

The Open Door Newsletter

April 2023



The Fellowship Services for April

*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.
Find us on the web at www.chequamegonuuf.org*

April 9—Speaker: CUUF Rev. Stacy Craig—Easter Service—*Easter through the Lens of Religious Naturalism*

Service Lay Reader: Jenise Swartley—Musician: Joni Chapman
In person at 10 a.m. in the Alvord Theatre and online on Zoom
—see below for Zoom link

The Christian Easter narrative follows Jesus through his last days. It is a story of resistance and civil disobedience that culminates in the death of Jesus and the birth of Christianity. The story hinges on the central tenet of resurrection. This service will explore how having connections with nature can help us understand the Easter story and the resurrection promise of universal salvation.

April 23—Guest Speaker: Janet Bewley—*Unlikely Lessons in Politics: Purple Cathedrals and Nirvana*

Service Lay Reader: Fred Clark—Musician: Joni Chapman
In person at 10 a.m. in the Alvord Theatre and online on Zoom
—see below for Zoom link



When we are open, honest, and vulnerable, our experiences uncover meaningful insights and even delight. Challenges themselves can contain the lessons we need to get through them. We can look beyond ourselves for hope and purpose, while we look within to find our truths.

Zoom Access Information for Sunday Services on April 9 and April 23

Join Zoom Meeting by Video:

<https://zoom.us/j/91687042498?pwd=TGpQWWl6bk0vM2ZHMVA4U0wrbnYwQT09>

Meeting ID: 916 8704 2498—Passcode: CUUF

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

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

CUUF 2023 Spring Service and Gatherings Schedule

April 9	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Speaker: Stacy Craig—Easter Service (see article on page 1)
April 15	UU Women’s Retreat (see article below)
April 16	UU Women’s gathering (see article below)
April 20	WCB PFLAG pizza party with new board member, Jess Hall (see page 7)
April 23	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Guest Speaker: Janet Bewley (see article on page 1)
May 7	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Annual All-Music Service (see article below)
May 10	CUUF Board Meeting
May 17	CUUF Annual Meeting
May 21	Sunday Service, 10 a.m.—Speaker Stacy Craig—Flower Service

* Also see the list of Small Groups and Programs throughout April on page 4.

Doug Lowthian to lead technology workshop

Doug Lowthian, our Technology Support Specialist, will lead a hands-on workshop on our audio/visual streaming system before and during the Easter service on April 9. See what goes where, how it works, and get hands-on experience monitoring attendees on Zoom and in-person. Come at 8:15 a.m. for setup. Please let Doug know if you’re interested at doug@chequamegonuuf.org

Attention UU Women

UU Women’s Retreat on Saturday, April 15

Registration is now open for the first annual Chequamegon UU Women’s intergenerational, post-COVID rejuvenation retreat to be held on Saturday, April 15 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Washburn Library and the Washburn Meditation Center. We’ll meet at the library first.

All who identify as female are welcome. Please register by Wednesday, April 12 by following this link: [Chequamegon UU Women's Retreat Registration - Google Forms](#)

Or, you may call Beth Lowthian at 502-693-4858. Thank you.

UU Women meets once a month and is open to anyone who identifies as a women in a way that is meaningful to them. Our group is a circle that provides a healing space to share, to be inspired, to find your voice, and to listen to others. We welcome newcomers. This month we’ll meet on Sunday, April 16 at 10 a.m. at the Washburn Library. The following month the date will be May 16.

If you have questions, please contact Jill at 715-292-9163 (text or voice).

Mark Your Calendars for the May 7 CUUF All-Music Service

Planning is underway for the annual CUUF All-Music Service on Sunday, May 7. Our guest musician will be Vincent Schueren, a 29-year-old queer musician who lives in Saxon, Wisconsin. He grew up in Tallahassee, Florida, singing in school choirs and performing in musicals. Some musical areas that get him most excited are singing, group improvising, songwriting, playing uncommon folk instruments, and teaching unsuspecting concert-goers how to play the musical spoons. He has a deep respect for spiritual communities that recognize the unique gifts each of us share. You can find him online at SpoonsForThePeople.com or on Facebook/Youtube.

Musical Spoons Workshop, May 7 at 9 a.m.—Vincent will teach a musical spoons workshop before the All-Music Service. If you’re able to attend (and you know that you want to), you’ll learn to ‘click’ along to some of the musical activities he’ll lead during the service. The workshop is open to anyone of all ages and ability levels. Spoons will be provided. The more, the merrier.

We need participation from our talented congregation to turn the Music Service into an All-Music Service. To add your talent to the service or if you need a pep talk, please contact Kristin Quinlan at krstnquinlan@gmail.com Karyn Watters at karynwatters@gmail.com Linda Calhan at calhans@centurytel.net or Megan Perrine at meganperrine54@gmail.com

From the Minister's Desk

Spring-ish Greetings to You!

I start with gratitude: thank you to all who planned, supported, and attended the Service or Ordination on Feb. 26. I am beyond grateful to have been ordained by the Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship! The Alvord Theatre was transformed into a garden of delights. Thank you for the music, for the art, and for the technology investments that made this ceremony available across the country. Thank you for the reception, a feast that met every food allergy and need—all were welcome at this table. Thank you for your presence, in body or spirit, to mark this threshold for myself and CUUF, connecting us all more profoundly to the vision of a radically inclusive, deeply caring, liberating religion across time and across space.

For this and so much more, I am forever grateful.

April and May hold many delights at CUUF—Easter rituals, the All-Music Service, an “All About Love” book group, and the Annual Meeting—just to name a few. Please read on and stay connected. As always, reach out with any questions or ideas for the fellowship at any time.

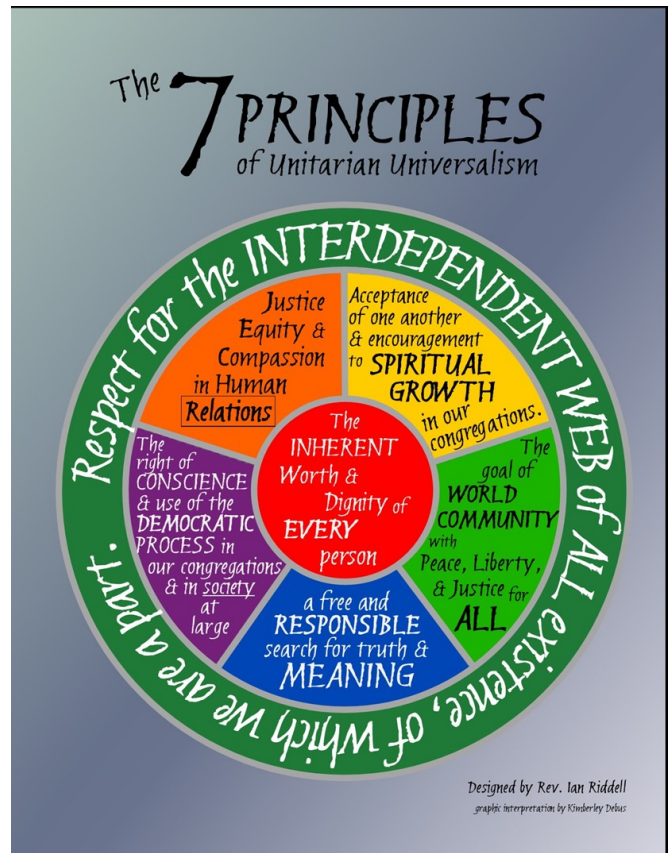
—In peace,
Stacy Craig



Greetings Chequamegon UU Fellowship—

Thank you for including us in Stacy Craig's Ordination service. You welcomed our in-person members so warmly and made it possible for all of our remote folks to watch and share in the celebration. We are delighted to join you in this revelatory act of creation as we build together a shared ministry with Stacy. We anticipate many opportunities to deepen our individual congregation's capacities and experiences through Stacy's work and shared intentions. Congratulations on a joyful, cohesive celebration. We are joined now in this relationship, family together in the love, the work, and the beauty of our beloved Lake Superior region.

—In fellowship, KUUF Board and membership



Small Groups and Programs

Soul Matters Sharing Circles

The theme for April is *resistance*. While the online group is currently full, the in-person group is currently open to new attendees. Interested in joining? Please contact Stacy Craig to register.

Virtual CUUF and KUUF circle: Monday, April 10 at 6 p.m. CST/7 p.m. EST

CUUF in-person circle: Friday, April 21 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the Wheeler Chapel (4th floor of Wheeler Hall) at Northland College.

Disability Justice Learning Group Meeting

All are welcome to join in this discussion and peer-to-peer learning group. During April, we will be looking at the word *disability*—its history and connotations and how it is being claimed by the disability justice movement.

Monday, April 17 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Zoom—<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/97277194531>

If joining on Zoom isn't accessible for you, or if you have any questions, please contact co-facilitators Jenise Swartley or Stacy Craig.

CUUF Book Group: “All About Love: New Visions” by bell hooks April 11 - May 16, Tuesdays from 4 - 5:15 p.m.

To practice the art of loving we have first to choose love—admit to ourselves that we want to know love and be loving. —bell hooks, “All About Love”

Discussion groups: We'll meet in-person at the CUUF office in Room 309 of the Vaughn Library in Ashland. The book titled “All About Love” by bell hooks (Gloria Watkins, 1952-2021) has touched many people in ways that brought new insights on what love is, what it isn't, the radical possibilities when we take the risk of love, and how we may more fully practice love in our daily lives. This book club will integrate an exploration of the centrality of ‘love’ in Article II of the Living Tradition of Unitarian Universalism. All are welcome. Contact Stacy Craig at stacymariemcraig@gmail.com or 715-413-1593 with questions or for more information.

Book Group Discussion Schedule

Tuesday, April 11—Session I, reading due: preface, introduction, chapter 1

Discussion questions: While love is a universal theme and practice, it also is a word that is hard to define. How do you define love? How does that definition change when referring to different forms of love? Do you have to like someone to love them?

Tuesday, April 18—Session II, reading due: chapters 2-6

Discussion questions: Do you believe relationships from one's past can affect the ability to experience love as an adult? Are you comfortable sharing an example from your own life? What are the intersections between love and social justice?

Tuesday, April 25—No book group

Tuesday, May 2—Session III, reading due: chapters 7-9

Discussion questions: The book discusses several barriers that society has created that prevent people from experience love. Have any of these examples (media, capitalism, greed, sexism, materialism, nuclear family) effected your life and ability to practice love? What does conditioned versus unconditioned love look like?

Tuesday, May 9—Session IV, reading due: chapters 10-13

Discussion questions: Throughout the book, bell hooks discusses different types of love—spiritual love, romantic love, self-love, communal love. How does each type of love serve the community? After reading this book and from your life experiences, how would you define love as the center of Unitarian Universalism?

Tuesday, May 16—Session V, closing session, Reading due: [Article 2 Study Commission of the UUA](#)

Discussion questions: In what ways does ‘love’ at the heart of governance change or affect how we ‘get things done’ as an organization? In what specific ways are we asked to transform lives, communities, and the world in these times.

Board Report

Newsletter Editor: Adam Haecker, our Fellowship Assistant and administrator, has accepted the newsletter editorship since Kim Suske is resigning at the end of this spring season. Once again, Kim, thank you for your outstanding work.

Annual Meeting: Our annual meeting is set for Wednesday, May 17, 2023. Members and interested friends are encouraged to attend. Members will vote for new board members, as well as vote on a July 2023 - June 2024 draft budget. An annual meeting report from Rev. Stacy Craig and committee chairs of the activities and accomplishments this past year will be distributed. There also will be time for visioning and fellowship.

Nominating Committee: Angela Stroud, board member, is working with others to nominate candidates for the board. If you're interested in visioning and planning an inspiring future for our fellowship community, please text Angela at 715-413-0003.

2023-24 Budget Planning: Our treasurer, Ed Calhan, and the board are beginning to draft a budget for the coming service year with input from the Stewardship Committee pledge drive and committee activity planning.

Hiring: The RE Advisory Committee and the board will be searching within our fellowship congregation for the next Director of Religious Education to start this summer. Please contact Rev. Stacy for details.

Ad hoc communication review committee: We have plans to establish an ad hoc committee to evaluate how the fellowship is communicating with our congregation members and friends, as well as the general public. This committee will then make recommendations. The question is, as always, what can we do better and how?

Our next board meeting is Wednesday, April 19 at 6 p.m. at the CUUF office and online on Zoom.

—Respectfully submitted by Karen Crowell, board president

Religious Education News

I have almost a month under my belt as the Interim Director of Religious Education (DRE). I have been busy learning the role, working with volunteer teachers, teaching the Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum, and getting volunteers caught up on background checks. We are looking forward to our upcoming RE fun, including participating in the Easter egg hunt, learning the song for the All Music Service, and ending the service year on a high note! Looking ahead, we're starting to plan the OWL curriculum for 4th - 6th graders in the fall, recruiting teachers, getting teachers trained, and contacting parents about their interest in this offering. Please reach out to me if you have any ideas or questions about the OWL curriculum this fall or other RE activities. I look forward to connecting with the fellowship in this new capacity, so please find me and say 'hello'.

—Happy spring, Ashley Smith

CUUF seeks communication review committee

CUUF is seeking a small group of volunteers to inventory and advise on our communications. Are we reaching out in the most effective ways so folks can find us? Are we communicating within our fellowship in ways that make you feel informed? This can be a fun way to get involved in CUUF and to help craft our strategies to reach many different audiences. If this sounds like something that you'd like to be involved in, please contact Ruth at 715-292-3872 or ruth@oppedahl.com

Stewardship Committee Report

A Mission-Based Budget

Our mission is reflected in the budget. Meaningful activities and programs need human resources and financial support. I see three elements of our fellowship that have substantially grown through the pandemic and into our new life as we meet in-person again. I hope that you will consider these areas of growth when you make your pledge.

First, it's possible that our fellowship has one of the most vibrant Religious Education programs for children and youth in the area. We know that this is important to parents and valued by all of us. The curriculum ranges according to age and includes Building Bridges—a world religions course for 7-9th graders and Our Whole Lives (OWL)—a sexuality education curriculum for kindergarten through 1st grade students. OWL is an eight-session workshop that helps children ages 5 through 7 begin the lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes and values about identity, relationships, safety and health. Reverend Stacy included the youth as a large part of her ordination service and we know this element of our mission will continue to strengthen and grow. These programs require coordination by a Director of Religious Education. We'd like to hire a permanent director in the coming year.

Second, many people have taken advantage of the adult education groups: Soul Matters Sharing Circles, UU Women, and the Disability Justice Learning Group. Other services for adults continue and will grow as our numbers grow. Pastoral care for individuals and caring cards, calls, and meals are a hallmark of our mission. Thank you to volunteers who keep these opportunities open and to Stacy for her excitement and time commitment to these new programs.

Third, we learned during the pandemic that providing remote access to our services is important to members who live far away, are traveling, or need to avoid large indoor gatherings. Adding Doug Lowthian for technical support has extended our reach online and in recorded services. Doug has developed A/V systems using our equipment and Northland College's equipment to broadcast our services in real time. He also has consulted on software purchases and installation. A focus on our technical realm is critical in staying in touch with our community. We'd like the budget to support his time and plans for purchasing equipment to provide smooth online access.



Thanks for considering these areas of growth as you plan your pledge for the next budget year 2023-2024.

Toward that end, we are asking you to make a pledge (not a gift) by April 15, if possible, that will inform our 2023-2024 budget planning. You can pledge online at <https://cuuf.breezechms.com/form/ae600565> or complete a yellow pledge card at our welcome table or included in the recent mailing. Written pledges can be mailed to: CUUF, P.O. Box 641, Ashland, WI 54806.

—With much appreciation, Ruth Oppedahl and the rest of the Stewardship Committee: Lois Albrecht, George Bussey and Ed Calhan.

Questions? Contact Ruth Oppedahl 715-292-3872

Lois Albrecht — *Edward W. Calhan* — *Ruth Oppedahl* — *George Bussey*

How to Remember CUUF in Your Will: Please consider joining others who have named CUUF as a beneficiary in their will, 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

Please join us on April 20 for a Pizza Party with PFLAG!

Washburn Chequamegon Bay PFLAG is celebrating our 14-year anniversary! We will have pizza, cake and beverages at the Washburn Public Library starting at 6 p.m. This is an alcohol-free, and kid- and family-friendly event. We also will be introducing our newest board member, Jess Hall.



Jess (they/them) has lived in Ashland for 19 years. Jess is a Northland College alumnus, and is openly queer, nonbinary, and enjoys the winter months curled up with their spouse and their cats. This spring and summer, you'll find Jess tending their gardens and enjoying outdoor adventures. Jess also serves as Chief of Police for the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Welcome Jess!

Please join us on Thursday, April 20 for fun, fellowship and an opportunity to meet our board and members as an ally or as an LGBTQ+ individual. Washburn Chequamegon Bay PFLAG is here for you!

—Submitted by Kate Stolp

Caring Committee Corner

Spring is just around the corner...really! The Caring Committee is there for you or someone you might know in the fellowship who is experiencing a life-changing event, whether joyful or full of sorrow. If you have a need, please contact Rev. Stacy Craig at stacy@chequamegonuuf.org

Regional Caregiver Conference: Technically Speaking and Financially Speaking

The Ashland and Bayfield County Dementia & Caregiver Network is hosting this annual conference on Wednesday, April 19, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. online on Zoom or in-person at Northwood Technical College in Ashland. The address is: 2100 Beaser Avenue. This is an excellent opportunity for caregivers on any level to get educated and receive support for the care that they provide to those in need. For more information, please visit the event page at bit.ly/ashlandcaregiver_2023

Right to Die Information and Discussion

Sunday, April 30 at 10 a.m. in the basement of the Washburn Library

—Submitted by Jill Lorenz

I had a hard time deciding how to describe this topic. Right to die? We're all going to die, so we don't need the right to do so. Death with dignity? What does that mean? Still, these are the popular names used for a movement that focuses on a person's right to choose to die peacefully at the time of their choice.

Around 2005, I became a member of Final Exit Network (FEN), which I learned about from an ad in "UU World" magazine. FEN's mission is 'To educate qualified individuals in practical, peaceful ways to end their lives, offer a compassionate bedside presence, and defend their right to choose.'

Last spring, I trained as a volunteer with FEN's Exit Guide Program. Through the program, volunteers provide information and support to those people who are considering ending their lives.

I'll be hosting an informal forum on Sunday, April 30 at 10 a.m. in the basement of the Washburn Library. I'll talk a little about FEN and the Exit Guide Program. There will be time for questions, stories and discussion.

**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 ~

Chequamegon Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship
P.O. Box 641
Ashland, WI 54806

**CUUF
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