

December 2012

Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty

2231 Jefferson Road

Clarklake, MI 49234

(517) 529-4221

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

STAFF

MINISTER ~ Rev. Cynthia Landrum
revCyn@ugaalum.uga.edu

R. E. COORDINATOR ~ Sharon Pedersen
sspetersen@sbcglobal.net

INTERIM PIANIST ~ Tom Pepper
peppet49@comcast.net

NURSERY & CHILD CARE ~ Vicki Haynes
kermi_210@yahoo.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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gjvolk@comcast.net

VICE PRESIDENT ~ JACKIE JOHNSON
jsj128@comcast.net

TREASURER ~ HUGH TOMLIMSON
ht49203@att.net

SECRETARY ~ ANITA PEPPER
apepper@aiserv.net

TRUSTEE ~ NENA OBITS
nena_obits@hotmail.com

TRUSTEE ~ DONNA HINTON
daisy_lefty@yahoo.com

CARING COMMITTEE

Alyce Oosting oosting115@comcast.net

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Vic Marshall vbmarshall@gmail.com

BOARD/ELECTED NOMINATING COMM

Steve Kish~ stevekish982@yahoo.com
Kerry Hart~ khart247@sbcglobal.net
Grace Mulnix



Minister's Column

The Christmas season is here, and we're full of bustle with bake sales, Santa's workshop (kids' crafts), a holiday gift-buying for kids program, a pageant, and, of course, a Christmas Eve service. For the eleven years I've been in ministry, I've been thinking a lot about what the Christmas Eve service is in UU churches, what it should be, what people are looking for, and what the potential is. What I've learned is that people are desiring many things from the service, just as we have many ideas about the holidays. Some people see Christmas as about a myth, some as about a truth, some as sacred, some as secular, some as solemn, some as joyous. Similarly, we have different ideas about a Christmas Eve service. Some people want Christmas Eve to be about the story of Jesus, because in a UU church it's one of the few times per year when we might really embrace our Christian roots and our Christian members' theology. Some people want Christmas Eve to have a more Unitarian Universalist theology, because it's the one place you can come on Christmas Eve to celebrate this story with the understanding at the same time that not all believe it to be the literal truth. Honoring both of these needs for this important holiday is a delicate balance. But it doesn't end there. Christmas Eve is a service that many see as an intergenerational affair, full of the laughter and wonder of children excited about Santa coming the next day. Others see it as a time for solemnity, silence, and candlelight.

Our Worship Committee has been discussing the Christmas Eve service at some length during just about every meeting over the last year (and it has been discussed by the Board, Religious Education Committee, and Committee on Ministry, as well). The Worship Committee has focused on the question of what the tone of the service should be, and looked at several different models, particularly in regard to the joyous or solemn question, and how to best include our congregation's children in the evening. We looked at models of two simultaneous services, two consecutive services, a service with a singing the children out time partway through, and our current intergenerational model. After all that, we've decided that our current model is the best one for this community, but we want to do a couple of things in clarification. The first is that we want to let the community know that we expect that this is a service that includes children and, as such, will be a little boisterous and lively with the children's energy. We'll provide elements in the service geared towards them, and the religious education committee is helping me with goodie bags for them, but we're not expecting that children will be perfectly quiet and still for a whole hour, and that's okay. The second thing, though, is that we want to make sure parents know what the options are for them. We want to reserve back pews for latecomers and families with small children who might need to stand up and bounce a baby around or pop out into the foyer to help a child settle down. Parents are not expected or required to sit in these back rows—we trust them to know what their family's needs are—but we want

Continued on page 5...

Religious Education Report

Lots of kids and youth activities continue at UUCEL. With the curriculum "Holidays and Holy Days," children are enjoying lessons about spiritual and cultural traditions around the world. Children will start rehearsals for our holiday pageant on November 25, with possible rehearsals on December 1 and 8 (Saturdays- I will email and/or call parents if these are needed). The holiday pageant will be on **Sunday, December 16** during the service.

With the holiday season upon us, some of our members may have a financial challenge providing their kids with gifts. The RE Committee realize that many families are struggling to make ends meet. We would like to help our church member families who are having a hard time, to help make their kids' Christmas enjoyable. If you would find it helpful to have a member buy some Christmas items for your child, please put 2-3 gift ideas per child on a note, along with specifics like sizes for clothes or brand names for toys, and give/email it to me (sspedersen@sbcglobal.net) or Rev. Cindy (cynlandrum@gmail.com) by 11/25 if possible. We will attach each gift idea onto 3 x 5 cards, and hang them on the church's Christmas tree. The cards will be "anonymous" but of course members may try to guess who they're for. We will ask families to pick up the gifts at church by Sunday the 23rd or Christmas Eve, unless other arrangements are made.

On the other hand, for those of you who would like to help these families with their Christmas needs, please take a gift suggestion off the tree by 12/09 and bring it back to church, wrapped, with the gift idea card attached to the outside, by 12/16.

Another easy option is to provide or pledge gift cash by 12/16 that Rev. Cindy and I can use to shop for the remaining gifts.

"Popcorn Faith with Principled Movies" features videos for youth and adults that explore one of the seven principles, held on the first Sunday of each month from 5-8pm. This month's movie highlights the fourth principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Remember, the movie nights include dinner and at a little conversation about the movie afterward. It's a fun opportunity for getting together, and you get to see lots of good movies for only a freewill donation. On **December 2** we'll watch Martin Sheen and his son Emilio Estevez in *The Way* (PG-13). Thomas Avery (Sheen) is an American who goes to France following the death of his adult son, killed while walking the *Camino de Santiago* (the Way of St. James), a pilgrimage route to the Catholic Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. In honor of his son, Tom decides to walk the ancient spiritual trail where his son died. While walking the *Camino*, Tom meets others from around the world, all looking for greater meaning in their lives.

We will again hold Santa's Workshop, craft stations for kids and anyone else who would like to participate, at social hour on **December 9**. Thank you to Gretchen, Michelle, Dee, Vicki and Kathy for helping to make this happen. See—lots of stuff happening! Thank you for your support of the RE program.

Luvv, **Sharon**

Sharon Pedersen, RE Coordinator

Historical Calendars

Are you interested in copies of the historical calendar that we're producing? Sign up for them in the social hall. The price will be set once we know how many we're producing. They will be available by Christmas, but we want to know how many to make before we enter production. Thank you!

Notes from the Board

Thanks to the co-chairs, Carole Hartsuff, Ruth Davis, Elissa Alden and Dorothy Kerr, our Harvest Bazaar was very successful. We raised over \$2,200.00, and this was accomplished by the creative efforts of many of our members. Another special thank you goes to Alyce Oosting who was in charge of our "Hoedown". It was a fun evening with plenty to eat (furnished by the Caring Committee) and lively square dancing.

We will be adding two more handi-capped parking spaces—these will be located to the left of the spaces already designated handicapped. George Haynes has kindly offered to place the appropriate signs in the spaces. Another note of appreciation goes to Dorothy Kerr who took care of having some much needed spouting replaced.

There are still a few of our "church" Christmas cards available. To purchase them, you need to contact Dorothy Kerr. If you wish to purchase our 2013 historical church calendar, please sign your name along with the number of calendars you want. The sign up list is on the bulletin board in the Social Hall.

As we move into the Christmas Holidays, we have many extra activities scheduled—Santa's Workshop, Holiday Baked Goods Sale, a Christmas Pageant, a Christmas Eve service just to name a few. The dates will be soon announced, so be sure to check articles in this issue of "The Bellnote", in our weekly announcements and our Sunday bulletin. Happy Holidays!

Jane

Submitted by: Jane Volk,
Board President



Notes from the Piano Bench

Our musical adventure continues at UUCEL with the choir back in full swing for this year. We prepared music for the Thanksgiving Service, and are selecting holiday music for the month of December. Our goal is to sing for the congregation once a month, and practice 3 Sundays a month before the service at 10 AM. If you enjoy singing, come and join our friendly group!

Music for Sunday services is currently provided live half-time, with recorded music on the Sundays in between. The Worship Committee has compiled recordings of hymns and classical music for other parts of the service. Some hard work and generous donations have been going on behind the scenes with Jackie Johnson donating funds for a new CD player that can play all of the new kinds of discs that are currently in use, as well as music files on a USB drive.

To provide recorded music during services, we now have a group of people trained to run the sound system. Officially known as "Tech Associates," they are generously donating their time to run the various devices that bring us recorded music. Please be patient, as we learn to coordinate the musical elements during a service.

Rob Gaecke has donated a CD burner for recording Sunday services, and a CD duplicator for making extra copies of the service. If you missed a service you would like to hear, or know someone who couldn't attend church, please ask Rob Gaecke, Tom Pepper, or Jon Hart about a CD copy for that week. We should be able to get you one fairly soon.

Thank you for your enthusiastic singing during services. It brings such richness to the church experience, and makes it very rewarding to participate in music with all of you. Thank you,

Tom

Submitted by: Tom Pepper
Interim Pianist

A Big Thank You to Jackie Johnson and Rob Gaecke for their donations to the Music Department of the Church.

Meetings and Events

U.U. Church of East Liberty

Sing-A-Long

Nena Obits and Nancy Cooper will be hosting a Holiday Sing-A-Long for the residents of the Jackson County Medical Care Facility on **Saturday, December 8** at 2:30pm. We are inviting church members of all ages to join us for this program. If you have questions or need directions contact Nena Obits.

Submitted by: Nena Obits



Holiday Baked Goods Sale

On **Sunday, December 16** we will be having a Holiday Baked Goods Sale during the social hour. Please come with some goodies ready to sell and or ready to buy some goodies to eat and take home. Thank you

The New Jim Crow

Last month we had very few people who could stay for the discussion, so we cancelled it at the last minute, and I know many of you are still getting the book and beginning it. Don't worry! We'll have more opportunities for discussion in January and/or February, so keep reading, and watching your newsletter for more information.

Shopping Online for Christmas?

Our church can earn money while you browse or shop online. To help while you surf the web, use <http://www.goodsearch.com> as your search engine after entering our church as your agency of choice to support. To help while you shop, go through the links at <http://www.goodshop.com> (again, after entering our church as your agency), to any number of different online sites. If shopping at Amazon, first click on one of our links on our webpage at <http://www.libertyuu.org/shop.html>. These will take you to Amazon, and then we'll earn a percentage of the total cost of your purchases

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 Supplements Page for 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.

Thursday, December 13

JXN Community Forum presents "The Arts in Jackson" on Thursday, December 13 at the Carnegie Library, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Learn a bit about the various cultural institutions and businesses and what they have to offer. Panelists will provide information about the local arts movement: who is involved, how to get involved, and the benefits to our community and economy. We'll hear from the Arts and Cultural Alliance, as well as members of the local arts community.

Submitted by: Outreach Comm.

Personal Care Ministry

The Jackson Personal Care Ministry has been very successful, serving 120-150 Jackson County households per week. Each week the following items are offered: shampoo, lotion, toothpaste, and tooth brushes, deodorant, bar soap, razors, combs, sanitary napkins, dish and laundry soap, all purpose cleaner, toilet paper and paper towels.

Donations of products and monetary gifts are needed. Donation baskets are located in the Social Hall and in the church foyer. Checks can be made out to Westminster Presbyterian Church with Personal Care Ministry written on the memo line. Our church has had good participation and I'm encouraging everyone to volunteer. We work on the **Second Thursday** of each month, 4:30-7:00

Submitted by: Nena Obits

Fall Bazaar

A report of our recent Fall Bazaar Proceeds from the total sales is \$2,282.11 plus a few small sale of left over items still in the social hall. The committee would like to thank all the people who furnished, worked and purchased items at our Bazaar. We couldn't have done it without you.

Submitted by: Ruth Davis, Carole Hartsuff, Elissa Alden and Dorothy Kerr

Square Dance Hoedown

The last fundraiser dinner that took place on November 16 was very successful, we took in \$245.00 with \$20.00 given to the square dance caller as a gift of thanks. The food was great, the dancing was fun. We would like to thank Alyce Oosting and Lynn McLean for inviting the caller and the three other couples from her dance group to share their time and talents with us.



In the picture – left to right with back to camera in dancing skirt is Alyce Oosting, Carole Hartsuff, seated Joan Bernstein. Lynn McLean, Guest, Gretchen Marshall, Elissa Alden, Guest, Guest, Caller and Kathy Haynes

Submitted by: Alyce Oosting

Book and Video Sale

Please check out our book and video sale in the Social Hall. Many items are like new and would make good gifts. Thanks,

Submitted by: Nena Obits

Rev. Cindy's Column Continued...

them to be available to them. Secondly, we'll have a special moment midway through the service when we say that if children are getting particularly restless they can go down to the nursery. This will happen before we enter into the quieter portion of the service. We're hoping to have the nursery staffed so that families have this option for the service, should they choose it. If you're interested in helping in the nursery on Christmas Eve, please contact Sharon Pedersen. Lastly, we've learned a new trick for Christmas Eve—battery-operated candles! If you would like to have your child use something other than a real flaming candle, we'll have some options. Last year we saw some parents bring battery-operated tea lights, and realized, that's a great idea! We should provide that! So I picked up some in after-Christmas sales, and also acquired a few battery operated vigil candles. We don't mind kids playing with them and turning them off and on all through the service, we'll just have a brief time of darkness right before our usual candles get lit.

As to whether we treat the story of Jesus' birth as sacred scripture or as interpretive myth, in a Unitarian Universalist question I think the answer has to always be both. This is a sacred time, a holy time, for many of our members and it's also a time when our non-Christian members feel bombarded with pressure to believe something they don't, and we need to honor that diversity among us more than ever. I hope the end result of all this talking and planning can be a service that brings back all the favorite elements of past services and also becomes just a little bit better this year. Thank you to all the committees who have been working on this service, particularly the Worship Committee. I'm looking forward to it, and hope to see all of you there!

Peace,

Cindy

CDs of Services

We now have the technology to record our worship services on CD and make copies of the CD to give to members (see Tom Pepper's column on page 3 for details). In the next month or so we'll be creating a system where you can sign up to get a CD of a particular service if you want to have one to give away or listen to again, or if you know you've missed a Sunday that you wanted to hear. Just think—religious education teachers can listen to the sermon on their drive home, and hear what the social hour buzz was all about! Until we have a system in place, contact Rob Gaeke or Tom Pepper if they are there on a Sunday if you're interested, as they're the ones who might be able to help you. Please be patient if it takes us a few weeks to learn our new technology and implement it. One thing we'll be deciding is what the fee, if any, should be for CDs. Some churches give them away free, others charge up to five dollars. The materials do have a price tag, and so we'll probably charge a nominal amount, but let us know what you think would be a fair and not prohibitive price. Should there be a different price for members, or for RE teachers, or for visitors? These are the things your worship committee will be discussing in December, and those committee members are Jon Hart, Gratia Karmes, Anita Pepper, Dee Reed, Tom Pepper, and Cindy Landrum.

• Church Website	http://www.libertyuu.org
• The Bellnote Newsletter	http://www.libertyuu.org/newsletter.html
• Church e-mail	EastLibertyUU@yahoo.com
• Church's facebook page	http://www.facebook.com/libertyuu
• Forum facebook page	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, including Kathy Haynes, Joan Bernstein and Carole Hartsuff.

FROM THE EDITOR:

"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 JANUARY ISSUE, INFORMATION IS NEEDED BY:
SUNDAY, DEC. 23. ~~~~~ SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:
UUCEL_BELLNOTE@YAHOO.COM OR IN WRITING TO

KATHY OR VICKI. THANK YOU –

We want to thank; Rev. Cindy Landrum, Sharon Pedersen, Jane Volk, Jon Hart, Nena Obits, Caring Comm., Outreach 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

December

- 1 Sat. Rehearsals for our Holiday Pageant (Sharon will Contact you with Times)
 2 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 2 Sunday Popcorn Faith with Principled Movies featuring; *The Way* ~ 5:00-8:00 pm
 5 Wed. Board Meeting 6:30 pm
 6 Thurs. AUUW Meeting ~ 12:30 pm
 6 Thurs. RE Meeting ~ 6:30 Pm
 8 Sat. Rehearsals for our Holiday Pageant (Sharon will Contact you with Times)
 9 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 9 Sunday **Santa's Workshop** ~ During Social Hour
 9 Sunday Gift for Kids Cards ~ Off the Christmas Tree by Today
 11 Tue. Meet Your Neighbor Coffee ~ 9:00 - 11:00 am
 12 Wed. Outreach/Forum Committee Meeting @ JDL ~ 5:30 pm
 13 Thurs. Membership Committee ~ 10:00 am
 13 Thurs. Personal Care Ministry ~ 4:30-7:00 pm @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson, Help Distribution
 13 Thurs. JXN Community Forum "Arts in Jackson"
 @ Jackson District Library, Carnegie Branch ~ 6:30 pm
 16 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~**Holiday Pageant** ~ 11:00 am
 16 Sunday **Holiday Bake Goods Sale** ~ During Social Hour
 16 Sunday Gift for Kids ~ Bring it Back to Church, Wrapped, with the Gift Idea Card Attached
 16 Sunday Caring Committee Meeting ~ After the Service
 21 Fri. Wedding Rental
 22 Sat. Wedding Rental
 23 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum ~ 11:00 am
 23 Sunday The Bellnote Newsletter Submissions Due
 24 Mon. **Christmas Eve Sevice** ~ 7:00 pm
 25 Tue. (Last Tue. of Month?) Worship Comm. ~ Meets at Members' Homes in the Evening
 30 Sunday ~~~~ Service ~ Worship, Lay Leader ~ 11:00 am

Upcoming Events

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2013 -- NEW DAY OF THE NEW YEAR

Sunday	Dec 2	Dec 9	Dec 16	Dec 23	Dec 24	Dec 30
Greeters	Alyce O	Grace M	Joan B	Carole H	OPEN	OPEN
R.E. Greeter	Sharon P	Sharon P	Sharon P	Sharon P	Sharon P	Sharon P
Nursery Helper	Joyce W	George H	Donna H	Steve B	Sharon P	Becky B
Ushers	Gary T Steve J	Nancy J OPEN	Gary T OPEN	Gary T Steve J	OPEN OPEN	Gary T OPEN
Social H. Host	Joan B Joyce W	OPEN	Grace M	Donna H Kathy H	Bring Cookies	OPEN
R.E. Pre.						
R.E. K-5	Sharon P Dee R	Kerry H Janette M	Intergen. Pageant	Cecily S Laura T		Michelle V Martha K
R.E. Youth						

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

**Dec 2 - "Sexuality Sermon Series Part 3:
World AIDS Day"**

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

World AIDS Day is Saturday, December 1, and for 24 years this has been a day dedicated to sharing information about AIDS to help stop its spread. We'll learn what's new, what hasn't changed, and what we can do as a congregation and as individuals.

Dec 9 - "The Miracle of Hanukkah"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Hanukkah, like Christmas, is a miracle story. Why do we need the miracle of light at this time? This service will explore the answer.

**Dec 16 - "Pageant -
Religious Education Program"**

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Dec 23 - "Solstice Celebration "

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

As our days get shorter and shorter, we reach

the darkest time of the year. We'll celebrate the winter solstice together on this day and learn about what the solstice means in the Wiccan and Pagan traditions.

Dec 24 - 7:00 p.m. "Christmas Eve"

- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Join us for our traditional Christmas Eve service featuring the familiar words of the gospels, Christmas carols, and candlelight, as well as new stories. This year the theme is "Starlight." This is an intergenerational service designed for all ages, but the nursery will be available for children of all ages who have difficulty sitting through a service. Please bring cookies or snacks for our social time following the service.

Dec 30 - "To Be Announced "

The Worship Committee will have information about this date soon.



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