



Community Matters

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

October Services

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

Sunday, October 7th and October 14th - Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney will be speaking.

Please be sure to check our website and Friday weekly e-mails for more information. We look forward to having you here with us.

Sunday, October 21st - Voters, Not Politicians volunteer Robert Weir will be speaking

The issue of fair legislative voting districts versus manipulated and skewed gerrymandered districts is going to be on the statewide Michigan ballot on November 6. It's Proposal 2, put forth by a nonpartisan Michigan organization, Voters Not Politicians.

In his ministry, Voters Not Politicians volunteer Robert Weir will present the "good versus evil" aspects of this issue. Robert will share statistics and stories of how voters are manipulated by gerrymandering techniques known as "packing and cracking." He will explain how gerrymandering has led America away from being a true "representational democracy." And he will demonstrate how and why Proposal 2 will bring about a legislative redistricting process that is fair, impartial, and transparent.

Sunday, October 28 - Movie: "Coco"

Please join us for a showing of the beautiful, colorful, musical movie "Coco" (2017), in honor of Day of the Dead, *Día de Muertos*, which begins Wednesday, October 31st. This is a family event, so all ages are welcome.



From the Minister

Rev. Gy Ludvig McCartney

Today I feel inspired.

I am inspired by beautiful service, daring dreams, commitment in action, and love, love, love – all coming from our Board.

Today, the last Saturday in September, we had our Board retreat. We all gathered at Marsha Laya's, your Board President's home, and got to work. It was beautiful to witness, it was exciting to participate in this creative process.

We talked much about communication. Communication with the congregation, communication among committee chairs, communication among leadership. We agreed that it's impossible to over communicate. Yet, we are thinking of new, creative ways to communicate even more and better than we have been.

We took an honest look at the things we do, the way we do them and asked simple questions, such as should we still do these things, is this how we should still do them? We set some goals for the next three months.

Here are some of the things we are going to take a fresh look at: the Newsletter. We noticed that some of the information is redundant, and is also shared in the weekly communication. We also wondered if it should be published monthly, or perhaps less frequently? Should we change the

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

content a bit? – in the next three months we are going to answer these questions and make changes as we gain clarity.

We also wondered if Program Council could use a bit of re-imagining? In the next three months we are going to revamp Program Council as well.

We are also going to focus on our overall communication. It is important to us that you, the congregation, feels included and well informed.

Today I feel inspired for I spent a day in the presence of love, caring, wisdom, vision, and unwavering commitment. I hope that inspiration is contagious.

I am going to leave you with the quote that we closed our retreat: “the best way to predict the future is to create it”.

Amen. Amen.



UUC Meeting Minutes

Some of you may be interested to find out more about what's going on behind the scenes here at UUC. We will be posting our meeting minutes and notes in our weekly emails as they become available. Some of them may also be posted at the church, on the bulletin board in the Community Room. Here are links to the most current information:

[September 13th Board Meeting Minutes](#)

[September 16th Program Council Minutes](#)

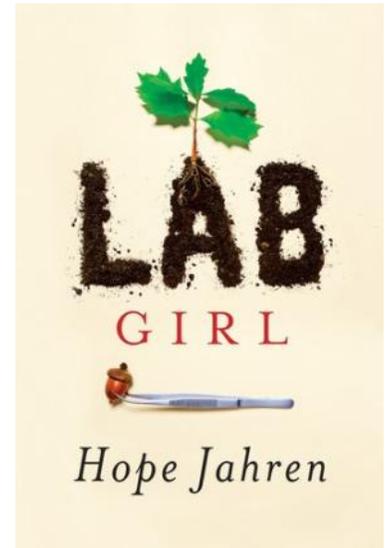


Women's Book Group - October

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren

The Women's Book Group will meet Friday, October 12 for lunch at 11:30 at [La Finca](#), 10412 Portage Road. Please make your lunch reservation with Betty Lee Ongley. We will be returning to the church for dessert and discussion of the book, [Lab Girl](#) by Hope Jahren. All UUCG women are welcome.

From Goodreads: "Acclaimed scientist Hope Jahren has built three laboratories in which she's studied trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. Her first book is a revelatory treatise on plant life—but it is also so much more. *Lab Girl* is a book about work, love, and the mountains that can be moved when those two things come together...." [\[read more\]](#)



October Calendar

Every Sunday, October 7, 14, 21, & 28 10:00 am - Sunday Service with childcare & R.E., classes	Every Wednesday, October 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31 6:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal
Thursdays, October 4, 11, 18, & 25 1:00 - 3:00 pm - iPhone/iPad Classes	Sunday, October 7 11:30 am - Potluck
Monday, October 8 3:30 pm - Board Meeting (following monthly Board Meetings will be on 2nd Wednesdays at 2:00 pm, conference call if inclement weather)	Wednesday, October 10 12:15 pm - Stewardship Meeting 5:30 pm - Sunday Services Committee Meeting
Friday, October 12 11:30 am - Women's Book Group Lunch 1:00 pm - Women's Book Group	Friday, October 12, 6:00 pm to Saturday, October 13, 10:00 am R.E. Retreat
Sunday, October 14 11:30 am - Faith in Action Meeting	Wednesday, October 17 Monthly Newsletter Deadline
Saturday, October 20 8:30 am - Men's Breakfast @ Burger Town Grille	Sunday, October 21 11:30 am - Program Council Meeting
Friday, October 26 5:30 pm - UUCG Service Auction	Sunday, October 28 11:30 am - R.E. Committee Meeting

R.E.flections

Jacquis Robertson
Director of
Religious Education



“The ability to observe without evaluating is the highest form of intelligence .”

– Krishnamurti

I love fall! I love when the leaves change, and the air becomes cool and crisp, and the smell of apple cider and doughnuts fill the air and we as a church settle into a calm yet eventful cadence. I love fall and I'm excited about the beautiful things fall will bring. Fall will bring our annual R.E. Retreat (formally the R.E. Sleepover) where the children will be able to engage in fun activities with their friends here at UUCC. They will also be able to take some much needed time to reflect on what's important to them, the key things that they believe in, that would be an essential component of their creed, given that we're focusing on personal creeds this year in Religious Education.

In my experience, I've found the personal creed to be the hardest part of the Coming of Age Ceremony (a bridging ceremony that celebrates the youth's transition out of Religious Education, at age 18 or as a senior in high school). It's something that the youth haven't had the ability to think about or contemplate in-depth. This year, that is going to be a focus in R.E. The children will build their own personal creed, and while this will not be the creed they will present at their Coming of Age Ceremony, it will provide a base, a starting point if you will, that they will be able to build on and refine year after year. Throughout this year, we're going to be building in activities that allow the youth to have more agency over their religious education but also be able to reflect on and observe what means the

most to them. They will examine that for understanding but not to evaluate or attribute “bad or good” to it.

I would encourage us all to go through that practice as well. In this year of transition and change, why not take a personal inventory of what we believe and why, and honestly question if that is something we're truly living in to. I think going through this process with the youth will allow for some great conversations around the dinner table!

Parent Orientation:

A big THANK YOU to all of you that bought baked goods during our bake sale on September 16! R.E. raised \$68!

R.E. Retreat:

The Religious Education Retreat will be held from 6 p.m. on October 12 to 11 a.m. on October 13th here at UUCC. You can find sign-up sheets and more information in the weekly R.E. e-mail and on the R.E. table located in the back of the sanctuary.

Religious Education Committee:

Religious Education Committee Meeting will be held Sunday, October 21, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Service Auction/Movie Night

During the October 26th Service Auction, the kids will have art available for sale during the silent auction; all proceeds will go to R.E. Renovations. The children will have a movie night during the service auction itself so please feel free to bring youth to the Service Auction.

Religious Education Weekly E-Newsletter:

If you are not receiving the Religious Education weekly e-newsletter and would like to please e-mail me at Jacquis.o.robertson@gmail.com.

October R.E. Schedule

Nursery Volunteers

Please contact Jacquis at jacquis.o.robertson@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer to hang out with our littlest UUCC people.

Dates	Lesson	Teacher
10/7	What do you Believe?	Jacquis Robertson
10/14	Retreat Debrief	Jacquis Robertson
10/21	UUer	Jacquis Robertson
10/28	Movie - "Coco"	Intergenerational

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.

Mission: Inspirational

At our last meeting, the Strategic Planning team took some time to be open and honest in our conversation. We spent time going around the room and sharing what was going on in our lives. We discovered some of us were feeling fatigued while others were energized. This is an integral part of our new strategic planning process and is called “checking the health” of the group. Understanding the health of each member of your group will serve you well in decision-making.

We also discovered a few of us were anticipating the task of being a mentor to be ominous. So, we took time to voice our concerns, discuss ways to simplify the process and shared our experience of having walked a committee through this process. After much conversation, a few vital points were revealed to us. We are sharing these with you in the hopes it will help us all to be successful together.

- Ease on into the year and the new strategic plan.
- Move forward in a slow and steady pace. This is not a race.
- Ask questions. Always move toward understanding.
- Share openly and honestly in a respectful manner.
- Honor the past, open up to the future.
- Collaborate between groups/committees and over communicate.
- Realize that it is alright to be uncomfortable. Sit with the change for a while, experience it and search for the positives, before deciding whether you like it.
- We will stumble occasionally. The goal is to get back up, identify the lesson and try again.
- Change can be difficult. This might be the year we all need to take care of each other.
- To sum it up: work together and “flow like a river” rather than “swim upstream.”

Starting in October, we will be reaching out to ask to attend your next meeting and begin mentoring in our new Strategic Planning process. Your mentors are:

Lauren Ritter (Sunday Services)
Darby Fetzer (Marketing)
Jacquis Robertson (RE & Faith in Action)

Nancy Calme (Connections team)
Rev. Gy (Stewardship, Board)
Erin Michael (Building & Grounds, Board)

We will be working with you to guide you through the strategic planning process from big picture to implementation. Bring all questions you may have regarding the One-year Congregational goals, the Vision/Strategy Organizer (V/SO) and the strategic planning process. We will be helping you to identify your priority project(s), with whom you may need to collaborate and ensuring realistic timelines. If your group, or you as an individual, does not have a mentor, please reach out to any of us. We will work with you to find ways for each person to contribute to the best of their ability. If we are unable to answer a question on the spot, we will find the answer and get back to you. We are here for you and with you. Your patience is greatly appreciated. Here’s to working better together!



“Building bridges. Inspiring life!”

Connections Team Update

New UUCC photo directories have been published! Inevitably, something will need an update moments after it is printed, so if you need a change please contact Nancy Calme (in the directory.)

Would you be willing to shine your friendly face and greet people coming in the door for the Sunday service? We need a few additional volunteers to sign up for one Sunday a month to help out as Greeters, either at the door, behind the table in the foyer, or at the Welcome Desk. There are tasks for everyone from newcomers to long-time members. We will hold a training session at 11:30 on Sunday, November 25. Some things have changed, so come to the training even if you have done the job before.

The Caring Community is also represented on the Connections Team, and the coordinators have identified a need to have a hospitality team at the ready for when a memorial service is to be hosted at UUCC. Team members would volunteer to provide food, make coffee, set up or clean up. Sign up sheets are available on the Activity sign-up table by the Welcome Desk. Please consider stepping up to care for our members and friends during their time of need.

Our Team plans to host a fun family event, together with the Religious Education program, in the next couple of months. Details are still in the works, but this will help the church to achieve its goals this year. We are also looking into UU Association training for people doing similar jobs to see how we can plug in to the body of knowledge built by many before us.

Do these kinds of community-building projects appeal to you? We are always happy to have new members pitch in. Contact Nancy Calme for more information.



You Are the Caring Community

It is again time to recommit to our practice of congregational ministry. When needs arise among our members or friends, they are met in an amazing way in our community. The following chart has been developed to help all members and friends at UCC become knowledgeable about being a part of caring ministry.



How does it work?

Persons to contact: Nancy Crowell, Judy Oliver, Judy Pigg-Behrendt

Teams: There are four teams: Meal Ministry, Transportation Ministry, Simple Presence Ministry, and Memorial Receptions Ministry. You are the volunteers for these teams. Not on a team? You are invited to help when and where you can.

Communication: You contact a Point Person when you know of a need. The point persons contact the member in need and, if necessary, get in touch with the appropriate team. They also may inform the congregation through the Caring Community's monthly newsletter article and/or special emails. You learn of needs through these media, and you help however you are able. It is helpful if you also let the Caring Point Person know what you have done. Communication needs to be both 2-way and circular!

The member in need is not required to approach any individual for help. The helpers are members who have volunteered in advance to be called upon for service on a preferred team or teams. When a member can provide a meal or a ride, the arrangements for meeting can be made directly between the individuals.

Ways of caring:

- Phone calls, notes, and visits to shut-ins
- Hospital or home visits when necessary and desired
- Flowers or a gift for serious illness, surgery, or death
- Preparation and delivery of food (or Ample Pantry certificates) to congregants in need of help with meals at home. In appropriate situations, a volunteer may choose to eat and socialize with the recipient.
- Transportation for members or friends who need rides to church or to appointments in the community
- Sitting quietly with the seriously ill

Memorial Receptions: In the event of a memorial service held at the church, refreshments are provided as the family desires. This effort may extend to set-up and clean-up of the serving and table areas. The Point Persons, or another member, will co-ordinate volunteers who respond to an invitation to service. Guidelines and an organizational chart are provided to help with this.

OCTOBER CARING COMMUNITY NEWS

Sending out October birthday wishes to Joan Young, October 5; Kathryn Ragains, October 7; Judy Halseth, October 8; Grayson Tasko, October 9; Ellouise Barnette, October 11 and Barbara McWhorter, October 31.

We also celebrate the lives of four early members who made significant contributions to getting UCC started and on a stable footing. Dorothea Tomkins (founder with husband Herb), Jean Houston (founder), Donald Mullhagen (who with wife Nina continued to be with us in spirit from Friendship Village long after they were no longer able to attend), and Barbara Maddox (who braved the elements, coming from Three Rivers for services and the Women's Book Group). We are grateful for their contributions and dedication and remember them fondly. They made a difference.

If you have, or are aware of someone else with a difficult circumstance, please contact a point person: Nancy Crowell 269-381-7659, and/or Judy Oliver 269-353-9397, and/or Judy Pigg-Behrendt 269-217-5252. Our e-mail addresses are in the UCC directory.



VOLUNTEER HELP WANTED

UCC works as a special faith community because we engage with each other, making possible any number of activities that all help to make this a better world. Are you looking to help, or are you looking for helpers?

Here's a brief list of some of the current opportunities for volunteers and the contact person:

- **Coffee Hour** - Denise Sonier
- **Library** - Brian Leekley
- **Religious Education** - Jacquis Robertson
- **Greeters and Folks to be at Tables for Sunday Service** - Nancy Crowell
- **Program Council Notetaker & Chair for October 21 meeting** - Stephanie Grathwol





What are you doing on Friday evening, October 26?

How about enjoying blues, rock and roll, and soul music by the band [Big Trouble](#)? Or would you like to go out for a meal of burgers, sides, desserts and beverages for only \$10 with no tax or tip? Perhaps you'd prefer shopping for gadgets and gift cards. Maybe you'd enjoy fevered bidding for unusual services. Or would you rather just visit with friends? How about doing something to support your Church?

Well, have we got a deal for you! You can experience all of the above beginning at 5:30 p.m. on October 26 with wine, silent-auction shopping, and music by Big Trouble. Dinner begins at 6:00, and the live auction starts at 6:45.

Please plan what you will offer, and sign up on the form available at the church desk. We will publish offerings in the weekly emails, so you can plan your potential purchases. Need ideas? Some of last year's popular services were Freya Lake's chick flick luncheons, Joan Young's awesome rhubarb pie, the Nelsons' Cinco de Mayo party, Robyn Hoing's family photo shoots, Stephanie Grathwol's one-day road trips, Darby Fetzer's Noble Goal workshop, and the Calmes' annual chili supper. Pet-sitting, house-cleaning, lawn care, gardening, and mending are other ideas. Whatever your talents, someone out there can use them.

The evening also includes a silent auction. Bring in items you no longer use that are in very good condition, and people will bid on them in writing. You, in turn, may bid on the things you like. There will be time to return to see if you've been outbid and to increase your bid. We will also have merchants' gift cards. You are welcome to donate those as well. Some of the children from our Religious Education classes are producing art for the silent auction with proceeds designated for the RE area renovation. Bring your items to Church before the auction so the tables and bid sheets can be ready when you arrive that night.

Children are welcome to attend with their parents. Jacquis will be showing a movie downstairs for children who prefer that to the Auction.

If other commitments prevent your attending this gathering, look over the donation lists that will soon be provided, and enlist a friend to bid for you. This is UUCC's major fundraiser of the year, and we count on it to support the annual budget.

For further information, speak to one of your Stewardship Committee members: Chair Regena Nelson, Joe Calme, Ron Crowell, or Beverly Folz.



2018 Public Meeting!

Thursday **October 25**

6 pm - Registration/Performances
6:45 - Program

Mt. Zion Baptist Church

120 Roberson at N. Burdick

Anti-Racism

Anti-Poverty

Affordable Housing

Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy & Action in the Community

isaackalamazoo.org

269-341-4213

**UU Community Church
is served by:**

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

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

Kristi Montgomery
Office Administrator
Office Hours: By Appointment Only
uucommunity@gmail.com
Church office: 324-7262

2018-2019 Board of Trustees

Marsha Laya
Betty Lee Ongley
Mary Roscoe
Nancy Calme
Denise Sonier

**The next Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, October 17th at 5:00 pm**
Send Submissions to:
uccnewsletter@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/uccswmi



**Unitarian Universalist
Community Church
of Southwest Michigan**
<http://www.uucommunitychurch.org>