



# 2014 ~ November

## The Bellnote Mini-News

Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty  
2231 Jefferson Road, Clarklake, MI 49234  
(517) 529-4221 Located 3/4 miles West of U.S. 127

### Minister's Column

This month's theme is "Grace." "Grace" as a concept has often been perplexing to me. As a Humanist and an agnostic, I haven't felt directly the concept of "God's Grace" that some people have experienced. The definitions of "grace" are "favor or goodwill" and "mercy, clemency, pardon." I believe fervently that people are inherently good and not in need of saving from eternal damnation brought about by inherent depravity. But that doesn't mean we don't need grace in our lives. There are times when we each fall short of the mark and break the threads in the interdependent web. There are times when perhaps we've done something unforgiveable, or as Rumi writes, "broken your vows a thousand times." But how do we experience grace in the absence of a forgiving God?

The song "Amazing Grace" was written by a man who was a slave trader. Trading human lives into slavery is a pretty unforgiveable act. Yet he found grace and turned his life around. The writer Anne Lamott has said, "I do not at all understand the mystery of grace - only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us." The theologian Paul Tillich wrote, "Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness. If that happens to us, we experience grace. After such an experience, we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed."

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### Sunday Services at 11:00 am

#### November Worship Theme: Grace

**Nov 2** - "Our Principles in the Streets" - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - Our principles are often a guiding document for us. How do we take them with us out into the streets and into the voting booth?

**Nov 9** - "Grace and the Cosmos" - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - Our theme for this month is "Grace", and November 9 was Carl Sagan's birthday. How will Rev. Cindy weave these themes together? Come and find out! In addition, this service will feature a Veteran's Day recognition of those in our congregation who have served our country.

**Nov 16** - "To Be Announced" - Davi Trusty, Guest Speaker

**Nov 23** - "Thanksgiving Ethnic Bread Service" - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - We're reprising our "ethnic bread service" in celebration of Thanksgiving this year. Bring a bread to share in our worship that represents your ethnic heritage - corn bread, soda bread, tortillas, fry bread, naan, challah, pita bread, etc.

**Nov 30** - "Dover, A Town Torn Apart" - Lay Leader - Peg Beison - Presented in a style similar to "Our Town," six members of the congregation will portray six real people from Dover, Pennsylvania, who participated in the 2005 controversy between intelligent design and evolution ending in a federal court case.

### Calendar - November

2 Sunday	~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
5 Wed.	Outreach/Forum Committee @ JDL ~ 5:15 pm
6 Thur.	Board Meeting ~ 6:30 pm
6 Thurs.	AUUW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
9 Sunday	~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
9 Sunday	Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service
9 Sunday	Sunday Afternoon Gospel Sing ~ 4:00 pm @ First Congregational Church
11 Tue.	Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
13 Thurs.	JXN Community Forums <b>"Meet ALICE in Jackson"</b> @ Library Carnegie Branch ~ 6:30 pm
16 Sunday	~~~~ Service ~ Davi Trusty, Guest Speaker ~ 11:00 am
16 Sunday	Start of the Holiday Gift Basket Silence Auction
18 Wed.	Membership Committee ~ 10:30 am
18 Tue.	Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening ~ <b>Not Meeting this Month</b>
20 Thurs.	Personal Care Ministry ~ @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson ~ 4:30-6:30 pm
23 Sunday	The Bellnote Newsletter ~ Submissions Due
23 Sunday	~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
30 Sunday	~~~~ Service ~ Lay Leader: Peg Beison ~ 11:00 am
30 Sunday	Hanging of the Greens ~ After the Service

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R.E. Coordinator - Sharon Pedersen [sspedersen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sspedersen@sbcglobal.net)  
Board President - Gratia Karmes [glk222@tds.net](mailto:glk222@tds.net)

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

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For the past two months, I've been teaching at the Cooper Street Correctional Facility. Seeing the vast numbers of people incarcerated in our society, and facing the fact that many of them are there because they've broken the web of life in some horrible ways, has been an experience of sorrow. But teaching there, and seeing the hope and promise, and the belief in some of the men's eyes that they will turn their lives around and make their lives something good going forward has been an experience of grace.

For reasons I can't go into in this newsletter, it looks like I won't be teaching there any longer. That's been a moment of sadness in my own life, and a struggle to find grace. I spent several days in the struggle with this situation until the wave of light broke into my darkness and I experienced grace around the issue. I may not be better than I was before, but for me the situation is transforming.

I hope that whatever your struggles are this month, the light of grace breaks through your darkness.

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](http://www.myjdl.com).

**Thursday, Nov. 13 - Please note 2nd Thursday**

### **Meet ALICE in Jackson**

Meet ALICE in Jackson: **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**. More than 40 percent of working Jackson County households are struggling financially, according to a study commissioned by the Michigan Association of United Ways. Ken Toll from United Way of Jackson County and Toby Berry from Community Action Agency will introduce us to ALICE and what it means for Jackson County. Thanks to CMS Energy for a donation of \$25,000 which funded the county by county study.

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