



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

At the end of my year as an intern minister, I attended a graduation party for one of the high school seniors. I was involved in a conversation with someone and not paying any attention to the conversation of the people behind me. When the conversation I was in ended, I turned around and said hello to the people behind me. Instead of a hello, the young woman blushed and offered me an apology. In reply to my obvious confusion, she explained that she hadn't realized I was standing behind her and she had just been swearing. As far as she was concerned, it isn't right to swear in front of your minister. I don't care whether or not people swear, but I wonder if the fear that I might has something to do with ideas about sin.

A colleague friend of mine was recently on board a plane during which she got into a conversation with her seatmate. When he found out she is a minister, he asked her if she would take his confession. I know that has to do with ideas about sin.

What are our ideas about sin? When I think about the mainstream societal messaging about sin in the

United States, it seems to me that it tends to focus primarily on personal morality filtered through Biblical interpretation. Many of the most vocal Biblical interpreters in the public square come from conservative religious traditions. The liberal religious perspective on sin doesn't get a lot of air time.

What is the liberal religious perspective on sin? That is what we are going to explore at church this month. The historical story of Unitarians and Universalists is rooted, in part, in our religious ancestors' rejection of conservative religious ideas about sin. During the early part of the 20th century, conservative theologians accused liberal religion of abandoning sin entirely in favor of an overly exalted view of human nature. I think there is some truth to that critique.

But the pendulum has been swinging back. Many liberal religious thinkers have come to believe that we need to take sin seriously. That is what we will be doing in worship this month. What can you learn about yourself and your spiritual life through a study of sin? What is your view of human nature? What is your view of the

Sunday Services

9:45 and 11:30 am

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Tuesday - Friday
By appointment

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The 20th each month



nature of God? And what does what you believe mean about the possibilities for our collective liberation? We are planning worship for the head and the heart, worship that can nurture our own spirits and help us heal the world. It's going to be good. I hope you will be part of it.

See you in church!

Melissa

UPCOMING SERVICES

9:45 and 11:30 am

March 2 - Seven Deadly Sins

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer
and Worship Associate John Marfy*

This morning we begin our exploration of sin and evil with a reflection on the social dimensions of sin as articulated by Mahatma Gandhi. Come join us as we reflect on the ways in which we are complicit as well as on the ways in which we can participate in our collective liberation.

March 9 - Do You Take Confession?

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer
and Worship Associate Joel Slater*

Every now and again someone asks me whether Unitarian Universalist ministers take confession. This morning we'll consider the question as well as the experience behind the question. This morning we look at the personal dimensions of sin.

March 16 - Beyond Light Bulbs: Covenant and Collective Action

Matt Meyer

Ours is a faith guided by covenant. As Unitarian Universalists, we believe that some things are better accomplished in community. A spiritual life is one of those. Social justice work is another. Join us for a service of rhythm, music, covenantal community and collective action. Matt is a musician and community organizer who has lead hundreds services for UU congregations across the country. He is a member of the UUA's Council on Cross Cultural Engagement and is also a founding resident of the Lucy Stone Cooperative in Roxbury.

March 23 - If Earth Could Speak

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

We end our exploration of sin and evil by considering what the earth might say about this subject if the earth could speak.

March 30 - Generosity of Spirit

*Rev. Elaine Strawn, Minister of the Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship of Wayne County*

What if generosity means a deep call from within-what energizes you, calls you to share from yourself, challenges you to leave your mark on a better world?

Important Dates to Note

March 28th, District Assembly

District Assembly 2014 will take place at the Avalon Hotel and Conference Center, Erie, PA March 28-29, 2014 with the Rev. Meg Barnhouse as the keynote speaker. Regionalization will undoubtedly be a topic of discussion. Put this date on your calendar, you won't want to miss it!

July 13th - 19th, Summer Institute

It's never too early to start planning. Summer Institute, a family friendly Unitarian Universalist camp of more than 500 UUs from around the district and beyond, will take place on July 13-19, 2014 at Oberlin College. Theme: The Power of the Vocal Community with Dr. Ysaye Barnwell (formerly of Sweet Honey in the Rock)



Furthering Multigenerational Community

from Karen Lapidus

In the past, I have used this newsletter column to share my opinion that our congregation is blessed to have such an overarching attitude of multigenerosity, to coin a word. As we begin our annual Surprise Friends mixer, I find myself thinking about the value of a multigenerational community of faith. (See details about Surprise Friends on page 9 of this edition of The Chalice Flame.)



Whether seated together in the pews or making music or otherwise taking leadership roles in the worship experience, our generations worship together. We are intentional in assuring that our social activities as well as our social justice work are open to the participation of folks of all ages.

As a community, we have come to expect this way of being together, but not all congregations are as fortunate, although most are much more welcoming to multigenerational mixing now than in the past. Did you know that churches are among the few places where people from several generations gather for a single purpose? So many people's families are far-flung and time-constrained. Young people don't have opportunities to spend time with elders and

elders have too few to be with the young. The young are deprived of chances to be nurtured and mentored by elders other than their parents and the elders miss out on the vitality and exuberance that only little ones can bring to a community.

The Religious Education Committee's annual Surprise Friends mixer is an opportunity for a child and an adult to be paired over the course of several weeks to make connections and hopefully create lasting bonds of friendship. The children and adults are asked to provide the

same basic information about themselves, such as favorites foods and books, as a starting point for them to consider what they have in common and what they might learn from each other. It is a good way to get to know each other and it is exciting to receive a message every Sunday morning! Making connections is often hard for people in the same age cohort, but especially challenging between the generations. The Surprise Friends program hopefully facilitates the connecting.

In faith and with love,

Karen Lapidus
Director of Religious Education

Jerusalem, Petra, Dead Sea: October 24 to November 6, 2014



Join Rev. Wayne Walder, as we take a Mindful Journey to the Holy Land -- "a cauldron of ancient myths and real historical events that have indelibly marked the fate of humankind." From the ancient sites of Amman, Jordan, to a magical candlelight walk through the Siq of Petra, to the therapeutic waters of the Dead Sea, and on to explore Jerusalem in depth - a city that captivates the imagination of billions of people and is home to a mosaic of cultures and beliefs, this will be a journey filled with memorable moments and awesome experiences. Email beverlz@me.com for details.

Messages from the Moderator



Progress continues on our exciting movement toward expansion!

The sale of contents of the 221 N. Mantua St. property were successful to the tune of \$1500 thus far. The proceeds will be deposited into the Capital Campaign fund. We are grateful for the cadre of volunteers who made this possible - organizers, purchasers and the clean-up crew. I am hesitant to name names for fear of omitting someone but special appreciation is due and offered to MaryBeth Hannan, Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer, Randy Ruchotzke, Max Grubb and Mary Leeson for your tireless efforts on behalf of our beloved community.

The board continues to work with a small group of concerned Kent citizens and a long time member of our congregation who wish to preserve the dwelling which sits on the property we purchased for the sole purpose of land acquisition. A timeframe has been provided to this group for action toward their goal prior to the anticipated demolition of the home in the mid to late spring, 2014.

More exciting news! A 6 member Capital Campaign Team (CCT) has been formed and will soon be meeting with the Building Expansion Team (BET) for a joint leadership session with the Rev. Renee Ruchotzke. Please join the Board and me in expressing our deep gratitude to Kathy Kerns, Marion Yeagler, Kay Eckman, J.R. Campbell, Dave Smeltzer and Randy Leeson for their commitment to our physical growth as members of the CCT.

These are heady times for us as we work toward the reality of our vision. We are closer now than ever before in our recent past and it is energizing! Do you feel it?

In service and faith,

Elaine

Wine Country Holiday

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of North Bay

"You generously share your beautiful community, your welcoming homes, your expertise and, especially, your warmth. We will remember this trip always."

Ann McCracken, Cincinnati, OH.

The UU's of Napa, California proudly announce the ninth season of our **Wine Country Excursions**. Again, we offer several options for an inside look at one of America's most beautiful areas, internationally known for fine wines, gourmet dining and spectacular vistas.

There is much to see and do in the Napa and Sonoma valleys, e.g. wine tasting at renowned and boutique wineries; visits to art galleries and museums; exploring the natural beauty of our hills and valleys on miles of hiking and bike trails or by car on our highways and back country roads. Napa is an hour from San Francisco by car or ferry.

We offer two choices: Both start with comfortable lodging in members' homes with full breakfast (up to 3 nights). You can choose a 2-day Wine Country Excursion, (a guided, personalized tour conducted by one of our members--some with wine industry experience) or lodging and self-guided touring. If desired, we provide guidance, maps, etc. UU ministers will be personally guided by our minister, Rev. Bonnie Dlott.

The program runs from April through October. Our fees are well below market rate for comparable services and all proceeds go to our small fellowship. For complete details contact: Iris Barrie at barrie001@comcast.net

We look forward to sharing our lovely "home" with you!



March Music Weekend



Wild Carrot in Concert

Pam Temple and Spencer Funk are Wild Carrot. This Cincinnati-based, award-winning group has what it takes to please all types of folk music fans. Rooted in traditional American music, their repertoire branches in diverse directions: from original tunes to swing, blues and traditional songs, using guitar, mandolin, dulcimer, concertina and vocals.

\$10 Donation at the Door

Sat, March 15, 8:00 pm



Matt Meyer Workshop Drumming and Spirituality

Matt's "Drumming and Spirituality" workshop is a chance for people of all skill levels to participate in hands on rhythm-making. The workshop includes instruction on basic technique, as well as information on the origins of percussion instruments from around the world. Participants will also experience the spirituality of community music-making through stories, games and discussions as well as look at how rhythm and music intersect with Unitarian Universalist values. Bring your own drum if you have one, for those who don't, enough will be provided. **\$10 Donation at the door**

Sunday March 16, 2-3:30 pm



Unitarian-Universalist Church of Kent
228 Gougler Ave March 15-16, 2014
Ph: 330-673-4247

www.kentuu.org

HARVEST for HUNGER



It's the month of March and in my professional and personal worlds that means it's both National Nutrition Month and the month of Harvest for Hunger.

For the 23rd year, Feeding America, the nation's largest anti-hunger agency, has sponsored Harvest for Hunger, a month long time of food and \$\$\$ drives to replenish the food and financial coffers at its participating agencies.

We can help by making a "full court press" to collect food and \$10 Acme gift card donations for Kent Social Services food programs. All non-perishable food donations are welcome, especially **The Super Six - cereal, peanut butter (and jelly), canned vegetables, tuna, canned soups and canned beef stew.**

Let's make this a March to remember by helping our neighbors in need. Please leave donations in the lower level closet by the elevator or in any basket on the sanctuary level.

Thank you,
Elaine Bowen



Members of our church prepared and served a hot lunch at the Lutheran Church on South Water Street on Feb 1st.



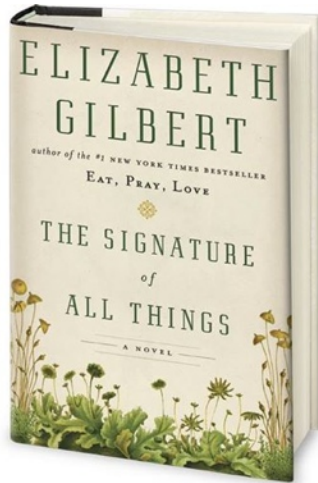
Literary Liner Notes

The Signature of All Things

The Patricia Pownall UU Book Group will be meeting on Tuesday, March 11 at 7pm in the home of Chris Hurlbut. This month we are reading *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert.

Spanning the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the novel follows the fortunes of the Whittaker family as led by Henry Whittaker—a poor-born Englishman who makes a great fortune in the South American quinine trade, eventually becoming the richest man in Philadelphia. Born in 1800, Henry's daughter, Alma becomes a botanist. As Alma's research takes her deeper into the mysteries of evolution, she falls in love with a man named Ambrose Pike who makes paintings of orchids and who draws her in the exact opposite direction—into the realm of the spiritual, the divine, and the magical. Alma is a clear-minded scientist; Ambrose a utopian artist—but what unites this couple is a desperate need to understand the workings of this world and the mechanisms behind all life.

In April, we will be reading *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry: A Novel* by Rachel Joyce. If you have any questions you may contact Bonnie Harper. All are welcome.



A Special Thank You



The Library committee would like to thank all who attended and participated in our four Symposiums, the last of which was held, Tuesday evening, Feb. 25th. Our moderators, Harry Noden, Carolyn Schlemmer, Bill Wilen, and Joel Slater contributed excellent leadership in promoting stimulating discussions. Thank you, all. If you would like the committee to sponsor Symposiums next fall (topics TBA), please speak to any committee member; we welcome any and all suggestions.

The Library committee would also like to thank Mrs. Gordon Vars for her thoughtful presentation to the committee on the place of libraries within the church structure, and its use by the congregation. Mrs. Vars is a professionally trained librarian, and she has had considerable experience with various church libraries and public schools in the area. Her suggestions were timely and very much appreciated by the committee.

A reminder that the Library committee has begun printing the primary sources used by our ministers (Rev. Melissa and guest ministers) to prepare their sermons. There may be quotes or ideas from the sermons you may wish to investigate further. This information may be found in the Thread and ennus following the sermon.



Going Bald for St. Baldrick's

Noreen Kumm-Gory will shave her hair on March 16, 2014 to raise money and awareness for childhood cancer research.

The event is sponsored by an organization known as the St. Baldrick's Foundation. Childhood cancer research is extremely underfunded, so we can all help through your donations.

To support Noreen and do your part in helping out children suffering from cancer, please go to Noreen's donation web page: <http://www.stbaldricks.org/participants/mypage/685372/2014>

Surprise! Surprise!

it's that time of year again!

Want to make a new friend in the church? Looking for a way to celebrate spring? Here is your chance! You are all invited to participate in this fun, intergenerational activity of friendship and caring! We will have a sign up table in Fessenden on March 23 & 30 and April 6. Participating adults will be matched with children in the congregation on April 13 and encouraged to exchange notes and artwork on Sundays, April 20 & 27 and May 4 & 11.

Adults will remain anonymous until the "big reveal" on May 18. Sign-up forms will be available until April 6.



Words to Live By...

"It seems to me we can never give up longing and wishing while we are still alive. There are certain things we feel to be beautiful and good, and we must hunger for them."

--George Eliot

Ohio Meadville District News

A Spirited Life: District Assembly 2014

The OMD/SLD District Assembly will be held at the Avalon Hotel in Erie, PA on March 28-29, 2014 with the Rev. meg Barnhouse as our keynote speaker. Registration is now open and all details are available on the website.

Visit www.ohiomeadville.org/program/da for details and links.

Stewardship: The Next Generation

This workshop will be presented at the UU Fellowship of Wayne County in Wooster, OH on March 8, 2014. Come learn how to bridge the gaps from generation to generation in stewardship appeals and re-envision a way to fund a vibrant, mission oriented faith. Details and registration are available at the OMD website. www.ohiomeadville.org/omdevents/566-stewardship2014

Allies for Racial Equality and People of Color Meeting

The Allies for Racial Equality (ARE) annual conference will take place March 14-16 at the West Shore UU Church in Rocky River, OH. In conjunction with this event will be a gathering of People of Color. Learn more at the ARE website: alliesforracialequity.wildapricot.org

General Assembly

This year's General Assembly will take place June 25-29, 2014 in Providence, RI. The theme is Love Reaches Out. Registration and housing open on March 1. The month of March is when individuals can apply for scholarships and to be volunteers. In addition, this year congregational presidents who attend will receive a \$100 rebate. Learn more at www.uua.org/ga



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.

