

Minister's Column in Brief

When I interviewed with the search committee before coming to UUCEL, a member of the search committee asked me if I thought I would preach less often from a manuscript as I gained experience. "No," I responded, "I just hope that my texts will get even better." True to my word, I've been a manuscript preacher this whole time. There are a lot of reasons why I like preaching from a manuscript. It allows me to share my words with people again later (and our recording equipment is currently not working). It allows me to carefully craft some of my sentences. I can quote things more easily and more often. And I don't forget my points or where I am. Mostly, it has to do with my love of the written word. I enjoy the process of writing, even when it's laborious, and I like the result of a written manuscript. I think I'm more eloquent and more precise in written form.

This past month, however, I attended a workshop by Rev. Stephen Shick and Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy, called "Preaching By Heart: the art of preaching without a manuscript—in the Universalist style" (www.preachingbyheart.org). Shick and Kennedy made a powerful argument that extemporaneous preaching, preaching from

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Sunday Services at 11:00 am

March 2 - "RE Sunday" – Sharon Pedersen & Religious Education Program

March 9 - "International Women's Day Celebration" – Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum – We'll raise awareness on this Sunday of women's issues with a celebration of International Women's Day. Originally suggested by Socialist leaders 100 years ago, it is being adopted by the United Nations, liberal NGOs, and developing nations.

March 16 - "St. Patrick & Ostara"– Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - On the Sunday leading up to the Equinox and St. Patrick's Day, this sermon will explore the Pagan side of the St. Patrick story.

March 23 - "Auction Sermon" – Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - Every year Rev. Cindy does a sermon on a topic supplied by the highest bidder on the sermon topic item at the church auction. This year's "auction sermon" topic comes from Ann Green.

March 30 - "Universalist Profile: P.T. Barnum" – Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - P.T. Barnum once said, "There's a sucker born every minute" — or did he? We'll take a look at one of the most misunderstood of famous Universalists.

Calendar - March

- 2 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Sharon Pedersen & Religious Education Program ~ 11:00 am
- 5 Wed. Board Meeting ~ 6:30 pm
- 6 Thurs. AUUW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
- 9 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 11 Tue. Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
- 13 Thurs. Membership Committee ~ 10:00 am
- 13 Thurs. Outreach/Forum Committee @ JDL ~ 5:30 pm
- 15 Sat. MUUSJN Spring Justice Party & Spring Concert ~ U U Church of Greater Lansing ~ 5:00 pm
- 16 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~11:00 am
- 16 Sunday New Tech Assistant Training ~ After the Service
- 18 Tue. Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening
- 20 Thurs. JXN Community Forums "**Natural Death Care: Home Funeral and Green Burial**"
@ Jackson District Library, Carnegie Branch ~ 6:30 pm
- 20 Thurs. Personal Care Ministry ~ 4:30-6:30 pm @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson
- 23 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 23 Sunday Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service
- 23 Sunday The Bellnote Newsletter ~ Submissions Due
- 30 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
- 30 Sunday New Tech Assistant Training ~ After the Service

Meetings and Events: at or affiliated with U.U. Church of East Liberty

the heart, is what's called for in our current era in Unitarian Universalism where people are hungering for authenticity in an increasingly fake (think: plastic) world.

It's very rare these days that I take a ministry workshop that radically changes how I do things. But this workshop was a really wonderful experience. We preached to each other in small covenant groups, doing short five-minute sermons. These group times were interspersed with worship and lectures. The whole conference had to be cut short because of an approaching snowstorm, but it was still very meaningful.

As a result of this workshop, I've made a commitment to myself to do more of my preaching extemporaneously. It seems only fitting, since I'm requiring my communications students to do extemporaneous speeches, as well! Hopefully my preaching and my teaching will both strengthen each other.

I hope you will enjoy this new turn in my preaching. It's likely to be less academic and more "by heart."

Namaste,

Cindy

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.

"Natural Death Care: Home Funeral and Green Burial"

by Merilynne Rush, Home Funeral Guide, of After Death Home Care Consulting -- **March 20** 6:30 pm
An Exploration of current funeral practices and alternative approaches, including legal and financial considerations.

- ~ An overview of the history of the funeral industry (or, how we got to where we are) ~
- Current cultural practices and definitions ~
- The cost comparison between conventional and home funerals ~
- Legal information (understanding what is Law and what is Common Practice) ~
- A photo essay of one family's home funeral, involving children ~
- An overview of how to care for your own dead at home ~
- An explanation of green Burial and where it is available, with photos ~
- Discussion and Q & A ~

Merilynne Rush is a nurse and midwife with 25 years professional experience who educates and consults about natural death care options, including home funeral and green burial.
www.AfterDeathHomeCare.com

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