



the UNIGRAM

Cultivating Creativity

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

I have the pleasure these days of watching a small child create art. My daughter Mira, who just turned two, delights in coloring, and you can see it in her eyes. They light up at the idea of coloring, they focus intently during the process, and they beam with pride when she is done. It's a joy to watch her find joy in the entire process. But it's the last part – the eyes beaming with pride when she's done – that challenges me to think more deeply about our theme for this month of Creativity. For her coloring is exactly what it should be at this point in her developmental cycle: squiggles of lines all over the paper that have absolutely nothing to do with black lines outlining the image or object to be colored. And, she is free of self-judgment, or the awareness of "what should be" –

she simply delights in what is. Mira is not unique in this of course. Most, if not all young children from what I can tell share this lack of self-judgment. Too often though, we adults are unable to follow suit and separate our acts of creativity from the self-judgment that follow.

I remember talking to my uncle on the phone one time when I was 14 or 15. I had been learning to play the flute for about 6 or 7 years at that point, and had by then become reasonably good for my age. His basic question: how were you able to stick it out? "I've been trying to learn to play the guitar," he said, "and I've been taking lessons for about a month. But I just keep getting discouraged – I sound

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The Making of Poems

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

"When I was 12 years old, I was responsible for the death of my younger brother in a hunting accident. I held the rifle that killed him. In a single moment, my world changed forever. I felt grief, terror, shame and despair more deeply than I could ever have imagined. In the aftermath, no one in my shattered family could speak to me about my brother's death, and their silence left me alone with all my agonizing emotions. And under those emotions, something even more terrible: a knowledge that all the easy meanings I had lived by until then had been suddenly and utterly abolished...As a young person, I found something to set against my growing sense of isolation and numbness: the making

of poems." (Gregory Orr)

I can relate to Professor Orr's comment about the making of poems. As many of you probably are aware, I also make poems. Mostly, I write out of pain, out of brokenness. Occasionally, yes, I write out of celebration and joy, or simply to give utterance to something that has caught my attention. But usually, I write because I'm writing my way out of hard places. The crafting of poems is for me a way of surviving the emotional chaos, spiritual confusions and traumatic events that come with being alive. I

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Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

Services begin at 10:45 am May Worship Theme :: Creativity

For more information about this month's theme check out Theme Exploration on [page 3](#).

Sunday, May 1 Music Appreciation Sunday	We celebrate music and our choir in this special Sunday service focused on how music brings deeper meaning to our lives. In addition to the choir, numerous guest musicians will join our own fabulous Director of Music, Jim Helton, in shaping this special service.
Sunday, May 8 Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Rev. Seth's sermon kicks off our May theme of Creativity, exploring why creativity matters in our lives, as we also acknowledge and honor Mother's Day.
Sunday, May 15 Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Rev. Seth's second and final sermon on Creativity – check the Friday eBlast on the 13 th for more details on the topic!
Sunday, May 22 Coming of Age Sunday	The Coming of Age class will lead this special service that culminates their year-long process of study, reflection and learning with the sharing of their faith statements with the congregation. The youth have had a powerful and rewarding experience this year – this is a service not to be missed!
Sunday, May 29 Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd	Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd will join us as a guest speaker.

Religious Education for Children & Youth, 10:45 am

Sunday, May 1 Multigenerational Service	On Multigenerational Sundays, the services are for all ages. Childcare will be available in the Blue Room for preschool & kindergarten youth.
Sunday, May 8 Curriculum Sunday	Please join us, as we continue our religious exploration!
Sunday, May 15 Curriculum Sunday	Please join us, as we continue our religious exploration! We'll also honor our graduates with our High School Bridging Ceremony .
Sunday, May 22 Coming of Age Service & Curriculum Sunday for grades PreK-2 grade	Youth in grades 3–12 are invited to attend our special "Coming of Age" service this morning. The COA service is the culmination of a yearlong program for our middle school youth where they are given the opportunity to present their faith statements. Following the service, youth in grades 3 rd -12 th are invited to come to the fellowship hall for our annual All Birthdays Celebration!
Sunday, May 29 Game Day	Come dressed to move! We will have activities set up outside, weather permitting.

Adult Religious Exploration Offerings, 9:30 am

Our mission statement begins by calling us to a continuing exploration of our faith. In pursuit and support of that goal, we offer our Adult RE during the Sunday morning 9:30-10:30 am pre-service slot. Check out all the offerings below!

1 st Sundays – Yellow Room Exploring Spiritual Practices with Rev. Julia	Start your month by investigating a spiritual practice. Engaging in regular spiritual practice is one way we can explore our faith. It's also a good way to strengthen ourselves for practicing inclusivity and living justice.
2 nd Sundays – Yellow Room What Moves Us: UU Theology with Rev. Elizabeth	Our theology is rich and powerful. Come explore what makes UU theology so life giving and transformative. We will journey together in faith, through shared direct experiences and reflection exercises, readings and lessons, and ethical deliberations.
Every Sunday – Red Room Adult Discussion Group	This group is meant as a chance for people with various personal beliefs to get together and openly discuss a variety of topics. See page 9 for weekly topics.
Every Sunday – Violet room Muncie UU Pagans	This is an open discussion group to explore the differences in our pagan traditions. We will also be discussing the reasons that so many Pagan and Earth-based religions find homes in UU congregations. People of any belief are welcome to attend.

Theme Exploration – Creativity

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.

Sacred Text

Our sacred text for this month is an excerpt from What We Ache For: Creativity and the Unfolding of Your Soul by Oriah Mountain Dreamer:

Our creativity is the soul-deep impulse in all human beings to go beyond the perceptions of the senses to the conception of something new. We begin with what is and make something more of it. A piece of wood becomes a beautifully carved and useful piece of furniture. An old way of organizing activities or people or space yields to new innovations. Observations give birth to ideas; words become a poem; sounds becomes music, light, and color; pigment and canvas become a painting. It is an inherent part of creation itself to produce new forms, and human beings are not separable from creation. I see this creative impulse in the minute front lawns of urban neighborhoods where homeowners spend countless hours carefully arranging stones and plants and concrete statues to create a place that mirrors some hope or dream or story they want the world to notice. I see it in the way advertisers use images of young families, untouched wilderness, and sexually provocative women to sell everything from shampoo to insurance policies. I see it in the games of children, who construct whole new worlds with empty cardboard cartons and illustrate their lives with colored chalk on concrete sidewalks. Human beings are continually creating.

Questions for Reflection

What do you do that is creative? Do those creative activities have value to you? Why?

What gets in the way of creativity in general? What gets in the way of creativity in your life?

Has there been a time in your life when creativity – your own or someone else’s – has had a profound or transformative impact on your life? If so, how did your life change?

Is there a connection between creativity and spirituality? If so, how does that show up in your life?

Suggested Reading – Sermons

“Getting Unstuck: Creativity and Spirituality” by Rev. Sandra Fees – <http://goo.gl/t4yti4>

“The Spirit of Creativity” by Rev. Barbara Wells
<http://goo.gl/tFX5zH>

Suggested Reading – Books

Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces that Stand In the Way of True Inspiration by Ed Catmull, president of Pixar Animation and Disney Animation

The Artist’s Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity, by Julia Cameron

Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear, by Elizabeth Gilbert, author of Eat, Pray, Love

Spiritual Practice

Set aside half an hour, once a week, to do something creative. It doesn’t matter if you’re “good” at it, it doesn’t matter what the activity is, just do something creative. Depending on what medium you choose, you might also to push yourself to focus on enjoying the process and being present in the moment by committing to throwing away or recycle the final product.

2015-2016 UUCM Themes

September – Forgiveness

October – Inclusivity

November – Grace

December – Waiting

January – Freedom

February – Sexuality

March – Brokenness

April – Truth

May – Creativity

Religious Education Corner

*Nadine Tringali,
Director of Religious Education*

Last month was very busy for Elizabeth and I with all the planning and preparations for our middle school “**Coming of Age Wilderness Journey Retreat**” that was held at Mounds State Park, April 22-24. Spending time with our youth on this retreat was a great honor. On Saturday morning, we headed out to find special locations for all of our youth to sit and reflect in the woods. This was a time for them to meditate, write in their journals, and to reflect on their lives. As we dropped off one of our youth to a particularly magical spot, we spotted a small deer that was less than 12 feet away. As she walked forward, the deer did not move for several seconds, and then when it did, it simply turned and walked away – which brought our attention to yet another deer that was in the shadows! After all the youth had found their special spot in the woods, I found my own spot in dappled sunlight on the boardwalk high above the little stream that runs through the park – the perfect location to be in earshot of all of our youth – and was able to have my own chance for meditation and reflection as I listened to the babbling stream, the singing of the birds, and enjoyed a cool breeze.

Many thanks to **Rev. Seth** and our COA mentors who spent Saturday afternoon with us at the Retreat! I wish to thank all the parents who helped to make the retreat such a success by lending us their camping equipment, shopping for all our food and supplies, providing farm fresh eggs, making soup, transporting all our equipment



and youth, being on our night crew teams, and signing up to be our chefs. A special thank you to **John & Susan Taylor**, who camped out with us for the entire retreat – keeping the campsite running smoothly while the facilitators and I led the programming. Last, but not least, a thank you to our facilitators **Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd, Zach Enos, Amy Shaw** and **Andrea Wolfe** who were able to spend the weekend with us leading our special programming. Thank you all!

The culmination of our yearlong middle school “Coming of Age” program, will conclude with our **Coming of Age Service on Sunday, May 22**. They have been guided on this journey by their COA facilitators, their mentors, and Rev. Seth.

I look forward to our **Bridging Ceremony** with our high school graduates on May 15. Our seniors are **Madison Bartlett, Taylor Gonzalez, Anthony Miller, and Claire Moorman**. On this Sunday, we recognize our graduating seniors as they begin the important step of moving forward into their futures!

Nadine

Youth Programs May Schedule

*Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd,
Coordinator of Youth Programs*

Sundays, May 1 and 8, 12:30-2 pm

Regular Joint Meetings

In May, all middle and high school aged youth are invited to join us for our regular meetings on the 1st and 8th of the month. Come to laugh and share! Lunch will be provided.

Sunday, May 15, 12:30-2 pm – Bridging Party

Please join us for the special celebration of our Bridgers,

those who are graduating out of our program and becoming young adults. The Bridging Ceremony will take place during the service on the 15th and we wish to honor and celebrate this occasion as a youth group. We will also host a small bridging ceremony for those who are transitioning from middle to high school. There will be cake!

And mark your calendars for **June 5**, when we will have our End of Year Party! We will enjoy our 2nd annual Jellybean Ritual! You do not want to miss it!

Elizabeth

Two Services Task Force (TSTF)

What We've Learned Thus Far at the Four Cottage Meetings

As of April 18, the TSTF has run four cottage meetings. Two were general invitation meetings, one was with the Pagan group that meets Sunday morning, and one with young adults. Thirty-three people have participated. Two more general invitation cottage meetings will have occurred on April 24 by the time this goes to print. Here's some of what we've heard and learned:

Concerns that have been expressed at the idea of adding a service:

- That we'd feel a loss of community
- Wondering whether we're big enough to warrant two services
- Wondering if we have adequate structure to support two services
- Concern about the estimated cost (\$9,000 - \$10,000 initially)
- Concern about how the current 9:30 events would be handled
- Wanting to be sure there would be plenty of time between services for congregational mixing

Dreams of what could happen if we had two services:

- Would have the choice of what time of day to come worship
- Potential growth of congregation which translates to more volunteers to do the work of the congregation and to carry out social justice work in the community
- Ability to meet different worship needs
- Two smaller services could create more "sociological" space, compared to frequently having 80% of our seats full
- Potential for having room to welcome more diverse members into our congregation

Other points:

- Most participants place a high value on our free religious tradition and believe we have a responsibility to extend ourselves to those who are not yet with us.
- Everyone agrees that parking is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Our next steps are to meet with the choir, staff, worship associates, RE committee, pre-service discussion group, and other committees that would be directly impacted by a change to two services. We will also be providing an official update to the congregation at the May congregational meeting.

If you were not able to attend a cottage meeting or have any other questions or concerns, please contact a member of the task force and to share your thoughts. We want to hear everyone's voice!



Contact a member of the TSTF:

Bea Sousa, co-chair

beals42@gmail.com

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, co-chair

seth@uuchurchmuncie.org

Ben Ewing, secretary

Ben.Ewing24@gmail.com

Jerry McKean, event organizer

jmckean1@comcast.net

Janay Sander, data analysis

janaysander@yahoo.com

Susan Taylor, communications

susantaylor68@hotmail.com

Congregational Business Meeting Sunday, May 22, after the service

On Sunday, May 22, immediately following the service, we will hold our Regular Congregational Business Meeting. Please plan to attend and be part of our church's democratic process. If you are unable to attend, an absentee ballot, deposited with the Board Secretary a minimum of two (2) days prior to the meeting, shall be permitted on all agenda proposals.

Please note that while everyone is welcome to attend the meeting, only voting members of the congregation are allowed to vote. Membership is defined in our By-Laws, ARTICLE III, as follows:

Section 2. Definition of Membership A. Persons who have been admitted to membership for at least thirty (30) days, who make a financial pledge to the church and make a good-faith effort to pay it, who donate their time and services, and who attend church services and activities are deemed to be voting members with all rights and privileges. Members who by reason of health have not been able to participate in church affairs and members who by reason of financial hardship have not been able to make a monetary contribution, are nonetheless viewed by the church as being members.

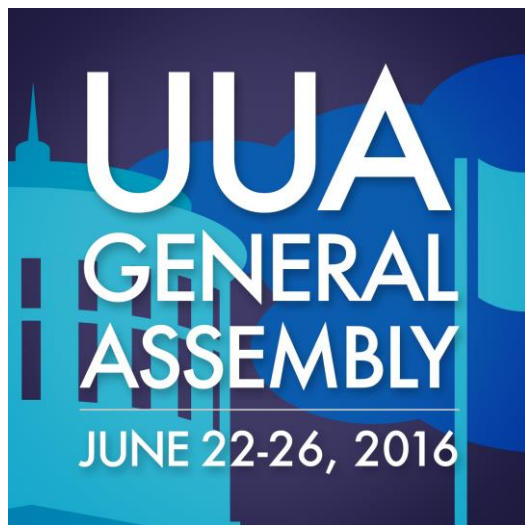
If you are uncertain as to your voting status or need an absentee ballot, please contact **Christie Williams**, our Office Administrator at christie@uuchurchmuncie.org or 765-288-9561.

Congregational Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Reading and Approval of the Minutes from October 18 Congregational Meeting
3. Presentation by Two Services Task Force
4. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of the Proposed 2016-17 Budget
5. Election of Board Officers

Budget Informational Meeting

On **Sunday, May 15**, immediately following the service, a special informational meeting to review the proposed 2016-17 budget will be held. Treasurer **Usha Shivaswamy** will present the Board recommended budget and answer questions. The purpose of this meeting is to facilitate members' understanding of this complex document.



General Assembly 2016 Register Now!

Have you ever been to General Assembly (GA), our annual national gathering? If not, you should consider going! If you've been before, you know what a treat it is to gather with Unitarian Universalists from across the country and participate in amazing workshops, lectures and worship. Either way, please consider signing up to attend all or part of GA 2016, which will be held June 22nd-26th in Columbus, OH. The location of GA moves around the country from year to year, so this year it's actually accessible to us driving, only 3 hours away.

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Message from the President

Exploring faith. Practicing inclusivity. Living justice.

Why Have Task Forces?

In October 2015, the Board voted to approve the creation of a special task force to investigate whether we should offer two services on Sunday morning. In his September minister's report to the Board, **Rev. Seth** mentioned consistently higher levels of attendance. In fact, a member of the congregation had pointed out to him that some Sundays the sanctuary was feeling crowded and perhaps we needed to add a second service. Rev. Seth looked at attendance numbers and discovered that we had reached 80% capacity on some Sundays—the capacity at which newcomers feel there may not be a place for them in our community.

So, **Bea Sousa, Ben Ewing, Jerry McKean, Janay Sander**, and **Susan Taylor** were approved to work with Rev. Seth on the Two Services Task Force.

They organized and held a Kick-Off on Sunday, March 6th. They have been holding Questions, Answers & Concerns sessions and Cottage Meetings to collect the congregation's opinions, thoughts and ideas. Right now, they are busy collating the data they have collected from all of you and will make a presentation at the May 22 Congregational Meeting.

As I've watched the Two Services Task Force, I've sensed that they seem to have formed a special bond. They have that energy that comes from a group that is working hard, but obviously enjoying their mission and each other. Mentioning this to Bea Sousa, she responded,

"Being a member of the Two Services Exploration

Task Force is a remarkable experience. I am learning that our work—and it is some of the most difficult work I have ever done—is more accurately about the future growth of the congregation. I am grateful to be with and supported by this small group of UUs who are dedicated and even fearless in their willingness to learn what is best for the congregation in the long run. And they are all younger than I am!"

I was honored to serve on the Mission & Vision Task Force last year. It was also a lot of work. I'm happy that we were able to produce a new Mission & Vision statement that reflects the views of the congregation—an outcome that wasn't guaranteed and should be redone within the next five years or so.

On Sunday, April 17, Co-Chairs **Meg Calkins** and **Pam Harwood** made a brief presentation to the congregation about the Grounds Vision Task Force. Assisting Meg and Pam on that task force are **Dave Calvin** and **Dylan Ford**. They will be leading us in a visioning process about the space outside our building, helping us form a cohesive plan for the future.

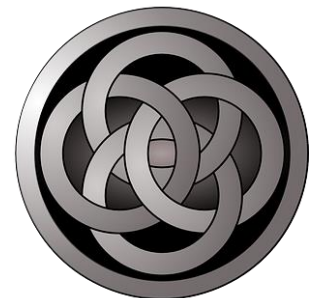
Serving on a task force is a lot of extra work. It means frequent meetings, event planning, data collecting and collating. This is the way that a Program Church works and we are a Program Church. Task Forces work hard to help us decide what our future will look like. They are the worker bees collecting data, but it is up to the congregation to take that data and make the final decision.

Sherry Ware, President of the Congregation

Wheel of Life

Sarah (Klein) and Kris Ratekin were married in our sanctuary on Saturday, April 23rd, with the ceremony officiated by Rev. Seth. Congratulations Sarah and Kris!

If you have a major life event you'd like the church community to be aware of, please submit it to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org and note "Wheel of Life" in the subject line.



Program Council

This is the sixth in a series of articles about the ministries of our church. Everything we do is part of our ministry to one another and to the community, both within the church and beyond. Each month over the next two years the series will spotlight the work of a committee or task force that contributes to the broader ministry of our congregation.

The Program Council works behind the scenes to keep our church running smoothly and focused on our mission and vision. Its primary functions are communication, coordination and accountability. The Board Vice President chairs the Program Council, and all standing committees are represented either by their chair or a delegate. Through shared monthly reports and timely discussion of current issues, including how a project or event supports our mission and vision, members keep their fingers on the pulse of congregational work.

Not all UUCM committees are Standing Committees, so not every group is represented on Program Council. However, task forces report to chairs of committees or to the board, so indirectly their work is part of the picture Program Council sees. If a task force is not achieving its goals, representative are asked to come to either Program Council or the Board to seek resolution and accountability.

Because Program Council holds the big picture, policies and procedure manual updates go through Program Council as well.

Working together for common cause creates personal bonds, an advantage that Program Council offers. But, as PC Chair **Susan Bossung** notes, working with other committee chairs, learning how they work, also offers insights into how the different committees work so that one can gain a better idea of how church works by being on PC.

Current Members of Program Council: **Susan Bossung** (Board Vice President and Council Chair); **Eleanor Trawick** (Adult Religious Education), **Jay Moorman** (Communications), **Ginny Nilles** (Fellowship), **Chuck Austin** (Finance), **Nancy Behforouz** (Nominating), **John Taylor/Jeff Hathaway** (Property Maintenance), **Velvet Miller** (Religious Education), **Michael Sullivan** (Social Justice), **Bruce Peavler** (Stewardship); **Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd**, ex-officio.

Sharing Gratitude

Many thanks to our Stewardship Committee for doing such a terrific job in helping us all get our pledges in this spring! We are 95% of the way to our goal, with some pledges still to come in. Thank you for helping our congregation in this very important way! The Stewardship Committee for 2016-17 is **Bruce Peavler**, chair; **Nan Barber**, **Katie Frederick**, **Lynn Hale**, and **Luellen Smucker**.

If you have a gratitude you'd like to submit for the next Unigram, please send it to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org, subject line "Sharing Gratitude," by May 18.



Cultivating Creativity

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd (continued from page 1)

terrible.” I didn’t have to think long or hard about my response, it seemed pretty clear to me. “Uncle Jake, it’s taken me years to get this good at playing the flute. You’re not going to get there in a month. You’re going to have to practice for a long time before you get good at it.” I kind of wanted to add on to that end of that, “well, duh.” And yet as an adult now myself, I fall into this same pattern of thinking all the time.

The deeper question I would ask my uncle now if I could go back in time with my present knowledge: is the point of learning to play the guitar to produce great music? Or is the point to enjoy playing the music, regardless of its quality? My daughter’s coloring right now isn’t “good coloring” – it’s not even remotely anywhere near being within the lines, or consistently filling each section with the same color. But it’s perfect coloring – perfect for her, for where she is at this time, and because of the enjoyment it brings her. We tell her that her coloring is beautiful, not because we’re humoring her, but because it’s true.

We live in a results driven culture, where we talk about frequently about setting goals, and working hard to reach them. We’re often all about metric-driven evaluation and competition and accomplishment. It can be hard not to succumb to the culture of achievement that is all around us. For many of us, it could be helpful to pay greater attention to one of the basic tents of Buddhism, which encourages us to be mindful and present to the moment. This doesn’t mean that we can’t also get to the achieving results part – but trying to be intentional about being present to the moment can make a big difference.

Creativity is good for the soul. We have a tendency to narrowly define creativity as what happens in the arts – but to be creative literally means that you are using your ability to “make new things or think of new ideas.” Regardless of our field, most of us feel some sense of fulfillment when we’re able to create in some way, shape or form. Whether it’s at work – finding a new way to solve a coding issue if we’re a programmer, or a new way of connecting ideas if we’re a physicist – or at home – gardening, knitting, or building a tree house from scratch – we usually have some place we can make or create something or some idea new. And for most of us, there’s some meaning made, there’s some satisfaction gained, from the act of creativity, whatever form it may take.

My hope for us, and my hope for you, is that wherever it is in your life that you are creative, that you can be present to the process, and find a way to color outside the lines, free from judging voices, whether your own or others.

See you in church!

peace, love and blessings,

Rev. Seth

Adult Discussion Group – Sundays at 9:30 am

May 1 – Faiths of the Founding Fathers

The idea of the faith of our Founding Fathers is frequently brought in political discussions in an attempt to turn our national vision back into some mythical ideal past. **Bill Miller** will be leading our discussion with new information presented by David L. Holmes in his 2006 book *The Faiths of the Founding Fathers*. After having researched this topic by looking at the diaries, letters, and memoirs of the Founding fathers, Holmes builds a case that most of them were Deists.

May 8 – The Evolution of God

In 2009, Robert Wright wrote *The Evolution of God*, where he attempts to reconcile two kinds of cultural clashes: the seemingly inevitable clash between Abrahamic traditions (especially post 9/11) and the on-going clash between science and religion. His central thesis is that humans create gods that speak to their circumstances; as circumstances change, humanity’s concept of god changes. The good news? The evolutionary path of god is toward cooperation and tolerance between cultures – secular and religious.

Join us on Sunday as we discuss Wright’s optimistic view and test our own tolerance for a view that embraces rationality and religiosity. Discussion leader: **Mike Sullivan**.

May 15 – Pagan Perspective

Our church’s mission is to explore faith and to practice inclusivity in our open search for truth. This Sunday, **Annemarie Voss** will moderate a presentation by **Alyssa Farnsworth** and **Lisa Abner**, who will share the perspective of pagan religion with us. They will share their beliefs and tell us what values arise for them out of their vision of the truth. How and where do our perspectives intersect and unite us, and how might they enrich and augment each other?

May 22 – 10 Principles of Burning Man

Bruce Perkins will lead a discussion based on things learned from his experiences at Burning Man Festivals.

May 29 – UUCM May theme: Creativity

An open, unplanned conversation will revolve around the UUCM theme of the month; Creativity.

The Making of Poems

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer (continued from page 1)

write my way to that place at which clarity and healing begin to emerge.

The poem is an *expressing*. When I write, I give a voice to that which has had no voice. I take, as Oriah Mountain Dreamer has said, what *is* and make something more of it. When I write a poem, I process experience. I engage with my internal world and give it external form and shape. The poem is also a *container*: As I write, I shape chaotic, tumbling raw emotion. I take what is otherwise without structure and give it form. In doing so I make it more accessible, more manageable. It makes the nearly-unbearable more bearable. As I write, I can take that which threatens to overwhelm me and engage with it. At the same time, I create a safe space for myself in which to do so. Writing helps give meaning to that which by its nature threatens to be meaningless. Even poems that portray terror and despair are an affirmation of life in all its glory and all its brokenness, in its complex and paradoxical meaning.

And a poem is a means of *sharing* what gave it birth. The challenging places can be isolating. In those places, I often feel cut off, alone. In shaping that experience into a poem, it becomes shared experience. When I share a poem with an audience, or with even another individual, it witnesses to the triumph of community over isolation. I have read to audiences poems that grew out of my experience as an abused child, and poems that grew out of my late husband's death. The sense of connection, of community, is palpable.

The alchemy of making poems out of the base metal of my lived experience helps me become more aware of the gifts hidden in the pain. I become more aware of the workings of the Holy in and through the brokenness. It becomes a way of blessing the *whole* of my experience.

In addition to its ability to express, share, communicate and create community, birthing poetry out of pain is an end in itself. To bring something of beauty—even stark beauty—and order out of pain is in itself a way of revealing the Sacred. It's both a way of inviting the Holy to be present and of expressing that presence. It is a way of touching the unshakable foundation of our being, even along the jagged edges of our lives. It is a way of being open to the gift hidden in the pain and sharing that gift with others that they too, may find healing.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Julia

UUA General Assembly 2016

(continued from page 6)

From the UUA website:

The theme for GA 2016 will be Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect. The faith world is increasingly multifaith. People are crossing borders of religion and spiritual practice to create wholeness in their lives individually and collectively. General Assembly 2016 in Columbus Ohio will assemble leaders and communities of many faiths to worship together, learn from one another, and create a new vision of faith that no longer divides us, but connects us to an interdependent future that works for all.

There are many wonderful programs and events to consider attending, including:

- the opening **Banner Parade** on Wednesday evening
- the **Service of the Living Tradition** on Thursday evening where Rev. Seth will be honored for receiving Final Fellowship (*free to the general public*)
- the **Ware Lecture** on Saturday evening which this year features NPR host of *On Being* Krista Tippett
- and the **Sunday morning worship service**, led this year by Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd (yes, related to Revs. Seth & Elizabeth – she's their sister-in-law)

If you plan to attend the full conference, you might consider applying to our Board of Trustees to be an official **Delegate to GA** from our church, which would mean you could vote on the official business of the denomination in the business meeting sessions. Scholarship money is available from the UUA to help pay for registration costs, with first-time attendees given highest priority. You can also register for just one day of the event – if, for example, you just wanted to go workshops on Saturday and attend the Ware Lecture to hear Krista Tippett speak. If you don't want pay to register, the Service of the Living Tradition and the Sunday morning worship service are open to the public free of charge.

If you're interested, mark the dates on your calendar and register now. You can learn more about the programming, logistics and schedule by visiting <http://www.uua.org/ga>, and clicking on the various links on the menu on the left. Register at: <http://www.uua.org/ga/registration>.

May 2016 UUCM Calendar

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

Regular Weekly Events

Adult Discussion Group	Sundays	9:30 am
Muncie UU Pagans	Sundays	9:30 am
Worship Service	Sundays	10:45 am – noon
Religious Education for Children & Youth	Sundays	10:45 am – noon
Body Life Dinner	Tuesdays	6:00 – 7:30 pm
Finding Spirit :: Transgender Support Group	Tuesdays	7:00 pm
Revival Hour (see web calendar for location)	Wednesdays	5:30 pm
Muncie OUTreach LGBTQ Youth Drop In	Fridays	5:00 – 8:00 pm

May Events & Activities

Adult RE :: Exploring Spiritual Practices	Sunday	May 1	9:30 am
Service Auction	Sunday	May 1	Noon
Combined Youth Groups	Sunday	May 1	12:30 pm
Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force	Monday	May 2	7:00 pm
Communications Committee	Tuesday	May 3	6:30 pm
Finance Committee	Wednesday	May 4	5:30 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	May 4	7:30 pm
Bazaar Task Force	Thursday	May 5	6:00 pm
Kitchen Cleaning	Saturday	May 7	9:30 am
Adult RE :: What Moves Us: UU Theology	Sunday	May 8	9:30 am
Chalice Marketplace	Sunday	May 8	9:30 am & Noon
Combined Youth Groups	Sunday	May 8	12:30 pm
Social Justice Committee	Monday	May 9	7:00 pm
Pastoral Associates	Wednesday	May 11	6:00 pm
Program Council	Wednesday	May 11	7:00 pm
OUTreach Prom	Saturday	May 14	7:00 pm
RE Committee (Children & Youth)	Sunday	May 15	9:30 am
Budget Informational Meeting	Sunday	May 15	Noon
Multi-Gen Event :: Zentangle	Sunday	May 15	Noon
Adult Discussion Committee	Sunday	May 15	12:15 pm
Unigram Submission Deadline	Wednesday	May 18	9:00 am
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	May 18	6:30 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	May 19	7:15 pm
Coming of Age Celebration Dinner	Saturday	May 21	6:00 pm
Sack Lunch Prep for Harvest Soup Kitchen	Sunday	May 22	9:30 am
Congregational Business Meeting	Sunday	May 22	Noon
Fellowship Committee	Sunday	May 22	12:15 pm
Committee on Community Ministry	Thursday	May 26	7:30 pm

Mark Your Calendar

Hospitality Teams

Your participation will help us continue to offer amazing hospitality to visitors and to each other!

1st Sunday – Red Team

2nd Sunday – Orange Team

3rd Sunday – Yellow Team

4th Sunday – Green Team

5th Sunday – Blue Team

Music Appreciation Sunday

was so successful last year that we've decided to do it again. This year's service on May 1, will use a similar format, combining various soloists and various styles of music, and we'll end with a set from the choir to close out our season. Of course, there will be lots of hymns to sing.

Don't miss it!!

~Jim Helton,

Director of Music

Our next **Congregational Business Meeting** will be Sunday, May 22, immediately following the service.

A **Budget Information Session** is scheduled after the service on Sunday, May 15. For more information check out the article on page 6.

Muncie OUTreach Equality

Prom is May 14. Check the eBlast for ways you can help make this LGBTQ prom a special **Starry Night!**

UUCM Staff & Leadership

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

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Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

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Office Hours: Monday 1:00 – 4:00 pm | Tuesday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm | Wednesday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie

4800 West Bradford Drive
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*Exploring faith.
Practicing inclusivity.
Living justice.*

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