



## Hopedale Community News

Volume 33, Number 2

August 2021

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

#### August Sunday Services Will Continue via Zoom

**August 1st - Enjoying Hymns from *Singing the Living Tradition* and Hearing Some of Their Stories.** Presenters and Service Leaders: Celia Ellison and Cynthia Kelley.

**August 8th – Blessing of the Animals.** One of the few benefits to having meetings, classes, and worship services over Zoom is that we have had a few more opportunities to see each other's pets. During this service, Jennifer Blue will lead us in a blessing of our animals (including, if you like, those whom we've lost). If you want a picture of your pet to be shown during the service, please email it (with your pet's name) to Jennifer at [bluejm@miamioh.edu](mailto:bluejm@miamioh.edu). We will also have time during the service for pets to show up in our Zoom windows and be introduced, if they are willing. Stuffed animal pets from kids (or those of us who still have very old stuffed animals) are also welcome.  
Service Leader: Jennifer Blue.

**August 15th – “Candle on the Corner: Considering the Festival of Santa Muerte.”** August 15 marks the Festival of Santa Muerte, a controversial saint who has become increasingly revered in Latin America, Mexico, and parts of the United States. Some call her “the saint of the dispossessed.” Join Diane Wright as we look at this evolving phenomenon, and consider what it says about the human experience of religion.  
Service Leader: Linda Amspaugh.

**August 22 -- Virtual GA.** Every year the Unitarian Universalist Association holds an annual conference in which denominational business is voted upon by some 4,000 or so delegates. For a second pandemic year, the entire conference was held virtually via Zoom. Hopedale delegates, Libby Earle and Liz Woedl, will fill you in on the inspiring and challenging issues that were brought forward. Some of them will guide our conversations for the coming year. Presenters and Service Leaders: Libby Earle and Liz Woedl.

**August 29th – Rock and Water.** Please join our annual service of gathering and rededication, a celebration of the beginning of a new church year. Normally our ritual requires bringing water and/or rocks from your summer travels; since our service will be Zoom only, just bring your memories and plan to tell us what they have meant to you.  
Presenter and Service Leader: Patty Klingenberg.



## Notes From Hopedale President Curt Ellison

Plans are, as mystery lovers might sometimes say, afoot for the beginning of our new church year. The In-person Task Force will review results of a recent congregational survey concerning best ways for us to return face-to-face as the pandemic risk, hopefully, declines for vaccinated persons. Not everyone can be vaccinated, though, so we're very glad that Neil Danielson secured a grant to assist in purchasing key equipment needed for future multi-platform gatherings. Thanks to Neil!

We can expect to continue Zoom Sunday services through August. However, in-person gatherings are already happening as Social Justice and Religious Education combined to offer an outdoor gathering July 25, volunteer gardeners continue their outdoor work, and the Board plans to begin meeting in a multi-platform format starting August 9. We are watching public health notices and news of pandemic trends in our area, keeping Zoom options alive, and beginning to anticipate again seeing our community in person.

Peter and Kathleen Carels have generously donated a solar array for installation at Hopedale. This should significantly reduce our annual energy costs while extending our green sanctuary commitments. We already subscribe to a green energy provider whose sources are wind generators, and we are seriously grateful to Peter and Kathleen for now making possible solar energy at Hopedale!

During the summer our Nominating Committee of Linda Amspaugh and Liz Woedl helped secure new committee chairs for Hopedale. Beginning July 1, Jennifer Blue heads the Sunday Service Committee and Liz Woedl heads both the Finance Committee and Social Justice Committee. In early September we will release an updated list of Hopedale committees, representatives and appointees for 2021-2022. If you are not already involved and are interested in serving on a committee, let us know.

Interviews with potential architects are ongoing and we hope to soon name a firm to assist us for the next stages of Hopedale's facilities improvement project, which involve creating drawings of a possible addition and better estimates of costs for what we want to do. It's safe to say that refinancing alone will not fund all of the congregation's priorities, so if you have not yet become involved in this effort by contributing to the Facilities Fund, please consider helping Hopedale with this project. You may contact me with questions at 513-461-1131, or our Treasurers at 513-895-0272, or respond via the form distributed in June. We are always open to providing updates on what's happening now, and next.

Hopedale Board meets both in person and *via* Zoom on August 9 at 7:00 p.m. If you wish to attend this multiplatform meeting, email [ellisocw@miamioh.edu](mailto:ellisocw@miamioh.edu) or call 513/461-1131 for the Zoom invitation. Weather permitting, you could also join us outside at Hopedale.



## Stewardship

By Drew Ruther, VP

513-265-1538

[andrew.ruther@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.ruther@gmail.com)

Greetings Hopedale Members & Friends,

Although the dog days of summer are upon us, the Hopedale outdoor areas continue to amaze. Flowers are in full-bloom, sapling trees are standing tall, and vegetables are everywhere. As we transition into the autumn season, we will continue to hold outdoor work sessions on a regular basis. For the month of August, let's plan on two work sessions: Thursday evening, August 5th from 6:30-8:00 and Saturday morning, August 28th from 9:00 - 10:30. More info to come.

While our In-Person Gathering task force navigates the best approach to reopen our building, one thing is certain. Our building insides need some work. We've had a cleaning service doing simple tasks like vacuuming, sweeping, and other small jobs. However, most of our indoor space has been neglected over the past 16 months. I would like to propose small cleaning crews that could begin tackling the dust and cobwebs. These will be informal, masked events with a couple of small groups of 2-3 people working in different areas of the building. If you are willing and able to be part of these cleaning crews, please let me know.

As always, contact Drew Ruther ([andrew.ruther@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.ruther@gmail.com) or 513-265-1558) with questions.

## Updates from Hopedale Task Forces

### *HUUC In-Person Gathering Task Force led by Neil Danielson*

The proposal to allow Zoom production of Sunday services held at Hopedale has been funded by the Munroe Husbands Grant Program of the Midwest UUA. About \$1,000 of the \$1,600 budget is for a dedicated laptop computer for Zoom and the remainder is for a high quality web cam, music-quality microphone, and various stands. Before any purchases are made, input from more knowledgeable people as well as Task Force members about this Zoom production plan will be obtained. Final approval of purchases will be made via a recommendation of the Task Force to the Board.

A survey about the transition to in-person services in the fall, drafted by Neil Danielson, expanded by Curt Ellison, and converted to e-mail surveys by Celia Ellison, was sent out by Celia. Response has been good, with 32 responses to the Sunday Services survey and 26 responses to the Gatherings/RE survey. Data are being summarized and will be discussed by the Task Force at an upcoming meeting. At this time we expect services to remain primarily via Zoom in August. Written guidelines about whether and how services should be conducted, hopefully starting in September, are forthcoming from the Task Force.

### ***Hopedale Construction Task Force led by Robert Bell***

The Construction Task Force has met a few times to discuss our objectives and to interview potential architectural firms that could work with us on renovations to the Hopedale building. The Task Force sent detailed materials to two architects and met with each via Zoom to discuss their approaches to our project. Each expressed concern with our budget, based on what we want to achieve. No final decisions have been made, discussions are continuing, and we may include a contractor in discussions of scope and potential costs. Once the Task Force has successfully recommended hiring an architect and a contractor, those firms will be announced and next planning stages will follow.

## **Religious Education CONNECTION**

**Genevieve O'Malley Knight, RE Coordinator 513-593-3275**

**Genevieveaok (at) yahoo (dot) com**

**RE Committee: Jennifer Blue, Valerie Elliott, Adriane Ruther; Darrel Davis (VP, Religious Services)**

The RE Committee has been deep in planning children's religious education for the fall semester. This year we will be offering *Coming of Age* for the high school youth group. The balance of the programming will begin as a "one-room schoolhouse."

While we are still meeting via Zoom, we will offer Zoom classes every other week. These will alternate between participatory cooking and the UU Cartuuns curriculum. This curriculum uses animated shorts from Pixar and Disney as a basis for discussions about the values inherent in Unitarian Universalism. In between the Zoom sessions we will have some outside, in-person activities and the occasional delivery of craft activities.

**Sunday, August 8<sup>th</sup>** 9:45 a.m. Cartuuns class led by Adriane Ruther

**Saturday, August 14<sup>th</sup>** 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. RE is hosting the third Family Fun Night of the summer featuring a Blessing of the Backpacks event. All those who will be starting a new school year are invited to bring a backpack, laptop, briefcase, lunchbox, etc., to receive a blessing and a small gift. COVID safety precautions will be followed (published previously).

**Sunday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>** 9:45 a.m. Participatory cooking class will require an rsvp to Genevieve by Thursday, August 19<sup>th</sup> to ensure delivery of ingredients.

Suggestions and volunteers are welcome and encouraged!



## Notes from the Social Justice Committee

By Liz Woedl

Social Justice Committee: Libby Earle, Liz Woedl, Mary Fox, Peggy Branstrator, Bethany Smith, Russ VieBrooks

In June, Libby Earle and I attended the Unitarian Universalist Association's 2021 General Assembly. It was held virtually so we were able to participate within the comfort of our own homes. (That can be a little tricky considering the active and busy households we both have to juggle.) Whova, a communication Internet platform, handled all the logistics of GA, which included many events with numerous services, presentations and workshop options to chose.

Most of the workshops we attended were centered on various ways Congregations can engage in centering equity and inclusion in our own congregations and the larger community-at-large, whether the conversation and actions be about people of color, gender, the environment or other concerns about inequity. Libby and I will be leading a Sunday service that will provide greater depth about our GA experience on Sunday, August 22, 10:30 p.m. We hope you will consider being a GA Delegate someday.

The Social Justice Committee meets on the 2nd Thursday each month. We encourage more participation from Hopedale members and friends to join in the effort. Though currently we are meeting in the late afternoon, we are able to meet at a later time, if needed, so we may welcome those that are busy during the traditional work week.

### Upcoming Social Justice Dates

- Thursday, Aug 12, 4:00-5:00 p.m. HUUC Social Justice Committee meeting (ZOOM)
- Sunday, Aug 22, 10:30 p.m. Virtual GA Service (ZOOM)
- Sunday, Aug 22 through August 29, Cincinnati Festival of Faiths (details TBA)
- Thursday, Sep 9, 4:00-5:00 p.m. HUUC Social Justice Committee meeting (ZOOM)
- Saturday, Sept. 11, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. UU Council of Greater Cincinnati meeting (ZOOM)
- Thursday, Oct 14, 4:00-5:00 p.m. HUUC Social Justice Committee meeting (ZOOM)
- Thursday, Nov 11, 4:00-5:00 p.m. HUUC Social Justice Committee meeting (ZOOM)
- Saturday, Nov. 13, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. UU Council of Greater Cincinnati meeting (ZOOM, if needed)

## Environmental Corner

By Peggy Branstrator

[jonwb@earthlink.net](mailto:jonwb@earthlink.net)

### *The 2022-2023 Ohio Budget*

In the last-minute flurry to finalize the state budget before the June 30th deadline, the Ohio General Assembly also passed two energy bills that have subsequently been signed by Governor DeWine.

The first was House Bill 201, which forbids local government entities from preventing access, zoning or taxing natural gas hook-ups in new buildings. Stopping new natural gas hook-ups has been implemented in some states as a way to help meet future carbon emission reduction targets. New natural gas hook-ups lock buildings into carbon emissions for years. This is one of the many ways Ohio Legislators have been trying to slow the switch to renewable energy recently. One of the arguments here is that developers need standard regulations across the state -- no local piece-meal regs!

The second bill signed was HB 52, which allows county commissioners veto power over proposed wind and solar energy projects in their counties. It's the opposite philosophy of the previous bill! At first proponents targeted only wind projects, using the rationale that wind farms have widespread effects on local areas such as property values. Solar was then added, although solar has almost no effect on neighbors. The county veto must now come early in the planning process – a big improvement from the original bill, which would allow it at the end of the approval process. The bill also adds two local voting members to the Ohio Power Siting Board for projects in their area. The argument here is that locals need more say in projects that affect them! HB 52 would go into effect in 90 days and would not apply to the 23 solar projects and one wind project\* currently under review. Of course, it also does not apply to any new fossil fuel energy projects such as fracking or gas-fired generating plants.

Other budget items with social justice implications include language allowing medical professionals to refuse treatments that violate their ethical beliefs. Critics fear that this opens the door to discrimination against LBGQT individuals. Increased Medicaid for certain groups – new mothers, children with medical handicaps -- was also added. The legislators also passed revisions to the school funding formula that was declared unconstitutional many years ago. The new plan has been supported by most school groups, in spite of increasing vouchers and charter-school funding. The six-year plan has been approved for only the first two years.

And there's the 3% across-the-board income tax cut! The income floor below which no income tax is due was raised which will help low-income families. At the same time the top tax bracket was eliminated – there are now only four brackets -- and the rate for the top bracket was reduced, especially benefitting those with incomes over \$110K.

- If you are wondering why there's only one new wind energy project seeking approval, it's because of the clause in the 2014 budget bill that TRIPLED the wind set-back requirements. This was added at the last minute without public debate, and is still in effect. It essentially killed wind investment in Ohio even though NW Ohio has some of the best wind resources in the mid-west! Indiana has nearly triple the installed wind power as Ohio now.

The Legislature is now on summer break. But stayed tuned!! One of the parts of the budget bill that Dewine vetoed allowed Senate and House leaders to file lawsuits challenging new redistricting maps.



## Congregational Life

By Celia Ellison, VP

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### HOPEDALE EXPLORES

As mentioned in the July newsletter, Congregational Life is establishing and will coordinate a regular event titled "Hopedale Explores." It will take place via Zoom initially and later in person or via a multi-platform gathering. Let's use this venue as a sharing place for a variety of presentations and conversations: articles read, book discussions or reports, art displays, vacation slide shows, sharing a special recipe, a cooking demonstration, addressing Christmas cards together, hearing about social justice issues, continuing a discussion from a recent Sunday service, or any number of other ideas. Many of these events could be planned as intergenerational. I'm still working on a plan for the inaugural exploration. Volunteers and/or your ideas are most welcome – just let me know!

### CARING

Let's keep reaching out and helping one another, whether we have something to offer or need some assistance. Contact me, or someone from the community. And remember – there are HUUC young people who are in the "odd jobs" business, if that is useful to you!



## Around Hopedale

By Celia Ellison, VP, Congregational Life

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Ryan Danielson** plus his two friends Ben and Cassidy, climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania! This is the highest peak in Africa at 19,354 feet, and it took over seven days from July 9-15. This was a guided trip of five "tourists" and eighteen very experienced support Africans who carried the major supplies, food, and water. They started at about 6,000 feet but hiked fairly slowly to get used to the altitude, particularly when reaching 15,000 feet. For the last 4,000 feet or so, it was a very slow midnight climb at sub-zero temperatures with flashlights/head lamps, reaching the summit at sunrise for beautiful views (the pictures were amazing)!

Kami and Neil are so glad the climbers had altitude sickness medicine and they all had a safe trip. Ryan is still in Tanzania until early August, volunteering at an orphanage with Ben, while Cassidy is a travel nurse.

## Staying Connected

*Cards from Hopedale friends would be greatly appreciated by:*

Carol Hennessey  
6727 Contreras Road  
The Knolls of Oxford Room 125  
Oxford OH 45056

Eunice Meadows  
468 Hermay  
Hamilton, OH 48013

## References from Last Month's Services

**July 4th** The Meaning of Patriotism and Democracy. **Libby Earle and Curt Ellison**  
*The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?*, by Michael J. Sandel (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), 272 pp.

*Last Best Hope: America in Crisis and Renewal*, by George Packer ((New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021), 226 pp.

"How America Fractured into Four Parts," by George Packer (*The Atlantic*, July/August 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/07/george-packer-four-americas/619012/>)

**July 11th** Sketchbook/Journaling our Perceptions of the Past, Present and Future. **Liz Woedl** Information available from [uua.org](http://uua.org)

**July 18<sup>th</sup>** **Libby Earle and Liz Woedl** The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle  
Story for all Ages – poem by Shel Silverstein.

**July 25<sup>th</sup>** Evening event at Hopedale sponsored by Religious Education and Social Justice.

## Happenings at Hopedale

**August 5** from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Outdoor work evening.

**August 9** at 7:00 p.m. Hopedale Board meets both in person and via Zoom. If you wish to attend this meeting, email [ellisocw@miamioh.edu](mailto:ellisocw@miamioh.edu) or call 513-461-1131 for the Zoom invitation. Weather permitting, you could also join us outside at Hopedale.

**August 12** from 4:00-5:00 p.m. HUUC Social Justice Committee Zoom meeting.

RE – Dedication of the Backpacks/Laptops on **Saturday, August 14th**. Details found in *RE Connection*.

**August 28** from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Outdoor work morning.



## Beyond Hopedale

- Sunday, August 22 to Sunday, August 29 – Cincinnati Festival of Faiths
- Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021 – UU Council of Greater Cincinnati meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021 – UU Council of Greater Cincinnati meeting, 9:30 a.m.

## Support Hopedale

Pledge payments or donations can be made to Hopedale UU Community by mailing them to our Treasurers: Richard and Judy Schlub, 2849 Stone Mill Way, Hamilton, OH 45011.

Hopedale Facilities Fund information and a reply form were mailed at the beginning of June (with an email follow-up regarding the Schlubs' address!). It is wonderful to see that donations and pledges are coming in.

