



# Bellringer

## April 2024

**Instead of telling you what to believe, we thought you might have a few ideas of your own**



### **APRIL'S THEME: THE GIFT OF INTERDEPENDENCE**

**April 7: TED Talk: Greening the Ghetto.** In an emotionally charged talk, activist Majora Carter details her fight for environmental justice in the South Bronx -- and shows how minority neighborhoods suffer the most from flawed urban policy. We'll also see some of her successes spotlighted. Brian Warren will lead our discussion.

**April 14: OUUC In Our Lives.** This Sunday is a time for talking together about the experience of being in the OUUC congregation, in our Historic Building, seeking Modern Spirituality. It is also a time for experiencing the camaraderie that singing generates from the brain out, with masterful pianist Bob Perry making it easy to raise our voices in song.

Marianna Carney & Jen Biermann will speak to their

personal meanings about OUUC, and will facilitate any and all those present in sharing their own meanings about our congregation, and hopes for the future.

**April 21: Interdependence - Entangled & Evolving Together.** In celebration of Earth Day, we lift up wisdom from humanity and beyond, to re-member who we are in Earth's unfolding story of co-creation, justice and Love. Our service will be led by Zellda Zelle & Rev. Mary.

*Before the service, 9:15-10:30 a.m., Rev. Mary invites you to join her in the Minister's Office for a Growth Brainstorm & Check-in.*

*Following the service, join us for a Potluck Lunch and Game Afternoon. See page 5 for details.*

**April 28: Interdependence.** The term "interdependence" is used a lot these days, but what does it actually mean? Interdependence is the state of being interconnected with others. More specifically, it is a situation in which two or more people depend on or affect each other such that the actions of one will influence the other. We're also interdependent with nature.

This concept has far-reaching implications for our individual and collective well-being. Join us as we discuss the characteristics of interdependence and the advantages of being interdependent. This knowledge can help us create more supportive and cooperative relationships that benefit everyone and everything involved. Our service will be led by Linda Rich.



## APRIL SHOWERS BRING...

It's the time of year when the people of Olmsted Unitarian Universalist Congregation are asked to pledge support of our community in Fiscal Year 25, which begins July 1, 2024 and runs through June 30, 2025.

Our pledge drive officially begins April 7 and runs through May 5.

There is a very strong (tho' small) core of congregants who show up most Sundays. If you have not joined us for a while, you might be amazed to stop by and sense the great community that has been re-generated post-COVID. People are coming down into Coe Hall at the conclusion of services about noon, and staying until 1pm! Very often some of us are there till 1:30 and even longer! This is happening whether or not there is a full spread of food! All these exclamation points are warranted – it really is amazing! We enjoy each other's presence, and welcome all who show. We are accepting, curious, connecting. We are embodying our new apothegm:

### **Modern Spirituality, Historic Building**

Yet, we long for more of the OUUC family to join us on Sundays in Coe Hall. We long for people in the surrounding areas of North Olmsted and beyond, who are themselves pursuing Modern Spirituality, to join us in our Historic Building, discover UUism, and experience the cordiality and rapport that we can generate together.

We are very fortunate that we own our building and are a non-profit corporation, so we have neither mortgage, nor rent, nor property taxes to pay from pledged funds. Yet we do need money for building & grounds upkeep, utilities, supplies, our website and digital communications, and of course compensation for the staff (the Children's Religious Explo-

## ...MAY PLEDGES

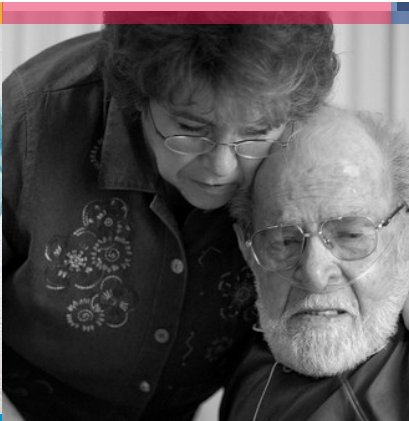
ration Coordinator, Office Manager, and Janitor).

You might have noticed that the list of expenses above does not mention compensation for our minister. By now you know that Rev. Mary will be retiring at the end of the year, June 30. In FY25 we will no longer have the obligation to compensate her, although we do plan to pay speaker's fees for professional visitors in our pulpit.

The Board has decided that after Rev. Mary leaves, we will take some time to sort out what we want in another minister. As a congregation, we will decide, for example, what strengths are we looking for in a new minister? What goals shall guide the new minister's work, which tasks must that person undertake, which tasks will the congregation take full responsibility for, and which tasks and activities can be let go?

This past year, your board has given great consideration to the upkeep of our grounds: the failing trees in the back of our beautiful property, and the barn. There are some marvelous upgrades in the lighting and other enhancements in the church building. Security improvements are in the works. We have also paid attention to procedures and policies, and our communications within the congregation and reaching beyond. We are satisfied with our modest financial position and happy that there is such a strong push to continue to operate. Of course, the success of this Pledge Drive will be taken as a clear indicator of what the Future holds for OUUC.

Please look for pledge materials over the next weeks, and be as generous as you can be, so that we can continue to offer Modern Spirituality, and spread our good cheer and liberal beliefs to a wider circle and grow OUUC.



## REV. MARY'S MUSINGS: The Gift of Interdependence



As I sat pondering Interdependence, I learned of today's collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, caused by a cargo ship colliding with it. I had a visceral response: a sweeping sensation of energy - compassion (and goose bumps), an ache in my heart.

It immediately opened me to all my experiences of collapse: revealing,

re-memembering myself as part of something larger: the human family, the family of being.

Not just as concept or abstract value. A lived, living and felt reality.

We've all experienced forms of collapse: From 9/11 to wild fires to earthquakes to war zones. We are wired to reach out and help.

After 9/11, news from around the world declared, "We are all Americans today." And then, instead of being lifted by that wave of interdependence, our government declared war on Iraq. Lines were drawn. Compassion faded.

Interdependence is.

It is driven beneath the facade of cultural individualism.

The human family needs us to live from interdependence, if we are to make a shift that will save democracy and the planet.

In our spiritual communities, how will we support one another in becoming more aware and sensitive to our interdependence?

Today I am thinking of the emergency workers, putting themselves at risk to rescue those who were on the bridge, even as the structure continues to collapse. Grateful for their courage. Breathing with them and with their families. Calling myself to be more aware and responsive to our "inter-being."

May we continue to ask ourselves and to notice:

How is interdependence calling us today? How does it need us?

How will we support one another in living from interdependence?

In Fellowship,  
Rev. Mary

## JOIN US TO HONOR REV. MARY & WISH HER WELL!

On Sunday, May 19, following the service, we will gather in Coe Hall to celebrate Rev. Mary's ministry with us at OUUC and wish her the very best as she

sets out on a new chapter in her life. More information will follow, but for now mark the date on your calendar and plan to join us!



# Religious Education



## OUR RE THEME FOR APRIL IS INTERDEPENDENCE

**April 7:** In listening to the story of "The Grumpy Gecko", we'll hear how the gecko learns we are all connected. According to the African concept of Ubuntu, we are human through the relationships and connections that we make. A person is a person through other people. We are made for interdependence. We'll be exploring this idea with yoga. Jessica Watts and Sheryl Chow will lead.

**April 14:** As Earth Day nears, Emily Williams and Sheryl Chow

will be leading a field-trip to explore nature in our beloved Metroparks. We'll read "Why the Sky is Far Away", which emphasizes the importance of taking only what you need, spend some Mindful Moments appreciating the beauty around us, and think about ways we can take care of it.

**April 21:** We are connected to our community through a web of relationships. We'll be looking at those strands that build our community as we do a fun project.

The Story For All Ages is "The Journey of the Birds". Emily Williams and Sheryl Chow will facilitate.

**April 28:** Today we'll contemplate how reliant we are on the natural world. Jessica Watts and Sheryl Chow will lead as we focus on the many gifts we receive and the many connections to nature and the environment - near and far, seen and unseen - that sustain us.



# OUUC News

## POTLUCK & GAME DAY - JOIN US ON SUNDAY, APRIL 21!



Potluck lunch! Game Day! Please bring something to share as we celebrate our relationships and community together at 12:15, following the service. Stay for games at 1 pm. Fran Mulkins will teach the game of "Bridge" to anyone who is interested. There will be many board games available as well, or bring a favorite of your own.

## MEDITATIONS FOR LIVING & DYING WELL

**Tuesdays, April 2, 16, 30, and May 7, 1-2:30 pm. Education Center Training Room, Kendal @ Oberlin.**

Practices from mindfulness, gratitude and neuroscience, to befriend the body and calm the mind, preparing us to live with peace and die with grace when it is our time. Open to all members & friends of OUUC, OUUF & Kendal residents. Led by Rev. Mary. Please register with [mary@marygrigolia.com](mailto:mary@marygrigolia.com)



## RESILIENCE: UU KENDAL GATHERINGS

Two monthly gatherings will approach Resilience in different though complementary ways. Welcoming all members and friends of OUUC and OUUF, and all Kendal residents. Crossroads Room at Kendal.

April's theme is **Interdependence**.

**Lift Your Spirit:** Poems, songs, stories of Interdependence - Tuesday, April 9, 2-3 pm.

**A Conversation in Community Exploring Interdependence:** Tuesday, April 23 2-3 pm.

## GROWING OUUC: SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 9:15-10:30 am

Before the Sunday service, join us for the next Growing OUUC brainstorm and planning meeting in the minister's office. Bring your coffee or tea...and

your ideas for fun and interactive events that might bring people together. All are welcome!



# Programs/Meetings

## Adult Programs

*Meeting type - whether in person, Zoom only, or both - is noted below. Active links for Zoom meetings are published in the weekly e-Bellsound.*

### Sundays

**Meditation with Mudras: April 28, 12:15-12:45 pm** (in person). Mudras bring meditation practice into the body with accessible hand positions and movement. They calm the mind, relax and empower the body and spirit. Facilitated by Emily Williams. All are welcome.

### Tuesdays

**Meditations for Living & Dying Well: April 2, 16, 30, May 7.** See page 5 for details.

**UU Resilience Conversations.** Two monthly UU Kendal gatherings, approaching Resilience in complementary ways. See page 5 for details. 2nd Tuesdays (April 9), 2-3 pm; 4th Tuesdays (April 23), 2-3 pm.

### Wednesdays

**Pastoral Counseling / Check-In: April 10 & 24, 11-12 noon.** Phone in: 216-402-3438. Or email Rev. Mary for an appointment at a different time - [mary@marygrigolia.com](mailto:mary@marygrigolia.com). All are welcome.

**Monthly UU Poetry Group Zoom: (3rd Wednesdays) April 17, 2-3 pm (Zoom).** Poems to Live By, Poems to Wake Us Up: April's theme is the Gift of Interdependence. Bring a poem (or two or three) reflecting your experience of Interdependence. Or another poem that speaks to your heart or our times. Come to listen. All are welcome.

### Thursdays

**Deepening Circles Meditation (DCM): Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 am eastern (Zoom).** Reading Pema Chodron's, *How We Live Is How We Die*. April 4 (chap 9: The Two Truths - Relative and Absolute); April 11 (chap 10, Propensities - How to work with our mind,

emotions and propensities); April 18 (chap 11, Feel What You Feel); April 25 (chap 12, The First Step to Courage: Refraining). All are welcome. No previous experience required. We read the book together. Led by Rev. Mary. No charge to members and friends of the congregation.

**Wisdom Dreams: April 4, 1:30-2:30 pm (Zoom).** Bring a dream (or dream image) to share. Explore the messages, meanings, and metaphors, wisdom and humor of dreams. How may your dreams reflect our month's theme, Interdependence? How might all parts reflect back as you? All are welcome.

**WISE Women - Women-in-Spirit-Evolving: April 18, in-person and Zoom, 1:00-2:30 pm.** Listen, share, support and celebrate what's emerging in our lives. We'll delve into the month's theme, The Gift of Interdependence. All women are welcome. In-person at Olmsted UU and online.

## Committees & Teams

**Sunday Services Committee: Tuesday, April 2, 4-5 pm (Zoom)** to reflect on past services and plan upcoming services. All are welcome.

**Board of Trustees: Wednesday, April 10, 6:30 pm (Zoom).** All are welcome.

**OUUC & OUUF Adult Program Teams: Thursday, April 18, 4-5 pm (Zoom).** Update current programs, envision and plan new ones. All are welcome.

## Oberlin Programs

**Men's Covenant Group: Mondays, April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 7 pm.** In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom. Contact [donleake087@gmail.com](mailto:donleake087@gmail.com) for information.

**What Would Jesus Do? Wednesday, April 24, 7 pm (In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom).** This covenant group focuses on returning to the heart of Jesus consciousness and Christian renewal within Unitarian Universalism.



# April Calendar

Meeting type - whether in person, Zoom only, or both - is noted below. Active links for Zoom meetings are published in the weekly e-Bellsound.

## Monday, April 1

7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group  
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

## Tuesday, April 2

1:00 Meditations for Living & Dying Well,  
(In person at Kendal in Oberlin)  
4:00 Sunday Services Committee (Zoom)

## Thursday, April 4

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)  
1:30 Wisdom Dreams (Zoom)

## Sunday, April 7

11:00 TED Talk: Greening the Ghetto *In person*  
11:00 Religious Education for Children *In person*  
12:00 Coffee Hour *In person*

## Monday, April 8 ECLIPSE OF THE SUN,

7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group  
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

## Tuesday, April 9

2:00 UU at Kendal *In person*

## Wednesday, April 10

11:00 Pastoral Counseling/Check-In *(Phone-In)*  
6:30 Board of Trustees (Zoom)

## Thursday, April 11

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)

## Sunday, April 14

11:00 Sunday Service: OUUC In Our Lives *(In person)*  
11:00 Religious Education for Children *(In person)*  
12:00 Coffee Hour *(In person)*

## Monday, April 15

7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group  
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

## Tuesday, April 16

1:00 Meditations for Living & Dying Well,  
(In person at Kendal in Oberlin)

## Wednesday, April 17

2:00 Poems to Live By (Zoom)

## Thursday, April 18

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)  
1:00 WISE Women *(In person at OUUC & Zoom)*  
4:00 Adult Programs Team (Zoom)

## Sunday, April 21

9:15 Growing OUUC *(In person)*  
11:00 Sunday Service: Interdependence - Entangled and  
Evolving Together *(In person)*  
11:00 Religious Education for Children *(In person)*  
12:15 Potluck Lunch *(In person)*  
1:00 Game Day *(In person)*

## Monday, April 22

7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group  
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

## Tuesday, April 23

7:00 UU at Kendal *(In person)*

## Wednesday, April 24

11:00 Pastoral Counseling/Check-In *(Phone-In)*  
7:00 What Would Jesus Do? *(In person at Oberlin  
UU & Zoom)*

## Thursday, April 25

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)

## Sunday, April 28

11:00 Sunday Service: Interdependence *(In person)*  
11:00 Religious Education for Children *(In person)*  
12:00 Coffee Hour *(In person)*  
12:15 Meditation with Mudras *(In person)*

## Monday, April 29

7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group  
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

## Tuesday, April 30

1:00 Meditations for Living & Dying Well,  
In person at Kendal in Oberlin

**Deadline for the May issue of the Bellringer is  
Monday, April 29**

## OLMSTED UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

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Jen Biermann, Jim Carney & Linda Rich - Trustees