



February 2023 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**

February 5th

"Peace in the Storm"

Jessica Mae Sheldon

Join Jessica and HUUC friends in celebrating the gifts the deep winter has to offer. This Imbolc service will incorporate a variety of Earth-Based Spiritual traditions and will be held in-the-round in the social hall.... Oh, and wear your favorite sweater!

February 12th

"Show Me the Love"

Rev. Matthew Cockrum

On this Sunday near Valentine's Day we will explore again the kind of love that can serve as the center of our faith. Rev. Matthew Cockrum, Consulting Minister, in the pulpit.

February 19th

"Human Condition"

Jones Barton

Jones will be presenting a sermon by Rev. Sharon K. Dittmar: American society has acculturated us to ideas about how our bodies should look and function. There are norms for everything from weight to brain functioning. Many of us spend a good deal of time trying to meet these norms in defiance of our beautiful diversity, the many ways human bodies grow, change, adapt, and function. Please join me for a sermon that uplifts and celebrates our bodies and humanity as we find it.

Rev. Dittmar graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 1997. She served one year as Interim Minister at the Gathering at Northern Hills (Cincinnati, OH 1997- 1998), and eighteen years as Minister at First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati (1998-2016). In 2016 she began work as Congregational Life Field Staff with the MidAmerica Region.

February 26th

"Hastening Beloved Community" Rev. Matthew Cockrum

What are the links between actions that hasten Beloved Community and those which serve as antidotes to White Supremacy culture? Rev. Matthew Cockrum, Consulting Minister, in the pulpit. ***Choir Sunday***

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



Greetings from the Board of Trustees

Hello All,

Welcome to the New Year. I am optimistic that 2023 will be yet another a good year for Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

We are halfway into the tenure of consulting minister, **Rev. Matthew Cockrum**. Membership is growing, the pews are filling, the choir is amazing, and his pulpit sermons are inspirational and thought provoking every Sunday. Thank you, Rev. Matthew, and congrats to all who feed from his inspiring spirituality.

The fiscal health of our congregation is strong. During the past few years, a lift has been installed, numerous building repairs and upgrades complete, and the social hall floor refinished. **Jim Stier, Jeff Ochsner**, and others consistently keep our building in safe operation-thanks.

Please note that the HUUC Lift is in full operation but stops and starts at level II do require some assistance. We are continuing to seek additional mechanical help with this challenge. We are glad to have **Dale & Peggy Humphreys** (and others) ride the Paul Kidd Memorial Lift into the Social Hall.

Anna Elden-Brady, Amber Brown, Les Rorick, Kali Forquer, Jeff Justin, Marie Cisneros, Hal & Betty Porter, and others are always welcome in person or online via zoom. **Shirley Hoffstedt** is scheduled to join us as a new member in the immediate future. **Ed & Jean Haase, Tim Hamlin, Janet Perrault, and Deborah Margulis** are longtime members seldom attending, but always welcome. When spring returns, **Jim Thompson** will be eagerly welcomed back to HUUC from Florida.

Our endowment is secure-we have a legacy of funded projects to be proud of. Our continued appreciation is extended to **Dave & Sue McIntire** for their enduring expertise in monitoring the financial commitments of the congregation.

Special thanks to **Arionna Huffington, Christine Cleary**, and others for spearheading a Christmas decorating project that put our sanctuary and social hall in a festive mood-thanks to all. During the Christmas snowstorm, the HUUC sidewalks & parking lots were magically shoveled free of snow. We are all grateful to **Jeff** for his service to the congregation.

After a short hiatus, HUUC is re-engaged with the Michigan Unitarian Universalist social Justice Network (MUUSJIN). *Get out the Vote, Reproductive Justice, Racial Justice, and Economic Justice* are among the many priority issues for 2023. **Marcia Hovey-Wright, Nancy Witt-Johnson, and Susan Fabrick** are among many who have been social justice stalwarts at HUUC.





The Choir keeps us rockin in the pews-thank you to **Tyler Newton, Michelle Martin-Mills, Isabel Collinge-Stahl, Evelyn Petersen, Eli Fox**, and many others who fill our sanctuary with the sounds of joy.

Our favorite Kitchen-Witch, **Mary VanSlooten** shares coffee and treat each week as we gather in our social hall. **Tom Wagner** has expanded his contributions to HUUC by serving as a worship assistant!

On Saturday, January 21, the HUUC Board of Trustees and Leadership Committee engaged in a day-long retreat at **Poppy & Alfredo Hernandez's** home led by HUUC Congregational Vice-President Robin Dennany and Consulting Minister **Rev. Matthew Cockrum. Jim & Nancy Stier, Rebecca St. Clair, Kwame James, Carolyn Holmes, Jones Barton, and Kurt Troutman** all engaged in covenant building, data analysis and dreaming, scheming, and planning for HUUC's future.

2023 begins with the promise that our best year is on the horizon. **Gwen Williams** is making grand retirement travel plans, and **Jeff Holmes** is seeking his future in Hollywood! New members **Ange, Chad, and Blake** are encouraged to blend their unique talents into the HUUC congregation. We all remain grateful to **Jessica Sheldon** for keeping us informed through the HUUC Newsletter.

- Sincerely
Kurt Troutman
HUUC Treasurer

A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of human history – Mahatma Gandhi

Mission statements remind us of our purpose of existence; our focus and direction. HUUC's Mission statement was crafted in 2010, our Vision Statement in 2011, and our Congregational Covenant in 2012. We began our work to review and renew these statements at our congregational workshop in September and we are now planning the completion of this work.

Proposed changes will be posted in the social hall. We invite additional comments from members and friends of HUUC. The next steps in completing this work will be discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting on Feb 20. Your input is welcome. Talk to Nancy Stier or Carolyn Holmes and share your thoughts.

- Carolyn Holmes
HUUC Trustee

Next HUUC Board Meeting: Monday February 20th • 6:30 pm
All are welcome!
in person or via zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96744707168>





from the Consulting Minister, Rev. Matthew Cockrum

Hastening Beloved Community

Greetings Beloveds. When was the last time someone called you that? When was the last time you called someone else that? When was the last time you believed it? A lot of questions to start out a column with, I know.

Last month in Sunday services I intentionally spent a bit more time discussing the concept of Beloved Community, popularized by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, and gaining renewed interest within Unitarian Universalist circles in recent years. I will continue to invite us to deeper exploration of this concept in this month's services. But I also want to ask you to consider here, as you read this column, how you know you are beloved...or how you know you are not. What behaviors, attitudes, standards and norms communicate to you that you are valued? And which serve as evidence that the opposite is true?

Each of us has, no doubt, more examples from our personal lives than we care to admit of how we are not valued and beloved...or perhaps how we are valued and beloved only under certain circumstances and when evidencing certain traits, qualities and characteristics. I imagine examples of feeling beloved can be much harder to harvest from our lived experience...and much more precious.

During the Board retreat, Robin Dennany led us through a journaling exercise reflecting on experiences of trust and being trusted. It was powerful. I think we could benefit from a similar exercise along the lines of being beloved.

As we continue our year-long consultation together and move into months of action after months of reflection, I invite you to continue considering how our decisions and actions, our words and our deeds can serve to hasten Beloved Community (a phrase I highlighted on January 22, quoting the Rev. Shirley Strong's essay, 'Toward a Vision of Beloved Community' - <https://chaplaincyinstitute.org/portfolio-items/toward-a-vision-of-beloved-community/>). And if hastening Beloved Community seems too lofty, grand or vague, perhaps consider this, instead; what are you hastening with your words and your deeds? With how you spend your life, your money and your love?

Take a breath. It is not that we have to accomplish it today. And it is not that we will even accomplish it in our lifetime. It is that even in our missteps...we can continue to move forward in love...with each choice, with each email and text, with each purchase...love, love, love.

Here's to The Work, Beloveds.

Peace, Faith & Passion,
Matthew

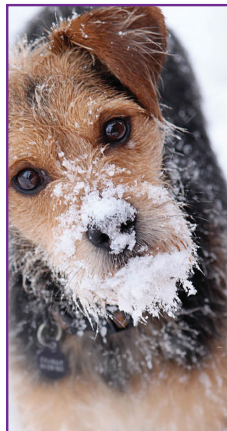
Rev. Matthew Cockrum (he/him/his)
Consulting Minister
mscockrum@gmail.com
206.849.9171 (cell - text or call as needed)



Do you want to have a voice in HUUC?

One of the benefits of membership at HUUC is the right to vote during our annual congregational business meetings which are held each Spring. This year, in order to be eligible to vote at the annual meeting, membership will have to be formalized by April 5, when we will have a membership ceremony as part of the worship service. Membership exploration sessions will be scheduled during March.

Contact Carolyn Holme:
holmesland58@gmail.com
or text 231-327-0375
if you are interested.



[Inclement Weather](#)
Please check for cancellations on
HUUC's Facebook
group and pages



IN THIS CONGREGATION, WE BELIEVE:

LOVE IS LOVE

BLACK LIVES MATTER

CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL

NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL

ALL GENDERS ARE WHOLE, HOLY, & GOOD

WOMEN HAVE AGENCY OVER THEIR BODIES

 UUA.ORG/IMAGES

Please submit information for the
MARCH Newsletter by Monday, February 27th
to Jessica at
gingermajick@hotmail.com
text or call 231.206.4947

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.

Healing thoughts and energy to **Eric Glatz**, who is recovering at MyMichigan Medical Center in Midland, you may reach out on Facebook to show your support.

Several people attended all of HUUC services in January (either in person or on Zoom). Out of those with perfect attendance we drew a name to win a prize. **Congratulations to John Dietrick!** 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

January 2023 Mid-Year Review & Board/LDC Retreat

Summary

On Saturday, January 21, 2023 (and briefly after worship on Sunday the 22nd to complete), HUUC Board and 23 of the Leadership Development Committee gathered in a Board Member's home for a day-long workshop and retreat. The day included time to build relationships and trust, create a covenant based on values, review data from congregational workshops, and distill recommended next steps for the remainder of this consulting ministry and beyond. The primary measurable outcome of the day was the development of a plan for three working groups to be presented for consideration at the next congregational workshop in February. These working groups are:

1. Reviving Congregational Life
2. Reviewing and Renewing Congregational Mission, Vision & Covenant
3. Strategic Stewardship

Overall, the Board's impression is that there is continued energy and enthusiasm for this work and for re-engagement at HUUC following COVID restrictions and several years of work without professional clergy assistance. Additionally, there is an impression that HUUC members and friends are generous in their giving when asked directly to give to a clear vision and purpose.

Present: Board Members (Poppy H, Jones B, Rebecca S, Jim S, Kurt, Robin, Carolyn H), Leadership Development (Kwame, Nancy S)

Values that bring us to this work:

Engagement	Introspection
Community (x3)	Wholeness
Service (x3)	Connections
(x3)	
Validation	Respect
Values (liberal religious)	Authenticity
Hope	Responsibility
Pluralism	

Covenant Developed for the Day: We value building a diverse religious (spiritual/faith) community, so we commit to:

- Building connections through service to those around us
- Accepting responsibility for and to authentic expression in ourselves and each other
- Choosing (radical) love
- Creating and nurturing relationships of care and respect
- Courageously and consistently engaging in conflict when it occurs

Lessons from Kite (collaboration & delegation) Game:

- Focus on big vision
- Be explicit about needs
- Recruit more people
- Multiple eyes on things
- Accept "rainbow" kite - something that can be used/useful anywhere
- See something, say something
- This doesn't mean you have to fix it
- Remember to keep fun and joy in justice

January 2023 Mid-Year Review & Board/LDC Retreat Cont.

Sitting with Data & Mining To-Do's from Workshops

Data & Workshop(s)	To-Do
<u>August - Identity, History & Covenant</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not need a minister to accomplish 6 of 16 items we want to do. We need people. • Be a magnet • HUUC is stubbornly hanging in (in the best way) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain a physical, visible calendar of weekly/monthly events • Look for/create non-Sunday morning worship events to increase offerings for connection and community
<u>Sept & Oct - History, Size & Systems</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congregational life could be more organized • Structure needed for mission, vision and covenant • We are a small congregation - need to keep in mind dynamics and expectations, needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and renew mission, vision and covenant • Research best practices for the above and make recommendations • Pick a few things to focus on (out of respect for size and capacity of our congregation)
<u>November - Stewardship & Finances</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HUUC gives (financially) as leadership (Board) identifies needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk more about money as something that matters and align finances with mission/calling • Board needs to lead regarding revenue needs - be aspirational in asking • Greater clarity about financial need and vision • Diversify Revenue Sources: events, fundraisers, grants • Be strategic in pledge drive
<u>December - Membership & Spiritual Growth</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similarities and differences • Conflict and communication • Evidence (through increased attendance and participation) of desire for engagement beyond worship service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate and reinforce that we (as a congregation) are responsible for interpersonal relationships • Plan more gatherings and opportunities for spiritual growth

Take-Aways & Next Steps: Create working groups of the board to prepare for February congregational workshop. Each group will generate a "blurb" (1-3 sentences) for next newsletter (due 1/30) and begin recruiting leaders/participants. This will "prime the pump" for February workshops

1. Revive Congregational Life & Calendar
(Jim, Rebecca, Robin & Jones)
2. Review & Renew Mission, Vision & Covenant
(Nancy & Carolyn)
3. Strategic Stewardship
(Poppy & Kurt)

Sunday February 26 Potluck & Workshop

Please join us after the service on Sunday, February 26, 12-3 p.m. Join HUUC friends and members in a continued conversation about the future of this community. This month's workshop will focus on the Board's recommendations for moving forward and continued exploration with Rev. Matthew of concepts and tools that can help strengthen HUUC's ministries. Bring a potluck and/or soup item to share.

YOGA!



Thank you all for being patient with me, as I needed some time to hibernate, learn, and re-evaluate how I want to facilitate my life and my classes. It was a very humbling, and honoring experience being able to share this practice with my elders. I felt in the middle of some of the meditations, these are the virtues I should be learning from you :) Thank you everyone for all the love and support. I really do cherish you all.

I have spent a good amount of time hanging out at On The Path in Spring Lake with Sandy Parker, where I learned a lot in a small amount of time. Great teachers at a fair price, well worth it if your looking for something during the weekdays. My teacher training with Sacred Moon has been such a blessing, though I am my only teacher, as I honor in you. I love the circles and community that yoga can create... and don't get me started on permaculture!

I am excited to be resuming class Saturday, Feb. 11th, where we all can develop our own practice. I also do have a black belt in Tae Kwon Doe, and I enjoy encorapating a bit of what I have learned with that and Qigong, an ancient chinese practice focusing on the subtle energy body. Don't worry, we won't be throwing punches ;) Feel free to ask, however, if you would like to know more after class.

In every class, it will be your own practice. Feel free to engage as hard or soft as you would like; and if you feel the need to hold where you are at in a pose or do something completely different, whether resting, need to excuse

yourself, or feel the need to do a headstand, go ahead! These all level classes will be open for you to find what you need that day.

The first hour long session will begin at 9:30 downstairs in the nursery. This will be a gentle yoga, focusing on mobility and restoration. You are welcome to use a chair or any props you may need. There will have a half hour in between the next session I call Yang Yoga, which will consist of more strength building, balance, and flexibility. Both will focus on breathing exersices. Make yourself at home; there is tea and water in the social hall; continue your own meditation / practice in between if you wish to stay for both classes. Donations for the church are appreciated, but not expected. Everyone is welcome.

Saturday, Feb. 11, 25
9:30 - 10:30: Gentle Yoga
11 - 12: Yang Yoga

These will be most reoccurring Saturdays, except for my training weekends, in which we will do a combined class on Friday that week. Time will to be determined. Those dates will be Feb. 17, March 17, and April 14. I will create and post a facebook page to the HUUC page to keep you updated on classes. We will begin by focusing on our roots, and build our foundation from the ground up. Feel free to call or message me if you have any questions.

Nameste,
Blake Daugherty



Welcome New Members!

Ange Barnes, Chad Axe, and Blake Daugherty

On December 11, 2022, we welcomed three new members into our HUUC family—
If you haven't met them yet, please introduce yourself to these wonderful people!



Ange

Born on the west coast, raised in the midwest, matured back in Chicago, Greece, and the western mountains of Colorado, and now am evidently going to grow old in Michigan with friends, family, and loved ones not too far away. I have found nature's beauty in each place that has nurtured me and now am learning to love what Michigan has to offer: plenty of water, lots of forests with wild mushrooms and maple syrup and an off-grid cabin in the UP with my partner. Covid put a quick end to my working life which for the last 22 years has been massage therapy (with a year off to teach English in China). I believe that time has kept me healthy as much as it did my clients! And I still love to give massages whenever I get the chance. But also for me I need community and a means to feel that I can help better the world around me. I have found that Unitarians generally help me do both and so I am looking forward to making friends and being of service to Harbor UU and the Muskegon community.

Chad

I'm a now five-year resident of Muskegon and Michigan. I currently work for Trinity Health Arena and the City of Muskegon, my fourth year doing so. I am a graduate of Purdue University, West Lafayette; BA in Sociology and Philosophy. I am happy to reaffirm my long-time commitment to Liberal Religion by joining Harbor Unitarian Universalist. I stepped into a UU church over thirty years ago and have attended and joined congregations in several states. I have been greatly nourished, sustained, and frankly empowered by the Church and the amazing folks I have met along my way. So it's a great joy to do so here now with Harbor!

Blake

I came to HUUC in the beginning of Summer '22, not knowing what to expect, looking for community of openness willing to confront the difficult questions of life. I found a group of unique minds and hearts and thought I might just like it here. I appreciate the growth mindset environment, where we can all learn to grow into our beings, rather than being moulded by another.

Music, nature / farming, and the physical arts such as yoga are my passions. Finally having community where I can feel free to explore / express myself has rejuvenated my soul, helping reconnect with my passions. Finding my place in a bundle of sticks, I feel as an empowered child at the door of mystery and opportunity, ready to discover, learn, and take care of Mother Earth.

Lately I have been entertaining the idea that everything is a fairy tale. I hold loosely to very few beliefs or labels. Peace lovin' flower child works, haha! I do believe, however, that we live in a world of infinite possibility, and just about anything could be possible in this world of magic.

