

First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.

August Newsletter

August 1, 2013 - Vol 9, Issue 8

Worship @ UUA

**One Worship Service at 10:00am
each Sunday, through September 1,
with classes for children K- 8, followed by Social Hour.**

Quick Links

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Heartland District](#)

[Standing on the Side of
Love](#)

[UUA.org](#)

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August 4, 2013

Rev. Mark Evens

"The Transient and Permanent in Unitarian
Universalism"

In 1841, Unitarian minister Theodore Parker preached a watershed sermon titled *A Discourse on the Transient and Permanent in Christianity*. Today we live in a time of rapid deep transformation in our religious landscape. What will still be true about us in ten years or a hundred years as a faith movement?

August 11, 2013

Rev. Mark Evens

"Life in the Garden"

A true love of our embodied selves, clear-eyed acceptance and affirmation of each other across a wide span of diversity, an open path of free individual, spiritual, and intellectual development supported in deeply rooted bonds of community: these and more can be found in our garden. Come for a guided walk.

August 18, 2013 and August 25, 2013

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer will be in our pulpit.

A note from Gail: "At this writing, July 21, 2013, I am about to submerge into two weeks of study leave. Study Leave is the kind of time where clergy plan and prepare for pulpit work. I'm not sure, today, what I have to offer in your pulpit these two Sundays. I will post updates to the web page as soon as my thoughts are clear."



From Our Staff

Gleanings

Reflections from Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister



I believe that singing is an important part of a robust spiritual life. And it's fun! I've often advocated for group singing, congregational singing, and singing with our young people.

As I write this on Sunday afternoon, July 21st, I've just come from your pulpit where, in response to the swirling conversations about racism in the aftermath of the Zimmerman trial, I said this, "Our task is not to have all the answers. Our task is to listen, to learn, to be teachable, to be open. Our task is to bear witness and to remember. Our task is to sing and sustain our resolve over time."

Imagine my delight when I was thumbing through the July 26th edition of "The Week" magazine and found a short piece (page 19) on the effects of group singing that included these conclusions:

"As choir singers harmonize, their breathing and heartbeats synchronize in time with the music - creating a rewarding feeling of oneness..., the conclusion of a new study by Swedish researchers."

And this, "Researchers found that the pulses of the singers increased and decreased together as the music's tempo changed. When the songs required the singers to breathe in unison, their heartbeats were especially aligned."

The author of the study offered this conclusion, "group singing strengthens solidarity. When you're singing together you are synchronizing with other people, and harmonizing your hearts."

There is a strength that moves into my heart, into my body, and into my mind when we all sing together. There is a view of possibility that opens to me when we sing in harmonies. That strength is part of what will be required of us if we are to be part of revisioning the paradigm that demands racism and oppression as necessary and immovable elements of American culture and economy.

Each week, week after week, we are growing stronger to the tasks of building the world we dream.

My Love to Each,
Rev. Gail



Using Our Beautiful Facilities Thom Bales, Executive Director

During my 5 ½ years on staff, I have visited over a dozen other churches - always with an eye for ways to improve our facilities here. While I admit strong bias, I have yet to find a religious home more beautiful and cared for than ours. A similar opinion has also been the testimony of



dozens of guests to our facility who have taken the time to tell me how "beautiful" or "clean" or "peaceful" they have found our building to be. It takes the effort of lots of folks to make it so. I hope you enjoy your time here as much as I do.



Our talented building attendant, Venus Gregory, has been working this summer to compile an administrative guide to help support the varied ministries and programs of the congregation. The final version will have sections on Building & Grounds, Communication, Finance & Fundraising, and Office Support. As recognized groups of the congregation warm up to begin a new program year, I want to share important sections of the guide in the next few newsletters. Here are some reminders and tips for using our facilities:

Building Hours:

First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor's building is open for scheduled use by members as follows:

Sundays	8:00am - 9:00pm
Mondays - Thursdays	9:00am- 9:00pm
Fridays	Building and Church Office are both closed
Saturdays	9:00am- 5:00pm

The Church Office is open Mondays - Thursdays 9:00am-5:00pm, excepting holidays.

Building Attendant Availability:

A member of the Building & Office Team is always on-site during scheduled use of the building to assist groups using the building.

Congregational Room Requests:

Recognized congregational groups may request to reserve a room and audio-visual equipment during regular building hours by submitting an online request at <http://goo.gl/flW5c>. An online calendar is available at www.uuaa.org/calendar to assist in determining room availability.

Requests should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event to ensure adequate time for processing. The building attendant typically reviews submitted requests and sends an email confirmation of receipt within seven days.

If changes are needed after a room request has been submitted, please email the building attendant for assistance.

After Hours Facility Requests:

Recognized congregational groups seeking to use the building after hours should first contact their recognized group's staff contact for approval and coordination of building access requirements. Once approved, the senior staff member will submit a congregational room request on the group's behalf for entry in the church calendar.

Building & Grounds Maintenance Issues:

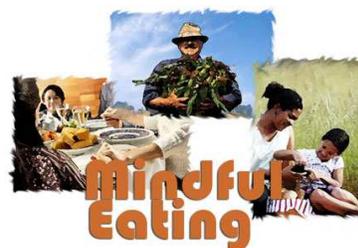
Maintenance/building issues may be reported to maintenance@uuaa.org. Please be sure to include specific details regarding the nature of the issue and location. Additional information regarding room policies, permitted items, inclement and severe weather information, appropriate behavior, and facility use is available online at www.uuaa.org/policies.



Activities and Events

Plant-Centric Family Potluck * August 3

A community-building vegan family potluck will be held in the Fahs Chapel, Saturday, August 3 from 12:00 to 2:00pm. Bring a plant-based vegan dish without meat, fish, eggs, dairy, honey, or other animal products. Enjoy the company of fellow mindful eaters, share vegan information, and eat delicious food. Bring your own table service and serving tools. For recipe ideas or questions, contact Donna Estry at 734-484-0913 or estry@umich.edu or Jenny McKillop at finnabar@gmail.com.



Challenging Racism * August 11



Join Challenging Racism on the Ann Arbor Cultural Heritage Museum underground railroad bus tour of Ann Arbor on Sunday, August 11 from 2:00 to 5:00pm. The group will meet at Washtenaw Community College (WCC) at 1:45pm. Tickets are \$20.

For questions or to reserve spaces contact Lucia Heinold at Heinoldcia@aol.com or 734-996-2796 or Kathy Friedrichs at kamf@umich.edu.



Women's Breakfast * August 24

This group meets on the fourth Saturday of every month at 8:15am at the Classic Cup Café on 4389 Jackson Ave. Laughter and concerns, wonderful companionship, good food: what better way to start a weekend? No reservations needed, just get up, get out, and come join us. Contact Judy Slater at 734-679-3497.



Chalice Sparks * August 25

The Chalice Sparks Children's Choir fall kick-off will be Sunday, August 25 from 11:30am to 2:30pm in the Fahs Chapel. Children in the third through eighth grade who like to sing and want to find out more about the Chalice Sparks are welcome. Join us for an afternoon of activities, music, and lunch. Get to know one another, sing some music chosen for the upcoming year, and just have fun together. Rehearsals for our next season will begin in October, between services. Questions? Contact Brianne Boyd at brnnbyd@yahoo.com.



Announcements and Notices

150th Birthday Celebration

Terry Madden, 150th Co-Facilitator

Sandy Simon, 150th Co-Facilitator

UUAA celebrates our 150th anniversary in 2015. If you missed the May Congregational meeting, you may not have heard...We're going to have a big birthday celebration soon.

This congregation formally organized on May 14, 1865 as the First Congregational Unitarian Society of Ann Arbor, Michigan. With our 150th birthday coming up in 2015 we will be reflecting, appreciating, and celebrating this big milestone from September 2014 through June 2015 with many special events and a grand finale service and celebration in May or June of 2015.



Who were we in 1865? Who are we today? Who will we be in 2165?

We are hoping that every person and every group that is a part of UUAA will take some time in the upcoming congregational year 2013-2014 to plan a way to have a joyful role in the 2014-15 year of celebrations. Land management plant 150 trees? Archives create a historic photo display? Humanists print a booklet of our congregation's historic contributions to the Humanist movement? Lots of possibilities.

A new group, the History Detectives, will be gathering some of our stories from the past. Want to join?

If you have ideas for how we should mark our 150th, send them to birthday150@uuaa.org.



Adult Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD)

Those who are working to revitalize the adult SGD program have heard an expressed desire for small-group dialogue to more deeply explore issues that matter. Opportunities to realize this desire in our congregation are ready at hand.

Consider the following resources: books on spirituality and theology, published by Beacon Press. Each book has fewer than 225 pages and is complemented by available discussion or teacher's guides.

[The Force of Spirit](#) by Scott Russell Sanders. Sanders reveals how the pressure of the sacred breaks through the surfaces of ordinary life - a life devoted to grown-up children, aging parents, the craft of writing, and the natural world.

[Lifecraft: The Art of Meaning in the Everyday](#) by Forrest Church. Church challenges us to imagine ourselves as a "consortium of personae" rather than as a fixed identity... otherwise, we will either think too much or too little of ourselves.

[*Man's Search for Meaning*](#) by Viktor E. Frankl. Psychiatrist Frankl's memoir gives descriptions of life in Nazi death camps and its lessons for spiritual survival.

[*Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious Liberals*](#) by John A. Buehrens is designed to help empower skeptics, seekers, nonbelievers, and those of a liberal and progressive outlook to reclaim the *Bible* from literalists.

These are opportunities ready to use. To learn more about the available discussion and study guides, contact Charley Burleigh at chburleigh@aol.com. To facilitate a class or discussion group, contact Sandy Garges, Director of SGD, at sandy@uuua.org for a proposal form.



Interweave



Pride events and parades in June ended with a celebration of the overturning of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and Proposal 8 in California. Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer was one of many community leaders to speak at the Jim Toy Community Center. Interweave, local faith community friends, and many others came together to rejoice.

Over the 4th of July weekend, Victor Hola and Scott Ferguson graciously hosted a

DOMA celebration at their home.

Interweave will be programming in a variety of ways during the 2013-14 church year. There will be two potluck meetings: October 15, 2013 for National Coming Out Day and February 18, 2014 for Standing on the Side of Love. On December 17, 2013, the group will collaborate on the annual Service of Affirmation. In April 2014 (date pending) Interweave will host an annual Congregational retreat.

"Interweave Circles" will be introduced after both services, every other month beginning September 8, 2013. These circles will facilitate deeper connections with each other and widen our embrace to continue to welcome new people to Interweave and to UUA. The smaller group circles will offer support, education, socializing, and spiritual reflection. TBLGQI people, friends, and allies are welcome.



Come to the first Interweave Circle on Sunday, September 8 at 10:45am or 12:45pm. Questions? Contact Leigh A. Robertson at leigrobe@umich.edu.



Denominational Connections Team (DCT)



DCT serves as a conduit for the exchange of information between UUAA and the wider UU community, providing our congregation and the denomination with a vibrant means of cooperating together and strengthening our identity as UU's. DCT chair, Roberta Allen can be contacted at bert7allen@gmail.com.

DCT will be working with General Assembly (GA) attendees on ways to bring pieces of GA back to share with the congregation. Below is one story of how the General Assembly (GA) experience can inspire us.

Reflecting on her first visit to GA, Els Nieuwenhuijsen documented her positive observations about accessibility issues for people with disabilities at GA, building on her expertise and interest. She presented this informal paper to the UUA Director of GA Services. It was well received. She plans is to share the report with the congregation at a later date.

Els discovered that the UUA Equal Access Committee (EAC) is coordinating a Disability/Ability Action program to pilot test an *Accessibility Certification Toolkit* to be given to all UU churches nationwide. This is in line with research she and local community members have conducted, but were not able to bring to fruition. With support of our Pastoral Care committee, endorsed by our Senior Minister, Els inquired for UUAA to join this pilot effort. She received a positive message from the chair of the UUA EAC, Rev. Barbara Meyers, that indeed we can join this effort. More details will follow.



The Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) for 2012-2016, *Reproductive Justice: Expanding our Social Justice Calling*, will be in full swing at UUAA during the 2013-2014 program year. The kick-off event featuring State Senator Rebekah Warren will be Saturday, September 21, from 9:30 to 11:30am. A series of monthly discussions with topics from the recommended CSAI curriculum will follow. Stop by our table during Social Hour for more information or email Roberta Allen at bert71allen@gmail.com.



Social Justice Council (SJC)

SJC teams, prepare for an invitation to a September meeting. The group plans to discuss the application for grants and yearly reports. SJC would like to hear about your team's plans for the coming year. The forms for funding requests and yearly reports can be found at uuaa.org/social-justice/council. SJC meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm. Contact Carolyn Madden at cgmadden@gmail.com or Kate Warner at kpwarner@umich.edu.

The SJC table is staffed on Sundays during Social Hour. Group members are ready to let you know about possible involvement in social actions. For example, the Reproductive

Justice group is gearing up for an active year and would appreciate your participation.



Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN)

"Get angry. Get very angry. Then get informed. And get organized." Those were the words of Rev. Jeff Lieberman, senior minister of the Midland UU Church. The Midland UU Church is pilot testing the UUA's reproductive justice curriculum that accompanies UUA's most recent UU Congregational Study/Action Issue. The DCT and the SJC will be offering reproductive justice classes covering that curriculum during 2013-2014. Get more information at the DCT/SJC table during Social Hour or contact Carolyn Madden at cgmadden@gmail.com or Roberta Allen at bert7allen@gmail.com.



On July 13, MUUSJN held a day-long workshop on *Standing Up for Reproductive Justice* at the UU Church of Detroit. Representatives from five Michigan UU congregations, allies from two UCC churches, Planned Parenthood of MI, Equality Michigan, Mothering Justice, and the National Council of Jewish Women attended. Marina Brown, Carol Acetelli, Ellen Teller, and Kate Warner attended from our congregation.

Eleven speaker-advocates informed, inspired, and trained on many issues affecting women's lives, choices, and welfare. The keynote luncheon speaker observed that she would never have imagined 49 years ago, while fighting for the Equal Rights

Amendment, that today the reproductive lives of women would be subject to intrusive regulatory action by state legislatures. This year, 17 states have passed 45 legislative abortion restrictions.

To make a difference in preserving and defending reproductive justice for women and families, Danielle Atkinson, of Mothering Justice, urged UUs to join efforts to help restaurant workers get paid sick leave and raise the minimum wage. Tipped employees minimum wage is \$2.20 per hour. Lindsay Maas, of Michigan Planned Parenthood, alerted us to the Michigan petition drive which would force a vote to ban all abortion coverage in state insurance programs. A postcard from Planned Parenthood explaining the proposed referendum will be available at the SJC table during Social Hour.



Currently, the Michigan Senate is holding up legislation to expand the Medicaid program to extend health care coverage to a half million women and children paid for entirely with federal funds. The legislator responsible for scheduling the vote is majority leader Sen. Randy Richardville. His Senate 17 District includes our Church and constituents who reside in Pittsfield, Lodi, Saline, Manchester, and York Townships, and the city of Saline. Call Sen. Richardville and urge him to adopt HB 4714

to expanding Medicaid at 517-373-3543. Questions? Contact Kate Warner at kpwarner@umich.edu.



Join the Anti-Fracking Campaign

A common argument against a ban on fracking is that stricter regulation and enforcement would solve issues of water contamination and depletion of water resources.

Regulating fracking is about as feasible as 100% public financing of election campaigns. In fact, fracking is exempt from key federal environmental regulations and from Michigan water-use regulations. This includes the Great Lakes Compact, an agreement limiting large water withdrawals. See <http://cleanwater.org/page/fracking-laws-and-loopholes>.

To protect our heritage and our environment, support *Let's Ban Fracking*. See what's going on across the country at <http://350.org/en/home?page=1>. Questions? Contact Marcia McMullan at mmcmullan@gmail.com.



Memorial Garden Cleanup

Volunteers Charley Burleigh, Joyce Budai, Angelina Zaytsev, Deborah Magee, and Vicki Echegoyen with children Roxi and Marina started the cleanup of the Memorial Garden last spring. They braved blustery weather while digging up weeds from the beds and cleaning up the walkways.



Following the Chalice Circle weeding day, Kim Clugston and Peter Russell began to renovate beds

where grass had encroached and planted colorful annuals. John Erdevig and his helper took out invading trees and shrubs, pruned, and edged the front perimeter. Kim found the original plan for the garden and added plants from that plan including coreopsis, grasses, aster, coneflower, butterfly bush, and gaillardia.



The garden looks better and there are glimmers of its former beauty. But, much more needs to be done. If you would like to help in the garden's restoration, contact John Erdevig at jerdevig@comcast.net.



Mindful Eating Coalition (MEC)

How does our garden grow? Very well, thanks to a team of incredible volunteers. The award-winning Food Gatherers Farm project is in full swing. Regular workdays are Mondays and Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:00pm and Sundays from 10:00am to noon.

It's harvest time. MEC needs your help to nurture this garden so low-income families and those suffering food insecurity can have access to fresh produce in their diet.

The MEC is working on Farmer Bill Schmid's property at 3725 S. Maple Road between Ellsworth Road and Ann Arbor-Saline Road, right around the corner from the Church building. Bring your chalice circle, choir pals, fellow board members...or come alone, there's always a friendly face to greet you.

Add your name to our volunteer list by contacting Colleen Crawley at ccrawley59@gmail.com or go to [Food Gatherers Farm Project - Sign Up](#).



Family Camp

Join fellow UUs and friends for a summer getaway at Family Camp from August 23 through 26. Whether you come with family, friends, or by yourself, there's something fun for everyone:

- Swimming
- Sailing, Paddle Boats, Canoeing, Kayaking and other water fun
- Fishing (no license needed)
- Mountain Biking
- Climbing Wall & Archery
- Ropes Courses
- Bird Watching & Nature Hikes
- Interactive Group Discussions
- Campfires with S'mores & Sing-Alongs
- Music (bring your instruments & voices!)



Where?

YMCA Camp Pinewood, www.camppinewood.com, near Muskegon, MI.

How do I register?

Click to download camp information and the registration form.

Questions?



Call YMCA Camp Pinewood at 231-821-2421, contact Jonathan Thomas-Palmer at 734-222-0433, or email the Family Camp team at familycamp@uuaa.org.



New Members

Amber Booker

I'm 42 years old and I grew up in Plymouth and Canton, MI. I moved to Ann Arbor about 3 years ago with my fiancé, Kevin. We both love art, nature, and animals. We enjoy visiting the many beautiful parks in the area for hiking, biking, and kayaking. I am passionate about animal welfare and have been an active, weekly volunteer with the Humane Society of Huron Valley for a year now.



We are both "starting over" in life and are seeking to improve our education and vocational opportunities after overcoming many obstacles. I look forward to meeting good people and making friends who will be a part of this new chapter in my life.



John and Patricia Danks

Patricia lives with her husband John. She is the mother of five children, ten grandchildren, and one great granddaughter. She works as a marriage and family therapist in Plymouth, MI. She likes reading, gardening, and being with her family.



John was born and raised in Pennsylvania. He can still speak "Philadelphiaeze", is happily married 28 years this month to his wife, Patty. He has four step-sons, a step-daughter, ten grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. John works part-time as a funeral home staff assistant in Belleville, MI. He enjoys reading, listening to classical music, travel, and being the kitchen and garden clean-up man.



Chelsey Elliott and Laurin Tuxbury

Laurin is originally from the "Downriver" Metro Detroit Area. She moved to Ann Arbor two years ago to attend the University of Michigan School of Social Work. Now practicing Clinical Social Work with at-risk youth, Laurin lives with her fiancé Chelsey and their furr-children.



Laurin grew up in a Jewish-Christian interfaith household, and identified as Jewish before finding the UU community. Laurin enjoys spending time with her animals, running, playing tennis, reading, and being a full-time advocate, activist, and rabble-rouser.

Chelsey grew up in a small farming town in southeast Michigan. She moved to Ann Arbor for moral support as her fiancé attended U of M. She has a passion for nature, hiking, kayaking, animals, gardening, and sports of all kinds. Chelsey graduated from Siena Heights University in 2011, and is a 2nd grade teacher. Chelsey grew up with Catholic roots and enjoys the flexibility and versatility of the UU Community. When she is not outdoors, Chelsey spends time with her animals and fiancé, or tirelessly works to improve her classroom and to enhance 2nd graders' educational experiences.



Church Office News

Hours of Operation:

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, 9:00am-5:00pm

Telephone: 734-665-6158

Fax: 734-665-7895

General Email: office@uuaa.org

Communicating at UUAU:

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in UUAU's Weekly Bulletin is 5:00pm each Wednesday. Send your submissions to bulletin@uuaa.org.

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in UUAU's Monthly Newsletter is 9:00am on the 21st of each month. Send your submissions to newsletter@uuaa.org.

Lay and staff program leaders may submit changes, additions, or updates for the website (www.uuaa.org) to webtech@uuaa.org.

Building & Office Team:

Thom Bales, Executive Director, thom@uuaa.org

Debby Casamatta, Office Administrator, deborah@uuaa.org

Venus Gregory, Building Assistant, venus@uuaa.org

Arthur Whigham, Custodian, arthur@uuaa.org





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