# ~ November 2026 ~
# The Bellnote Mini-News

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EAST LIBERTY
2231 Jefferson Road, Clarklake, MI 49234
Located 3/4 miles West of U.S. 127

**Healing Isn't the Same as Going Back**

November's Soul Matters theme is "Healing". How fitting, then, that we begin to think about healing in reference to the mid-term elections. By the time you read this, we may know the results of the November 3 elections. For many of us, the weeks leading up to Election Day have been filled with anxiety about the future of our country and the health of our democracy. The cost of living continues to strain household budgets, international relationships feel uncertain, and public trust has been shaken by dishonesty, corruption, and concerns about the abuses of power. Beneath the headlines, many people are simply tired of wondering what comes next.

Whatever the election brings, there will be healing to do.

Even welcome changes cannot undo what has happened. A calmer political climate won't instantly restore trust. Economic improvements won't immediately erase the strain families have endured. Better relationships with other nations won't undo the damage already done. The effects of years of conflict and instability don't vanish just because circumstances begin to improve.

Perhaps one of the hardest truths about healing is that we cannot simply go back to the way things were. The past has happened. Some losses cannot be reversed, and some relationships may never return to what they once were. Pretending otherwise won't help. The work must begin where things stand now, with an honest understanding of what has been damaged and what still needs care.

**Continued on next page ...**

## Sunday Services

**Nov 1 "UU: Church of Change"**
**-Led by: Ann Green**

**Nov 8 "The Things We Cannot Fix"**
**-Led by: Rev. Dan**

**Nov 15 "Native Traditions and the Teachings of Jesus" -Led by: Pastor Michael Peters**

**Nov 22 "It Wouldn't Be Thanksgiving Without…"**
**A Joint Intergenerational Service**
**-Led by: Rev. Dan**
Rev. Dan will be in Elkhart & UUCEL will Zoom in.

**Nov 29 "A Focus on Thanksgiving"**
**- Led by: Patty Brue**
With a Potluck Dinner to follow. Please bring a food dish to share.

MINISTER ~ DAN MIYAKE
~ UUDJM@YAHOO.COM
BOARD PRESIDENT ~ ANN GREEN
~ GREENANNM@JCCMI.EDU

## Calendar

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|---|---|
| 1 Thurs | Personal Care Ministry @ Partnership Place, 801 S. Mechanic ~ 4:30-6:30 pm |
| 1 Sunday | ~~ Service ~ Led by: Ann Green ~ 11:00 am |
| 1 Sunday | YUUMM Meeting ~ School House ~ 12:30 pm |
| 2 Mon | Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes |
| 8 Sunday | ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 10:30 am |
| 8 Sunday | Special Sale for Books and Puzzles ~ In the schoolhouse ~ After the service |
| 9 Mon | Board Meeting ~ 12:00/noon |
| 11 Wed | New Drum Circle 6:30 pm |
| 12 Thurs | Book Group ~ Zoom 6:30 pm |
| 12 Thurs | Ladies Lunch @ Bone Island Grill ~ Noon |
| 13 Fri | Lunch with the Minister @ Red Lobster ~ Noon |
| 15 Sunday | ~~ Service ~ Led by: Pastor Michael Peters ~ 11:00 am |
| 15 Sunday | Special Sale for Books and Puzzles ~ In the schoolhouse ~ After the service |
| 16 Mon | Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes |
| 22 Sunday | ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 11:00 am |
| 23 Mon | The Bellnote Newsletter, Submissions Due |
| 23-27 | Rev. Dan on Study Leave |
| 29 Sunday | ~~ Service ~ Led by: Patty Brue ~ 11:00 am |
| 29 Sunday | Potluck Dinner after the Service |
| 30 Mon | Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes |

## Rev Dan's Column Continued....

Healing begins when the harm that has been done is honestly acknowledged. Those responsible must be willing to face the consequences of their actions, and rebuilding trust requires more than promises that things will be different. It takes meaningful change and a commitment to preventing the same harm from happening again. This is true in personal relationships, and it is true of public life. When people lose confidence in institutions, when neighbors begin to regard one another as enemies, or when truth itself becomes a source of constant contention, repairing the damage takes sustained effort. People won't always agree about the causes of our problems or the best solutions. Still, honesty, respect, and a willingness to recognize the humanity of those with whom we disagree are essential to moving forward.

Healing takes time. There is no single moment when a community can declare itself healed, no simple measure that tells us when trust has returned. Progress may be uneven, and some days the work may feel discouragingly slow. Even so, there are choices to be made about the kind of future worth building. Transformation, one of the central values of Unitarian Universalism, offers a useful way to think about this work. Transformation means more than restoring what was lost. It invites us to ask what needs to change so that the conditions that caused the harm are not recreated. A society built on justice and equity requires more than patching up damage after a crisis. It calls for institutions, relationships, and communities that are more honest, humane, and worthy of trust.

That may seem like an enormous responsibility when the problems feel far beyond any one person's reach. No individual can repair every broken institution or resolve every national conflict. Yet each person has some influence over the communities they inhabit and the ways they treat the people around them. Listening rather than dismissing, taking responsibility for one's own mistakes, speaking up when someone is mistreated, and refusing to answer contempt with more contempt are ways of helping create a healthier environment for everyone. The UU value of Interdependence reminds us that lives are connected, even when people disagree about how best to live together. A society cannot thrive when its members lose faith in one another or believe that their well-being depends on someone else's defeat. Healthy communities need relationships and institutions that allow people to work together, address shared problems, and find common ground without requiring everyone to think alike.

It is natural to hope for a future in which the wounds of recent years have healed and the country has found a steadier footing. No one can know how quickly that future will arrive. But healing doesn't have to wait for everything to be settled in Washington or for every uncertainty to disappear. It begins wherever people choose to repair rather than deepen a division, tell the truth rather than look away, and build trust where it has been lost. These may seem like small acts beside the challenges facing the country, but a healthier future cannot be built without them.

The past cannot be changed, and the future is not yet settled. What comes next will be shaped, in part, by the choices made now: whether harm is acknow-ledged, whether accountability is taken seriously, and whether people are willing to work toward something better. Healing is not a return to the way things were. It is the chance to build something more just, more humane, and more worthy of our hope. None of this guarantees that healing will come quickly, or that the work will always be easy. There will be disappointments, and progress may not look the way we imagined. But the possibility of a better future remains. Perhaps that is the hope worth holding onto as we face an uncertain future. The past cannot be undone, but it need not determine every-thing that comes next. Healing gives us the oppor-tunity to learn to create something better—not by returning to the way things were, but by moving toward a future that is more just, more humane, and more worthy of our hope.

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