

# the Beacon

Sunday Services at 10:30 AM

[www.uucgt.org](http://www.uucgt.org)

Email: [office@uucgt.org](mailto:office@uucgt.org)

December 2019

## December Services

Theme "Season of Light, Season of Dark"



### Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse

6726 Center Road  
Traverse City, MI 49686-1802

**UUCGT Office Hours**  
Monday - Thursday  
9:00am-3:00pm  
231.947.3117

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Rev. Cathy Harrington  
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### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2019 - 2020

Mike McDonald	President
Tom Darnton	Vice President
Barb Termaat	Secretary
Karl Keinath	Treasurer
Mary Anne Rivers	Trustee
Pat Light	Trustee
Judy Myers	Trustee

12.1	Rev. Cathy Harrington	The Gift	Major wisdom traditions exalt giving, and the Bible says it is more blessed to give than to receive. Our service will counter this by proving that giving and receiving are equally blessed.
12.8	Renee Russell UUCGT Music Director	Annual All Music Service	This All Music Service will include individual pieces performed by members of our congregation and others as well as choral music performed by the Vocal Ensemble.
12.15	Rev. Cathy Harrington	Grace Notes	Like those little musical grace notes whose only purpose is to freshen a phrase, the small grace notes of life can remind us of life's sacredness and the power of love.
12.22	Rev. Cathy Harrington Betsy Hammerberg	No-Rehearse Christmas Pageant	A multi-generational service! Sophia Lyon Fahs wrote, "Each night a child is born is a holy night." We will bring the Christmas story to life in a way that speaks to everyone.
12.21	Misty Sheehan	Winter Solstice	As the darkness of winter gathers and the light of spring ensues, we gather to celebrate this season of change.
12.24	Rev. Cathy Harrington Mary Van Valin	Candlelight Service	A calm introspective, interfaith, candlelight celebration will be held at 7:00 pm with a reception following.
12.29	Mary Van Valin	A Whole New Era	As we enter a new year, a new decade, and a new era of geologic time, we might want to look at how our individual lives have impact, and collectively, how we humans have some major work to do for a livable future!

January Services Theme: "Integrity—New Beginnings"

1.5.20	Rev. Cathy Harrington Karen Casebeer	Into A New Year	A New Year's ritual based on Joanna Macy's Four Point Spiral: Point One is grounding ourselves in gratitude; Point Two is honoring our pain; Point Three is Seeing in New Ways; and Point Four is Going Forth.
1.12.20	Rev. Cathy Harrington Hal Gurian	Walking Together	Unitarian Universalists do not adhere to doctrine or creed, so what holds us together? Multigenerational Cardboard Challenge will follow the service
1.19.20	Pam Hendrick, Mary Van Valin	TBD	Martin Luther King Day Celebration
1.26.20	Rev. Cathy Harrington Misty Sheehan	The Three Questions	A sermon about Mission & Vision. Who were we? Who are we? Who do we want to become?

Board Meeting  
Wednesday, Dec 18  
7:00 PM

Open to all unless indicated



Candlelight Service  
is on  
Christmas Eve!  
Details inside

Amanda Mangiardi, editor  
Please send submissions to  
[beacon@uucgt.org](mailto:beacon@uucgt.org)  
by the 25th of the month

## Reflection from Rev. Cathy



Whether we are celebrating Solstice, Hanukkah or Christmas, December is a season of hope. Advent is a time of expectation, of waiting for something to happen that will change the grim and gloomy status quo, a light of hope for a time when joy replaces despair, when peace reigns over war, forgiveness replaces hurt and anger, when all people begin again in love. We are waiting for the coming of love.

The holiday season can be overwhelmingly stressful with preparations and parties that we can forget to do the real work of advent, waiting. As my mentor Davidson Loehr used to say, "Holidays are easy, but preparing for the possibility of a holy day is an achievement."

Waiting is not passive. Henri Nouwen wrote, "Active waiting means to be present fully to the moment in the conviction that something is happening where you are and that you want to be present to it. A waiting person is someone who is present to the moment, who believes that this moment is the moment." (from *Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas*).

Another way to say it is, "To wait in hope is to have what we hope for already come true in us through our hoping." (NPR, Advent, a Season for Hope from Darkness).

Every year during this season of hope, we are given a choice to fall into the distraction trap of busyness, or to use this season of darkness and hope to go deep within, to listen and wait. Ask yourself, what are your deepest yearnings for yourself . . . for those around you . . . for your community . . . for the world? Listen . . . for something holy wants to be born within us and among us.

Take some time this holiday season to tend to your inner life with a joyful attitude of hope and expectation. Old Testament scholar, Walter Brueggemann explains it this way: "Advent is an abrupt disruption in our 'ordinary time'... utterly new year, new time, new life." Everything begins again.

In faith and love,  
Cathy

**"Whether we are celebrating Solstice, Hanukkah or Christmas, December is a season of hope"**





*Join us!!*

*Sunday, December 8 ~ 10:30 AM*

*UUCGT's Annual All Music Service*

*Individual pieces, Ensembles, Choral music  
performed by UUCGT Members & Friends*

*Each night  
a child  
is born  
is a  
Holy night*

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*Please join us  
for  
A Candlelight interfaith service  
UUCGT  
6726 Center Road  
Traverse City  
7:00-8:00PM*

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*Tuesday, December 24, 2019  
7:00-8:00 PM  
Reception following the service*

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**All proceeds benefit Justice for our Neighbors**

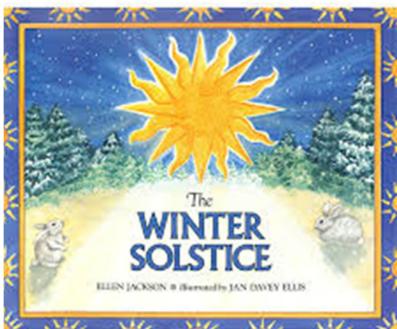
 Unitarian  
Universalist  
Congregation of  
Grand Traverse

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6726 Center Road, Traverse City, MI 49686-1802 (231) 947-3117

# Our Bulletin Board

## A Winter Solstice Service



As the dark nights of December turn to the coming light of spring, let us celebrate both the darkness and the light.

**Saturday, December 21 - 5:00 - 6:30 PM**

- Nursery care for the littlest ones
- Vegetarian potluck meal - lasagna & chili provided
- Cookies
- Please bring a dish to pass and table service



**Safe Harbor Thank You!** UUCGT has once again completed a successful week of volunteering at Safe Harbor. We would like to thank all of our volunteers for helping provide shelter, meals, hospitality, and, most importantly, love, to an average of nearly sixty guests a night. Fifty-six individuals from UUCGT volunteered the week of November 16 through 23, along with nearly 40 volunteers from our partners, Congregation Beth Shalom, the Grand Traverse Humanists and the Grand Traverse Area Pagans.

We hope to see everyone volunteering again in February 2020 during our second week for the season.



## In our thoughts during this holiday season

These members would enjoy calls, cards, or visits

- Shari Cope— at Cordia
- Ann Dressel — at Cordia
- Gary Deavel — at Cordia
- Nancy Landfair — at The Pavilions
- Barb McClellan — at Glen Eagle. We were so happy she could attend our Thanksgiving dinner at Twin Lakes!
- Karen Culp — lives at home with her husband Ron
- Bob Doughty — recovering from a fall, is now at home with wife Nancy. It was great to see him at our Thanksgiving Dinner!
- Mark Gustafson — is doing well after another trip to the cardiologist. It was good to see him at Sunday services!
- Joanie Jackson — is doing better, but is still having problems with her vision. We were glad that she and Mike could be with us at our Thanksgiving dinner!

## Events Happening



### Memorial Jazz Concert & Reception Celebrating the Life of **Treva Jaffe**

**Sunday, December 1 at 3:00 pm**

A Memorial Jazz Concert in honor of Kim Gribi's mother, TREVA JAFFE, who passed away on November 8, will be held at UUCGT on Sunday, December 1, 2019, at 3:00 p.m. Treva performed many times at UUCGT and was a regular entertainer at the Senior Center for the past several years.

"Music in My Mother's House" will be performed by Gary Deavel and Shelley Burnes. The Jeff Haas Trio, including Laurie Sears on sax and flute and Jack Dryden on bass, as well as pianists Tom Kaufmann and David Chown will all perform.

A wine and cheese reception will follow the concert.

Treva's wish was to have a "Jazz Concert for All" and this event is open to the public. So come and enjoy a tribute to a local jazz matriarch. This will truly be a celebration of her life!

### Benzie UU - December Schedule

Please join us on the first and third Wednesday evening of each month

Grow Benzie Building  
5885 Frankfort Highway, Benzonia

Potluck at 6:30pm, and service at 7:30pm. For more information, email Catherine Green, [seecgreen@gmail.com](mailto:seecgreen@gmail.com), or call or text 231-499-7276.

#### **Wednesday, December 4**

Josh Stoltz and Annie Browning of Grow Benzie, will discuss their vision for building community through Grow Benzie. Josh will also discuss his world travels, where he observed local communities.

#### **Wednesday, December 18**

Barb Skurdall will treat us to her annual Solstice Program.

Please visit us, and send anyone you know in or around Benzie, who might want some nice food and/or our great, good company!

# Our Bulletin Board

## UUCGT Program Council

- Program Council met November 10, 2019 at 12:30 pm for a potluck lunch prior to starting discussions at 1:00 pm. Fourteen members attended.
- Minutes of the previous meeting of October 13 were approved as corrected. Final plans for the Thanksgiving Feast at Twin Lakes Gilbert Lodge were discussed.
- Social Justice will be planning a variety of informative programs following Sunday services in 2020.
- The blackboard outside the kitchen will be thoroughly cleaned and possibly repainted.
- Mike McDonald reviewed some of the outcomes from the Board Retreat where a variety of plans were made for focus on needed congregational covenants and operations over the next 2 years as we work with Reverend Cathy toward the goal of obtaining a new settled minister in 2021. Policy and functional needs of the Program Council also need to be further defined.
- Individual committees reported a variety of activities over the last month - some of which are mentioned in other locations of the Beacon.
- Program Council will not meet in December. Our next meeting will be Sunday, January 12, 2020 @ 9:00 AM in the social hall.
- If you are interested in learning more about the inner workings of UUCGT, please join us!

### R.E. Classes Sponsor Cardboard Box Day!



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES

Recently I attended a webinar for new UU Faith Formation professionals, and I asked the facilitator what the main goal of RE was. She replied, "The primary goal of RE is for children and adults in the congregation to share in each other's joy."

We are planning a number of events, services, and activities to bring all congregants - children and adults - together.

In the spirit of shared joy, everyone is invited to an All Ages Cardboard Play Day on January 12! Everyone is invited to the social hall from 12:00 - 2:00 pm to enjoy an afternoon of creativity, building, problem solving, and FUN! Cardboard box collection will begin in the RE room on Sunday, December 29, so please save those holiday shipping and gift boxes! I'm looking forward to a wonderful afternoon and I hope many of you will join us!



Did you always want to play a donkey in a nativity play, but never had the chance? Well, now's your moment! On December 22 the Sunday service will be a Multi-Generational No-Rehearse Christmas Pageant, a UU take on the traditional nativity pageant. You will have the opportunity, if you desire, to join the children onstage in any number of roles. Start practicing your "hee-haw"s!

Finally, I am excited to announce that we have hired two new RE teachers. Claire Crandell and Alison Ernst will be teaching our Sunday RE classes, helping develop and facilitate special events, and assisting with program development. They both have a wealth of experience working with children, youth, and adults in various educational capacities and we are very lucky to have them. Biographies and photos of Alison and Claire will soon be found in a Flash newsletter, on Facebook, and the UUCGT website.

I wish you a wonderful December Holiday Season and I look forward to seeing many of you at the Winter Solstice, No-Rehearse Pageant, and Christmas Eve services.

Betsy Hammerberg  
Director of Religious Education  
[dre@uucgt.org](mailto:dre@uucgt.org)

# Our Bulletin Board



## Giving of Our Time to Help School Children

The Social Justice Action committee is asking for volunteers to help in an elementary school. Blair Elementary is one of the neediest schools in the area, but is blessed with a remarkable caring principal and dedicated loving teachers. The kids blossom through the years with the support and care of the teachers. I have volunteered there now for about 8 years. Please join me.

I have asked the teachers to list their needs - read to a student, have the student read to you, help with math, help older kids write a sensible paragraph, learn percentages, etc. There is also a need to put away the books in the library. Volunteering is a commitment. That would mean you pick a few hours or an afternoon, a morning, a certain day of the week, whatever fits your schedule, and you come each time as you say. Of course there are emergencies and please don't come if you are sick, but call in and let them know. When you are out of town or have to cancel, try to notify ahead so the teachers can plan.

And when you are volunteering, we will meet about once a month over a brown bag lunch after UUCGT Sunday services and share our experiences. What is working, where do we need support, understanding or help, how do we deal with whatever it is? We will share and learn more together.

If we do it all together, we learn and help the kids, teachers, school, and ourselves! It is an honor to go there and be a part of such a grand place.

There will be a meeting about this UUCGT opportunity in the library on Sunday, December 8 after the All-Music Service. Please watch the Flash for future meeting dates, any changes or additional details.

If this opportunity intrigues you and you are interested, please let me know right away so you can start.

Many thanks!

Emmy Lou Cholak  
sjatcmi@gmail.com



Our endowment fund was established in 1996, and it provides a financial legacy for our Congregation. Our Endowment Fund received over \$1500 in Memorial Gifts over the past couple of months.

Earlier in the year a partial list of donors was published. Since then we've learned of more Memorial Gifts in honor of Peg Kauffman and Mary Ann Force.

Thanks to Marcia Bellinger, Barbara Berry, Bob and Nancy Doughty, Anne Magoun, Mike and Sandra McDonald, and Joy Platteborze for using memorial donations as an enduring way to honor these long-time members of our Congregation!

Questions about congregational benefits from an endowment fund and personal benefits from your contribution, including tax benefits, may be directed to Endowment Committee members: Ellie Smith, Nancy Doughty, Don Pyne, Karl Keinath, or Ann Swaney.

“Giving of your time and sharing your thoughts, are the truest gifts to give.”

## Christmas is the time of giving

What would be appropriate and appreciated by family members of different ages? A glance at some of the available social justice books is a good starting place. Try a book for a 4 to 8, 9 year old: *I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsberg Makes her Mark* by E. Baddeley.

For an advanced 9 year old, her history told like presenting a case before the courts, but in comic strip form, is *Becoming RBG, Journey to Justice* by D. Levy. There are several excellent books about RBG for kids!

For children's book about refugee families try: *Stepping Stones: a Refugee Family's Journey* written by a Canadian and illustrated by a Syrian artist. Quite astonishing and intriguing!

For high school and all of us, learning about the racial errors and the systemic racism in our society is very important. Try some of these: *Just Peace*, a true account of the flaws of the justice system in Alabama, by a dedicated attorney, Bryan Stevenson. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander. For a beautiful and poignant letter advising his son to be acutely aware, read: *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* by John Lewis.

*The Lesson of the Lark* by L.K. Cobb about ratifying the 19th amendment, the women's right to vote, is good for older young readers through teens and adults. There are many books on Women's Rights including abortion. *Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman* by Lindy West, is a thought provoking book, honestly written about a woman and how the world judges, and then of course, how that feels! And *Bad Feminist* by Roxane Gay.

One of my favorites because it is so clearly stated and includes chapters by family members and friends, is this one about Trans: *He's Always Been my Son* by Janna Barkin. It is complete with references and best for understanding, including the new language.

About the conflict in Syria is: *We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled: Voices from Syria* by Wendy Pearlman. There is also *the Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri about how wars and displacement affects family and personal life.

More for some of the teenagers, but also for adults, try *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, about war and prejudice. This was his first novel and is excellent. Also about books, learn how the librarian saved books in the Iraq war, *The Librarian of Basra: A True Story from Iraq* by J. Winter, appropriate for younger readers, too. About books again but for older readers, is another true story: *The Bad Ass Librarian of Timbuktu* by Joshua Hammer. This book depicts the love and respect that the Muslims in Africa had for their acquired knowledge in all areas of science and religion and the need to protect the manuscripts from the 1500's and earlier from destruction during war and roaming terrorists today.

Don't forget *The Sunflower: on the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* by Simon Wiesenthal written from his experience in Auschwitz. And a direct book about anti-Semitism: *How to Fight Anti-Semitism* by Beri Weiss.

I know I have left out lots of social justice issues as well as books about those issues. They can't all be named here. I am sure we could all name a thousand good books that all need to be read. But most of all -- read, enjoy, learn, share your learning, feelings and compassion with the next generation so they know and want to learn more, too. Giving of your time and sharing your thoughts - these are the truest gifts to give.

Emmy Lou Cholak  
sjatcmi@gmail.com

# Board Report

## UU Board Meeting Summary for November



The UUCGT Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, November 20.

Following are key items from the meeting:

- Accepted a report from Emmy Lou Cholak, representing the Social Justice Action Committee.
- Supported SJA activities to support legal immigrants.
- Approved directing the Christmas Eve offering to support SJA activities supporting legal immigrants
- Gave approval of SJA request to recruit additional volunteers to work at Blair Elementary and inform the school that volunteers were from UUCGT
- Facilities Committee is looking into adding burglary and fire reporting to our new security system. Will report back in January.
- Approved a policy change allowing non-members to serve as Committee Chairs with Board Approval. Board Committees (Finance, Staff Resources and Leadership Development) cannot be chaired by non-members.
- Received updates from the Healthy Congregations Committee and the Safe Congregations Team.
- Discussed the proposed "Weapons Free Policy". Agreed that we needed input from the Congregation prior to approving this policy.
- Agreed to renew Interim Minister Covenant paperwork from the UUA. Both the Board and the Interim Minister are required to submit this paperwork.
- Heard a report from Rev. Cathy and discussed plans to involve the Congregation in required Interim Ministry activities beginning in January.

We plan to share highlights from our monthly Board meetings throughout the year. You can also find the minutes of Board meetings on our website. Our Board meetings are open meetings and you are welcome to attend. Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18 at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary.

### Financial Summary

**As of October 31, 2019**

**(33.3% of fiscal year)**

	<b>Current Year</b>		<b>Prior Year</b>	
<b>Budgeted Income Received YTD</b>	<b>\$106,253</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>\$118,841</b>	<b>46.7%</b>
<b>Budgeted Expenses Paid YTD</b>	<b>\$ 78,765</b>	<b>29.9%</b>	<b>\$ 85,740</b>	<b>33.7%</b>
<b>"For Those in Need" YTD</b>	<b>\$ 3,501</b>		<b>\$ 3,359</b>	

**We continue to be off to a good start financially due to a number of prepaid pledges for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Prepaid pledges are a normal annual occurrence.**

Budgeted income includes the total of all pledged and unpledged donations and miscellaneous income including building rent, etc. "For Those in Need" collections are in addition to Budgeted Income Received and are disbursed quarterly to worthy causes, including Congregational Care, Tuesday Community Lunch and other Community needs outside our congregation.

The percentage reflects the portion of the total amount of income or expense budgeted for the fiscal year. If you want more detailed information, you can look at our website, click on Board, then on Board Packet, then on Monthly Comparison. Questions can be directed to your Finance Committee members: Dusty Culton, Karl Keinath, Mike McDonald, Jim Walworth and Price Watts.