



## Monthly Musings from Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer

I write this just hours after the Supreme Court of the United States has heard oral arguments on the marriage equality cases being brought from our state and three others. According to early news reports, a big focus of the questions posed by the conservative justices focused upon tradition. We have had marriage between one man and one woman for millennia, they said, but same sex marriage for only 15 years. Why is this issue compelling enough to overturn tradition?

The reality is that these cases aren't trying to overturn the tradition of marriage, but rather simply refine it to be more inclusive and equitable. And the fact is that the institution of marriage has been refined again and again over time by many different societies in order to better reflect the societal contexts in which it has been practiced. Equality Ohio sent an email out to its constituents today which said it very well:

"As to an ancient concept of marriage, marriage has never been a static societal institution. It has been viewed and experienced in diverse ways in different eras, classes and cultures. The Romans only allowed the upper one-third of Roman citizens to legally marry. Early Christians viewed marriage as a tainted institution and didn't declare it a sacrament until the 13th century. And in these United States, wives were once considered the property of their husbands with no right to their children's guardianship and no right to own property."

This month we will be exploring tradition in our worship and small groups. The history of marriage is an excellent example of the ways in which traditions are always evolving. Sometimes that evolution happens unconsciously and in tiny ways and sometimes it happens intentionally and in life-changing ways.

**Sunday Services**

9:45 and 11:30 am

228 Gougler Ave.  
Kent, Ohio 44240  
Phone: 330-673-4247  
Fax: 330-677-4772  
[www.kentuu.org](http://www.kentuu.org)

**Minister:**

Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer  
[minister-uukent@sbcglobal.net](mailto:minister-uukent@sbcglobal.net)

**Minister's office hours:**

Tuesday - Friday  
By appointment

**Congregational  
Administrator:**

MaryBeth Hannan

**Office hours:**

Mon. through Fri. 9 - 4

**Religious Ed. Director:**

Karen Lapidus  
[dre-uukent@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dre-uukent@sbcglobal.net)

**DRE's Office Hours:**

Tuesday and/or Wednesday  
by appointment

**Music Director:**

Hal Walker

**Commissioned Lay Leader:**

Rev. Christie Anderson  
[christiea@neo.rr.com](mailto:christiea@neo.rr.com)

**Affiliated****Community Minister:**

Rev. Renee Ruchotzke  
[zimlar@juno.com](mailto:zimlar@juno.com)

**Newsletter editor:**

Saul Flanner  
[newsletter@kentuu.org](mailto:newsletter@kentuu.org)

**Deadline:**

The 20th of each month



Like so many, I am looking forward to a life changing update to the tradition of marriage this spring. In hopeful anticipation, I am planning a Freedom to Marry Celebration for July 3 at the church. My plan is to offer up to 8 free weddings for committed same-sex members of the larger community that day\*, along with a rolling celebration all day long for people who want to come toast what I hope will be an historic decision for justice and equity. Of course I can't finalize plans until a decision is announced in late June, but I'm beginning to lay the groundwork now. I need a few people who would like to help me plan the event and several people who would like to help staff the party in Fessenden that day. If you'd like to be part of making this celebration happen in any way, please let me know.

With hope,

\*Since the eight free weddings will be offered every hour and with short notice, they will be short, simple and include limited choices. I'm assuming church members who are waiting to be married in Ohio will want to take the time to plan a wedding that is more personalized. If I'm mistaken and you want to have a wedding that day as part of the celebration, please let me know!

## UPCOMING SERVICES

9:45 and 11:30 am

### May 3 - Faith in Bloom

*Coming of Age Youth, with their Mentors and Facilitators*

This morning our youth will be sharing their personal statements of faith. As we learn what is in their hearts and on their minds, we will celebrate their accomplishments and blooming maturity.

### May 10 - Flower Ceremony: A Unitarian Universalist Tradition

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

This Sunday we will celebrate one of the very few traditions unique to Unitarian Universalism. The Flower Ceremony is an opportunity to affirm the gifts of diversity and the beauty of the one making up the many. Please bring a cut flower or two to church with you today.

### May 17 - On the Banks of the Cuyahoga

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer and Worship Associate Sophie Smith*

As we look forward to our church's upcoming 150th anniversary, we will look back at some of the traditions that have shaped the life of this religious community over the years. What can we learn from the traditions of another time?

### May 24 - Beyond Words

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer and Worship Associate Deb Biggins*

Rituals can be a kind of tradition. Sometimes, when we can't find the words to express what we most deeply think and feel, rituals can speak for us instead. Join us for a morning of contemplation, celebration and maybe even a ritual to ground reflection in practice.

### May 31 - You Can Create New Traditions

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer and Worship Associate Bonnie Harper*

Sometimes our lives change so much that our traditions no longer fit. When that happens, we can feel empowered to change our traditions or even create new ones for new times. The Celtic Clan will be leading all of the music this morning, including an update of a traditional piece.



## EVENTS TO NOTE

### Should I Give Up?

**Tuesday, May 5th, 7:00pm**

(see page 5 for details)

### UU Book Group

**Tuesday, May 12th, 7:00pm**

(see page 5 for details)

### NEW UU Classes

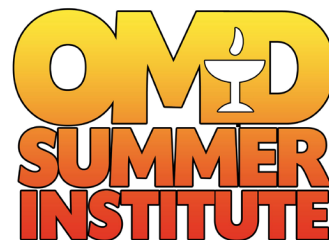
**May 10th and May 17th,  
9:00 - 11:00am**

(see page 6 for details)

### Garlic Mustard Pull

**Sunday, May 17th, 12:30pm**

(see page 6 for details)



**July 12th - 18th**

(see page 8 for details)



# Marking Maturity: Our Coming of Age and Our Whole Lives Programs

from Karen Lapidus

*Maturity involves being honest and true to oneself, making decisions based on a conscious internal process, assuming responsibility for one's decisions, having healthy relationships with others and developing one's own true gifts. It involves thinking about one's environment and deciding what one will and won't accept.*

~Mary Pipher, author of *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*

In addition to our Sunday morning religious education programming, we offered both Coming of Age, involving thirteen 9th and 10th graders, and OWL (Our Whole Lives program of comprehensive sexuality education), involving 11 of our 8th graders this year. Both programs were well-received and worthwhile.

We have a long and proud history of offering OWL in our church. Over the years, our four facilitators, Kat Holtz, Kathy Walker, Fred Smith and Saul Flanner, have fine-tuned the program into a masterpiece of content and caring. (I realize that that statement seems over-the-top, but it truly is a masterpiece!) The team and the youth met nearly every Tuesday evening from September until late April. Not only does the program cover the expected “birds and bees” kind of content, but places the content in the context of Unitarian Universalism and infuses it with our shared values of sound decision-making, responsibility and respect. Many young adults have reported to me that having OWL in middle school prepared them to address situations that confronted them in high school and college, with knowledge, resolve and maturity.

The OWL class recently had their last session which was followed by a graduation ceremony, a celebration dinner with their parents, and an opportunity for the parents to engage in some of the same lessons as the OWL class. This year 5 of our 11 youth had perfect attendance.

Our Coming of Age program is a more recent addition to our youth programming, this being the third time we have offered the program in recent years. All four of this year's facilitators, Elaine Bowen, Laura Sinclair,



Jeff St. Clair and Andrew Rome, were new to their roles and each stepped in and co-created a wonderful and powerful experience for our youth. Thirteen mentors worked closely with our youth, as well. As I write this, it is the week following the Wilderness Journey Retreat, so I am still awash in all those wonderful feelings that come from a life-affirming community experience. The youth spent several hours in the woods of Camp Asbury in Hiram to consider the faith statements they have each written, to consider how their relationships will change as they transition from childhood to young adulthood, and to consider their life's passion. The youth met the task with enthusiasm and sincerity.

Their culminating event will be Coming of Age Sunday on May 3rd, which will be followed by a Celebration Potluck for the youth, their mentors and their extended family. See the listing of worship services for more details.

In my role of Director of Religious Education, I only help to make things happen. Then I get the opportunity of watching the adults blossom into their roles of caring and committed leaders of youth. Many of the youth in the Coming of Age and OWL programs have been known by me (and many of you) since they were young children. I truly enjoy watching them blossom and mature, moving away from the childhood ways of being to becoming youth and young adults. I am so proud of them.

In faith and with love,

Karen Lapidus  
Director of Religious Education

## Should I Give Up?

### A Dramatic Presentation about Aging and Disability



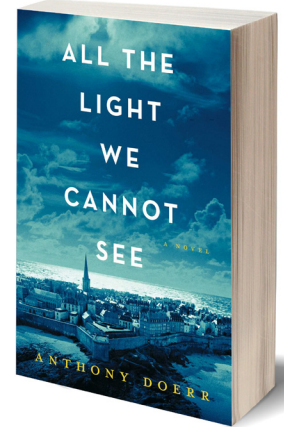
The Care Team is looking forward to hosting Professor Mary Giffin from Walsh University on **Tuesday, May 5 at 7:00 pm** for her performance and presentation, *Should I Give Up?* The presentation will be held in Fessenden Hall, will last for about an hour, and is open to the larger community. Anyone who is contemplating questions of aging or disability for themselves or with their loved ones may find this program helpful.

The 10-minute dramatic monologue *Should I Give Up?* portrays an 83-year-old woman seeking meaning and purpose in her last years. This piece engages the audience with questions, challenging them to take action to assist the elderly and disabled. Discussion, led by the presenter, follows the performance and usually lasts 30-45 minutes.

After the program, the members of the Care Team will be glad to discuss the work of the team with anyone who may be interested in learning more about how to get support or how to become involved in offering support. Please contact Rev. Melissa with any questions prior to the event.

## All the Light We Cannot See

The Patricia Pownall UU Book Group will be meeting on Tuesday, May 12 at 7 pm at the home of Kathy Wilen. This month we are reading *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. This is a novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel. In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.



In June we will be reading *The Love Song of Miss Quennie Hennessy* by Rachel Joyce. If you have any questions you may contact Bonnie Harper. All are welcome.



## New to UU Classes This Month!



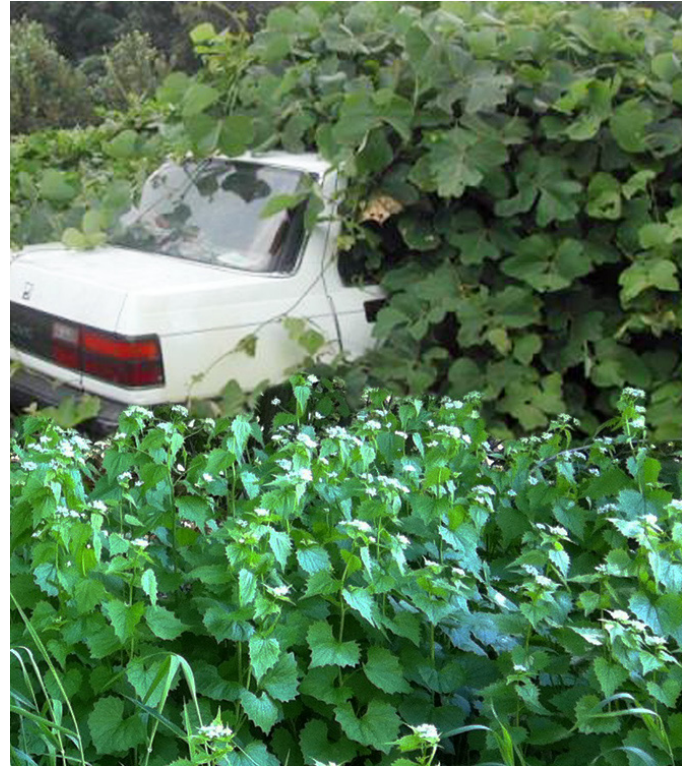
Curious? Interested in learning more? Ready to take the next step? Our “New to UU” classes cover everything you wanted to know about the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent in particular and Unitarian Universalism in general, but didn’t know where to go or whom to ask. Well, maybe not everything, but we try to give you an overview, a starting point ~ some history of both, some organizational details. Come join the conversation. And, if you’re curious about membership, we will help to clarify what membership in UUCK entails.

Part 1 will be on Sunday, May 10th, from 9-11 am. Part 2 will be on Sunday, May 17th, from 9-11 am. You may attend one or both, although attendance at both is encouraged. Different topics will be covered in each. We will gather at the Annex, the yellow house next to the church.

If you have any questions, contact Claudia Miller.

## Garlic Mustard Pull - May 17th

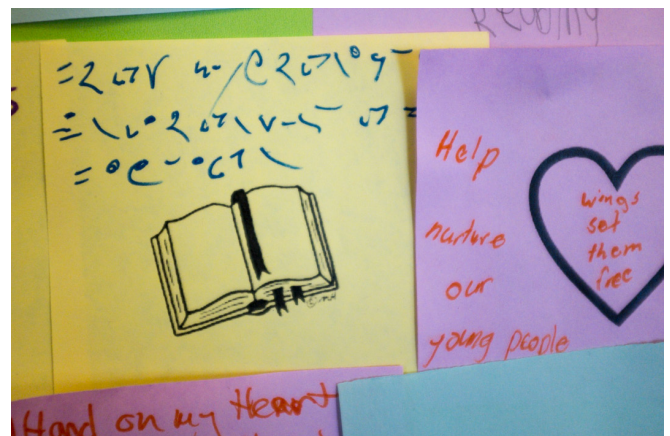
The 15th annual Garlic Mustard Pull will help protect our beloved riverside park from invasive weeds on Sunday May 17th, starting at 12:30pm (right after the second service).



Our middle school youth will be leading the efforts to rid our park of this noxious menace and restore the natural beauty of native plants. Please wear long pants and closed toe shoes - gloves and bags provided by Kent Parks & Rec. Contact Andrew Rome with any questions.



Ike Brannan  
shows off his  
Batman imitation







## Our 150th Anniversary: Heirs of the Past, Makers of the Future, 1866-2016

The countdown has begun for the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Founding of our congregation: Heirs of the Past, Makers of the Future. Join us on Sunday, May 3rd for pancakes as we kick off the countdown to the year-long (May, 2016-April, 2017) series of parties, and opportunities for service, worship, and reflection. All will be revealed on the 3rd!

An additional opportunity: we will be fund-raising through spring and summer by selling hats, t-shirts, totes, and denim shirts with the UUCK logo. Proceeds will fund the 150th Celebration. Plan to place your order during May for a June delivery. Sample items will be displayed.

150th Anniversary Task Team

Bonnie Harper, Kathie Slater, and Vivien Sandlund, Co-Chairs





## Simple Gifts received...

### Aunt Elaine Bowen

In celebration of the dedication  
of Harper Walton Fissette

### Loucille Powers

In memory of Dad, "Theodore"

Our Simple Gifts program is designed to encourage everyday giving. If members and friends of the congregation continue to remember the church with regular gifts, we will be well on our way to building the kind of endowment that can help ensure our congregation's continuing health and vitality.

No gift is too small or too large. Donations can be made in celebration, in honor of someone or something, in appreciation or to note a special occasion. If you would like to participate, the blue Simple Gift envelopes can be found in the pews; please include your dedication and name so we can provide you with a donation credit. Thank you.



Golden  
Tones waiting  
to perform.

## Ohio Meadville District News

### It's Time for Summer Institute

Join 500+ UUs for our annual summer intergenerational gathering at Oberlin College on July 12-18, 2015. Theme speaker is Rev. Abhi Janamanchi speaking on *Living Fully, Loving Mightily, and Bowing to the Mystery*. Registration is now open - visit [www.omdsi.org](http://www.omdsi.org) for details.

### Young Adult Opportunities

Young Adults have several opportunities to gather this spring and summer in our district. OPUS, the annual national gathering of Young Adults will once again take place in the OMD at Camp Nuhop August 19-23, 2015. Registration is open. Find details at [www.ohiomeadville.org/omdevents/736-opus15](http://www.ohiomeadville.org/omdevents/736-opus15). Finally, a regional gathering of Young Adults will take place north of us at Camp Unirodondack. Find details at [www.unirodondack.org](http://www.unirodondack.org)

### Looking for Resources and Help?

The CERG On Demand Learning Center offers videos of webinars and workshops on your time schedule. All congregational life topics covered. Newly redesigned and updated! Check it out at [www.cerguua.org/ondemand](http://www.cerguua.org/ondemand)





For a complete and up-to-date 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

