

April 2013

Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty

2231 Jefferson Road

Clarklake, MI 49234

(517) 529-4221

The Bellnote

LOCATED 3/4 MILE WEST OF U.S. 127

MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS:

Monday: Minister's day off
Tuesday: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Wednesday: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Thursday: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Friday: Sermon-writing day,
no office hours
Saturday: By appointment
Sunday: By appointment

STAFF

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Grace Mulnix



Minister's Column

Today, as I write this, the Supreme Court starts hearing the case for and against same-sex marriage, as they listen to arguments for and against the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). This decision, whatever it may be, is a key moment in the struggle for marriage equality.

Our church became a Welcoming Congregation in 2004, following a lot of work and examination. It was later that year that I became the minister in this congregation.

When I was in Massachusetts serving at a congregation there, I took a vow not to sign any marriage licenses in that state until same sex marriage was legalized in Massachusetts. One of the reasons that I took that vow was that Massachusetts was pushing for marriage equality, and statements by clergy were mounting up and adding to public pressure on the legislature. Taking a stand there at that time enabled me to make an impact through my local media. I was very glad that in 2004, Massachusetts legalized same-sex marriage and I was able to sign several marriage licenses for gay and lesbian couples before I moved to Michigan that summer.

In Michigan in 2004, the climate was very different, and I didn't renew my vow. Here, instead of fighting for marriage equality, we were fighting against a same-sex marriage ban. And we lost that fight. In 2004, our state put in place one of the most restrictive same sex marriage bans into our constitution, banning not only marriage but "any similar union." As predicted by same-sex marriage advocates, that constitutional amendment was then used to ban same-sex couples from partner benefits when working for state institutions, most notably the state's universities, which fought back and lost that case to continue to provide benefits for their employee's partners and, in some cases, their employee's children.

Despite being a Welcoming Congregation since 2004 and personally performing several same-sex weddings in Michigan since that time, it wasn't until this year that I performed my first same-sex wedding in our sanctuary. I'm hoping it will be the last one I perform in our sanctuary, or anywhere, that isn't a legal ceremony as well. This year, a Michigan court was hearing a case on same-sex adoption when the judge, U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman, asked the couple to broaden the case into a same-sex marriage case. They did so, and the judge has stayed his decision on the case until the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on DOMA and California's Proposition 8 is issued. As you can see, the Supreme Court decision will have an immediate and large impact on our state. Judge Friedman is

Continued on page 5...

Religious Education Report

I'm very pleased with the turnout at our "Bring a Friend" service on 3/17. Speaking for the children's participation, we had 12 kids in K-6 class and 3 in the nursery. Thank you to teachers Kerry Hart, Joyce Kelly and Cecily Savick, who helped me with the "Noruz" (Persian New Year) lesson. Kids had an interesting month, with lessons from St. Patrick's Day and Henry Bergh Day (Bergh founded the ASPCA) to Noruz and then Passover. Easter promises to be an interesting intergenerational service.

In April we will have a "craft day" on the 7th, when several children will probably be on Spring Break. We will plan our RE Sunday service on the 14th, and then have an Earth Day celebration on the 21st (The kids were surprised that Earth Day was not part of the curriculum last year, so this year I was pleased to see it was!). And on the 28th we'll observe Japanese Child's Day.

Holidays and Holy Days, this year's curriculum, is a well-rounded one for studying world religions and cultures. We will be narrowing down choices of new on-line curriculum for next year, probably focusing on UUism next. And we always start recruiting next year's teaching and nursery volunteers around this time of year, since the RE year starts in August and the summer is not an easy time to finalize plans, what with vacations and such. Please "be the change you want to see in the world" by helping bring up our next generation with UU values—heed the call if you are asked to volunteer in the RE program. And thank you for your support!

Sharon

Sharon Pedersen, RE Coordinator

Notes from the Board

This past month we have had some successful church events. Our March 10 bowling party was well attended, and "a good time was had by all." Our "Bring a Friend Sunday" was extremely well attended with 76 adults and 15 children present. We're hopeful that we'll be seeing many of them in future services. Thanks to Nathan Brue and Dad, Ben Brue, for providing music for the March 22nd potluck and also for pre-senting Nathan's very creative film, "Moon Attic". It made for a wonderful evening! We really appreciate their donating the goodwill offering to the church.

The nominating committee is busily working on a slate of officers for the Board of Directors for this next year. Two people are leaving the Board this year—Anita Pepper and Jane Volk—and will need to be replaced. Due to Hugh Tomlinson's resignation as treasurer, we are extremely pleased that the remainder of his term is being filled in by Martha Koopman. We were regretful to accept Hugh's resignation, and we are thankful that he was able to serve in a competent and professional manner. Should a member of the nominating committee contact you regarding becoming a Board Member, please give it serious consideration.

As of this writing, we do not have any one willing to be chairperson of our annual Pledge Drive. Needless to say, the Pledge Drive is our largest source of income, from which come the majority of the funds used to operate our church budget; without pledges, we have little idea of the amount of money we will have to keep our doors open. Please seriously consider working on our Pledge Drive.

We have a newly formed Music Committee whose purpose is to search for a pianist/choir director for two to three Sundays a month. The committee members are: Rev. Cindy, Jackie Johnson, Tom

Continued on top of page 6...

Silent and Standard Auctions

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Our standard goods and services auction will be **Friday, May 10**, in the church sanctuary.

Dinner will be served at 5:00 pm in the social hall followed by the auction at 6:00 pm. Invite your friends and relatives to join us in the fun.

The items listed below are a sample of those offered for bidding during the past few years. More than 100 items are usually donated. Some items will be offered for a silent auction that will take place in the school house. Silent auction items need to be delivered to our church by **Wednesday, May 1**, so they can be prepared for viewing and bidding after church services on Sunday, May 5.

Auction volunteers will be making calls seeking donated items, so start now thinking about what items you might be willing to offer. Donated items do not need to be recently made or purchased, but please be sure they are in very good condition. Auction items that are not purchased will be returned to the donor.

Submitted by: Steve Beison

Weeks or week-ends at vacation homes
College football and basketball tickets
Homegrown canned organic vegetables
Live music for an event of your choice
Framed poems and pictures
Jars of bread & butter pickles
Outdoor bubbling fountain
German Language lessons
Handmade mosaic mirrors
Personalized business cards
Artist painting materials
Movie tickets and dinner
Flowers and potted plants
Comic book packs
Raft rides with dinner
Hand-carved figures
Hand-made jewelry
Home-made breads
Home-made dinners
Sermon of your choice
Hand-made pillows
Electric floor cleaner
Hand-made Afghan
Cakes and pies
Handyman work
Framed paintings
Birdwatcher's kit
Lawn ornaments
Brass candelabra
Garden wagon

Champagne
Wicker baskets
Bird houses
Children's toys
Picnic table
Piano lessons
Garden basket
Knitting lessons
Hand-made quilts
Sewing alterations
Bath products
Biscotti and coffee
Dehumidifier
Toaster oven
Lawn mower
Ceramic figures
Music CD's
Local fishing trips
Cookies
Fudge
Dishes
Glassware
Maple syrup

Camera
Lamps
Vases
Tea pot
Bar stools
Blankets
Book ends
Kayak
Rugs
Puzzles
Dolls
Pizza party
Ceiling fan
Folding table
Chairs
Golf clubs
DVD movies
Cosmetics
Silver platter
Rototiller
CD player
Table cloth
Wreaths
Numerous gift cards
and Much More! ~ 3 ~

Meetings and Events

U.U. Church of East Liberty

Committee on Ministry

As part of our charge to conduct an assessment of the Shared Ministry of our church every three years (and a follow-up to our Sunday service on Shared Ministry), the Committee on Ministry will be surveying church members. The Committee - Gratia Karmes, Marge Duane, Gretchen Marshall, and Ann Green - will be at tables in the social hall after church on Sundays in April with a brief survey.

The three questions we have are:

- 1) *What do you value most about the difference our church makes to you personally and to the community?*
- 2) *Do you feel you are supporting the shared ministry of our church to your satisfaction?*
- 3) *What could the church – both minister and laity – do to enrich your life more? We thank you in advance for your participation.*

Submitted by: Ann Green

Personal Care Ministry

The Jackson Personal Care Ministry has been very successful, serving 120-150 Jackson County households per week. Each week the following items are offered: shampoo, lotion, toothpaste, and tooth brushes, deodorant, bar soap, razors, combs, sanitary napkins, dish and laundry soap, all purpose cleaner, toilet paper and paper towels. Donations of products and monetary gifts are needed. Donation baskets are located in the Social Hall and in the church foyer. Checks can be made out to Westminster Presbyterian Church with Personal Care Ministry written on the memo line. Our church has had good participation and I'm encouraging everyone to volunteer. We work on the **Second Thursday** of each month, 4:30-7:00

Submitted by: Nena Obits

JXN Community Forums

..are free and open programs to encourage dialogue about the challenging issues of our day. The series is sponsored by the Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty and the Jackson District Library. All forums are held at the JDL, 244 West Michigan Ave., Jackson, MI and they are usually on the third Thursdays at 6:30-8:30 pm. Childcare may be available for a modes donation: (See Supplement Page for more contact information) to RSVP for childcare. Call Debby Sears at the library at 517-788-4087 ext. 234 for more information or see the JDL website at www.myjdl.com.

Thursday, April 18 ~ 6:30 pm

“Reproductive Freedom in MI: Recent Legislation”

Rep. Earl Poleski and a staff member of Planned Parenthood of Mid-Michigan will address questions such as: the reason for recent legislation, what is still pending, and what is the impact on service providers and clients/patients?

Submitted by: Outreach Comm.



Please welcome our

newest members

Tim & Elizabeth Walker

and their children

Arielle , Ellyana, Kitiara

and son-to-be Kemry

who joined our church

on March 17th

Bowling Event Update

Bowling history was made on March 10th when 17 UU members and families descended upon Summit Lanes to illustrate their skills at the lanes. Okay, well maybe not bowling history but much fun and merriment was had for sure! We bowled on 3 "teams" for 2 hours and most people improved as their abilities sharpened. Many hadn't bowled in years, like Steve Beison, Ken Johns, Donna Hinton, Kathy Haynes and Ann Green but they quickly found they still had it and began throwing strikes and spares like crazy! Unfortunately "it" never returned to Gratia Karmes & Elissa Alden who tied for the title of worst bowler.

Aubrey Hart was happy to collect the side bet between her team and team 3, which came to \$1.80. All in all, everyone was surprised to find that they had a blast, no matter what their skill level. There were several bowlers who obviously had mad bowling skills and left us speechless: Alyce Oosting, Lynn McLean, & their fun friend & wonderful square dancer, Gene Emery and #1 bowler of the day, Jason Hinton. Team #1= Alyce Oosting, Lynn McLean, Gene Emery, Nena Obits, Gracia Karmes. Team #2 = Aubrey Hart, Jon Hart, Kerry Hart, Kathy Haynes, Jason Hinton, Donna Hinton. Team #3 = Ann Green, Elissa Alden, Robin Wormser, Ken Johns, Steve Beison. And in the cheering section was: George Haynes. — What a group! Submitted by E lissa Alden

SAVE THE DATE!

As you know, Donna & Jason Hinton are expecting their first baby this summer. We will celebrate this and shower them with baby goodies after church on **June 2**. Please plan on this opportunity to wish them well and help them stock up with essentials and frills for their baby boy. They are registered at Target & the Toy House and Baby Too! But would also love Meijer gift cards (Meijer unfortunately does not offer a register any longer – boo!) See you there!! Submitted by E lissa Alden

and Cindy Landrum

Cindy's Column Continued from page 1...

expected to rule very quickly after the Supreme Court ruling. If the Supreme Court strikes down DOMA and Proposition 8, and if Judge Friedman strikes down our constitutional amendment, same-sex marriage could be legal in Michigan very soon. If that happens, there may only be a short window of the time before the state government moves to stop it.

Across the state, liberal churches are readying themselves. Our goal is to have couples ready to get licenses and perform as many weddings and sign as many licenses as is possible while the door is open. We're beginning by identifying which county clerks will be open for business and willing to issue licenses immediately and quickly, and we'll gather in those locations and perform weddings. If you would like to be with me or get married on that historic day if it comes to pass, I invite you to let me know.

It's exciting that we're on the brink of potentially a big ending to a long fight here in Michigan. On the other hand, the outcome we seek is not guaranteed. But as we continue this fight and wait anxiously for the next steps, we remember the Rev. Theodore Parker's words: "do not pretend to understand the moral universe. The arc is a long one. My eye reaches but little ways. I can not calculate the curve and complete the figure by experience of sight. I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends toward justice."

Namaste,

Cindy

"Go now and live your religion.

Its truth reflect in all you do.

Go, may love's presence ever guide you.

Live the good life the whole day through."

-- Our Closing Song --

The Bellnote Calendar

All events are at the church, unless otherwise noted

April

- 3 Wed. Board Meeting ~ 6:30 pm
- 4 Thurs. AUJW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
- 4 Thurs. RE Meeting ~ 6:30 Pm
- 7 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 9 Tue. Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
- 10 Wed. Outreach/Forum Committee Meeting @ JDL ~ 5:30 pm
- 11 Thurs. Membership Committee ~ 10:00 am
- 11 Thurs. Personal Care Ministry ~ 4:30-6:30 pm @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson, Help Distribution
- 14 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 18 Thurs. JXN Community Forum **"Reproductive Freedom in MI; Recent Legislation"**
@ Jackson District Library, Carnegie Branch ~ 6:30 pm
- 21 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 21 Sunday The Bellnote Newsletter ~ Submissions Due
- 23 Tue. Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening
- 28 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 28 Sunday Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service

Upcoming Events

- May 10 Annul Church Auction ~ Dinner at 5:00 and Auction starting at 6:00
- May 19 Our Annual Meeting

WEEKLY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE:

Sunday	Apr 7	Apr 14	Apr 21	Apr 28
Greeters	Alyce O	Grace M	Joan B	Carole H
R.E. Greeter	Gretchen M	Sharon P	Sharon P	Sharon P
Nursery Helper	Becky B	Joan B	Joyce W	George H
Ushers	Gary T Steve J	Gary T Steve J	Gary T Steve J	Gary T Steve J
Social H. Host	OPEN	OPEN	Gratia K Elissa A	OPEN
R.E. Pre.				
R.E. K-5	Sharon P Kelley E	Sharon P Nancy S	Cecily S Dee R	Michelle V Kelley E
R.E. Youth				

All Sunday Services Start at 11:00 am ~ Celebrating Over 150 Years of Liberal

Apr. 7 - "A World of Afterlife"

- Lay Leader, Worship Committee

Come experience explanations and music from various religions regarding their views of the afterlife.

Apr. 14 - "Strong Families—Services for returning Veterans"

- Lay Leader, Worship Committee

Listen to an expert on the subject discuss the state of returning veterans and the services available for them and how we can help.

Apr. 21 - "Earth Day"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Last year she spoke her whole sermon in verse. / What now will she do, and could it get worse?

Apr. 28 - "Marriage"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

As we await the Supreme Court's decisions related to same-sex marriage, Rev. Cindy will explore what marriage means, and its relationship to both religion and the state.

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