



Community Matters

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

November Services

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

Remember: DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS on the Sunday, the 4th, so turn your clocks back!

Sunday, November 4th - Tret Fure will be sharing her music and thoughts through her "Sermon as Song: The Tremendous Power of Love"

Please join us for this celebration in sweet song as nationally recognized and celebrated musician Tret Fure shares her music and her voice with us! You can visit with Tret after the service, and CD's will be available for sale. You are also welcome to stay for our monthly **POTLUCK** after the service.

Sunday, November 11th - "A Guest at Your Table"

Guest at Your Table is an annual tradition in which congregation members take home a box featuring people that the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has worked with recently. These people are your "guests," and you are asked to share your blessings with them each meal by putting your spare change in the box. As you give to your guests, you can learn about them by reading the Stories of Hope booklet. UUSC uses the funds raised through this program to support their human-rights work in the United States and around the world. (See pg. 8 for more info.)

Sunday, November 18th - Rev. Gy will be speaking to us this morning.

Please check weekly emails for information about her topic. We welcome you with us, as always.

Sunday, November 25th - "The Grateful Heart"

During this Sunday we will sit with each other to learn and share what we are grateful for. We hope to see you there!

***"Today I choose to live with gratitude for the love that fills my heart, the peace that rests within my spirit, and the voice of hope that says all things are possible."* – Anonymous.**



From the Minister

Rev. Gy Ludvig Mc-Cartney

I started writing this article some time ago and just when I think I got it, something happens. Two innocent black people get shot in a grocery store. A Jewish synagogue is attacked by a deranged individual and scores of innocent,

completely unsuspecting worshippers are gunned down. I am especially moved by the 97-year-old who survived the Holocaust only to die by a bullet no less in the United States of America. My heart just breaks. And breaks. And breaks.

I know that I don't want to offer prayers. I don't want to offer thoughts. I want to offer my vote instead.

I stand on the side of love and my vote is going to reflect that.

This is the social contract we have with one another. We vote. We participate in our democracy by giving our choices a voice.

Yesterday I convinced a 21-year-old to vote. I wish I could convince scores of 21-year-olds to vote. The words of Franklin D. Roosevelt ring in my ears: "Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves and the only way they could do this is by not voting."

It is my hope and wish that the goodness and decency of us will prevail at the poles. It is my hope and wish that Light and Love get the final word.

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Last, but not least, allow me to share the blessing I gave at the most recent ISAAC meeting:
Breathe in, breathe out. Notice your breath. What one exhales, the other inhales. No one is an island.

As you breathe in, feel the love of the universe flowing through you, this community, and out into the universe again. We are all connected. Completely. In community. We belong.

As we live into this beloved community, may we:

Give power to that which is ours to do.

Give voice to that which is ours to say.

Give life to the service we are individually and collectively called for.

For blessed be the peace keepers.

Blessed be the bridge builders.

Blessed be the truth seekers.

Blessed be those who are willing to include even when powerful forces are pushing to exclude already marginalized people from our human family.

Blessed be those who are willing to serve the less fortunate.

Blessed be those who are willing to give hope to the hopeless.

Blessed be those who stand for love, stand for love always.

Blessed be our Beloved Community.

And so it is.



Visit www.thelovevote.org
for more info

First Sunday Potluck

Potluck after the service (featuring musician Tret Fure!) on November 4th will be hosted by the "West Side Car Pool" (Marcia Adams, John and Bev Folz, and Joan Young), assisted by our Board President, Marsha Laya. Please bring a dish to pass and your own table service. We try to reduce waste by avoiding plastic and paper dinnerware as much as possible, and your efforts to bring your own dishes are much appreciated.

DECEMBER POT LUCK: There will be no December potluck on December 2nd. We will use the time after services to decorate for the holiday. Please plan to stay and help beautify the church. There will be plenty to do so many helpers will be needed. Bring a snack or finger food to share while we work, if you like.



Women's Book Group - November

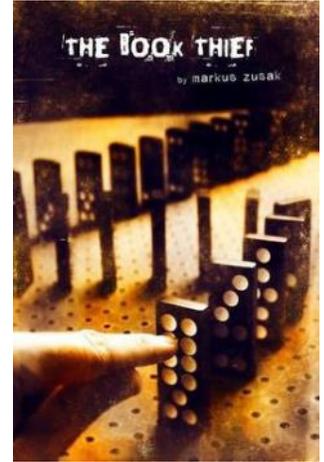
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

The Women's Book Group will meet Friday, November 9th for lunch (please watch the Friday emails for restaurant and location), and then we will be returning to the church for dessert and discussion of the book, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. All UCC women are welcome.

"When Death has a story to tell, you listen.

It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still.

Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement..." [\[read more\]](#)



November Calendar

Every Sunday, November 4, 11, 18, & 25 10:00 am - Sunday Service with childcare & R.E. classes	Every Wednesday, November 7, 14, 21, & 28 6:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal
Tuesdays, November 6, 13, 20, 27 1:00 - 3:00 pm - iPhone/iPad Classes	Sunday, November 4 Daylight Savings Time Ends (set clocks back) 11:30 am - Potluck
Friday, November 9 11:30 am - Women's Book Group Lunch 1:00 pm - Women's Book Group	Sunday, November 11 Veterans Day 11:30 am - Faith in Action Meeting
Monday, November 12 Veterans Day Observed	Wednesday, November 14 12:15 pm - Stewardship Meeting 2:00 pm - Board Meeting 5:30 pm - Sunday Services Committee Meeting
Saturday, November 17 8:30 am - Men's Breakfast @ Burger Town Grille	Wednesday, November 21 Monthly Newsletter Deadline
Thursday, November 22 Thanksgiving Day	Sunday, November 25 11:30 am - R.E. Committee Meeting 11:30 am - Greeter Training - Connections Team

R.E.flections

Jacquis Robertson
Director of
Religious
Education



“We have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize.”

– Thich Nhat Hanh

Here we are in November, the month that reminds us that giving is at the heart of all that’s beautiful in the world. With that, the first thing that I would like to say is, “Thank you”! As of late, Religious Education has engaged in numerous fundraisers to fund their renovations, and the congregation has been in full support, from popcorn to sandwiches to cookies. We’re very thankful for your help! We’re also very thankful for you not cringing at the thought of the R.E. area being full of hammocks, a treehouse, and Astroturf. During the past few months in R.E., the focus has been on their own personal creed, or rather what’s important to them. This can be seen again through them working hard to cultivate the physical changes they would like to see in R.E., and also through the activities in which we engage in R.E.

During the Service Auction, we discussed what’s important to them. While some children said electronics, other kids said things like animals, family, friends, and sleep. But, I found the most exciting answer to be “equations,” and when asked why, the

child stated something along the lines of, “it allows us to look at life easier.” That answer was something that stuck with me; equations in and of themselves are a language, a way of making sense of some the most difficult things in the world. It’s interesting, because I think community functions in the same way. The community allows you to make it through some of the most challenging things in the world. I’m thankful that I’m a part of this community.

R.E. E-Newsletter: If you don’t already receive the R.E. E-Newsletter and would like to, please e-mail me at Jacquis.o.robertson@gmail.com.

Holiday Food Donation Wish-List: We will be participating in the Portage Community Center Holiday Food Donation Wish-List. Attached (<http://portagecommunitycenter.org/Portals/0/2018%20Holiday%20food%20donations.pdf>) are the item’s we’re collecting. There will be a bin in the Foyer labeled “Donations” in which you can place your donations. The food will be delivered to the Portage Community Center by November 16th for Thanksgiving baskets, or by December



November 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
11/4	What is Thanksgiving?	Jacquis Robertson
11/11	Guest at Your Table	Jacquis Robertson
11/18	What are you Thankful For?	Jacquis Robertson
11/25	UUer	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.



What does a Unitarian Universalist Believe? Is your elevator answer the answer? by Marsha Laya

So, you are a Unitarian Universalist, or at least you think you might be. And I'm sure you get asked from time to time "what does a Unitarian Universalist believe?" Maybe you gave your "elevator answer". Mine is "I believe in life before death". Cute but not a good explanation. Maybe you gave a history lesson. Maybe you said we are a faith without a creed or dogma. If we are to be ambassadors for our faith it might be helpful to have a explanation that is a bit more than an elevator answer but less than a history lesson. At least it should be something that generates curiosity and opens the door for more dialogue.

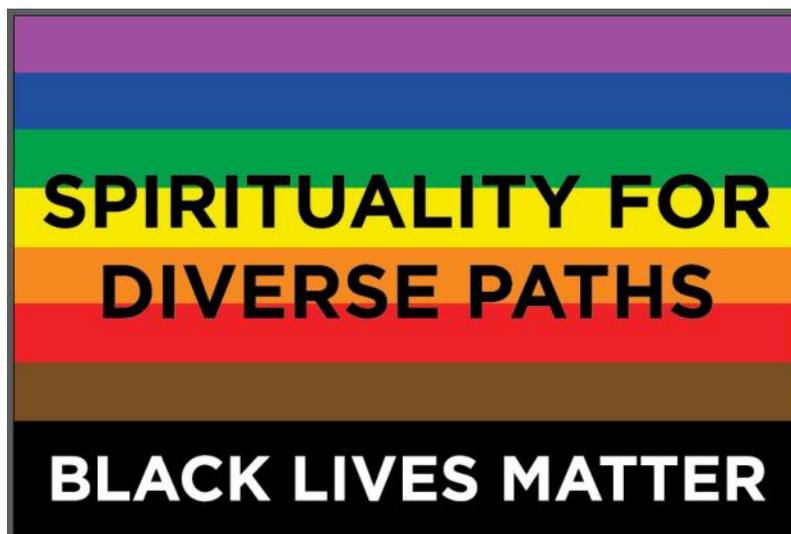
Unitarian Universalist. That's a mouth full. And it's a mouth full of a great deal. Let's break it down so we can quickly and easily say what we believe and who we are, a simple sentence that is easily remembered and quickly said.

Unitarian means to unite. We seek to unite. We bring people together. We bring people together who have diverse beliefs. We celebrate diversity. We even celebrate the diversity within ourselves as we discover a new thought, change our minds and accept new ideas because we are free to express our diversity and explore the mysteries of life with others. We are united in our quest and hunger for truth.

Universalist: Although we are diverse, we share some common values. Those values are universal. You know what those are. Our seven principles capture some of those values. In short they are: Respect for life; justice, equity and compassion; search for truth and meaning; peace, liberty and justice; the right of conscience; the democratic process; the interdependent web. And there are others unspoken but held dear to our hearts. Universalist have shared universal values.

So the next time you are asked what a Unitarian Universalist believes, try using this simple sentence and see if it opens dialogue:

We bring people with diverse beliefs together around shared universal values.



Caring Community News



This is a time of major transitions for several of our members. We hold in our hearts Jon Vanderberg, who is going to be in Boston with his daughter while he explores the area and chooses a new home. He will be back in Michigan in December to complete his move. What will we do without Jon's enthusiastic singing and participation in so many parts of UCC life? We will miss him.

Kayle Rice has lovingly walked her mother, Louise Rice, to the end of this life and has honored her in many ways. We hold Kayle through her sadness, recognizing a life well lived and a job well done. Kayle is experiencing even more change as she and Brian Leekley have chosen to separate. Kayle will remain in Kalamazoo and continue her many activities and contributions to the community.

Brian Leekley, after a heartfelt send-off from UCC friends, is traveling to Bainbridge Island, WA where he will be near his niece and establish a new community. He is chronicling his journey as he goes. We will miss him and the leadership he has provided. The UU church there will feel so lucky when they meet Brian.

Watch your emails in the coming weeks for new addresses as these special friends get settled.

Just as you exhaust your stash of Halloween candy, it is time for birthday cake and ice cream!! Celebrating in November are: Elizabeth Fernandez 11/12, Liam Michael 11/18, Denise Hartsough 11/26, Stephanie Grathwol 11/27, and Hayden Tasko 11/28 – enjoy, everybody!

Thank you to everyone who signed up for the Member Ministry teams! You are generous in showing up when there is a need. Still remaining is the need to develop procedures to guide us if we are called upon to provide hospitality for a memorial service. Actually, there are already some suggestions from other times, but they need to be refined to fit our current circumstances. There will be a **meeting on Monday November 12 at 10:00 am**, hosted by Nancy Crowell at her home to work on this.

In light of the streamlining that the Program Council is undertaking, we plan to also discuss the Caring Community column in the monthly newsletter. What should be included? What would you not miss? What content is helpful? (such as birthdays, wedding anniversaries, death anniversaries, graduations, travels, joys, and concerns). **If you have opinions** about any of this and would like to participate in this "one-meeting-only" committee, **please join us at the meeting on November 12th** – all are welcome. If you can't attend, but have suggestions, complaints, or praise, please contact any of the point persons (see below).

It is important that we hear each other in community so that we may share the joys and the times of concern – we are not alone. If you have, or are aware of a member/friend with a difficult circumstance, please contact: Nancy Crowell 381-7659, Judy Oliver 353-9397, and/or Judy Pigg-Behrendt 217-5252.



Sunday, November 11th, 10:00 am

What is Guest at Your Table?

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about key human rights issues. Since UUSC works in over 25 countries, with over 75 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. The program is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership, support human rights, and learn about just four of these individuals – the “guests” in Guest at Your Table.

2018-2019 Theme: Justice Across Borders

From the Northern Triangle of Central America, to deserts of Mexico and Arizona, to detention centers in the United States, the road away from danger is paved with injustices. Partnering with grassroots allies along the Central American migration trail, UUSC addresses root causes, supports migrants in transit, and protects the right to seek asylum. Join with UUSC for Guest at Your Table to learn more about UUSC's and our nation's involvement in Central America – historically and presently – and our courageous Migrant Justice partners.

[Click here](#) to read the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Stories of Hope, stories from four UUSC migrant justice partners.

Here are other ways you can support UUSC projects connected with GAYT:

- [Take action](#) to support Honduran nationals seeking asylum in the United States
- [Special edition of Rights Now newsletter](#) focused on Central American Migrant Justice
- [2018 UUSC Report about Asylum](#) in Hungary vs. the United States
- [Overview](#) of UUSC's Central American Migrant Justice Work
- [Summary of opportunities to advocate](#) for Central American Migrant Justice
- [Immigration Justice Study Guide](#) by the UU College of Social Justice
- [Video](#) and [statistics](#) about the U.S. immigration detention system by UUSC's partner Freedom for Immigrants

**THE STATISTICS ARE IMPORTANT.
SO ARE THE STORIES.**

This year, you'll meet...



Please remember to vote on Tuesday, November 6th!

If you're still researching your candidates and/or ballot measures, check out vote411.org. Enter your address to find your polling place, build your ballot with their online voters' guide and much more! With their voters' guide you can see the races on your ballot, compare candidates' positions side-by-side, and print out a "ballot" indicating your preferences as a reminder and take it with you to the polls on Election Day.



VOTE411.ORG
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

**Your voice matters!
Inform your vote.**

Use **Vote411.org** a non-partisan
online voter guide from the
League of Women Voters®

VOLUNTEER HELP WANTED

UUCU 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
- **Religious Education** - Jacquis Robertson
- **Greeters and Folks to be at Tables for Sunday Service** - Nancy Crowell



**UU Community Church
is served by:**

Rev. Gy Ludvig-McCartney M.Div., M.A.
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Hours: Thursdays 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, November 21 st at 5:00 pm**
Send Submissions to:
uuccnewsletter@gmail.com

Community Matters

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