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First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.

January Newsletter

January 1, 2015 - Vol 11, Issue 1

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.

January 4, 2015

"Letting Go and Bringing In"

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, preaching

At the turning of the year, let's take time for personal reflection. Looking backwards, what needs to be left behind? Do we need atonement or forgiveness? Looking forward, what needs to be brought in? What are our aspirations? The membrane between our innermost life and our outermost actions in the world is whisper thin. Whether we are called to contemplation or public witness, parenting or poetry or pipe-fitting, our religion invites us to reflect, to assess, and to plan.

January 11, 2015

Annual Service of Remembrance

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, assisted by Jim Lee

Each year we take time to reflect on those we love who have died in the previous year.

"Devise and Establish: New Paradigms for a New Year"

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, preaching

We live in paradigms of privilege and want, power and oppression. Much needs to change. In order to be the change we wish to see in the world, we must create and build new paradigms.

January 18, 2015 - OUR STORY SUNDAY

WEAR 150th T-Shirts!

"Sanctuary: Care for the Stranger"

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, with Kathy Friedrichs and Carolyn Madden.

We are a social justice church with many examples in our

history of reaching out to others. One powerful example was declaring our church a sanctuary for a family from El Salvador in 1988. Members of the Rodriguez family will join us for remembering and celebrating our rich history together.

FORUM - Discussion following each service: "Sustaining Our Social Justice Work"

January 25, 2015 * Congregational Meeting at 1:00pm*
Rev. Mark Evens, preaching

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. challenged us to love beyond race. How does love call us to carry on the work for justice across lines of race and class today?



Gleanings

Reflections from Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister



150 Years of Reason and Compassion in Action. We are mid-way through our year-long celebration of the life of our Congregation. We are learning of the challenges, the decisions, the turning points of those who came before us.

The planning teams envisioned our year long celebration of the founding of our Congregation grounded in one motivating fragment of text from hymn #145, "As Tranquil Streams", in the grey hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*. Marion Franklin Ham wrote of the freedom in our religion that allows us to "revere the past and trust the dawning future more." From September through December we have been reviewing and even revering our distant past.

As we enter into January 2015, we are at an important intersection. Stories shared from here forward can be told by those of us who lived them. Turning points presented were decisions made by the voices telling the tales.

And we will be well served to listen with open hearts.

Every day in our turbulent times there are turning points - decisions to be made in our own lives - demands made on us by the present. Among the many ways we learn to make decisions that bring our values alive is by listening to the stories where people like us made decisions grounded in our values - decisions swaddled in our shared aspirations.

In January the "Our Story" Sunday brings us into a time of living history, our recent past. And this comes not a moment too soon. Our decision to become a Sanctuary church is a social concern as timely now as it was 30 years ago. A new year is opening before us all. A renewed urgency is calling to us all.

Thousands of immigrants all over the United States await compassion and reason as they struggle to protect families and provide better lives for their children. Once again, we are called to help.

Ferguson, Staten Island, Cleveland, and Ann Arbor are calling us to bring our values to

challenge the systemic racism that is incarcerating Black lives and killing Black children in our streets.

One way to shape our rage and turn our lamentation into the sustaining fuel of love and justice is to take in the stories of lives gone before - celebrate the successes, humbly embrace the failures, the lost opportunities - and chart new courses together.

We are a learning community. We learn and grow together toward the ends and goals prophesied centuries ago - Peace on Earth, Good Will to All. This Congregation has been a beacon of hope embodying Reason and Compassion in Action for nearly 150 years. The emerging future calls us to reason, compassion, and action in our own time.

Come! Be a part of building a world of just peace, awakened good will, and sustainable futures for our children's children.

See you in church!

Rev. Gail



Musings

Rev. Mark Evens, Associate Minister

Willing to Be Changed

The deaths of black men in Ferguson, Staten Island, and too many other places have sparked a wave a response across our nation. People are protesting in the streets. People are talking around the dinner table. People are praying and meditating, seeking to interpret current events and find a way forward. As our congregation celebrates its 150th anniversary this year, we can look back on the ways this institution and its individual members have engaged the need for racial justice over a long arc. Some of our founding families were active in the Underground Railroad, helping escaped black slaves reach freedom in Canada. Members of this congregation worked for open housing regulations here in Ann Arbor and helped found intentional integrated athletic clubs. We helped resist the Ku Klux Klan when they came to Ann Arbor to sow mayhem in the late 1990s.



Right now there is a new ferment in the quest for racial justice. The strongest slogan for me is "Black Lives Matter." I am challenged to leave my comfort zone and do something to help.

A lyric from one of our hymns comes to mind. I believe there is stuff of the divine, of grace, of creative transformation in each of us. These words sing in my heart as I contemplate the current challenge:

"Young, growing God, eager still to know,
willing to be changed by what you've started,
quick to be delighted, singing as you go:
hail and hosanna, young, growing God!"

#23 Bring Many Names

Singing the Living Tradition

We have been engaged in anti-racism work as a congregation and as individuals for a long time. Let us make ourselves ready for the changes that are required of us next. And let us know that we can find delight and gladness in the work.

With hope and gratitude,
Mark



News from the Harper Room

Julie Dybdahl, YRUU Coordinator



As I write this, the youth should be basking in a job well done. Our sales of apple dumplings netted YRUU over \$850, which the youth used to purchase gifts for 25 youngsters at Peace Neighborhood Center. Our Holiday Feast was a great success. We dined sumptuously with parents, dressed in our formal wear, then shopped for the gifts for kids at Meijer. We returned to wrap the gifts up, then enjoy a seasonal Solstice and holiday worship together.

We've had a fun year so far, with 18-30 youth attending Sunday mornings, depending on the week. Thank you to YRUU advisors Mark Van Kempen, Kate Hutchens, Phil Hodges, and Emma Kennedy for all the energy you're putting into facilitating YRUU! It's because of you that we have such a large, happy group. Thanks also to Leigh Robertson and Craig Van Kempen, who were guest leaders one Sunday, to teach an OWL-for-high-school class. The topic was gender issues and there was a lot of passionate discussion.

Up next in January are more Sunday morning classes with discussions about controversial topics. Also, there will be more youth doing "Passions," which is YRUU lingo for leading a class focused on something you're passionate about. Sarah O'Conner did an excellent class on the HeForShe campaign and feminist issues in November, and more will be coming in 2015. Also in January, we'll head north to the Domans' vacation home for our annual ski trip. Pray for snow!



Board of Trustees

President's Message

Ken Klein, Board President



As I write this, we are heading into the holidays and the days continue to get shorter. The weather has been unseasonably warm and very seasonably gray. Soon the days will begin to grow again as we round the year end and, although it will get colder in the coming weeks, the lights of the season and lengthening days serve to remind us that spring is not that far off.

For your Board of Trustees, this is the time of year we grapple with The "B" word - Budget. Like any good religious community that seeks to improve the world, our aspirations typically exceed our means, and it is the job of the CEO and her staff, working with the Board to prepare a budget that fits our mission (ends, aspirations) and means (revenue). Since most of our revenue is generated from your generous pledges, this is the point in the article where I remind you to complete your 2015 pledge form, if you haven't done so already and continue to make your 2014 donations.

The operating budget is developed by the CEO and Executive Director with input from the Board and will be presented to the Congregation at our Annual Meeting on January 25th, 2015. In the meantime, thanks to all of you who continue to support the work of this congregation. We make an important difference in the lives of our members, the community, and world.

Happy Holidays!

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.

We have recognized the members from the 50s, 60s, and 70s and will continue on:

January 18: 1980s members will be honored.

February 15: 1990s members will be honored.

March 15: 2000-2009 members will be honored.

April 12: 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.



Women's Rights Display Case



150th Anniversary celebrates with a Women's Rights Display. Come visit Doug Kelley's new display in the Jackson Chapel during January and February expressing the theme of "Women's Rights and the Vote." The display provides an historical context to view the 150th anniversary year.

On Sunday, January 4, after each service, Doug Kelley, the creative display master, will be available to talk about and answer questions about this important effort and historical time period. Questions? Contact Terry Madden at birthday150@uuaa.org.



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.



150th Anniversary News



Photos of events, mini-histories and more are all posted at uuaa.org/150. Check them out. Questions? Contact Sandy Simon and Terry Madden at birthday150@uuaa.org.



150th Anniversary Commemorative Tiles



Sales will resume for a second run of these beautiful Motawi art tiles. The cost is \$35 per tile, payable by cash or check at the time the tile is ordered. Orders will be taken during Social Hour on Sundays



January 4 through February 15. The tiles will be delivered in April. Order forms will be available by email from Margaret Pekarek at mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com for those unable to order in person.

Questions? Contact Margaret Pekarek at 734-998-3522 or mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com.



Activities and Events

Interweave Circle * Sunday, January 4



Interweave, the TBLGQQA (transgender, bisexual, lesbian, gay, queer, questioning, intersex, and ally) group, invites the congregation at 10:45am for an Interweave Circle in the Fahs Chapel. Interweave circles help to create deeper connections with each other, and widen our embrace. The circle discussion will focus on sharing spiritual practices especially in the winter season. TBLGQI people, their children, friends and allies are welcome. Questions? Contact Leigh A. Robertson at leigrobe@umich.edu.

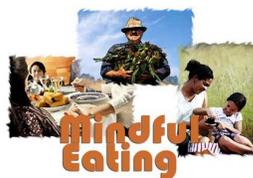


Senior Dinner * Wednesday, January 7

Come one, come all, Seniors, to celebrate the first Senior Dinner of the New Year at Gourmet Garden at 6:00pm. Questions? Contact: Marie Duke at 734-769-0467 or omaduke7@gmail.com.



Meet Your Farmer Series * January 11



The Mindful Eating Coalition will pick up on the "Meet Your Farmer" series with Frog Holler Organic Farm at 12:45pm in the Fahs Chapel. Cathy King will tell the story of Frog Holler, one of the first organic farms in Southeast Michigan 42 years ago. She will share how she and husband, Ken, got started; what their philosophy has been on farming and food; and how she and her three sons have carried on the tradition since her husband's death.

Healthy snacks will be provided. Questions? Contact Cathy



Muha at cmuha@att.net.



Faces of Faith (FOF) * Sunday, January 11

Sponsored by the Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County, FOF allows people to pose as "books" tell the story of their personal spiritual journey. Learn one-on-one about a different spiritual practice, religious belief, or turning point of faith each time a "book" is "borrowed". Each "reading period" will last 25 minutes. Hear directly from those who go by Buddhist, Conservative Jew, Muslim, Unitarian Universalist, and more. UUAA member Vilma Mesa will be the "book" for this congregation.

FOF will be from 2:00 to 4:00pm at Zion Lutheran Church at 1501 W. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Questions? Contact George Lambrides at 734-424-1535 or gbrides@umich.edu, or Vilma Mesa at vmmesa@comcast.net.



Congregational Meeting * Sunday, January 25

A Congregational Meeting will be held from 1:00 to 2:30pm in the Sanctuary. All are encouraged to attend and participate. The meeting agenda will include a report on the 2015 operational budget and Annual Budget Campaign, a presentation on Board of Trustee goals, an update on the 150th Anniversary Celebration, a report from the Accessibility Team, a report from the Reflective Conversations Team, and a vote on a reproductive rights Statement of Conscience (SOC) from the Denominational Connections Team. Join in the practice the fifth principle. Questions? Contact P. Spencer at 734-663-1874.



Game Day * Sunday, January 25

A child-friendly game day will coincide with the Congregational Meeting from 1:00 to 4:00pm in the Fahs Chapel. School-age children will have a fun place to gather while their parents attend the meeting. Many games will be available, but feel free to bring others. There will be a potluck lunch and all are invited to bring a dish to share. Questions? Contact Bethany Ramirez at bethanyramirez@gmail.com.



Announcements and Notices

Leadership Nominations Requested

Board of Trustees and Leadership Development Team (LDT) nominations are needed. At the Annual meeting in the spring of 2015, members of the Congregation will be elected to serve on the Board of Trustees in the following positions: Vice President/President Elect, Treasurer, and Trustee. Job descriptions for these positions can be found at <http://uuaa.org/index.php/about-us/our-congregation/how-we-govern/ldt#board>. In addition, one person will be elected to serve on the Leadership Development Team (LDT). Information about the LDT can be found in Article VII of the Bylaws at <http://uuaa.org/index.php/about-us/our-congregation/how-we-govern/bylaws>. The LDT will begin to consider possible candidates in January 2015.

Those interested in serving the Congregation in one of these roles, or to nominate someone, email the reasons for the recommendation to a member of the LDT by Tuesday, January 13. Nominations and questions can be sent to: Dee Dishon at deedishon@gamil.com, Allen Duncan at aduncan85@gmail.com, Kathy Edgren at kedgren@gmail.com, Kathy Friedrichs at kamf@umich.edu, or Connie McGuire at cmguire@umich.edu.



More News from the Harper Room
Judi Lintott, 7th Grade Teaching Team Member

On Sunday, December 7, 2014, the 7th grade class had a "Rockin' Good Time" helping out Food Gatherers with their annual "Rockin' for the Hungry" event. Four classroom teachers and 15 youth rotated through a three-hour shift at the Maple Road Kroger Store. They were helped by long-time members Terri Wilkerson and Jim Lee. These outgoing and friendly young people were impressively successful in their donation recruiting efforts -- bringing in more than a ton of grocery donations and about \$2,500 for Food Gatherers. This service project is an important part of the 7th grade curriculum, putting into action all three of the themes: "Leadership, Team Building, and Values".



The team was congratulated by Food Gatherers Chief Development Officer Mary Schlitt. She said, "Thank you for volunteering and with such eager young people! There was much celebrating during my shift and I appreciated their commitment to meeting our goal and fighting hunger where we live."



Accessibility Team Update

Remarkable progress was made in 2014. Completed were comprehensive accessibility and inclusion checklists that capture UUAU accessibility status - a work in progress. The team created a list of 23 proposed action projects and discussed these with lay leaders to select 2015 priorities.

The 2014 accomplishments include a "listserve" for the Accessibility Team members, a panel session *The Dream of Inclusion for All*, a forum on depression, a worship service led by Rev. Mark Evens, and ongoing commitment to large print Orders of Service. A grant from the Social Justice Council enabled a purchase of a second wireless microphone/audio system and the book *Not Far from the Tree*.

As one of ten pilot project sites, the team is in close contact with the UUA's EqUual Access Team and assist UUA in enhancing their Certificate requirements. This Certification is on track to be received by UUAU in 2016.

A 2015 goal is to enhance access to the Sanctuary steps by adding handrails. The design, functionality, and aesthetics are being addressed. All congregants' opinions about such a change are welcomed. On Sunday, February 1 from 1:15 to 2:15pm in the Sanctuary, all are invited to share views about these handrails. Send questions and comments to Els Nieuwenhuijsen at elsni@comcast.net or Phil Tuchinsky at ptuchinsky@sbcglobal.net. Gratitude for strong support goes to Rev. Mark Evens, lay leaders, the dedicated Accessibility Team, Els Nieuwenhuijsen, Priscilla Spencer, and Phil Tuchinsky.



Denominational Connections Team (DCT)

Here is a Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAI) Update:



2012-2016: [Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling](#)

A Draft of the Statement of Conscience (SOC) for this CSAI was released by the Commission on Social Witness on November 15. The folks who went to the Reproduction Justice Classes we held last year and anyone else interested met to discuss and offer comments on the SOC on December 14, 2014. The UUAU Congregation will be voting on January 25th, 2015, whether this SOC should

be brought before the 2015 General Assembly. The GA will decide final wording and its final acceptance by the UUA.

2014-2018: [Escalating Inequality](#)

This CSAI was chosen at the 2014 General Assembly. A study guide has been developed and is

available on the UUA website. DCT and the Social Justice Council will be co-sponsoring discussions of this CSAI. If you are interested in participating, please contact Royla Furniss at refurniss@gmail.com or Carolyn Madden at cgmadden@gmail.com.

Important UUA Dates:

Regional Assembly: April 18 in Naperville, Illinois,

General Assembly: June 24 through 28 in Portland, Oregon,

Questions or suggestions? Contact Royla Furniss at refurniss@gmail.com.

DCT serves as a conduit for the exchange of information between UUAA and the wider Unitarian Universalist (UU) community, providing our Congregation and the denomination with a vibrant means of cooperating together and strengthening our identity as UUs. 

Social Justice Council (SJC)

There will be a workshop on Saturday, February 21 from 9:30am to 1:00pm in the Fahs Chapel. All are invited to attend an interactive workshop that will provide inspiration, resources, and nuts and bolts information to foster participation in community and social justice activities. Breakfast will be provided and people will inspire. The secrets of how to get things done at UUAA will be revealed. The workshop is for new, emerging, and current leaders and team members. Watch for an announcement about where to sign up-space will be limited.

The workshop on Saturday will be followed by a Volunteer Fair on Sunday, February, 22. The Fair will take place during Social Hour, and all UUAA congregants are invited to meet with representatives of groups and teams. Find out about the many opportunities that are available and how to make a difference. Sign up for anything from a short, discrete task to an in-depth, longer term project. Or just come, learn, and file for future reference.

Watch for more details, but save the dates. Co-sponsored by the Social Justice Council (SJC) and the Leadership Development Team (LDT). cgmadden@gmail.com or kkedgren@gmail.com or cmcguire@umich.edu. 

Challenging Racism (CR)

Challenging Racism will start 2015 with some ambitious programming.

CR will participate in the Social Justice Forums on Sunday, January 18 "Welcoming the Stranger: What Sustains You in Your Social Justice Work? "

Monday, January 19 will be the fourth year CR will go to the MLK Forum keynote address in Hill Auditorium and join to discuss it at a nearby restaurant afterwards. This year's speaker is noted African American journalist, Marc Lamont Hill. He is Distinguished Professor of African American Studies at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. He hosts the nationally syndicated television show Our World with Black Enterprise and online HuffPost Live. He is also a BET News correspondent and a CNN political commentator.



Hill is a longtime social justice activist and organizer. He is a founding board member of My5th, a non-profit organization aiming to educate underprivileged youth about their legal rights and responsibilities. In 2001, he started a literacy project that uses hip-hop culture to increase school engagement and reading skills among high school students. Hill was named one of America's top 30 black leaders under 30 years old by *Ebony* Magazine. In 2011 and 2014, *Ebony* Magazine named him one of America's 100 most influential Black leaders. Challenging Racism and UU friends and community friends will meet at Panera's on North University, downstairs, for the discussion.

Details about additional programming are available at <http://mlksymposium.umich.edu/>.
 On Sunday, January 25, at the 9:30 and 11: 30am Services will be the Challenging Racism Mini-History.

Also save these dates for additional spring events:

On Sunday, April 19 from 1:00 to 3:00pm, Charlie Pekarek will lead a discussion of *The Selma Awakening* by UU Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed.

On Sunday, May 3 UU Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed will be in the UUAA pulpit. Don't miss it. Questions? Contact Lucia Heinold at heinoldcia@uuaa.org.



Sharing the Collection

The following nonprofits will be the recipients of the 2015 first Sunday collections:

January	Jim Toy Community Center	July	Growing Hope
February	Religious Action for Affordable Housing	August	Washtenaw Literacy
March	Washtenaw Alano Club	September	Children's Literacy Network
April	Summer Camp Scholarships	October	UU Service Committee
May	Habitat for Humanity- Huron Valley	November	IHN/Alpha House
June	MI UU Social Justice Network	December	Community Action Network

2014 Recipients

January	(Snowstorm- No Collection)	= \$0	July	Catholic Social Services	= \$1,032
February	Corner Health Center	= \$1,864	August	Student Advocacy Center	= \$1,190
March	Friends In Deed	= \$1,444	September	Packard Health	= \$1,897
April	UU Service Committee	= \$2,566	October	Washtenaw Prisoner Re-Entry	= \$1,956
May	Habitat-Humanity	= \$1,470	November	IHN/Alpha House	= \$2,803
June	House by the Side of the Road	= \$1,960	December	UU Social Justice Network	= \$1,799

The Sharing the Collection program mission is to live out the second principle of Unitarian Universalism: "Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations." This program provides financial assistance to non-profit community service organizations in the furtherance of their work.

The Sharing the Collection team includes: David Allen, Lynn Ayres, James Johnson, Terry Madden, and Theresa Rohlck. Questions? Contact Terry Madden at terence.madden@gmail.com.



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.



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

and

**** The building will be closed on Monday, January 19
to honor Martin Luther King Day**

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

Telephone: 734-665-6158

Fax: 734-665-7895

General Email: 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, January 4, 2015	Monday, December 29, 2014	9:00am

Send submissions to bulletin@uuaa.org.

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in the 2015 February Newsletter is 9:00am on Wednesday, January 21.

Send your submissions to newsletter@uuaa.org.

Lay and staff program leaders may submit changes, additions, or updates for the website (uuaa.org) to 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
Debby Casamatta, Office Administrator, deborah@uuaa.org
Venus Gregory, Building Attendant, venus@uuaa.org
Arthur Whigham, Weekend Custodian, arthur@uuaa.org
Dewon Lewis, Weeknight Custodian, dewon@uuaa.org.



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