



Hopedale Community News

Volume 32, Number 2

October 2020

Sunday Services (via Zoom) – Service 10:30 am; open 10:20 am

Oct. 4th -- Play Groups as Contexts for Moral Development (in a technological age!)

Part II. The play of children has often been considered important for their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. However, their self-chosen play in groups, especially when it occurs with children of various ages and backgrounds, is also important for their moral development. The speakers (Darrel Davis and Doris Bergen) will discuss the possible effects of expanding technological and media play environments on both the play and the moral development of humans of all ages. Service Leader: Darrel Davis.

Oct. 11th -- Facing our Colonialist History. The participants in the recent UUA General Assembly chose as an Action for Immediate Witness the call to reckon with our (denominational/national) history of colonialism. In order to address our complicity with colonialist history, first we have to understand and acknowledge it. While the specific call to action utilizes the 1620 Plymouth landing by English Pilgrims as the starting date, Patty Klingenberg will speak on the Columbus Day holiday and push the discussion back hundred-plus years, to 1492.

Oct. 18th – A Long, Intricate Drum Roll on Castle Hill: Reflections on Alaska Day. Over 150 years ago, on October 18, 1867, United States troops marched up to Castle Hill in Sitka, Alaska, as Russian soldiers lowered the Russian flag. Then the United States flag was raised over the land that had been purchased from Russia for about seven million dollars. The day is still celebrated in Sitka, but not by all the residents. Come join Diane Wright as we consider anniversaries like this one, which mark victory for some, and continued suffering for others. Service leader: Cynthia Kelley

Oct. 25th – Providing Academic and Social Success for All Students. All students in school need the opportunity to experience academic and social success. Please join Patric Leedom for this discussion. The book “Companion Reader for Multicultural Relevance” is a rich and supportive resource for teachers. Service leader: Linda Amspaugh



Notes from President Curt Ellison

Our religious community remains strong during this period of physical separation. We're grateful to board members, committee chairs and others who put together committee leadership and membership for this year, and to all who agreed to serve Hopedale in these and other ways. The board confirmed them in September, and we want the congregation to be aware of who is doing what this year. A list of these fine people appears in this *Newsletter*. Thanks to everyone!

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We witnessed an amazing amount of engagement and enthusiasm last year for suggested improvements to our property via exercises engaging the entire congregation and friends, and we don't want to lose that momentum while we are not in our building. Last year volunteers completed a number of practical improvements that made our physical space more habitable. Now background work is under way toward other recommendations for improvements to our property. The Needs & Feasibility Committee, VP for Stewardship, and the Finance Committee have been in early discussion, and when recommendations come forward, I assure you the board wants to move deliberately and with prudence, timely efficiency, and transparency. We are holding designated funds from a Chalice Lighter grant already earmarked for expected improvements to the lower level, and we will be guided by the character and feasibility of further recommendations, the advice of appropriate VPs and committees, and congregational involvement. Stay tuned.

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"We look to the night sky and see the planets and stars, the distant lights as specks of salt, single grains of sand, and are reminded of how small we are, how insignificant our worries of the moment, how brief our time on this planet, and we wish to be part of something bigger than ourselves, to magnify our significance, to matter somehow as more than the dust that we are.

"Even the longest lived of our species spends but a blink of time in the span of human history. How dare anyone cause harm to another soul, curtail their life or life's potential, when our lives are so short to begin with?"

"The species has suffered incomprehensible loss over the false divisions of caste: the 11 million people killed by the Nazis; the three-quarters of a million Americans killed in the Civil War over the right to enslave human beings; the slow, living death and unfulfilled gifts of millions more on the plantations in India and in the American South.

"Whatever creativity or brilliance they had has been lost for all time. Where would we be as a species had the millions of targets of these caste systems been permitted to live out their dreams or live at all? Where would the planet be had the putative beneficiaries been freed of the illusions that imprisoned them, too, had they directed their energies toward solutions for all of humanity, cures for cancer and hunger and the existential threat of climate change, rather than division?"

Isabel Wilkerson, Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents, 2020

RE CONNECTION

Genevieveaok (at) yahoo (dot) com Genevieve O'Malley Knight, RE Co-ordinator 513-593-3275

Religious Education Committee: Jennifer Blue, Peggy Branstrator, Valerie Elliot (ex officio), Jessica Kopp (on leave), and Adriane Ruther

Virtual Scavenger Hunt

You're Invited!

What: Hopedale Virtual Scavenger Hunt -- you'll use the GooseChase app to join a friendly competition among our Community.

Who: Anyone! Sponsored by the UU R.E. Committee, we're encouraging not only families, but also any individuals who are interested in playing -- there are challenges for all ages!

When: Starting Sunday, October 4th, your team will have one week to accumulate as many points as possible by completing UU-related challenges.

Why: It's a fun, safe way to interact virtually and delve deeper into our creative, UU selves!

Please email Adriane Ruther at ruthercrew@gmail.com if you have questions or would like to sign up.

Voting is an Act of Faith

UU the Vote is sponsoring a "Harvest the Power" week of action October 21-27 and UUs are being asked to commit to actions that will turn out the vote and help deepen our organization for justice. Learn more at uuthevote.org.

UU World Discussion

Look for an upcoming email announcement of discussions of topics within our *UUWorld*.

Notes from the Social Justice Committee

By Liz Woedl and Libby Earle

Systemic Racism

It is gratifying to know the Oxford Police Community Relations and Review Commission shares the concerns of UUs by taking steps to address systemic racism locally. This is so in keeping with the AIW: Amen To Uprising and a press release from the UUA available at: <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/unitarian-universalist-association-says-its-time-defund-police>

When UUs affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, they position themselves to be active allies.

This means being willing to let people of color define the issues. Grassroots organizations like M4BL have chosen “defund” as the action that speaks to the lived experience of black and brown people. It is not the place for white organizations to reframe the issue in a way that makes white people more comfortable. It is our job to listen to their experiences and ask about the actions that are only possible with defunding a militarized police force and shifting funding and priorities to services that serve and reinvest in communities. If you would like to read some background on the initiative to defund the police, the National Indivisible <https://medium.com/@IndivisibleTeam/why-we-say-defund-the-police-109fc6ec196d> has some great resources.

Here are resources to learn what’s being demanded:
Movement for Black Lives’ (M4BL) Invest-Divest platform:
<https://m4bl.org/policy-platforms/invest-divest>

The Breath Act:
https://breatheact.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-BREATHE-Act-PDF_FINAL3-1.pdf

Indivisible Seattle’s post on why it’s important to defund the police:
<https://www.seattleindivisible.com/blog/2020/6/19/seattle-indivisible-agrees-its-time-to-defund-the-police>

A video that you can share:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMTILgqVddQ>

Some resources from Indivisible for taking action:
[Indivisible’s Resource on Taking Action in Solidarity with Black Lives Matter](#)

The Election

November 3 is fast approaching. UUJO is a great resource for all things voting in Ohio.
<https://cohhio.org/advocacy/ohio-votes>

The Board of Elections is still looking for poll workers and even for people who can open envelopes for absentee ballot requests.

Beloved Conversations

You have recently received an email concerning the Meadville program **Beloved Conversations**. Because the deadline for registering for the fall session was September 20, folks probably did not have time to figure out what kind of commitment they can make. And we all have a lot on our plates. I am recommending we plan to register in January for the spring session when other area congregations will be registering.

Social Justice Committee will meet the 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 PM. Next meetings: 10/8, 11/12, 12/10.

UU Council of Greater Cincinnati

The September meeting featured UUJO’s Rev. Joan VanBecelaere and Kristen Beireis presenting an update on UUtheVote. The next UUCGC meeting will be November 14 with a ZOOM breakout session discussing “How we are serving and working with families with children.” Look for a link to register.



Environmental Corner

By Peggy Branstrator

Be a Smarter Electric Consumer

Ohio deregulated the electric industry in 1999. As a result, consumers have more control over their electric supplier and their bill but that comes with increased responsibility. Here's some information to help. (If your electric bill comes from Butler Rural this information does not apply to you. Butler Rural is a CO-OP and operates differently.) Understanding your bill. There are two parts to your electric bill (find the explanation section). The first charge is for distribution. This is for maintaining wires, reading meters and billing etc. The rates and service area are set by the Public Utility Commission of Ohio (PUCO). The second part is the cost to actually generate the electricity – usually called supplier charges. This is the part you can choose.

Aggregation Program. If you live within the City of Oxford, you are eligible to participate in the city aggregation program. The City has negotiated on your behalf with an energy supplier to get the best plan for renewable energy. The current plan is expiring this fall and you will get a letter explaining the new one in November. The new plan is for 100% wind energy - Energy Harbor. 4.71 cents/kwh. This rate is cheaper than the previous plan and cheaper than the going rate for fossil fuel generated electricity from Duke (5.89cents/kwh). The aggregation plan is an “opt out” plan. This means that eligible participants will automatically be enrolled unless they choose to “opt out”. More info at

<https://www.cityofoxford.org/departments/city-manager/electric-aggregation-program>

If you opt out, you will be responsible for choosing your own energy supplier. Note: changing energy suppliers does not change who bills you. The distributor still does the billing. (When you move you are NOT automatically enrolled in the aggregation plan. You go back to the default plan unless you take action.)

Choosing your own energy supplier. If you are outside the city limits and not a Butler Rural customer, you can choose your own energy supplier. If you do not select one you will be assigned a default supplier, probably the same as your energy distributor. This will probably be a fossil fuel plan and the rate may be higher than other plans that are available. Search ENERGY CHOICE OHIO to find the website for the list of suppliers and their rates. There are several companies that offer renewable energy plans at competitive rates. This is an opportunity to reduce your carbon footprint! Contact the company of your choice directly.

You will likely continue to get calls and letters trying to get you to switch energy suppliers; it's a very competitive market! All the ones I have checked have been more expensive than the city aggregation plan so check their rates before deciding anything. If you tell them your current rate they may stop calling!

Hopedale is outside the city limits and is not eligible for the aggregation plan. We currently have a contract with Brighten Energy for 100% wind electricity at 5.09 cents/kwh. This runs until July 2021.

Congregational Life

knightcm@miamioh.edu

By Celia Ellison, VP

513-461-1204

Outreach Survey

The responses to the outreach survey (14/60) indicated that there is not a significant need among us for more things to do! Some activities will be planned though and announcements will be made. There will be book discussion/*UUWorld* discussion/Adult RE sessions and the RE co-ordinator will make an announcement of the events.

Directory Update

Emails will be sent/have been asking those currently listed in the directory to review their entries for accuracy. (Maybe there should be a cell phone listed instead of a landline number??) No response to the email will be interpreted as the current listing is accurate.

Stewardship

By Drew Ruther, VP

Greetings Hopedale Members & Friends,

As I write this on Friday evening, before heading out to meet the work crew at Hopedale, there is a crisp chill to the air. Autumn has always been my favorite time of year. A lot has to do with the changing season and the associated colors, but there's something about this time of year that elicits in me a recognition of the many blessings that I have in my life. Maybe it's got something to do with fall being the traditional harvest time and a time of preparation for the 'dark' days of winter. Regardless, I think it is a time to take stock of and to celebrate the good things you have.

Luckily for me, I get to visit our Hopedale building and grounds on a weekly basis and take stock of what we have. Although our building will never be remembered for its great entry facade or towering spires, it is a place that we can call our own. Sure, it's got a few blemishes and is starting to show its age, but aren't we all. As I make my weekly walk-throughs it's hard for me to fathom that I've been attending here for nearly 14 years. It has certainly served my family's needs in that time.

But it is also an exciting time at Hopedale with possible change on the horizon. The Needs and Feasibility Committee is finalizing its report and we should be able to renew our conversation of how we as a congregation can extend, or even amend, the life of this building.

The outdoor areas at Hopedale also continue to be a blessing for many. Although the trails aren't hiked as often and the flowers are not admired so frequently, I truly believe that we have one of the most beautiful 'church' properties in Oxford. We also have a dedicated group who are committed to making the gardens and grounds even better. We've been meeting twice a month since early summer, and although I can't be certain, I think many of us are finding that it's not the perfect garden that we are after, but rather the notion that we are working with our fellow Hopedalians to maintain something we can call our own.



Chalice Lighters

by Curt Ellison, President

Chalice Lighter grants are funded by small donations from individuals that are pooled together to help congregations across the MidAmerica Region of the UUA. A large grant of over \$10,000 is awarded to one congregation after each Call for a specific project identified by that congregation, and grants of up to \$1000 are available via *Faithify* campaigns.

The Chalice Lighter program is an excellent example of mutual aid among our region's congregations. To be eligible, a congregation is expected to support the program through the voluntary donations of its own individual members. Hopedale has benefited from several Chalice Lighter grants. We received one for our outdoor playground, and most recently, another of \$9,000 to support upgrades to the lower level that will enhance our religious education space.

The Fall 2020 Chalice Lighter Call supports the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing, Michigan's plan to create a Natural Play Space. It has been reclaiming urban property around their congregation to create a welcoming and accessible oasis, a place where children can engage in noncompetitive, cooperative, and imaginary play amidst native plants and trees; where neighborhood and church families alike can gather for outdoor play; where adults can renew their spirits in a natural setting; and where, after worship when in-person church resumes, people of all ages and abilities can bring their coffee and continue to build Beloved community. A guiding principle of this project is inclusivity and accessibility for all, including children with disabilities and people of historically marginalized communities who have limited access to high quality parks, playgrounds and natural spaces for renewing physical and mental health. The Natural Play Space will be a place to nurture all children, families, communities, and Unitarian Universalism.

If you would like to help Hopedale play a part in mutual support of MidAmerica UUA congregations by donating to the Fall 2020 Chalice Lighter Call, you can learn how to do that and find a donation form at the site below, or contact Curt Ellison with questions about how this project benefits Hopedale and the UUA.

<https://www.uua.org/midamerica/giving/chalice-lighters/2020-fall>

Around Hopedale
By Curt Ellison, President

HOPEDALE COMMITTEES AND APPOINTEES FOR 2020-2021

Responding to the good work of board members and others to activate Hopedale committees for 2020-2021, and to identify those leading in key areas of responsibility along with Hopedale representatives to other organizations, other appointees, volunteers and paid staff for 2020-2021, the Board confirmed the following group at its September meeting. Our community is immensely grateful to all those who have agreed to serve this year. Thank you for your commitment to Hopedale!

HOPEDALE BOARD

Elected by Congregation: Neil Danielson, Secretary; Valerie Elliott, Vice President, Religious Services; Celia Ellison, Vice President, Congregational Life; Curt Ellison, President; Drew Ruther, Vice President, Stewardship; Judy and Richard Schlub, Treasurers.

COMMITTEES

Leadership Nominating: Linda Amspaugh, Chair; Liz Woedl; works with President.

Finance: Jennifer Blue, Chair; Doris Bergen; Peter Carels; Celia Ellison; Richard Schlub; works with President for 2020-2021; VP Stewardship meets with committee.

Sunday Services: Linda Amspaugh, Chair; Doris Bergen; Celia Ellison; Martha Castaneda; Cynthia Kelley; works with VP Religious Services.

Religious Education: Genevieve O'Malley Knight, RE Coordinator, Chair; Adriane Ruther; Peggy Branstrator; Jennifer Blue; works with VP Religious Services.

Social Justice: Libby Earle, Chair; Peggy Branstrator; Russ Vie Brooks; Mary Fox; Genevieve O'Malley Knight; Bethany Smith; Liz Woedl; works with VP Congregational Life.

Communications: Neil Danielson and Celia Ellison, Co-chairs; Curt Ellison; Amy West Poley.

Membership: Judi Hetrick; Nancy Eicher; works with VP Congregational Life.

History: Valerie Elliott, Chair; Curt Ellison; works with President and Board.

Needs and Feasibility: Robert Bell, Chair; Linda Amspaugh; Libby Earle; J Elliott; Celia Ellison; Jessica Kopp; Liz Woedl; works with VP Stewardship.

Housing and Property: Drew Ruther, Chair; Peggy Branstrator; Russ Vie Brooks; Peter Carels; Curtis Mortimer; works with VP Stewardship.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Caring: Amy West Poley, Care Coordinator, and volunteers as needed; works with VP Congregational Life.

Long-Range Planning: Board responsibility; advised by Needs & Feasibility and Finance Committees.

Personnel: Board responsibility, advised by board members with personnel oversight duties.

Denominational Affairs: Overseen by Neil Danielson, Secretary, with advice of Board and Administrator.

Fundraising: Overseen in 2020-2021 by President and Board.

Webmaster, Website and Social Media Administrators: Overseen by Communications Committee; under review.

Children's Religious Education Teachers: Overseen by Coordinator of Religious Education; virtual programming being arranged.

HOPEDALE REPRESENTATIVES

Unitarian Universalist Council of Greater Cincinnati: Libby Earle and Liz Woedl, Council Delegates.

Oxford Religious Communities Association: Patty Klingenberg, Liaison.

Delegates to UUA General Assembly: Board to determine 2021 delegates.

PAID STAFF

Coordinator of Religious Education: Genevieve O'Malley Knight, part time; works with VP Religious Services.

Office Administrator: Amy West Poley, part time; works with President and Board.

Musician/Pianist: Evan Danielson, monthly; works with VP Religious Services and Sunday Services Committee.

Sunday Services Zoom Host: Evan Danielson, monthly; works with VP Religious Services and Sunday Services Committee.

OTHER BOARD APPOINTEES

Canvass Co-Chairs: Peter Carels and Celia Ellison; work with President and Board.

Newsletter Co-Editors: Neil Danielson and Celia Ellison; work with Administrator, contributors and Board.

NOT SERVING DURING PERIOD OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Infant and Toddler Caregiver, hourly paid staff; Director of Music; Choir Director; Audio-Visual Coordinator; Sunday Service Hospitality; Sunday Service Greeters.

Staying Connected

A Big Thank You from Jessica Kopp: Thank you so much to all my Hopedale friends who kept me supplied and well fed with wonderful meals over the last several weeks. I really appreciate all the help I've gotten from so many of you. Having two unexpected surgeries back to back is not something I would recommend, but it had to happen. Thank you to Celia Ellison and Amy West Poley for coordinating the meals and the thoughtful care to make sure I was okay alone. Thank you especially to Mary Fox and Susan Thrasher, who cut food up for me (yes, I was babied) and are still driving me where I need to go. I love Hopedale and miss everyone. Thank you so much, you are loved. Let's pay it forward.

Happenings at Hopedale

Next outdoor workday scheduled for Friday, October 9th 6:30 – 8:00 pm-ish at Hopedale. No tools or talent required.

Social Justice Committee will meet the 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 PM. Next meeting: October 8, 2020.

The HUUC Board will meet on Monday, October 12, 2020 at 7:00 pm, via Zoom. Contact Curt Ellison (ellisocw@miamioh.edu) if you would like to receive the Zoom invitation.

Beyond Hopedale

UU Council of Greater Cincinnati

The next UUCGC meeting will be November 14 with a ZOOM breakout session discussing "How we are serving and working with families with children." Look for a link to register.

Support Hopedale

You may make your pledge payments or donations to *Hopedale UU Community* by U.S. Mail to our Treasurers, Judy Schlub and Richard Schlub. Your support is appreciated!

