



**MAY SERVICES**

Services are held at 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 3870 Millville-Oxford Road, Oxford, Ohio and available on Zoom.

**May 3 – Hymn Sing**

Let's all celebrate the beginning of May and the middle of spring by singing together. Our fellow congregants have chosen some of their favorite hymns, and we can now get together and make a joyful noise,

*Presenter and Service Leader: Jennifer Blue*

**May 10 – Why My Congregation is My Spiritual Home: Reflections on Belonging, Becoming, Believing, and Beloving**

The six UU congregations of greater Cincinnati will hold a combined Sunday service at First Unitarian Church (536 Linton St., Cincinnati ~ an hour from Oxford) at 10:30 a.m. Members of our choir will attend, and Celia Ellison will be Hopedale's five-minute speaker. Travel to Cincinnati, watch the service at Hopedale or from home on [YouTube](#).

*Note – No Zoom link for service at Hopedale – watch via YouTube link (above).*

*Social Justice Second-Sunday Collection MARCC (Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati) for housing, police reform, and equal access to resources across our region.*

**May 17 – RE Recognition**

Join us as we celebrate and honor the heart of our Religious Education program: our incredible children, youth, and the dedicated volunteers who nurture their growth. Throughout the year, our young UUs have explored our shared values through stories, discussions, creativity, and community-building, deepening their understanding of compassion, respect, and justice. This special service offers a time to recognize their learning, lift up their voices, and express our deep gratitude to all who have contributed their time, energy, and care. From volunteer teachers to supportive families, this program thrives because of you. We warmly invite everyone to be part of this meaningful celebration as our children help lead us in worship and reflection.

*Presenter and Service Leader: RE Committee and kids.*

*Special congregational meeting and monthly Potluck following the service.*

**May 24 – Flower Communion**

We celebrate this intergenerational and unique ritual along with Unitarian Universalist congregations around the country. Designed during the lead-up to World War II, the flower communion became an expression of the worth of human life in all its diversity. Of course, it is also a celebration of spring, and it marks the end of our regular church year. Bring a flower from your garden to share. Don't worry if you forget; we'll have extras on hand.

*Presenter and Service Leader: Patty Klingenberg*

**LAST SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE OF THE PROGRAM YEAR**

*See RE Connection for information about children's RE activities.*

## May Happenings at Hopedale

**May 5** – HUUC Board special meeting via Zoom, 7 p.m.

**May 13** – Wednesday Wine or Something Else, 5 p.m. at O Pub.

**May 17** – **Special Congregational Meeting** following Sunday service.

**May 17** – Potluck (after Sunday Service, in conjunction with congregational meeting).

**May 19** – HUUC Board via Zoom, 7 p.m.

**June 21** – Sunday morning service streamed from General Assembly.

Stay tuned for announcements about summer picnics and other events coming to Hopedale. If you would like to plan something fun, please contact Jessica Drew [drewjn88@gmail.com](mailto:drewjn88@gmail.com) with your idea.

## JOB SEARCH

### Administrator for Hopedale Unitarian Universalist Community

HUUC is seeking to fill the paid part-time position of administrator to begin August 2026. This position supports Hopedale activities by providing compiled information in the form of a Sunday bulletin, monthly newsletter, website, emails, and reports, and performs general clerical duties as required. The administrator serves on the HUUC Communication Committee and two subcommittees: Newsletter and Website/social media. Please contact Board President Libby Earl [mearle1945@gmail.com](mailto:mearle1945@gmail.com) for information about this position.

## Notes From Board President Libby Earle

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My May message is about caring. I'll begin by acknowledging the care that the Hopedale Board, committee chairs and members and our congregational members and friends give to this community that keeps us flourishing as a community. You are loved, appreciated and really, really valuable.

At the top of my caring person list is Patty Klingenberg, who has been our volunteer choir director for ten years. Patty considers music to be a ministry because, as the choir has sung, "music builds a bridge ..." This will be Patty's final year as choir director. Because I am a member of the choir, I can say this: We can be a little rowdy. Please forgive us, Patty, and we thank you for your leadership and service.

The April 12 service presenter was Kate Poppenhagen, who explored how caring, person-centered relationships intersect justice, ethics, and advocacy to meet the needs of LGBTQI+ persons as they age. Each person views caring through their own lens. In order for us to care, we need to listen to what being cared for means to the other.

The importance, the necessity, of caring is the premise of Imara Jones's 2025 Unitarian Universalist General Assembly Ware lecture (focus of a recent Adult RE discussion). Jones concluded her address with this statement:

"There is no way to save democracy without standing up for transgender rights."

A democracy that reflects the values and principles we hold as Unitarian Universalists is being threatened by a powerful, extremely wealthy, elite minority that strives to create minority rule through a white patriarchal Christian nation. That world order would create a caste system where very few people will count, and the rest are disposable.

Racism and misogyny are reactions to the perceived threat to maintaining power. The framing of groups as less than, undesirable, and defective, justifies the various means used to control or remove the group. It is the clear intent of Project 2025, and the “dark money” that funds it, to use transgender identity as a wedge to split the Left and unite the Right. Project 2025 calls for funding and *manufacturing* studies on the negative effects of transgender-affirming care, with the goal of outlawing transgender people, their care and providers. We are getting dangerously close to realizing this goal. The state of Idaho just passed a bathroom ban bill that criminalizes the use of public and private bathrooms, with the first offense a misdemeanor with a fine and up to one year in jail. The second offense is a felony with up to five years in jail, and the fourth is a felony with five years and the possibility of life.

How and why does one care about transgender persons, immigrants, or any other oppressed group? We must first know what is going on. Then we must examine whether their treatment is compatible with our Unitarian Universalist values. Finally, we commit to some form of active caring.

Here is my challenge: It is human nature for one to be more comfortable with people like oneself. Take a moment to ask, “How do I know an immigrant, and how do I know someone who is transgender?” Then consider your source of information about both groups. You will probably discover that you have more access to information from reliable news sources about immigrants than about transgender persons.

Here is an action that challenges our assumptions about what we know: for one month, subscribe to at least one of these news sources: *The Ohio Capital Journal*, *Erin In The Morning Newsletter*, or Ken Schneck’s *The Buckeye Flame*. Then you will know the lived experience of transgender persons.

## Congregational Life

Jessica Drew

[drewjn88@gmail.com](mailto:drewjn88@gmail.com)

513-594-2691

We are so pleased to be growing, as evidenced by new members signing our membership book. If you have been considering making Hopedale your official home, we would love to have you.

*“Any person sixteen years old or older who is in sympathy with the goals and purposes of this congregation may become a voting member by signing the official Membership Book.”*

For more information or to let us know you're interested, please contact Jessica Drew at [drewjn88@gmail.com](mailto:drewjn88@gmail.com).

**Summer is Coming:** We are looking forward to keeping our Hopedale community active and connected over the summer months. We'd love to see a return of Circle Suppers, group picnics, and fun get-togethers. If you are interested in hosting or helping to plan a summer

event, we'd love to hear from you – contact Jessica and let's make something happen together!

### **Mark Your Calendars**

- **May 17** – Monthly potluck follows service.

***Attention great cooks:** There is interest in adding to our Hopedale Recipe Book. Please consider bringing a copy of a favorite recipe to add to our collection. (The Hopedale Recipe Book began after a 2019 Thanksgiving "Family Recipe" service. Let's resurrect it.)*

You can contact Jessica if you are interested in membership, planning an event, or anything else concerning Congregational Life.

## **Notes from the Social Justice Committee**

**Jessica Drew (Chair and VP Congregational Life), Libby Earle, Peggy Branstrator, Russ Vie Brooks, Linda Amspaugh, Kevin Rose**

Our committee has been tracking a great deal of activity at the state and federal level. Here are some highlights:

**Immigration Justice:** Butler County Immigrant Justice continues its weekly witness at County Commissioners' meetings. This month, Liz Woedl heard firsthand from Ayman Soliman about conditions inside the Butler County Jail for ICE detainees – a sobering account of an administrative immigration court process that lacks full protections of our judicial system. The call to action remains: Call the Butler County Commissioners on Wednesdays at (513) 887-3247 between 8 a.m. and noon to oppose the use of our county jail as an ICE detention facility.

**LGBTQI+ Justice:** Threats to the transgender community continue to mount. Idaho has passed a bathroom ban with penalties escalating to life imprisonment. Ohio is considering similar legislation, and HB 249, which uses language broad enough to effectively criminalize transgender people for simply being themselves in public, has already passed the State House. We are watching closely.

**Reproductive & Education Justice:** Several concerning bills are moving through the Ohio legislature, including the "Baby Olivia Bill" requiring schools to show a scientifically disputed fetal development video, a bill allowing school chaplains to provide student support services, and SB 113/HB 155, which would ban Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in public schools with language so vague it could harm students with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), English language learners, and students with disabilities.

### **Mark Your Calendars**

- **Saturday, May 8 – Oxford Branch of the NAACP Annual Freedom Fund Banquet.** Begins at 4:30 p.m., at Shriver Center, East Spring Street, Miami Oxford Campus. Ticketed; all are welcome to attend.
- **Sunday, May 10 – Second Sunday offertory** will benefit MARCC (Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati), which works on housing, police reform, and equal access to resources across our region.
- **May 16-28 – Great Ohio Climate March.** See *Environmental Corner* for details.

**Call to Action: Protect Egypt Valley Wildlife Area from Fracking:** In March the Ohio Oil and Gas Land Management Commission approved fracking on 9,000 acres of Ohio public lands, including Egypt Valley Wildlife Area and Salt Fork State Park, after just 13 minutes of deliberation and despite more than 1,300 Ohioans submitting testimony in opposition. Now, four new nominations have been made for an additional 8,000 acres of Egypt Valley, land that has already been strip-mined in the past and is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of fracking and disposal wells.

Each nomination is a separate case and needs your opposition on the record:

26-DNR-0006 — 5,440 acres

26-DNR-0007 — 1,286 acres

26-DNR-0008 — 778 acres

26-DNR-0009 — 863 acres

How to comment: [Submit a public comment](#) for each case number. Make it personal, tell them what Egypt Valley and/or Ohio's public lands mean to you. Here is an example to use as a starting point: *"I oppose all nominations to frack Egypt Valley Wildlife Area. This is public land that belongs to the people of Ohio and should be protected for conservation, recreation, and wildlife. Fracking this area puts water, habitats, and the long-term integrity of the land at risk. These nominations should be rejected."*

Use your own words if you can, personal stories carry weight. However you say it, please say something.

## Religious Education Connection

**RE Committee: Adriane Ruther (VP, Religious Services); Celia Ellison, Holly Wilson**

**RE Coordinator: Krystal McKinney**

**Adriane [ruthercrew@gmail.com](mailto:ruthercrew@gmail.com)**

**Krystal [ksmckinney25@gmail.com](mailto:ksmckinney25@gmail.com)**

### Children's RE

As we wrap up our year, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who volunteered their time, shared ideas, or supported our program in any way. It truly takes a village, and your presence and contributions helped create a welcoming, engaging space for our young UU's to learn and grow.

This year, our children explored the seven UU values, practiced kindness and inclusion, and learned what it means to be part of a caring community. Through stories, activities, and thoughtful discussions, they built connections with one another while growing in empathy, curiosity, and respect for the world around them.

We invite you all to join us for a special Children-Led RE Recognition Service at the Sunday service on May 17. Our young people will share what they've learned. It's a beautiful opportunity to celebrate their growth and the spirit of our community. Thank you again for being such an important part of our RE program – we couldn't do it without you.

### Adult RE

Thanks to all who led and participated in Adult RE offerings this year. Ideas for topics for next year welcome.

**Environmental Corner  
(And Gardening News!)  
By Peggy Branstrator**

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937-733-7327

**Gardening News**

- The spring crops have started to grow and promise to soon give us lettuce, radishes, peas, broccoli and various greens. Thyme and oregano can be picked now.
- Edging to better define the ground-level beds is being installed. The flower garden was reduced in size and some plants and bulbs relocated. Some new native plants have been planted as a result of thinning at the Pollinator Garden at the Community Park. If the weather cooperates, we should try to have a workday soon! It's been so dry the ground is like concrete! We've had to water a lot in April!! What happened to our April Showers??

**Oxford Seniors Ecology Club** is taking a field trip on May 7 to tour the newly opened Miami Solar Installation on Miami's Western Campus. All are welcome to join but sign-ups are required to save a spot on the bus. Call the Senior Center to make a reservation. We will meet at the Senior Center on Thursday May 7 at 1:30 p.m. The rain date is Wednesday May 13 (also 1:30 p.m.). A small donation is requested to ride the bus.

**A battery recycling program** is being started by the City of Oxford. Various kinds of small dry-cell batteries (AA, AAA, hearing aid, watch batteries, etc.) can be dropped off at the city administration building on College Avenue. Please put a small piece of tape on the ends of the batteries before discarding them to prevent them from accidentally touching ends and starting a fire. NEVER put batteries in your Rumpke recycling container.

**Mark Your Calendars.**

- **May 16-17 – Geofair** at the Butler County Fairgrounds will feature rock, mineral and fossil displays.
- **May 14-19 – Annual Oxford Sharefest.** This community event strives to keep useable furniture, electronics, food and miscellaneous household items out of the landfill and distributed to others as Miami students leave for the summer. This year there is a need for a special kind of help. Sharefest planners are asking for people to sit by dumpsters and encourage people to participate. It sounds like a perfect activity for senior citizens! You need a chair, sunscreen, a water bottle and an umbrella perhaps. Peggy has more information and there will be sign-up sheets for two-hour time slots.
- **May 16-28 – The Great Ohio Climate March.** Sponsored by Third Act, an environmental group of elders, in partnership with other Ohio environmental groups. The march is designed to call attention to the dangers of fracking. Ohio has some of the loosest regulations around fracking. Walkers are starting at Athens on May 16 and ending at the Legislature in Columbus on May 28. The weekend of May 23-24 there will be public activities at Salt Fork State Park. Look online for more information.

## Beyond Hopedale

### Be Our Delegate!

Unitarian Universalist General Assembly June 14-21, 2026

*Meet the Moment: Together Everywhere*

Are you ready to take a deeper dive into the workings of your Unitarian Universalist Association? This year General Assembly (GA) will unfold in two parts with a midweek pause. From **Sunday, June 14 to Tuesday, June 16**, delegates will engage in fully virtual General Sessions focused on the business of the Association. Programming resumes **Friday, June 19 through Sunday, June 21** with worship, featured speakers, and Meet the Moment-themed programs that can be experienced online, at the studio site in Louisville, or in participating local congregations.

As a member congregation, Hopedale has one voting delegate (whose registration is paid). Consider attending the UUA General Assembly this summer either as a delegate representing Hopedale and participating in the decision-making of the Association, or as a regular attendee. As a delegate you will be expected to report on the business of the Association at a Hopedale Congregational meeting or Sunday service.

Registration must be completed before the end of April. Cost for an individual attending independently is \$450. Please see Libby Earle for more information. Information on GA and registration info is also available at <https://www.uua.org/ga>.

## Supporting Hopedale

By Celia Ellison, Stewardship VP

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Numerous personal contributions by *volunteers* make Hopedale happen. We depend upon one another to sustain this tradition. Hopedale also needs your *financial* support. The congregation approves an annual Operating Budget and authorizes capital improvements. We encourage you to support our congregation, and here are some ways you may do so.

### Let Kroger Donate \$\$\$ to Hopedale

Connect your *Kroger Plus Card* to Hopedale through Kroger's  
*Community Rewards Program*

**On the web:** [www.kroger.com](http://www.kroger.com)

Upper-right-hand corner: "Sign In." My Account – will ask you to verify your email by replying to an email from Kroger.

**Create an Account.** Once in your account: left-hand navigation: Choose "Community Rewards." Organization code for Hopedale is: **HX533**. Enter that and finish up!

### Use the Kroger App

The "menu" is in the upper-right-hand corner: three stacked hyphens ☰  
Select "Rewards" from the next list; then select "Community Rewards"  
Hopedale's code is: **HX533**

### **Your Annual Pledge**

Your annual pledge payments are the only regular source of funding for our operating budget. Please make your pledge check to “Hopedale UU Community” and place it in the Sunday offering plate, or send it *via* U.S. Mail to Holly Wilson, HUUC Treasurer, 721 South College Ave., Oxford, Ohio 45056, or P. O. Box 625, Oxford, Ohio 45056.

### **Financial Questions?**

Contact Stewardship VP Celia Ellison or Treasurer Holly Wilson. The Hopedale Spirit remains alive because of your devotion and generosity, and our entire Community benefits!

