

The Open Door Newsletter

February 2023



This Month's Fellowship Services

Sunday services are generally held at 10 a.m. in the Alvord Theatre on the Northland College campus in Ashland, however locations and times can vary— see individual service descriptions for information. Links to online services are on page two of this newsletter. Find us on the web at www.chequamegonuuf.org.

February 12—Speaker: Stacy Craig—All About Love

Service Lay Readers: : Heidi, Jed, Raina, Joel, and Reid Ungrodt
Musician: Joni Chapman

In person at 10 a.m. at the Alvord Theatre and on Zoom—see page 2 for Zoom link

Unitarian Universalism (UU) is a living tradition, which means that how one articulates what UU is evolves with time, reflection, and dialogue. Several years ago, love was identified as the word that best described the center of faith and belonging in UU, yet this word isn't reflected in the current principles and sources as a central tenet. A process called the Article II Study Commission was charged with creating a process to consider how to incorporate the fact that love came up as the most central and consistent theme among UUs. After years of input and revisions, a final draft of a new Article II will be going to vote at General Assembly, and at the center is love. At this service, we will explore different dimensions of love and share examples of sacred love at work in the world in some of the least expected places.



February 26—Speaker: David Saetre—Stacy Craig's Ordination

Musicians: Alan Craig and the CUUF String Ensemble

In person at 2 p.m. at the Alvord Theatre and on Zoom—see page 2 for Zoom link

The Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is happy to announce the Ordination Celebration for Stacy Craig on Sunday, February 26, at 2:00 p.m. at the Northland College Alvord Theatre. We would be honored if you could attend in person or virtually on Zoom.

The Act of Ordination confers the mantle of ministry. It is a rite of passage that will connect Stacy to a long line of professional ministers and to live a life of service to the UU tradition. Ordination also recognizes the web of relationships with colleagues, the congregation, and the larger community that supported Stacy's call to ministry. The service also recognizes the dedicated years of study and reflection required for ordination.



The Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship welcomes people of any age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, ability, religion or cultural background.

Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's Ordination Celebration for Stacy Craig



On February 26 at 2 p.m. in the Alvord Theatre, our congregation will gather for a very special service as we celebrate Stacy's ordination. In other religious traditions, institutional hierarchy determines whether someone can be ordained, but for Unitarian Universalists only a congregation can bestow this special recognition. While Stacy has led CUUF for three years, she only became eligible to be ordained in September 2022, after completing what our former minister and Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies at Northland College David Saetre calls "the most rigorous and demanding process among all denominations in the Judeo-Christian lineage."

Stacy completed an undergraduate degree at Northland College in 2004, a Masters of Divinity from United Theological Seminary in 2020, and then entered into fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association. This final step involved deep study of the

UU tradition and the completion of internships with St. Johns United Church of Christ on Madeline Island, the Recovery Church in St. Paul, and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Duluth. Many of Stacy's former professors, mentors, and classmates will be joining us—online and in person—as will representatives from the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and members of the Keweenaw UU Fellowship, which Stacy also serves.

According to the UUA, "ordination is one of the most important traditions of our faith," a rite of passage that formally ties Stacy's ministerial calling to the larger UU body. Importantly, the UUA is clear that ordination is not a celebration of a minister's individual achievement; instead, it is a moment for our congregation to sanctify Stacy's move into the clergy and to deepen our commitment to living out our principles and practices together. Upon her ordination, and for the first time in our history, CUUF will be led by an ordained UU minister—Reverend Stacy Craig.

This special service will draw on UU traditions that celebrate and consecrate the occasion, and afterward we will enjoy an extra special spread and time for fellowship. Please join us in what will be a deeply meaningful ceremony and festive celebration.

Would you like to become a member of Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship?

During the month of March, there will be two educational sessions called Get to Know UU for those who would like to explore belonging in UU. There will also be a celebration and recognition for new members of the Fellowship on Sunday, March 26.

For those who are considering CUUF membership, or who would like to learn more about it, our Membership Committee will be sending out information and invitations about becoming a member and signing the collective book. More information will be published in the March newsletter as well. Please reach out to Kristin or Henry Quinlan of the Membership Committee or Minister Stacy Craig if you have questions or would like more information.

Access Information for Zoom Services and Meetings for February 2023

CUUF Sunday Services—February 12 and 26—In person at the Alvord Theatre or on Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting by Video:

<https://zoom.us/j/91687042498?pwd=TGpQWWI6bk0vM2ZHMVA4U0wrbnYwQT09>

Meeting ID: 916 8704 2498—Passcode: CUUF

Or, join us by phone: 312-626-6799—Meeting ID: 916 8704 2498—Passcode: 324633

CUUF Board Meeting—In person at CUUF office or on Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting by Video:

<https://zoom.us/j/98533490376?pwd=cTErZEF6R0tNVmVZWfPaURadHh2dz09>

Meeting ID: 985 3349 0376 —Passcode: CUUF

Or, join by phone: 312-626-6799—Meeting ID: 985 3349 0376 —Passcode: 095767

CUUF 2023 Winter and Spring Service and Gatherings Schedule

January 31	RE Building Bridges for Middle/High Schoolers, Washburn Library, 6:15–7:30
February 12	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Speaker: Stacy Craig—All About Love
February 13	Virtual CUUF and KUUF Soul Matters Sharing Circle (see next page for info)
February 14	RE Building Bridges for Middle/High Schoolers, Vaughn Library room 309, 6:15-7:30
February 17	CUUF In-person Sharing Circle (see next page for info)
February 18	Outdoor Religious Education Program—details in weekly eblasts
February 19	UU Women, 10 a.m. at Washburn Public Library
February 20	Disability Justice Learning Group Meeting (see next page for info)
February 26	Sunday Service, 2 p.m. —Speaker: David Saetre—Stacy’s Ordination Ceremony
March 12	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.
March 26	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—New Member Service
April 9	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Speaker: Stacy Craig—Easter Service
April 15	UU Women’s Retreat—more info to come in March
April 23	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.
May 7	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Annual All-Music Service

From the Minister’s Desk: Being Saved

We had lost two dogs in as many years. Life was chaotic with work and school, and the travel each required. The last thing I wanted was a new dog, but Alan was committed. He spent time with the litter and shared pictures of his pick, Ringo. “He’s the one who snuggles the most,” Alan explained his decision. The high energy puppy who came to live with us brought a special gift. He is an intuitive healer who has made *me* his special project of care.

There are many examples of Ringo’s healing nature. Once I sprained my ankle and Ringo slid into the space between my leg and pillow to help prop it up. He has never done this again, despite me kicking up my feet from time to time. The day he got in my face and began sniffing my eyes, my nose, and my sinuses I had just started feeling a little ‘off’. Ringo was acting so concerned I took a COVID test. It was positive. His early warning prevented me from spreading it to others. A final example is when I had panic attacks. He laid his chin on my leg and just stayed there, no matter how long it lasted. He channeled some kind of calm that he doesn’t exhibit any other time of his life, and this became my most effective treatment.

I can say without irony that Ringo saved me. He helped the pieces of my heart restitch together after they had been shattered by a trifecta of life events. I’ve recently stumbled upon several movies that have a similar message, and this has caused me to reflect on my relationship with Ringo and to also consider what it means to *be saved*.

The short clip called “The Three-Legged Dog that Saved My Life” shares the story of Marne, who was in a traumatic car accident. He adopted Tripod, a dog who had a leg amputated after a different car accident. Marne had been suffering from panic attacks and depression after his accident, and no therapies had helped. He reflected, “I was broken and he was broken” when he and Tripod got together. He credits Tripod with teaching how to love, how to show emotion, and how to be forgiving. He called Tripod a miracle, an angel, and reflected that when he realized Tripod’s presence in his life “transcends all human understanding,” that he had peace for the first time in his life. The documentary *Wildcat* tells the story of an English army veteran suffering from extreme PTSD and depression. He works on a wildlife rehabilitation project in the Peruvian Amazon rainforest where he fosters an orphaned ocelot. Early in the film, he remarks, “I am saving him while he is saving me.”

Salvation is the deliverance from harm. In my Christian upbringing, I was taught salvation comes through faith in Jesus where one is delivered from sin. In my own life and in the stories I’ve mentioned, people were in need of saving, but not because they had done something wrong or because of sinful nature. Life had dealt anguish, as it does to so many, and in that anguish, a different kind of savior appeared. They shared unconditional love, walked alongside, became teachers, and provided healing. Some call them angels. I realize some may find this use of *being saved* sacrilegious, but I’m not proposing any kind of conclusion about salvation. I’m just relating these experiences, lifting them up as a place to find wonder and gratitude, for salvation that comes in different ways.

May you take time today to say *thank you* for all that loves you back together when things fall apart.

Attention UU Women

UU Women will meet on February 19 at 10 a.m. at the Washburn Public Library. Future dates will most likely be March 19, April 16, and May 14.

The group welcomes new people at any time and is open to anyone who identifies as a woman in a way that is meaningful to them. If you have questions, please contact Jill at 715-292-9163 (text or voice).

Save the Date!

Saturday, April 15, 2023. This is the date for the Chequamegon UU Women's 2023 Retreat to be held at the Washburn Library and Washburn Meditation Center. A day full of diverse activities for adults of all ages is being developed based on feedback from members of the fellowship who identify as female.

More details to come in next month's newsletter.

Small Groups Information

Soul Matters Sharing Circles—The theme for February is Love

Virtual CUUF and KUUF circle will meet on Monday, February 13 at 6 p.m. CST/7 p.m. EST

CUUF in-person circle will meet on Friday, February 17 from 10–11:30 a.m. at Northland College's Wheeler Chapel (4th floor of Wheeler Hall).

Disability Justice Learning Group Meeting

Monday, February 20 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

On Zoom: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/97277194531>

All are welcome to join as we continue to explore disability justice for ourselves, CUUF, and this region. If joining on Zoom is inaccessible, please let Stacy Craig or Jenise Swartley know and we will make arrangements for an in-person option.

Caring Committee Corner

Happy February from the Caring Committee! We impart warm and healthy wishes to all during this cold month, deep in the heart of winter 2023. Please join us in sharing profound condolences to Jacki Rae-Ledin and family for the recent loss of Jacki's brother Dennis. Sending you beloved love and light, Jacki!

Are you or someone you know experiencing a life event, whether joyful or full of sorrow? Can the Caring Committee assist by organizing a meal train? If you have a need, please contact Stacy at stacy@chequamegonuuf.org.

Finance Report

As of January 24, CUUF spending was \$38,369 or 52% of this year's \$73,897 budget. We have received \$37,342 in contributions plus \$6,209 from reserves or other income for a total of \$43,551. Pledged contributions total \$54,166 for this Fiscal Year (FY), of which we have received \$33,188 (61%). With fully paid pledges and \$5K in anticipated unpledged donations, our FY income is projected to be approximately \$69,529.

The Fellowship is now using the local accounting firm of Ehlers & Pierce to do payroll for our Minister and Fellowship Assistant. The Minister's first compensation as a W2 employee with benefits was paid via direct bank transfer on January 15. The first payment to our Fellowship Assistant will be on February 15 for hours in January. Benefits for employees working at least 750 hours annually are provided through the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Please contact me if you have questions or would like additional information.

Ed Calhan, Treasurer—treasurer@chequamegonuuf.org—715-410-9746 (cell)

Religious Education News

Notes from the RE Nest—The RE program has begun! On January 8, all the kiddos and as many of the teachers who could gathered together to meet and greet one another. We played a fun name game, and the energy was sweet with lots of laughter!

On January 23 we began by circling together around the Chalice Light and then broke into our various RE groups. I sat in with Irene and the 6th grade group listening in as Irene led a rich dialog around the Big Questions: Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going? The emphasis was on the first question—Where do we come from? Listening to this dialog and inquiry was quite special and meaningful.

Thanks to all the volunteer teachers who are helping to make this happen!

Tracy

Outdoor RE—Mark your calendars! Coming off of the joyful success of January's program, the Outdoor RE Program crew is dreaming of February. We'll have our next event on the morning of February 18. Keep your eye out for more information in the weekly e-blast!

Dear Fellowship Members and Parents,

It is our practice to annually remind our members (and especially parents of children involved in our Religious Education programs) that we follow the National Unitarian Universalist Association Safe Congregations guidelines and best practice recommendations as we conduct both services and religious education. A copy of the full policy is available upon request. A brief summary of highlights of the policy (adopted by our fellowship in 2017) is below:

Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Safe Congregations and Background Check Policy for Religious Education Staff and Volunteers

The Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (CUUF) recognizes the importance of fostering and creating communities where everyone, especially our most vulnerable populations such as children and youth, are protected. We seek to preserve that spirit of welcome, respect and trust in balance with our concern for the safety of our children, applying the best practices from the Unitarian Universalist Association to any policies or guidelines we adopt.

Religious education (RE) classes will be conducted following best practices from the Safe Congregations handbook: two adults or attendants will be present and classes will be conducted in open spaces or with doors open.

The CUUF Board will conduct a background check on all staff hired to work with RE, such as the Director(s) of Religious Education. The RE director(s) will conduct a background check on all RE volunteers who are hired to work with the youth. Background checks will be repeated once every five years.

RE director(s) will be mandatory reporters and will attend an annual training. RE volunteers will be provided an incident report form for accidents, injuries, medical situations, student behavioral incidents, or other concerns and will turn this into the RE director(s).

Every employee and every volunteer who comes in contact with children and youth will receive a copy of the safe congregation policy, ethics policy (under development), and sexual harassment policy (under development).

As we head into an exciting winter and spring of spiritual exploration and discovery within our religious education program, we want to thank you for entrusting your children and youth—our future as a congregation and our future leaders as a community—to our generous and talented volunteers. By sharing with our fellowship and parents these important practices that are designed to keep our fellowship safe, we hope to instill confidence in our parents and maintain an atmosphere of safety and high expectations in our fellowship.

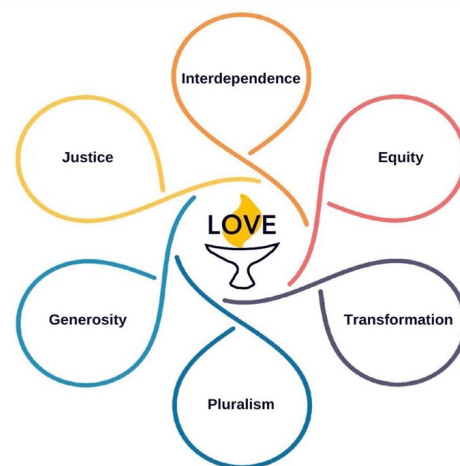
On behalf of the CUUF RE Committee,
Doug Liphart and Beth Reed (Co-Chairs)

A New Way of Saying...This is UU

There are no creeds in Unitarian Universalism, but within the bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association there is an articulation of principles and sources that help define who and what is UU. This image, which depicts revised language and concepts for this section of the bylaws, is the result of a multiyear study and feedback process. This change to the bylaws will be voted on at General Assembly in June 2023 and, if it passes, a year of study will commence before it comes to another vote at General Assembly 2024. If it passes both years, the principles and sources will be updated. This is the process of being part of a living tradition that expresses the 'who' and 'how' of faith as it changes over time.

Read the full report here:

https://www.uua.org/files/2023-01/a2sc_rpt_01172023.pdf.



Stewardship Committee—Member Testimonial: Jenise Swartley

Why is the Fellowship important to you?

I grew up in a close-knit church that showed me the value of having a community to celebrate all of our greatest joys with and to support us when we need it. It was also a community that tragically limited how I understood both myself and the world around me, and it often failed to extend love and acceptance when I needed it most. Being a part of this fellowship has allowed me to trust and know that spiritual communities can be shaped by the collective questions we ask and values we hold rather than prescribed, infallible truths that are not up for question. I find it to be both healing and generative to be in a spiritual community that honors everyone's truths, that stays curious about all that is unknowable, and that is committed to orienting towards justice.

Why do you choose to financially support the Fellowship?

I financially support the fellowship because it gives me so much, and I am in a financial position to give a little bit back. I trust that if I use my financial resources to support community, there will be community to support me when I need it.

2022 Giving Statements: On behalf of the CUUF Stewardship Committee, thank you all for your financial contributions in 2022. A giving statement was emailed to you on January 14. The statement is a list of your gifts for you to use as you prepare your taxes. If you do not have an email address, the statement was sent via USPS on January 16.

Please let Ruth Oppedahl know if you did not receive this information or if you have questions. You may contact her at ruth@oppedahl.com or 715-292-3872.

How to Remember CUUF in Your Will: Please consider joining others who have named CUUF as a beneficiary in their will or retirement or investment accounts. All you need is our EIN# 30-0248893 and our address: CUUF, P.O. Box 641, Ashland, WI 54806.

All inquiries are confidential. For more information contact:

Lois Albrecht 715-779-5630 bayfieldlois@gmail.com or Ruth Oppedahl 715-292-3872 ruth@oppedahl.com

CHEQUAMEGON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP MISSION STATEMENT

**We are a welcoming spiritual community that nurtures lifelong journeys of mind and spirit
in the liberal tradition.**

~ Founded, February 22, 1998 ~

The Washburn Chequamegon Bay PFLAG Board and members were shocked and dismayed that the Wisconsin Republicans blocked Governor Evers ban on “conversion therapy”. Conversion therapy is “therapy” that attempts to convert individuals that are LGBTQ+ into “straight” individuals. It is known to be extremely psychologically adverse and harmful and can lead to suicide. At the same time, these legislators are trying to criminalize gender-affirming healthcare which has been proven to be beneficial and life-saving.

Please join us for a presentation and discussion on gender-affirming healthcare on February 16 at 6:30 p.m. (rescheduled from January 16 due to snow) when we will outline what this means and help demystify all of the misinformation that is coming from uninformed people who are not healthcare professionals about this very positive and highly developed care. Join us in person at the Washburn Public Library or via Zoom at the link below.



Topic: WCB PFLAG Third Thursdays—Transgender and Intersex Healthcare

Time: February 16, 2023, 6:30 p.m. Central Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84534154589?pwd=ODBDTUw0M0J3YkdWVE10OTBKRFhIdz09>

Meeting ID: 845 3415 4589—Passcode: PFLAG

To join by phone, find your local number at <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/keDnholOp5>.



Faith In Action of Ashland County connects senior citizens with caring volunteers who provide a range of support services to help seniors continue to live independently in their own home. FIA currently needs volunteer drivers to deliver meals for the Meals on Wheels program and to take seniors to medical appointments.

For more information on volunteering as a driver or to explore other potential volunteering needs, please visit <https://www.ashlandaging.com/faithinactionashland> or call Melodie Phipps at the Ashland County Aging Unit at 715-682-4414.

The League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties has a question (or five) for you.

Did you know that...

... if you vote from home, you need to re-apply each year for an absentee ballot? However, if you have already applied as a voter who is indefinitely confined (have a difficult time getting to the polls due to age, illness, infirmity, or disability—no questions asked), a ballot will be automatically sent to you for every election. Not sure if you need to re-apply? As soon as possible, find out by going to [MyVote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov) or contact your municipal clerk.

... you can no longer return your absentee ballot to a drop box or the mail slot at City Hall? You must either mail it in (make sure you allow plenty of time for USPS), take it to your clerk's office the week before, or take it to the polls on voting day.

... there is an important primary election on February 21 for Supreme Court justice? There are four candidates in the running. Two will emerge from the primary to face each other in the spring election on April 4. You can learn about the candidates here: https://ballotpedia.org/Wisconsin_Supreme_Court_elections,_2023. In addition, at the League's website, lwwabc.org, there are news articles and a video recording of a debate sponsored by WisPolitics. And UW Law School is offering this webinar on February 17 at 2:30: "Understanding Wisconsin's Supreme Court Election." Googling the title will take you to the link.

... the state Supreme Court hears cases that could include such issues as school funding, education policy, voting rights and voting districts, labor rights, women's healthcare, economic development, and environmental policy?

... that the winner of this election, the new Supreme Court justice, will hold office for a decade?

This is an extremely high-stakes election. Please vote, and make sure your friends and neighbors do, too. If you'd like to help the local League of Women Voters in getting out the vote, or if you have any questions at all, please contact a Voter Services member: Anne Chartier achartiercoates@gmail.com, Diane Koosed koolake@gmail.com, or Linda Calhan calhans@centurytel.net.

—Submitted by Diane Koosed

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