



The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petoskey

Newsletter September 2024

Sunday Services

Join our services via Zoom at https://unitarianpetoskey.org/?page_id=6071

September 1—Labor Day Coffee Hour—Discussions about Labor Day and coffee hour on Zoom

September 8—Earth is a Garden—Author and gardener Mary Agria will be our guest speaker at this service.

September 15—Water Communion—We will meet at the home of Audren McMullen (7819 Channel Road, Petoskey) as well as on Zoom. The Carnegie Building will be our backup in case of nasty weather! If you're coming in person, please bring a dish to pass, a water sample to return to the earth, and a brief reverie about the physical and metaphysical importance of water in your life. Service will be led by Rev. Alice in person.

September 22—Building Connections for Growth: Spiritual, Community, and You—Rev. Alice will speak at our Triangle Retreat in the Garden Peninsula. If you are participating from home, please join via Zoom at the usual time and link.

September 29—Fifth Sunday Fellowship: Climate Revival—We'll meet in fellowship with Mid-America UUs for this service.

October 6—Love at the Center—Rev. Alice will take us on a tour of the new UUA Article II values circle, which puts "Love at the Center."

Click “Upcoming Services” on our webpage, <http://unitarianpetoskey.org>, to keep up with the wonderful flow of information planned by our Program Committee.

Mark your calendar



September 10—The Gathering

The Gathering is an inclusive gathering of diverse people with different - or no - religious backgrounds. It was started as a spiritual offshoot of the Northern Michigan Interfaith Common Ground movement.

On September 10, Audrey and Diane are participating as part of a women's book group that recently studied *Wild Mercy: Living the fierce and tender wisdom of the women mystics* by Mirabai Starr. Their stories will include some of the repercussions of going against the grain in order to live your values.

Each month the Gathering is held in the Carnegie Building on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, at 7 p.m. Someone volunteers to lead a discussion based on their spiritual journey, and the group takes it from there. You need to remember your good covenants for considerate communication. All are welcome to attend. This is a great opportunity to network with others in our area and help to make UUCOP visible and inviting.

Book Group--October 27

The book is *Humankind: A Hopeful History* by Rutger Bregman, who argues that rather than being inheritantly bad, humans are hardwired for kindness and cooperation. Let's talk about it October 27, 1:30 p.m. Location to be announced.



UU the Vote is coming!

UU the Vote is the UUA's nonpartisan civic engagement initiative focused on strengthening democracy and organizing for justice and accountability. In an effort to encourage voters to participate in the upcoming election, we'll send postcards to a select list of addresses. Watch for details about how you can help.



Musings from the Minister, Rev. Alice Diebel

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petoskey has been actively involved with other congregations in the area for several years. The three congregations, Petoskey, Marquette, and Bay de Noc (Escanaba) call themselves the Triangle Congregations. We worship together on the second Sunday of the month. As three small congregations, we can stretch our resources when we share. We can also build a community by and for UUs in Northern Michigan. It is good to have a presence and a voice!

Later in September we will hold a Triangle Congregations Retreat. During the retreat, the Petoskey congregation will set aside some time to set some goals for the coming year. We will invite the board to make decisions about these goals and then share them with the congregation for approval. The goal setting will build on the listening sessions we held early in the year. I'm looking forward to being with you as we shape a direction forward.

Our annual water communion and ingathering is planned for September 15th – outdoors if the weather permits. This service is an opportunity to come together and start the “new year.” It is interesting that so many congregations, including ours, hold this service after Labor Day; it builds on the idea that congregations operate on an academic calendar and even take the summer off! That’s an old idea and few UUs take Summers off anymore. But the ritual of gathering and marking a beginning is still a meaningful ritual. Bring water to share that represents something meaningful to you. Also, bring a dish to share! Join us! Please watch your weekly Service Announcements for details.

The following Sunday, worship will be broadcast live from the retreat at our usual Zoom link. I will be in town from the 14th through the 22nd and look forward to being with you all week. If you would like to meet with me, please let me know.

Finally, UUs all over the country are working to preserve democracy by registering voters and getting out the vote. One easy step is to write postcards to voters reminding them to vote. If you would like postcards and a list of addresses, please reach out to Audrey McMullen or me!

A note from your president

by Barbara Sugden, UUCOP President

I have spent the past couple of months getting to know you better and learning how UUCOP operates. I am impressed with the generosity of time and talent that each of you offers to our congregation. A special thank you, too, to our anonymous donor, who made a surprise donation of \$20,000. We may be small, but we are mighty!

Before our time in northern Michigan comes to an end and Ron and I must return to Illinois, I am looking forward to getting acquainted with some of the like-minded groups in the area, such as The Gathering on September 10, when Audrey and Diane will present. I am also happy that many of us will be able to spend time together in person during the Water Communion and potluck on September 15 and at our retreat September 20-22. There will be a time at the retreat set aside for goal-setting, and I'm eager to hear what you have to say.

In the past, I've heard us express a desire to be more visible in the community in order to help increase membership. With that in mind, the board has been working to create t-shirts that we will each be able to purchase and wear at appropriate events. Thank you, Diane, for creating a lovely design and leading us through this process. Watch for this shopping opportunity in the future!

Thank you, Mark, for the lesson in Vertical Response, the software that creates and emails this newsletter, as well as your weekly service announcements and other messages. I can see there will be a learning curve! Please forgive any formatting glitches that may appear in this issue. And thanks to Rev. Alice, Audrey, and Tom for contributing articles, both with and without bylines. We also thank Joe for keeping our web page up-to-date. Make <http://unitarianpetoskey.org> your first stop for information.

Welcome, Friends!

by Tom Buekema

Hello Unitarian Universalists! Each of you is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petoskey (UUCOP) community. You are always welcome at any service, meeting, potluck, or any other activity (such as the Book Group) organized or sponsored by UUCOP – sometimes in partnership with other religious and community organizations.

Besides being a “member” of the UUCOP community, are you also a member of our Congregation? Most of you are. If not, please consider becoming one. Anyone 16 years or more old may join. Officially, such membership entitles you to vote in meetings, including our various committees; and you get access to member-only sections of our website. On a more personal level, to join our Congregation is a commitment to the values and principles of Unitarian Universalism – a public, caring statement and source of pride. For you it might convey love, mutual respect, support of our Congregation’s work, your unique ethics and spirituality, and much more. There are no dues, no obligation to participate beyond whatever you already do.

To repeat, whether or not to join the Congregation is strictly your decision. Rev. Alice Diebel, our minister (diebelalice@gmail.com), is very willing to

explore membership issues with anyone who requests it.

“So what must I do to join?” you might ask. It’s a simple process. First, contact UUCOP Board member Naomi Behrmann (naomimb49740@gmail.com or 248-608-2480). She will explain the joining procedure & send you pertinent materials. Unless you’ve already discussed membership with Rev. Alice, Naomi will inform her about your interest.

If you are not yet a member of UUCOP, we hope that you will consider doing so. Either way we are so pleased that you have joined our community.

How long have we had it - What’s Happening? – Are you a Member?

by Tom Buekema, UUBG Coordinator

As many of you know, the UUCOP Book Group (UUBG) has been a UUCOP tradition for at least 25 years. When i 1st joined (around 2000) we met 4 times/yr at the homes of UUBG members. In my opinion both the setting & the socialization after the meetings – not to mention the chosen books themselves - attracted some 15 members each time.

Over time such a venue was generally replaced by meetings in the Petoskey Library, a bookstore basement, & the like. The Covid epidemic forced us to meet only on Zoom for a year or so. Now we meet both on Zoom and in the library every three months.

While we’ve welcomed new members regularly, attendance at the meetings began to dwindle, recently to as few as 2 or 3 members. So i prepared a survey & request for new ideas. Several members responded. As those on the UUBG mailing list know, several changes in our procedures have been proposed. Based on further input, final decisions will be made by the end of September.

If not already a UUBG member, have you considered joining? It’s free, & there are no obligations at all. If interested please contact me at

231.347.3802 or tforb@core.com. I'll respond with a written "orientation" explaining procedures, etc. Hope to hear from you soon!

Hospitality on Wheels

by Audrey McMullen, Chair, Program Committee

It's easier than ever to be the Hero of Hospitality for UUCOP'S hybrid services. When you say "yes" to making coffee hour happen, you will be given temporary possession of a luxury thrift-shopped rolling suitcase containing everything you will need for the job. Open the zips and you will find: coffee pot and filters, hot cups, stir sticks, teabags, snack plates and napkins, plastic tableware, tablecloths, dishpan, metal utensils for serving, paper towels, and probably a couple of other things. You add things that need to be fresh: Coffee, creamer, sugar, Splenda. Then you call a couple of people from the congregation and ask them to bring the edibles. Boom! Coffee Hour. You get to use your creativity making coffee, arranging things on the table, and fending off those who want an early bite! After coffee hour, put everything back in the suitcase, take it home, clean it up, and be ready to pass it on to the next person. This is a bare-bones cart; nothing fancy. Our aim was to optimize use of space and minimize weight. And use up some of the "picnic" inventory Gary has been storing in his garage for two years. So you'll find the plastic utensils do not match (gasp!!) and the paper plates may not be color compatible with the tablecloth. Suck it up, Buttercup, and enjoy the fellowship!



A Welcoming Congregation



On July 30, some UUCOP members and friends participated in the Petoskey Pride Parade. UUCOP had previously donated \$150 to help purchase flags that were distributed to the participants.



FY2023-24 Financial Report

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Assets	June 30, 2024
CD's	\$ 82,412.50
Annuity	21,176.85
Building Fund	43,588.27
Money Market/Prime Share	8,000.03
Checking	18,523.38
<i>Total</i>	\$ 173,701.03

	Budget	Actual
Revenues		
General Fund	\$ 26,620.00	\$ 35,378.10
<i>Total Revenues</i>		\$ 35,378.10
Expenditures		
General Fund	\$ 23,749.99	\$ 23,153.66
Technology Grant	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,024.00
<i>Total Expenditures</i>		\$ 24,177.66

In addition, \$8,939.83 was donated for **Quarterly Giving**.

Thank you to all who contributed so generously during the past fiscal year! Operating expenses were within the budgeted amount. And, as has happened several times in the recent past, our donations exceeded our expenditures. This has allowed us to add surplus revenues of \$11,200.44 to our interest-bearing assets.