

April 2024
Newsletter



Zoom Gatherings:

http://unitarianpetoskey.org/?page_id=6071

Congregational Update

Our Upcoming services (Be alert: some have an in-person option!)

- April 14 (hybrid - zoom and in person), Triangle service with Bay de Noc and Marquette, Susan Urban and February Sky performing.
- April 21 (hybrid & zoom), Earth Day with Alice Diebel
- April 28, The Great Mess How have we “Othered?” and “What have we tried to do about it?” with Bob Lewis. The second of Bob's services with us.
- May 5, The Middle East: Creating healthy dialogues on difficult issues, with Mark and Nancy Kinney

Musings from the Minister

February 25, 2024

Our wonderful UUCOP community spent two Sunday services reflecting together on the meaning of our congregational life together. You shared clear ideas about what is important to you, and what you might want to see more of.

You truly value the free thought that comes with our tradition. We do not have a creed, but instead focus on learning and growth. Our covenanted Principles support the values we hold without having to say, “I believe....” Such freedom encourages our spiritual exploration into different faiths, histories, and experiences.

With that freedom comes responsibility. Being part of a faith community has certain obligations. You said you provide some service to the community through financial donations and the local

activities that some are involved in. Many of you said you want to do more, and perhaps even more importantly, you want to be known for the values you hold as you put your values into action in the public square. UU values hold meaning.

People who have been UU elsewhere knew they would be welcome at UUCOP once they found us. When we are gathered, we know we can be ourselves and be treated with love and care. Some of you are new to UUism and have found UUCOP accepting and welcoming. You want to build community. Since the pandemic, UUCOP has met on-line, with some exceptions. Many of you miss the potlucks, the coffee hour conversations, and the opportunities to be together that we enjoyed in the past. Having Sunday services in person and on line (hybrid) is desirable and will take a team of people to make it happen. Reach out if you want to help!

Being together might mean on Sunday morning and it might also mean gathering at events during the week. Sunday morning has its own purpose. Sunday mornings are peaceful and centering times. They provide opportunities to learn and be inspired by words and music. Attending worship is self-care, a time for a reset. That said, you are very aware that the congregation is absent children and youth – and you shared ideas on how to address that generation gap.

In these listening circles and subsequent conversations, you have posed many ideas of things you would like to do – too many to list! There is palpable energy and excitement! The Committee on Shared Ministry* will dig a little deeper into these sessions to learn more about the places you might like to go next. Please reach out with your ideas – and especially if you want to lead something! We are ready to listen some more!

The congregation is also in the planning process for a September retreat weekend with the other congregations in our triangle: Bay de Noc and Marquette. Watch for information!

* Kim Nowack, Audrey McMullen, including Rev. Alice Diebel

By Rev. Alice Diebel



Co-Presidents' Report

Dear Members and Friends

Dear members and friends,

We're celebrating! It's been almost two years (is it possible?) since we agreed to serve as co-presidents of the UUCOP Board for one year with a second year as a possibility. At first, we were obviously tentative as you can appreciate! Then when we found that the Board and other associated committee members were such great people and that working with them was rewarding and even fun(!), it wasn't difficult and indeed, we enjoyed it! So there was no question about the second year.

2024 is a big year for UUCOP because our bylaws direct that it's time to elect a new President, VP, and Secretary. It is, however, time for the Kinneys to move on to other roles.

SO, we ask that YOU, yes, YOU who are reading this message, be the ones who will say YES, when asked, will you serve? Or perhaps even volunteer to gift your skills and ideas to this organization, perhaps in a new way.

What's cookin' in the UUCOP kitchen? Some pretty exciting stuff!! First, we are hoping to hold in-person services this summer as many times as possible. What would make in-person services possible, you ask? Every time we meet at the Carnegie Building, which for our purposes on Sundays is essentially a free donation by the Petoskey Library (Bless their souls!) as long as we take no more than three hours of their time.

That means that we need to be ready with our technology to move in with a reservation, keys, computers, a microphone, camera and all the cords that connect them at 10:00 a.m. on the Sundays we plan ahead to be there. We also need coffee and fixin's, goodies and cups, etc. SO, we need HELP!

On April 14 at 12:00 p.m. and April 21 at 12:00 the "Techies" in UUCOP are holding training sessions to encourage UUCOP members and friends to learn what it takes to connect the parts of the machines to actually make services available on-line and in person at the same time. Will YOU be there? We hope so. The availability of in-person services depends on the availability of technical support to make them happen!

A secret is that on April 21 we will be demonstrating the "Owl." It's a super-microphone/camera that can pick up voices from around the whole room, create a panorama of the group and zoomed-in image of the speaker, and make broadcasting easier and of higher quality. We

will be evaluating whether it would serve our purposes well or not so well and whether we should purchase this technology for our use. Be there to see how it works!

Second big thing: we are having a retreat! On the weekend of September 20-22, we will be gathering with the congregations of our Triangle partners, Bay de Noc UU and Marquette UU at Garden Grove Retreat Center at Garden, MI in the beautiful Upper Peninsula as the fall leaves begin to turn colors, the days become a little shorter and we celebrate the Autumnal Equinox! We urge all of you to think about joining the group.

Accommodations at the Retreat Center are reasonably priced and we will cooperate on the food for the weekend. If you need a little financial help to make attending possible, let us know and we will try to work something out.

Our minister, Rev. Alice will be there, along with Phil Lund from the MidAmerica Region, who is very knowledgeable and fun to be with. If you would like to put in some ideas about what we might do together, send us a message and/or contact Rev Alice! We will add those ideas to the planning group's deliberations

A few other things are happening with the Board that may interest you: The finance Committee has a new member: Barbara Sugden, who loves accountability and planning and keeping us talking to one another! Gary Sydow has retired from the Program Committee to devote more time to the Finance Committee, leaving a place which YOU could fill if you choose. Let us know!

As you can see, exciting times at UUCOP. Get involved!!

Mark and Nancy Kinney

MidAmerica Regional Assembly

Threads That Connect, Stories That Inspire

2024 Multi-Platform Regional Assemblies

The MidAmerica and Pacific Western Regional Assemblies are April 19 & 20, 2024. In MidAmerica, First Unitarian Society in Madison, Wisconsin, will be the site for Regional Assembly. But if you can't be there you in person, you can catch the great worship, discussions, and workshops from your home. New this year, both Regional Assemblies will be online via the




wnova App (it's the GA App, too).

The highlight of regional assembly is Friday night's Keynote, a conversation between Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and the Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. For the first time ever, these two presidents will jointly share their thoughts on The Future of Liberal Religion: A Quest for Justice and Liberation.

So, please begin making your plans to travel to Madison to be with other Unitarian Universalists in person, or to join online with Unitarian Universalists from across the country for this first multi-platform and multi-region Regional Assembly!

Visit <https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/events/threads-connect-stories-inspire> for more information and to register for Threads That Connect, Stories That Inspire, MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2024.



The UUCOP Board is looking for congregation members who are interested in a month long study group about worship. If you are interested please contact Audrey, audreymcmullen@gmail.com. Costs may be diminished by board contribution yet to be determined.

Spiritual Deepening through Worship and Small Groups



Hello, peeps and geeks who care about the content and relevance of our Sunday services:

There's still time to register for the spring session of Spiritual Deepening through Worship and Small Groups.

This four-session course will lead participants through a process of planning a liturgical year that is authentic to their congregation, gathering resources on the year's seasonal themes, integrating those themes through communal spiritual practice in worship, creating opportunities for spiritual practice in small groups, and inviting participants to engage in individual practices centered on the theme.

The structure of the course will include both on-demand videos and in-person virtual sessions beginning with a 90-minute session at 11:30am Eastern on Saturday, May 4, and continuing each of the following Saturdays until May 25, 2024. While the course is open to individuals, congregations are encouraged to have two to four people

participate. The registration fee is \$350 for 4 people, \$300 for 3 people, \$225 for 2 people, and \$125 for one person.

The course is compatible with a variety of UU Holidays, Holy Days and Worship Themes, including Earth-centered Wheel of the Year celebrations and monthly theme-based subscription services like Soul Matters or Touchstones.

If we have enough interest to actually DO this series, (I am guilty of signing up for a bunch of stuff and then finding I don't have the energy to follow through) please indicate your interest to me by Wednesday April 10.



THE UUCOP QUARTERLY GIVING COMMITMENT

Are you aware of the donations UUCOP makes to non-profit organizations every three months? For several years the Board has chosen a local, state, national, or even international non-profit endeavor that devotes itself to addressing various problems or challenges in a manner consistent with UUA principles and practices.

These have varied from Planned Parenthood of Michigan, to area libraries for purchase of materials oriented around LGBTQ and teen crisis issues, to the Southern Poverty Law Center, to the Michigan Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, and to a UUA student sponsorship program in Khasi Hills, India, and many others.

Have you added a donation to any of these or other recipients of Quarterly Giving yourself/selves? To do so, simply indicate on your check to UUCOP the amount you would like set aside for the current recipient. The Board has decided that any such donations are matched by UUCOP funds, up to \$200 each quarter. All our donations are tax-deductible. Hopefully you are aware that all donations should be sent to P.O. Box 873, Petoskey 49770.

Through the end of March the chosen recipient was UUA Worthy Now program.

Between April 1 and June 30, 2024 the designated recipient will be the UUA supported Sponsor a Student program in the Khasi Hills India, which provides support for the Unitarian Union of North East India schools.

Incidentally, our co-Presidents Mark and Nancy Kinney have made

Incidentally, our co-presidents Mark and Nancy Kinney have made several trips into Khasi Hills in order to provide hands-on support for that program and will return in October 2024.

Of course, any UUCOP member or friend may suggest an organization for Quarterly Giving. Just inform a Board member, bring it up during the announcement-discussion period after each service, or send an email or letter to UUCOP.

Just about all UUCOP members volunteer for human service, advocacy, and other organizations – a most positive expression of UUA principles. Regardless of that, even a modest donation also supports such important endeavors.

See below for a thank you we received from our support.



Secretary
Jim Tuschy
Executive Manager
Serra Traverse City

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Whitney Amant
Donor Engagement Manager
The Festival Foundation

Mitchell Blue
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Highstreet Partners McGregor
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Oscar - Restaurant Restaurant

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President
Milestone Partners, Inc. - MPI

Mike Marsh
Owner - Bill Marsh Auto

Matt Ness
Vice President
Highland Landing

Iliz Ruszkowski
Retired, Elementary Principal

Chief Executive Officer
Cecilia Chesney



We are sincerely thankful for your generous donation of \$2,858 to Big Brothers Big Sisters. Your support allows us to continue to provide life-changing mentoring programs for local children and helps us make a positive impact in their lives.

I wanted to share with you a heartwarming story that happened recently. Six Littles and their Bigs enjoyed an exciting tour of the Peninsula Fire Station, hosted by Big Brother and Firefighter Joe Cleminson. The Littles were in awe of the station and asked fantastic and intelligent questions throughout the tour. However, the highlight of the day was when Little Brother Jayce put on firefighting gear and was challenged to do pushups and he did! It was a moment of pure joy and excitement for everyone involved.



We are so grateful for donors like you who make these kinds of experiences possible for our Bigs and Littles. Without your support, we wouldn't be able to share stories like this and make a difference in the lives of these amazing kids. Thank for your generosity and for helping us make a positive impact on the lives of children in our community.

Together we are making a difference in the lives of our future leaders. With your continued support, we look forward to creating countless more stories of friendship, resilience, and hope. We are excited to keep you updated on the progress and achievements of our Littles.

With Sincere Appreciation,
Cecilia Chesney
Cecilia J. Chesney
Chief Executive Officer

Your support means so much! Thank you. -C

Antrim | Charlevoix | Emmet | Grand Traverse | Kalkaska
Bigsupnorth.com // 231.946.2447

Dear Judith,
I would like to personally thank you for being a season of hope and for showing your commitment to empowering the children in our community. Your generosity will create a positive ripple of positive change that will extend far beyond the lives of the children we serve.
Your donation not only provides critical financial support but also serves as an inspiration for others to join our mission. We are truly grateful for your support and look forward to updating you on the progress of our mentoring program.
With Deepest Gratitude,
Cecilia Chesney
-CEO-





Register for UUA General Assembly

Will you join us for this year's virtual GA featuring

prominent speakers, dynamic worship, and exclusive access to on-demand programming? Whether you are a seasoned attendee or a first-timer, this is your opportunity to be a part of an extraordinary gathering. Register today and join us at General Assembly 2024.



UUCOP sends up to two delegates to GA each year. Support to underwrite the registration fee for participation is available through the congregation. If YOU are interested in becoming a **delegate**, in addition to Audrey, please let us know, mark.kinney@utoledo.edu. Delegates represent the congregation, attend many of the sessions and vote for the issues which are presented.

In addition to delegates, others can attend the business meetings without fee.

[GA Registration](#)

Decisions to be made by GA

There are more decisions to be made by this GA about Article II, which you may want to learn more about.

- **The deliberation on Article II which is a continuation from last year. Alice says, "The website for Article II is chock full of good information. I encourage people to start here**

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission>

It also has a link to the discussion hub.

<https://discussion.uua.org/t/2024/2024-20>

<https://discuss.uua.org/c/ga24/2024-a2-amendments/28/1/latest>

Here is the discussion on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/UUAArticle2>



Local Events of Interest

Northern Michigan Interfaith Common Ground

MISSION STATEMENT

Northern Michigan Interfaith Common Ground is a gathering of people of faith working together to support the well-being of our community.

Values

- Community: NMICG is inclusive; collaborating and partnering to create a stronger and safer community.
- Compassion: NMICG has a responsibility to move our community towards peace, love, and kindness for all.
- Visionary: NMICG strives to empower and inspire our community.
- Well-being: NMICG promotes self-worth and hope through faith, spirituality, and self-expression.
- Advocacy: NMICG works towards a more just society.

We welcome any faith organization who wants to join us. Currently we meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Our member organizations are:

- Petoskey Buddhist Sangha
- [Christian Science Society of Petoskey](#)
- [Cross of Christ Lutheran Church of Petoskey](#)
- [Emmanuel Episcopal Church of Petoskey](#)
- [First Presbyterian Church of Petoskey](#)
- [Greensky Hill Indian United Methodist Church](#)
- [Petoskey Church of Christ](#)
- [Petoskey United Methodist Church](#)
- [Temple B'Nai Israel of Petoskey](#)
- [Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petoskey](#)

Contact us [here](#) to find out more. We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 11:00AM.

Please note that at our March 2022 meeting we voted to change our name from Petoskey Interfaith Common Ground to Northern Michigan Common Ground to better reflect the geographical range of our member communities.



The Gathering

2018-2019 | 10-11-2019

2nd & 4th
Tuesday each
Month

7-8p
The Carnegie
Building

Creating an
inter-spiritual space:

- for our stories to be shared
- our beliefs to be explored
- and community to be nurtured

UU Ministry for earth

Join UU Ministry for Earth on the Full Moon so we may all find time to ground, recenter, and imagine what is possible in a world in need of repair. There are readings, a short reflection, time for individual contemplation, and sharing in small groups. Together, we nourish our spirits for the work of environmental justice. To draw us more closely into alignment with Earth-based philosophies, we follow the [Lunar Calendar](#) and gather, via Zoom, on (or near) the Full Moon.



Full Moon Gathering

April 23, 2024 7:00 pm EDT - 8:00 pm EDT

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3248332840?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3248332840?pwd=SXVScW1ESzJILy9PMWkTXVkTnpjZz09)

[pwd=SXVScW1ESzJILy9PMWkTXVkTnpjZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3248332840?pwd=SXVScW1ESzJILy9PMWkTXVkTnpjZz09)

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Zoom link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3248332840?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3248332840?pwd=SXVScW1ESzJILy9PMWkTXVkTnpjZz09)

[pwd=SXVScW1ESzJILy9PMWkTXVkTnpjZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3248332840?pwd=SXVScW1ESzJILy9PMWkTXVkTnpjZz09)

Register

here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQdl33->

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petoskey

We currently meet via [Zoom](#) and occasionally in person.

email us at: PetoskeyUnitarians@gmail.com

Snail mail us at:
UUCOP
P.O. Box 873
Petoskey, MI 49770



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