

The Confluence

News of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Marietta, Ohio

December 2025

tedgoertzel@gmail.com editor

FUUSM office hours: 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday. The office is in the Religious Education (RE) building, the white house next to the church at 232 Third Street, Marietta, OH 45750. Email Dawn at fuusm.office@gmail.com, or call (740) 373-1238.

[Click Here for information on Becoming a Member](#)

Worship Services

In the sanctuary at Third and Putnam streets, Marietta, Ohio
Also streamed live on the FUUSM Facebook page & via [Zoom link](#).

December 7 HOPE – The Ribbon Ceremony

In this service, we will both acknowledge that the holiday season brings a mixture of emotions and also take time to identify what is especially heartening to us. We will ponder the questions of “What do you cherish about the holiday season?” and “What is most challenging to you during the holiday season?” Then we will decorate the tree with ribbons as we share perspectives that may help us all tap into the enduring hope of the season.

CHOIR directed by Martha Webster: “A Yuletide Greeting” by Victor C. Johnson

Worship Leader: Betsy Liller



December 14 PEACE – Bringing Light to Darkness

This year, Hanukkah, the Jewish holiday of The Festival of Lights, begins in the evening of Sunday, December 14, and continues through Monday, December 22. The Hebrew word *Hanukkah* means “dedication.” The holiday commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian Greek army and the miracle that sustained the Jewish peoples. That victory lifted oppression and enabled Jews to practice their faith in freedom and with renewed dedication. In the service, Reverend Hilary Krivchenia will shed light on the season, its themes, and some hidden meanings waiting to be discovered. [What is Hanukkah?](#)

Worship Leaders: Rev. Hilary Krivchenia & Suzyn Mills



December 21 JOY – The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

Come join us for an interactive, no-rehearsal Christmas Pageant, written by Norman Allen. There will be opportunities for audience responses and lots of singing.

Worship Leader: Adeline Bailey

Wednesday, December 24, 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Professionals posed a question to a group of 4- to 8-year-olds: What does love mean? The most memorable answer? “Love is what’s in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and just listen.” Bobby (age 7)
Come join us for a service of listening to the sound of love.
CHOIR directed by Martha Webster: “Candlelight Canon” by Andy Beck Special Music Nohl Johnson. Worship Leader: Martha McGovern

December 28 Fire Ceremony

In this worship service, we will celebrate the coming of the New Year with our Fire Ceremony. The Fire Ceremony is a ritual of Letting Go, Cleansing, Intention and Hope.

As you prepare for this service, consider the words of John O'Donohue's poem, “A Morning Offering”:

May I have the courage today to live the life that I would Love,
to postpone my dream no longer but to do at last what I came here for
and to waste my heart on my fear no more.

May I have the courage today to live the life that I would love.

Worship Leader: Nancy Luthy

Special Music: LeeAnn Gallucci



Calendar of Events

Monday, Dec. 1

- 2 p.m., **Caring Committee** meeting via Zoom
- 6:30 p.m., **FUUSM Board of Trustees** meeting, RE parlor. Decision on hiring a minister (see page five).

Tuesday, Dec. 2

- 3:30–6:30 p.m., Girl Scouts in social hall
- 4:30 p.m., private use of RE parlor (Roger Kalter)

Wednesday, Dec. 3

- 5 p.m., **Worship & Music Committee** meeting, RE parlor
- 5:30-8 p.m. MOV Indivisible (Lori Flis)

Sunday, Dec. 7

- 9:30 a.m., **Choir practice**, sanctuary
- 11 a.m., **Sunday service**, sanctuary
- 12:15 p.m., **Coffee Hour**, social hall



Tuesday, Dec. 9

- Noon, **UU+ Women's Book Group**, Parkersburg Country Club
- 3:30–6:30, Girl Scouts in social hall
- 4:30, private use of RE parlor (Roger Kalter)

Wednesday, Dec. 10

- 6 p.m., **Women's Group potluck**, social hall

Saturday, Dec. 13

- 10:30, **Tai Chi reunion**, social hall.

Sunday, Dec. 14: Hanukkah begins at Sunset

- 9:30 a.m., **Choir practice**, sanctuary
- 11 a.m., **Sunday service**, sanctuary
- 11 a.m., MOV Friends, Quaker meeting, RE parlor
- 12:15 p.m., **Coffee Hour**, social hall

[Click Here for the Full Month's Calendar, Regularly Updated](#)

GUEST AT YOUR (OUR) TABLE



Guest at Your (Our) Table has been a Service Project of UUA for over 50 years; a successful multigenerational project serving over 20 countries.

This year FUUSM will participate throughout the holiday season, with boxes and donations due on Sunday, January 11th. Please call the church office if you would like a box delivered to your home.

Placing a box on your table encourages all members of the family and all guests to contribute. It is also a visual representation of one of the many ways FUUSM serves the wider community.

If paying by check, please make your check payable to UUSC and write GAYT in the memo. Envelopes are available near the boxes (foyer) and may be placed in the collection plate, donation box (Fellowship Hall), or given to Dawn or me. Do not seal the envelope. Since all checks and donations will not be sent to UUSC until January, please date the check for January 11, 2026.

I will be documenting all gifts; however, this donation will not appear on your FUUSM statement.

Nancy Luthy

Board Briefs

November 3, 2025

Board Members present: Vic Elam, Ron Rees , Darryl Ting, Robin Bozian, Lloyd Elliot, Betsy Liller, Shari Ballantyne, Don Poole (via Zoom)

October minutes stand as published.

The Treasurer's report was given by Don over Zoom. Key takeaways:

- All revenue items are in good shape
- Good jump start on this year's auction due to Shari's generous contribution
- Pledge contributions are pacing ahead of last year
- We are within budget across the board, in no small part because we have not been

paying for a minister
New Business:

1. **The Board's interview with Evan Young went very well; all board members are in support of moving ahead with the hiring process.** He will join us to do a service on November 23, 2025. We will have an extended coffee hour/meet and greet following the service for congregants to meet him. All of the **board members contact information will be sent out to the congregation and we will welcome comments until the board reconvenes on December 1 to make a hiring decision.**
2. Going forward, the board will use: <https://doodle.com/en/product/polls/> to expedite our process of scheduling meetings.
3. A Wayside Pulpit team is now in place including Dawn, Rebecca, and Shari.
4. Service Recognition Award: Ted Goertzel. Ron will do the write-up and Shari will send a card.

Join UU's for Winter Institute February 13-16, 2026

Winter Institute is a long held tradition of gathering over President's Day week-end for a mid-winter retreat at Salt Fork State Park in Cambridge, Ohio (one hour north of Marietta). In these difficult times, we are reminded how sacred it is to be in community, raising our voices in song, sharing meals together, and enjoying togetherness. The WI Planning committee is delighted to invite you to join us. Registration is open and is a 2 step process. Hotel reservations are due by January 15, early bird rate for WI registration is also January 15. Learn more at the [Central East Region website](#).



Service Award: Ted Goertzel

The FUUSM board is pleased to announce that this month's recipient of the Service Award is Ted Goertzel, who compiles this newsletter and supports our community in many other ways. Ted moved to our area thirteen years ago with his wife, Linda, who grew up in the Washington County community of Barlow. Those of you who have had the good fortune to have a conversation with Ted would not be surprised to know that, prior to arriving in our area, he had a long career as an academic and has written a number of books in his focus areas of anthropology and sociology. His longest tenure as a professor was at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, with 40 years of service. He has continued to teach in our community as an instructor at Washington State College of Ohio and in the Learning In Retirement program at Marietta College. Those of you who attended our recent Sunday service which highlighted the Quakers saw Ted in a replica of traditional Quaker clothing. This was not simply a costume for Ted, who has been and remains active in the Quaker community in other parts of the country and now here. In addition to compiling the *Confluence* and formerly serving as Board Member and Treasurer, Ted has served our congregation by coordinating the Today's Issues discussion group that meets in the parlor adjacent to the church. Thanks, Ted, for all that you do to enrich our congregation. Sent by Ron Rees

Our Time By Reverend Evan Young

Addressing FUUSM on November 23

The FUUSM Board expects to make a decision on hiring Rev. Young as a contract minister at its December 1 meeting. A contract minister is typically hired for a specific period of time, as distinct from a settled minister, to whom the congregation makes a long-term commitment. However, UUA rules no longer prohibit converting a contract appointment to a settled appointment. Anyone with feedback should email or speak to Vic Elam, Board Chair (elamva4@gmail.com), or another board member (Ron Rees, Darryl Ting, Robin Bozian, Lloyd Elliot, Betsy Liller, Shari Ballantyne, Don Poole) prior to the December 1 meeting.

I am proud to be speaking this morning before a community that embraces and upholds principles that I believe are profoundly meaningful, even necessary. Principles like the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. The first time I ever encountered these principles stated together as the focal point of a faith community, I was overwhelmed by a feeling of being welcomed home, and floored by the realization that I was, as an adult and a parent, learning about the existence of such a community for the first time.

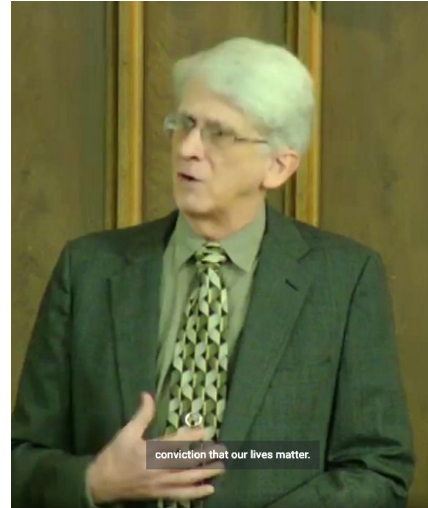
And on this occasion, some thirty-one years after that first time, I must admit to being a little disheartened, as I stand before this very similar community, by what seems to me to be a very different time. A time that has raised for me an abundance of questions. Questions like:

How can a body of legislators charged with attending to the needs and wishes and welfare of an entire population not just allow, but create conditions that produce a profoundly harmful cessation of services—services we as a people have determined we are morally and ethically obligated to offer to the least fortunate among us?

How can the government of a nation, elected and empowered to extend to all and defend for all a set of basic and universal human rights for which its founders—and generation on generation of its workers and soldiers and activists and journalists since then—argued, and risked, and fought, and died, proudly proclaim and actively pursue actions and measures expressly intended to deny those rights? And to deny them not indiscriminately, but in a way that specifically and on purpose targets those whose status or identity has relegated them to our margins? [Click Here to Continue Reading.](#)

[Click Here for Information on Rev. Young's Background.](#)

[Click here to watch the November 23 service on Facebook.](#)



Great Spirit
Poetry by Ami Rush

Great Spirit	Words from the Great Spirit
<p>Great Spirit I call for your help.</p> <p>Our land, water and sky is being destroyed and polluted.</p> <p>They are killing our wildlife and sea friends that you have created.</p> <p>Mother Nature is angry and has become more powerful and full of rage.</p> <p>Men of great wealth and power are full of greed and hate, they manipulate the weak minded to follow their lead.</p> <p>Great Spirit, we as your children ask for your help, they do not respect you or the ways of the land.</p>	<p>My children from Mother Earth, I will keep giving you strength like the bear and wisdom of the owl.</p> <p>I will keep you resilient like the mighty bison.</p> <p>When the wind blows, it is I speaking to you my children.</p> <p>Work together as a pack like the wolves. Do not let them break you.</p> <p>Keep dancing, keep chanting and keep protecting the land, water, sky and animals.</p> <p>My children you also need to keep protecting each other.</p> <p>They tried to destroy you but I have created you to come back stronger like the mighty bison.</p>
<div data-bbox="302 840 698 1226" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="397 1222 597 1255" data-label="Caption"> <p>Art by Ami Rush</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="998 907 1237 1184" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="993 1180 1242 1213" data-label="Caption"> <p>Image by Dave Hold</p> </div>

This I Believe by Elin Jones

I believe in gangs. Gangs can be organizations, committees, teams, groups of people with a purpose, cause, objective. My favorite mental image is gangs of women, particularly old ones like me, traveling together. People look at us with wide eyes. Men fear us. Women want to be one of us. Too much laughter!

I believe that relying on only one or two friends, a spouse, or children for emotional needs, purpose, entertainment—joys and sorrows—is burdensome to not only oneself but to those relied on. Breakups, arguments, perceived slights become big and devastating.

Way long time ago, a half a lifetime ago, back in 1979, we moved to Marietta to find an open, friendly town. Within a couple of months I was welcomed into the gang of volunteers called Outdoor Education who guided school children into the woods to supplement classroom science. Outside, school volunteer, not having to bake cup cakes! Nice. We took courses at

Marietta College and the Career Center. Some of us became an exploring group, later calling ourselves "The Woodchucks." We'd go wandering with a purpose for a day or a weekend. Several of the Outdoor Education volunteers were also members of the Marietta League of



Women Voters. What better way to learn and influence local, state and national government? My particular interest was natural resources.

Which led to Marietta Natural History Society, Friends of Lower Muskingum River, Dragon Boat, and Farmers Market. I joined a dragon boat team, the Mov'n Dragons, for a new sport and to be on the river promoting non-motorized boating. This is a gang of over a hundred women supporting each other through cancer and life in general. The Farmers Market is another gang of people promoting food, of course, and local crafts. My

interest there is selling market totes and phone wallets made from donated materials to promote and create a little money for Friends of Lower Muskingum River.

Besides dragon boat, there must be other exercise: YMCA swimming and stomping about to loud music.

Then there are hiking and biking gangs.

For the mind, there are reading gangs.

For the neighborhood there is a coffee-drinking gang.

For the home there is family including pets, very important.

For the town, there are historic preservation gangs, tree gangs, traffic gangs, sidewalk safety gangs, to name a few.

There is the church and its sub-groups for the soul. For me, the old dragon of buildings & grounds, archives, and the clutter witches.

Before you know it, there are hundreds of people to meet your many personal needs. A whole town-full.

Our Friends, the Quakers



The Mid-Ohio Valley Friends Meeting (Quakers) Meets in the RE Building on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.

On November 16, members of the Mid-Ohio Valley Friends Meeting (Quakers) presented a service on Quakerism to the FUUSM congregation. If you missed this service, you can [view it on YouTube by clicking here](#). The Mid-Ohio Valley Friends Meeting (Quakers) meets every second and fourth Sunday at 11 in the parlor of the Religious Education Building of our church.

Worship leader Kelcey Jacobs (who is also a member of FUUSM) introduced the service with a quote from Quaker educator Thomas Raymond Kelley, “Deep within us there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a divine center, a speaking voice to which we may continuously return. Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time, torn lives, warning us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto itself.”



Roberta Gellner spoke about the [History of Quakerism](#) beginning in England in the 17th century and coming to America in colonial times. Its founding leader, George Fox, emphasized building a direct connection to God without formal clergy and ritualized worship. Quakers emphasized equality and pacifism. The state of Pennsylvania, awarded by the King of England to William Penn, became a refuge of religious freedom for all sects. Quakers, and particularly Quaker women, were very active in the abolitionist movement.



Many Quakers settled in southwestern Ohio after the Civil War. There are 48 Quaker meetings today in Ohio, and one Quaker college, Wilmington College. Roberta first got in touch with Quakerism about six years ago, when she was doing research on Quaker quilts.

Jane Hearne used the mnemonic [SPICES to discuss the Quaker Testimonies](#) which traditionally are Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship. Jane said “I prefer the



broader, deeper concept of Equity vs. Equality. And for the last 'S', some use Stewardship, some use Sustainability." The core spiritual belief of Quakers is that there is that of God or The Spirit in everyone, not just people you like.



Haley Gilbert discovered Quakerism about three years ago after a struggle with cancer. She found the Mid Ohio Valley Quaker Meeting and appreciated the rich silence and the wisdom of Quaker leaders. The following words from William Penn were inspiring at that point in her spiritual journey: "I expect to pass through life but once. If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again." She finds meaning in the small things she can do for other people. She invited everyone to "enjoy the silence with us, enjoy the peace and listen for the light to speak to

you."

Nate Wright has attended Quaker meetings since his mother brought him to Meeting as a small child in the Netherlands. Although he went to Catholic school, Sunday was for the Quakers. After the family moved to the United States he enjoyed many Quaker activities including workshops on nonviolence, potlucks and camps in the Adirondacks. He concluded that "the dream of peace is a great one, and it is very much alive with us.



In the "joys and sorrows" at the end of the service, Ted Goertzel (who is also a member of our congregation, and edits this newsletter) shared his costume, first used at the Medford, NJ, Friends' Meeting's Christmas Concert (with a Unitarian choir). He expressed regret that the Quakers failed to protect their brand, allowing Quaker Oats to misuse it. He forgot to bring another Quaker artifact he has, a bottle of Old Quaker Bourbon Whiskey which was found on the Lawton farm in Barlow. The Quaker brand didn't do well in marketing whiskey. (photo by Nancy Luthy),