



HARBOR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION MUSKEGON • MICHIGAN

December 2025 Newsletter

Sunday Worship Services Begin at 10:30am

December 7

“The Benefits of Forgiveness” **Dr. Lou Yock**

Throughout the world in many religions, forgiveness stands out as a building block of how humans can get along. We all make mistakes and do things we regret, and in being willing to tolerate the wrong we view in others, we find it helps us and allows us to find some peace in ourselves.

Noisy Offering

December 14

“Being a Buddhist Unitarian Universalist”

Scott Roodvoets

Scott Roodvoets has been both an active UU and a practicing Buddhist for many years. His message will focus on some of fundamental beliefs and practices of Buddhism and how it connects with and supports being a UU

December 21

“The Sacred Darkness of Yule” **Rae Brassell**

A Winter Solstice Service honoring grief as a teacher of Love

Potluck

December 28

“New Year’s Burning Bowl”

Jessica Mae Sheldon

A Unitarian Universalist (UU) burning bowl ritual is a ceremony, often held at the end of the year, where individuals write down what they want to release from the past year on paper. This will be an intergenerational meeting in the social hall celebrating open doors, open minds, open hearts.

Meet With Us In-person at 1296 Montgomery, Muskegon, MI 49441
Zoom With Us at <https://zoom.us/j/91447658076>

Greetings from the Board of Trustees

Season's greetings, everyone!

I hope you all are staying warm and enjoying the change of the seasons and the beauty that west Michigan winters can bring us.

While things might be slowing down and drawing in for the winter, our spiritual home at Harbor UU is keeping the hearth burning and continuing to provide a safe and accepting home for people of all walks of life.

First, I would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who made our recent Thanksgiving dinner at the church a huge success and especially to **Faith Groesbeck** who took the lead on organizing things and brought many great dishes to share. It was a beautiful experience all around and one I hope we keep offering through the years.

Next, I would like to recognize the efforts of **Jim Stier** and **Jeffrey Oschner** who have been upgrading the thermostats upstairs at the church so we can better and more economically heat our spaces and provide warmth for all the events we host. A huge thank you also needs

to go out to **Dan Martin-Mills** for the massive amount of work he has put into developing an application that currently lets us more efficiently keep track of people's contact information and send out communications about what's happening at the church. He is also working on even more functionality so this app can serve our community even more.

If you made a financial pledge to Harbor earlier this year, be on the lookout for an update email from **Kurt Troutman** with the status of your pledging. Your generous donations are what enable us to continue to serve the community and to provide the safe harbor that is our congregation!

And finally, for those who are in attendance in person at Sunday's (11/30) service, be sure to stick around to help us decorate the sanctuary and social hall for the winter holidays! Many hands help make it easier for us to provide a welcoming and cozy place for all of us to join.

Be Well, Be Warm, Be Safe,
Jones Barton
HUUC Board Secretary

If you ever have any questions for the Board you can contact us via e mail at trustees@harboruu.org

Next HUUC Board Meeting: Monday, December 15th • 6:00 pm
All are welcome!
in person or via zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96744707168>

from the Endowment Committee

APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR THE CONGREGATION'S ENDOWMENT FUND

Thanks to the generosity of past members, Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation has the opportunity each year to award grants from our endowment fund to support special projects aligned with our mission. The Endowment Committee is accepting grant applications from Oct 1 until Dec. 1. Last year, we awarded a total of about \$6,500 in grants, which ranged from social action projects to educational grants and a very comfortable couch for the social hall.

Our mission is to be "... a safe haven inspiring people to seek their own spiritual truths through worship and learning in community as we build a better world together." If you have something you'd like to do that would benefit from our community's financial support, please apply.

Applications can be downloaded at harboruu.org/endowment. Email completed applications to endowment@harboruu.org or deliver hard copy applications to the Endowment Committee's mailbox in the church office off the social hall.



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

Director of Religious Education Anna 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 **Jackie Nicholls** on the loss of her mother.

Condolences to **Rev. Mimi Bush** on the loss of her husband, Mark.

We have four members:

Sue McIntire, Christine Cleary,

Ange Barnes, and Deborah Margules.

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

Contact: Sue McIntire (231) 563-3988

A **legacy gift** is a donation made by an individual through formal and informal methods. A designated dollar amount is by far the most common type of legacy gift. Other gifts include investment stocks, bonds and personal property. Any gift in any form is welcome.



Your gift ensures that Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation maintains the resources necessary to grow and thrive in fellowship and service to each other and our greater community. We have proudly advanced our liberal religious values in the Muskegon area for over 70 years and with your help we can continue for another 70 years.

A legacy gift is not about luxury or price. It is about meaning and impact. And most of all, it allows each one of us an opportunity to leave something behind that still speaks long after we are gone. Gifts carry our values, memories, and stories into the future.

If you have any questions, contact Kurt Troutman, HUUC Treasurer, to ensure that your gift serves to maintain HUUC for our posterity.

News from the Director of Religious Education

December 2025 Religious Education Updates

Hello, Harbor UU Friends!

Our next RE adventure is starting soon!

Youth at the Elementary School level will be working through a curriculum called “The Undivided Isle: The Missing Quest,” by Morgan Patten. The curriculum summary:

The Undivided Isle is a curriculum for elementary students to explore what it takes to work together and to practice using skills that foster a vibrant, collaborative community. In each lesson, students will become travelers, who are presented with challenges and stories about the Undivided Isle and the creatures that live there. As they solve the puzzles and continue to look for something that is missing, it will become apparent that the Undivided Isle is surprisingly full of division, and they may not have traveled as far from home as they thought.

Do they have what it takes to navigate the challenges, find what is lost, and bring harmony back to the island?

Youth at the Middle and High School levels will be learning about world religions through a series of lessons based on the Crash Course Religions series while also considering where they, as UUs, fit into the broad range of spiritual practices world-wide.

Because we are dividing the age groups, we need volunteer teachers! Those who are interested in volunteering can check out

the weekly subjects on the Teacher Sign-Up Sheet available to view on Google Drive and in the social hall. In order to make our youth RE program work, we will need your help!

Some other updates:

- RE Registration Forms are now available! Please make sure each child has one on file. They will only need to be updated in future years if things change.
- I am still using Google Classroom (link will allow you to join) to share lesson plans, stories, project instructions, and other materials. I will also start using Remind for short text messages to our RE families.
- I have started a book wishlist for the RE Program and am working on identifying outdated curriculum, finding updated versions, if they exist, and identifying what we can still use from sunsetted curricula, like “Tapestry of Faith” that the UUA is no longer keeping current.
- Our youth are still working on their Little Free Library project and are also collecting items for the Health Project’s new personal care pantry. More information on how you can help is in this newsletter!

With love at the center,
Anna L. EldenBrady

Personal Care Items Needed

When people are first referred into **The Health Project**, they often have very basic day-to-day needs that are going unmet that cannot wait for referral to outside assistance programs. Two Health Project staff members are starting a personal care pantry in order to be able to immediately meet these needs as they are identified, such as needing toothbrushes and toothpaste, toilet paper, or laundry detergent.

Our RE youth have decided to act on the value of Generosity by asking our congregation to help get the personal care pantry started through a donation drive.

Some commonly needed items are:

- ☐ Laundry detergent (multiple sizes, include “free and clear” options)
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Toothbrushes
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Bath soap
- ☐ Dish soap
- ☐ Cleaning supplies
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Paper towels

There is a basket in the social hall for all donations.

For those unfamiliar with the Health Project, it is the community health partner of Trinity Health and has been helping connect community members to resources for over 20 years. In just the past four months, the Health Project’s Community Health Workers (CHWs) successfully connected with 2015 community members, offering assistance in finding the resources and services they needed. CHWs were able to connect 75% of those seeking assistance to exactly what they needed. 40% of those assisted were in need of social services, such as access to food and personal needs. Other ways in which the Health Project assists individuals who seek assistance include connecting clients with programs that can help with bill payment assistance, safety equipment, and home repairs. The Health Project also can help with expedited access to Trinity’s financial assistance program, grant-funded prescription assistance, and access to specialists available to help navigate Medicare, Medicaid, and Affordable Care Act enrollment.

FeedING the Lakeshore Food Drive

IndyNextGen is coordinating a project to help stock local pantries this winter. They are hosting boxes for donations at a variety of local organizations and businesses. Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation will be hosting one of these boxes Sunday, December 7th through Sunday, December 14th to contribute to this effort.

Items requested for donation include:

- ☐ Peanut butter, jelly
- ☐ Protein bars and individually wrapped meat sticks (like Slim Jims)
- ☐ Single serving fruit cups
- ☐ Soups in pull-tab cans
- ☐ Hormel Completes
- ☐ Spaghetti-Os
- ☐ Tuna and chicken salad kits
- ☐ Individual instant coffee packets
- ☐ Individually wrapped hot tea bags
- ☐ Spice mixes
- ☐ Juice pouches and bottled water
- ☐ Monetary donations through Venmo (@FeedINGtheLakeshore)



venmo

In addition to collecting loose items, organizers have also been building meal kits for families in need. If anyone is interested in helping with this project, they are welcome to contact feedingthelakeshore@gmail.com or to call Jo H. at 231-246-3507.



You Are Invited!

Hosted by Christine

Saturday, December 6th @3pm

English tea for whoever wishes to come. There is a signup sheet in the social hall.

Come join us for tea and treats.

Hats On!

Pinkies Out!

and... Have Fun!

Chalice Circles



Chalice circles are small groups that gather once or twice a month to discuss topics of spirituality and life. In sharing their stories, deep friendships are formed and community is cemented. This expression of small group ministry is fun, rewarding and helpful for both personal growth and community relationships. Do you think it might find a home at Harbor UU? If you think you would like to be part of a group or be a group leader, or if you have any questions feel free to reach out to me at angebarnes70@gmail.com or 303-717-6366.

Worship & Music Committee

**Tuesday, December 9th @ 6:00pm
at HUUC**

All are welcome to attend.

If you have any ideas for topics for our Sunday Services, or if you would like to hear a particular speaker or present a message yourself, contact Carolyn at holmesland58@gmail.com

Our services are presented as a service to you so your feedback is appreciated!





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