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First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan

Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.

June Newsletter

June 1, 2016 - Vol 6, Issue 6

Congregational Links

UUAA Links:

[Make a 2016 Pledge](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

[Social Justice at UUAA](#)

[UUAA.org](#)

[Geisenhainer Music Fund](#)

Other Links:

[MidAmericauua.org](#)

[Standing on the Side of Love](#)

[UUA.org](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

Weaving Worship

theresa rohlck, Worship Associate

Sunday Worship | 10:00am

Rites of Transition

June. Daylight now extends over 14 hours. Many, especially those on academic calendars, and families with children soon to be out of school, are experiencing the transition to new routines that come with the season. We too as a Congregation have shifted down a gear, back to one service on Sundays for the next few months; the Chalice Singers, Sparks, and Bells are all taking time away from intense rehearsals, to breathe in different rhythms. Worship leaders rotate in and out and increased lay leadership on Sundays shapes our summer.

With June comes General Assembly (GA). As I prepare for my first GA at the end of the month, I find myself trying to articulate my own Credo, anchored in our Words of Affirmation. I am also reflecting on the fact that I never had the chance as a ninth grader to write a Credo, the way the ninth graders in this Congregation have been doing this past year. They will mark this Coming of Age transition on Sunday, June 12, when they will deliver their Credos from the pulpit, and we will listen and learn. I wonder, what would I have written when I was their age? What would you have written?



All are welcomed to engage in the moments of transition in the life of this Congregation. Come, listen, and learn, as we embark on summer worship together.

Theresa Rohlck



theresa rohlck
Worship Associate
theresa@uuaa.org



Sunday, June 5

Worship | 10:00am

I Believe

Annual Meeting

11:45am

Within this service our YRUU High School Seniors will be Bridging, from Youths to Young Adults.

Following the service is the Annual Meeting; all are welcomed and encouraged to attend, to take action through our votes on matters that we believe in.

Sunday, June 12

Worship | 10:00am

Coming of Age-Credos

In this annual Credo service, we celebrate the ninth grade students who have been part of the Coming of Age program. Their voices are inspiring and articulate, honest and authentic, and bring hope for the future. It is an honor for the Congregation to bear witness to the aspirations of these young people, and your support for them is warmly welcomed.

Sunday, June 19

Worship | 10:00am

To Be of Use

In the vows of Installation when our Congregation formally installed the Reverend Gail Ruth Geisenhainer as our 12th Settled Minister, we established Rev. Gail as our spiritual leader. She, in turn, vowed to embrace our memories of the past and our aspirations of the future as her own. We join our voices today to release Gail from those vows as she prepares for her retirement.

Sunday, June 26

Worship | 10:00am

Summer Solstice Hymn Sing

Meteorologically speaking, summer begins Wednesday, June 1. Astronomically, it begins with the summer solstice; in Ann Arbor, this occurs on Monday, June 20 (6:34pm for those who find joy in details). Celebrate

the transition into both summers as we join our voices
in a joyful hymn-sing with guest musicians.



Gleanings

Reflections from Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister



Have you ever heard someone say, I'm spiritual., but I don't want anything to do with organized religion? I feel sad when I hear it. It seems such a timid way to live a life. I have found that to embrace spirituality, even a disciplined spirituality, without organization or the accountability organization requires, is to drift with no destination, to coast through life without the very challenges that make life worth living.

It is time for American religion to grow past the 19th century privileged ideals of individualism that cut us off from one another, obscure our reliance on one another, and create the illusion that the earth is a fathomless pool of resources to be plundered for individual gain. All Lies.

We are all interconnected. My well-being depends on your well-being, and we all depend on the well-being of our planet. No one gets great on their own. To yearn for that is to yearn for death. To measure success by that kind of 19th century "rugged individualism" is to create mayhem and death for others. The stakes are high, friends. And so, too, are the ideals and the aspirations of our Unitarian Universalist religion.

We seek redemption from the excesses of individualism through learning to promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We seek to create sustainable living for all through democratic process, awareness and allegiance to visions of interconnectedness of all life, and, always, through compassion. Our aspirations are lofty. As well they must be. And here, in Ann Arbor, our collective strength and vision is taking tangible form as we push forward strengthening our building and grounds for ministries of welcome and possibility.

It is not glamorous to rebuild a huge parking lot. It is not newsworthy to eradicate mold from classrooms, rebuild retaining walls, replace boilers and chillers, or patch roof leaks. Yet, without all that infrastructure work., we cannot live into our ideals of making safe welcome or walking in beauty. Henry David Thoreau taught this:

"If you have built castles in the air,
your work need not be lost;
that is where they should be.
Now put the foundations under them."

That, friends, is precisely what we have done here at UUA.

As we move more deeply into this season of ministerial transition, I am proud and grateful for all the foundational work we have done to strengthen our Congregation toward the next "150 Years of Reason and Compassion in Action" here in Ann Arbor.

And I offer my deepest, personal thanks to all who have been able to contribute to the Geisenhainer Music Fund., strengthening the foundations of our music ministries for decades to come. Thank You All.

Love Abides,
Rev Gail




Upon Reflection

Rev. Lindasusan Ulrich, Assistant Minister



Gratitude upon gratitude for everyone who made my ordination such a joyous event! From participants and volunteers to attendees and well-wishers, I could hardly imagine a more meaningful, heart-filled day to mark my transition into ordained ministry. I was thrilled, too, that the offering raised nearly \$2,000 for the Living Tradition Fund and Black Lives Matter. My biggest thanks, of course, goes to the entire congregation for entrusting me with this role and responsibility.

Just before the ordination service, I learned from Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs that the UUA Board had recently voted to give the Saturday general session offering from this year's General Assembly to a group called Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU). The UUA is guaranteeing at least \$60,000 to support BLUU's work "to provide support, information, and resources for Black Unitarian Universalists [and] to expand the role and visibility of Black UUs within our faith." They plan to use the funds to help Black UUs attend GA and to seed a national convening within the next 12 to 18 months.

Since a portion of the ordination offering was already earmarked for Black Lives Matter, Rob asked me to consider whether we might channel those dollars towards supporting BLUU as well. Gail and I agreed that taking advantage of this sudden opportunity could make a real difference in the ways UUs engage with the Movement for Black Lives, while remaining true to the original spirit of the ask. Given the deep respect I have for the colleagues organizing BLUU, I had no doubt we'd be investing our resources wisely.

The UUA Board's commitment to BLUU can't help but resonate historically with what's come to be known as the "Black Empowerment Controversy" in the late 1960s. Google can get you more details, but the basics are this: a painful and lasting rift within Unitarian Universalism erupted over the funding and strategies our denomination should deploy to address racism.

In the five decades since, our congregations and leaders have put a lot of time and effort into anti-racism/anti-oppression/multicultural work. Unitarian Universalism still has a long way to go before it earns the moniker of Beloved Community. But it matters to me that our covenants keep us coming back, trying again and again to do the heartbreaking work, to have the difficult conversations, and to put our money where our mouths are.

What old wounds are you trying to heal in a new way?

Peace,
Rev. Lindasusan



Board of Trustee News

Annual Meeting * Sunday, June 5



Plan on attending the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, June 5 at 11:45am in the Sanctuary.

Anyone associated with our Congregation is welcome to attend the meeting and take part in discussions. Only full members and associate members can vote.

The Annual Meeting agenda items will include Congregant votes on a) whether to spend more than \$50,000 on capital improvement projects; b) a "Black Lives Matter" resolution; c) election of Board of Trustee and Leadership Development Team officers; d) an "Emerita status for Rev. Gail Geisenhainer" resolution; and e) whether to cancel the loans from the Jackson Endowment Fund. The meeting materials and the 2015-2016 Annual Report are all electronic this year. The biographies for the board nominees can also be found in these materials. Please review the information prior to the meeting: click here [Annual Meeting and Report 2015-2016](#). Additionally, a hard copy of these meeting-related items will be available for review in binders in the Sunderland Library and on the Involvement Table during Social Hour.

Questions? Contact President Beth Hospadaruk at president@uuaa.org.



President's Message Beth Hospadaruk, Board President

Welcome to June. When I say there has been a lot going on here at UUAA, I mean it. This past month brought the interim task force much work with interviewing and ultimately choosing the Rev. Douglas Wadkins for our incoming Interim Senior Minister. You can learn more about him at www.douglaswadkins.org. The Board of Trustees is very happy with the choice, and we feel he will be a great match for us. He begins work here in August. More details will come; watch the transition page at uuaa.org for updates.



Back to June. Don't miss the "Goodbye Gaila" event on Sunday, June 19 after the 10:00am service. This is a family event with many fun things for the kids to do, along with a lunch of grilled goodies and other tasty treats. Really, come one, come all. Plan to be there. Gail would love to see each and every one of you and your family and have the chance to say goodbye. We have been so fortunate to have Gail as our Senior Minister, and now it's our turn to show up to the party. We will be celebrating the landmark unveiling of the Geisenhainer Piano. What a grand tribute to her love, dedication, and support during her eight years at UUAA. [Donate here](#) to support the ongoing Geisenhainer Music Fund and learn more.

Sunday, June 5, is the Annual Congregational Meeting beginning as close to 11:45am as possible. The agenda is full; check out everything [here](#). We are trying to reduce waste, so there will be very few paper copies made of all the documents. Please try to review them ahead of time and print at home, if possible.

As I come to the end of the first of my two years of proudly serving this Congregation as your President, it is an emotional transition time for me. Rev. Gail and I have walked very closely on this path; it won't be easy to change partners. However, this is my spiritual work; I am inspired everyday by all of you. When you give me words of encouragement, share your thoughts and ideas, share your gifts of voice, music or other talent, or simply just by being here, I feel renewed. You let me know that my commitment and hard work matter. Thank you. I will revere the past with love and kindness but do trust in the dawning future even more.

Be well friends,
Beth Hospadaruk
2015-2016 Board President
president@uuaa.org



UUAU Welcomes Interim Senior Minister

The Board of Trustees is very excited to announce that Reverend Dr. Douglas E. Wadkins has been hired to serve as our Interim Senior Minister beginning in August. Rev. Dr. Wadkins has deep experience in UU interim ministry. He comes to us from his previous successful interim ministry post in Bloomington, Indiana. Visit his web site: douglaswadkins.org to learn more about him.



The Board's Interim Ministry Task Force (President Beth Hospadaruk, Hayley Boyse, Allen Duncan, Tricia Mooney, Lissa Oliver, and Sandy Simon) evaluated eight outstanding candidates and interviewed five of the eight to find an Interim Minister who will interact well with our staff and congregants and bring joy and inspiration to our high energy UUAU community. Rev. Wadkins' interim skills will help us work on our governance, pastoral care, and other work that we need to complete before we call a settled minister. We very much look forward to welcoming him here in August.

Questions? Contact Board President Beth Hospadaruk at president@uuaa.org.



UUAU Welcomes New SGD Director

Rev. Gail and the Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) team are delighted to announce an exciting addition to the UUAU staff.

Cassandra Hartley will join UUAU in July as the part-time Assistant Minister for Spiritual Growth and Development. Welcome!



Cassi graduated with her M.Div. from Detroit Ecumenical Theological Seminary and will be ordained into Unitarian Universalist ministry by the Farmington Unitarian

Universalist Church on Sunday, June 12. She has a deep passion for faith formation and has worked in several congregations, including an internship at the Church of the Larger Fellowship that focused on family ministry. Cassi is the mother of three young children, Emerson, Fionn, and Miren. They have been members of UUAA since 2013.

Questions? Contact Board President Beth Hospadaruk at president@uuaa.org.



Ministerial Transition Timeline

With Rev. Gail's retirement in summer 2016, the Board of Trustees has been busy making decisions toward the future.

Visit uuaa.org for the most up-to-date information about the [ministerial transition period](#). Check out this link regularly or ask any Board member. The basic timeline is below:



May/June 2016| Interim Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Douglas Wadkins selection made by Board of Trustees.

June 19, 2016| A Goodbye Gaila for Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer will follow the Service.

July 31, 2016| All-Congregation gala farewell and good wishes party for Rev. Gail.

August 2, 2016| Rev. Geisenhainer's last day at UUAA.

August 2016| Selected Interim Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Douglas Wadkins joins us for two years.

Spring 2017| Search Committee forms, meets with UUA consultant, begins search process.

April 2018| Presentation of final candidate to the UUAA Congregation.

September 2018| UUAA enthusiastically greets our 13th Senior Minister.

Questions? Contact Board President Beth Hospadaruk at president@uuaa.org.



Board of Trustees Notice



A proposal to change the name of one of the classrooms in the lower level of the SGD wing from the Thomas Jefferson room to the Viola Liuzzo room was presented to the Board of Trustees (BoT) on behalf of the Challenging Racism group with support of the Social Justice Council.

In part, the proposal states that Viola Liuzzo (pronounced Lee-OO-zo), was a Unitarian Universalist and civil rights activist from Michigan, murdered by the KKK after participating in the 1965 civil rights march in Selma, AL. Liuzzo lived her life with great courage, putting UU principles and values into action.

In accordance with UUAA Room Naming Policy, the BoT is publishing this notice of request and seeks input from UUAA members prior to making a formal decision at an

upcoming BoT meeting. View the full proposal on the BoT bulletin board outside the Social Hall. Send any feedback to the Board of Trustees members at bot@uuaa.org. 

Activities and Events

Senior Dinner * Wednesday, June 1

The monthly senior dinner will be at Gourmet Garden at 6:00pm. Also, have a good time solving many of the world's problems. Questions? Contact Marie Duke at omaduke7@gmail.com or 734-769-0467. 

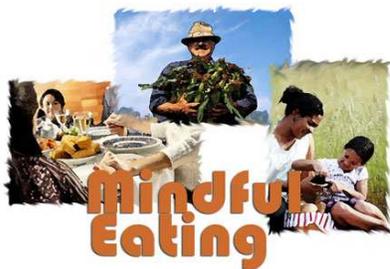
Introduction to OUUr Faith Workshop * Saturday, June 4

This engaging workshop is for both newcomers and long-time members and is a prerequisite for signing the membership book. Taught by a Unitarian Universalist minister and the welcome ministries coordinator, topics include the history of Unitarian Universalism and this Congregation, how this Congregation is governed, how to get involved, and the meaning and responsibilities of membership. Participants are also given a chance to share their spiritual experiences.



Register by Wednesday, June 1. Forms are available in the Visitor Welcome Room and on the Involvement Table during Social Hour. Or, register by contacting Welcome Ministries Coordinator Hannah Hotchkiss at hannah@uuaa.org. 

Mindful Eating Permaculture Tour * Saturday, June 11



Interested in sustainable agriculture? The Mindful Eating Team will sponsor a walking tour with the staff of UUAA's next door neighbor Amrita Farms on Saturday, June 11 from 10:00am to 12:00pm at the Amma Center (4201 Ann Arbor-Saline Road).

Amrita Farms is dedicated to empowering people through nature and offers demonstrations of sustainable systems in a variety of disciplines including permaculture, renewable energy, beekeeping, natural building, and composting. Meet at the farm for this informative tour. Questions? Contact Connie McGuire at cmcguire@umich.edu. 

Ordination of Cassandra Hartley * Sunday, June

12



All are invited to attend the ordination of UUAU member and new Assistant Minister for Spiritual Growth and Development.

The ordination of Cassandra Hartley to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry will be at 3:00pm at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington, 25301 Halsted Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan. A reception will follow in Adams Hall. Children are welcome to attend. RSVP to ordination@uufarmington.org.



Accessibility Team Potluck * Saturday, June 18

Join the Accessibility Team for a potluck lunch in Fahs Chapel from 11:30am to 1:30pm. Seniors and non-seniors alike are welcome and invited to bring a favorite dish (with ingredient list, please) for this social gathering. Help celebrate the Accessibility Team's accomplishments and gather fresh ideas about accessibility and inclusion for the future.

Questions? Contact Mary Burton at mjburtruss@hotmail.com.



Goodbye Gaila * Sunday, June

19

Celebrate Rev. Gail's eight years of service with UUAU at our formal farewell to Rev. Gail from 11:30am to 1:30pm.

11:30am - Picnic

- *Food - hamburgers, hot dogs, side dishes
- *Games and Activities for Children
- *Pony Rides
- *Music



12:15pm - Short Program

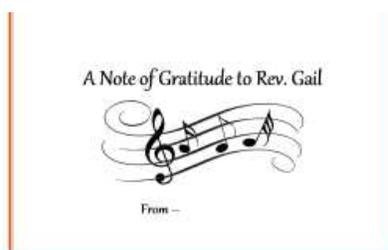
The "Notes of Gratitude" for Rev. Gail will be presented in a scrapbook during the program. To fill one out, find the blank template in the office or at uuaa.org. Place completed Notes of Gratitude in the Geisenhainer Music Fund box in the office before Sunday, June 19.

12:30pm - Ice Cream Sundae Bar

There are many opportunities to help host this event. Questions? Contact Welcome Ministries Coordinator Hannah Hotchkiss at hannah@uuaa.org.



Note of Gratitude * Sunday, June 19



Every one of every age is invited to write or draw a "Note of Gratitude". The notes will be assembled into a "Symphony of Gratitude" scrapbook. Pick up a note card at the Geisenhainer Music Fund table at the Congregation office or [download a template to print at home](#). Feel free to be creative and make your own. Express your gratitude from your heart.

A scrapbook of notes will be presented to Rev. Gail at the "Goodbye-Gaila" following the 10:00am Worship Service. Questions? Contact Dixie Hibner at dixiehibner@comcast.net.



One Time Chalice Circle Registration * Sunday, June 26

Join from 1:00pm to 2:30pm with the topic of Forgiveness. Register on Sunday, June 26 or Sunday, July 3 during Social Hour or at listen2children@gmail.com. Questions? Contact Alma King am_king@hotmail.com.



2016 GA News * Wednesday-Sunday, June 22-26



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, learn, connect, and make policy for UUA through the democratic process. Anyone may attend. GA 2016 will be held from Wednesday to Sunday, June 22-26 in Columbus, Ohio. Most events will be held at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. The drive is less than 3.5 hours from Ann Arbor.

The theme for GA 2016 is *Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect*. The faith world is increasingly multifaited. People are crossing borders of religion and spiritual practice to create wholeness in their lives individually and collectively. The labels of Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, theist, and non-theist no longer define who or what to love, or how the spirit moves in lives. GA 2016 will assemble leaders and communities of many faiths to create a new vision of faith that no longer divides, but connects to an interdependent future that works for all.

Online registration is required at uua.org/ga for both the conference and housing. Sunday morning worship will be open to all with no registration required.

Interested in going to GA? Sign up on the interest sheet at the Social Justice Table during Social Hours. This list will be used as the contact sheet to keep everyone abreast of GA 2016 news.

The Denominational Connections Team (DCT) will hold a delegate-only meeting on Friday, June 17 at 7:00pm at UUA.

Questions? Contact DCT Co-Chair Roylea Furniss at refurniss@gmail.com.



Rideout to Provide GA Worship & Music Leadership * Wednesday-Sunday, June 22-26

Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, our own Director of Worship and Music, will bring his leadership to several venues for this year's General Assembly (GA). He will be Director of the GA Choir, Director of Music for the Church of the Larger Fellowship Worship Service on Friday, June 24 at 1:15pm, and lead Musician and Liturgist for the Grand



Sunday Morning Worship Service on Sunday, June 26 at 10:30am.

This is an opportunity to showcase what UUA is developing on a much larger scale. He will be teaching what is possible with our model of deep collaboration and theological reflection in worship preparation.



Announcements and Notices

Building Closures and Deadline Changes

During the week of General Assembly (GA), the building and office will be closed from Tuesday, June 21 at 9:00pm through Sunday, June 26 at 9:00am. Worship Service will be held at 10:00am. The building and office will then be closed at 12:00pm on Sunday, June 26 through Monday, June 27 at 9:00am.

The revised deadline for the Sunday, June 26 *Weekly Bulletin* is Monday, June 20 at 9:00am. Send submissions to bulletin@uuaa.org.

The revised deadline for the *2016 July Newsletter* is Wednesday, June 15 at 9:00am. Send submissions to newsletter@uuaa.org.



Geisenhainer Music Fund



As of Wednesday, May 18, donations to the Geisenhainer Music Fund exceeded the initial goal of \$47,500 to purchase a new piano. The long-term vision for this fund is about more than the instrument itself. It's also about what the piano can mean to the wider community.

Additional gifts will support music outreach programs, such as low-cost lessons for area children who cannot otherwise afford them.

Please consider making a contribution to the fund as your special farewell tribute to Rev. Gail. You can [download the letter and donation form](#). You can [click here to make a credit card contribution](#) to the fund on-line. Questions? Contact Interim Administrator Ed Lynn at ed@uuaa.org.



Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)



Support of the coffee program and ongoing contributions to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) continue to do great work in the wider world.

In mid-April, Ecuador experienced a devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake and 6.1-magnitude aftershock, killing more than 600 people and injuring more than 20,000. Immediately, UUSC staff reached out to longtime partner Mi Cometa, a grassroots organization that was well positioned to deliver a rapid response. They provided water, food, medicine, and mattresses to two affected communities, including particularly marginalized populations. In the days ahead, Mi Cometa will determine if there are other opportunities for UUSC to provide aid. UUSC could not launch such an immediate response without steadfast support.

UUSC continues to do its part in the refugee relief area. Greek partner PRAKSIS has been providing transportation from the arrival point of Syrian refugees to the camp on Lesbos as well as distributing food and water. UUSC support also allowed for the distribution of blankets, jump suits, and hats for 536 babies.

Cristy Cardinal is the new justice building innovator. These innovator volunteers improve the capacity and effectiveness of congregations and their parishioners to engage in sustained justice work in their communities and across the country. Utilizing statewide networks and congregational projects, Cristy will be supported by UUSC with periodic training, ongoing coaching, a peer network, and various financial and technical resources. Cristy's area of interest and work will be implementing the UUA Gender Equity curriculum. She is looking for people to help, particularly with starting a council on gender equity. Contact Cristy at cristycardinal@gmail.com.

Sometime this fall, see the show *Defying the Nazis*, a Ken Burns' documentary about the Sharps, UUSC founders. Stay tuned.

For more information go to UUSC.org. Questions? Contact Quincy Northrup at qnorthrup@gmail.com.



Office News

New Parking Lot

Parking lot construction will continue through mid June. Note that UUA will be accessible through at least one entrance during the entire project. There will be a short period when the only parking available will be on compacted gravel. Wear appropriate footwear. Parking will be tight. Carpooling is strongly encouraged. Many thanks in advance for your cooperation. Questions? Contact Interim Administrator Ed Lynn at ed@uuaa.org.



Building Schedule and Publication Deadlines

Building Hours

Sundays | 9:00am-4:00pm

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

Friday | Closed

Saturdays | 9:00am-4:00pm

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

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Telephone | 734-665-6158

Fax | 734-665-7895

General Email | office@uuaa.org

Communicating at UUA

Note: Revised deadlines for June/July Publications due to GA.

The deadline for submitting UUAU events, news, and program notices for inclusion in the *Weekly Bulletin* is 5:00pm each Wednesday.

The revised deadline for Sunday June 26 *Weekly Bulletin* is Monday, June 20 at 9:00am. Send submissions to bulletin@uuaa.org.

The deadline for submitting UUAU event, news, and program notices for inclusion in the *2016 July Newsletter* is Wednesday, June 15 at 9:00am. Send 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.



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