.
- UUCC T-shirts and Sweatshirts: Will be a slightly different shade of green so both types of shirts are the same.
- The board will do Rev. Gy's mid-year evaluation this month.
- The board will appoint a Strategic Planning Task Force. A pre-planning SP meeting is scheduled for Wednesday January 17 at 5 p.m. Attendees: Board, potential SP Task Force members.
- The board approved Phil Najar's request to host a weekly men's-only addiction group at UUCC.
- Upcoming UUA Events to recruit for: June 20-24 GENERAL ASSEMBLY in Kansas City, MO and July 15-21 MidWest Leadership School at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Reminder: Board meetings are open to all to attend. The next meeting is scheduled for February 1st at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at UUCC.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Ritter

UUCC Board of Trustees Secretary

FEBRUARY CHOCOLATES from Equal Exchange

Get your chocolates now, at UUCC's wholesale prices, from Equal Exchange. To see the various chocolate products, and details about each, please visit EE's website: <https://shop.equalexchange.coop> and then see Stephanie Grathwol to order. Note: The prices on the website are higher than UUCC's price (because we are an organization, we order by the case and do not pay for shipping if the order is \$135 or more).

By way of example, here is what EE's website says about just one chocolate bar, their Organic Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch with Sea Salt (55% cacao):

"STORY: This bar is made with cacao (cocoa beans) from farmer co-operatives in the Dominican Republic and Peru. The sugar and vanilla are also fairly traded and organic. The sugar comes from co-operatives in Paraguay and the vanilla from a co-operative in Madagascar."



UCC Program Council

January 21, 2018

20 attending, Phil Najjar, leading; Pat Fuehr, notes

Call to Order – 11:44 AM**PC Basics**

Meetings - 3rd Sunday, after coffee hour, August - June. Decision making - Robert Rules of Order.

UCC Member to Member Covenant – read by attendees**Tickler** – place holder for future ideas, action**Budget:** Thanks to Marsha Laya for donating \$36 for easel paper**UCC PROGRAMMING****Potlucks - Nancy Stob, Potluck Coordinator**1st Sunday of the month, unless changed at PC. One page of written instructions/guidelines available.

Looking for groups or individuals to volunteer.

February 4th: UCC Board of Trustees

March – discussion, decision to skip this month because of the 3/24 pledge dinner

April 1- Easter Sunday – will there be a potluck?

May 6th – Mexican theme – possibly hosted by Faith In Action**ISAAC:** The Kellogg Foundation provided a grant to ISAAC. Focus will be on racial healing and affordable housing in Kalamazoo. ISAAC is sponsoring a 5 K/walk in June rather than a banquet.**Religious Education—Jacquis Robertson:** Curriculum is finished, modified from UUA, “Heeding the Call”. Teachers are needed. R.E. will also be part of Peace Pizzazz, dollars and volunteers are needed. See the website or Jacquis for more information.**Sunday Services Committee:** Clarified role of the Service Coordinator when working with a guest speaker. Please inform our Treasurer in advance so he can have a check ready for the guest speaker.**Caring Committee:** Good list of volunteers. Need people to help/standby for memorial service. Judy Oliver recognized Nancy Crowell’s extreme dedication to many causes.**Connections (formerly Membership Com.)—Nancy Calme:** Planning a mini retreat to plan improvements in orienting newcomers.**Faith in Action:** Brian Leekly has done a great job of organizing our January 28th service that will focus on poverty. Guest minister is Dr. Pinkney from Benton Harbor. There will be a buffet luncheon and panel discussion after Coffee Hour with Don Cooney, Chris Buckley, and Dr. Pinkney.**Generosity Sundays:** Schedule one every three months to maximize our gift.

January 21 – Michigan Immigration Rights Center

April 22 – Portage Community Outreach Center

June – Outfront Kalamazoo

?early September?- First Day Shoe Fund

Social Groups:

Men's Breakfast Group – 8:30 AM on the 3rd Saturday at Burger Town Grille on Shaver Road. All men of the church are welcome. Brian Leekley sends e-mail reminders.

Women's Book Group – Judy Halseth, Chair. 2nd Friday, September-May, lunch at 11:30 AM, followed by a gathering at UUCC at 1 PM for discussion. All women of the church are welcome; please let Judy know if you are coming for lunch and discussion. February 9: "Tears We Cannot Stop" by Michael Eric Dyson. Lunch at the Cove at 11:30 AM, discussion at UUCC at 1:00 PM. March is the Community Read: "Evicted" by Matthew Desmond, he will be speaking at Chenery Auditorium in March.

Special Functions:

Adult RE Film Forum – Third Wednesday of each month. Need more volunteers to help make this is a regular monthly event again, ideally 4 to 5 folks who will take turns hosting (choose a film, facilitate a discussion afterwards, operate the equipment). Ron Crowell will resend a list of films to all members. Stephanie Grathwol will host on February 21.

Art Wall – Ron and Nancy Crowell are planning an exhibit with a painter and woodworker.

Coffee Hour Coordinator - Denise Sonier is replacing Stephanie Grathwol. Denise will also team with Nancy Kulka as one of our coffee crews.

Library – moved to the front office area. Thanks to Eric Nelson, and Brian Leekly. Steve Tasko will be assisting with data entry. Need a step stool to reach higher shelves.

Support for the Board's areas

Strategic Plan Task Force: The Board and the Committee on Ministry are forming a task force of people to build upon our Vision and Mission for our future three to five years. This task force will participate in virtual online meetings with outside facilitator Martha Creek, starting February 22. Preparatory work began on January 17, with a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis; easel sheets are in the Community Room for all to review and add to, or share your thoughts with Rev. Gy.

Building & Grounds – Stephanie will prepare sign-up sheets for the various tasks. Eric is working to resolve recent problems with our hot water heater.

Committee on Ministry – Working with the Board to form a Strategic Plan Task Force.

Marketing Team: Phil will place our order for T-shirts and sweatshirts this week, advise delivery date. Please make checks payable to Phil and mark "paid" on the sign-up sheet.

Stewardship: The annual Fellowship Dinner is being planned for Saturday, March 24.

Next Program Council Meeting: February 18, 2018, at 11:30 AM. Nancy Calme will take notes.

Adjourn – 12:21 pm



Welcome, Engage, Inspire!



Thinking on the Edge of the Box (where transformation happens)!!

Our February **Super Server** is Eric Nelson! Eric has served many years as our lone Building and Grounds Chair, co-led our early Youth Group, taught many Religious Education classes, and much, much more! We will celebrate him and his service to UUCC at the Sunday, February 11 service. Thank you, Eric for all you do!

Watch for **yellow ribbons**, which first-time attendees can choose to wear to let you know they are new to UUCC. If you see someone with a yellow ribbon, please live our new Mission by nurturing abundant welcoming!

Weekly, the **Incredible Introducer** (identified by a light-up badge) is available to all congregants to help answer your questions about opportunities and events at UUCC. Look for this person before or after the service!

The Connections Team is holding a **mini-retreat** on February 3 to plan improvements to how we 'do' orientation and stay connected to those newer to our community. We may be asking *YOU* to join in the change!

Let's get together! Important dates to put on your calendar!

Second Saturdays – Opportunity for newcomers and long-time UUCCers to gather, inspire and support each other and share our dreams. Come to one or all of them!

- February 10 – meeting place TBD
- April 14 – meeting place TBD
- June 9 – meeting place TBD

Joining Ceremony – welcome new members on March 4, 2018

Connections Team's mission and goals for the upcoming church year:

Welcoming – by all and to all; invite everyone to continue sincere acceptance

Connecting – foster communication of opportunities to socialize, engage, help and lead, both in our community and the community at large; inspire creativity, take risks and invite adventure

Streamline – put our processes in writing, provide training to all who wish it

We welcome your questions about making connections, membership at UUCC, and your input and feedback as we move forward in this church year! Please contact us; Nancy Calme, Nancy Crowell, Nancy Stob, Lauren Ritter, Joyce Van Baak and Erin Michael. Love to see your smile!

DENISE SONIER: NEW COFFEE HOUR COORDINATOR

Please welcome * DENISE SONIER * as UUCC's new Coffee Hour Coordinator! We are thrilled to have Denise join the team, and know that she has our full support in her new role.

Many of us know Denise as part of the family that includes partner Stephen Tasko and sons Hayden, Grayson, and Nick. Besides their regular engagement with UUCC, some of us have volunteered alongside either Steve or Denise, or both of them, with various activities here at [10441 Shaver Road](#) in Portage.



Question: So, what does the Coffee Hour Coordinator do?

Answer: Help to make sure that we continue to cherish UUCC's Sunday Coffee Hour. Responsibilities include coordinating coffee crews and supplies.

CREWS: We currently have four two-person crews who share a monthly schedule, and we're always happy to show others where things are in our kitchen. The crews are: Joe & Nancy Calme (since January 2010); Ron Crowell & Jon Vanderberg; Stephanie Grathwol; Brian Leekley & Ed Stob; Nancy Kulka & Denise Sonier. Many thanks to these committed individuals for their faithful service.

SUPPLIES include the "Fellowship Blend" percolator coffee, teas, and hot cocoa mix from Equal Exchange. Locally purchased items include distilled water; refreshments; cream (liquid, powder); sugar and sugar substitutes; marshmallows; paper products -napkins, cups, saucers-towels; stirrers; plastic ware; dish liquid & hand soap; coffee urns & hot water equipment. Donations of these supplies are always appreciated; THANK you for your previous gifts!

UUCC's Sunday Coffee Hour is an essential community time, one that we hold dear and love to share with visitors, friends, and members. Your contributions of time and/or supplies ensure that this vital activity continues, for the benefit of all.

Please join with me in congratulating Denise as she begins her latest service for us.

Stephanie Grathwol

ARCHIVES - Did You Know?



UUCC's Archives were started in 1995 by one of our founders, Joan Wallace; she faithfully performed this volunteer service until shortly before her death in 2015. Freya Lake is our current archivist; she stepped forward to cover this activity in 2015. So, perhaps you are curious to know what's in our archives, or maybe you'd like to recall a former event or favorite activity? Please feel free to look through one or more of the white three ring binders on the shelves behind the Welcome Desk.

Future additions about UUCC and/or UUCC people are welcome. Please give the materials to Freya, or place them in the black tray on the shelf in the Community Room. Materials include our usual printed church communications (the monthly newsletter, Order of Service, letters from church leadership, etc.) as well as articles and/or photographs from the media.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Winter/Spring Catalog

The Winter/Spring 2018 catalog for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Western Michigan University is on UUCC's information table. Registration for members opened last month; you may still be able to get the class or the trip you want.

OLLI has provided distinctive lifelong learning opportunities for mature adults in Southwest Michigan since 2011. The Winter/Spring semester features 54 courses, a six-session lecture series, and six trips. A typical four-week course meets two hours a week, with a fee of \$40 for an OLLI member and \$80 for a non-member. An annual OLLI membership costs \$35, or for a new member (1/1/18-7/1/18) \$17.50. The OLLI office. Their telephone number is 269-387-4200.

OLLI courses are taught by volunteers and are held at sites on the WMU campus and in the community. Several UUCC members are active OLLI volunteers and instructors, and many other UUCC members and friends have taken OLLI courses. If you are interested in knowing more about OLLI, or in volunteering, check the website (become an instructor) or talk with Ron Crowell, Stephanie Grathwol, or Judy Halseth.

General Assembly 2018

Kansas City, Missouri and Online

Wednesday, June 20, 2018 (All day) to Sunday, June 24, 2018 (All day)



General Assembly 2018 will take place at the Kansas City Convention Center, 301 W 13th St, Kansas City, MO 64105

2018 Registration Rates:

Adult: Wed-Sun: \$395 (\$225) March 1 – April 30; \$450 (\$260*) May 1 – June 24

Youth (Grades 9-12): \$225 until April 30 and \$260 thereafter.

Off-Site: \$150 until April 30 and \$175 thereafter.

SCHOLARSHIPS: Applications accepted March 1 through March 31.

Reduced Rates: \$0 in exchange for 18 hours of volunteer work. Apply by 3/31.

Interested? Please contact Stephanie Grathwol or Jacquis Robertson.

CANCELLATION: Cancel a GA registration through the GA Registrar at generalassembly@uua.org Fee is \$35 before May 1; \$60 May 1 and thereafter.

Attending Online

Registration NOT required to vote in a UUA Election nor to view: Events in the General Session Hall via live streaming and online chat ([watch GA 2017](#)). Most videos are posted afterwards.

In addition, Off-site Registrants are able to watch and ask questions in live sessions including workshops and business sessions (mini-assemblies, hearings, etc).

SAVE THE DATE

Next month is the time we traditionally consider what our Church community means to us and what we can do to support it. You'll hear more about this in the next few weeks. For now, it's important that you mark your calendar for the date we celebrate your generosity.



5:00 P.M. Saturday, March 24, 2017, at UCC

5:00: Wine, Music and Conversation

5:45: Buffet Dinner and Pledging

6:45: Comments and entertainment followed by dessert and canvass results

Please note that childcare and transportation will be provided and that, unless you are one of the special cooks bringing side dishes, you DO NOT need to bring a dish to pass.

BETTY LEE ONGLEY NATURE PRESERVE



Exciting News! As posted in [MLive's December 20, 2017 edition](#), Tom Haroldson's article reports that our own Betty Lee will have a nature preserve named after her "...the city's first female mayor and its most well-known community activist and volunteer."

The gift of the 11.1 acre property in Portage, by Portage City Councilwoman Claudette Reid and her husband Richard Kraas, was accepted and approved by the Portage City Council during its December 19 meeting, at which Betty Lee was present. The land is adjacent to the Portage Creek Bicentennial Park Trail and was described as being "...rich in wildlife, oak trees and water resources."

Tom Haroldson's article reports that Betty Lee "...thanked the council, Reid and Kraas and said she was honored to have the preserve named after her, especially since she has served on several parks or land preservation committees, including the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy."

Please be sure to congratulate Betty Lee when next you see her.

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

Jacquis Robertson
By Appointment Only
Director of Religious Education
Jacquis.o.robertson@gmail.com
Cell: 269-569-9337

Jacquis Robertson
Office Administrator
Wednesday 10 - 1
Thursday 9 - 1
uucommunity@gmail.com
Church office: 324-7262

2017-2018 Board of Trustees

- Pat Fuehr
- Stephanie Grathwol
- Marsha Laya
- Brian Leekley
- Phil Najar
- Lauren Ritter
- Mary Roscoe

**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Tuesday, February 20 at Noon
Send Submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com**

Community Matters

UU Community Church of SW Michigan
10441 Shaver Rd.
Portage, MI 49024
269-324-7262
uucommunity@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/uuccswmi

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