

First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.

June Newsletter

June 1, 2013 - Vol 9, Issue 6

Worship @ UUA

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**One Worship Service at 10:00am,
now through September 8, 2013
with classes for children K- 8, followed by Social Hour.**

June 2, 2013

Bridging of our High School Seniors

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer

June 9, 2013

Coming of Age Credo Service

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer

Come join Rev. Gail as we celebrate our Coming of Age Youth in this inspirational 90 minute service where we witness and receive their Credo summaries.
Not To Be Missed!

June 16, 2013

Annual Flower Communion

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer

Each of us are encouraged to **bring a single flower to share** with others as we enter into this Unitarian tradition of celebrating diversity in religious community.

June 23, 2013

"Have You Ever Considered?"

Rev. Greg Martin, Guest Preacher

Rev. Greg's odyssey, moving from Christianity to Unitarian Universalism, began in response to an invitation to reflection, "have you ever considered?" From there, we'll reflect together on the promise and challenge of the fast growing population of the "nones" in our society, those with no religious background or affiliation. The vast majority of this group share UU

values and principles. We'll conclude by asking the question, "Is there a role for invitational Unitarian Universalism today?"

Bio Information:

Rev. Greg Martin is a candidate for Unitarian Universalist ministry and is the Ministerial Intern at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing for 2012-13. However, Rev. Greg is no stranger to ministry, having served in that capacity in the United Methodist Church for 28 years. He also is no stranger to Ann Arbor, having served as the United Methodist Campus Minister and Director of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Michigan from 2002-06. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC. His wife, Dr. Jennie Browne, is Sr. Minister of University United Methodist Church in East Lansing. They have two daughters, Katie, who recently graduated from the U of M Law School, and Lexie, a sophomore at Kalamazoo College. He is an avid cyclist, political junkie, poet, Henry David Thoreau scholar, and has a deep fascination with the evolving universe. He is a passionate advocate for LGBTQ rights and full inclusion in our society.

June 30, 2013

Reflections after General Assembly

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer.



From Our Staff


Gleanings

Reflections from Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister



I woke to a fullness of gratitude the morning after our Annual Meeting. I am grateful to all of you who were able to attend. I am grateful that the culture of membership within our Congregation is one of engagement and commitment. Thank you all for being present. A special shout out goes to those adult mentors who were camping on the land Saturday night with our Coming of Age youth and still managed to be upright and in attendance for the meeting. Brava!!

I am grateful for the experience of working with our elected Trustees. This is true of all the Boards I have worked with here in Ann Arbor. Our Board culture is one where we empower and encourage one another to be guided less by personal gain or

 comfort zones and more by our By-Laws and Core Values. And always, always, through careful listening and deep reflection, our Board is guided by their careful conversations with you all, our members. We are served and watched over by Boards who listen, Boards who lead, and Boards who offer deeply of themselves. I am grateful to be walking with our leaders.

Another wave of my gratitude is felt for our music ministries and the Chalice Singers. Wow! The choral benediction you all offered to us on May 19th was elegant. The blending of solo and group voices was compelling. In those moments when you all are singing, offering from deep within ourselves, focused so intently on your Director, many voices blending and empowering one another into one whole..., those are my moments of church, of knowing I am truly in a "Sanctuary." I am grateful for your gifts of song and presence and ensemble.

In my State of the Congregation reflection I spoke of my gratitude to all of you, our whole Congregation, for the cradle of hope, presence, and empowerment that you provide for one another. I am grateful for the presence you are creating for our larger community. We are, at times, refuge, beacon, rock, and rainbow for many more folks than we sometimes realize. I spoke, also, of my gratitude for our staff team. More and more, as we all learn the ropes, invent new structures, and listen more deeply, we are developing sustainable ways to empower your ministries. That is the role of staff in a large church, not to do all the ministries but to empower the ministries of the laity. I am grateful for the ways that goal is unfolding.

In new ways this morning I am grateful for our religion, a set of guiding Principles that honor, empower, encourage, and challenge the fullness of human living: here and now. As we struggle to find sustainable ways to live on our planet in peace and prosperity, justice and compassion, the practice of our Living Tradition guides me daily. I am grateful to be creating Unitarian Universalism with you all: here and now.

My love to Each,
Rev. Gail



Musings

Rev. Mark Evens, Associate Minister

Someone To Talk To

...weaving a tapestry of love and action...

We say these words when we dedicate the dollars we collect as Sunday offering. But we weave the tapestry in other ways, too.

We have been living in an era of ongoing cultural change. Our social patterns and expectations remain in flux. Perhaps in earlier days, centuries ago, there were more stable truths about living that parents could pass down by example and word to their children. Perhaps our lives have



gotten more complicated. And here in the United States it's common for us to move to a different city, state or even across the country for career advancement which can separate us from networks of family and friendship which can provide us with support and a place to reflect on the challenges we face in life. And there are some life events that are always challenging no matter how well connected and supported we may be.

Sometimes we need someone to talk to beyond our circle of friends and family. Your ministers are available for helpful conversations about the challenges and opportunities of life. We are especially available for conversations about meaning and purpose, about mortality, about wholeness, and integrity. We can sometimes help with forgiveness, and brokenness in relationships. Mostly we help by listening, caring, holding your difficult experiences with you in confidence, and providing perspective.

Gail and I both have training and experience in pastoral counseling which helps us establish a connection with you. We help you assess what is going on, respond to your spiritual needs, and identify other resources you might benefit from connecting with. To balance our other responsibilities to the Congregation and stay within the scope of our training and expertise, we can usually offer one to four conversations of about an hour, usually spread over several weeks or months. Gail's responsibilities leading the staff and sharing Congregation leadership with the Board President and other members of the Board of Trustees force her to be very selective with regard to when she can be available for one-on-one pastoral engagement. Pastoral Care is a major focus of my work with the church. If you are a Congregant I will get you on my calendar.

We can also help you identify times when an extended relationship with a helping professional might be beneficial and help you find a counselor who might be a good fit for you.

To help Gail and me provide Congregants the best possible referrals for counseling by dedicated helping professionals we could use your help. If you have experience with receiving counseling from an area professional and would be willing to share their name and contact information it will help Gail and me build our base for referring others for help. It would be most useful to hear something about what area you sought help with from them and how well you felt served.

Help us in "weaving a tapestry of love and action" by sharing your experiences of counseling relationships here in southeast Michigan. Your experiences, shared, will help us support others in the months and years ahead. Send them to me in the church office or by email at mark@uuaa.org.

Yours in faith,
Mark



Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) in Action

Sandy Garges, Director of SGD



The summer months offer a change of routine for many, warmer weather for all, and often times opportunities to try something new. Last weekend I tried something new - I was



present for the 9th grade Girls' Coming of Age Initiation Weekend. Wow, was I impressed by my experience! These young women have fully engaged in the program this year, a program which will be complete on June 9th when our 9th grade youth each present their Credo, or "statement of belief". This surely is the service not to miss!

The Coming of Age Program, as with the SGD program itself, only works because of the dedicated volunteers who make it happen each Sunday, each year. Currently the Coming of Age Program is led by Tom Goodson, Jim Schaefer, and Stephanie Surfus. Please don't pass up an opportunity to thank Tom, Jim and Stephanie for sharing their gifts with our youth. It is transformative work.

If their service, the Coming of Age credos, or simply your involvement with our Congregation inspires you to share your gifts with our youngest Congregants, we are currently recruiting teachers and mentors for the 2013-14 school year and would love to hear from you! Each Sunday a representative of the Children and Youth Program will be present in the Social Hall to answer any question you may have.

We often times advertise the need for adult volunteers. Throughout the year I am also asked if there are ways a youth, a family or other group can volunteer their time to serve our Congregation. Yes, there are! Because of the requests I have received I began keeping a list of opportunities available here at UUAU. Below is my current list of volunteer opportunities for youth, families and adults. This is by no means exhaustive. If you are interested in finding another way to serve our Congregation through volunteer work in the SGD program for a fixed amount of time this summer, let me know!

Volunteer Opportunities Within SGD Program:

- Gather books from our library which are needed for next year's classroom curricula.
- Organize a classroom and prepare it for next year's teaching team.
- Test the classroom markers, keeping only the ones which still work (my family's favorite!).
- Serve as Food Gatherers Event Coordinator.
- Transfer data from VHS tapes to DVDs for use in 4th/5th grade Bibleodeon class.
- Serve as a member of our Children's Welcoming Counsel, a teaching team, or Children and Youth Committee.
- Offer an adult education class.
- Serve as a 9th grade Coming of Age mentor.
- Be a Sunday morning greeter - this is something parents can do with their children.

With care,
Sandy



Coordinates

Maria Thomas, Programs Coordinator

I'd like to fill you in on what the Spiritual Growth and Development Program has in store for this summer. It's a busy time!

The SGD Summer Program launched on Sunday, May 19. Our theme is *Bible Heroes and Beyond*, a curriculum developed by SGD Program Assistant Debra Golden. Young folks will explore what it means to be a heroic person, and how the lives and teachings of heroes - some historical, some legendary, and some local - exemplify UU values. Look for children and youth wearing white baseball caps decorated with hero symbols and themes, the fruit of our first week's activity.



Some important events for our older youth are on the horizon. On Sunday, June 2, the YRUU twelfth grade students will participate in the traditional Bridging Out ceremony, in which the Congregation honors their passage from High School to the next phase of their journeys as young adult UUs.

On Sunday, June 9, the ninth grade Coming of Age students will present their Credo essays to the Congregation. Each student has spent the year reflecting on her or his beliefs and engaging in conversation and exploration with other students, the COA teaching team, and the adult mentor with whom she or he has been matched. The result is a collection of uniquely wonderful Credo essays, which will be read aloud during the service.

The annual YRUU Service Trip is scheduled for July 22 through the 27. In this event, the fun and excitement of a road trip combines with the living out of UU values. This year, YRUU youth and adult volunteers will travel to Chicago to participate in a Habitat for Humanity building project, and perhaps partake of some deep-dish pizza. It could happen.

The SGD Summer Program will close on Sunday, September 1. The following week, Sunday, September 8, will mark the return of the two-service schedule and the celebration of the multi-generational Water Communion. The SGD regular program year for 2013- 2014 will begin on Sunday, September 15.

With gratitude to all whose service, good wishes, or both help to support this thriving program,

Maria



Pastoral Care News

Meredith Ley, Pastoral Care Coordinator

We have two events scheduled for Monday, June 10: The Senior Lunch at 12:00pm in the Social Hall, and a workshop to follow in the Jackson Chapel presented by the Pastoral Care-Education Team.

The workshop, *Five Wishes*, will address the important topic



of medical advance directives. Marie Pierce, Community Outreach Representative at Arbor Hospice, will present this highly recommended program.



Five Wishes will look at the following areas:

- 1) The Person I Want to Make Care Decisions for Me When I Can't.
- 2) The Kind of Medical treatment I Want or Don't Want.
- 3) How Comfortable I Want To Be.
- 4) How I Want People to Treat Me.
- 5) What I Want My Loved Ones to Know.

If you do not have an advance directive, *Five Wishes* will be a highly informational workshop for you, regardless of your age. If you already have an advance directive, this program offers a chance for you to review your choices.

For more information, see or contact Meredith Ley, Pastoral Care Coordinator, meredith@uuaa.org, or Terry Madden, Pastoral Care-Education Team Lead, terence.madden@gmail.com.

We hope that you will also attend the Senior Lunch on Monday, June 10, from noon to 1:30pm in the Social Hall. You needn't be a "senior" to join us. Everyone is welcome to come and partake of a light meal while enjoying the company of long-time friends. Pastoral Care will provide the sandwiches; you provide any side dishes you wish to share. Or, come without a dish. If you are unable to drive, let us know and we will make every effort to pick you up and take you home.



Activities and Events

Bridge Mix * June 2

The last Bridge Mix of the season will be on Sunday, June 2 at 1:00pm. We will have a Bridge lesson at 12:30pm. Dick Bauman and Emily Sharp lead the rest of the players by over 3,800 points! If you would like to join the group for the 2013-2014 season, contact Bert Ramsay at bramsay1@emich.edu.



One-Time Chalice Circles * June 2

We are looking forward to a series of One-Time Chalice Circles sessions offered over the summer months.

The session dates and topics to be discussed are:

- June 2: Celebrating Diversity
- July 7: Beauty
- August 4: Gratitude



Each event will be held in the Young Room from 11:30am to 1:00pm. For more information or questions contact Royla Furniss at xenaphan2000@yahoo.com.



Plant-Strong Family Potluck * June 8

Calling all vegans, vegetarians, and mindful eaters: The Mindful Eating Coalition invites all to a community-building vegan family potluck on Saturday, June 8 from 12:00 to 2:00pm in the Fahs Chapel. Bring a plant-based vegan dish which is anything without meat, fish, eggs, dairy, honey, or other animal products. Enjoy the company of fellow mindful eaters, hear about vegan activities in our area, and eat delicious food. Please bring your own table service and serving tools. If you have questions or for recipe ideas, contact Donna Estry at 734-484-0913 or estry@umich.edu or Jenny McKillop at finnabar@gmail.com.



ICE-T Potluck * June 12

The newly formed Intergenerational Community Events Team (ICE-T) held its first intergenerational potluck on Wednesday, May 15 in Fahs Chapel. By all accounts this social event was a success, drawing over 30 members and friends. Many participants brought their children and babies, who provided the entertainment for the evening. The little ones enjoyed toddling around on the carpet and looking out of the large glass windows at our land. We would like to express appreciation for four volunteers for making this happen: Carol Acitelli, Greg Campeau, Sandy Eyl, and Bethany Ramirez.



ICE-T was created to host community events for our Congregation, fostering that work of strengthening the bonds between individuals in our beloved Community. ICE-T will host continuing intergenerational potluck events throughout the summer on the second Wednesdays of the month. We are planning regular programming for this fall. The next event will be Wednesday, June 12 with the theme of: Salad Bar. What to bring? Your favorite topping for salad such as beans, proteins, grains, veggies, nuts, fruit, or dressing. We will gather at 5:30pm and share a meal at 5:45pm.



Lori Fithian, Jean Chorazyczewski and Bethany Ramirez enjoy a chat.

ICE-T invites members and friends to participate in our planning team, and invites other groups within the Congregation to provide optional social justice, educational, historical, or entertaining programs in conjunction with future events. To be reminded of future ICE-T events, to volunteer for a future event, or to partner with ICE-T and provide programming please contact Sandy Eyl

at sandy.eyl@gmail.com.



Round Robin Picnic * June 14

An end-of-season picnic for Round Robin members will be hosted by John and Sally Preston on Friday, June 14 at 6:00pm. A crock pot of barbeque pork and buns will be provided. Please bring a dish to share that would serve 8 to 10 people and what you wish to drink. Bring a folding lawn chair if you have one.

The address is 10956 Scio Church Road in Chelsea, which is 10 miles west of town. The house is at the corner of Scio Church and Guenther Road. The driveway is about a

hundred feet East of Guenther on the North side. Look for a sign by the driveway. If the driveway is full, you can park on the side of Guenther.

The alternative rain-out date is Saturday, June 15 at 6 pm. Please contact John or Sally Preston at dinner@pctraining.net or sally@pctraining.net if you plan to attend.



Announcements and Notices

Denominational Connections Team

The Denominational Connections Team (DCT) serves as a conduit for the exchange of information between the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor (UUAA) and the wider Unitarian Universalist (UU) community, providing our Congregation, and the denomination with a vibrant means of co-operating together and strengthening our identity as UUs.

All are welcome to the DCT meetings on the second Thursday of each month, from 7:00 to 8:30pm, in the Young Room. For more information contact Roberta Allen at bert71allen@gmail.com.



General Assembly (GA) will be only a six hour road trip away to Louisville, Kentucky where thousands of fellow UU's will gather from June 19 through 23. Sign up at the Social Justice table during Social Hour. Here is the UUA link for more information and to register: <http://www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml>.

Save the dates Sundays, June 2 and July 7. Our pre-GA meeting on June 2 will go over some of the major happenings and business items at GA. The post-GA meeting on July 7 will be to share our stories and experiences of attending GA. All are welcome to attend the meetings but delegates must commit to attend both.



Social Justice

If you are one of the Social Justice groups, mark your calendars for a get-together on September 7. We'll have an opportunity to get better acquainted with members of other groups, get updates on and learn more about the policies and procedures, the annual report, and request for funds. You'll find the policies and procedures and the application for funding at <http://www.uuaa.org/social-justice/faith-in-action/council>.

Go to the UUAA website and take a look at information for your group. The information should be kept current and *only you* can make sure your information is correct. Contact Carol Acitelli with updated information or questions at carol.acitelli@gmail.com. We will be sending requests to individual groups and working with the Congregation's web team to insure the most accurate information is available.

If you would like us to partner with your group to cosponsor an event, contact us for information. The SJC recently partnered with the Mindful Eating Coalition (MEC) and Challenging Racism groups to present a panel based on the book, *Behind the Kitchen*



Behind the Kitchen Door Panel:
(Left to right) Kathy Muha, Janella James, Lucia Heinold, Carol Acetelli, and Antonio Carearas from the Michigan Immigration Alliance

Doors. It was well attended and followed by a lively discussion. We are currently working with the Intergenerational Community Events Team (ICE-T) to include optional presentations on social justice issues.

If you were unable to attend the panel on, *Behind the Kitchen Doors*, check out our Facebook page to

get information on fair working conditions for restaurant workers. There's much individuals can do to initiate change. Links and action suggestions at <https://www.facebook.com/SocialJusticeCouncilOfTheUuaa>.

Contacts for the SJC are Carolyn Madden at cgmadden@gmail.com and Carol Acitelli at carol.acitelli@gmail.com.



Khasi Hills

Student sponsors are needed. The Sponsor-a-Student program connecting our Congregation with the Mawkisjiem Unitarian Primary School in the Khasi Hills of northeast India is currently enrolling sponsors of eager young students for the 2013 school year. Your \$50 annual donation will help provide textbooks, teacher wages, infrastructure development, and a year-end gift for "your" student.



If you would like to become a sponsor and correspond with one (or more) of these students, look for the Khasi Hills table in the Social Hall after Service through early June. Please note that we are in our final year of contributing to renovation of the village Unitarian church as well. Contributions for both projects are joyfully accepted. Contact Cathy Doherty for more information at mysarina@aol.com.



Men's Breakfast

We will not officially meet during the months of June, July, and August since attendance has been minimal in past summers. Some men may wish to join for breakfast on the third Saturday of these months at the Classic Cup Café. Contact Fred Lynch at 734-665-9904.



Family Camp Registration Open

We need YOU to make Family Camp really happen this summer. Register with your deposit now and receive early bird rates.

**Get the
REGISTRATION FORM** 

Join us for a UU 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, Michigan about 3.25 hours from Ann Arbor. Camp Pinewood is situated on beautiful Lake Echo, with a natural sandy beach. There are lots of trails that encircle the lake to explore, winding through 200 acres of forest.

How do I register?

Click to download camp information and the registration form. Return the form with your non-refundable deposit of \$50 per person to the Church. Register by July 15. Payment in full is due by August 1.



Questions?

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



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

**Note: The building will be closed for the Memorial Day Holiday
at 5:00pm on Sunday, May 26 and will re-open
at 9:00am on Tuesday, May 28.**

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

Debbie Casamatta, Office Administrator, deborah@uuaa.org

Venus Gregory, Weekend Building Assistant, venus@uuaa.org

Arthur Whigham, Custodian, arthur@uuaa.org



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