

# First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

*Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.*

## January Newsletter

January 2017 Newsletter - Vol 14, Issue 1

### Congregational Links

#### UUA Links:

[Make a 2017 Pledge](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Social Justice at UUA](#)

[UUA.org](#)

[Geisenhainer Music Fund](#)

#### Other Links:

[MidAmericauua.org](#)

[Standing on the Side of Love](#)

[UUA.org](#)

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### Weaving Worship

Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, Director of Worship & Music

#### January 2017 | What Now: Beginning Again in Love

##### The Worship Planning Team at UUA

Allison Halerz, Pianist-in-Residence  
Rev. Cassandra Hartley, Assistant Minister for Spiritual Growth and  
Development

Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, Director of Worship and Music  
theresa rohlck, UUA Member

Rev. Lindasusan V. Ulrich, Assistant Minister

Rev. Doug Wadkins, Senior Minister

#### January 1, 2017 | Begin with Stillness Service at 10:00am

We begin a new year of spiritual quest and community building, heeding the wisdom of contemporary UU theologian Kathleen McTigue. We "pause for a moment on the forming edges of our lives, to resist the headlong tumble into the next moment." We offer one another a service of stillness to focus our common energy for the work ahead.

#### January 8, 2017 | Seek to Remember Services at 9:30am and 11:30am

Each new year, our community pauses to acknowledge and remember those of us who have died since last year's start. As we continue the living work of loving well, helpful wisdom is waiting in the memories of those who've gone before.

#### January 15, 2017 | Dream for Freedom Services at 9:30am and 11:30am

With the 32nd observance of Dr. King Day, with the inauguration of a 45th president, and entering the 449th anniversary year of the landmark document of religious freedom, the Edict of Torda, this week seems to urge us to consider the power and potential of gathered solidarity. In an America torn in deep division, what will our beloved community realize with its togetherness?

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**January 22, 2017 | Gather in Hope, Gather in Strength  
Services at 9:30am and 11:30am**

The most visible faces of America's government will change in unmistakably significant ways this week. With these new faces will come at least as much anxiety, anger, and protest as any joy or hope. And still the potential remains in our grasp: to build a community of unmitigated compassion, of radical hospitality, of unstoppable love beyond the false binaries of race, gender, religion, or political persuasion. With gratitude to the poet Marge Piercy,

"It starts when you care  
to act..  
it starts when you say We  
and know who you mean, and each day  
you mean one more."

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**January 29, 2017 | Choose Something Like a Star  
Services at 9:30am and 11:30am**

In the flurry of headlines and new happenings that loudly wrestle for more of our attention, the new year calls us again to deeper, ancient truths - the persisting value of love, well-grown truth, and gratitude. When anxiety comes, can we learn to focus these enduring truths more deeply in our living?

Note: This worship service was originally scheduled for December, 2016, canceled for weather, and is now scheduled for this date.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen Thomas Rideout'.

Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout  
Director of Worship & Music  
[glen.thomas@uuaa.org](mailto:glen.thomas@uuaa.org)



**In the Interim**

**Rev. Dr. Doug Wadkins, Senior Interim Minister**

We have turned the corner of the holidays and are tumbling into a new year. Much of worship this month will help us explore how to move forward into this year with deeper sense of purpose given the realities of our world now. I would also like to start the new year by inviting you to a next step in the interim process - Listening Sessions on Worship. The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor has been through many, many changes in the past decade. Working in transition ministry, and really ALL ministry is transition ministry, reminds me how essential and yet difficult change is. Perhaps one



of the most visible set of changes in recent years has been around worship. When I did my initial interviews with congregants, and there were about 75 people I talked to in all, I heard a great deal of enthusiasm for worship. The last Q &A indicated that there are also some strong and complicated feelings about worship as well. The format of a Q & A is not really set up to serve the needs of such a large and passionate gathering as was assembled in November. It is set up for asking relatively simple questions and hearing fairly direct answers, and I know many of you found that meeting frustrating. You have asked to express your thoughts and feelings, and I would like to offer a session for me to listen to you do just that. We will offer the first session on Saturday, January 7 in the afternoon from 1:00pm to 2:30pm and then, if needed, I can offer a second session on Saturday, January 14 from 1:00pm to 2:30pm. The format will be simple, we will sit in a circle or circles, and I will invite people to share the time well and offer your thoughts. I will listen, ask clarifying questions if needed, and take notes. Your sharing will shape what further work is necessary. Often these gatherings bring out people who have critiques of the current system, and I welcome their comments, but I also encourage people who find the current worship offerings to be meaningful and satisfying to come as well. It is possible that these insights can be easily lost if they are not present in the circle. We need to know the full range of how you experience worship.

On another note, I hope you will also take a moment to read the newsletter article from the Transition Team. It will share some of our work together and touch on some key points in the interim process so far. Furthermore and finally, here is a reminder about the focus points of interim ministry. These are the core areas of work that we agree to explore together in our two years. In February I will give you a further update about where we are in that work, but I put this before you to remind you of the range of exploration together.

**Heritage:** reviewing how the congregation has been shaped and formed

**Mission:** defining and redefining sense of purpose and direction

**Leadership:** reviewing the congregation's ways of organizing and developing new and effective clergy, staff, and lay leadership

**Connections:** discovering all the relationships and networks a faith community builds beyond itself

**Future:** synthesizing the interim work, clarifying the task of the ministerial search committee, and coaching the committee (as requested) to accomplish its work; finally, helping the congregation prepare for beginning well with their called minister.

Sending warmth to counter the January chill.

Doug

Rev. Dr. Doug Wadkins  
Senior Interim Minister  
[doug@uuuaa.org](mailto:doug@uuuaa.org)



**Upon Reflection**

Rev. Lindasusan Ulrich, Assistant Minister



*"This is still a world with us in it." - Rev. Elena Rose Vera*

Amidst all the turmoil across the globe right now, I keep coming back to these words from my seminary colleague and friend. I find they have a way of renewing my hope - not the thin hope that quickly sags into complacency, but the deep hope that sustains even when the path ahead is treacherous and the outcome uncertain.

As long as people who believe in freedom and justice are still in this world, the forces of oppression haven't had the last word.

As long as our outrage is fueled by love rather than bitterness, we can use that energy to transform all that harms life.

As long as we remain connected to our communities of accountability, our struggles will be grounded in humility and respect.

And as long as I'm still in this world, I have the power to effect change - in myself and in the systems around me.

Where do you find deep hope?

Peace,  
Lindasusan

Rev. Lindasusan Ulrich  
Assistant Minister  
[lindasusan@uuuaa.org](mailto:lindasusan@uuuaa.org)



## Board of Trustee News

### President's Message Beth Hospadaruk, Board President

#### Welcome to January, Welcome to 2017!

What a year we have had. Tradition tells us to look back over the past year, remind ourselves of the events that have happened in our lives, take stock, and move forward, promising to be kinder, more loving, and just an overall better person. Well, that seems like a big task indeed, almost a setup for failure. Instead, why don't we remind ourselves what kindness we have shown toward others over the last year, what joy we already have in our lives, what love we have both shown and received, and promise to continue to be that person? UUs often recite our seven principles, the first being "The inherent worth and dignity of every person." These are words I remind myself of when I'm feeling a bit agitated toward another person...when someone cuts me off in traffic...when I see someone less fortunate than myself asking me to help them out...when my fellow congregant expresses an opinion different than mine. We are all people, here together, making decisions to better our lives and the lives of others. This is my New Year's resolution: I promise to continue to stay woke, stay engaged, keep kindness, love and joy in my life, AND to remind myself of our UU principles as I make my way through 2017. It's going to be a year of change, learning, compromising, and being kind to one another here at UUAA...will you join me?



The Board of Trustees continues to study the book by Dan Hotchkiss *Governance and Ministry* as we work together to look into the future of our church. We have had very deep and meaningful discussions about big items such as governance, worship, and ministry. It is the job of the Board to talk about the congregation with a long-range lens as we join with our ministers and staff to share current information and find productive ways to listen to all of you during this time of transition. Please join me and Rev. Doug for our next President/Senior Minister Q&A on Sunday, January 22 after the second service at 1:00pm. We will begin sharing information about the search process. Searching for a new called Senior Minister is our work over the next year and a half. Populating the search committee this spring with seven members of this congregation is the combined work of the congregation and the Board. Come and learn the process we will follow as well as other important work that is part of this interim time. Stay woke, stay engaged, and be there for our congregation; we need you and you and you and you!

Be well, friends,  
Beth

Beth Hospadaruk  
2016-2017 Board President  
[president@uuaa.org](mailto:president@uuaa.org)



## Transition Team Updates

Erik Stalhandske



This fall has been a busy time as Rev. Doug Wadkins has settled in a new community, oriented himself to the staff and Board, and spent extensive time listening and observing.

The Transition Team has supported Doug with several activities to help him get grounded and learn about our history, and what makes us unique. In August, we identified a group of people across the congregation with diverse views and experiences. During September, Doug set up times for structured conversations. We arranged for an October potluck with previous board presidents and their partners - many thanks to Sandy and Dick Simon for hosting this event!

In an effort to hear and share our stories, on Saturday, November 19 Doug facilitated a story-sharing session open to all congregants. About 30 people participated. Questions addressed included: what connects us to this congregation, what are some meaningful recent experiences, and what values do we see borne out through our activities. Our hope is that different committees and groups will engage in their own dialogue on these questions during this coming year.

On Sunday, November 20, there was a robust discussion on the subject of Sunday services, facilitated by the Board President, with over 50 participants and the ministerial team. On Sunday, December 18, there was a Q&A opportunity on congregational finances and the budgeting process.

Most recently Doug has developed his areas of focus for his time with us and has reviewed these with the Board, the staff, and the Transition Team. These areas include the following:

- Support for the staff and the ministerial team to avoid burn out
- Attention to the finances and financial stability of our operations
- Clarification of policy governance and fine tuning to be most effective
- Connection with the larger community both locally and with UUs across the

land

- Attention to pastoral care and the needs of this congregation

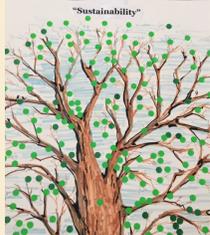
The Transition Team is in place to help Doug as a sounding board and a conduit for sharing information with the congregation. We welcome your comments and feedback, either in person or by contacting us at [transitionteam@uuuaa.org](mailto:transitionteam@uuuaa.org). Or, you may speak directly with Rev. Doug or other members of the ministerial team.

The Board of Trustees also encourages contacting them at [bot@uuuaa.org](mailto:bot@uuuaa.org) regarding transitional operations with any questions or comments.



## Green Building Committee

### Energy of Action



### Earth Day In the Middle of Winter

Have you noticed the growing number of green LEAVES on the Energy of Action tree in the Social Hall?

A recent count put the number at 587. Each leaf (green dot) represents a light bulb changed to LED by UU congregants in their homes since last April's Earth Day.

On that special day in April, Climate Action and Green Building committees gave out LED lamps for home use and asked all who replaced LEDs during the year to add a green leaf dot to the Energy of Action tree in the Social Hall.

How are we doing? Can you count the LEDs you've replaced this year and add more leaves to the tree? Every upgrade to LED represents an average annual savings of 37.2 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity.

Not bad. In fact, very good.

Please keep replacing incandescent and fluorescent bulbs in your home and at your workplace with LED - and for each LED you install, place a green dot on the tree in the Social Hall.

On Earth Day 2017 the tree will be in full flower - fully leafed.

The Green Building Committee will report the tons of carbon dioxide we, as a congregation, have saved. Thanks for helping!

Green Building Committee

Dave Friedrichs

[dave@meadowmgmt.com](mailto:dave@meadowmgmt.com)



## Activities and Events

### UUAA Senior Dinner Out \* Wednesday, January 4

Join UU seniors for our first dinner of 2017 at 6:00pm at Gourmet Garden, 2255 West Stadium, Ann Arbor. Share your holiday stories and New Year resolutions with the group. All are welcome! Questions? Contact Marie Duke at 734-769-0467 or [omaduke7@gmail.com](mailto:omaduke7@gmail.com).



**JANUARY**

**FIRST FRIDAY FUN NIGHT**

Friday, January 6th, 6pm to 9pm

All are welcome to UUAA for the January First Friday Fun Night! This month will feature...

- a shared meal (\$5 donation)
- a euchre tournament
- a movie: Finding Dory
- winter crafts
- a knitting & adult coloring table



From September through May, all are welcome for a night of fun at the UUAA Congregation! Dinner will be provided, and donations are welcome.

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF ANN ARBOR  
4001 ANN ARBOR-SALINE ROAD // ANN ARBOR, MI  
Questions? Contact [firstfridays@uuaa.org](mailto:firstfridays@uuaa.org)



## Community of Writers \* Sunday, January 8

The Community of Writers will launch the New Year with a focus on memoir, a subject that inspires so much of our writing. Patricia Kuessner will bring her experience in memoir writing to lead our session. No matter what writing you are exploring, this session promises to be of interest. Bring your coffee and join us from 1:00pm to 2:30pm in the David Room. For more information contact Katherine Edgren at [kkedgren@gmail.com](mailto:kkedgren@gmail.com) or Mary Lund at [mlund@mi.rr.com](mailto:mlund@mi.rr.com).



## Round Robin Dinner \* Friday, January 13

Join UU adults for an evening of great conversation and excellent food in congregants' homes. The dining groups consist of about eight people, so you will get a chance to really get to know other UUs in their native habitat (someone's home). Contact Round Robin Organizer Wally Welch at [wwsystems@fastmail.fm](mailto:wwsystems@fastmail.fm) to receive your invitation or to learn more about Round Robin Dinners.



## Meet Your Farmer \* Sunday, January 15

The Mindful Eating Team will host Meet Your Farmer in the Fahs Chapel at 1:00pm. Dick and Diana Dyer will share how and why, in 2009, they started the Dyer Family Organic Farm (aka Dick's "Pretty Good!" Garlic). They say, "By growing healthy food in healthy soil, we hope to create and nourish a healthy community as we begin to live our farm's vision statement: "Shaping our future from the ground up." A light

snack will be provided. Questions? Contact Cathy Muha at [cmuha@att.net](mailto:cmuha@att.net).



## Congregational Meeting \* Sunday, January 29

The hubbub of the holidays is behind us and 2017 is gathering steam. Embrace UUAA's future at the Annual Congregational Meeting at 1:00pm in the Sanctuary. Mark it on your 2017 calendar and plan to be there. Questions? Contact Cathie Briedenbach at [cathie@breidenbach.net](mailto:cathie@breidenbach.net).



## UUAA Alpha House Host Week \* Monday - Sunday, February 6 - 12



The next UUAA Alpha House Host Week will be from Monday through Sunday, February 6 to 12, 2017. Alpha House is a shelter for families experiencing homelessness. Ninety volunteers are needed to provide meals, serve and clean up dinner, play with the kids, stay overnight, and to be day hosts. Sign up on Sundays during Social Hour or sign up online at the following link: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0D4DAAAAA2EA02-february](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0D4DAAAAA2EA02-february). Questions? Contact UUAA Alpha House Coordinator Angela Barber at [abarber@gmail.com](mailto:abarber@gmail.com).

## Announcements and News

### UUAA Alpha House News



A great big "Thank you" to the many people who donated meals, money, and/or their time for the UUAA final Alpha House Host Week of 2016 that took place in November. Without your contributions, Alpha House would not be able to do all that it does for families experiencing homelessness in Washtenaw County. The following lists the volunteers for our Thanksgiving Host Week.

- **Day Hosts:** Sally Preston, Barb Gales, Diane Fead, Mark Dickinson
- **Brunch Buffet Volunteers:** Kathy Shay, Diane and Tom Bauld, Carol Cramer, Ed Rutherford and Mary Lynn Stevens
- **Provided Dinner:** Lorelle Otis, Jo Anne Diehl, Amy Hortop, Pauline Loewenhardt, Delphine Benard, Kate Hutchens, Gwen Guthrie, Mary Locey, Roen Montalva, Terri Palacios, Ilene Beninson, Brandy Sinco, Laurie Schiller, Allison Paine, Elinore Sommerfeld, Betsy Reitbauer, Nikolas Sweet, Cathy and Mike Muha, Deana Shields, Jackie Koch
- **Served Dinner and Cleaned Up:** Amy Hortop and Matt Hortop, Gwen, Tom, and John Guthrie, Roen and Marianne Montalva, Constance Bridge, Fran Dew, Lora Girata
- **Played with Children:** Angela Menegay (with two of her children), Gloria Jones, Victoria Moessner, Aida Gadelkarim (with two others), Suzanne Davidson, Kate Hutchens, Gwen, Tom, and John Guthrie, Jen and Steve Coffman (with their three children), Terry Kress, Roen and Marianne Montalva (with three children), Virginia and Don Luke (with their two grandchildren), Benjamin and Seth Childs, Paul and Nicole Albanese (and their children), Doug and Katen Park (with two children), Jay and Dorothy Cavanaugh (with Luke and Emma), Amie Anderson and Jamie Krake (with Arlo), Lara Brown (with Sophia and Mateo), Ann Brennan (with Joe and Katie), Melissa Villanueva (with Creed and Annika)
- **Overnight Hosts:** Jim Schaefer, Ilene Beninson, Kathy Friedrichs, Jim Lee, Carrie Hatcher-Kay

If I have misspelled or missed any names, please accept my apologies!

Thank you again to a wonderful group of volunteers.

Angela Barber  
UAAA Alpha House Coordinator  
[abarber@gmail.com](mailto:abarber@gmail.com)

## Sharing the Collection: 38% Growth in Donations



UAAA's generosity towards Washtenaw County non-profit Sharing-the-Collection recipients has increased 38% since 2013 as expressed in the increase of the First Sunday Sharing-the-Collection receipts. In 2013, we collected \$15,649. Over the last three years, we averaged \$21,613. In addition, these past three years we have given to six new recipients, and in 2017 we have selected four first-time applicants to help those in need.

Thank you for your donations to our First Sunday Sharing the Collection. In particular, thanks to the Facilitators who served in either 2014, 2015, or 2016, namely: David Allen, Lynn Ayres, Mary Ann Camron, Bob Dinan, John Frank, James Johnson, Theresa Rohlck, and Facilitator and Chair of Sharing the Collection Terry Madden.

Special recognition is given to members of the UAAA staff: Office Administrator Debby Casamatta, Welcome Ministries Coordinator Hannah Hotchkiss, Custodian Arthur Whigham, and Interim Administrator Ed Lynn for making the Sunday operation run so smoothly, and to the Director of Worship & Music Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout for promoting Sharing the Collection from the pulpit and integrating it into the theme of the Sunday Service.

For a list of the names and dates of the 2017 recipients, as well as the names and amounts given to each of our 2013 - 2016 recipients, visit the UAAA website at [www.uaaa.org](http://www.uaaa.org) and enter "Sharing the Collection" in the search box at the top of the page. For questions or more information, email the 2017 Facilitator and Chair of Sharing the Collection Bob Dinan at [bdinan@yahoo.com](mailto:bdinan@yahoo.com).



## Partner Church: Transylvania



### Preparing for 450th Anniversary of the Edict of Torda

King John Sigismund of Transylvania signed into law the Edict of Torda in 1568, pronouncing religious freedom for all. Certain sentences continue to ring true for us and are worthy of action:

*"... no one shall be reviled for his religion by anyone, ..., and it is not permitted that anyone should threaten anyone else by imprisonment or by removal from his post for his teaching."*

Our partner church in Kézdivásárhely, Romania, and other Unitarian congregations in Transylvania continue to honor the author of these words, Francis David, even if the freedom announced was short lived for them. Our partnership, entering its 20th year in 2017, has helped us understand more clearly how privileged we have been to choose our spiritual path. And the celebration reminds us to continue to proclaim these truths. If you have questions about UAAA Partner Church: Transylvania, contact Phyllis Valentine at [pav@umich.edu](mailto:pav@umich.edu).



**Memorial Reception Team Co-Hosts Needed**

Have you ever heard of the Memorial Reception Team? This team helps to hold a memorial reception for a family member or friend at UUAA. Team members help set out food for the occasion, maintain a smooth flow during the reception, and clean up afterwards. Team leadership organizes team members and acts as the liaison with the family, caterers, and UUAA staff. Our previous team leader has taken on extra job duties, so we are looking for two volunteers to co-lead the group. Are you an organizer? Is there someone you like to work with? Contact Office Administrator Debby Casamatta at [deborah@uuaa.org](mailto:deborah@uuaa.org).



## Office News

### Building Schedule and Publication Deadlines

#### Building Hours

**Sundays**| 9:00am-4:00pm

**Mondays-Thursdays**| 9:00am-9:00pm

**1st & 3rd Fridays**| 5:00pm-9:00pm

**Other Fridays**| Closed

**Saturdays**| 9:00am-4:00pm

**Sunday, January 1 - Tuesday, January 3**| The UUAA building and office will close Sunday, January 1 at noon and will reopen Tuesday, January 3 at 9:00am.

**Church Office Hours**| Mondays-Thursdays from 9:00am-5:00pm

**Telephone**| 734-665-6158

**Fax**| 734-665-7895

**General Email**| [office@uuaa.org](mailto:office@uuaa.org)

#### Communicating at UUAA

The deadline for submitting UUAA events, news, and program notices for inclusion in the *Weekly Bulletin* is 5:00pm each Wednesday. Note: There will be no *Weekly Bulletin* on Sunday, January 1. Send submissions to [bulletin@uuaa.org](mailto:bulletin@uuaa.org). Questions? Contact Hannah Hotchkiss at [hannah@uuaa.org](mailto:hannah@uuaa.org).

The deadline for submitting UUAA events, news, and program notices for inclusion in the *February 2017 Newsletter* is Saturday, January 21 at 9:00am. Send submissions to [newsletter@uuaa.org](mailto:newsletter@uuaa.org). Questions? Contact Hannah Hotchkiss at [hannah@uuaa.org](mailto:hannah@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).

