



2016 ~ May 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

This month's theme is "Blessing," but the truth is that every May I'm reminded of my blessings in life, because May is our Annual Meeting. I am blessed to serve this wonderful congregation, and I look forward to our annual meeting as a time to tell you so. May is also a blessing for our church, because we have our annual Auction in May, when we are blessed by the generosity of our members and friends as they bid on them. I've gone to other church auctions over the years, and I can tell you that I was amazed the first time that I came to our auction. In other auctions, people bid on gift cards hoping to get a deal – they'll get a \$30 gift card for \$25 dollars, and thereby save five dollars. In our church, gift cards always go for more than the face value, because people bidding on them are practicing the spirit of generosity, knowing that they are blessing the church with their purchase.

The other side of the generosity in the auctions is in the donations. There are always things that don't sell at our auction, and I'm always sad for those items, in a way, that they haven't found a loving home. Usually this happens more as we get toward the end of the night, when people have already bid on more than they planned to, caught up in the spirit of generosity and goodwill that pervades our auction. But one trick, if you're worried about your item not selling, is always to not set a minimum bid. Tell people how much it's worth, sure, but let it sell for what the buyer can afford. Maybe someone who really needed it, but couldn't afford the minimum you might have set, will walk off with something special, and it will be a blessing in their life. The way I look at it, it's the same write-off for the donor regardless of what it sells for. And if it sells for anything, that's more than the church received without it. And whoever buys the item got what they needed for what they were able to generously afford. That's a win-win-win, no matter what the dollar.

I'm not setting a minimum on my auction sermon topic this year (I seldom do). It's worth \$250, because that's the set rate for a UU minister's sermon when we guest preach, and I almost always do the auction sermon as an additional sermon to the number I would otherwise preach. However, my auction sermon has never gone for nearly that much, even when a coalition of people are bidding together, as they did for the topic "Zombies" several years ago. Sometimes it goes for \$100, sometimes \$150, seldom more, in my memory. This is perfectly okay – it's a gift gladly given to a church that's a blessing in my life – and if it only goes for a dollar, I'll hope that it's someone who hasn't gotten to choose a topic before and really wanted to. I always enjoy the auction topics I'm given, because they're usually things I wouldn't have thought of otherwise. I can assure you, I never would have preached on zombies!

Blessings to you this May,

Rev. Cindy

This Month in Religious Education

It's been an interesting year for RE here at East Liberty. I'm happy to say we have grown By 18%! Four of our youth attended retreats, more commonly called Cons, and we had great participation in the Christmas program. Our playground continues to improve and the community can see we are a great place for liberal families. May wraps up our RE classes but not our commitment.

Jackie

Submitted by: Jackie Johnson

OUR ANNUAL MEETING
WILL BE HELD
AFTER CHURCH
ON SUNDAY,
MAY 22ND.

~~ Upcoming Fund Raisers ~~

Annual Church Auction ~ Friday, May 6,

Annual Attic Sale ~ Sept 16 and 17

Submitted by : The Church Board

Notes from the Board

4/13/16 The board met at the church, with everyone present. We reviewed Marion Shroyer's report and are pleased to note that next fiscal year's pledges are coming in at a very healthy rate. Many thanks are due to Marion for his hard work, and to all of you who pledged. We are preparing for Cindy's sabbatical; Elissa and Gratia will be board liaisons to the sabbatical committee when it is finalized. The building committee is actively reviewing bids for paving part of the parking lot, and we hope to get that done this summer. The board will meet again on Wednesday, May 4th, 6:30, at the church. Please don't forget about our MAJOR fundraiser, the auction, May 6th, and of course our annual meeting will be held after church on Sunday, May 22nd. Everyone's participation is not only helpful, it is crucial! See you there!

Gratia

**Submitted by: Gratia Karmes
Board President**

"Blessing" Questions

Don't treat these questions like "homework" or a list that needs to be covered in its entirety. Instead, simply pick the one question that "hooks" you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal of these questions is not to help you analyze what blessing means, but to figure out what being a person of blessing means for you today. So, which question is calling to you?

1. Do you believe you are a blessing?

We talk a lot about giving and receiving blessings. It's another thing entirely to believe that we are a blessing. This has nothing to do with hubris. It's about owning your uniqueness. Our Christian friends say that we've already earned grace without having to do a thing. We UUs prefer to talk about inherent worth. But we agree that all the proving, striving, achieving and competing to earn acceptance is a waste of time and a drain on the soul. Does this task of accepting yourself as a blessing come easy for you? Or are you still a bit too hard on yourself and imagine it as something you still have to earn?

Continued on page 3 ...

2. Has age helped or hurt? At what age were you best at noticing the blessings around you?

Have you gotten better as time has gone on? Or worse? What would improve your gaze?

- 3. Have you paid them forward?** Many of us are likely familiar with the idea of “paying it forward” rather than simply “paying it back.” To pay someone back for a blessing or gift accomplishes little more than evening the score. The concept of paying it forward changes everything. Suddenly the blessings in our life are sources of abundance rather than sources of debt.
- 4. Are you ok with asking for a blessing?** Sometimes it is easier to offer a blessing rather than admit you need one yourself? What’s getting in your way? Why not let others know your need?
- 5. Do your words bless others?** One of our facilitators writes, “My Mom often told us to consider our words before offering an opinion. Her mantra was: “Are your words kind and helpful? If both adjectives do not apply, keep the thought to yourself!” Are there any words that have fallen from your lips lately that you need to go back and turn into a blessing?
- 6. Are your high expectations blinding you to the blessing?** What if your standard for blessing was:
- ~ living with integrity, most of the time
 - ~ loving your work, most of the time;
 - ~ loving the people around you, most of the time;
 - ~ loving yourself, most of the time.

In short, how would your life look different if you added that one simple phrase to all your assessments: “...*most of the time*”?

- 7. Do you taste it?** How do you take in the simple yet precious gift of food. Yes, literal food. Forget the metaphor of “nourishment.” When was the last time you just enjoyed that apple? That cup of coffee? That holiness of warm butter on freshly baked bread? Why do we let this blessing slip pass us?

8. Have you given thanks for your work?

Writing about the blessing of work, poet John O'Donohue writes, “May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.” This is not always the case. It isn't always an option. But sometimes it is. Sometimes we have the power to pick work that reflects the beauty of our soul. Is that true for you? Do you want it to be?

- 9. How many mothers do you have?** Mother's Day, at its best, reminds us that many have mothered us. How are you planning to thank all of those who have helped “give birth” to you?
- 10. What blessing do our soldiers need most?** This is the month of “honoring heroes.” Yet sometimes the celebration of heroics can mask the need for healing. How might Memorial Day be inviting you to honor their sacrifice in a new way?
- 11. Do you see neutrality where blessing should be?** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once wrote, “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” Howard Zinn, renowned activist and professor, was fond of saying, “You can't be neutral on a moving train.” We see it all the time – in others and in ourselves: people have the chance and the power to offer a blessing in the face of suffering, but they settle for passivity instead. Often there are good reasons; we are not capable of taking on every injustice or saving every hurting individual that crosses our path. And yet...
- 12. What is “working” in your life?** Buddhist teachers encourage their students to pay attention to what is “working” in their lives. This is a unique take on noticing the blessings around us. So often we focus on what is broken or stuck in our lives. But the truth is, most things in our lives are working so well that we should be utterly amazed. So are you? Utterly amazed by what is working?
- 13. What's your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what the theme is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it.

Meetings and Events

U.U. Church of East Liberty

Come One! Come All! ~ ~ to the “Annual Church Auction”

The annual church auction takes place Friday, **May 6**, starting with a barbecue dinner in the social hall at 5pm with the live auction at 6pm. The silent auction runs from April 24 to 6pm May 6th in the social hall.

The auction features yummy baked goods, hosted social events, gift certificates galore, lovely jewelry, interesting collectibles, cottage rental opportunities, flowers and plants, and more goodies than you can shake stick at.

Donated items for the silent auction should be at the church by **Sunday, April 24**. Live auction items (except perishables) should be delivered by **May 1st**. No last minute items, please.

This is our biggest and most fun fundraiser of the year. Come spend a couple of hours for a good time and good cause.

Submitted by: The Auction Committee

**Congratulations to UU Ministers
Lindasusan, Cassandra, and Rachel!**
Congratulations to Lindasusan Ulrich who will be ordained by the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor on May 7th, and to Rev. Rachel Lonberg who will be installed as the minister of the People's Church (UU) of Kalamazoo on May 21st, and to Cassandra Hartley who will be ordained by the Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington on June 12th.

Submitted by: Rev. Cindy

Adult RE Presentations on Health

Continuing on the theme of health, Jeanette Lamphere, M.A., CHES, RYT, has been invited to speak on **May 15** after social hour. She will talk about yoga which she has taught for many years. Jeanette says yoga is the process of integrating body, breath and mind to build strength, balance and flexibility physically, emotionally and spiritually. This series will occur over the next several months on health. These presentations are being coordinated by Steve Kish and will include presentations by both members and guests. Each session will be held after our church service starting approximately at 12:30 -12:45 pm, and lasting about a half hour. **Submitted by: Steve Kish**

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 W. 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...

Thursday, May 19

“G.R.E.A.T”

The Grand River Environmental Action Team is celebrating their 25th year of challenges and opportunities to preserve and protect the Grand River Basin.

Co-sponsored by the Sierra Club and the League of Women Voters, Jackson Unit.

This will be held at the downtown branch of the library on April 21, at 6:30 pm.

Submitted by: Outreach Committee

General Assembly

Registration for General Assembly is now open. The General Assembly is closer than ever this year, in our neighboring state of Ohio! General Assembly is from June 22 through June 26 in Columbus. If you've never been, this is a great opportunity to attend for even a day or weekend. The theme this year is "Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect" and is all about interfaith cooperation. This year's Ware Lecture (the keynote address) speaker is Krista Tippet, journalist, author, and host of the public radio show "On Being." The choir at this year's GA is being led by the fabulous Glen Thomas Rideout of the Ann Arbor church. For more information and to registration, go to www.uua.org/ga.

Submitted by: Rev. Cindy

Gramma's Attic Sale

The Annual Gramma's Attic Sale will be held on Friday, **September 16** and Saturday the **17th** – more information will be in next month Bellnote newsletter. Gratia Karmes will be the chair of this large fundraiser. If you are able to help in any way, please let Gratia know as soon as possible as plans are getting under way. The Gramma's Attic Sale is our name for a large yard sale held inside and outside the schoolhouse next to the church. Save the dates and clean your closets and or attics. Thanks

Submitted by: Gratia Karmes

Sabbatical Notice

The Board has approved a plan for Rev. Cindy to take a three month sabbatical beginning after Christmas 2016 or starting in January 2017, which will be taken along with two or three additional weeks of vacation and study leave. While she is eligible for one month per year of service up to six months, this is a sabbatical planned to be shorter than her previous sabbatical of five months in 2010-2011, with the thought that trying shorter but more-frequent sabbaticals may prove to be a better model for our church. Vic Marshall, Joan Bernstein and Kathy Haynes have agreed to serve on a sabbatical committee. They will plan for how to best handle Cindy's absence.



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.

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

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, **May 19** from 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 contact information. **Submitted by: Nena Obits**

Church Website

The Bellnote Newsletter

Church's facebook page

Forum facebook page

<http://www.libertyuu.org>

<http://www.libertyuu.org/newsletter.html>

<http://www.facebook.com/libertyuu>

<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 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 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 JUNE ISSUE, INFORMATION IS NEEDED BY: SUNDAY, MAY 22. ~~~~~ SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:

UUCEL_BELLNOTE@YAHOO.COM OR IN WRITING TO

KATHY OR VICKI, THANK YOU –

WE WANT TO THANK; REV. CINDY LANDRUM, JACKIE JOHNSON, GRATIA KARMES, NENA OBITS, JANE VOLK, STEVE KISH, 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



May

- 1 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Lay Leader, Ellisa Alden ~ 11:00 am
- 4 Wed. Board Meeting ~ 6:30 pm
- 5 Thurs. AUUW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
- 6 Fri. Annual Church Auction ~ Dinner @ 5:00 Auction @ 6:00
- 8 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister ~ 11:00 am
- 8 Sunday Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service
- 10 Tue. Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
- 11 Wed. Outreach/Forum Committee @ JDL ~ 1:30 pm
- 12 Thurs. RE Committee at Carnegie Branch, Jackson Public Library ~ 7:00 pm
- 15 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister ~ 11:00 am
- 15 Sunday Adult RE Presentations on Health "Yoga" 12:30 -1:00 pm
- 17 Tue. Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening
- 19 Thurs. Membership Meeting ~ 2:00 pm
- 19 Thurs. Personal Care Ministry ~ @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson ~ 4:30-6:30 pm
- 21 Thurs. JXN Forum ~ "G.R.E.A.T." @ JDL, ~ 6:30-8:30
- 22 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister ~ 11:00 am
- 22 Sunday Annual Meeting ~ After the Service
- 22 Sunday The Bellnote Newsletter ~ Submissions Due
- 29 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~TBA ~ 11:00 am

Upcoming Events

General Assembly ~ June 22 through June 26 in Columbus Ohio

Attic Sale ~ Sept 16 and 17

Sunday	Greeter	Nursery	Ushers	Social Host	R.E. K-5	R.E. Youth
May 1	Alyce O	Vicki H & Kathy H	Gary T & ____	Vic M & Lime Team	Jackie & Donna H	Teens Journaling the service
May 8	Grace M	Vicki H & Gratia K	Gary T & ____	Donna H & Magenta Team	IG	IG
May 15	Joan B	Vicki H & Joan B	Gary T & ____	Kerry H & Coral Team	Jackie J & Kerry H	Lynn H & Elizabeth W music and blessing
May 22	Betty G	Vicki H & Nena O	Gary T & ____	Carole H & Yellow Team	Jackie J & Nancy S	Gretchen M & Alice O COA-7
May 22	Carole H	Vicki H & Cecily S	Gary T & ____	Nena o & Green Team	Craft Day Jackie J	Teens choose crafts or stay in church

May Theme: Blessing

May 1 - "Would you Rather..."

– Lay Leader: Elissa Alden

The focus of the day is on communication and the message/sermon is: Would you Rather...

May 8 - "Mother's Day: A Blessing for Our Children"

– Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

For Mother's Day, Rev. Cindy turns her thoughts to our children, the world we want to create for them, and the role of our church in bringing about that world.

May 15 - "Fostering Blessing"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

May is National Foster Care Month. What role can we all play in fostering blessings in the lives of children and youth in foster care?

May 22 - "Small Blessings"

– Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Our small church brings many blessings into the world. Rev. Cindy will explore small blessings and acts of kindness this week.

May 29 - "TBA"

– TBA

W h e