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First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.

July Newsletter

July 1, 2015 - Vol 11, Issue 6

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](#)

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Worship Services begin
at 10:00am
followed by Social Hour.

July 5, 2015

"Declaration of Interdependence"

Cassandra Hartley, Guest Preacher

The founders of our country promoted the concept of independence, but now science is finding that our survival as a species will hinge on our ability to embrace interdependence. Guest preacher Cassandra Hartley explores what this paradigm shift means for the present and the future.

Bio: Cassandra Hartley is a candidate for Unitarian Universalist ministry and mother of three young children. She received her M.Div. from Detroit Ecumenical Theological Seminary and did her internship with the Church of the Larger Fellowship. Cassandra and her family are also proud members of UUAA. A job transfer took them to Massachusetts for a year, but they are grateful that a new opportunity allowed them to move back home to Ann Arbor!

July 12, 2015

"Roots Hold Us Close: Nurturing a Grounded Spiritual Life"

Nic Cable, Guest Preacher

This sermon focuses on the power and necessity of a grounded spiritual life. Through nurturing a strong spiritual practice as individuals and as members of a religious community, we are able to experience a deeper sense of our place in the universe, as well as the meaning of spiritual leadership.

Bio: Nic Cable is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist who

grew up in Milwaukee, WI. He studied at DePaul University and Chicago Theological Seminary, before moving with his wife, Hattie, to East Lansing, for her law studies at MSU. Nic believes in the saving power and potential of our faith, which at its core is a Love that will not let us go. He currently serves our Unitarian Universalist Association, as a Donor Relations Specialist, and the UU Church of Greater Lansing, as Ministerial Intern for Multigenerational Community.

July 19, 2015

"The Courage to be Out of Control"

Cassandra Hartley, Guest Preacher

Many Christians use the phrase "Let Go and Let God" but does that have meaning for Unitarian Universalists? Guest preacher Cassandra Hartley looks at how letting go can become a powerful spiritual practice.

July 26, 2015

"Wings Set Us Free: Discovering the Liberating Spirit of UUism"

Nic Cable, Guest Preacher

Building upon his sermon, "Roots Hold Us Close" on July 12, Nic Cable will help us to see how spiritual leadership is critical to recognizing and claiming the liberating potential of our religious movement. A liberating tradition, rooted in spiritual practice, will transform us into a radical force of love and justice in the world.



In Memoriam

On June 17, 2015, nine people were shot and killed during an evening prayer service at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Charleston, South Carolina.

We honor their names:

The Reverend Doctor and Senator Clementa Pinckney, Pastor

The Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Singleton

The Reverend Depayne Middleton-Doctor

The Reverend Daniel Simmons, Sr.

Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd

Susie Jackson

Ethel Lee Lance

Tywanza Sanders

Myra Thompson

Peace be with their families.

Peace be with their church.

May that peace which passes human understanding be with Emanuel AME Church and the city of Charleston.



Gleanings

Reflections from Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister



Dear Ones, All,

As I write this to you I am on my way to Oregon for the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly, nine people have been killed during a prayer service in Charleston, and my heart wants to burst in surrender to "all I cannot save". How to respond? How to be present? How to offer succor, solace, solidarity, rage, revolution, redemption?

As a woman of privilege, one who struggles to "Keep Awake" as Jesus asked..., one who labors to grow aware of the imbalances, to which I contribute, that maintain the systemic evils obscured and over summarized by words like "racism, classism, militarism, and sexism", I recognize that I am trained to reach out with the expectation that I can fix something. I am programmed to assume agency, the ability to affect change. Privilege dictates the expectation of agency. And I don't know what to do.

I want to scream. I want to weep. I want to spend a month in monastic silence., and I want to find words to help make this madness stop.

It is obscene. It is wrong in every way. Black children shot by police. Black church members shot while at prayer. Where to find words for what cries out from my heart as so obvious?

White terrorists targeting churches or movie theaters are arrested without injury, individually excused as mentally ill or misguided. Black children are shot on swing sets, necks broken in police vans, and generalized as sub-human criminals. White sports fans pillage, burn, and loot when sports team lose., or win, their actions reported as rambunctious excessive celebration. Black communities rise up in despair, in rageful response to economic exploitation and the murder of their children to become characterized as thugs, criminals, beyond the pale of understanding.

This. Must. Stop. This must be changed.

In the words of poet, Adrienne Rich, found in our hymnal, Singing the Living Tradition, as reading #453:

"My heart is moved by all I cannot save: So much has been destroyed I have to cast my lot with those who, age after age, perversely, with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world."

May our Congregation find its voice, its place in the struggle. May we each find our voice, our own place in the struggle. Together, may we find the courage to stay open to all this pain. May we find ways to Keep Awake.

My Love Abides
Rev. Gail



Restructuring Update

Staffing Changes

Once again, UUAA is in a season of deep change, staff turnover, and new possibility. During the years of interim ministry, 2005-2008, we had a complete turnover of all but part-time staff. This year, many of our positions are changing hands, once again.

As promised at Annual Meeting and working closely with lay leadership, I am taking steps to bring our expenditures within the bounds of our projected income. One of the steps we are taking is to move back to a staffing structure more suited to our size, a structure that has worked well for us in our recent past. We will have a smaller staff and deeper lay involvement in financial management.



One hard change has been the elimination of the Executive Director position. This job was defined and structured in 2006-2007 by Interim Senior Minister, David Keyes. Two years before the massive Recession that hit Michigan so hard, it was reasonable to plan that UUAA would soon grow in size. Planning for that growth was prudent management. But that growth never came and the scope of the job is much greater than what we need or what we can afford.

We all have occasion for gratitude to Thom Bales who for 7.5 years served us well as our Executive Director. He created important policies to keep us safe and make our operations more fair and more efficient. With sadness, I have acknowledged that this is a staff position we can no longer afford. Thom was given notice following UUAA policy and he will receive a fair severance with full compensation and benefits for three months. I am grateful to Thom for his service to our Congregation.

In parting, Thom has asked that we do not schedule any Church-wide events on his behalf. Notes or cards for Thom will be collected in the Church office.

The loss of that staff position has been hard news to accept, for me as well as for many of us. But hard news is not our only news. While we may lack the assets needed to fund our ambitious aspirations, giving to our Congregation is steady and generous. I believe our disconnect is with our relentlessly high expectations. Since 2009, we have been expecting ourselves to bounce back up to goals set at levels possible before the Recession. Just because that expectation has not happened there is no reason to devalue all our good news.

Our financial base is sound and well managed. The "means" within which we must live are not insubstantial, they are just smaller. Rather than continue along by dealing with our budget shortfalls by "Second Asks" and the persistent pressure for more money, I have decided it is time to pull back. I am working to restructure our staff and our expenditures such that we will be living well within our means by October of this year.

I will offer more details and more news as the summer months unfold. For now, as you read this, I will be in Portland, Oregon for the General Assembly (GA) of our Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. GA is always an intense work time for me.

This year it will include several conversations with folks interested in coming to Ann Arbor for ministry and religious education possibilities. Please stay tuned to future newsletters for updates on our plans to rebuild our religious professional staff.

And thank you, all of you, for your steady, caring, generous support of our Congregation and its ministries.

Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer,
Senior Minister.



Musings

Rev. Mark Evens, Associate Minister

Two new congregation groups have been recognized since the last Newsletter issue.

The first is UUA North which is brought into existence by Louis Merlin and members Barb Cherem and Neal Foster. This group's goal is to "enable greater participation in UUA for those who live on the north side of Ann Arbor who find the distance or time a barrier to participation." They intend to plan monthly activities to foster spiritual growth and development, social connections, and support. This group and its activities are open to all without regard to where you live. For more information contact Louis Merlin at louismerlin@gmail.com.



If you are interested in starting a new Congregational group, talk to Hannah Hotchkiss or myself. The Group Recognition Request Form which is a step in the process can be found here on the Congregation's web site: uuaa.org/index.php/policies

Our second new group is one organized through the Social Justice Council: an Immigration Action Coalition. The process for forming a new recognized social action project group can be found as a link near the bottom of this page on the Congregation's web site: uuaa.org/index.php/social-justice/faith-in-action/council-2

For information about this group contact Cheryl Valentine at 313-670-1947 or cherylntatzmervvalentine@gmail.com

In Faith,
Mark



News From the Harper Room

Julie Dybdahl, YRUU Coordinator



This spring has been a time of lots of transition for YRUU. We've had several new youth join the group, and have had some visitors. Seniors are moving toward graduation (we will miss you!!), while we're looking forward to welcoming the Coming of Age graduates into YRUU. At the same time, we're saying good-bye to all of our advisors. Mark VanKempen and Kate Hutchens, who have served us faithfully for 3+ years, stepped out of their roles with YRUU in order to make room for their new son Iggy. Our other two advisors, Phil Hodge and

Emma Kennedy, will also be leaving YRUU soon, and Laurin Tuxbury and John Palmer-Thomas will be joining us in advising roles.

What a lot of transition! This kind of upheaval can make for bumpy seas, as relationships change and new relationships develop. Change is often difficult, but it's also a time of great opportunity! While it might be easier to lament what is lost and to drop out, our covenant calls us to stay together to work through this transitional period, knowing our group will thrive if we stay committed and look for ways to enjoy the change.

So as our year winds down and we switch to a 10:00am Service time, we will lighten our schedule. We will have chalice circle meetings some weeks and will attend Church Services other times. We hope to have some service work days at Farmer Bill's, Habitat for Humanity, and with other organizations. And in the fall, we'll push the re-set button and fire up for another busy year.

If you have an interest in working with our youth as an advisor, please contact YRUU Coordinator Julie Dybdahl at julie@uuaa.org. Advisors must: be 25+ years old, enjoy teens, be known to our Congregation (or another UU congregation) for a minimum of one year, identify as a Unitarian Universalist, be flexible, and be ready to have fun. 

Board of Trustee News

President's Message

Beth Hospadaruk, Board President

Welcome to July and a new year for your Board of Trustees. I want to extend a warm welcome to our newest members; Sandy Simon/Vice President, Jeff Poliner/Treasurer, Lissa Oliver and Hayley Boyse/trustees at large. Saying "yes" to the call to serve our Congregation in this way is no small commitment and I want to personally say thanks to each of them, we have important work to do. Please extend the same when you see them.



It seems to be a season for change as our Senior Minister and CEO, who, with full support of the Board, has been making some very difficult decisions but ones we feel will bring our Congregation into alignment with our financial commitments and mission. Being able to maintain our outstanding ministries and Worship Services is very important to us all. Some of you have said "What's going on around here, with so many staff members leaving?" and though it may seem that we will not survive, rest assured, we endured the same amount of staff turnover when Rev. Phifer retired, we will endure this restructuring as well. The heart and soul of our Congregation resides with the membership, friends, lay leaders, and dedicated volunteers- our beloved community!

Update on a few things:

1. To date, we have increased our pledges to the amount of \$91,000. This is an amount that exceeds any other 2nd ask and an amount that truly shows how much this Congregation means to us all. Thank you to all who have considered,

- reflected, and been able step up and make this financial decision.
2. The parking lot work continues. A small team of dedicated leaders is making progress on the big project. So much has yet to happen before their labors are visible to us all. With the construction season in full force, our construction will not be completed until the 2016 season. If you have specific questions, please don't hesitate to speak with Ed Lynn, our Interim Church Administrator.
 3. As our yearlong 150th celebration has officially ended, it can never be said enough what a great year we had. It left me with great respect for those who made these kinds of difficult decisions before us and a feeling of trust in the future that we will be able to make good sound decisions going forward. Thank you to everyone who helped to make it a year to remember.

In conclusion, Bob and I will be attending the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly in Portland OR from Wednesday-Sunday, June 24-28. We will be proudly representing our Congregation as delegates along with several others from UUAU during the business meeting of the UUA. I am looking forward to learning, participating, and growing with thousands of UU's from around the country, bringing what I gain back with me to help sustain my role as President.

Be well friends,
Beth Hospadaruk
2015-2016 Board President



Activities and Events

Senior Dinner * Wednesday, July 1

Those in town, come join for the monthly dinner at Gourmet Garden at 6:00pm. No reservations required. Questions? Contact Marie Duke at 734-769-0467 or omaduke7@gmail.com.



Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) * Saturday, July 11



There will be a monthly meeting of the Ann Arbor Chapter from 12:45 to 2:45pm in the Jackson Chapel. All are welcome to join for a dial-in call to a national CCL expert talk, followed by local discussion. For more information go to citizensclimatelobby.org. Questions? Contact Larry Junck at ljunck@umich.edu.



Immigration Action Coalition (IAC) * July 14

Sentencing Postponed For Ubaldo Castenada-Tapias

Members of UUAU and Ubaldo Castenada-Tapias' extended family gathered at the court house on Tuesday, June 16 to demonstrate their support during his sentencing. However, the judge postponed the hearing until Tuesday, July 7 at 9:30am and then changed again to Tuesday, July 14. Did this Judge hope those present would be discouraged and do nothing? Supporters will return, though; stronger and more organized than ever. Join the IAC on Tuesday, July 14 outside the Federal Building in Ann Arbor at 8:30am to take a stand for justice. Ubaldo may be allowed to make a statement before his sentencing, but Judge O'Meara—who would not allow any personal testimony at the trial, and who postponed the sentencing hearing—will be presiding.

Supporter presence may help to influence the judge to give Ubaldo a more humane sentence.

Ubaldo could face 10 to 20 years in Federal Prison followed by deportation to Mexico for illegally entering this country. At Ubaldo's trial in March, the judge did not allow him to explain how his mother fearfully fled Mexico with her children when he was 8 years old following his father's murder. Ubaldo lived with his family in southeast Michigan. Soon after turning 18 yrs, he was detained for not having a photo ID. Within two hours, and before he could talk with his family or receive legal counsel, Immigration had him sign a paper giving up his right to ever return to the US, and he was deported.



To learn more about Ubaldo's case and what how to help, contact Kate Stenvig at kstenvig@umich.edu or Jose Alvarenga of BAMN. Follow on UUAU Social Justice Council Facebook page for updates. Questions? Contact Cheryl Valentine at cheryl.natzmervallentine@gmail.com.



Experience Blue Lake * Monday-Wednesday, July 27-29

All are invited to attend a special Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp showcase at the University of Michigan's Hill Auditorium Monday-Wednesday, July 27-29. The free events will feature performances by the Blue Lake International Youth Symphony Orchestra (IYSO), International Choir (IC), and International Jazz Orchestra (IJO), who will have just completed a joint four-week tour of Western Europe before returning to Michigan.

Monday, July 27 at 7:30pm

IJO will present a program of traditional and contemporary big band jazz selections from their tour repertoire. Also, IC will offer selections comprised of a variety of sacred, secular, and traditional choral literature.



Tuesday, July 28 at 7:30pm

IC, the Alumni Choir, and IYSO will perform *Festival Mass* by Ludolf Arens, *That Music Always 'Round Me* by James Niblock, and *Te Deum* by Anton Bruckner.

Wednesday, July 29 at 7:30pm

The IYSO program will feature *Academic Festival Overture* by Johannes Brahms, *Capriccio Espagnol, Opus 34* by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and *Firebird Suite* by Igor Stravinsky.

In addition to the above concerts at Hill Auditorium, the Blue Lake International Choir has been invited to perform at UUAU on Sunday, July 26 at 6:00pm. This is also a free concert open to the public.

Host families are needed from Tuesday-Thursday, July 26-July 28 for the International Choir. What a wonderful opportunity for the Chalice Singers and Chalice Sparks (or any Congregants) to host students ages 13 and up. Contact Sandy Sheroky, International Secretary, at 1-800-221-3796 ext.200 or sherokey@bluelake.org if able to host a Choir member(s).

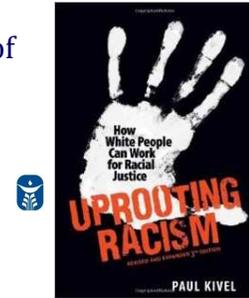
Questions? Contact Glen Thomas Rideout at glen.thomas@uuaa.org.



Announcements and Notices

Challenging Racism

All are invited to participate in a congregational Common Read beginning fall 2015. This intriguing book is the 3rd edition (2011) of *Uprooting Racism-How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* by Paul Kivel. It is available in the QUUest Bookstore. Each book discussion will focus on: How can we be strong white allies? Questions? Contact Edie Croake at ecroake@wccnet.edu.



Climate Action Group (CAG)



Three CAG members, Louis Merlin, Robbi Duda, and Larry Junck attended the Citizens Climate Lobby International Conference from Sunday to Tuesday, June 21-23.

CAG has selected a steering committee that includes Kate Hutchens, Larry Junck, Paul Morris, Akin Oni-Orisan, John Seeley, and Bennett Stark. Suggestions of projects that could be taken on by the group or the Congregation are especially welcome. To make a suggestion or ask a question, contact climatesteering@uuaa.org or Larry Junck at ljunck@umich.edu.

QUUest Bookstore Closed

QUUest Bookstore will be closed for the month of July. For special needs and order requests for August, contact Lucia Heinold at heinoldcia@aol.com or 734-996-2796.

Denominational Connections Team (DCT)



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through the democratic process. The 2015 GA was held Wednesday, June 24 through Sunday, June 28 in Portland, OR.

The 2016 GA will be held in Columbus, OH from Wednesday, June 22 to Sunday, 26, 2016. More info to come.

The Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAI) 2014-2018: [Escalating Inequality](#) study guide is available; contact Roylea 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 co-operating together and strengthening our identity as UUs.



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

Alpha House Thank You



Thank You to the many volunteers who support Alpha House, a shelter for homeless families. The next Host Week will be held from Wednesday to Sunday, August 26 to 30. More than 100 volunteers will be needed. Sign up at [SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0D4DAAAAA2EA02-august1](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0D4DAAAAA2EA02-august1).

Questions? Contact Angela Barber, UUAU Alpha House Coordinator, at abarber@gmail.com.



Holtkamp Organ

What became of the Holtkamp Organ from the 1917 Washtenaw Avenue Church Sanctuary? That question was asked several times as information on UUAU music programs was gathered for the 150th anniversary. Recently a full report was offered on the whereabouts of the much loved organ.

It was purchased by Juliette and George Loup and moved to their home in New Orleans, LA. where it is in good use. Juliette sent the following email referencing information received earlier from Ann Arbor organist Marijim Thoene:



"She is correct--the Holtkamp tracker from Ann Arbor is now much beloved at our house here in New Orleans. I am attaching a photo. You can see that we have less case than in AA and have moved the 4 largest pedal pipes, but not much else is changed. It sounds wonderful in our house.

We have had house concerts for years (begun when a concert pianist friend asked about 'rehearsing' a program on our Steinway), so have been very happy to invite organists to play our organ. Most performers are local, and it has been wonderful to have Marijim play it, especially since she played it in Ann Arbor! Since she is usually in New Orleans every spring, we hope her 'series' will continue for a long time. A local organist is playing it Friday evening, a program he hopes to tour around the southeast this summer.

Marijim said you were documenting the life and times of our organ. We are very interested in learning what you find out. We have been in email contact with Sarah Albright and hope she will get to play it again sometime when she is in New Orleans."

Questions? Contact History Detective Sandy Simon at sandy@triltech.com.



New Member Bio

Dorothy Haigler



Originally from Philadelphia, Dorothy Haigler is a third-generation UU. She is a member of an antique bicycle club, the Wheelmen, and rides an 1889 Columbia Light Roadster with a 47 inch wheel. The antique cars are a newer hobby with her husband, John Grace.

Dorothy's strongest automotive interest is two-cylinder Renaults from 1908-1915, and she enjoys driving hers on tours.

Dorothy has three daughters: Emma, Jackie, and April. Much of her time is spent being actively involved in the Wayne-Westland Community School District. At UUAU, she enjoys Round Robin Dinners and music.



Liz Hartley

"Becoming an official member of this Church has been a three-year journey. Last year, I became involved with the Wednesday Morning Readers group and most recently, as a volunteer greeter. The Church has not only given me a chance to explore my spirituality, but a wonderful opportunity to connect with others.



I have my degree in Children's Literature and Youth Theater from Eastern Michigan University. For many years I worked as a special needs para pro and substitute teacher.

My interests include reading, cooking, gardening, and word games.

My husband, Chuck, and I reside in Saline. Our two children, Mike and Rachel, are in their late 20s. Mike is a member of the Church and sings in the choir."



Jerry McKay

Jerry McKay is the husband of Melinda McKay. He went from a High School math teacher, to an IBM Marketing representative, to a wood lathe artist, to a non-profit leader, and now- at 76 years old, he is trying to really retire.



Jerry was a volunteer in the Methodist church leadership which included merging two churches in Detroit. He led an extensive addition project on one church in Farmington Hills, and was involved in all kinds of church fundraising.

Having moved to Ann Arbor last summer, he and Melinda are ready for a change and find Ann Arbor and UUAU to be more compatible with their current approach to life and issues.



On The Horizon

Men's Retreat News

The 2015 Men's Retreat has been scheduled for Friday to Sunday, September 25 to 27 at the Judson Collins Campground. Come join with other men in the Congregation for fun and fellowship. Questions? Contact Mark VanKempen at mark.vankempen@gmail.com.



Family Camp

Enjoy a weekend of camping, fun activities, and camaraderie at YMCA Camp Pinewood from Friday to Monday, August 21 through 24. Don't miss s'mores around the campfire, the cardboard boat regatta, or zip lining. Register here. Questions? Contact Cristy Cardinal at cristycardinal@gmail.com.



Church Office News

Summer Building Hours:
Sundays, 8:30am-9:00pm
Mondays-Thursdays, 9:00am-9:00pm
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

***Note: The UUAU building and office will be closed on Saturday, July 4 to honor the Fourth of July Holiday. The building and office will be closed from 9:00pm on Thursday, July 2 to 8:30am on Sunday, July 5.**

Communicating at UUAU:

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

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in the *2015 August Newsletter* is 9:00am on Tuesday, July 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.

Building & Office Team:

Ed Lynn, Interim Administrator, ed@uuaa.org
Debby Casamatta, Office Administrator, deborah@uuaa.org
Venus Gregory, Building Attendant, venus@uuaa.org
Robert Klingler, Building Attendant, robert@uuaa.org
Dewon Lewis, Weeknight Custodian, dewon@uuaa.org
Arthur Whigham, Weekend Custodian



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