

December 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

MINISTER REV. CYNTHIA LANDRUM

REV.CYN@UGAALUM.UGA.EDU

R. E. COORDINATOR ~ SHARON PEDERSEN

SSPEDERSEN@SBCGLOBAL.NET

PIANIST TOM PEPPER

PEPPET49@comcast.net

NURSERY & CHILD CARE Vicki Haynes

kermi_210@yahoo.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT GRATIA KARMES

glk222@tds.net

VICE PRESIDENT JACKIE JOHNSON

jsj128@comcast.net

TREASURER MARTHA KOOPMAN

koopman9@live.com

SECRETARY Dee Reed

hd1reed@comcast.net

TRUSTEE NENA OBITS

nen_a_obits@hotmail.com

TRUSTEE DONNA HINTON

daisy_lefty@yahoo.com

CARING COMMITTEE

Jane Volk gjvolk@comcast.net

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Vic Marshall vbmarshall@gmail.com

BOARD/ELECTED NOMINATING COMM

Steve Kish ~ stevekish982@yahoo.com

Kerry Hart ~ khart247@sbcglobal.net

Grace Mulnix



Minister's Column

At the end of the Christmas Eve service, I always share these words from Howard Thurman:

“When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.”

December is a month that asks us to turn our thoughts away from self and to other people. It is a month wherein we think about our charitable giving both because of the end of the year and because of the history and meaning of Christmas. It is a month where we pass bell-ringers with buckets and boxes for toys on a daily basis, asking us to think of those in need. In our church we often give away our Christmas offering, ask for toys for families in need of help, and collect canned goods for the food pantry. It is a month wherein we give gifts to loved ones, friends, people with whom we work and who provide services for us.

One way I've been exploring to make the money I spend go even further, is to focus on where I spend my money for gifts this year. There are a lot of reasons to shop locally. Money spent in the community at locally-owned businesses comes back to benefit our community in a greater proportion than money spent at non-local businesses. If shopping online, we can shop through programs that earn our church money, as well. And then there's the option of focusing on fair trade goods, where we know the workers were paid a living wage. Another way to shop in a meaningful way is to look for non-profit organizations that sell goods, where a percentage of the profit continues to help the cause. And, of course, home-made and recycled objects that are given with care and love often are much more meaningful than anything bought in a store.

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Religious Education

Report

November is speeding toward December and we have the unruly weather to prove it. We've had some nice RE programs this past month:

We've continued to enjoy the "Love Connects Us" curriculum, exploring this covenant statement:

Love is the spirit of this church,

and service its law.

This is our great covenant:

To dwell together in peace,

To seek the truth in love,

And to help one another. — James Vila Blake (1842-1925), Unitarian minister

Five girls in third through sixth grades participated in the Puberty class that Planned Parenthood put on with us.

The Michigan Project for Informed Public Policy brought us the KUP (Know Us Project) training on November 24, educating LGBT folks and allies about communication skills to help educate our friends and colleagues about discrimination, stigma, and our moral values.

After I've survived having my big family over for Thanksgiving on November 30, I'll enjoy our intergenerational fun services with you in December!

We're planning an intergenerational holiday program for **December 8**, Santa's Workshop **December 15**, and of course the intergenerational holiday services.

On **December 24** I'll be in the nursery during the Christmas eve service for a crying room only, meaning that at least one parent needs to be with me if your

kid(s) need a break there.

Looking forward to the month to come! Teachers, I'll be getting a draft schedule out for January 5, 2014 -soon - thanks!

Enjoy the holidays!

Luvv and Light,

Sharon

Sharon Pedersen, RE Coordinator

Rev. Cindy's Column Continued...

These are just things I've been thinking about which make the season more meaningful for me. For me, thinking about how I spend my money and what good I can do in the world is something my faith calls me to do, and one of the reasons I value our religion, which helps bring a context of caring to how we understand the world.

We may have different understandings of Christmas, or different holidays we celebrate this season, but Unitarian Universalism unites us in how we care for the loved ones around us, the people of the earth, and the earth itself. This holiday season, I invite you to bring your Unitarian Universalist values with you as you celebrate the season, and then come back into community to share that experience. Connect with the people around you about how you're celebrating and honoring your beliefs. Listen to them share their ideas. The religious community is for just that — connecting with each other and lifting up what is best and most precious.

Peace,
Cindy

Notes from the Board

The UUCEL board met on Wednesday, Nov 6th. All members were present. Our biggest (and best) news is that the church has already received a distribution of \$1,135 from the Capital Campaign Fund. This indicates that the decision made by the congregation to invest this money is already bearing fruit, and in fact is exceeding expectations. (This is a good thing, considering that the plumbing issues we recently faced are an unexpected expense.) Board meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month, at 6:30, at the church. Please submit items for consideration to any member, in writing or via email. Full minutes of each meeting are available in the social hall.

Gratia

Submitted by: Gratia Karmes
Board President

"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~~



from the Piano Bench

December is a joyous month at church and that always calls for a lot of music! Tom Pepper will be performing old favorites on the piano, the congregation will join their voices in hymns of celebration, and our Community Choir will be singing anthems on **Sunday, December 22** and at the Christmas Eve Service on **December 24**.

We are looking for more adults and children to join our choir, so feel free to show up for rehearsals on December 15 and December 22 starting at 10:15 - 10:45.

No prior experience is needed.

Nena

Community Choir Director
Submitted by: Nena Obits

Visitor Orientation Q and A

Question and Answer - If you would like to learn more about the church, please join the minister after the service for a short, informal conversation on **Sunday, December 15**. Meet in the foyer after the service, following the Q and A for a tour of our buildings if you would like.

Submitted by: the Membership Comm.

Meetings and Events

U.U. Church of East Liberty

Deck the Halls on December 1

The Hanging of the Greens will be on **Sunday, December 1st** this year. The Christmas tree and greens will be brought up prior to that day. The children and adults will be helping to decorate the tree as a part of the service with Rev. Cindy. Then after the service, the greens and other decorations will be put into place by everyone that would like to help.



Holiday Basket Silent Auction

The Gift items are on display in the Social Hall **now through December 8**. Check them out in and make some bids. The bids will be taken until 11:00 am on the 8th. At that time Nena and Donna will collect the slips, and get the items to the highest bidder during the social hour. Some of the themes are:

Movie Night with DVDs & Treats
Jewelry & Truffles
Dog Treats
Basket for your Cat
The Nut Cracker & Nuts
Popcorn & More
Homemade Canned Food
Snowman Puzzle & Puzzle Books with Tea
Sleight Full of Candles
and lots more!

Please contact Nena Obits or Donna Hinton if you have any questions (See Supplements Page for more information). Thank you!

Submitted by: Nena Obits



Interested in Joining?

We will be planning our next new member service soon. So if you're interested in joining, see Rev. Cindy or Kathy Haynes, Membership Committee Chair.

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 modest 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, December 12 6:30 pm

The editors were told, the topic will be on **"Minimum Wage"** and our Representative Earl Poleski will be there to answer your questions along with some others. As more information comes to us it will be added to the weekly Order of Service.

Note: While forums are generally hosted on the third Thursdays, please notice that the December forum will be held on the 2nd Thursday due to scheduling conflicts. Mark your calendars!

Submitted by: Outreach Comm.

Personal Care Ministry

The Jackson Personal Care Ministry provides personal and household products to those in needs in Jackson County. An average of 150 guests are served weekly. Our team works at the distribution on the third Thursday of each month, 4:30- 6:30 pm. financial support and donations of new and gently used products are greatly appreciated. for more information, contact Nena Obits (See Supplements Page for more information)

Submitted by: Nena Obits

Support Our Church While Shopping Online!

UUCEL has multiple ways you can support our church while shopping online. Try one of these easy methods this holiday season!

1. We have a new Amazon Store where every purchase benefits our church. Simply go to <http://astore.amazon.com/libertyuu-20> and search for items like you would on Amazon. All the same items are there at the same prices. When you go to check out, you'll be directed to Amazon's usual secure check-out area.
2. Another way to shop at Amazon is to go to our shopping page at <http://www.libertyuu.org/shop.html>. If you click on a link there, anything you buy at Amazon will earn us a percentage.
3. When you go to <http://www.goodshop.com>, you can enter our church as your chosen agency. From Goodshop there are links to dozens of online stores. When you go from Goodshop to those stores, you earn a percentage. Goodshop also often has coupons that can save you money.

These links have the potential to earn the church a significant amount of money. With only a few people participating, we've already been making enough per year to replace one small fundraiser. *Share this link with your friends and family and ask them to participate, too!*

For so the children come, and so they have been coming.
Always in the same way they come, born of the seed of man and woman.
No angels herald their beginnings. No prophets predict their future courses.
No wise men see a star to show where to find a babe that will save humankind.
Yet each night a child is born is a holy night.

Fathers and mothers—sitting beside their children's cribs—
Feel glory in the sight of a new life beginning.
They ask, "Where and how will this new life end? Or will it ever end?"
Each night a child is born is a holy night—
A time for singing, a time for wondering, a time for worshipping.

by Sophia Lyon Fahs
Submitted by: Rev. Cindy

~Visitor Tips for Everyone~~

Here are some ways to make people feel welcome that everyone can follow:

- Introduce yourself and get to know a visitor by name.
- Invite a visitor to social hour.
- Wear a nametag.
- Sit toward the middle of the pew or nearer to the front of the church so visitors can be more anonymous if they choose.
- Watch for people who may be alone during social hour and ask them about the sermon or their faith journey.

Thank you!

Collect Jiffy Muffin Mix

We have been asked to collect Jiffy Muffin Mix for the Brooklyn Food Pantry for their family Holiday Baskets. And we well completed that task – thanks to all who bought and brought in the muffin mixes to the church. 75 boxes were delivered to the Pantry by Carole Hartsuff for the Thanksgiving baskets and about 80 is the number of boxes of muffin turned in prior to this printing of the issue. **December 1st** is the last day to collect. Then the last 75 plus boxes will also be taken to the Food Pantry. The Brooklyn Food Pantry is an organization we have voted to support. Thanks again.

• Church Website	http://www.libertyuu.org
• The Bellnote Newsletter	http://www.libertyuu.org/newsletter.html
• Church’s facebook page	http://www.facebook.com/libertyuu
• Forum facebook page	http://www.facebook.com/JXNCommunityForum

We Welcome Your Membership Not a member? We’d love to have you join our spiritual community. New members signify their commitment by signing the Membership Book during a scheduled church service. It is understood that members actively support their congregation through attendance, service and/or financial commitment. To start your process of becoming an official member of our lively, compassionate and challenging congregation, speak with Rev. Cindy Landrum, (517) 529-4221, or a member of the membership committee,

FROM THE EDITOR:

“THE BELLNOTE” IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF UUCEL. IF THIS IS YOUR 1ST COPY OF THE CHURCH’S NEWSLETTER, WELCOME. OUR CHURCH YEAR RUNS FROM JULY 1-JUNE 30. THE CHURCH BOARD ASKS THOSE THAT RECEIVE THE PAPER VERSION OF THE NEWSLETTER TO PAY A \$17.00 PER-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION FEE. NEW VISITORS WILL GET 3 MONTHS FREE, AFTER THAT A SUBSCRIPTION FEE WILL BE ASKED FOR, OR CHANGE TO AN ON-LINE VERSION THAT IS FREE OF CHARGE.

THE DECEMBER ISSUE, INFORMATION IS NEEDED BY: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17. ~~~~~ SEND SUBMISSIONS TO: UUCEL_BELLNOTE@YAHOO.COM OR IN WRITING TO KATHY OR VICKI. THANK YOU –

We want to thank; Rev. Cindy Landrum, Sharon Pedersen, Gratia Karmes, Nena Obits, Outreach Comm. and Membership Comm. **for their news items this month.**



OUR 7 PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES

WE, THE MEMBER CONGREGATIONS OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION, COVENANT TO AFFIRM AND PROMOTE:

- ∞ THE INHERENT WORTH AND DIGNITY OF EVERY PERSON
- ∞ JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND COMPASSION IN HUMAN RELATIONS
- ∞ ACCEPTANCE OF ONE ANOTHER AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN OUR CONGREGATIONS
- ∞ A FREE AND RESPONSIBLE SEARCH FOR TRUTH AND MEANING
- ∞ THE RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE AND THE USE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS WITHIN OUR CONGREGATIONS AND IN SOCIETY AT LARGE
- ∞ THE GOAL OF WORLD COMMUNITY WITH PEACE, LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL
- ∞ RESPECT FOR THE INTERDEPENDENT WEB OF ALL EXISTENCE OF WHICH WE ARE A PART

The Bellnote Calendar

All events are at the church, unless otherwise noted

December

- 1st- 8th Gift baskets on Display in the Social Hall for Bidding of Silent Auction Items
 1 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 1 Sunday Hanging of the Greens ~ During and After the Service
 4 Wed. Board Meeting ~ 6:30 pm
 5 Thurs. AUUW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
 5 Thurs. Outreach/Forum Committee @ JDL ~ 5:30 pm
 8 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 8 Sunday Intergenerational Holiday Program
 8 Sunday Bidding of the Silent Auction Baskets Ends
 10 Tue. Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
 12 Thurs. Membership Committee ~ 10:00 am
 12 Thurs. JXN Community Forums **"Minimum Wage"**
 @ Jackson District Library, Carnegie Branch ~ 6:30 pm
 15 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 15 Sunday Visitor Orientation Question & Answer ~After the Service
 15 Sunday Santa's Workshop during Social Hour
 17 Tue. Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening
 19 Thurs. Personal Care Ministry ~ 4:30-6:30 pm @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson, To Help
 22 Sunday The Bellnote Newsletter ~ Submissions Due
 22 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 22 Sunday Choir will be Singing Anthems
 22 Sunday Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service
 24 Tue. Christmas Eve Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 7:00 pm
 24 Tue. Choir will be Singing on Christmas Eve Service
 29 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Lay Leader ~ TBA ~ 11:00 am

Upcoming Events

Sunday	Greeter	R.E. Greeter	Nursery Helper	Ushers	Social Host	R.E. K-5	R.E. Monitor
Dec 1	Alyce O	Sharon P	Donna H	Paul J	RE Comm	Sharon P Laura T	Sharon P
Dec 8	Grace M	Sharon P	Becky B	Paul J	Steve B Peg B	IG Pageant	Sharon P
Dec 15	Joan B	Sharon P	Joyce W	Paul J	Donna H Kathy H	Kerry H Peter M	Elizabeth W
Dec 22	Alyce O	Sharon P	Kathy H	Paul J	Open	Gretchen M Alyce O	Sue R
Dec 24	Joan B	Sharon P	Sharon P	Paul J	Cookies	Intergen.	Sharon P
Dec 29	Carole H	Sharon P	Joan B	Paul J	Open	Sharon P	Kathy H

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

Dec 1 - "Deck the Halls"

- Rev. Cynthia L. Landrum

Join us for a unique service as we begin to decorate our sanctuary and celebrate the upcoming holiday season.

Dec 8 - "O We Believe in Christmas"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum and the Religious Education Program

Dec 15 - "In the Bleak Midwinter"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

After two more boisterous Sundays, it's time to turn to the quiet side of the month, to acknowledge the sadness that the season brings for many, and to listen for the still, small voice of hope.

Dec 22 - "The Holly and the Ivy"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

This service will celebrate the Winter Solstice and the return of the sun

Dec 24 - 7:00 pm "Christmas Eve Service"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Join us for our traditional Christmas Eve service as we light candles, sing carols, and share readings new and old to celebrate peace and joy.

Dec 29 - "TBA"

- Lay Leader: TBA

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