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## First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

*Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.*

# December Newsletter

December 1, 2014 - Vol 10, Issue 11

## Worship @ UUAA

### Congregational Links

#### UUAA Links:

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Social Justice at UUAA](#)

[UUAA.org](#)

#### Other Links:

[MidAmericauua.org](#)

[Standing on the Side of Love](#)

[UUA.org](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

Worship Services begin  
at 9:30 & 11:30am with classes for children  
followed by Social Hour.

#### December 7, 2014

##### "Waiting Time, Quiet Time"

Rev. Mark Evens

In the Christian tradition the weeks before Christmas are a time of waiting and reflection. What could it mean to welcome quiet and surrender into our lives?

#### December 14, 2014

##### "A Winter Light Pageant"

Rev. Mark Evens, Sandra Garges, and Debra Golden

In this multi-generational worship Service our actors, young and older, will get us thinking about the origins and purposes of our winter holiday traditions.

#### December 21, 2014: Our Story Sunday - Wear 150th T-Shirts!

##### "Evolving Unitarian Universalist Theology"

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer and Terence Madden

This Congregation has been at the forefront of some big theological debates over the years, notably playing a large role in the writing and signing of the Humanist Manifesto of 1933. We are a faith that continues to morph as knowledge, circumstances, and needs change.

##### FORUM DISCUSSION 1:00 to 2:30pm.

##### Diverse UU Theologies Among Our Congregants

UU Buddhists, Christians, and Humanists share their perspectives.

#### December 24, 2014: CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES 4:30, 7:00, & 9:00pm.

##### "Candles and Carols"

Senior Minister Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer with Associate Minister Rev. Mark Evens, Director of Music Glen Thomas Rideout, and Pianist-In-Residence Allison Halerz.

At 4:30pm a shorter, more family oriented Service - candles, carols and Jingle Bells.

At 7:00 & 9:00pm, we will hear the Handbell Choir and our Chalice Singers.

For each Service, we will listen again to the Christmas story, sing the old carols, light the candles of hope, and provide for one another the gifts of companionship and presence.

A special collection will be taken for the Minister's Discretionary Fund.

**December 28, 2014**  
**"Alumni Voices"**

Rev. Mark Evens

Several of our young adults returning from college or having recently graduated will reflect on what they have learned about being Unitarian Universalist in their widening world, and how the world looks to young adults today. A reception for all returning college and current high school YRUU youth will follow each Service.



**Gleanings**

**Reflections from Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister**



Dear Ones, All:

No column from me for December. I'm writing this the week before Thanksgiving. My Beloved in Life, Celeste, has just come through an emergency surgery. All is stable so far. Now it is time for my focus to be with my family.

My Love to Each,  
 Rev. Gail



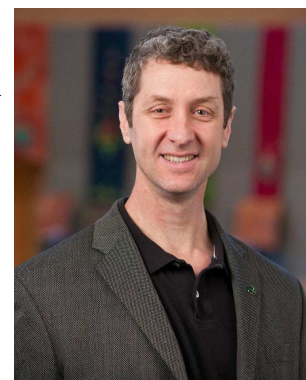
**Musings**

**Rev. Mark Evens, Associate Minister**

**Common Ground for Young Unitarian Universalist Voices**

What is it like to be a Unitarian Universalist in young adulthood these days?

Our youth participate in congregational life in different ways and to differing degrees as they grow up. Some remain engaged in congregational programs like our Young Religious Unitarian Universalist (YRUU) high school group through their high school years. Others may attend Sunday Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) classes when younger but become engrossed in other competing opportunities before leaving for



college.

When our youth go off to college or move on in their lives in other ways they begin making decisions about how to live their lives amid a broader range of options. What ongoing influence does exposure to UU values and practices have on our younger adults? How does it feel to have a Unitarian Universalist identity for young people today? What would our young people like to change about our living faith tradition which is gradually becoming theirs to sustain and develop?

Our younger adults benefit from connection with each other, from connections to UU congregational life, and from connection to the continental community of UU young adults. To promote these connections and to foster dialog across the generations about the realities of today and the future course of Unitarian Universalism, I'm inviting younger adult UUs who are currently college age or recently graduated from college to bring their voices to Sunday morning worship on December 28, 2014. If you are in this age group and might like to be one of our selected speakers, or have suggestions for readings or music for the service, please contact me at [mark@uuua.org](mailto:mark@uuua.org).

We will work together to craft a meaningful, sustaining, transformative worship experience for all ages. After each of these worship services we will host a reception so that our younger adults and current YRUU high school youth can socialize and catch up with one another during the winter holiday break.

With hope and gratitude,  
Mark



## The Business of the Church

Thom Bales, Executive Director



A long-standing habit here at UUAA is to wait until the spring to produce our "annual reports", sharing all of the wonderful accomplishments of our respective ministries. Alas, notice of pending deadlines in this regard will find your email box not long into the New Year.

But the arrival of this "most wonderful time of the year" has me busting at the seams with gratitude for the many blessing I have received from my *significant UUAA others* throughout this year. So this month, I would like to share my thanks to a few of these folks for some noteworthy accomplishments in 2014:

- To Jim Gallas for spearheading the yearlong development of detailed, intelligent, and manageable plan with recommendations for making capital improvements over the next 10 years (I can't imagine a better partner for this work.)
- (Relatedly) To Larry Cooper for stepping into my office one Sunday, six months ago, and freely offering his extensive expertise in developing a plan that is well underway for rehabbing our parking lot (Want to know a secret...if you're reconstructing a parking lot, you might want to ask Larry's help. BUT NOT BEFORE WE DO THIS ONE!);
- To Roberta Allen for coordinating the re-development of UUAA's chart of accounts and financial reports, as well as taking a lead role in the development of a strong and reliable Monday money-counting team (We actually have enough folks each Monday morning to field a basketball team);
- To the entire Our Land for Worship Team - Jo Anne Diehl, John Erdevig, Paul Forringer, Bob Lippert, Roberta Allen, Scott Morgan, and Arthur Prokosch - for always *enjoying* coming together for a meeting (I mean it. No one hardly ever misses.);

- To an amazing Office Services volunteer crew - Carolyn Barber, Scott Ferguson, Marie Duke, Phyllis Valentine, Jane Ferguson, Sally Preston, Carol Acitelli, Royla Furniss, and Joanne Dodge - for helping manage an often too busy church office and ultimately reminding us who we serve;
- And lastly, to my - more unbelievable than that man with the beard and the reindeer thingy - staff - Debby Casamatta, Venus Gregory, Dewon Lewis, and Arthur Whigham. "No" doesn't seem to be in their respective vocabularies and they put up with quite a bit of silliness (some of it mine).

I offer My Warmest Happy Holidays to Them, To You and extend My Best Wishes to All for a Peaceful New Year!



## **Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) in Action**

### **Sandy Garges, Director of SGD**



Together in community. This was my thought as I exited the building on Sunday, November 16. To celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the classroom wing, the SGD program had hosted an open house that day. There was cake, a scavenger hunt, and community. What I enjoyed most about the event was my many conversations with folks unfamiliar with the Children and Youth Program. I answered questions about the Coming of Age credo writing process, the discernment surrounding curriculum choice, which class met in which room, among other topics. My gratitude to all who participated.

In a few weeks we will have yet another opportunity to join together in community. Our annual multigenerational Holidays Pageant will be on December 14 during both services. The Pageant will offer a celebration of light and will be presented through the lenses of multiple faith traditions. Except for nursery and preschool, which are available each and every Sunday, no classes will meet and, instead, we will all join in aspiration, reflection, and song.

A goal of the Spiritual Growth and Development Program is to provide age-appropriate opportunities for each congregant which, on most Sunday mornings, translates into grade-segregated gathering in the classroom wing for our children and youth. On those few precious times each year when we all gather in the Sanctuary for worship, every person present takes on the role of teacher and of student. How is it that we choose to be together? What are we, the adults, modeling for our youngest congregants about Unitarian Universalism? What are our youngest congregants teaching us? I invite each one of us to hold these questions in mind as we worship together on December 14.

With care,  
Sandy



## **Growing Together**

### **Debra Golden, SGD Program Assistant**



Would you like a chance to shine this December? We are looking for more stars (actors, readers, and helpers) for this year's annual holiday's pageant. The focus is the common theme of light in holiday traditions including Winter Solstice, Chaunkah, Christmas, and Chalica.

The Services on Sunday, December 14 will feature a multi-generational cast; and while we have a dozen or so cast members at this writing, we can use twice that. This will be a scripted reading, so no memorization will be required. There are non-speaking parts, and we also need folks to help manage the props and serve as fire marshal. We invite families and classes to consider performing and "playing" together in community. This is a fun time that brings us of all ages together.

Rehearsals will focus on practicing the readings "in character" with volume, emotion, and enthusiasm, and working on movement and carrying props. The rehearsal schedule is as follows:

- Sunday, November 30 from 2:00 to 3:15pm.
- Sunday, December 7 from 2:00 to 3:15pm.
- Saturday, December 13 from 3:30 to 4:15pm.
- Sunday, December 14 from 8:30 to 9am.

If you are unable to make one of the first two rehearsals but would still like to participate, just let us know. Contact Maria Thomas, programs coordinator, at [maria@uuaa.org](mailto:maria@uuaa.org).

We will also have two Special Sundays this month when most classes do not meet, but structured activities will be provided for children and youth grades K-7. On Sunday, December 21, we will hear holiday stories while we wrap boxes and make gift wrap and cards to take home. On December 28, we will consider time travel as we prepare for the New Year. Both dates will offer origami opportunities, too. Older youth are most welcome to help out (please!) with this.

With thanks,  
Debra Golden



## Holiday Senior Lunch

**Meredith Ley, Pastoral Care Program Coordinator**

Join us for the Holiday Senior Lunch starting at noon and ending around 1:30pm in the Social Hall on Monday, December 8. Everyone is welcome to partake of a light lunch and enjoy the company of fellow UUs. No food necessary. Pastoral Care will provide all the food. Join us, I guarantee a good time.

If you are unable to drive, let us know and we will make every effort to pick you up and take you home. Register during Social Hour, call 734-665-6158 ext. 118, or email me at [meredith@uuaa.org](mailto:meredith@uuaa.org). Look forward to seeing you December 8 at noon.



## Board of Trustees

### President's Message

**Ken Clein, Board President**



Well it's that time of year again. The days are shorter and colder. Snow is in the air and on the ground in some areas. The sun goes missing for days on end. November is considered by many to be the most depressing month in Michigan. So kicking-off our Annual Budget Campaign on November 2 may seem like poor timing.

For most congregants, this ranks as one of the least favorite aspects of being a church member. It is an anxious time for those making pledges, but also for church leaders and staff, whose futures rely on the generosity of the members. The uncertainty and tension resulting from the change of seasons, pledging process, and approaching holidays can affect congregants and ministers alike. If you are still considering your financial support level for our Congregation in 2015, let me share a few thoughts to help in your deliberations.

During this time of year, I am so very grateful for the uplifting services, inspiring music, and supportive community that we have at UUAA. This congregation helps me to be hopeful for the spring even through the cold, dark winter. My wife and I generously support the Congregation by sharing our time, talents, and treasure, because we believe in our mission and ministries and recognize that both require our financial support.

Our operating budget this year is about \$1.054 million. That includes the mortgage, insurance, staff, program costs, and operating expenses. While this is a lot of money, it is not enough to fund everything that we would like to do. Noticeably missing last year was our fair-share contribution to the UUA, establishing a capital replacement/maintenance fund for stewardship of our wonderful building and grounds, and offering staff overdue salary increases. It costs almost \$2,900 per day to keep our Congregation running! Based on 421 pledging units (2014), that's an average pledge of \$2,164 or just about \$6 a day!

While not everyone can afford to support at that level, many of you have made pledges exceeding that amount! Regardless of where you are on the giving spectrum, the Board of Trustees appreciates your support and generosity. If you're still deciding on your pledge, please consider supporting the work of this congregation at the average amount. During this season of gratitude, please ask yourself how this congregation helps you and your family through the year and lend your generous support, so that we can continue to be a beacon of liberal religious compassion and reason.

Happy Thanksgiving and safe travels to all this upcoming holiday weekend!  
Ken Clein  
Board President



## 150th Anniversary Celebration

### 150th Anniversary Honoring Members



As this Congregation celebrates 150 years of continued presence in Ann Arbor, all members who have served this Congregation over the years will be honored.

For 150 years, our name, our location, and our ministers have all changed. What has endured for 150 years is the Congregation -- a tapestry of diverse

members who have signed the book and chosen to walk together.

During the "Our Story" Services, members will be recognized with a special chalice lighting, according to the decade they signed the membership book. We hope you will take part on the date that includes your year. An email invitation will be sent prior to your Service. Here are the recognition dates:

**September 28:** Honored were all members no longer with us who had ever signed the membership book.

**October 19: 1950s:** Honored were the valued elders of the congregation who joined in the 1950s and have served for over 55 years. They are: Philip Campbell, Judd Coon, Don MacMullan, Eleanor Hoag, Larry Crockett, Don Pelz, Ethel Potts, and Louise Kazarinoff.

**October 26: 1960s:** Honored were the 30 members who joined in the 1960s: Joan Buchele, Mary Stadel, Jane Ferguson, Donald Axon, Shirley Axon, Marion Hart, Elvera Shappirio, Ray Kazmierczak, Don Haefner, Marilyn Crandall, Sterling Crandall, Hal Estry, Ethel Lee, Fred Lee, Margot Youngs, David Youngs, Irwin Goldstein, Ruth Pinkus, Ruth Steinicke, Doris Terwilliger, Jean Casey, Ken Casey, John Hagen, Walt Pinkus, Dan Gray, Mary Gray, Ruth Lamphiear, Eric Ericksen, Joan Overmir, and Thomas Overmire.

**November 16:** This Service recognized the 10th anniversary of the Spiritual Growth and Development wing of the current church building. Honored were all who worked on the major teams that made the classroom wing possible.

**December 21: 1970s:** Return to honoring members by decade. Those that joined in the 1970s are invited to take part in the chalice lighting.

**January 18, 2015: 1980s** members will be honored.

**February 15, 2015: 1990s** members will be honored.

**March 15, 2015: 2000-2009** members will be honored.

**April 12, 2015: 2010-2015:** The newest members, who will sustain this Congregation into the future, will be honored.

Questions? Contact Co-chairs Terry Madden and Sandy Simon at [birthday150@uuaa.org](mailto:birthday150@uuaa.org).



## Alpha House Host Week Thank You



"Thank you" to everyone who helped meet the UUAU 150th anniversary goal of involving 150 UUs in the Thanksgiving week hosting at Alpha House. Adding up volunteers and financial contributors, 150 participants were exceeded.

For the Thanksgiving 2014 Host Week, all volunteer positions (96 slots) and donation items (54 slots) were signed up for by at least 111 different people. This has been a wonderful outpouring of generosity and caring from Congregational members. The support that volunteers provide is essential to the critical work that IHN at Alpha House does for homeless families in Washtenaw County.

Much thanks to the Thanksgiving Host week people: Nicol and Paul Albanese with Aizlyn and Zack, Carey Allen, Lisa Anderson, Angela Barber, Jon Boyd, Ann Brennan with her three kids, Constance Bridge, Lara Brown, Terry Butcher, Steve and Mary Ann Cameron, Hayley Cason, Jay and Luke Cavanaugh, Kim Clugstone, Brenna Crawford, Scott Crawford, Melanie Dever, Fran Dew, Bob Dinan, Dee Dishon, Kathy Edgren, Sandy Eyl, Diane Fead, Lorna Gibson with her son, Madeline Goodson, Amy Grant, Venus Gregory, Gwen Guthrie, Heidi Harris and Kirsten Mogbo with Johanna and Kim, Pat Herbst, Kate Hutchens with Mark VanKempen, Derek Johnson with Eva, Collin and Josh, Gloria K. Jones, Jonena Jones and kids, Larry Junck, Karen Kerr, Alma King, Lisa Kohn, Bridget Landra, Jim Lee, Judi Lintott and her child, Mary Locey, Pauline Loewenhardt, Tom Longworth, Brian Love, Nancy Love and child, Fran Lyman, Carol Maccini, Sara Mathews, Aleza Merkel, Ki-Wing and Louis Merlin, Teri Minton, Cathy and Mike Muha, Margaret Pekarek, Christine Pellar Kosbar, Mary Penet with Larry Godfrey, Joyce Phillips, Barbara Pickett, Sally Preston, Bethany Ramirez, Lori Reece, Betsy Reitbauer, Ebonie Ramsey, Gretchen Ridenour, Carolyn Roberts, John Russell, Bruce Shields with Chantelle, Sandy Simon, Tricia Smith, Laura Sparrow, Priscilla Spencer, Linda Sprankle, Sharon St. Mary, Brian Sullivan, Margie Teall, Lorie Otis Thomas, Lisa Travis, Carol Tucker, David Tumbarello and Holly Tumbarello, Cheryl Valentine, Vey Valentine, Melissa Villanueva with Creed and Annika, and Terri Wilkerson and Spencer. For questions



about Alpha House and the work the IHN does there, contact Angela Barber at [abarber@gmail.com](mailto:abarber@gmail.com).



## Frequent Flyer Miles Needed



The 150th celebration in May 2015 will include special guests who will fly to Ann Arbor, Michigan for the occasion. A list of people willing to donate frequent flyer miles as airfare for a guest will be compiled.

Those interested in donating air miles may send information that includes the airline and the number of miles gifted to Phyllis Valentine at [pav@umich.edu](mailto:pav@umich.edu).



## 150th Anniversary News



View the 150th Kick-off, Klein Lecture photos, and mini-histories. All are posted at [uuaa.org/150](http://uuaa.org/150). Check them out. Questions? Contact Sandy Simon and Terry Madden at [birthday150@uuaa.org](mailto:birthday150@uuaa.org).



## Activities and Events

### Holiday Poinsettia Orders \* Through Sunday, December 7



Continue the long standing tradition of filling the Sanctuary with poinsettias for the Christmas Eve services and the preceding Sundays. Congregants will be able to donate a plant in the name of a loved one. The names of the honorees and donors will then be printed on an insert in the Order of Service.

The cost of each plant will be \$10. Place orders during Social Hour each Sunday through Sunday, December 7. Click here for a [poinsettia order form](#). Those who placed an order may take their poinsettia plants home after the 9:00pm Christmas Eve service. Questions? Contact Rick Johnson at [rjohnson46@gmail.com](mailto:rjohnson46@gmail.com).



### Senior Dinner \* Wednesday, December 3

This is the last chance this year to get together for Senior Dinner. Meet as usual at the Gourmet Garden at 6:00pm. Come join us. Questions? Contact Marie Duke at 734-769-0467 or [omaduke7@gmail.com](mailto:omaduke7@gmail.com).



### Plant-Strong Holiday Potluck \* Saturday, December 6

Come to a vegan holiday family potluck in the Fahs Chapel from 12:00 to 2:00pm. There will be healthful, delicious food and good cheer. Many will share experiences with Rip Esselstyn, of Engine 2 Diet fame, from his appearance in Ann Arbor on Wednesday, October 1 along with adventures in vegan dining out on trips.

Bring a plant-based vegan dish without meat, fish, eggs, dairy, honey, or other animal products. Bring table service and serving tools. Questions? Contact Donna Estry at [estry@umich.edu](mailto:estry@umich.edu).





## Giving Tree Begins \* Sunday, December 7



Beginning on December 7, there will be a Christmas tree in the front entrance of the building as well as one in the lower level SGD alcove. Under these trees, items for Alpha House will be collected to assist in their mission to provide temporary shelter, food, and support services for local families and to help these families overcome barriers so that they can move into permanent housing.

Consider donating and taking this opportunity to discuss with children the reasons for giving to those in need. Below is the complete list of items requested by Alpha House this year. Questions? Contact Sandy Garges at [sandy@uuaa.org](mailto:sandy@uuaa.org).

Needed items for the Shelter and for families moving to their own homes:

- Large Laundry Baskets
- New Pillows
- New Twin Sheet Sets (flannel or regular)
- New Twin Comforters
- New Twin Blankets
- New Plastic Twin Mattress Covers
- Infant Monitors
- High Efficiency Light Bulbs
- Batteries (AAA, AA, C, and E)
- Accordion or Expandable files (with multiple dividers) for important papers
- Day Planners
- New Bathroom Mats or Rugs
- New Towels (bath, hand, and wash cloths)
- New Shower Curtains (fun colors or patterns would be a special treat)
- New Pots & Pans Sets
- New Dish Sets (Place Settings for four)
- Travel Coffee Mugs
- Tool Kits
- Mop, Broom, Dustpans
- First Aid Kit (family size)
- Socks, Underwear, and T-Shirts (all sizes for infant, toddler, children, and adults)
- Slippers (all sizes for toddlers, children, and adults)
- Sweat Pants and Sweat Shirts (all sizes for infants, toddlers, and children)
- Pajamas (all sizes for infants, toddlers, and children).



## All Church Holiday Party \* Saturday, December 13



Celebrate the shortest days of the year in the comfort of fellow congregants of all ages from 11:15am to 1:30pm. Join in holiday crafting, trimming of the Sanctuary tree, visiting with Santa, and sharing in a potluck meal.

Crafts will begin at 11:15am, lunch will be at 12:00pm, and trimming of the tree will be at 12:30pm. Bring a dish to share that can serve 12 people. Folks who would like to help with a craft table, run a game, or assist with clean-up may contact Hannah Hotchkiss at [hannah@uuaa.org](mailto:hannah@uuaa.org).



## 150th Anniversary Tile Pick-Up \* Sunday, December 14

The 150th Anniversary commemorative tiles that were ordered in October will be available for pickup during Social Hour on Sunday, December 14.


The tile proved sufficiently popular that there will be another opportunity to order them again early in the new year. Watch the Monthly Newsletter and Weekly Bulletin for the dates and information.



Questions? Contact Margaret Pekarek at 734-9989-3522 or [mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com](mailto:mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com). 



### **Adult SGD: Dreaming \* Saturday, December 14**

The monthly Dreaming Group will bring dreams and a sense of adventure to explore new landscapes, tap into sources of creativity, and find guidance through the Lightening Dream Work process. With dream theater, dreams will come alive. Through shamanic journeying, learn to re-enter dreams and bring back information for healing and transformation. Find out how dreams play can be a source of fun and healing. Meet on the second Sunday of the month through April from 3:00 to 5:00pm in the Brown Room. Questions? Contact Julie Tumbarello at [info@dreamingjulie.com](mailto:info@dreamingjulie.com). 

### **Social Justice Council (SJC) Film \* Sunday, December 14**

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Christmas Truce of 1914, the SJC, Veterans for Peace, and Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice will sponsor the film *Joyeux Noël* at 1:30pm in the Fahs Chapel. *Joyeux Noel* is a dramatization of the Christmas Truce of 1914.

"During World War I, on and around Christmas Day 1914, the sounds of rifles firing and shells exploding faded in a number of places along the Western Front in favor of holiday celebrations in the trenches and gestures of goodwill between enemies.

On Christmas Eve, many German and British troops sang Christmas carols to each other across the lines, and at certain points the Allied soldiers even heard brass bands joining the Germans in their joyous singing.

At the first light of dawn on Christmas Day, some German soldiers emerged from their trenches and approached the Allied lines across no-man's-land, calling out "Merry Christmas" in their enemies' native tongues. At first, the Allied soldiers feared it was a trick, but seeing the Germans unarmed they climbed out of their trenches and shook hands with the enemy soldiers. The men exchanged presents of cigarettes and plum puddings and sang carols and songs. There was even a documented case of soldiers from opposing sides playing a good-natured game of soccer.

The soldiers on the Western Front did not expect to celebrate on the battlefield, but even a world war could not destroy the Christmas spirit." Courtesy of [History website](http://www.history.com). View the trailer at <http://youtu.be/KRrr-CDXijs>.

Who better than veterans who work for peace to tell the story of these soldiers' celebration of peace in the midst of war? Society needs to hear this story; that peace is possible. Questions? Contact Mike Muha at [mmuha@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mmuha@sbcglobal.net) or Carolyn Madden at

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



## Service of Affirmation \* Tuesday, December 16

Interweave invites everyone in the Congregation to attend the 5th annual Interfaith Service of Affirmation in the Sanctuary at 7:00pm on Tuesday, December 16. A reception will follow at 8:00pm in the Social Hall. Children are welcome.

The theme will be *Love and Justice*. Keynote speaker will be the UUAU's own Honorable Judith E. Levy, recently appointed Federal District Court Judge. Judge Levy will tell her story and perhaps speak to the legal challenges to dignity and human rights faced at this time in Michigan. The service will have music and clergy from several faith traditions. Gathered clergy will bless all marriages and partnerships as well as the desires of those present to rest in a relationship of commitment and love. The gathered congregation will bear witness to this blessing.

What is a "Service of Affirmation" and why should one attend, aspiring allies and TBLGQII folk alike? At a time when there are painful assaults on the worth, integrity, and freedom of all, when marriage equality is denounced and attacked, when civil rights protection for all people is denied, there is a need to gather in support, in hope, and in determination that all this will be put right.

Even without legal wrangles and hurtful denials, the winter holiday time can be painful for those whose family might not fully embrace their authentic personhood. It is time to hold all brothers, sisters, and kin in an embrace, a time to be present. Come join in for this interfaith service. Click here for a [poster of the service](#).

Questions? Contact Margaret Pekarek at 734-998-3522 or at [mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com](mailto:mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com).



## Men's Breakfast \* Saturday, December 20

All men are invited to attend the special "gift stealing breakfast" at 8:15am at Holidays Restaurant at 2080 W Stadium, across from the Post Office. Bring a wrapped gift to exchange that is under \$10. Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month. Questions? Contact Fred Lynch at 734-665-9904.

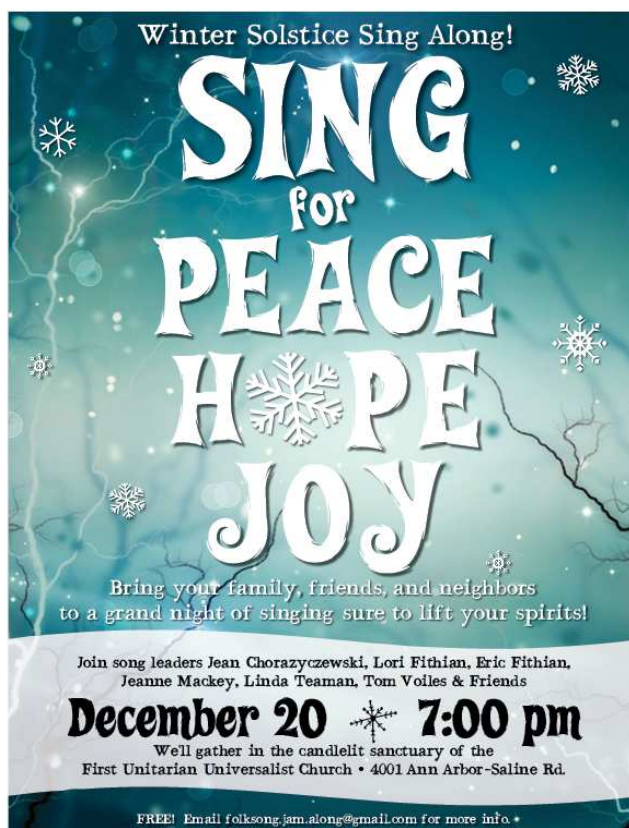


## Sing for Peace \* Saturday, December 20

Come out for a night of singing at the 3rd annual "Sing for Peace" Winter Solstice sing along in the Sanctuary.

Join song leaders Jean Chorazyczewski, Lori Fithian, Eric Fithian, Jeanne Mackey, Linda Teaman, Tom Voiles, and friends in a candlelit Sanctuary to sing familiar songs of Peace, Hope, and Good Cheer that are sure to lift winter spirits.

Invite family, friends, and neighbors - this event is open to the whole community. Spread the word. Questions? Contact Lori Fithian and Jean Chorazyczewski at [folksong.jam.along@gmail.com](mailto:folksong.jam.along@gmail.com) or 734-426-7818.



## Announcements and Notices

### YRUU Apple Dumpling Sales

Every year, Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) sell apple dumplings to raise money to purchase Christmas gifts for families, in partnership with the Peace Neighborhood Center. These delicious apple dumplings are on sale each Sunday during Social Hour through December 17 or until they run out. The cost is \$5 for a pack of two frozen dumplings or one delicious hot dumpling with a scoop of ice cream. Come and get them while they last. Questions? Contact Mark VanKempen at [mark.vankempen@gmail.com](mailto:mark.vankempen@gmail.com).



## Interweave



Standing on the Side of Love: Update on Marriage Equality and Civil Rights Protection for all.

The opinion last month by the Sixth Court of Appeals which overturned Judge Friedman's March 2014 verdict in favor of marriage equality in Michigan is not the end of the struggle.

This Congregation has stood in support of the respect and dignity of all persons, both in words and witness.

On Sunday, November 16, speakers Gina Calcagno of Michigan for Marriage, Greg Varnum of Equality Michigan, and Ann Arbor attorney Angie Martell addressed 50 marriage equality supporters at the Jim Toy Community Center. Here is a brief summary of what was shared:

1. The end of these issues is not here. Equality is possible, but not inevitable. The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) can't duck this one. Their docket will be announced on January 7, 2015. The Michigan case ("DeBoer") may be tried there, as it included an entire trial. Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia have marriage equality. There is a shift in public opinion in the past few years to support this; all must not flag in efforts to support and to see it come to be in the state.
2. How to support this? Join or contribute to an organization working toward marriage equality in Michigan. Examples are Michigan for Marriage at [michiganformarriage.org](http://michiganformarriage.org) and Michigan Marriage Challenge at [michiganmarriagechallenge.com](http://michiganmarriagechallenge.com).
3. Write letters to the editor of Michigan publications to keep the issue and the extent of support before the public and before the courts.
4. Continue to have conversations in support of marriage equality and civil rights for all Michigan citizens, focusing on: A. common values of marriage: love, commitment, responsibility, B. that good people do not stand in the way of others' happiness, and C. share stories of evolution of individuals' beliefs and acceptance, what you have heard, perhaps your own.

Click here to [read the article](#)

The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, the over-arching Michigan law safeguarding civil rights, does not include protection for TLGBQ people at this time. Many groups are working to amend the act in order to provide protection for these groups, among them the ACLU with the "Freedom Michigan" [freedommichigan.org](http://freedommichigan.org) coalition. There is concern that an amendment passed by the Legislature will water down protection by failing to protect gender expression and gender identity, which would not only fail to protect trans people, but could also erode intended protection for LGBQ people. The "religious belief" exclusion is another potential erosion and in the views of many should be opposed.

Questions? Contact Margaret Pekarek at [mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com](mailto:mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com).

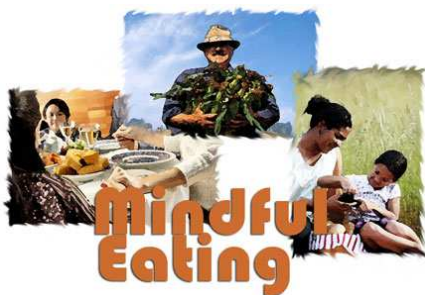


### Mindful Eating Coalition (MEC)


Food Gatherers Farm Project 2014:  
Year three is completed of this Mindful Eating Coalition (MEC)  
service project that fights hunger in Washtenaw County and



benefits Food Gatherers. Working with Farmer Bill Schmid on his land located near the church, 3,270 pounds of fresh produce and \$1,895 in cash donations for a favorite local food bank were raised. How was this accomplished? 60 volunteers contributed more than 450 hours, working two-hour shifts from May through October, rain or shine, digging in the dirt, weeding, watering, harvesting, and building a community - now that's social justice in action. The project returns in 2015. Questions? Contact Colleen Crawley at [ccrawley59@gmail.com](mailto:ccrawley59@gmail.com) or visit the Mindful Eating table during Social Hour.




On behalf of Farmer Bill, Food Gatherers, and MEC, a "Thank You" is offered to everyone who volunteered at the farm (including the cooks): Alan, Delphine and Louie Benard, Mary Ann Camron, Hayley Carson, Deirdre Clein, Ken Clein, Merrill Crockett, Diane Downer, Julie Dybdahl, Kathy Edgren, Jennifer Ellsworth with her son Ben and mother, Hal Estry, Nanna Fecteau, Maddie Goodson and Skyline student volunteers, Murphy

Guinane, Beth Hospadaruk and Stone Circle Sisters, Bob Hospadaruk, Shannon Koenig, Guala Lauzzana, Jenny McKillop, Kirsten Mgobo and daughter Johanna, Cathy Muha, Mike Muha, Steve Nason, Shawnda Nichols, Janet Nichols, Els Nieuwenhuijsen, Quincy Northrup, Margaret Pekarek, Bethany Ramirez and UM Family Housing, Anne Ramsey, Jaye Starr and Muslim Sisters and International Youth Exchange and Study students, Tina Topalian, Mark VanKempen, Ricardo Wyatt, and the YRUU. Thank you all for an amazing effort - everyone is welcome back again next year. 

## Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Coffee Project

Feel overwhelmed by warfare in Syria? Bombings in Benghazi? Blizzards in Buffalo? Elections that didn't go as expected? All that bad, sad news that weighs on the spirit and darkens outlooks. Take heart. There is hope. There is something to do to bring the light of justice to this gone-berserk, bruised world--buy equal exchange, fair trade products at the UUSC coffee project table during Social Hour where the taste of justice, consumption with a conscience is sold. Fair, equal, justice, conscience all describe the mission of the UUSC coffee project: to make the world a fairer, kinder place.

Every purchase helps the small farmers who grow the products get fair exchange for their work. It helps the UUSC promote cooperatives to give small farmers opportunities to make a decent living. Many of those who benefit are women who are too often denied the chance for success in an unfair world. Not only does each purchase benefit farmers and the UUSC, this church also makes a small amount. Yet the prices are reasonable and the products first class.

Ten different flavors of chocolate bars, more than a dozen different coffees, whole bean and ground, caffeinated and decaf, dark and medium roasts. We sell teas, dried fruits, nuts, jam, and olive oil; all of excellent quality. So make each purchase count. Shine a little light of justice in the world. And with every lovely sip or flavorful bite, know that each did a small part. Questions? Contact Cathie Breidenbach at [cathie@breidenbach.net](mailto:cathie@breidenbach.net). 

## Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) News Becky Hoort, UUSC News Reporter


## UUSC Economic Justice Initiatives



Did you know that 59% of Michigan's women restaurant workers earn less than a living wage? That restaurant workers of color in the US earn 56% less than equally qualified white workers? That the federal tipped minimum wage has been stuck at \$2.13 for more than twenty years? Or that the oranges used to make your orange juice may have been picked by workers in involuntary servitude, held captive against their will by their employers through threats of violence?

Economic justice is essential for securing basic human rights. Recognizing that workers' rights are human rights, the UUSC is committed to defending and supporting living wages, fair trade, and the right of workers to organize. UUSC focuses on defending the rights of, and promoting fair conditions for, small farmer cooperatives, restaurant workers, and workers who are women and persons of color.

UUSC's economic justice projects include: partnering with workers' centers to protect the rights of workers throughout the food chain, supporting small farmers around the world through the UUSC Coffee Project, engaging activists and congregations in educating their peers, and urging restaurant owners to treat their workers with respect. UUSC offers ethically sourced products through [thegoodbuy.com](http://thegoodbuy.com), which supports UUSC's human rights work pressuring US lawmakers to raise the minimum wage - especially the minimum wage for tipped workers.

Everyone is essential to these efforts. Consumers have the power to make a difference in the lives of workers every day when choosing services and products that align with the values of justice, dignity, and equality. UUSC's Choose Compassionate Consumption initiative can help you figure out how to do that. Go to [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org) to learn more. Questions? Contact Becky Hoort at [rhoort@umich.edu](mailto:rhoort@umich.edu). 

## Partner Church News Steve Schewe, Member

### Visiting Istvan in Romania



Istvan plays guitar during worship at UUA.

"For years, we Ann Arbor UUs have been aware of our partner church in Transylvania as various pilgrims have described their visits. Sadly, whenever I heard "Transylvania", my mind would conjure up Count Dracula. I'm not proud of that fact. All that changed when Istvan stayed at our house when he visited Ann Arbor. He totally won me over with his love of ministering, especially by using music as a way to allow his congregants to enjoy their worship service.

He is pictured with his guitar and some local musicians--one of whom is Hungarian born--leading a rollicking song. He totally mesmerized our Congregation with his charm and enthusiasm. He told me that he couldn't wait to get his own congregation singing with this same gusto.

My wife, Nancy, and I traveled to visit Istvan in June 2014, along with a small group of UUAs. We had a marvelous time, as Phyllis Valentine made sure everything went like clockwork. A high point for me was to see Istvan and his wife Csilla co-minister in their village church. Music was a major part of the service.

The family is pictured during a service at



their village church, with Csilla holding Eszter in the children's seating area in the village church.



Eszter and Steve

I am so glad that we visited our Transylvanian partner church. We now know them in a very personal way, and the Count Dracula image is completely replaced by images of warm-hearted Unitarians who opened their homes to us UUAA pilgrims. My personal favorite moment is shown in this photo. As I was walking with my hiking stick and my 70 year old grey beard, a tiny, warm, and sweaty little hand suddenly slid into mine. I was just another "grandpa" to Eszter. It was a magical way to end our visit."

Questions? Contact Phyllis Valentine at [pav@umich.edu](mailto:pav@umich.edu).



## New Members

### John and Elizabeth Hansen

Elizabeth Hansen is a retired professor in Education and Technology from Saginaw Valley State University (2013). She is now in Chelsea. Elizabeth was involved with UU as a college student at the University of Miami (LRY). She also volunteered for youth programming when her children were younger in Flint, Cincinnati, Big Rapids, and Ft. Wayne with teenagers.



John is a retired professor from the Department of Computer Science, College of Science, Engineering and Technology, at Saginaw Valley State University. He has been the northeastern Michigan section chair of IEEE. John has research interests in software engineering, computer security, operating systems, and computer science education.

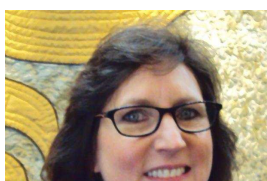


### Bruce and Jen Arrieta

Bruce and Jen Arrieta are grateful to have found UUAA and are looking forward to becoming members. "We are parents to two wonderful children Alex, and Allison. Our family is rounded out by our pets: a dog, cat, and two fish. We both work at the University of Michigan. Bruce is a supervisor at the hospital and Jen is a project manager at the Institute for Social Research. We love spending time with our children, taking family walks, and relaxing at home."




### Toni Wander




"I moved to Ann Arbor from Chicago when I was eleven. I got my Bachelors in Philosophy at U of M, and my Masters in Accounting at Eastern. I am currently Vice President at Old National Bank in the Wealth Management department. My husband, Joe, and I have two beautiful girls, Elise, 21 and Michelle, 19. I was first introduced to



Unitarian Universalism through my mother, who joined a UU congregation in South Carolina. I felt that this would be the church I would join if I ever wanted organized religion in my life, and now that time has come." 


## Therese Taylor



"I'm originally from Lansing but moved to the Ann Arbor area to go to college and it felt so much like home, I wanted to stay. The same is true for UUAU. My background is social work and workforce development. I'm a bit of a sci-fi geek and love working with people and animals. I look forward to getting to know you all better and hope to see you on Sunday!" 

## Church Office News

### Communications Content Guide

Recognized Congregational groups who share activities and events in the Monthly Newsletter and Weekly Bulletin can access a Content Guide to aid in writing entries. Find deadlines and details on how many words to write, where to send each article, learn about Congregant contacts, and more. [Click here](#) for a copy. Questions? Contact office administrator Debby Casamatta at [deborah@uuaa.org](mailto:deborah@uuaa.org). 

#### Building Hours:

**Sundays, 8:00am-9:00pm**  
**Mondays-Thursdays, 9:00am-9:00pm**  
**Fridays, CLOSED**  
**Saturdays, 9:00am-5:00pm**

**The Church Office is open Mondays-Thursdays from 9:00am-5:00pm**

**\*Note: The building will be closed for the Christmas holiday on Thursday, December 25 and will re-open on Saturday, December 27 at 9:00am.**

**\*Note: The building will be closed for New Year's from 5:00pm Wednesday, December 30 to 9:00am Saturday, January 3.**

**Telephone: 734-665-6158**  
**Fax: 734-665-7895**  
**General Email: [office@uuaa.org](mailto:office@uuaa.org)**

#### Changes in Communicating at UUAU:

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in the Weekly Bulletin for December are as follows :

<u>Publication:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>	<u>Time:</u>
Sunday, December 7	Wednesday, December 3	5:00pm

Sunday, December 14	Wednesday, December 10	5:00pm
Sunday, December 21	Monday, December 15	9:00am
Sunday, December 28	Monday, December 22	9:00am
Sunday, January 4, 2015	Monday, December 29	9:00am

Send submissions to [bulletin@uuaa.org](mailto:bulletin@uuaa.org).

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in the 2015 January Newsletter is 9:00am on Monday, December 15.

<u>Publication:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>	<u>Time:</u>
January 2015	Monday, December 15	9:00am

Send your submissions to [newsletter@uuaa.org](mailto:newsletter@uuaa.org).

Lay and staff program leaders may submit changes, additions, or updates for the website ([uuaa.org](http://uuaa.org)) to [webtech@uuaa.org](mailto:webtech@uuaa.org).

For general guidelines on submissions to the Monthly Newsletter and Weekly Bulletin, refer to the [Content Guide](#).

For more information about how to get things done at UUAU, refer to the [Lay Leader Administrative Guide](#).

#### Building & Office Team:

Thom Bales, Executive Director, [thom@uuaa.org](mailto:thom@uuaa.org)

Debby Casamatta, Office Administrator, [deborah@uuaa.org](mailto:deborah@uuaa.org)

Venus Gregory, Weekend Building Attendant, [venus@uuaa.org](mailto:venus@uuaa.org)

Arthur Whigham, Weekend Custodian, [arthur@uuaa.org](mailto:arthur@uuaa.org)

Dewon Lewis, Weeknight Custodian, [dewon@uuaa.org](mailto:dewon@uuaa.org).



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