



## Monthly Musings from Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer

**H**ow much would you like to get out of your experience with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent? Like so many things in life, how much you get out of our church has some relationship to how much you are willing to put in. You could read that to mean involvement in teams, committees, social justice projects, service and more and that would be one way of understanding what I'm talking about. It is true that sharing your time and talent in pursuit of the mission of our congregation is one very important path you can pursue to deepen your experience not only of congregational life, but also of Unitarian Universalism generally and your own spiritual growth and development in particular. Just about every form of involvement in the congregation can be approached as an opportunity for spiritual practice.

In addition, we have two opportunities for involvement that are exclusively devoted to spiritual exploration and growth and to fostering deeper social connections with others in the congregation. Those opportunities are called Chalice Groups and Food for

Thought groups and both are a part of our small group ministry program. There are two big ideas behind these programs: one is that there needs to be a place where people can intentionally and explicitly form relationships with other folks in the church besides what is possible at coffee hour, the other is that there needs to be times and places besides Sunday morning services where people can intentionally and explicitly explore spiritual questions and themes. We keep our small group ministries very focused on these two goals and, as a result, most people find that they come out of the experience with new and deeper relationships and more insight into the spiritual themes and questions the groups have explored together.

The two types of groups have different formats in order to appeal to different needs and sensibilities. Our Chalice Groups are clearly structured to create sacred space, make room for stillness and invite sharing from the heart by each person in the group. We aim to have our Chalice Groups feel spiritually grounding and opening. Our Food for Thought groups explore many

**Sunday Services**

9:45 and 11:30 am

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Tuesday - Friday  
By appointment

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**Religious Ed. Director:**

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**Deadline:**

The 15th each month

Gia Marfy and a friend  
do some serious  
thinking at Summer  
Institute.



of the same questions as the Chalice Groups, but they are much more loosely structured and organized around a shared meal. Each person still has an opportunity to speak, but the conversation is more free flowing. We aim to have our Food for Thought groups feels like a social gathering focused on particular spiritual questions.

Aside from the content, what unites these two groups is the commitment we expect from those who participate. When you sign up to participate in a Chalice Group or a Food for Thought group, please understand that you are signing up to participate for the whole church year - September/October through May. Most groups will meet once per month and the groups work best when you are able to attend regularly. Please understand that if you sign up to participate in a group and don't attend regularly, you are not only affecting yourself but also all the other people in your group who will be missing your voice, perspective and experience around the table. We want to be clear that most people who participate regularly don't experience the time commitment as a burden, but rather as a gift. Choosing to commit to participate in a small group is a gift you can give yourself to deepen your relationships with others at the church and to explore your own spirituality.

We'll begin advertising for the 2013-2014 small groups in late August so look for more information then. Whether you have been with our congregation for a few weeks or many years, small groups have something to offer you. Please let me know if you have any questions and consider whether you can participate this coming church year.

Peace,

## New Service Times!

### UPCOMING SERVICES

9:45 and 11:30 am

#### August 4 - Reaching Across the Aisle

*Jennifer May with Worship Associate Joel Slater*

It seems today that people disagree on more things than they agree on. Topics like abortion, marriage equality, immigration, universal healthcare are polarizing topics. Why is someone always right and someone always wrong? Why can't politicians agree on seemingly anything to pass meaningful legislation? Why can't people stop arguing on my Facebook feed?

#### August 11 - Lions and Tigers and Bears! Oh My!

*Kathy Walker and Saul Flanner*

In this multimedia service, Kathy and Saul will explore the interdependent web of which we are all a part. We are not qualified to do so, but we think you'll appreciate our attempt as we share our limited experience with the seventh principle of Unitarian Universalism and the spirit animals that keep pestering Kathy to lead this service.

#### August 18 - Heirlooms, Curiosities, and Castoffs

*Rev. Renee Ruchotzke with Worship Associate Justin Czekaj*

Our lives are influenced by the legacy of those who preceded us. How might we choose what to keep and what to set aside as we attempt to live lives of authenticity and purpose?

#### August 25 - The Spiritual Wisdom of Children

*Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer, Director of Religious Education Karen Lapidus, and Worship Associate Sophie Smith.*

Everyone is invited to join together for our annual multigenerational, ingathering service. During this special service for all ages, we will celebrate coming together again for the start of a new church year as we lift up children and youth as a source of spiritual wisdom for us all. Nursery care will be provided for our littlest ones during both services.

Please bring a small vial of water and/or a small amount of earth from a place you have been this summer which has nourished your own spirit.

## Summer Schedules to Note

Our Director of Religious Education, Karen Lapidus, will be on vacation August 12-18.

## Welcome, Colleen!

The RE Assistant Search Committee is pleased to announce that Colleen Thoele has joined the church staff team. She began her work on July 10th. One of her first big projects will be conducting the RE registration beginning at the end of August. Colleen is an experienced social worker, a creative writer, a dedicated mom and a lover of Unitarian



Universalism and our church. Search Committee members were Dani Beale, Kathy Walker and Karen Lapidus.

## Change of Date for the Retirees Luncheon

For the last few years, the retirees luncheon has been held at noon on the second Tuesday of every month. Beginning in August we are moving it one week later to the third Tuesday of each month. We meet for an hour to an hour and a half depending on the number of people who attend so everyone has an opportunity to check in with the group. All retirees are welcome to join us. Bring your own lunch, beverages are provided.



# Children's Religious Education Curriculum Offerings for 2013-2014

from Karen Lapidus

The RE Committee and I are excited about the programs we have selected for next church year. All programs are firmly grounded in our Unitarian Universalist principles, are age-appropriate, address our children's needs to be out of their seats and active, and provide generous elements of fun. The classrooms will be divided a bit differently this year.

Nursery Care will be provided at both services for babies up to age 3 (by September 2013).

Preschool will be for children ages 3 and 4. We are stepping away from the Spirit Play program and will offer a UU curriculum written specifically for preschool children. We have three to choose from and the committee has not yet made a final decision.

Grades Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd will be using World of Wonder from the UUA's Tapestry of Faith. The children will focus on our seventh principle that instills respect for the interdependent web of life. There will be lots of outdoor experiences.

Grades 4 and 5 will use Tapestry of Faith's Sing to the Power which will guide them to their power to be leaders for justice, compassion and love.

The Middle School group will be using Popcorn Theology which integrates clips from popular and recent movies to facilitate discussion about issues of theology and ethics.

The High School Youth Group will be offered the opportunity to use Exploring Our Values Through Poetry in which poems and raps are used to explore many aspects of the human condition.



The Multiage Class meets during the 2nd service. This class is primarily for children who have older siblings in the middle and high school youth groups. We will be using Spirit of Adventure, which uses unique and engaging activities—dissecting a computer, building cantilever architecture with graham crackers, using science to prepare food—to learn about our faith.

Two programs will be offered at times (yet to be determined) other than Sunday mornings:

Coming of Age will be offered to young adolescents in grades 8 and 9.

Elementary OWL (Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education) will be offered to children in grades 4 and 5.

Please let me or any member of the RE Committee know if you would like to take a look at these programs or if you have any questions.

In faith and with love,

Karen Lapidus

Director of Religious Education





## Hal Returns from Leave of Absence

I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to the congregation for allowing me to take off a couple months to address my recent health issues. I want to let you know that despite challenging continuing concerns, I'm doing everything I can do to keep getting better and to live a full life. I return to my job excited about new projects which will expand our music program's tradition of being collaborative, participatory, inclusive and high quality. I welcome your encouragement and good thoughts as I continue on this healing path. Again, thank you so much for allowing me the time away this summer.

## Expanding our music program!

As September approaches, I always look forward to the beginning of a new season of our wonderful adult choir. This fall, we return to an old tradition of **Sunday evening** rehearsals from **6:30-8:00**. If you're interested in singing, we'd love to have you join us. Please contact Hal for a conversation about where in the choir your voice would fit best.

This year, I'm also excited about the start of our own "**UU Folk Orchestra**." I was rehearsing with the folk orchestra at our district's annual Summer Institute when I looked around and realized that about half of the orchestra was from our congregation. A "folk orchestra" combines the unique instrumental talents of the congregation with diverse choices of repertoire to make a sound that will fill our sanctuary like nothing you've ever heard. Basic music reading skills are required. We will rehearse on **Thursday evenings** from 7-8:15.

Finally, we will be creating a youth choir for treble voices from 3rd grade-7th grade. The weekly one-hour rehearsal time is soon to be determined. Stay tuned!

As a kickoff to a great year of music, I will be hosting an open house potluck at my house for anyone with any interest in either singing in the choir or playing in the folk orchestra. The open house will be merely for fun and information... No commitment required, yet. If you are able to, please bring a dish to share.

### Singers and Musicians Open House Potluck!

Sunday, August 18 at 6 o'clock.

Hal Walker's house  
all are welcome...

If you have any questions, please contact  
Hal Walker.





# On the Ground in the Arizona Borderlands

Mike Kreyche, July 2013

For the last few years Jean and I have been planning to spend part of the year in Arizona after retiring. Ordinarily our preferred time of year for a little extra sunshine would be the winter months, but we decided to come for a few months after my retirement on June 1.

During a couple of previous visits over the last year and a half we got involved with some of the numerous organizations working here to protect the lives and human rights of undocumented migrants crossing our southern border. The group we are most involved with is Tucson Samaritans which celebrated its 11th anniversary on July 1 and is dedicated to providing food, water, and medical assistance to those crossing the desert.

This is the hottest time of the year in the Southwest and this is an unusually hot year. A couple weeks after our arrival we learned that we were in the latter part of streak that nearly broke the record of 39 consecutive days over 100 degrees. The media have been full of stories lately about migrants found wandering in the desert in distress—or dead, usually from dehydration.

Since 1999 over 2000 people have died in the Arizona desert making the trek north from the border. Another organization, Humane Borders, has compiled a visual database of deceased migrants. You can go to [humaneborders.info](http://humaneborders.info) and see the situation for yourself. Select the “Bounding Box Map of Migrant Mortality” and click the Search button. If you repeat the search selecting individual years, you’ll see that the number of deaths has remained fairly constant in recent years even though the number of migrants crossing the border has decreased dramatically.

There are few visitors here this time of year and many full-time residents are on vacation in cooler climates, so Samaritans volunteers have been in short supply. In particular, the “water drops” have been suffering. We decided to take responsibility for the drops for the next couple of months we’ll be here. A water drop

involves carrying gallon jugs of water to strategic points on known migrant trails. Each walk can range from a few minutes to half an hour. The Tucson Samaritans have two routes and each one should be done about once a week. Our first trip out is on June 24. According to reports, neither route has been resupplied in two weeks or more, so we plan a compressed excursion that will cover both.



The evening before, we load the Samaritans 4Runner with 42 gallons of water and some food packs; we set the alarm for 3:45 and go to bed early. The eastern sky starts getting light about 4:00 (no daylight savings in Arizona!) and at 5:00 we meet Bob, our companion for the day, for the trip south. An hour later we pass through the small town of Arivaca, twelve miles due north of the border (roughly a day’s walk, depending on the route), and turn onto the back road that will bring us near the head of a narrow, steep-sided canyon that is about a mile long.

As we approach our parking spot Bob tells us that the Border Patrol no longer seems to be responding to a presumed sensor that we

appeared to trip on prior visits. Almost without fail, an agent would drive up to see what was going on just as we were finishing the water drop. After a glance at us or maybe a brief conversation the agent would be off again.

On one occasion things went quite differently. The agent got out and headed up the trail towards the water drop, exchanging a few brusque words without breaking his stride. We proceeded to check water at a couple of other spots on our way back to the paved road and became increasingly suspicious as we discussed the agent’s behavior. We waited near beginning of the dirt road to let the agent’s truck exit ahead of us, got the license plate number, and retraced our route back to the parking spot. We hiked back in to the water drop and found that all the sixteen jugs we had left were empty, the ground still wet where they had been dumped out.

Border Patrol policy is not to disturb the supplies we leave or interfere with our humanitarian mission, but

*(continued on page 6)*

## On the Ground in the Arizona Borderlands (continued)

some individual agents resent what we do and violate the policy. We reported the incident to a Border Patrol official, tracked down the truck and confronted the agent so we could get his name from his badge, then filed a written report. Supposedly this led to agent being called on the carpet, but we were not told if there was any disciplinary action taken against him.

Parked on a ridge now, we load our backpacks and start hiking along the ridge towards the head of the canyon. As everywhere in these parts, there are mesquite trees and cactus but right here the most distinctive plant is the ocotillo, growing more thickly than usual. It has numerous slender, spiny stalks growing from the base of the plant, spreading out to make a V-shape and topping out above our heads. In April there are clusters of bright orange flowers at the tips of the stalks but now the petals are scattered on the ground below, perfectly preserved in the dry air.

The ocotillo has no leaves now. It grows them and sheds them in rapid response to the presence or absence of moisture and there has been no rain for months. I had been wondering whether a small one I planted in our yard last year had survived, so one evening I gave it a good

watering. The next day it was covered with small, fully developed leaves! Unfortunately humans cannot adapt to prolonged periods without water, so the ocotillo is a reminder of the importance of our hike today.

After following the trail over a couple of high points along the ridge, we have an easy downhill stretch to a saddle where we begin a steep descent to the water drop location. To our surprise, there are three full jugs of water. As we find out later, a couple of Samaritans had taken two journalists to the spot a few days earlier and left a few gallons behind. We unload the additional thirteen gallons we are carrying and return to the vehicle.

We're ready to ride in air conditioned comfort for a while before starting the next route, a few miles closer to the border. The busiest spot there is all out of water so we hike up to it twice, leaving a total of nineteen gallons. At another spot some jugs appear to have been vandalized and we leave a few fresh gallons. By the time we are finished with the second route we've distributed all the jugs. Around 1:00 p.m. we are back in Arivaca and pull into a cafe for a bite to eat and some cold drinks. We've put in an exhausting 8 hour day and still need to drive back to Tucson.



**July's Special Offering raised \$275.00 for the Phyllis Zumkehr County Clothing Center, a program sponsored by Family & Community Services.**



## Educational Opportunities



### Coming of Age Program Being Offered this Year

It is our tradition to alternate offering OWL (Our Whole Lives Comprehensive Sexuality Education curriculum) with our Coming of Age program for young adolescents. This church year we will offer Coming of Age, but the dates and times have not yet been determined. Parents of next year's 8th and 9th graders will be notified as the details emerge.

We have used *Coming of Age: Deepening Ties Within Your Congregation* from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing two times.

It is a wonderful program, but quite involved, requiring lots of time of the leaders and participants. A team of former CoA facilitators and members of the RE Committee is looking at ways to stream-line the program while retaining its essence.

### New UU Classes in August

Our New UU classes cover everything you wanted to know about the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent in particular and Unitarian Universalism in general, but were afraid 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, this is the place to be.

Part 1 will be on Sunday, August 11, from 9-11 am. Part 2 will be on Sunday, August 18, 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 or Marion Yeagler.





## Words to Live By...

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it."

— Rumi

## Literary Liner Notes

### Flight Behavior

The Patricia Pownall UU Book Group will be meeting on Tuesday, August 13 at 6:30 pm for a delicious dinner prepared by Annie Brightbill in her home in Navarre. If you wish to carpool, we will meet at the church at 5:30. This month we are

reading *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver.

Dellarobia Turnbow is a restless farm wife who gave up her own plans when she accidentally became pregnant at seventeen. After a decade of domestic disharmony, she hikes up a mountain road behind her house toward a secret tryst, but instead encounters a shocking sight: a silent, forested valley filled

with what looks like a lake of fire. She can only understand it as a miracle, but it sparks a raft of other explanations from scientists, religious leaders and the media.

In September we are offering a choice of two older novels: *Main Street* by Sinclair Lewis or *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser. In October we will be reading *The Language of Flowers* by Vanessa Diffenbaugh. If you have any questions you may contact Bonnie Harper. All are welcome.

### From the Library

The Library Committee is planning a symposium on two TV programs featuring Bill Moyers. We will view the program followed by a discussion and refreshments. Dates are W, September 11, and W October 9. Both programs will be held in Fessenden Hall at 7:15p.m. All are welcome. Specific topics will be announced in August. The programs will be selected from the DVDs in our collection.

The Library Committee is working hard to maintain a current record of volumes that have been checked out. We ask that you please give us your contact information, and the date you check out a book. This will be very helpful, and we thank you in advance for your cooperation.

### Book Review

Edward Searle, *In Praise of Animals: A Treasury of Poems, Quotations and Readings*, (Boston, Skinner House Books, © 2007).

Searle, a long-time UU minister, collected these poems, quotations, and readings to celebrate animals and their place in Nature's interdependent web of all existence. This is located in the Meditation category of the church library.

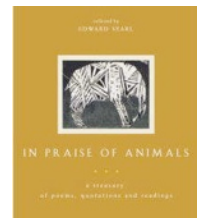
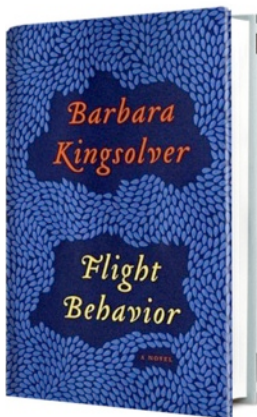
The following quotations are examples of the selections in this worthwhile little volume.

"The great pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself, too". --Samuel Butler

"On a moonlit nite on a spring day,  
The croak of a frog  
Pierces through the whole cosmos and turns  
it into a single family!" --Chang Chiu-Ch'en

"Men and cats can get along together very well--as well indeed as people with irreconcilable political or religious differences, but under the same conditions: namely that the differences remain undiscussed, and above all, that neither tries to change the other". --Joseph Krutch Wood

Submitted by Martha Kluth





Don't Forget! New Service Times!



Starting August 4:  
9:45 and 11:30 am



### Where's the Calendar?

For a complete and up-to-date church calendar, please visit <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.

