



2015 ~ November
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

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Minister's Column

Do you remember when we became a Welcoming Congregation? I don't – it was right before I came to this church. Well, now the UUA has a Welcoming Congregation renewal program. A lot of things have changed in our culture since we became a Welcoming Congregation, a big piece of which is that we have a much larger awareness of transgender identity. The renewal program is less prescribed than the initial Welcoming Congregation program, but it calls on us to do work again in educating ourselves, assessing our programs and publicity, and doing advocacy work, and then taking a confirmation vote. We've been engaging in some of this work, and I think may be ready to vote on this by spring. And so with this in mind, I'm particularly excited that this month we're once again welcoming the Rev. Julie Nemecek to our pulpit. The Rev. Nemecek has been an important advocate for transgender awareness and civil rights in our community, and November 20 marks the Transgender Day of Remembrance, a time to remember those who have died as a result of transphobia.

Once we've gone through the Welcoming Congregation renewal process, or maybe when we've committed to it, we're eligible to use the UUA's new Welcoming Congregation logo on our website. The new Welcoming Congregation logo is designed to integrate with the UUA's new logo and branding materials, which is handy because the UUA is launching a new template for UU congregational webpages. Not too long ago we did an overhaul of our webpage and converted it to using Wordpress. Wordpress has a lot of lovely templates and applications we can use, and has the advantage of being a system where our leaders can be given individual IDs to access and adapt portions of our web. This has made it easier for our newsletter editor, for example, to get things onto our webpage in a timely fashion without going through getting it posted by a second volunteer. The UUA's new template is a Wordpress template, so changing over our look and our theme to their template will be fairly easy, although we'll need to probably add content and pictures. But there's good reason to make the switch, since this template is specifically designed for UU churches, and so incorporates all the elements that we'll need. So keep an eye on our webpage this month, because you'll be seeing this change soon. If you'd like to see the UUA's demo site for the new template, it's available at <http://demo.uuatheme.org/>.



This Month in Religious Education

Religious Education is off to a good start this year. The K-5th class is learning about the 7th principle, care for our earth and all living beings. In October we learned about healing our world. The kids had a lot of energy and enthusiasm for recycling and picking up litter. The 6th-12th class talked about "Letting Go Through Music". We've got some good musicians coming up through our congregation. This group will spend time this year thinking about their values and beliefs. By summer they will each have developed an individual "This I Believe" statement. It promises to be a year of growth!

We are in need of nursery volunteers. If you can help out once a quarter (or once a month) please sign up in the social hall or talk to Jackie.

Jackie

Submitted by: Jackie Johnson

Notes from the Board

The Board met at In Good Company restaurant this month, to support the fundraiser for Personal Care Ministries. Everyone was present. We spent some time reviewing the budget...pledges are coming in a little slower than expected for this point in the year. We are confident that this is a temporary situation. We don't have a final tally for the Grandma's attic sale and Harvest Bazaar, but it seems the total take was reasonably good considering the weather was so bad. Full minutes of this and all board meetings are available in the social hall. Our Board meets the first Wednesday of every month, 6:30 p.m. at the church social hall. We welcome all visitors and input.

Gratia

**Submitted by: Gratia Karmes
Board President**

This year I've joined the Michigan UU Social Justice Network board. As I look at the work MUUSJN is doing, and as I look at the template for the new Wordpress site, it makes me think about what our congregation is doing for justice. We have monthly participation in the Jackson Personal Care Ministry (the personal care items pantry), and we vote to take special collections for agencies, but we have no current social justice committee so there's more we could do but don't do due to lack of leadership in this area. I preach on issues, but seldom do we see initiatives that take the issues from the theoretical to the concrete. I know you're involved in justice issues individually, but there's more we can do collectively, if we work on it. If you're interested in taking leadership in this area, speak with me about your passions, your interests, the need you see in the world. Together we can make things happen.

Namaste,

Rev. Cindy

2015 Common Read Book: Just Mercy

For the last several years, the Unitarian Universalist Association has announced "Common Read" books. This year's book is an important one for us here in Jackson, so we'll try to hold discussion groups later in the year. Pick up a book from your favorite bookseller and start reading now. [Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption](#) by Bryan Stevenson is this year's selection. Stevenson has dedicated his legal career to defending those who are trapped by an often capricious, political, and willfully unjust criminal justice system - poor people, people of color, children, and others over whom the system has run roughshod. It speaks to justice, mercy, and compassion, themes of concern to us as Unitarian Universalists and as human beings. It follows on recent Common Reads, such as *The New Jim Crow* and *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness*, and responds to recent statements passed by the delegates to the UUA General Assembly.

Submitted by: Rev. Cindy

Soul Matters Spiritual Exercises for This Month's "Ancestry" Theme:

Option A: Bring it Back — Being a people of ancestry means passing on traditions. And it doesn't take much to notice that so many family traditions are in danger of extinction. The recipe that was required at every Thanksgiving but now no one bothers with. The outdated and supposedly tedious task of writing a handwritten letter. Passing on a family heirloom. Bedtime stories. Family game night. Marking the height of your kids on the kitchen doorway wall. Even sitting down at the dinner table to eat together. Slowly disappearing. Maybe even already gone. This exercise simply asks you to bring one of them back. Here's your task, put simply: **Dust off an old, forgotten family tradition and protect it from extinction.**

Option B: Pass The Wisdom On — Traditions are important to pass on, but so is wisdom. And while you may not feel you possess ancestor-like wisdom, you do have useful lessons to share! You have learned a lot about life that will be useful to those who come after. And believe me, they are more open to it than you imagine. So don't be shy. Share your wisdom! It's as simple as that. *Your assignment: Find someone younger than yourself who you think has open ears and tell them something you've learned that you think might be useful to them.*

Option C: The Ancestors Are Watching — Sometimes it's on our wall. Sometimes on the dresser or our desk. Many of them have been placed in a locket we wear around our neck. We are of course talking about pictures of ancestors, and placing them in prominent places so as not to forget that they are watching us. It's a habit that has fallen out of style. This month bring it back. And in doing so, hear their voice, wisdom, comfort and call anew. Your instructions:

1. Find or print out a picture of a relative that was important to you or played a major role in your family's story. You might also pick a picture of your chosen ancestor (one that you've adopted by choice rather than given by blood) or a spiritual ancestor (a political or religious hero whose life inspires your

- own). The goal is to pick someone who you *want* to be looking down on you.
2. Place that picture in a prominent place for the entire month and take a brief moment to look at it at the beginning of each day.
3. Pay attention to how pulling their face, their story and "their stare" into your awareness alters your days.
4. Share your experience with someone at church.

Option D: When the Story Changed — Being a people of ancestry sometimes means putting an end to what's been passed on. We are all working in one way or another to break family cycles of dysfunction. We also know that we are not the first to struggle with changing our ancestral storyline. This exercise invites you to honor this work that has gone before. You can approach this from multiple angles:

- ~ Identify a family member who you know has been central to the cycles of your family changing. Find a way to thank them and talk to them about what it was like for them.
- ~ If you are a writer, make the time this month to journal or write a poem in honor of a family member who helped pass on a new storyline to you.
- ~ Sit down with your child and tell them the story of the relative that gifted your family with "new ancestry."



Our Closing Song

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.

Meetings and Events

U.U. Church of East Liberty



Holiday Gift Baskets

November 22 - December 13

Note the change of dates, one week later than last issue's info: Once again we will be asking for donations of gift baskets for our Holiday Silent Auction. Some creative ideas from the past are holiday gift wrap, pet supplies, candles, books, games and puzzles, personal care items and various treats, to name a few. Bidding will start on Sunday, November 22 and end at 11am on Sunday December 13. If you have any questions, please see Donna Hinton or Nena Obits

Submitted by: Nena Obits

Showing Up for Racial Justice!

Chris Crass, one of the founders of the national group Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), will be in Michigan this month for a session with faith leaders titled "What is the call upon Michigan faith leaders for racial justice in this time?" The event is **Friday, November 13th** from 10:30 am to 1:30pm, and is held at the First Congregational Church of Battle Creek, 145 Capital Ave. NE, Battle Creek, MI. Rev. Cindy will be attending and would love to have some UUCEL members join her. No registration is necessary, but please tell Rev. Cindy if you're thinking of attending. See page 6 for a flyer with more information. **Submitted by: Rev. Cindy**

Death and Desserts

Ten people enjoyed our Death Potluck in September, so we're back this month for desserts! Bring a dessert, and we'll make coffee and together we'll discuss death – how do we feel about facing our own mortality? What do we want to have happen to our body after we die? Is there an afterlife? Join us for discussion on **Wednesday, November 18th**, at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by: Rev. 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. Call Debby Sears at the library at 517-788-4087 ext. 234 for more information or see the JDL website at

www.myjdl.com

Michigan Ave. Construction is Done

Thursday, November 19 at 6:30 pm

Now that the construction is done, where do we go from here? A conversation with Patrick Burch, the Jackson City Manager.

Submitted by: Outreach Committee

Pub Theology

Local Lutherans and Presbyterians have been meeting for a group called "Pub Theology," and they're interested in expanding to become an interfaith group, and would love to have some interested UUs come and discuss theology as part of the group. Their last session featured Rev. Cindy as their guest and they peppered her with questions about Unitarian and Universalist theology, and a good time was had by all. The group is about discussion, not conversion, and is friendly and interested in different opinions. Join them this month on the first or third **Tuesday (Nov. 3 or 17)** at 7:00 pm at the Grand River Marketplace. Discussion questions and guest speakers are posted in advance on their Facebook page — <https://www.facebook.com/JacksonPubTheology>.

Submitted by: Rev. Cindy

Art, Spirit, Practice!

Do you have an artistic spiritual practice? An artistic practice that you don't think of as spiritual practice? Is it portable? Come join on **Tuesday, November 24th** at 7:00 pm, and bring your art to work on, or come and color one of Rev. Cindy's coloring pages from her new coloring book.

Submitted by: Rev. Cindy



Gospel Sing Fundraiser, an invitation to Personal Care Support Churches

November 8, @ First Congregational Church, N. Jackson Street. This is to invite the churches who support the Personal Care Ministry to join us on Sunday afternoon, November 8, 2015, in a Gospel Sing Festival to be held at the First Congregational Church.

Each participation choir/praise team/small group/soloist will have a slot on the program for one, two, or three selections along with congregational hymn singing.

Please pass this invitation on to those who may be interested in performing in this event. Last November, we had a great time and raised a good amount for the ministry. Our goal is to increase the choir participants.

For information or to register to participate, contact Christine Canning-Peterson at Christine.Canning@uni.edu or call her at 517-416-2281. Or you can contact Nena Obits for more information. **Submitted by: Nena Obits**

Personal Care Ministry

The Jackson Personal Care Ministry provides personal and household products to those in need in Jackson County. An average of 150 guests are served weekly. Our team works at the distribution on the third **Thursday** of each month, **Nov. 19** 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 Supplement Page for more information.

Submitted by: Nena Obits

~~ Upcoming Fund Raisers ~~

Holiday Gift Baskets ~ Nov. 22 - Dec. 13

Submitted by : The Church Board

Minister's Schedule

Rev. Cindy will be out of town from **November 9** through **November 12** for her ministerial study group, Ohio River Group. She can be reached on her cell phone, or by leaving messages with her family. In case of emergency, please try both.

Submitted by: Rev. Cindy

Caring Committee

Caring Committee monthly meeting will generally be held on the 2nd Sunday of the month after church at 12:30 in the Nursery. If you are aware of any issues or concerns involving any of our church family for which the Caring Committee can lend a helping hand, please contact any member of the Committee. Those serving on the Caring Committee are: Debbie Hartsuff, Debbie and Fred Marshall, Gretchen Marshall, Alyce Oosting, and Jane Volk as chair.

Submitted by: Jane Volk

Meetings and Events

not directly affiliated with UUCEL

Redistricting in Michigan:

Should Politicians Choose Their Voters? Learn from League leaders how Michigan's legislative boundary lines are drawn, who draws them and why this is a critically important question for citizens concerned about fair representation. Bring your questions! Educational Town Hall 6:00 pm – Thursday, November 5 at the Meijer Branch, Jackson District Library, 2699 Airport Rd. Sponsored by League of Women Voters and Women 4 Equity. **Submitted by: Marge Duane**

What is the call upon Michigan faith leaders for racial justice in this time? :

A session with Chris Crass

All people are welcome, but this workshop will focus on how historically white faith leaders and congregations can be a part of racial justice movements of today. There will be skill-building, resource sharing, and support for the work already being done.

November 13th 2015
10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
First Congregational Church of Battle Creek
145 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek Mi 49015



Chris Crass has over 15 years of experience supporting the work of faith communities in building collective liberation. He is one of the founders of SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice). For more info on Chris, please visit: <http://www.chriscrass.org/>

No registration necessary. Have questions? Want to help co-sponsor the event? Be in touch: 269-965-1225 or emilyioye@gmail.com

This event is co-sponsored by the Center for Diversity & Innovation and ecumenical faith groups throughout the state of Michigan.

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• 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>

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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 EDITORS:

"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 22. ~~~~~ SEND SUBMISSIONS TO: UUCEL_BELLNOTE@YAHOO.COM OR IN WRITING TO

KATHY OR VICKI. THANK YOU –

We want to thank; Rev. Cindy Landrum, Gratia Karmes, Nena Obits, Debbie Hartsuff, Committee on Ministry, Outreach Comm., Caring 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

November

- 1 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister ~ 11:00 am
- 4 Wed. Board Meeting ~ 6:30 pm
- 3/17 Tue Pub Theology @ Grand River Marketplace ~ 7:00 pm
- 5 Thurs. AUUW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
- 8 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister ~ 11:00 am
- 8 Sunday Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service
- 8 Sunday Gospel Sing Fundraiser ~ @ First Congregational Church ~ 120 N. Jackson Street
- 9 Mon. Outreach/Forum Committee @ JDL ~ 2:00 pm (subject to change)
- 10 Tue. Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
- 12 Thurs. Membership Meeting ~ 2:00 pm
- 12 Thurs. RE Committee at Carnegie Branch, Jackson Public Library ~ 4:30 pm
- 13 Fri Showing Up for Racial Justice! First Cong. Church of Battle Creek ~ 10:30am to 1:30pm
- 15 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Julie Nemecek, Guest Preacher ~ 11:00 am
- 17 Tue. Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening
- 18 Wed Death and Desserts ~ 7:00pm
- 19 Thurs. Personal Care Ministry ~ @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson ~ 4:30-6:30 pm
- 19 Thurs. JXN Forum ~ "Michigan Ave. Construction is Done" @ JDL, 244 West Michigan Ave. ~ 6:30-8:30
- 22 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister ~ 11:00 am
- 22-12/13 Holiday Gift Baskets Silent Auction
- 22 Sunday The Bellnote Newsletter ~ Submissions Due
- 24 Tue Art, Spirit, Practice! ~ 7:00pm
- 29 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Lay Leader: Jon Hart ~ 11:00 am

Upcoming Events

Weekly Volunteer Schedue

Sunday	Greeter	Nursery	Ushers	Social Host	R.E. K-5	R.E. Youth
Nov 1	Alyce O	Vicki H & ___	Gary T & ___	Peg B & Teal Team	JackieJ/DonnaH	Youth in Sunday Service
Nov 8	Grace M	Vicki H & ___	Gary T & ___	Donna H & Magenta Team	KerryH/PeterM	Lynn H/ElizabethW
Nov 15	Joan B	Vicki H & ___	Gary T & ___	Kerry H & Coral Team	RobG/NancyS	GretchenM/AlyceO
Nov 22	Betty G	Vicki H & ___	Gary T & ___	Carole H & Yellow Team	IG	IG
Nov 29	Carole H	Vicki H & ___	Gary T & ___	Nena O & Green Team	Craft day for all ~~ JannetteM/LauraT	

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

November Theme: Ancestry & Faith

Nov 1 - "All My Relations"

– Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

"The very air surrounding us and moving the flame is the air our Ancestors were breathing. There is no other." says Mi-Shell Jessen. At this time of year of All Saints' Day and All Souls's Day, how do we embrace, struggle with, and engage our ancestors?

Nov 8 - "Faith and Stardust"

– Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Carl Sagan used to say, "We are all star stuff!" How do the latest scientific discoveries, such as water on Mars, change how we understand our place in the universe?

Nov 15 - "To Be Announced"

– Rev. Julie Nemecek, Guest Preacher

Nov 22 - "Guest at Your Table: Refugees"

– Rev. Cynthia L. Landrum

One of the UU Service Committee's major focuses is serving the people who are most overlooked or discriminated against in the midst of humanitarian crises such as forced migration, large-scale conflicts, genocide, and natural disasters. This year the Guest at Your Table program is highlighting the empowerment of refugees. As UUSC celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, we'll look back to their origin: Martha and Rev. Waitstill Sharp helping European refugees escape persecution during World War II.

Nov 29 - "In Thanks for Grace Lee Boggs"

– Lay Leader: Jon Hart

An examination of the Detroit based activist Grace Lee Boggs and her development of the (r)evolution idea. How her concepts can help us transform and love our world.

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