



December 2022 Newsletter

HARBOR Unitarian Universalist CONGREGATION

Muskegon, MI 49441-1719
1296 Montgomery Ave. at McGraft

231-755-2932
www.harboruu.org

HUUC Mission Statement:

Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation is a safe haven inspiring people to seek their own spiritual truths through worship and learning in community as we build a better world together.

HUUC Vision Statement:

The people of Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation envision a community where connections are strengthened and deepened, where families are supported, and where diversity is celebrated.

Sue McIntire, *Music Director*

HUUC Board of Trustees

Poppy Sias Hernandez, *President*
Robin Dennany, *Vice President*
Kurt Troutman, *Treasurer*
Jones Barton, *Secretary*

Members at Large:

Carolyn Holmes • Rebecca St. Clair • Jim Stier

Sunday Worship Services

*Virtual!
or In Person!*

**Begin at
10:30am**

December 4th

"Winter Rest and Grace" The Bittersweet Christmas Band
Modern life often demands that we be in productive mode all the time. At the holiday season, with its frantic rush to get everything done in time, people tend to feel even more pressured and anxious than at other times. For many, the holiday rush is unavoidable, but then comes the blessed dormancy of Winter. We will explore, in song and spoken word, the rightness of accepting that, like the Earth herself, we need times of rest and regeneration.

December 11th

"We Would Be One"

Rev. Matthew Cockrum

Join in welcoming new members to the Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation and an exploration of what it takes to build Beloved Community. Rev. Matthew Cockrum, Consulting Minister, preaching. Workshop to follow. *Potluck Sunday

December 18th

"Why We Need an 8th UU Principle"

Kurt Troutman

The 8th Principle affirms and promotes journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions. *Choir Sunday

December 25th

"The Work Of..."

Rev. Matthew Cockrum

The Reverend Howard Thurman's writing, "The Work of Christmas," is an apt reminder not just for this Christmas day but also for all of the intersecting holidays at this time of year. Join Rev. Matthew Cockrum, Consulting Minister.

Zoom With Us at <https://zoom.us/j/91447658076>



from the Consulting Minister, Rev. Matthew Cockrum

Every year at this time I am grateful for bare branches. Despite the fact that many adorn their homes and workplaces, shops and lives with evergreens, I personally cherish the ways in which this season provides the opportunity to see between the spaces usually occupied by lush greenery. In fact, during the years when I have lived in more temperate climates I kind of missed the changing of seasons and the opportunity to look up at the sky through bare branches.

I think this is especially helpful as the winter holidays have many of us rushing from place to place, scurrying to complete tasks and attend gatherings. Bare branches remind me to slow down, to appreciate what is not as well as what is.

I think this holds a message for organizations and institutions, too - churches, workplaces, families.

While we can benefit from an appreciative inquiry approach and looking at what we do well, we can also gain greatly by looking at what is no longer. Winter makes us take stock of our capacity and vulnerability in real ways that can be humbling. They can also lead to greater experiences of gratitude, beauty and grieving.

*However you find this wintry season and however it finds you, I wish you well, my Friends.
It is good to be in this work with you.*

Peace, Faith & Passion,
Matthew

Rev. Matthew Cockrum (he/him/his)
Consulting Minister
mscockrum@gmail.com
206.849.9171 (cell - text or call as needed)



Sunday December 11 Potluck & Workshop

Please join us after the service on Sunday, December 11, for our next monthly workshop led by Consulting Minister, the Reverend Matthew Cockrum. This month we will focus on Unitarian Universalist spiritual growth and the meanings of membership. Whether you are brand new or an elder, your presence and participation are welcome! As in past months we will share a potluck meal immediately following the worship service and then have an interactive experience for approximately three hours, ending no later than 3:30 p.m.

Next HUUC Board Meeting:
Monday December 19 • 7:00 pm
via Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/96744707168>
All are welcome!

New Member Welcome Ceremony

December 11, 2022

During the Worship Service



HUUC Welcomes Back

The Bittersweet Christmas Band

December 4th

On the band:

The holidays are a mixed bag and so is the Bittersweet Christmas Band! From Thanksgiving through December 25th, the folk music duo February Sky, whose members are traditional guitarist and singer Phil Cooper and songwriter and “wise” woman Susan Urban, join forces with singers Kate Early and Margaret Nelson for a show that presents every possible perspective on the holiday season from the reverent to the ridiculous, featuring traditional and contemporary holiday music with stunning vocal harmonies, plus guitar, banjo, mountain dulcimer, hand drum and other percussion instruments. The band has also developed a number of Unitarian Universalist holiday services which they present in various UU congregations in the areas where they travel for concerts. For more information, see the band’s website at <http://uuwisewoman.tripod.com/bittersweetband>



News from Caring Committee...

The past two years have been fraught with worry, confusion, and exhaustion. As we strive to become the best we can be as people and as a congregation, it is important to remember that which was good pre-pandemic. Some positive things fell to the wayside and are being revived. To that end the caring committee, an important element for any congregation as it is a sacred pillar of what it means to be a loving and thoughtful body, has been brought to life. We are here to help you carry those difficulties that make knots in our lives—a hand, a shoulder, an ear for those times.

Condolences to **Janet Perreault** on the loss of her stepsister and stepmother.

Condolences to **Jeffrey Ochsner** on the loss of his father.

Several people attended all of HUUC services in November (either in person or on Zoom). Out of those with perfect attendance we drew a name to win a prize. **Congratulations to Nancy Johnson!** We appreciate you continuing to show up at HUUC.

We have three members: Sue McIntire, Mary Van Slooten, and Christine Cleary.

(If you would like to be involved in any way, please let one of us know.)

Contact: Sue McIntire (231) 563-3988



November Workshop Review

About thirty HUUC members and friends joined in another monthly workshop on Sunday, November 6, in which we focused on Stewardship and finances. We began by unearthing some of our underlying

assumptions and formational experiences about money and stewardship, discovering that we have a broad range of financial backgrounds and levels of comfort (emotional and fiscal). We were able to give voice to some of our judgements and explore some of our individual histories regarding finance. Ultimately, we recognized that all of our financial situations may change over time and that where we are now does not necessarily reflect where we have come from or where we may be..

Rev. Matthew Cockrum shared some feedback and recommendations from the Unitarian Universalist Association, beginning with gratitude that for over 25 years HUUC has been an Honor Congregation, paying the amount requested annually by the UUA to support its programming. Only ten percent of congregations have this history and level of support and this is to be admired and applauded! It also entitles HUUC to a free consultation regarding stewardship which the Board and other volunteers will attend. Rev. Matthew is communicating with UUA representatives to set this up. Stay tuned for a report back!

The UUA recommended completing a quartile analysis of current giving at HUUC (a link to describing this is at the bottom of this article). With help from more mathematical minds, the final calculation of HUUC's current pledging looks like this:

Calculations modified during workshop:

<i>1st Quartile - 1st 25% of income</i>	<i>2nd Quartile - 2nd 25% of income</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● % of givers<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ideally 10%○ HUUC 8.7%● # of pledges - 2● Total amount - \$12,200● 8.7% of pledgers give 30.6% of income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● % of givers<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ideally 15%○ HUUC 17.4%● # of pledges - 4● Total amount - \$10,600● 17.4% of pledges give 26.6% of income
<i>3rd Quartile - 3rd 25% of income</i>	<i>4th Quartile - 4th 25% of income</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● % of givers<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ideally 30%○ HUUC 26%● # of pledges - 6● Total amount - \$10,400● 26% of pledges give 26.1% of income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● % of givers<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ideally 45%○ HUUC 47.8%● # of pledges - 11● Total amount - \$6,600● 47.8% of pledges give 16.6% of income





November Workshop Review Continued

Overall, this is a promising picture with illumination of some areas for growth. The current median pledge is \$1200 annually and the average pledge is \$1592. A total of 25 pledge units this year represent 32 individuals who range in age from 29 to 89 (average age 52) and in membership from 60+ to 3 years (average of 19). What the quartile analysis is meant to reveal is how many people are giving at what level and if the congregation's financial health is more vulnerable due to the distribution of pledges. The Board will be taking these numbers into consideration as they plan for the 2023-2024 annual campaign.

Additional recommendations from the UUA included:

- Annual face-to-face pledge drive - still the gold standard and best way to build relationships, comfort and transparency about money in congregational life.
- Focusing on what HUUC does well rather than what it has done well in the past. Some smaller congregations survive and thrive by being "niche" churches rather than trying to be all things to all people.
- Acknowledging difficulties for smaller congregations securing paid ministry due to rising expenses.

Here are some of the links the UUA recommended and shared, which Rev. Matthew distributed during the workshop:

- An article about congregational finances and communication: [How to Be Transparent About Money — Congregational Consulting Group](#)
- How to do a quartile analysis of giving [Quartile Analysis - A Great Tool You Never Knew You Had - Stewardship For Us](#) (this is the best way to know if giving is lopsided and puts the congregation at risk – formula to do it included in article)
- How to motivate people to give <https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/6-ways-to-maximizing-your-churchs-home-field-advantage-in-giving/?id=li20180905>
- 50 suggestions to improve giving [50 Ways to Encourage Faithful Giving - 20130812](#)
- How to address equity and income inequality in giving [Economic Inequality at Church — Congregational Consulting Group](#)

Please plan on joining us for upcoming workshops on Sunday, December 11 and Saturday, January 21.

Mark your calendars now and plan to participate in future workshops: Sundays after services with potluck/soup lunches: December 11 and Saturday, January 21





**We will be
Sponsoring a
Young Family
from Every Woman's
Place for Christmas**

- A young 23 year old woman , pregnant with her third baby. She needs comfy clothes in size large until she goes into labor.

-She says her 3 year old daughter wears a size 5T or 6T in a coat, a pair of pants, shirts or pajamas.

-Her 2 year old son wears size 4T, likes trucks and Spider-Man stuff.

She asked for newborn size clothes(but I would recommend size 3-6 months) for a girl. She will need a diaper bag, car seat and crib. She requested beds for her and her daughter, size queen and twin. Maybe someone has beds or cribs in storage. I will have stars on the small tree in the social hall including each item. Please take select something and bring it wrapped and labeled on Sunday December 18. Call me if you would like to select something virtually or have questions.



Join us for a new yoga class Thursday evenings here at HUUC in the social hall led by Blake Daugherty. Come explore how to listen to and love your body and soul, and calm the mind through the practice of gentle movement, meditation, and breathwork. We will also be incorporating Qigong, an ancient practice related to Tai Chi that focuses on circulating energy through the body. This will be a gentle, restorative class for all levels, including those who would like to use a chair. Bring your mat with you, and also blocks and a blanket if you would like. Donations will be accepted to raise money for the church. Contact Blake at 231-750-0064 or blake.daugherty27@gmail.com if you have any questions.

In Search Of...

"Sound and Tech" Helpers on Sunday mornings

Social Justice Committee to lead the charge of social justice work in Muskegon

Kitchen: Bring in treats, Make coffee, or Stay to Clean up after service

- Contact Robin Dennany
robin.dennany@gmail.com
HUUC Board Trustee

Please submit information for the **January Newsletter** by Monday, December 26th to Jessica at gingermajick@hotmail.com • text or call 231.206.4947



Coming Up... at HUUC



Sunday	December	4	10:30am	Worship Service
Thursday	December	8	5:00pm	Yoga
Sunday	December	11	10:30am	Worship Service
Sunday	December	11	10:30am	New Member Welcome Ceremony
Sunday	December	11	11:30am	Potluck / Soup Lunch
Sunday	December	11	12:15pm	Workshop
Thursday	December	15	5:00pm	Yoga
Sunday	December	18	10:30am	Worship Service
Sunday	December	18		Family Christmas Gifts Collected
Monday	December	19	7:00pm	Board Meeting
Tuesday	December	20	7:30pm	Worship & Music Committee
Thursday	December	22	5:00pm	Yoga
Sunday	December	25	10:30am	Worship Service
Monday	December	26	5:00pm	Newsletter Deadline
Thursday	December	29	5:00pm	Yoga
Sunday	January	1	10:30am	Worship Service
Thursday	January	5	5:00pm	Yoga
Sunday	January	8	10:30am	Worship Service
Thursday	January	12	5:00pm	Yoga
Sunday	January	15	10:30am	Worship Service
Thursday	January	19	5:00pm	Yoga
Saturday	January	21		Workshop

