



the UNIGRAM

Faith Matters

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

Faith has become a dirty in word in some parts of our culture. For some, it has come to be thought of as “blind faith,” associated with the religious right and unquestioning acceptance of beliefs that don’t seem rational or reasonable to many. As is the case with many of the religious words we stigmatize though, the word faith exists for a reason – faith is an important part of religious experience.

When I’ve participated in interfaith work in the past, I’ve occasionally run into some confusion. After I’ve shared that our Unitarian Universalist churches and congregations welcome atheists, agnostics, theists and everything in between, some folks have asked, “If there’s no common belief in God, how is Unitarian Universalism a religion?” There are multiple answers to that question of course,

including that we have a shared belief in how we relate to one another, emphasizing inclusivity, equality, love, and the right to individual conscience. Our shared religious practice of worship (the etymology of which, remember, is “worth-ship,” or honoring that which is of worth) is also an important part of what makes us a religion, as is our social justice work. And faith – faith is a vitally important part of what makes us a religion. We have shared faith.

The Mission & Vision Task Force thus intentionally chose to include faith in our congregational Mission & Vision process precisely because faith is a central component of our life as a Unitarian Universalist religious community. Given the negative connotations faith has in some parts

(continued on page 6)

Music Appreciation

Jim Helton, Director of Music

Hello everyone! Welcome to my music article. This isn’t a regular thing to look for, but from time to time it’s good for you to hear from your music director when he’s not on the piano bench. News both old and new, these varied topics might answer those burning questions you might have such as, “Was Jim quarantined throughout January? Or was he in witness protection?” “And why is he less pastey these days?” “Will we ever sing those skipped pages in ‘Turn the World Around’?”

I’m writing this on a grey, frigid Tuesday morning, sitting in Victor’s Diner sipping coffee and watching the traffic go by. Ah, the joys of sabbatical or, as Ball State terms it, “Special Assigned Leave With Pay.” I enjoyed the month of January away, spending more extended time with my family in Boston, then joining up with a dear old friend for some warmth and sun on a Caribbean cruise. I’m back in Muncie now, and I’ve launched into my projects: learning a recital of Russian piano music for a summer festival and recording a CD of English Romantic Era music. I’m practicing like a student again, and enjoying it. *Boy, if I knew then what I know now....*

(continued on page 10)

In This Issue

Sunday Mornings at UUCM	2
Community Minister	3
Nadine’s RE Corner	4
President’s Message	4
Stewardship	5
Mission & Vision	5
Service Auction	6
Leadership Needed	7
Budget News	7
Sharing Gratitude	8
Pre-Service Discussion	8
March Dedicated Offering	9
UUA & Regional News	9
March Calendar	13

Sunday Mornings at UUCM

March Worship Theme :: Faith

Selecting a theme for our worship services each month allows us to explore specific important theological topics in greater breadth, while also challenging us to go deeper. If you have a reading, poem or personal story to share that relates to our current or upcoming theme, please e-mail them to Rev. Seth at themes@uuchurchmuncie.org.
Our theme for April is Trust.

Sunday, March 1 Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Rev. Seth will kick off March’s theme of Faith on this Commitment Sunday with a ceremony recognizing new members from the past year. The Generosity Picnic immediately following the service kicks off our 2015-16 Stewardship pledge drive – a Sunday not to be missed! Our Dedicated Offering Recipient: Second Harvest Food Bank
Sunday, March 8 Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Rev. Seth will be preaching and sharing a Story for All Ages on this Generosity Sunday. The sermon will reflect on what’s important to us about church. Our Dedicated Offering Recipient: Second Harvest Food Bank
Sunday, March 15	Don’t miss Music Appreciation Sunday! We’ll have fabulous musicians from our church leading us in a service honoring the important of music to our Sunday worship experience.
Sunday, March 22 Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Today’s sermon will again focus on Faith. Nadine will share a Story for All Ages. Our annual Age of Reading Ceremony will also happen on this Sunday morning.
Sunday, March 29 Rev. Anastassia Zinke	Rev. Anastassia Zinke from All Souls Unitarian Church in Indianapolis will preach on “The Unitarian Universalist Faith that Calls Me” for us while Rev. Seth preaches at her church on this Pulpit Swap Sunday.

Religious Education for Children & Youth, 10:45 am

Sunday, March 1 Social Action Sunday Boston Bound Bake Sale	All youth will begin in the service with their parents. Classes will begin following the hymn <i>Spirit of Life</i> . This morning our youth will be making homemade dog and cat treats to sell after the service next Sunday, March 8. Our 6-8 grade youth will be selling delicious baked goods to go with your coffee this morning. Please be sure to stop by their booth!
Sunday, March 8 Curriculum Sunday Social Action Fundraiser	All youth will begin in the service with their parents. Classes will begin following the Story for All Ages with Seth. Please stop by our booth! Our youth will be selling homemade cat and dog treats to raise funds to support Animal Rescue Fund, a locally run animal shelter.
Sunday, March 15 Curriculum Sunday Boston Bound Soup Luncheon	All youth will begin in the service with their parents. Classes begin following the hymn <i>Spirit of Life</i> . Please plan to stay after the service for our Soup Luncheon! This is a wonderful opportunity to meet our youth, enjoy delicious soup and bread, and help our youth travel to Boston in June!
Sunday, March 22 Curriculum Sunday	All youth will begin in the service with their parents. Classes will begin following our Age of Reading Ceremony and Story for All Ages with Nadine.
Sunday, March 29 Curriculum Sunday	All youth will begin in the service with their parents. Classes will begin following the hymn <i>Spirit of Life</i> .

Note: Due to space issues Pre-service Discussion topics are listed on [page 8](#)

Faith, Trust, and the Transpersonal

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

I just couldn't make the faith thing work for me in seminary. I had the *concept*: there was pretty general agreement among both faculty and students that the preferable description of faith revolved around whole-hearted trust in a personal God (usually described as a father, or as a parent by the more progressive-minded) whose love is everlasting and unquenchable, and whose all-forgiving grace is sufficient for every need. It was a *relational* faith rather than a *propositional* faith, and had to do with *who* one trusted in, rather than with *what* one believed.

I was very much attracted to that idea; who wouldn't be? Especially since I'd grown up in a family ravaged by alcoholism, abuse and a pronounced lack of much of anything trustworthy, loving, or gracious, that whole idea beckoned to me like a beacon in foggy darkness. It took me a long time to figure out that while my head grasped the concept and was drawn to it, it didn't work below my eyebrows. My heart simply couldn't get on board. It took even longer for me to begin to develop a faith that worked for me—a long time, hours of wise counsel, and not a few tears. It's still a work in progress.

It's still largely about trust. For me, however, I had to let go of the concept of a personal God in order to find something I could trust. Even seeing it as a symbol along the lines of Rudolph Bultmann's "demythologizing" theology couldn't fix what was wrong there. I couldn't trust in a personal God, especially when he/she was depicted as a parental figure. I know people who grew up in similar circumstances for whom the symbol of a father God has provided a blessed alternative to their experiences of their earthly fathers and restored their trust, but it didn't work that way for me.

Fortunately, I discovered in Hinduism and Buddhism nonpersonal or transpersonal images of the Holy that offered me something I could trust. I don't know that I can fully explain why that's been the case, but it has been. In Hinduism, it's the Atman/Brahman, the unborn, undying and unchanging Holy that resides deep within each living being and at the same time transcends all individual beings. Buddhism's description of the same underlying reality as a process of constant flow and change struck and continues to strike a responsive chord in me. Although they initially seem to be polar opposites, I think they point to the same reality. I hold

them both in paradoxical tension because together they feel more adequate than either alone. Each of us and all of us are part of that much larger, transcendent whole, what our own Principles name as "the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." It's also what theologian Paul Tillich called the Ground of Being or Being-itself. Now there was something I could trust!

That reality is, for me, gracious and supportive of human life and growth. We cannot ever, under any circumstances, fall out of it or be ejected from it. It embraces everything that ever was, is, or could ever possibly be – and always will. It gives rise to and sustains all things. That's probably my most fundamental affirmation, and the ground of many others.

Because of this, I can trust that no matter what happens, I—and everyone/everything else—will be OK. I cannot know what will come, but we do know that this greater, all-encompassing reality will always enfold and support me. I can't say what happens after death; I've not been there, and near-death experiences are just that—near-death. I believe, nonetheless, whatever that is, or if it's nothing, it's encompassed in this larger reality.

Because I'm a part of this much larger whole, along with everyone and everything else, I am called to leave this world a better place for my having lived. There are an infinite number of ways to do so, but the fundamental calling is the same. We all get to be co-creators of the ever-evolving mystery.

I can welcome and even enjoy mystery, because it's OK to not-know. I can, in the words of Rainer Maria Rilke, love the questions themselves until I can *live* the answers. Questioning, doubt, uncertainty, misgivings, are all welcome within my faith. They don't represent failures of faith, but rather show its growing edges. A faith without doubts and questions is probably a faith that isn't reflective enough.

Faith is the way we take up and maintain our most basic stance toward life, toward living and dying and everything in between. It's the way we make meaning and sense of it all. It is first and foremost an *experience*. Most of us sooner or later strive to give that experience shape and form, to communicate it in language. Humankind's various religious faiths and spiritual/humanistic/scientific traditions are languages by means of which we try to express the inexpressible. Trust in a nonpersonal reality has become my language.

Rev. Julia

RE Corner

Age of Reading Ceremony

Nadine Tringali, DRE

I don't remember when I read my first book, but I do remember my mother telling me to stop reading and go outside and play on Saturdays. Without that push, I would have lounged on my bed reading through the whole afternoon. I loved stories about animals, one of my favorites was Black Beauty, which I read over and over.

Reading expands our knowledge, and as Unitarian Universalists we search for truth and meaning through reading and sharing with others. Learning to read is an important step in this direction, for one's own enjoyment and enlightenment. We wish to honor our youngest readers as they begin, and join us, on this journey.

On Sunday, March 22, we will be offering our "Age of Reading" Ceremony for our 1st and 2nd grade readers. This is our time to honor our young readers, and to present them with the book Unitarian Universalism Is a Really Long Name and a hand painted chalice bookmark. The ceremony is simple yet meaningful, as we invite the youth participating to come forward through an archway created by our teachers and librarians, to receive their gifts as they march into the world of books and wonder!

Please let me know if your 1st or 2nd grade reader would like to participate. I hope they will!

Lenten Worship Series

Each year Christian Ministries sponsors a Lenten worship series open to the entire Muncie community that runs every Wednesday during Lent, and we were invited to host this year! We've held two services so far, with the last four scheduled for the four Wednesdays in March.

Services run from noon to 12:30, followed by lunch from 12:30 to 1pm, provided by our very own Fellowship Committee. Different ministers from across the city lead each service. Of special note:

- Our own **Rev. Elizabeth** is leading the service on March 4th, sharing her take on Mark 8:31-38
- **Dr. Anne Eliades** and **Bibi Bahrami** will be leading the service on March 18th, looking at Lent from the Jewish and Muslim perspectives, respectively

The event is intentionally scheduled so that folks who are working can attend and still eat lunch during their lunch hour. We realize you probably won't come to all of them, but if you can, come and check out one or two, experience something a little different, and connect with folks from different faith backgrounds.

Message from the President

Nancy C. Behforouz

This winter started out very mild but has really turned into a cold, snowy ordeal for many although I know the children have enjoyed many school days which were either delayed or cancelled. Last night as I walked down the path for our church board meeting, I felt as though I had been transported to the Arctic, particularly as Mohammad and I had just returned from a trip to Florida. But our Board meeting was both warm and congenial and at its conclusion we all felt very lucky to be with good friends and contributing to an organization which we all treasure.

We had many topics on the agenda including new, double-purpose table storage units which will also be useful for serving, the possibility of installing solar panels for the church, budget issues for next year as well as a By-Laws review. Our treasurer, Jeff Hathaway, reported that our financial status is good and on track with our income closely matching or slightly exceeding our budget so far this year.

The possibility of solar panels for our church is a complex issue with many different considerations which must be examined but, in my opinion and the rest of the Board, it is an opportunity to uphold our seventh principle which we cannot overlook. There is a possibility to apply for and receive a SUN grant for half of the cost of the installation (up to \$30,000), and it will significantly reduce our electricity costs (perhaps by more than 60%) as well as our carbon footprint. We are still in the exploration phase of this project and no commitments have been made except that the green task force of the social justice committee, chaired by **Wayne Meyer**, has been very busy getting assessments, pursuing funding possibilities and looking at ways we can be a leader in the community in using renewable energy.



Drawing by
Barbara Tweedy

Generosity Springs Forth

The 2015-16 Stewardship Campaign – *Generosity Springs Forth* – invites you to a free luncheon after church on Sunday, March 1. We will be serving sloppy joes, vegetarian food, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and vegetables, chips, and brownies. There will be a short program for the adults while the children will be entertained by a magician in the sanctuary.

Please think about how important the church is to you and how much you can financially commit to its mission. Our color-coded guide (which you received in the mail) describing family situations may help as you consider how much to contribute. Pledge forms will be available. Come and have a good time.

Sunday, March 8 is Generosity Sunday. We will have pledge forms at tables after the service. Please fill them out as soon as possible. The pledge campaign winds up March 30. The total amount pledged will be given to the finance committee to prepare the budget for the May congregational meeting.

Thank you in advance for your generosity. We hope to see you there!

The Stewardship Committee

Carolyn Cooley & Caroline Sullivan, co-chairs, Bruce Peavler, Marnee Cooley, Mona Burton

Mission & Vision

“Dots & Words” Event

Mark your calendars! On Sunday, March 22nd, at 12:15pm in the church sanctuary, we will be holding our next significant Mission & Vision event, “Dots & Words.” If you’ve been keeping track, so far we had our kick-off event in September, our Tailgate round-robin in October, and cottage meetings in January. We’ve been hard at work since then collating and analyzing the data from all the different conversations we’ve had, in preparation for the Dots & Words event on March 22nd. Dots & Words describes the two main ways we’re going to ask you to participate on the 22nd. We’re going to provide a list of values and phrases that have come out of our research so far up on the wall, and we’re going to give everyone present some little dot stickers to put up next to the ones that are most important to them. We’re then also going to ask if there are particular words or phrases that have the most meaning for folks, as we go about crafting the actual mission & vision statements.

So we need YOU to come and show up on the 22nd, and stay after the service and participate in the event. You’ve shared your hopes and ideas, and now we need your participation to know what is most important out of the pages and pages of notes we have taken. We’ll have some light refreshments to tide everyone over, so stick around, please! Your participation makes a difference. We’ll also have childcare available if need be – please e-mail Nadine (nadine@uuchurchmuncie.org) if you’ll need childcare for the event.

One final note: if you didn’t get a chance to participate in an in-person cottage meeting, and would like to fill out the online survey, you can do so [here](#). The deadline for submission is March 1st, so act fast!



The Services and Food Auction Is Almost Here!

Saturday, February 28

5:30 Registration and Greek Dinner begins

6:00 Silent Auction begins

7:00 Live Auction begins

View and print your own catalog at the church website: www.uuchurchmuncie.org

Send the link to friends! Browse the **catalog** before the big night and plan your bidding. Gather your friends and plan to bid on a party or event. Study your personal calendar so you'll know which events you can attend. Find services and foods you want. (Also, you can pick up a catalog at church.) Make notes in your catalog. Bring it with you to the auction. You'll want it that night to keep track of the offerings and your bids on them.

Can't be with us for the Service Auction? Just find a buddy who will bid for you and pay for you. You can settle up with your buddy later.

The Greek Dinner Menu:

Kotopoulo Fournou (Greek Chicken with Potatoes) Fasolakia (Greek Green Beans) Zucchini Ricotta Casserole
Greek Salad
Bread Pudding (for dessert for extra \$2)

Prices:

Adult Dinner	\$7
Adult Vegetarian Dinner	\$6
Child Dinner (12 and younger)	\$4
Dessert (sold separately)	\$2

Bring in your food donations before **5:00 on Saturday**.

Be prompt! First comers get the best goodies. Bring your pen. Bring your calendar. Bring your cash, check book, or credit card. Get ready to bid and win! **We promise the auctioning will be fast and furious!**

Faith Matters (continued from page 1)

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd

of our culture though, the task force thought it important to define what we meant by it, and so if you came to one of the cottage meetings or took the survey online, you've heard our definition: "faith is the unique way in which we each make meaning in the world, whether it be faith in nature, faith in other human beings, faith in God, or your personal variation." As Sharon Daloz Parks argues in Big Questions, Worthy Dreams, we all make meaning in the world, because we couldn't function in it otherwise. We all have ethical and moral decisions to make on a regular basis, and if we didn't create some sort of moral, ethical and yes for many of us religious road map to follow, we'd be paralyzed in our day to day life as we came across each decision. The road maps we create for ourselves are based in our mean-making, our understanding of how the world operates based on a reasoned interpretation of our experience – they are based in and on our faith.

So we of course come to define our faith in different ways. As the task force's definition notes, some of us end up with faith in nature, some of us with faith in other human beings, and some of us with faith in God. For some of us, we might have faith in all three, while others of us might have faith in something else in entirety, like reason. And it is because of the very nature of these different personal truths that we gather together in religious community – to have our own faith experiences deepened and enriched by our interaction with others' faith experiences. We come together not around one creed, but around a shared journey of life. That shared journey includes shared beliefs about love, inclusivity and equality, it includes shared worship, it includes shared social justice work – and it includes the importance of sharing and exploring our faith together.

I look forward to exploring this month's theme of Faith with all of you, in worship, in small groups such as Dinner Discussion and some of our adult religious education offerings, and in one-on-one conversation. What's your faith all about?

See you in church!

peace, love and blessings,

Rev. Seth

We Need Accounting Services – Part 2

Lynn Austin, Finance Committee

A few weeks ago I wrote about our need here at the church for accounting services, and in this present article I will go into a bit more depth, hoping to better prepare us for a decision that will need to be made by the congregation when we are asked in May to approve our 2015-16 budget. Over the past several decades we have not had to spend funds to hire a professional accountant simply because we have been fortunate enough to have among our membership professional accountants who had the required knowledge and have been willing to put in the countless hours necessary to keep our books and records in good order, and comply with state and federal law. These professional accountants have also served as our Treasurers.

Because we have run out of professional accountants who are willing and able to do all this work, we need to hire a professional accountant so that we have a greater pool of members who could consider serving as Treasurer, but not be required to be professional accountants. To try to understand all this, some members have been asking what the difference is between a Treasurer, a professional accountant, and a bookkeeper, and I'll attempt to explain.

Part of what is so confusing about these different roles is that how the duties get split up depends a great deal on the complexity and size of the organization, the qualifications of the people available to do the work, and in some cases how well the duties combine with other duties of the individuals involved. So, whatever you may know about these duties in one organization is likely to be very different as it relates to another organization. To keep things as simple as possible, I'll primarily describe how the differences apply to our church.

Much of our bookkeeping is done by our office manager, Christie. In the recent past, the bookkeeping portion of her duties consisted primarily of preparing checks and presenting them to Trustees (primarily the Treasurer) for signature, along with appropriate invoices or other documentation. Recently, Jim Vincent has trained her to do more, including preparing payroll checks for our staff, with appropriate withholding, and preparing payroll tax reports, submitting them to state and federal taxing authorities, and paying associated payroll taxes by the required deadlines. Our software does some of the

[\(continued on page 11\)](#)

Your Leadership is Needed

Kirsten Smith, Nominating Committee

When you come to church on Sundays you may not realize how many people it takes to assure the effective and efficient running of our congregation. Reverend Seth works hard all week to administer the church and to provide leadership in and out of the pulpit; Nadine is managing Religious Education activities; Reverend Julia provides pastoral care; Reverend Elizabeth is engaging our youth on many levels; and you notice our greeters, deacons, sights and sounds folks, coffee team and worship associates. What may not be as obvious on a weekly basis, but is critical to our continued success as a congregation is a committed Board of Trustees and the many standing and ad-hoc committees working for the good of us all. For details on the Board and committee duties, we direct you to the Procedures Manual and the By-Laws (links are below). This article calls attention to three Congregational/board positions which need to be filled and we ask you (yes you) to consider your willingness to serve. The positions are President Elect (who becomes President the following year), Vice President and Treasurer.

The President Elect is elected for a one year term but is agreeing to a three year commitment to the Board. This person moves into the President's position the following year, and the third year serves as chair of the nominating committee. The President Elect is responsible for expanding their working knowledge of the structure and functioning of the congregation and its relationship to the ministry of the church, to the MidAmerican Region, and to the UUA. This person also chairs the Board of Trustees and Congregational meetings in the absence of the President and coordinates Ad Hoc Committees and special projects identified by the President/Board. If you have questions about what this means in reality, please contact Nancy Behforouz, the current President who served in this position, or Sherry Ware who is currently serving.

The Vice-President primarily facilitates the operations of the Program Council and serves as a liaison between the Program Council and the Board. It is beneficial in this two-year position to have good managerial and meeting facilitation skills. There is reporting to be done in this position; details are found in the Procedures Manual. This position is critical for supporting the work of the

[\(continued on page 12\)](#)

Sharing Gratitude

Welcome to our new Sharing Gratitude section! We'll run this section each month, sharing *significant* gratitudes from our church life together. This is not meant to replace thank you notes or thank you e-mails, because we could fill pages with thank yous if we listed every one. Rather, this section is for the big thank yous and appreciations. If you have a gratitude you'd like to submit for the April Unigram, please send it to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org, subject line "sharing gratitude," by March 18th.



Thank you to our **Youth** for putting together a fabulous Youth Sunday worship service on February 22nd. A lot of hard work and creative inspiration went into the process, and we had a blast. Thank you all!



Deep appreciation and gratitude goes to **Gunther Cartwright**, for his yeoman's work on making sure the Harshman glass panels are in good repair. The Catholic panel, in particular, which needed repair from past damage, required a tremendous amount of patience and research from Gunther. Thank you Gunther!



The Youth Groups are pleased to thank all those who helped to make Youth Sunday such a success!

In particular, we'd like to lift up:

Jim Helton for taking the time to work on music with us!

Bryce Taylor for making sure we could be heard!

Bruce Craig for hanging our set!

Rev. Seth for giving us the opportunity to share with the congregation!

Nadine for all of her support!

And **Elizabeth** for leading us!

Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors

Third Monday Volunteering Going Strong at the Second Harvest Food Bank Warehouse

We've had a busy couple months of volunteer-work at the Second Harvest Food Bank Warehouse. On MLK Day in January, over 60 of us gathered to put together boxes of food for the food insecure. (Thanks to you all!) Then we enjoyed lunch together back at the church. (Thanks to **Caroline Sullivan, Kirk Robey, Tania Said, Jan & Ron Moore, and Bea Sousa!**) A small but hard-working group of UUs turned up last Monday to sort through and bag potatoes and apples at the warehouse. (Many thanks to you regulars!) Those of you that have been there know how good it feels to help out at this great organization. And the conversation with fellow UUs and other volunteers is always entertaining!

In March our third Monday falls on the 16th.

If you can join us it would be wonderful.

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 noon.

Place: Second Harvest Food Bank Warehouse, 6621 North Old State Road 3 in Muncie

RSVPs appreciated, but not required

susantaylor68@hotmail.com

Pre-Service Discussion, Every Sunday, 9:30 am, Red classroom

Sunday, March 1 Food Insecurity	Tim Kean, President & CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank will be with us as we discuss food insecurity in our community.
Sunday, March 8 The Michael Brown Grand Jury Decision	A grand jury voted not to indict Officer Darren Wilson in the shooting of Michael Brown. Join us as we examine some uncomfortable facts and explore issues underlying this tragic event. Mike Sullivan will provide us with details.
Sunday, March 15 Police Training	Dr. Greg Morrison, Chair, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at BSU will lead discussion on police training. How should police react in given situations?
Sunday, March 22 An Orientation to Islam	Tony Yakos, Muncie resident and IU graduate majoring in Near East Language and Culture, will be our discussion leader. Also a graduate of the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, he was stationed in Jordan while serving in the military.
Sunday, March 29 Faith	We'll explore the monthly theme for March.

Farm to Food Bank Program Will Help

Tim Kean, President and CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank

In this state legislative session a new biennium budget will be hammered out for the next 2 years. A few years ago, our Indiana food bank state association, Feeding Indiana's Hungry, aka FISH was successful in lobbying to get a line item in the Governor's budget. The amount was roughly \$300K/year to be divided between the 11 Indiana regional food banks who are members of Feeding America for the purpose of product acquisition to assist struggling families. This line item provides approximately \$23,000 to Second Harvest and enables us to purchase some products that we rarely get donated. The amount of food is usually one truck load or less depending on what it is. It is usually completely distributed the same week we receive it. We are grateful to get it.

This is the 10th year of our state association which should speak to our viability as a vehicle to address food insecurity on a statewide level. We decided in an earlier board meeting to lobby this year to get the budget line item doubled for the next 2-year budget. To aid in the lobbying effort we also would make a commitment to buy products from local Indiana farms. We want to purchase surplus and #2 grade produce at just below wholesale prices to compensate farmers for their costs. This would benefit the local grower to be able to recover most of their costs and would provide much needed highly nutritious items to struggling cash strapped families. This program would provide millions of additional pounds of fresh produce into the network of food banks in this state through the food pantry partners who get food from the regional food banks.

Surrounding states have stepped up to the plate with this program. The Kentucky state legislators have passed the same Farm to Food Bank Program line item in their most recent budget at the \$1.2 million level for the struggling families in their state. In Ohio, the Ohio Food Program and Agriculture Clearance Program, (OFPACP) has been funded for many years in the millions of dollars. In 2014, the Ohio program provided 40.5 million pounds of food from local farmers. (continued on page 12)

Mid-America Regional & UUA National Assemblies

If you're interested in connecting with other Unitarian Universalists and learning more about what's happening in UUism outside our church walls, attending the regional or national assemblies is a great way to do that!

The annual Mid-America Regional Assembly is April 17th-19th, in Chicago, featuring keynote speakers Rev. Marlin Lavanhar and Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt. Rev. Marlin is the minister at the largest UU church in the country, All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, OK, and Rev. Rosemary is the newly hired president of Starr King School for the Ministry, one of our two Unitarian Universalist seminaries. If you're interested in attending, learn more and register [here](#).

General Assembly (GA), our annual national gathering of Unitarian Universalists from across the country, will be held June 24-28th this year in Portland, Oregon. The theme for the conference is "Building a New," and as always, there will be many workshops and amazing speakers, featuring the best and brightest in Unitarian Universalism, presented over those four days. If you're interested in attending GA, learn more and register [here](#).

Also, as a member church of the Unitarian Universalist Association, we can send official delegates to both of these assemblies. This means that if you wish to be a delegate, you can participate in the business meetings and vote on the official business of the denomination – important work! If you're interested in becoming a delegate to either the Mid-America Regional Assembly or the national General Assembly this year, please contact our Board President, **Nancy Behforouz**, by March 20th.

Music Appreciation (continued from page 1)

I want to thank several people for covering for me while I was away. **Renae Timbie**, a doctoral candidate in choral conducting at Ball State, took the choir rehearsals while I was away. My first two Sunday's off, **Ben Crook** played services. Ben is one of my performance majors, graduating this May. We welcomed another musician joining us on the piano bench on a more regular basis: **Joseph (Joey) McNamara**. Joey is our new choir pianist, and he will be my regular sub on Sunday mornings when I must be away. Joey is a junior piano performance major, studying with my colleague, Bob Palmer. *By the way, he will perform his junior recital on Monday, March 16, at 5:30 pm in Sursa Hall, free of charge. If you can make it, you won't be disappointed!*

Prior to welcoming Joey, we bid fond farewell to **Tom Conroy** in December. I was really sad to see Tom go. Truly superb at his craft, he basically fell into our laps last spring, having moved to Muncie to be closer to some special people in his life. Though he still owns his house here, Tom found professional opportunities in New York that were simply too good to turn down. He is thriving there, and I'm happy for him. I would have liked to thank him more publicly before he left, but he was shy about any kind of public adoration. The choir was able to throw a going-away gathering for him, though. *Thank you, Linda Hanson!*

Choir - By the time you read this, you will have enjoyed our first 'performance' of 2015, which included some lovely violin playing by **Marnee Cooley**. *Thank you, Marnee!* Future choir Sundays include the Music Appreciation service on March 15 (more on that, below!), Easter Sunday, and Mothers Day, when the choir will present the 2014 Service Auction winning bid, a lovely piece by a UU composer you won't want to miss. Remember, no matter how full the risers look on Sunday morning, we always welcome new members. Also, the beauty of choir singing is that you don't have to read music, and you certainly don't have to have a solo-sounding voice. Please stop by and speak with me after church some Sunday, or e-mail me if you have questions.

Another service you will have enjoyed is the one on *Youth Sunday*, February 22. While I had a very small part in their preparations, I had a blast. Bright and creative to a person, I can't exaggerate how impressed I am with our young people. Since one of the pieces they presented might be somewhat alien to most of us so, here's a bit more information after the fact. The chant/mantra we sang at

the meditation is from 13th century Nichiren Buddhism. Each word is packed with symbolism so literal translation is problematic. An expanded translation reads: "Devotion to the Mystic Law of cause and effect that exists throughout all the sounds and vibrations of the universe." If you'd like to hear and read more about it, try this YouTube [link](#).

Now to mention an upcoming service I'm excited about: on March 15 we will present a **Music Appreciation Service**. I confess that, when Seth suggested this, I had no idea what it would look like. I'm getting excited about it now, though! Without giving too much away, I will say that it will be packed with variety. One of my desires is to feature some of the lesser-known musicians in our congregation. You just might be surprised! One of the problems—a sweet problem, I assure you—is how to include all the people I would like and not have a 3-hour service. I assure you that your favorites are mine as well. If you don't see/hear them on the 15th, you surely will at some point. We're blessed with a lot of talent in this congregation. I aim to have you hear more of it. Oh...and that missing piece of "Turn the World Around?" You might find it here.

My final topic of conversation is one that is long overdue. You might remember that I attended the **UU Musicians Network Conference** last July in San Diego, CA. I was fortunate to receive a scholarship from the UUMN that covered the majority of the expenses. This was such a great experience for me. I met some wonderful UU musicians from around the country; I heard wonderful music; I gained some great ideas for music for the choir. At the risk of bragging, I also learned these things: We have a staggeringly large choir, especially for a church our size. (Many churches have paid choir members; we do not—*which I like!*) Though many churches acquired the teal hymnal before we did, we know it as well or better than most. A question that many of us discussed at the conference is the perceived role of music in the worship service. When/how does it take us to meditative/spiritual states of mind; when is it entertainment? No reason it can't be both, but if it's only the latter...well I'll leave you to ponder that. That said, I'm always looking for ways to expand our musical variety in authentic ways. If you have ideas I'd love to chat about them! This year's UUMN Conference will be in Boston. While I'm not positive that I'll be able to attend this year, I do hope to attend conferences in the future.

Well, that was a lot. Thanks for reading, and thank you for your continual affirmation of me and my work. I'm so lucky to know and to work with you!

Jim

We Need Accounting Services

(continued from page 7)

calculations, but Christie needs to make sure the input is correct, and the results are accurate. She also needs to make sure she designates appropriate accounts for income and expenses of all types to be recorded in our general ledger, which is much of the basis for our financial statements. Most of the work of a bookkeeper is repetitive and routine, but there are always exceptions and oddities, and a good bookkeeper knows when to ask questions. We would expect our future professional accountant to be available to answer such questions. The better trained and supported a bookkeeper is, the less likely is the need for the professional accountant to get involved in straightening out mistakes and misunderstandings, and this will help keep the cost of the accounting services down.

A professional accountant needs to have an accounting degree and relevant experience in the appropriate application of generally accepted accounting principles and federal and state law and regulations, primarily tax, and must keep this knowledge up to date constantly. The accountant begins with a complete copy of our general ledger (sort of a database), in which all cash transactions have been recorded by Christie. Several financial events and changes, however, can occur without directly impacting our checking and savings accounts, and so these will not usually be reflected in the general ledger as it is transferred from Christie to the accountant. A couple of examples of this would be changes in the value of our investments or the receipt of some donated stock, or a loan we may have made payments on, or recently entered into. The accountant will record these non-routine events and changed circumstances, and will review the general ledger for possible errors or misunderstandings about how certain cash transactions may have been recorded, or other circumstances which may not have yet come to anyone's attention. An important duty of the accountant will be to see that our financial statements are in agreement with statements from third parties, such as banks or investment firms, and will confer with our Treasurer about anything that is unclear or may need attention. The accountant may be a solo practitioner, or part of a larger firm, and will likely be a Certified Public Accountant, which means he or she will be licensed by the state and required to take continuing professional education. Requests for Quotation will be going out within a few weeks, so that we may have a reasonably firm number for our budget before it is presented to the Board and Congregation in May. If funds

are approved by the Board and Congregation, the plan would be to engage professional accounting services beginning July 1, 2015. It is hoped that with the accounting taken care of in this way, the Board will more easily be able to find a member willing and able to serve as Treasurer.

Once the Treasurer is relieved of accounting tasks, some of the remaining duties of our Treasurer would include signing checks, reviewing the financial statements prepared by the accountant and questioning anything unclear, inappropriate or misleading, attending Board meetings and reporting to the Board on all significant aspects of our financial situation, including the financial statements themselves, assisting the finance committee with budget preparation, and overseeing our investments and loans.

Clearly, it would be helpful if our Treasurer had some financial knowledge and experience, and good common sense, but they will not be required now to have all the technical knowledge (which changes very frequently) required of a professional accountant. Because of the professional accountant's qualifications, experience, and required continuing professional education, our Treasurer can rely upon him or her to be aware of current accounting practices and tax laws and regulations, and to apply them to services provided to our church. Recently Jim Vincent shared with me information from about five other UU churches similar in size to ours, who chose to share their similar experiences, what they learned, and how they chose to deal with the situation. They indicated they had each concluded that hiring professional accounting services is, or has become, a necessity for them.

I know all this is a lot to digest, but it is important. We've been so fortunate to have conscientious and hard-working accountants watching out for our financial well-being all these decades on a volunteer basis. I'll be happy to do my best to answer your questions, or get answers to them, either by phone or email or in person, so that you can be prepared to make this budget decision in May. Thank you for reading.

Lynn Austin

Your Leadership is Needed (continued from page 7)

Standing Committees who in turn keep our church running. Our current Vice President is Annemarie Voss who will be happy to help you understand the ins and outs of this important Board of Trustees position.

The two-year term of Treasurer is also vacant. Requirements for this position may look daunting, but the church is committed to engaging an accountant to handle much of the complex financial processes such as taxes, payroll, reconciling accounts and preparing financial reports. The good news is we have a bookkeeper since our Office Administrator Christie Williams has taken over this role. The Treasurer is custodian of the church funds and as such is an authorized fiscal representative. Details related to this are in the Procedures Manual. The Treasurer must present financial statements to the board and the congregation.

If you are interested in any of these positions, your ideas are wanted and your willingness to serve is needed. If a board position is not possible right now there are many Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees that need support too. Please contact any of us with questions.

Nominating Committee Members:

Bill Frederick, Chair bill@kbfrederick.com

Nan Barber: njbarb37@att.net

Ron Burton: Rburton1@aol.com

Kirsten Smith: kirstensmith92@gmail.com

Mike Mayfield: mmayfiel@bsu.edu

Bylaws <http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/media-lib/pdf/gov/bylaws-2014.pdf>

Procedures Manual <http://www.uuchurchmuncie.net/media-lib/pdf/gov/procedure-manual-2014.pdf>

Farm to Food Bank Program Will Help (continued from page 9)

On Monday, February 9th, 3 people from our staff, 2 board members and I traveled to the Indiana Statehouse to join our other state food banks in meeting with several of our state elected officials including Lt. Governor Ellspermann, House Speaker Bosma, Senator Lanane, Representatives Austin, Errington and Beumer. Some shared remarks from the podium and then visited with us to discuss our areas of interest. We were able to share some information about our program impact for struggling families and discuss the funding as well. Advocacy is part of our core responsibility as a food bank. We must share the viewpoint of nameless, faceless people who number in the tens of thousands that can't write checks to campaigns. The Farm to Food Bank Program is impactful. Consider letting your voice be heard.

Tim Kean is the President and CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana. The Second Harvest Food Bank network of 110-member agencies and programs provides food assistance to more than 74,000 low-income people facing hunger in Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, Randolph and Wabash Counties.

Our March Dedicated Offering recipient is Second Harvest Food Bank. Learn more about SHFB's mission to alleviate hunger in East Central Indiana [here](#) and meet with Executive Director Tim Kean at the discussion group at 9:30 on March 1.

If you can't be in church on March 1 & 8, please send your check to the church office, payable to UUCM, with "Second Harvest" on the memo line. *Your donation will be greatly appreciated!*

March 2015 UUCM Calendar

Online calendar: <http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/web/calendar.html>

Regular Weekly Events

Adult Discussion Group	Sundays	9:30 am
Worship Service	Sundays	10:45 am – noon
Religious Education for Children & Youth	Sundays	10:45 am – noon
High School Youth Group (no meeting 3/15)	Sundays	6:00 – 7:30 pm
4U Campus Ministry BSU Student Center, Rm 305	Sundays	8:00 – 9:30 pm
Body Life Dinner	Tuesdays	6:00 – 7:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal	Tuesdays	7:30 – 9:00 pm
Lenten Service & Lunch	Wednesdays	Noon
Revival Hour (see calendar for location)	Wednesdays	5:30 pm
Muncie OUTreach LGBTQ Youth Drop In	Fridays	5:00 – 8:00 pm

March Events & Activities

Stewardship Committee	Sunday	March 1	9:30 am
Membership Joining Ceremony	Sunday	March 1	10:15 am
Generosity Picnic	Sunday	March 1	Noon
Boston Bound Bake Sale	Sunday	March 1	Noon
Middle School Youth Group	Sunday	March 1	1:00 – 2:30 pm
Adult RE :: Theme Reflections	Sunday	March 1	1:00 – 2:30 pm
Communications Committee	Tuesday	March 3	6:30 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	March 4	7:30 pm
High School Youth Group Lock In	Saturday	March 7	6:00 pm
Chalice Marketplace :: coffee & other Fair Trade items for sale	Sunday	March 8	Before & after the service
Boston Bound Bake Sale	Sunday	March 8	Noon
Adult RE :: Exploring Your Theology	Sunday	March 8	12:30 – 2:00 pm
Mission & Vision Task Force	Sunday	March 8	3:30 pm
Pastoral Associates	Wednesday	March 11	7:00 – 8:30 pm
Finance Committee	Thursday	March 12	Noon
UU Crafters	Thursday	March 12	7:00 – 9:00 pm
RE Committee (Children & Youth)	Sunday	March 15	9:30 am
Committee on Ministries Focus Group	Sunday	March 15	Noon
Soup Lunch :: Boston Bound Fundraiser	Sunday	March 15	Noon
Anti-Racism Task Force	Sunday	March 15	12:15 pm
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	March 18	7:00 – 8:30 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	March 19	7:15 pm
Mission & Vision Event	Sunday	March 22	12:15 pm
Community Service	Sunday	March 22	9:30 am
Sack Lunches for Harvest Soup Kitchen			
Adult RE Committee	Sunday	March 22	12:15 pm
Boston Bound Meeting	Sunday	March 22	12:15 pm
UU Crafters	Thursday	March 26	7:00 pm
UU Book Group	Thursday	March 26	7:00 pm

Bits & Pieces

The UU Crafters

Seven UU Crafters met for the first time February 12. Knitting, quilting, felting, beading, paper crafts, and pattern books were shared.

Any age, any gender is cordially invited to join us from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, in the Indigo-Violet classrooms on the second and fourth Thursdays in March (12th and 26th). Come prepared to enjoy a relaxing time working on your craft project or ready to explore possible new projects. If we meet twice a month, we'll have time to complete projects for the Bazaar and Mitten Tree or personal projects.

Hope to see you on the 12th!

Sherry Ware

sherryware04@gmail.com

Holly Hanauer

HBHanauer@aol.com

New Webmaster!

We are excited to announce the hire of **Paul Ament-Gjenvick** as our new Website Admin. Paul brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position, and he's already helped us get caught up on our sermon podcast posting. While all content needing to be posted to the website should be sent to Christie moving forward, Paul can of course be reached if the need arises at

paul@uuchurchmuncie.org

Welcome Paul!

UUCM Staff & Leadership

Board of Trustees

Nancy Behforouz
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Sherry Ware
President-Elect

Annemarie Voss
Vice President

Mary Johnson Robey
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Jeff Hathaway
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Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie

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