



# HARBOR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION MUSKEGON • MICHIGAN

## July 2025 Newsletter

### Sunday Worship Services Begin at 10:30am

#### **“This is What Democracy Looks Like”**

Join us this July as we explore the concepts of liberty, freedom, and our changing society through four services that examine different angles of these ideas.

**July 6**

#### **“Free Speech Sunday”**

**Kurt Troutman**

We invite participation in our annual celebration of Free Speech Sunday.

This unique UU holiday honors our religious and political traditions of engaging in free speech. Celebrate freedom of expression by sharing your voice. You have a maximum of 3 minutes to speak what is on your mind.

*The pulpit is open to the first six (6) respondents. Please contact Kurt Troutman to secure your place in the speaker's line. Extemporaneous monologues will only be included if time permits. Now is our time to let freedom ring!*

*\*Noisy Offering\**

**July 13**

#### **“Across the Divide: Listening With Empathy”**

**Anna EldenBrady**

Sometimes it's tempting to just throw the people with opposing ideas out of our lives, especially if their words cause real-world harm. But what happens when they're trapped in their own echo-chamber without any progressive voices

to empathize with their struggles? Who catches them when they realize their fears were preyed upon by exploitative and opportunistic people in power? And is there a way to both care and protect ourselves, especially if we're members of marginalized groups their supposed leaders are targeting?

**July 20**

#### **“Freedom Of/From Religion”**

**Amy G. S. A. Brooks**

Amy is a fat cisgender, queer, Australian-born immigrant to the United States who loves a good cup of hot tea and hates mornings. Amy's pronouns are she/her.

**July 27**

#### **A Tale of Two Societies**

**Scott Roodvoets**

Description: Our famously polite northern neighbor does a few things differently than we do, which make a profound difference in the quality of life. Scott spent half his life living and working in Canada and will describe the experience of living in a country that has slightly different structures and values.

*\*Choir Sunday\**

**Meet With Us In-person at 1296 Montgomery, Muskegon, MI 49441**

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



## July 6 : “Free Speech Sunday”

This unique UU holiday honors our religious and political traditions of engaging in free speech. Celebrate freedom of expression by sharing your voice. You have a maximum of 3 minutes to speak what is on your mind.

*The pulpit is open to the first six (6) respondents. Please contact **Kurt Troutman** to secure your place in the speaker’s line. Extemporaneous monologues will only be included if time permits.*

**Now is our time to let freedom ring!**



**POTLUCK!**  
*Sunday July 20th  
After Service  
Bring a Dish to Share*



Next HUUC Board Meeting: Monday, July 21st • 6:00 pm  
All are welcome!

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

### **HUUC Board of Trustees**

Kal Fox, President  
Robin Dennany, Vice President  
Kurt Troutman, Treasurer  
Jones Barton, Secretary

### **Members at Large**

Christine Cleary, Rebecca St. Clair,  
Michelle Martin

**Music Director** Sue McIntire

# News from the Director of Religious Education

## July 2025 Religious Education Updates

Hello, Harbor UU Friends!

Our first week of “World of Wonder” introduced our kids to the concept of interdependence in nature and started our youth creating a covenant together, an agreement for behaviors during our lessons. We’ve had a few hiccoughs getting those expectations established, but we’re working on it together. The covenant has been added to our Google Classroom site in the “RE Projects” section. In case you don’t have access to that site, this is what they contributed together:

### Our Covenant

We will do our best to:  
listen to one another  
respect other people’s items  
respect and be kind to all  
not talk when other people are talking  
be helpful to everyone  
respect the differences in how people learn



Our second week of “World of Wonder” happened after RE Sunday. This past week, we learned about partnerships in nature and expanded our understanding of the relationships between creatures, plants, and fungi that depend on each other for survival. Materials for this lesson have also been added to our Google Classroom. If you would like to continue this exploration at home, the UUA provides a “Taking it Home” page for this curriculum that recaps the theme and offers ways to bring conversations about these partnerships home.

RE Sunday was a rousing success with all our kids engaged in some way or another in the ways they were comfortable throughout the service. I have received nothing but good feedback for it so far and everyone I’ve talked to was impressed by our kids’ willingness to be involved and their enthusiasm for the roles they took on. We are going to try to go back to having these multigenerational services where youth have opportunities to engage once a quarter. This used to be a regular event at HUUC and it is wonderful to resurrect this tradition! I will be working with the Worship Committee to identify when we can put together our next multigen Sunday.

Youth are encouraged to take on parts in our regular services as well--the opportunity is open for youth to light our candles and if anyone is interested in taking on readings, such as our chalice lighting or our peace and justice candle reading, all they have to do is ask!

I have also been forwarded an opportunity for UU middle school youth (grades 6th-9th) to attend a retreat at Mystic Lake Camp October 17th-19th. The details have been uploaded to our Google Classroom and are in the PDF flier attached to this email. I will also have printed copies on Sunday. There are not scholarships available, so if cost is a barrier, please reach out and we can try to find a way to creatively fund attendance (perhaps there are people in the congregation willing to sponsor youth to go!)

If you have not yet joined our Google Classroom and would like to, there are a few different ways to do so. You can follow this link to join HUUC RE Classroom. If you are already on Google Classroom, you can use the class code to join--it is 4zbimzms. Or you can use the QR code attached to this email to access the join link from your phone or tablet. I am using Google Classroom to post weekly lesson materials, plan outlines, and hand-outs as well as the information on other opportunities also included in this email and photographs of our kids' projects. It's one more way to keep up on things going on and to be able to do activities at home if there's a week missed that you'd like to do at home (or activities they enjoy and want to share with you!)

I am also starting to use Google Calendar to keep track of my office hours at HUUC and the RE opportunities planned. While it's fairly bare-bones at present, I am hoping we can use it more frequently as we expand our offerings for adults and make bigger plans with our kids!

We also now have a supply donation box in the Fellowship Hall--in your spring cleaning, if you come across **craft supplies you don't have a use for, leftover classroom materials, hobbies that just didn't take off**, or other items you think our RE kids could use, please feel free to drop them in the box. We are always looking for consumables, such as **markers, paints, crayons, pipe cleaner, feathers**, and other supplies, as well as other nifty things our kids might enjoy using in their RE classes or for decorating their classroom spaces. We have a crafty, hands-on group of youth and donations will be well-used!

The **RE Survey** is still active and can be found at the URL: <https://tinyurl.com/53nbk8u5>. It leads to a Google Form. The QR code linking to it is still present in the Fellowship Hall on the bulletin board. The more people who fill it out, the better I will be able to get a feel for the needs and wants of the congregation as we plan future youth and adult offerings.



I would love to start some short-term **adult enrichment programming** over the summer, so please make sure to fill out the survey so I know what direction folks want to go in and who is eager to lead one of these adult offerings.

With love at the center,  
Anna L. EldenBrady





# News from C A R I N G COMMITTEE...

*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.*

Condolences to **Kal and Eli Fox** on the loss of their beloved cousin Ike.

Congrats to our child care provider, **Braylin Meyers**, on her graduation from high school.

Caring Thoughts to **Rebecca St. Clair** as her sister battles with a recent lung cancer diagnosis

Caring Thoughts to **Marcia Hovey-Wright** as her sister continues to battle melanoma

Congratulations to **Lauren Acton and Jacob Snover** on the birth of their daughter, **Nora Lynn Marie Snover**, born April 18th.

Condolences to **Gary Simmons** on the loss of his father.

We have three members:  
Sue McIntire, Christine Cleary,  
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



In recognition of outstanding fellowship, **Jessica Sheldon** was presented the *Ruth Berlow and Lucile Mason Award* during Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation's annual meeting. Each year, one congregation member is selected to receive this honor. Jessica has contributed to our church in many ways over the years, including VP of the Board, ministerial search committee, youth group leader, RE teacher, Co-Knittee and Fundraiser coordinator. More recently she serves as member of Worship Committee and newsletter and social media editor.

# COMMUNITY



Together in Spirit,  
United in Love

## On Being UU

The worship committee plans our services each week by making very intentional choices regarding each element of the service that you experience. This is an attempt to explain one segment of our worship tradition:

### *Why do we **Sing In Church** as a part of our worship services?*

Singing in church serves several meaningful purposes across different dimensions of human experience:

#### **\*\*Community and Connection\*\***

For many of us singing is not our most comfortable form of expression. In fact, several of you have shared with me stories of your childhood when you were told not to sing. But singing together at church creates a powerful sense of unity and shared experience. When our voices blend in harmony, it breaks down individual barriers and fosters a feeling of belonging to something larger than ourselves. This communal aspect strengthens bonds between us and creates lasting connections.

#### **\*\*Emotional Expression\*\***

Music has a unique ability to convey emotions that words alone cannot capture. Singing allows us to express devotion, gratitude, joy, or contemplation in ways that feel more complete and heartfelt. Many find it easier to connect with their faith through melody and rhythm.

#### **\*\*Stress Relief and Well-being\*\***

Singing has documented psychological and physical benefits, including reduced stress, improved breathing, and the release of endorphins. In a church setting, this contributes to an overall sense of peace and well-being that many of us associate with our spiritual practice.

#### **\*\*Active Participation\*\***

Rather than being passive observers, singing transforms us into active participants in the service, making the experience more engaging and personally meaningful.



And on a lighter note, I've heard UUs are notoriously poor singers... because they're always reading two lines ahead to make sure they agree with the words.

If you're having an issue with language in our music, my motto is always, "If you can't sing it for yourself, sing it for someone else."



#### ***Want to try choir without a big commitment?***

Come sing with us on Sunday, July 27. We typically don't meet in the summer, but we are adding this one so we can sing about Freedom & Democracy. You just need to come to one rehearsal on Wednesday, July 23 at 6pm. If you are interested in checking us out, please contact music director Sue McIntire.

The next  
**Worship Committee Meeting**  
will be held at HUUC on  
Tuesday, July 8 at 6:00 pm.  
All are welcome to attend.  
Contact Carolyn Holmes holmesland@  
gmail.com if you wish to make  
suggestions regarding the services  
we present.

The first Sunday of the  
month we will take an  
additional offering for our  
RE program.  
Bring loose change for this  
Noisy Offering!

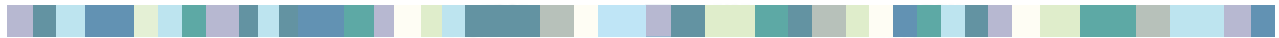


## Welcome New Members!

On June 29th, 2025, we welcomed four new members into our HUUC family:  
**Brittany Frantz, Bill Spaniola and Roxanna Vallier**  
We are excited to have you as part of our community!

*If you haven't met them yet, please introduce yourself to these wonderful people!*

If you are interested in expressing your commitment to HUUC by joining as a  
member, we ask you to attend an orientation session.  
Contact Sue McIntire or Carolyn Holmes for more information.



### Child Care Provider

HUUC is in need of a responsible person to act as a Child Care  
Provider during our Sunday morning services. If you know of such  
a person please refer them to Anna EldenBrady for information.

Please submit information for the **August Newsletter** before August to  
gingermajick@hotmail.com





***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.

**MUSKEGON PRIDE**

**TRANSGENDER  
GENDERQUEER  
AND GENDER  
NON-CONFORMING  
SOCIAL GROUP!**

Come join us every Thursday!

**THE COFFEE FACTORY**  
**4PM-6PM**  
1402 Hudson Street  
All ages welcome!



**HARBOR UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**  
**7PM-9PM**  
1296 Montgomery Ave.  
Ages 18 and up



**MUSKEGON PRIDE** 

**Choir will be on  
Summer Break  
June and July!**

**Practices Resume  
Late August**







Pride



# HUUC Social Action Committee

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

1. **READING TUTORS AT BUNKER** – This project is didn't get started until March due to several delays from the school administration, but four members have been tutoring weekly until the end of school. Scott Voodvoets, Nancy Stier, Don Mangione and Marcia Hovey-Wright will be tutors this year, working one or two 45 minute shifts per week and helping 3 students each time. The students love the individual attention and work hard.
2. **ENDOWMENT APPLICATIONS** – the Social Action applied for funds to help Bunker school and we received \$400 for **books** related to a musical they attended at the Frauenthall. We also were awarded \$1000 for a **food truck** at First Congregational Church. We also provided 10 volunteers to join with their volunteers to staff the food truck distribution. They were very grateful for the donation and volunteers. We are too small to do one ourselves and don't have the equipment or expertise.
3. **COMMUNICATING WITH ELECTEDS** – Given the many attacks on our Democracy and slashing of programs we value many are asking what to do.
  - a. **Indivisible** is having meetings on the first, third and forth Mondays at 6:00 at Samuel Lutheral church on Muskegon avenue downtown. They plan demonstrations, notify citizens about Legislator Town Halls and other political activities.
  - b. **5calls** is an app you can download that is focused on communicating with your Congressman and Senators about federal issues. It provides a summary of the details on current issues (usually about 12-15), when you select one or more, it provides a short script and who to contact and their phone numbers. We suggest you add something to personalize your message. You will probably leave a message and sometimes talk to a staffer, but the calls are counted and it makes a difference when a congressperson gets over 1500 calls instead of the usual 40 per day.
  - c. **Visit the facebook of Progressive Democratic Women's Caucus and the Muskegon County Democratic Party** for more information. They recruit local candidates and help them get elected.
4. **PRIDE FESTIVAL** – HUUC is again participating in Pride Festival. We will have a group in the parade and a booth with our HUUC materials and giveaways.
5. **SUPPER HOUSE VOLUNTEERS** – Every third Friday at 3:00 HUUC has committed to supply volunteers to serve dinner to guests who show up at Temple United Methodist church. We have not been successful in getting volunteers regularly so we need to reevaluate this commitment.
6. **GUN SAFETY** – we planned to do research on states that banned assault weapons, but when Trump got elected there were too many other more urgent issues to address, so we put that project on hold.
7. **PLANNED PARENTHOOD** – Planned parenthood closed several clinics statewide and is transitioning to virtual services, so it is unlikely that they will be able to fiancé opening a clinic in Muskegon. The current administration is targeting Planned Parenthood for defunding.
8. Our meetings will go back to the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 7:30 in the big room downstairs unless otherwise advertised. We welcome new members to the committee. The next meeting will be June 25, 2025 at 7:30.

Marcia Hovey-Wright, chair

Ange Barnes

Nancy Stier, co-chair

Mary VanSlouten



# JULY 2025 Calendar

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 10:30a Worship 12:00p Kid Potluck - Bring your favorite "kids' food"	30 Newsletter Deadline	1	2	3 7:00p Trans/GNC Group	4 4:30p 4H Mtg	5
6 10:30a Worship Free Speech Sunday <i>Noisy Offering</i>	7	8 6:00p Worship Committee	9	10 7:00p Trans/GNC Group	11	12
13 10:30a Worship 12:00p Social Action	14	15	16	17 7:00p Trans/GNC Group	18 3:00p Supper House 4:30p 4H Mtg	19 7:00p Trans/GNC Movie Night
20 10:30a Worship 12:00p Potluck	21 6:00p Board Mtg	22	23 6:00p Choir	24 7:00p Trans/GNC Group	25	26
27 10:30a Worship *Choir Sunday	28 Newsletter Deadline	29	30	31 7:00p Trans/GNC Group	1	2

[Check Facebook and Social Hall for Updates and Additions](#)



# Safe Congregation Policy

## Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation

### Statement of Commitment

We, the Board of Trustees of Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation, wholeheartedly commit to fostering a Safe Congregational Space that is unwaveringly free from harassment, abuse, and discrimination. Our primary aim is to ensure the safety, well-being, and dignity of all members, visitors, and staff.

### Code of Conduct

Acceptable behavior and interactions within our congregation are grounded in respect, inclusivity, and the nurturing of a vibrant community atmosphere. We affirm the values and principles espoused by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), and we warmly welcome all individuals who share a commitment to living in harmony with these principles.

### Reporting Procedures

We recognize the importance of promptly addressing any incidents of harassment, abuse, or violations of this policy. We strongly encourage anyone who witnesses or experiences such behavior to report it to the Board of Directors. Timely reporting is encouraged, and we assure confidentiality and unwavering support for those who come forward.

### Protection

Above all, we empower and support individuals who have experienced harassment, abuse, or policy violations to establish and assert personal boundaries that ensure their safety. This may include asserting their right to ask the perpetrator to cease, discontinuing any interactions on social media platforms, and making the choice to disengage from the individual involved. Furthermore, we encourage our members and guests to explore all available legal avenues for protection, which may include seeking Personal Protection Orders or other legal remedies.

### Statement of Inclusion, Diversity, and Non-Discrimination

Inclusion, diversity, and non-discrimination are not only fundamental principles of our faith but also the cornerstone of this policy and our communal interactions. We affirm our commitment to embracing and celebrating the rich tapestry of humanity. We are resolute in our stance against discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. We pledge to create a community where every individual is valued and respected, and where their unique contributions enrich our shared experience.

### Conclusion

By upholding these principles and values, we reaffirm our dedication to creating a sanctuary of safety, respect, and belonging for all who seek solace and spiritual growth within Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Together, we aspire to build a congregation where love, compassion, and justice flourish, and where every member can thrive in an environment of trust and support.

