

The Open Door Newsletter

May 2020



This Month's Fellowship Services

Please Note: This month's fellowship services will be held online on YouTube at 10 a.m.

Follow this link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY04EKR6mCa0SH5OipZiLNg/videos?view_as=subscriber

*Information and links will also be provided at our website: www.chequamegonuuf.org
and Facebook page: facebook.com/Chequamegonuuf.*

May 3— All-Music Service—“Connections”

Our annual All-Music Service will feature Jan Lee as our guest musician. Jan is a singer, actor, playwright, and stage director/designer whose career has included many roles in the Twin Cities and across the country. Her most notable works include the Midwest premier of Stephen Sondheim's *Assassins*, Paula Vogel's *A Civil War Christmas*, and the off-Broadway national tour of *Woody Guthrie's American Song*. She's been a house-show director and featured performer at the Big Top Chautauqua since 1987. Jan is currently a member of *Jazz On The Bay Trio* as well as the local accordion duo, *Double Squeeze*.



In addition to Jan, CUUF members will add their music to the mix. They include the Horning/Lee Family Singers, the CUUF Women's A Capella Choir, Donn Christensen, Joni Chapman, Kathryn Tietze, and Mike Storms. Led by Ruth Oppedahl, this service will feature a combination of prerecorded and live music streamed on YouTube.

Please join us for this one-of-a-kind All-Music Service.

May 17— Speaker: Stacy Craig—“Sacred Silence, Northwoods Solitude”

We live in the Northwoods, an area known for its cold and icy winters, mosquitos the size of chickens, and a festival of apples. Yet there is something more, known to those who live in and love this region. It is a gift some have never experienced: silence. The Northwoods provides a cathedral-like quiet for contemplative practice. Is fly fishing a religion? Is staring at the lake a spiritual practice? What is the presence I sense in the company of old-growth trees? We will explore several Northwoods activities and take time to appreciate the subtle and powerful invitation to experience silence this spring and summer.

At this closing gathering of the service year, we will also take time to honor our high school and college graduates. Additionally, this service will include our annual Child Dedication and Flower Communion. Although we will not be physically together to share flowers, please have flowers near you during the service if possible. They can serve as an important connection to our past gatherings and might be used for a special purpose that Stacy will guide during the service.

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

CUUF Spring Service Schedule and Upcoming Events

May 3	All-Music Service with guest musician Jan Lee— <i>Connections</i> (10 a.m. on YouTube)
May 10	The Other Sunday— <i>The Art of Liberation and Revolution</i> (10—11 a.m. on Zoom)
May 10	Game Night! (7—8 p.m. on Zoom)
May 17	Speaker: Stacy Craig— <i>Sacred Silence, Northwoods Solitude</i> —plus our annual Flower Ceremony, Child Dedication, and Graduate Recognition (on YouTube)

Please note—If you have an announcement for the May 3 or May 17 service, please submit your information to Stacy by the Friday before the service. Her email is minister@chequamegonuuf.org.

Summer services—Decisions have not yet been made regarding summer services. Please watch for information in future newsletters and emails.

Cancellations! The Great CUUF Garage Sale is cancelled. Also, there will be no UU Women's coffee group and no CUUF office hours until it is safe to once again gather in groups.

Did you miss our online April 26 Earth Day Service? You can find a recording at our CUUF YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY04EKR6mCa0SH5QipZiLNg?view_as=subscriber

Spring Graduation Celebrations

Spring is a time of graduations for many people. Some are finishing their college studies. Others are graduating from high school or finishing up graduate or technical school degrees. Please let us know if you, a family member, or a CUUF friend has reached a milestone moment. We would like to celebrate these achievements at the May 17 online service.

Contact Megan Perrine at meganperrine54@gmail.com to share the names of graduates. Congratulations and good luck from all of us at CUUF in all your future adventures!

Child Dedication Service

The Unitarian Universalist Child Dedication Ceremony welcomes our children into the fellowship. Through this ceremony, we recognize the gifts that each child brings to our fellowship, and we express our willingness as a community to support them as they grow. This is a chance for us to recognize individual children in our fellowship and to pledge our support to their spiritual growth.

This year's Child Dedication Ceremony will be part of our Sunday, May 17 online service. If you would like to have your child dedicated this year, please contact Kristi Kiel by May 8 at kjkk19@yahoo.com or 715-373-0626.

May 10—The Other Sunday: *The Art of Liberation and Revolution*—10-11 a.m. on Zoom

Art provides a window into the human condition that can inspire, educate, liberate, and revolutionize. Artists are often agents of the prophetic: they mediate between what is and what can be. They help us see things in a different way. Join Stacy for The Other Sunday on May 10 for an exploration of art that has been transformational. Please bring a poem, image, song, or example of art that has had an impact on you, or just join us for a journey of liberation and revolution.

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/99138393869?pwd=S0cwODA1UllxdzUwZDc3VXU4cXdrdz09>

Meeting ID: 991-3839-3869

Password: CUUF

May 10—CUUF Game Night—7-8 p.m. on Zoom

Our first game night was such a blast, we're doing it again! Join us on Zoom for word games, picture games, and time to get to know one another. The games are suitable for ages 4-104. No preparation is necessary—just bring your imagination.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99486564366?pwd=cDZ2UktjWnovbkNHZzlNRk5nUVQzdz09>

Meeting ID: 994-8656-4366

Password: CUUF

Local Resources

Chequamegon Bay Community Care and CORE Community Resources are currently offering the following services: running errands (pick up and deliver groceries, medications, or mail), social support (e.g., friendly phone conversations), scheduling assistance (e.g., calling doctors, calling about medications), pet care (pet sit/dog walk), technology assistance, and homework help.

Requests received from Ashland County are being coordinated by Chequamegon Bay Community Care and requests received from Bayfield County are being coordinated by CORE Community Resources.

To request or offer support, visit cheqbaycc.org, call the support line at (716) 262-9679, or call CORE's office at (715) 779-3457.

Do you need a face mask? Made from fabric donated by Jan MacFarlane and Emily Schlager with elastic from a Mennonite store in western New York, Linda Calhan has the supplies and time to make face masks. If you or anyone you know would like a mask, please contact Linda at elcalhan@centurytel.net or 715-682-0446.

From the Minister's Desk—Rite of Passage

Right before I started this article, I submitted my final paper for seminary. While I still have a clinical course to attend this summer, completing the four years of class work feels both exhilarating and disorienting. We often mark major transitions in our lives with ceremonies to help us move through the heap of emotions and experiences. We move between spaces: from the familiar to the mysterious, from the places we've been to the place we are going. Like our high school seniors and college graduates, the ceremonies to help guide this transition have been cancelled for me. We will have an online Zoom celebration and I'm going to bake myself a cake and go fly fishing on the day I would have graduated. I'm really looking forward to all of this, especially if the cake turns out. Yet I've found myself reflecting this week on ceremony and transitions.

A graduation ceremony recognizes the individual journey but also connects a shared achievement to create a rite of passage from student to graduate. It honors the hard work of the past and connects this to the hope and dreams for the future, even though the way ahead may not be clear. A metaphor for this is a threshold. We come to a place that lies between the life we have known and the life ahead of us.

Graduates aren't the only ones at a threshold. All of us are becoming aware of the slow adaptation from quarantine to the world opening up. Like our graduates, we might feel like ceremony, ritual, and community would help right now.

Artist and pastor Jan Richardson has written about thresholds in several of her books and poems. She writes,

I am still fascinated by thresholds—those places we come to that lie between the life we have known and the life ahead of us. I am continually intrigued—and eager, and fearful, and amazed, and mystified—to enter into those spaces where we have left the landscape of the familiar, the habitual, and stand poised at the edge of a terrain whose contours we can hardly see or even imagine.

Whether we arrive at these between-places by design, by accident, or by the choices that others have made for us, the threshold can be a place of wonders. It can also be chaotic, discombobulating, and even terrifying. Yet a threshold, chosen or otherwise, is a place of wild possibility. A threshold invites and calls us to stop. To take a look around. To imagine. To dream. To question. To pray.

In our services this past month, we explored the early spring rooting that happens beneath the snow despite the transitions of freeze, thaw, rain, sleet, snow, wind, and sun. We explored the one-note choir, which can go on indefinitely because others will hold the note while we take a breath. As we move across thresholds, be rooted deeply in who you are and what you value. Take the time to dream, question, pray, and pause as you move forward. And as movement happens, remember we will not be alone in the work ahead. We will re-root not in some new, distant future but in who we are, as a community which holds belovedness and radical interdependence at the core of our being.

In peace and the place of wild possibility,
Stacy Craig



Graduation Announcements



Congratulations to Stacy!

Chequamegon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's new minister, Stacy Craig, will graduate with high honors on May 3 with a Masters of Divinity, Church Leadership and Religion and Theology, from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in St. Paul, Minnesota. She will be completing a Clinical Pastoral Experience (CPE) this summer as part of that program. This will include working with restorative justice in the prison system and with people working through addiction and recovery through The Recovery Church in St. Paul. A CPE is a supported experience where Stacy will be immersed in difficult work to find her own struggles and to build empathy and pastoral care skills for others while also learning to care for herself while doing difficult work.

Stacy's course of study at United Theological Seminary has been challenging and inspirational. She has deepened her knowledge, expanded her search for the truth, and made lifelong connections. Her studies, though concluding soon at United Theological, will continue as she pursues the road to ordination over the next couple of years. Though the actual graduation ceremony is delayed until spring of 2021, let's help Stacy celebrate her huge accomplishment now!

—submitted by Megan Perrine

Congratulations to Haydn!

Haydn Suske-Funk will graduate from homeschooling on June 5, 2020, or after we have finished reading The Federalist Papers (and at this pace, it might be August before he graduates!). Haydn has had a wonderful senior year. In February he spent a week at the capitol in Madison as part of the Senate Scholar Program. Senate Scholars gain experience in policy development, constituent relations, and processing legislation by working with legislative staff, University of Wisconsin faculty, and senators, including our very own Janet Bewley. He also learned in February that he was selected as a recipient of a Herb Kohl Student Excellence Scholarship.



Haydn plans to attend Middlebury College in Vermont and will be starting classes there in February of 2021 as a member of the class of 2024.5. Although he remains open to still finding his true calling, he will likely major in something related to environmental studies. This summer he will be working in Bayfield as a kayak guide.

—submitted by Haydn's mom

Dear Future Generations Zine—Community Letters for Earth Justice

In continuation of the Youth-Led Earth Day Service, you may still submit a letter, poem, prose, story, or art piece to our Community Letters for Earth Justice project using this [form](#) up until May 17. We are compiling our words and art into a zine that will be distributed to the community. You have the chance to opt-in to adding art to someone's letter and/or having someone add art to your letter. Letters will be electronically distributed to project participants who will draw, paint, collage on, or otherwise decorate the letter.

This project is a collaborative collection of letters highlighting our reverence for the natural world and the necessity of action on the climate crisis. Now is the time to take action, and intergenerational, community-based collaboration is the only way to build the world we want to see for future generations.

Prompt: write a letter incorporating the themes of the environment, intergenerational activism, or community collaboration.

Examples

- Write a letter to the Earth expressing your love, gratitude, or worry.
- Write a letter as an environmental advocate of one generation to an advocate of a different generation.
- Write a letter to future generations with your hopes and concerns for their world.
- Write a letter to your ancestors—tell them your stories, ask them your questions, honor their life.
- Write a letter to your community with your hopes, concerns, or ideas about working together to address the climate crisis in our region.

Additionally, you may submit your writing and/or art to the Ganawendan Nibi (Protect Water) blog at ganawendannibi.wordpress.com where stories and knowledge are shared so that we can care for Nibi (water) who gives life to us and all those we depend on. If you have any questions about submitting something for the Ganawendan Nibi blog, please contact Abi Fergus at abigail.fergus@gmail.com.

The Community Letters for Earth Justice project is being coordinated by Ella Syverson, Stella Banowetz, and Jenise Swartley. If you have any questions, please direct them to Jenise Swartley at swartleyjenise@gmail.com.

Meals-On-Wheels is continuing to serve the residents of Ashland County. Please help share the word if you know a senior citizen that is in need.

Information can be found at <https://business.facebook.com/faithinactionashlandcounty/> or by calling 715-682-4414.



Rain Barrels for Sale

The City of Ashland is partnering with the Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Dept. to host a rain barrel and compost bin sale again this year. The cost of the rain barrels has been subsidized through grant and City of Ashland funding—150 barrels will be sold at the reduced cost of \$45 (they typically sell for \$85). Pickup for this event will be on May 15 from 2-6 p.m. outside of the Bretting Community Center (400 4th Ave West, Ashland). This will be curbside pick up and staff will be wearing PPE to ensure safety.

Pre-order deadline is May 6. Orders can be placed online at enviroworld.us/ashland.

For information regarding the benefits of rain barrels or about other options available that can have a positive impact on community water quality, please contact the Chequamegon Bay Green Infrastructure AmeriCorps Service members at cb.green.infrastructure@gmail.com.

Hello Everyone,

As many of you know, our son, Perrin Kamantauskas, was diagnosed with a congenital cholesteatoma about a month ago in his right ear. This means that he currently has a cyst that eats away at bone and has taken over 2 of the 3 bones necessary for hearing in his middle ear. It is also close to his facial nerve which affects facial movement, taste buds, tears, saliva production etc. He has had it since birth but it was just discovered through surgery in Duluth to fix an ear tube that had moved. If it is not removed, Perrin could have facial paralysis or even meningitis should his cyst eat through his skull. With or without the surgery, Perrin will likely have unilateral hearing loss. Perrin is not currently in pain except for when he has congestion and so far the pain is managed with Tylenol. Perrin is aware that he has an "owie in his head and ear" but still loves to talk, dance, play with advanced puzzles and legos, and roar like a dinosaur.

The surgery—Michael and I took Perrin to see Dr. Manuela Fina in St. Paul (2.5 hours away) this week after being dissatisfied with his treatment in Duluth. She specializes in endoscopic cholesteatoma surgery and teaches at the University of Minnesota. Dr Fina was shocked to hear that Perrin's previous ENT wanted to do a "canal wall down mastoidectomy" surgery on a child so small and young. She also hopes that the cyst has not spread to his mastoid bone behind his ear but that the cloudy area in his CT scan is backed up fluid. Dr. Fina was also able to take a picture of his eardrum which is still intact and see that the cholesteatoma is pressing against the drum.

Perrin is scheduled for a 3.5-hour outpatient surgery in St. Paul on April 1st. We will be staying with Michael's Uncle Al and Aunt Toni in Woodbury for a couple of days to recuperate. The room and board and emotional support are top notch. A follow-up appointment will happen in a month. As far as we know, another surgery will then happen in a year to see how he is healing and to make sure the cyst hasn't returned. Some sort of reconstruction may be possible with prosthetics or cartilage from the exterior of his ear. Michael and I are also considering learning American Sign Language to boost Perrin's language and social understanding. We found a parental hearing loss support group near Duluth that meets monthly. After Perrin heals, we may also look into speech therapy and a hearing loss supportive preschool program for next year.

How can I help? Send cards, pictures or videos to Perrin. Our address is:

Perrin Kamantauskas
4835 Howard Gnesen Rd. Apt. 304
Duluth, MN 55803

Educate yourself on cholesteatomas, unilateral hearing loss and deaf culture. Here are some helpful links:

<https://med.umn.edu/bio/ent-faculty-a-z/manuela-fina>

<https://www.mountsinai.org/locations/center-hearing-balance/conditions/cholesteatoma>

Donate gas cards or restaurant chain gift cards or make a donation online at

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/perrin039s-medicalsurgery-fund>.

Both Michael and I have to miss work for appointments, travel, and child care. I am already out of PTO and Michael's job offers no PTO or sick time. We also have high deductible health insurance through my employer. Please donate money if you are able. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Love,
Ashley, Michael, and Perrin Kamantauskas



Ed. Note: Ashley attended CUUF for several years before moving to Duluth, and she still attends when she is in the area or when we have online services. Perrin is three years old. His surgery was delayed because of COVID, so they are still awaiting the procedure.

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