

The Open Door Newsletter

May 2024



The fellowship services on May 5 and May 19

Sunday, May 5—*Indra's Net: Reflections on Interdependence and New Member Ceremony*

Speaker: Rev. Stacy Craig

Service Lay Leader: Beth Gehred **Musician:** Joni Chapman

In-person at Northland College and live-stream on Zoom at 10 a.m.

"There is an endless net of threads throughout the universe...

At every crossing of the threads there is an individual.

And every individual is a crystal bead.

And every crystal bead reflects

Not only the light from every other crystal in the net

But also every other reflection

Throughout the entire universe."

—Words from Anne Adams, Indra's Net of Jewels

Indra's net is a Buddhist symbol of mutuality, a guiding concept on living interdependently. Take a moment and think about what you've used today. Who are you in community with? As we celebrate all who have joined CUUF over the past year, let us take time to wonder about our independence and interdependence.

Sunday, May 19—*Annual Flower Communion and Child Dedication Ceremony*

Guest Speaker: Gayle Chatfield

Service Lay Leader: Ruth Oppedahl **Musicians:** CUUF Choir

In-person at Northland College and live-stream on Zoom at 10 a.m.

Title for Gayle's talk: "Meaning and Connections from Flowers". Flowers are the most common decorative design used in every human culture. Through the ages, assigned meanings of flowers carried messages to the viewer. Today we use their beauty to give meaning to annual holidays and events like our Flower Service. Gayle will explore a bit of history, names and traditions that connect us from our garden to history and our world.

(Please see page 3 for Gayle's bio.)

Zoom access information for the Sunday services on May 5 and May 19

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/91687042498?pwd=TGpQWW16bk0vM2ZHMVA4U0wrbnYwQT09>

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.

A message from the Hospitality Committee

The CUUF Annual Meeting will follow the May 5 service. If you are planning on attending the annual meeting, please sign up to bring something to contribute to a sandwich bar luncheon. This luncheon is meant to feed the people who will be staying for the meeting, as it will go through the lunch hour. A sign-up sheet was available at the April 28 service. If you didn't have a chance to sign up at the service, please contact June Bavlina at 715-209-1622.

New members to be recognized at Sunday service on May 5

Belonging is a journey. For some it is casual, for others it is a lifelong commitment. Membership with the Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (CUUF) is not required for belonging, but it can be an inspiring step to move over a personal and communal threshold towards connection and reciprocal relationship. To that end, there will be a celebration and recognition for new members of the fellowship during the service on Sunday, May 5.

Anniversary of Flower Communion and children to be recognized at service on May 19

2024 is the 51st anniversary of the Flower Communion, which began in 1923 by Unitarian minister Norbert Capek of Prague, Czechoslovakia. We have adapted this ritual as our own. Please bring a vase and flower (or several) to the service as we celebrate beauty, uniqueness, and community. You will leave with a different flower than you brought. We will also introduce and honor the children that have come into our fellowship with a Child Dedication Ceremony. If you would like to have your child dedicated, please contact Director of Religious Education, Andrea Ward, by May 10th. (Please see a complete article on page 5 for more information.)

Small Group Gatherings in May

Soul Matters Adult Discussion Groups

The Soul Matters theme for May is "The Gift of Pluralism". The Unitarian Universalist language for interdependence as a spiritual value is: We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology. We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.

CUUF In-Person Group: Tuesday, May 7 at the Washburn Library, basement room, 4 - 5:30 p.m. CST

CUUF and KUUF Online Group: Monday, May 13 on Zoom, 7 p.m. EST/6 p.m. CST

These groups are currently full. Please contact Minister Stacy Craig at minister@chequamegonuuf.org for more information or to join a waitlist.

Reconnection Group

Reconnection will meet on May 8 and May 22.

From the Minister's Desk

Holding On and Letting Go

The season we are in is called the *via creativa* in universal or creation spirituality. Buds push through and open, soil heaves as it freezes and thaws, and rivers crest their banks. Here in the Northwoods, several times we've gone from red flag fire danger to everything is squishy wet in the same day. Some call this resurrection energy as new life emerges from the leaves and flowers that died and composted after summer's vibrant abundance. The *via creativa* is spring flowers and green grass, baby bunnies and bird songs, but to get there, the world goes through pains of mud season. It's a powerful notion that the world is created again and again, and we are invited to participate in that creative process.

During this season, I often walk with the questions of holding on and letting go. What do I need to hold onto that serves to guide and nourish the way, and what am I holding onto that is weighing me down. Northland College has been through six weeks of limbo debating if they will close or transform. I see the exhaustion of this time on the faces of employees and students as they respond to the urgency of creative demands: reaching out for resources, assessing what they can carry into the future, wondering what that means in terms of letting go. This small college is nested within a much larger system of education, which is also going through transformative shifts.

The *via creativa* reminds us anytime things fall apart or we must begin again, we have to go through the pain of change. We can't get over it, around it, or avoid it. Creativity is art but it is also therapy. It is new beginnings that come from loss. So how do we know when to hold on or when to let go? One of the greatest hindrances to creativity is fear. When we release fear, something new can emerge. While control can serve us in many situations, often the creative process requires that we relinquish control and create, which is inherently difficult, messy, and novel. In creation spirituality, we know we are in tune with the *via creativa* when we create in the ways of divine creation: with beauty and for compassion's sake, with joy and for love's sake.

In the spirit of the season, may you juggle holding on and letting go while grounded and centered in your values, may what is created bring more balance in the chaos of life, and may you find the support and care from your community that you need to keep from burning out (as Kelsey taught us in April).

Peace be your journey.
Rev. Stacy Craig

Guest speaker Gayle Chatfield's bio for service on May 19

Gayle Chatfield moved to the Bayfield area full time in 2010 to live where she could see the stars at night and live more closely with nature's rhythms. Creating has been at the core of her life as a small business person in garden design, property management and architectural design and renovation. She had a lodging business in Bayfield and is a Master Gardener and former garden columnist. She creates 3-D art assemblage of various materials including birch bark. Photography of her garden on social media is also where she shares the joys of learning about plants.



Caring Corner

Spring is here and the Caring Committee on behalf of the fellowship sends heartfelt well wishes to:

The Northland community, which extends into the surrounding area, and their continuing efforts to support in any way they can the continuation of the college.

The committee would also like to extend congratulations to **all the kids who participated in the very wonderful Peter/Wendy production** of the Chequamegon Theater Association.

Congratulations to **all our high school, college and other degree program graduates.**

The Ashland School Track and Field team is featuring **Oleana Jurewicz** in the pole vault.

Congratulations on her continuing success.

We welcome the return of **Melodie Phipps, Deb Aarons and all others** who experienced this winter's illnesses and injuries.

We are so glad you are back.

If you have a need, are experiencing a life-changing event of sorrow or joy or know someone who is, please contact Rev. Stacy. Her number is 715-765-4214 and her email address is minister@chequamegonuuf.org She and the Caring Committee members can connect you to resources and organizations that provide support services.

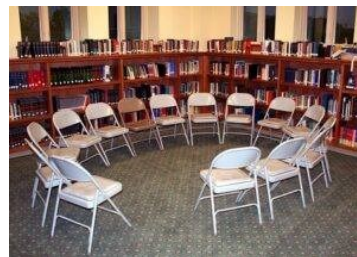
—Lindy Howe, Caring Committee

Science group to meet at the Sandbar

The science group will meet on Sunday, May 12 at 10 a.m. at The Sandbar in Ashland. To date, the group has talked about fusion energy, entanglement (something Einstein called “spooky action at a distance”), Schrodinger’s cat, and gravitational time dilation and speed time dilation. The group hopes to tour the Ashland power plant for one of its meetings. All are welcome. For more information, please contact Mike Bunch at 715-209-5383.

UU Women

UU Women is a group that meets once a month for conversation and support. Our next meeting is Sunday May 12 at 10 a.m. in the basement of the Washburn Public Library. Use the side entrance. We welcome anyone who identifies as a woman in a way that is meaningful to them. Come check us out! More info: Jill @ 715-292-9163.



Second annual UU Women’s Retreat turns out to be another treat

The second UU Women’s Re-treat was well named since the first, held last year, was a treat. The day was simply structured, held at the Washburn Library and Washburn Meditation Center, with highlights being everything from start to finish. Sixteen women brought out what was funny, wise, honest and beautiful in one another.

Conny Bell’s talk about her solo kayak trip around Lake Superior was beautifully photographed, light but strong, like her kayak and her fortitude. Stacy’s chalice-lighting assured that there was not only emotional safety in the room right from the jump, but an open-heartedness. Sandy Brue led us with her customary grace through sessions based on the arts and tools of pranayama and yoga.

Many, but not all, welcomed the idea of an overnight retreat, so that is worth exploring further.

Perhaps a fall overnighter might be conjured to pair with our spring day-long. Might help those who never are able to make the April time work. An idea brewing at this stage.

Party on! It’s spring! Via Creativa! Let us remember to rely on the shelter of each other!

—Beth Gehred

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Child Dedication—Sunday 5/19

Would you like your child to be dedicated in CUUF? Child dedication is open to any age and to anyone who attends CUUF (membership is not required). We will hold our child dedication ceremony during our May 19 service. The child dedication ceremony involves:

- Introducing and welcoming the child to the fellowship by sharing the inspiration for their name(s)
- Asking the fellowship to pledge their support to ‘be the village’ for the tender life among us
- Providing a Four Directions blessing to the children

If parents or guardians prefer, the ceremony can also include the naming of godparents, spiritual companion, or spiritual mentor in their child’s life. **If you would like your child(ren) to participate in the child dedication ceremony, please indicate your interest by emailing Andrea Ward (andrea@chequamegonuuf.org) by Friday, May 10.** Andrea will follow up with interested parents immediately to gather background on your child’s name and any additional details by Wednesday, May 15, in order to prepare materials for the ceremony.

Follow-up on April 14 RE Parent Meeting/Conversation

Thank you to all the parents who attended the meeting and discussion following the 4/14 service! We counted more than 20 parents in attendance, and several others who would have liked to be there. It was deeply affirming for many of us to listen and share about our experiences, hopes, and ideas for the future of our children (and for ourselves as parents!) within CUUF. The RE committee will process the wealth of feedback and ideas that were shared and keep it top of mind as we plan for the upcoming year(s). [Here is the presentation](#) we shared summarizing the survey results and providing general program updates to open the meeting, for those who could not attend.

—Andrea Ward, Director of Religious Education

Building Bridges

This comparative world religions course meets in the basement of the Washburn Library from 6:15 - 7:45 p.m. Our final meeting date for the 2023-24 service year is Tuesday, May 7.

A change of chair for the Worship Committee

At the CUUF Easter service on March 31, Jenise Swartley, who is the outgoing chair of the Worship Committee accepted a basket of Easter lilies from Jan Perkins, who also serves on the committee. Jenise served as chair during the 2023-24 service year up until April, at which time Tracey Snyder took on the role. Jenise is relocating to the Minneapolis area. We all will greatly miss Jenise for her time, dedication and generosity while she was part of the CUUF community.



Jenise



Tracey

A note from the board on this year's annual meeting scheduled for Sunday, May 5

The fellowship's annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 5, and will be held in-person directly following the worship service. The meeting is an opportunity to review the achievements and concerns of this year, elect new board members, set achievable priorities for next year, and approve the 2024-2025 budget.

Achievements during the 2023-2024 service year offer much to celebrate! The continued growth of the Religious Education (RE) program is so evident each time we sing the children to their classes. The UU Women's group held its second annual retreat. The Soul Matters group continually experiences full enrollment. And there are many more rewarding and vibrant activities offered to, and by, the congregation. However, as I write this article, the future of Northland College is unknown. 20% of our fellowship members are directly linked to that future, both financially and professionally. Many of our RE participants are from families with one or more parents employed by the college.

The fellowship needs all of us to participate in the democratic process of governance. Our bylaws require 20% of the membership to be present for a quorum. In previous annual meetings, we have just barely that. Members will receive a packet of committee reports, board nominations, and the draft 2024-2025 budget. Everyone is encouraged to take the time to read the documents, leave comments, ask questions, and make suggestions. Feedback is welcome on our Facebook page, at [annualmeeting2024@chequamegonuuf.org](https://www.facebook.com/annualmeeting2024@chequamegonuuf.org) or email me directly: beth@chequamegonuuf.org

—In gratitude

Beth Lowthian, CUUF president

For the annual meeting:

Please follow this link to view the agenda: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XNgw1VBn3aE_xLqEsvazNoBVeMjFuoE/view?usp=sharing

Please follow this link to view the committee reports:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dM_KBvCYIGAE4SoH0yzsUzYtMo1VY00e?usp=sharing

Mark your calendars! Summer worship and annual picnic schedule

Sunday, June 9, 10 a.m. at Bayview Beach (north of Washburn)
"Opening to Pure Consciousness" through Zhineng Qigong. Multigenerational Service with Tracey Snyder. *Stay for beach fellowship after the service if it is a nice day!*

Sunday, July 14, 10 a.m. at Memorial Park in Washburn
Children's Chapel Service and Annual Brunch Picnic at 11 a.m.
All are welcome to attend Children's Chapel, a unique adaptation of a service with each section designed for all ages OR join us at 11 a.m. for the annual potluck picnic. Bring a dish to pass, your own dinnerware, and enjoy conversation and fellowship.



Memorial Park in Washburn

Sunday, Aug. 11, 10 a.m. at Memorial Park in Washburn
All-Poetry Service with concurrent Children's Chapel
If there is interest, we would like to bring back the fellowship camp-out on Saturday night before the service.

Spotlight: Stewardship Committee

Pledge Update: Thank You Everyone!

Our fellowship has received 38 pledges in advance of the July 1 budget year. The total pledged so far is about \$47,000. If you are holding off on making a pledge, we totally understand with the uncertainty around Northland College for next year. One thing *is* for certain, CUUF will be there for you and your loved ones regardless. We appreciate so much the gifts of time and talents as well that make this fellowship special—like the beautiful shadow puppet play Megan Perrine and others organized with the youth on Easter Sunday.

This year has exceeded all expectations with incredible growth of our Religious Education (RE) program and vibrant small groups. With a wonderful donation effort through Faithify (a Unitarian Universalist Association online fundraising platform) we can ensure the future of our RE Director position for the next year. In addition, CUUF was a grateful recipient of a \$10,000 Chalice Lighter grant from the Unitarian Universalist MidAmerica Region to build our capacity now and for the future.

Our experience has been that when we receive large gifts like this, we step up our game. We are challenged to maintain that level of support beyond the gift. It is an organic way to grow and build confidence as a stable institution in our community. Did you know it costs about \$7,000/month for our operations?

Your gifts of treasure, time, and talent make this happen! Thank you.

We are still accepting pledges in the mail or online here: <https://cuuf.breezechms.com/form/ae60056577>

—In grateful appreciation, your Stewardship Committee

Lois Albrecht Edward W Calhan Ruth Oppedahl George Bussey



CUUF Chalice Circle

We are pleased to introduce you to our Chalice Circle; a growing list of individuals who have included CUUF in their estate plans.

**Karen Ruedi Crowell
Jill Lorenz
Edward Calhan
Linda Borglum Calhan
Lois Albrecht
Mary Rehwald
Ruth Oppedahl**

For information on how you can make a future gift to benefit CUUF, go to <https://www.chequamegonuuf.org/donate-2/> The webpage includes a “how to” handout you can share with your advisor. There is also an online form to notify us that you have added CUUF to your estate plans, so we can recognize you (or you can choose to be anonymous). If you prefer to receive this information by mail, contact Lois Albrecht at bayfieldlois@gmail.com or Ruth Oppedahl at ruth@oppedahl.com These gifts can be life-changing for our fellowship!

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

**CUUF
CONTACT
INFORMATION**

PO Box 641, Ashland, WI 54806
Fellowship Website: www.chequamegonuuf.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Chequamegonuuf
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/chequuf>



**Fellowship Assistant/Newsletter Editor/
Minister/Director of Religious Education/
Coordinator of Our Whole Lives**

Adam Haecker
Fellowship Assistant
cuufad@gmail.com
and
Newsletter Editor
uunews@chequamegonuuf.org
651-303-6931 (cell)

Andrea Ward
Director of Religious Education
andrea@chequamegonuuf.org
608-438-6156

Ashley Smith
Coordinator of Our Whole Lives
smitha-02@hotmail.com
715-209-8200

Stacy Craig, Reverend
stacymariecraig@gmail.com
minister@chequamegonuuf.org
715-765-4214 (home)
715-413-1593 (cell)