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## Beyond Green...

Welcome to the new environmentally friendly version of the UUFCM newsletter! As most of you are aware – if you've been paying attention! – The UUFCM Board has decided to "go green" with this communication tool and hope that the vast majority of you will receive this monthly missive electronically. We will continue to make some hard-copies available for those without access to email. If you know of anyone who needs to receive this newsletter via the USPS, please contact Dawn Daniels via [email](#) or by phone at 989-763-6315.

The decision to revitalize our newsletter went beyond a desire to lessen our environmental impact. The hope is for this newsletter to become a more expansive communication/outreach tool that will more fully reflect who we are as a congregation. Please know that this is a work in progress! We hope you enjoy the changes made so far. There are active navigation links in the left column to help you move through the newsletter with greater ease. There are also active links within several of the articles that will take you to websites referenced.

We'd love to hear what you think! Please direct all questions/comments/suggestions to newsletter editor Dawn Daniels via [email](#) or by phone at 989-763-6315.

*Enjoy!*

## President's Reflection

### Sharing is the Selfish Thing to Do

*by Guy Newland, Past President*

Religious traditions teach that happiness comes from generously sharing with others. Christians call it *caritas*, which is sometimes translated as charity, but also means Love, as in "God is Love." It specifically means an unlimited loving-kindness towards others. In Buddhism, limitless loving-kindness is called *metta*; it is expressed in generous giving (*dana*) of material things, protection from harm, and spiritual teachings. Muslims practice *zakat*, which is the obligatory purification of one's wealth through generous contributions to the poor. Beyond the sharing of wealth, one is encouraged to care for others through kind words, smiling, protecting animals and the environment, and so forth. In each tradition, loving care for others is – in some way – required in order to attain our own highest personal happiness – enlightenment, heaven, or paradise. The Dalai Lama has summarized this message by saying that if you are going to be selfish, at least be smart in how you go about it: Care for others!

A steadily growing body of scientific research supports the conclusion that caring is the smart way to happiness. University of Virginia Psychology Professor Jonathon Haidt summarizes this research in *The Happiness Hypothesis*. People tend to be happier when they have religious faith, strong social networks, and solid marriages. Those who focus on achieving wealth and career advancement are significantly less happy than those who focus on helping others, spirituality, or friends and family.

*"Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared."*

*– Buddha*

In brief, science – along with religion – suggests that if we really want to make a reliable and long-lasting difference in our sense of contentment, we should join with others in serving a greater cause. How does this work? Dr. Jorge Moll of the National Institutes of Health [found](#) that when subjects were encouraged to think of giving money to charity, their brains lit up in parts usually associated with selfish pleasures like eating or sex. It seems that we have evolved to find joy in caring for others.

Caring service that I undertake a bit reluctantly, out of a sense of duty or obligation, often ends up being one of the most rewarding parts of my life. Others find this as well. Brian Mullaney, an advertising executive who drove his dates to fancy restaurants in his Porsche, felt something was missing in his life. He left the business world to found Smile Train, a group that helps children born with cleft lip. If you ask him what he has learned, he says, "The most selfish thing you can do is to help other people."

Sometimes our good intentions miss the mark – charity is not always effective in helping as intended. But when I do my best to help others, at least one person is sure to be happier: me.

## Worship Service Calendar

### **February 7: "Shooting the Albatross"**

– a sermon by the Rev. Jane Rzepka. *Light refreshments to follow.*

### **February 14: "Valentine's Arrows: a Sermon on the True Nature of Friendship"**

– by the Rev. James Ishmael Ford. *Light refreshments to follow.*

### **February 21: "The Gift of Silence"**

– a sermon by the Rev. Peter Morales. *Light refreshments to follow.*

### **February 28: "Caution Church Ahead"**

– a sermon by the Rev. Victoria Safford. *Light refreshments to follow.*

*Unless otherwise indicated, service leadership and sermon presentation will be provided by UUFCM Worship Director Dawn Daniels and designated worship associates.*

### **Service Cancellation Policy**

During the winter months, we may have to cancel services due to inclement weather. Our policy is that the decision will be made by 9:00 a.m. Sunday morning, at the latest. Everyone will be notified by email or telephone at that time. If you are in doubt and want to make sure, call Gisela Moffit at (989-772-1602) or Dawn Daniels at (989-763-6315).

## Interested in joining the UUFCM?

When you decide to join this fellowship, it will be a big moment for you and for us!

We have a responsibility to see that you are made welcome and you find a place in our midst where you can make friends and find support on your spiritual journey.

In return, we ask that you to make an effort to become involved in the church in ways that are meaningful for you. When you join, we want you to participate in the life of the church by taking up a task of your choosing (many hands make quick work), and to support the church – as you are able – with your financial gifts.

The membership process is as follows:

1. Attend an orientation session for newcomers (membership class). This is not mandatory, but strongly recommended.
2. Sign the Membership Book in the presence of a church officer or Chair of the Membership Committee.

3. After signing the Membership Book, you will be asked to make a financial pledge in support of the church. When you join us, the Fellowship must pay dues to both the district and national offices. Please know that you are welcome, whatever you can give.
4. Participate in a New Member Ceremony where you will be officially welcomed into the church and introduced to the congregation.

Please, contact the New Member Committee Chair, [Laura Frey](#) at 989-444-1958 for more information or to let her know that you are interested in attending the upcoming Membership Orientation meeting (see below).

**Note:** *Being a member is not absolutely required, but we encourage it. You may choose to be a "friend" of the church and be actively involved in church activities. However, remember that only members can vote in congregational elections. And only members are counted by the denomination in its annual survey. The more actual members we have, the more influence we can have as a liberal religious body in our own community and in the world.*

### **Next Membership Orientation:**

**Saturday, February 20, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Tom & Gisela Moffit (1101 Watson Rd.)**

This is an informal gathering and a wonderful time to become acquainted with one another and learn more about the UUFCM. We look forward to having you attend.

## **What the UUFCM Means to Me**

*By Laura Frey*

Daily, I am grateful to have the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Central Michigan (UUFCM) in my life. The UUA principles are a touchstone for my heart, my mind, my faith, and my daily actions. These principles challenge as well as comfort me. I am very appreciative to have found a congregation that has helped me to increase my capacity to love and accept others.

I attended my first UUFCM service in early Fall 2004 and continued to attend once or twice a month during my first year. Within that first year I knew I wanted the UUFCM congregation in my life. As a result, I gradually increased my attendance to nearly every Sunday. I started to volunteer as a greeter, helped set-up services, attended special congregation retreats, engaged in community outreach activities, and also joined the board. These activities have increased my personal faith satisfaction as well as my commitment to have the UUA principles active in my life.

My expanded involvement in the UUFCM has enhanced my life because I have had the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful congregation. I want the UUA principles to be integrated daily in my life but I want this through a loving and thriving UUFCM congregation. You have helped me discover how important we are as a congregation and what the UUFCM can bring to our collective community.

I want the option to attend the UUFCM every Sunday for as long as I can see into my future. I want to continue to have stirring and thought-provoking services. I want to continue to have my ears ring with joyful music. I want to hear many more children's stories. I want to continue to see all of you in the closing friendship circle as well as enjoy a snack with you at fellowship. As a result of wanting all of this, I realized that I would have to make life adjustments in how I spend my time and money. I clearly know that finances and time have limits. As a result, I have cut back on other volunteer obligations as well as other areas of spending. I give regularly to the

*"I want to help you have the joy of walking into the door of the UUFCM every Sunday for as long as you can see into the future."*

*- Laura Frey*

UUFCM as I want to do my part to be able to help this congregation thrive far into the future. I want to help you have the joy of walking into the door of the UUFCM every Sunday for as long as you can see into the future.

This is a part of what the UUFCM means to me.

Peace.

– Laura Frey

## Volunteer Schedule

Sunday	Set Up/ Takedown	Greeters	Clean Up	Refreshments
<b>Feb. 7</b>	Alan & Libby Jackson	Carole Richardson Geni Petersen	Jim and Liz Dealing	Doris Hall, Millie Putz, Geni Petersen, Carole Richardson
<b>Feb. 14</b>	Norma Bailey Mary Alsager	Rachel Sherwood TBA	Angie Taylor Amy Voege	Libby Jackson, Annette Pratt, Grace Rollins
<b>Feb. 21</b>	Jim Simmons Amy Voege Lewis Krec	Pat & Carole Burdell	Valerie Stephens Angie Burdett	Barb Schultz, Angie Taylor, Liz Busch
<b>Feb. 28</b>	Janet Simon Tina Christy	Laura Frey Mari Potter	Bob Busch Laura McBride	Linda Spyke, Laura McBride, Valerie Stephens

**Subs:** Carol & Rick Messick (772-0304), Dave & Beth Macleod (772-0595), Rachel Sherwood (609-0238-5219), Marcie Post (989-400-7735), Margui Terrill (779-8351)

## REview

The RE committee is excited about the new year and the possibilities in store for this second semester of religious education.

During its January meeting, the committee selected a new curriculum entitled "Spirit of Adventure" which focuses on the contributions and lives of famous historical Unitarian Universalists who lived in a way that illustrated UU characteristics. Theresa will be teaching these materials through the spring, after which she will begin lessons that incorporate summer activities and crafts.

The committee has also been discussing options for a late winter and/or spring intergenerational activity and is open to suggestions from the fellowship. Please feel free to share any ideas you may have with Norma, Theresa, or any of the committee members.

# “Splinters from the Board”

January 10, 2010

– minutes submitted by Vicki Chessin

Attending: Mary Alsager, Chris Bailey, Vicki Chessin, Laura Frey, Glenn Lewandos, Gisela Moffit, Guy Newland and Rev. Dr. Nana' Kratochvil.

Gisela Moffit called the meeting to order followed by the Chalice Lighting by Nana' and the minutes of December 13, 2009 were accepted.

*“It is in our lives and not our words that our religion must be read.”*

– Thomas Jefferson

## 1. Announcements – Gisela

- A banner for use at the General Assembly is being designed by Carol Burdell and Linda Spyke.
- Mary Alsager will be recruiting people to attend the General Assembly in Minneapolis in June 2010. We will be able to pay registration for a number of people.
- Choir can no longer meet at the Library annex and has been practicing at Gisela, Libby or Beth's home. There is no budget for rental space.
- Our administrative secretary, Jeanne, has resigned. Gisela will arrange an exit interview with her and a meeting to transition her tasks to her replacement, Lynn Lipe. Dawn will be editing the newsletter.
- There are problems booting our computer. Motion passed: The president or her designee is approved to purchase a new computer for \$1200 or less to replace the current computer.

## 2. Social Action Committee – Glenn

- 10,000 Villages, Food Drive and the Christmas outreach projects were all well received. The Food Drive was an initial effort that can be repeated in better weather with more PR.
- The Welcoming Congregation Committee report included details regarding the promotion of the Retreat on Jan. 23 2010 with handouts, emails, personal-contact invitations and inclusion of support in the Worship Services leading up to the Retreat.

## 3. The Space Committee continues to look into alternatives for service locations for the months and years ahead. Art Reach building may be a viable alternative should it become available and alterations to the space be possible to meet our needs. (Guy, Gisela)

## 4. Worship Committee Report: Nana'

- Discussion has taken place regarding whether the final authority for the Worship process rests with the Worship Committee or the Board. The committee is currently making the decisions in regards to the content and process of the worship service. The board provides feedback.
- Marriage Cleric: (Nana') The board approved 2 motions regarding the role of marriage cleric for UUFCM to be presented a week or more ahead to the congregation and voted upon at a special congregational meeting just before the lunch at the retreat on Jan. 23.

5. Treasurer's Report: Chris presented and discussed the financial report from 10/01/2009 to 12/31/2009. The report was accepted.
6. Stewardship Drive: Guy
  - Canvassers will be trained to facilitate small group discussions about pledging with small groups that will include currently functioning interest groups like the Movie Night group or the Readers'Theatre Group as well as "Circle Suppers" hosted by members.
  - A letter from President Moffit introducing the concept of stewardship and the approach being taken this year is ready to go out. A letter from other members of the committee will follow and in March everyone will be encouraged to commit to one group event around the pledge drive.
7. The Board approved Guy's request that the next nominating committee consist of himself, Gisela and Norma Bailey. The committee must fill President-Elect, Treasurer, and one trustee to replace Laura Frey whose term will be up.
8. Other: Gisela will ask for commitments from 2-3 people each Sunday to bring cookies or other snacks for fellowship time after the services.

**Next Meeting:** February 14, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. at Gisela Moffit's home.



## Welcome to Our New Administrative Assistant!

Hi! My name is Lynn Lipe and I am very excited to join the Unitarian Universalist staff. I received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Graphic Design with a minor in Business from Central Michigan University in 2002. Since earning my diploma, I have been working in Graphic Design and currently hold the position of Program Coordinator at Art Reach of Mid Michigan. I am happily married to my husband Jason and we are blessed with a 15 month old son, Sebastian. When I am not spending time with my family or working, I enjoy taking various art classes, reading, cooking and learning about history.

Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to being a part of the UU's!

## Gratitudes

### Members of UU:

Thank you so much for your generous donation of books and bags to give to our Head Start children to use. We heard from many families how appreciative they were to get these gifts for their kids. Happy Holidays!

– Marni Taylor, FSC, Head Start

### Dear UUFCM,

Thank you for all the gifts you so graciously donated to my family. May God richly bless you.

– Sheila & kids (a sponsored family this Christmas)

## To the UUFCM Welcoming Congregation Committee and Jan. 23 Retreat participants:

Thank you for all the hard work and generous participation – what an amazing day in the life of this congregation! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

In peace & love,

– Dawn

## Community Corner

By Libby Jackson

- Libby Jackson wishes to thank all who helped with our cold but sunny January 9 food drive at Kroger: Glenn Lewandos, Bob Busch, Amy Voegel, Laura Frey, Tom Moffit, Jim Dealing, Guy Newland, Dave Macleod, Laura McBride, Norma Bailey, Alan Jackson, Mary Irvine, Kenlea Pebbles, Ben Bement, Mary Alsager, Marcie Post, Dawn Daniels & Presanna Narayan. Special thanks to Norma and Presanna for helping to unload the truck at the Food Pantry. We passed out about 600 flyers inviting people to make a contribution – and we got over 200 bags of food! A great success!
- For the time being, Linda Spyke is hanging on to her threatened second toe (next to the big toe that was amputated). We send many healing thoughts to keep that toe healthy.
- Dawn Daniels' mom has healed up enough from her back surgery to be able to return home. May she continue to heal and get stronger.
- Congratulations to Angie Taylor and Kumar Mohanrajan on their upcoming marriage – possibly this month! All the best to you both.
- Congrats as well to Ashleigh Smiley who is now engaged to boyfriend Trevor, who attends Georgia Tech. A post-graduation wedding is planned in a couple of years.
- Come watch several UU youth – Becca Newland, Emma Bement & Zoe Jackson – in the MPHS musical, CATS, the last two weekends in February. Promises to be wonderful...
- Mike Evans has cleared another hurdle with the INS towards acquiring permanent residency. As well, a relative newcomer to teaching at CMU, Mike is also on the forefront of the current unionization movement for temporary faculty. Thanks for your hard work, Mike!
- Margaret Nash turned 90 this month in Hong Kong: Happy Birthday to you, Margaret, and we look forward to your return in the spring!
- Lastly, Jeff Smith, Annette Pratt's husband & CMU faculty member, successfully defended his dissertation last month. Congratulations Dr. Smith!

## Board Members

### [Gisela Moffit](#)

President  
989.772.1602

### [Guy Newland](#)

Past-President  
989.773.1941

### [Mary Alsager](#)

President-Elect  
989.773.2595

### [Chris Bailey](#)

Treasurer  
989.775.8257

### [Vicki Chessin](#)

Secretary  
989.463.3076

### [Laura Frey](#)

Trustee-At-Large  
989.444.1958

### [Glenn Lewandos](#)

Trustee-At-Large  
989.773.0265

The Board of the UUFCM  
meets on the second Sunday  
of each month.

### [Rev. Dr. Nana' Kratochvil](#)

231.759.0522 Home  
231.740.5817 Cell

### [Dawn Daniels](#)

Worship Director  
989.763.6315

### [Norma Bailey](#)

RE Coordinator  
989.560.3952

### [Lynn Lipe](#)

Administrative Assistant  
989.400.3845

Rev. Robert G Franke  
Founding Minister Emeritus  
Served in Faith 2000-2004

<http://www.uufcm.org>

989.763.6694

## Additional & Informative

### Book Discussion Group

The newly formed book discussion group will meet to discuss *Love & Death* by the Rev. Forrest Church on Thursday, February 11 at 7 p.m. at the home of Valerie Stephens & Guy Newland, 1165 Scully Dr., Mt. Pleasant. The book may be purchased online at the [UUA bookstore](#).

From the website description: "On February 4, 2008, Forrest Church sent a letter to the members of his congregation, informing them that he had terminal cancer but promising to sum up his thoughts on the topics that had been so pervasive in his work – love and death – in a final book. {Rev. Church actually completed one more book, *The Cathedral of the World* after this one - ed.} The goal of life, Reverend Church tells us, "is to live in such a way that our lives will prove worth dying for." This book in his impressive oeuvre is imbued with ideas and exemplars for achieving that goal."

For more info, please contact Jim Dealing at 989-772-0269.

### Retreat Follow-up – Resources

*In case anyone missed this, here is the text of an email sent out by Guy Newland following the January 23 all-congregation retreat:*

At our retreat we began a discussion about gender identity issues. One person suggested using our e-mail list to share information about GLBTQ issues within UUFCM.

Here is an [article](#) from today's (January 24) NYT about transgender name changes.

### Newsletter Submissions

All newsletter items are due in by the **20th of each month**. Please send all submissions to Dawn Daniels. Questions? Feel free to [email](#) me or call at 989-763-6315.