



## Monthly Musings [from Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer](#)

One of my best friends died last week. Ojae and I met in 1994. We dated briefly but soon realized we were better as friends. That wasn't just a break up line – both of us really meant it. For the first decade of our friendship we lived in the same area. We loved to go to events together. We regularly went to plays, concerts, lectures, museums and dance performances. It was such fun to discuss our experiences of the event together afterward. We liked hiking together and wandering into bookstores and just hanging out. Ojae wasn't an enthusiastic cook, but she was a very appreciative eater of healthy foods. I loved having her over for dinner. She would usually come early and tell me all the news while I finished preparing the meal.

When I left to go to seminary, moving away from Ojae was one of my losses. It wasn't long

though before Ojae proved she was the kind of friend who was undeterred by distance. It helped that I've returned to New England at least once a year and it helped that Ojae liked to travel. She came to see me in Chicago more than once and visited me in St. Paul, MN when I was interning there. She visited me here in Kent several times. Some of you may remember her as she was one of the people who came to my ordination. Over this last decade my friendship with Ojae has continued to deepen and grow through our visits, letters and regular phone calls.

A few years ago Ojae was diagnosed with cancer. After a rigorous treatment of chemotherapy, radiation and surgery, her doctors declared her cancer free. Unfortunately, if that was ever true it didn't remain true for long. Last year, in November, Ojae was diagnosed with cancer once

**Sunday Services**

9:45 and 11:30 am

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Tuesday - Friday  
By appointment

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**Deadline:**

The 20th of each month



The Kent UU Choir performs a piece at Caroline Arnold's memorial service

again. She told me the news over breakfast in one of my favorite Northampton restaurants when we were visiting New England for Thanksgiving. This year, just before Thanksgiving I will go to her memorial service.

I share this with you because her death is on my heart and because Ojae is on my mind tonight as I think about grace. I've heard people talk about loved ones dying with grace. When they say that, I think they often are referring to a kind of open-hearted acceptance. I can't describe Ojae's dying in that way. But there was another way in which her life was infused with grace these last months. Even in the pain and the struggle, Ojae was fervently devoted to noticing and naming God's blessings in her life. Gifts of grace did not escape her attention, no matter how small. Each and every one she lifted up in praise and gratitude. The praising strengthened her and the gratitude carried her through many difficult moments. For Ojae, grace and gratitude were woven tightly together.

Grace is our theme for reflection at church this month. There is much to consider. I hope to see you in church.

In faith,



## UPCOMING SERVICES

9:45 and 11:30 am

### November 2 - Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer  
and Worship Associate Justin Czekaj*

A celebration of the hymn, a meditation upon the hymn and an exploration of its message, this service shall dwell with the grace of blessing.

### November 9 - Grace in Disguise

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer  
and Worship Associate Lori McGee*

Sometimes grace shows up in unexpected people and places or in challenging circumstances. How can we prepare to meet grace in disguise?

### November 16 - Agents of Grace

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer  
and Worship Associate Elaine Bowen*

If it were possible to condition ourselves to become agents of grace, what kind of training would we need to prepare?

### November 23 - Only Enough

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer, Director of Religious Education  
Karen Lapidus and Worship Associate Elaine Bowen*

Our special multigenerational Thanksgiving service is always a joyous time. Come join our beloved community as we celebrate together.

### November 30 - From Untouchable to Dalit

*Lori McGee with Worship Associate Trish McLoughlin*

India is known for its caste system--its way of structuring social classes--but how much is actually known about how that system affects the people, most especially the "untouchables"? This service will explore a brief explanation of the caste system with focus on the women of the untouchable caste. We will also explore how some of these women are rising about their social constraints to become Dalit--touchable members of the lowest class.

*(Note: there will be parts of the service which may be hard to hear as the violence against these women is often horrific. Please feel free to leave during those times.)*

### November 23 - Service of Memories and Light

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer and Rev. Christie Anderson*

As the holiday season begins, we offer this contemplative service especially for people who experience the holidays with a heightened sense of loss of loved ones. Adults and mature teens are invited to bring your memories, a photo or other memento of your loved one, and the fullness of your heart to this time of remembering. Light refreshments will be served following the service.

**This service will be held at 7pm in the sanctuary.**



### THANKS 4 GIVING AUCTION November 8, 2014 - 6 pm

Buy your tickets now!!! We can't make this a success without you, our beloved congregation. Tickets are only \$20 and you get a great meal, a fun time and a chance to fill your calendar with wonderful events and win cool items all while supporting our wonderful church. So join in the fun at the United Church of Christ at 1400 E. Main at the corner of Rt. 59 and Horning Rd.

# "Paying What's Right, Not What's Left"

## An Observation from LREDA Fall Conference

from Karen Lapidus

I have just returned from Decatur, Georgia, the site of this year's annual gathering of Unitarian Universalist professional religious educators. (LREDA is the acronym for Liberal Religious Educators Association.) It is always wonderful to spend a long weekend learning and networking with approximately 200 other Directors of Religious Education from across the United States and Canada.

Our theme this year was "Best Practices for Shared Ministry". Some of the topics we considered were Staff Relations, Finance, Continuing Education and Pastoral Care. We heard from several influential Unitarian Universalist leaders including Dr. Janice Marie Johnson, Multicultural Ministries and Leadership Director; the Reverend Sarah Lammert, Director of Ministry and Faith Development; the Reverend Richard Nugent, Church Staff Finances Director and Jessica York, Faith Development Director. It was an honor to be among such Unitarian Universalist luminaries.

I was particularly engaged in Reverend Nugent's presentation on church finances. He shared with us that one of their office's guiding principles is to "Pay What's Right, Not What's Left". This refers to how he and his staff encourage congregations to fairly compensate all of their staff with adequate pay, good benefits, a positive work environment and support for their professional development.

Before the conference, thirty experienced religious educators from various sized churches were invited to take part in one of three "compensation focus groups" in order for the UUA to gather information about the realities of compensation. I sat with 11 other DREs from mid-sized congregations while we shared our stories and situations with Reverend Nugent. We all spoke candidly and honestly about our working environments and how our churches are functioning as employers.

I discovered that the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent has much to be proud of in this regard. I was one of just a few DREs who is fairly compensated in accordance with the UUA's guidelines, receives access to health insurance at the recommended rate and receives the suggested support for my professional development. While my colleagues were telling some sad tales, I was feeling very grateful, indeed!

Of course I look forward to the day when all professional religious leaders, including ministers, professional religious educators, administrators, support staff and musicians receive fair compensation and adequate benefits, but until that time, I am feeling blessed and supported by your good work.

In faith and with love,

Karen Lapidus  
Director of Religious Education



Approximately 38 members enjoyed the 2014 Walden Fall trip to Loreta Recreational Area.





## An Open Invitation

The Social Justice Council invites all church members and friends to join us on Sunday, November 2nd, immediately after the second service in Fessenden Hall to learn about our social justice activities. Find out how you can get involved in social justice efforts that interest you and make a difference in our community and our world. Pizza will be served. We promise a lively discussion.



## Kent Community Bill of Rights

The UUCK Social Justice Council approved a resolution supporting ISSUE 21 which allows residents to stop hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and injection wells in the City of Kent. On **October 12th**, the congregation voted to support the passage of Issue 21: Kent Charter Amendment (Community Bill of Rights) on November 4th, 2014. For more information, visit [kentenvironmentalrightsgroup.org](http://kentenvironmentalrightsgroup.org), and don't forget to vote on November 4th.

## Justice Assembly 2014

### Get Smart on Organizing

**Saturday, November 8, 2014**

UUJO Justice Assembly in Columbus will feature Democratic State Rep. Nickie Antonio, West Shore UU, and lobbyists from UUJO allies and partners such as the ACLU and Equality Ohio offering guidance on how to impact issues before the Ohio General Assembly. Issue Group workshops on Immigration, Economic Justice, Criminal and Racial Justice, LGBTQ, Environment, Voting Rights, and Reproductive Justice will promote education, service and advocacy through lobbying, litigation, media, public witness, and civil disobedience. For more details, visit [ohiomeadville.org/uujo](http://ohiomeadville.org/uujo)



## How To Talk to Climate Change Skeptics

On Saturday, November 15, from 1pm to 2:30 pm in Fessenden Hall, the Green Sanctuary Committee is presenting this short program just in time for holiday dinners with friends and family who may not share your views. We'll start with a brief presentation on the science of climate change and then spend most of our time practicing skills for respectful dialogue across differences.



## Art and Allah Symposium featuring Persian Poetry: The Gate to Islamic Mysticism

The Library committee is grateful to the congregation and to friends of the congregation for their support of the first two Symposiums, "Art and Allah." The 3rd and final Symposium will be held



on Monday, November 17th at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary and will feature Mohammad Ja'far Mahallati, Presidential Scholar in Islamic Studies at Oberlin College. Professor Mahallati will speak on "Persian Poetry: The Gate to Islamic Mysticism." He will discuss a few works from classical Persian poetry, including the Sufi poet, Rumi, each conveying an important concept in the Islamic worldview.

After studying Islamic theology at Khan Seminary in Shiraz, Iran and receiving his Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from McGill University, Mahallati began working on his book, *The Return of a Civilization: Reflections on the Contemporary Iranian-Shii Thoughts on War and Peace*. In addition to his religious studies, Mahallati enjoys pursuing his interests in Islamic art and literature, specifically Sufi poetry and sacred calligraphy.

Professor Mahallati will answer questions at the end of his presentation, followed by refreshments in Fessenden Hall. This is a special opportunity to learn about Islamic culture through poetry. We look forward to seeing you there.



## The Wisdom Path

The Wisdom Path series of workshops on money continues. All are encouraged to attend this continuing series of workshops during which we examine our relationships with money. The workshops will be held on Thursdays at 7:00 pm in the Annex, the yellow house next to the church, and will be led by Marion Yeagler. You do not need to have attended previous workshops to attend these.

**November 6,** Faithful Investing, Putting money to work with spirit! Using capital in alignment with our values and objectives.

**November 13,** Spiritual Practices in the Material World. Bringing all we've learned together to make a practical plan for transforming our living.



## News from the Building Expansion front

The Building Expansion Team (BET) and the Capital Campaign Team (CCT) have been busy working toward making 'Realizing our Vision: Not for Us Alone', a reality. The BET is meeting regularly with the Architect. Many issues need to be resolved before building plans can become reality. We don't want to hurry the process; we want to get it right.

The CCT has been working on the theme, a LOGO, a timeline, communications strategies, and volunteer recruitment. If you would like to help us 'Realize Our Vision', please contact a member of the CCT. We are all in this together, creating our legacy.

Marion Yeagler & Kathy Kerns, CCT co-chairs

## Make Your Own Advent Calendar

### A Multigenerational Activity



**Sunday, November 16**

**1:00 – 2:30 PM Fessenden Hall**

What makes the holidays in December meaningful for you? This is a chance to gather in community to talk about the kinds of activities, rituals, practices and experiences that most help you connect with the wonder of the winter holidays. After a brief conversation, everyone will be invited to make their own Advent Calendar to reflect your intentions. You can make a calendar on your own or as a family. People of all ages are welcome to participate. We will have coffee, tea and snacks when you arrive and you will leave with your very own Advent Calendar. All supplies will be provided. Please RSVP to the church office by 11/16 so we can be sure to prepare enough supplies.

## Are You a Knitter or a Crocheter or a Needler??

We'd like to form a group at church on Wednesday afternoons at 2 pm. We'd like people to donate or bring their old yarn,



unfinished projects and patterns. We'd like to make baby blankets, small lap blankets for our ill members and friends, and items that could be sold at the annual auction, or you could make things that you would like for yourself. We'd be happy to teach anyone of any age or gender how to knit, crochet or needlepoint. Please call Carol Gould with suggestions, questions or comments.

Please appear at our first get-together on Wednesday, November 5th. We will have fun doing this together.



## Literary Liner Notes

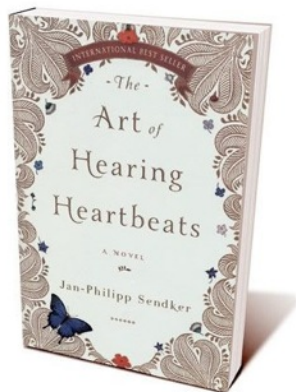
### The Art of Hearing Heartbeats

The Patricia Pownall UU Book Group will be meeting on Tuesday, November 11 at 7 pm in the home of Bonnie Harper. This month we are reading *The Art of Hearing Heartbeats* by Jan-Philipp Sendker.

A poignant and inspirational love story set in Burma, *The Art of Hearing Heartbeats* spans the decades between the 1950s and the present. When a successful New York lawyer suddenly disappears without a trace, neither his wife nor his daughter Julia has any idea where he might be...until they find a love letter he wrote many years ago, to a Burmese woman they have never heard of. Intent on solving the mystery and coming to terms with her father's past, Julia decides to travel to the village where the woman lived. There she uncovers a tale of unimaginable hardship, resilience, and passion that will reaffirm the reader's belief in the power of love to move mountains.

In December we will be reading *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel and in January we will be reading *A Teaspoon of Earth and Sea* by Dina Nayeri.

If you have any questions you may contact Bonnie Harper. All are welcome.



## Ohio Meadville District News

### It's Coming, only four months away!

Hey, SI Campers! Is it getting hard to remember the fun we had this July in Oberlin? Do you think you won't be able to make it to next summer without another bit of that ol' SI magic? Sounds like you're in need of Winter Institute! WI is all the fun and socializing of SI without the hectic schedule. Winter Institute is February 13-16 at Salt Fork State Park near Cambridge, OH. Registration is now open!. Details and links online at [ohiomeadville.org/omdevents/552-wi2015](http://ohiomeadville.org/omdevents/552-wi2015)

### H-UULTI Is Flipping the Classroom!

H-UULTI uses online technology to create a "flipped classroom" experience. Presentations happen online so that when you are meeting in person, you are using your valuable time in experiential and team learning. The flexible format also enables our professional staff to offer both introductory and advanced versions of useful leadership courses. Participating as a part of a congregational team can make all the difference in keeping your congregation healthy and vibrant. As a congregational leader, you already have wisdom and experience. Our process circles and "community of practice" Saturdays will help you connect and share wisdom with UU leaders from other congregations in your area and from around the country. Now accepting applications for Peer Hosts for the Spring 2015 semester. Learn more at [cerguua.org/HUULTI](http://cerguua.org/HUULTI)

### Save the Date! District Assembly

District Assembly 2015 will take place March 27-28, at the Niagara Falls Convention Center, Niagara Falls, NY. Our theme is Strong Roots, Broad Wings and our keynote speaker is Rev. Scott Tayler, Director of Congregational Life of the UUA. Gould Lecture will be presented by Rev. Tom Chulak, retired District Executive of the OMD and SLD districts. Some very important votes will be taking place at this year's district assembly as well as discussion on the topic of regionalization. Start planning now to make sure your congregation has its full complement of delegates!



For a complete and up-to-date church calendar, please visit [www.localendar.com/public/uukent](http://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.

