



Monthly Musings from Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer

Now that spring has truly arrived, I hope it lingers. I love when the temperatures stay cool enough for the blossoms to last awhile. My favorites are the lilacs. Where I used to live in MA there was a family that opened their land up to the public every year to come enjoy the lilacs. They had cultivated over fifty different varieties of lilacs on their land. It was such a great pleasure for me to wander among the bushes and notice the differences in color and fragrance. I fondly remember that particular pilgrimage as a festival of beauty and a treat for my senses.

This month at church we will be celebrating beauty and color. We will celebrate for the sheer joy of it and we will look for the wisdom we can find in investigating these particular blessings. What can color and beauty teach us about living lives of meaning and purpose? How can beauty, in particular, inform our ethics? Come explore in

community. For now, I offer you a poem in celebration of spring.

Peace

Melissa

Four Kinds of Lilacs by Leo Dangel,
from **Home from the Field: Collected Poems**.
© Spoon River Poetry Press, 1997.

"Why don't you turn at the next corner,"
she said, "and take another road home.
Let's go past that farm with all the
different colored lilacs."

"That's seven miles out of the way,"
he said. "I wanted to plant the rest
of the corn before evening. We
can look at lilacs some other time."

Sunday Services

9:45 and 11:30 am

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Minister's office hours:

Tuesday - Friday
By appointment

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MaryBeth Hannan

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Mon. through Fri. 9 - 4

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The 20th each month



"It'll take only a few minutes"
she said. "You know that lilacs
aren't in bloom for long—if we
don't go now, it will be too late."

"We drove past there last year,"
he said. "They're like any other lilacs
except for the different colors. The rest
of the year, they're all just bushes."

"They're lilac, purple, white, and pink,"
she said. "And today, with no breeze,
the scent will hang in the air—no flowers
smell as good as lilacs in the spring."

"I thought of planting lilacs once,"
he said, "for a windbreak in the grove.
The good smell lasts only a few days.
I suppose we can go, if we hurry."

"Now slow up," she said.
"Last year, you drove by so fast
we couldn't even get a good look.
It wouldn't hurt to take it easy."

"Well, there they are," he said,
"and looking pretty scraggly—past
full bloom already. You should
have thought of doing this sooner."

UPCOMING SERVICES

9:45 and 11:30 am

May 4 - Letting Go

Youth Group
and Worship Associate Lori McGee

Join us for our annual Youth Sunday created and led by our senior high youth. They will consider the joys and challenges of letting go as they move from childhood to young adulthood.

May 11 - Colorful Spirituality

Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer
and Worship Associate Mary Lou Holly

Hindus celebrate a spring holiday called Holi. It is literally a festival of colors. This morning we wonder together how exploring color might help us explore spirituality.

May 18 - Color and Fragrance

Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer
and Worship Associate Joel Slater

Perhaps the only uniquely Unitarian Universalist ritual we celebrate is our annual Flower Ceremony. Though each flower is lovely on its own, together the flowers create a more expansive beauty. Come experience the ritual and consider the meaning of the metaphor in our beloved community. Bring a flower (or two) to share during the service.

May 25 - An Ethic of Beauty

Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer
and Worship Associate John Marfy

The late Irish philosopher John O'Donohue has argued that beauty is a defining aspect of God. How might beauty be related to divinity? How can beauty inform our moral sensibilities? What might an exploration of beauty reveal to us about depth in ourselves and each other?

Saturday, May 17th, 10am - 12pm

Garlic Mustard Pull

Riverside Park



This year's Annual Garlic Mustard Pull is on Saturday, May 17th, from 10am-12pm, scheduled in conjunction with RiverDay. We will meet at the parking lot at 143 Gougler Ave. across from the Church to protect our riverside park from invasive weeds.

According to the National Parks Service "Garlic mustard poses a severe threat to native plants and animals in forest communities." Contact Andrew Rome for more information.

2014 Annual MEETING

Annual Information Meeting will be held
Wednesday, May 28 at 7 pm

Voting Meeting will be held
Sunday, June 1 at 12:30 pm

The Core Value of our Religious Education Program

from Karen Lapidus

I knew what I wanted my article in the May edition of the Chalice Flame to be about and I remembered that I have written a similar article a few years ago. When I reread it, I realized that it is exactly what I want to say again, so I am repeating the article from December of 2012. We have many new families who have joined our community since then and isn't it true that sometimes we need to hear an important message more than once?

I know that there are probably many Sunday mornings when you find yourself engaged in a struggle with your child or teen because they do not want to go to church. I know because I've been in that situation myself and I know because I sometimes hear about that challenge from our parents. Is it worth the struggle? Is it really that important that our children and youth attend a formal program of liberal religious education?

If you think I would answer "yes" to those questions, you are so correct! Let me offer some encouraging words that will give you strength and hope in that moment of struggle.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent is a community that we have chosen because here we find other who share our values. We may not agree on everything, but we do agree on the values of fairness, equity, compassion and love. There is no other community available to families where folks can be together, bound by the promises of how we will treat each other, and live these shared values.

Being among people of all ages who are active in social justice leadership and living lives of purpose can serve as a catalyst to our children and youth. They see that it can be done and they have opportunities to partner with them in the work.

We address the "Big Questions" in our RE program--those questions about death, God, evil, heaven, hell,

prayer, Jesus, etc. Our program equips children and youth with the tools to answer those questions for themselves, from their own hearts, from their family's values and from their own life experiences. The program also prepares them to respond with confidence when their peers, who have answers of their own to the "Big Questions" inevitably ask them, "What do you believe?"

Our RE program strives to create a framework for their own faith journey. It supports the family's values and helps children and youth apply those values in their daily lives.

Our program strives to be about the here and now and is framed around what is relevant and directly applicable to their lives.

We all need respite from the busyness of our lives. Children and youth need a place to worship; a place to

just be quiet for awhile to offer

thanks, or gaze on a lit chalice or listen to their own still voice within. Worship helps all of us lead a balanced life.

Of course, attending RE classes supports Unitarian Universalist identity. The Reverend Jeanne Nieuwejaar tells a story in her book, "The Gift of Faith: Tending to the Spiritual Lives of Children" about a conversation between a mother and a rabbi. The mother was apologizing to the rabbi about her son who had not been attending religious education classes because he was so busy with soccer. The rabbi asked the mother if she aspired for her son to be professional soccer player when he became an adult. The mother replied that, of course, she did not. The rabbi then asked the mother if she aspired for her son to be a Jew when he became an adult. With this simple lesson, the mother saw that life long value of her son's religious education. I hope you do too!

In faith and with love,

Karen Lapidus
Director of Religious Education



Some Notes About Our FY '15 Budget

The Board has reviewed the budget recommended by the Finance Committee. It is a decent budget in that it covers the expenses of our operation, preserves our current level of staffing, and preserves our payment of our fair share of annual program fund dues to the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Ohio Meadville District. The congregation has made clear that these are core values for us, and we are happy that our pledging is sufficient to reflect these values in our budget. We can all be proud of the hard work we have done to get to this place.

However, we know that many of you will be disappointed to learn that our pledging is not sufficient to maintain the budget we had in FY '14, nor are we able to grow into all of the goals we had for FY '15. We told you at the beginning of our stewardship campaign that we had three goals for this year: to respond to rising health insurance costs, to create a fund for our 150th anniversary celebration in 2016-2017, and to invest in our music ministry. Of course we want to make sure that all of our staff meet the UUA fair compensation guidelines, and we also hoped to provide them with a modest 1 or 2% cost-of-living adjustment. Because our pledge total for FY '15 shows only a small increase over FY '14, we are not able to accomplish as much as we hoped.

As an employer we are obliged to fulfill the health insurance commitments we have made to staff; this necessitates absorbing increased costs of insurance in our FY '15 budget. Since FY '15 pledging does not cover this amount, we had to make cuts in some of our program areas to absorb the additional cost in the budget. The proposed budget as it currently

stands covers the increased health insurance costs, but it does not allow us to meet the UUA's most recent (just received a few days ago) minimum fair compensation guidelines for all of our staff, nor does it include cost-of-living adjustments for all of them.

In addition, this budget does not provide a fund for the 150th anniversary celebration or sufficient additional investment in our music ministry. This past year Hal created the Golden Tones

Junior Choir, the Fallow Time Folk Orchestra, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent Tone Chimers, in addition to his work with the adult choir and other responsibilities. We will not be able to sustain the level of musical programming we have this year without additional funding for FY15.



If you are able to reconsider your pledge in light of this information, we would welcome additional contributions. We would love nothing more than to revise the budget to achieve more of our goals in support of our mission.

Thanks to all who worked hard on our stewardship campaign this year, especially the leaders, Kathie Slater, Meg Milko, Sandy Eaglen, and Marion Yeagler. And thanks again to all of you for your contributions of time, talent, and treasures to our beloved church community.

Sincerely,

Elaine Yehle Bowen,
on behalf of the Board of Trustees
Sandy Eaglen, Treasurer

"Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love."

-- Lao Tzu



Summer Hogwarts is coming June 19-22!

Hogwarts is a day camp for children entering kindergarten through age 17. During our four day session we use the wizarding world of Harry Potter to explore UU values. Thursday through Saturday children will attend classes such as Care of Magical Creatures, Potions, Charms, Divination, Spirit Dance, and Quidditch from 9:30am – 3:30pm. The session concludes with an awards ceremony on Sunday 1:30-3:30pm where we recognize children for their life achievements such as learning to swim, ride a bike, play chess, taking care of the planet, reading, and much more.

Applications will be mailed on April 30 to students who have attended a session or requested to be on the mailing list within the past year. Applications will also be available in Fessenden Hall on May 4. We accept students based on postmark date until we reach capacity. Priority will be given to church members with applications postmarked by May 14. All applications must be postmarked by May 21 to be considered. We encourage everyone to apply early for the best chance of being accepted.

If you would like to join our cast of volunteers or help sponsor a child to attend Hogwarts, email us at registration@kenthogwarts.org or use one of our envelopes pinned to the Church Events bulletin board to enclose your information or donation to the scholarship fund and drop it in the collection basket at Sunday service. Our program is entirely self-funded and completely run by volunteers and friends of UUCK. We are very grateful for this community's continued support as we complete our 13th year of KentHogwarts!

Hal-elujah!



Get your red-hot CD, "Hal-elujah," any Sunday at coffee hour. It contains Hal's best performances at Sunday services in church over the last several years, including guest appearances by Saunis Parsons, John Marfy, the young (and younger) Hallie Walker, J. R. Campbell, and others. Included are many of Hal's pieces on his collection of weird and wonderful instruments. You can also pick one up from Brad Bolton any time for \$10. All proceeds go to the UUCK music fund. No bitcoins, please.



Literary Liner Notes

The Unlikely Pilgrimage

The Patricia Pownall UU Book Group will be meeting on Tuesday, May 13 at 7 pm in the home of Trish Kwartler in Silver Lake. This month we are reading *Let the Great World Spin* by Colum McCann.

Let the Great World Spin is the critically acclaimed author's most ambitious novel yet: a dazzlingly rich vision of the pain, loveliness, mystery, and promise of New York City in the 1970s. Elegantly weaving together seemingly disparate lives, McCann's powerful allegory comes alive in the unforgettable voices of the city's people, unexpectedly drawn together by hope, beauty, and the "artistic crime of the century." A sweeping and radical social novel, it captures the spirit of America in a time of transition, extraordinary promise, and, in hindsight, heartbreaking innocence.

In June we will be reading *Cloud Cover* by Margot Milcetic. If you have any questions you may contact Bonnie Harper. All are welcome.



The Grades 3-5 class went to the Humane Society of Greater Akron to deliver the pet toys they collected and made from old t-shirts.

Ohio Meadville District News

Goldmine Youth Leadership Training

Are you a youth who is interested in developing leadership skills? Do you know a youth that would like to develop leadership skills? Goldmine is for you. Two offerings in CERG this year. Goldmine West at East Shore UU Church in Kirtland, OH on July 6-12, 2014 (the week before SI). Goldmine East at Unitarian Church of Staten Island, NY on August 17-23, 2014. Learn more at www.cerguua.org/programs/goldmine

Young Adult Programming in the OMD

The OMD UU Young Adult Network (OMDUUYAN) plans programming for young adults (18-35) throughout the year. Their spring conference will be held May 30-June 1 at the UU Congregation of Erie. Details are available at www.ohiomeadville.org. In addition, this year OPUS, the continental gathering of young adults will take place in the OMD. Details and registration on the OMD website when available. OPUS will take place August 12-17, 2014 at Nuhop Center for Experiential Learning on Ohio.

Summer Institute 2014

It's back! Summer Institute is in a new location, but our favorite camp is back for another year. Join 500+ UUs July 13-19 for an intergenerational week of fun, learning, networking and music at Oberlin College. Theme speaker is Dr. Ysaye Barnwell formerly of Sweet Honey in the Rock. Registration is now open! \$75 registration fee is waived if you register by June 1. Details at www.omdsi.org



For a complete and up-to-date church calendar, please visit www.localendar.com/public/uukent. If you are unable to access our electronic calendar, please contact the church office and we will gladly provide you with a paper copy.

the chalice flame

NEWSLETTER
OF THE
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH
OF KENT

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KENT, OH
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