



**April 2023 Newsletter**

# **H A R B O R Unitarian Universalist C O N G R E G A T I O N**

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

**231-755-2932**

**[www.harboruu.org](http://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**

### **April 2nd**

***"Palm Sunday: Procession, Poetry and Protest"***

**Bro. Tom Wagner**

Palm Sunday begins the Christian commemoration of Holy Week, leading to Good Friday and eventually ending on Easter. It is intertwined with the older Jewish observance of Passover, the celebration of liberation from slavery in Egypt. We will focus primarily on Matthew's account of the day, including not only Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, but also his cleansing of the Temple. In addition to notes on the historical and literary context of Matthew 21:1-17, we will look at the quotes from the Hebrew Bible scattered through both stories.

### **April 9th**

***"Broken Hallelujahs"***

**Rev. Matthew Cockrum**

in an encouragement to find and to voice your own Hallelujah, in however many pieces. We might even explore Christ for Unitarian Universalists on this Easter Sunday.

### **April 16th**

***"Choir's Greatest Hits"***

**HUUC Choir**

Music is a vital part of our services at HUUC. Please join us for a special program as the choir members talk about their favorite songs from our hymnals and we all make music together! \*Choir Sunday\*

### **April 23rd**

***"A UU Countdown"***

**Rev. Matthew Cockrum**

An exploration of how we might creatively explore and integrate our principles into our daily lives. For example: where does inherent worth and dignity reside in your body...and how does it intersect with encouragement to growth? Potluck following service with a congregational workshop on Social Action.

### **April 30th**

***"Kindness Lingers On"***

**Christine Cleary**

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



## Greetings from the Board of Trustees

Every month, you can count on this space in your newsletter to read of recent board action or happenings at HUUC, all with a positive spin. I'm not here to deliver any type of shocking reality check because I really do think there is much more to be happy about than there is for despair. To be sure, there is bad news to be reported at every board meeting. Things break down. We lose members. Issues go unresolved. I see all these as normal parts of congregational life. What keeps me positive is that, given time, things do get fixed, we gain more members, and we are guided by people determined to keep those unresolved issues on our agendas until we can honestly say that we tried our best.

Whether or not you have been attending the monthly congregational workshops, I hope that you appreciate what is being accomplished there. Sometimes it takes a new set of eyes to make us realize our possibilities. To that end, our Consulting Minister, Rev. Matthew Cockrum has done a remarkable job of helping us explore our potential going forward. The March 26 workshop involved exercises in active listening. Hearing the stories from other HUUC members about the difficulties they encounter in daily life was a profound lesson in developing empathy.

While on vacation recently, I was exposed to another form of active listening which I found most pleasant; something which I am sure you have experienced often enough. Wherever I went, I encountered people determined to make my meal, my ride or my overnight stay as pleasant as possible. Of course, this is what you would expect in a service economy, but it went beyond just the manner in which tourists are treated. I saw the same respectful discourse among the locals themselves. I don't know whether that type of engagement is a cultural thing or if it has to be practiced but I think I know right relations when I see it.

Do we at HUUC see ourselves as part of any sort of service economy? Shouldn't those we have known for years be afforded the same respect as visitors? I think it's only fair at this point to give equal time to those who love this church and are passionate about their vision for its future, sometimes at the expense of making nice. Arguing quickly turns to bickering when we let the discussion get personal. At the end of the day, I hope we can find a way to distinguish between strong advocacy and just plain anger in our personal relations. It's part of being there for one another.

- Sincerely  
Jim Stier

HUUC Board of Trustees

Next HUUC Board Meeting: Monday, April 17th • 6:30 pm

All are welcome!

in person or via zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96744707168>





## 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.

*The caring team has become a strong and vital part of our UU experience. We acknowledge the vital and valuable part we play in this sacred space and to that end, we hope that you will turn to us for any issue that is a concern in your life. We are here to help you carry those difficulties that make knots in our lives. We offer a hand, a shoulder or an ear for those times. Please reach out - we are here.*

Several people attended all of HUUC services in March (either in person or on Zoom). Out of those with perfect attendance we drew a name. **Congratulations to Gary Simmons, who attends on Zoom!** We appreciate you continuing to show up for our services!

We have five members:  
Sue McIntire, Christine Cleary, Chad Axe, Nancy Johnson, and Ange Barnes.  
(If you would like to be involved in any way, please let one of us know.)

Contact: Sue McIntire (231) 563-3988

## The newly organized **SOCIAL ACTION** Committee

is focusing on a major ongoing project instead of a lot of smaller ones. One that hopefully HUUC will eventually be known for and will attract new members. There seems to be a lot of excitement around tutoring 1-3rd graders at Bunker Elementary or our church. We are in the middle of narrowing it down to something a small church can manage and have minimal or no cost. Half a dozen members have already expressed interest in volunteering. And the school is excited about how we can help. Once it is more nailed down, we will present it to the board.


We will continue to encourage members to

- participate in Supper House,
- participate in Adopt a Family for Christmas
- participate in Pride Muskegon

Stay tuned - HUUC is on the move.

Contact Marcia Hovey-Wright if you have any questions or want to volunteer

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## from the Consulting Minister, Rev. Matthew Cockrum

### *We are in the home stretch!*

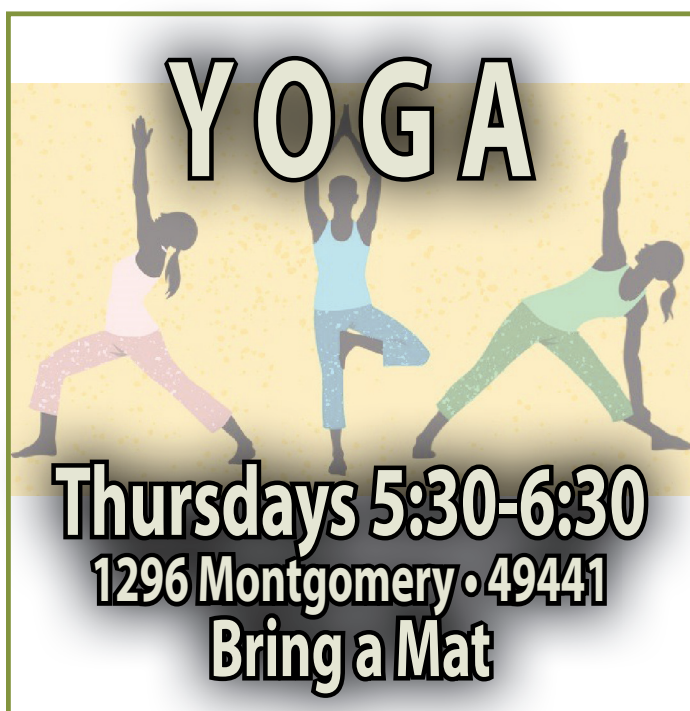
We have just completed eight months of our work together and we have three more in this consulting ministry. You all have been doing great work. Thank you for your attendance and participation at the monthly workshops, for the continuity of conversations and for the clarity and transparency - vulnerability, even - in reflecting on the history and hopes of Harbor UU Congregation. There is still work to be done, but that will always be the case.

In my sermon on March 26 I referenced the International Transgender Day of Visibility. You can find more on the history elsewhere. What I would encourage you all to check out, though, is a great UU resource for continuing to make our congregations and communities more trans-aware and inclusive. While Harbor UU has been an official "Welcoming Congregation" for some time (a designation of congregations who have done intentional work around lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues), there

is a renewed effort to encourage and invite congregations to re-visit this work. You can find more information here: UPLIFT: Love and Solidarity with Trans and Nonbinary People | Uplift | UUA.org including a resource called "The Five Practices of Welcome."

Looking forward into April and May, I want to invite you to dream with me about another possible resource. I will be with you on April 9, which is the western Christian observance of Easter and also coincides with Jewish Passover and part of the month of Ramadan for Islam (Ramazan Mubarak, my Muslim beloveds...I hope your fasts are going smoothly). You know that Judaism is a central spirituality for me and one of the practices I have been enjoying for a few years now is called "Counting the Omer." It is a way to count the days between Passover and Shavuot/the Feast of Weeks. The Christian corollary would be the time between Easter and Pentecost.

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**YOGA**

**Thursdays 5:30-6:30**  
**1296 Montgomery • 49441**  
**Bring a Mat**



**Cozy Craft Circle**

meets April 10th and 24th from 6:30-8:30pm in the social hall. Bring a work-in-progress, something new, or just a notebook to brainstorm and collect inspiration. You are encouraged to bring a beverage of choice and snacks to share. This is a welcoming space to stretch your creativity and socialize. We'll use the side door, but if you need the front door available for accessibility, message Robin at 2482291601. Join our FB group, via the HUUC



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## ***We are in the home stretch!***

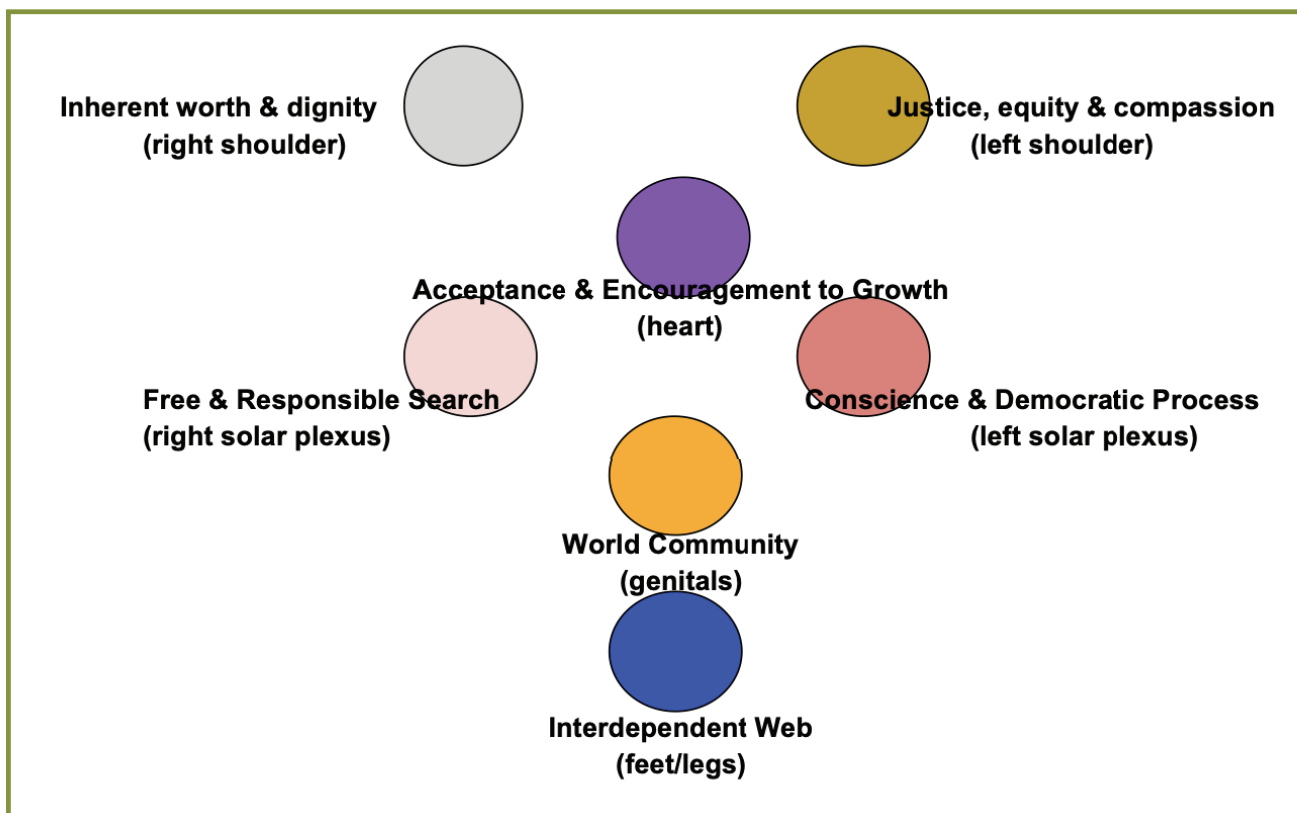
All of this is a long way of stating that it is an opportunity to use seven weeks to reflect on intersecting themes. Mystical Jews use qualities associated with the Tree of Life. I find myself wondering what it would be like for us to use these seven weeks to reflect on our intersecting seven principles (maybe soon to be less, maybe completely renovated come the annual General Assembly in June). Shamelessly swapping out names and concepts with those from Judaism (including bodily locations and colors), I wonder what it would be like for you/us to spend time daily and weekly looking at the principles, how and where we experience them in our bodies and how they intersect with one another, utilizing the map below as a starting point for conversation:

So...that's my invitation for this month. Play with these principles, where you experience them in your body and how they intersect with one another. You'll hear more about this later in the month when I am there April 23...who knows, you may even hear something about this on Easter Sunday.

And don't forget to mark your calendar for our next congregational workshop on April 23 after services. Bring your potluck item and come ready to explore.

***Here's to The Work, friends.***

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



# March 2023 Workshop Review

*We had a slightly smaller crew for our March 26 workshop, which focused on listening with holy curiosity. Seventeen HUUC friends and members stayed after our potluck for the following:*

**1. Energy Exercises** - Rev. Matthew Cockrum warmed us up with some “theater games,” including “Zip, Zop, Zoom” and “Wah Ball.” Both of these were embodied and playful exercises intended to lighten us up a bit and to begin to focus our attention on the quality of our energy - both shared and individual.

**2. Work Group Updates** - Members of the work groups established at the February workshop gave reports on their progress and learnings to date.

a. The Reviving Congregational Life & Calendar group reported that they have created a physical calendar in the social hall in order to allow folks to get an in-person visual of when the space is available and what activities might interest them. This space also serves as a place for folks to post their hopes and needs (ie. someone posted the need for a new tree for Christmas decorations). This group is also in the process of creating

an on-line calendar for similar purposes. They clarified that their work is primarily to hold space for folks to create and imagine programming, not to create programming for others.

b. The Strategic Stewardship group reported that they are continuing to make progress on clarifying values-based and aligned stewardship efforts. The pledge drive/annual campaign is in the preparatory phase and will be launched in April and May. Leadership reminded folks that a significant increase in revenue will be necessary to secure an ongoing relationship with a minister.

c. The Reviewing and Renewing Values, Mission, Vision and Covenant group indicated that they, too, are continuing to make progress on their project. This group will be soliciting HUUC values from congregants and narrowing them down to three to five that can succinctly and accurately reflect HUUC at its best. Eventually, these values will guide and shape decisions and become more publicly woven into the life and language of the congregation.

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# March 2023 Workshop Review

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**3. Story Theology** - Rev. Matthew then invited participants to divide into groups of 4-5 and take turns sharing and reflecting on stories from their personal lives. The purpose of this was to provide an exercise in listening through spiritual or theological ears while also noticing how our bodies, minds and beliefs shape how we experience and respond to others. Each group followed the following steps through several rounds:

a. A speaker tells a five minute story from their life that had a meaningful impact on them while the rest of the group listens attentively and silently without interrupting.

b. The listeners then each respond with a caring/reflective statement with the intent to connect rather than to fix/change, agree or disagree with the story-teller.

c. The listeners then note and share:

- i. Where and how in their bodies they experienced their responses to the story
- ii. Where and how in their minds (their own stories) they experienced their responses to the story

iii. How their theology and/or spirituality might shape their response to the story and how they would process the story, themselves

d. The speaker then notes which of the responses felt most closely aligned/connecting with them

e. The group as a whole examines how c.i.-iii. (above) might have influenced which statement connected most closely with the story-teller

Rev. Matthew concluded with suggesting this might be a useful exercise for further exploration in small-group gatherings at other points in the congregation's life. He emphasized this as an opportunity to practice listening through the lenses of our faith and making Harbor UU Congregation a place where Beloved Community in the making continues to be practiced.

Mark your calendars for the next workshop and potluck: Sunday, April 23, 12-3 p.m.

## Sunday April 23 • Potluck & Workshop • 12-3pm

Join HUUC members and friends immediately following Sunday service for a potluck lunch and workshop facilitated by Consulting Minister, the Reverend Matthew Cockrum. Continue to imagine and build together the future of Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation!





**New Member Sunday in March  
Welcomes New Member  
Judy Spitler**

**as well as formalizing  
Shirley Hoffstedt's  
reinstatement as a member**


(she was present on Zoom for the ceremony)

**Anyone interested in becoming a member of HUUC  
or learning more about Unitarian Universalism**  
contact Carolyn Holmes. She can arrange an information  
session to get answers to questions you may have.  
Holmesland58@gmail.com or 231-744-4099.



Please submit information for the **MAY Newsletter** by Monday, April 24th  
to Jessica a gingermajick@hotmail.com / text or call 231.206.4947





# Earth-Based Spiritualists Meeting

**Thursday, April 13th  
@7pm @HUUC**

**Direct interest and inquiries  
to Jessica:  
[gingermajick@hotmail.com](mailto:gingermajick@hotmail.com)  
or text/call 231.206.4947**

**See you there!**

## SPRING CLEANUP SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023

*Is there a particular room or corner of our church that you find dirty, cluttered or just plain unsightly?* The Space and Grace Committee would like to offer you the opportunity to take the lead on making that part of the building appear attractive and inviting again. Some rooms that you might agree need attention include the office next the social hall, the library adjacent to the sanctuary and the boiler room. Let me know your thoughts and ideas on this and I will do my best to get the volunteers necessary. A few items may need board approval for disposal, but if you get your recommendations to me before the board meets on April 17, we can get a decision on the matter before clean up day when we will meet at 9:00 a.m. ***Let's do this!*** ~Jim Stier

**Save the Date!**

**Saturday, May 20th, 7pm**

**An Evening with  
The Barley Saints at HUUC**



**\$5 Donation Requested  
Proceeds to benefit Community Outreach  
Programs Sponsored by HUUC  
[www.barleysaints.com](http://www.barleysaints.com)**

# WE ARE:

**ALL CONNECTED**  
**STRONGER TOGETHER**  
**LOVE'S HANDS IN THE WORLD**  
**CALLED TO CREATE JUSTICE**  
**RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE  
ANOTHER AND THE EARTH**





**Anna EldenBrady would like to invite the  
HUUC community to join zir at a virtual summit**  
near and dear to zir heart (and that ze is fortunate to say ze is helping to organize this year!)



The LGBTQ+ Champion Group of the 4-H PLWG  
Access Equity & Belonging Group Presents:

# VIRTUAL RAINBOW SUMMIT

APRIL 27-29, 2023

## Navigating Resistance, Celebrating Resilience

FREE conference for youth, families,  
and professionals providing resources  
and networking opportunities to  
benefit the overall health and wellness  
of individuals in the LGBTQ+  
community.

 **April 27-29, 2023**

 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM PST  
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM MST  
11:00 AM - 7:00 PM CST  
12:00 PM - 8:00 PM EST

 **Online, All Around the World**

**SPEAKER**  
**Jennifer Sirangelo**  
President and CEO  
National 4-H Council

**SPEAKER**  
**Mercury Stardust**  
Award-Winning Activist  
& Social Media  
Influencer

**SPEAKER**  
**Amy Bonomi**  
Founder & CEO of Social  
Justice Associates

**SPEAKER**  
**Ellen Rodrigues**  
Director of the LGBTQ+  
Center at West Virginia  
University



Register below or scan the QR code:

<https://beav.es/Si6>



Daily programming will span a wide range of topics, the importance of identity exploration, using tabletop role-playing games (like Dungeons and Dragons) to affirm youth as they embrace their whole selves, dealing with focus friction between institutional values and stakeholders, and panels amplifying youth and family perspectives.

**To register, follow the QR code on the poster or go to <https://beav.es/Si6>**

